Cultural Participation and Subjective Well-Being in Latin America: Does Ethnic-Racial Ascription Matter?

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Abstract

Cultural participation has been evidenced to bring several benefits to the well-being of individuals. However, the analysis of this relationship has been addressed mostly in the context of Westernized countries, without considering the diversity of populations in Latin America. Therefore, the aim of this manuscript is to explore the association between cultural participation and subjective well-being (measured by life satisfaction) in Latin America, considering ethnic-racial ascription. With data from the 2013 Latinobarómetro survey (n=20204), several ordered logit regression analyses were performed. Results suggest that read books, read news, attend movies, attend theater, visit heritage places, and participation in community celebrations are associated with life satisfaction. However, these relationships show differentiated patterns depending on the ethnic-racial ascription, which implies that the positive impacts of cultural participation cannot be attributed to all populations, highlighting a process of social exclusion where some individuals get benefits of cultural participation, while others do not.

Keywords: cultural participation; subjective well-being; ethnic-racial ascription; social exclusion; minorities.

JEL classification: Z19; I31; J15; I32.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, the Latin American region has experienced stagnant economic growth, with a tendency towards slowing down of economic activity, fallings in investment and per capita GDP, as well as a constant decrement in formal employment, per capita consumption, and exports (ECLAC, 2019). Along with the poor economic performance, poverty, extreme poverty, and social inequality have increased (OECD, 2019). In other words, the current economic situation has not been sufficient to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor; contrary, some countries have experienced a setback in social indicators (OECD, 2019).

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Several external and structural issues have contributed to the existing economic conditions and thus to the prevalent presence of poverty and income inequality in Latin America. Among others, factors such as risky international context (e.g. trade tensions, geopolitical conflicts, and rising credit costs); financial volatility; and capital flows have been enumerated as critical components of the economic downfall (ECLAC, 2019). Domestic factors have also been mentioned to reproduce socioeconomic inequalities, such as the inequitable redistribution of wealth; geographical and territorial aspects; economic sectors with a low contribution to the economy; and lags in access to education (Rivadeneira-Pacheco, Gamboa-Poveda, & Granoble-Chancay, 2020). However, despite the pervasive influence of poverty and inequality on people in the region, few studies have explored the role of individual traits, such as those based on ethnic origin and race (Trejo & Altamirano, 2016). Indeed, ethnicity and race (along with gender, age, and territory) are considered one of the axes that structure and reproduce social inequalities in Latin America (CEPAL, 2020).

From the economic perspective, Latin America has been usually observed as one unified region, despite it is a very heterogeneous territory with an ample variety of economic, social, and cultural traits and conditions. For instance, Latin America is home to 41.8 million Indigenous individuals that represent approximately 7.8% of the total inhabitants in the region (Davis-Castro, 2020), and 134 million Afro-descendants that represent 21.0% of the total population (CEPAL, 2020). All of them mingle over the extension of 33 nations, including Caribbean countries. Both groups have been observed to be in a vulnerable situation because of a historical trajectory of colonialism and last-decades economic models (CEPAL, 2014, 2020). Considering this diversity, it is not possible to study life conditions and social inequalities in Latin America without taking into account ethnic-racial ascriptions.

The ethnic-racial category denotes the absence of a clear delimitation between ethnic traits (e.g., language, traditions, and customs) and racial characteristics (e.g., racialized phenotypes) in the consciousness of individuals (Cordano, 1992). It means to some people, ethnicity and race are difficult to separate (Solís, Krozer, Arroyo, & Guemez, 2019, p. 4). This lack of boundaries is a result of historical and social constructions that validate ethnocentrism and racism, and thus, it legitimizes asymmetric power relations (Solís et al., 2019) and standards of behavior that do not correspond to the context (Nutini, 1997). Of course, it affects all human groups, in particular, the most vulnerable and marginalized (see, e.g., Cordano, 1992).

Furthermore, ascription to specific ethnic-racial identities has been associated with socioeconomic inequalities (Campos & Rivas, 2020; Cano & Mason, 2016; Solís, Güémez, & Avitia, 2020; Trejo & Altamirano, 2016), structural discrimination (Solís et al., 2019), mistreatment (Solís et al., 2019), as well as it defines relationships with the State (Altamirano, 2020). Besides, to some researchers, some ethnic-racial ascriptions are related to the loss of well-being (Solís et al., 2020). Usually, these analyses are mostly based on the economic dimensions of well-being and quality of life, which leaves aside the role that ethnic-racial ascription has on the subjective perception of well-being, namely, subjective well-being (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Yap & Yu, 2016).

Subjective well-being refers to the responses that individuals have regarding objective conditions (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004), in their context, and under their functioning and capabilities (Diener & Suh, 1997; Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2009). It also indicates all of the different types of evaluations that people build around their lives, in positive and negative ways (Diener, 2006). Subjective well-being is a relevant construct because is a central and differentiated component of general well-being (Blessi, Grossi, Sacco, Pieretti, & Ferilli,

2016; Daykin et al., 2018; Mundet, Fuentes, & Pastor, 2017). It has been frequently used to observe and evaluate the life conditions of diverse populations because of its comparability, validity, and reliability (OECD, 2013). In addition, subjective well-being overpasses one of the most recurring problems in the assessment of well-being: the imposition of external criteria about what is important for individuals and communities. Indeed, subjective well-being is a measure related to the points of view, values, and preferences of persons and groups (Dockery, 2011; Yap & Yu, 2016).

