Sharenting, Exploitation, or Entertainment? Case Study of @abe_daily TikTok Accounts and Their Impact on Children's Privacy

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Abstract: Sharenting is a practice where parents share their children's life moments on social media. The study focused on @abe_daily's TikTok account, which features videos of a child's daily life and has sparked debate about children's privacy and potential exploitation. The main issue in this study is how the public views the content, whether it is as family entertainment or a form of child exploitation. This study aims to understand the public's perception of sharenting in @abe_daily accounts and its impact on children's privacy. This study uses a mixed methods approach, with in-depth interviews with ten informants and a survey of 13 respondents familiar with the account. Qualitative analysis was done through thematic, while quantitative data was collected through Likert scale questionnaires. The results showed that most respondents viewed content as positive entertainment, but there were concerns about child exploitation and privacy. While monetization of children's content is considered acceptable as long as children's well-being is maintained, there is an urgent need for stricter regulations regarding children's privacy on social media. This study recommends increased digital education for parents and clearer policies to protect children's rights in sharenting.

Keywords: Sharenting; Child Exploitation, Child Privacy, TikTok, Kidsfluencer

1.   Introduction

Social media has become an inseparable part of modern society's daily life. Platforms like TikTok offer a space for users to share various moments of their personal lives, including family and children's lives. This phenomenon is known as *sharenting* (*oversharing + parenting*), a practice in which parents actively share their children's life activities on social media as part of their parenting style. This *sharenting* practice often attracts attention and elicits various responses from the audience, ranging from appreciation to sharp criticism. Although usually done without full awareness of its impact, this practice has the potential to pose a risk of child exploitation. (Firdaus & Fajria Utami, 2023). Parents indirectly expose their children's private lives to the broader public through content uploaded on platforms like TikTok.

One of the TikTok accounts that has been widely highlighted related to this phenomenon is the @abe_daily account, which is managed by the parents of a small child named Abe. This account shares Abe's daily activities through his videos, often accompanied by his parents' comments, reactions, and jokes. This account managed to attract the attention of millions of TikTok users, making it one of the real examples of *sharenting* practices in Indonesia.

The *sharenting* phenomenon on TikTok, including in the case of @abe_daily, has sparked debate among the public regarding its benefits and impacts. For some, the content is considered fun, showing an authentic and

entertaining side of family life. However, this has sparked a debate about children's privacy ethics in the digital realm. Others consider this practice to be considered a form of exploitation of children. (Fridha & Irawan, 2020), where children's moments are used as content commodities to gain popularity and financial benefits.

Children's privacy ethics in the context of sharing are becoming increasingly relevant, and public attention is increasing to protecting children's data, especially for children vulnerable to the negative impact of digital exposure. Children's right to privacy and the potential negative impact of a digital track record created early on is a critical issue, especially when content can quickly go viral and be accessible to a broad audience without geographical restrictions. A critical view of *sharenting* is also rooted in fundamental questions about children's right to privacy and the long-term impact of a digital track record formed from an early age (Goel & Chaudhary, 2024).

This research explores the public's perception of *sharenting* content on TikTok, focusing on how the public distinguishes between content perceived as entertainment and content perceived as a form of exploitation. The case study of the @abe_daily account is used as a representation of the rampant *sharenting* practice and to delve deeper into the ethical implications of children's exposure on social media platforms. This study's findings are expected to guide parents in sharing their children's content more responsibly and enrich discussions about the need for policies that protect children's rights in the digital era.

2. Literatur Review

Sharenting is a term that describes the practice of parents sharing photos, videos, or information about their children on social media. The term first appeared in academic literature in the mid-2010s and has become increasingly concerning with the development of digital technology and the popularity of social media. (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2017). According to Blum-Ross and Livingstone, *sharenting* is often driven by parents' desire to document their child's development, share happy moments, and connect with the wider digital community. However, some researchers highlight the risks that come with this practice, such as potential child privacy violations, data misuse, and long-term psychological impacts on children. (Steinberg, 2017).

2.1. The Psychological and Social Impact of Sharenting on Children

Long-term psychological impacts on children due to sharenting can be in the form of anxiety related to overexposure, as well as disturbances in the formation of children's self-identity. Brosch (2018) explains that when children are often exposed to social media from an early age, they may feel that their privacy is not respected, which can ultimately trigger discomfort and anxiety (Brosch, 2018). This happens because children feel observed by people they don't know, and their freedom of self-expression can be constrained by the expectations of parents who publish their moments. This anxiety can continue to develop as they get older, especially when children begin to realize that many aspects of their personal lives have been revealed without their consent, which can affect the child's relationship with the concept of privacy in the future.

