Demographic, Social Network Structure- and Instagram-Use-Related Factors Predicting Parents' Sharenting Behaviors

Ebeveynlerin Sharenting Davranışlarını Yordayan Demografik, Sosyal Ağ Yapısı ve Instagram Kullanımı ile İlgili Faktörler

Hale Ögel Balaban[1]

Bahçeşehir University, Department of Psychology, İstanbul, Turkey

ABSTRACT

There has been limited number of studies on sharenting which has occured as a new concept related to parenting due to parent's extensive sharing of information about their children on social media. The aim of the present study was to examine mothers' and fathers' sharing of their children's photos on Instagram as a sharenting behavior with its predictors. Thus, the relationship of the frequency of sharing children's photos with the demographic (gender, age, education level and perceived financial status), social network structure-related (online: number of Instagram followers, ratio of followers liking and commenting on children's photos; offline: perceived social support), and Instagram-use-related (frequency of visiting account, duration of having an account and frequency of general sharing) factors was analyzed. Six hundred seventy three parents using Instagram completed the demographic information form, the use of social media form, and the perceived offline social support scale. Five hundred thirty seven (300 mothers) parents reported to have shared at least one photo of their children on Instagram. Mothers and fathers did not differ in the frequency of sharing photos and the analysis of the contents of shared photos demonstrated that special events, trips and holidays with children, and times with family and friends were the most frequently reported contents. Regression analysis showed that the frequency of sharing children's photos was predicted negatively by parents' age; and positively by the frequency of general sharing, the ratio of followers liking children' photos, and the perceived offline social support.

Keywords: sharenting, Instagram, parenting

ÖZ

Ebeveynlerin sosyal medyada çocukları hakkında paylaşım yapmaları sonucu ebeveynlikle ilgili yeni bir kavram olarak ortaya çıkan sharenting üzerine sınırlı sayıda araştırma bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, bir sharenting davranışı olarak anne ve babaların Instagram'da çocuklarının fotoğraflarını paylaşma davranışlarını ve bu davranışları yordayan faktörleri incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda, demografik (cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim düzeyi ve algılanan gelir seviyesi), sosyal ağ yapısı ile ilgili (çevrim içi: Instagram'daki takipçi sayısı, çocukların fotoğraflarını beğenen ve yorumlayan takipçilerin oranı; çevrim dışı: algılanan sosyal destek) ve genel Instagram kullanımı ile ilgili (Intagram hesabını ziyaret etme sıklığı, Instagram kullanıcısı olma süresi, Instagram'da paylaşımda bulunma sıklığı) faktörlerin ebeveynlerin çocuklarının fotoğraflarını paylaşma sıklığı ile ilişkisi araştırılmıştır. Altı yüz yetmiş üç Instagram kullanıcısı ebeveyn demografik bilgi formu, sosyal medya kullanım formu ve algılanan çevrim dışı sosyal destek ölçeğini çevrim içi olarak doldurmuştur. Beş yüz otuz yedi katılımcı (300 anne), çocuklarının en az bir fotoğrafını kendi Instagram hesaplarında paylaştıklarını belirtmiştir. Anne ve babaların çocuklarının fotoğraflarını paylaşma sıklıkları arasında bir fark gözlenmemiş ve paylaşılan fotoğrafların ağırlıklı olarak özel günler, seyahat ve tatiller ile aile ve arkadaşlarla geçirilen zamana dair olduğu bulunmuştur. Regresyon analizi sonucunda çocukların fotoğraflarının paylaşılma sıklığının ebeveyn yaşı tarafından negatif; ebeveynin Instagram'da paylaşım yapma sıklığı, çocukların fotoğraflarının takipçiler tarafından beğenilme oranı ve algılanan çevrim dışı sosyal destek tarafından pozitif olarak yordandığını görülmüştür.

Anahtar sözcükler: sharenting, Instagram, ebeveynlik

Introduction

Since the frequency of using Internet has increased, it has been changing various dimensions of individuals' lives. One of these dimensions is parenting. Many parents are sharing their lives with their children and their children's lives on social network sites (SNSs). Consequently, sharenting has occurred as a new concept related to parenting (Choi and Levallen 2017). Sharenting is defined as parents' sharing of information about their children on social media (Choi and Levallen 2017).

