

R-Ally: Research Allies for Lifelong Learning

Adult Non-Participation in Education: Detouring from the Pathway

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Breaking the Ice

Introduce yourself to a neighbor (or two). Ask him/her the following question:

What do you already know about the **PIAAC** survey and assessments?

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Overview

Adult Non-Participation in Education

A Conceptual Model of the Pathway – and the Detour

Overview of the PIAAC Survey and Assessments

Characteristics of Adult Non-Participants in PIAAC

Assessment of Adult Non-Participants in PIAAC

Group Activity – Implications for Recruiting Non-Participants and Deterrents

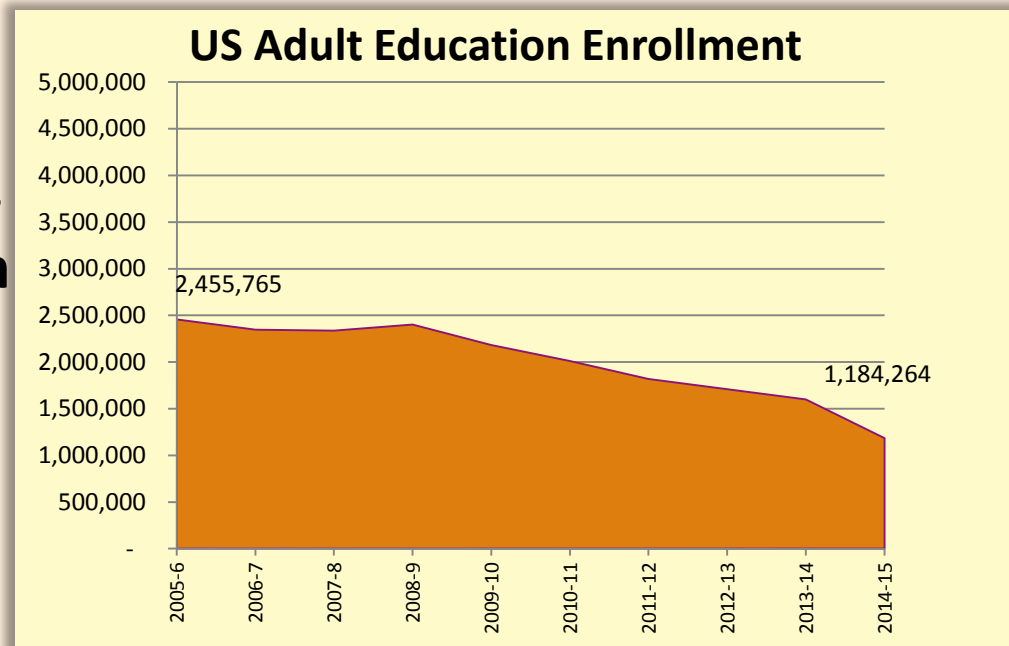
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Adult Non-Participation in Education

- Non-participants include high-school dropouts, home schoolers, immigrants, and others who are **unreached by adult education** or postsecondary education (PSE).
- Nearly 29 million adults did not complete high school, according to PIAAC-USA data (Patterson & Paulson, 2014) – that is **1 in 7 of those aged 16 to 65** – similar to current U.S. Census (2011) figures.
- The pool of non-participants continues to **grow by one million annually** (*Education Week*, 2013)
- An estimated seven million non-participants cannot read English well or at all (Patterson & Paulson, 2014).

