

# Does Your Smartphone Make You Unhappy?

## The Effects of Restricting Digital & Social Media

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### INTRO

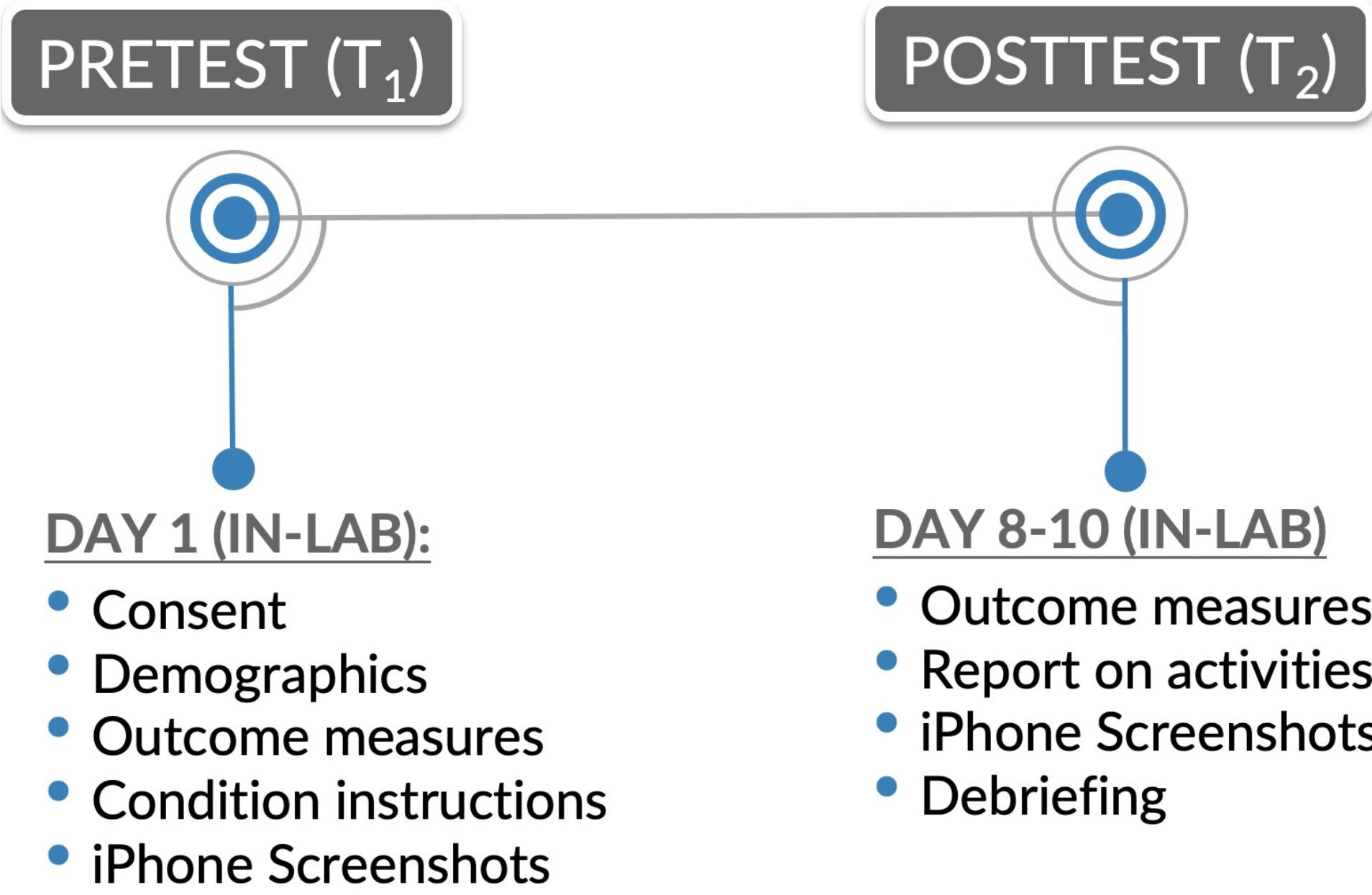
- Some correlational research suggests screen time negatively impacts well-being (Twenge et al., 2018), while other work argues the effects are small and unnoteworthy (Orben & Przybylski, 2019).
- A “shortitudinal” experiment may help disentangle correlation from causation and better elucidate the strength and direction of effects.

