Assessing the Integration of Immigrants: A Case Study of a Midwestern Community

Kelly Genners

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Assessing the Integration of Immigrants: 
A Case Study of a Midwestern Community

Kelly Genners

2017

Master Professional Report submitted to the Faculty of the Iowa State University, Ames 
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE STUDIES

With a Community Development Emphasis

Advisory Committee:
Biswa Das, Major Professor
Tim Borich
Susan Bradbury
ABSTRACT

As the demographic mix of communities across the nation and especially the Midwest undergoes change, there is an increasing need to better understand these new groups of people, primarily immigrants and their level of assimilation and integration into the American community fabric. The City of Ottumwa, is a mid-sized Midwestern community struggling to retain population as well as its economic base as a regional hub for the southeast region of the state of Iowa. As the city has witnessed loss in skilled labor over the past couple of decades, many immigrants and refugees have moved into the city. These individuals bring not just cultural diversity but also human capital that is needed both in the city and the broader region. With the differences in language, food and culture comes the challenges of assimilation and acculturation of this new group within the city. The main objective of this study is to understand the level of integration of the new diverse group into the community as well as the opportunities for improvement in current services toward better integration. Utilizing a survey based approach to acquire quantitative data, the study combines it with secondary data from U.S. Census to help understand the ‘cohort’ in a variety of ways. The study assesses impacts based on educational attainment, English proficiency and upward economic mobility among the new immigrants and how effective the current integration processes in the study area are. Based on the findings, it was observed that there is considerable evidence to suggest that most immigrants living within the Ottumwa community are integrating through advancing educational attainment, and upward economic mobility. While the efforts of the Ottumwa community to integrate have been received favorably, there are areas of emphasis, specifically increased English proficiency that require additional nurturing and investment.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The state of Iowa is undergoing a transformation in terms of its demographic composition. An increasing number of ethnically diverse groups are moving into the state. According to the American Immigration Council, the foreign-born share of Iowa’s population tripled from 1990 to 2013, rising from 1.6% to 4.8% (2015). For a very long time Iowa has been an ethnically homogenous state filled with generations of families whose roots were deeply embedded in their hometown communities. Over time, these primarily small Iowa communities that had previously held such promise for the future have lost not just their population but also much of the business and industry that drove the local economies. With a great number of the children leaving to pursue their academic endeavors and often choosing not to return, many Iowa communities have become primarily home to a significant number of the elderly who choose to retire in them. This is validated by data that shows that Iowa had the lowest increase in population, in percentage terms, from 1900 to 2010 of all 50 states (U.S. Census, 2016). Further, latest census estimates also reveal that Iowa’s elderly population, which account for approximately 15 percent of the population, ranks Iowa among the five states with the highest percentage of people aged 65 and older (U.S. Census, 2016).

This shift in demographics, in combination with outsourcing of manufacturing and service jobs overseas, has put many towns in Iowa in an extremely fiscally and economically vulnerable situation. The ongoing population and the associated economic decline has resulted in an erosion of human and social capital that historically has provided these places with its biggest strength. With the passage of time, both Iowa and the nation, have witnessed changes in the population mix especially as it relates to new ethnically diverse residents. This mix is a
combination of highly skilled foreign workers in sectors such as education and health care, students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees and professionals in services, as well as low skilled immigrants working in farming and more labor intensive industries like meat packing, in addition to the influx of refugees, all of whom now call Iowa their home.

Given the changes in out and in-migration, an argument can be made that what the state has lost with the outflow of its native residents, it has gained back as a result of the in-migration of equally skilled, if not more, immigrants that now contribute to the state in a variety of ways. But, is this infusion of new human capital, defined as “individuals that contribute to their ability to earn a living, strengthen community and otherwise contribute to community organizations, their families and self-improvement” (Flora and Flora, 2013, p. 84) and the cornerstone for the community capitals framework, depicted in Figure 1.1, being fully accepted and nurtured by the communities in Iowa? Alternatively, are these immigrant populations taking advantage of opportunities to increase their skill sets and capacity? Although it is undeniable that

Figure 1.1 Community Capitals Framework

![Community Capitals Framework Diagram](source: Flora and Flora)

immigration has favorably affected population growth in Iowa, there has been limited understanding of the broader community-wide impact of these groups in many communities.
Further, many immigrants work low paying jobs that require little, if any, education and there is often a perception among the members in the host community that immigrants don’t desire to assimilate in common ways, such as learning English. So, are these newcomers taking measurable steps to integrate into the community or are they just co-existing as an independent group mostly interacting within themselves? Conversely, are host communities taking the necessary steps to assist in this integration process? An argument can certainly be made that if immigration is viewed less as a circumstance and more of a community development opportunity and if more emphasis is put into the integration efforts that foster the development of human capital, it would provide a win-win situation that benefits not only immigrant groups but also communities across the U.S. - including in Iowa.

With continually dwindling population, communities are recognizing the need to both attract and grow their human capital and immigration has slowly evolved as an economic development issue and strategy for community revitalization. While there is a large body of literature on how immigration is affecting the United States in terms of population gains, economic impact, cultural diversity, skill contribution and how immigrants are filling the role of low-skill labor, there still seems to be disagreement about strategies to assist in the integration of immigrants and to what degree immigrants are actually integrating. Studies focusing on such issues can be very useful for micropolitan communities. These mid-size towns cannot compete with the amenities that larger metropolitan areas have to offer nor can they offer the inexpensive cost of living that a rural community often does. This study is an attempt to help understand the process of assimilation including the challenges and opportunities that exist. Further, this study can make the case that, through integration, immigration can be “an asset and not a burden to communities” (Paral, 2014, p.12) if indeed it is determined that the immigrant population studied
has continued to increase their human capital through education attainment, increased English proficiency and upward economic mobility. For the purpose of this study, one small community in Iowa that has experienced an influx in the immigrant population, has been identified to understand to what extent immigrant groups have integrated into the community fabric and what improvements can be made in the integration process.

Authors note: In my daily role as a nonprofit foundation professional, the challenges that affect mid-sized communities in Iowa are evident each and every day. One of the earliest lessons I learned in this challenging work was not to take any opportunity that presented itself lightly. In addition, while immigration can be an obvious benefit in so many ways to be discussed later in this paper, it also exacerbates the challenges that arise when a new population is struggling to acclimate to a new community and in many instances a new country. Seeing this evolution first hand in my own community has created a desire to study this process and not only gain a better understanding of it but also to strategize what solutions may be necessary to assist the community not just to avoid conflict and to coexist but to thrive.

**Research Objectives**

The broad goal of this study is to assess the level to which immigrants are integrating into their host communities. Toward this, the study uses educational attainment including English proficiency as well as improvements in the economic condition of immigrating individuals and families as indicators of their successful integration. The study will use the immigrant population living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa as a case study to evaluate the degree to which they have been successful at integrating into the community and how they perceive the effectiveness of the resources are that are available to assist them.
Specifically, this report will focus on following questions:

1. Are first generation immigrants who reside in Ottumwa, Iowa adding value to their individual capacity and skills by furthering their education and becoming more proficient in English since immigrating to the United States and specifically to Ottumwa?

2. Has the economic condition of immigrants improved over time to make them and their families financially sustainable?

3. Is there a need to improve the existing resources and services that can further assist in the process of integration?

The findings of the study could potentially be used to make recommendations that could be used not only by the City of Ottumwa but other similar communities to address issues relating to integration and assimilation of new immigrants.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review first examines the meaning of immigrant integration and identifies what metrics can be used to analyze the level of integration that occurs in a community. Next, the literature also helps to understand the benefits, barriers and challenges that are experienced by communities as part of the immigrant migration and settlement process. In addition, the literature also reviews some of the examples within the state of Iowa and how they have been successful in their efforts. Finally, the literature focuses on the historical aspect and provides an overview of the history of integration and the associated efforts to measure it.

What is Integration?

In reference to immigration, integration may be an overused word and one that has various meanings for different people. Integration can be viewed as an evolving process defined as “a culmination of everyday interactions between and among immigrant newcomers and host communities” (Jimenez, 2011, p. 1). According to the White House Task Force on New Americans integration is “a dynamic two-way process that brings together newcomers and the long-time residents of communities into which they settle (“receiving communities”) to foster greater understanding, promote inclusiveness, speed economic success, and build secure, vibrant and cohesive communities” (2015). Perhaps as critical to define what integration is may be to define what it is not. Integration is not about conformity or making one fit what is determined to be the norm or the accepted standard. It is important to remember when discussing integration that a respect for one’s language, culture, tradition and beliefs are imperative in the process. As
integration remains a nebulous term, Jiminez assists us with the measurement of integration by outlining five main indicators of integration progress, including:

1) language proficiency
2) socioeconomic attainment
3) political participation
4) location of residence, and
5) social interaction with host communities (2011).

Many aspects of integration indicators can be defined in terms of the capital that they secure over some period of time. For example, the language proficiency can be defined in terms of human capital and increasing one’s understanding or skills. Learning the English language is a critical element of success for new Americans. Not only does it allow for easier navigation and obvious improved communication with others within the community, it also encourages increased earnings over time. In a study by Bleakley and Chin (2010), researchers determined that adults who had immigrated to the U.S. as children and increased their English fluency over time obtained higher earnings later in their lives (White House, 2015). The same study also validated English language proficiency as an integration metric by determining that those immigrants that had greater English language skills were more likely to be “socially integrated in their broader communities in terms of both interpersonal relationships” (White House, 2015).

It is important to note that education and language are not only a way to facilitate integration but are also an avenue to determine whether integration is taking place successfully at all.

Socioeconomic attainment can be defined in terms of human, social and even financial capital, other important components of the Community Capitals Framework that create a healthy, sustainable community. Political participation can increase the political capital of the
immigrant population when political office is obtained allowing for political influence in the community. The social interaction or sociocultural milieu (Green and Haines, 2012) with host communities perpetuates the increased social capital of newcomers as they make connections with native community members. Essential in this process is the participation of the first immigrant generation and subsequent generations as well as the degree of social acceptance by other Americans (Miller, 2015). Vargas confirms for us that “a key determinant of successful integration is how much social distance must be traveled between the immigrant and the host community” (Vargas, 2002).

One study of note was developed by the RISE (Refugee Integration and Evaluation) project. This study focused on a single cohort of refugees during their first 4 years of resettlement and piloted a survey instrument that was used to assess the integration of the refugees within the city of Denver (Taintor & Lichtenstein, 2016). The RISE survey is unique in that others that have looked at immigrant integration such as the one by the Migration Policy Institute or National Academies Press commonly use U.S. Census data which is limited to annual cross-sectional data. In contrast, the RISE study was administered longitudinally (Taintor & Lichtensten, 2016). Focusing on the same individuals over a period of years allows for a much clearer picture around integration whereas with Census data there are limitations in knowledge because of the in and outmigration that occurs. In addition to the longitudinal aspect, the RISE survey also included qualitative data to support findings in the form of participant interviews.

**Driving Forces of Immigration**

Before attempting to develop integration strategies, it is important to understand why individuals from other countries are choosing to leave their native homes and travel to the United States to begin new lives. As illustrated in Figures 2.1 and 2.2, the number of immigrants in the
U.S. is larger than it has ever been and these numbers are only projected to increase over time. Iowa has not been immune to this growth as demonstrated in Figure 2.3. In fact, of all the states Iowa has experienced the 17th highest population growth of all 50 states as a result of immigration.
Figure 2.1: Immigrants in U.S. – Number and Percent Projections

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 2.2: Immigrant Population Growth (Legal and Illegal)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
While thousands of immigrants may end up in Iowa, their individual journeys to get to here are as different as the countries they originate from. Many immigrants have been recruited from their hometowns or villages for work opportunities. This is primarily seen within the agriculture and meat-processing industries, which regularly recruit immigrant workers to meet their demand for low-skilled labor (Ramos, 2016). Such was the case in Marshalltown where immigrants were recruited to fill positions in the local Swift slaughterhouse. The expansion at Swift and Company in the late 1980’s required new recruitment practices that included a heavy emphasis on Hispanic workers. Within a decade, more than 3,700 Hispanics had settled in Marshall County and by 2009, just over 6,100 Hispanics resided there (Woodrick, 2015). In fact, at one point, a quarter of the production employees were estimated to have come from the Mexican town of Villachuato (Bloom, 2006). Numerous workers became “commuter residents” (Bloom, 2006), transferring back and forth between Marshalltown and Villachuato but never fully integrating into the Marshalltown

community. Another pertinent example can be found in Postville, Iowa, where immigrants were recruited from a single Mexican village, El Barril, in the state of San Luis Potosí (Bloom, 2006).

As one becomes knowledgeable about the various journeys involved in immigration, it is essential to understand that the settlement patterns of immigrants have changed over the decades. Previously, “immigrants entered through gateway states like Florida, Texas, California and New York and went no further” thus concentrating in these locations (Vargas, 2002, p. 345). Now, immigrants are settling in states, like Iowa, not previously considered immigrant destinations. What has become the emerging norm is for immigrants to move through these primary states and then settle in secondary communities, many of which are rural (Vargas, 2002). This step-migration, which involves first settling in one state and then another was experienced by many immigrants who eventually settled in Marshalltown, Iowa. Networking developed between the Swift Company and residents of Villachuato, Michoacán, Mexico recruited individuals to the United States to work. These immigrant’s began their journey in California, settling for a time, but eventually moving onto Chicago. (Bloom, 2006). It was during their time in Chicago when they learned of the growing Latino population in Iowa and decided to settle there. What has been noted as the main reason for this secondary migration is the desire for a higher quality of life or a better paying job (Ramos, 2016). Many have chosen to immigrate to Iowa “because of economic difficulties in their homeland and because of economic opportunities in Iowa” which is demonstrative of the push and pull factors often referred to in literature (Baker and Hotek, 2002, p. 449).

Refugees are another category of immigrant whose search for a better life has led them to the United States. “Since 1975, approximately 3 million refugees have come to the U.S. from countries all over the world” (White House, 2015, p. 7). Increasingly more are settling into
smaller Midwest communities because of the affordability, plentiful jobs and peaceful
neighborhoods (Baker and Hotek, 2002, p. 7). These individual and families have often been
forced to flee their own countries because of war or fear of persecution and are desperately
searching for a safe place to raise their families. Other immigrants desire this safety as well. In
addition to Refugees, “the U.S. has welcomed asylees, victims of human trafficking,
Cuban/Haitian Entrants and Special Immigrant Visa recipients from Iraq and Afghanistan”
(White House, 2015, p. 7).

