Using dialogic/performance narrative analysis to assess the suitability and acceptability of social isolation and loneliness interventions for older minoritised people living in the UK

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Overview

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• Overall research resign
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• Phase 4
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Clarification of key concepts

• **Social isolation**: A lack of contacts, interactions and quality support between people & a social network (Dickens et. al. 2011)

• **Loneliness**: An unwelcome feeling occurring when there is a discrepancy between a person’s desired & actual relationships (Hughes et. al. 2004)

• **Older minoritised people living in the UK**
  • Black and minority ethnic (BME)
  • Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME)
  • Ethnic minority
Social Isolation & Loneliness: health & economic impact

- Symptoms of depression (Cacioppo et. al., 2010)
- Poor cognitive function (Wang et al., 2015)
- Impaired immunity (Cacioppo et.al., 2011)
- Impaired sleep (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2014)

Risk associated with them comparable with well-established risk factors for mortality (Holt-Lunstad et. al., 2015).

The cost to employers is estimated to be around £2.5 billion per year (New Economics Foundation, 2017)
Older minoritised people: Processes that result in vulnerability

- Geographical separation
- Language difficulties
- Negative effects of persistent discrimination
- Hostile environment policy
- Socioeconomic & health inequalities

(Treas & Mazumdar, 2002; Fokkema & Naderi, 2013: Park et. al. 2019)
Older minoritised people: How do they compare with the majority ethnic group?

- Older minoritised people are at an increased risk of poor health, economic inactivity and late-life poverty (Gough & Adami, 2013; Tillin et al., 2013).

- Around 7% of those over 65 say that they are often lonely and 31% say that they are sometimes lonely (Age UK, 2017).

- Very high rates of loneliness reported ranging from 24%-50% in some minoritised categories (Victor et al., 2012).

- The number of older minoritised people is set to increase in the coming decades (Lievesly, 2010).
Effective interventions:

• Incorporate an educational component, targeted at specific groups, with some level of facilitator and/or participant control (Cattan et al, 2005).

• Have a theoretical basis (Dickens et al, 2011).

• Adaptability and have a community development approach (Gardiner et al, 2016).

• Interventions that corrected maladaptive social cognition may be more effective in reducing loneliness (Masi et al., 2011).
Past systematic reviews

Shortcomings

• Many past systematic reviews have been broad in focus.

• They have also been narrow in synthesis by focusing on studies with quantitative outcomes.

• They lack a theory-based framework that includes the life-course experiences of older minoritised people.
1. To better understand the life-course experiences of older minoritised people

2. To better understand social isolation and loneliness in older minoritised people

3. To better understand of the effectiveness of social isolation and loneliness interventions and how they work

4. To understand what is required of interventions that can also/better meet the needs of older minoritised people
Research Design

**Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis**

**AIM:** To assess the efficacy of CBGIs targeting social isolation and loneliness in older people
**DATA:** 7 process evaluations and 20 outcome evaluations
**PRELIMINARY FINDINGS:** Effective interventions give participants active roles and attend to theory, fidelity, dosage, vulnerability, cognition

**Phase 2: Qualitative Analysis**

**AIM:** To explore the social networks of older minoritised people living in the UK
**DATA:** In-depth interviews with ten people from minoritised ethnic groups
**FINDINGS:** Community based group interventions appear to be protective of social isolation and loneliness

**Phase 3: Systematic Review**

**AIM:** To assess the suitability and acceptability of the interventions for older minoritised people.
**DATA:** Secondary data (Phase Two interviews)
**FINDINGS:** ???

**Phase 4: Qualitative Analysis**

**AIM:** To explore ethnic variations in the friendship networks of older people
**DATA:** Understanding Society: UK Longitudinal Household study
**RESULTS:** Older minoritised people reported fewer close friends and fewer friends who live locally.
Assessing the *suitability* and *acceptability* of social isolation & loneliness interventions for older minoritised people
Research questions

Are interventions that attend to following features of effective interventions suitable and/or acceptable for older minoritised people?

a) Target cognitive processes
b) Target vulnerable participants
c) Give participants an active role

In assessing suitability and acceptability,

• How do older minoritised people position themselves?
• What are older minoritised people’s preferences?
• What circumstances enable/hinder older minoritised people from participating in interventions?
Methods

**Source:** Secondary analysis of in-depth interviews conducted in Phase 2

**Benefits:** time saving, makes full use of readily available data

**Ethical concerns:** consent, anonymity, confidentiality

**Methodological concerns:** co-construction
Methods

- **Sample:** 10 older minoritised people aged 65 years and above
- **Recruitment:** Purposive sampling
- **Data collection:** In-depth interviews informed by biographical narrative interpretive method (BNIM)
- **Analysis:** Narrative analysis
Narrative research

• Across the lifespan, personal narratives are told by a wide range of people (Langellier, 1989)

• Give us insight not only about an individual or a group, but also about society, culture, and history.

