





A Video Experience Design for Emotional Bullying in Public High School in Guangzhou, China

Zhen Liu¹  and Zihao Zhuang² 

- ¹ School of Design, South China University of Technology, Guangzhou 510006, People's Republic of China
² Guangzhou No.2 Middle School, Guangzhou 510040, People's Republic of China

Abstract. In Guangzhou, a region boasts advanced economy and education, campus bullying still exist. One hidden form of campus bullying is emotional bullying, which is difficult to identify and take precaution against. First, both the victims and the victimizers may not be aware of the occurrence of bullying. Second, the hazard of emotional bullying tends to be underestimated, which is responsible for the overall absence of care and protection for the victims. To address these issues, this paper adopts video experience to educate students, teachers, and parents on the existence and hazards of emotional bullying is necessitated. The design process of the video includes the following steps. First, questionnaires were designed to investigate emotional bullying in high school class within Guangzhou, and volunteers who participated the questionnaire were selected to share experience. Second, interviews with the volunteers were conducted to acquire information and story of emotional bullying on campus, which was used to develop video content. Third, based on information obtained from the interviews, a video was created about high school campus bullying. The results show that 1) there are no significant gender difference in emotional bullying; 2) the most common forms of emotional bullying are rumor and isolation; and 3) the most people are not sure whether they should seek help in the face of emotional bullying.

Keywords: Public high school · Emotional bullying · Rumor · Internet · Questionnaire · Video experience · Interview

1 Introduction

In western countries, campus bullying has received due attention. As time passes, researches into campus bullying have been developed and expanded [1]. Recently, Chinese Ministry of Education has launched a campaign to tackle campus bully [2]. Primarily, campus bully takes two different forms, namely, psyche means and physical means [3, 4]. Physical bullying has received more public attention and research efforts, yet verbal or emotional bullying has only been recognized recently. As China undergoes dramatic modernization, the campus bullying in high schools in China's first-tier and second-tier cities has been characterized by verbal and emotional bullying, instead

of physical bullying. According to an investigation by China Youth Research Center among 5864 students across ten provinces in China, 36.3% students were once beaten, 22.5% were extorted, and the rest 41.2% were verbally abused, which in particular, compared with male students, female students are more inclined to become victims to campus bullying [5]. These were statistics collected a decade ago. It could be presumed that in modernized societies, non-physical campus bullying accounts for more proportion. In the best schools in first-tier cities, such as Guangzhou, physical abuse is largely absent, but it does not follow that campus bully does not exist. It has only become more indiscernible. As such, what this paper seeks to probe into is one of non-physical form of bullying, i.e. emotional bullying. Emotional bullying is a type of bullying that causes mental and emotional damage [6, 7]. It is usually characterized by malicious rumors, ganging up on others, ignoring, provoking, belittling and humiliating [8]. It is predictable that emotional bullying is more common and concealed, thereby hampering preventative efforts. The reasons for this are manifold. First, emotional bullying may not involve physical confrontation or even verbal attack, which causes it to be indiscernible. For example, “ignoring one on purpose”, one form of emotional bullying, is difficult to identify. Because it does not involve physical bully or verbal abusing, the guilt of the victimizer tends to be smaller. Second, the harm caused by emotional bullying has not been recognized by parents or teachers. Consequently, there is a lack of adequate and timely protection for victims. Thirdly, emotional bullying becomes more difficult to prevent when it is helped by the Internet. Compared with bullying in the classroom or campus, online emotional bullying is far more undetectable. Considering these, this paper aims to investigate emotional bullying, including its circumstances and the usual forms it takes, in one class in a public high school in Guangzhou, China. The information from this investigation and its analysis contribute to an anti-bullying video that help with educating the public about emotional bullying’s existence and harm.

2 Research Method

2.1 Questionnaire

This paper designed an online questionnaire to investigate the emotional bullying in one Grade 12 class in Guangzhou Number Two High School, a first-rate public high school in Guangzhou, China. As is shown in Fig. 1, the content of this questionnaire constitutes two parts. The first part investigates the common forms of emotional bullying. The questions were based on information from Wikipedia and a website of anti-bullying on campus [9]. The second part seeks to gain insight into students’ attitude towards and opinions of emotional bullying, thereby helping to select several interviewees. The questionnaire was designed with the help of Questionnaire Star and delivered to participants through WeChat. The data were analyzed via SPSS.

