



A Qualitative Study of Social Media Parents: Instamoms and Instadads

Özlem Gözün Kahraman ¹, Meryem Esra Öztapak ²

Article History

Received: 18.02.2025

Accepted: 15.04.2025

Keywords

Social media, Instamom, Instadad

Abstract: This study examines the interaction of parents on social media, particularly through Instagram; the content of their posts and their perception on the feedback for their posts, regarding the changes in the 21st century. Social media has significantly altered the way individuals' self-expression, interaction with others, and information sharing ways. In this context, parents' presence on social media not only reflects their identities but provides with their societal perceptions and values, regarding the concept of "parenting". The study group for this research consists of three Instagram mothers (@akademisyenanne, @serminyasarofficial, and @zynpzeze) and three Instagram fathers (@dijitalbaba.orhantoker, @ogretmen.baba, and @babalar_kizlari), all of whom have quite amounts of followers and active in social media. The study is limited to one month of posts of the above mentioned Instagram parents. The research employed the netnography method, and the data were analyzed using content analysis. Four categories were established for content analysis: follower and post counts, types of shared content (e.g., child development and education, product promotion), language features of the content (e.g., intimate, informative, humorous), and interaction (e.g., video views, video likes, hashtag usage). The results revealed that Instagram mothers had more followers than fathers, while Instagram fathers had a higher total number of posts and video posts than Instagram mothers. Regarding content type, Instagram mothers predominantly shared informative, personal, and product/brand promotional posts, whereas Instagram fathers shared content, related to games and activities, social awareness, informative posts, and a few personal shares. In terms of language, it was observed that Instagram mothers tended to use a more intimate and informative tone, while Instagram fathers used a more informative and critical language. Instagram fathers also created more hashtags and gained more comments under their posts compared to Instagram mothers. In summary, the findings of this study indicate gender-specific socialization differences among parents, appearing on Instagram, one of the social media platforms. This research contributes to studies on social media and parenting and offers an analysis of how social media shapes individuals' parenting roles. These findings will provide valuable insights into the digitalization of parenting practices for both researchers and social media users as parents.

Introduction

With the impact of digitalization, communication through the Internet and social media platforms has become increasingly widespread in today's world (Ayaz & Aytakin, 2021). Social media distinguishes itself from other forms of media by allowing users to produce and share content and engage in direct communication (Başoğlu, 2020). While these platforms promote both socialization and individuality, they can sometimes lead to feelings of loneliness (Güleç, 2018). In contrast to the modern individual who is more connected to societal norms and rules, the postmodern individual has developed a more libertarian and introspective approach (Yardım, 2017). In other words, social media plays a crucial role in enabling

¹Karabük University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Child Development, Karabük, Türkiye, e-mail: okahraman@karabuk.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0003-2767-0592

²Bartın University, Vocational School of Health Services, Department of Child Development, Bartın, Türkiye, e-mail: moztapak@bartin.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-2321-2554

Cite as (APA 7): Gözün-Kahraman, Ö. & Öztapak, M. E. (2025). A qualitative study of social media parents: Instamoms and instadads. *Journal of Child Development and Education*, 1 (2), 103-117.

individuals to participate in civic and political activities, access health-related information, and seek emotional support, while also contributing significantly to social relationships and psychological well-being (Duggan et al., 2015; Prabhakar et al., 2021).

In online social media platforms, Newly-mothers, in particular, stand out as they seek to connect with individuals facing similar challenges to gain information and emotional support (Webb, 2011). Social media is an important resource for mothers and is preferred more by mothers compared to fathers (Duggan et al., 2015). Mothers interact with other mothers for various purposes, such as seeking validation, sharing knowledge, receiving social and psychological support, and expressing their happiness and concerns. Motherhood, as a significant societal role, shapes women's identities and carries great cultural meaning (Zeybek- Kaplan, 2018). Alongside the increasing use of technology, fathers, who are supposed to share the responsibilities with mothers, have also become more visible in online spaces (Gökaliler & Özer, 2019).

Instagram, as a social media platform, utilized more frequently each day,, provides its users with opportunities to share aspects of their private lives, acquire information, and engage in interactions. Mothers on this platform share both their personal experiences and child development contents, offering emotional and informational support to their followers (Yazıcı & Özel, 2017). Known as "Instagram moms," these profiles aim to construct an "ideal mother" identity by sharing their parenting experience, covering a wide range of topics from pregnancy to childcare interactively with their audience (Aydemir & Şen, 2020). At the same time, these mothers promote products for companies to generate income, often sharing photos of their children, thereby risking their children's privacy and publishing such content without their consent. This practice increases the potential for privacy and security issues, which children could face with in future (Parsa & Akmeşe, 2019; Duygulu, 2019).

Mother profiles on Instagram function as virtual diaries, facilitating the publicization of private lives and reflecting the evolving nature of motherhood. Traditionally passed down through generations, maternal knowledge is now disseminated to a broader audience in online spaces (Aktaş, 2019; Gürçayır - Teke, 2014). Additionally, some mothers promote their children as "micro-celebrities" to generate commercial revenue. These influencer mothers aim to guide their followers toward specific products by advertising baby-related items (Erişir & Erişir, 2018; Ergül & Yıldız, 2021). In doing so, they address the needs of the new generation by fostering new forms of motherhood that include strengthening mother-child relationships and responding to follower inquiries (Aktan & Kayış, 2018). This newly emerging "supermom" identity, shaped by social networks, equates motherhood with perfection, potentially leading mothers to feel inadequate. Simultaneously, the modern family structure has given rise to the "super dad" figure, with fathers taking on greater responsibilities both at work and at home. This trend demonstrates a convergence of traditional gender roles for men and women (Gökaliler & Özer, 2019; Aydoğan, 2019).

