Abstract

Background: Problematic Internet use in adolescents has become an issue of concern for a growing number of researchers and institutions over the past years. Behavioural problems, social isolation, school failure and family problems are some of the consequences of psychological and behavioural impact on teenagers. Taking into account the interest that this issue has generated at many levels, the aim of this paper is to develop a screening tool for early detection of problematic Internet use in teenagers.

Method: A survey of Compulsory Secondary School students from Galicia involving a total of 2,339 individuals was carried out.

Results: The results obtained allow (1) gauging the magnitude of the problem, establishing the risk levels among the adolescents, and (2) presenting a new, simple and short screening instrument.

Conclusions: The present scale has sufficient theoretical and empirical support, including good psychometric properties (\(\alpha = .83\); specificity = .81; sensitivity = .80; ROC curve = .90), making it an interesting applied tool.

Keywords
Screening, early detection, evaluation, Internet, adolescents