

## **Factors Influencing University Students' Online Disinhibition Behavior: The Moderating Effects of Deterrence and Social Identity**

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**Abstract :** This study adopts deterrence theory as well as social identities as moderators, and explores their moderating affects on online toxic disinhibition. Survey and Experimental methodologies are applied to test the research model and four hypotheses are developed in this study. The controllability of identity positively influenced the behavior of toxic disinhibition both in experimental and control groups while the fluidity of the identity did not have significant influences on online disinhibition. Punishment certainty, punishment severity as well as social identity negatively moderated the relation between the controllability of the identity and the toxic disinhibition. The result of this study shows that internet users hide their real identities when they behave inappropriately on internet, but once they acknowledge that the inappropriate behavior will be found and punished severely, the inappropriate behavior then will be weakened.

**Keywords :** seductive properties of internet, online disinhibition, punishment certainty, punishment severity, social identity

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