As a ne term, "sharenting", " refers to the practice of parents frequently sharing information and visuals about their children's lives on digital media (Dursun, 2019). This phenomenon, which involves sharing parenting experiences through social media, has become increasingly common across cultures (Jorge et al., 2021). The behavior is often driven by parents' desires to strengthen social connections, manage impressions, and express themselves online. Research indicates that parents engage in sharenting to seek validation, manage online perceptions, and present an idealized family image, or to seek support from their networks.

However, this practice could infringe upon children's rights to privacy, potentially leading to risks such as digital identity theft and other security concerns. By creating digital footprints for their children, parents' social media posts can have long-term implications on their children's lives. Studies have highlighted the potential risks of sharenting, including child exploitation and issues related to digital safety. Furthermore, research shows that the carefully curated portrayals of perfection often seen in parents' social media posts, particularly those depicting idealized family lives, can foster feelings of inadequacy among others—especially mothers—who struggle to meet these depicted standards (Ayhan & Öztürk, 2021; Ergül & Yıldız, 2021).

It is crucial to consider where the online identity of a parent ends and that of their child begins (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017). Parents who share extensive details about their children on social media may not fully grasp that these images and comments will eventually become accessible to everyone.

Establishing boundaries and on the content and the amount of sharing is essential. Parents must be aware of the potential risks associated with sharing information about their children on social media. Among these risks are identity theft and the misuse of shared images on child pornography websites (Otero, 2017). Key concepts emerging from parental social media posts, includedigital footprints and digital kidnapping. These terms highlight the connection between parental sharing and child exploitation risks. Whether intentional or unintentional, parents contribute to the formation of their child's digital footprint through social media posts. Parental sharing of a child's information is defined as the creation of the child's traceable digital identity. From the moment children are born, their virtual footprints begin to form as parents share personal information about them online (Cino & Dalledonne-Vandini, 2020). To safeguard minors' privacy and digital security, the development of parents' digital literacy and competencies must be prioritized. Protecting a child's privacy should be regarded as a collective family responsibility (Rodríguez et al., 2022).

Considering the existing research within this context, studies have focused on mothers with high follower counts on social media from various perspectives. However, there is a noticeable gap in literature examining mothers and fathers together. In light of the term "sharenting" entering the academic discourse and the potential harm this practice may pose to children, it is imperative to take necessary measures to promote healthy generations and implement policies prioritizing children's well-being. This study aims to contribute to the field by analyzing the information, content, and interactions on the Instagram accounts of highly followed mothers and fathers.

In line with this objective, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the follower and post counts on the social media accounts of Instagram mothers and fathers?
2. What types of content do Instagram mothers and fathers share on their social media accounts?
3. What are the characteristics of the language used in the content shared by Instagram mothers and fathers?
4. How do Instagram mothers and fathers engage with their followers on their social media accounts?

Method

Research Model

The study uses the netnography method. Netnography can be defined as the application of ethnography, a qualitative research method, to examine social behaviors and cultures in online environments. Similar to traditional ethnographic studies, netnography aims to understand the culture and behaviors of a specific community, but in this case, observations are made in online environments (social media). This method not only examines individual behaviors but also explores the social contexts and meanings behind these behaviors (Akgün & Hatipoğlu, 2023). The netnography method allows to study the various practices and behaviors of users in the social media environment, which constitutes the natural ecosystem of daily interactions online. The most important advantage of the method is that a large dataset is automatically archived online for researchers. Therefore, it includes all types of multimedia data, including images, videos and audio. (Brosch, 2016)

Research Group of the Study

The study group of this research was determined by searching the Google search engine using the keywords "high follower count Instagram mothers" and "high follower count Instagram fathers." By reviewing publicly available profiles, the three Instagram mothers and three Instagram fathers with the highest follower counts were selected for the study. The Instagram accounts of three highly followed mothers were ranked according to their follower counts as follows: 1- @akademisyenanne, 2- @serminyasarofficial, and 3- @zynpzeze. The Instagram accounts of three highly followed fathers were ranked as follows: 1- @dijitalbaba.orhantoker, 2- @ogretmen.baba, and 3- @babalar_kizlari.

Among the Instagram mothers, @akademisyenanne (Saniye Bencik Kangal) is a academician, university faculty member, and mother of one; @serminyasarofficial (Şermin Yaşar) is an author and

mother of three; and @zynpzeze (Zeynep Özbayrak) is a digital content creator and mother of one. Among the Instagram fathers, @dijitalbaba.orhantoker (Orhan Toker) is an architect, IT specialist, author, and father of one; @ogretmen.baba (Mehmet Gönen) is a mathematics teacher and father of two; and @babalar_kizlari (Özdemir Hiçdurmaz) is a digital content creator and father of two. Basic information about the Instagram mothers and fathers' accounts is provided.

Table 1. Basic Information about Instagram Mothers and Fathers Accounts

	Instagram Account Name	Instagram Mother's/Father's Profile Name	Description About the Profile	Availability of Identity Information	Educational Background	Occupation
Instagram Mothers	@akademisyenanne	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Saniye Bencik Kangal	Available	Available	Not available	Academic
	@serminyasarofficial	Şermin Yaşar	Available	Available	Not available	Author
	@zynpzeze	Zeynep Özbayrak	Available	Not available	Not available	Digital content creator
Instagram Fathers	@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker	Orhan Toker	Available	Available	Not available	Architect, it specialist, author
	@ogretmen.baba	Mehmet Gönen	Available	Available	Not available	Mathematics teacher
	@babalar_kizlari	Özdemir Hiçdurmaz	Available	Available	Not available	Geodesy and photogrammetry engineer

Data collection and analysis

In this study, the number of likes and comments received by 3 high-followed mothers and 3 high-followed fathers were compared, and the content of their posts was evaluated. The primary criterion was the number of likes and comments on the posts of the parents on their Instagram accounts during the last month (from March 11 to April 11, 2022). The likes and comments received by the three high-followed mothers and the three high-followed fathers were compared, and their content was evaluated. Descriptive statistics for the six accounts were also provided.

