

## **A Review of Program Inquiry for Refugee Adult Education in the United States**

*We want to ensure that refugee rights are upheld everywhere and that they have access to shelter, food, and health care. This must continue. But we also want to create opportunities for education and livelihoods. This is what refugees want desperately.* (Filippo Grandi, UN H C R , 2016)

### **The Refugee Crisis and the Landscape of Adult Refugee Education in the U.S.**

According to the UN Refugee Agency's annual *Global Trends Report*, 68.5 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide as of June 2018 (UNHCR, 2018), a population nearly twice as large as the population of California, the most populous state in the United States. The UN High Commissioner on Refugees (1950) and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (UNHCR, 2017), signed by 193 countries, guarantee protections, in which about 17.2 million refugees are entitled. Within this group of refugees, 11.6 million were living in protracted displacement or long periods of exile and separation from home (FMR, 2009), with 4.1 million living in exile for 20 years or more, contributing to learning loss, sustained illiteracy, and lack of future opportunities (UNHCR, 2017). Approximately 3 million refugees have resettled in the United States since the 1980 Refugee Act was passed in Congress and the Federal Refugee Resettlement Program was established, both efforts that allow refugees special humanitarian concern entrance into the U.S. (Pew, 2017). Moreover, the U.S. admitted 84,995 refugees for fiscal year 2016 (PRM, 2017), 15,062 more refugees than the previous year.

This humanitarian crisis raises the question of responsibility on host countries to fulfill refugees' right to quality education (SDG4 UN, 2018; UNHCR, 2017). The United States has historically led the world in refugee resettlement, taking in 3 million of more than 4 million refugees resettled worldwide since 1980 (Conner & Krogstad, 2018; Martin et al., 2019 ). As a key host and refugee receiving country, the United States' Refugee and Admissions Program (USRAP) is a critical component of the U.S.' overall protection efforts around the globe (US, 2014) and was established following the Vietnam War and enactment of the Refugee Act of 1980 (US, 1980), an amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1954 (INA, 1954). The President of the United States is required to provide a report to Congress in compliance with the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) prior to the start of the fiscal year (US, 2014). However, implementing educational

programs for refugees can be challenging. A 2018 policy report from the Migration Policy Institute on language integration in the United States (McHugh & Doxsee, 2018) claims that in recent years, a system of support that facilitates a smooth transition has dwindled. One example is major reductions in support for parents with young children in areas of English and family literacy in the United States. McHugh and Doxsee (2018) further discuss the need to address systemic barriers that prevent youth and adult populations from accessing resources, such as language acquisition, workforce training, economic self-sufficiency, health and wellness, and cultural adjustment that are necessary for successful integration into countries of resettlement. In response to these barriers, unique and innovative educational programming has emerged to address deficits in under-resourced programs and critically evaluate existing systems (2018).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a legislative reform to the public workforce system, is an example that spurred the development of integrated English as a Second Language (ESL) and employment readiness programs (WIOA, 2014). McHugh and Doxsee (2018) proposed “English Plus Integration,” a program that complements the existing system that focuses on English acquisition by offering digital literacy training, helping students overcome barriers related to integration, and supporting students in developing an individual and family success plan while identifying strategies for integration. Moreover, the United Nations provides further justification to support sustainable adult education programs; a UN Sustainable Development Goal 4: Education (SDG4) aim is that within the next decade, there will be a substantial increase in the number of youth and adults that have acquired relevant skills in vocational and technical education to prepare for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship (UN, 2018). Despite barriers that informal refugee educational programs have encountered in a constantly transforming sociopolitical and financial landscape, the question around how existing adult refugee educational programs should be evaluated remains relatively unexplored. The purpose of this review is to examine existing bodies of academic literature on how evaluation is applied in adult educational programming for refugees within community organizations and how programs utilize evaluation to improve their effectiveness in serving adult refugee populations in the United States.

## **Literature and Structure of this Review**

This literature review will primarily focus on the methodological procedure and analysis to describe the approach to understand the relationship between evaluation, adult education, and refugees. This review will examine existing literature on how evaluation is applied in adult educational programming for refugees in non-formal settings, with a focus on how programs use evaluation to

achieve effective outcomes related to serving adult refugees in heavily populated areas of resettlement in the United States. I will further existing or similar models related to non-formal, nontraditional educational programs for young adult and adult refugees that emerge and compare them in this literature review.

While previous studies in refugee-related literature have documented evaluative programming, limited research exists on evaluation in non-formal, non-traditional educational settings for young adult and adult refugees, despite recently published refugee-related academic literature. I first organize emerging themes by the three major frameworks and theories that guide this review: the evaluation theory tree, integration framework, and adult learning education. In addition, this literature review is structured to inquire into the relationship between three main areas (evaluation, adult education, refugees) and understand the context of refugees. The process of unearthing the context will then inform non-formal educational programming. Non-formal educational programming, in turn, influences the evaluation process and vice-versa.

*Non-formal education*—different from informal and contrary to formal education—refer to educational settings and structured educational programs that take place outside of or a complement to formal educational settings and schooling structures (i.e., K-12 schools, university), and can refer to adult basic education, adult literacy education, and skill development and can often take on different forms of learning (e.g., fitness programs, community-based adult education, etc.) and mostly in a community-oriented/based setting (ISCED, 2011). Non-formal educational settings in the context of this literature review, will not include formalized adult school and community college programs, which are directly state funded and federally funded and will be limited to what can be ascertained as grant, sub-granted, and privately funded programs. One such example is McHugh and Doxsee's September 2018 policy report that proposes an innovative adult refugee education model while simultaneously critiquing current adult education models. McHugh and Doxsee provide an analysis of education policy initiatives (such as WIOA) and the impact of these initiatives on adult education and resettlement for refugees; they provide strong justifications for an alternative model that may address existing deficits within the system of adult education that serves refugees. There are not many others that match the breadth of this study and focus on the evaluation component of similar non-formal education programs for refugee structures in the United States. While their proposal is quite innovative, further critiques must be considered to better understand the underlying and intersectional frameworks which address issues concerning racial/ethnic and socio-economic dynamics, discussed in the implications section.