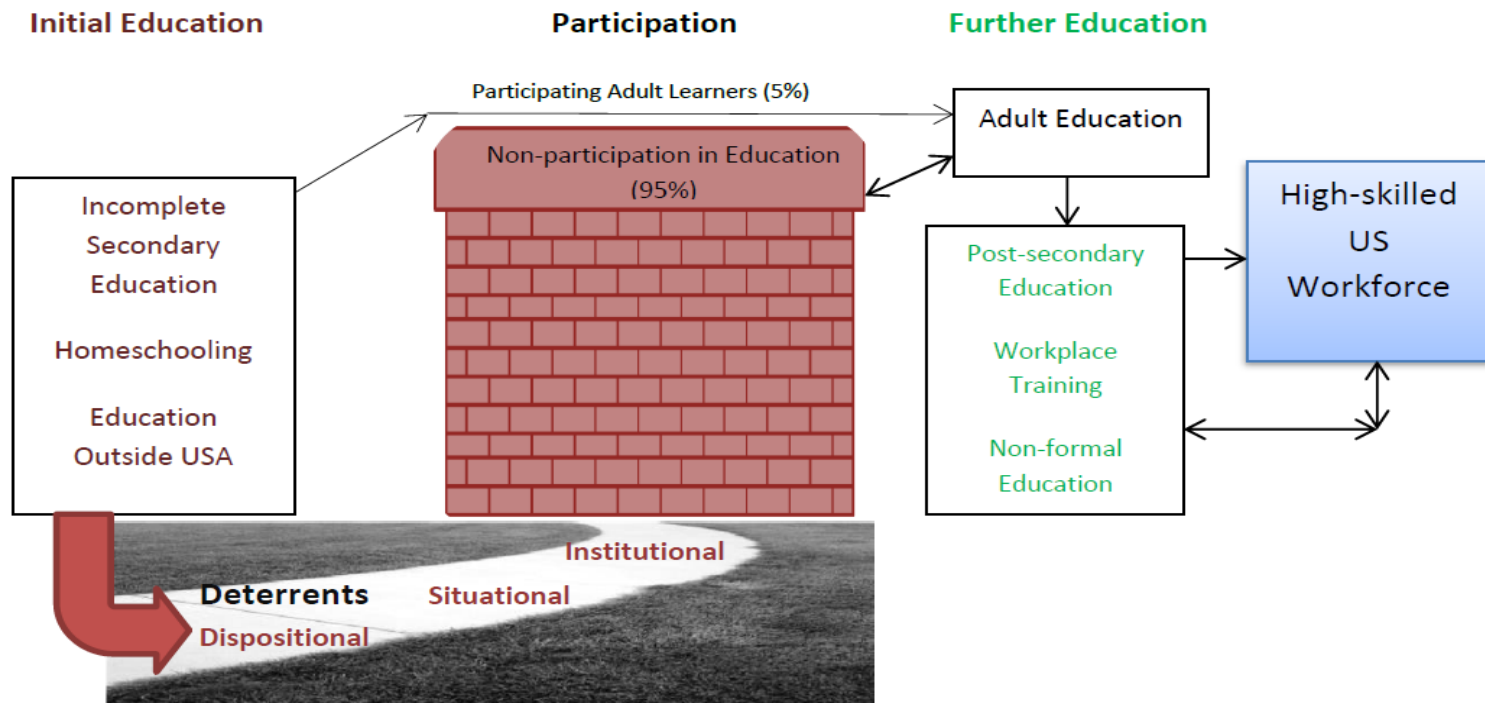
Adult Non-Participation in Education

- US adult education programs serve only **1.2 million adults per year**, or roughly 3% of the 36 million, according to OCTAE (NRS)
- ProLiteracy reports another **.25 million** annually, to 5% combined
- The question is: **what about the other 95%?**



The Pathway – and the Detour

Conceptual Model



The Pathway – and the Detour

- **3 Clusters of deterrents:** situational, institutional, and dispositional (Cross, 1981; Quigley, 2006)
- **Situational deterrents** result from a person's circumstances
- Lack of child care or lack of support from close relatives are examples (McAnnaney, 2009; Patterson, 2014)

The Pathway – and the Detour

- **Institutional deterrents** occur when educational procedures, policies, or practices prevent or limit learner participation
 - Examples include lack of information, geographic inaccessibility, inconvenient course times, and prohibitive tuition rates
- **Dispositional deterrents** refer to learned barriers which involve learners' self-perceptions and attitudes about potentially repeating failure in formal education settings
 - Examples include low confidence, negative past schooling experiences, or fear of math (Patterson, et al., 2010; Quigley, 1997; Quigley, Patterson, & Zhang, 2011)