Content analysis was used in the analysis of the research data. Content analysis is defined as the systematic, quantitative, and objective examination of communication forms in social sciences, and objectivity is related to the process of obtaining similar results by different individuals when analyzing the same content using predefined classification categories. Content analysis is based on a basic classification system (Kızıltepe, 2015). The content analysis used in this study aimed to systematically examine the shared content on social media and evaluate the parents' activities on social media in a more objective manner.

The posts of Instagram mothers and fathers were categorized under four headings: 1) Follower and post count information: the number of followers and the number of followed accounts, total number of posts, number of video posts; 2) Content type of the posts: nutrition, family, daily life, child-baby care, child education, expert opinion sharing, play-activity, product-brand promotion, personal sharing, social sensitivity; 3) Content language of the posts: friendly, informative, humorous, critical; 4) Interaction: number of post likes, video views, video likes, whether there is a caption under the posts, and the use of hashtags (#). Frequency calculation was used in the data analysis.

Results or Findings

In this section, the findings obtained from the content analysis are presented under the headings of "Instagram Account Follower and Post Counts," "Post Content and Content Language," and "Interaction Information."

Findings on Instagram Account Follower and Post Counts

This section presents the total number of followers, the number of accounts followed by Instagram mothers and fathers, the total number of posts, and the number of video posts. It also includes information

on the types of content and the language used in their posts.

Table 2. Followers and Posts Information of Instagram Accounts

Instagram Name	Account Number of Followers	Number of Accounts Followed	Total Number of Posts	Number of Video Posts
Instagram Mothers				
@akademisyenanne	1.6 Million	385	18	6 (About child development)
@serminyasarofficial	1.4 Million	301	19	-
@zynpzeze	746 Thousand	666	13	4 (Product promotion and daily life)
Instagram Fathers				
@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker	554 Thousand	263	23	1 (Personal development)
@ogretmen.baba	137 Thousand	293	23	22 (Game activities)
@babalar_kizlari	28 Thousand	2,197	8	2 (Social awareness and father-child relations)

When Table 2 was analyzed, among the Instagram mothers, the account @akademisyenanne is the most followed (1.6 million), while @zynpzeze has the fewest followers (746 thousand). Among the Instagram fathers, the account @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker has the most followers (554 thousand), while @babalar_kizlari has fewer followers compared to other Instagram fathers (828 thousand). Looking at the number of accounts they follow, @zynpzeze follows the most accounts among the Instagram mothers (666), while @serminyasarofficial follows the fewest (301). Among the Instagram fathers, @babalar_kizlari follows the most accounts (2,197), while @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker follows the least (263).

In terms of post counts, @serminyasarofficial shares the most posts (19) among the Instagram mothers, while @zynpzeze shares the least (13). However, the account with the most video posts is @akademisyenanne (6), while @serminyasarofficial has not shared any videos (0). Among the Instagram fathers, both @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker and @ogretmen.baba share the same number of posts (23), while @babalar_kizlari has the fewest posts (8). Among these posts, @ogretmen.baba shared the most videos (22), while @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker shared the fewest (1).

In conclusion, the follower count for Instagram mothers is higher with the @akademisyenanne account compared to other Instagram mothers and fathers. However, the total post and video post counts for Instagram fathers are higher with the @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker and @ogretmen.baba accounts compared to other mother and father accounts. Additionally, the number of people followed by Instagram fathers and mothers is higher in fathers' accounts relative to their follower counts. This may indicate that Instagram fathers engage more actively.

Table 3. Content Types of Instagram Posts

Instagram Account Name	Educational Content (About Child Development)	Game-Activity Content	Product/Brand Promotion	Personal Sharing	Social Awareness
Instagram Mothers					
@akademisyenanne	16		4		1
@serminyasarofficial				19	
@zynpzeze			5 (Personal care products)	8 (1 Photo of her child)	
Instagram Fathers					
@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker	4		1		18
@ogretmen.baba		22 (9 Videos feature children)		1	
@babalar_kizlari	1		3 (All photos feature children)		4

When Table 3 was examined, regarding the content types of the accounts' posts, it was found that Instagram mothers mostly shared personal content, with the highest number of personal posts made by the @serminyasarofficial account (19). The account @akademisyenanne (16) made the most posts in the child development and education content type, and @zynpzeze (5) was the only account to share product and

brand promotions. None of the Instagram mothers made posts in the "game-activity" content category, and the least shared content type was "social awareness," which was posted only once by the @akademisyenanne account.

In personal posts, it was determined that @zynpzeze's account shared posts with pictures of her child, while none of the other Instagram mothers shared photos of their children in their personal posts.

Instagram sharing example



Photo 1. Informative content sharing example on interactive reading (@akademisyenanne account, March 28, 2022).

User	Post/Comment
@akademisyenanne	Here I am, I'm back! 🙋♀ Moreover, I've prepared a checklist with seven questions. Let's see who deserves applause?
User 1	You can scroll through and explore the nuances of effective reading to children, and maybe collect some applause at the end! 😊
User 2	♥♥♥ I do this every day with my 30-month-old baby — it's amazing. She brings the book herself and pretends to read it before I even start. ♥
User 3	I really pay attention to such posts, but it never occurred to me to focus on punctuation marks. 😊
User 4	I read all of this in your book, especially the chapter about reading books to Koza 🙋 So glad you exist and are well — you've touched the most beautiful part of my motherhood journey with my child. ♥
User 5	I've been missing out on so much 😊

Among the Instagram fathers, the highest number of shares in the "game-activity" content type was made by the account @ogretmen.baba (22 posts), while the most shares in the "social sensitivity" content type were made by @dijitalbaba.orhantoker (18 posts), followed by @babalar_kizlari (4 posts). It was found that none of the Instagram fathers shared content in the "product-brand promotion" category. In personal posts, it was observed that @babalar_kizlari shared photos of his child, while the other two fathers did not share any photos of their children.

