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Whose Information Should Be Shared With Whom?: Parents' Awareness Of Children's Digital Privacy In Turkey

ABSTRACT

Today, parents make use of social media accounts for many different purposes, such as obtaining information, giving advice, receiving support, and exchanging ideas with other parents. In parallel with the use of social media, according to their parenting roles, individuals frequently share various content related to both their own daily practices and the development processes of their children. The fact that most of the content shared is about children raises the question of digital privacy in this context. Based on this focus, this research aims to determine the priorities attached by the parents when they share content about children on their social media accounts, and what kind of measures they take in sharing this content to protect the digital privacy of their children. Therefore, a questionnaire based quantitative field study was carried out within the scope of this research. As a result of the study, it was found that parents primarily prefer sharing special occasions with their children, family photographs and photographs of their children at early ages; if the child is at a later age, they tend to consult him/her before sharing the content, but they do not tend to pay enough attention to ensuring that the child's identity is kept confidential and sharing of personal information is avoided.

KEY WORDS

Sharenting. Digital parenting. Digital privacy.

1. Introduction

As individuals start using digital media in line with their needs regarding their parenting roles, this process is accompanied by sharing of a large amount of content about themselves and their children. By benefiting from the possibilities provided by digital media, parents obtain many opportunities, such as giving suggestions to others regarding their own parenting practices, avoiding feelings of loneliness, having access to recommendations on daily parenting practices and evaluating different perspectives on parenting roles.¹ Therefore, it can be suggested that digital media have been integrated into parenting practices and provide many functions to mothers and fathers. On the other hand, posts shared by individuals on digital media about their parenting roles also make it possible to reveal a large amount of personal data about their children. In this regard, although digital technologies provide new opportunities in many areas of a parent's daily life, they also pose potential risks resulting from sharing the personal information of the child.² Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring the well-being of their children. This also imposes on parents the duty of protecting personal information about the child on digital media.³ However, the way in which parents often do not pay enough attention to the contents of their posts about their children or do not take the necessary protective measures, causes violations of their children's privacy on digital media, even if this is unintentional. For this reason, determining the priorities attached by the parents when they share content about their children on their social media accounts, and what kind of measures they take in sharing this content to protect the digital privacy of their children, is considered important.

2. Sharenting

The concept of 'sharenting' corresponds to the combination of the words 'share' and 'parenting'; and refers to parents' using social media for their motherhood and fatherhood practices, sharing content about their children, such as news, photographs and videos, and presenting themselves to other users as a parent.⁴ In those posts, parents share both many activities they spend with their children, and also their emotions about their children on social media.⁵ Parents have various motivations to share posts about their motherhood/fatherhood practices or their children by means of social media. For instance, they connect to their families, friends or other parents through social media, reinforce and expand these relationships, thereby having a strong social capital.⁶

¹ See: KEITH, B. E., STEINBERG, S.: Parental Sharing on the Internet: Child Privacy in the Age of Social Media and the Pediatrician's Role. In *JAMA Pediatrics*, 2017, Vol. 171, No. 5, p. 413-414. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XozRQV>>.

² YAMAN, F., DÖNMEZ, O., AKBULUT, Y., KABAKÇI-YURDAKUL, I., ÇOKLAR, A. N., GÜYER, T.: Exploration of Parents' Digital Parenting Efficacy through Several Demographic Variables. In *Education and Science*, 2019, Vol. 44, No. 199, p. 149. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3ehPn6Y>>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ See: BLUM-ROSS, A., LIVINGSTONE, S.: „Sharenting“ Parent Blogging, and the Boundaries of the Digital Self. In *Popular Communication*, 2017, Vol. 15, No. 2, p.110-125. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3b2QoOe>; FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents' Sharenting for Children's Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 414-432. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2wyoEC6>>.

⁵ MARASLI, M., SUHENDAN, E., YILMAZTURK, N. H., COK, F.: Parents' Shares on Networking Sites About their Children: Sharenting. In *Anthropologist*, 2016, Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 399. [online]. [2020-06-15]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2CaAbdp>>.

⁶ See also: JANG, J., DWORKIN, J.: Does Social Network Site Use Matter for Mothers?: Implications for Bonding and Bridging Capital. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2014, Vol. 35, p. 489-495. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3csAs8e>>; YOUNG, K.: Social Ties, Social Networks and the Facebook Experience. In *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, 2011, Vol. 9, No. 1, p. 20-34. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/34Kb5Mv>>.

