



The Outland Youth Employment Program: A Narrative Study

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Preface

This report presents a holistic analysis of the experience of Indigenous youths participating in the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP). This analysis was conducted by examining the narratives of the youths and the people who make up their circle of support, including parents/caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and Mink Lake Camp administration/staff (2018). This study's findings demonstrate that the OYEP's Indigagologic approach has significantly increased the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical well-being of its Indigenous youth participants, and that these youths have been able to successfully carry these benefits into other areas of their lives.

Nurturing Capacity: Building Community Success

Indspire supports communities to improve educational outcomes through the documentation and evaluation of their innovative practices. This community-led process is supported by an Indspire-funded Indigenous scholar, who works with programs on the ground to provide training on data collection and evaluation methodology.

Project Abstract

The Outland Youth Employment Program provides Indigenous learners with a holistic learning, working, and living environment that has been designed to help them experience success, often for the first time in their lives. Over the program's six-week duration, Indigenous youth are immersed in a curriculum that is based on both Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and Contemporary Western Knowledge. In short, the OYEP has successfully implemented key international Indigenous research findings that emphasize the importance of aligning practices at all levels of education with the learning needs of Indigenous people.

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Executive Summary

The Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) is a local, community driven initiative that works towards equity and opportunity for Indigenous Youth through education, training and work opportunities. To succeed, it requires the support of Government, Indigenous Communities, Educational Institutions and key industry players. Youth are fully immersed in a natural resource-based work-culture, including safety training, time management, remote and rotational work schedules and work-life balance (OYEP, 2018, p. 1).

During the summer of 2018, the OYEP operated in three locations in Ontario and one in British Columbia, employing 93 Indigenous youth age 16 to 18 from 58 communities. In Ontario, these youth were predominantly Anishinabe, which includes Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Cree, and Métis.

The OYEP was implemented in response to the unprecedented numbers of Indigenous youth leaving school early. For example, according to the 2016 Census, only 38.4% of the population in the age groups 18 to 20 years living in private households in Northwestern Ontario had a high school diploma or equivalent (Statistics Canada, 2016a).

The research presented in this report was based on an analysis of the voices of Indigenous youth and those who form their supportive circle, including parents/caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and the administration/staff at Mink Lake Camp.

In order to develop a holistic understanding of how the OYEP has impacted Indigenous youth on a personal level, the analysis was framed based on the Four Elements of Self, which is a part of the Traditional Medicine Wheel Teachings. The teachings related to the Four Elements of Self recognize that effective education requires the integration of the learner's spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical realities. Once the narratives of the youths, their parents/caregivers, and the Traditional and Contemporary Educators had been recorded, they were compared to determine how successful the OYEP had been in responding to these four dimensions of Indigenous learning.

The OYEP's 2018 Ontario season featured a number of significant achievements, including: a 96% program completion rate; 99% of OYEP graduates returning to school or entering the workforce; a total of 131 high school credits being earned by OYEP participants; 58 Indigenous communities being represented among OYEP-employed youth; and 12 OYEP graduates entering college or university (OYEP, 2018, p. 2).

The findings of the current study demonstrate significant growth in the spiritual,

emotional, intellectual, and physical well-being of the Indigenous OYEP participants who were employed at Mink Lake Camp in Northwestern Ontario. This increase in well-being helps to offset the many socio-economic, socio-health, socio-cultural, and socio-educational challenges faced by OYEP participants, and it provides them with an experience of success that they can carry into other areas of their lives.

The Outland Youth Employment Program: A Narrative Study

Context

An Economic Snapshot of Northwestern Ontario

The discovery of a significant deposit of minerals in Northwestern Ontario's Ring of Fire has been called the "greatest economic development opportunity in a generation" (Ontario Chamber of Commerce, 2015). The labour-market opportunities related to this discovery hold tremendous economic potential for the First Nations and Métis communities in this region, particularly in terms of mining, processing, infrastructure, and ancillary and supply services. In addition, a number of other sectors in Northwestern Ontario also hold the promise of new employment opportunities for Indigenous people, most notably in construction, health, forestry and Indigenous governance/services.



Demographic shifts among non-Indigenous populations in Northwestern Ontario, including an ageing population and the out-migration of younger populations, have contributed to a general population decline of approximately 9% between 1991 and 2011 (Moazzami, 2015). This has effectively shrunk the pool of potential employees, which has posed a challenge for employers who are trying to maintain a skilled workforce. In contrast,

Northwestern Ontario's Indigenous population increased by 13% over the same period (Moazzami, 2015). On average, Northwestern Ontario's Indigenous population is younger, has a higher birth rate, and generally resides in urban and rural areas close to many current and future resource-development sites (see Ontario Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, 2019).

In an effort to capitalize on these labour-market opportunities, the Federal (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2017) and Ontario (Ministry of Education, 2007) governments have developed a number of policies and made strategic investments in initiatives aimed at improving elementary, secondary, post-secondary, and trades education for Indigenous youth in Northwestern Ontario. These investments are critical, as they represent a key step in reducing the poverty that plagues Indigenous

peoples.

The depth of this poverty was recently documented in a Canadian Press report, which analyzed data from the 2016 census. The authors of this report found that “81% of reserves had median incomes below the low-income measure, which Statistics Canada considers to be \$22,133 for one person” (Press, 2017, p. 1).

Education—or rather, the lack of high school certification—is, and will continue to be, the greatest barrier preventing Northwestern Ontario’s Indigenous peoples from benefiting from the bounty of their traditional lands.

The Educational Context of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario

There is little data that accurately reflects the number of Indigenous children attending Ontario-funded schools, or the number that graduate from high school,¹ move into higher education, or enter into employment-training programs. The existing data is either questionable or does not fully reveal how education truly impacts Indigenous people residing in Northwestern Ontario. This lack of accurate data is problematic, as it makes it very difficult to obtain a direct and informed picture of how educational achievement impacts the socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-health outcomes of Indigenous populations living in remote and urban communities in this territory.

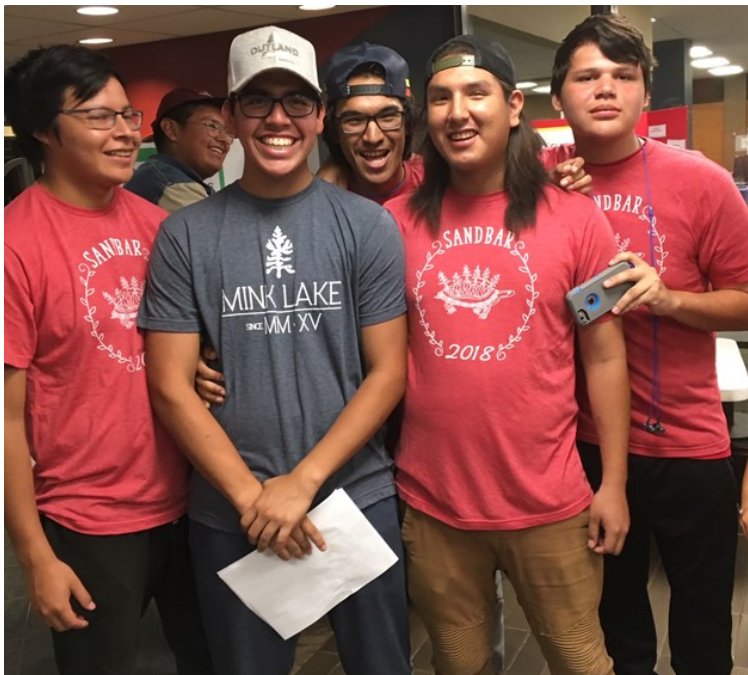
For example, Statistics Canada reports that 23% (7,070) of Indigenous people in Ontario between 20 and 24 (31,220) do not hold at least a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 7% (55,920) of non-Indigenous people (857,365) (Statistics Canada, 2016d).

What happens to the 23% (7,070) of Indigenous people in this age bracket who **do not** have a high school diploma or equivalent? Specifically, do they move into gainful employment? We see that unemployment among Indigenous people age 25-64 who do not hold high school diplomas or higher is greater than unemployment for similarly educated non-Indigenous people, 10.9 percent and 6.3 percent, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2016d). When considering education and its relationship to income, we can see Indigenous people in Ontario between 24 and 64, without high school education have a median income of just over \$12,500, compared to Indigenous people in Ontario with a high school diploma or equivalent in the same age group, who earn a median income of nearly \$22,000 (Statistics Canada, 2016d).