Revitalization of the Heartland

One of the most dramatic consequences of immigration is the population infusion and
redistribution that has resulted in its wake (Coates and Gindling, 2012). Because of this, Iowa
has been the recipient of what can only be described as a reverse of population loss. For
decades, Iowa has continued to experience out-migration and brain drain. It has been said that
“Iowa’s greatest export isn’t corn, soybeans or pigs; it’s young adults” (Bloom, 2006, p. 3). This
out-migration, coupled with Iowa’s aging population, has resulted in a high population loss over
time. This population loss has threatened the future of many Iowa communities but, for some,
immigration has allowed for their reprieve. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, Iowa’s population
grew by 5.4% to 2.9 million, and two-thirds of that growth was due to international immigration
alone (Bloom, 2006). This comes in stark contrast to the previous decade where, “from 1980 to
1990, all but seven of Iowa’s 99 countries lost population” (Bloom, 2006, p. 3). It can certainly
be said that immigration is slowing, and in some cases, reversing decades of population decline
(Bloom, 2006). This realization has caused many to view international immigration in a whole
new light, causing one bi-partisan panel appointed by Iowa’s governor to go so far as to propose
Iowa become the “Ellis Island of the Midwest” (Grey, 2000, p. 9). A primary role of immigrants
may best be summed up by author Stephen Bloom, who says, “They are taking places of the old who are dying, the young who are leaving and the locals who refuse to take the low-paying, menial jobs that abound” (Bloom, 2006, p. 3).

**Economic Benefits and Workforce**

Bringing population back to shrinking communities is not the only benefit that has been realized through immigration. With increased population, economic benefits can be acquired as well. In a study conducted by Coates and Gindling to determine whether faster Hispanic population growth is linked to faster economic growth per capita, the determination was that as the Hispanic population increased (whether from international immigrants, migrants from within the U.S. or from natural growth in the families), economic growth was also seen in those rural communities whose populations had previously been in decline (2012). In addition, according to economist David Card, immigration’s “impact on population growth has a corresponding positive impact on a region’s wages, housing prices, rents and cultural diversity” (McDaniel, 2014, p. 2).

It cannot be disregarded that immigrants play a vital role in filling workforce gaps as they frequently fill positions for employers that are desperate for workers. These positions are often those that Americans find undesirable (Vargas, 2002). If these positions were to remain unfilled there is a prevailing fear that employers will pull up stakes for locations that can better satisfy their labor needs. There is also a theory that by taking these low-skill jobs, immigrants are inducing natives to move into higher paying positions, thereby raising the incomes of natives who might otherwise fill low-skill jobs or remain unemployed (Coates and Gindling, 2012). Let us not forget that there are many experts who believe that because of retiring baby boomers and declining fertility rates the U.S is on the cusp of a dramatic labor shortage (Bean, Bachmeier and
Brown, 2014). In fact the Census Bureau predicts that, by 2030, the working age (18–64) population will drop to approximately 57 percent of the total population (Munoz and Rodriguez, 2015). Immigration could be a needed game-changer for the labor force as experts believe that over the next 20 years 85% of the net growth will consist of immigrants and their children (White House, 2015).

**Entrepreneurial Ability**

A desirable trait recurrently seen in immigrants is a spirit of entrepreneurism. Immigrants, who are very often risk-takers by nature, are generally successful entrepreneurs, more than twice as likely as native born Americans to start their own firms (McDaniel, 2014). They appear to have a high motivation to succeed, an ability to innovate and aspiration levels that can be much higher than that of residents in their host communities (Grey et al., 2004). Many speculate that this may be because of everything they have risked to gain a better life. In a study by the Partnership for a New American Economy, researchers found that more than 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded either by immigrants or their children (White House, 2015). In addition, a study by Hunt and Gauthier-Loiselle determined that foreign born workers may be more innovative as well, obtaining patents at twice the rate of native born workers. Most immigrants establish their businesses without any assistance from local resources like banks. In contrast, they choose to rely on family members for both labor and financial assistance to grow and sustain their businesses. According to Guth, “Immigrant business owners account for over a quarter of all U.S. Main Street businesses, restaurants, clothing shops and grocery stores,” (2015, p. 4). Because immigrant businesses are ordinarily these smaller Main Street businesses and niche shops they also contribute to the revitalization of many downtowns across the United States. Many times immigrants open ethnic stores and while these markets are not desirable for
most because of their instability they can create a significant opportunity for immigrants (Grey, 2004). These businesses serve multiple purposes, not only do they allow immigrants to earn a living, they also allow them to integrate into their new host community while still retaining close ties to their own individual cultures (McDaniel, 2014). It is not uncommon to witness clusters of ethnic businesses that are geographically located in the same area, often referred to as an “ethnic enclave” (Grey et al., 2004, p. 27). Ethnic enclaves allow for a community within the community where immigrants can support and employ one another and where immigrants who are new to the community can integrate in a safer and less intimidating way (McDaniel, 2014).

Opening businesses can alleviate other areas of concern for immigrants as well. In fact, research has shown that immigrants often use entrepreneurship as a method to cope with low prospective returns to salary work because of discrimination, language barriers and incompatible education and training (Shinnar, 2009).

**Cultural Capital**

One of the most noticeable benefits of immigration is the cultural diversity that accompanies it. The vibrancy that is added to the community when it is exposed to new traditions, customs, religions and foods also brings a level of depth that enriches the overall social and cultural fabric of society. It can be argued that being presented with this diversity cultivates a level of tolerance and understanding of others that serves to contribute to the cohesiveness of the community as a whole. The White House Task Force reminds us that “New
Americans bring fresh perspectives and help ensure that our country remains a dynamic global leader” (White House, 2015, p. 10).

Integration Challenges and Barriers

Burdens to Infrastructure

Immigration may bring much needed people but along with the infusion of people that have bolstered population numbers comes the added pressure that is applied to an already stressed infrastructure. As Paral states, “For towns that have been losing population, shutting schools and seeing their fortunes fade with the loss of younger people, immigration has sometimes been a shock, requiring new investments in municipal services that have been unchanged for years” (2009, p. 41). After all, not everything that accompanies immigration is positive. In the education sector alone there are significant challenges dealing with students who have limited English proficiencies and many school districts cannot keep up with the rapid growth within their school districts (Vargas, 2002). According to the Migration Policy Institute nearly 10% (and growing) of U.S. students are English learners (Sugarman, 2016). And while the funding to subsidize English learners is unified and does not fluctuate based on need, the education costs can vary dramatically based on the needs of the children involved. Communities that experience an influx in immigration may also incur significant and unbudgeted increases to serve English learners. This financial strain is coupled with the human strain experienced by teachers who must put in additional time and effort when additional teachers cannot be hired or are unavailable (Sugarman, 2016).

Education attainment is also a barrier for success. For example, a large number of Mexican immigrants have low levels of formal education and are more than six times as likely as natives to lack a high school education (Hotek, 2003). In fact, many Iowa communities, like
Marshalltown, have struggled with multiple logistical issues, including lack of suitable housing, overextended social services, and training needs of law enforcement and have wondered how they would accommodate the influx of newcomers.

**Communication Challenges**

One of the greatest challenges accompanying immigration is a lack of communication. An inability to communicate can perpetuate feelings of distrust which can eventually perpetuate feelings of being unwelcomed or disliked. Such was the case when immigrants first arrived in Marshalltown, Iowa. During this time, natives had an unrealistic expectation that newcomers would learn English immediately and align their behaviors with what was considered the norm. The fact that this did not occur caused resentment in the community. The immigrants, on the other hand, felt intimidated because they didn’t readily understand the language or the customs.

The importance of communication was further validated by findings of a Missouri survey that was given to immigrants requesting information about barriers they encountered in bettering their families in which respondents ranked language barriers as the most significant hurdle they faced (Vargas, 2002). Petsod et al. confirm “that language barriers and a lack of cultural understanding can also lead to feelings of isolation and segregation within the immigrant community” (ND, p. 60).

**Ethnic and Cultural Differences**

When immigrants join a new community, they bring with them religious beliefs and cultural traditions that may be very different than anything local residents have experienced before. Because of this lack of familiarity and understanding, there is bound to be wariness or distrust felt by the receiving community. This was evident in the case of Postville, Iowa, a community
that underwent dramatic changes when immigrants were recruited to work at the local processing plant. As a result of ethnic differences between natives and newcomers, Postville ultimately struggled to maintain cohesiveness in education and spirituality. Once immigrant children began to flood the public school system, Anglo children began migrating to outlying school districts. Similar negative reactions were witnessed at the local Catholic Church. Some members felt as though Hispanic parishioners were “stealing their mass” because the priest began offering Spanish speaking services. This act of inclusiveness prompted a backlash by many church members who began attending services in a neighboring town where mass was only said in English. (Bloom, 2006).

While some of these ethnic and cultural differences can be quite complex and difficult to understand, others may be very simple. An example of this would be how Latinos may choose to congregate outdoors, playing music and interacting with one another as a form of socialization. Although this practice hurts no one in particular, and is commonplace in their native communities, it may not be a practice that fits well within rural communities and may be viewed negatively (Vargas, 2002). Interestingly, during a study of three meatpacking communities in Nebraska, researchers found that, even though they didn’t immediately realize it, immigrants and long-term residents had a great deal in common. Each group saw the same positives in their community, such as a quiet life as well as the same challenges like the education of their children or drug use. These same researchers concluded that a realization of the commonalities shared by these diverse groups is the essential element to creating a harmonious community and is a successful way to bridge the differences between the two groups (Vargas, 2002).
Racial Discrimination and Stereotyping

Unfortunately, a negative side effect that many times rears its ugly head when diversity is evident is some form of racial discrimination or stereotyping. The current national and global political environment, which has become so focused on national and international security, has served to breed fear and hatred based simply on religion, ethnicity or country of origin. Until this lack of understanding is clarified there will always be those that look at newcomers into our community as a threat.

Inaccurate Perceptions

When it comes to the subject of immigration there is no shortage of inaccurate perceptions wrapped up in the mix. One of the most prevalent inaccuracies is that immigrants are taking jobs from Americans who are in need of the work. The reality is that immigrants are not taking away jobs but are filling the large increases in demand for workers of primarily low-paying, low-skill jobs (Paral, 2009). Another misperception is that all immigrants wanted to leave their own native countries. On the contrary, it is often the case that, if they felt they had a choice, they would have remained. The truth is that many immigrants have come to the U.S. because of economic opportunities not available in their own countries or because of unsafe conditions. Another assumption of receiving communities is that all immigrants are unskilled and uneducated. In reality many immigrants have jobs in the high end of the labor market. For example, in the U.S., one out of three doctors, dentists and nurses is foreign born (Petsod et al., ND). This point is further validated by a report recently released by the Migration Policy Institute stating that “Almost half, 48%, of immigrant adults who entered the United States between 2011-2015 were college graduates” (Batalova, Fix, & Bachmeier, 2016, p. 1). An unfortunate side effect of this perception is underutilization of these skills (often referred to as
of these college educated immigrants, approximately 57% are naturalized citizens, 24% are legal permanent residents, 8% have temporary visas and 11% are unauthorized (Batalova, Fix, & Bachmeier, 2016). In many cases, these highly skilled and educated immigrants have actually been recruited to the U.S. in an effort to expand its skill pool (Batalova, Fix and Bachmeier, 2016).

In Marshalltown, a main source of friction in the community was discrimination based on negative stereotypes (Woodrick, 2015). Because the number of immigrants increased rapidly, there was a significant amount of misinformation spread throughout the community (both in print and via word of mouth) that only served to widen the gap that existed between the natives and the newcomers (Woodrick, 2015). It is important to note that one category of immigrants – refugees, do not necessarily carry the same stigma as others and native community members are generally more empathetic and sympathetic to their plight. Former Iowa Governor Vilsack stated during his time in office that refugees are easier to accept because of the following, “I suspect that it is an appeal to compassion, an appeal to the hardship that they’ve been through. Well, the same aspect can be applied to the sometimes heroic efforts on the part of Mexicans to cross the border because they don’t have economic opportunity in Mexico” (Belluck, 2000, p. 2).

Another source of contention seen in diverse communities has been the perception that immigrant entrepreneurs are taking business away from native business owners. Not surprisingly, this perception can perpetuate feelings of hostility between immigrant business owners and their competition (Grey et al., 2004). Ultimately, these types of misunderstandings only serve to solidify the closeness of immigrant groups and their reliance on their own immigrant community for labor, capital and support and can stunt further integration from occurring (Grey et al., 2004).
Undocumented Workers

According to Jimenez, “of the roughly 39 million immigrants in the U.S., nearly one-third in the country are without legal authorization” (2011, p. 4). A significant partnering issue is that of undocumented workers. This is a problem that will continue to persist in the United States as long as low-skilled jobs are created and remain difficult to fill with American workers. In fact, Bloom states that, “Without undocumented workers the meat processing industry would grind to a halt” (Bloom, 2006, p. 3). Many of these undocumented workers are from Mexico because of the close proximity to the U.S. and the limited options that those immigrants have to enter legally (Paral, 2009). Not surprisingly this issue continues to cause anxiety and unrest within many communities. In Marshalltown, integration efforts led by Lutheran Priest John Allen came to a screeching halt when undocumented workers were deported during a 1996 raid at the local plant (Woodrick, 2015). In fact, the number one source cited for tension in the Marshalltown community was legal/political issues surrounding local Hispanics with undocumented status (Woodrick, 2015). Not only were the undocumented immigrants anxious about being deported but legal immigrants were unhappy about being labeled “illegal aliens” by local residents. In 1992, in Midtown, Iowa, INS officials raided the town and picked up many Mexican and Mexican American residents as they walked out of the local plant and drove them to Omaha, NE to the INS regional office. Although legal residents were eventually released they were not given transportation back home, which only served to compound the distrust that was already evident among the immigrant community (Vargas, 2002). In 2008, a similar raid occurred in Postville, Iowa when 389 workers at the local Agriprocessors plant (290 Guatemalans, 93 Mexicans, 2 Israelis and 4 Ukrainians) were arrested causing a dramatic upset to the entire town that remains unsettled to this day (Hsu, 2008).
Positive Examples of Integration

While there are many challenges and barriers that remain surrounding immigration and the integration of this diverse group of newcomers to Iowa, the past few decades have allowed for many strategies to be developed to promote inclusion and integration across the state. During this time, Iowa lawmakers have had various conversations about policy that would make the state more welcoming to international immigrants, even so far as suggesting the adoption of a strategic plan that would have had the state designated as an “immigration enterprise zone”. This suggested strategic plan would have allowed immigrants to relocate quicker and in greater numbers and would have exempted Iowa from application of certain provisions of federal immigration laws (Vargas, 2002). Ultimately, this plan was not adopted and, in reality, Iowa has refused to adopt many policies, such as allowing them to pay in-state tuition at state universities or to get a driver’s license, which would make their life here much easier (Mertens, 2015).

