

Beyond Physical Violence: Bullying-Related Experiences and Bystander Responses among Chinese International Students

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Abstract

Bullying in higher education remains underexamined, particularly among international students. This exploratory cross-sectional survey examined perceptions of bullying, bullying-related negative experiences, bystander responses, and retrospectively reported concerns among 62 Chinese international students studying overseas. Because the behavioural items did not separately establish repetition and power imbalance for each endorsed event, the findings are interpreted as reports of bullying-related experiences rather than prevalence estimates of strictly defined bullying. Verbal aggression (41.94%) and social exclusion (40.32%) were endorsed above “never” more often than physical violence (8.06%). Direct intervention was selected by 90.32% of participants when the target was a friend, compared with 32.26% when the target was a stranger. In the same cross-sectional survey, 25.80% retrospectively recalled high pre-departure anxiety about language-based discrimination or social exclusion, whereas 4.84% reported high post-departure distress on the corresponding experience item; this contrast does not represent measured change over time. The findings highlight the salience of non-physical harm and relational closeness in bystander responses, while underscoring the need for validated measures and longitudinal research.

Keywords

Chinese International Students, Bullying-Related Experiences, Cyberbullying, Bystander Intervention, Cross-Cultural Adjustment

1. Introduction

Bullying is not confined to primary or secondary school. Research in higher edu-

cation shows that university students may experience verbal attacks, social exclusion, academic humiliation, physical intimidation, and technology-mediated harassment from peers or university personnel. Cross-national evidence also suggests that the prevalence and form of these experiences vary across cultural and institutional settings, with verbal and relational forms generally reported more often than physical aggression (Pörhölä et al., 2020; Sinkkonen et al., 2014). Cyberbullying adds a further context in which harmful material can be rapidly circulated and remain accessible beyond the original interaction (Myers & Cowie, 2017).

Conceptual precision is essential. Bullying is typically defined as intentional or harmful aggressive behaviour that is repeated over time and occurs within a power imbalance that makes it difficult for the target to defend themselves (Olweus, 1993). General interpersonal conflict, teasing or “banter”, discrimination, and isolated negative incidents may overlap with bullying, but they are not automatically equivalent to it (Buglass et al., 2021). Discriminatory language or exclusion can constitute bullying when repetition and power imbalance are present; a one-off discriminatory incident, although harmful, should be described separately unless those criteria are established.

Chinese international students may encounter these behaviours while also navigating language demands, unfamiliar institutional systems, and cross-cultural adjustment. Studies of international students have documented perceived discrimination and acculturative stress as significant features of overseas study (Lee & Rice, 2007; Wei et al., 2007). These pressures may affect how ambiguous social interactions are interpreted, whether students seek institutional support, and how confident they feel intervening when another person is targeted.

Bystanders are central to the social dynamics of bullying. Peer-group research indicates that witnesses may defend the target, reinforce the aggressor, remain passive, or withdraw, and that intervention depends on moral evaluation, perceived efficacy, social identity, relational closeness, and anticipated risk (Levine et al., 2005; Salmivalli, 2010; Thornberg & Jungert, 2013). For international students, uncertainty about language, local norms, and available support may add further barriers to direct intervention.

The present study therefore used an exploratory cross-sectional questionnaire to examine how Chinese international students judge bullying-related behaviours, report personal and witnessed negative experiences, describe bystander responses, and retrospectively compare pre-departure concerns with distress reported after studying abroad. The study focused on descriptive patterns rather than hypothesis testing. Particular attention was given to non-physical experiences and to whether bystander responses differed according to whether the target was a friend or a stranger.

2. Method

2.1. Design and Operational Scope

The study used a cross-sectional online survey with retrospective items. Tradi-

tional bullying was defined for the study as repeated aggressive behaviour involving a power imbalance and including verbal, physical, or relational forms (Olweus, 1993; Pörhölä et al., 2020). Cyberbullying referred to harmful behaviour enacted through digital platforms, including malicious comments, unauthorised disclosure of personal information, identity exposure, rumours, or manipulated images (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Wang et al., 2009).

