Stages of Entrepreneurial Success: A Qualitative Study of Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the United States

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by

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“Stages of Entrepreneurial Success: A Qualitative Study of Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the United States”

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ABSTRACT

Title: Stages of Entrepreneurial Success: A Qualitative Study of Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the United States

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Keywords: Acclimation, Assimilation, Entrepreneurial Intelligence, Entrepreneurial Success, Ethnic Enclave, Immigrant Entrepreneurial Need, Invisibleness, Predisposing Entrepreneurial Characteristics, Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneur

The rate of immigrant entrepreneurship continues to grow, affecting economic development in many host country communities. Immigrant entrepreneurs are found in past research studies to be outpacing host natives in entrepreneurial activities, offering additional economic, social, and cultural benefits. This study examined a phenomenon at the individual immigrant entrepreneur level in the United States to provide increased insight into understanding the phenomena of surges in immigrant entrepreneurial startups for continued research on immigrant entrepreneurship to effect related policy formation and decisions.

This research examined a cohort of eighteen post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs from 11 different Eastern European countries with successful businesses in five different states in the United States operating in ten different market segments of the economy, and their ability to rapidly overcome host country barriers beyond bare subsistence needs to establish and sustain new businesses in the United States. In the process, a new definition of entrepreneurial success was observed and formulated. With exponential growth in demand for entrepreneurship learning, immigrant influxes in the U.S., and immigrant startups are now outpacing American natives two
to one in the United States. This study aimed to examine a micro-level phenomenon regarding the immigrant entrepreneurship success of post-Soviets in the United States. It proposes a conceptual model built on the belief that there was a potential advantage for immigrant invisibleness in a host country. The study focused on defining success from the participants' worldview by developing an Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) framework to determine how the participants report initial and sustained success through their motivational lifecycle. Finally, the research offers further definition and meaning to a novel concept called immigrant entrepreneurial intelligence (EI) for continued research consideration.
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to all the people who impacted my journey in one way or another. To understand one’s virtuous behavior (or telos) is the greatest lifetime reward. To those virtuous friends, family members, and associates, I add you all in this dedication. To my grandparents, who have passed, you shaped me into the person I am today and inspired me to be true to myself and value our family name and others. In their loving memory, Ernest Rozea, Mary Rozea, Helen Rawlins, and John Rawlins, thank you for your mentorship and showing me unconditional love and support.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Overview

This study examined a phenomenon at the individual immigrant entrepreneur level in the United States to provide increased insight into understanding the phenomena of surges in immigrant entrepreneurial startups for continued research on immigrant entrepreneurship to effect related policy formation and decisions.

This research examined a cohort of eighteen post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs from 11 different Eastern European countries with successful businesses in five different states in the United States operating in ten different market segments of the economy, and their ability to rapidly overcome host country barriers beyond bare subsistence needs to establish and sustain new businesses in the United States. In the process, a new definition of entrepreneurial success was observed and formulated. With exponential growth in demand for entrepreneurship learning, immigrant influxes in the U.S., and immigrant startups are now outpacing American natives two to one in the United States. This study aimed to examine a micro-level phenomenon regarding the immigrant entrepreneurship success of post-Soviets in the United States. It proposes a conceptual model built on the belief that there was a potential advantage for immigrant invisibleness in a host country. The study focused on defining success from the participants' worldview by developing an Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) model to determine how the participants report initial and sustained success through their motivational lifecycle. Finally, the research offers further definition and meaning to a novel concept called immigrant entrepreneurial intelligence (EI) for continued research consideration.
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**Purpose of the Study**

With exponential growth in demand for entrepreneurship learning, immigrant influxes in the U.S., and immigrant startups are now outpacing American natives two to one in the United States. This study aimed to examine a micro-level phenomenon regarding the immigrant entrepreneurship success of post-Soviets in the United States. It proposes a conceptual model built on the belief that there was a potential advantage for immigrant invisibleness in a host country. Moreover, the study attempted to understand the intervening variables impacting the immigrant's ability to gain initial success and sustain that entrepreneurial success through eighteen post-Soviet immigrant participants' entrepreneurial experiences and worldviews.

**Background and Rationale**

Over the last century, much of the European continent has experienced a series of unpredictable alterations in nation-states that generated a series of 'push and pull' events displacing millions of people from their natural origins (Lee, 1966). Lee (1966) asserts the following four push and pull factors motivating individuals and groups to migrate: factors associated with the area of origin, those associated with the destination area, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. Lee's (1966) push and pull model extends Ravenstein's (1885, 1889) Seven Laws of Migration. This research study uses Lee's (1966) four factors to explain why individuals of ethnic groups migrate from their home country to Western countries like the United States of America.

The research used past literature findings on entrepreneurship, ethnicity, culture, and immigration; its formulation came from the researcher's observations of continuous success by post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in the Greater New York City region of the United States. A fascinating phenomenon occurred by observing post-Soviet immigrants migrating to the
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United States and mitigating frequent high-risk and stressful obstacles through migration to business success in their transitory entrepreneurial lifecycle phases.

The academic research literature repository contains an assorted number of theories and models on intersecting topics of migration, immigration, entrepreneurship, ethnicity, culture, and immigrant entrepreneurship (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aldrich and Fiol, 1994; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Fairlie, 2012; Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; Gunter, 2012; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Hunt, 2011; Kerr and Kerr, 2016; Lee, 1966; Ravenstein, 1885, 1889). The topics of immigration and immigrant entrepreneurship are not new phenomena, as immigrants have been migrating to the United States since (and before) the country's founding. However, over the last century, the United States has seen an unceasing influx of immigrants who have migrated to the U.S. (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Camarota and Zeigler, 2016). The intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960) associated with a home or host country's conflict, political unrest, and restructuring of economies are the catalysts for migration of large ethnic groups from home to host countries in the last century.

In 2023, many debates continue to surround the topic of immigration (i.e., policy changes, monetary concerns, illegal versus legal entry, crime, job competition, wage concerns, and changing demographics). Immigrants, and their contribution to a host country, have become a contentious hot point among the general populace (i.e., host country natives) and policymakers in the United States. However, against this backdrop, statistical findings tend to be ignored in much of the public discourse on the topic. The statistical data show that immigrant entrepreneurs arriving and participating in a host country are outpacing the host natives two to one in new business startups (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Vandor and Franke, 2016).
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The researcher discovered a series of corresponding research findings in the literature repository, conceptual frameworks, and theoretical concepts for explaining immigrant migration factors and entrepreneurial activities in a host country. While exploring the vast academic literature over the last century and a half, the level of complexity and scope of the various research findings were both consistent and diverse in their various reflections. One of the first challenges for this research study was the development of the terminology for properly framing the definition of what constitutes an 'immigrant' in the United States and the linkage to the immigrant entrepreneur. The definition of immigrant can be convoluted with topics like ethnicity and culture. Therefore, the researcher followed a discovery path of the following topics: ethnicity, networks, ethnic enclaves, behavior, politics, cultural distances, entrepreneurial mindset, individual attributes, education level, psychic distance, and others in the research. The vast literature on ethnicity, culture, and entrepreneur studies aided in shaping the immigrant entrepreneur criteria and conceptual framework, despite numerous but opaque linkages between various theoretical models and viewpoints among scholars examining immigrant entrepreneurship. According to Kerr and Kerr (2016):

A better understanding of how the existing immigrants in the United States can more effectively engage in starting new businesses requires careful study of the choices and policy constraints faced by immigrants in their decisions to build and grow new firms versus being workers in a large corporation. We also lack a clear picture of how successful immigrant founders enter the United States, which can be for reasons as diverse as schooling, employment, family reunification, and more. A study of the transitions or the sequence of events explaining entry by immigrant entrepreneurs and the role of policies in allowing / blocking this transition would be a helpful start (p. 25).

The study organized the relevant literature into a set series of categories starting from the individual and working outward from the home to the host country for the immigrant entrepreneur, as seen in Figure 6 and discussed in detail in Chapter Two. The categories for the
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development of the theoretical and research model for this study not only outline the various
cross-disciplinary theories but also incorporate literature to help the researcher present a better
understanding of the intervening obstacles and opportunities encountered by immigrants in their
entrepreneurial lifecycle from migration to business establishment and sustainability of their
businesses in the host country.

The study overlays a proposed model against past research findings and concepts for
developing an initial grounded theory that focuses on the topic of invisibleness and a
decentralized protective network as to why a particular immigrant group can enter a host country
and rapidly achieve and sustain entrepreneurial success over host natives and other ethnic
groups. However, during the research data analysis and findings, the influencing strength of
invisibility diminished over potential evidence for a set profile for entrepreneurial intelligence
over the accepted literature on the entrepreneurial mindset (Envick, 2014; Gartner, 1988;

The definition of the individual’s perceived success becomes critical to explain and
assess as it is encapsulated as the unit of analysis for this study. To develop and measure the
immigrant entrepreneur’s initial and sustained success for this study, the researcher developed
the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) framework in Figure 8 for data analysis and
interconnection to the theoretical model. The IEN framework has four progressive phases that
supported the development of the participants’ interview questions as a measurement instrument
mixed with the set standard for each of the participant’s firms having reached breakeven or
profitability and business continuity for more than three years. In Chapter 2 a supplementary
discussion provides the additional context of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurship and an
emerging definition of success used in this study.
With a large, diverse number of immigrants residing within the United States, this study emphasized one geographical cohort. The selected post-Soviet immigrant cohort of participants' home geographical region contains many diverse ethnic groups who migrated to the U.S. and established and sustained successful businesses in the host country. The United States, the largest market for immigrant entrepreneurship, was chosen as the host country for the research study. The researcher chose to examine immigrant entrepreneurs achieving success in a Capitalistic Constitutional Republic structured host country who came from socialist home countries historically having restricted opportunities due to communist governments and economic uncertainties.

The study's selected participant group for inquiry is from a region formerly known as the 'Eastern Bloc' (Gati, 1990; Magocsi, 1996). The former Soviet Union contained over 100 ethnic groups (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975) forced to conform to one ideological perspective and language under the control of a Communist dictatorship, formerly known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), from 1919 to 1991. The term, post-Soviet is used synonymously with layperson terms like Eastern Bloc or Eastern European for the research participant group of immigrants (Gati, 1990; Glazer et al., 1975; Magocsi, 1996). The geographic/dictatorship state titled the U.S.S.R., also known as the Soviet Union is referred to as the home country of origin in the study despite its termination into the Russian Federation and individual nation-states in 1991. The participants in the study came from the geographical region now referred to as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland, the Republic of Georgia, Estonia, and other nation-states that make up the 12 independent republics of the former Soviet Union. Figure 1 illustrates the geographical territory of the immigrant entrepreneurs who participated in the study.
The participant cohort of present-day United States immigrant entrepreneurs interviewed for the research migrated to the United States from the geographical home region before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and met the criteria for business success. It is this cohort of participants that provided critical insights for the theoretical development and findings in this study. These immigrant participants were all from the former eastern bloc territory, where individuals have been characterized in American popular culture and the media for over fifty years as the foremost adversary to America throughout the Cold War and continuing to the present. Most recently, and coinciding with the timing of this research, a major conflict is underway in eastern Europe between the Russian Federation and Ukraine supported by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries. The selected immigrant entrepreneurs have successfully navigated a series of similar 'Red Scares' (Glazer et al., 1975) in America over the last half century and successfully navigated through push factors (Lee, 1966) like war, government persecution, and economic collapses. The various push factors (Lee, 1966) initiated large groups to migrate great distances at extreme sacrifice from their home countries to Western
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Europe, the United States, and other Western countries. In their testimonial interviews, this participant cohort supported the literature by confirming push and pull factors (Lee, 1966) referenced for why individuals migrate.

Push and pull factors (Lee, 1966) cannot be disregarded as they have been the catalyst for mass emigration from post-Soviet into the United States for more than a century. The world is witnessing a new series of push factors with the war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine as millions of refugees flee Ukraine and other areas to seek safe harbor and opportunity elsewhere, including in the United States. America and Western Europe are receiving thousands, if not millions, of Ukrainian refugees who continue to enter the U.S. and compete in the home markets against the natives and other ethnic groups. The research study used the Everett Lee's (1966) theory on migration as a theoretical underpinning for why the post-Soviet participants and other immigrants seek opportunity and safety in the U.S. by moving massive distances under duress from their origin to a new destination. Lee's (1966) Theory of Migration expanded on the British geographer Ernest Ravenstein's "Laws of Migration" (1889). This study introduces several other literary theories to shape the development of the study's initial proposed conceptual model for the theoretical propositions. The study examined the factors influencing post-Soviet immigrants' migration to the U.S. and how they generate a higher rate of successful immigrant business startups in the United States over host natives. Not only has this study's participant group of immigrants achieved successful startups, but they have also been able to sustain their businesses and expand market shares over natives and other ethnic groups.

Why these post-Soviet immigrants (Glazer, Moynihan, and Schelling, 1975) are motivated to overcome intervening obstacles to meet their transitory needs factors for rapid and successful entrepreneurial endeavors was one of the underlying premises for this inductive
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research approach to the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurs outpacing host country natives by a factor of two to one (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Vandor and Franke, 2016). The vast amount of related literature focuses on other ethnic groups like African Americans, Hispanics/Latinx, Asians, and others as having higher barriers to overcome in a host country than the post-Soviet cohort. The paucity in the literature was reason to reflect on why and how the post-Soviet immigrant has lower barriers over other ethnic groups, despite being from a region of the world steadily branded in Western popular culture as a global Communist threat. The study initially assumed post-Soviet immigrants, in their ability to conduct entrepreneurial activities, were challenged with lower barriers over other ethnic groups due to a possibility that this group of immigrants can 'blend in' to the host native general populace unnoticed. The rationale behind the researcher’s initial theoretical position of invisibility (or invisibleness as used throughout this study) as a critical moderating variable between the immigrant’s attributes and business success in the host country resulted from the historical examples in the literature. One of the historical examples is the Germans of Post-World War II who were branded as 'Nazis' even though they immigrated to America successfully and melted into the general populace unnoticed by the native populace of the time (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). The German immigrants, like the post-Soviet participants, appeared in the literature to be able to go unnoticed, thus creating the potential for an entrepreneurial ethnic strategy in America. This lack of 'noticeableness' led to the initial belief that the invisibleness of immigrant groups by host natives could correlate to the native populace's threat level reduction of an immigrant group resulting in lower entrepreneurial barriers. However, the study found a divergence from this initial belief in the findings explained in Chapters 4 and 5.
The researcher, leveraging the past literature for the study's initial position, formulated a position that invisibleness was being employed as an ethnic strategy by the immigrant entrepreneur because their ability to blend into the native populace provided them a reduction in the native's threat levels. Thus, the barriers associated with intervening obstacles for the immigrant entrepreneur become reduced. At the start of the study, it was unclear how certain groups could enter the United States and rapidly penetrate various market sectors with successful businesses when native African Americans and other ethnic groups continue to struggle in the American economic, educational, and governmental systems. The literature did not readily support arguments that certain groups can acclimate rapidly, while African Americans and other ethnic groups continued to fight for the ability to be fully acclimated into American society as natives (Cummings, 1980; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970, 1975; Light, 1972). The study started out examining the phenomenon of entry into a host country to rapid immigrant entrepreneurial success for post-Soviets, searching for how invisibility influenced their entrepreneurial success. The study sought to understand why a post-Soviet ethnic group of immigrants was able to successfully navigate a host country's potential for dehumanization barriers (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020), lack of capital (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970,1975), limited networks, the liability of newness (Das et al.,2017; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000), and several other obstacles for business creation and sustainable success in the United States.

However, the research findings from the field work changed the researcher's initial position on the influencing strength of invisibleness for immigrant entrepreneurial success in the immigrant host country business lifecycle.
Significance of the Study

The rate of immigrant entrepreneurship continues to grow, affecting economic development in many host country communities. Immigrant entrepreneurs are found in past research studies to be outpacing host natives in entrepreneurial activities, offering additional economic, social, and cultural benefits (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Das et al., 2017; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015; Kloosterman, 2010; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000; Vandor and Franke, 2016). This study examined a phenomenon at the individual immigrant entrepreneur level in the United States to provide increased insight into understanding the phenomena of surges in immigrant entrepreneurial startups for continued research on immigrant entrepreneurship to effect related policy formation and decisions.

Immigration and entrepreneurship are two topics characteristically American and critical to our economic success since the country's founding. This research effort examined the literature concerning immigrant entrepreneurship to offer a new theoretical proposition for correlating other theoretical positions captured to aid in mitigating research gaps in the academic repository. Immigrant entrepreneurship in America has continued to grow over the past several decades, thus making it an essential area of interest for policymakers, competing businesses, academic institutions, and widespread press reporting (Kerr and Kerr, 2016). At the intersection of immigration and entrepreneurship are individuals, and these individuals are from a multitude of ethnic groups that make up the collective demographic of the United States of America (i.e., the melting pot as described by Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). The demand for discussions and learning on entrepreneurship and immigrant entrepreneurship has grown steadily over the past decade among business schools and the general populace in the United States (Kerr and Kerr, 2016, 2018; Mescon, 2021). Research scholars continue to endeavor to explain how
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entrepreneurs are a vital component of the driving influences behind long-term economic growth, with their roles of creating, operating, and advancing existing markets with innovative ideas (Gunter, 2012).

Nevertheless, entrepreneurship and the controversy surrounding immigration continue the debate among business scholars and policymakers. Aside from immigration, one of the primary contemporary debates on entrepreneurship studies and instruction in recent decades centers around the argument of considering entrepreneurship as an actual field of research that requires more attention in the economic literature versus a byproduct of other business field's teachings (Gunter, 2012; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000; Sorenson and Stuart, 2008). Universities continue to advance instruction on entrepreneurship and social behavioral sciences instruction on immigration with persistence. The common underpinnings for entrepreneurship teachings usually focus on the psychology of the entrepreneur, the entrepreneurship process of developing a business plan and model, navigating statutory requirements for starting businesses, and the seminal theories encompassing entrepreneurship. A few of the seminal theories students continue to learn are the works of Drucker's (1986) innovative opportunity, Schumpeter's (1942) gales of creative destruction, or the Kirznerian entrepreneur (1997) who, through arbitrage and speculation seize advantage of overlooked opportunities that add equilibrium to markets through their influences (Gunter, 2012).

The word 'entrepreneur' is connected to the immigrant for this research study. Over the past several decades, the Entrepreneur has begun to take on the connotation of the opportunistic innovator (Drucker, 1986) or market disrupter (Schumpeter, 1942) with stories about founders of multinational corporations like Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, and Amazon as contemporary examples. Teachings have led students to ask, who is an entrepreneur, and what is considered
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entrepreneurial, especially in today’s technologically dynamic and hypercompetitive global market. For this research study, Gunter's (2012) explanation for what constitutes an entrepreneur is the criteria for defining an entrepreneur. Gunter (2012) defines entrepreneurs as "individuals who, in an uncertain environment, recognize opportunities that most fail to see, and create ventures to profit by exploiting these opportunities." Therefore, the immigrant entrepreneur is, by definition, an individual who navigates through uncertain environments and leverages his/her human, social (including ethnic) capital to employ strategies to seize opportunities in markets (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Kerr and Kerr, 2016; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017).

In the transition from the definition of an entrepreneur to the word immigrant, a series of questions surfaced; these questions required answering before continuing with the research. Starting questions that were addressed included, who are considered immigrants in the United States in 2022, what does the literature explain, are these individuals, naturalized citizens, green card holders, or anyone not born in America? These questions on who and what became increasingly complex, especially when the discussions on ethnicity were inserted into the discussion mix for various groups coexisting within America among this ambiguous native group called citizens (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer, Moynihan, and Schelling, 1975). For this research study, the standards for the word immigrant originate from the literature as any first-generation immigrant arriving in America through the legal Federal immigration process. The participants for this study were required to have, at a minimum, authorized refugee status, green card holders, children born in America from immigrant parents, or naturalized citizens. The study did not account for illegal immigrants operating uncertified and unregulated businesses within ethnic enclaves (Portes, 1987). Though this study recognizes the impacts and is
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sympathetic to those entrepreneurial individuals who operate in the shadows of the United States economy by starting businesses for subsistence needs, and even though these individuals are an extension of immigrant entrepreneurs, they are outside the scope of this research study.

A recent report by the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the number of immigrants in the United States at over 40 million (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Camarota and Zeigler, 2016). Researchers have found that immigrant startups are outpacing ventures launched by natives in the U.S. by two to one (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Duan et al., 2020; Vandor and Franke, 2016). According to Sundararajan and Sundararajan (2015), "the Small Business Administration (U.S.) detailed immigrant entrepreneurs are twice as likely to start a business as native-born citizens, and more importantly, immigrants are creating jobs in neighborhoods where they are needed the most" (p. 30). Moreover, Awotoye and Singh (2018) uncovered data from the Kauffman Foundation showing that immigrant startups grew significantly from 13.3 percent in 1997 to over 25 percent by 2015. Immigrant entrepreneurs are now encompassing a large segment of the U.S. economic engine (Das et al., 2017; Saxenian, 2000). According to Kerr and Kerr (2019), "First-generation immigrants create about 25% of new firms in the United States, but this share exceeds 40% in some states."

**Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs**

The continuous growth of immigrants in the United States and immigrant entrepreneurship rising and competing against the U.S. natives is a phenomenon that compelled this researcher to examine this topic. Figure 2 provides two visuals. The top graph shows the increased growth of post-Soviet immigrants into the United States since the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the graph, Western Europe showed steady decline while Eastern Europe doubled over the same period. The bottom map shows geographical clustering of post-Soviet
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immigrants within the United States. The research study accessed and interviewed participants from four of the six major geographical clusters shown in the host country in the map in Figure 2.

https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/european-immigrants-united-states-2016#RegionsCountries

Figure 2: European Immigrant Population Clusters in the U.S.

Given this backdrop, how are immigrants outpacing natives, who appear to have an increased language and system knowledge advantage over the immigrant in entrepreneurship achievements? The researcher’s initial thoughts when developing this study were centered on the possibility of certain groups of immigrants having the ability to acclimate and accelerate entrepreneurial activities rapidly. The research initially leaned toward evidence for post-Soviet immigrants’ ability to leverage predisposing traits with perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991) to go unnoticed (i.e., invisible) by a host country’s populace majority, thus reducing host native threat barriers for the immigrant’s business startup success. These two essential questions
supported by evidence within the literature developed the researcher's need for further exploration and findings discovery. The research set out to provide an initial theoretical proposition using the grounded theory approach to present the justification to investigate the possibility of an invisible group factor contributing to immigrant entrepreneurial success. The researcher started the study by looking for factors influencing an immigrant entrepreneur's choice to employ invisibility as an ethnic strategy in a host country. This also assumed the immigrant entrepreneur leveraged a decentralized protective market and networks as ethnic advantages over other ethnic groups and host natives for entrepreneurial success and sustainment. Taken together, this could help explain entrepreneurial startups and success.

Against the backdrop of this study, there is an ongoing debate about newcomers worldwide migrating into the United States. This immigration debate continues as almost nonstop political and media concern spotlights the controversy involving border control of the U.S. Mexico border in particular. Likewise, the participants in this study reported that this level of regimental reporting on immigrants in the host country's popular culture and political arena does create intervening obstacles for all immigrants (Lee, 1966) in America.

Moving on from popular press rhetoric into the academic literature on immigration, ethnicity, and immigrant entrepreneurship, the researcher found a large and mixed amount of research on the topics. However, the literature findings for immigrant entrepreneurship are minimal for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs as a cohort in the United States. The research literature indicates a consensus on three topics: immigration, ethnicity, and entrepreneurship. First, immigrants face enormous trials and tribulations, referred to here as intervening obstacles that are aside from typical everyday challenges associated with entrepreneurship activities, regardless of country of origin or destination in the quest for business ownership (Lee, 1966).
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Second, research efforts to quantify data in a quantitative approach on human beings interacting within their environments are complex and challenging to achieve clarity for reporting (Charmaz, 2006; Schein, 2000). Third is the importance of the ethnic enclave and how these enclaves develop protective ethnic markets and networks for an ethnic group's entrepreneur (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cummings, 1980; Gonzalez and Campbell, 2018; Light, 1972; Portes, 1987; Uzzi, 1996). Given the intricacy of this study area for ethnic groups immigrating and starting businesses in the United States, it was imperative to seek a qualitative inductive research approach to develop the study's grounded theory.

Continuing the discussion, the researcher found more questions than answers in developing the research study. If America is a "Melting Pot," as Glazer and Moynihan (1970) argued, could certain groups go unnoticed over other ethnic groups in a host country, and can this unnoticeability provide the opportunity for immigrants to use invisibleness (i.e., blend in) as an ethnic entrepreneurial strategy? Or is invisibility a byproduct of the host country system forcing immigrants to leverage ethnic resources, tribal networks, and mix embeddedness (Kloosterman, 2010) to achieve entrepreneurial success to overcome obstacles in a host country? Are post-Soviet immigrants going unnoticed as an ethnic group in America, and does this invisibility provide them an advantage over other ethnic groups? African Americans represent one such group. Why do Black American natives continue to demand equal opportunity among the U.S. White majority populace, even though they are host natives? Or why are Black Americans in the literature being lumped into other African immigrant groups and commonly referred to as African Americans instead of just Americans like the U.S. preponderance of Caucasians? Why are the post-Soviet immigrants able to enter the U.S. and rapidly achieve success if Black American natives continue to address grievances against the U.S. government?
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about feeling unable to effectively assimilate into the general populace of the United States for over 200 years (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970)? Restructured and represented, in 2023, who is considered an actual native of the United States given the diverse ethnic makeup of the native population, is White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) still an acceptable term for defining Caucasian majority in America? Are racially white individuals WASPs in the Census reporting, or are they inaccurately branded as WASPs and then everyone else who is nonwhite? These are sensitive but essential questions as all ethnic groups make up the U.S. melting pot’s (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970) economic engine, and all groups must peacefully coexist and have equal opportunities for civil society to function.

Invisibleness as Ethnic Advantage

The research in the approach began to seek out if certain ethnic groups appear to have an entrepreneurial advantage over others regardless of their status as immigrants or natives. At the most basic level, the U.S. economy is people interacting with each other to produce and exchange goods and services. All people are critical to the U.S. economy regardless of what ethnic group the popular press, government census reporting, or politics package into them. The literature becomes blurred when segmenting ethnicity and immigration, leading the researcher to repeat the question: Can a specific ethnic group of immigrants go unnoticed amid a large, dominant Caucasian segment of the population? If so, is this leveraged as an advantage by the immigrant for achieving rapid entrepreneurial success over their competitive natives in the host country?

At face value, it is hard to imagine that an entire group of immigrants could go unnoticed and acclimate quickly among a native populace. Even more so, this seems impossible if a group is negatively branded similarly to Germans called Nazis by political and popular cultural
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rhetoric, thus generating a threat to the native populace of the United States. This 'immigrant invisibleness' seems unachievable in periods of anti-immigrant sentiment or dehumanization of immigrants (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020), like the United States is experiencing in 2023. However, it did occur with literature arguments on post-World War II Germans immigrants in the United States (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). Was it possible that post-Soviet immigrants could be invisible to natives? The literature suggested the possibility of an advantage to being invisible for immigrants whose entire identity – or significant parts – can be withheld. The study's initial position on invisibility in the theoretical development stage before inductive analysis believed there was the potential for a mix of home and host country, societal and individual underlying factors influencing the phenomenon. Against the backdrop of the host country environment, there is a decentralized secure ethnic network created out of social media tools and word of mouth by ethnic groups to rapidly exchange knowledge for small business competitive advantages over Native Americans. This decentralized ethnic network is largely invisible to host natives. The research study's findings and results provide the transition of the study’s initial premise for invisibleness as an immigrant entrepreneurial factor to emphasizing increased importance on the immigrant's predisposing attributes for entrepreneurial success in the host country.

**Host Country Ambivalence Toward Immigrants**

The need for immigrants to navigate through a host's politically charged societal atmosphere on immigration is not new to America. Additionally, racially charged debates and other manifestations of social justice actions and policies to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion are now at the forefront of the present national dialogue. However, white Christian Ukrainian refugees are acceptable for entry into the United States, or vice versa. Over the past
century, countless natives of the United States are the descendants of past immigrants coming through Castle Garden or Ellis Island during the Postbellum Expansion and Progressive Era in American history (Briggs, 1984). The divisive immigration debate is a topic that continues to resurface going back to the mid-1800s and early 1900s in the United States. Like contemporary debates on U.S. immigration, the topic of immigration has been, and always will be emotionally charged and continuously disputed among different political factions of the native populace in America. Some American natives seeking research findings will continue to argue that immigrants benefit the U.S. economy or lower natives' wage growth, cost natives’ jobs, and limit host country resources that can destroy sectors of the U.S. market (Hunt, 2011). A host country's popular press and political parties will argue the bigotry and rhetoric with an endless set of newly ordained natives projecting aggression toward the next wave of immigrants.

This research study attempts to avoid contentious debates on immigration benefits or shortcomings for a host country. This research topic for study is complex and multifaceted in the literature. Before engaging in data collection, the researcher was conscientious of the debates and took the time to comprehend the controversy and research findings surrounding the topic of immigration and immigrant entrepreneurship. This study required a comprehensive investigation into ethnic groups' entrepreneurship, home, and host country factors, including who is considered the native and immigrant within the populace of the United States.

The contention behind immigration is not something contemporary in the U.S., as the literature is full of historical debates going back to 1783 when the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) founders of America struggled to develop the U.S. Constitution for the topic of immigration. During this period, the developers of the U.S. Constitution tackled three concepts that ultimately led to the United States' criteria surrounding citizenship law and the general
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populace's significant shifts in norms that have stood the test of time. The researcher discovered importance here by explaining the historical literature findings to mitigate any controversial findings provided in Chapter 4. The three concepts developed and captured in the American Constitution are called *jus soli* (i.e., birthright or those born in the U.S.), *jus sanguinis* (i.e., those children born to U.S. citizens), and naturalization or what is commonly known now as the pledged allegiance (Grabbe, 1989; Safran, 1997). Therefore, leveraging the founder's language in the development of the constitution, the word 'native' is equivalent to the word citizen though some argue differently.

**Historical Trends in Immigration**

In the last forty years, going back to 1980, a significant increase in migration from around the world of people wanting to enter the United States for opportunity and safety has steadily increased in response to push and pull events (Lee, 1966). Studies in recent years present information supporting a narrative that a surge in immigration in the U.S. is aligned to severe monetary alterations and governmental unpredictability in other nation-states worldwide (Esterline and Batalova, 2022). Another major contributor is the structural transition to a post-industrial economy where services represent a significant share of urban economies, mix embeddedness increasing opportunities for small firms in general due to the shift to services, outsourcing, market fragmentation, and the availability of cheap information and communication technology (I.C.T.) (Kloosterman, 2010). Less expensive labor and little need for financial capital for specific market opportunities allow immigrant entrepreneurs to replace native business owners who have sold their businesses and properties in search of other opportunities.

The Migration Policy Institute (M.P.I.) continues to compile data from the U.S. Census Bureau over the past several decades. Figures 3 and 4 provide a general breakdown of the data to
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display the influx of immigrants as a percentage of U.S. society over the last hundred and sixty-plus years. Note the significant influx of immigrants entering the U.S. in recent years, similar to the period commonly referenced as the Ellis Island New York period in American history. The influx of immigrants is exponentially growing (Camarota and Zeigler, 2016), as observed in the two graphs dating back to 1850.

Figure 3: Historical Trends of Immigrant Share and Number of Immigrants in the U.S.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-19 American Community Surveys (A.C.S.), and 1970, 1990, and 2000 Decennial Census (Gibson and Lennon, 1999)

Figure 4: Annual Immigrant Admissions by Type: 1783-2019
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Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-19 American Community Surveys (A.C.S.), and 1970, 1990, and 2000 Decennial Census (Gibson and Lennon, 1999)

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2022, the United States will have over 332 million people. The statistical number of 40 million immigrants (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Camarota and Zeigler, 2016) incorporated into the 332 million people are immigrants that comprise the various legally authorized immigration visa types (Hunt, 2011) allocated to immigrants recorded entering the United States. The 40 million number excludes naturalized citizens or noncitizens who circumvented legal immigration processes and reside in the host country illegally as defined by U.S. immigration law. As in the historical past of America, today’s host country consists of generational immigrants who are now considered the native populace, which is far different than the WASP founders that represented the early U.S. populace. A question is who and what group are perceived as the real 'Native Americans' inside the United States in 2023?

The researcher found questions like this too complex to frame the study, especially when one steps outside the bounds of statistical reporting and looks through the worldview lenses of individuals operating within the mixed populace of America. The late 1700s WASP demographic majority no longer exists in this context even though anyone 'White' from different ethnic groups is commonly branded into this single group (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975). The plausible reality is that the U.S. natives' makeup is a mix of the many ethnic groups supporting the term coined the Melting Pot by Glazer and Moynihan (1970). The host native is any individual who lived in the host country from adolescence to adulthood, regardless of ethnicity. A native in the context of this study uses English as a primary language and whose
beliefs, education standards, and societal traditions were shaped during their developmental years in the host country by its governmental and societal systems.

For this study, the literature search helped formulate the researcher's initial premise of invisibleness for the study by providing findings on specific groups of immigrants from particular geographical regions having the ability to use invisibleness as a concealment advantage among the host country's natives (Erickson, 1972; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975, Leinonen, 2012). Removing language challenges or immigrant accents, certain ethnic groups over other ethnic groups can rapidly acclimate and achieve entrepreneurial success in the United States among the demographic majority (Erickson, 1972; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975, Leinonen, 2012). Nevertheless, the researcher discovered novel insights during the research study that reshaped the initial position built from the literature on the advantages of invisibleness for post-Soviet immigrants in a host country. In the research findings discussed in Chapter 4, immigrants, regardless of home country origin, significantly contribute to the American entrepreneurial economic engine by achieving over 25 percent of all new business startups (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Vandor and Franke, 2016).

The research study examined the effects of barriers or dehumanization (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020) and whether they dissipate for immigrants when they achieve their naturalized citizen status. Preliminarily, the literature and this study's findings did not conclude that immigrants achieving naturalized citizen status transition the immigrant to native status (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Cummings, 1980; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975; Light, 1972). The study examined whether invisibility is connected to the term assimilation, as being synonymous with the term native for when the immigrant achieved naturalized citizenship status.
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Despite the direction of invisibleness on the immigrant living within a host country, the correct term for transitioning an immigrant toward a native status is their ability to *acclimate* quickly among the host populace by learning the language and host system. This research suggests that the term assimilation was an unrealistic achievement for immigrants even when naturalized citizenship status is achieved. The results of this study side with the literature findings on acclimation over assimilation (Bryce-Laporte, 1972; Cummings, 1980; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975; Light, 1972). The study continued to inductively examine if *invisibleness* in the acclimation process offered any advantages to immigrant entrepreneurs for their entrepreneurial goals. Chapter 2 expands on this terminology by framing the context of invisibility, acclimation, and native and immigrant success, while Chapters 4 and 5 provide the results and reflections of these topics in the study.

In 2023, there is growing consensus that ethnic groups are rapidly changing the business landscape of small businesses in the U.S. economy. Immigrant startups continue to grow into the bedrock of the contemporary United States economy. Many immigrants arrive in a host country like America looking for better societal conditions, employment, and safe harbor. The research study proposed that post-Soviet immigrants see opportunities and employ ethnic strategies by utilizing their networks, social capital, and ethnic resources (Kloosterman, 2010; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017) to create businesses. It is these immigrant business startups that ultimately permeate out of ethnic enclaves (Achidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Portes, 1987; Zhang et al., 2016) into host country open markets (Bonacich, 1973; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016). These newly minted immigrant entrepreneurs in a host country tackle environmental and cultural adversity to overcome a series of host country legal and language obstacles to access the host country’s markets for entrepreneurial success. The
immigrant entrepreneur’s success creates a ripple effect across markets, increasing market opportunities for themselves, host natives, and other immigrant groups. Certain immigrant ethnic groups appear to be able to rapidly adapt to the native U.S. population, learn the host country system, and achieve tremendous financial success through entrepreneurial activities.

Generation after generation, the cycle repeats with a new set of natives and immigrants. This cycle of immigrant to native and expansion of immigrant entrepreneurship promotes a need for more investigation and insight into the U.S. business literature concerning immigrant entrepreneurship and how the most prominent global market can sustain it. Therefore, researching how specific immigrant cohorts can enter the United States and establish businesses rapidly without venture capital backing or long-term system knowledge over their native competitors was worthy of a deeper investigation. When speaking of the rapid business startup in the findings, the general timeline for immigrant entrepreneurial employment activities was within three to five years of gaining access to a work-authorized green card in the host country.

Comparable to the historical past, contemporary concerns of the U.S. populace include debates on the influx of immigrants, along with a series of global and domestic turbulences with a virus pandemic, a rise in U.S. inflation, surging crime, and a war in eastern Europe, or what some could call back-to-back black swan events (Taleb, 2010). These are independent from home and host country push or pull factors. The war in Eastern Europe, potentially spilling over into Western Europe, the Baltic states, and Poland, is causing thousands of Ukrainians and potentially other ethnic groups to flee their home in the same general focus area for this research. The global events provided the researcher with opportunities and challenges for conducting the study.
Comparable to research interest for the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 on small businesses, research interest should offer increases in investigating the impacts of immigrants, specifically post-Soviet immigrants (e.g., Ukrainian and other refugees), on the U.S. domestic markets and the economy. The new influx of post-Soviet immigrants, like the 1919 and early-1990s waves, are using their mixed embeddedness advantages of socioeconomic, institutional, and cultural dynamics (Kloosterman, 2010; Kloosterman et al., 2016) during their host country’s transitionary period to achieve entrepreneurial success over natives while the host natives are preoccupied with addressing domestic and global priorities. In the years to come, how will these newly minted post-Soviet immigrants entering the U.S. in 2023 impact the host country’s market makeup, and what are the impacts on the host native future opportunities?

**Decentralized Ethnic Networks and Markets**

The post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs who informed this research offered additional insights about entering the U.S. by using established American Jewish-Russian-Polish-Ukrainian networks, both localized and globally, for distributed knowledge sharing to negate liabilities (Das et al., 2017; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000). The post-Soviet immigrants leveraged their structural embeddedness linked through social networks (Uzzi, 1996) to mitigate various host countries’ intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) while going unnoticed by the host country system and natives. Like the participants' testimonies in this study, it is unknown if modern-day host natives will be as welcoming to the current generation of post-Soviet immigrants entering the host country as the immigrants of the past in this study. A more evident finding in the research is that past cohorts explained desire for the expanded networks that the present post-Soviet immigrants are leveraging. Today’s decentralized protective ethnic networks built in the host country by prior post-Soviet immigrants provide a global reach network access into a host
country for planning and knowledge sharing, allowing the immigrants to position themselves for entrepreneurial strategies before entry. These decentralized ethnic networks and markets in the host country allow contemporary immigrants to mitigate various intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) by using their social capital to access co-ethnic resources from decentralized networks (Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017). Access to co-ethnic resources and networks (Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017) is critical for immigrants to establish a foothold in the host country and rapidly deploy business startup activities by commandeering opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960) over natives.

The timing of this business research study aligns with contemporary geopolitical events occurring around the world and inside the United States. With the war in Eastern Europe and what appears to be a series of nonstop economic disturbances affecting the natural order of life speeding up, demand for entrepreneurship is gaining momentum among the U.S. populace. With an uptick in demand for entrepreneurship understanding, people could instinctively execute some inherent principles of effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001) to mitigate concerns about unemployment, economic conditions, and the need to sustain an expected level of accustomed subsistence standard. An article by 'gold standard' accreditation for M.B.A. programs, AACSBS International (Burrus, 2015; Stein, 2021) is leveraged to show the demand for entrepreneurship. According to Mescon (2021):

*In March 2020, demand for entrepreneurship education was up 66 percent year-on-year—a strong indication that, during times of great crisis, students perceive new business creation as a catalyst for helping them find opportunities.*

**Individual Lived Experiences Inform Grounded Theory**

So, why wouldn't one expect immigrants entering the United States not to share the same underpinning ideologies that drive students' demand for entrepreneurship learning? The research
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advanced the academic literature repository on immigrant startups by approaching the topic of immigrant entrepreneurship from a grounded theory approach. This research provides an understanding of the influencing factors for immigrant entrepreneurs to quickly establish and sustain entrepreneurial success in a host country from the immigrant entrepreneur's perspective. The study's goal is to achieve a more precise understanding of the influencing societal factors on groups that impact the development of individual attributes (Awotoya and Singh, 2018; Hirischian, 1982; Portes, 1987) influencing immigrant entrepreneurial success to explain the details of the rapid growth in immigrant business startups compared to natives in the United States (Stillman, 2021). The examination of the literature on influencing environmental host and home factors (Hofested, 1983, 1985; Hofstede and Minkov, 2010; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) and predisposition components (Awotoya and Singh, 2018; Hirschman, 1982; Portes, 1987) for individuals within a set group supports the development of this research study.

Research suggested there is a congregation of various influencing factors developed from the immigrant's home country experience coupled with local and societal factors in both the host and home countries that allow certain ethnic groups of immigrants to achieve success, thus giving them an entrepreneurial advantage over other ethnic groups (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Muchinsky and Monahan, 1980). The participants in this study were found to have the ability to circumvent obstacles in a host country by leveraging their ethnic capital, networks, and resources to employ ethnic strategies (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990) that capture opportunities from market imperfections for entrepreneurial success in a host country over other ethnic groups and native groups. Though the focus at the start of the study was on invisibility as an ethnic strategy, the findings and discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 provide a shift from the initial research position for invisibleness as an ethnic advantage in a host country.
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Adding to the Macro Level Research and Teaching Tradition

Past research studies on immigrant entrepreneurship have leaned toward the individual and group arguments on ethnicity challenges and opportunities (Aldrich et al., 1985; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cummings, 1980; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970, 1975; Light, 1972), visa entry differences (Hunt, 2011; Jasso et al., 2007; Kerr and Kerr, 2016; Lubotsky, 2007; Massey and Nalone, 2002; Sweetman and Waman, 2008; Wadhaw, 2008), access to capital and ethnic markets (Cummings, 1980; Kerr and Kerr, 2016; Light, 1972), Newness and Social Networks (Das et al., 2017; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000; ), Sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952), ethnic enclaves importance (Portes, 1981, 1984), ethnic protected markets (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990) and other theoretical discussions like middleman theory (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Bonachich, 1973; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016). With influencing factors impacting both internal and external strategic approaches coupled with foreign direct investment ideas (Buckley and Casson, 1998; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) from a macro level, researchers seek to find answers to how businesses adapt, sustain a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991), and navigate transaction costs (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1975) in hypercompetitive and dynamic markets worldwide (D'Aveni et al., 2010).

This study leveraged all the past macro-level, cross-disciplinary research to cross-examine those findings and theories with ethnicity and entrepreneurial studies to formulate this grounded theory view at the micro level for immigrant entrepreneurs. This grounded theory research separated itself from beliefs that a host country word like assimilation is achievable and proposed that certain ethnic groups of immigrants can become invisible among the native host country population in America even though they can acclimate. The researcher supports the view that no one group or individual immigrant can effectively assimilate (Glazer and Moynihan,
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1970, 1975) into one unified group called Americans. However, some groups, as seen in the literature, can acclimate rapidly and take advantage of their immigrant situation despite the factor of invisibleness as a barrier by the host system. If a group could assimilate and achieve this goal, one must ask, why can't the perceived Caucasian ethnic groups like Irish, French, Italian, German, and British assimilate into one group without centuries of warfare with each other? As the Swedish-American activist Joe Hill (1911) would say, it is a 'pie in the sky dream' to believe different ethnic groups can achieve host country assimilation. The research suggests the term, assimilation be replaced by acclimation as the correct term for the ethnic groups peaceably coexisting under one umbrella group called Americans. The context of the word, acclimation for this study comes from the principles in Glazer and Moynihan’s (1970) Northern Model discussed in more detail in Chapters 2, 4, and 5.

Contemporary business schools provide students and emerging entrepreneurs with incredible insights and publications linked to business theories, finance, or how to choose one of the many strategic approaches to mitigate a hypercompetitive (D'Aveni et al., 2010) business environment experiencing a continuous explosion of new entrants (Porter, 1985). The immigrant and native entrepreneurs at the grassroots level fall into the shadows of business school studies that focus instructions on things like multinational corporation case studies, human resources federal laws, theories on strategy, global economics, the foundations of organizational behavior applied to large businesses, understanding global supply chains, and or how to gain advantages through business plan innovation (Zott and Amit, 2010). Each of these areas of study is critical to understanding the broad and deep areas of business, but startup businesses are where it all starts.

Hollywood movies rarely show the current state of corporations like Apple, Facebook, or Starbucks; these movies or documentaries typically elaborate on the tale of a unicorn type of
founders and their story of starting a business that revolutionizes a market to become a popular culture household name. Few of these famous American movies reflect the reality of the fundamental underpinnings of the American economy; it is the millions of small businesses created by immigrants and natives with an almost innate entrepreneurial profile of attributes. The entrepreneur's story is fascinating, but understanding immigrant ethnic strategies and influencers behind the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship surges in the U.S. during a large influx of new immigrants is even more relevant (Carmarota and Zeigler, 2016).

With globalization and migration (Lee, 1966) continuing to increase dramatically across the globe and war in Eastern Europe, the lines of separation between various nation-states' supply chains, governmental economic policies, and national workforces are becoming blurred between nation-states. Thomas Friedman (2005) explained this in his book, The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century. The flat world Friedman (2005) referred to is demonstrated in the book by a modest illustration of how a laptop was conceived, developed, assembled, tested, and shipped to his doorstep (Friedman, 2005). In the almost twenty years since Friedman (2005) explained a flat world with global markets and diverse workers, globalization has made the workers and nation-states even more connected through the global market by linking research, development, employment, and maintenance of consumer products and services. With increased migration of talented individuals from home to host countries and the rise of globalization, immigrants are significantly impacting the foundation of many host countries' local economies. Many of these newly arrived entrepreneurs have brought from their home countries formally developed skills, experience, and network connections developed while working in the global supply chains. Findings from past research studies have identified that
many entrepreneurs are spillovers with explicit and tacit knowledge from working within the large corporation as members of the global supply chain (Hunt, 2011).

For this study on immigrant entrepreneurship in the United States, the research required a series of building blocks from past research results and scholarly publications to define the immigrant, immigrant entrepreneur, native, and a series of frameworks supporting the research. The initial building blocks established the foundation for the next layer of literature exploration on ecological effects on business development, the value of social networks (Uzzi, 1996), entrepreneurial mindset (Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018, 2021), ethnic enclaves (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Light, 1972; Porter, 1985), culture (Hofested, 1983; Hofstede and Minkov, 2010), and tacit knowledge from home to host countries influence the psychic distance (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) for the immigrant to use their predisposition factors almost as entrepreneurial intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018, 2021) to become successful entrepreneurs. The heavy labor of past research efforts was instrumental in providing the literature backbone for completing this research effort and developing the theoretical proposition presented in chapters four’s results and five’s reflections.

Questions that Guided the Research

RQ1. What facilitators and barriers do post-Soviet immigrants encounter when establishing a business in the United States?

