

The Multiple Dimensions of Transnationalism: Examining their Relevance to Immigrants' Subjective Well-being

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Abstract

Using data from a random representative survey of South Florida immigrants (n=1,268), our research examines different facets of transnationalism and how they relate to a typically overlooked component of immigrant incorporation—subjective well-being. We examine separately the affective and evaluative components of immigrants' well-being in their country of reception—the United States — by differentiating between self-reported emotional well-being and self-reported satisfaction with life in the U.S. Findings support that the kinds and frequency of connections that immigrants maintain with the home country are important factors for understanding immigrants' subjective well-being.

Keywords: Immigrants, Life Satisfaction, Subjective Well-Being, Happiness, Transnationalism

Introduction

For decades scholars have sought to understand the process of immigrant adaptation. Researchers have spoken of “assimilation,” the process by which immigrants become like their native counterparts (Gordon, 1964). More recent discussions of assimilation have noted how children of immigrants take different paths to incorporation through segmented assimilation (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Portes & Zhou, 1993), which does not necessarily conform to previous understandings of assimilation as a steady process of ‘conversion’ with natives. Others point out how the United States has adopted aspects of immigrant cultures as immigrants come to resemble “mainstream” society over time (Alba & Nee, 2003). At the same time, immigration scholars have expanded the scope of their inquiries to include how immigrants maintain involvement in the societies they leave behind (Basch, Glick-Schiller & Szanton-Blanc, 1994; Levitt, 2001; Smith, 2006). These latter works focus on what has been termed patterns of transnational living.

Many of the studies on immigrant incorporation examine objective indicators of well-being to measure the success and adaptation of immigrants in the receiving country. Income, educational

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attainment, language use, occupational mobility, residential integration, or intermarriage, among others, are standard indicators of assimilation (Alba & Nee, 2003). The assumption is that greater well-being is associated with successful assimilation to the dominant group in a society, although research on the paradoxes of assimilation, which point to declining well-being (such as health) upon migration, has called this assumption into question (e.g. Rumbaut, 1997).

Within the assimilation literature, however, not enough attention has been paid to immigrants' subjective indicators, despite the suggestion by some that they might be more relevant to an individual's condition when compared to objective indicators (e.g. Diener, Lucas, Schimmack & Helliwell, 2009). Subjective indicators of well-being, which refer to people's own feelings about and evaluations of their lives, include affective components, such as happiness, and cognitive components, such as life satisfaction (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith 1999; Diener, Kahneman, Tov & Arora, 2010). In the process of moving, adapting, and integrating into a new society - and given that linkages are often maintained with the old country, we ask: how do immigrants *think* and *feel* about their lives in the receiving country? Are they satisfied with the lives they have created in the United States? How do they describe their own emotional states? In this study we explore the subjective well-being of immigrants, and in particular, how subjective well-being relates to transnationalism.

Theoretical Framework

Contemporary Immigrants and Assimilation

The characteristics of immigrants have changed dramatically since Milton Gordon's formulation of the assimilation theory (1964). Immigrants arriving to the U.S. from Latin America and parts of Asia are socio-economically and racially distinct from those in the earlier waves of immigration, and do not always speak English. Addressing contemporary immigrants, Alejandro Portes and his colleagues propose that the context of reception in the U.S., in addition to the conditions of exit from home countries and immigrants' social capital, are important to understand the diverse paths to assimilation into various segments of the American population, particularly among the children of immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Whereas Portes & Rumbaut's (1996, 2001) work challenges the dominant straight-line assimilation theory, others such as Alba & Nee (2003) and White & Glick (2009) have argued that the dominant assimilation paradigm is still theoretically and empirically valuable, and that new immigrant groups play significant roles in defining American culture. In the last few decades, the study of immigrant assimilation has been further complicated by increasing patterns of circular, and serial or family-stage migration, and more broadly, by the growth of transnational/bi-national communities. These are the patterns that we argue are central to the understanding of contemporary immigrants' subjective well-being.

Transnationalism

Transnationalism refers to the development of networks, activities and patterns of living that span home and host societies (Basch et al. 1994). Researchers have shown how transnational communities are intertwined and how immigrants navigate the terrain of transnationality and migration (Basch et al., 1994; Levitt, 2001; Massey, Goldring & Durand, 1994; Smith, 2006). Some researchers have proposed that transnational linkages and host society incorporation and assimilation can coexist (Levitt, 2001; Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004; Morawska, 2004; Portes, Guarnizo & Haller, 2002). In other words, incorporation into the American mainstream society

is blended with persistent ties to the home country. Michel Laguerre, for instance, calls these binational connections, attachments and belonging diasporic citizenship (1998), implying that one can negotiate membership and belonging to more than one country. The ideas of membership and belonging raise questions regarding how transnational involvement is conceptualized. Are transnational immigrants only those who actively engage in cross-border activities? Are transnational immigrants those whose identities and loyalties lie in the home country, or to both the home and host country? Or, does membership in transnational families or communities mediate the relationship immigrants have with their home countries? We take into account these various dimensions of transnationalism in our examination of immigrants' subjective well-being.

Conceptualizing the multiple dimensions of transnationalism

Although transnational practices among immigrants are not new (Foner, 2000), the scale and intensity of transnational exchanges (Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999) have accompanied major transformations in technology and mass communication. However, the frequent use of the concept by scholars and its ambiguity have led some to conclude that it is losing its conceptual and explanatory capacities (Kivisto, 2001). In their seminal work, Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt (1999, pp. 219) identify a typology of transnationalism in which economic, political and socio-cultural transnationalism are used to understand the research to date, and in which they argue that the "high intensity of exchanges" in these areas are what gives the concept its meaning. We see evidence of these forms of transnationalism in the remittances that migrants send (Duany, 2010; Guarnizo, 2003) and the grassroots political activities in which immigrants engage in their home countries (Guarnizo, Portes & Haller, 2003; Smith, 2006), among other formal exchanges.

A broader approach to transnationalism entails viewing it as a type of consciousness and identity (Laguerre, 1998; Nájera-Ramírez, 2002; Vertovec, 1999; 2001). As Laguerre (1998, p. 8) has argued, "Diaspora is thus both a residence and a state of mind. It has a subjective content as well as an objective quality." The subjective content is in the form of identities, consciousness, belonging and emotions, which precede and result from transnational processes (Vertovec, 2001). This perspective raises questions about whether immigrants' cognitive and emotional connections to their home and/or host countries might influence their subjective well-being in the country of settlement. This might be ascertained by exploring immigrants' desire to return to their home country or remain settled in the host country; or even if immigrants feel "at home" in one country or the other, or both. Taken together, these could be indicators of the extent to which immigrants see themselves as transnational actors or as members of transnational families or communities whose identities and loyalties might be split.

Along these lines, transnational populations have also been defined by others more broadly in terms of membership to kinship groups, organizations or communities. For instance, scholars such as Parreñas (2001), Hondagneu-Sotelo (2001) and Olwig (2003) have examined transnational family forms and other kinship groups, and have illustrated the emotional and familial linkages that bind groups of people separated by international boundaries and the global economy. This perspective accounts for immigrants and nonimmigrants alike as embedded in transnational social fields, or an arena of social relations that is not necessarily contiguous with the boundaries of nation-states (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). According to this approach, remittances, for example, could be interpreted as significant for both their material value and because they are based on "an emotional attachment to those left behind. It is a tie predicated on emotions related to longing, the sorrow of absence, and the desire to remain bonded to one's family" (Kivisto, 2001, pp. 567-568). In the current study, we attempt to establish how a number of these approaches to transnationalism relate to immigrants' subjective well-being.

