What can research on children and media learn from longitudinal research?

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The project

Net Children Go Mobile
Participating countries

**Belgium**
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

**Ireland**
Dublin Institute of Technology

**Romania**
Institute of Sociology Romanian Academy

**Denmark**
IT University of Copenhagen

**Italy**
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore

**Spain**
Universidad del País Basco

**Germany**
Hans Bredow Institute

**Portugal**
Universidade Nova de Lisboa

**UK**
London School of Economics and Political Science
## Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of questionnaires:</th>
<th>Children's age:</th>
<th>Method:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>9-16</td>
<td>Random walk sampling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Face to face in home questionnaires, self-completed for sensitive issues
- Internet users
Methods

Children aged 9 to 16
Focus groups (N=219)
Interviews (N=108)

Parents, teachers, youth workers
Focus groups (N=180)
Interviews (N=50)
The flow of the interview

- **Access and use**
  - all respondents
  - Aspects of mobile access and use
    - only those who use mobile devices

- **Activities**
  - all respondents
  - Issues related to social networking
    - only those who do social networking activities

- **Harmful experiences**
  - all respondents
  - Circumstances associated with harmful experiences
    - only those who have had harmful experiences

- **Mediation**
  - all respondents

- **Context and background**
  - all respondents

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It has to be kept in mind that the total number of respondents can limit the extent to which it is feasible to have large sections that are only covered by a small sub-group of respondents.
Changes in children’s online experiences

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More private and mobile access through smartphones

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% Daily use % Ownership

Boys
- 40
- 46

Girls
- 43
- 46

9-10 yrs
- 13
- 20

11-12 yrs
- 35
- 40

13-14 yrs
- 52
- 55

15-16 yrs
- 60
- 64

Low SES
- 36
- 38

Medium SES
- 45
- 50

High SES
- 46
- 55

All
- 41
- 46

% Daily use % Ownership

Belgium
- 28
- 35

Denmark
- 72
- 84

Ireland
- 35
- 40

Italy
- 42
- 45

Portugal
- 35
- 34

Romania
- 21
- 26

UK
- 56
- 58

All
- 41
- 46
More private and mobile access through smartphones

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More communication and sharing
More use, more risks

- Seen websites where people discuss ways of committing suicide: 4 (2010), 6 (2014)
- Seen websites where people discuss ways of physically harming or hurting themselves: 7 (2010), 11 (2014)
- Seen websites where people talk about or share their experiences of taking drugs: 7 (2010), 10 (2014)
- Met online contact offline: 9 (2010), 13 (2014)
- Seen websites where people publish hate messages: 13 (2010), 20 (2014)
- Received sexual messages: 14 (2010), 12 (2014)
- Seen sexual images online: 18 (2010), 20 (2014)
- Had contact with someone not met face to face before: 32 (2010), 29 (2014)
- Bothered or upset by something on the internet: 13 (2010), 17 (2014)

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More pressure to be “always on”

81% of children feel more connected to friends since they had a smartphone BUT 72% feel the need to be always available to family and friends

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Continuities in children’s use of mobile communication

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Consistencies in the research findings

- Bedroom culture – playing records, television, personal computer
  - Miniaturisation and privatisation of media
- Making and breaking of friendships
- Fashion
- Exploring identity
- Rite of passage
Texting (SMS, MMS and messaging apps)

- % Friends
- % Parents

Boys
- 9-10 yrs: 60
- 11-12 yrs: 46
- 13-14 yrs: 41
- 15-16 yrs: 51
- Low SES: 40
- Medium SES: 46
- High SES: 39
- All: 41

Girls
- 9-10 yrs: 71
- 11-12 yrs: 58
- 13-14 yrs: 73
- 15-16 yrs: 81
- Low SES: 66
- Medium SES: 69
- High SES: 63
- All: 66

15-16 yrs
- Girls: 81
- Boys: 58

13-14 yrs
- Girls: 73
- Boys: 58

11-12 yrs
- Girls: 71
- Boys: 58

9-10 yrs
- Girls: 60
- Boys: 46

% Friends
- Belgium: 71
- Denmark: 61
- Ireland: 37
- Italy: 79
- Portugal: 79
- Romania: 64
- UK: 78
- All: 66

% Parents
- Belgium: 54
- Denmark: 61
- Ireland: 37
- Italy: 79
- Portugal: 79
- Romania: 64
- UK: 78
- All: 66

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Social networking

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### Social Networking

#### Gender

- **Boys**
  - 15-16 yrs: 71%
  - 13-14 yrs: 76%
  - 11-12 yrs: 65%
  - 9-10 yrs: 76%

- **Girls**
  - 15-16 yrs: 71%
  - 13-14 yrs: 41%
  - 11-12 yrs: 65%
  - 9-10 yrs: 76%

#### SES

- **Low SES**
  - 15-16 yrs: 72%
  - 13-14 yrs: 76%
  - 11-12 yrs: 72%
  - 9-10 yrs: 75%

- **Medium SES**
  - 15-16 yrs: 76%
  - 13-14 yrs: 76%
  - 11-12 yrs: 76%
  - 9-10 yrs: 75%

