Hernandez Mendoza, Jose Sergio (2022) *Transnational adult education for migrant populations: a realist evaluation of the programme "Education Model for Life and Work" (MEVyT Spanish acronym).* PhD thesis.

https://theses.gla.ac.uk/83334/

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses
https://theses.gla.ac.uk/
research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk

Transnational Adult Education for Migrant Populations: A Realist Evaluation of the Programme "Education Model for Life and Work" (MEVyT Spanish acronym)

Jose Sergio Hernandez Mendoza

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor in Education
School of Education, College of Social Sciences
University of Glasgow
December 2022

Abstract:

Adult education for migrant populations in a globalised economy is gaining relevance as a conduit to facilitate social cohesion and integration. For this reason, adult education is becoming part of the policy agendas in many countries. Different research projects have been launched by international organisations, governments, and higher education institutions to explore the effects of adult education on well-being and development. Nevertheless, there is still much to be studied about the implications of such interventions. This thesis draws on a realist evaluation of the programme "*Education Model for Life and Work" (MEVyT)* for migrant adults in the city of Los Angeles, California. This programme is operated transnationally by the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA for its acronym in Spanish), a Mexican agency providing literacy and basic education for adults who have been left out of the formal education system and have migrated to the United States. The objective is to identify if the programme improves the student's subjective well-being whilst fostering the creation of social capital. Moreover, through the realist evaluation, this research identified the context-mechanism-outcome pattern configurations that allow this programme to produce positive effects.

Keywords: adult education; subjective well-being; social capital; migration; transnational education policy; realist evaluation; global education.

Table of contents

Introduction ... 1
Objective ... 3
Operationalisation ... 3
Literature Review ... 5
1.1 Adult education and migration ... 7
1.2 Research theoretical framework ... 17
1.2.1 Subjective Well-being ... 18
1.2.2 Social Capital ... 27
1.3 Adult Education and the challenges of literacy in Mexico ... 36
2. Methodology ... 44
2.1 Qualitative methods ... 44
2.2 Realist Evaluation ... 47
2.3 Study design ... 55
2.4 Data collection tools ... 56
2.5 Study setting, population and sampling procedures, access to the field ... 59
a) Plaza Comunitaria Casa Guerrero ... 61
b) Plaza Comunitaria Casa Durango ... 63
2.6 Fieldwork activities ... 64
3. Contextual data and intrinsic motivations ... 67
3.1 Sociodemographic data ... 67
a) Age Groups ... 67
b) Immigration status ... 71
c) Education level and employment status ... 73
d) Language proficiency ... 75
e) Time participating in the Learning Centre and types of courses ... 77
3.2 Motivations to participate in adult education ... 79
1. Overcoming personal development challenges ... 82
2. Obtaining U.S. Citizenship ... 85
3. Leisure ... 86
4. Looking for better employment opportunities ... 88
4. Findings – Student’s perceptions by theoretical dimension ... 92
4.1 Mental Health ... 94
4.1.1 CMO configurations concerning mental health ... 104
4.2 Employability ... 106
4.2.1 CMO configurations concerning employment opportunities ... 116
4.3 Social Relationships ... 119

4.3.1 CMO configurations concerning social relationships ... 133
4.4 Interpersonal Trust ... 135
4.4.1 CMO configurations concerning interpersonal trust ... 147
4.5 Accomplishment of goals ... 150
4.5.1 CMO configurations concerning the accomplishment of goals ... 156
5. Conclusions ... 163
5.1 Topics addressed ... 166
5.2 Barriers and enablers of adult education ... 173
5.3 Further research and study limitations ... 177
5.4 Policy recommendations and messages ... 182
Annexes ... 187
Annexe 1: Semi-structured questionnaire for students ... 187
Annexe 2: Descriptive Statistics ... 190
Annexe 3: Socioeconomic and context data ... 191
Annexe 4: NVivo table of Nodes and number of references ... 193
Annexe 5: Student's perceptions ... 195
References ... 198

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Learning Centres creation process……………………………………………………… 39
Table 2.1: Theoretical principles tested………………………………………………………… 54
Table 2.2: Semi-structured questions for students at Learning Centres……………………………... 59
Table 3.1 Age Groups……………………………………………………………………………67
Table 3.2: Cluster of two groups of students ………………………………………………….. 80
Table 4.1: Themes, subthemes, and references………………………………………………… 93
Table 4.1.1: Mental health codes……………………………………………………………….. 94
Table 4.2.1: Employability codes……………………………………………………………… 107
Table 4.3.1: Social relationships codes………………………………………………………… 119
Table 4.4.1: Interpersonal trust codes…………………………………………………………. 135
Table 4.5.1: Accomplishment of goals codes………………………………………………….. 150
Table 4.5.2: Student's profiles by predominant characteristics……………………………………… 160
Table 5.1: Kirkpatrick Model of Learning Evaluation…………………………………………………178

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Self-constructed Subjective well-being and Social Capital model……………………………….18
Figure 1.2: Balance point between Resources and Challenges as well-being………………………………….21
Figure 1.3: Educational dropouts in Mexico (2012-2018) ……………………………………………………42
Figure 2.1: Realist programme evaluation based on Gill Westhrop…………………………………………..51
Figure 2.2: Suggested pathway of analysis in Realist Evaluation……………………………………………..53
Figure 2.3: Functioning scheme of Learning Centres in the United States……………………………………60
Figure 4.1.1: Life satisfaction on a scale of 0-10…..…………………………………………………………101
Figure 4.1.2: MEVyT improving mental health……………………………………………………………...106
Figure 4.2.1: MEVyT improving employability……………………………………………………………..118
Figure 4.3.1: MEVyT improving social relationships………………………………………………………..134
Figure 4.4.1: MEVyT improving interpersonal trust…………………………………………………………149
Figure 4.5.1: MEVyT improving goals………………………………………………………………………158

List of Boxplots

Boxplot 3.1: Age groups and years in the United States ………..…………………………………………..71
Boxplot 3.2: Age groups and months taking part in the courses ……………………………………..………77

Acknowledgement

"I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution."

Printed Name: Jose Sergio Hernandez Mendoza

Signature:

Introduction

This doctoral work studies the Education Model for Life and Work (henceforth MEVyT for its acronym in Spanish) programme implemented by the Mexican National Institute for Adult Education in Los Angeles, California. This educational programme aims to upskill adult migrants who did not access the formal education system in their home country. The programme provides basic education and lifelong learning opportunities for Mexican migrants in the United States.

It covers two policy dimensions referring to educational opportunities for life and work, focusing on literacy skills, certified basic education courses and training to develop technological and computational capabilities and other classes (INEA, 2007). The goal is to provide students with basic education and lifelong learning opportunities throughout the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) and the national consulates across the United States (Castro-Mussot, 2007). The INEA developed the Education Model for Life and Work to provide learning opportunities and basic education for the migrant population in Mexico and the United States[1]. This intervention embodies a transnational education policy implemented for over 15 years. Transnational adult education policies are governmental approaches responding to globalisation and migration trends in different regions worldwide (UNESCO/CEPES, 2000; JISC, 2013).

This doctoral work comprises five chapters. The **first chapter** addresses a literature review exploring adult education concepts and their relationship with migration. The chapter examines data on migration between Mexico and the United States, highlighting why this phenomenon is significant for Mexico's development. Moreover, the literature review chapter outlines the most relevant conceptual approaches to define subjective well-being and social capital. This definition includes the relationship between adult education and self-esteem, self-confidence, life satisfaction, employability, social relationships, and interpersonal trust. To operationalise the concept of subjective well-being, I considered elements of mental health and employability. Referring to social capital theory, I used social relationships and interpersonal trust. Lastly, the chapter covers literacy and educational dropout challenges in Mexico to define the origins of the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA) and its policy approaches.

The **second chapter** outlines the methodological tools and approaches used for this study. It covers the reasons behind choosing a qualitative approach over a quantitative one to conduct semi-structured interviews with students and founders at two Learning Centres in Los Angeles, California. Similarly, the

[1] http://www.cursosinea.conevyt.org.mx/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=658&Itemid=254

chapter defines the most significant elements of a Realist Evaluation and its ontological perspectives based on realism to deconstruct the programme's context-mechanism-outcomes configurations. The methodology chapter also depicts the study design processes, fieldwork activities, ethical issues and how the data was collected and analysed using Nvivo software.

The **third chapter** entails the overall description of the student's socioeconomic and contextual data highlighting the most significant demographic information about the participants. The data covers the development of groups by age, gender, English proficiency, months taking part in the classes, employment and immigration status, years living in the United States, and schooling years. I used this data to cluster the students into groups defining similarities and contrasts to conduct the Realist Evaluation and the analysis of perceptions. The similarities correspond to age groups, immigration and employment status, types of courses attended by the students, and months taking part at the Centres. Furthermore, the chapter includes a subsection examining the different motivations to participate in adult education reported by the students. Alongside the sociodemographic characteristics, the motivations to take part in the classes play a determinant role in defining the student's goals and perceptions of the programme's effects.

The **fourth chapter** reviews the most significant findings relating to the student's perceptions of the four theoretical dimensions. The theoretical dimensions relate to the concepts of subjective well-being and social capital described in the literature review chapter. The theoretical dimensions analysed are self-esteem, self-confidence, life satisfaction, employability, social relationships, and interpersonal trust. For each dimension, I coded the interviews using Nvivo software and constructed analytical categories to understand the student's perceptions. Furthermore, I created qualitative profiles of students by their perceptions and sociodemographic characteristics to enable the analysis. Moreover, for each dimension, I undertook a realist evaluation constructing context-mechanism-outcomes configurations to understand how the programme operates and how students benefit from it. In addition to the four theoretical dimensions, I included the analysis concerning the students' perceptions of accomplishment of goals.

The **fifth chapter** comprises a summary of the main findings. It recapitulates the predominant sociodemographic characteristics of the students and their perceptions and the three main most relevant findings of this study. It compares why some students benefit more from the programme and how the MEVyT programme activates certain mechanisms to allow outcomes. Moreover, the chapter includes relevant theoretical and conceptual elements for further discussion about the effects of adult education on migrant populations. The discussion aims at understanding that adult education principles can be contrasted

drawing from this study. Lastly, the fifth chapter reviews further research opportunities, challenges for policy implementation and the study's strengths and weaknesses.

Objective

The overall goal is to evaluate the transnational policy regarding adult learning for migrants and its effects on participants' subjective well-being and the creation of social capital. The theoretical framework of adult education and its positive effects on individual well-being and social capital were tested using qualitative methods such as face-to-face semi-structured interviews with participants. Through a realist evaluation, this research project examines four theoretical principles concerning adult education and its relationship with social capital and subjective well-being. By analysing the different contexts, characteristics, and mechanisms, I analysed for what type of student the MEVyT programme entails more significant benefits and why. Furthermore, the motivations behind this policy adoption are analysed to determine the extent to which this intervention has achieved the goals expected by the Mexican government.

Operationalisation

To operationalise the concepts of Subjective Well-being and Social Capital as outcomes of taking part in the courses, I considered the following elements: 1) Subjective Well-Being as the student's perception of self-esteem, self-confidence, and improvement of employability opportunities (Bradburn, 1969; Diener et al., 1999; Dodge et al., 2012); and 2) Social Capital as the perception of increased feelings of interpersonal trust and the creation of stronger social networks or friendships among students (Feinstein et al., 2003; Field, 2005; Grootaert et al., 2001). Although different theoretical frameworks have studied the impacts of adult education on various elements such as happiness, increased wages, and personal development (Field, 2009; Pavot & Diener, 2013), I selected self-esteem, self-confidence, improvement of employability opportunities, feelings of interpersonal trust and the creation of stronger social networks as theoretical elements for this study because the literature on social capital and subjective well-being strongly supports that taking part in this educational type improves the student's employability opportunities, whilst enhancing their self-confidence, self-esteem and life satisfaction and enables them to meet new people and foster interpersonal trust (Field, 2009; Bhattacharya et al., 2020; Lewis, 2012; Feinstein et al., 2003; Manninen et al., 2014; Robotham et al., 2011; Schuller et al., 2004). In understanding the extent to which Mexican migrant adults who take part in the MEVyT benefit from the courses, the goal was to explore the theoretical dimensions against students' perceptions.

Amongst many factors related to adult education, I have chosen subjective well-being and social capital because the research focus is on the forms of outcome impacting not only the students individually but also at the community level where they build social networks. The dimensions of social capital and subjective well-being are pre-eminent in the literature which encouraged me to study these conceptual dimensions further and their relationship with adult education for migrant populations.

In the following sections, I explore the literature on Social Capital and Subjective Well-being that supports the theoretical elements related to the effects of adult education and the relationship with migration.

1. Literature Review

This chapter comprises three subsections about the relationship between adult education, social capital, subjective well-being, and migration. By analysing the theoretical approaches of social capital and subjective well-being, this study aims at elucidating the conceptual framework that guides the realist evaluation. Additionally, the chapter considers empirical evidence from other studies in different contexts evaluating the effects of adult education on employment, subjective well-being, and social capital. Lastly, it briefly describes Mexico's literacy policies and challenges. This chapter examines the normative and historical aspects of the National Institute for Adult Education and its efforts to eradicate illiteracy and educational dropouts), policy implementation and institutional motivation of adult education policies in Mexico.

In identifying research gaps, this doctoral work considers the following theoretical elements: a) the theoretical perspectives about adult education involving assumptions, concepts, definitions, and its relationship to elements such as economic, employability and social benefits; and b) empirical literature, where evidence concerning the importance of adult education to tackling social challenges for development and well-being are portrayed. In this sense, I explored the most relevant literature available on adult education and its effects or wider benefits, covering topics related to self-esteem, life satisfaction, employability, social relationships, and interpersonal trust (Wang & Sohail, 2022; Manninen et al., 2014; Hanushek et al., 2011; Van Deth, 2003; Dragolov et al., 2013; Schuller et al., 2002; Field, 2009).

I searched for relevant literature in books, journals, reports, and publications using various databases and diverse search tools. A search was conducted on databases such as ERIC and JSTOR to find publications on the relationship between adult education, well-being, and social capital, which were analysed to identify the relevance and accuracy of the research topics. Through this search, I encountered publications and studies from some of the most renowned authors in the field who have contributed to this topic for decades. This search was not to the exclusion of certain items from others. In this light, I considered researchers and academics with numerous publications on related fields to strengthen the literature chapter and build a solid baseline to develop the theoretical framework (Field, 2009; 2011; Nizinksa, 2016; Healy, 2002; Jenkins, 2011; Dragolov et al., 2013). Similarly, I considered publications from international organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, WHO, the World Values Survey and the World Bank to support the theoretical base for this study.

The rationale for selecting the literature for this study and the determinants of subjective well-being and social capital followed the principles of relevance and validity. The term relevance refers to the literature connected to the researched topics, namely those publications that addressed the issues subject to this study, such as adult education, social capital, and subjective well-being (Toffel, 2016). The term validity refers to the literature with the strongest rigour regarding theory and method (Whittemore et al., 2001). In this regard, I selected the literature that addressed the research topics of adult education and its relationship with subjective well-being and social capital. I also considered literature with academic rigour published in prestigious academic journals, reports, or books to identify gaps in the current knowledge of the effects of adult education.

For example, Hammond and Feinstein (2005) discovered that adult learning positively affects self-efficacy. However, as self-efficacy is not portrayed as part of subjective well-being or social capital concepts, I disregarded this study for my research. By contrast, other studies fulfilled the relevance and validity criteria, such as Fujiwara's study on the impacts of adult learning on different domains (2012), published by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, a former leading non-governmental organisation for adult learning in England and Wales. Similarly, studies conducted by Schuller and Desjardins (2011) addressed the wider benefits of adult learning on domains related to subjective well-being and social capital, published by the International Encyclopaedia of Adult Learning and Education. I selected these academic publications for this study that fulfil the selection criteria described above. For example, Morrice et al (2017) addressed the relationship between adult education and migration, which relates to the topics I studied in this doctoral research. I reviewed this publication because their study was published in the journal Studies in the Education of Adults, which fulfilled the selection criteria of validity and relevance. The same standards were applied to choose the rest of the literature covering relevant topics such as migration, transnational education and literacy.

I encountered a limited number of studies conducted in the Latin American context, which motivated me to explore this topic, given the existence of many literacy programmes and adult education opportunities across the region. I recognised that the existing literature on adult education, subjective well-being and social capital should cover Latin American contexts, which encouraged me to formulate the research questions addressing this gap. For instance, I discovered a study carried out by Granderath et al (2021) addressing the effect of participation in adult education on life satisfaction of immigrants and natives. They found that adult learning in Germany does not directly affect individual well-being, regardless of migration background. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that more research efforts are needed better to understand the

impact of ALE participation on integration. This acknowledgement of more research needed to understand integration and well-being through adult education encouraged me to study the effects of adult education in a different setting for migrant populations.

After consulting well-known authors for this study, I nuanced these following a more in-depth literature review, where I sifted for relevance and validity. The literature review I conducted prevented me from duplicating what was already published. As part of this process, I outlined the literature structure. In this regard, the selection of subjective well-being and social capital as conceptual dimensions for this study became relevant to explore how adult education entails benefits beyond acquiring new skills. The selection of the theoretical dimensions emerged from the literature available on subjective well-being and social capital as elements related to participation in adult education. According to the literature on adult education and the list of prolific authors that have widely explored the topic, I identified that subjective well-being and social capital are significant conceptual elements that can be innovatively explored in this study for migrant populations in Los Angeles and contribute to the existing literature.

The following subsection addresses the relationship between adult education and migration to clarify why this topic is relevant for policy agendas in the Mexico-US region.

1.1 Adult education and migration

Studying the impact of adult education is part of the policy and research agenda in many countries (Ahl, 2006; Cain et al., 2017; Morrice et al., 2017; UNESCO, 2019). It has motivated researchers and international organisations to conduct longitudinal and cross-sectional studies to understand why people participate in this type of education and how people benefit from it (Ahl, 2006; Boeren et al., 2012).

The flows of migrants to the U.S. are continuously evolving, and the number of persons crossing the border varies constantly depending on diverse conditions and circumstances. Compared to other migrant populations in the United States, people from Mexico tend to be younger, have a lower educational level, are more likely to work in low-skilled occupations, and have lower economic backgrounds (Zong & Batalova, 2018). However, this tendency is in constant transformation (Passel & Cohn, 2019), and the socio-economic context of migrants differs. Some migrants are skilled and experienced, whilst others are low-skilled or illiterate (ILO, 2021).

In this regard, UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report 2019 describes years of education of Latin American immigrants in the U.S. by their legal situation. They have identified that citizens of Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Haiti without legal documentation had, in some cases, more years of education than those individuals living in the U.S. on temporary contracts. At the same time, immigrants who became legal residents have more education when compared to those undocumented or under temporary contracts (UNESCO, 2019). In this case, undocumented individuals in the United States are not always with fewer education years (Passel & Cohn, 2019).

The links between countries include several dimensions ranging from trade, commerce, politics, and education (CRS, 2022). Concerning the migration flows in the region, Mexico is known internationally for being a country of destination, transit, and origin of international migration due to the vast migratory flows to its northern neighbour, the United States of America (OECD, 2009). Both countries share a border of almost four thousand kilometres, which is one of the most active and dynamic in the world. It records about 1 million crossings daily, indicating the intense and complex network of interactions in that area (SRE, 2018).

In the light of economic cooperation and financial activities taking place at the border, considered hypothetically as a single economy, the ten border states (California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, on the U.S. side, and Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas on Mexican territory) would represent the fourth-strongest world economy. In the case of Mexico, the impact of the border states on the GDP accounts for 21% (Mexican Senate, 2017). The economic and trade activities that link these countries are only part of a more extensive interconnection that includes significant migration flows and socio-cultural activities (World Bank, 2011).

Since NAFTA was signed, many companies and industries from different sectors experienced a flourishing period (Chatzky et al., 2020). For example, for many workers and businesses in the United States, this Agreement represented an opportunity to expand and grow internationally at lower costs. Some benefits are studied and reported by specialised agencies in the three countries involved. For instance, the United States Chamber of Commerce identifies the following data regarding NAFTA opportunities and profits a) The expansion of trade unleashed by NAFTA supports tens of thousands of jobs in each of the 50 states—and more than 100,000 jobs in each of 17 states; b) trade with Canada and Mexico has nearly quadrupled to $1.3 trillion, and the two countries buy more than one-third of merchandise exports; c) NAFTA has been a boon to the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers, which added more than 800,000 jobs in the four years

after NAFTA entered into force; d) NAFTA has been a bonanza for U.S. farmers and ranchers, helping agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico to increase by 350%; and e) With new market access and transparent rules, U.S. services exports to Canada and Mexico have tripled, rising from $27 billion in 1993 to $92 billion in 2014 (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 2017).

Furthermore, there are tangible developments in all nations, and actors in the industrial sector have benefited substantially. This progress does not necessarily translate to social equality or development in vulnerable areas. Poverty and inequality still affect citizens' quality of life and prosperity in the three countries (Floyd, 2022). Although, there are significant development differences, consequently influencing the migration flows. Regarding the interrelationship between countries in the region, globalisation is a phenomenon that profoundly affects migration processes, which involve financial and economic interactions between countries (Tacoli & Okali, 2001). These relations include ideas, capital, goods, services and information, and people who virtually connect with others across boundaries (McAuliffe, 2018. P 150). As people continue migrating, the cultural and social bonds intensify, leading to a cross-border identity shaping Mexican American society. In understanding the principles of migration and its effects, numerous efforts from academics and research institutes take place internationally (ILO, 2021). The MEVyT programme is a response from the Mexican government to tackle the socio-economic disadvantages Mexican migrants face in the United States (UIL, 2016).

For instance, the number of Mexicans migrating to the United States has placed Mexico as the second country with the most emigrants. Since 2010 India has ranked at the top of that list, with 16.6 million persons leaving the country in 2017, followed in order of importance by Mexico (13.0 million), Russia (10.6), China (10.0) and Bangladesh (7.5) (Consejo Nacional de Poblacion, 2018, p. 22). The number of Mexicans crossing the border each year has increased slowly but continuously, reaching an astonishing number of 12.2 million just in 2017. Therefore, migration has been a fundamental topic in the Mexican policy agenda for the past decades, including providing adult education and training opportunities for Mexicans living in the United States (Mexican Senate, 2017). It is a strategy to foster social connections and improve their economic capacity to generate income transferred to families in Mexico, thus boosting the country's economy.

As the number of Mexicans living in the United States grows in importance, some institutional efforts aim to deliver better life opportunities for migrants, which can also impact economic activities such as an increase in remittances (World Bank, 2011). In this light, UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report

clarifies the relationship between international migration and its effects on education, particularly concerning refugees and victims of displacement. Migration and displacement interact with education through intricate two-way relationships that affect those who move, those who stay, those who host migrants and refugees and those who may do so (UNESCO, 2019). Migration and displacement as phenomena affect the policy agenda for education at national levels. Governments need to modify or adjust the approaches of education systems to accommodate students leaving their hometowns. Migration and education are interrelated concepts that affect education policies in those countries experiencing mass migration (Zaiceva, 2014; Zong & Batalova, 2018; Beck et al., 2012). The migration dynamics depend on the number and characteristics of migrants arriving in a hosting country (European Commission, 2000).

Similarly, people's origin and regional destination from country to country play a role (Tuiran, 2000, p 19). Regarding migration processes, it is relevant to understand the trends of globalisation. Conceptually, globalisation is understood as the intensification of cross-national interactions promoting the integration of transnational structures concerning cultural, economic, environmental, political, technological, and social processes (Dreher et al., 2008). Both migration and globalisation have set a new policy paradigm in Mexico and the United States, through which the MEVyT implementation through the Consulates represents an example of intergovernmental dialogue. Nevertheless, each country establishes unique regulations to monitor the number of people crossing their territory, and international law distinguishes the countries' right to decide when and under what conditions the entry of aliens may be allowed (Zlotnik, 1987, p, 927).

In developing a better understanding of migration, it is relevant to study the conditions and motivations migrants experience when leaving their country of origin (IOM, 2012; IOM, 2018; IOM, 2019). International migration is not only limited to its effects on population growth (European Commission, 2000; Fussell, 2004; ILO, 2020). The challenge considers topics related to security and socio-economic development. Mass migration fuels the political debate worldwide and makes it more critical than ever that people from all economic, social, and cultural backgrounds learn to live together peacefully (UNESCO, 2016).

Concerning the relationship between education and migration, adult education as a mechanism that fosters social integration and individual fulfilment can be a determinant element in studying the effects of migration because the lack of education and low English skills undermine social integration processes and well-being (Passel and Cohn, 2019; Zong & Batalova, 2013). In this regard, access to literacy programmes is part of the right to education. Nevertheless, improving youth and adult literacy and numeracy remains a

global challenge (UNESCO, 2016). For this purpose, the Mexican government developed an institutional mechanism to support its citizens' personal development in the United States.

The OECD identifies principles indicating that having access to adult education opportunities is challenging, particularly in contexts affected by vast migration since migrants are unfamiliar with the hosting education system and have a language barrier. In this light, 'foreign-born adults are also more likely to be neither employed nor in education or training (NEET). Some 18% of foreign-born 15–29-year-olds are NEET compared to 13% of native-born young adults' (OECD, 2018, p. 23). Migration flows impact labour market conditions and dynamics in the countries involved. However, the evidence suggests that immigrants are unlikely to replace native-born workers, putting low pressure on their salaries (Penn Wharton, 2016, p. 7). In this regard, Mexicans are still the biggest migration group in the United States, accounting for 25 per cent of the 44.5 million immigrants as of 2017 (Zong & Batalova, 2018). Therefore, the literacy and numeracy of Mexicans in the United States are relevant for both countries' development and progress.

Also, the financial contribution that Mexican citizens undertake to the economy continues to be a determinant of its development and financial stability. For instance, the total remittances sent to Mexico in 2018 reached about 33 billion USD (2.7% of the GDP), which positioned Mexico as the fourth country in the world with the most remittances, just after India, China, and the Philippines (BBVA Research, 2018. P. 5). In December 2021, the remittances accounted for 50 billion USD (Banco de México, 2021). It is relevant for both nations that Mexicans in the United States can strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills to improve their financial contribution and living conditions (UIL, 2016). Important to bear in mind that in 2017, almost 50 million immigrants resided in the United States, one-fifth of the global number, positioning the nation as the principal recipient of migrants in the world (BBVA Research, 2018, p. 23). Specifically, 97.8% of all Mexican migrants reside in the United States. Other important destinations for Mexican migration are Canada (81,000 migrants) and Europe (121,000) (BBVA Research, 2018).

The number of mexican migrants in the United States is astounding, and California has been historically a popular destination due to its connection with Mexico and historical background (Hans & Sanchez, 2018). California is a vital state to the United States with a dynamic and thriving economy where Latinos are a powerful group with a presence in all financial activities in the state (Hayes & Hill, 2017). Due to the borderline between both countries, Mexicans represent the most important immigrant group in the state. In the 2012–16 period, most immigrants from Mexico lived in California (37%), Texas (22%), or Illinois

(6%). In this regard, the counties more populated by Mexicans are Los Angeles and Orange in California, Harris in Texas, and Cook in Illinois, representing 23 per cent of the immigrant population in the United States (Zong & Batalova, 2018).

To understand the complexity of migration issues in the United States, California has more immigrants than any other state in the United States, with about 10 million persons. Mexicans represent 4.2 million (PPIC, 2016). Moreover, the profile of immigrants in California is very heterogeneous regarding schooling years and socio-economic background. In 2016, 34% of California immigrants 25-year-olds and older had not completed high school, compared with 8% of US-born California residents (Op. Cit.). The profile of individuals migrating to this state diverges between groups. According to the Pew Research Center, in terms of educational attainment, immigrants from Mexico (57%) and Central America (49%) are less likely to be high school graduates than those from the U.S. (9%). Mexicans have the lowest rates of English proficiency (32%), followed by Central Americans (33%) and are the least likely to have a bachelor's degree (Lopez et al., 2017).

The profile of immigrants is changing over time depending on different circumstances and migration policies implemented by the United States. For instance, unauthorised immigrants speak better English and have more schooling years than a decade ago (Passel & Cohn, 2019). Particularly immigrants from India and China have better language skills than those from Mexico and Central America. Language proficiency impacts poverty levels (Passel & Cohn, 2019). By contrast, undocumented immigrants with low proficiency skills tend to experience poverty and complex physical jobs. This type of immigrant tends to concentrate in large immigration centres in states like California (Zong & Batalova, 2013).

Despite an improvement in educational levels and English proficiency experienced in the last decade in the United States. Education levels of unauthorised immigrants remain below that of lawful immigrants and U.S. born. For example, most undocumented immigrants from Mexico (62% in 2007 and 57% in 2016) did not complete high school, and only 4% held college degrees (Passel & Cohn, 2019). In this light, education levels and English proficiency tend to be lower for unauthorised immigrants, hindering their development and integration.

The literature on adult education shows that one generation's educational achievements can positively affect the next (Wolfe & Haverman, 2002). For instance, schooling years have a long-lasting impact on individuals, families, communities, and societies. More education can translate into the development of

better citizens that share positive values or attitudes with future generations (OECD, 2018b). In this respect, lifelong learning is surrounded by great expectations, providing avenues for people to improve their lives and build their capacity to change their direction and overcome setbacks (Evans, 2013, p. 8).

Learning can improve the subjective well-being of individuals through different routes. For example, understanding the social environment enables individuals to contextualise their lives (Feinstein et al., 2003). Government policy should focus on developing strategies to provide formal learning opportunities and improve the understanding of the outcomes implicit in adult education (Edwards, 1997). The educational outcomes could relate not only to the skills and competencies acquired by the students in learning centres but might also suggest the existence of supplementary benefits not strictly linked to new knowledge or skills. For example, social transformation and well-being are elements related to the impacts of education (Jenkins, 2011; Robotham et al., 2011; Waller et al., 2018), which I tested in this study.

Furthermore, the literature indicates that the human learning capacity is affected by other factors such as the socio and economic background of persons and their experiences: learning processes are in part a function of broader personal situational, and societal circumstances (Jarvis et al., 2011). For example, Andrew Jenkins noted that adult education is related to developments in several areas of psychological well-being, including self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-understanding (2011), which constitute the core elements for human development, individually and collectively. In this light, a person who participates in adult education or training programmes experiences different things from someone who does not participate (Waller et al., 2018). An indication of this difference can be a change of mentality and attitude towards life. Moreover, adult education is associated with prejudice-free perspectives about race and authority and a better understanding of different cultural backgrounds. Participation in work-related training, as opposed to academic or vocational courses, positively affects race tolerance and the adoption of health behaviours (Feinstein et al., 2003, p. 55). Low schooling and communication difficulties hinder their development and social integration (OECD, 2019b).

Concerning the inequal participation rates in adult education, the literature shows evidence that people in greater need are not the ones benefiting the most from this type of educational service (Walberg, H., and Shiow-Ling Tsai, 1983; Pisoni, 2018; Lamb, M., 2011). Indeed, the participation rates show that socio-economic deterrents entrenched in an unequal society also affect the involvement of vulnerable groups in adult education. Migrant populations are part of the groups lacking the opportunities to succeed in host countries (Walseth, 2007; Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). As to this argument, it is significant that the lack of

literacy and exclusion from 'learning opportunities constitute the reality for a large share of the rural population experiencing acute multidimensional deprivations' (UIL, 2019, p. 134).

Different studies show that migrants are plural groups comprising a set of other stories and interests (Zong & Batalova, 2013). They migrate carrying unique experiences, skills and knowledge developed throughout the years in their home countries. In this light, the ILO found that most global migrant population comprises skilled or highly skilled individuals (ILO, 2018). Many illegal crossings relate to people escaping poverty, deprivation, violence, or diverse unfavourable circumstances. For instance, the rural communities in Mexico are marginalised from the formal education system, and people struggle to survive in precarious conditions, which sets the ground for migration (Fussel, 2004). Consequently, it is unsurprising that "low-skill workers are more likely to rely on rural-based social networks for assistance in migrating to the U.S. and seeking upward mobility" (Op. Cit.).

Regarding the interconnection of migrants and education, some researchers argue that most immigrants tend to avoid participation in adult education (Desjardins et al., 2006). The reasons for not participating in educational activities are diverse and respond to unique circumstances affecting each person (Boeren et al., 2012). For example, in some cases, fears of deportation can be a deterrent for migrants to participate in educational activities (Sanchez, 2019). In Germany, some studies examined the effects of the courses designed for migrant adults or refugees, which in some cases are mandatory for people pursuing permanent residence. One of the most revealing research works about migrants and education focuses on the experience of Turkish migrants (Sirkeci et al., 2015). The study aimed to understand the effects of this kind of educational service on participants' development, and it found three different types of learners, each with specific conditions: a) people with a less educational background will not attend any educational activities if they are not forced to, jobs they have are unqualified no matter the country they are in, and the amelioration of socio-economic status comes with the conditions provided in the host country rather than through personal impulses; b) people with more schooling years and better human capital make use of this condition to gain a better economic capital by attending education after migration, and finally c) the category of gender, that plays a role particularly when it comes to cultural or religious beliefs, factors that can keep women at home away from the host society, and deprived of adult education (Şükrü Erhan Bağcı, 2019).

Exploring into more detail migration challenges, it is important to highlight that some people experience multivariate forms of vulnerability (UNESCO, 2020; UNHCR, 2017; Bustamante, 2010). In this sense, the

literature shows that most illiterate youths are female, accounting for almost 60% globally (UIS, 2017, p. 2). Migrant women are, therefore, a very vulnerable group that requires specific interventions from governments and organisations. Regarding this situation, studies have shown that the lack of adequate skills makes it hard for migrants and refugees to successfully compete for employment, mainly because there is a significant difference between migrants' levels of numeracy and literacy compared to natives (OECD, 2018b). Moreover, many adults lack access to formal educational opportunities in their home countries. This lack of options is part of the inequality in many developing countries. Lacking access to scholarly sources can hinder the development of individuals in many aspects ranging from professional progress to well-being (Hans & Sanchez, 2018). Therefore, lifelong learning and adult education can become transformation agents for a better life for vulnerable groups (Dorsett et al., 2010; Evans, 2013; Field, 2009b). Relating to this benefit, UNESCO points out that participation in adult education leads to higher levels of equality and inclusion, which provides a strong argument for individuals and governments to invest in this kind of service (UIL, 2019). Governments face the challenge of providing opportunities for social integration and development of vulnerable people that emigrate looking for a better life (IOM, 2012; IOM, 2018).

The literature also suggests that there is inequitable participation in adult education. As Boeren mentions (2009, p. 154), besides the unequal division of participation rates amongst different countries, there is a significant variance by socio-economic status, age, gender, and other personal characteristics involved in adult education. Some of these groups are neglected from the opportunity to access adult education: older adults, women from low socio-economic groups, less educated and skilled adults, unemployed, immigrants, language minorities and rural residents (Desjardins et al., 2006).

Marginalised and vulnerable individuals in society experience difficulties and challenges that broaden the inequality gap between socio-economic groups (OECD, 2019b). Furthermore, people with high levels of education are more likely to carry on with the training, and educational activities whilst the less skilled are less likely to participate. This is known as the Mathew Effect. As to this circumstance, there is no European country where low-educated adults participate more than their high-educated compatriots (Boeren, 2009). The Mathew Effect in adult education relates to the already negative and unequal conditions that people experience.

In countries where the social integration of migrants is considered an asset (OECD, 2020c), access to integration courses or language classes is available. Unfortunately, host countries are not always prepared for such an institutional challenge, and the integration of immigrants follows other dynamics (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2020). For example, in the United States, efforts encourage the integration of legal immigrants, but undocumented incomers need to find different mechanisms to find housing and employment (Hans & Sanchez, 2018). A challenge is perhaps to raise awareness of adult education for migrant populations as a mechanism for their integration and contribution to host countries (European Union, 2012). The literature shows that the analysis of immigrants and participation in adult education is a topic that has not been fully explored (Şükrü Erhan Bağcı, 2019), which is one of the reasons driving this study. Referring to the array of adult education opportunities, initial courses in language and socio-cultural integration can be significant as the literature shows that some immigrants regret not having attended a language course in the earlier phases of migration (Şükrü Erhan Bağcı, 2019).

In understanding more about adult education, studies show that there are different modalities and approaches to providing adult education (Milana, 2012; UIL, 2019). Some countries focus on language and integration classes to encourage social integration, but this is not the only option. Concerning this variety, the types of adult learning and education that UNESCO acknowledges are literacy and basic skills, continuing education, and professional development (vocational skills), liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills) (UIL, 2019, p. 95). Further research is needed to understand the impact of adult education on migrant populations. Under this understanding, this research focuses primarily on providing literacy, basic education, and job-related opportunities offered at two Learning Centres in Los Angeles, California.

This study considers exploring the intrinsic motivation of students to participate in these courses as a relevant analytical category. In this regard, it is crucial to understand the principles surrounding the vision of Patricia Cross to define the decision-making process of persons that take part in adult education. The Chain of Response Model developed in 1981 comprises seven steps affecting persons' decision-making process regarding their participation in adult education. The model explores the individuals: 1) self-perception; 2) Attitudes toward Education; 3) The importance of goals and expectations; 4) Life transitions; 5) Opportunities and barriers; 6) Information on educational opportunities; and 7) The decision to participate (Boeren, 2009, p. 159). This model explains the interaction of variables and circumstances present in every person that will ultimately determine their participation in adult education.

The model shows that external and individual actors motivate a person to join adult education courses (Ahl, 2006). Some reasons include having financial support, determination, and the free time to commute. The circumstances are part of a whole cycle of factors and conditions embedded in one person's decision to participate and pursue goals (Boeren et al., 2012). However, the 'likelihood of participation increases with the number of positive responses along the chain. The model is reciprocal in that participation in learning will, in turn, influence self-perception and attitudes towards education. When the learner has decided to participate and has enrolled in a course, the cycle will start again with positive responses resulting in persistence and negative responses resulting in dropout' (Melrose, 2014, p. 18).

About the individual's motivation to take part in the courses, certain elements hinder or impede more active participation in adult education, called "barriers", defined as a) Situational, for example, lack of money to finance the course and lack of time to follow a course due to job and family responsibilities; b) Institutional, for example, inconvenient class schedules or inappropriate entrance requirements; and c) Dispositional, for instance, low self-esteem and attitude to succeed in the course or feeling too old (Boeren, 2009, p. 160). Some barriers exist at the individual level and some at the community and institutional levels, in which many actors and agencies participate (Flynn et al., 2011). This study includes an analysis of the intrinsic motivations, accomplishment of goals, barriers and enablers affecting the students' perceptions.

This subsection of chapter one explored the relationship between adult education, and migration in the Mexico-United States area through conceptual approaches to understand how these elements are interconnected. The following section describes social capital and subjective well-being comprising the arguments in the literature to understand the mechanisms through which adult education fosters social integration and improves students' well-being. It considers a conceptual description of mental health, social relationships, interpersonal trust, and employment opportunities.

1.2 **Research theoretical framework**

This research draws upon the theoretical framework concerning adult education and its relationship with subjective well-being and social capital. The aim is to explore the connection between adult education and health and employment as grounds for subjective well-being (Lee et al., 2008; Pavot & Diener, 2013; Witter et al., 1984; Doland & Metcalfe, 2012; Hanushek et al., 2011); and social relationships and trust as foundations of social capital (Feinstein et al., 2008; Field, 2005; Grootaert et al., 2001). Figure 1.1 is inspired by the elements in the literature supporting the notion that adult education contributes to improved subjective well-being and social capital.

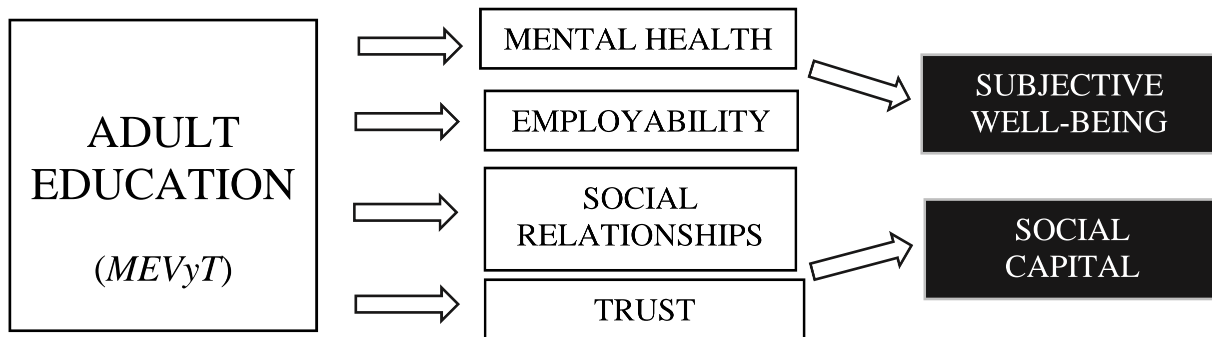


Figure 1.1: Self-constructed Subjective well-being and Social Capital model

For this study, I considered mental health, employability, social relationships, and interpersonal trust as potential benefits of adult education (Feinstein et al., 2003; Schuller et al., 2002; Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Furthermore, I studied how mental health and employability relate to individuals' well-being. And I studied how social relationships and interpersonal trust link to social capital (Feinstein et al., 2003; Pennacchia et al., 2018). I selected these conceptual elements because the literature supports that adult education, social capital, and subjective well-being are interconnected concepts. This connection means that students taking part in this educational type improve their well-being by improving their employability opportunities and self-esteem. Similarly, they could interact with new individuals, which enables them to make friendships, and social networks and foster interpersonal trust. After exploring the conceptual elements addressing the benefits of adult education, I chose social capital and subjective well-being to study the extent to which these elements are present in migrant populations in Los Angeles.

In the following subsections, I address the concepts of subjective well-being and social capital and their relationship to adult education.

1.2.1 **Subjective Well-being**

In analysing the relationship between adult education and subjective well-being, the student's mental health and employment opportunities are recurrent elements studied in the literature (Lane et al., 2016; OECD, 2019c). Subjective well-being is a broader concept that includes additional features beyond economic wealth (Voukelatou et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2021). For example, measuring quality in life considers a full range of factors and circumstances that influence what we value in life beyond its material side. Everyone interprets their well-being conditions depending on freedoms or capabilities. As mentioned by Sen and Stiglitz, life is a combination of various doings and beings, also called functionings and our freedom to choose among these capabilities (Stiglitz & Sen, 2009). This capacity to decide what we value in life allows individuals to experience happiness.

Some researchers have focused on happiness as the outcome variable of well-being (Pavot et al., 2013). In this regard, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics states that the highest of all goods achievable by human action is happiness (the latter term serving as the translation for the Greek word eudaimonia) (Ryff, 1989, p. 1069). Concerning this approach, well-being can be inferred as happiness constructed by different circumstances and contexts, where mental health plays an important role.

Understanding subjective well-being considers different elements and factors such as happiness, self-esteem, self-confidence, physical health, socialisation, access to services, satisfaction with life and employment status, and other factors (Witter et al., 1984; WHO, 2014). I selected mental health and employability as elements relating to adult education because various studies have explored and identified a positive relationship between adult education and improved perceptions of self-confidence, self-esteem, happiness, and employment opportunities (Field, 2009, UNESCO, 2016; Bhattacharya et al., 2020; Glied et al., 2003; Schuller et al., 2002; OECD, 2018; Dorsett et al., 2010; Frey, 2011), which I explore for migrant populations in Los Angeles. The selection criteria of conceptual elements derive from the existing literature on the benefits of adult education and the academic goal to understand whether the MEVyT programme improves the students' lives and under what circumstances.

a) Mental Health

Adult education has a significant role in helping populations adapt to changes. Adults need support in acquiring new skills and managing a new labour market's mental, physical, and emotional demands. (UNESCO, 2016). The literature shows that education is a social determinant of health, where schooling years is a frequently used indicator in epidemiology (Solar & Irwin, 2010), which confirms a link between health and education. However, there is no simple straight pathway from an individual's better education translated into better health automatically. Diverse conditions and factors shape an individual's mental health (WHO, 2014; Bhattacharya et al., 2020). External and individual factors characterize a person's mood or happiness (Field, 2009). For instance, there are specific moments in life where a person can feel happier or sadder.

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being, a moment through which every person can accomplish their personal goals and be productive for the community (WHO, 2014). The link between health and education refers to more educated individuals being more likely to care for their health. More educated societies will likely have healthier populations (UNESCO, 2016). Healthy lifestyles could incite better lives based on positive beliefs and behaviours. This research explores positive

behaviours, and the student's perception of self-esteem and self-confidence developed throughout adult education.

Some studies address the effects of adult education on the generation of better and healthier habits (OECD, 2006). For example, in England, findings related to mental health through longitudinal studies show that higher cognitive test scores link with lower rates of depression and higher intelligence in childhood. This connection connects to a decreased risk of psychological distress in adulthood (Marmot, 2010). Walter MacMahon (2002) reviews the relationship between lifelong learning, health, and civic participation. The literature suggests that education encourages healthier habits whilst discouraging unhealthy behaviours such as smoking (Robotham et al., 2011). The assumption is that participation in learning activities may improve an individual's well-being by encouraging him to adopt healthy behaviours, change social attitudes and increase civic participation (Pennacchia et al., 2018; Schuller et al., 2004).

For instance, as an individual feels better about himself may feel more confident to join social activities, which increases his or her well-being (Feinstein et al., 2003). It has been noted that among the benefits of adult education, the greatest is related to physical health, mental health, and well-being (Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012). The study shows that participating in educational activities improves attitudes, physical health, motivation, and self-esteem. Participating in education can contribute to an individual's well-being, self-care, and motivation. In this regard, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development presented evidence on the direct link between high levels of literacy with health outcomes, for example, higher life expectancy and healthier habits and lifestyles (OECD and Statistics Canada, 2000, p. 81). Higher educated persons appeared to benefit from health care technologies more than people with lower education levels (Glied et al., 2003). Likewise, individuals with higher education know more about diseases and new medical treatments than those with less educated. Poor education or low attendance in educational activities hinders health condition levels (Glied et al., 2003).

Numerous assumptions and theories address the link between education and health (Feinstein et al., 2003; WHO, 2014). In this regard, the World Economic Forum defines well-being and health as indicators of human development, where the levels of stress or depression define factors of possible low satisfaction levels. Depression is studied worldwide because it is a leading cause of disability (Schwab, 2013). This situation shows that high levels of depression hinder the motivation to learn and satisfaction with life. Moreover, the impact of learning on health-related issues is 'potentially extremely large' (OECD, 2006).

It is argued that access to proper health services is a fundamental part of an individual's state of well-being (OECD, 2020c; Witter et al., 1984). Furthermore, studies indicate that subjective well-being consists of three interrelated components: life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant effect, where life satisfaction refers to a cognitive sense of satisfaction with life (OECD, 2013, p. 26), where perceptions of life satisfaction appear to link to well-being as a central aspect in most literature. The manifestation of subjective well-being is understood as the balance point between an individual's resource pool or skills and the challenges they face (Dodge et al., 2012). The researchers developed a figure to illustrate the definition of well-being through the equilibrium between resources and challenges they face in their lives. The balance constitutes what the authors consider to be well-being. In this light, well-being relates to more positive attitudes than negative ones. Positive affect needs to predominate over the negative (Bradburn, 1969). In this regard, well-being is an overall assessment of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria (Shin & Johnson, 1977).

Figure 1.2: Balance point between Resources and Challenges as well-being

On one side, everyone possesses specific psychological, social, and physical resources to deal with daily challenges and problems. On the other hand, the challenges are related to all individual's objectives and goals. Based on figure 1.2, the balance point of well-being occurs when a person possesses the adequate resources to accomplish the individual's set of challenges. In this regard, the absence of challenges in one individual's life represents a stagnation period that hinders his well-being. Facing challenges with insufficient resources may lead to unhappiness and frustration (OECD, 2019b; Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Furthermore, building sufficient resources is a mechanism for individuals to achieve their freedom to constitute themselves as decision-makers with personal choices, preferences, and the possibility of becoming masterful and compelling (Seligman, 2002).

Additionally, research suggests that adult community learning improves mental health and the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Lewis, 2012). A longitudinal study on the effects of adult education in the U.K. discovered that adults aged 16 and over with higher qualifications were more likely to report having medium or high satisfaction with their lives. They were also more likely to view their life activities as

worthwhile. Those who had undertaken formal or non-formal part-time education over the previous year had a higher level of well-being than those who had not. Similarly, leisure- or interest-related learning increased life satisfaction (Duckworth & Cara, 2012).

The literature addresses the issue of self-satisfaction as the most accurate definition of well-being. However, Ryff (p. 1071) operationalised the concept using the following criterion: a) Self-acceptance. The most recurrent aspect of well-being is the perception of self-confidence; b) Positive relations with others. The ability to love is a central component of mental health. A person having strong feelings of empathy and affection for human beings is capable of greater love, friendships, and identification with others; c) Autonomy. This concept refers to the qualities such as self-determination, independence, and the regulation of behaviour; d) Environmental mastery. An individual's ability to choose or create environments suitable to her psychic conditions; e) Purpose in life. Mental health includes beliefs that give one the feeling there is purpose in life and f) Personal growth. This aspect relates to the need to actualise oneself and realise potentialities. Despite the evidence concerning the positive effects of adult education, different studies (Schuller et al., 2002) demonstrate that some learners in the U.K. experienced adverse health conditions.

Research shows that students may suffer from alterations in their health conditions due to the stress from learning if a) it is too difficult for the students to learn, b) if it raises expectations that are difficult to accomplish, c) if learning puts stress on their family life or d) if it conflicts with existing social networks (Feinstein et al., 2008). By contrast, the negative effects are due to high-stress levels and alienation, as not all students share the same learning competencies and skills. The academic literature indicates that better education accounts for better job opportunities and, therefore, greater probabilities of higher incomes, which could benefit an individual's personal development and well-being (OECD, 2019b).

The 22rogram22ng section examines the literature concerning the relationship between participation in adult education and the development of new skills for employability purposes. It addresses how adult education increases the chances of a better job by providing meaningful skills and tools.

b) **Employability**

Industrialisation changed all aspects of our lives, especially how we create knowledge and information at a top speed (Schwab, 2016). As economic and productive activities keep growing in complexity, the need for more specific, dynamic, and complex education has risen worldwide. It has been common knowledge that education benefits relate to better employability opportunities, i.e., more schooling years should

represent more skills for greater possibilities of good jobs and high wages (OECD, 2019b). Consequently, educated individuals could have access to better services and life quality. Previous generations appealed to education to face economic exigencies, and new challenges emerged from technological development (Aoun, 2017, p. 6). In this way, education is one of the fundamental mechanisms for economic development and a substantial component of social change (Hanushek & Wössman, 2010). Amartya Sen argues that the capability to be educated provides citizens with the possibility of freedom to achieve what they reflectively consider valuable in life (Wells, 2014). Considering what matters in life includes the capacity to achieve employment goals.

Concerning the relationship between education and employment opportunities, the concept of employability refers to the individual's ability to participate in the labour market under certain circumstances allowing them to enhance their life satisfaction (De Grip et al., 2004). The concept comprises different perspectives. For example, someone with appropriate employability skills and attributes may be 'employable' from an employer's viewpoint. From the job seeker's perspective, a lack of availability of enabling support (such as transport to work) or contract terms (such as the requirement for shift work) may mean that a specific job is unacceptable. From a policymaker's perspective, the fact that the person does not take the job and remains unemployed suggests that (within the context of a specific vacancy or job role) the individual cannot be considered employable (McQuaid, 2004, p. 214; ILO, 2021). Furthermore, the term employability includes the qualifications, knowledge and skills that increase the ability of workers to achieve and maintain a job position, improve it, and adapt to change to facilitate their integration into the labour market during different periods of their life (Formichella, 2013).

Reasoning on this matter, the Marmot Report indicates that unemployment is higher among those with no or few qualifications and skills, people with disabilities, those caring responsibilities, lone parents, those from some ethnic minority groups, older workers, and young people. These groups are more likely to be in low-paid, poor-quality jobs with few opportunities for advancement, often working in conditions harmful to health (Marmot et al., 2010). Among other studies (Lane, 2016; Evans, 2013), Daniel Fujiwara evaluates the impacts of employability as a constant determinant of the link between education and subjective well-being. Using the British Household Panel, he tested the significance of variables of employment relating to adult learning, identifying employment status and participation in learning activities. The study found that taking a part-time course in the previous year has a statistically significant and positive effect on the likelihood of someone being employed in the current year (this condition improves people's job

expectations). Likewise, correlating the results shows that unemployment leads to a 0.15 index-point deterioration in life satisfaction (Fujiwara, 2012, p. 23).

The premise surrounding lifelong learning is that learning occurs throughout our lives r'lentlessly (Dorsett et al., 2010). Individuals cannot prosper and achieve their goals based on access to the formal education system alone (Bengston, 2013). People must continually enhance their knowledge and skills through training and professional development and the educational imperative is to empower people to manage their learning in diverse contexts throughout their lifetimes (Sharples, 2000). Lifelong learning influences the probability of being in work and thereby indirectly increase earnings for movers (Dorsett et al., 2010, p. 33). Similar studies show that lifelong learning provides a one-off boost to wages for those individuals in stable employment (ILO, 2021; Manninen et al., 2014). Many studies show the impact of adult education on productivity and company performance. This research includes micro-level studies, which have observed that vocational training helps boost productivity and enhance product value at the company level (Barron et al., 1997), which indicate that vocational training and related educational activities represent an excellent opportunity for employees to improve their position in the labour market and continue their professional careers.

The relationship between educational attainment and success in the labour market has been a concern on the agenda of international organisations and researchers to examine the relevance of education policies and their effects on socio-economic development at national levels (OECD, 2001). Concerning social integration, research shows that finding ways of validating prior learning (both formal and non-formal learning) is a tool that facilitates and promotes migrant inclusion in the labour market (Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). Nonetheless, some studies have shown that these processes can reinforce inequalities by entrenching migrants' weaker position in the labour market (Morrice et al., 2017). One of the most evaluated assumptions regarding the effects of adult education is that it implies a direct benefit in terms of employability. Research suggests that adult learning and post-secondary education significantly reduce the risk of unemployment (Sabates, 2007; Dorsett et al., 2010, p. 33; Fujiwara, 2012; OECD, 2018).

Regarding these efforts, the OECD reported that 81% of 25–34-year-old adults with at least an upper secondary education are employed, compared to 60% of those who have not completed upper secondary education (OECD, 2018, p. 70). The literature argues that upper secondary education is the minimum educational level for effective integration in the labour market. In this light, adults (age 25-64) without at least this level of education are penalised in the labour market. On average, across OECD countries, the

employment rate is 85% for tertiary-educated adults, 76% for adults with an upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary qualification, and less than 60% for adults who have not completed upper secondary education (OECD, 2018).

Addressing employability challenges, Keynes exposed the risks and difficulties for the labour market because of technological progress and automation (Aoun, 2018). This argument is relevant because the world's most important market is the labour market, in which one person rents his human capital to people with financial capital (Glaeser, 2011). In this light, research on adult education shows benefits in participants' employability and income, allowing them to join the labour market satisfactorily (Luhmann et al., 2011). Studies conducted in Kenya, the Dominican Republic, Poland, South Africa, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo found that adult education equips individuals with the dispositions, knowledge, and skills to become active citizens (Finkel, 2014).

Education systems face challenges in providing citizens with education and training opportunities for their development and well-being (Cerna, 2019). Concerning this notion, the market demands new skills in times of abrupt technological changes. Specifically, competencies in information and communication technology (ICT) are relevant in helping people find jobs despite lower educational attainment (Lane & Conlon, 2016). The challenge relates to the government's ability and willingness to develop quality opportunities for learning, training, and formal education for all citizens. For instance, Gary Becker affirms that education and training are essential investments in human capital, i.e., the earnings of educated people are almost always above average. Although, the benefits are generally better in less-developed countries. In this regard, there is evidence of the positive link between schooling years and income in over one hundred countries with different cultures and economic systems (Becker, 1994).

Significant research has been conducted in different countries to analyse wage variations relating to participation in educational activities (Lane, 2016; OECD, 2018). Using data from the British Household Panel, Richard Dorsett studies the impacts of lifelong learning activities on individual wages using a dataset spanning 1991-to 2008. He used the "mover-stayer" model to compare wage variations between individuals. The study established the variables indicating whether people have acquired qualifications since the first wave of the British Household Panel conducted in 1991 and if they acquired these qualifications by upgrading their education status by defining three age groups (Dorsett et al., 2010). The analysis aimed at determining the impacts of newly acquired qualifications on wages across different periods in the United Kingdom. They found that taking part in lifelong learning activities affects monthly

earnings as long as new skills or knowledge result in an upgraded educational status. In this sense, a verifiable acquired skill accounts for a greater chance of increasing wages in the UK.

Adult education has a role to play in helping populations adapt to changes. In this light, adults require support to gain skills to manage the emotional demands of a new labour market. (UNESCO, 2016). The world of labour is developing rapidly, and individuals keeping up with progress require new skills. Concerning these variables, the US National Centre for Education Statistics presents further evidence of the positive link. This agency confirms that the unemployment rate in 2017 was significantly lower for those with higher levels of educational attainment. For example, the unemployment rate was lowest for those with a bachelor's or higher degree and highest for those who had not completed high school (NCES, 2017). More schooling could represent a significant difference in personal development and employment possibilities, allowing people to enjoy a better life (Blundell et al., 2001).

Researchers conducted similar studies at the macro-level to link training and education to productivity and economic growth (Hanushek et al., 2011, p. 28). Similarly, countries with higher education levels have lower crime rates and better government performance (Botero et al., 2013). On this subject, adult education for Mexicans in the U.S. can be a conduit to quality education. Furthermore, Mexicans who emigrate can support the development of Mexico beyond remittances. Migrants contribute with ideas, attitudes, values and from their experiences to the development of the hosting country. Studies suggest that more education and income represent greater possibilities for people getting involved in transnational activities with people from their country (Tinley, 2008). The involvement of migrants can have many positive implications for the economy of countries of origin. As pointed out in previous sections, Mexico benefits vastly from the remittances that Mexican citizens in the United States support their families (World Bank, 2011; BBVA Research, 2018).

This section explored the relationship between adult education and opportunities for employability. It indicates that research in different countries and contexts confirms an interrelation between schooling years, income, and satisfaction with employment (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Furthermore, lacking secondary education or literacy skills represents a setback for better jobs and development (OECD, 2019b), which is a factor I examine with migrant populations in Los Angeles. In the following section, I explore the concept of Social Capital and its implications for well-being and adult education, I examine the theoretical principles and concepts relating to adult education, interpersonal trust, and social relationships. This section revises the literature and highlights how adult education fosters social capital.

1.2.2 **Social Capital**

This section examines the MEVyT programme and students' perceptions of new social relationships and networks. For this section, I examine interpersonal trust and social relationships as elements arising from adult education because the Social Capital literature indicates that building strong social relationships based on interpersonal trust is a significant element for the socioeconomic development of nations and individuals. This concept has been studied in different contexts, but I found limited evidence surrounding social capital for migrant populations, which is a theoretical concept I explore in this study.

