



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

Migration Experiences and Mental Health of Older Latin American Immigrants in Australia

This is the Accepted version of the following publication

Hormazábal-Salgado, Raúl, Whitehead, Dean, Osman, Abdi D and Hills, Danny (2024) Migration Experiences and Mental Health of Older Latin American Immigrants in Australia. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. ISSN 1488-3473

The publisher's official version can be found at
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-024-01213-1>

Note that access to this version may require subscription.

Downloaded from VU Research Repository <https://vuir.vu.edu.au/49025/>

Migration experiences and mental health of older Latin American immigrants in Australia

Raúl Hormazábal-Salgado^{a*}, Dean Whitehead^b, Abdi D. Osman^c, Danny Hills^d

^a RN, BN, MN. Ph.D. student, Federation University Australia - Berwick Campus* **Corresponding author:** ra.hormazabalsalgado@federation.edu.au, **telephone number:** +61343137973, **ORCID:** 0000-0002-6736-9983

^b RN, Bed, MSc, MPH, Ph.D. Senior Lecturer, Federation University Australia, Federation University Australia - Berwick Campus; **email:** d.whitehead@federation.edu.au, **ORCID:** 0000-0003-4131-4594

^c RN, BN, GCEmergN, MPHTM, DrPH, GCHLT. Senior Lecturer, Victoria University College of Sport and Exercise Science; email: abdi.osman@vu.edu.au, ORCID: 0000-0002-8104-8019; **email:** abdi.osman@vu.edu.au, **ORCID:** 0000-0002-8104-8019

^d BN, Grad Cer Ter Teach, Grad Cer Mgt, MN Hons, Ph.D. Adjunct Professor, Federation University Australia - Berwick Campus; **email:** d.hills@federation.edu.au, **ORCID:** 0000-0002-1908-0739

Funding statement

No funding was obtained to conduct this research.

Acknowledgments statement

I extend my profound gratitude to the dedicated individuals on the research team for their invaluable contributions and collaborative ethos during this research. The synergy of our collective efforts and teamwork has enhanced the quality of this study. Each team member's distinctive expertise and perspectives have enriched the analysis with diverse insights, culminating in a more comprehensive and well-rounded analysis.

Disclosure statement

The authors report that there are no competing interests to declare.

Ethics approval statement

This research project has been approved by The Human Research Ethics Committee of Federation University Australia, reference number 2023-044. This project was conducted following the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2018). All participants gave their informed consent before their inclusion in the study. Details that might disclose the identity of the subjects under the study were omitted.

References: National Health and Medical Research Council. (2018). *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Commonwealth of Australia.

Abstract

Background: Contemporary research on older Latin American immigrants emphasises their health issues and mental problems. Most lived experience research has been done in North America and Europe, with relatively few studies in Australia, creating a gap that needs to be addressed.

Methods: As part of a broad Constructivist Grounded Theory study, the aim of this study was to explore and derive insights from the lived migration experiences of older Latin American immigrants in Australia. Twenty-three Spanish-speaking immigrants aged 60 and above were interviewed. Data analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection using a constant comparative method. Ethical approval was obtained before commencing data collection.

Results: The study's core category was "Preserving culture and values after migration." This highlights the significance of cultural identity for older Latin American immigrants in Australia, as they prioritise promoting and preserving their traditions to foster a sense of solidarity, helping them enhance their mental health. Language experiences were vital in cultural conservation and integration into the host society.

Conclusion: The migration experiences of older Latin American immigrants in Australia involve various aspects, including cultural preservation, identity maintenance, and integration challenges. Recognising and respecting their cultural background, values, traditions, and language within Australia's multicultural society is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of services and promoting their mental health and integration within the community.

Keywords: aged, culture, emigrants and immigrants, mental health, social support

Background

The migration process, particularly for older individuals, irrespective of their cultural heritage, involves the physical movement to a new location and substantial adaptations to various aspects of life, encompassing cultural, social, and personal dimensions. These adjustments significantly influence the overall experience of migration. Older Latin American immigrants encounter distinctive obstacles as they strive to acclimate themselves to unfamiliar cultural surroundings, social frameworks, and healthcare systems (Jimenez et al., 2020). The experiences and the mental health of this population are intricate and multifaceted, shaped by various factors such as chronic health conditions (Camacho et al., 2018; Sanchez et al., 2020), disability, limited social support (Rote et al., 2015), late-life migration (García et al., 2019), experiences of discrimination (Salas-Wright et al., 2020), and English proficiency (Kim et al., 2019). Existing research on older Latin Americans predominantly focuses on depression and anxiety, acculturation and challenges in accessing mental health services (Jimenez et al., 2020). Over the last five years, most research has been conducted on the migration experiences of older Latin Americans in North America (Jimenez et al., 2020).

Latin Americans represent one of the fastest-growing migrant groups globally, totalling approximately 32 million individuals residing predominantly in North America, followed by Europe, Asia, and Oceania (International Organization for Migration, 2021). Specifically, Latin American immigrants constitute around 43 per cent of the immigrant population in North America (encompassing the United States and Canada) and nine per cent in high-income European countries, according to the World Bank (2023). As of 2021, the population of Latin Americans aged 65 years and older residing in the United States exceeded five million, accounting for eight per cent of the total Latin American population in the country (United States Census Bureau, 2022). Furthermore, there has been a notable increase in migration to alternative destinations across Europe, including Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, France, and the United Kingdom, where approximately 4.1 million South Americans were recorded around 2020 (United Nations, 2020). In Europe, the proportion of Latin Americans aged 65 and older stands at 5.9%, which is significantly lower than the average of 17.6% for foreign-born populations in the region (Abud et al., 2022; Bayona-i-Carrasco & Avila-Tàpies, 2020). This percentage is closely

aligned with the continental European average of 17.7% (Bayona-i-Carrasco & Avila-Tàpies, 2020). The Asia-Pacific region, including Eastern Asia, South-Eastern Asia, and Oceania, Mason and Azeredo (2023) reported that about 550,000 Latin American migrants were living in 2020. While this figure is comparatively modest compared to Latin American populations in Europe and North America, it reflects a substantial and consistently growing presence. It is important to note that research conducted in different migratory contexts may fail to capture critical elements pertinent to the Latin American community residing in Australia, where they constitute a minority population, unlike in the United States, where they are more prominently represented.