One initiative that the University of Iowa spearheaded was the New Iowans Program. The New Iowans Program provided communities receiving immigrants and refugees the tools, resources and expertise needed to provide for an easier transition. This was done primarily by educating communities about these “New Iowans’ and the benefits that they provide, both socially and financially. The ultimate goal of this program was to “provide access to information and resources to immigrants and refugees so that they could work toward self-sufficiency and achieve full participation in community life” (Grey et al., 2004, p. 5). Perhaps the most positive aspect about the New Iowan program was that it looked at integration in the way in which this paper has defined it - that is - a two-way process between both the community and the immigrant newcomers. This approach also allows communities to be more proactive in their efforts to make sure resources are available and processes in place on the front end rather
than reactively trying to mitigate problems and gaps in community services as they are identified. Unfortunately, although this program was highly regarded by many and contributed to acclimating immigrants into Iowa, the program was ultimately discontinued and the University of Iowa created the Iowa Center for Immigrant Leadership and Integration in its place which contains many of the same components, although not all, of the original program.

Research has provided multiple examples of communities that have worked very diligently to provide newcomers to the community the most robust and welcoming experience possible. One example, the town of West Liberty, Iowa has evolved dramatically over time and can serve as an example of how positive immigration integration can occur. West Liberty began its transformation, in part, because of the number of immigrant Latinos that came to work in the local turkey processing plant. That was two decades ago and over that time West Liberty has implemented a dual language program that now serves as an amenity that recruits families to the area and often has a waiting list. The program began back in 1997 with funds that were provided through a five year federal grant. Both the middle and high schools are International Spanish Academies which both strive to have a 50/50 split of English and Spanish speakers. The dual language program not only serves as a catalyst to bring diverse students and families together it also serves as an amenity that makes the community a more inviting and appealing place to live. It is important to note that this implementation of a dual language program was not easy or quick. In fact, it took three referendums before the dual language measure was passed (Mertens, 2015). West Liberty has also made a concerted effort to hire bilingual city employees, such as police officers. One female officer hired, who is originally from Mexico states, “I want them (immigrant community) to know that the police department is trying its best to understand them, to speak their own language” (Mertens, 2015, p. 2). Further efforts of positive integration is the
presence of immigrant representation in public office like Hispanic councilman Jose Zacarias. As of 2015, Zacarias was only the third Hispanic to be elected to the city council in West Liberty (Mertens, 2015).

Another example of successful integration efforts is Marshalltown, Iowa. Led by a local Lutheran priest by the name of John Allen, one of the first tactics was the development of a civic task force (later known as a diversity committee) (Woodrick, 2015). This task force was comprised of key town officials and leaders who promoted an open dialogue between townspeople and the immigrant newcomers, provided education to the native population and advocated for the needs of the immigrants. John Allen also utilized ministry outreach programs located within his church to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and assist with food and housing needs. Another tactic utilized to perpetuate understanding was the organization of several learning trips to Villachuato, Mexico by local university professors and with key Marshalltown leaders in attendance (Woodrick, 2015). During these trips Marshalltown leaders gained a better understanding of the realities that families torn apart by migration face and ultimately returned home with perceptions that had been significantly altered. After this trip, officials were motivated to launch multiple outreach programs including a video which explained Marshalltown laws in Spanish. Of the efforts in Marshalltown, it has been mentioned by many residents that integration was made possible “through the efforts of empathetic, dedicated and visionary people who promoted but did not mandate communication and engagement between the newcomers and the townspeople” (Woodrick, 2015, p. 14).

Integration Over Time

Although immigration has been around for many centuries, little attention has been paid to integration itself, especially in terms of law or policy that is driven by the government. Pastor
and Ortiz shares “there was an effort during the 1910s and 1920s called the Americanization movement in which public and private sector organizations came together to try to integrate immigrants” (2015, p. 13). This was a unique effort that has not been duplicated since. Local efforts to integrate began as early as the 20th century. During this time the industrial economy was such that aspirations of earning a living wage and a middle class lifestyle were made possible for immigrants and their families (Pastor and Ortiz, 2015). Events like World War II also expanded the scope of what it meant to be American and added to the allure of the “melting pot” concept. Since that time, integration efforts have primarily been led at a local community level and immigrant experiences can be varied depending on the community in which they settle.

Measurement

Perhaps one of the most interesting examples of measuring the effectiveness of integration efforts lies with a scorecard system that was developed by the University of Southern California (Pastor et al, 2012). This system allowed participants to score integration efforts utilizing metrics such as “economic mobility, civic engagement and warmth and welcome from receiving communities” (Ramos, 2016, p. 4). Accessing this data through this type of self-evaluation can be extremely beneficial in assessing what a community is doing well and what requires improvement. Ultimately, this feedback can provide valuable input to the development of integration programs and services.

Efforts to measure integration have increased over time but have primarily been limited to U.S. Census data which tends to be cross-sectional. Examples of this would be a study released from the Migration Policy Institute. The following statement identifies its limitations, ACS American Community Survey data are not longitudinal, and therefore do not enable us to track individual refugees to see if they have made education gains since their arrival. However, it is
possible to compare attainment over time among similar groups of refugees by comparing data from the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2009-11 ACS (Taintor & Lichtenstein, 2016, p. 5). Other studies, such as one published by the National Academies Press stress the importance of having longitudinal data in relation to immigrant integration, citing the fact that the lack of obtaining this type of data has been “a long-standing problem that has become increasingly critical as immigration to the United States has increased and as immigrants have become dispersed throughout the country” (Taintor and Lichtenstein, 2016, p. 5).

One study that has secured longitudinal data was the RISE (Refugee Integration Survey and Evaluation) report. This survey was administered to refugees in Denver over a five year period. Although participation from the original cohort declined each year ultimately going from 467 to a final participant total of 327, researchers were still able to acquire valuable qualitative and quantitative data in the areas of:

- Employment and Economic Sufficiency
- Social Bridging
- Language
- Cultural Knowledge
- Housing
- Social Bonding
- Health and Physical Well-Being
- Civic Engagement, and;
- Safety and Stability (Taintor and Lichtenstein, 2016)
High level takeaways from this survey include the fact that integration among the cohort increased steadily over time. The lowest progress of integration was seen with participants 55 years and older including those with physical and mental disabilities. Conversely, the highest level of integration was witnessed in the 17-34 group. Men were also seen to integrate at a faster rate than women. The greatest challenge to integration was seen as the lack of English proficiency. This lack of integration did result in stronger feelings of isolation amongst immigrants. The survey also determined that an inability to speak the language hindered survey participants’ ability to progress on several integration pathways, including Safety & Stability, Language & Cultural Knowledge, Social Bonding, and Social Bridging. (Taintor and Lichtenstein, 2016). The greatest determination of the survey was that the refugees studied in the survey all developed a steady level of integration over time.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In an effort to understand the level of integration taking place for immigrants in Ottumwa, this study was conducted in two phases. Figure 3.1 illustrates the methodology of the study and identifies the main elements of the research process adopted for this study. For the first part, secondary data relating to the socioeconomic characteristics of the foreign born population in Ottumwa obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau has been used to understand the group and how their condition has changed over time. Specifically, data has been extracted for two periods of time utilizing American Community Survey estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau to make comparisons of the immigrant groups’ situation and change (either improvement or regression) in the areas of education attainment, English proficiency and economic condition.

In the second phase, a paper-based survey, administered both in English and Spanish was been conducted targeting immigrants living in the City of Ottumwa. The survey provided an opportunity to gain a much more specific, in-depth and local insight on the immigrant population. This information was then compared with broader trends identified from the secondary data. The survey targeted first generation immigrants that have lived in Ottumwa, for more than a year. This duration was necessary in order to allow time for integration to occur. The questions in the survey were segmented into five major categories: demographics, education attainment, English language proficiency, economic mobility and community resources. The analysis of the survey data was used to provide a comprehensive understanding of the immigrant population experience and allow for practical policy recommendations.
Study Area

Ottumwa, Iowa, the county seat of Wapello County, is a community situated in the Southeast corner of Iowa that is struggling with both population and economic decline. In 1960, during what is considered by many as the city “peak”, the population in Ottumwa soared to 33,871 residents (City of Ottumwa, 2017). In the decades that followed, the population continued to decline until a plateau was reached around 2000. An examination of the full county of Wapello provides insight that over the past full decade (from 2000 – 2010) the population has remained fairly stable. During this time, the population declined from 36,051 in 2000 to 35,625 in 2010. Figure 3.2 illustrates that, while the white population has decreased during this time, the Hispanic population has increased significantly allowing the population numbers to be maintained, albeit with a new composition.
According to ACS 2011-2015 Census estimates, the percentage of persons in Ottumwa below the poverty level is 21%, one of the highest in the state increasing from 15.2% in 2000. This reality further compounds the challenges that Ottumwa faces. Not only is the community struggling to maintain an infrastructure that was built for a much larger population, it is attempting to do so with a smaller tax base of individuals, many of whom are facing their own economic challenges.

One of Ottumwa’s largest employers is JBS, a pork processing facility. Prior to a sale of the facility in late 2015, the plant was owned by Cargill Meat Solutions. JBS currently employs approximately 2,400 people in various areas of the pork processing facility and often struggles to find workers to fill all the available positions. Coincidentally, JBS has recently announced its intention to relocate several hundred Burmese refugees to the area to work. Local media coverage of this story confirms the mixed public reaction to the announcement (Ottumwa Courier, 2017).
Over the past few decades a steady stream of immigrants and refugees have migrated to Ottumwa, many of whom have come to work at the local pork processing plant. This influx was especially significant during the 2000 – 2009 timeframe during which over a thousand immigrants made Ottumwa their home. This population increase has created a community that is continually attempting to address the needs of this new population and, as witnessed by JBS’ recent announcement these numbers will only continue to increase. Because of both the challenges and the opportunities that Ottumwa currently faces around immigration, it represents the ideal scenario to study regarding the issue of integration.

**Study Population**

Participants of this study are first generation immigrants, specifically those individuals who have come from other countries to live in the United States and have not been born in the United States. In order to allow time for change or improvement to occur in the chosen integration metrics, survey participants are required to live in Ottumwa, Iowa for a minimum of one year. Because of the characteristics being studied, namely education attainment, English proficiency and economic mobility, respondents are required to be of adult age (over 18). To achieve a representative sample for the survey, participants were recruited from multiple sectors and organizations. First, utilizing Iowa State University Extension and Outreach as a partner, participants were recruited from those that have accessed various programs and services provided by ISU Extension. Second, utilizing Indian Hills Community College (IHCC) as a partner, participants were recruited from the English Learning Laboratory or in attendance of assorted IHCC classes. Finally, outreach was rendered to various immigrant families in the spiritual community, those owning small businesses, and at sporting events in an effort to
procure a more diverse survey sample. It is important to note that all participants were provided assistance in completing the survey and to ensure a clear understanding of the questions asked.

**Survey Data Collection**

In order to access the sample population of this survey it was necessary to conduct the survey in paper form. The survey was administered in English (Survey in English is attached in Appendix A) as well as Spanish (Survey in Spanish is attached in Appendix B) to access various segments of the population. The survey instrument was also utilized because of the ability to access information from the sample population confidentially, which was essential given the sensitive issues surrounding immigration. The survey allowed the researcher to gain current information from immigrants in a relatively short period of time, from 2-1-17 to 5-1-17. While the administration of a longitudinal survey was not possible for this study because of time constraints, the constructed survey did allow for respondents to answer questions about progress that has been made in specific categories during their time living in Ottumwa.

The first part of the survey focused on obtaining demographic information from participants. Subsequent sections, dedicated to education attainment, English proficiency and economic mobility, included questions to determine baseline levels in these categories as well as questions to determine what progress, if any, had been made in all of these areas during their time in Ottumwa. Because of the politically charged environment surrounding immigration at this time, primarily due to impending reform from the Trump administration which includes potential deportation, efforts were made to keep the survey concise and unobtrusive. The final section was focused on the Ottumwa community and perceptions and experiences living there. In addition to the structured questions, there was one open-ended question to gauge what
community resources were utilized and helpful throughout their integration process. Overall, the survey included a total of 41 questions which was deemed succinct enough to gain cooperation from the immigrant population yet detailed enough to yield meaningful inferences that allowed the researcher to make policy recommendations.

**Ethical Considerations**

In order to administer the survey, it was necessary to complete the Application for Approval of Research Involving Humans and submit the survey draft to the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. This approval is included in Appendix C. Because the survey was also administered within the English Learning Lab and various classrooms at Indian Hills Community College (IHCC), it was a requirement to receive approval through the Institutional Review Board at IHCC. This approval was received via email on March 3, 2017.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS

As outlined in the Methodology Section of this document, analysis for this study is divided into two parts. Initial analysis focused on U.S. Census data while subsequent analysis was concentrated on the survey data.

U.S. Census Bureau Data

The initial step taken in analysis was to gain an understanding of when the immigrant population began to move into the Ottumwa area. This was accomplished by extracting U.S. Census Bureau data of *foreign born residents and pinpointing their period of entry to Ottumwa. Figure 4.1 depicts the number of foreign born residents that have moved into Ottumwa during the identified periods of time. The chart clearly indicates that the largest majority of immigrants moved into Ottumwa during the period of 2000 – 2009. During this decade, the number of foreign born residents that moved into Ottumwa was nearly as much as the cumulative total of foreign born individuals that had moved to Ottumwa during previous decades.