## **Inquiry and Research Questions**

I explore two questions: (a) How is evaluation structured in practice in non-formal educational programs for refugee adults in the United States, if at all? (b) What outcomes exist, if at all, and typically follow the implementation of evaluation within these programs (e.g., the effectiveness and accessibility of adult educational programming and vocational training).

### **Positionality: Practitioner to Researcher**

As a former Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) and Citizenship Instructor at a U.S. based resettlement agency, I have observed through our internal program evaluations and assessments the ways in which clients who have engaged in our English and resettlement education program, in addition to our bundled services, have moved towards receiving the necessary support towards community integration. Moreover, experience I gained through work with adult refugees and families during my tenure there, as well as the additional evaluation and research skills I acquired from my work with an independent small-scale educational consulting nonprofit, have fueled my curiosity in understanding how evaluation affects program change and success on the communities which are served. Therefore, this literature review will examine the existing academic discourse through a systematic literature review around the identified key areas (evaluation, education, refugees) to understand the educational landscape for adult refugee resettlement.

### **Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

According to UNHCR (2018), a *refugee* is “a person forced to flee their country because of persecution, war or violence.” I explore the socioeconomic and political landscape of the resettlement experience through Ager and Strang’s (2004) “Understanding Integration” that suggests ten core domains reflecting normative understandings of integration and provides a potential structure for analysis of relevant outcomes. I focus on the indicators in the Ager and Strang framework that address education in the “markers and means” section (see dark gray shaded area in Figure 1). Overlap may occur in the markers and means area of employment and the three subcategories of the second area of “social connections” (social bridges, social bonds, social links) (see light gray shaded area in Figure 1), as workforce development initiatives and theories of social capital may arise from this academic review process.

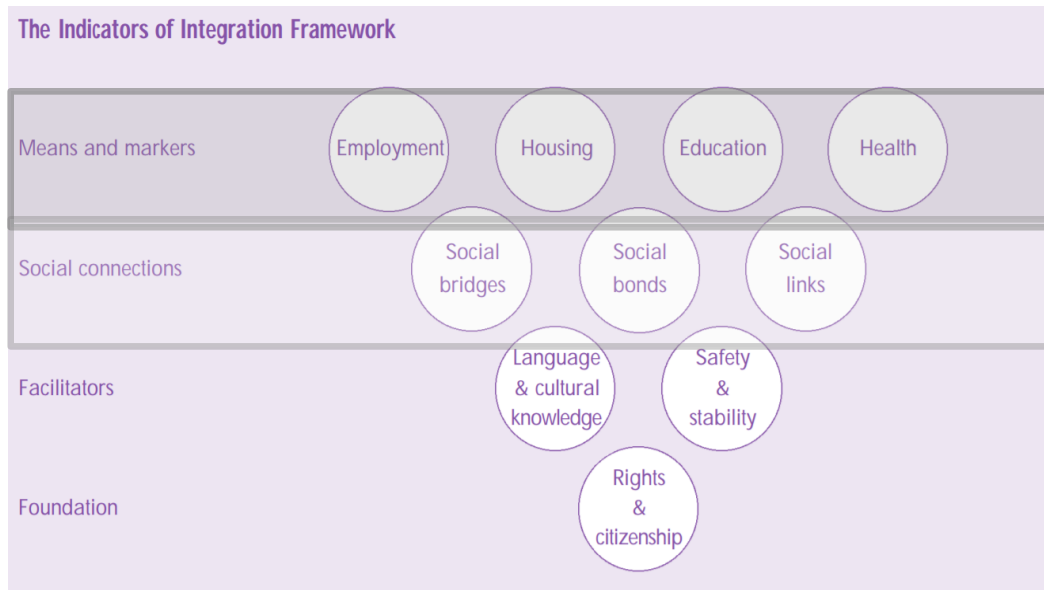


Figure 1. *Understanding integration: A conceptual framework*. Source: Ager and Strang (2004).

Prior to examining the educational structures in place that evaluation assesses, I use a critical theory lens and discourse on “A Political Sociology of Adult Learning Education” (Torres, 2013) to introduce an adult education model tied to adult learning theory. Immersed within are ideas such as workforce development initiatives (e.g., WIOA) and the concept of lifelong learning. Lastly, I explore the potential role of evaluation and various theories that influence the decision-making process of informing educational programs for young adult and adult refugees.

I use Alkin and Christie’s Evaluation Theory Tree below (See Figure 2), a theoretical framework that organizes the various approaches and designs to visualize and understand the types of evaluation theories and evaluation methodologies present in the literature and in practice, primarily situated in an American context (2004, 2008, 2012). Note, Alkin and Christie (2008) clarified the term “theory,” which is conventionally used, meaning that the terminology of “approaches, models, or frameworks” are due to an almost prescriptive nature and a set of rules may be more fitting. This theoretical framework serves as a common umbrella to understand the area of program evaluation structures present in this review. The evaluation theory tree will be used to identify the evaluation component within the literature found in this review.