Hodson and Kitchen (2015) attempted to determine the actual number of Indigenous learners specifically in Northwestern Ontario by analyzing data obtained from eight of the territory’s nine school districts. Although they identified a total of 6,824 Indigenous

¹ The Ontario Ministry of Education required all Boards of Education in the province to track the school success rates of Indigenous learners who began high school in 2011/12 over a period of four and five years. That data, although collected, has yet to be released.

students, they had grounds to suspect that this number did not fully reflect the actual number of Indigenous students in these districts. The students in this initial figure consisted of those who had chosen to self-identify under the various Aboriginal Self-Identification Policies that had been adopted by these school boards; however, it is well known that many Indigenous students choose to not self-identify for a variety of reasons. In order to account for those who had not self-identified, the authors drew upon population data, ultimately arriving at a maximum estimate of 9,139 Indigenous learners enrolled in the reporting district school boards. Using the minimum figure of 6,824 students, the authors determined that at least 1,570 (23%) would not successfully complete their secondary education.



Once again, it is necessary to ask: what will happen to these young people, and how will they impact the communities in Northwestern Ontario? One significant outcome of low high school graduation rates is the loss of the energy and vitality that young educated populations who are beginning to build their lives and their families bring to a community. Indeed, this loss cannot be overstated, as these individuals are critical contributors in addressing the needs of their

communities.

The underlying issue at the core of this education gap among Indigenous youth in Ontario is the failure of an entire educational system to fully recognize and respond to the learning needs of Indigenous learners. As a result, the casualties of this system are left with few educational alternatives and a sense of personal failure that erodes hope for the future.

Training, Education, and Employment Challenges

There is a growing body of research (Cajete, 1994; Battiste, 2013; Bishop, O'Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010; Castellano, Davis, & Lahache, 2000; Hampton, 1995) dedicated to understanding which learning environments are best suited for meeting the needs of Indigenous learners. While many of these studies have provided strong evidence in support of the success of such environments, their key features are often at odds with the

learning environments currently found in the dominant educational system.

Given that many of Ontario's Indigenous learners are not completing high school, it would seem worthwhile to explore educational alternatives that could increase Indigenous educational success.

Hands-On Learning & the Power of the Land

There is evidence suggesting that Indigenous peoples tend to respond extremely well to kinaesthetic-based learning approaches (Cajete, 1994; Battiste, 2013; Bishop, O'Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010; Castellano, Davis, & Lahache, 2000; Hampton, 1995). As such, educational strategies that make effective use of this approach may be instrumental in increasing educational success.

In contrast to book- or lecture-based approaches to learning, kinaesthetic, or hands-on, learning is participatory; that is, students learn by doing. Some suggest that this learning preference is an outcome of Indigenous parenting styles, which tend to encourage children to freely explore their world (see Cajete, 1994). Others suggest that it is rooted in genetics, the outcome of 130,000² years of experience on Turtle Island and is passed from one generation to the next.

Whether learned at a young age or inherited genetically, many Indigenous peoples seem to excel in learning environments that emphasize kinaesthetic learning. In response, some provincial and federal schools are now developing various types of land-based programming to get children out of the classroom and onto the land to literally learn through their hands.

² In 1992, construction workers dug up smashed mastodon bones while clearing earth to build a sound barrier along Route 54 in San Diego County. Tests show that if early humans did smash those mastodon bones it was 130,000 years ago. This potentially pushes back the time humanity has been on Turtle Island by as much as 100,000 years (see Zimmer, 2017).



One such program is the Kingsway Park Elementary School Learning Academy in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The Kingsway Academy has successfully developed a kinaesthetic-based curriculum that integrates both Traditional Anishinabe Knowledge and Contemporary Western Knowledge (see <https://indspire.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Kingsway-Academy-FINAL.pdf>). Students at Kingsway are able to learn about subjects like math and science by engaging in kinaesthetic activities that are based on Traditional Anishinabe Knowledge, and these lessons are then supplemented with more abstract or theoretical Western Contemporary Knowledge. Kingsway's model has been highly successful in improving learning outcomes for Indigenous students, which demonstrates the importance of incorporating kinaesthetic approaches when working with Indigenous learners.

Culturally Responsive Indigagogy of Relations

The greatest contributing factor to Indigenous school success is the availability of teachers who are educated to work within a Culturally Responsive Indigagogy³ of Relations (see Battiste, 2013; Bishop, O'Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010; Kitchen, Hodson, Hedican, Hodson, & Herrera, 2017). These teachers are effective in helping Indigenous students succeed in the classroom because they consistently demonstrate several key behaviours on a daily basis, namely:

1. They create and maintain a culturally responsive context for learning.
2. They create and maintain culturally appropriate contexts for learning.

³ indig-a-gogy /' indige , gäjë noun

The method and practice of Indigenous teaching, learning, and research, especially in relation to the theory of healing and wellness of Indigenous children, youth, adults and [E]lders.

"the successful pursuit of Indigenous healing and wellness is dependent on Indigagogy."

3. They have high expectations regarding student behaviour.
4. They care for learners as culturally located individuals.
5. They have high learning expectations for students.
6. They create and maintain a secure, well-managed learning environment.
7. They genuinely care for their learners (Kitchen et al., 2017, p. 52).

Successful Indigenous learning environments embrace a curriculum that is predominantly kinaesthetic and based on the land, where learners work with educators who employ a Culturally Responsive Indigagogy of Relations. These two educational elements make up the core components of the Outland Youth Employment Program.

Brief History of the Program

The Ontario branch of the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) began operation in 2000. The OYEP is operated in partnership with local First Nations, which ensures the development of culturally responsive programming, in addition to providing Indigenous participants with summer employment opportunities.

In the summer of 2018, the OYEP was offered in three locations in Ontario and one in British Columbia (see Table 1.1). In the time since its founding, the OYEP has been developed to “provide hands-on, land-based learning opportunities for Indigenous youth in Ontario” (OYEP, 2018).

Table 1.1: OYEP Camps & Locations, 2018.

Camp	Town & Province	First Nation Partner
<i>Camp Hughes</i>	<i>Prince George, B.C.</i>	<i>McLeod Lake First Nation</i>
<i>Esker Lakes Camp</i>	<i>Kirkland Lake, Ontario</i>	<i>Temagami First Nation</i>
<i>Mink Lake Camp</i>	<i>Atikokan, Ontario</i>	<i>Lac la Croix First Nation⁴</i>
<i>Sandbar Camp</i>	<i>Ignace, Ontario</i>	<i>Fort William First Nation</i>

During 2018, the OYEP employed 93 Indigenous youth from 58 communities across Ontario and British Columbia.

Each spring, the OYEP places a call for applications through an extensive paper advertisement and social media campaign targeted at past employees, Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTOs), Tribal Councils, First Nations, the Métis Nation of Ontario, Indigenous agencies and service providers, as well as over 70 other program sponsors and supporters.

To be hired by the OYEP, interested Indigenous youth must complete an application and commit to six weeks of employment between mid-July and the end of August.

⁴ This study focuses on the Mink Lake Camp of OYEP. It is assumed that the Mink Lake Camp is generally representative of the other camps in operation during the summer of 2018.

OYEP participants earn \$2,900 during in their first year and \$3,400 for their second year, if they are re-hired. In addition, some graduates are given the opportunity to come back for a third year as an OYEP crew leader, which sees their earnings further increase to \$5,575.

The Ontario OYEP Context

In 2012, the Government of Ontario ended the Ontario Ranger Program, which resulted in a number of under-utilized or surplus ranger camps in Ontario's provincial parks. At the time, the discontinuation of the Ranger program was controversial because it had provided summer employment and training for over 70,000 youths; however, it was also critical to the ongoing success of the OYEP, as its Ontario branches now operate in surplus ranger camps in the province's provincial parks.

Although this study only focuses on the OYEP's Mink Lake Camp, it is assumed that this camp was generally representative of the other camps in operation during the summer of 2018.