![Figure 4.1 Foreign Born Residents Period of Entry to Ottumwa](image)

*Throughout this document the terms “foreign born” and “immigrant” are used interchangeably and refer to persons with no U.S. citizenship at birth. This population includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents, refugees and asylees, persons on certain temporary visas, and the unauthorized.*
Figures 4.2 and 4.3 below provide an illustration of the countries that foreign born Ottumwa residents have originated from. One can interpret from the charts that the greatest concentration of immigrants were born in Latin and Central America, a fact that remains consistent in both the 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 estimates. Other countries of origin have also experienced an increase in numbers, including Europe and Asia, but their percentage of the overall foreign born population has remained fairly consistent. One country that has experienced significant growth is Africa which has more than doubled in its population and overall percentage of the foreign born population in Ottumwa increasing from 9% to 17%.

**Educational Attainment**

The first integration indicator that was reviewed utilizing Census data was education attainment. Although the use of secondary Census data is not precise because it can only provide information about a group with the same characteristics and not the individuals themselves making historical comparisons more difficult, it will provide a general understanding of the education attainment levels of immigrants living in Ottumwa. Because of the influx of
immigrants moving into Ottumwa during 2000 – 2009, education attainment data was compared using the American Community Survey estimates for two time periods - 2006-2009 and 2011-2015. Figures 4.4 and 4.5 below depict the education attainment levels of the foreign born population residing in Ottumwa. Comparing the two charts, it is apparent that the levels of education for immigrants have risen in all areas including a 6% increase in high school graduation levels, a 5% increase in “some college or associate’s degree”, a 2% increase in “bachelor’s degree” and a 1% increase in “graduate or professional degree.”

![Figure 4.4 Foreign Born Ottumwa Residents Education Attained U.S. Census 2006-2010 Estimates](source: U.S. Census Bureau)

![Figure 4.5 Foreign Born Ottumwa Residents Education Attained U.S. Census 2011-2015 Estimates](source: U.S. Census Bureau)

![Figure 4.6 Native Born Ottumwa Residents Education Attained U.S. Census 2006-2010 Estimates](source: U.S. Census Bureau)

![Figure 4.7 Native Born Ottumwa Residents Education Attained U.S. Census 2011-2015 Estimates](source: U.S. Census Bureau)
Data on native residents analyzed during these same time periods also experienced increases in the education attainment rates as depicted in Figures 4.6 and 4.7 including a 3% increase in “some college or associate’s degree,” a 1% increase in “bachelor’s degree” and a 1% increase in “graduate or professional degree.” Native population increases are not as large as foreign-born increases but it is important to note that the education attainment levels of foreign born residents were significantly lower than those of native residents. Estimates from the 2011-2015 time period indicate that more than half of the foreign born population had less than a high school diploma. This is in stark contrast to native residents, only 11% of whom have less than a high school diploma. In the higher levels of education attainment, including “some college or associate’s degree”, “bachelor’s degree” or “graduate or professional degree”, native resident percentages are twice as high or more as those of the foreign born residents. Although initial education attainment rates of immigrants are much lower upon arrival to Ottumwa than those of native residents, the data does support the fact that immigrant education attainment rates are increasing over time which is a very positive barometer of their integration into the Ottumwa community.

**Economic Condition**

In order to understand the economic condition of the immigrant population in Ottumwa, various data sets were accessed from the U.S. Census Bureau website utilizing American Community Survey data. As illustrated in Figure 4.8, the median income of the foreign born population has remained fairly consistent over time. An interesting point of note illustrated in the chart is the fact that the median income of the foreign born population is higher than that of
the native population. In order to understand if the median income has been skewed and where the greatest area of income is concentrated, an area graph is plotted as depicted in Figure 4.9. While income reported by the individual immigrants ranges from 0 to $64,999, the greatest concentration of income is located within the $25,000 to $34,999 category – exactly where the median income for the foreign born residents is positioned.
If the ACS 2006-2011 individual income estimates are compared to those of the ACS 2011-2015 estimates as illustrated in Figure 4.10, it is apparent that the largest concentration of residents are still located within the same category of $25,000 to $34,999. It is also clear that the span of income has increased to include the “$75,000 or more” category. There is also a significant increase in the “50,000 to $64,999” category. It is important to note that during this span of time an additional 778 immigrants moved to Ottumwa so while it is impossible to determine the exact level of economic mobility, the individual charts for the two time periods show a similar trend regardless of the population increase. Figure 4.11 provides a comparison of the median income of Ottumwa residents over time, which includes both native and foreign born populations.

Although the foreign born population was higher than the native populations, it remained fairly consistent from 2005 to 2013, increasing only $603 during that time. Although this increase is minimal, the rate of increase was similar to the native population.
Language Proficiency

To examine the changes in language proficiency of the Ottumwa immigrant population, foreign born population data was extracted from the American Community Survey section of the U.S. Census Bureau including estimates from 2005-2009 and 2011-2015. Originally, data for the foreign born population was analyzed cumulatively but it was later determined that because of the increase in population during that time a more accurate view of progress could possibly be procured if the distinct cohorts of foreign born remained segmented by foreign language spoken (i.e. Spanish, Asian and Indo-European).

Figure 4.12 categorizes the English proficiencies of Spanish speaking immigrants. Because of the in and out-migration experienced in Ottumwa by the foreign born population during this time, it is difficult to definitively determine if individual immigrants are increasing their levels of English proficiency. It is obvious from the increased numbers depicted for the 2011-2015 time period that there has been an influx in Spanish speaking immigrants during this period. The
The chart does clearly indicate that there has been an increase in both the Speak English “very well” and “well” categories. The most significant increase is seen in the “very well” category which has experienced a 266% increase from one time period to the other.

Among Asian and Pacific speaking immigrants there was also an increase of population experienced, growing from 163 to 209 during this time. As Figure 4.13 illustrates there was no progress made in increased English proficiencies in this population in any of the categories. In
fact, the reverse happened in both of the speak English, “not at all” or “not well” categories there were increases and in the speak English “very well” or “well” there were decreases in the number of foreign born that increased proficiency.

![Figure 4.14 Indo-European Speaking Immigrants English Proficiencies](source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Unlike other foreign populations who have experienced a population increase during the time period studied, the Indo-European speaking immigrants witnessed a population decline as illustrated in Figure 4.14, decreasing from 189 to 129 residents. Because of the population decline, which has actually caused two of the proficiency categories to have a value of zero, it would be a logical assumption that the increase in the “speak English “very well” category, which increased from 88 to 111, would illustrate increased proficiency.

Determining the progress in English proficiency utilizing secondary data was challenging because of the difficulty in pinpointing changes. Many factors contribute to this difficulty including the in and out-migration of the foreign born population, the cross-sectional nature of the data and the subjectivity with which individuals determine their proficiency progress. It is believed that the following section, which renders an overview of survey data results, will serve
to provide a more comprehensive picture of the integration progress of foreign born Ottumwa residents.

**Integration Survey Data**

*Survey Participant Demographics*

As has been written earlier in the narrative, participants were required to be first generation immigrants, over the age of 18 and have lived in Ottumwa for a minimum of one year. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately 1,725 immigrants who fit this profile within Wapello County, of which Ottumwa is the county seat. It must be mentioned that during the time surveys were solicited, the climate surrounding immigration was a sensitive one but because of the support and assistance from intermediaries with whom existing relationships were already in place, the researcher was successful in securing 71 completed surveys. After the surveys were obtained, the demographics of the 71 participants were scrutinized and it was determined that the sample was adequately representative of the immigrant population in Ottumwa. Although not intentional, survey respondents were in balance based on gender, including 49% female and 51% male, as illustrated in Figure 4.15. The age of participants varied and did include representation in each age category. As indicated in Figure 4.16, the largest...
number of participants (23) were included in the 18-30 category, closely followed by 19 responses in the 31-40 category.

The marital status of participants, depicted in Figure 4.17, included those who were single, married and part of an “other” category which included those who classified their marital status as widowed, separated or divorced. Over half of the survey participants, nearly 54% indicated that they were married, with 36% notating a single marital status. Six respondents identified with the “other” marital category.

Nineteen countries of origin were represented within the survey as delineated below in Figure 4.18. The largest group present by far were those immigrants originating from Mexico, which at 45%, accounted for nearly half of the survey respondents. The next two largest groups were both countries in close proximity to Mexico, and located in Central America, 11% from El Salvador and 8% from Guatemala. All of the other countries had very few respondents. This distribution is consistent with Census data and countries of origin representative of immigrants living in Ottumwa, Iowa.
Of these 71 participants, 22 of them revealed that they had attained Citizenship during their time in the United States. Time spent living in Ottumwa ranged from a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 21 years. The average amount of time respondents were determined to have resided in Ottumwa was 9.66 years. This extended length of time is certainly indicative of a favorable view of the Ottumwa community.

![Integration Survey Participants by Country of Origin](image)

Figure 4.18: Integration Survey Participants by Country of Origin

Other characteristics of the sample population that were examined included identifying those who were drivers. The responses determined that nearly three-quarters of the respondents had acquired a driver’s license. In addition, the living status of participants was examined to ascertain what family supports existed. The majority of the immigrants surveyed reported the presence of immediate family living in Ottumwa with them. Further, only 17.14% participants
live alone while 38.57% have 1-2 family members living with them, 25.71% have 3-4 family members and the remainder have more than 5 family members living with them.

**Educational Attainment**

Analysis of the education of survey respondents upon arriving to Ottumwa revealed a relatively low attainment rate. Figure 4.19 illustrates that nearly half of the immigrants (45.07%) surveyed had not earned a high school diploma at their time of arrival. This is considerably lower than native residents of Ottumwa whose high school graduation rate is 89%, nearly twice as high. Only 8 of the 71 survey responders (11.27%) reported that they had received a college degree before arriving to Ottumwa. Of those, 4 had received an Associate Degree and 6 had received a Bachelor’s Degree (two individuals received both degrees). Once again, this data is consistent with Census data studied earlier.

Since arriving in Ottumwa, a considerable number of survey participants, 18.3%, reported continuing their formal education. Of these individuals, 4 earned their high school diploma/GED, 4 received “some college”, 4 earned a degree or credential, 3 earned a Bachelor’s Degree and 2 received their Master’s Degree (one in Leadership and one in Education). While
58 survey respondents did not formally further their education, a high number of them reported utilizing other educational resources, such as ESL or citizenship classes to increase their skills and English language proficiency. Those choosing not to continue their education provided the following top three reasons: 1) lack of time, 2) didn’t feel it was necessary and 3) work.

**Language Proficiency**

Ten different languages were identified as primary languages spoken upon arrival by the survey respondents. These languages are illustrated in Figure 4.20. Of these languages, Spanish emerged as the most commonly utilized. Further, Spanish was identified as the primary language spoken by 52 (or 73%) different individuals. Although Spanish speaking individuals were dominant in this survey it was determined not to be skewed as the Census confirms that 68% of immigrants in Ottumwa originate from Latin and Central America, which are Spanish speaking countries.
The English proficiency levels of those surveyed varied from no proficiency to fluent, Table 4.1 confirms that nearly half of the respondents indicated that they could not speak any English when they arrived in Ottumwa. When asked if they improved their English proficiency since their arrival, more than three-quarters of the respondents (77.27%) verified that their English had improved. Of these individuals, 10 characterized their current English skills as “advanced”, while 21 characterized their English proficiency as “intermediate”. For those with whom no improvement was noted the top reason given was that they “didn’t know how.”

**Economic Condition**

A number of indicators were utilized to assess the economic mobility of immigrants taking the survey. Multiple life changes were verified by respondents that would economically enhance their lives. Forty-five immigrants (63.38%), reported that they had gotten a better job since arriving in Ottumwa, 20 (28.17%), reported they had purchased a home, 6 (8.45%) had started a business and 16 (22.54%) reported an increase in salary. Many participants indicated that they had movement in more than one of these areas. In fact, 23 (32.39% of immigrants surveyed) reported that two of these indicators applied to them and 10 (14.08%) verified that three or more of these indicators applied to them.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73.17%) indicated that they had changed jobs at least once, while an additional 7 reported 2-3 job changes and 4 more said they had changed jobs more than 3 times. Several reasons were supplied by survey responders as to why they had changed jobs including both financial and quality of life criteria. The number one reason given

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**Table 4.1 Immigrant English Proficiency Upon Arrival**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluently</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47.89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was an increase of pay, the second highest reason identified was better benefits followed by better hours.

On the annual household income, as Figure 4.21 illustrates, nearly half of the respondents earned an annual household income within the $35,000 - $49,999 category. This is consistent with the previous section that utilized secondary data. A significant number of the respondents, 83.3% confirmed that they had increased their salary since arriving in Ottumwa. While this
Statistic is certainly promising, Figure 4.22 illustrates that over half of these individuals reported an increase in the lowest possible category of “less than $5,000 per year.” Clearly more encouraging is the fact that a significant number, 32%, reported an increase in the next largest category of “more than $10,000 but less than $20,000.”

Other indicators of economic solvency were also reported on the survey including the number of vehicles owned. More than three-quarters of the immigrants surveyed, (78%) reported owning 1-2 vehicles. In contrast to this, only 11% reported owning no vehicles.

Perhaps one of the greatest indicators of integration into the community is home ownership. As illustrated in Figure 4.23, the survey confirmed that 38% of respondents have purchased a home in the Ottumwa community, while 42% are renting. A smaller number of respondents (20%), many of whom are currently without income – such as students - are living with family or friends.

![Figure 4.23: Integration Survey Respondents Housing Situation](image)

**Community Resources**

The final section of the survey was focused on the perception of respondents about how welcoming the community has been, the helpfulness of integration efforts, the intention of
participants to stay or leave the community and what are its best characteristics and greatest challenges.

Figure 4.24 illustrates that nearly half of respondents were “extremely satisfied” with the welcoming efforts of the Ottumwa community. Another 18.3% (13), indicated that they were “very satisfied” with the efforts of the community to welcome them. In stark contrast, less than 3%, only 2 individuals were “unsatisfied” with welcoming efforts.

This positive trend continues as community integration efforts are rated in Table 4.2. More than 61% of respondents were either “very” or “extremely satisfied” with the community efforts around integration. In comparison, only one individual was dissatisfied with the efforts of the community around integration.

