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**A R T I C L E**

# Engaging critical community resilience praxis: A qualitative study with Mapuche communities in Chile facing structural racism and disasters

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**Abstract**

Mapuche are the largest indigenous group in Chile and have survived histories of colonialism, socionatural disasters, and more recently, increasing conflicts with the Chilean state. This study aimed to engage critical theories and examine resilience processes from indigenous perspectives while exploring the impact of racism, intersecting adversities, and ongoing decolonial struggles in Mapuche communities. Decolonial qualitative methods, situational analysis, and community-engaged participatory approaches were utilized in application of a critical community resilience praxis (CCRP). First, an interagency collaborative entitled Mapuche Equipo Colaborativo para la Investigación de la Resiliencia (MECIR) was established. MECIR involved partnerships between a Chilean national research center for disasters, a nongovernmental organization of indigenous advocates/researchers, and a Mapuche community health center. MECIR completed semistructured interviews with 10 participants (N = 10) in addition to ethnographic observations. Four themes of resilience emerged: newen, "strength and spiritual life-nature force"; azmapu, "ancestral systems of social organization and tribal law"; nietun, "cultural revitalization"; and marichiweu, "resistance." Findings contribute to reconceptualizations of resilience from Mapuche perspectives while identifying culturally meaningful strategies for promoting racial justice and mental health equity. Results show benefits of CCRP in community psychology research in an international setting.

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Race and ethnicity have been shown to be significant determinants of health and mental health across wide-ranging literatures, from psychology to public health and beyond (e.g., Barnes & Lightsey, 2005; Beals et al., 2005; Breslau

et al., 2006; Graham, West, Martinez, & Roemer, 2016; Krieger, 2003; Paradies, 2006a,b; Ren & Amick, 1996; & Young et al., 2004). Moreover, racialized inequities in mental health are a global concern (Ngui, Khasakhala, Ndetei, & Roberts, 2010). These inequities are part of a web of larger phenomena rooted in overwhelming transnational social inequality, which may be one of the most pressing issues of our times (Burawoy, 2014), evidenced in the recent Oxfam (2017) report demonstrating that "new estimates show that just eight men own the same wealth as the poorest half of the world" (Hardoon, 2017, p. 1). For indigenous peoples internationally, these inequities unfold within contexts of profound historical trauma and ongoing racialized structural violence (e.g., Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses, 2014), impacted by colonialism as a key social determinant of health (Czyzewski, 2011; Walters, Beltran, Huh, & Evans-Campbell, 2011).

Analysis of such complex inequities and deep-rooted colonial injuries are strengthened by in-depth explorations of historical trauma and resilience processes from indigenous perspectives (e.g., Atallah, 2017; Hartmann, & Gone, 2014). In fact, transdisciplinary mapping of ecosocial intergenerational protective pathways in addition to centering inquiry on experiences of discrimination and dignity in the lives of marginalized groups remain at the core of critical race research and praxis (e.g., Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010; Sonn & Quayle, 2013; Yosso & Garcia, 2007). Public health scholars and community psychologists engaging critical race theory have argued for the importance of assets-based methodologies, building relationships, and focusing on resilience to "counter" mainstream discourses in health-related research, which tend to focus on disease in ways that highlight disadvantages of ethnic and racial minority groups without drawing on communities' strengths when investigating and developing interventions and policies to address race-based inequities (e.g., Atallah, 2016; Ford & Harawa, 2010; Sonn & Quayle, 2013).

## 1.1 | Conceptual background: Integrating resilience and critical race theories for a critical community resilience praxis

Briefly, what is the state of the literature on human resilience and intergenerational protective pathways that foster positive mental health? Atallah, Bacigalupe, and Repetto (2017) argue that there are "three waves" of scholarship on human resilience. In the first wave, an emphasis was placed on better understanding the human capacity to protect the status quo, or to "bounce back" after trauma or adverse experiences.

Atallah et al. (2017) argue that the second wave of resilience scholarship shifted from a focus on an individual's or a systems' capacity to investigating adaptive processes. This second trend can be characterized as the "bounce forward" wave because of its focus on posttraumatic growth and human adaptation (Atallah et al., 2017). However, more recent trends in thinking across applied social and health sciences caution that a given factor may be protective in one situation and promote adaptation, yet in another situation, the same factor may actually increase vulnerability or even directly cause psychiatric pathology, depending on how factors intersect with historical and sociopolitical phenomena within a given context (Kirmayer, Sehdev, Whitley, Dandeneau, & Isaac, 2009). In this light, resilience thinking in the third wave now engages critical race theory and reimagines human responses to trauma as understood in terms of social transformation (Atallah et al., 2017).

Resilience scholars (e.g., Ungar, 2015) and community activists (e.g., Brown, 2017) are advocating more and more to focus on promoting both mental health and social justice together, emphasizing letting go of the status quo and focusing instead on fostering value-based movements privileging interdependence and collaboration, which overlap with core values in community psychology (e.g., Prilleltensky, 2009). Thus, Atallah et al. (2017) suggest that a critical community resilience praxis (CCRP) could be helpful to investigators attempting to contribute to processes of promoting resilience in ways that dismantle interlocking systems of power and oppression, which are rarely shaped by one factor or process, and that unfold at the intersections of psychosocial and physical realities (Atallah, 2016; Donovan, 2017; Lorenz, 2013). In fact, Atallah et al. (2017) argue that resilience itself is intersectional. In other words, pathways toward resilience intersect with the human selves and bodies that respond to cumulative adversities embedded in sociocultural and historical contexts, which in turn shape health trajectories as people literally embody biologically the conditions in which they live (Grosz, 1994; Krieger, 2005).

Furthermore, when studying resilience from critical frameworks, Wilkinson and Kleinman (2016) argue that there becomes "a pressing need for a critical reflexivity that aims not only to make explicit the values that shape our

practice but also to take action to change the institutions that govern the way we work" (p. 19). In this light, consistent with critical race theory applied to public health (e.g., Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010), Atallah et al. (2017) argued for increased research that examines our own ontologies and epistemologies as researchers, especially when studying and formulating "resilience" in English, and from Global North perspectives and institutions.

CCRP, as defined by Atallah et al. (2017), seeks to integrate three key principles of critical race theory, adapted from Ford and Airhihenbuwa's (2010) seminal paper introducing a public health critical race praxis and that includes (a) transdisciplinary commitments to social justice; (b) intersectionality and the interlocking power relations that interweave racism with other forms of oppression and social problems at local and global levels; and (c) centering at the margins, building relationships and partnerships toward directly prioritizing and privileging the voice(s) of marginalized individuals and groups with an emphasis on experiential and indigenous knowledges.

Transdisciplinarity, according to Leavy (2011), "has emerged in order to meet the promise of transcending disciplinary knowledge production in order to more effectively address real-world issues and problems" (p. 24). In fact, disciplinary self-critique is an important component of critical race theory and is an approach to research, rather than a methodology, which underscores how no single discipline alone can address the complexity of oppression and privilege.

Intersectionality, an approach to critical inquiry and praxis that has long been embedded in Black feminist thought, "is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences" (Collins & Bilge, 2016;, p. 2). Intersectional approaches to studying and promoting resilience aim to ground human pathways toward wellness within complex life-world experiences and seek to better understand how mental health disparities are shaped by social inequity rooted in the consequences of a history of power and unequal conditions of everyday life (Atallah et al., 2017).

Last, centering at the margins, which is a term that comes from critical race theory, is about shifting from majority groups' perspectives toward incorporating perspectives of marginalized communities, through genuine partnership building, toward transforming systems.

These three core principles (transdisciplinarity, intersectionality, and centering at the margins) are the pillars of our CCRP approach to studying resilience. Throughout this article, they will be touched upon and frequently woven together because they are highly interrelated concepts rather than three separate concrete steps to apply mechanistically. Building off of these legacies of praxis and critical literatures on resilience, the current study aimed to engage critical race theory embodied in CCRP to explore the impact of racism and intersecting adversities, including socionatural hazards, on transformative mental health processes and ongoing antiracist struggles of an indigenous group in Chile: the Mapuche.

