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A 13-year follow-up study of post-traumatic stress disorder in flood victims in Huarong part of China

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The objective of the study was to estimate the chronicity rate and to identify the prognostic factors of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in flood victims. Simple cluster sampling was used to select subjects from 540 flood victims diagnosed with PTSD in our 2000 study. We ascertained chronic PTSD using the same questionnaire (PTSD Checklist-Civilian version) as our previous study, according to DSM-IV criteria. Data were collected in face-to-face interviews and analyzed using univariate analysis. A total of 76 subjects (42.0% of the selected subjects) were interviewed. The chronicity rate of PTSD was 17.1%. The current occurrences of re-experiencing, avoidance/numbing and hyper-arousal symptom groups were 82.9%, 17.1% and 51.3%, respectively. Significant prognostic factors for chronic PTSD include smoking status, alcohol use status, frequency of general collective action, and financial aid situation. Our findings indicated that PTSD can persist 13 years after flood. The occurrence of avoidance/numbing symptom cluster is the most important criterion for chronic PTSD. Social behavior characteristics, represented by frequency of general collective action, are important predictors of chronic PTSD.

Biography

Shimin Hu is a PhD candidate in the Department of Epidemiology And Health Statistics of Central South University. She is the president of the Graduate Student Union of school of Public health of Central South University.

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