2.2 Interview

After finishing the questionnaire, four participants expressed interest in providing more details. In order to elicit more details from them, the questions in the following interview

Questionnaire about Emotional Bullying in High School

The purpose of this questionnaire is to research the situation of emotional bullying in our class. The answer will be submitted anonymously. Thank you for filling the questionnaire.

***1. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Others

***2. Which kind of emotional bullying have you or your friends experienced? 【请选择1-4项】**

- Saying hurtful things
- Spreading malicious rumors about people
- Getting certain people "gang up" on others
- Others _____

***3. Which kind of hurtful words have you or your friends heard? 【请选择1-4项】**

- Commenting negatively on someone's looks or body
- Directing foul language
- Taunting on someone's interest or dreams
- Others _____

***4. Which kind of rumors have you heard? 【请选择1-4项】**

- About relationship status
- About classmates committing wrongdoings
- About family condition
- Others _____

***5. Which kind of package bullying have you or your friends experienced? 【请选择1-4项】**

- Denying one in any kind of conversation
- Refusing to be teamed up with one
- Not informing a student of any group activity
- Others _____

***6. Do you think it is necessary to seek help from adults in the face of emotional bullying?**

- Total unnecessary
- Unnecessary
- Unknown
- Necessary
- Total necessary

7. How can high school students fight against emotional bullying?

Fig. 1. Questionnaire on emotional bullying in one class in Guangzhou Number Two High School.

with them were designed based on the analysis of the results from the questionnaire. The face-to-face interviews with them provided real cases of emotional bullying. The essay adopts a content analysis approach to analyze the information from the interview.

2.3 Video Production

Based on the results of questionnaire and interview, a video has been produced in line with story board. After video shooting, the material was edited and placed for the emphasis of the interview results.

3 Results

3.1 Results of Questionnaire

Gender Distribution in This Investigation. As is shown in Fig. 2, of the 34 responses to this questionnaire, near three fifth of responses were from female participants, whereas two fifth of responses were from male participants.



Fig. 2. Gender distribution in this investigation.

Types of Emotionally Bullying Witnessed or Experienced (in Contrast to Physical Bullying). As indicated in Fig. 3, approximately four fifths of participants experienced or witnessed emotional bullying in the form of “belittling” or “saying hurtful things”. Over three quarters of participants experienced or witnessed malicious rumors being spread. Over two thirds of participants experienced or witnessed “ganging up” on others. From these statistics, it could be concluded that spreading rumors, belittling, and ganging up on others are common forms of emotional bullying, among which rumors and belittling are the most prevalent forms.

Negative Comments Witnessed or Experienced by Participants. As shown in Fig. 4, over two thirds of participants have experienced or witnessed emotional abuse in the form of commenting negatively on someone’s appearance or body. Nearly three fifths of participants have experienced or witnessed taunting on someone’s interest or dreams. Over half of participants have experienced or witnessed foul language or profanity directed at the victim. Based on these statistics, it could be inferred that attacking one’s appearance is the most frequent form of verbal emotional abuse. Other forms, including taunting or foul language directed at the victim, are also common.

Rumors. As shown in Fig. 5, statistics indicate that an overwhelming majority (94.12%) of participants have heard rumors about relationship status. Roughly two third of participants have heard rumors about classmates committing wrongdoings. Over two fifths of participants have heard rumors regarding family conditions. These statistics support the conclusion that rumors about relationship are the most frequent, far more than any other types of rumors.

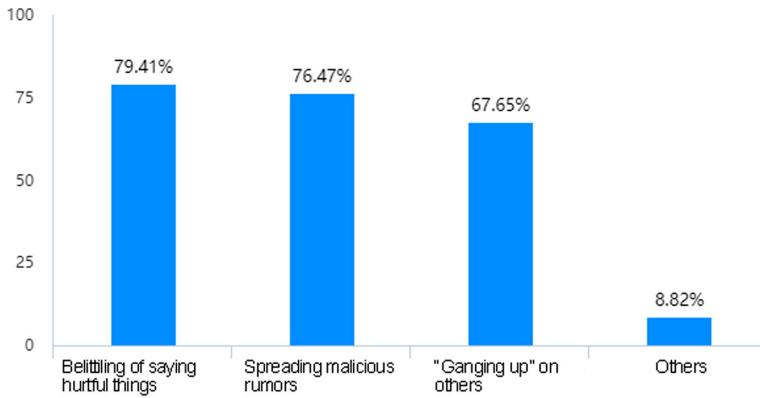


Fig. 3. Types of emotional bullying witnessed or experienced by participants.

