**Cultural Scripts of Posttraumatic Experience among Chinese Trauma Survivors**

Background: The theory of cultural scripts of trauma sequelae constitutes the background.

Objective: This study aims to identify cultural scripts of trauma (CSTs) among Chinese trauma survivors, and to investigate the related cultural factors in forming such CSTs.

Methods: 8 focus groups with 15 trauma experts and 7 survivors were conducted in face-to-face or online semi-structured interviews. Using MAXQDA, qualitative content analysis was employed by 2 independent raters for coding.

Results: 552 fragments were coded into 8 main categories (i.e., body-related phenomena, affects, behavioral changes, worldviews, self-images, motivational changes, interpersonal consequences and growth). Among them, body-related phenomena are highly heterogeneous and most frequently mentioned. Findings indicate that Chinese trauma survivors commonly manifest physical symptoms such as headaches, gastrointestinal discomfort, and limb numbness. Emotionally, prevalent responses include fear and guilt, with guilt linking to self-depreciation. To cope with those intense emotions and negative self-perceptions, many engaged in binge eating, self-injury or even suicide attempt. Additionally, individuals often exhibit interpersonal mistrust and insecurity, with a subgroup expressing a fear of solitude and a compelling need for companionship. Notably, many experts emphasized a tendency to suppress emotions or challenges in identifying specific emotions among Chinese trauma survivors, which may contribute to the prominent physical discomfort. Such bodily responses frequently serve as primary cues, prompting them to seek medical intervention or address their well-being through traditional Chinese medicine.

Conclusions: By capturing traumatic experiences closer to the affected persons and describing CSTs among Chinese, future trauma interventions can be promoted with heightened cultural sensitivity.