Social Connection & Aging for Older Latines

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CLLARO RESEARCH INSTITUTE | NEXT 50

Mission & Values

We conduct community-engaged research that can inspire, inform, and impact action towards improving the lives of Latines in Colorado.

Rigorous & credible

Accessible

Center Latine experiences

Research Focus Areas

- Intersectional approach to focus on most marginalized
- Community engaged approach

ESSENTIAL NEEDS

- Fair wages
- Housing
- Food insecurity

WELL-BEING

- Mental health
- Physical health

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Immigration
- Voting
- Participation in policy process

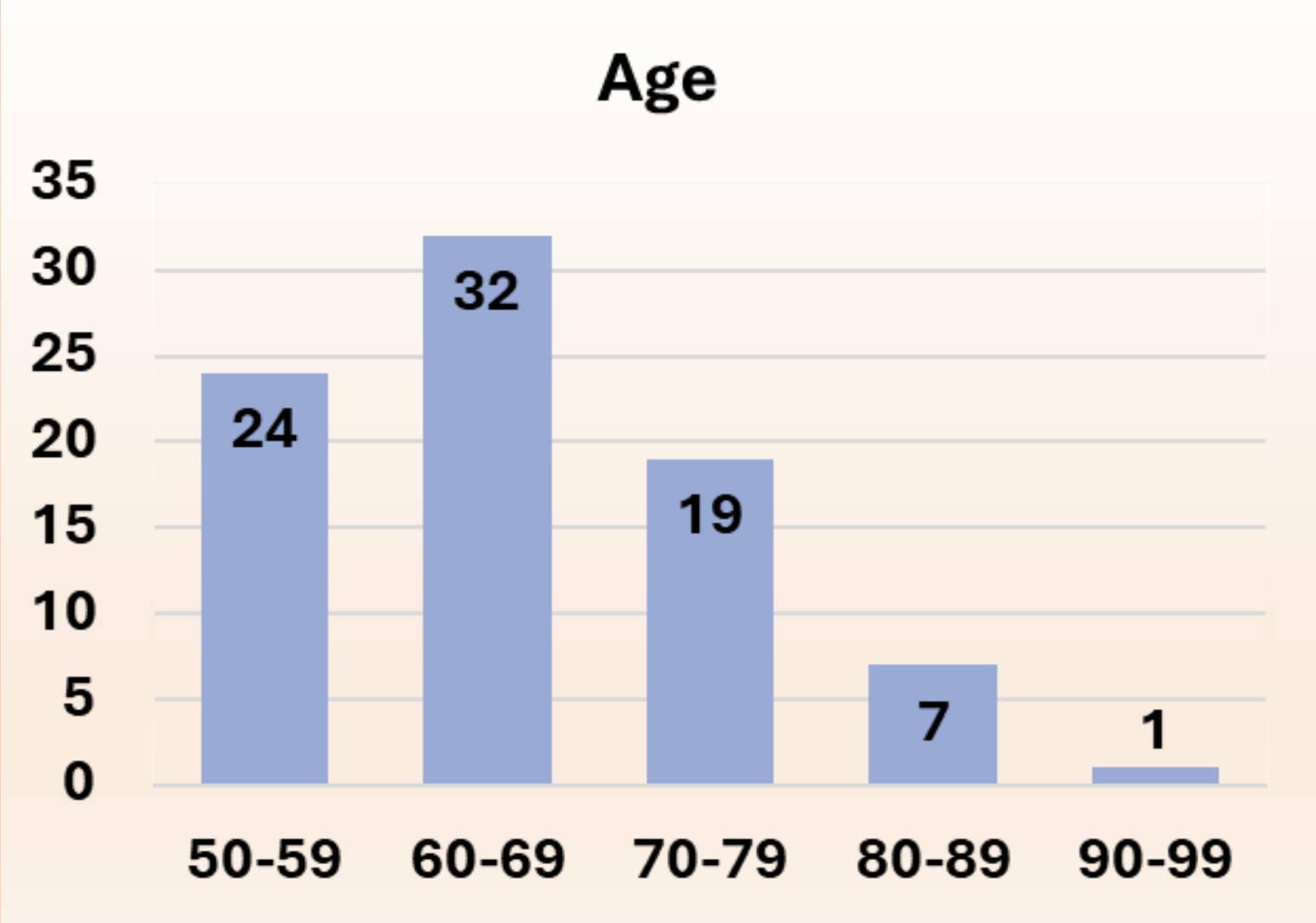
Why Study Older Latines?

