

Exploring Motives and Types of Bullying in Young Adults: Cases From China

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Received: February 26, 2021

Accepted: April 28, 2021

Online Published: May 10, 2021

doi:10.20849/aes.v6i1.894

URL: <https://doi.org/10.20849/aes.v6i1.894>

Abstract

Bullying issues occur among adolescents and young adults globally, however, it does not get enough scholarly attention in mainland China (Zhou et al., 2013). This article aims to explore the motives and types of bullying through two cases: one in a high school setting, and the other in a college/university campus in the mid-eastern area of China. Participants included 315 senior high sophomores and 265 freshmen university students. Students completed a questionnaire reporting their bullying experience as witness, victim, or/and perpetrator, as well as their definition of bullying behaviors. 258(81.90%) senior high and 239(90.18%) undergraduate participants had witnessed bullying behaviors before. While 199(63.18%) senior high and 175(66.10%) undergraduate participants reported as bullying victims. The most-reported bullying behavior was verbal bullying, most bullying incidents happened in a classroom, and were inflicted by their peers. Moreover, the researchers explored the motives behind the bullying behavior. The findings help deepen our understanding of bullying epidemics in China educational settings and have implications on preventing the problems and improving the campus climate.

Keywords: bullying, bully, social justice, Chinese adolescents, Chinese young adults, college students, China

1. Introduction

Bullying is considered a major public health issue worldwide (Nansel, Craig, Overpeck, Saluja, & Ruan, 2004). School bullying, especially assaults with some students that intentionally intimidating others physically or verbally, has reached frightening levels in mainland China. According to reports by the website of the Legal Daily, 75% of school bullying cases take place among adolescents and young adults between ages 16 to 20, with 32.5 percent among senior high school students (Zhang, 2015). Moreover, bullying is not just confined to the K-12 school settings; it is also happening at later stages of life.

This study intended to understand the manifest, causes, and consequences of bullying in China school settings where most numbers of adolescents and young adults spend time, thus the epicenter for bullying, China's education features an exam-oriented education system and pedagogy. Students in primary or secondary schools are too busy studying for Gaokao (the annual National College Entrance Exams), or being closely supervised by both parents and teachers to truly cause some issues and problems.

But in high school and universities, where students live in dorms and are far from close adult monitoring and supervision, the bullying often begins. Unlike the prevalence of cyber-bullying in western countries, bullying still often takes the traditional ways in China, which is usually upfront in your face (Kang, 2012).

The current study takes a holistic approach and defines bullying in broad terms. The researchers followed Olweus' (1994) definition to identify bullying behavior: (a) bullying is aggressive behavior or intentional "harm-doing"; (b) the behavior is carried out repeatedly and over time; (c) a perceived power imbalance exists in an interpersonal relationship. Bullying can further be classified into four main types: physical, verbal, relational (also known as social), and cyber-bullying ("Types of Bullying," n.d.). Physical bullying involves causing both short-term and long-term damage and includes body harm to and property damage of another person or group. Verbal bullying includes name-calling, repeated insults, teasing, threatening, intimidation, or verbal abuse. Relational/social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, occurs when people intentionally try to

damage others' social standing and/or cause humiliation. It may include lying and spreading rumors; encouraging others to purposefully and socially exclude someone; damaging someone's social reputation or acceptance. Generally speaking, physical, verbal, and social bullying are considered as traditional types and grouped in research on prevalence; whereas cyber-bullying via using digital technologies (which can occur overt or covert) is considered different and addressed separately (e.g., Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Perry & Blincoe, 2015). Chinese schools witnessed more of the traditional types of bullying.

The researchers intended to deepen the understanding of bullying in China through two cases: one in a high school setting, and the other in a college/university campus in the mid-eastern area of China. Though it is acknowledged that the epicenter for bullying is school and university campuses, few studies examined the bullying of students in these settings (Chapell et al., 2004; Duncan, 2010). The study intends to explore the uncharted territory guided by the following research questions:

- 1) How do Chinese young adults define "Bullying Behavior"?
- 2) What are the certain bullying behaviors experienced on a Chinese school and university campus?
- 3) Who are the bullies on campus?
- 4) Where do the bullying incidents most often happen?
- 5) What are the motivating factors behind the bullying behavior?

