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**Narratives of the self:
The impact of migration on the health of Latinos
living in
Wellington, New Zealand**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

**Masters in Science
in
Psychology**

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Abstract

This research examines how Latinos living in Wellington have made sense of their experiences and negotiated their identity positions during their acculturation process to New Zealand society. It also examines the impact of acculturation on these Latinos, found in their narratives and dialogical positioning. Utilising the qualitative research methods of a dialogical self theory framework to inform a narrative inquiry analysis of recorded interviews, I explore the experiences of migration, social connectedness and health had by ten Latinos living in Wellington New Zealand. This research found that during the process of acculturation to New Zealand society these participants made sense of their experiences of migration, social connectedness and health as part of a process of resilience building; which they felt they achieved through being positive in the face of adversity. During their acculturation process these Latino participants underwent a diverse array of experiences including: a lack of social interaction, a cultural clash between their cultural values and the values of New Zealand society, a lack of social participation and social connectedness, difficulty gaining employment, feeling like they are ‘the other’, and experiencing disparity in the healthcare system. The Latinos participating in this research negotiated their identity positions by adopting multiple identities which enabled them to navigate their world. In conclusion the aforementioned experiences have hindered these Latinos’ process of acculturation as well as their upward mobility in New Zealand society.

Key words: *Latinos living in Wellington New Zealand, migration, acculturation, health, dialogical self theory, narrative inquiry, social constructionism, critical realism, social connectedness*

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