

The Quality of Life of Latinos in New Zealand: Defining their Quality of Life

La calidad de vida de los latinos en Nueva Zelanda: Definiendo su calidad de vida

A qualidade de vida dos latinos na Nova Zelândia: Definição da sua qualidade de vida

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21803/penamer.16.31.491>

Alfredo José López Severiche

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0783-5521>

PhD in social sciences and public policy,
Bachelor's degree in computer science and a
specialization in information technology.
Master's degree in international communication.
Email: alslopez1@hotmail.com.

Abstract

Introduction: This research explores how Latin American refugees and immigrants living in New Zealand define the quality of life. The main reason for conducting this investigation was the lack of academic research on Latin American refugees and Immigrants in New Zealand. **Objective:** The purpose of this research is to contribute to the development of research on Latin American people in New Zealand, to discover the factors that impact the quality of life of these people in New Zealand, and what can be done to improve their quality of life. **Methodology:** Ethnographic and autoethnographic were the methodologies used in this study. Also, 20 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants. **Results:** The findings of this research show that the definitions of quality of life given by the participants are aligned with those of the academic literature. For example, the participants believe that quality of life means having sufficient financial resources to live with dignity. They also think that it is necessary to feel at peace, tranquillity, happy and safe to enjoy a true quality of life. **Conclusion:** In summary, this research presents the definitions of quality of life given by Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand and the factors that contribute to quality of life.

Keywords: Immigrants, Refugees, Latin Americans, Quality of Life, Integration

Resumen

Introducción: Esta investigación explora cómo los refugiados e inmigrantes latinoamericanos que viven en Nueva Zelanda definen la calidad de vida. La principal razón para realizar esta investigación fue la falta de investigación académica sobre los refugiados e inmigrantes latinoamericanos en Nueva Zelanda. **Objetivo:** El propósito de esta investigación es contribuir al desarrollo de la investigación sobre las personas latinoamericanas en Nueva Zelanda, y descubrir los factores que impactan la calidad de vida de estas personas en Nueva Zelanda, y qué se puede hacer para mejorar su calidad de vida. **Metodología:** Etnografía y auto etnografía fueron las metodologías utilizadas en este estudio. Asimismo, se realizaron 20 entrevistas semiestructuradas a 20 participantes. **Resultados:** Los hallazgos de esta investigación muestran que las definiciones de calidad de vida dadas por los participantes están alineadas con las de la literatura académica. Por ejemplo, los participantes creen que la calidad de vida significa tener suficientes recursos económicos para vivir con dignidad. También piensan que es necesario sentirse en paz, tranquilidad, alegría y seguridad para disfrutar de una verdadera calidad de vida. **Conclusión:** En resumen, esta investigación presenta las definiciones de calidad de vida dadas por los refugiados e inmigrantes latinoamericanos en Nueva Zelanda y los factores que contribuyen a la calidad de vida.

Palabras clave: Inmigrantes, Refugiados, Latinoamericanos, Calidad de Vida, Integración.

¿Cómo citar este artículo?

López, A. (2023). The Quality of Life of Latinos in New Zealand: Defining their Quality of Life. *Pensamiento Americano*, e#:491. 16(31), 1-15. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21803/penamer.16.31.491>



Resumo

Introdução: Esta pesquisa explora como os refugiados e imigrantes latino-americanos que vivem na Nova Zelândia definem qualidade de vida. A principal razão para a realização desta pesquisa foi a falta de investigação académica sobre os refugiados e imigrantes latino-americanos na Nova Zelândia. **Objectivo:** O objectivo desta investigação é contribuir para o desenvolvimento da investigação sobre a população latino-americana na Nova Zelândia e descobrir os factores que têm impacto na qualidade de vida da população latino-americana na Nova Zelândia e o que pode ser feito para melhorar a sua qualidade de vida. **Metodologia:** A etnografia e a autoetnografia foram as metodologias utilizadas neste estudo. Além disso, foram realizadas 20 entrevistas semi-estruturadas com 20 participantes. **Resultados:** Os resultados desta investigação mostram que as definições de qualidade de vida dadas pelos participantes estão alinhadas com as da literatura académica. Por exemplo, os participantes acreditam que qualidade de vida significa ter recursos económicos suficientes para viver com dignidade. Também pensam que é necessário sentir paz, tranquilidade, alegria e segurança para desfrutar de uma verdadeira qualidade de vida. **Conclusão:** Em suma, esta investigação apresenta as definições de qualidade de vida dadas pelos refugiados e imigrantes latino-americanos na Nova Zelândia e os factores que contribuem para a qualidade de vida.

