



# Characteristics of Risky Internet Behavior and Psychological Intervention Methods among College Students in Reproductive Health Management

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**Abstract:** In recent years, the phenomenon of internet dependency among college students in reproductive health management has become increasingly severe, particularly with the widespread adoption of online education, which has significantly increased the time they spend online, exacerbating internet dependency issues. Internet dependency not only affects academic performance and daily life but can also lead to psychological and social problems such as anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. Therefore, early detection of risky internet behavior in students has become an important topic. This paper summarizes the characteristics of risky internet behavior among college students through literature research, including loss of time management, noticeable emotional fluctuations, changes in social behavior, and decline in academic performance. It proposes a series of measures for the early identification and intervention of risky internet behavior, providing references for educators and parents. The results of this study show that early detection of risky internet behavior in college students and active psychological intervention are of great significance.

**Keywords:** risky internet behavior, internet dependency, psychological intervention

## Introduction

In recent years, the phenomenon of internet dependency among college students has become increasingly severe, with the internet becoming an important platform for students' learning, socializing, and entertainment. This trend is also evident among students in the reproductive health management. With the widespread adoption of online education, the time students spend online has significantly increased. Although this change has facilitated learning and communication, it has also exacerbated internet dependency issues. Internet dependency not only affects students' academic performance and daily life but can also lead to a series of psychological and social problems, such as anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. Therefore, early detection of risky internet behavior in students has become an important topic of social concern.

The key to risky internet behavior lies in identifying the tendency of students to excessively use the internet and the negative impacts it brings. Research shows that risky internet behavior typically manifests as loss of time management, noticeable emotional fluctuations, changes in social behavior, and a decline in academic performance. To effectively prevent and intervene in internet dependency issues, it is necessary to closely monitor students' internet usage, promptly identify early signs of risky internet behavior. Early detection and intervention of risky internet behavior among college students are particularly important and require the collective efforts of society.

## 1. Literature Review

### 1.1 Definition and Classification of Internet Dependency

Internet dependency, often referred to as internet addiction or internet addiction disorder, is a psychological health issue characterized by an excessive reliance on internet use, to the extent that it interferes with daily life and functioning [1]. Research indicates that this dependency can lead to emotional issues [2], social impairments [3], sleep disturbances [4], reduced academic and work quality [5], decreased auditory perception [6], and musculoskeletal strain [7]. Key diagnostic features typically include a persistent need for increased internet activity, withdrawal symptoms (such as anxiety and irritability when not online), and internet usage so extensive that it affects an individual's social functioning. In recent years, researchers have further classified internet dependency into categories such as internet gaming addiction, social media addiction, and online shopping addiction.

Internet gaming addiction, also known as internet gaming disorder, is characterized by behavioral and psychological disturbances caused by excessive engagement in online games. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of

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Mental Disorders (DSM-5), this addiction is marked by excessive preoccupation with and compulsive use of online games, resulting in significant impairment in daily life, social interactions, academics, and occupation.

Social media addiction, also referred to as social network addiction, is characterized by behavioral and psychological disturbances caused by excessive use of social media platforms. This addiction manifests as compulsive use of social media, leading to significant impairment in daily life, social interactions, academics, and occupation.

Online shopping addiction, also known as compulsive shopping or shopaholism, is characterized by behavioral and psychological disturbances caused by excessive online shopping. This addiction manifests as a compulsive need and lack of control over online shopping, leading to significant impairment in daily life, social interactions, and financial status.

It is evident that regardless of the type of addiction, they all share characteristics such as a compulsive craving for certain internet behaviors, impact on life functions, negative emotional regulation, and symptoms of tolerance and withdrawal. These behaviors not only affect normal life and work but can also lead to more adverse outcomes. Therefore, attention should be paid to the early manifestations of these abnormal internet behaviors, and early detection and prevention are necessary.

### **1.2 Current Status of Internet Dependency among College Students**

According to the "51st Statistical Report on Internet Development in China," as of December 2022, the age group of 10-29 years old accounted for 28.5% of internet users. In recent years, multiple studies have shown that mobile phone dependency among college students is becoming increasingly severe [8]. Excessive internet use by college students can have serious adverse effects on their physical and mental health, academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and other social functions.

### **1.3 Early Detection of Risky Internet Behavior**

Early detection of risky internet behavior is key to preventing and intervening in internet dependency. Young's Internet Addiction Test (IAT) is widely used to detect internet addiction. Additionally, in recent years, researchers have developed various assessment tools, such as the "Chinese Internet Addiction Scale" compiled by Taiwanese scholar Shu-Hui Chen [9], and the revised version of this scale by Bai Yu and Fan Fumin from Tsinghua University [10].