- **High SES**
  - 15-16 yrs: 74%
  - 13-14 yrs: 74%
  - 11-12 yrs: 74%
  - 9-10 yrs: 74%

#### Age

- **All**
  - 15-16 yrs: 74%
  - 13-14 yrs: 74%
  - 11-12 yrs: 74%
  - 9-10 yrs: 74%

#### Country

- **Belgium**
  - 15-16 yrs: 71%
  - 13-14 yrs: 71%
  - 11-12 yrs: 71%
  - 9-10 yrs: 71%

- **Denmark**
  - 15-16 yrs: 73%
  - 13-14 yrs: 73%
  - 11-12 yrs: 73%
  - 9-10 yrs: 73%

- **Ireland**
  - 15-16 yrs: 70%
  - 13-14 yrs: 70%
  - 11-12 yrs: 70%
  - 9-10 yrs: 70%

- **Italy**
  - 15-16 yrs: 88%
  - 13-14 yrs: 88%
  - 11-12 yrs: 88%
  - 9-10 yrs: 88%

- **Portugal**
  - 15-16 yrs: 69%
  - 13-14 yrs: 69%
  - 11-12 yrs: 69%
  - 9-10 yrs: 69%

- **Romania**
  - 15-16 yrs: 67%
  - 13-14 yrs: 67%
  - 11-12 yrs: 67%
  - 9-10 yrs: 67%

- **UK**
  - 15-16 yrs: 80%
  - 13-14 yrs: 80%
  - 11-12 yrs: 80%
  - 9-10 yrs: 80%
Empirical challenges

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Challenges for Longitudinal Research about mobile phones

• Impact of new rules and practices in schools
• Parental blocking and mediation strategies
• Changing ecology of mobile communications among young people and among their parents/carers
• New Mobile Technology
Challenges for Longitudinal Research about mobile phones

• Mobile technology changes and opportunities
  • New tranche of cheaper/accessable smartphones
  • Security and Location services
  • ‘Free’ WiFi
• Interoperability between different manufacturer’s devices
• New messaging, apps and OTT services: WhatsApp; Snapchat; Askfm
What lessons for longitudinal research?
ASK ALL
Here are some questions about using different kinds of technology. This could be either at home or
in other places, such as at school or friends' houses

300 Which of these devices do you use for the internet THESE DAYS? Please say yes or no to
each of the following...

READ OUT. A-H - ONE ANSWER PER ROW
SHOWCARD A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Your own PC (desktop computer)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Your own laptop or laptop that you mainly use and can take to your own room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A PC shared with other members of your family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A laptop shared with other members of your family and that you cannot take to your own room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>A mobile phone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>A Games console such as a PlayStation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>A Television set (TV)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Other handheld portable devices (e.g. iPod Touch, iPhone or Blackberry)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Q2**

When you use the internet these days at [name location], how often do you use the following devices to go online

READ OUT ONE ANSWER PER ROW

SHOWCARD 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Several times each day</th>
<th>Daily or almost daily</th>
<th>At least every week</th>
<th>Never or almost never</th>
<th>Don’t know / prefer not to say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A desktop computer (PC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>A laptop computer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>A mobile phone that is not a smartphone. A mobile phone is device able to have a call, send messages (also multimedia messages) and, sometimes, surf on the internet.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>A smartphone (e.g. iPhone, Blackberry, Nokia Lumia, Samsung Galaxy, other Android etc.). A smartphone is a new generation device that, in addition to allow you to call and send messages, is able to connect of the internet and is provided with applications (Apps).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>A tablet (e.g. iPad, Samsung, Asus Vivo, Motorola Xoom, Kindle Fire, Nexus etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Other handheld devices (e.g. iPod touch or PSP and other games devices)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>E-book reader such as Kindle, Sony reader etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Home games consoles (e.g. X-box, Wii or PlayStation)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations

- Changes in empirical evidence regarding skills and risks (less easy to compare) - e.g.,?
- No questions on smartphones in EU Kids Online survey
- Portability of media not explored in EU Kids Online
- Meaning of Internet changing – from static PC based email, WWW to dynamic mobile device data delivery
- From a child’s perspective they want to talk, play and be educated and they use whatever they can access to do so – the research explores this from a device and technology perspective which is not flexible enough
What could do differently

- More time to design the survey and more time for analysis of the material
- Explore meanings of online, internet, mobile internet, mobile devices, talking, messaging from a child’s perspective
- Explore experiences of families and children at particular risk
- Obtain more information about demographics, SES
- Offer incentives for organisations to participate, e.g. donation to a school fund, youth group
Common features in many comparative projects

• A network is formed by institutions or individuals that are collecting similar data
• One (or few) take on the responsibility for coordination
• A common standard is decided which determines ‘a lowest common denominator’
• A set of core questions is agreed upon
• Parts of the network sometimes develop sets of questions which become optional
But if you then want to make comparisons over time...

- Remember that if you want to measure change you have to change the measurements
- Remember that even if it was at some point a very good idea to ask about something it can be pointless to repeatedly ask about that same thing
Thanks

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