Due to the fact that sharenting has been a new concept, there is a limited number of studies on it (Günüç 2020). Some of these studies focused on the frequency of sharenting and demonstrated that sharing digital photos of children on social media is a frequent sharenting practice (Bartholomew et al. 2012, Morris 2014, Brosch 2016, Maraşlı et al. 2016, Davidson-Wall 2018, Kopecky et al. 2020). For example, 98% of new US mothers and 83% of new US fathers were found to have posted photos of their children on Facebook (Bartholomew et al. 2012). Davies (2015) showed that 74% of US parents of 0-4 years-old children knew other parents who engaged in over-sharenting. In Kopecky et al.'s (2020) study, 80% of parents in Czech Republic and 90% of parents in Spain were shown to have shared their children's photos. The examination of the contents of the photos indicated that photos depicting developmental milestones; daily life events like playing, sleeping, or eating; special events like birthday parties and Christmas; and social activities with children are frequently shared. Some parents were found to share embarrassing photos depicting their child nude, semi-nude, funny or grimy (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015, Brosch 2016, Maraşlı et al. 2016). For instance, Davies (2015) reported that 27% of parents knew another parent who shared children's embarrassing photos. Some studies examined the reasons for sharenting.

When parents engage in sharenting, they also share information about themselves, their parenthood, and their emotions and experiences as a parent (Blum-Ross and Livingstone 2017, Davidson-Wall 2018). In addition, through SNSs they create a positive image of themselves, their children, and families through which they manage their impressions on others selectively (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015, Davidson-Wall 2018). This positive image helps parents to feel themselves more confident and to decrease their anxieties (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015). Based on this, it can be claimed that the need of being realized, liked and approved as a parent might be among the reasons for sharenting (Blum-Ross and Livingstone 2017, Damkjaer 2018, Günüç 2020, Latipah et al. 2020).

It has been also suggested that parents are engaged in sharenting to fulfill their interpersonal needs. Feeling connected to others and supported by them is important for parents' psychological well-being (Belsky 1984, Meadows 2011). Studies examining parents' use of SNSs demonstrated that they get social support through SNSs (Bartholomew et al. 2012, Jang and Dworkin 2014). Through their sharenting practices parents think that they are connected with their family members, friends and others; and they feel supported by them through their likes and comments (Bartholomew et al. 2012, Morris 2014, Brosch 2016, Livingstone and Byrne 2018).

In addition to these studies summarized above, there is a need for quantitative research on the predictors of sharenting (Ranzini et al. 2020). Thus, the main aim of the present study is to examine the predictors of sharenting. The first group of the possible predictors included the demographic factors. Most of the studies on sharenting have been done with mothers. Some of the few studies involving also fathers demonstrated that mothers engaged in sharenting more than fathers whereas others did not show any difference (Bartholomew et al. 2012, Davis 2015). Therefore, the present study was conducted with both mothers and fathers, and compared the frequency of their sharenting behaviors. Research on parents' SNSs use has shown that the frequency of SNSs use and its patterns are related to age, education level and perceived financial status. Age and education level was found to be negatively related whereas perceived financial status was found to be related positively (Madden et al. 2012, McDaniel et al. 2012, Gibson and Hanson 2013, Haslam et al.. 2017, Ögel-Balaban and Altan 2020). Considering these relationships, the present study examined the relationship of the sharenting with age, education level and financial status.

In addition to the demographic factors, based on the idea that receiving social support is one of the reasons for sharenting the structure of parents' online and offline relationships were also included as predictors in the present study. Previous research has shown that the number of online friends and their reactions to the posts such as likes and comments are related to the frequency of sharenting (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015, Brosch 2016). In addition to them, as a feature of offline relationships the perceived offline social support was examined in the present study. The studies examining the relationship between offline social support and the use of online SNSs are based on two assumptions. The social enhancement hypothesis (Kraut ve ark. 2002, Valkenburg ve ark. 2005) stated that individuals with offline social support increase their social support further through their online relationships whereas the social compensation hypothesis (Valkenburg et al. 2005) argued that individuals who lack offline social support try to compensate for it on SNSs. In the present study, these two hypotheses were tested to understand the relationship between sharenting behaviors and offline social support.

