



INTIMATE ATTITUDES, PRACTICES AND KNOWLEDGES

Chinese-speaking international students in Australia



**Intimage attitudes, practices and knowledges:
Chinese-speaking international students in Australia**

Fran Martin, Can Qin, Caitlin Douglass, Megan Lim and Carol El-Hayek
May 2019

School of Culture and Communication
The University of Melbourne 3010
Australia
The Burnet Institute
85 Commercial Road
Melbourne 3004
Australia

This project was partially funded by the Australian Research Council

Suggested citation:

Martin F, Qin C, Douglass C, Lim M, El-Hayek C. 2019. Intimate attitudes, knowledges and practices: Chinese-speaking international students in Australia, The University of Melbourne and The Burnet Institute, Melbourne, Australia.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	03
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	04
BACKGROUND	06
METHODS	07
1. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	08
2. SEXUAL ATTITUDES	09
3. SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS AND EXPERIENCES	12
4. SEX EDUCATION, SEXUAL KNOWLEDGE, AND SEXUAL HEALTH	20
5. ATTITUDES TOWARD GENDER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE	26
6. INTERNET AND PORNOGRAPHY USE	28
CONCLUSION	31

List of Tables

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics by gender	08
Table 2: Acceptability of sexual attitude statements by gender	10
Table 3: Reasons for pre-marital sex and living with a partner by gender	11
Table 4: Disclosure of information by gender	11
Table 5: Sexual attraction and partners by gender	14
Table 6: Sexual and dating behaviours since arriving in Australia	15
Table 7: Lifetime experiences of sexual behaviours	16
Table 8: Sexual behaviours in the past 12 months by gender	17
Table 9: Condom and other contraception use in the past 12 months by gender	18
Table 10: Sexual activity in the past 12 months by gender and gender of partners	18
Table 11: Pressured or forced sexual activity by gender	19
Table 12: Payment for sexual services	19
Table 13: Sex education by gender	21
Table 14: STI knowledge by gender	22
Table 15: Information seeking for sexual health issues by gender	23
Table 16: Help-seeking for sexual health issues by gender	24
Table 17: Health service use in Australia by gender	25
Table 18: Targeted health information by gender	25
Table 19: Responses to gender statements by gender	27
Table 20: Internet use by platform and frequency	29
Table 21: Pornography use	30

Acknowledgements

The research that underlies this report was enabled by many people and organisations throughout Australia. We express our thanks and appreciation to the group of Chinese students who helped us test the survey and offered their valuable feedback on aspects of its design, especially Yinzong Xiao. Many thanks, too, to those who helped with the graphic design of the beautiful call for respondents, especially Fiona X. Li and Akiko Peng.

We very much appreciate all of the Chinese student groups Australia-wide and others who promoted the call for participants. These include Chinese Association of Professionals and Scholars (CAPS), University of Melbourne Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA), the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology CSSA, University of Tasmania CSSA, University of New South Wales CSSA, NewEastwest Partners100, Study Melbourne, the Australia China Youth Association, DatingLab, and various Chinese media companies, such as Oursteps and Welif. Special thanks also to Lauren, Michael Liu, Erin Chew, Bridie Allen, Angela Lehmann, and Angela Yao. Without their tireless efforts, we could never have achieved the response rate we did.

We are grateful for the financial support of the Australian Research Council, which supported this project as part of Fran Martin's Future Fellowship research (FT140100222), and for the Burnet Institute's provision of in-kind support.

Finally, we thank all the participants who dedicated their time, effort and thought to completing the survey and giving us such valuable insights into their experiences. We hope this project will form the basis for responses by Australian governments and universities to better support Chinese-speaking international students' needs.



Executive Summary

In 2018, University of Melbourne and Burnet Institute conducted the survey *Intimate attitudes, practices and knowledges: Chinese-speaking international students in Australia*. This study aimed to generate data on Chinese international students' sexual experiences in order to inform sexual health service provision in Australia. We provide this summary report as a resource and reference for future work in this area.

The survey was open for nine weeks and completed by 723 Chinese-speaking international students. Participants were aged 16 years and over, self-identified as Chinese-speaking international students, and were studying across Australia in high schools, universities, language schools, foundation studies courses, and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sectors. The majority (96%) of participants were from the mainland of the People's Republic of China, and almost half (47%) had been in Australia for less than a year. The median age of participants was 22 years and most identified as female (69%).

Sexual attitudes

- Respondents had broadly liberal sexual attitudes, with high acceptance of premarital sex and living together outside marriage.
- Most male participants hold females to a more conservative sexual standard than themselves, especially in relation to multiple sexual partners and casual sex.
- A majority of respondents perceived that males and females bringing condoms on dates was acceptable (74% for women bringing condoms and 72% for men bringing condoms).

Sexual experiences and behaviours

- Over half of respondents had engaged in genital touching and/or other forms of sexual activity in their lifetime (56%).
- On average, participants were 19 years old the first time they had vaginal or anal intercourse.
- The largest proportion of sexually active respondents reported one sexual partner in their lifetime (50% for vaginal intercourse).
- A majority of respondents reported no sexual partners in Australia (74%).
- Of those who did have sexual partners in Australia, a majority were of the same ethnicity and nationality as the respondents themselves (74%).
- A large minority of respondents reported a change in their sexual and dating behaviours since arriving in Australia (20%), especially increases in sexual activity and engaging in sexual behaviours for the first time.
- Rates of consistent condom use with regular and casual partners were high (59% reported always using condoms with a regular partner, and 58% with casual partners).
- During participants' most recent experience of vaginal intercourse, the most common forms of contraception were condoms (79%) and withdrawal (23%).
- 8% of females and 3% of males reported experiencing forced or pressured sexual activity.
- A small percentage of males reported they had paid for sexual services in Australia (9%).



Sex education, knowledge, and health

- Approximately one in three respondents had not received any sex education in high school (31%).
- Content of sex education varied based on location. Human reproduction and HIV/ AIDS were emphasised more in sex education participants had received overseas; while how to use a condom, preventing sexually transmissible infections (STIs), sexual consent and sexual harrassment were emphasised more in Australia.
- On average, participants obtained low scores on our STI knowledge quiz; for example, only 6% knew that many STIs can be easily treated with antibiotics.
- Almost half of participants had visited a doctor or other health service in Australia (47%); however, very few of these had discussed sexual health with an Australian health professional (21%).
- The majority of participants stated that they would use Chinese-language internet sources for general information on sex and relationships (81%); however, over 75% would seek information from an Australian health provider if they thought they had contracted an STI or experienced an unplanned pregnancy.
- Among participants who had ever had penetrative sex, most reported they had never had an STI test in Australia (13%).
- Half of participants thought they would benefit from more tailored information for international students about sexual health, and 61% thought they would benefit from more tailored information about the Australian healthcare system.

Attitudes toward gender and sexual violence

- In general, respondents disagreed with sexist statements; however, there was a gendered divide in opinions.
- A greater proportion of female than male respondents disagreed with sexist statements in most instances.

Internet and online pornography use

- Chinese-language online platforms were used far more frequently than English-language platforms.
- A majority of respondents had viewed online pornography, though a higher proportion of males (84%) than females (66%) had done so.
- Participants first saw online pornography by accident at a median age of 13 years and intentionally at 15 years.
- Males first saw online pornography at a younger age than females (12 years compared to 14 years), and viewed it more regularly and frequently.
- Participants most commonly preferred pornography featuring Japanese porn actors (54%).
- Most participants had never sent or received a sexually explicit image of themselves or another person (77%).



Background

Students from the People’s Republic of China and other Chinese-speaking regions account for over 30% of Australia’s total international students annually and constitute a significant youth population, with well over 200,000 such students studying across all educational sectors in 2018.¹

The overall wellbeing of international students, as with most migrant populations, is challenged in the context of limited health literacy, poor access to health services, and social stresses as a result of living abroad. In addition, being a young person is linked internationally to increased sexual health risk as a result of sexual experimentation, heightened vulnerability to sexual coercion, and a range of other age-related factors.²

In Australia, international students suffer poor sexual health outcomes, including higher than average rates of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).³ Despite this, little data have been available to-date on the experiences and needs of international students in relation to their sexual health while they are living in Australia.

This study aimed to generate data on Chinese international students’ sexual health to inform service and information resource provision in Australia. We provide this summary report as a resource and reference for future work in this area.