Palavras-chave: Imigrantes, Refugiados, Latino-Americanos, Qualidade de Vida, Integração.



Introduction

The first Latin Americans to arrive in New Zealand were Chileans, who arrived in the 1970s and 1980s (Wilson, 2015). Later, many immigrants from all over Latin America began to arrive (López, 2018; Sánchez, 2016; Wilson, 2015). Most of these Latinos came to New Zealand as immigrants searching for a better quality of life (Dürr, 2011; Hoffmann, 2016; Pérez, 2012; Smythe-Contreras, 2015). On the other hand, another group of people from Latin America, arrived in New Zealand as refugees due to internal armed conflicts and civil wars in countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, Peru, and Chile (López, 2018; Sánchez, 2016; Wilson, 2015). As a result, by 2018, New Zealand had a population of around 18,000 Latinos living in its territory (Stats NZ, 2018). Of that amount, it is estimated that more than 2,500 entered the country as refugees (Stats NZ, 2018). Colombian refugees make up the largest refugee group from Latin American in that country, with a population of more than 1,300 by 2018 (Stats NZ, 2018).

Once in New Zealand, Latin American refugees and immigrants discover that New Zealand is a country where they can live in peace and tranquillity (López, 2018). Contrary to this, in Latin America, the participants faced insecurity, violence, poverty, poorly paid jobs and a shortage of economic resources to enjoy a true quality of life. Some of them had to flee their countries because they were kidnapped, tortured and killed (López, 2018). Therefore, the participants say they feel safe in New Zealand, free from fear of violence and satisfied with their quality of life in this country. However, at the same time, Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand claim that life in this country is not perfect (López, 2018).

In New Zealand, they have had to face many challenges to integrate into the country and enjoy a quality of life. Some of these challenges that refugees and immigrants in New Zealand have faced are discrimination, language barriers, unemployment, low income, loneliness, mental health problems and family problems (Dürr, 2011; Hoffmann, 2016; Pérez, 2012; Smythe-Contreras, 2015). However, despite facing the aforementioned challenges, participants claim to be satisfied with their quality of life in New Zealand.

There is very little research on Latin American immigrants and refugees in New Zealand. This research paper explores how Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand define the quality of life. It is driven by a pragmatic question of what can be done to improve their integration and quality of life in New Zealand. The literature research has identified a significant gap in the research about the quality of life of Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand. Thus, this study seeks to make an original contribution to knowledge on the concept of quality of life for refugees and immigrants. Further, it makes an original contribution to research on Latin American people in New Zealand and their quality of life.

Thus, the new knowledge derived from this research can help refugee and immigrant organisations and local communities where refugees and immigrants are settled to understand their needs better. That is why in this study, we sought to answer the following research question:

- How do Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand define quality of life?
- Therefore, this research paper presents the definition of the participants about the quality of life and what their quality of life is like in New Zealand.



Theoretical Framework

Quality of life as a theoretical framework

The term quality of life began to be used after World War II in the United States by economic researchers seeking to discover North Americans' living conditions after the war (Campbell, 1981; Meeberg, 1993; Urzúa & Caqueo-Urizar, 2012). Later, in the 1960s, many researchers in sociology, psychology, and economics began conducting quality-of-life research (Campbell et al., 1976; Haas, 1999). In this way, the term quality of life became very popular in the academic and scientific community (Campbell et al., 1976; Haas, 1999). One of the promoters of the quality-of-life concept was the American psychologist Abraham Maslow, who between 1943 and 1987 published several articles on his theory of what, according to him, is a good life and the ideal life (Maslow, 1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987).

Maslow's theories of an ideal life and a good life are known as "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" (Maslow, 1962; Ventegodt et al., 2003a; 2003b; 2003c). Maslow (1962), affirms that to have "the ideal life" or a "good life" (in other words, to have quality of life), it is necessary to satisfy the eight needs that make up his "Hierarchy of Needs", which are: 1) The physiological needs, 2) the needs for safety and peace of mind 3) the needs for self-belongingness and love, 4) the needs for self-esteem 5) cognitive needs to know and understand, 6) aesthetic needs, 7) the needs for self-actualization and 8) the needs to transcendence in the world (Maslow, 1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987).

Although Maslow's research (1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987) are quite old, they are still used to support much recent research on quality of life (Chan, 2018; Urzúa & Caqueo-Urizar, 2012), and this is because Maslow's theories are the ones that best explain the concept of quality of life in a broader, more detailed and deep way (Ventegodt et al., 2003a; 2003c). It could be said that after Maslow, the other researchers on quality of life have only replicated, repeated or interpreted the theories of Maslow (1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987). The foregoing suggests that since Maslow to date, there have been no major advances in defining the concept of quality of life.

