Author's response to reviews

Title: Perceived problems with computer gaming and internet use among adolescents: measurement tool for non-clinical survey studies

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Resubmission of the manuscript "Problematic computer gaming, console-gaming, and internet use among adolescents: new measurement tool and association with time use"

Dear editor

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to re-submit this manuscript. Please find our response to the reviewers' comments below.

On behalf of the authors
Bjørn Holstein
Professor

Reviewer 1:

Comment 1: Thank you for sending me this revised manuscript for review. Several changes were requested by all 3 reviewers. The authors have attempted to address a frequently raised issue about the clinical validity of the measure. Primarily, the authors have attempted to revise the manuscript by "rebranding" the measure as a "non-clinical" measure. I have some reservations about the purpose and relevance of a measure that purports to measure "problems" but not "clinical" problems. It becomes very unclear what we mean by problems.

Response: It is correct that we attempted a rebranding of the manuscript because we learned from the reviewers' comments that we had not been able to communicate the real purpose of our work. We are involved in survey studies of
adolescents' health and everyday life. In this work, we felt a need to address how adolescents themselves perceive their screen-based activities. We follow the tradition from studies of adolescents perceptions of other activities such as physical activity, leisure time, drinking and smoking. From a health education point of view is is useful to know the perceptions of a target group. We have explained this motive in the revised manuscript.

Further, we realise that the term "Problematic computer gaming" may cause confusion because this terminology is close to the terminology of the DSM-5. Therefore, we have changed this term to "problems related to computer gaming" in the description of our own study (but not when we refer to other studies about problematic computer gaming). Accordingly, we have also changed the title of the manuscript: Perceived problems with computer gaming and internet use among adolescents: measurement tool for non-clinical survey studies".

Comment 2: Accordingly, the conclusion of the paper is difficult to make sense of: "Most schoolchildren who spent much time with gaming and internet use did not experience problems but increasing time use was associated with increasing risk of perceived problems." This is a core measurement problem: What are perceived problems vs problems vs excessive use? For this reason, I am reluctant to approve of this manuscript. If the authors are not presenting a "clinical" measure (i.e., aligned with a disorder) then the purpose of the measure is very limited.

Response: We agree that this is confusing because the sentence deals with two separate issues. We have reformulated the conclusion in order to address each issue separately.

We still convinced that some adolescents perceive problems related to their gaming and computer use which are not manifestations of pathology. We have attempted to explain this issue in the revised manuscript.

Reviewer 3:

Comment: Thank you very much for sending me the revised version of this manuscript. Although I have been quite critical of the first version of this manuscript, I must admit that the authors have done a very good job when revising the manuscript according to the reviewers' comments. Coming from a perspective of child and adolescent psychiatry, the previous version did not clarify what the manuscript really was about and how this research might add to current knowledge. However, the revised version does much better clarify the public health perspective and non-pathological approach which helps understand the study and the respective results. Since the authors aim to publish this article in a journal of public health and not a journal of child and adolescent psychiatry, I feel that the manuscript in its current version may be suitable for publication in this journal.

Response: Thank you for your kind response to the re-written manuscript.

Minor Essential Revisions: As required, the introduction and the first paragraph of
the discussion now includes some background on clinical criteria. However, these statements are not completely correct:

1) Criteria for Internet Addiction or pathological Internet use are not only drawn from criteria of substance-related addiction or dependency but also from criteria of pathological gambling.

Response: We read the DSM-5 and realise that our explanation was insufficient. This is now corrected in the revised manuscript.

2) In addition, the first paragraph of the discussion now includes DSM-IV instead of DSM-5 which has been released for a while and should be acknowledged as the current American classification.

Response: Thank you for your information. We revised the manuscript and now use DSM-5 as source.