In addition to anxiety, some studies have also shown that children who are exposed to sharenting early on may have difficulty distinguishing between the realm of privacy and the public realm. According to research by Siregar and Muslem (2022), children who live in an environment where their personal lives are consistently publicized may grow up with a vague understanding of what is allowed to be shared and what should be taken care of for themselves(Siregar & Muslem, 2022). This can cause problems with self-confidence, lack of independence, and social dependence later in life. In the long run, these children may develop behavior patterns that rely too much on social acceptance from others, especially on social media, as a source of validation.

Another impact often emphasized is the emergence of social pressure on children to meet the expectations formed from the content uploaded by parents. Maheswari et al. (2023) highlighted that when content involving children becomes viral or receives a lot of public attention, children may feel that they must continue appearing according to the image formed by social media(Maheswari et al., 2023). This pressure can interfere with developing

a child's personal and emotional identity, as they may feel trapped in a role created by social expectations rather than based on their original desires or personality. Over time, the pressure to appear perfect in public can create confidence problems and hinder a child's ability to express themselves authentically.

2.2. Legal Protection and Public Perception of Sharenting in the Digital Age

In the legal context, discussions on protecting children's rights in *sharenting* are getting more and more attention. In some countries, such as France, privacy and data protection laws have begun to include children's rights to content their parents share. A study by Steinberg (2017) highlights that in European countries, children's privacy rights are now more protected through data protection policies such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), which allows children to request the deletion of their content at a certain age. This kind of policy aims to protect children from the negative impact of digital track records formed from an early age, including in cases of *sharenting*.

In Indonesia, legal studies on child protection in the digital realm are still in their early stages, but the need for clear policies is beginning to be felt by the public and the government. (Widyaningsih & Suryaningsi, 2022). Based on research by Widyaningsih and Suryaningsi, although Indonesia has general regulations related to child protection, such as the Child Protection Law, there are no specific rules governing children's right to privacy on social media. With the increasing phenomenon of *sharenting*, legal experts assess the importance of policies that protect children's rights and ensure parents have guidelines for sharing children's content ethically and responsibly. (Damanik et al., 2023)

Public perception of *sharenting* varies depending on the cultural context, community values, and prevailing social norms. In some studies, *sharenting* is seen as a form of parental pride and an expression of love for children. (Sugiharti, 2024). The public, which is more open to digital phenomena, often considers this content to be harmless entertainment. However, other studies show that some people view *sharenting* more critically, primarily when the content reflects the exploitation of children for commercial purposes or personal gain. (Autenrieth, 2018). This negative perception often arises when the content shared is inappropriate or over-exposing the child's personal life.

TikTok, as one of the dominant social media platforms today, offers a space for parents to share their child's life moments in the form of short videos that are interactive and accessible. TikTok's characteristics allow videos to go viral quickly and make the platform appealing to parents who want greater exposure to their children's content (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Parents often use this to build their child's or family's brand on TikTok, as seen on the @abe_daily account. This account is popular because it uploads daily content that showcases children's expressions and activities in an entertaining daily context.

However, research on *sharenting* on TikTok also shows that the virality of the platform can increase the risk of exploitation, as content can quickly reach a broad audience without complete parental control. (Leaver, 2022). Some studies reveal that this practice often risks putting children in the spotlight, which is not always cheerful and potentially invites inappropriate comments from the audience.

One of the main issues in the discussion about *sharenting* is how the public assesses whether content functions as mere entertainment or leads to exploitation. According to Fridha and Irawan (2020), perceptions of child exploitation often arise when the content shared no longer respects children's privacy or when children appear to be used as a tool to gain attention or financial gain. On the other hand, many parents argue that they only share happy moments that are considered normal in the digital age and that their children do not feel bothered by their presence on social media.

This debate is even more relevant in cases such as @abe_daily accounts, where uploaded content is often discussed about the balance between children's right to privacy protection and parents' rights to manage content on social media. The study aims to explore TikTok's audience's perception of the content generated by the account and how this perception affects the public's view of ethical boundaries in *sharenting*.