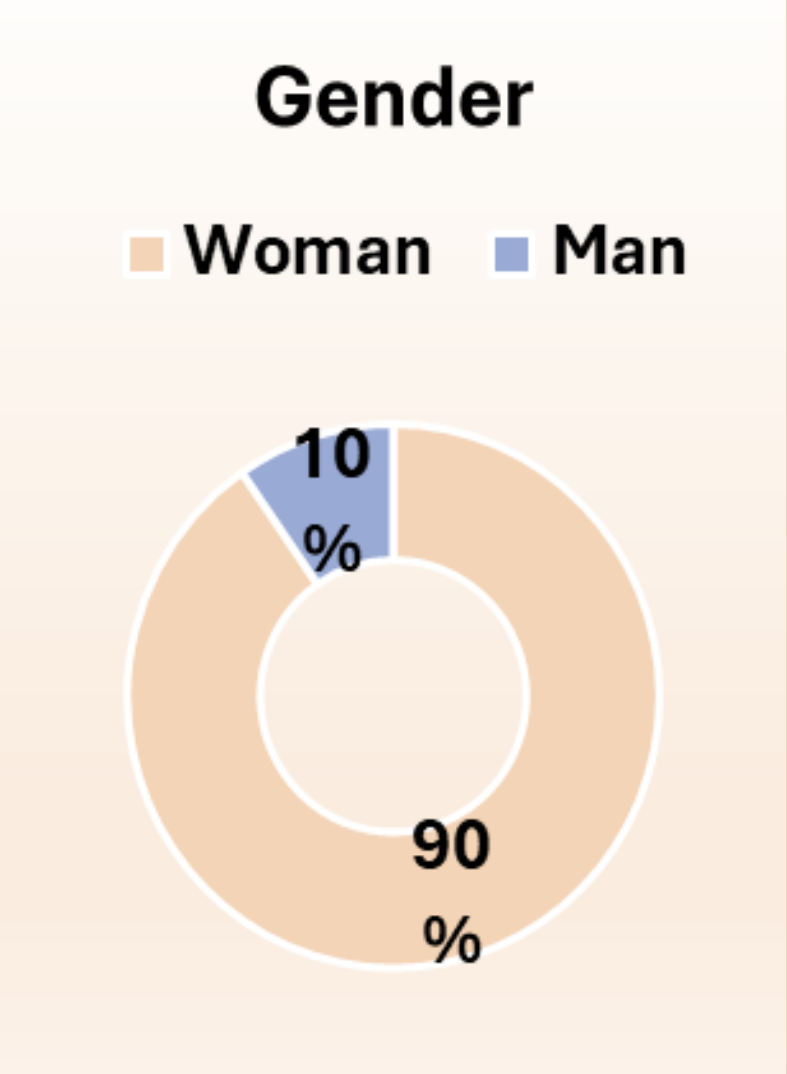
- Lack of in-depth research about older Latines
  - Rapid population growth
  - Not a monolith
  - Unique factors
- Health impacts of social isolation
- Not enough research on causes of social isolation