• Provide a unique vantage point to study the intersection of the individual, the collective and the social (Lasslet, 1999)

• Doesn’t privilege structure or agency (Andrews et. al. 2003)
Narrative research: approaches

- Event-centred narratives
- Experience-centred narratives
- Small stories approach
- Biographical narratives
- Socio-cultural narrative
- Analysis of what is unsaid
- Interview as narrative
My wish list....

- Broad approach to defining and identifying narratives
- Attention to language
- Attention to positionality and performance
- Attention to the wider context
Dialogic/performance analysis (Riessman, 2008)

- Mikhail Bakhtin and Erving Goffman influence this approach
- Interrogates how talk between people is interactively produced and performed as narrative
- Combined thematic and structural analysis
- Performance and context are given considerable attention.
- The language of the narrative is scrutinized
- Adopts a flexible approach to the identification of narratives.
- Compatible with secondary analysis of qualitative data
I sought to identify performance features e.g.

- Narration styles,
- Switched verb tenses,
- Creative language,
- Repetition,
- Direct speech,
- Expressive sounds
- Asides to the audiences
- Breakoffs, interruptions and overlaps in speech (Riessman, 2008)
Bamberg (1997) encourages analysts to ask of their data different positioning questions e.g.

- ‘How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events?’
- ‘How does the speaker position him/herself to the audience?’
- ‘How do narrators position themselves to themselves?’
- ‘In what kind of story do narrators place themselves?’ (Riessman, 2002)

Attention to wider historic, cultural and/or social context to demonstrate whether the participants’ narratives resisted or conformed to dominant narratives.
Findings: Mrs Khuboni

- Aged 65-69
- Retired, widowed, lives alone
- Born in Africa
- She is a late life-migrant
- During the interview, she tells me about her day to day activities, her hobbies and numerous stories based on her experience of working as a carer
- I honed in on these moments and identified narratives that could give me insight into her preferences and what she would find acceptable or suitable
- The narrative identified was produced in response to a question about the government’s role in helping older people who are housebound and are unable to go out
Mrs. Khuboni: =Yeah, maybe there can be a center for elderly people. People they go, they meet up. They, there is uh -I remember when I was in (.)in (.)[Town A]...in [Town B] (.2) [Town A] and [Town B]. There is a(,) there is a center there for old people. There, they play music. If –honestly, it’s so nice! You find old people, they come there. Even if they come with their own chairs, they come with their -You see somebody is really enjoying. Just music and talking to people, then they play this recording which tells stories...? Mmm here, we haven’t got it in [Town C]. There is no(.) like a(.)

Interviewer: Day center?

Mrs. Khuboni: Day center for older people. It’s not (. )cause is, is, is, -You are not forced to go there. That -You, you find that if you go, you will enjoy it. You will meet other people. Then there’s people there. Some will come and donate, making cupcakes. Some they will be making tea. You know they give each other duties. ‘Oh! Next week it’s you making tea, it’s you who will be making cakes!’ -You know?! People chip in, donate a pound, pound, they buy those things, they buy flour to make cupcakes or cakes so that when they meet mmm? And sometimes, they play these games

Interviewer: Yeah?(. ) oh good! So that -You used to go to that in [Town A] and [Town B]?

Mrs. Khuboni: I used to, to -Yes! When I was looking after this -When I used to work there. Then I thought, ‘This is a good thing!’ These people, they go and play games like bridge(.) different games. Cause they meet, the old - elderly people. Instead of sitting at home. And when they go home, you find that they are refreshed. And when it’s the day for coming, they will all come. They enjoy that! They enjoy the company. Drinking tea, talking, laughing with somebody. Just enjoying music, that’s it! Mmm

Interviewer: ((Laughs)) I know! oh my gosh(.) So if there was something like that in [Town C], then it’s something that you would attend or go to?

