

ILLUMINATING THE EVOLVING IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON ETHNOCULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN EDMONTON: THE ILLUMINATE PROJECT

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CONTEXT

COVID-19 outbreaks in visible minority and racialized communities have exacerbated disparities in poverty, illness and accessing high-quality culturally appropriate information and support. The Illuminate project involves a collaboration between the Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative of Edmonton, AB and, research and policy partners evolving from previous work to address the needs of these communities.

OBJECTIVE

To generate and feedback real-time synthesised data to help understand and mitigate the evolving impacts of COVID-19.

STUDY DESIGN

Community-based participatory action research using a mixed-methods approach based on complexity science and narrative theory.

Between September-December 2020, 20 cultural health brokers and natural community leaders collected and self-signified in a SenseMaker® platform, real-time micro-narratives on COVID-19 impacts on diverse ethnocultural communities. They also engaged in weekly collaborative discussions on the emerging data.

OUTCOME MEASURES

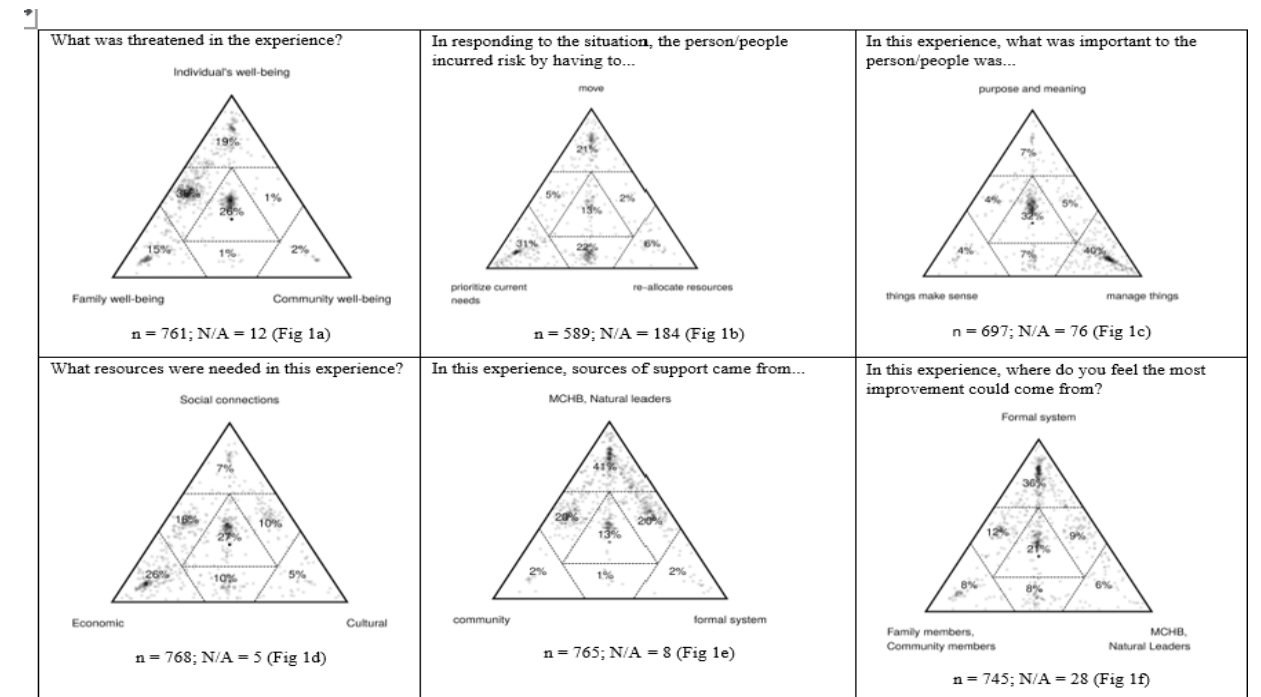
Quantitative description of compositional data, qualitative analysis of the micro-narratives and visualization of outcomes with social network analysis.