Several studies associate some ethnic-racial ascriptions with subjective well-being, in a positive manner. For instance, to some scholars, practicing one's own culture; using indigenous languages (see, e.g., Browne-Yung, Ziersch, Baum, & Gallaher, 2013; Walsh, 2018); deciding on ethnic and racial identity (see, e.g., Cobb et al., 2019; Crooks, Exner-Cortens, Burm, Lapointe, & Chiodo, 2017; Hadjipavlou et al., 2018), as well as participating and engaging in cultural and artistic activities (i.e., cultural participation) (Reyes-Martínez, 2021) may lead to higher levels of subjective well-being.

Cultural participation has been referred to as an important contributor to the subjective well-being of individuals and communities. In general populations, participation in cultural and artistic activities have been evidenced to bring a positive impact on subjective well-being, quality of life, and physical and mental health (Blessi et al., 2016; Goulding, 2013; Grossi, Tavano, Sacco, & Buscema, 2012; Nenonen, Kaikkonen, Murto, & Luoma, 2014; Reyes-Martínez, Takeuchi, Martinez-Martínez, & Lombe, 2020; Toepoel, 2011). However, the analysis of this relationship has been addressed mostly in the context of Westernized countries (Guardiola, 2011). Only a few studies have deepened the influence of cultural participation on the subjective well-being of Indigenous (Morales, 2015; Olmos Aguilera, 2011; Rojas & Chavez, 2019), and neither on African-descendants in Latin America.

Bearing all that in mind, and considering the benefits of participation in cultural and artistic activities that may bring on diverse individuals and communities, it would be central to understand the role of cultural participation on subjective well-being by ethnic-racial ascription. Therefore, what is the association between cultural participation and subjective well-being in Latin America, considering ethnic-racial ascription?

Answering this question would lead to several implications. First, results will be helpful in the understanding of socioeconomic inequalities, mostly from the perspective of ethnic-racial ascription and under the framework of subjective well-being – i.e. the perceptions of individuals. This, eventually, will promote a design of social and economic policies more diverse and inclusive, where ethnic-racial identities will be part of programs and interventions. Also, it would add evidence towards the contribution of cultural participation to the subjective well-being of distinctive groups; thus, it would lead policymakers to a more equitable allocation of cultural resources and services. Finally, responding to the research question would add arguments to the promotion and defense of the economic, social, and cultural rights of different groups of individuals that have been historically disenfranchised, which represents one of the main breaches to achieve social justice and inclusion in Latin America.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In previous research, several factors have been associated with subjective well-being. Among them are sociodemographic aspects such as age, sex, marital status, household size, family conditions, geographic location, migration status, race, ethnic identification, and

language (Gonzalez-Konig, 2016; OECD, 2011; Wadsworth & Pendergast, 2021). Similarly, material conditions, such as income, poverty, housing, and access to technology have been related to subjective well-being (Garcia, 2011; Gonzalez-Konig, 2016; Millan & Mancini, 2014; OECD, 2013). Besides, employment status, health status, work and life balance, education, free time, cultural participation, social support, civic engagement, environmental quality, religion, and personal security are cited among other sets of factors that influence subjective well-being (Cordeiro, Kwenda, & Ntuli, 2020; Fabricatore, Handal, & Fenzel, 2000; Garcia, 2011; Millan & Mancini, 2014; OECD, 2013).

As observed, ethnicity and race have been cited as relevant factors of subjective well-being (Wadsworth & Pendergast, 2021). More in specific, some aspects related to the practice of ethnic and racial identity have been linked with lower or higher levels of subjective well-being. For instance, the use of (native) languages has been mentioned as a central component to health and well-being because it represents the way people construct their identity, express their culture (Walsh, 2018), and foster social justice (McCarty et al., 2018).

Ethnic and racial identities have also been referred to be interrelated to well-being (Manuela & Sibley, 2014) mostly when a strong sense of cultural identity and pride is present (Williams, Clark, & Lewycka, 2018). Besides, high ethnic-racial identity levels have been evidenced to operate as a protective factor against discrimination, due to its capacity to elicit feelings of belonging, acceptance, and social support, which leads to greater well-being, increased personal self-esteem, and better life satisfaction (Cobb et al., 2019). In other words, ethnic and racial identities could be relevant contributors to well-being because individuals gain positive emotions through belonging to groups that are meaningful to them (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Regarding the relationship between cultural participation and subjective well-being, it has been frequently studied in general populations. To several scholars, participation in artistic and cultural activities has been evidenced to be a positive predictor of subjective well-being (Blessi et al., 2016; Daykin et al., 2018; Mundet et al., 2017). It means cultural participation may have a potential influence on subjective well-being, as well as in other related concepts such as quality of life, and physical and mental health (Galloway, Bell, Hamilton, & Scullion, 2006; Goulding, 2013; Grossi et al., 2012; Livesey, Morrison, Clift, & Camic, 2012; Nenonen et al., 2014; Perkins & Williamon, 2014).