Mrs. Khuboni: Yes! A:::h! I’ll love that because I keep on asking, ‘where can I go?’ Me, I don’t mind even going to help in the community, if there is people like (. )making food for people. Making teas for -That’s what I’m trying to find now. I enjoy that.
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Mrs Khuboni: findings

- Performative features identified in this narrative: asides, direct speech, repetition, expressive sounds
- Positioning of herself and others
- Resists narratives that view older people as passive and non-agentic
- Narrative was produces interactionally, in response to my question
- She elaborates further on the narrative when I respond to her narrative by asking more questions
- Very detailed description of what goes on in the day centre
- Perhaps she positions the interviewer as someone who has never been to a day centre

‘You, you find that if you go, you will enjoy it’
Mrs Khuboni: findings

• Based on focus on the social aspects of the day centre, interventions that target cognitive process might not be suitable.

• Interventions that give participants an active role would be acceptable

• Cold weather is an issue

• She feels cold and it hinders her from going out socially.

‘Sometimes I say I want to go to bingo. I won’t be feeling alright. My pains, joints (.). Then I will be thinking, ‘Should I go?’ Then, the day will be gone! You know, because of the weather. You don’t even see the, oh the (.). the sun - so I can’t go anywhere(.).’

• Interventionist would need to find a way to address this issue.
Findings: Mr Edosa

- Aged 65+ at the time of the interview
- Retired, lives alone
- Born in Africa
- Migrated to the UK in early adulthood
- He told me several stories about the challenges faced by people from Africa who live and grow old in the UK.
- Key themes: cultural differences, independence, as well as the push and pull factors influencing return migration
- The narrative identified was produced in response to a question about the available assistance and services provided by government to older people in his area.
Mr Edosa: well there are a lot of . There's lots of erm, community things . they organise like clubs. Some people, something -Pensioner, some pensioner clubs, pension . There are so many! But it depends on, like the way I would say back home, ‘age is number!’ It all depends on how you feel in yourself
Interviewer: ok.

Mr Edosa: My experience is that I don't feel really I'm old! ((Laughs))
Interviewer: of course! ((Laughs))

Mr Edosa: I could do things, I could do things myself. I go shopping, I cook, I do all things I want to do. So, I don't necessarily have to go to clubs to socialise
Interviewer: /mhml/

Mr Edosa: You know, that's the way I look at it.
Interviewer: ok.

Mr Edosa: So:: it hasn't come to that yet and I hope it doesn't come. I hope it doesn't come to that anyway
Interviewer: No, at least then, you are alright. You are (. Yea::h

Mr Edosa: So, you know, I don't have, I don't have to go and rely on people to come and do things for me, you know
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Mr Edosa: So, you know, I don't have, I don't have to go and rely on people to come and do things for me, you know
Findings: Mr Edosa

- Performative features identified: repetition, direct speech, creative language? (falls outside his narrative)
- Positioning of others and himself
- He resists the homogenising of older people and the depiction of older people as dependent
- The narrative was co-produced in response to my question
- My age and my gender might have influenced this narrative.
Findings: Mr Edosa

- Interventions that are explicitly targeted at older people are not suitable for Mr Edosa
- Interventions advertised in such a way that portrays older people as dependent may be off-putting for him
- He is however, open to socialising through other avenues as seen below when he responds to a question I asked about emotional support,

“...when there are occasions for, kind of get together, and I get invited, you know, then of course we open up to -Not we all. Some of them from my community belong to (.) call it union, call it association, call it whatever you like. But there is sort of a community meetings where we- Once every two months, we all come together to discuss issues.”

Support for these types of community groups where people from the same background offer support may be necessary
Subjectivity: Highly dependent on the my choice of data

Descriptive: The findings can be very descriptive and may lack in-depth analysis

Presentation: In depth analysis generated numerous findings making it difficult to decide the amount of data to present when communicating the research to others

Language: Difficulty in identifying switched verb tenses for those who don’t speak English as a first language e.g. Mrs Khuboni presents her past stories in present tense

Secondary data analysis: narratives that answer research question might be unavailable
Next steps:

- Complete Phase 3
- Complete the dialogic/performance analysis for the remaining interviews
- Answer the question of whether interventions for social isolation and loneliness are effective and suitable for older people from minoritised ethnic groups
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Thank you!
Questions and Comments

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