Lastly, because of the fact that it was claimed that parents' use of SNSs influences their sharenting practices (Brosch 2016, Haslam et al. 2017, Ranzini et al. 2020), the frequency of parents' SNSs use, the frequency of sharing a post, and the length of having an account were included in the present study as Instagram use related factors.

Research on sharenting has been focused on Facebook. Although it is the most popular SNS and preferred by parents frequently, the patterns of and reasons for the use of different SNSs might be different (van Dijck 2013, Stanley 2015, Utz et al. 2015, Alhabash and Ma 2017). Thus, examining sharenting on other SNSs might provide more insight on this practice (Ranzini et al. 2020). In

the recent years, an increase in sharenting has been reported on another SNS, namely Instagram (Morris, 2014). Instagram has 1.221.000.000 monthly active users in 2021(Digital 2021). Seventy nine percent of its users are in the child-bearing age. In their search with #children on Instagram, Choi and Levallen came up with 13 million photos in 2016. In 2021, this number has increased to 36.1 million. Moreover, it was stated that it is preferred by parents to share their children's photos, because Instragram allows visual presentations (Abidin 2017, Le Moignan ve ark. 2017). Considering that Instagram has been used frequently and there is an increase in the shared photos, the present study explored parents' sharing of their children's photos on their own Instagram account as a sharenting practice and examined its demographic, social network related and Instagram use related predictors.

Method

Sample

Nine hundred forty-two Turkish parents (433 mothers and 509 fathers) were contacted for the present study through convenience sampling. Participants were recruited by the author through sharing the information about the study on SNSs. In addition, the undergraduate students in the Psychology departments at Işık University and Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul contacted the parents they knew. Participants were invited to study through a text including the aim of the study and the link to the online survey. Considering that the early adolescence period starts at the age of 10 (Belsky 2019), the only inclusion criterion was having at least one child who was 10 years old or younger. Sixty-two percent of the sample was from three big cities in Turkey, namely Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir; and the remaining part of the sample was from 58 different cities.

Six hundred seventy-three participants (71.40% of the sample) reported to have an Instagram account. Five hundred thirty-seven of these participants (79.79%; 300 mothers) reported to have shared at least one photo of their child on their Instagram account and were included in the study. Table 1 provides the demographic characteristics of these participants. They did not differ from the participants who reported not to have shared any photo of their children in terms of their gender, age, education level and perceived financial status ($\chi^2(1)$ = 3.37, p > .05; $t(663)$ = .38, p > .05; $t(663)$ = -.28, p > .05; $t(663)$ = -1.34, p > .05 respectively).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the participants who reported to have shared photos of their children on their Instagram account (N=533)

Variable	Mothers (N = 300)			Fathers (N = 237)		
	M	SD	Range	M	SD	Range
Mean age	34,22	5,37	20-47	37,24	6,45	20-55
Mean age of children	5,08	3,93	0-18	5,94	3,85	0-19
Duration of marriage (in years)	9,45	5,26	2-26	9,84	5,80	2-38
Variable	**Mode**	**Range**		**Mode**	**Range**	
Number of children	1	1-5		1	1-4	
Variable	n	%		n	%	
Education Level						
Primary-secondary	285	95,00		230	97,05	
High school	15	5,00		7	2,95	
University						
Postgraduate	24	8,00		21	8,86	
Employment	94	31,33		56	23,63	
Full-time	146	48,67		133	56,12	
Part-time	36	12,00		27	11,39	
Home office						
Not working	120	40,00		216	91,14	
Perceived Financial status	18	6,00		10	4,22	
Low	15	5,00		5	2,11	
Middle	147	49,00		6	2,53	
High						
Very High	8	2,67		10	4,22	
Orta	157	52,33		109	45,99	
İyi	123	41,00		106	44,73	
Çok iyi	12	4,00		12	5,06	

Instruments

Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form included 14 items on the gender, the age, the education level, and the perceived financial status of the participants, and the number, the gender and the age of the participants' children.