For some researchers, quality of life is a purely subjective concept (Diener & Diener, 1995; Veenhoven, 2008). By subjective, we mean that it is based on the opinions and feelings of each person (Ortiz, 2013). For example, Zhang (2014), explains the subjective approach to quality of life "focuses on a individuals' personal experiences and perceptions of their own life. The rationale behind this approach is that quality of life can be defined by people's conscious experiences – in terms of feelings or cognitive satisfactions" (p. 31). Likewise, Campbell (1972) affirms, "the quality of life must be in the eye of the beholder" (p. 442). Marans and Stimson (2011) also argue that quality of life is a subjective concept that is defined by each individual according to their way of thinking and feeling. Therefore, according to Marans and Stimson (2011), what means quality of life for one person may not be the same for another (Diener & Diener, 1995; Veenhoven, 2008).

On the other hand, some researchers think that quality of life is an objective concept (Georgiou & Hancock, 2009; Marans & Stimson, 2011; Peet & Hartwick, 2015). Objective quality of life "involves tangible objects such as finances, employment, place of residence (homeownership), education levels and one's social or physical environment" (Georgiou & Hancock, 2009, p. 5). It can be seen then that there are people who think that quality of life is a subjective concept, and there are those who believe that it is an objective concept. However, some researchers and organisations believe that quality of life is a combination of objective and subjective factors (Bayram et al., 2011; Bowling, 2007; Ferriss, 2004; Walker,



2005; Zhang, 2014). For example, the World Health Organization (1997), defines quality of life as:

an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and their relationship to salient features of their environment. (p. 1)

Likewise, Hu and Das (2019) affirm that quality of life means enjoying economic and psychological well-being. Nag and Jain (2019) say that quality of life involves health, well-being and positive experiences in life. For his part, Petroczy (2019) states that quality of life means economic and social development. On the other hand, Urzúa and Caqueo-Urizar (2012) say that quality of life is living conditions, contentment with life or life experience. Ventegodt et al. (2003a; 2003c) define quality of life as existential satisfaction produced by economic resources and spiritual and religious factors. Therefore, the literature suggests that quality of life means living satisfied and happy with our condition and lifestyle. This means that the person is satisfied with her/his socioeconomic, cultural, mental and spiritual state. It can be seen then that all the definitions found in the literature on quality of life are aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987).

Methodology

The methodological approaches of this study are ethnography and autoethnography. According to O'Leary (2014), ethnography is "the study of cultural groups in a bid to understand, describe and interpret a way of life from the point of view of its participants" (p. 133). Likewise, Revell (2012) says that "ethnography is a qualitative approach in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviours, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group" (p. 65). Thus, as this study is based on investigating the views of Latin Americans in New Zealand on quality of life, the ethnographic approach was suitable to conduct this research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019; Mohedas et al., 2014; Raafaub & Talbert, 2010; Singer, 2009). Likewise, autoethnography was used because the principal investigator is also a Latin American living in New Zealand; therefore, the principal investigator served as both an investigator and a participant, as is often the case in autoethnographic studies (Denshire, 2013; Douglas & Carless, 2013; Méndez, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews as a data collection method

The findings presented in this research paper are based on 20 semi-structured interviews that were conducted with 11 immigrants and 9 Latin American refugees in New Zealand. These 20 interviews were carried out in May 2020. Due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to conduct the interviews via telephone, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. Each interview lasted about an hour. The questionnaires with the questions were sent days in advance to the participants to meditate on the answers. The interviews were conducted in Spanish, the mother tongue of the participants. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed and translated into English by the researcher.

Sampling and Recruitment

To recruit participants, advertising sheets were posted on Facebook inviting the Latin American community in New Zealand to participate in this research. This type of sampling is known as voluntary



sampling (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Morse, 2011; O'Leary, 2014). Around 15 participants were recruited through this medium (voluntary sampling). The other five remaining were recruited through snowball sampling (O'Leary, 2014). Snowball sampling means that the researcher directly invites some potential participants who have been referred by people who have already been included in the research (O'Leary, 2014). Once a participant is interviewed, this person is asked if he/she knows someone who might like to participate in the research (O'Leary, 2014). In this way, as if it was a snowball, the group of participants grows as more participants are requested. The participants in this research were selected according to the following criteria:

1. Older than 21 years
2. Speak fluent Spanish or English
3. Being a New Zealand resident or citizen
4. Being a former Latin American migrant
5. Being a former Latin American refugee
6. Have lived in Latin America
7. Have lived in New Zealand for at least three years
8. First-generation immigrant

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data produced by this research (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Calliou, 2004; Fernández, 2016; O'Leary, 2014) "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this research paper, three themes that emerged from the thematic analysis are presented, these are 1) Peace, happiness and tranquillity, important factors in the quality of life. 2) Employment, housing and economic resources as indicators of the quality of life. And 3) association with family and friends: an indispensable factor in the quality of life.

