

Summary Report

Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network Kausattumi Grants Program, 2020-2021

JOCELYN PAUL, PHD IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Quantitative and qualitative investigations among First Nations adult cancer survivors in Canada: Fear of cancer recurrence, racism and cultural identity links

Description of Research

Across Canada, Indigenous have been documented as more likely to experience poor mental health outcomes compared to non-Indigenous counterparts. These health disparities have been linked to harmful colonization practices and anti-Indigenous racism perpetrated by non-Indigenous populations. Recent research has also suggested that some First Nations (FNs) cancer survivors are at an increased risk of experiencing feelings of anxiety compared to adult cancer survivors of the general population. However, it remains unclear how and why these feelings manifest. As lower rates of cancer survival exist among FNs compared to non-FNs populations and FNs peoples continue to be at risk of experiencing racism within Canadian health-care settings, it is possible that "fear of cancer recurrence" (FCR) is an elevated state of distress experienced by FNs adult cancer survivors with *unique* impacts on health and wellbeing. Although these potential links remain unexplored, it is also possible that specific cultural factors might protect against the negative consequences of FCR among FNs cancer survivors; feelings that may have been pre-existing or worsened by a prior experience(s) of racism. To address these gaps, "Part One" of the project will use quantitative (i.e., online multiple-choice surveys) methods comparable to those used in the First Nation Regional Health Survey in 2015/16, and Part Two will use focus groups (in-person/online).

Part One will use reliable questionnaires to explore whether there is a (1) negative relationship between experiences of specific types of racism and FCR symptoms, (2) positive relationship between specific cultural factors and FCR symptoms and/or a (3) moderating (protective) influence of specific cultural factors on FCR symptoms exacerbated by experiences of specific types of racism. Part Two will consist of the collection of qualitative data collection. The qualitative data will be collected from various facilitated hour-long in-person focus group sessions, comprised of a maximum ten participants per session. During the hour-long session (and after a traditional opening prayer and a food offering), focus group attendees will be asked to discuss, and if appropriate, elaborate on (1) how their FCR symptoms impede on their daily life, (2) whether/how their experiences of specific forms of racism influenced their FCR symptoms and (3) whether/how specific cultural factors help or hinder these symptoms. The specific questions asked by facilitators have yet to be unanimously decided upon by the various

Indigenous stakeholders and communities involved in the project. For the first part of the project, data will be collected on FNs and non-FNs cancer survivors. For part two, data will only be collected from FNs cancer survivors living in eastern Canada. The project will use a unique mixed-methods research paradigm that will yield novel findings for community health and epidemiology in the context of First Nations adults who are cancer survivors.

Research Outcomes

Overall, the objectives of the mixed-methods project are to:

1. Exploration of the potentially protective effect that increased community belonging, engagement with cultural activities, engagement spent with traditional medicines and land, might have in changing feelings of FCR and associated poor health outcomes,
2. Identification of how FCR and associated poor health outcomes(e.g., insomnia) are impacted in instances that an individual has been victimized by specific types of racism (e.g., direct, systemic), and
3. Identification of how specific aspects of culture, such as increased community belonging, engagement with cultural activities, engagement spent with traditional medicines and land, buffer against changes in FCR and associated poor health outcomes.

This entire project is built upon the principles of successful community-based research. In this regard, all discussions and collaborations have been and continue to be transparent, and mutual trust and personal accountability will be emphasized at all times. Decision-making processes will continue to be collective and respectful, and all partners will maintain high levels of involvement related to the dissemination of the findings as they pertain to presentation at/within Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and organizations.

This project responds to a widespread issue faced by Membertou First Nations and neighbouring communities related to unique experiences of symptoms of poor psychological health and interest in traditional and cultural activities as protective against specific psychological states (e.g., FCR) within First Nations contexts. Membertou is enthusiastic to support the exploration of social and cultural factors, such as traditional and cultural practices and knowledge as a protective measure for unique symptoms of poor psychological and other health outcomes within the community. Specifically, the project team expects that within the

analyses of the findings will illuminate the pathways in which racism, especially experiences of racism experienced within workplace and health-related settings is associated with symptoms of FCR as an obsession with the cancer returning or progressing, impairment in daily function and debilitating social isolation. We also expect that higher levels of solitary frequency in natural environments, heightened community belonging and participation in cultural events will be associated with fewer symptoms of FCR. Finally, we predict that the cultural factors described will all independently buffer against heightened levels of FCR exacerbated by specific forms of racism, in particular experiences of racism within health-care settings.

Knowledge Sharing

- **Paul, J.** (2020). Guest Lecturer Of “Health History And Cultural Safety Of Indigenous Peoples” At Dalhousie Science Interest Group (Presented First Nations in Canada Intergenerational Trauma & Health)
- **Paul, J.** (2021). Guest Lecturer For Community Development (HAHP 3000) Of “MMIW, Indigenous Health And Community Advocacy/Development And The National Day For Truth And Reconciliation”
- **Paul, J** (2022). Present Knowledge Sharing And Transfer With Membertou First Nation
- **Paul, J** (2022). Present Knowledge Sharing And Transfer With Sharon Paul-Rudderham And Colleagues
- **Paul, J** (2022). Present knowledge sharing and transfer with Dr. Amy Bombay, A.

