Our Practices Protect Us: Lived Experiences of Indigenous and Immigrant Heritage for Health

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Abstract
The proposed research explores the relationship between traditional environmental and cultural practices and health in immigrant and indigenous communities in New York City. Focusing on the lived experiences of individuals, the study uses the embodied ecological (EEH) framework and ethnographic methods to outline specific ways in which members of these historically-marginalized communities understand, maintain and practice their heritage traditions. Through the discussion and documentation of these practices, this research aims to investigate the connections between heritage and health, broadly defined, among recent, and more long-term, migrants currently living in an urban environment. The research poses the question: does continuing traditional practices in an urban setting help buffer individuals and communities against negative health outcomes associated with urban life? A student researcher, ideally from an immigrant or indigenous background, will be mentored and trained as a research assistant, participating in identifying participants, collecting and analyzing data. Data will be shared with the NYC Department of Health and presented and published in the Anthropology and Public Health communities.