## 1.2 | Contextual background information: The mapuche of Chile

According to the Chilean census of 2012, over 1.4 million people (approximately 8.7% of the total population of Chile) self-identify as Mapuche (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2012). Most Mapuche reside in either the capital Santiago or the Araucanía region of Southern Chile, which is the country's poorest region at the national level (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2012). Findings from the Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) database from 2013 suggest that Chileans who identify as a member of an indigenous group are more likely to present with higher levels of poverty and extreme poverty compared to individuals who do not identify with any indigenous group (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2014). In total, around 30% of all self-identified Mapuche live below the poverty line, and less than 3% of the Mapuche population receive education after high school (Agostini, Brown, & Roman, 2010). indigenous groups in Chile also suffer from unequal access to health due to ongoing structural discrimination and systematic subordination, leading to drastic health inequities that are visible, for example, in life expectancy rates, infant mortality, tuberculosis, women's health, and mental health (Obach, 2016).

Furthermore, in recent decades, in Southern Chile in particular, there has been an increase in conflict as Mapuche communities continue to contest interlocking sites of marginalization, struggle for linguistic and educational justice challenging whiteness in schools and in the public sphere, and confront forestry companies and government legislation related to land rights and self-determination (Correa & Mella, 2010). As Camerati, Gutierrez, Caballero, Fuentealba,

and Colihuinca Cayun (2016) describe, in this southern region, there has effectively been a "rebirth of the border." The response by the Chilean state to this rebirth of Mapuche resistance has been harsh and, at times, even deadly, where some protesters have been injured or killed, and many more detained under the antiterrorism law that was established decades ago during the military dictatorship (Correa & Mella, 2010). Undoubtedly, the Mapuche are among the most targeted and marginalized groups in Chilean society today.

However, it is important to remember that the Mapuche are a heterogeneous group, and that there are various significant subgroups with distinct collective histories and lived experiences, for example, the Picunches, Pehuences, Lafkenches, and Huilliches (Crow, 2013). Unfortunately, discussions of the distinctions, nuances, and richness within Mapuche societies and a historical timeline with analysis of current contexts that does justice to the complexity and diversity of the Mapuche antiracist decolonial struggle are well beyond the scope of this study (for extensive reviews and analysis, see Baeza, Carcamo-Huechante, Montalva, & Huinca-Piutrin, 2015, and Correa & Mella, 2010).

However, many colonial patterns of power, past genocides, and ongoing racisms that create complex vulnerabilities in indigenous communities internationally have been well documented and apply to the Mapuche (United Nations, 2007). Across Latin America, colonialism manifested itself in racist policies of selective migration that privileged European settlers over indigenous groups and African peoples as a way to "enhance the race" by systematically whitening the geographies and citizenry (Tijoux & Palominos, 2015). In the Chilean case, Bengoa (1985) argues that part of the state's actions throughout this brutal and racist history was characterized by policies aimed at dividing indigenous communities while revoking their rights of self-determination through violent forms of physical, material, psychological, and cultural violence. In fact, Fanon's writings, nearly half a century ago (e.g., Fanon, 1963), illuminated our understandings of the settler colonialism condition as the unique intersection of military, material, and psychological violences, which indeed directly applies to Mapcuhe situations–past and present.

Furthermore, considering the cumulative nature of trauma and intersectional dimensions of human resilience, it is important to consider the ways in which Mapuche have endured not only genocide, legacies of colonialism, ongoing racialized structural violence, educational, economic, and health inequalities but also, socionatural disasters (Kronmuller, Atallah, Gutiérrez, Guerrero, & Gedda, 2017). In fact, Southern Chile, where the current study took place, is characterized by the reoccurrence of major socionatural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, fires, volcano eruptions, and tsunamis. Milliano, Faling, Clark-Ginsberg, and Gibbons (2015) argue for conceptualizations of disasters that take into account "multiirisk environments," which include "slow and rapid onset emergencies, violent conflict, climate change, and other global challenges such as pandemics and biodiversity loss, as well as chronic political, economic, and societal fragility" (p. 25).

In this light, it is important to consider how the Mapuche communities in Southern Chile that participated in this study have endured racist contexts for more than 500 years, as well as surviving various socionatural disasters that continue to challenge pathways to resilience today. In particular, Southern Chile was devastated by the 1960 and 2010 earthquakes, various volcanic eruptions, and continuing problems over water and natural resources, which together intersect with racialized struggles and ongoing social conflicts. Significantly, the 1960 earthquake was the biggest recorded in human history. Its epicenter was from 100–200 kilometers from the different communities where the current study took place. The rupture zone of the earthquake, however, was 1,000 kilometers and killed thousands of people and destroyed many cities and towns (Castaños & Lomnitz, 2011).

Overall, there have been few studies in Chile that focus on intersectional analyses and linkages across issues of systemic racism and colonial violence, lived experiences of disaster, discrimination of indigenous peoples, mental illness, and pathways for mental health promotion with cultural humility and sensitivity (Atallah, 2016). Part of the reason for this lack of exploration of the impact of racism and adversity on people's lives, livelihoods, and mental health in Chile may be associated with the prevalence of Eurocentric settler discourses and ideologies that imagine the mainstream Chilean identity as almost a raceless citizenry, with social class dominating public and academic discourses (Tijoux, 2016).

Furthermore, studies of social class in Chile rarely engage intersectional analysis that would include issues or race and ethnicity, as well as gender, disability, sexuality, citizenship status, and more (Barandiaran, 2012). In this light, critical scholars have begun to argue for the importance of taking a "decolonial turn" when engaging in research with

racialized groups in Chile, which involves explicitly utilizing critical community approaches to exploring the role of the coloniality of power and historical trauma in resilience research in ways that relocate settler colonialism to the center of analysis (e.g., Atallah, 2016; Atallah, Bacigalupe, & Repetto, 2017).

## 1.3 | Method

Consistent with critically oriented community-based participatory approaches to research (e.g., Fals-Borda, 1985; Atallah, 2017; Lazarus, Taliep, Bulbulia, Phillips, & Seedat, 2012; Lykes & Scheib, 2016; Rasmus, Charles, & Mohatt, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2017; Sonn & Quayle, 2013), the point of departure for this research project involved using CCRP (Atallah, Bacigalupe, & Repetto, 2017) to engage in relationship building while seeking to understand "our place" as researchers in the social landscape of Mapuche communities and the broader Chilean society. In doing so, Atallah–a postdoctoral research fellow with the Chilean National Research Center for Integrated Natural Disaster Management at the time (December of 2015)–began to deconstruct the normative discourses and practices within which investigators in Chilean academia and related national research centers tend to create their partnerships with indigenous communities, by recognizing how racism and other forms of discrimination may be carved into even the most well-intentioned studies, interventions, policies, and efforts by academics to increase research participation.

In the first phase, Atallah built on existing research infrastructures in Mapuche communities by developing relationships across diverse stakeholders in the creation of a partnership that could function as a type of interagency collaborative team (ICT; e.g., Aarons et al., 2014). In doing so, Atallah reached out to various agencies, researchers, and community workers already actively involved in promoting community health and critical resilience praxis in Mapuche communities. During this phase, Atallah built a partnership with El Centro de Investigación Indígena de Historia, Salud, y Derechos Humanos (RUCADUNGUN; The Research Center for indigenous History, Health, and Human Rights). In fact, Contreras Painemal and the director of RUCADUNGUN suggested that Atallah's developing research on resilience with CIGIDEN be integrated into RUCADUNGUN's ongoing larger interdisciplinary anthropological and human rights research project on Mapuche history and culture as a way to build on existing infrastructures for increasing changes for long-term suitability of the initiatives.

RUCADUNGUN is an independent nonprofit agency located at the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago and comprises Mapuche anthropologists, legal scholars, sociologists, and Mapuche community stakeholders who first organized in the 1990s at the end of the military dictatorship to build scholarship and critical praxis harnessing Mapuche community cultural wealth while promoting understandings and human rights in a new era of democracy in Chile. Eventually, through this collaboration with RUCADUNGUN, Atallah was introduced to La Casa de Salud Ancestral Mapuche (KVME FELEN; House of Mapuche Ancestral Health and Healing). KVME FELEN stands out in their aim to promote ancestral Mapuche medicine within the broader health system of the city of Santiago yet with long-term networks with Mapuche communities and healers in rural regions of Southern Chile in areas of active struggle for indigenous rights at the "rebirth of the border" or frontline of the conflict.