The Latin American community in Australia has undergone substantial growth and transformation in recent decades (Kath, 2022; Kath & Del Río, 2022). These changes are represented in the migration experiences of Latin Americans in Australia, which show the complex interplay between the cultural background of the newcomers and the sociocultural context of the host country (Kath, 2022). Early research before 2000 centred on the experiences of the initial waves of Latin American immigrants, emphasising aspects such as refugee experiences, language adaptation, discrimination, cultural integration, and social support (Kath & Del Río, 2022). While recent literature explores Latin Americans' attributes and experiences in Australia, the focus has mainly been on the broader community, with limited attention given explicitly to older Latin Americans (Kath & Del Río, 2022). This contrasts with the United States, where research on older Latin American immigrants is extensive, although less extensive regarding other older immigrant groups (Hawkins et al., 2022). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) notes that Australia is home to 202,980 people from Latin America. Notably, migrants from Brazil and Colombia are predominantly young, with a median age of 34. In contrast, those from Uruguay, Chile, and Nicaragua have higher median ages of 61, 52, and 50, respectively. This demographic variation is particularly noteworthy given Australia's aging population trend, with individuals aged 60 and older constituting 22.8 per cent of the total population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

In the past five years, only two studies reporting findings from studies centred on Latin American immigrants in Australia have been published (Cordella & Rojas-Lizana, 2020; Sanchez et al., 2020).

Sanchez et al. (2020) conducted a cross-sectional survey revealing that Latin American immigrants face language barriers, hindering their full integration into Australian society even after more than 40 years of residence. The study highlighted health concerns, with over 40% of the ageing, predominantly female Latin American population experiencing high blood pressure, dyslipidaemia, and obesity, and more than 20% dealing with chronic conditions like diabetes and mental health issues (Sanchez et al., 2020). Cordella and Rojas-Lizana (2020) delved into the caregiving expectations of nineteen older Spanish speakers in Australia, revealing the vulnerability and fear associated with aging in a foreign country and a solid attachment to family values (Cordella & Rojas-Lizana, 2020). Despite these insights, there is an urgent need for additional research on the mental health of older Latin Americans in Australia to address the existing gap in the literature and better understand their unique challenges and needs (Cordella & Rojas-Lizana, 2020). While the multiple challenges faced by the Latin American immigrants who arrived in Australia more than three decades ago are well documented (Kath & Del Río, 2022), understanding the migration experiences as they age requires consideration of the diverse factors that can affect their health and mental health, acknowledging their individual stories within the broader context of Australia.

Methods

This paper reports results obtained in the context of a broader study that utilised a Constructivist Grounded Theory methodology outlined by Charmaz (2014) which goal was to investigate the mental health decision-making of older Latin American immigrants in Australia. The broader study has not been published as it is currently in press, and the main finding was that the decision-making of older Latin Americans was mainly autonomous. The focus of this paper is to describe the migration experiences and migration-related factors that could affect the mental health of older Latin American immigrants residing in Australia.

This study was conducted using the grounded theory methodology. According to Singh and Estefan (2018), in this approach, the researcher acknowledges multiple perspectives of reality, utilising their knowledge and experience to guide the process. The interpretive nature of constructivist grounded theory, coupled with shared background elements such as the Spanish language, cultural ties to Latin

America, and clinical expertise in mental health, enriches the researcher's understanding of the cultural aspects that influence the mental health of this group. Within the constructivist paradigm, the grounded theory approach acknowledges both researchers' and participants' reality and background, encompassing language, meanings, actions, and the research's historical, social, and situational conditions (Charmaz, 2017).

Purposeful and snowball sampling was employed to recruit Spanish-speaking Latin American immigrants from Spanish-speaking backgrounds aged 60 and older who had lived in Australia for at least one year. The age range of participants was considered to be 60, which is the globally accepted definition of the onset of old age World Health Organization (2024). Purposive and snowball sampling methods were employed to recruit participants for the study, given the accessibility of potential participants within community groups and the likelihood of them introducing others with similar characteristics. Recruitment efforts included outreach through social media platforms, radio podcasts, and formal groups in Australia facilitated by a not-for-profit organisation. Interested individuals were encouraged to participate in the study through these channels.

Face-to-face and online interviews were conducted from July 2023 to October 2023, lasting between 40 to 100 minutes each. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, as preferred by the study participants, and audio recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy. Consistency was maintained by having the first author conduct all interviews using a semi-structured interview schedule. The research question started broadly and open-ended, gradually refined and narrowed down throughout the research process (Hull, 2013). Sample questions included: “What could you tell me about your experiences after migrating?”, “How important is your culture and language?” and “How do your culture and cultural practices help you improve your mental health?”. The interviewer modified the last research question by stating “well-being” or “feeling good” when referring to the concept of “mental health” to facilitate the participants’ understanding. The interviewer also documented field notes during the sessions, which were subsequently employed during the review and analysis of the data.

The analysis was conducted in various stages: initial coding, focused coding, elaboration of categories, writing, and rewriting, providing guidelines for coding execution, emphasising the importance of

factors such as flexibility, creativity, awareness of potential biases and existing theoretical knowledge (Charmaz, 2014, 2017). The transcripts of the interviews were initially transcribed and then uploaded onto NVivo qualitative data management software (QSR International, 2024) for the coding process. The initial codes served as the foundation for creating various sub-categories and categories. Additionally, a single core category was identified to encapsulate all the data, aligning with the constructivist grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2014). Throughout the process, discussions were conducted using a constant comparison and consensus-based approach. Disagreements were deliberated upon, and decisions regarding whether to retain or modify them were made through discussions and voting. Continuous comparisons were made between the data and new codes, sub-categories, and categories to assess their alignment with the broader context of the study. The point of theoretical saturation was reached when no unique properties of the emerging categories were observed, following the criteria outlined by Charmaz (2014). The focus of theoretical saturation lies in data analysis, particularly in the development of categories and the evolving theory, serving as the benchmark for additional data collection while being guided by theoretically driven sampling (Saunders et al., 2018). Theoretical sampling was conducted to determine the relevance of the data to collect and seek additional information from participants (Charmaz, 2014). This involved allowing participants to confirm the accuracy of their discussions for precise transcription and coding, with other research team members serving as independent checkpoints to interpret the data. All authors agreed upon the results.