Transnationalism and subjective well-being

Subjective well-being and other psycho-social measures have been examined in immigrant populations before. Early work on migrants frames these experiences in terms of emotions of loss, as the historical account of European migrations by Oscar Handlin (1973) illustrates. More recently, ethnographic work on immigrants' emotional states has confirmed the dislocating nature of the migration process (Aranda, 2006; Sayad, 2004). However, much of the research that links well-being and immigration has used a more medicalized approach that seeks to identify immigrants' emotional and mental dysfunctions (see Cuellar, Bastida & Braccio, 2004; Hao & Johnson, 2000, for examples of exceptions) for what they reveal about mental illness in immigrant populations (Portes, Kyle & Eaton 1992; Salgado de Snyder, 1987; Vega, Kolody & Valle, 1987).

Although these findings reveal a wealth of information on how immigrants are coping with life in the United States, the trend toward the medicalization of subjective assessments and emotional states may fragment our understanding of immigrant adaptation, especially when one considers that "many of the mental illness categories included in *DSM* are peculiar (culture-bound) to North America and Western Europe" (Flaskerud, 2000, p. 11). Additionally, as Myers & Diener (1995) have stated, much of the psychological literature focuses on negative states. The positive side of the well-being spectrum can be found in studies of emotional well-being or happiness (Bartram, 2011; Diener & Lucas, 2000). In agreement with this latter approach, in the current study we examine the subjective well-being of immigrants—not just emotional states, but also immigrants' cognitive assessments of their lives. For example, rather than just examine how migration might lead to separation from kin, possibly resulting in negative emotional states, we also consider how visiting the home country and communication with confidants back home might lead to positive evaluations of life satisfaction.

Diener and colleagues propose that subjective well-being encapsulates topics such as happiness, life satisfaction, and morale (Diener & Lucas, 2000). They also make the careful distinction between a person's evaluation of his/her life - what might be considered a global judgment, versus feelings of well-being, that include moods and emotion which are often based on evaluations of life events (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith 1999; Diener, Kahneman, Tov & Arora, 2010). Thus, as Diener and his colleagues argue (2010, p. 14), well-being "must be parsed into the judgmental versus affective components." This becomes particularly important when studying immigrant subjective well-being given the international variations that have been found in prior research (Diener, Kahneman & Helliwell, 2010). When making international comparisons, Diener et al. (2010) highlight this necessary differentiation arguing that circumstances of life vary to a much larger extent than patterns of emotion do. We agree that correlates of well-being need to disaggregate between evaluative judgments and affect. Thus, we carry this distinction forward in our empirical approach.

Like mental health illness, these subjective states also face cultural relevancy concerns. International comparisons regarding predictors of life satisfaction, for instance, reveal that there are indeed cultural differences in how a state of life satisfaction is determined (Oishi, Diener, Lucas & Suh, 2009). Oishi and colleagues (2009) found that financial issues are more relevant to life satisfaction in poorer countries, and home-life issues are more strongly associated with life satisfaction in wealthy countries. Moreover, fulfilling esteem-related needs was more important to overall life satisfaction in individualist countries compared to collectivist countries.

In spite of these cultural relevancy concerns, subjective assessments do allow room for individuals to consider both major and minor life events. Changing life conditions influence subjective well-being. For example, recent work has shown this to be the case for happiness among immigrants who increase their income through migration, although their levels of happiness do not achieve parity with natives (Bartram, 2011). Additionally, reactions to events depend on the amount of time that has passed since the event occurred (Diener & Lucas, 2000). This

raises questions regarding not just how the migration process itself affects individuals, but how a sustained transnational life, which might involve extended separations from kin and/or long-term patterns of remitting, might continue to define immigrants' subjective well-being. In other words, for immigrants who lead transnational lives, migration might be more than an experience in their past; it might represent a social position with ongoing effects on their lives. Or, alternatively, weak transnational linkages might be important for their symbolic ties to the country of origin.

Thus, transnationalism may mediate how the relationship between migration and well-being are interpreted in two ways. First, much research on immigration assumes that immigrant adaptation and well-being are linear processes beginning once the process of migration is complete. From a transnational perspective, which is the angle that we adopt in this paper, movement back and forth or having ties in both countries might alter the nature of adaptation and ultimately, the outcomes under consideration. Yet, transnationalism has rarely been analyzed for its relationship to subjective well-being or mental and emotional health outcomes (for exception, see Murphy & Mahalingam, 2004).

Another way in which transnationalism may contribute to our understanding of immigrant well-being is by introducing other mediating factors related to linkages to the home country. For instance, a transnational approach allows room to consider immigrants who continue to actively engage in communication patterns with the home country. This network of support is important as it could mitigate negative emotional states that may emerge from difficulties with host country adaptation. At the same time, maintaining transnational ties could encumber the immigrant with greater responsibilities regarding the sending of remittances, thereby affecting their assessments of satisfaction with their lives. These examples illustrate the importance of integrating transnationalism in studies of immigrant subjective well-being.

Murphy & Mahalingam's (2004) work represents one of the main attempts to demonstrate how transnationalism relates to subjective well-being. Based on a community sample of West Indian immigrants, they found that transnationalism was positively related to both life satisfaction and, paradoxically, depression. The higher incidence of depression was related to those who engaged in transnational political activism. Communicating with transnational kin was positively related to social support, ethnic identity, and perceived stress, and negatively related to anxiety, demonstrating transnational communication's emotional buffering effects. These findings also lend support to the notion that cognitive and affective evaluations of immigrants' lives must be examined separately for they may work in different ways.

While keeping immigrants' subjective well-being at the center of our research questions, this study gauges the extent to which different forms of transnationalism, such as sending remittances or having ongoing close relationships in the home society, are found among immigrants in South Florida. Specifically, we analyze how these aspects of transnationalism are related to self-reported emotional well-being and life satisfaction of first-generation immigrants. In line with the previous research already discussed (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999; Diener, Kahneman, Tov & Arora, 2010), we argue that emotional well-being and life satisfaction are indicators of subjective well-being. Most importantly, they are measures that are not typically explicitly looked at when examining immigrant assimilation and incorporation.

Hypotheses

As mentioned previously, transnationalism has been conceptualized from different angles. One approach emphasizes the frequency and intensity of transnational exchanges (Portes et al., 1999) when evaluating activities that give the concept its definition. Accordingly, we examine the relationship between transnational activities (such as visiting the home country and owning a business in the home country) and subjective well-being. We believe that when immigrants

are able to maintain regular contact with the home country, they will also report a better sense of emotional well-being and life satisfaction. The following hypothesis is derived from this perspective:

H1: Visiting the home country and owning a business in the home country are related to higher emotional well-being and life satisfaction among immigrants.

There are other transnational exchanges that may prove burdensome on immigrants. For example, sending remittances could prove to be a hardship for immigrants who may not earn as much income as U.S. natives. This is particularly poignant given that most remittances go to the poor in the countries of origin (Orozco, 2004). Thus, sending remittances could be indicative of a lack of resources among kin networks in the home country, which could compromise an immigrant's emotional well-being because they shoulder the weight of improving the status of those left back home. However, given that migration grants immigrants the opportunity to help kin back home through remittances, we believe their overall life satisfaction will remain unchanged. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Those who send remittances to the home country are less likely to report high emotional well-being, but they are no different than those who do not send remittances in terms of their life satisfaction.

Other conceptualizations of transnationalism define it as a type of consciousness or identity (Vertovec, 2001). This approach captures how immigrants' emotions and cognitive states are shaped by their status as transnational actors. We hypothesize that this kind of identity or consciousness is captured in a desire to reconnect with the home country, perhaps by wanting to return home or identifying where immigrants feel the greatest sense of belonging. We hypothesize that these two indicators are, in turn, related to subjective well-being:

H3: Immigrants who want to return home and who consider their countries of origin as their true home are less likely to experience high emotional well-being and high life satisfaction in the country of reception.