As mentioned above in the introduction, these areas are also subject to recurrent socionatural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis. In their work with their patients, KVME FELEN builds on indigenous frameworks of the integration of physical, mental, and spiritual health, as well as giving importance to the environment. Mapuche community members and indigenous traditional healers recently began KVME FELEN by organizing together in advocacy for the ability to practice their healing traditions. Through community activisms, longstanding requests, protests, and persistence of Mapuche community members toward the Chilean Ministry of Health's Programa Especial de Salud y Pueblos Indigenas (Special Program of Health and indigenous Peoples), KVME FELEN was finally founded in 2014.

Consistent with critical race theory and transdisciplinary community-based participatory research (CBPR; e.g., Bluthenthal et al., 2006; Atallah et al., 2017; Leavy, 2011; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008; Rubin et al., 2012), as are core inspirations of CCRP, when developing this ICT as a long-term research partnership, Atallah prioritized building a "community" of colearners, emphasizing trust and the development of shared visions across the three collaborating agencies: CIGIDEN, RUCADUNGUN, and KVME FELEN. This involved initial research planning meetings that unfolded informally during community events where RUCADUNGUN and KVME FELEN invited Atallah to participate and

speak, cook, and share food and stories–often presenting his previous research and empowerment work with Mapuche community members. CCRP emerged in this context: building up from local infrastructures, participating in cooking of community feasts, showing up at Mapuche cultural events, and paying close attention to the theorizing of community members on solutions to their problems and pathways toward increasing capacities for change, survival, and dignity.

As discussed in the Introduction section, like other indigenous groups across the globe, the Mapuche have collectively experienced colonial efforts to systemically eliminate them or change them, and researchers that engage critical race theory frameworks (e.g., Rasmus et al., 2014) often aim to be vigilant to avoid engaging in research that replicates these colonial dynamics. Smith (2012) argues that "'research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (p. 1), which is why Atallah placed an emphasis on the process of building transparent and trusting relationships across difference, toward justice, by placing an emphasis on power dynamics at play throughout the research. To date, there have been few studies on psychosocial protective processes and resilience in Chile that were conducted in collaborative ways with Mapuche communities and that built on existing community infrastructures and indigenous knowldges for solutions that can address racial health inequities resulting from histories of colonization and ongoing synergies of overlapping disasters that mark Mapuche family and community life today.

As part of building trust during this stage, when establishing the ICT, Atallah was transparent about his own institutional affiliations with CIGIDEN, a national research center based in a major Chilean university, while explaining his transdisciplinary, antiracist commitments as a critical researcher and community health worker. In addition, Atallah disclosed his own lived experiences as a multiracial Latino, Arab, and European American man born in the United States, and a member of the Palestinian Diaspora in Chile with lasting intergenerational family bonds in indigenous communities in present-day occupied Palestine, yet also as a descendant of European settler colonizers in North America with significant White male and Global North privileges.

Atallah's complex social locations were coconstructed with the ICT, and illuminated his "place" in the project while impacting his role in the ICT teaming process itself, overlapping in many ways with the "outsider within" construct from Black feminist thought–balancing both colonizer and colonized identities (e.g., Collins, 1986). Throughout this process of transparency and reflexivity, Atallah was also explicit about his allyship building and social justice commitments as a non-Mapuche researcher aiming to engage in CCRP, and explained his interest in not only resilience as apolitical health-related phenomena, but also in studying, naming, and transforming differential allocations of power based on race and colonial patterns embedded in mainstream research and knowledge production processes in Chile and elsewhere internationally where he worked. As a result, across the research planning during ICT meetings, Mapuche participants' voices and contributions to the understandings of resilience and the research project as a whole were privileged at every step of the way.

Contreras Painemal and Pilquil Lizama, as respected leaders in Mapuche communities themselves, were integral in helping to balance the centering of understandings on Mapuche values and worldviews, and when shaping the project from beginning to end. As Mapuche community members and as "insiders," both Contreras Painemal and Pilquil Lizama were fundamental to this research and to the MECIR team.

> *I would like to underscore how my perspectives and commitments as a Mapuche working in this academic way as an anthropologist, professor, and director of RUCADUNGUN, am rooted in understandings of the brutal discrimination, denial, and poverty to which my previous generations of Mapuche have been subjected. Therefore, my efforts in research are in a position of struggle in the academic domain, to contribute to knowledge production as equals against those colonizers who simply try to "study us," and in such I hope to generate knowledge for decolonization.* (Contreras Painemal)
>
> *I would like to highlight that my work and understandings, as the president of the KVME FELEN Mapuche community health center and home of ancestral healing, are rooted in my identity as a Mapuche woman and nurse by profession, and a defender of the health and human rights of the Mapuche people. I have viewed my role in this research as being an important link between Mapuche communities and this knowledge production process, grounded on my perspectives and culturally grounded protocols of my people who are in active struggle to rescue and revitalize our ancestral and territorial culture, in search for justice and equality in law, for my*

> *village and for the land of all Mapuche. My understandings are also rooted in my direct experiences, my family's,*
> *my communities'—where we have been confronted with various manifestations of state violence, discrimination,*
> *and inequality impacting nearly every aspect of our lives and lands today.* (Pilquil Lizama)

As "outsiders" to Mapuche communities, Albornoz and Salgado are non-Mapuche members of RUCADUNGUN and work as allies, bringing their self-awareness and constantly interrogate their own perspectives, which are often rooted in Western worldviews and primarily accountable to Chilean institutions. Albornoz identities as a mestizo human rights lawyer and anthropological researcher, who brings experience with human rights law and commitments of contributing to decolonization of Chilean society. Albornoz hopes to learn with Mapuche communities on how research on human rights and indigenous rights perspectives may be able to contribute to the promotion of resilience and racial justice impacting social transformation and increased social equity. Salgado identifies as a multinational Venezuelan-Chilean social scientist, whose approach to research is grounded in his commitment to investigating and unveiling the relations of domination that oppress indigenous peoples internationally, to build a new ontology and a new way to break with hegemonies that result from histories of power rooted in Western colonialism.

Thus, from the very beginning of this partnership, these shared visions and commitments to antiracist, decolonial research, and amplifying voices of Mapuche leaders, scholars, healers, activists, and community members, were articulated and an agreement to collaborate on this ICT (across three agencies: CIGIDEN, RUCADUNGUN, and KVME FELEN) was established, which we ended up calling Mapuche Equipo Colaborativo de la Investigacion de la Resiliencia (MECIR; Mapuche Collaborative Research Team for the Study of Resilience). Consequently, all of the authors of this study were the core members of the MECIR team and developed the specific goals of the project, which aimed to contribute to reconceptualizations of resilience from indigenous perspectives using CCRP as well as a decolonial participatory qualitative method and situational analysis, addressing the following overarching research questions:

What are collective resilience processes in Mapuche families and communities who have been facing historical trauma, structural racism, and intersecting sociopolitical and environmental adversities for multiple generations?
How can the identification and mobilization of these protective processes inform the development of interventions and policies to directly improve pathways toward resilience in Mapuche communities?

In addressing these two main research questions, we identified three specific study aims:

- To contribute to the development of a conceptual framework that explains collective Mapuche resilience processes and local community and cultural strengths in response to historical trauma, structural racism, and ongoing conditions of intersecting adversities
- To contribute to practical understandings of the application of critical race theory and decolonial community engagement methodologies with indigenous communities as an example of CCRP in a South American setting
- To connect knowledge with action by building connections between MECIR team members (such as across university, national, and local community health agencies for increased psychosocial health promotion capacity building in Mapuche communities for the long term) while generating next steps toward the concrete development of an intervention with Mapuche youth at the KVME FELEN community health center in Santiago for sustainable and practical pathways toward promoting resilience in the local community

To accomplish these aims, the MECIR project participated in data collection within the larger research project lead by the second author of the current paper, and director of RUCADUNGUN, Contreras Painemal of the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago.