Theorists like Durkheim, Marx and de Tocqueville have pointed out the value of human relationships (Martikke, 2017) as a significant element shaping how societies work and interact. Concerning the importance of social interactions, the notion of social capital became part of international mainstream thinking since Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work (Knack & Keefer, 1997). This study has encouraged many scholars and research organisations across the globe to understand it as a variable that enables societies to work better and develop.

The social capital of societies comprises the institutions, attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development (Grootaert et al., 2001; Hoenig et al., 2016). Furthermore, economists like Paul Collier suggest that Social Capital implies the term "social" because it generates externalities arising from social interaction, and it is "capital" only if its effects persist throughout time (Collier; 1998, p. ix). This approach claims that social interactions have explicit outcomes or impacts on people's lives. As externalities of social interaction, Collier identifies three general types: a) those related to knowledge, b) those to opportunistic behaviour, and c) those to free-riding (Collier, p 1). The externalities of social interaction emerge from an orientated arrangement between actors that share perspectives and interact. These effects are unexpected but have a lasting economic impact from this perspective.

As to the relevance of social capital to understanding socioeconomic development, Social Capital theory is evolving conceptually, and no universal definition is accepted (Feinstein et al., 2003). In this regard, Social Capital theory entails three notions 1) it is a set of social networks, 2) it includes the reciprocities arising from them, and 3) the value of these relationships for achieving mutual goals. This conception emphasises that social interactions produce reciprocities structured to achieve mutual purposes. People interact to achieve specific goals, whereas people in isolation are likely to suffer from unpleasant feelings of loneliness (Field, 2005). Moreover, Social Capital refers to the norms and networks that facilitate collective action

(Martikke, 2017). In this regard, Woolcock mentions that the most compelling empirical evidence of the social capital thesis comes from household and community-level studies, drawing on sophisticated measures of community networks, the nature and extent of civic participation and exchanges among neighbours (Woolcock, 2001).

International studies show significant evidence of the connection between having strong social networks and economic development, particularly at the local level (Schuller et al., 2004). By examining migration flows in Rwanda, researchers identified two elements of Social Capital: a) Information Capital, understood as the potential for social networks to provide access to information about jobs and new opportunities; and b) Cooperation Capital, which comprehends the potential for social networks to provide community enforcement, which helps to sustain repeated cooperation, such as risk-sharing and social insurance (Blumenstock, 2018). The analysis of Social Capital focuses, among others, on the implications of social cooperation on economic development, by considering the level at which individuals participate in social activities (Schuller et al., 2004). Thus, explaining that greater cooperation tends toward economic development. In the UK, for example, participation in adult education reports higher levels of satisfaction with social life (Fujiwara, 2012).

This study explores new forms of networks and social cohesion that developed based on these learning centres as spaces where interaction occurs. In this regard, Mancur Olson suggests that macro-level institutions allow local associations to flourish efficiently (Grootaert et al., 2001). Moreover, Social Capital has two general dimensions: 1) structural/cognitive and 2) bridging/bonding (Martikke, 2017). Structural social capital is determined by associational activity, whilst cognitive capital relates to measures of norms and reciprocity (Grootaert, 2001). On the other hand, when it comes to social interactions, we should bear in mind implications such as group interests that determine the level of exclusion or inclusion of other parties or members (Walseth, 2007; Westlund & Larsson, 2016). In this light, Bonding Social Capital refers to creating social networks between homogeneous groups sharing social norms and cooperative spirit (Claridge, 2018), while Bridging Social Capital encompasses social networks between heterogeneous groups with different social norms but that may share and exchange information (Panth, 2010).

Moreover, Michael Woolcock defines another important notion of Social Capital by including “Linking Social Capital”, which refers to relationships between people in dissimilar situations. For example, those who are entirely outside of the community, thus enabling members to leverage a far wider range of resources than are available in the community (Woolcock, 2001). Such discussions highlight the role of

political institutions and public policy in shaping opportunities for civic involvement and democratic behaviour (Solar & Irwin, 2010). The theoretical claim is that social networks can facilitate or impede effective learning practices (Feinstein et al., 2003). A significant element in this regard is that social interactions and sharing of information can foster participants' knowledge and skills.

Learning habits, practical learning and knowledge transfer presuppose social settings through which people learn in relationships with others (Healy, 2002). This learning threshold defines the existence of mutual dependence between social capital and learning practices. In other words, solid social interactions could increase the participation of its members in learning activities and strengthen social interactions by enabling people to trust each other within classrooms (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2001). Likewise, it has been argued that effective learning enables social ties and strengthens networks within diverse communities (Krasovec & Kump, 2009). The relationship between social capital and lifelong learning is complex and multifaceted rather than unilinear and simple (Field, 2005). Further research in different contexts is needed to analyse the positive relationship between both elements over extended periods.

Another feature of the social capital approach is its capacity to understand the concept of poverty (Collier, 1998). Living on the margins of existence, the social capital of the poor is the one asset they can potentially draw upon to help negotiate their way through an unpredictable and unforgiving world (Woolcock, 2001, p. 15). Social interactions based on interpersonal trust to create a sense of community could help poor communities to overcome deprivation and marginalisation (Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020). Moreover, scholars have noted the role of social networks in facilitating migration. For instance, the flow of information between migrant groups and people who have not migrated could encourage further migration flows (Lancee, 2012; Walseth, 2007). Regarding this approach, research indicates that individuals are more likely to emigrate where they have more connections (Blumenstock et al., 2018). This communication is a relevant factor explaining why Mexicans decide to move to California rather than another state. Similarly, the communication flows between participants at the Centre, and community members can foster the participation of more people in the courses. Furthermore, the feeling of belonging and social connectedness (Westlund & Larsson, 2016) could be crucial to understanding the dynamics of migration and the role that social capital plays in the phenomena.

The following section addresses the literature on the positive effects of adult education on new social relationships and feelings of trust amongst learners. This study explores the student's perception of their connectedness, the sensation of networking, interpersonal trust, and social integration as part of their

participation in adult education activities. Components such as self-reported trust and their perception of new social relationships are studied to operationalise the concept of social capital. Researchers (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998; Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020; Healy, 2002; Schuller et al., 2002; Field, 2009; Nizinksa, 2016) have studied interpersonal trust as part of a set of elements comprising social capital in the sense that trust enables communication and cooperation of individuals towards specific goals that can include helping each other or building communities.

a) **Social relationships**

The benefits of learning go beyond economic or employability aspects (Wolfe & Haveman, 2002). Research shows that taking part in learning activities provides positive emotional and social benefits to lifelong learners (Feinstein et al., 2003). Participation in adult education activities is an excellent opportunity to meet new people and create social networks while learning something new and gaining meaningful skills (Field, 2005; Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020). In this way, schools can foster values for social cooperation and provide meeting places where social networks and individuals can intersect (OECD, 2001, p. 46; Comber, 2013).

In the light of social inclusion and adult education, policymakers and researchers from different countries have found a deep connection between both concepts (Morrice et al., 2017; Waller et al., 2018). One notion of social inclusion implies that citizens participate in society's activities (World Bank, 2016). Participation in community activities fosters communication and feelings of belonging, enabling the creation of social capital and social cohesion (Cain et al., 2017; Nizinksa, 2016). Similarly, acknowledging diversity and tolerance sets the ground for social cohesion and inclusiveness (Fielding & Anderson, 2008).

In understanding the implications of adult education for migrant populations, researchers must consider the type of beneficiaries and their socio-economic backgrounds (Hickman et al., 2008; Bhattacharya et al., 2020). The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning shows that migrants and refugees bring considerable skills but providing them with the opportunity to deploy these skills is a significant challenge for governments (UNESCO, 2016). Many countries design and implement programmes to provide migrants with learning opportunities, mainly to facilitate migrants' social integration (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). For example, Germany's number of courses and training alternatives is a reality for immigrant populations and refugees. Though, some criticism emerges from the academic sector, referring to the strict controlling features of these interventions. Likewise, research shows that the government controls the language courses and reproduces hegemonic ideas (Heinemann, 2017).

European countries facing migration flows undertake institutional efforts to provide lifelong learning opportunities for migrants (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008; Mallows, 2014). For example, in 2009, the Learning Community Project with Education Ambassadors in Germany, Greece and the Netherlands embraced the notion of ambassadors to implement an intervention with migrants. The Ambassadors are migrants acting as ‘multipliers who share the same background (e.g., share the experience of being migrants), have a deeper knowledge of social and cultural backgrounds and speak the same language to other migrants (Moser, 2012). This approach is interesting as an intervention that creates a communication channel with migrant populations by using individuals from the same group that share similar circumstances, facilitating trust and the creation of social ties (Mallows, 2014).

The concept of subjective well-being embraces feelings of autonomy, environmental mastery, the purpose of life and realisation of potential, self-acceptance, and positive relationships with others (Ryff, 1989, p. 1071). These social connections improve life satisfaction in different aspects (Samdal et al., 1998; Duffy, 2004; Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). For instance, social connections could deliver better services and help people by sharing information about diverse topics, like job offers or security issues, which enhance an individual’s well-being (Woolcock & Sweester, 2002). Bourdieu defines social capital as the resources that emerge from the membership in each social group (Bourdieu, 1983). He argues that social capital depends on the capacity of individuals to leverage their social networks. It is not enough to have many friends unless these offer a canal for accessing different sources of capital. Social networks require ongoing work through material and symbolic exchange of social relationships (Martikke, 2017). This perspective stresses that social relationships should trigger benefits for their members. If social relationships do not entail benefits, they cannot refer to as social capital (Feinstein et al., 2008).

Highly sociable persons find it easier to engage in learning opportunities, and their learning is more likely to be valued in their communities as social and emotional skills are significant for learning (OECD, 2020c). Those with poor social networks find it more difficult to avail themselves of learning opportunities and find fewer applications for what they have learned (UNESCO, 2016, p. 111). Regarding the conceptual understanding of social capital, there are significant differences between human capital and social capital. Human capital lives in individuals, whilst social capital is in relationships (Schuller et al., 2004; Schwab, 2013). Under this understanding, human and social capital are complementing elements within societies.

The benefits of social capital are part of schools (Dorsett et al., 2010). For instance, schools that are integral to community life nurture high parental involvement (Woolcock, 2001), triggering a sense of community and social integration. Literature has revealed that social cohesion fosters resilient social relationships, an acute sense of community and strong social networks that allow people from different socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnic roots to interact harmoniously (Lancee, 2012). Social cohesion is a resource, a prerequisite for economic success and a functioning society (Dragolov et al., 2013) that enhances an individual's quality of life (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Likewise, networks are a basic component of Social Capital, and learning helps develop and maintain these networks (Schuller, Green et al., 2002). Countries or societies with fragile social networks and little interpersonal trust could face developmental difficulties as these can hinder the essentials of social cohesion (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017).

Social inclusion is the combination of social participation and social connectedness (World Bank, 2016). Social connectedness refers to the self-evaluation of closeness between the self and other people, the community, and society at large (Lee et al., 2008). In this light, the Hamburg Declaration affirms that adult education is a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society (UNESCO, 1997). For instance, an extensive review and evaluation of adult literacy and numeracy in the United Kingdom support this claim. The study finds statistically significant evidence that participating in adult literacy and numeracy programmes has a positive personal and social impact on individuals and communities (Vorhaus et al., 2011). However, measuring how social relationships affect well-being is not a simple task that requires institutional efforts to produce the data and skills to understand and use it (Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012; Geys & Murdoch, 2010; Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2001).

Achieving social cohesion at national levels is a growing challenge, especially in the times of globalisation, where populations' capacity to tolerate diversity is a vital cohesive resource. More literacy relates to greater tolerance of diversity (UNESCO, 2015). Adult Education plays a role in encouraging diversity tolerance, understood as the capacity for a fair and permissive attitude toward beliefs and practices that differ from one's own (Feksi & Sulle, 2013). On this matter, having social capital means having the skills to join community life, extend one's general knowledge, and sustain social connections (Manninen et al., 2014).

Moreover, Vorhaus et al. (2011) point to social capital as an almost ubiquitous outcome of adult education and learning interventions over the past twenty years. Learning habits and knowledge transfer presuppose a social setting through which people can learn in relationships with others (Healy, 2002). Thus, while adult education can lead to social change, civic and social structures also affect the availability and quality of

adult education (UNESCO, 2016). Social structures and civic participation are determinant factors when building resilient societies. The literature on adult education acknowledges that active participation in educational activities increases the possibility of creating social relationships and networks that could enhance people's well-being (Pavot & Diener, 2013). The concept of interpersonal trust is relevant to this approach that emerges as a component that glues societies together and leads to harmony and development (Borum, 2010).

b) **Interpersonal Trust**

This doctoral work includes feelings of interpersonal trust as a measure of subjective well-being because the literature indicates that a functioning society fosters trust and diversity inclusion (De Bliek, 2013). For instance, interpersonal trust is a determining element for the functioning of cohesive countries. Similarly, research shows that the lack of interpersonal trust may lead to increased criminality, intolerance, or low levels of economic growth (Van Deth, 2003). The Social Capital Theory understands the feelings of trust as determinants of social participation and civic cooperation (Healy, 2002). Interpersonal trust and cooperation enhance community life, fostering social and economic development (Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020).

Different studies measure the social capital effects, where the most common measure is the share of people having "trust in other persons" (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998). For instance, the World Values Survey and other international surveys embrace this approach. The second most used indicator is the number of memberships in social groups, clubs, or associations. Similarly, other studies consider the number of enterprises or actors within a society to measure social capital more specified (Westlund & Adam, 2010). For example, using empirical data from the World Values Survey, Knack and Keefer confirmed the importance of social capital elements on economic and government performance in 29 countries. The conceptual elements they analysed are a) the relationship between interpersonal trust, norms of civic cooperation and economic performance; and b) the determinants of trust and norms of civic cooperation, including levels of associational activity and formal institutions (Knack and Keefer, 1997). They identified social connectedness as a factor that contributes to development. They conclude that interpersonal trust and civic cooperation impact the economic performance of the examined countries (Morrone et al., 2009).

Moreover, countries that provide sustained, high-quality adult education services have higher levels of socio-economic development, active political and civic institutions, and social trust and inclusion (UNESCO, 2015). The claim is that social networks incorporate the power to facilitate or impede effective

learning practices (Field, 2005). Likewise, effective learning practices in a community can foster social ties and strengthen networks. Several studies show that adult education contributes to social cohesion and integration (Manninen et al., 2014). Regarding the analysis of interpersonal trust as a meaningful variable for socio-economic development, the European Social Survey investigated average trust levels and macro-economic performance in 33 countries (ESS). The researcher aggregated survey data per country to allow for panel regressions. De Bliek (2013) found that processes of modernisation harm interpersonal trust. The study concludes that cohesion occurs if governments make sufficient educational investments to tackle linguistic barriers (Op. Cit., 2013, p. 24).

According to these results, interpersonal trust influences economic development in certain countries, and modernisation has a negative in building social relationships, alerting in this way about the need for intervention to establish a conduit to compensate for the challenges of modernisation (Borum, 2010; Cuesta, 2012). By contrast, in a different study about social capital and economic performance, researchers show that governments face the challenge of producing measures of social connectedness (Geys & Murdoch, 2010). For instance, they need to develop standards of values, norms, and attitudes for social networks, to produce further research about the economic impact of social capital (Westlund & Adam, 2010).

Similar reports on social connectedness consider social networks, trust in other people and acceptance of diversity as measurement tools for social cohesion in different countries (Dragolov et al., 2013). The authors discovered that high levels of social cohesion relate to fair income distribution and life satisfaction. Higher levels of income inequality are associated with weaker social cohesion. Higher GDPs relate to better community social cohesion (Ibid, p. 42). Countries such as Denmark and Sweden display the highest levels of social cohesion, i.e., nations with good civic cooperation, trust, and acceptance of diversity (Ibid, p. 49). Some countries developed indicators and data collection tools with larger samples and longitudinal approaches. Countries interested in social capital should include the qualitative aspects of social capital to understand its dimensions (Woolcock, 2001).

The concept of social capital considers levels of trust as a determinant factor (Healy, 2002; Murtin et al., 2018). It is crucial because social interactions occur in every aspect of our lives. Trust is involved in every decision we make in different contexts and scenarios (Reiersen, 2018). Coleman explains that a person chooses to trust others after examining the costs and benefits he will experience (Coleman, 1988, p. 117). Nevertheless, many external factors determine the levels of trust in societies, such as conflict, violence, inequality, and others. Trust is essential for societies that glue individuals for cooperation and life-

community construction (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). It is an element that decision-makers should embrace in defining public policy approaches for social development. Pierre Bourdieu argues that the time and money invested into a social group membership is part of an individual's capital (Martikke, 2017). He argues that social relationships comprise the actual situation in which individuals interact, plus individuals' present and past positions in the social structure (Bourdieu, 1977). Under this perspective, there is a rational choice motivation to join social activities. Trust is a crucial factor in fostering social cohesion, whether at the level of organization, school, or family (Healy, 2002).

Research shows that strong relationships based on interpersonal trust can hinder or improve the functioning of societies depending on the approach, ideologies, plans and intentions (De Bliek, 2013). Since bonding and trust within criminal groups demands the exclusion of others, a perverse insight of social capital may lead to extreme violence and hatred seen in the mafia, the Ku Klux Klan, maras, or other groups (Cuesta, 2012). Further examples of adverse outcomes arise from observing that several downsides of Social Capital seem to occur in strong bonding capital but weak bridging capital (Claridge, 2018). This observation is relevant in understanding cohesive societies that emerge from good interactions between people of different backgrounds and beliefs. In this regard, they identified the following categories of negative effects: 1) Exclusion of outsiders; 2) Excess claims on group members; 3) Restrictions on individual freedoms; and 4) Downward levelling norms (Villalonga-Olives & Kawachi, 2017, p. 106). The characteristics of social interactions define the level of social capital and its orientation in societies (Panth, 2010). Researchers should be aware of the implications of the negative side of social capital when studying this concept.

In this section, I explored the conceptual frameworks and the literature on the benefits of adult education. The focus was on the benefits of social capital and subjective well-being. Research shows that this type of education improves self-confidence, self-esteem, social integration, interpersonal trust, life satisfaction and employment according to different characteristics and social circumstances (Robotham et al., 2011; Sabates, 2007; Schuller et al., 2002; Field, 2009). Research suggests that migrants and refugees in international contexts benefit from this type of education when certain elements play out (Moser, 2012; OECD, 2018b). For instance, the literacy or education levels of migrants are determinant in understanding why they participate in adult education and how they benefit (Lancee, 2012; Morrice et al., 2017). For this reason, the following section examines the literacy context of Mexican migrants and addresses policy interventions from the government to tackle this challenge.

1.3 **Adult Education and the challenges of literacy in Mexico**

During the 2012-2018 administration, the INEA led institutional efforts to eradicate illiteracy and educational dropouts in Mexico[2]. The policy approaches included massive literacy campaigns in marginalised areas and programmes to tackle educational dropouts. This section examines the most relevant policy approaches that led to the MEVyT programme and its implementation in Mexico and the United States. It comprises a review of the national and international contexts to understand the historical background and theoretical principles for policy implementation.

For instance, supranational and inter-state organisations construct adult education as a policy object transcending the nation-state polity (Milana, 2012). In this vision, Mexico is not the only country undertaking large and ambitious literacy campaigns and attention to educational dropouts (Solar Roca, 1990). In Latin America and the Caribbean, international organisations such as UNESCO have reported on institutional efforts to provide literacy and elementary education opportunities to people over 15 years old in the most marginalised communities (OREALC/UNESCO, 2012).

Providing adults with education opportunities has been a priority for different countries. In the United States, the federal legislation for adult education began in 1964, but the Federal Government has implemented adult education programmes for over 230 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Mass literacy campaigns in Latin America and the Caribbean date from the middle of the last century (OREALC/UNESCO, 2012). Civil organizations inspired by Paulo Freire printed a pedagogical and political approach to eradicate illiteracy. This approach sought to provide learning and reading skills alongside the capacity to decode reality (Infante & Letelier, 2013). In 1972, adult education became a targeted policy aim beyond the nation-state level. Two events gave it a boost: UNESCO's launch of an Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) in 1967 (Valderrama, 1995) and the publication of An Introduction to Lifelong Education (Lengrand, 1970; Milana, 2012).

During these years, and inspired by an international impulse for literacy, the Mexican government founded the National Institute for Adult Education INEA to meet the basic education and literacy needs of the population over 15 years of age, responding to the constitutional principle on the right to an education[3]. From its origins, the Institute has aimed to become an international reference in the planning and implementation of policies to address educational dropouts and eradicate illiteracy. Since then, the Institute

[2] http://www.inea.gob.mx/colaboracion/asuntos_internacionales-240ct2018/documentos/pdf/analisis_campanas_alfa.pdf
[3] https://www.gob.mx/inea/que-hacemos

has defined models to face an educational deficit, designing and researching the subject, fashioning learning materials and certifying basic education studies for adults and young people (Castro-Mussot & de Anda, 2007).

The Mexican government created the INEA in 1981 as a decentralized organ of the Federal Education Ministry to provide literacy, primary and secondary education, and non-formal training for work and community education to the population aged 15 and older. INEA's role is to support the vulnerable groups that did not access formal educational opportunities (Castro-Mussot, 2007). The creation is an institutional response to the high illiteracy levels in rural and vulnerable communities[4]. The number of illiterate persons in Mexico represents a challenge for its development and evolution as a knowledge society. In addressing this historic challenge, the first national census in 1895 revealed a population of over 12 million inhabitants, of which 75.3% were illiterate (9.5 million). In 1900, the second census revealed that 6.8 million of 13.6 million were illiterate (Narro Robles et al., 2012).

In achieving the objectives, the Institute devotes enormous efforts to eradicating illiteracy, a challenge mainly in rural and poor areas (INEA, 2007). The Institute has offices in all states nationwide. The education policy in Mexico focused on increasing access to improve the coverage of the education system, a complex effort mainly because the country was rural (Rodriguez & Meneses, 2011). In the 1970s, about 87% of the population over 15 had some educational dropouts: 25.8% were illiterate, 42.7% had not completed primary school, and 18.6% were secondary (Granados Roldan, 2018, p. 36). In 38 years of its existence, the INEA provided educational opportunities to nearly 27 million people through a quality model that encourages lifelong learning. Since its creation, the percentage of the illiterate population has decreased considerably from 17% to 4.2%, representing that almost 3 million people are no longer under this condition. The number of people over 15 who do not have primary education reduced from 24.9% to 9.5%. Similarly, the population that has not completed secondary school decreased from 24.3% to 17% (INEA, 2018).

Despite the institutional efforts to eradicate illiteracy and educational dropouts, the challenges remain in the most marginalized states in the country[5]. Still, there are many challenges in rural areas where the population faces tremendous inequalities in terms of quality and access to education and training services.

---

[4] https://www.gob.mx/becasbenitojuarez/articulos/hace-37-anos-se-creo-el-instituto-nacional-para-la-educacion-de-los-adultos-inea?idiom=es
[5]https://cuentame.inegi.org.mx/poblacion/analfabeta.aspx?tema=P#:~:text=En%20M%C3%A9xico%2C%20durante%20los%20%C3%BAltimos,no%20saben%20leer%20ni%20escribir.

These institutional approaches are undertaken by other countries worldwide. For instance, in the United States, government efforts and investments in adult education have continued during the first decade of the 21st century. Grants to states increased from $416 million in 2000 to $497 million in 2010, and total adult education funding increased from just over $500 million in 2000 to almost $640 million in 2010 (U.S. Education Department, 2013, p. 29). This investment shows that adult education at the national level is a determinant factor for the development and welfare of the United States. Similarly, the institutional efforts aim to eradicate educational inequalities through investments in adult education, which resonate with the government approaches of the Mexican government (INEA, 2020).

The training activities organised by the INEA take place in *Plazas Comunitarias* (Learning Centres in English), where the coordinators offer programmes using computer systems to provide basic education and learning opportunities. The main educational programme in the Learning Centres is the Education Model for Life and Work (*MEVyT)* to offer learning opportunities for the workplace and daily life situations (elements related to the improvement of social skills, community and civic participation and opportunities to improve performance in work situations) (Castro-Mussot & De Anda, 2007). A relevant feature of the work is the operation and management of Learning Centres in the United States, where the number of Mexicans with low education skills or illiterate is significantly high. The number of Hispanics of Mexican origin in 2012 reached the record number of 33.7 million, where 11.4 were born in Mexico and 22.3 in the U.S. (Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez, 2013). Regarding illiteracy, at least one million are illiterate, and 3 million lack elementary education (INEA Bulletin, 2014).

Mexicans in illiteracy conditions in the U.S. struggle to have better life opportunities and integrate into American society (Zong & Batalova, 2013). The national strategy to foster lifelong learning draws upon the Education Model for Life and Work, which chief goal is to stimulate the student's basic skills required for life and work (Castro-Mussot, 2007, p. 122). Similarly, in coordination with local civil society organisations, the National Institute for Adult Education supports Mexicans living in the United States. The Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME) and the network of Mexican Consulates in the United States accompany this collaboration. Each Plaza Comunitaria is an operative unit with unique approaches and opening hours. The learning processes occur through specialised learning advisers and tutors, assigned, and trained by the INEA.

The *MEVyT* is a flexible and diversified model. There are different modules per educational level[6]. Among the modules, there are those covering the learning fundamentals: Language and Communication, Mathematics and Sciences (both Natural and Social). The alternative modules are those called 'diversified' modules that address specific topics of interest of the population, national, regional, or state, and those that refer to training for work (FLACSO, 2008). All these services and the didactic materials are also available online and previously offered free of charge (UIL, 2016). The following table describes how the Plazas Comunitarias operate in the United States.

Opening	Training	Registration	Endorsement	Certificate
Each NGO founding a new Learning Centre, submits a Working Plan to the corresponding Consulate. This is revised and authorised by the INEA central offices and the Consulate.	INEA, provides online tutorials and training to facilitate the operation of the SASACE (Automated Accreditation and Monitoring System for Communities Abroad).	For each student pursuing certification, it is mandatory to generate a registration file on the SASACE platform.	Each student takes a diagnostic test. Students complete the basic and diversified modules corresponding to their level. At the end of each module, they take an exam to evaluate knowledge. Once all the modules are accredited, they receive a certificate.	Local administrators report the exam results to INEA's Sub-directorate of International Affairs to request the certificates. Once validated, the INEA sends a diplomatic bag with the certificates.

Table 1.1: Learning Centres creation process

The Institute aims to provide learning opportunities for Mexicans in the United States and enhance their quality of life and subjective well-being by providing skills and knowledge for daily life activities and civic engagement (CONEVYT, 2000). Each year, approximately 6,000 students in the United States enrol in the education activities carried out by the INEA (UIL, 2016). The learning centres offer courses to Spanish speakers, who can get certifications that other countries validate. Through international agreements between countries, they acknowledge the certificates issued by the Institute.

Students pursuing primary education certification must complete ten modules (eight basic and two diversified). For the secondary education certification, students must take four diversified modules. It is important to remember there is no fixed duration of primary or secondary. Courses depend on the previous

[6] http://www.cursosinea.conevyt.org.mx/

knowledge of learners, their characteristics, the time, and the regularity that they give to the study. Between 2003 and 2015, approximately 50,000 students completed one of the educational levels (24,449 literacy, 12,404 primary and 11,765 secondary school) (SASACE, 2016). The number of beneficiaries is relevant because Mexican immigrants have a low chance of getting a school diploma or further education. In this light, 40% of Mexican immigrants who arrived at age seven do not complete secondary school, compared to 70% of those in the United States at age 14 (Beck et al., 2012).

Adult education is a mechanism for Mexicans with low educational levels to overcome the barriers embodied in illiteracy or dropouts (UIL, 2016). Correspondingly, the programme aims at empowering learners and improving their literacy conditions. Beyond the qualifications and certificates, the Learning Centres benefit the students by creating an environment of trust and community belonging where people can meet to celebrate their culture in a foreign country. Part of the theoretical assumption is that being continuously in a learning environment inspires students to continue with other education opportunities (Op. Cit.).

In producing outcomes, some external factors can influence the participation of adults (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). The threat of deportation could keep students out of school (Asad, 2020; Sanchez, 2019). For example, a school district in Las Cruces, New Mexico, saw a 60% spike in absenteeism after an immigration raid shook the community. As a result, the school board changed its policies. They stopped collecting information regarding the immigration status of its students and started rejecting requests from ICE agents to access the school (Acevedo, 2018). Alongside exploring the direct effects of adult education participation, I considered the broader elements and circumstances that affect individuals' daily activities in the Learning Centres.

Reducing educational dropouts and illiteracy entails several benefits for the individual and society (Lane & Conlon, 2016). The National Institute for the Evaluation of Education (INEE) established that understanding illiteracy is relevant because it reflects the minimum learning degree a community has reached and reflects societal inequality (INEE, 2018). On the other hand, UNESCO contemplates that the "multiplier effect" of literacy empowers individuals since, among other things, it allows them to participate fully in society and contributes to improving the quality of livelihoods (UNESCO, 2018).

Since a country's development is linked to its inhabitants' education, literacy represents a driving force for sustainable development (Lane & Conlon, 2016). Literacy allows people to participate more in the labour

market, which is a fundamental element in reducing poverty and inequalities (Melrose, 2014; Post, 2016). Lacking opportunities to learn and get skilled are major deterrents and disincentives for individual development. For instance, some municipalities and rural areas in Mexico face high illiteracy levels, hindering the development of individuals and regions. Chiapas and Guerrero in southern Mexico represent the most dramatic cases where most of its municipalities (89% and 82%, respectively) have two-figure illiteracy rates (Granados et al., 2018).

In this regard, a city where approximately 40% of its inhabitants are illiterate will struggle to find mechanisms for development and progress. Furthermore, the disturbing number of persons under illiteracy conditions in these regions in Mexico is not related to recent phenomena. People have lived marginalized and relegated for generations. This paradigm of poverty and deprivation can be compared to the living conditions prevailing in Sub-Saharan Africa[7]. The municipalities are indigenous communities positioned among the poorest in the country, and access to them is quite complex due to the lack of adequate infrastructure for transport and communication. Therefore, integral strategies will have to be designed to deliver better services, including components of social development, health, education, promotion of work, and public safety, among others (Granados et al., 2018).

Illiteracy is considered one of the main problems in fighting poverty worldwide (UNESCO, 2019). It is associated with high rates of poverty, marginalization, and migration. The illiterate population is usually concentrated in extreme poverty and marginalization, and the migrant population has various forms (Narro et al., p. 97). Therefore, integral strategies will have to be designed to deliver better services, including components of social development, health, education, promotion of work, public safety, and others (Granados et al., 2018). Literacy is much more than an educational priority (UNESCO, 2019). It is the investment of the future (Bokova, 2013). The concept of literacy has evolved historically worldwide (Lane and Conlon, 2016). Each civilization historically reaches a certain level of development and is naturally inclined to practice education more intensely (Jaeger, 2008), where literacy is a necessary condition for the development of people, which is determinant for the prosperity of nations.
Within the Educational Reform implemented in Mexico during the 2012-2018 administration, the Institute restructured and strengthened its conceptual and operational framework to improve the quality and focus of educational efforts. Thus, they launched literacy campaigns and reinforced the efforts against educational

[7] These figures are similar to those of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. See http://hdr.undp.org/en/data

dropouts. This approach enabled more than 6 million adults (15 years old or more) to finish primary or secondary school or learn how to read and write between 2012 and 2018 (Granados et al., 2018, p. 38).

The Institute considers a person without basic education if they belong to the population of 15 years or older that does not know how to read or write and has not started or finished primary or secondary education (INEA, 2016). As to educational dropouts, in Mexico, this concept is understood as the condition in which people who, being 15 years old or more, have not reached the academic level that is considered elementary, which in Mexico are secondary school studies (Narro Robles et al., 2012). The following graph describes the percentage of educational 42rogramts related to adults (15 years old or more) in Mexico (2012-2018). It illustrates the progression of educational dropouts by the number of individuals under three categories: a) illiterate people, b) no elementary school completed, and c) no secondary education completed.

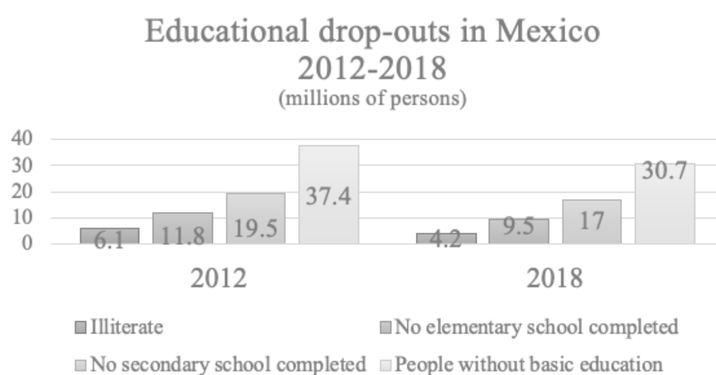


Figure 1.3: Educational dropouts in Mexico (2012-2018). (Granados, 2018)

As shown by the National Institute for Adult Education, there has been a significant decrease in the percentage of educational dropouts, dropping from 37.4 to 30.7 million Mexicans. Likewise, illiterate persons shrank considerably from 6.1 to 4.2 million in six years of implementing literacy campaigns at the national level. As part of the national strategy to tackle illiteracy, launched in January 2016 by the INEA, the Special Certification Programme (PEC) targeted those literate users to recognise knowledge acquired self-taught. More than 600 thousand people received elementary school certificates, and over 700 thousand received secondary school certificates (Granados Roldan et al., 2018).

It is significant to highlight that educated parents have greater possibilities of sending their children to school and helping them do their homework (UNESCO, 2006). This educational attainment strengthens community engagement and supports the eradication of illiteracy. Literacy improves the living conditions of individuals, families, communities, and nations (Lane & Conlon, 2016; UNESCO, 2019). For example,

on average, an illiterate person earns half the income of a person who can read and write (INEA, based on estimates from the INEGI Intercensal Survey 2015). In addition, beyond reading and writing, literacy involves literacy skills and knowledge mobility, meaning that learning can be referred to other areas of life. It is also a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digitalised world (UNESCO, 2018a). Thus, eradicating illiteracy and reducing educational inequalities are significant challenges that require understanding the problem and policy dimensions (UNESCO, 2019).

This section examined the relevant background and historical approach concerning illiteracy in Mexico. Despite the institutional efforts, significant challenges remain open to addressing illiteracy and educational dropouts in Mexico. Regarding these challenges, this research examines how adult education for migrant populations improves subjective well-being and creates social capital. This study explores the dimensions and outcomes of the MEVyT programme implemented in Los Angeles. The subsequent chapter describes the methodological approach and study design to evaluate the MEVyT programme.

2. Methodology

This study explores the effects of adult education on participants' lives, particularly looking at the impact on subjective well-being and the creation of social capital for migration populations in Los Angeles, California. In addressing this topic, this study draws on the Realist Evaluation (Jackson and Kolla, 2012) approach to better understand the MEVyT programme's effects. I conducted semi-structured interviews to examine participants' perceptions of the programme at two Learning Centres. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology approach and research questions used to undertake the study.

This chapter is divided into **six subsections** to describe my motivations and rationale concerning the research approach and methods. This section comprises the reasons behind choosing a qualitative approach and the realist evaluation to conduct this study. Additionally, the methodology chapter describes the study design, data collection tools and fieldwork activities relating to the semi-structured interviews with students at two Learning Centres in Los Angeles.

2.1 **Qualitative methods**

The methodological approach aims to discover the personal perceptions of students participating in adult education. To understand the participants' perceptions, I selected a qualitative approach because quantitative research addresses the impact of a programme by answering the overall questions involving the outcomes and the goals embedded in the intervention, whilst qualitative research focuses more on comprehending the components of the intervention (Ravitch, 2020; Levy, P., 2020), which I considered to be most useful and relevant for the purpose of this study. As the research goal is to discover the student's perceptions, the qualitative perspective aims at exploring issues like "why was this effective or not?" and "how is this helpful for learning?" (Sargeant, 2012), which in this case sheds light on specific circumstances and contexts that enable the MEVyT programme to deliver positive outcomes.

Important to bear in mind that 'all research methods are founded on philosophical beliefs regarding the acquisition and interpretation of data' (Knox & Burkard, 2009, p. 570). Certain principles motivate the researchers to conduct interviews and examine perceptions and personal experiences. In this light, qualitative studies require more time and a certain level of detail to deliver meaningful results (McGrath et al., 2019). This approach requires the researcher to get close enough to the people and location to understand the depth of what goes on and the perceived features that the participants encounter along with their participation in each programme. Patton argues that 'qualitative data consist of direct quotations from

people, both what they speak and write down' (Patton, 2002, p. 36). The data gathered emerges directly from people involved in the programme, allowing a more detailed understanding of the current programmes' effects and implications. This process aligns with the research goal of uncovering the students' perceptions, comparing them against the theoretical dimensions of adult education, and analysing why and how the programme benefits the participants.

The main goal of qualitative studies is to 'contribute to a body of knowledge that is conceptual and theoretical and is based on the meanings that life experiences hold for the interviewees' (DiCicco & Crabtree, 2006, p. 314). A significant element of this methodological approach is that it goes beyond categories to describe deeper connexions between the context, mechanisms, and outcomes. In other words, this approach elucidates and exposes the whole apparatus of interventions to understand what makes the programme effective for certain people in each context. On the other hand, the quantitative analysis aims to pinpoint differences between sub-groups or contexts against the programme theory (RAMSES II Project, 2017).

I selected this methodological approach because the findings are organised to demonstrate interactions between the context, mechanism, and outcome (Greenhalgh et al., 2019). On the contrary, the quantitative research design is a successful tool for exploring certain programmes and interventions where the objective is to determine correlations and longitudinal data for comparison purposes. This method entails, among other components, the standardisation of procedures and the random selection of participants to avoid external variables that can affect the results with the overall goal of allowing the generalisation of results. On the other hand, selecting the participants in qualitative research is well-focused. Participants are typically selected considering those who can best inform the research questions and enhance their understanding of the programme (Sargeant, 2012).

Nevertheless, in qualitative research, the random selection of candidates can be contemplated if the research design and purposes are well aligned (Marshall, 1996). For instance, the Randomized Controlled Trials RCT entail a comparative study where interviewees are randomly selected and assigned clustered into intervention group and control group. The groups are compared to identify possible differences or results attributed to the effects of the specific intervention. Under this approach, the standardisation and measurements offer certain advantages for research purposes and 'contribute to its limitations in relation to generalisability of its findings and its usefulness for certain evaluations' (O'Halloran, 2012, p. 512). Moreover, the Randomized Controlled Trial is appropriate when the sample size is big enough to detect the

programme’s effects with sufficient accuracy; the study must have what statisticians call sufficient ‘power’ (White et al., 2014, p. 2).

Each methodological approach has strengths and weaknesses (Ravitch, 2020). For instance, RCTs are the gold standard for clinical research in placebo-controlled trials (Faraoni & Schaefer, 2016) because it eliminates bias in the treatment assignment by removing elements of choice that researchers may have under another methodological approach. In this sense, RCTs have the potential to yield an estimate of the effect that is unbiased and consistent (Clay, 2010). On the other hand, as many scholars would argue, the RCTs are quite contestable because the groups selected for the trial have different features that the researcher cannot easily detect and may have a role in defining results. These variables can be demographic characteristics (age, race, gender, etc.) or clinical features (severity of symptoms, etc.) (Thyer, 2012). All these elements that could constitute relevant factors for the analysis are not assessed or overlooked through RCT.

The risk of losing crucial information Is considerably high with this approach (Clay, 2010). Therefore, the methodology depends entirely on the objective followed by the research designer. Principally, because the ‘selection on statistical significance leads to overestimates of treatment effects, this bias can be huge, and it can lead to a cascade of errors in the literature when exaggerated estimates are used in the design of overly optimistic future experiments’ (Gelman, 2017). Examples of programmes that may not be amenable to randomisation are those with a small number of treatment units (White et al., 2014). Since the number of participants at the Learning Centres is relatively low to accomplish the minimum number to deliver statistically results, the efforts to reach out to people in more than two Centres would have been extraordinarily costly. In addition to this criterion, RCTs are not particularly suitable for this research because the goal is to explore the perceptions through interviews rather than assessing the programme. Similarly, the interviews generated sufficient quality data to develop analytical categories and build qualitative profiles of the students according to their perceptions and the theoretical framework.

Moreover, this study considers thematic analysis to identify codes and patterns from the interviews. This method constitutes an advantage given the diversity of work when analysing aspects relating to learning and teaching (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The thematic analysis enables the researcher to report peoples’ experiences and perceptions based on a particular setting. This method works to reflect reality and unpick the surface of reality (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A positive aspect of coding is that the patterns identified can be compared against the researcher’s assumptions at an early stage of the realist evaluation, which is useful

when there is little existing literature identifying these theories (Jackson & Kolla, 2012). In this regard, Maguire and Delahunt developed the 6-phase guide to thematic analysis. Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data means that researchers must read and re-read the transcripts. Step 2: Generate initial codes by organising the data in a meaningful and systematic way to reduce data into small pieces of meaning. Step 3: Search for themes that capture something significant or interesting about the data. Organise the codes into broader themes about the research question. Step 4: Think about whether the topics work in the context of the entire data set. The themes should be coherent, and they should be distinct from each other. Step 5: Define the themes. Identify the essence of what each topic is about. Step 6: Write-up. (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3354- 3362). By analysing and coding the interviews according to the theoretical dimensions, I identified patterns of perceptions related to specific sociodemographic characteristics that explained some differences between the students. In this light, the Realist Evaluation enabled the identification of characteristics and contexts to study the benefits of the MEVyT programme.

In this regard, the subsequent section explains the principles and goals related to the implementation of Realist Evaluation and its relevance to this research. It comprises the reasoning behind selecting the realist evaluation approach to conduct this study.

2.2 **Realist Evaluation**

As to the methodological approach, Realist Evaluation indicates that participants bring different outlooks, perceptions, and skills (Timmins & Miller, 2007) that should be included when examining the programme's effects. For this reason, I considered that this methodological perspective effectively supports the research goals of this study. My reasoning was informed by the fact that I had encountered the method being used recently in various contexts in education with positive results. For example, a systematic review conducted by Berg and Nanatavi on the Realist Evaluation shows that this approach is expanding into a wide range of research areas. Nevertheless, most research using realist evaluations focuses on health-related issues (Berg & Nanavati, 2016), for instance, out of 71 Realist Evaluation publications, only eight studies addressed educational topics.

Analysing interviews from a realist evaluation approach is a task that involves a "retroductive" approach. The data analysis method in Realist Evaluation tends to be retroductive because it moves between inductive and deductive processes to provide the best possible explanation of acknowledged to-be-incomplete data (Greenhalgh et al., 2019). In this sense, the retroductive perspective facilitates the identification of CMOs across data to identify causal forces that lie behind identified patterns or changes in those patterns (Gilmore

et al., 2019). The context-mechanism-outcome patterns relate to the cycle of characteristics and contexts that enable or hinder a programme to deliver positive outcomes.

For instance, the mechanisms are considered the activities taken by the actors involved in the programme (Westhorp et al., 2011). Furthermore, the literature provides examples of its application by describing that a Context can be characteristics of location/community. Lastly, the Outcome is a change that originated from the influence of the intervention (Jackson & Kolla, 2012). It is essential to bear in mind that after analysing and categorising the data in the form of the Context-Mechanisms-Outcome, the realist evaluation seeks to examine the link between these findings and the middle range theory (Marchal et al., 2010, p. 19). Under this perspective, data analysis in realist evaluation is not a specific method but a way of testing programme theories accordingly to the pattern Context-Mechanism-Outcome (Jackson & Kolla, 2012).

In social sciences, epistemological reflections are closely linked with the paradigms that shape knowledge (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009). The elements constituting research paradigms to understand the phenomenon affecting our reality are ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods. These components comprise the building blocks of research that allow meaningful results and an understanding of reality. These elements are the grounds of the whole edifice (Grix, 2004, p. 59). In Realist Evaluation, the questions aim to comprehend if the programme successfully delivers positive outcomes and to understand the intervention's effects and causes (Gilmore et al., 2019). A fundamental principle of the Realist Evaluation is the existence of a real world, which lives independent of any interpretations (Westhorp et al., 2011). Under this notion, the importance lies in how we decode the world, which influences our actions and reality. According to this approach, programmes are 'theories', they are 'embedded', they are 'active', and they are parts of 'open systems' (Pawson, 2004, p. 3). Those theories need to be tested out using a wide array of methods to define contextual outcomes.

Realist Evaluation has gained relevance in the scientific world as an approach to reviewing and explaining the interplay between context, mechanisms, and outcomes of programmes (Rigmor & Nanavati, 2016). The overall theoretical assumption is that an "intervention leads to an outcome in specific contexts if it triggers certain mechanisms. If the mechanism is context-dependent, which in health services may often be the case, essential context elements can be identified" (Marchal et al., 2010, p. 22). Under this paradigm, if the processes originate a pattern of events, this can also be defined as a 'causal mechanism'. In this light, mechanisms can operate at all levels of reality, and the outcomes usually emerge at a different level from the mechanism itself (Westhorp et al., 2011, p. 4).

Due to its principles, this methodological approach is placed between positivism and constructivism to adopt particularities of both considerations to define the composition of reality and its structures (Graham, A., and McAleer, S., 2018). On the one hand, positivist research ambitions to uncover reality through prediction using principally quantitative methods where the researcher plays the role of the independent observer of reality. Conversely, constructivists see reality as socially constructed, and researchers are active participants, using either quantitative or qualitative methods (Knoblauch, 2020). Realists converge views, understanding that there is a real world out there that is open to various interpretations that rely on the interaction of external influences and factors (Graham & McAleer, 2018).

Realism is a relatively recent approach by philosophical principles compared to ontological, epistemological, and axiological ones (Yeung, 1997). Critical realists take for granted that there is a real world to be explored. 'The fundamental tenet of critical realism is that we can use causal language to describe the world' (Easton, 2010, p. 119). Among other objectives, realist evaluation aims to explain changes related to a programme by examining the actors involved in a specific situation. In this approach, actors and interventions are entrenched in a social reality that influences how the programme is implemented and how actors respond (Marchal, 2017). Therefore, 'causation (how programmes cause change) and attribution (whether observed changes can be attributed to the programme or were caused by other things) are critical questions for impact evaluation. If an evaluation does not address these questions, it is not an impact evaluation' (Westhorp, 2014, p. 4).

The power of 49rogrammmes lies in the mechanisms and interactions that occur at every moment and stage of the implementation (Gilmore et al., 2019). Hence, one of the principles of the Realist Evaluation not only focuses on result evaluations but aims to deconstruct the programme to understand interactions and circumstances that allow certain people/participants to benefit more than others. Following this idea, "realist authors try to rework and re-assess conceptual frameworks, which they argue are representations of the real". Even when doing empirical research, they aim to develop better underpinnings for world descriptions, also called ontology (Olsen, 2009, p. 5). The programme's ontologies are the programme's concepts as the 'mediators in the representation of knowledge through concepts. Therefore, ontologies lie between concepts (which they subsume) on the one hand and the embracing knowledge domain (within which they are embedded) on the other' (Jakus et al., 2013, p. 29).

The attributions of the programme are the conceptualisations of reality entailed in it. Using the ontology of the given programme, the aim is to realise “what works for whom in what circumstances and in what respects, and how?” (Pawson & Tilley, 2004, p. 2).

Throughout the Realist Evaluation, the structure of the MEVyT is examined in the eyes of its: “mechanism”, “context”, “outcome pattern”, and “context-mechanism-outcome pattern configuration” (Pawson & Tilley, p. 6). The complete set of elements, circumstances and mechanisms that interact internally for the programme to operate are considered for this study. To further explore this approach, it is relevant to comprehend that the mechanism used to analyse interventions lies in building the Context-Mechanism-Outcome pattern constructed through analytical tools (Gilmore et al., 2019). Respondents directly involved in the programmes are a key source of information to produce this scheme. The data emerging from actors is then used to refine the theory about how, for whom, and in what circumstances interventions generate positive outcomes. ‘This implies that any processes used to invite or recruit individuals need to identify an adequate sample of individuals who can provide information about contexts, mechanisms, outcomes and or programme theory‘ (Greenhalgh et al., 2019, p. 7).

Following the principles of the realist evaluation, the researcher ‘may strive to analyse the available data in the search for explanations and to pave the way for the identification of the relevant mechanisms in the future’ (Kazi, 2003, p. 22). Research shows that the programme and its operation are a substantial assemblage of different structures, mechanisms, and particular contexts. Considering that the mechanisms of every programme or intervention exist, whether they are visible and are operating at a particular moment, realism as an approach offers an understanding of how this causation works. ‘The basic idea is that things we experience or can observe are caused by ‘deeper’, usually non-observable processes’ (Westhrop, p. 5).

Realism is based on contextual thinking to address the issues of ‘for whom’ and ‘in what circumstances’ an intervention will work (Sayer, 2000). The context significantly determines the outcomes; therefore, the realist evaluation inquiries about the components of the context that shape the programme (Westhorp et al., 2011). In this light, Pawson and Tilley (2004, p. 7) stated that context entails all the characteristics and conditions in which programmes or initiatives are relevant to the operation of the mechanisms.

Figure 2.1 depicts the realist evaluation's process and circumstances, including the contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes embedded in programmes or policy interventions.

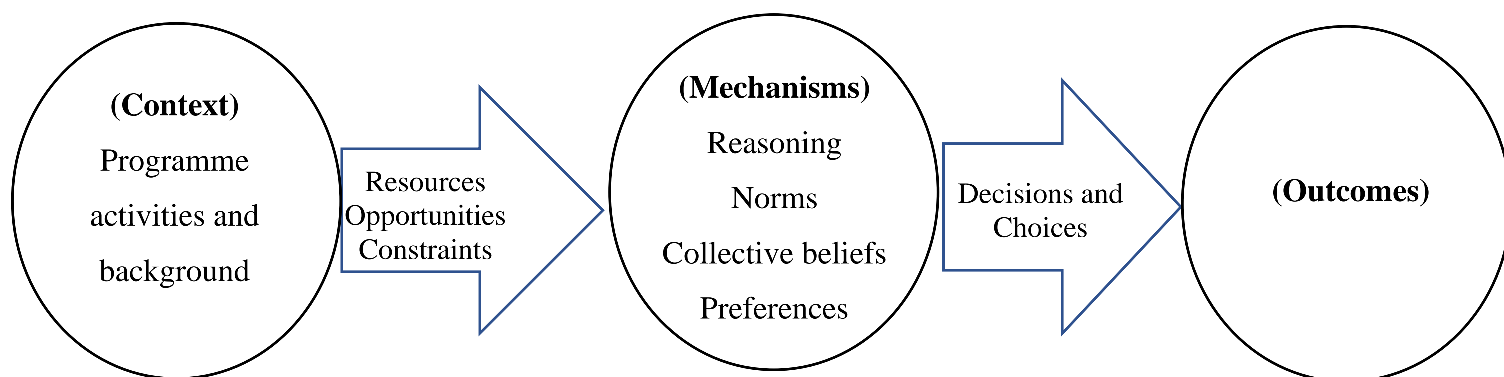


Figure 2.1: Realist programme evaluation based on Gill Westhrop (2014)

Realist evaluations consider the programme activities, backgrounds, and unique characteristics of the settings to conduct an assessment (Westhorp et al., 2011). The analysis includes the resources and constraints playing out in the dynamics of the programme. Similarly, this type of evaluation considers the mechanisms, reasoning, beliefs, behaviour change and preferences active in a programme (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Likewise, the decisions and choices of individuals involved in a programme influence the outcomes. The reasoning behind the realist evaluation entails a description of different processes, actions, beliefs, and decisions that shape the functioning of a programme, and the way outcomes are produced (Graham & McAleer, 2018), which correspond to the research goals of this study. As the objective is to unearth characteristics and contexts that influence the students' perceptions, this methodological approach constitutes a dynamic research tool.

Understanding that the causality of a programme does not ineludibly reside in the events or the behaviours of objects, i.e., certain individuals, but in the 'social relations and organisational structures which constitute the open system' (Kazi, 2003, p. 23). The realist researcher configures the set of circumstances and mechanisms that operate simultaneously to allow a programme to provide or produce outcomes. Pawson and Tilley (1997, p. 68) define a mechanism as 'an account of the make-up, behaviour, and interrelationships of those processes that are responsible for the outcome. A mechanism is thus a theory — that spells out the potential of human resources and reasoning' (Dalkin et al., 2015b). The main goal of this perspective is to evaluate these elements to explain the causal mechanisms and conditions. Therefore, the first rule is 'to penetrate beneath the observable outputs and inputs of a programme' (Kazi, 2003, p. 28). Evaluators involved in the field of education, aiming for significant findings, should reach a certain level

of engagement in the teacher-learner relationship alongside policymakers, practitioners, and participants to better understand the programme's effectiveness (Simon and Pleshová, 2013).

This kind of evaluation offers significant advantages, mainly because it allows the external validity of case studies. It examines the nature of changes by referring to the actors that make this possible under the influence of external events (Marchal et al., 2010, p. 11). According to Kazi (2003), researchers aim to track the following elements that constitute the Realistic Effectiveness Cycle: a) changes in outcomes (including changes in the levels of risk); b) changes in the models of intervention or the content of the programmes implemented; c) changes in the contexts of service users; d) changes in the mechanisms over time (factors in the circumstances of the service users that influence outcomes) (Dalkin et al., 2015b).

The two main approaches to carrying out realist evaluations are intensive and extensive (Sayer, 2000). 'An intensive approach would start with individuals (again, not necessarily individuals) and trace the main causal (including discursive) relationships into which they enter and study their qualitative nature and number. It might not be possible to define these causal groups at the outset of the research. Indeed, discovering and studying how they operate might be a key component or objective of the research' (Op. Cit., p. 20). A significant factor is that this approach is related to qualitative analysis rather than quantitative.

A certain level of periodicity in data collection is required to conduct a substantial and meaningful evaluation. On the other hand, the extensive design comprises the analysis of individuals in their causal contexts, and interviews represent one of the most common tools to gather data (Adams, 2015). The intensive approach can be carried out with one or a small number of cases/individuals. The outcomes-mechanisms-context and the content of a human service are analysed based on the realist effectiveness cycle (Kazi, 2003, p. 34). Despite the pros, there are some limitations involved in this design. For instance, concrete patterns and contingent relations are unlikely representative or generalisable (Sayer, p. 21). The Realist Evaluation can be further explained using the following examples that address the way researchers formulate their principles:

* What do we need to know in formulating programmes in this area?
* What are the key decisions in implementing it?
* What pointers can you give us in making these decisions?
* Should the programme be targeted, and if so, how?
* Should the intervention be adapted to local needs?

* Are we likely to need to adapt the programme over time?

* How can we track the programme and keep it on track? (Pawson)

In this regard, the Middle Range Theory that supports the development of a realist evaluation states how the intervention leads to which effect in which conditions (Marchal et al., 2010, p. 12). According to this approach, there are specific steps that the realist researcher should consider. Most evaluations conducted in different contexts and countries under these principles followed this pathway.

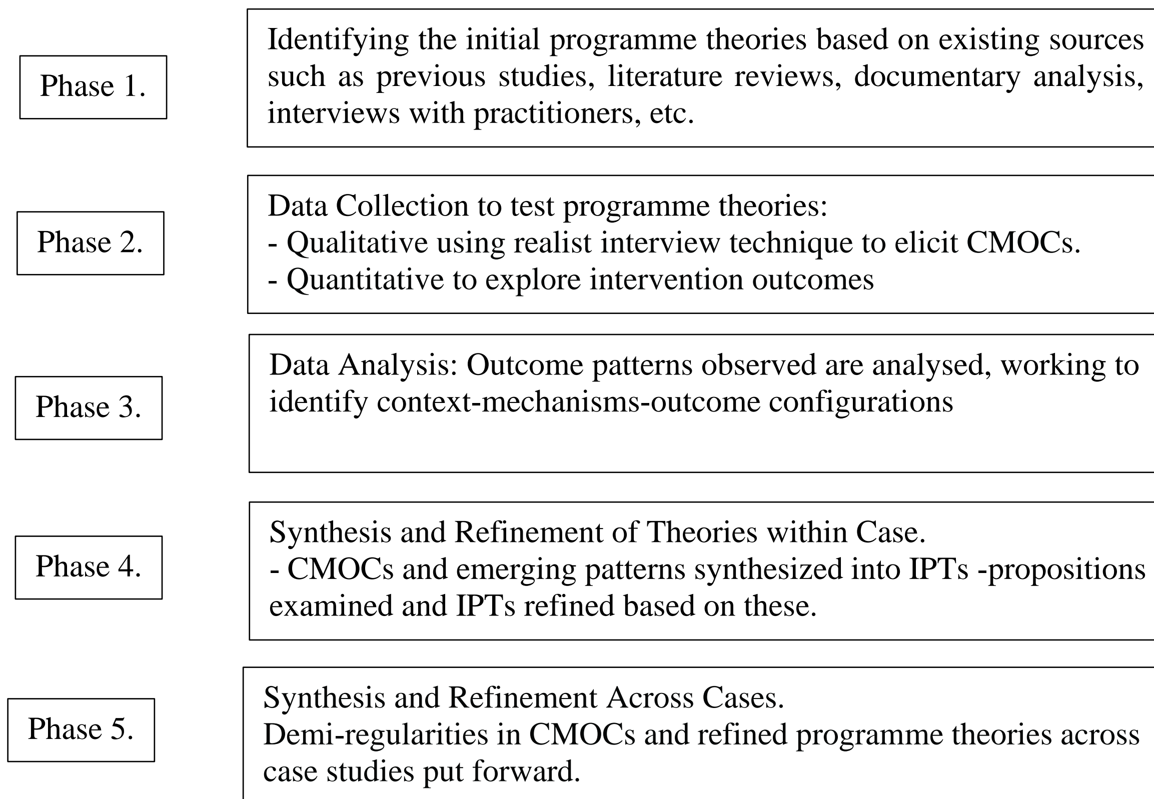


Figure 2.2: Suggested pathway of analysis in Realist Evaluation. Based on Gilmore et al., 2019

Figure 2.2 describes how realist evaluators structure the analysis of a programme. Firstly, realist researchers must identify the initial programme theories drawing on existing academic sources and literature to classify the elements to test. Additionally, selecting the methodological approach to collect data is significant for conducting the realist evaluation (Jackson & Kolla, 2012). Analysing the data through the lens of realist evaluation is the subsequent step guiding the development of patterns that include the context, mechanisms, and outcomes. The final steps in the realist evaluation consider refining theories within cases or programmes (Gilmore et al., 2019). Refining the theories means that the realist evaluation and the context-mechanism-outcomes configurations yield new concrete information about the ontology of the programme (Marchal et al., 2017).

The principles consider a set of studies and sources addressing the relevance of adult education in improving subjective well-being and creating social capital (Schuller et al., 2004; Field, 2009; Feinstein et al., 2008). Following the realist evaluation principles, this research includes the initial theories of the MEVyT programme and a literature review of adult education and its relationship with social capital and subjective well-being. To test these theories, I developed the following research questions.