RESULTS

- 773 micro-narratives were collected representing lived experiences of individuals and families living in vulnerable circumstances from diverse ethno-cultural communities in Edmonton (Fig 1).
- The resulting narrative patterns illuminate the entanglement of COVID-19 impacts on individuals and families: prevention and management, care of non-COVID acute, chronic and serious illness; maternal care; mental health and triggers of past trauma; financial insecurity; impact on children and youth, and seniors; and legal concerns (Fig 2).
- A core obstacle for COVID-19 holistic management was income instability, a key asset was community social capital.

CONCLUSIONS

The Illuminate Project has made visible the entangled issues with systemic roots that result in poor health in vulnerable members of ethnocultural communities, and the impact of COVID-19 on increasing basic needs and the time and effort needed to mitigate them. We illustrate cultural brokering as a practice to support people through this crisis and propose concrete recommendations to inform policy to reduce harm, and support community resiliency.



NB. Each dot represents a micro-narrative signified by a sensor in the triad
Fig 1 Descriptive patterns in the compositional data.

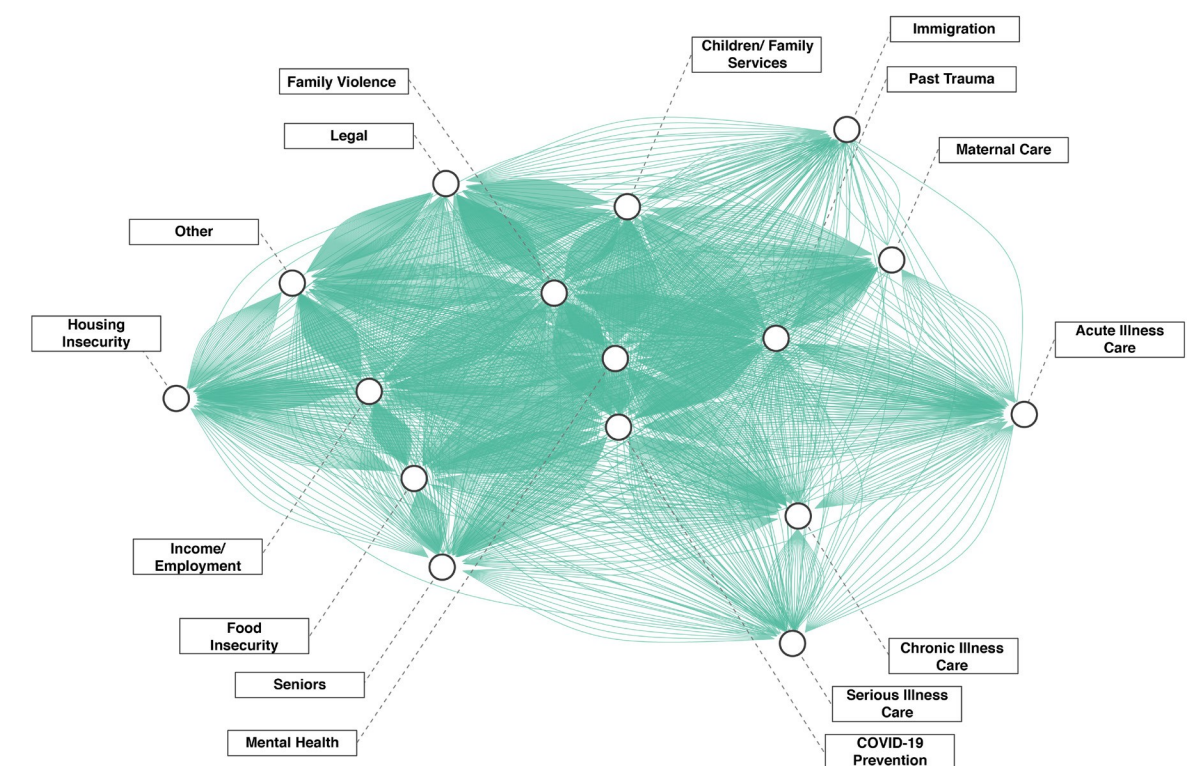


Fig 3. A network view of the identified areas represented as nodes (circles), and the ties that connect them (edge). Each edge represents one micro-narrative that includes issues represented by connected nodes.