Use of Social Media Form

The use of social media form included items on the extent of the use of Instagram and sharing children's photos on Instagram as a sharenting practice. They covered general Instagram use in terms of the frequency of visiting Instagram account (1: never - 7: more than once in a day), the frequency of sharing posts on Instagram account (1: never - 7: more than once in a day), the length of having an Instagram account (1: 0-3 years, 4: more than 10 years). In terms of sharing children's photos on Instagram, the frequency of sharing (1: never - 7: more than once in a day) and the contents of the photos were analyzed. The contents of the shared photos were adapted from Brosch (2016) and Kumar and Schoenebeck (2015). In addition, to measure the structure of the participants' online social network, items on the number of followers and the ratio of the followers liking and commenting on the children's photos were included. A similar form was used by Ögel-Balaban and Altan (2020) to measure mothers' Facebook use and sharenting practices.

Perceived Social Support Scale

The perceived social support scale was used to assess the perceived offline social support received by the participants from their family, friends and spouses. It was previously used by Ögel-Balaban and Altan (2020). Six of the 12 items were on general social and emotional support from the family and the friends; three items on support received from the participants' spouse, parents and friends with respect to parenting; and three items on the strength of the relationship with the spouse, parents and friends after having children. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The sum of the scores on all items constructed the perceived offline social support score. Ögel-Balaban and Altan (2020) found its internal consistency as .85. In the present study, it was found to be .86.

Procedure

Ethical approval was received from F.M.V. Işık University's Ethical Board on 02.04.2018. The consent form followed by the demographic information form, the use of social media form, and the perceived social support scale were presented to the participants via SurveyMonkey, an online survey software, in 5 screens. The online presentation of the materials and responding to them were checked by the author and her research assistant before the data collection. During the completion of the items which took approximately 15 minutes, the answers to the items were not mandatory except those on the demographic information form; moving forward and backward between the screens were allowed; and responding to the survey more than

once from the same technological device was blocked. The participants were asked to answer the questions about their children through considering only their children who are 10 years old or younger. No incentive was provided to the participants.

Statistical analysis

Before the analyses, data were screened for the presence of outliers. Cases with standardized scores higher than 3.29 were identified as outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). Two cases on the duration of having an Instagram account, four cases on the number of followers, eight cases on the frequency of visiting Instagram account, four cases on the frequency of sharing children's photos, three cases on the ratio of followers commenting on children's photos, three cases on the offline perceived social support score were treated as outliers and removed from the data. Moreover, cases with the low perceived financial status and the very good perceived financial status were also excluded because of the low number of the cases in these categories. Following analyses were conducted with the data from the remaining four hundred seventy-three (266 mothers) participants. Because of the fact that the assumptions of the normality of the sampling distribution were met, no transformation was required (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014).

To analyze the differences between mothers and fathers in the contents of the shared photos, Chi-square analyses were done. To test whether age, gender, perceived financial status and education level had an effect on the frequency of sharing children's photos, a 2 (gender) x 2 (perceived financial status) x 4 (education level) ANCOVA with age as the covariate; gender, perceived financial status and education level as the between-subjects independent variables; and the frequency of sharing children's photos as the dependent variable was run. To analyze the predictors of the frequency of sharing children's photos on Instagram account, first correlation analyses were conducted between the frequency of sharing children's photos, general Instagram use, the structure of the online social network, and perceived offline social support. The predictive effect of the variables that were found to significantly correlate with the frequency of sharing children's photos was then analyzed via regression analysis

Results

Chi-square analyses on the contents of the shared photos demonstrated no gender difference. Special events (71.25%), trips and holidays with children (63.21%) and times with family, friends and relatives (48.20%) were the most frequently reported contents followed by children's social, sportive and creative activities (42.28%), their funny moments (37.00%), their achievements (28.96%) and their firsts (26.64%). Daily routines (16.28%) and unhappy moments (3.59%) were the least frequently reported photo contents.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the variables related to the use of Instagram and sharing children's photos.