To other researchers, cultural participation may bring sadness or psychological stress, thus producing negative effects on subjective well-being (Biddle & Crawford, 2017; Dockery, 2011). It means, to some individuals, cultural participation may recall painful experiences or be a channel to solve traumatic circumstances, such as what happens in the case of victims of crime (Reyes-Martínez, 2021). Besides, to some investigators, cultural participation does not have a significant association with subjective well-being; therefore, it could be impossible to support a positive or negative influence (Biddle & Crawford, 2017; Dockery, 2011; Alex C. Michalos, 2005; A. C. Michalos & Kahlke, 2008). In one last argument, integration of previous positions, cultural participation may bring mixed effects on the different dimensions of subjective well-being. It means that is possible to find cultural and artistic activities with significant associations, while others may not have them (Daykin et al., 2018), or to observe both positive and negative associations depending on the activities (Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010).

Despite this multitude of evidence and positions in the relationship between cultural participation and subjective well-being, a few studies have explored the role of ethnic-racial ascription on it. For instance, in Latin America, some scholars have analyzed the subjective

well-being of Indigenous (Arcos & Biddle, 2019; Garcia-Quero & Guardiola, 2018; Rodriguez de la Vega & Rodriguez, 2017; Rojas, 2020) and Afro-descendants (CEPAL, 2020). From these, only a few of them have deepened on the influence of cultural participation in Indigenous' well-being (Morales, 2015; Reyes-Martínez, 2021; Reyes-Martínez & Reyes, 2021; Rojas & Chavez, 2019). In the case of Afro-descendants and other races, this relationship has been less explored (or not explored at all).

In sum, a literature review reveals an important gap in the study of the role of cultural participation on subjective well-being, in Latin America. More importantly, the observed breach emphasizes the lack of studies regarding Indigenous and Afro-descendants individuals in the region. This situation suggests the existence of unexplored inequalities for these populations, based on ethnic-racial ascriptions, and beyond the socioeconomic factors usually addressed in the field.
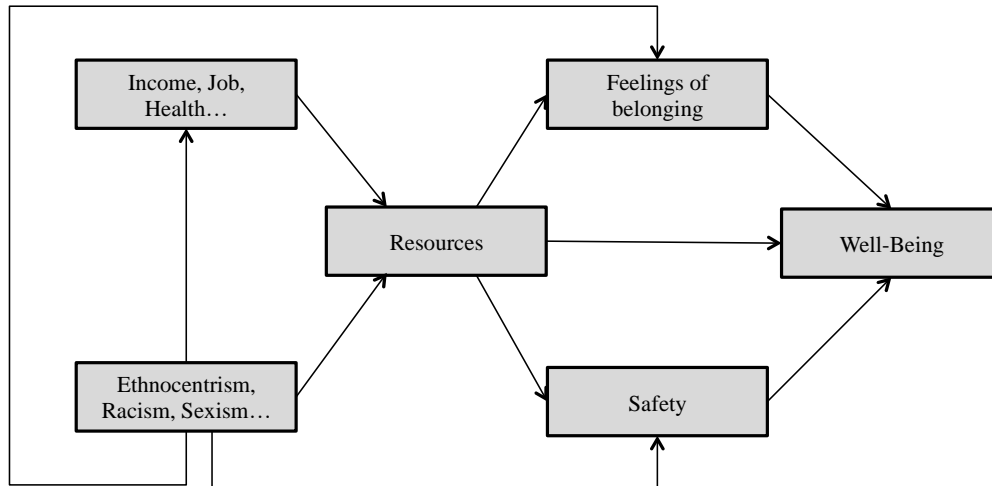
3. THEORETICAL PREMISES

Despite the exploratory nature of the manuscript, some theoretical premises could be outlined with the purpose of framing findings from the statistical analysis. Therefore, this research draws into concepts of the social exclusion perspective and the minority human rights approach to elucidate the phenomena.

The idea of social exclusion has theoretical underpinnings on the studies of poverty and marginalization (Castro, 2018). To Levitas et al. (2007), social exclusion represents the inability to engage in social, economic, cultural, and political life, which results in several forms of inequity. Social exclusion also refers to the alienation or deprivation of rights that individuals or groups with some characteristics experience within a specific society (Tamayo, Besoain, & Rebolledo, 2018). Those socially excluded are considered to have little social value: they are denied the economic and social opportunities available to others (Tamayo et al., 2018). In counterpart, social inclusion implicates more an active process than a condition. To Barraket (2005), social inclusion is a set of measures that takes action against the mechanisms of exclusion with the purpose to reduce their impact.

Under the perspective of social exclusion as a process (i.e., instead of as an outcome), exclusion occurs according to different structural aspects such as ethnocentrism, racism, sexism, or marginalization (Scott, 2020) that are related to several material conditions (e.g., income, job, health, housing). This, in turn, affects access to essential resources (or rights) and perceptions and feelings of belonging and safety. Negative or positive outcomes in these three last components impact subjective well-being, thus in general well-being. Figure no. 1 summarizes this process.