The OYEP Ontario Mink Lake Camp

Mink Lake camp is an ideal setting for an outdoor education program: it is rustic, yet clean. It features separate bunkhouses for female and male learners and staff alike. And it offers good amenities, such as a cook house/dining hall, administrative offices, full washroom/shower facilities, a recreational/classroom building, and a fire-pit area, which is arguably the after-hours heart of community.

An OYEP Ontario Learner Demographic Profile

The typical OYEP learner is 16 to 18 years of age upon entering the program, Anishinabe (Chippewa, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, or Cree) or Métis, and from one of the 58 First Nations or urban centres in Central or Northwestern Ontario.

Generally, an OYEP learner is not fluent in their heritage language, and many have been separated from their traditional spirituality and culture as a result of colonization.

As learned through conversation with OYEP participants, often, the learners are struggling in high school, are considering dropping out, or have dropped when they are admitted to the program.

The OYEP Ontario Financial Model

Historically, Ontario branches of the OYEP have been funded as follows:

- 60% from governmental sources.

- 30% from industry sources.
- 10% from community sources (OYEP, 2018).

Activities Accomplished

The first year of the six-week OYEP program at the Mink Lake Camp consists of land-based job training, education, and work experience. Each week is organized according to a particular theme, as presented below and in the program calendar in Appendix A.

Week 1 – Orientation and Employment Training Certification

Youth spend the first week building trust, making new friends, and learning about workday expectations and responsibilities.

At the end of the first week youth have completed:

The Tobacco Reduction Challenge; opening ceremonies and orientation training; cultural teachings with a Traditional Knowledge Educator; Cooking 101; Food Garden Planting and the Three Sisters; Outland Training, Chapters 1, 2, and 3; Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) training; “Bear Beware” training; and first aid levels one and two.

Week 2 – Mining Matters

Youth are taught about the traditional arts, mining/prospecting, and mineral exploration by Outland Youth Employment Program, in addition to receiving a presentation from the Canadian Armed Forces.

At the end of the second week youth have completed:

Outland Training, Chapter 4; the Traditional Knowledge Tour; “Mining Matters” training; the Porcupine Quill Workshop; and the Soap Stone Carving Workshop.

Week 3 – Science Week

Youth are shown how Traditional Knowledge intersects with Contemporary Knowledge.

At the end of the third week youth have completed:

The Ontario Recreational Canoeing and Kayaking Association Training (ORCKA); the Wild Rice workshop; values mapping and Indigenous cartography; archaeology; and classes on Traditional Ways of Knowing at a local college or university.

Week 4 – Field Work

Youth begin training related to future field work.

At the end of the fourth week youth have completed:

Outland Training, Chapter 6; the Drum Making Workshop and Birthing Ceremony; chainsaw training; the SP102 Forest Fighter Training course; and brush-saw training.

In addition, the youth also attend the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition in Thunder Bay during this week of the program.

Week 5 – Field Work

Youth apply their training in the field and through co-ops.

At the end of the fifth week youth have completed:

Classes with the co-op teacher (monitor and evaluation with students and supervisor where necessary), and tree planting/brush clearing.

Week 6 – Field Work

Youth begin the final week.

At the end of the sixth week youth have completed:

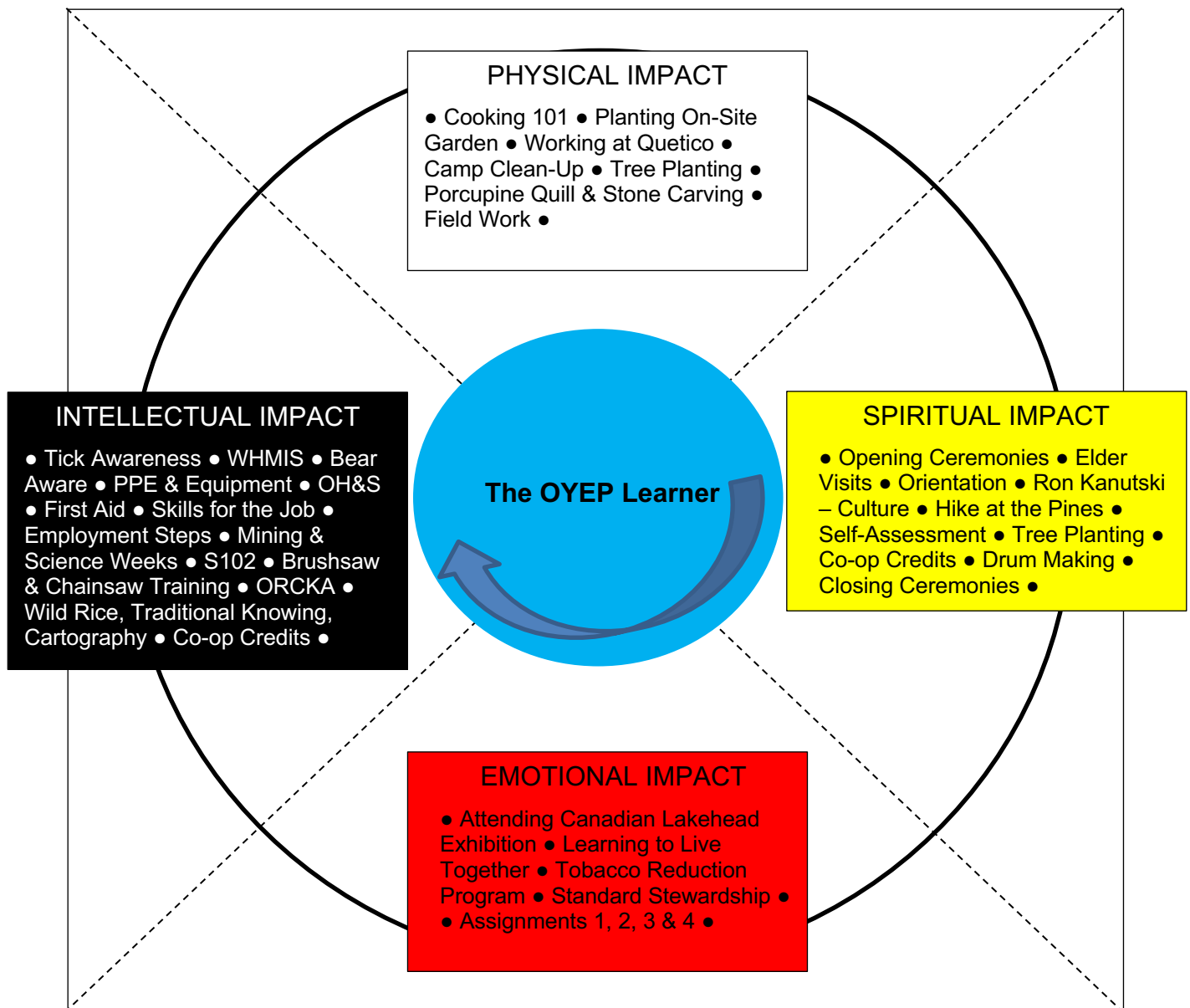
Tree planting; camp clean-up; closing ceremonies; and the Talking Circle.

Project Model

Living in accordance with a traditional Anishinabe worldview is often referred to as Mino Bimaadiziwin, which translates to “the good way of Anishinabe life.” In order to follow this way of living, an individual must seek to balance the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical dimensions of their life. Mino Bimaadiziwin has a corresponding Medicine Wheel Teaching, often referred to as the Four Elements of Self, which is one of series of inter-related teachings that make up the traditional Anishinabe understanding of life.