3. How does participation in the MEVyT courses improve the student's mental health and employability?
   - Under what factors and circumstances are the students' self-confidence and self-esteem improved?
   - Under what factors and circumstances does the MEVyT programme improve the students' perception of employability?

2. How does participation in the MEVyT courses benefit the creation of social relationships and interpersonal trust?
   - Under what factors and circumstances is the student's perception of social relationships affected?
   - Under what factors and circumstances is the student's perception of interpersonal trust improved?

The analysis of contexts, mechanisms and outcomes aims to understand how the MEVyT programme improves social capital and subjective well-being in specific settings. In this regard, I address the research questions through semi-structured interviews with students at two Learning Centres in Los Angeles. The interviewees' perception of the courses and their effects on the theoretical principles is the source of data guiding this study. I tested these principles according to the student's perceptions. Table 2.1 comprises the theoretical approaches I have selected for this study.

Theoretical principles of adult education
1.- Students with low skills have less confidence in their own abilities and thus develop a less positive attitude towards learning. 2.- Schools can foster values for social cooperation and provide "meeting places" where students can socialise with classmates. 3.- Adult education provides a one-off wage boost for better employment

Table 2.1: Theoretical principles tested

These theoretical principles emerge from existing literature and academic sources that evaluate the power of adult education to improve students' lives (Field, 2009; Feinstein et al., 2008). From the interviews, I tested if the effects of the MEVyT programme confirm or refuse these principles. The following section

comprises specific characteristics that guided this study design and includes a recollection concerning the process of sampling, interviewing, selection of learning centres, data collection tools and overall procedures.

2.3 **Study design**

One of the most relevant aspects involving Realist Evaluation is its capacity to identify certain tendencies in the outcomes that emerge from the operation of the mechanisms within an intervention (Marchal et al., 2017). Along this line, the concentration of Context–Mechanism–Outcome configurations allows the development of transferable and cumulative lessons about the nature of these configurations (O'Halloran, 2012, p. 520). Identifying these configurations can be challenging if the interviews are inadequate and do not provide substantial elements for analysis or if the interviewer pushes the development of responses to fulfil the research agenda. Nevertheless, the researcher must gain familiarity with the context without imposing expectations (inductive approach) to unearth the characteristics of the programme and its effects (Fleming, 2018). The strategy in qualitative research is 'to allow the important dimensions to emerge from analysis of the cases under study without presupposing in advance what those important dimensions will be' (Patton, 2002, p. 41).

In studying the effects of the MEVyT, I selected interviews as a data collection tool because the power of interviews draws on the connection between the participants and the researcher that establish direct communication to understand the participant's perceptions. A significant exchange of feelings, experiences, and perceptions takes place during the interviews, through which even the body language is significant in establishing effective communication (Fleming, 2018). The conversations generate data that researchers can use scientifically to analyse patterns and predominant characteristics of the participants that shape their perceptions. Thus, interviews are a very efficient tool for gaining meaningful data, particularly in the social sciences, where "twenty-first-century social researchers have become interviewers" (Manzano, 2016, p. 342). In qualitative research, interviews 'are preferable when the researcher strives to understand the interviewee's subjective perspective of a phenomenon rather than generating generalizable understandings of large groups of people' (McGrath et al., 2019, p. 1002).

There are diverse alternatives to approach people or groups of persons from a qualitative approach. For instance, semi-structured interviews serve as a meaningful and efficient tool to gather information from participants. Most time, these mechanisms are based on a set of predetermined open-ended questions that act as a guide. With this tool, other questions emerge equally from the dialogue between the interviewer

and interviewees (DiCicco & Crabtree, 2006). The overall purpose of interviewing is to discover what is crossing the participant's mind. 'We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe' (Patton, 2002, p. 196). Nonetheless, conducting interviews entails some negative aspects related to time and costs, but it also involves the sample because interviewing many participants is difficult to accomplish. Researchers should know the difficulties and external elements hindering the interviewing process. On the other hand, despite the high costs for researchers, semi-structured interviews are useful tools, particularly when more than a few open-ended questions require follow-up queries (Adams, 2015).

Drawing on academic literature about techniques for conducting interviews (Fleming, 2018; Knox & Burkard, 2009; Manzano, 2016; McGrath et al., 2019), I developed and piloted semi-structured questions with the support of members of the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles, PhD students and staff members at the Education Secretariat in Mexico City. These actors provided meaningful insights about the project itself and the semi-structured interviews. This technique is a determinant factor for the success of the research as the data collection tools should test the programme theory and be piloted beforehand to avoid problems or difficulties regarding participants' capacity to understand concepts (Pawson & Tilley, 2004). The piloting process 'furnishes the researcher with an opportunity to explore language, the clarity of the questions, and aspects of active listening' (McGrath et al., 2019, p. 1003).

The semi-structured interviews aim at understanding each participant's context and perception of the impact of the educational courses on their lives (Adams, 2015). Some questions address the socioeconomic and migratory background of the participants, as well as questions focused on the main variables discussed in previous chapters (employability, health, social relationships, and trust). The following section describes the data collection method I used for this study.

2.4 **Data collection tools**

In qualitative research, interviews are a common practice to gain a deeper understanding of programmes (Britten, 1995). In this type of evaluation, the interview's subject matter is the researcher's theory, and the role of the participants is to confirm or falsify theories (Greenhalgh et al., 2019). This action is based on the explanation of the foundations of the theory and then setting the ground and allowing the respondent to teach the evaluator about his/her vision of programme components (Manzano, 2016).

For the selection of participants, the objective was to include all possible students participating in the programme from different stages of their participation to compare different perceptions. Thus, the research

study is quasi-longitudinal in the sense that interviewing people from different stages allowed the researcher to compare students' perceptions considering the period taking part in adult education as a variable. Interviewing a variety of students with different contexts, goals, ambitions, experience at the Centre and perceptions enrich the analysis. Similarly, interviewing people from different contexts and neighbourhoods enhances the capacity of the researcher to build categorisations and comparisons. Adams categorises appropriate actors for the semi-structured interviews as 1) programme recipients, 2) interested parties, and administration members (2015, p. 495).

Furthermore, I considered ethical principles in conducting the interviews to guarantee anonymity and protect the students' personal data. The ethical approaches respond to the University of Glasgow regulations to collect primary data and guidelines from the academic literature. The ethical principles related to interviewing are a) reducing the risk of unanticipated harm; b) protecting interviewees' information; c) effectively informing interviewees about the nature of the study; and d) reducing the risk of exploitation (DiCicco & Crabtree, 2006, p. 319). I addressed these principles to guarantee that the interviews would run efficiently whilst always protecting participants' integrity and confidentiality following academic regulations. In this regard, I used the official Learning Centre's names and the number of interviews to categorise the students following a sequence. For example, the second interview conducted at Learning Centre Casa Guerrero was coded as CasaGuerrero2 protecting the participants' names. Similarly, I used these codes in the analysis chapter to keep the students' identities secret. In this light, all the students' names have been protected by using the name of the Learning Centre and interview number without providing their full names.

Moreover, the semi-structured interviews constituted a guide that allows flexibility in terms of communication. This flexibility enabled access to topics and experiences beyond the researchers' initial conjectures or assumptions. As the interviews take place, different questions and concerns emerge that enrich the data for the researcher (Adams, 2015). Another element embedded in face-to-face sessions is the possibility of analysing facial expressions, gestures, and other verbal communications that could also enhance the meaning of the spoken words (Knox & Burkard, 2009).

The power of the semi-structured interviews lies in the possibility of further exploration following a logical structure of questions that will guide the researcher to deliver meaningful results. For this purpose, researchers should develop a schedule with topics for the interview guide. The interview structure should consider an outline of planned topics and questions displayed in a well-thought order (Adams, 2015).

On the other hand, some challenges emerge from designing data collection tools (Britten, 1995). In this sense, the first thing is to capture the baseline questions to gather information about the contexts, programme activities and characteristics that could become mechanisms to be studied through the lens of Realist Evaluation. Furthermore, the other issue is how to examine the strings innovatively from coding under common themes (Jackson & Kolla, 2012). For instance, interviews can deliver impactful results if the researcher meets specific methodological technicalities.

Table 2.2 depicts the elements that constituted the guide for the interviews. The semi-structured interviews are not merely a questionnaire because that connotes 'a fixed instrument to be read verbatim, rather than the flexible, interactive approach of SSI questions' (Adams, 2015, p. 496). The goal was to set the basis for efficient communication with the participants. The questions described in table 2.2 are overall guidelines for exploring the topics. The full semi-structured guidelines for interviews with students are attached to this thesis in Annexe 1.

Area	Topics for questions
Context	Intrinsic motivation to join the courses. Job-related motivation or personal challenge.
Education	Schooling years. Months participating. Number of modules attended.
Mental health	Overall satisfaction with mental health.
	The perception of the improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem.
	The perception of different mood and behaviour change.
	Perception of improvements in self-esteem and attitude towards life.
Employability	Satisfaction with current employment situation.
	Perception of improvement in job opportunities.
	Perception of using the new knowledge and skills in work.
	Perception of having proper skills to compete in the labour market.
	Participation in adult education generates the conditions to feel better prepared for the labour market.
Social Relationships	Satisfaction with the quality of your current social relationships.
	Perception of the courses enabling new social groups.
	Motivation to participate in activities such as volunteering, sports, artistic, social, etc.
	Perception of improving social integration and belonging. The courses allow students to meet people and share personal problems.
	The courses open the possibility for people from heterogeneous social groups to interact. (Bridging or bonding)
Trust	The courses motivate students to trust people.
	Most people in your neighbourhood or community can be trusted or precautions should be taken.

	Levels of trust: relatives, friends, classmates at the learning centre and neighbours.
	Trusting classmates enable the flow of information that generates trust. Do students share information about jobs or health services in the community?
Satisfaction	Satisfaction with life using a 0-10 scale. Differences in satisfaction with life between before and during the courses.
	Level of satisfaction with the INEA modules. The courses entail further benefits for students.
	Perception of accomplishing educational goals.
	Participating in the learning activities improves the student's quality of life.
Profile	Courses attended. Current occupation. Marital status. Number of children. Economic dependents. Age. Immigration status. Years living in California.
Socioeconomic level	Housing status (rented, owned, etc.). Perception of security in your neighbourhood. Medical insurance. Working hours per week. Salary per hour.

Table 2.2: Semi-structured questions for students at Learning Centres

The number of participants interviewed aimed to achieve the minimum number required to report all significant elements of the programme (Sargeant, 2012), and to achieve 'saturation' whereby no new themes for analysis emerged. Thus, I interviewed 29 participants at two Learning Centres to achieve these goals. This tool guided the conversations with the participants. Also, by interviewing students at different stages of their course participation, I gained more value in their perspectives, which allowed me to compare their perceptions using the time taking part in the courses as a variable. In the following subsection, I describe the study setting, sample size and other procedures.

2.5 **Study setting, population and sampling procedures, access to the field**

One of the motives for selecting the city of Los Angeles was the conversations with personnel working at INEA in the central office in Mexico City. Mexican Officials suggested me cities in the United States with a significant presence of Plazas Comunitarias and community engagement to carry out the study. After considering the recommendations from government officials, I evaluated the general documentation of different Learning Centres across the United States. I decided to conduct the interviews in Los Angeles because of the number of active Learning Centres and the quality of community engagement, as reported by the Consulates.

Subsequently, the Consulate authorities provided me the list of registered Plazas Comunitarias in the city, which contained: specific geographical locations, contact persons, managers, overall background of the Centres and years of operation. I analysed the information of each Centre (16 in Los Angeles) to determine the most suitable for the interviews in terms of their geographical location, years of experience and number of students. In selecting the Learning Centres, I considered the following elements. Centres with significant

experience running the educational programme (years of operation). Lastly, I considered the Centre with several graduated students with years of experience[8]. The most suitable Centres for the realist evaluation are the Plaza Comunitaria Casa Guerrero, located in Long Beach, and the Plaza Comunitaria Casa Durango in Huntington Park. Both areas experience high concentrations of Latin-American population. This concentration could play a significant role in determining the creation of social networks based on language and cultural similarities (Barria, 2019). Furthermore, the following figure illustrates their complete operation scheme of the Learning Centres in coordination with the Consulates and the Federal Government of Mexico.

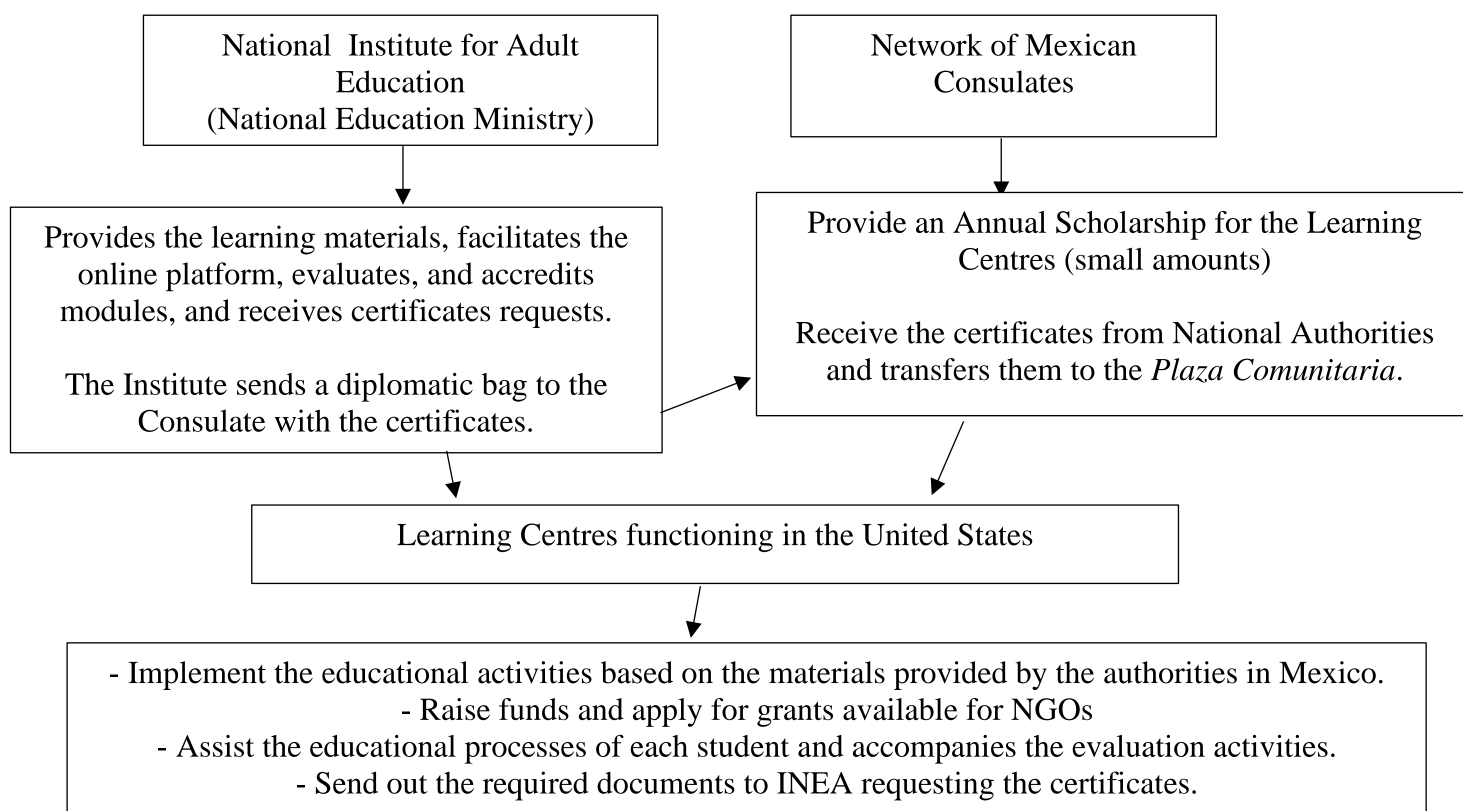


Figure 2.3: Functioning scheme of Learning Centres in the United States

Figure 2.3 explains the activities and roles of each institutional agent involved in the functioning of the Learning Centres in the United States. The National Institute for Adult Education in Mexico designs the programme's policies, curriculum, and dimensions. The network of Consulates in the United States acts as communication agents between local organisations and the federal government in Mexico that allow the distribution of official certificates and documentation[9]. Moreover, the local organisations of Mexican in

[8] https://www.gob.mx/inea/prensa/las-plazas-comunitarias-del-inea-en-ee-uu-centros-de-asesoria-segura-para-mexicanos-m-lopez
[9] https://www.gob.mx/inea/prensa/las-plazas-comunitarias-del-inea-en-ee-uu-centros-de-asesoria-segura-para-mexicanos-m-lopez

different cities establish communication and cooperation with the Consulates to understand the MEVyT content and pedagogical approach. This mechanism enables the functioning of the Learning Centres across different cities in the United States. The Consulate's efforts to attract more students include television and radio, word-of-mouth strategies, and flyers. These tools are fundamental for their functioning (Gandara, 2004).

To understand more about the Learning Centres and their institutional capacities, the following sections describe the steps taken by the coordinators to set up the Learning Centres and their institutional goals.

a) Plaza Comunitaria Casa Guerrero

The Learning Centre has been operating in Long Beach for over six years. It started operations as a liaison office representing the Government of the Mexican State Guerrero, which had an office in that city to help and support the citizens who decided to emigrate and establish themselves in that city in California. This office functioned for some years under the supervision of the authorities in Mexico that aimed to establish communication with community members in Los Angeles and strengthen cooperation channels. The liaison office in Long Beach acted as a type of consulate to serve communications between people from Guerrero. This situation was convenient given the number of migrants originally from Guerrero called 'guerrerenses'.

According to the census carried out in 2019, the State of Guerrero was home to almost 3.6 million inhabitants (CityPopulation, 2019). According to the Ministry of Migration and International Affairs of Guerrero, in 2016, the population of 'guerrerenses' in the United States accounted for 800 thousand persons. However, the most relevant mass exodus of migrants began in the '70s. According to the Consular Registrations issued in the United States, the cities with the highest presence of guerrerenses were Chicago, Santa Ana and Los Angeles, California (Cassani, 2016). This migration flow explains the significance and relevance of establishing communication channels between people from the same region. Unfortunately, the State of Guerrero, located in southwest Mexico, is ravaged by many heavily armed warring gangs competing over territory and poppy production. For instance, in 2020, the region's murder rate reached 69 per 100,000 inhabitants – more than three times the national average (comparatively, the UK's murder rate is one per 100,000). The World Health Organization classifies ten homicides per 100,000 peo'le as characteristic of endemic violence (Lakhani, 2018). Guerrero is home to internationally famous cities like Acapulco, so not unexpectedly, tourism is the State's top industry and the heart of its development.

Important to consider is that emigration takes place considerably due to a lack of opportunities (Mirnoff et al., 2019). Similarly, a variety of circumstances such as the presence of organized crime prevents people from enjoying a peaceful and prosperous life (IOM, 2019; Martinez et al., 2019), which has an impact on their decision to emigrate. For example, many migrants at the US-Mexico border applying for asylum recently confirmed they were fleeing organized crime. 'Some of the states that asylum seekers fled — Guerrero, Michoacan and Zacatecas — were among those with the highest per-capita homicide rates last year' (Hennessy-Fiske, 2019). The terrible situation of violence and drug-related crime in those States pushes people out of their communities and cities (Woody, 2018). For example, back in the 50s, the city of Acapulco was considered a top tourist destination and refuge for internationally known celebrities. However, in the past 20 years, the resort has changed dramatically, becoming one of the world's most violent cities, struggling daily to cope with the strain of gang warfare (Parish, 2016). For example, in Acapulco, 46% of deaths are among young people between 15 and 29 years of age, as indicated in a study from 2015 on young people in Guerrero (Solano, 2014). Almost 17% of the population over 14 years old was illiterate in 2010, and 54% had not completed elementary education (Senado de la Republica, 2014).

Among other factors, the lack of opportunities and escalated violence have created a perfect prospect for people to try to emigrate (OECD, 2018b). In Acapulco, recently considered the second most dangerous city in the world after Tijuana (Consejo Ciudadano, 2019), the situation is life-threatening for many 'guerrerenses' looking forward to a better life. Acapulco has been a focal point, with the highest homicide rate among Mexican cities five times between 2011 and 2016. In 2016 the city had 918 homicides, rising to 1,096 last year (Woody, 2018). In this catastrophic scenario, it is no coincidence that many people would make efforts to emigrate.

Unfortunately, Latin America is the most violent region of the world, with the highest rates of murders (Woody, 2019). Every day more than 400 persons are killed in the region. Similarly, almost 145 thousand deaths occur every year. This scenario accounts for roughly a third of the global murders. Approximately one in every four homicides occurs in four countries: Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia (Luhnow, 2018). Following this setting, violence rates are like war zones in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The phenomenon of migration continues to be an exciting topic for researchers and will undoubtedly remain On the agenda of policymakers. In this sense, thousands of Mexican adults and children have been camping out at the US-Mexico border while awaiting a chance to apply for refuge. Many stated that they are escaping corruption and flaring drug violence, which is intensifying daily (Miroff et al., 2019). Understandably, the situation of panic or fear plays a role leading to human displacement and migration. Many people have left

Guerrero, migrating to the United States or other regions of Mexico to find better opportunities (Krauze, 2019).

Moreover, as part of different administrations' policies in Guerrero, the government has no longer supported the liaison offices in the United States. The daily operations of the Learning Centre were restructured through different sources of funding and administrative support. For the Casa Guerrero to continue, the intervention of a catholic church is needed to provide an area for the activities to take place.

b) **Plaza Comunitaria Casa Durango**

The Learning Centre has been operating in Huntington Park for over ten years. The learning centre's source of administrative and financial support lies in the Federation of Durango, which works across different regions in the United States. The Federation provides financial resources and the specific location for the Centre to function without any cost. The Learning Centre receives its name from the government of Durango in north-central Mexico. Similar situation to the Casa Guerrero Centre that aims to respond to the needs of people who emigrated from this region in Mexico.

Although the establishment of companies and industries in the region has brought benefits to the community, the migration flows have been an interesting issue affecting Durango's development. By the early 21st century, Durango was home to nearly 4,000 industrial enterprises employing more than 100,000 workers. Companies in Durango manufacture goods for companies such companies as Wal-Mart and Honda. The most relevant industries are clothing, wood products, auto parts, food processing and electronics. In addition, mining, particularly silver and gold, continues to be a significant source of revenue. (History, 2009).

Several investigations have studied movements in the natural origins of migrants coming from Mexico into the United States (Spener, 2005; IOM, 2018; Massey et al., 2010). For example, early in the 20th century, United States labour recruiters targeted Mexico's west-central region, typically defined as the historical region by Jorge Durand (1998), which considers Durango, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, San Luís Potosi, and Zacatecas as large regions for emigration. The migration flows demarcated California as their destination (Massey et al., 2010). In the late 20th century, the State of the Durango became part of the so-called hollow core of Mexico as increasing numbers of migrants left to seek jobs in Mexico City, along the U.S.-Mexican border, or within the United States (Britannica, 2018). In this light, data indicates that 95% of the migrants from Durango moved to the United States (INEGI, 2010). The massive migration

movements that have taken place occurred from people coming from Aguascalientes, Colima, Durango, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Morelos, Oaxaca, Queretaro, and San Luis Potosí (CONAPO, 2010).

Some conditions of the migrant population hinder their social integration and success in the United States (UNHCR, 2017; Mallows, 2014). For instance, fewer schooling years and a lack of skills hinder their personal development. Experts project that this situation will improve in the coming decades as more Latinos participate in training and more skilled workers migrate. This estimation is relevant because the Latino community will reach 119 million in the United States by 2060. This social group will play a more determinant role in the economy of the world's first power (Barria, 2019). The Latino community in the United States is playing a defining role in the country's development and will expand its influence in the future (Barria, 2019; Sulbaran, 2019). Learning Centres like Casa Durango and Casa Guerrero contribute to this progress by enabling more Latinos to become literate, which is a powerful tool for their development.

2.6 Fieldwork activities

The members of staff at the Centres indicated that exploring the impacts of the MEVyT is significant to attract the attention of more students in the community without elementary education. Once the communication with the coordinators was established, the research objectives and tools were explained to them to engage and motivate them to ensure their support. The coordinators granted their permission and support to approach the students. Once this permission was granted, I approached the students to invite them to participate in this research.

To conduct the interviews, I considered the variations in 'how teachers respond to evaluation instruments, how students perceive the teaching of those teachers, how teachers prepare applications for awards or grants, or any other methods used to evaluate the programme' (Simon and Pleshová, p. 266). The researcher pondered some considerations about the fieldwork to explore the students' perceptions. For example, several phone conversations with the Centres' coordinators followed the introductory email arranged by the Consulate personnel. The main goal of the phone calls and follow-up emails was to set a schedule for the visits, the number of participants, length of interviews and collection tools. Throughout these conversations, I planned the visit to facilitate the assistance and participation of students taking part in the courses at the beginning of the academic year, usually after the summer.

I visited the Plaza Comunitaria at the beginning of the academic year, where students from different educational levels participate in the introductory sessions. The purpose of these actions was to interview a

variety of students with unique backgrounds and experiences. Regarding the size of students for the semi-structured interviews, I considered 15 participants in each Centre (each year, the number of students taking part in the courses varies between 80 and 100).

The scheduled visits at the Learning Centre began with a short introductory session about the researcher's background and an overall description of the goals related to the study. According to the principles determined by the University of Glasgow, the Participant Information Sheet was delivered to the participants. Explaining these elements to the participants allowed the familiarity and the explanation of possible uncertainties about the interview's procedures, for example, the estimated length of interviews of about 20-25 minutes. Likewise, I presented the principles of integrity and confidentiality to ensure interviewees' trust and participation. This process also considered exploring the motivation of students to participate in the interviews because this could be a determinant factor in the quality of data collected. Equally, the value of understanding the participants' cultural background and values was explained to the students because these factors can affect interview relationships (Knox & Burkard, 2009).

Ethical norms about the respect and protection of the integrity of interviewees are a relevant factor for semi-structured interviews. Participants sharing their experiences and opinions about the programme are the core and most important elements in qualitative research (Knox & Burkard, 2009). Participants must consent to participate in the interviews and should always have the right to disengage from the session at any time. "By asking for consent to participate several times during the course of a study, this actuality is reinforced and provides the opportunity for interviewees to reconsider their participation" (DiCicco & Crabtree, 2006, p. 319). Therefore, specific notions on ethical behaviour were addressed.

Furthermore, as part of the guidelines established by the University of Glasgow, the respondents received a copy of the Participant Information Sheet explaining. 1) Information and contact details of the researcher and PhD supervisors. 2) reason for their selection to participate. 3) Objective of the research. 4) Commitment of the researcher to explain any questions. 5) Voluntary nature of their participation. 6) Freedom to interrupt the interview and withdraw the dialogue at any time without prejudice confidentiality principle. 7) Estimated duration of the interview. 8) Intention to record the interviews along with the storage mechanism. 9) Possibility of sharing the results through conference papers and journal articles. 10) Distribution of a written summary of results with the participants and staff members of the Learning Centres. 11) Email address of the university ethics officer in case of any complaints. According to the regulations and requirements of the University of Glasgow, the interviews did not start until the

Ethics Approval Committee granted permission formally. A wave of interviews at both Learning Centres took place in September-October 2019 with 29 students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

The interviews yielded qualitative information to formulate analytical categories on the theoretical principles described in the literature review section. The following chapter analyses the students' socioeconomic and demographic data to comprehend the most relevant contextual characteristics that shape their perceptions. It also comprises the analysis of predominant motivations to join adult education.

3. Contextual data and intrinsic motivations

This section comprises demographic and socioeconomic data such as age, gender, years in the United States, immigration status, country of origin, schooling years, English proficiency, employment status, motivation to join the courses and months at the Centre. I used this information to link characteristics and the student's perception of the courses through the lens of the theoretical principles of social capital and subjective well-being.

The demographic and socioeconomic data emerged from the semi-structured interviews, which were transcribed verbatim and translated into English to contextualise the information. The traditional coding techniques outlines two approaches to analyse data: 1) broad-brush coding using queries or 2) manual coding (QSR International, 2020). For this study, I coded the interviews manually using Nvivo software.

The following chapter is divided into two subsections containing the socioeconomic data and the motivations to join the courses. Each section comprises a narrative to explain the most relevant information concerning the students' sociodemographic characteristics. This section considers an overview of the socioeconomic and contextual features of the students to identify the most relevant factors playing a role in the programme's effects. As part of data visualisation, Annexe 3 includes the tables and boxplots for further reference.

3.1 **Sociodemographic data**

a) **Age Groups**

I have identified a significant number of middle-aged students between 40 and 60 years old (13 representing 45%) and adults over 60 (9 students, 31%). Finally, young adults between 15 and 40 are the minority (7 participants, 24%). Notably, most participants are married (72%), which can be a factor that shapes the personal circumstances enabling or hindering their enrolment.

	Age Groups			
	20-40	40-60	Over 60	**Total**
Female	4	9	5	**18**
Male	3	4	4	**11**
Total	**7**	**13**	**9**	**29**

Table 3.1: Age groups

The data shows that students between 40 and 60 years old represent the majority. The participants over 60 years old represent the second most numerous group. Younger participants represent the minority. This set of students by age group sheds light on the composition of the classrooms and can be linked to the different motivations to join the courses. For instance, many younger participants look for job-related training whilst older students usually take part to overcome personal challenges such as illiteracy. This distinction between age bands and type of motivations to join the Centre is not absolute. Some students in the 15-40 group are largely looking for job-related training, but some older students are also interested in upskilling for the labour market. As the motivations to participate in adult education can be multidimensional, I considered the student's primary motivation to join the Centres to carry out the analysis. In this regard, younger students were interested in the computational and English courses rather than elementary education or literacy. A 15-year-old student (Casa Guerrero 5) mentioned that:

"I am here ***because I am interested in getting a better job****. I would like to explore the possibility of setting up a business as a hairdresser or beauty professional in the future. First, I want to finish secondary education and then start High School. At the moment, I do not know if I would like to study something at university. It is not part of my plans at this moment".*

This student (Casa Guerrero 5) is taking part in job-related courses to manage small businesses, but the participant has an interest in the make-up industry or hairdressing. This student's primary goal is to get a better job after gaining new skills at the Centre. Therefore, I included this participant in the "looking for better jobs" bracket. Also, Casa Guerrero 5 student has completed elementary school and has a good understanding of numeracy and literacy. Therefore, her interest focuses on gaining proper skills for better jobs in the future. Similarly, a 30-year-old participant (Casa Guerrero 6) reported that:

"I am here in the United States because my mom brought me here many years ago. I finished secondary education in Mexico, but I would like to do High School here. Here the tutors will help me prepare for the courses to apply for high school. Afterwards, I am interested in getting a better job that pays me better because I am not happy with my job."

She (Casa Guerrero 6) is also interested in a better job after completing the courses. This participant perceives that taking part in adult education will allow her to achieve further goals and compete in the labour market for the job she envisions. Achieving the educational goals takes some time, and participants can experience frustration if they perceive more challenges as they progress with the courses (Eberle &

Robinson, 1980). This report shed light on the types of students taking the courses and their demographic and contextual characteristics.

As mentioned by most younger participants, the motivation to join the Centre relates to the skills they need for the labour market (OECD, 2019b). On the other hand, a significant group of older students tend to show more interest in basic education and literacy courses, which is a tendency in retired participants living in the United States for long periods attending both Learning Centres. Regarding this type of student, the 53-year-old participant living in California for 35 years (Casa Durango 12) mentioned:

"I have been taking literacy courses for 3 years. When I got here, I didn't know how to read. My goal is also to be able to improve my working conditions. I want to finish primary school because if I can improve my work. Then I can improve my English. What I want is to be able to improve myself, defend myself and have a better job because many people discriminate against us because we don't know how to read or write."

Student Casa Durango 12) is a middle-aged student experiencing frustration and sadness at work due to his illiteracy. This vulnerability progressively hinders the participant's development, self-esteem, and life satisfaction (Harris & Orth, 2019).). People his age can significantly improve their employability by gaining sufficient skills for life and work, starting from literacy. This student aims to achieve educational goals to learn how to read and read, continue to learn English, and apply for better jobs in the future. For this type of student, the courses represent an opportunity to change their lives and improve their conditions systematically. Moreover, another 53-year-old student living in the United States for 24 years (Casa Durango 1) suggested:

"My main goal is to be able to obtain my citizenship and then continue studying in high school. My friend became a citizen and that motivated me to come. Later I would go to secondary school. I am also interested in taking a computer course later. I would like to continue practising and improving my knowledge. I will keep coming because I like what they are teaching me."

Some of the middle-aged participants pursue goals relating to citizenship because the Centre offers a variety of courses and training for life and work purposes. These courses include preparation for the citizenship tests and English classes that assist the participants in fulfilling government requirements to understand the questions and tasks in the citizenship test. Similarly, the English classes enable the students to learn the

basics of grammar to enhance their communication skills. The age groups show some differences between their motivations and expectations from the classes that shed light on the outcomes of the MEVyT programme. Lastly, students older than 60 have unique characteristics defined by their experience and familiarity with the environment. As suggested by a 68-year-old living for 40 years in the United States participant (Casa Guerrero 9):

"My motivation is to be able to read and write. My main motivation was to learn to read and write, and after that, once I'm certified, probably getting a job would be great. Getting a job was not my main motivation. I cannot rule it out in the future."

The students' age is relevant in shaping their motivation to participate in the classes and perception of the course's effects. It is observable that most learners over 60 embody a unique group of participants defined by motivations and expectations relating to personal development as they perceive that illiteracy has hindered their lives in many regards (Hayes & Hill, 2017). As they have goals and ambitions consistent with their age, some students are retired and have little interest in pursuing a professional career which is also a significant factor in how they benefit from the courses. In this regard, a 61-year-old living in California for 40 years (Casa Durango 9) suggested:

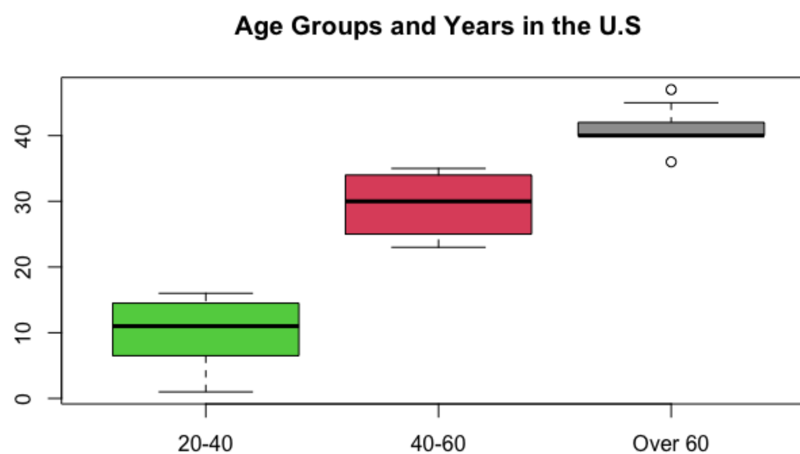
"I started coming because my wife took classes to become a citizen. I accompanied her to the classes. I didn't participate because I was scared until she finished her courses and became a citizen. I also decided to take classes. The first thing was to take classes to know the procedures and the questions they ask you to become a citizen. Later I realized that there were more learning opportunities and that I could also take literacy classes."

The three age groups I identified have dominant characteristics that play a role in determining different motivations, expectations, perceptions, and effects. For example, I discovered that age is a significant factor in determining the student's ambitions and goals from the courses. The age of the students influences different aspects of their lives, such as the employability possibilities in the future and their interests (Hayes & Hill, 2017). In the following subsections, I analyse further socioeconomic and contextual characteristics to describe the elements playing a role in the student's composition.

b) **Immigration status**

The immigration status and the years living in the U.S. are relevant elements in understanding the students' contextual circumstances (Caponi & Plesca, 2013) and reasons for joining the courses. I identified that seven students lack residence permits (24%), 17 learners are citizens or legal residents (59%), and five declared that the legal immigration process is underway (17%). Noteworthy, students lacking residence or work permits represent the minority. The distribution shows that 17 (59%) have been in the U.S. for over 30 years. Moreover, ten students have been there between 10 and 30 years, representing 31%, and only 10% for less than ten years. Boxplots in annexe 3 illustrate the distribution of years in the U.S. by immigration status.

It is observable that there is a connection showing that older adults have been longer in the U.S. than younger ones, which suggests that people emigrate when they are younger, probably because the drive or necessity to migrate is stronger at younger ages. This characteristic is consistent with international data showing that migrants over 60 tend to comprise an estimated 12 per cent of the international migrant stock at mid-year 2020 (UN DESA, 2020). Research shows that older individuals tend to migrate less because there are psychological costs and risks of migration that are higher for them. Also, the earnings tend to be smaller for older adults. Data indicates that the highest probability of migrating is between 20 and 30 (Zaiceva, 2014; Migali & Scipioni, 2018). Although the estimated number of older migrants over 65 in high- and middle-income countries increased by nearly 16 million from 1990 to 2020 (IOM, 2021).



Boxplot 3.1: Age groups and years in the United States

The reasons behind migration are multi-layered and depend on local factors in home countries and the individuals' desire or urgency to emigrate. Regarding this characteristic, none of the interviewees over 60

years old at both Learning Centres has recently arrived in California. As mentioned by a 67-year-old student living in the U.S. for 47 years (Casa Guerrero 11):

"I am now 67 years old. I have been in the United States for more than 47 years. I got married here and made my life in California. I am now retired and have no economic dependents."

This student (Casa Guerrero 11) emigrated from Mexico many years ago, looking for a better life. Despite her enthusiasm for more opportunities in the United States, she did not complete her elementary education and emigrated under illiteracy conditions. She acknowledges that illiteracy hindered her possibilities to communicate and understand what was going on around her. Similarly, the employability conditions were hard involving physical work. Similarly, a 65-year-old in California for 36 years (Casa Guerrero 13) mentioned:

"I was born in Mexico but emigrated 36 years ago because I was looking for better opportunities and a safer environment. I'm an illegal migrant married, working in houses as a housemaid. I have never managed to learn English."

Like many other illegal migrants in the United States and other parts of the world, this student (Casa Guerrero 13) struggles to integrate herself into a new society despite living in a host country for long periods. Long periods in a new country do not translate into language proficiency and social integration. Another element in this section is the participants' country of origin. Most migrants settle into communities with people from the same country speaking a common language, thus constituting an influential ethnic group in the United States (Sulbaran, 2019).

The Mexican government provides learning opportunities for the Mexican population of adults over 15 years old in the United States. Nevertheless, the interviews revealed other nationalities take part in the courses. Mexican students constitute 83% of the sample, the rest being from Central American countries. This condition is the typical profile of participants in Learning Centres in the United States. In contrast, the participation of students from other countries tends to be a function of the interactions between Latino communities in Los Angeles. In this regard, participation from other countries is a positive indication concerning the communication and interaction between Latino community members in Los Angeles because participating in the courses could lead to the further social integration of individuals from the same community sharing similar values, beliefs, and languages, which refers to Bonding Social Capital (Walseth,

2007; Sel et al., 2022). Further research can shed light on the integration processes and how these individuals interact with people beyond their community.

c) **Education level and employment status**

The student's employment status and schooling years are elements that could explain the motivations behind their participation and perception towards courses because there is a tendency for adults with more schooling years and better employment to participate more in adult education and training than those less skilled (Boeren, 2009), which in turns impacts labour-market gaps . In this regard, employed students could be motivated to get better jobs as opposed to developing literacy skills.

Concerning the official schooling years of the students, basic education in Mexico entails 12 years of schooling (preschool three, primary six, and secondary three years) until secondary level. The government compulsorily provides these educational levels across the nation. Nevertheless, half of the students (15) have not completed one year of formal education. The rest of the participants have basic literacy skills and can read and write some sentences as they are familiar with the foundations of written communication. 48% of the students attended at least six years of elementary education (14 students) but did not get a certificate of completion. One assumption is that students with more schooling years have different motivations than those who recently took part in adult education (OECD, 2018b). The analysis of this relationship is part of the subsequent sections, explaining to what extent there is a difference between age groups and their motivation to join the courses.

Regarding the relationship between schooling years and employment status, 50% of the 12 employed students attend basic education courses for less than one year, which shows that schooling years are not indicative of employment status. More schooling years do not relate to better employment status for this group. Seven students with less than one year of formal education are retired. This information shows that students' schooling years do not explain unemployment status. For instance, a 67-year-old retired student living in the U.S. for 47 years attending basic education courses (Casa Guerrero 11) mentioned:

"I am 47 years old, living in the United States. I have five children. I always perceived writing and reading as challenges. Now that I no longer have small children and no longer work, I can come to class. If God gives me a chance, maybe I can also finish high school."

Students with low schooling years struggle to return to school after different circumstances, such as having a family or being employed. In previous sections, I mentioned that other studies show a relationship between schooling years and better employment status for individuals upskilling themselves (Sabates, 2007; Dorsett et al., 2010, p. 33; Fujiwara, 2012; OECD, 2018; Dorsett et al., 2010). As people gain skills and knowledge, their chances of better employment increase correspondingly. This experience is one of the reasons motivating people to join courses. Some students looking for better jobs are employed and have more schooling but tend to take part in English or technology courses. As mentioned by a 48-year-old employed legal resident attending basic education for one year (Casa Guerrero 7):

"I finished primary and secondary school here at the Learning Centre. I've been coming here for a long time, approximately one year. Last year I wanted to start computing classes, but I couldn't because of my work. I am motivated to carry on studying as much as possible. I would even like to finish college and a get degree at the university. I am interested in accounting or some other degree that allows me to work from home."

This student (Casa Guerrero 7) showed a great enthusiasm to carry on studying and taking part in classes until she achieves more educational goals. She is employed and finished basic education at the Learning Centre. She is now looking for better jobs and will join classes to accomplish her professional goals. She is now taking part in work-related training to pursue a career or professional experience. From the interviews, I identified that highly motivated students are influenced by factors and circumstances such as employability opportunities (OECD, 2018b) that differ from those illiterate participants joining the Centre to overcome personal development challenges. This participant is one of the relevant cases of employed literate students who completed the initial plans. Moreover, a 53-year-old employed with six schooling years in Mexico (Casa Guerrero 1) suggested that:

"I finished primary education, and now I'm just taking English classes. First, I would like to learn English because I would like to obtain citizenship, and it must be in English for me, so for me learning English is more important now. I also have a job and I need English to communicate. I don't want to be discriminated against, if you don't know the language, they discriminate against you at work."

I identified certain tendencies in the participation and motivation to join the Centre relating to the student's age and employment status. English classes and job-related training are visited by students who have completed elementary school and understand written principles or sentences. To access this information,

students must have good literacy skills. Concerning this notion, younger employed students attend job-related courses, while older participants join basic education and literacy classes. Another relevant factor in analysing migrant adults joining the Learning Centres in the United States is language proficiency (OECD, 2011; Extramiana, 2012). The student's capacity to understand, communicate, and interact in the hosting country's official language is crucial in explaining the level of integration into society or community (Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). I explore this element in the following subsection.

d) **Language proficiency**

Another element that emerged from the interviews is the integration of the participants into the community through language (OECD, 2011; Extramiana, 2012; Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). Concerning language proficiency, almost 97% of the students at the Centre consider their English communication level to be very low or low, even when considering the years, they have spent in the United States. The literature indicates that individuals with low literacy skills struggle to learn a new language more than more skilled participants (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Some students are 'faced with social and economic demands that are far easier to address if they understand the host country's language, both spoken and written' (Mallows, 2014).

Concerning the ability to learn a new language, research shows that the years in a host country do not indicate a person's ability to speak the language (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). In this light, the years in the United States do not reflect the ability of the participants to speak English. The time spent in the country does not impact their communication levels, which is a significant constraint on social integration. This information suggests that adult learners do not successfully interact with people rather than Mexicans, Latinos or Spanish-speaking persons (Panth, 2010).

Social integration is challenging when there is no communication between immigrants and the hosting society. Furthermore, research shows that assimilation differs from integration where both sides, 'migrants and the receiving country, are open to creating new common ground for living together, respecting the already formed identity' (Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). Although most students struggle to speak and understand English, the data shows that the participants with more schooling years speak and understand better English than those with fewer schooling years. Although most students consider having limited English skills, the responses indicate that more schooling years are related to a better self-reported perception of language skills. Regarding this slight difference between self-reported perceptions of English proficiency, a 30-year-old student with nine schooling years (Casa Guerrero 6) reported:

"Regarding my English proficiency, I can read a lot, and I understand it, answer exams too, because I was here going to school, but I had to leave it for my daughters. So, I can read some things and answer but to speak it is more difficult."

Proficiency refers to the capacity to read, understand, write, communicate, and express various topics in different settings (Verhoeven & De Jong, 1992). It is a process that takes time, effort, and energy to study grammar and enrich vocabulary. In learning a new language, many factors play a role that enables or hinders the person's capacity and possibilities to accomplish this goal (Op. Cit.). Some students are more skilful and have the self-confidence to communicate and try to establish conversations with non-Spanish speakers beyond their communities. In this regard, a 39-year-old participant with nine schooling years (Casa Guerrero 8):

"The English teacher invited me to participate because everyone in my neighbourhood speaks English, and I didn't understand anything. The teacher invited me to come and learn English. I am studying English to feel better and see if maybe I can get a job. The first thing is to communicate, then look for something else. I have been coming to the community plaza for one year. I started from 0. I didn't know anything. I still need a lot, but I feel more confident to read and communicate."

The perception of students with self-confidence differs from participants experiencing difficult situations such as depression or low self-esteem (Harris & Orth, 2019). In this light, the students taking the courses perceive an improvement in their capacity to understand and communicate. Nonetheless, most participants reported having difficulties socialising with people beyond the Latino community, which suggests that they struggle to integrate due to the persistent language barrier. This language barrier to communicating with others beyond the Latino community could hinder their social integration and employability or educational possibilities (Zorlu & Hartog, 2018) in different settings requiring English proficiency. As mentioned by a 55-year-old living in the United States for 34 years (Casa Durango 11):

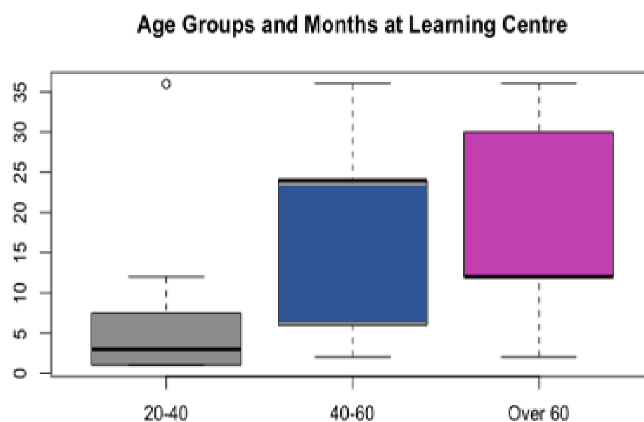
"I consider myself to be very sociable. I have many Latino friends because I do not speak English. My friends are from different Latin American countries because my English is very basic. I understand a lot, but I have difficulties speaking. I have been in the United States for many years. Speaking English is not necessary here much because we are all Latinos."

Latino community members create social networks in their neighbourhoods and communities where they develop influence and economic dominance (Sulbaran, 2019). As suggested by most participants, they interact with Spanish-speaking individuals because they do not speak any other language. This interaction occurs because they share beliefs, culture, traditions, and language, allowing them to communicate and build networks (Hall, 2019; Hall, 2012). Some participants mentioned that former students recommend the classes to their families and friends, which is a factor that enables the participation of more people from the community.

Another element playing a role in the students' perceptions and accomplishment of outcomes is the number of classes and months they have been in the Centre (Morrone et al., 2009; Cain et al., 2017). This category sheds light on the quality and intensity of the perceptions as students taking part for longer periods have developed a deeper understanding of the courses and their benefits. Nevertheless, these variables are part of an array of elements I consider for this study.

e) **Time participating in the Learning Centre and types of courses**

This section describes the time the students are taking part and the type of courses they attend. The Centres offer a range of courses, including English, Basic Technology, and Basic Education. As the courses are self-paced, they do not follow a formal schedule to facilitate the participation of students with busy working hours. The type of courses visited by the participants shed relevant information about the students' profiles and interests by age group. The data shows that older students attend the Centre for more extended periods. Basic Education courses are the most visited by the participants, where 18 participants take basic education representing 62%, whilst 21% take part in English classes, and 14% in computing and technology courses. This information shows that most students look for literacy skills rather than job-related training. The boxplots used in this section serve visualisation purposes only.



Boxplot 3.2: Age groups and months taking part in the courses

The data shows that adults over 60 have been at the Centre longer. The months taking part are consistent with age groups. Considering the age group 20-40, it is noticeable that five out of seven take either English or technology-related courses instead of elementary education. The data shows that young people are interested in job-related training or language skills for this group. Older adults are looking for literacy training. As mentioned by a 46-year-old student taking computer courses for six months (Casa Guerrero 3):

"Learning more things is exciting. For example, technology is something that interests me. I had a technical career in computer repair in Mexico. I like to keep learning things. I have always been interested in the development of technology, that is why I studied something related to computers, to always be in contact with new technologies. My main objective is to understand what is happening around me."

The data shows that younger students at the Centres tend to attend job-related skills or English classes rather than literacy or basic education. This characteristic shows that most younger participants are literate or have more schooling years than older participants. Mainly, students over 60 take part in basic education and literacy courses, representing that this group of participants have struggled to understand and communicate in all settings since they arrived in the United States. Moreover, a 39-year-old participant taking English classes for one year (Casa Guerrero 8) mentioned:

"I started learning English from 0. I didn't know how to say anything in English. I still have a long way to go. I still need to learn how to pronounce things. I returned to classes after a while, and now I am helping to give classes within the Centre. If I learn good English, I could get a better job."

This type of younger student (Casa Guerrero 8) envisions adult education as an opportunity to achieve goals for their professional development and inclusion in society. From the interviews, I observed that younger students looking for better jobs or job-related training have been taking part at the Centre for shorter periods than older adults. This factor is significant in analysing the programmes' effects in the short and long run as students develop more profound perceptions over time. On the other hand, most older students take part in basic education to overcome the personal challenge of illiteracy. A challenge that has hindered their professional development and satisfaction with life (Hayes & Hill, 2017). In this regard, a 65-year-old participant taking basic education for approximately one year (Casa Durango 5):

"I have been coming for more than a year. I have already finished citizenship classes and passed the exam. I am already a U.S. citizen and am taking literacy classes. I have six months in the literacy courses to finish primary school. After that, I will continue coming because I like the classes. I am interested in finishing primary and secondary school because I did not know how to read or write."

This student (Casa Durango 5) represents the type of participant who completed the initial courses they had planned and decided to continue attending more classes to achieve different educational goals. Originally, the plan was to prepare herself for the citizenship test, but after accomplishing this objective, this participant perceived benefits from the courses that changed her life. Completing the basic education certificate is a new challenge for this student. Similarly, a 70-year-old student taking part in basic education classes for six months (Casa Durango 13):

"I have been coming to the centre for six months. I am in literacy classes because I did not know to read or write. In Mexico, I couldn't go to school. I had to leave school very quickly. I came to the Centre because I want to improve myself and learn to read and not depend on my children to understand things. My goal is first to learn to read and write well. I have only been here for a short time, and I feel I am improving little by little."

From the interviews, I observed that two groups of students stand out by their sociodemographic characteristics. First, the younger participants with more schooling years look for better jobs and job-related training. Second, a group of older students not interested in better employment participate in the basic education courses to overcome the personal challenge of illiteracy. This appreciation emerges from the interviews with students at both Learning Centres. The subsequent section analyses students' intrinsic motivation to join the classes. It includes the different goals and drives that encouraged them to join the Centre.

3.2 **Motivations to participate in adult education**

One of the most relevant elements regarding adult education is understanding why adults join this type of learning (Ahl, 2006). This topic has been studied in different contexts to define how this motivation occurs and what factors enable or hinder adult participation (Boeren, 2009). Each student comes from a unique background and faces distinct challenges, so they have different motivations to join the courses. From the interviews, two groups of students stand out. Students are motivated to get better employment skills or overcome personal challenges such as illiteracy or obtaining U.S. citizenship.

Group 1 (Better job opportunities)	
Number of students	10 participants
Age	All students in this group are younger than 60 years old. Half of the participants are middle-aged students 40-60 years old, and the rest are between 20-40 years old.
Type of courses	Most students in this group take English, computing, or work-related courses (6). The rest assist basic education classes (4)
Employment status	None of these students is retired. Most participants in this group are in any form of employment (7). Only 3 are unemployed.
Immigration status	Most students in this group have a residence or work permit. Only 3 participants lack a permit to live in the United States.
Years in the U.S.	Most participants have been in the United States for less than 30 years (7).
Months at the L.C.	Only 3 participants have been attending the courses for more than two years.
Group 2 (Overcoming personal challenges)	
Number of students	19 students
Age	Around half of the participants in this group are over 60 years old (9). 8 students belong to the middle-aged group. Only two students are between 15-40 years old.
Type of courses	Most students take basic education (14). The rest of participants attend English or job-related training (5).
Employment status	Most participants are either retired (8). 6 participants are unemployed. The rest of the students are in some form of employment (5).
Immigration status	Most students are citizens or legal residents in the United States (15). The rest participants lack a residence or work permit (4).
Years in the U.S.	13 are in the U.S. more than 30 years
Months at the L.C.	3 less than 6 months at the Learning Centre. 7 students have been there between six months to one year. Most students have been at the Centre for more than one year (9).

Table 3.2: Cluster of two groups of students

Group 1 comprises students primarily motivated to improve their job opportunities. They tend to be younger participants attending job-related courses rather than basic education or literacy training. All students in this group are younger than 60 years old. Most students take English, computing, or work-related courses. None are retired. Most participants are in any form of employment and have a residence or work permit. The majority have been in the United States for less than 30 years. I identified a tendency between the intrinsic motivation to take part and the age of the students. Younger employed students tend to look for better job opportunities rather than personal development (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Some participants reported having intentions to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy and would not rule out applying for better jobs after achieving their educational goals.

On the other hand, **group 2** comprises students predominantly motivated to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy and educational dropouts. Around half of the participants in this group are over 60 years old, whilst only two students are between 15 and 40 years old. Most students take basic education courses or literacy training. Only five participants attend English or job-related training. Many students are either retired or unemployed, which explains why these participants aim to fulfil personal challenges rather than employment. More than half of the students have lived in the United States for more than 30 years. Four participants in this group lack a residence or work permit. Undocumented students tend to set aside better employment opportunities as they are not entitled to work legally in the United States (Hayes & Hill, 2017). Although lacking a work permit does not constrain students from taking up jobs. The difference lies in the opportunities for legal employment that tend to be better paid and less physically demanding (Anderson & Huang, 2019). The enthusiasm and joy of living are noteworthy in students that see this opportunity as a personal challenge. Annexe 5 comprises a table with further demographic and contextual data from these two groups of students.

There are two main approaches to understanding the motivation to participate in adult education. First, the self-determination approach outlines the difference between autonomous and controlled motivation, the distinction between individual free choice and conditioning by the pressure of external requirements. Second, the expectancy-value theory shows a connection between individuals' learning value and how this activity fulfils their expectancies (Boeren et al., 2012). The circumstances and motivations driving people to join adult education are unique. Some theories suggest that the desire for learning is an intrinsic part of all individuals, and therefore the motivation emerges from several dispositional and structural barriers.

Researchers argue that motivation "should not be regarded as something residing within the individual" (Ahl, 2006) but as part of a context. For each person, the process of participating is different. For instance, barriers to adult education are defined within the Chain of Response Model introduced by Patricia Cross in 1981, which explains the complexity involved in the decision process to participate in adult education (Boeren, 2009). Examples of the barriers are lacking free time, financial problems, emotional barriers, lack of self-confidence and others (Cross, 1981).

In analysing participants' perceptions, this section clusters the responses into two groups of dominant motivations to participate in adult education (relating to personal development challenges or better job opportunities). Students reported four main reasons for taking the courses: overcoming personal challenges, obtaining U.S. citizenship, leisure, and job-related motivations. The first three motivations do not relate

strictly to better employment ambitions. However, some students report having an interest in better employment as a secondary goal after overcoming personal development challenges such as illiteracy. To classify the students' motivations, I considered their primary goals and motivations to participate in adult education. For example, a student reporting an interest in better job as a secondary goal, falls into the category of “Overcoming personal development challenges”.

1. **Overcoming personal development challenges**

The motivations related to personal development challenges are those referred to as improving personal experiences rather than searching for educational outcomes (Irving & Williams, 1999). The concept of personal development entails many elements connected to life satisfaction and new skills for life. Maslow (1970) mentioned that all individuals have an intrinsic necessity for personal development, which occurs through self-actualisation. Participation in adult education is a mechanism for students to overcome challenges they carry throughout their lives.

The students at the Centres provided different reasons to attend the courses, but the most recurrent one was the motivation related to their personal development. Most students (19 out of 29) take part to overcome challenges. This motivation stems from individual circumstances, ranging from having free time to participate to the notion that it is never late for education. To the question, what is your motivation to join the courses? This group of interviewees have different reasons but looking for a better job is not their target. Some participants mentioned that gaining basic literacy skills challenges their personal development and life satisfaction. In this regard, a 68-year-old retired student (Interviewee 14 at Casa Durango Centre) declared:

> *“My main motivation is to improve myself. I want to learn to read and write well. I want to improve my reading and learn to write correctly. I'm improving little by little, but I still have a lot to learn. I have not improved so much, but something. Then I would like to think about studying English and some basic computing skills. Now I have more time to come, and I want to take several courses when I finish this one. Getting a job is not my main motivation for coming here, I don't think I can get a job anymore. I'm old enough, and I can't get anything new.”*

This person's aim is related to literacy skills for a better life in which the respondent can understand and communicate what is happening around her. In this case, having free time plays a determinant role, where being retired represents an excellent opportunity to get the reading and writing skills they never gained.

The person (Casa Durango 14) wishes to continue learning even after receiving a basic education certificate. This statement shows that, for some students, adult education can encourage people to acquire additional learning or educational opportunities. The lack of reading skills hinders the person's ability to carry out daily activities, such as communication with other persons via telephone. As 60-year-old retired Interviewee 8 at Casa Durango stated:

"My goal is to improve myself personally. Many people consider that it is essential to know how to read and write at work. That's why I wanted to come and learn to read and write. Also often had trouble reading addresses and basic information that one uses every day".

A person lacking literacy skills struggles day-to-day in understanding, reading, and writing messages or addresses, emails, books, and basic instructions. Literacy empowers individuals to carry out different activities. Literacy skills are a determinant factor for a better life in which new communication technologies demand skills (Vorhaus et al., 2011). The vulnerability of individuals increases as they feel deprived of using technological and communicational devices because of the lack of literacy (Lane & Conlon, 2016). Some students expressed a deep enthusiasm for improving their communication skills and shared that becoming literate is a meaningful transformation that benefits all aspects of their lives. The capacity to read and write is an achievement that defines an individual's perception of being capable or not (Eberle & Robinson, 1980). Regarding this perception, a 44-year-old unemployed Interviewee 12 at Casa Guerrero mentioned:

"My main motivation is my personal development. I want to learn to read and write well. I also want to improve my communication with others. I want to continue learning. It motivates me a lot to continue here. I want to improve my reading, and I would also like to learn to write correctly."