It can also be suggested that they interpret their posts on social media about their children as *better parenting*, they have the experience of showing their attention and support towards their children also in digital media,⁷ which allows them to construct a parental identity of themselves.⁸ On the other hand, it is also observed that there are positive aspects to individuals' sharing posts about their parenting practices and children on social media accounts, such as getting social and psychological support through 'likes' and comments to these posts, receiving information from *more experienced* parents who go through similar situations, and getting rid of the feeling of loneliness.⁹ From this point of view, it can be suggested that parents of today make use of various social media accounts, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram with various motivations, namely, to share content about their children, follow the posts of other parents, have an exchange of ideas on daily parenting practices, have an access to an environment of solidarity with regard to various social and psychological problems they encounter, and share information and developments about their children.¹⁰

Possibilities provided by digital media environment to mothers and fathers motivate parents to prefer their social media accounts more and more every day to share content about their children. In this context, Brosch¹¹ even argues that the contents parents update about their children on their accounts through shared photos and videos have "*almost become a social norm*". Similarly, Kumar and Shoenebeck emphasize the fact that today Facebook has become

⁷ See: INAN-KAYA, G., KAYA, U.: Bir Ebeveyn Pratiği Olarak 'Sharenting'. In AKFIRAT, O. N., STAUB, D. F., YAVUŞ, G. (eds.): *Current Debates in Education*. London, İstanbul : IJOPEC Publication, 2018, Vol. 5, p. 480-549. [online]. [2020-04-22]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3eLg58a>>.

⁸ See: BLUM-ROSS, A., LIVINGSTONE, S.: „Sharenting“ Parent Blogging, and the Boundaries of the Digital Self. In *Popular Communication*, 2017, Vol. 15, No. 2, p.110-125. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3b2Qo0e>>.

⁹ See: KEITH, B.E., STEINBERG, S.: Parental Sharing on the Internet: Child Privacy in the Age of Social Media and the Pediatrician's Role. In *JAMA Pediatrics*, 2017, Vol. 171, No. 5, p. 413-414. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XozRQV>>.

¹⁰ See also: AMMARI, M., MORRIS, M., SCHOENEBECK, S.: Accessing Social Support and Overcoming Judgement on Social Media among Parents of Children with Special Needs, In *Proceedings of AAAI International Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*, 2014, p. 22-31. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3euTEUG>>; BARTHOLOMEW, M. K., SCHOPPE-SULLIVAN, S. J., GLASSMAN, M., DUSCH, C. M. K., SULLIVAN, J. M.: New Parents' Facebook Use at the Transition to Parenthood. In *Family Relations*, 2012, Vol. 61, No. 3, p. 455-469. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XxXg2f>>; DRENTEA, P., MOREN-CROSS, J.: Social Capital and Social Support on the Web: The Case of Internet Mother Site. In *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 2005, Vol. 27, No. 7, p. 920-943. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XJGkGg>>; DWORKIN, J., CONNELL, J., DOTY, J.: A Literature Review of Parents' Online Behavior. In *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 2013, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 1-12. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2xGGjYO>>; GIBSON, L., HANSON, V.: Digital Motherhood: How Does Technology Help New Mothers?. In MACKAY, W. E., BREWSTER, S. (eds.): *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. New York : Association for Computing Machinery, 2010, p. 313-322. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2RLV5EF>>; LUPTON, D.: The Use and Value of Digital Media for Information about Pregnancy and Early Motherhood: A Focus Group Study. In *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 2016, Vol. 16, p. 171-81. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2RMX3Vh>>; LUPTON, D., PEDERSEN, S.: An Australian Survey of Women's Use of Pregnancy and Parenting Apps. In *Women and Birth*, 2016, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 368-375. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3epOgCt>>; MADGE, C., O'CONNOR, H.: Parenting Gone Wired: Empowerment of New Mothers on the Internet. In *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2006, Vol. 7, No. 2, p. 199-220. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3cvhGxh>>; MORRIS, M.: Social Networking Site Use by Mothers of Young Children. In FUSSEL, S., LUTTERS, W. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 17th ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*. New York : Association for Computing Machinery, 2014, p.1272-1282. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3ahPzPl>>; WALKER, S., DWORKIN, J., CONNELL, J.: Variation in Parent Use of Information and Communication Technology: Does Quality Matter?. In *Family & Consumer Sciences Research* Vol. 40, p. 106-119. [online]. [2020-04-17]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/34KvDo7>>.

¹¹ See: BROSH, A.: When the Child is Born into the Internet: Sharenting as a Growing Trend Among Parents on Facebook. In *The New Educational Review*, 2016, Vol. 43, No. 1, p. 225-235. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3b6hxji>>.

a “modern day baby book”, due to the contents parents share about their children on Facebook.¹² It is even observed that most parents start sharenting posts through the photos of their children, who are not born yet.¹³ Hence, it can be suggested that today, among parents who have children over the age of 4, 56 % of mothers, 34 % of fathers share posts about their children on their social media accounts within the framework of the parenting role.¹⁴ Sharenting not only involves mothers and fathers who are primary parents, but other family members, such as grandmothers and grandfathers, close friends also assume the role of parenting.¹⁵ In this regard, it is of paramount importance for parents who are active social media users to have an awareness of the potential risks their posts pose on their children as they make use of the possibilities provided by social media to them by sharing various content about their children.