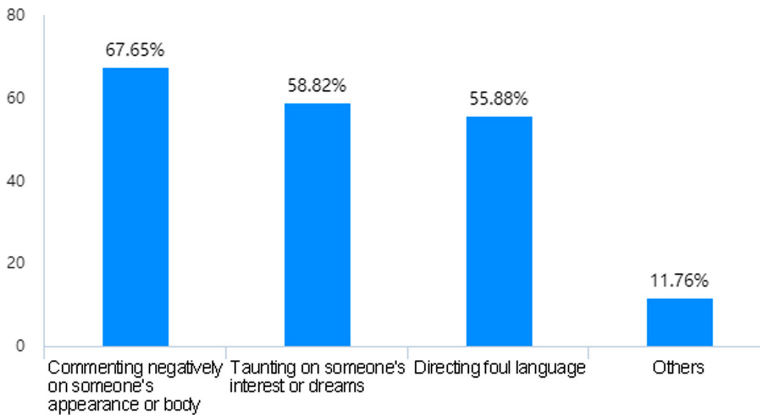


Fig. 4. Occasions of saying hurtful things that participants have witnessed or experienced.

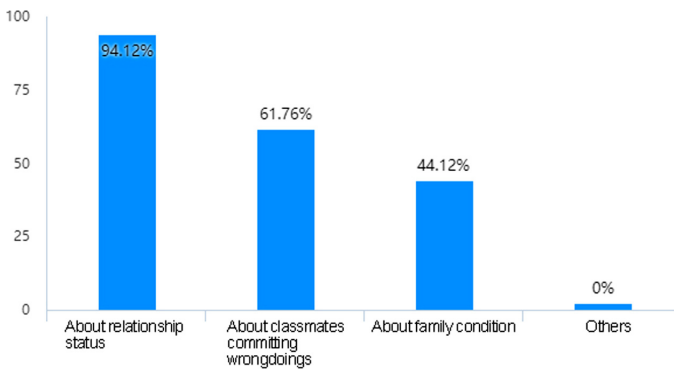


Fig. 5. Campus rumors that participants have heard.

Package Bullying That Participants Have Witnessed or Experienced. As shown in Fig. 6, a majority of participants (70.59%) have suffered or heard about package bullying or isolation in the form of denying one in any kind of conversation. Over two thirds of participants suffered or experienced such package bullying during which a student is refused to be teamed up with. Over a fifth of participants experienced or heard of isolation by not informing a student of any group activity. These statistics indicate that the two common types of package bullying are denying one in a conversation and refusing to team up with a student.

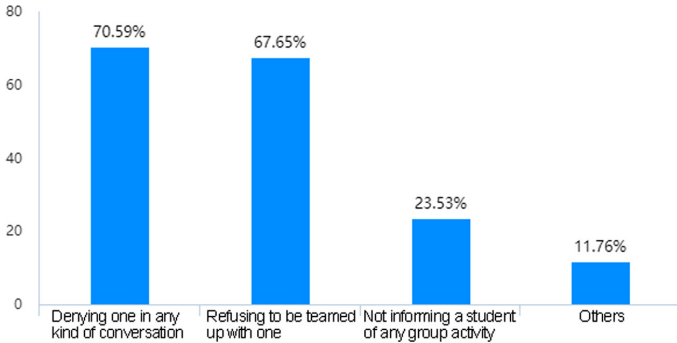


Fig. 6. Package bullying that participants have heard or experienced.

Seeking Help from Adults for Emotional Bullying. As shown in Fig. 7, approximately half of the participants are not sure whether they should seek help from adults. Over a fifth of them believe that they should turn to adults for help. Nearly a fifth of the participants strongly believe that it is necessary to ask help from adults. Nearly a tenth of them regard it unnecessary for students to seek help from adults. Few participants (2.94%) consider it completely unnecessary to turn to adults for emotional bullying. It can be concluded that most participants are unsure whether they should seek help from adults. Also, a larger proportion of participants believe that help from adults is necessary.

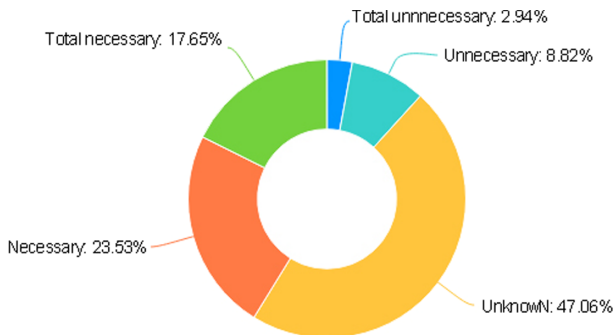


Fig. 7. Participants' choices on whether they should seek help from adults.