## 1.4 | Participants

The MECIR research team conducted in-depth interviewed with 10 Mapuche community members (N = 10). The interviews took place between June and December of 2016. The participants were selected through a community-based networking procedure, guided by the MECIR team who are Mapuche community members and leaders themselves.

**TABLE 1** Basic demographic information on MECIR project study participants

| Participant pseudonym (in alphabetical order) | Four categories of demographic information | | | |
| | Gender | Age | Occupation | Place/home setting Village – living in a rural Mapuche community in region of southern Chile; or City – living in a built-up urban setting in southern Chile |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cielo | Male | 70 | Farmer | Village |
| Colorado | Male | 41 | Student, child of a Longko (Mapuche chief) | City |
| Jaguar | Male | 33 | Student | City |
| Macho Negro | Female | 75 | Farmer and seamstress | Village |
| Manzanilla | Female | 34 | Community organizer | Village |
| Ñandú | Female | 52 | Social worker, government employee | City |
| Perla | Female | 47 | Farmer and domestic worker | Village |
| Puma | Male | 71 | Spiritual practitioner, poet | Village |
| Rio | Male | 34 | Student | City |
| Sol | Male | 36 | Community organizer | City |

*Note.* Mapuche Equipo Colaborativo para la Investigación de la Resiliencia.

Outreach began with phone calls to potential participants who were screened for certain characteristics. Additional participations were interviewed through convenience sampling. All 10 participants reported belonging to the Mapuche indigenous group. Important dimensions across which the MECIR team attempted to select participants were related to attempts to ensure a range of participants based on gender, related to home location, and age (see Table 1 for basic demographic information on the participants).

More specifically, when recruiting participants, we, as the MECIR research team, aimed to speak with Mapuche participants from different locations in Southern Chile, where nearly the majority of the Mapuche population is located, with varying proximities of participants' homes to frontlines of social conflicts and ongoing confrontations with the Chilean military over land disputes and active political protest with increased risk for subjection to antiterrorism laws targeting marginalized Mapuche individuals and groups. We also aimed to interview participants of different ages in relation to distinct generational experiences of surviving the different major earthquakes and tsunamis that have affected their communities (namely, the 1960 and the 2010 mega-earthquakes), as well as lived experiences of enduring the harsh military dictatorship (which lasted from 1973 to 1990) and the now increased militarization of Mapuche-Chilean conflicts over the past decades, particularly affecting younger generations and current students and organizers.

## 1.5 | Ethics

After participants were selected to participate in our study, they were individually asked to confirm their willingness to participate. Informed consent was obtained in compliance with ethical requirements for research on human beings according to international standards, and ethical approval proceeded from the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano within the guidelines of a larger research project that was being led by principal investigator Contreras Painemal from RUCADUNGUN.

Furthermore, it can be beneficial for researchers working with indigenous communities to seek out ethical protections from tribal institutional review boards (IRBs) (Morello-Frosch, Brown, & Brody, 2017). However, this was difficult

to achieve in the MECIR project because of the way in which Mapuche comprise noncentralized groups and do not delegate representation in any one consolidated body across a range of issues as other societies that have a "state" or related instituted tribal law may do. In fact, although many laws have been passed in Chile to recognize the distinctive culture, language, and history of Mapuche people, Mapuche societies continue to demand constitutional recognition in Chile (Minority Rights Group International, 2017). To this day, unlike the United States and Canada, Mapuche societies in Chile still do not have a centralized institution or a representative tribal law assemblage.

Furthermore, Morello-Frosch et al. (2017) do warn that overly relying on centralized IRBs can create dynamics of ethical imperialism and may undercut "the research priorities and methods advanced by indigenous communities," especially when IRBs "universalize ethnical frameworks in ways that *homogenize* indigenous communities" (p. 220; emphasis in the original). In this light, the heterogeneity and decentralized social structures within many indigenous communities can complicate research ethics yet can also empower local communities. In navigating through these challenges and complexities, the MECIR Team acknowledged RUCADUNGUN's role as part of social movements for Mapuche rights as a nonprofit organization in Chile with Mapuche leadership and representation, in addition to the partnering Mapuche community health center KVME FELEN, which is also part of the MECIR team. Therefore, in this research project and in the ICT process, we attempted to compensate for the lack of "official" Mapuche "institutional" oversight or tribal IRBs by ensuring Mapuche community members and leaders were active in guidance and governance of the MECIR team from the very beginning of the project to end, including in this writing up of the results.

Furthermore, to ensure the confidentiality of the participants in the study, several precautions were taken. Once a participant agreed to participate in a qualitative semistructured interview, they were given a pseudonym relating to meanings of typical Mapuche names, usually related to local animals or elements in the natural world, which were used on the transcripts and all written materials to maintain participant anonymity due to the conflict situation facing Mapuche in Chile today (see Table 1 for complete list of participant pseudonyms). All interview tapes, interview transcriptions, researcher notes, and ethnographic observations were coded, deidentified, and kept in a secured file cabinet in the locked RUCADUNGUN office at the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago, Chile.

## 1.6 | Interview and ethnographic procedures

### 1.6.1 | Interview protocols

All 10 interviews were semistructured and in-depth and were conducted face-to-face. Two to four MECIR researchers cofacilitated each interview (Atallah was present at each of the 10 interviews). They were 1–2 hours in length and usually took place at the participant's home. In three locations, interviews took place outside of the participants' home based on the participant's own preference (one occurred in a university office, and the other two occurred in public cafés, yet with sufficient privacy to be able to engage in discussion without jeopardizing the privacy of the participant).

Following grounded theory research frameworks sensitive to the sociocultural contexts (e.g., Charmaz, 2006), we constructed an interview protocol that could be modified so as to focus on certain areas of inquiry mapping onto the central focus of the study. These areas were as follows:

- Opening with stories and perspectives–the researchers explored stories that the participant wished to voice themselves in relation to their ancestors and their own lived experiences.
- Capturing impacts of structural racism and intersecting adversities on individual, family, and community life–the researchers explored how legacies of colonialism, ongoing exposures to ordinary and structural racism, and responding to socionatural disasters (earthquakes and tsunamis) may have impacted participants' pathways toward wellness and social justice.
- Identifying participants' strengths applied to responses to racism and the wide range of intersecting adversities.
- Exploring the types of information, knowledge, and activities shared and taught by across generations related to participants' strength-based responses to racism and other intersecting adversities.

- Exploring the pathways in which these strengths were passed down intergenerationally and adapted to changing contexts in participants' current conditions.

- Closing questions, such as, "Based on your understanding of what this research is about, is there something that you thought that we were going to ask that we may have left out? Is there anything else that you hoped to share with us that is meaningful to you about these issues and how you face them?"

The MECIR researchers cofacilitating the interviews did address the same areas of inquiry in each interview, but the specific questions and order were responsive to the emerging stories and responses.

Nine interviews were transcribed verbatim in Spanish. For two participants, they preferred to speak in Spanish and at times switched to Mapudungun (the Mapuche language) during their interviews. Knowing this beforehand, we, the MECIR Team, made sure that a Spanish Mapudungun interpreter was present for these two participants. The interpreter is a native Mapudungun speaker with knowledge of the local dialect in the region, where these two bilingual interviews were completed. The interpreter is a member of RUCADUNGUN and is committed to linguistic justice. His commitment is evidenced, for example, by his dedication to facilitating a weekly radio show in Mapudungun that he himself leads and coordinates and is well-known in various Mapuche communities for his bilingual dexterity.

After the interviews were recorded and the transcripts written in Spanish, the MECIR team members contacted the interpreter for linguistic inquiries periodically throughout the project, including in the data analysis stage. Although one interview was not recorded because of the participant's request, each coresearcher blocked off time immediately afterward to engage in memoing about the interview and then compared notes to increase the accuracy of reporting on the content and statements of this particular participant who agreed to participate in the project but preferred not to be audio recorded.