These components (i.e., resources, belonging, and safety) have been attributed to actively participate in the process of social exclusion in the form of (a) accessibility to resources (i.e., economic resources, public services, and social resources), (b) individual and community participation and belonging (i.e., economic, social, political, and cultural engagement), and (c) quality of life (i.e., well-being, living conditions, and public security) (Levitas et al., 2007). To Walker (1997), social exclusion is also associated with the non-compliance of civic, political, social, economic, and cultural rights of individuals (Castro, 2018); in consequence, it could affect the achievement of citizenship and democracy. Paradoxically, populations that accumulate these indicators (i.e., the most excluded) are the

most misrepresented in research, between them, ethnic-racial minority groups, persons in situations of homelessness, and older adults (Levitas et al., 2007).

Source: adapted from Scott (2020)
Figure no. 1 – Social Exclusion Model

In the relationship between cultural participation and subjective well-being, social exclusion may play several roles: (a) the access and engagement in cultural and artistic activities are limited by the unequal distribution of resources and rights; (b) the lack of cultural participation may deepen the differences between social, ethnic, and racial groups; and (c) cultural participation may have a restitutive role on well-being, which may be negated or delayed by social exclusion and fostered by social inclusion (Barraket, 2005). Indeed, according to Saraví (2006), social exclusion represents the disruption of social bonds, solidarity networks, and psychological well-being and self-stem (Castro, 2018) which may intensify the aforementioned outcomes.

As observed, ethnic-racial identities and other social-excluded groups are also minorities. A minority refers to "a group numerically inferior to the rest of the population of a state, in a non-dominant position" with specific ethnic, cultural, religious, or linguistic traits that differ from the others (United Nations, 2010, p. 2). As a consequence of size and non-dominant position, minorities usually suffer marginalization and political, socioeconomic, or cultural oppression, as well as they are more vulnerable to such issues in comparison to other groups (Dersso, 2012). Contrary, a majority is a group larger than other groups in a community (Orgad, 2017) or a group whose members have "the strongest political, economic, or cultural power in society" (Orgad, 2017, p. 186) . It means a majority usually is in control of strategic resources (such as finances and mass media), dominance, and power in any given society.

It is important to observe that the number of individuals in the group does not directly imply the amount of power or control that a group wields. Greater communities can also be in a vulnerable position, without access or control to economic, political, or cultural resources (Reyes, 2018). In consequence, it is possible to state that not all groups with large numerical

populations are able to regulate resources, nor that all groups with relatively small populations are dominated groups (Reyes, 2018).

Table no. 1 depicts the relationship between the two indicators (numeric size and dominant position) and their association to groups. As observed, the axis majority-minority is not so straightforward. It reveals the emergence of an alternative model of dominance with the presence of larger groups in non-dominant positions as well as the capacity (or the lack of) to achieve the accomplishment of human rights.

Table no. 1 – Relationship between Dominant Position and Numerical Size

Size	Dominant position	Non-dominant position
Inferior numerical size	Privileged Minority	Minority
Superior numerical size	Majority	Disadvantaged Majority

Source: Reyes (2018)

In sum, it is possible to observe a convergence between both approaches. On the one hand, the social exclusion perspective allows a better understanding of the role of the ethnicity-race adscription in well-being and access to cultural services and resources. It happens because the ascription to ethnic or racial groups also implies being part of a minority, a group without control over the strategic resources in a given community. In turn, it implies being disenfranchised or depowered, or, in other words, excluded.

Hypotheses

Considering the previous exposition, it is possible to formulate the following hypotheses:

H1. Cultural participation (measured by reading books, reading news, attending concerts, attending movies, attending the theater, visiting heritage places, and participating in community celebrations) is positively associated with subjective well-being (measured by life satisfaction) in White and Mestizo populations, in Latin America.

H2. Cultural participation (measured by reading books, reading news, attending concerts, attending movies, attending the theater, visiting heritage places, and participating in community celebrations) is negatively associated with subjective well-being (measured by life satisfaction) in Indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, in Latin America.

4. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

This is a quantitative study with secondary data and an exploratory-relational scope.

Dataset and Data Collection

The Latinobarometer collects data from the entire Latin American region, including Caribbean countries. It is an international survey representative of more than 600 million inhabitants. The 2013 edition includes some of the following topics: perception of democracy, perception of the domestic economy, international agenda, social classes, life satisfaction, and cultural participation, along with other topics. Data in Latinobarómetro 2013 were collected between May and June 2013 (Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2013).

Sampling Characteristics

The 2013 Latinobarometer comprises data from 20,204 face-to-face interviews. Between 1000 and 1200 cases were collected by country with an approximate 3% of margin error (Corporación Latinobarómetro, 2013). Data are representative of Latin America, at the national level. The sampling procedure was probabilistic and multi-stage.

The next lines describe the sociodemographic composition of the general population (n= 22,663) in the survey. Data from every ethnic-racial ascription are included in the Results section.