Ethical considerations

Before commencing the study, we secured ethical approval for the mental health recovery project from the Human Research Ethics Committee at XXXX (Ref. 2023-044). We adhered to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2018). Additionally, both verbal and written informed consent were obtained from participants before the commencement of any interviews.

Findings

Interviews were conducted with 23 older Latin Americans residing in Australia, comprising 15 females and eight males, aged between 60 and 95 years. Their residency duration in Australia varied from three to 60 years. While this could have impacted the experiences of those three older adults who have lived less than two decades, especially for the one who arrived three years before the interview, they did not explicitly report more integration difficulties than the other participants. Eighteen participants declared being proficient in English, whereas five reported limited English proficiency. More than half (12) of the participants were from Chile, followed by Argentina (3), El Salvador (2), Uruguay (2), Colombia (2), Venezuela (1) and Cuba (1). Fifteen resided in Victoria, five in New South Wales, two in South Australia and one in Queensland. The demographic information is shown in Table 1.

The data analysis revealed four categories emerging from focused codes established during initial coding (Table 2). Relationships within and between categories were identified, ensuring cohesion in the analytical process (Charmaz, 2014). The core category, 'Preserving culture and values after migration,' was identified, depicting cultural integration as an assimilation process between Latin American and Australian cultures (Figure 1). Living in Latin American culture and maintaining Spanish were critical for cultural assimilation, where older adults could appreciate differences in their home country after living in Australia, understand Australian culture and values, and use English proficiently. Integration into the host society was the desired outcome. The main challenges for cultural assimilation were perceiving Australians as unapproachable, being fixated on customs that no longer helped in integrating, communication issues with people from other cultural backgrounds, and poor English proficiency. The findings were represented by four categories: 'Showing and sharing own Latin American culture in Australia,' 'Noticing differences in the home country after living in Australia,' 'Sharing Post-migration language experiences,' and 'Understanding and assimilating Australian culture.'

1. Showing and sharing own Latin American culture in Australia

Study participants expressed positive perceptions of Latin American culture, highlighting a sense of solidarity and respect shared among individuals with similar backgrounds and values. They actively engaged in the study, viewing it as an opportunity to contribute to the Hispanic community of older

adults, motivated by the researcher's shared cultural identity and commitment to assisting the community:

I am interested in doing that interview because, after all, this is historic! No one has ever done it before! Moreover, I say, we are here, in this English-speaking country, where they are doing something for Spanish-speaking people. How nice that someone is doing something for us, right? (Interviewee #8, female).

Study participants perceived participating in and initiating social groups that promoted Latin American culture as advantageous. They viewed these groups as opportunities to share their cultural heritage with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Participants observed misconceptions about Latin Americans among locals in Australia and felt that leading these groups allowed them to educate others about their culture. One interviewee shared a personal experience illustrating the impact of participating in such a group:

When I arrived in Australia, a group promoted the Hispanic culture ... Some musical groups played the guitar or danced typical dances from their countries... I liked it because each country showed its culture... many Germans, Dutch, Australians, and Italians wanted to learn the language because they were interested in our culture (Interviewee #14, female).

Maintaining cultural identity was emphasised by all participants, who expressed the importance of preserving their traditions despite living in Australia for several decades. They continued celebrating their countries' national days and other cultural festivities, passing down their customs to future generations. This commitment to cultural heritage instilled a sense of pride among the participants, as exemplified by Participant #17:

To this day, I maintain my customs. We eat typical dishes at home, and I play music from my country. Other than that, I also love Australia! So, once you live here, your identity stays the same ... My mind, my soul, and my heart are with my country! (Interviewee #17, female).

Another study participant shared her perception of the culture of Latin American immigrants:

Whenever there is a community of immigrants, there is a piece of culture from that country where that culture continues to be practised (Interviewee #23, female).

While all participants in the study felt a sense of commonality with other Latin Americans, some expressed a stronger bond with those from their own country. They believed they shared a deeper understanding of idioms and customs with compatriots, influencing their social interactions and decision-making. This sense of connection fostered stronger relationships, such as rapport with counsellors or friendships with individuals from the same country, as described by Participant #18:

Next year, we will travel ... and visit our friends because it gives us that sense of community, unity, and sharing of culture; it is as if you were sharing a joke with a colleague from your same country because maybe I will make a joke or tell an anecdote (Interviewee #18, male).

2. Noticing differences in the home country after living in Australia

Older Latin American immigrants emphasised preserving their cultural roots, values, and customs, which they maintained within their families and communities for several years. However, they observed significant cultural changes in their home countries during visits, experiencing a sense of culture shock. They found it challenging to navigate changes in public transport and social customs, feeling misunderstood compared to their past experiences:

There are differences in language ... in my country, many years ago, it stopped being formal... I went there for a year. I kept the idea of how it was in the mid-seventies. While waiting for the bus, a boy suddenly called me just 'you' instead of 'lady' or 'Mrs.'! I do not know the face I gave him because the boy later just said, 'Oh! sorry!' after which he ran away ... Later, I told my sister, and she told me, 'But, how antiquated, my sister!' So, I told her, but how will he come and talk to me like that? That is disrespectful! Then, she told me how antiquated you are; nobody on the streets calls other people 'lady' or 'Mrs.' anymore! ... I think it is very wrong [silence for four seconds] (Interviewee #8, female).

Another interviewee talked about his experience of going back to his home country after several years and the reasons for this:

One realises that things change back in one's country of origin and also changes one's personality. Then, one goes there and finds that one is out of place. I saw that when I went back years ago. I noticed many differences ... when you live in another country for a while and see something else, you notice the differences (Interviewee #10, male).