## **2. Research Methods**

This study uses the literature analysis method, which can comprehensively and systematically summarize and compare existing research findings and provide scientific evidence to support the early identification and psychological intervention of risky internet behavior among college students. By systematically reviewing and summarizing research on internet dependency and its early detection, this study extracts the characteristics of risky internet behavior among college students and their early identification and intervention methods through comparative analysis of different studies.

## **3. Characteristics of Risky Internet Behavior**

According to relevant literature, risky internet behavior among college students is characterized by loss of time management, noticeable emotional fluctuations, changes in social behavior, and a decline in academic performance.

### **3.1 Loss of Time Management**

Loss of time management is one of the most significant characteristics of internet dependency among college students. These students spend a large amount of time online and cannot effectively manage their study and life schedules. This loss of control is manifested in excessive time spent on non-essential internet activities, such as browsing social media, indulging in online games, and watching videos for extended periods [11]. These behaviors take up a lot of time that should be spent on studying and resting, leading to chaotic time management and inability to complete academic tasks on time [12]. In this state, students often feel anxious and guilty because they realize they have wasted a lot of time but cannot control themselves. This guilt further undermines their self-esteem and confidence, trapping them in a vicious cycle. Students may start to avoid reality and choose to continue immersing themselves in the online world to temporarily relieve their inner anxiety and stress. This avoidance behavior makes it more difficult for them to get back on track, exacerbating the loss of time management.

Additionally, due to long hours online, students' sleep time is compressed, and they often stay up late. Lack of sufficient rest leads to fatigue during the day, difficulty concentrating, frequent emotional fluctuations, and even depression and anxiety. Long-term exposure to this state not only affects academic performance but also negatively impacts daily life and interpersonal relationships, further deepening students' feelings of loneliness and helplessness.

### **3.2 Emotional Fluctuations**

Emotional fluctuations are another noticeable characteristic of internet dependency. College students who are heavily addicted to the internet often exhibit significant emotional fluctuations, such as anxiety, depression, and irritability. The reasons for these emotional fluctuations can be multifaceted.

On the one hand, excessive stimulation and information overload on the internet may lead to emotional overreaction and fatigue. During the continuous reception of large amounts of information, students' brains remain highly active, unable to rest, leading to decreased emotional regulation ability and more intense and unpredictable emotional reactions. On the other hand, when students leave the internet, they may experience strong feelings of emptiness and loss, feeling unable to find alternative activities in real life to satisfy their inner needs [13]. This sense of emptiness after disconnecting from the internet makes them feel lost and lonely, further exacerbating emotional fluctuations.

Moreover, negative experiences such as frustration in virtual social interactions and cyberbullying can further exacerbate students' emotional problems. Interpersonal interactions in the virtual world often lack the emotional support and understanding found in real life, making students feel more helpless and desperate when facing setbacks. Victims of cyberbullying are more likely to feel isolated and rejected, with deeper and more lasting psychological harm.

Studies show a significant correlation between internet dependency and mental health issues, with internet dependents more likely to experience symptoms of anxiety and depression. These students' emotional fluctuations not only manifest in intense changes in emotions but also accompany inner self-doubt and helplessness. They may often get caught in a vortex of negative emotions, unable to escape, which further affects their daily lives and academic performance.

### **3.3 Abnormal Social Behavior**

Internet dependency also significantly impacts the social behavior of college students<sup>[14]</sup>. Internet dependents tend to reduce face-to-face social activities, relying more on the internet for social interaction. This change in social behavior can lead to estranged relationships with family, friends, and classmates, gradually weakening their real-life social networks.

In such cases, students may feel a deep sense of isolation as they gradually lose contact with intimate relationships in real life. Although they may have many "friends" online, these relationships often lack depth and genuine emotional support. Students may spend a lot of time communicating with strangers or virtual friends to escape the loneliness and stress of real life. However, this behavior often makes them more isolated and distant as they neglect important real-life relationships.

This change in social behavior not only affects their social skills but also increases feelings of loneliness and the occurrence of social phobia<sup>[15]</sup>. Students may become less adept at handling real-life social situations due to long-term lack of face-to-face social interaction, developing fear and avoidance of social occasions. Over-reliance on virtual social interactions may also create a false sense of security and belonging, further deepening their internet dependency as they gain temporary satisfaction and false recognition in the online world.

At the same time, students may experience inner conflict and contradiction, desiring genuine emotional connections and support on one hand, while being unwilling or unable to break free from the internet's grip on the other. This contradictory psychological state keeps them oscillating between the real and virtual worlds, making emotional fluctuations more obvious and frequent, further affecting their mental health and daily life.

