



JATSS, 2025; 7(3), 172-191

First Submission: 06.06.2025

Revised Submission After Review: 25.07.2025

Accepted For Publication: 28.09.2025

Available Online Since: 30.09.2025

Research Article

**The Digital Privacy Dimension of Sharenting: Social Norms, Parental Strategies and
Privacy Concerns^a**

Sevra Su Tathoğlu^b & Fuat Güllüpinar^c

Abstract

Introduction: With the widespread use of social media in the digital age, parents' perceptions and concerns regarding their children's privacy have become increasingly complex. This study examines how the practice of sharenting intersects with perceptions and concerns about digital privacy. It also explores how factors such as educational background and the child's gender influence these practices, within the framework of broader social and cultural norms.

Method: In the study, an online survey was conducted with three hundred parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds in İzmir, and semi-structured interviews were held with twenty parents. The data obtained through a mixed-methods approach were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

Results or Findings: The findings reveal a complex relationship between sharenting, digital privacy concerns, and demographic variables. Digital privacy concerns are closely linked to parents' educational levels. It was found that parents of daughters tend to approach privacy issues with greater sensitivity. Additionally, the continued sharing behavior of parents through various strategies highlights the "privacy-openness paradox."

Discussion or Conclusion: Digital privacy is not merely a technical issue, but also a cultural and social one. Therefore, digital literacy programs should include components on privacy ethics and gender sensitivity. It is also crucial to enhance default privacy settings on social media platforms, ensure legal protections specific to children's data, and address socioeconomic inequalities. Future research should explore the long-term effects of sharenting from the perspective of children themselves.

Keywords: Sharenting, digital privacy, privacy concerns, child privacy, social media ethics

JEL Codes: Z13, J13, D83

^a This study is derived from the doctoral thesis titled 'New parenting model through digital habitus: 'sharenting' in the context of child privacy violation', completed by the first author under the supervision of the second author at the Department of Sociology, Graduate School of Education, Anadolu University.

^b Sociologist Dr., Independent Researcher, İzmir/Türkiye, sstatlioglu@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5236-0161> (Corresponding Author)

^c Prof. Dr., Anadolu University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Sociology, Eskişehir/Türkiye, fgullupinar@anadolu.edu.tr, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3661-7232>



JATSS, 2025; 7(3), 172-191

İlk Başyuru: 06.06.2025

Düzeltilmiş Makalenin Alınışı: 25.07.2025

Yayın İçin Kabul Tarihi: 28.09.2025

Online Yayın Tarihi: 30.09.2025

Araştırma Makalesi

Sharenting'in Dijital Mahremiyet Boyutu: Toplumsal Normlar, Ebeveyn Stratejileri ve Mahremiyet Kaygıları^a

Sevra Su Tathoğlu^b & Fuat Güllüpinar^c

Öz

Giriş: Dijital çağda sosyal medyanın yaygınlaşmasıyla, ailelerin çocuklarının mahremiyetine dair algı ve kaygıları giderek karmaşıklaşmaktadır. Çalışma, sharenting'in dijital mahremiyet algısı ve kaygısıyla nasıl kesiştiğini incelemektedir. Ayrıca eğitim düzeyi ve çocukların cinsiyetinin bu pratiklere etkisi, toplumsal ve kültürel normlar çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır.

Yöntem: Araştırmada, İzmir'deki çeşitli sosyoekonomik düzeylerden 300 veliyle online anket yapılmış, 20 veliyle ise yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Karma yöntemle elde edilen veriler betimleyici istatistikler ve tematik analizle değerlendirilmiştir.

Sonuçlar ya da Bulgular: Bulgular; sharenting, dijital mahremiyet kaygısı ve demografik değişkenler arasında karmaşık bir ilişki olduğunu göstermektedir. Dijital mahremiyet kaygısı, ebeveynlerin eğitim düzeyiyle yakından ilişkilidir. Kız çocukları olan ebeveynlerin mahremiyet konusuna daha hassas yaklaştığı saptanmıştır. Ebeveynlerin, çeşitli stratejilerle paylaşım yapmaya devam etmesi de "gizlilik-açıklık paradoksu"nu ortaya koymaktadır.

Tartışma ya da Yapılan Çıkarımlar: Dijital mahremiyet sadece teknik değil, kültürel ve toplumsal bir meseledir. Bu nedenle dijital okuryazarlık eğitimlerinin mahremiyet etiği ve toplumsal cinsiyet duyarlılığını da kapsamaları önemlidir. Ayrıca, sosyal medyada varsayılan gizlilik ayarlarının geliştirilmesi, çocuk verilerine özgü yasal korumaların sağlanması ve sosyoekonomik eşitsizliklerin giderilmesi önemlidir. Gelecek araştırmalar, sharenting'in çocuklar üzerindeki etkilerini uzun vadede ve çocukların bakış açısıyla incelemelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sharenting, dijital mahremiyet, mahremiyet kaygısı, çocuk mahremiyeti, sosyal medya etiği

JEL Kodlar: Z13, J13, D83

^a Bu çalışma Anadolu Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Sosyoloji Anabilim Dalı'nda birinci yazar tarafından ikinci yazarın danışmanlığında tamamlanmış olan "Dijital habitus üzerinden yeni ebeveynlik modeli: çocuk mahremiyeti ihlali bağlamında "sharenting" başlıklı doktora tezinden üretilmiştir.

^b Sosyolog Dr., Bağımsız Araştırmacı, İzmir/Türkiye, sstatlioglu@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5236-0161> (Sorumlu Yazar)

^c Prof. Dr., Anadolu Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Sosyoloji Bölümü, Eskişehir/Türkiye, fgullupinar@anadolu.edu.tr, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3661-7232>

Introduction¹

The rapid proliferation of digital technologies has enabled families to share memories, photographs, and information in regard to their children instantaneously. In particular, the practice of ‘sharenting’ on social media platforms is fundamentally reshaping both the construction of children’s digital identities and family perceptions of privacy. The term ‘sharenting’, a blend of ‘share’ and ‘parenting’, refers to the frequent sharing of child-related content by parents across digital channels. This phenomenon simultaneously functions as a communicative strategy through which families make visible their social belonging, status, and relational ties, while also exposing children to digital surveillance, the disclosure of personal data, and the potential privacy violations they may face in the future.

