



# Reasons and Countermeasures of Short Video Addiction --A Case Study of Chinese Teenagers

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**Abstract.** At present, there is little research on the new type of Internet Addiction—short video addiction, the psychological mechanism and causes of short video addiction, and the research on the causes of short video addiction from multiple angles. This paper takes Chinese teenagers as an example to explore the causes of short video addiction and give corresponding suggestions. The object of this study is Chinese teenagers. Through reading literature and collecting previous data, this paper expounds on the phenomenon of short video and short video addiction, and explores the causes of short video addiction from multiple perspectives of psychology. Finally, the factors affecting short video addiction in Chinese teenagers are explained and the corresponding suggestions against addiction are given in this paper.

**Keywords:** Short video · Teenagers · Short video addiction · Reasons · CounterMeasures

## 1 Introduction

China is in the era of “Internet plus”. The number of short video users in China is 934 million [1], of which the number of adolescent short video users is rising. It is particularly important to prevent and explore adolescent people’s short video addiction. At present, there are many studies on the psychological mechanism and influencing factors of Internet addiction, but there are few studies on the new type of Internet Addiction—short video addiction. With the rapid development of the short video market, the rise of short video apps, and the increase of short video users year by year, it has become an indispensable way of leisure in people’s life. Because of the development of Internet technology and the economy, Chinese teenagers can access the internet almost every day, and even have mobile phones and tablet mobile electronic products. Chinese teenagers are the main force of short video users. Teenagers lack self-control and do not stabilize moral values. From 2019 to the current epidemic, teenagers have more time to watch short videos. Lack of control is easy to form short video addiction. Addiction causes great harm to teenagers’ bodies and minds. By reading relevant literature and collecting relevant data, this paper discusses the causes of Chinese teenagers’ short video addiction from the aspects of personality, parent-child and peer relationship, social needs, stress

response, Bandwagon Effect and Fear of Missing Out from the perspective of psychology and puts forward corresponding suggestions. This paper expounds on the reasons affecting teenagers' short film addiction, provides multi-angle ideas for the research of short film addiction, enriches the research scope of short film addiction, and puts forward various suggestions to prevent teenagers' addiction.

## 2 Analysis of the Phenomenon of Short Video Addiction

### 2.1 Development Status of Short Video

The definition of a short video on the social beta website: "the short video is a new video form whose length is counted in seconds, which mainly relies on mobile intelligent terminals to realize rapid shooting and beautification editing, and can be shared and seamlessly connected in real-time on social media platforms" [2]. A short video is a medium for sharing content on the Internet [3]. It is an emerging social media. Users create online short videos through application platforms and realize sharing and collaboration functions [4]. Chinese scholars define short videos as videos with relatively short lengths. There are no strict regulations on the length of videos. The mainstream view holds that a video with a duration of fewer than 5 min [5].

It is a new way of text expression [6]. The short video originated in the United States. YouTube, Viddy and other video platforms, as early short video communication carriers, have been favored by communicators. The emergence of short video in China was relatively late, which began in 2005, but developed rapidly [7].

Since China met with COVID-19 in 2019, China has adopted strict epidemic prevention measures, and people are at-home quarantine. People's life is inseparable from a short video. It is affecting and integrating people's life at an unprecedented speed, accelerating the development of short videos.

### 2.2 Current Situation of Short Video Addiction Among Chinese Teenagers

Short video addiction is a new form of Internet addiction, because the repeated use of short video apps leads to a chronic or periodic obsession state, and produces a strong and continuous sense of desire and dependence [8]. It is an unusual habit and hobby formed by the long hours of watching short videos [9]. Short video addiction is mainly manifested as: continuously watching short videos for a long time accompanied by self-blame, constantly uninstalling and re-downloading short video software, having the consciousness to control Swipe the video but unable to control their Swipe the video behavior [10].

In China, it is generally believed that adolescence is 11–18 years old [11]. But at present, college students are still in the stage of psychological immaturity, and 18–21 years old is the later stage of adolescence. Therefore, this study defines the concept of teenagers as those who are between 12 and 24 years old, tend to be adults physically, but are not really mature psychologically.

According to the data in the 2018 survey report on Chinese teenagers' Internet use and network security, 20.49% almost always watch short videos (Age-old: 13–18 years)

[12]. According to the survey data, 32.69% of teenagers use Kwai APP frequently (many times a day), 29.33% of teenagers often use (almost every day), 19.23% of teenagers occasionally use Kwai APP, and only 18.75% of teenagers rarely use Kwai APP. In addition, the average time that teenagers watch Kwai APP is more than half an hour, accounting for 35.58% [13]. The detection rate of College Students' short video addiction symptoms is 21.6%, which is lower than 49.8 and 37.9% measured by Leung's mobile phone addiction scale in recent years. Short video addiction is one of the types of mobile phone addiction [8].