¹ Australian Government, Department of Education and Training, 2019, “International Student Data Annual 2018 (Infographic),” <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/International-Student-Data/Documents/MONTHLY%20SUMMARIES/2018/Dec%202018%20MonthlyInfographic.pdf>.

² Arora, Shilpa Khanna, Dheeraj Shah, Sanjay Chaturvedi and Piyush Gupta. “Defining and Measuring Vulnerability in Young People.” *Indian Journal of Community Medicine* 2015;40(3):193–197. doi:10.4103/0970-0218.158868.

³ Poljski, Carolyn. 2011. *On Your Own: Sexual and reproductive health of female international students in Australia*. Multi-Cultural Centre for Women’s Health: Melbourne.

Methods

Between March and May 2018, the University of Melbourne and Burnet Institute conducted the *Intimate attitudes, practices and knowledges* survey. The study was cross-sectional and developed to capture data on the sexual behaviours, knowledge, attitudes, internet use and health service use of Chinese International students.

The survey was created partly based on items included in Burnet Institute's annual *Sex, Drugs, & Rock'n'Roll* (SDRR) survey which captures sexual health information from young Australians.⁴ Similar questions were used to enable some comparison between the two studies and to gain the benefit of robust and effective questions that have been developed and used in the annual Burnet study over many years. Additional questions were added to the *Intimate attitudes, practices and knowledges* survey to address specific knowledge gaps in relation to Chinese international students. The survey was developed in English and translated by author Qin into standard modern written Chinese. Four Chinese international students pilot tested the survey and provided feedback on layout, wording and cultural sensitivities, and the survey was refined accordingly. The final version of the survey included questions on: demographics; sexual attitudes; sexual behaviours and experiences; sex education, sexual knowledge, and sexual health; attitudes to gender and sexual violence; and internet and pornography use.

The survey was launched on 6th March 2018 and closed on 6th May 2018. Participants were eligible to complete the 20-minute anonymous survey if they were aged 16 years and over, an international student in Australia, and able to complete the

survey in Chinese. They were asked to confirm that they met these criteria before beginning the survey. The survey was promoted by the authors and their contacts in the Chinese student community, including Chinese university student groups and through WeChat, a smartphone app developed in China and currently popular among Chinese international students in Australia. Participants completed the online survey in Chinese through the secure web-based application REDCap hosted at the Burnet Institute.⁵ Upon completion, participants were directed to a separate REDCap page where they could enter the draw to win one of four \$100 vouchers. The University of Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee approved the study (1749805).

Data management, analysis and presentation
Participants self-reported their responses into REDCap. Data were downloaded and analysed in Stata version 15 (StataCorp. 2017. Stata Statistical Software: Release 15. College Station, TX: StataCorp LLC). Email addresses of participants who entered the prize draw were downloaded into a separate file to ensure responses and email addresses were not linked. Over 1,000 people answered at least one question in the survey. The data in this report includes those 723 participants who answered the majority of questions in the first and second sections of the survey. For categorical variables, we present the frequency and percentage of each response. For continuous variables, we report the mean or median. All variables are presented by gender. One participant identified as non-binary; their responses are not included in this report to prevent potential identification. Responses that were conflicting have been coded to missing. Missing responses have been excluded from percentage calculations.

⁴ Douglass, Caitlin H., Cassandra J. C. Wright, Angela C. Davis and Megan S. C. Lim, "Correlates of in-person and technology-facilitated sexual harassment from an online survey among young Australians," *Sexual Health* 15(4) 2018: 361-365.

⁵ Harris, P. A., et al. (2009). "Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) - A metadata-driven methodology and workflow process for providing translational research informatics support." *Journal of Biomedical Informatics* 42(2): 377-381.

1

Socio-demographic characteristics

In section one, participants answered questions about their socio-demographic characteristics including year of birth, gender, current education level and length of time spent in Australia (Table 1).

Over two thirds of participants identified as female and 31% as male. Most participants (96%) were from the mainland of the People's Republic of China. Among these participants, most were from second-tier (42%) or first-tier cities (33%). Over a third of

participants were enrolled in undergraduate degrees (34%) and 20% in coursework Masters degrees. Most respondents had been in Australia for under four years, and almost half (47%) had been in Australia for 12 months or less. A majority of respondents lived in rental accommodation. Over half of participants (57%) reported they were single and not sexually active and over a third (35%) reported they were in a relationship.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics by gender

Characteristic	Males (n=221) n(%)	Females (n=502) n(%)	Total (n=723) n(%)
Hometown			
First tier ⁶ mainland city	63 (28.5)	172 (34.3)	235 (32.5)
Second tier mainland city	90 (40.7)	210 (41.8)	300 (41.5)
Third tier mainland city	32 (14.5)	54 (10.8)	86 (11.9)
Fourth tier mainland city	20 (9.0)	45 (9.0)	65 (9.0)
Outside mainland People's Republic of China	11 (5.0)	18 (3.9)	29 (4.0)
Median age			
Years	21.9	21.8	21.9
Current education enrolment			
High school	10 (4.5)	27 (5.4)	37(5.1)
English language tuition	40 (18.1)	62 (12.4)	102(14.1)
Foundation studies	35 (15.8)	68 (13.6)	103(14.3)
VET/TAFE	2 (0.9)	2 (0.4)	4 (0.6)
University: Undergraduate	78 (35.3)	169 (33.7)	247(34.1)
University: Masters coursework	31 (14.0)	112 (22.3)	143(19.8)
University: Higher research degree	23 (10.4)	55 (11.0)	78(10.8)
Length of time in Australia			
1-12 months	130 (58.8)	207 (41.2)	337(46.6)
1-4 years	62 (28.1)	231 (46.0)	293(40.5)
> 4 years	29 (13.1)	64 (12.8)	93(12.9)
Living situation			
With own family	7 (3.2)	29 (5.8)	36(5.0)
Homestay with a family	19 (8.6)	53 (10.6)	72(10.0)
Student accommodation	22 (10.0)	59 (11.8)	81 (11.2)
Renting alone or with flatmates	139 (62.9)	272 (54.2)	411 (56.9)
Renting with partner	22 (10.0)	54 (10.8)	76 (10.5)
Living in a self- or family-owned property alone or with flatmates	6 (2.7)	25 (5.0)	31(4.3)
Living in a self- or family-owned property with partner	4 (1.8)	10 (2.0)	14(1.9)
Relationship status			
Single, not sexually active	129 (58.4)	281 (56.0)	410(56.7)
Single, sexually active	15 (6.8)	19 (3.8)	34(4.7)
In a relationship	66 (29.9)	186 (37.1)	252(34.9)
Married	11 (5.0)	14 (2.8)	25(3.5)

2

Sexual attitudes

In section two, participants responded to questions about their attitudes towards sexual activity including pre-marital sex, partners living together before marriage, having several sex partners before marriage, one-night stands and bringing condoms on dates. Participants rated how acceptable they thought each behaviour was for males and females, potential reasons they would engage in certain behaviours and people they would disclose this information to.

Most respondents reported that it was acceptable for males and females to have sex before marriage (Table 2). When asked if they hoped to be a virgin when/if they married, over half of participants responded as 'neutral' (Table 2). Common reasons for considering pre-marital sex among female participants included both people loving each other (77%), being adult and having consent (72%), marriage plans (53%) and enjoyment (57%) (Table 3). Common reasons for considering pre-marital sex among male participants were both people loving each other (77%), being adult and having consent (74%), enjoyment (72%) and marriage plans (47%) (Table 3). Over half of female participants indicated they would tell someone if they had premarital sex compared to 40% of male participants (Table 3). Female participants indicated they would disclose pre-marital sex to close friends in Australia (77%), close friends in their home country (75%) and a parent (27%). Male participants indicated they would disclose pre-marital sex to close friends in their home country (74%), close friends in Australia (70%), acquaintances in their home country (43%) and acquaintances in Australia (36%) (Table 4).

Most participants reported that it was acceptable for males and females to live together before marriage (Table 2). Female participants reported that they would consider living with a partner if they were in love (61%), had marriage plans (53%) and if it was convenient (52%) (Table 3). Male participants indicated they would consider living with a partner if they were in love (72%), if it was convenient (70%) and if they had plans to get married (47%) (Table 3). If participants lived with a partner they reported they would tell their parents (59%), close friends in Australia (67%) and close friends in their home country (55%) (Table 4).