Results and discussion

Below direct quotations from the participants on their definitions of quality of life are presented. For ethical considerations, the names of the participants have been changed.

Peace, happiness and tranquillity, important factors in the quality of life.

The participants were asked: How could you define quality of life? They offered interesting answers. For example, Fernando is a 65-year-old former Colombian refugee who has lived in New Zealand for 10 years. His definition of quality of life is:

Quality of life is what I find myself living in this paradise that is New Zealand. Here I live in peace and tranquillity. Quality of life is the way of life in which I find myself living in New Zealand. (Fernando)

Fernando's definition of quality of life is based on the peace and quiet he claims to be experiencing in New Zealand. It is understandable that for a former Colombian refugee who had to flee his country to save his life, what he likes most about New Zealand is the peace and tranquillity he lives in. According to Fernando, Colombia is a country torn by war and violence, but New Zealand is a country where peace and tranquillity reign. During the interview with Fernando, he compared the tranquillity of New



Zealand to resting at peace in a cemetery. According to Fernando, in a cemetery, everything is silent and the dead rest in peace. Likewise, Fernando feels safe and at peace; this is what true quality of life means for him. Fernando adds, “my quality of life in New Zealand is very good and it is improving every day. I am very happy here. Government aid is very good”.

The next participant to define quality of life is Lola; she is a 34-year-old Argentine immigrant who has lived in New Zealand for seven years. Lola says: “For my quality of life, it is the balance between working life and enjoying free time. For me, a person who lives in peace is happy and has quality of life”. Lola adds: “I was not happy with my quality of life in my home country. I believe that this is the reason why many people like me leave their country of origin to seek a better quality of life abroad”. Like Fernando, Lola states that she

was not happy with the quality of life she had in her country of origin. For that reason, she went to New Zealand in search of a better quality of life. Once in New Zealand, Lola affirms that she has quality of life, and the reason she gives is that in New Zealand, she has everything she needs to live, which brings her peace and happiness.

The pattern of including the words “peace and tranquillity” is repeated once again in the following quotation presented by Marta, another 37-year-old immigrant from Argentina who has been in New Zealand for seven years. Marta says: “I understand that quality of life is everything that allows a person to have a comfortable lifestyle, time economic facilities, peace and tranquillity”. Marta’s definition of quality of life agrees with the definitions given by Fernando and Lola. However, unlike Fernando and Lola, Marta was happy with her quality of life in Argentina. However, she feels that her quality of life in this country is much better than the quality of life she had in Argentina. When Marta was asked why her quality of life in New Zealand is better for her, she replied:

I think that my quality of life in New Zealand is better than my quality of life in Argentina because here I have basic things, health, food, and spare time to share with the family. Also feeling happy and at peace... emotionally well. Fortunately, I came with my husband, and he gives me emotional stability, which contributes to my quality of life. (Marta)

Similarly, Ricardo is an immigrant from Nicaragua who came to New Zealand 30 years ago in search of a better quality of life. He defines quality of life:

Quality of life is how I live here in New Zealand. I also lead a free, quiet and peaceful life. My quality of life in my country was not very good. I had a very stressed life as a result of insecurity, my country is very insecure and at any time, one can be the victim of an assault. This situation makes one not feel safe. Therefore, I would say that my quality of life in my country of origin, on a scale of 1 to 10, I would give it an 8. If my country were safer, I would give it a 10

out of 10. Currently, my economic quality of life in New Zealand is better than the quality of life I used to have in Nicaragua. However, if I lived in Nicaragua at the salary, I currently earn in New Zealand, my quality of life in Nicaragua would be better than my current quality of life in New Zealand. On the other hand, in Nicaragua, I used to own a house, but in New Zealand. I have to pay extremely expensive rent. However, in Nicaragua, my house looked like a prison ... full of bars on all sides to protect me from dangers or risks, while in New Zealand. I live in safety and peace. (Ricardo)



Likewise, Ramon is another Latin American immigrant from Venezuela who came to New Zealand 12 years ago. His definition of quality of life is aligned with that of the four aforementioned participants. Ramon says:

