Reviewer’s report

Title: Gender differences in the associations between age trends of social media interaction and well-being among 10-15 year olds in the UK

Version: 1 Date: 20 Feb 2017

Reviewer: Eline Frison

Reviewer's report:

The present paper investigates gender differences in the associations between age trends of social media use and well-being among 10-15 year olds in the UK. The study is well written and well done. Although I reviewed this submission with great interest, I have some remarks and questions based upon my reading of the manuscript.

1. Although the authors argue that the literature on social media use and well-being is primarily based on cross-sectional evidence, there have been some longitudinal studies on this topic:


- Interesting study about how different types of Facebook use function over the course of adolescence: Frison & Eggermont (2016). Gender and Facebook motives as predictors of

The claim that "this literature is mostly based on cross-sectional evidence" should be tempered and authors should refer and discuss some of these studies in their introduction and discussion.

2. The authors may want to add references to justify the risks to using social media (see sentence 32).

3. Although the primary aim of this study is to investigate changes in social media use and positive and negative markers of well-being with age, the manuscript primarily discusses studies focusing on the association between screen-based media and adolescents' well-being. As a result, there is some kind of discrepancy between the studies referred to in the introduction and the research aims. Social media, however, clearly differ from more traditional screen media such as television. Authors currently ignore the specific characteristics and affordances of social media. This is an important limitation of the introduction.

4. Social media use was operationalized using direct estimates of the frequency of "chatting or interacting with friends through a social website". Although authors refer to social media use, in fact, a specific type of social media use was measured, often referred to as active Facebook use (Verduyn et al., 2015).

- It seems more correct to refer to 'interacting on social media', rather than 'social media use'.

  - Why did the authors focus on this specific type of social media use? Can the authors comment on that.

  - Research has shown that adolescents mainly use social media in a passive way (not for interaction with others). Did the authors also measured passive social media use (e.g., lurking, browsing through others' social media profiles, etc.)? It would be interesting to compare the current findings with passive social media use.

As a result, the introduction should be more focused on this specific way of using social media use, rather than focusing on general social media use.
5. The inclusion of control variables in the model is, in my opinion, not clearly justified. In theory, the control variable should be associated with both the exposure and the outcome variables. Thus, I suggest to justify your control variables or to run new analyses with those control variables that can be justified.

6. The introduction and discussion lack any reference to theory. Although I agree that the focus and strengths of this article are the empirical findings, some reference to theory in explaining the results (in the discussion) would strengthen the manuscript.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

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