However, the questionnaire asked participants to rate the frequency of specific behaviours without separately asking whether each endorsed behaviour was repeated or involved a power imbalance. Accordingly, item-level endorsements cannot establish that every reported incident met the full operational definition of bullying. Throughout the revised manuscript, these outcomes are therefore described as bullying-related negative experiences or specific aggressive behaviours. Items concerning discrimination, cultural conflict, or isolated incidents are interpreted as adjacent experiences unless the defining bullying criteria can be established.

2.2. Participants and Recruitment

Data were collected between July 20 and August 1, 2025. Eligibility criteria were self-identification as a Chinese international student, current enrolment in an educational programme outside China, and completion of the online questionnaire. The survey link was circulated through WeChat groups for Chinese international students and through the researcher's personal network, producing a convenience sample with elements of snowball recruitment.

A total of 64 submissions were received. Two responses failed the prespecified attention-check item (Question 12, which instructed respondents to select option C) and were therefore excluded, leaving 62 valid responses for the final descriptive analyses.

Among the 62 included participants, 80.65% identified as female, 16.13% as male, and 3.23% preferred not to disclose their gender. Mean age was 19.60 years. Participants were studying in the United Kingdom (59.68%), the United States (37.10%), Australia or Canada (combined 3.22%). Time abroad was reported as 0 - 6 months by 0%, 6 - 18 months by 53.23%, 18 months - 4 years by 12.90%, and more than 4 years by 33.87%. Most participants were undergraduates (90.32%); 3.23% were high-school students and 6.45% were master's students.

2.3. Questionnaire Development and Measures

A self-developed questionnaire was prepared in Chinese. Item content was informed by established definitions and commonly assessed forms of school, university, and cyberbullying, including verbal aggression, relational exclusion, physical aggression, privacy violations, and technology-mediated harassment (Olweus, 1993; Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Pörhölä et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2009). An English version was prepared for reporting in **Appendix** but was not separately administered.

No formal pilot study, cognitive interviewing, back-translation procedure, or psychometric validation was conducted before data collection. The English version should therefore be treated as a close reporting translation rather than evidence of established Chinese-English measurement equivalence. Most grouped items represented distinct behaviour categories rather than a single reflective scale, so internal-consistency coefficients were not calculated. The questionnaire and findings should be regarded as exploratory, and future work should use validated instruments or formally evaluate reliability and construct validity.

The instrument contained ten sections: study information; demographics; perceived tolerability of offline and online behaviours; personal experiences; witnessed behaviours and bystander responses; self-reported involvement in aggressive behaviour; perceived causes and contexts; intended responses to victimisation; retrospective pre-departure anxiety and post-departure distress; and a single-item self-evaluation of coping with interpersonal conflict. Likert-type items generally used five response options, with anchors tailored to tolerability, frequency, anxiety, distress, or agreement. Several questions allowed multiple responses, and one attention-check item was included.

2.4. Procedure, Consent, and Ethics

The questionnaire was administered through Wenjuanxing. The opening page stated that participation was voluntary and anonymous and that responses would be used only for academic research. Participants indicated consent by choosing to proceed with and submit the questionnaire. No names, student numbers, email addresses, or other direct identifiers were requested in the questionnaire.

The study received ethical approval before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and the first survey page explained the study purpose, the anonymous nature of participation, the intended academic use of the data, and participants' right not to proceed. Consent was indicated by voluntarily continuing to and completing the questionnaire. No names, contact details, or directly identifying information were collected.

2.5. Data Analysis

All analyses were descriptive. Frequencies and percentages were calculated using the 62 included participants as the denominator unless otherwise stated. For five-point frequency items, "experienced at least once" or "endorsed above never" was calculated as the combined proportion selecting 2 (rarely) through 5 (very often). For the bystander items, "intervened" referred specifically to selecting the option "intervene or protect the victim". Because Questions 14 - 16 and 19 - 22 allowed multiple responses, each percentage represents the proportion of all 62 participants selecting that option and percentages can sum to more than 100%. For anxiety and distress items, "high" was defined as a rating of 4 or 5. Percentages were rounded to two decimal places. No inferential tests, effect sizes, confidence intervals, or causal models were used.