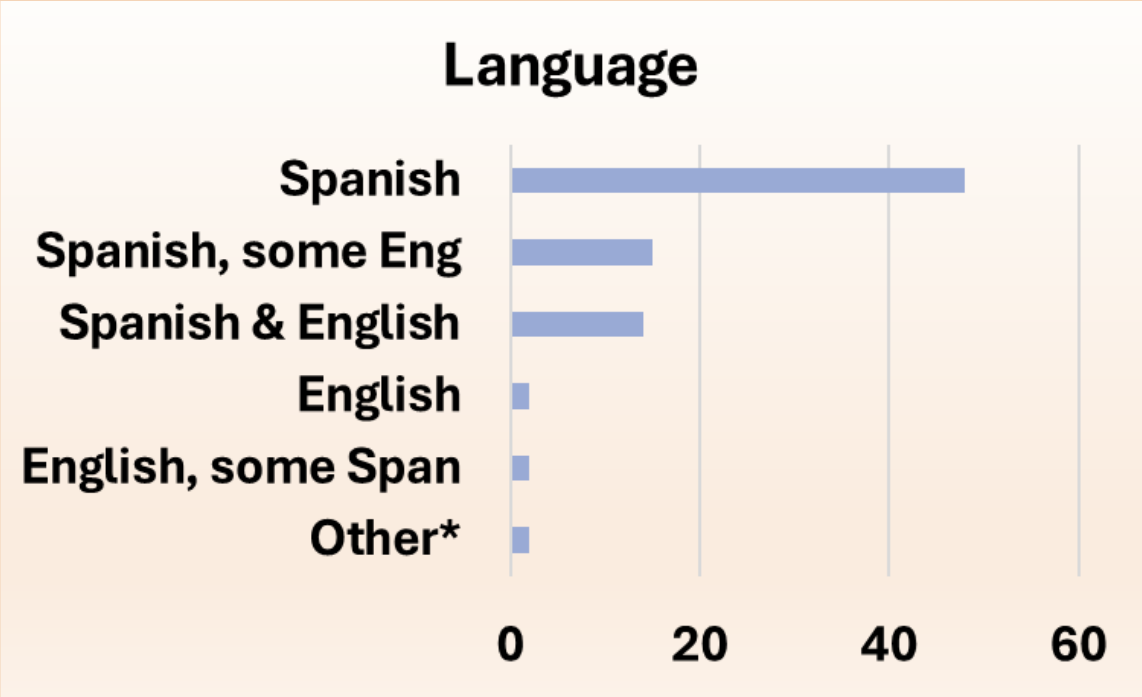
Methods

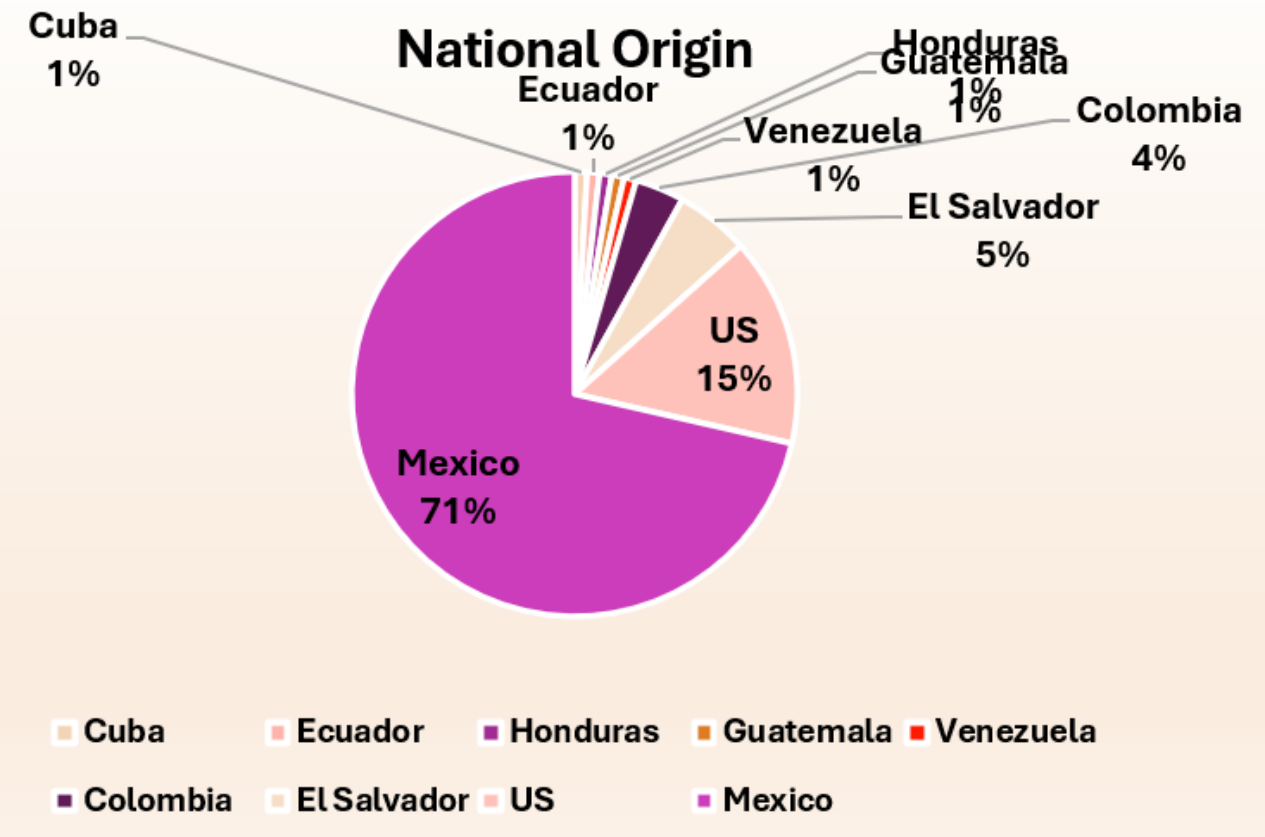
- Surveys
- In-depth interviews
  - Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson, and Weld
- Pilot cohort program "Las Chicas Rebeldes"
  - To learn about & address social isolation in Westwood
  - 50+ Latines
  - 12-16 Latinas
- Community engaged approach