Over half of female participants and almost two thirds of male participants reported it was acceptable for males to have several sexual partners before marriage (Table 2). In comparison, 57% of females and 54% of males believed it was acceptable for females to have several sexual partners before marriage (Table 2). One-night stands were perceived as less acceptable, particularly for females. A male having a one-night was perceived as unacceptable by over a third of male participants and over half of female participants (Table 2). A female having a one-night stand was rated as unacceptable by 44% of males and 56% of females (Table 2). Almost three-quarters of participants' believed it was acceptable for males and females to bring condoms on a date (Table 2).

⁶The tier system is a hierarchical classification of mainland Chinese cities based on population, GDP, and political administration level. The higher the tier, the larger and more economically prosperous the city.

Table 2: Acceptability of sexual attitude statements by gender

Statement	Total n(%) ⁺		
	Male	Female	Total
Women having sex before marriage is...	n=220	n=502	n=722
Unacceptable	18 (8.2)	44 (8.8)	62 (8.6)
Neutral	18 (8.2)	22 (4.4)	40 (5.5)
Acceptable	181 (82.3)	431 (85.9)	612 (84.8)
Men having sex before marriage is...	n=221	n=502	n=723
Unacceptable	16 (7.2)	32 (6.4)	48 (6.6)
Neutral	12 (5.4)	32 (6.4)	44 (6.1)
Acceptable	193 (87.3)	431 (85.9)	624 (86.3)
A couple living together when they aren't married is...	n=220	n=502	n=722
Unacceptable	9 (4.1)	47 (9.4)	56 (7.8)
Neutral	8 (3.6)	36 (7.2)	44 (6.1)
Acceptable	199 (90.5)	418 (83.3)	617 (85.5)
Men having several sexual partners before marriage is...	n=220	n=502	n=722
Unacceptable	38 (17.3)	120 (23.9)	158 (21.9)
Neutral	35 (15.9)	88 (17.5)	123 (17.0)
Acceptable	143 (65.0)	284 (56.6)	427 (59.1)
Women having several sexual partners before marriage is...	n=220	n=502	n=722
Unacceptable	65 (29.6)	123 (24.5)	188 (26.0)
Neutral	35 (15.9)	86 (17.1)	121 (16.8)
Acceptable	118 (53.6)	285 (56.8)	403 (55.8)
A man having a one-night stand is...	n=220	n=500	n=720
Unacceptable	75 (34.1)	283 (56.6)	358 (49.7)
Neutral	47 (21.4)	114 (22.8)	161 (22.4)
Acceptable	93 (42.3)	93 (18.6)	186 (25.8)
A woman having a one-night stand is...	n=220	n=502	n=722
Unacceptable	97 (44.1)	279 (55.6)	376 (52.1)
Neutral	51 (23.2)	113 (22.5)	164 (22.7)
Acceptable	67 (30.5)	99 (19.7)	166 (23.0)
A man bringing condoms on a date is...	n=220	n=501	n=721
Unacceptable	6 (2.7)	75 (15.0)	81 (11.2)
Neutral	22 (10.0)	61 (12.2)	83 (11.5)
Acceptable	184 (83.6)	346 (69.1)	530 (73.5)
A women bringing condoms on a date is...	n=219	n=498	n=717
Unacceptable	16 (7.3)	59 (11.9)	75 (10.5)
Neutral	20 (9.1)	76 (15.3)	96 (13.4)
Acceptable	176 (80.4)	341 (68.5)	517 (72.1)
I hope to be a virgin when/if I get married	n=219	n=502	n=721
Strongly or somewhat agree	26 (11.8)	142 (28.4)	168 (23.3)
Neutral	123 (55.9)	271 (54.2)	394 (54.7)
Strongly or somewhat disagree	55 (25.0)	77 (15.4)	132 (18.3)

Note. The “unacceptable” category combines participants who responded ‘always unacceptable’ and ‘mostly unacceptable’. Acceptable category combines participants who responded ‘always acceptable’ and ‘mostly acceptable’. Each item had a different number of participants who responded thus totals are shown for each item.

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because “Don’t wish to say” responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 3: Reasons for pre-marital sex and living with a partner by gender

Personal statement	Total n(%)		Total
	Male	Female	
I would consider having sex before marriage if...	n=211	n=493	n=704
Both parties enjoy sex	152 (72.0)	281 (57.0)	433 (61.5)
We loved each other	162 (76.8)	378 (76.7)	540 (76.7)
We planned to get married	100 (47.4)	260 (52.7)	360 (51.1)
Both parties are adults, and consent	157 (74.4)	353 (71.6)	510 (72.4)
I wanted to show love	67 (31.8)	77 (15.6)	144 (20.5)
I was curious about sex	52 (24.6)	77 (15.6)	129 (18.3)
I would not do so	8 (3.8)	17 (3.5)	25 (3.6)
I would consider living with a partner if...	n=214	n=489	n=703
It were convenient to do so	149 (69.6)	256 (52.4)	405 (57.6)
We were in love	155 (72.4)	299 (61.1)	454 (64.6)
We planned to get married	101 (47.2)	260 (53.2)	361 (51.4)
I would not consider living with a partner	2 (0.9)	21 (4.3)	23 (3.3)

Note: Participants could select multiple options to these questions thus column percentages do not add up to 100%.

Table 4: Disclosure of information by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		Total
	Male	Female	
If you had sex before marriage, would you tell anyone?	n=218	n=501	n=719
No	100 (45.9)	149 (29.7)	250 (34.5)
Yes	88 (40.4)	282 (56.2)	370 (51.1)
NA: Would not consider sex before marriage	4 (1.8)	27 (5.4)	31 (4.3)
I don't wish to say	26 (11.9)	43 (8.6)	69 (9.6)
Who would you tell if you had sex before marriage?^A	n=86	n=279	n=365
Parent	22 (25.6)	76 (27.2)	98 (26.8)
Other family members	11 (12.8)	19 (6.8)	30 (8.2)
Acquaintances in home country	37 (43.0)	40 (14.3)	77 (21.1)
Close friends in home country	64 (74.4)	208 (74.6)	272 (74.5)
Acquaintances in Australia	31 (36.0)	48 (17.2)	79 (21.6)
Close friends in Australia	60 (69.8)	216 (77.4)	276 (75.6)
Australian doctor or health professional	20 (23.3)	60 (21.5)	80 (21.9)
Doctor/health professional in home country	16 (18.6)	39 (14.0)	55 (15.1)
Australian teacher or counsellor	8 (9.3)	5 (1.8)	13 (3.6)
Who would you tell if you lived with a partner?	n=210	n=493	n=703
Parent	130 (61.9)	285 (57.8)	415 (59.0)
Other family members	52 (24.8)	83 (16.8)	135 (19.2)
Acquaintances in home country	57 (27.1)	111 (22.5)	168 (23.9)
Close friends in home country	106 (50.5)	281 (57.0)	387 (55.1)
Acquaintances in Australia	72 (34.3)	133 (27.0)	205 (29.2)
Close friends in Australia	127 (60.5)	344 (69.8)	471 (67.0)
Nobody	17 (8.1)	18 (3.7)	35 (5.0)

A. Among participants who reported they would tell someone about having sex before marriage

3

Sexual behaviours and experiences

In section three, participants answered questions about their sexual attraction, changes in sexual activity since arriving in Australia and the age they first experienced sexual behaviours such as genital touching, oral sex, vaginal intercourse and anal intercourse. Those who had been sexually active also responded to questions about contraception and frequency of condom use. There were also questions regarding unwanted sex and use of paid sexual services in Australia.

Sexual attraction and partners in Australia

The majority of respondents (84% of males and 76% of females) reported they were attracted to the opposite sex. Some participants reported being attracted to the same sex (2% of females and 8% of males), and some reported they were attracted to both sexes (17% of females and 4% of males) (Table 5). Since arriving in Australia, most participants reported they had not had a romantic or sexual partner. Among those who did, the majority reported that their partner was of the same ethnicity/nationality as themselves (Table 5).