In terms of gender, females represent 51.5% of respondents in the study, while males represent 48.5%. The average age is 41.0 years old (standard deviation= 16.7, minimum age= 16 years, maximum= 99, skewness= 0.5, kurtosis= 2.3). In addition, participants mentioned they have not attained formal education (26.6%) or they attained primary education (31.0%), secondary (32.9%), or superior education (9.3%). Concerning social class, 22.1% of respondents categorize themselves as low class, 30.5% as medium-low, 40.1% as medium, 4.2% as medium-high, and 1.0% as high class.

Missing Data

The variables in the analyses present a missing data average of 3.8%. In the statistical techniques, missing information is omitted.

Measures
Dependent variable

Life satisfaction is the dependent variable in the current analysis. This indicator is one of the most studied components of subjective well-being (Diener & Suh, 1997; Stiglitz et al., 2009). In the present study, life satisfaction is an ordinal variable that is categorized into four levels of satisfaction: 1) Not at all satisfied, 2) Not very satisfied, 3) Quite satisfied, and 4) Very satisfied. These answers indicate if the respondent was satisfied with his/her life as a whole and how he/she would define it.

Independent variables

The first set of independent variables relate to participation in cultural and artistic activities. Among them are a) read books; b) read the news; c) attend concerts; d) attend movies; e) attend theater; f) visit monuments, historical places, artistic places, archaeological sites, or other heritage sites; and g) participation on community celebrations of cultural or historical events. These variables are recoded into two categories of responses (1=yes, 0=no) to reflect whether respondents participated in the selected activity or not during the last year.

The second group of variables is sociodemographic measures usually associated in the literature with subjective well-being. Among these indicators are a) gender, b) age, c) marital or civic status, d) education level, and e) work status. Gender categorizes respondents into male or female. Age is an interval variable that asks years old turned. Marital or civic status categorizes respondents in those who are not in a partnership and those who are in one. Education level organized participants into non-professional and professional. Work status classified individuals into those who are occupied and those who are not.

Ethnic-Racial Ascription Variable

Ethnic-racial ascription is a key attribute in this research. Four ethnic-racial groups are used in the analysis, those that self-ascribed as a) Mestizos, b) Whites, c) Afro-descendants, and d) Indigenous. Mestizo, White, and Indigenous ascriptions are directly recoded from the question "What race do you consider yourself to belong to?" Concerning the Afro-descendant ascription, two categories in the same question are taken into account, those who describe themselves as a) Blacks and b) Mulattos (CEPAL, 2020).

Data Analyses Procedures

Several tests are performed to analyze the association between cultural participation and subjective well-being in Latin America. First, univariate analyses are run according to the measurement level (i.e. categorical, interval variables). Second, ordinal regression analyses are performed for each ethnic-racial ascription. The statistical model is integrated by the dependent variable (life satisfaction), the cultural participation variables (read books, read news, attend concerts, attend movies, attend the theater, visit heritage places, and participation in community celebrations), and the sociodemographic variables (gender, age, marital status, education level, work status).

Finally, other tests are also run to add robustness to results, such as the variance inflation factor calculation (VIF) to review multicollinearity issues, and the Wald test, to evaluate if independent variables produce a statistically significant improvement in the fit of the model.

5. RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis Results

Descriptive analysis shows the distribution of all indicators by ethnic-racial ascription. In general, all groups indicate high levels of life satisfaction. From them, Afro-descendants report the highest levels (quite satisfied and very satisfied) in comparison to the other ethnicity-races. Concerning participation in cultural and artistic activities by ethnicity-race ascription, Mestizos report the highest involvement in reading books (54.0%); Whites participate more in attending concerts (31.6%), attending movies (39.2%), and attending theater (14.9%); meanwhile, Afro-descendants has the highest participation in reading news (62.7%), and visiting heritage places (40.7%). From another point of view, Indigenous are the group with less participation in cultural and artistic activities (31.0% in average), while the Afro-descendant ascription reports the highest participation (40.0% in average). Other descriptive results are summarized in Table no. 2.

Table no. 2 – Descriptive Statistics of Categorical Variables, by Ethnic-racial Ascription

Categorical Variables	Mestizo		White		Afro-Descendants		Indigenous	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Life Satisfaction								
Not at all satisfied	252	2.84	139	2.23	63	2.96	51	3.40
Not very satisfied	1,872	21.10	1,080	17.33	338	15.89	401	26.72
Quite satisfied	3,820	43.06	3,047	48.90	856	40.24	596	39.71
Very satisfied	2,927	33.00	1,965	31.54	870	40.90	453	30.18
Read books								
No	3,871	45.96	2,918	49.29	1,004	48.79	787	54.65
Yes	4,552	54.04	3,002	50.71	1,054	51.21	653	45.35