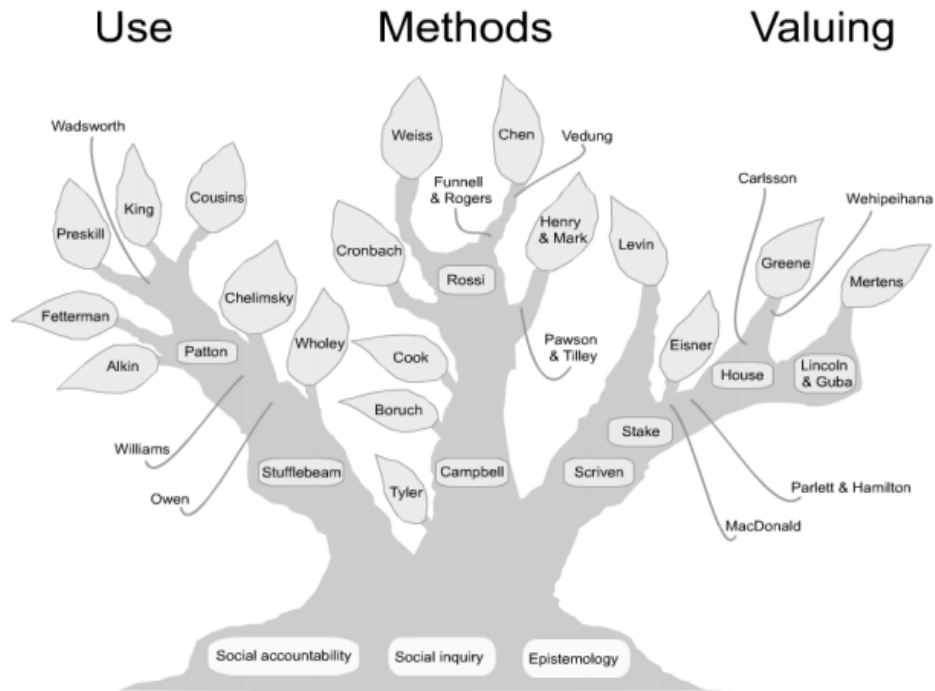


Figure 3. Evaluation theory tree. Source: Alkin and Christie (2012).

### Method for Inquiry

I inquire into three key topics: refugees, adult education, and evaluation. The framework below shows three major areas covered in this literature review and focus on these areas of overlap: refugees + adult education + evaluation. Inextricably linked to the Evaluation Theory Tree bubble, which represents the possible program evaluation theories, is the golden framework around the adult education bubble that indicates the *influence of evaluation* on adult educational programming. Moreover, the golden framework around the refugee bubble represents the context and the external forces of integration. Where the two bubbles, the gold framework intersect, is the area in which the research questions in this literature review converge, the shaded area pictured above.

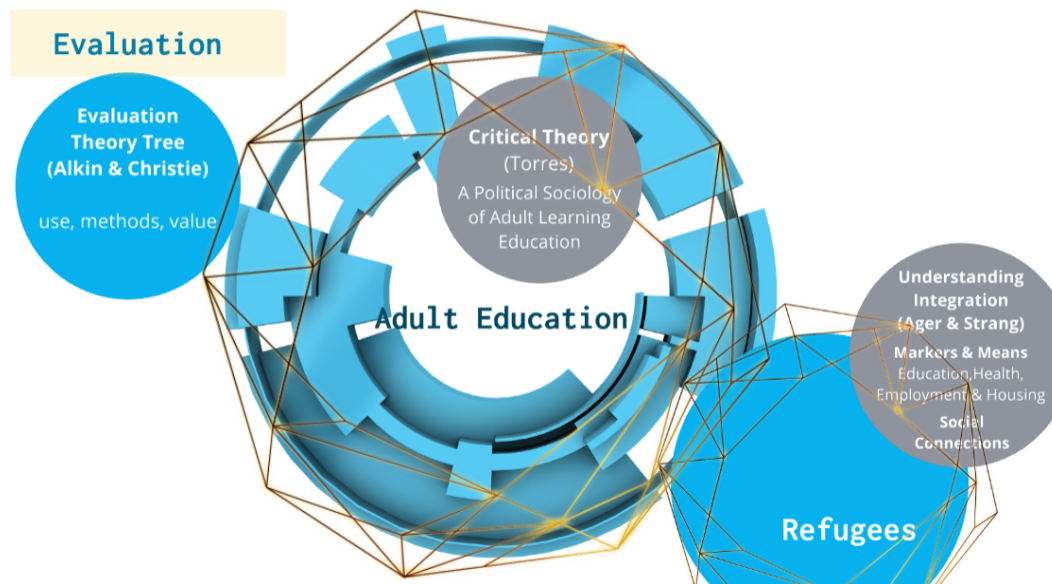


Figure 2. *Theoretical / conceptual framework on evaluation in refugee adult educational settings.*

A historical leader in refugee resettlement up until 2017, I choose the United States as the region of focus in my study for the complexity of its system and process of resettlement at various levels of local, state, and federal governance and the impacts on refugees during the early stages of integration and beyond. Furthermore, I limit this review to resettlement within the U.S. region due to the distinct context of American immigration policy tied to political agendas within the United States, unique from the context of Europe and other major countries of resettlement (Martin et al., 2019 ). An example of this is the strict vetting process refugees undergo prior to arriving in the United States (USCIS, 2017), and the push for integration through employment and self-sufficiency (Deloitte, 2016). I will not examine immigration law and policy, nor public policy that support the refugee community and the implications of resettlement; rather I may reference these laws to explain the resettlement process and the effects of policies at the federal, state, county, and local levels.

This literature review is divided into in three phases: (a ) a bounded search of terms related to the research questions; (b ) an exhaustive search of terms related to the research questions; and (c ) a bounded search of key terms paired to analyze overlap within the literature. A bounded search where a reviewer either samples from a “population” of studies such as in the first phase of this review, or as in the third phase, where the reviewer chooses specific criteria through the use of explicitly stated criteria (e.g., dates of the sources reviewed, set of journals or types of sources. Moreover, an exhaustive search of terms is when the reviewer

combs a wide range of possible sources to identify potential studies (Hallinger, 2013 ). Therefore, this section is structured by order of these three phases.

Major key terms in searches mirror the three primary areas of this literature review: “refugees,” “adult education,” and “evaluation.” I elaborate on these key terms and the combinations used related to the search terms below. I begin this review in a bounded search of online educational databases that provide a search of only academic literature (EBSCOhost, ERIC, Academic Search Complete, Education Source and ProQuest), restricting results to peer-reviewed journals using Boolean search variables, natural language searching, and database search syntaxes, such as truncation and wildcard symbols (see Table 1 in Appendix A ). The databases above are utilized in this review to search the literature only available in academic literature to survey what academic research has been conducted in regard to non-formal adult refugee education and program evaluation. EBSCO search results are automatically ranked by relevancy and for this reason, I prioritized inspecting articles by the order in which they first appeared, such as scrutinizing the first 20 results prior to selecting the most relevant articles for this review. I employed an exhaustive search approach when hits related to the overlap of the three subjects (“refugee,” “non-formal adult education,” and “evaluation”) yielded few results. Searches were initially restricted to peer-reviewed journals, books, dissertations, and master's theses, then opened to include select reports and policy papers.