Digital privacy emerges as a dynamic concept that goes beyond traditional notions of privacy by focusing on the individual's control over what information is shared, when and with whom. As Altman (1977) emphasizes, privacy is not confined solely to physical space; rather, it is a multilayered process encompassing cognitive, emotional, and informational dimensions. However, the permanence, replicability, and wide accessibility of social media content significantly undermine this control. Every digital sharing can be copied without consent, recirculated across different platforms, or manipulated through artificial intelligence-based technologies. This situation exposes parents to a multifaceted risk environment that extends beyond technical privacy settings to include cultural norms, social expectations, and symbolic violence.

While sharenting practices are often motivated by the desire to preserve memories and foster social participation, they also entail potential harm that shapes children’s digital footprints, affect their bodily privacy, and threaten the security of their personal data. This dilemma, referred to in the literature as the ‘privacy-openness paradox’ (Chalklen & Anderson, 2017; Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019), is characterized by parents’ simultaneous pursuit of the symbolic benefits afforded by social media sharing and their profound concerns regarding their children’s digital future and privacy. Moreover, gender norms play a significant role in shaping sharenting practices; for instance, parents tend to adopt a more protective approach to privacy concerning their daughters, while exhibiting a more tolerant perception of risk toward their sons, illustrating how these practices are deeply intertwined with societal gender codes.

International studies (Lipu & Siibak, 2019; Latipah et al., 2020; Ranzini et al., 2020) provide significant insight into the individual privacy risks, parental motivations, and gender-related aspects of sharenting. However, research conducted within the Turkish context remains limited and predominantly descriptive in nature. Existing studies (Erişir & Erişir, 2018; Ayhan & Öztürk, 2021; Morva & Ünlü, 2021; Akpınar et al., 2020) generally address parents’ levels of digital literacy and overall privacy concerns but do not thoroughly explore the influence of socioeconomic differences, local cultural codes, and social norms on sharenting practices. This gap presents a critical limitation in understanding how parental digital behavior is shaped specifically in Turkey.

The primary aim of this study is to examine how sharenting practices intersect with perceptions of digital privacy among parents of middle school students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in Izmir. Additionally, the study investigates how parental

¹ Permission was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Anadolu University with the decision dated 28.03.2023 and document number 495269.

education level, the child's gender, and individual privacy concerns contribute to variations within this process. Employing a mixed-method approach, comprehensive data were collected through a quantitative survey administered to three hundred parents, complemented by in-depth interviews with twenty parents. The analysis focused on several thematic areas: perceptions and levels of digital privacy concerns; sharenting practices and the control-strategy dilemma; the role and differentiation of demographic variables; and the potential negative impact of sharing on children alongside parental concerns. By synthesizing both numerical trends and qualitative narratives reflecting individual experiences and perceptions, this study offers a multilayered analysis of the social, cultural, and technological dynamics of sharenting within the Turkish context.

The article is structured as follows. The first section outlines the theoretical framework, centered on the concepts of sharenting, digital privacy, and the determining role of social norms in sharenting practices. The second section details the methodology, including participant profiles, data collection, and analysis methods. The third section presents an integrated discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations section evaluates the results within theoretical debates and develops practical and policy-oriented suggestions.

Literature Review

Sharenting: The New Family Practice of Visibility

Sharenting, a digital phenomenon derived from the combination of the words 'share' and 'parenting', refers to parents sharing photographs, videos, and information about their children on social media (Latipah et al., 2020). In the digital age, children begin to acquire an online identity even before birth, with parents' posts constructing a 'digital biography' of the child (Omur & Uyar, 2022).

The prevalence of sharenting practices is rapidly increasing worldwide, with many parents sharing their happiness, memories, and daily experiences related to their children on social networks. However, since these shares also shape the child's digital identity, they raise concerns in regard to potential privacy risks that the child may face in the future (Bare, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial for parents to be aware of the risks that their posts may pose both for themselves and their children. The digital world harbors threats that can harm children's lives, including identity theft and child pornography (Otero, 2017). Above all, sharing children's photographs inevitably exposes their personal information to the public. In particular, paedophiles' access to children's personal data or images can lead to severe trauma for the children, either now or in the future (Duygulu, 2019).

In the United States, children's digital privacy and the protection of their personal data are regulated under laws such as the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which safeguard children's rights by restricting access to, use of, and sharing of their personal information on online platforms. In contrast, Turkish legislation lacks a specific regulatory framework dedicated to children; instead, the protection of children's personal data is broadly governed by the general provisions of the Personal Data Protection Law (Bilgi Teknolojileri Kurumu, 2019).

While a number of parents are fully aware of the dangers posed by social media and carefully consider each post, others remain unaware of the potential risks associated with sharing. Studies have generally found that parents tend to act cautiously regarding the appropriateness of photographs they share, with concerns primarily centered on who might

view these images. At the same time, there is a perceived need to share positive photos with friends and relatives through social media. In this ethical dilemma, the opinions of family members and close acquaintances often take precedence over concerns about digital privacy. Consequently, this issue raises important questions about the risks involved when parents disclose information about their children. Since any data shared online remains permanently accessible, children's information may be used in harmful ways, such as cyberbullying, particularly involving data they might prefer to keep private or find embarrassing in the future (Bare, 2020).