Therefore, it is very important to explore the causes and mechanisms of adolescent short video addiction and give intervention suggestions.

### 3 On the Causes of Short Video Addiction Among Chinese Teenagers

#### 3.1 Relationship Between Addiction and Personality

In the past few years, more and more studies have revealed the role of personality traits in the formation of Internet addiction. Neuroticism, low self-esteem, introversion, shyness and poor self-control are related to Internet addiction [14]. Neuroticism is a core aspect of borderline personality [15]. Some studies have revealed the relationship between short video addiction and personality. Neuroticism is the high-risk factor for short video addiction, and agreeableness and conscientiousness are the protective factors to reduce short video addiction. The study also found that the stronger the agreeableness, the weaker the individual's short video addiction [8]. Addiction is the result of the interaction between people and short videos, so people with different personality characteristics will have different reactions to short videos.

#### 3.2 Addiction and Parent-Child and Peer Relationship

A bad parent-child relationship may affect the adaptive development of teenagers. Research evidence shows that there is a significant positive correlation between parental neglect and adolescent mobile phone addiction [16]. Parental phubbing can lead to teenagers becoming addicted to electronic devices [17]. In the process of parent-child interaction, if parents focus on mobile phones rather than healthy parent-child communication, teenagers may feel rejected by their parents, so they are more inclined to escape the real world and obtain psychological satisfaction through the rich short video content on the Internet. Studies have shown that with the improvement of peer communication, the impact of parental scolding and relative deprivation on adolescents' short format video addiction is weakened. Therefore, parental infidelity is an important risk factor for adolescent short video addiction. Peer communication significantly moderated the association between parental relative deprivation and adolescent short video addiction.

### 3.3 Social Needs

Addiction may be due to a sense of belonging. Relying on social media to fill the psychological gap in an individual's lonely life may lead to addiction [18]. The social compensation hypothesis assumes that people with high social anxiety and low social ability will often use virtual socialization to compensate for the lack of interpersonal relationships [19]. Teenagers' anonymity on a short video platforms can effectively reduce the level of social anxiety and meet their social needs. Based on the number of video likes, there will be different types of videos in short videos. Facing the number of likes will enable teenagers to gain self-identity, think what they like is recognized, and meet the needs of a sense of belonging.

### 3.4 Stress Response

In adolescence, adolescents' immature self-regulation combined with motivational processes may increase the likelihood of addiction [20]. Internet addiction is also related to self-avoidance tendency, lack of self-control, emotional regulation disorder and negative coping with stress [21]. Nowadays, Chinese students are under great academic pressure and many students are involved in the rat race. Students may escape and respond negatively in the face of pressure. They will choose online entertainment to release the pressure. They can temporarily get rid of the negative impact of real-life pressure by using short format video applications [22]. Short videos are very short and fast-paced and usually focus on relaxed content, which can help them temporarily forget their stress and troubles. They can get happiness and reduce pain by Swipe videos many times. Short videos have become a reinforcement for teenagers. Skinner found that the reinforcement effect of indefinite time and the indefinite ratio is the best, and once the behavior is learned, it is difficult to subside. This kind of enhancement process of indefinite timing and the indefinite ratio is that when users brush short videos, they can't know which short videos they like to see. This will make people constantly swipe short videos and cause short video addiction.

### 3.5 Bandwagon Effect

“Bandwagon Effect” refers to the behavior that an individual makes consistent with the majority of the group under the influence of the people around him. At this stage, teenagers like to be innovative and use new social media applications to prove that they are fashionable, such as short video apps. Many teenagers will use short video apps and watch videos they think are fashionable to people around them. In addition to the “online celebrity”, “Idol” fans and rice circle culture, stars and online celebrities will appear in the short video app, which will drive teenagers to watch short videos and can't stop, which increases the possibility of short video addiction.

### 3.6 Fear of Missing Out

The motivation to gain new experiences and take risks often puts teenagers at risk [23]. ‘Fear of Missing Out’ refers to an anxiety state caused by an individual's fear of missing

other people's novel experiences or new events [24]. Studies have shown that the higher the level of individual fear of missing out, the easier it is to use social networks to pay attention to others or information, resulting in excessive use of social networks. Teenagers are in a socially sensitive stage and need to prove that they know a lot of new things and entertainment information in the peer group to obtain recognition. Through the survey, it is found that because short videos can meet the needs of young students to obtain entertainment information, they will keep using short video apps and continue to strengthen, resulting in short video addiction.

