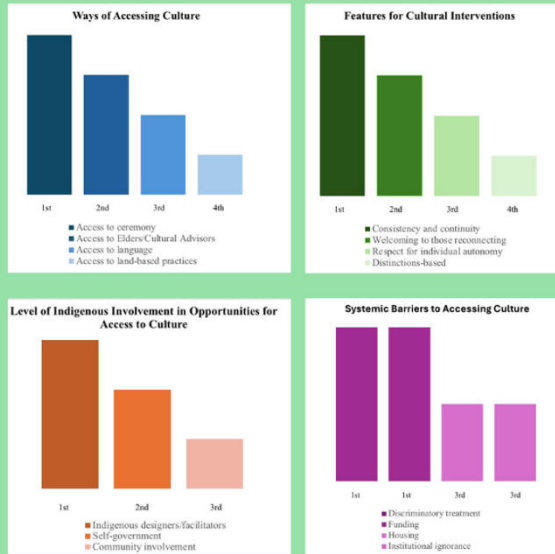


MORE RESULTS



IMPLICATIONS

Our participants were a diverse group of academic and front-line experts, many of whom have direct, first-hand experience from working with Indigenous persons in Canada's criminal legal system. They demonstrated high levels of consensus on the basic parameters of the relationship between access to culture and justice involvement for Indigenous persons. Showing consensus among these experts could provide a clearer starting point for decision-makers throughout Canada's criminal legal system. For example, judges can more confidently consider when culture-based interventions ought to be prioritized in sentencing decisions.



If you would like more information, please contact Benjamin Ralston at: benjamin.ralston@usask.ca

We would like to give special thanks to the members of our invaluable Advisory Committee :

Joseph Naytowhow
Tamara Pearl
Gavin Cazon-Wilkes
Andrea Phillips

This research was funded by:



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Centre for Forensic
Behavioural Science
and Justice Studies
CFBSJS.USASK.CA

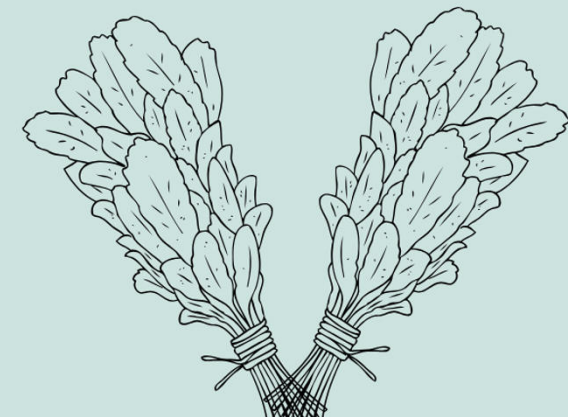


UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

CULTURE AS HEALING

Research Team:

Asst. Prof. Benjamin Ralston
Dr. Christie Tetreault
Lucie Blackburn (BSc)
Ayyah Ismail



ROUND 1

Participants were asked about: their broad understanding of the relationship between access to culture and justice involvement for Indigenous persons; the relationship between access to culture and substance use and mental health symptoms as risk factors for justice involvement; factors that make access to culture more or less likely to address risk factors for Indigenous persons; barriers related to gender identity or expression; and key priorities for interventions. On a 10-point Likert scale (1-not at all to 10-completely), participants rated the importance of access to culture in reducing justice involvement for Indigenous persons at an average of 8.82. However, the level of consensus they felt existed in key research and literature on this topic averaged 6.07.

ROUND 2

The analysis from Round 1 resulted in 36 propositions that were presented to participants in Round 2 so they could indicate their level of agreement with each on a 4-point Likert scale. Thirty-four achieved consensus. Among other points, there was consensus that access to culture can: (1) strengthen an Indigenous person's support network, including connections to healthy family members, friends, and community members; (2) strengthen their ties to an Indigenous value system; (3) help them build a positive self-identity; (4) help them develop pro-social skills and behaviours; (5) support the development of a positive, pro-social environment for others beyond the individual participant; (6) help them gain greater insight into the impacts of colonialism on their lives; (7) protect them from anti-social influences among their friends, family, and community members; (8) support their sense of purpose and planning for the future; and (9) protect them from the negative consequences of experiences of racism and discrimination on their (a) mental health and (b) self-identity.

There was some disagreement on (1) whether prison disrupted access to culture and could increase the likelihood of further justice involvement and (2) whether greater awareness of anti-Indigenous discrimination could be a risk factor for developing adverse mental health conditions.

ROUND 3

Participants noted that the impacts of a prison sentence on an Indigenous person tend to be individualized, as do those of increased awareness of anti-Indigenous discrimination. Some may access opportunities in prison that were not previously available to them while many others lose access to culture in their community. Similarly, some experience feelings of hopelessness, fatalism, or pessimism after learning more about injustices against Indigenous peoples. But for others, it can empower them for self-advocacy and better navigation of systemic barriers. Many participants noted in the rankings that their collective prioritization seemed to reflect practical realities. Items under each theme were also closely interconnected and not easily disentangled.