The Concept of Digital Privacy

The term privacy originates from the Latin word *privatus* and traditionally refers to an individual's home and private life as opposed to the public sphere (Boyar & Işık, 2019). According to the Turkish Language Association, privacy is synonymous with 'confidentiality' (TDK, 2022). Irwin Altman defines privacy as an individual's ability to decide which information to share, with whom, and when during social interactions, while maintaining control over this process (Altman, 1977). Therefore, in the digital age, privacy is not merely the right to be alone but also encompasses the capacity to regulate both solitude and disclosure through 'verbal, nonverbal, environmental, and cultural mechanisms' (Altman, 1977).

Generally, privacy rights are categorized into three types; territorial privacy, personal privacy, and informational privacy. Territorial privacy refers to the protection of an individual's physical space; personal privacy involves safeguarding against actions that may cause physical or psychological harm; and informational privacy pertains to the control over the collection, storage, and processing of personal data (Hübner, 1998). However, the boundaries of these three forms of privacy have begun to blur in light of developments in the digital era.

With the advancement of technology, the concept of privacy has been reshaped to include notions such as personal data privacy and internet privacy. Digitalization raises issues related to the collection, storage, processing, and sharing of personal data, making digital privacy fundamentally concerned with the recording, security, and surveillance of information and data. This is because almost every aspect of an individual's life becomes transparent in digital communication environments (Barkuş & Koç, 2019).

Marwick and Boyd (2014) describe this phenomenon as 'users producing persistent and widely accessible content as an intrinsic component of sharing'. Similarly, Eroğlu (2018) emphasizes that big data analytics transform accumulated information, known as the 'digital footprint', into metadata, thereby facilitating privacy violations. According to Han (2017), the vast amount of data stored digitally eliminates the luxury of 'forgetting' or being forgotten; every search, share, and like leaves a permanent digital trace, making the protection of privacy increasingly difficult.

Privacy Concerns and Social Norms in Sharenting

When it comes to sharenting, parents face the privacy-openness paradox in deciding whether or not to share information regarding their children. According to this paradox, parents experience a dilemma; while sharing content related to their children offers certain benefits, it simultaneously raises privacy concerns, particularly regarding the disclosure of inappropriate or excessive information. Therefore, parents must strike a balance between protective behavior that safeguards their children's privacy and the advantages gained from sharing.

Above all, sharing is perceived as a form of social participation. These sharing practices allow parents to keep their family and friends updated in regard to their children in real time.

Additionally, many parents view sharenting as a way to preserve memories. Sharenting provides parents with a means to acquire useful information during their parenting journey, receive answers to their questions, and gain social support. Furthermore, the desire to be perceived as a ‘good parent’, which is a key motivation for many parents, also shapes the content they choose to share (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019).

Sharenting behavior is also shaped by gender roles. Research generally indicates that mothers are more active than fathers in sharing content related to their children on social media. While sharenting is not exclusive to mothers, they tend to engage more intensively in this practice, which has led to frequent discussions within the discourse of ‘digital motherhood’ or ‘digital femininity’ (Latipah et al., 2020; Lazard et al., 2019; Kumar & Schoenebeck, 2015; Tatlıoğlu, 2025, among others). Similarly, the child’s gender represents another dimension influencing sharenting practices. International studies have found that parents tend to share content regarding their sons more frequently than about their daughters. For example, Sivak and Smirnov’s (2019) study revealed that both mothers and fathers posted more about their sons than their daughters on social media, and that these posts generally received higher engagement. This gender imbalance has been highlighted as potentially contributing to the reduced visibility of girls and sending early messages of inequality.

Although studies specifically examining the relationship between a child’s gender and privacy concerns are limited within the Turkish context, investigating such differences in light of cultural gender roles holds significant importance in the literature. More broadly, analyzing the biases and expectations related to both the parent’s and the child’s gender in sharenting practices will open new avenues for research aimed at understanding how familial social norms are reflected in digital spaces.

Method

Participants

The quantitative phase of this mixed-method study involved three hundred parents of middle school students from neighborhoods with varying socioeconomic levels in Izmir during the spring term of 2023–2024. Since online surveys and semi-structured interviews was used in this study as a data collection method, the permission has been obtained from Ethics Committee of the Anadolu University with a decision on the date of 28.03.2023 and document number 495269.

The participants, two hundred and twenty were female and eighty were male. Regarding the gender of their children, 47% (n = 141) had daughters, while 53% (n = 159) had sons. In terms of educational levels, the largest group consisted of high school graduates (n = 89, 29.7%), followed by primary school graduates (n = 76, 25.3%). Middle school and university graduates each accounted for 14% of the sample (n = 42 per group). Additionally, there were nineteen participants (6.3%) with vocational school diplomas and fourteen participants (4.7%) who were literate without a diploma or who had dropped out of primary school. Smaller proportions included eleven participants (3.7%) with postgraduate education and seven participants (2.3%) who were illiterate.

For the qualitative data collection, in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty parents; fifteen women and five men. Of these, eleven had daughters, one had both a daughter and a son, and eight had sons. The participants came from various educational backgrounds: three had completed primary school; two middle school; six high school; one vocational school; one had an associate degree; six had university degrees; and one had a postgraduate degree.

Sampling was based on voluntary participation, with written informed consent and participation criteria provided under the approval of the Izmir Provincial Directorate of National Education.

Design

The study employed a convergent parallel mixed method design, wherein quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed independently, and then synthesized. This approach allowed for a comparative and complementary evaluation of the general trends revealed by the quantitative findings alongside the individual interpretations provided by the qualitative data (Creswell, 2016).

Ethical Approval and Consent

For the study, ethical approval was obtained from the Research and Publication Board of Anadolu University on 28 March, 2023, with protocol number 495269; official permission was also granted by the Izmir Provincial Directorate of National Education on 27 September, 2023, under document number E-12018877-604.01.02-85350724. The participants were informed verbally and in writing concerning confidentiality principles, the non-recording of personal identification information, and that data would be used solely for research purposes. Written consent was obtained from all the participants.