ANCOVA analysis conducted to test whether age, gender, perceived financial status and education level had an effect on the frequency of sharing children's photos demonstrated the main effect of age, $F(1, 454) = 28.13$, $p = .00$, partial $\eta^2 = .06$, observed power = 1.00. The effects of gender and perceived financial status were not found to be significant, $F(1, 454) = 0.42$, $p > .05$ ve $F(1, 454) = 0.04$, $p > .05$ respectively. The effect of education level was significant, $F(1, 454) = 3.97$, $p = .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$, observed power = .83. In addition, the interaction between the education level and the perceived financial status was significant, $F(3, 454) = 2.76$, $p = .04$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, observed power = .67. To test the effect of the education level on each level of the perceived financial status, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. In the middle perceived financial status group, the effect of the education level was not significant, $F(3, 249) = 0.51$, $p > .05$. In the high perceived financial status group, its effect was significant, $F(3, 214) = 5.96$, $p = .001$, $r = .28$. Further Bonferroni analysis demonstrated that participants with high school education level ($M = 4.02$, $SD = .99$) shared their children's photos more frequently than those with primary ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .57$), university ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .87$) and higher than university education level ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .80$).

Because there was no effect of gender on the frequency of sharenting, further analyses on this dependent variable were conducted through combining two gender categories. Table 3 displays the results of the correlation analysis between the frequency of sharing children's photos, general Instagram use, the structure of the online social network, and perceived offline social support.

In the hierarchical regression analysis following the correlation analysis, age and education level were entered in the first step; the duration of having an Instagram account, the frequency of visiting Instagram, the frequency of sharing a post on Instagram, and the ratio of followers commenting on photos in the second step; and the perceived offline social support score in the third step. The variance inflation factor (VIF) value close to 1.00 and the tolerance statistics above 0.2 indicated no multicollinearity (Field, 2009). Table 4 shows the results of the regression analysis.

In the first step, age was found to have a negative predictive effect, $\beta = -.04$, $t = -5.56$, $p = .000$; and the model explained 6% of the variance, $F(2, 428) = 17.30$, $p < .001$. In the second step, in addition to the negative effect of age ($\beta = -.02$, $t = -3.71$, $p = .000$), the frequency of sharing on Instagram ($\beta = .66$, $t = 20.07$, $p = .000$) and the ratio of followers commenting on the shared photos ($\beta = .08$, $t = 2.15$, $p = .03$) were found to be significant positive predictors. They explained 57% of the variance. In the third step, besides the negative predictive effect of age ($\beta = -.02$, $t = -3.60$, $p = .000$) and the positive predictive effect of the frequency of sharing on Instagram ($\beta = .66$, $t = 20.07$, $p = .000$), and the ratio of followers commenting on the shared photos ($\beta = .08$, $t = 2.06$, $p = .04$); the perceived offline social support was found to have a positive predictive effect ($\beta = .01$, $t = 1.93$, $p = .054$). The model explained 57% of the variance, $F(8, 422) = 70.26$, $p < .001$.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for Instagram use, sharenting practices, the structure of the online social network on Instagram and the perceived social support score

Variable	Mother (n = 266)		Father (n = 207)		Total (N = 473)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Frequency of sharing photos (1-7)	3.66	.99	3.46	.87	3.57	.94
Frequency of visiting Instagram(1-7)	6.56	.78	6.28	.97	6.44	.88
Frequency of sharing(1-7)	4.07	1.01	3.96	.96	4.02	.99
Number of followers	272.18	290.17	370.27	523.64	315.22	411.72
Social support score	44.47	7.02	47.30	6.65	45.73	7.00
Variable	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Duration of account						
0-3 years	161	60.53	106	51.21	267	56.45
4-7 years	91	34.21	83	40.10	174	36.79
8-10 years	12	4.51	16	7.73	28	5.92
Ratio of followers liking photos						
Less than half	86	32.33	62	29.95	148	31.29
Half	93	34.96	77	37.20	170	35.94
More than half	77	28.95	63	30.43	140	29.60
All	10	3.76	---		15	3.17
Ratio of followers commenting photos						
Less than half	217	81.58	163	78.74	380	80.34
Half	32	12.03	32	15.46	64	13.53
More than half	17	6.39	11	5.31	28	5.92

Table 3: Correlations between the frequency of parents' sharing of their children's photos, general Instagram-use, the structure of the online social network and and the perceived offline social support score

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Frequency of sharing children's photos	1	.13**	.21***	.74***	.06	.09*	.17***	.14**
2. Duration of Instagram account		1	.18***	.16**	.17***	-.08	.02	.01
3. Frequency of visiting Instagram			1	.23***	.12*	.00	-.02	-.06
4. Frequency of sharing on Instagram				1	.18***	.03	.18***	.07
5. Number of followers					1	-.17***	-.03	.03
6. Ratio of followers liking photos						1	.40***	.14**
7. Ratio of followers commenting photos							1	.24***
8. Offline social support score								1