Participants’ Advice about How to Fight Against Emotional Bullying. There are eighteen suggestions from the open question. Four suggestions are concerned with seeking help from adults. Another four pieces of advice are about asking help from friends. Three suggestions regard school regulation and law as solutions. The rest four suggestions are irrelevant.

Summary of the Questionnaire Results. According to the T-test, as shown in Table 1, no significant difference is found between male participants’ responses and female participants’ responses. In addition, the statistics suggest that the commonest form of emotional abuse is belittling or saying hurtful things and spreading malicious rumors. The words used to abuse someone mostly are negative comments on someone’s looks, clothes, and body; rumors are mostly about relationship. What is also worth remembering is that most students are unsure whether they should seek help from adults in the face of emotional abuse. These conclusions will be useful references for designing plots of the video.

Table 1. T-test result of the correlation between gender and questionnaire response.

Answer	Male V.S. female
Saying hurtful things	P = 0.171 > 0.05
Spreading malicious rumors about people	P = 0.736 > 0.05
Getting certain people “gang up” on others	P = 0.736 > 0.05
Commenting negatively on someone’s looks or body	P = 0.704 > 0.05
Directing foul language	P = 0.134 > 0.05
Taunting	P = 0.601 > 0.05
About relationship between boys and girls	P = 0.235 > 0.05
About bad things classmate did	P = 0.655 > 0.05
About family background of classmates	P = 0.212 > 0.05
Ignoring someone on purpose	P = 0.112 > 0.05
Not willing to group with someone	P = 0.736 > 0.05
Not informing someone to participate in group activities	P = 0.171 > 0.05

3.2 Interview Results

Four participants of the questionnaire agreed to have a subsequent interview. As is shown in Table 2, they provided detailed accounts of cases of emotional abuse according to the questions in the questionnaire.

To analyze the information from the interview, this paper adopts content analysis to analyze. Regarding verbal abuse, the analysis suggests that such abuse comes not only from students but also teachers. The emotional abuse done by teachers may be long overlooked, so a story was designed in which a teacher humiliates a student verbally. In responses about rumors, the most detailed answers can be found. This suggests

Table 2. Interviewee responses to questions on real cases of emotional bullying.

Question	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3	Interviewee 4
<p>Have you ever been attacked by negative comments on your appearance? If not, is there anyone you know who has been attacked in this way? What was the scenario? What was the cause?</p>	<p>Yes. They called me squirrel, because I have big front teeth. They called me this in different scenarios. For instance, when they see me in a corridor, they call me squirrel. Though I've complained many times, they insist on calling me in this way.</p>	<p>No. But I believe this happens a lot around us, though I cannot recall any specific instances.</p>	<p>There is an overweighted boy in our class. He is over 100 kilograms. It is said that gene problem causes him to have this problem. When we were shooting a photo on graduation ceremony, no classmates wanted to stand beside him. They sneered and shoved, taunting that it was too crowded. Though these comments were not directed towards the boy, he must have suffered.</p>	<p>There was a boy in our class not as tall as everyone else. He is 162 cm in height probably. So, some male students like to call him little man or dwarf. He looked very upset but kept silent.</p>
<p>Have you ever experienced vicious personal attack? What was the scenario? What was the cause?</p>	<p>Yes. When I made mistakes playing video games with my friends, some would curse me, saying that I was good for nothing. This hurt a lot. Their vicious attack may be attributed to their over excitement</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>Yes. But it was not my classmates but my physics teacher and English teacher. My GPA was among the worst in the class. The headteacher said that I was hopeless and that he would</p>	<p>No.</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