As part of having a transnational identity, immigrants may feel drawn to both kin and the culture of their home country. Both communication with kin left behind and attending cultural festivities, for example, may fill some of the void resulted from the separation from the home country. Greater communication with kin and attending cultural festivities might represent strategies that improve life satisfaction and emotional well-being. For this reason, we hypothesize that:

H4: Communicating with kin in the home country and attending festivities related to the home country are related to the greater likelihood of having high emotional well-being and life satisfaction.

As part of membership to transnational kinship groups, immigrants might be separated from their confidants in the home country. Having confidants (regardless of where they are located) might help to elevate immigrants' emotional well-being given the social support they might provide, but at the same time, the separation from these confidants might not improve satisfaction with one's life. As such, we hypothesize that our two measures of subjective well-being will operate differently from each other. We hypothesize that:

H5: Immigrants who have confidants in the home country are more likely to report high emotional well-being, but not high life satisfaction.

Data and Methods

Home to over one million of the nation's immigrants, South Florida is a perfect case study to test the prevalence of transnational lives and how living transnationally enhances or detracts from immigrants' subjective well-being. The political and economic turmoil that propels immigrants from the Caribbean, Central, and South American countries into the migratory flow often lead them to settle in South Florida. As the most important metropolis in this area and because of

its proximity to Latin America, Miami's status as a global city, (Sassen, 2001) and a hub for the concentration of global capital (Grosfoguel, 2003) in particular, lead us to believe that South Florida immigrants may engage in patterns of transnationalism living.

With the support from the National Science Foundation, the authors created a survey to be administered to a random sample of South Florida first generation immigrants-- the Immigrant Transnationalism and Modes of Incorporation study (ITMI). The questionnaire was designed to further inquire on findings from a prior qualitative study about South Florida immigrants that included in-depth interviews with 115 South Florida immigrants and 15 focus groups with immigrants from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Colombia, and Peru (Aranda, Sabogal & Hughes 2004). The findings were used to develop the survey questions that would test whether the information gained through the qualitative study was supported by data from a larger random sample of immigrants.

The telephone survey designed by the researchers included questions about a broad range of issues including immigrants' patterns of assimilation, their transnational behaviors, their subjective well-being, their experiences with discrimination, among other topics. The questionnaire was administered by The Institute for Public Opinion Research (IPOR) at Florida International University to a randomly selected group of almost 1,270 immigrants from Broward and Miami-Dade counties during the summer and fall of 2008.

The random digit dial (RDD) sample included two components, one sample of landline telephone numbers and a subsample of cell phone numbers. Out of the 1,268 completed phone interviews, 344 were conducted with cell phone users. The sample had an overall margin of error of plus or minus 2.8%. Respondents included immigrants from over 80 countries. The survey was originally created in English, pre-tested, then translated into Spanish, pre-tested again, amended, and pre-tested again. It was also translated into Haitian Creole. The interviews were performed using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) survey techniques. The cooperation rate was high at 87%--that is, of the qualified respondents who heard the interviewer's introduction on the phone, 87% agreed to complete the survey. The response rate was 51% for landlines and 49% for cell phones (AAPOR response rate #4), which is comparable to studies using similar methods and populations (AAPOR, 2011; Kasinitz et al., 2008). It is possible that those with higher subjective well-being were more likely to agree to be interviewed. However, the survey was introduced to the respondents as one based on their experiences as an immigrant, not about well-being, so perhaps even those with low subjective well-being might have felt compelled to share their experiences.

Analyses reported are weighted by age, gender, education, and country of origin to represent the proportions of each immigrant population based on data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2005-2007 data. In addition, we employed multiple imputation techniques to deal with missing values on covariates in the analytical models. We employed the *proc mi* and *proc mianalyze* commands of the *SAS* software to deal with missing data. These statistical tools predict values for missing data by incorporating information from other attributes of individuals with some randomness built into the imputed values in order to account for the uncertainty of estimates (Allison, 2002). As a robustness check, we compared analytical models using multiple imputation as well as list-wise deletion and sample mean. The results were quantitatively almost identical to those reported in the tables below and did not change the qualitative interpretations at all.³

³ Calculations available upon request.

Measures

An important contribution of this study is its focus on measures of subjective well-being as indicators of how immigrants fare in their countries of destination. Diener, Scollon & Lucas (2009) have shown that subjective well-being is in fact composed of a number of inter-related measures encompassing positive and negative feelings, life satisfaction among others. As discussed earlier, subjective well-being needs to be examined in terms of both its *cognitive* and *affective* components (Diener, Kahneman, Tov & Arora, 2010). We use a general indicator of affect by asking the question, “In general, how would you describe your emotional well-being? Would you say it is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?” We also consider an evaluative measure of subjective well-being: life satisfaction, which was measured from the question, “How satisfied are you with your life in the United States? Would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, or not satisfied?” While a possible limitation to our data is that we only have two measures of subjective well-being and the response options were constrained to a few possible answers, Diener, Kahneman & Helliwell (2010) have stated that this kind of approach is better than having no measures of subjective well-being at all. Additionally, our study offers an innovative analysis of how immigrants rate their well-being within the context of transnationalism.

Our key independent variables include a variety of measures of transnationalism. As justified above, these consist of activities such as sending remittances, owning a business in the home country, attendance to festivities related to the home country, communicating with members of the home country, visiting the home country, having confidants in the home country, thinking about moving back to the home country, and what country feels like home. Some of these are concrete international exchanges and some represent cross-border relationships that are indicative of transnational patterns of living.

Studying subjective well-being among immigrants from a sociological perspective means that attention must be paid to external factors that are known to affect psychological states (Ross & Mirowsky, 2003). We also include control measures that have been shown to be important for well-being such as English fluency, gender, education, and household income (Cuellar, Bastida & Braccio, 2004), as well as discrimination (Dawson, 2009). Finally, we account for elements that have been found to be related to subjective well-being such as self-rated health, religiosity, marital status and unemployment (Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008). For a complete list of measures and how they were asked in the survey refer to Table 1.

The empirical analysis proceeds as follows. We start by presenting the main characteristics of our sample. Then we examine the bivariate relationship between subjective well-being and transnationalism. Next, we move onto the analytical models. Using ordinal logistic regressions, we estimate the relationship between transnationalism and our two outcomes of subjective well-being: emotional well-being and satisfaction with life in the U.S. while accounting for the factors described above.