Categorical Variables	Mestizo		White		Afro-Descendants		Indigenous	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Read news								
No	3,706	43.34	2,655	43.89	767	37.29	773	52.76
Yes	4,845	56.66	3,394	56.11	1,290	62.71	692	47.24
Attend concerts								
No	5,964	68.90	4,170	68.37	1,411	68.50	1,102	75.07
Yes	2,692	31.10	1,929	31.63	649	31.50	366	24.93
Attend movies								
No	5,508	64.17	3,704	60.76	1,318	64.32	1,138	79.52
Yes	3,075	35.83	2,392	39.24	731	35.68	293	20.48
Attend theater								
No	7,585	87.32	5,196	85.01	1,833	87.66	1,345	92.12
Yes	1,101	12.68	916	14.99	258	12.34	115	7.88
Visit heritage places								
No	5,312	61.27	3,773	62.12	1,216	59.26	1,004	67.93
Yes	3,358	38.73	2,301	37.88	836	40.74	474	32.07
Participate on community celebrations								
No	5,276	60.84	3,818	62.69	1,114	54.03	893	60.50
Yes	3,396	39.16	2,272	37.31	948	45.97	583	39.50
Gender								
Male	4,406	49.56	2,929	46.85	1,119	52.56	737	48.78
Female	4,485	50.44	3,323	53.15	1,010	47.44	774	51.22
Marital status								
Not in a partnership	3,742	42.23	2,798	44.94	1,051	49.46	631	41.82
In a partnership	5,119	57.77	3,428	55.06	1,074	50.54	878	58.18
Education attainment								
Non-professional	6,929	77.93	5,069	81.09	1,769	83.09	1,345	89.01
Bachelor and graduate	1,962	22.07	1,182	18.91	360	16.91	166	10.99
Work status								
Not employed	3,551	39.94	2,671	42.72	849	39.88	624	41.30
Employed	5,340	60.06	3,581	57.28	1,280	60.12	887	58.70

Interval Variables	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age					
Mestizo	8,891	39.22	15.93	16	99
White	6,252	41.94	17.25	16	93
Afro	2,129	39.68	15.93	16	98
Indigenous	1,511	40.29	16.61	16	98
Log_age					
Mestizo	8,891	3.59	0.41	2.77	4.60
White	6,252	3.65	0.43	2.77	4.53
Afro	2,129	3.60	0.41	2.77	4.58
Indigenous	1,511	3.61	0.42	2.77	4.58

Ordered Logit Analysis Results

Table no. 3 shows the results of the ordered logit analysis for life satisfaction. The model is statistically significant in every ethnic-racial ascription ($p < 0.001$ in Mestizo, White, and Indigenous groups, and $p < 0.05$ in the Afro-descendant population).

Concerning coefficients for the cultural participation indicators, read books, read news, attend movies, attend theater, visit heritage places, and participation in community celebrations presented statistically significant results in different ethnic-racial ascriptions, at

different p values. Only the attend concerts indicator did not present significant results in any of the ethnic-racial groups. Besides, in most variables, all scores were positive, except for the community celebration variable, which shows negative associations in all cases. For instance, the ordered logit for those Mestizos who read books last year, being in a higher life satisfaction category is 0.21 ($p<0.001$) more than those who did not read when the other variables in the model are held constant. Meanwhile, for those Afro-descendants who participated in community celebrations last year, being in a higher life satisfaction category is 0.31 less ($p<0.01$) than those who did not participate.

Regarding ethnic-racial ascription, in the Mestizo group, reading books, attending movies, attending the theater, visiting heritage places, and participating in community celebrations present statistically significant relationships with life satisfaction ($p<0.01$, $p<0.001$). In the White population, reading news and attending theater are statistically significant ($p<0.01$). In the case of Afro-descendants, only participation in community celebrations is significant ($p<0.01$). Similarly, in Indigenous, only one variable presents a significant association: read the news ($p<0.05$).

Some sociodemographic variables also show a statistical association with life satisfaction by ethnic-racial groups (see Table no. 3). In the case of Mestizos, only age is statistically significant and negative ($p<0.001$). In the group of White people, gender and age presented negative associations ($p<0.05$ and $p<0.01$, respectively), while education (bachelor and graduate) showed a positive one ($p<0.001$). In the case of the Afro-descendant group, none sociodemographic variable indicated an association with life satisfaction. Finally, in the Indigenous group, only one negative relationship between age and life satisfaction was statistically significant ($p<0.05$).