### **Phase 1: Bounded Search of Terms Related to Research Questions**

The search began through a consultation with the university education librarian who assisted in the beginning literature review process and provided a general understanding of database navigation and searching syntax codes and shortcuts to filter results. I used an online library and educational databases in the initial phase of this review: EBSCOhost, ERIC and ProQuest. The search began narrowly using EBSCOhost, a robust educational online referencing system offering full-text databases, and included the key terms “refugee\*,” AND (“adult education” or “adult learning”) AND “evaluation” limited to peer-reviewed journals only (see Table 1 in Appendix A for a definition of database search terms and Table 2 in Appendix A below for search results). Three were related to the criteria required for this review (see list of relevant articles in Table 5 in Appendix A).

The same search was then repeated using identical key terms and was limited to full-text and scholarly peer-reviewed journals, then expanded to include the same key terms and used additional filters and expansion features: “related words,” “search within text,” and “equivalent subjects,” which returned 2,414 results. I added “United States” as an additional key term which resulted in 1,648

hits. I glanced at the first several search results, tiered by relevancy (See Table 2 in Appendix A for expanded and selected search results). I searched ProQuest (another library database) for dissertations related to this subject. I used the following combination of these key terms: (“refugee” or “refugees”) AND (informal adult education OR adult learning) AND (program evaluation) AND (United States), which resulted in two dissertations related to this review.

### **Phase 2: Exhaustive Search of Terms Related to Research Questions**

I expanded my inquiry to journals and credible sources related to the target populations (e.g., *Journal of Refugee Studies*) and followed the same search approach and structure to select journals that appeared in relevant articles (non-educational and refugee focused). These journals included articles from the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, the *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, and policy reports and publications from the Migration Policy Institute (MPI). This expanded search returned articles more closely related to the questions of inquiry in this literature review, though not all of the articles were peer-reviewed (such as policy papers). I selected the journals listed above based on their appearance in academic search engines, the potential relatability to refugee educational studies, and the impact factor based (see Table 3 in Appendix A for more details). Also, see Table 2 in Appendix A, “Phase Two” for a detailed search of key terms in the second phase.

### **Phase 3: Bounded-Search of Paired Key Areas and Terms Related to Research Questions**

In the third phase, I examined the relationship between two key terms (e.g., refugees and adult education) and surveyed these topics with this method. I researched paired terms through EBSCOhost, ERIC and peer-reviewed, full-text, and within the United States. The results are as follows: refugees + adult education = 12 hits; refugees + evaluation = 69 hits; and adult education + evaluation = 233 hits. See Table 3 in Appendix A for full results.

### **A Review of Literature on Evaluation on Adult Refugee Education**

After completing these three search phases above, the small number of relevant results is evidence of a gap in academic research literature on the topic of evaluation and adult-education for refugees. See Table 4 in Appendix A for full list of relevant search results titles. A close examination of 13 sources in this review led to several themes in the review, outlined below by category and the topic areas

related to the content of the literature. I organized emerging themes by the three major frameworks and theories that guide this review: the evaluation theory tree, integration framework, and adult learning education. Figure 4 shows the literature map and the relationship between the three main areas (evaluation, adult education, refugees). These relationships will serve to describe the process and approach in this literature review.