Table 1: Definitions of Main Measures in Study

Measures	Question from Survey
Subjective Well-being	<p><i>Emotional well-being</i> In general, how would you describe your emotional well-being? Would you say it is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?</p> <p><i>Satisfaction with Life in the U.S.</i> How satisfied are you with your life in the United States? Would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied or not satisfied?</p>
Indicators of Transnationalism	<p><i>Visited home country</i> Since you left (country or origin) how often have you been back?</p> <p><i>Remittances</i> How often do you or someone in your household send money to (country of origin)?</p> <p><i>Own business in home country</i> Do you own any business(es) in the United States or in (country of origin)?</p> <p><i>Frequency of communicating with home country</i> In general, how often do you communicate with anyone in (country of origin)? Would you say that you communicate every day, at least once a week, at least once a month, every few months, rarely or never?</p> <p><i>People in which you confide in home country</i> How many of those people that you can confide in currently live in (country of origin)? Do none of them live there, some of them, most of them, or do all of them live there?</p> <p><i>Thought of moving back</i> Have you ever thought of moving back to (country)? Would you say you have thought about this all the time, sometimes, or never?</p> <p><i>Which country feels like home</i> Which feels most like “home” to you: the U.S., (country of origin), both or neither?</p>
Controls	<p><i>Self-reported Gender</i></p> <p><i>Age</i> May I ask how old you are?</p> <p><i>Marital status</i> What is your marital status?</p> <p><i>Length of stay in the U.S.</i> What year did you come to the United States?</p> <p><i>Education</i> What is the highest grade of school you have completed?</p> <p><i>Citizenship</i> Are you now a U.S. citizen?</p> <p><i>National origin</i> Open ended. Recoded as follows: Cuban, Colombian, Haitian, Other Hispanic, Other non-Hispanic</p> <p><i>English fluency</i> How well do you speak English? Would you say very well, well, not well or not at all?</p> <p><i>Racial Discrimination</i> Has people treating you unfairly because of your skin color been a major problem, somewhat of a problem, a small problem or no problem at all?</p> <p><i>Annual household income</i> We don't want to know your exact income but would you tell me approximately, what is your annual household income before taxes?</p> <p><i>Employment status</i> Which of the following best describes your type of employment in South Florida: professional, managerial, technical, sales, administrative support, student, homemaker, unemployed, military or police, or farming? Recoded as employed or unemployed</p> <p><i>Health</i> Living in the U.S. has made me a healthier person. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?</p> <p><i>Religiosity</i> How often do you attend religious services? Do you attend always, sometimes, rarely or never?</p>

Descriptive Analyses

In Table 2, we describe the main characteristics of the sample as well as the distribution of their responses to the questions on transnational patterns of living. Our respondents are evenly distributed by gender (52% female), and their average age is almost 49 years – the youngest being 18, and the oldest 96. Almost 60% of the sample is married or in marriage-like relationships. On average, the immigrants interviewed have been in the U.S. for 22 years. However, the sample includes immigrants who arrived to the U.S. the same year the interview took place (2008), to a few who have been in this country for over 80 years.⁴ On average, the respondents reported having received about 13 years of formal education, and about 53% has U.S. citizenship.

Whereas our sample is too small to differentiate all respondents by their country of origin, a few groups had enough respondents to be studied separately. We singled out the countries of origin with a critical mass of respondents (i.e. more than 100 respondents); the rest of the origins are grouped under “Other Hispanic” and “Other Non-Hispanic.” The countries we were able to consider separately are: Cuba, Colombia, and Haiti. Not surprisingly, as our sample was in South Florida, 35% of the respondents were from Cuba, about 7% were from Colombia, and an additional 8% were from Haiti. Given the demographic composition of the region in which we based our sample, in our analyses we use Cubans as the referent group.

As for perceived English fluency, about two thirds of the respondents (66%) reported speaking English at least well. A measure of perceived racial discrimination requested participants to consider to what extent experiencing differential treatment because of phenotype was a problem. Interestingly, about three quarters of the respondents do not find differential treatment because of skin color to be a problem in their daily lives, but 11% responded it to be *somewhat* to a *major problem*. We also included annual household income as measured in brackets. About one quarter of the sample made \$20,000 or less annually, an additional 32% made between \$20,000 and \$39,999, 21% between \$40,000 and \$59,999; and about 12% made between \$60,000 and \$79,999. About 10% made \$80,000 or more. Our sample approximates the income distribution for the U.S. foreign-born population at the national level based on 2003 estimates (Larsen 2004). About 5% of our sample reported being unemployed, which is consistent with the 5.2% national unemployment rate for the foreign born in 2008 (Kochhar, Espinoza & Hinze-Pifer, 2010).

About one third of the respondents attends religious services regularly, and about one quarter never attends. Finally, about two thirds of the immigrants interviewed claim to have better health since migrating to the U.S. Although not an ideal measure of general health, we deem that it may provide important information on the health changes that immigrants experience upon migration and that the literature has extensively studied, such as better health compared to non-immigrants but worsening and converging with natives over time, and susceptible to the stresses of their immigrant status (Akresh & Frank, 2008; Cunningham, Ruben & Narayan, 2008; Jasso et al., 2004; Rumbaut, 1997).

The measures on transnational linkages appear on the right panel of Table 2. Over one-third, or 36% of the respondents has not been back to the country of origin since coming to the U.S. This number is affected by Cubans, who disproportionately do not visit their country of origin (Cubans are 55% of those who do not visit, even though they are 35% of the sample), likely a function of Castro’s government and U.S. restrictions on visitation in years past. Over one third of the respondents (35%) had returned but not in the past year; the rest had returned at least once in the past year. About 20% sends remittances at least once a month, with an additional 20% sending money to their country of origin twice a year or more. Interestingly, almost half of the respondents reported that they never send money to their country of origin. As expected, only a very small proportion of the sample reports owning a business in the country of origin (3%).

Regarding the affective relationship with kinship networks, we observe that communications with

⁴ The majority of the respondents (87%) arrived to the U.S. in 1965 or after. About 53% of the respondents migrated to the U.S. between 1986 and 2008.

individuals in the country of origin are common. Almost half of the respondents communicate with their country of origin at least once a week (in tables reported as *frequently*), and an additional 25% at least once a month (*sometimes* in the tables). Fourteen percent of the sample said that they never communicate with their home country. Regarding their responses on confidants, about 14% of the sample reported having no confidants (in any country). Of those who did have confidants, half had none of these in the home country and about 37% had at least one confidant in the home country. Attendance to festivities related to the home country is not widely embraced by the respondents—half of the sample report they never or only rarely attend such festivities; an additional 33% respond they attend only sometimes and 11% report attending frequently. There is an almost even split between those who never think of returning and those who do think of returning at least sometimes. Finally, only 13% of the sample believed that their home country is the place that feels like “home.” About half of the sample favor the U.S. as ‘home’; over a third (36%) declare that both countries feel like home, and a small minority report that neither or another country feels like home (2%).

In sum, Table 2 presents a very heterogeneous population of both recent and long-time immigrants. It also highlights diversity in terms of the transnational relations immigrants maintain. There is a mix of connections with the country of origin: a significant group extremely engaged who keeps strong ties with the country of origin and a smaller group that does not keep such ties. Next, we examine how the measures of transnationalism are related to the two measures of subjective well-being assessed in the current work.

In Table 3 we examine bivariate relationships between subjective well-being and key measures of transnationalism. High emotional well-being is common among our respondents, with about half of the sample respondents reporting very good or excellent emotional well-being (56%). There seems to be an interesting relationship between visits to the home country and emotional well-being, with those who have never been back being underrepresented in the excellent emotional well-being category, and those who visit often, overrepresented among those with very good and excellent emotional well-being. Sending remittances frequently is related to lower levels of emotional well-being (between 18-22% of those who send remittances respond having excellent emotional well-being, whereas excellent well-being is reported by 24% of the whole sample). The same is true for respondents who own a business (only 18% reported excellent well-being).

On the other hand, higher levels of communication with the home country seem to be related to higher proportion of respondents with poor emotional well-being when compared to the whole sample. The relationship between the number of confidants in the home country and the emotional well-being is more complicated. Emotional well-being is similarly distributed among respondents regardless of whether they do not have confidants back home or whether they have most of them in their country of origin. Interestingly, those with all confidants in the country of origin have higher proportions of respondents in the ‘poor’ and ‘fair’ well-being categories (29% vs. 17% for the whole sample). The same is true for respondents who said they had no confidants at all (23% had fair/poor well-being and only 19% had excellent well-being). Attending festivities related to their country of origin is the only measure of transnationalism that is not significantly related to reports on emotional well-being. Further, those who think about moving back all the time are less likely to have high emotional well-being than immigrants who never think about returning. Finally, those who consider the U.S. home are the ones with higher proportions of respondents in the excellent emotional well-being category (28%) when compared to those who consider the country of origin (15%), neither (13%) or both countries (23%) home.

