Time to abandon internet addiction? Predicting problematic internet, game, and social media use from psychosocial well-being and application use

# Details

## Year

2017

## Issued

2017

## Language

English

## Volume

14

## Issue

1

## Start Page

## End Page

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Clinical Neuropsychiatry

## Topics

## Sample

N=3945
"The sample contains 50% boys, distributed over the first grades (ages 12-13, 46%) and second grade (ages 13-14, 54%) of Dutch secondary schools. Pre-vocational training (low educational level, 57%) was most prevalent, compared to pre-college/university training (high educational level, 43%)." (van Rooij et al., 2017, p. 115)

# Abstract

Objective: There have long been indications that those with problems controlling their Internet use manifest those problems in relation to specific applications. The current study empirically explores the option of abandoning a unified approach to problematic ‘Internet use’, by splitting the concept into more specific application level measurement. Method: The current study used self-report survey data, collected from Dutch adolescents (aged 12-15, N=3945). Two Structural Equation Models predicted either problematic Internet use (model 1) or both problematic game use and problematic social media use (model 2). Problematic use of the Internet/games/social media was assessed with three abbreviated 6-item versions of the CIUS. Predictors included computer-activity use type in hours per week, depressive mood, loneliness, social anxiety, negative self-esteem, and general life-satisfaction. Results: Problematic Internet use was associated with both social and gaming activities, as well as depressive mood. In the split model, problematic social media use was associated with three types of social, Internet behavior (social networking, Twitter, and instant messenger) and depressive mood, while problematic gaming was associated with both online (Internet) and offline gaming, as well as by gender (male) and depressive mood. Conclusions: The more specific problematic social media use and problematic game use measures provide a less ambiguous and clearer picture that also reveals the role of gender within problematic game use. This provides some evidence to support splitting up measures of problematic Internet use into more specific measures in the future.

# Outcome

"Problematic Internet use was associated with both social and gaming activities, as well as depressive mood. In the split model, problematic social media use was associated with three types of social, Internet behavior (social networking, Twitter, and instant messenger) and depressive mood, while problematic gaming was associated with both online (Internet) and offline gaming, as well as by gender (male) and depressive mood." (van Rooij et al., 2017, p. 113)