Completed Project Deliverables

Publications (non-exhaustive)

- **Paul, J...** & Bombay, A. (2021). First Nations Youth and Adults Living On-Reserve in Canada: Links With Social Stressors, Community Belonging, Participation In Cultural Events and Psychological Distress. *Transcultural Psychiatry*. Accepted.
- **Paul, J.**, Biderman, M., Hart., C., Blinn, N., Broussard, A., Murphy, K., WordenDriscoll, I., Martin, D., & Bombay, A., A. Indigenous Services and Health-Related Programs in Atlantic Canada for Indigenous Students. (2019-20).

Presentations

- **Paul, J** (2021). Exploration of the First Nations Regional Health Survey Data of 2015/16. PREP Graduate Research Conference.
- **Paul, J** (2021). Exploration of the First Nations Regional Health Survey Data of 2015/16. AIMN Gathering Conference.

- **Paul, J.**, (2020). 3-Minute Thesis: Oral Presentation. AIMN Graduate Student Seminar Series.
- **Paul, J.** (2021; A Judge) for the National Gathering of Graduate Students (NGGS) Oral 3-Minute Thesis Presentations
- **Paul, J.** (2021) Delineating Culture And Stressors: Preliminary Analyses Of The 2015/2016 First Nation's Regional Health Survey” at AHEAD Collaborative Health Research Conference”
- Zolopa, C., **Paul, J.**, Bomfim, E., Larney, S., & Wendt, D. C .(2021). Youth Mental Health And Substance Use During The Covid-19 Pandemic [Invited Address; Remote]. CIHR Institute Of Indigenous Peoples’ Health Knowledge Mobilization Forum: Indigenous Peoples & COVID-19.

Forthcoming Project Deliverables

Presentations

- (2022, Alberta, presentation tentative), Canadian Psychological Association Annual Gathering/Conference
- (2022, Halifax, attendee) Indigenous Consultation Atlantic Conference
- (2022, British Columbia, tentative), Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors Congress (PRIDoC)
- (2022, Virtual, presentation tentative), Tribal Public Health Conference
- (2022, Hamilton, present tentative) McMaster Indigenous Community Health and Research Conference
- (2022, presentation tentative), Atlantic Indigenous Health Conference

Activities Outside of Your Research

Publications

- Pride, T.,...**Paul, J.**... (2021). Trauma-informed approaches to substance use interventions with Indigenous Peoples: A Scoping Review. Journal of Psychoactive Drugs. Accepted.
- Corkum, P....**Paul, J.**... (2021). Better Nights and Better Days for Canadians: An Innovative National Strategy to Prevent and Improve Insomnia Across the Lifespan Using Digital Approaches for Sleep Promotion, Intervention, and Provider Training. Research Present (to publish part one 2022).
- Stevens, L....**Paul, J.**... (2021) Chapters/Parts 6, 9 & 10 of “Introduction to Psychology and Neuroscience”. Create Commons Attribution. 1st Edition. Digital Libraries. Open Education Project. Approved.
- Corkum, P....**Paul, J.**... (2020). Chapter 16: Sleep Disorders. Interventions for Child and Adolescent Mental Health: A Core Competencies Approach. Cambridge Publishing. Published.

- 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): 60-68. Co-Editor (**Honours Thesis described** p. 61; formal acknowledgement p. 68).
- **Paul, J.** & Nickerson, S. (2021). REVISED: 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*. (Revised Under Review).
- Eaglespeaker, J...**Paul, J.** (2020). *Indigenous Peoples for Black Lives Matter*. Eaglespeaker Publishing. Published.
- Lynds, T...**Paul, J.**... Stewart, S.H... (2021). Effects of Alcohol... FNs Youth. (To Submit 2021). *Journal of Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*.
- **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*. Under Review.
- **Paul, J.**,...Bombay, A. (2019-20). *First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS) Newfoundland & Labrador Regional report: Adult Report*.