### METHOD

- N = 338 Gen Z participants ( $M_{age} = 19.4$ ; 78.1% female)
- Participants were randomly assigned to 1 of 4 conditions:



### Study Timeline:

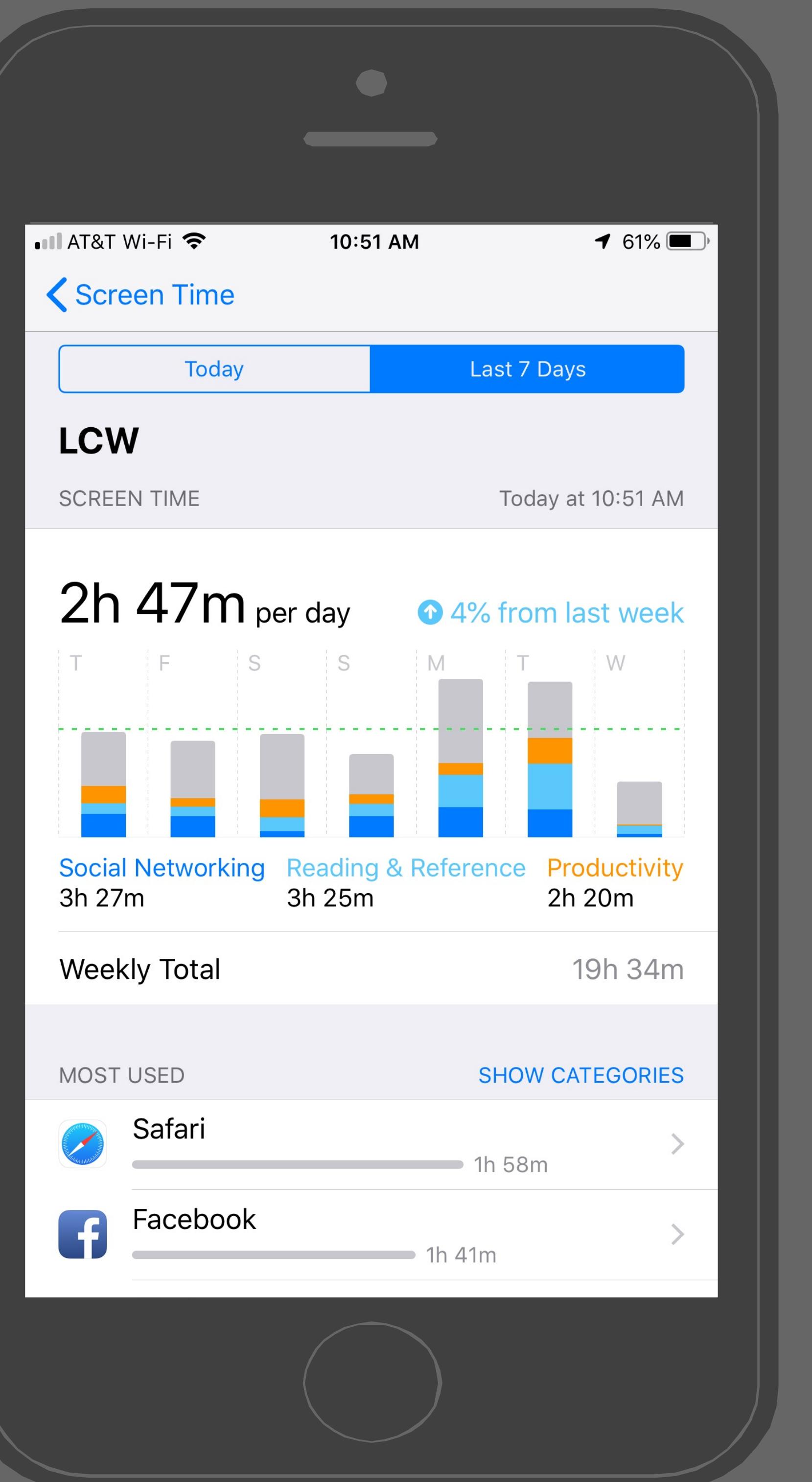


### Preregistered Hypotheses:

- H1: Digital Diet > Controls
- H2: Social Diet > Controls

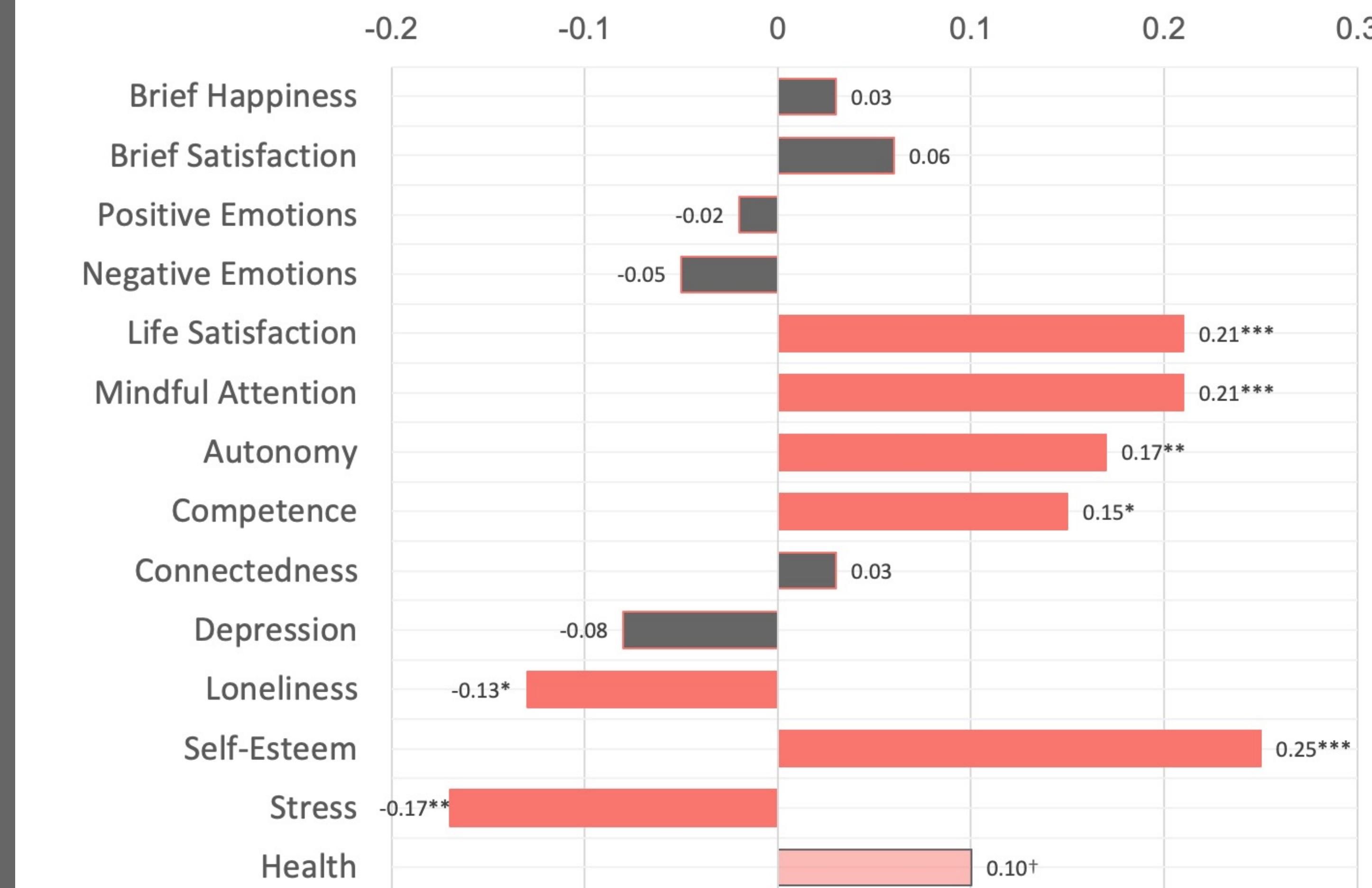
### RESULTS

- H1: Digital Diet participants successfully reduced their smartphone time, relative to controls (partial  $r = -.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $M = -115$  minutes/day). Restricting digital media significantly improved life satisfaction, mindful attention, autonomy, competence, loneliness, self-esteem, and stress.
- H2: Social Diet participants successfully reduced their social media time (partial  $r = -.66$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $M = -68$  minutes/day). Restricting social media only significantly improved mindful attention, relative to controls.