	<p>during the game. Also, it was because on the Internet, people show less constraints on what they say.</p>	<p>leave me alone. He said that I could do anything as long as I did not disrupt other students. Physics teacher added that I was a loser. I felt so angry and upset that I would not forgive them for a lifetime.</p>		
<p>Have you ever been mocked for your dream or hobby? If not, do you know anyone who has such experience? What was the scenario? What was the cause?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Is there any rumor about your relationship? If not, do you know anyone who has such experience? What is the rumor? Why does it spread?</p>	<p>There is no rumor about me, but I've heard many about my friends. Interestingly, there are often contradictory rumors around. For instance, one moment I heard that they broke up. The very next moment, I heard rumor that they were back together. Perhaps, these rumors cause troubles for them; but for us,</p>	<p>I once had a crush on a girl from neighboring class, so I started to learn more about her. This was when I found out that there were many rumors about her. Rumor had it that she had a crush on a senior student from the Model Airplane Society; another rumor claimed that she had been in rela-</p>	<p>I have a male bestie from neighboring class and hang out with him a lot. So, my classmates assume that we are lovers. No matter how I explain to them that we are not lovers, they simply ignore my explanation. Perhaps it is because they do not believe true friendship between opposite genders.</p>	<p>I have a friend who ends up in a relationship with someone she does not like because of rumors. They are in the same class. The boy courted her first, but while she had not said yes, he spread rumors around that they were already in a relationship. Later on, with him constantly courting her with other</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

	<p>some rumors are interesting topics of conversations.</p>	<p>relationship with many students from our school; another rumor spread that she had a boyfriend from outside the school. The reason for all these rumors about her may be attributable to her popularity.</p>	<p>classmates, she agreed under pressure. He deliberately spread the rumor to push her to accept him.</p>	
<p>Is there any rumor of a wrongdoing that you actually never commit? If not, do you know any such rumors of others? What is the rumor exactly? Why does it spread?</p>	<p>Such rumors are common in dorms. They are usually about "misbehaviors" like forgetting to turn down the light, steal someone else's shampoo, or forget to flush the toilet. There are two reasons. First, it starts with someone who has terrible memory. Second, the rumor is invented to avoid being punished.</p>	<p>There is a rumor in our school that a student sneaked into the Ladies and took photos. It is certain that someone spotted him with a cell-phone that night near the Ladies but there is no evidence that he has committed that misbehavior. But online, people claim that he is a habitual "criminal" and humiliate him online. Many "busybodies" even deliberately shout out his names to humiliate him offline.</p>	<p>My friend's boyfriend has depression and now is absent from school for treatment at home. She is very attentive to her boyfriend, but rumor has it that my friend caused this boy to become depressed. This rumor hurt her to such an extent that she severed ties with many of the rumor spreaders.</p>	<p>When my dormmates lambast a girl they do not like, they tend to find fault with everything. Whatever the girl has done, they exaggerate, distort, and maliciously question the motive. They fabricate many rumors of this girl doing terrible things. When I ask them for evidence, they replied very ambiguously.</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

<p>Is there any rumor about your family? If not, do you know any such rumor about your classmates? What is it? Why does it spread?</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>There is a rumor about a girl who many people believe to be coquettish and pretentious. The rumor is that her parents have cerebral palsy. The reason for this rumor is that everyone thinks she is bizarre and thus finds a reason to explain her bizarreness. Or perhaps the rumor is intended to humiliate her.</p>	<p>Rumor has it that the father of one of my friends has been sent to jail. I am not sure about the authenticity of this rumor.</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Have you been excluded or ignored intentionally? If not, do you know anyone who has such experience? What is the scenario? What is the cause?</p>	<p>There is one classmate who everyone else refuse to talk with. It is because he is extremely annoying. In a self-study class when everyone is supposed to be silently studying, he likes to sing and disrupts us. Also, he likes to quarrel with our teacher during the class, thereby interrupting the class. This is why we dislike him.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>One girl in our class likes to ask questions to which the answer seems obvious, for instance, how to draw a certain function. In grade 3, these questions are easy and basic. But this girl asks these simple questions relentlessly and never seem to figure them out. So eventually, we are not willing to answer her questions.</p>	<p>No.</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

<p>Have you been excluded from group activity or been denied in any form of social events? If not, do you know anyone who has such experience? What is the scenario? What is the cause?</p>	<p>There is an overweight boy in our class. No one wants to share a desk with him, because he takes up too much room, and he talks loudly.</p>	<p>No.</p>	<p>There is one classmate that she likes to turn to (who sits behind her). Eventually, the boy wrote on a piece of paper these words: I am not available.</p>	<p>One girl in our class is a loner. She seems to have no friend. She has strange hobbies and talk in a really weird way. She is not ugly looking. I am not sure she is excluded, but for sure, few want to be in a group with her.</p>
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Note: The texts in green color are words intended to hurt; the texts in blue are contents of specific rumors; the texts in yellow are about social exclusion.

that rumors may be the commonest form of emotional abuse. The rumors listed in the responses are widely spread in grade 12, which indicates that it is representative. Hence, based on this information, a further two stories were designed. One story is about a rumor of relationship, and the other is about rumors of wrongdoing. Also, the interview suggests that the spread of rumors often involves the impact of Internet, which causes large-scale of spreading. This would also be reflected in the story. From responses about social exclusion, the commonest form is to exclude any activity with a certain student. Thus, based on this, another story was designed in which no one wants to sit with a specific student.