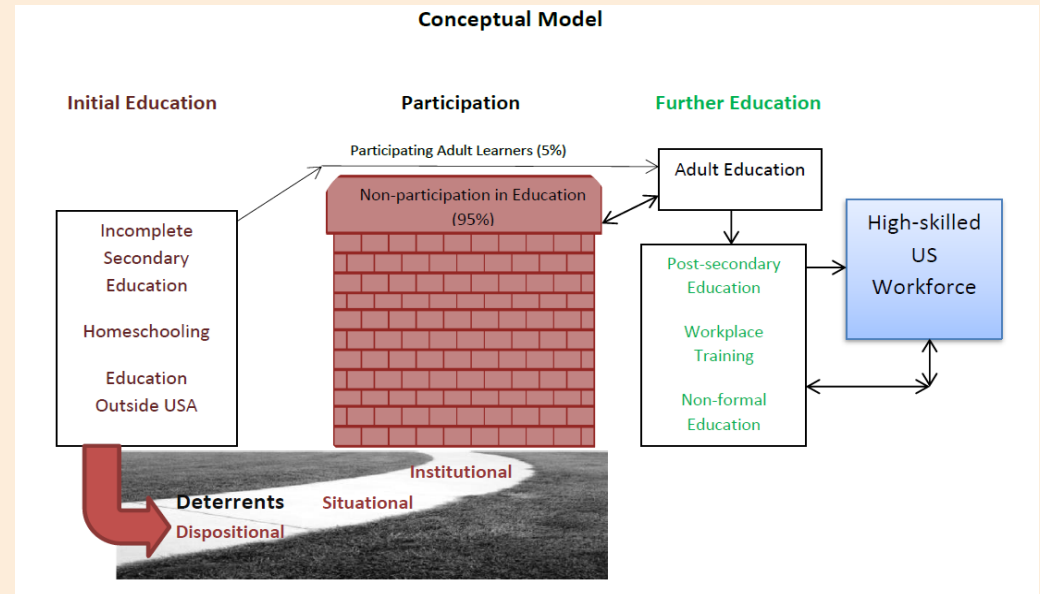
Group Activity – Identifying Non-Participants and Deterrents

In pairs or threes, please talk with your colleagues for 5 minutes about the following questions :

1. What do you think are the consequences for the least-educated adults who don't participate in learning?
2. What value does non-participation research have for adult ed?
3. What deterrents do you think non-participants face?
 - Situational
 - Institutional
 - Dispositional

Where Are the Solutions?

- One source for a solution is **quantitative** PIAAC data (Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies)
- Another source is **qualitative** – asking the non-participants themselves



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PIAAC Survey and Assessments

- IALS: 1994-1998
- ALL: 2003-2006
- PIAAC Development and Field Testing: 2008-10
- PIAAC Main Study: 2011-12
- PIAAC Analysis and Reporting: 2013-15
- PIAAC Supplementary Data on Younger, Older, and Incarcerated Adults: 2016

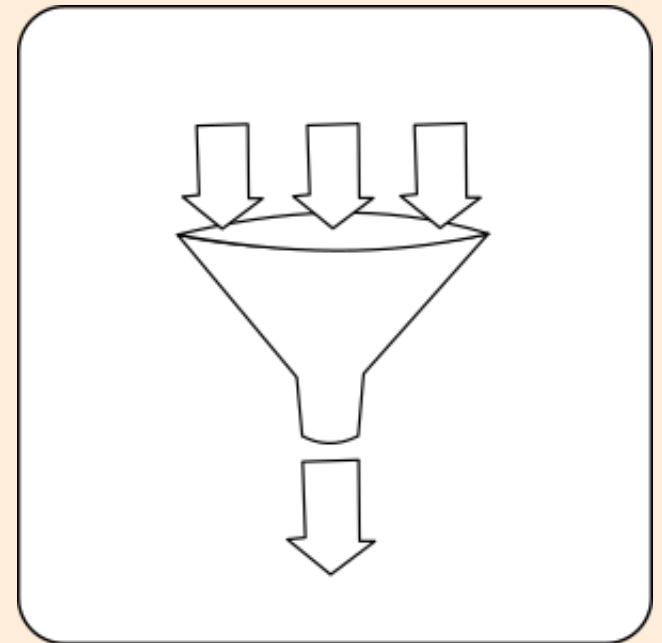


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For This Study

- Included adults age 20-65
- Less than high school (LHS) or high school (HS) education
- Did not complete PSE though may have attempted it
- Not in formal or non-formal education in past year