Table 2: Descriptive Characteristics of Sample (Weighted Percentages)

Individual and socio-economic measures	Percentage	Transnational measures	Percentage
Female	52.49	Has been back to country of origin	
Age (mean)	48.64	Never	36.28
Marital Status		Been back, but not last year	34.64
Single/Never Married	18.38	Once last year	19.40
Married	59.67	Twice last year	5.27
Widowed	6.45	Three or more times last year	4.25
Divorced/Separated	15.50	Sends remittances	
Years in the U.S.	21.94	Never	48.09
Years of education	12.70	Rarely	8.89
U.S. citizenship	53.31	Sometimes	21.81
Origin		Frequently	21.20
Cuban	34.72	Owns a business in country of origin	2.84
Colombian	7.23	Communicates with home country	
Haitian	7.86	Never	13.53
Other Hispanic	43.62	Rarely	15.86
Other Non-Hispanic	6.37	Sometimes	24.89
Speaks English		Frequently	45.72
Not well at all/does not speak it	34.13	Confidants in home country from total	
Well	30.36	None	49.63
Very well	35.50	Some	25.79
Receiving differential treatment because of phenotype is		Most	6.08
No problem at all	75.61	All	4.72
A small problem	13.03	No confidants	13.78
Somewhat of a problem	7.77	Attends festivities related to home country	
A major problem	3.59	Never	55.88
Household annual income (in US \$)		Sometimes	32.93
19,999 or less	24.57	Always	11.17
20,000-39,999	32.08	Thinks about moving back	
40,000-59,999	21.13	Never	52.69
60,000-79,999	12.39	Sometimes	34.18
\$80,000 or more	9.94	All the time	13.13
Unemployed	5.40	What Country feels like home	
Attends religious services		Country of origin	13.01
Never	25.17	U.S. Feels like home	49.56
Rarely	13.89	Both U.S and country of origin	35.67
Sometimes	28.17	Other or Neither	1.76
Always	32.76		
Healthier since migration			
Strongly agree	17.86		
Agree	49.70		
Disagree	26.36		
Strongly disagree	6.07		

Next, regarding the relationship between transnationalism and reports of satisfaction with life in the U.S., we observe that most immigrants in our sample are satisfied with their lives in this country (51% satisfied and 42% very satisfied). Visits to the home country and sending remittances reveal that the more visits or the more often one sends remittances, the lower the proportion of people who answered they were satisfied with their lives in the U.S. That is, among those who never visited, 47% reported being very satisfied, while only 33% of those who visited three or more times last year were very satisfied. Similarly, 49% of those who did not send remittances reported being very satisfied with their life in the U.S, but only 34% of those who send money frequently

fall into this group. Those who own a business in the home country are less likely to answer being very satisfied (29%) than the overall sample (42%). More frequent communication with the home country is related to underrepresentation among the satisfied group (34%) compared to the overall sample. The same is apparent for the number of confidants in the country of origin (31% among those with all confidants back home are very satisfied). Those with no confidants back home seem to be more likely to respond that they are very satisfied with life in the U.S. (38%) than those with more confidants in their country of origin. Immigrants who reported having no confidants at all seem to fall in between those with no confidants back home or all confidants back home in their reports of satisfaction with life in the U.S. (42%). Individuals not satisfied with lives in the U.S. are overrepresented among those who constantly think about going back to their country of origin (19% vs. 7% in the whole sample). Those who frequently attend festivities related to their home country also seem more likely to be in the 'non-satisfied' group (12%). Finally, respondents who say the U.S. feels like home are more likely to also be satisfied with their lives in the U.S. (56%) compared to the overall sample (42%), those who consider the country of origin (19%), both countries (34%) or neither country (14%) home.

Analytical Results

Next, we proceed to assess the robustness of the relationships between subjective well-being and transnationalism. In Table 4, we first model the relationship between transnational measures on self-reported emotional well-being (Models 1 and 2) and then we assess transnational measures on their reports of satisfaction with life in the U.S. (Models 3 and 4). We start by introducing models that only include measures of transnationalism and then compare these relationships, controlling for theoretically relevant individual, socio-economic and contextual measures. It is important to account for these measures as they may modify the relationship between these components. To accommodate our nominally ordered dependent variables, we have employed Ordered Logistic Regression models (OLR). We present odds ratios, which can be interpreted in a similar fashion as those from logistic regressions: odds ratios larger than 1 indicate an increased chance that an individual with a higher score on the independent variable will be observed in a higher category on the dependent variable (i.e. positive emotional well-being or higher life satisfaction). Odds ratios smaller than 1 indicate an increased chance that an individual with a higher score on the independent variable will be observed in a lower category on the dependent variable.

Model 1 in Table 4 presents our measures of transnationalism as they relate to self-reported emotional well-being. In general, the table suggests that when immigrants maintain symbolic linkages with the country of origin (e.g., visiting infrequently, having confidants there), they have higher odds to report high emotional well-being, but sustained linkages such as frequent contact and sending remittances, or having thoughts of returning to the home country, or alternatively feeling attached to neither country may have negative consequences for emotional well-being when compared to those who do not maintain any linkages at all. In short, it seems that emotional well-being among immigrants in South Florida is optimal when the immigrant keeps symbolic ties with their country of origin.

More specifically, compared to those who have never gone back to their country of origin, only those who have been, but not in the last year seem to report higher emotional well-being than those who never visited. No differences are evident between those who never visit and those who visit one or more times a year. This finding only partially supports our first hypothesis (H1) in which we proposed that immigrants who visit frequently would be more likely to report high emotional well-being. Thus, when compared to those who never visit, infrequent visits are associated with improved well-being. A possible explanation for this is that less frequent visits serve the purpose of cultural maintenance and keeping symbolic ties with the home country.

Table 3: *Transnational Measures and Well-being (Frequencies)*

<i>Measures of transnationalism</i>	Self-Reported Emotional Well-being				Satisfaction with Life in the U.S.		
	Poor/Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
All respondents	16.51	27.17	31.99	24.33	6.75	50.95	42.30
Has been back to country of origin							
Never	15.77	27.53	36.24	20.47	5.69	47.39	46.92
Been back but not last year	14.48	25.17	30.96	29.40	3.59	51.12	45.29
Been back once last year	18.11	31.10	29.92	20.87	11.02	54.33	34.65
Been back twice last year	19.72	22.54	30.99	26.76	16.90	50.70	32.39
Been back three or more times last year	24.59	27.87	19.67	27.87	8.20	59.02	32.79
Sends remittances							
Never	12.68	24.88	34.07	28.37	6.09	45.35	48.56
Rarely	15.70	29.75	36.36	18.18	9.92	50.41	39.67
Sometimes	21.69	27.71	28.92	21.69	6.83	56.22	36.95
Frequently	21.26	30.71	27.95	20.08	6.67	58.82	34.51
Business Ownership							
Owns a business in country of origin	13.33	33.33	35.56	17.78	8.89	62.22	28.89
Does not own a business	16.73	26.96	31.74	24.57	6.71	50.54	42.75
Communicates with home country (a)							
Never	8.17	22.01	40.25	29.56	3.82	28.03	68.15
Rarely	14.90	27.13	28.19	29.79	5.88	44.92	49.20
Sometimes	15.19	29.11	31.96	23.73	4.75	53.80	41.46
Frequently	19.94	27.47	30.82	21.78	8.92	57.41	33.67
Confidants in home country from total							
None	15.63	26.63	32.22	25.52	5.93	44.71	49.36
Some	13.83	27.09	34.87	24.21	5.49	59.25	35.26
Most	12.82	28.21	33.33	25.64	10.26	56.41	33.33
All	29.09	21.82	23.64	25.45	12.73	56.36	30.91
Has no confidants	23.27	30.82	27.04	18.87	8.92	52.87	38.22
Attends festivities related to home country (b)							
Never	16.74	27.06	32.44	23.77	6.17	47.89	45.93
Sometimes	17.69	25.40	32.88	24.04	5.68	57.27	37.05
Frequently	12.86	32.14	25.71	29.29	12.14	45.71	42.14
Thinks about moving back							
Never	12.42	23.76	36.34	27.48	2.48	42.55	54.97
Sometimes	16.82	31.49	30.29	21.39	7.95	61.20	30.84
All the time	29.94	29.95	20.32	19.79	18.58	57.92	23.50
What country feels like home							
U.S.	13.49	22.63	35.79	28.09	3.86	40.42	55.72
Country of origin	24.84	27.88	32.12	15.15	15.34	65.64	19.02
Both U.S. and country of origin	16.30	32.59	27.68	23.44	6.71	59.51	33.78
Neither/Other country	34.79	39.13	13.04	13.04	22.73	63.64	13.64