This study’s analysis of OYEP participants’ education/employment experiences focuses on how the program addresses the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical dimensions of their lives (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: The Four Aspects of Self-Medicine Wheel Teaching & OYEP Experience

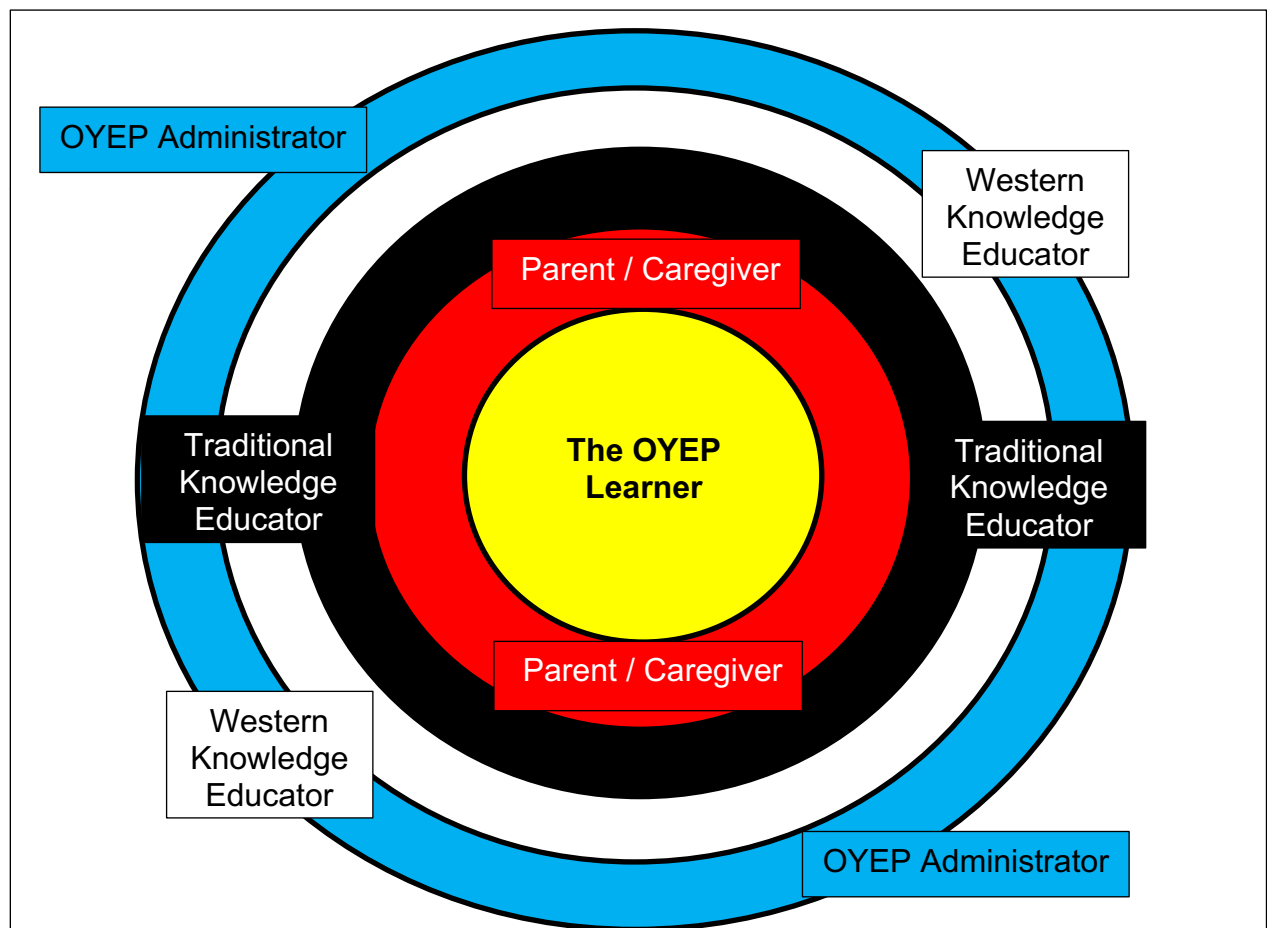


It is important to recognize that all Medicine Wheel Teachings are understood to be organic in nature. As such, they do not progress in a logical, linear sequence from the spiritual, to the emotional, to the intellectual, and, finally, to the physical; rather, the order in which these dimensions are addressed is determined by the experiences and needs of the learner. However, this does not mean that an experience will only impact one dimension of a person. Indeed, experiences will often impact multiple areas. For example, the full impact of an Elder's teachings on Anishinabe culture may nurture the learner's emotional and spiritual dimensions, along with their intellectual dimension.

Logic Model Used for the Project

Along with the Medicine Wheel Teachings, the logic model used in this study employs a version of the Wildfire Research Method (Kompf & Hodson, 2000). The Wildfire Research Method is a culturally responsive and relational research method that relies on the collection and analysis of experiential narratives (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: The Wildfire Research Method: A Culturally Responsive Relational Model



In this research, narratives were collected from OYEP learners at Mink Lake Camp and those who formed their circle of support, including their parent /caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and OYEP administrators. The authors then examined and compared these narratives to determine how the OYEP had impacted them spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Although this study only focuses on Mink Lake Camp, it was seen as being generally representative of the other camps in operation during the summer of 2018, which allows the findings a degree of generalizability.

For a more detailed explanation of the logic model, please see Appendix B.

Performance Indicator and Measures

Individual Wildfire sessions included a representative sample of parents/caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and OYEP administrators. All sessions were digitally recorded and transcribed.

That final transcriptions underwent rigorous analysis, which was shaped by Patton's (1990) three-stage approach. This approach entails:

1. Content analysis to make the obvious, obvious.
2. Interpretive analysis to make the hidden obvious.
3. Critical analysis to make the obvious and hidden dubious.

The analysis aimed to identify patterns within the individual sessions and those that commonly emerged in other Talking Circles. The identified patterns were coded and categorized into key "idea units," which were then collapsed into categorical clusters and themes reflecting the participants' collective experiences.

For a more detailed explanation of the performance indicators and measures used in this study, please see Appendix B.

Evaluation

The authors were first exposed to the OYEP in July of 2018. At that time, both authors were Artists in Residence at Quetico Ontario Provincial Park, literally across the road from the OYEP Mink Lake Camp. The day before the authors were scheduled to host an interactive workshop on porcupine quill work at the park, they were approached by a representative from the OYEP, who asked them if it would be okay for a group of Indigenous learners to attend. The authors agreed, and they were joined by an additional 30 OYEP learners, counsellors, and administrators the next day. At that time, the authors had no idea (nor did Indspire) that the OYEP would become involved with Indspire later that summer.

This encounter proved to be a fortunate coincidence. From the researcher's perspective, this time with the OYEP learners and staff established a crucial element of



the Wildfire Research Method: an open, transparent, trusting relationship between researchers and the researched. Later in August, Indspire contracted the authors to complete this study. Upon finalizing the agreement, the authors traveled to the camp and met with the entire group of OYEP learners to brief them on the research, and to invite them to attend a Talking Circle the next day where questions could be answered and concerns discussed.

Since this meeting took place near the end of the OYEP, the Talking Circle consisted of a representative sample of the adult OYEP learners—many of whom were in their second year—who were legally able to agree to participate.

The following sections present the narratives obtained from learners during the Talking Circle, as well as related narratives from those in their supportive network, such as parents/caregivers, Traditional and Western Knowledge Educators, and administrators. All of these narratives were assessed within the framework of the Four Elements of Self Medicine Wheel Teaching.

Objective 1: Spiritual Well-Being

To **qualitatively** assess how OYEP cultural activities—including Anishinabe arts, flint knapping and/or bow making and/or drum making—impacted the spiritual well-being of participating learners.

This study follows the findings of research suggesting a strong relationship between increased access to traditional cultural activities and an increase in the spiritual well-being of learners (see Cajete, 1994; Battiste, 2013; Bishop, O'Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010; Castellano, Davis, & Lahache, 2000; Hampton, 1995).

The OYEP enhances the cultural experience of its participants by incorporating new Traditional Knowledge Educators (TKE) and cultural activities into the program on a scheduled and non-scheduled basis each year. As one TKE observed, “learning to live with a group of Indigenous youth in a twenty-four-hour setting for over a month is as cultural as you can get. They learn to work together.”

The summer months are a busy time for Indigenous people in Northwestern Ontario, and many traditionalists and Elders are travelling to ceremonies or Pow Wows during this time. In addition, Elders, the ultimate TKEs, may, and often do, show up at camp on an

unscheduled basis. The OYEP is especially interested in taking advantage of these cultural activities as they become available; for example, the authors' experience with the porcupine quill workshop at Quetico Provincial Park.

The scheduled drum-making workshop was acknowledged by many learners as being significant. Although most had been exposed to drumming or had their own drum, they had never participated in the birthing ceremony associated with the creation of a new traditional drum. For many, experiencing that ceremony shifted their understanding of the drum. Prior to the ceremony, they simply saw it as instrument; after the ceremony, however, they viewed it as a sacred object.