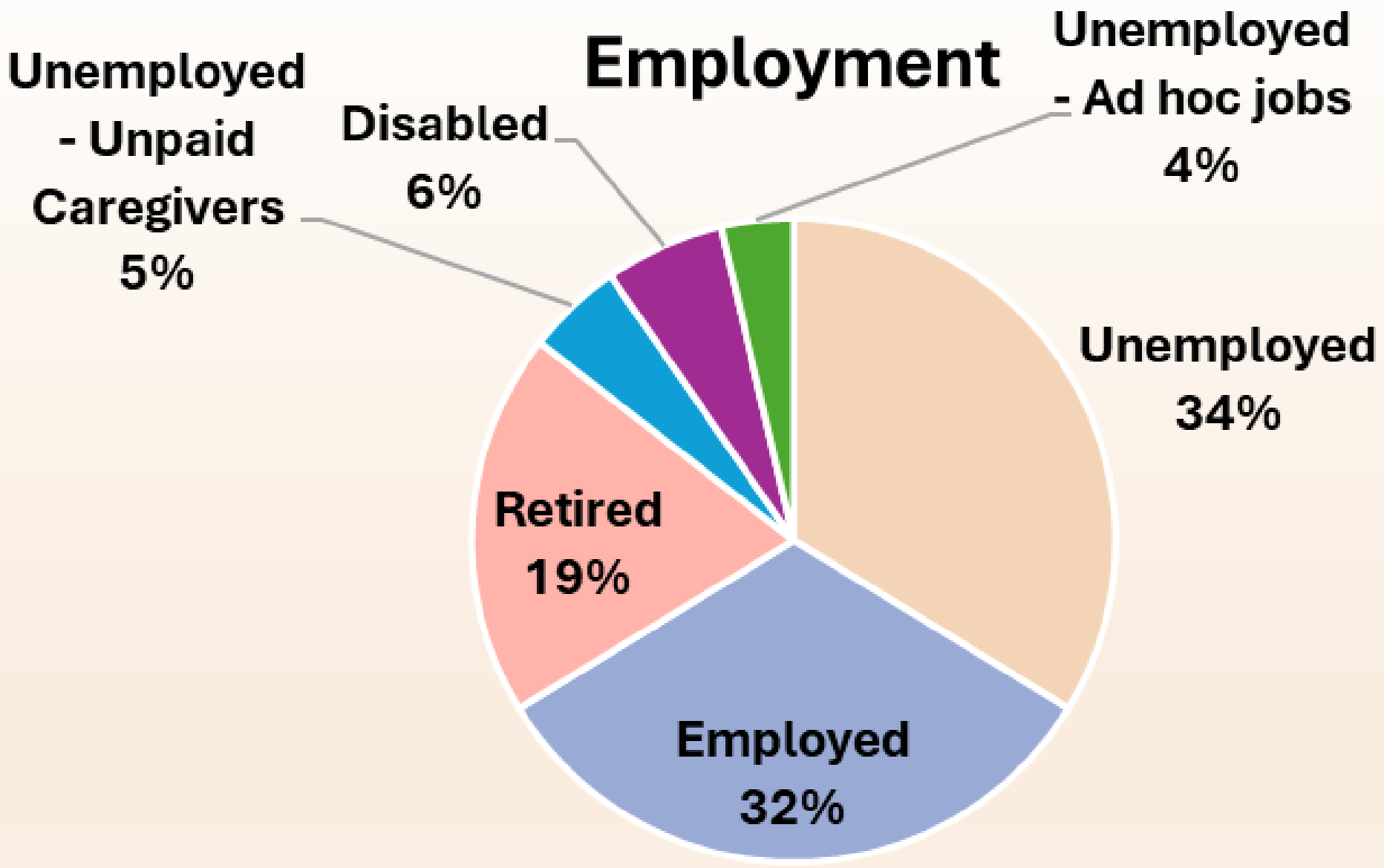
Participant Demographics (n=83)