Instagram sharing example



Photo 2. Example of a social sensitivity content post on ensuring children's digital safety (@dijitalbaba.orhantoker account, April 9, 2022).

User	Post/Comment
@dijitalbaba.orhantoker (Ankara)	Dear parents, dear mothers and fathers, Sharing your children's photos does not require any official document or permission. With a petition, you can withdraw your consent. You can also delete your past posts. 🙋👉 These are the facts. Pedophiles are roaming freely and their job has never been this easy!! 😊 ORHANTOKER.COM #technology #children #pedophilia #childabuse #influencerteacher
User1	There are people who profit from children under the guise of cuteness. These are the parents.
User 2	(tagging a friend)
User 3	(tagging a friend)
User 4	(tagging two friends in separate comments)

Instagram sharing example



User	Post/Comment
@ogretmen.baba	Our new game, which we play as a right and left brain exercise that requires speed, attention, and at the same time being uncontrolled, is called "LET IT GO!" 🎵🎶 @ogretmen.baba @ogretmen.baba
Hashtags:	.#sensoryplay #kindergarten #happykid #toddlerlife #etkinlik #cocukfisstragram #kidsactivities #kids #diyactivities #montessorimethod #montessorieducation #activities #anaokulu #etkinlikrüyam #handsonlearning #preschoolactivities #preschoolmommyhacks #日常 #育児記録 #育児日記 #子育て #правильнаяразвивающаясреда #развивающиесреды #развивашки #раннееразвитие #etkinlikpaylasimi #evdeetkinlik #preschoolactivities

Photo 3. Example of a game-activity content (@ogretmen.baba account, March 12, 2022).

Instagram sharing example



User	Post/Comment
@babalar_kizlari	YES! WE DID SOMETHING BIG After sharing it in our stories yesterday, I received a few messages like "is it really that big of a deal?" So I wanted to share it in a more detailed way. We wanted to go on a long walk, without a stroller, just with backpacks. Maybe a little adventurous, a bit sincere and just us. We set out at 8:30 in the morning with the kids. We tried to keep it open-ended, avoiding definite goals. We started walking without a specific destination in mind. On one side, we were walking with kids who were full of energy in the morning. On the other side, we were constantly reminding ourselves not to get caught up in the rush and to enjoy the moment. We set a goal not to check what time it was until 11. When we checked, it was 9:03 AM. So we had 11 more hours. So what was the point? There's a book called "Time to Parent" which has a subtitle: "Organizing Life to Bring Out the Best in Our Children and Ourselves." It talks about the importance of giving children both attention and structure. And it says one of

the best gifts we can give our children is
"unstructured, open time".
 That's what we tried to do.
 To be together, to move together, to explore
 together, to be aware of each other in nature
 and to understand one another.

Photo 4. Example of a "social sensitivity" on the subject of "people-centered society" (@babalar_kizlari account, March 14, 2022).

In conclusion, when the content types of the accounts' posts are analyzed, it has been determined that the highest number of posts made by Instagram mothers are in the category of personal sharing, while for Instagram fathers, the highest number of posts are in the category of games and activities.

Table 4. Language Styles Used in Instagram Posts

Instagram Account Name	Friendly	Educational	Humorous	Critical
Instagram Mothers				
@akademisyenanne	8	7		3
@serminyasarofficial	12	3	2	2
@zynpzeze	6	5	2	
Instagram Fathers				
@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker	1	7		15
@ogretmen.baba	1	21		1
@babalar_kizlari	3	2		3

When Table 4 was examined, it is observed that Instagram mothers most frequently use a sincere tone in their posts. The account that uses the sincere tone the most is @serminyasarofficial (12 posts), followed by @akademisyenanne (8 posts) and @zynpzeze (6 posts). Informative tone is the second most used by Instagram mothers. It is also noted that Instagram mothers used critical and humorous tones the least in their posts. For Instagram fathers, it is determined that they predominantly use an informative tone. The account that uses the informative tone the most is @ogretmen.baba (21 posts), while @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker is the account that most frequently uses a critical tone. Critical tone is the second most used by Instagram fathers. Instagram fathers used a sincere tone very sparingly in their posts, and no Instagram father has used a humorous tone in their posts.

As a result, the Instagram mother with the highest number of posts in the "friendly content language" category is @serminyasarofficial. An example of the friendly content shared by this account is: *"I've been in a meeting for 7 hours, we've eaten and drunk, thank God, but no one has taken the leftovers. I'm too embarrassed to ask for another tea, so I'll post something so they can see."* The Instagram father who made the most posts in the "informative content language" category is @ogretmen.baba. An example of the informative content shared by this account is: *"The name of our new game, which requires quick, careful, and controlled movements while exercising both the left and right brain, is 'BIRAKÇEKGİT'."* Among Instagram fathers, the account that used the most critical content language is @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker. An example of the critical content shared by this account is: *"The guy first goes and does some research. What kind of harm could it do to children? He proves that children are exposed to all kinds of dangers, including strip clubs and pedophiles. Then he reports to his parliament. Meanwhile, we're using slogans like 'furnish the tables' for the metaverse era in education. You should have worn that headset first, see what's being done to a 7-year-old girl. After that, maybe you'd say Meta..."*

Instagram sharing example



User @ogretmen.baba

Post/Comment

📍 Today, I want to show you how a balloon can turn into a ball-tossing toy. Based entirely on my own experiments, I've named this toy "BALONCIK". With this, you can play many different games involving tossing a ball.

