

# Summary Report

Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network Kausattumi Grants Program, 2019-2020

JOCELYN PAUL, MASTERS OF PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH

*Exploring the links between community engagement and belonging, substance use, psychological distress, and racism among Mi'kmaq youth living on-reserve in Canada*

### ***Description of Research***

My *original* Master's thesis project proposed delineating the prevalence and impacts of psychological distress, alcohol use and substance use, and independent and dependent of stressors (e.g., experiencing racism), as well as the impacts of particular cultural factors (e.g., sense of community belonging, participation in community cultural events) among Indigenous peoples in Canada (?).

In working with my community partner, the Thunderbird Partnership, I was encouraged to shift the research questions slightly and explore fewer dependent health outcomes and a greater number of social stressors in the context of First Nations youth and adults in Canada via secondary analyses of the First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS). In this way, the data from two psychological health outcomes (i.e., alcohol use and substance use) was "put aside". In addition, four new social stressor predictor variables (i.e., verbal aggression, physical aggression, verbal/physical bullying, cyberbullying) were added to the models. New to this annual report is the addition of two predictor cultural factor variables (e.g., importance of traditional events [youth] and the importance of traditional spirituality [adults]) relative to the now *one* psychological health outcome variable (psychological distress) in First Nations youth (aged 12-17) and adults (aged 18+) living on-reserve in Canada. Therefore, the three main objectives of the current study (that are quite similar to the original study) are:

1. Explore the potentially protective impact that increased community belonging and engagement with cultural activities might have in the reduction of one dependent variable, psychological distress (no alternative predictions were made for participation in community cultural events, importance of traditional cultural events [youth], importance of traditional spirituality [adults]),
2. Identify how psychological distress is impacted in instances when a First Nation adult or youth has been victimized by social stressors such as racism, various forms of aggression (e.g., verbal, physical) or various forms of bullying (e.g., verbal/physical, cyber), and;
3. Identify how specific cultural aspects (community belonging, participation in community cultural events, importance of traditional cultural events [youth] importance of traditional spirituality [adults]) buffer against the relationships between social stressor predictor

variables and the outcome variable, psychological distress.

### ***Research Outcomes***

Overall, it was predicted that the results of the revised secondary data analysis with the 2015/16 RHS youth and adult data sets, would reveal that:

1. All measured social stressors will be associated with increased psychological distress in both youth and adult FN populations living on reserve in Canada (this was found).
2. Community belonging was associated with reduced psychological distress in both youth and adult FN populations living on reserve in Canada (this was found).
3. Community participation buffers against increased psychological distress regardless of social stressor to psychological distress in both youth and adult FN populations living on reserve in Canada (this was found wherein belonging buffered against bullying [and cyberbullying] and high distress for youth; belonging buffered against racism and high distress for adults).

The first round of preliminary revised secondary analyses was conducted in December 2018 at the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) in Ottawa, Ontario. The preliminary analyses has since been screened by the Data Manager of the First Nations Information Governance Centre, and emailed to the Research team based at Dalhousie University in a locked Excel file. The next round of analyses was conducted in mid-April 2019, wherein revised analyses were performed up until July 2020. All analyses were conducted out of the Ottawa FNIGC data centre, and though were vetted last minute, they arrived in time for my defense. However, due to the late arrival of the new data, our team still has to employ knowledge translation with the findings and meet Thunderbird Partnership Foundation to discuss the findings, potential implications and next steps for knowledge translation (e.g., online booklet resources, presentations to the public, paper-brochures). This meeting will take place in winter 2021.

### ***Knowledge Sharing***

#### ***Completed Project Deliverables***

- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020) Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and

Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Oral Presentation. PREP Graduate Research Conference, Halifax, NS.

- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020) Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Indigenous Mentorship Network Virtual Gathering, Canada.
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020). Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Poster Presentation. National Gathering of Graduate Students (NGGS), London, Ontario. [Cancelled due to COVID-19].
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020). Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Poster Presentation. McMaster University's Indigenous Community Health and Research Conference, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020). Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Oral Presentation. 21st Canadian Collaborative Mental Health Care Conference, Halifax, Nova Scotia. [Cancelled due to COVID-19].
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020). Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Poster Presentation. Pre-NAISA Conference Gathering on Indigenous Health and Well-Being, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada [Cancelled due to COVID-19].
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2020). Social Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Poster Presentation. Crossroads Interdisciplinary Health Research Conference, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. [Cancelled due to COVID-19].

### ***Forthcoming Project Deliverables***

- It is the hope that my completed Master's project will be synthesized and published in 2 peer-review journal for widespread access (a paper for youth findings and a paper for adult findings).

### ***Activities Outside of Your Research***

#### *Conferences*

- Paul, J. (2019). Defining Unceded: The Importance of Indigenous Land Acknowledgments and an Introduction to the 2019/20 Executive Standing Youth Advisory Committee. Halifax Regional Municipal Government Youth Summit, Halifax, NS, Canada
- Paul, J. (2019). Could Indigenous Cultural Identity Improve Psychological Health?