One young woman was especially touched by the notion of giving birth to her creation, as it evoked a connection to child-bearing and the roles and responsibilities of women within the drumming tradition.

The Talking Circle participants also mentioned other ceremonies, such as smudging ceremonies and the opening ceremonies.

The participants' inclusion in ceremonies and other traditional teachings can be understood as overt ways in which the OYEP attempted to increase their cultural knowledge. However, in living and working at Mink Lake, OYEP participants were covertly immersed in numerous forms of cultural knowledge. These more subtle forms of cultural knowledge served a healing function due to the camp's closeness to the land.

The land's immense power to transform and heal is a notion that is intrinsic to the Anishinabe world view. As with much Indigenous knowledge, the land's power is difficult to quantify, which has led some to view it as being irrelevant to employment training or education.

Despite such views, the OYEP participants felt this power and benefited from its effects. As one participant shared, the experience in the program, and particularly the experience of working with the land, "got me out of my shell. [It helped] me with my mental health issues. Everyone is great!"

Mastering a new skill within an educational environment that honours both Traditional and Contemporary forms of knowledge helps to heal the conflicts that have characterized so much of the OYEP participants' past school experiences. For many, the OYEP experience resulted in many successes, which is something they had been unable to enjoy in past educational settings. Moreover, the OYEP experience was profoundly spirit building for Indigenous youth who had been branded as un-educatable by the school system (and themselves).

It was moving to see and hear the story of an Anishinabe youth who had surpassed all of their peers in mastering a certain skill. The only way the authors can describe what they observed during the Wildfire Session is as follows: "[they] lit up, there was a quiet sense

of pride, of accomplishment that shone through the shyness.” That particular learner admitted, “I aced that one. It was awesome. I had the best time.”

Although numerous cultural programs have been developed for Indigenous youth, these tend to be pre-packaged curriculums. Certainly, such programs have a place in the enormous task of filling the cultural knowledge gap of Indigenous youth, but they may not be as effective as the OYEP. What is intriguing, and what is obviously important to the Indigenous youth and the TKEs who are observing them, is that many of the program’s cultural activities occur naturally, simply as a consequence of being part of the program.



In the OYEP, cultural activities became normal occurrences instead of strictly scheduled events. Cultural activities occurred around the fire pit, in the bunk house, and over meals, which naturally allowed participants opportunities to reflect upon and discuss new ideas.

Another TKE noted how the relevance of the OYEP experience was not limited to youth from remote communities: “I was afraid that urban kids [cut off from the land] could not stand the forest, far away from home. But the land holds them.”

One parent who had two children enrolled in the OYEP was extraordinarily open about the challenges they faced in their lives.

Both of my kids don’t do well in school. There are many variables that lead to that lack of success; some are about intergeneration trauma, others are about health issues, but the reality is they go to schools that don’t support them the way OYEP did. One child has had no friends through the school years. It has been really sad to see that. The other was social but not engaged in school. Didn’t care.

In spite of those challenges both of my kids came back from OYEP with new skills, friends, a boost in confidence, and co-op credits that they have taken back to high school. They were different people.

They are now starting to talk about what will happen after high school. Setting goals.

The confidence that comes from success, along with the support of the OYEP's dedicated staff, helped OYEP learners succeed in Contemporary Knowledge areas, for example, in attaining OYEP co-operative education credits. In fact, OYEP learners earned "131 high school credits" in 2018 (OYEP, 2018, p. 4).

Discussion

It is difficult to accurately quantify the immensity of the cultural loss that Indigenous people experienced as a result of Canada's colonialist policies, and it is equally difficult to fully comprehend how this loss has impacted Indigenous youth. Nonetheless, there is overwhelming evidence linking this loss of cultural identity to many of the contemporary issues faced by Indigenous youth, namely: poverty; poor health and educational outcomes; higher rates of abuse, incarceration, violence, and addiction; and fractured families and communities.

Haudenosaunee scholar Taiaiake Alfred (1999) suggests that the loss of culture has placed Indigenous people in a state of perpetual crisis where "we wander a forest of frustration living inauthentic lives that make us easy prey for those who would enslave us" (p. xi).



As a result of colonization, OYEP learners often are not fluent in their heritage language, and many have been separated from their traditional spirituality and culture. It was indicated by some individuals in the program that tension was felt between the expression of traditional cultural activities and Christian beliefs. As a result, participants are often conflicted when faced with opportunities to engage in traditional activities like drum making and maintaining

their community's religious norms.

In response, the OYEP has established a safe learning environment, primarily through its use of TKEs, where youth can speak about this conflict without ridicule or fear of penalty. This environment helps to produce a community of youth who are able to examine the conflict and its underlying issues, while still giving conflicted members the

space and the freedom to make their own decisions. Consequently, everyone involved has the opportunity to practice self-determination, as they are able to exercise their free will and make their own decisions.

Such an environment does not come into being accidentally; rather, it is the product of knowledgeable OYEP personnel and the implementation of an Indigagologic learning environment that is capable of addressing the learning needs of the youth.

For example, the courses and training sessions offered as part of the OYEP abandon formal testing in favour of performance-based assessment. In the OYEP, it is more important for learners to demonstrate that they possess a practical and working knowledge of the subject matter, whether it be first aid or operating a bush saw, than it is for them to be able to pass a test at the end of the unit. Generally, this competence is assessed by OYEP staff during the units, as well as through reviewing the learners' journal entries.

The OYEP helps learners based on where they are starting from. If the learner doesn't have a social insurance number (SIN), a birth certificate, a status card, or G1 driver's license—all barriers to employment—they are not rejected. Instead, OYEP staff work with them to gather those documents or to obtain a driver's license.⁵

Indeed, the OYEP's ability to create Culturally Responsive Indigagogy of Relations that is integrated at all levels of the learning community has produced impacts on the lives of the participants that have been nothing short of stunning.

Objective 2: Emotional Well-Being

To **qualitatively** assess how the OYEP's emotional activities—including, community living, Elder support, peer support, group activities, and staff support—have impacted the emotional well-being of participating learners.

When asked about how the OYEP's emotional activities have influenced the participants' well-being, one TKE observed that the work of the OYEP is all about,

working on the land, with the land, protecting the land, reseeding the [harvested] forests, being invested in the land. Mastering an activity or skill not only increases employability but creates a sense of purpose.

There were unlimited stories about how the program had offered participants opportunities for emotional growth and enhanced well-being that seemed personally tailored to their needs.

⁵ Many Indigenous youth living in remote and not-so-remote communities are unable to participate in a Driver's Education program and are far from provincial testing services. As a result, they are unable to secure a driver's license, which can be a deterrent to future employment. The OYEP includes this as part of its programming.

When asked about their emotional growth, OYEP learners responded, “[It is] heartwarming. Great!” Another participant pointed out that “When we have sad days, everyone can feel it and they support you, they help you out.” The program’s ability to establish a supportive community of youth has been foundational to its ability to nurture its participants’ emotional well-being.

One parent/caregiver observed that the “boost in [my child’s] emotional confidence through personal success was huge.” When asked how that boost worked, one parent paused for several minutes before responding, “being an employee with well-defined



responsibilities, expectations, and a community of peers who are similarly motivated and aligned was an effective motivation for my child.”

For another parent, their daughter’s increased emotional well-being was so profound that her sisters teased, “who are you and what have you done with our sister?”

For many learners, the OYEP experience was the first time they had been away from their families, which can be an additional emotional hurdle to overcome. One parent/caregiver recalled how their child’s experience at the camp had been particularly emotionally challenging:

In the last week of the camp [my child] called and wanted to come home. I told [my child] that there is just one more week and I hope you can find it in you to stay there. [My child] did stay and as a result I believe [my child] learned to survive on their own.

Discussion

OYEP learners are surrounded by people who have the same goals, which creates a community wherein everyone helps to emotionally support each other in the ways that they need. This support fosters the emotional growth that will someday become the foundation on which these youth build their lives. Moreover, this new emotional foundation, combined with the array of possibilities shown to them by the OYEP, allows participants to begin to see a brighter future for themselves. By exploring future opportunities in forestry, mining, or higher education, participants are able to see the economic possibilities that are available to them, which serves to motivate and excite them about their future. For many, this is the first time they have felt this way.