2. Literature Review

Bullying, especially the traditional types, has become rampant in China recently. According to the 2002 survey conducted by the psychology department of Shandong University, it is found that 14.9% of all school children have been subject to some form of bullying (Deng, 2016). Furthermore, a study published in 2012 found that 21% of middle school students reported being involved in bullying as a perpetrator, victim, or both from a survey that looked at four cities in the southern province of Guangdong. Bullying experience hampers a minor's mental and physical health and could become a life-long nightmare for some individuals (Wang, 2012).

The prevalence of school bullying in China is found to be different between gender, schools, and regions. A nationwide study conducted in 2009 which surveyed over 177,000 middle school students from 18 China mainland provinces, showed that 66.1% of boys and 48.8% of girls reported being a bullying victim (Qiao, Xing, Ji, & Zhang, 2009).

A recent national survey confirmed that bullying affects half of the school students in China (Zhao, 2017). The 21st Century Education Research Institute investigated 1,003 students from 12 schools including primary, middle, and high schools in Beijing, China. The findings showed that about 50% of students had been intentionally knocked down or bumped by peers at school. Moreover, about 6% reported that they are targeted bullying victims by bullies on a daily basis. Furthermore, mainstream school students experienced more bullying than other leading and elite schools (Han, Zhang, & Zhang, 2017). Students from low-income and low social status families are more likely to be targeted and bullied on campus.

There has been a surge on school violence and bullying in China. In 2016, the Juvenile Procuratorial Affairs Office received about 1,900 reported cases related to school bullying, with a great increase regarding middle school students ages from 14 to 18 (Zhao, 2016).

Zhao (2016) also reported that researchers at Beijing Normal University's Capital Institute for Economics of Education discovered that being bullied can have a negative influence impact on a child's overall development, such as personality and academic performance. The bullying victims often find it hard to trust others, feel a lack of confidence, and easily get anxious, resent, or depressed. These negative feelings and repel emotions soften their ability to control their emotion and life.

Han, Zhang, & Zhang (2017) analyzed the 2016 national representative self-reported survey data from K-12 schools in seven provinces of mainland China and found that 26.10% were bullying victims, 9.03% reported as bullying perpetration, and 28.90% of students witnessed bullying. Among the bullying behaviors, the top reported ones are "making fun of others", "spread a rumor", and "push or kit". They also discovered three of the school climate indicators--relation with teachers, relation with classmates, and self-perceived academic performance--were significant protective factors from being bullied, which indicate the importance of school-level intervention and building a positive school climate to prevent violence and bullying issue. Lei and Yong (2017) also stated that lacking systemic laws and regulations is the most direct reason for the high occurrence of school bullying in China.

Though traditional types of bullying dominate Chinese campuses, Cyberbullying (bullying conducted through

communication and information technology) is another issue that youth are encountering all over the world in the 21st century. Fung's (2010) study demonstrated that more cyberbullying behaviors were exhibited among school students with behaviors including teasing, name-calling, and gossiping. Emotional ventilation was regarded as the major reason for cyberbullying of students.

Lei and Yong (2017) reminded us that school bullying has the potential to lead to serious social harmfulness, resulting in a high probability of deviant behaviors, and impacting students' mental health. With drastic increasing incidents of bullying events in China, the government facing a great challenge in preventing and dealing with the issues. The Minors Protection Act (also known as the Law against Domestic Violence) is only limited to protect minors from adult bullying. However, there are barely any articles of law that handle the insulting, violent, or bullying incidents that occur between adolescents or young adults.