The validation of positive experiences for immigrants in the Ottumwa community continues as Table 4.3 outlines the survey responses which categorize the experiences of immigrants working and living in Ottumwa. An overwhelming majority, 87.33% indicated they
were “happy”, “very happy” or “extremely happy.” In fact, nearly half, 47.89% of those surveyed confirmed they were “extremely happy” living and working in Ottumwa.

Perhaps not surprisingly, based on the positive responses of the previous question, nearly three-quarters, 73.3%, of respondents had plans to remain in Ottumwa. Reasons to stay were split relatively equally as depicted in Figure 4.25 between 1) “Job”, 2) “I like the community” and 3) “My family is here”. There were 18 respondents that indicated they did have plans to leave, but only 4 of those individuals verified that it was because of a dislike for the community. In fact, the majority of those planning to leave were doing so only because of additional job opportunities.

Survey respondents were also asked to identify what they liked best about the Ottumwa community. Six choices were provided in addition to a write-in category. Respondents were
further asked to rank their top three choices (which were assigned 1-3 points in the coding scheme). Within the write-in category two prominent themes surfaced in the responses. The first, which received 63 points, indicated that Ottumwa is a desirable community to live in because it is a small town. The second theme identified in the write-in responses, which received 14 points, was that respondents feel as though Ottumwa is a safe community. These two themes are incredibly important factors to immigrants who have chosen Ottumwa as a place to work, live and raise their families. Figure 4.26 provides a visual representation of the rankings for attributes of the community found to be liked best. The most obvious top choice, which received 95 points was the people in Ottumwa, and the third most desirable trait identified (behind the write-in category of “small town”) was “job opportunities.” All of these traits were ranked above the others identified as: amenities, retail opportunities, spiritual opportunities, cultural opportunities and schools. While it is confirmed from the responses that the immigrants surveyed did find Ottumwa to be a welcoming community it is important to note that it has been nearly two decades (after 2000) since Ottumwa has experienced its first wave of immigrants and,
as such, has had a significant amount of time to adjust to newcomers in the community and had the survey been given during this early time, the results may have been quite different.

Respondents of the integration survey also identified their top three integration challenges. As illustrated within Figure 4.27, there was one response that was overwhelmingly identified as the greatest challenge for community integration - which was “language”. No other response included on the survey came close. In fact, language received more than 5 times as many points as the next highest response, which was transportation. When asked if these challenges had decreased over time, 65.71% of respondents answered in the affirmative. This was a positive indication that although challenges do exist surrounding language, these challenges are decreasing as the immigrants spend additional time living in the community.

In an effort to understand if similar characteristics would be found in immigrants who have successfully been integrated, survey respondents who were found to have made progress in all three areas including: increasing their education, increasing their English proficiency and increasing their income were identified. Fourteen of the 71 survey participants were found to have successfully met this criteria. Within these 14, 6 were also found to have attained their citizenship status. Both the gender, which included 7 males and 5 females as well as the marital
status (6 married, 6 single, 2 other) were found to be neutral. The age of the individuals were primarily included in the 18-30 (4) and 31-40 (5) categories but there were also 2 individuals in the 41-50 category and 3 in the 51-60 category. Nine of the respondents matching this criteria came to the United States and Ottumwa within the same year while the remaining 5 utilized a step-migration process. While no obvious dominant theme has emerged as a common characteristic to integration, it does appear that success in all areas is more common in the younger categories and in those persons who have come to Ottumwa directly upon immigrating to the United States.

Looking at the converse and survey respondents that did not make progress in the various indicator areas it was determined that while 19 of the immigrants surveyed did not make progress in 2 of the areas there was not a single immigrant surveyed that made no progress in all of the three areas. Again, efforts were made to compare characteristics to find commonalities within the 19 individuals who made no progress in at least two integration areas. One the commonalities identified was citizenship status. Out of the 19 respondents, only 3 had taken steps to become American citizens. The second theme that emerged was the limited English proficiency obtained by all of them. Five of the individuals in this subcategory stated they could not speak or understand language at all while the remaining 14 classified their proficiency at the beginner or limited level. This would certainly validate the importance of English proficiency as an indicator of community integration and success and would corroborate the fact that language was prioritized previously as the #1 barrier to community integration.

The final question of the survey provided for qualitative responses from the survey participants. The question solicited suggestions as to what would help make integration into the community easier. Thirty-nine respondents provided suggestions to the question. From the
responses, included in Appendix D of this document, it is clear that many of the immigrants view “integration” into the community as a parallel to living and being a part of the community or simply fitting in to the community. Examples of this would include the response of “eat more American food” or “stop losing retail.” Suggestions provided also included a theme around quality of life issues. Street improvements were mentioned 4 times in addition to better housing and soccer fields. Other suggestions validated the desire by Ottumwa immigrants to improve their human, financial and social capital and their belief that the community is a partner that can help them to do that. Jobs was the most dominant theme and was mentioned 11 times, both in reference to providing better opportunities for quality jobs as well as the need for additional services to improve skills that would enable them to acquire a better job. Two respondents specifically mentioned their desire to move from a meat packing plant job to something better.

Other responses expressed a desire for more integrated social celebrations, family events and youth activities which would indicate their eagerness to be a part of the larger community as a whole and not remain only within their own ethnic or cultural groups. Communication and language was another prevalent theme and was mentioned 7 times. Suggestions included additional ELL programs and more interpreters. Encouragingly, discrimination was mentioned only twice, once in reference to providing work opportunities and once in reference to treatment by law enforcement. A singular response was recorded asking not to be deported back to their home country.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Many Iowa communities including Ottumwa are facing unique demographic and economic challenges unlike anything else previously experienced. Population loss, aging infrastructure and workforce shortages are but a few of the issues at the top of an often long list. And while there is no “silver bullet” to mitigate these challenges, an opportunity has been presented, in the form of immigration that may provide some much needed assistance. What has remained unclear, is the depth to which these new community members are fully realizing their individual capacity and skills and to what degree communities, like Ottumwa, are assisting them in their efforts to do so. The findings of the research study summarized in this report which utilizes Ottumwa, Iowa as a case study, makes the argument that immigrants in the Ottumwa community are, in fact, integrating and adding value to themselves and to their host community. This section, in addition to drawing conclusions, also makes specific recommendations to improve upon the main aspects of integration.

Integration Progress

The first research question addressed in this study was the extent to which first generation immigrants residing in Ottumwa are furthering their education and becoming more proficient in English. Through the analysis conducted in this study it became apparent that a considerable number of immigrants residing in Ottumwa are choosing to continue their education and increase their skills after arrival. The Census data which compared two different time periods from the American Community Survey confirmed an increase in education attainment at all levels, including 6% in high school degree attainment, 5% in associate or “some college”, 2% increase
in bachelor’s degree and 1% increase in graduate degree attainment. The integration survey data only served to endorse these findings further as 18.3% of immigrants surveyed confirmed efforts to continue their formal education. And while it is true that the formal education of the majority of immigrants moving to Ottumwa is much lower than that of the native population, the increase in attainment rates over time is quite promising. Additional data that must be considered is the qualitative comments from the survey that verify not only the desire of Ottumwa immigrants to improve their own capacity but also the comments relating to providing opportunities for youth (i.e. – their children) to learn as well. With that thought it mind it is important to remember that, based on past research, subsequent generations of immigrants have been shown to achieve higher levels of education than their parents so as these first generation immigrants begin to have children who are more proficient in English and have greater access to education, these attainment levels should continue to rise (Chiswick and DebBurman, 2013).

An additional question in the study focused on the economic mobility of the foreign born in Ottumwa. One of the integration challenges discussed in the literature review section was in reference to inaccurate perceptions. Some community members may have the perception that immigrants coming into the Ottumwa community will be a burden to society by not working or overextending already stressed social service organizations. Although there is no doubt that adding a diverse population to a community is not without complexity, based on the findings of this study, additional financial burden on the community is not one of them. Both the data from the Census, as well as the survey, verify high levels of employment and increased earnings over time. In fact, the median per capita income of the foreign born population was noted as $26,703, while the median per capita income of the total population was much lower at $20,757. Other important indicators of economic mobility confirm the financial sustainability of the immigrant
population in Ottumwa, including 38% who confirmed they had purchased a home, 78% who owned 1-2 vehicles and 83.3% who validated an increase in income. And while most immigrants have achieved employment status, the qualitative responses on the survey would lead the reader to believe that some have aspirations for much higher skilled positions.

Perhaps the most difficult integration indicator to accurately quantify is that of language proficiency. Unfortunately the analysis of Census data was inconclusive which required the researcher to place a heavier reliance on survey data. Although 77.27% of respondents felt as though their English proficiency had improved since arriving to Ottumwa, it is difficult to gauge how proficient these individuals actually were due to the subjective nature of the judging. It is certainly clear from the qualitative responses of the survey, as well as the recognition of language as the #1 challenge faced, that learning the language and being able to communicate is overwhelmingly recognized as being a vital element to success in the community.

**Community Resources**

It is important to reiterate that integration is truly a two way process and just as important as the efforts of the immigrant community to take steps toward integration are the efforts of the community to create a welcoming environment that provides the resources and support system necessary to assist with the integration process. The integration survey administered to 71 first-generation immigrants living in Ottumwa provided a valuable insight to how welcoming the community was perceived to be, how beneficial the integration resources had been to newcomers and whether the community was a place they wanted to stay. The information received from survey respondents was extremely positive, which may be an important element to the positive outcomes for the integration indicators. For example, 62 of the 71 surveyed were “satisfied” – “extremely satisfied” with efforts to make them feel welcome. In relation to the integration
efforts, 61% of those surveyed felt the efforts to be “very” or “extremely” helpful. In contrast, only 1 respondent felt as though they were “not helpful at all.” Most of the respondents relayed their intention to stay in the community with only 4 communicating their intention to leave because of a dislike for the community.

Suggestions for Community Improvement

While the overall reviews for the Ottumwa community were found to be favorable there is always room for improvement. Some of these “improvements” can be extracted from the comments and suggestions made by individuals taking the survey. When asked what they liked best about the community, two of the write-in themes included the size of the community and the fact that it was safe, which correlates with step-migration many of them experience. Combine this with the qualitative responses recorded for question #41 integration suggestions and a theme emerges creating a vision for the type of community that immigrants are looking for. Contrary to the belief that immigrants prefer to stay clustered within their own ethnic and cultural groups, it is the belief of this researcher that these newcomers would prefer just the opposite. Take for example comments such as “more community celebrations together,” “rely on community” and “integrated social, cultural and sporting events” joined with the desirable traits of a small, safe intimate community and it becomes clearer that immigrants are not worried so much about what their host community can do for them but what all of the community can do together. Although events like Latinofest, pictured earlier in this document, are a fantastic way to celebrate individual cultures it may be a better idea to create an event that celebrates all cultures together providing additional opportunities to create a community not only in infrastructure but in spirit as well.
The most critical suggestion that has emerged from this research is the vital role that language proficiency plays in integration. The ability to understand and communicate is essential and, as proven in the research, the #1 indicator trait that was missing in those immigrants surveyed who had been the least successful in their integration efforts was the lack of English proficiency. “Learning and Understanding Language” was also overwhelmingly identified as the greatest challenge faced. While many of the survey respondents had participated in an ELL class at some point those that had not relayed that they “didn’t know how” to improve their language and that “time” was a barrier to learning. Expanding English Language Learning classes to venues that meet immigrants where they are, such as Churches or work sites, would be a proactive way to increase language proficiencies with the immigrant population. Another avenue to explore would be partnerships with the school district to share resources. The Ottumwa Community School District, which reported a 5% district ELL student composition back in 2005, reported a significantly higher 15.7% ELL composition just last year (Iowa Department of Education, 2017). As the district continues to expand its resources to meet the needs of its student base perhaps there is a way to leverage those resources to assist community members as well.

In all the recommendations, a new approach would be suggested in the sense that, in the past, Ottumwa has taken an overall tact of being very reactive in its efforts around integration. As the diversity landscape continues to change in Ottumwa, the community has simply been doing its best to meet the needs of the changing population as those needs become apparent. Changing this approach to a more proactive one that takes into account lessons learned during the past two decades would put the community into a much better position to make long-term strategic decisions procuring better outcomes and more enduring results.
As the RISE Integration Survey results, as well as the results of this research study affirm, immigrants are integrating into their host communities over time and contributing to the financial vitality and social capital in the process. While the fact that integration has occurred is not in question, what may yet be undetermined is how increased efficiency and proactivity in integration processes can provide a competitive advantage to communities using immigration as an economic development tool and a strategy to increase human capital. It is the belief of the author that communities who are incrementally evaluating and continually striving to improve their processes will be those that attain the most success.

The final and most important suggestion that can be made moving forward is to encourage community leaders and citizens alike to continue (or begin as the case may be) to look at immigration in Ottumwa as an opportunity to enhance the community, not only culturally but socially and economically as well. It would appear that any investment made to cultivate this new human capital would be a wise one.

**Implications of the Study**

The study addresses a critical topic which at this point in the nation’s history is a politically hot button issue and has significant implications for the future of small and mid-sized communities. Experiences in some other parts of the world including within the U.S. point at the potential that the new immigrants bring to offset depopulation in rural areas, but also as vehicles of economic opportunity. In addition to bringing diverse culture, language and religion into small towns in U.S., the new immigrants bring fresh ideas, creative capacity and unique potential to contribute to local economies which could bode well for the future. Just as history suggests, every time there is a new wave of immigrants, there is skepticism and resistance. However, as history has
witnessed, these groups eventually go on to adopt the American way of life and become productive and contributing residents, while at the same time retaining their cultural, religious and ethnic identity. This study offers some pragmatic strategies for the City of Ottumwa to continue to be welcoming place for immigrants to work and live. In the most optimistic scenario, the city could in the future become a case study on how the community, by accepting immigrants with open arms, was able to turn around the population decline and became a thriving place in Southeast Iowa for others to learn from.

HOW WELL WE INTEGRATE IMMIGRANTS AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAS FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS FOR — AND IS EXTRICABLE FROM — OUR CURRENT AND FUTURE VITALITY (PETSOD ET AL, ND).
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Assessing the Integration of Immigrants Living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa

Greetings!

As part of a research project toward my master’s degree in community development, I am undertaking a study of immigrants working and living in the City of Ottumwa.