RQ1a. Do post-Soviet Immigrant entrepreneurs encounter similar or disparate opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship activities compared to natives?
RQ1b. What does invisibleness mean to the post-Soviet Immigrant entrepreneur?
RQ1c. What is considered an initial success for the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?

RQ2. What factors contribute to continued business success for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs?
RQ2a. Are such factors related to constructs of invisibleness as an ethnic strategy?
RQ2b. What factors do modern networking tools like social media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.?
RQ2c. Are such factors related to constructs of continued Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success?

Definition of Terms

Acclimation
The belief that an immigrant or group of immigrants of different ethnicity and cultural heritages adapt to their interacting environment or situation in a host country. The ability to coexist without the host country's natives perceiving them as an outgroup.

Assimilation
The belief is that an immigrant or group of immigrants of different ethnicity and cultural heritages conform to the host country's traditions, language, and cultural norms.

Dehumanization
The act of treating out-group individuals as less than human by the in-group majority.

Post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneur
Any entrepreneur in the United States whose country of origin was directly influenced by the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) communist government before its dissolution in 1991. These participants come from the region now known as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland, Armenia, the Republic of Georgia, and other nation-states that comprise the 12 independent republics. This specific group of present-day United States immigrant/naturalized citizens migrated from this region in Eastern Europe prior to or after the collapse of the Soviet Union.
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Entrepreneur

For this research, Gunter's (2012) definition of an entrepreneur is used for this study: "any individual who, in an uncertain environment, recognize opportunities that most fail to see, and create ventures to profit by exploiting these opportunities."

Entrepreneurial Mindset

For this research, Neck’s (2018) definition of the entrepreneurial mindset is used: the courage to act on opportunities under varying conditions of unknowingness.

Entrepreneurial Success

Immigrant entrepreneurial success is a consolidation of participants' data using the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) model of four phases linked to the immigrant entrepreneurs' lifecycle transition periods from migration and establishment phases into a growth and sustainment phase mixed with a set standard for each of the participant's businesses having reached breakeven or profitability while maintaining business continuity for three plus years.

Ethnic Enclave

A set area where a specific ethnic group has clustered both socially and economically. An area distinctly different from other host country ethnic groups.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is the condition of belonging to a particular ethnic group, or group membership. Given the challenges with the study's cohort, the term is defined as a group with a shared cultural tradition and sense of identity as a more significant society subgroup. Petersen (1980) states, "Ethnic is an adjective that refers to differences between categories of people."
Immigrant

For this research study, the term immigrant is any individual who is a first-generation immigrant who arrived in America through the legal federal immigration process. These individuals have authorized refugee status and can be green card holders, children born in America from immigrant parents, or naturalized citizens. The study does not account for illegal immigrants operating noncertified and unregulated businesses within ethnic enclaves (Portes, 1987). This study uses the definition of immigrants by Kerr and Kerr (2016): "those persons born outside of the United States; immigrants may have later been naturalized and become citizens."

Invisibleness

The ability of an individual or group to conceal their ethnic, language, and cultural differences to a host country's native majority, to blend into the native populace unnoticed.

Decentralized Protective Network (i.e., Tribal what? Chain or another descriptor)

Networks that are closed to outside ethnic groups but distributed in the administrative functions of a central authority or concentrated areas used by individuals who share ethnic connections, language, and cultural similarity compared to a host country's native populace; to exchange information, knowledge, and build relationships for personal goal achievements during their lifecycle in a host country.

Push and Pull Factors

The term push and pull consists of the four factors Lee (1966) developed in his Migration theory. The four factors are areas of origin, areas of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. Push factors are why people leave their homes, and pull factors attract people from their homes to new locations.
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**White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP)**

This term refers to racially white individuals of British descent who were the wealthy elitist class in the United States during its early developmental years, The Founders of the American Constitution.

**Initial Conceptual Model**

An initial conceptual model was prepared to guide the research as shown in Figure 5. As the research progressed, this conceptual model evolved, and is reflected in subsequent sections of the study in Figures 8 and 13 in Chapter 2, and Figure 29 in Chapter 5.

![Figure 5: Initial Conceptual Model](image)

**Organization of the Remainder of the Study**

The remainder of this research study consists of Chapter 2 Literature Review, Chapter 3 Research Methodology, Chapter 4 Research Results, Chapter 5 Discussion, Implications, Recommendations, References, and the Associated Research Appendixes. Chapter 2 comprises an extensive literature review in the academic repository applicable to immigration entrepreneurship. The chapter features a series of theories, propositions, viewpoints, and
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frameworks on Immigration, Entrepreneurship, Ethnicity, and Culture. The chapter includes but is not limited to the Migration Theory, the North and South Model, the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Ethnic Enterprise, 3 Dimensions Framework, The Six Dimensions of Demands of Immigrants, the Ethnic Enclaves Viewpoint, the Protected Market Hypothesis, and several others. Chapter 3 encompasses the research methodology that includes this study's approach, design, and processes for collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data captured. Chapter 4 provides a detailed outline of the research findings by sequentially explaining the research challenges, participant profiles and their connections to the literature, demographics, coding methods and categories, model updates, thematic framework discussion, and novel insights. Chapter 5 encompasses the chapter overview, study contributions, discussions and implications, essential models, themes and propositions for the study, recommendations, limitations, and future research suggestions. The chapter concludes with a short narrative of the researcher's reflections. The remainder of the study's artifacts are all associated references and appendices.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

Overview

This chapter provides an in-depth and expansive examination of the vast literature encircling the topic of immigrant entrepreneurship. The chapter aims to align the literature in a concise and clear building block format to support the ideological underpinnings behind formulating a theoretical proposition for immigrant entrepreneurial success. The results of the research’s inductive approach moved the researcher from an initial view of invisibleness as a significant moderating variable for immigrant entrepreneurial success toward the importance of individual attributes generating a profile consistent with the past literature on the entrepreneurial mindset (Goldman, 2007; Neck 2018; Neck et al., 2021; Somers, 2022) and novel term, entrepreneurial intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck 2018; Neck et al., 2021) to explain immigrant entrepreneurial success. Invisibility as an influencing variable for the relationship between the immigrant and his/her entrepreneurial success in a host country was found in the immigrant’s entrepreneurial lifecycle. The details of the research findings are discussed later in chapter four. The consolidation and grouping of the various theories, models, viewpoints, and frameworks from the literature search for the research development of immigrant entrepreneurship is visually provided in Figure 6. The literature wheel in Figure 6 is structured from the individual working outward from host to home countries.
This literature review introduces three important intersecting topics to the study. These critical intersecting areas of literature findings or viewpoints on entrepreneurship and immigrant entrepreneurship are migration, ethnicity, and culture. Regardless of origin, people migrate large distances and overcome individual and societal challenges as they navigate the home and host country’s cultural, economic, and language differences in their journey to use their social capital, networks, and tacit knowledge to sustain entrepreneurial success in a host country. The chapter baskets the available literature into four sets on immigrant entrepreneurship. It expands on these literature sets to shape the context for this study’s overall purpose by including the two additional but applicable literature topics. Chapter 2 was a living document in this grounded theory approach as it impacted changes in the study’s chapters. As the study inductively collected the data from eighteen post-Soviet entrepreneurial participants in America, the literature for the
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The study was shaped and updated accordingly to the evolving data required to refine this study’s final theoretical proposition and conceptual model updates seen in chapters four and five. The major update to the study associated supporting literature was the unearthing of research findings for the entrepreneurial mindset (Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021; Somers, 2022) and a discovery of the novel term called Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck 2018; Neck et al., 2021) linked directly to the research findings of a consistent profile of attributes for the immigrant entrepreneur.

Questions That Guided the Research

The research on immigrant entrepreneurs is at the center of the following four intersecting areas of research: entrepreneurship, culture, ethnicity, and intervening obstacles associated with migration and the establishment of a business in a host country (Aldrich, 1985, 1990; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aslund et al., 2014; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Bonacich, 1973; Cummings, 1972; Das et al., 2017; Fairlie, 2012; Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; Glaser, 1975; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975; Goldman, 2007; Hofested,1983; Hofstede and Minkov, 2010; Hunt, 2011, 2015; Kerr and Kerr, 2016, 2018; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015; Lee, 1966; Light, 1972; Lofstrom, 2002; Lubotsky, 2007; Jasso et al., 2007; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009; Massey and Nalone, 2002; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020; Mohl, 1985; Neck, 2018; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Saxenian, 2000; Somers, 2022; Sweetman and Waman, 2008; Van der Sluis et al., 2008; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016; Yinger, 1985).

In 2020, immigrant startups have risen to 30 percent in the U.S. (Stillman, 2021), with research studies reporting immigrants are outpacing host country natives two to one in business startups (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Vandor and Franke, 2016). Therefore, the research goal was to advance the insight into this phenomenon through investigative research using a particular
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immigrant cohort of post-Soviet immigrants who entered the United States and rapidly acclimated to achieve initial and sustainable entrepreneurial business success. The research questions driving this inductive grounded theory research are:

**RQ1. What facilitators and barriers do post-Soviet immigrants encounter when establishing a business in the United States?**

- RQ1a. Do post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs encounter similar or disparate opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship activities compared to natives?
- RQ1b. What does Invisibleness mean to the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?
- RQ1c. What is considered an initial success for the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?

**RQ2. What factors contribute to continued business success for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs?**

- RQ2a. Are such factors related to constructs of Invisibleness as an ethnic strategy?
- RQ2b. What factors do modern networking tools like Social Media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.?
- RQ2c. Are such factors related to constructs of continued Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success?

**Entrepreneurship**

Before delineating the literature providing the groundwork for the initial theoretical development of this study, as represented in Figure 6, it is suitable to expound on what the literature expresses for the overarching umbrella of entrepreneurship. In 2000, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) conducted a study to deliver a conceptual framework for entrepreneurship. The researcher's framework for studying entrepreneurship started with the underpinnings of premises that aid in this study. The first explains that entrepreneurship activities are a 'conduit' for societies where technical information transforms into products and services (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Second, Shane and Venkataraman (2000) take from Drucker (1985) by
explaining that entrepreneurship activities identify and mitigate inefficiencies in each market by sensing disequilibrium within a society's economy at all levels (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Last, like the novel proposition for entrepreneurial intelligence (Envick, 2014) discussed in Chapter 5, researchers use Schumpeter (1934) and Mill (1848) to explain that entrepreneurial activities initiate change for societal advancements (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000).

Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) research reconfirmed Drucker's (1985) opportunity categories. The researchers discovered that entrepreneurs perceive different views on resources; they look at resources from a polling effect (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Asymmetry of information and an entrepreneur's beliefs are critical requirements regardless of the market conditions (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). These scholars found that diffusion, essential ownership of information, and the cognitive ability to value this information are critical for entrepreneurial success (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Another relevant finding by Shane and Venkataraman (2000), possibly associated with immigrant entrepreneurs, is the correlated topics of opportunity exploitation and ambiguity. Studies have shown that individuals with a higher tolerance for ambiguity are more likely to see and exploit opportunities with market inadequacies, while others are challenged with obscuration and thought clutter generated from unmanageable obstacles (Begey and Boyd, 1987; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Shane and Venkataraman (2000) help contribute to select underpinning for this study from their effort to develop a conceptual framework for the study of entrepreneurship.

**Immigrant Entrepreneur Success**

Defining success for an immigrant entrepreneur became increasingly complex when examining the literature. The study's unit of analysis is the success of the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur; therefore, defining what constitutes 'successes' for these individual entrepreneurs
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was critical. Consequently, it was imperative not to generalize the word success but to dissect the literature and restructure this multifaceted and dynamic word for this study.

The research literature consistently frames the firm's success into two areas, business establishment and business sustainment. Scholars have provided research findings on factors like education (Hunt, 2011), opportunity structures (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990), structural embeddedness (Kloosterman, 2010) linked to social networks (Uzzi, 1996), Social Capital (Gomez et al., 2020), and access to ethnic enclaves and resources (Cummings, 1980; Gonzalez and Campbell, 2018; Light, 1972; Portes, 1987). These are all ways to define success in the context of how and why certain immigrants are successful in the establishment of their businesses. Some scholars define success from the more traditional sequentially staged business mindset by examining a firm's establishment, survival rate beyond five years, and growth in the number of employees, capital, and wages (Churchill and Lewis, 1983; Kerr and Kerr, 2016). The baseline graduate-level business school literature provides instruction on success with topics like growth, liquidity, and strategic controls (Baron and Barbieri, 2019), with numerous theoretical discussions and models on how firms can sustain success. These business schools provide business success instruction through the prism of topics like sustained competitive advantages (Barney, 1991), innovation rents (Drucker, 1986; Miles et al., 2003), and achieving market positions over a firm's competitors using strategic approaches and tools like the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis framework, Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005) or employing Porter's (2008) five forces model. However, most of this literature in the repository focuses on industries and at the macro-level for firms. This research scaled macro-level findings to a micro-level by researching post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurial participants to examine and define success through their worldviews.
This study's hybrid definition of success originated from the academic literature and participants' perspectives using the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) framework, see Figure 7. The IEN framework is developed from the theoretical foundation in the theory of human motivation by Maslow (1943). Maslow's (1943) theory explained individuals are motivated by their need to fulfill immediate lower-level needs before becoming motivated to transition to higher level individual needs (Maslow, 1943). The four intersecting phases captured in the initial IEN framework consist of Subsistence, Personal, Social, and Growth. These factors are transitory in their priority level by the individual's motivation, as captured in Figure 7. Based on the immigrant entrepreneur desired goal for each phase and motivation level, each phase level is persuaded by exogenous pressures labeled as intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960) through a transitory three phased lifecycle for the immigrant entrepreneur.

The first initial phase in the IEN framework is Subsistence; it encompasses an individual or group's basic needs for survival through the migratory process from origin to destination and includes their basic sustainment needs as the immigrant establishes their existence in a host country. The second initial developed phase was labeled Personal; it was believed to be the core demand of the individual to meet their intended goals for successful migration and establishment from the home to host country. The third phase developed was labeled Social; this factor incorporates the immigrant entrepreneur's need to influence social capital, ethnic resources, and structural embeddedness within what was theoretically believed to be a decentralized protective market. The last phase was designated Growth. The Growth phases was conceptualized as the highest phase of success with a premise the immigrant entrepreneur desires increase in capital to employ their higher level of entrepreneurial goals directly connected to their experiences and
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influences as they transitioned in and out of phases. The entrance and exit criteria for each phase at the initial development of the research study was unknown. In chapter four results, the restructure of the IEN framework and exit and entry criteria for phase transitions defining an individual’s success realization for each phase are provided. Moreover, the preliminary IEN framework in was believed to be bidirectional. However, the findings in provided in Chapter Four did not validate the researcher’s initial assumption and aligned with Maslow’s (1943) directional position.

![Figure 7: Initial Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) Framework](image)

The hybrid definition used data derived from four traversing building block phases captured in the IEN framework as the immigrant entrepreneur moves through a three phased life cycle approach in their entrepreneurial activities as seen in the expanded final theoretical model in Figure 29 within Chapter 4. The initial two-phased lifecycle model in Figure 8 was developed before the data collection and analysis phases of the research, as follows. Figure 8 provides a visual consolidation of the preliminary theoretical model with an overlayed of the two research questions on initial and sustained success for the immigrant entrepreneur. The Figure 8 model is proposed as an illustration of the developmental process for the final theoretical model provided in Figure 29.
Stages of Success in IEN Framework

For a complete definition of success, the researcher used the four intersecting phases captured in the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) framework seen in Figure 7 as a tool to measure the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur testimonies for success. The IEN framework was updated in Chapter Four and shown again in Figure 25 after the research findings of misalignment with the data results. The IEN framework was created using the theoretical groundwork found in the theory of human motivation by Maslow (1943). Maslow's (1943) theory explains that individuals are motivated by a need to fulfill their immediate lower-level survival needs before becoming motivated to transition to the next higher level of individual needs (Maslow, 1943). The four intersecting factors in the IEN tool consist of Subsistence, Social, Growth, and Personal. The four phases of the IEN framework are transitory in a sequential priority level with entry and exit criteria as the immigrant entrepreneur transitions to the next higher level to achieve their motivational goals. Outside the individual motivation level, each factor's priority level is influenced by exogenous pressures labeled as intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960) encountered by immigrant
entrepreneurs throughout their entrepreneurial lifecycle as they navigate through three transitory phases in the updated theoretical model in Figure 29. The study discovered that two of the four transitory phases initially presented in Figure 8 do not align with the research findings.

The first factor in the IEN framework is Subsistence; it encompasses an individual or group's basic needs for survival through the migratory process from origin to destination and includes their basic sustainment needs as the immigrant establishes their existence in a host country. The second initial factor was considered personal; it was believed to be a core demand of the individual in meeting their intended goals for migrating from home to a host country. However, the researcher discovered that the personal phase was the highest level of the IEN framework as it was entwined to what these participants called ‘Personal Freedom.’ The update to the IEN model in Figure 8 is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four. Initially believed to be Social, the third factor became the second factor after the data findings. The Social factor incorporates the immigrant entrepreneur’s need to influence social capital, ethnic resources, and structural embeddedness within the decentralized protective market to grow their networks. However, if a decentralized ethnic network is limited or lacking, the need for the immigrant to build their host country's ethnic network becomes the social phase priority. The last factor was believed to be Growth. However, Growth became the third phase after initial entrepreneurial success because the immigrant desires here for increases in capital to employ a higher level of immigrant entrepreneurial goals directly connected to their Personal and Social factors with influences due to the subsistence factor experiences in the mobile and establishment phase.

Organization of the Remainder of the Chapter

The rest of the chapter is organized into six sections representing the literature. The literature review structure is in a sequential outline six-step model below in Figure 9, and briefly
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described in the paragraphs that follow. Each step is then explored in greater detail through a thorough synthesis of the relevant literature.

![Literature Review Six Step Model](image)

**Figure 9: Literature Review Six Step Model**

1. **Migration.** This section examined the literature on migration, predisposing attributes of individuals, entry and educational factors, and the intervening obstacles immigrants encounter on their pathway to entrepreneurship in the host country (Aslund et al., 2014; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Fairlie, 2012; Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Hunt, 2011, 2015; Lee, 1966; Lofstrom, 2002; Lubotsky, 2007; Jasso et al., 2007; Massey and Nalone, 2002; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020; Sweetman and Waman, 2008; Van der Sluis et al., 2008).

2. **Destination.** This section provided the study with literature theories on why immigrants start businesses and where these immigrants initially start their ethnic businesses (Achidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Audretsch et al., 2017; Cummings, 1980; Lewis, 2013; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015; Portes, 1987; Zhang et al., 2016).

3. **Protected Markets.** This section provided literature on how immigrants leverage mixed embeddedness and ethnic resources through decentralized protective networks to establish businesses within protected markets, all while managing interethnic competition to seize opportunities (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Das et al., 2017; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015;
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Kloosterman, 2010; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017).

4. **Open Market.** This section summarized the literature on how immigrant entrepreneurs gain access to open markets / nonethnic markets (Aldrich, 1985, 1990; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Bonacich, 1973; Light, 1972; Mohl, 1985; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016).

5. **Culture.** The section provided the study’s findings traceability to the literature on culture applicable to immigrant entrepreneurs (Hofested, 1983; Hofstede and Minkov, 2010; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). It is culture and ethnicity where immigrant entrepreneurship intersects with other theories and viewpoints of immigrant entrepreneurship (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cummings, 1972; Glaser, 1975; Glazer and Moynihan, 1963, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975; Light, 1972; Yinger, 1985; Hofested, 1983; Hofstede and Minkov, 2010; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009).

6. **Invisibleness.** The final section summarizes the relevant and conceptual framework developed for the study. However, this study's invisibility coincides with the literature but is executed as an advantage in the last stages of the immigrant entrepreneurs’ lifecycle, as seen in phase three of Figure 29. The initial phases of the updated theoretical model from the data findings in Chapter Four found invisibleness as an obstacle for immigrants, not an opportunity until after the immigrant entrepreneur has sustained their entrepreneurial success.

**Step 1: Migration**

In 1966, the scholar Everett Lee published what is now known as the theory of migration. Lee’s (1966) Theory of Migration is an extension of the British geographer Ernest Ravenstein’s "Laws of Migration," completed in 1889. Ravenstein (1885, 1889) presented and represented these laws after attaining twenty other countries' data beyond the 1881 British Census report to
the Royal Statistical Society in 1885 (Lee, 1966). Unfortunately, Ravenstein’s (1889) laws received little fanfare when he presented them to the Royal Statistical Society (Lee, 1966). Ravenstein’s (1889) Seven migration laws have held the test of time as the true bedrock for understanding migration, and Lee's (1966) building blocks for his theory on migration. Ravenstein’s (1989) Seven laws are in Figure 10.

RAVENSTEIN (1889) SEVEN LAWS OF MIGRATION

1) Migration and Distance – the center of absorption.
2) Migration in Stages – settle in the centers of commerce and industry.
3) Stream and Counter-Stream – each Migration produces a compensating counter-stream.
4) Urban and Rural differences in propensity to migrate – natives of towns are less migratory than rural.
6) Technology and migration – development of industry and manufacturing increases in migrants.
7) The dominance of the economic motive – oppressive laws, high taxes, bad climate, and unwelcoming social surroundings- increases migration events, men more for economic prosperity reasons.

Figure 10: Ravenstein’s Seven Laws of Migration

Lee’s (1966) conceptual model follows in Figure 11. Lee’s (1966) theory of migration accounts for what he devised as the push and pull factors influencing individuals’ or groups’ decisions to migrate. Not only do the push and pull factors influence migration decisions, but they also influence the migration process, including the assimilation of migrants at a destination of choice.

Figure 11: Lee’s Theory of Migration

Lee (1966) consolidated his push and pull factors into the following four categories: (1) Factors associated with the area of origin, (2) factors associated with the area of destination, (3) Intervening Obstacles, and (4) Personal Factors. Lee (1966) explained that the first three factors
are in his model, with pluses (i.e., positive) and minuses (negative) displayed for the multitude of reasons that attract or repel individuals. Furthermore, Lee (1966) explains that his model consists of zeros. The zeros represent ‘indifferent’ factors because all people at varying class levels (i.e., education, marriage, and financial status) react differently to a given set of personal factors. Lee (1966) goes on to explain. “Persons living in an area have an immediate and often long-term acquaintance with the area and can make considered and unhurried judgments regarding them” (p.50). Lee’s (1966) theory of migration sets no condition on distance but includes distance as an intervening obstacle since the knowledge of a destination is rarely complete. Lee (1966) explains, “Migration is defined broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act” (p.49). Lee (1966) continues, “No matter how short or how long, how easy or how difficult, every act of migration involves an origin, a destination, and an intervening set of obstacles” (p.49). Lee’s theory of migration is the entry point into this research study’s literature review, given that the study is on immigrant entrepreneurs. Using Gunter’s (2012) definition of entrepreneurs for this study on immigrant entrepreneurs, these individuals circumnavigate through uncertain environments to employ their social capital, networks, and ethnic resources to overcome continuous intervening obstacles. These immigrants employ ethnic strategies to mitigate negative factors to seize market opportunities in a host country (i.e., destination) (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Kerr and Kerr, 2016; Lee, 1966; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017).

Expanding on the ideologies contained in Lee’s (1966) migration theory, the following section examines the building blocks for an immigrant’s predisposition factors and the associated
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intervening obstacles to entry and establishment of the immigrant at the destination (i.e., United States).

**Predisposing Factors, and Behavior, Reasoned Action and Planned Behavior Theories**

The context of predisposing factors for this study is any human capital factors (i.e., motives and ambition) developed by an immigrant at their origin by association with a group’s social and cultural orientation before and after the execution of the migratory process to a new nation-state’s ethnic enclave entry point (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982; Portes, 1987). According to Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), “By predisposing factors, we mean the skills and goals that individuals and groups bring with them to an opportunity” (p.122). Nevertheless, the definition of predisposing factors can get intertwined with the topic of predisposition in the literature as that term trends toward medical field research. For this research study, predisposing factors apply to an immigrant’s profile of attributes in their worldview, intentions, and behavior shaped by their home country’s group membership. The literature provides a theoretical position on how an individual can have shaping factors at origin that become associated with the immigrant’s entrepreneurial attitude and behavioral controls (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) in this study’s exploration of understanding why this post-Soviet cohort can migrate and achieving rapid acclimation and are motivated to entrepreneurial success in the United States. Like all individuals, the immigrant cohort for this study carries a set of predisposed attributes derived from cultural influences that impact and shape the individual's attitude, worldview, intention, and executing behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Hofstede, 1983, 1985, 2011). The literature used for this study was derived from the researchers Lewin's (1936) behavior equation and Ajzen's (1967, 1985, 1991) theories of Planned Behavior and Reasoned Action captured in Figure 31. Lewin's (1936, 1951) and Ajzen's (1967, 1985, 1991) works assisted in expanding the researcher's
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investigation to frame the criteria of what constitutes 'predisposing factors' and the executable intentions and behavioral controls for an immigrant entrepreneur's human capital (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982).

Lewin (1936) initially developed the concept of field theory derived from adapting the Gestalt principles to show that people are a system of systems. From Lewin's (1936, 1951) work, he developed a behavior equation known as the Lewin equation. Lewin's (1936, 1951) equation explains that Behavior (B) is equal to the function (f) of personal traits (P) and one's environment (E). Lewin’s (1936, 1951) equation is mathematically shown as B=f(P, E). Lewin (1936, 1951) explains the relationship between an individual's attributes, environment, and behavior. Using Lewin's (1936, 1951) equation to understand that characteristics and the individual's environment can influence these immigrants' entrepreneurial behavior, it is the work of Ajzen (1967, 1985, 1991) that links an individual's behavior to attitude and their perceived behavioral controls.

For conciseness and clarity, Ajzen’s (1967, 1985, 1991) two theories are presented sequentially in their development. First, Ajzen and Fishbein (1967) developed a theory called Reasoned Action. The theory proposes an association between an individual’s attitudes and behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen’s (1967) theory predicts that an individual’s behaviors are derived from their pre-existing attitudes and behavioral purposes; then, individuals will decide to execute a specific behavior if they feel they will achieve a desired outcome from the behavior. Therefore, considering Lee’s (1966) personal factor and aligning with Ajzen’s (1985, 1991) theoretical works, a post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur in the U.S. executes the behavior of migrating from their origin (i.e., U.S.S.R Controlled territories) to a destination (i.e., United States) due to their attitude and social acceptance. Ajzen’s (1967, 1985) theoretical concepts are captured in the rings of the literature taxonomy in Figure 6. Second, Ajzen (1985, 1991) expands on the original
theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1967) with the theory of planned behavior by updating the original model with what is called perceived behavioral control (PBC). According to Awotoye and Singh (2018) on Ajzen’s (1985) theory, “a person’s behaviors is predicted by their intentions, intentions are predicted by one’s attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (PBC).”

When dissecting Ajzen’s (1985) theory, attitudes are an individual’s assessment (i.e., positive or negative) of their planned behavior. Subjective norms capture whether a social group's interpretation of a chosen behavior is acceptable. The third term of perceived behavioral control (PBC) is the individual’s perceptions of the difficulty level in executing the behavioral activity. The term intention mediates the effects of attitude and subjective norms on behavior. (Ajzen, 1985; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Kautonen et al., 2015). During the research, the study explored whether the host and home societal factors associated with the post-Soviet participants create an interpretation of their chosen behavior based on their societal past. The cohort explained in their testimonies of the home environment as restricted and corrupt under the Soviet regime reducing their ability to opportunistic pursuits with prestige only afforded to the nobility dependent on heredity and wealth or those in favor of the hierarchy Communist Government (Glazer et al., 1975). They would execute a behavior to migrate after the push factor of the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991 and economic instability for opportunities in the United States because this became acceptable amongst their social groups. Ajzen’s (1985, 1991) theoretical proposition was confirmed in the researcher’s data findings discussed in Chapter 4. The participants explained their perceptions of pull factor opportunities in host countries outside the U.S.S.R. The participants perceived that they owned superior tacit knowledge developed during the Communist party years (Snow, 1959), and this knowledge allowed them to trust their ability
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to circumvent any intervening obstacles associated with a host country's cultural distance (Hofstede, 1983, 1985, 201x; Lee, 1966).

The literature provided evidence supported by the research findings that an immigrant’s behavior is predicted by their intention. If intentions are in search of entrepreneurial success, then the immigrant entrepreneur’s intention is predicted by their attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). Furthermore, an immigrant entrepreneur’s PBC allows these individuals to handle higher stress levels than U.S. natives (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). Awotoye and Singh (2018) proposed resilience as the moderating variable between stress and entrepreneurial intentions for immigrant entrepreneurs, all within the backdrop of PBC (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The principles behind Ajzen's (1985) theory on PBC and Lewin's (1936, 1951) equation for behavior were critical theoretical positions for defining the entry and exit criteria in the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) model phases for assessing the data captured in this study.

**Entry Factors – Visa Type and Education**

An immigrant’s visa category is the first area of discussion when examining an immigrant’s entry into a host country after migrating from their origin. The United States, like other developed nation-states, has created a series of visa categories to include special visas along with entry requirements to entice immigrant entrepreneurs (Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015). Policymakers in advanced nation-states like the United States recognize the significance of immigrant entrepreneurship in assisting their host country’s economic development, supporting employment opportunities, and positively impacting market innovation (Lofstrom, 2017). The literature reveals that these immigrant businesses enhance immigrant labor market assimilation into the open market (Cummings 1980). When approaching the topic of visa type at entry for an
immigrant’s projected success in a host country, the literature reveals a correlation between visa type at entry and the predictors for entrepreneurship traits of the immigrant (Hunt, 2011; Kerr and Kerr, 2016). Hunt (2011) discovered that the performance of immigrants who entered the United States on work and student visas outpaced natives by 18.2 percent in wage earnings and patenting and commercializing. Hunt’s (2011) research found a correlation between entrepreneurial success in niche markets to the immigrant’s explicit knowledge associated with their specific skill training, including a master’s or doctoral education. Hunt (2011) explains, “who arrive as graduate students considerably, to a statistically significant 1.2 percentage point advantage over natives. these results point to such immigrants having a niche in startups founded on advanced technical knowledge” (p. 22).

Hunt (2011) explains that naturalized immigrants outperform natives in wage earnings. However, Hunt (2011) found evidence that immigrants who entered the family unification process or as dependents perform equally or less than natives in the United States. Hunt’s (2011) research implies that age and skill level factors weaken or strengthen an immigrant’s economic and entrepreneurial success in the United States. Therefore, home country predisposing factors influence an immigrant’s entrepreneurial achievements. To validate this statement, Hunt (2011) explains, “All entry visa groups would earn the same as or more than similar natives had they arrived as children and acquired only U.S. degrees” (p. 28). As the literature has shown, education and training from the home country and additional host country learning give immigrants an advantage over natives in their entrepreneurial endeavors and overall wage earnings. The researcher used Hunt’s (2011) research findings to develop specific participant interview questions and cross-examine the data findings. All the post-Soviet participants in this study received a formal education, with most having graduate degrees from their home country.
Intervening Obstacles and Dehumanization Theories

Intervening obstacles are commonly known as situations or events that can cause an individual or group an obstruction. This study’s definition of ‘Intervening Obstacles’ is taken from Lee’s (1966) explanation developed from leveraging Stouffer’s (1960) theory on intervening opportunities. According to Lee (1966), “Between every two points, there stands a set of intervening obstacles which may be slight in some instances and insurmountable in others; the effect of a given set of obstacles also depends upon the impediments with which the migrant is encumbered” (p. 51). Intervening obstacles can be access to capital, language barriers, and isolation from a group majority that shapes into a strict line of discrimination by natives in a host country. There are limitless obstacles all individuals face throughout their lives. This research focused on one insurmountable obstacle, in particular, that immigrants have always faced, dehumanization effects by natives. Restructured dehumanization can take on the connotation of racism by an outside group, as experienced over the centuries by African Americans, Asians, Italians, Puerto Ricans, Jews, and Irish in the United States (Cummings, 1980; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975; Light, 1972). However, the data revealed inadequate dehumanization factors by host country natives toward post-Soviet immigrants, as discussed in chapter four.

At face value, dehumanization in the word itself explains what it means (i.e., less than human). The literature emphasized dehumanization concerns for immigrants trying to navigate their way through a host country onto entrepreneurial opportunities (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020; Waytz, 2012). Markowitz and Slovic (2020) explain that dehumanization is a social process of how some individuals judge and make extrapolations about others. These researchers explain that individuals who behave, speak, and look like the host group majority will be
perceived positively from the host group’s vantage point (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020), linking their positions to assimilation. However, those individual migrants who do not look, speak, or act like the group majority will take on the perception of negativity and face a series of insurmountable obstacles unnecessarily (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). According to Markowitz and Slovic (2020), “Dehumanization toward immigrants is a pressing and unrelenting issue across the globe” (p. 9268). The literature provided four theoretical frameworks to use in the data analysis that make up the overall construct of dehumanization for any findings. The first theoretical perspective is the Infrahumanization Theory (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020; Waytz, 2012). This theory explains that dehumanized individuals or groups are intentionally denied derived emotions (i.e., uniquely human characteristics like nostalgia) as a tacit form of dehumanization by the out-group while simultaneously giving these secondary emotions to in-groups (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020; Waytz, 2012).

The second framework is called the ‘Dual Perspective of Humanness’ (Haslam, 2006; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). The Dual Perspective of Humanness theory for dehumanization combines two perspectives, as Markowitz and Slovic (2020) explain. According to Markowitz and Slovic (2020), “In the first perspective, if people are denied human uniqueness, they are perceived as animals without ‘refinement, self-control, intelligence, and rationality.’” Dehumanization behaviors lead certain groups to explicit metaphors about the targeted dehumanized groups, such as Jew and Hispanic immigrants being called parasites and leeches. In the research, several post-Soviet participants referenced other ethnic groups in the U.S. aside from host natives as projecting dehumanization behaviors onto them. In the second perspective, if people are denied human nature, they are objectified and perceived as instruments in society. The dual perspective of humanness is unique because it proposes human-object and human-
animal distinctions and suggests that humanness is orthogonal on two dimensions (i.e., Human Uniqueness and Human Nature).

The 'Dehumanized Perception' theory is the third framework for the dehumanization concept (Harris and Fiske, 2006; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). This theory is explained as a cognitive perspective where the in-group’s intentional cognition fails to recognize or acknowledge the individual or out-group (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). This theory is close to the past concept of the “Invisible Man” assigned to black Americans without a job and not accounted for in the U.S. census (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). According to Glazer and Moynihan (1970), “In the 1960s, the black Invisible Man became the working class and the middle class, people who had been leaders in their communities, they were now pushed aside by young militants, who were supported by white mass media and some white political leaders.”

Invisibility or dehumanized perception is negative if given to an immigrant by the in-group versus an immigrant using the idea of invisibleness as a positive ethnic strategy to offer them concealment within the native populace in a host country.

The fourth and final theoretical framework on dehumanization is called the ‘Mind Perception’ (Gray et al., 2007; Haslam and Loughnan, 2014; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). The literature explains this framework as immigrants or out-groups are believed to lack the compacity of cognitive freedom and agency (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). The definition of mind perception restated is that dehumanized individuals or out groups are believed to lack the ability to execute higher thinking and act rationally within the norms of society by in-groups (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). The study’s overall premise is that dehumanization toward immigrants creates the various barriers immigrant entrepreneurs encounter in a host country. Dehumanization can lead to increased barriers to entrepreneurial success by denying access to
capital, inhibiting social media networks, increasing liability to newness, reducing trust by natives, access to markets and resources, assimilation, and acceptance of education credentials (Aldrich, 1985; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cummings, 1980; Glazer et al., 1975; Kerr and Mandorff, 2015; Lewis, 2013; Light, 1972; Mohl, 1985). As discussed in chapter four, the participants provided little testimony to support the theoretical framework on dehumanization by most host natives. The study discovered that the immigrant entrepreneur’s challenge of being an outgroup member was perceived by the host country system and other immigrant groups, not natives.

**Northern and Southern Models**

The last literature topic applicable as an intervening obstacle is the two conceptual models called Northern and Southern by Glazer and Moynihan (1970) to explain the dynamic and challenging native environment of group relationships immigrants face when they enter and sustain themselves in the United States. Glazer’s and Moynihan’s (1970) model, on the one hand, attacks the concept of assimilation as unachievable with their bipolar choice model called Southern while offering up another model called Northern as a means for ethnic groups to acclimate together and peacefully coexist. According to Glazer’s and Moynihan’s (1970) definition of the Southern Model, “In the Southern Model, society is divided into two segments, white and black. The line between them is rigidly drawn. Other groups must choose to which segment they belong, even if, as many Southern Jews felt, they do not really want to quite belong to either” (p. 23).

Glazer and Moynihan (1970) explain the Northern model: "The Northern Model is quite different; there are many groups. They differ in wealth, power, occupation, values, but in effect, an open society prevails for individuals and groups, over time, a substantial and rough
equalization of wealth and power can be hoped for even if not attained, and each group participates sufficiently in the goods and values and social life of a common society so that all can accept the common society as good and fair” (p. 23). Glazer and Moynihan (1970) allude to their model concerning the U.S. historical past, where the northeast and west coasts of the U.S. fostered a Northern style model, and the Southern and Midwest regions of America fostered more of a Southern-style model. Regardless, assimilation was challenged and recommended from the data findings for replacement with the term acclimation.

All immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs are challenged with this intervening societal obstacle amongst regional differences and social tribalism of the native populace in America when they look to employ ethnic strategies for business startup, sustainment, and expansion to open markets. The Northern and Southern Models in the literature offer up the concept of choice by the immigrant entrepreneur to willingly choose to be invisible as a concealment advantage to reduce threats correlated to barriers by natives as an ethnic strategy for entrepreneurial success. However, the overarching host system can project invisibleness onto an immigrant in their early stages of redevelopment in a host country. If the host country system projects invisibility onto the individual immigrant, it is an obstacle and not an employed ethnic strategy for their goal of attaining success.

**Six Dimensions of Demand Framework**

Aroian et al. (1998) provided a framework called the six dimensions of demands faced by immigrants in the United States. These six dimensions are considered obstacles immigrants face while adjusting to a host country. Aroian et al. (1998) six dimensions are loss, novelty, occupational adjustment, language barriers, discrimination, and not feeling at home (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The first dimension of loss is an unresolved attachment to the origin of the
immigrants (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The next novelty dimension is the liability of newness or strangeness to the host country (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The third dimension, called an occupational adjustment, deals with an immigrant’s challenges in seeking employment or being viewed as having a lower status by natives (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The fourth dimension of language is the immigrant’s perception of their ability to speak English relative to natives (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The fifth dimension, discrimination, is the effects of dehumanization (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). The last dimension of not feeling at home is the immigrants' perception of feeling like a stranger (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The literature explains that an immigrant’s perception of not feeling at home in a host country is referred to as sojourning (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952). Awotoye and Singh (2018) leverage the six-dimension framework by Aroian et al. (1998) to present a theoretical proposition that immigrant entrepreneurs have higher stress tolerance levels due to these interviewing obstacles over natives; therefore, high perceived behavioral controls of stress are correlated to entrepreneurship success for immigrants. The study supported the researcher’s positions found in the literature.

Step 2: Destination

Once a newly minted immigrant has successfully arrived in America and established a foothold, they begin navigating through their new environment, socially learning the host country's norms, and wargaming their forecasted entrepreneurial goals. However, stepping back to the point of entry at the destination, the past literature findings are supported by the research results that an initial immigrant choice of location settlement is based on their tribal network, shared knowledge, and access to initial ethnic resources (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Cummings, 1980; Light, 1972; Portes, 1981; Uzzi, 1996).
Ethnic Enclave, Sojourning Orientation and Linkage to Predisposing Attributes

As defined in Chapter 1, ethnic enclaves are specific areas within a host country where ethnic groups cluster socially and economically. It is this area that is distinct from other host country ethnic groups. Portes (1981) coined the term “immigrant enclave” and provided a theoretical concept containing two characteristics. Portes (1981) explains that the first characteristic of an immigrant enclave is a clustering of immigrant-owned businesses that employ the same ethnic group members. The second characteristic of these enclaves is what Portes (1981) called the spatial clustering of enterprises. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) expand on Portes' (1987) work by explaining that group characteristics provide ‘opportunity structures’ for entrepreneurial access. According to Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), “Group characteristics are emphasized by researchers concerned with why particular ethnic groups are disproportionately concentrated in ethnic enterprises (Portes, 1987). We have identified two dimensions of group characteristics: predisposing factors and resource mobilization” (p.122). As described earlier in step one, predisposing factors impact entrepreneurial motivation and entry points at the destination.

The ethnic enclaves in a host country allow for the immigrant to use their tacit knowledge, predisposing attributes, and cultural norms from their origin for migration area selection. This selective migration is found in the literature on studies about educated Cubans fleeing Castro’s takeover of Cuba and the post-1965 influx of white-collar Koreans into America (Perez, 1986; Min, 1988). These studies explain that immigrants’ selectiveness in migrating to their destination correlates to individual predisposing factors and characteristics (Perez, 1986; Min, 1988). The literature explains that immigrants will migrate to ethnic enclaves because the enclave provides not only a semi-alignment with the immigrant’s local home markets but offers
access to co-ethnic buyers and the ability to use their embedded networks for the immigrant entrepreneurs (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Gurau et al., 2020). This initial entry point allows a new immigrant entrepreneur to expand their embedded co-ethnic networks and resources. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) explain ethnic resources using Light’s (1984) model as “any and all features of their ethnic group that potential owners can use, such as cultural endowments, reactive solidarity, and sojourning orientation” (p.127). Step two in the literature shapes the conditions for step three (i.e., Protected Market Hypothesis and Interethnic Competition) and step four (i.e., access to nonethnic markets / open market entry) outlined in Figure 7 at the beginning of this chapter.

In closing step 2 of this literature review, intervening obstacles are added to the discussion. These ethnic enclaves provide a safe harbor for new and legacy immigrants who cannot acclimate with the host country’s natives. Many immigrants remain with ideological perception as temporary visitors within these ethnic enclaves and are described as sojourning immigrants (Siu, 1952). The literature explains sojourning as an immigrant who never fully accepts his or her place in a host country. According to Siu (1952), “an immigrant who clings to the culture of his own group and who is unwilling to organize himself as a permeant resident in the country of his sojourn” (p.34). Light (1972) expanded on the topic of sojourning by stating, “Discrimination and minority status are unique features of sojourner life in America” (p.103). Though the ethnic enclaves offer a sense of comfort and safe harbor to immigrant groups (Light, 1972), they are not without the challenges of intervening obstacles associated with establishing a business, interethnic competition, and rivalry over resources and customers (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990).
Nevertheless, it is the ethnic enclaves that produce the initial relationships between the immigrant entrepreneur and co-ethnic and native networks (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). The discussion of the literature on ethnic enclaves is introduced in this literature review but initially not deemed as critical in supporting a theory for advantages of invisibleness as an ethnic strategy. The term invisible (i.e., rapidly acclimating into a host country without native awareness) was believed to support immigrant entrepreneurs in initiating entrepreneurial activities by leveraging ethnic enclaves that provide access to co-ethnic group customers and networks that participate within the protected market (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). However, the study found that in the initial stages of the immigrant’s entrepreneurial lifecycle, they desire to be visible in the host country by the system and natives. Invisibility, if utilized by the post-Soviet immigrant in the later stage of entrepreneurial success when dealing with the host system, was found to have a positive connotation for the participants. However, invisibleness can be applied negatively to the immigrant by a native populace, as African Americans have experienced for over a century (Light, 1972).

**Step 3: Protected Market Hypothesis**

In step 1 of the literature review information was provided on why immigrants migrate from home to host countries, predisposing factors, education, visa considerations, and a discussion on intervening obstacles and opportunities. Step 2 provided information on ethnic enclaves to explain why immigrants mass together in particular locations with co-ethnic groups inside a host country to leverage their human capital (i.e., tacit knowledge) and networks for mobilizing ethnic resources to employ opportunistic strategies. It is the ethnic enclave that generates co-ethnic markets where an immigrant entrepreneur outside of venture capital backing can build capital and expand networks for access to the open market while retaining dedicated
access to a co-ethnic customer base (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). However, though the literature on ethnic enclaves is critical in the evolution of an immigrant entrepreneur in a host country, it is the ‘Protective Market Hypothesis’ developed by Light (1972) within these ethnic enclaves that provide immigrant entrepreneur the ability to leverage ethnic resources and employment of a set ethnic strategy. Light’s (1972) Protected Market is explained as the initial market for immigrant entrepreneurs within an ethnic enclave; these protected markets serve the needs of co-ethnic customers that the immigrant entrepreneur can leverage. According to Cummings (1980):

The idea that distinct ethnic groups produce, distribute, and consume resources is largely alien to orthodox modes of economic thought. As is emphasized in a widely used economic text, “Economics is based upon facts concerning the activities of individuals and institutions in producing, exchanging, and consuming goods and services.” Here “institutions” refers to business and commercial establishments, as well as the banking and financial communities. The fact that immigrant groups created explicit economic institutions for the purpose of influencing the distribution of income and wealth and expanding employment opportunities has largely escaped the attention of most economists. In most economics texts one finds no mention of immigrant banks or credit unions, mutual benefit societies or fraternal, cooperation or lodges, or collectively owned commercial and agricultural operations. (p.8).

Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) expand on Light's (1972) and Cumming’s (1980) work on protected markets and self-help by developing a conceptual framework with three interactive components to provide additional insight into ethnic business creation. The words, immigrant and ethnic group are interchangeable in literature. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) offer a conceptual framework allowing additional linkage to the preceding literature. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) call their framework’s three interacting components: opportunity structures, group characteristics, and strategies. As immigrant entrepreneurs operate within an ethnic enclave that provides access to protected markets, the immigrant observes favorable co-ethnic market conditions (i.e., opportunity structures) by leveraging their predisposing factors (i.e.,
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group characteristics) to overcome intervening obstacles by employing ethnic strategies as immigrants learn to adapt to their environments (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Lee, 1966).

The Decentralized Network and Market

Initially, the researcher asked, can a protective market be decentralized? Merriam-Webster dictionary defines 'decentralized' as the dispersion or distribution of functions and powers, the delegation of power from a central authority to regional and local authorities, and the redistribution of population and industry from urban centers to outlying areas (Merriam-Webster, 2022). This idea of decentralized presents a research inquiry in 2023; with social media now global and imperfect nation-state border constraints on social media, are the historically centralized ethnic enclaves with controlled, protected markets transitioned to a decentralized status? The data revealed that in 2023, the emergence of increased acceptance for social media platforms like Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are now leveraged globally by post-Soviet immigrants for rapid information sharing and exchanging of goods and services. Therefore, social media is aiding immigrants to mitigate host country obstacles by offering new co-ethnic decentralized protective markets and networks for their entrepreneurial activities. This study is coining the terms 'decentralized protective market and network.' The participants’ testimonies supported the researcher's position to confidently argue that co-ethnic protective markets and networks function in 2023. Modern technology provides access to distributed ethnic resources, networks, and customers across the United States, requiring little to no capital investment or time. The literature search found no research that coins ‘decentralized protective market or network.’ Therefore, one of the underlying theoretical positions in this study was the belief that a large decentralized protective ethnic market and network assists post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial
activities. Decentralized and distributed protective co-ethnic markets and tribal networks are helping post-Soviet immigrants in their ability to carry out advanced entrepreneurial activities even within a system that can project invisibility onto the immigrant in their early stages of host country entry and business startup. The study’s results supported an initial theoretical position of decentralized protective markets and ethnic networks supporting the immigrant in learning the host language and system for rapid acclimation and system use. Access to the decentralized protective market through ethnic networks assists an immigrant in overcoming intervening obstacles through information sharing and access to resources that historically took many years to achieve in the centralized urban ethnic enclave centers. The contemporary brick-and-mortar urban ethnic enclaves for post-Soviets still support immigrant startups, but most have transitioned into a social retreat center over ethnic support areas.