One older Latin American expressed his thoughts about how he felt about his home country and Australia:

I want to say something related to the experience of loneliness because the one who emigrates is an emigrant in the country where he lives and is an emigrant in the country of origin when he returns because the people that one remembered have already changed (Interviewee #7, male).

Interviewees observed that individuals who had never lived outside their home country tended to have a limited mindset, attributed to their lack of travel experiences. This narrow perspective was viewed as contributing to mediocrity and conformity in Latin America. Despite their lack of exposure to different cultures, individuals believed they possessed sufficient knowledge, reflecting a sense of complacency:

It makes me sad when my wife and I visit my country of origin. We see that people there live only based on what my country is and think that that is the best... that everything is known and that everything has been seen—but they have not travelled much abroad. If you do not go out to another country, another place, or another culture, you will never be able to have these experiences! You will never be able to try something new! (Interviewee #16, male).

Study participants maintain ties with their home countries. Notwithstanding that, they are hesitant to return. Their concerns primarily revolved around their health and physical condition, which they deemed unsuitable for a long journey, especially considering the considerable geographical distance. Additionally, some felt there were no compelling reasons to return, citing changes in their homeland and the passing of loved ones. Even those with family in their home country often felt disconnected, particularly from relatives born after relocating to Australia. High travel costs also deterred study participants from visiting. Despite some expressing a desire to return, others cited negative experiences, such as poor healthcare, as reasons for their decision not to do so:

At that moment ... I only wanted to return to Australia from my country of origin ... I decided not to return ... because I did not know what I could return to, apart from the fact that one returns with so much fear. It would be best to look behind you every time you turn a corner to see that no one is following you to rob you. There are so many other places to go! [laughs] ... When your parents are alive, you want to go. When my parents were alive, we visited them every two years (Interviewee #21, female).

When asked about that possibility, one participant shared her thoughts about returning to her home country permanently. She chose to remain in Australia:

I do not have any more siblings..., and my parents are not living either... so if my time comes, I would like to stay here. However, some people ask me, wouldn't you return to your country? Furthermore, I say no; the truth is that I chose this place because although I have a country of birth, Australia was my country of choice (Interviewee #1, female).

3. Sharing post-migration language experiences

Post-migration language experiences were related to learning English and maintaining Spanish, intertwined with the Latin American culture. Most interviewees chose to retain their Spanish language by speaking it at home and in social settings. Spanish meant returning to their roots and allowing them to socialise with others from the same cultural background. This was critical, especially for those five participants with poor English proficiency. In addition, the interviewees saw the Spanish language as an expression of culture and as a tool for life, where their children and grandchildren could obtain opportunities in life as they grew up, like job opportunities. They instilled an interest in learning the language in their children by sending them to extracurricular activities where their children could enhance their Spanish proficiency and feel good about their decision. Interacting with their children in Spanish was preferred, too, as explained by one participant:

My son has always wanted to learn Spanish ... Now, he speaks it more academically than I do ... if there is a word he does not know, he asks me, and yes, I know what I need to answer him,

but he speaks it more academically than I do! He is a teacher, so indeed, with his English, he can communicate well in that environment (Interviewee #3, female).

Most interviewees' spouses were from Latin America, usually from the same country. However, a few interviewees married someone from a different cultural background, including Anglo-Saxon Australian. In general, maintaining and passing on the Spanish language to the next generations within the family was easier when both spouses shared the same Latin American background because of the more significant opportunities to immerse in the language their children were provided with. Conversely, raising a family with parents from two different cultural backgrounds and, thus, other languages posed many challenges. Participant #20 shared his experience with his family:

Yes, I do speak Spanish at home with my children. My wife, who is Australian, understands a bit and says some, but only a little ... My daughters speak Spanish very well. The oldest one used to go to a Spanish school in my city ... She has a lot of Spanish-speaking friends to talk to ... She is travelling to South America to take some courses from her career there so that she will speak Spanish there! Spanish is a tool that they can use for life (Interviewee #20, male).

Study participants noticed remarkable differences in how Spanish was used in their home countries. These differences shocked them because the widespread use of words they considered inappropriate and even offensive was present across social circles, especially among the younger generations. Some interviewees decided to refrain from interacting with people who came to Australia from the same country because they used the language poorly. They have noticed these differences when visiting their homelands and from television shows from their home countries that they could access while living in Australia, as explained by interviewee #21:

I used to watch some programmes from my country. There were some journalists from a well-known morning show talking about a topic. Hey, I could not believe it! They said so many abominations. Moreover, I thought, why don't they stay silent? Because that is what they are teaching the youth today. Please! Here in Australia, many journalists appear on similar

programs, all very professional ... you realise everything is changing ... It is a problem—a social problem (Interviewee #21, female).

The process of assimilating English, the dominant language in Australia, varied among the study participants. Some arrived with strong English skills, while others had limited proficiency upon migration. Learning English was more accessible for those with prior knowledge, while others faced language acquisition challenges. Over time, most participants improved their English skills, but five participants never achieved proficiency beyond basic communication. One participant shared her experience of noticing increased proficiency in English but expressed concerns about losing fluency in Spanish:

[laughs] It feels ugly because, after all, [Spanish] is your language! As I say, I, well... I emigrated, and I brought my daughters here into the world. That is, I cannot demand much either... can I? However, ... it does not matter because here is where I will die, I say (Interviewee #8, female).

Most interviewed Latin American immigrants were able to integrate into Australian society due to their English skills. However, around three older adults were isolated due to their poor command of English. For them, regularly attending groups for Hispanic people was crucial to socialising with people outside their families. In these groups, they could talk to other Spanish-speaking older adults besides doing many activities targeted to improve their mental health and well-being, including physical and cognitive exercises. One participant with low English skills shared his experience:

[Going to the group] has been very good ... in the sense of communication ... the social exchange, and that has allowed me to learn ... I do know many things about Australian culture through the social relationships I have had with Latin Americans themselves... if I had marginalised myself because I have not mastered the English language, I do not know what would have happened to me ... but indeed, being in a group is good (Interviewee #12, male).

