

S. AARTS. *The next step in studying social media usage and loneliness: developing a questionnaire to assess social media usage in older age. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):83s*; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.083.00>.

Purpose It has been argued that the use of social media can aid in improving wellbeing in older adults, by decreasing levels of loneliness and improving the quality of life. Especially the amount of online self-disclosure, i.e. the process in which a person reveals information about himself to others, might be key in the relation between social media usage and loneliness. However, to date, no questionnaire is available to operationalize 'social media usage' and online self-disclosure in older age. The purpose of this study was to develop a questionnaire useful in various scientific areas to assess social media. **Method** Quantitative and qualitative research design. Based on the available literature, a questionnaire containing 1 open question (age), 7 multiple choice-questions, and 19 statements which could be answered on a 6-point Likert scale was developed. In total, 71 adults aged 65 and over, residing in the Netherlands, filled in the questionnaire. Only persons who used social media were included. To assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire Cronbach's alpha was used. Five interviews, wherein the participants filled in the questionnaire and responded on the questions and the corresponding answers were conducted. Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed by open and axial coding. Participants received an information letter and provided informed consent. **Results & Discussion** Five scale were revealed: 'self presentation' ($\alpha=.623$), 'sent communication' ($\alpha=.622$), 'received communication' ($\alpha=0.766$), 'networking' ($\alpha=.710$) and 'self disclosure' ($\alpha=.758$), showing acceptable internal consistency. Based on the internal consistency and the conducted interviews one item in 'self presentation' was deleted. Based on the interviews, modifications were made to the questionnaire for age-friendly wording. In summary, this is the first step in developing a thorough and widely usable questionnaire to assess social media usage in older age. Further psychometric validation (i.e. test-retest reliability and construct-validity) is needed.

References

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Address: Fontys University of Applied Sciences, DS. Th. Fliednerstraat 2, Postbus 347, 5600 AH, Eindhoven, the Netherlands;

E: S.Aarts@fontys.nl