While a lot of people believe that bullies can only take occurs in K-12 school settings with the assumption that maturation will help grow bully behaviors out. Thus, the majority of bullying-related research focused on the K-12 population. However, the unfortunate truth is that tertiary-level bullying is also prevalent. Though we couldn't find any report on university bullying surveys in China, some studies address bullying in higher education in the West. One study surveyed 1,025 undergraduate students in an American university discovered that 24.7% of college students witnessed bullying by peers, 12.8% had seen bullying by instructors, and 9.8% reported themselves as bullying victims (Chapell et al., 2004). Moreover, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015) report indicated that about 15% of college students experienced bullying. Furthermore, a Finnish health survey discovered that bullying was more frequent at comprehensive universities than applied sciences universities, among which about 20% of the male students had experienced bullying (e.g., Kunttu & Huttunen, 2009). Sinkkonen et al. (2014) conducted research in a Finnish university and revealed that 5.2% of 2,634 participants were being victimized and 11% reported that they had witnessed bullying on campus.

In this study, we investigated the bullying issue among Chinese adolescents and young adults because of the high occurrences in this age group, and both traditional types of bullying behavior and cyberbullying. We hope to provide the groundwork for documenting the cases, understanding the nature of bullying, seeking effective ways to prevent it before happening and intervene to mitigate the negative impact after it has happened.

3. Method

3.1 Materials

Participants were required to complete a survey questionnaire about their bullying experiences on campus along with the demographic information. The questionnaire was adapted and translated from the CDC Division of Violence Prevention (Hamburger, Basile & Vivolo, 2011) and The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (Olweus, 1996). We revised the wording of some items to make them relevant to Chinese adolescent and young adult students and added some items, especially items pertaining to cyber-bullying. The questionnaire included open-ended responses, multiple-choice selections, and yes/no questions.

The questionnaire was originally written in English and then was translated into Chinese. In order to establish the comparability of the English and Chinese items, the Chinese instruments were back-translated into English by several independent translators and compared against the English version originals for equivalence of meaning. Moreover, the translated version was reviewed by seven Chinese students and faculty/teachers and confirmed in practice by piloting the study with 10 college students in China, none of whom participated in this study.

Besides the demographic information, the questionnaire has four non-associate sections that ask about participants' bullying experience with social, verbal, cyber, and physical bullying behaviors: A. Experience as a bullying witness; B. Experience as a bullying victim, C. Experience of conducting bullying behaviors; D. Definition of bullying behaviors.

There were only two differences in the questionnaire distributed to the high school and university students due to the culture. In Sections A and B, where students were asked about the places that bullying happened, a high school survey had an option of "restroom". However, in the survey for university students, it was replaced with "parking lot". High school students who stay on campus have less freedom and do more things in the restroom to avoid the teachers and advisors. They also do not have access to the parking lot, since they are not allowed to leave campus for safety reasons and the majority are not able or allowed to drive vehicles.

3.2 Participants

Participants of the study include 340 sophomore high school students and 294 freshmen college students from a city in the mid-eastern part of China. The high school is a three-year boarding school that has a strict daily

schedule that students had to follow from 6:20 am to 22:10 pm. A total of 17 classes participated in the study, with 340 questionnaires distributed. 315 (92.6%) of the participants completed and returned the questionnaire. Of the 315 participants, 223 were female, 91 were male. One did not report the gender information. The participants' age ranged from 15 to 20, with the average age being 17.19.

The college participants came from a four-year university majoring in Mechanical Design Manufacture and Automation. Twenty-nine responses were incomplete, therefore were not included in data analysis. Of the 265 participants, 20 were female, 244 were male. One did not report the gender information. Their ages ranged from 17 to 21, with the average age being 18.82 (See Table 1).

Table 1. Basic information of participants

	Average Age	Gender	
Senior High (N=315)	17.19	Female = 223	Male = 91
Undergraduate (N=265)	18.82	Female = 20	Male = 244
Total (N=580)	17.93	Female = 243	Male = 335

3.3 Ethics Approval

Prior to conducting this study, the researchers obtained ethics approval from the local university IRB office for human subjects approval. They were given a one-page hard copy of the project description, which acted as the informed consent form. Before students participated in the study, they were informed that their participation was totally voluntary and not related in any way to their grades in the class. Participants were encouraged to answer the questionnaire as accurately as possible, reflecting their own experiences regarding bullying on campus. The researcher's contact information was also provided to address any concerns related to the research. The students were provided with contact information for the university Institutional Review Board (IRB) office if they had questions about their rights as research volunteers.

