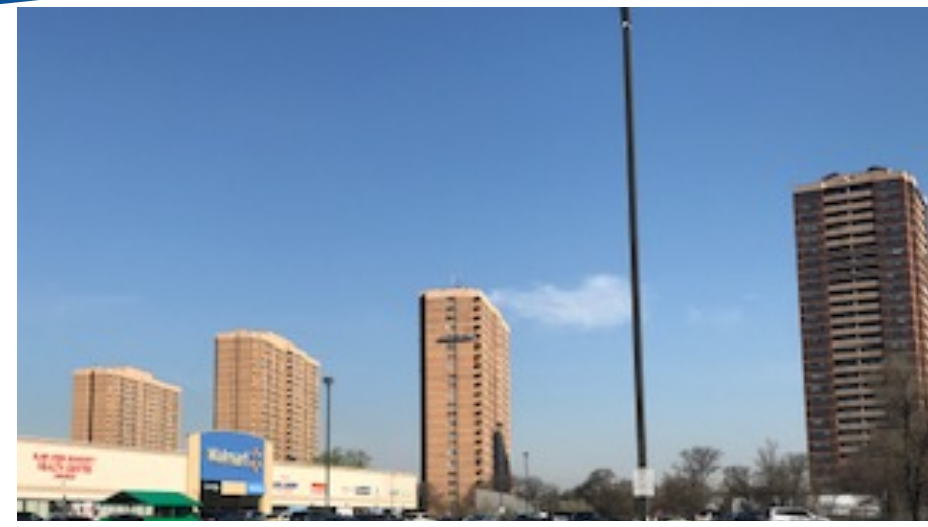


# Reaching the Underserved: Development and evaluation of culturally appropriate mental health education and engagement in an underserved community setting



## Background

- “Jane and Finch” is a broad term used to define the Black Creek and Glenfield-Jane Heights areas in Toronto
- 79% of people identify as a visible minority versus 51.5% in the rest of the city
- Median household income is \$49272 vs \$65829 in Toronto
- Jane Finch is in the most deprived 20% of areas in Ontario on measures of residential instability, material deprivation, income dependency, and ethnic concentration (ON Marginalization Index)