The OYEP offers participants a safe, supportive space where they can reflect on

emotional issues and let them percolate until they are ready to be acted upon. While this can be a terrifying and lonely experience for those who do not have support, the OYEP has created an environment that embraces the rich diversity of Northwestern Ontario's Indigenous communities and that naturally encourages participants to support one another.

OYEP administration has the wisdom to allow the magic of the community to evolve and flourish. One TKE noted that OYEP learners and administration share a common land-based experience that has evolved into a “maanoo” environment, which translates from the Anishinabe language as “let it happen.” This overarching mindset of the administration allows learners to negotiate a multiplicity of relationships with their peers and to practice self-determination through that experience.

Importantly, the OYEP also provides external resources for learners who are experiencing emotional distress. In such circumstances, OYEP administration can be a resource, but Elders can also be included. If the issue is severe, external mental-health resources can also be accessed.

Land: The Great Teacher

One of the most interesting questions that has prompted much conversation between the authors and the participants is: why does the OYEP generate such learner success?

With few exceptions, OYEP staff are not trained educators; however, participants in the program can often exhibit stunning emotional growth. When asked about this, one parent/caregiver emphasized the difference between provincial schools and the OYEP learning environment:

The OYEP approach is [about] **not** conforming to schools that are restrictive, [and have] demanding classrooms and an approach to teaching [that can be best described as] a colonial classroom environment. A child must conform in order to pass. [Teachers] don't take the time to learn where [Indigenous children] are coming from, who they are. [The OYEP] has a much different connection made through relationships.

One OYEP staff member echoed this response, simply noting that the OYEP was different because “We build a program that responds to [Indigenous youth].”

There are many relationships that play a significant role in the OYEP experience, for example, relationships between the learners, relationships between learners and their employers, relationships between learners and their food, relationships between learners and themselves, and supportive relationships with OYEP staff. Although all of these relationships shape the experience, it is critical not to overlook the common experience of all—OYEP learners and staff alike—and their shared experience on the land.



One such shared experience was the tree-planting exercise, which was participated in by all OYEP staff. For those unfamiliar with this line of work, tree-planters spend the summer planting seedlings. Often, their living circumstances are rough, to say the least; they live in tents, work in all types of weather, are constantly under attack from insects, are burdened by huge loads of saplings, and have to traverse rough territory. Yet, in spite of these unappealing conditions, the staff that were interviewed as part of this research reported having spent the summers of their youth on the land planting seedlings.

From an Indigenous perspective, the land is sacred, as it has “the capacity to literally shape us as individuals.” Hence, the ceremonies like the fast or vision quest are often completed in isolation, on the land, without the distractions of others, food, or water.

Given this, it would be reasonable to speculate that the land is the main reason behind the successful experience shared by OYEP staff and learners alike. One TKE believed that shared experiences result in a, “like-minded, land-based people. They are land-thinking, land-living.”

Objective 3: Mental Well-Being

To **qualitatively** assess how the mental activities offered as part of the OYEP—including various certifications (WHIMIS, First Aid/CPR, ORCKA, etc.), science, cartography, mining, and co-op credits—impacted the mental well-being of participating learners.

The OYEP mainly builds youth success through activities that are kinaesthetic, or hands-on, in nature. Instead of formal testing, learners are evaluated through performance-based evaluations in which they demonstrate their proficiency in a given area.

Contemporary Knowledge Educators (CKEs) working within a kinaesthetic framework recognized that the first step in teaching learners about a subject is to have them intensely observe the task to be mastered. After observing, the learners move on to practicing the task themselves. Once the learner believes they can perform the task competently, they demonstrate their ability to do so for the teacher and earn their credit. If they have not fully mastered the task, they simply continue practicing. This approach is particularly effective because it eliminates the stresses associated with formal examinations. Unlike formal examinations, which are often based on a pass or fail outcome, the evaluation system used by the OYEP consists of as many levels of mastery as the learner requires. When the learner has achieved a certain level of mastery over a task, the educator can move into



deeper study of related theory to enhance the learner's expertise.

For example, consider the first aid certification. The unit dealing with CPR begins with the physical act of resuscitation—how the hands should be placed on the chest for compressions, how often compressions should be performed, how much force should be used, etc. The learners are not evaluated based on their understanding of the biology or the

physiology involved. Rather, they are evaluated on what truly matters: knowing how to save a life. This approach allows learners to initially limit their focus to mastering the actions involved in CPR. By focusing on practical mastery, the OYEP provides learners with a scaffolding that can be used to further enhance their understanding of CPR as they move on to a deeper study of the biology or the physiology involved.

The OYEP uses a scaffold approach that begins by having learners study the OYEP's framework of behaviours and expectations. Once this scaffold has been established, the learner can move on to learning opportunities that become progressively more complex.⁶ This approach sets learners up for success because it presents them with achievable goals; success in simpler, early tasks provides the confidence and motivation that learners need to succeed in the increasingly more complex and challenging tasks that will follow as the program progresses. In the end, learning success becomes the norm, and OYEP learners carry this success into their futures.

⁶ OYEP learners often commented on the various certifications they received. Those little pieces of paper – WHMIS, First Aid, ORKA – are evidence of their success that serve as reminders that they can learn, they can be happy, and they are not victims of their past educational experiences.

In response to being asked, “how did you do in high school?” one OYEP learner responded:

I was so shy. I didn’t want to be around people and I skipped a lot. I didn’t try at all. I learned that if I could do bush work for six-weeks I can do high school. You realize that high school is really nothing.

A parent / caregiver observed a similar experience for their child who was, “motivated by the fact that [they] earned two [co-op] credits in spite of the trouble she has had in school. She is now motivated to graduate.”



TKEs also use kinaesthetic approaches to learning and practical evaluation techniques, but they also instil motivation and an attitude that reflects traditional Anishinabe teachings. Respect, one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, is directly relevant to the mental well-being of the learners. In a contemporary world where Indigenous youth are conditioned to expect everything to be fast—fast food, fast fashion, fast communication, etc.—the idea of respect has multiple applications, both within the OYEP environment and beyond. Indeed, the concept of respect applies to countless aspects of one’s life, for example, respect for the environment, for one’s peers, for one’s work, for one’s learning, and for one’s self. By showing learners the practical implications of respect and how it is everywhere in daily life, TKEs help learners see that it is more than an abstract philosophical concept.

One TKE believes that the OYEP is, “respect in action. Take a spiritually diverse group of youth, traditionalists, atheists, agnostics, fundamentalists and they have the opportunity to negotiate the potential minefield of that diversity.”

Traditional Anishinabe arts like drum making and beadwork are complex activities that are difficult to master, as they require extreme hand-eye coordination, concentration, commitment, and patience. One TKE in the porcupine quill workshop recalled,

There was fun in the room; such a mixture of regular campers, OYEP staff and learners created a community immediately. They mingled, started conversations, people were helping each other. But what the art form demanded was a level of patience that grew between the participants because they were helping and encouraging each other. There was pride in the faces of everyone because they accomplished something that was important to them.

Discussion

When the authors first met the Mink Lake campers in 2018, they asked how many of them had left high school before completing Grade 12 or were seriously considering leaving. Every single hand was raised immediately.

While this straw poll is admittedly unscientific, the StatsCan data (2016b & 2016c) showing that only 35% of Indigenous people in Ontario over the age of 15 have a high school diploma is not.



We know that, in part, leaving school early results in a minimum of 10 years before Indigenous people will consider returning (see Statistics Canada, 2019). This 10-year period can often be punctuated by alarmingly high levels of violence, substance abuse, suicide, incarceration, health issues, unemployment, and / or economic inequity. While

troubling, these outcomes make sense. After all, what options does a young Indigenous person have without a Grade 12 diploma? Higher education opportunities are non-existent, employment opportunities are limited, there is a sense of shame, hopelessness, and purposelessness that is often only relieved through some form of self-medicating or anti-social behaviour.

What is especially disturbing is the connection between non-Indigenous education and Indigenous youth suicide in this territory. In the Sioux Lookout district, suicide rates among First Nations youth between the ages of 10 and 19 are 50 times higher than the rest of Canada (cited in Frideres & Gadacz, 2012). Chandler's work (2003, 2005, 2008)

The authors have long believed that Indigenous education can only encourage mental well-being if the learning experience meets the student's learning needs. When this fundamental need is met, learner success is almost always the result. More importantly, once success is experienced and understood, the Indigenous learner becomes able to replicate that success over and over.



