Menores conectados y riesgos online: contenidos inadecuados, uso inapropiado de la información y uso excesivo de internet

Engl. transl.: Connected minors and online risks: inappropriate content, inappropriate use of information, and excessive use of the internet

# Keywords

* Adolescence
* Children
* Excessive use
* Inappropriate content
* Harmful content
* Hate speech
* Psychological problems
* Sharenting

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## Topics

* Risks and harms
* Social mediation
* Wellbeing

## Sample

The questionnaire was administered in public and charter schools to a representative sample of 2,900 children aged 9 to 17. An interviewer was deployed to these schools and remained in the classroom while respondents answered the questionnaire. In order to ensure national representativeness, we chose several areas: Madrid, Catalonia, Andalusia, Valencia, Galicia, the Basque Country and Extremadura. Ten schools were chosen in each Autonomous Community, except in Extremadura (9). In Primary Education 77.84% were public and 22.16% subsidised, and in Secondary Education 60.37% were public and 39.63% subsidised, reflecting the distribution of the Spanish school population according to the ownership of their school. The sample was divided into 80% centres located in capital cities and 20% in smaller municipalities. In total, the questionnaire was administered in 138 classrooms, two classrooms of different grades per school. The confidence level is 95.5% and the sampling error is +/- 1.87.

The results of the survey, conducted between October and December 2018, describe the characteristics of the children surveyed and their access to the Internet, uses and activities, opportunities, total risks (bullying, contact with strangers, sexual messages and images, and "other risks"), and have been compared with the national results of the EU kids online 2010 survey (Livingstone et al., 2011; Garmendia et al., 2011) and the Net children go mobile survey of 2015 (Garmendia et al., 2016, Garmendia et al., 2018).
The comparison allows us to see changes and continuities in internet use among Spanish children and adolescents (9 to 17 years old) from a temporal perspective. However, the reading of these data must take into account certain methodological differences. In the 2010 and 2015 surveys, the sample covered children and adolescents aged 9 to 16; in 2018, on the other hand, our survey also covers adolescents aged 17. The sample size used has varied: 1,000 minors (in 2010), 500 (in 2015) and 2,900 (in 2018). The conditions of administration of the questionnaires also differ: from the administration of the questionnaires at home by an interviewer in the 2010 and 2015 surveys, to self-administration in 2018.

## Implications For Parents About

* Parental practices / parental mediation
* Parental digital literacy
* Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

encourage school trainings focused on teachers to prevent children´s online harms

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Industry

# Abstract

This article presents some of the most relevant results of a survey of 2,900 Spanish minors aged between 9 and 17 years who are Internet users and who were asked about their online habits. It focuses on an analysis of their exposure to inappropriate content on the Internet, typified as information about injury to others or self-injury, ways to commit suicide, anorexia, bulimia, hate messages, drug use, or violent images. It also analyzes the exposure to experiences with viruses or malware and online fraud, and risks related to the misuse of personal information, sharenting, and excessive use. Differences are observed by age groups, and also by gender, for example, regarding the exposure to hate messages against certain groups, which during adolescence is noticeably more frequent among girls than among boys. The results, which are partially comparable to those of two equivalent surveys carried out in 2010 and 2015, allow us to conclude that the exposure to online risks has increased in recent years.

# Outcome

This paper highlights that Spanish children's risk exposure has increased between 2010, 2015 and 2018, especially among those children who use mobile devices. The authors note that harmful experiences have not increased in the same proportion. In terms of harmful content risks, more than a third of Spanish minors have visited, above all, websites containing hate messages against certain groups of people (of different ethnic origins, religions, nationality or sexual orientation) and those showing gore or violent images. In particular, older children, with notable differences regarding gender, with girls being more exposed than boys.
This study also analyses the incidence of risks of inappropriate use of personal data, commercial risks and computer security risks to which Spanish minors are exposed. Viruses and spyware are the technical risk most frequently encountered by children, with few differences by age and gender, and as far as inappropriate use of personal data and commercial risks are concerned, the results show that there are differences by age (higher incidence among older children) and no significant differences by gender.
The authors also include in this study the practice of sharenting and the practice of image sharing by teachers as activities that involve risk for the child. A total of 17% of the Spanish children surveyed stated that their own parents and/or caregivers posted messages, images or videos without first asking them if they agreed. Conversely, friends posting information about them on the Internet without having asked their permission beforehand seems to be a common practice: 22% say that their friends posted information about them without having asked them beforehand if they agreed. Dissemination of images by teachers without asking permission does not seem to be common practice, or at least only 4% of respondents report that this happened.

Garitaonandia et al. (2020) also point to the excessive use of the Internet by Spanish children as a risky practice, stating that 40% of children say that they have felt annoyed a few times ("a few times a month") when not on the Internet, and 7% say that they do it frequently ("almost every week"). Garitaonandia et al. (2020: 7) point out that this "speaks of browsing policies that are sometimes routine, settled in everyday life and sometimes without clear objectives of searching for information or interest in sharing content".
Garitaonandia et al. (2020: 8) state that "family mediation should be fundamental to prevent and manage Internet risks and inappropriate uses. In almost all the groups observed, shortcomings in this area have been detected, and in many cases this is due to a lack of digital literacy on the part of the parents".

[Translated by the coder]