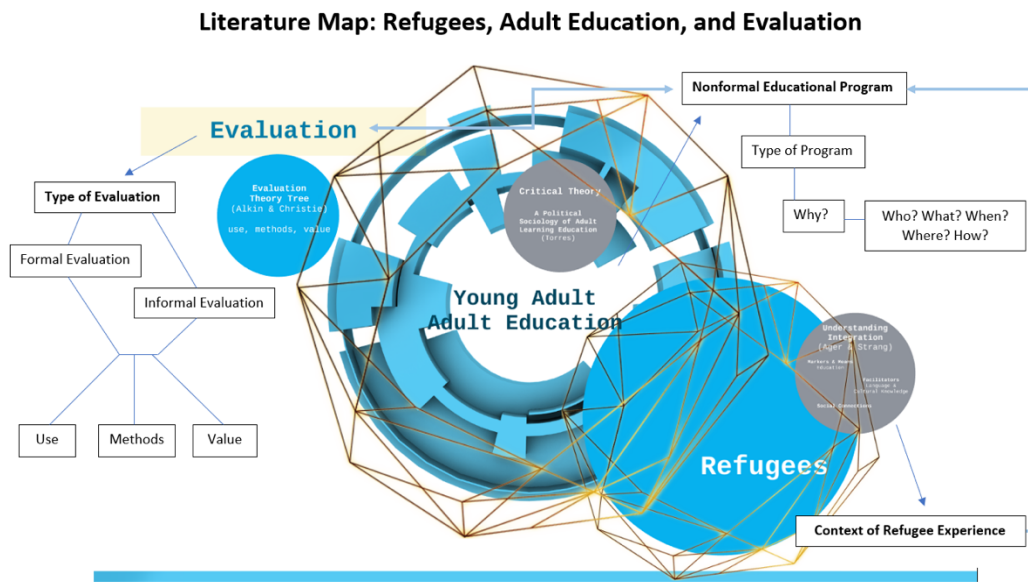


Figure 4. *Literature map.*

### Evaluation Theory Tree: Use, Methods, Valuing and Sub-Themes

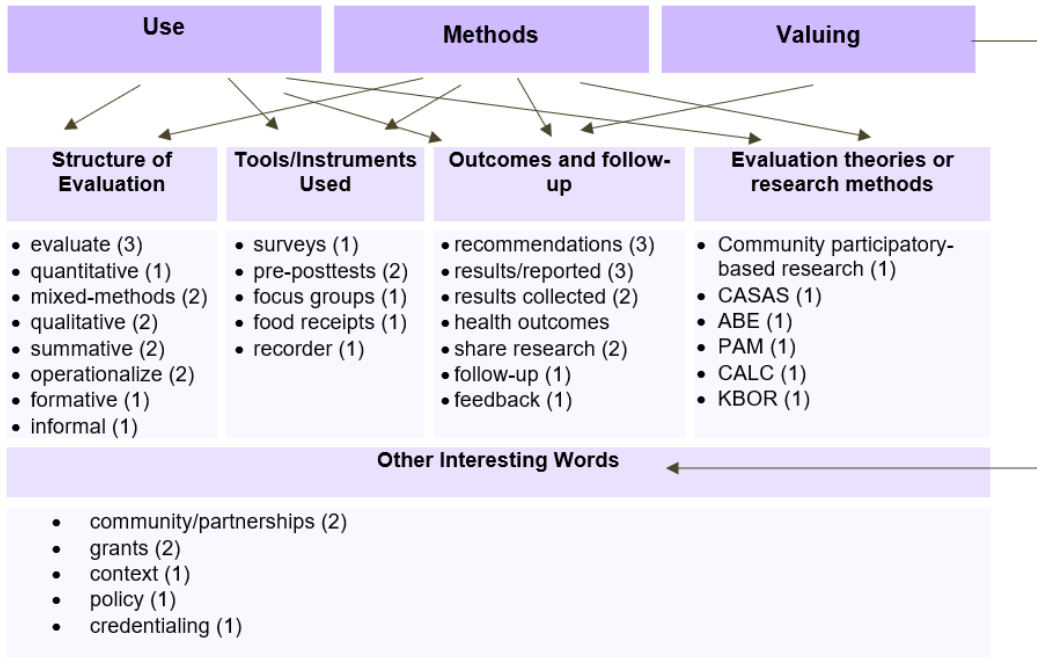
Several themes related to evaluation emerged from the articles. I organized common threads that appeared through an analysis of the sources. These were generated and guided by the research questions. Throughout this process, I built such vocabulary, concepts, and themes that linked to Research Question 1 and “structure,” meaning how an evaluation may have been structured as indicated in the article or source. After a closer read of each source, I was able to identify sub-themes that surfaced from the three main categories of use, methods, and valuing: (a ) structure of evaluation; (b ) tools or instruments used; (c ) outcomes and follow-up; and (d ) identifiable theories or research methods. However, the main categories do not necessarily provide strict umbrella categories for the subthemes.

For example, in my analysis, “structure of evaluation” and “outcomes and follow-up” may appear under both “use” and “methods.”

Though I performed this analysis and captured emerging themes, the process of scrutinizing the sources has offered only a preliminary snapshot of what is occurring in the literature. I share this because I would need to further investigate specific evaluation theories that exist in the field to truly categorize a specific evaluation method according to the evaluation theorists which span the sub-branches of the evaluation theory tree with certainty. The data found in this review (see Table 1 ) show the difficulty in discerning which specific theorists and their work drive the evaluations that are present in the studies found in this review. Research has also shown that evaluation theories are difficult to distinguish, even within the field of evaluation, as evaluations that are conducted may not be explicitly driven by an exact evaluation theory or are otherwise not stated (Christie, 2003; Donaldson & Lipsey, 2006; Leeuw & Donaldson, 2015).

For this reason, I choose to categorize the three major branches to provide a broad perspective on evaluation within the field of non-formal education focused on adult refugees rather than delve in-depth into certain evaluation philosophies. Below, observe three major branches of the Evaluation Theory Tree. Further below, I have included the four emergent subthemes (i.e., (a ) structure of evaluation; (b ) tools/instruments used; (c ) outcomes and follow-up; and (d ) evaluation theories or research methods) from the analysis and the codes that indicate an association with a particular subtheme. An example of this would be “Mixed-Methods” under the subtheme “Structure of Evaluation.” In the chart below, the numbers indicate how many times certain words related to evaluation emerged in my analysis based on the main themes and subthemes. I utilized an online word generator (<https://www.wordclouds.com/>) to assist in this word count. Text was pulled from an initial annotated bibliography I compiled for this literature review.

Table 1. Evaluation Themes and Categorization.



Note. Source: Evaluation Theory Tree (Alkin & Christie, 2004).

### Integration Framework: Themes by Indicators

Ager and Strang's (2004) "Integration Framework" is one of the few mid-theory frameworks existing on refugee integration. I explicitly chose this framework as this specific theory assists in contextualizing and defining what "types" of refugee academic literature exist that explain the natural socioeconomic and political landscape of refugee integration and resettlement, in this case, specific to the U.S. context. Like the Evaluation Theory Tree above, I organize the literature by themes that emerged from the literature and naturally categorized the sources by indicators. Also, I modeled how I conducted my review after for Research Question 2, which targets "outcomes" and "implementation." The four sections that were used to categorize the literature by topic include: (a ) Health; (b ) Education; (c ) Employment; and (d ) Housing. As I allowed the themes to naturally emerge from the sources found, it appeared that of those included in this review, only three of the four categories emerged: Health, Education, and Employment.

None of these sources fell under the Housing category, therefore, I have removed this indicator from the categorization process and left a note of its irrelevance (see Table 2 in Appendix A). The table shows how the literature is categorized. Each major category was then further separated into subthemes. For example, Health included: “Social Networking/Social Capital, Mental Health, Nutrition, Health Education on Disease and Prevention.” Health included three articles and a dissertation. I chose these four articles due to the type of health education programs, the first a health workshop, the second due to its focus on health-related issues, the third as an educational class focused on nutrition education, and the fourth on its focus on tuberculosis education and prevention. For these reasons, all four sources fall into the category of Health.