An interviewee with experience assisting older Latin Americans in Australia highlighted the challenges faced by individuals with limited English proficiency when integrating into the host society. She also discussed the potential problems that could arise within immigrant families:

There are other impacts at the family level, which can end because it may be that one of the sons or daughters is in a relationship with a person from another background. Communication problems occur ... can also cause isolation because the parents did not learn English since they worked like beasts to support their families when they first came to live here; they did not develop on a social level within the Australian culture, so they are left alone in the end! ... Because they cannot communicate with their children's partners ... As a result, older people are devastated... and that is where culture comes in ... this country is so multicultural... (Interviewee #17, female).

4. Understanding and assimilating Australian culture

Older immigrants expressed a strong connection both to their home countries and to Australia, the host country. Their ties to their home country were often rooted in family connections and nostalgic memories from before immigrating. Despite the physical distance, participants remained emotionally connected to their homeland and maintained contact with family and friends, offering support when needed. However, for around three participants, the decision not to return to their home country was influenced by the absence of close family members there, although they still felt a sense of connection to their remaining loved ones:

I do not have anyone left in my home country because everyone has already died... so now I only have cousins and nephews ... with other people; we can have that experience that perhaps we are not related to or anything. However, because of that attachment that it is the son or the daughter of someone we know, they become like cousins. Over there, everyone is a cousin. Everyone is an uncle ... I have my daughters living abroad ... I no longer have a mother; I do not have a father, so I would like to end up in my home country (Interviewee #11, female).

The connection with the host country came after spending decades there. Most study participants felt intensely connected to Australia because they lived almost all their adult lives there. They claimed they loved Australia because all they had got in life was here. In Australia, they married, bought a house, started a family, raised children, made friends, worked, retired, and spent time with grandchildren, as explained by interviewee #17:

My husband and I have lived in Australia for almost five decades! It is a lifetime, a whole life here, so it is already tricky. The heart, the emotions, and the feelings are more attached to this life here in Australia than to the one over there in my country because one is becoming more distant (Interviewee #17, female).

Several interviewees noted the positive cultural values in Australian society, including respect for others, demonstrated through good manners, acceptance without judgment, and respecting personal space in interactions. This cultural trait was appreciated by older Latin Americans, who felt comfortable in Australian society and sometimes preferred it over the customs of their fellow Latin Americans. As a result, participants chose to adopt these Australian customs into their own daily lives:

I can be cordial with other people, but I reject hugs. The only people I allow to touch me are my wife and daughter. I may avoid that when interacting with other Latin Americans. For example, at my work, some Latin American coworkers barely knew me; they did not even know who I was! However, the second time we met, they were already kissing me on the cheek to say hello! So, I have told them, but what are you doing? Only my wife and my daughter kiss me! This is one of the reasons why I feel so comfortable in Australian society: if they do not greet you, they do not, and that is okay! ... they respect interpersonal distance (Interviewee #18, male).

One lady expressed how much she enjoyed dancing in Australia because the locals were non-judgemental and accepted her. She claimed to be able to express herself freely when dancing:

What happened to me in my home country: if you do not know how to dance well, you do not dare to go out dancing, which is not how things are here in Australia! Here, I came to let loose

and dance. I have always liked folklore dancing in my country, and I like folklore, dancing
(Interviewee #5, female).

Older Latin American immigrants observed that Australians were more organised and adhered to rules more diligently than in their home countries, perceiving this behaviour as more professional. One participant shared how she passed on the value of the organisation to her daughters-in-law:

We always have everything well organised in advance. For a trip, we already have everything ready. We have purchased the flight tickets, the place where we will arrive is reserved, and if we are going to meet someone, we have the place and date ready. My two daughters-in-law are also very organised, and so are we with my husband, so we will not be left adrift (Interview #21, female).

Older adults observed that the topic of mental health was taken very naturally in Australian society. Australians were willing to talk about going to see their therapist, contrasted by the behaviour of people from Latin American people, as explained by one participant:

In Australian society, the topic of mental health is taken very naturally compared to Latin Americans. However, I know this is also very personal and individual. At work, for example, I have heard people commenting, 'Tomorrow I have an appointment with my therapist' (Interviewee #18, male).

Another interviewee experienced psychotic symptoms during a depressive episode and sought mental health care, with her condition now controlled and in remission. She believed that the reluctance to disclose mental health issues among other Latin Americans stemmed from a sense of shame associated with being ill:

Yes, there is still much shame in our countries, our people ... shame of being sick... I have been through that; I am no longer ashamed of being sick; I am sick, that is it! I cannot walk well, and all that ... Is it that I do not feel ashamed of being sick because I have been in Australia for a long time? ... in my country, I would be sorry to have had those dreams I told you about, where

people around you would say things like, 'You are fooling around; you are talking nonsense!'

They would say to me all that (Interviewee #3, female).

Interviewees observed Australians as more reserved than non-Australians, including Latin Americans. While commitment could be positive and negative, sensitive topics, like religion, were best avoided. The reserved nature could hinder open communication in workplace relationships, potentially leading to isolation, especially if subjected to workplace bullying. However, one participant viewed being reserved positively, citing reasons for their perspective:

I live here, and Australians are different... in everything; what is more, they are more reserved; they have their things like everyone else, but they are more reserved... for me, for my thinking ... it seems that being reserved is better (Interview #9, female).

Most study participants fully integrated into Australian society. Because of this process, those who had chances to work were the most successful in their endeavours to learn more about the locals while incorporating new rules and values into their lives. One lady with teaching experience had a unique chance to work with Australian communities:

Of course, yes... my husband and I were very active in all these events; although we have always been swamped as education professionals in my country, I managed to work there for almost two decades. Then, I worked for just over twenty years here in Australia... I have worked with many people, including the Aborigines. I have had many experiences! So those experiences have greatly enriched us, as have our children, who came to Australia when they were little and grew up here (Interviewee #13, female).