Materials

A forty-six-item online survey was developed to collect quantitative data. This survey included multiple-choice questions addressing the parents' characteristics such as gender, age, educational level, and their children's gender, as well as dynamics related to sharenting practices, privacy perceptions, and digital privacy concerns. In the qualitative phase of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents on topics such as privacy perceptions, digital privacy concerns, and awareness.

Procedure

The quantitative data collection was conducted between October and December 2023 by way of Google Forms; the survey link was sent to parents through parent-teacher associations and teachers. The qualitative data collection phase also took place between October and December 2023, involving face-to-face interviews lasting forty-five to sixty minutes at the middle schools where the children were enrolled. Audio recordings were made during the interviews, and the transcripts were anonymized.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using an IBM SPSS Statistics 27. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) were used to reveal the levels of privacy concerns and the parents' worries regarding the negative impact of sharenting on their children. Chi-square tests analyzed the variability of digital privacy concerns according to the educational level and the child's gender, as well as the relationship between concerns about children being negatively affected by posts and digital privacy concern.

In the qualitative phase, the interviews were categorically evaluated based on themes determined by the researcher. To maintain ethical considerations, parents were coded as P1, P2, ... P20. Additionally, age and gender information were indicated in parentheses, with female participants coded as F and male participants as M; for example, P1 (49, F). The findings obtained from the analyses were integrated in a complementary manner and interpreted. Therefore, privacy perception in sharenting practices and the variability of digital privacy

awareness according to the educational level and the child’s gender were revealed both in terms of measurable trends and individual interpretations.

Findings

Digital Privacy Perception and Concern Levels

The initial findings of the study focus on the parents’ perceptions of digital privacy and their levels of concern regarding this issue. The digital privacy concern levels of the three hundred participating parents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The Digital Privacy Concern of Parents

Privacy Concern	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I am very concerned about online privacy.	140	46.7
I am somewhat concerned about online privacy.	88	29.3
I am not concerned.	30	10.0
I am not sure what online privacy means.	42	14.0
Total	300	100.0

Note. Created by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

When examining the online privacy concerns of parent survey participants, the highest frequency is seen in the response ‘I am very concerned about online privacy’ with one hundred and forty of the participants (46.7%). The second most frequent response is ‘I am somewhat concerned about online privacy’ with eighty-eight of the participants (29.3%). This is followed by ‘I am not sure what online privacy means’ with forty-two of the participants (14.0%), while the least frequent response is ‘I am not concerned’ with thirty of the participants (10.0%).

These findings indicate that a significant portion of parents are ‘very concerned’ in regard to digital privacy. The high proportion of this response suggests a certain level of awareness regarding digital privacy. The second most common response, ‘somewhat concerned’, reflects a moderate level of concern but still confirms the presence of concern. It is worth highlighting the response ‘not sure what it means’, as this indicates that a number of the parents lack sufficient knowledge concerning online privacy or experience uncertainty regarding the concept. On the other hand, the ‘not concerned’ group represents a small segment, implying that awareness levels may be associated with levels of concern.

Overall, these results suggest that most parents take the issue of digital privacy seriously and are concerned about it. This can be interpreted as a sign of parental sensitivity towards their children’s online safety, particularly in an era where managing personal data and digital sharing is becoming increasingly difficult.

The qualitative findings enrich the data by revealing the perceptual and experiential dimensions behind these concerns, demonstrating that the ambiguous boundaries of digital privacy and fears regarding unauthorized sharing significantly shape parents' digital behavior. Furthermore, it emerges that parents are not only worried about losing control on digital platforms in relation to their children but are also concerned about how this loss of control might affect their own social reputation.

P10 (49, F): “Digital privacy...I think people no longer have any real sense of privacy. In the digital realm, it’s more flexible; actually, it’s nonexistent. People share things however they want, without thinking twice... But it’s very dangerous for children. They’re already the most affected.”

P20 (38, M): “Digital privacy doesn’t evoke an image of a photo taken at the beach in a swimsuit for me. It’s about sharing something about someone else. It has to be something that a person consents to. Because you never know where it might end up. There are screenshots, screen recordings, and all sorts of tool. There’s Photoshop, and now artificial intelligence can generate things; make you speak without you, listen to your voice. That’s why I prefer people I don’t know not to see my content. I’ve adjusted my social media accordingly. All my accounts are private and locked.”

In general, digital privacy refers to a form of control over the protection and usability of data. However, it is most commonly discussed in the context of violations such as the collection of personal information, fraud, misuse of data, surveillance, and the infringement of private life (Aslanyürek, 2016). These concerns emerge especially when individuals lose control over how and where their shared content is used, highlighting concerns about the dissemination of personal data and images in the digital world. Once a photo or video is shared without permission, the consequences are uncertain and may severely damage a person’s reputation or identity in social contexts. In this regard, the protection of digital privacy is not merely a technical issue but a complex matter with social and ethical dimensions. Raising awareness among parents about their digital sharing practices and providing guidance in this area is of critical importance for ensuring the safety of children in online environments.

Sharenting Practices and the Control–Strategy Dilemma

The second key finding of the research focuses on parents’ sharenting practices, that is, sharing digital content related to their children, and the dilemma they face between maintaining control and applying strategic decisions in such sharing.

Table 2

The Sharenting Practices of Parents

Sharenting Practice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
I shared it on my social media account	201	67.0
No, I did not share	94	31.3
I shared it on their social media account	5	1.7
Total	300	100.0

Note. Created by the author using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

The quantitative data indicate that the majority of parents share content related to their children on social media platforms. However, this behavior entails both an effort to maintain control and a motivational dilemma. The qualitative data reveal that many parents are careful to limit their sharing and restrict access to individuals they trust, in an attempt to safeguard their children’s privacy:

P1 (49, F): “I generally do not share anything with people who might raise concerns regarding my child’s privacy. I believe I am able to choose people as carefully as possible. I make a conscious effort not to do anything that could harm my family, my child, or myself.”