Sexual and dating behaviours since arriving in Australia

Overall 20% of participants reported that their sexual and/or dating behaviours had changed since arriving in Australia and 14% were unsure (Table 6). Participants who reported a change in behaviour or were unsure were asked a series of questions about changes in specific behaviours. 43% of participants indicated they had experienced an increase in dating the opposite sex since arriving in Australia, 24% stated that they had made love with someone of the opposite sex for the first time, and over one quarter reported an increase in making love with a long-term partner (Table 6).

Lifetime experience of sexual behaviours

Overall 620/723 participants responded to questions regarding lifetime sexual behaviours. The mean age that participants first experienced sexual activity (touching/being touched on genitals) was 17.9 years among males and 18.5 years among females. On average, male participants were 18.4 years when they first had oral sex compared to 19.1 years among females. Males reported a mean age of 18.8 years when they first had vaginal intercourse compared to 19.2 years among females. Females had a mean age of 19.7 years when they first reported anal intercourse compared to 18.8 years among males (Table 7). Overall, over half of respondents (56%) had ever experienced genital touching, 47% had experienced oral sex, 44% had engaged in vaginal sex, and 7% had engaged in anal sex (Table 7). Participants who had ever engaged in each sexual behaviour reported the number of partners they had in their lifetime; for each sexual behaviour, the largest proportion of respondents reported having one partner in their lifetime (Table 7).

Sexual behaviours in the past 12 months

Participants who had ever engaged in sexual activity (genital touching, oral sex, vaginal intercourse and anal intercourse) reported the number of partners they had for each behaviour in the past 12 months. Female participants most commonly reported having one partner in the past 12 months for genital touching (68%), oral sex (70%) and vaginal intercourse (67%). For anal intercourse, female participants most commonly reported having no partners in the past 12 months (55%). Male participants most commonly reported having one partner in the past 12 months for genital touching (55%), oral sex (57%), vaginal intercourse (59%) and anal intercourse (47%) (Table 8). Less than half of sexually active participants reported they had met a new sexual partner in the past 12 months. Places for meeting new sexual partners in the past 12 months included work or college (32%), through friends or family (8%) and online (7%) (Table 8).

Condom and other contraception use in the past 12 months

Reported rates of condom use were high. Among respondents who had a regular sexual partner, 59% reported always using condoms (Table 9). Among respondents who had casual sexual partner(s), 58% reported always using condoms in the past 12 months (Table 9). Among participants who had ever had vaginal intercourse, the most common form of contraception used at participant's most recent vaginal intercourse was condoms (79%), followed by withdrawal (23%), the contraceptive pill (14%) and the morning-after pill (7%). Use of all other forms of contraception listed was very low or zero (Table 9).

Sexual activity by gender of partners

A majority of respondents who were sexually active in the past 12 months had partners of the opposite sex. 10% of males had engaged in genital touching and/or oral sex with male partners (Table 10). 7% of females had engaged in genital touching with female partners, and 5% of females had engaged in oral sex with female partners (Table 10).

Pressured or forced sexual activity

A vast majority of respondents (91%) did not report being pressured or forced into unwanted sexual activity in Australia (Table 11). Among the small number of participants who did report unwanted sexual activity, 60% indicated they did NOT tell anybody about it (Table 11).

Payment and exchange for sexual services in Australia

A vast majority of respondents (96%) had never paid for sexual services in Australia. Of those who had, almost all were male (Table 12). Overall, 15% of respondents reported that they knew another international student who had exchanged sexual services for money, favours or gifts (a semi-informal transactional sex practice known in Chinese as *yuanzhu jiaoji* 援助交际, abbreviated to *yuanjiao* 援交; literally "compensated relations"). Many more (29%) were unsure whether other international students they knew did this (Table 12). Only 9% of male participants reported having personally engaged in such an exchange.



Table 5: Sexual attraction and partners by gender

Variable	Total n(%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
I am sexually attracted to...	n=205	n=490	n=695
Men	17 (8.3)	373 (76.1)	390 (56.1)
Women	173 (84.4)	11 (2.2)	184 (26.5)
Both men and women	9 (4.4)	81 (16.5)	90 (13.0)
Neither men nor women	3 (1.5)	1 (0.2)	4 (0.6)
Don't know	0	21 (4.3)	21 (3.0)
Have you had romantic or sexual partners in Australia?	n=205	n=489	n=694
Yes	47 (22.9)	121 (24.7)	168 (24.2)
No	152 (74.1)	358 (73.2)	510 (73.5)
Ethnicity and nationality of romantic or sexual partner^A	n=46	n=120	n=166
Same ethnicity and nationality as me	33 (71.7)	83 (69.2)	116 (69.9)
Same ethnicity, different nationality as me	3 (6.5)	11 (9.2)	14 (8.4)
Different ethnicity	2 (4.3)	17 (14.2)	19 (11.5)
Both: Partners of same and different ethnicity/nationality as me	6 (13.0)	8 (6.7)	14 (8.4)

A. Among participants who indicated they had a romantic or sexual partner in Australia

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because "Don't wish to say" responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 6: Sexual and dating behaviours since arriving in Australia

Variable	Total n(%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
Since arriving in Australia my sexual and/or dating behaviour has...	n=205	n=489	n=694
Been the same as it was in my home country	71 (34.6)	172 (35.2)	243 (35.0)
Changed	45 (22.0)	90 (18.4)	135 (19.5)
Not sure	33 (16.1)	65 (13.3)	98 (14.1)
Never experienced sexual/dating behaviour	45 (22.0)	132 (27.0)	177 (25.5)
Making love with the opposite sex since arrival in Australia^A	n=76	n=154	n=230
Increased	22 (28.9)	33 (21.4)	55 (23.9)
Decreased	14 (18.4)	13 (8.4)	27 (11.7)
No change	9 (11.8)	12 (7.8)	21 (9.1)
Happened for the first time	15 (19.7)	39 (25.3)	54 (23.5)
Never experienced	13 (17.1)	41 (26.6)	54 (23.5)
Dating the opposite sex since arrival in Australia^A	n=74	n=153	n=227
Increased	33 (44.6)	64 (41.8)	97 (42.7)
Decreased	15 (20.3)	27 (17.6)	42 (18.5)
No change	14 (18.9)	29 (19.0)	43 (18.9)
Happened for the first time	0	10 (6.5)	10 (4.4)
Never experienced	9 (12.2)	16 (10.5)	25 (11.0)
One-night stands since arrival in Australia^A	n=78	n=153	n=231
Increased	10 (12.8)	12 (7.8)	22 (9.5)
Decreased	2 (2.6)	4 (2.6)	6 (2.6)
No change	6 (7.7)	7 (4.6)	13 (5.6)
Happened for the first time	5 (6.4)	5 (3.3)	10 (4.3)
Never experienced	51 (65.4)	122 (79.7)	173 (74.9)
Making love with a long-term partner since arrival in Australia^A	n=77	n=154	n=231
Increased	24 (31.2)	36 (23.4)	60 (26.0)
Decreased	11 (14.3)	14 (9.1)	25 (10.8)
No change	5 (6.5)	13 (8.4)	18 (7.8)
Happened for the first time	10 (13.0)	27 (17.5)	37 (16.0)
Never experienced	23 (29.9)	54 (35.1)	77 (33.3)
Living with a partner since arrival in Australia^A	n=77	n=153	n=230
Increased	15 (19.5)	23 (15.0)	38 (16.5)
Decreased	8 (10.4)	5 (3.3)	13 (5.7)
No change	4 (5.2)	8 (5.2)	12 (5.2)
Happened for the first time	14 (18.2)	33 (21.6)	47 (20.4)
Never experienced	33 (42.9)	81 (52.9)	114 (49.6)

A. Among participants who reported their sexual/dating behaviour had changed since arrival or stated they were 'unsure'

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because "Don't wish to say" responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 7: Lifetime experiences of sexual behaviours