3.3 Video Production

Story Board. Based on the responses from the interview and questionnaire result, a story board consisting of six short stories has been drawn for helping with shooting a video. The first story, as shown in Fig. 8, is about exclusion on campus. The inspiration is

derived from a personal experience shared in the interview. The protagonist sits at the desk quietly reading a book, yet two girls passing by wears an expression that indicates strong aversion. They refuse to sit beside the protagonist. Though the whole process is silent, it causes damage to the protagonist's self-esteem. The second story, as shown in Fig. 9, is about rumor on relationship. The male protagonist walks out from the classroom with the female protagonist. This is noticed by their classmate, who then takes a photo of them walking together and upload it online, which lead their circle to believe that they are in a relationship. The third story, as shown in Fig. 10, is also about rumor. It is a rumor of one student's misbehavior. The inspiration is derived from a true incident in the high school. The secondary lead is memorizing English vocabulary near the bathroom. It is then rumored that he sneaked into the Ladies and take photos. The fourth story, as shown in Fig. 11, is a continuation of the second story. The female protagonist learns the rumor and gossip spreading online. This upsets her. The fifth story, as shown in Fig. 12, is the continuation of the second and third story. The male protagonist is dining at the cafeteria when he hears girls gossiping about his romance with the female protagonist and the secret shooting by the secondary lead. As the protagonist of the rumor, he is embarrassed but pretends that he has not heard about the rumor and goes on dining. The sixth story, as shown in Fig. 13, is about hurting someone with negative comments. Unlike other emotional bullying, this is committed by teachers instead of students. The teacher is scolding the protagonist with humiliating words because of his poor performance in exams and rumors about his romance with another students. This agonizes him.



Fig. 8. The 1st scene of story board when the protagonist is excluded.



Fig. 9. The 2nd scene of story board of being sneaked and taken a photo without permission.



Fig. 10. The 3rd scene of story board the secondary lead memorizing vocabulary.

Video Production. Based on above story board, video Scenes, as shown in Fig. 14, were shot and edited. The finished video is uploaded on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/asWhra bLKsk>.) The video with its slogan, as shown in Fig. 15, has been shown for the high school class where questionnaire and interviews have been conducted.



Fig. 11. The 4th scene of story board the female protagonist being upset.



Fig. 12. The 5th scene of story board male protagonist being gossiped about.



Fig. 13. The 6th scene of story board the male protagonist being humiliated by a teacher.



Fig. 14. Scenes from the video.

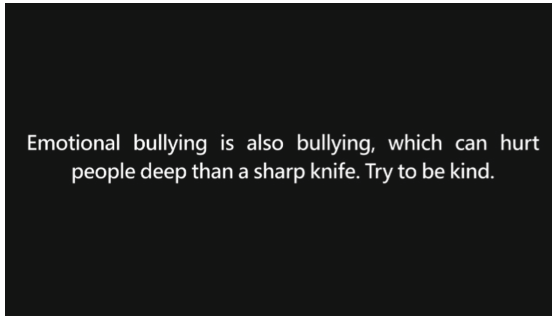


Fig. 15. Slogan for this anti-emotional bullying video.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

This investigation concludes that emotional bullying is far more prevalent than participants assumed. It sheds light on its forms and characteristics, which may contribute to future preventive efforts. The statistics and conclusion based on the questionnaire will be important reference for future research. The questionnaire and anti-emotional bullying video have made positive influence, at least, on high school class, making students realize that emotional bullying exists. Predictably, they will pay more attention to such incidents in their life and avoid becoming the victimizer in the future. Though it is conducted within a class, it helps shed light on the essence of emotional bullying. The investigation serves as an exploration into the status of emotional bullying, so the relatively small sample size will not influence the production of the video. The video content is mostly based on the interview. This research into emotional bullying can be continued in a university campus in a foreign country in the future, and conduct comparison analysis across different races in order to obtain more generalized conclusion.

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