

Building Reconciliation at the U of S

Arts and Science/Medicine | University of Saskatchewan | Sociology/Community Health and Epidemiology

Decision Making Process for Indigenous Women with Breast Cancer

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INTRODUCTION

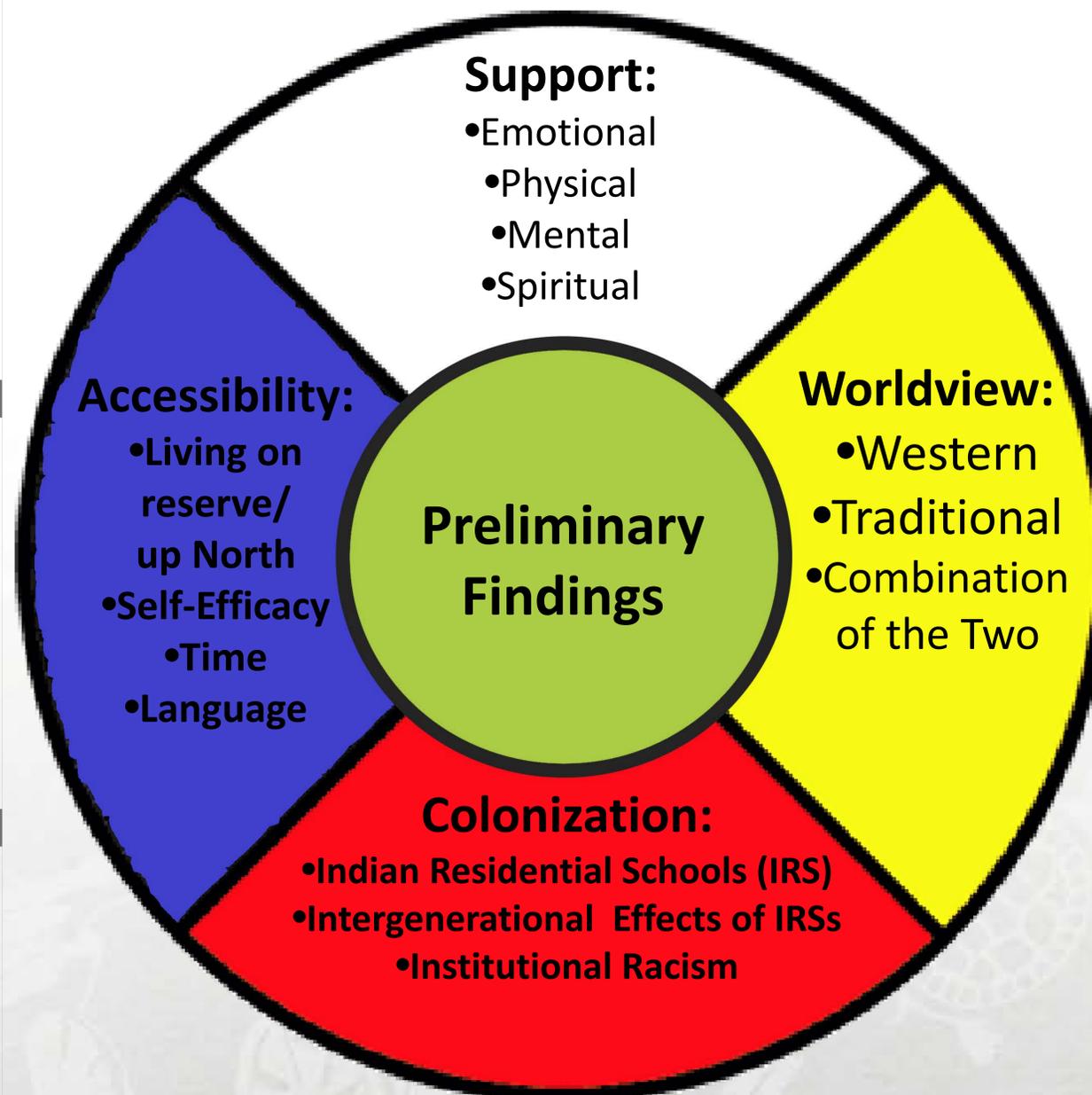
This qualitative project focuses on the decision making process that Indigenous women undergo when receiving breast cancer treatment. One-on-one, open-ended interviews were completed with 12 Indigenous women from the Saskatchewan region. Two-eyed seeing was the theoretical framework that developed the data collection and analysis phases. A methodological approach of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was conducted in a thematic analysis to conclude the main findings.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand what impacts the decision making process around breast cancer treatment for Indigenous women
- To understand Indigenous women's experiences in the health care system when going through breast cancer treatment
- To understand how culture plays a role in the decision making process around breast cancer treatment
- To understand Indigenous women's approaches (Western and/or Traditional) for breast cancer treatment

RESULTS

Several of the participants have expressed concerns about four main themes which are: worldview, colonization, accessibility, and support.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Worldview:

"Everybody has different beliefs in their lives. Some are different like Catholic or whatever, right? I'm Catholic. I always go to the churches, but I always go that [Traditional] way too. I don't want to lose my culture, [or] where I come from. A lot times that helps a person out."

Colonization:

"I couldn't believe having to make that decision because nowhere on the forms does it say, "I want to be seen by a woman doctor," or something like that right? There's nowhere to check that off. It's an assumption made and for Aboriginal women, it's not something we do, right? We go in a sweat lodge and cover up in a blanket, you know? We cover, cover, we're covering ourselves constantly, so yeah that was the big one that really scared me. [It's a challenge] and I think that it has residential school influence and unfortunately in learning the Indigenous culture, I was learning Indigenous culture effected by residential schools [and] so that was layered on top of it."

Accessibility:

"I had to go to the Pink Tree and they gave me the prosthesis and two bras and I went back for another one here, I think it was five years later I went back and then I went back about three years ago because you have to take yourself to Saskatoon to get the services. They don't bring it to you. Then there's nobody here to talk to and everybody you talk to, they just sit there and listen and walk away. It's not effective in any way and the only way you can get a referral back to the Pink Tree is to go see the family doctor and he will refer you."

Support:

"I found that difficult. That there wasn't much support. I mean there was a lot of - there were support groups for women - but they were all older women, and there was definitely nothing for Indigenous people there."

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