I believe that quality of life is everything that allows us to feel good, including the mental, emotional and physical sense. All external factors make us feel good. Quality of life is a combination of the objective and subjective aspects ... you need both aspects to have quality of life. The indicators of quality of life are physical safety, feeling safe, in peace and free from crime and delinquency. Have a good health system that covers all our medical needs. I believe that my quality of life in Venezuela was neither bad nor good. I could say that my quality of life in my country was above average. That is, my quality of life in Venezuela was from 6 to 7 on a scale of 1 to 10. In Venezuela I had a good job, many friends, my family, I had good medical care. The negative was the unsafety of my country and the shortage of gasoline and some other items. I could say that I was happy with my quality of life in my country until I arrived in New Zealand and I realized that, although in Venezuela I was fine, I could have been better. I say this because when comparing my quality of life in New Zealand with my quality of life in Venezuela, I can see that in Venezuela my quality of life was lower. (Ramon)

The quotes already presented from Fernando, Lola, Marta, Ricardo, and Ramon show that aspects such as peace, happiness, and tranquillity are part of the quality of life. Although these participants point out other socio-economic aspects as part of the quality of life, they highlight "peace, tranquillity and happiness" as the most important factors in the enjoyment of the quality of life. These definitions of the participants are aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987), and other studies previously presented (Hu & Das, 2019; Nag & Jain, 2019; Urzúa & Caqueo-Urizar, 2012; Ventegodt et al., 2003a; 2003b, 2003c).

Employment, housing and economic resources as indicators of the quality of life

The participants in this research also think that having material possessions and a good socio-economic level are necessary factors contributing to the quality of life. For example, they mention how important it is to have a house, a job, money, a car, and other economic comforts to enjoy a quality of life. This is the case of Julio, a 56-year-old former Colombian refugee who has lived in New Zealand for eight years; Julio thinks that material possessions are necessary to have quality of life. During the interview, Julio was asked: what factors have brought you quality of life in New Zealand? Julio replied:

The economic factor. Because in Colombia, the only option I had of being able to have a car was participating in a raffle where I risked losing my money. While in New Zealand, I already have my car, and my wife also has her car. Also, the study here is excellent and I have not had to pay for my children's studies. I have a good house to live in and all kind of amenities. My children study, my wife and I have our car, we have good health services. All these aspects are giving us quality of life in New Zealand. In Colombia and Ecuador, I had no quality of life. In Ecuador, I was very sick with the colon and did not have the financial resources to pay for medical treatment. If we compare a photo of me from that time with a photo of me from now, you can see that I now look much better. Upon arrival in this country, the doctors treated me and helped me with my health problem. When I got here, my body was semi-destroyed, here I had surgery, and thanks to this, I feel like a new person. These things have contributed to my quality of life in New Zealand. (Julio)

In Colombia, the peasants are economically poor people; most of them do not have the economic re-



sources to cultivate the soil. Much less do they have the money to buy a car that allows them to transport their products to the cities to sell them at a better price. In Colombia, Julio was a peasant who lacked the basic resources to live with dignity, so once in New Zealand, he feels pleased to enjoy all the comforts that he did not have in his country of origin. He is even happy to see that his children are even being educated for free, while in Colombia, Julio could not study due to a lack of financial resources. According to Julio, all these comforts that he enjoys are factors that contribute to his quality of life.

Similarly, Fernando, previously quoted, also mentions that the enjoyment of material comforts has contributed to his quality of life in New Zealand. When asked, what factors have brought you quality of life in New Zealand? Fernando replied:

I have a quality of life that I have not had anywhere else in the world. I have food here, a house to live in and money to survive. And also, if I need any social support, the system is eager to help me. For me, this is quality of life. Because in other Latin American countries, there is no such aid for an older person like me. The government assistance I receive gives me quality of life. The New Zealand health system has also been very good to me, which has contributed to my quality of life. For all this, I live very well here. (Fernando)

Although Fernando is satisfied with the material comforts, he has in New Zealand, he says that his quality of life could be better if he had a better income. He makes this clear in the following quote:

Yes, of course, my quality of life in New Zealand could be better. This would be possible if the government created better social policies to improve social assistance to older people like me. I live comfortably with the weekly money that the government provides me, but if the social welfare from the government were increased, surely, I would live better. I think that when I become a pensioner, my financial situation could be better. (Fernando)

Likewise, Alberto, a 36-year-old Argentine immigrant who arrived in New Zealand 7 years ago, believes that material comforts are factors that contribute to the quality of life. Alberto makes it clear when he says:

What things should give me quality of life? Material and emotional things, a house, a car, food, friends and loved ones. For example, my economic or material quality of life in New Zealand is much easier than in Argentina. Here we work fewer hours than in Argentina and the salary is higher. In Argentina, a person works 12 or 14 hours a day and the money is not enough to cover the expenses of the month. Thus, one in Argentina lives very stressed, while in New Zealand, one lives calmer. (Alberto)

