

Fast and slow thinking in trying to make a difference

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Presentation summary

- Mixed methods research on Domestic violence help-seeking – wide range of evidence
- Fast and Slow Thinking - How people engage with evidence
- How to be effective – persuading decision-makers:
 - That this is happening
 - Why it matters
 - What to do differently (better!)
- Instrumental, Conceptual and Strategic use of research evidence

Mixed methods research

- Wider research on women's domestic violence journeys in England (Bowstead, 2015; 2019)
- Including:
 - Quantitative and mapping –140,000 journeys over 8 years from administrative data from services
 - Qualitative - creative participatory work with women in London who have relocated
- Focus here on how to use the research to change policy and practice

Making a difference

- Think of a situation where you have been able to change something in policy or practice
- What – if any – was the role of research evidence in this?

Forced Internal Displacement in the UK

- Tens of thousands of women and children are displaced around the UK every year in a process of forced internal migration
- What would convince you of this?
- What would convince politicians, policy makers and practitioners?
 - That this is happening
 - Why it matters
 - What to do differently (better!)

Quantitative data and analysis

- *DATA*

- *Admin records of accessing services*

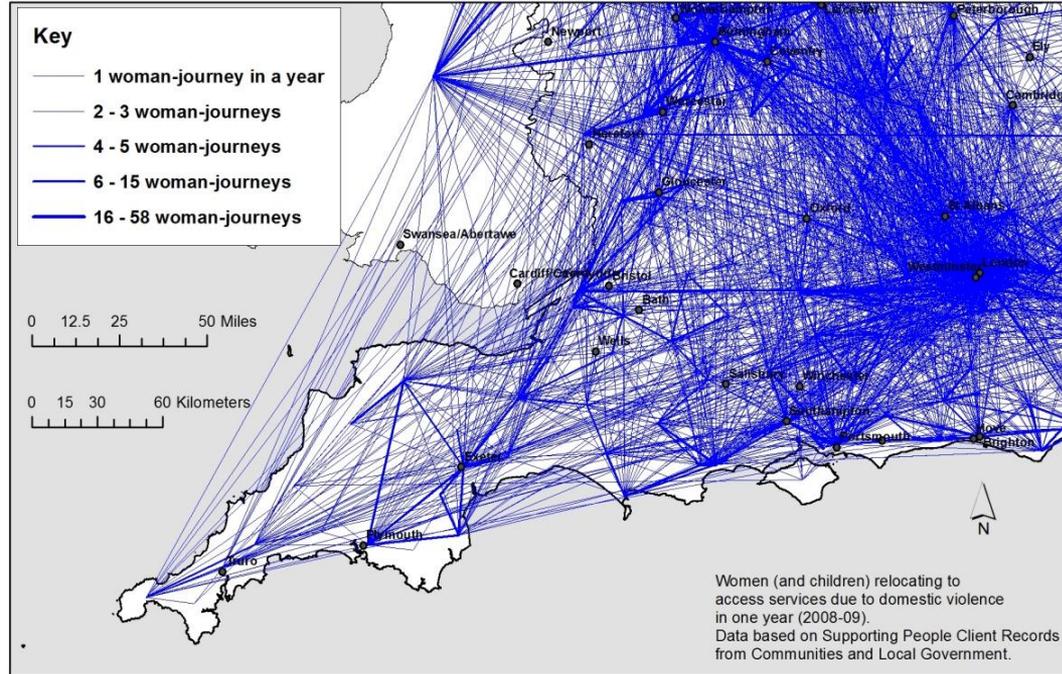
- *NUMBERS*

- *DEMOGRAPHICS*

- *96.9% female*
- *Age 15-88*
- *All ethnic origins (67.4% were White British)*
- *Over half had children with them*

- *PATTERNS*

- *Mass churn of very individualised journeys*



SW England and Wales: One year of woman-journeys between local authorities

Media interest

in numbers and scale



<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/scale-of-abuse-against-women-revealed-7637592.html>



Qualitative data

-
images by
women

Favour



Lucy



We made a
good deal of
use of our
knapsacks in
the periods we
were homeless

[Favour]

Carol





Daisy

Hope

Seeing signs of
hope in the
everyday



Amy



Sarah

There is
always a
way out!

[Amy]

Kelly





Fast and Slow Thinking

- How people engage with evidence
 - Slow thinking:– deliberate, methodical, conscious, calculating and effortful
 - maps, numbers, graphs
 - Fast thinking: quick and automatic, often driven by emotions, beliefs, stereotypes
 - quotes, images, individual stories

Kahneman, Daniel. 2012. *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Cairney, Paul. 2019. “Evidence and Policy Making.” In *What Works Now? Evidence-Informed Policy and Practice*, 21–40. Bristol: Policy Press.

Why it matters

- Can be more about ‘Fast Thinking’ - emotions, beliefs, stereotypes
- Evidence can have a role here – but also less evidence-driven:
 - pragmatism and consensus building
 - generating engagement among key stakeholders
 - telling a good consistent story
 - understanding the political/policy context
 - networks – who you know
 - Finding the Doors of Access

What to do differently

- Can be more about ‘Slow Thinking’
 - evidence of the issue – over time and place
 - Current situation
 - Examples of interventions
 - Modelling of potential futures
- But recognising that systems are often only open to change at particular points in time (eg. elections) or place (eg. scale of administrations – eg. London)
 - Taking the Windows of Opportunity - sometimes need to be fast...

Thinking about sequence and connections

SLOW TO FAST

Fast to Slow

Slow-Fast-Slow

The many routes to trying to make a difference

- Weiss, Carol H. 1979. “The Many Meanings of Research Utilization.” *Public Administration Review* 39 (5): 426–431.
- NOT just Instrumental – SLOW and LINEAR
- also Conceptual – interactive, intellectual, political and media and legal context – often FAST
- and Strategic – political and tactical – for and against change – fits pre-existing FAST-derived thinking and positions.

Carol Weiss (1979) [adapted by Boaz et al 2019 p254]

Knowledge-driven	assumes that once research has been produced it will be developed, applied and used	Instrumental
Problem-solving	assumes the direct application of research to a policy problem – research provides solutions and resolutions	
Interactive	research knowledge enters into the policy area through interactions of researchers and policy makers – part of a web of knowledge and opinion that supports decision making	Conceptual
Enlightenment	research enters the policy domain in the form of concepts and ideas (rather than findings from studies) – over time it changes the way people think about a policy issue	
Intellectual enterprise	research is embedded within a wider system and responds and adjusts to changes in the landscape of politics, media, law	
Political	research is used to support policy decisions that have already been made – research aligns with and supports a predetermined position	Strategic
Tactical	research can be used more generically for tactical purposes – to deflect attention or delay action – governments might claim that more research is needed before action can be taken	

Conclusions

- Tens of thousands of women and children a year make forced domestic violence journeys - Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the UK
- How to be effective – persuading decision-makers:
 - That this is happening/Why it matters/What to do differently (better!)

Time
Scale
Access
Opportunity

References

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Thanks

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- Map boundaries from Open Geography portal
<https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/>
- Administrative data from Supporting People Programme of housing-related support services. Department for Communities and Local Government and University of St Andrews, Centre for Housing Research (2012) *Supporting People Client Records and Outcomes, 2003/04-2010/11: Special Licence Access [computer file]*. Colchester, Essex, UK Data Archive [distributor]. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-7020-1>
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