✓ Children aged 5 and above can play this game safely under your supervision.

📍 You don't need to inflate the balloon too much for this activity.

👉 When you turn the open end of the balloon downwards and get close to the balloon's surface with a lightweight ball, the ball floats and rises (I also shared a video showing this).

✦ If this page and its content resonate with you, your presence and comments mean a lot to me. ❤️

👉 @ogretmen.baba

👉 @ogretmen.baba

Hashtags: #sensorplay #kindergarten #happykid #toddlerlife #activities #diyactivities #preschoolactivities #ballgame

Photo 5. Example of a informative tone (@ogretmen.baba account, March 14,2022).

Instagram sharing example



User @dijitalbaba.orhantoker

Post/Comment

On YouTube, there is a trend called "kids, be scared," where someone sneaks up behind children and screams "boo!" in an effort to scare them. In our country, this trend is unfortunately growing. And let me be clear: **this is not funny. It is not educational. It is absolutely not entertaining.**

Frequent question: "But fear is instinctive, shouldn't kids learn to handle fear?" Of course, they should. But not through forced fear in a safe environment. You don't build emotional resilience by yelling at a child and calling it an "experience."

Dear parents, fear is not a game. Trauma caused by fear remains. The most valuable asset a child has is a secure attachment and an environment of trust. Any forced fear attempt may disrupt that feeling of trust and create a negative imprint in the child's memory. And that imprint can shape their adulthood.

Instead of laughing at fear, face your own. Let's be the **safe space** our children need.

Let's not turn children's tears into content.

ORHANTOKER.COM

Hashtags: #technology #children #childhoodfears #childdevelopment #parentingtips #catcontent #childpsychology

Photo 6. Example of a critical content language (@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker account, April 1, 2022).

Findings Regarding the Interaction Information of Instagram Accounts

In this section, the “like” counts of Instagram posts, video views and likes, caption usage under posts, and the use of hashtags were examined.

Table 5. Interaction Details of Instagram Accounts

Instagram Account Name	Number of Likes on Posts	Number of Likes on Videos	Number of Post Descriptions	Hashtags
Instagram Mothers				
@akademisyenanne	498,500	41,257	18	-
@serminyasarofficial	953,497	-	19	1
@zynpzeze	69,868	28,609	12	6
Instagram Fathers				
@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker	410,720	24,000	23	23
@ogretmen.baba	659	52,368	23	22
@babalar_kizlari	4,105	1,249	8	8

When Table 5 was analyzed, it can be seen that the personal content posts of @serminyasarofficial account among Instagram mothers received the most likes, @akademisyenanne account's child education content videos had the most views and likes among all accounts. Furthermore, @zynpzeze account was found to use the most hashtags in the product brand promotion content type. It was also observed that @akademisyenanne did not use any hashtags. Hashtags are a method of categorizing content and making it easier to find on social media. Hashtags are important because they ensure that the post reaches the right audience and receives the best possible engagement. However, it is a striking finding that the account with the highest number of followers among the mothers does not use hashtags. While @zynpzeze used collaboration-related hashtags for her business, @serminyasarofficial shared hashtags related to national holidays. @ogretmen.baba used hashtags for games and activities, while @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker focused on hashtags related to child abuse and child mental health, and @babalar_kizlari shared hashtags related to father-daughter love.

Looking at the Instagram fathers, @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker's account made 23 posts in the social awareness content category in the past month, receiving the most likes with its posts, and using the most hashtags in all posts, generally related to technology and child abuse topics. The account with the highest video views in social awareness content type posts was @babalar_kizlari, while @ogretmen.baba received the most video likes in the game and activity content category. It is also observed that almost all the accounts of Instagram mothers and fathers wrote captions under their posts regarding the content of their posts.

In conclusion, it was observed that hashtag usage is more common among fathers. Although the follower numbers are lower among fathers, their like rates are higher.

Instagram sharing example

User	Post/Comment
@ogretmen.baba	If you use a different type of scissors, you can stick the cups with hot silicone as shown in the video. I wish you healthy and happy playtimes. ❤️
Hashtags:	#diy #preschoolactivities #montessoriacivities #kindergartenactivities #toddleractivities #montessoriathome #homeschooling #activitysetup #babyplay #motherandchild #montessori #playingathome #activitytime #montessorikid #preschoolactivity #schoolreadinessactivity #playtime #homeactivity #homefun #homelearning #playing

Photo 7. Example of hashtag posts by @ogretmen.baba

Instagram sharing example



User	Post/Comment
@ogretmen.baba	<p>☺ The name of the new toy I made using a pot holder and a plastic tube is "TUTMACINCIKSET" ☺</p> <p>👤 I used hot silicone to stick the materials made from cardboard cups for the baskets. Wishing you healthy and happy games ❤</p>
Some Hashtags:	<p>#sensoryplay #kindergarten #happykid #toddlerlife #activities #montessori #diyactivities #preschoolactivities #homeeducation #playing You can visit gptonline.ai/tr for more organized content and resources related to child developmen. 🧑🧑🧑🧑</p>

Photo 8. Example of a most video likes Instagram fathers, (@ogretmen.baba account, April 2, 2022).