3.4 Procedures

The data were collected between the year 2017 to 2018. The undergraduate participants completed the questionnaire towards the end of their freshmen year after they lived in a campus dormitory for about a year. In the high school study, the participants were sophomore students who had lived in a dorm for two years.

A student advisor (trained by the researcher for research protocols) further explained to the participants that the study they were about to partake in was designed to investigate the type and prevalence of bullying in the campus setting. After participants read through the page and with no further questions, they were then given the hard copies of the questionnaire containing the demographics and four sections about their bullying experiences at the campus. When the participants completed all of the sections on the questionnaire, the student advisor collected the questionnaires and the consent forms.

The researchers numbered all paper copies of the questionnaires and manually recorded the data into an excel sheet. Different researchers compared the paper questionnaires with digital records to confirm accuracy. Data were coded and analyzed by descriptive statistics. This paper reports a statistical summary of results mainly through percentages.

Table 2 reports the number of participants who completed the questionnaires by sections. Of the high school participants, 315 (92.65%) completed section A; 296 (87.06%) completed section B; 9 (2.64%) completed section C; and 238 (70%) completed section D. Likewise, of the university participants, 265 (90.14%) completed section A; 236 (80.27%) completed section B; 11 (3.74%) completed section C; and 196 (66.67%) completed section D. The final statistical analysis was performed based on the number of participants who completed each section respectively.

Table 2. Sample size completed each section of the survey

	Section A	Section B	Section C	Section D
Senior High	N=315	N=296	N=9	N=238
Undergraduate	N=265	N=236	N=11	N=196

Note. Section A: Experience as a bullying witness; Section B: Experience as a bullying victim; Section C: Conducting bullying behaviors; Section D: Definition of bullying behaviors.

4. Results

The statistical analysis findings are grouped into five categories based on five research questions: (1) bullying definition reported by all participants, (2) bullying behaviors reported by witnesses, victims, and bullies, (3) bullies' identities reported by victims, (4) bullying locations reported by victims, and (5) bullying motivating factors reported by victims.

4.1 Bullying Definition Reported by Chinese Young Adults

To make sure the definition of bullying is compatible in the east and west, we asked students to choose the behaviors they consider as bullying. 196 undergraduates and 238 senior high students shared their understanding of what could be considered as bullying behavior (see Figure 1). In a total of the 434 records from both senior high and undergraduate students, five bullying behaviors were selected by more than 74% of the students. 92.86% reported that "hitting, kicking, pulling hair, pushing or other behaviors that make someone feel physically uncomfortable" is bullying behavior. 78.57% reported that "spreading false rumors" is bullying behavior. 74.65% reported that "saying hurtful words or doing unpleasant things towards someone" is bullying behavior. 74.65% reported that "trying to get other students to dislike another person" is bullying behavior. 74.88% reported that "using mean and hurtful nicknames" is bullying behavior. Students also reported other behaviors that should be considered as bullyings, such as threatening others, aggressively forcing others to do things and moral kidnapping that uses moral standards to force others to conduct behaviors against their will.

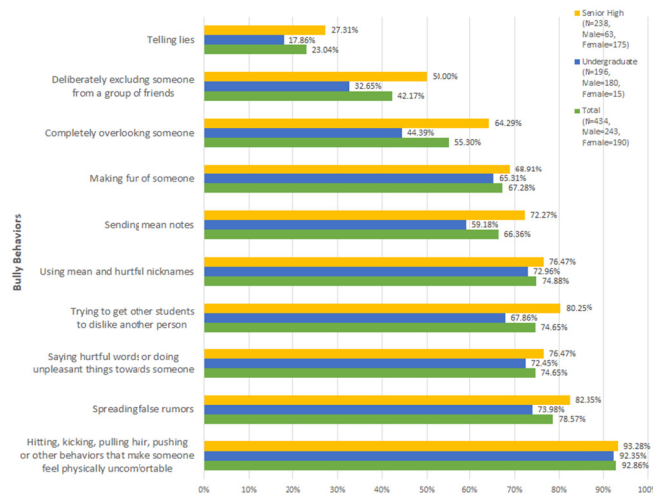


Figure 1. Chinese senior high and undergraduate students definition of bullying behaviors