## 1.6.2 | Ethnographic observations

Close ethnographic monitoring (Creswell, 2013) was completed related to the environmental, cultural, and political contexts in the lives of our participants. In addition to meeting with participants in the home, the MECIR researchers participating in the fieldwork accompanied participants in their natural settings, attending cultural events and community gatherings. Daily periods of continuous monitoring were also completed during days spent in the villages and urban areas where participants lived, which involved our visiting and walking through different places with community informants who reflected on historical and daily aspects of living in the different Mapuche settings we visited while interviewing participants.

## 1.7 | Data analysis

Data analysis involved several steps. First, it began during data collection itself, and involved discussions between MECIR team members in the field and while engaging in ethnographic observations. After the interviews, the team spent time reflecting on what was discussed and observed, and we engaged in reflexive memoing, with an emphasis on situational elements (Clarke, 2005) and exploring issues of power and colonial dynamics impacting the research process (Smith, 2012).

Subsequently, the MECIR team identified several emergent themes and subthemes during regular, confidential data analysis meetings that occurred in the RUCADUNGUN office at the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago, Chile. Our data analysis meetings were held weekly from September 2016 to May 2017, for a total of 27 meetings lasting for 2–4 hours each. For any portions of interviews in Mapudungun, a professional Mapudungun interpreter and a member of the MECIR research team translated these segments into Spanish for our analysis during the data analysis stage. Therefore, our analysis was conducted primarily in Spanish, yet with frequent discussions about meanings in Mapudungun, especially in dialogues related to identifying emergent themes and illustrative quotes. Atallah then translated all analysis and illustrative quotes used in the representation of the results into English for the purposes of this study.

Overall, we completed open coding (Creswell, 2013), followed by pattern and axial coding (Saldaña, 2009) collectively during our MECIR team meetings, in addition to engaging in situational map-making exercises (Clarke, 2005). Situational map-making involves the creation of visually-based maps, poster boards, diagrams, tables, and figures, which we crowded onto dry-erase boards in the RUCADUNGUN office. Our intimal maps outlined fresh ideas emergent from interview data, memos, and ethnographic field notes and helped us to lay out the major human, nonhuman, discursive, historical, and other contextual elements for deeper and more contextually informed analysis. Various stages of these maps were drawn and redrawn as we progressed through cycles of coding and later through more theoretical analysis. Incorporation of decolonial analysis (e.g., Fanon, 1963; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Said, 1993; Wendt & Gone, 2012) and traditional Mapuche knowledges shared during these weekly MECIR team meetings from consulting with Mapuche elders, in particular, were critical to our collective interpretation of participants' reported experiences with racism, colonialism, structural violence, and continual waves of crises.

Furthermore, this data analysis process (including the open and theoretical coding cycles) frequently included participatory collaborative engagement from the study participants themselves, who were members of diverse Mapuche communities and invited from the southern regions of Chile where we had completed our data collection. Three of the study participants remained involved in the data analysis from afar via phone conversations. The two participants who agreed to come up to Santiago and participate in data analysis meetings at the RUCADUNGUN office were compensated by MECIR team for their transportation expenses. These two participants were able to travel up to Santiago regularly and voice their perspectives and contribute to the generation of the emergent themes and subthemes, and they were integral in creating the four main categories that resulted in our final analysis.

These multiple sources of "expert" knowledges and indigenous perspectives were invited without giving primacy to a single source yet were balanced and talked through within each meeting. As part of our CCRP, we used dialogue and theoretical tools from critical race theory, CBPR, and decolonial qualitative methods (e.g., Atallah, Shapiro et al., 2018; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008; Rasmus et al., 2014; Wendt & Gone, 2012). Each individual participating in these weekly MECIR data analysis team meetings were invited to speak from their own areas of expertise and "voice" their lived experiences when commenting on the contents of deidentified transcripts and helping to generate codes and categories. Through this process, the validity of research increased as the perspectives of participants themselves were incorporated in the identification of meanings that emerged in the coding.

Last, it is important to highlight how reflexivity and relational analysis were central to MECIR team analysis. Consistent with our CCRP approach, we explored the relations between emergent themes across the interviews and embedded in complex changing contexts and power dynamics between researchers and participants. The situational map map-making exercises (Clarke, 2005) and resulting visual representations particularly provoked our intersectional analysis and exploration of relations among key elements to more accurately situate participants' statements from the transcripts into complex webs of human power relations. Taken together, the final themes and subthemes, described below in the Results section, emerged inductively and are based on an organization of the data that aimed to do justice to the richness of participants' own words and descriptions, interpretations and lived experiences of the members of the MECIR data analysis team, and the wealth of Mapuche knowledge and wisdom embedded in long-standing antiracist struggle.

## 2 | RESULTS

Four themes emerged from the use of grounded theory situational analysis and decolonial community-engaged approaches to critical antiracist inquiry described above as a CCRP (see Atallah, Bacigalupe, & Repetto, 2017). These four themes articulate participants responses, as organized by our MECIR data analysis team, into a theoretical framework explaining resilience formulated in Mapudungun: (a) newen, as "strength and spiritual-nature life force"; (b) azmapu, as "ancestral systems of social organization and tribal law"; (c) nietun, as "cultural revitalization"; and (d) marichiweu, as "resistance." These four emergent themes and their subthemes are outlined in Table 2, substantiated by quotes of study participants and are explicated in detail below.

**TABLE 2** Emergent critical framework of resilience from Mapuche perspectives

| Four themes w/nine subthemes | Illustrative quotes |
|---|---|
| **Newen–Strength and natural-spiritual life force** | |
| Emplaced spiritual strength | We [Mapuche] have a different worldview, a different way of looking. We live and co-live with the Earth. The strength and forces that are in nature are also in us. (Ñandú, 52-year-old female participant) |
| Reciprocity and interconnectivity | The strength we have is reciprocity… it has to do with our belief in giving, a way of co-habitation, with the land and with communities…. A way of living, for example, if we know there is Newen in a territory… we may go there and ask for strength, and at the same time, we leave strength there, sharing our Newen with the community. (Ñandú, 52-year-old female participant) |
| Nature, harmony, and health | You develop harmony with the soil, with the waters, with all the different Newen. But when you fall sick, it is because you lost connection with the Ñoque Mapu [Mother Earth], you have lost harmony with nature, lost Newen. (Perla, 47-year-old female participant) |
| **Azmapu–Ancestral systems of social organization and tribal law** | |
| Balance, education, and leadership | An old wise one in my community guided me long ago, when I was a child, teaching about the presence of the Four: the man elder, woman elder, boy, and girl; the north, south, east, and west; the winter, spring, summer, and fall; these are examples of the balance of Four, and are keys for balance…. The wise one taught me these laws of natural and spiritual worlds…. I arm myself with this truth. (Puma, 71-year-old male participant) |
| Koyang (Parliament meetings): Inter- and intragroup problem-solving practices | Within Mapuche society there was always, and remains, a way to talk, to agree to talk in parliaments, which can last for days…and people come together to solve conflicts by this way of dialoguing. (Sol, 36-year-old male participant) |
| **Nietun–Cultural continuity and revitalization** | |
| Bringing culture back to life: Intergenerational storytelling, collective routines and rituals | We understand that as we retake our culture and bring it to life again, therein lies the internal strength of our people. (Ñandú, 52-year-old, female participant) |
| Recovering Mapudungun (the Mapuche language) | Now the children have an interest to speak Mapudungun because we have discovered the rebirth of wisdom, and that impacts the children, who want to return to be like the giant tree we call Pewen [a pine tree native to Chile]. (Puma, 71-year-old male participant) |
| **Marichiweu–Resistance** | |
| Developing decolonial consciousness and Mapuche pride | We still have to decolonize ourselves in many different ways…. We still need to have and to develop strong consciousness about how to keep struggling for our rights … and pass this on to the next generation. (Colorado, a 41-year-old male participant) |
| Defending dignity, indigenous rights, and Mapuche ways of life | During the dictatorship, our customs and ways of life were prohibited because the military thought that being Indian was equal to being communist. So during our Mapuche ceremonies, we would gather together on Tren Tren [a sacred flat hilltop] and celebrate our culture and spirituality, but we would always bring candles and pictures of Virgin Mary, so if the military came, we would tell the soldiers that we were only having a Christian church congregation. This was a clandestine way for us to defend our dignity and way of life, to protect ourselves against being imprisoned, or even disappeared just for being ourselves, for being Mapuche. (Cielo, 70-year-old male participant) |

## 2.1 | Newen: Strength and natural–spiritual life force

In Mapudungun, the term newen means strength, having strength, or being with force. Newen is currently a significant discourse across Mapuche communities and is frequently invoked to describe a range of meanings as strengths harnessed when facing complex trauma and persistent adversities. During the interviews, participants used newen associated with a range of phenomena that map onto resilience constructs. It is important to highlight that the meanings of newen are manifold and constantly developing and changing, impacted by Mapuche spirituality, cultural

hybridities, and intersectionality. Reflecting and articulating the range, unity, and entirety of Mapuche wisdom and indigenous knowledge about newen is well beyond the scope of this study. Instead, we, as the MECIR team, have organized three subthemes to articulate certain meanings of newen as understood in our modest exploratory framework, representing multifaceted processes that participants expressed when describing how they persevered and protected their wholeness, health, and community and cultural integrity through individual and collective actions. The subthemes of newen are briefly reviewed below and are outlined in Table 2, with example quotes from participants.