3. Results

3.1. Sample Characteristics and Perceptions

The sample was predominantly female (80.65%), undergraduate (90.32%), and studying in the United Kingdom or United States (96.78% combined). Most participants rated their English proficiency as good or very good (83.87%). Physical violence was judged most consistently intolerable. Verbal aggression and social exclusion were also generally viewed as unacceptable, although responses were more varied. Among online behaviours, unauthorised disclosure of personal information was judged most intolerable, followed by online verbal abuse.

3.2. Personal Bullying-Related Experiences

Table 1. Frequency of self-reported offline bullying-related experiences.

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal aggression (e.g., insults, sarcasm, or discriminatory language)	58.06%	25.81%	8.06%	3.23%	4.84%
Social exclusion (e.g., isolation, exclusion, or spreading rumours)	59.68%	24.19%	9.68%	1.61%	4.84%
Physical violence (e.g., pushing, kicking, or other physical assaults)	91.94%	3.23%	0%	0%	4.84%

Note. 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often. N = 62.

As shown in **Table 1**, 41.94% of participants endorsed verbal aggression above “never”, 40.32% endorsed social exclusion above “never”, and 8.06% endorsed physical violence above “never”. These percentages describe exposure to the listed behaviours and should not be interpreted as strict bullying prevalence because repetition and power imbalance were not assessed for each event.

The physical-violence distribution was non-monotonic: 57 participants (91.94%) selected “never”, 2 (3.23%) selected “rarely”, and 3 (4.84%) selected “very often”; no participant selected “sometimes” or “often”. These values were checked against the original data and confirmed. Given the small cell counts, the pattern is reported transparently without further interpretation.

Table 2. Frequency of self-reported online negative experiences associated with bullying.

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Malicious comments or attacks	82.26%	11.29%	4.84%	1.61%	0%
Public disclosure of personal information	98.39%	0%	1.61%	0%	0%
Doxxing or identity exposure	95.16%	3.23%	0%	0%	1.61%
Spreading rumours	88.71%	4.84%	3.23%	3.23%	0%
Photos being edited or mocked	88.71%	4.84%	3.23%	3.23%	0%

Note. 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often. N = 62.

Online negative experiences were less frequently endorsed than offline behaviours. Depending on the item, between 1.61% and 17.74% selected a response

above “never” in **Table 2**, compared with 8.06% to 41.94% for the offline items in **Table 1**.

3.3. Witnessed Behaviours and Bystander Responses

Table 3. Frequency of witnessed bullying-related behaviours.

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal aggression (e.g., insults, sarcasm, or discriminatory language)	51.61%	25.81%	14.52%	6.45%	1.61%
Social exclusion (e.g., isolation, exclusion, or spreading rumours)	43.55%	22.58%	29.03%	1.61%	3.23%
Physical violence (e.g., pushing, kicking, or other physical assaults)	91.94%	8.06%	0%	0%	0%
Online violence (e.g., exposure of private information or mocked photos)	74.19%	16.13%	6.45%	3.23%	0%

Note. 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = very often. N = 62.

Table 3 shows that 48.39% had witnessed verbal aggression above “never”, 56.45% had witnessed social exclusion, 8.06% had witnessed physical violence, and 25.81% had witnessed online harm. On the multiple-response bystander items, 32.26% selected direct intervention when the target was a stranger, whereas 90.32% selected direct intervention when the target was a friend. These percentages indicate selection of the direct-intervention option and do not imply that it was participants’ only response.

When asked which factors might explain remaining silent, 69.35% selected fear of escalating the conflict. Other frequently selected reasons were uncertainty about whether the behaviour constituted bullying (38.71%), belief that intervention would be ineffective (37.10%), fear of becoming a target (37.10%), and uncertainty about how to intervene (37.10%). The least selected reasons were believing the target was partly responsible (6.45%) and regarding the incident as irrelevant or private (16.13%).

For Question 17, 88.71% reported never having been encouraged or pressured to participate in bullying, 6.45% reported being encouraged but refusing, 0% reported participating, and 4.84% selected “not sure/cannot recall”.

3.4. Perceived Contexts, Self-Reported Behaviour, and Intended Responses

Because the context question allowed multiple responses, percentages exceed 100% when combined. Incidents were reported as occurring between Chinese international students by 80.65% of participants, between Chinese international students and host-country students by 61.29%, and in other contexts by 12.90%.