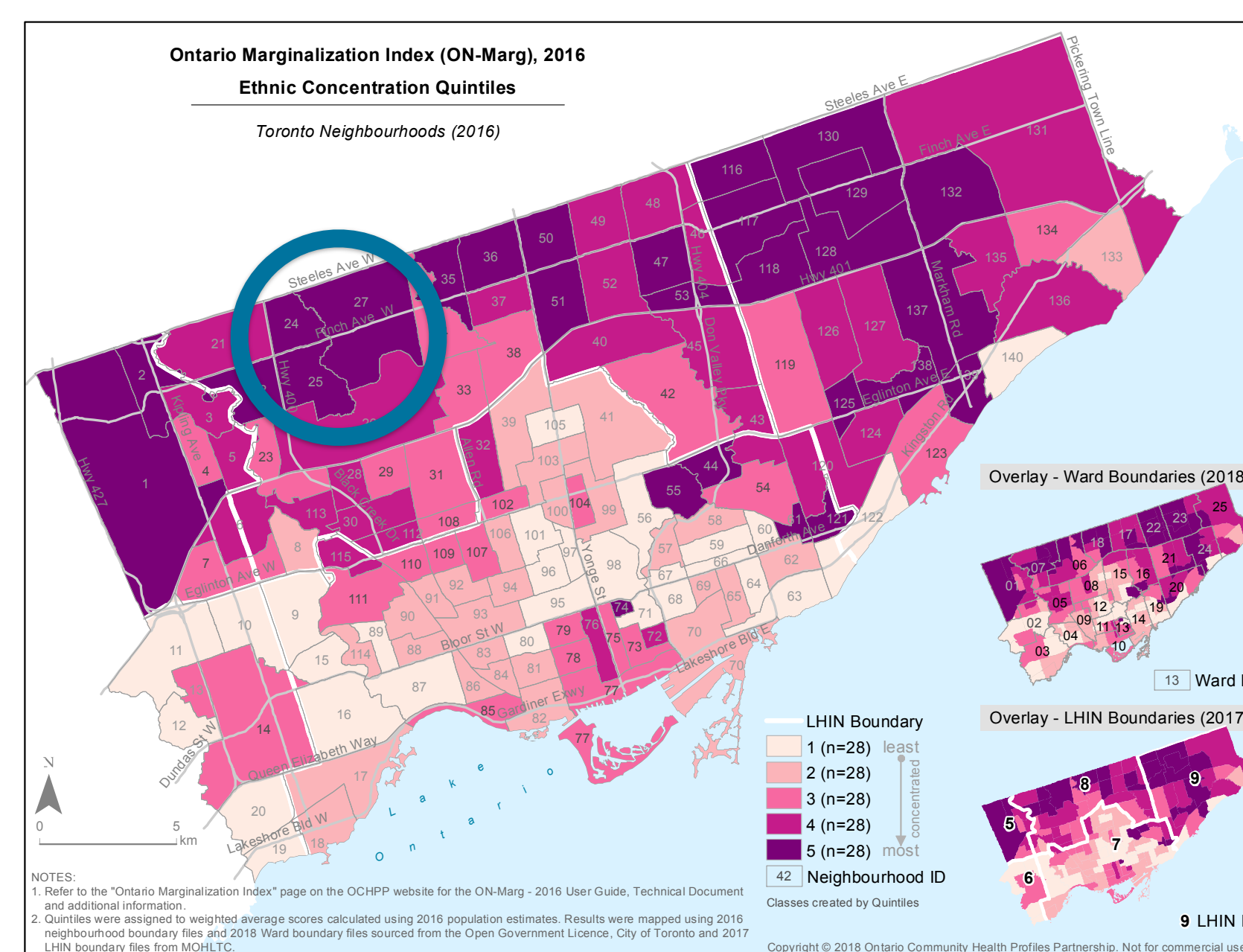


Figure 1 - ON Marginalization Indices for Toronto Neighbourhoods (Statistics Canada, 2006)

## Rationale

- Residents face significant stress related to low income and immigration and other risk factors for poor mental health
- Previous research conducted with residents identified that cultural perceptions and stigma and lack of awareness of resources deterred individuals from seeking mental health services

## Study Objectives

1. Determine the mental health needs of the community by interviewing staff at Black Creek Community Health Centre (BCCHC), a family and community centre in Jane Finch
2. Develop culturally appropriate mental health education at BCCHC for clients and patients

## Methods

### 1. Needs Assessment

- Interview staff at BCCHC to identify mental health priorities in the community

### 2. Programming Development & Implementation

- Develop educational programming based on needs assessment
- Organize and promote event

### 3. Programming Evaluation

- Administer optional post-workshop survey

## Results


### 1. Needs Assessment Results

5 staff were interviewed at Black Creek Community Centre — a family and community health centre whose catchment area spans the entire Jane Finch community.

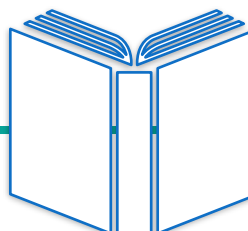
Table 1 - Characteristics of Staff Interviewed at BCCHC

Staff Position	Duration of Service at BCCHC (Years)
Receptionist	8
Bilingual Healthcare Navigator	2
Social Worker	5
Nurse	10
Outreach Worker	8


Thematic analyses were performed on interview transcripts. Three themes were uncovered:



**Theme 1:**  
Workshop outlining intersection between mental and physical health



**Theme 2:**  
Provide participants an information sheet on resources and services in the community



**Theme 3:**  
Teach skills and coping strategies that clients can apply in their lives

### 2. Programming Development and Implementation Results

Based on the themes above, a one-day interactive mental health educational workshop was designed to address the following:

- Intersection between mental and physical health
- Exercises like progressive muscle relaxation and belly breathing
- Information about resources available for counselling and addiction services in the Jane Finch community

Figure 2 - Poster for the workshop

Figure 3 - Two page brochure designed with mental health resources specific to the Jane Finch community for workshop participants

### 3. Programming Evaluation Results

- 20 patients/clients participated in the workshop at BCCHC
- 10 participants completed the optional post-workshop feedback form

Figure 4 - Average responses to workshop feedback form (n=10)