Other participants also gave similar answers to the question, what things should bring you quality of life? For example, Roman (a 52-year-old immigrant from Uruguay who has lived in New Zealand for 19 years) said: "A house, a car, a good job and being healthy. Also, be happy". Mabel, a 28 years old former Colombian refugee who has lived in New Zealand for 10 years, says: "Money, health, peace, a house, a car. Also being able to have their own business so as not to be managed by others. Being your own boss contributes to the quality of life". Emilio, 64 years old former refugee from El Salvador who has lived 31 years in New Zealand, says:

Quality of life is the magnificent life that I have in New Zealand. In this country, there are many



opportunities and the government help unemployed people. Therefore, quality of life, for me it means having everything I need to live. Have food to eat, have a decent home, have health services and be happy with having enough of what one needs. (Emilio)

Likewise, Eladio, a 52-year-old former Colombian refugee who arrived in New Zealand 12 years ago, says:

I think that quality of life means having a decent life and having everything necessary to live satisfactorily. Many people lack the basics to live ... they are very poor people who do not have the resources to eat, they do not have a house to live in ... these people with extreme poverty do not have quality of life. In my opinion, the quality of life indicators are having a house to live in, having food and good health. Economic indicators are essential to have quality of life. Therefore, when a person has their financial needs covered, they can feel satisfied and perhaps happy. So, this also contributes to their subjective quality of life. Therefore, I think that objective and subjective indicators are necessary to have a true quality of life. (Eladio)

The quotes presented show that the participants in this research think that material comforts such as having a house, a car, a job, money, health and education, are necessary factors to enjoy quality of life. These definitions of the participants are aligned with those presented in the literature (Hu & Das, 2019; Nag & Jain, 2019; Urzúa & Caqueo-Urizar, 2012; Ventegodt et al., 2003a; 2003b, 2003c).

Association with family and friends: An indispensable factor in the quality of life

The literature previously presented on the definitions of quality of life does not specifically describe that being surrounded by family and friends is an important factor contributing to people's quality of life. Maslow's investigations (1943; 1954; 1962; 1970a; 1970b; 1987) neither specifically mention this issue. Nevertheless, the third hierarchy of needs described by Maslow (1962), which is "the need for self-belongingness and love", suggests that feeling love for others and feeling loved is a human need. Therefore, satisfying this need to love and be loved contributes to the quality of life. For that reason, the participants think that being surrounded by loved ones contributes to their happiness and quality of life. For example, regarding this matter, Lola, previously quoted, says: "having health and friends and above all having my husband who helps me in everything I need contribute to my quality of life".

For her part, Elena, a 50-year-old Venezuelan immigrant who came to New Zealand 13 years ago, says that being in New Zealand with her husband and daughters contributes to her quality of life in this country. However, Elena misses her parents, siblings, nephews and friends who are in Venezuela. Therefore, Elena thinks that if these people were in New Zealand with her, then her quality of life in New Zealand would be much better; Elena says: "I believe that my quality of life in New Zealand could improve if I lived here with all my family who is in Venezuela. I would also really enjoy having my friends from Venezuela here in New Zealand".

Marta, a previously mentioned Argentine immigrant, is happy to live with her husband and baby in New Zealand. She tells us about those factors that have contributed to her quality of life in New Zealand:

Employment, and having everything necessary to live in dignity. Also having free time to share with my family. Having my baby here in New Zealand has been great for me. It would have been challenging for me to be a mother in Argentina because it would be pretty hard to dedicate time to looking



after a baby with three jobs. Here I have the economic ease and the time to stay at home taking care of my baby and during this period, the government helps me cover my living expenses. This is something that does not happen in my country. I think my quality of life in New Zealand is excellent. However, my quality of life in New Zealand could improve if I had all my relatives here with me; in this way, my subjective or emotional quality of life would be much better. So, I would feel complete. I feel that Argentina and New Zealand are my home. But if I had my whole family in New Zealand, then New Zealand would be my only home. (Marta)

Likewise, Alberto (an immigrant from Argentina, previously mentioned) Says:

In the material part, it is good; emotionally, it is hysterical ... changeable. To make my quality of life in New Zealand go from good to excellent, it would be necessary for me to bring my family from Argentina to enjoy the good things of this country as well, and I would feel full and delighted. Happiness is only happiness if it is shared. (Alberto)