Objective 4: Physical Well-Being

To **qualitatively** assess how the physical activities offered as part of the OYEP—including field work, sports activities, forest fighting training, and job placement/shadowing—have impacted the physical well-being of participants.

Type 2 diabetes in Indigenous peoples is stunningly high. “National survey data have consistently shown that the national age-adjusted prevalence of diabetes is 3 to 5 times higher in First Nations than in the general population” (Harris et al., 2013, p. 191). Current research has attributed this explosion of diabetes to “an interaction of local genetic mutations with numerous social stressors and lifestyle factors” (Harris et al., 2013, p. 192). Key among these lifestyle factors are a lack of nutrition resulting from poor dietary habits and obesity stemming from lack of physical activity. Troublingly, both of these factors are quite common among youth populations.

The long-term health implications of diabetes are significant and include high rates of “lower limb amputation, foot abnormalities and more severe retinopathy” (Harris et al., 2013, p. 191). All youth are naturally physical and competitive, and the OYEP taps into these traits using a number of overt and covert strategies.

Clearly, working in forestry is an overtly physical activity. However, the OYEP offers multiple other activities in which physicality is part of the learner experience. For example, there are volleyball tournaments, regular opportunities to go jogging, a tobacco reduction challenge, and lessons about how to choose and prepare healthy foods. Perhaps most importantly, the OYEP’s learning environment, which is grounded in a Culturally Responsive Indigagogy of Relations, is highly effective in helping the participants lower their stress levels with regards to learning.

One of the most damaging outcomes of colonization has been the destruction of the Indigenous clan infrastructure that served to moderate individual behavior. In many instances, this infrastructure included a number of culturally-based moral principles that were applicable prior to contact, but that may not work in the contemporary world. The principle of non-interference is an example of a traditional ethic that could be applied within the lives of many OYEP learners.

Brant (1990) has done interesting work on this subject, noting that the ethic of non-interference is “a behavioral norm...that promotes positive interpersonal relations by discouraging coercion of any kind, be it physical, verbal, or psychological” (p. 535). In other words, no one should tell anyone what they should do. It is considered to be the height of rude behavior.

While the ethic of non-interference is an unconscious constant in contemporary Indigenous communities, the effects of colonization have left the edges of these societies frayed, which has changed how this ethic is applied.

For example, pre-contact communities were extremely physical, and youth played a large role in everyday activities such as hunting, fishing, gathering, and planting. People slept when they were tired and ate when they were hungry.

Today, parent/caregivers who practice non-interference are faced with a dilemma: if they practice non-interference—that is, allow their children to go to bed whenever they want—their children will be exhausted the next day when they have to go to school or work.

The OYEP's work environment is highly physical and the natural outcome is exhaustion and a need for sleep, which is critical to personal safety and productivity on the job. Some learners fall into regular sleep patterns for the first time in their lives while in the OYEP. As one learner participant commented, “the work was really good, tiring, keeps you busy and you get a good night's rest.”

Peer pressure is another covert outcome of the OYEP's physical environment. What should be clear from the research at this point is that OYEP learners naturally create an effective and supportive working community that encourages participation. One parent/caregiver provided an example of how peer pressure had encouraged their child to be more physically active:

My [child] is not physical. Regardless of what is going on [they] don't enjoy that at all. When I asked why [they] participated, excelled in the physical part of OYEP. [They] simply said, “everyone else was doing it and I wanted to do my part.”



Discussion

The physical nature of OYEP learners and the OYEP's focus on physicality are mutually beneficial. Many of the participants come from difficult life circumstances or have had bad educational experiences, but the OYEP helps them build success through its many physical activities. The outcome of that success includes practical skills that can be applied in other areas of the participants' lives, including school and future employment. One of this research's key findings is that both youth with and without a history of being physically active can find success in the OYEP.

The physical aspects of the OYEP are challenging. SP102 firefighting training is extreme. As one self-admittedly not physical participant recalled,

I had to wrestle a huge hose and other equipment. I didn't realize how hard it is until I had to do it. In the end I was really thankful that I didn't really have to fight a forest fire...yet!

The OYEP focuses on some of the major contributing factors to the poor health of Indigenous people in this territory including non-ceremonial consumption of tobacco, poor nutrition, and a decline in the types of physical activity associated with traditional lifestyles.

Outcomes: Most Significant Accomplishments and Lessons Learned

The OYEP provides a holistic learning, working, and living environment where Indigenous learners can experience success, many for the first time in their lives. Over the program's six-weeks, Indigenous youth are immersed in curriculum that incorporates both Traditional Indigenous Knowledge and Contemporary Western Knowledge. In short, the OYEP has done an outstanding job of putting into practice international Indigenous research findings that recommend the alignment of all levels of education with the learning needs of Indigenous people.

OYEP learners blossomed, pursued their emotional healing, and began to see hope and a brighter future. Consider their observations:

- "Gave me a sense of accomplishment."
- "Helped me with school."
- "Opened my eyes to the world of opportunity."
- "I got my sh_t together and did well."
- "Built more trust. I didn't have any before. I trust more people now."
- "I came out of my shell."

- “It was awesome. I had the best time.”
- “I communicate better now.”
- “I’m working on my emotional issues.”

In light of these candid personal accounts of success, all Indigenous parents/caregivers with children should consider the results of this study and ask themselves: why is this not the norm? Innovative and effective programs like the Outland Youth Employment Program can serve as an exemplar for all levels of education.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The authors are thoroughly impressed by the importance OYEP places on research associated with many of its outcomes for Indigenous youth, and we understand that much of that data is now being analyzed in another study.

At this time, evidence-informed decision making is a common philosophy in government and the private sector. Building ongoing awareness about the OYEP and the success it provides for Indigenous youth depends on the ongoing promotion of the program. With this in mind, we offer the following recommendations.

Culture & Language Program Inclusions

The authors recognize that making employment commitments is often dependent on program funding. Nonetheless, we recommend that:

- Expand the OYEP’s circle of Elders and Traditional Knowledge Educators. Since this can be challenging, we recommend that the OYEP consult with its current TKEs and Elders when making decisions about who is brought into the program.
- Whenever possible and as early as possible, the OYEP make commitments to Traditional Knowledge Educators and Elders.
- Begin weekly Talking Circles run by an experienced and recognized Anishinabe Elder. Ideally, this Elder will become a mentor and a model for the participants, particularly in relation to cultural and traditional knowledge.
- Incorporate Anishinabemowin, the Ojibway language, into the OYEP. This can be as simple as encouraging OYEP staff and administration to use words and simple phrases in their interactions with participants. A workshop on language at the beginning of the program would be especially helpful in achieving this goal. This was one of the few recommendations for improvement offered by the youth.

Lead the creation of an Indigenous outdoor-education association in Northwestern Ontario.

A number of boards of education and Indigenous education authorities in Northwestern Ontario have begun to establish outdoor-education programming, or culture camps, that integrate both knowledge traditions.

This outdoor-education association's members could include parents/caregivers, practitioners, business/industry, First Nation Tribal Councils, boards of education/First Nation education authorities, schools, teachers, principals, provincial territorial organizations, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and OYEP alumni.

The main activity of this association could be the hosting of an annual conference where associated researchers can present their work and discuss Indigenous education and its potential benefits. In part, the focus of such a conference should be on training and research aimed at enhancing the association's collective impact.

Education policy changes

Work should be done to build and maintain relationships with key decision makers and to create an ongoing lobby strategy that focuses on key individuals in all levels of government. During this process, two points should be stressed consistently:

- The TRC's Call to Action, especially its Recommendations related to education, language, and culture.
- How the OYEP meets and/or exceeds these Recommendations.

This step is necessary in order to express of the benefits of Indigagogy and to further encourage them to build stronger relationships with the Indigenous community.

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Appendix A: Program Calendar



MINK LAKE- Outland Youth Employment Program.