3. Violation of Child’s Digital Privacy and Possible Risks

The concept of privacy, in the broadest sense of the word, can be defined „as the right to be left alone, to be able to keep one’s personal information out of the public domain, to be protected from control by others, to decide what personal information to share with others, to know what personal information is being collected by others, and to access one’s personal data held by others.“¹⁶ Based on this definition, it would not be wrong to suggest that social media posts of parents have the potential to violate their children’s privacy, and therefore bring along various risks with regard to protection of child’s digital identity as digital identities of children are constructed by their parents before children become social media users.¹⁷ A recent study shows that today 80 % of children have an image of themselves shared on digital media by their parents before they reach the age of two.¹⁸ The fact that a child’s personal information reaches digital media in a period when they cannot give their personal content, even if this is done through the posts of their parents, eliminates the child’s freedom to share information about themselves with persons they prefer and causes the private information, which the child may prefer keeping confidential, to be circulated without their consent. It becomes difficult for children, who already have a digital footprint through the posts shared by the parents, to have a say in the construction of their digital identities in the ensuing years.¹⁹

¹² See: KUMAR, P., SCHOENEBECK, S.: The Modern Day Baby Book: Enacting Good Mothering and Stewarding Privacy on Facebook. In *Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW’15) ACM*, 2015. [online]. [11-04-2020]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2V0cg7t>>.

¹³ QUVREIN, G., VERSWIJVEL, K.: Sharenting: Public Adoration or Public Humiliation?: A Focus Group Study on Adolescents’ Experiences with Sharenting against the Background of their own Impression Management. In *Children and Youth Sciences Review*, 2019, Vol. 99, p. 320. [online]. [2020-06-15]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3hwZSFi>>.

¹⁴ DAVIS, M., CLARK, S. J., SINGER, D. C., HALE, K., MATOS-MORENO, A., KAUFMANN, A. D.: Parents on Social Media: Likes and Dislikes of Sharenting. In *Mott Children’s Hospital National Poll on Children’s Health*, 2015, Vol. 23, No. 2, p.1-2. [online]. [2020-06-15]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2V2rVD1>>.

¹⁵ FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents’ Sharenting for Children’s Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 414. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2wyoEC6>>.

¹⁶ See also: LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children’s Privacy Online: Experimenting with Boundaries within and Beyond the Family. In KRAUT, R., BRYNIN, M., KIESLER, S. (eds.): *Computers, Phones and the Internet: Domesticating Information Technology. Human Technology Interaction Series*. Oxford University Press : New York, 2006, p.145-167. [online]. [2020-04-16]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3ayx36y>>.

¹⁷ See: BROSH, A.: When the Child is Born into the Internet: Sharenting as a Growing Trend Among Parents on Facebook. In *The New Educational Review*, 2016, Vol. 43, No. 1, p. 225-235. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3b6hxji>>.

¹⁸ See: BESSANT, C.: *Too Much Information? More than 80 % of Children Have an Online Presence by the Age of Two*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2Rwh5U2>>.

¹⁹ INAN-KAYA, G., KAYA, U.: Bir Ebeveyn Pratiği Olarak ‘Sharenting’. In AKFIRAT, O. N., STAUB, D. F., YAVAŞ, G. (eds.): *Current Debates in Education*. London, İstanbul : IJOPEC Publication, 2018, Vol. 5, p. 481. [online]. [2020-04-22]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3eLg58a>>.

As mentioned above, due to its functions, such as keeping people in constant connection and providing instant access to information, social media provide the possibility to get social and psychological support by accessing information and recommendations when they have a problem that they cannot handle, or when they find themselves in a situation of uncertainty. However, it can be suggested that this encourages individuals to stay connected to digital media for their parenting roles. Parents' sharing of information and recommendations about their children on digital media is accompanied by sharing private content about their children, and the increase of personal content shared about the children also increases the vulnerability of the child.²⁰ Within this framework, it becomes necessary to consider who can have access to the contents shared about the child. The necessity arises from the fact that being able to know the persons with whom the parents share the information about the child becomes gradually more difficult due to the increase in the intensity and frequency of shared information, and because the boundaries between public and private space become more and more blurred.²¹

In addition to this, yet another subject that must be considered is to what extent the person sharing the information transfers it to a third user, or to what extent the third user will have access to the content in question through the account of the sharing person. The reason behind this consideration is the fact that the users' friends, who have access to the content these users share about themselves and their children, can also share these contents with their other friends on their own accounts²² and the understanding about the privacy level of the shared content may be interpreted differently according to the context.²³ In this regard, it can be suggested that a case of privacy breach of under the name of „Instagram role playing“ started involving also children. According to this, photographs of children shared by parents on their Instagram accounts are stolen, a new digital history is written for children in these photographs and fake parents present the photographs of these children as if they are their own children.²⁴ Considered within this scope, it can be suggested that not being able to know who has access to the posts shared by parents with good intentions may make it impossible to estimate the diffusion of personal contents about the child, such as photograph or video, and cause such contents to be used for purposes like cyber-harassment or paedophilia.