The findings of this study show that Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand define the quality of life as living in peace, tranquillity, and feeling safe and happy. For them, these are subjective factors that are very necessary to enjoy a true quality of life. However, at the same time, Latin Americans in New Zealand recognize that objective components are also needed to have quality of life. The objective factors to which the participants refer are the comforts and economic amenities such as having a decent house to live in, having a well-paid job, owning a car and all kinds of material comforts. According to the participants, these things already mentioned contribute to their quality of life in New Zealand. However, Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand feel that their quality of life in this country would be much better if they could be surrounded by all their relatives who remain in their countries of origin. They miss their family and friends and would like to bring these people to New Zealand to also enjoy the quality of life in this country. Therefore, although Latin Americans are happy in New Zealand, they would be much happier if they could share that happiness by being with all their relatives in New Zealand, it is as Alberto says: "Happiness is only happiness if it is shared". In other words, quality of life is only quality of life if it is shared with our loved ones.

Conclusion

In summary, this research paper has presented the definitions of quality of life given by Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand. The definitions given by them show that living in peace, tranquillity, and feeling safe and at peace are subjective factors that contribute to the quality of life of human beings. Also, the participants' responses show that objective factors such as a house, a car, a job, health, education and food are indispensable factors in the quality of life of every human being. However, Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand emphasize that being surrounded by loved ones is perhaps the most important factor contributing to happiness and, therefore, quality of life. For this reason, the participants want to be able to bring their family members to New Zealand so that they can all enjoy a quality of life together.

On the other hand, although the definitions of the participants are aligned with the definitions presented in the literature, the findings of this study go further and provide new knowledge about the factors that contribute to the quality of life. For example, previous studies on quality of life do not specify that it is necessary to be surrounded by family and friends to feel happy and have quality of life, while in



this research, this issue is emphasized showing that to have true quality of life is necessary to love, feeling loved and being surrounded by loved ones. Furthermore, this study has contributed new insights into the quality of life of Latin American refugees and immigrants in New Zealand. These new contributions can help public policymakers to create new policies that contribute to the quality of life of refugees and immigrants in any country.

Esta obra está bajo una Licencia Creative Commons
"Reconocimiento/No Comercial/Sin Obra Derivada".



Referencias

- Bayram, N., Thorburn, D. & Bilgel, N. (2011). Quality of life among Turkish immigrants in Sweden: A study for assessing the measurement properties of the World Health Organization's Quality of Life 100 Instrument. *Migracijske i Etničke Teme*, 27(1), 39–55.
- Bowling, A. (2007). Quality of life in older age: What older people say. In H. Mollenkopf & A. Walker (Eds.), *Quality of life in old age: International and multi-disciplinary perspectives* (pp. 15-30). Springer.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Calliou, B. (2004). Methodology for an oral history project. Pacific Worlds Essays: <http://www.pacificworlds.com/homepage/education/essays/essay2a.cfm>
- Campbell, A. (1972). Aspiration, satisfaction and fulfilment. In A. Campbell, & P. E. Converse (eds.), *The human meaning of social change* (pp. 441-446). Russell Sage Foundation.
- Campbell, A. (1981). *The sense of well-being in America*. McGraw-Hill.
- Campbell, A., Converse, P. & Rodgers, W. (1976). *The quality of American life*. Russell Sage.
- Chan, K. (2018). Is religious and existential well-being important in quality of life in Hong Kong Chinese? *The Social Science Journal*, 55, 273–283.
- Collis, J. & Hussey, R. (2009). *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students* (3rd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Denshire, S. (2013). Autoethnography. In *Sociopedia.isa* (pp. 1-12). <https://doi.org/10.1177/205684601351>
- Diener, E. & Diener, C. (1995). The wealth of nations revisited: Income and quality of life. *Social Indicators Research*, 36(3), 275-286.
- Douglas, K. & Carless, D. (2013). A history of autoethnographic inquiry. In S. H. Jones, T. E. Adams, & C. Ellis (eds.), *Handbook of autoethnography* (pp. 84-106). Routledge.
- Dürr, E. (2011). To belong in Aotearoa New Zealand: Latin American migrant experiences in multicultural Auckland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(3), 503-519.
- Fernández, L. (2016). *¿Cómo analizar datos cualitativos?* Butlletí LaRecerca.
- Ferriss, A. L. (2004). The quality of life concept in sociology. *The American Sociologist*, 35(3), 37-51.
- Georgiou, J. & Hancock, P. (2009). Quality of life indicators: The objective-subjective: Interrelationship that exists within one's place of residence' in old age. *Asian Social Science*, 5(9), 3-20.
- Haas, B. (1999). Clarification and integration of similar quality of life concepts. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 31, 215-220.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2019). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (4th ed.). Routledge.
- Hoffmann, L. (2016). *Gender, migration and communication networks: Mapping the communicative ecology of Latin American migrant women in New Zealand / Aotearoa* (Master's thesis, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand). <https://hdl.handle.net/10652/3478>
- Hu, S. & Das, D. (2019). Quality of life among older adults in China and India: Does productive engagement help? *Social Science & Medicine*, 229, 144–153.
- López, A. (2018). *Colombian refugees in New Zealand and their resettlement stories* (Master's thesis, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand). <https://hdl.handle.net/10652/4325>