The main objective of the study is to assess how well immigrants have integrated into the community over time. You have been selected to receive this survey because your profile matches with the group being studied. Toward that, the survey aims to target individuals who:

- Are not born in the United States (first generation immigrants), and
- Have resided in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa for more than a year

The purpose of the survey is to assess the extent to which immigrants have been integrated and assimilated into the Ottumwa community by focusing on following broad questions:

1. Are first generation immigrants who reside in Ottumwa, Iowa increasing their human capital by furthering their education and becoming more proficient in English since immigrating to the United States and specifically to Ottumwa?
2. Has the economic condition of immigrants improved over time to make them and their families financially sustainable?
3. What resources currently exist and what scope there is of improving them to assist in making the lives of immigrants better and feel as part of the community?

The survey is being conducted in-person in English and Spanish to make it easier for non-English speaking residents to participate. Participants will be recruited from numerous locations including the pork processing plant, businesses that cater to immigrants (such as Hispanic grocery stores), the community college and any additional partnering organizations that work with immigrants. Individual responses collected through this survey will be confidential.

If you have questions regarding the research or survey please do not hesitate to contact me by phone (641) 777-5599, or email kgennes@iastate.edu. In addition the survey has been approved by the IRB at Iowa State University.

Participants in the survey will have the chance to win from a lucky draw for two respondents. Each of the two winners will get a $50 gift card.

Thank you for taking the time to help make our community better.

Kelly Gennes
Demographic Information

1. What is your country of birth? ____________________________

2. What year did you first come to the United States? ________________

3. What nationality did you have when you were born? ________________

4. What nationality do you have now? ______________________________

5. What year did you come to Ottumwa, Iowa? ______________________

6. What is your gender  □ Male    □ Female

7. What is your marital status?
   □ Single (never married)
   □ Married (legally)
   □ Other (separated, divorced or widowed)

8. Which of the following age category describes your age?
   □ 18 – 30
   □ 31 – 40
   □ 41 – 50
   □ 51 – 60
   □ 61+

9. How many members in your immediate family live with you in Ottumwa?
   □ I have no family
   □ 1 – 2
   □ 3 – 4
   □ 5 – 6
   □ More than 6

10. What is your current employment status?
    □ Full-time employment
    □ Part-time employment
    □ Unemployed/looking for work
    □ Unemployed/not looking for work
    □ Student
    □ Retired
    □ Disabled
    □ Other. (Please specify) ____________________________

11. Do you have a driver’s license? □ Yes □ No

12. How many of your family members have a driver’s license?
    □ 0
    □ 1 – 2
    □ 3 – 4
    □ More than 4
Education Attainment

13. What was your highest education level upon arriving to Ottumwa?
   - Less than high school diploma
   - High school diploma
   - Some college
   - College Degree

14. If you received a college degree(s), please check those that apply
   - Associate’s Degree
   - Bachelor’s Degree
   - Master’s Degree
   - Doctorate

15. During your time in Ottumwa have you furthered your formal education in any way?
   - Yes
   - No

16. If no, why not?
   - Didn’t feel it was necessary
   - Didn’t know what degree to pursue
   - Too expensive
   - Other. (Please specify) ________________________________

17. If yes, in what way have you furthered your formal education?
   - I received a high school diploma or GED
   - I have attended college but did not graduate
   - I received certification or credential (example: welding certificate) If so, what?
   - I attained my college degree, at the following level:
     - Associate’s Degree
     - Bachelor’s Degree, in the following: ________________________________  (ex: Business Administration)
     - Master’s Degree, in the following: ________________________________  (ex: Sociology)
     - Doctorate Degree, in the following: ________________________________  (ex: Public Administration)

18. If you did further your formal education in the time you have resided in Ottumwa, what community resources did you access to do so? (example: A juice) ________________________________

English Language Proficiency

19. Upon arriving in Ottumwa what was your primary language? ________________________________

20. Upon arriving in Ottumwa, did you speak English?
   - Yes, I could speak fluently and understand English
   - I could speak a limited amount of English and mostly understood spoken English
   - No, I could not speak or understand English at all

21. If you could not speak and understand English at the time you arrived in Ottumwa, have you improved your English speaking proficiency since then?  
   - Yes
   - No
22. If no, why not?

☐ Don't feel it is needed
☐ Don't know how to improve my proficiency
☐ Other. (Please specify) ____________________________

23. If yes, to what degree:

☐ I can now speak a limited amount of English (beginner level)
☐ I can now speak and understand most but not all English (intermediate level)
☐ I can now speak and understand English proficiently (advanced level)

24. If you have improved your language skills, how did you do this?

☐ Help from family and/or friends
☐ Took a class
☐ Other. (Please specify) ____________________________

---

25. Since arriving in Ottumwa, have any of the following occurred (please check all that apply)?

☐ I have gotten a better job
☐ I have purchased a home
☐ I have started a business
☐ My salary has increased
☐ Unemployed – retired
☐ Unemployed – Other (Please specify) ____________________________

26. If you have changed jobs during your time in Ottumwa, how many times have you changed jobs?

☐ Just once
☐ 2-3 times
☐ More than 3 times

27. If you did change jobs during your time in Ottumwa, which of the following was true of the new job(s) (please check all that apply)?

☐ The pay increased
☐ The benefits were better
☐ The hours were better
☐ The new job was not as physically demanding

28. What category best describes your annual household income?

☐ Less than $24,999
☐ $25,000 to $49,999
☐ $50,000 to $99,999
☐ $100,000 or more

29. Since your time in Ottumwa, has your household income increased?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, by how much?

☐ Less than $5,000 per year
☐ More than $5,000 but less than $10,000 per year
☐ More than $10,000 per year but less than $20,000 per year
☐ More than $20,000 per year but less than $30,000 per year
☐ More than $30,000 per year
30. What best describes your housing situation?

- I own my home
- Rent
- I live with family or friends
- Other. (Please specify)

31. How many vehicles do you own?

- I do not own a vehicle
- I own 1–2 vehicles
- I own 3 or more vehicles

**Community Resources**

32. Overall, how satisfied are you with the efforts of the community to make you feel welcome?

- Unsatisfied (1)
- Somewhat satisfied (2)
- Satisfied (3)
- Very satisfied (4)
- Extremely satisfied (5)

33. Overall, how would you rate the resources in Ottumwa that were available to assist you in integrating into the community?

- Not helpful at all (1)
- Somewhat helpful (2)
- Helpful (3)
- Very helpful (4)
- Extremely helpful (5)

34. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 indicating "extremely happy" and 1 indicating "not happy at all", how would you characterize your experiences of working and living in Ottumwa?

- Not happy at all (1)
- Somewhat happy (2)
- Happy (3)
- Very happy (4)
- Extremely happy (5)

35. Do you have any plans to leave Ottumwa in the near future?

- Yes
- No  (If yes, proceed to question #36; If no, skip to question #37)

36. If yes, please identify a possible cause from the list below. (Skip to question #38)

- Job in another location in the U.S.
- Return to my native country
- Don’t like community
- Other. (Please specify)

37. If no, please choose a reason from the list below of why you will stay. (Please check all that apply)

- Job
- My family is here
- I like the community
- Other. (Please specify)

38. From the choices below please identify what you like best about Ottumwa. Please choose up to 3, ranking them on the line to the left from 1 – 3. (With 1 being your top reason followed by 2 and 3 being as the next important reasons).

- People in the community
- Job opportunities
- Amenities (parks, sports fields, etc.)
- Retail opportunities (shops, restaurants, etc.)
- Spiritual opportunities
- Cultural opportunities (arts, entertainment, etc.)
- Other. (Please specify)
39. In your efforts to integrate into the Ottumwa community, what have been the greatest challenges you have faced? Please choose up to 3, ranking them on the line to the left from 1 – 3. *(With 1 being your top challenge followed by 2 and 3 being as the next important challenges).*

- [ ] Learning and/or understanding language
- [ ] Securing employment
- [ ] Securing housing
- [ ] Accessing services
- [ ] Assisting my children to be successful in school
- [ ] Cultural barriers
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Discrimination
- [ ] Other. (Please specify)

40. Have these challenges decreased over time?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

41. Finally, what suggestion(s) would you make to help your integration into the community easier?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

*Thank you for your participation in this survey!*
Evaluación de la integración de Inmigrantes que Viven en la Ciudad de Ottumwa, Iowa

¡Saludos!

Como parte de un proyecto de investigación para mi maestría en desarrollo comunitario, estoy realizando un estudio sobre inmigrantes que trabajan y viven en la Ciudad de Ottumwa.

El objetivo principal del estudio es evaluar hasta qué punto los inmigrantes se han integrado en la comunidad a lo largo del tiempo. Usted ha sido seleccionado para recibir esta encuesta porque su descripción coincide con el grupo en estudio. Para ello, la encuesta elige a los individuos que:

- No han nacido en los Estados Unidos (inmigrantes de primera generación), y
- Ha vivido en la Ciudad de Ottumwa, Iowa por más de un año

El propósito de la encuesta es evaluar hasta qué punto los inmigrantes han sido integrados y asimilados en la comunidad de Ottumwa, centrándose en las siguientes preguntas generales:

1. ¿Los inmigrantes de primera generación que viven en Ottumwa, Iowa, han aumentando su capital humano mediante el fomento de su educación y su dominio del inglés desde su emigración a los Estados Unidos y específicamente en Ottumwa?
2. ¿Ha mejorado la situación económica de los inmigrantes con el tiempo para hacer que ellos y sus familias sean financieramente sostenibles?
3. ¿Qué recursos existen actualmente y cuál es el alcance de mejorarlos para ayudar a mejorar la vida de los inmigrantes y sentirse como parte de la comunidad?

La encuesta se lleva a cabo en persona en inglés y español para facilitar la participación de los residentes que no hablan inglés. Los participantes serán reclutados de numerosos lugares incluyendo la planta de procesamiento de carne de cerdo, las empresas que atienden a inmigrantes (como las tiendas de comestibles hispanas), la escuela comunitaria y cualquier otra organización asociada que trabaje con inmigrantes. Las respuestas individuales colectadas en esta encuesta serán confidenciales.

Si tiene preguntas sobre la investigación o encuesta, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo por teléfono (641) 777-5599, o por correo electrónico a kgenners@iastate.edu. Además, la encuesta ha sido aprobada por el IRB del la Universidad del Estado de Iowa (Iowa University State).

Las personas que participan en la encuesta tendrán la oportunidad de ganar un sorteo para dos encuestados. Cada uno de los dos ganadores recibirá una tarjeta certificada de $50.

Gracias por tomarse el tiempo y ayudar a mejorar nuestra comunidad.

Kelly Genners
Información Demográfica

1. ¿En qué país nació? __________________________

2. ¿En qué año vino por primera vez a los Estados Unidos? __________________________

3. ¿Qué nacionalidad tenía cuando nació? __________________________

4. ¿Qué nacionalidad tiene ahora? __________________________

5. ¿En qué año vino a Ottumwa, Iowa? __________________________

6. ¿Cuál es su género?  
   - Masculino [ ]  
   - Femenino [ ]

7. ¿Cuál es su estado civil?  
   - Soltero (nunca casado) [ ]  
   - Casado (legalmente) [ ]  
   - Otro (separado, divorciado o viudo) [ ]

8. ¿Cuál de las siguientes categorías de edad describe su edad?  
   - 18 – 30 [ ]  
   - 31 – 40 [ ]  
   - 41 – 50 [ ]  
   - 51 – 60 [ ]  
   - 61+ [ ]

9. ¿Cuántos miembros de su familia inmediata viven con usted en Ottumwa?  
   - No tengo familia [ ]  
   - 1 – 2 [ ]  
   - 3 – 4 [ ]  
   - 5 – 6 [ ]  
   - Más de 6 [ ]

10. ¿Cuál es su estado de empleo ahora?  
    - Empleado tiempo completo [ ]  
    - Empleado medio tiempo [ ]  
    - Desempleado / buscando trabajo [ ]  
    - Desempleado / no buscando trabajo [ ]  
    - Estudiante [ ]  
    - Retirado [ ]  
    - Incapacitado [ ]
    - Otra (Por favor especifique) __________________________

11. ¿Tiene licencia para conducir carro?  
    - Sí [ ]  
    - No [ ]

12. ¿Cuántos miembros de su familia tienen licencia para conducir carro?  
    - 0 [ ]  
    - 1 – 2 [ ]  
    - 3 – 4 [ ]  
    - Más de 4 [ ]
Conocimientos Educativos

13. ¿Cuál fue su mayor nivel de educación cuando llegó a Ottumwa?
   - Menor que el diploma de secundaria (preparatoria)
   - Diploma de secundaria (preparatoria)
   - Algo de universidad
   - Título universitario

14. Si recibió título(s) universitario(s), por favor marque aquellos que correspondan
   - Grado Asociado (2 años universitarios)
   - Grado de Licenciatura
   - Grado de Maestría
   - Doctorado

15. Durante su tiempo en Ottumwa, ¿ha mejorado su educación formal de alguna manera?
   - Sí
   - No

16. Si no, ¿por qué no?
   - No creí que fuera necesario
   - No sabía qué carrera seguir
   - Muy caro
   - Otro (Por favor especifique)

17. Si sí, ¿en qué forma ha continuado su educación formal?
   - Recibí un diploma de secundaria (preparatoria) o GED (HiSet)
   - He asistido a la Universidad pero no me gradué
   - He recibido un certificado o credencial (ejemplo: certificado de soldadura). Sí es así, ¿qué?
   - He alcanzado mi título universitario, en el siguiente nivel:
     - Grado Asociado (2 años universitarios)
     - Licenciatura en lo siguiente: (ejemplo: Administración de Empresas)
     - Maestría, en lo siguiente: (ejemplo: Sociología)
     - Doctorado, en lo siguiente: (ejemplo: Administración Pública)

18. Si no continuó una educación formal en el tiempo que ha estado viviendo en Ottumwa, ¿a qué recursos comunitarios tuvo acceso (ejemplo: Al Éxito)

Dominio del idioma Inglés

19. Cuando llegó a Ottumwa, ¿Cuál era su idioma primario? ________________

20. Al llegar a Ottumwa, ¿hablabas inglés?
   - Sí, podía hablar con fluidez y entender inglés
   - Podía hablar una cantidad limitada de inglés y en su mayoría entendía un inglés hablado
   - No, no podía hablar o entender nada de inglés

21. Si no podía hablar y entender inglés cuando vino a Ottumwa, ha mejorado su dominio del idioma inglés desde entonces?
   - Sí
   - No