4.2 Bullying Behaviors Reported by Witnesses

Regarding the bullying behaviors reported by students who witnessed certain behaviors more than once, table 3 Listed the 15 bullying behaviors categorized by four types of relational (or social), verbal, cyber, and physical. For verbal bullying, about 45.08% o high school students and 40.75% undergraduates reported that they witnessed some students making fun of others respectively; 45.08% high school students and 31.32% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students saying mean words to make fun of one respectively; 29.84% high school students and 29.06% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students criticizing or calling one's name rudely respectively; 9.52% high school students and 6.42% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students threatening to physically hurt one respectively. For relational bullying, 40.95% high school students and 34.34% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students saying negative words behind one respectively; 27.30% high school students and 19.62% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students discussing dislike one's appearance respectively; 15.24% high school students and 18.87% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students overlooking one purposefully respectively; 13.97% high school students and 9.06% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students spreading false rumors respectively. For physical bullying, 25.40% high school students and 13.96% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students hitting, kicking, pushing, or other violent behaviors; 19.37% of high school students and 10.57% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students hitting one with objects respectively; 5.71% high school students and 6.42% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students destroying one's belongings purposefully respectively. For

cyberbullying, 15.24% of high school students and 24.53% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students posting on social media that make one feel uncomfortable respectively; 7.62% of high school students and 8.30% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students sending one annoying or uncomfortable messages respectively; 2.86% of high school students and 5.66% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students posting one's privacy information online respectively; and 3.81% high school students and 3.02% undergraduates reported that they witnessed students sending messages to threaten one respectively.

Table 3. Bullying behaviors categorized by types reported by senior high and undergraduate students that witnessed more than once

Bullying Type	Detailed Bullying Behavior	Senior	Bullying Type
Verbal	Making fun of one. (拿某学生来开玩笑)	45.08%	40.75%
	Saying mean words to make fun of one. (说刻薄话取笑某学生)	45.08%	31.32%
	Criticizing or calling one's name rudely. (语气粗鲁地评论或喊叫某学生的名字)	29.84%	29.06%
	Threatening to physically hurt one. (威胁恐吓某学生将受到身体伤害)	9.52%	6.42%
Relational	Saying negative words behind one. (在某学生背后说负面的话)	40.95%	34.34%
	Discussing dislike one's appearance. (谈论不喜欢某学生外表)	27.30%	19.62%
	Overlooking one purposefully. (故意忽视某学生的存在)	15.24%	18.87%
	Spreading false rumors. (散播有关某学生不真实的谣言)	13.97%	9.06%
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing or other violence behaviors. (对某学生推、踢、打或施加其他暴力行为)	25.40%	13.96%
	Hitting one with objects. (拿东西打某学生)	19.37%	10.57%
	Destroying one's belongings purposefully. (故意破坏某学生财产)	5.71%	6.42%
Cyber	Posting on social media that makes one feel uncomfortable. (在贴吧、QQ群、微信群或其他社交网络平台上发言, 令某学生心烦或不舒服)	15.24%	24.53%
	Sending annoying or uncomfortable messages via social media. (给某学生发送令其心烦或不舒服的电子邮件、微信、QQ、短信或其他类型的信息)	7.62%	8.30%
	Posting one's privacy information online. (在网络平台上发布一些有关某学生隐私的信息)	2.86%	5.66%
	Sending messages to threat one through social media. (向某学生发电子邮件、微信、QQ、短信或其他类型的信息, 试图恐吓或勒索他们)	3.81%	3.02%