P6 (47, F): “I don’t share with everyone anyway. Just with people I trust; close relatives I know, maybe three or five very close friends. Even then, there are limits. If you look, I probably have three, maybe four friends like that.”

A number of the participants did not express concerns about their children's privacy, assuming that their sharing was limited to their close social circles. For these participants, the sense of control over privacy is associated with their ability to choose a social environment in which they feel comfortable and trust. There is a prevailing belief that boundaries and privacy can be maintained by consciously knowing and selecting whom to trust. On the other hand, despite their concerns concerning privacy, many parents tend to continue sharing content on social media. This paradox reflects parents’ efforts to balance the safety of their children in digital spaces with their own needs for social visibility and belonging.

P14 (45, F): “Yes, of course I worry, but I make sure not to show their faces in the photos; especially because they might be misused in harmful ways. Nothing is the same as it used to be. That’s why I don’t include their face, but I still share their photos on social media from different angles, where the face isn’t visible.”

P9 (52, M): “Well, I’m not sharing anything right now, but if I keep my account public, people with bad intentions could use anything. We hear about all kinds of things. In these copy-paste cases, terrible things can happen. There’s always a possibility that something I post might negatively affect my child’s life in the future. But when I think about it now, their childhood photos are still there. But they were babies back then; it felt safer. Now, it feels more dangerous.”

These statements indicate that concerns regarding privacy are indeed present, yet parents often believe that their sharing practices will not harm their children for various reasons. At this point, it is also possible to refer to the ‘privacy-openness paradox’ identified by Chalklen and Anderson, (2017). In this paradox, parents are aware that their online posts may raise privacy issues by disclosing personal information regarding their children, yet they simultaneously believe that sharing has multiple benefits (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019) Trying to strike a balance, these parents attempt to take certain precautions that they believe will protect their children’s privacy while still engaging in sharing practices. Therefore, sharenting is revealed not merely as a privacy issue but as a complex process in which social identity, belonging, and parenting roles are redefined in digital spaces. This research once again highlights the importance of raising parental awareness in regard to digital sharing and developing strategies to safeguard children's privacy.

The Role of Demographic Variables and Variations

The third set of findings in the study focuses on how parents’ educational background and the gender of their children affect digital privacy concerns, examining the variations in concern levels based on these demographic variables. In this context, a Chi-square test was conducted to determine the relationship between parents' educational levels and their concerns regarding digital privacy:

H₀: Digital privacy concerns do not differ based on parents’ educational levels.

H₁: Digital privacy concerns differ based on parents' educational levels.

Table 3

The Digital Privacy Concern by Educational Level

Chi-Square Tests					
	X²	V	df	p	n
Pearson Chi-Square	44,634		21	,002	300
Cramer's V		,223		,002	

Note. Created by the author using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

The Chi-square test results show a Pearson value of 44.634 with twenty-one degrees of freedom (df). Since the p-value was less than 0.05 ($p = 0.002$), the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. Therefore, a statistically significant difference was found between the parents' educational levels and their digital privacy concerns. Additionally, the Cramer's V value was calculated as 0.223, indicating a moderate association. Consequently, it can be stated that the parents' educational level has a significant effect on their digital privacy concerns. This finding suggests that educational level plays an important role in digital literacy and privacy awareness. Education emerges as a key factor influencing digital literacy, privacy consciousness, and risk perception. In this context, there is a clear need to increase knowledge and awareness regarding digital privacy, particularly among groups with lower educational attainment.

Furthermore, considering the potential impact of gender norms on digital privacy, the study also examines whether parents' privacy concerns vary according to their children's gender. Accordingly, a Chi-square test was conducted to investigate the relationship between parents' digital privacy concerns and the gender of their children:

H₀: Parents' digital privacy concerns do not differ according to their children's gender.

H₁: Parents' digital privacy concerns differ according to their children's gender.

Table 4

The Parents' Digital Privacy Concerns According to their Child's Gender

Chi-Square Tests					
	X²	V	df	p	n
Pearson Chi-Square	5,968		3	,113	300
Cramer's V		,141		,113	

Note. Created by the author using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

The Chi-square test results showed a Pearson value of 5.968 with three degrees of freedom (df). Since the p-value was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.113$), the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the parents' digital privacy concerns and their child's gender. However, on the other hand, the qualitative data indicate that social gender norms may play a determining role in privacy concerns. The participants' statements reflect widespread societal perceptions that daughters require more

protection and attention, especially regarding bodily privacy. This suggests that parents hold gender-based concerns when selecting and limiting content shared on social media.

P17 (49, M): “Something very private, or I don’t know... if it were a daughter, like if there was a photo in a bikini or something like that. Yes, maybe things like that... related to nudity. We are a bit more relaxed when it comes to a son.”

P18 (38, F): “Of course. For example, if I share a photo of him at the beach, I do look at it from an outside perspective and post accordingly... I did that when he was a baby, for instance. It’s somewhat instinctive. It’s not about covering the face, but sometimes I’ve covered parts of the body with an emoji or some text, but generally, his face is always visible. On the other hand, if I had a daughter, I might have been more cautious. Having a son feels like a somewhat safer zone.”

Gender norms reinforce the perception that girls are more vulnerable and at risk, leading parents to develop more meticulous and controlled sharing strategies for their daughters. Moreover, the fact that abuse cases predominantly target girls intensifies these concerns among parents. At this point, cultural norms and individual experiences play a significant role in shaping digital privacy concerns:

P11 (31, F): “I am very careful with her. For example, I pay attention to her clothing. Sometimes I check her pants to ensure that her private parts are not visible. I make her adjust her clothes and take photos accordingly. I am very cautious. Not everyone has good intentions; some look with bad intentions. We see abuse cases on TV, various things happen. I don’t want anyone to look at her with dirty eyes.”