### 2.1.1 | Emplaced spiritual strength

This first subtheme specifies newen as emplaced and embedded with nature–spirit intersections. Newen is theorized as connecting to resilience, in part, as a vital force that describes connections between people and nature and ancestral lands. Participants often described newen as a synergy of vital energies (in rivers, in volcanoes, in humans, in animals, etc.) that feed and strengthen people's spiritual worlds and bodies alike.

### 2.1.2 | Reciprocity and interconnectivity

Participants underscored newen as resilience when focusing on the importance of practicing reciprocity and maintaining connectivity and responsibility to each other, during both routine situations and in times of crises. Some participants shared examples of coming together in ceremonies for days at a time upon a hill top, each bringing their entire families with food and resources to share while surviving onslaughts by the Chilean military, or even when facing socionatural crises such as major earthquakes and tsunamis.

Our ethnographic observations directly substantiated these understandings of resilience and impacted our research procedures when participants invited us into their homes during our qualitative interviews. For example, participants frequently immediately explained to us the importance of reciprocity in their social interactions at the beginning of our interview sessions. As the MECIR research team, this included our agreeing to take on responsibilities in the collective interview setting, such as by our helping to first chop wood for fire, to share Yerba Mate to drink, or other expressions of reciprocity that messaged our interest in contributing to group happenings through our own actions, which fostered interconnectivity whereby newen could take root. Participants highlighted how his dimension of newen was critical for protecting against difficulties related to discussing difficult topics during our interviews, including histories of genocide and major disasters, surviving intense episodes of racialized violence, and daily racism-based humiliations.

### 2.1.3 | Nature, harmony, and health

The third subtheme describes the unique strength that emerges when harmony between people and nature endures and promotes health. Participants spoke of losing newen and falling ill due to the impact of the racialized colonial violence resulting from being pushed off their native lands, or being obligated to migrate to urban areas for work and survival. Because of the interconnectivity between strength intrinsic to newen and the land and community, when leaving natural environments relocating to built-up urban spaces, many of our participants shared direct links between alienation from the land and development of both mental and physical illness.

## 2.2 | Azmapu: Ancestral systems of social organization and tribal law

In Mapudungun, the term azmapu means law or legal system and consists of an order that regulates all aspects of life in relationship with nature, including spiritual forces, ancestors, and living human relations. In our MECIR research team's ethnographic observations and during our qualitative interviews, participants engaged in discussions and actions that pointed out the salience of Mapuche regulations, duties, and systems of tribal law in coping and resisting racism and recurrent waves of crises. In this light, we have organized two subthemes to give meaning to azmapu as understood in our exploratory framework or resilience, representing multifaceted processes that participants expressed when describing how they engaged aspects of Mapuche tribal law to promote individual, family,

and community wellness and mitigate impacts of colonial violence, ongoing structural racism, and recurrent disasters. The two subthemes of azmapu are briefly reviewed below and are outlined in Table 2 with example quotes from participants.

### 2.2.1 | Balance, education, and leadership

First, a significant dimension of resilience as azmapu emerged from our analysis as related to Mapuche worldviews, which perceive law and order as associated with balance–yet a balance where the human being is not at the center. As participants described, the whole environment, spiritual system, and ecology place animals, plants, waters, rocks, and stars at center stage in maintaining balance. In this context, rights are not only applied to humans, as Puma, a 71-year-old male participant, theorized: "Not only human rights but the rights that any being has are important and vital to balance, we say: the right of the pigeon, the right of the snake, the right of plants, the right of the water springs."

When responding to adversity and trauma from this worldview, participants explained how considering human rights and needs in association with the broader environment becomes paramount. Participants highlighted that when multinational business conglomerates construct vast pine and eucalyptus farms in ways that deplete natural water springs and destroy native forests, or when Chilean municipalities dump waste in tribal lands, leaking toxins into rivers and lakes, these actions may not directly challenge "human rights," but, as Manzanilla, a 34-year-old female participant, explained, they constitute "environmental racism" and are violations that disrupt the balance of azmapu.

Furthermore, these difficulties directly challenge Mapuche resilience strategies when facing diverse forms of adversities. For example, the expansive plantations of pine and eucalyptus now surrounding many Mapuche villages complicate communities' capacities to identify the Tren Tren (a flat treeless hilltop nearby that communities identify as the spiritual backbone of the village where community members agree to climb upon in times of crises to collectively seek refuge for days or even weeks at a time, such as to avoid the rising seas in the aftermath of an earthquake which could bring tsunamis).

When taking collective action to preserve and protect the balance of azmapu, participants spoke of the importance of education and leadership. The interviewees referred to learning about azmapu and the organization of the social and natural worlds from elders and in particular from longkos (chiefs), Machis (spiritual leaders and healers), or other leadership roles that integrated within Mapuche social relations. Some of the discourses that emerged from the participants about education and guidance centered on the diverse range of leaders that exist, and how responsibility to protect balance is shared but that each type of leader has distinct roles in the transmission of cultural and oral knowledge, including traditional ecological knowledge.

Explaining the wide range of education and leadership in Mapuche communities is beyond the scope of this research; however, briefly articulating a few issues is necessary to consider how the destruction of Mapuche social systems as a result of long-lasting institutional forms of racism results in a specific type of racialized violence and collective trauma perpetrated, first by the Spanish empire and later by the Chilean state, as explained by Colorado, a 41-year-old male participant:

> *In Mapuche social structures, knowledge is transmitted in an open and spiritual way, through responsibility… and not just anyone can take up this responsibility, there must exist Guiliche, which is established through cultural community organization. Guiliche means chosen. So passing down knowledge is linked to this process, where the chosen one, based on this spirituality, passes down knowledge.*

Colorado is himself a decedent of a longko, and he highlighted the importance of understanding the differences in roles within Mapuche society to better appreciate the ongoing struggle to educate youth and protect and foster azmapu for cultural continuity in the face of past and continual ethnocide: "longkos protect Mapuche knowledge…. They exercise their responsibilities to try to build that beautiful Mapuche society that was broken, that was attacked, that was dismembered as a result of the colonization of our lands."

### 2.2.2 | Koyang: Inter- and intragroup problem-solving practices

In Mapudungun, the term koyang refers to the events where communities come together in dialogue to solve problems, make decisions, and enact Mapuche systems of law or azmapu. As Sol, a 36-year-old male participant, explained: "Koyang are regular meetings where unique and poetic speech is invoked, where each longko has an open space to speak, hours if needed, to share stories in very vivid and personal ways." The koyang is not only a practice reserved for Mapuche intragroup meetings; on the contrary, for hundreds of years, the Mapuche held many koyang as formal meetings between the Spanish empire and the Mapuche nation (Contreras Painemal, 2002). The Spanish called these parlamentos, which recognized the independent sovereignty of the Mapuche and even set agreements for trade (Contreras Painemal, 2002).