The participants' enthusiasm becomes clear when they express the courses are an excellent opportunity to improve their lives and not a requirement to stay employed. In these cases, learning takes place without pressure, and therefore, adult education can increase happiness and joy. A 50-year-old unemployed participant (Interviewee 15 at Casa Guerrero) said:

"My main motivation for coming here is to learn to read and write well. I had not thought about getting a job. First things first, learn the basics because I let many years go by without studying."

This participant (Casa Guerrero 15) states that literacy is more important than looking for a job. For him, becoming literate is the priority. The interviewee suggests that getting better employment cannot be ruled out after the courses, suggesting that adult education can encourage people to gain more skills that can be helpful for potential employability (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). In globalisation and the rapid development of new technologies, the challenge of equipping low-skilled or illiterate adults becomes greater because they need the proper skills to use new tools and services. The lack of digital literacy is 'excluding many citizens from the digital society and economy' (Zelezny-Green et al., 2018, p. 35), representing a setback for individuals' and societies' development. As some participants suggested, they highly depend on the help of others to carry out communication activities. A 70-year-old retired interviewee (Casa Durango 13) argued:

"I came here because I want to improve myself and learn to read. I don't want to depend on my children to understand things. My goal is first to learn to read and write well. If I can get better jobs after the courses, that would be ideal."

Adult education is a mechanism that empowers students to accomplish their educational goals toward a life in which they feel more included and valued (Waller et al., 2018). For instance, the capacity to understand messages, communications, news, or signs is something that most people take for granted, but illiterate individuals struggle each day. In support of this statement, a 46-year-old part-time worker (interview 3 at Casa Guerrero) said:

"My goal is to understand better what is happening around me, not only to get a better job but also to understand communication issues using technology issues".

Students perceive many things are happening around them, but the limitations for understanding and communicating are substantial because of illiteracy. The communication they establish through new technologies is also constrained. They join basic education courses to become more independent individuals. A 48-year-old self-employed respondent (Casa Durango 4) argues:

"I also want to learn to read and write, as a matter of personal improvement, because I did not know how to communicate well or fill out a form."

For this group of students, looking for a job is not necessarily relevant. Sometimes, age and immigration status are determinant factors for potential employability opportunities. Students without work permits or legal documents to live in the United States face difficulties staying employed or finding new opportunities (Hans & Sanchez, 2018). Similarly, retired students are not motivated to take part in adult education for better employment. In contrast, personal development lies at the heart of their decision to participate.

2. **Obtaining U.S. Citizenship**

The students come from different backgrounds and have intrinsic motivations unrelated to employment. I identified that some students have the goal of obtaining U.S. citizenship through an official test run by the government. To pass the test, an applicant must answer 6 out of 10 questions[10]. This exam becomes relevant for individuals with no English skills, older than 50 years and who have lived in the U.S. as a permanent resident (Green Card holder) for 20 years[11]. Even though the exam is oral, the applicants must prepare themselves and understand the content of the possible questions.

The Learning Centres offer special courses for adults with poor reading and writing skills to approve the test and become U.S. citizens. For this purpose, they must understand the nature of the questions and start the preparation, which requires literacy skills. The participants showed great enthusiasm for learning about the content of the exam. Some students perceive learning as positive and feel encouraged to continue attending courses beyond the citizenship test. In this regard, a 53-year-old employed participant living for 35 years in the United States (Casa Durango 1) stated:

"My main objective is to be able to obtain my citizenship and then continue studying high school. My friend became a citizen, and that motivated me to come. I did not know about the courses until my friend told me about the Learning Centre and the citizenship test preparation."

Obtaining U.S. citizenship motivates some students to join the courses as they need to prepare for the tests. The tests comprise different questions about history, politics, and life in the United States that the students need to understand and summarise until they feel ready to take the test. This process requires time, energy, and determination, but essentially this process cannot begin if the participants struggle to read and understand the questions. Also referring to the motivation to join the Learning Centres, a 61-year-old retired student living for 40 years in the U.S. (Casa Durango 9) mentioned:

---

[10] https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/questions-and-answers/100q.pdf
[11] https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/exceptions-and-accommodations

"Mainly, the first thing that brought me here was to take classes to know the procedures and the questions they ask you to become a citizen. My main motivation was that. Later I realized that there were more learning opportunities and that I could also take literacy classes."

The acknowledgement of more learning opportunities available to them at the Centre becomes significant when students understand the value of learning and feel drawn to take part in the courses (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Other participants mentioned the difficulties they are experiencing because of the language barrier that hinders their integration (Krogstad et al., 2020). Some students meeting the Government conditions can take the exam in Spanish, which is a great opportunity to pass test[12]. Referring to this motivation, a 65-year-old retired participant living for 42 years in the U.S. (Casa Durango 5) shared that:

"My first goal was to get citizenship. After achieving citizenship, I am interested in completing primary and secondary school because I want to learn to write and read correctly."

Looking for a better job is not a priority for students in this group. The personal circumstances to achieve citizenship becomes the overall target regardless of their employment status. Sometimes, the initial motivation is getting help for the citizenship test. Still, some students have also felt inspired to join further courses, indicating that adult education encourages people to continue learning (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). In the next subsection, the concept of leisure is analysed as another motivation that inspires adult learners to join the Learning Centres.

3. **Leisure**

Leisure is another motivation mentioned by the participants (Payne, 2006). For some participants, having the time to participate in learning and wanting to meet people are enablers to joining adult education. Studies on adult learning and subjective well-being show that taking up learning for leisure purposes has meaningful benefits for students even during a crisis (Gioti & Perdiki, 2019).

Duckworth and Cara found that participation in non-accredited learning significantly contributes to the student's well-being compared to accredited education. For instance, they identify an effect of leisure or interest-related learning on increased life satisfaction, decreasing depression in female students, and better

[12] https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/questions-and-answers/100q_Spanish.pdf

self-efficacy (Duckworth & Cara, 2012). Other studies show that older respondents aged 65 and over and retired adults are more likely to participate in adult education motivated by leisure. The 2017 Adult Participation in Learning Survey carried out across Great Britain revealed that learners motivated for leisure purposes were most likely to experience benefits related to learning and knowledge over work-related benefits (Eggleston et al., 2018).

The lack of stress through the achievement of educational goals plays an important role in shaping students' well-being (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). This factor is analysed in subsequent sections to understand if the students taking part in personal development challenges perceive the effects of adult education differently. Concerning the participation of adults in education, the Learning and Work Institute in the UK undertake surveys to identify, among other aspects, what motivates adult students to take part. In this regard, the survey in 2017 shows that 75% of people take part for work or career-related reasons, and just under 24% do it for leisure or personal interest (Egglestone et al., 2018), showcasing that leisure is an important cause or push factor to join adult education (Gioti & Perdiki, 2019). From the interviews, only two participants mentioned leisure as a reason to participate. Although other participants expressed that gaining basic literacy skills is related to having free time, leisure was not necessarily the overall aim. A 33-year-old unemployed legal resident living for 14 years in the US (Casa Guerrero 4) mentioned that:

"I came here because I had a lot of depression. I spent it locked up in my house. I cried all the time. My motivation was also to be able to meet people and distract myself with something new."

The motivation to join the courses relates to feelings of depression that affect an individual's mood and self-esteem (Field, 2011; UIL, 2019). In this case, the participant perceives the courses as a chance to improve her mental well-being, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life. For this student (Casa Guerrero 4), the possibility of meeting new people and getting some distraction is the aim. Related to this statement, a 67-year-old retired and a legal resident living for 47 years in the U.S. (Casa Guerrero 11) said:

"I am old and retired. Now that I have the time, I come to learn to read and write out of joy because before I did not have time. Now I'm retired, and I have a better chance to come."

The students joining the leisure courses expressed that learning brings them joy and happiness whilst meeting new people. They are looking forward to meeting more students and having a pleasant time at the Centre. The student's positive attitude towards attending courses can be a determinant factor in

understanding the effects of adult education. Concerning this notion, participants in this group feel motivated to join the classes to feel better and have a good time. Nevertheless, they are also willing to make new friends and gain new skills useful for daily activities.

The motivations related to literacy skills for daily activities and the capacity to enjoy the courses as leisure activities refer to the literature indicating that adult education could improve student's subjective well-being by enhancing the participant's self-confidence and self-esteem (Harris & Orth, 2019; Waller et all., 2018). Moreover, as part of subjective well-being theory, adult education can provide the students with the opportunity to gain skills for better employment.

4. **Looking for better employment opportunities**

A significant motivation to take part in education is getting better employment opportunities in the future (Lane & Conlon, 2016; OECD, 2019c). As mentioned in the literature review, the term employability includes the different qualifications, knowledge, and skills that increase the ability of workers to achieve and maintain a job position (Formichella, 2013). Adult education can become a conduit to achieve goals for better employment (Bates & Aston, 2004; OECD, 2018).

The literature indicates that satisfaction with the employment status shapes the individual's subjective well-being (Witter et al., 1984). In this regard, staying employed or improving employment opportunities can be a determinant factor for an individual's satisfaction with life. People leave everything behind in their home countries because of insufficient human development and prosperity options. The limited chances for good jobs in developing countries and poverty are reasons for migration (European Commission, 2000). In analysing the reasons for migration, different approaches point out that violence, poverty, environmental challenges, and economic, cultural, and socio-political forces people to move out of their places of origin (Fussel, 2004; IOM, 2018). The negative categories are defined as push factors obliging individuals to move, as they would be at risk if they were to stay. On the contrary, the positive factors attracting people are the pull factors that motivate people to move, as they are likely to have better conditions in different countries or areas (Lee, 1966).

The employment conditions in developing countries motivate people to find better options in more developed ones (Mallet, 2018; IOM, 2018). As stated in previous chapters, the United States attracts many people from Latin America looking for better conditions to prosper and enjoy a peaceful life. In this regard, some migrants perceive that more education can be a conduit to better jobs, translating into a better life.

For this purpose, keeping up with education becomes a determining factor. As economies constantly transform themselves because of technological evolution and access to communication technologies, individuals must keep up (Schwab, 2013). We live in a fast-changing world where new skills and capabilities are needed to keep up with development. For instance, the OECD reports that adults between 25 and 64 without secondary education are heavily penalised in the labour market and face difficulty staying employed (OECD, 2018). Literacy skills and basic education are determinants of fulfilling employment goals, and a motivation to participate in these courses is related to better job opportunities. In this regard, a 23-year-old, unemployed, living for ten years in the U.S. (Casa Durango 6) mentioned:

"I'm here to get a professional career. That's why I came here to the Plaza Comunitaria to learn English and computing skills. I'm interested in these skills and then continuing a professional career. I want a better job."

Acquiring new skills for a better professional life is part of the motivation to join adult education courses (Ahl, 2006). Beyond basic literacy skills, language and computing capabilities can represent an opportunity to get a better job in certain sectors or industries (OECD, 2020b). The motivation of this young student to get a better job after completing some courses can be related to his age and employment status. This situation can also be the case for other young students aiming for professional careers. A student with different characteristics, a 53-year-old, an employed citizen living for 35 years in the U.S. (Casa Durango 12) stated:

"My goal is also to improve my working conditions. I want to finish primary school because, if I can improve my work, then improve my English. I'm unsatisfied with my current employment situation. The conditions are very hard for immigrants. It is difficult to progress if you don't have skills."

The students looking for better jobs demonstrate great determination to get a job and improve their quality of life. The enthusiasm of this student (Casa Durango 12) to achieve better employment reflects the wishes of many migrants aiming for better lives (OECD, 2020c). After concluding primary school, his objective is to continue with language courses, which indicates that adult education can motivate students to participate in more learning opportunities. Likewise, a 50-year-old, employed, undocumented student living for 26 years in the U.S. (Casa Guerrero 2) said:

"My motivation is also to stop being one of those people who work cleaning houses. I don't like that life. I don't have studies, but I don't like that. I want to be independent and have my own business. For that, I need to prepare myself. I need tools for that."

This person (casa Guerrero2) is an example of someone unsatisfied with her employment situation. Most migrants look for jobs that are better paid and include the benefits they never experienced in their home countries. The frustration at work drives this participant to look for more opportunities to change the employment conditions (Hennessy-Fiske,2019). From the interviews, it is significant that the immigration status of the students determines their ability to achieve their goals. Immigrants lacking residence and work permits struggle to overcome their challenges as they are ineligible for legal work and benefits (Zong & Batalova, 2013). This situation of vulnerability will affect their prosperity negatively. Not having documentation to work in the United States is an obstacle to the participants' development (Cha & McConville, 2021; Hayes & Hill, 2017). A 19-year-old, undocumented, employed student living for almost one year in the U.S. (Casa Guerrero 10) suggested:

"I want to learn the basics of Spanish, learn to read and write and then learn English. I would be interested later in getting a good job. I think this can help me get a good job."

Getting a better job motivates these students to participate in adult education. It is one of the main factors inspiring people to join the courses. They perceive education as a conduit or an opportunity to improve their jobs and employment possibilities (Schuller et al., 2002; Schuller & Desjardins, 2011). The Learning Centre represents the opportunity that some people seek to overcome challenges and succeed in life. It is conceived by most participants as a mechanism that enables them to get the necessary skills for employment.

The courses are designed to improve skills for work, such as numeracy capabilities to understand how transactions work but are not technical or vocational training. However, several participants join the courses to improve their chances of employment to use technological devices and computers, perform basic numeracy tasks or learn English. These opportunities are vital for the individuals neglected by formal education systems in their home countries (UNESCO, 2020). The role of the Centres in improving the students' lives is relevant for the community members that look for better development opportunities, which relates to the literature, indicating that adult education boosts the student's capacity to get better jobs and improve their subjective well-being (Lane & Conlon, 2016; Meadows & Metcalf, 2008; OECD, 2019d).

In the next chapter, I examine the theoretical principles of adult education relating to subjective well-being and social capital. As indicated in the introduction, I operationalised both conceptual frameworks by analysing the students' perceptions of social relationships, interpersonal trust, mental health, and employment opportunities. Additionally, I considered their predominant sociodemographic characteristics to understand the factors that enable them to experience the benefits of adult education and have different perceptions.

4. Findings – Student’s perceptions by theoretical dimension

This chapter analyses the students' perceptions concerning the theoretical dimensions (social relationships, interpersonal trust, employability, and mental health) and the accomplishment of their educational goals. These dimensions emerge from the literature on the effects of adult education and its relationship with subjective well-being (UIL, 2016; Witter et al., 1984; Field, 2011; Schuller et al., 2004) and social capital (Collier; 1998; Field, 2005; Woolcock, 2001; Healy, 2002; OECD, 2001).

I coded the interviews to analyse students' perceptions by identifying relevant concepts, categories, and themes. The coding technique included a selection of statements provided by the students as the interviews took place at both Centres. Using NVivo software, I categorised the responses individually into themes and subthemes related to the theoretical dimensions, considering the level of agreement or disagreement of the perceptions. Additionally, I considered the number of references by subthemes indicated by the students regarding the different theoretical dimensions. The number of references includes the occasions students reported their perceptions on the theoretical dimensions. As some of the responses are multifactorial, I considered the students’ full opinions, but disaggregated them by the number of references given to each topic. To illustrate this approach, a 50-year-old student unemployed and a legal resident in the U.S. attending basic education classes for ten months (Casa Guerrero 15) provided three references to self-esteem:

*“**Ref 1**: being here has motivated me to feel much better. I can read more things, and I have also improved my writing a lot. **Ref 2**: My self-confidence has improved a lot. I feel that learning makes me happier and happier. **Ref 3**: I feel more confident in becoming more important because I was discriminated against before.”*

For each of the four theoretical principles, I considered the subthemes emerging from the interviews to identify relevant findings and the principal variables describing the type of student that benefits from the programme. I categorised the students' perceptions by significance levels according to what the students report regarding each theoretical principle and developed student profiles. I included the analysis of context-mechanism-outcomes configurations for each dimension to construct programme theories.

Table 4.1 contains the themes, subthemes, and the number of occasions the students reported something about these elements.

Main Themes	Subthemes	References
Mental Health	Self-esteem and self-confidence	36
	Improved satisfaction with life	28
	Uncertain about mental health	3
Employability	Increased chances to stay employed	3
	Increased chances for better job opportunities	18
	Not looking for a better job	16
Social Relationships	Communication with new people at the Centres	29
	Feelings of belonging	6
	Creation of Social Networks beyond the Centre	5
	Students disagreeing	9
Interpersonal Trust	Meeting people that I can trust	20
	Trusting people is complicated	19
	Always careful regardless of ethnicity	14
Accomplishment of goals	Accomplished and continue learning	6
	Accomplishment in process	50

Table 4.1: Themes, subthemes, and references

The level of agreement was constructed following the students' perceptions as these relate to the theoretical dimensions. In this light, I identified that certain students agreed more to the positive effects of adult education whilst other participants were uncertain, tendencies that I coded into subthemes by impact level.

The analysis of mental health yielded three subthemes, the first two categories corresponding to students who agree on an improvement of their self-esteem and satisfaction with life. The third category related to students who could not fully agree on this improvement. Concerning the analysis of employability, I identified three categories. The first relates to participants who managed to keep their jobs as part of the effects of the MEVyT programme. The second refers to students reporting an improvement in their chances to get better jobs in the future. Lastly, a group of participants were not interested in better employability opportunities.

In terms of Social Capital theory, I identified four categories of responses. The first comprised students who met new people and established friendly communication without developing friendships. Secondly, some participants felt that as they participate, they belong to a new community where people interact in a positive environment. Furthermore, a group of students reported a more developed level of engagement with their classmates that extended beyond the Learning Centre. Lastly, there were a group of participants

who disagreed on the benefits of adult education on social relationships. Moreover, the coding of interpersonal trust yielded three categories of responses: a first group of students who met people they can trust at the Learning Centre; secondly, a group of participants indicating that trusting someone is complicated; and lastly, some students indicated that trusting someone is difficult despite sharing similar cultural backgrounds or the same language.

The following subsections include the analysis of each theoretical dimension and the subthemes emerging from the interviews. Each theoretical dimension comprises direct quotations from the students to support and facilitate the analysis.

4.1 **Mental Health**

This subsection addresses the research questions concerning the role of adult education in improving individuals' self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life as they participate in the MEVyT programme in the United States. The theoretical assumption is that access to quality adult education and training opportunities enhance the perception of individuals as they see themselves as productive, capable, sociable, confident, and successful people (Feinstein et al., 2003; Feinstein et al., 2008; UIL, 2019; Schuller & Desjardins, 2011). Throughout this subsection, I examined the research question concerning the circumstances under what adult education enables students to feel empowered, more confident with improved self-esteem and more satisfied with life.

Concerning the relationship between adult education, life satisfaction and mental health (Field, 2011; UIL, 2019, Duckworth and Cara, 2012), I coded three subthemes that explain what the participants perceived from the courses. The following table depicts the main themes, subthemes, and the number of references to self-confidence, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.

Main Themes	Subthemes	References
Mental Health	Improved self-esteem and self-confidence	36
	Improved satisfaction with life	28
	Uncertain about mental health	3

Table 4.1.1: Mental health codes

In understanding the self-perception of mental health and adult education, I observe two profiles of students. On the one hand, the first category corresponds to participants reporting improved self-esteem, confidence, and satisfaction with life as they participate in the courses with a positive attitude and have the capacity to

overcome difficulties (Gorard et al., 2012; Pennacchia et al., 2018). On the other hand, there is a reduced group of students uncertain about this relationship because their self-esteem and confidence (Harris & Orth, 2019) are significantly affected by previous external conditions and constant difficulties related to health or immigration status (Hayes & Hill, 2017). I have designated names for each profile to simplify the analysis of these groups. The first group corresponds to **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied (ICS)** students. Most students from both Learning Centres fall into this group. In contrast, the second category relates to **Relatively Hesitant (RH)** students.

Firstly, the group of **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied students (ICS)** entails participants reporting an improvement in self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life as part of their participation in adult education. Almost all the interviewees confirmed that taking part in the courses enabled them to improve their mental health gradually (Lewis, 2012). They understood it as they felt more confident and satisfied with the knowledge and skills gained at the Learning Centres. As the perception of mental health involves two theoretical dimensions (self-esteem and satisfaction with life), I addressed these analytical categories separately. I observed that a good attitude, determination, support, and access to educational materials are significant factors helping the participants to feel more recognised and valued as they progress in their learning (Gorard et al., 2012). In this regard, students looking for better jobs or overcoming personal challenges benefit from the courses and feel happier and more confident throughout their participation. Similarly, sociodemographic factors such as age, employment or immigration status do not explain why some students benefit more than others. I observe that the difference mainly lies in the attitude and previous negative situations or experiences that marked the students (Gorard et al., 2012; Osborn, 2013; Pennacchia et al., 2018).

Secondly, regarding the **Relatively Hesitant (RH) students**, I identified that external factors and past negative experiences significantly influence their perceptions and attitudes. For example, they tend to have low self-esteem at the beginning of their participation (Harris & Orth, 2019; Norman & Hyland, 2003). The RH participants experience frustration due to illiteracy and a lack of work permits (Sanchez, 2019). Furthermore, RH students report having irregular feelings of self-esteem and health issues and are always careful regardless of similar cultural backgrounds, which hinders their sociability skills. Similarly, looking for better jobs seems to influence the RH student's experience. These are not absolute sociodemographic characteristics, but I observe a qualitative tendency around these features. In this regard, the RH students do not disagree with the role of adult education in improving their self-esteem, confidence, or life satisfaction. Instead, the RH student struggles with constant external factors that affect their overall

perception of happiness, such as lack of work permits, health problems, family loss or depression (Sanchez, 2019; Hennessy-Fiske, 2019; Pennacchia et al., 2018). The set of factors and negative experiences influence their well-being more intensely than ICS students.

These findings confirm the positive impact of adult education on the students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life (Samdal et al., 1998; Wolfe & Haveman, 2002; Feinstein et al., 2003) when students are not affected by difficult external circumstances such as health-related problems or immigration instability. Under these circumstances, the students tend to feel uncertain about the benefits of adult education (Feinstein et al., 2003; Manninen et al., 2014). The development of the two profiles derives from the analytical categories of qualitative codes relating to mental health. The analytical codes correspond to the following classification using NVivo software.

a) **Improved self-esteem and self-confidence**

Most students from both Learning Centres indicate that adult education positively impacts their self-confidence and self-esteem. The number of references related to this positive perception is noteworthy. These interviewees belong to the **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied (ICS) group**. The overall perception indicates that the ICS students feel more valued and happier as they continue participating in the courses. For example, a 53-year-old citizen employed, attending basic education courses for over 36 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 12) mentioned:

"Sometimes my self-esteem is high and sometimes not. Coming here has helped me a lot. I feel that I am improving my mood and attitude. I feel like I'm more confident and believe I can accomplish different things in my life."

Building self-confidence is a crucial feeling that can activate positive attitudes and a good mood (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). With this in mind, it may be that if people consider becoming more independent through new literacy skills, their perception of happiness can improve. Nevertheless, an individual's happiness and self-esteem cannot be attributed solely to participation in adult education. The distinct elements that play a role in an individual's satisfaction with life and self-esteem are part of a complex picture that includes daily circumstances (Duckworth and Cara, 2012).

Each student faces unique challenges and possesses specific resources to overcome their issues. As indicated in the literature review chapter, well-being is an overall assessment of a person's quality of life

according to his own chosen criteria (Shin & Johnson, 1977). Each person experiences different difficulties and challenges that shape their happiness and satisfaction with life. Taking part in educational activities can positively affect an individual's happiness and well-being (UNESCO, 2016; Field, 2009). For instance, a 39-year-old unemployed student attending English courses for 12 months looking for better jobs (Casa Guerrero 8) said:

"I think my self-esteem is somewhere in the middle. I don't feel that it's so high or so low. I like being here because I spend time with more people, which helps me feel happier. I believe that my confidence and self-esteem have improved as I keep attending the classes."

For some ICS students, the perception of improved self-esteem is related to acquiring new skills and literacy. This improvement could show that adult education gradually contributes to individual self-esteem and life satisfaction, as indicated in different studies (Field, 2009; UNESCO, 2016; Norman & Hyland, 2003; Waller et al., 2018). Some interviewees mentioned that the courses and new skills had improved their mood and attitude, making them feel more valued and recognised. This recognition by others can be crucial in strengthening self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, a 48-year-old legal resident, self-employed, attending basic education courses for 24 months looking for better jobs (Casa Durango 4) reported:

"I consider that before coming here, I had very low self-esteem. I was depressed. I even had to go to a psychiatric hospital. My self-esteem was on the ground. Now I feel much better, and the Plaza Comunitaria has helped me a lot."

Self-esteem is a multi-layered feeling related to specific contextual conditions (Seligman, 2002; Lewis, 2012). Therefore, measuring levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction is a complex task. Self-esteem can improve if the students feel they gain new knowledge and skills to improve communication with others. For this student (Casa Durango 4), adult education is a pleasant experience through which he has been tackling depression. This is in line with research concerning the link between health and education refers to more educated individuals being more likely to care for their health and generate healthier populations (UNESCO, 2016, p. 68; Groot and Maassen van den Brink, 2006). Healthy lifestyles could incite better lives based on positive beliefs and behaviours. Walter MacMahon (2002) reviews the relationship between lifelong learning, health, and civic participation.

The literature suggests that education can encourage healthier habits whilst discouraging unhealthy behaviours such as smoking. For instance, as an individual feels better about himself may feel more confident to join social activities, which increases his well-being (Feinstein et al., 2003, p. 13). Among the benefits of adult education, the greatest is related to physical and mental health, and well-being (Dolan & Metcalfe, 2012). Adult education can improve students' well-being and self-confidence as they gain new skills and capabilities to carry out daily activities (Field, 2009; Field, 2009b). Following this assumption, the literature indicates that taking part in education can contribute to an individual's self-care and motivation (Groot and Maassen van den Brink, 2006). For example, a 50-year-old unemployed citizen attending Citizenship courses for five months, overcoming personal development challenges (Casa Durango 2) said:

"I consider that my self-esteem is very low now. I have had difficult times and struggled with family issues. But I believe this helps me a lot to improve my self-esteem. Gradually, I feel that I can learn new things and feel happier."

Some ICS students have struggled significantly throughout their lives. For example, forced migration and illegal crossings into the United States harm the person's satisfaction with life, as these are challenging experiences that can create anxiety and depression (Sanchez, 2019). Some students have lost relatives during the crossing journey or have been victims of violence, which is a complex memory to replace. Even if this student (Casa Durango 2) has low self-esteem, he believes that adult education can improve this condition. This impact is not necessarily immediate, but it comes as people gain skills and build relationships with other classmates. In this regard, the benefits of adult education can relate to health and family life (Schuller et al., 2004; Schuller & Desjardins, 2011). As mentioned by a 65-year-old retired citizen, attending basic education courses for 12 months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 5):

"There are times when I do have good self-esteem, and there are times when I don't, but being here has helped me a lot to feel more confident. Since I have been learning here, I feel much safer and happier. I believe that the courses help people a lot to feel better, more valued and recognised by their families and friends. It takes some courage to come back to school when we are older."

Another student (Casa Durango 5) confirms that joining the courses has improved her self-confidence and happiness in conjunction with a feeling of social validation, which makes her feel better (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). From the interviews, I perceived that gaining new skills is significant for most students and can

help them to overcome negative factors (Manninen et al., 2014). Despite the commonalities, each student has different contextual characteristics influencing their life satisfaction perception. They must be analysed separately to identify how adult education participation improves students' mental health. Most ICS interviewees reported feeling motivated and happy because they participated in adult education. Regardless of the type of courses, age, and intrinsic motivation, the positive atmosphere at the Learning Centre and gaining new knowledge show that adult education develops feelings of happiness and self-esteem. The students' perception of happiness and life satisfaction is positive. The following subsection explores the perceptions around satisfaction with life and its relationship with adult education.

b) **Improved satisfaction with life**

From the interviews, I identified that most students feel more empowered and capable of carrying out more activities, improving their satisfaction with life (Feinstein et al., 2003; Feinstein et al., 2008). These interviewees also belong to the Increasingly Confident and Satisfied students (ICS). Nonetheless, I analysed both theoretical dimensions separately to understand the perceptions of satisfaction with life as a different element referring to Subjective Well-being.

The concepts of satisfaction with life and self-esteem are intrinsically related as both connect with positive factors in an individual's life (Duffy, 2004; Harris & Orth, 2019). For example, satisfaction with life relates to a subjective evaluative approach to defining a person's fulfilment with what they have achieved in different realms (Pavot & Diener, 2013; Diener et al., 1999; Dodge et al., 2012). In other words, the evaluation of satisfaction includes a variety of factors and circumstances ranging from employment to health and emotional characteristics. It is also defined as a multifaceted construct in a person's life (McGillivray et al., 2009).

The literature indicates that satisfaction with life depends on diverse contextual circumstances and experiences that can hinder or enable individuals to feel better. For example, being unemployed deteriorates life satisfaction (Fujiwara, 2012). Similarly, high levels of income inequality are associated with weaker social cohesion and reduced life satisfaction (Dragolov et al., 2013). On the other hand, it has been indicated that adult education and participation in leisure- or interest-related learning improve life satisfaction (Duckworth & Cara, 2012; Schuller et al., 2004). To explore the participants' satisfaction with life, I asked their perception considering a 0-10 scale where 0 means unsatisfied, and ten is completely satisfied with life. In this regard, a 53-year-old employed, legal resident attending the English courses for 24 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 1) said:

"I feel very happy at the moment. I would rate my satisfaction with life, say, with 8. I think my self-esteem has improved since I've been here. Before, I was a little sadder more often than now. It is probably because I feel that I'm learning new things every time I come to the Learning Centre."

Most ICS participants indicate that adult education improved their mood and satisfaction with life as they gain skills and capabilities (Harris & Orth, 2019), which is consistent with the literature. For example, this participant (Casa Durango 1) said that taking part in the classes reduces the occasions he feels sad or unhappy because he meets new people whilst learning English to improve his chances for better employment opportunities. Following this notion, some elements indicate that adult education gradually influences people's attitudes and social behaviours that gradually benefit their mental well-being (Field, 2011). Moreover, a 48-year-old legal resident, self-employed, attending basic education courses for 24 months looking for better jobs (Casa Durango 4) said:

"I think my satisfaction with life is at a ten today. I think being here has also helped me to improve my happiness. I think that gradually the knowledge gives us confidence and self-esteem as capable persons."

The literature indicates that gaining new skills and knowledge for life and work enables a person to develop and achieve her goals (Schuller et al., 2004). Although, it is noteworthy that students identified as ICS recognise that this is a gradual process that includes socialising, feeling more valued and being integrated into society. Some ICS students report feeling happy and satisfied with life as part of their participation in adult education. The positive attitudes reflect the students' perceptions of feeling more confident and satisfied regardless of their motivation to join the courses (Department for Education, 2018). For example, a 61-year-old retired resident attending basic education courses for over one year to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 9) reported:

"I feel that my satisfaction with life is a solid 9. I have a positive spirit. The courses helped me to be happier and more confident. Coming to the Learning Centre is a good opportunity to feel more useful and capable."

The student Casa Durango 9 feels more capable of reading, writing, and performing different tasks that he could not do before the courses. As this student learns new things, he develops a sense of belonging and importance that he did not previously experience. This accords with research that suggests that experiencing

frustration with the employment status or immigration instability can become barriers to satisfaction with life (Hennessy-Fiske, 2019). In this regard, unemployment can be associated with social and psychological distress (Gallie & Russell, 1998; Fujiwara, 2012). Gaining new skills to accomplish employment goals significantly improves an individual's happiness and sense of importance. Similarly, students not interested in better employment have reported improved satisfaction and happiness. As to this notion, a 50-year-old, self-employed, undocumented adult learner, attending the Technology and English courses for over 24 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 2) said:

"I feel 100% happy. I feel that the most important thing about being here, apart from getting a job, is that I can meet more people that I didn't know before. Now I feel more confident in asking things. I have the confidence to approach people and share things with more people."

A renovated sense of confidence and self-esteem is noticeable in students who gain more skills and knowledge (Norman & Hyland, 2003). Developing social skills to communicate better and understand other people's needs is significant for many interviewees. From the interviews, I observed that satisfaction levels with life are related to good mental health and self-esteem among students in adult education (Borum, 2010). Nevertheless, there is no simple straight pathway from an individual's level of education to be translated into better health automatically. Diverse conditions and factors shape an individual's mental health (WHO, 2014). In this regard, specific moments in life in which a person can feel happier or sadder depending on external and individual circumstances. In this regard, the World Health Organisation defines *health* as complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease (WHO, 2014). Most ICS interviewees reported a connection between feeling more confident in life and participating in adult education courses. Figure 4.1.1 describes the students' levels of Life Satisfaction.

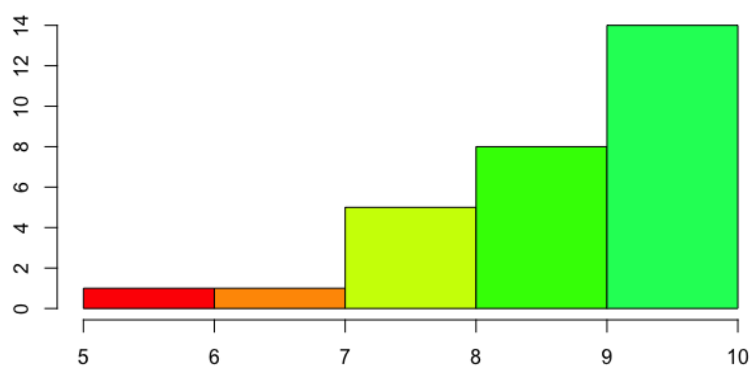


Figure 4.1.1: Life satisfaction on a scale of 0-10

Concerning the 0 – 10 scale, where 0 means unsatisfied and ten completely satisfied, most interviewees reported high satisfaction levels as part of adult education benefits. The majority mentioned between 9 and 10 levels of satisfaction with life, which are high scores suggesting that students are experiencing good times at the Centre. Figure 4.1.1 also indicates that fewer participants report low satisfaction levels with life (Borum, 2010). This statement is consistent with the literature addressing the impacts of adult education on an individual's well-being, mental health and happiness (OECD, 2020c; Witter et al., 1984; Hendricks et al., 2018). Nonetheless, certain participants are reporting a different perception of the courses. In the following subsection, I explore the sociodemographic factors and arguments explaining why some students have different perceptions of self-esteem and satisfaction with life as part of their participation in adult education.

c) **Uncertain about mental health**

By contrast, students in this group report uncertainty about their perception of mental health, understood as improved self-esteem, confidence, and satisfaction with life. They belong to the **Relatively Hesitant (RH)** interviewees. I used the term "relatively" because the references concerning subjective well-being constantly fluctuate due to previous negative factors or experiences that intensely influence the RH students (Young et al., 2004). This argument shows that some students are more susceptible to adverse contexts and struggle more than others. Some students could be afraid or hesitant to participate as previous negative experiences in educational settings could hinder their participation (Osborn, 2013; Pennacchia et al., 2018). This controversy needs further revision because some adult learners could experience potential damage when returning to education (Waller et al., 2018). In this regard, one of the RH participants, a 30-year-old student, undocumented, employed who is attending technology-related courses for one week to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 6), said:

"My satisfaction with life is sometimes at 7 and sometimes at 8. I am undocumented in the United States. My mood depends on the day. Today is a good day for example. I think that learning can help me a lot, I like to learn new things. I hope that learning new things can help me, but I do not think I can ever get a better job because I'm not here legally."

As argued by RH participant Casa Guerrero 6, lacking a work permit hinders their perception of being able to get a better job after achieving their educational goals. In this light, I observed a certain level of frustration with her employment situation that affects her satisfaction with life and self-confidence. This condition refers to low-wage workers dissatisfied with work and life, who tend to participate less in training or

educational activities (OECD, 2019b). As indicated in the literature, the self-evaluation of satisfaction with life includes variables such as employment fulfilment (Diener et al., 1999). In this regard, some RH students lacking a work permit consider this a significant factor hindering their life prospects.

In some cases, dissatisfaction with work involves vulnerability conditions that migrants experience, including performing risky or physical jobs (Zong & Batalova, 2013). Moreover, RH interviewees struggle to have the free time to attend educational or training activities and lack the confidence to trust others. As reported by a 15-year-old born in the United States, unemployed looking for better employment opportunities in the hospitality sector, attending for one week (Casa Guerrero 5):

"My self-esteem is sometimes high and sometimes very low. I don't feel the same way every day. I feel confident sometimes, but it's not always the same. I am not sure about what to expect from the courses. I don't think I will make new friends. I find it difficult to trust new people. I just want to learn new things to get a better job."

Concerning this perception, the student Casa Guerrero 5 reports lacking trust to meet new people and feels uncertain about socialising at the Learning Centre. Similarly, the motivation to get a better job seems to play a role in defining this student's capacity to improve her satisfaction with life as she prioritises gaining new skills over other potential benefits. Some RH interviewees struggle interacting with new people because of a cautious approach to trusting, which relates to negative past experiences. Expectations from the courses remain low for this RH student as she perceives that getting a better job will improve her satisfaction in the future. Furthermore, frustration due to illiteracy is acknowledged as a factor that hinders some RH participants' satisfaction with life (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Regarding this argument, a 70-year-old retired student living in the United States for over 40 years attending basic education courses for two months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 3), said:

"My self-confidence is sometimes low. I perceive a slow improvement in my self-esteem but still quite low. I feel frustrated due to the illiteracy condition I have experienced all my life. It has been difficult to cope with illiteracy at the job and community. Besides, my health problems affect my mood and happiness."

Overall, I perceived that most students from both Learning Centres experience positive feelings as they participate in educational activities. Most participants feel revitalised, valued, and recognised as they learn

new things and meet new people with similar goals and sociodemographic characteristics. The RH participants reported specific circumstances that directly affect them and hinder their satisfaction with life. These factors are not absolute but relate to lacking work permits, health issues, illiteracy, dissatisfaction with the employment conditions, being cautious in trusting new people and prioritising getting better jobs over other benefits.

A combination of circumstances or sociodemographic features can hinder their satisfaction with life and self-esteem (Diener et al., 1999). These findings are significant for the literature on the relationship between mental health and adult education, as students with positive attitudes toward learning perceived improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life (Harris & Orth, 2019). This improvement is perceived when they gain new skills for life and work in constant interactions in positive environments (Comber, 2013; Morrone et al., 2009). On the contrary, students with low esteem experiencing constant difficulties related to health issues or immigration instability struggle to meet their educational goals and are uncertain about the effect of adult education on their self-confidence (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). This argument responds to a theoretical approach that indicates a relationship between adult education and improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life according to the contexts and contrasts above highlighted.

Furthermore, as indicated in the introduction, I developed the context-mechanism-outcome configurations to identify the factors and circumstances influencing the students' perceptions. This technique enables the understanding of specific characteristics and contextual factors that shape students' perceptions. In the following subsection, I explored the context-mechanism-outcomes configurations concerning their satisfaction with life, self-esteem, and confidence.

4.1.1 **CMO configurations concerning mental health**

The CMO configurations highlight what type of student benefits more from adult education and the circumstances enabling this benefit. Moreover, this technique highlights the contrasts and contextual variabilities influencing the perceptions of the programme by student profile and predominant sociodemographic characteristics. The rationale behind the CMO configurations relates to the construction of identifiable contexts and characteristics that shape the students' perceptions regarding the theoretical dimensions. Although, the sociodemographic characteristics are not absolute conditions, I identified a qualitative tendency showing that some students benefit more than others, which is highlighted through the Realist Evaluation. In this regard, I constructed CMOs for each subtheme that explain the contexts and

circumstances that activated mechanisms or changes in the students' perceptions about the courses. The CMO configurations are the pathway to understand how the MEVyT operates regarding the theoretical dimensions benefit certain type of students under specific circumstances.

- CMO configuration leading to a positive impact on mental health

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C1: Mid and long-term migrant adults with a positive attitude towards learning and socialising who are determined to achieve educational goals and overcome challenges through adult education	**M1**: Students feel empowered, capable, and recognised as valuable individuals while they gradually achieve educational goals for life and work	**O1**: Students perceive improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life as part of adult education
CMO1: When students take part in the courses with a positive attitude toward socialising and learning new things for the mid-and long- term, they start achieving educational goals with determination which gradually makes them feel empowered, capable, and recognised as valuable individuals		

- CMO configuration leading to an undetermined impact on mental health

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C1: Short-term migrant adults who suffered negative experiences in life that are related to health issues or a family loss who have low self-esteem and lack residence permits	**M2**: Students struggle developing motivation to achieve educational goals, gain skills and remain hesitant towards the effects of adult education	**O2**: Students have low expectations about the benefits of the courses and struggle to improve their self-esteem and confidence
CMO2: When migrant adults with low self-esteem and without residence permits take part in the courses with short term goals and with a negative or hesitant attitude towards learning because they have suffered negative experiences in life related to health issues or a family loss, they remain hesitant and struggle to achieve educational goals and to improve their self-esteem and confidence		

This analysis yielded two CMO configurations. I identified that the programme works for students with the determination to overcome personal development challenges or get better jobs. Most students from both Learning Centres feel enthusiastic about the progress achieved and empowered as individuals. By contrast, the programme has little impact on students struggling with problems related to health or immigration status that have experienced negative situations in their lives (Waller et al., 2018). From the interviews, I discovered that a negative predisposition to new friendships affects the self-esteem and self-confidence of students (Osborn, 2013; Harris & Orth, 2019; Robotham et al., 2011). Some participants without work or residence permits struggle more to develop positive feelings about the courses' effects and feel health

affected (Cha & McConville, 2021). The following figure describes how the programme improves mental health.

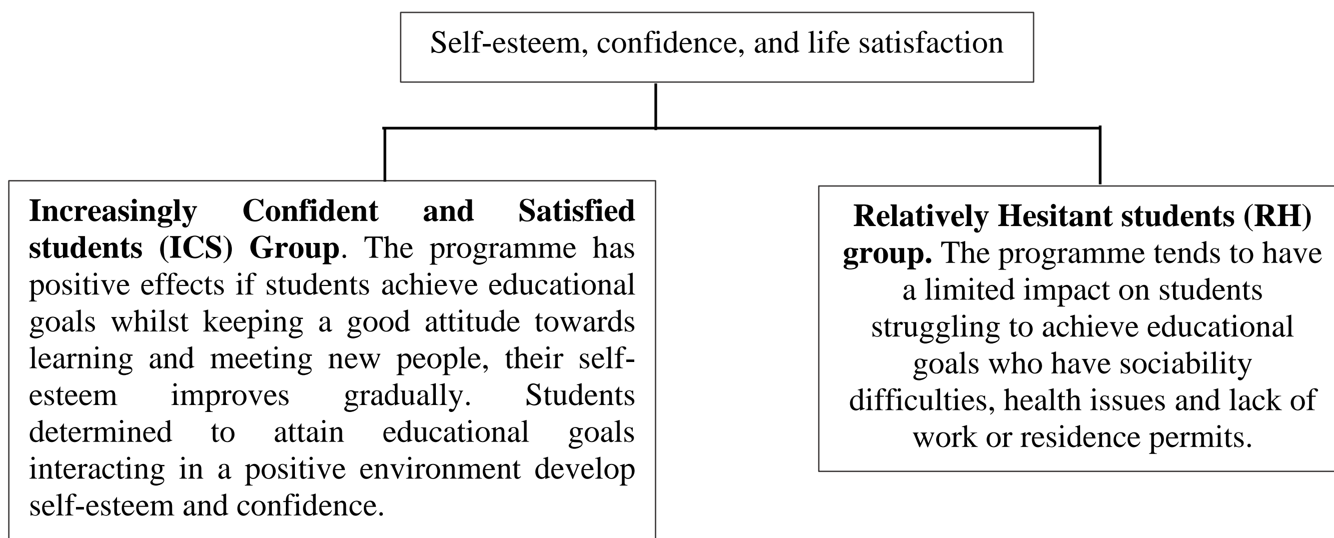


Figure 4.1.2: MEVyT improving mental health

In this subsection, I examined the students' perceptions of self-esteem, confidence, and life satisfaction as outcomes of the MEVyT programme. This section contributes to the literature on the effects of adult education on mental health, as studying the effects of education on health-related issues has been on the agenda of many countries and research institutions worldwide (WHO, 2014; UNESCO, 2016; OECD & Statistics Canada, 2000), showing that education benefits an individual's perception of self-value and confidence (Harris & Orth, 2019). This theoretical principle relates to the impact of adult education on the participants' mental health, namely concerning self-esteem, self-confidence, and satisfaction with life (Feinstein, 2008; Waller et al., 2018). Furthermore, the subsequent subsection addresses the dimension of employability as a conceptual element in understanding students' Subjective Well-being.

4.2 **Employability**

This section addresses the relationships between adult education and employability. The theoretical principle refers to adult education as an opportunity to empower people with skills and knowledge to compete in the labour market and achieve employment opportunities (OECD, 2019b; McQuaid, 2004; Marmot et al., 2010; Fujiwara, 2012; ILO, 2021). Research shows that education is one of the fundamental mechanisms for economic development and a substantial component of social change (Hanushek & Wössman, 2010). In understanding this relationship, the research question examines under what circumstances the MEVyT courses boost the students' employability by providing them with capabilities and job-related skills. I tested this theoretical principle by considering the participants' intrinsic motivation

to join the courses and their perceived employability. The following table depicts the main themes, subthemes, and the number of references given by the interviewees about this topic.

Main Themes	Subthemes	References
Perception of Employability	Increased chances to stay employed	3
	Increased chances for better job opportunities	18
	Not looking for a better job	16

Table 4.2.1: Employability codes

I identified three profiles of students by their perceptions. The first profile corresponds to students with a positive attitude toward better employment opportunities which improves their chances of staying employed. The second relates to participants with a good attitude toward employment opportunities which are increasing their opportunities for better employment in the future (Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). Lastly, the third profile refers to students reporting that new employment opportunities are not a priority as they have other educational goals. Following the same criterion to analyse mental health, I designated names to categorise the profiles. The first group corresponds to **Job Keepers (JK)**, the second to **Job Seekers (JS)**, and the third relates to **Not Seeking Employment (NSE) students**.

Firstly, the group of **Job Keepers** comprises students with a good attitude towards improving their employment conditions, actively employed who perceive that adult education enabled them to keep their jobs. They are middle-aged participants attending English or technology-related courses, motivated by better employment opportunities. They have a good attitude towards socialising and usually have more schooling than other students. Gaining communication skills and job-related training allowed them to keep their jobs and improve their employment prospects (Lane & Conlon, 2016). For JK students, immigration status seems to have less impact as illegal or legal immigrants participate in the labour market besides the government regulations. This situation relates to the educational imperative of empowering people to manage their learning in diverse contexts throughout their lifetimes for better opportunities (Sharples, 2000, p. 178; ILO, 2021). For instance, a Job Keeper student lacking a work permit can keep their job and increase his employment opportunities by improving their communication skills. The difference is that an immigrant with documents to legally work can participate in the formal labour market and one who does not have a permit does so in the informal market (Massey et al., 2010).

Secondly, the **Job Seekers** group entails students looking for better jobs who tend to take English and Technology-related rather than Basic Education or literacy courses. The type of courses they attend is

explained by their interest in gaining specific skills for work and indicates that these students have more schooling than the rest of the participants (OECD, 2019b). For the JS group, three elements stand out as tangible factors for better jobs: language barriers, immigration status, and lack of literacy (Tegegne & Glanville, 2018). A second tangible factor for employment prospects is immigration status, which restricts employment opportunities as individuals without a work permit cannot be employed legally in the United States. Of interest is that most of the JS participants perceive that the courses are positively helping them to achieve their goals, even if they have not gotten better jobs yet. Similarly, students overcoming personal development challenges reported that the new skills could have been determinant in the past. This situation tends to be the case for a minority of retired students, as they do not seek employability opportunities. However, most JS students tend to be younger, actively employed with work permits and schooling years attending English or technology courses. Gradually, these JS students gain more skills to meet their professional expectations. The perception that adult education can improve employment opportunities is highly positive (Lane & Conlon, 2016). This accords with evidence showing that adult education provides a one-off wage boost for those individuals in stable employment (Sabates, 2007). Moreover, lifelong learning influences the probability of being in work and thereby indirectly increases earnings for movers (Dorsett et al., 2010, p. 33; ILO, 2021; OECD, 2019b).

By contrast, the **Not Seeking Employment (NSE)** students tend to be older, retired, and long-term participants. These are not absolute sociodemographic characteristics as some NSE students lack work permits. From the interviews, I identified that the relationship between the students' age and employment status is associated with their motivations to join adult education. Studies show that employed students are more likely to get better jobs after participating in training than those unemployed (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). For instance, an unemployed young adult is under different circumstances than older retired students, which relates to their desire for employment through gaining more skills. Retired students do not look for better jobs, whilst employed or unemployed students look for employment opportunities. This situation relates to the fact that more than three in four adults with low skills across OECD countries do not participate in any job-related training in any given year (OECD, 2019d) as they lack confidence and determination. Similarly, immigration status plays a role in defining the aspirations for employment and feelings of depression (Sanchez, 2019). For instance, undocumented students are not eligible for formal jobs, hindering their employment opportunities in the future (UNESCO, 2019). The lack of work permits is a substantial constraint for work opportunities and personal development. Marginalised people excluded from quality education are more likely to be unemployed and lack opportunities for better employment. Adults with low skills, unemployed or low-wage workers are less likely to participate in any form of

training (OECD, 2019b). This finding is relevant as the lack of literacy and other core skills penalises immigrants in the labour market (OECD, 2019b). This vulnerability forces them to take illegal, low-paid, manual jobs. Furthermore, these manual jobs tend to be in more dangerous industries. In the United States, many undocumented or legal immigrants usually have jobs that US-born people don't want to do (Krogstad et al., 2020). The motivation to improve their personal development differs from students looking for better jobs; thus, their perception of the positive effects of adult education is different. NSE participants do not aim for better jobs as part of adult education. Instead, they look for literacy skills, leisure, or training for the citizenship test.

Overall, I identified that the main factors impacting the students' perception are the intrinsic motivation to participate in the classes, the student's goals, types of courses they attend, number of months taking part in classes, age, employment, and immigration status. These are not absolute characteristics, but I observed a qualitative tendency around the sociodemographic features. These predominant sociodemographic factors interplay depending on the characteristics of each participant, which confirms the theoretical principles concerning the role of adult education in boosting the student's employment opportunities (Bhattacharya et al., 2020; Cain et al., 2017). Older retired students who lack work permits tend to participate in adult education to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy. For the NSE students, the courses do not seem to impact their employment opportunities as they report more interest in overcoming personal challenges and leisure (Payne, 2006). The development of the three profiles (JK, JS and NSE) derives from the analytical categories of qualitative codes relating to employability. In this regard, the analytical codes correspond to the following classification using NVivo software.

a) **Increased chances to stay employed**

Although few references address the students' perceptions of staying employed as part of adult education, some participants consider that the courses enabled them to remain employed as they were facing difficulties at work. These participants belong to the **Job Keepers (JK) group**. Research shows that the need for broader skillsets in advanced economies increases as countries grow. Considering this notion, workers need more complex capabilities for jobs that require a combination of tasks (OECD, 2019c; ILO, 2021). As a way of illustrating how individuals in this sample are responding to these challenges, a 53-year-old employed resident who is learning English at the Learning Centre, looking for better jobs and experiencing frustration at work (Casa Guerrero 1) reported:

"Of course, taking part in the courses benefited me. When I started working at the Long Beach Memorial Hospital, I didn't know any English. Learning here has helped me a lot. I even participated in more courses at the city college. It's hard for me to go because of the complicated schedules. The courses helped me perform better at my job and keep it."

The courses enabled this student (Casa Guerrero 1) to improve her language proficiency at work, which has allowed her to stay employed and communicate better with her workmates. In this light, gaining command of a foreign language to communicate better provides many benefits for migrants, one of which is obtaining employment (OECD, 2011; Extramiana, 2012; Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). For example, a 50-year-old undocumented employed student attending English and technology courses to improve her employment opportunities (Casa Guerrero 2), said:

"I've already started to use the knowledge at work. I am improving my English communication with the people I make up. This communication helps me to stay employed. I've already started to make up people, to have a salary. I was frustrated cleaning houses. I'm very happy with my current job."

Experiencing frustration at work is a common factor that can drive students to participate in the courses (Sterud et al., 2018). As this participant reports (Casa Guerrero 2), having poor communication skills at work is a limitation that affects her salary and life satisfaction (Mallows, 2014; Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). Because immigrants lack work permits and have poor English proficiency, they tend to have difficult, risky, and low-paid jobs in the United States (Zong & Batalova, 2013). Nevertheless, regarding the ambition to improve their job opportunities, this first group of students is comprised of middle-aged students attending English or basic technology courses.

The subsequent subsection addresses the perceptions about having more chances to get better jobs as part of adult education.

b) **Increased chances for better job opportunities**

Around half of the participants consider that adult education improves their chances of getting better job opportunities as they gain relevant skills and knowledge. This type of student is usually attending the courses looking for better employment. They belong to the **Job Seekers (JS) group**. Also, the students referring to better job opportunities are not exclusively unemployed, suggesting that having a job is not the only sign indicating that a person is looking for better employment. Unemployed and employed students

are interested in getting better jobs. This condition is consistent with the adult learner, a 23-year-old unemployed citizen attending English and technology courses for three months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 6):

"I would like to study Pedagogy, but to do so I first need to improve my English and gain computing skills. I have heard that it is easier for people who speak two languages to get a better job, so I would like to improve my English to get a good job."

This student (Casa Durango 6) has concrete goals related to employability opportunities and adult education. She perceives that learning English is significant to get a job and continue her studies after gaining new skills. Her motivation is consistent with the type of courses she attends to develop skills for a future carrier (OECD, 2011; OECD, 2019c). In a competing world, some students perceive the need for skills and capabilities to get a better job or stay employed. For this reason, some participants joined the courses expecting to increase their possibilities. The courses equip the students with literacy skills and opportunities to improve their work conditions, such as basic computing and English courses. According to their different learning capabilities and expectations from the courses, every student decides the type of courses they attend and the time they can invest at the Centre. In this regard, a 48-year-old employed, legal resident with 12 months attending basic education courses to improve her job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 7) reported:

"I am a nursing assistant. I took a course to become a medical technician, and little by little I have continued studying and preparing to improve my working conditions. I feel like I will be able to improve that aspect step by step."

Gradually, this student (Casa Guerrero 7) is building reading and writing skills to improve his performance at work. His goal is to become a technician, which requires specific capabilities that demand literacy skills. The role of adult education can have a meaningful impact on the students' employment opportunities, as literacy skills sit at the core of the capabilities for personal development (Dorsett et al., 2010, p. 33; ILO, 2021). In this regard, a 39-year-old unemployed citizen attending English courses for 12 months to improve her job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 8) reported:

"Right now, I don't have a job, occasionally I help people to clean their houses, but I would like a permanent job, at the moment I am learning English, I still haven't gotten a good job because of the lack of English."

Difficult physical jobs under harsh conditions often negatively affect migrants' satisfaction with life and well-being, as they are not fulfilling their goals (Hayes & Hill, 2017; Krogstad et al., 2020). The language barrier is another element that increases the students' vulnerability and hinders their employability opportunities and happiness (Extramiana, 2012; Krumm & Plutzar, 2008; Zorlu & Hartog, 2018; Ding & Hargraves, 2009). As mentioned by a 19-year-old employed, undocumented student, attending Basic Education courses for two weeks to improve her job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 10):

"I think this can help me to get a better job because, in Honduras, I didn't have opportunities to grow professionally. I worked on farms, here I am a dishwasher in a restaurant."

The perception that adult education can improve their employment opportunities is mostly positive among the students looking for a job. I identified two groups of students from the interviews by their motivation to join the courses. On the one hand, some participants are openly looking to improve their chances of getting better jobs or staying employed (Bhattacharya et al., 2020, OECD, 2018b). Others are overcoming personal challenges through adult education and have little interest in improving their employment situation as they also tend to perceive adult education as a leisure opportunity (Duckworth & Cara, 2012; Payne, 2006). For the group of participants interested in better jobs, there is a tendency for younger employed students with more schooling years and attending English or basic computing courses at the Centres to look for jobs. The following subsection explores students' perceptions reporting that better employment is irrelevant to them.

c) **Not looking for a better job**

Some students participate in the courses following specific goals unrelated to better employment opportunities in the future, confirming that low-skilled adults tend to avoid job-related training (OECD, 2019d). They belong to the **Not Seeking Employment (NSE)** group. This is a group of participants reporting that they take part because they want to overcome personal challenges such as illiteracy at a moment when they finally have the free time to participate in adult education. In this regard, lacking time to join classes is one of the barriers to adult education mentioned in the literature. For example, Patricia Cross (1981) argues that the decision to participate in learning activities is not isolated and comes after a

set of circumstances and responses based on the self-evaluation of each person. Moreover, the interaction with different structural conditions at the national, regional, or local levels has a role in shaping the individual's decision to join adult education (Boeren et al., 2012).

Some older students reported having the free time to join the classes and gain new skills for life and work (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Some NSE students argue that they couldn't enrol in any training during their productive years because of a lack of time, financial resources, support, and energy (Spielhofer et al., 2010). From the interviews, I identified that most students overcoming personal challenges are retired older adults for whom literacy provides them with the capacity to understand and communicate better. For them, gaining literacy skills is a substantial accomplishment in their lives as against finding concrete employability opportunities (Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). The NSE group considers that adult education comes when they are not interested in jobs or are not competing in the labour market. This situation is explained by students such as the 65-year-old retired student attending basic education courses for 12 months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 5), who stated:

"I can't get a better job because I'm already retired. I don't need a better job or better employment conditions as I'm retired already."

Retirement and the student's age determine whether the students seek better employment (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). The interviews identified that most retired learners are not interested in better jobs and focus on personal development benefits, such as better communication and sociability with others, which is a significant aspect of adult education (Krasovec & Kump, 2009). Adult education plays a different role for this type of student, conveying family and community cohesion rather than boosting their chances in the labour market. This perception supports the notion that adult education benefits the students in numerous ways, including multiple and inter-connected social impacts (Neville et al., 2011). For example, a 60-year-old legal resident, retired, attending basic education courses for 36 months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 8) reported:

"I am retired. I no longer work. I was a machine operator, it was a complicated job, wish I had different opportunities. I do not have the ambition to go back and look for better jobs. I want to learn what I did not achieve in the past because I did not have the time and determination to come."