Chi-square is significant for all crosstabulations except for "Attendance to festivities related to home country."

Notes: (a) "Sometimes" and "always" are collapsed into "Frequently."
(b) "Everyday" and "At least once a week" appear as "Frequently." Respondents who choose either "Every few months" or "Rarely" are included in "Sometimes."

Next, as we hypothesized (H2), individuals who send remittances to their home country are less likely to report positive emotional well-being compared to those who never send money. Those who send money back home may be sending it to relatives facing financial difficulties, when the immigrants themselves also may be struggling financially in the U.S., which in turn may affect the emotional well-being of the respondents. Having a business in the home country is not related to differences in their emotional well-being, therefore the second part of (H1) is not supported. However, because less than 3% of the sample reported having a business in the home country, we cannot be certain if the lack of significance may be due to the small number of people who answered positively to this question.

Next, we examine communication with the home country. Compared to those who never communicate with their home country, those who communicate frequently report a lower sense of emotional well-being. More specifically, they are 31% less likely to report high emotional well-being than those who never communicate with their home country. Some communication does not seem to be different to emotional well-being compared to no communication at all. Our fourth hypothesis in which we proposed that communication was related to higher odds of reporting high emotional well-being is unsupported.

Reports on confidants in the home country indicate that having *some or most* confidants back home is related to higher levels of emotional well-being when compared to those who do not have any confidant there. However, when individuals have *all* confidants back home or no confidants at all, these are no better off in terms of their emotional well-being than individuals who had *no* confidants back home (but some in the United States). Therefore, our fifth hypothesis is partially supported, in that having *some or most* confidants back home (as opposed to none) is related to positive emotional well-being.

Differences in attendance to festivities related to their home country are not related to changes in reports of emotional well-being. However, the direction of the coefficient would support our fourth hypothesis that frequent involvement in festivities is related to high emotional well-being. As we proposed (H3), frequent thoughts of returning to the country of origin are negatively related to emotional well-being; the more the individuals reported thinking of returning, the less likely they were to report high emotional well-being. However, reporting that the country of origin felt like home (as opposed to the U.S.) has no significant relationship to self-reported emotional well-being, therefore not supporting the second part of (H3). Interesting to note, however, is that those who report that neither country or another country felt like home have lower likelihoods of reporting high emotional well-being. Perhaps this latter finding might speak to a general lack of attachment to any particular place, or a sense of disconnect where they feel at the margins of multiple societies. This might suggest that their identities are not anchored in either the country of origin or the receiving society.

Model 2 assesses the robustness of the relationship between transnational measures and emotional well-being while controlling for individual and socio-economic measures. Most of the relationships just described remain qualitatively unchanged. Some of the coefficients increased their size, for example, those who have visited the country of origin three or more times in the last year have even lower likelihoods of reporting excellent well-being compared to those who never visit. It may be that visiting the home country on a very frequent basis can take a toll on immigrants regarding travel, or the very reasons that motivated those trips may be responsible for the lower likelihood of experiencing high emotional well-being. However, the significance of occasional visits to the home country on reporting excellent emotional well-being remains, thus partially supporting our first hypothesis.

A few measures that were significant in Model 1 are no longer significant when including our control variables. The only change that really alters the overall findings is that the relationship between communicating frequently with the home country and a lower likelihood of experiencing high emotional well-being (in comparison to those who never communicate) disappears. Levels

of communication have no apparent relationship with emotional well-being once controls are considered, thus, the first part of (H4) remains unsupported.

Regarding the relationship between individual and socio-economic characteristics and emotional well-being included in Model 2, only a few of the measures seem to be related to emotional well-being. In particular, females are less likely to experience high emotional well-being. Also, perceived English proficiency is significantly related to the self-reported emotional well-being of immigrants in South Florida. Compared to those who report speaking English very well, lower perceived English command is related to lower odds of reporting good or excellent well-being. This is an important finding given the many assumptions that English fluency is not necessary in immigrant Miami (Huntington, 2004). Our data show that it matters when it comes to immigrants' emotional well-being. On the other hand, racial discrimination seems to be most detrimental to emotional well-being when it is perceived as a major problem, and to a lesser extent, somewhat of a problem. Those who consider differential treatment a major problem have 54% lower odds of reporting excellent emotional well-being than those who reported never having received this type of differential treatment. This is consistent with the literature pointing that discrimination affects mental health (Williams, 1997). Finally, the economic situation of the household appears to be related to the self-reported emotional well-being of immigrants. When compared to the highest income bracket (\$80,000 or more), respondents in all other income brackets are less likely to report excellent emotional well-being. This is consistent with research that finds that adverse conditions such as poverty are likely to affect people's sense of well-being (Veenhoven, 1991). Interestingly, those who are unemployed report higher levels of emotional well-being than employed respondents. Whereas from preliminary analyses we know that unemployment is negatively related to emotional well-being, this reverse in sign is likely the product of accounting for other socio-economic indicators such as income and education. Moreover, it is possible that this finding, which does not correspond to the general findings in the literature, could be a product of the relatively small number of unemployed respondents in our sample (Dolan et al., 2008).

Finally, we included measures for health and religiosity, two factors traditionally considered in the literature on subjective well-being. According to our models, when compared to the group who considers itself healthiest since moving to the U.S., the rest of the respondents seem to report worse emotional well-being. Interestingly, different levels of religiosity are not associated with differences in self-reported emotional well-being.

Next, we turn to assess the relationship between transnationalism and satisfaction with life in the U.S. It is important to understand these results in relationship to those discussed above; rather than focusing on one's emotional state of well-being, life satisfaction represents a cognitive evaluation of one's life. Although some of our hypotheses state that these outcomes might work in similar ways, we also believe that, in some circumstances, these two outcome measures will deviate from each other.

Model 3 in Table 4 suggests that, similar to findings on emotional well-being, only those who have been back to the country of origin, but not recently, report higher levels of satisfaction with their lives in the U.S. when compared to those who have never visited. This finding only partially supports (H1) that associates higher frequency of visits with high life satisfaction. When compared to those who never visited, visiting the home country is related to higher satisfaction with life in the U.S., as long as these visits are not too frequent—those who visit frequently are no different from those who have not gone back at all in terms of their life satisfaction.