Once the country of Chile was created, the Mapuche continued to hold koyang with the nascent Chilean state as nation-to-nation agreements. The knowledge of ways to dialogue with complex oratory skills, including negotiating and mediation processes, has included critical resilience strategies for generations. Many younger generations many never have had the opportunity to participate in a koyang and witness ways of solving problems in ways that are consistent with core Mapuche values and knowledge.

As the MECIR research team, we were invited to participate in a koyang, held in November of 2016, which occurred out in the open air upon a flat hill top (Tren Tren) in Southern Chile, and involved hundreds of longkos, diverse community stakeholders from across Mapuche territories, and a panel of invited international observers. This koyang lasted a full day beginning with a Mapuche spiritual ceremony in the early morning followed by circle dialogues that lasted until sunset. As part of the ethnographic methods of this research, we chronicled our observations of the koyang by reflexive journaling, which we later integrated into our data analysis and formation of the emergent themes of this research. In particular, we highlighted the unique forms of dialogue and orality involved in the koyang as Mapuche leaders shared stories packed with knowledge of the multileveled implications of racism (psychological, cultural, social, environmental, spiritual, political and economic implications were discussed and collectively analyzed in public by the longkos).

## 2.3 | Nietun: Cultural continuity and revitalization

The Mapudungun word nietun means to return to have something once again, or it can connote the process of returning along a path to pick up something that you have dropped or lost. In this light, nietun emerged from our data analysis to represent the multifaceted resilience process that participants reported when describing how they passed down key indigenous knowledges and returned to diverse ways of life when facing adversity, trauma, and/or loss. For the purposes of this analysis, nietun includes meanings related to the revitalization of Mapuche cultural practices and the navigation through multiple identities in the borderlands between European, Chilean, and Mapuche nations, lands, and traditions. Nietun, for the purposes of this emergent framework of resilience, has to do with the process of returning, not necessarily to a territory but to culture and knowledge, to dignity and honor within Mapuche ways of being and identities. The two subthemes of nietun are briefly reviewed below and are outlined in Table 2 with example quotes from participants.

### 2.3.1 | Bringing culture back to life: Intergenerational storytelling, collective routines, and rituals

The first subtheme of nietun centers on how, within the context of historical genocides and colonial injury as well as continual attacks on Mapuche culture and social systems, there surfaces a critical importance of intergenerational messaging in ways that promote cultural continuity and provide younger generations with access to developing rich and complex identities as Mapuche and racial and ethnic minorities within the broader Chilean society, challenging dominant historical colonial narratives. For example, the dimension of nietun as involving intergenerational storytelling and collective routines and rituals is evidenced in this family dialogue during one of our interviews with Perla, a 47-year-old female participant, and her mother, Macho Negro, a 75-year-old female participant:

> My mother never stops sharing the history of our grandmother to us … of when they were kicked off our native
> lands…. She shares how she obtained so much knowledge and wisdom, which my mother then transmits to us,

*and to her grandchildren and great grandchildren … by way of the fire. For example, without the fire, I could not sit here and drink yerba mate with her, and it is by way of the yerba mate [a South American type of hot herbal drink], by way of the mate tun [daily collective ritual of sitting together and passing and sharing yerba mate together], where we also speak and share stories. And it is in these moments, like in the early morning around the fire, that my mother actually speaks about dreams, about nature, and the importance of responsibilities and giving back to the community.* (Perla)

*Here in the morning when you wake up, we first do a chachan [a Mapuche greeting] to the sun to begin the day … because the sun is what gives us the day…. The light rises above the waters and above the life of the trees.* (Macho Negro)

### 2.3.2 | Recovering mapudungun

An important dimension of nietun is Mapudungun itself, reclaiming and, in many circumstances, relearning and reteaching the language in schools and households. In fact, participants spoke about the importance of the family as becoming a platform for cultural continuity and passing down Mapuche knowledge and practices, including the language. Some participants highlighted the importance of giving children names in Mapudungun and educating them about their history and how their surnames were often stolen from them as part of systemic racism within Chilean society. For example, returning to an interview with Perla, she explained:

*My mother struggles a lot so that the language is not lost, and so she participates in the community, in ceremonies, every year, in the cold, rain, no matter what, she is committed to being present, even in the opening of the Mapuche school in [nearby city], she was there at the opening, supporting that the language would finally be able to be taught to the children in the community.*

Overall, it is important to understand how nietun is deeply connected to the themes presented earlier–newen and azmapu–which describe the ways in which people, strength, health, nature, and the cosmos unfold in balance. Therefore, a key dimension of nietun is the process of revitalizing both newen and azmapu and, perhaps most importantly, adapting Mapuche processes and understandings of the world within current (post)colonial Chilean contexts–within family life, school settings, built-up urban areas, traditional villages, cyber or online communities, health centers, prisons, collaboration with Chilean government institutions, or active resistance.

## 2.4 | Marichiweu: Resistance

The Mapudungun word marichiweu is a multilayered, psychopolitical construct and a popular discourse across Mapuche communities directly contesting racial discrimination. More specifically, marichiweu is a phrase combining the word mari, which means "10," and wewün, which means "we will win." Currently, marichiweu can be shouted out during political protests in the streets, during Mapuche religious ceremonies, or even at seasonal holiday events, where people harness hope and together assert: "Ten times we will win!" In this light, marichiweu emerged from our data analysis to represent the multifaceted resilience process that participants reported when they describe how they directly resist intersecting oppressions with conviction to triumph, and to continue the collective struggle for self-determination and social justice under conditions of historical and ongoing settler colonialism power relations. The two subthemes of marichiweu are briefly reviewed below and are outlined in Table 2 with example quotes from participants.

### 2.4.1 | Developing decolonial consciousness and Mapuche pride

An important dimension of marichiweu connects to the multileveled process of supporting children, youth, and adults in developing awareness of systems of oppression and how social power relations shape their developmental trajectories and identities in ways that are relevant to specific social contexts. For children, our results demonstrate how parents, extended family networks, and schools can play critical roles in guiding Mapuche youth in making sense of racist messages and conditions that mark their histories and future development. For example, participants with children

frequently shared difficult stories of incidents of racial discrimination impacting their families, yet also explained how these same situations could be transformed into sites of resilience when they effectively "parented against racism."

Manzanilla, a 38-year-old female participant, reflects on this multifaceted protective parenting process, which involves her teaching her 9-year-old son about the colonial legacy of racist violence in education settings while advocating for him and instilling Mapuche pride:

> Whenever my son comes home from school and tells me how his classmates have teased him about him being Mapuche, bullied him, and calling him racist slurs, I talk to the teachers and demand that the school protects him. I also talk to him about how I was bullied as a child by my peers, because I looked more "Indian" than many of the other kids, and how my father, his grandfather, was actually beat over and over again at school by his teachers whenever he was caught speaking Mapudungun. I try to help my son to feel that he is not alone, and that even though we, as Mapuche, have been killed and beat, and pushed aside for generations, we are still here. I even sent him to a Mapuche school for a few years, but it was so far away, it was not sustainable, but it did help him be connected to who he is and feel pride.

### 2.4.2 | Defending dignity, indigenous rights, and Mapuche ways of life

Another important dimension of marichiweu emerged in our study as justice-seeking actions and struggles against discriminatory policies and colonial legacies. For some participants, this involved defending Mapuche cultural ways of life, which, at times, required clandestine performances that allowed for communities to continue their Mapuche cultural practices while mitigating risks of racial and ethnic persecution. For example, older participants who lived through the Chilean dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s often spoke at length of the importance of covert actions to hide evidence that they belonged to a Mapuche ethnic group. Younger participants, such as Jaguar, a 33-year-old male, explained that, for him, overt advocacy for increased self-determination required complex understandings of human dignity and social equity: "We [Mapuche], are struggling for equality with Chileans in terms of dignity, but difference in terms of law."

