The Participatory Research Newsletter

This monthly newsletter aims to highlight the participatory research initiatives emerging from P*articipatory Research @ McGill* (PRAM), and *Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency* (CIET), as well as share new opportunities for projects, courses, funding, and more!

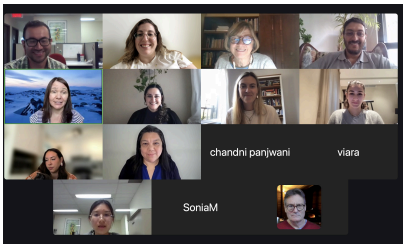
Note, the CIET-PRAM Newsletter is offered in the following languages:

Français | Español

A Month in Review

An ever busy team, below are a few updates from the CIET-PRAM network.

Monthly Meeting



Improving Intercultural Communication in Nunavik

The monthly CIET-PRAM meeting is an opportunity to share project updates, present research protocols, practice dissertations defences, and more.

This month, we welcomed Natasha Ita MacDonald PhD(c), an Inuk scholar and Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University. Natasha is originally from Nunavik, and is currently working on decolonizing systems and enhancing intercultural communication in Indigenous education and health in the area. We enjoyed learning about her work and hope to collaborate in the future!

Project Updates

Read on to learn how PRAM projects are progressing in Botswana, Canada, and Nigeria!

Botswana | *Malata* pilot survey: Progress and next steps

We are happy to report that the *Malata* pilot survey was successfully completed in early August, covering 300 households across three rural communities. The survey was well-received and has provided valuable insights for future research and initiatives.

This pilot survey was the next step of an ongoing project to understand the forms and perceived causes of domestic child trafficking in Botswana and estimate its prevalence. In September 2024, the local team will present the findings to the participating communities and engage in discussions to explore the results and gather feedback. These conversations will help shape the direction of future efforts and ensure that the needs and perspectives of the communities are at the forefront of ongoing work.

Montréal, Canada | Co-designing teen health services

This August, we kicked off data collection for our ongoing participatory project in collaboration with Drs. Yvonne Quan, Perry Adler, and Mark Karanofsky from the Goldman Herzl Family Practice Centre at the Jewish General Hospital.

This project unites providers from the Teenage Health Unit, school staff, and teenagers (aged 14+) to explore their perspectives on services addressing their mental and physical health needs. Participants will work together to map out the factors that influence youth access to and use of these services through fuzzy cognitive mapping (FCM). Using these insights, we will engage in deliberative dialogues to identify potential changes that could enhance service accessibility and teenager engagement.

So far, we have conducted six FCM sessions with healthcare providers, and will begin our school-based recruitment this September. Stay tuned for more updates as the project progresses!

Bauchi State, Nigeria | COVID-19 recovery project: Communities taking action

This two year project, funded by the New Frontiers in Research Fund, addresses priority 5.1 of the UN Research Roadmap for COVID-19 Recovery on social cohesion and community resilience.

Following the presentation of findings from the fuzzy cognitive mapping sessions and baseline survey on pandemic-related challenges, several communities have started taking collaborative steps to recover from the most severe impacts of COVID-19. For instance, some communities have begun utilizing local land to grow food crops, which they either consume or sell, helping to enhance food security and economic resilience.

The local team is now working to connect these communities with government bodies responsible for COVID-19 recovery programs (see below photos!). By bringing government representatives to the communities, they are creating opportunities for dialogue about ongoing initiatives and the support needed from government programs to bolster recovery efforts.

Bauchi State, Nigeria | Empowering adolescents through cellphilming

In all 30 intervention communities, adolescents have taken the initiative to create cellphilms highlighting their concerns about *adolescent sexual and reproductive Health* (ASRH). These creative efforts have been showcased by the local team through screenings of the cellphilms and docudramas within the communities.

Following these screenings, the communities have started taking action to address their priority ASRH concerns. This effort is being led by dialogue groups that include adolescents, fostering open discussions and collaborative solutions to improve ASRH outcomes.

Medical Students Exchange

This month, PRAM fortunate in hosting two more visiting medical students from Bulgaria and Taiwan, respectively! This exchange was facilitated through the IFMSA Research Exchange, which provides medical students with opportunities to improve their research skills.

Meredith Su

Meredith is a third-year medical student at Kaohsiung Medical University in Taiwan with a deep passion for oncology and public health. She is dedicated to advancing cancer research and enhancing public health awareness, particularly among Indigenous communities in Taiwan, where she serves as a coordinator for a student-led club. Meredith is committed to making a meaningful impact through research, advocacy, and compassionate care.

Vyara Pavlova

Vyara Pavlova is a 6th-year medical student from Bulgaria. She studies at the Medical University of Sofia and has a strong interest in internal medicine, particularly in the field of gastroenterology.

Both students had the opportunity to work on an ongoing review about factors contributing to youth suicide in sub-Saharan countries. They also participated as note-takers during fuzzy cognitive mapping sessions for the ongoing Teenage Health Unit project, and learned how to digitize the maps.

Thank you both for your help, and best of luck on your future endeavours!

Latest Publications

Highlighted below are some of the most recent publications from the industrious CIET-PRAM team:

Integrating knowledge systems for holistic approaches to addressing knowledge and health inequities: combining fuzzy cognitive maps

Authors: Anna Dion, Iván Sarmiento, Mateja Šanjna & Neil Andersson

Visit our website for more publications from the CIET-PRAM team

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Departmental Newsletters

McGill | Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences | Department of Family Medicine

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