**Step 4: Open Market**

Through this literature review, the chapter provides a sequential approach to the various research findings to show a linkage between migration to destination and immigrant startups. Step 4 expands on the literature by explaining the theoretical propositions and views behind an immigrant entrepreneur’s movement from the protected market into the open market. This expansion into the open market for the immigrant entrepreneur was found to coincide with the IEN phases associated with growth and personal.

**Middleman Minority Theory**

Several of the theories supporting this research on post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurship have been presented in discussions on ethnic enclaves (Alchidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Portes, 1981; Zhang et al., 2016), selective migration (Audretsch et al., 2017; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Perez, 1986; Min; 1988) and research
findings on social capital, networks and use of ethnic resources (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Light 1972, 1984; Gurau et al., 2020; Sanders and Nee, 1996). This step in the literature findings will introduce the Middleman Theory (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Bonacich, 1973; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016).

According to Aldrich and Waldinger (1990):

*The classic model of middleman minorities, as refined by Bonacich (1973) and others, includes three traits characterizing a group’s cultural patterns: first, sojourner orientation to their host country; second, distinctive social and cultural characteristics that promote solidarity communities; and third distinctive economic traits, including a concentration in entrepreneurial roles, a tendency to keep capital liquid, and a preference for kin and co-ethnic labor.* (p.125)

The theory of the middleman minority continues to be constantly debated (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Jain, 1988; Light and Bonacich, 1988; Rischin, 1962; Wong, 1987;). In simple terms, a middleman minority is used to explain how immigrant/ethnic entrepreneurs can provide a linkage between protected markets and the open markets of a host country. This term gets its historical context from the days after the abolishment of slavery when WASP ruling elites leveraged certain Black business owners to exchange goods into protected markets (Bonacich, 1973; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). Middleman theory was minimally discovered in the research data findings.

**Step 5: Culture: Psychic Distance and Cultural Distance**

When a discussion on culture occurs, three collaborative building blocks define cultural differences among ethnic groups of different nation-states. Johanson and Vahlne (1977) developed the first building block for this research by advancing the term Psychic Distance (PD) in their research on business' foreign direct investment decisions. Johanson and Vahlne (1977) explain psychic distance as the measure of impediments to the flow of information between
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ethnic groups (i.e., buyers and suppliers). When exploring the impact of psychic distance on immigrants who choose to migrate from their origin to a host country destination, researchers found evidence that common language, country-specific international experience, and education aided in the reduction of the psychic distance perceptions of an immigrant (Ambosa et al., 2019).

With the many challenges associated with intervening obstacles, as explained in Step 2 of this chapter’s literature review and Figure 29, immigrant entrepreneurs can circumvent obstacles like the impediment of host system information and language understanding. The immigrant entrepreneur can do this by leveraging embedded host country co-ethnic networks, decentralized protected market access, language connections, international experience, and a tribal linkage to ethnic enclaves that provide access to protected and open markets within host countries.

**Cultural Dimensions**

The following culture topic incorporates the Cultural Dimensions Model by Hofstede (1983, 1985, 2011), represented below in Figure 12. Hofstede’s (1983, 1985, 2011) model’s six dimensions criteria is captured in the literature wheel shown in Figure 6 at the beginning of Chapter Two in the rings designated for home and host country segments.

![Figure 12: Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Model](image)

Hofstede (2011) believed that culture results from the collective programming of an individual’s mind. It is these individuals that make up the collective ethnic groups. Hofstede
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(1983, 1985, 2011) created the conceptual framework called six dimensions to explain the variance between one ethnic/cultural group from another; they are Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism/Collectivism, Masculinity/Femininity, Long/Short Term Orientation, and Indulgence/Restraint (Hofstede, 2011).

The third term described in the literature is Cultural Distance (CD), developed by Hofstede (2001, 2011). Cultural Distance is the level of difference between two cultural groups’ norms and values (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede (1983, 1985, 2011) expanded his original four dimensions concept to six to identify the cultural distance between different countries (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011). These six dimensions can act as intervening obstacles, as displayed in the literature for immigrant entrepreneurs operating in a host country.

**Step 6: Invisibleness and the Invisible Man**

The literature investigation on invisibleness found the term associated with a topic called the ‘Invisible Man’ (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). The invisibility is rarely found as a positive connotation in the literature findings. In the literature on Black ethnic groups, invisibility is a negative suggestion that becomes closely associated with inequality (Bryce Laporte, 1972). Afar with the association of invisibility and inequality, the term continues to be associated with the 1960s Invisible Man. The Invisible Man is the intentional act of a majority group to ignore a specific ethnic group, historically applied to African American, Chinese, and Puerto Rican group members (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970).

According to Glazer and Moynihan (1970):

> The Invisible Man once meant the black man without a job, without a home, truly invisible, not even counted in the census. In the 1960’s, the black Invisible Man became the working class and the middle class, people who had been leaders in the communities. They were now pushed aside by young militants, who were supported by white mass media and some white political leaders. Thus, a good deal of the practical, effective
working in raising the income and power of individual blacks and of the black communities was totally ignored by whites and blacks (p. 54).

Invisibility can be changed to an advantage from the Invisible Man’s negative perspective by individuals. If individuals use invisibility instead of it projected onto them like the Invisible Man position, then using invisibility to acclimate among a host native majority group could reduce barriers for the immigrant in the host country. The term invisibleness in this research used the optimistic view versus a negative connotation for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs initiating their entrepreneurial activities. It was initially believed that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs used invisibility to host natives while leveraging ethnic markets and networks that provide access to co-ethnic group customers and networks that participate within the protected and open markets (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). Invisibility was examined to see if it was utilized opportunistically by the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur in the host country. Therefore, the post-Soviet immigrant was thought to use invisibility as a strategic approach versus the act of inequality occurring to a specific ethnic group by a native majority group. The study did find immigrants as an ‘invisible man’ by the host system in the first two phases of the updated theoretical model in Figure 29. Invisibility was more of a cultural norm and not leveraged as an advantage until the post-Soviet immigrant achieved high financial success and wanted to hide from the host system and natives.

Some literature references immigrant ethnic groups in the U.S. using ‘Invisibleness’ as an ethnic strategy to melt into the host country among natives unnoticed. Through the participants’ testimonies, they expressed minimal acclimation challenges from natives versus other ethnic groups’ complaints, only a select few used invisibleness as an ethnic strategy in their entrepreneurial goals. As discussed in Chapter
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One on the Germans of Post-World War II who were branded as ‘Nazis’ though they immigrated to America successfully and melted into the general populace unnoticed, immigrants today can use it, too (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). However, the researcher found that applying invisibleness as an opportunity to the immigrant entrepreneur was imprecise in phases one and two of the entrepreneur’s lifecycle captured in the theoretical model in Figure 29. The book by Erickson (1972) called ‘Invisible Immigrant: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in the 19th Century America’ showed how these immigrant groups successfully melted into American society. Erickson (1972) found that English and Scottish white-collar workers, farmers, and industrial workers could successfully immigrate to the United States without the pressures imposed on other ethnic groups. A study by Leinonen (2012) looked at Finnish immigration and the internationalization experiences of Americans who were immigrants amongst Finnish natives. The study focused on the intervening obstacles associated with American immigrants gaining access to employment compared to other immigrant ethnic groups (Leinonen, 2012). In Leinonen’s (2012) study, American immigrants were shown to have an advantage of ‘Invisibleness’ compared to other non-white immigrant groups. Invisibility is the ability of immigrant groups to camouflage themselves in a host country for rapid acclimation to employ ethnic strategies for immigrant entrepreneurship activities. The findings are not disputing past research; however, the research found minimal discovery for the early stages of the immigrant’s entrepreneurial activities where invisibility is used as an ethnic strategy.
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**Theoretical Framework**

The initial independent variable of predisposing attributes influencing immigrant entrepreneurial success in America for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs remains the same after the data analysis. The moderating variables of intervening obstacles and opportunities with higher-level influencing variables of cultural distance and psychic distance below in Figure 13 were perceived in the initial conceptual framework evolution to the theoretical framework for this inductive qualitative grounded theory research study.

![Primary Theoretical Model](image_url)

**Figure 13: Primary Theoretical Model**

However, in Figure 26 presented later in Chapter Four, the research findings required the researcher to restructure of the preliminary research model in Figure 16 for the mediating and moderating variables affecting the relationship and strength for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs predisposing attributes and their entrepreneurial success.

**Summary**

In summary, Chapter 2 provided primary components acquired from literature for the development of the research. This chapter explained several theories, concepts, and frameworks contributory for advancing the researcher’s conceptual models. Chapter Two provided
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discussions on literature concerning behavior, ethnicity, immigration, culture, ethnic enclaves, dehumanization, migration, and numerous others. The chapter concludes with a preliminary theoretical model prior to research data collection and analysis.
Chapter 3 Methodology

Overview

This chapter is a descriptive outline of the research methodology for an inductively derived theory of invisibility used as an ethnic strategy by post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States. The research inductively examined if invisibility acted as a moderating variable in understanding the increases in immigrant entrepreneurship success in the United States. Of the five traditional qualitative research methodologies (i.e., ethnography, grounded theory, case study, phenomenology, and narrative), this study’s strategic approach uses a qualitative design and the grounded theory methodology (Creswell and Poth, 2017). The grounded theory methodology allowed the researcher to develop a general theory for a process, activity, or interaction derived from the views of eighteen post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur participants (Creswell, 2014). Grounded theory’s research roots are from Glaser and Straus (1967), who developed a methodology for theory development through methodical coding of interviews with terms. This approach allowed for a richer understanding of a cohort of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs’ experiences establishing and sustaining their businesses in the United States. The rationale for using a qualitative grounded theory approach for this study is to support a theory development created from the data to understand what factors influence successful immigrant entrepreneurs in a host country navigating through intervening obstacles. Grounded theory is a verified and validated qualitative approach that captures knowledge from individuals for a collective understanding (Stake, 2010). A series of literature results discovered in examining the proper pathway for grounded theory research is provided in Figure 14 below.
Organization of the Remainder of the Chapter

The chapter is organized into four sections to present the research methodology. To explain this qualitative grounded theory approach, Chapter 3 provides primary components for the overarching plan of action for this research. The subsequent section describes ethical concerns and philosophical worldview, restates the research questions, and provides the research design, sampling, and conceptual model. Section two provides the research approach, geographical area of study, recruitment of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur participants, and selection of participants. Section three is the data collection, analysis, and interview questions. The final section of this chapter addresses validity and ends with a summary.

Ethical Considerations

Like all research studies, the researcher used a series of controls and precautions for the safety of participants and the study’s integrity (Creswell and Poth, 2017). For the integrity of the study and the safeguarding of all participants, this study adhered to all procedural precautions by initially attaining the authorized IRB approval before executing any interaction or data collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Glaser and Strauss</td>
<td>The Discovery of Grounded Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Glaser</td>
<td>Theoretical Sensitivity</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Strauss</td>
<td>Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>Strauss and Corbin</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Charmaz</td>
<td>Grounded theory: In rethinking Methods in Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Charmaz</td>
<td>Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods, in Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd Edition)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Clarke</td>
<td>Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory after the Postmodern Turn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14: Grounded Theory Methods
activities with participants. Before any data collection activities occurred, the researcher received
voluntarily signed consent forms from each participant. The voluntary consent form safeguards
all participants from any deceitful act or misinformation about their participation (Creswell and
Poth, 2017; Grant, 2017). All data collected, stored, and analyzed is physically secured and
protected by encryption to maintain the confidentiality and safety of all participants (Creswell
and Poth, 2017; Sekaran, 2003).

**Philosophical Worldview**

Charmaz (2006) describes a grounded theory method as having positivist and
constructivist dispositions. This research effort employed an inductive approach to an observed
phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurial startups with significant success rates increasing for
immigrant entrepreneurs over host country ethnic group natives. This approach was qualitative in
design, using a grounded theory methodology to explore and comprehend the factors behind a
phenomenon and its meaning attributed to immigrant entrepreneurs (Creswell & Poth, 2017) by
using an inductive approach for the general conclusion development from the researcher's initial
ideas for the theory development (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020; Creswell, 2017). Therefore, the
worldview perspective for this research takes the constructionist approach. This perception
assists in understanding a phenomenon through the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur
participants' lenses. The lived experiences of this post-Soviet cohort of immigrant entrepreneurs
promoted a better understanding of the construction of a theory as to why these individuals of a
collective group are achieving entrepreneurial success rates at or above other ethnic groups and
natives. Bougie and Sekaran (2020) explain, “Constructionists do not search for the objective
truth. Instead, they aim to understand the rules people use to make sense of the world by
investigating what happens in people’s minds” (p.22). Using a ship captain analogy, by looking
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through a constructionist’s lens just like a ship captain navigating the open seas through their telescope, the research attempts to capture what these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs perceive for ethnic strategy development and employment for entrepreneurial success. As a ship captain navigates through intervening obstacles to arrive at safe harbors, a constructionist uses his/her worldview in the coding process for the data by offering descriptive knowledge on entrepreneurship, immigration, business ecology, and small business policies for theoretical development. The proposition of entrepreneurial intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018) discussed in Chapter 5 was supported by the literature discovery in Chapter 2 and the research results presented in Chapter 4.

Questions that Guided the Research

RQ1. What facilitators and barriers do post-Soviet Immigrants encounter when establishing a business in the United States?

  RQ1a. Do post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs encounter similar or disparate opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship activities compared to natives?
  RQ1b. What does invisibleness mean to the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?
  RQ1c. What is considered an initial success for the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?

RQ2. What factors contribute to continued business success for post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs?

  RQ2a. Are such factors related to constructs of invisibleness as an ethnic strategy?
  RQ2b. What factors do modern networking tools like social media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.?
  RQ2c. Are such factors related to constructs of continued immigrant entrepreneurial success?
Research Design

Past research on immigrant entrepreneurship offers contemporary researchers a series of selective theories, viewpoints, and propositions on the subject. These past research findings focus on immigrant entrepreneurs’ home and host country's supply chain linkages, cultural challenges, access to capital, embedded networks, ethnic enclaves and resources, open and protective markets, migration challenges associated with visa types, and education at entry. However, the body of research lacks a contemporary theoretical descriptive reason behind the rapid growth of certain groups of immigrants’ entrepreneurial successes in open markets over a host country’s diverse ethnic natives. Using interpretive grounded theory from a constructivist vantage point allowed the researcher to conceptualize this study’s phenomenon, comprehend it in abstract terms, and theorize the data findings (Charmaz, 2006). This research design required a qualitative grounded theory methodological approach to support the inductively conceived theory developed by collecting and analyzing data (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This research study conducted a theoretical sampling for theory creation through coding (i.e., essential words or groups of words) and writing memos for performing several groupings and comparisons (Birks and Mills, 2015; Bougie and Sekaran, 2020). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), “theoretical sampling is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes the data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (p.45).

This researcher initially intended to develop a theory on invisibility for the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurial success by looking through the worldview lenses of immigrants. In an attempt to confirm the belief that rapid acclimation is occurring with certain immigrants, the researcher conducted an extensive examination of the academic literature and collected a robust
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amount of data for analysis. Immigrant entrepreneurial success initially conceived by the researcher was believed to correlate to ethnic strategies employed under the cloak of invisibleness as a camouflage to host natives against the backdrop of other ethnic group dehumanization factors to achieve their entrepreneurial success within a host country. However, though invisibility was found in the inductive analysis, the theoretical development took a different direction after the data was collected and analyzed. This study followed the seven stages of planning provided by Birks and Mills (2015) for the theoretical positioning for theory development. The seven stages followed were: acknowledge assumptions, clarify the research questions, review the literature before and after data collection, develop a research design, identify ethical and legal concerns, determine needed resources, and create a timeline (Birks and Mills (2015). Using Birks’ and Mills’ (2015) stages, the researcher realized the current literature findings were an extensive interpretation of the participants' shared experiences being post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States, as the study’s results required the researcher to seek out additional past literature findings to appreciate the results. In conclusion, the research design for generating this grounded theory study for the observed phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship adhered to the methodological approach taken by Glaser and Strauss (1967), as provided visually in Figure 15.
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Figure 15: *Grounded Theory Coding Process*

**Sampling**

To accomplish the intent of this study, specific host country regions and an ethnic cohort were identified and chosen for focused-based sampling. The researcher focused on the importance of selecting the proper collection areas and participants to gain access to valuable information for the researcher to generate the grounded theory position of entrepreneurial intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018) linked to the participants’ predisposing attributes for explaining the phenomenon of increases in immigrant entrepreneurship startups and success are occurring with post-Soviet immigrants (Palinkas et al., 2015). This qualitative inductive approach required a systematic examination to achieve a ‘Focused Based’ sampling. It was imperative to select participants who understood the area of research (i.e., immigrant entrepreneurship) and had a level of required ‘lived’ experiences needed to capture the data (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Palinkas et al., 2015). Furthermore, as outlined under the ethical considerations section of this study, this effort was able to attain access to participants who are not only enthusiasts about this topic but have the required accessibility to contribute to the
study’s effort. It was imperative for the integrity and safety of the study that all participants were allowed to express their opinions, feelings, and experiences willingly and truthfully.

For this qualitative grounded theory research effort, all selected participants were immigrant entrepreneurs from the defined cohort regardless of gender identity. The study cohort represented a diverse range of the levels of entrepreneurial experience, time in the host nation-state, education achievements, visa entry status, and personal identifiers with all the post-Soviet participants. The data from this cohort's lived experiences in navigating various intervening obstacles in their entrepreneurial achievements in a host country was captured in more than 300 pages of reliable data for critical analysis in developing this study’s grounded theory. A subset of this dataset is included in Appendix F Participants’ Full Quotes from Chapter 4. Still, a smaller subset was used as supporting evidence in Chapter 4 Findings.

This study’s sample comprises one cohort of group members for data collection. This study conducted eighteen individual interviews for purposeful sampling and coding. The initial research model shown in Figure 16 required an update after the data was analyzed to the new model in Figure 26.

**Research Model**

![Figure 16: Preliminary Research Model](image_url)
Research Approach

Research Site

The geographical region for this study was initially the greater New York City area, commonly known as Tri-State Area in the Northeast United States. This area encompasses the regions of northern New Jersey, the City of Manhattan, and Western Connecticut. The researcher was able to access post-Soviet cohort entrepreneur participants who live outside the Greater New York City region during the data collection. The researcher accessed and collected data from participants operating businesses and living in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Georgia, California, Texas, and Florida. Moreover, additional considerations for the safety of all participants concerning the Covid-19 pandemic were in the research design. Though the study desires all data collection to be in person, the participants chose to conduct their interviews remotely via telephonic or virtual engagements using Microsoft Teams application offered by the researcher. Since this is a qualitative research study, this data was collected through a series of interviews using a structured questionnaire for all participants.

Recruitment

The researcher was able to gain access to twenty-four participants for the research. Several of the post-Soviet participants did not meet all the requirements for the study. Those participants were used to refine the interview questions through pilot interviews. The researcher qualified eighteen participants who met the research criteria for data collection. The study received the IRB acceptance to conduct the research. All participants voluntarily supported a one-hour interview session. To achieve maximum participant support for data collection, the researcher attempted to keep all interviews under one hour and use the Microsoft Teams tool to accommodate each participant's schedule. Any participant who failed to meet the identified
requirements for the study was removed from the participant list. The research effort conducted a pilot in support of the refinement of the interview questions. All interviews used voice and video tools for the data collection to help capture several areas of nuances.

**Interview Process**

The researcher contacted participants in initial discussions to verify that each met the criteria for the research and was willing to participate voluntarily with the accepted terms of the study. The terms protected the subjects’ privacy and allowed them to speak freely during the interviews. The researcher was conscientious by ensuring each participant understood the interview’s purpose and its use for research. Next, the researcher set up a scheduled appointment through email with each participant for a recorded Microsoft Teams meeting. All interviews were recorded using the Microsoft Teams application. The Microsoft Teams application provided a transcript of the recorded interviews. The actual names of the participants were replaced, and their transcripts were verified by the participants for accuracy and secured to ensure validity. Once the video was transcribed, the subject's name was removed and replaced with a different name before coding. The person's identity was also assigned a number only known to the researcher. However, each participant expressed no reservations about their first names being used by the researcher in the study. Finally, the transcriptions were read and thoroughly analyzed for accuracy. After reformatting from the published Microsoft Teams application, the transcriptions were returned to the participants for validation through member checking before being coded using the software NVivo. Appendix B contains the interview protocol and interview questions.
Selection of Participants

All participants in this research effort were post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States. These immigrant entrepreneurs were individuals whose country of origin was directly influenced by the U.S.S.R. before its dissolution. The participants came from the region now known as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland, the Republic of Georgia, Ukraine, and other nation-states that comprise the 12 independent republics. This specific group of present-day United States immigrant/naturalized citizens migrated from this region in Eastern Europe prior to and after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This specific group of present-day United States post-Soviet immigrants and naturalized citizens are all successful entrepreneurs in America.

Data Collection

The researcher executed exploratory factor analysis to align the questions with the constructs of the study by conducting a pilot study with three participants to modify, add, or eliminate the interview questions for relevancy to the research effort. The pilot study participants were post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs but did not meet the baseline requirements for the study. The pilot study was instrumental in restructuring, eliminating, and adding questions to ensure clarity for the participants who had strong accents and challenges with some English word meanings in the interview questionnaire to avoid a ‘bad fit’ between the data (i.e., interviews) and the theory developed for this research. The pilot adjusted question sequences, eliminated questions, and added two new questions to create a total of 45 interview questions for the core study. The Microsoft Teams software tool was used to schedule and execute eighteen interviews with participants living in seven different states in the United States. The software tool provided a dial-in number from their cellphones for a telephonic interview or online video access through
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a web browser or application. The Microsoft Teams software allowed the researcher to conduct, record, and generate raw transcripts for all interviews. The telephone was the primary choice for interviews by most participants as it allowed them to answer the questions without schedule constraints. Several telephonic interviews lasted two to three hours due to the participants’ responses.

Data Analysis

In the data capture and analysis phase, the researcher ensured this qualitative study was reliable and valid by ensuring the categories balance and refinement in the pilot, assessing for bad-fit data, conducting internal and external validity using triangulation (i.e., using multiple theories/perspectives and sources to interpret the data). The one challenge identified early in the interviews was the challenges with this cohort of participants' accents and the Microsoft Teams software to capture verbatim their responses accurately. To protect the reliability of the study, the researcher sent a copy of each participant's adjusted transcripts to ensure the accuracy of the transcripts with their confirmation. In addition to providing each participant a copy of their individually recorded transcripts for an accuracy check, the researcher avoided defining categories in a ‘broad manner’ from the approved transcripts in the data analysis process. The average length of each interview’s transcript was thirteen pages of single-spaced testimony. This process supported the coding tags for category development that generated the thematic framework of the research study. All raw data captured through the interview process was transcribed using the Microsoft Teams software application tool. The video and voice data were reviewed and cross-reviewed with the researcher's memos for analysis. The transcriptions of the personal interview represent raw research data provided by the Microsoft Teams application requiring a format restructuring and validation by the participants before each transcript was
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uploaded into the NVivo qualitative data analysis software tool. Analytical memos and pertinent findings in research studies from the literature were also entered into NVivo. NVivo was used to develop 9,315 codes with 167 peak tags for the development of 15 categories building 8 themes in the thematic framework presented in Chapter 4. The research study followed the Saldaña (2021) Streamlined Codes to Theory Model process in Figure 17. The qualitative researcher Saldaña (2021) explains:

Our brains synthesize vast amounts of information into symbolic summary (codes); we make sense of the world by noticing repetition and formulating regularity through cognitive schemata and scripts (patterns); we cluster similar things together through comparison and contrast to formulate bins of shared knowledge (categories); and we imprint key learnings from extended experiences by creating proverb-like narrative memories (themes). (Saldaña, 2015, p.11)

First- and second-cycle coding was accomplished in the coding process. The standard tool of NVivo offered the researcher a coding and sub-coding tool for group lines of data and creating themes in this theoretical approach, as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: Streamlined Codes to Theory Model

Source: Saldaña (2021), The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers 4e, Sage, p18.
Reliability and Validity

Ensuring this qualitative study is reliable and valid, the topics of categories balanced and refined, bad-fit data, internal and external validity, and the triangulation technique were all used. There was a slight variance in reliability and validity for conducting this qualitative versus quantitative research study. Reliability in qualitative approaches is described by Bougie and Sekaran (2020) and Kassarjian (1977):

Reliability in qualitative data analysis includes category and interjudge reliability. Category reliability ‘depends on the analyst’s ability to formulate categories and present to competent judges definitions of the categories so they will agree on which items of a certain population belong in a category and which do not’ (Kassarjian, 1977, p. 14). Thus category reliability relates to the extent to which judges are able to use category definitions to classify the qualitative data. Well-defined categories will lead to higher category reliability and eventually to higher interjudge reliability (p. 318).

Consequently, to protect the reliability of the study, the researcher worked diligently to avoid defining categories in a ‘broad manner’ that diminished the relevance of the study’s findings. Collection and analysis of the data became an art and a science for ensuring the reliability of the data for the findings to provide maturity of the grounded theory effort. The study balanced category reliability and the importance of the categories in this study (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020; Kassarjian, 1977). Furthermore, the study conducted a pilot to stress modifying the categories and refine the interview questionnaire for the participants to avoid a bad fit between the data (i.e., interviews) and theory development.

Bougie and Sekaran (2020) explain validity in qualitative research as the degree to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure; it is explained by two points called internal and external validity (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020). Internal validity refers to the accuracy of the collected data for the research results, and external validity can be described as generalizations or
settings (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020). This study leveraged the triangulation technique (i.e., using multiple theories/perspectives and sources) to interpret the data in this qualitative study.

Finally, the researcher made every attempt to control for validity threats. In the recruiting process for study participants, the researcher recognized and considered a particular form of selection bias called *Survivor Bias* (Morgenstern, 2018). According to Morgenstern (2018), “Survival bias is a type of sampling error or selection bias that occurs when the selection process of a trial favors certain individuals who made it past a certain obstacle or point in time and ignores the individuals who did not (and are generally less visible).” Though there is always a potential for bias in any research, the researcher could not exclude the potential for this area of bias given the researcher’s participants all met the required established criteria for entrepreneurial success for the study. Though the researcher had maintained all aspects of integrity for the study, survival bias is acknowledged as a consideration to the study’s results.

**Summary**

In summary, chapter three provided the primary components for the study’s methodology. This chapter explained the ethical concerns, a philosophical worldview, the research questions, the research design, sampling, and the initial research model. The chapter also provides the researcher’s approach, data collection sites, recruitment of participants, and selection of participants. The chapter concludes with how the research study’s data was analyzed and how it maintained reliability and validity in the data and results.
Chapter 4 Results

Overview

This chapter summarizes the process from data capture through analysis and a detailed summary of the research findings. With demand for entrepreneurship training rapidly increasing (Mescon, 2021) and data revealing immigrants and immigrant startups are outpacing American natives two to one in the United States (Vandor and Franke, 2016), the purpose was to examine a micro-level phenomenon regarding immigrant entrepreneurship success inductively. To execute this study, the researcher chose a cohort of participants connected by geographical origin. The cohort consisted solely of eastern European immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States who came to the United States from the post-Soviet geographical region. Inductively, the research began with a proposed conceptual model on the potential advantage of the term ‘Invisibleness’ as an ethnic strategy for success to better understand the nuances between the term’s assimilation and acclimation. Within the backdrop of Invisibleness and through the immigrant participant’s lived experiences and worldviews, the study investigated potentially influencing interacting variables impacting an immigrant’s life cycle from country entry through sustained entrepreneurial success in the United States.

Conversely, during the data analysis, Invisibleness, still an evolving factor, was not found as a critical stimulant for immigrant entrepreneurial success. The findings on Invisibleness indicate that the term aligns with the concepts in the theoretical positions on cultural distance (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011), individual’s perceptions of psychic distance (Ambos et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009), and the interaction between a host countries culture and systematic environment. What did emerge in the analysis phase of the data were individual attribute linkages to a novel term called Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck et al., 2021).
Entrepreneurial Intelligence appears to be surfacing from studies on Emotional Intelligence, Intelligence, and Entrepreneurial Mindset (Goldman, 2007; Neck 2018; Neck et al., 2021; Somers, 2022). Hence, the findings of this study may contribute to a better understanding of the interacting variables of immigrant entrepreneurial success by adding to the Academic literature repository for future researchers in a quest to build a consistent pattern of traits (Gartner, 1988) for defining Entrepreneurial Intelligence.

**Recruitment Challenges**

In the recruitment phase of this study, three significant challenges occurred. The first challenge was identification and location to engage potential participants to support the study. The researcher discarded the search for this specific participant cohort using government databases and local township city halls to share information to access participants for the study. The researcher identified early in the stage of recruitment that to collect this type of data, a sponsor was required to penetrate and gain trust from members of this cohort of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs for participation. The researcher was able to establish a post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur business owner sponsor. During this study phase, the researcher’s sponsor provided invitations to a series of social events that many successful post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs attended. In attending the social events, the researcher conducted a series of individual recruitment conversations with potential participants. In addition to the researcher attending the social events for recruitment, the researcher’s sponsor used their access to a series of closed social media networks to assist in recruiting the participants for this study.

The second challenge during the recruitment phase was gaining the participants’ trust, as the researcher was not part of this cohort of post-Soviet immigrants. Leveraging the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval authorization memorandum, providing details of participant
safeguards, and the value of the researcher’s sponsor provided the required elements of trust for each participant's willingness to participate in an interview session voluntarily. The last challenge was achieving the proper coordination needed to voluntarily conduct a forty-five-minute to a one-hour interview session with each participant. In the scheduling of the interviews, the researcher determined the participant's work demands, and the constraint of schedules created challenges in establishing a date and time for the interviews. The researcher used the Microsoft Teams software tool to mitigate the scheduling challenges for each participant. The Microsoft Teams software tool was instrumental in assisting with the scheduling and execution of each interview.

**Organization of the Remainder of the Chapter**

The remainder of this chapter is sequential and outlined as follows: a restatement of the questions guiding the research, demographic profiles of the post-Soviet immigrant cohort, participants' profiles with selected testimonials providing linkages to the literature, coding method, peak codes (i.e., tags), thematic framework and summary. During the coding process the researcher identified 167 peak codes, from which 15 categories were derived, from which 8 themes emerged in the thematic framework. The results of the research provided in Chapter 4 are supported by the literature summarized in Chapter 2 and provided discovered novel insights for future researchers. Chapter 5 amplifies the research findings in Chapter 5 by providing contributive detections from the results that will require additional investigation by future researchers.
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Questions that Guided the Research

RQ1. What facilitators and barriers do Eastern European Immigrants encounter when establishing a business in the United States?

RQ1a. Do eastern European Immigrant entrepreneurs encounter similar or disparate opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship activities compared to natives?
RQ1b. What does Invisibleness mean to the Eastern European Immigrant Entrepreneur?
RQ1c. What is considered initial success for the Eastern European Immigrant Entrepreneur?

RQ2. What factors contribute to continued business success for Eastern European Immigrant Entrepreneurs?

RQ2a. Are such factors related to constructs of Invisibleness as an ethnic strategy?
RQ2b. What factors do modern networking tools like social media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.?
RQ2c. Are such factors related to constructs of continued Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success?

Demographics of Participants

The 18 participants for this study come from a set geographical region now known as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Poland, Republic of Georgia, Belarus, and other nation-states that make up the 12 independent republics of the former Soviet Union. The geographical territory for this group of immigrant entrepreneurial participants leveraged for the study is illustrated in Chapter 1, Figure 1. The study gained access to participants from eight countries within the former Soviet Union. The most prominent geographical group of participants is from the Russian Federation. In terms of age, seventeen or 94 percent of the participants immigrated to the United States before turning forty with a mean age of 22.8 years. The researcher was able to provide a balanced gender makeup of 56% male and 44% female participants. The participants for the study reside in five different states in the United States and have a combined number of twenty-
five businesses. Of the twenty-five small businesses, the participating firms operate in ten market segments within the host country's economy. Of the participants, 44 percent have owned businesses for over eleven years. The study found that 78 percent of the participants had some entrepreneurial experience or desire before migrating to the host country. The most significant percentage captured in this study was the use of a distributed protective network. Of the 18 participants, 100 percent used a Russian speaking distributed social media network for information clarity to achieve business and personal needs.

The participants in this study are a highly educated cohort of immigrant entrepreneurs, all receiving a formal high school education in their host country. Of the participants in this study, 83% had a bachelor's degree or higher from their home country, and 56 percent held master's or doctorate degrees. Of the 18 participants, only 16 percent worked in some capacity within their college degree area of study in the host country. However, 83 percent of the participants attended some additional formal education in the host country. The study found that 89 percent of the participants experienced challenges or did not attempt the host country process to gain reciprocity for their home country University degrees. In the study, 28 percent experienced some level of sojourning in their migration journey in the host country; 78 percent received no subsistence support in the host country from a government or non-government organization. Thirty-three percent of the participants received no assistance during their initial entry into the host country.

Of the 18 participants, 83 percent claimed some religious beliefs; 72 percent immigrated with their family or just the spouse. The study separated the immigration timeframe for entry into the host country by two, before or after 2000. Of the 18 participants, there was an equal split among participants, with 50 percent in each category. Sixty-one percent of the participants
attained access to the host country by claiming asylum, whereas 22 percent through marriage and 16 percent on other types of visas. Figures 18 through 22 provide demographic tables for the participants of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N = 18</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Country Education: Primary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Country Education: Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Country Education: Master Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Country Education: Doctor Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attained Additional Training / Education in U.S.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Attend Training / Education in U.S.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges Transferring Education in U.S.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Challenges Transferring Education in U.S.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Attempt (Various Reasons)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Age (0-18)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Age (19-27)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Age (28-40)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Age (41-60+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age at Immigration</td>
<td>22.8 Yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Support when immigrated - Acquaintances</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Support when immigrated - Family</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Support when immigrated - Government</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Support when immigrated - NGO</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Support when immigrated - Church</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received No Support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observed Sojourn Effect</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Observed Sojourn Effect</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Time at First location on Entry to U.S.</td>
<td>3.4 years</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Figure 18: Participant Demographics

(Gender, Immigration Age, Education, Support, and Sojourning)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N = 18</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated with Family</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated with Spouse Only</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated Alone</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (Christian)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (Jewish)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion (Protestant)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (Orthodox)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (Catholic)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion (Other)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Religion</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Visa to Green Card (Tourist) / Then Asylum</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Visa to Green Card (Other)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Visa to Green Card (Refugee - Asylum)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Visa to Green Card (Marriage) / Enter as Tourist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Visa to Green Card (Marriage)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Business (3-10)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Business (11-25)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Entrepreneurial Experience or Desire in Home Country</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for Entrepreneurship - No Experience in Home Country</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial Experience in Home Country</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Some Form of Eastern European Group Digital Network</td>
<td>18 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated Prior to 2000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrated After 2000</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 19: Participant Demographics
(Religion, Visa Status, Business Years, Experience, Year of Immigration, and Networks)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Country (N=18)</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20: Participant Country of Origin
Participant Profiles

This section of Chapter 4 provides a series of direct quotes by each of the 18 participants in the data collection process. Though the expansion of testimonies as the participant’s testimonies in this section of chapter four is novel, the researcher felt it was crucial for the derived conclusions of this study. The data findings presented in this section are not all encompassing of the raw and assessed data. The full statements of this section for each participant’s direct quote from the interviews are provided in Appendix F. Nevertheless, the data captured in the course of this effort is rich with information and pertinence, for the purposes of brevity for Chapter Four, only a selected number of quotes from over 300 pages of interview testimonies are provided here in this chapter. Figure 23 provides a crosswalk of the 18 participants for this research.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>First Employment</th>
<th>Business Industry</th>
<th>Years in Business</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Visa Status</th>
<th>Entry Age</th>
<th>U.S. Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Александр</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>Medical School, *Medical School</td>
<td>Hotel Laundry, Cab Driver, Bouncer</td>
<td>Diagnostic Laboratory, Medical</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Tourist, Political Asylum</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Алексей</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>Bachelor Accounting, Master Finance MBA</td>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>VC, Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>O1</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Анна</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Daycare, Bank Teller</td>
<td>Construction, Real Estate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Tourist, Political Asylum</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Бесо</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Bachelor Sports Medicine</td>
<td>Hotel Worker, Elderly Care, Cable Tech</td>
<td>Hospitality, Construction, Real Estate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Republic of Georgia</td>
<td>Tourist, Political Asylum</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Билл</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>Bachelor, Master</td>
<td>Printing, Construction, Truck Delivery</td>
<td>Construction, Security</td>
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<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>No (in process)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Елена</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Master Economics, *Cosmetology</td>
<td>Home Cleaner, Nanny, Salon Worker</td>
<td>Personal Care</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Tourist, Green Card, Marriage</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Грегорий</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>Middle School, *Medical School (MD)</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Игорь</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>Bachelor Engineer-Electronics, *BS Computer Science</td>
<td>Delivered Pizza, Construction</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Uzbekistan/Russia</td>
<td>Tourist, Political Asylum</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Айк</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>High School, *Some College</td>
<td>Washing Dishes</td>
<td>Restaurant, RV Dealerships, Wedding Hall</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>First Employment</th>
<th>Business Industry</th>
<th>Years in Business</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Visa Status</th>
<th>Entry Age</th>
<th>U.S. Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Екатерина</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Scientology</td>
<td>Bachelor Physical Education</td>
<td>Daycare, Cleaner</td>
<td>Fitness</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Green Card, Marriage</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Елизавета</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>Personal Care</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Green Card, Marriage</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Михаил (1)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>Bachelor Mechanical Engineer</td>
<td>Janitor, Beverage Distribution, Painter</td>
<td>Medical Services, Owns Hospitals, Elderly Care</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Михаил (2)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Master Mechanical Engineer</td>
<td>Taxi Driver, Shop Operator, Construction</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Tourist, Political Asylum</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Олена</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>Master Economics, Electrology</td>
<td>Bookkeeper, Dental Office</td>
<td>Medical, Personal Care</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Вечеслав</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Professional Sports</td>
<td>Fitness</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Валентина</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Bachelor, Master Business, Doctor Business</td>
<td>Hotel Worker, Night Audit</td>
<td>Hospitality, Real Estate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Green Card, Marriage</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Виолета</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>High School, Some College</td>
<td>Daycare, Dermatology Office</td>
<td>Medical, Dental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Евгения</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Salon Worker</td>
<td>Personal Care</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Green Card, Marriage</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Attained in the U.S. System

Figure 23: Research Participants Crosswalk Matrix
Alex (Александр)

Alex immigrated to the United States almost thirty years ago after the fall of the Berlin wall and the Soviet Union collapse. Alex is a successful immigrant entrepreneur who owns several very successful businesses in three states within the United States. Before starting his entrepreneurial journey, he was a physician in Russia. In his story, Alex alludes to push and pull economic and social freedom factors (Lee, 1966), leading him to immigrate to the United States from Russia in 1993. In Alex’s own words, he explains the economic push factors (Lee, 1966) leading to a decision to migrate to the United States. According to Alex:

I decided to leave, but my goal in my life was to work, enjoy what you do, and don’t think about money. That was my ultimate goal, and that was what I always was living with, that idea. And while you are in Russia, you always have to be focused on money, for survival, pretty much, because again, inflation. Now we're talking about inflation here, it's like nothing. It’s a kinder color here. But we have inflation in Russia, let's say, uh, obviously, you know, trying to buy some, uh, hard currency, either it's the Deutsche mark at the time or American dollars.

So, for example, if buying, you know one $1.00 U.S. dollar cost, let's say 500 rubles, tomorrow that $1.00 dollar is already 600 rubles. The day after that its 700, the next day after that, it's thousand and so on, it's crazy. That's what, that’s what we call inflation. So, obviously you have to make sure that your funds are secured and not become like a paper that you can use in the toilet. The inflation was so bad that the, the, and then what they did, let's say you got 1000 rubles, right?

And it's worth $1.00 dollar, then they just decided, OK, uh, we’re gonna cut the zeros. So, they cut 2 zeros and instead of $1000 rubles you start having 10 rubles. And this is how they did it. That was not a good thing to do.

Outside the push and pull factors (Lee, 1966) of economics between home and host countries, there is a romantic spot of freedom within Alex that spawned a pull factor leading to his decision to abandon everything and migrate to the United States. According to Alex:

I was dreaming about the United States ever since I was in middle school. So, that, that's pretty much my dream fulfilled. My dream is freedom, you know, be free, because the United States knowing at that time was free.
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Alex was a physician in Russia when he immigrated to the United States; however, the host country's system did not have reciprocity for his formal medical education (Hunt, 2009, 2011). This lack of recognition for his medical degree from his home country when Alex migrated with little resources to the United States with his wife and child created many intervening obstacles for him (Lee, 1966; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). Alex speaks to leveraging a tribal-like relationship with a formal classmate from his home country to secure shelter, employment, and other resources needed to position himself and his family in the host country (Cummings, 1980; Xie and Gough, 2011). Long before his entrepreneurial success, his journey as an unrecognized physician with no knowledge of the host country system began with jobs folding laundry in a hotel, being a uber driver before uber, working construction, moving household goods, and providing security in bars. According to Alex:

*Some people learning to swim, they just drop them in the water, in the deep water and then you have to survive. That that's pretty much what happened here.*

Alex discussed the importance of learning the host country's language, its system and building a network inside and outside the immigrant groups to learn (Uzzi, 1996). When asked about the term invisibileness in his experiences, Alex confirmed he does use the term as part of his business practices. According to Alex:

*If you become visible, meaning in your business and you stick out, you got vultures like lawyers, insurance companies, representatives, and so you name it, they will go after you because they are vultures.*

*But it, it's, you know, it's a rule of thumb, if you if you stick out you will be noticed, and the people will come after you.*

During the interview, when the topic of success was part of the questions, Alex would link success to financial gains with a stronger emphasis on freedom. In the formal analysis of Alex’s interview, the researcher found Alex transitioned through all four motivational needs layers in
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his journey from initial to sustained entrepreneurial success. He began at the foundational layer of subsistence at host country entry in the IEN model before transitioning through social and growth to finally reaching the personal layer with his repetitive testimony of the word freedom, giving him the ability to travel and allocate more time to family. According to Alex:

> Success is when you, when you do your business, you like to do it because that's the goal. Otherwise, if you don't like what you do, I don't think you're going to make any money. Hmm, and obviously, the freedom, if, if this business gives you freedom to you know, travel to get some, I don't know, good times.

Alex met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Aleksey (Алексей)**

Aleksey immigrated to the United States eight years ago in 2015 as part of his greenfield foreign direct investment initiative with his business in Moscow. Aleksey is a successful immigrant entrepreneur who expanded his business into the United States. Aleksey operates a venture capitalist firm for technology, starting with a business division dedicated to business education training. In his story, Aleksey's migration is due to market pull factors for intervening opportunities causing him to immigrate to the United States from Russia in 2015 (Lee, 1966; Stouffer, 1940, 1960). In Aleksey’s own words, he explains the pull factors leading to migrating to the United States. According to Aleksey:

> So, the reason was my business because I was doing similar things in Russia. I invested in technology companies and, uh also I'll consult with startups. How to do business globally and you know it was very silly, I'm consulting them how to go global and I'm not in the US.

> The U.S. is the best market for my portfolio companies and for me to continue developing this kind of business investment in technology.

Outside the pull factors of his business expansion, Aleksey explains challenges with a lack of information clarity and system knowledge for the United States environment (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). Like many of the participants in this study, Aleksey leverages its cohort
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protective networks to execute systematic and calculated planning (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Uzzi, 199; Xie and Gough, 2011). In his testimony, he alludes to the differences between assimilation and non-assimilation factors among members of immigrant groups (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). Both assimilated, acclimated, and non-acclimated individuals within a protective network are present in the data. According to Aleksey:

"Funny story. So, I reached out to a couple of my classmates with whom I haven’t seen for, let’s see, maybe 25 years. So, they immigrated 25 years before me, and I tried to figure out some details about the area for living. Just some, details about you know. Uh, lifestyle about life, information about schools, medicine, and other thing.

You know everything I get was zero useful information from them. Really zero with couple of meetings. We did a couple of meetings for couple of hours each and I get nothing, no understanding how to do stuff, how financial system works, how education system works and all other life stuff. Nothing, so, then I meet with the friend of mine from Moscow, but he immigrated, let’s say only around five years before me. And in an hour, he explained me everything.

Aleksey is highly educated with financial degrees and immigrated to the United States on an O-1 visa, a visa for extraordinary talents visa (Hunt, 2009, 2011). In the interview, Aleksey's immigration process was the outlier over many participants in the study. Aleksey explains in the interview that his significant challenges were the cultural and system differences between home and host countries (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011). It appeared there was perceived lower Psychic Distance (Ambosa et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) between home and host country, but that changed once Aleksey entered the host country environment and began his entrepreneurial journey—Aleksey talks of unpredictability, economic differences and the need to build networks for information clarity. According to Aleksey:

"Living, you know huge difference in everything. Uh, especially when you just moved. I mean, maybe first two years every time you trying to compare everything. Prices uh, you know, very different, yeah. Some stuff with finance, with utilities, with food, with services, with everything. Uh, the communication with people, you know, uh in Russia, everything is much more predictable."
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In the interview question on Invisibleness, Aleksey provides a conflicting response to the researcher’s initial intuition for immigrant entrepreneurial success factors. Aleksey discussed the importance of being visible in what he termed as the ‘information age’ (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1967). According to Aleksey:

So, if you are invisible, there is no business. That’s it. Hmm, because it's, uh, we live in information century and if there is no information about you, you know, for other people you do not exist. So, you do not have credibility etcetera. Nobody can check your background track and make some conclusions about how to deal with you, who you are. So, I mean you can't be invisible, it's impossible. I'm well very visible.

His interview brings up attributes of the immigrant as always running, multitalented, hard work is almost innate, and a rebirth as his views on entrepreneurial success for immigrants over host country natives (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). Specifically, the ‘reborn’ and ‘run’ phrases, though restructured in other participants’ statements, these two words maintained the same context for all participants. According to Aleksey:

I think immigrants do much more things, completing with native people because you know they need to do much more in much more shorter time period because Americans start doing something when their born and we came here when we already grown up but we came to you like we are just born without a track record, without everything, you know nothing.

