Video gaming in a hyperconnected world: A cross-sectional study of heavy gaming, problematic gaming symptoms, and online socializing in adolescents

# Details

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## Topics

## Sample

"We aggregated data from the 2009-12 study years combined for the current cross-sectional study. The final sample contained 439 classes from thirty schools." (Coldler Carras et al., 2017, p. 473)
"Of this sample, 48.8% were male and 82.1% were of Dutch background; the average age was 14.1." (Coldler Carras et al., 2017, p. 474)

# Abstract

Aims
Examining online social interactions along with patterns of video gaming behaviors and game addiction symptoms has the potential to enrich our understanding of disorders related to excessive video game play.
Methods
We performed latent class analysis in a sample of 9733 adolescents based on heavy use of games, social networking and instant messaging, and game addiction symptoms. We used latent class regression to determine associations between classes, psychosocial well-being and friendship quality.
Results
We identified two types of heavy gaming classes that differed in probability of online social interaction. Classes with more online social interaction reported fewer problematic gaming symptoms than those with less online social interaction. Most adolescents estimated to be in heavy gaming classes had more depressive symptoms than normative classes. Male non-social gamers had more social anxiety. Female social gamers had less social anxiety and loneliness, but lower self-esteem. Friendship quality attenuated depression in some male social gamers, but strengthened associations with loneliness in some male non-social gamers.
Conclusions
In adolescents, symptoms of video game addiction depend not only on video game play but also on concurrent levels of online communication, and those who are very socially active online report fewer symptoms of game addiction

# Outcome

"Using a data-driven, person-centered approach, we found support for our first hypothesis, that including information about online social interaction provided a meaningful way to distinguish subgroups of heavy gamers into those reporting more or fewer problems. Using this approach, gamers could be separated into social and non-social classes, with social classes reporting fewer or no feelings of problematic use at equivalent levels of play." (Coldler Carras et al., 2017, p. 476)
"Consistent with our second study hypothesis, we found differences in well-being across gaming subgroups, such that non-social classes were associated with lower levels of psychosocial wellbeing. Importantly, before friendship quality was taken into account, all heavy gaming classes in both boys and girls were associated with more depressive symptoms" (Coldler Carras et al., 2017, p. 477)
"We found support for our third hypothesis, that classes with high online social interaction would have better friendship quality, only in females, where Social Engaged gamers were found to have higher-quality friendships both on-and offline compared to the Normative class. In fact, some classes that were less active on social networking and instant messaging reported high online friendship quality, either in the presence of low-quality real-life (male Problematic Gamers) or high quality real-life (male At-Risk Gamers) friendships"(Coldler Carras et al., 2017, p. 477)