Parents share important moments, parenting experiences with their social circle through social media sharing sites, particularly Facebook, Instagram and blogs, in which one can keep digital diaries and also participate in discussions about the situations they confront in parenting process and share their opinions on such platforms. Considered from this perspective, it can be suggested that the posts shared by parents with regard to their parenting practices pose various risks by possibly violating the privacy of their children's digital identity. Those risks include:²⁵ (1) posts shared by parents about their children make it possible for foreign persons, who are not

²⁰ See: FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents' Sharenting for Children's Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 414-432. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2wyoEC6>>.

²¹ See: LANKTON, N. K., MCKNIGHT, H. D., TRIPP, J. F.: Facebook Privacy Management Strategies: A Cluster Analysis of User Privacy Behaviours. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, Vol. 76, p. 149-163. [online]. [2020-04-16]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/34G9RC4>>.

²² See: FOX, A. K., HOY, M. G.: Smart Devices, Smart Decisions? Implications of Parents' Sharenting for Children's Online Privacy: An Investigation of Mothers. In *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2019, Vol. 38, No. 4, p. 414-432. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2wyoEC6>>.

²³ See: NISSENBAUM, H.: A Contextual Approach to Privacy Online. In *Daedalus*, 2011, Vol. 140, No. 4, p. 32-48. [online]. [2020-04-16]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3alezGN>>.

²⁴ See also: GROSSMAN, W.: 'Online Baby-Role-Playing': Between Casual Fantasy and Real-Life Obsession. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/76296/>>; MILLER, B.: *The Creepiest New Corner of Instagram: Role-Playing with Baby Photos*. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3ehsZdR>>.

²⁵ MINKUS, T., LIU, K., ROSS, K.W.: Children Seen But Not Heard: When Parents Compromise Children's Online Privacy. In GANGEMI, A., LEONARDI, S.: *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on World Wide Web*. Italy: International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee, 2015, p. 777. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2VpKwbc>>.

directly related to the parents or the child, to have access to the personal information about the child, (2) although social media accounts allow users to take various security measures about their posts, it is not one hundred per cent possible to know who can see the contents shared about the child, (3) shared contents allow creating a profile about the child and this profile can be used by various brands or advertisers for marketing purposes, (4) as child's likings and identity information are transferred to online media, parents create a digital footprint for the children, which is voluntarily presented to the viewing of other observers.

4. Protecting the Digital Privacy of the Child

It is of significant importance for parents to pay attention to certain criteria in order not to violate the digital privacy of the child, especially when they share content about children who cannot look out for their own well-being. In this context, the fact that no content, which does not need to be disclosed to the public, should be shared on social media, can be accepted as the first and basic criteria.²⁶ Considering the fact that social networks are public spheres, all contents shared by parents about the child will also be publicly visible and they can be recorded by other users and used for different purposes afterwards. On the other hand, although parents do not share contents related to their children with the intention of circulating them publicly, detailed information is transferred to the media in question (birthday, school of the child, etc.) and as the shared content increases, it becomes impossible to hide or delete this information. In this regard, certain measures that can be taken when contents related to the children are shared in media can be suggested. Regarding this subject, Minkus, Liu and Ross²⁷ emphasize the following recommendations, which may allow parents to protect the digital privacy of their children, while using social networks actively at the same time: position before sharing content about the child and evaluating the potential risks that might be caused by this post, (4) not sharing contents which contain personal information about the child, (5) encrypting the contents shared on social networks by means of applications such as Cryptagram,²⁸ thereby being able to share content related to the child with only preferred users.

On the other hand, it is observed that other studies conducted on parents with children of older ages²⁹ suggest that parents can make use of the following recommendations, which will allow them to protect the privacy of their children, while ensuring that they participate in digital media as independent users at the same time:

- having information about the security of the website, on which contents are shared,
- using applications such as Google Alert for receiving a warning message whenever the child's name is searched on the Internet,
- sharing contents by not revealing the identity of the child as far as possible,

²⁶ See: ORTERO, P.: Sharenting... Should Children's Lives Be Disclosed on Social Media. In *Archivos Argentinos de Pediatría*, 2017, Vol. 115, No. 5, p. 412-414. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2ya5N0y>>.

²⁷ MINKUS, T., LIU, K., ROSS, K.W.: Children Seen But Not Heard: When Parents Compromise Children's Online Privacy. In GANGEMI, A., LEONARDI, S.: *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on World Wide Web*. Italy: International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee, 2015, p. 783. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2VpKwbc>>.