Participation in adult education becomes possible for some retired students, as some participants never had the free time to join the classes when they were younger or lacked the determination to participate. As indicated in the Chain of Response Model, different mechanisms, factors, and circumstances enable participation in adult education (Cross, 1981). Every person evaluates their conditions, resources, goals, and expectations to decide to participate in adult education activities as they are different educational and personal goals beyond earning a certification. For example, some participants overcoming personal challenges aspire to gain literacy skills for daily activities that include communication with other people, which can improve their mental health (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). In this regard, a 50-year-old adult learner, legal resident, unemployed, living in the United States for 30 years, attending citizenship courses for five months (Casa Durango 2) said:

"I am not interested in getting a better job. I am interested in developing everyday skills because I know that I will feel much better when I learn to read and write. Obtaining citizenship is my main goal at the moment, but I will consider options for jobs or more courses in the future."

As indicated by several participants uninterested in better jobs, their current goal is to gain literacy skills over job-related training. Therefore, most of these students take part in basic education courses rather than any other form of training. Although these are not absolute characteristics, they tend to be older retired long-term students attending basic education. For example, some students mentioned they have personal development goals and consider their participation comes at an age where employment is no longer relevant. Arguing in this regard, a 55-year-old, employed, legal resident, attending basic education courses for 24 months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 11) reported:

"My motivation is not to get a job. I have a job sewing. I have done that all my life. I like it and I enjoy it. My personal goal is to have a better life by reading and writing. I never had the opportunity to learn and gain literacy skills. This is an opportunity I never had."

Most students in the NSE group are pursuing the opportunity to understand and communicate better with their families and close friends rather than employment opportunities. I identified that most participants overcoming personal development challenges consider that adult education will not improve their employability as they are either retired or undocumented. For the retired students who lack work permits, the courses do not positively impact their employment opportunities as they are not motivated by this factor. The reasons for showing little interest in employment opportunities are multivariate and depend on each

student's circumstances but also the structural conditions of the geographical area (Boeren et al., 2012). For immigrants, lacking a work permit plays a defining role in their ambitions and possibilities for better lives.

From the interviews, having the right to work in the United States stands out as a factor that enables or hinders the participants' ambitions for better jobs. This situation is relevant because everyone requires a work permit to be eligible for legal employment[13]. The student's immigration status is a factor that can hinder their development and achievement of goals. Concerning the difficulties some participants face at work, a 30-year-old, part-time employed, undocumented, attending computing courses for one week to improve her potential job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 6) said:

"I am not happy with my current work situation. I clean houses and offices. I would like to change my situation. I do not think that by participating in this course I can improve this. I don´t have documents to work in this country. I don't have a chance. Being illegal is complicated."

This participant (Casa Guerrero 6) showed frustration with their current job, as cleaning houses is a physical activity that limits her life satisfaction (Krogstad et al., 2020). She is partially interested in looking for better jobs. However, she understands this is not easily achievable due to her immigration status, which makes her sceptical about the courses' effects on employability. Many immigrants carry out heavy physical activities, constraining their personal development and well-being. This situation is consistent with data showing that immigrant workers usually experience poorer working conditions than native individuals and are more exposed to physical hazards (Sterud et al., 2018; ILO, 2015). Some students want to overcome this problem through adult education and improve their lives, but not having a work permit harms their ambitions. As reported by these students, adult education is perceived as a secondary or inconsequential goal. I identified that the predominant sociodemographic characteristics refer to older retired, illiterate, and long-term participants attending basic education with a positive attitude toward overcoming personal challenges. Similarly, immigration status is a determinant factor influencing the students' ambitions for better employment as they are not legally allowed to work in the United States.

These findings confirm the theoretical assumptions regarding the effects of adult education in improving the student's opportunities for better employment (Lane & Conlon, 2016; Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). In this light, transnational adult education in the United States represents a mechanism to boost participants'

[13] The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services oversees the right to work in the United States. https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/employment-authorization-document

chances to compete in the labour market if they are literate young participants attending job-related training, fulfil the legal requirements established by the United States government, have a good attitude towards gaining skills to gain employment, and gradually achieve educational goals (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). By contrast, elderly students who have few schooling years or are illiterate tend to take part in adult education to overcome personal development challenges instead of looking for better jobs (Payne, 2006). Similarly, students lacking work permits tend to overlook the potential benefit of increasing their chances of a better job (Sanchez, 2019; Asad, 2020) as they perceive those better opportunities are not available for illegal workers and fear deportation. From this information, I observed that the motivation to join the courses defines the effects of adult education on the perception of employability.

As indicated in the introduction, I developed the context-mechanism-outcome configurations to identify the factors and circumstances influencing the students' perceptions. This technique enables the understanding of specific characteristics and contextual factors that shape students' perceptions. In the following subsection, I explore the context-mechanism-outcomes configurations concerning employment.

4.2.1 **CMO configurations concerning employment opportunities**

This subsection examines the conditions, contexts and mechanisms that allow some students to improve their employability opportunities. I identified the following CMO configurations that define the contrasts and contextual variabilities influencing the perceptions of the programme.

- CMO configurations leading to a positive impact on employability opportunities

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C1: Middle-aged, literate, and employed students with a good attitude towards improving their employment conditions who are attending English or technology-related courses	**M1**: Middle-aged students feel motivated and encouraged to put into practice at work the new skills and knowledge gained as they participate in adult education	**O3**: Middle-aged students improve their employability conditions or keep their jobs as they gradually achieve their educational goals
CMO1: Middle-aged literate and employed students with a positive attitude towards gaining skills and knowledge for job-related purposes feel encouraged and motivated to keep taking part in the courses as they are improving their conditions to stay employed and look for better job opportunities in the future		

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C2: Younger literate students with work permits having a good attitude towards employability who take part in adult education aiming for better employability	**M2**: Students begin to acknowledge that the skills are adequate for their purposes and feel empowered to participate in the labour market after achieving their educational goals	**O2**: Students acknowledge the acquisition of new skills and knowledge that will allow allowed them to compete for better jobs and feel empowered

opportunities attending job-related courses		
CMO2: Young literate students with work permits who have a good attitude towards learning as a mechanism to achieve better employment begin to feel motivated and empowered as they gain new skills and knowledge to compete in the labour after achieving their educational goals		

- CMO configuration not leading to a positive impact on employability opportunities

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C3: Elderly students who are retired or lacking work permits who attend basic education courses aiming to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy or educational dropouts	**M3**: Students feel discouraged to look for better jobs as they are not eligible for legal work or are not considering returning to work after retiring	**O3:** Retired adults or participants lacking wok permits do not look for better jobs, but instead, they focus on overcoming personal development challenges
CMO3: Elderly students who are retired with few schooling years or students lacking work permits attend basic education courses aiming to overcome personal development challenges feel discouraged to look for better jobs		

This analysis yielded three CMO configurations relating to employment. According to the literature, the intrinsic motivation to participate in adult education, in addition to the participants' age and schooling years, are factors that can explain the different perceptions of employability (Bhattacharya et al., 2020; Lane & Colon, 2016, OECD, 2019d). For the JS group, the courses are gradually helping them to accomplish their goals in the labour market, as reported by most interviewees. Having a work permit in the United States is a determinant factor that allows students to compete in the labour market and feel more empowered due to their education levels (Caponi & Plesca, 2013), influencing their perception of the courses. On the contrary, lacking a work permit translates into a struggle to develop self-confidence and positive attitudes (Sanchez, 2019).

The results show that the participants' employment status determines the motivation to participate in the courses (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). This characteristic is significant in understanding what types of students join the Centre and their motivations. For example, literate students holding work permits looking for employment with determination and enthusiasm benefit more from the courses. Students lacking residence permits benefit to a lesser extent and struggle to interact with classmates. The programme improves the tangible employability opportunities for determined students with work permits, whilst those lacking work permits gain the skills and knowledge for daily activities or interactions. However, their employability will scarcely improve due to the legal restrictions (Caponi & Plesca, 2013). This negative condition or barrier to development is permanent for illegal immigrants. Migrants lacking a residence and work permit are

ineligible for regularization under the United States legislation or face difficult bureaucratic processes such as DACA (Capps et al., 2020). Even if they complete degrees or have US-born children, their immigration status will not improve, which places them in permanent vulnerability (Meissner, 2010). 'Regularization leads to higher wages through better jobs because wage exploitation is harder to hide' (Kossoudji, 2016). For illegal immigrants having the opportunity to get legal status will change their lives positively (Caponi & Plesca, 2013).

As suggested by some students, illegal immigrants have access to certain healthcare services under California regulations (Cha & McConville, 2021). Nevertheless, this type of resident denies them the right to work in the formal sector, forcing them to look for manual jobs in the fields or construction sites. Retired participants mentioned that taking part in the courses would have been a great asset years before retiring, confirming their perception of the courses improving the employability conditions in the long run. These statements relate to UNESCO arguments around adult education and its role in leading to higher levels of equality and inclusion. It is a strong argument for individuals and governments to invest in this kind of service (UIL, 2019). The next figure describes how the programme improves employability opportunities, for whom and under what circumstances.

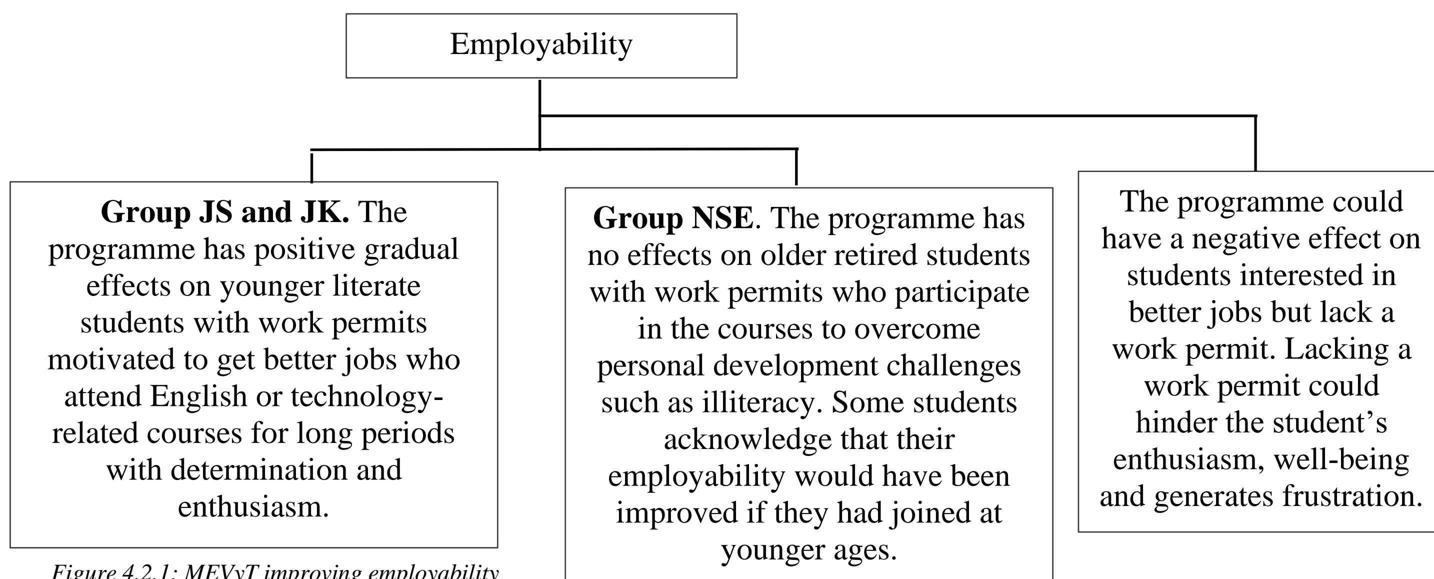


Figure 4.2.1: MEVyT improving employability

In this subsection, I examined the students' perceptions of employability as an outcome of the MEVyT programme. Overall, I identified that the intrinsic motivation to participate in the courses defines if the programme positively affects employability. As reported by the students, age, a positive attitude, and immigration status are determining factors enabling students to benefit from adult education. The

subsequent two subsections address the conceptual categories of Social Capital and its relationship with adult education. I will explore the dimension of Interpersonal Trust and Social Relationships.

4.3 **Social Relationships**

In this section, I analyse the student's perception of new social relationships, networks, and feelings of belonging as part of their participation in adult education in Los Angeles. The analysis of social relationships emerges as part of the Social Capital theory that considers the creation of social networks as a driver for socio-economic development, cohesion, and well-being (OECD, 2001; UNESCO, 2016; Dragolov et al., 2013). Moreover, the literature shows relevant findings that define a positive connection between school and making new friendships or networks (Schuller, 2004; Ross-Gordon et al., 2016). In understanding this connection, the research question addresses if the MEVyT courses improve students' sociability skills and allow them to meet new people and friends to build social networks (Schuller et al., 2002; Woolcock, 2001; UNESCO, 2016).

Concerning the development of social relationships or networks as part of participation in adult education, I coded four subthemes that explain what the participants perceive from the courses. Table 4.3.1 comprises the main themes, subthemes, and the number of references regarding students' perceptions of social relationships.

Main Themes	Subthemes	References
Social Relationships	Communication with new people at the Centres	29
	Feelings of belonging	6
	Creation of Social Networks beyond the Centre	5
	Students disagreeing	9

Table 4.3.1: Social relationships codes

After coding the interviews, I developed profiles of participants for each level of perception. The first profile corresponds to students with a positive attitude but poor networking. The second label relates to participants with a positive attitude, but networking is constrained to social interactions at the Learning Centres. The third profile belongs to students with a positive attitude and extensive networking beyond the activities at the Centres. By contrast, the fourth label refers to students with a negative attitude and no networking. To simplify the analysis, I have named the profiles identifying them as **Relatively Sociable (RS)**, **Increasingly Sociable (IS)**, **Actively Sociable (AS)**, and **Non-Sociable (NS)**.

Firstly, **Group Relatively Sociable (RS)** represents students perceiving a positive environment for meeting new people whilst learning and gaining skills for life or work (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). This type of student has a positive attitude towards making new friends and social networks. Nevertheless, they have not reached a level of socialisation to feel part of the community or develop social networks. Group RS relates to the students agreeing that taking part in the courses enabled them to meet new people and communicate in a friendly environment (Feinstein et al., 2003). The RS type of student is mostly younger and has an open attitude towards socialisation with classmates and tutors regardless of their intrinsic motivation to join the courses. Interacting with classmates or tutors at the Centres does not directly translate into friendships or long-lasting social networks. Nevertheless, the perception of meeting new people is positive (Comber, 2013). Most students from both Learning Centres fall into this category. They perceive that taking part in the courses enables them to interact with new people in a friendly environment.

Secondly, the **Increasingly Sociable (IS)** group comprises students who perceive a positive atmosphere for making friends and feeling part of a new community with classmates, volunteers, and tutors (Feinstein et al., 2003; Field, 2005). The Group of IS participants refers to students feeling part of a community that emerges from the interactions at the Centres. Interacting in a friendly environment at the Learning Centres enables this type of participant to feel part of a community and develop a sense of belonging (OECD, 2001). A significant number of participants in Group IS are over 50 years old and have been in the United States for extended periods. They share a positive attitude towards socialising and exchanging ideas, beliefs, and life experiences with classmates and tutors. Although some participants aim to improve their employability, several students tend to participate in the courses to overcome personal challenges such as illiteracy or educational dropouts. Moreover, the months taking part in the classes reflect that most students perceive that long and constant interactions with classmates and tutors improve their feelings of belonging to a community if they are open to socialisation (Morrone et al., 2009). Students overcoming personal challenges such as illiteracy appreciate the opportunity to meet new people and socialise with classmates and tutors. Taking part in the courses to overcome personal challenges relates to a friendlier and more easy-going approach to communicating with classmates (Goodman et al., 2015).

Thirdly, the **Actively Sociable (AS)** group relates to students that developed a feeling of belonging in a new community of adult learners and have built social networks with classmates or tutors that go beyond the learning activities at the Centre (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). Some students in this category have not consolidated a long-lasting social network with many members but gradually are building networks with former classmates or people they met at the Centre. Group AS refers to participants building

a sense of community or social network beyond the learning activities at the Centres (Cramm et al., 2012). Expanding their interaction with students or tutors outside the Learning Centre characterises this type of participant. They have met new people due to their social skills and positive attitude towards benefiting from social networks with Latinos. For these highly sociable students, immigration or employment status are not determinant factors shaping their perception of social relationships. They do not report having experienced traumatic experiences when socialising with others (Osborn, 2013; Villalonga-Olives & Kawachi, 2017). They have recommended the courses to other people in the Latino community to attract more people to the Learning Centres. According to this classification, most students in Group AS perceive that adult education improves their capacity to meet new people, feel part of a new community and expand their social networks whilst pursuing educational goals (Cain et al., 2017; Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000).

By contrast, Group **Non-Sociable (NS)** represents the participants that disagree with the relationship between adult education and the opportunity to improve their social relationships, which is reflected by feelings of distress (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Students in this group tend to prioritise the learning activities to achieve educational goals over making friends or social networks. However, some of them consider that the environment in the classrooms is positive. They are characterised by having a cautious approach when dealing with new people because of negative experiences in the past. Similarly, immigration status can hinder a person's ability and willingness to interact with classmates (Sanchez, 2019). For example, lacking a residence permit is a significant barrier to immigrants' well-being, development, and opportunities for success (Krogstad et al., 2020). An illegal immigrant faces a deportation risk constantly, which can be a deterrent to participating in social events or educational activities (Acevedo, 2018). Some immigrants lacking residence permits prefer to keep a low profile to reduce deportation risk or problems with the authorities (Crowe & Lucas-Vergona, 2007). Moreover, the intrinsic motivation to join the courses shapes the students' attitudes at the Centre. Determining to achieve educational goals and improve their lives is a driving force that enables and pushes them to make the most of the classes. For this type of student, gaining work-related skills is why they take part in the courses, thus setting partially aside other benefits such as socialisation. This factor is associated with participation in job-related training (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Making new friendships is challenging for some individuals because they lack self-confidence, self-esteem, and the skills to communicate and share experiences with people (Harris & Orth, 2019).

Overall, I identified that the main factors impacting the student's perception are the personal attitudes toward meeting new people, previous negative experiences with friendships (Ding & Hargraves, 2009),

intrinsic motivation to participate in the classes, the student's goals, months of taking part in the courses, and employment and immigration status. These predominant sociodemographic factors interplay depending on the characteristics of each participant and confirm that taking part in adult education improves the student's capacity to meet new people, interact, build social networks, and gradually feel part of a homogeneous community (Panth, 2010). In this regard, research shows that participating in educational activities fosters interpersonal trust and feelings of belonging (Van Deth, 2003; Westlund & Adam, 2010; UNESCO, 2015). As the participants develop a sense of community belonging, I discovered that the categories of perception depend on the student's previous experiences when socialising, their attitude towards socialising, motivation to join the courses, constant positive interactions at the Centre and their educational goals (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). By contrast, these findings corroborate that a pessimistic attitudinal factor, a lack of interpersonal trust, low self-esteem, and negative experiences when socialising can affect the student's capacity to improve their sociability skills and build networks (Harris & Orth, 2019).

Furthermore, the profiles derive from the analytical categories of codes relating to social relationships and direct quotations from the participants. The four analytical codes correspond to the following classification gathered in thematic analysis.

a) **Communication with new people at the Centres**

The first code relates to students meeting new people at the Centre (**Relatively Sociable**). Most students reported having met new people at the Centre. Although, meeting people does not directly translate into new friendships or social networks based on trust that enables cooperation and social cohesion. Usually, building new friendships or social networks takes time and constant interaction between people sharing ideas, beliefs, traditions, concerns, activities (Hall, 2019; Hall, 2012) or a common language. Similarly, other factors such as sociability skills or previous experiences play a role in determining if a person is open to friendships or not. In this regard, a 19-year-old, employed, undocumented, attending basic education courses for two weeks (Casa Guerrero 10) reported:

"I think that being here encourages me to talk to more people if later I learn English, I could then speak with more people and have more friends. That could help me a lot. I would like to make new friends and start meeting new people."

This student (Casa Guerrero 10) feels motivated to talk to more people as he participates in the courses. He perceives an encouragement to start communication with new people at the Centre. Similarly, he

acknowledges that the language barrier to communicating with diverse groups is a relevant social integration matter for some students (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Some participants interact and share experiences only with Latinos because of language barriers, which constrains their full integration and builds bonding rather than bridging social capital (Geys & Murdoch, 2010). The bonding social capital derives from a limited form of integration, leading to individuals from similar groups isolating themselves from others (Lancee, 2012). It is well established that this form of social bonding can hinder the communication bridges between people from diverse backgrounds, for example, by their ethnicity or religious affiliation (Lancee, 2012; Walseth, 2007).

Taking part in the courses, nonetheless, has some benefits that improve students' socialization skills as they interact with people in similar contextual conditions and share their experiences. Interacting with people sharing similar contexts can facilitate the development of friendships and networks (Cain et al., 2017). A 39-year-old adult learner, an employed citizen attending the English courses for 12 months (Casa Guerrero 8), reported:

"Being here allows me to meet several people, and I am already starting to talk with them more. It has also allowed me to start trusting some of them. Trusting new people can be challenging even in the same community or neighbourhood. There are bad people everywhere, and I need to be careful all the time. My family are the only persons I fully trust."

The interviews revealed that educational settings represent an opportunity to establish communication bonds with new community members (OECD, 2001). Although, the socialisation process varies depending on all participants' skills, experiences, and interests. For some individuals, making new friendships is challenging because they lack the confidence and skills to communicate (Harris & Orth, 2019) and share their experiences and opinions with people they do not know or do not belong to their families. At the same time, some participants have different considerations about the importance of socialising. For some students, the primary goal is to achieve educational goals and make good use of time at the Centre for other activities beyond making new friends or networks. A 45-year-old retired student attending the basic education courses for one year to overcome illiteracy (Casa Durango 14) reported:

"I'm a bit sociable, but I have made a couple of friends here. Many people only come to the courses, and that's it, but I have been able to meet very valuable people. It creates good friendship and good trust with people I did not know before."

This participant (Casa Durango 14) acknowledges that some students have little interest in socialising because they focus on achieving educational goals as a priority. Achieving their goals is relevant for the participants regardless of their intrinsic motivation to join the courses (Samdal et al., 1998), but some students prioritise skills acquisition over meeting new people. The Centre offers social interaction as the tutorials take place in groups, and the participants sit together in sessions, which fosters social interaction and cooperation for some learning activities (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017). In this regard, a 53-year-old student attending the English courses for almost two years (Casa Durango 1) said:

"I consider myself friendly. On a 0-10 scale, I would grade myself on 8. I think that this course has helped me to meet more people I did not know before. I normally interact more with my group of Mexicans during the tutorials or beyond. I consider that it is more difficult to socialize with groups other than Latinos."

I discovered that social relationships are fostered at both Learning Centres at different intensities depending on various personal and contextual factors (Schuller et al., 2002). As the courses and face-to-face tutorials usually take place in groups, the participants communicate with each other, exchanging ideas and supporting classmates. Constant interaction and conversations beyond the formal teaching and tutoring can foster new friendships and networks that evolve into networks if the conditions exist (Morrone et al., 2009; Cain et al., 2017). For example, if a person has little interest in meeting people due to personal negative reasons or experiences, the chances of developing social networks are low. In contexts where immigrants lack a work or residence permit or fear deportation, the chances for such sociability can be hindered (Crowe & Lucas-Vergona, 2007).

In close relation to the interveirws, it is relevant to study f*rustration* as a feeling that impacts different aspects of individuals, which is rooted in disappointment (Jeronimus & Laceulle, 2017). It hinders their well-being, self-esteem, satisfaction with life, self-confidence, and ability to interact and share their experiences with others and generates insecurity between job and well-being (Vander Eist et al., 2012). It is significant to remember that some participants entered illegally into the United States, experiencing great difficulties and life-threatening events (Hennessy-Fiske, 2019). As suggested by some students, lacking a work or residence permit and frustration at work are relevant barriers to their social integration and personal development (Hayes & Hill, 2017). In this light, participation in adult education represents a new opportunity for most adult students that were left out of the formal education system in their home countries

(UIL, 2019; Schuller et al., 2004). This opportunity entails the chance to meet people in similar conditions pursuing educational goals with whom they can connect and build social networks of support (Healy, 2002). Moreover, the next sub-section explores the feelings of belonging to a social group that emerges from taking part in the courses at the Learning Centres.

b) **Feelings of belonging**

Social cohesion entails a feeling of connectedness to a social group where people share cultural beliefs, ideas, and experiences (Healy, 2002; Lancee, 2012). This group comprises the **Increasingly Sociable (IS)** type of participants. In this light, feeling part of a community or a group can benefit self-esteem, happiness, and satisfaction with life (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). This feeling of social connectedness can emerge in supportive environments where individuals share ideas, and the opportunities for interaction influence the sense of belonging (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). Constant social interactions in a positive environment enable social integration and connectedness. Regarding this approach, educational settings have been studied as places that foster social cohesion and feelings of belonging if certain conditions exist (OECD, 2001). For this study, I examine if the participants report improved feelings of belonging as part of the classes they take with people from the Latino community. For instance, the notion of socialisation, a 50-year-old participant, unemployed, a legal resident with over ten months taking part in the basic education classes to overcome illiteracy (Casa Guerrero 15):

"I have been able to meet valuable people here in the Plaza Comunitaria, the feeling of being with your people is very good. I am sociable, and I feel that it is important to have friends. Especially if your classmates are Mexicans or speak the same language. I believe that this interaction makes you feel like part of a family where everyone is learning new things every day."

Feelings of belonging to a social group are a significant element of personal development and subjective well-being (World Bank, 2016; Moser, 2012; Ryff, 1989). Social belonging enables social cohesion and cooperation between community members, sharing common ideas, beliefs, and circumstances (UIL, 2019; Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2017). The communication between students enables the development of networks that have the potential to become support mechanisms to overcome problems or share information beyond the Learning Centre. In this regard, another element that plays a determinant role in shaping the social interactions between adult learners is a shared language. Speaking the same language enables them to communicate and understand what is happening around them whilst developing potential networks

(Krumm & Plutzar, 2008). In this regard, a 55-year-old retired citizen attending basic technology courses at the Plaza Comunitaria for six months to improve her communication skills (Casa Guerrero 14) suggested:

"I am very sociable, and I have also been able to meet very nice people. I believe that good friendship is created through the language, but I only get along with Latinos. It is very difficult to communicate with people from other places who do not speak Spanish because my English is not good. I feel like coming here facilitates the creation of friendships and networks with new people, also taking the time to learn."

For instance, sharing a common language allows for better communication among adult learners (Quin Yow & Ming Lim, 2019). Nevertheless, it can also constrain the interaction with people beyond the Latino community, thus hindering their social integration into the entire community. The creation of small communities based on language and culture is a common phenomenon taking place in countries with high levels of immigration (Hickman et al., 2008; European Union, 2020). The feeling of belonging among people from the same country speaking the same language can be relevant for developing social networks. Social interaction in educational settings can be a mechanism to build friendships based on trust, especially if the students have commonalities as the 65-year-old, self-employed, undocumented, attending basic education to overcome illiteracy at the Plaza Comunitaria for 12 months (Casa Guerrero 13) stated:

"I believe that I have built friendships with my classmates. I feel like I'm home when I come to classes. It is very difficult to communicate with people from other countries who do not speak Spanish, and my English is very bad. I have not managed to improve my English in over 30 years. Since I arrived in the United States, I have only interacted with Mexicans or Latinos in my community because that is my network."

The student (Casa Guerrero 13) reports having an improved feeling of belonging because of the communication with classmates, which is a strong suggestion for creating new friendships (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). However, the type of social relationships built at the Centre corresponds to the dimension of bonding social capital where members of the same community develop further connections rather than expanding links with other communities (Claridge, 2018; Woolcock & Sweetser, 2002; Geys & Murdoch, 2010). This type of interaction has positive implications for individuals and communities but hinders community building at broader levels, as interaction does not occur between people from different backgrounds and beliefs. The social relationships with people beyond the Latino community seem to be weaker because of the language barrier and a lack of interest in learning English. As reported by the 55-

year-old participant living for 34 years in the United States, attending basic education for two years overcoming illiteracy (Casa Durango 11):

"I have been in the United States for many years. It was also complicated to learn to read and write because I did not have the time. I have made new friends and extended my network of people, but only because we speak the same language. English is not needed here much because we are all Latinos. You do not need English, not even at work."

Some participants indicated that participating in educational or recreational activities is challenging due to the lack of free time and other constraints (Bates & Aston, 2004). Lacking time represents a barrier to personal development and opportunities to improve a person's well-being. Closely related to the lack of time, not having financial support or money represents significant constraints to adult education (Spielhofer et al., 2010). Moreover, this type of statement (Casa Durango 11) indicates that people from the Latino community tend to establish strong ties whilst discounting the possibilities of interaction with other ethnic groups in Los Angeles. It does not mean that social relations within similar groups are strictly negative. Rather, opportunities exist to foster social cohesion if a balance point between bridging and bonding social capital occurs (Geys & Murdoch, 2010; Claridge, 2018; Westlund & Larsson, 2016). This type of perspective relates to students acknowledging that the courses enable them to socialise more but only with people from similar backgrounds. Nonetheless, the exclusive nature of bonding social capital is a source of social support and communication that enables people to share information and resources to overcome challenges (Claridge, 2018). As suggested by a 44-year-old unemployed, undocumented, attending basic education courses at the Plaza Comunitaria for 24 months (Casa Guerrero 12), many students share this vision:

"I have been able to meet very valuable people. My classmates are nice people, and I believe that I can trust some of them because we share similar contexts and ideas. I think we are here to help each other if someone is facing difficulties. It feels like we belong here because we have so many things in common."

As reported by some students, sharing similar contexts and socioeconomic backgrounds can be a reference point for future student social relationships. In this sense, adult education can foster interpersonal trust in environments where students share beliefs, language, and ethnic backgrounds (Krasovec & Kump, 2009). It is acknowledged that adults with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to display greater life satisfaction, interpersonal trust, and civic engagement than those with lower levels of attainment

(OECD, 2007). In this regard, the Learning Centres offer the possibility to communicate with new people to share experiences and difficulties in learning and beyond. Also, some participants report feeling integrated into this social group of adult students looking to improve their lives. The feeling of belonging relates to the capacity to understand each other and offer support if other student faces difficulties (Moser, 2012). Moreover, some students said that these interactions enabled them to develop new social networks beyond talking to new people and feeling integrated into a new social group. These networks take place beyond the tutorials and classes at the Learning Centre, which corroborates that the activities and interactions foster new support networks at the community level (Cain et al., 2017).

c) **Creation of Social Networks beyond the Centre**

In the two previous subsections, I indicated that some students had met new people at the Learning Centres. Other students reported feelings of belonging, with participants sharing similar backgrounds, making the networks limited and insular (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). By contrast, other students are creating extended social networks beyond the Learning Centre. These students belong to the **Actively Sociable (AS)** group. Regarding the creation of social networks beyond the learning activities, a 65-year-old student taking part in basic education for one year to overcome illiteracy (Casa Guerrero 13) reported:

"I am very sociable, and I have been able to meet people here. I have befriended many of my classmates. I feel like I'm home and part of a network of students sharing similar challenges, problems, and goals. It is very difficult to communicate with people from other places who do not speak Spanish because my English is very bad, but I have made friends I am still in contact with."

The connection after meeting new people at the Centre can transcend the learning activities organised by the coordinators. For some students, making friends is important because it allows them to feel understood and part of a group of people in similar circumstances (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). However, this is not always the case for students who lack communication skills or attitudes toward socialising in new settings. A good environment where people learn and share their experiences and ideas is a place that fosters social interaction, but the characteristics and context of everyone play a role correspondingly (OECD, 2001). Regarding the feeling of integration, a 46-year-old participant without a residence permit participating in a technology course for six months employed, interested in personal development over getting a better job (Casa Guerrero 3), reported:

"I feel that I get more involved and more connected with different groups. For example, I work with Asian people, and I believe I have improved how I communicate with people. I can already talk with more groups beyond Latinos. Improving my English proficiency enhances my level of communication with more people. Making friends is always good for me. In the course, I met people from my city. At the Centre, I met people from Guerrero, so the sense of community becomes larger from the courses."

This student (Casa Guerrero 3) considers that friendships originating at the Centre allowed him to expand his social networks with people beyond the Latino community in Los Angeles. Expanding the network of friends beyond the local ethnic group represents a challenge for people used to interactions only with members of the same community or neighbourhood (Claridge, 2018). Building self-confidence and self-esteem enabled this participant (Casa Guerrero 3) to communicate with new people. Still, he acknowledges that taking part in the courses encouraged him to build stronger ties with people from Guerrero. Although, interacting with people from similar backgrounds can lead to isolation and segregation if there are no bridges to interact with people from diverse backgrounds (Claridge, 2018; Geys & Murdoch, 2010). It is of interest that for some students communicating with people from the same state allows them to feel a stronger connection and a desire to establish longstanding bonds that act as support mechanisms when individuals face difficulties or want to share information about jobs or opportunities. This type of social connection is significant for migrant populations needing support networks to find employment, accommodation, or information about policies and programmes (Blumenstock, 2018). Regarding this approach towards socialising with immigrants beyond the Learning Centre, a 50-year-old self-employed undocumented participant taking part in the English and technology courses for almost two years (Casa Guerrero 2) reported:

"Yes, I have a community group with my neighbours that also have come to the Centre. I feel that we can be more efficient and want to carry out projects for the community. I am capable of more things for the people. We think of launching more community projects with our group of friends and neighbours that come here. This participation makes me feel like I want to do more volunteering."

Highly outgoing students with a positive attitude toward developing social networks and community groups benefit from the interactions at the Learning Centres (Comber, 2013). For this student (Casa Guerrero 2), the communication and interaction with her neighbours extend beyond the classes and learning activities. However, this participant (Casa Guerrero 2) interacts mostly with members of her community (Claridge, 2018). As most participants reported, the language barriers and the lack of self-confidence are significant

impediments to their social integration into American society (Ding & Hargraves, 2009). Moreover, some students consider that the relationships at the Centres can transform into social networks of support that go beyond the learning activities at the Centres (Lancee, 2012), which is an indication of the potential embedded in adult education for migrants.

On the other hand, some students disagreed with the notion that taking part in the classes allows them to meet new people. This disagreement is multidimensional and depends on unique personal and sociodemographic circumstances that I explore in the next subsection.

d) **Students who disagree**

Some students struggle to build friendships regardless of the common language and positive educational setting or social environment as they are unaware of the benefits of socialising in positive environments (Khullar et al., 2021). Some students argued that making friends is not always a straightforward process after meeting new participants. These participants belong to the **Non-Sociable group**.

According to the interviews, the environment has little significance for people who struggle socialising due to a lack of skills or attitude to communicate with new people or have low esteem due to negative past experiences (Pennacchia et al., 2018). I identified individual attributes and social circumstances interplaying in each student, defining their predisposition and attitude to make new friends and socialise at the Learning Centres. For instance, I encountered some participants that prioritise gaining knowledge and skills over making use of the time to socialise before, during or after the classes. The reasons are multi-layered and depend on unique contextual circumstances for each participant.

Some participants feel satisfied with superficial conversations and friendly interactions with classmates and tutors, while others feel encouraged to communicate more and share their ideas or experiences as they perceive that having friends can influence their lives (Department for Education, 2018; Comber, 2013). For example, a 30-year-old student, undocumented, employed who is attending technology-related courses for one week to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 6) said:

"I am not very sociable. I do not like having friends. I have contact with many people, but I do not have friends. Maybe this course helps me meet more people, but we will see in the future. I am not very confident that I will make new friends here."

This young student (Casa Guerrero 6) recently joined the Plaza Comunitaria looking for job-related training. Personal circumstances define this person's ability to make friends or socialise with more people. A negative experience with previous friendships determines a person's willingness to socialisation in different settings because of a lack of trust or fear of harmful intentions. This disposition hinders the possibility of communicating and exchanging experiences with classmates and tutors (Pennacchia et al., 2018). In this regard, constant interaction with other students at the Centre does not ensure the creation of social networks. These social interactions play a defining role in old-age students as they continue to enjoy and benefit from friendships in creative ways (Blieszner et al., 2019).

Other external factors, such as attitude and enthusiasm, shape these connections (Gioti & Perdiki, 2019). According to the student's perceptions, personal circumstances, past experiences, and immigration status are determinant factors that can define a person's attitude towards socialising, meeting people, trusting, or sharing personal issues. This set of negative circumstances or day-to-day difficulties plays a role in a person's willpower to connect with new people. This student (Casa Guerrero 6) indicates that living in a dangerous neighbourhood makes her feel unsafe when interacting with people (Baum et al., 2009; Young et al., 2004).

Moreover, research indicates that living in constant danger influences the way the students perceive social interactions beyond their communities, affecting their attitude in the classrooms and interpersonal trust (Gorbunova et al., 2015). This lack of a positive attitude towards socialising can also shape the student's academic experience in the long run. By contrast, a positive and open attitude toward participating in educational activities can be the difference between gaining skills or learning under pressure (Duckworth & Cara, 2012; Schuller & Desjardins, 2011). For example, a 68-year-old adult learner, an unemployed citizen with over 36 months at Learning Centre overcoming personal challenges through adult education (Casa Guerrero 9), said:

"I have not made great friends here, but I have met valuable people with whom I can communicate things without necessarily considering them great friends. I believe that making real friends is a long process that requires more time and trust. I am not sure how many friends I have in my life, but certainly not many. I have always been careful and a bit fearful because you can get hurt."

As reported by these students, different factors and individual attitudes determine their perception of new social relationships. Some participants have friendly attitudes toward meeting new people and creating

networks, whilst others struggle to communicate due to the lack of disposition, willingness, self-confidence, or the skills to build social networks with classmates and tutors (Khullar et al., 2021). From the interviews, I observe that lacking these skills and attitudes towards socialising are crucial factors hindering students' capacity to build social relationships that can benefit them. Concerning this predisposition, a 53-year-old taking part in English courses for 24 months employed, looking to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 1), suggested:

"I am not really sociable. I have tried to make new friends, but I come here to learn, I do my things, pay attention, greet my classmates and tutors, and then I go back home without socialising very much."

For this student (Casa Guerrero 1), the courses represent an opportunity to learn English with the support of specialised tutors that assist them in Spanish. This participant's top priority is looking for better jobs by improving his communication skills. By pursuing this specific objective, this participant prioritises acquiring knowledge over having the opportunity to interact with new people or tutors. Therefore, socialising represents a secondary element that emerges from the interaction at the Centre, but it has little value for this student. As other interviewees share this notion about social relationships, making friends or social networks is not as relevant as acquiring the knowledge they envisioned and achieving educational goals for work or life, as they perceive this personal effort as a cost of learning (Department of Education, 2018). In addition to placing little significance on social relationships, the lack of skills and negative experiences with other people shapes their perception. In this regard, a 48-year-old employed participant attending basic education for one year, looking for better jobs (Casa Guerrero 7), said:

"It is not always easy to make new friends because trusting people is difficult. I cannot always trust people easily and befriend them. I am always careful even with people from my community regardless of the common language."

As indicated by this student (Casa Guerrero 7), having a common language, and sharing the same culture are not necessarily straightforward indications for developing social networks. Other external and individual factors are significant when people interact in educational settings. These elements are mostly determined by previous negative or positive experiences and an individual's social skills (Pennacchia et al., 2018). For example, research indicates that social and emotional skills developed in early childhood have long-term effects on adults' lives (Goodman et al., 2015). For non-sociable students, it is interesting that adult education is perceived as a conduit for better lives that are not necessarily related to social

relationships or networks (Manninen et al., 2014). As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, after coding the interviews, I considered the context-mechanism-outcome configurations as a mechanism to identify the factors and circumstances influencing the students' perceptions.

4.3.1 **CMO configurations concerning social relationships**

I identified relevant sociodemographic characteristics such as age, previous personal experiences and intrinsic motivation to participate in the courses that shape the students' perceptions of social relationships (Pennacchia et al., 2018; Department of Education, 2018). In this light, I identified the following CMO configurations concerning developing social relationships at the Learning Centres that derive from adult education theory and showcase the contextual variability defining perceptions.

- CMO configurations leading to a positive impact on social relationships

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C1: Students with a positive attitude towards socialising interact with classmates in a positive environment for short periods	**M1**: Students feel included, supported, and develop a sense of positive communication with new classmates	**O1**: Improved sociability skills to interact with new students but limited networking in the short term
CMO1: When students take part in adult education with a positive attitude towards socialising in a friendly environment, they gradually perceive positive effects on their sociability skills and interact with new people		

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C2: Middle-aged long-term students with a positive attitude towards socialising who have been living in the United States for extended periods	**M2**: Students feel motivated to socialise with classmates in a positive atmosphere and start feeling part of a new community with people sharing a common language, culture, and goals	**O2**: Students build networks and social groups constrained to the interactions at the Centres and recommend the courses to other people in the Latino community
CMO2: When middle-aged students and long-term residents in the United States take part in adult education for long term with a positive attitude towards socialising, they develop a feeling of community belonging constrained to students sharing the same language, culture, and educational goals		

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C3: Highly sociable and long-term students with outstanding sociability skills and a background of positive extended social networks are gradually accomplishing their educational goals	**M3**: Highly sociable students feel encouraged to extend their community or social networks beyond the learning activities at the Centres	**O3**: Students build extensive networking beyond the activities at the Centres engaging with people outside their social circle

CMO3: Highly sociable long-term students with outstanding capacity and attitude to develop social networks feel encouraged to extend their community networks with people beyond the Centres as they achieve educational goals

- CMO configuration not leading to a positive impact on social relationships

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C4: Students looking for better employment with a negative attitude towards socialising due to negative experiences in the past lack self-confidence to interact and socialise	**M4**: Students feel motivated to gain work-related skills to compete in the labour market and set aside building social relationships with classmates	**O4**: Students prioritise the learning activities to achieve educational goals over making friends or social networks, thus, struggle to build social relationships even with people sharing culture and language
CMO4: Students with a negative attitude and a cautious approach towards socialising due to negative past experiences feel motivated to gain work-related skills to compete in the labour market, set aside building social relationships with classmates, and thus, struggle to build social networks even with people sharing the same culture and language		

The analysis yielded four CMO configurations concerning the development of social relationships. The MEVyT programme gradually improves the sociability skills of participants without negative past experiences with friendships and a good attitude toward socialising (Mckenzie & Harpham, 2002; McMahon, 1998). By contrast, students who experienced difficult situations and who have a cautious approach toward socialising tend to struggle with new social groups (Pennacchia et al., 2018). These findings confirm the positive effects of adult education in fostering new social relationships (Post, 2016; Feinstein et al., 2003; Schuller et al., 2002). Figure 4.3.1 depicts how the MEVyT programme fosters social relationships.

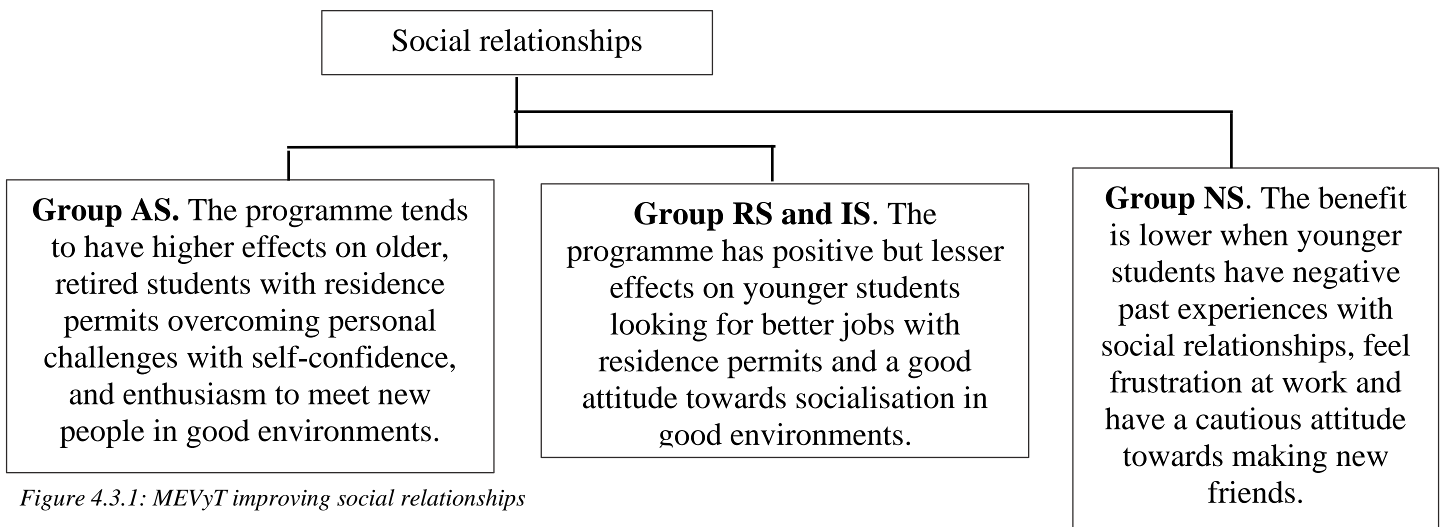


Figure 4.3.1: MEVyT improving social relationships

The following subsection considers the second element of Social Capital theory addressed in the literature review chapter. I analyse interpersonal trust and its relationship to adult education (Borum, 2010; Cofta,

2021) for migrant populations in Los Angeles. This theoretical approach is part of the Social Capital dimension included in the literature review of this doctoral work.

4.4 **Interpersonal Trust**

In this section, I analyse the relationship between adult education and interpersonal trust as part of Social Capital theory. The literature shows that participating in educational activities can foster trust-based social relationships (Field, 2005; Dragolov et al., 2013; Frederiksen et al., 2016). Social Capital theory entails notions referring to social networks, reciprocities arising from them, and their value in achieving mutual goals. People interact to achieve specific goals, whereas people in isolation are likely to suffer from unpleasant feelings of loneliness (Field, 2005). Regarding this theoretical approach, the research question of this study is that taking part in the MEVyT classes fosters interpersonal trust as migrant adults gain skills and overcome personal challenges.

Concerning the perception of adult education and interpersonal trust, I coded three subthemes that explain what the students perceive from the courses. Table 4.4.1 comprises these elements and the number of references to interpersonal trust.

Main Themes	Subthemes	References
Interpersonal Trust	Meeting people you can trust	20
	It's complicated to trust people	19
	Always careful regardless of ethnicity	14

Table 4.4.1: Interpersonal trust codes

I developed profiles for each subtheme to understand the perceptions and the different types of students. The first profile corresponds to students with a positive attitude and meeting new people they can gradually trust at the Learning Centres. The second category relates to participants with a cautious approach but who suggest that trusting people outside their close circle is a complex task. Lastly, the third profile refers to students with a negative attitude, saying that ethnicity or having similar cultural, and demographic backgrounds are irrelevant factors when trusting people. Following the same criterion as in the previous theoretical dimension (Social Relationships), I designated names to identify the three profiles. The first group corresponds to **Actively Trustful (AT)**, the second group relates to the concept of **Relatively Trustful (RT)**, and the last one refers to **Distrustful Students (DS)**.

As to the **Actively Trustful (AT)** students, I identify predominant but not absolute characteristics that influence their perceptions of interpersonal trust. In this regard, age, time participating at the Centre,

intrinsic motivation, employment condition and immigration status are factors characterising students' improvement in trust and life satisfaction (Gallie & Russell, 1998). This type of participant begins their course participation with a cautious approach but is open to trusting classmates and tutors as they progress in learning. For instance, long-term older retired students with a residence permit attending the courses to overcome personal development challenges tend to agree more that adult education can foster interpersonal trust (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998). This perception relates to homogeneity as a factor within communities which is crucial in building interpersonal trust because individuals with similar characteristics that constantly interact tend to trust more (Morrone et al., 2009). Around half of the participants belong to the AT group because they believe that adult education gradually fosters interpersonal trust (Borum, 2010). Research shows that trusting relates to a process of rational choice, behavioural assumptions, risks, and norms. For instance, economic theory considers repeated social interactions and cooperation central to fostering trust (James, 2002). According to the literature, the combination of social cooperation and repeated social interactions, and maximisation of long-term self-interest are enabling factors that encourage trustworthiness (Reiersen, 2018). I identified that social cooperation in friendly environments, a positive attitude and repeated positive interactions gradually enable the development of interpersonal trust (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

The **Relatively Trustful (RT)** participants tend to be younger employed, looking for better employment through adult education, sometimes lacking a work permit. These are not absolute sociodemographic characteristics for students in this group, but a tendency is observable. I relate this group of participants to the concept of limited trust because they consider that trusting new people at the Learning Centres is a difficult task. Nevertheless, they are relatively more open to developing trust with students sharing similar contextual characteristics, which relates to the notion of Bonding Social Capital (Sel et al., 2022). In this regard, this sense of limited trust relates to the concept of "thick trust", conceptualised by Putnam as embedded in strong and frequent social relationships based on community norms over personal experiences (Putnam, 2000). This theoretical approach means that RT students appreciate people sharing their cultural and sociodemographic characteristics over strangers or outsiders (Morrone et al., 2009). Considering this notion, the likelihood of an RT student trusting another immigrant from the same country or region is higher (Uslaner, 2011). Conceptually, this means that the environment at the Centres can enable the cultural transmission of trust between migrant populations (Uslaner, 2011; Moschion & Tabasso, 2014). A RT student usually remains hesitant and cautious when dealing with classmates and tutors. However, some elements stand out as hindering factors for trust. For example, I observced that having previous negative experiences can define the student's attitude toward interacting with and trusting new people. A lack of

disposition to communicate and interact with classmates is a conditioning factor for socialising (Blieszner et al., 2019). This condition relates to the capacity of shy or withdrawn students to socialise as they perceive that they have few friends. These elements prevent students from trusting classmates and tutors as they continue learning.

Lastly, participants who disregard ethnicity or cultural similarities when trusting others belong to the **DS group (distrustful students)**. This type of participant disagrees with a connection between adult education and interpersonal trust, arguing that building friendships, social networks, or interpersonal trust are not substantial elements fostered at the Learning Centres. Distrustful students consider their ethnic backgrounds or cultural similarities irrelevant to trusting more if they suffer from negative experiences or traumas (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). I identified a tendency showing that students looking for better employment opportunities are more cautious when dealing with others, regardless of their ethnicity and sociodemographic backgrounds. This group comprises mostly younger newcomers looking for better employment opportunities and focusing primarily on gaining new skills. Expectations of building interpersonal trust are very low among students in this group. I observed a predisposition to stay alert and cautious when meeting new people, especially if the participants feel insecure in their neighbourhood (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998; Martinez et al., 2019). In this light, it is noticeable that the MEVyT programme has a limited impact on trust if students are predisposed to be careful interacting with other people regardless of ethnicity, a common language, or socioeconomic background (Moschion & Tabasso, 2014).

Overall, I identified that the main factors impacting the student's perception of interpersonal trust are age, motivation to join the courses, the attitude towards trusting, months of taking part and employment status (Samdal et al., 2018; Comber, 2013). These findings confirm the relationship between adult education and interpersonal trust according to the student's previous negative experiences when trusting other people, constant positive interactions at the Centre, their intrinsic motivation to join the courses and their attitude toward trusting (Pennacchia et al., 2018). By contrast, adult education has limited effects on students who take part in the courses with a cautious approach towards socialising. Similarly, they tend to prioritise gaining skills for better employment over fostering communication with classmates, as this factor can be related to their professional performance and economic prosperity (De Bliek, 2013). As indicated in previous sections, these analytical categories and profiles emerged from the semi-structured interviews.

a) **Meeting people that I can trust**

Social interactions at the Learning Centres occur during the tutorials when students sit together in groups and receive support from teachers to carry out the activities. Some students observe that interpersonal trust is fostered through constant interactions with classmates and tutors in positive environments where people from similar backgrounds learn and exchange experiences (Pennacchia et al., 2018). The students in this category belong to the **Actively Trustful group (AT)**.

Most participants acknowledge that building interpersonal is a complex process that requires time, enthusiasm, and willingness (Gorbunova et al., 2015). The number of references shows that mentions were given to the recognition around meeting people they can trust. Progressively, students are referring to interpersonal trust as an outcome of the social interactions at the Learning Centres, which confirms the theoretical approaches concerning adult education and interpersonal trust (Borum, 2010; Lancee, 2012). Actively Trustful participants perceive that the learning environment at the Centre is positive, which can lead to interpersonal trust. This notion accords with an aspect of social capital theory that highlights the role of community networks, civic participation, and positive exchanges among neighbours (Woolcock, 2001). Regarding this recognition, a 53-year-old, employed, legal resident, attending English courses at the Learning Centre for 24 months to improve her employment opportunities (Casa Guerrero 1) indicated:

"I am always careful when it comes to trusting people you never know, so you always must be careful. Little by little, I'm building trust with my classmates. But I would like to get to know them better and consider them my friends and trust them more. It is not an easy task. In my country, people are always alert."

The perception of interpersonal trust relates to an individual's capacity to rely on others' intentions and positive behaviour as the trust question captures an individual's beliefs about others and themselves (Sapienza et al., 2007). This ability refers to the understanding that other individuals will not deliberately harm others, thus enabling social cohesion, positive interactions, and harmony. The literature shows that trust determines social relationships, cohesion, and socioeconomic development (Martikke, 2017). A society where individuals trust each other develops stronger connections and participation in civic matters (Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020). As suggested by this long-term participant (Casa Guerrero 1), building interpersonal trust is not simple and requires some contextual and personal circumstances to facilitate this process. In this light, educational settings can be places where personal interaction enables social communication and trust among participants. Interactions at school can foster long-standing cohesion and

social participation (Comber, 2013). The interactions occurring in educational settings follow unique conditions as people take part in the courses pursuing different goals and come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Similarly, past experiences, principles and attitudes can become determinant factors around trusting or being careful with others (Pennacchia et al., 2018). For instance, a 65-year-old retired legal resident, living in the United States for 42 years, attending basic education courses for 12 months to overcome illiteracy (Casa Durango 5) mentioned:

"Although I know my classmates here in the Plaza Comunitaria, I feel that I am always careful to trust people, I did not know them before, but now I feel that we are building more trust, but you always must be careful in dealing with people. Slowly, I believe that some of my classmates are trustworthy."

This student (Casa Durango 5) reports that building trust with his classmates is a gradual process conditioned by his cautious position towards socialising and trusting new people (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). The participant struggled with trusting classmates at the Centre since he started taking the classes due to a predisposition to be careful when dealing with new individuals. Nevertheless, the perception of his classmates' trustworthiness has been positive throughout time, showing that adult education can facilitate trust under some circumstances (Woolcock & Sweetser, 2002). These conditions relate to constant and positive interactions in friendly environments where students learn together whilst sharing their experiences and opinions (Murtin et al., 2018; Morrone et al., 2009). Regarding this gradual process, a 67-year-old legal citizen retired who has been attending basic education courses for over two years to overcome illiteracy (Casa Guerrero 11) mentioned:

"You can trust people a little. I trust all my classmates here at the Learning Centre. Surely being here has also helped me to trust people because we have things in common. I think that we all have similar goals and should help each other if we can."

Although this student (Casa Guerrero 11) reports having a positive approach to trusting her classmates, she acknowledges an improvement in trusting them with caution, keeping in mind that people can betray or harm others under different circumstances (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). I identified a predisposition from most students in both Learning Centres to protect themselves from potential mistreatment or harm, which is consistent with the low levels of interpersonal trust reported in Mexico[14] (Morris & Klesner, 2010). Most

[14] National Institute of Statistics and Geography. INEGI 2020
https://www.inegi.org.mx/contenidos/programas/encuci/2020/doc/ENCUCI_2020_Presentacion_Ejecutiva.pdf

participants perceive that dealing with new people and classmates is not a straightforward process. Nonetheless, concerning the environment at the Learning Centre that fosters trust, a 55-year-old retired citizen who has been attending computing courses for six months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Guerrero 14) suggested:

"I feel that the atmosphere at the Learning Centre is good. A positive vibe allows me to trust my classmates a little more. Beyond the Learning Centre, you always must be careful even if you don't speak Spanish. I feel that slowly I am trusting more people, but I am always careful. I have always been careful."

Overall, students who acknowledged an improvement in trusting classmates at the Learning Centre also confirmed that trusting their classmates a little more occurs throughout time and constant interactions in positive environments (Samdal et al., 2018; Comber, 2013). From these references, I identify predominant but not absolute characteristics that influence students' perceptions of interpersonal trust. In this regard, age, time participating at the Centre, employment condition, and immigration status characterise students, referring to an improvement in trust. For instance, long-term older retired students with a residence permit attending the courses to overcome personal development challenges tend to agree more that adult education can foster interpersonal trust (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). In the subsequent subsection, I examine why students perceive trusting a person as difficult and their predominant features.

b) **Trusting people is complicated**

From the interviews, I identified that trusting new people is perceived as a complex task that does not occur straightforwardly (Borum, 2010). Most students from both Learning Centres report being careful when they meet people trying to protect themselves from potential harm or maltreatment (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). Despite that some students have an optimistic perception of the relationships between adult education and interpersonal trust, the general belief is that trusting is a complex undertaking. Students in this category belong to the **Relatively Trustful (RT)** group.

A predisposition to being careful and cautious relates to previous beliefs and experiences developed throughout peoples' lives. People are not always willing to take risks on the behaviours and actions of others, which relates to a prediction about the behaviour and nature of the other (Campbell-Cree & Lotten, 2018). In this regard, a survey conducted by the MORI Social Research Institute in the United Kingdom in 2004 showed that people with higher levels of trust tend to be more educated, older, and better off. More

details about trust levels and contextual features indicate that having a degree predicts interpersonal and community trust (Frederiksen et al., 2016). Similarly, other factors identified as indicators are having a sympathetic attitude towards the difficult circumstances faced by diverse groups, age, participation in community activities and age showing those aged 35 and older tend to be more trusting (Duffy, 2004). These are factors that shape the respondent's perceptions in each context. I examine the students' observations to define if similar contextual circumstances can be referred to in the existing literature.

In analysing the students' perceptions of interpersonal trust, I identified that a vast number of participants disagree with the relationship between adult education and interpersonal trust. For example, a 46-year-old part-time employed, undocumented student attending technology classes for six months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Guerrero 3) mentioned:

"You always must be careful in this country. You can't trust people. Being here doesn't have much to do with my trust for classmates or other people. You always must be careful, although I like socialising. My husband and I always want to be sociable and communicate with neighbours. It is better to have contact with them than to be strangers. It is better to have them close and to know more about them".

Students that have lived in the United States for extended periods do not necessarily have developed a feeling of belonging or have integrated into American society (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). The tendency I observe refers to a lack of skills and a central predisposition to stick together with people from the same country or culture that share a common language. Nevertheless, the set of things these students have in common does not seem to influence the perception of trust. Several students perceive that the courses have little or no influence on trusting classmates as they have specific goals and take the time to leverage the knowledge they gain. In this way, some students lack the willingness and openness to trust new people as they are mostly predisposed by a widespread lack of trust in their home countries (Frederisken et al., 2016). The process of taking the risk of trusting new people is complex (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998), as indicated by a 54-year-old employed citizen looking for better jobs attending basic education for two months (Casa Durango 10) suggested:

"I believe that trusting someone is complicated. Nowadays, it is complicated to trust someone new. You must always be careful. Trusting people is always complicated for me. I have no discrimination against anyone, but it is difficult to trust. I have always been cautious."