## 4 The Hazards and Countermeasures For Short Video Addiction

### 4.1 Hazards

A large number of empirical evidence shows that Internet addiction will have many negative effects and internalization problems [25]. Internet addiction can also damage your cognition [26]. Internet addiction also has influential external behavioral problems [27]. Cognitive impairment is irreversible. In the face of adolescent development, some physiological damage, such as visual impairment and sleep disorder, is very harmful. Chinese teenagers have high academic pressure, distraction and improper time management, which are not conducive to learning [28]. Teenagers will have a lot of procrastination behavior. Procrastination will increase the level of anxiety, reduce academic performance and be detrimental to mental health. In serious cases, they may be tired of school, drop out of school, have depression, and so on. Research on addiction has confirmed that addiction may have negative effects on users' health, such as mental health problems, decreased learning and work performance, and poor quality of interpersonal relationships [29].

### 4.2 Countermeasures

#### 4.2.1 Selective Viewing of Short Videos

When users watch short videos, the platform will accurately push similar short videos to users according to their viewing records, which will cause users to watch videos with similar content all the time. Teenagers' morals are not perfect, which is very unfavorable to the construction of teenagers' values. It is easy for teenagers to become extreme. People should also avoid the phenomenon of information cocoon room. Information cocoon room refers to the phenomenon that people's attention to the information field will be habitually guided by their own interests, so as to shackle their life to a "cocoon room" like a cocoon [30]. People should help teenagers choose suitable videos to watch, make rational use of short video platforms, choose high-quality nutritious videos, or choose videos with speculative thinking to guide teenagers to watch.

#### 4.2.2 Focus on Teenagers with Neurotic Tendencies

According to the relationship between personality characteristics and short video addiction, the current situation of short video addiction urgently needs to be paid great attention

to by schools and education management departments. People should focus on the short video use of individuals with strong neurotic tendencies, and avoid the addiction caused by neurotic users' excessive use of short video platforms from the source. Teachers should often communicate with and care for such students. Facing short video addiction teens, people can ask professionals to take corresponding intervention measures.

#### **4.2.3 Parent-Child and Peer Relationship**

IN the parent-child and peer relationship, parents should avoid excessive use of mobile phones, give children enough attention, actively participate in parent-child activities with children, and give children enough emotional needs. Parents should appropriately guide the use of short video platforms, prohibit children from using short video platforms excessively, and avoid accelerating teenagers' short video addiction due to the increase of relative deprivation. Teenagers should actively keep in touch with their peers. In the face of the pressure of life and learning, they should communicate with their peers in time, actively solve problems, avoid escapism and choose short videos.

#### **4.2.4 EncourAge Participation in Real-Life Relationships and Activities**

IN the face of the need for online virtual social networking, teachers and parents should encourage teenagers to establish real interpersonal relationships. Encouraging teenagers to maintain stable relationships with family and friends can help improve social skills and expand social networks, so as to reduce social anxiety and loneliness. Therefore, teachers and parents should require teenagers to participate in sports, social and academic campus activities.

#### **4.2.5 Correct Cognition of Short Video Addiction**

According to Ellis's theory, people's emotions are not caused by the induced event, but by the individual's cognition, interpretation and evaluation of the event, so addiction is the result of the interaction between people and short videos. Schools, society and parents should guide young students to reshape their cognition, make them aware of the reasons for short video addiction, their subjective activities on short videos, encourage them to find out the reasons, inform the harm of addiction, and guide them step by step to stay away from short video addiction.

### **5 Conclusion**

This paper introduces the current situation of Chinese teenagers' short video addiction and explains the factors affecting teenagers' addiction from the perspective of psychology, including teenagers' personality, parent-child and peer relationship, social needs, stress response, Bandwagon Effect and Fear of Missing Out. This paper puts forward the corresponding suggestions to prevent short video addiction: Parents guide teenagers to watch short videos selectively; Focus on neurotic teenagers because they are more likely to become addicted; Parents should pay enough emotional attention and actively participate in parent-child activities. Let children watch short videos moderately and

encourage communication with peers; Encourage teenagers to participate in real social activities and establish real interpersonal relationships; Guide teenagers to establish correct cognition of short video addiction and help them stay away from short video addiction.

The influencing factors of short video addiction are complex and require comprehensive exploration of a variety of theories and interdisciplinary research. This paper is not confirmatory, there is no experiment, and it is not a causal study. It is only to explain and explore the phenomenon of short video addiction among Chinese teenagers according to the theory and effect. After that, the research can conduct causal research on the influencing factors of short video addiction.

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