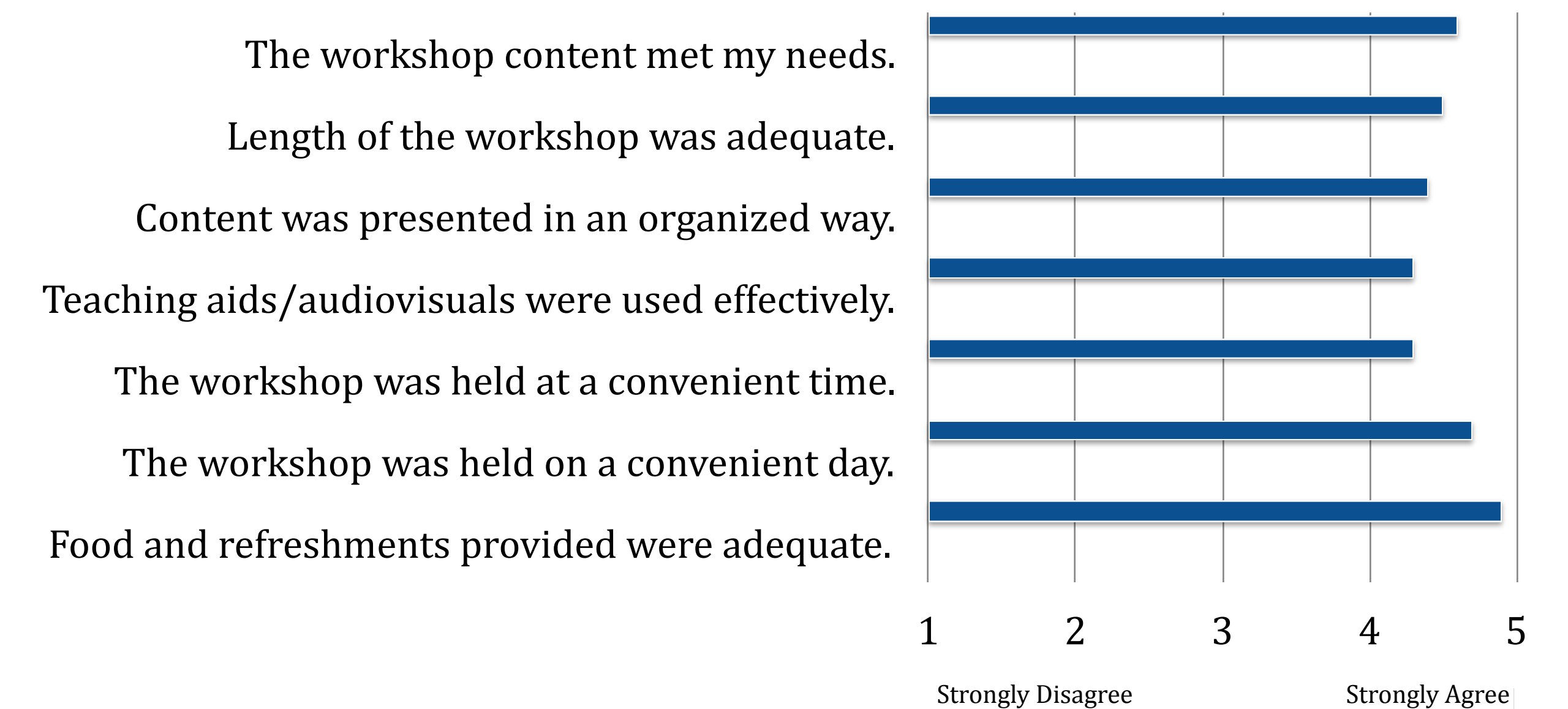


Table 2 - Average responses to workshop feedback form (n=10)

As a result of attending this workshop, I see the value to me in the following ways (check all that apply):	n=10	%
I gained a better understanding of mental illness.	10	100
I learned a new skill or approach that I can use in my life.	10	100
I learned about resources available in my community.	10	100
I do not see the impact of this workshop in my life.	0	0

### Quotes from workshop participants:

1 "I like the fact that natural methods like relaxation techniques and belly breathing were described as well as remedies like medicines."

2 "...I liked how this workshop was not too far from home for me since commuting downtown can be a hassle."

3 "Well put together workshop. I liked how the presentation wasn't focused on statistics. I like the resource sheet."

## Conclusions

- Results of the current study lend support for the justification and value of organizing culturally responsive mental health programming for this vulnerable community
- Future work includes collaborating with community agencies to deliver additional specific mental health programming for children/youth in this area

## Acknowledgements

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