These statements from the participants indicate that prevailing gender norms in society also influence social media sharing practices. The gender-based risk perceptions towards girls position them as more vulnerable and at greater risk. Furthermore, the parents’ personal experiences may increase the perceived need to protect their daughters’ privacy more rigorously. Therefore, it can be argued that digital privacy concerns are linked not only to individual awareness and education but also to societal gender norms and cultural factors. In this context, it becomes necessary to consider gender-specific needs and social perceptions when developing privacy protection strategies.

The Potential Negative Impact of Sharing on the Child and Parental Concerns

The study also examines the parents' concerns regarding the possible negative effects of their digital sharing related to their children and evaluates the relationship of these concerns with digital privacy concerns.

Table 5

The Parents’ Concerns regarding the Potential Negative Impact of Their Shares on Their Children

Concerned	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	68	22.7
No	232	77.3
Total	300	100.0

Note. Created by the author using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

The quantitative findings reveal that while the vast majority of parents (77.3%) believe that their digital shares do not harm their children, a significant portion (22.7%) express concerns that their children may be negatively affected by these shares. The high proportion of 'No' responses may reflect the parents' confidence in managing their own social media usage or their belief that the content they share does not adversely impact their children. Conversely, the 22.7% 'Yes' responses indicate that a number of the parents do harbor concerns regarding the potential negative effects on their children. This variation highlights the diversity in the parents' awareness and concern regarding the protection of their children's privacy in digital environments. The difference between these two groups provides important insight into digital literacy and parental awareness, signaling a need for enhanced information and education. Notably, the significant relationship between digital privacy concerns and worries about children's negative exposure to shared content underscores the necessity for parents to recognize online risks and to act with greater caution.

H0: Concerns about children being negatively affected by digital shares do not differ according to digital privacy concern.

H1: Concerns about children being negatively affected by digital shares differ according to digital privacy concern.

Table 6

The Relationship between Digital Privacy Concern and Concern about Negative Effects of Shares on the Child

Chi-Square Tests					
	X ²	V	df	p	n
Pearson Chi-Square	14,897		3	,002	300
Cramer's V		,223		,002	

Note. Created by the author using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 statistical software.

The Chi-square test results reveal a Pearson value of 14.897 with three degrees of freedom (df). Since the p-value was less than 0.05 ($p = 0.002$), the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. Therefore, it was concluded that concern about the potential negative effects of shares on children differs statistically according to digital privacy concern. Additionally, the Cramer's V value was found to be 0.223, indicating a moderate level of association. As the parents' concerns regarding digital privacy increase, so does their concern regarding the possible negative impact of their shares on their children. This finding demonstrates that worries about children being adversely affected by shared content vary significantly depending on the level of digital privacy concern.

The qualitative data further elaborate on parents' sensitivity toward protecting their children from dangers in the digital world. The participants' concerns regarding sharing extend beyond mere fears of individual privacy violations and can be interpreted as a protective reflex shaped by social norms and cultural expectations. Unlike physical spaces, the digital environment's ambiguous boundaries and lack of control generate profound distrust and concern among the parents. This underscores that privacy in the digital world encompasses not only individual but also social and cultural dimensions.

P3 (28, F): “Of course... That’s why I don’t want my 13-year-old daughter to use Instagram. Something could happen; someone might message her; she’s very young, her mind could get confused. I see these things on TV... I don’t allow it. Phones, computers; I absolutely do not permit. I pay very close attention to her, though if she does something behind my back, I wouldn’t know, but I really watch over her.”

P8 (41, F): “My concern... yes, it exists. That’s why I pay attention to what she does. That’s also why my daughter doesn’t have an Instagram account. She uses YouTube instead. For example, I set an 18+ age restriction for her and I also watch the shorts and reels she views. Sometimes I check what she’s been watching.”

P6 (47, F): “This is much more... I don’t know, scarier. You can protect your child from physical environments; that’s in your control. You see where they go, you can follow their friends, know who they talk to, but once they enter the digital world, it’s infinite. You don’t know who they’re reaching, who they’re communicating with.”

These statements add to the discourse on privacy by highlighting the tension between the traditional, controlled nature of the family and physical spaces and the open, often uncontrollable character of the digital world. For the parents, violations of their children’s privacy represent both personal and societal concerns, as they invoke traditional norms and expectations about when and how certain aspects of life should be shared. Therefore, these expressions demonstrate that privacy is not solely confined to the private sphere, family, or individuals, but becomes problematic in the digital realm where deeper social and cultural issues emerge. Consequently, the digital environment is seen to transform conventional notions of privacy and impact not only individuals but also broader social structures. In this context, strengthening parents’ digital literacy and developing conscious strategies for social media use are essential requirements for protecting children online. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that digital privacy is not merely a technical issue but is also shaped by family dynamics and cultural norms.

Discussion

The findings reveal that the relationship between parents’ sharenting practices and digital privacy concerns in the digital age is not merely a technical issue but is rooted in complex social and cultural dynamics. The fact that many parents exhibit high levels of concern regarding digital privacy underscores the increasing complexity of Altman’s (1977) conceptualization of privacy as ‘the ability to decide which information, with whom, when, and how to share’, within digital environments. Because digital platforms render shared content permanent and widely accessible, parents experience concern over the uncontrollable dimensions of both their own and their children’s privacy, leading them to reconsider their sharing decisions. At this point, Marwick and Boyd’s (2014) emphasis on the ‘persistent trace’ becomes particularly relevant. As sharing shifts from a momentary interaction to an ongoing process that affects children’s digital identities and social perceptions over the long term, parents are driven to develop protective strategies.

On the other hand, examining sharenting practices reveals that families’ motivation to maintain social visibility and a sense of belonging reinforces the dilemma known as the ‘privacy-openness paradox’. As described by Chalklen and Anderson, (2017), although parents are aware that their sharing practices may constitute a violation of their children’s privacy, they continue these practices due to the benefits of social support, belonging, and memory preservation. This paradox demonstrates that many parents construct their sharing strategies not only based on technical privacy settings but also through social norms and trust relations. At

this point, parents' sensitivity to their children's bodily privacy, such as obscuring faces or body parts in shared content, reveals the influence of societal norms on sharenting practices. Therefore, sharenting becomes not merely the act of sharing children's photos but also a site where gender codes are reproduced and contested.

