SOS on SNS: Adolescent distress on social network sites

# Details

## Year

2017

## DOI

10.1016/j.chb.2016.11.025

## Issued

2017

## Language

English

## Volume

68

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Computers in Human Behavior

## Publisher

Elsevier BV

## Topics

Wellbeing

## Sample

The participants were 413 Israeli adolescents. They were recruited from a large national panel sample (with over 100,000 active adolescent members) that is subjected to state privacy law and ethic norms. Participation was on a first-come, first-served basis and was closed once the goal of 400 adolescent participants with SNS accounts was reached, while safeguarding a representative breakdown of gender (53.8% girls), age (M = 15.42, SD = 1.37), and religious sectors (46.5% secular, 22.5% traditional,1 29.8% religious, 0.2% ultra-orthodox, 1% other).

# Abstract

Psychological distress and experiences of peer victimization and social rejection are common among
adolescents. Nevertheless, the growing popularity of online Social Network Sites (SNS) among adolescents
offers an unprecedented opportunity for early detection of adolescents' distress. This study
examined the scope of, and the individual differences that may be associated with, distress sharing on
SNS. A total of 413 adolescents (mean age ¼ 15.42, 53.8% girls) completed three questionnaires assessing
(a) social media usage, (b) distress sharing on SNS, and (c) feelings of social rejection. More than 15% of
the sample shared personal distress and searched for help on SNS. Distress sharing did not differ between
genders. Social rejection predicted distress sharing on SNS. Notably, social rejection and distress
sharing were only associated among individuals with high social media use scores. Implications are
discussed for early identification of adolescents' distress.

# Outcome

participants in the current study (Ophir, 2017) were found to be frequent users of SNS. More than ninety percent (90.8%) of the sample use SNS on a daily basis, and 15.3% reported that they share their personal distress and seek help on SNS. Distress sharing on SNS did not differ between genders.distress sharing on SNS was found to be associated with social media use and with feelings of social rejection. Second, social rejection had a unique contribution to the prediction of distress sharing on SNS beyond the expected
effects of social media use. Third, an interaction effect was found. The relationship between social rejection and distress sharing on SNS is moderated by levels of social media use. Social rejection and distress sharing on SNS were significantly associated only among individuals with high social media use scores.