### **3.4 Decline in Academic Performance**

One of the direct consequences of excessive internet use is a significant decline in students' academic performance and classroom behavior. Students who invest a large amount of time and energy in online activities tend to have reduced study time and impaired concentration. In the classroom, internet-dependent students often exhibit distractibility and difficulty focusing on the teacher's instructions and learning tasks.

These students may experience internal anxiety and pressure as they recognize their academic decline but struggle to control their internet dependency. This internal conflict makes it even more challenging for them to concentrate in class, leading to low listening efficiency and scattered attention. After class, due to spending a lot of time online, they lack sufficient time and energy to complete assignments and review coursework, resulting in academic neglect.

This academic neglect is eventually reflected in their exam scores and overall academic performance. Each time they face exams and assignments, they may feel a deep sense of helplessness and self-blame, believing they cannot break free from the internet's grip, thus falling into a vicious cycle. Studies have shown a negative correlation between internet dependency and academic performance—the higher the degree of internet dependency, the poorer the academic performance. Over time, this self-blame and helplessness may gradually turn into complete disappointment and abandonment of their studies, further affecting their mental health and future development.

## **4. Early Detection and Psychological Intervention Methods for Risky Internet Behavior**

Early detection of internet dependency issues among college students is crucial for preventing and intervening in internet addiction.

### **4.1 Early Detection of Abnormalities**

Monitoring risky internet behavior among college students through various methods is of great significance. This can be done through the following aspects: ①Behavior Monitoring and Analysis: By monitoring students' online behaviors and analyzing data such as visited websites, searched keywords, and online duration, potential risky behaviors can be identified. For example, frequent visits to specific types of websites or prolonged internet use late at night may signal risky behaviors. ②Psychological Assessment Tools: Using standardized psychological assessment tools, such as the Internet Addiction Test (IAT) and the Chinese Internet Addiction Scale (CIAS), to regularly evaluate users' psychological states and detect internet addiction or other risky internet behaviors early. ③Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence: Utilizing machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies to build user behavior models, predicting and identifying abnormal behaviors. For instance, analyzing language patterns and emotional changes on social media can reveal users' emotional fluctuations and potential psychological issues. ④Parental and School Monitoring: Parents and schools can install monitoring software to restrict and monitor college students' internet behaviors, detecting and intervening in potential risky behaviors in a timely manner. ⑤Network Community and Peer Monitoring: Encouraging mutual monitoring and reporting of suspicious behaviors among network community members and peers to create a safe and supportive online environment. For example, social media platforms can provide reporting features, allowing users to report content suspected of self-harm or other risky behaviors. ⑥Psychological Health Education: Raising awareness and

self-protection consciousness of risky internet behaviors through psychological health education. Educating users on how to identify and avoid risky internet behaviors and fostering healthy internet usage habits. ⑦Data Analysis and Monitoring Platforms: Establishing professional data analysis and monitoring platforms that integrate multi-source data (e.g., social media, search engines, online forums) to detect trends and individual cases of risky internet behavior through big data analysis.

#### 4.2 Psychological Intervention Measures

Psychological intervention is an important method to help students cope with internet dependency. Through professional psychological intervention, educators can deeply understand students' psychological states and internet usage conditions, providing targeted support and intervention. Specific intervention methods include:①Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): Through individual and group therapy, helping students establish healthy internet usage habits and providing skills to cope with real-life stress and emotional distress. The goal is to help students identify and change negative thinking patterns and behavioral habits. ②Motivational Interviewing (MI): By discussing the pros and cons of their internet use with students, stimulating their desire for self-change, and developing specific behavior change plans. The goal is to enhance students' intrinsic motivation to change their behavior. ③Mindfulness Therapy: Through mindfulness meditation and practice, helping students remain calm and self-controlled when facing internet temptations, reducing impulsive behaviors. The goal is to improve students' awareness and control over their internet usage behaviors. ④Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT): Through therapy, helping students handle interpersonal conflicts and improve social skills, enhancing the support of real-life social networks. The goal is to improve students' real-life interpersonal relationships, reducing the motivation for internet dependency. ⑤Group Therapy: Organizing support groups for internet-dependent students to share experiences and coping strategies, building mutual support relationships. The goal is to provide emotional support and behavioral models through group interaction.

#### 5. Conclusion

Internet dependency has become a widespread issue among college students, and early detection and intervention of risky internet behaviors are crucial. Through methods such as questionnaires and behavior observation, students' tendencies toward internet dependency can be identified early, and corresponding intervention measures can be taken. Future research can further explore the deep-seated causes of internet dependency and its intervention strategies to help college students establish healthy internet usage habits.

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