Some people feel that trusting someone new cannot occur straightforwardly. In this regard, when people perceive that other people can harm or deceive them, they become more protective, which hinders the development of a trustful atmosphere (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). A predisposition to be alert and cautious is significant for the student's protection and development of emotional skills to connect with others (Goodman et al., 2015; Borum, 2010). At the same time, the willingness to open to new people can enable more fruitful relationships based on trust. This student (Casa Durango 10) believes that trusting someone is complicated despite his positive attitude towards socialising and respecting classmates. I noticed different social interactions and positions towards building friendships and trust. Some students have more open attitudes, social skills, and approaches to communicating with new people, whilst others struggle to develop positive communication and interactions (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016).

Although most participants are always careful when trusting other people, some have gradually developed a more open approach to trusting classmates and tutors (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). This approach to trusting people from similar backgrounds relates to research indicating that interpersonal trust can be deconstructed into two categories, limited and generalised trust. For instance, the limited notion refers to trust between individuals who know each other in well-known environments such as family, friends, or neighbours. In contrast, the generalised notion of trust captures reliance between acquaintances or strangers (Murtin et al., 2018). This approach suggests that several students remain cautious despite constantly interacting at the Learning Centres but relatively trust people from the same country a little more. For example, a 30-year-old, part-time employed, undocumented, attending computing courses for one week to improve her employment opportunities (Casa Guerrero 6) suggested:

"I am always careful when trusting someone. The area where I live is very dangerous. I must be more careful because it is full of street gangs and vandalism. My neighbourhood can be a bit dangerous. There are many people of colour. Although it can always be complicated, I would trust a Mexican a little more. I would say that people must always be cautious."

As suggested by the literature, people living in dangerous or unsafe neighbourhoods experience many types of stress that affect many aspects of their lives (Martinez et al., 2019; Gorbunova et al., 2015). External factors such as the perception of violence generate distress that can harm the predisposition and alertness of the students (Borum, 2010). This student (Casa Guerrero 6) reports living in an area where she feels unsafe due to the criminal activities of street gangs and vandalism. This stressful situation affects her

approach to communicating with her classmates as she perceives that earning someone's trust is complex because she interacts in complicated environments (Martinez et al., 2019).

There is an anticipation that people can be potentially aggressive and capable of harming each other, which hinders the students' attitude toward trusting (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016). This participant (Casa Guerrero 6) acknowledges a sense of reluctance against individuals from different ethnic backgrounds and people of colour. This hesitancy to socialise with people from other ethnic groups relates to the strong social ties that develop amongst individuals sharing similar culture, beliefs, or ethnic backgrounds, which relates to the bonding social capital approach that considers a sense of exclusion or isolation between social groups (Geys & Murdoch, 2010). Trusting a new person is perceived as challenging because there are different risks associated with potential harm and a lack of confidence (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016; Gorbunova et al., 2015). In this regard, a 19-year-old employed, an undocumented student attending Basic Education courses for two weeks to improve his employment opportunities (Casa Guerrero 10) mentioned:

"I believe that you always must be careful trusting in other people. Although I only trust in God. I always have reservations about trusting people. There are bad people everywhere, and you never know what to expect. Maybe being here at the Learning Centre can help me trust more but I am not sure."

Although this participant (Casa Guerrero 10) considers trusting new people difficult, he perceives that adult education can become a friendly environment where students can gradually trust each other (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). The expectation shows that he started believing in his classmate's honesty and sincerity as he interacted more with them at the Learning Centre. A sense of community and social belonging can allow the students to gain skills and achieve educational goals whilst building trust (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). In this sense, having a respectful approach toward other people allows this student to communicate amicably and develop a feeling of friendship with his classmates if there is a feeling of reciprocity (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2003).

This positive position builds the foundations for interpersonal trust and social cohesion and confirms that adult education contributes to social cohesion and integration (Manninen et al., 2014). Nonetheless, there is a tendency in the students' behaviours to be cautious but polite at first. In this regard, a 23-year-old citizen unemployed student attending English classes for three months to improve her employment opportunities (Casa Durango 6) suggested:

"It is difficult to trust people 100%. I am always careful in trusting new people. Especially at the beginning, people must be cautious. I always offer my friendship at first, but I am also careful with classmates around me. I am friends with people as long as they respect me and offer friendship with transparency."

The initial position of most students refers to being careful and suspicious when meeting new people (Furlong & Yasukawa, 2016; Lewicki & McAllister, 1998). As this participant (Casa Durango 6) suggests, he is always cautious at first, showing respect for his classmates and tutors, but fully trusting someone is not straightforward. The assumption relates to a process of interaction and exchange of friendship and respect between individuals that gradually enable trust and cooperation. Without this progression, most students perceive that trusting is complicated. This self-protective approach shown by most participants connects to the notion of self-preservation that acts as a mechanism behind the decision-making to trust or distrust people considering benefits, risks, and chances of survival (Cofta, P., 2021). From the interviews, I observed a tendency of most participants to have initial suspicions about classmates' behaviours and attitudes (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998; Campbell-Cree & Lotten, 2018).

This predisposition is sometimes accompanied by a respectful and polite approach when socialising at the Learning Centres, enabling positive communication and interactions that can become the foundations for interpersonal trust. Several students share this perception and approach toward trusting new people at the Learning Centres. Most students are predisposed to be careful when trusting. Nevertheless, they are polite during the learning activities showing respect to other people, which can contribute to interpersonal and community trust towards an exchange of information that connects to economic performance and transactions (Moschion and Tabasso, 2014). By contrast, a different group of participants consider trusting difficult regardless of the individuals' ethnic background or cultural connections.

c) **Always careful regardless of ethnicity**

Most students are always careful and suspicious when meeting new people. As indicated in the literature, previous experiences and predispositions can shape the capacity to trust other people and distinguish from harm or not (Borum, 2010; Marchand & Vonk, 2005). This initial predisposition is present in most students at the Learning Centre, where participants constantly interact with new people. Students with a polite and respectful approach toward socialising report experiencing positive interactions and communication with their classmates, which increases the chances for interpersonal trust (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Khullar et al., 2021). At the same time, other groups of participants remain hesitant to risk further socialisation with

new people despite sharing a common language or cultural aspects (Mallows, 2014). Participants in this category belong to the **Distrustful Students** group. Following this argument, a 15-year-old born in the United States, unemployed, looking for better employment opportunities in the hospitality sector, attending for one week (Casa Guerrero 5) suggested:

"I believe that you always need to be careful, it is difficult to trust people. For me, the country of origin does not matter. You cannot easily trust people. In my country, people don't trust each other easily because there is much violence in the streets, and everyone can hurt you at any time."

This student (Casa Guerrero 5) is hesitant to trust people from her same country sharing a common language and cultural values and beliefs. For this participant, the capacity to communicate in the same language does not translate into trusting more, as referred to in other studies (Mallows, 2014; Quin Yow et al., 2019). There is a partial disconnection between the country of origin and trust for migrant populations. For some students, community building relates to different aspects and determinants that are not necessarily articulated around the country of origin and a common language. It takes more elements for some students to trust their classmates than their country of origin and ethnicity (Fehr & Fischbacher, 2003; Lewicki & McAllister, 1998; Manninen et al., 2014).

For some participants, the cultural transmission of trust is embedded in their mindsets to remain alert when trusting people regardless of their home country. The literature on interpersonal trust shows that individual approaches relate to home country and host country dynamics, suggesting that immigrants carry similar degrees of trust from their home country (Uslaner, 2011; Moschion & Tabasso, 2014). Some students confirm an inclination to distrust people as a protection mechanism against potential harm or neglect. Concerning this perception, a 50-year-old unemployed citizen attending Citizenship training for five months (Casa Durango 2) mentioned:

"I think you should always be cautious with everyone in general. Being here has not motivated me to trust people either, because I don't have much contact with them. I mostly come here and focus on my courses. I say hi to everyone, but I do not socialise much after the classes."

This statement is consistent with the arguments from the other group about the need to be careful when dealing with new people (Lewicki & McAllister, 1998). This student (Casa Durango 2) shows that attending the courses for five months does not contribute to building interpersonal trust because there is no contact

with classmates. In this case, the personal disposition to interact with other individuals in educational settings perhaps explains the lack of willingness to communicate as this participant hesitates to interact and socialise more, which constrains him from benefiting from having friends (Khullar et al., 2021). The environment is not conducive to deeper communication with his classmates and trust for this student. Similarly, some students have the perception that adult education does not influence building trust as the 55-year-old legal resident, employed, attending basic education courses for 24 months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 11) mentioned:

"You always must be careful regardless of where they are from. After class, each of us has a life. We usually talk to each other and trust each other, but we are just classmates. I believe that communication is cordial, and the environment is amicable, but I do not believe we are a group of close friends."

Building interpersonal trust is a complex and paradoxical process that requires more social interactions, attitude, sociability skills, and a positive environment that interplays to make individuals decide to trust other people (James, 2002). This situation is fostered because people have more trust in people with whom they are used to interacting in positive environments (Morrone et al., 2009). Research suggests that interpersonal trust is less developed in close societies dominated by family ties and shared norms, also known as "thick trust" (Sel et al., 2022). By contrast, "thin trust" relates to trust towards outsiders. In this regard, trusting is a rational process requiring a set of elements and dispositions to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of ideas in a cordial atmosphere (Healy, 2002). The cultural transmission of trust is present in several students that remain hesitant towards new people regardless of their country of origin and cultural backgrounds. For example, a 53-year-old citizen employed, attending basic education courses for over 36 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 12) mentioned:

"I believe that even among Latinos, there are differences. We have our own beliefs and understandings of things. It is not easy to trust everyone. You must always be careful. I try to communicate amicably and nicely, but I have reservations about my classmates. I do not know if I should try to socialise more or beyond the Learning Centre."

Educational settings can become meeting places where people develop a sense of belonging if favourable conditions and personal attitudes are in place (OECD, 2001), and adult education is an opportunity to gain skills and knowledge for specific activities or to compete more successfully in the labour market (UIL, 2019; OECD, 2007; 2006). Regarding this approach, some participants focus on achieving educational

goals to improve their living conditions and opportunities for a better life. This determination is a driving force that will push them to accomplish further goals. Nonetheless, building networks and friendships can materialise into better communication, exchange of ideas and support that require interpersonal trust to flourish (Khullar et al., 2021; Wolfe & Haveman, 2002; Feinstein et al., 2003).

These findings confirm the gradual benefits of adult education in fostering interpersonal trust (Cain et al., 2017). The RT and AT participants corroborate those constant interactions in a positive environment based on a positive and open attitude toward socialising and trusting, which enables them to feel part of a community of people they can gradually trust (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). This statement suggests that interpersonal trust is not fostered spontaneously as part of adult education. Rather, it is a process that requires time (Borum, 2010). By contrast, research shows that actions fostering interpersonal trust in complex and dangerous environments can affect mental health (Martinez et al., 2019). Moreover, studies show that the lack of interpersonal trust may lead to increased criminality, intolerance, or low levels of economic growth (Van Deth, 2003).

In analysing the effects of the MEVyT programme, I considered the context-mechanism-outcome configurations as a mechanism to identify the factors and circumstances influencing the students' perceptions of interpersonal trust. In the following subsection, I explore the context-mechanism-outcomes configurations that activate interpersonal trust.

4.4.1 **CMO configurations concerning interpersonal trust**

From the interviews, I identified that building interpersonal trust is closely related to the disposition or enthusiasm to make new friends and social networks (Khullar, 2021). I discovered relevant sociodemographic characteristics such as age, motivation to join the courses, the attitude towards trusting, months of taking part and the students' employment status. I identified the following CMO configurations relating to interpersonal trust that showcase the contextual variability defining different perceptions.

- CMO configuration leading to a positive impact on interpersonal trust

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C1: Long-term elderly retired students with a residence permit who attend the courses to overcome personal development challenges and are open to trusting	**M1**: Constant interactions in positive environments enable students to develop trust as they progress achieving their educational goals	**O1**: Interpersonal trust is gradually fostered among students that socialise in a positive environment

CMO1: When long-term elderly students are retired and attend adult education with the goal to overcome personal challenges, they constantly interact with classmates in a positive environment whilst achieving their educational goals, which enables them to gradually develop interpersonal trust

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C2: Middle-aged employed students looking for better employment who are relatively more open to trusting other students sharing similar contextual characteristics who have an open and polite attitude to communicating and sharing their experiences with new people	**M2**: Constant interactions in a positive environment where communication is polite between students enables a sense of belonging that generates a limited sense of interpersonal trust	**O2**: The environment at the Centres enables the gradual cultural transmission of trust between homogeneous social and ethnical groups
CMO2: When middle-aged students taking part in adult education looking for better employment opportunities have an open and polite disposition to communicating with classmates, they interact in a positive environment that enables the gradual cultural transmission of trust between homogeneous ethnic ethnical groups		

- CMO configuration not leading to a positive impact on interpersonal trust

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C3: Younger newcomers with a negative attitude towards socialising who are looking for better employment opportunities, lack a residence permit and prioritise gaining job-related skills tend to be distrustful despite interacting with classmates sharing similar contexts	**M3**: Younger newcomers prioritise gaining job-related skills and remain skeptical about interacting with other classmates despite sharing similar contextual backgrounds	**O3**: They disagree with a connection between adult education and interpersonal trust and remain uninterested in community with people sharing similar contextual and ethnical backgrounds
CMO3: When young newcomers with a negative attitude towards socialising take part in adult education to look for better job opportunities tend to prioritise gaining job-related skills and remain skeptical about interacting with other classmates despite sharing similar contextual backgrounds which hinders interpersonal trust		

The Realist Evaluation yielded three CMO configurations. According to this study, most students from both Learning Centres suggested that trusting is a complex process that requires time and constant interaction (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Comber, 2013). In this regard, long-term older participants overcoming personal challenges attending basic education courses tend to develop more trust over time. More time interacting with classmates and staff members benefits students' ability to trust, which is consistent with the literature on positive interactions in friendly environments (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). By contrast, younger newcomers who experienced traumas and have a negative attitude toward socialising

tend to prioritise gaining job-related skills, which hinder their integration and hamper interpersonal trust (Pennacchia et al., 2018).

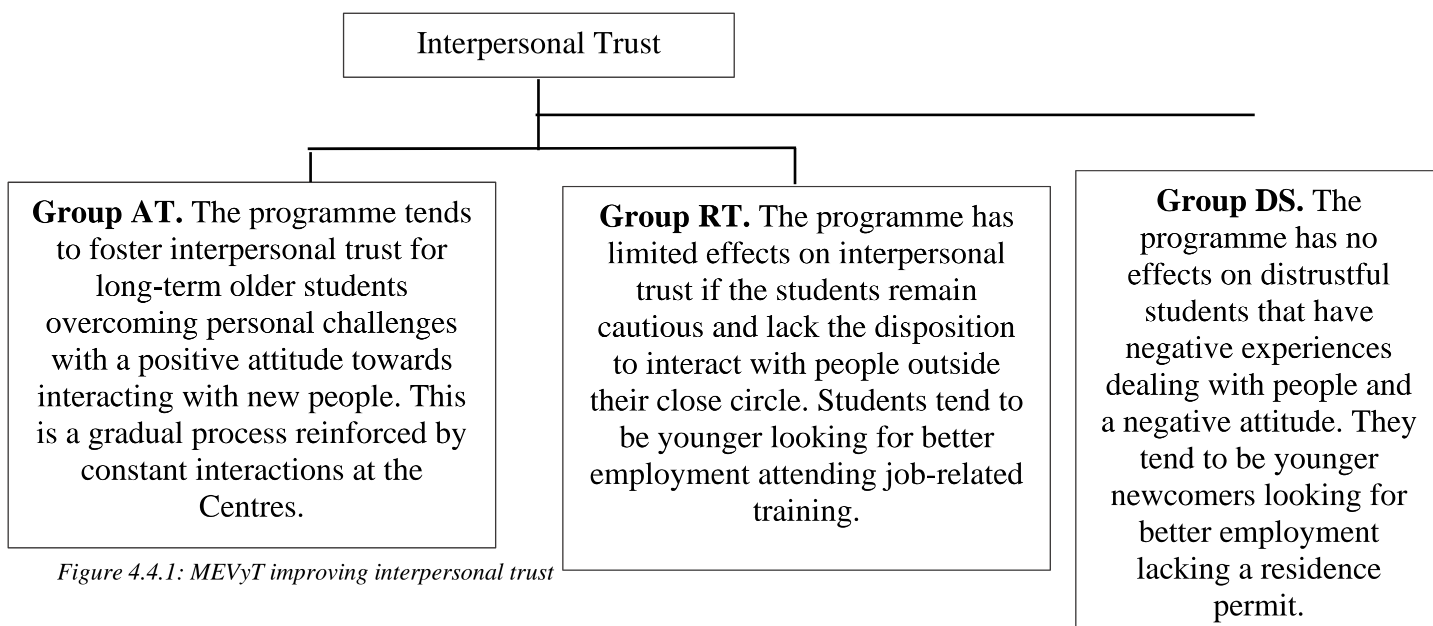


Figure 4.4.1: MEVyT improving interpersonal trust

In this subsection, I identified that most students from both Learning Centres are always careful when meeting new people. Nonetheless, age, attitudinal factors, and constant positive interactions between people sharing similar contexts and educational goals gradually foster interpersonal trust (De Bliek, 2013; Borum, 2010). The findings related to social relationships and interpersonal trust confirm the positive relationship between adult education and social capital for migrant populations that are found in the literature (Feinstein et al., 2003). The type of social capital fostered at the Learning Centres in Los Angeles accords with Bonding Social Capital theory (Hellerstein & Neumark, 2020; Lancee, 2012), which suggests that homogenous groups tend to cooperate, communicate, and stay together rather than extending their networks to heterogeneous groups (Lancee, 2012).

In addition to the analysis of adult education, subjective well-being, and social capital, I included one subsection addressing the perception of accomplishment of educational goals because the interviews revealed meaningful information about the students' perceptions of the courses with regard to their capacity to satisfactorily complete the courses. Some participants reported having accomplished the initial courses and continued taking part in additional training. In this regard, I identified that completing or gradually achieving academic goals has an impact on the students' perceptions. This subsection sheds light on the students' notions about the educational goals they have accomplished as part of their participation in adult education.

4.5 **Accomplishment of goals**

In the previous subsections, I examined the four theoretical dimensions concerning the effects of adult education on subjective well-being (mental health and employability) and social capital (social relationships and interpersonal trust). Furthermore, I analyse the participants' assessment of the accomplishment of their educational goals. This consideration enables understanding the way they perceive the value of the classes and the knowledge and skills they have gained (Morrice et al., 2017; Waller et al., 2018).

Concerning the students' assessment of achieving their initial educational goals, I coded two categories that explain what the participants perceived from the courses. The following table depicts the main theme, subthemes, and the number of references to achieving educational goals.

Main Theme	Subthemes	References
Accomplishment of goals	Initial goals accomplished and continue learning	6
	Accomplishment in process	50

Table 4.5.1: Accomplishment of goals codes

I identified two profiles of students. On the one hand, most interviewees report gradually accomplishing their goals as they keep participating in the courses. They perceive that gaining new skills is a process that requires time, determination, and sustained effort until they achieve the educational goals they set for themselves when they joined the Learning Centres (Department for Education, 2018; Ahl, 2006). On the other hand, a minority of students report having completed their initial plans but have continued joining different classes. This type of student developed a motivation to carry on learning new things to achieve additional goals. I designated names for each profile to simplify the analysis of these groups. The first group corresponds to **Persistent Achievers (PA)**, and most students from both Learning Centres fall into this group. The second profile corresponds to **High Achievers (HA)**.

The **High Achievers (HA)** group is mostly comprised of long-term older adults looking to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy and educational dropouts. They tend to attend basic education courses for extended periods whilst showing great determination and enthusiasm. HA students are highly motivated individuals and legal residents. This type of participant socialises at the Centres for several months whilst focusing on their educational goals (Khullar, 2021). Some HA participants are retired and report having the free time to participate in the lessons with the support of their families (OECD,

2019d). Achieving their initial goals was not an easy task for them. Nevertheless, they have shown determination to achieve further goals and feel motivated by their skills and knowledge (Waller et al., 2018).

On the other hand, most students from both Learning Centres belong to the **Persistent Achievers (PA)** group. They report feeling satisfied with their progress and skills so far. In this regard, none of the students from either Learning Centres reported dissatisfaction with what they had learned or achieved. However, they perceive learning new skills as a long process requiring determination, discipline, support, and patience (OECD, 2019d). Particularly, students with few schooling years and unskilled report struggling more to learn and put the knowledge into practice (Pennacchia et al., 2018). The PA students tend to be younger and look for better job opportunities (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Similarly, they are primarily short-term students aiming for educational goals. The development of the two profiles derives from the analytical categories of qualitative codes relating to accomplishing goals. The analytical codes correspond to the following classification using NVivo software.

a) **Initial goals accomplished and continue learning**

Students in this category belong to the **High Achievers (HA) group**. This type of participant has completed their initial educational goals and has continued participating in different courses to achieve further objectives. They are usually highly motivated adult learners that have experienced specific benefits from adult education and have set new goals related to their personal development (Khullar, 2021). Nonetheless, great motivation is not the only characteristic of a HA student. For instance, pursuing goals is influenced by numerous dispositional motives, learning styles, and perceptions of ability (Sommet & Elliot, 2016). Each student possesses unique characteristics and skills to learn new things, which are influenced by multiple factors. For example, a 48-year-old employed legal resident, attending basic education lessons for over one year to improve her job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 7), mentioned:

"I have completed primary education here at the Learning Centre, but I would like to continue when I complete the secondary education. Now I want to obtain U.S. citizenship. Here they also offer courses for that. October of this year, I can officially ask to start the process to become a U.S. citizen."

This student (Casa Guerrero 7) is about to achieve the goal of obtaining U.S. citizenship after one year of attending the courses. Some other students have already obtained citizenship. Nevertheless, they are seeking further education and learning. Participants that completed the initial courses and joined additional

classes stand out for their determination and motivation to enrol in more courses (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). In the analysis relating to impact level, I consider this type of student a high achiever who has benefited significantly from the courses. A high achiever is a motivated person who believes in adult education's benefits and can encourage friends, relatives, neighbours, and family members to join (Khullar, 2021). They can become transformational agents for the community's development (Finkel, 2014; Gioti & Perdiki, 2019). Furthermore, a 33-year-old unemployed citizen attending basic education courses for over three years to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Guerrero 4) reported:

"I studied elementary school in Mexico, but I finished my secondary education here at the Learning Centre. I have been in the Learning Centre since approximately 2007. I got into this because I had a lot of depression. I was locked up in my house. I cried all the time, and my motivation was also to be able to meet people. Now that I have finished high school, I can also get a better job anywhere because I already have better studies. I feel prepared because now I also want to continue studying to go to college. That is my next goal. I would also like to be able to study at the university one day. I want to continue studying. I still have a long way to go, I feel I have achieved good progress, but I still want to continue studying."

This student (Casa Guerrero 4) reports fighting depression through adult education. Participating in educational or recreational activities has been identified as a mechanism to support people struggling with depression or other health-related issues (Field, 2011; UIL, 2019, Duckworth and Cara, 2012). These factors relate to students' well-being, improved self-confidence, optimism, and positive attitudes (Robotham et al., 2011). Feeling better after achieving an educational goal is a positive indicator of the effects of adult education on students' well-being and satisfaction with life. Accomplishing goals are self-regulatory commitments that guide students (Sommet & Elliot, 2016). When students accomplish educational objectives, they improve their well-being and satisfaction, as they feel capable of completing courses and gaining skills (Samdal et al., 1998). As reported by HA participants, the positive effects they have experienced motivate them to carry on taking part in different courses. In this regard, a 65-year-old retired legal resident, living in the United States for 42 years, attending basic education courses for 12 months to overcome illiteracy (Casa Durango 5) reported:

"I have been coming here for one year and three months. I am a citizen of the United States. I have already passed citizenship classes. I'm still taking literacy classes. I have been in the literacy course for six months because I want to finish primary school. After that, I will keep coming because I like the

classes. I feel like I'm improving a lot. I want to learn to write and read correctly. I am learning too many new things. I can no longer get a better job because I am already retired."

From the interviews, I identified that most HA participants attend basic education and preparation courses for the citizenship test. This factor is a predominant characteristic in individuals who have achieved their initial educational goals and have joined additional training to improve their development. This student (Casa Durango 5) represents the HA participants who are long-term retired and have overcome personal development challenges but are not interested in better jobs. Improving self-confidence influences their mood and attitude toward life for this type of HA. They acknowledged that adult education has contributed to positive attitudes and a good mood (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Field, 2009). A different type of HA refers to long-term motivated participants interested in better employment opportunities, such as a 53-year-old citizen employed, attending basic education courses for over 36 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 12):

"I've been in literacy for three years. When I first started, I could not read or write. I don't do it very quickly, but I have improved a lot since I got here. I feel a radical change. I already passed the citizenship test thanks to their support. We learned the basics, from the alphabet to even the vowels. Little by little, I have felt that progress, and I will continue learning."

The motivation of this HA student (Casa Durango 12) reflects a positive perception of the effects of the MEVyT programme. The courses have enabled them to feel better, valued, and capable of performing different activities (Feinstein et al., 2003; OECD, 2020c). Gradually they achieve more goals and feel self-confidence and esteem, which improves their well-being (Feinstein et al., 2008). In this regard, learning is conceived as one way to improve their well-being by addressing their needs and boosting their capabilities for life (Robotham et al., 2011). The skills or experience acquired can change the students' behaviour when they use this knowledge in concrete new activities (Feinstein et al., 2008; UIL, 2019).

Understanding the perception of accomplishment of educational goals sheds light on the programmes' impact. This perception is related to Kirkpatrick's learning evaluation model, in which level three analyses the behaviour changes using new knowledge (Kurt, 2016). As students continue gaining skills and knowledge, a behaviour change occurs, improving their attitude and self-confidence (Tamkin et al., 2002). Furthermore, the remaining participants who have not yet completed any courses also report positive attitudes as they gradually progress in their learning goals.

b) **Accomplishment in process**

Most participants from both Learning Centres belong to the **Persistent Achievers (PA)** group because they reported progressing in their pursuit to achieve educational goals. In some cases, the participants had recently joined the Learning Centre, and their perception was limited. Since this study is not longitudinal, it is difficult to identify if the students looking for better employment opportunities will accomplish this when they finish the courses. In this regard, a 23-year-old unemployed citizen, attending English and Technology courses for three months to improve her job opportunities (Casa Durango 6) mentioned:

"Now I speak better English, which has helped me a lot. I am no longer so afraid to express myself, I make mistakes in English, but I am much better. It has helped me a lot to open up to more people."

Gradually, students feel they are gaining skills to communicate with others beyond the Latino community (Mallows, 2014). Learning English can benefit their integration into society and participation in the labour market (Passel and Cohn, 2019). This student (Casa Durango 6) considers that his level of English is improving, and his self-confidence has increased. *Accomplishing goals* is a process that requires determination and enthusiasm, as suggested by most students (Robotham et al., 2011). The students report feeling happier and more self-confident, which shows that adult education can contribute to individuals' happiness (Field, 2009; Lyubomirsky et al.,2005). As to the perceptions of better employability opportunities, students mentioned that concrete opportunities arise as they continue gaining skills. As suggested by a 50-year-old, self-employed, undocumented adult learner, attending the Technology and English courses for 24 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 2):

"I've already started working. I've started using the tools. I've already started to earn a salary. I'm thrilled with my current job because I like to talk with people. I like having contact with people. Although I'm doing very well, I still have a long way to go. I would like to learn much more."

The accomplishment of goals can motivate these students to continue learning and joining further courses and activities (Pennacchia et al., 2018). Accomplishing goals step by step can encourage students to join different classes if they perceive the benefits of learning in their employment opportunities or personal development (Bates & Aston, 2004). Some students suggested that the courses they initially visited encouraged them to continue. Other students started to use new skills and knowledge in practice at work or in family settings, which improved capabilities and behaviours (Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). Nonetheless, there is an awareness of the need to carry on the courses with determination. In this light, some participants

realise there is still a long way to achieve their goals. In this regard, a 39-year-old, unemployed citizen attending English courses for 12 months to improve his job opportunities (Casa Guerrero 8) mentioned:

"I have a full year coming to the Learning Centre. When I started, I was at zero. I didn't know anything. I still have a long way to go. I still have a lot to learn, but I feel that I understand more things in English. I will continue my classes for at least another year."

People looking for jobs may have different perceptions from the individuals overcoming personal development challenges. The motivation related to better job opportunities and the accomplishment of goals is hardly perceived since few students have gotten better jobs, which constrains this study to the analysis of perceptions of employability improvement (Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). Nevertheless, responses suggest that the participants feel more equipped and self-confident to carry out job-related activities and indicate that adult education can be a conduit for employment opportunities in the future (OECD, 2019b; McQuaid, 2004). As mentioned by most participants, having work permits and immigration status are defining factors in an individual's potential for employment and development. By contrast, lacking a work permit restricts tangible possibilities for jobs (Zong & Batalova, 2013), hindering their well-being. In this regard, a 53-year-old employed, legal resident attending the English courses for 24 months aiming to improve his job opportunities (Casa Durango 1) stated:

"I have been here for a short time, but I feel that they are teaching me well and I feel much better. I feel happy. I feel that there has been some change because they are helping me. I think so because at first, I was distrustful. Now I feel motivated because I think I can learn a lot and improve my life."

This student (Casa Durango 1) perceives the classes are supporting him to achieve his goals, and adult education enables him to feel more motivated to keep learning. This participant is employed and has not yet completed the English courses, explaining that he has not yet gotten a better job. This type of student should continue his studies to improve his chances in the labour market. For example, a 50-year-old unemployed legal resident attending Citizenship courses for five months to overcome personal development challenges (Casa Durango 2) stated:

"I'm already able to read a little bit, I still have a lot to learn, but first, God, I won't stop coming. I have felt little change because I have problems learning. I don't get all the information all the time. I would like to learn faster, but I have memory problems and am an introvert."

This interviewee (Casa Durango 2) has distinctive learning difficulties hindering his possibilities of gaining skills. Nonetheless, this PA student perceives a progressive improvement in his reading skills, which is a significant accomplishment. The accomplishment of goals seems to happen at a slow pace. Certainly, it improves the students' self-esteem, which was also confirmed by a 60-year-old retired attending the basic education courses for 36 months to overcome illiteracy (Casa Durango 8) who reported:

"I've started to read more things. I'm much happier and more confident that I can survive on the streets. I have felt a lot of improvement, and I feel that those who come to this Learning Centre are more integrated. I have been progressing a lot. I have been coming to this Centre for four years. I am about to finish elementary school."

High and Persistent performers report feeling better, confident, and valued as they continue learning and gaining new skills (OECD, 2019c). The improvement in the student's self-esteem reflects the revitalised confidence when dealing with people beyond the Centre (Harris & Orth, 2019). The perceptions of accomplishment of goals yielded significant information about the programme's effects on their well-being. In this regard, factors such as age, motivation to participate in the courses, months attending the lessons and employment status are relevant sociodemographic factors influencing the participant's perception. These circumstances are not fundamental characteristics, but a tendency shows that older long-term retired and motivated students tend to accomplish their goals and join further activities at the Centres. These findings confirm that accomplishing goals revitalises students' well-being as they feel empowered to carry out new activities and tasks (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Adult education has a significant role in students' self-confidence and feelings of belonging as they progress toward achieving new educational goals (Morrice et al., 2017). In the following subsection, I explore the context-mechanism-outcomes configurations concerning their perceived accomplishment of goals.

4.5.1 **CMO configurations concerning the accomplishment of goals**

Some students attend the courses for extended periods, while others have started their classes at the time of the interviews. This condition plays a role in understanding what conditions, contexts or mechanisms enable or hinder the accomplishment of goals for each participant. On this subject, I identified the following CMO configurations relating to accomplishing goals that showcase the contextual variability defining different perceptions.

- CMO configuration that leads to taking further classes

Context	Mechanism	Outcome

C1: Long-term older adults who are looking to overcome personal development challenges with a positive attitude towards socialising and showing great determination and enthusiasm	M1: Students feel motivated, satisfied, valued, confident, and empowered as they have perceived the positive effects of adult education on their lives	O1: Students accomplish their initial goals and continue participating in additional courses whilst they recommend the courses to other members of the community
CMO1: When long-term older students take part in the MEVyT to overcome personal development challenges with a positive attitude toward socialising and determination, they feel gradually empowered and satisfied as they perceive the positive effects of the courses on their lives. This feeling enables them to complete the initially planned courses and continue taking part in the classes, whilst they recommend the courses to other community members.		

- CMO configuration leading students to gradually accomplish their goals

Context	Mechanism	Outcome
C2: Middle-aged and young students participating for a short term look for better job opportunities who are determined to accomplish their educational goals	**M2**: Students gradually feel empowered and motivated to achieve educational goals as they develop an understanding of the effects of adult education	**O2**: Students perceive the accomplishment of educational goals is in progress
CMO2: When middle-aged and young students participate in adult education looking for better jobs with determination and a positive attitude, they gradually feel empowered and motivated to achieve educational goals. This feeling enables them to understand the effects of adult education and a positive perception of the accomplishment of goals.		

This analysis yielded two CMO configurations. Different circumstances, socioeconomic backgrounds, beliefs, legal status, and attitudinal factors determine for whom the programme is more effective. In line with this notion, retired students overcoming personal challenges feel empowered and recognised as they gain more skills (Bhattacharya et al., 2020; Feinstein et al., 2003). The motivation to join the courses alongside the age and months taking part in the courses play a role in influencing the student's perceptions.

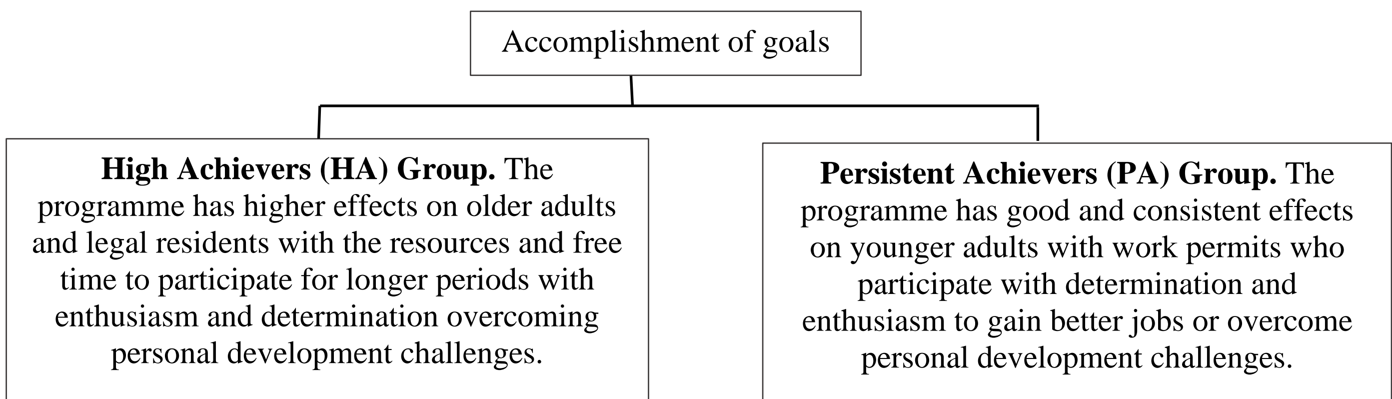


Figure 4.5.1: MEVyT improving goals

Figure 4.5.1 depicts the profiles of students by their accomplishment of goals. The student's positive attitudes, age, motivation to join and sustained determination throughout periods at the Learning Centre significantly influence the participant capacity to achieve their educational goals (Pennacchia et al., 2018). In this subsection, I examined the students' perceptions of accomplishing goals. As indicated in the theoretical dimensions, sociodemographic characteristics are not absolute factors. Instead, they are predominant features playing a significant role in several students haring similar conditions and contexts.

After examining the four theoretical dimensions for subjective well-being (mental health and employability) and social capital (social relationships and interpersonal trust), I analysed the student's perception of the accomplishment of educational goals. As part of this analysis, I studied the predominant sociodemographic characteristics shaping and influencing students' perceptions of adult education. Additionally, I examined the participants' perceptions of accomplishment of educational goals to understand more about how they are progressing and achieving their educational goals under specific circumstances. In summarising the predominant sociodemographic characteristics alongside personal, situational social and psychological factors that I discovered, the following table illustrates the profiles of students by theoretical dimension:

Dimension	Profiles	Predominant sociodemographic features
Mental Health	**Increasingly Confident and Satisfied (ICS)**	They report improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life. A good attitude, determination, support, and access to educational materials are significant factors helping the participants to feel more recognised.
	Relatively Hesitant (RH)	Experience frustration due to illiteracy and a lack of work permits. Only three students in this profile. They report having irregular feelings of self-esteem and health issues and are always careful regardless of similar cultural backgrounds.
Employability	**Job Keepers (JK)**	Students with a good attitude toward improving their employment conditions. Are actively employed. They perceive that adult education enabled them to keep their jobs. They have a good attitude towards socialising and usually have more schooling than other students. Only three students in this profile.
	Job Seekers (JS)	They look for better jobs. Tend to take English and Technology-related rather than Basic Education or literacy courses. Have more schooling years than the rest of the participants and are younger short-term students. Three elements stand out as tangible factors for better jobs: language barriers, immigration status, and lack of literacy. Tend to be younger, actively employed with work permits and schooling years attending English or technology courses.
	Not Seeking Employment (NSE)	Tend to be older, retired, and long-term participants. The relationship between the students' age and employment status relates to their motivations to join adult education. Immigration status defines the aspirations for employment. They look for literacy skills, leisure, or training for the citizenship test. The lack of work permits is a substantial constraint for work opportunities.
Social Relationships	**Relatively Sociable (RS)**	They have a positive attitude towards making new friends and social networks. They are mostly younger and have an open attitude towards socialisation with classmates and tutors regardless of their intrinsic motivation to join the courses. Nevertheless, they have not reached a level of socialisation to feel part of the community or develop social networks.
	Increasingly Sociable (IS)	They feel part of a community that emerges from the interactions at the Centres. A significant number of participants in Group IS are over 50 years old and have been in the United States for extended periods. They share a positive attitude towards socialising and exchanging ideas, and life experiences. Several students tend to participate in the courses to overcome personal challenges such as illiteracy or educational dropouts.
	Actively Sociable (AS)	They have developed a feeling of belonging in a new community and have built social networks with classmates beyond the activities at the Centre. They do not report having experienced traumatic negative experiences when socialising with others. They have recommended the courses to other people in the Latino community to attract more people to the Learning Centres. They tend to be elderly participants.
	Non-Sociable (NS)	They tend to prioritise the learning activities to achieve educational goals over making friends or social networks. They are characterised by having a cautious approach when dealing with new people because of negative experiences in the past. Their immigration status can hinder a person's ability and willingness to interact with classmates. Moreover, the intrinsic motivation to join the courses plays a role in shaping the students' attitudes.
	Actively Trustful (AT)	Age, time participating at the Centre, intrinsic motivation, employment condition and immigration status are factors characterising students' improvement in trust. They begin their participation with a cautious approach, but they are open to trusting classmates as they progress in learning. Long-term older retired students with a residence permit attending the courses to overcome personal development challenges tend to agree more that adult education can foster interpersonal trust. Around half of the participants belong to the AT group. Social cooperation in friendly environments,

Interpersonal Trust		a positive attitude and repeated interactions enable the development of interpersonal trust.
	Relatively Trustful (RT)	Participants tend to be younger employed. Tend to look for better employment through adult education, sometimes lacking a work permit. They relate to the concept of limited trust because they are relatively more open to developing trust with students sharing similar contextual characteristics, which relates to the notion of Bonding Social Capital. Some experienced previous negative experiences.
	Distrustful Students (DS)	This type of participant disagrees with the connection between adult education and interpersonal trust. This group comprises mostly younger newcomers, looking for better employment opportunities focusing primarily on gaining new skills. Students looking for better employment opportunities tend to be more cautious when dealing with other people, regardless of their ethnicity and sociodemographic backgrounds.
Accomplishment of goals	**High Achievers (HA)**	Mostly comprises long-term older adults overcoming personal development challenges such as illiteracy. They tend to attend basic education courses for longer periods whilst showing great determination and enthusiasm. They are highly motivated individuals and legal residents. This type of participant socialises at the Centres for several months whilst focusing on their educational goals. Some HA participants are retired and report having the free time to participate in the lessons with the support of their families.
	Persistent Achievers (PA)	None of the students reports dissatisfaction with what they have learned or achieved. However, they perceive that learning new skills is a long process that requires determination. Unskilled students with less schooling report struggling more to learn and put the knowledge into practice. The PA students tend to be younger and look for better job opportunities. Similarly, they are mostly short-term students aiming for educational goals.

Table 4.5.2: Student's profiles by predominant characteristics

The profiles illustrate two predominant groups of students with sociodemographic characteristics and attitudes that define their perceptions of the courses. Considering how the students' profiles and sociodemographic characteristics overlap, I identified the following two groups.

Firstly, the group of younger short-term participants with more schooling years showed a tendency to look for better jobs and job-related training (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). The majority have been in the United States for less than 30 years. They tend to belong to the **Relatively Hesitant (RH), Job Keepers (JK), Job Seekers (JS), Relatively Sociable (RS), Non-Sociable (NS), Relatively Trustful (RT), Distrustful Students (DS), and Persistent Achievers (PA).** These are not absolute definitions of all younger students attending the courses to look for better jobs. Nonetheless, I observed a tendency to define these characteristics. These students are improving their employment opportunities as they participate in job-related training rather than basic education (Ahl, 2006). Similarly, they feel increasingly motivated and empowered as they progress in gaining the skills they need, which gradually improves their self-confidence and self-esteem (Bates & Aston, 2004). Furthermore, they tend to have more schooling years which defines why they are not looking for basic education or literacy courses (Pennacchia et al., 2018; OECD, 2019d). They tend to be less sociable and hesitant towards trusting new people because they are inclined to prioritise gaining new skills to accomplish their educational goals. Overall, the findings illustrate that they improve

their subjective well-being through a positive perception of employment opportunities and a gradual improvement of self-esteem and confidence (Norman & Hyland, 2003). By contrast, there are limitations relating to creating social capital, understood as developing social relationships and interpersonal trust (Schuller et al., 2004). This theoretical dimension has a limited effect on these students as they tend to be less open to socialising and interacting with classmates.

Secondly, a group of older students who are not interested in better employment participate in the basic education courses to overcome the personal challenge of illiteracy for extended periods. Around half of the participants in this group are over 60 years old, whilst only two students are between 15 and 40 years old. They tend to belong to the **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied (ICS), Not Seeking Employment (NSE), Increasingly Sociable (IS), Actively Sociable (AS), Actively Trustful (AT), and High Achievers (HA).** Many students are either retired or unemployed, which explains why these participants aim to fulfil personal challenges rather than employment (Pennacchia et al., 2018). These students benefit from the courses improving their subjective well-being and social capital. They improve their self-esteem and self-confidence as they gain skills for life and work, impacting their well-being (Schuller et al., 2004). Similarly, they feel empowered to perform new tasks and understand what is happening around them, increasing their motivation to continue gaining skills and knowledge in the courses. These students tend to socialise more and be more open to trusting new classmates as they constantly participate in positive environments (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). This notion is consistent with the social capital approach suggesting that adult education gradually encourages social interactions and interpersonal trust (Martikke, 2017). By contrast, this type of student tends to have a limitation regarding better employment opportunities in the future. This limitation relates to the participant’s employment status and right to work in the United States (Hayes & Hill, 2017). Retired students and illegal immigrants perceive a significant limitation concerning their capacity to get better employment opportunities as part of their participation in adult education. This statement confirms that this type of participant will improve his self-esteem, self-confidence, social relationships, and interpersonal trust (Healy, 2002; Manninen et al., 2014; Norman & Hyland, 2003) but will not improve his employability opportunities.

Overall, the MEVyT programme provides significant long-term benefits for the students regardless of their intrinsic motivation to join the courses. The findings illustrate a relevant connection between adult education and self-esteem, self-confidence, and life satisfaction (Norman & Hyland, 2003; Schuller et al., 2002). On the contrary, the benefits of social relationships and interpersonal trust are constrained by students’ attitudinal characteristics and previous negative experiences (Pennacchia et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the MEVyT can improve the employability of students who are not retired and possess the right to work in the United States (Caponi & Plesca, 2013). In the following chapter, I summarise the concluding remarks of this doctoral work and include a discussion subsection with policy recommendations and study limitations.

5. Conclusions

This chapter summarises the most significant findings and contributions concerning the effects of adult education on migrant populations and outlines the three most important things addressed in this research. Also, this chapter highlights how the CMO configurations provided a meaningful analytical difference concerning the methodological approach to study the effects of adult education for migrant populations. Likewise, the chapter includes an analysis of barriers and enablers of adult education discovered in this study. Lastly, the chapter entails the study limitations, further research proposals, and policy recommendations and messages to the Mexican government.

Drawing on qualitative research, I conducted semi-structured interviews to study the perceptions of 29 adult learners from both Centres in Los Angeles. I coded the most relevant topics, experiences, and perceptions using NVivo software. Furthermore, I used thematic analysis to identify significant codes and patterns from the interviews. This method unpicks the surface of reality, enabling a qualitative analysis of the effects of the MEVyT programme (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Dalkin et al., 2015). Moreover, I analysed the interviews using a realist evaluation approach considering a retroductive perspective moving between inductive and deductive analytical processes (Greenhalgh et al., 2019). The goal was to realise how the MEVyT programme works, for whom and under what circumstances. To carry out the realist evaluation, I developed the following research questions:

1. How does participation in the MEVyT courses improve the student's mental health and employability?
    - Under what factors and circumstances are the students' self-confidence and self-esteem improved?
    - Under what factors and circumstances does the MEVyT programme improve the students' perception of employability?
2. How does participation in the MEVyT courses benefit the creation of social relationships and interpersonal trust?
    - Under what factors and circumstances is the student's perception of social relationships affected?
    - Under what factors and circumstances is the student's perception of interpersonal trust improved?

In addressing the research questions for this study, Realist Evaluation constituted an impactful methodological tool to understand the students' specific characteristics and predominant sociodemographic features in relation to their perceptions. Unlike the traditional thematic analysis, the Realist Evaluation approach enables the researcher to build context-mechanism-outcomes configurations that explain in more

detail the causation mechanisms attributed to the effectiveness of a programme, which goes beyond the analysis of whether a programme entails positive effects on the students. Through the context-mechanism-outcome configurations, the researcher unearths the mechanisms and characteristics of specific groups that benefit from a programme. In this regard, not only the programme's effects are analysed, but the Realist Evaluation also involves the particularities that allow a group to benefit more than others. In this sense, the analytical structure of this study enabled the identification of qualitative profiles of different type of students based on predominant sociodemographic characteristics and attitudinal factors.

The rationale behind building context-mechanism-outcome configurations is the analytical approach to categorise the students according to their perceptions of adult education and their predominant sociodemographic characteristics so that classifications can be drawn. In this light, as I analysed each students' perceptions, I observed patterns between the perceptions and sociodemographic characteristics such as age, motivation to participate, employment status, months at the Learning Centre and attitudinal attributes that constituted significant elements to build CMO configurations for each dimension. The thematic analysis in isolation would not have been sufficient to develop categorisations of students by their predominant characteristics, attitudinal factors and the behavioural changes attributed to the MEVyT programme.

Concerning the development of context-mechanism-outcomes, I categorised the context as predominant sociodemographic characteristics alongside personal, situational social and psychological factors related to the students' backgrounds, the mechanisms were classified as activities taken by the actors involved in the programme (Westhorp et al., 2011), and the outcomes as behavioural changes attributed to the programme. This analytical approach facilitated the connection between characteristics, contexts, mechanisms, and perceptions.

Regarding the policy dimensions and the CMO configurations, I identified two main groups of students by their sociodemographic characteristics and perceptions, which relate to their intrinsic motivations to join the Learning Centres. I discovered that students' perceptions vary depending on different factors related to their sociodemographic features, attitudinal attributes, and other qualitative variables. For example, some students are motivated to get new skills for better employment, whilst others participate in overcoming personal development challenges such as illiteracy (Boeren et al., 2012). Similarly, some participants indicated that they would not rule out getting new jobs after completing the courses. Although, they mentioned this as a secondary goal.

As to the groups of participants, the **first group** comprises mostly younger participants attending job-related courses rather than basic education. They tend to attend courses related to language proficiency or basic technology. Furthermore, they usually are short-to-medium-term students interested in practical skills and knowledge to compete in the labour market (Lane & Conlon, 2016). In this light, I identified that their motivation to participate in adult education and their age are related. This notion means younger students look for better job opportunities rather than personal development. Similarly, I noticed that the majority have been in the United States for less than 30 years, which could be why they are not yet retired and, thus, looking for jobs. To elaborate on the student's profiles, I identified that their predominant sociodemographic characteristics (age, months in adult education, employment and immigration status, years in the United States, and schooling years), attitudinal attributes (relatively positive attitude toward socialising and distrustful) and motivation to participate (looking for better jobs) influence their perceptions.

On the other hand, the **second group** comprises older adults with more years of residence in the United States. Around half of the participants in this group are over 60 years old, whilst only two students are between 15 and 40 years old. Similarly, they predominately attend basic education and literacy courses. Most of these students are either retired or unemployed, which explains why these participants aim to fulfil personal challenges rather than employment (Melrose, 2014). The immigration status of six students (undocumented) shows that they do not look for employment, as they are not entitled to work legally (Caponi & Plesca, 2013). The enthusiasm and joy of living are noteworthy in these students that see this opportunity as a personal challenge.

In building these categories and profiles of students, I analysed how adult education influences the student's subjective well-being and social capital. In this light, I identified that predominant sociodemographic characteristics, attitudinal behaviours, and intrinsic motivation determine the student's perceptions of adult education (Pennacchia et al., 2018). The elements I identified are not absolute. Instead, they reflect a qualitative tendency of the students' profiles by their perceptions that emerged through the Realist Evaluation.

As an analytical structure, the Realist Evaluation approach was determinant in building the categories and classification of students by their characteristics, activities, and perceptions of the courses because it enabled the identification and construction of patterns revealing that the programme entails diversified benefits for students under specific circumstances and contexts. Through Realist Evaluation, the researcher

is in the position to suggest that the MEVyT improves the student's subjective well-being and social capital under specific circumstances and characteristics that provide a richer analysis of adult education.

In the following subsection, I summarise the topics addressed through this research, covering the theoretical principles of adult education that can be tested with this study.

5.1 Topics addressed

The Realist Evaluation of the MEVyT programme addressed the research questions to understand under what circumstances, particularities, and contexts, the MEVyT benefits the student's well-being and social capital. The main findings in chapter four outlined, for each theoretical dimension, the qualitative classification of students that benefit more than others, which is determined by predominant sociodemographic characteristics alongside personal, situational social and psychological factors. In this sense, the three most relevant topics addressed in this study are self-esteem and self-confidence, the creation of social relationships (bonding social capital) and the interconnection with better employability. This study contributes to the literature on adult education by providing arguments on the benefits entailed in this type of education for migrant populations.

Through the Realist Evaluation, the participants' specific conditions and predominant sociodemographic characteristics allowed the researcher to build context-mechanism-outcome configurations that explain for whom and under what circumstances the MEVyT has more benefits. In this regard, the following three topics summarise this research's main findings and theoretical implications. Furthermore, this chapter includes a subsection concerning the barriers and enablers of adult education discovered through this study for migrant populations.

1) Self-esteem and self-confidence

The literature indicates that adult education benefits the student's well-being through an improvement of their self-esteem and self-confidence (Harris & Orth, 2019; Field, 2009; Witter et al., 1984; Young et al., 2004; Diener et al., 1999). This improvement occurs as the students gain skills and perceive they can learn and use the capabilities in their daily activities. This study confirms that many participants positively perceived that the MEVyT programme gradually strengthens their capacity to learn new skills, improving their self-esteem and motivation to keep participating.

In this regard, a principle of adult education refers to students with low skills having less confidence in their abilities, and thus they develop a less positive attitude toward learning (Hirsch, 2007; Gorard et al., 2012). Concerning this argument, the interviewees shared insights about their self-confidence and self-esteem. Some students indicated that before taking part in the courses, they had less confidence in their abilities and suffered from low self-esteem. The vulnerability situation due to illiteracy affected their self-confidence for most of their lives. Some participants stated that they had a less positive attitude toward learning due to a lack of confidence in acquiring new skills and knowledge (Department for Education, 2018). The attitude towards learning has improved as the students continue participating in adult education.

I discovered that most students from both Learning Centres report improving their mental health as part of adult education (Lewis, 2012, Schuller and Desjardins, 2011). This feeling is possible because they see themselves as more productive, capable, sociable, confident, and successful (Feinstein et al., 2003; Feinstein et al., 2008; Schuller & Desjardins, 2011). By contrast, I identified a reduced group of students who are uncertain about the effects of adult education on mental health because their self-esteem and confidence are significantly affected by previous external conditions. Concerning this contrast, the first group of participants corresponds to **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied (ICS)** students. Most students from both Learning Centres fall into this group. On the other hand, the second category relates to **Relatively Hesitant (RH) students** with only three participants.

Regarding the **Relatively Hesitant (RH)** students, I identified that external factors and past negative experiences significantly influence their perceptions and attitudes (Pennacchia et al., 2018). The RH participants experience frustration due to illiteracy and a lack of work permits. They report having erratic feelings of self-esteem and physical health issues. Similarly, there is a tendency to show that they are always careful regardless of similar cultural backgrounds, hindering their sociability skills and affecting their overall perception of happiness (Khullar et al., 2021). By contrast, the **Increasingly Confident and Satisfied ICS) students** tend to be more open to socialising and interacting with classmates in a positive environment whilst gaining new skills for life and work, gradually enhancing their self-confidence and self-esteem (OECD, 2018b). They feel more empowered and capable of carrying out new tasks as they progress in adult education (Schuller et al., 2002).

The Realist evaluation yielded two CMO configurations concerning the role of adult education in improving the student's mental health. The programme has a limited positive impact on students with sociability and communication issues who lack residence permits to live in the United States. Most students

report improved self-esteem, self-confidence, and life satisfaction (Waller et al., 2018). This positive outcome reflects the courses as mechanisms that help the students' attitude toward life and improvement of self-recognition as essential individuals (Harris & Orth, 2019). Similarly, the programme works for students with the determination to overcome personal development challenges or get better jobs that have not experienced external negative factors or physical health issues (Pennacchia et al., 2018). In this regard, I developed the following CMO configuration that encompasses the combination of contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes outlined in chapter 4 concerning mental health.

CMO: Only students with high self-esteem and a positive attitude toward socialising and learning new things, in the mid and long term will achieve their educational goals, which makes them feel empowered, capable, and recognised as valuable individuals.

The analysis of self-esteem and self-confidence that as results from adult education confirms the positive effects indicated in the literature (Field, 2009; 2009b; Diener et al., 1999). Furthermore, this study provides an overview of the limitations and circumstances that hinder a student's well-being, such as the lack of work permits, health-related problems, or previous negative experiences, which contribute to the literature on subjective well-being and adult education for migrant populations.

Following the analysis of mental health, the subsequent subsection examines the second relevant topic addressed in this study. It entails the analysis of social relationships as part of adult education for migrant populations.

2) Social Relationships (Bonding Social Capital)

The second topic addressed in this study relates to the creation of social relationships, which is part of the Social Capital theory. The literature review section indicates that participating in educational activities can foster positive social interactions between classmates (OECD, 2001; Schuller et al., 2004). In this sense, the principle refers to the notion that schools can foster values for social cooperation and provide "meeting places" to students (Comber, 2013; Field, 2005). The principle refers to the capacity the students have to socialise and develop friendships in a positive environment while gaining relevant skills for life and work.

Concerning this principle, I constructed the analysis identifying the topics that emerged from the interviews and the extent to which students agreed or disagreed with the connection between adult education and social relationships. In this light, most students suggested that the Learning Centre is an excellent place to meet

new people. However, meeting new participants does not translate automatically into friendships or social networks, as most interviewees suggested. Nonetheless for many their participation at the Centre improved their sociability skills and allowed them to socialise with more people (Khullar et al., 2021). By contrast, the individuals disagreeing with this notion are those students with previous negative experiences that hindered their sociability and predisposition toward new people (Pennacchia et al., 2018). This study provides information to indicate that the Learning Centres are hubs for learning and socialising with people from the Latino community in Los Angeles. However, this socialisation process needs to be explored in detail to analyse the scope of the networks and social cooperation in the long term.

As part of this study, I identified that the type of social relationships fostered through the MEVyT programme relates to the interaction between homogenous groups that tend to socialise with people sharing similar socioeconomic backgrounds, languages, and cultures. In this sense, the social capital theory addressed in the literature review specifies that when people share similar beliefs, contexts or values this leads to the creation of strong Bonding Social Capital (Geys & Murdoch, 2010; Lancee, 2012; Claridge, 2018; Nizińska, 2016). Some students reported having experienced positive feelings of belonging to the Latino community, which relates to Bonding Social Capital between homogeneous social groups (Young et al., 2004). This factor is not necessarily considered harmful or detrimental to social integration. Nevertheless, integration between different social and ethnic groups is understood as a more vital form of cohesion (Claridge, 2018; Lancee, 2012). By contrast, Bridging Social Capital encompasses social networks between heterogeneous groups with different social norms that may share and exchange information (Panth, 2010). The ideal principle of social interaction and cohesion refers to positive communication and cooperation between distinct social groups rather than having positive interactions limited to similar groups.

Furthermore, to the questions concerning the development of friendships and social networks, I discovered that most participants agreed that taking part in the classes allowed them to communicate with new people in a positive environment where they simultaneously gain skills and knowledge for life and work. I coded four types of students by their perception of the courses and their capacity to socialise. Namely, the categories are **Relatively Sociable (RS)**, **Increasingly Sociable (IS)**, **Actively Sociable (AS)**, and **Non-Sociable (NS)**.

To illustrate the categories, the first group of **Relatively Sociable (RS)** represents students perceiving a positive environment for meeting new people. They have a good attitude but have not reached a level of

socialisation to feel part of the community or develop social networks. Moreover, the second group of **Increasingly Sociable (IS)** comprises students who perceive a positive atmosphere for making friends and feeling part of a new community. They feel part of a community and have developed a sense of belonging. A significant number of participants in Group IS are over 50 years old and have been in the United States for extended periods. Moreover, the months of participating in the classes reflect that most students perceive that long and constant interactions have improved their feelings of belonging to a community (Morrone et al., 2009). Additionally, **Group Actively Sociable (AS)** relates to students that developed a feeling of belonging and have built social networks beyond the learning activities at the Centre. They do not report having experienced traumatic experiences when socialising with other people. They have recommended the courses to other people in the Latino community. Lastly, **Group Non-Sociable (NS)** represents the participants that disagree with the relationship between adult education and the opportunity to improve their social relationships. They tend to prioritise the learning activities to achieve educational goals over making friends. The intrinsic motivation to join the courses shapes the students' attitude at the Centre. Making new friendships is challenging for some individuals because they lack self-confidence, self-esteem, and communication skills (Harris & Orth, 2019).