Participants perceived Australian society as cold, noting that while people were generally polite and respectful, they could also be reserved and unapproachable, particularly in workplace settings. Participant #19 recounted interactions with Australian neighbours, highlighting a sense of indifference and lack of warmth in social interactions, such as greetings:

I also understand that people our age need to be entertained by something and have the possibility to talk because here, unfortunately, Australian society is cold. If you go out on the

street and see a neighbour, you greet them briefly, but that is all! One asks him, how are you? How have you been? That is all. On the other hand, we, Latin Americans, are the other way around; we are people who talk, ask, respond, and all that ... Of course, society is different, indeed, and we are different, whether due to the cultural aspect or the community level, since we come from societies with many needs, but for us, the spirit of solidarity and support and all that affects our personalities in some way, right? Our way of being and collaborating (Interviewee #19, male).

One older Latin American sees mutual communication as the cornerstone of social interactions with other immigrants in Australia, especially when coming from different backgrounds. The perception of an excellent cultural value might differ from the perception of the other parties involved in the interaction, as explained:

That is the need to communicate, but it affects the cultural problems that exist in this country because we do not all think the same; things have happened to me with people from other cultures that for them is a negative value, which for me is a positive value (Interviewee #7, male).

Discussion

The research investigated the migration experiences of older Latin American immigrants in Australia, revealing a strong desire to share their cultural background and values, fostering solidarity. All participants, including those living in the country for less than a decade, reported positive migration experiences that positively affected their mental well-being. Cultural identity and preservation of traditions are crucial, with language serving as both an artistic expression and a practical tool for integration. While maintaining ties with their home countries, concerns about health and travel costs deter them from returning. Challenges for cultural assimilation include differences in customs, perceptions of Australians' unapproachability, communication issues, and poor English proficiency. Successful integration is observed among those engaging with Australian communities, although some

perceived Australian society as cold, affecting workplace relationships and their mental health in the long term. Mutual communication and respect for cultural differences are emphasised to foster social understanding and decision-making to enhance mental health.

Our findings reveal that older Latin Americans take pride in their cultural heritage, actively preserving and sharing their cultural values within their communities and social settings, demonstrating inclusivity across diverse backgrounds. According to Georgeou et al. (2023), the expression of culture extends beyond mere participation in activities and values alone. Instead, culture involves engagement in practices and embodiment, influencing individuals' identity formation and sense of belonging (Georgeou et al., 2023). Interviewees emphasised positive relationships with their grandchildren, forged during their upbringing, which, alongside transmitting their heritage language, served to uphold and live by their cultural values. They bolstered their mental well-being by prioritising quality time with family, fostering a strong sense of support and pride in their cultural heritage.

This finding aligns with the concept of familism, emphasising the importance of relying on family for support, comfort, and assistance and prioritising family needs above individual interests (Hernández & Bámaca-Colbert, 2016). Familism is associated with improved psychological well-being among Latin American immigrants, who prioritise close, supportive family relationships and derive psychological benefits from feelings of closeness and support within the family unit (Campos et al., 2014). A qualitative study conducted by Cordella and Rojas-Lizana (2020) on older Latin Americans in Australia shows several challenges to maintaining family bonds and familism, like their expectations of being taken care of by their adult children who grew up in Australia, with different cultural values. There is little research on the benefits of familism in the mental health decision-making of older Latin American immigrants in Australia. Additional research and evidence substantiating the impact of familism on mental health could provide a better understanding of its role in the mental health of these populations (Valdivieso-Mora et al., 2016).

Older Latin Americans adhered to their cultural values by choosing to speak Spanish, their native language, at home, within their Latin American community and even with the researcher for the interviews. These connections within the Latin American community contribute positively to their

mental health by addressing migration challenges and fostering a sense of belonging, especially with their adult children. According to Kilpi-Jakonen and Kwon (2023), using the heritage language, family cohesion, and parental warmth has been linked to better mental health and well-being of the children of immigrants. Nevertheless, there is no research about the direct benefits for older Latin American immigrants of speaking their native language, Spanish, at home and within their communities. Regarding language use in older migrant populations, current research focuses mainly on the effects of English language proficiency as a health-inhibiting and mental health facilitator, including depression, social participation, and access to healthcare services (Hawkins et al., 2022). Therefore, more research is required on the importance of speaking their native language to create and implement strategies that could help them improve the mental health of older Latin American immigrants by maintaining their heritage language.

The findings of this study show that English proficiency helped older Latin Americans integrate into the host society and enjoy good mental health, as identified by Lee et al. (2022). Proficiency in English allowed older Latin Americans to study opportunities for social interaction beyond their families and the Latin American community, facilitating the expansion of their social networks and integration. However, five participants did not attain English proficiency despite residing in Australia for more than ten years. This limited their ability to engage within Australian culture socially, potentially resulting in communication difficulties and feelings of isolation, particularly when unable to communicate with family members in English. In congruence with previous research (Gubernskaya & Treas, 2020; Kim et al., 2019), our findings show that older Latin Americans with low English command are at risk of loneliness, social isolation, and linguistic isolation. Low English proficiency is the most common barrier to integration among older immigrant adults in Australia who feel disconnected from the wider society (Georgeou et al., 2023). This also signifies a higher risk for heightened depressive symptoms and an accelerated development of such symptoms over time (Kim et al., 2019). In this study, all the older Latin Americans with limited English proficiency lived alone. This could lead to linguistic isolation, which could be challenging for them to overcome independently, mainly due to the increased risks of mental illnesses. Therefore, linguistic isolation could be reduced indirectly by improving the English

proficiency of younger immigrants who live with them or are part of their social support network (Gubernskaya & Treas, 2020). Additionally, providing support for those with limited English proficiency through language education initiatives is essential to alleviate depressive symptoms by facilitating more efficient use of healthcare resources and mitigating disparities stemming from language barriers (Kim et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2022).