4.3 Bullying Behaviors Reported by Victims

With regard to students experienced as a bullying victim, about 40.20% of high school students and 26.27% undergraduates reported that others made fun of them respectively; 35.81% high school students and 17.37% undergraduates reported that others saying negative words behind them; and 30.41% high school students and 26.27% undergraduates reported that others said mean words to make fun of them. Furthermore, 18.58% high school students and 16.10% undergraduates reported that others criticized or called their names rudely; 14.19% high school students and 8.05% undergraduates reported that others discussed dislike their appearance; and 12.50% high school students and 9.75% undergraduates reported that they experienced hitting, kicking, pushing or other violent behaviors. Moreover, 23.31% high school students and 14.41% undergraduates reported that they were being overlooked purposefully; 12.16% high school students and 12.29% undergraduates reported that they others hit them with objects; 15.20% high school students and 11.44% undergraduates reported that they others posted on social media that make them feel uncomfortable. The results also revealed that 21.96% high

school students and 8.05% undergraduates reported that others spreading false rumors about them; 8.78% high school students and 7.63% undergraduates reported that someone threatened to physically hurt them; 7.77% high school students and 8.47% undergraduates reported that they received annoying or uncomfortable messages. In addition, 5.07% high school students and 4.24% undergraduates reported that others destroyed their belongings purposefully; 3.72% high school students and 4.24% undergraduates reported that their private information was posted online; 5.07% high school students and 2.97% undergraduates reported that they received threatening messages through social media. In general, senior high students reported a higher percentage of bullying experience compared with undergraduates. The top reported ones are verbal and relational bullying types and the latter ones are cyber and physical bullying.

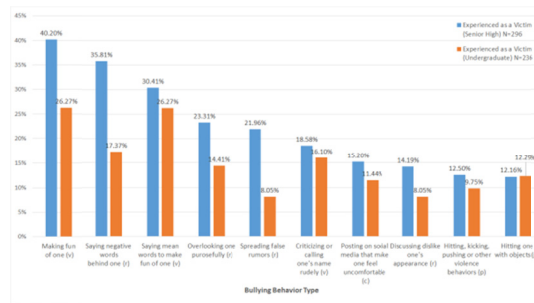


Figure 2. Top 10 bullying behaviors that senior high or undergraduate victims experienced

Note. Reported data in total includes experience as a victim once or more than once. v=verbal bullying, r=relational bullying, p=physical bullying, c=cyber bullying

4.4 Bullying Behaviors Reported by Bullies

Using self-report, we also asked students their experience as a bullying perpetrator. Only 11 undergraduates and 9 senior high students completed this part of the questionnaire. Out of those 20 students, 16 of them admitted they might bully others before. The mentioned bullying behaviors as saying hurtful words, making fun of others, threatening others, giving others nicknames, hurting others physically, and forcing others to conduct behaviors against their will. We can see that most of those are verbal bullying behaviors.

4.5 Bullies' Identities Reported by Victims

Participants who reported as bullying victims at school also indicated the identity of the bullying (see Figure 3). Of students who reported being bullied at school, 39.86% senior high and 36.44% undergraduate students reported being bullied by peers, which includes classmates, roommates, friends, or student association members. Results further showed that 11.15% of senior high and 13.98% undergraduate students reported being bullied by the older generation, such as a teacher. However, only four (1.35%) senior high and four (1.69%) undergraduate students reported being bullied by the younger generation. Additionally, 6.76% senior high and 7.77% undergraduate students reported being bullied by strangers and 7.77% senior high and 5.51% undergraduate students reported being bullied by acquaintances.