In Aleksey’s statement on the definition of success, the researcher found him currently in the growth phase of the IEN model, given the financial success he has achieved as an immigrant entrepreneur. However, an exciting discovery in his testimony surfaced, as did with many other participants. It appears this cohort is never satisfied, constantly changing, and does not align well with firm set rituals (Saravathy, 2001). Aleksey focuses on growing, adapting, and diversifying his business to assist his family’s upper mobility to success (Sanders and Nee, 1996). According to Aleksey:

I don’t know, because, uh, when you reach some goal, uh, you already have another one in your head. You know you can’t stop, it’s like addiction.
I am successful because I already have some different idea in my head.

Aleksey met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Anna (Анна)

Anna has a remarkable story of adolescent self-preservation through her migration years into entrepreneurial success in the United States. She immigrated to the United States over twenty years ago at 26. Like many participants in this cohort, Anna is formally educated in their home country (Hunt 2009, 2011) and migrated due to push and pull factors (Lee, 1966) with home and host countries. Anna and her husband, in a partnership, have two very successful businesses. Anna’s predisposing attributes assist in her entrepreneurial behaviors and risk control (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991); the researcher feels it is only proper to hear Anna’s testimony of life before migrating to the United States. According to Anna:

To be honest with you, I start being in sales when I used to be in the second grade in school. Ok, and then, I had very tough childhood and technically I started living by myself when I was 12.

The life was difficult in the cities because there were no opportunities, no job. People could not survive.

And since 14 or maybe even 13 years old, I was going to the market. I’ve been standing on the market and selling the stuff on the market. And then got married at 17, OK. And then when I captured it was, I will speak of this farm so badly, I was ready to run away.

Given the push economic factors (Lee, 1966) driving Anna’s migration to the United States, the researcher asked her about acclimation challenges in the host country. In this testimony, the researcher found that, like many participants, Anna knew how to accumulate resources against economic differences between home and host countries to advance entrepreneurial goals. Beyond saving capital to execute a business strategy, Anna explains the challenges with a lack of information clarity and system knowledge for the United States
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environment. She explains that language is the key to unlocking the system, and once the system is unlocked, they systematically learn the system to navigate it to entrepreneurial success rapidly.

According to Anna:

Yeah, of course. I think everyone has issues. You don't speak English, you have to, uh, learn the language. That's #1, OK, then you have to learn the customs here. I mean, there is certain things that you need to know. How, how, pretty much, everything.

I’ve been by myself, as I mentioned to you since I was like 12. Ok, and I kind of learned it, I used to depend on myself always, ok, and, oh, I like the freedom. And I think it was, it was not even a question to go to work for someone, or to become a business owner and work for yourself.

Although formally and informally educated in her home country, Anna desired to receive more education in the host country despite the economic wealth attained (Hunt, 2009, 2011). To the researcher, Anna’s testimony aligned with other participants' continuous quest for more knowledge and pathway to achieving more personal freedom links her to the top phase of the IEN model. According to Anna:

Because even though we're more free, we have more freedom. But still, you know, I cannot leave the business every month for a week and go on vacation every month. Still, you have to always be present for business to run.

On the question of Invisibleness, Anna’s response offered an altered view of the researcher’s initial predisposition. Anna alludes to a characteristic of this cohort not wanting to ‘draw attention’ to oneself (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). Furthermore, Invisibleness in Anna’s testimony appears to be projected onto these immigrants by the host country system, not an ethical strategy or the host country native’s discriminative behavior. According to Anna:

You know, people don’t acknowledge you. Yeah, Mm-hmm, Yeah, and from and from a business standpoint and establishing business.

I don't want to draw attention, first of all that, my nature, my human nature, let’s put it this way. I don't like attention to myself. OK, since I was a child, I don't like attention to myself. That's why the way I do business the same thing. I don't like too much attention.
In Anna’s interview, the topics of opportunity, having to hustle, street smarts, and hard work are her linkages to entrepreneurial success for immigrants over American natives (Kloosterman, 2010; Stouffer, 1940, 1960). Specifically, views on American natives are that they have all the opportunities over the immigrant as the immigrant must catch up. This hustle-and-run theme is repetitive for all participants. According to Anna:

*I feel like some people, the big difference is the opportunity. The people who have been born here, they have much more opportunities.*

*To learn English, whatever I speak English, I picked up everything on the street. OK. Because I had no time to do it, to go to school. I have to go work.*

In Anna’s statement on the definition of success, the researcher found her in between the social (i.e., system development) and business growth phases of the IEN model. According to Anna:

*I guess the success is when you make more money than you spend. We achieved a lot. Umm, we’ve been able to establish the business. You know, we have uh clientele and we have, uh, like local client, loyal clients who’s coming back to us even after 20 years. And plus, we’re not in financial stress.*

Anna met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Beso (Beco)**

In Beso’s testimony, he has four successful businesses in the United States. He has been in business in the U.S. for fifteen years. Beso initially came to the U.S. in 2004 at age 19 before returning to his home country due to a feeling of projected negative Invisibleness by the host country environment, sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952), and a misjudgment of the Psychic Distant (Ambosa et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) between the host and home countries. After returning to his home country for over a year, Beso explains the pull factors of opportunity for a better life in the host country as an entrepreneur made him decide to return and fully immigrate on his second entry into America. According to Beso:
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Umm, I would say to, to do something for a living, financial. And ultimately, uh, I always wanted to own my own business. That would be, that would be, just better life, I would say generally, umm, I wanted a better way.

I did have a major culture shock. So, I did go back, but then I decided that I might like it second time and I would have better impression, and I came back.

Somehow, I got by and convinced myself that, you know, you have to do it and it's to be done and there is no going back. So, that's what I can say about it.

Beso, in his interview, provides testimony aligned with the literature associated with sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) felt by immigrants in a host country. However, Beso, like many of the participants in this study, provides insight into assisting in building an Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021) profile with individual traits like commitment, resilience, and persistence in their ability to acclimate, negotiate host country system and execute strategies to achieve their entrepreneurial goals in the host country. According to Beso:

I would say that here you're really alone. I mean alone. Like nobody's really going to give you anything, and general, generally you are on your own, you have to make it.

And I would say if I was not an immigrant, I probably would not have, would not have succeeded. Let's put it this way, And I can elaborate very, very deeply about that because I sometimes, I think because of my accent because of my international manners, you know, different understandings, you know, some sense, you know, some, I would say qualities, right, personal qualities Help me, uh succeed and become successful.

Beso is a systematic and calculated, resilient individual who appears to have an abnormal level of risk absorption for his entrepreneurial activities with his self-awareness of the host country environment (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). Beso explains he had initial business failures, but his motivation was never impacted. In the interview testimony, this participant associated his initial failures with a lack of information about the host country system, capital challenges, and limited networks to provide the proper knowledge of the industry he was penetrating as a startup
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business. In these early years of Beso’s testimony, the researcher found he was transitioning from the subsistence phase into the social phases of the IEN model. According to Beso:

*My first business, so serious, Let's, let's call that I did have failed businesses. I have very failed businesses, failed businesses with businesses. The motivation was there, but the goal was financial.*

*When starting the business, uh, information. Information was very, very hard to come by, umm, back in the day, there wasn't that much information. Umm, because you have to know how insurance works. So, and this is not actually the profession related, it's more like I would say, uh, not management related, it was more, more, I would say uh, paperwork related.*

*I would say challenges was bureaucracy, right. Let's call it one of those things where bureaucracy was the biggest challenge and still is.*

Beso, throughout his interview, stated the importance of learning the host country's system and bureaucracy, the industry knowledge within which competing, and the importance of the network information clarity. When Beso was asked about invisibility in his experiences, he confirmed the researcher’s initial premises that invisibility is an evident factor in their immigrant entrepreneur’s success. However, Invisibleness in Beso’s testimony is not a calculated ethnic strategy, and Invisibleness is a learned cultural trait within this post-Soviet cohort that can permeate their behavior and business practices (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). According to Beso:

*I think it's a cultural thing because I know for sure that in Georgian culture, in Russian culture, Ukrainian culture showing off something is very not, not polite, so that would say it's called the bad manners, And somehow, somehow, it's very deep. You know, it's that we have to be quiet. Um, and you know, do it that way because it provides more chance that you will achieve something versus just go around and you know, keep screaming and demanding this and that. I think it's cultural thing.*

*I don't think there is anything very different, but you very rarely find, any Eastern European areas out there, going crazy with the YouTube and everybody knows about him, there are some, but you can't tell where the guys from because they've been here for so such a long time, they could be general or generalized as some immigrant guy.*

*We have the ability of improvisation. Um to improvise things, adaptation to things, maybe hardship. Or just like general, you know, challenges. It could be even daily. You*
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know, I would not imagine anybody I know ever back home would not be able to, let's say, put the TV on the wall, right.

For the topic of success in the interview questions, Beso linked his success to achieving financial gains with a strong emphasis on personal freedom. The researcher found Beso was in the transitory phases of growth and personal in the IEN model. In his comments on success, Beso speaks to the need for a higher level of motivation, networks, avoidance of ritual-like behaviors, and adaptation (Saravathy, 2001). According to Beso:

*I see success as a business owner as very good financial stability, ok, number one.*

*When I get tired, you know, or maybe doing the same thing, I try to change things, or do something different. And most importantly, just always have the drive. You know that is important. It has to be, because without it You know, it's not worth it, you know, because I'm, I'm not only a business owner, you know, it's, it's my passion, so we do it. You know, it's like I just can't imagine any other way. So, you know, I always try to keep the same amount of that hunger, you know.*

Beso, in his final interview comment, provides a series of closing comments aligning with the data findings in Vandor and Franke (2016) that immigrant startups outperform American natives two to one. Beso talks about the changes in the pre-year 2000 immigrants who went straight to work, whereas the new immigrants are entrepreneurial in their mindsets (Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021; Somers, 2022). Last, a thematic phase amongst this post-Soviet cohort continues to resurface in the participant’s statements; though the phrase is worded differently from participant to participant, the comment is consistent. In Beso’s passage below, the critical phase is underlined in the passage just as it is in each participant’s profile when captured. According to Beso:

*I see the new generation that’s coming in still in the country, they all want to become businesspeople right away. I would say eight people in ten, maybe from 10-1 want to start some kind of business versus when I remember, everyone went straight to work, took any work.*
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I've been in Brooklyn, especially most of businesses I would say is somehow associated with the Eastern Europe. Many businesses, I would say more than 50% in Brooklyn. Yeah, I guess they have drive, Yeah, they're hungrier than Americans.

I'm just gonna say one more thing just came in my mind. I think that it is very important thing, that when you see something is on the table and it's within your reach, you will have to just put out an effort to get it.

Beso met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Bill (Билл)**

Bill is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been in business for eighteen years and owns four successful businesses in the United States. Bill explains in his testimony that his initial plan was to work in the U.S. for a few months and return to his home country, but the opportunity he witnessed while in the U.S. was a pull factor for his wanting to stay in the host country (Lee, 1966). According to Bill:

*Originally, I was thinking it's going to be just uh to work for a few months and actually see New York and see Louisiana.*

In Bill’s testimony, he provides testimony aligned with the literature associated with entrepreneurial traits. Bill, like most participants, was formally educated and explained that he could quickly advance and learn the host country's system, given his foundation in speaking the language (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Bill’s testimony adds to this study's profile for controlled entrepreneurial behaviors (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991) and additional insight into building Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021) profile. According to Bill:

*I believe it's a four year of college, but yeah, basically transfer when you transfer the credits because of the intensity that they do over there because I've tried to transfer the credits, it comes out to a master’s degree in United States, but I don't know, I never had a need for any diploma in my life.*

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_I like to learn how to learn a lot. I like to know a lot. So, it was pretty simple. How to figure it out. The, the system and how to, I wouldn't say manipulate, but how to work inside the system._

Bill, in his interview, displayed entrepreneurial behaviors in his home country before migrating to the host country. However, though Bill was executing entrepreneurial activities in his home country, he was limited in opportunity due to corruption in building a legitimate business. Bill’s testimony provided the research data supporting home country push and host country pull factors (Lee, 1966). During these early developmental years, Bill’s testimony is consistent with the other post-Soviet cohort’s predisposing characteristics related to their entrepreneurial success in the United States. According to Bill:

_I didn't have the company, if that's what you're asking me. But I did bought and sell quite a bit. I was going to Turkey and to Bulgaria. I was buying clothes, machinery and a lot of different stuff. And I was selling them in Macedonia for almost 4-5 years, but it wasn't a company._

_My country has always been, uh, corrupted. There is a big corruption going on over there. It's a very difficult to earn a living. If you wanna do anything, you gotta either be with the government or with the whatever local mafia it is. Uh, so, it's a, it's huge and you don't have opportunities, uh, like over here._

The researcher presented the question on Invisibleness to Bill, and he confirmed the researcher’s initial premises that Invisibleness is an evident factor in their immigrant entrepreneur’s success. Bill’s testimony aligns with other participants explaining that this post-Soviet cohort has a learned cultural trait not to promote oneself (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). Bill’s statements explain that Invisibleness is used as ‘looking average’ in his ethnic business strategy for business success (Kloosterman, 2010). However, Bill does explain that he encounters the systematic negative aspects of Invisibleness as a recipient by the host country environment in his early years of business development. According to Bill:

_A little bit, Uh, interesting. Uh, I drive small car, very small car that has a dent on it that I when I bought it, a lady backed into me and I never fixed it, And the reason why is I_
deal with the government, employers that usually their salary is not big enough. So, if I show up with an expensive car and this one, I'll be totally ignored and I will be called white boy, rich boy, whatever the hell you wanna say. But when I show up in a beat-up car with a dent on it, they tend to be lot more open and a lot more accepting uh to whatever I'm telling them, and uh, whatever I'm doing, whatever I wanna do for them. So that works, I've seen it and I've heard that a lot of times and I experienced myself a lot of times.

On the topic of success, Bill, in his statements, links success to financial gains in the sense of wealth security for himself and his family. Bill does not explicitly call the term personal freedom, but in his testimony, this term is a theme in his definition of success. The researcher found Bill is in the transitory phases of growth and personal in the IEN model. According to Bill:

"I came over here almost 20 years ago now with nothing. I had 180 bucks in my pocket. I live in a decent house, I drive decent cars, I have a decent salary, my kids are going to decent schools. And for me, that's uh, success, and I don't, uh for everybody, everybody can understand success in a different, uh, ways in a different shapes or form. Uh, but for me I feel that I am a successful and I do, I do have more than what most of the people that they have done in my age.

So, to measure success it's a, it's only I measure it only on a personal level. I don't really measure it with the business for business. I go, and I work, and I do my best, and whatever is going to be the outcome, I, I understand it and I take as much as I'm going to be able to do, I will do. I'm not interested to be a billionaire or stuff like that. I earn enough not to think about and not to worry about.

Bill has successfully sustained his business for eighteen years and credits an extreme work ethic, adaptation through continuous professional development, and using the host country’s political system at the local levels to his advantage (Kloosterman, 2010). Bill’s position, as most participants, is not associating success or sustained success with their firm’s financial health and growth but defining both success and sustained success on a personal level. The researcher holds firm in the findings that Bill is transitioning from the growth phase into the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Bill:

"I'd have an extreme, I'm the first guy that goes to work and I'm always the last guy that leaves the jobs."
I didn't understand that you need no matter how long you wanna do it, you need to have political connections to be able to deal in some of these difficulties. And then throughout the years I understood that.

Bill met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Elena (Елена)

Elena is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been in business for three years in the United States. Elena has a formal education with a master’s degree in economics from her home country. Elena's inclusion in this study is because she met the three-year minimum threshold for operating a business in the United States. Elena is a relatively recent immigrant entrepreneur who migrated to the United States a decade ago. Elena’s business in the U.S. is in the same industry as the original business she operated in her home country for a decade before immigrating. Elena is limited in her U.S. experiences to provide post-five years of business operations for explaining sustainability of success in the U.S. However, she does provide cherished data for understanding the immigrant entrepreneur’s business establishment process and the lived factors for creating their initial business success.

Elena does not talk to either push or pull factors (Lee, 1966) motivating her migration to the United States from Ukraine. Elena’s lack of push or pull factors (Lee, 1966) is connected to her migration a decade before the recent war in Ukraine displaced many immigrants from this region. Elena’s reasoning for migration to the U.S. is more associated with the seven laws of Migration by Ravenstein (1885, 1889). However, Elena does show signs of still being in an acclimation stage of the host country environment as her testimony as linkage to the literature on sojournring appears in her statements (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952). Her statement of ‘Born Again’ and defining herself as solely Ukrainian speaks to the cultural distances, perceived behavior controls (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) and perceptions of psychic
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distances (Ambos et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) between the home and host countries. According to Elena:

*If I wouldn't meet my husband, I would still live in Ukraine. Yes, of course I worry, yes, because everything was new, I even couldn't speak English.*

*Oh, everything was new, so, I was concerned about so many different things, like how to label, like everything for me. It, I felt like I was born again.*

*I don't know the exact examples right now, I, it doesn't come to me, examples, but I remember like in every, every day something different. Then it was the saying that it's not like they're just different country, it's like another planet here.*

The interview posed a series of questions to Elena on entrepreneurial motivation, goals, and challenges she had to overcome to become a new immigrant business owner in the United States. Elena, in her testimony, discusses tacit knowledge of the business industry for assisting her ability to create a startup in the U.S. for desires of independence and financial gains. When discussing the intervening obstacles to starting her business, Elena explains the process for her was “smooth” due to her access to a distributed immigrant network and an American Sponsor’s (i.e., her husband) support in navigating the host country system (Sanders and Nee, 1996).

According to Elena:

*I wanted to uh, earn more, yes, I'm gonna have more. I like to be independent.*

*So, it's word of mouth and the people like clients were telling clients on Facebook. So that's how I had gained clients. We have in Livingston, Russian speaking, Livingston moms, and they were talking about me every day. So that I gained clients. I don't know how many members on Facebook, but, uh, maybe less than 1000. For the workers, they found me too in these networks.*

When asked to define her definition of success, Elena showed she is transitioning from the social phases to the growth phase of the IEN model on meeting the immigrant’s entrepreneurial motivational phase for success. The definition of success for Elena in her testimony links the desire for the growth of her business with building a solid reputation and trust
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between her business, its workers, suppliers, and customers. In Elena’s closing comments on immigrant entrepreneurial success, she stresses the importance of learning the host country’s language, penetrating social media networks, and using these media networks to build success. According to Elena:

*I really want, I sincerely want to help them dissolve their problem.*

*I would tell everyone to use media. Uh like all platform what is like on top. Um, because it helped me a lot. And uh, what else, uh, exactly. Language, I told you about language, uh, definitely every immigrant has to learn English. But media, it helps a lot.*

Within the context of the study’s term invisibleness, the researcher asked Elena for her views. Elena, in her testimony, has a confirmed lived experience of Invisibleness. However, Elena’s description of Invisibleness was not from the context of negative or positive concerning the researcher’s initial premises that Invisibleness is an evident factor in their immigrant entrepreneur’s success. Elena's worldview on Invisibleness is the creation of oversaturation of businesses in a given industry. Therefore, Elena talks of a desire to be visible and not invisible for her business success. The researcher finds Elena in phase two of the updated theoretical model in Figure 27. According to Elena:

*I’m not sure if I’m correct, but I’m, I’ll tell you my, my thoughts. Uh, I feel like so much of this country is, has so many businesses, that, We, uh, we become not that visible. So, we are like, umm, like your invisible, because uh, there are here are so, so many of us, blend in. Oh, it’s good or bad like you said in different ways, ok. Yes, sometimes you have to you want to be visible. sometimes not. Maybe I have used this, but I don’t remember.*

Elena met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Gregory (Грегорий)**

Gregory is an immigrant entrepreneur who has grown his business into a very successful and large business. Gregory has been in business in the United States for ten years before recently merging his company with another firm. Gregory is one of two participants in this study.
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who migrated to the United States in their early teenage years. Gregory entered the United States at the middle school level, was formally educated, and received a medical degree from a U.S. University (Hunt, 2009, 2011). His family migrated to the U.S. due to push factors (Lee, 1966) of war and discrimination in their home country. Gregory, like Ike and Mike, is the closest participant to the definition of assimilation over acclimation (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). However, neither Gregory nor Ike, who entered the U.S. at a younger age in their testimony, provide the criteria for complete assimilation into the host country. According to Gregory:

"Um, part of it, if not, the entire reason was, um, kind of some, I guess you would call it racial tensions. But, uh, racial typically implies to a different skin color. But for us, it was as Armenians and Russia.

Gregory did not provide any statements that showed struggles with acclimation to the host country from his home country (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). In Gregory’s statements, he explains that his family migrated to an ethnic enclave (Achidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982; Portes and Jensen, 1987; Portes, 1984; Xie and Gough, 2011; Zhang et al., 2016) inside the host country. Gregory’s story on entry from home to the host country aligns with the literature. It is this migration into an ethnic enclave within the host country and initial governmental support systems that Gregory states provided a level of support for him and his family in their acclimation phases to the host country (Xie and Gough, 2011). In Gregory’s testimony, the researcher found the principles behind the definition of acclimation over assimilation as discussed in the Northern Model by Glazer and Moynihan (1970), where different ethnic groups coexist under one umbrella called America. According to Gregory:

"Thankfully we were, um, able to have uh, I guess you would say some social programs like welfare, um support. Uh for the first nine months of being here. So, I think it was free healthcare through the medical or Medicaid program. And I want to say, umm 700 plus or minus dollars’ worth of support, including food stamps for our family of five."
It was a relatively smooth transition. Um, obviously part of that transition had to do with the fact that I was able to learn the language pretty quickly and part of it had to do with the fact that the area we lived in had a relatively large Russian community. And uh, so I had Russian speaking classmates who were able to help me through the most difficult part of the transition.

Though Gregory states he did not experience any feelings of being an outsider from native Americans, there were some levels of discrimination from other ethnic groups experienced (Mohl, 1985). However, Gregory does explain the role of the church and the ethnic community in supporting the younger generation to acclimate and stay out of criminal activities in the host country (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Cummings, 1980; Uzzi, 1996; Xie and Gough, 2011). In Gregory’s statements, the home country’s morals and ethics learning is brought into these ethnic enclaves (Achidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Hirschman, 1982; Portes and Jensen, 1987; Portes, 1984; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Xie and Gough, 2011; Zhang et al., 2016) in the host country. It is the home country’s cultural ethics and morals passed onto younger generations by the group that the researcher finds as part of the ideological factors that develop individuals predisposing attributes needed for the successful immigrant entrepreneur (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Sanders and Nee, 1996). It is these predisposing attributes that feed into the theoretical model trace to building a profile for Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021)

According to Gregory:

Yeah, I'd say more so from other immigrant group groups than native Americans. There was some a gang activity from the Hispanics and Asians. You know, fortunately gangs never got to a uh form in the Russian community. Um, just I think, largely due to the fact that a big portion of the Russian community, especially in this town or city that I was growing up in was church going and religious.

In Gregory’s interview, the researcher expanded on his responses for more insight between the immigrant and nonimmigrants and why the data shows immigrants outpacing
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nonimmigrants in entrepreneurial startups. The rationale behind this research study opportunity here in Gregory’s interview is that he is a member of both the immigrant and nonimmigrant worlds. Gregory immigrated to the U.S. in his early teens, grew up in an ethnic enclave influenced by the home country members (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Sanders and Nee, 1996), and received the highest level of education in the American system before becoming a successful business owner (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Gregory’s insight into the immigrant entrepreneur and nonimmigrant aided this study in the building blocks of the predisposing characteristics influencing immigrant entrepreneurs’ success (Kloosterman, 2010). Gregory talks of immigrants differing from American natives with the following attributes: resiliency, strong work ethic, broader knowledge, need for independence/freedom, motivational drive, and appreciation.

According to Gregory:

*I think the biggest difference I've noticed is we as immigrants have, um, more context, if you will, considering we've seen our parents go through the transition as immigrants and have seen them oftentimes go from having something in their you know, country of origin to then having very little, if not nothing in the country they immigrated to, which in this case is obviously the United States.*

*I feel personally and through observation of my peers, um who were in a similar situation, that gives an additional personal drive, if you will, to work hard to start, to study hard, to try hard, and not taking anything for granted. So, um, I, I do believe that's hard to duplicate or replicate without that life experience.*

Gregory, in his interview, when asked about his entrepreneurial motivation building to his success, his statement was aligned to community service and individual freedom even though his testimony of achieving a higher level of financial success than he could have imagined (Kloosterman, 2010). In Gregory’s statements, the research finds in the analysis that Gregory, having achieved a high level of financial success, has transitioned out of the growth phase and is now in the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Gregory:
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Get to practice medicine the way I believed it to be. You know, best practice and Um, be able to earn a comfortable living. At the time I had very little experience or knowledge to know what that income would be like and certainly never imagined it to be what it grew to be.

Gregory defines his immigrant entrepreneurial success in terms of personal rewards over the data points defining a level of profitability for a firm’s success. According to Gregory:

*I think #1 is kind of what it achieves. The goal of me starting the business as you asked earlier. So, the number one measure for me was the fact that it allowed me to be available towards or for those communities that I wanted to be available for, and for those patients that I wanted to be able to help, part of which was Russian speaking, considering them bilingual part of it, had to do with uh using my surgical training to help.*

Gregory met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Igor (Игорь)**

Igor is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been in business for seven years and has ten employees. Igor received a formal education in his home country with a bachelor’s degree in engineering and electronics (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Igor migrated to the United States in his late twenties. Igor was an entrepreneur in his home country but in a different industry from his business in the United States. Before transitioning to an entrepreneur in the U.S., Igor spent the first decade in the host country as a worker in the same industry as his home country. Igor migrated to the U.S. due to opportunistic pull factors (Lee, 1966) for financial gains for him and his family in the host country and push factors (Lee, 1966) of corruption and lower socioeconomic conditions in his home country (Massey et al., 2008). According to Igor:

*I was looking for a better life for like uh, for steady income. That's, that's the main reason, and maybe for better life for my kids too, for like, can I get to get a career. America is more justice here.*

In his story, Igor explained that learning the language was the most challenging intervening obstacle when asked about his acclimation to the United States. Igor, in his
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testimony, explains his frustration with the lack of clarity of information before learning the host country's language. However, in his interview, Igor did not express sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) or cultural distances (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) challenges. Though Igor states his acclimation transition to the host country was routine, after being in the host country, he maintains strong ties to his home country and his family connections there, confirming Glazer and Moynihan’s (1970) argument of acclimation over assimilation. In Igor’s testimony, his perception of the host and home countries' psychic distance was low (Ambos et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). According to Igor:

*Nothing big, maybe language it was, it was. It was the hardest thing for me.*

*I like staying informed with that, with Russia because I'm Russian. And so all my relatives moved out from Uzbekistan as I have, I have few left over there. So, I just, uh, more informed about what's going on in Russia. I'm Russian, I just live in Uzbekistan. My, my family, my dad is Russian, my mom is Russian.*

Igor’s story explains the cultural differences (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) and extremes in the environments between home and host countries for him. Igor describes the host country system as creating intervening obstacles the immigrant must overcome and views immigrants over host country natives as resourceful, non-wasteful, non-entitled with passionate goals, non-ritualistic, highly motivated, and having a desire for constant development. In Igor's story, as with all the participants, the qualities of hard work, educated, non-ritualistic, resourceful, continual development, and motivation aligned to build the predisposing characteristics of this cohort of successful post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs. According to Igor:

*The main difference is, the main difference is a lot of people who are from here, they, they grew up spoiled. You know, and they think their country, uh they like, that owe them something. You know, it's like, they don't get why we don't get that spoiled, privilege. That I'm like, you have to earn it, you have to do.*

*The customs and the culture is different, Absolutely different. It's in good ways and bad ways too.*
Igor’s thoughts on the term invisibleness were limited in his response. However, Igor did comment that it pairs culturally with many of the other participant’s responses in this study. Igor explains he is not one to draw attention to himself and defines himself as a ‘mellow guy,’ not trying to draw attention to himself and following the stream (Saravathy, 2001). Given Igor’s story and success, the researcher captured Igor’s testimony as an innate characteristic learned in his host country upbringing that aligns with the researcher’s intuition that Invisibleness is used, but unknown to Igor that he is using it. According to Igor:

\[ \text{It's just it's hard to describe like that. I'm, I'm more mellow guy. I mean, I'm not, I'm not trying to seek out, you know, attention, like just the pulse. Well, I follow the stream you know, not fighting the stream pretty much.} \]

Igor goes on in his story, and when the topic of his entrepreneurial success is asked, he explains his ability to overcome loss and keep going. Igor is forward-thinking, calculated, willing to accept uncertainty, and absorbing higher levels of risk. Igor is satisfied with the level of growth of the business. The researcher found that Igor is in the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Igor:

\[ \text{When you, when you can take some loss and not being upset about it. That's, that's a successful thing probably.} \]

Igor met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Ike (アイク)**

Ike is an immigrant entrepreneur who has opened and closed several businesses in the host country. Currently, Ike has grown three successful businesses in less than ten years. Ike, like Gregory, is the other participant in this study who migrated to the United States in their early teenage years. Ike entered the United States at the high school level and initially had challenges acclimating to the host country. Ike did not express sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) in
his story, and his challenges were a degraded belief in the U.S. education system due to cultural distances (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) from other immigrant Americans and the need to capitalize on his newfound freedom in the host country financially.

Ike’s family, like Gregory’s story, migrated to the U.S. due to push factors (Lee, 1966) of corruption, the threat of violence, and discrimination in their home country with pull factors (Lee, 1966) of financial opportunities in the host country (Stouffer, 1940, 1960). Both Ike and Gregory migrated to the host country at a young age, and the researcher found in testimonies that their perceptions of the psychic distance between home and host countries were low for both (Ambos et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). Ike’s interview was the longest in this study, as the engagement lasted over three hours. Given the length of Ike’s story being approximately twenty pages, only a limited amount of his testimony is in this chapter. According to Ike:

*You know, living in Russia or any part of the former Soviet Republic and trying to make money. It's a dog-eat-dog world and you really have to like, hustle and outmaneuver all the smart guys.*

*I still remember we came with like $200 in our pocket after selling everything, it was crazy.*

*Go to the classes and try to understand a Chinese accent English while trying to understand the chemistry class or mathematics class or any other classes where they’re not teaching you English. It was even more difficult because you had to learn a very important subject of chemistry or biology in a language you don’t understand or speak.*

Ike, in his story, when asked about his acclimation to the United States, explained that his family had a social network within an ethnic enclave (Achidi and Priem, 2011; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982; Portes and Jensen, 1987; Portes, 1984; Uzzi, 1996; Xie and Gough, 2011; Zhang et al., 2016) inside the host country. Ike’s testimony, like Gregory, found the principles behind the definition of acclimation over assimilation as discussed in the Northern Model by Glazer and Moynihan (1970), where different ethnic groups coexist under one
umbrella called America. However, in Ike’s story, this Northern Model (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970) created challenges when Ike explained his integration into the host country’s school system. In his story, Ike felt his level of attained knowledge from his home country schooling was sufficient and gave up on the American school system in what appears to be cultural distances between immigrant groups cohabitating within his ethnic enclave in the host country (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009; Mohl, 1985). According to Ike:

*When I moved here, the high school I went to, we had a lot at that point there was a lot of Russian immigrants, Ukrainian immigrants, Jewish immigrants moving in.*

*So, it’s a lot of like a little mini-Russia. Maybe right there was, but there were more Chinese people there. My entire high school was like 80% of our high school was Chinese. And then the rest is like white, black and the rest of Asians like Koreans and Japanese because it was, you know, the centers was a very heavily populated Chinese town.*

Ike’s story of migrating to the host country with minimum resources to leverage opportunities for his entrepreneurial success (Kloosterman, 2010) is exhibited by many learned characteristics (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991) routinely seen in the immigrant entrepreneur participants in this study. Ike’s testimony of his lived experiences in America displays learned attributes of resiliency, motivation, higher levels of risk-taking, multitalented, perseverance, freedom, adaptiveness, calculated, strong networks, entrepreneurial foresight, and aggressive nature for his ability to achieve business success. These predisposing attributes in Ike’s story add to the theoretical model trace for aiding in presenting a proposed profile for Entrepreneurial Intelligence in their decision-making (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1990; Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021). According to Ike:

*I remember the bedroom was so tiny that my youngest brother had to sleep in the closet.*

*Business Opportunity is a huge, the United States has a lot of money. People have money. And to get that money from people, it’s basically the money is there on the table, you just have to go grab it.*
In Russia if you are a hardworking man, even if you work really hard the amount of money you were getting for it was a lot less.

Personally, I never really was bothered by racism much because I was used to it in a way by being Armenian. In Russia for instance; because we were different and in high school there was a thing that rhymed the word Armenian, and it rhymed with the black ass. There was a, there was a slang, and we were called black asses.

I notice is the immigrant here in a lot of ways are bit more savvy because they’ve never had it just good. The people that live in United States that Americans, a lot of Americans they don't appreciate what they got.

People here in United States in a lot of ways, they're weaker in mentality, you know, like small little things that happen to them in their life brings them down and in a lot of times they won’t find a way back up.

Like all these immigrants’ kind of help each other on WhatsApp, I guess. Um, there's a little portal where they give each other advice on how to cross the border legally or what you do when you come in and where there's a community out there. They help each other out. Then there's like different groups on Facebook and what not. And so, you know these people on these sites.

You know may know from our high school named Jan Koum. He was in our high school and was a little older. He became the founder of the WhatsApp and he sold it for $19 billion. Jan was my friend’s cousin. He wasn’t a real supper close buddy of mine, but we knew each other. And you know, he went into tech world with a lot of the other Eastern European minds. They work really well for engineering and computer science. And so, you know, all of us dropped out of high school and a lot of us went to school to learn how to be a QA engineer at first or a programmer.

Ike provides many examples in his interview to explain how he sees immigrant entrepreneurial success. The researcher from Ike’s testimony in the analysis finds Ike’s continuous comments on achieving more significant financial success with his adaptive behavior to avoid ritualistic behaviors allow him to buy and sell businesses (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1967) to grow personal wealth. Ike consistently says that growing wealth is his priority in his statements in the interview; therefore, Ike is in the growth phase of the IEN model. However, Ike provides some statements to present the belief that he is beginning to diffuse into the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Ike:
When I was 25, when I first opened my business. So, for me my goal was to live, uh live this lifestyle that I can afford.

To be able to do whatever you want. the older I grow, my values change. You see what changes around you, and you know things, you learn more. You realize how much certain things cost and what you need to do. And just before dreaming about making you know, $10,000 a month from $5,000 a month. Now you're like, well, I need to be making at least $50,000 a month to be successful. Then I get to 50 thousand and then I need to do 100 thousand a month, you always wanna grow and I always wanna do more.

Um, sometimes I feel trapped doing the same thing over and over. I hate repetitive things, I always wanna do something new, something cool. And so, for me to like, a lot of times I'll open a new business just like that. You know, I'm like, hey, I could do this and say goodbye to the old one and not think twice about it, not worry about it.

In Ike’s story, his discussion of Invisibleness within this study provides a unique explanation from the immigrant entrepreneur’s perspective. Ike defines Invisibleness as the host country’s environment projecting invisibility over the immigrant. Ike alludes to the early stages that the immigrant entrepreneur desires to be visible. In his statements, Ike’s comments align with Markowitz and Slovic’s (2020) findings on immigrants navigating the interviewing obstacle of a host country's dehumanization barriers. The research found in Ike’s story during cross-analysis with other participants' definitions that Invisibleness takes on different meanings between the three phases within the theoretical model provided in figure 29. In Ike’s testimony, he explains that once an entrepreneur can secure enough money to become visible, the attention, whether good or bad is valuable by bringing attention and new opportunities. According to Ike:

I right away think of a gardener, a Mexican that you know, comes to your nice house and he cuts your grass. And you know it’s getting done, you know, someone is doing it, but like, you’re so up above that, you don’t care. You don’t see them as like humans in the way. You’re just like, okay, cut my grass and get out, you know.

I love free marketing. And sometimes to make something go viral will get you a free publicity. So, I always hunt for free publicity.

Ike met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.
Katrina (Екатерина)

Katrina is an immigrant entrepreneur who built four successful businesses in less than ten years in the host country. Katrina received a formal education in her home country with a bachelor’s degree in physical training (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Katrina immigrated to the United States in her late twenties with her American husband against her family and friends' wishes. When Katrina first immigrated, she attempted to find work in the host country and explained that there were many intervening obstacles in her finding employment. Katrina eventually turned to entrepreneurial activities to succeed in the host country by leveraging her home country training for her business development. Katrina before transitioning as an entrepreneur in the U.S., Katrina spent the first several years of her time in the host country as a worker learning the host country's system. Katrina, in her testimony, does talk of sojourning (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952), experiencing racism (Haslam, 2006; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020), and projected invisibility by the host country's environment early in her story of coming to the host country; eventually, she overcame those by building a series of closed groups social network with home country people living in the host country. Katrina has been able to acclimate in the host country despite viewing host country natives as having a fakeness to them. Her ability to assimilate is highly unlikely, if impossible.

According to Katrina:

*My family and friends did not want me to leave because I was a valued worker all over there and provider. So of course, you know, they were not, they were not very happy.*

*You know I did not because I found immediately Russian community, Russian friends. And that was only who I was hanging out. And so, it was no problem.*

*I'm a hustler, you know.*

*I came with a huge resume. They then look at my resume and there was a child and Youth Services. At that place there was a woman, she says, she says Oh, you're overqualified, we will call you back. And in my head then, when she said we will call you back means I*
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will call you back. Uh, but she really basically told me to, uh, you know, [get lost] but she says her words were, we will call you back.

Regarding Invisibleness, Katrina explains her viewpoints within the context of this study with a desire to be visible with her business and the need for additional information clarity on the host country system. Katrina explains that with increased understanding and visibility, she can expand into the open market to access host country natives as customers. However, in her testimony, she discusses conversations with others in this cohort who experienced the negative aspect of being invisible, like a second-class citizen, as Glazer and Moynihan (1970) explained when discussing the invisible man. In this portion of Katrina’s statements, the researcher finds Katrina in the growth phase of the IEN model. According to Katrina:

One guy told me that we always going to be when, when we're trying to do business with Americans, we're always going to be invisible or we’re always going to be you name it. You know the Chechen Republic of Chechnya. So, he says like we in America are always going to be Chechen in Russia you know like always going to be like Second class people.

My only issue with being invisible is that inability to understand the market. And an ability to market correctly in United States because all my marketing goes within the Russian community, the Russian speaking communities, Ukrainians, you know, Kazakhstan, where so it's just, you know more convenient to me.

Katrina explains her entrepreneurial goals, success, and sustaining that success by focusing on building networks, trusting relationships, and achieving a higher purpose. In her testimony, the researcher evaluates Katrina as still in the growth phase but transitioning from the growth phase into the personal phase of the IEN model. In Katrina’s story, the researcher found a consistent pattern of attributes in the other participant's statements. These attributes are strong work ethic, resiliency, motivation, higher levels of risk-taking, multitalented, perseverance, seeking to achieve personal freedom, calculated, strong networks, entrepreneurial foresight, and aggressive nature with the ability to rapidly adapt in order to achieve and sustain business success even through a black swan pandemic (Taleb, 2010). According to Katrina:
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I believe that is eight or nine languages I speak.

Success to me personally as a business or owner after pandemic, it changed to me. I'm on the target, I'm on the goal and my purpose of success is two things. The 1st is to get financial freedom. I do not want, I don't really want, I don't need to get uh rich, I want to be free. I want to be free of you know Finances and if I need to do something then just do it. But in terms of success, actual success, I have a purpose to give people jobs as many as possible. I want to feed people. It's my duty and responsibility, let's put it this way. Success to me equals freedom for me and my group of people.

I work really hard, really hard. I work really, really, hard. I work eight days a week. That, that's one thing, most importantly, I have a vision.

Do not listen to anybody because a lot of times people that are closest to you, they will say to you they love you and when you hear it, when you hear I love you the way you are, you have to run from those people because that's the most harm that people can.

Katrina met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Lisa (Елизавета)

Lisa is an immigrant entrepreneur who built a successful business in less than four years with seventeen employees in the host country. Lisa has been in the host country for less than ten years and has a formal education in her home country with a master’s degree in accounting (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Lisa immigrated to the United States with her spouse in her mid-twenties. Lisa explains in her story that when she and her spouse first immigrated, they traveled and explored the host country to assess where the best location in the host country would be to execute an entrepreneurial startup. Lisa, in her testimony, migrated to the host country due to economic opportunity pull factors (Lee, 1960). Lisa has quickly assimilated into the host country and has a positive outlook on the host country’s culture and environment (Erickson, 1972). Lisa uses a variety of social media distributed global reach networks between the host and home country to rapidly assimilate, gain access to host country natives for support, and learn the host country system to mitigate a series of intervening obstacles (Kloosterman, 2010; Kee, 1966). The research has assessed Lisa as satisfying the social phase of the IEN model with her motivation
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and has oriented toward the growth phase for her entrepreneurial and personal motivational factors for achieving success. According to Lisa:

"We met one guy in New York and uh, he was very friendly to us, and he helped with like banks and bills because when we just came and we don't have a credit history, you cannot print anything you know? So, he gives us his address to make a bank account like so, yeah, he's helping like some things. What was really helpful and It's only one, I think person who helps us that was enriching. He was American, and we meet him on like a couch surfing app.

We visit uh, New York, Miami, like a few different places in Florida. We visit Nashville, we visit Indianapolis, Chicago, so like it was a little bit more than 10 different cities.

I think only our language, it's like the biggest problem. I think it's the biggest problem because sometimes uh, for like a faster success. You need to speak well. You need to understand the people and people should understand you. So, I think this is the biggest one.

Lisa’s position on Invisibleness within the context of this study does not align with the initial research premise that this cohort is using Invisibleness as an ethnic strategy for their entrepreneurial activities in a host country. Lisa uses many social media tools and networks to highly market her business. In Lisa’s story, she explains that with increased visibility, there are increases in intervening obstacles with her business (Lee, 1966). According to Lisa:

"I think it sometimes better to be visible. Of course, like in good things like I do something, but people don't know what I do, but something better to know for people what I do.

To be visible in social media it’s a good part to be visible because people talk all the time about you, like they know you and they come to your place because the name, right. So, it works in my situation because I came like a kind of famous because of my name because I work with some like a famous people.

So, a lot of people know our business, but bad things also happen because some people who jealous, they tried to do bad thing for us. Because they think it's like very easy. For us, they try to do some bad thing. So, as I said, like both sides, I think it's works like it can be in my situation.

In explaining her entrepreneurial goals and success, Lisa focuses on achieving profits, customer relationships, and having quality employees. In her story, she talks about the challenges
of finding good employees and the need to work 14-hour days to achieve her goals of marketing her brand and growing her company’s profits, employees, and customers. According to Lisa:

*You own some business your business should grow, like so, you should have every year more, more, more money than previous one. You should have more employees and your employees should have a like more salary every year than they had before. So, like your employees and your clients, everything should be bigger than before. If you stay at the, at the same point for a few years, probably something wrong.*

*I was like a very, very inside the process and also, in my day off, I still keep working because I just love it. So, maybe it gives me like a more, more motivation.*

Lisa met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Mike 1 (Михаил)**

Mike is an immigrant entrepreneur who has owned successful businesses in the host country for 14 years. Mike attempted to immigrate once to the U.S. but was denied and experienced ostracism in his home country. Again, Mike attempted to immigrate prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union and was successful through a multiple-country journey before making it to the United States. Mike, in his story, expresses several push and pull factors (Lee, 1960) associated with personal freedom in the host country and suppression experiences in his home country for the decision to migrate with his family. Mike speaks of restricted speech, controlled movement, the threat of retribution for noncompliance to the home country system, and lack of opportunity as a few reasons he began as a refugee in the United States. However, Mike has a strong positive response to his learned family values, societal group morals, and the education system he experienced in his home country (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991). Mike's negative response toward his home country is associated with the Communist party and the Soviet Government. Like Gregory in his testimonies, Mike is the closest of the study’s participants to the criteria associated with assimilating over acclimation in the host country. In their famous works, Glazer and Moynihan (1970) discussed what is found in Mike’s testimony,
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with acclimation as the Northern model and assimilation as the Southern model. According to Mike:

*No, I am an American. I am an American. Yeah, my country.*

*I was ready to immigrate when I was, uh, probably 10 years old because I grew up in the family where my grandfather, my grandmother, they were repressed in 1937. I just, my dream was to leave the Soviet Union to the United States to be in a free country.*

*Everything is different. There's just, just the freedom of movement. Uh, freedom of speech. There's just, I think the most was the freedom of movement, I could do anything, I can go anywhere I want. And you can say anything you want that was the biggest.*

Mike discusses his challenges in the host country and the difference between immigrant entrepreneurs and host country natives. Mike uses the need to ‘run’ to describe the immigrant’s motivation and ability to learn the host country's environment and systems. Mike’s testimony on education, live-to-work behavior, and unwavering commitments align with the literature and other participants’ testimony in building this study’s profile of predisposing characteristics for these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs. A repetitive theme continues to emerge in Mike’s statement, as others, that their primary education system in the home country was superior to the host country. Mike has an unwavering ideological position that failure to ‘make it’ in the host country is an unacceptable reality. The researcher finds that this cohort is highly educated and can quickly learn the host country's language and environment. Through Mike’s testimony, language is a powerful instrument in unlocking and gaining access to the host country’s system. Once the immigrant like Mike entered the host country system on a path to entrepreneurship, they rapidly maneuvered through the system using decentralized protective networks for information clarity (Uzzi, 1996), non-ritualistic behaviors (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1967), and savvy solid work ethic to achieve initial business creation and sustained success. According to Mike:

*So, what we were learning at nine and ten grade in the high school in the Soviet Union some people here were learning in the university.*
I guess language would probably be #1. I did not have any other challenges because whatever challenge I had; I am overcoming that challenge. I was learning as fast as I can. I was making money and everyday my son was getting bigger and bigger. So, I felt better and better because I was learning the country, I was learning the customs, I was learning life in this country, and I felt, uh, every day I was feeling more and more comfortable. Well, we're all chasing the clock. Many immigrants are running, and if you are born in this country and you're not running, it's very easy to be behind those immigrants who is running.

We have to make it happen for us. But the real regular joe schmo United States born here, well I think they feel that they deserve to have everything because they were born in this country. But it's not. It doesn't work that way.

Mike’s views on the term Invisibleness within the context of this study. In Mike’s story, he explains that he wanted to be on the ‘Stage’ early in his entry years and business creation. Mike did not employ Invisibleness as an ethnic strategy to initial business creation but did explain that after years of high financial success, he prefers Invisibleness. Mike’s statement aligns with phase three of the theoretical model in Figure 27. Mike says his visibility correlates with increased wealth creation and higher advancements. Mike provides a story about experiencing some projected Invisibleness during his developmental years in the host country. In Mike’s story, he does not associate a projected Invisibleness experience to host native racism, and this experience has a connection to the host country's environmental system. In this experience, Mike explains it only motivated him to work harder to be visible. The researcher found Kloosterman’s (2010) theory of mixed embeddedness in Mike’s discussion on connecting with politicians and leveraging these relationships for entrepreneurial advantages. Mike is assessed by the researcher as having reached the top end of the growth phase of the IEN model with the level of capital and success achieved; therefore, Mike is in the personal phase of the IEN model, with his testimony linking his age to his level of success acceptable as achieved.