22. Si no, ¿por qué no?
   - No siento que sea necesario
No sé cómo mejorar mi dominio del idioma inglés
Otro (Por favor especifique) ________________________________

23. Si el, ¿hasta qué grado?:
☐ Ahora puede hablar una cantidad inglés limitada (nivel para principiantes)
☐ Ahora puede hablar y entender bastante pero no todo el inglés (nivel intermedio)
☐ Puedo hablar y entender el inglés competentemente (nivel avanzado)

24. Si ha mejorado sus habilidades del idioma inglés; cómo lo hizo?
☐ Ayuda de familiares / amigos
☐ Tomé una clase
☐ Otra (Por favor especifique) ________________________________

Movilidad Económica

25. Desde que llegó a Ottumwa, ¿ha pasado alguno de los siguientes (por favor marque todos los que correspondan)?
☐ He tenido un mejor trabajo
☐ He comprado una casa
☐ Comencé un negocio
☐ Mi salario ha aumentado
☐ Desempleado - retirado
☐ Desempleado – Otro (Por favor especifique) ________________________________

26. Si ha cambiado trabajos durante su estancia en Ottumwa, ¿cuántas veces ha cambiado de trabajos?
☐ Solamente una vez
☐ 2-3 veces
☐ Más de 3 veces

27. Si ha cambiado trabajos durante su estancia en Ottumwa, ¿cuál de los siguientes fue cierto del nuevo (s) trabajo(s) (por favor marque todos los que correspondan)?
☐ El pago aumentó
☐ Los beneficios fueron mejores
☐ Los horarios fueron mejores
☐ El nuevo trabajo no tenía mucha demanda física

28. ¿Qué categoría describe mejor el ingreso anual de familia?
☐ Menos de $24,999
☐ $25,000 a $49,999
☐ $50,000 a $99,999
☐ $100,000 o más

29. Desde que vino a Ottumwa, ¿su salario familiar ha aumentado? ☐ Si ☐ No
Si sí, ¿por cuánto más?
☐ Menos de $5,000 por año
☐ Más de $5,000 por año, pero menos de $10,000 por año
☐ Más de $10,000 por año, pero menos de $20,000 por año
☐ Más de $20,000 por año, pero menos de $30,000 por año
☐ Más de $30,000 por año

30. ¿Cuál de las siguientes describe su situación de vivienda?
☐ Soy dueño de casa propia
☐ Rento
Vivo con familiares o amigos
Otro. (Por favor especifique)

¿Cuántos vehículos tiene?
☐ No tengo un vehículo
☐ Tengo de 1 – 2 vehículos
☐ Tengo 3 o más vehículos

Recursos Comunitarios

32. En general, ¿qué satisface está usted con los esfuerzos que la comunidad tiene para hacerlo sentir bienvenido?
☐ Insatisfecho (1) ☐ Algo satisfecho (2) ☐ Satisfecho (3) ☐ Muy satisfecho (4) ☐ Extremadamente satisfecho (5)

33. En general, ¿cómo calificaría los recursos disponibles en Ottumwa para ayudarlo a integrarse en la comunidad?
☐ No ayuda en absoluto (1) ☐ Algo útil (2) ☐ Útil (3) ☐ Muy útil (4) ☐ Extremadamente útil (5)

34. En escalas de 1-5, en donde 5 indica “extremadamente feliz” y 1 indica “No feliz en absoluto”, ¿cómo caracteriza sus experiencias de trabajo y de vida en Ottumwa?
☐ No feliz en absoluto (1) ☐ Algo feliz (2) ☐ Feliz (3) ☐ Muy feliz (4) ☐ Extremadamente feliz (5)

35. ¿Tiene algunos planes de irse de Ottumwa en un futuro cercano?
☐ Sí ☐ No (Si la respuesta es sí, proceda a contestar la pregunta #36, si no, pasar a la pregunta #37)

36. Si sí, por favor indique una posible causa de la lista siguiente. (Y pasar a la pregunta #38)
☐ Trabajo en otra localidad de los Estados Unidos
☐ Regresar a mi país de origen
☐ No me gusta la comunidad
☐ Otra (Por favor especifique)

37. Si no, por favor escoja una razón del por qué se quedará. (Por favor marque todas las que correspondan)
☐ Trabajo
☐ Mi familia está aquí
☐ Me gusta la comunidad
☐ Otra (Por favor especifique)

38. De las opciones de abajo, por favor identifique qué es lo que más le gusta de Ottumwa. Por favor escoja hasta 3, clasificándolas en la línea de la izquierda de 1 – 3. (Con 1 siendo su razón más importante seguida por 2 y 3 como las siguientes razones más importantes).
☐ Las personas de la comunidad
☐ Oportunidades de trabajo
☐ Comodidades (parques, campos deportivos, etc.)
☐ Oportunidades comerciales (tiendas, restaurantes, etc.)
☐ Oportunidades espirituales
☐ Oportunidades espirituales (arte, entretenimiento, etc.)
☐ Otra (Por favor especifique)

39. En sus esfuerzos por integrarse en la comunidad de Ottumwa, ¿cuáles han sido los mayores desafíos que ha enfrentado? Por favor elija hasta 3, clasificándolos en la línea a la izquierda de 1 - 3. (Con 1 siendo su desafío superior seguido de 2 y 3 como los siguientes desafíos importantes).
☐ Aprender y/o entender el idioma
☐ Asegurar el trabajo
☐ Asegurar vivienda
40. ¿Han disminuido estos desafíos con el tiempo?  [ ] Si  [ ] No

41. Finalmente, ¿qué sugerencias haría para facilitar su integración en la comunidad?

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

¡Gracias por su participación en esta encuesta!
APPENDIX C

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
220 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
Ames, Iowa 50011-4366
515-294-1566

Date: 2/21/2017
To: Kelly Gennawi
11544 118th Avenue
⊆⊆⊆ Dr. Biswa Das
592 College of Design

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: Assessing the Integration of Immigrants Living in the City of Ottowa, Iowa

IRB ID: 17-090

Study Review Date: 2/24/2017

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b) because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

1. (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey or interview procedures with adults or observation of public behavior where
   - Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; or
   - Any disclosure of the human subjects’ responses outside the research could not reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, or reputation

The determination of exemption means that:

- You do not need to submit an application for annual continuing review.
- You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application. Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any modifications to the research procedures (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, changes in confidentiality measures, etc.), modifications that result in the inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations and/or any change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants. Changes to key personnel must also be approved. The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.
- Non-exempt research is subject to many regulatory requirements that must be addressed prior to implementation of the study. Conducting non-exempt research without IRB review and approval may constitute non-compliance with federal regulations and/or academic misconduct according to ISU policy.

Detailed information about requirements for submission of modifications can be found on the Exempt Study Modification Form. A Personal Change Form may be submitted when the only modification involves changes in study staff. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, than an Application for Approval of Research Involving Human Subjects will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review. Only the IRB or designee may make the determination of exemption, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.

Please be aware that approval from other entities may also be needed. For example, access to data from private records (e.g., student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarity, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. An IRB determination of exemption in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.

Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-1566 or IRB@iastate.edu.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)
Exempt Study Review Form

Title of Project: Assessing the Integration of Immigrants Living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa

Principal Investigator [PI]: Kelly Genners
Degrees: Interdisciplinary - MS
(Community Development)

University ID: 198005899 Phone: 641-777-5599 Email Address: kgenners@iastate.edu

Correspondence Address: 11044 118th Avenue

Department: Community Development
College/Center/Institute: Iowa State University/Great Plains

PI Level: Tenured, Tenure Eligible, & NTM Faculty Adjunct/Associate Faculty Collaborator Faculty Emeritus Faculty Visiting Faculty/Scientist Senior Lecturer/Clinician Lecturer/Clinician, adj Ph.D. or DBM P&S Employee, P&S & above Extension to Families/or Youth Specialist Field Specialist III Postdoctoral Associate Graduate/Undergraduate Student Other (specify: )

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS (Required when the principal investigator is a student)
Name of Major Professor/Supervising Faculty: Dr. Biswa Das
University ID: 198005899 Phone: 641-777-5599 Email Address: kgenners@iastate.edu

Campus Address: N/A Department:

Type of Project: (check all that apply) ☒ Thesis/Dissertation ☐ Class Project ☐ Other (specify: )

Alternate Contact Person: Email Address: Phone:

Correspondence Address: 11044 118th Avenue

ASSURANCE

- I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate and consistent with any proposal(s) submitted to external funding agencies. Misrepresentation of the research described in this or any other IRB application may constitute non-compliance with federal regulations and/or academic misconduct.

- I agree to provide proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are protected. I will report any problems to the IRB. See Reporting Adverse Events and Unanticipated Problems for details.

- I agree that modifications to the approved project will not take place without prior review and approval by the IRB.

- I agree that the research will not take place without the receipt of permission from any cooperating institutions, when applicable.

- I agree to obtain approval from other appropriate committees as needed for this project, such as the IACUC (if the research includes animals), the Radiation Safety Committee (if the research involves X-rays or other radiation producing devices or procedures, etc.), and to obtain background checks for staff when necessary.

- I understand that IRB approval of this project does not grant access to any facilities, materials, or data on which this research may depend. Such access must be granted by the unit with the relevant custodial authority.

- I agree that all activities will be performed in accordance with all applicable federal, state, local, and Iowa State University policies.

Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Signature of Major Professor/Supervising Faculty Date
(Required when the principal investigator is a student)

For IRB Use Only ☐ Not Research Per Federal Regulations ☐ No Human Participants Review Date: 2/21/2017

Exempt Per 45 CFR 46.101(b):

IRB Reviewer's Signature

Office for Responsible Research
Updated: 9/24/16

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Exempt Study Information

Please provide Yes or No answers, except as specified. Incomplete forms will be returned without review.

Part A: Key Personnel

1. List all members and relevant qualifications of the project personnel and define their roles in the research. Key personnel include the principal investigator, co-principal investigators, supervising faculty member, and any other individuals who will have contact with the participants or the participants’ data (e.g., interviewers, transcribers, coders, etc.). This information is intended to inform the committee of the training and background related to the specific procedures that each person will perform on the project. For more information, please see Human Subjects — Persons Required to Obtain IRB Training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Interpersonal contact or communication with subjects, or access to private identifiable data?</th>
<th>Involved in the consent process?</th>
<th>Contact with human blood, body fluids, or tissues containing biohazardous materials?</th>
<th>Other Roles in Research</th>
<th>Qualifications (i.e., special training, degrees, certifications, coursework, etc.)</th>
<th>Human Subjects Training Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Genners</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>MS Coursework - Community Dev. Emphasis</td>
<td>1/27/2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Biswa Das</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td>Major Advisor (oversee capstone project)</td>
<td>10-10-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Timothy Borich</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Advisor Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-12-01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Susan Bradbury</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>Advisor Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
<td>10-23-01</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Office for Responsible Research
Updated: 9/29/16
Part B: Funding Information and Conflicts of Interest

2. Does your study include children (persons under age 18) as research subjects?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please read and respond to the following:

ISU policy requires that background checks be completed for all researchers and key personnel who will have any contact with children involved in this research project. Details regarding this policy can be found here. Principal Investigators and faculty supervisors are responsible for ensuring that background checks are completed BEFORE researchers or key personnel may have any contact with children. Records documenting completion of the background checks must be kept with other research records (e.g., signed informed consent documents, approved IRB applications, etc.) and may be requested during any audits or Post-Approval Monitoring of your study.

☐ Agreed

2a. Please check here to indicate that you have read this information and agree that you will comply with these requirements.

☐ Yes ☐ No 1. Is or will the project be externally funded?

If No, skip to question 8.

If Yes, please identify the type(s) of source(s) from which the project is directly funded.

☐ Federal agency
☐ State/local government agency
☐ University or school
☐ Foundation
☐ Other nonprofit institution
☐ For-profit business
☐ Other; specify: ___

☐ Yes ☐ No 2. Is ISU considered to be the Lead or Prime awardee for this project?

☐ Yes ☐ No 3. Are there or will there be any subcontracts issued to others for this project?

☐ Yes ☐ No 4. Is or will this project be funded by a subcontract issued by another entity?
Part C: General Overview

Please provide a brief summary of the purpose of your study:

The purpose of this research study is to assess the degree to which immigrants are integrating into their host communities. Toward this, the study will use educational attainment including English proficiency as well as improvements in the economic condition of immigrants and families as indicators of their successful integration. The study will use the immigrant population living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa as a sample to evaluate the degree to which they have been successful at integrating into the community.

Please provide a brief summary of your research design:

As part of a research project toward my master’s degree in community development, I am undertaking a study of immigrants working and living in the City of Ottumwa. The main objective of the study is to assess how well immigrants have integrated into the community over time. Toward that, the survey aims to target individuals who:

- Are not born in the United States (first generation immigrants), and
- Have resided in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa for more than a year

The purpose of the survey is to assess the extent to which immigrants have been integrated and assimilated into the Ottumwa community by focusing on following broad questions:

1. Are first generation immigrants who reside in Ottumwa, Iowa increasing their human capital by furthering their education and becoming more proficient in English since immigrating to the United States and specifically to Ottumwa?
2. Has the economic condition of immigrants improved over time to make them and their families financially sustainable?
3. What resources currently exist and what scope there is of improving them to assist in making the lives of immigrants better and feel as part of the community?

The survey is being conducted in-person in English and Spanish to make it easier for non-English speaking residents to participate. Participants will be recruited from numerous locations including the pork processing plant, businesses
that cater to Immigrants (such as Hispanic grocery stores), the community college and any additional partnering organizations that work with immigrants. Participants who complete the survey have the option of being entered into a drawing that makes them eligible to win one of two $50 Walmart gift cards. Individual responses collected through this survey will be confidential. *Contact information for the drawing will be collected separately from the survey data.*

**Part D: Exemption Categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>1. Are you conducting research on Educational Practices (e.g., Instructional techniques, curriculum effectiveness, etc.)? If Yes, please answer questions 1a through 1e. If No, please proceed to question 2.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.a. Will the research be conducted in an established or commonly accepted educational setting, such as a classroom, school, professional development seminar, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>1.b. Will the research be conducted in any settings that would not generally be considered to be established or commonly accepted educational settings? If Yes, please specify: ____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>1.c. Will the research procedures and activities involve normal educational practices (e.g., activities that normally occur in the educational setting)? Examples include research on regular or special education instructional strategies or the effectiveness of instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>1.d. Will the research procedures include anything other than normal educational practices? If Yes, please specify: ____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>1.e. Will the procedures include randomization into different treatments or conditions, radically new instructional strategies, or deception of subjects? If Yes, please specify: ____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>☑</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>2. Does your research involve use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observations of public behavior? If Yes, please answer questions 2.a. through 2.b. If No, please proceed to question 3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.a. Will the research involve one or more of the following? (Check all that apply.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td>□ The use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Surveying or interviewing adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Observations of public behavior* of adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Observations of public behavior* of children, when the researcher will not interact or intervene with the children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Activities occurring in the workplace and school classrooms are not generally considered to involve public behavior.*

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2. Are all of the participants elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office?