The demographic analyses of the study reveals that digital privacy concerns are closely related to the educational level of parents. This finding indicates a particular need for increased digital literacy education among parents with lower educational attainment. Without developing such awareness and knowledge, parents may fail to anticipate the long-term consequences of sharenting, inadvertently exposing their children to the risks of the digital world. At this point, the findings on the parents' awareness of the potential negative outcomes of sharenting for their children present a stark contrast. While the vast majority believe that their sharing does not negatively affect their children, a smaller percentage expresses concerns, demonstrating awareness regarding privacy violations, digital footprints, and children's autonomy. This concern is closely linked to the concept of the digital footprint; parents argue that every shared photo, video, or text may lay the groundwork for adverse situations their children might face in their future social lives. This reflects a growing unease due to the evolving nature of digital boundaries. The quest for protection in the digital realm extends beyond physical boundaries to the level of smartphones and applications, often manifesting through restrictions on children's social media use or the blocking of certain content. This directly impacts power dynamics within families and the development of children's digital identities. Therefore, digital literacy education should encompass not only technical skills but also privacy ethics and the digital reflections of social roles, emphasizing their crucial importance.

Concerns in regard to digital privacy increase when it comes to children's privacy. Many of the participants expressed worries about the disappearance of clear boundaries between private (family) and public (social media) spheres, emphasizing that the digital world is less controllable than the physical world and that privacy tends to be lost within this endless flow. While the family is traditionally seen as a 'space' in the physical world where specific norms and boundaries are enforced and privacy is protected through control, this distinction becomes blurred in the digital realm. Although parents strive to protect their children from privacy violations, the inherently complex nature of digital environments complicates this effort. Sharenting practices and the accompanying privacy strategies illustrate that the digital space functions simultaneously as a field of dissemination and control.

Within this complex balance, it becomes clear that digital parenting is not merely a technical issue but one deeply intertwined with educational policies, gender roles, cultural norms, and legal regulations. Schools and local authorities should organize programs to raise digital literacy and privacy awareness while developing gender-sensitive digital education content. By addressing the distinct risks faced by girls and boys in the digital world, strategies to cope with gender-specific concerns could be developed. Furthermore, social media platforms must strengthen their default privacy settings and create regulations that safeguard children's online sharing. From a legal standpoint, enriching data protection laws such as the KVKK with provisions specifically addressing children's data would be an important step forward.

Conclusion

This study highlights the multidimensional nature of sharenting practices and their implications for digital privacy among parents of middle school students in Izmir. The findings reveal that digital privacy concerns are deeply intertwined with social, cultural, and gender-based factors, extending beyond mere technical considerations. Parents' awareness of potential

risks varies, underscoring the importance of enhancing digital literacy that incorporates privacy ethics and gender sensitivity. Therefore, beyond understanding the technical features of platforms, there is a need for a critical perspective aimed at transforming existing gender inequalities and cultural perceptions.

Furthermore, parent education programs focused on digital literacy and privacy awareness should be implemented alongside policy interventions aimed at creating safer digital environments. Additionally, developing gender-sensitive digital content can help address the distinct risks faced by children online.

Future research should monitor how these dynamics evolve across different geographical regions and through longitudinal designs. Moreover, by centering on children's own experiences and evaluating their digital identity development, future studies could reveal the long-term effects of sharenting more comprehensively. Such a perspective will enable a fuller understanding of both the social benefits and the inherent risks of sharenting.


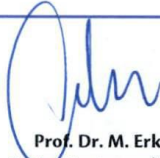

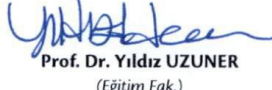



References

- Akpınar, B. S., Paylan, N., Etlik, Ş., Erus, B. & Karakoç, H. (2020). “Sharenting” konusunda ebeveynlerin farkındalık düzeyleri. *Genel Sağlık Bilimleri Dergisi*, 2(2), 8-18.
- Altman, I. (1977). Privacy regulation: Culturally universal or culturally specific?. *Journal of Social Issues*, 33(3), 66-84.
- Aslanyürek, M. (2016). İnternet ve sosyal medya kullanıcılarının internet güvenliği ve çevrimiçi gizlilik ile ilgili kanaatleri ve farkındalıkları. *Maltepe Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 3(1), 80-106.
- Ayhan, H., & Öztürk, E. (2021). Dijital dünyada ebeveyn olmanın görünürde normal bir yansıması olarak paylaşılan ebeveynlik (sharenting): Geleneksel bir derleme. *Türkiye Klinikleri Journal of Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences*, 18(2), 165-177.
- Bare, C. (2020). *The undisclosed dangers of parental sharing on social media: A content analysis of sharenting images on Instagram*. [Unpublished Master's thesis]. East Tennessee State University.
- Barkuş, F.& Koç, M. (2019). Dijital mahremiyet kavramı ve ilgili çalışmalar üzerine bir derleme. *Bilim Eğitim Sanat ve Teknoloji Dergisi*, 3(1), 35-44.
- Bilgi Teknolojileri ve İletişim Kurumu. (2019). *Türkiye’de internet hukuku*. Ocak 1,2023 de <https://internet.btk.gov.tr/turkiye-de-internet-hukuku> den erişildi
- Boyar, O., & Işık, S.K. (2019). Dördüncü kuşak haklar ve bilişim teknolojilerinin doğuşunda mahremiyet kavramına karşılaştırmalı bir bakış. *Marmara Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Hukuk Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 25(2), 602-623.
- Chalklen, C., & Anderson, H. (2017). Mothering on Facebook: Exploring the privacy/openness paradox. *Social Media+ Society*, 3(2), 1-10.
- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Araştırma deseni: Nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları* (S. B. Demir, Çev.). Eğiten Kitap.
- Duygulu, S. (2019). Sosyal medyada çocuk fotoğrafları paylaşmanın mahremiyet ihlali ve çocuk istismarı açısından değerlendirilmesi, *TRT Akademi*, 4(8), 428-487.
- Erişir, R. M., & Erişir, D. (2018). Yeni medya ve çocuk: Instagram özelinde “sharenting” “paylaşılanabalık” örneği, *Yeni Medya*, (4), 50-64.
- Eroğlu, Ş. (2018). Dijital yaşamda mahremiyet (gizlilik) kavramı ve kişisel veriler: Hacettepe Üniversitesi bilgi ve belge yönetimi bölümü öğrencilerinin mahremiyet ve kişisel veri algılarının analizi. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 35(2), 130-153.
- Han, B, C. (2017). *Şeffaflık Toplumu*. Metis Yayınları.
- Hübner, S.F. (1998). Privacy and security at risk in the global information society. *Information Communication & Society*, 1(4), 420-441.
- Kumar, P., & Schoenebeck, S. (2015, February). The modern day baby book: Enacting good mothering and stewarding privacy on Facebook. In D.Cosley, A.Forte, L.Ciolfi &D.