According to Mike:
As a business owner in the US, well, it’s hard to say because I was always, I was not afraid to be visible. I was always trying to step forward to be visible to be on the stage.

I said to myself few years ago that I don’t want to be on stage anymore. And I don’t need any recognition anymore, but I was always trying to be visible because it was not afraid to step forward.

[S]omebody said to me basically, if English would be your native language you deserved, um, will be in a corner office. So, it means that probably I’m not going to be a lecturer in the University of College and probably not going to be on TV and most likely not going to be a politician, but my language will not stop me to become an entrepreneur start making money.

I don’t care, because with my level of money I don’t care. If I can drive Bentley flying Spur I don’t care if somebody saying between themselves, he’s the immigrant. Well, I’m an immigrant driving this car and you’re not immigrant driving a Honda.

Very, very good job to, to meeting and having a conversation with the President of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama. So, I have a picture with him. I met the Chuck Schumer and then the I know Cory Booker very well, not now. So, I used to be in, well, I used to have a closer part. I was not part of them, but I was always, uh, somewhere in circles. And I knew very well, Chris Christie.

Mike generally explains that success for a business is profitable and functioning. Mike explains that a functional business provides a viable product or service consumers want and need. Mike goes on to explain that his immigrant entrepreneurial success is associated with his mental focus on more growth for the business, recognition, ability to adapt in periods of uncertainty (Saravathy, 2001; Taleb, 2010), and to never be satisfied. Mike discusses the need to be constantly involved in the business, be adaptive, and maintain high morale and clear guidance to the workforce. According to Mike:

So, your success is you have a working business that works, and it makes profits.

Last couple years with the pandemic, it just changed a lot. But before every day I was in the business, but at least for a few hours talking to employees. So, I was involved in a business. Gonna be in the business making decision, discussing different things. You need to be involved; it cannot run by itself all the time.
The researcher asked Mike if he would do anything differently in the journey to entrepreneurial success; Mike said no and shared a story to explain that some things are better left alone. Mike’s short story is shared below in his comments. According to Mike:

You know there is a joke in Russia that the young couple finally got an apartment in Soviet Union. Right. They got in apartments and nice room, everything. But in the middle of the room, there is a bolt on the floor sticking up a little bit and every time there was tripped over the bolt and at first, they put it some kind of rug so they don’t trip. Then they finally, the guy decided oh, let me take it out. So, he cut the bolt out and the apartment downstairs, the light fixture fell down on the people.

Mike met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Mike 2 (Михаил)**

Mike is a highly educated immigrant entrepreneur with a master’s degree in mechanical engineering (Hunt, 2009, 2011) and has maintained a successful business for 14 years in the host country. Mike was a grassroots entrepreneur in his home country since a young age. Mike expressed some elements of sojourning (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) in his story as he talks of achieving success in his home country by building a home when his wife and children decided to immigrate to the U.S. However, Mike discusses that his family fell in love with the host country when they visited the United States (Ambosa et al., 2019) and decided to stay for the benefit of his children and spouse. In Mike’s story, he explains the push factors of the home country’s government, personal freedom restrictions, uncertainty, and lower socioeconomic conditions compared to the home country’s pull factors of personal freedom and opportunities (Lee, 1966; Stouffer, 1940, 1960) as the rational to migrate and stay in the host country with his family. In his 35 years, Mike has fully acclimated to the host country but explains he will never be fully assimilated as a host country native, though he desires to be one (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991; Ambosa et al., 2019). According to Mike:
Honestly, I didn't make a decision before I came to America, but during this day, let's say like this. Well, we came just for the vacation, let's say like that, and we fall in love to America is the first look. And we were looking for the way to stay in this country and just, you know, be American.

I would say I wish to be American, but I understand I'm not yet American because I didn't grow up in this country. I'm American patriot, I will fight for America. I am not Polish anymore because like I said, the country which I left back in the 90s, they are in the past now.

I would say I'm not yet American like. Maybe I'm. I'm not going to die as American, but I'm not anymore Polish.

The salaries were in U.S. dollars about $30 dollars per month, of course all the prices were like pennies so everybody inside could exist. People had government position for reasons, first you had to have a job because it was a jail penalty for people with no job.

When asked about the definition of Invisibleness, Mike explains that his experience in the host country was welcoming and helpful (Erickson, 1972). Mike does discuss that his home country was the projector of negative Invisibleness onto people, whereas the host country was utterly opposite to him (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011). Mike's testimony does not contradict the researcher's propositions on Invisibleness used as an ethnic strategy ultimately. Though Mike did not use Invisibleness as a strategic approach, he was a beneficiary of Invisibleness by his statements on helpfulness and ability to blend in as no threat or discrimination to natives (Erickson, 1972). According to Mike:

So, the people accept me and my parents, especially when they came from Poland with a visit, they were surprised, but the people are so nice to each other that they are welcome each other. They, even if my father couldn't speak English at all, they helped him and how they treat him as they like, like we are treating any other people in America.

When Mike talked about his entrepreneurial motivation, the definition of success, and how he achieved and sustained success, his stories were not about increasing profits but on reputation, delivering a superior product, and relationship building (Uzzi, 1996). Mike explains that his ability to achieve and sustain success is due to his deep commitment, hard work ethic,
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built relationships, and willingness to adapt and learn, leverage opportunities, and take risks (Kloosterman, 2010). Mike has achieved growing success in the IEN model and is now in the personal phase. According to Mike:

*I'm not focused truly on the money, only I'm focused on the good opinion.*

*I was waking up at 4:00 o'clock and going to sleep at 10 o'clock, something like that. I work long hours.*

*So, I have to learn. Some of the people who are doing this kind of job, sometimes they refuse to do something, let's say, like we didn't, we never refuse to use certain technology or certain materials. We just have to learn how to do that works.*

Mike met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

*Olena (Олена)*

Olena is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been in business for 18 years in the host country. Olena has a formal education in her home country with a master’s degree in accounting (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Olena, as with most participants, felt their primary education in the home country was better despite accolades of opportunity for the host county (Ambosa et al., 2019). Olena immigrated to the United States with her family as a refugee before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Olena accomplished her desire to immigrate to the U.S. with the help of a non-government organization (Cummings, 1980). The researcher found Olena thoroughly acclimated to the host country with a desire to fully assimilated as a host native, as the participant Mike explained in his testimony. Olena migrated to the host country due to economic opportunity and personal freedom pull factors (Lee, 1960; Stouffer, 1940, 1960). According to Olena:

*Because I didn't like the system, I didn't like uh, you know, living in Russia at all. And also, you know, of course, the length of opportunities. I mean, it’s a cliche, but I mean it's the whole truth. I was never into, you know, communism, socialism and equal distribution.*

*I mean, it was much better education there and very much wider kind of education than here, here was not tunneled.*
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I would say that America is my motherland. I mean, I know I was not born here, and I shouldn't say it, but even before the war, I would was always thinking I'm American, who speaks with an accent.

You know, we knew that there's no future. So, we're stuck there, and we do exactly the same. As you know, our parents would be doing, but here, we have, you know, the sky is the limit.

Olena was questioned on her position on Invisibleness within the context of this study. Her response was somewhat indifferent but aligns with the initial research premise that this cohort uses Invisibleness for their entrepreneurial activities. Olena, in her story, also explains that she uses caution and does not expose herself when it comes to social media (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1967). According to Olena:

I don't need to be invisible, but I don't need to be visible very, you know, like that much either.

I prefer not to be visible. I guess that's how I answer. I prefer not to be visible when it comes to social media.

Olena was forthcoming in her perceptions of the immigrant entrepreneur versus the host country native. Olena sees immigrants as having perseverance and the ability to overcome intervening obstacles with a willingness to take on challenges. Olena’s position on the immigrant entrepreneur’s attributes is consistent with the other participants in this study. According to Olena:

We are used to challenges and we approach them, and we try to resolve them. Usually, I think Americans, they don't want to, they don’t want to get over those challenges.

We still want to approach the challenges and get over them. So, I mean, it's still in their blood also in in their DNA.

Olena, in her testimony, talks of her entrepreneurial goals as personal freedom and success are linked to solid and trusting networks (Uzzi, 1996), dedicated hard work, reputation, and providing superior services to her customers. Business growth and profit increases were not
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Olena’s primary measures of success, and her main measures are reputation and trusting relationships. The researcher finds that Olena has reached the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Olena:

*Through word of mouth and uh, again, opened the Google for my website, uh is my base.*

*One day I decided that's it. I don't want to be under anybody. I want to be my own boss.*

*My success is basically having people keep coming back, that's my success. If they recommend somebody to me, that's my success.*

Olena met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Slava (Вечеслав)**

Slava is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been a business co-owner in the host country for eight years. Slava is a high school graduate but did not attend college in his home country as he was focused on his path as a professional-level athlete. Slava discusses his migration journey to the host country as an easy process with some initial minor economic challenges. Slava's reason for migrating to the host country was a pull factor (Lee, 1960) of opportunity to compete in an American professional sports sector (Stouffer, 1940, 1960). Slava explains that his ethnic upbringing helped his acclimation process in the host country, and the experience was positive and welcoming by the host country's natives (Erickson, 1972). According to Salva:

*I was comfortable when I get here. Only one thing was uh, the money, issue with money. So, it's like, so we have to pay for, I mean, for nice apartment. America was expensive compared to Russia.*

*I don't like talk about myself, but we play very, very well, at a very high level and so we came here.*

Slava's position on Invisibleness within the context of this study was not aligned with the initial research premise that this cohort uses Invisibleness for their entrepreneurial activities.
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Slava wants to be visible and uses social media to promote his business visibility. According to Slava:

*I like to be visible, you know, because like us, uh, special like, uh, like I do like a lot of exercise, and I have my Instagram to promote the business.*

Slava, in his perceptions of the immigrant entrepreneur compared to a host country native, explains the immigrant works harder, loves to work, and sees the financial rewards from their work in the host country. Slava sees immigrants as having work reward traits, and this trait makes the immigrant look at work as fun. According to Slava:

*Immigrants have to work harder. Yeah, because for us, it's fun. Let's say, you get like, you get money. Like, like I said over there you get 20 bucks. Wow, for me it's like well, it's a lot of money. Let's say 20 in Russia I have to work for probably maybe one entire day. And here people get 20 bucks an hour.*

On his motivation, goals, and how he defines success, Slava's orientation is around personal factors. Slava’s testimony was full of confidence, resolution, commitment, and unwavering focus on being the best in his industry. Slava explains that to capitalize on an opportunity for success, he has worked hard, built trusting relationships, providing superior services, and cared for his clients (Kloosterman, 2010). Slava's critical measure of success was his ability to grow his business’s reputation. The researcher found limited references to profits in his definition of success, as profitability is inherent over other requirements for successful entrepreneurs. The research found that Slava is measuring success in the social and personal phases of the IEN model. In Slava’s interview, he did reference a need to grow the business and increase profits in the past few years, but it came across as a natural occurrence and not a key measure of success. According to Slava:

*Me personally, we build a reputation and care for our kids. I'm the best and they will come because they see how we work.*
More clients to make more money. Grow the business. It’s more people, like now we have over 200 clients and lots of different people.

So, definitely my goal was building reputation through hard work and caring to teach the kids.

When people see how hard we work, how we skate, how we talk to kids, how we teach them and how they get results. When they come on our reputation and provide good training.

Salva met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Valentina (Валентина)

Valentina is an immigrant entrepreneur who built several businesses in the host country over the past 12 years. Valentina has a master’s degree in business from her home country and a doctor’s degree in the host country (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Valentina’s family immigrated to the U.S. several years before her journey to the host country. Valentina, in her story, discusses a series of immigration process challenges, sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952), and several intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) with her foreignness (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009), and the cultural distances (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) between the host and home countries on her path to entrepreneurial success. When asked Valentina why she chose to migrate from her home to the host country, she talked of the pull factors of better opportunities (Lee, 1966; Stouffer, 1940, 1960). During her interview testimony, Valentina discusses many intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960), support factors of family and friends (Sanders and Nee, 1996), helping with subsistence needs, and the ability to assimilate by gaining host country system knowledge and environmental understanding. Valentina explained that she could mitigate sojourning consequences and assimilate in the host country by building social and business networks (Uzzi, 1996). Like Katrina’s story, Valentina circumvented their sojourning feeling and lack of host country system and cultural knowledge by building their network instead of finding and
penetrating existing networks. These positive activities in Valentina’s immigrant entrepreneurial story allowed her to match opportunities with her resources within the host country for success (Kloosterman, 2010). According to Valentina:

*The big picture I was seeking for a better, uh, career opportunity. So, the opportunities there were very limited. I felt like I reached the sky there. Uh, that's the main reason.*

*Huge, huge issues. It's uh, it wasn't an easy journey for me at all.*

*I just simply felt like I'm I don't belong. I don't, and I'm not needed here. I couldn't, umm, couldn't really understand a lot of things. So just the cultural thing. It was challenging to me, especially back then. I didn't understand why people are so distant from people. I was constantly looking for somebody who is like me, who speaks Russian. And um, I was going to the Facebook pages or some, uh, meet up places, see where the people like me, where are they and what are they doing? So that was that was one of the biggest differences that everybody spoke different language.*

*I was like in the limbo and couldn't do much, I felt terrible, and I couldn't really get any support from any Americans; and we open Russian group which just reach 100,000 members on Facebook. It is one of the largest Russian speaking group and he's an American.*

When exploring the topic of Invisibleness, the researcher found Valentina experienced a perceived (Ambosa et al., 2019) and physical experience of projected negative Invisibleness by the host country’s environment and system (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). Valentina’s story discusses two stages of her life for Invisibleness. In these two stages of Valentina’s life, she associates them with her home and host country experiences. In both instances, Valentina desired visibility but received rejection and Invisibleness from the home and host countries due to racism in the home country (Mohl, 1985) and system challenges in the host. However, in Valentina’s testimony, she contributes these experiences as catalysts for her entrepreneurial successes. Valentina’s story provides consistent resiliency attributes, increasing risk tolerance, motivation, environmental adaptiveness (Saravathy, 2001), strong work ethic, and ability to build relationships and networks (Uzzi, 1996).
proposed proposition of Invisibleness used as an ethnic strategy does not occur at the earlier stage of the immigrant entrepreneur’s business development. The researcher found that Invisibleness takes on a different form in the stages of the entrepreneurial immigrant’s successes. The research finds that Valentina has transitioned from the subsistence phase through the social and growth phases and is currently in the personal phase of the IEN model for motivational success achievement. According to Valentina:

* I have like 2 basically stages of my experience here in America. Was one before and that was painful because I want to be visible because I was visible all my life and I was a person with the capital letter. So, I could resolve so much just by making a call by asking someone, and here I was like pretty much nothing, and that was that was hurtful at that specific point of my life.

* I remember when you're walking on the street and the kids or adults even say some stupid comments like oh like Russian chicks or whatever. You know, like something really hurtful. I never, I never heard anything here like that you know, one time just American lady told me she wasn't happy because of whatever service I should, uh, she received. She just called me white trash, but I think it's not because I'm a foreigner. So alright, so it's yeah, I feel like it was a good comment because I thought to myself, finally I probably belong because that's what they believe.

* I would love to be invisible as and as of right now, I manage my businesses, the people I work with. I think contributed so much for them to be independent, um and capable to resolve things without asking for my help. So, I want to be left in peace. I want to be invisible. I don't want nobody complain uh, asking for the manager's contact details and uh, reach out to me. So, I see it as a positive and as a negative for sure.

Valentina discussed her viewpoints on entrepreneurial motivation, startup challenges, business goals, and how she defined success. Valentina asserted she did not have goals initially and was just looking at an opportunity and trying not to make a mistake. Valentina transitioned the interview testimonies to explain that building processes and establishing a system for the business to increase growth and profits without her constant oversight is the focus. For Valentina’s challenges, she explained the importance of time management, making intelligent decisions when selecting employees, and establishing best business practices. For the topic of
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success, Valentina defined success from a personal level. Valentina associates success with financial and personal freedom and functioning systems. When asked about sustaining her success, Valentina focused on five factors. These five factors are building lasting relationships within a strong network, minimizing mistakes, adapting and advancing a functional system with policies and procedures, creating system artifacts like an employee’s handbook, and making intelligent decisions on employee selections. Valentina concluded her interview by stating that there is no magic and entrepreneurial success is through hard work. Valentina stated that immigrant entrepreneurs must seek self-help in the host country and not rely solely on their attributes (Cummings, 1980). According to Valentina:

*I just make a step further to see where it takes me and that was a not mistake and it worked out great.*

*I wanted to make a better system to cover bigger scope of work and get more money and have money keep coming, and then, until the point where we couldn’t handle that.*

*The biggest challenge because time management, you know, like when I started, it was like nonstop.*

*My personal goals, yes, there’s three of them, time, freedom, money, but with freedom, I think like my third thing, that’s um, absence of emergencies or urgent presence is needed. It's kind of time freedom, you know? So, I wanna see that, everything I put in this company really works in the system.*

*A must is to ensure the system works and is constantly adapted and improved, but from the beginning.*

*Behind any entrepreneurial success in the United States is a lot of hard work. So, they have to be ready for that, there is no magic.*

Valentina met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

**Violet (Виолета)**

Violet is an immigrant entrepreneur who has been a business co-owner for 25 years in the host country. Violet has a bachelor’s degree in her home country and a technical degree in the host country (Hunt, 2009, 2011). Violet and her family migrated with the help of a church
organization to the United States due to economic collapse, the threat of violence, and a civil war push factors (Lee, 1966) in the home country. Violet, in her story, discussed many sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) in the early years of her time in the host country. Violet eventually acclimated to the host country, and the sojourning feelings dissipated when she was reunited with her family and learned the language and system of the host country. Violet explained to the researcher that she had to overcome many intervening obstacles due to cultural distances (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) and her perceptions of the psychic distance (Ambos et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009) between the host and home countries. According to Violet:

_Sadly, there's still a war between those two people, so this was the reason for us to move because it wasn't safe to stay in Azerbaijan anymore for Armenian people._

_Not like anything about America, just feel sorry to move, feel sad and mad to move because everything is different, languages and everything and no family._

_We came to this country as a refugee, and our sponsor was the Lutheran Church._

_I was crying. I wanted to go back home. But it was only from the beginning, now remembering that it's making me laugh, but before, Hmm. Yeah. Was crying. Yeah. I want to go back home because you know I miss my parents, I miss my life, my, you know, my home, everything._

Violet was asked about her position on Invisibleness within the context of this study and had a difficult time answering the question. In analyzing Violet’s comments, the research finds she was invisible in the country, not by her choice in the early phases of the migration and establishment journey. The Invisibleness slowly faded once she could link with a post-Soviet sponsor and establish the business. Therefore, Invisibleness was a host country system, and Violet felt cultural distance in her early years as an immigrant in the host country. Violet explains that the host country's natives were supportive, and her views are only positive. According to Violet:
I really don't know how to answer this question. You know, we establish this business in this country, and I will tell you just, you know, we knew someone who was like here before we came to this country, and we just found his guys. He was also a Russian speaking guy.

I only have, like a good memory. Even you know, when we came to this country in 1992, everybody were like, very, very nice. So, I could only say like you know, good words about like all American people.

Violet provided testimony on motivation, the business goals, and how she defines success. Violet explained that her initial motivation and goals for starting the business were personal freedom, providing a superior product or service, and increased wealth security. Violet testified to her position on success, focusing on profits, system knowledge, hard work, building vital, loyal customers and networks, and gaining more personal freedom to spend time with family. The researcher found that Violet is in the personal phase of the IEN model. According to Violet:

You know, like to do like good job, I mean, and of course, you know, financially, become much better. That everybody wants to do whatever.

Um to be the owner of your business because this is your business, and you are the boss.

There is more money financially and you don't depend on anyone like, you know. Because you're working for yourself. Plus, you're doing whatever you love to do.

If your hard-working person, if you're honest and your personality is good, and if you're not lazy, I mean, this is more successful for the business. um, honest not to be lazy. And if you are a hard-working person.

To start their own business, it depends on the kind of business, but get the right people who have the right information to help you in the system.

Violet met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Evgenia (Евгения)

Evgenia is an immigrant entrepreneur who has owned a business for 12 years in the host country, has a bachelor’s degree from her home country, and has achieved a degree in the host
Evgenia speaks four languages and built several successful businesses with a national customer base in the host country. Evgenia has started businesses in three states in the United States. In her testimony, Evgenia explains she did not experience any sojourning effects (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952) in her immigration process but did not want to assimilate as a host native. Evgenia, in her testimony, explained that her family and an extensive network of host country post-Soviet friends living in the host country assisted in the assimilating process (Erickson, 1972; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Uzzi, 1996;). Evgenia discusses the intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) for her were initial language challenges, learning the host country system, cultural differences (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011) with host natives, and building Russian-speaking social networks (Uzzi, 1996). According to Evgenia:

*Learning the language and the way things work in America.*

*I finish high school and my two colleges, I have my degree in jurisprudence from university.*

*I really do not make any real friends with Americans, they are different, not racist but not like my culture, you know, our jokes, music, food, movies, and many things they don’t understand.*

*I am thinking I am American by passport, but Russian by culture.*

*The system is very, very different in America. It has a lot of bureaucracy. I do not know if it’s hard for us immigrants or hard for everyone. Us immigrants know how to find a way to get where we want to go and make money.*

Evgenia was asked to explain her view on the topic of Invisibleness within the context of this study. Evgenia explains that she uses social media platforms to promote her business through Russian-speaking networks (Cummings, 1980; Uzzi, 1996; Xie and Gough, 2011), and these platforms assisted greatly in expanding her customer reach within the post-Soviet cohort. However, when the researcher asked about these social media networks, Evgenia explained that her initial networks aligned with her home country, but she expanded a few years ago to
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Americans (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aldrich et al., 1985). Evgenia explained that she was intentionally invisible or visible to host natives as either exotic, incompetent, or noncapable because of her accent and style (Haslam, 2006; Markowitz and Slovic, 2020). Evgenia started her early success, becoming visible to post-Soviet people living in the host country (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aldrich et al., 1985; Xie and Gough, 2011). Evgenia explained a desire to be more visible in the early development of her business but did not choose to become more visible in the open market (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990) until she understood the host system and her business profits grew to a need for expansion outside of her post-Soviet consumers. The researcher found that Evgenia desired to be visible but kept her business visibility within the cohort until business growth required expansion to host natives. According to Evgenia:

*I think I cannot say for sure. I can’t say I had negative on me but people here think you have an accent you are slow in the head.*

*People do not want to give you a good job, they think us Russian immigrants from a country with dirt on the floor and bears in the streets.*

*Um, maybe I did use invisibleness. I did not want to promote myself big when I started. I didn’t want to expand my business because I was learning so much. I was building clients, learning the language, the business system, you know.*

*If you are not visible when you get big business, you will not be successful, you will not have a business for long. So, yes, I like to be visible, and it helps a lot with my business.*

Evgenia was questioned about the differences between immigrant entrepreneurs and host country natives. Evgenia discussed that immigrant has many talents, stronger mentally, are willing to take risks, are adventurous, know the value of making money, and can build networks and focus on how to build more wealth, while natives waste their time focusing things they cannot change, like politics (Hofstede, 1983, 2001, 2011). Like the other participant’s testimony, Evgenia sees work as fun, given the reward gains for her work in the host country over the home
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country by using her resources to capitalize on opportunities (Klooster, 2010). According to Evgenia:

You have freedom to work hard and get large success. They do not understand government can become horrible like my life under the Soviets. My grandfather went to the gulag for owning a pig, government takes everything, not give. I never got to know my grandfather because he died in the gulag for trying to feed his family.

Evgenia was asked about her motivation, goals, and how she defines success. Evgenia discussed that her goal is a high reputation and personal freedom associated with individual choices and wealth security. Evgenia discusses her goals to grow the business into an industry leader by expanding her strong reputation. When Evgenia asked how she could make her business successful, she stated that she provides the best products and services, has partnerships (Cummings, 1980), and works harder than others. In sustaining her initial success, Evgenia said she continues to modify her business model, focuses on growing customers and profits, keeping talented workers, intelligent supply chains, and adapting. Evgenia’s testimony is focused on business growth and more profits; the researcher finds Evgenia is in the growth phase of the IEN model. According to Evgenia:

I am not letting someone have power in my life, I mean my money, my opportunity in the hands of someone else. I want to make more. I want more freedom.

Make more money, grow your business by being the best and um, have a strong reputation. You have more freedom of time because your system works without you controlling everything. Success happens through hard, hard work. You have to continue to learn, change, and make yourself better or people will go somewhere else.

Hard work, hard work must be fun, learn more, and learn more and more.

Evgenia met all the required criteria as a participant in this study.

Coding Method

As referenced earlier, the researcher used NVivo 14.1.7.1 software tool version for Mac in the coding process. For each interview, the researcher uploaded the verified transcripts of the
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interviews generated in Microsoft Word into the NVivo program before executing the coding activity. The researcher uploaded the interviews using the NVivo software tool and ran an auto-coding function to capture keywords for building an inductive approach codebook. The researcher executed line-by-line coding while cross-referencing copious notes and memos from each participant interview to build the inductive codebook. The codebook framework was built after five interviews were coded due to the large amount of raw data captured for each of the eighteen interviews. Using the line-by-line coding method, it took the researcher over a month to code over three hundred pages of raw data. The researcher then conducted a second coding process by grouping all participants' responses to each of the forty-six questions into single documents. The researcher conducted a second line-by-line coding to cross-examine the code results for overlap and consistency for the construction of 15 categories alignment and development of 8 themes in the thematic framework. Figure 27 captures the researcher's thematic framework for the results provide in this Chapter.

Peak Tags and Categories

The data analysis captured 9,315 codes in NVivo from the raw data in the eighteen participant interviews. From the 9,315 total codes emerged 167 peak tags that developed 15 interactional categories called parent codes aggregated from the 167 peak tags NVivo calls child codes inductively made from the direct references. For example, the category for the definition of Success was derived from eleven child codes (i.e., financial, personal freedom, system execution, reputation, legacy, and others). Moreover, the study's participants are initially from a home country who migrated into a host country; therefore, the researcher did not subcategorize home and host for culture and environment. For home and host cultures and environments, both areas are broken out for set categories inductively built. The 15 categories building the thematic
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framework are acclimation, home country culture, host country culture, education, home country environment, host country environment, IEN factors, Immigrant profile, intervening obstacles, intervening opportunities, Invisibleness, Networks, the definition of Success, initial Success, and Sustainable Success. The researcher's peak tags and categories are in Figure 24 of this study.

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Figure 24: Coding Categories

Acclimation

In the eighteen interviews, the category acclimation received 498 aggregated coding tags from child codes. The research found varying acclimation challenges in participants' migration onto entrepreneurial Success in the host country. The researcher proposed in Chapter 1 that immigrants of all ethnicities cannot migrate from home to a host country and assimilate after a reasonable time. The researcher believed the United States, as a host country, comprises many diverse groups of immigrants coexisting in one system. The study found that all eighteen participants operating their businesses in six states had not assimilated to the host country even after ten to thirty-plus years of living there. Of the eighteen participants, fifteen were naturalized citizens, with the remaining three getting citizenship. Testimony captured from the participants' interviews in the coding process supported the term acclimation over assimilation. Consequently,
the term assimilation in the study is underprovided for immigrants in achieving the title 'American,' as Glazer and Moynihan (1970) argued. This study used Glazer’s 'and Moynihan's (1970) argument of a northern model using acclimation as the accepted position over a southern model demanding assimilation. To restate from Chapter 1, the definitions of assimilation and acclimation for this study are as follows:

Acclimation: The belief that an immigrant or group of immigrants of different ethnicity and cultural heritages adapt to their interacting environment or situation in a host country; The ability to coexist without the host country's natives perceiving them as an outgroup.

Assimilation: The belief that an immigrant or group of immigrants of different ethnicity and cultural heritages conform to the host country's traditions, language, and cultural norms.

Home Country Culture

The category Home Country Culture received 257 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The research found 154 negative attitude code tags and 103 positive code tags for the home country's culture. Leveraging Hofstede's (2011) six dimensions, the participant's negative attitudes towards their home country's culture were the high-power distance, economic uncertainty, and normative repression. On the positive side, the highest tags were collectivism and masculinity. Hofstede (2011) Cultural Dimensions Model provided the researcher with criteria for measuring the participant's stance toward their home country's culture. The eighteen participants' testimonies aligned with Hofstede's (2011) belief that culture results from a 'collective programing' of an individual's mind. This collective programming (Hofstede, 2011) by the group influences the development of the individual's predisposing
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characteristics. Hofstede's (2011) six dimensions scale between a home and host country are found to act as intervening obstacles. The intervening obstacles for this study's participants were language differences, new and diverse cultural norms, limited initial social networks, a sense of invisibility, and systematic discrimination.

Host Country Culture

The category Host Country Culture received 108 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The research found 74 negative attitude code tags and 34 positive code tags for the home country's culture. In the study, the researcher found no evidence of host country natives collectively discriminating against these participants. The only testimonies of discrimination in the host country were of other ethnic immigrant groups and selected individuals. Fishbein and Ajzen's (1967) theory of Reasoned Action and Ajzen's (1985) theory of Planned Behavior were used in the researcher's analysis and interpretation process of the data in the research. Fishbein and Ajzen's (1967) explained that an individual's behaviors originate from their pre-existing attitudes and behavioral purposes. Ajzen's (1985) theory of Planned Behavior expanded on his previous works by clarifying that individuals decide to perform a particular behavior if they sense they will accomplish a chosen outcome from the behavior. Therefore, the higher negative over positive responses for the host country's culture identified in the participants' testimonies are connected to the positive perceptions of participants on their cultural upbringing in the home country. The home and host country's cultural separation provided noteworthy coding tags that exhibited a split on the Hofstede (2011) cultural distance scale. The immigrant entrepreneurial participants direct reporting found the participants execute Perceived Behavioral Controls (PCB) to accomplish a reasoned action of attaining wealth security for their desired individual freedom. The participants provide abundant accolades for the host country’s
opportunities it offers but are quick to degrade the host native culture and behaviors by calling
the natives entitled, lazy, and mentally weak. The study agrees with Awotoye and Singh (2018)
on Ajzen's (1985) theory that a person's behaviors are grounded in their intentions, and these
intentions are predicated by the participant's attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral
control (PBC). The study uncovered five participants having a level of sojourning (Siu, 1952)
during their acclimation process in the host country. The study found that all the participants
retained some level of their group's culture, and several participants provided testimonies that
they did not initially consider the host country an enduring residency. Likewise, Aldrich and
Waldinger's (1990) argument of intervening obstacles associated with common entrepreneurial
challenges related to establishing a business, interethnic competition, and rivalry over resources
and customers is supported in the research findings.

**Education**

The category Education received 147 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the
eighteen interviews. Of the cohort of participants, fifteen attained a bachelor's degree, and 10 had
a master's or doctor's degree from their home country. This cohort of participants was formally
educated, with fifteen participants having attained additional educational training in the host
country. The study supports Hunt's (2011) findings that immigrants who arrive in the host
country with college degrees have a statistically significant 1.2 percentage point advantage over
natives. However, the research findings moderately differ from Hunt's (2011) findings on a
correlation between entrepreneurial Success in niche markets and the immigrant’s knowledge
associated with their host country's formal educational training. Of the eighteen participants,
only seven aligned with Hunt's (2011) argument. In the study, eleven participants' rationale for
not leveraging their explicit knowledge and formal degree was their discontentment with that
field of work and learning. Unfortunately, the researcher did not capture actual earnings from the participants but was able to attain business cash flow information. All participants had over one million dollars in cash flows for their businesses. This finding supports Hunt's (2011) assertion that naturalized immigrants outperform natives in wage earnings. The study discovered the extreme challenges for gaining reciprocity of home country educational degrees in the host country. The study found that the host country system offers some sense of ethnocentrism toward immigrant academic degrees. Many participants abandoned their pursuit of education transfer in the host country due to intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) associated with the host country accepting their academic degrees and executing entrepreneurial behaviors shortly after.

**Home Country Environment**

The Home Country Environment category received 143 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The research found 90 negative attitude code tags and 53 positive code tags for the home country environment. Of the 53 positive code tags, all positive statements came from the seven Russian participants. The researcher cautions that current affairs, with a war occurring between Russia and Ukraine at the time of the study, may inadvertently offset the data accuracy in this study for this area. However, of the negative tags from direct references, government, lack of speech freedom, restriction of individual opportunities, system benefitting a selected few, economic uncertainty, limitation of movement, and corruption were the highest.

**Host Country Environment**

The category Host Country Environment received 496 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The research found 155 negative attitude code tags and 341 positive code tags for the home country environment. The overwhelming majority of testimonies
were positive for the host country's environment. The pull factors (Lee, 1966) of economic opportunism, lower levels of corruption, and freedom of speech and movement were the highest tags from direct references. The negative direct references were associated with host natives understanding their English, lack of system understanding, limited initial networks, and bureaucracy. Several participants expressed a strong desire to be host natives but stated they never would, even though they are naturalized citizens living in the host country for thirty years. Some participants explained a miscalculation of the perceived psychic distance between the host and the home country (Ambosa et al., 2019). The psychic distance described by Johanson and Vahlne (1977) explains as a measure of impediments to the flow of information between ethnic groups. The researchers found evidence that economic systems, lack of a common language, country-specific international experience, and cultural differences increased the psychic distance perceptions of an immigrant (Ambosa et al., 2019). The study found that a distributed ethnic network using social media tools mitigated the intervening obstacles in the host country and supported these immigrants in their initial business startup and Success before expanding into an open market to capture host natives as customers (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990).

**Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) Factors**

In the eighteen interviews, the category IEN Factors received 147 aggregated coding tags from child codes. The model's breakdown of code tags for the four IEN phases is Subsistence at 33, Social at 35, Growth at 41, and Personal at 38. As outlined in chapter two, the researcher developed the IEN framework to capture data for defining post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success. The IEN framework consists of four factors linked to the immigrant entrepreneurial transition periods, from the mobile and establishment phase to the sustained success phase. Outside the individual motivation level, each factor's priority level experiences
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influence by exogenous forces the researcher labeled intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1960) as the immigrant entrepreneur transitions through the phases in their entrepreneurial life cycle. During the research, the researcher discovered an error in the initial model from the direct testimonies of the participants. The researcher found that the IEN framework’s phases' sequential structure was out of transitory configuration with the participants' actual path from migration through business establishment onto sustained entrepreneurial success in their life cycle.

The data revealed that the correct process of evolution is Subsistence $\rightarrow$ Social $\rightarrow$ Growth $\rightarrow$ Personal. The research data analysis finds the personal phase of the IEN model as the highest level of Success accomplished for the participants. The participants continually described to the researcher that there is a need to attain economic wealth security. When wealth security is realized, the participants report a level of success sustainment as they perceive true personal freedom. The participants described personal freedom as increasing their ability to spend more time with family, vacation travel, and not focus on the business. The personal phase is the highest level of business success for the participants. The updated IEN framework is seen below in Figure 25.

![Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs Model](image)

Figure 25: *Update to the IEN Framework*
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To restate from Chapter 2, the IEN model was developed from the underpinning theoretical principles in the theory of human motivation by Maslow (1943). Maslow's (1943) theory explains that individuals are motivated by a need to fulfill their immediate lower-level survival needs before becoming motivated to transition to the next higher level of individual needs (Maslow, 1943). The IEN model with a set standard for each participant's firm having reached a breakeven point or profitability and maintaining business continuity for three years defines immigrant entrepreneurial Success.

Immigrant Profile

The Immigrant Profile category received the most significant coding tags in the codebook. The immigrant profile category received 1,213 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The immigrant profile was the most extensive data of all categories. The immigrant profile consists of a series of traits that comprise the independent variable influence on the dependent variable of Success in the research model. The research found 913 positive and 300 negative code tags for the immigrant profile. Of the negative tags, language challenges, understanding the host system, and misperceptions of the psychic distances between home and host were the principal intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) associated with the Immigrant's profile. Of the 913 tags making up the Immigrant profile category, the following factors are:

- Care of Family
- Highly Motivated
- Formally Educated
- Ability to Absorb Above Normal Levels of Risk
- Hard Work is Viewed as Fun
- High Self-Esteem
- Calculated
- Adaptive / Nonstop Learning
- Ability to Rapidly Build Networks
- Ability to Accumulate Wealth
- Strong Need to Start New Adventures
- Process Development
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The researcher captured the top 12 coding tags from the eighteen participant's direct reporting to develop the profile for the predisposing characteristics of the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur seen in Figure 30.

**Intervening Obstacles**

The category Intervening Obstacles received 201 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The researcher used Lee's (1966) works on the migration theory to examine the various intervening obstacles these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs encounter with interacting culture and environment on their way to entrepreneurial Success in the host country for this study. To restate, Lee (1966) explains, "No matter how short or how long, how easy or how difficult, every act of migration involves an origin, a destination, and an intervening set of obstacles" (p. 49). The research discovered from the direct testimony of the study's participants the following intervening obstacles in priority order:

- Lack of System Understanding – Rules
- Language
- Lack of Support Networks
- Economic Conditions / Higher Cost of Living
- Time Management
- Certification Acceptance Barriers
- Access to Capital

**Intervening Opportunities**

The category Intervening Opportunities received 149 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The researcher leveraged Stouffer's (1960) theory on intervening opportunities for examining the various intervening opportunities these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs encountered within the interacting culture and environment that assisted them in achieving entrepreneurial success in the host country for this study. To restate, Stouffer
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(1940, 1960) explains in his law, "The number of persons going a given distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at that distance and inversely proportional to the number of intervening opportunities." The research discovered from the direct testimony of the study's participants the following intervening opportunities in priority order:

- Ability to Build or Leverage Ethnic Networks in the Host Country
- Ability to Learn System Quickly
- Increased Market Opportunities
- Ability to Rapidly Navigate Host County System Once Language is Learned
- Financial Rewards
- Ability to Accumulate Wealth
- Reduced Competition

Invisibleness

The category Invisibleness received 113 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The researcher began this study with a theoretical belief that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs were achieving entrepreneurial success over host country natives by having the ability to use invisibleness within the host country. Not only were these immigrants using invisibleness, they were also leveraging decentralized protected markets through tribal social media networks as part of their ethnic strategy for business success. For the study, invisibleness was defined as the ability of an individual or group to conceal their ethnic, language, and cultural differences from a host country's native majority to melt into the native populace unnoticed. The researcher's rationale for this theoretical belief was that the use of 'immigrant invisibleness' seems plausible in periods of anti-immigrant sentiment, a war in eastern Europe, and dehumanization of immigrants (Markowitz and Slovic, 2020) like the United States is experiencing in 2023. The literature search identified research findings for certain groups of immigrants from particular geographical regions having the ability of invisibleness as a concealment advantage among host country's natives over other ethnic groups to achieve rapid
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acclimatization and entrepreneurial success in the United States among the racial majority (Erickson, 1972; Glazer and Moynihan, 1970; Glazer et al., 1975, Leinonen, 2012). However, the data found different results. The data revealed that the participants strongly desired to be visible in phases one and two of the updated theoretical model. The participants in direct reporting explained the host country system projecting invisibleness onto them against their wishes in phases one and two, as shown in Figure 29. Of the 113 tags, 76 were associated with the host country system projecting invisibility on the immigrant entrepreneur at entry and business establishment. The participants reported using invisibleness as a business strategy once they achieved high financial success. Therefore, the study found invisibleness in the context of this study did not apply until phase three of the theoretical model in Figure 29.

**Networks**

In the eighteen interviews, the category Networks received 217 aggregated coding tags from child codes. The researcher discovered four areas of networks from the direct testimony of the study's participants. The following four areas in priority order for the coding tags are:

- Word of Mouth
- Home Country Networks for Information Share
- Home to Host Country Networks for Information Share
- Host Country Networks for Information Share

The researcher found that the participants' testimonies aligned with the literature. All participants leveraged some information-shared networks at the home-country localized level and home-to-host-country distributed networks for opportunism to negate liabilities (Das et al., 2017; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000). Once the immigrants had migrated to the host country, two resurfacing themes were found; the lack of information clarity on the host country system, and a host country social network were consistent in many of the participants’ responses. However, once these immigrants penetrated the host country, they rapidly leverage their structural
embeddedness to seek out or develop protected tribal social media networks (Uzzi, 1996) and overcome the lack of information on the host system as an intervening obstacle (Lee, 1966) while going unnoticed to host country natives in their entrepreneurial endeavors. The researcher initially believed that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs intentionally used an unrecognized decentralized protective network to natives for planning and employing a series of ethnic strategies to mitigate various intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966). In the researcher's initial premise, the participants should report on their activities of taking advantage of opportunities by utilizing invisibleness, tribal social capital for access to co-ethnic resources, and tribal networks (Sanders and Nee, 1996; Vinogradov and Jergensen, 2017) for their business startups for entrepreneurial success over natives. The findings are partially true to that initial statement.

The liability in the statement is that the study found the participants did exercise this process; however, the participants truly desired to be visible, not invisible, in phases one and two of the theoretical model in Figure 29 for their business development. The participants reported that the host system projected invisibleness because the immigrant lacked system and language knowledge. Therefore, the participants explained that if they understood the host country's system and language at the onset, they would not have leveraged exclusively ethnic networks and markets in the host country in their initial entrepreneurial activities. Participants reported a strong desire to access a host native network early in their lifecycle to understand better the host country markets, native consumer preferences, and the ability to promote their business to natives early in the development phase. The study found that immigrant entrepreneurs were required to use tribal social capital, ethnic resources, and structural embeddedness (Kloosterman, 2010) within a decentralized protective market and networks for their initial business success due to intervening obstacles reported in the study (Lee, 1966).
Definition of Success

The category Definition of Success received 188 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. As stated in the IEN factors section, Success for this study is a hybrid definition of the IEN model related to the immigrant entrepreneur life cycle phases and their firm having maintained breakeven or profits for over three years. Of the 188 aggregated code tags developing the success definition category, the researcher found the following top tag factors in priority order from the participants' direct reporting.

- Personal Freedom
- Reputation
- Financial
- Growth
- Ability to Persevere
- System Execution
- Trust
- Legitimacy
- Legacy

Immigrant entrepreneurial success is a consolidation of participant data findings in the Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) framework’s four phases connected to a set standard for each of the participant's firms having reached breakeven or profitability while maintaining business continuity for three-plus years. It is the entry and exit criteria for each phase the immigrant entrepreneur explains as they transition through the mobile and establishment phase into the growth and sustainment phase.

Initial Success Factors

Initial Success received 645 aggregated coding tags from child codes in the eighteen interviews. The participants' direct reporting on their worldview of initial entrepreneurial success influenced the phases of the IEN model for the immigrant entrepreneur. Of the 645 aggregated
code tags developing the initial success findings, the following tops tag factors in priority order from the participants' direct reporting are:

- Motivation (Received 200 tags)
- Resilient
- Ability to Take Higher Levels of Risk
- Adaptation – Keep Changing
- Legitimacy
- Strong Networks
- Trusting Relationships
- Process Development
- Achieve Information Clarity
- Calculated Risk

**Sustainable Success**

In the eighteen interviews, Sustainable Success received 127 aggregated coding tags from child codes. From the participants' direct reporting, the factors behind this category are:

- Smart Decision Making
- Maintain Motivation / Drive
- Strong Processes
- Adaptation
- Continued Personal Development
- Smart Employee Selections
- Maintaining Cash Flows
- Calculated Risk
- Love What You Do
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Revised Research Model

![Research Model Diagram]

Thematic Framework

The thematic framework in Figure 27 was inductively developed from the coding process of over 300 pages of raw data. Figure 27 eight themes were developed from the fifteen categories built from over 1200 coding tags in the data analysis process using the NVivo software tool. This section sequentially discusses each of the eight themes research findings in detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme #</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How facilitators and barriers affect post-Soviet Immigrants when establishing a business in the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>How disparate opportunities and barriers in entrepreneurship activities for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs compare to host country natives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How the post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs view Invisibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneur considered initial success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>How post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs predisposing traits contribute to sustainable business success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs Predisposing traits contribute to constructs of Invisibility as an ethnic strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>How modern networking tools like Social Media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How networking factors contribute to continued post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 27: Thematic Framework
Theme 1: How facilitators and barriers affect post-Soviet Immigrants when establishing a business in the United States.

For the thematic framework, theme one's facilitators and barriers are the findings for immigrant entrepreneurs' predisposing traits profile and intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) encountered in their lifecycle to entrepreneurial success. The following tagged codes built the facilitators, barriers, and opportunities during the inductive analysis of the research's raw data.

**Intervening Obstacles (Barriers):**

- Direct subsistence needs require access to established tribal networks in the host country.
- Host country language challenges.
- Lack of system knowledge of the host country.
- Access to capital from the host country system.
- Initial networks are limited.
- New diverse culture – "born again."
- System discrimination – not racial – caste system type discrimination.
- Invisibleness project by system.

**Facilitators (Predisposing Traits):**

- Family is priority.
- Ethical & morals instruction (elderly, women, and no bragging about self).
- Networks built on tribal trust.
- Hard work is good.
- Desire for freedom
- Ability to build trusting networks.
- Language and cultural skills.
- Deliberate and risk-taking.
- Adaptiveness.
- Resilient.
- Be multitalented.
- The desire for adventurism (desire for new challenges).

**Intervening Opportunities:**

- Open access to the system for all.
- Lower corruption.
- Market access/ industry is diverse as it provides more choices for entry.
- Native competition is viewed as less competitive.
• The wealth opportunity of the host provides greater rewards (i.e., monetary).
• The scale of industries in larger.
• Ability to leverage networks from local to global.
• Access to open and closed groups of employees and supply chains.
• Ability to rapidly insert into the system without system-created constraints (debt & time).

The predisposing profile (i.e., facilitators) discovered in the study allowed an immigrant entrepreneur to rapidly circumvent host country obstacles while sequestering opportunities using their predisposing traits. The study found that a 'hustle' mentality, 'calculated' risk-taking, work-reward enthusiasm, and access to decentralized ethnic networks for information clarity allowed the immigrant entrepreneur to establish startup businesses quickly. Moreover, obstacles like system discrimination, projected indivisibleness, lack of access to bank leverage, limited native networks, and scarcity of education reciprocity can be offset by immigrant entrepreneurs. The immigrant entrepreneur offsets obstacles by leveraging their home country's formal education, environmental skills training, and predisposing traits to use the host country's scale and diversity of their market opportunities to employ entrepreneurial activities. The findings discovered that the barriers are low for immigrant entrepreneurs and opportunities high in the host country.

