

Online research with children

Ulf-Dietrich Reips¹

It has been noted that in recent years children have become increasingly important participants in research and marketing studies. Likely reasons for this trend are children's higher purchasing power and a heightened interest in opinions and rights of children. The trend goes along with a changed view in western societies: Children are seen as actors in their own right, not as incomplete adults (Scott, 1997).

This changed view has not been adopted yet by most researchers conducting studies that aim at generalizing results to populations of neighborhoods, cities, states, or countries. Many of them might be hesitating to include children into their studies because of a number of methodological particularities in conducting research involving children. Which characteristics have to be taken care of, and how and why online research with children might avoid or soften some of the potential problems and create others, is at the focus of this presentation. It is explained, how so-called "kid's portals", online panels consisting of children and adolescents, and a distributed online/offline research technique can be used in conducting research with children. Two examples of online studies with children from the Web Experimental Psychology Lab (Reips, 1995) are reported.

Reips, U.-D. (1995). *The Web's Experimental Psychology Lab* [WWW document]. Available URL: <http://www.psych.unizh.ch/genpsy/Ulf/Lab/WebExpPsyLab.html>

Scott, J. (1997). Children as respondents: Methods for improving data quality. In L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. de Leeuw, C. Dippo, N. Schwarz, & D. Trewin (Eds.), *Survey measurement and process quality* (pp. 331-352). New York: Wiley.

Keywords: Online research, children as respondents, data quality, incomplete adults view, children and the internet, kid's portal, Web experiments

1 Ulf-Dietrich Reips [ureips@genpsy.unizh.ch], University of Zürich, Experimental and