

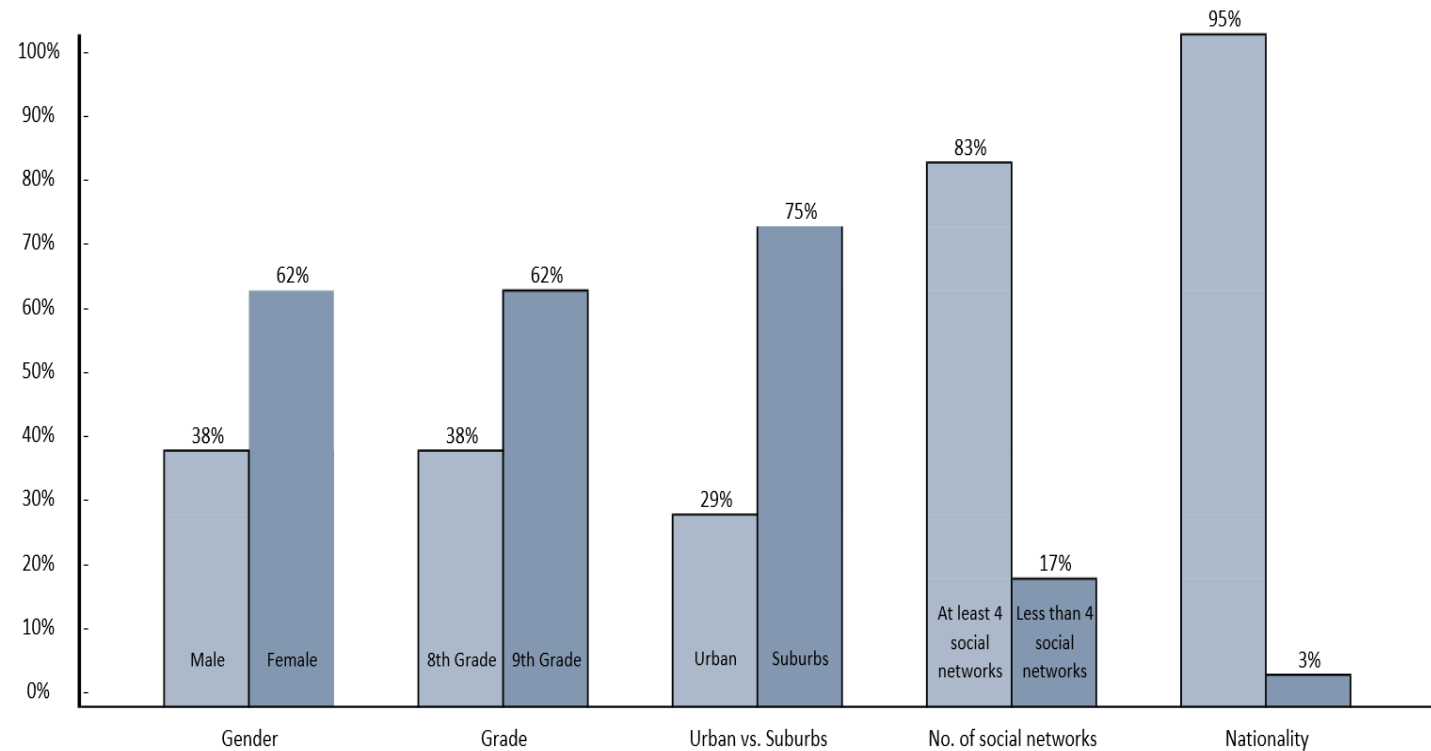


Wild playgrounds- social networks as lawless realms

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Semi structured interviews; 66 participants; 8th and 9th grades; 3 schools in northern Israel; April- May 2015



A photograph of a person sitting on a light-colored, textured ground. Their head is buried in their hands, which are clasped together. They are wearing blue jeans and dark, worn-in sneakers. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Findings

Children articulate mistaken perceptions of legal norms.

Children experience lack of response or over-responsiveness from adults in regard to incidents of electronic aggression.

Enhanced awareness amongst children of offensive incidents - electronic aggression that did not produce an adequate legal response.

A photograph of a child sitting on a light-colored, textured surface, possibly concrete. The child is wearing blue jeans and dark sneakers with white laces. Their hands are clasped together near their feet, and they are looking down at them. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

Precarious digital life of children

Children articulate mistaken perceptions of legal norms-

Digital rights illiteracy.

Children experience lack of response or over-responsiveness from adults in regard to incidents of electronic aggression-

Children articulate sense of abandonment in the digital realm.