Conclusion and Discussion

This study, which scrutinized on Instagram accounts of mothers and fathers with high follower counts on social media, examined the number of posts, follower counts, content types, language used, and interactions with followers on their social media accounts. The results of the study show that Instagram mothers have significantly higher follower counts compared to fathers. In literature, studies have found that mothers tend to use social media more than fathers. Duggan et al. (2015) emphasize that mothers are heavily active on social media, by using these platforms both to provide and receive support. The results indicate that fathers are not as active on social media as mothers, and their posting frequency is not as intense as that of mothers. Parents, in general, tend to respond to good news shared by others, answer questions, or seek support through online networks, which applies not only to posts related to parenting but also to any personal matters they might encounter. While social media is considered a useful source of information for both mothers and fathers, mothers have been found to prefer using social media as a resource more than fathers (Duggan et al., 2015). Mothers may be more inclined to share their experiences, seek support and solidarity, and engage in communication and interaction. A focus group study on Instagram mothers showed that most of the followers of these accounts that they followed the mentioned accounts to reach new information and follow the innovations on parenting (Sine & Parlak- Yorgancı, 2017). In this study, the particularly high follower count of @akademisyenanne, an academic in the field of child development and education, might be attributed to mothers viewing her as a reliable and accurate source on child development and parenting. @akademisyenanne shares informative content in line with her expertise creates professional video recordings, and ensures her child's privacy in her posts. Erişir&Erişir (2018) emphasized the importance of parents being cautious about their children's privacy when sharing content related to their children on social media. In this study, the presence of children's images in the posts of an Instagram mother and an Instagram father suggested that they were not sufficiently sensitive about child privacy.

Diniz and Sepúlveda (2022) defined posts representing paternal involvement on Instagram using the "#fatherhood" hashtag, selecting a final sample of 121 posts. They found that fathers involved in child care, dedicated to their children, providing love, considering the child's interests, offering new stimulation opportunities, and engaging in play were highly visible. The Instagram fathers with high follower counts included in this study exhibited these characteristics as well. All fathers emphasized their paternal roles in their account names, whereas only one of the Instagram mothers emphasized their maternal roles in their account names. Instagram mothers who did not highlight their maternal role in their account names were found to share more personal posts and engage in product brand promotion rather than content related to child development. Today's mothers have started to use this new communication tool for various purposes such as content creation, information gathering, and interaction. Instagram mothers, who are well-known

for their content creation, make personal posts, providing emotional and/or scientific support to their followers (Yazıcı & Özel, 2017). Yıldırım Atlı (2021) and Başoğlu (2020) also note that mothers support other mothers by providing suggestions on topics such as healthy eating and education for their children, as well as sharing snippets of their daily lives. These Instagram mother profiles could belong to experienced mothers and professionals in child development, or they may be Instagram accounts without a “mother” suffix in the profile name, but still emphasizing motherhood in their profile information (Aydemir & Şen, 2020).

In terms of video posting frequency, the Instagram account *@ogretmen.baba* stands out with the videos of games played with his children. This father's game and activity videos are important as they exemplify spending quality time with children through play. In studies involving parents, one of the challenges they face is feeling inadequate about how to play with their children. A study analyzing the reasons parents do not play with their children revealed that the reasons given by participants include "working or lack of time," "unwillingness or lack of knowledge," "the child's age," "traditions," and "large family structure" (Gülen & Barış, 2021). Another study by Koçyiğit and Başara- Baydilek (2015) found that children reported not participating in games with their parents at home. In a qualitative study by Özyürek and Gürleyik (2016), although parents were aware of the importance of play for child development, they stated that they did not play enough with their children due to work and lack of time. *@ogretmen.baba's* video shares on playing games are important as they serve as an example to other parents and encourage them to engage in play with their children. However, the inclusion of children in some of the videos might suggest that the father failed to pay enough attention to protecting the child's privacy. On the other hand, it is striking that no Instagram mothers shared content related to games and activities. In a study by Gülay Ogelman and colleagues (2019) that examined play based on the perspectives of parents and children, children expressed the "fun aspects of playing games" with their fathers, while they mentioned "individual emotional states" when discussing play with their mothers and peers. Play is an important tool that can be used in parent-child interaction as a method of spending quality time together. Playful interactions and emotional responses support healthy child development and effective parenting (Özyürek & Gürleyik, 2016). These high-followed Instagram mothers, with their applications demonstrating the importance of play, may motivate other mothers to play more with their children. This is particularly significant in early childhood, as play has an essential role in supporting child development. One of the key findings of the study is that Instagram fathers, in terms of content type, share many more posts related to social awareness. This could suggest that they are more sensitive to events and situations that might threaten the society in which their children live, possess the courage to reflect critical viewpoints, and are more rational.

The language, used in the content of Instagram posts, is important for understanding social roles and their interactions with followers. The results of this study show that Instagram parents with high followers adopt different language strategies in their accounts. It is observed that the Instagram mothers examined in this study generally use a friendly tone to share their personal experiences and emotions. For example, the account *@serminyasarofficial* establishes an emotional connection with followers by narrating her meeting experiences in a humorous tone. Such posts enable mothers to share their experiences via social media and interact with other mothers. Additionally, they provide emotional support to each other by exchanging information. Father accounts, on the other hand, tend to use more informative and critical language. The account *@ogretmen.baba* shares game suggestions for child development, providing information to his followers. The account *@Dijitalbaba.orhantoker* takes a critical stance on educational technologies and draws attention to social issues. This suggests that father accounts mostly provide content that focuses on information sharing while promoting critical thinking. In their studies, Daantje and colleagues (2008) concluded that women engage in more positive communication. They emphasized that this may stem from the fact that women place more importance on politeness and maintaining a positive image in society. However, men tend to be more aggressive and risk-taking when making negative comments or assessments, preferring to convey judgmental, risky information, and critical messages in a broader social context. Women may express themselves more and prefer to use a sensitive, emotional, and interpersonal communication style when sharing their feelings through social media channels. In contrast, men are goal-oriented, self-protective, and prefer to share rational information or social facts in an objective

and rational manner (Daantje et al., 2008; Jeanine et al., 2014).