Variable	Total n/N(%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
Lifetime sexual behaviours			
Ever touched/being touched on genitals	112/180 (62.2)	233/439 (53.1)	345/619 (55.7)
Ever had oral sex	95/179 (53.1)	193/441 (43.8)	288/620 (46.5)
Ever had vaginal intercourse	90/178 (50.6)	180/438 (41.1)	270/616 (43.8)
Ever had anal intercourse	18/176 (10.2)	22/442 (5.0)	40/618 (6.5)
Mean age at first sexual experience (years)	n=112	n=233	n=345
Touching/being touched on genitals	17.9	18.5	18.3
Oral sex	18.4	19.1	18.9
Vaginal intercourse	18.8	19.2	19.1
Anal intercourse	18.8	19.7	19.3
Number of lifetime sexual partners: genital touching^A	n=112	n=235	n=347
1	45 (40.2)	107 (45.5)	152 (43.8)
2-3	38 (33.9)	76 (32.3)	114 (32.9)
4-5	14 (12.5)	26 (11.1)	40 (11.5)
6 or more	14 (12.5)	23 (9.8)	37 (10.7)
Number of lifetime sexual partners: oral sex^A	n=95	n=194	n=289
1	41 (43.2)	102 (52.6)	143 (49.5)
2-3	31 (32.6)	59 (30.4)	90 (31.1)
4-5	11 (11.6)	19 (9.8)	30 (10.4)
6 or more	10 (10.5)	12 (6.2)	22 (7.6)
Number of lifetime sexual partners: vaginal intercourse^A	n=91	n=183	n=274
1	45 (49.5)	93 (50.8)	138 (50.4)
2-3	23 (25.3)	54 (29.5)	77 (28.1)
4-5	9 (9.9)	19 (10.4)	28 (10.2)
6 or more	11 (12.1)	14 (7.7)	25 (9.1)
Number of lifetime sexual partners: anal intercourse^A	n=18	n=22	n=40
1	14 (77.8)	20 (90.9)	34 (85.0)
2-3	2 (11.1)	2 (9.1)	4 (10.0)
4-5	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
6 or more	2 (11.1)	0 (0.0)	2 (5.0)

A. Among participants who had ever done this behaviour in their lifetime

Note. The total number of participants who responded to each 'lifetime sexual behaviour' differed thus totals are shown in each cell for these variables.

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because "Don't wish to say" responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 8: Sexual behaviours in the past 12 months by gender

Variable	Total n (%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
Number of sexual partners in the past 12 months: touching/being touched on genitals^A	n=112	n=235	n=347
None	17 (15.2)	31 (13.2)	48 (13.8)
1	62 (55.4)	159 (67.7)	221 (63.7)
2-3	24 (21.4)	35 (14.9)	59 (17.0)
>4	8 (7.1)	9 (3.8)	17 (4.9)
Number of sexual partners in the past 12 months: oral sex^A	n=95	n=194	n=289
None	11 (11.6)	26 (13.4)	37 (12.8)
1	54 (56.8)	135 (69.6)	189 (65.4)
2-3	21 (22.1)	24 (12.4)	45 (15.6)
>4	7 (7.4)	8 (4.1)	15 (5.2)
Number of sexual partners in the past 12 months: vaginal intercourse^A	n=91	n=183	n=274
None	10 (11.0)	23 (12.6)	33 (12.0)
1	54 (59.3)	123 (67.2)	177 (64.6)
2-3	17 (18.7)	28 (15.3)	45 (16.4)
>4	7 (7.7)	7 (3.8)	14 (5.1)
Number of sexual partners in the past 12 months: anal intercourse^A	n=19	n=22	n=41
None	6 (31.6)	12 (54.6)	18 (43.9)
1	9 (47.4)	9 (40.9)	18 (43.9)
2-3	2 (10.5)	1 (4.6)	3 (7.3)
>4	2 (10.5)	0	2 (4.9)
How you have met new sexual partners in the past 12 months^B	n=94	n=195	n=289
No new partners	43 (54.3)	99 (50.8)	142 (49.1)
Through friends or family	4 (4.3)	18 (9.2)	22 (7.6)
At workplace or college	32 (34.0)	60 (30.8)	92 (31.8)
At bars or clubs	4 (4.3)	8 (4.1)	12 (4.2)
At a brothel or other paid sexual service	7 (7.5)	0	7 (2.4)
Online/app	9 (9.6)	12 (6.2)	21 (7.3)

A. Among participants who had ever done this behaviour in their lifetime

B. Among participants who reported having at least one partner for any of the sexual behaviours in the past 12 months

Note that totals/percentages do not add up to the numbers in the heading/100% because participants could select more than one answer.

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because “Don’t wish to say” responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 9: Condom and other contraception use in the past 12 months by gender

Variable	Total n (%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
Condom use with regular partners in the past 12 months^A	n=80	n=153	n=233
Always	46 (57.5)	91 (59.5)	137 (58.8)
Usually	18 (22.5)	28 (18.3)	46 (19.7)
Sometimes	8 (10.0)	20 (13.1)	28 (12.0)
Never	4 (5.0)	14 (9.2)	18 (7.7)
Condom use with casual partners in the past 12 months^A	n=28	n=36	n=64
Always	15 (53.6)	22 (61.1)	37 (57.8)
Usually	4 (14.3)	9 (25.0)	13 (20.3)
Sometimes	4 (14.3)	2 (5.1)	6 (9.4)
Never	1 (3.6)	2 (5.1)	3 (4.7)
Contraception used at last vaginal intercourse^B	n=91	n=180	n=271
Condom	69 (75.8)	145 (80.6)	214 (79.0)
Withdrawal method	22 (24.2)	41 (22.8)	63 (23.3)
Oral contraception (the pill)	10 (11.0)	28 (15.6)	38 (14.0)
Emergency/ morning after pill	5 (5.5)	13 (7.2)	18 (6.6)
Other (Implant, injection, hormonal ring, vasectomy)	1 (1.1)	4 (2.2)	5 (1.8)

A. Among participants who reported having at least one vaginal or anal intercourse partner in the past 12 months

B. Among participants who reported having at least one vaginal intercourse partner in the past 12 months

Table 10 : Sexual activity in the past 12 months by gender and gender of partners

Variable	Total n/N (%) ⁺		
	Males	Females	Total
With Males			
Touching/being touched on genitals ^A	9/94 (9.6)	188/203 (92.6)	197/297 (66.3)
Oral sex ^A	8/82 (9.8)	160/167 (95.8)	168/249 (67.5)
Vaginal sex ^A	0	156/158 (98.7)	157/236 (66.5)
Anal sex ^A	3/13 (23.1)	10/10 (100.0)	13/23 (56.5)
With Females			
Touching/being touched on genitals ^A	84/94 (89.4)	14/203 (6.9)	98/297 (33.0)
Oral sex ^A	73/82 (89.0)	9/167 (5.4)	82/249 (32.9)
Vaginal sex ^A	77/78 (98.7)	3/167 (1.9)	80/236 (33.9)
Anal sex ^A	10/13 (76.9)	1/10 (10.0)	11/23 (47.8)

A: Among participants who reported having at least one partner for this behaviour in the past 12 months

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because "Don't wish to say" responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 11: Pressured or forced sexual activity by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Pressured or forced into unwanted sexual activity while in Australia	n=177	n=440	n=617
Yes	6 (3.4)	35 (8.0)	41 (6.6)
No	167 (94.4)	395 (89.8)	562 (91.1)
Did you tell anyone about pressured or forced unwanted sexual activity^A	n=6	n=35	n=41
Yes	2 (33.3)	14 (40.0)	16 (39.0)
No	4 (66.7)	21 (60.0)	25 (61.0)

A. Among participants who reported being pressured or forced into unwanted sexual activity in Australia

Table 12: Payment for sexual services

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Do any international students you personally know in Australia offer sexual services in exchange for money, favours or gifts?	n=177	n=441	n=618
Yes	34 (19.2)	59 (13.4)	93 (15.0)
No	92 (52.0)	247 (56.0)	339 (54.9)
I don't know	46 (26.0)	131 (29.7)	177 (28.6)
While in Australia, have you ever paid for sexual services?	n=177	n=439	n=616
Yes	16 (9.0)	1 (0.2)	17 (2.8)
No	158 (89.3)	435 (99.1)	593 (96.3)

4

Sex education, sexual knowledge, and sexual health

In section four, participants reported whether they had received sex education and the content that was covered. Participants completed a six-item quiz where they indicated whether STI-related statements were true, false or they did not know. They also reported sources they would use if they wanted to seek additional information about sexual health topics and what kind of action they would take in different sexual health scenarios. In addition, participants were asked if it would be useful to receive targeted information about the Australian healthcare system and sexual health for international students.