²⁸ For more information see: TIERNEY, M., SPIRO, I., BREGLER, C., SUBRAMANIAN, L.: Cryptagram: Photo Privacy for Online Social Media. In MUTHUKRISHNAN, M., EL ABBADI, E. (eds.): *Proceedings of the First ACM Conference on Online Social Networks*. Boston: Association for Computing Machinery, 2013, p. 75-88. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3a4KfQg>>.

²⁹ See: MOSER, C., CHEN, T., SCHOENEBECK, S. Y.: Parents' and Children's Preferences about Parents Sharing about Children on Social Media, In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2017, p. 5221-5225. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XukTZJ>>; KEITH, B. E., STEINBERG, S.: Parental Sharing on the Internet: Child Privacy in the Age of Social Media and the Pediatrician's Role. In *JAMA Pediatrics*, 2017, Vol. 171, No. 5, p. 413-414. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XozRQV>>.

- avoiding referring to the personal information and location of the child in shared content,
- giving children of older ages the right to reject their parents' sharing content about them,
- making sure that children are dressed in all photos,
- deciding to share a content about the child after considering the child's reaction to this post when they grow older,
- taking the preferences of the child into account by means of software that especially remind getting the approval of children of older ages and allow checking whether the child is tagged in the post.

Parents must not only share their own posts in a way that the privacy of their children is protected, but also act as guides for the contents shared by the children. Because the measures taken by parents regarding the use of digital media also shape the child's experience of digital presence in digital media. While digital media pose various threats for individuals of all ages, it is observed that children are the most vulnerable group among others since their digital literacy level is low.³⁰ Within this framework, it can be suggested that parents assume the most important role to ensure that children take place in digital media safely³¹ and all the monitoring acts, measures and prohibitions adopted by parents shape the child's experience in digital media³². In this regard, parents must be guides not only in terms of regulating child's use of digital media, but also to help the child understand the importance of protecting oneself by taking the right decisions when digital media are used.³³

5. Aim and Methodology

The research aims to determine the priorities attached by the parents when they share contents about children on their social media accounts and what kind of measures they take in these shared contents to protect the digital privacy of their children. Within this framework, the research questions of the study are as follows:

RQ1: Which content do parents primarily prefer when they share posts about their children on their personal social media accounts?

RQ2: Which preferences of their children do parents take into account when they share posts about their children on their personal social media accounts?

³⁰ See: AKBULUT, Y., ŞAHİN, Y. L., ERIŞTİ, B.: Cyberbullying Victimization among Turkish Online Social Utility Members. In *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 2010, Vol. 13, No. 4, p. 192-201. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2yeqecL>>; KAŞIKÇI, D. N., ÇAĞILTAY, K., KARAKUŞ, T., KURŞUN, E., OGAN, C.: Türkiye ve Avrupa'daki Çocukların İnternet Alışkanlıkları ve Güvenli İnternet Kullanımı. In *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 2014, Vol. 39, p. 230-243. [online]. [2020-04-12]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XBEiYN>>.

³¹ See also: LIVINGSTONE, S., HELSPER, E.: Balancing Opportunities and Risks in Teenagers' Use of the Internet: The Role of Online Skills and Internet Self-Efficacy, In *New Media & Society*, 2010, Vol. 12, No. 2, p. 309-329. [online]. [13-04-2020]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2K4kbdw>>; ROSEN, L. R., CHEEVER, N. A., CARRIER, L. M.: The Impact of Parental Attachment Style, Limit Setting and Monitoring on Teen MySpace Behavior. In *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 2008, Vol. 29, No. 6, p. 459-471. [online]. [2020-04-13]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2yg5ph2>>.

³² See: ALVAREZ, M., TORRES, A., RODRIGUEZ, E., PADILLA, S., RODRIGO, M. J.: Attitudes and Parenting Dimensions in Parents' Regulation of Internet Use by Primary and Secondary School Children. In *Computers & Education*, 2013, Vol. 67, p. 69-73. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/34xb9iN>>; VALCKE, M., BONTE, S., DE WEVER, B., ROTS, I.: Internet Parenting Styles and the Impact on Internet Use of Primary School Children. In *Computers & Education*, 2010, Vol. 55, No. 2, p. 454-464. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3cgsIX6>>.

³³ See: LIVINGSTONE, S.: Children's Privacy Online: Experimenting with Boundaries within and Beyond the Family. In KRAUT, R., BRYNIN, M., KIESLER, S. (eds.): *Computers, Phones and the Internet: Domesticating Information Technology. Human Technology Interaction Series*. Oxford University Press : New York, 2006, p. 145-167. [online]. [2020-04-16]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3ayx36y>>.

RQ3: Which measures do parents primarily implement for the protection of their children's digital privacy when they share posts about their children on their personal social media accounts?