In some Mapuche communities, critical legal advocacy is a defining aspect of current antiracist struggles, where institutional-level change remains a major platform of resistance. However, we believe it is important to stress how resistance processes surfaced in our study in a myriad of ways, changing over time and across distinct spheres, from government courtrooms to rural villages, from universities to city streets, from churches to factories, from households to health clinics, from forestry plantations to prison cells, and beyond. Yet a nuanced psychopolitical analysis of positive and negative impacts of diverse resistance in Mapuche communities is beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, in this subtheme, we argue that according to many of our participants, because of the sociohistorical and institutional dimensions of racism, group-level actions that increase equity and dignity together, within conditions of indigenous historical trauma and ongoing racial discrimination, at times could have particularly fundamental protective and mental health promoting impacts in routine circumstances and in times of sudden crisis. Currently, the ways in which reparative issues of legal and land concerns are negotiated appear to be key domains that remain to be addressed. Rio, a 34-year-old male participant, explained:

> There was a genocide here…. The Chileans eradicated us [Mapuche], colonized us…. And for us, a major issue is property rights because for us, the land is collective, and the Winca's [word in Mapudungun meaning 'White/Foreign Invader'] idea of land ownership has been so consuming, so devastating.… And it will be a difficult road ahead, as it has surely been in the past…over hundreds of years… yet through this struggle we are recuperating our dignity, recuperating our history, recuperating our Mapuche way of life…"

## 3 | DISCUSSION

Our findings reveal how wide-ranging effects of racism and multileveled socioenvironmental adversities profoundly shape Mapuche individual, family, and community lives and well-being. When responding to these intersecting adversities, various themes emerged from our study and data analysis using methodologies informed by critical race theory

and community-engaged research approaches applied, as in public health (Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010), to community psychology (Atallah, Bacigalupe, & Repetto, 2017). The emergent themes include: newen, azmapu, nietun, and marichi-weu, which are outlined in Table 2. Results suggest the salience of a wide range of community cultural wealth and the importance of the revitalization of traditional knowledges and language, as well as truth-telling and decolonial justice-seeking actions in antiracist efforts to increase self-determination. Overall, our findings contribute to reconceptual-izations of resilience from Mapuche perspectives while identifying culturally meaningful indictors and strategies for promoting racial justice and health equity.

Our results support previous research on the importance of self-determination and cultural continuity for indige-nous communities who face complex historical legacies of ethnic cleansing and ongoing cultural repression (Kirmayer et al., 2009). In fact, in a North American study by Chandler and Lalonde (2008), the researchers found that the con-servation of traditional indigenous practices and language in particular were associated with reduced rates of native youth dropping out of school, in addition to fewer suicides.

Similarly, in Atallah's (2017) study with Palestinian refugees in the Middle East who had been ethnically-cleansed off their native lands, the participants' journeys' of returning to dignity and belonging, relearning traditional Pales-tinian cuisine, and engaging in intergenerational storytelling, together emerged as critical dimensions of resilience in contexts of settler colonialism. Likewise, in a study by Pilgrim, Samson, and Pretty (2009) with indigenous communi-ties in Canada, the authors highlighted the importance of increasing the communities' consumption of native foods, transferring traditional knowledge to younger generations through linguistically and culturally sensitive pathways and strengthening ceremonial traditions and cultural practices.

Relatedly, our results empathize the importance of resistance as resilience, with the development of decolonial con-sciousness and Mapuche pride. These processes overlap with Freire's (1970) work on the transformative power of crit-ical consciousness as well as more recent scholarship on racial socialization. In fact, racial socialization has been theo-rized as a possible health-promoting factor (Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, & Notaro, 2002), and emerging data provide preliminary evidence that specific types of parents' messages to their children about race and racism may compensate for, or protect against, experiences of racial discrimination pointing to improvements in socioemotional, behavioral, and academic functioning (Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006). In this light, our findings support previous research on the importance of parenting against racism, by demonstrating the protective role of Mapuche caregivers and leaders in the community who effectively support youth in critically evaluating the historical and sociopolitical contexts in which they live while balancing the resources that their environments offer and the demands that they place on everyday life and in times of crisis.

Furthermore, the results of this study suggest that Eurocentric theories of mental health require increased cultural humility and critical analysis. Results show benefits of community-engaged approaches inspired by critical race theory within applied fields such as community psychology and public health, and previous scholarship formulated by Atallah, Bacigalupe, and Repetto (2017) in a CCRP. More specifically, our study demonstrates how the application of CCRP can facilitate the exploration of resilience grounded in indigenous perspectives while genuinely contesting the colonial power dynamics built into academic inquiry in attempts to dismantle systems of oppression and generate pathways toward social justice. As Ford and Airhihenbuwa (2010) found in public health, focusing on the primacy and structural dimension of racism, intersectionality, transdisciplinarity, and "centering at the margins" can be helpful tools when designing and implementing research on resilience in community psychology research and practice from start to finish.

Mental health clinicians, social workers, community organizers, health advocates, school teachers, lawmakers, dis-aster response planners, and other professionals working alongside Mapuche individuals and communities may find utility in building curricula, clinical treatments, counseling interventions, and public policies informed by the resilience processes articulated across the emergent themes and subthemes of our MECIR project. However, further research investigating the various themes articulated in this research is recommended.

The urgency of social transformation as integral to resilience is, however, pressing and reflected in many narratives of our study, as participants elaborated on the devastating impact of colonization, racism, and continual crises unfolding in their lives. When people are affected by damages of unremitting racism and oppression, multileveled interventions

and public policy changes that directly promote social justice and decolonization are essential for indigenous lives to be fully respected and protected and so that resilience can more equitably take root.

Moreover, further transnational research projects that engage critical race theory and explore commonalties of trauma and pathways toward resilience across racialized groups are recommended. For example, the present study showed how for some Mapuche individuals and families, their lived experiences of discrimination, and dislocation share important similarities with African Americans, Palestinians, and other historically colonized groups across the globe. Similar to Ungar (2010), who cites the 2008 *American Psychological Association's Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents* in suggesting that clinicians should work to increase the critical mindedness of youth of color, when working with Mapuche youth, it is also recommended to support their awareness-building journeys and navigation of systems of oppression.

Moreover, many Native American families in North America continue to cope with legacies of brutal colonial violence as their ancestors walked the "trail of tears" forced off their lands by U.S. federal policies obligating the "removal of Indians" so that territories could be occupied by White settlers. In this light, when exploring and promoting resilience processes in indigenous and racialized communities transnationally, it may be helpful to more systematically link constructs such as resilience and resistance, cultural continuity and perseverance toward decolonization, and reinforce emplaced cultural strengths–newen.

## 3.1 | Limitation

A major limitation of our study, and a common challenge of in-depth qualitative research, was the small number of participants (N = 10). Moreover, this small number limits the ability of our findings to represent Mapuche resilience processes generally, although, this was not one of the specific aims of the current study. Rather, we focused on using critical theories and community-engaged methods while paying a high level of attention to both culturally and contextually specific experiences, allowing for nuanced and collaborative coconstructions of resilience through dialogue and with respect for indigenous knowledge. Taken together, this allowed for our generation of an initial, exploratory model of resilience with insights into the impact of racism, long-lasting colonial violence, and recurrent disasters on Mapuche family and community life.

## 3.2 | Conclusion

This paper represents an attempt to explore psychosocial processes in Mapuche communities in ways that honor the intersectional and power-ladden dimensions of human resilience, while centering interpretations on perspectives of Mapuche participants themselves. In doing so, we co-constructed knowledge within a collaborative research partnership – The MECIR Team - a collaborative that was created and brought together not only because of an interest in a shared research question, but because of our shared values for decolonization, indigenous rights, and antiracist community praxis. Furthermore, the MECIR team, from the beginning, understood how in indigenous communities, it is particularly important to be critical and humble about one's own research agendas and outcomes, as Tousignant and Sioui (2009) highlight: "The consequences of many centuries of colonization, repeated trauma, both historical and contemporary, and an explicit national project of ethnocide, cannot be eradicated by short-term interventions or a well-thought culturally adapted program" (p. 44). In this light, the current paper represents a humble effort at contributing to interpretations of resilience within Mapuche communities. In fact, we believe that our fostering of empowerment and building on community capacities as evidenced in the MECIR team itself, and longer-term engagement in social change activities during the research process, emerged as important 'research' outcomes, grounded in our deep respect for strengths in Mapuche institutions, indigenous knowledge, and in local community process.

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