Sex education

Almost one in three respondents reported that they had not received any sex education in high school (Table 13). Those who had received sex education were asked to indicate which topics were covered outside and within Australia. Topics commonly covered in sex education outside Australia included human reproduction/biology (95%), HIV/AIDS (76%), pregnancy and contraception (73%) and STI prevention (60%). Topics included in sex education in Australia included pregnancy and contraception (74%), STI prevention (72%), HIV/AIDS (69%), sexual consent (68%), how to use condoms (68%) and sexual harassment (59%) (Table 13).

STI-related knowledge

Overall, participants' median number of correct answers in the STI knowledge quiz was two out of six (Table 14). For some items, participants' most common response was 'Don't know'. For example 68% of participants indicated they did not know whether chlamydia can be diagnosed by a urine test or whether chlamydia can make women infertile. Only 6% of participants correctly identified that many STIs can be easily treated with antibiotics. Over half of participants correctly identified that STIs don't always have symptoms (Table 14).

Information and help-seeking for sexual health topics

Participants most commonly reported that they would use Chinese-language internet sources for information about sex and relationships (81%) (Table 15). Just under half reported they would seek information from a university clinic or service (Table 15). If participants believed they had an STI or unplanned pregnancy, over three quarters would seek help from a doctor or health professional (Table 16). Participants indicated they would visit a doctor in Australia immediately rather than wait to see a doctor in their home country if they thought they had an STI or unplanned pregnancy (Table 16). In the event of being subject to sexual violence, participants reported that they would turn to Australian police (85%), Australian counsellors (53%), or Australian doctors (48%) (Table 16).

Health service use in Australia

Less than half of participants had visited a doctor or healthcare professional while in Australia (Table 17). Of those who had, most had not discussed sexual health or contraception during their appointment (79%). Among participants who had ever had vaginal or anal intercourse, 9% of males and 16% of females reported having been tested for an STI by a doctor or health worker while in Australia (Table 17).

Targeted information

Overall 61% of participants agreed that they would benefit from receiving more targeted information for international students about the Australian healthcare system. Just over half reported that sexual health information targeting international students would be beneficial for them (Table 18).

Table 13: Sex education by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Received sex education in high school	n=178	n=436	n=614
Yes in Australia	42 (23.6)	90 (20.6)	132 (21.5)
Yes, outside Australia	46 (25.8)	135 (31.0)	181 (29.5)
Yes, both in and outside Australia	28 (15.7)	72 (16.5)	100 (16.3)
No	59 (33.2)	134 (30.7)	193 (31.4)
Sex education content covered outside Australia^A	n=74	n=207	n=281
Human reproduction/biology	69 (93.2)	196 (94.7)	266 (94.7)
Pregnancy and contraception	55 (74.3)	150 (72.5)	206 (73.3)
STI prevention	47 (63.5)	120 (58.0)	168 (59.8)
HIV/AIDS	55 (74.3)	157 (75.9)	213 (75.8)
Sexual harassment	34 (46.0)	81 (39.1)	115 (40.9)
Sexual violence	21 (28.4)	45 (21.7)	66 (23.5)
Sexual pleasure	7 (9.5)	12 (5.8)	19 (6.8)
Sexual consent	23 (31.1)	57 (27.5)	81 (28.8)
Sex outside marriage is wrong	5 (6.8)	10 (4.8)	15 (5.3)
How to use condoms	26 (35.1)	66 (31.9)	92 (32.7)
Masturbation	17 (23.0)	21 (10.1)	38 (13.5)
Homosexuality	12 (16.2)	31 (15.0)	43 (15.3)
Bisexuality	14 (18.9)	27 (13.0)	41 (14.6)
Gender diversity	10 (13.5)	23 (11.1)	33 (11.7)
Sex education content covered in Australia^B	n=74	n=154	n=228
Human reproduction/biology	41 (58.6)	94 (59.5)	135 (59.2)
Pregnancy and contraception	48 (68.6)	119 (75.3)	168 (73.7)
STI prevention	48 (68.6)	115 (72.8)	164 (71.9)
HIV/AIDS	49 (70.0)	107 (67.7)	157 (68.9)
Sexual harassment	49 (70.0)	84 (53.2)	134 (58.8)
Sexual violence	36 (51.4)	62 (39.2)	99 (43.4)
Sexual pleasure	26 (37.1)	41 (26.0)	67 (29.4)
Sexual consent	47 (67.1)	108 (68.4)	156 (68.4)
Sex outside marriage is wrong	4 (5.7)	13 (8.2)	17 (7.5)
How to use condoms	44 (62.9)	110 (69.6)	155 (68.0)
Masturbation	16 (22.9)	18 (11.4)	34 (14.9)
Homosexuality	31 (44.3)	62 (39.2)	93 (40.9)
Bisexuality	26 (37.1)	50 (31.7)	76 (33.3)
Gender diversity	21 (30.0)	45 (28.5)	66 (28.9)

Note. For sex education content, participants could select multiple options so column percentages do not total 100%.

A. Among participants who received sex education outside Australia

B. Among participants who received sex education within Australia

Table 14: STI knowledge by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Chlamydia can be diagnosed by a urine test (True)	n=172	n=425	n=597
Correct	43 (25.0)	75 (17.7)	118 (19.8)
Incorrect	20 (11.6)	53 (12.5)	73 (12.2)
Don't know	108 (62.8)	295 (69.4)	403 (67.5)
Using contraception like the pill, IUD, or implant when you are young reduces your future fertility (chance of getting pregnant) (False)	n=172	n=424	n=596
Correct	56 (32.6)	193 (45.5)	249 (41.8)
Incorrect	90 (52.3)	158 (37.3)	248 (41.6)
Don't know	26 (15.1)	70 (16.5)	96 (16.1)
Many STIs can be easily treated with antibiotics (True)	n=171	n=424	n=595
Correct	13 (7.6)	25 (5.9)	38 (6.4)
Incorrect	123 (71.9)	311 (73.4)	434 (72.9)
Don't know	35 (20.5)	86 (20.3)	121 (20.3)
If left untreated chlamydia infection can last for years (True)	n=171	n=425	n=596
Correct	80 (46.8)	230 (54.1)	311 (52.1)
Incorrect	5 (2.9)	10 (2.4)	15 (2.5)
Don't know	85 (49.7)	183 (43.1)	268 (45.0)
People infected with STIs almost always have some symptoms (False)	n=171	n=425	n=596
Correct	105 (61.4)	235 (55.3)	340 (57.1)
Incorrect	24 (14.0)	83 (19.5)	107 (18.0)
Don't know	41 (24.0)	105 (24.7)	146 (24.5)
Chlamydia can make women infertile (unable to become pregnant) (True)	n=171	n=425	n=596
Correct	45 (26.3)	101 (23.8)	146 (24.5)
Incorrect	14 (8.2)	28 (6.6)	41 (7.1)
Don't know	111 (64.9)	295 (69.4)	406 (68.1)
Median number of correct answers (out of six)	2	2	2

Table 15: Information seeking for sexual health issues by gender

Variable	Total n(%)*		
	Males	Females	Total
If you wanted information about relationships and sex, you would seek further information from	n=171	n=421	n=592
Partner	57 (33.3)	155 (36.8)	212 (35.8)
Friends	54 (31.6)	149 (35.4)	203 (34.3)
Parents	26 (15.2)	74 (17.6)	100 (16.9)
Other family members	7 (4.1)	12 (2.9)	19 (3.2)
Chinese-language Internet sources	136 (79.5)	344 (81.7)	480 (81.1)
English-language Internet sources	85 (49.7)	168 (39.9)	253 (42.7)
Doctor	26 (15.2)	17 (4.0)	43 (7.3)
Books or magazines	27 (15.8)	83 (19.7)	110 (18.6)
University clinics or services	78 (45.6)	194 (46.1)	272 (46.0)
If you thought you might have contracted an STI while in Australia, you would seek further information from	n=170	n=422	n=592
Partner	39 (22.9)	79 (18.7)	118 (19.9)
Friends	38 (22.4)	69 (16.4)	107 (18.1)
Parents	27 (15.9)	43 (10.2)	70 (11.8)
Other family members	11 (6.5)	6 (1.4)	17 (2.9)
Chinese-language Internet sources	100 (58.8)	216 (51.2)	316 (53.4)
English-language Internet sources	83 (48.8)	189 (44.8)	272 (45.9)
Doctors / health professionals	128 (75.3)	323 (76.5)	451 (76.2)
Books or magazines	21 (12.4)	38 (9.0)	59 (10.0)
University clinics or services	63 (37.1)	175 (41.5)	238 (40.2)
If you or your partner had an unplanned pregnancy while in Australia, you would seek advice from	n=170	n=418	n=588
Partner	44 (25.9)	132 (31.6)	176 (29.9)
Friends	45 (26.5)	111 (26.6)	156 (26.5)
Parents	51 (30.0)	111 (26.6)	162 (27.6)
Other family members	15 (8.8)	23 (5.5)	38 (6.5)
Chinese-language Internet sources	66 (38.8)	158 (37.8)	224 (38.1)
English-language Internet sources	56 (32.9)	140 (33.5)	196 (33.3)
Doctors / health professionals	120 (70.6)	337 (80.6)	457 (77.7)
Books or magazines	19 (11.2)	25 (6.0)	44 (7.5)
University clinics or services	61 (35.9)	153 (36.6)	214 (36.4)

Note: Participants could select multiple options for these questions so column percentages do not total 100%.