This study, which aims to present the awareness of parents about the protection of children's privacy in digital media, is a field study based on the descriptive method via questionnaire. Within this scope, the target population of the study was determined as parents who live in Turkey and use at least one social media account actively. Goal-oriented sampling, which is one of the non-random sampling methods, was used for the selection of individuals to be included in the sample group from the target population. Goal-oriented sampling allows determining and selecting the units that represent the characteristic for which information is required from the target universe³⁴ and conducting the research based on the units, from which in-depth information can be obtained through specific criteria and certain common characteristics. To avoid any error regarding the sample size, attention was paid to ensure that the participants selected from the determined population represent the population of Turkey. Accordingly, when the population of Turkey is taken into account,³⁵ the level of representation in the sample of 442 participants has a reliability degree of 95 % with a 4,66 % margin of error.

The questionnaire applied to the participants consists of five sections. In the first section of the questionnaire, questions intended for determining the demographic features of the participants were included, while ranking questions intended for determining the usage frequency of social media accounts of the users were included in the second section. In the next three sections of the questionnaire, the five-point likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, I have no idea, agree, strongly agree) was used. In these likert scale based three sections, statements for determining the priorities attached by parents when they share content about their children, statements regarding parents' tendency to take the preferences of their children into account in their social posts and statements for determining the digital privacy measures adopted by children were included respectively. In the process of determining the statements in the likert scale, various research findings addressing parent's awareness towards the digital privacy of children³⁶ were used and the questionnaire took its final form by revising recommendations for protecting the digital privacy of the child in accordance with the purposes of the study. This version of the questionnaire was first implemented on 20 participants and necessary revisions were made based on the findings obtained through 20 participants. Revisions made at this phase were in the form of adding explanations from example applications to the statements intended for determining the digital privacy measures adopted by parents as included in the fifth section of the questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire with these additions

³⁴ YAZICIOĞLU, A., EROĞLU, C.: *SPSS Uygulamalı Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemleri*. Ankara : Detay Yayıncılık, 2014, p. 82.

³⁵ According to the Turkish Statistical Institute's (TUIK) data for the year 2018, the population of Turkey is approximately 83 million. [online]. [2020-04-22]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2W4wBJR>>.

³⁶ See: BELANGER, F., CROSSLER, R. E., HILLER, J. S., PARK, J. M., HSIAO, M.: Children Online Privacy: Issues with Parental Awareness and Control, In RAO, H. R., UPADHYAYA, S. (eds.): *Handbooks in Information Systems: Information Assurance Security and Privacy Services*. United Kingdom : Emerald Publishing, 2009, p. 311-333. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3c9V9pu>>; MINKUS, T., LIU, K., ROSS, K. W.: Children Seen But Not Heard: When Parents Compromise Children's Online Privacy. In GANGEMI, A., LEONARDI, S. (eds.): *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on World Wide Web*. Italy : International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee Republic and Canton of Geneva Switzerland, 2015, p. 776-786. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2VpKwbc>>; MOSER, C., CHEN, T., SCHOENEBECK, S. Y.: Parents' and Children's Preferences about Parents Sharing about Children on Social Media. In *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 2017, p. 5221-5225. [online]. [11-04-2020]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XukTJj>>; STEINBERG, S. B.: Sharenting: Children's Privacy in the Age of Social Media. In *Emory Law Journal*, 2016, Vol. 66, p. 839-884. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/3c9IDX0>>; KEITH, B. E., STEINBERG, S.: Parental Sharing on the Internet: Child Privacy in the Age of Social Media and the Pediatrician's Role. In *JAMA Pediatrics*, 2017, Vol. 171, No. 5, p. 413-414. [online]. [2020-04-11]. Available at: <<https://bit.ly/2XozRQV>>.

was implemented on the participants. As far as the reliability degree of answers given by the participants to the questionnaire is concerned, it can be suggested that Cronbach's Alpha figure has a high level of reliability with 0,813. For the evaluation of the answers given to the questionnaire, the answers given to the implemented questionnaire were coded, data available for processing were transferred to the computer environment by using SPSS 22.0 package software. Descriptive analyses conducted for answering the research questions were also obtained by means of the same software.

6. Findings

In this study, which aims to measure parents' protection of their children's digital identity in their posts shared on social media, the participants were first asked questions to determine their demographic features. Accordingly, it was determined that 52% (230 persons) of the participants are women, 48% (212 persons) of the participants are men; 7,9% (35 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 25-30, 26,1% (115 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 31-35, 29,8% (132 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 36-40, 18,5 % (82 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 41-45, 19,3% (50 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 46-50, 4,9% (21 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 51-55, 1,5% (7 persons) of the participants are between the ages of 56-60. 24,9% (21 persons) of the participants are primary school graduates, 24,9% (21 persons) of the participants are high school graduates, 55,7% (246 persons) of the participants are university graduates, 10% (44 persons) of the participants have a graduate degree, 4,8% (21 persons) have a doctorate degree; 27,6% (122 persons) of the participants are single and 72,4% (320 persons) of the participants are married. As far as the number of children the parents have is concerned, it is observed that 54% (239 persons) of the participants have one child, 42% (186 persons) of the participants have two children, 4% (17 persons) of the participants have three children. Among the parents who have one child, 47,4% (131 persons) of them have a daughter, 52,6% (145 persons) have a son; among the parents who have more than one child, 24% (40 persons) of them have only sons, 28,9% (48 persons) of them have only daughters and 46,9% (78 persons) have both sons and daughters.