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Adult Non-Participants Characteristics in PIAAC: Similarities with Comparison Group

- Primarily born in USA and native English speakers, 9 in 10 say they understand, speak, read, and write English well or very well
- 43% from South, 24% from Midwest, 16% each from Northeast and West US
- 3 in 10 have low income (< \$36K annually)
- Satisfied employees working full time
- Middle-aged, with the vast majority having (working) spouses/partners and children
- Infrequently in management roles or self-employed



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Adult Non-Participants Characteristics in PIAAC: Similarities with Comparison Group



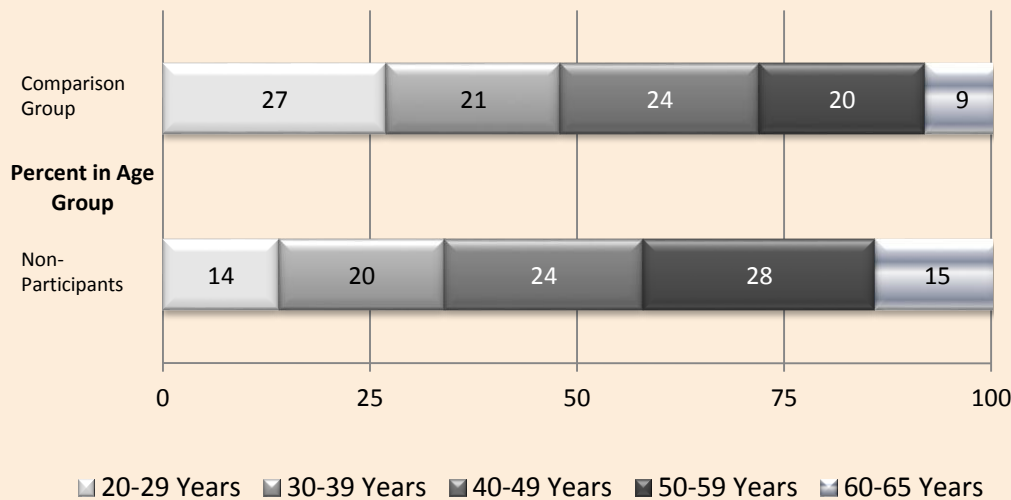
- 3 in 10 did not complete a diploma or degree that they started
- 14% had difficulty seeing print
- 11% had learning disabilities
- The majority had parents who finished high school and many who attempted PSE
- At least 7 in 10 like to learn and look for information
- 9 in 10 get info about current events from family, friends, co-workers – or TV