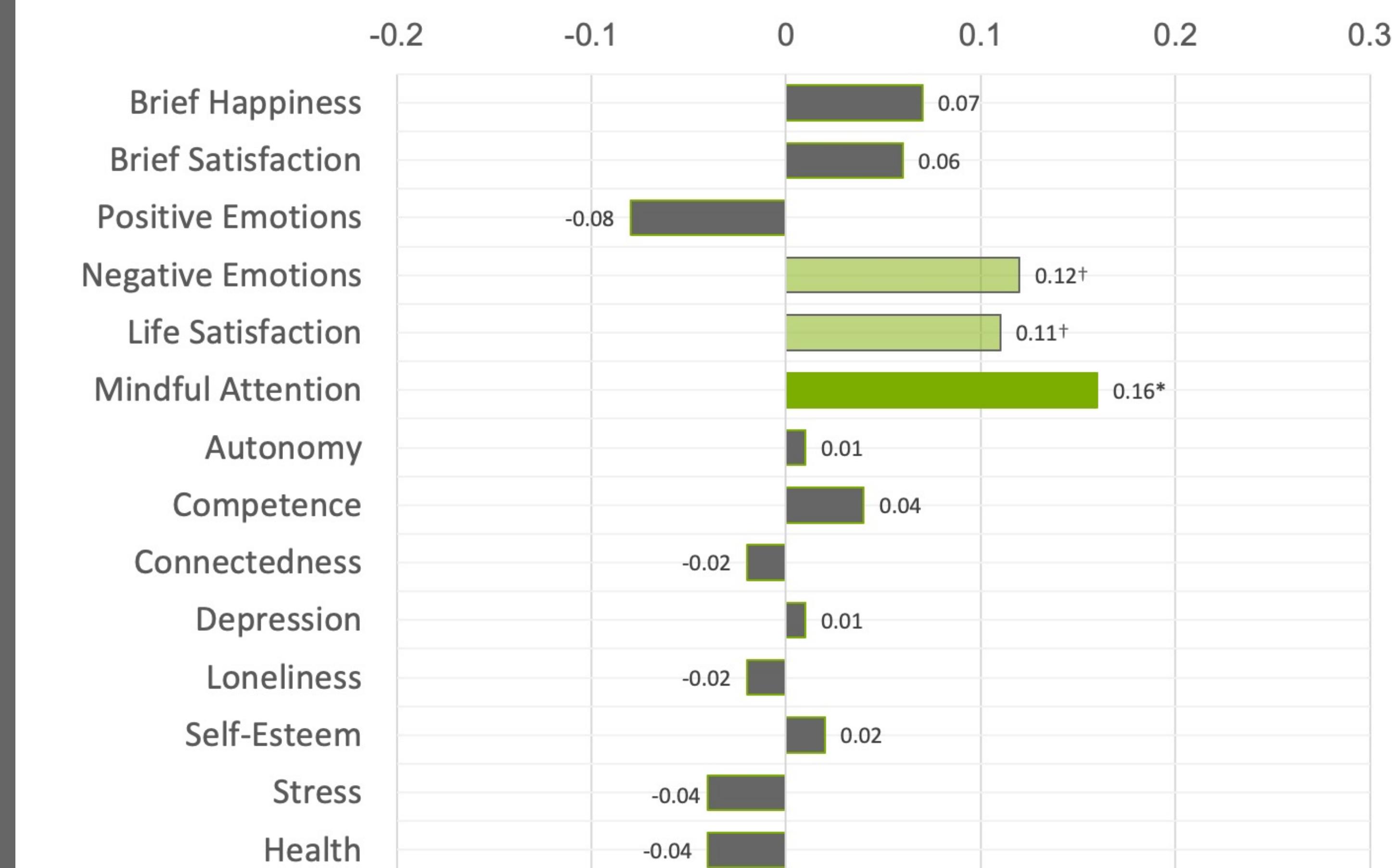
### The Effects of Restricting Digital Media

#### H1. Digital Diet vs. Controls Regressed Change Partial rs



### The Effects of Restricting Social Media

#### H2. Social Diet vs. Controls Regressed Change Partial rs



Note. Regressed change analyses predicting T<sub>2</sub> scores from hypothesized condition dummy codes, controlling for T<sub>1</sub> scores with *bs* converted to partial rs. Dark pink/green bars present significant regressed changed outcomes, light pink/green bars present marginal outcomes, and gray bars present non-significant outcomes.

†p < .1; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