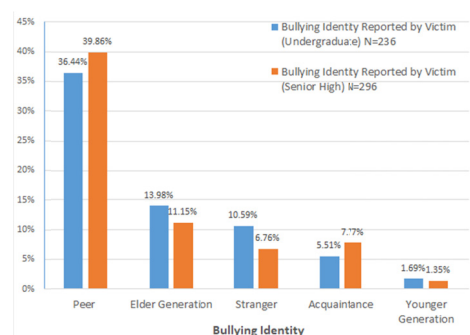


Figure 3. Bullies' identity reported by senior high or undergraduate victims

4.6 Bullying Locations Reported by Victims

This paper also reported the bullying locations reported by victims (see figure 4). For senior high students, bullying usually happened in the classroom (25.34%), dorm (15.20%), hallway (10.81%), restroom (8.11%), and on the internet (7.09%). While less than 6% of the bullying events happened on the playground (5.41%), cafeteria (3.72%), bathhouse (0.68%), or out of campus (2.36%), which would be considered as a more public location. There were similar results for undergraduate victims, which most bullying happened in the classroom (18.64%), dorm (13.98%), playground (8.90%), hallway (7.63%), and on the internet (7.20%). While less than 6% of the bullying events happened in the cafeteria (4.24%), bathhouse (1.27%), parking lot (1.69%), or out of campus (0.85%). The only difference was there were more incidents at the playground for undergraduates than senior high, which probably since undergraduate has more free and flexible time while senior high had to follow a strict schedule with limited opportunities and time to go to the playground.

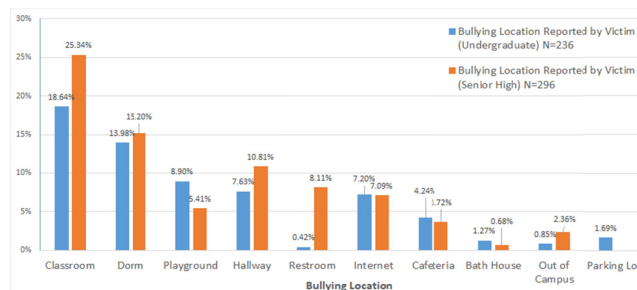


Figure 4. Bullying location reported by senior high or undergraduate victims

4.7 Bullying Motivating Factors Reported by Victims

The researchers discovered that 27.03% of senior high and 20.34% of undergraduate bullying victims believed that the reasons bullying incidents happened were because bullies didn't realize their bullying behaviors (see figure 5). Beyond that, 23.99% senior high and 22.03% undergraduate bullying victims agreed that bullies want to show their power through bullying behaviors. 21.62% of senior high and 22.88% of undergraduate bullying victims believed bullies want to get what they want or control others through bullying. While 17.57% senior high and 17.80% undergraduate bullying victims believed bullies enjoy bullying others. 6.42% senior high and 4.66% undergraduate bullying victims believed that bullying behaviors happened because bullies were encouraged or forced by friends. Only 2.36% of senior high and 5.51% undergraduate bullying victims believed the bullying incidents happened a lot, were part of the school life, and it's not a big deal.

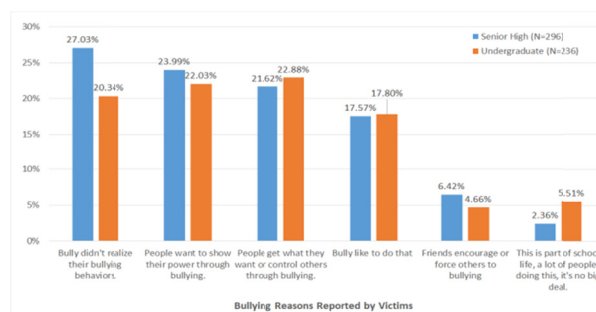


Figure 5. Reasons behind bullying behaviors reported by senior high or undergraduate victims

5. Discussion

Bullying is a serious problem for adolescent and young adult education worldwide (Lund & Ross, 2017; Wang et al., 2019). It is associated with a wide range of negative health issues, such as depression emotion, violence, and suicidal and behaviors (Klomek et al., 2010). Bullying happens in different forms, including physical, verbal, social, and cyber. The findings from this paper help broaden our understanding of bullying in Chinese senior

high and postsecondary education settings by specifying common bully identities, incident locations, different perceptions of bullying behavior, and motives behind the action in the Chinese culture.