Table no. 3 – Ologit Results for Life Satisfaction, by Ethnic-Racial Ascription

Variables	Mestizo		White		Afro-Descendant		Indigenous	
	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.	Coef.	Std. Err.
Read books (Yes) [a]	0.21***	(0.05)	0.02	(0.06)	0.04	(0.10)	0.13	(0.12)
Read news (Yes) [a]	-0.02	(0.05)	0.14**	(0.06)	0.18	(0.09)	0.23*	(0.11)
Attend concerts (Yes) [a]	-0.04	(0.06)	-0.01	(0.07)	0.13	(0.12)	0.15	(0.14)
Attend movies (Yes) [a]	0.14**	(0.05)	0.00	(0.06)	0.00	(0.11)	0.29	(0.15)
Attend theater (Yes) [a]	0.24***	(0.07)	0.21**	(0.08)	0.00	(0.14)	-0.11	(0.22)
Visit heritage places (Yes) [a]	0.16**	(0.05)	0.11	(0.06)	0.09	(0.11)	0.21	(0.13)
P. community celebrations (Yes)[a]	-0.15**	(0.05)	-0.06	(0.06)	-0.31**	(0.11)	0.07	(0.12)
Gender (Female) [b]	-0.01	(0.05)	-0.11*	(0.06)	-0.11	(0.09)	-0.02	(0.12)
Log_age	-0.24***	(0.06)	-0.21**	(0.06)	-0.08	(0.12)	-0.29*	(0.13)
Marital status (In a partnership) [c]	0.03	(0.05)	0.08	(0.05)	0.13	(0.09)	-0.06	(0.11)
Education (Bachelor and graduate)[d]	0.10	(0.06)	0.25***	(0.07)	0.00	(0.12)	-0.23	(0.18)
Work status (Employed) [e]	-0.01	(0.05)	-0.11	(0.06)	0.14	(0.10)	-0.13	(0.12)
cut1	-4.21***	(0.22)	-4.51***	(0.27)	-3.63***	(0.46)	-4.31***	(0.52)
cut2	-1.86***	(0.21)	-2.14***	(0.25)	-1.60***	(0.45)	-1.79***	(0.50)
cut3	0.04	(0.21)	0.09	(0.25)	0.20	(0.44)	-0.03	(0.49)
N	7467		5296		1806		1265	
p	0.0000		0.0000		0.0489		0.0000	
pr2	0.0083		0.0061		0.0052		0.0151	
ll	-8547.63		-5762.27		-2029.12		-1477.47	
chi2	143.36		71.10		21.10		45.39	

Note. a) In comparison to no, b) in comparison to male, c) in comparison to no in a partnership, d) in comparison to non-professional, e) in comparison to non-employed. Std. Err.) Standard errors: *) p<0.05, **) p<0.01, ***) p<0.001

Model using this dataset presents pseudo r2 equal to 0.01 or less. With the purpose to add robustness, other tests are also run. For instance, variance inflation factor (VIF) tests do not indicate multicollinearity issues (VIF ≤ 1.27). Finally, Wald test scores show that the whole set of variables in the model is statistically significant in every ethnic-racial ascription. Table no. 4 summarizes the results.

Table no. 4 – Wald Test by Ethnic-Racial Ascription

Ethnic-racial ascription	Wald test result	Significance level
Mestizo	Chi2 (11) = 100.94	Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
White	Chi2 (11) = 57.01	Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Afro	Chi2 (11) = 31.03	Prob > chi2 = 0.0011
Indigenous	Chi2 (11) = 20.58	Prob > chi2 = 0.0380

6. DISCUSSION

Findings agree with preceding evidence concerning the relationship between cultural participation and subjective well-being. Accordingly, reading books, reading news, attending movies, attending the theater, and visiting heritage places presented significant and positive relationships with life satisfaction, although not in all ethnic-racial ascriptions. In general, these results agree with the most prevailing position in the field, namely, that participation in artistic and cultural activities can have a positive influence on subjective well-being and its dimensions (Blessi et al., 2016; Daykin et al., 2018; Mundet et al., 2017). In other words, a change in some categories of cultural participation can be associated with a change in subjective well-being –i.e., life satisfaction.

Other findings are also supported by the extant literature. For instance, participation in community celebrations presented significant and negative results in two different ethnic-racial ascriptions (Mestizos and Afro-descendants). Contrary, attending concerts did not present statistically significant results in any of the ethnic-racial groups. To some scholars, cultural participation may bring negative effects on subjective well-being, in the form of sadness or stress (Biddle & Crawford, 2017; Dockery, 2011), or it may not present any statistical result or present null results (Biddle & Crawford, 2017; Dockery, 2011; Alex C. Michalos, 2005; A. C. Michalos & Kahlke, 2008). These scores support that just as cultural participation can bring positive results, it can simultaneously bring positive or negative effects on subjective well-being (Hampshire & Matthijsse, 2010) or significant or not significant associations (Daykin et al., 2018). To be specific, it depends on the type of cultural activity the presence and the direction of statistical associations between cultural participation and subjective well-being.

Of course, results in the current study also have an additional nuance: the role of the ethnic-racial ascription. Concerning Mestizos, ordered logit results showed several cultural activities being associated with life satisfaction, among them, reading books, attending movies, attending the theater, visiting heritage places, and participating in community celebrations. In the White population, reading news and attending theater were the only activities associated with life satisfaction. In the case of Afro-descendants and Indigenous, only one indicator was related to life satisfaction, participation in community celebrations and reading news, respectively.

A few prior investigations examine the role of ethnic-racial ascription in the relationship between cultural participation and subjective well-being (see, e.g., Altamirano, 2020; Morales, 2015; Olmos Aguilera, 2011; Reyes-Martínez, 2021; Rojas & Chavez, 2019). In them, participation in cultural and artistic activities may have a positive effect on the subjective well-being of Indigenous. However, this is not the case for the Afro-descendant groups, of which there is even less information on this topic.