- McDonald (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 18th ACM conference on computer supported cooperative work & social computing* (pp. 1302-1312). ACM Press.
- Latipah, E., Kistoro, H. C. A., Hasanah, F. F., & Putranta, H. (2020). Elaborating motive and psychological impact of *sharenting* in millennial parents. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(10), 4807-4817.
- Lazard, L., Capdevila, R., Dann, C., Locke, A., & Roper, S. (2019). Sharenting: Pride, affect and the day-to-day politics of digital mothering. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 13(4), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12443>
- Lipu, M., & Siibak, A. (2019). ‘Take it down!’: Estonian parents’ and pre-teens’ opinions and experiences with *sharenting*. *Media International Australia*, 170(1), 57-67.
- Marwick, A. E., & Boyd, D. (2014). Networked privacy: How teenagers negotiate context in social media. *New Media & Society*, 16(7), 1051-1067.
- Morva, O., & Ünlü, D.G. (2022). Parenting blogs and children's online privacy: On the privacy management of parent blogs in Turkey. *Ankara Üniversitesi İlef Dergisi*, 9(1), 9–30. <https://doi.org/10.24955/ilef.1073284>
- Omur, S., & Uyar, M. (2022). Sharenting: Türkiye’de ebeveynlerin paylaşım eğilimleri üzerine bir değerlendirme. *Kastamonu İletişim Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (9), 23–45.
- Otero, P. (2017). Sharenting... should children’s lives be disclosed on social media. *Arch Argent Pediatr*, 115(5), 412-413.
- Ouvrein, G., & Verswijvel, K. (2019). Sharenting: Parental adoration or public humiliation? A focus group study on adolescents' experiences with *sharenting* against the background of their own impression management. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 99, 319-327.
- Ranzini, G., Newlands, G., & Lutz, C. (2020). Sharenting, peer influence, and privacy concerns: A study on the instagram-sharing behaviors of parents in the united kingdom. *Social Media+ Society*, 6(4), 1-13.
- Sivak, E., & Smirnov, I. (2019). Parents mention sons more often than daughters on social media. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(6), 2039-2041.
- Tatlıoğlu, S. S. (2025). *Dijital habitus üzerinden yeni ebeveynlik modeli: Çocuk mahremiyeti ihlali bağlamında “sharenting”*. [Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi]. Anadolu Üniversitesi.
- Türk Dil Kurumu, *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*. Mayıs 1, 2023 de <https://sozluk.gov.tr/> den erişildi



ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERÎ BİLİMLER BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMA VE YAYIN ETİĞİ KURULU
KARAR BELGESİ

ÇALIŞMANIN TÜRÜ:	BAP Projesi-Doktora Tez Çalışması
KONU:	Sosyal Bilimler
BAŞLIK:	Dijital Habitus Üzerinden Yeni Ebeveynlik Modeli: Çocuk Mahremiyeti İhlali Bağlamında "Sharenting"
PROJE/TEZ YÜRÜTÜCÜSÜ:	Prof. Dr. Fuat GÜLLÜPİNAR
TEZ YAZARI:	Sevra Su TATLIOĞLU
ALT KOMİSYON GÖRÜŞÜ:	-
KARAR:	Olumlu
 Prof. Dr. Saime ÖNCE (Başkan-İkt. ve İdari Bil. Fak.)	
 Prof. Dr. M. Erkan ÜYÜMEZ (Başkan Yardımcısı -İkt. ve İdari Bil. Fak.)	 Prof. Dr. Fatime GÜNEŞ (Edebiyat Fak.)
 Prof. Dr. Yıldız UZUNER (Eğitim Fak.)	 Prof. Dr. Erkan YÜKSEL (İletişim Bil. Fak.)
 Prof. Dr. Handan DEVECİ (Eğitim Fak.)	 Prof. Dr. Kamil ÇEKEROL (Açıköğretim Fak.)

Information About the Article/Makale Hakkında Bilgiler

The Ethical Rules for Research and Publication / Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği

The authors declared that the ethical rules for research and publication followed while preparing the article.

Yazarlar makale hazırlanırken araştırma ve yayın etiğine uyulduğunu beyan etmiştir.

Conflict of Interests/ Çıkar Çatışması

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Yazarlar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.

Grant Support/ Finansal Destek

The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.

Yazarlar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.

Author Contributions/ Yazar Katkıları

The draft process of the manuscript/ Taslağın Hazırlanma Süreci S.S.T./F.G., Data Collection/Verilerin Toplanması S.S.T, Writing The Manuscript/ Makalenin Yazılması S.S.T./F.G., Submit, Revision and Resubmit Process/ Başvuru, Düzeltme ve Yeniden Başvuru Süreci S.S.T./F.G.