Several previous studies have examined *sharenting* on social media, including how public perception is formed and changes over time. According to a study by Siibak and Traks (2019), public perception of sharenting on social media is often influenced by how content is presented and the interaction in the comment column. Another study by Sespiani (2021) revealed that public perception of *sharenting* content could be influenced by factors such as the narrative built by the uploader and the online community's reaction to the content.

With a focus on @abe_daily accounts on TikTok, the study will use a similar approach to analyze how the public perceives shared content and what factors influence the public's view of viewing the content as entertainment or a form of exploitation. This analysis is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the social and ethical dynamics associated with *the sharenting phenomenon* in the era of social media.

3. Methods

This study uses a qualitative and quantitative descriptive approach (mixed methods) to understand the public perception of *sharenting* practices carried out by TikTok @abe_daily accounts. This approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding through qualitative interviews and quantitative data from questionnaires. The goal is to understand how the public views the content, whether it is more inclined toward the entertainment aspect or more towards child exploitation.

The subject of this study is content uploaded by TikTok @abe_daily accounts featuring children, as well as comments and reactions from the audience to the content. This research focuses on @abe_daily accounts, interactions in the comment column, and discussions on other social media related to the *sharing* phenomenon.

This study involved ten informants who were purposively selected for in-depth interviews. Selection criteria include: (1) active TikTok users with at least one hour of usage time per day, (2) know the @abe_daily account, and (3) have commented or participated in discussions regarding the content of the account. This criterion aims to ensure that the informant has sufficient experience and understanding of the *sharenting* phenomenon that is the focus of the research. This sample represents the diverse views of active TikTok users familiar with the account. The interview questions include topics such as the informant's views on the content shared by the @abe_daily, their impressions of the interaction between parents and children in the content, and their opinions on the ethics *of sharenting*.

Before conducting the interview, the researcher explained to the informant the purpose of the research, the confidentiality of the data provided, and the informant's right to withdraw from the interview at any time. Each informant is asked to give written consent. Data obtained from interviews and questionnaires are guaranteed confidentiality. The research report will not mention the informants' and respondents' names and identities. Only data relevant to the analysis will be published without mentioning personal information.

The data obtained from in-depth interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This analysis process includes a transcript of interviews, identification of key themes, and grouping of data based on these themes. The main themes explored in this study include perceptions of entertainment, exploitation, child privacy, and *sharenting* ethics. This analysis aims to understand the informant's patterns of views and opinions more deeply.

Thirteen respondents were randomly selected to complete an online questionnaire distributed through social media platforms. The main criteria of respondents include age 18-45 years and knowledge of @abe_daily accounts. With *the random sampling technique*, this sample is expected to cover a broader range of public views on the *sharenting* phenomenon on these accounts, although the number is limited. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended questions and a Likert scale (1-5), designed to measure the general perception of *sharenting* and content shared by @abe_daily. Data from the Likert scale (1-5) are processed to measure the level of approval or disagreement with a particular statement. Questions include: 1. Assessment of the entertainment aspect of the content, 2. Views on child exploitation in content, 3. Opinions on children's privacy on social media, and 4. Perception of the potential commercialization of children as influencers. The frequency and percentage of respondents' answers were calculated to understand the distribution of perceptions towards each statement related to *sharenting*.

The selection of this small sample can help dig into the in-depth views of each respondent, although it cannot be generalized to the broader population. This interview was conducted to get a more in-depth view of how they interpret content related to children.

Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to get a general picture of the public's perception of @abe_daily accounts. The analysis results are based on the percentage and frequency of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with the statements. In addition, the Likert scale is used to calculate the average perception score of *sharenting content*, whether it is more likely to be perceived as entertainment or as child exploitation. This analysis is carried out using statistical software to make it easier. The statistical results are then visualized in tables and graphs, which help to present the findings more clearly and easily understood.

The study was limited to analyzing the public perception of a single TikTok account (@abe_daily), so the results may not be generalized to all cases of *sharenting* on TikTok. The data obtained from the questionnaire depends on the respondent's understanding of the account, so the perception can differ depending on how familiar they are with the content presented.