- Marans, R. W. & Stimson, R. J. (2011). Investigating quality of urban life: Theory, methods, and empirical research. Springer.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396.
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. Harper and Row.
- Maslow, A. H. (1962). *Toward a psychology of being*. Van Nostrand.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970a). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970b). *Religions, values, and peak experiences*. Penguin.
- Maslow, A. H. (1987). *Motivation and personality* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Meeberg, G. A. (1993). *Quality of life: A concept analysis*. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 18, 32-38.
- Méndez, M. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 15(2), 279-287.
- Mohedas, I., Daly, S. R. & Sienko, K. H. (2014). Design ethnography in capstone design: Investigating student use and perceptions. *International Journal of Engineering Education*, 30(4), 888-900.
- Morse, J. (2011). Sampling in qualitative research. In *The SAGE encyclopedia of social science research methods* (pp. 1-6). Sage Publications.
- Nag, N. & Jain, R. (2019). *A navigational approach to health: Actionable guidance for improved quality of life*. Ramesh Jain.
- O'Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. 2nd Edition. Sage Publications Inc.
- Ortiz, A. (2013). *La objetividad y la subjetividad en la investigación social y humana*. Casa editorial Antillas.
- Peet, R. & Hartwick, E. (2015). *Theories of development* (3rd ed.). The Guilford Press.
- Pérez, A. R. (2012). *Health and New Zealand health services: A Latin American perspective* (Master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland New Zealand). <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/4733>
- Petroczy, D. G. (2019). *An alternative quality of life ranking on the basis of remittances*. Corvinus University of Budapest.
- Raaffaub, K. A. & Talbert, R. J. (2010). *Geography and ethnography: Perceptions of the world in pre-modern societies*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Revell, E. S. (2012). *The manifestation of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand* (Master's thesis, Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand). <https://hdl.handle.net/10652/2064>
- Sánchez, V. C. (2016). *Latin American refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand: A chronology of forced migration and analysis of resettlement experiences* (Master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand). <http://hdl.handle.net/10292/10413>
- Singer, J. B. (2009). *Ethnography. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 86(1), 191-198.
- Smythe-Contreras, K. C. (2015). "Maybe because we are too Chilean": *Stories of migration from Hispanic women living in New Zealand* (Master's thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand). <http://hdl.handle.net/10179/7579>
- Stats NZ. (2018). 2018 *Census all ethnic groups counts.xlsx*. <http://m.stats.govt.nz>
- Urzúa, A. & Caqueo-Urizar, A. (2012). *Quality of life: A theoretical review*. *Terapia Psicológica*. Sociedad Chilena de Psicología Clínica, 30(1), 61-71.
- Veenhoven, R. (2008). Sociological theories of subjective



well-being. In M. Eid, & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 44-61). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Ventegodt, S., Merrick, J. & Andersen, N. J. (2003a). *Quality of life theory I. The IQOL theory: An integrative theory of the global quality of life concept. The Scientific World Journal*, 3, 1030-1040. <https://doi.org/10.1100/tsw.2003.82>

Ventegodt, S., Merrick, J. & Andersen, N. J. (2003b). Quality of Life theory II. Quality of life as the realization of life potential: A biological theory of human being. *The Scientific World Journal*, 3, 1041-1049. <https://doi.org/10.1100/TSW.2003.83>

Ventegodt, S., Merrick, J. & Andersen, N. J. (2003c). Quality of life theory III. Maslow revisited. *The Scientific World Journal*, 3, 1050-1057. <https://doi.org/10.1100/tsw.2003.84>

Walker, A. (2005). A European perspective on quality of life in old age. *European Journal on Ageing*, 2, 2-12.

Wilson, J. (2015) 'All images and media', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/latin-americans/media>

World Health Organization Quality of Life Group. (1997). *Measuring quality of life*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHOQOL.

Zhang, J. (2014). *Enhancing quality of life: The social support of elderly Chinese migrants in New Zealand* (Doctoral thesis, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand). <https://www.ecald.com/assets/Resources/Assets/Enhancing-Quality-Life.pdf>