Older Latin American immigrants in this study had lived in Australia for around four decades and successfully integrated into the host society. They recognised the cultural values and traits of the host society and other immigrants in Australia, perceiving them as mainly positive. The most remarkable values were being organised, polite, respectful, and reserved. This integration process led to personal changes in their perceptions of their culture, which was more evident when they travelled back to their home country. Studies conducted in populations of Latin Americans in Australia show that assessing and adapting to a new country entails continuous comparison and reference to the old context, giving rise to new hybrid perspectives and norms (Kath, 2022). Latin Americans in Australia undergo challenging and liberating experiences that might not have been possible in their home countries, such as confronting prejudices related to race and gender, achieving professional success, and renegotiating household roles (Kath, 2022). All study participants shared their experiences living in Australia, where they were related to people born in Australia and with other immigrants from diverse cultural backgrounds while feeling free to maintain their customs and language, which helped them maintain and even enhance their mental health. From the standpoint of the destination country, a multicultural society emerges when immigrants are not only integrated into existing cultural frameworks but also encouraged to preserve their cultural heritage from their country of origin (Lansford, 2011). As Australia's migrant population grows, multiculturalism and cultural diversity become a societal concern and should thus be promoted to build culturally inclusive social environments (Huang et al., 2023). This could be achieved through targeted measures that must consider that integration is an ongoing, dynamic process to mitigate the deterioration of migrants' health over time (Huang et al., 2023). Future research should focus on the acculturation process and the acculturation coping strategies that could be more effective in the Latin American populations to help older newcomers integrate into Australian society.

Limitations

The research acknowledges potential limitations in its findings, including variability due to participants spread across different Australian states. The study included 23 older Spanish-speaking adults from Latin America living in Australia, with 12 participants from Chile, potentially limiting generalizability to other age groups, countries and cultural backgrounds. The focus on understanding the migration process among older adults suggests a need for more in-depth exploration, particularly regarding mental health issues. Despite these constraints, the results provide a broad overview of the experiences of older Latin American immigrants in Australia.

Conclusions

The migration experiences of older Latin American immigrants in Australia involve cultural preservation, identity maintenance, and integration challenges. Cultural integration occurs through assimilation, blending immigrants' cultural heritage with Australian culture. Preserving Latin American cultural elements aids in effective assimilation. Challenges include differences in customs, interpersonal perceptions, communication barriers, and English proficiency. Successful integration is seen in those engaging with Australian communities, positively impacting mental health and well-being.

Healthcare and social service providers working with older Latin American immigrants in Australia should prioritise cultural sensitivity. Understanding and respecting their cultural background, values, traditions, and language can enhance service effectiveness and community solidarity. Language plays a crucial role in cultural preservation and integration, facilitating communication and reinforcing cultural identity. Community programs promoting and preserving cultural traditions can improve mental health and foster intergenerational connections. Further research should explore the influence of familism on mental health, the health benefits of language use, and effective acculturation coping strategies tailored to Latin American populations' needs.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declared that they have no conflict of interest.

Funding statement

No funding was obtained to conduct this research.

Author Contribution declaration

Each of the four authors listed in the submission of this paper significantly contributed to its development. They played essential roles in conceiving, designing, acquiring, analysing, and interpreting data and creating new software for the project. Additionally, each author either drafted the manuscript or provided significant revisions to ensure the inclusion of important intellectual content. Approval for the final version intended for publication was obtained from all authors. Moreover, they collectively agreed to take responsibility for all aspects of the work, committing to thorough investigation and resolution of any questions regarding the accuracy or integrity of the research.

Data Availability declaration

The data underpinning this study's findings are not accessible to the public because they contain sensitive information that could jeopardise the privacy of the research participants. Additionally, written consent for public data sharing was not obtained from the study participants; hence, considering the research's sensitive nature, supporting data is unavailable.

References

- Abud, T., Kounidas, G., Martin, K. R., Werth, M., Cooper, K., & Myint, P. K. (2022). Determinants of healthy ageing: a systematic review of contemporary literature. *Aging Clinical and Experimental Research*, 34(6), 1215-1223. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40520-021-02049-w>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021). *Migrant Data Matrices, Latest Release*. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved January 9 from <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/migrant-data-matrices/australia#data-download>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2023). *National, state and territory population tables*. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved January 9 from https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/jun-2023/31010do001_202306.xlsx
- Bayona-i-Carrasco, J., & Avila-Tàpies, R. (2020). Latin Americans and Caribbeans in Europe: A Cross-Country Analysis [Article]. *International Migration*, 58(1), 198-218. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12565>
- Camacho, D., Estrada, E., Lagomasino, I. T., Aranda, M. P., & Green, J. (2018). Descriptions of depression and depression treatment in older Hispanic immigrants in a geriatric collaborative