3. Does the research involve the collection or study of currently existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens? If Yes, please answer questions 3.a. through 3.b. If No, please proceed to question 4.

3.a. Are all of the data, documents, records, or specimens publicly available?

3.b. Will the data you record for your study include ID codes? If Yes, please answer 3.b.(1) and 3.b.(2).

3.b.(1). Does a "key" exist linking the ID codes to the identities of the individuals to whom the data pertains?

3.b.(2). Will any persons on the research team have access to this key?

4. Does your research involve Taste and Food Quality tests and Consumer Acceptance Studies involving food? If Yes, please answer questions 4.a. through 4.c. If No, please proceed to question 5.

4.a. Is the food to be consumed normally considered wholesome, such as one would find in a typical grocery store?

4.b. If the food contains additives, are the additives at or below the level normally considered to be safe by the FDA, EPA, or Food Safety and Inspection Service of USDA? Consider additives in commercially available foods found at a grocery store and/or any additives that are added to food for research purposes.

4.c. If there are agricultural chemicals or environmental contaminants in the food, are they at or below the level found to be safe by the FDA, EPA, or Food Safety and Inspection Service of USDA?

5. Is your study a research or demonstration project to examine:
   - Federal public benefit or service programs such as Medicaid, unemployment, social security, etc.; or
   - Procedures for obtaining benefits or service under these programs; or
   - Possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or
   - Possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under these programs?
Part F: Additional Information

☐ Yes ☒ No 6. Does your research involve any procedures that do not fit into one or more of the categories in Items #1-45 listed above, such as the following? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Usability testing of websites, software, devices, etc.
☐ Collection of information from private records when identifiers are recorded
☐ Procedures conducted to induce stress, moods, or other psychological or physiological reactions
☐ Presentation of materials typically considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading
☐ Video recording or photographing non-public behaviors
☐ Use of deception (e.g., misleading participants about the procedures or purpose of the study)
☐ Physical interventions, such as
  ☐ blood draws
  ☐ new collection of biological specimens
  ☐ use of physical sensors (ECG, EKG, EEG, ultrasound, etc.)
  ☐ exercise, muscular strength assessment, flexibility testing
  ☐ body composition assessment
  ☐ measuring of height and weight
  ☐ x-rays
  ☐ changes in diet or exercise
☐ Tests of sensory acuity (i.e., vision or hearing tests, olfactory tests, etc.)
☐ Consumption of food (other than as described in #4) or dietary supplements
☐ Clinical studies of drugs or medical devices
☐ Other; please specify: 

☐ Yes ☒ No 6.a. If Yes, is your research conducted in an established educational setting, and are the checked procedures part of normal educational practices given that setting? If Yes, please describe:

☐ Yes ☒ No 7. Do you intend or is it likely that your study will include any persons from the following populations? (Check all that apply.)

☐ Prisoners
☐ Cognitively impaired
☐ Children (persons under age 18)
☐ Wards of the State
☒ Persons who are institutionalized

7.a. If Yes, please describe how they will be involved and what procedures they will complete:

Office for Responsible Research
Updated: 9/22/16
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>8. Will any of the following identifiers be linked to the data at any time point during the research? (Check all that apply.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|     |    | - Names:  
|     |    |   - First Name Only  
|     |    |   - Last Name Only  
|     |    |   - First and Last Name  
|     |    |   - Phone/fax numbers  
|     |    |   - ID codes that can be linked to the identity of the participant (e.g., student IDs, medical record numbers, account numbers, study-specific codes, etc.)  
|     |    |   - Addresses (mail or physical)  
|     |    |   - Social security numbers  
|     |    |   - Exact dates of birth  
|     |    |   - IP addresses  
|     |    |   - Photographs or video recordings  
|     |    |   - Other; please specify: ______ |

| Yes | No | 9. Is there a reasonable possibility that participants' identities could be ascertained from any combination of information in the data? If Yes, please describe: ______ |

| Yes | No | 10. Will participants' identities be kept confidential when results of the research are disseminated? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>11. Could any of the information collected, if disclosed outside of the research, reasonably place the subjects at risk of any of the following? (Check all that apply.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|     |    |   - Criminal liability  
|     |    |   - Civil liability  
|     |    |   - Damage to the subjects' financial standing  
|     |    |   - Damage to the subjects' employability  
|     |    |   - Damage to the subjects' reputation  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>12. Does the research, directly or indirectly, involve or result in the collection of any information regarding any of the following? (Check all that apply.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|     |    |   - Use of illicit drugs  
|     |    |   - Criminal activity  
|     |    |   - Child, spousal, or familiar abuse  
|     |    |   - Mental illness  
|     |    |   - Episodes of clinical depression  
|     |    |   - Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts  
|     |    |   - Health history  
|     |    |   - History of job losses  
|     |    |   - Exact household income other than in general ranges  
|     |    |   - Negative opinions about one's supervisor, workplace, teacher, or others to whom the subject is in a subordinate position  
|     |    |   - Opinions about race, gender, sexual orientation, or any other socially sensitive or controversial topics  
|     |    |   - Sexual preferences or behaviors  
|     |    |   - Religious beliefs  
|     |    |   - Any other information that is generally considered to be private or sensitive given the setting of your research; if so, please specify: ______ |

After completion of Parts A, B, and C of this application, please send the completed form to:

Office for Responsible Research
Updated: 9/24/18

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## APPENDIX D
### Assessing the Integration of Immigrants Living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa
#### Survey Code Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. #</th>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Questionnaire Number</td>
<td>1-100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BTHCTY</td>
<td>What is your country of birth?</td>
<td>Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>YEARUS</td>
<td>What year did you first come to the US?</td>
<td>YYYY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BORNNATION</td>
<td>What nationality did you have when you were born?</td>
<td>Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NOWNATION</td>
<td>What nationality do you have now?</td>
<td>Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>OTTUMWAYR</td>
<td>What year did you come to Ottumwa, IA?</td>
<td>YYYY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 6    | GENDER | What is your gender? | 1 = Male  
2 = Female |
| 7    | MARITAL | What is your marital status? | 1 = Single  
2 = Married  
3 = Other (S/D/W) |
| 8    | AGE | Which age category describes your age? | 1= 18-30  
2=31-40  
3=41-50  
4=51-60  
5=61+ |
| 9    | FAMLIVE | How many members in your immediate family live with you in Ottumwa? | 1=No family  
2=1-2  
3=3-4  
4=5-6  
5=>6 |
| 10   | EMPLOYMENT | What is your current employment status? | 1=Full-time  
2=Part-time  
3=Un/looking  
4=Un/Not look  
5=Student  
6=Retired  
7=Disabled |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Do you have driver's license?</td>
<td>1=Yes 2=No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>How many of your family members have a driver's license?</td>
<td>1 = 0  2=1-2  3=3-4  4=More than 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>What was your highest education level upon arriving to Ottumwa?</td>
<td>1=Less HS  2=HS  3=Some college  4=College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>If degree was received, check all that apply.</td>
<td>ASSOC 0=N 1=Y BACH 0=N 1=Y MAS 0=N 1=Y DOC 0=N 1=Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>During your time in Ottumwa have you furthered your formal education in any way?</td>
<td>1 = Yes  2=No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>If no, why not?</td>
<td>1=Not necessary  2=Didn't know  3=Expensive  4=Time  5=Can't learn  6=Work  7=No transp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17A</td>
<td>If yes, in what way have you furthered your formal education?</td>
<td>1=HS or GED  2=Some college  3=Cert/cred.  4=College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17A2</td>
<td>What certificate or credential (from 17A)</td>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17B</td>
<td>Attained college degree at the following level?</td>
<td>1=AA  2=BA  3=MA  4=Doctorate common themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17B2</td>
<td>Degree area of focus</td>
<td>Answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>RESOURCEED</td>
<td>If you did further your formal education in the time you have resided in Ottumwa, what community resources did you access to do so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 19 | LANGUAGE   | Upon arriving in Ottumwa what was your primary language | 1=Spanish  
2=English  
3=Amheric  
4=Tigrinya  
5=French  
6=Arabic  
7=Burmese  
8=Soninke  
9=Chinese  
10=Portuguese |
| 20 | OTTENGLISH | Upon arriving in Ottumwa, did you speak English? | |
| 21 | IMPENGLISH | If you could not speak and understand English at the time you arrived in Ottumwa, have you improved your English speaking proficiency since then? | 1=Yes  
2=No |
| 22 | WHYNOIMP   | If no, why not? | 1=Not needed  
2=Don’t know how  
3= No Time  
4=Working on it |
| 23 | WHATIMP    | If yes, to what degree? | 1=Beginner  
2=Intermediate  
3=Proficient |
| 24 | HOWIMP     | If you have improved your language skills, how did you do this? | 1=Fam/friends  
2=Class  
3=Immersion |
| 25 | ECCHANGE   | Since arriving in Ottumwa, have any of the following occurred? | JOB 0=N 1=Y  
HOME 0=N 1=Y  
BUS 0=N 1=Y  
SAL 0=N 1=Y  
UN/R 0=N 1=Y  
UN/O 0=N 1=Y |
| 26 | JOBCH      | If you have changed jobs during your time in Ottumwa, how many times have you changed jobs? | 1=Once  
2=2-3 times  
3=More than 3 |
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **27** | NEWJOB | If you did change jobs during your time in Ottumwa, which of the following was true of the new job(s)? | PAY 0=N 1=Y  
BEN 0=N 1=Y  
HRS 0=N 1=Y  
PHYS 0=N 1=Y |
| **28** | INCOME | What category best describes your annual household income? | 1=<$24,999  
2=<$25-$49,999  
3=<$50-$99,999  
4=>$100,000 |
| **29A** | INCOMEINC | Since your time in Ottumwa, has your household income increased? | 1=Yes  
2=No |
| **29B** | MOREINCOME | If yes, how much | 1=<$5,000  
2=>$5 but <$10  
3=>$10 but <$20  
4=>$20 but <$30  
5=>$30,000 yr |
| **30** | HOUSING | What best describes your housing situation? | 1=Own  
2=Rent  
3=Fam/friends |
| **31** | VEHICLES | How many vehicles do you own? | 1=None  
2=1-2  
3=3 or more |
| **32** | WELCOME | Overall, how satisfied are you with the efforts of the community to make you feel welcome? | 1=Unsatisfied  
2=Some sat.  
3=Satisfied  
4=Very sat.  
5=Ext. sat. |
| **33** | COMMRESOURCE | Overall, how would you rate the resources in Ottumwa that were available to assist you in integrating into the community? | 1=Not help  
2=Some help  
3=Helpful  
4=Very help  
5=Ext. help |
| **34** | EXPERIENCE | On a scale of 1-5, how would you characterize your experiences of working and living in Ottumwa? | 1=Not happy  
2=Some happy  
3=Happy  
4=Very happy  
5=Ext. happy |
| **35** | LEAVEPLANS | Do you have any plans to leave Ottumwa in the near future? | 1=Yes  
2=No |
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | LEAVECAUSE | If yes, please identify a possible cause from the list | 1=Another job  
2=Ret. Native  
3=Don't like comm  
4= Weather  
5=Near Family  
6=College |
|   | STAYCAUSE | If no, choose reason why you will stay | JOB 0=N 1=Y  
FAM 0=N 1=Y  
COMM 0=N 1=Y |
|   | LIKEBEST | Identify what you like best about Ottumwa. (up to 3) 3=top, then 2 and 1 | PEOPLE  
JOBS  
AMENITIES  
RETAIL  
SPIRITUAL  
CULTURAL  
SMALL TOWN  
SAFETY |
|   | CHALLENGES | In your efforts to integrate what have been the greatest challenges you have faced (up to 3) 1 = top, then 2 and 3 | LANGUAGE  
EMPLOYMENT  
HOUSING  
ACCESS SERV  
CHILD. SCHOOL  
CULTURAL  
TRANS  
DISCRIM  
OTHER |
|   | CHALLDEC | Have these challenges decreased over time? | 1 = Yes  
2= No |
|   | SUGGESTIONS | What suggestions would you make to help your integration into the community easier | Themes |
APPENDIX E

Assessing the Integration of Immigrants Living in the City of Ottumwa, Iowa
Survey Responses to Question #41 – What suggestion(s) would you make to help your integration into the community easier?

1) Improve streets, better jobs.
2) More jobs.
3) Integrated social, sporting and cultural events.
4) Be happy, don't get into trouble and rely on community.
5) All nice.
6) Better jobs, fix streets.
7) Increased communication with diverse community.
8) Stop losing retail.
9) Support newcomers
10) More employment opportunities.
11) Roads could be better.
12) Build more soccer fields.
13) Make safer for immigrants.
14) More equality, police treats us differently. Was asked for SS card when someone broke my car light.
15) Student center in the community to link college students to comm. Teen center, comm. center to socialize.
16) Help those who want to leave the meat plant for better job.
17) More ELL opportunities.
18) More ELL opportunities.
19) English speaking programs.
20) Need more jobs.
21) More jobs.
22) Assistance with language.
23) Better opportunities to train/retrain immigrants.
24) Do not deport us to our country.
25) Provide opportunity to work and do not discriminate.
26) Help me to learn English to make more money.
27) I'm not happy working job at JBS.
28) Help people who don't have computer to fill out applications.
29) More interpreters.
30) Eat more American food. See more people.
31) More cultural events
32) I like that there are more community programs for immigrants.
33) Family activities.
34) Better streets.
35) More diversity in stores.
36) Better housing (apartments).
37) More youth activities.
38) More community celebrations together.
39) More programs to help youth succeed.