Finally, the differences in the use of hashtags in the interactions of Instagram mothers and fathers are noteworthy. Instagram fathers used more hashtags in their interactions. Different gender characteristics and preferences for expressing satisfaction are the main reasons for the different selection of hashtags. For example, women tend to be more supportive and conciliatory, while men are bolder in expressing complaints and dissatisfaction (Ye et al., 2017). Hashtags are important as they ensure that a post reaches the right audience and receives the best possible engagement. Romero and colleagues (2011) have stated that the more trend hashtags are used, the greater the visibility of the posts, and the higher the likelihood of the posts being liked. Male users tend to give less social, less emotional, and more task-oriented messages (John & Jennifer, 2008). In this study, it was observed that @ogretmen.baba used task-oriented hashtags related to game and activity suggestions. @Dijitalbaba.orhantoker used hashtags related to preventing child abuse and child psychology, while @babalar_kizlari used father-daughter love hashtags. However, mothers did not share any hashtags related to child development.

In the digitalized world, parental roles of motherhood and fatherhood are being redefined on social media platforms. It is important to raise awareness among parents regarding their use of social media and the information overload on these platforms. Regardless of the era, motherhood and fatherhood are significant social roles that require dedication and effort. Therefore, it is crucial for parents using social media to be mindful of their responsibilities and to engage in realistic and appropriate interactions and posts. Furthermore, it is critical to recognize the need of upholding a responsible user attitude that is grounded in truth and devoid of hyperbole, given that social media use puts pressure on women to be better mothers. Particularly, Instagram parents with a high follower count should be aware that the perspectives they acquire through social media can influence their attitudes toward their children. The exploitation of children to gain likes must never be overlooked, as it is a matter of privacy and potential abuse. Within this context, it is vital to emphasize the need for parent awareness. Additionally, it was observed that the Instagram fathers examined in this study have adapted to the changing roles of fatherhood in the digital age. In the past, fathers were authority figures, but today they demonstrate active involvement in their children's healthy development, taking on more responsibility and building positive relationships by playing games with their children. More research is becoming necessary to safeguard children's digital safety and to increase knowledge about digital parenting.

Declarations

Authors' Declarations

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank the Instagram mothers and fathers we included in this study.

Competing interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Funding: There is no funding agency supporting the research.

Ethics approval and consent to participate: Ethical permission was obtained from the Karabük University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee (Decision No. 29 dated 15.03.2022)

Publisher's Declarations

Editorial Acknowledgement: The editorial process of this article was completed under the editorship of Dr. Ayşe Güler Küçükturan through a double-blind peer review with external reviewers.

Publisher's Note: Journal of Child Development and Education remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliation.

References

- Akgün, A. E., & Hatiboğlu, M. B. (2023). Dijital sınırlar çağında çevrimiçi toplulukları anlamak: Netnografi nedir?. *Yıldız Social Science Review*, 9 (2), 95-103.
- Aktan, A., & Kayış, M. (2018). Sosyal medya ve değişim: Bloglar aracılığıyla anneliğin evrimi üzerine netnografik bir analiz. *AJIT-e: Online Academic Journal of Information Technology*, 9 (32), 39-54. <https://doi.org/10.5824/1309-1581.2018.2.003.x>
- Aktaş, G. (2019). Günümüz toplumlarında anneliğin değişen biçimlerini sosyal medya kullanıcıları üzerinden değerlendirmek. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 36 (2), 253-271. <https://doi.org/10.32600/huefd.441402>