**Theme 2: How opportunities and barriers in entrepreneurship activities for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs compare to host country natives.**

In the research findings, the participants offered minimal testimony of direct challenges, including discrimination due to interactions with host country natives. Most of the direct reporting from the participants provided a perspective of host country natives as friendly, helpful, and welcoming. Several participants expressed some discrimination, but these instances resulted from other outside ethnic immigrant groups or social interactions with select coworkers. The participants expressed host country language and system challenges creating some discrimination challenges, but not natives. The coding process found that the system
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discriminates from the perspectives of the participants. The system discrimination concerns bureaucracy and lack of credit history for access to housing, vehicle loans, bank accounts, and startup capital.

Additionally, the participants reported that education transfer requirements were too burdensome and time-consuming. In the coding analysis, the category of native profile received 98 aggregated tags. Of the 98 tags, 77 tags are perceived by the participants as natives having a disadvantage compared to the immigrant, and 21 tags for natives having an advantage over the participants. The participants viewed natives’ advantages as language knowledge, cultural assimilation, system knowledge and experience, and ability to operate in the system without inadvertent discrimination. For the native disadvantages, the participants repeatedly viewed natives as comfortable, risk-averse, entitled, and having a low work ethic. Therefore, the study found that once able to learn the host country's language, immigrant entrepreneurs can decode and use the host system to their advantage. Once language and system knowledge are attained, immigrant entrepreneurs’ predisposing traits, prior formal education, and skill training are leveraged to rapidly employ entrepreneurial activities over natives to capitalize on business opportunities (i.e., 149 aggregated coding tags) for entrepreneurial success. The study found from direct reporting that immigrant entrepreneurs are highly motivated, talented, and have a "Run" mentality for catching up in the host country as they do not speak the language, understand the system, or know the culture. The study found that the participants' importance of learning the host language is a strategic factor for learning the host system to achieve entrepreneurial success. Once the immigrant learns the host language (i.e., Redevelopment Phase), the immigrant entrepreneurs insert themselves into the system by exploitation of their home country's skill training and access to decentralized tribal networks while using an almost
innate desire for individual freedom. Once the immigrant enters the host system, they navigate for market opportunities much faster (i.e., Run) than the natives, who should have the advantages over them.

**Theme 3: How the post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneur View Invisibleness.**

Theme three of the study explored the initial proposition that invisibleness is employed as an ethnic strategy for entrepreneurial success in a host country. The researcher in this approach inductively discovered from the participant’s worldview in testimonies that invisibleness is active in various ways during the immigrant entrepreneur's life cycle. The research found that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs’ desire was to be visible and not invisible in their developmental and business establishment phases (i.e., Phase I and II). The participants perceived invisibleness as being projected onto them by the host country system, but not by the host natives. The study found that the participants’ view on host system's initial invisibleness as an intervening obstacle, not an opportunity. The projection of invisibleness by the system created barriers for these participants to a wide range of needs, including access to housing, proper education and employment, ability to open a bank account, secure vehicle loans, working capital, and more. The study uncovered immigrant entrepreneurs in their initial business development and mitigated the intervening obstacle of host system invisibleness by leveraging ethnic networks for customers, suppliers, and employees. This access to ethnic networks and markets does present a level of influence on the participants' ability to achieve initial entrepreneurial success. In the participants’ direct reporting, they explained an effort executed to work toward being visible in their life cycle phase to promote their business and growth. However, the study found that once the immigrant's business was established and initial success and growth of the
business were attained in the host system, the immigrant entrepreneurs then transitioned from a
desire to be visible to be invisible, as depicted in phase III of the theoretical model.

Furthermore, the study discovered that this post-Soviet immigrant cohort culturally does
not support self-promotion oneself (i.e., to boast/over-exposure) and is highly discouraged. The
individual did not highlight his/her talents for fear of bragging, but did promote the business as
superior over native businesses. When immigrant entrepreneurs achieve growth success on the
IEN scale, they employ new strategies and a desire to be invisible from the business and the
system.

**Theme 4: How the post-Soviet Immigrant entrepreneurs consider initial Success.**

There are four (4) milestones of Success found in the IEN model: The study defines
Success using the combination of the IEN model and the firm having executed operations for
three or more years with breakeven or profit margins. All participants' businesses met the
qualifications for years and profitability. Therefore, each phase criteria of the IEN model for
success was leveraged with the participants' direct reporting on initial success factors to track the
transitions of immigrant entrepreneurs through their motivational phases to capture the three
milestones for initial success. The research discovered entrance and exit criteria for transition
through each phase, and personal motivation serving as the catalyst for entrepreneurial phase
transitions. The study found 147 aggregated codes for the IEN category, with each phase of the
IEN model receiving the following: Subsistence – 33; Social – 35; Growth – 41; Personal – 38.
The growth phase (i.e., business growth and profit growth) received the most significant number
of tags from direct reporting. The research then overlapped the 645 aggregated code tags and
groupings, building the category for initial entrepreneurial success factors with the IEN code
findings. The researcher aligned the IEN and initial success codes from the direct reporting to
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discover four milestones using entrance and exit criteria for establishing immigrant entrepreneurs' initial success in each phase of the IEN model.

The research discovered that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs believe initial success for the overarching achievement of entrepreneurial success occurred in the following three milestones:

- Personal Redevelopment Achieved
- Business Profitability Attained
- Operating in the Open Markets

**Phase I: Movement and Host Country Establishment**

IEN Phase: Subsistence  
Entry: Migration to Host  
Exit: Personal Redevelopment (Milestone 1) (Initial Success)

Initial Success Factors:
- Motivation.
- Resilient.
- Take Risk.
- Adaptation – Assimilation.
- Network access for information clarity.

**Phase IIA: Personal Development and Business Establishment**

IEN Phase: Social  
Entry: Business Creation  
Exit: Business Profitability Attained (Milestone 2) (Initial Success)

Initial Success Factors:
- Motivation.
- Resilient.
- Enhancing networks.
- Trusting relationship build.
- Process development.
- Calculated risk.

**Phase IIB: Business Execution**

IEN Phase: Growth  
Entry: Protected Market Transition  
Exit: Operating in the Open Markets (Milestone 3) (Initial Success)
Initial Success Factors:
- Motivation.
- Ability to take higher levels of risk.
- Adaptation – keep changing.
- Legitimacy established.
- Strong networks in place.
- Process enhancements.
- Achieved information clarity.

**Phase III: Business Adaptation and Sustainment**

IEN Phase: Growth and Personal
Entry: Adaptation
Exit: Success Sustained (Milestone 4) (Sustained Success)

Milestone 4 is not associated with initial success; rather, it is sustained success. The immigrant entrepreneur in Phase III of the theoretical model and the personal phase of the IEN model views sustained success as personal freedom. Success is sustained once the immigrant entrepreneur achieves his/her personal freedom. Personal freedom is found to have the following definition: having achieved wealth security with the ability to maximize time away from the firm to spend with family.

**Theme 5: How post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs’ predisposing traits contribute to sustainable business success.**

From the direct reporting, Sustainable Success received 127 aggregated coding tags from child codes. The research received 1,213 aggregated coding tags from the data to analyze the immigrant profile category. The immigrant profile findings developed the predisposing traits from 913 positive and 300 negative code tags for the immigrant profile. The predisposing traits and Sustained Success factors behind these two categories are:

Predisposing traits for the immigrant entrepreneur were:
- Take care of family.
- Highly motivated.
- Formally educated.
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- Higher risk levels to U.S. natives perceived as lower.
- Hard work is viewed as fun (work more for rewards).
- Confident – high self-esteem.
- Calculated.
- Focus on process development.
- Ability to build networks.
- Ability to accumulate capital.
- Desire to try new things.

Immigrant entrepreneur continued business success factors:

- Smart decision marking.
- Maintain motivation / drive.
- Strong processes.
- Adaptation.
- Continued personal development.
- Smart employee selections.
- Maintaining cash flows.
- Calculated risk.
- Love what you do.

Figure 28 illustrates the linkages between the research findings on the immigrants’ predisposing traits and sustained success factors.

**Figure 28: Predisposing Traits and Sustained Success Linkages**
Theme 6: How post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Predisposing factors contribute to constructs of invisibleness as an ethnic strategy.

In the coding process and analysis of the data findings for theme 6, the researcher discovered the researcher's premise on invisibleness as a phenomenon associated with the immigrant entrepreneur's success by leveraging their predisposing traits was misaligned with the findings. The research found that immigrants employed invisibleness at stages of their entrepreneurial lifecycle, which makes invisibleness a component of the immigrants’ entrepreneurial activities. The research revealed that the participants did express a desire for invisibleness in the later stage of Phase III of their business success and the personal phase of the IEN model. However, in Phases I & II, the immigrant entrepreneur did not employ invisibleness as an ethnic strategy; they had to overcome invisibleness as an intervening obstacle (Lee, 1966). These post-Soviet entrepreneurs desired to be visible in their entrepreneurial activities, but the host country system created a level of invisibleness for them in Phases I and II of Figure 29. Immigrant entrepreneurs reported a requirement to use protective ethnic markets and networks to initially establish a business and accumulate wealth until they had become visible to the host system for open market expansion.

Furthermore, the researcher discovered that the higher the density of ethnic groups in a set region within the host country, the more invisible the immigrant was inclined to become (North Model) due to the various ethnic groups living in their host country area. This post-Soviet immigrant cohort’s perspective on invisibleness was more attributed to their home country's culture that developed their predisposing traits, not to any ethnic strategy employed by them in the host country. Three of the eighteen respondents (16 percent) did use invisibleness as an ethnic strategy. One possible explanation from the findings is that these participants were
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initially operating their business outside the host system until they accumulated enough capital to enter the business in the host system.

**Theme 7: How modern networking tools like social media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.**

For theme seven, networks received 217 aggregated coding tags. Four areas of networks from the direct testimony of the study's participants were discovered:

- Word of mouth.
- Home country networks for information share.
- Home to host country networks for information share.
- Host country networks for information share.

The top network tag found by direct reporting was word of mouth. However, in the participants’ testimony, word of mouth also included the use of social media tools. All the participants in their direct reporting leveraged some information-shared networks using social media tools at the home-country localized level and home-to-host-country distributed networks to achieve information clarity and opportunism to mitigate liabilities (Das et al., 2017; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000). The topic of networks was critical to the immigrants' life cycle development and growth for their entrepreneurial success. The use of social media was not only aligned with business promotion, but the modern networking social media tools were used to exchange information and attain "Information Clarity" to employ their ethnic strategies for gaining access to customers, employees, and suppliers for business success. The participants’ initial business establishment and early success relied on the use of new decentralized protective tribal networks created with the use of social media tools.
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**Theme 8: How networking factors contribute to continued post-Soviet Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success.**

In theme eight, Phases I and II networks in Figure 29 helped the immigrants overcome intervening obstacles like host system invisibility. Participants revealed that the host system created barriers like education transfer challenges, lack of employment opportunities in using their formal education, and access to capital and native customers. Immigrant entrepreneurs used their ethnic networks to build relationships and establish businesses. Once the immigrant entrepreneurs successfully achieved a profitable business, they expanded their business exposure by building or engaging open market networks as an incentive to expand their entrepreneurial activities to the open market. This supports the theory that the ethnic decentralized protective network is critical to Phases I & II initial business success, and the expansion of open market networks can assist the immigrant entrepreneur in sustaining success in the host system open markets.

**Update to the Theoretical Model**

The preliminary theoretical model provided in earlier chapters necessitated revisioning after the raw data was captured and analyzed in the coding process. The researcher discovered invisibleness was prevalent, but different in two distinct stages of the immigrant entrepreneurial lifecycle. The results of the researcher revealed the initial assumptions of two phases divided into initial and sustained success was inaccurate. The research findings discovered three phases containing three initial success milestones with one sustained success linked to the term personal freedom. The model in Figure 30 was updated to provide a holistic illustration of the research results described in the 8 themes of thematic framework.
Theoretical Argument for Entrepreneurial Intelligence

The research was derived from the literature on immigrant entrepreneurship to inductively examine why immigrant entrepreneurs are outpacing host country natives in entrepreneurial success. The researcher initially offered the idea that certain immigrant groups have an invisibility associated with them when they migrate to a host country. It was initially theorized that the immigrant capitalized on the idea of invisibility as an ethnic strategy to establish businesses to achieve entrepreneurial success rapidly. The rationale behind this belief came from the literature findings on other studies of invisibility because certain ethnic groups are not perceived as a threat to the significant demographic of natives. As such, the immigrants
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can ‘blend in’ to the host country's environment unnoticed. However, the study found that invisibleness is a factor in the immigrant entrepreneur’s lifecycle of success but not a developed ethnic strategy in the host country. During the study on the post-Soviet cohort of immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States, it was discovered that a profile emerged for these participants. The eighteen participants operated their businesses in different markets and states in the United States.

Moreover, each of the study’s participants did not interact with each other or have business relationships. Yet, through the conduct of the research and linkage to the literature, an emerging profile for all these successful entrepreneurial participants was discovered. The researcher explored more literature on the topic of the Entrepreneurial Mindset (Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018; Neck et al., 2021; Somers, 2022) and Entrepreneurial Intelligence (EI) (Envick, 2014; Neck, 2018). The literature on the Entrepreneurial Mindset is more established than the information search on Entrepreneurial Intelligence. In discovering more information concerning EI, researcher Gartner (1988) stated that researchers have not agreed on a profile for EI. The topic of EI is novel, innovative, and requires more examination. This study found a set profile built from a cohort of eighteen post-Soviet successful immigrant entrepreneurial participants. Figure 30 offers a starting point for defining EI with nine characteristics in this research. The importance of this theoretical position in this study has significant impacts on lending institutions, venture capitalists (VC), and the development of regulations and policies for governmental programs. This research calls on the academic research community to expand this research on Entrepreneurial Intelligence.
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Figure 30: Aggregated Research Findings

Summary

In summary, chapter four provided the findings of this study's theoretical offering. This chapter's presentation explained the data collection, analysis process, participants' testimonies with connection to the body of literature, research findings, conceptual model updates, and a theoretical offering. It concludes with an initial call for future research studies to define Entrepreneurial Intelligence (EI).
Chapter 5

Discussion, Implications, Recommendations

Overview

The purpose of this research was to explore a phenomenon occurring where immigrant entrepreneurs enter and remain to outpace American natives two to one in business startups while achieving over 25 percent of all new business startups (Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Vandor and Franke, 2016). The researcher designed and executed a qualitative approach using grounded theory to inductively determine if the 'Invisibleness' of post-Soviet immigrants in a host country (i.e., United States) is a moderating variable used as an ethnic strategy for initial and sustained entrepreneurial success. The study focused on defining success from the participants' worldview by developing an Immigrant Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) model to determine how the participants report initial and sustained success through their motivational lifecycle. Moreover, the study examined what and how the participants' predisposing characteristics and decentralized protective markets and networks influence the immigrant's initial and sustainable success in the host country. The two research questions comprised three sub-questions to segment and guide the research. The two research questions were divided into initial and sustainable success phases for theory development. During the research analysis, the study discovered three entrepreneurial lifecycle phases instead of two and a selectivity away from invisibleness as a theory toward developing an Entrepreneurial Intelligence profile argument for achieving and sustaining business success in the host country. The findings of this research call on the academic community and future scholars to proliferate the argument of Entrepreneurial Intelligence and develop works beyond the argument of the Entrepreneurial Mindset (Envick, 2014; Gartner, 1988; Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018, 2021). This researcher calls on future students to provide
supplementary works from this research for a novel term called Entrepreneurial Intelligence (Envick, 2014; Neck 2018, 2021).

**Organization of the Remainder of the Chapter**

The remainder of this chapter is sequentially provided as follows: the research contributions, discussion and implications, research models facilitating the assemblage of the data and its analysis, recommendations, research limitations, and a call for future research. Chapter 5 concludes with the researcher’s reflection on the study.

**Contribution of the Study**

The researcher collected data from eighteen post-Soviet participants in five different states in the United States operating in ten different market segments of the economy. Over 300 pages of data were collected to increase understanding of immigrant entrepreneurial success and sustainment of success leading to the development of a theoretical alteration from invisibleness to Entrepreneurial Intelligence (EI). The research found invisibility linkages to the participants’ predisposing characteristics and contributing to immigrant entrepreneurial success. In the research findings, invisibility was an obstacle in the initial phases of immigrant entrepreneurial success.

The research began by conducting an extensive literature review on entrepreneurship, strategy, immigration, ethnicity, human factors, and other literary works for the inductive development of the research theory. The research literature review expanded by examining past research findings on push and pull factors facilitating the migration of individuals and groups from home to host countries and the associated intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and opportunities (Stouffer, 1960) immigrants encounter navigating the host country environment, culture, and system for initial business development and success. The study’s literature findings
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oriented the researcher to explore past studies to establish criteria including a framework for defining immigrant entrepreneurial success from the individual entrepreneur's perspective. The researcher searched and investigated the literature on the topics of human behavior (Ajzen, 1967, 1985, 1991; Lewin, 1936), ethnic enclaves (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Portes, 1981, 1984), social networks (Das et al., 2017; Savino, 2014; Saxenian, 2000; Uzzi, 1996), middleman theory (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Bonachich, 1973; Wingfield and Taylor, 2016), sojourning (Light, 1972; Siu, 1952), mixed embeddedness (Kloosterman et al., 1999; Kloosterman, 2010; Kloosterman et al., 2016) advantages of socioeconomic, institutional, and cultural dynamics, and many other works for the development of study's theoretical proposal.

The study used a cohort of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs to understand how immigrants achieve and sustain business success in the host country. During the research data collection and analysis, the researcher realized a standard profile for predisposing characteristics emerged from the study participants' testimonies as the influencing factors on initial and sustained success in the host country. The study findings suggest that the home country's societal influences on the group that influences the individual provide a set profile of predisposing traits. Following migrating to a host country, the predisposing traits interact with the host country environment and culture, influencing the determination of immigrant entrepreneurial behavior. The works of Hofstede (1983, 1985, 2011) on his six dimensions model that argued culture is the result of collective programming on the individual's mind assisted the researcher in understanding the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurial participant's worldview on how they engage intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and leverage opportunities (Stouffer, 1960) in the host country against the cultural distance between home and host cultures.
Furthermore, research on psychic distance (Ambosa et al., 2019; Johanson and Vahlne, 2009), Lewin's (1936, 1951) behavior equation, and Ajzen's (1985, 1987, 1991) theories of planned behavior and reasoned action aided the interpretations of the findings for 'predisposing factors' for the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur's human capital (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982). The combination of past literature findings aided in developing the research theory for interpreting the raw data through the coding process for facilitating the formation of the immigrant entrepreneur’s predisposing traits profile that led to the researcher's argument that an Entrepreneurial Intelligence profile can be found in the study's findings. The immigrant entrepreneur’s predisposing characteristics are critical factors determining entrepreneurial success. The entrepreneur's predisposing traits profile allows an individual to use their instinctive predisposing traits to navigate host country obstacles by employing planned behavioral controls (Ajzen, 1985, 1987, 1991) and mixed embeddedness (Kloosterman, 2010) to leverage entrepreneurial opportunities against host country natives for entrepreneurial initial and sustained success.

The research suggests that post-Soviet participants are discovered to have a consistent profile for their predisposing traits and a shared worldview for how to engage and interpret obstacles and opportunities in their achievement of entrepreneurial success (i.e., Personal Freedom) in a host country. The study contributes to the academic repository for future scholars by initiating an argument for an Entrepreneurial Intelligence profile that can prognosticate entrepreneurial success.

The researcher identified five significant contributions from this study. First, the research provides the academic repository with a study to fill the deficiency in studies on the ethnic group of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States. Second, the study provides a
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foundation for building a stable profile of predisposing traits for successful immigrant entrepreneurs while calling for additional research on a novel idea called Entrepreneurial Intelligence (EI). Third, the findings suggest that Entrepreneurial Intelligence exists outside the discussions and studies on the Entrepreneurial Mindset, a challenge to the academic consensus (Envick, 2014; Gartner, 1988; Goldman, 2007; Neck, 2018, 2021). If other researchers can expand this research and confirm a set profile for Entrepreneurial Intelligence for investors, the question to ask future business students is: are business plans, financial classes on the importance of Net Present Value (NPV) analyses, and the numerous strategic approaches truthfully applicable in determining return on investment decisions for investors and success of the entrepreneur? Fourth, the research supports Glazer and Moynihan’s (1970) northern model argument to accept acclimation over assimilation. Of the eighteen participants, none was found to have achieved assimilation in the host country. The definition of acclimation was found consistent in data for explaining the dynamic host country environment of group relationships immigrants face when they enter and sustain themselves in the United States. The research study contributes to Glazer’s and Moynihan’s (1970) argument that assimilation is unachievable and that the northern model as a means for ethnic groups to acclimate together to coexist peacefully is consistent. Finally, the impact of having a settled Entrepreneurial Intelligence profile and being accepted by the research community can significantly enhance national immigration policies and small business lending for immigrants striving to create new businesses in the United States. If additional research on EI is executed, it can critically support the contemporary goals of policymakers for investment measures on urban redevelopment and equity enhancement in the United States.
Discussion and Implications

In the literature review captured in Chapter 2, the Lewin (1936) equation on behavior and Ajzen (1967, 1985, 1991) theories of planned behavior and reasoned action were used to frame and assess the data captured from the participants of the study in the shaping of what constitutes 'predisposing factors' for an immigrant entrepreneur's human capital (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Hirschman, 1982).

Lewin's (1936) concept was derived from adapting the Gestalt principles to show that people are a system of systems. It was Lewin's (1936, 1951) work on developing a behavior equation that explains Behavior (B) is equal to the function (f) of personal traits (P) and one's environment (E). The research built the personal traits profile (f), home country, and employed in the host country environment (E) to examine if invisibleness was a behavior attribute. Lewin (1936, 1951) explained that the relationship between an individual's attributes, environment, and behavior was leveraged to examine connections to the participants' entrepreneurial success. Lewin's (1936, 1951) equation assisted the research in understanding the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs' characteristics and the host country environment's obstacles and opportunity influence in understanding the immigrants' entrepreneurial behavior. It was determined that invisibleness is a behavioral factor later in the immigrant entrepreneurial lifecycle.

The study discovered that the immigrant entrepreneur desires to be visible in the host country. However, invisibleness is projected onto the immigrant, and the host environmental system drives the immigrant entrepreneur to engage their (P) personal traits and tribal networks in the (E) host environment for executing an entrepreneurial behavior. Furthermore, to assist in the theoretical development from the data findings in the study, the researcher used Ajzen and Fishbein's (1967) theory called Reasoned Action and Ajzen's (1985, 1991) theory on individual
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Perceived Behavioral Controls (PCB) to expand the variable of predisposing traits influence on the dependent variable of entrepreneurial success in the interpretation of the data for these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs. The study supports Ajzen's (1985, 1991) and Lewin's (1936, 1951) research by linking their theories to the finding for immigrant entrepreneurial success. The study found that the system of the host environment interacting with the immigrant's personal traits derived a behavioral outcome leading to entrepreneurial success (Lewin 1936, 1951).

The participant's testimonies and analysis of the data through the coding process discovered that post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs' PCBs originated from their perceptions of the level of difficulty and risk in the host country for executing their behavioral activities for entrepreneurial employment in the host country. Therefore, considering Lee's (1966) work and overlaying Ajzen's (1967) theory of planned behavior, the participants were found to execute a set behavior under Lewin's (1951) equation after migrating from their origin (i.e., U.S.S.R Controlled territories) to a destination (i.e., United States) for rapidly learning the host country language and system. Ajzen's (1967, 1985) theoretical concept of PCB is shown in Chapter 2 in the individual rings of the literature taxonomy in Figure 6.

Though the researcher's initial theoretical proposition on invisibleness was found to have limited validation on this study's cohort data findings, what emerged was a consistent profile of predisposing traits and controlled behavioral executions using Lee's (1966) model for intervening obstacles (Lee, 1966) and opportunities (Stouffer, 1940, 1060) to build an Entrepreneurial Intelligence theoretical proposition. The study agrees with Ajzen's (1985) theory that a person's behaviors are predicted by their intentions, and intentions are predicted by one's attitude, subjective norms, and PBC. Chapter 4 explains Ajzen's (1985) theoretical findings on the
participant's attitudes are captured as an individual's assessment (i.e., positive or negative) of their planned behavior when encountering the host country's culture, environment, and system.

The participants, through direct reporting, explained subjective norms concurred by the social group's interpretation displaying a consistent chosen behavior as acceptable. The post-Soviet immigrants executed a perceived behavioral control (PBC) for opportunities against host natives who were perceived as mentally weak, lazy, and entitled, even though the participants reported their interactions with natives were friendly and supportive. The participants' testimonies gave the researcher an understanding of the immigrant entrepreneurs' perceived difficulty level (i.e., obstacles) as low in executing their behavioral activity once they could learn the host country's language and system. The study finds that the participants' intention (i.e., assessment of the host system) is a mediator of the effects of attitude and subjective norms on behavior for their goals to achieve personal freedom (i.e., wealthy security) (Ajzen, 1985; Awotoye and Singh, 2018; Kautonen et al., 2015).

This study also found that the level of risk tolerance is abnormal to host country natives. The researcher explored whether the host societal factors associated with this post-Soviet cohort's experiences created an interpretation of their chosen behavior based on their societal past in the home country. The cohort's chosen behavior was influenced by the participants' previous restrictions under a Soviet regime and system that greatly limited opportunistic pursuits in the home country. The study found that the home country system experiences provided an 'entrepreneurial drive' and development of a closed and decentralized tribal network (Uzzi, 1996) within a northern model environment (Glazer and Moynihan, 1970) in the host country created the conditions of entrepreneurial activities by the participants. The tribal decentralized network
The participants were provided access to information clarity for entry into the host country system for rapid entrepreneurial success.

The cohort of post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in this study was found to have a mix of push and pull factors (Lee, 1966) leading to entrepreneurial activities in the host country. Whether the immigrant entrepreneur decided based on push or pull factors (Lee, 1966) to migrate, their possession of tacit knowledge (Hunt, 2009; Snow, 1959) and developed predisposing traits for higher risk-taking, love to work ideology, and the ability to adapt in the host country (Sarasvathy, 2001) provided an entrepreneurial advantage over host country natives. The study found that immigrant entrepreneurs innately contain a developed Entrepreneurial Intelligence profile allowing them to circumvent host country's intervening obstacles and capitalize on opportunities in their goal of what they deem as true personal freedom.

The research study aligned with the literature that an immigrant's behavior is predicted by his/her intention, and intentions are in search of entrepreneurial success linked to the ideology of personal freedom. The participants' intentions in this study were predicted by their attitudes, tribal subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in the host country (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). These post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs' PBC permitted them to handle higher stress levels than U.S. natives (Awotoye and Singh, 2018). The study also concurred with Awotoye and Singh (2018) that proposed resilience is a moderating variable between stress and entrepreneurial intentions for immigrant entrepreneurs, all within the backdrop of PBC (Awotoye and Singh, 2018).

In the study, the average age of migration for the participants was 22.8 years old, and 83 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher from their home country. The research found that 78 percent received no subsistence support in the host country from a government or non-
government organization; however, 100 percent used Russian-speaking distributed protective social media networks to achieve information clarity on business and personal needs in the host country. As explained earlier, the linkage of predisposing characteristics influencing immigrant entrepreneurial success was confirmed. However, the researcher was challenged to define initial and sustained success based on the theoretical position that invisibility was the moderating variable. The research concludes that invisibleness was not a moderating variable for immigrant entrepreneurial success, but did serve as a mediating variable.

Models, Theories, and Propositions

As previously explained, the researcher leveraged multiple models and theories to develop this theoretical research study. The study leveraged eleven major models, theories, and propositions for the theoretical development and findings presented in this study. Therefore, within the context of this research, the researcher examined the literature and used studies approaching the topic of visa type at the entry for an immigrant's projected success in a host country. The past literature revealed propositions arguing a correlation between visa type at entry, education, and the predictors for entrepreneurship traits of the immigrant (Hunt, 2011; Kerr and Kerr, 2016). Though some of the participants aligned with the literature, the study found a divergence from other findings as 61 percent of the participants attained access to the host country by claiming asylum, whereas 22 percent accessed through marriage and 16 percent through other types of visas. All the participants in this study have achieved a high level of financial success (i.e., earnings in the millions of dollars), with 44 percent having owned businesses for over eleven years in the host country.

The study used a hybrid criterion for determining immigrant entrepreneurial success. The hybrid development for determining entrepreneurial success for immigrants used an Immigrant
Entrepreneurial Needs (IEN) model sequential structured with four developmental phases to interpret the data findings on the participants' path from migration through business establishment onto sustained entrepreneurial success. The IEN model design in this study was developed from the theoretical principles in the theory of human motivation by Maslow (1943), who explained that individuals are motivated by a need to fulfill their immediate lower-level survival needs before becoming motivated to transition to the next higher level of individual needs. The IEN model derived four phases to determine success from the participants' testimonies inductively. The IEN data revealed that the correct process of evolution is Subsistence → Social → Growth → Personal. The study found the personal phase as the highest level of success for the immigrant entrepreneur. The personal phase is where the individual entrepreneur perceives they have attained economic wealth security for personal freedom. The IEN model is presented again in Figure 31.

The researcher used two conceptual models by Glazer and Moynihan (1970), called Northern and Southern, to define and assess the data on the assimilation and acclimation of the immigrant in the host country. Glazer’s and Moynihan's (1970) northern model over the southern model was confirmed in this study's testimonies of the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs. The
term assimilation is challenged for replacement with acclimation. As previously discussed, Lewin's (1951) equation for behavior. Lewin's (1951) is mathematically shown as $B=f(P, E)$. In the equation, Behavior ($B$) is equal to the function ($f$) of personal traits ($P$) and one's environment ($E$). The research built on Lewin's (1951) work by using Ajzen and Fishbein's (1967) theory of Reasoned Action and Ajzen's (1985, 1991) additional works for the theory of individual Perceived Behavioral Controls (PCB) for developing the immigrant entrepreneur's predisposing traits profile. Ajzen's model on Perceived Behavioral Controls (PCB) is provided in Figure 32.

![Ajzen's model on Perceived Behavioral Controls (1991)]

Figure 32: *Ajzen's model on Perceived Behavioral Controls (1991)*

The work of Lee (1966) on the theory of migration model was a foundational building block of this research. Lee's (1966) theory, with Stouffer's (1960) work, provided the researcher with research support on push and pull migration factors and intervening obstacles and opportunities associated with the area of destination individuals of ethnic groups migrating to countries like the United States of America. Lee's (1966) theoretical model from Chapter 2 is provided in Figure 33.
The last primary model and theoretical works are Hofstede's (1983, 1985, 2011) cultural Dimensions Model and Cultural Distance work. Hofstede’s conceptual six dimensions model argues a variance between one cultural group differences using six dimensions to provide the model for expanding his work on cultural distance (CD). Hofstede (1983, 1985, 2001, 2011) developed the cultural dimensions model as shown in Figure 34 by providing six dimensions to explain Cultural Distance as the difference between two cultural groups' norms and values (Hofstede, 2001).

Recommendations

Findings from this study suggest that Entrepreneurial Intelligence exists. The researcher examined a group of individuals who migrated from a restrictive socialist totalitarian home
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country to an open capitalist democratic republic host country. All the research participants were entrepreneurs within the host country who achieved rapid and sustained entrepreneurial success.

In the search for academic works on Entrepreneurial Intelligence, the researcher found a recorded lecture from the scholar Heidi Neck (2018) on the topic. Neck (2018) first explained entrepreneurship as the practice and mindset. In her lecture, Neck (2018) continued using Goldman’s (2007) work on strategic thinking to explain the entrepreneurial mindset as the courage to act on opportunities under varying conditions of unknowingness. The post-Soviet participants of this study were found to align with Neck’s (2018, 2021) and Goldman's (2007) works, as shown throughout Chapters 4 and later in this chapter as and shown in Figure 30. Neck (2018) then explained her position on Emotional Intelligence as the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. In Neck’s (2018, 2021) lecture and works, the term Entrepreneurial Intelligence was tied to the Entrepreneurial Mindset. Neck (2018, 2021) discusses three building blocks for entrepreneurial intelligence: mindset, opportunity, and connection.

According to Neck, mindset is the practice of curiosity, the ability to look beyond. The mindset definition by Neck (2018) was found in the study and captured visually in Figure 30 under the list of predisposing attributes and entrepreneurial intelligence. The practice of curiosity (Neck, 2018) was captured in this research study as the desire to try new things, the ability to use the system for advantages, and adaptation with continuous learning.

The second building block of Neck’s (2018) argument is opportunity, as she defined as the entrepreneur’s focus on their need before solutions. Neck (2018, 2021) expands on the opportunity category by explaining that the entrepreneur creates something people did not know they needed before they needed it in four steps. Neck’s (2018, 2021) four steps are called (1) found, (2) search, (3) create, and (4) design. The research study found Neck’s (2018) opportunity
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category by capturing it in Figure 30 as the ability to observe an ecosystem strategically and enhanced foresight for advantageous positioning for entrepreneurial success.

The last of Neck’s (2018, 2021) categories is called connection, defined as the entrepreneur being connected to themselves and others. Neck (2018, 2021) expands on the connection by explaining it as entrepreneurs know their purpose and what they are trying to do. The category connection for Neck is consistent with the IEN model phases and the associated findings for initial and sustained success. The research study sees Neck’s (2018, 2021) connection category criteria as a desire for true individual freedom in Figure 30. Neck (2018, 2021) and Goldman (2007) are supported in this study.

The researcher Envick (2014), citing the early development of the entrepreneur works by Mill (1848) and Schumpeter (1934), provides a model for the concept development of Entrepreneurial Intelligence. Envick (2014), in the model, uses the three primary categories labeled as (1) cognitive qualities, (2) psychological state, and (3) action steps. Envick’s (2014) three primary categories are provided in Figure 35, and the eleven psychological traits are in Figure 35. Envick’s (2014) Entrepreneurial Intelligence conceptual model is presented below in Figure 36.
This research found all of Envick’s (2014) psychological traits and two of the three primary categories in the conceptual model for Entrepreneurial Intelligence. In the inductive approach looking for invisibility’s linkage between the immigrant’s predisposing attributes and immigrant entrepreneurial success in a host country, the researcher discovered an argument for
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Entrepreneurial Intelligence. The research findings in this study support Envick’s conceptual model minus the arguments for the action steps. This research found no evidence for steps three, four, and five in the data of Envick’s (2014) action steps conceptual model. Of the eighteen participants in this study, not one conducted the conventional business development process of conducting a feasibility analysis and business plan, typically taught in business school. This researcher found that steps three through five in Envick’s (2014) model have little to no value in determining initial and sustained entrepreneurial success.

Moreover, Envick’s (2014) research does provide eleven psychological traits profile but contends that researchers have not agreed on a consistent pattern of traits for Entrepreneurial Intelligence by citing Gartner (1988). As seen in Figure 30, this research found each of the eleven psychological traits in Figure 35 of Envick’s (2014) research. The research refutes Gartner’s (1988) and Envick’s (2014) process argument over psychological traits for developing a set profile for defining entrepreneurial intelligence. The research argues that Entrepreneurial Intelligence is linked back to the predisposing attribute of these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs. The research suggests that removing the emphasis on business plans and other academic processes will not have an impact on an individual's entrepreneurial success. On the other hand, the research does support the individual's predisposing attributes as more critical to defining the outcome of success than any business process or artifact, such as a business plan. The researcher concludes by arguing why immigrants are outpacing host country natives in entrepreneurial startups. The success of the 18 participants was directly linked to their host country's development of predisposing characteristics with the enhancement of decentralized protected networks for rapid information exchange.
Entrepreneurial Intelligence is a novel term with limited research in this area, and I call on current and future scholars to test and consider the findings of this research to provide additional clarity and definition to the burgeoning field and the related field of entrepreneurial mindset (Envick, 2014; Gartner, 1988; Goldman, 2007; Neck 2018, 2021).

Limitations

There were several limitations encountered in the design and execution of this research, but only the major ones will be addressed here. The first was the dearth of literature and published research on the topic itself. The Eastern European, former Eastern Bloc/Soviet Union in particular, demographic in immigrant entrepreneur research has been understudied. At the same time, the researcher was able to identify and interview a significant number of successful post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs as research participants. The second limitation was the sheer logistics involved in researching such large geographic areas, both at home and host countries; also language, various Slavic dialects, and other cultural factors that presented difficulties in communications. A subset of this was the recent conflict between Russia and Ukraine that may have introduced bias. The third and probably most significant was limited time. This was an ambitious topic that deserved more time to delve more deeply. The practical constraints of a working adult learner/researcher to conduct sufficient field work in a matter of months vs. years limited the potential outcomes. At the same time, the research that was accomplished has sufficiently addressed the research questions and the hope is that it has started the ball rolling down a fertile path for future research. For example, a full-bodied quantitative analysis building off this qualitative research would enhance and extend the findings in this theoretical study.
Future Research

As stated previously, future research is required to expand the argument that Entrepreneurial Intelligence exists. After the data analysis, the researcher searched for any works on Entrepreneurial Intelligence for cross-referencing this research’s findings for a set profile. The researcher discovered the works of Envick (2014) and Neck (2018, 2021), and the research findings were found to overlap these two researchers’ efforts. The research discovered the need for future research on the reciprocity of immigrants’ education when migrating and establishing in the United States. The research found that many participants discussed the system as broken and nearly unattainable. Numerous immigrants entering the United States have diverse tacit knowledge in STEM. Unfortunately, the United States system is not allowing industries to consume and leverage these highly skilled workers. The third area of research for a future researcher is the value and emphasis placed on business plans. All eighteen participants achieved high levels of financial success in their entrepreneurial activities. However, no one used or placed value in developing a business plan or associated artifacts like a three-year pro forma financial forecast. This research suggests that traditional business plans were not as important to the eighteen participants as what would be normally expected. Lastly, the researcher found no systematic discrimination or racism by host natives against immigrants. The research found that the participants viewed the system, not people, as discriminatory. A future investigation would be warranted to determine whether the system is challenging based on socioeconomic status, not origin of birth or an individual’s phenotypical traits.

Researcher’s Reflections

I began this research believing post-Soviet immigrants could enter the United States going unnoticed because their phenotypical traits allowed them to blend in with host country
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natives. I believed this allowed the post-Soviet immigrants to employ entrepreneurial activities relatively easily because natives did not see them as a threat. However, what I discovered is that the system created invisibility for the immigrant through lack of credit history, inability to access bank leverage, limited to no reciprocity of their formal educational training, and other reported challenges. The immigrants desired to be visible in earlier phases of business creation and development. Once success was attained and sustained, the immigrant entrepreneur desired to be invisible from the system that initially projected invisibility on them before success. The findings led me to ask more questions.

It was during this period of the research that the idea and novel term, Entrepreneurial Intelligence emerged and seemed to capture the theoretical concepts and constructs of the themes drawn from the 18 participants’ lived experiences shared in the personal interviews. Additionally, the findings through the research process revealed a consistent list of developed predisposing attributes that connected to the end state profile for an individual who possesses entrepreneurial intelligence. Taken another step, it is possible to make the connection between the predisposing profile of traits developed by these post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs in their home countries and the determinants of entrepreneurial success as discovered in the course of this research. And by extension, the predisposing attributes are in alignment with a more complete definition of Entrepreneurial Intelligence. Figure 37 is offered as a conceptual model of immigrant entrepreneurial intelligence for continued research consideration. The call for more research to validate, refute, and/or refine the proposed conceptual model for immigrant entrepreneurial intelligence could have merit in increasing our understanding – and ultimately, practice – of immigrant entrepreneurship.
Figure 37: Immigrant Entrepreneurial Intelligence Conceptual Model

Source: The Author
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APPENDIX A: Grounded Theory Quality Evaluation

Adapted from: (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 277)

1. Does the study focus on a process, an action, or an interaction as the key element in the theory and consider the steps that unfold when studying the central phenomenon?

2. Does the coding process organize the data to build a larger theoretical model while alternating data collection with data analysis?

3. Is the theory presented in a creative manner? Does it use figures or diagrams where appropriate?

4. Does it advance a proposition that relates to the categories in the theoretical model and refer to the emerging picture in the current study as a springboard for potential future research?

5. Is memoing used throughout the process of research? Are the recording methods used described in the conduct of the study?

6. Does the researcher display evidence of reflexivity or self-disclosure about stance taken in the study? Is reflexive thinking documented in a research journal or field notes.
APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol

A Qualitative Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship by Post-Soviets in the United States

Date and Time of interview:
Location:
Interview Participant:
Interviewee Title or Position:

Note: Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher will explain the purpose of the study, redefine specific terms used in each section, and review the research questions that guide the study:

**RQ1. What facilitators and barriers do post-Soviet immigrants encounter when establishing a business in the United States?**

RQ1a. Do post-Soviet Immigrant entrepreneurs encounter similar or disparate opportunities and challenges in entrepreneurship activities compared to natives?
RQ1b. What does Invisibleness mean to the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?
RQ1c. What is considered initial success for the post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur?

**RQ2. What factors contribute to continued business success for post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneurs?**

RQ2a. Are such factors related to constructs of Invisibleness as an ethnic strategy?
RQ2b. What factors does modern networking tools like social media support immigrant entrepreneurship activities in the U.S.?
RQ2c. Are such factors related to constructs of continued Immigrant Entrepreneurial Success?

**Research Questions for Interview Participants:**

1. Are you the owner (or co-owner) of a business in the United States?
2. How long have you in been in business in the United States?
3. Where did you grow up (country of origin) before you decided to immigrate to the United States?

4. How old were you when you decided to immigrate to the United States?

5. Did you have any family or friends in the U.S. before you immigrated here?

6. Did you immigrate to the U.S. alone or with your family?

7. Why did you decide to immigrate to the U.S.?

8. Before you came to the U.S., did you have a concern about living in the U.S.?

9. Did you receive any support outside the family and friends when you immigrated to the United States?

10. When you immigrated to the U.S., what was your visa status?

11. Did you experience any issues with the U.S. visa process on immigrating to the United States?

12. What is your present immigration status in the United States? (Naturalized Citizen, Green Card holder, etc.)

13. What education level did you finish before you immigrated into the U.S.?

14. Do you feel your schooling in America is the same, less, or better compared to where you grew up?

15. Did you have any challenges transferring your education or training certifications in the U.S.? (Was your earned education diploma, degree, or certificate accepted in the U.S.?)

16. Did you do any training or schooling in the United States?

17. Were you an entrepreneur/business owner before coming to America and starting a new business - If so, have you stayed in the same industry as a business owner?

18. Where did you first go when you came to the U.S.?
19. How did you know where to settle when you immigrated to the U.S.?
20. How long did you live in the place when you first came to the U.S.?
21. Are there any significant differences between living in America vs. where you grew up before coming to the U.S.?
22. Did you find any issues acclimating to America?
23. As used in this study, what does the term, *Invisibleness* mean to you?
24. What were the most demanding challenges you remember when you first came to the U.S.?
25. As an immigrant, have you ever faced any issues from other (i.e., American Natives) because you were an immigrant?
26. Are there any differences between immigrant Americans and nonimmigrant Americans?
27. Do people realize you are an immigrant? If so, how?
28. Have you ever been treated as an outsider by other Americans?
29. Do you consider yourself an immigrant American, American, or country of your birth?
30. Did you find living in the U.S. any different than where you grew up before immigrating to the U.S.?
31. Before becoming a business owner, what were the job(s) you did in the United States?
32. What motivated you to become an entrepreneur/business owner in the U.S.?
33. When you first started your business, what were your goals?
34. What were the most demanding challenges starting your business?
35. Who were your first customers?
36. How were you able to gain access to customers, suppliers and workers?
37. Is there any group you prefer to deal with – the nonimmigrant Americans, other immigrant groups, post-Soviet immigrants, or it doesn’t matter?

38. Do you think your customers are loyal to your business? Please comment on why.

39. Are your suppliers’ other post-Soviet immigrant businesses?

40. What does a success mean to you as a business owner?

41. Do you feel you have been successful in your business?

42. Has your definition of success changed over time, if so, what is it now?

43. What have you done to keep your business successfully going?

44. What would you do differently if you had a chance to redo any of the changes you made as an immigrant entrepreneur in the U.S.?

45. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as an immigrant business owner in the U.S. you did not already share?
APPENDIX C: Research Participant Informed Consent Form

A Qualitative Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship by Post-Soviets in the United States

Principal Investigators: Nathan T. Rozea, MBA., (862) 571-4558, nrozea2019@my.fit.edu

1) Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study. Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to take part, or you may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

2) Why is this study being done?

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are an post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur in the United States and an owner of the following business________________________ (Company Name). Your personal experiences with your responses as an post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur, and your input and ideas will greatly enhance this research project.

The purpose of this study is to discover success factor associated with immigrant entrepreneurship in the United States. We will pool the results of each participating organization to discover trends in immigrant entrepreneur’s innovative strategies which resulted in new business establishment, but the survival and sustainability as viable businesses in a host country.

If you are participating in a live interview, it will take place at a location and time of your choosing. If you are participating in a virtual interview, it will take place via (Zoom)(Skype)(Facebook Messenger)(Microsoft Teams)(Other) on a date and time convenient to you, and you will be provided with a link ahead of time to join the session at the designated meeting time. If you are participating via phone, a researcher will call you at the number you provide on a date and time convenient to you.

If you volunteer to participate in a follow-up interview, should one be deemed necessary, the research investigator will contact you to set up a mutually convenient time and location or electronic method.

Analysis of all data collected will be conducted at the following locations: North Arlington, New Jersey as part of dissertation effort for Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida.

What is involved in this study?

If you choose to take part in this study, this is what will happen:
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

- A research investigator will contact you to set up an interview date, time, and method (live, via phone, or via any of several electronic methods).
- A research investigator will send you a confirmation e-mail to confirm the agreed-upon date and time.
- You will participate in the approximately hour-long interview on the designated date and time. You will be asked a series of questions regarding your experience and responses as an immigrant entrepreneur in the United States.
- The research investigator will take handwritten notes during the session.
- Final analysis will be conducted, and the results and findings will be formally written into the study.
- The total amount of time you will spend in connection with this study is approximately 1 hour for the initial interview, and 30 minutes to 1 hour for a follow-up interview, if needed, for a total of up to 2 hours.

3) **What are the risks of participating in this study?**

There are no physical risks associated with this study. As part of this informed consent, you agree to allow the investigator to use a identifier for your name and type of business in the study; No demographic or personally identifying information will be disclosed without your expressed, written consent. The research investigators will make every effort to keep all non-disclosed information strictly confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed. Also, you may find that some of the questions asked as part of this study may raise sensitive issues for you, resulting in mild emotional discomfort. You may refuse to answer any of the questions asked, and you may take a break at any time during the study, both during the initial and follow-up interviews, if you choose to participate. In addition, you may withdraw from this study at any time without negative consequences.

4) **Are there any benefits to taking part in this study?**

Taking part in this research will not assist you directly; however, you may benefit from:
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

- The opportunity to reflect on your lived experiences as a post-Soviet immigrant entrepreneur.

- The opportunity to provide guidance for small businesses to help effect policy changes for small businesses and immigration while offering insight into supporting future immigrant Entrepreneurs.

The benefit to science and humankind may include:

- The opportunity to support immigrant small businesses in building resilience and successful businesses when faced with a series of migration and host country challenges.

5) **What are my options?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. Should you decide to participate and later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time.