When defining bully behavior, Chinese adolescent students don't think "Telling lies" and "Deliberately excluding someone from a group of friends" were bullying behavior. However, physical and verbal threatening such as "Hitting, kicking, pulling hair, pushing or other behaviors that make someone feel physically uncomfortable" "Saying hurtful words or doing unpleasant things towards someone", "Spreading false rumors", and "Trying to get other students to dislike another person" were defined as bullying behavior by Chinese students.

Though bullying occurred throughout the campus, interestingly, we found that bullying behaviors occur more often in public than private spaces. Participants most often indicated seeing bullying incidents in the classroom, playground, dorm, hallway, and through the Internet.

Moreover, most bullying occurred at the hands of peers, including classmates and dorm mates. When bullying happened, students tended to share it with peers rather than parents or teachers. Overall, students were more willing to report the bully experience as a witness rather than a victim.

Verbal bullying has been the most reported form of bullying behavior from both witnesses and victims, which is consistent with previous findings in adolescents (Wang et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, only 6% of students indicated that they witnessed students being threatened or bullied over email, social media, or other types of text messages and only 8% of students mentioned they found private information about some students through the Internet. It indicates that cyber-bullying is not the most significant type in China yet, which is different from the report of similar age from the US sample that approximately 37% of the students report experiencing cyberbullying in their campus life (Hinduja & Patchin, 2019).

For the motives behind the bullying behavior, the majority of students agreed that the bullying incidents happened as the bully wanted to get something or control others; or showing power and obtaining stuff from others. Another important factor of bullying incidents is the fact that the bully failed to realize their bullying behavior. This indicates that more moral and related education is needed on the school and university campuses.

6. Conclusions and Limitations

Findings in this paper help broaden our understanding of bullying in China's higher education settings by specifying common bully identities, incident locations, different perceptions of bullying behavior, and motives behind the action in the Chinese culture.

On average, the following are the top three bullying behaviors selected by participants as a part of the bully definition: "hitting, kicking, pulling hair, pushing or other behaviors that make someone feel physically uncomfortable", "spreading false rumors", "saying hurtful words or doing unpleasant things towards someone". Each of them represents physical, relational, and verbal bullying behaviors.

The top three reported Bullying Behaviors by witnesses and victims are the same ones, which are "making fun of one", "saying mean words to make fun of one", "saying negative words behind one". The first 2 are verbal and the third one is relational bullying. The participants did not share much about their experience as a bully, however, out of 20 reported data, several of them mentioned "saying hurtful words" and "making fun of others". We can conclude that in high school and university settings, the mostly happened bullying behaviors are mainly verbal and relational type as reported by witnesses, victims, and bullies.

The most-reported bully identity is peers, which is 20% more than the next identity - the elder generation. The most-reported bullying happening location is classroom and dorm. It's also noted that only about 7% of bullying happened on the internet. This also corresponding with participants' responses that they did not witness or experience much cyberbullying.

The top three motivating factors of are "bullies didn't realize their bullying behaviors", "people want to show their power through bullying", and "People get what they want or control others through bullying".

The empirical results and findings reported in this paper should be considered in light of some limitations. When students share their experience as bullying witnesses or victims, some students indicated that they have no experience with mentioned bullying behaviors but made choices about bullying identities and locations. It was possible that students did not answer the survey honestly due to self-esteem or other reasons. Or students experienced bullying behaviors that were not mentioned in the survey and they were reluctant to share more details. Another limitation concerns that some students mentioned they did not witness the bullying but heard about it through peers, and then they reported the experience as a witness. Moreover, some students even shared

their bullying behaviors out of the environment settings we asked in the survey, such as out of campus or experience when they were in junior high.

It is also noteworthy that the research presented herein remains a snapshot, which limits to represent students' perspectives at a single Chinese college of mainly male students and a senior high school of mainly female students, thus the results cannot be generated to all secondary and university students in China. Future research is expected to include a large-scale study of bullying with samples to represent both gender and cross different educational settings.

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to all the participants for participating in this study.

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