TRIGGERS OF STROKE FROM A PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

- Why does a stroke happen on that particular day?
- Complex phenomenon = stroke triggers [1]
- Increased mental stress could be related to the triggering of a cardiovascular event [2,3]
- Case crossover design most widely used [4] but susceptible to bias [5]
- Pilot study using phenomenology: all participants (n=9) spontaneously related the stroke event to a family conflict AND mentioned potential benefits of having a stroke at that particular moment [6]

OBJECTIVE

- Document in-depth perceptions of circumstances spontaneously associated with the occurrence of the stroke on that particular day.

METHODS

- Cross-sectional descriptive study using a phenomenological orientation
- Inclusion criteria
  a) Have been admitted to the hospital neurovascular unit for a stroke diagnosis (family member invited to participate)
  b) Speaking French
  c) Being less than 70 years of age since greater social desirability has been associated with advanced age
- Exclusion criteria
  a) Delirium not resolved
  b) Stroke secondary to a surgical procedure
  c) Phasic or cognitive disorders
- Recruitment and unfolding of study
  a) Daily screening by research nurse
  b) Interview at home 5 – 8 weeks post-stroke
  c) Use of an interview guide: “Tell me your story”
  d) The negative form in questions was also used to overcome defence mechanisms; e.g. “When you think of the [date of stroke], nothing comes to your mind?”
- Analysis
  a) Audio content transcribed verbatim
  b) Use of Nvivo software for data management
  c) Data were analyzed concurrently and in parallel by two members of the team
  d) Summaries to capture overall meaning
  e) Comprehensive coding
  f) Discussion of results in team meeting until reaching consensus
- Ethics
  a) The research protocol was approved by the institutional research ethics committee where recruitment took place.

RESULTS

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<th>Characteristics of participants (n=37):</th>
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<td>Mean age = 56.3 years ± 11.9</td>
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<td>Female = 15 (40.5%)</td>
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| Side of stroke:
  - Right: 19 (51.3%)                  |
  - Left: 17 (46.0%)                    |
  - Bilateral: 1 (2.7%)                 |
| Date the stroke happened was meaningful |
| Stroke leads to secondary benefits, making it possible to resolve cation of tension |
| Overarching theme = relationships |

| Figure 1. Flow chart |

INTERRELATED SUBTHEMES

- Birthday or anniversary
  - “We don’t do anything on my birthday, my birthday is just a day where we say ‘well, that’s all. You know, it’s not... Yeah. My father died on my mother’s birthday, my mother died on her birthday. We move onto other things, yes. Because I move onto other things before my birthday. It’s okay today but tomorrow, it’s over, you know. I don’t know. My birthday was never something that I focused on.”
  - “Because, no, I said, we have to hurry because you know, tomorrow I may not be there. I’ll be too old, I’ll be 50 years old... some guys from the office, there’s one of them who came to see me, he was freaking out because he said... I want you to tell me, you know it was going to happen to you, because you made fun of me, you told me. As far as I said, guys, tomorrow, 3 a.m., it’s finished for me. Because I was born at 3 a.m. 1: It happened on a Wednesday! P: Yep. It’s... the day of my 50th birthday. (2019, stroke on 50th birthday and misses surprised jake).
  - “Yes, it was her birthday [spouse]... A great gift. It happened on the 23rd, I think? The 23rd, that was her birthday...”
  - “I don’t know if she will be there...”

- Money issues
  - “But he [brother] has no money, he knows how to make a dollar... Perhaps it’s better to know how to make a dollar than us.”

- Being sick seen as a benefit
  - “In the evening I would stay quiet at home because I was burnt out! (laughs) because at some point you have to return to work, eh, whether you want to or not. The damned sick leave is only 15 weeks.”
  - “I expressed ambivalence about a possible return to work.”

- Parenting
  - “Could it be that I’ll be a grandmother... I hope so, but I don’t know if I could do it to her... I can’t do that, you know.”

- Alcohol or drug abuse
  - “I stopped completely... No, I stopped drinking about four years ago. It’s two years that I’ve not been drinking... Two years, I can say that I have a beer occasionally... On Saturday... two of us drank a bottle of wine.”

- Being sick seen as a burden
  - “I think, I never drink alcohol. I have never drank any... From time to time in the summer when it’s really hot at the weekend, I’ll have a beer. But it’s not... it’s, it wasn’t every day, I’m not a drinker, oh no, I’ve never been inclined that way...”

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REFERENCES