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because “Don’t wish to say” responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 16: Help-seeking for sexual health issues by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
If you thought you might have contracted an STI while in Australia, you would probably:	n=170	n=424	n=592
Visit a doctor in Australia immediately	133 (78.2)	353 (83.7)	486 (82.1)
Visit a pharmacy in Australia	8 (4.7)	19 (4.5)	27 (4.6)
Wait until next trip to home & visit a doctor there	22 (12.9)	33 (7.8)	55 (9.3)
Do nothing	1 (0.6)	5 (1.2)	6 (1.0)
If you or your partner had an unplanned pregnancy while in Australia, you would probably:	n=168	n=421	n=589
Visit a doctor in Australia immediately	139 (82.7)	379 (90.0)	518 (88.0)
Wait until my next trip home to visit a doctor in my home country	7 (4.2)	22 (5.2)	29 (4.9)
Do nothing	3 (1.8)	1 (0.2)	4 (0.7)
If you or your partner wanted to get contraception (other than condoms) while in Australia, you would probably	n=169	n=420	n=589
Visit a doctor in Australia immediately	101 (59.8)	293 (69.8)	394 (66.9)
Wait until my next trip home to visit a doctor in my home country	17 (10.1)	22 (5.2)	39 (6.6)
Do nothing	20 (11.8)	44 (10.5)	64 (10.9)
Search online	1 (0.6)	9 (2.2)	10 (1.7)
Use other methods	1 (0.6)	4 (1.0)	5 (0.8)
Don't wish to say	27 (16.0)	38 (9.1)	65 (11.1)
If you experienced sexual violence in Australia, you would seek help from	n=169	n=420	n=589
Australian police	143 (84.6)	358 (85.2)	501 (85.1)
Friends	73 (43.2)	158 (37.6)	231 (39.2)
Parents	52 (30.8)	104 (24.8)	156 (26.5)
Other family members	12 (7.1)	20 (4.8)	32 (5.4)
Chinese-language Internet sources	22 (13.0)	48 (11.4)	70 (11.9)
English-language Internet sources	28 (16.6)	71 (16.9)	99 (16.8)
Counsellors in Australia, e.g. a university counsellor	78 (46.2)	233 (55.5)	311 (52.8)
Churches in Australia	13 (7.7)	19 (4.5)	32 (5.4)
Counsellors in my home country	6 (3.6)	13 (3.1)	19 (3.2)
Doctors in Australia	58 (34.3)	227 (54.1)	285 (48.4)
Doctors in my home country	11 (6.5)	20 (4.8)	31 (5.3)

Note: Participants could select multiple options for 'If you experienced sexual violence in Australia, you would seek help from' so column percentages do not total 100%.

Table 17: Health service use in Australia by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Have you ever visited a doctor or other health service in Australia?	n=170	n=422	n=592
Yes	66 (38.8)	211 (50.0)	277 (46.8)
No	103 (60.6)	208 (49.3)	311 (52.5)
Have you ever discussed sexual health or contraception with a doctor or health worker in Australia?^A	n=65	n=211	n=276
Yes	14 (21.5)	45 (21.3)	59 (21.4)
No	51 (78.5)	166 (78.7)	217 (78.6)
Have you ever been tested for any sexually transmitted infection by a doctor or health worker in Australia?^B	n=92	n=174	n=266
Yes	8 (8.7)	27 (15.5)	35 (13.2)
No	83 (90.2)	146 (83.9)	229 (86.1)

A. Among participants who had ever visited a doctor or other health service in Australia

B. Among participants who had ever had vaginal or anal intercourse

Table 18: Targeted health information by gender

Variable	Total n(%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Would you find additional information targeted to international students helpful in understanding the Australian healthcare system?	n=156	n=386	n=542
Yes	76 (48.7)	257 (66.6)	333 (61.4)
No	12 (7.7)	10 (2.6)	22 (4.1)
Not sure	61 (39.1)	107 (27.7)	168 (31.0)
Would you find additional sexual health information targeted to international students helpful?	n=155	n=385	n=540
Yes	72 (46.5)	201 (52.2)	273 (50.6)
No	18 (11.6)	22 (5.7)	40 (7.4)
Not sure	57 (36.8)	148 (38.4)	205 (38.0)

5

Attitudes toward gender and sexual violence

In this section, participants were presented with a series of statements about gender and sexual violence and asked to select their level of agreement with each item. In addition to insights into respondents' broad attitudes toward these issues, what stand out are the differences between male and female respondents' answers, with a greater proportion of female than male respondents disagreeing with sexist statements in most instances.

Overall, 62% of females and 31% of males disagreed that 'men make better political leaders/managers than women'. The overwhelming majority of participants disagreed that 'women who are sexually harassed should sort out the problem themselves' and that 'a man is less responsible for rape if he is drunk or affected by drugs at the time' (Table 19). Over 90% of females and almost three quarters of males disagreed that talking about rape on social media is usually a joke and should not be taken seriously. One in three participants agreed that 'if a woman meets up with a complete stranger she met on a dating app then she is partly to blame if she is raped'. Among female participants, 61% disagreed that 'a lot of times, women who say they were raped had led the man on and then had regrets' compared to 35% of male participants (Table 19).

Table 19: Responses to gender statements by gender

Variable	Total n (%)		
	Males	Females	Total
On the whole, men make better political leaders/managers than women	n=166	n=414	n=580
Agree/ strongly agree	58 (34.9)	43 (10.4)	101 (17.4)
Neutral	54 (32.5)	109 (26.3)	163 (28.1)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	51 (30.7)	257 (62.1)	308 (53.1)
Women who are sexually harassed should sort out the problem themselves rather than report it	n= 167	n=415	n=582
Agree/ strongly agree	10 (6.0)	7 (1.7)	17 (2.9)
Neutral	13 (7.8)	17 (4.1)	30 (5.2)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	141 (84.4)	389 (93.7)	530 (91.1)
When people talk about raping someone on social media, it's usually just a joke and shouldn't be taken seriously	n=164	n=414	n=578
Agree/ strongly agree	11 (6.7)	3 (0.7)	14 (2.4)
Neutral	27 (16.5)	31 (7.5)	58 (10.0)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	122 (74.4)	377 (91.1)	499 (86.3)
A man is less responsible for rape if he is drunk or affected by drugs at the time	n=165	n=416	n= 581
Agree/ strongly agree	6 (3.6)	1 (0.2)	7 (1.2)
Neutral	5 (3.0)	7 (1.7)	12 (2.1)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	152 (92.1)	407 (97.8)	559 (96.2)
If a woman is raped while she is drunk or affected by drugs she is at least partly responsible	n=164	n= 413	n=577
Agree/ strongly agree	35 (21.3)	65 (15.7)	100 (17.3)
Neutral	24 (14.6)	48 (11.6)	72 (12.5)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	100 (61.0)	298 (72.2)	398 (69.0)
If a woman meets up with a complete stranger she met on a dating app (e.g. Tinder), then she is partly to blame if she is raped.	n=164	n=414	n=578
Agree/ strongly agree	58 (35.4)	143 (34.5)	201 (34.8)
Neutral	34 (20.7)	68 (16.4)	102 (17.7)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	69 (42.1)	202 (48.8)	271 (46.9)
If a woman doesn't physically resist – even if protesting verbally – then it isn't really rape.	n=165	n=415	n=580
Agree/ strongly agree	31 (18.8)	32 (7.7)	63 (10.9)
Neutral	31 (18.8)	73 (17.6)	104 (17.9)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	98 (59.4)	307 (74.0)	405 (69.8)
A lot of times, women who say they were raped had led the man on and then had regrets.	n=165	n=412	n=577
Agree/ strongly agree	31 (18.8)	28 (6.8)	59 (10.2)
Neutral	60 (36.4)	117 (28.4)	177 (30.7)
Disagree/ strongly disagree	58 (35.2)	251 (60.9)	309 (53.6)

6

Internet and pornography use

Section six of the survey investigated participants' internet use and engagement with online pornography. Participants were asked how often they used a number of different websites and applications (apps). They also estimated the amount of time they spent online per day. Participants reported how old they were when they first viewed online pornography by accident and intentionally, how often they viewed online pornography in the past year and the ethnicity of actors they preferred. We also asked if participants had ever sent or received a sexually explicit image of themselves or another person.