The second category, Education, comprised five articles and a very short report write-up. The first article, “Making Art of Make a Difference” was initially difficult to place in this category; I was unsure to count this as valid to this review as the article reports a presentation on the results of an art program delivered to Somali refugee adults and then, shared findings amongst art experts after its completion. I chose to designate the article under this marker and mean, as it is educational by nature and the purpose of this article was a community event to report and gather feedback. After a closer read, this article seemed to provide an explanation of a meta-evaluation of the art education program described. The second article, “Extension Partners on Financial Programs” by Stovall (2004) under “Financial Education” was a published, yet very brief, report on a workshop that was published in the Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences. Despite its brevity, it provided the needed explanation of an educational program in a non-formal educational setting for refugee adults such as participant demographics, outline of curriculum, final outcomes, even providing very brief comments for the feedback portion of the evaluation. Therefore, this report was included. The other four articles broadly fell under the categories of language learning, largely based on English as a Second Language programs, which appear to be the most frequent types of educational programs for adult learners. Though the article, “The Mini-United Nations Adult School Southwest Kansas” (Lukwago, 2001) takes place in a formalized adult educational setting, there is mention of additional types of programs embedded within the formalized ESL class setting that constitute a non-formal setting.

Employment had three sources. Of the three sources, two explicitly focused on employment-related topics. For example, “Exploring Immigrant Farming Programs and Social Capital: A Mixed Method Approach to Evaluation” (Hightower, 2012) discussed farming as a specific means of social integration which connects immigrants to technical training, farming resources, and community members who can provide access to markets and “What’s a Sundial in the Shade? Brain Waste Among Refugees” (Campbell, 2018) covered the topic

of adult refugees who were previously professionals in their country of origin and upon entering the U.S., struggling to integrate due to difficulty in finding a job at the same professional level. The last category, Housing, does not include any articles that were similar or belonged in this category. Therefore, it has been eliminated from the model as mentioned above.

What is interesting within framework and categorization is the emergence of sub-themes, in particular, that of “Social Networking/Social Capital.” It could be that a further investigation of these themes in the sources listed may uncover certain concepts within a Social Networking Theoretical Framework or even possibly an asset-based and critical framework (Moll, 1998; Yosso, 2005). But for the sake of the length and focus of this review, I choose to reserve this analysis for future study. Overall, the Understanding Integration framework provides a natural backdrop in not only understanding what type of literature exists on refugees, but further depicts the nature of literature in terms of refugee resettlement and integration.

Table 2. Ager and Strang (2004): “Integration Framework: Markers and Means.”

Organization of Themes in Literature by Integration and Resettlement	
	<p><b>Social Networking / Social Capital</b></p> <p>(1) Building Social Capital Through a Peer-Led Community Workshop. Im. H., Rosenberg. 2016. (article)            (4) Community Gardens for Refugee and Immigrants as a Means of Mental Health Promotion. Hartwig. 2016. (article)**            (18) Evaluation of a Tuberculosis Education Video Among Immigrants and Refugees at an Adult Education Center A Community Based Participatory Research. Wieland, M.L. et al. 2013. (article)**</p> <p><b>Mental Health</b></p> <p>(4) Community Gardens for Refugee and Immigrants as a Means of Mental Health Promotion. Hartwig. 2016. (article)**</p> <p><b>Nutrition</b></p> <p>(5) Integration of Nutrition Education Classes into English as Second Language class for Refugees. Gunnell, S. 2016. (dissertation)</p> <p><b>Health Education on Disease and Prevention</b></p> <p>(18) Evaluation of a Tuberculosis Education Video Among Immigrants and Refugees at an Adult Education Center A Community Based Participatory Research (article)**</p>
	<p><b>Social Networking / Social Capital</b></p> <p>(2) Making Art of Make a Difference. A Review of a Collaborative Project Between an Arts and a Social Services Organization. Barniskis. 2013. (article)</p> <p><b>Financial Education</b></p> <p>(3) Extension Partners on Financial Programs. Stovall. 2004. (report)</p> <p><b>Language Learning</b></p> <p>(8) The Mini-United Nations Adult School Southwest Kansas. Lukwago. 2007. (article)            (9) Adult ESL Education in the U.S. Eyring. 2014. CATESOL. (article)*            (16) Adult Refugee Education in Portland, Oregon, USA – Jeff MacDonald (article)            (20) Refugees from Reading: Students’ Perceptions of “Remedial” Literacy Pedagogy. Lesley, 2004 (article)</p>
	<p><b>Social Networking / Social Capital</b></p> <p>(6) Exploring Immigrant Farming Programs and Social Capital: A Mixed Method Approach to Evaluation. Hightower. 2012. Farming. (dissertation)</p> <p><b>Integration Survey</b></p> <p>(7) The Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation (RISE): Results from a Four-Year Longitudinal Study. Leichenstein, Puma. 2018. (survey)*</p> <p><b>Professional Career Pathways</b></p> <p>(10) What’s a Sundial in the Shade? Brain Waste Among Refugees. Campbell. 2018. (article-policy)*</p>
	<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>Eliminated from model due to no articles addressing “housing” in particular. This may be due to the fact that not enough adult programs are geared specifically towards addressing housing education are present or have emerged in this academic literature search.</p>

\*No clear delineation if fully fit for this review but included otherwise due to ambiguity.

\*\*Fall under two sub-categories within the same major category.

Note: Number preceding title indicates order in which article appeared in searches.

## **Themes on the Political Sociology of Adult Education**

In this preliminary review, the theme of community emerged in nine of the thirteen sources. Also, as briefly discussed in the categorization of literature under the “Understanding Integration” framework above, the idea of “social capital” appeared often in three of the sources, “Building Social Capital Through a Peer-Led Community Workshop” (Hyojin & Rosenburg, 2015), “Integration of Nutrition Education Classes into English as Second Language class for Refugees” (Gunnell, 2012) and “Exploring Immigrant Farming Programs and Social Capital: A Mixed Method Approach to Evaluation” (Hightower, 2012). Coincidentally, three of the sources fall within the “Health” related marker in the integration framework above and two of the three are dissertations. Two of the three explicitly mention using “community-based participatory research” as the method of the research study. As mentioned earlier in this study, it would be interesting to integrate or compare “social-capital” theory to further investigate an added layer to this literature review in the next iteration or version of this investigation for further discussion on examining refugee integration whether education and social networking / social capital is a means to achieve this. Torres and Schugart (1994) argue that in a modern democracy, there is a contradiction between two roles (i.e., capital accumulation, and a harmonious participatory political society) and the contribution of adult education to equitable labor force demands.