From the perspective of theoretical premises, analysis suggests that the Mestizo group conceptually corresponds to that of a majority –i.e., those in control of cultural power (see, e.g., Orgad, 2017). Indeed, results insinuated a more relevant and significant cultural offering to Mestizos than to the members of other ascriptions. Although with methodological limits (see Limitations section below), it is possible to argue that the predominant cultural offering in Latin America is mostly thought or designed for "the general population", in other words, from and for mainstream culture; hence its impact.

In contrast, the groups of Whites, Afro-descendants, and Indigenous people can be categorized as minorities. As scholars suggest, these groups are not only in a lower numerical position; besides, they are in a non-dominant situation (see, e.g., United Nations, 2010). Results hint that in these populations cultural participation activities are mostly non-relevant in regards to life satisfaction, i.e., subjective well-being. This situation evidences a breach between Mestizos and other ethnic-racial ascriptions in Latin America. The positive impacts usually attributed to cultural participation on subjective well-being cannot be accomplished to all the studied populations, highlighting a process of social exclusion where some individuals get access to benefits, while other do not. It also indicates that members of certain minorities miss the ability and possibility to engage in social, economic, cultural, and political life. Particularly, findings here underscores the lack of access to a key resource (cultural participation), the absence of individual participation, as well as the (null) impact on quality of life –i.e., subjective well-being, in some specific sectors of the population.

Regarding the sociodemographic indicators, gender, age, and education were the only variables that presented associations with life satisfaction, at different patterns of ethnic-racial ascription. According to the literature, gender, age, and educational attainment are usually associated with life satisfaction (see, e.g., Gonzalez-Konig, 2016; OECD, 2011; Wadsworth & Pendergast, 2021). In specific, from these relationships, only age showed a constant presence. For instance, in the case of Mestizos, Whites, and Indigenous, a change in age can be associated with a lower change in life satisfaction. In other words, older individuals have a lesser probability to experience better life satisfaction in comparison to those younger. Gender and education, although regularly referred to as predictors of life satisfaction, in this analysis presented only significant results in the White population. It may imply a limited study of the conditions of subjective well-being in the Global South populations in comparison to those of high-income countries (see, e.g., Daykin et al., 2018). In turn, it reveals the need to deepen in the drivers of life satisfaction in the Latin American inhabitants, mainly those related to Afro-descendants and Indigenous.

It follows that results partially support Hypothesis 1 because not all cultural participation categories (read books, read news, attend concerts, attend movies, attend the theater, visit heritage places, and participate in community celebrations) were positively associated with life satisfaction in Mestizo and White groups. Similarly, Hypothesis 2 is minimally supported by the presented results due to the lack of statistical associations between cultural participation indicators and life satisfaction in Afro-descendants and Indigenous ascriptions. From the

theoretical premises, it arises an uneven role of cultural participation on the subjective well-being of individuals, according to the ethnic-racial ascription.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Two main conclusions stem from the previous exposition. First, it is possible to observe a differentiated association of cultural participation with life satisfaction when the analysis is conducted by ethnic-racial ascriptions. Besides, most of the associations are only relevant (i.e., significant) to the Mestizos individuals. This situation highlights a central role of cultural participation only to specific populations, namely, those compounds by the majorities. It also suggests a process of social exclusion where minority groups are omitted from the potential benefits of participating in cultural and artistic activities. In this vein, the unequal importance of cultural participation activities may denote another form of social exclusion, beyond the most studied economic factors.

Second, considering most sociodemographic indicators were significant in the White group and not in the Mestizo, Afro-descendant, and Indigenous populations, it is possible to support what has been referred in the literature: the lack of research of the well-being of diverse ethnic-racial ascriptions, as well as the overemphasis on the studies and indicators relevant to Westernized societies. Indeed, it implies the need to further research in the field of subjective well-being and its indicators in the minorities in Latin America, usually, depowered communities.

Some implications arise from these conclusions. First, it is central to observe the necessity for stronger cultural policies in the region to reinforce the access of cultural services and goods as well as the production of cultural offering relevant to every ethnic-racial ascription. As the previous discussion highlights, the lack of cultural participation and its related benefits may constitute another form of social exclusion. Promoting equal distribution of cultural and artistic activities and producing more significant offerings to every cultural and racial group may be central steps towards economic equity and social justice.

Second, the understanding of these phenomena and the potential positive impacts of cultural participation on individuals require additional efforts in research. In national surveys would it be central to disaggregate every form of social exclusion by ethnic-racial ascription. In another way, it is not feasible to eradicate structural inequalities resulting from the role of individual traits, such as those based on ethnic origin and race.

8. LIMITATIONS

Limitations in this study mostly emerge from the use of secondary data. The selected dataset did not include other relevant dimensions of subjective well-being (e.g., positive or negative emotions, or happiness). In addition, questions regarding cultural participation did not distinguish between mainstream and cultural-tailored activities. Thus, it is not possible to identify the precise role of the cultural offering in the presented results. Also, given the cross-sectional nature of the survey, it is not possible to asseverate causality.

Despite these limitations, this manuscript provides empirical evidence and a theoretical framework in the study of the association between cultural participation and subjective well-being by ethnic-racial ascription. Besides, it highlights the importance of fostering social inclusion in the pursuit of better life conditions for everyone.

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