- Ayaz, M., & Aytekin, A. (2021). Fenomen annelerin fenomen pazarlaması kapsamında yaptıkları paylaşımlar üzerine bir içerik analizi. *Sosyal Araştırmalar ve Davranış Bilimleri Dergisi*, 7 (14), 210-237.
- Aydemir, S., & Şen, Y. (2020). Kadın takipçilerin gözünden Instagram annelerine yönelik bir değerlendirme. *International Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences (IJSHS)*, 4 (1), 41-54.
- Aydoğan, H. (2019). *Yeni süper annelik rolünün medyadaki yansımaları: Facebook'ta süper annelik*. [Master's Thesis, Marmara University].
- Ayhan, H., & Öztürk, E. (2021). Dijital dünyada ebeveyn olmanın görünürde normal bir yansıması olarak paylaşılan ebeveynlik (Sharenting): Bir derleme. *Türkiye Klinikleri Adli Tıp ve Adli Bilimler Dergisi*, 18 (2), 165-177. <https://doi.org/10.5336/forensic.2021-82082>
- Başoğlu, R. (2020). Annelerin sosyal medya kullanımı ve Instagramda olan popüler anneler. *Akademik Tarih ve Düşünce Dergisi*, 7 (1), 857-873.
- Blum-Ross, A., & Livingstone, S. (2017). Sharenting: Parent blogging and the boundaries of the digital self. *Popular Communication*, 15 (2), 110-125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15405702.2016.1223300>
- Brosch, A. (2016). When the child is born into the Internet: Sharenting as a growing trend among parents on Facebook. *New Educ. Rev.* 43, 1, 225– 235.
- Cino, D., & Dalledonne-Vandini, M. (2020). "My kid, my rule": Governing children's digital footprints as a source of dialectical tensions between mothers and daughters-in-law. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 20 (2), 181–202.
- Daantje, D., Agneta, H. F., & Arjan, E. R. B. (2008). The role of emotion in computer-mediated communication. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 24 (1), 766–785. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2007.04.004>
- Diniz, E., & Sepúlveda, R. (2022). Depicting #fatherhood involvement on Instagram: Caregiving, affection, and stimulation. *Communication & Society*, 35 (4), 1-18.
- Duggan, M., Ellison, N. B., Lampe, C., Lenhart, A., & Madden, M. (2015). Parents and social media. Mothers are especially likely to give and receive support on social media. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/>
- Dursun, C. (2019). Ebeveynlerin çocuklarını sosyal medyada teşhiri: Çocuk hakları bağlamında bir değerlendirme. *Çocuk ve Medeniyet*, 2, 195-207.
- Duygulu, F. (2019). Sosyal medyada çocuk fotoğrafı paylaşımlarının mahremiyet ihlali ve çocuk istismarı açısından değerlendirilmesi. *TRT Akademi*, 4 (8), 428-487. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4382-7476>
- Ergül, Y., & Yıldız, S. (2021). Sosyal medyada sosyal annelik: Instagram anneliği. *Kırıkkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 11 (2), 611-627.
- Erişir, R. M., & Erişir, D. (2018). Yeni medya ve çocuk: Instagram özelinde "sharenting" örneği. *Yeni Medya Hakemli Akademik E-Dergi*, 4 (5), 51-64.
- Gökalliler, A., & Özer, Y. (2019). Baba 2.0: Dijital dönüşüm ile değişen baba rolü üzerine bir araştırma. *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 48, 388-403.
- Gülay Ogelman, H. Aytaç, P., Erol, A., Erdentuğ, F. G., Yolaç, Ö. A., & Özbilenler, M. G. (2019). Anne-baba ve çocuk görüşleri doğrultusunda oyun. *International Anatolia Academic Online Journal Social Sciences Journal*, 5 (2), 65-87
- Güleç, V. (2018). Aile ilişkilerinin sosyal medyayla birlikte çöküşü. *e-Journal of New Media*, 2 (1), 105-120. <https://doi.org/10.17932/IAU.EJNM.25480200.2018.2.2.105-120>
- Gülen, S., & Barış, S. (2021). Ebeveynlerin çocuklarıyla oyun oynamama nedenlerinin incelenmesi. *Gazi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 7 (1), 20-38.
- Gürçayır -Teke, T. (2014). Dönüşen anneliğe yönelik netnografik bir analiz: Blogger anneler. *Millî Folklor*, 26 (103), 32-4.
- Jeanine, G., Marcus, M., Yan, J., & Vivian, M. (2014). From #mcdonaldsfail to #domonossucks: An analysis of Instagram images about the 10 largest fast food companies. *International Public Relations Research*, 133 (24), 408–414.
- John, R., & Jennifer, B. R. (2008). MySpace and Facebook: Applying the uses and gratifications theory to exploring friend-networking sites. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 11 (2), 169–174. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.2007.0056>
- Jorge, A., Marôpo, L., & Neto, I. (2021). 'When you realise your dad is Cristiano Ronaldo': Celebrity sharenting and children's digital identity. Paper presented at AoIR 2021: The 22nd Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers. Virtual Event: AoIR. Retrieved from <http://spir.aoir.org>.
- Kiziltepe, Z. (2015). Career choice: Motivations and perceptions of the students of education. *The Anthropologist*, 21(1-2), 143-155.
- Koçyiğit, S., & Başara- Baydilek, N. (2015). Okul öncesi dönem çocuklarının oyun algılarının incelenmesi. *Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 12 (1), 1-26.
- Otero, B. (2017). Sharenting... should children's lives be disclosed on social media?. *Arch Argent Pediatr*, 115 (5), 412-414.

- Özyürek, A., & Gürleyik, S. (2016). Anne babaların okul öncesi dönem çocukları ile etkileşimlerinde oyunun yeri. *Journal of International Social Research*, 9 (42).
- Parsa, A. F., & Akmeşe, Z. (2019). Sosyal medya ve çocuk istismarı: Instagram anneleri örneği. *Kadem Kadın Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5 (1), 163-191.
- Prabhakar, A. S., Maris, E., & Thies, I. M. (2021). Toward understanding the cultural influences on social media use of middle-class mothers in India. *CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Extended Abstracts*, 1-7. ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3411763.3451779>.
- Rodríguez, J. M. R., Kopecký, K., García-González, A., & Gómez-García, G. (2022). Sharing images or videos of minors online: Validation of the Sharenting Evaluation Scale (SES). *Children and Youth Services Review*, 136, Article 106396. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106396>
- Romero, D. M., Galuba, W., Asur, S., & Huberman, B. A. (2011). Influence and passivity in social media. *The 20th International Conference Companion on World Wide Web*, 113–114.
- Sine, R., & Parlak-Yorgancı, D. (2017). Yeni medya ve metalaşan annelik: Instagram anneliği üzerine bir odak grup çalışması. *Route Educational and Social Science Journal*, 4 (8), 399-412.
- Webb, L. M., & Lee, B. S. (2011). Mommy blogs: The centrality of community in the performance of online maternity. In *Theoretical perspectives on family communication* (pp. 243-256). Sage.
- Yardım, G. (2017). *Sosyal medyada kültürel kimliklerin dönüşümü odaklı "blogger anne" kimliklerinin incelenmesi*. [Master's Thesis, Anadolu University].
- Yazıcı, T., & Özel, M. (2017). Sosyal medyada anneliğin eğitim ve etkileşim boyutu: Instagram üzerine bir inceleme. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research*, 3 (5), 1715-1730.
- Ye, Z., Hashim, N. H., Baghirov, F., & Murphy, J. (2017). Gender differences in Instagram hashtag use. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 27 (4), 386–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2018.1382415>
- Yıldırım Atlı, A. *Kadınların yeni ifade alanı: Anne temalı sosyal medya hesapları üzerine bir inceleme* (Master's thesis, Göç Enstitüsü).
- Zeybek-Kaplan, M. (2018). *Annelik sosyalizasyonu ve sosyal medya: Instagram örneği*. [Master's Thesis, Yıldız Teknik University].