Question Break



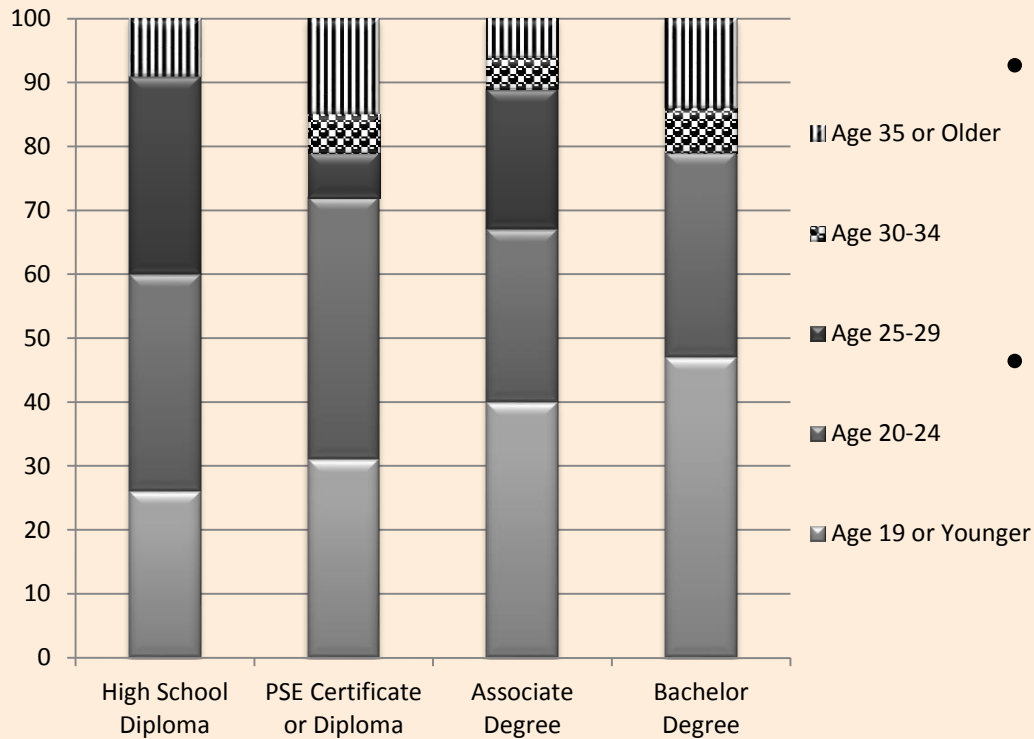
Take one minute and ask your neighbor if he/she has a question about the PIAAC survey, the groups we are comparing, or the similarities between both groups – can *you* answer the question?

Adult Non-Participants' Characteristics in PIAAC: Differences from Comparison Group



- Gender balance was even, *except* LHS males were over-represented (56%) in non-participants
- A higher median age than comparison group (OECD, 2013; Patterson & Paulson, 2014)

Adult Non-Participants Characteristics in PIAAC: Differences from Comparison Group



- The more advanced the attempted degree level, the **younger non-participants left without completing it**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of high school non-completers left *after* 16-19 years, indicating **they attempted to complete a high school education at a later age but didn't**

Adult Non-Participants Characteristics in PIAAC: Differences from Comparison Group

	Non-Participant	Comparison Group
Employment Rate	63%	80%
Skilled Occupations	30%	54%
Employer Size 1-50	57%	46%
Top Industries	construction or building and landscape services	healthcare, education, or public administration and security