In addition to demographic features, the parents were also asked which social media accounts they use and about the frequency of using them. Accordingly, 94,5% (418 persons) of the participants are Facebook users, 88,9% (393 persons) of the participants are Twitter users and 96,1% of the participants are Instagram users. The table, which shows participants' frequency of using these social media accounts, is given below:

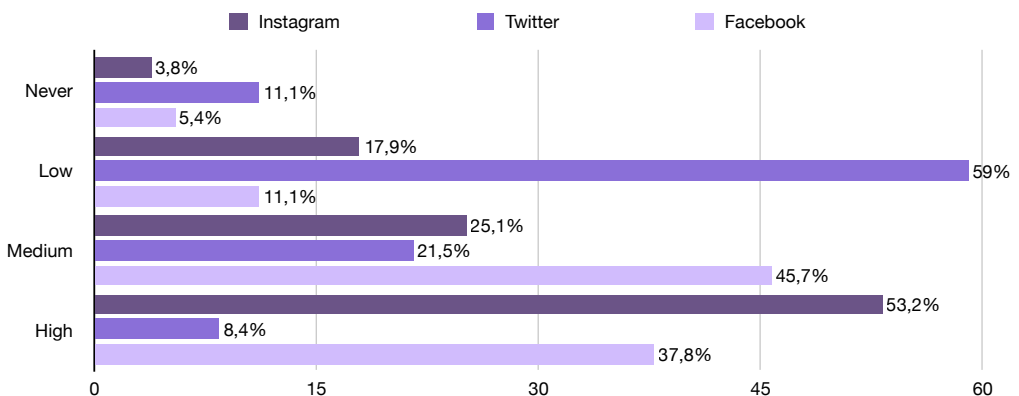


TABLE 1: Parents' frequency of using their personal social media accounts

Source: own processing

According to the table, among the users, who have a Facebook account, 37,8% (167 persons) use Facebook intensively, 45,7% use Facebook at a moderate level, 11,1% (49 persons) use Facebook occasionally; among the users who have a Twitter account, 8,4% (37 persons) use Twitter intensively, 21,5% (95 persons) use Twitter at a moderate level, 59% use Twitter occasionally; among users who have an Instagram account, 53,2% (235 persons) use it intensively, 25,11% (111 persons) use Instagram at a moderate level, and 17,9% use Instagram occasionally.

After the parents were asked questions for determining their frequency of using social media accounts, the participants were asked to mark the statements on the Likert scale according to their degree of agreement. Within this scope, statements for determining the priorities attached by parents when they share content about their children, statements regarding parents' tendency to take the preferences of their children into account in their social posts, and statements for determining the digital privacy measures adopted by children were presented.

The table, which shows the parents' agreement degree averages to the given statements for determining their preferences regarding the posts shared about their children, is given below:

Parents' preferences about sharing content related to their children	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
When I share posts about my child, I generally prefer special occasions such as their birthday, school graduation, etc.	3,95	1,002	442
I prefer sharing my child's infancy photos more.	3,37	1,320	442
I generally prefer sharing photos taken together as a family.	3,93	1,123	442
I prefer sharing posts which show the growth process of my child more.	3,79	1,248	442
I share the photographs and videos of my child in a way that they are only seen by my family members and close friends.	4,10	1,043	442
I prefer photographs and videos of my child which I consider entertaining or funny.	3,87	1,221	442

TABLE 2: Parents' preferences about sharing content related to their children

Source: own processing

According to the table, when the parents' preferences about sharing content related to their children are evaluated, it is observed that participants generally choose special occasions, such as birthday, school graduation of their children (mean: 3,95; SD: 1,002), they prefer sharing the infancy photos of their children more (mean: 3,37; SD: 1,320), they generally share photos taken together as a family (mean: 3,93; SD: 1,123), they mostly share the contents that show the growth process of their children (mean: 3,79; SD: 1,248), they mostly share the photos and videos of their children in a way that they are seen by their family members and close friends (mean: 4,10; SD: 1,043) and they mostly prefer sharing photos and videos of their children, which they consider entertaining or funny (mean: 3,87; SD: 1,221).