Having a business and sending remittances do not appear to make a significant difference in reported levels of satisfaction with their lives in the U.S., thus not supporting the second part of (H1), but indeed supporting the second part of (H2). Differences in communication with the home country seem to be related to satisfaction with life in the U.S. Compared to those who never communicate with their home country, communication with the home country is

associated with lower likelihoods of reporting high satisfaction with life in the U.S. Thus, the first part of hypothesis four is not supported. It is important to note that we do not know if discontent with their lives in the U.S. leads to frequent communication with the home country, or whether too much communication suggests that separation from those with whom immigrants communicate influences their life satisfaction in the U.S.

Next, when compared to those who have no confidants in the home country, those who have them are not different in their reports on life satisfaction in the U.S., thus not supporting our fifth hypothesis. Compared to those who never attend, attending festivities related to the home country does not seem to be significantly associated with differences in life satisfaction in the U.S. Therefore, the second part of our fourth hypothesis is not supported. Two of the measures on transnationalism appear as the most important in predicting differences in reports of satisfaction with life in the U.S.: thoughts of returning to the country of origin and feeling their country of origin is home. Frequent thoughts of returning are related to lower odds of being satisfied with life in the U.S. As we hypothesized (H3), those who report always thinking of returning only have about one third of the odds (odds ratio 0.34) of those who never think of this of reporting high satisfaction in the U.S.

As with emotional well-being, one needs to take into consideration endogeneity when interpreting these relationships: people who are not satisfied in the U.S. may be more likely to want to leave, but also, those who want to leave may not allow themselves to be satisfied in the U.S. Similarly, those immigrants who report that their country of origin feels more like home are less likely to report being satisfied with their lives in the U.S. (odds=0.40) compared to those who responded just the U.S., thus supporting the second part of our third hypothesis. In other words, those rooted in the U.S. society only have higher levels of life satisfaction in the U.S. This might be the case because the country to which they feel attached corresponds to the country in which they live. Similarly, compared to those who mentioned that only the U.S. felt like home, immigrants who consider that both countries feel like home and those who report that neither or another country feel like home have 44% and 83% respectively lower odds to say that they are very satisfied with their lives in the U.S. Among those with loyalties to both countries, perhaps the mixed emotions or feelings of being split between the two might be responsible for the lower satisfaction with their U.S. lives.

Considering individual and socio-economic measures (see Model 4) leaves the relationships between transnational measures and self-reported satisfaction with life in the U.S. largely unchanged from our reports above, suggesting that these measures do not significantly moderate the relationship between transnationalism and life satisfaction. Only two important changes are worth highlighting. First is that sending remittances “sometimes” is associated with a lower likelihood of reporting high satisfaction than never sending remittances. This finding means that (H2) is only partially supported. Secondly, the relationship between communication with the home country and satisfaction with life in the U.S. changes. The full model suggests that, after accounting for individual and socio-economic differences, there are no significant differences in satisfaction with life in the U.S. between those who never communicate with their country of origin and those who do, regardless of frequency, rendering the first part of (H4) unsupported. This suggests the idea that variables related to social context are responsible for the lower levels of life satisfaction reported earlier for people that communicated often. Similar conclusions, though not as strong, seem to be taking place regarding emotional well-being measured in Model 2.

In terms of the relationships between socio-economic and individual measures and satisfaction with life in the U.S. included in Model 4, we observe a few additional differences from the model on emotional well-being. Most importantly, there are differences by country of origin. Compared to Cubans, all other immigrants are less likely to be satisfied with their lives in the U.S., but no such differences were significant for emotional well-being. It is possible that having a larger community of co-ethnics may result in greater social support and social capital among

Table 4: Transnationalism on Subjective Well-being (Ordered Logistic Regression Odds Ratios)

	Emotional Wellbeing				Satisfaction Life in the U.S.			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Baseline	Full Model	Baseline	Full Model	Baseline	Full Model	Baseline	Full Model
	Odds	S.E.	Odds	S.E.	Odds	S.E.	Odds	S.E.
Measures of transnationalism								
Has been back to country of origin (ref: never)								
Been back but not last year	1.36	(0.13)**	1.32	(0.14)*	1.42	(0.15)	1.36	(0.16)*
Been back once last year	1.04	(0.16)	0.92	(0.17)	0.92	(0.17)	1.17	(0.20)
Been back twice last year	1.10	(0.25)	0.63	(0.27)	0.92	(0.27)	0.73	(0.31)
Been back three times or more last year	0.97	(0.28)	0.47	(0.31)*	0.94	(0.31)	0.97	(0.34)
Sends remittances (ref: never)								
Rarely	0.52	(0.19)***	0.61	(0.20)*	0.88	(0.21)	0.70	(0.23)
Sometimes	0.69	(0.14)**	0.82	(0.16)	0.84	(0.16)	0.71	(0.18)†
Frequently	0.60	(0.14)***	0.67	(0.16)**	0.95	(0.16)	0.99	(0.18)
Owens a business in country of origin								
Communicates with home country (ref: never)	1.21	(0.32)	1.01	(0.34)	1.30	(0.36)	1.22	(0.38)
Rarely	0.81	(0.20)	0.90	(0.21)	0.72	(0.23)†	1.01	(0.25)
Sometimes	0.82	(0.19)	1.09	(0.22)	0.70	(0.22)†	1.11	(0.25)
Frequently	0.69	(0.19)*	0.89	(0.23)	0.54	(0.23)***	1.17	(0.27)
Confidants in home country from total (ref: none)								
Some	1.52	(0.13)**	1.63	(0.14)**	1.12	(0.15)	1.19	(0.16)
Most	1.75	(0.22)**	1.91	(0.23)***	0.73	(0.25)	0.77	(0.27)
All	1.05	(0.25)	1.35	(0.26)	0.97	(0.28)	1.15	(0.30)
No confidants	0.86	(0.16)	1.28	(0.17)	0.79	(0.18)	0.99	(0.20)
Attends festivities related to home country (ref: never)								
Sometimes	1.09	(0.12)	0.98	(0.13)	1.13	(0.13)	1.18	(0.14)
Frequently	1.30	(0.17)	1.16	(0.19)	1.12	(0.20)	1.14	(0.22)
Thinks about moving back (ref: never)								
Sometimes	0.74	(0.12)**	0.81	(0.13)	0.48	(0.14)***	0.62	(0.15)***
All the time	0.44	(0.18)***	0.53	(0.19)***	0.34	(0.22)***	0.39	(0.24)***
What country feels like home (ref: U.S.)								
Country of origin	0.79	(0.17)	0.98	(0.19)	0.40	(0.20)***	0.66	(0.22)***
Both U.S. and country of origin	0.90	(0.13)	1.00	(0.14)	0.56	(0.14)***	0.70	(0.16)***
Neither/Other country	0.27	(0.38)***	0.32	(0.38)**	0.17	(0.42)***	0.15	(0.47)***
Individual and socio-economic measures								
Female			0.80	(0.11)			1.02	(0.13)