Preliminary Literature Review Findings and Implications for Indigenous Populations.  
Weld Kernohan Lecture Series, Halifax, NS, Canada

- Paul, J. (2019). Health-Related Occupations & Health Research: Strategies to Excel as a Post-Secondary Indigenous Student in Atlantic Canada: Oral Presentation. Global Health Office Junior University at Dalhousie University Medical School, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
- Paul, J.... Bombay, A. (2019). This Is What I Wish You Knew: Interpreting and Understanding Indigenous Perspectives Within The Halifax Regional Municipality. Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Annual Conference, Fredericton, NB, Canada
- Lynds, T., Paul, J., McQuaid, R., Bombay, A., & Stewart, S. H. (2019). Effects of Bullying Victimization on Alcohol Use and Binge Drinking in First Nation Youth; Is Cultural Connectedness a Protective Factor? Poster Presentation. 3rd Atlantic CRISM Symposium, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., & Bombay, A. (2019). Preliminary Results: Stressors, Cultural Factors, and Psychological Distress Amongst First Nations Adults and Youth Living On-Reserve: Oral\* Presentation. Dalhousie University's Psychiatry Research Day, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

### *Papers*

- Bowering, E., Frigault, C., & Yue, A.R. (2020). Preparing Undergraduate Students for Tomorrow's Workplace: Core Competency Development Through Experiential Learning Opportunities. *Canadian Journal of Career Development*. 19(1): 60-62. Co-editor. Published, Description/Contribution Value: Edited Dr. Elizabeth Bowering's section - was not listed active author or editor throughout entire process - my Honours Thesis work was described on pg. 61 - formal acknowledgement of Honours Thesis work on pg. 68
- Paul, J., Birt, A., & Nickerson, S. (2020). (2020). False Information and Flourishing Memory?: A Replication of Experiment 2 of Putnam, Sungkashette and Roediger (2016) with an Exploratory Extension on Memory Confidence. *Undergraduate Journal of Psychology at Berkley*. First-Listed Author, Submitted, Refereed: No, Number of
- Paul, J., McQuaid, R., Anisman, H., Matheson, K., & Bombay, A. (2020). First Nations Youth and Adults Living On-Reserve in Canada: Links With Social Stressors, Community Belonging, Participation In Cultural Events and Psychological Distress (Will Submit December 30, 2020). Invited Special Edition of *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority*.
- Paul, J. (2020). My Culture Made Me Do It: The Influence of Cultural Factors on the Expression of Psychological Health Outcomes Related to Anxious and Depressive Symptomatology. *Undergraduate Journal of Psychology at Berkley*.
- Lynds, T., McQuaid, R., Bombay, A., Paul, J., & Stewart, S.H. (2020). Effects of Bullying Victimization on Alcohol Use and Binge Drinking in First Nation Youth: Is Cultural Connectedness a Protective Factor? (Will Submit December 30, 2020). *Journal*

of Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology.

- Paul, J., & Bowering, E. (2020). Reflections on a Short Service Learning Experience in First Year Undergraduate Students (Will Submit January 2021). *Journal of the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*.
- Paul, J., Bombay, A., Schwartz, F., & Gaspar, C. (2020). A Scoping Review: Cultural Factors and Links With Health And Wellness Outcomes Among Indigenous Youth and Adults (Will Submit January 30,2021). *Journal of Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*.
- Corkum, P., Keys, E., Johnson M, Paul, J., & Rigney, G. (2020). Chapter 16: Sleep Disorders. *Interventions for Child and Adolescent Mental Health: A Core Competencies Approach*.
- Paul J., Carrier, L., Badmus-Strachan, T., Hull, K., & Bombay, A. (2019). First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS) Newfoundland & Labrador Regional report: The Adult Report. Membertou, NS: Union of Nova Scotia Indians. Union of Nova Scotia Indians in collaboration with Dr. Amy Bombay's Dalhousie University Lab
- Paul, J., Biderman, M., Hart., C., White, T., Blinn, N., Broussard, A., Murphy, K., Worden-Driscoll, I., Martin, D., & Bombay, A. (2019). *Indigenous Services and Health-Related Programs in Atlantic Canada for Indigenous Students*.

### ***Other Deliverables***

- Interview; 2020 National Vital Signs Report on Gender Equality – Article on Community Foundation of Nova Scotia Loretta Saunders Scholarship and Relevance of Personal Research to Gender Equality and Social Issues, Juniper Glass
- (2020). Questionnaire; Research Endeavors as a Recipient of Atlantic Indigenous Scholarship Network Masters Award from 2018, Tara White
- (2020). Blog Post; Wabanaki-Labrador Indigenous Health Event Review, Jocelyn Paul <http://wabanaki-labradornetwork.ca/networking-in-a-safe-space-improving-indigenous-health-one-conversation>
- (2020). Interview; Loretta Saunders Community Scholarship Fund Research and First Nations Identity as an Academic, Delilah Saunders <https://nsadvocate.org/2019/08/06/dont-be-afraid-of-failing-introducing-jocelyn-paul-this-years-winner-of-the-loretta-saunders-community-scholarship-fund/>
- (2020). Interview; Diversity in Health Care Bursary Reflections and Calls to Action, Jenn Coleman-Ford
- (2020). Community Author; Indigenous Peoples for Black Lives Matter, Eaglespeaker Publishing; [https://www.amazon.ca/gp/aw/d/B08BW431BS?psc=1&ref=ppx\\_pop\\_mob\\_b\\_asin\\_title](https://www.amazon.ca/gp/aw/d/B08BW431BS?psc=1&ref=ppx_pop_mob_b_asin_title)
- (2020). Guest Speaker; “Health, History and Cultural Safety of Indigenous Peoples” Module, Undergraduate Science Interest Group Gathering

***Future Plans***

My future plans include pursuing my doctoral studies at Dalhousie in Clinical Psychology (began September, 2020) under the supervision of Dr. Shannan Johnson. My work will continue to be Indigenous health and wellness based, where I plan to explore cancer recurrence in First Nations adult cancer survivors. Further, I plan to complete knowledge dissemination for my Masters thesis work – which will ideally include two peer-reviewed publications (one for the youth findings, and one for the adult findings).