The table, which shows the parents' agreement level averages of statements intended for determining parents' tendency to take the preferences of their children into account in their social media posts, is as follows:

Parents' tendency to take the preferences of their children in their social media posts	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
If my child is at an older age, I get my child's opinion when I share their photographs.	3,81	1,085	442
I avoid sharing photographs and videos which my child would not be happy to see.	3,97	1,056	442
If my child is at an older age, I take care of sharing photographs and videos that my child wants.	3,92	1,084	442
If my child is at an older age, I sometimes share the photographs that I like, although I think that my child will react negatively.	2,69	1,082	442
If my child is at an older age, I do not get my child's opinion when I share their photographs and videos.	2,06	1,005	442

TABLE 3. Parents' tendency to take the preferences of their children in their social media posts

Source: own processing

As far as the parents' answers to statements regarding their tendency to take the preferences of their children in their social media posts are concerned, it can be suggested that if the participants' children are at an older age, they ask the opinion of their children when they share their photos (mean: 3,81; SD: 1,085), they avoid sharing photos or videos which they think their children will not like (mean: 3,97; SD: 1,056) and if their children are at an older age, they pay attention to sharing content in accordance with the preferences of their children (mean: 3,92; SD: 1,084). On the other hand, it is observed that the participants avoid sharing content about their children when they think that their children will react negatively to such posts (mean: 2,69; SD: 1,082) and they prefer asking for the opinions of their children when they share their photos or videos (mean: 2,06; SD: 1,005).

Finally, the table which shows the parents' agreement levels to statements intended for determining the measures adopted by parents to protect the digital privacy of their children is as follows:

Measures adopted by parents to protect the digital privacy of their children	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I customized the security settings of the site on which I share content in a way that I can protect the privacy of my child.	4,15	,919	442
I share my posts by keeping my child's identity confidential.	2,56	1,373	442
I take care not to share my child's personal information.	2,93	1,383	442
If my child is at an older age, I tag them in my posts for allowing them to delete the contents that they do not like.	4,13	,915	442
I make sure that my child is dressed in the photos and videos that I share.	4,46	,811	442
Before I share a content about my child, I consider what my child would think about this content when they grow up.	4,09	1,015	442
If my child is at an older age, I share content by taking their preferences into account.	4,06	1,019	442
I use various applications to protect the digital privacy of my child in the posts that I share.	3,95	1,039	442

TABLE 4. Measures adopted by parents to protect the digital privacy of their children

Source: own processing

According to the table, it is observed that the parents customize the security of the site on which they share posts (mean: 4,15; SD: ,919), tag their children in their posts for allowing them to delete photos that they do not like (mean: 4,13; SD: ,915), make sure that their children

are dressed in the contents that they share (mean: 4,46; SD: ,811), when they share content about their children, they consider what their child would think about the consent in question when they grow up (mean: 4,09; SD: 1,015), they take the preference of their children when sharing posts (mean: 4,06; SD: 1,019) and they use various additional applications to protect the digital privacy of their children (mean: 3,95; SD: 1,039). However, on the other hand, it can be suggested that parents do not adopt measures such as keeping the identity of the child confidential (mean: 2,56; SD: 1,373) and making sure that the child's personal information is not shared (mean: 2,93; SD: 1,383).

7. Conclusion

The contents shared by parents about their children on their personal social media accounts, how and with whom they share such contents is of paramount importance for protecting the privacy of the child in digital media. Based on this focus, the study aims to determine the priorities attached by the parents when they share contents about children on their social media accounts, and what kind of measures they take in these shared contents to protect the digital privacy of their children. When the social media useage frequency of parents included in the study is evaluated, it is observed that parents use Instagram primarily and more intensely for sharing content on social media. Instagram is followed by Facebook with a moderate level of use and Twitter with the least frequent use. As far as parents' preferences of sharing content about their children are concerned, it is observed that parents mainly choose special occasions, such as their children's birthday, school graduation, etc. when they share content about their children, they prefer sharing infancy photos of their children, they mostly share photos taken together as a family, they mostly share posts that show the growth process of their children, they generally share the photos and videos of their children in the way that these contents are seen by family members and close friends, and they mainly prefer sharing photos and videos of their children which they consider entertaining or funny.

On the other hand, it can be suggested that when parents share content about their children, they ask for the opinion of their children if they are at an older age, and if their child is younger, they avoid sharing content which they consider their child would not enjoy being shared by putting themselves in the child's position.

As far as the measures adopted by parents when they share content about their children on social media are concerned, it is observed that they make use of settings of the site, tag their children for allowing them to remove photos that they do not like from their profile pages, make sure that their children are dressed in the contents they share, and use various additional applications to ensure the safety of their contents. On the other hand, it can be suggested that parents do not keep the identity of their children confidential in their posts and are not careful enough about the measures such as not sharing their personal information. In other words, although parents take various measures to protect their children's privacy in digital media, they do not hide their children's identity completely in the contents they share. Evaluated within this framework, it would not be wrong to argue that, while parents take certain measures taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the digital media, there are various gaps in these measures. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for parents to extend these measures taken to protect the child's digital privacy completely. In this context, as Lökkke argued, the necessity to find a balance which will allow both attaching importance to privacy and developing useful digital tools and services must be re-emphasized.

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