Language
Spanish
Spanish, some Eng
Spanish & English
English
English, some Span
Other*
0
20
40
60


National Origin
Cuba 1%
Ecuador 1%
Honduras 1%
Guatemala 1%
Venezuela 1%
Colombia 4%
El Salvador 5%
US 15%
Mexico 71%
Cuba
Ecuador
Honduras
Guatemala
Venezuela
Colombia
El Salvador
US
Mexico


Employment
Unemployed - Unpaid Caregivers 5%
Disabled 6%
Unemployed - Ad hoc jobs 4%
Unemployed 34%
Retired 19%
Employed 32%

Overall Findings

- Aging and social connection varies based on identity & perspective
- Many patterns mirror those for all older adults, but some unique considerations:
    - Inequality
    - Familismo shapes expectations
    - Resilience and coping mechanisms to manage challenges
- Perspectives on aging
- Complicating familismo
- Gender

Perspectives on Aging

- Fear
  - Burden
  - Who will provide care
  - Disability and/or illness
  - Death
- Acceptance
- Gratitude
- Freedom
- Mixed feelings

"To be an older adult is to be free and at peace."

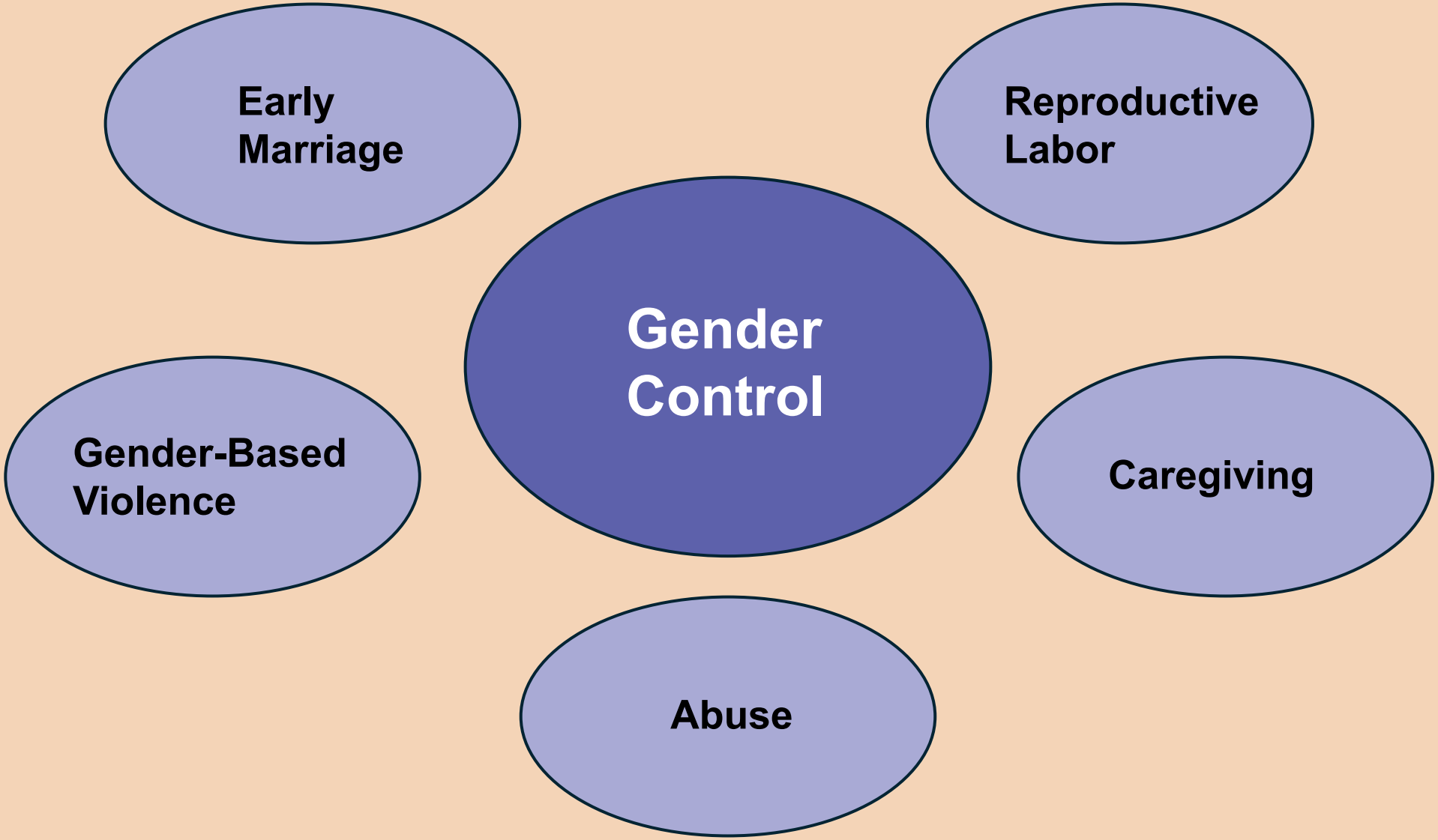
Perspectives on Aging

"I think we should be aware that the phases change and that we need to accept them little by little, because it's difficult. It's hard for us not to be able to do the things we used to do. It's hard for us. Not eating what we used to eat is also hard for us. I think accepting old age is the hardest thing."

Complicating Familismo

"I just hope I stay healthy, you know, that I don't become a burden — that's what I really wouldn't want. That's something I always say: I don't want to be a burden, because, like I said, the years are going by, and I wouldn't want to be a burden to my daughters. That's what would worry me — being a burden to them."

Gender


Early Marriage
Reproductive Labor
Gender Control
Gender-Based Violence
Caregiving
Abuse

Gender

“When I started working, the jealousy began... If I came home laughing, that was bad, because it meant I had been laughing about something. If I came home serious... It was this constant thing of looking for a reason to accuse me.

…

[He'd] say, “I’m going to burn the house down with both of us inside. If I kill you, well then I’ll kill myself too and end it all."

Protective Factors

- Social Groups
  - Hobbies
- Religion
  - Church as a social place

"*Being with you all—that's what I look forward to the most, especially the hugs. We all need a hug, even if it's not a special day. We all need to feel that someone cares, even when it's just an ordinary day*."

Protective Factors

“When I arrived to that group, I became involved and believe me I started noticing that the emptiness that I felt started disappearing... and since then I tell you, I don't feel alone, thanks to God I no longer feel alone.”

Preliminary Recommendations

- Support dedicated spaces for older Latines to connect
- Integrate screenings for social isolation in healthcare settings
- Center culturally responsive mental health access for older Latines
- Improve transportation access for older adult Latines
- Promote ageism awareness centering intersectional identities

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Thank you!

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COLORADO LATINO LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY & RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

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