Internet use

More participants reported using Chinese-language websites and apps than English-language platforms. WeChat (China's multi-functional mega-app) was the most frequently used website or app by a wide margin with 98% of participants using it several times a day (Table 20). The next most popular website/app was Weibo (China's Twitter-like platform) with two in five participants using it more than once a day. Other Chinese social media apps including messaging/ videocall app QQ and video sharing sites Youku, Tudou and Bilibili were used regularly but with lower frequency (Table 20). The most frequently used English-language platform was Youtube, with over half of participants using it at least once a day. Facebook was not used regularly by participants (Table 20). A majority of participants spent three or more hours online per day: 11% spend less than 3 hours online, 46% spent between 3 and 6 hours online, and 43% spent more than 6 hours online.

Pornography use and sexually explicit images (sexts)

A majority of participants (71%) had seen online pornography (Table 21). Most respondents saw pornography for the first time during their teens, initially by accident (median age of 12 years for males and 14 years for females) and later intentionally (median age of 14 years for males and 16 years for females). Males most commonly viewed pornography on a weekly basis (43%) and females most commonly viewed it less than monthly (46%) (Table 21). Overall Japanese pornography actors were the most popular among respondents, followed by white and then Chinese actors (Table 21). Most respondents (77%) had never sent or received a sext (Table 21).



Table 20: Internet use by platform and frequency

Apps /websites	n(%) ⁺					
	Several times a day	Once a day	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	Never
WeChat (n=554)	540 (97.5)	6 (1.1)	2 (0.4)	1 (0.2)	3 (0.5)	1 (0.2)
Weibo (n=543)	240 (44.2)	81 (14.9)	72 (13.3)	29 (5.3)	58 (10.7)	61 (11.2)
Renren (n=526)	2 (0.4)	1 (0.2)	4 (0.8)	4 (0.8)	153 (29.1)	351 (66.7)
QQ (n=539)	117 (21.7)	68 (12.6)	81 (15.0)	58 (10.8)	172 (31.9)	35 (6.5)
Facebook (n=535)	69 (12.9)	100 (18.7)	109 (20.4)	66 (12.3)	121 (22.6)	66 (12.3)
Whats App (n=532)	31 (5.8)	24 (4.5)	38 (7.1)	37 (7.0)	103 (19.4)	287 (54.0)
LINE (n=524)	6 (1.2)	7 (1.3)	13 (2.5)	17 (3.2)	98 (18.7)	371 (70.8)
Instagram (n=540)	148 (27.4)	89 (16.5)	97 (18.0)	41 (7.6)	69 (12.8)	91 (16.9)
Twitter (n=531)	14 (2.6)	25 (4.7)	39 (7.3)	50 (9.4)	123 (23.2)	271 (51.0)
Youtube (n=541)	194 (35.9)	106 (19.6)	131 (24.2)	53 (9.8)	28 (5.2)	27 (5.0)
Youku (n=532)	32 (6.0)	53 (10.0)	88 (16.5)	83 (15.6)	178 (33.5)	92 (17.3)
Tudou (n=526)	13 (2.5)	23 (4.4)	45 (8.6)	61 (11.6)	215 (40.9)	161 (30.6)
AcFun (n=528)	12 (2.3)	7 (1.3)	26 (4.9)	45 (8.5)	157 (29.7)	268 (50.8)
Bilibili (n=534)	82 (15.4)	69 (12.9)	79 (14.8)	59 (11.1)	105 (19.7)	132 (24.7)
Dating apps (n=534)	11 (2.1)	14 (2.6)	16 (3.0)	20 (3.8)	83 (15.5)	378 (70.8)

+ Percentages do not total 100 and totals do not tally because “Don’t wish to say” responses have been omitted from the tables when comprising <5% of responses.

Table 21: Pornography use

Variable	Total n (%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Ever seen online pornography	n=162	n=397	n=559
Yes	136 (84)	263 (66.3)	399 (71.4)
No	15 (9.3)	87 (21.9)	102 (18.3)
Not sure	7 (4.3)	37 (9.3)	44 (7.9)
Median age first viewed pornography accidentally	n=145	n=340	n=485
Years	12	14	13
Median age first viewed pornography intentionally	n=145	n=295	n=440
Years	14	16	15
Frequency of viewing pornography in the past 12 months^A	n=141	n=291	n=432
Not at all	4 (2.8)	44 (15.1)	48 (11.1)
Less than monthly	16 (11.4)	133 (45.7)	149 (34.5)
Monthly	36 (25.5)	44 (15.1)	80 (18.5)
Weekly	60 (42.6)	42 (14.4)	102 (23.6)
Daily/almost daily	10 (7.1)	1 (0.3)	11 (2.6)
Don't wish to say	15 (10.6)	27 (9.3)	42 (9.7)
Actors preferred while watching pornography^A	n=140	n=284	n=424
Japanese actors	99 (70.7)	131 (46.1)	230 (54.3)
White actors	52 (37.1)	99 (34.9)	151 (35.6)
Chinese actors	76 (54.3)	61 (21.5)	137 (32.3)
Other Asian actors	16 (11.4)	36 (12.7)	52 (12.3)
Thai actors	3 (2.1)	5 (1.8)	8 (1.9)
Actors of other races	3 (2.1)	10 (3.5)	13 (3.1)
Don't wish to say	18 (12.9)	76 (26.8)	94 (22.2)
Ever sent a sexually explicit image of yourself or another person			
Sent	17 (10.8)	60 (15.5)	77 (14.1)
Received	35 (22.3)	52 (13.4)	87 (16.0)
Neither	111 (70.7)	289 (74.5)	400 (73.4)

A. Among participants who had ever viewed pornography intentionally

Conclusion

Results from the *Intimate attitudes, practices and knowledges* survey provide an insight into the sexual behaviours, knowledge, attitudes, internet use and health service use of Chinese international students in Australia. The results from our sample have identified particular characteristics that contribute to the vulnerability of Chinese international students in relation to their sexual health outcomes. While most participants reported no new sexual partners in Australia, a large minority had engaged in sexual behaviours for the first time since arriving in Australia or had experienced an increase in particular sexual practices. One third had never received sex education, and participants demonstrated poor knowledge of sexually transmitted infections. Half of participants had been in Australia for less than a year, possibly providing little opportunity for them to become familiar with the Australian health system. Few had discussed sexual health with a health provider in Australia, and few who had engaged in penetrative sex had been tested for sexually transmitted infections in Australia. A majority felt that they would benefit from tailored information about the Australian healthcare system for international students, and half felt that they would benefit from tailored information about sexual health specifically.

These results suggest that this population may have unmet needs in terms of sexual health-related service and information provision in Australia. Particular areas that stand out as in need of targeted information provision for this group include:

- Information about STIs: types, symptoms, consequences, treatment and prevention;
- Information about effective contraception and the range of methods available;
- Information about navigating the Australian healthcare system;
- Information about how to access sexual health related services within the Australian healthcare system.

It is our hope that the data presented in this report will be of use to service providers across the higher education, health, and government sectors in developing more effective information and service provision for this growing national youth population in response to the specific gaps identified.







Contact:

Fran Martin: f.martin@unimelb.edu.au

Carol El-Hayek: carol.el-hayek@burnet.edu.au

© the authors, 2019