This qualitative research aims to analyze and better understand how the quality of earlier relationship influences later relationships in emerging adulthood for Latinx college students. This phenomenological research approach was chosen because of the complexity and individuals' subjective experiences of sibling relationships in Latinx individuals. Participants were four college students ranging from ages 19-22 with multiple gender identities (two women, one man, and one non-binary). Participants were originally recruited through the Student Health Services at the University of Rochester and were told that they would be completing an interview regarding their perceptions and experiences of sibling relationships. This interview was required prior to eligible participant selection. The purpose of the interview was to collect data on the participants’ experiences and perceptions of sibling relationships. The interview was transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis. The project will qualitatively examine Latinx college students’ concepts of sibling relationships. Specifically, this research project has four main purposes:

1. To better understand the nature of Latinx college students’ concepts of sibling relationships during the period of emerging adulthood.
2. To analyze and better understand early relationship quality in emerging adulthood.
3. To analyze and contextualize the nature and relevance of sibling relationships of Latinx college students in emerging adulthood.
4. To explore the unique characteristics of Latinx culture through qualitative inquiry. The present research design analyzed thematic centers on the concept that Latinx culture is influential in the participants’ sibling relationships during the emerging adulthood, as well as in their personal lives.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

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MATERIALS AND METHODS (cont’d)

Data Analysis

The methodological approach for the present study was qualitative interpretative phenomenology (Bennett, 1994). Recent theory and phenomenological work by Mahler and Sarvimäki (2010), as well as employing methods adapted from the work of Braun and Clarke (2006), applied thematic analysis in interpreting the findings. The purpose of this study used the methodology for thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) as a structure, in which to situate the inquiry of this present research. The specific approach employed aimed to establish categories and subcategories.

Credibility measures

In the present study, we did not group participants based on the level of the participant’s Latinx identity (e.g., high, medium, low). We found that many of our participants highlighted the factors that influence their Latinx identity, as presented in Figure 1, rather than the extent to which they identify with Latinx culture. Participants discussed the “Factors Influencing Identity” with “Cultural Values,” “Closeness,” “Parental Influence and Sibling Relationships,” “Factor Influencing Cultural Identity,” and “Factor Influencing Sibling Relationships” as the corresponding thematic categories. These shared constructs were noted in exploratory codes in the coding process.

DISCUSSION

In comparison to our first phase of this study, we did not group participants based on the level of the participant’s Latinx identity (e.g., high, medium, low). We found that many of our participants highlighted the factors that influence their Latinx identity, as presented in Figure 1, rather than the extent to which they identify with Latinx culture. Participants discussed the “Factors Influencing Identity” with “Cultural Values,” “Closeness,” “Parental Influence and Sibling Relationships,” “Factor Influencing Cultural Identity,” and “Factor Influencing Sibling Relationships” as the corresponding thematic categories. These shared constructs were noted in exploratory codes in the coding process.

A limitation we faced during our research was getting all seven participants from the previous study to return for the individual interviews. The goal of this phase of our study was to bring back those seven participants, and not ask them fewer questions. However, only four of those participants returned. If those participants were in the previous “low group” and one belonged to the “high group” with that being said, we were unable to make any distinctions between “high” and “low” participants because there were not enough participants from the “high” group. To strengthen the study, inviting the missing participants from the previous study and collecting their data could result in similar if not identical thematic categories.

Possible future studies may include a combination of the results from our previous study (partner pressure to engage in advantageous educational opportunities) and the results from our current study (the influence of Latinx identity to identify how “high” and “low” partners identify as being Latinx in a differing way). Another future study could include a combination of the studies into high and low opportunities.

Participants who identified as being Latinx in differing ways.

CREDIBILITY MEASURES

Triangulation of Data Sources. The purpose was to check for consistency and continuity across the primary data set. The following served as sources for triangulation: focus group transcripts, results from post-coding techniques, researcher notes, and original participant responses.

Negative Case Selection. During the final stages of the thematic analysis, the researchers began to label these cases within the data set and attached them to burgeoning themes in order to establish credibility of the data.

“I’m gonna say off the bat, my siblings no because they also are in the same boat as me and they engage in lesser ways to refer to my culture” (00816, pg. 4)

“We haven’t been there in like five years and then we won’t go, like no interest in going back” (00721, pg. 10)

—— We (participant and sibling) avoid each other around the house whenever I go back home it’s like not really clear set. It’s messy” (00816, pg. 9)