Although most participants selected “never” for self-reported aggressive behaviours, 24.19% endorsed verbal teasing or exclusion above “never”, 30.65% endorsed privately spreading negative rumours or comments above “never”, and 8.06% endorsed posting negative comments or images online above “never”. The most frequently selected perceived causes were conformity pressures (62.90%) and jealousy (61.29%).

If personally targeted, participants most often selected reporting to the institution (72.58%), seeking support from friends (67.74%), and fighting back (64.52%). For another person being targeted, 58.06% selected reporting to the institution and 48.39% selected encouraging help-seeking or social support. Because these were multiple-response hypothetical items, the percentages represent endorsed intentions rather than observed behaviour.

3.5. Retrospective Pre-Departure Anxiety and Post-Departure Distress

Table 4. Retrospectively reported pre-departure anxiety about potential challenges.

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Language-based discrimination or social exclusion	29.03%	25.81%	19.35%	17.74%	8.06%
Inability to access effective help or support	30.65%	24.19%	24.19%	12.90%	8.06%
Conflicts arising from cultural differences	33.87%	24.19%	19.35%	12.90%	9.68%

Note. 1 = not at all anxious, 2 = slightly anxious, 3 = moderately anxious, 4 = very anxious, 5 = extremely anxious. N = 62.

Table 5. Reported post-departure distress about corresponding experiences.

Item	1	2	3	4	5
Language-based discrimination or social exclusion	50.00%	27.42%	17.74%	3.23%	1.61%
Inability to access effective help or support	46.77%	16.13%	24.19%	11.29%	1.61%
Conflicts arising from cultural differences	45.16%	25.81%	17.74%	9.68%	1.61%

Note. 1 = not at all distressed, 2 = slightly distressed, 3 = moderately distressed, 4 = very distressed, 5 = extremely distressed. N = 62.

In **Table 4**, 25.80% retrospectively rated their pre-departure anxiety about language-based discrimination or social exclusion as high (ratings 4 - 5). In **Table 5**, 4.84% rated their post-departure distress about the corresponding experience as high. These values were obtained from different prompts administered at the same time: one asked participants to recall anxiety before departure, while the other asked about distress after studying abroad. They therefore represent a retrospective cross-sectional contrast, not longitudinally measured change.

For the single coping item, 51.61% agreed or strongly agreed that they could manage interpersonal conflict effectively, 43.55% selected neutral, and 4.84% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

4. Discussion

This exploratory study examined Chinese international students' perceptions of bullying, reports of specific negative experiences, bystander responses, and retrospective concerns related to overseas study. Three descriptive patterns were most prominent: non-physical behaviours were endorsed more often than physical violence, direct bystander intervention was much more frequently selected for friends than for strangers, and retrospectively recalled pre-departure anxiety was

higher than post-departure distress on corresponding items.

The first pattern is consistent with higher-education research showing that verbal and relational forms are more commonly reported than physical aggression (Pörhölä et al., 2020; Sinkkonen et al., 2014). However, the present percentages should not be compared directly with formal bullying prevalence estimates such as those in meta-analytic research (Modecki et al., 2014). The current behaviour-frequency items did not establish repetition and power imbalance for every endorsed event, and some items could capture conflict, discrimination, teasing, or a one-off incident. The revised terminology therefore distinguishes bullying-related experiences from strictly defined bullying.

Participants strongly condemned physical violence, yet verbal aggression and social exclusion were reported more often. This gap between normative judgement and reported exposure suggests that indirect or socially embedded harm may be easier to normalise, reinterpret as humour, or treat as ordinary interpersonal difficulty. Research on the boundary between banter and bullying similarly shows that intent, repetition, relational context, perceived harm, and power affect whether behaviour is labelled as bullying (Buglass et al., 2021).

Relational closeness was strongly associated with endorsed bystander action: direct intervention was selected by 90.32% for a friend and 32.26% for a stranger. This descriptive difference accords with bystander models emphasising shared identity, perceived responsibility, emotional connection, and anticipated risk (Darley & Latané, 1968; Levine et al., 2005). The reported barriers—especially fear of escalation, uncertainty about whether an event counted as bullying, and uncertainty about how to intervene—suggest that moral disapproval alone may be insufficient when students lack confidence, situational clarity, or institutional support.