6) **Will I receive payment being in this study?**

No compensation is being offered for your participation in the study.

7) **Can I be taken off this study?**

The investigator may decide to withdraw you from the study at any time. You could be removed from the study for reasons related solely to you (e.g., not following study-related directions from the investigator) or because the entire study is stopped.

8) **How will my privacy be protected?**

If the results of this research study are published in journals or at higher education meetings or conferences, none of business’s information will be disclosed. You may choose to use a pseudonym for your business and yourself rather than disclosing the name of the business or your name. If you are quoted in published materials, it would include only the pseudonyms you choose, unless you specifically provide consent to use actual names. At no time will reference be made to any possible identifying information other than the business name and your name (or pseudonyms if you so choose). The research investigators will not release any information about your involvement without your written permission, unless required by law.
9) **Problems or Questions**

The Institutional Review Board of Florida Institute of Technology, at telephone number (321) 674-8960, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant. Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting Nathan Rozea, lead researcher, at (862) 571-4558.

- Please keep a copy of this document for your files and bring the original to your interview.

If you agree to participate in this study, please sign below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Name (printed) and Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person Obtaining Consent’s Name (printed) &amp; Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator’s Name (printed) &amp; Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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APPENDIX D: Recruitment letter / email

Recruitment Email/Letter

Dear [Participants Name]:

I am conducting a research study on Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States. With rapid growth in demand for entrepreneurship learning combined with immigrant business startups outpacing natural born American citizens 2 to 1, this study seeks to understand the influencing variables impacting an immigrant’s ability to attain and sustain entrepreneurial success in the United States. This study looks to achieve this by interviewing Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurs in the U.S. to understand these participants’ lived experiences and worldviews. The goal of this study is to assist in future policy development by Government policymakers to support continued development of immigrant entrepreneurship activities for positive economic and community development across the U.S.; Participation in this study involves a one-on-one interview with the researcher that takes approximately one hour. If you are interested in participating in this study by scheduling a virtual, telephonic, or in-person interview, please contact the investigator via email. A follow up separate email with meeting invite and further instructions will follow. Participation in this study is voluntary and there are no known risks involved in this research.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Respectfully,

Mr. Nathan Rozea
MAJ(R), PMP; MBA
Florida Institute of Technology
Melbourne, Florida
Doctor Candidate
(862) 571-4558
nrozea2019@my.fit.edu

Verbal Script: Recruitment First Contact

Hi! My name is Nathan Rozea from Florida Institute of Technology. I am a Doctor of Business Candidate conducting a research study on Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurs in the United States. With rapid growth in demand for entrepreneurship learning combined with immigrant business startups outpacing natural born American citizens 2 to 1, this study seeks to understand the influencing variables impacting an immigrant’s ability to attain and sustain entrepreneurial success in the United States. My study looks to achieve this by interviewing successful Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurs in the U.S. to understand your lived entrepreneurial experiences and worldview. The goal of this study is to assist in future policy development by Government policymakers to support continued development of immigrant
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

entrepreneurship activities for positive economic and community development across the U.S.; Participation in this study involves a one-on-one interview with myself and takes approximately one hour. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and there are no known risks involved in this research. If you want to volunteer for this study and have any additional questions, please let me know [Provide my business card with contact email and cell number].

Thank you for your time.

**Verbal Script: Consent Following Recruitment**

**OPENING:**

Hi! My name is Nathan Rozea from Florida Institute of Technology. I am conducting a research study on Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurial success in the United States. Participation would involve you conducting an interview asking a series of questions. This interview will take about approximately one hour. There are no known risks involved and participation is voluntary. Would you be interested in participating?

**CLOSING:**

Do you have any questions you would like answered now? You may contact me at nrozea2019@my.fit.edu or 862-571-4558. If you prefer to speak with someone else, call the Florida Institute of Technology Institutional Review Board (IRB)

**Reminder Message: Research involving participation to occur at a specific time/location.**

This is a reminder that you have signed up to participate in a research study about Eastern European immigrant entrepreneurial success in the United States. You are scheduled to complete the study on [date] at [time]. The study will be conducted at [location of participation]. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Nathan Rozea at nrozea2019@my.fit.edu or 862-571-4558.
APPENDIX E: IRB Form

Florida Institute of Technology
Institutional Review Board

Notice of Exempt Review Status
Certificate of Clearance for Human Participants Research

Principal Investigator: Nathan T. Rozea
Date: October 14, 2022
IRB Number: 22-103
Study Title: Qualitative Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship by Post-Soviet Eastern Europeans in the United States

Your research protocol was reviewed and approved by the IRB Chairperson. Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.101, your study has been determined to be minimal risk for human subjects and exempt from 45 CFR46 federal regulations. The Exempt determination is valid indefinitely. Substantive changes to the approved exempt research must be requested and approved prior to their initiation. Investigators may request proposed changes by submitting a Revision Request form found on the IRB website.

Acceptance of this study is based on your agreement to abide by the policies and procedures of Florida Institute of Technology’s Human Research Protection Program (http://web2.fit.edu/crm/irb/) and does not replace any other approvals that may be required.

All data, which may include signed consent form documents, must be retained in a secure location for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

The category for which exempt status has been determined for this protocol is as follows:

3. Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met:
   a. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; or
   b. Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or
   c. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and IRB can determine if there are adequate provisions in place to protect the privacy of the subjects and confidentiality of the data.
APPENDIX F: Participants Full Quotes from Chapter 4

Alex (Александр)

- “I decided to leave, but my goal in my life was to work, enjoy what you do, and don't think about money. That was my ultimate goal, and that was what I always was living with, that idea. And while you are in Russia, you always have to be focused on money, for survival, pretty much, because again, inflation. Now we’re talking about inflation here, it's like nothing. It’s a kinder color here. But we have inflation in Russia, let's say, uh, obviously, you know, trying to buy some, uh, hard currency, either it's the Deutsche mark at the time or American dollars. So, for example, if buying, you know one $1.00 U.S. dollar cost, let's say 500 rubles, tomorrow that $1.00 dollar is already 600 rubles. The day after that its 700, the next day after that, it's thousand and so on, it's crazy. That's what, that’s what we call inflation. So, obviously you have to make sure that your funds are secured and not become like a paper that you can use in the toilet. The inflation was so bad that the, the, and then what they did, let’s say you got 1000 rubles, right? And it's worth $1.00 dollar, then they just decided, OK, uh, we’re gonna cut the zeros. So, they cut 2 zeros and instead of $1000 rubles you start having 10 rubles. And this is how they did it. That was not a good thing to do.”

- “I was dreaming about the United States ever since I was in middle school. So, that, that's pretty much my dream fulfilled. My dream is freedom, you know, be free, because the United States knowing at that time was free.”

- “My uh first official job was in the laundry in the hotel I was folding. You know some other clothing that being washed in that laundry for the hotel Mediterranean. That's the name of the hotel. The challenges were mostly economic at the, at the time, because once you have nothing to eat, you really don’t think about culture, theater, museums and stuff like that. You really need to eat something, and you have to bring some bread to the table so your kids can eat, and you have to pay your rent and, you know, eventually the car and the gas and everything else. Everything is so expensive compared to Russia. For example, right, because Russia is very regulated at the time. Not when I left, but uh in the, you know, socialist. Everything is regulated, then you live in and that regulations for years you kind of, you know, you're accustomed. You, it's, it becomes you, you know nature. Here everything is different, and you have to adapt. Plus, you have no one who can give you any valuable advice because you, I mean, at the time, obviously we didn't speak any English. So, all our friends, all our social, you know, social time spent is the Russian speaking people and obviously they, they still like, you know, anthologies still being like being there in Russia. So, you, you are not getting it, you know, outside the group’s advice to help you navigate that, to acclimate, you had to learn everything on your own as you went through experiences, right? Yeah. It's just like you. Some people learning to swim, they just drop them in the water, in the deep water and then you have to survive. That that’s pretty much what happened here.”
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

- “How many years did I live here. So, half of the time here I put almost half of the time I've been doing this business and this country in particular. If you become visible, meaning in your business and you stick out, you got vultures like lawyers, insurance companies, representatives, and so you name it, they will go after you because they are vultures. And I, I actually, every time I, I'm talking to someone who understands medical business I'm saying, look there, insurance companies are there to collect the premium, not to pay out. Of with the shorter. So, they do anything and everything in order to Not to be. So, that, therefore they hire like an army of lawyers. They Search around for, you know, big fish, I should say, because there is no point for them to go after, let's say medical practitioner who hardly survive in himself. So there is no meat on the bone for them. That's what, that's how I, I described the result. I don't wanna be noticed. I don't wanna be, but I do not do something illegal. But it, it's, you know, it's a rule of thumb, if you if you stick out You will be noticed, and the people will come after you.”

- “Success is when you, when you do your business, you like to do it because that's the goal. Otherwise, if you don't like what you do, I don't think you're going to make any money. Hmm, and obviously, the freedom, if, if this business gives you freedom to you know, travel to get some, I don't know, good times. To help other people, I think that's cool. Except, obviously you won't be in business if you're not making a profit, then you're not successful. You have to make money, but personally, um, you know, I do what I like, and I have the freedom, and I can help others, I can travel and do the things, make my own choices. Right. And so, you know, depends on somebody who can let you do what you like. That's what success is for me; success now is freedom to be with family, travel, not always worry about the business.”

Aleksey (Алексей)

- “So, the reason was my business because I was doing similar things in Russia. I invested in technology companies and, uh also I'll consult with startups. How to do business globally and you know it was very silly, I'm consulting them how to go global and I'm not in the US. So, the reason was, uh to help My Portfolio company, so adapt it here in the U.S. Every time customers ask me reasonable question like why you are personally not in the U.S. The U.S. market, uh, it is the biggest market in the world. So, how can you say you are advising and not be in the U.S.; So, I decided to make the adaptation program for my portfolio companies. Uh, yes, so I moved here and made the adaptation and orientation program for them to penetrate these local markets, so I organize this program for already existing companies in my portfolio. And after this program was quite successful for my companies, I just wanted to do it on a regular basis. So, the reason why, getting through this because, the U.S. is the best market for my portfolio companies and for me to continue developing this kind of business investment in technology.”

- “Funny story. So, I reached out to a couple of my classmates with whom I haven't seen for, let's see, maybe 25 years. So, they immigrated 25 years before me, and I tried to figure out some details about the area for living. Just some, details about you know. Uh, lifestyle about life, information about schools, medicine, and other thing. You know everything I get was zero useful information from them. Really zero with couple of
meetings. We did a couple of meetings for couple of hours each and I get nothing, no understanding how to do stuff, how financial system works, how education system works and all other life stuff. Nothing, so, then I meet with the friend of mine from Moscow, but he immigrated, let’s say only around five years before me. And in an hour, he explained me everything. He introduced me about my needs for kids, you know, work, and other means you know. Helped with logistics, where I will work, where I can live. So, he explained me everything about finance and it was the most useful power I get, you know, from anyone because he dealt with the same questions I have and problems five years ago when he came to America, so it was fresh knowledge and the same problems. The ones here in America for 25 years offer nothing for me.”

- “Living, you know huge difference in everything. Uh, especially when you just moved. I mean, maybe first two years every time you trying to compare everything. Prices uh, you know, very different, yeah. Some stuff with finance, with utilities, with food, with services, with everything. Uh, the communication with people, you know, uh in Russia, everything is much more predictable. In pricing and relations and expectations. In the US, sometimes you, uh, get to know the price only when you get some service or product, you know it’s impossible in Russia. So, everything is predictable, you can plan, you can, you know, organize something good and it will not change. Here everything is not predictable. Also, different kind of product, different style of communications. Everything is different, everything. So yeah, a lot of features. First of all, in Russia, Moscow I was, uh, let’s say at some level with successful people. Entrepreneurs, skill level, etcetera, and you know it was my circle of communication and here I was not, zero society with whom I can communicate my level. And in Moscow, with my income, etcetera, I was like higher class and here with these prices and everything. I feel like I’m, must see, low. Middle class lower than middle class. So, the challenges were, um, everything was more expensive and, and, communication and networks, uh, were really reduced, right. And you must build those.”

- “So, if you are invisible, there is no business. That’s it. Hmm, because it’s, uh, we live in information century and if there is no information about you, you know, for other people you do not exist. So, you do not have credibility etcetera. Nobody can check your background track and make some conclusions about how to deal with you, who you are. So, I mean you can’t be invisible, it’s impossible. I’m well very visible.”

- “I think immigrants do much more things, completing with native people because you know they need to do much more in much more shorter time period because Americans start doing something when their born and we came here when we already grown up but we came to you like we are just born without a track record, without everything, you know nothing. Without credibility, etcetera, without resources. So, I mean, I, I, think entrepreneurs to immigrate here, they work harder and one more thing I think they run faster. If you’re talking about US entrepreneurs that I made, maybe there’s others like Elon Musk, but if we’re talking about entrepreneurs and skill levels, I think they’re very, very narrow specialization. So, immigrants have more broad knowledge and more broad skills, Computer skills, technology skills, they are local guys.”
“I don’t know, because, uh, when you reach some goal, uh, you already have another one in your head. You know you can’t stop. So, do you know what I mean? So, you say I set this level of goals personally and I achieved those, I set a new set of goals. And so, because I keep moving and creating new goals on being successful. Yeah, you know, it’s like addiction. So, to set up a new goal and you know to run this direction, putting everything, all your resources to achieve this goal and you can’t say OK, right now I am successful because you already have some different idea in your head.”

Anna (Anna)

“To be honest with you, I start being in sales when I used to be in the second grade in school. Ok, and then, I had very tough childhood and technically I started living by myself when I was 12. Um, I was, and I was in sales helping my parents. To sell the goods that they’ve been growing on their farmland since I was 14. Um, then when I got married, after a year of marriage, we bought a business which is the 1st photography business with my husband, and we’ve been dealing with that business. But since my husband, he has some degree in construction. I did, whatever I could find, you know, in second grade, I was, what, nine years maybe 10 years old. I could find something and find if it has some value, valuable stuff. I would bring it to school and find a buyer for it and sell it. And um, I grew up in a city, but since the life when Soviet Union was getting to the end. The life was difficult in the cities because there were no opportunities, no job. People could not survive and my parents, they decided to buy a house. It’s like in the village. Hmm, I would say like 10 miles from the city, and they open up the farm. This way we could survive. The family could survive because they would grow on the farm. And this is where we can sell this stuff, whatever they grow. And since this happened, the village where they bought the house had no school and I was forced to stay in the apartment in this city and continue schooling in the city on my own at 13, maybe 14. it was the apartment of my plan, and by 14 because since my parents moved and they had the farm, wherever you grow on the farm needs to be sold. And since 14 or maybe even 13 years old, I was going to the market. I’ve been standing on the market and selling the stuff on the market. And then got married at 17, OK. And then when I captured it was, I will speak of this farm so badly, I was ready to run away.”

“Yeah, of course. I think everyone has issues. You don’t speak English, you have to, uh, learn the language. That’s #1, OK, then you have to learn the customs here. I mean, there is certain things that you need to know. How, how, pretty much, everything. If we’re speaking of construction, its day and night. The requirements in Kazakhstan and requirements here are completely different. The language was, yeah, that was the most challenging part. But the cost of living is a different challenge, it was more expensive, but since we came from Kazakhstan and in general, we’ve been poor there, we’re used to it being poor. We used to save money and be very like, you know, conservative spenders. uh, we’re used to it and it’s kind of, wasn’t a challenge. I’ve been by myself, as I mentioned to you since I was like 12. Ok, and I kind of learned it, I used to depend on myself always, ok, and, oh, I like the freedom. And I think it was, it was not even a question to go to work for someone, or to become a business owner and work for yourself.”
“I would go to college when we came to the United States. I would go and get a degree. In my mind, the company, what I do, you know, like the business that we do, it's still depended on you. It's like while you're working with your IQ. OK, you are getting, if you can get the degree, and if the degree would be the right degree, you have much more opportunities where you can set up the business the way that you can be more flexible with what you do. Because even though we're more free, we have more freedom. But still, you know, I cannot leave the business every month for a week and go on vacation every month. Still, you have to always be present for business to run. Ok, and it's not an easy business and I see opportunities to get the degree certain degree which I understand right now.”

“You know, people don't acknowledge you. Yeah, Mm-hmm, Yeah, and from and from a business standpoint and establishing business, honestly, I did not experience this on me, ok, doing the business, uh, people did not try to be not helpful. Let's put it this way. I mean, some people, even when you don't speak English, some people trying to understand you, and they try and kind of help you and accommodate you, because to me, I did not experience any of it in both aspects. Um, well to think, maybe that's actually what I'm doing right now. I don't want to draw attention, first of all that, my nature, my human nature, let's put it this way. I don't like attention to myself. OK, since I was a child, I don't like attention to myself. That's why the way I do business the same thing. I don't like too much attention. To my business and what I'm doing. The hardest challenge was uncertainty. Was uncertainty, yeah, because you kind of worry how it's gonna go because you are starting, you, you have financial obligations, and you want to make sure that what you just started, you wanna make sure you're gonna get work, enough work to be able to get pay for your living expenses.”

“I feel like some people, the big difference is the opportunity. The people who have been born here, they have much more opportunities. Yeah, because when I came into states, uh, first of all, I came, I was young, and when I was 17 or 15. I had no ability to go to school, and at least at least learn English in school. When I came, I came with a child, and I went straight to work. Because to survive you have to work. I did not even go to school to learn English. I did not attend a single class. To learn English, whatever I speak English, I picked up everything on the street. OK. Because I had no time to do it, to go to school. I have to go work. And the same thing. I'm not even talking about English. The same thing happened to other education. Let's say, maybe I would love to become a doctor, But I had no opportunity to get that degree because first of all, it's a lot of money. I did not have the money back then, OK, and I did not have Time to do it because I have to support my family.”

“I guess the success is when you make more money than you spend. We achieved a lot. Umm, we've been able to establish the business. You know, we have uh clientele and we have, uh, like local client, loyal clients who's coming back to us even after 20 years. And plus, we're not in financial stress. For 25 years, working 24/7. Well, you know what, it's just a system being very like 40 years, that if you do something, you have to be like kind of be very oriented and if you started you have to finish it. we change our model a little
Beso (Beco)

- “Umm, I would say to, to do something for a living, financial. And ultimately, uh, I always wanted to own my own business. That would be, that would be, just better life, I would say generally, umm, I wanted a better way. Well, first I visited the United States in 2004, and I, I did have a major culture shock. So, I did go back, but then I decided that I might like it second time and I would have better impression, and I came back. So yes, I did have concerns. Well, I remember, I was 19 when first just visited. I was working, travel, I believe a program, and I had a different impression about, you know, the whole country people, the climate and everything. And to me, it was little cold, society wise. It was a little cold. You know, people were a little cold, not so welcoming. It was very hard financially. So, I had to, well the life standards were very low when, when we arrived, the group of students I was with. And overall, I was not really impressed because from all the, you know, the movies and everything it was, it seemed a little easier to get by, in America. Um, you know people and everything pretty much to me, was like, not really good, it was like I'm there and that's it. I made it wasn't like that second time but was a very similar situation. Somehow, somehow, I got by and convinced myself that, you know, you have to do it and it's to be done and there is no going back. So, that's what I can say about it.”

- “I would say that here you're really alone. I mean alone. Like nobody's really going to give you anything, and general, generally you are on your own, you have to make it. There's no, no options. I mean, I'm in a situation when you're alone, right? When you don't have relatives, because friends not going to just, you know, take care of him. They have to take care of themselves. Especially that time I'm talking about 2006, 2007. It wasn't that great, you know. And I would say if I was not an immigrant, I probably would not have, would not have succeeded. Let's put it this way, And I can elaborate very, very deeply about that because I sometimes, I think because of my accent because of my international manners, you know, different understandings, you know, some sense, you know, some, I would say qualities, right, personal qualities Help me, uh succeed and become successful. That's how I feel I'm very, very positive about it. Somehow it makes you not be, you know, just like ordinary guy.”

- “My first business, so serious, Let's, let's call that I did have failed businesses. I have very failed businesses, failed businesses with businesses. The motivation was there, but the goal was financial. That's pretty much what it was, you know, to, to have financial stability. When starting the business, uh, information. Information was very, very hard to come by, umm, back in the day, there wasn't that much information. Umm, because you have to know how insurance works. So, and this is not actually the profession related, it's more like I would say, uh, not management related, it was more, more, I would say uh,
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paperwork related. So, it was very hard. There were excess delays, delivery not enough and accounting was very hard, but the insurance process was hard. You know the licenses and everything. So, all that was, you know, very big challenge. So, Yeah, but nothing actually worked, especially related to delivery or even employee related, right? Hmm, OK, I would say challenges was bureaucracy, right. Let’s, let’s call it one of those things where bureaucracy was the biggest challenge and still is. I had a challenge with raising and dealing with capital, little bit of challenges. You know, one of my businesses failed because of capital. I would say, actually, the whole reason was because it was a stupid idea to go into this business. Let’s put it this way, because I should have got more experience in this, but I did not, and this was not me, the kind of person I am that you know. And then I put a role in it and broke it. I couldn’t keep it up, I did have many, you know, options.”

- “I would say it’s a cultural thing. I’ll be honest with you, I actually, I did think about that before. Let’s say why you don’t see? It’s the new Europeans left and right. Let’s put it this way, right versus, you know, I think it’s a cultural thing because I know for sure that in Georgian culture, in Russian culture, Ukrainian culture showing off something is very not, not polite, so that would say it’s called the bad manners, And somehow, somehow, it’s very deep. You know, it’s that we have to be quiet. Um, and you know, do it that way because it provides more chance that you will achieve something versus just go around and you know, keep screaming and demanding this and that. I think it’s cultural thing. And it kind of, uh, you know, that’s how I was raised. All of us were raised. You know, because don’t forget what’s up with you. And they couldn’t show anything for many, many years, and before that it was ZAR for 300 years to showing off anything was really a good thing. I think, I, I think I’m gonna answer your question. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But from a business, a business aspect, I don’t think I don’t think there is anything different than any other, you know. Any other part of you know, people. I don’t think there is anything very different, but you very rarely find, any Eastern European areas out there, going crazy with the YouTube and everybody knows about him, there are some, but you can’t tell where the guys from because they’ve been here for so such a long time, they could be general or generalized as some immigrant guy. Then I from Middle East, But from Soviet Middle East or could be, uh, you know from Eastern Europe. Sometimes I tell myself of them, I can tell that they’re not like Recent immigrant. Like I guess you know, they assimilated already. So, from the from Americans perspective, not from the Eastern Europeans perspective. I wouldn’t say they try to blend in. I, I would, I would say I don’t think that’s the case. I think that’s the case. I think definitely the case is that they try to stay within Culture. I don’t think that’s the correct term, but within the community, especially for business owners. They tried to hire somebody that they would trust. I have a better control, better quality and just overall the comfort, even for myself as a business owner, I feel much more comfortable, you know, working with the people of similar culture. We have the ability of improvisation. Um to improvise things, adaptation to things, maybe hardship. Or just like general, you know, challenges. It could be even daily. You know, I would not imagine anybody I know ever back home would not be able to, let’s say, put the TV on the wall, right. Or just do like a basic thing. Or just come up with some, you know solution. So, another would be finding solutions quickly, multitasking.”
“I see success as a business owner as very good financial stability, ok, number one. And very good contact as far as when you need something and you need to sell, um, or just be out there. And as my personal thing is, that I have to, you know, prove right to myself that I achieved something so that would make me successful and that would, you know, satisfy me. I've done what I've always done and never stopped doing that. So that's, I would say is the big plus. When I get tired, you know, or maybe doing the same thing, I try to change things, or do something different. And most importantly, just always have the drive. You know that is important. It has to be, because without it You know, it's not worth it, you know, because I'm, I'm not only a business owner, you know, it's, it's my passion, so we do it. You know, it’s like I just can’t imagine any other way. So, you know, I always try to keep the same amount of that hunger, you know, I always have because it always got me going. And that is the most authentic answer I can give to somebody to answer that question, OK, from bottom of my heart.”

“I see the new generation that coming in still in the country, they all want to become businesspeople right away. I would say eight people in ten, maybe from 10-1 want to start some kind of business versus when I remember, everyone went straight to work, took any work. So um, my thing that we, we're gonna see a lot more from the old eastern bloc, you know, create more businesses than ever before. You know, so many Ukrainians came in, you know, some are leaving, you know, some Polish people usually go, a lot of them went back, of them, you know that they came way earlier than others, but You know, we gonna, we gonna see lots of businesses coming. I've been in Brooklyn, especially most of businesses I would say is somehow associated with the Eastern Europe. Many businesses, I would say more than 50% In Brooklyn. Yeah, I guess they have drive, Yeah, they're hungrier than Americans. Oh yeah, um, well I’m just gonna say one more thing just came in my mind. I think that it is very important thing, that when you see something is on the table and it's within your reach, you will have to just put out an effort to get it.”

Bill (Билл)

“Originally, I was thinking it's going to be just uh to work for a few months and actually see New York and see Louisiana. But it was a New Orleans was one of my towns that I wanted to visit. But when I came over here, I really strongly realized that this is so basic land of opportunity and for a person like me can do a lot more than uh, staying in your, our country. So, I decided to stay in the United States and shortly when I was there, I fall in love, and I got married so. That's basically the short the story behind it.”

“I believe it's a four year of college, but yeah, basically transfer when you transfer the credits because of the intensity that they do over there because I've tried to transfer the credits, it comes out to a master’s degree in United States, but I don't know, I never had a need for any diploma in my life. I can adapt very easily, almost in every place. I did speak English when I came out, so it wasn't a problem. It wasn't fluent, but I spoke English, so it really wasn't a problem. For the rest of it, uh, you know I will. I like to learn how to learn a lot. I like to know a lot. So, it was pretty simple. How to figure it out. The, the system and how to, I wouldn't say manipulate, but how to work inside the system.”
“I didn't have the company, if that's what you're asking me. But I did bought and sell quite a bit. I was going to Turkey and to Bulgaria. I was buying clothes, machinery and a lot of different stuff. And I was selling them in Macedonia for almost 4-5 years, but it wasn't a company. It was just one, you know, me going over there buying stuff, then coming back and selling them through friends and family and through people that I know. So OK, I don't know if you call that entrepreneurship, but I was very young, and it was kind of a like excitement to learn by myself. It was great. So, it kind of a push me forward and I like that independence. So, until today I only worked very little time in United States for somebody else and the rest of the time, I was working only for myself. My country has always been, uh, corrupted. There is a big corruption going on over there. It's a very difficult to earn to earn a living. If you wanna do anything, you gotta either be a with the government or with the whatever local mafia it is. Uh, so, uh, I, it's a, it's huge and you don't have opportunities, uh, like over here. Even if you wanna do something, the bureaucracy will kill you. If not the bureaucracy, the government will come after you for sure as soon as you start making some money, they're going to come to take their part or either with penalties or with bribes. But you're going to pay. So, it's very difficult place to live over there, and over here you have all the opportunities in the world as long as you wanna work and you want your castle. You can basically do almost anything that you want.”

“A little bit, Uh, interesting. Uh, I drive small car, very small car that has a dent on it that I when I bought it, a lady backed into me and I never fixed it, And the reason why is I deal with the government, employers that usually their salary is not big enough. So, if I show up with an expensive car and this one, I'll be totally ignored and I will be called white boy, rich boy, whatever the hell you wanna say. But when I show up in a beat-up car with a dent on it, they tend to be lot more open and a lot more. A lot more accepting uh to whatever I'm telling them, and uh, whatever I'm doing, whatever I wanna do for them. So that works, I've seen it and I've heard that a lot of times and I experienced myself a lot of times. You go to a place and people are just completely ignoring you because I was nobody. I had the knowledge, I had the vision, I had the, the work ethics to do it, but it was very difficult to begin and to do something. So, in the beginning, uh, when I started the company, I started with few $100. I didn't start with a significant the amount of money, and it was very difficult to even do a job. You go to a bank they just ignore you because you are not. So, I've experienced it in the positive way and in the negative way and there is really no support system whatsoever for people like me. That was uh, if I get a little bit support system, I might have done a lot more than what I have achieved today.”

“I came over here almost 20 years ago now with nothing. I had 180 bucks in my pocket. I live in a decent house, I drive decent cars, I have a decent salary, my kids are going to decent schools. And for me, that's uh, success, and I don't, uh for everybody, everybody can understand success in a different, uh, ways in a different shapes or form. Uh, but for me I feel that I am a successful and I do, I do have more than what most of the people that they have done in my age when they, if I looked at them on the same level in terms, there are, there are people who have a lot more than me, but they got there, they had a
predispositions or their parents, uh had, had, uh, predispositions that they can help if I take a look at the people who were on the same leveling field. I believe that I'm better than most of them. I won't say the best, but uh, because there are people who are better than me, but uh, I think that I'm, I can easily say that I will, uh, I'm over 90% of the people, I'm better. So, however you want to measure success, I will say that I am successful. Throughout the years it's, you know, it requires more and more. I don't have any set limits to say, OK, I need to achieve this and then I'm going to stop at that, it doesn't exist to me. So, to measure success it's a, it's only I measure it only on a personal level. I don't really measure it with the business for business. I go, and I work, and I do my best, and whatever is going to be the outcome, I, I understand it and I take as much as I'm going to be able to do, I will do. I'm not interested to be a billionaire or stuff like that. I earn enough not to think about and not to worry about.”

- “I'd have an extreme, I'm the first guy that goes to work and I'm always the last guy that leaves the jobs. So, I don't care who is working in my company, it's just about working habits. Uh, I don't do anything else. If I have a guy in the company that works 350 days a year. I work 351 days a year. So, I will not work everybody, I will out do everybody. But uh, I know, and I see you on daily basis. So, I think that's one of the reason my businesses see successes. The second thing is that I make me better. I constantly learn and I constantly try to develop myself. It's not, oh I know this and that, its I'm good, I don't believe in that. I constantly strive to learn more, to understand more, and to, to have better knowledge or better understanding of the business itself and the area, the surroundings. And, uh, politics, that it's, uh happening so I can use that to my advantage. Except tremendously, I mean in the beginning I didn't understand that you need no matter how long you wanna do it, you need to have political connections to be able to deal in some of these difficulties. And then throughout the years I understood that.”

Elena (Елена)

- “When I came, uh, first day, I had my salon in Ukraine. I had my business, and I came to a beauty show in U.S. So, um and I met some people here and um Like I, I came back to Ukraine, and we start to call each other. So, we were chatting and then I came back in in one year and I met, met my husband. Like future husband at that time. So then, uh, I got married and I moved to USA. I never thought coming to USA. Yes, uh, probably. If I wouldn't meet my husband, I would still live in Ukraine. Yes, of course I worry, yes, because everything was new, I even couldn't speak English. My husband is from Ukraine, so I could communicate with him on our language. Oh, everything was new, so, I was concerned about so many different things, like how to label, like everything for me. It, I felt like I was born again. Everything was new mentality, uh, business, I was, uh, I, I opened in Ukraine. I opened my business there when I was 20 years old, and I couldn't imagine how I work for somebody because I always wanted to work for myself. And that was big concern, How I'm gonna be here, how I'm gonna open that business. So, it's. Yeah, that was big concern on how, how am I going to make it through this new way. It's a different mentality, totally different mentality. I don't know the exact examples right now, I, it doesn't come to me, examples, but I remember like in every, every day
something different. then it was the saying that it's not like they're just different country it's like another planet here.”

- “I wanted to uh, earn more, yes, and uh, I worked at the salon for somebody and uh, I uh, I can count. So, like I count in advance that if I'm gonna work, yes, by myself. I'm uh, I am gonna have people working for me. I'm gonna have more. I like to be independent, so I mean, uh, I mean that I like to be like this, it gives me confidence. So, I wanted to be more confident, and I felt like I have to, to be on the same level with the people around here like I, I know I had already so many friends. They are earning more, and I didn't earn in like 4 years. In my mind, I didn't earn enough to be on the same level. So, I always wanted to be higher. And I just to open, uh, I didn't have any, any problem with, it was very smooth. I just knew that it has to be a process, and uh, my husband helped me. That's why I had uh support. I moved to Livingston before, and we had friends here. So, my friends start to come to me, and they started to tell their friends. So, it's word of mouth and the people like clients were telling clients on Facebook. So that's how I had gained clients. We have in Livingston, Russian speaking, Livingston moms, and they were talking about me every day. So that I gained clients. I don't know how many members on Facebook, but, uh, maybe less than 1000. For the workers, they found me too in these networks.”

- “Having many clients to be, uh, to be booked, this is like I'm talking exactly about my, my success. To be booked for couple weeks in advance and, and clients, if they recommend you to many, this is success for me. And then if they come back, this is success for me. My goal is uh, not to, not to have client just for one time, but one client for many times. Not just like, I'm talking about work about what I'm doing. I really want, I sincerely want to help them dissolve their problem. I would tell everyone to use media. Uh like all Platform what is like on top. Um, because it helped me a lot. And uh, what else, uh, exactly, Language, I told you about language, uh, definitely every immigrant has to learn English. But media, it helps a lot.”

- “I’m not sure if I’m correct, but I'm, I'll tell you my, my thoughts. Uh, I feel like so much of this country is, has so many businesses, that, We, uh, we become not that visible. So, we are like, umm, like your invisible, because uh, there are here are so, so many of us, blend in. Oh, it’s good or bad like you said in different ways, ok. Yes, sometimes you have to you want to be visible. sometimes not. Maybe I have used this, but I don't remember. Like now, I don't have any examples. OK, I'm very young here, I mean, for three years in business, I didn't have, yeah, no, probably I say no.”

**Gregory (Греозопй)**

- “Um, part of it, if not, the entire reason was, um, kind of some, I guess you would call it racial tensions. But, uh, racial typically implies to a different skin color. But for us, it was as Armenians and Russia. There was a growing amount of tension with the locals, if you will, not directly with our family, as you know, we were well, uh integrated into the community, but there was a large amount of Armenians immigrating to Russia and to that part of Russia, I should say at that time in the mid-90s. And there was a growing tension,
if you will, with some of the local people and even authorities. And that, that, that pushed my father to make the decision. And in large part because my two older brothers were in their teenage late teens, if you will, and we’re experiencing some discrimination. And um, probably a secondary factor was to avoid the possibility of them getting drafted into the army. But that was, I’d say, a smaller portion of the decision, because there were ways around that.”

- “Thankfully we were, um, able to have uh, I guess you would say some social programs like welfare, um support. Uh for the first nine months of being here. So, I think it was free healthcare through the medical or Medicaid program. And I want to say, umm 700 plus or minus dollars’ worth of support, including food stamps for our family of five. I remember we walked into our local middle school, so we immigrated in April, mid to late, no early April. And we walked into a local middle school and we, you know, expressed an interest with help and interpretation to enroll me in in class or in school. And I remember how they asked us what grade you know that my parents wanted me enrolled in. And we kind of had a brief discussion which surprisingly I was even, I was a part of and we, we thought well, I was a month away from finishing fifth grade there, uh, it doesn’t make sense to reenroll me in in fifth grade and we should go to 6th grade. So right there on the spot we kind of made the decision and that decision was accepted and respected by the middle school staff. And so, they enrolled me in 6th grade. But obviously that 6th grade ended in two months after enrollment, so it, it turned out that I was a year ahead through that in school. It was a relatively smooth transition. Um, obviously part of that transition had to do with the fact that I was able to learn the language pretty quickly and part of it had to do with the fact that the area we lived in had a relatively large Russian community. And uh, so I had Russian speaking classmates who were able to help me through the most difficult part of the transition, if you will, and so those, those two factors, my young age and the existing Russian speaking community here made the transition quite smooth for me personally. It was noticeably harder for my older brothers, and certainly even harder for my parents. We settled in the city itself, the city of West Sacramento, we call it um, on hand a fair amount of Russian immigrants now, it wasn’t to the extent that we had, you know, Russian speaking teachers or school staff necessarily. But there was a translator in the school, so she was able to help with some of the classes, if you will, for new coming immigrants. And um, there were, let’s see, I, I’m assuming I think there was probably a European market, if you will, in the community where you know we could go to if we needed something specific aside from your typical grocery stores.”

- “Yeah, I’d say more so from other immigrant group groups than native Americans. There was some a gang activity from the Hispanics and Asians. You know, fortunately gangs never got to a uh form in the Russian community. Um, just I think, largely due to the fact that a big portion of the Russian community, especially in this in this town or city that that I was growing up in was church going and religious. So, there was no support, if you will from the older generation and no example if you will from the older generation of what gangs are like or what mafia is like. So, it didn't, I feel like, um, infiltrate the Russian community the same way it did the Hispanic and Asian community here. And even those kids or teens or young adults that uh chose the dishonorable if you will, walk
of life and or got engaged in criminal activities were more of the out outcasts and outliers as opposed to the, you know, celebrated heroes, if you will.”

- “I think the biggest difference I’ve noticed is we as immigrants have, um, more context, if you will, considering we’ve seen our parents go through the transition as immigrants and have seen them oftentimes go from having something in their you know, country of origin to then having very little, if not nothing in the country they immigrated to, which in this case is obviously the United States. And um and watching them adjust and set out on the path of regaining some stability and regaining some, Um, independence, if you will. And uh also understanding that for a lot of our parents and I’d say mine, at least as much, if not more, than the average family looking to do so for the sake of giving their kids an opportunity to succeed. Through education and through the lack of corruption I described earlier, I feel personally and through observation of my peers, um who were in a similar situation, that gives an additional personal drive, if you will, to work hard to start, to try hard, and not taking anything for granted. So, um, I, I do believe that's hard to Duplicate or replicate without that life experience. Umm, and so, if anything, that makes it hard to be entitled, um, or at least gives us reason to be entitled. So, if it was a one-word difference, I would say uh, less entitlement, if not lack of entitlement. And I think obviously you know, It's, it's appropriate to say or even critical to say that this is, you know, more the rule in understanding than the exceptions to both meaning. I have more than a handful of native-born American friends and colleagues who, well, I think our exception to that rule, um and vice versa. Unfortunately, I see some immigrant Americans Who gained that sense of entitlement, in my opinion, inappropriately.”

- “Get to practice medicine the way I believed it to be. You know, best practice and Um, be able to earn a comfortable living. At the time I had very little Experience or knowledge to know what that income would be like and certainly never imagined it to be what it grew to be. But I’d say at the onset it was just a comfortable living, best case scenario comparable to some of these large healthcare company physician salaries that I was aware of. And alternately Being able to serve the community and the patients that I felt most fit and most capable of serving.”

- “I think #1 is kind of what it achieves. The goal of me starting the business as you asked earlier. So, the number one measure for me was the fact that it allowed me to be available towards or for those communities that I wanted to be available for, and for those patients that I wanted to be able to help, part of which was Russian speaking, considering them bilingual part of it, had to do with uh using my surgical training to help, um, any and all people with foot and ankle needs including the difficult cases in hospital as well as the less complex cases outside of the hospital. So, Me being able to reach that goal, uh was huge and remains extremely, uh, fulfilling to me as a measure of my success. Secondly, doing so in the sustainable fashion, financially sustainable fashion to where we’re able to employ and or partner up with the physicians, you know who joined our practice and be able to offer competitive salaries to staff, and be able to retain staff for multiple years at a time. That to me is success, and lastly of course, having the financial benefit of a well-functioning business.”
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Igor (Игорь)

- “I was looking for a better life for like uh, for steady income. That's, that's the main reason, and maybe for better life for my kids too, for like, can I get to get a career. America is more justice here. That's the way I see it's uh, the law works. Like, I'm among pretty much among all the people you know, you, messed up, you're gonna pay. I mean, you're gonna get in trouble there, you can't, you just can't bell yourself out and just you know America is more fair, fair life. And America has justice.”

- “Nothing big, maybe language it was, it was. It was the hardest thing for me. To sit in no right to where the people are asking you something, you know, you go. You're working in the store and then somebody would Come see you and trying to ask on the street, you know, it's like you don't understand them and so it Feel itself uncomfortable. When I came, I spoke little English, on high school level, yeah, maybe a thousand 1000 words in my vocabulary, but the hardest part was, uh, was to understand.”

- “I like staying informed with that, with Russia because I'm Russian. And so all my relatives moved out from Uzbekistan as I have, I have few left over there. So, I just, uh, more informed about what's going on in Russia. I'm Russian, I just live in Uzbekistan. My, my family, my dad is Russian, my mom is Russian. So, I'm not the Uzbek, I'm not Uzbek.”

- “The main difference is, the main difference is a lot of people who are from here, they, they grew up spoiled. You know, and they think their country, uh they like, that owe them something. You know, it's like, they don't get why we don't get that spoiled, privilege. That I'm like, you have to earn it, you have to do.”

- “if I wouldn't have anyone to help, then yes much harder to find your place or a cosigner for the place. You need, you a apartment, you need that. To have a credit history so they can check it and they let you live there. That's, that's the hardest, you know, get the credit from a bank. It's, it's hard to start, Get the loan.”

- “The customs and the culture is different, Absolutely different. It's in good ways and bad ways too.”

- “Hmm, they respect there, they respect the food, the food more. like they, you won't see a piece of bread laying on the ground on the streets. It's all this, so, when you see bread, some people, if you see somebody dropped a piece of bread, play some chess, The other people will pick it up and just put it somewhere up high so birds can eat it, you know. They don't, they try to not waste the food, because they appreciate the food.”

- “I was in a position where I reached my limit. It's like right there, I won't move from this position and like I decided to move somewhere. You know, like, I have to move up because It's right there, get it. Like I have to, I have to go somewhere, you know and it wasn't for me to stay in one spot. I like a place to grow and will be still unless I'm going to go on my own somewhere. My opportunities and the brain wise too, it was like, like I
was wasting, wasting myself. I get, getting stuck in one position while getting stuck in one place, I have to go somewhere, grow.”

- “I don’t, it’s, it’s hard to tell. I’m like, I can’t really answer. Umm, there’s a contact that turned on me. You know, it’s like I became invisible. It’s just it’s hard to describe like that. I’m, I’m more mellow guy. I mean, I’m not, I’m not trying to seek out, you know attention, like just the pulse. Well, I follow the stream you know, not fighting the stream pretty much.”

- “When you, when you can take some loss and not being upset about it. That’s, that’s a successful thing probably. Like one, like one day my truck get brought breakdown, right? And I put the 10,000 in a truck to get it fixed and I’m not upset about it because I know I’m gonna make more, or I’m gonna, I’m going to return the money pretty much. Pretty, pretty much like when, when you’re not getting stressed about that, you know, so you have, you feel you’re secure and you know like, it’s not gonna be okay. I have five trucks. But that’s, I don’t want to expand with more truck because it’s taking too much of my time and I’m, my business pay, pays my bills since uh, I, I have income and it pays my bills and I have, I can put some money away and then I can go, can go on vacation, and take myself to the store and buy, buy food sometimes not looking at the prices. Sometimes but now my wife does it more than I do.”

**Ike (Айк)**

- “You know, mostly all the same reasons. Mostly other people do for better future brighter future. You know, living in Russia or any part of the former Soviet Republic and trying to make money. It’s a dog-eat-dog world and you really have to like, hustle and outmaneuver all the smart guys. And try not to get played because you know the rules. You know, doing business in many other countries are very vicious and also very bureaucratic like in Russia or any of our former Soviet Union. Owning a business is tough. Um, and you know my dad basically moved here for the better future. Plus, we have some relatives that lived here too, and they came five years earlier and my mom had a dream. All my mom wanted is to come here, my dad didn’t really care much. She filed the documents she did everything and we, you know we were able to move to United States for those reasons. For a better future, really, she wanted a better future for her kids. I still remember we came with like $200.00 in our pocket after selling everything, it was crazy. I guess my parents could have not paid their debts and just ran away with the money they got from the house but they’re very good people. So, all the debts were paid completely with which was what we got when we sold the House and car and but enough money, we got tickets and $200.00 in our pocket.”

- “I had a teacher that would teach me English, I knew how to read, and I knew how to write. But I didn't understand what I was reading or what I was writing most of the time. We were taught the old Soviet British English. And you know, when you move, you learn this English. You know where the library is or London is the capital of Great Britain, you know like. The English that we were learning was very different because I you know, when we moved here. Well, San Francisco is very diverse city and of course there’s a lot
of Chinese, very Chinese city, but it's very diverse. So, when I moved to the U.S. school and you had the Chinese accent of English speaking to you and you have to learn that, then you have you know the black Community School. They spoke with their own Lingo, Ebonics, and then we had you know the Russian English. So, what does this mean, umm, communicating with people was frustrating at first but we started learning. So, the biggest barrier for any immigrant coming here is learning the language and lingo. Second biggest challenge I would say was probably the school for me because during the ESL classes you'll find the teacher understands that you don't speak the language. The go to the classes and try to understand Chinese accent English while trying to understand the chemistry class or mathematics class or any other classes where they're not teaching you English. It was even more difficult because you had to learn a very important subject of chemistry or biology in a language you don't understand or speak. And so, staying in school was a big challenge for me. That's why I guess I'm a dropout at the U.S. high school for these reasons. And uh other challenges were I'm trying to make enough money. To do better, trying to stay out of trouble was another challenge because. Back then, we were getting into a lot of trouble."

- "When I moved here, the high school I went to, we had a lot at that point there was a lot of Russian immigrants, Ukrainian immigrants, Jewish immigrants moving in. There were a lot of Jewish immigrants from, you know, Ukraine. Most of them moved here a lot earlier than we did. A lot of them been here since the 1989 to 1993 wave. We moved in 98 when we came here, and I met right away immigrant kids in school. And these were my friends as we didn't make too many American friends. We had some American friends in high school, but it was our Russian speaking click. And I came in and right away in this area and everybody was speaking Russian. You know, they spoke English amongst themselves too, because you know you're growing up kids, but because of that Russian language, we had that in common, I didn't feel out of place, I kind of quickly blended in. I blended in almost too quickly, right away and a year later I starting to speak English and had a job where I had to talk to people. For me it wasn't an issue. Moving to the United States was like a piece of cake, you know. When I came here the district or the area that the school is in is called the Richmond District in San Francisco and it's like 6 blocks away from a big Russian church and all the Russians lived in the community back then. They lived in the Richmond district and in Sunset District. Two districts right next to each other. So, it's a lot of like a little mini-Russia. Maybe right there was, but there were more Chinese people there. My entire high school was like 80% of our high school was Chinese. And then the rest is like white, black and the rest of Asians like Koreans and Japanese because it was, you know, the centers was a very heavily populated Chinese town."

- "My parents slept in the living room and three of us, my brothers we slept in a tiny bedroom. I remember the bedroom was so tiny that my youngest brother had to sleep in the closet."

- "Business Opportunity is a huge, the United States has a lot of money. People have money. And to get that money from people, it's basically the money is there on the table, you just have to go grab it."
“In Russia if you are a hardworking man, even if you work really hard the amount of money you were getting for it was a lot less. It doesn't matter how much of a hard worker you are, there is still like a small cap down on how much money you could make, and it was a small cap because there are a lot of talented people.”