### **Research Question 1: Structure of Evaluation in Non-formal Adult Educational Settings for Refugees – Preliminary Findings and Conclusions**

Research Question 1 relates to how evaluation is structured in practice in non-formal educational programs for refugee adults in the United States. From the results above, we can identify various types of evaluations, tools and instruments, and outcomes and follow-up evaluations within the present literature. While some articles explicitly state what type of evaluation design was used, others do not. Three sources with detailed descriptions of their evaluation design include the articles related to social capital mentioned above: “Building Social Capital Through a Peer-Led Community Workshop,” “Integration of Nutrition Education Classes into English as Second Language class for Refugees,” and “Exploring Immigrant Farming Programs and Social Capital: A Mixed Method Approach to Evaluation.” Two of these sources are dissertations which, if we examine a typical structure of a dissertation, may often include more of a detailed explanation of a study design (possibly due to the absence of a page limitation and presence of multiple chapters) than most journal articles related within the scope of work related to evaluation and adult refugee education. This is the case here with the dissertations included in this review. Also, the article on a peer-led community workshop is an example of another study that fits the model of evaluation within a non-formal educational

setting for adult refugees. That is not to say that these studies had perfect evaluation designs. A number of evaluation designs exist, and the theories are each rooted in the three branches, as in our Evaluation Theory Tree, by social accountability, social inquiry, and epistemology. Two such foundation models on the “use” branch is that of Stufflebeam’s CIPP or “context, input, process, product” and Patton’s UFE or Utilization Focused Evaluation. The types of theories and methods that may exist may not be explicitly stated and identified according to existing evaluation literature, or even driven by an explicit theory of change.

Though all evaluations are structured in a certain way, it is often much easier to identify the method of research rather than the evaluation design itself. In the case of four sources in this review (Gunnell, 2012; Hightower, 2012; Im & Rosenberg, 2016; Wieland et al., 2013), we can see that the method of research carried out is community-based participatory research, as previously mentioned, which has components of evaluation theory inherently built into the implementation process and connected with specific evaluation theories (methods, use, and valuing). In addition, other types of evaluation methods may include formative and summative evaluation and assessment. In the case of the sources that were returned and selected for this review, two articles, *Adult ESL Education in the U.S.* (2014) by Eyring and *The Mini-United Nations Adult School Southwest Kansas* (2007) by Lukwago, included various types of formalized assessments. It is important to note that these two articles focus on programs within an adult school setting, which unfortunately, deems these two articles unideal for this study as the examined programs did not take place in a non-formal educational setting (see Table 4 in Appendix A for sources that have been included and excluded).

## **Research Question 2: Outcomes that Usually Follow Evaluation; Preliminary Findings and Conclusions from Sources**

Each branch of the evaluation theory tree has a purpose, but the ultimate goal of an evaluation is that it leads to a decision. In these cases, the valid articles above show that many had mentioned some form of outcome or follow-up. We see in Hartwig, Gunnell (2012), Hightower (2012), and Wieland et al. (2013), that reports were collected, and results compiled. However, only in Hightower’s and Gunnell’s dissertations do they explicitly state that the evaluation process yielded recommendations that were shared back with the communities. Others, such as Hartwig, Stovall, and Lukwago, reported collecting results but did not state if results were shared in a follow-up with stakeholders or the community. Interestingly, in Gunnell’s evaluation, they found that later using food receipts in the integrated nutrition class had an impact on students’ budgeting decisions and was a useful tool that informed the evaluation process. Hightower’s dissertation recommended that program directors can use social capital theory to measure the

impact of their programs through social development and agricultural educators could potentially utilize social capital theory to conceptualize and measure the social networking already in their programs, such as bringing guest speakers and field trips.

Outcomes within each source varied. A report such as Stovall's shared simple comments and a very brief explanation of continued programming. Much more robustly detailed reports include Gunnell's (2012), for example, which focused on the integration of nutrition education classes into ESL for refugees and target around the feasibility of integration of nutrition education classes into ESL classes for recently resettled refugees, the elements to form a collaborative partnership, determining if nutrition choices change thereafter, and the feasibility of using food receipts to measure money spent on food before and after nutrition ed classes. Hartwig's study focused on characterizing the experiences of refugees and immigrants, of which the following themes emerged on health benefits (food security, physical benefits, mental health) and social support; the recommendation from this study highlighted the opportunities for community organizations to partner with local resettlement organizations to foster new relationships and strengthen community social ties and networks (p. 1158). Hightower's (2012) questions focused on social capital within a specific refugee community. An outcome of this study included that characteristics in immigrant farming programs contribute to the development of social capital, including resources such as technical skills and development of social relationships (p. 73).