The anxiety findings require particularly cautious interpretation. Participants retrospectively recalled more high pre-departure anxiety than they reported high post-departure distress, but the study did not follow the same construct prospectively over time. The two questions used different temporal frames and response labels, and both were answered in one survey after participants had gone abroad. The contrast may reflect differences between anticipated threat and experienced distress, recall bias, item wording, selective exposure, coping, or other unmeasured factors. It cannot establish that studying abroad caused anxiety to decline or that participants adapted because of time overseas.

Several limitations constrain the conclusions. The sample was small, predominantly female and undergraduate, and recruited through convenience and personal networks. Self-report and retrospective recall may introduce social-desirability and memory biases. The self-developed questionnaire was not formally piloted, back-translated, or psychometrically validated. The behavioural items did not consistently measure repetition, power imbalance, perpetrator identity, or incident timing, limiting classification of strict bullying. Multiple-response items also describe endorsed options rather than mutually exclusive behaviours. Finally,

the cross-sectional descriptive design does not permit causal inference or measured change over time.

Despite these limitations, the findings point to practical areas for international education settings. Anti-bullying communication should explicitly include relational exclusion, discriminatory language, privacy violations, and online harm rather than focusing only on physical violence. Bystander programmes may be more useful when they provide concrete low-risk actions—such as checking in with the target, documenting an incident, seeking staff support, or intervening collectively—rather than relying on general appeals to courage. Future research should recruit larger and more diverse samples, use validated measures that assess repetition and power imbalance, distinguish bullying from discrimination and conflict, and employ prospective longitudinal or mixed-method designs.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix A¹

Survey on Experiences and Attitudes Toward School Bullying Among Chinese International Students (Chinese Version):

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qmpogAVnierjmx0BAEXSjxtsA518ZGs6VkqCAstDtU0/edit?usp=sharing>

Appendix B

Survey on Experiences and Attitudes Toward School Bullying Among Chinese International Students (English Version)

The English version below was prepared for reporting and was not separately administered. It follows the Chinese questionnaire closely; no formal back-translation or Chinese-English equivalence testing was conducted.

Section 1. Instructions

This questionnaire aims to investigate Chinese international students' experiences of school bullying, related attitudes, and psychological expectations during overseas study. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. All responses will be used solely for academic research. One attention-check item is included to ensure data quality.

Section 2. Demographic Information

1. Gender

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Preferred not to say

2. Age (in years): _____

3. Current country of study

- ☐ United Kingdom
☐ United States
☐ Australia
☐ Canada
☐ Other (please specify): _____

4. Length of time studying abroad

- ☐ 0 - 6 months
☐ 6 - 18 months
☐ 18 months - 2 years
☐ 2 - 4 years
☐ 4 years or more

¹Appendix note. The original questionnaire wording is reproduced below without retrospective alteration. As explained in the Method, several items assess specific negative or discriminatory experiences without independently establishing repetition and power imbalance; therefore, the instrument captures bullying-related experiences more broadly than strictly defined bullying.

5. Current level of study

- ☐ Middle school
☐ High school
☐ Undergraduate
☐ Master's
☐ Doctoral

6. Are you an only child?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

7. How would you rate your overall English proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)?

- ☐ Very poor
☐ Poor
☐ Average
☐ Good
☐ Very good

Section 3. Subjective Judgements of Bullying Behaviours

8. What are your views on the following types of offline bullying?

(1 = *Tolerable*, 5 = *Completely intolerable*)

Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal aggression (e.g., insults, sarcasm, discriminatory language)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social exclusion (e.g., isolation, spreading rumours, deliberate ignoring)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical violence (e.g., pushing, kicking, intentional physical harm)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. What are your views on the following types of online bullying?