- care program. *Aging & Mental Health*, 22(8), 1056-1062.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2017.1332159>
- Campos, B., Ullman, J. B., Aguilera, A., & Dunkel Schetter, C. (2014). *Familism and psychological health: The intervening role of closeness and social support* [doi:10.1037/a0034094]. Educational Publishing Foundation.
- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory (2nd ed.)*. SAGE Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2017). Constructivist Grounded Theory. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), 299-300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262612>
- Cordella, M., & Rojas-Lizana, S. (2020). Aging and Migration: The value of familism for Spanish speakers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 35(1), 99-109.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10823-019-09389-1>
- García, C., García, M. A., Chiu, C.-T., Rivera, F. I., & Raji, M. (2019). Life Expectancies With Depression by Age of Migration and Gender Among Older Mexican Americans. *The Gerontologist*, 59(5), 877-885. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny107>
- Georgeou, N., Schismenos, S., Wali, N., Mackay, K., & Moraitakis, E. (2023). A Scoping Review of Aging Experiences Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse People in Australia: Toward Better Aging Policy and Cultural Well-Being for Migrant and Refugee Adults. *The Gerontologist*, 63(1), 182-199. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnab191>
- Gubernskaya, Z., & Treas, J. (2020). Pathways to Linguistic Isolation Among Older U.S. Immigrants: Assessing the Role of Living Arrangements and English Proficiency. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 75(2), 351-356. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbx178>
- Hawkins, M. M., Holliday, D. D., Weinhardt, L. S., Florsheim, P., Ngui, E., & AbuZahra, T. (2022). Barriers and facilitators of health among older adult immigrants in the United States: an integrative review of 20 years of literature. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1), 755.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13042-x>
- Hernández, M. M., & Bámaca-Colbert, M. Y. (2016). A Behavioral Process Model of Familism. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 8(4), 463-483. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12166>
- Huang, G., Guo, F., Taksa, L., Cheng, Z., Tani, M., Liu, L., Zimmermann, K. F., & Franklin, M. (2023). Decomposing the differences in healthy life expectancy between migrants and natives: the 'healthy migrant effect' and its age variations in Australia. *Journal of Population Research*, 41(1), 3. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12546-023-09325-8>
- Hull, S. (2013). *Doing Grounded Theory- Notes for the aspiring qualitative analyst*. University of Cape Town: Division of Geomatics. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.4659.3127>
- International Organization for Migration. (2021). *World migration report 2022* (M. McAuliffe & A. Triandafyllidou, Eds.). International Organization for Migration.
<https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022>
- Jimenez, D. E., Martinez Garza, D., Cárdenas, V., & Marquine, M. (2020). Older Latino Mental Health: A Complicated Picture. *Innovation in Aging*, 4(5), igaa033.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaa033>
- Kath, E. (2022). A New Era in Latin American Migration Scholarship in Australia. *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, 28(2), 117-119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13260219.2022.2131800>
- Kath, E., & Del Río, V. (2022). Latin American Migrants in Australia: A Systematic Review of the Data and Literature. *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, 28(2), 120-143.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13260219.2022.2132272>
- Kilpi-Jakonen, E., & Kwon, H. W. (2023). The behavioral and mental health benefits of speaking the heritage language within immigrant families: The moderating role of family relations. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 52(10), 2158-2181. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-023-01807-5>
- Kim, G., Kim, M., Park, S., Jimenez, D. E., & Chiriboga, D. A. (2019). Limited English Proficiency and Trajectories of Depressive Symptoms Among Mexican American Older Adults. *The Gerontologist*, 59(5), 856-864. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny032>

- Lansford, J. E. (2011). Immigrant Issues. In B. B. Brown & M. J. Prinstein (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Adolescence* (pp. 143-151). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-373951-3.00063-6>
- Lee, J., Niu, A., & Yang, H.-S. (2022). Language Proficiency and Subjective Well-being: Evidence from Immigrants in Australia. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 23(5), 1847-1866. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-021-00474-2>
- Mason, R., & Azeredo, R. (2023). Latin American Migration to the Asia Pacific: Transpacific Connections in the Twenty-First Century. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 44(3), 345-350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2023.2213986>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2018). *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Commonwealth of Australia.
- QSR International. (2024). NVivo 14. In Lumivero. <https://lumivero.com/products/nvivo/>
- Rote, S., Chen, N. W., & Markides, K. (2015). Trajectories of Depressive Symptoms in Elderly Mexican Americans. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 63(7), 1324-1330. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.13480>
- Salas-Wright, C. P., Vaughn, M. G., Goings, T. C., Oh, S., Delva, J., Cohen, M., & Schwartz, S. J. (2020). Trends and mental health correlates of discrimination among Latin American and Asian immigrants in the United States. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 55(4), 477-486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-019-01811-w>
- Sanchez, L., Johnson, T., Williams, S., Spurling, G., & Durham, J. (2020). Identifying inequities in an urban Latin American population: a cross-sectional study in Australian primary health care. *Australian Journal of Primary Health*, 26(2), 140-146. <https://doi.org/10.1071/PY19049>
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2018). Saturation in qualitative research: exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality & Quantity*, 52(4), 1893-1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>
- Singh, S., & Estefan, A. (2018). Selecting a Grounded Theory Approach for Nursing Research. *Global Qualitative Nursing Research*, 5, 2333393618799571. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2333393618799571>
- United Nations. (2020). *UN Decade of Healthy Ageing: Plan of Action 2021–2030*. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/decade-of-healthy-ageing-plan-of-action>
- United States Census Bureau. (2022). *Sex by Age (Hispanic or Latino)*. United States Government. Retrieved February 25 from <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT1Y2022.B01001?q=older%20Latinos>
- Valdivieso-Mora, E., Peet, C. L., Garnier-Villarreal, M., Salazar-Villanea, M., & Johnson, D. K. (2016). A Systematic Review of the Relationship between Familism and Mental Health Outcomes in Latino Population [Review]. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01632>
- World Bank. (2023). *World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees and Societies*. World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1941-4>
- World Health Organization. (2024). *Ageing*. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/health-topics/ageing#tab=tab_1

Table 1: Participants' demographic details.

Item	Description	Number of participants
Age (years)	60 – 64	1
	65 – 69	4
	70 – 74	5
	75 – 79	8
	80 – 84	4
	85 – 89	0
	90+	1
Gender	Male	8
	Female	15
	Other	0
Perceived English skills	Proficient	18
	Limited	5
Country of origin	Chile	12
	Argentina	3
	El Salvador	2
	Uruguay	2
	Colombia	2
	Venezuela	1
	Cuba	1
Years living in Australia	1 – 10	1
	11 – 20	2
	21 – 30	1
	31 – 40	9
	41 – 50	6
	51+	4
State of residence	Victoria	15
	New South Wales	5
	South Australia	2
	Queensland	1

Table 2: Depiction of the study's categories as they were constructed through the data analysis.

Category	Label	Focused codes
Category A	Showing and sharing own Latin American culture in Australia	Describing Latin-American culture and related beliefs Being able to show Latin American culture in a group Staying involved with other Hispanic immigrants in Australia
Category B	Noticing differences in the home country after living in Australia	Feeling like an immigrant in both the country of origin and Australia Observing differences in people's mentality back in one's home country Deciding not to go back to country of origin
Category C	Sharing Post-migration language experiences	Passing on the Spanish language to the next generation Noticing differences in how Spanish is currently used in the home country Assimilating the English language Being ignorant about Australian society because of not mastering English
Category D	Understanding and assimilating Australian culture	Feeling connected to the country of origin and the host country Feeling that people in Australia have good cultural values Observing that mental health is taken very naturally in Australian society Perceiving that Australians are more reserved than other non-Australians Describing difficulties in assimilating the Australian culture

Figure 1: Grounded theory and main narratives.

