Digital Resilience: Empowering Youth Online

In response to the growing policy debate between online risk and opportunity, the following research initiative aimed to shed light on child attitudes in dealing with online risk. A focus was placed on integrating safety concerns with the promotion of a positive uptake of online opportunities for children, through the concept of ‘digital resilience’.

Drawing on the most prevalent literature on child online safety, this project sought to expand and strengthen the current understanding of child digital resilience. This was based on the need for ‘more country-wide as well as region-wide research targeting early childhood and school-aged population’ (UNESCO 2014, p. 14) in the Asia Pacific region.

While existing literature has sought to address the issues of online safety by mainly looking at risk exposure, (e.g. Livingstone 2011; Livingstone et al 2014; Unicef 2012) this project is making a further step by assessing how children prevent and react to online risk.

It does so by collecting a unique set of data where children (aged 9 to 18) are asked to describe their actual strategies in dealing with online risk across 11 countries in the Asia Pacific region. The resulting dataset collected 5500 answers from: Australia, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Turkey, Taiwan, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Israel.

In addition to the collection of empirical data from countries previously untouched, the project built a set of resilience indicators that were successively compiled into a national resilience score. The resilience indicators reflect the social, cognitive and technical aspects empowering child digital resilience.

**Summing up**

The report has added crucial insights into the online habits of young people internationally. Using previously unknown empirical findings, it reiterates the role of self-regulation when online, and the integral role of digital literacies and online education. Moreover, the results represent an integral data set for future policy considerations in the field of child safety online, and builds upon the progress already made from previous influential child online safety reports.