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>15</p> <p>Ranger Pick Up</p>	<p>Pre-Placement 16</p> <p>Orientation Training: Chapter 1</p> <p>Tobacco Reduction with Jonathan Chief (10:30-12:00)</p> <p>Trevor Gibb with previous Rangers (arrive for lunch)</p> <p>Opening Ceremony with LLCFN (3:00 – 6:00)</p> <p>Traditional Tobacco Session Feast</p>	<p>Pre-Placement 17</p> <p>Orientation Training: Chapter 1</p> <p>Assignment #1: Health & Safety</p> <p>Ron Kanutski With Care Consulting</p>	<p>Workplace 18</p> <p>1st -First Aid-Emergency (8:00-5:00)</p> <p>2nd Yrs.: Green Jobs Announcement in Thunder Bay (8:00-5:00)</p> <p>Green Jobs Announcement?</p>	<p>Workplace 19</p> <p>2nd -First Aid-Standard (8:00-5:00)</p> <p>1st Yrs: Chapter 2: Skills for the Job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job Expectations - Job Readiness - Goals for my Co-op - Build Your Learning Skills <p>Chapter 3: Workplace Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confidentiality in the workplace - Human Rights + Case Studies - Unions (8:00-5:00) 	<p>Workplace 20</p> <p>2nd -First Aid-Standard (8:00-5:00)</p> <p>1st Years – Camp Clean Up (fallen trees)</p> <p>Cooking 101 – Erin to set up a cooking session – Rangers can help make lunch.</p> <p>Planting gardens on Site (building off last year's planting program)</p> <p>Three Sisters and Traditional Food</p> <p>Explain OYEP Video Programming</p>	<p>DAY OFF 21</p>

<p>Integration 22</p> <p>Chapter 4: Employment Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment Skills 2000 - Employment Skills Assessment - Job Descriptions - Resume Building - Employer Expectations (8:00-5:00) <p>Assignment #2: Tasks & Duties at my</p>	<p>2nd Year Depart to SB 23</p> <p>Hike at the Pines Traditional Ecological Knowledge Tour Second Years Head to Sandbar</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Mining Matters</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Porcupine Quill Workshop</p>	<p>Integration 26</p> <p>Soap Stone Carving lesson and activity</p>	<p>DAY OFF 27</p> <p>2nd-1st years switch</p>	<p>Workplace 28</p> <p>Canadian Armed Forces</p> <p>Quetico Park Work</p>
<p>Workplace 29</p> <p>ORCKA</p> <p>1st year AM 2nd year PM (8:00-5:00)</p>	<p>SCIENCE WEEK 30</p> <p>Wild Rice Workshop</p>	<p>SCIENCE WEEK 31</p> <p>Values Mapping and Indigenous Cartography</p>	<p>SCIENCE WEEK 1</p> <p>Computer Lab: Final assignments + Resume/Cover Letter</p>	<p>SCIENCE WEEK 2</p> <p>Archaeology</p>	<p>SCIENCE WEEK 3</p> <p>Traditional Ways of Knowing</p>	<p>DAY OFF 4</p>
<p>Integration 5</p> <p>Chapter 6: Self- Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-Assessments - Review my Goals (8:00-5:00) <p>Assignment #4:</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Civic Holiday DRUM MAKING WORKSHOP AND CEREMONY <u>Nathan Moses</u></p>	<p>Workplace 7 Workplace 8 Workplace 9</p> <p>1st Years: S102 Training + Chainsaw Awareness: @ Mink Lake (use felled trees @mink for chainsaw training) 2nd Years: Treeplanting: @ Sandbar.</p>			<p>Integration 10</p> <p>BRUSHSAW TRAINING</p> <p>Assignment #1: Market Trends</p>	<p>11</p> <p>DAY OFF</p> <p>CLE in Thunder bay</p>
<p>DAY OFF 12</p> <p>Co-op Teacher onsite</p>	<p>Workplace 13</p> <p>Tree Planting and/or Brushing the Mink Lake Road</p>	<p>Workplace 14</p> <p>Co-op (Group 4,5,6) Tree planting Training 2nd years</p>	<p>Workplace 15</p> <p>Co-op (Group 1,2,3) Tree planting Training 1st years</p>	<p>Workplace 16</p> <p>Co-op (Group 4,5,6) Tree planting</p>	<p>Workplace 17</p> <p>Co-op (Group 1,2,3) Tree planting</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Final Assignment Due</p> <p>Tree Planting</p>

	TEACHER: Monitor and Evaluation with Students and Supervisor				
<p>DAY OFF 19</p> <p>DAY OFF</p>	<p>Workplace 20</p> <p>Standard Stewardship Ranger</p> <p>Visit to planting site</p> <p>Tree planting</p>	<p>Workplace 21</p> <p>Tree planting</p>	<p>Workplace 22</p> <p>Camp Clean Up</p> <p>Smudge and Sharing Circle</p>	<p>Workplace 23</p> <p>Closing Ceremony</p>	<p>Teacher: - anya.scheibmayr@gmail.com</p> <p>Ceiligh Milligan- Logistics Officer- cmilligan@outland.ca</p> <p>Sarah Ambroziack- Program Developer- sambroziak@outland.ca</p> <p>Mark Kmill- Camp Supervisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Camp Teacher - Crew Leader - Crew Leader - CIT <p>Camp Students: First Year Rangers:</p>

Appendix B: The Logic Model Used in the Project

The Purpose & Objectives of the Study

Living according to a traditional Anishinabe worldview is often referred to as Mino Bimaadiziwin, which translates to “the good way of Anishinabe life.” Living this good life requires an individual to seek balance between the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical dimensions of their being. There is a corresponding Medicine Wheel Teaching, often referred to as the Four Elements of Self, which is one of a series of interrelated teachings that make up the traditional Anishinabe understanding of life.

Our analysis of the OYEP participants’ educational/employment experiences has been structured along these four dimensions (see Figure 1.1). Specifically, our analysis takes the following objectives:

1. To **qualitatively** assess how the OYEP’s spiritual activities—including Anishinabe arts, flint knapping and/or bow making and/or drum making—have impacted the spiritual well-being of participants.
2. To **qualitatively** assess how the OYEP’s emotional activities—including community living, Elder support, peer support, and group activities—have impacted the emotional well-being of participants.
3. To **qualitatively** assess how the OYEP’s mental activities—including various certifications (WHIMIS, first aid/CPR, ORCKA, etc.), science, cartography, mining, and co-op credits—have impacted the mental well-being of participants.
4. To **qualitatively** assess how the OYEP’s physical activities—including field work, sports activities, forest fighting training, and job placement/shadowing—have impacted the physical well-being of participants.

The Research Study’s Methodology

This study employs a version of the Wildfire Research Method (Kompf & Hodson, 2000), which is a culturally responsive and relational method that relied on recording the experiential narratives of OYEP participants and those in their supportive circle, including parents/caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and OYEP administrators (see Figure 1.2).

The Wildfire Research Method includes:

- Developing relationships with the many circles of participants that make up the community in which the research is to take place.
- Complete transparency, ongoing consultation, and meaningful engagement with the circles of participants that make up the community.
- A series of individual Wildfire Sessions dedicated to each circle of participants within the community.
- Inclusion of traditional concepts within the research study, such as prayer, ceremony, tobacco offerings, honourariums, and/or food offered to each individual in the circle.

Wildfire sessions, or Talking Circles, are semi-structured discussions that invite each circle of participants to share their experiences and observations about the focus of the research study.

Qualitative Analysis of Wildfire Sessions

During their Wildfire session, the OYEP participants shared their individual and collective experiences, which were prompted through questions that had been developed to compliment the OYEP's Indigagogical model and the Medicine Wheel Teaching on which it is based.

Individual Wildfire sessions were held with a representative sample of parents/caregivers, Traditional and Contemporary Knowledge Educators, and OYEP administrators. Each of these sessions was digitally recorded and transcribed.

That final transcriptions underwent rigorous analysis, which was shaped by Patton's (1990) three-stage approach. This approach entails:

1. Content analysis to make the obvious, obvious.
2. Interpretive analysis to make the hidden obvious.
3. Critical analysis to make the obvious and hidden dubious.

In this study, the analysis identified patterns within and between individual circles. These patterns were then coded and categorized according to key idea units. The idea units were then collapsed into categorical clusters and themes that reflected the research participants' collective experiences.