4. Result

This study analyses the *sharenting* practices carried out by TikTok accounts @abe_daily and public perception of the content, whether exploitation or entertainment. The account, managed by a parent of a young child named Abe, has 7 million *followers* as of August 7, 2024. Every video uploaded always gets tens of millions *of views* and thousands of comments. With many *viewers* on TikTok, Abe Cekut is now a *kidsfluencer* flooded with endorsements.

The data in this study was obtained by taking random photos that displayed the number of followers and the number of views of @abe_daily accounts on TikTok. In addition, videos uploaded in July 2024 featuring Abe as *a kidfluencer* were also randomly selected. Additional data in the form of screenshots from uploads on platform X (formerly known as Twitter) containing pro and con comments from netizens related to Abe Cekut's content was also analyzed.

Figure 1. A photo collage that displays the number of followers and views (Source: TikTok account @abe_daily).

Figure 2. Video collage of *endorsement* content involving Abe and his family (Source: TikTok account @abe_daily).

Figure 3. Collage of uploads on platform X and comments (Source: account X @tanyakanrl).

From these qualitative findings (interviews), several main themes emerged:

1. **Content as entertainment is positive;** most informants (8 out of 10) see content shared by @abe_daily accounts as light and upbeat entertainment. They were entertained by Abe's cheerful behavior and warm interactions within the family. One of the informants stated, "The content is entertaining. Watching Abe play and interact with his parents made me smile. It was like watching a happy family moment." This view shows that many viewers see the account as a representation of family happiness without any indication of exploitation.

2. **Concerns about child exploitation and privacy:** Although most respondents found the content entertaining, two informants highlighted concerns regarding child exploitation and privacy. They say young children like Abe may not yet understand the consequences of exposure to social media. One informant revealed, "Parents may not be aware that their child is widely exposed and how this could impact children's privacy in the future." These concerns are rooted in children's right to privacy protection and the potential long-term impact of a digital track record formed early on.

3. **Given content monetization,** most informants (9 out of 10) do not mind Abe's content monetization as a kidsfluencer, as long as the child still looks happy and does not feel burdened. One informant opined, "As long as the profits are used for Abe's future and do not sacrifice his happiness, I do not see any problems." However, they emphasized the importance of parental transparency regarding using these benefits as ethical accountability.

The main findings of this quantitative (questionnaire) result include:

1. **The understanding of child exploitation data** in Table 1 shows that most respondents (84.6%) stated that they know the definition of child exploitation. A total of 53.8% said they "agreed," and 30.8% "strongly agreed" that they understood the risks of child exploitation. This understanding is essential because it shows respondents are aware of the issue of exploitation in *sharenting*.

Table 1. Know the definition of child exploitation
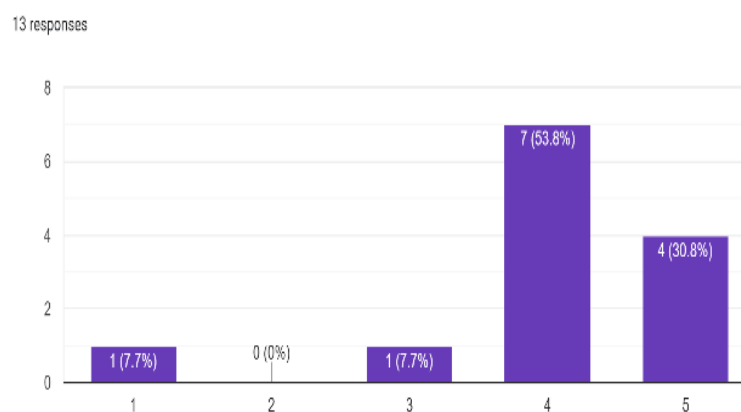
No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	4	30,8
2.	Agree	7	53,8
3.	Neutral	1	7,7
4.	Disagree	0	0
5.	Strongly disagree	1	7,7
	Sum	13	100

Source: Primary data

2. **Regarding the perception of the potential exploitation of *sharenting*** in Table 2, 15.4% of respondents strongly agreed, and 38.5% agreed that the practice of *sharenting* has the potential to lead to child exploitation. 53.9% of respondents considered *sharenting* risky, while 30.8% were neutral. This suggests that despite awareness of the risks of exploitation, not all respondents explicitly view *sharenting* on @abe_daily accounts as a practice that harms children.

Table 2. *Sharenting* practices can lead to child exploitation

13 responses
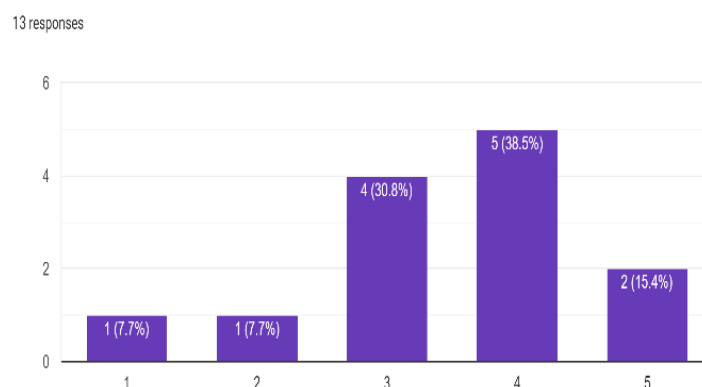
No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	2	15,4
2.	Agree	5	38,5
3.	Neutral	4	30,8
4.	Disagree	1	7,7
5.	Strongly disagree	1	7,7
	Sum	13	100,1

Source: Primary data

3. **The potential for commercialising children as kidsfluencers** Table 3 shows that most respondents (61.6%) agree with the potential commercialisation of children as kidsfluencers. 23.1% "strongly agree," and 38.5% "agree." These findings reflect the acceptance of the kidsfluencer phenomenon as long as the child's well-being remains guaranteed. Respondents accept child content monetization if it is managed wisely.

Table 3. I agree with the potential commercialization of children as *kidsfluencer*
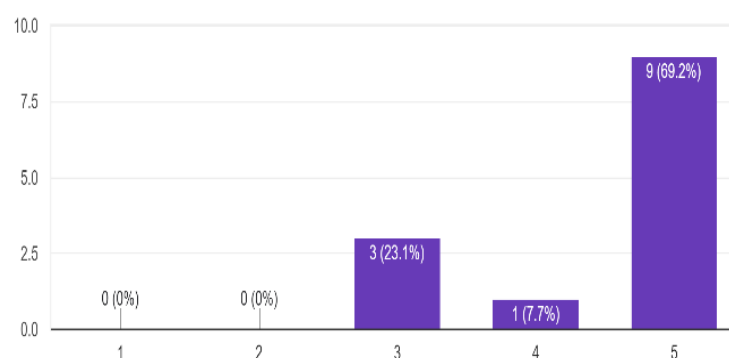
13 responses
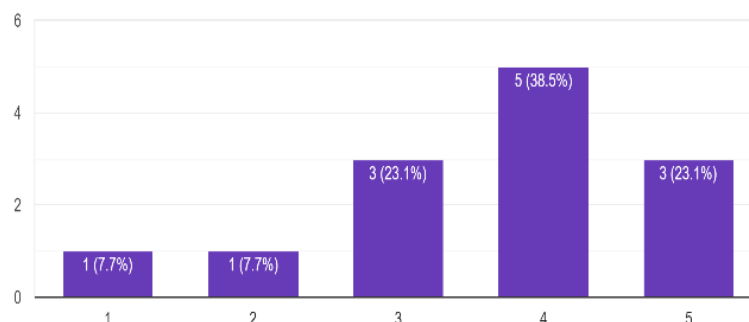
No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	3	23,1
2.	Agree	5	38,5
3.	Neutral	3	23,1
4.	Disagree	1	7,7
5.	Strongly disagree	1	7,7
	Sum	13	100,1

Source: Primary data

4. **The need for child privacy and safety considerations**: 84.6% of respondents strongly agree that parents should consider children's privacy and safety before sharing their content on social media (Table 5). This reflects a high awareness of the importance of maintaining children's privacy and is a reminder of the responsibility of parents in managing their children's digital exposure.

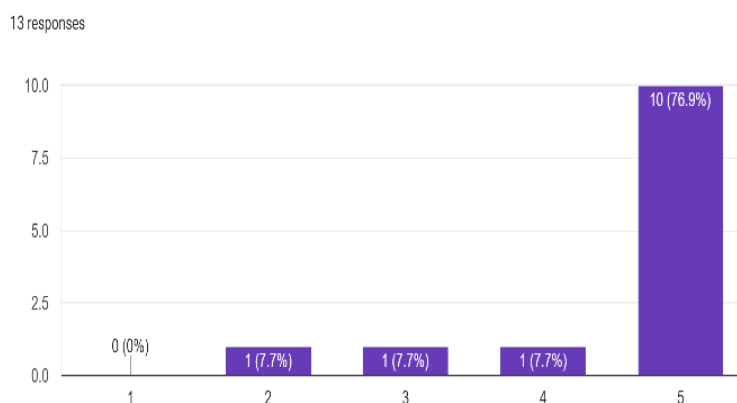Table 4. Opposing child exploitation

13 responses

No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	9	69,2
2.	Agree	1	7,7
3.	Neutral	3	23,1
4.	Disagree	0	0
5.	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Sum	13	100

Source: Primary data

5. **The view of content as entertainment** Table 6 shows that most respondents (77%) consider content shared by @abe_daily accounts entertaining, with an average score of 4.1 on the Likert scale. This figure shows that respondents generally see the content as positive entertainment, not harmful to children.

Table 5. Parents should consider their child's privacy and
safety before sharing their content on social media

13 responses

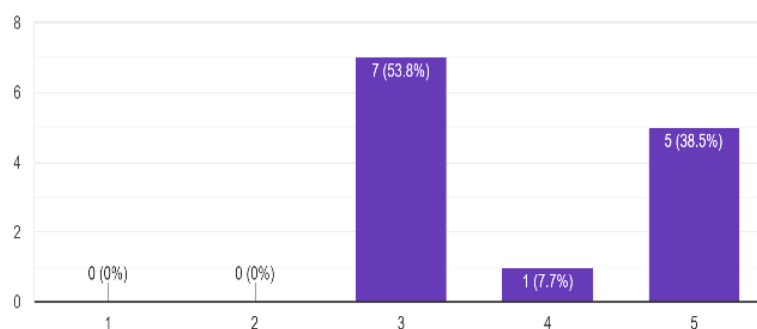| No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	10	76,9
2.	Agree	1	7,7
3.	Neutral	1	7,7
4.	Disagree	1	7,7
5.	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Sum	13	100

Source: Primary data

6. **Objections to child exploitation by netizens** Table 9 shows that most respondents (53.8%) are neutral to the views of netizens who criticize @abe_daily accounts as a form of child exploitation. As many as 30.8% strongly agreed with the criticism, indicating that a small part of the public does consider there to be potential exploitation of the content displayed.

Table 6. Considering Abe's content to be considered entertainment

No.	Answer	Frequency	Presented (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	5	38,5
2.	Agree	5	38,5
3.	Neutral	2	15,4
4.	Disagree	1	7,7
5.	Strongly disagree	0	0
	Sum	13	100,1

Source: Primary data

5. Discussion

Findings from interviews and questionnaires show differences in public views on *sharenting* on @abe_daily accounts. Most of the public will likely consider content entertainment that does not harm Abe. However, concerns regarding privacy and the risk of child exploitation remain, especially among those who are more critical of the long-term impact of digital exposure on children.

Public perception suggests that parents need greater awareness about the limitations of sharing children's content on social media. The results of this study also indicate the importance of stricter regulations to protect children's rights in the context of social media, as well as more transparent management of benefits for children who become *kidsfluencer*.

With data, 84.6% of respondents agree that parents should consider children's privacy before sharing content, emphasising the importance of awareness for parents in maintaining children's privacy limits. Parents need to be aware that exposing their children too often to social media can create a digital track record that is difficult to erase. In addition, children may be unable to understand or consent to their digital exposure. Therefore, parents need to think carefully before openly sharing aspects of their children's lives to protect their children's right to privacy.

These findings could be the basis for policies that strengthen parental awareness of the long-term impact of digital exposure. Policies such as specific guidelines for *sharenting* can help parents realize that showing their children too often on social media can create a digital footprint that is difficult to erase, ignore children's right to privacy, and increase the risk of harm later in life. Structured policies can include recommendations on the frequency of uploads, prohibitions on sharing children's personal information, and emphasis on children's right to control their digital track record after a certain age.

Most respondents do not mind monetizing children's content as long as the child does not feel burdened. Parents who choose to monetize their children's content should ensure that the profits are used for the welfare of their children, for example, for education or future funds. Transparency in managing these profits will show that parents are responsible for monetization decisions and provide a positive example of the wise use of monetization proceeds. Policymakers can also formulate more specific regulations on managing kids' income to ensure that children are not exploited financially or psychologically and that children's rights to income management are recognized and respected.

With many respondents viewing content as positive entertainment, there is an opportunity for parents to continue to share happy family moments without putting aside their children's rights. For parents who want to stay engaged on social media, it is essential to set limits such as avoiding sharing children's personal information, limiting the amount of content shared, and monitoring audience interaction. This will help reduce the risk of overexposure and balance sharing family happiness and protecting children's privacy.

These findings indicate the need for stricter policies and guidelines for parents who are active on social media. Policymakers can formulate guidelines that describe the recommended boundaries in *sharenting* practices, such as guidance on upload frequency, protection of personal information, and children's right to control their digital track record. These kinds of guidelines can help reduce the risk of child exploitation in the digital realm.

With the increasing phenomenon of kidsfluencer, policymakers can consider regulations governing monetizing children's content to prevent financial exploitation. These regulations can include rules regarding the use of income for the benefit of children, protection of children's rights to monetization results, and protection against commercial exploitation that can burden children psychologically.

These findings underscore the importance of digital awareness campaigns involving governments and social media platforms, which will help educate parents about the risks and responsibilities of *sharenting* practices. Digital education that targets understanding the impact of digital exposure on children can be socialized through special programs, especially among parents with young children. Social media platforms can also provide child-friendly warnings or usage guidelines.

Public perception of *sharenting* cannot be separated from the influence of social and cultural biases. Most of the respondents in this study considered @abe_daily content as entertainment, which could be influenced by social norms that see the practice of sharing family life as something natural or positive. However, this view may differ in societies with stricter cultures regarding privacy or child protection.

The potential for bias in the view of child exploitation also needs to be considered. People more open to digital culture may be more likely to understand *sharenting* as part of the social sharing trend. In contrast, others who are more critical of digital technology may see it as exploitation. This bias points to the need for a more balanced

perspective in understanding the phenomenon of *sharenting*. It suggests that public responses are highly contextual and can change according to evolving social norms and consciousnesses.

The difference in views between content as entertainment and exploitation shows that parents and society must consider the balance between personal interests and children's rights. Parents should be aware that while shared content looks cheerful and funny, there are ethical limits to engaging children on social media. Therefore, developing more comprehensive policies, such as the *sharenting* guidelines and kidsfluencer regulations, will help create a digital environment that supports children's rights and privacy while allowing parents to share family moments without sacrificing children's well-being. In addition, parents and society need to focus on the entertainment aspect and consider the long-term impact on children's psychological development and privacy.

6. Conclusion

This research reveals that sharenting, especially on TikTok @abe_daily accounts, triggers various views from the public. Most respondents see the shared content as light and positive entertainment, especially because it shows moments of togetherness in the family and the child's cheerful behavior. However, there are significant concerns regarding children's privacy and potential exploitation in the future. A total of 53.9% of respondents agreed that sharenting risks triggering child exploitation, especially when content is produced for commercial or popular purposes. While monetizing children's content is considered acceptable by most respondents, they emphasize the importance of parental transparency in managing the profits earned and ensuring the child's well-being remains a priority. This research also shows a high awareness among respondents about the importance of maintaining children's privacy in an increasingly open digital world.

This research enriches scientific discussions about the sharenting phenomenon on social media, especially on the TikTok platform. This study not only adds to the understanding of how public views are shared but also touches on the ethical aspects of managing children's privacy and rights in the digital world. These findings are relevant in the context of social media development, making it easier for parents to monetize their children's lives. In addition, this research adds insight into the phenomenon of kidsfluencer, where children become content objects that have the potential to generate profits but can raise long-term privacy and well-being issues. This research contributes to developing social and communication sciences related to digital ethics, children's privacy, and how society responds to growing social media trends.

This research opens up opportunities for further exploration of legal and policy aspects related to the sharenting and protecting children's privacy on social media. Future studies may focus on cross-cultural comparisons regarding public perceptions of sharenting, given each country's different views and social norms. In addition, a more in-depth research is needed on the long-term impact of social media exposure on the psychological development and identity of children who become kidsfluencer. Further studies could also explore how children who have grown up respond to the digital footprints created by their parents during their childhood. Finally, the study suggests the development of stricter and more specific policies regarding children's rights in the digital world, which could be the focus of further research to provide concrete recommendations for policymakers and social media platforms.

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