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The association between elder mistreatment and perceived hopelessness among Chinese elderly in Chicago

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Elder mistreatment is recognized as a serious issue that results in harm to elder adults in the US. However, little is known about the relationship between elder mistreatment subtypes and hopelessness among elderly. The aim of this study was to assess the association between elder mistreatment and perceived hopelessness among Chinese older adult in Chicago. Data were obtained through the Population Study of Chinese Elderly in Chicago (PINE) study. Elder mistreatment was assessed by a 10-item instrument derived from the Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (H-S/EAST) and the Vulnerability to Abuse Screening Scale (VASS). Participants answered questions regarding psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, caregiver neglect, and financial exploitation. Definitional approaches for EM and its subtypes were constructed from least restrictive to most restrictive. Social support was measured using the Social Support Index (SSI). The perceived hopelessness was assessed by the modified 7-item Beck Hopelessness Scale. Logistic regression and linear regression models were used for data analysis. Our study indicates 45.03% study participants reported experiencing hopelessness. After adjusting for confounders, psychological mistreatment (OR 1.62, 95% CI 1.24-2.12) and caregiver neglect (OR 2.22, 95% CI 1.50-3.30) were significantly associated with hopelessness. The lower presence (OR 1.24, 95% CI 1.00-1.52) and severity (OR 1.32, 95% CI 1.10-1.64) of elder mistreatment were associated with hopelessness. Also, perceived social support was shown to be a protective factor for elder mistreatment patient against hopelessness (OR 0.95, 95% CI 0.93-0.98). In summary, this study illustrated elder mistreatment are significantly related to perceived hopelessness among the Chinese older adults and social support is a factor that promotes hope within the US Chinese aging population.

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