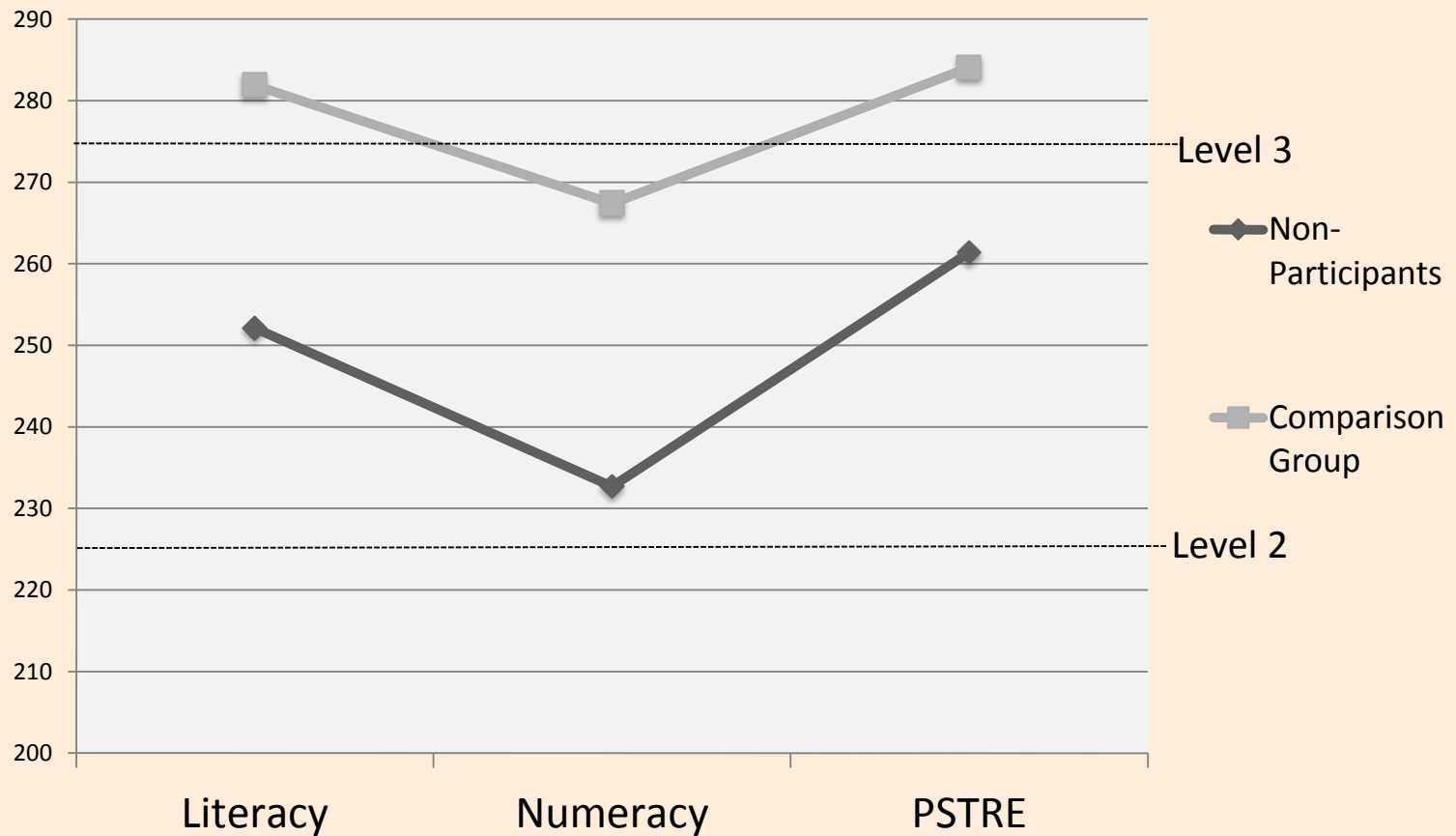


Adult Non-Participants Characteristics in PIAAC: Differences from Comparison Group

- 23% of non-participants (vs. 45%) wanted non-formal education last year but didn't pursue – reasons include **family** responsibilities, **cost**, and being **too busy at work**
- 1 in 4 non-participants had fair or poor health (vs 1 in 10)
- Non-participants had less flexibility in structuring their **work schedule** (50% vs. 57%)
- Computer/internet use for non-participants was high – 95% for adults under 35 and 75% for adults over 55

Non-Participant Performance on PIAAC Assessments

Mean Scores



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Group Activity – Implications for Recruiting Non-Participants into Adult Education

Extra Information – in your group focus on ONE topic:

Use your packet to think about...

- Degrees that don't get completed
- Parents' education background
- Interest in learning
- Health-related deterrents
- Learning at work
- Computer use at home
- Community involvement and social trust

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Group Activity – Implications for Recruiting Non-Participants into Adult Education

Form a small group, allow yourself 15 minutes, and take notes on group members' answers to the following questions:

1. If non-participants are satisfied employees in small businesses, or unemployed adults with health problems, shouldn't we just leave them alone?
2. What recruitment solutions do you see from the data on your topic?
3. Where would you find these non-participants if you did decide to recruit them?

Be prepared to share one idea that your group discussed that would benefit the other groups.

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Conclusion and Contact Information

- Questions before we part?
- If you'd like to discuss further solutions to non-participation issues you are facing, please contact me
- Please stop by our COABE exhibit table for more research findings
- For further information, e-mail or visit our website:
 - Margaret Patterson, PhD
 - margaret@researchallies.org

www.researchallies.org

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