(1 = *Tolerable*, 5 = *Completely intolerable*)

Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
Sarcastic or mocking comments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online parody images or memes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Impersonation without consent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public disclosure of personal offline information without consent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online verbal abuse	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Indifference, exclusion, or social isolation on social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4. Personal Experiences of Bullying

10. Have you personally experienced any of the following situations in over-

seas educational settings? (1 = *Never*, 5 = *Very often*)

Situation	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal aggression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social exclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical violence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Have you experienced any of the following online situations as a result of school bullying?

Situation	1	2	3	4	5
Malicious comments or attacks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public disclosure of personal information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Doxxing or identity exposure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spreading rumours	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Photos being edited or mocked	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Attention-check item: Please select **C**

☐ A

☐ B

☐ C

☐ D

Section 5. Witnessed Bullying and Bystander Responses

13. Have you witnessed others experiencing the following behaviours in overseas educational settings?

(1 = *Never*, 5 = *Very often*)

Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal aggression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social exclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical violence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online violence (e.g., exposure of private information or mocked photos)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. When witnessing bullying involving a **stranger**, what is your typical response? (Multiple responses allowed)

☐ Intervene or protect the victim

☐ Observe without intervening

☐ Feel afraid to intervene

☐ Consider it irrelevant to oneself

☐ Comfort the victim privately afterward

☐ Talk to others about the incident

☐ Other (please specify): _____

15. When witnessing bullying involving a **friend**, what is your typical response?
(Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Intervene or protect the victim
- ☐ Observe without intervening
- ☐ Feel afraid to intervene
- ☐ Consider it irrelevant to oneself
- ☐ Comfort the victim privately afterward
- ☐ Talk to others about the incident
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

16. If you chose to remain silent when witnessing bullying, the reasons may include: (Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Belief that intervention would be ineffective
- ☐ Fear of escalating the situation
- ☐ Fear of becoming a target
- ☐ Desire to avoid standing out
- ☐ Uncertainty about whether the behaviour constituted bullying
- ☐ Belief that the victim was partially responsible
- ☐ Uncertainty about how to intervene
- ☐ Perception that it was a private matter
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

17. Have you ever been encouraged or pressured to participate in bullying another student?

- ☐ Yes, and I participated
- ☐ Yes, but I did not participate
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure/cannot recall

Section 6. Self-Reported Bullying Behaviours (Anonymous)

18. Have you ever engaged in the following behaviours?

(1 = *Never*, 5 = *Very often*)

Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal teasing or exclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Posting negative comments or images online	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deliberately excluding others from group activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spreading negative rumours privately	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 7. Perceived Causes and Contexts of Bullying

19. What do you think are the causes of school bullying? (Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Lack of understanding or awareness

- ☐ Curiosity or imitation
- ☐ Retaliation or displaced anger
- ☐ Desire for group conformity
- ☐ Jealousy (e.g., appearance, academic performance)
- ☐ Perceived moral justification
- ☐ Victim characteristics (e.g., appearance, academic ability, cultural background)
- ☐ No specific reason
- ☐ I have not experienced or observed such situations

20. In which contexts do these incidents mainly occur? (Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Between Chinese international students
- ☐ Between Chinese international students and host-country students
- ☐ Other

Section 8. Attitudes and Responses to Bullying

21. If you personally experienced school bullying, what would you be most likely to do? (Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Seek help from friends
- ☐ Endure it silently
- ☐ Fight back
- ☐ Report to the institution
- ☐ It would not affect me
- ☐ Other

22. If someone else experienced school bullying, what would you be most likely to do? (Multiple responses allowed)

- ☐ Seek help from friends
- ☐ Endure it silently
- ☐ Fight back
- ☐ Report to the institution
- ☐ It would not affect me
- ☐ Other

Section 9. Anxiety Before and After Studying Abroad

23. Before studying abroad, how anxious were you about the following potential issues?

(1 = *Not at all anxious*, 5 = *Extremely anxious*)

Concern	1	2	3	4	5
Language-based discrimination or social exclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inability to access effective help	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conflicts arising from cultural differences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. After studying abroad, to what extent did you feel distressed by the following experiences?

(1 = *Not at all distressed*, 5 = *Extremely distressed*)

Experience	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling isolated or discriminated against due to language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inability to access effective support when facing difficulties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Experiencing conflicts due to cultural differences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 10. Individual Differences

25. "I can easily cope with situations involving interpersonal conflict."

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree