DERLEME MAKALESİ/COMPILATION ARTICLE

# A NEW PARENTING IN A CHANGING WORLD 'SHARENTING'

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*Abstract*

*Social media offers individuals the opportunity to create a digital identity as well as their current identity. However, nowadays, this digital identity is usually not produced by children, but by parents. Every post about children on social media makes children open to digital risks. Reflecting parental identity through the child can bring along various ethical problems.*

*As a matter of fact, in the literature, these posts made by parents about their children on social media are called "sharenting" moreover, a growing body of research has been carried out on this topic in recent years. This study aims to clarify the concept of sharenting, which is the social media posts of parents for their children, to identify the causes behind this behavior, to express the problems that may arise from sharenting and to provide information about legal regulations and sanctions related to sharenting. It is thought that awareness can be raised by examining the sharenting behavior in which parents play a role. Sharenting, which is a new concept in both national and international literature, is aimed to present a conceptual integrity by addressing it with different dimensions in this study. In this context, it is predicted that the analyzes will make a reference contribution to many stakeholders such as researchers, parents and educators who want to learn about the subject.*

*Keywords: digital parent, sharenting, parental attitude, attitude.*

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# DEĞİŞEN DÜNYADA YENİ BİR EBEVEYNLİK 'SHARENTİNG'

### *Özet*

*Sosyal medya, kişilere var olan kimliklerinin yanı sıra dijital bir kimlik oluşturma imkanı da sağlamaktadır. Ancak günümüzde bu dijital kimlik genellikle çocuklar tarafından değil, ebeveynler tarafından oluşturulmaktadır. Sosyal medyada çocuklar hakkında yapılan her paylaşım, çocukları dijital risklerle karşı karşıya bırakmaktadır. Ebeveyn kimliğinin çocuklar aracılığıyla yansıtılması, etik açıdan çeşitli sorunları gündeme getirebilir.*

*Nitekim literatürde, ebeveynlerin çocukları hakkında sosyal medyada yaptıkları bu paylaşımlar 'sharenting' olarak tanımlanmakta ve bu konuda son yıllarda giderek artan sayıda araştırma yapılmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, ebeveynlerin çocuklarıyla ilgili sosyal medya paylaşımları olan sharenting kavramını açıklamak, bu davranışın nedenlerini ortaya koymak, sharenting'in yol açabileceği sorunları tartışmak ve sharenting ile ilgili yasal düzenlemeler ve yaptırımlar hakkında bilgi sunmaktır. Ebeveynlerin gerçekleştirdiği sharenting davranışını inceleyerek bu konuda farkındalık yaratılabileceği düşünülmektedir. Hem ulusal hem de uluslararası literatürde yeni bir kavram olan sharenting, bu çalışmada farklı yönleriyle ele alınarak kavramsal bir bütünlük oluşturulması hedeflenmektedir. Bu doğrultuda yapılacak analizlerin, konu hakkında bilgi edinmek isteyen araştırmacılar, ebeveynler ve eğitimciler gibi birçok paydaşa kaynak niteliğinde bir katkı sağlayacağı öngörülmektedir.*

***Anahtar kelimeler:*** *dijital ebeveyn, sharenting, anne baba tutumu, tutum*

## INTRODUCTION

With the widespread integration of digital platforms into daily life, individuals now possess the capacity to construct a digital identity in parallel with their real-world persona. According to Otero (2017, p. 412), the ability to form and control one's digital identity is a fundamental right, particularly for children. However, in contemporary digital environments, it is often parents—not the children themselves—who shape and define these identities.

Empirical studies conducted in countries such as Poland, Germany, and Austria suggest that many parents perceive their online sharing practices as benign. For instance, Wiśniewska-Nogaj (2019) reported that Polish parents generally believe their social media posts do not harm their children, while Wagner and Gasche (2018) found that mothers in German-speaking contexts view the act of posting their children's photos as innocuous. Nevertheless, other research (e.g., Brosch, 2018) emphasizes that families may remain unaware of the long-term implications and potential digital risks associated with these behaviors.

Indeed, each post featuring a child potentially exposes them to a range of online vulnerabilities, raising ethical concerns—particularly when children's images and personal information are used as extensions of parental identity (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017, p. 111). This practice, now widely referred to as *sharenting*, involves parents sharing content about their children via social media, often without the child's informed consent. Sharenting has become an increasingly prominent subject of academic inquiry in recent years due to its multifaceted implications.

The present study seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the sharenting phenomenon. Specifically, it aims to (1) define and contextualize the concept, (2) identify the psychosocial and cultural motivations underlying parental sharing behavior, (3) examine the potential risks and consequences posed to children's privacy and well-being, and (4) review relevant legal frameworks and regulatory responses to sharenting at both national and international levels.

By addressing sharenting from an interdisciplinary perspective, this study aspires to raise awareness and contribute to the academic discourse surrounding digital parenting practices. It is anticipated that the findings will serve as a valuable resource for stakeholders such as researchers, educators, policy-makers, and parents seeking to better understand the ethical boundaries and responsibilities of parental behavior in digital spaces.

## 1. THE CONCEPT OF SHARENTING

In the modern era, online platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which have become integrated with people, offer people the opportunity to upload their own content, reply, tag, and share the content of others. With the progress in phone technology, photo and video sharing has become widespread, and more than 100 million content has been uploaded to social media on average per day. When sharing became a trend, parents were also affected by this situation (Erişir and Erişir, 2018, p. 51Advancements in technology and the proliferation of new media platforms have contributed to a rise in the information channel. With the commercialization of the media in the process, the use of children began to be done for commercial purposes. The marketing of products through children has led to objectified children. Therefore, social media networks have become a platform for child abuse (Parsa and Akmeşe, 2019, p. 167). According to scientists, the contemporary child is raised in a way that is constantly manipulated and analyzed by

technological processes (Siibak and Tracks, 2019, p.116). The fact that parenting practices become complex in direct proportion to technological development by getting rid of traditional obligations contributes to the development of the concept of sharenting (İnan Kaya and Kaya, 2017, p. 444).

The combination of daily sharing and parenting identity in today's culture has brought the concept of *"Sharenting"* to the literature (Lazard et al., 2019). The notion of *"sharenting"* emerged with the combination of the words *"sharing",* which is the Turkish equivalent, and *"parenting",* which is parenting. The concept was first defined in Collins Dictionary and Urban Dictionary. By definition, sharenting is parents sharing content regarding their children on social media platforms (Brosch, 2017, p. 380). When defining the concept, it is emphasized that the parent shares child-oriented content on social media without mentioning privacy, rights and ethics (Lazard et al., 2019, p. 2).

Sharenting is a term that is formed by combining the words sharing and parenting (Urban Dictionary, 2021) and briefly refers to parents posting details about themselves and their children online (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017). Sharenting was defined by the Collins Dictionary as "a parent's regular use of social media to convey a lot of detailed information about their children." Urban Dictionary, on the other hand, defined sharenting as "parents sharing their children's information, pictures and private moments online". Although the concept of sharenting in Turkish is translated as sharenting in a few places, it is thought that this translation does not fully meet the concept of sharenting (Astam and Pınarbaşı, 2020; Erişir and Erişir, 2018). Günç (2020), on the other hand, translated sharenting as "sharing parenting" in his study. The term oversharenting is used to indicate that the sharenting behavior is frequently or excessively performed (Serçemeli, 2020). Over-sharenting behavior is the sharing of more personal details, photos, images and information on social media, which can become more embarrassing when the child grows up (Clark et al., 2015).

## 2.   HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT OF SHARENTING

Although the concept of Sharenting entered our lives with the popularization of social media, the behavior of sharing information about children and the historical record of children date back to ancient times (Ahioğlu-Lindberg, 2012). Kumar (2019) found that sharenting behavior isn't a recent practice, people have been recording their daily lives for centuries using diaries, notebooks and baby logbooks. In addition, products such as baby books have led parents to record information about their children.

Children's lives have been recorded for many years as interpreted by their parents (Ahioğlu-Lindberg, 2012). Humphreys (2018) argues that people take on many roles throughout their lives, such as children, spouses, parents, friends, colleagues, and that one way to perform these roles is to document them. He then thinks that looking back at these traces can help people shape their sense of self , create a coherent life story, and feel connected to others. He also stated that mobile diaries, which started to be employed in the eighteenth century, allow the logger to record his life in real time, such as the smartphones currently used, and these diaries are usually written to be shared with family and friends (Humphreys, 2018). The concept of sharenting became popular in 2015 when a national survey conducted by the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital revealed that parents shared a lot of information about their children online (Choi & Lewallen, 2018).According to this report, it has been revealed that 84% of mothers and 70% of fathers under the age of 18 use social media tools, online forums or blogs such as Facebook, and 34% of fathers and 56% of mothers discuss child health and parenting issues on social media (Clark et al., 2015). In contrast, it was found that 68% of parents shared private information about their children, while 67% shared photos of their children. In addition, 52% of parents stated that they were worried about their children being embarrassed by the photos they shared on social media when they grew up. In the same study, it was also revealed that parents who use social media follow another parent who shares inappropriate photos and location about their child and provides a lot of personal information about their child (Clark et al., 2015). Again in 2015, 589 parents with children aged 6-17 were studied by the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI) in the UK. As a result of the research, according to the report *"Parents, Privacy and Use of Technology"*, it was found that approximately 20% of parents who have a social network account share information online that their child may find embarrassing in the future. In addition, one in ten parents asked their child to remove some information posted online by their parent (Family Online Safety Institute, 2015).

Although the studies on the concept of *"sharenting"* started in 2012, the first academic study was conducted in 2015. In Turkey, the first study on the concept was carried out in 2016 (Maraşlı, Sühendan, Yılmaztürk & Çok, 2016). *"Sharenting"* as a concept is a new concept in both international and national literature. Although the concept can be translated into Turkish as *"sharing parenting",* it does not have a common Turkish word equivalent. For parents, sharenting behavior is seen as a way to talk about the difficulty of parenting, to offer suggestions, to get advice, approval and support (Verswijvel et al., 2019). The summary information regarding the history of the concept of sharenting is presented in Table 1.

*Table 1. Historical Timeline of the Sharenting Concept*

| Year | Event / Finding | Reference |
|---|---|---|
| Ancient times | Parents recorded children's lives through diaries, notebooks, and baby logbooks. | Ahioğlu Lindberg (2012); Kumar (2019) |
| 18th century | Emergence of mobile diaries used to document and share life in real-time with family and friends. | Humphreys(2018) |
| 2006 | Sharenting behavior became popular with the rise of social media. | Ahioğlu-Lindberg (2012) |
| 2012 | Concept of sharenting began to be discussed in literature. | Ahioğlu-Lindberg (2012) |
| 2015 | First academic study on sharenting conducted internationally. | Choi & Lewallen (2018) |
| 2015 | University of Michigan survey: • 84% of mothers and 70% of fathers use social media • 34% of fathers and 56% of mothers discuss child health • 68% share private info; 67% share | Clark et al. (2015) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | photos • 52% worry children may feel embarrassed later | |
| 2015 | UK FOSI study (589 parents): • 20% shared content children might find embarrassing • 10% of children asked their parents to remove content | Family Online Safety Institute (2015) |
| 2016 | First Turkish academic study on sharenting published. | Maraşlı, Sühendan, Yılmaztürk, & Çok (2016) |
| 2019 | Sharenting viewed as a tool for sharing parenting experiences and receiving support and validation. | Verswijvel et al. (2019) |

## 3. SHARENTING APPROACHES

### 3.1. Sharenting Approacho to the Purpose of Social Affirmation Expectation

Today, it is possible to say that motherhood and paternity have a glorified and even blessed context. In this direction, the acceptance of the individual in the socio-cultural climate in which he/she lives and the affirmation of his/her roles still have an important and prioritized role. The parenting phenomenon, which maintains its priority in daily life, takes its place among the main roles and values that stand out in digital environments. Especially in social networks, individuals who construct their identity through parenting roles create posts in line with the expectation of social affirmation and even use the definitions of '…mother' or '…father' when establishing their account profile names through a prefix phrase. Among the most frequently used digital media on the Instagram social network, the

number of social media accounts created with usernames such as' Actress mother, musician mother, working mother, traveling mother, natural mother or academic mother, expert mother, teacher mother to add a little more seriousness to the event 'is increasing day by day (Çimke, Yıldırım Gürkan and Polat, 2018, pp. 263-264). A similar situation applies to fathers, and in today's social networks, it is possible to encounter user accounts such as *"digital father, fighting father, comfortable father, playful father, flying father"*. In addition to the use of mother or father, it is seen that users are actively involved in social networks through the role and participation of 'parents'. Research indicates that social media accounts bearing such titles have been examined and that, under the concept of influencer parenting, the visual exposure of children has led to violations of children's rights (Tosuntaş & Griffiths, 2024).

Accounts, which have become widespread with the affirmative and mindful aspects of parenting, produce content not only on the contextual aspects of being a mother or father, but also on the role of parenting as more inclusive. As an example, account users with names such as *"conscious parents, technological parents, parents in us, parents who make a difference, relevant parents, new generation parents"* sometimes share their experiences because they are parents, and sometimes they directly produce digital content in the accounts they associate with their fields of expertise. While such accounts aim to increase parents' awareness, they also enable the development of alternative solutions by creating areas where experiences about the problems encountered in the parenting process are discussed. While these and similar attitudes serve to facilitate the parenting process, at the same time, parents can share the sympathy environment created. In the content shared in this direction on social networks, parents can seek social support, expect their emotional expectations to be met, or ask them to evaluate their solutions on any issue that concerns their children. In this way, social positivity also provides social support to parents and parents can be informed about any issue through common experience. Similarly, when there is a positive development regarding children or parenting experiences, it is possible to support parenting through the digital environment and 'well-being' can be achieved by affirming parenting. In this way, parents can increase their happiness levels by internalizing their experiences. While producing content about their children in line with the expectation of social positivity, parents can increase the frequency of posts in some cases to a remarkable extent. Parents in this behavior sometimes share photos of their children excessively and use their children as a means of psychological satisfaction in order to get social approval that they can perform their duties in the best way. In fact, it has been reported that commenting and liking these photos increases parents'

satisfaction with their parenting role (Çimke, Yıldırım Gürkan, & Polat, 2018, p. 264).

In line with the expectation of social positivity, the subject of the account posts of the parents who share in the digital environment stands in an important place. Sometimes parents can carry out a continuous flow of information about children or their children in digital environments in order to affirm their parenting roles. Although this approach is evaluated on parenting affirmation, this means that information about children is shared with third parties. In this respect, it recalls the data ethics approach with the protection of children's personal data security and sensitivity towards the subject. As a matter of fact, these contents and sensitive information, which are produced carelessly and quickly about children without being aware of it, can reach dangerous levels that can violate the privacy and security of children in their social daily lives. Especially in multi-follower accounts, the problem of accessing this information to more people is critical. Some accounts can reach a high number of followers and create a role model for their followers by addressing more users. In these networks, the posts of account holders who present themselves through their parenting roles or act for an affirmative purpose can be considered as a reliable or accurate source by their followers. Some account holders can be experts in the field they share in their working lives. However, while a definition is made on expertise in social network profile information in digital environments, there is no process that proves a condition for its official provability. This increases the likelihood of encountering users with fake ID profiles who are not experts but identify themselves as experts. The evaluation of such accounts as an expert opinion and the opinion that the information conveyed is correct create the risk of mobilizing third parties. This problematic necessitates media literacy knowledge and awareness development for all users. The current point reveals the necessary role of being aware of the ability to distinguish accurate information in digital environments and the risks that may be encountered. Therefore, it is critical to gain a questioning perspective on the validity of the transferred information and to direct it to the source of the correct information in line with conscious use.

### 3.2.Sharenting Approach to the Purpose of Information Sharing

The possibility of the information to enter the circulation by gaining instant popularity can also be considered as a risk factor in cases in need of confirmation. The concern of increasing the number of likes and clicks in new media environments for various purposes has left users with the problem of

the reliability of information. Information obtained from the internet can be published in an extremely serious way even when it is "unconfirmed, unconfirmed, even when it is a*"sensation",* which causes many false information to circulate rapidly on the internet" (Binark and Bayraktutan, 2013, pp. 70-71). Sometimes this information is circulated by people who are claimed to be experts, and sometimes it is disseminated by giving it the quality of news. While commercial concerns are often among the most important reasons for this situation, the risk of misleading or misleading individuals/societies as a result is an important problem. The content created by giving false news or news images also significantly harms the reliability of the news by benefiting from the reality, accuracy and credibility context of the news language.

With today's child-centered perspective, much information about meeting children's biopsychosocial needs perfectly takes its place in various forms on the internet in this context. The effort of the parent who tries to have information may sometimes confront them with the problem of the source of the correct information. In some cases, redirecting users to access information according to the first results of search engines and sometimes even with sponsored content may cause them to use misleading methods to cope with the problems faced by the parents.

Today, with increasing sources of anxiety, parents' concerns about protecting and caring for their children have led to an effort to learn more about their children. The effort of parents to obtain information about children or their children is popularly carried out through social networks. The content produced on social networks is shared for various purposes such as informing, entertaining, popularizing or making commercial profit. For this reason, mostly the contents are created with fast consumable, remarkable and simple expressions. In this respect, parents can consume dozens of contents in a short time and store them in order to remember or apply them later by taking advantage of the recording or downloading features offered by new media environments. However, it is not always possible to distinguish whether these contents are created to provide real benefit to the lives of individuals or whether commercial concerns lie in the art field.

### 3.3.Digital Parenting Approach to Raising Awareness

While adults fulfill their parenting roles, they can obtain a lot of information from the internet that will benefit child self-care and upbringing processes. This information can already be obtained from the data on a source site, as well as through interaction-based bilateral or even multiple

communication methods. In this respect, new media environments can turn into a sharing platform where similar life experiences are shared and solutions and suggestions can be developed together, and can function as a social support mechanism.

### 3.4. Self-Driven Digital Parenting

In a circular paradigm, the use of children/infants in a position to functionally contribute to the self-focused presentation of parenting by turning into a presentation tool in social networks leads to children becoming more visible in new media environments. When this visibility is not in line with providing a benefit on the scale of motherhood or fatherhood presentation, seeking social support or increasing sharing, it sometimes serves to create a method for the user subject to increase the number of followers only. Thus, children settle in the position of an object in the self-centered life presentation and exist in the digital media as a tool that feeds the role of mother or father as the subject of the posts. Although some digital parents are responsible for their self-care and safety, especially in order to maintain or increase the number of followers, the constant sharing of information about their children on social networks brings along various problems and criticisms directed at parenting. In some cases, the positioning of children as' masks' in Goffman's words, the effort of self-focused individuals to introduce themselves through the role of mother or father can be considered as "the acceptance of the fact that everyone always and everywhere plays a certain role by being more or less aware" (Goffman, 2004, p. 31).

### 3.5. Digital Parental Approach to the Purpose of Making Commercial Gains

Today's fan culture is actively reproduced through social networks, especially by digital celebrities. The interest in increasing the number of followers can be considered remarkable in terms of both socialization and turning into a means of earning. The large number of followers also offers a function that increases the advertising revenues of celebrities at the same rate. Accordingly, digital parents are able to share more willingly for child-oriented content that is welcomed with interest. High-value products, services or goods are shown for a reason such as activities carried out for children through ownership, and even children can be transformed into subjects of this presentation.

## 4. CAUSES OF SHARENTING BEHAVIOR

For parents, sharenting behavior is seen as a way to talk about the difficulty of parenting, to offer suggestions, to get advice, approval and support (Verswijvel et al., 2019). According to Brosch ( 2016), the early period of parenting causes social isolation and digital tools allow you to spend this time more comfortably. Therefore, parents do not mind sharing photos of their children to declare that they can fulfill their parenting duties, to have their parenting approved, and to compare themselves with others on issues such as social status and life experience. (Brosch, 2016).

Clark et al. (2015) suggested that 56% of mothers and 34% of fathers with children under 4 years of age use social media to share and discuss information on parenting issues. Some researchers have specifically linked mothers' greater use of social media and sharenting behavior to their greater need for a sense of social support (Jang & Dworkin, 2014; Bartholomew et al., 2012).

In their study, Bartholomew et al. (2012) revealed that mothers who commented on the photo they shared with their children felt more social support. Social support is especially important during the transition to parenting. Researchers have found that social support improves the quality of communication between spouses and parent-child, reduces parenting stress, and increases satisfaction with parenting (Salmela-Aro et al., 2010; McDaniel et al., 2012). At the same time, it has been stated that parents use sharenting behavior to avoid being away from their friends and family and to stay in constant communication (Wagner and Gasche, 2018).

As a result of a survey conducted with a data group of 1000 people in Estonia, it was revealed that parents often share about their children, that is, exhibit sharenting behavior, while communicating with their families and friends (Sukk and Soo, 2018). Blum-Ross and Livingstone (2017), on the other hand, stated that parents use their social media as a photo album and share photos of their children to save the moment.

Humphreys (2018), on the other hand, suggested that parents' sharing information about their children on social media is a form of *"media accounting"* that individuals use to document their daily lives and emphasized that *"media accounting"* is important for an individual's sense of self and identity.

Today's parents who have adopted social media use social media for different purposes such as discussing their parenting, finding solutions to

parenting problems, and giving advice to other parents (Blum-Ross and Livingstone, 2017, p. 117). As a matter of fact, social media is a way to meet the needs of parents to establish connections and seek support (Steinberg, 2017). Online environments help other parents overcome the uncertainty of being parents by conveying their experiences to parents (Çelik, 2019, p. 77; Kopecky, Szotkowski, Aznar-Díaz & Romero-Rodríguez, 2020, p. 1) (Fox & Hoy, 2019, p. 416). Because parents who raise children in the digital world find the process of raising children difficult and seek a road map (Levy, 2017).

When parents cannot find solutions to the problems they experience in parenting, they prefer to seek solutions on social media (Hachisuka, 2018, p. 135). While Sharenting is a method of providing information exchange (Chrostowska, 2018, p. 64; Damkjaer, 2018, p. 213), it is also a way of developing knowledge and skills in parenting (Latipah, Kistoro, Hasanah & Putranta, 2020, p. 4815). Sharenting is also important in the creation and maintenance of social ties (Chrostowska, 2018, p. 64; Damkjaer, 2018, p. 213). Especially in the new motherhood period, it allows mothers to stay in touch with their immediate environment and get rid of social isolation (McDaniel, Coyne & Holmes, 2012, p. 1510; Brosch, 2016, p. 233; Fox & Hoy, 2019, p. 422). In addition, parents share about their child on social media in order to cope with parenting stress (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017, p. 121; Archer & Kao, 2018, p. 125). In addition, sharenting is an indirect form of self-presentation of the parent through the child, as well as an indicator that parenting tasks are completed (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019, p. 320; Brosch, 2016, p. 233). Because social media is a way of exhibiting parental identity (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017, p. 112). However, it also constitutes evidence of the parent's investment in their child (Lazard et al., 2019, p. 4).

## 5. CONSEQUENCES OF SHARENTING BEHAVIOR

Parents may have motivations for sharenting behavior such as receiving positive social support and exchanging ideas, but sharenting can be a dangerous practice when parents share too much information about their children, especially inappropriate or descriptive information (Nottingham, 2019). Researchers argue that the contemporary child grows up in a world that is increasingly monitored, analyzed, and manipulated by technological processes (Willson, 2018). Obtaining children's data depends on the digital applications used by parents (Siibak and Traks, 2019). Paradoxically, parents think that as they share information, they will appear as a good parent in the eyes of the society (Damkjaer, 2018). Sharenting can cause a child emotional harm. Although parents give their children the right to choose neither food

nor clothing, it has been stated that when they share something on social media without their children's permission and containing information about their children, it is actually not respecting their privacy, ideas and children's sense of body ownership (Rymanowicz, 2018). It shows that a significant number of parents frequently share without taking into account issues related to their children's privacy (Maraşlı et al., 2017). Although an infant or young child is not aware of sharenting behavior, he/she may be harmed by it when he/she is old enough to understand it, so the negative effects of sharenting may not occur immediately as soon as the images or information are published on social media (Nottingham, 2019). In addition, when parents share humiliating posts on the internet to embarrass or punish their children, children suffer emotional damage (Kinghorn, 2018). It has been revealed that such posts, especially videos, made by parents are viewed in large numbers (Nottingham, 2019).

The information parents share about their children means leaving their children's digital footprints (Steinberg, 2017). In this way, perhaps children have an online identity before they are born and become active in the online world (Steinberg, 2017; Maraşlı et al., 2016). According to the survey findings of the AVG company, which was carried out in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain in 2010, 81 out of every 100 children under the age of 2 already have digital footprints created by their parents.

Information about children can often be collected by companies for marketing purposes, and this information, which was revealed when the child was still a young child, can be recorded and stored until the child becomes an adult (Nottingham, 2019). In addition, when a parent posts certain information about their child online (child's name, age, where they go to school, where they play, etc.), this information becomes available to people who want to access the child, and innocent photos or videos shared can be posted on pornographic or malicious sites (Fisher & Taub, 2019). At the same time, parents cannot control who has access to these posts or how someone else will use them, even if they hide their profile and share only with acquaintances. Revealing credentials can put a child at risk of digital abduction. (Rymanowicz, 2018; Haelle, 2016). Digital hijacking is when a person accesses and copies his/her account, personal information, or photos and shares these data as if they were his/her own data (Astam & Pınarbaşı, 2020). Digital abduction, which usually occurs for young children, occurs when other people copy photos shared by a child's parent and share them as if they were their own child (Astam & Pınarbaşı, 2020; Nottingham, 2019). Social media is now very important economically and has become a platform

where competition is increasing day by day. Some micro-famous parents, that is, parents who are known through blogs, webcams or social media, 'instamomas' or 'instadadler', include their children in their social media posts to increase their popularity, increase their number of followers and gain a new audience (Nottingham, 2019; Marwick, 2016). It can be said that micro-famous parents who make money through social media posts or obtain products such as toys, diapers, and baby food are used here as subjects of exploitation because they share these posts in line with their own interests (Nottingham, 2019).

## 6.  SCIENTIFIC, FORENSIC AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF SHARENTING BEHAVIOR

Sharing photos and information with private images of children on social media violates children's privacy (Duygulu, 2019). This situation also means violating the rights of the child regulated within the framework of international and national law (Serçemeli, 2020). As stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children have the right to life, development, name and citizenship, protection of identity, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, protection of private life, protection from abuse and neglect, and access to health and education services. Under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, *"the child has the right to express his or her views freely and to have his or her views taken into account in any matter or proceeding concerning him or her"*.

Sharenting behavior occurs without the consent of children, as found in many studies. In this case, any post in which the opinions of the children are not taken can be considered as a violation of children's rights. According to Article 16 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, *"No child's private life, family, housing and communication shall be arbitrarily or unfairly interfered with, nor shall his dignity and reputation be unjustly attacked"*. Research shows that a large number of parents frequently share without considering issues related to their children's privacy. These posts can sometimes be embarrassing for children. In fact, parents are also worried that their children will be embarrassed by the photos they share when they grow up (Clark et al., 2015). In this case, it can be said that sharenting behavior is contrary to children's rights in terms of violating the private life of children and attacks on their dignity and reputation that may occur in the future due to sharing. The fact that the parent of the child makes these shares does not change this fact. The right of custody brings with it rights, duties and

responsibilities for parents such as taking care of the child, protecting the child, determining the place of residence of the child, naming the child, providing vocational education and religious education appropriate to the child's abilities, representing the child against third parties and managing the child's capacity to act (Arslan Öncü, 2019). Kumar and Schoenebeck (2015) stated that today's parents should also take on the role of managing their children's privacy and identity online. That is, parents must now decide what is appropriate to share about their children online. In addition, parents have to ensure that their families and friends respect and apply these rules.

Sorensen (2016) takes a tougher stance on this, claiming that parents should fully protect the privacy of their children and therefore should not disclose any personal details and information until the child chooses to disclose or refrain from disclosing himself/herself as an adult. Naab (2019), on the other hand, emphasized that parents should guide their children on the media as well as managing their children's properties in accordance with the law, directing their activities, that is, making them a kind of proxy, and suggested the concept of *"parents' social media proxy".* In Article 18 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is emphasized that parents bear joint and first-hand responsibility for the upbringing of the child and that these persons should act in the best interests of the child above all. In this case, sharenting behavior can be described as a behavior contrary to the high interest of the child due to the consequences it may cause. Any behavior in which the benefit of the child is not taken into consideration means that the parents do not fulfill their responsibilities.

As stated in Article of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it has been decided that *"the child's parents, or only one of them, shall be protected against all kinds of abuse and ill-treatment, including physical or mental assault, violence or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, rape, while the child's legal guardian is with any person undertaking the care".* The World Health Organization (2006) defines child maltreatment as *"any type of physical, emotional maltreatment, sexual abuse, negligent behavior or commercial or other type of exploitation that may actually cause harmful or potentially harmful consequences for the health, life, development and dignity of the child in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power".*

Sharenting behavior can have many negative consequences for children. Making decisions about children without permission can be perceived as a disrespectful attitude; it can be hurtful for them to have embarrassing memories on social media when they grow up. In addition, the sharing of children's personal information along with sharenting behavior

may lead to the use of children commercially, the inclusion of relevant photos on pornographic sites, and forensic incidents such as child abduction or digital abduction. In addition, photos shared in public accounts with closed privacy settings directly evoke abuse (Uzun, 2020). In this context, it is understood that sharenting behavior is contrary to children's rights, as sharenting behavior may cause physical and emotional mistreatment for children, or even indirect abuse in advanced stages. Sharenting behavior violates not only children's rights but also personal rights. The right to personality is one of the fundamental rights protected in our law. Serozan (2011) defined the right to personality as *"the right of a person to all material and spiritual values that make him/her human, in particular, to his/her life, physical integrity, health, dignity, dignity, confidentiality of private life, word, image, name, work, freedom, meanwhile, freedom of economic movement"*. A person's spiritual assets such as his/her life, body integrity, identity, name, and official are within the scope of personality rights, and these are among the absolute rights that can be asserted against everyone and expected to be respected by everyone. Everyone is under the obligation to comply with these rights and not to violate these rights (Oğuzman and Barlas, 2016).

Unless justified by the consent of the person whose right of personality is harmed, a superior private or public interest or the exercise of the authority granted by law, every attack on personal rights is illegal." When evaluated in this context, when the images of children are shared on social media, the problem of violation of personal rights will arise. If it is not possible to consent to the sharenting behavior or to benefit from this behavior, the sharenting behavior will also be contrary to personal rights. As stated in Article 16 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children's private lives cannot be interfered with, *"Everyone has the right to demand that his/her private life and family life be respected. The confidentiality of private life and family life cannot be touched."* Pursuant to Article 134 of the Turkish Penal Code, the violation of the confidentiality of private life It is considered a crime according to the article. As stated in paragraph 2 of the same article, the penalty to be imposed is increased if the crime of violation of the privacy of private life results in the disclosure of the collected data in any environment.

In this context, sharenting behavior also causes a violation of the privacy of children. According to the Personal Data Protection Law No. 6698, personal data is defined as follows: *"Personal data refers to any information related to an identified or identifiable real person. In this context, not only information that provides the definitive diagnosis of the individual such as his/her name, surname, date of birth and place of birth, but also information*