The Realist Evaluation concerning social relationships yielded four CMO configurations. The main factors impacting the student's perception are the personal attitudes toward meeting new people, previous negative experiences with friendships (Pennacchia et al., 2018), their intrinsic motivation to participate in the classes, the student's goals, months of taking part in the courses, and employment and immigration status. In this regard, I developed the following CMO configuration that encompasses the combination of contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes outlined in chapter 4 concerning social relationships:

CMO: Only students with a positive attitude toward socialising in a friendly environment with people sharing similar cultural backgrounds and language will develop a feeling of community belonging and empowerment as they achieve educational goals and build social relationships and networks.

I identified that the attitudes towards socialisation, past negative experiences (Pennacchia et al., 2018), intrinsic motivation to join, immigration status (Caponi & Plesca, 2013), employment status, age and time at the Centre define the significance of the students allocate to social relationships. This study shows that the benefit is lower when younger students have negative past experiences with social relationships, feel frustration at work (Ding & Hargraves, 2009) and have a cautious attitude towards making new friends (Khullar, 2021). This study contributes to the literature on the relationship between adult education and

social capital, indicating that this type of educational provision gradually encourages students to interact and build friendships, contributing to community building. The study illustrates that these interactions enable the participants to build stronger networks with people sharing similar backgrounds and cultural values (Cramm & Nieboer, 2012). This is a manifestation of the creation of Bonding Social Capital where connections between people in homogenous groups in society are built, whilst people from different backgrounds tend to interact less.

Overall, the study contributes to the literature indicating that adult education contributes to subjective well-being and fosters social capital for migrant populations when motivational and attitudinal mechanisms are activated as the students' gain new skills for life and work. This contribution is possible by identifying a significant positive perception from the students who enjoy the classes, gain skills, and prepare for life and work whilst socialising and gradually building new relationships with new people in friendly environments. Constant social interactions in a positive and friendly environment between motivated students sharing similar contextual and cultural backgrounds enable the creation of social networks and friendships, which fosters social capital and the student's subjective well-being.

The following subsection examines the third topic addressed in this study. It analyses how the MEVyT programme contributes to the student's employability conditions by providing them with new skills and knowledge for work-related purposes.

3) Employability

This study analysed the relationship between adult education and employability conditions. This principle is present in the literature as a positive element that influences a student's motivation to join adult education opportunities. As indicated in the first chapter, there are studies that have analysed why more skilled students with more schooling years are predominantly looking for better skills to boost their employability opportunities (OECD, 2018b; Meadows & Metcalf, 2008) and compete in the labour market.

In this regard, the concept of employability refers to the individual's ability to participate in the labour market under certain circumstances allowing them to enhance their life satisfaction (De Grip et al., 2004). Concerning this notion, education is considered one of the fundamental mechanisms that boost economic development and a substantial component of social change (OECD, 2019b; Hanushek & Wössman, 2010). In addressing this theoretical assumption, I identified three profiles of students by their perceptions. The

first group corresponds to **Job Keepers (JK)**, the second to **Job Seekers (JS)**, and the third relates to **Not Seeking Employment students** (**NSE**).

The group of **Job Keepers** comprises students with a good attitude towards improving their employment conditions. They tend to be middle-aged participants attending English or technology-related courses. They have a good attitude towards socialising and usually have more schooling than other students. Furthermore, for the **Job Seekers** group, three elements stand out as tangible factors for better jobs: language barriers, immigration status, and lack of literacy. Most **JS** participants perceive that the courses are helping them achieve their goals, even if they have not gotten better jobs yet. Gradually, JS students gain more skills to meet their professional expectations. The perception that adult education can improve employment opportunities is highly positive, but this depends on immigration and employment status because the lack of work permits is a substantial constraint for work opportunities. Lastly, the **Not Seeking Employment (NSE)** participants tend to be older, retired, and long-term. In this light, the motivations related to personal development challenges are those referred to as improving personal experiences rather than searching for educational outcomes (Irving & Williams, 1999, p. 525). Most students (19 out of 29) take part to overcome challenges. I identified that this motivation stems from individual circumstances, ranging from having free time to the notion that it is never late for education, obtaining U.S. citizenship and leisure.

The Realist Evaluation relating to employment yielded three CMO configurations. Overall, I identified that the main factors impacting the student's perception are the intrinsic motivation to participate in the classes, the student's goals, types of courses, months of taking part in the lessons, age, and employment and immigration status. Concerning employability, I developed the following CMO configuration that encompasses the combination of contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes outlined in chapter 4:

CMO: Only middle-aged and young literate and employed students with the right to work in the United States and a positive attitude toward gaining skills for work will feel motivated and empowered as they gain new skills and knowledge to compete in the labour market.

The MEVyT programme has positive effects on younger students, employed or unemployed motivated to improve their employment conditions (Lane & Conlon, 2016). For the type of students who are uninterested in getting better jobs, the MEVyT programme has no effect as they prioritise other goals related to personal development. The programme has limited, or no effects on older retired participants who attend the courses primarily to overcome personal development challenges such as illiteracy. Also, I discovered that lacking

work and residence permits negatively affects the participant´s capacity to participate in the labour market. Immigrants lacking residence and work permits struggle to overcome their challenges as they are ineligible for legal work and benefits (Hayes & Hill, 2017). This situation of vulnerability will affect their prosperity negatively. Not having documentation to work in the United States is an obstacle to the participants' development (Op. Cit.). The Learning Centre represents the opportunity some people seek to overcome challenges and succeed in life (UIL, 2019; OECD, 2007). It is conceived by most participants as a mechanism that enables them to get the necessary skills for employment.

In this subsection, I examined the three most important topics addressed in this study. I analysed how and under what circumstances the MEVyT programme positively affects the participant's self-esteem and self-confidence as they gain new skills. Similarly, I identified how the programme positively impacts the development of social relationships and friendships as most students perceive that the Learning Centres become a meeting place where they can socialise with people sharing similar socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. This type of interaction relates to the development of Bonding Social Capital between homogenous groups that predominantly interact with people from similar backgrounds. Lastly, the third topic addressed with this research refers to the capacity to improve the students' employability conditions. The programme provides job-related training opportunities that benefit the participants' capacity to compete in the labour market if they have the work permits and a positive attitude towards learning. Overall, these three topics constitute the most relevant contributions to the literature on the effects of adult education for migrant populations. However, I identified additional factors that contribute to the literature on the mechanisms at the individual, community and institutional levels that hinder or enable adults to participate in this type of educational opportunity.

5.2 **Barriers and enablers of adult education**

This section considers the most significant findings as a cornerstone to address theoretical contributions to the effects of adult education on migrant populations. It addresses the barriers and enablers to adult education and the multidimensional vulnerability experienced by some students.

Research shows that certain elements hinder or impede more active participation in adult education, called "barriers", defined as a) Situational, for example, lack of money to finance the course and lack of time to follow a course due to job and family responsibilities; b) Institutional, for example, inconvenient class schedules or inappropriate entrance requirements; and c) Dispositional, for instance, low self-esteem and attitude to succeed in the course or feeling too old (Boeren, 2009, p. 160). From the interviews, I identified

specific enablers and barriers at the individual, community and institutional levels playing a role in the student's participation.

Firstly, at the individual level, I encountered that the enablers relate to having the free time to join the courses, where transitions from employment to retirement are significant (Bates & Aston, 2004). Also, the students must have the financial resources to commute (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). In this regard, family support becomes relevant for numerous students. Similarly, good health benefits the student's participation and enthusiasm (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). Lastly, another enabler is the chain of recommendations of the courses occurring among family members or close friends. This factor relates to social connectedness and cohesion, improving communication (Winter-Collins & McDaniel, 2000). On the contrary, the barriers refer to the individuals' unawareness of the Learning Centres and unfamiliarity with the positive effects of adult education (Cain et al., 2017). Furthermore, previous negative school experiences affect some students' self-esteem and confidence to participate in education (Pennacchia et al., 2018). If students are hesitant to participate due to low self-esteem and self-confidence, their performance and enthusiasm in the classrooms can be hindered, thus, it is significant to find mechanisms to encourage their subjective well-being, so they overcome their low self-esteem.

Secondly, at the community level, I found that the recommendation of the courses taking place in the community between homogenous groups has a positive effect on the participation in adult education. It has become the most effective mechanism to attract more students to the Learning Centres (Cain et al., 2017). This situation means the flow of communication between community members, family, relatives, friends, and neighbours fosters adult education participation, which promotes a strong culture of learning in the community (Field, 2009b). On the contrary, if community members lack communication and trust, their participation in adult education can be hindered (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). I noticed that interpersonal trust depends on factors relating to continuous participation and positive attitudes (Morrone et al., 2009) that have an effect on the quality of social interactions. Lastly, I identified that concerns about deportation could affect participation in adult education as people are not feeling safe joining the Centres if they lack residence permits (Crowe & Lucas-Vergona, 2007). This situation negatively affects people who are hesitant to participate in adult education and has an impact on the students looking for better jobs.

Lastly, several elements stand out at the institutional level as enablers for adult education participation. For instance, the institutional capacity to structure and implement the courses effectively enables accessible class schedules and relaxed entrance requirements to tackle dispositional barriers (Boeren, 2009). The

flexible opening hours at the weekends and support from volunteer tutors facilitate the student's participation and achievement of goals. Similarly, using technology to support learning activities allows students to learn more and feel more valued to achieve their goals (Laurillard, 2013). Moreover, the role of the Mexican government and the Consulates in developing the learning materials for the Learning Centres and issuing official certification of the courses encourages more students to take part. By contrast, if the resources are scarce, the Learning Centres struggle to provide educational services. The lack of sufficient resources hinders the participation of tutors as they do not receive a salary (Pennacchia et al., 2018). Furthermore, this situation impedes the professionalisation of volunteers and staff members. Lastly, I discovered that the lack of research and dissemination of results concerning the effects of adult education hinders more students' participation as they are unaware of the Learning Centres and their educational opportunities.

The barriers I identified are consistent with the literature recognising situational, institutional, and dispositional barriers (Flynn et al., 2011; Bates & Aston, 2004). In this light, situational barriers refer to life situations, including marginalisation, poverty, and family support. Additionally, the situational barriers relate to the effectiveness of programmes and institutions (Boeren, 2009). Also, institutional barriers can include educational government policies (Pennacchia et al., 2018). Removing these barriers is challenging for authorities, policymakers, and coordinators at the Centres. Similarly, policymakers and authorities in Mexico have a role in understanding and tackling the institutional barriers to successful Learning Centres in the United States.

On the other hand, the enablers or drivers relate to elements that facilitate the participation of individuals. The enablers identified in this study are consistent with the literature about the drivers. For example, the engagement of stakeholders and government support can enable more individuals to participate in adult education (European Union, 2012). Similarly, stakeholders' intervention can improve the Centres' effectiveness and scope. This consideration also includes that technology is a tool that facilitates learning and can be used to encourage individuals' participation (Laurillard, 2013). As part of the barriers and enablers identified from the interviews, two aspects emerged: the multidimensional vulnerability of some participants (IOM, 2019; OHCHR, 2017; UNESCO, 2020) and the challenging social integration they face (Zorlu & Hartog, 2018; Cerna, 2019; European Union, 2020). Both aspects are significant for the student's personal development and social integration into American society.

In understanding more about the students' circumstances, the condition of vulnerability is defined by specific settings that pushed the migrants to leave their home countries or regions (IOM, 2019). Some examples refer to violence, poverty, injustice, famine, environmental challenges, religion, cultural beliefs, sexual orientation, and other conditions. Other circumstances that foster the vulnerability of migrants are the language barrier and illegal immigration (OHCHR, 2017). The language barrier is a factor that hinders the full integration of immigrants but activates a bonding process between members of the same community that interact and consolidate groups separated from the rest of society (Extramiana, 2012). This phenomenon refers to the creation of Bonding Social Capital mentioned in previous sections as a singularity that hinders social cohesion in heterogenous societies such as the American (Geys & Murdoch, 2010; Lance, 2012).

Regarding the elements of vulnerability, the International Organization for Migration considers four factors defining migrants' vulnerability: 1) individual, 2) family factors, 3) community and 4) structural. Individual factors include the persons' histories, experiences, beliefs, physical and mental health, and emotional, psychological, and cognitive characteristics (IOM, 2019). In this light, family factors entail circumstances such as family size, household structure, education levels, and socioeconomic status. The community factors involve equal access to resources, such as educational or training opportunities, health care and social services, social norms, and behaviours. Lastly, the structural factors are shaped by the political, economic, social, and environmental conditions and institutions at national, regional, and international levels influencing the migrants living conditions (IOM, 2019; OHCHR, 2017). These findings contribute to the literature on the mechanisms that enable or hinder participation in adult education and provides the basis for policy recommendations for governments and programme coordinators.

The main findings reflect the contribution of this type of educational activity in improving the students' lives in different domains such as self-esteem, self-confidence, social relationships, and employability. In this light, the study indicates that adult education improves students' self-confidence, self-esteem and life satisfaction through attitudinal behaviours and dispositions towards learning (Waller et al., 2018). Furthermore, it enhances employment possibilities if students are motivated and fulfil age, employment situation and immigration requirements. According to the interviews, these conditions allow them to increase their chances of staying employed or getting better jobs (Lane & Conlon, 2016). Similarly, constant social interactions at the Learning Centres enable them to meet new people and gradually build friendships or networks (Frederiksen et al., 2016) with people from similar backgrounds.

The following subsection highlights the need for further research and the study's weaknesses. This subsection entails a description of potential areas to explore with regard to the benefits of adult education on students' lives in the long term. This study provided significant findings on the implications of this type of educational activity. I also identified domains that could be explored to further understand the MEVyT programme for migrant populations in the United States.

5.3 Further research and study limitations

As part of the study's findings, I acknowledge that additional research is required to explore the programmes' implications in the long term and at different Learning Centres across the United States and Mexico. Understanding adult education's impacts could be broadly explored with other research undertakings combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. In this regard, the Learning Centres could undertake surveys, interviews, and other research tools to study how the students feel about the courses and how they benefit in the long run. In coordination with the Consulates and the Mexican government, further academic studies could be supported to understand the longitudinal effects of the programme across different areas in Los Angeles.

This study considered a qualitative approach to understanding the student's perceptions concerning self-esteem, self-confidence, employment opportunities, sociability, interpersonal trust, and accomplishment of goals. These theoretical dimensions were examined through a realist evaluation considering the analysis of context, mechanisms, and outcomes (Manzano, 2016; Marchal et al., 2017). The findings emerging from this methodological approach followed an analytical structure to identify predominant sociodemographic characteristics, attitudinal factors, and students' perceptions, which allowed the construction of qualitative profiles. Nonetheless, the field of adult education for migrant populations must be further explored, considering additional elements such as surveys and a combination of research approaches such as interviews to establish ongoing monitoring mechanisms. Similarly, the Learning Centres could develop a system comprising email addresses and telephone numbers to keep track of the student's development after completing their courses. This system will enable the Learning Centres to keep track of the student's needs and achievements beyond the activities at the Centres.

Concerning the analytical level of the programmes' effects, Kirkpatrick developed a framework for understanding training effectiveness according to learning outcomes, students' satisfaction, and the acquisition of new learning. However, this analytical approach does not examine the long-term effects of education on students' lives, as this deeper analysis would require tracking the students' performance for

the long term (Aryadoust, 2016, p. 152). As depicted in Table 5.1, the impact of learning comprises four levels.

Level 1	Student's reaction (satisfaction with learning)
Level 2	Learning (increase in knowledge, skills, or experience)
Level 3	Behaviour change (utilization of knowledge)
Level 4	Results (outcome for the institutions)

Table 5.1: Kirkpatrick Model of Learning Evaluation

This framework is a parameter in understanding the effectiveness of the educational programme based on students' perceptions. According to Kirkpatrick's Model of Learning Evaluation, the *Educational Model for Life and Work* programme has a good impact on the three first levels of the model: 1) Student's reaction (satisfaction with learning); 2) Learning (increase in knowledge, skills, or experience); 3) Behaviour change (utilisation of knowledge), and 4) Results (Tamkin et al., 2002). From the interviews, I discovered that most students report satisfaction with learning because they acknowledge the value of using new skills. Moreover, I identified a positive behaviour change relating to improved self-esteem, self-confidence, and life satisfaction (Field, 2009; Feinstein et al., 2008). Nonetheless, there is limited data concerning how well they have learned. Examining this factor through evaluations could be interesting for further research.

Another element emerging from this study is the need to understand if the programme improves the students' employment opportunities in the long term (Meadows & Metcalf, 2008). This type of research would be relevant to identify and cluster those students who attend looking for better employment. This group of students could be examined at different moments of their participation to analyse and compare their performance in the labour market after completing their educational goals. Regarding this notion, it would be noteworthy to study if there are differences between employment prospects for illegal and legal participants to analyse if undocumented immigrants benefit from the courses, as some studies indicate that unauthorised immigrants are more proficient in English than a decade ago (Passel & Cohn, 2019). This information could inform that adult education improves the employment and wages of illegal immigrants, despite the negative perceptions of some undocumented students.

Moreover, it would be significant to study the creation of social groups or networks beyond the educational activities at the Learning Centres. Similarly, it would be relevant to study if adult education encourages bridging social capital between minority groups (Walseth, 2007). In this light, some students reported having experienced positive feelings of belonging, which relates to Bonding Social Capital within

homogeneous social groups (Young et al., 2004). This factor is not considered to be harmful or detrimental to social integration. Nevertheless, integration between different social and ethnic groups is understood as a more vital form of cohesion (Claridge, 2018; Lancee, 2012). The relationship between adult education and social cohesion could be a meaningful topic to explore through additional research undertakings in the United States. A study could shed light on integration levels that take place throughout social interactions in positive environments in the long term. This potential study could portray the programme's scope in different settings with diverse social groups. Furthermore, it could highlight the role of adult education for migrant populations experiencing various forms of vulnerability and integration challenges. This potential study would allow the researchers to draw comparisons between different types of students, their perceptions and performance—for instance, migrant adult learners versus nonemigrants.

Lastly, further research could address the understanding of adult education as a mechanism to improve the student's well-being and social capital by comparing results across Learning Centres in both countries (Mexico and the United States of America). Further research might be undertaken to understand the effects of the MEVyT programme across the two countries by comparing differences and similarities in a variety of settings. This study could shed light on the programmes' effects on migrant populations and local students attending the courses in Mexico. Through this study, government officials would better understand the role of adult education in community building, social cohesion, mental health, personal development, and employability opportunities for different populations.

However, despite the potential for additional research, this study in itself provided meaningful contributions to the existing literature on adult education for migrant populations. As part of this study, I acknowledge specific strengths and weaknesses that constitute a significant part of this undertaking.

Study Strengths

This doctoral work contributes to the literature on adult education for migrant populations, a field of study that requires further investigation. This contribution refers to understanding adult education as a transformational mechanism that empowers migrants to improve their lives, live happier and build social relationships that potentially become support networks.

In this study, I identified predominant sociodemographic characteristics constituting diverse profiles of students that benefit more from the classes. Specifically, factors such as age, immigration background, employment status, time participating at the Learning Centres, course type, motivation to join the Learning

Centre and months participating in the Centres define two main groups of students. On the one hand, younger students in some form of employment with the right to work in the United States seek better jobs through adult education. On the other hand, older students tend to be retired or unemployed and are uninterested in better jobs seeking to gain literacy skills to overcome personal challenges. This categorisation enables the understanding of circumstances, attitudinal factors and sociodemographic characteristics influencing how the programme delivers outcomes. Further research could help identify how students benefit from the courses in the long run. By developing the qualitative profiles of students, this study contributes innovatively to understanding what type of students benefit more from the courses. This innovative contribution constitutes a study strength because it can be used to understand further that the programme has more effects on some students than others. Thus, the programme coordinators can implement changes to keep the students motivated to achieve further academic goals.

As part of the study's strengths, it is significant to highlight that the Consulate in Los Angeles, central authorities in Mexico and the Learning Centres coordinators supported the researcher in conducting semi-structured interviews with the students in both Learning Centres and facilitated access to documents and information. This institutional support was crucial to building trust with the students, as this permission allowed the researcher to establish positive communication based on positive levels of trust. The institutional support to contact the programme coordinators and carry out the interviews enabled the development of the study and can facilitate the dissemination of findings with government authorities in Mexico and the United States, which is a significant strength in transforming findings into concrete policy actions. I acknowledge that lacking adequate institutional support would have constituted a hurdle to undertaking this study because the Learning Centres tend to be cautious when allowing researchers or outsiders into their world.

Another strength refers to the piloting process of the semi-structured interview guidelines. In this regard, I was able to refine the guide for the semi-structured interviews after piloting it with the support of PhD colleagues, professors, and staff members from both Learning Centres. This support was determinant to adjust the vocabulary and some questions so that the students could understand the questions more easily. Piloting the questions with colleagues, supervisors, and the programme coordinators facilitated the development of easy-to-understand questions designed for migrant populations. In this regard, the questions captured the theoretical dimensions in a way that students could understand the meaning and purpose of the study. Additionally, the piloting process constituted a helpful mechanism to integrate relevant and meaningful questions into the different theoretical dimensions and to identify potential problems before

implementing the questionnaire. Through this process, the study gained validity and reliability, representing an asset for this study.

Furthermore, this study is innovative in addressing the effects of adult education through the lens of transnational policies for migrant populations in a distinctive setting through the Realist Evaluation approach. I have not encountered studies addressing transnational educational challenges through realist evaluations for migrant populations. Moreover, little research has been conducted to understand the broader effects of adult education on subjective well-being and social capital in Mexico. This study is therefore innovative and contributes to a potential research agenda. In this regard, this work provides policy recommendations to improve some aspects of the programme's implementation. The aim is to share the findings with the Mexican government and the Learning Centres' authorities seeking to influence how they implement the programme transnationally.

Lastly, this research can raise awareness about the role of adult education and promote more active participation of Latino community members in the United States. This study can motivate and encourage the implementation of monitoring and evaluation strategies and indicators at the institutional level to keep track of the effects of the MEVyT programme on migrant populations.

Study Limitations

In undertaking this study, I experienced several circumstances that facilitated or hindered the development of activities. For instance, the lack of resources to conduct interviews with more students in various locations hindered the researcher's capacity to include a wider variety of Learning Centres. In this regard, the limitations of this study comprise the selection criteria of Learning Centres in Los Angeles to conduct the semi-structured interviews. This selection process might have left out the analysis other Learning Centres with fewer years of experience providing adult education or in different districts in Los Angeles that could have been interesting to draw comparisons. It would have been interesting to interview more adult learners through two waves of interviews to compare variations in their perceptions.

Another limitation consists of the lack of monitoring mechanisms implemented by the Consulates and the Learning Centres to keep track of the students concluding their studies in recent years. In this light, a significant limitation is an impossibility of interviewing former students to analyse their experiences and compare perceptions after graduating from the Learning Centres. In this regard, it would have been interesting to study how the courses affected or impacted their lives after graduation and across different

Learning Centres. A comparison of former students with current participants could have showed meaningful differences in their perceptions. In this regard, not having access to former participants constitutes a weakness.

Furthermore, there is no official calendar for the modules to begin. This situation hinders the analysis of a specific cohort of students that simultaneously start and finish their participation. For example, the students can join the MEVyT whenever they consider it suitable and convenient. This flexibility has positive implications for the student's involvement, who can participate when they have availability. At the same time, it hinders the possibility of interviewing and studying cohorts of students beginning and concluding the courses following a specific calendar of activities and modules. The educational modules are structured to be completed within eight months of participation. This completion does not usually occur on time because the students attend the Learning Centres irregularly, making the education process slightly longer.

Students do not usually complete different modules continuously. In this regard, some participants attend several courses at a time within eight months, making it hard to keep track of them, which constitutes a limitation for this study.

5.4 Policy recommendations and messages

This study revealed relevant aspects concerning the role of adult education on subjective well-being and social capital that represent meaningful findings for policy implementation. Drawing on these findings, I identified that the MEVyT programme positively impacts students' self-confidence and self-esteem and allows them to gradually build social relationships based on cultural similarities. In understanding these benefits, the Learning Centres become significant players at the individual and community level for student development and community integration, which should be fostered and supported by the Mexican government.

The role of the Learning Centres could be crucial for the migrants’ capacity to engage more in the development of Mexico through remittances and cooperation. As the Learning Centres become small hubs for social integration for migrant populations, the support from local authorities and the Mexican government should leverage the Centre's capacity to engage in community building to improve the students' lives and build stronger and more resilient communities. In this way, the Mexican government, through the Networks of Consulates, should promote participation in adult education and encourage the Learning Centres to keep track of the students in the long term. The message is clear: by strengthening the Centres’

capacity to attract more students, the possibility of improving the community's development is higher which then could translate into a direct benefit for Mexico's development.

Concerning the Centre's institutional capacity to deliver educational opportunities for life and work, the founders reported facing several challenges to keep the Learning Centres running, ranging from financial to human problems related to the shortage of institutional support. These relevant findings respond to the institutional need to allocate more human and institutional resources to support these initiatives for vulnerable populations in the United States. The lack of resources is a common challenge to the development of Learning Centres that should be addressed by the Mexican government in cooperation with the US government and local authorities where the Centres operate. A policy shift is possible if the government acknowledges the transformational power of adult education in benefit of migrant populations that directly contribute to Mexico's development through the remittances. The methodology chapter indicates that the Consulates and the Mexican Government provide funding to the Learning Centres. Nevertheless, this allocation of resources is insufficient to expand their work and scope. In this light, understanding that the programme positively affects the population should encourage a redefinition of resource allocation from the Mexican government in conjunction with the educational authorities in the cities where the MEVyT is implemented in the United States. Both governments should establish more assertive communication and cooperation channels to support initiatives addressing vulnerable populations' educational needs.

The Centres offer the students the possibility to improve their self-esteem, self-confidence and to build social relationships which contribute to community building and resilience. Therefore, the Mexican government should consider the students at the Learning Centres as significant contributors to the national economy. Immigrants in the United States are key players in the country's development due to the economic interconnections between both countries. For example, Mexico received more than 51 billion US dollars from remittances in 2021[15], which have contributed significantly to the government's efforts to tackle the adverse effects of the pandemic (Harris & Maldonado, 2022). The Mexican authorities should consider integrating these Learning Centres as a critical mechanism for social integration and civic engagement through monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to keep track of the programme's effects in the long term. This mechanism could enable further participation and integration of community groups and foundations that have not yet taken part in supporting the development of the Learning Centres. The message is strong:

[15]https://www.banxico.org.mx/SieInternet/consultarDirectorioInternetAction.do?accion=consultarCuadroAnalitico&idCuadro=CA11§or=1&locale=es

the Learning Centres can become places where migrants gain new skills, meet new people, and improve their self-esteem. As key actors in the country's development, the Centres in the United States become a key ally for Mexico's development.

Furthermore, this study revealed a lack of monitoring mechanisms to keep track of the students' performance and development beyond the Learning Centres. For policy implementation, it is crucial to develop effective mechanisms to understand the programmes flaws and achievements. In this regard, a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators should be developed to support the understanding of how the programme works and benefits the students in both countries. This investment requires political will and institutional capacity to build longitudinal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Achieving these goals could enable the National Institute for Adult Education to become a Latin American leader in adult education for migrant populations.

Additionally, it is vital to promote the development of Learning Centres as spaces where positive environments enable long-lasting interactions where people can find social relationships, networks, and support groups. The Learning Centres should be acknowledged as places that provide meaningful development opportunities for vulnerable and marginalised individuals where they interact with other people sharing a common language and culture. This action can revitalise community development and social cohesion in the long term to benefit the Latino community in Los Angeles and other cities where the programme is implemented. Furthermore, attracting young adults should be part of the Learning Centre's agenda. In coordination with the Consulates, the Learning Centres should find innovative mechanisms to raise awareness about the courses for young adults who have been left out of the formal education system in their home countries. Some interviewees indicated that they would have benefited more from the courses when they were younger and could compete in the labour market.

Another element that can reinforce the potential of adult education for migrant populations is the capacity to find advertising mechanisms to encourage the participation of more individuals in the community that face difficult situations due to the lack of education or skills to succeed in life. The findings of this study reveal that recommendations of the courses that take place between former participants and community members allow further participation. It is recognised as the most direct and efficient approach that encourages more participation in the courses. Therefore, raising awareness of the benefits of adult education at the community level through various means has the potential to consolidate the MEVyT programme as a transformational agent for the benefit of vulnerable populations in the United States. In this regard, to

enable social recognition, the Network of Mexican Consulates in the United States should maintain the directory of Learning Centres up to date with relevant and explicit content about the courses offered, locations, opening hours, and other information that could facilitate the participation of community members.

Moreover, a key mechanism in supporting the effectiveness of the Learning Centres and the MEVyT programmes is the institutional support from the Mexican government to enable the transition of all Learning Centres in the United States into well-established institutions, or non-governmental organisations could raise funds from other sources nationally and internationally. This action can detonate the capability to reach a broader audience in the Latino community whilst enabling institutional stability to carry out their educational activities. Achieving this institutional stability would mean that the Learning Centres would no longer depend on single sources of support. Also related to this capacity, the Centres could develop capacity development in favour of the tutors and staff members that volunteer without remuneration.

Lastly, I identified that the students who benefit less from the courses are those affected by emotional crises and negative experiences in life, ranging from health-related issues to the loss of a family member. This type of student tends to suffer from depression and anxiety due to many difficulties related to migrants' experiences, such as having crossed illegally into the United States and having lost a family member during the journey. Nonetheless, these participants take part in the courses to overcome some of these personal challenges, which indicates that receiving psychological support whilst gaining new skills for life and work could be a positive element for their development. In this regard, the Learning Centres and the Mexican government should consider integrating psychological and emotional strategies to support students in need, as these opportunities could increase the possibilities of success. Additionally, this study sheds light on the negative effects of lacking work permits on a student's well-being and capacity to compete in the labour market. The government and the programme coordinators should seek legal advice to guide the students into the possibility of becoming legal residents, as many of them have been in the United States for more than 30 years.

As part of this study, I considered that the policy recommendations outlined above could positively impact the Learning Centres' progression as transformational agents favouring migrant populations in the United States. The message to the Mexican government and the Institute of Adult Education (INEA) is clear. Evidence indicates that adult education positively impacts students' well-being and social capital as they participate in the MEVyT programme in the United States. The programme enables the participants to

improve their well-being and participate in community activities as they gain new skills for potential employment, contributing to Mexico's development. This contribution should not be overlooked. On the contrary, the government should shift its policy approach by allocating more resources to the Learning Centres and supporting their endeavours to raise funds. Additionally, the government should introduce monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the impact of the programme in the long term and should encourage additional research undertakings from external sources.

Annexes

Annexe 1: Semi-structured questionnaire for students

Context	Intrinsic motivation to participate. What is the main motivation to take the courses? Do you have specific goals in joining the courses? Do these goals refer to personal challenges or better employment? What changes in your life do you envision after completing the courses? What type of courses do you want to attend and why?
Education	What is your level of education? Schooling years in your home country? How many months have you been participating in the courses? How many modules have you attended? Have you completed any courses at the Centre?
Mental health	How satisfied are you with your mental health? Do you consider having high self-confidence and self-esteem?
	Referring to your participation in the INEA courses: How does the courses improve your self-confidence? Have you noticed any improvements?
	Do you think the courses improve your mood? Do you feel happier or motivated when you come to the courses?
	Do you think the courses affect your self-esteem and your positivity towards life? Do you feel any difference between before joining the courses? Before participating the courses how was your self-confidence?
Employability	What is your current employment status? How satisfied are you with your current employment situation? Have you considered changing your job? What are the factors you enjoy or dislike from your job?
	Referring to your participation in the INEA courses: How does this improve your job opportunities? Do you perceive an improvement?
	How have you used the new knowledge in your area of work? Do you think the skills you are gaining are useful for your job or future jobs?

	To what degree, does participation in adult education generate the conditions for you to feel better prepared for the labour market? How do you want to use the skills in your job? Are the courses effective in preparing the students for the labour market?
Social Relationships	How satisfied are you with the quality of your current social relationships? Are you a sociable person? Do you socialise with different ethnical or economic groups? Do you consider socialising to be important for your life?
	Referring to your participation in the INEA courses: To what degree, do the courses link you to new social groups? Are you making new friends or social networks at the Centre?
	To what degree have you felt more motivated to participate in activities such as volunteering, sports, artistic, social, etc?
	To what extent, do you feel more integrated in society? Do you think the courses allow you to meet people with whom you can talk about your personal problems? Socialising at the Centre is easy? What are the constraints to making more friends or networks? Is the environment at the Centre adequate for building new friendships? After completing the courses, you think you will in touch with classmates, tutors or coordinators?
	In what sense does it open the possibility for people from heterogeneous social groups to establish ties? (Bridging or bonding)
Trust	In general terms, would you say that most people can be trusted or should precautions always be taken? Do you trust in people at the Centre? What are the constraints you perceive for trusting people? Do you think trusting people is relevant? If so, why? Before joining the courses did you have a different perception about trusting people?
	To what degree have INEA courses motivated you to trust people more? Do you feel an improvement in how much you trust people at the Centre?

	In general terms, how much do you trust: relatives, friends, classmates at the learning centre and neighbours? What does it take for you to trust people? What does trust someone mean to you?
	In what sense is there a flow of information among classmates that generates trust? For example: Do you share information about jobs, activities or health services in the community?
Satisfaction	In general terms, what is the level of satisfaction with life? On a 0-10 scale, where 10 means completely satisfied, what is your level of satisfaction with life?
	What is your level of satisfaction with the INEA modules? Do you perceive additional benefits that you did not have contemplated? Do you perceive an improvement in your satisfaction with life?
	Considering your intrinsic motivation for attending the INEA modules. To what degree the objective has been met?
	To what degree, participating in the learning activities has improved your quality of life and made your life happier? Negative points? Would you recommend it?
Profile	Can you please share the current information on your background with me? Current occupation. Marital status. Number of children. Economic dependents. Age. Immigration status. Years living in California.
Socioeconomic level	Can you please sharecurrent information on your socioeconomic background? Housing status (rented, owned, etc.). Perception of security in your neighbourhood. Access to medical care or insurance. Working hours per week. Salary per hour. Reasons for migrating.

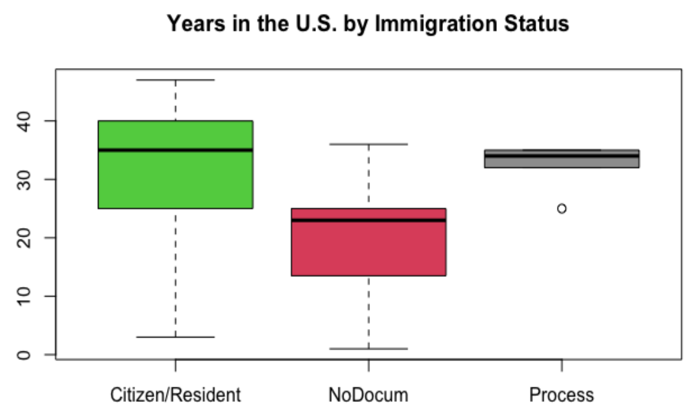
Annexe 2: Descriptive Statistics

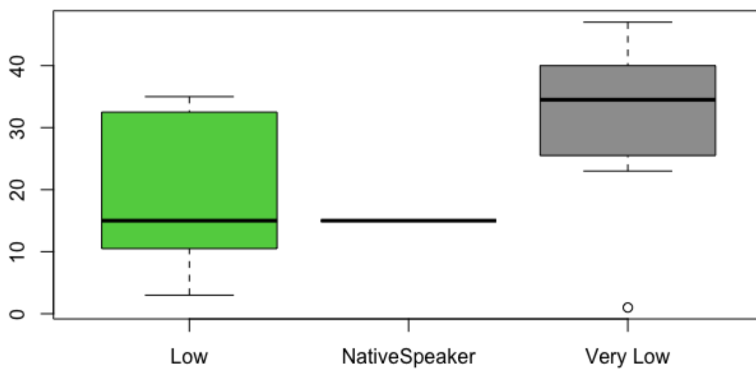
Demographic and Socio-economic Data											
ID	Age	Sex	Marital status	School years	Months at LC	Course	Country	Employ	Migration	Years in US	English skills
CG1	53	1	Married	6	24	English	Mexico	Employ	Process	35	Low
CG2	50	1	Married	9	24	English	Mexico	Self Em	NoDocum	26	VLow
CG3	46	1	Married	9	6	Tech	Mexico	PartTime	NoDocum	24	VLow
CG4	33	1	Single	9	36	BE	Mexico	Unemp	Citizen	14	Low
CG5	15	1	Single	10	1	Tech	US	Unemp	Citizen	15	NativeSp
CG6	30	1	Single	9	1	Tech	Mexico	PartTime	NoDocum	16	Low
CG7	48	1	Single	9	12	BE	Mexico	Emp	Process	32	VLow
CG8	39	1	Married	9	12	English	Mexico	Unemp	Citizen	3	Low
CG9	68	0	Married	6	36	BE	Mexico	Unemp	Citizen	40	VLow
CG10	19	0	Single	1	1	BE	Honduras	Emp	NoDocum	1	VLow
CG11	67	1	Married	1	30	BE	Mexico	Retired	Citizen	47	VLow
CG12	44	0	Married	1	24	BE	Mexico	Unemp	NoDocum	23	VLow
CG13	65	0	Married	1	12	BE	Mexico	Self Em	NoDocum	36	VLow
CG14	55	1	Married	9	6	Tech	Mexico	Retired	Citizen	32	VLow
CG15	50	1	Married	1	10	BE	Mexico	Unemp	Resident	25	VLow
CD1	53	1	Married	6	24	English	Mexico	Emp	Process	35	Low
CD2	50	1	Married	6	5	Citizen	Mexico	Unemp	Citizen	30	Low
CD3	70	1	Single	1	2	BE	Mexico	Retired	Citizen	40	VLow
CD4	48	0	Married	1	24	BE	Guatem	Self Em	Process	25	VLow
CD5	65	0	Single	1	12	BE	Mexico	Retired	Citizen	42	VLow
CD6	23	0	Married	12	3	English	US	Unemp	Citizen	10	Low
CD7	35	0	Single	12	3	English	Mexico	Unemp	NoDocum	11	Low
CD8	60	1	Married	1	36	BE	Mexico	Retired	Resident	41	VLow
CD9	61	1	Married	1	13	BE	Mexico	Retired	Resident	40	VLow
CD10	54	0	Married	1	2	BE	El Sal	Emp	Citizen	30	VLow
CD11	55	1	Married	1	24	BE	Mexico	Emp	Process	34	VLow
CD12	53	0	Married	1	36	BE	Mexico	Emp	Citizen	35	VLow
CD13	70	0	Married	1	6	BE	Mexico	Retired	Citizen	40	VLow
CD14	68	1	Married	1	12	BE	Mexico	Retired	Resident	45	VLow

Annexe 3: Socioeconomic and context data

	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Total
Female	13	5	18
Male	8	3	11
Total	21	8	29

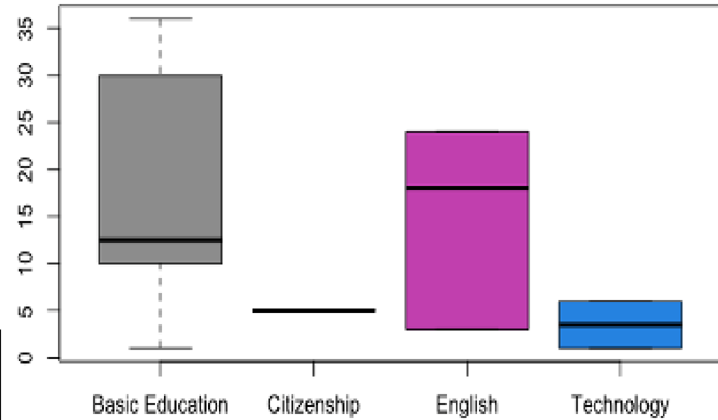
	Years in the U.S. by Immigration Status			
	Legal Resident	No documents	In Process	Total
Less than 10	1	1	0	2
10-30 years	4	5	1	10
More than 30	12	1	4	17
Total	17	7	5	29



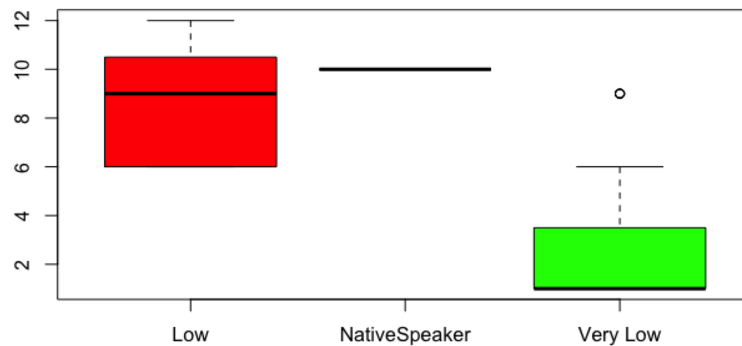


Mexico	24
U.S.	2
Guatemala	1
El Salvador	1
Honduras	1
Total	29

	Schooling years by Employment Status			
	Employed	Unemployed	Retired	**Total**
1 year or less	6	2	7	**15**
6 years	2	2	0	**4**
9 years	4	3	1	**8**
12 years	0	2	0	**2**
Total	**12**	**9**	**8**	**29**



	Age Group and Type of courses			
	20-40	40-60	60+	**Total**
Basic Education	2	7	9	**18**
Citizenship	-	1	-	**1**
Technology	2	2	-	**4**
English	3	3	-	**6**
Total	**7**	**13**	**9**	**29**



Annexe 4: NVivo table of Nodes and number of references

Node	Description	Files	References
Motivation	Different motivations to participate in adult education shared by the students	29	56
• Better Job	Students who attend the courses primarily to acquire new skills for job-related purposes	13	17
• Citizenship	Students attending the courses for the citizenship test	5	6
• Leisure	Participants that perceive the Learning Centre as a place for socialising and relaxation	2	2
• Personal Development	Students that perceive the acquisition of literacy as a personal challenge	18	31
Social Relationships	The student's perception about the improvement of social skills and the creation of new social networks	29	49
• Communication with new people	Student's perception related to the communication they established with people they recently met	22	29
• Creation of Social Networks	Participant's comments about the creation of new social networks as part of meeting new people at the Learning Centre	3	5
• Don't agree	Students that perceive that adult education did not enable them to meet new friends and create social networks	6	9
• Feeling of belonging	Participants that perceive that adult education has helped them to feel more integrated	6	6
Trust	The perceptions about the relationship between adult education and improved feelings of interpersonal trust	29	53
• Always careful regardless ethnicity	Students that consider that they always must be careful when dealing with people regardless the ethnicity or origin	13	14
• It's complicated to trust people	Students that consider that trusting people is always a difficult activity	18	19
• Meeting people you can trust	Participants that met new people they can trust or that feel they have become more confident in trusting new people due to participating in adult education	15	20
Perception of employability	Student's perception about the acquisition of new skills for better employment opportunities	29	37
• Chances to stay employed	Participants considering that the new skills they acquired have helped them to stay employed	2	3
• Increased chances for better job opportunities	Participants that are feeling more confident for future employment due to new skills acquired	13	18
• Job is irrelevant	Students that are not interested in future employment opportunities due to retirement or lack of documents	14	16
Mental Health	Student's perception about improved mental health factors	29	67
• Life satisfaction	Students' perception about the relationship between their participation in adult education and satisfaction with life	27	28

• Self-esteem and confidence	Participant’s perception about self-confidence and self-esteem as part of their participation in adult education	29	36
• Uncertain about mental health	Participants who are uncertain about the role of adult education in improving mental health	3	3
Accomplishment of Goals	Student’s perception about the accomplishment of their academic goals	27	58
• Accomplished but continue learning	Participants that finished the initially planned courses but continue attending more classes	5	6
• Accomplishment in process	Students acknowledge that they are gradually progressing in the accomplishment of their goals	26	50

Annexe 5: Student's perceptions

Casa Guerrero Learning Centre – Student's Perceptions					
	Effects				Overall
	Mental Health	Employability	S. Relationships	Trust	
1	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem and Attitude towards life	Better communication skills at work	Better sociability skills with English-native speakers.	Trust building is a slow process. Improved integration outside the L.C.	Hasn't achieved a better job yet but communication has improved. Aiming for better
2	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem	Developed self-employability skills	Better sociability skills with English-native speakers	Always careful. Developed sense of community	Improved perception of Trust
3	Improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	Improvement in computational skills	Better communication with other ethnicities and classmates	Always careful. Courses and trust not relevant	Better sense of integration and Community involvement with countrymen.
4	Health issues affect self-esteem	Improved employability after BE certification	Built friendships and feelings of community	Always careful and Communication and trust with Latinos.	Despite health positive attitudes. Lack of trust with other ethnicities, strong with LC mates.
5	Irregular feelings of self-esteem. Expectations are reasonable	High expectations to find a job after courses	Communication open to ethnicities. Expectations are low.	Always careful regardless ethnicity	Considers herself Mexican.
6	Irregular feelings of self-esteem. Lack of documents impact negatively	Expectations low due to lack of work permit	Not a sociable person. Hesitates to socialize at LC	Always careful. Communicates with Latinos	Lack of work permit complicates success. Crossed illegally.
7	Perception is high after LC. Feelings of improvement	Kept the job after BE accomplishment	Sociable person. Feelings of community	Always careful. Communicates with Latinos	After time at LC feels improvement in Self-confidence.
8	Improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	In progress. Improving English skills.	Sociable. Strong feeling of belonging with Latinos but open.	Always careful. Volunteers at LC. Trust improvement	Looking for a stable job after improving his English. Energy and motivation are essential
9	Improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	Not really correlated.	Sociable. Mostly Latinos. Language barrier	Always careful regardless nationality.	Personal Development is the main goal. Happiness improving. Felt blind before courses.
10	High expectations in self-esteem and confidence	Not the main goal. Enjoys current job. Expectations are high.	Sociable, only with Latinos. Language Barrier. Good vibes.	Always careful, expectations high.	Recommended the LC, no positive response from friends. Crossed illegally.
11	Improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	Not the main goal.	Met trustworthy people. Belonging with Latinos.	Always careful. Made good friends.	Now has the time to study. Feels great improvement in self-

					confidence. Citizenship at LC.
12	Great improvement in self-esteem and confidence. It has been slowly but constant	Secondary goal.	Relatively friendly and sociable	Always careful. Regardless ethnicity.	Has improved literacy skills deeply. Feels really motivated in life.
13	Significant improvement in Self-esteem and confidence. Slowly but steady.	Not a primary goal. Improvement in communication skills.	Language barrier. Latinos only.	Always careful regardless ethnicity. Latinos only	Better sense of integration and Community improvement. Motivation important.
14	Great improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	Secondary goal. Retired already.	Sociable. Most with Latinos. Language Barrier.	Always careful regardless ethnicities. Met people at LC	Recommended the LC, no positive response from friends. Motivation is essential.
15	Improvement in Self-esteem and confidence	Not a primary goal. Improvement in communication skills.	Sociable. Most with Latinos. Met people friendly at LC	Always careful regardless ethnicities.	Has improver literacy skills and feels more confident in daily activities.
Casa Durango Learning Centre – Student's Perceptions					
	Effects				**Overall**
	Mental Health	**Employability**	**S. Relationships**	**Trust**	
1	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem and Attitude towards life	Better communication skills at work	Better sociability skills with English-native speakers.	Trust building is a slow process. Improved integration outside the L.C.	Hasn't achieved a better job yet but communication has improved. Aiming for better
2	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem. Sadness reduced	Expectations are high bur it's not main goal	Met new persons. Mostly Mexicans. Integration slow.	Always careful but has improved slowly.	Language barrier to socialize. Motivated to carry on.
3	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem but quite low.	Not interested.	Low integration. Not highly social. Low expectations.	Always careful regardless nationality.	Retired with finally time to learn. Great frustration due to illiteracy condition. Health issues.
4	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem. Expectations are high	Expectations are high to improve own business. Communication skills.	Not very sociable. Expectations are low. Communication for job	Always careful. Expectations very low.	Spanish is not first language. Pursuing university studies. Entrepreneurial.
5	High improvement in Self-esteem. Very grateful.	Not interested.	More sociable than before but hasn't made friends at LC.	Always careful regardless nationality.	Community building very important. Latinos only. Language barrier.
6	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem. More open than before.	High expectations to pursue a professional and academic.	Sociable mostly with Latinos. Language barrier.	Always careful regardless ethnicity.	Communication problems but sociable. Thankful for opportunity.

7	Slowly improvement in Self-esteem. High expectations.	Secondary goal.	Sociable but limited due low English level. High expectations	Always careful regardless ethnicity.	Frustration due to communication barrier.
8	High improvement in Self-esteem.	Not interested. Retired already.	Not sociable but feels more integrated. Latinos only.	Always careful. Communication barrier.	Feels more important and respected. Have started reading and writing.
9	Not always high self-esteem but feels improvement.	Not interested. Retired already.	Sociable with Latinos only due to communication barrier.	Always careful. Sometimes easier to trust Latinos.	Open to social relationships but English is very low. Feels happier to participate at LC.
10	High expectations. Has a great attitude towards learning	Moderate expectations. Personal development is more important	Sociable with Latino friends	Has not befriended anyone at LC. Low expectations	Worker at industry sector, hard-working conditions. Would like to learn computer skills.
11	High improvement in Self-esteem and self-confidence.	Not interested. Enjoys her job.	Very sociable with Latinos due to language barrier.	Trust LC mates. Regardless ethnicity always careful	English is rarely needed in US.
12	High improvement in Self-esteem and self-confidence	Job is a secondary goal	It has improved very much. Mostly Latinos due language.	Always careful regardless ethnicity.	Felt discriminated before LC. It has seen a great improvement. Very thankful.
13	Self-esteem but quite low. Moderate expectations.	Secondary goal.	Not highly social. Moderate expectations.	Always careful regardless nationality.	Retired with finally time to learn. Frustration due to illiteracy condition.
14	High improvement in Self-esteem.	Secondary goal. Already retired.	Very social and has met friendly people at LC but only Latinos.	Always careful regardless nationality.	Looking for a job is secondary Improving literacy skills

References

Acevedo, N. (2018). *Immigration policies, deportation threats keep kids out of school, report states.* NBC News. Latino. Available at: https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/immigration-policies-deportation-threats-keep-kids-out-school-report-states-n938566

Adams, W. (2015). *Conducting Semi-structured interviews in Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*. Jossey-Bass. 4th Edition. P. 492-498

Ahl, H. (2006) *Motivation in adult education: a problem solver or a euphemism for direction and control?* International Journal of Lifelong Education, 25:4, 385-405, DOI: 10.1080/02601370600772384

Anderson, K., and Huang, Z. (2019). *Can immigrants ever earn as much as native workers?* IZA World of Labor. 159 doi: 10.15185/izawol.159.v2

Aoun, J. (2016). *Robot-Proof: Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*. Cambridge: MIT Press. P. 4-25

Aryadoust, V. (2016). *Adapting Levels 1 and 2 of Kirkpatrick's model of training evaluation to examine the effectiveness of a tertiary-level writing course*. Pedagogies: An international journal. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. 12:2, p. 151-179

Asad, A. L. (2020). *Latinos' deportation fears by citizenship and legal status, 2007 to 2018*. PNAS Research. Available at: https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1915460117

Banco de Mexico. (2021). *Ingresos y egresos por remesas*. Available at: https://www.banxico.org.mx/publicaciones-y-prensa/remesas/%7B18DDDD62-7FA9-8066-4B4A-7D0EF344FFA2%7D.pdf

Barria, C. (2019). *Los latinos en Estados Unidos: en qué trabajan realmente, cuánto dinero ganan y cuál es su poder económico.* BBC News International. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-50048191

Barron, J., Berger, M., and Black, D. (1997). *On-the-Job Training*. Upjohn Research. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Available at: https://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1070&context=up_press

Bates, P. and Aston, J. (2004) *Overcoming Barriers to Adult Basic Skills in Sussex*. Institute for Employment Studies. Brighton, UK. Available at: https://www.employment-studies.co.uk/system/files/resources/files/1552slsc.pdf

Baum, FE., Ziersch, AM., Zhang, G., and Osborne K. (2009). *Do perceived neighbourhood cohesion and safety contribute to neighbourhood differences in health?* Health & Place. 15(4):925–934

BBVA Research and Consejo Nacional de Población. (2018). *Anuario de Migración y Remesas México 2018*. Available at:
https://www.bbvaresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/180905_PresentacionAnuarioMigracion_2018.pdf

Beck, A., Miles Corak and Marta Tienda. (2012). *Age at Immigration and the Adult Attainments of Child Migrants to the United States.* US National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health. p. 134-158. Available at:
https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1177/0002716212442665

Becker, Gary S. (1994). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*. Third Edition. University Chicago Press. p. 15-22

Bengston, J. (2013) *National Strategies for implementing lifelong learning (LLL) – the gap between policy and reality: An international perspective*. International Review of Education, Journal of Lifelong Learning, Springer, 2013, Paris. P. 343-353

Berg, R. C., and Nanavati J. (2016). *Realist review: Current practice and future prospects.* Journal of Research Practice, *12*(1), Article R1. Available at:
http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/538/449

Bhattacharya, A., Corfe, S., and Norman, A. (2020). *(Adult) education, education, education How adult education can improve the life chances of those on low incomes*. Social Market Foundation, November 2020, London

Blieszner, R., Ogletree, A., and Adams, R. (2019). *Friendship in Later Life: A Research Agenda*. Innov Aging. 2019 Jan; 3(1). doi: 10.1093/geroni/igz005

Blundell, R., Dearden, L., and Sianesi, B. (2001). *Evaluating the impact of education on earnings in the UK: models, methods and results from the NCDS*. UCL. DfES Centre for the Economics of Education and the ESRC Centre for the MicroeconomicAnalysis of Public Policy at IFS

Blumenstock, J., Guanghua Chi and Xu Tan. (2018). *Migration and the Value of Social Networks*. CEPR Discussion Papers 1361, C.E.P.R. Discussion Papers. P. 2-29

Boeren, E. (2009). *Adult education participation: The Matthew principle*. *Filosofija- Sociologija*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 154-161.

Boeren, E., Holford, J., Nicaise, I. and Baert, H. (2012). *Why do adults learn? Developing a motivational typology across 12 European countries*. Globalisation, Societies and Education, vol 10, no. 2, pp. 247-269., 10.1080/14767724.2012.678764

Bokova, I. (2013). UNESCO. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/es/media-services/single-view/news/message_from_ms_irina_bokova_director_general_of_unesco_on-97/ November 28th, 2018.

Borum, R. (2010). *The Science of Interpersonal Trust*. Mental Health Law & Policy Faculty Publications. 574. http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/mhlp_facpub/574

Botero, J., Ponce, A., and Schleifer, A. (2013). *Education, Complaints and Accountability*. Journal of Law and Economics. University of Chicago. P. Available at:
https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/shleifer/files/publication_final_02262014.pdf

Bourdieu, P. (1983). *Ökonomisches Kapital, kulturelles Kapital, soziales Kapital*. Soziale Welt, Special Issue 2, p. 183-198

Bradburn, N. (1969) *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago. Aldine, p. 53-55. Available at: http://www.norc.org/PDFs/publications/BradburnN_Struc_Psych_Well_Being.pdf

Braun, V., and Victoria Clarke. (2006). *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3:2, 77-101

Britten, N. (1995). *Qualitative research: qualitative interviews in medical research*. British Medical Journal 311, p. 251-253.

Britannica Encyclopaedia. (2018). *Durango State of Mexico*. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. Available at: https://www.britannica.com/place/Laguna-District

Bustamante, J. (2010). *Extreme Vulnerability of Migrants: The Cases of the United States and Mexico*. Georgetown University Law Center. Georgetown Law Library.

Cain, J., Naz, I., and Clewes, B. (2017). *How adult learning transforms lives and communities*. Adult Education Impact Report. WEA. Available at:
https://www.wea.org.uk/sites/default/files/WEA_Impact_Report_2017_0502.pdf

Campbell-Cree, A. and Lotten, M. (2018). *The value of trust How trust is earned and why it matters*. British Council. Available at:
https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/the_value_of_trust.pdf

Caponi, V., and Plesca, M. (2013) *Empirical Characteristics of legal and Illegal Immigrants in the U.S.* Kiel Institute for the World Economy. No. 1835. Kiel, Germany.

Capps, R., Gelatt, J., Ruiz Soto, A., Van Hook, J. (2020). *Unauthorized Immigrants in the United States: Stable numbers, changing origins*. Migration Policy Institute. Available at:
https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi-unauthorized-immigrants-stablenumbers-changingorigins_final.pdf

Cassani, G. (2016). *Hay 800 mil guerrerenses viviendo en Estados Unidos.* Síntesis de Guerrero. Available at: https://sintesisdeguerrero.com.mx/2016/01/24/hay-800-mil-guerrerenses-viviendo-en-estados-unidos/

Castro-Mussot, Luz Maria and Maria Luisa de Anda. (2007) *Literacy, "Knowledge and Development"*. UNESCO UIL and Mexican National Institute for Adult Education INEA, Hamburg, p.117–141

Cerna, L. (2019). *Refugee Education: Integration Models and Practices in OECD Countries*. OECD Education Working Paper No. 203. Available at:
https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP(2019)11&docLanguage=En

Cha, P., and McConville, S. (2021). *Health Coverage and Care for Undocumented Immigrants: An Update*. Public Policy Institute of California. Available at:
https://www.ppic.org/publication/health-coverage-and-care-for-undocumented-immigrants/

Chatzky, A., McBride, J., and Sergie, M.A. (2020). *NAFTA and the USMCA: Weighing the Impact of North American Trade*. Council on Foreign Relations. Available at:
https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/naftas-economic-impact

City Population. (2019). *Mexico: Guerrero, Population*. Available at:
https://www.citypopulation.de/Mexico-Guerrero.html

Claridge, T. (2018). *What is Bonding Social Capital.* Social Capital Research. New Zealand. (Accessed January 24, 2022) Available at:
https://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/what-is-bonding-social-capital/#:~:text=Bonding%20social%20capital%20is%20a,and%20available%20information%20and%20resources

Clay, R. (2010). *More than one way to measure. Randomized clinical trials have their place, but critics argue that researchers would get better results if they also embraced other methodologies.* American Psycholigical Association. Vol 41, No. 8. Available at:
https://www.apa.org/monitor/2010/09/trials

Cofta, P. (2021). *Trust, choice, and self-preservation: a computational approach*. Cognition, Technology & Work volume 23, pages85–101. Springer.

Coleman, J. (1988). *Social capital in the creation of human capital*. American Journal of Sociology, p. 95-120.

