

Intergenerational Conversations of Anti-Racism: A Culturally Syntonic Resistance of Systemic Discrimination of Black Immigrant Youths in Alberta

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Abstract

Systemic racism in Canada profoundly affects Black youth, contributing to mental health challenges, academic underachievement, and heightened social isolation, particularly in Edmonton, with dispersed Black immigrant populations. This case study examines Sinkunia's Intergenerational Conversations on Anti-Racism program, a participatory community initiative designed to foster racial socialization, critical consciousness, and resistance among Black youth aged 11-29. Grounded in the Community Healing and Resistance Through Storytelling (C-HeARTS) framework—originally developed for African American communities in the U.S.—the study tests its adaptability in Canada's multicultural context, where distinct histories of colonization and race relations shape racial trauma and healing. Employing Participatory Action Research (PAR), we engaged 30 youth and 10 elders in four focus groups from May to June 2025, sampling for diversity in age, gender, and immigration status (e.g., Afro-Caribbean descent). Drawing on Critical Race Theory, Ubuntu Philosophy, and C-HeARTS, the program adopts African Oral Traditional Storytelling to transmit intergenerational wisdom, challenging dominant narratives like colourblind multiculturalism. Expected outcomes include strengthened connectedness through shared experiences, enhanced collective memory via elders' insights, and heightened critical consciousness driving acts of resistance against racism. This study extends C-HeARTS by exploring positive intergenerational resilience over trauma transmission, assessing within-group differences (e.g., age, gender) to refine psychological dimensions like solidarity, and evaluating adaptability in Edmonton's immigrant-rich setting while addressing costs like vicarious trauma. As one of the first empirical validations of C-HeARTS since 2020, the PAR approach aligns methodology with the framework's participatory ethos, offering insights into its processes. Findings aim to inform culturally responsive strategies, advocating for policy integration of intergenerational programs to combat systemic racism and build resilience in urban centres like Edmonton.

Keywords: racial healing, intergenerational storytelling, black youth, anti-racism, resilience