Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder‐Symptoms, Social Media Use Intensity, and Social Media Use Problems in Adolescents: Investigating Directionality

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## Sample

" In the first wave, 543 adolescents from the first and second year of two secondary schools participated in the study. Both schools were based in the Netherlands: one school was located in medium-sized city and the other was located in a large city. Participants were
between 11 and 15 years old (Mage = 12.91, SDage = .73). Of this sample, 293 adolescents (54%) participated in all three waves, 198 (36%) in two waves, and 52 (10%) in one wave. Nonresponse was mainly due to dropout of entire school classes and not due to individual selection, because teachers were absent, or because teachers were not able to schedule time for the completion of the survey. During the first wave, school year and gender were evenly distributed (51% first year students, 52% girls). Adolescents attending pre-university education (48%) and adolescents with two Dutch parents (84%) were somewhat overrepresented compared to the composition of the Dutch adolescent population in the first 2 years of secondary school (26% and 73%, respectively; Statistics Netherlands, 2018)" (Boer et al., 2020, p. 855)

# Abstract

Abstract
Cross-sectional research shows that adolescents’ social media use (SMU) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)-symptoms are related, but it is unclear whether this relation is explained by SMU intensity or by addiction-like SMU problems. Also, due to the lack of longitudinal studies, the direction of this relation remains unknown. This study aims to disentangle which type of SMU is related to ADHD-symptoms, and in which direction, using a three-wave longitudinal study among Dutch adolescents aged 11–15 years (n = 543). Findings suggest a unidirectional relation: SMU problems increased ADHD-symptoms over time, SMU intensity did not. This implies that problematic use, rather than the intensity of use harmfully affects adolescents’ ADHD-symptoms.

# Outcome

"Over time, SMU problems, but not SMU intensity, increased ADHD-symptoms. Specifically, we consistently found that adolescents, whose SMU problems increased, also experienced increased attention deficits 1 year later. Adolescents’ increased SMU problems at T2 also increased their impulsivity at T3. Yet, adolescents whose ADHD-symptoms increased neither reported increased SMU intensity 1 year later nor did they report increased SMU problems 1 year later" (Boer et al., 2020, p. 860)