*about the physical, family, economic, social and other characteristics of the person is personal data. The fact that a person is specific or identifiable refers to making that person identifiable by associating existing data with a natural person in any way. ... Data such as name, phone number, motor vehicle license plate, social security number, passport number, resume, picture, image and audio records, fingerprints, genetic information are personal data due to their ability to make the person identifiable, even indirectly."* According to Article 5 of the relevant law, personal data cannot be processed without the explicit consent of the person concerned, unless there are compulsory situations. There are also penal sanctions for sharing personal data. 5237 sayılı Türk Ceza Kanunu. Anyone who unlawfully records personal data is sentenced to imprisonment from one to three years. Article 136 (1) of the Turkish Penal Code: Any person who unlawfully gives, disseminates or obtains personal data to another person shall be sentenced to imprisonment from two to four years. Therefore, children's photos, audio recordings, videos, name, location are included in the scope of personal data and cannot be shared without the consent of the children. The right to be forgotten, which comes to the fore with the sharing of personal data, is defined as the right to delete, limit or change all kinds of personal content that may be misleading, unnecessary, embarrassing or may contain unrelated data about an individual in digital memory in a way that cannot be recovered (Haley, 2020; Nalbantoğlu, 2018). The right to be forgotten in our country is regulated by Article 10 of the Law on the Amendment of the Law No. 7253 on the Regulation of Publications on the Internet and the Fight Against Crimes Committed Through These Publications, which entered into force as of October 1, 2020. *"Upon the request of those whose personal rights are violated due to the content of the publication made on the internet, the judge may decide not to associate the applicant's name with the internet addresses subject to the decision within the scope of this article."*

Accordingly, individuals have the right to request that their names, photos or any information not be in any medium. All information shared without the consent of children within the scope of Sharenting behavior causes a violation of children's right to be forgotten as well as their right to personality, privacy and protection of personal data. There are also examples of circulars regarding the sharing of children on social media published in accordance with the relevant laws. For example, in the circular numbered 14168703-1O.06.02-E.2975829 published by the General Directorate of Legal Services of the Ministry of National Education in 2017 and sent to all schools throughout the country, it was announced to the administrators, authorized personnel and students in the schools in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, the Turkish Penal Code and

international conventions that it is a crime to publish the articles, sounds, photographs and video recordings related to the persons on any social media, and also that legal proceedings will be initiated if all kinds of data that will have a negative effect on the persons are shared. Forensic sciences is the use of information resources and methods of various scientific disciplines for the solution of forensic problems (Ubelaker, 2013).

Many fields of science can be applied to judicial problems. Many different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, botany, dentistry, medicine, toxicology, entomology, economics, accounting, engineering and informatics are included in forensic sciences (Maras and Miranda, 2014). Although some scientific disciplines may seem unrelated to forensic science, they can sometimes be a very important source of advice. For example, a zoologist who specializes in the taxonomy of a particular rodent genus may work throughout his or her career without dealing with a forensic issue. However, if evidence regarding the classification and behavior of these rodent genes becomes important in a murder investigation, the zoologist may need to provide forensic perspective and present this evidence in court (Ubelaker, 2013). Forensic sciences must also adapt to the demands of the age. Because criminal behavior changes with developing technology. Especially in the twenty-first century, technological devices, modern communication tools and the risky use of the internet have led to cybercrime or cybercrime (Gökçearslan, 2016). Cyber crimes are regulated by Articles 243, 244 and 255of the Turkish Penal Code. In addition, the Department of Combating Cyber Crimes was established under the umbrella of the General Directorate of Security. With these developments, forensic sciences cannot be expected to stay away from informatics. Cybercrime committed through social media is one of the areas that forensic science has recently focused its attention on. In particular, violations such as the privacy of private life and the recording of personal data are areas where judicial authorities are concentrated. Sharenting behavior is also a phenomenon that is carried out through social media, is officially known and legal regulations have started to be made in some countries. For example, France has enacted the law that children exposed to sharenting behavior can sue their parents when they become adults (Chazan, 2016). Similar debates continue in the UK and Australia. When the legal aspects are examined and considering that the processes of referral to forensic authorities have started, the relationship between sharenting behavior, which is the main subject of the study, and forensic sciences, which is very closely related to the fields of forensic informatics, forensic psychology and forensic sociology, is clearly seen.

**CONCLUSION**

Sharenting is a parent model that shares every aspect of the child on social media and cannot stop sharing. This model, despite the goodwill of the families, causes a violation of privacy for the child. It carries significant risks that can cause great damage to the social structure for future generations. Hazards related to sharenting application are preventable. For this reason, we have important duties to raise awareness of parents.

Today, social media has become an important part of people's daily life activities. People use social media to a large extent as a means of communication and sharing. Along with many benefits, there are substantial damages, especially addiction, privacy, and confidentiality, as well as unconscious use. Parents, who are obliged to protect children from all kinds of physical, social and psychological harm, can cause serious harm through social media, even if not intentionally. The most basic task that can be done about Sharenting is to raise awareness of what parents should do. Therefore, it is important to increase the awareness of parents that sharing the child's photos and videos on social media violates privacy, that photos and videos can be used by others with applications such as screenshots, that the child may feel uncomfortable with shared photos and videos in the future, and that sharing funny and ridiculous events about the child is a violation of privacy.

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