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Perceptions of belonging in service users with psychosis living in linguistically mismatched communities in North Wales

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Learning Goal:

Studies suggest that minorities living in low own-group density neighbourhoods are exposed to increased minority stress and reduced access to social capital which renders them more susceptible to psychosis. Here we qualitatively explore whether these mechanisms extend to individuals with psychosis whose minority status is defined by their language profile.

Abstract Text:

Background

Belonging to a minority group confers greater risk for psychosis. However, studies have found that this risk is attenuated when minorities live in neighbourhoods that comprise a high proportion of the same minority group. In terms of underpinning mechanisms, high own-group density has been associated with increased access to social capital, for example community belonging and access to reciprocal support, which protect against minority stress such as discrimination and perceived outsider status. No studies have investigated these mechanisms in persons with psychosis whose minority group membership is defined by their language status.

Method and aims

Given the paucity of research in this area, semi-structured in-depth interviews will be conducted with participants with psychosis who are living in high density ($\geq 50\%$) Welsh-speaking communities but whose first-learned and preferred language is English. Interviews will qualitatively explore participants' sense of belonging and their experiences living in their local community. Data will be analysed using thematic analysis.

Preliminary results

Thus far, four participants have completed interviews. Five main themes were derived from interim thematic analyses of the four transcripts (feeling a sense of belonging, outsider status, the Welsh language, psychosis and social interaction, and rural/urban comparisons). The Welsh language and Welsh national identity were perceived as largely interconnected and were conveyed as important determinants of belonging to a Welsh-speaking community. Half of the participants expressed that their language status contributes to their perceptions of not belonging to their communities.

Conclusions

For some individuals with psychosis, being linguistically mismatched to their local community might reduce their perceived access to social capital and contribute to the development and maintenance of their experiences of psychosis; however, further data are required to reach saturation of themes. A future study will also investigate sense of belonging in Welsh-speaking service users living in high-density English-speaking communities.

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