Collier, P. (1998). *Social Capital and Poverty*. The Social Capital Initiative, World Bank, Working paper 4, p. ix – 34

Comber, B. (2013). *Schools as Meeting Places: Critical and Inclusive Literacies in Changing Local Environments*. Language Arts, Volume 90 Number 5, May 2013

Congressional Research Service–CRS (2022). *Mexico: Background and U.S. Relations*. Congressional Research Service. Washington. Available at:
https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/R42917.pdf

Consejo Ciudadano Para La Seguridad Pública y la Justica Penal. (2019) *Las 50 ciudades más violentas del mundo 2018*. Available at: www.seguridadjusticiaypaz.org.mx/files/estudio.pdf

Consejo Nacional de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo CONEVYT (2000). *Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo*. Available at
https://www.conevyt.org.mx/colaboracion/pdfs/revistaesp.pdf

Consejo Nacional de Poblacion. (2010). *Intensidad migratoria a nivel municipal y estatal*. CONAPO. Available at:
http://www.conapo.gob.mx/work/models/CONAPO/intensidad_migratoria/pdf/IIM_Estatal_y_Municipal.pdf

Cramm, J., and Nieboer, A. (2012). *Relationships between frailty, neighbourhood security, social cohesion, and sense of belonging among community-dwelling older people*. Social research, planning and practice. https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/10.1111/j.1447-0594.2012.00967.x

Cross, K.P. (1981). *Adults as learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Crowe, S., and Lucas-Vergona, J. (2007). *What should be done about the illegal immigration from Mexico to the United States?* Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mcm.2007.03.026

Cuesta, J. (2012). *Does social media reate (or estroy) Social Capital?* The World Bank Group. Working for a world free of poverty. Available at: http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/opendata/does-social-media-create-or-destroy-social-capital

Dalkin, S.M., Natalie Forster, Philip Hodgson, Monique Lhussier and Sue Carr. (2015). *Using NVivo to enhance transparency in a vvaluation.* QSR International. The National Institute for Health's (NIHR) School for Public Health Research. Available at: http://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/nvivo-community/the-nvivo-blog/how-researchers-use-nvivo-to-enhance-transparency

Dalkin, S.M., Greenhalgh, J., Jones, D. et al. (2015b) *What's in a mechanism? Development of a key concept in realist evaluation*. Implementation Sci 10, 49. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-015-0237-x

De Bliek, R. (2013). *The development of interpersonal trust and its relation to economic performance*. IEDPR. LXV, p. 24-26. Available at: http://www.ipedr.com/vol65/005-ICEBI2013-Y00010.pdf

De Grip Andries, Jasper van Loo and Jos Sanders. (2004). *The Industry Employability Index: taking account of supply and demand characteristics*. International Labour Review, Vol. 143(3), pp. 211–221

Della Mirandola, G. (1965). *On the Dignity of Man*. Indiana: Hacket Publishing.

Department for Education (2018) *Decisions of adult learners*. Kantar Public and Learning and Work Institute. Social Science in Government. Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED590017.pdf

Desjardins, R., Rubenson, K., and Milana, M. (2006). *Unequal chances to participate in adult learning*. Paris: UNESCO

DiCicco, B. and Benjamin Crabtree. (2006). *The qualitative research interview*. Association for the Study of Medical Education. ASME. p. 314-321

Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., and Smith, H. L. (1999). *Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress*. Psychological bulletin, 125(2), 276-302.

Ding, H., and Hargraves, L. (2009). *Stress-Associated Poor Health Among Adult Immigrants with a Language Barrier in the United States*. Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health**. Volume 11**, Article number: 446

Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., and Sanders, L. (2012). *The Challenge of Defining Well-being*. International Journal of Well-being, p. 222-235

Dolan, P., and Robert Metcalfe. (2012). *Measuring Subjective Wellbeing: Recommendations on Measures for use by National Governments*. Journal of Social Policy. P. 410-421. Available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/43155/1/Dolan_Measuring_subjective_wellbeing_2012.pdf

Dorsett, R., Silvia Lui and Martin Weale. (2010). *Economic Benefits of Lifelong Learning*. Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies. Available at: https://www.llakes.ac.uk/sites/default/files/DorsettLuiWealeComplete.pdf

Dragolov, G., Zsofia Ignacz, Jan Lorenz, Jan Delhey and Klaus Boehnke. (2013) *Social Cohesion Radar, Measuring Common Ground*. Berteslmann Foundation, Gütersloh, Germany, p. 8-14

Dreher, A., Gaston Noel and Pim Martens. (2008). *Measuring globalisation. Gauging its consequences*. Springer. New York,

Duckworth, K., and Olga Cara. (2012). *The Relationship between Adult Learning and Wellbeing: Evidence from the 1958 National Child Development Study*. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. London. Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/34669/12-1241-relationship-adult-learning-and-wellbeing-evidence-1958.pdf

Duffy, B. (2004). *Life satisfaction and trust in other people*. MORI Social Research Institute. Available at:https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/publication/1970-01/sri_life_satisfaction_and_trust_in_other_people_122004.pdf

Durand J. Nuevas Regiones Migratorias. In: Zenteno René M., editor. (1998). *Población, Desarrollo y Globalización: V Reunión de Investigación Socio-Demográfica en México*. Vol. 2. México: Sociedad Mexicana de Demografía-El Colegio de la Frontera Norte. pp. 101–115

Easton, G. (2010). *Critical realism in case study research*. Elsevier. Industrial Marketing Management. p. 118–128. Available at:
http://www.mega-project.eu/assets/exp/resources/critical_realism_-_easton_1.pdf

Eberle A. and Robinson S. (1980). *The adult illiterate speaks out: personal perspectives on learning to read and write*. National Inst. for Community Development, Washington, D.C. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. p. 15-20

Edwards, R. (1997) *Changing Places? Flexibility, Lifelong Learning and a Learning Society*, London, p. 92-95

Egglestone, C., Stevens C., Jones E., and Fiona Aldridge (2018). *Adult Participation in Learning Survey 2017*. Learning and Work Institute. Department for Education. UK.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/735438/Participation_in_Learning_Survey_2017.pdf

European Commission. (2000). *Push and pull factors of international migration: a comparative report*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European Union. (2012). *Strategies for improving participation in and awareness of adult learning*. European Commission. Education and Training. Available at: https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/1_avrupa_birligi/1_9_politikalar/1_9_4_egitim_politikasi/ec_guide_adult_learning.pdf (Accessed September 8, 2021)

European Union. (2020). *Integration of migrants in middle and small cities and in rural areas in Europe*. Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs. Available at: https://cor.europa.eu/en/engage/studies/Documents/Integration%20of%20Migrants.pdf

Evans, K. (2013) *The PAY-OFFS of Lifelong Learning*. ASEM Magazine for Lifelong Learning. ASEM, p. 8-9 Available at: http://www.e-pages.dk/aarhusuniversitet/626/html5/

Extramiana, C. (2012). *Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes Outline of issues and educational approaches*. Language Policy Unit Education Department Council of Europe. Available at: https://rm.coe.int/16802faa70

Faraoni D. and Simon Schaefer. (2016). *Randomized controlled trials vs. observational studies: why not just live together?* US National Library of Medicine. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5073487/

Fehr, E., and Fischbacher, U. (2003). *The Nature of Human Altruism*. Pub Med. DOI:10.1038/nature02043

Feinstein, L., Hammond, C., Woods, L., Preston, J., and Bynner, J. (2003). *The Contribution of Adult Learning to health and Social Capital*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, London, Available at: http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/10014854/1/WBLResRep8.pdf

Feinstein, L., Budge, D., Vorhaus, J., and Duckworth, K. (2008) *The Social and Personal Benefits of Learning: A summary of key research findings*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, London, p. 11-25 Available at: http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/10003177/1/Feinstein2008thesocialreport.pdf

Feksi, K. and Andrew Sulle. (2013). *The role of education in poverty reduction in Tanzania*. Mzumbe University, Dar es Salaam Campus College. P. 6-11. Available at: http://garj.org/full-articles/the-role-of-education-in-poverty-reduction-in-tanzania.pdf?view=download

Field, J. (2005). *Social Capital and Lifelong Learning*. Policy Press. Bristol, England. p. 5-19.

Field, J. (2009). *Well-being and Happiness*. Inquiry into the future for Lifelong Learning, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, England and Wales, p. 9-33 Available at: http://www.lifewidescrapbook.co.uk/uploads/1/0/8/4/10842717/ifll-wellbeing.pdf

Field, J. (2009b). *Good for your soul? Adult learning and mental well-being*. International Journal of Lifelong Education 28(2). DOI:10.1080/02601370902757034

Field, J. (2011). *Adult learning, health, and well-being –changing lives*. University of Stirling. ERIC. Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ954303.pdf

Fielding, A., and J. Anderson (2008). *Working with Refugee Communities to Build Collective Resilience*. ASeTTS Occassional Paper. (Accessed on 5th September 2021) Available at: http://www.asetts.org.au/Oldwebsite/resources/Documents/collectiveresilenceweb.pdf

Finkel, S. (2014). *The impact of adult civic education programmes in developing democracies.* Public Administration and Development, 34, pp. 169–181. Available at: https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/pad.1678

FLACSO-Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (2008). *Evaluación de consistencia y resultados del programa de atención a la demanda de educación para adultos a través del modelo de educación para la vida y el trabajo del INEA*. Mexico.
Available at: http://www.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sep1/Resource/102508/2.pdf

Fleming, J. (2018). *Recognizing and resolving the challenges of being an insider researcher in work-integrated learning.* International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning, Special Issue, 2018, 19(3), 311-320

Floyd, D. (2022). *NAFTA's Winners and Losers*. Investopedia. Available at: https://www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/08/north-american-free-trade-agreement.asp

Flynn, S., Brown, J., Johnson, A; and Rodger, S. (2011). *Barriers to Education for the Marginalized Adult Learner*. Journal Articles. 3. https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/csmh-articles/3

Formichella, M., and Silvia London. (2013). *Empleabilidad, educación y equidad social*. Universidad de los Andes. Revista de Estudios Sociales. No. 47. Available at: http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=81529190007

Frederiksen, M., Larsen, C.A., and Lolle, H.L. (2016). *Education and trust: Exploring the association across social relationships and nations*. 59(4) Aalborg University. DOI:10.1177/0001699316658936

Frey, B. S. (2011). *Happy people live longer*. Science, 331(6017), 542–543. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1201060.

Fujiwara, D. (2012). *Valuing the impact of adult learning: an analysis of the effect of adult learning on different domains in life*. NIACE. Leicester, England. Available at: https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A52639

Furlong, T., and Yasukawa, K. (2016). *Resilience: Stories of Adult Learning A learner voice co-production*. Festival of Learning for supporting, RaPAL (Research and Practice in Adult Literacies) and ACAL (Australian Council for Adult Literacy). Available at: https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/site-elements/documents/pdf/education/adult-education/resilience-stories-of-adult-learning.pdf

Fussell, E. (2004). *Sources of Mexico's migration stream: rural, urban, and border migrants to the United States.* Social Forces. Oxford University Press. Vol. 82, Issue 3

Gallie, H. and Russell, H. (1998). *Unemployment and Life Satisfaction: A Cross-cultural Comparison*. European Journal of Sociology/ Archives Européennes de Sociologie,Vol. 39, No. 2, 248-280

Gandara, P. (2004). *A Preliminary Evaluation of Mexican-sponsored Educational Programs in the United States: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Potential.* Institute for Education Policy, Law, & Government. University of California, Davis. https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/Adult_Ed_History_Report.pdf

Gelman, A. (2017). *Benefits and limitations of randomized controlled trials*. Social Science & Medicine. Department of Statistics and Department of Political Science, Columbia University, New York

Geys, B., and Murdoch, Z. (2010). *Measuring the 'Bridging' versus 'Bonding' Nature of Social Networks: A Proposal for Integrating Existing Measures*. BSA Publications, Volume 44(3): 523–540. DOI: 10.1177/0038038510362474523

Gilmore B., McAuliffe, E., Power, J., and Vallieres, F. (2019). *Data analysis and synthesis within a Realist Evaluation: Toward more transparent methodological approaches*. International Journal of Qualitative Methods. Volume 18: 1–11, SAGE

Gioti, L., and Perdiki, E. (2019). *Participation to adult non-formal leisure education in local community programs in the economic crisis*. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. International Journal of Management and Applied Science, ISSN: 2394-7926. Volume 5

Glaeser, E. (2011). *The Triumph of the City*, Penguin Books, 2011, U.S.A., p. 69-71

Glied, S. and Adriana Lleras-Muney. (2003) *Health Inequality, Education and Medical Innovation.* Working Paper No. 9738. Cambridge. National Bureau of Economic Research. p. 18-23. Available at: https://www.nber.org/papers/w9738.pdf

Gonzalez-Barrera, A., and Mark Hugo Lopez. (2013). *A Demographic Portrait of Mexican-Origin Hispanics in the United States.* Pew Research Center. Hispanic Trends. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2013/05/01/a-demographic-portrait-of-mexican-origin-hispanics-in-the-united-states/

Goodman, A., Joshi, H., Nasim, B., and Tyler, C. (2015). *Social and emotional skills in childhood and their long-term effects on adult life*. Early Intervention Foundation. Available at: https://www.eif.org.uk/report/social-and-emotional-skills-in-childhood-and-their-long-term-effects-on-adult-life

Gorard, S., Huat, B., and Davies, P. (2012) *The impact of attitudes and aspirations on educational attainment and participation*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/education-young-people-parents-full.pdf

Gorbunova, L., Ambrasat, J., and Von Scheve, C. (2015). *Neighborhood Stereotypes and Interpersonal Trust in Social Exchange: An Experimental Study*. City & Community 14(2):206-225. DOI:10.1111/cico.12112

Granados Roldan, O., Molina Alvarez, G., and Galvan Romero, J. M. (2018). *Rostros del rezago. Democratización educativa en México*. INEA. Ciudad de Mexico. Available at: http://cdmx.inea.gob.mx/ejemplos/doctos/LibroRostrosDelRezago.pdf

Graham, A., and Sean McAleer. (2018). *An overview of realist evaluation for simulation-based education*. US National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6050705/

Granderath, J., Martin, A., and Froehlich, L. (2021).*The Effect of Participation in Adult Education on Life Satisfaction of Immigrants and Natives: A Longitudinal Analysis*. Journal of Happiness Studies volume 22, pages3043–3067

Greenhalgh, T., Pawson, R., Wong, G., Westhorp, G., Greenhalgh, J., Manzano, A., and Jagosh, J. (2019). *Quality Standards for Realist Evaluation For evaluators and peer-reviewers*. The RAMESES II Project, National Institute of Health Research, Available at: http://ramesesproject.org/media/RE_Quality_Standards_for_evaluators_and_peer_reviewers.pdf

Grix, J. (2004). *The Foundations of Research*. 3rd Edition, New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan Reseacrh Skills.

Groot, W., and Maassen van den Brink, H. (2006) *What does education do to our health?* Measuring the effects of education on health and civic engagement: proceedings of the Copenhagen symposium. OECD

Grootaert, C., and Bastelaer, T. (2001) *Understanding and Measuring Social Capital: A synthesis of findings and recommendations from the Social Capital Initiative*. Working Paper 24, xi – 38

Hall, J. A. (2012). *Friendship standards: The dimensions of ideal expectations.* Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 29, 884–907. doi:10.1177/0265407512448274

Hall, J. A. (2019). *How many hours does it take to make a friend?* Journal of Social and Personal Relationships 2019, Vol. 36(4) 1278–1296 DOI: 10.1177/0265407518761225

Hammond, C. and Feinstein, L. (2005). *The effects of adult learning on self-efficacy* 1. London Review of Education 3(3):265-287. DOI:10.1080/14748460500372754

Hans, J., and Sanchez, S. (2018). *Immigrants in California.* Public Policy Institute of California. PPIC. Available at: https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/

Hanushek, E., and Woesmann, L. (2010). *Education and Economic Growth*. Elsevier Ltd. Encyclopedia of Education. Available at: https://hanushek.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Hanushek%2BWoessmann%202010%20IntEncEduc%202.pdf

Hanushek, E., Ludger Woesmann and Lei Zhang. (2011). *General education, vocational education, and labour-market outcomes over the life-cycle*. National Bureau of Economic Research. Cambridge. P. 24-29 Available at: https://www.nber.org/papers/w17504.pdf

Harris, M. A., and Orth, U. (2019). *The Link Between Self-Esteem and Social Relationships: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies*. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Advance online publication. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000265

Harris, J., and Maldonado R. (2022). *Un nuevo récord para las remesas en América Latina y el Caribe*. La Maleta Abierta. BID blogs. Available at:
https://blogs.iadb.org/migracion/es/un-nuevo-record-para-las-remesas-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe/

Hayes, J., and Hill, L. (2017). *Undocumented Immigrants in California*. Public Policy Institute of California. PPIC. Available at: https://www.ppic.org/publication/undocumented-immigrants-in-california/

Healy, T. (2002) *Social Capital and Lifelong Learning: Issues for public policy*, Lifelong Learning in Europe Review, vol. III; p. 7-10

Heinemann, A. (2017). *The making of 'good citizens': German courses for migrants and refugees*. Studies in the Education of Adults, 49:2, 177-195

Hellerstein, J., and Neumark, D. (2020). *Social Capital, Networks, and Economic Wellbeing*. IZA DP No. 13413. Available at:
https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/13413/social-capital-networks-and-economic-wellbeing

Hendriks, M., Burger, M., Ray, J., and Esipova, N. (2018). *Do international migrants increase their happiness and that of their families by migrating?* In J. Helliwell, R. Layard, & J. Sachs (Eds.), World happiness report 2018 (pp. 44–66). New York: UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

Hennessy-Fiske, M. (2019). *Mexican asylum seekers at multiple border crossings grow frustrated with waiting.* Los Angeles Times. World & Nation. Available at:
https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2019-09-30/u-s-customs-blocking-mexican-asylum-seekers-at-multiple-border-crossings

Hickman, M., Crowley, H. And Mai, N. (2008) *Immigration and social cohesion in the UK The rhythms and realities of everyday life.* Joseph Rowntree Foundation. London Metropolitan University. ISBN: 978 1 85935 659 3

Hirsch, D. (2007). *Experiences of poverty and educational disadvantage*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/2123.pdf

History. (2009). *Durango*. History Channel. Available at:
https://www.history.com/topics/mexico/durango

Hoenig, K., Pollak, R., Schulz, B., Stocké, V. (2016). *Social Capital, Participation in Adult Education, and Labor Market Success: Constructing a New Instrument*. Methodological Issues of Longitudinal Surveys pp 291–312

International Labour Organization. (2015). *ILO Global estimates of migrant workers and migrant domestic workers: results and Methodology*. In: International Labour Office. Geneva: ILO; 2015. p. 2015.

International Labour Organization. (2018). *Global estimates on international migrant workers: Results and methodology.* Geneva, ILO. Available at:

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_652001.pdf

International Labour Organization (2020). *The migrant pay gap: Understanding wage differences between migrants and nationals.* Labour Migration. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_763803.pdf

International Labour Organization. (2021). *Shaping skills and lifelong learning for the future of work International Labour Conference 109th Session, 2021*. ILO, Geneva. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_813696.pdf

INEA. Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos. (2007). *Reglas de Operación e indicadores de evaluación y de gestión del Programa de Atención a la Demanda de Educación para Adultos a través del Modelo de Educación para la Vida y el Trabajo para el año 2007*. Diario Oficial de la Federación. DOF. Available at: http://www.inea.gob.mx/transparencia/pdf/marco_normativo/RO13.pdf

INEA. Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos. (2020). Gobierno de Mexico. Available at: https://www.gob.mx/inea/prensa/disminuye-sep-indice-de-analfabetismo-nacional-a-3-8-por-ciento-inea?idiom=es (Accessed 19/11/2020)

INEE. Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2014) *Lleva México Campaña de Alfabetización y Abatimiento del Rezago educativo a connacionales en Estados Unidos*. Information Bulletin Available at: (22nd September 2018) http://www.inea.gob.mx/boletines/admin/view/detalleBoletines.php?id_boletin=807

INEE. Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación. (2018) *Los rostros del rezago educativo en Mexico*. Available at: http://cdmx.inea.gob.mx/ejemplos/doctos/LibroRostrosDelRezago.pdf

INEGI. Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía. (2010). *Información por entidad*. Durango. Available at: http://cuentame.inegi.org.mx/monografias/informacion/dur/poblacion/m_migratorios.aspx?tema=me&e=10

Infante, María Isabel and María Eugenia Letelier. (2013). *Alfabetización y educación. Lecciones desde la práctica innovadora en América Latina y el Caribe*. Available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002191/219157s.pdf

International Organization for Migration. (2012). *Factsheet for Migrant Integration*. Available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/migrated_files/What-We-Do/docs/IOM-DMM-Factsheet-LHD-Migrant-Integration.pdf

International Organization for Migration. (2018). *World Migration Report 2018*. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf

International Organization for Migration. (2019). *Handbook on Protection and Assistance to Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse*. IOM. Available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/our_work/DMM/MPA/1-part1-thedomv.pdf

International Organization for Migration. (2021). *Older persons and migration*. Migration Data Portal. IOM. Available at: https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/older-persons-and-migration

Irving, J. and Williams, D. (1999). *Personal growth and personal development: concepts clarified*. Department of Psychology. University of Hull. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling.

Jaeger, W. (2008). *Paideia Los ideales de la cultura griega,* Fondo de Cultura Económica, Libro primero, México, p. 10-18

Jackson, S., and Gillian Kolla. (2012). *A New Realistic Evaluation Analysis Method: Linked Coding of Context, Mechanism, and Outcome Relationships*. American Journal of Evaluation. SAGE Publications. 33(3) p. 339-349

James, H.S. (2002). *The trust paradox: a survey of economic inquiries into the nature of trust and trustworthiness*. Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, Vol. 47: 291-307. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/222570697_The_Trust_Paradox_A_Survey_of_Economic_Inquiries_into_the_Nature_of_Trust_and_Trustworthiness

Jarvis, P., Holford, J. & Gouthro. (2011) *Paradox of learning*. In International Journal of Lifelong Education. p 285-286.

Jakus, G., Veljko Milutinovic, Sanida Omerovic and Saso. (2013). *Concepts, Ontologies, and Knowledge Representation*. Springer. Springer Briefs in computer Science. p. 29 -30

Jenkins, A. (2011) *Participation in learning and wellbeing among older adults*. International Journal of Lifelong Education, Vol.30, p. 403-420

Jeronimus, B., and Laceulle, O. (2017). *Frustration*. In book: Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences (pp.1-8)Edition: 1Publisher: Springer, New YorkEditors: Virgil Zeigler-Hill and Todd K. Shackelford. DOI:10.1007/978-3-319-28099-8_815-1

JISC, Joint Information Systems Committee. (2013). *Transnational education (TNE). Delivering support for both established and developing TNE activities*. UK. Available at: https://www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/transnational-education

Kazi, M. (2003). *Realist Evaluation for Practice*. JSTOR. British Journal of Social Work. 33, 803-818

Khullar, T., Kirmayer, M., and Dirks, M.A. (2021) *Relationship dissolution in the friendships of emerging adults: How, when, and why?* Journal of Social and Personal Relationships. SAGE Journals. https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075211026015

Knack, S., and Philip Keefer. (1997) *Does Social Capital have an Economic Payoff?* Quarterly Journal of Economics. p. 1251

Knoblauch, H. (2020). *The Social Construction of Reality as a paradigm*. Communicative Construction of Reality. Technische Universität Berlin.

Knox, S., and Alan Burkard. (2009) *Qualitative research interviews, Psychotherapy Research*, 19: 4-5, p. 566-575, DOI: 10.1080/10503300802702105

Kossoudji, S. (2016). *What are the consequences of regularizing undocumented immigrants?* IZA World of Labour. DOI 10.15185/izawol.296

Krasovec, S., and Kump, S. (2009). *Adult learning activities, social networks, and different neighbourhoods.* European Societies. 11(2):257-282 DOI 10.1080/14616690802209705

Krauze, L. (2019). *Mexico's drug policy is failing. That's why the cartels are on the offensive.* The Washington Post. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/11/04/mexicos-drug-policy-is-failing-thats-why-cartels-are-offensive/

Krogstad, J. M., Lopez, M. and Passel, J. (2020). *A majority of Americans say immigrants mostly fill jobs U.S. citizens do not want.* Pew Research Center. Accesed 18/06/2021. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/10/a-majority-of-americans-say-immigrants-mostly-fill-jobs-u-s-citizens-do-not-want/

Krumm, H-J and Plutzar, V. (2008). *Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants.* Council of Europe. University of Vienna. https://rm.coe.int/16802fd54a

Kurt, S. (2016). *Kirkpatrick Model: Four Levels of Learning Evaluation in Educational Technology*. Available at: https://educationaltechnology.net/kirkpatrick-model-four-levels-learning-evaluation/

Lakhani, N. (2018). *The medics braving drug wars to treat people in Mexico's brutal Guerrero*. The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/aug/29/msf-medics-brave-drug-wars-mexico-brutal-guerrero

Lancee, B. (2012). *Immigrant Performance in the Labour Market: Bonding and Bridging Social Capital*. Amsterdam University Press. MISCOE International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion in Europe. ProQuest Ebook Central. Available at: http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gla/detail.action?docID=1002956

Lane, M., and Conlon, G. (2016). *The Impact of Literacy, Numeracy and Computer Skills on Earnings and Employment Outcomes*. OECD Education Working Papers. OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/5jm2cv4t4gzs-en.pdf?expires=1554831994&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=825AB41088FA9C673A35996362BAAB06

Laurillard, D. (2013). *Technology as a driver and enabler of adult vocational teaching and learning..* London Knowledge Lab, Institute of Education. Available at: https://repository.excellencegateway.org.uk/IoE-Technology-driver-and-enabler-teaching-learning.pdf

Lee, E. (1966) *A Theory of Migration*. Demography *3*(1): 47-57.

Lee, R., Dean Brooke, and Kyoung-Rae Jung. (2008) *Social connectedness, extraversion, and subjective wellbeing: Testing a mediation model. Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 4. pp.414-419. Available at:

https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/698d/fb80cf9b3e3b11efa02e1a800edf8779e133.pdf

Levy, P. (2020). *The Oxford Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press

Lewicki, R., and McAllister, D. (1998). *Trust and distrust: new relationships and realities*. Academy of Management Review 1998. Vol. 23, No. 3,438-458.

Lewis, L. (2012). *The capabilities approach, adult community learning and mental health*. Community Development Journal. Oxford University Press. Available at: http://www.socialvalueuk.org/app/uploads/2016/09/The-capabilities-approach.pdf

Lopez, G., Kristen Bialik and Jynnah Radford. (2017) *Key findings about U.S. immigrants*, Pew Research Center, Available at: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/11/30/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants

Luhmann, M., Schimmack, U., and Eid, M. (2011). *Stability and variability in the relationship between subjective well-being and income*. Journal of Research in Personality, 45(2), 186–197. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2011.01.004.

Luhnow, D. (2018). *Latin America Is the Murder Capital of the World. Riven by drugs, gangs, weak institutions and lawlessness, the region is facing a crisis.* The Wall Street Journal. Available at: https://www.wsj.com/articles/400-murders-a-day-the-crisis-of-latin-america-1537455390

Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., and Diener, E. (2005). *The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?* Psychological Bulletin, American Psychological Association, Vol. 131, No. 6, 803– 855

MacMahon, W. (2002). *Education's Effects on Individual Life Chances and On Development: An Overview with Oketch in British Journal of Educational Studies*, 61, pp. 79-107

Maguire, M., and Delahunt, B. (2017). *Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars*. Dundalk Institute of Technology. Vol. 9. Number 3. All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, p. 3354- 3362. Available at: https://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/335

Mallet, R. (2018). *Decent work, migration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Overseas Development Institute. ODI. London. Available at: https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12390.pdf

Mallows, D. (2014). *Language issues in migration and integration: perspectives from teachers and learners*. British Council. London. Available at: https://esol.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/Language_issues_migration_integration_perspectives_teachers_learners.pdf

Manninen, J., Monica Kil, Irena Sgier, Marion Fleige, Bettina Thöne-Geyer, Ester Možina, Hana Danihelková, David Mallows, Samantha Duncan, Matti Meriläinen, Javier Diez, Simona Sava, Petra Javrh, Natalija Vrečer, Dubravka Mihajlovic, Edisa Kecap, Paola Zappaterra, Anina Kornilow, Regina Ebener and Francesca Operti. (2014). *Benefits of Lifelong Learning in Europe: Main Results of the BeLL Project*. Research Report. Bonn, Germany, p. 58-76. Available at: http://www.bell-project.eu/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/bell-research-report.pdf

Manzano, Ana. (2016). *The craft of interviewing in realist evaluation*. SAGE. Vol. 22 (3). University of Leeds. p. 342-360

Marmot, M. (2010). *Fair Society, Healthy Lives, strategic review of health inequalities in england post-2010*. The Marmot Review. P. 66-68. Available at: http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review/fair-society-healthy-lives-full-report-pdf.pdf

Marchal, B., Van Belle, S., Westhrop, G., and Peersman, G. (2017) *Realist Evaluation*. Better Evaluation. Sharing information to improve evaluation. Available at: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/approach/realist_evaluation (Accessed July 22. 2019)

Marchal B., McDamien, D., and Kegels, G. (2010). *A realist evaluation of the management of a well-performing regional hospital in Ghana*. BMC Health Services Research. BioMed Central. Available at: http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6963/10/24 (Accessed September 22, 2021)

Marchand, M., and Vonk, R. (2005). *The Process of Becoming Suspicious of Ulterior Motives. Social Cognition*. 23(3):242-256. DOI:10.1521/soco.2005.23.3.242

Marshall, M.N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. Oxford University Press. Vol. 13, No. 6. Printed in Great Britain.

Martinez, L. M., Estrada, D. and Prada, S. (2019). *Mental health, interpersonal trust, and subjective well-being in a high violence context*. Elsevier. Population health. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2019.100423

Martikke, S. (2017). *Social Capital and Overview.* GMCVO Research. The University of Manchester. 4-12 Available at: https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/system/files/social_capital_an_overview.pdf

Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. New York; London: Harper & Row, 2nd Edition, c1970.

Massey, D., Jacob Rugh, and Karen Pren. (2010). *The Geography of Undocumented Mexican Migration*. National Center for Biotechnology Information. Mex Stud. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2931355/

McAuliffe, M., and Martin Ruhs (2018) *World Migration Report 2018*. International Organization for Migration IOM. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf

McGillivray, J. A., Lau, A. L. D., Cummins, R. A., and Davey, G. (2009). *The utility of the personal wellbeing index intellectual disability scale in an Australian sample*. Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities, 22(3), 276-286

McGrath, C., Palmgren, P., and Liljedahl, M. (2019). *Twelve tips for conducting qualitative research interviews*. Medical Teacher, 41:9, p. 1002-1006.
DOI: 10.1080/0142159X.2018.1497149

McQuaid, R. and Colin Lindsay. (2004). *The Concept of Employability*. Urban Studies, Vol. 42, No. 2. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group. Available at: https://pureportal.strath.ac.uk/files-asset/12212609/Concept_of_Employability_FINAL.pdf

Mckenzie, K., and Trudy Harpham. (2002) *Social Capital and Mental Health*. Kingsley Publishers, Philadelphia, United States of America, Available at:
https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/88128FEE4234566CCD6EBFF47E324001/S0007125000027525a.pdf/social_capital_and_mental_health.pdf

McMahon, W. (1998) *Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of the Social Benefits of Lifelong Learnings.* University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Meadows, P., and Metcalf, H. (2008). *Does Literacy and Numeracy Training for Adults Increase Employment and Employability? Evidence from the Skills for Life Programme in England*. Industrial Relations Journal 39(5) DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2338.2008.00493.x

Meissner, D. (2010). *5 Myths about immigration*. The Washington Post. Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/30/AR2010043001106.html (Accessed March 22nd 2022)

Melrose, K. (2014). *Encouraging participation and persistence in adult literacy and numeracy*. Department of Education. Social Science in Government. Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683824/Encouraging_participation_and_persistence_in_adult_literacy_and_numeracy.pdf

Mexican Senate, (2017). *Panorama actual de la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos*. Available at:
https://centrogilbertobosques.senado.gob.mx/docs/NI_FronteraMX_EEUU_010617.pdf
Migali, S. and Scipioni, M. (2018) *A global analysis of intentions to migrate*. Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission. Available at:
https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/technical_report_on_gallup_v7_finalpubsy.pdf

Milana, M. (2012). *Globalisation, transnational policies, and adult education*. Springer. Media Dordrecht. Int. Rev. Ed. Aarhus University, Denmark, p. 7-18

Mirnoff, N., Mary Sheridan, and Kevin Sieff. (2019). *Surge of Mexican migrants is new challenge for Trump border crackdown.* The Washington Post. Immigration.
Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/surge-of-mexican-migrants-is-new-challenge-for-trump-border-crackdown/2019/10/18/c40f6e72-f029-11e9-b648-76bcf86eb67e_story.html

Morrice, L., Hongxia Shan and Annette Sprung (2017). *Migration, adult education, and learning*. Studies in the Education of Adults, 49:2, 129-135, DOI. Available at:
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02660830.2018.1470280?needAccess=true

Morris, S., and Klesner, J.L. (2010). *Corruption and Trust: Theoretical Considerations and Evidence from Mexico*. First Published April 27, 2010. Research Article. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414010369072

Morrone, A., Tontoranelli, N. and Ranuzzi, G. (2009). *How Good is Trust? Measuring Trust and its Role for the Progress of Societies*. OECD Working Papers. https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/220633873086

Moschion, J., and Tabasso, D. (2014). *Trust of second-generation immigrants: intergenerational transmission or cultural assimilation?* IZA J Migration 3, 10. https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-9039-3-10

Moser, H. (Editor). (2012) *Opening to Adult Education for Migrants, Guidelines for working with Education Ambassadors – Grundtvig "Learning Community" Project".* The "Learning Community" project partnership. pp. 20-28 Available at:
https://www.bgz-berlin.de/files/r18_opening_doors_to_adult_education_for_migrants_hohe_aufloesung.pdf

Murtin, F., et al. (2018). *Trust and its determinants: Evidence from the Trustlab experiment*. OECD Statistics Working Papers, No. 2018/02, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/869ef2ec-en.

Narro Robles, J., Jaime Martuscelli Quintana, and Eduardo Barzana García. (2012) *Plan de diez años para desarrollar el Sistema Educativo Nacional*. México: Dirección General de Publicaciones y Fomento Editorial, UNAM. Available at: http://www.planeducativonacional.unam.mx

National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment. The Condition of Education 2018*. Economic outcomes. Available at:
https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_cbc.pdf

Neville, P., O'Dwyer, M., and Power, M. J. (2011). *The Social Value of Community-Based Adult Education in Limerick City*. Department of Sociology, University of Limerick. Paul Partnership. Available at: https://www.paulpartnership.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/The-Social-Value-of-Community-based-Adult-Education-Full-Report.pdf

Nizińska, A. (2016). *Social Capital, Adult Learning and Equality*. In: Evans, R., Kurantowicz, E., Lucio-Villegas, E. (eds) Researching and Transforming Adult Learning and Communities. Research on the Education and Learning of Adults. SensePublishers, Rotterdam. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-358-2_8

Norman, M., and Hyland, T. (2003). *The Role of Confidence in Lifelong Learning*. OAI. Educational Studies 29(2-3/JUNE/SEPTEMBER 2003):261-272. DOI:10.1080/03055690303275
O'Halloran, P., and Sam Porter. (2012). *The use and limitation of realistic evaluation as a tool for evidence-based practice: A critical realist perspective*. Nursing Inquiry. DOI: 10.1111/j.1440-1800.2011.00551.x

OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2017). *Principles and Guidelines, supported by practical guidance, on the human rights protection of migrants in vulnerable situations*. United Nations. Available at:
https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/PrinciplesAndGuidelines.pdf

Olsen, W. (2009). *Realist Methodology*, Benchmarks in Social Research Methods, University of Manchester.

OREALC/UNESCO (2012). *Alfabetización y educación: lecciones desde la práctica innovadora en América Latina y el Caribe*. UNESCO. ISBN:978-92-3-001130-7

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD and Statistics Canada. (2000) *International Adult Literacy Survey. Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey*. Paris. P. 81

Available at: http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/41529765.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2001) *The Well-being of Nations, The role of Human and Social Capital*, Centre for Educational research and Innovation. p. 46-55. Available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264189515-en.pdf?expires=1552582569&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=887854EFF0FA3EB7381CD8A8BDC218C5

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2006). *Measuring the effects of Education on Health and Civic Engagement.* Available at: http://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/37437718.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2007). *Understanding the Social Outcomes of Learning*. Paris. ISBN: 9789264033108

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2009). *Latin American Economic Outlook 2010*. Paris. OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/dev/44121339.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD (2011). *International Migration Outlook 2011.* Paris. http://www.oecd.org/document/10/0,3746,en_2649_37415_48355658_1_1_1_37415,00.html

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2013). *Framework for Statistics on the Distribution of Household Income, Consumption, and Wealth*. OECD Publishing, p. 25-38. Available at: http://www.oecd.org/statistics/302013041e.pdf 4th October 2018

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2018). *Education at a Glance 2018*. OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris. Available at: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/eag-2018-en.pdf?expires=1554823136&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=F69B29F708983FB8069F152AC5366BCF

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2018b). *Skills on the move: Migrants in the survey of adult skills*. Paris, OECD. Available at: https://www-oecd-ilibrary-org.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/docserver/9789264307353-en.pdf?expires=1585833028&id=id&accname=oid018225&checksum=BBD2BCFCDDCADE1F75D21270F5609EC5

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2019). *The road to integration. Education and Migration*. Paris, OECD. Available at: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/the-road-to-integration_d8ceec5d-en#page2

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2019b). *Key facts about job-related training across the OECD*. Paris. OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/els/emp/skills-and-work/adult-learning/Policy-Brief-Future-ready-adult-learning-2019-EN.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2019c). *Getting Skills Right: Making adult learning work in social partnership* (www.oecd.org/employment/

emp/adult-learning-work-in-social-partnership-2019.pdf).

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD (2019d), *Getting Skills Right: Engaging low-skilled adults in learning*, (www.oecd.org/employment/emp/engaging-low-skilled-adults-2019.pdf)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2020). *Towards 2035 strategic foresight making migration and integration policies future ready*. OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/migration-strategic-foresight.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD. (2020b). *Social and Emotional Skills Well-being, connectedness and success.* OECD. Paris. https://www.oecd.org/education/school/UPDATED%20Social%20and%20Emotional%20Skills%20-%20Well-being,%20connectedness%20and%20success.pdf%20(website).pdf

Osborn, M. (2013). *Exploring perceptions of school through negative school experience – what can Educational Psychologists learn?* University of East London. Available at: https://repository.uel.ac.uk/download/3cbd8ad2d1585d7c040ca78291642188ce964fad162f439ddc62ebc165f63c58/3837277/u0212457_amended_thesis_submission_version_19.2.14%5B1%5D.pdf

Panth, S. (2010). *People, Spaces, Deliberation. Exploring the interactions among public opinion, governance, and the public sphere*. Bonding vs Binding. The World Bank Blogs. Available at: http://blogs.worldbank.org/publicsphere/bonding-and-bridging

Parish, N. (2016). *From glamour to gunfire: the tourist city of Acapulco torn apart by violence.* The Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/dec/13/gunfire-tourist-resort-acapulco-mexico-torn-apart-violence

Passel, J., and Cohn, D. (2019). *U.S. unauthorized immigrants are more proficient in English, more educated than a decade ago*. Pew Research Center. Available at: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/23/u-s-undocumented-immigrants-are-more-proficient-in-english-more-educated-than-a-decade-ago/

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Sage Publications, printed in the United States of America.

Pavot, W., and Diener, E. (2013). *Happiness experienced: The science of subjective well- being*. The Oxford Handbook of Happiness, 39, 134-151. doi: 10.1007/s10902-015-9703-z

Pawson, R., and Nick Tilley. (1997). *Realistic Evaluation*. SAGE Publications. Thousand Oaks. London.

Pawson, R., and Nick Tilley. (2004). *Realist Evaluation*. SAGE Publications.

Payne, J.H. (2006). *Understanding adult education and leisure*. Leisure Studies, 10:2, 149-162, DOI: 10.1080/02614369100390141

Penn, W. (2016). *The Effects of Immigration on the United States' Economy*. Budget Model University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55693d60e4b06d83cf793431/t/5bdb6a6540ec9acdd252b311/1541106277851/The+Effects+of+Immigration+on+the+United+States%E2%80%99+Economy.pdf

Pennacchia, J., Jones, E., and Aldridge, F. (2018) *Barriers to learning for disadvantaged groups. Report of qualitative findings*. Learning and Work Institute. Department for Education. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/735453/Barriers_to_learning_-_Qualitative_report.pdf

Pisoni, D. (2018). *Between idealism and pragmatism: Social policies and Matthew effect in vocational education and training for disadvantaged youth in Switzerland*. Social Inclusion 6(3):289 DOI 10.17645/si.v6i3.1515

Post, D. (2016). *Adult literacy benefits? New opportunities for research into sustainable development.* IRE. Vol. 62. p. 751-762

Putnam, Robert. (2000). *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks.

Quak, E. (2019). *The effects economic integration of migrants has on the economy of host countries.* Institute of Development Studies (IDS). K4D Knowledge, evidence and learning for development.

Quin Yow, W., Ming Lim, and Tony Zhao. (2019). *Sharing the same languages helps us work better together*. Palgrave Communications volume 5, Article number: 154

QSR International. (2020). *About Coding*. Nvivo for Mac. (Accessed September 11, 2020). Available at: http://help-nv11mac.qsrinternational.com/desktop/concepts/about_coding.htm

RAMSES II Project. (2017). *Quality standards for realist evaluation*. NIHR. UK. Available at:http://ramesesproject.org/media/RE_Quality_Standards_for_evaluators_and_peer_reviewers.pdf

Ravitch, S. M. (2020). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. SAGE Publishing. 2nd Edition.

Reiersen, J. (2018). *Drivers of Trust and Trustworthiness*. University College of Southeast Norway. Available at: https://www.nhh.no/contentassets/00f1c7e85d464901b37710bfac7742be/jon-reiersen---trust_trustworthiness.pdf

Robotham, D., Morgan, K., and James, K. (2011). *Learning for Life. Adult learning, Mental Health, and wellbeing*. Mental Health Foundation. London. Available at: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/learning-for-life.pdf

Rodriguez, A., and Meneses, J. (2011). *Transformaciones rurales en América Latina y sus relaciones con la población rural.* Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Chile. https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/adrian_rodriguez.pdf

Ross-Gordon, J., Rose, A. and Kasworm, C. (2016). *Foundations of adult and continuing education*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Ryff, C. (1989) *Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being.* Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, p. 1069-1071. Available at: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7eb5/1dfece4f39df7c5c3aefa1276ae1116473a5.pdf

Sabates, R. (2007) *The Effects of Adult Learning on Social and Economic Outcomes*, London: Commission of Inquiry.

Samdal, O., Nutbeam, D., Wold, B., and Kannas, L. (1998). *Achieving health and educational goals through schools - A study of the importance of the school climate and the students' satisfaction with school*. Health Education Research. 13(3):383-397. DOI:10.1093/her/13.3.383

Sanchez, O. (2019). *Endless fear: Undocumented immigrants grapple with anxiety, depression under Trump*. USA Today. Available at: https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/08/25/undocumented-immigrants-struggle-mental-health-surival-mode/1816672001/ (Accessed 20 March 2022)

Sapienza, P., A. Toldra and L. Zingales. (2007). *Understanding trust*. NBER Working Paper No. 13387.

Sargeant, J. (2012). *Qualitative Research Part II: Participants, Analysis, and Quality Assurance*. Journal of Graduate Medical Education. Mar. 4(1): 1–3.

Sayer, A. (2000). *Realism and Social Science*. SAGE Publications. London. Available at:https://profs.basu.ac.ir/spakseresht/free_space/realism%20and%20social%20science%20%28introduction%29.pdf

Schiefer, D. and Van der Noll, J. (2017). *The Essentials of Social Cohesion: A Literature Review*. Springer. Social Indicators Research 132(2). DOI:10.1007/s11205-016-1314-5

Schuller, T., Angela Brassett-Grundy, Andy Green, Cathie Hammond, and John Preston (2002). *Learning, Continuity and Change in Adult Life*. Wider Benefits of Learning Research Report No. 3. London: Institute of Education, Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning. p. 43-87

Schuller, T. and Desjardins, R. (2011). *Wider benefits of adult learning*. In Rubenson, K. (ed.), International Encyclopedia of Adult Learning and Education (pp. 294-298). Oxford: Elsevier

Schuller, T., Preston, J., Hammond, C., Bassett-Grundy, A., and Bynner, J. (2004). *The Benefits of Learning: the impacts of formal and informal education on social capital, health, and family life*. London: Routledge

Schwab, K. (2013) *The Human Capital Report*. World Economic Forum. Switzerland. p. 2-36. Available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_HumanCapitalReport_2013.pdf

Schwab, K. (2016). *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. World Economic Forum. ISBN-13: 978-1-944835-01-9

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores SRE (2018). Hoja Informativa. Frontera Mexico-Estados Unidos. Available at: https://mex-eua.sre.gob.mx/images/stories/PDF/actualizacion/b.-Hoja-Informativa-fontera-general-web-2018.pdf

Sel J. Hwahng, Allen, B., Zadoretzky, C., Barber, H., Doucet, C., McKnight & Don Des, Jarlais (2022) *Thick trust, thin trust, social capital, and health outcomes among trans women of color in New York City*. International Journal of Transgender Health, 23:1-2, 214-231, DOI: 10.1080/26895269.2021.1889427

Seligman, M. (2002). *Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy*. In Snyder. C. R., & Lopez. S. (Eds.). Handbook of positive psychology. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 3-7 Available at: http://www-personal.umich.edu/~prestos/Downloads/DC/10-7_Seligman2002.pdf

Senado de la República (2014, November 31). *La violencia en el Estado de Guerrero*. Dirección General de Análisis Legislativo. Mirada Legislativa. 66. Available at: http://bibliodigitalibd.senado.gob.mx/

Sharples, M. (2000). *The design of personal mobile technologies for lifelong learning*. Pergamon. University of Birmingham. P. 177-182. Available at: https://www.tlu.ee/~kpata/haridustehnoloogiaTLU/technolohiesforlifelong.pdf

Shin Doh, C. and Johnson D. (1997). Avowed *happiness as an overall assessment of the quality of life*. Springer, p. 478

Simon, E., and Pleshová, G. (Ed). (2013). *Teacher Development in Higher Education. Existing Programs, Program Impact and Future Trends*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London.

Sirkeci, I., Seker, B. B., and Caglar, A. (2015). *Turkish Migration, Identity and Integration*. Transnational Press London. ISBN: 78-1-910781-12-8

Sistema de Acreditación y Seguimiento Automatizado para Comunidades en el Exterior SASACE. (2018) Available at: http://sasace.conevyt.org.mx:8080/SASACE/ (Reviewed on December 21st, 2018)

Solano, R.G (2015). *Factores de riesgos de violencia para las juventudes en Acapulco, Guerrero*. Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero. Instituto Internacional de Estudios Políticos Avanzados. Retrieved from http://iiepa.uagro.mx/f

Solar, O., and Alec Irwin (2010) *A Conceptual Framework for Action on the Social Determinants of Health. Geneva. World Health Organization. Available at:* https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/44489/9789241500852_eng.pdf

Soler Roca, M. (1990). *La alfabetización en América Latina: progresos, problemas y perspectivas*. Revista Latinoamericana de Estudios Educativos (México), Vol. XX, No. 3, pp. 125 - 133

Sommet, N., and Elliot, A. (2016). *Achievement Goals*. In book: Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences (pp.1-4). DOI:10.1007/978-3-319-28099-8_484-1

Spener, D. (2005). *Mexican Migration to the United States, 1882-1992: A Long Twentieth Century of Coyotaje*. Department of Sociology and Anthropology Trinity University. Working Paper 124

Spielhofer, T., Golden, S., Evans, K., Marshall, H., Mundy, E., Pomati, M., and Styles, B. (2010) *Barriers to participation in education and training.* National Foundation for Educational Research. ISBN 978-1-84775-765-4

Sterud, T., Tynes, T., Mehlum, I.S. *et al.* (2018). *A systematic review of working conditions and occupational health among immigrants in Europe and Canada*. *BMC Public Health* **18,** 770. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5703-3

Stiglitz, J., Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi. (2009) *Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress* CMEPSP, pdf., p. 31 – 142. (18th September 2015). Available at:http://www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/en/documents.htm

Şükrü Erhan Bağcı. (2019). *Migration and Participation in Adult Education: The Matthew Effect on Immigrants.* Adult Education Quarterly, Vol. 69(4), p. 271–294. SAGE Publications.

Sulbaran, P. (2019). *Mexicanos en Estados Unidos: las cifras que muestran su verdadero poder económico*. BBC News Internacional. Available at:
https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-internacional-46705825

Tacoli, C., and Okali, D. (2001). *The Links Between Migration, Globalisation and Sustainable Development*. International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in collaboration with the Regional and International Networking Group (RING). Available at:
https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/11020IIED.pdf

Tamkin, P., Yarnall, J., and Kerrin, M. (2002). *Kirkpatrick and Beyond: A review of models of training evaluation*. Institute for Employment Studies. Brighton, England. IES Research Networks. Report 392

Tegegne, M. A., & Glanville, J. L. (2018). *The immigrant-native gap in subjective well-being in western European countries: Assessing the role of social capital*. International Migration Review, 53(2), 458–485. https://doi.org/10.1177/0197918318769309.

Thyer, B. (2012). *Quasi-Experimental Research Designs*. Oxford Scholarship Online.
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195387384.001.0001

Timmins, P., and Miller, C. (2007). *Making evaluations realistic: the challenge of complexity*. Support for Learning. Volume 22. No. 1.

Tinley, A. (2008). *La situación educativa de los mexicanos en Estados Unidos: aprendizajes para orientar las políticas públicas de migración*. CONAPO. p. 265-280

Toffel, M. W. (2016). *Enhancing the Practical Relevance of Research*. Harvard Business School. Available at:https://www.hbs.edu/ris/Publication%20Files/Enhancing%20the%20Practical%20Relevance%20of%20Research%202016-03-06%20working%20paper_023171e6-6f25-4997-9199-64a48f8ab430.pdf

Tuiran, R. (2000). *Migración Mexico-Estados Unidos, Presente y Futuro*. Consejo Nacional de Población. Available at: http://www.omi.gob.mx/work/models/OMI/Resource/481/ppyfuturo.pdf

Uslaner, E. (2011). *Trust, diversity, and segregation in the United States and the United Kingdom***.** *Comp Sociol*.**10**(2):221–247. 10.1163/156913311X566571

UNESCO (2006). *La alfabetización. Un factor vital. Educación para todos (ept).* Informe de seguimiento 2006, UNESCO, Paris, Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000141639

UNESCO (2015). *Education for All 2000-2015: achievements and challenges*. Paris. P. 120-127. Available at:https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232205

UNESCO. (2018). *Alfabetizacion*. Available at: https://es.unesco.org/themes/alfabetizacion

UNESCO (2019). *Global Education Monitoring Report 'Migration, displacement, and education: building bridges not walls*. UNESCO, Paris, p. 11-46

UNESCO (2020). *UNESCO qualifications passport for refugees and vulnerable migrants: information notes*. Paris. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374690

UNESCO Institute for Education. (1997). *Adult Education: The Hamburg Declaration; the Agenda for the Future*. Hamburg. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000116114

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. (2016). *Plazas comunitarias en Estados Unidos*. Available at: https://uil.unesco.org/es/caso-de-estudio/effective-practices-database-litbase-0/plazas-comunitarias-estados-unidos-america

UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning-UIL. (2019). *4th Global Report on Adult Learning and Education – GRALE*. UNESCO. Hamburg, Germany. Available at: https://uil.unesco.org/system/files/grale_4_final.pdf

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2017). *Literacy Rates Continue to Rise from One Generation to the Next*. Montreal, UIS. Fact Sheet No. 45. Available at: http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs45-literacy-rates-continue-rise-generation-to-next-en-2017_0.pdf

UNESCO/CEPES (2000). *Transnational Education Provision; Enabling Access or Generating Exclusion in Higher Education in Europe*, Volume XXV, No.3.

UNESCO-SITEAL. (2005). *Functional literacy in adults in Latin America.* Available at: http://www.siteal.iipe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/analfabetismo_funcional.pdf (August 27th, 2018).

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2017). *Migrants in vulnerable situations. UNHCR's perspective*. Available at: https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/596787174.pdf (Accessed 28 September 2021)

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – UN DESA. (2020). *International Migrant Stock*. Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock
US Chamber of Commerce. (2017). *The facts on NAFTA. Assessing two decades of gains in trade, growth and jobs*. Available at: https://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/the_facts_on_nafta_-_2017.pdf

US Department of Education. (2013). *Federal Adult Education. A Legislative History 1964-2013.* US Department of Education, p. 5-29 Available at: https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/Adult_Ed_History_Report.pdf

Van Deth, J. (2003). *Measuring Social Capital: orthodoxies and continuing controversies*. Taylor and Francis Group. vol. 6; p. 79-92

Vander Eist, T., Van den Broeck, A., De Cuyper, N., and De Witte, H. (2012). *The mediating role of frustration of psychological needs in the relationship between job insecurity and work-related well-being*. Work and Stress 26(3). DOI:10.1080/02678373.2012.703900

Vasilachis de Gialdino, I. (2009). *Ontological and Epistemological Foundations of Qualitative Research.*Forum: Qualitative Social Research. Vol. 10, No. 2. Available at:
http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1299/3163

Verhoeven, L., and De Jong, J. (1992). *The Construct of Language Proficiency*. Global Scale of English. Available at:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234640864_The_Construct_of_Language_Proficiency

Villalonga-Olives, E., and Ichiro Kawachi. (2017). *The dark side of social capital: A systematic review of the negative health effects of social capital.* Social Science and Medicine Journal. Elsevier, USA. 124-126

Vorhaus, J., Litster, J., Frearson, M., and Johnson, S. (2011). *Review of Research and Evaluation on Improving Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills*. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32356/11-1418-review-research-on-improving-adult-skills.pdf

Walberg, H., and Shiow-Ling, Tsai (1983). *Matthew effects in education*. SAGE Journals. DOI 10.3102/00028312020003359

Waller, R., Hodge, S., Holford, H., Milana, M., and Webb, S. (2018) *Adult education, mental health, and mental wellbeing*. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 37:4, 397-400, DOI: 10.1080/02601370.2019.1533064

Walseth, K. (2007). *Bridging and bonding social capital in sport—experiences of young women with an immigrant background*. Sport, Education and Society.
https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/10.1080/13573320701780498

Wang, Z., and Sohail, M. (2022). *Short- and Long-Run Influence of Education on Subjective Well-Being: The Role of Information and Communication Technology in China*. Front Psychol. 2022; 13: 927562.
Published online 2022 Jun 14. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.927562

Wells, T. (2002). *Sen's Capability Approach*. Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands. Available at: http://www.iep.utm.edu/sen-cap/

Westhorp, G., Prins, E., Kusters, C., Hultink, M., Guijt, I., and Brouwers, J. (2011). *Realist Evaluation: an overview Report from an Expert Seminar with Dr. Gill Westhorp.* Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation. Available at: https://edepot.wur.nl/173918

Westhorp, G. (2014). *Realist Impact Evaluation*. Research and Policy Government. Methods Lab. Available at:https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9138.pdf

Westlund, H. and Frane A. (2010). *Social Capital and Economic Performance: A Meta-analysis of 65 Studies*. European Planning Studies. Available at:
https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.lib.gla.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/09654311003701431?needAccess=true

Westlund, H., and Larsson, J.P. (2016) *Social capital and regional development*: An introduction. In *Handbook of Social Capital and Regional Development*; Wesltund, H., Larsson, J.P., Eds.; Edward Elgar Publishing: London, UK; pp. 1–23

White, H., Shagun Sabarwal and Thomas de Hoop. (2014). *Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs).* Methodological Briefs Impact Evaluation No. 7. UNICEF.

Whittemore, R., Chase, S., and Mandle, C. (2001). *Validity in qualitative research.* Qualitative Health Research 11(4):522-37. DOI:10.1177/104973201129119299

Winter-Collins, A., and McDaniel, A. (2000). *Sense of belonging and new graduate job satisfaction*. Journal for Nurses in Staff Development, 16, 103–111.

Witter, R., Okun, M., William A. Stock and Haring, M. (1984). *Education and Subjective Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis*. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. Vol. 6, No. 2 (Summer, 1984), pp. 165-173 (9 pages). American Educational Research Association

Woody, C. (2018). *Violence is high in Mexico's most popular tourist destinations — but some groups are more at risk.* Business Insider. Available at:
https://www.businessinsider.com/how-mexico-violence-affects-tourists-tourism-2018-4?r=US&IR=T

Woody, C. (2019). *400 murders a day: 10 reasons why Latin America is the world's most violent place.* Business Insider. Available at: https://www.businessinsider.com/latin-america-is-the-worlds-most-violent-region-crime-2019-9?r=US&IR=T

Wolfe, B., and Haveman, R. (2002) *Accounting for the Social and Non-Market Benefits of Education.* OECD. Available at: http://www.oecd.org/innovation/research/1825109.pdf

Woolcock, M. (2001). *The place of Social Capital in understanding social and economic outcomes.* Spring, p. 12-16. Available at: http://www.social-capital.net/docs/The%20Place%20of%20Social%20Capital.pdf

Woolcock, M. and A. T. Sweetser. (2002). *Bright Ideas: Social Capital—The Bonds That Connect*. ADB Review 34 (2).

World Bank (2011). *Migration and remittances factbook 2011*. World Bank Group.
https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-8218-9

World Bank (2016). *Social inclusion*. World Bank. Available at:
https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion

World Health Organization WHO. (2014). *Mental health: a state of well-being*. Available at: http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/

Yeung, H. W-C. (1997). *Critical realism and realist research in human geography: A method or a philosophy in search of a method?* Progress in Human Geography, 21, 51-74.

Young, AF., Russell, A., and Powers, JR. (2004). *The sense of belonging to a neighbourhood: can it be measured and is it related to health and well-being in older women?* Social Science and Medicine.12:2627–2637.

Zaiceva, A. (2014). *The impact of aging on the scale of migration.* IZA World of Labor 2014: 99. University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy, and IZA, Germany. Available at: https://wol.iza.org/uploads/articles/99/pdfs/impact-of-aging-on-scale-of-migration.pdf

Zelezny-Green, R., Vosloo, S. and Conole, G. (2018). *A Landscape Review Digital Inclusion for Low-skilled and Low-literate People*. Education 2030, UNESCO. Paris.

Zlotnik, H. (1987). *The concept of International Migration as reflected in data collection systems*. SAGE Journals. DOI10.1177/019791838702100402

Zong, J. and Batalova, J. (2013). *The Limited English Proficient Population in the United States in 2013.*Migration Policy Institute. Available at: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/limited-english-proficient-population-united-states-2013

Zong, J. and Batalova, J. (2018). *Mexican Immigrants in the United States*. Migration Policy Institute. Available at: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/mexican-immigrants-united-states

Zorlu, A. and Hartog, J. (2018). *The Impact of Language on Socioeconomic Integration of Immigrants*. Discussion Paper Series. Institute of Labour Economics IZA. https://repec.iza.org/dp11485.pdf