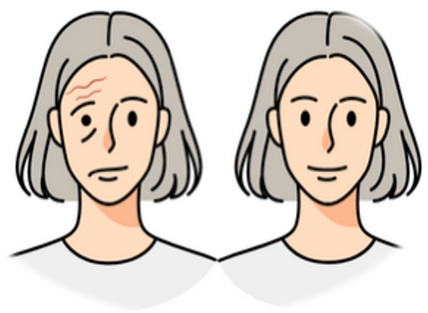
A Qualitative Study of Stroke Survivors' Experiences of Living with Facial Palsy

Havva Sumeyye Eroglu [a,d], **Audrey Bowen** [b,d], **Matthew Checketts** [c], **Claire Mitchell** [a,d]

a)Division of Psychology, Communication and Human Neuroscience, Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, The University of Manchester, UK
b) Division of Psychology and Mental Health, Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, The University of Manchester, UK
c)School of Psychology & Neuroscience, University of Glasgow, UK
d) Geoffrey Jefferson Brain Research Centre, The Manchester Academic Health Science Centre, Northern Care Alliance & University of Manchester, UK

Background and Aim



- Facial palsy after stroke is a common sequela [1].
- Facial palsy is a highly visible, appearance-affecting condition that can have a significant impact on speech, facial movements, and eating, ultimately affecting quality of life [2].
- Understanding the lived experiences of stroke survivors with facial palsy is important for improving rehabilitation outcomes.
- This study aims to explore the experiences of stroke survivors with post-stroke facial palsy, including how facial palsy affects daily life and experiences of improvement and treatment offered.

Method

Interviewed stroke survivors with facial palsy, 6 months after stroke

Audio recorded, anonymised transcript

NVivo 12 software for coding and theme development

Thematic Analysis for data analysis

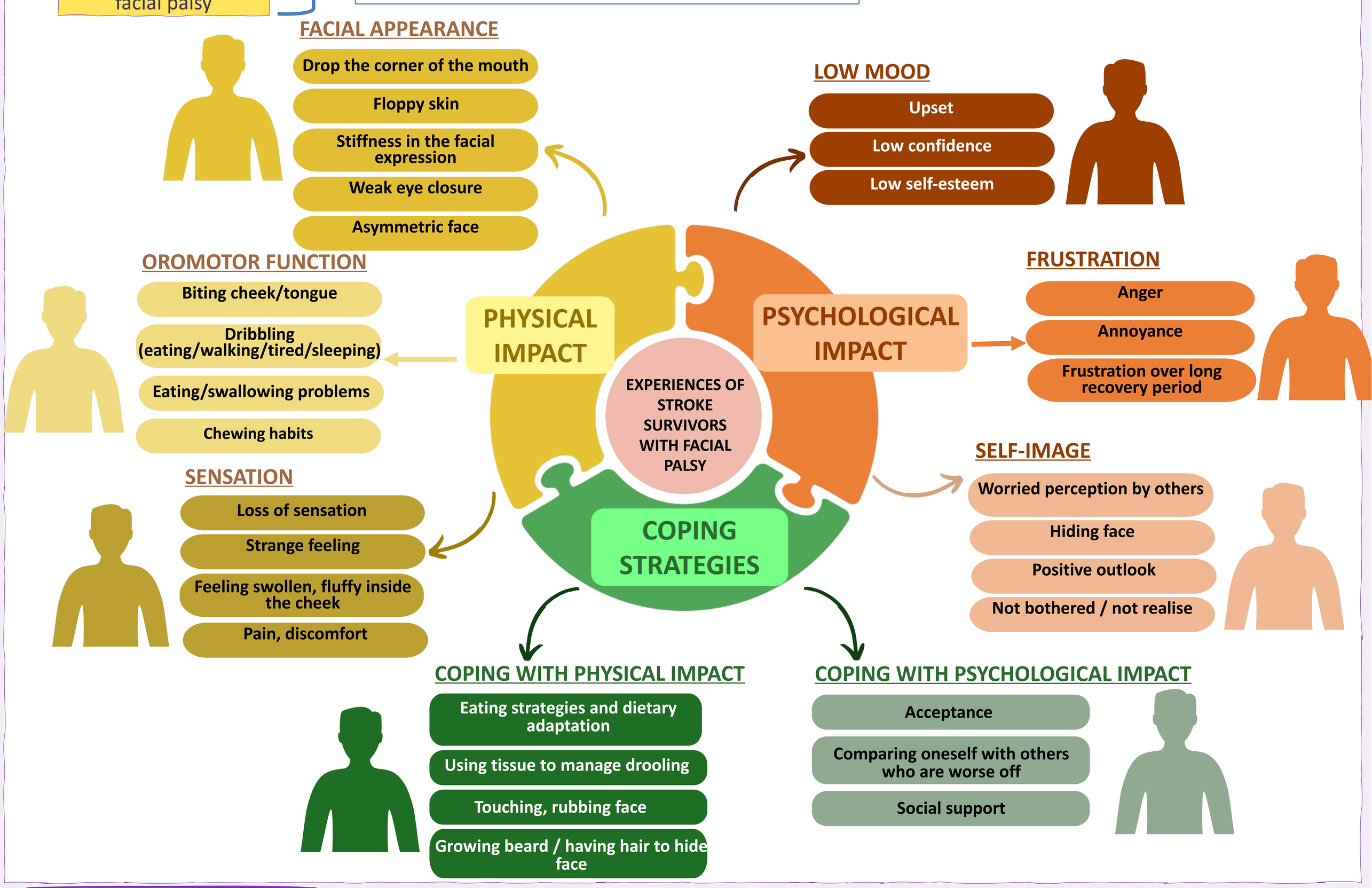
Results

14 stroke survivors with facial palsy

- 12 male – 2 female, age range 39-96 years
- Ethnicity: 13 White British – 1 Asian Pakistani
- 4 live alone – 10 with family/partner
- Employment: 10 retired - 2 self-employed – 1 full time – 1 unemployed
- Hemisphere of stroke: 8 right hemisphere – 6 left hemisphere

NIHSS on admission:
- Minor: 3 patients
- Moderate: 9 patients
- Moderate to severe: 2 patients

Facial palsy scores:
- Minor: 8 patients
- Partial: 4 patients
- Complete: 2 patients



Conclusion

- Post-stroke facial palsy has physical and psychological impacts on survivors.
- Stroke survivors appear to adopt a range of self-initiated coping strategies and often navigate their recovery with limited guidance, as facial palsy is frequently not addressed through active interventions by healthcare professionals.

havvasumeyye.eroglu@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

1. Mitchell et al. Aphasiology. 2021;35(7):950-960. 2. Konecny et al. J Rehabil Med. 2011;43(1):73-75.

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