Enhanced awareness amongst children of offensive incidents - electronic aggression that did not produce an adequate legal response- **children articulate dejection in regard to digital rights.**

Wild playgrounds; dejection, abandonment, apprehension

- 14-year-old girl
 - **Who ever is in it can't get out. Think how scary that is.**
- 13 year-old boy who chose to be digitally disconnected (has no cell phone)
 - **I am afraid it is going to taunt me.**
- 14-year-old girl
 - **I am most afraid of WhatsApp, because suddenly it's a group ...and everybody has it.**
- 14- year-old girl
 - **There is a feeling that at any moment someone can hurt you. It's like at any moment someone can write something about you. At any moment someone can spread a rumor on you...**

**Children articulate
mistaken perceptions
of legal norms**

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graph TD; A[Children articulate mistaken perceptions of legal norms] --> B[No knowledge of relevant law]; A --> C[Limited knowledge of relevant law]; A --> D[Inaccurate knowledge of relevant law];
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**No knowledge
of relevant law**

**Limited
knowledge of
relevant law**

**Inaccurate
knowledge of
relevant law**

Children articulate no knowledge\ limited knowledge of legal norms

- 14-year-old girl
 - There is no law on WhatsApp, no law on Instagram, no law on anything . No laws... not a single one.
- 14-year-old girl
 - ...here in this country [Israel]...no laws exist... so its problematic.
- 14-year-old girl
 - Interviewers : You think that you can share a picture without permission?
 - There is no law about it....so yes I can.

Children articulate Inaccurate knowledge of relevant law

- A participant is telling about her 13-year-old classmate who had sent a video of her self in nude to her boyfriend. The video was spread amongst thousands of teens.
 - **She did not go to the police..... [because] she is to blame... she sent the picture at her own choice. If she would have gone to the police then she is twice a whore....once for sending the naked picture and then for reporting to the police that it was distributed.**
- A 14-year-old boy
 - **I know the law regarding privacy... but harming your privacy? How? By sending something private--- that you had sent me? If you sent it to me by your own choice I am not to blame if I later distribute it.**

**Children's increased awareness of
electronic aggression that lacked an
adequate legal or non-legal response.**

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graph TD; A[Children's increased awareness of electronic aggression that lacked an adequate legal or non-legal response.] --> B[Electronic aggression events that were not legally addressed]; A --> C[Children's denial of the relevance of law to digital situations.]; A --> D[Adults do not respond or over respond to electronic aggression.];
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**Electronic aggression events
that were not legally
addressed**

**Children's denial of
the relevance of law
to digital situations.**

**Adults do not respond or
over respond to electronic
aggression.**

Children's denial of the relevance of law to digital situations.

- 14-year-old girl
 - Even if such laws existed nobody would enforce them, because teenagers don't exactly listen to these laws. People say 'rebellious youth'...it's not that...it's just that some children just don't care. I say it about myself as well. If such a law existed I would not listen to it...because it is about how you speak...how you flow

Children's denial of the relevance of law to digital situations.

- 13-year-old girl
- **Even if laws do exist...once an offensive picture is shared, who cares if the perpetrator will be punished or not... The picture is already out there- maybe there is a law and maybe the one who sent the picture will be punished, and maybe for the victim it does not really matter if he will be punished or not... These laws are both not enough and not relevant.**

Electronic aggression events that were not legally addressed

- 14-year-old girl
 - The fact that police was not involved says that you can do this...and ummm...there is no lesson to be learned and no explanation why it is not ok ...it just says that if it will happen again and then everyone will just go through with it...and will talk about the girl instead of pointing to those who distributed the video...

Electronic aggression events that were not legally addressed

- 13-year-old girl explaining why the police was not involved when her nude picture was distributed:
 - I preferred not to get the police involved...I would have to look at the picture again...and deal with it again...I did not want to talk about it again...I did not want to re-experience what happened to me...it would be like being raped again.

Another 13- year old girl explaining why she preferred the police was not involved:

- At the beginning they [parents] wanted to go to the police...but I asked them not to...I did not want to make a big deal... and then they met with the parents and the children and we closed it between ourselves.

Adults do not respond or over respond to electronic aggression.


- 13-year-old boy took a picture during a trip field of his class mates. The last frame was of his class mate from behind, wearing a jeans. Two hours later he was sent home.
 - I did not do it on purpose...it's like taking a picture of a man's behind...why should I be punished for something I should not be punished for... it was hard coming home and explaining what had happened...
- His class mate who witnessed the incident
 - It was totally exaggerated... it was a party... and she jumped into the frame... the problem is that she did not like it...they could not even see her face. Nobody knew who she was. He was kicked off of the trip.

Initial Conclusions

- Children perceive the digital space as perilous
- "nobody is safe".
- Children experience and witness offensive incidents of electronic aggression that are not legally addressed in spite of existing legal norms.
- Children experience that there is no adequate response from adults to offensive incidents of violence and electronic aggression.

Implications

- The compability of existing children's rights concept to the digital age should be examined, at national and transnational levels.
 - In the local level- libel law, privacy laws and sexual harassment law should be examined/modified.
 - In transnational level the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, U.N. General Assembly, 1989) should be examined/modified.

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- The way adults will perceive law generally, and human rights in particular, will probably be shaped by the way they perceived and experienced law as children growing up in the digital space.