Presentations

- **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.
- **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: Poster Presentation.
- **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. PreNAISA Conference Gathering On Indigenous Health and Well-Being, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada; Accepted - Cancelled Event (COVID-19 Global Pandemic).
- **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; Accepted - Cancelled Event (COVID-19 Global Pandemic).
- **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, Accepted - Cancelled Event (COVID-19 Global Pandemic)

- **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; Accepted - Cancelled Event (COVID-19 Global Pandemic)

Media

- 2020: Interview for 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-introducingjocelyn-paul-this-years-winner-of-the-loretta-saunders-community-scholarshipfund/>
- 2020: Blog Post; Wabanaki-Labrador Indigenous Health Event Review, Jocelyn Paul
<http://wabanaki-labradornetwork.ca/networking-in-a-safe-spaceimproving-indigenous-health-one-conversation>
- 2020/06: Interview for 2020 National Vital Signs Report on Gender Equality * (CFNS)
- 2021/02: *QEII Foundation*: <https://qe2foundation.ca/our-impact/news/phdstudent-focused-combining-mikmaq-cultural-aspects-cognitive-behaviouraltherapy>
- 2021/03: *CBC*: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/diversitybursaries-health-care-students-1.5955190> (Radio 22minute interview: coming winter 2022!)
- 2021/04: *Chronicle Herald*: <https://qe2foundation.ca/our-impact/chronicleherald-not-afraid-stand-out-three-students-talk-diversity-ns-health-care> or http://saltwire.pressreader.com/@Reader21326652/csb_BuFLPBgkMLjBf1qvsdObRMTM7gFk8pquIdmgHok46Zp9SQjbJyn1uLb-sbDROFB9

Roles

- 2019/2 to present: Appointed Member of Youth Advisory Committee, Halifax Regional Municipal Government
- 2020/10: Youth Digital and Social Media Subcommittee Member of Appointed Youth Advisory Committee, Halifax Regional Municipal Government
- 2020/9 to 2021/09: Lead of Departmental Climate Subcommittee (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of the Department of Psychology at Dalhousie)
- 2021/9 to present: Lead of Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee of the Department of Psychology at Dalhousie)
- 2020/09 to present: Member, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Department of Psychology at Dalhousie University
- 2019/1 to present: Student Research Scholar, Healthy Populations Institute o
2018/9to present: General Member (and previous Research Committee member), Indigenous Health Interest Group, Dalhousie
- 2018/2 to present: Student Mentor Member, Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network (AIMN)

- 2019/9 to present: Dalhousie Indigenous Student Centre Casual Volunteer, Dalhousie University
- 2019/7 to present: Dr. Sherry Stewart's MAAC Lab SCID-5 Assessment Volunteer, Dalhousie University

Supervision

- 2020/2 to present: Scoping Review Supervisor, Indigenous Health (Rebecca St. James)
- 2020/4-8: Opinio/Environmental Research Input Supervisor (Adriana Tuck-Quezada)
- 2021/6-2022/6: Honours Thesis Co-Supervisor (Rachel McMillan)

Other

- 2021/6: NSHA Training with Dr. Brad MacNeil: “Assessment and Evidence based Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- 2022: Adult Assessment Practicum 2 (off-campus in association with NSHA)
- 2020-2022: Dalhousie Course Facilitator - FoM Cultural Safety...Indigenous Course
- 2020 to present: FNIGC Project Colleague, Dr. Bombay, A.
- 2020 to present: Indigenous Relations Liaison, CRISM
- 2021: Child Assessment – Practicum (e.g., observations, case review, teacher interviews, parent interviews, administration of tests (e.g., WISC-V, VMI-6, WRAML-2, WIAT-III), scoring, case report write-up, teacher/parent feedback session)
- 2021 to present: Foundations in Clinical Psychology – Practicum (e.g., case review, semi structured interviewing (SCID-V and suicide assessments/case report write-up)
- 2021 to present: Teaching Assistant for Experimental Research Methods
- 2021 to present: Exam Proctor for Psychology Department (For Courses Including Statistical Methods, Animal Behaviour, etc.)
- 2022: Adult Assessment – Practicum (e.g., observations, case review, interviews, administration of tests (e.g., WAIS-V), scoring, case report write-up/feedback)
- 2022: NSHA Assessment – Practicum (e.g., assessment, scoring, case report write-up/feedback session)

Future Plans

As a young Mi'kmaq (Membertou FN) woman raised on the land of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, I am extremely excited to collaborate with Indigenous organizations (e.g., First Nations Information Governance Centre), communities and allies throughout eastern Canada on this novel project. I hope that our findings will provide the groundwork for and help inform the development of mental health and wellness programming and policies for FNs cancer survivors in Canada, and advance understandings of distinct health outcomes associated with FCR within FNs adult cancer survivor populations. Overall, the researchers, communities and

stakeholders involved hope the findings will inform the policy-makers of the need for culturally appropriate survivorship care methodologies for FNs adult cancer survivor populations in eastern Canada, as well as and provide insight for health- care professionals into the unmet needs and heightened unique symptoms that FNs cancer survivors face. Before I obtain my degree, I am keen to continue to serve on various committees that impact health and wellbeing of various age groups of First Nations living in the HRM and elsewhere. I hope to travel to other countries that have experienced colonization and learn from their experiences and about unique country-colonial impacts, culture, and culture revitalization. Finally, I am hopeful to finish my degree by my fifth year, and go onto my internship, with speciality in Indigenous mental health and outcomes from Indigenous-based and humanistic therapeutic methods.