“Personally, I never really was bothered by racism much because I was used to it in a way by being Armenian. In Russia for instance, I, we were basically back then, we were different from your average Russian. So, the fact that you were Armenian there were a lot of people that kind of give you racist remarks. Um, especially like the older grandmas, you know, they would like they call you, you know, a black ass because you know your darker skin and they used to call us blacks, umm, we were the black people of Russia to them in the way. Because we were different and in high school there was a thing that rhymed the word Armenian, and it rhymed with the black ass. There was a, there was a slang, and we were called black asses. And you know you’re kids. And I never like, I guess some people maybe would get mad, but it was Russia, it was racist and we kind of took it as a as a thing like look, umm, this is like an old ass grandma and they’re racist. But I don’t give a shit you know, or like some in high school they were, you know, they were racist towards you. Some people, but I didn’t care about that.”

“I notice is the immigrant here in a lot of ways are bit more savvy because they’ve never had it just good. The people that live in United States that Americans, a lot of Americans they don’t appreciate what they got. They really don’t because they've never seen a different life. They’ve never seen the hardships that some of these immigrant people had to endure, and some of the shit they had to go through to be here.”

“People here in United States in a lot of ways, they're weaker in mentality, you know, like small little things that happen to them in their life brings them down and in a lot of times they won't find a way back up. You know, I’ve seen people. You know the Russians from immigrant communities, they've lost a lot of businesses before. They opened a business, they lose business, then they take it as okay, well, I lost the business let me start another business. You know, they will be like let me get do something else the works. For a lot of Americans when they would lose something the depression will get the best of them.”

“I always knew that I'm gonna have money and that I'm gonna do well. You know, like the idea of uh being broke doesn't fit my lifestyle. So, I realized I have to make money in order to feel like I'm a normal human being otherwise I, you know, like if I have no money, I get depressed and in order to get out of the depression, I need to make money.”

“Like all these immigrants’ kind of help each other on WhatsApp, I guess. Um, there's a little portal where they give each other advice on how to cross the border legally or what you do when you come in and where there’s a community out there. They help each other out. Then there’s like different groups on Facebook and what not. And so, you know these people on these sites.”
“I mean none of us graduated, but everyone ended up making a lot of money hustling, the ones that had that hustle and a little bit of luck. Everyone's got very high positions, very high salaries one of our guys that you know may know from our high school named Jan Koum. He was in our high school and was a little older. He became the founder of the WhatsApp and he sold it for $19 billion. Jan was my friend's cousin. He wasn't a real supper close buddy of mine, but we knew each other. And you know, he went into tech world with a lot of the other Eastern European minds. They work really well for engineering and computer science. And so, you know, all of us dropped out of high school and a lot of us went to school to learn how to be a QA engineer at first or a programmer.”

“You know, like you couldn't own the business in the Soviet Union. But once Soviet Union collapsed everyone just, you know, kind of start trying to be a businessman and hustle and basically everything was buy and sell.”

“When I was 25, when I first opened my business. So, for me my goal was to live, uh live this lifestyle that I can afford. And you know, my goals or vacation goals, and beautiful cars, just basically. In a way, it was kind of like being able to show off and look just like my friends who were making good money, you know, like I wanted to be on the same level with all of my friends, and I didn't want to be broke. So it was, you know, money was always the main drive, but also, it's the comfort, you know from having this money. Success means a lot. It's a peace of mind. Yeah, it's, um, it's assurance in the future. And uh, you know, the older I get the more responsibilities I have, and you know, you have two kids, you have a wife, you have a mother-in-law, you're the protector of the family. They look upon you to keep them safe and to provide for them. And these things are like, you know, your main goal is to make sure that your son, your daughter, your family have everything they need. That they're comfortable but you know you don't get in the situations where you can't sustain your, uh, your standard of living. You know they're living a life they are used to, and basically, you know, it's just living, enjoying life and being comfortable being able to vacation. To be able to do whatever you want. The older I grow, my values change. You see what changes around you, and you know things, you learn more. You realize how much certain things cost and what you need to do. And just before dreaming about making you know, $10,000 a month from $5000 a month. Now you're like, well, shit, I need to be making at least $50,000 a month to be successful. Then I get to 50 thousand and then I need to do 100 thousand a month, you always wanna grow and I always wanna do more. Um, sometimes I feel trapped doing the same thing over and over. I hate repetitive things, I always wanna do something new, something cool. And so, for me to like, a lot of times I'll open a new business just like that. You know, I'm like, hey, I could do this and say goodbye to the old one and not think twice about it, not worry about it.

“The first thing that came to my mind is like if you're an immigrant in the United States and you're working. And so, like an average American or European, you know you're invisible as far as, like your life or what you're going through because it doesn't really matter to them. I right away think of a gardener, a Mexican that you know, comes to your nice house and he cuts your grass. And you know it's getting done, you know, someone is
doing it, but like, you're so up above that, you don't care. You don't see them as like humans in the way. You're just like, okay, cut my grass and get out, you know.”

- “I love free marketing. And sometimes to make something go viral will get you a free publicity. So, I always hunt for free publicity, and I got a good eye on it a lot of times you can go viral on. And certain things and advertising your business by going viral. And I was able to do that many times. When we were on national news we benefit definitely for a couple of months until that dies down because everything gets forgotten.”

Katrina (Екатерина)

- “My family and friends did not want me to leave Because I was a valued worker all over there and provider. So of course, you know, they were not, they were not very happy.”

- “You know I did not because I found immediately Russian community, Russian friends. And that was only who I was hanging out. And so, it was no problem, I mean, I see things here and there in the stores, you know, of course we go to the store and we, but no, I had a good friend that were immigrants like me, Russian speaking and we were, you know, great. So no, I cannot complain. It was not a bad time.”

- “I did not know anything about racism until I came to United States. This is the country that screams black lives matters as not being treated right, well like I was, you know, not treated well by blacks because I was, I was a white chick for them. And I didn't feel like I'm a white chick, I'm a Russian girl, I'm a hard worker, I'm a hustler, you know? So, like, I have other qualities and they, and then I had a, I had a many different, not many, but many different stories for example. I don't know some I had but you know I had a black husband, and his family says right in front of me, they say why her? And then he says, what do you mean? And they say why? White chick like, you know? And then I'm standing there thinking I cannot even get mad, you know because it's not really, it’s not about me, I understand it's about them. It's their problem.”

- “I came with a huge resume. They then look at my resume and there was a child and Youth Services. At that place there was a woman, she says, she says Oh, you're overqualified, we will call you back. And in my head then, when she said we will call you back means I will call you back. Uh, but she really basically told me to, uh, you know, fuck off but she says her words were, we will call you back. But that's not what she meant. So, I started to come to that office every day for six months. Every day I was there asking do you have any news for me? Do you have any news for me? So, then she gets really tired of me coming back because she still can tell me to not to bother her anymore, right. So, she keeps telling me we will call you back whenever we will have a news. We will let you know. You don't need to come every day. You know, we will send your message. I'm like. No, no, no. I'll be back. So, uh again, that fakeness. To me, it was a challenge because I didn't understand exactly what she means. We will call you back, what does this mean? You know, just tell me we don't want you go find something else. So that was a big challenge, but then eventually I caught her hiding kind under her desk. Yeah. And I, I, yeah. And I raised the hell there and then fortunately for me, there was a
boss walking in a hallway and then he came to me, he said, what is going on? Why you like, you know, not happy. And I said, well, because I come here for six months with the child in my hand Trying to get an answer or a job because my profession I work with kids, I needed access to children. I that's what I do. I'm, I'm, you know, I don't want to be a housewife. And he says, well, we cannot give you a job with children because you have a green card, and you need to have a citizenship. And that's the rule on us, you know. And I was like, well, that's all she had to tell me. So, I would have step out and, you know, find something else. And I did and got an opportunity to work. Three months or four months after that lady hiding under her desk and she called me. And she says, oh, I remember you came, and you saw me for six months, and then they, well, we have a position for you. And I told her, you know what I told her? I said I will call you back. Hmm. You know, and I never did because this is not how you treat people. You know, especially with people who need a job and willing to work and have an education. And, you know, they have a child on their hip. So, So, yeah, so that was a challenge.”

- “I’ve heard uh something like this from higher much higher businesspeople like in Russian community. One guy told me that we always going to be when, when we’re trying to do business with Americans, we’re always going to be invisible or we’re always going to be you name it. You know the Chechen Republic of Chechnya. So, he says like we in America are always going to be Chechen in Russia you know like always going to be like Second class people. And I say I disagree because, you know, I just disagree. It depends on how you going to step in and how you’re going to position yourself. And really, when you talk like that, when I feel invisible and within like a small business, Russian business within American businesses, it's only because you really talk about yourself, how you see yourself. So, I told him that I said I don't, I don't see myself like that. I didn't never have a problem with being invisible. My only issue with being invisible is that inability to understand the market. And an ability to market correctly in United States because all my marketing goes within the Russian community, the Russian speaking communities, Ukrainians, you know, Kazakhstan, where so it's just, you know more convenient to me. And then I'm getting, you know, I'm getting lazy like that, but when we hired Americans to work with us and marketing and you know, other aspects, American started to come to us and, you know, it was not. It was no problem. So, if that's what you're asking for, I don’t have any problems with invisible. But uh, I've heard from other people that, you know, they did say that that no matter, no matter how hard you try, you always going to be a second class because of the, you know, blue collar American, you know, society, blah blah blah. So, I haven’t experienced, maybe I’m not that high yet, you know.”

- “I was able to speak Korean, but not good anymore because I don't use it. I mean I studied Italian.my languages I speak, it's just Spanish, English, Russian and Italian because we started to work with Italians and I can understand the conversation in German and of course Ukrainian comes along with my Russian, but I do work with a lot with Ukrainian community. Those are the languages that I use, that I speak. I would also say Romanian, I can understand it because we work a lot with Romanians. I can understand that and Bulgarian, I believe that is eight or nine languages.”
“I didn't have any financial goals. I didn’t have any, you know nothing. I just wanted people around and I wanted maybe in my wildest dreams to raise the United States champion. And then, uh, yes, that was, that was really the goal. And then I started to think about expanding. And, you know, I wanted to have more people around me and then I wanted to have more champions, and this last year was the most successful champions. The most successful year for us, we hit 14 world champions.”

“Success to me personally as a business or owner after pandemic, it changed to me. I'm on the target, I'm on the goal and my purpose of success is two things. The 1st is to get financial freedom. I do not want, I don’t really want, I don't need to get uh rich, I want to be free. I want to be free of you know Finances and if I need to do something then just do it. But in terms of success, actual success, I have a purpose to give people jobs as many as possible. I want to feed people. It's my duty and responsibility, let's put it this way. Success to me equals freedom for me and my group of people. When we decide if we want to go somewhere, we just go. We don't have to sit there and calculate this; you know dollars and you know. But in terms of every other thing, I would like success as to provide jobs to as many people as possible and to provide health and the quality to my kids, to my customers. It is very important to me right now and the purpose has change. Umm, the purpose has changed, the purpose can get bigger and my purpose changes as well I wish, I hope I will raise a national champion to then, I wish we can represent the country and the world. I want my coaches to live a happy, healthy and full life, have no need, have higher purposes and results. And for my students, I want, you know, I want them to be successful as well. I really want to help my people.”

“I work really hard, really hard. I work really, really, hard. I work eight days a week. That, that's one thing, most importantly, I have a vision. A big purpose like I just told you. Uh, so, it will be like this big purpose. Work hard and have intention. To get there no matter what. Without dropping it, so meaning to get to my goal, to get to my target, to my goal, to my purpose, and I don’t walk away from it. I am like a train, I'm on path and I'm going there. Like I can't, I do not have an ability I cannot allow myself to get off the tracks, I'm running and I'm going there and that's three most important things. To be successful, you have to working hard. You have to, I don't want to say be disciplined. I want to say be committed to yourself and to your goals. You have to be committed and you have got to have an intention and hold that intention throughout the day throughout the week, throughout the month, throughout the year because there is so many distractions coming your way on the way to your goals that you can easily, you know, walk away. So many distractions to your goal. You handle the distractions accordingly and adapt. I had to learn how to handle different obstacles. There is no other way to do it. You have got to handle obstacles and continue to go. Continue, continue and continue on your way, find a way to continue going. It just like you know, I achieved something and then I changed the purpose. I achieved something else, and I changed the purpose and then I realized that I need to get my purpose so high that I don't have to change it. I just have to, you know, reach it and do everything possible to reach it.”

“Do not listen to anybody because a lot of times people that are closest to you, they will say to you they love you and when you hear it, when you hear I love you the way you are,
you have to run from those people because that’s the most harm that people can. Tell you that you don’t have to do anything, I love you the way you are versus go and conquer the world and I'm gonna love you even more. So, do not, don't, don’t. I, I say do not listen to your parents. Do not listen to your friend. Do not listen to anybody who tell you, oh you are you crazy? This is too big of a dream. Don't do it or you they know who are you? This is ridiculous, only rich people can do it. Runs away from those people. Those people are doubters. They can be haters, and they can harm your life and change your life tremendously.”

Lisa (Елизавета)

▪ “When we first time traveled to United States, we kind of fall in love because we did like a few different states, like a lot of different cities and everything here was quite so nice. People was very friendly like infrastructure for normal people was much higher and like acquired the of life was much higher than in my city. It was just like a so nice that when we came back to Russia, we started thinking like a more and more about moving to United States, and we did.”

▪ “We met one guy in New York and uh, he was very friendly to us, and he helped with like banks and bills because when we just came and we don't have a credit history, you cannot print anything you know? So, he gives us his address to make a bank account like so, yeah, he's helping like a some things. What was really helpful and It's only one, I think person who helps us that was enriching. He was American, and we meet him on like a couch surfing app.”

▪ “We visit uh, New York, Miami, like a few different places in Florida. We visit Nashville, we visit Indianapolis, Chicago, so like it was a little bit more than 10 different cities because we like to travel, and we visit all these places that in this like crowdsourcing app. So, we stay all the time with like new people who will never know. And we like a talk, we try to ask some questions and also, we talk about immigrations like about where we can live, where we can, like which state we should choose, and all of them give some recommendations for us and told us about, like, good things and bad things living in the United States. But almost all people say on the good things. We came here for one month and we did the same thing when we came for like immigration too, and it was that process we did.”

▪ “I think only our language, it's like the biggest problem. I think it's the biggest problem because sometimes uh, for like a faster success. You need to speak well. You need to understand the people and people should understand you. So, I think this is the biggest one.”

▪ “I think it sometimes better to be visible. Of course, like in good things like I do something, but people don't know what I do, but something better to know for people what I do. I don't know how to exactly answer this question because as I said in my business, probably like a both ways bad and good in some parts of the things, it's the best, best option.”
“To be visible in social media it’s a good part to be visible because people talk all the time about you, like they know you and they come to your place because the name, right. So, it works in my situation because I came like a kind of famous because of my name because I work with some like a famous people.”

“So, a lot of people know our business, but bad things also happen because some people who jealous, they tried to do bad thing for us. Because they think it’s like very easy. For us, they try to do some bad thing. So, as I said, like both sides, I think it’s works like it can be in my situation.”

“I want someone to work well, I have a like a nice client, not only for myself but for my employees as well. And like I have like a little bit more money than I had before.”

“You own some business your business should grow, like so, you should have every year more, more, more money than previous one. You should have more employees and your employees should have a like more salary every year than they had before. So, like your employees and your clients, everything should be bigger than before. If you stay at the, at the same point for a few years, probably something wrong.”

“We did everything, communication with clients with like some loyalty programs and education for our employees. And as I said, we never have any people who help us with money or with anything. So, I did a lot. Yeah, I just don't know like how, how, how to say everything. I did all this probably because I like it and I was like a very, very inside the process and also, in my day off, I still keep working because I just love it. So, maybe it gives me like a more, more motivation.”

Mike 1 (Михаил)

“No, I am an American. I am an American. Yeah, my country. Do you know, I, I try. We travel a lot, and I don't know if people telling you the same thing every time when we arrive back to United States, there is a feeling we're home.”

“I decide to immigrate to United States when I was 16 and then when I was twenty is the first time I tried to immigrate, and I was rejected. And the only I was at uh, refusenik for number of years and only in 1987 was able to reapply for to leave the country and I left the country in the beginning of 1988. So, I was 29 when I came to the United States.”

“I was ready to immigrate when I was, uh, probably 10 years old because I grew up in the family where my grandfather, my grandmother, they were repressed in 1937. I just, my dream was to leave the Soviet Union to the United States to be in a free country.”

I was living in the Soviet Union as a refugee, going to state of Israel. Like uh, almost 100% of refugees from Soviet Union. I was living in the country on the invitation of which was received from a state of Israel. So, when we came from Moscow, we flew from Moscow to Vienna to Austria in the Vienna for 10 days, not to long, and we won to immigrate, and we had the chance to make a choice to either go to Israel or go to the
United States or another country. And the choice was going to expedite. So, we traveled to Italy and stayed in Italy until it was approved for a final decision to go to United States. I think it was like 2 and ½ months I was living in the Rome. We're waiting for approval of my request to come and when it came, the next day I was interviewing, I was interviewed in the United States Embassy in the room and had to provides some medical tests and some other stuff. And finally, it was approved, and we flew from Rome to United States, JFK, New York.”

“Everything is different. There's just, just the freedom of movement. Uh, freedom of speech. There's just, I think the most was the freedom of movement, I could do anything. I can go anyplace I want. And you can say anything you want that was the biggest. In the Soviet Union, when you born in a city where one town, I mean, you can go on vacation sometimes somewhere. But uh, you can move from one town to another town, it was almost impossible. And you can live in New York, and you can go as far as you look for a job in Chicago or Miami or whatever or LA. So that was the biggest. It's not like I knew about that, but it was the biggest feelings of freedom of movement. So let me just expand on that. In the Soviet Union you can go take a train or fly to hotel and go to visit. You know, stay in a hotel or something for a few days a week, but you cannot move. When I get an apartment and I get a job in another city, but the only way people were able to In Soviet Union in my time where if you graduate with, say from a university. So, the government will send you after graduation somewhere to work, at least for two years, obligated. So, if they send you from Omsk to Moscow, you go to Moscow. If you graduate in Moscow, that sends to Omsk, you go to Omsk. As far as they're moving from one place to another it was impossible. If you, let's say you have an apartment in Moscow and someone with on in Omsk wants to change. Has an apartment and also wants to move to Moscow, so it was the wait till its exchange. The places of living. Let's see if I can have maybe one bedroom to there in Moscow I could reply. I could probably change for two-bedroom apartment in Omsk or three bedrooms, but it's probably changing place of living through. Changing, exchanging apartments, it was not so often, it was not. Uh, widely used sometimes, but that was the only way for people to move from one place to another. Well, there are two ways. If somebody sends you for jobs after graduation or you exchange, but after you would say if you exchanged your apartments, it's not necessarily going to get a job in the different city. The movement to different city in Soviet Union was very, very restricted.”

“I think that the students who graduate from high school in Soviet Union were better educated. I think we were pretty, very well educated over the United States primary education. First, the physics, mathematics, literature and geography. Let's say I found that most of the United States as far as, let's say, geography history, they on a very long level of knowledge versus compared to my time as a student in the schools in Soviet Union. When I graduate school in Soviet Union, I was a specialized in physics, mathematics and regional electronics. So, it happened also to say because we were very advanced. So, what we were learning at nine and ten grade in the high school in the Soviet Union some people here were learning in the university.”
Dissertation Study of Immigrant Entrepreneurship

- “I guess language would probably be #1. I did not have any other challenges because whatever challenge I had; I am overcoming that challenge. I was learning as fast as I can. I was making money and everyday my son was getting bigger and bigger. So, I felt better and better because I was learning the country, I was learning the customs, I was learning life in this country, and I felt, uh, every day I was feeling more and more comfortable. Well, we're all chasing the clock. Many immigrants are running, and if you are born in this country and you're not running, it's very easy to be behind those immigrants who is running. So, I think right now, unfortunately it is what it is, but everybody needs to run. You were born here, or you're born in India, Russia, for whatever country you need to run and again, not just in United States.”

- “We have to make it happen for us. Of course, you can be, you know, not to have anything else. Plenty of immigrants in the United States who is not making well, not doing well at all. But at least we understand that to make wealth, you have to really work hard. You know, I'm not sure they have this feeling that they need to work more and hard to make it. Of course, some people do, and some of them make it. But the real regular joe schmo United States born here, well I think they feel that they deserve to have everything because they were born in this country. But it’s not. It doesn't work that way. So, if somebody’s telling me now that they need to work hard to make it. I will say yeah, you have to work hard. Do I feel bad for them? No. I give myself too.”

- “As a business owner in the US, well, it's hard to say because I was always, I was not afraid to be visible. I was always trying to step forward to be visible to be on the stage. I said to myself few years ago that I don't want to be on stage anymore. And I don't need any recognition anymore, but I was always trying to be visible because it was not afraid to step forward because I knew that if you use this term visibility and invisibility, the visibility always gives opportunity because if you are trying to be invisible or somebody trying not to see you, it's hard to advance.”

- “Somebody said to me basically, if English would be your native language you deserved, um, will be in a corner office. So, it means that probably I'm not going to be a lecturer in the University of College and probably not going to be on TV and most likely not going to be a politician, but my language will not stop me to become an entrepreneur start making money. Because the main thing for this for me in United States was making money and have a good life, and I knew that. So, in that, it is the way I take it, I'll make myself more visible because obviously my accent makes me visible from a native speaker creating invisibility in the system, but I'll work harder and persevere more than others, allow myself to be visible to succeed. But if people have blinders on their eyes, they're not going to understand. And those people, they're not really developing in real life and probably never make money in their life. They never succeeded, never successful because they are looking very straight, and they do not deviate inch to the left inch to the right.”

- “I don't care, because with my level of money I don't care. If I can drive Bentley flying Spur I don't care if somebody saying between themselves, he's the immigrant. Well, I'm an immigrant driving this car and you're not immigrant driving a Honda.”
I gonna be 64 at one point this year. You know what it is what it is, and you have to be thankful to what I have. I have to be thankful and thank God that this is what it is.

Very, very good job to, to meeting and having a conversation with the President of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama. So, I have a picture with him. I met the Chuck Schumer and then the I know Cory Booker very well, not now. So, I used to be in, well, I used to have a closer part. I was not part of them, but I was always, uh, somewhere in circles. And I knew very well, Chris Christie and I was in the Karzai. You know, the governor used to be Corzine at school. I was at his apartment at the booking, sitting in the couch and talking. So, right now I don’t need all these people and I really didn’t know what I didn't. I want to say that I needed them before just, I was, uh, part of the like the high close. Somehow, I got into this with my brother, with friends, so I was in the circle and of course you cannot be close to all these people because the way I described, the only real benefit anybody gets from being connected to those powerful people, if you part of the fight the very first fight, imagine your hand, your hand has five fingers, right? So, only if you part of those five fingers. Close to president or governor, whoever. You're gonna get some benefit from being part of that, if you were #6, you are somewhere close on the foot. You just, you can be close to them, but you will never really uh, gonna have any benefit of being close to them.

“To have a business which is the working business. In other words, if you create a business, you want to make sure that your business works. Being used by. If you provide the services being used by other people. Because businesses open not making money, so there is no reason to have a business. So, your success is you have a working business that works, and it makes profits.”

“I want to be recognized at the time the business owner and I achieved this. I was involved and they see the last couple years with the pandemia, it just changed a lot. But before every day I was in the business, but at least for a few hours talking to employees. so, I was involved in a business. Gonna be in the business making decision, discussing different things. You need to be involved; it cannot run by itself all the time. I knew what we’re gonna do is just this happened this way because this pandemia came and nobody knew how to deal. We just we were taking data time. It's trying to adjust the meeting on a daily or weekly basis. And uh, to survive and progress.”

“You know there is a joke in Russia that the young couple finally got an apartment in Soviet Union. Right. They got in apartments and nice room, everything. But in the middle of the room, there is a bolt on the floor sticking up a little bit and every time there was tripped over the bolt and at first, they put it some kind of rug so they don’t trip. Then they finally, the guy decided oh, let me take it out. So, he cut the bolt out and the apartment downstairs, the light fixture fell down on the people.”
Mike 2 (Михайл)

- “Honestly, I didn’t make a decision before I came to America, but during this day, let’s say like this. Well, we came just for the vacation, let’s say like that, and we fall in love to America is the first look. And we were looking for the way to stay in this country and just, you know, be American.”

- “I would say I wish to be American, but I understand I’m not yet American because I didn’t grow up in this country. I’m American patriot, I will fight for America. I am not Polish anymore because like I said, the country which I left back in the 90s, they are in the past now. It’s a different Poland, different people. So, I don’t feel too much in common with these people. I would say I’m not yet American like. Maybe I’m. I’m not going to die as American, but I’m not anymore Polish like the people who are living in Poland right now. I don’t want to say I have something against. I’m just realizing that when I’m walking on the street, people can realize that I’m not anymore one of them in Poland.”

- “For me personally was let’s say, lower down the level of living because I had my own becoming in Poland. And I have to move to the apartment. But majority of the Polish people at this time they level living. Let’s say that the quality of the apartment was much lower than in America. Most of the food was unavailable on free market because it wasn’t a free market, food stamps which were not money, but you have to present them with the money by register to get meat, sugar, and many other including alcohol even though in every home in case of holidays, family events or parties the tables were full of food way above the government limited to include alcohol. Also, the salaries were in U.S. dollars about $30 dollars per month, of course all the prices were like pennies so everybody inside could exist. People had government position for reasons, first you had to have a job because it was a jail penalty for people with no job. Second, everybody wants to have government retired program, and third, everybody wants to have healthcare.”

- “I was involved in some business in Poland, we just moved to our new home which was about 3000 square feet. I simply did not want to go. She came back and brought the invitation for me. Her visa was still valid. I was made by her to go to U.S. Embassy in Warsaw to apply for entry visa. I went there, took my place in line and was finally called to the window and the consul on other side asked me if I can speak English, since I could he treated me much warmer. I told him about my wife, her exhibitions, and show him a local paper from North Arlington. He was very interested in what I told him because most applicants were going for reason of any family event and not many could speak English. Finally, he asked me if my wife is still in Poland and I told him ironically that about 5am when I was leaving to Warsaw, she was still there, but I can’t swear she is now. He took a piece of paper with the list of all requirements to obtain tourist visa like bank account with some number of U.S. dollars, Job, Property in Poland and such. He then scratches off all of them and manually write wife with passport and Polish ID. In exchange I told him that we have two kids, I’m busy in Poland so if he stamped in my passport detail, I would have alibi in front of my wife. He said to me do not resign, come with your wife. Next day we came together, he saw me in line and took us both and asked some neutral
questions and issued a visa for me. So, I had no choice, I had to finish some business in Poland and take a few months’ vacation to America.”

- “So, the people accept me and my parents, especially when they came from Poland with a visit, they were surprised, but the people are so nice to each other that they are welcome each other. They, even if my father couldn't speak English at all, they helped him and how they treat him as they like, like we are treating any other people in America. But in Poland at this time, it was totally different, that people were like silent on the streets. They could watch you have an eye contact with you didn't say anything, just go through, you know what I'm saying. The people who try to be nice, let's say good morning to unknown people, they were treated as intruders.”

- “I'm not focused truly on the money, only I'm focused on the good opinion. So, I don't like to do the business, get the money and then the people will curse me, you know, for the next 20 years. I'm working totally different ways. I like to do the good job. Even sometimes when I don't have, let's say as much money as I expect. But the quality of work for me was the key to success.”

- “I was waking up at 4:00 o'clock and going to sleep at 10 o'clock, something like that. I work long hours. Yeah, I was like the, you know, working long hours, let's say like that. And I was learning, I had to learn a lot because each project it will sometimes need the new technology. When we start to deal with the designers they start to introduce, uh, let's say special kind of light fixtures, different kind of paint, different kind of finishing the walls and some woodwork special requests let's say like that so. So, I have to learn. Some of the people who are doing this kind of job, sometimes they refuse to do something, let's say, like we didn't, we never refuse to use certain technology or certain materials. We just have to learn how to do that works.”

**Olena (Олена)**

- “Because I didn't like the system. I didn't like uh, you know, living in Russia at all. And also, you know, of course, the length of opportunities. I mean, it's a cliche, but I mean it's the whole truth. I was never into, you know, communism, socialism and equal distribution of the uh, you know, everything that Russia was giving us. So, that was again, I mean, I was against the system. I didn't do anything about it, but I never, never liked the system, so, I was silent silently against it.”

- “I mean, it was much better education there and very much wider kind of education than here, here was not tunneled. So, a lot of you know, like coverage on the subjects here, you know electives and in Russia they are basically, they were mandatory, elective versus mandatory. Yeah. Like I'm talking about everybody, Physics, chemistry, geography, history, math. I would say probably the wrong history and the wrong approach to history, but physics, math, and higher math there. And the geometry, you know, chemistry, they teach deep in physics, and everything there. Everything was mandatory not elective like here.”
“We came through Jewish organizations. Yes, it's called HIAS. So, we uh, you know, we borrowed the money, even some money from the organization that we lately return. We had quite well-organized help.”

“American with some, with some you know, like basically, more, mostly cultural, background. Uh, different cultural background but American. I would say that America is my motherland. I mean, I know I was not born here, and I shouldn’t say it, but even before the war, I would was always thinking I'm American, who speaks with an accent.”

“Growing up in Russia. I grew up in the, you know, like, I a good family with a good family values and, you know, as I said, it was cultural and educational, good education, but was no length of opportunities there. You know, we knew that there's no future. So, we’re stuck there, and we do exactly the same. As you know, our parents would be doing, but here, we have, you know, the sky is the limit.”

“You have to join the Communist Party at that time to get some, you know basically higher position and there was a lot of things involved and then you still couldn’t go that high, you know, I mean, it was. No, I we didn’t see any future. We knew that we will live the life of our parents. That's it. You have to continue living in the system and the rule, which for me personally I don't want to obey. you know, for example, there was no question about it, you have to join Communist Party.”

“I don't need to be invisible, but I don't need to be visible very, you know, like that much either. And in social media, I am not, umm, aggressive with the social media. I try it, but unfortunately it like can expose my thoughts, my home or with, you know, somebody and I don't go to social media to talk about stuff. So, I have my own opinion. Don't get me wrong, but I don't do it. I don't record it on the social media. So therefore, it doesn’t really matter to me. I prefer not to be visible. I guess that's how I answer. I prefer not to be visible when it comes to social media.”

“We are used to challenges and we approach them, and we try to resolve them. Usually, I think Americans, they don't want to, they don't want to get over those challenges. Most of them, not everybody. But I'm just saying most of them, you know, like, I mean, as long as life is easy and comfortable, that's all they care about. We still want to approach the challenges and get over them. So, I mean, it's still in their blood also in in their DNA.”

“Through word of mouth and uh, again, opened the Google for my website, uh is my base.”

“One day I decided that’s it. I don't want to be under anybody. I want to be my own boss. People think, you know when you have your own business that you're on your own and you do whatever you want. No, you can't. You have to work long hours and you provide the services. But I mean, but again on the other hand, I don't have a boss who stands in and constantly checks what I'm doing.”
“My success is basically having people keep coming back, that's my success. If they recommend somebody to me, that's my success. But as I said, I don't think about bigger things than that. There's been a lot of challenges in recent years. Providing good customer service and good service, I think those are my two goals as long as I follow them, I think my business is more or less successful and I'm happy with this.”

**Slava (Вечеслав)**

- “I was comfortable when I get here. Only one thing was uh, the money, issue with money. So, it's like, so we have to pay for, I mean, for nice apartment. America was expensive compared to Russia.”

- “So, I could only say like you know, good words about like all American people, even if you're immigrant and if you don't speak language where well, so, everybody were, like very nice. You know, I feel now more like an American.”

- “And so, they just give us sponsorship opportunity to play here like, like play college, maybe some professional. Because we played, we played in Russia and then uh. So, I mean, I don't wanna say I don't like talk about myself, but we play very, very well, maybe some professional. Because we played, we played in Russia and then uh. So, I got, it's very nice. You know, I feel now more like an American.”

- “I wanna play NHL, you know. If that was my game, they said it's gonna be tough, like even impossible. Nobody can believe. Because just a lot of how you get there. So, like who's gonna help people? How are you going to get the visa? How you get green card, how you get citizenship? So, the lady who brought us here help us a lot with all that.”

- “I have no problem with anybody because me and my brother, like it's like uh the first, so we got, we got like, good school in Russia, it's like uh, don't touch anybody. They will like, so you, so you have to respect everybody you respect. Like the young guys, you respect the older people, so it's like, you don't do anything that is uh disrespectful. Tells me a lot because if parent not gonna help parents, not going to explain to you and even like we had the school, we had like very good teachers. Like hockey, it's a tough sport and you can fight in the game, but you can do anything out, let's say like when you walk like somewhere. It's like you have very good distance, so, I do not have no problem.

- “I like to be visible, you know, because like us, uh, special like, uh, like I do like a lot of exercise and I have my Instagram to promote the business. Listen, if you want to know like if you want the people to have to know who you are because they can't just, let's say I just don't like to talk about myself, but I know my job very well and people like people. People like to come to my practices and then the guy says, well, listen, if you want to have more people, you have to have them see you, to see what you're doing was. So yeah, I'd like to be visible.”

- “Immigrants have to work harder. Yeah, because for us, it's fun. Let's say, you get like, you get money. Like, like I said over there you get 20 bucks. Wow, for me it's like well, it's a lot of money. Let's say 20 in Russia I have to work for probably maybe one entire day.
And here people get 20 bucks an hour. People get $20.00 for an hour and tips or whatever. So, I get like 20 bucks or 10 bucks there and 200 bucks here, it's like probably here I am going to be rich. It's like fun, you know, like right now. And I think we'd say when people get so much money, they feel like, oh, it's no fun. But for us, it is fun. I have to work hard. So that, like, this way, like, I'm going to have more money."

- “Me personally, we build a reputation and care for our kids. I'm the best and they will come because they see how we work. They see how like how we speak to them, how we tried to teach them.”

- “More clients to make more money. Grow the business. It's more people, like now we have over 200 clients and lots of different people, so now people even drive from Connecticut, from New York, from Brooklyn, from Staten Island, from Westchester, from Philadelphia, they drive from all over. I don't like, I don't wanna talk about myself. It just by our reputation, this is important. Now with more, we're reaching a wider customer group and growing from a local support to really national regional.”

- “So, definitely my goal was building reputation through hard work and caring to teach the kids.”

- “When people see how hard we work, how we skate, how we talk to kids, how we teach them and how they get results. When they come on our reputation and provide good training.”

Valentina (Валентина)

- “The big picture I was seeking for a better, uh, career opportunity. So, the opportunities there were very limited. I felt like I reached the sky there. Uh, that's the main reason.”

- “Huge, huge issues. It's uh, it wasn't an easy journey for me at all. First, my mom when she immigrated here and like I would say in the year 2000. It was extremely long case; it took longer than 10 years. The Immigration were constantly saying that the case is either delayed or lost. At some point they were saying that its lost, and when they say its lost, it means not interested. When I applied and spent like $5000 getting the whole program set up and my visa was denied. I can't wait any longer for my mother's key case to give me anything because I could stay. I couldn't stay out of status. So, and then, we decided to formalize our relationship with my boyfriend that's my husband now and I jump into a new immigration journey.”

- “I just simply felt like I'm I don't belong. I don't, and I'm not needed here. I couldn't, umm, couldn't really understand a lot of things. So just the cultural thing. It was challenging to me, especially back then. I didn't understand why people are so distant from people. Why can't you just call somebody and talk when you want to or go to somebody and talk to somebody, why must you send a text message. The Lifestyle is very different here. For the majority of population, not speaking, of course, for everyone. I
was just too naïve because my English was very poor and uh then I kind of had no connection, no networking.”

• “I basically was left alone on my own. I didn’t really speak English at home, so I had to, I was constantly looking for somebody who is like me, who speaks Russian. And um, I was going to the Facebook pages or some, uh, meet up places, see where the people like me, where are they and what are they doing? So that was that was one of the biggest differences that everybody spoke different language. Then everybody used the car, vehicles here. So um, there is no public transportation here.”

• “People don’t go to see friends without any appointments here. So, that’s another thing. But it was. I really eliminated all this very fast. So, at the beginning I had only Russian speaking friends, and they kind of helped me. Some girls were more um, but they were present here for longer. They knew more, and um, then, as the more I was engaged at work, the more I had Um, Americans speaking people around me and my husband who really helped me to learn how things work here.”

• “I was like in the limbo and couldn't do much, I felt terrible, and I couldn't really get any support from any Americans. Uh, but there was so many great examples when Americans were so kind to me, truly kind and uh, I had great mentors who are Americans. A person named Robert who really met me in 2009, and we open Russian group which just reach 100,000 members on Facebook. It is one of the largest Russian speaking group and he's an American.”

• “These Russian investors, they wanted to do EB5, but then they said no, that's too unpredictable. They did a L1 visa, so they had to create the actual businesses, get their employees, get business operations running, and it was 2010. I started helping them, I started helping them with uh, their vacation rental company and then in 2013 I think I started managing this company. when they finished all their immigration businesses, I bought this business from them because it technically was like my own baby, you know, I raised it from the ground and now I have it.”

• “I have like 2 basically stages of my Experience here in America. Was one before and that was painful because I want to be visible because I was visible all my life and I was a person with the capital letter. so, I could resolve so much just by making a call by asking someone, and here I was like pretty much nothing, and that was that was hurtful at that specific point of my life.”

• “I remember when you're walking on the street and the kids or adults even say some stupid comments like oh like Russian chicks or whatever. You know, like something really hurtful. I never, I never heard anything here like that you know, one time just American lady told me she wasn't happy because of whatever service I should, uh, she received. She just called me white trash, but I think it's not because I'm a foreigner. So, alright, so it's yeah, I feel like it was a good comment because I thought to myself, finally I probably belong because that's what they believe.”
“So, with when it comes to immigrants, so as an immigrant, I was always working a lot, paying a lot of taxes. So, I'm good at this point. I don't think any American can tell me that I'm not worthless immigrant here. But as a foreigner I'd certainly face lots of challenges. Uh, especially working in the customer service. I don't know if you ever noticed this pattern, but when customer service comes not to a great guest satisfaction or guest expectation, then they always try to take advantage of the one who really speak limited English, or they understand that you are a foreigner and then they basically just start being more rude.”

“I would love to be invisible as and as of right now, I manage my businesses, the people I work with. I think contributed so much for them to be independent, um and capable to resolve things without asking for my help. So, I want to be left in peace. I want to be invisible. I don't want nobody complain uh, asking for the manager's contact details and uh, reach out to me. So, I see it as a positive and as a negative for sure.”

“I wanna be, um, completely remote. I wanna be distant from that business. I wanna see it from distance. I wanna see it growing. I wanna make sure my KPI's are there where I set them to be without all the time people needing me.”

“Normally business owners don't have those goals like a small business owner. They don't, they just do something, and the goal come later. The first I was thinking was just opportunity. Yeah, and I don't know what to do with that and if when, umm, I just don't know what to do that with that. So, I just make a step further to see where it takes me and that was a not mistake and it worked out great.”

“I wanted to make a better system to cover bigger scope of work and get more money and have money keep coming, and then ,until the point where we couldn't handle that.”

“The biggest challenge because time management, you know, like when I started, it was like nonstop. I was trying to combine uh, a lot on my plate. So, it was normal to me to stay up till three or four o'clock in the morning and then I had to go back to work till 9:00 o'clock. It was hard, I had to make some changes and make some decisions and um. And I built much, and it worked.”

“My personal goals, yes, there's three of them that are important for them because I went through, you know, it was, uh, it was, I went through a lot. I am implementing currently and will continue doing that to just achieving those three things like I named time, freedom, money, but with freedom, I think like my third thing, that's um, absence of emergencies or urgent presence is needed. It's kind of time freedom, you know? So, I wanna see that, everything I put in this company really works in the system.”

“A must is to ensure the system works and is constantly adapted and improved, but from the beginning.”

“I was lost. I didn't know what to do because there was too much until I said stop, we need to have a formal procedures, policies, and employee handbook, so let's just do it.
And I started doing that. I squeeze the time out of me and I got it done. Not perfect, not 100%, but it’s something. And every time I experience the new need, I will go in and modify with discuss with share. So that was very smart decision that really helped me to find the second life out of me to keep going.”

“Behind any entrepreneurial success in the United States is a lot of hard work. So, they have to be ready for that, there is no magic.”

**Violet (Виолета)**

“So, I don’t know if you know anything about it, but back in 1988 there is war between Armenian and Azerbaijan people. Have a heard about like paraba? Sadly, there’s still a war between those two people, so this was the reason for us to move because it wasn’t safe to stay in Azerbaijan anymore for Armenian people.”

“Not like anything about America, just feel sorry to move, feel sad and mad to move because everything is different, languages and everything and no family. I left my brothers and parents behind. Yes, everything was different. I mean, different style of life and like it’s like absolutely different life. So, we were going to it scare, and the languages and work. You know like, everything, everything was very scary.”

“We came to this country as a refugee. And before we came here, we applied for refugee status. And we had a sponsor in this country, otherwise we would not come. And our sponsor was the Lutheran Church.”

“Oh, yes, of course. I was crying. I wanted to go back home. But it was only from the beginning, now remembering that it’s making me laugh, but before, Hmm. Yeah. Was crying. Yeah. I want to go back home because you know I miss my parents, I miss my life, my, you know, my home, everything. Everything was different and we didn’t speak English, just like few words and yeah, lots of differences, People, languages, food, everything.”

“I really don’t know how to answer this question. You know, we establish this business in this country, and I will tell you just, you know, we knew someone who was like here before we came to this country, and we just found his guys. He was also a Russian speaking guy. So, we called him, and he took my husband to work for him for a while. I mean, there was nothing like, you know, nothing special, he just started to work and that’s it. And then we open our own business without like anything like, you know.”

“I only have, like a good memory. Even you know, when we came to this country in 1992, everybody were like, very, very nice. So, I could only say like you know, good words about like all American people, even if you’re immigrant and if you don’t speak language where well, so, everybody were, like very nice.”

“You know, like to do like good job, I mean, and of course, you know, financially, become much better. That everybody wants to do whatever.”
“Um to be the owner of your business because this is your business, and you are the boss. You don't have to work for somebody else. It is financially better, you are flexible with the hours and can you do what you want.”

“There is more money financially and you don't depend on anyone like, you know. Because you're working for yourself. Plus, you're doing whatever you love to do. And then, because this, the thing you were doing, like all your life, and plus all the like clients, the doctors, they are like very nice. They are very loyal to us. I mean all together. And more time, of course, because they are flexible with the hours you, you know, like I believe it's all together.”

“You could spend more time with them because you working, you know like you have flexible hours and means. Yeah, I believe this is the reason you know. So, yeah, now it's about the more freedom, yes. Mm-hmm. Spend time with the family, yes.”

“Umm, not to relax, come and work hard. if your hard-working person, if you're honest and your personality is good, and if you're not lazy, I mean, this is more successful for the business. um, honest not to be lazy. And if you are a hard-working person.”

“to start their own business, it's depends on the kind of business, but get a the right people who have the right information to help you in the system.”

“To start their own business, it's depends on the kind of business, but get a the right people who have the right information to help you in the system.”

Evgenia (Евгения)

Learning the language and the way things work in America. My husband was American and so my early time was made pretty smooth here. I met other friends that came here much earlier than I came to America. My friends and family help increase my English words, um, higher level of speaking and understanding here.

I finish high school and my two colleges, I have my degree in jurisprudence from university, um, like American criminal prosecution lawyer for Russian government.

A little, when I came here, I carry myself with pride not like American woman who dress for bed going to stores. People listen to my accent and always ask friendly if I am from Germany and I say from Russia, and they look at me with different face and start talking to me slow like I am dumb. I speak four language and these people barely made it through high school. I really do not make any real friends with Americans, they are different, not racist but not like my culture, you know, our jokes, music, food, movies, and many things they don’t understand. I had my mom visit and my dad, stepsister and stepmom live in America so no issues. I have not any issue, but I do not, never will be a real American, my mind is strong. I am thinking I am American by passport, but Russian by culture. You know, not appropriate, I do not want to act like them, the fatness, lazy,
cry about everything and this belief they are better than everyone in the world. I do think Americans make easy clients to deal with over Russians who expect a lot and always try to get something more. Americans just happy with little, they are easy maybe they are too busy on things that do not matter, they cannot change. The only challenge I remember is working on my making my English better and trying to learn the system. The system is very, very different in America. It has a lot of bureaucracy. I do not know if it’s hard for us immigrants or hard for everyone. Us immigrants know how to find a way to get where we want to go and make money.

- “I think I cannot say for sure. I can’t say I had negative on me but people here think you have an accent you are slow in the head. People do not want to give you a good job, they think us Russian immigrants from a country with dirt on the floor and bears in the streets. But using invisibleness like you say in your Army story, um, maybe I did use invisibleness. I did not want to promote myself big when I started. I didn’t want to expand my business because I was learning so much, I was building clients, learning the language, the business system, you know, come into very high level to fast you make mistakes. So, I think maybe I did try to be invisible to Americans at first, but not Russian speaking people. I wanted to be visible, but I need time to learn so I can’t. When I built my business, I grew it big and I cannot handle it in small place, I got a bigger place and more employees. I then start to promote more on social media, grow my reputation, become very visible as you say. If you are not visible when you get big business, you will not be successful, you will not have a business for long. So, yes, I like to be visible, and it helps a lot with my business."

- “They seem to me as fake, try to be nice but really cold people with no dreams or care. I don’t understand their minds, I hear them talk like the government needs to give them everything like the Soviet time. The American news is always barking at each other and horrible to watch. They do not seem to understand this is bad, all things are earned through hard work by you. You have freedom to work hard and get large success. They do not understand government can become horrible like my life under the Soviets. My grandfather went to the gulag for owning a pig, government takes everything, not give. I never got to know my grandfather because he died in the gulag for trying to feed his family, the government took everything from his family. Why would you give your freedom to a government, you will have no voice, no opportunities, no life. Here no one was bad to me, no one ever said mean thing or did anything to me, but I find the people in this place who are part of my culture and understand what we know. I find many girls, and everything was fine. I love America, it is an open sky of opportunities."

- “I just jump to do it so I can have financial freedom to do what I can do. I want my way and if I control it, I will build a business that is famous with high reputation, the best. To have, um, to build my own piece of happiness in this world. To make my business as big as I can make it, make many people happy. It was my dream to be in America, in New York city with a famous business. I do not want to work or be controlled by anyone for my money. I am not letting someone have power in my life, I mean my money, my opportunity in the hands of someone else. I want to make more. I want more freedom. I know in America you can have a good life as a worker, but you will never have the life
you want, you will never have the success to do whatever you want like travel or be free of worry. A worker is just making someone else rich.”

- “Make more money, grow your business by being the best and um, have a strong reputation. You have more freedom of time because your system works without you controlling everything. Success happens through hard, hard work. You have to continue to learn, change, and make yourself better or people will go somewhere else.”

- “Hard work, hard work must be fun, learn more, and learn more and more. You have to care of your workers, be smart on your costs, but most important, um, choose good workers, do not be naïve, be smart or you will lose money and time. Uh, another thing, um, when things happen like the pandemic, you have to look and know how to change to keep money from leaving, trust in your ideals and have good promotion.”