Recommendations also varied. For example, Gunnell (2012) mentioned that not all ESL programs are integrated into a worksite training program and provided recommendation considering the frequency and length of time of lessons, adapting evaluation tools to measure short-term and long-term nutrition related behaviors, a set curriculum that could be delivered when students cannot attend all lessons and creating culturally sensitive educational materials and tools. Gunnell also recommended a longitudinal design where two independent methods are used to measure change and the results compared. Hightower (2012), on the other hand, offered recommendations on strategies to develop and evaluate farming programs as well as how to utilize the findings of the study to better understand social capital theory within agricultural education and suggested future studies to explore funders of immigrant farming programs, other types of farming programs (urban versus rural immigrant farming programs), and sustainability.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

This review examined existing bodies of academic literature in three phases: (a ) a bounded search of terms related to the research questions; (b ) an exhaustive search of terms related to the research questions; and (c ) a bounded

search of key terms paired to analyze overlap within the literature. Analysis focused on how evaluation is present or applied in adult educational programming for refugees within non-formal educational spaces, such as community organizations, and how programs utilize evaluation to improve their effectiveness in serving adult refugee populations in the United States. Moreover, the sources were broadly investigated on how evaluation is structured in practice within informal educational programs and provided a comparison in what outcomes typically follow implementation. The Evaluation Theory Tree provided a framework to survey and organize the scope of existing evaluation (Use, Methods, Valuing) within this specific niche; the Understanding Integration framework conceptualized how sources selected were situated accordingly to refugee integration using the “Means and Markers” indicators, where most literature relates to first, health or then employment, sometimes, if not often, in combination with each other, for example, language learning with health (see Wieland et al.’s [2013] study in Table 4, in Appendix A). Other aspects to be explored include how many programs were embedded within an existing ESL or adult education program, such as Wieland’s study. Lastly, within the Understanding Integration framework, indicators of “Social Connections” appeared through the emergence of social capital theory (Stanton-Salazar, 2011).

There is no explicit evaluation theory present in any of the literature within this review. Traces of such theory exist by examining how evaluation is used and employed, reiterating that theory is not made explicit. According to Donaldson and Lipsey (2006), this may be due to the field of evaluation theory, where evaluators and practitioners may not consciously employ a specific evaluation or program theory nor have needed to make known such a theory prior to conducting an evaluation. Or perhaps there is often a focus on social science theory rather than evaluation theory. Moreover, the language can be very confusing for a relatively newer discipline, even an evaluation veteran, due to interchangeable terms in the evaluation landscape, such as “theories of practice, theories of evaluation, theory-driven evaluation, program theory, evaluation, theory of change, logic models, and the like” (Donaldson & Lipsey, 2006). For evaluators, not only is theory important, many evaluation scholars would agree that the link between evaluation practice and theory is an area of much-needed inquiry (Cousins & Earl, 1999; Scriven, 1991; Shadish et al., 1991; Smith, 1993; Worthen, 1990 as quoted in Christie, 2003) and need to refine current practice to increase the understanding of influence of context on the nature of evaluation practice through experientially-based knowledge acquired through formal study. One such evaluation approach proposed is *theory knitting* or integrating parts of (at first sight non-related or loosely coupled) theories to reduce *theoretical segregation* and accumulate additional theory, though this may not be possible for all evaluation theories in combination with certain social science theories (Leeuw & Donaldson, 2015).

The implications of integrating evaluation theory in practice into such programs can contribute to the body of evaluation theory and influence future educational programming, as McHugh and Doxsee's English Plus Integration model.

### **Recommendations for the Future Program Inquiry on Refugee Adult Education in Non-Formal Education in the United States**

These recommendations are to better understand how evaluation is structured in practice in non-formal educational settings for adult refugees in the United States and have implications for identifying what outcomes follow the implementation of evaluation. Recommendations to further this topic is to analyze and explore extant information on refugees as it pertains to asset-based and socio-cultural capital theories, and additional study can be conducted to further explore the connection of program evaluation in non-formal adult education for refugees, while examining a dimension of asset-based frameworks of social networking theories (Moll, 1998; Yosso, 2005) as it relates to refugee integration. Future study may include a critical lens of adult education as the value-added aspect of adult learning education policies focused on lifelong learning and self-development to policies that investigates employability such as workforce development frameworks (Torres, 2013).

For program evaluation, in addition to strategies discussed above on theory knitting and evaluation theory linked directly to practice, it may be worthwhile to explore evaluation strategies beyond the United States context and expand the Evaluation Theory Tree to include the international development sector for Low-Middle Income Countries (LMIC) (Carden & Alkin, 2012). It is important to note that LMIC is not limited to the entire United States but rather suggested to analyze the context of regional differences, the type of environment in which a program within an organization operates, and the potential impact of an educational program on its beneficiaries. International aid evaluation strategies and theories can be considered (Carden & Alkin, 2012). Such theories can be examined if emerging in existing approaches, such as a participatory research-based evaluation, where strategies have been adapted due to the sensitivity of the context, therefore, making adaptation fundamental to the design (Alkin, 2012, p. 110). Additionally, the "Rapid Rural Appraisal and Participatory Rural Appraisal" (Chambers, 2008) may be considered in a context where much misleading information is widely available but also in a place where administering and completing long and detailed surveys was not feasible and efficient. Another strategy is developmental evaluation (Patton, 2010) which could be placed on the "use" branch of the Evaluation Theory Tree and situates the evaluator within a program and requires innovative use of strategies and development for adaption within dynamic and changing environments (Carden & Alkin, 2012 ). Lastly, when considering specific groups

(e.g., refugees) that are traditionally assisted through agencies that operate with the international aid and development model, it may be interesting to consider this approach for a program's constituents and other development agencies (e.g., UNICEF, Oxfam International, Save the Children) that have adopted their own models for evaluating large-scale programs.

Models as such have been proposed in LMICs primarily deal with the unpredictability of a program environment. Though the U.S. itself is not considered an LMIC, it could further benefit this research area to investigate and recognize that constituents of such programs and the capacity in which these organizations operate when delivering programs, indeed, have similar attributes to LMICs. Context may vary from organization to environment and programs to its beneficiaries, not to be confused with what is defined as the "developing world" (Carden & Alkin, 2012, p. 102). See Figure 5 in Appendix A for the expanded version of the Evaluation Theory Tree that includes perspectives from the international development sector. As LMICs have two distinctions which are described as "collective rather than individual in origin" because of limited evaluation theory of the writings or developed by a group of people rather an individual theorist described as "cultural and political in origin" (Carden & Alkin, 2012), this makes the nature of formal evaluation work in the LMICs challenging, as practice origins are not formalized into prescriptive theory. Though this may be the case, these models could certainly be useful to the U.S. context if expanding the Evaluation Theory Tree to truly include such international evaluation perspectives.

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