Age	1.01 (0.01) †	1.01 (0.01)
Marital Status (ref: married)		
Single/Never Married	1.00 (0.16)	1.26 (0.18)
Widowed	1.00 (0.25)	1.13 (0.33)
Divorced/Separated	0.91 (0.16)	1.28 (0.18)
Years in the U.S.	0.99 (0.01)	0.97 (0.01) †
Years of education	1.01 (0.02)	0.97 (0.02)
Citizen	1.08 (0.16)	1.16 (0.19)
Origin (ref: Cuban)		
Colombian	0.75 (0.24)	0.49 (0.27) **
Haitian	0.84 (0.25)	0.26 (0.28) ***
Other Hispanic	0.82 (0.16)	0.38 (0.18) ***
Other Non-Hispanic	0.74 (0.26)	0.36 (0.30) ***
Speaks English (ref: very well)		
Well	0.59 (0.15) ***	1.13 (0.17)
Not well at all/does not speak	0.34 (0.18) ***	0.78 (0.21) ***
Receiving differential treatment because of phenotype is (ref: no problem)		
A small problem	0.93 (0.16)	0.75 (0.19)
Somewhat of a problem	0.71 (0.21) †	0.73 (0.24)
A major problem	0.46 (0.30) **	0.36 (0.34) ***
Household annual income (ref: \$80,000+)		
\$60,000-\$79,999	0.42 (0.35) **	0.65 (0.39)
\$40,000-\$59,999	0.48 (0.26) **	0.68 (0.29)
\$20,000-\$39,999	0.37 (0.29) ***	0.53 (0.28) *
\$19,999 or less	0.24 (0.30) ***	0.48 (0.31) *
Unemployed	1.78 (0.26) *	0.73 (0.29)
Health since moving to U.S. (ref: very healthy)		
Healthy	0.59 (0.18) **	0.34 (0.21) ***
Unhealthy	0.41 (0.19) ***	0.17 (0.24) ***
Very unhealthy	0.32 (0.29) ***	0.10 (0.38) ***
Attendance to religious services (ref: never)		
Rarely	1.20 (0.18)	1.27 (0.21)
Sometimes	0.98 (0.15)	1.30 (0.18)
Always	1.03 (0.15)	1.75 (0.18) **
-2 Log Likelihood	3.202	2.291
	3.583	2.058

† Significant at 10%; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%, *** significant at 0.1%.

immigrants from Cuba. Additionally, U.S. immigration policies have historically supported the settlement of Cubans in this country. These may be among the reasons why all of the immigrants are less satisfied with their U.S. lives when compared to Cubans, who have made South Florida into an extension of Cuban society (Portes & Stepick, 1993).

Compared to immigrants who reported speaking English very well, lower levels of English command are related to lower likelihoods of reporting high satisfaction with life in the U.S. Like emotional well-being, this reveals the importance of English language acquisition for life satisfaction in this country. In terms of differential treatment due to phenotype, it is especially relevant in terms of life satisfaction in the U.S. among those who reported it being a major problem. The findings on discrimination highlight the importance of context. Discrimination may be related to satisfaction in the U.S. because it is perceived as being a feature of this country. However, we suggest that learning English might be a mechanism by which individuals feel more personal worth and esteem. That would explain its relationship with general emotional well-being (see Table 4) and to a lesser extent with life satisfaction in the U.S. In terms of income, similar to emotional well-being, those in the lowest income brackets have the smallest odds of reporting being satisfied with life in the U.S.

Finally, compared to the immigrants who report being very healthy since moving to the U.S., all others are less likely to report high satisfaction with life in the U.S. highlighting the important relationship between these measures. In terms of self-reported religious attendance, we observe that, unlike with emotional well-being, those who always attend religious services are more likely to report high satisfaction with their life in the U.S. when compared to those who never attend such services.

Discussion

Our research examines the importance of recognizing the different manifestations of transnationalism and how they relate to a typically overlooked component of immigrant incorporation—subjective well-being. As our results suggest, for many, migration is not a linear progression in which a process of country substitution occurs. Many immigrants keep various forms of transnational involvement, from material exchanges, to activities engaged in to nurture relationships, to ways of thinking and being that span borders. Numerous aspects of transnational living examined above appear to be associated with the subjective well-being of immigrants. Thus, their levels of involvement and strengths of connections to the home country inform our understandings of their cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives in the U.S.

Our analytical findings demonstrate that variations in certain measures of transnationalism are related to individuals' general emotional well-being and their satisfaction with their U.S. lives. More specifically, compared to those who do not maintain such relationships at all, infrequent visits to the home country and having some or most confidants in the home country are associated with high levels of emotional well-being; however, visiting three or more times a year, sending remittances, thinking about moving back to the home country all the time, not feeling rooted in either the home or the host country, or feeling attached to a third country, all contribute to lower likelihoods of experiencing high emotional well-being when compared to those who do not maintain those relationships. For life satisfaction in the U.S., when compared to those who do not maintain any relationship, infrequent visits to the home country seem to improve the likelihood of experiencing high satisfaction with their lives in the U.S.; whereas, sending remittances occasionally, thinking about moving back to the home country, and considering the country of origin, both countries, or neither (or another) country home detract from high life satisfaction. We propose two main ways to interpret these relationships. The most useful way is to think about each way as representing one scenario.

For instance, thinking about returning to the home country maintains a clear-cut relationship with emotional well-being and life satisfaction—immigrants who frequently think about returning are worse off along both measures than those who do not entertain such thoughts. However, according to our findings, measures such as visiting the country of origin and how many confidants one has there operate differently. Visiting infrequently seems better for emotional well-being and life satisfaction than not visiting. However, multiple visits in a year seem worse to emotional well-being than no visiting (although it is unrelated to levels of life satisfaction). Similarly, having some or most confidants in the home country is better for emotional well-being compared to having no confidants in the home country. On the other hand having all of them there is related to lower emotional well-being than having none back home (although confidants are not related to life satisfaction).

What these two scenarios tell us is that there are patterns of involvement and connection to the home country and these maintain complex relationships with immigrant subjective well-being. In the first scenario, too much attachment to the home country is detrimental for their cognitive and emotional reports of well-being. More specifically, thinking about returning all the time may suggest a lack of rootedness in the U.S. and/or fierce loyalties to the country of origin, that result in lower reports of emotional well-being and life satisfaction in the U.S. In other words, strong cognitive and emotional attachments to the home country, or enmeshment in the home society, may compromise immigrants' subjective well-being in the host society.

However, recall the second scenario where symbolic involvement in the home country seemed the best scenario when compared to no involvement, particularly with regards to emotional well-being. Visiting occasionally rather than not visiting at all is better for their subjective well-being, whereas too many visits in a year compromises emotional well-being – similar to having a certain amount of confidants back home is better than having all or none. That subjective well-being, in particular, seems optimal with some linkages to the home country rather than a lot or none suggests that those who maintain some connection, perhaps in more symbolic ways, may have successfully negotiated the pull of the home country without having it compromise their subjective well-being in the U.S.

Our study uncovers some ways in which transnationalism relates differently to emotional well-being and life satisfaction in the U.S. It could be that with a few exceptions noted above, the measures of transnationalism considered in our study are not related to life satisfaction as strongly because immigrants draw on different events and circumstances to evaluate their lives along affective and cognitive dimensions. Satisfaction with their U.S. lives is more of a global evaluation that has shown to respond to individuals' needs and values, and can result in a positive assessment despite the possible presence of negative emotional states, as Murphy and Mahalingam (2004) found in their study of West Indian immigrants. For instance, immigrants may feel a longing for their country of origin (e.g., desire to return) and be highly involved in the activities we have examined here (e.g., frequent visits), thus more likely to experience poor emotional well-being in the country of reception. However, if they earn an income that would afford them a better living than in their home country, and can carry out their lives similar to how they envisioned them when they decided to migrate, then they may have a higher life satisfaction, an assessment that might rely on fulfilling physical needs such as shelter and safety, as the research on cross-cultural comparisons of life satisfaction reveals (Oishi, Diener, Lucas & Suh, 2009).

Finally, an immigrant might accomplish these markers of successful incorporation, and to those studying objective well-being, they would be deemed to have successfully assimilated; however, much would be missed by not examining their subjective well-being—in particular their emotional well-being and life satisfaction, as we have done in this study. These outcomes might play out in contradicting ways, particularly in light of the prevalence of transnational communities and the linkages immigrants maintain with their home countries. Thus, we argue that these under-examined, subjective immigrant outcomes be incorporated more widely into the research on assimilation and incorporation.

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