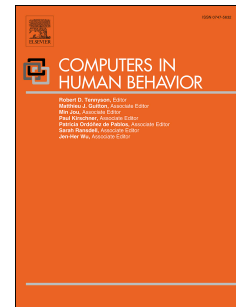


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Do Individuals with Problematic and Non-problematic Internet Game Use Differ in Cooperative Behaviors with Partners of Different Social Distances? Evidence from the Prisoner's Dilemma and Chicken Game

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ABSTRACT: Numerous studies have reported deficits in non-social decision-making tasks and reward-related impulsivity in individuals with problematic Internet game use (PIGU). However, those findings may not generalize to situations that involve social interactions. Therefore, this study aimed to examine how PIGU may relate to behavior during cooperative dilemmas and the potential moderating influences of social distance. Twenty-three subjects with PIGU and 23 with occasional Internet game use (OIGU) were recruited to participate in the experiment. Participants played *League of Legends* cooperatively with one of their real-life friends and one strange confederate game-mate under non-face-to-face conditions, and then completed Prisoner's Dilemma (PD) and Chicken Game (CG) tasks with their friend, game-mate, and stranger, respectively. Results showed no between-group difference on cooperation in the PD, but participants with PIGU (as compared to those with OIGU) exhibited lower cooperation during the CG. Compared with friends and stranger partners, short-time cooperation in online gaming did not improve cooperation toward game-mates in the PD, but elevated cooperation in the PIGU group toward game-mates in the CG. The results of this work suggest that risk-taking-related preferences in individuals with PIGU may extend to some aspects of social decision-making.

Keywords: Problematic Internet game use; Internet gaming disorder; cooperation; Prisoner's Dilemma; Chicken Game; risk preference

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