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p<.001

Table 4: Predictors of the frequency of parents's sharing of their children's photos on Instragram

	ΔR²	β
1.step	.08	
Age		-.26***
Education level		-.08
2.step	.49	
Age		-.13***
Education level		-.02
Duration of account		.04
Frequency of visiting		.02
Frequency of sharing		.69*
Ratio of followers liking		.08*
Ratio of followers commenting		.04
3.step	.00	
Age		-.12***
Education level		-.02
Duration of account		.04
Frequency of visiting		.02
Frequency of sharing		.69***
Ratio of followers liking		.07*
Ratio of followers commenting		.03
Social support		.06<*>

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p<.001 <*>p = .05

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine mothers' and fathers' sharing of their children's photos on their Instagram account and the predictors of this sharenting practice. Almost eighty percent of the parents who have an Instagram account were found to have shared at least one photo of their children on their own account. This finding indicated the high prevalence of sharenting on Instagram. Most of the previous studies on sharenting were carried out on Facebook and demonstrated that sharenting is widespread on this SNS (e.g. Barholomew et al. 2012,

Morris, 2014; Kumar and Schoenebeck, 2015). The present study extends the finding of these previous studies and showed that sharenting is not limited to Facebook and occurs also frequently on Instagram. In addition, it supports the idea that Instagram is a social media platform preferred by the parents to share their children's photos (Abidin 2017, Le Moignan et al. 2017).

There was no difference between mothers and fathers in the frequency of sharing their children's photos on Instagram. This finding is consistent with Bartholomew et al.'s (2012) finding. They showed that frequency of sharenting practices of new mothers and fathers in U.S. on Facebook is similar with each other. The present study extended their finding to a larger group consisting of parents who have children between 0 and 10 years of age, are living in a different culture and sharing on a different social media platform. Most of the studies on sharenting were conducted with only mothers. One reason is that mothers are more affected from having a child, looking more for social support, and spending more time with their children than fathers (Fox ve Hoy 2019, Günüç 2020). However, the findings of the present study suggested that fathers who shared their children's photos as frequent as mothers should be also included in the studies on sharenting.

When the contents of the shared photos were analyzed, it was found that special events, trips and holidays with the children, and times with family members and friends were shown to be the most reported contents of the shared photos whereas unhappy moments constituted the least reported content. This finding supported the idea that parents are trying to create a positive image for themselves and their children through sharenting (Pauwels 2008, Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015). The high rate of happy moments and the low rate of unhappy ones might be a reflection of parents' attempts to create a positive image of their parenthood and their relationship with their children, and to be liked and appreciated through this image (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015).

Previous studies on US and Polish parents' sharenting practices have demonstrated that children's daily activities, firsts and developmental milestones are among the most frequently reported contents of the shared photos (Kumar and Schoenebeck

2015, Brosch 2016). In the present study with parents in Turkey, these contents were not found to be as frequent as the moments shared with the family members. This difference between the findings might be attributed to the cultural differences. Considering that parents are trying to create a positive image and get support through sharenting, it is expected that the contents of their sharenting might be in line with the values and expectations of their culture. For the parents living in Turkish culture which includes collectivistic elements, moments with family and friends might be more important than the personal achievements of their children whereas for those living in cultures dominated by the individualistic elements personal activities and achievements might be more important (Hofstede 1980, Kağıtçıbaşı 1996, Kağıtçıbaşı and Ataca 2005). The differences in the contents of the shared photos might be related to this cultural difference. Future cross-cultural studies might provide more insight about these comparisons.

The examination of the predictors of the frequency of parents' sharing of their children's photos on Instagram demonstrated the negative predictive effect of age. This finding can be explained by the fact that younger parents are using SNSs more frequently (Madden et al. 2012, Haslam et al. 2017, Ögel-Balaban and Altan 2020). Because they are using SNSs more frequently, they might feel themselves more comfortable on them and have more positive attitude toward them (Gibson and Hanson 2013, Haslam et al. 2017) as a consequence of which they might engage in sharenting more frequently. This explanation is in line with another finding of the present study showing that the frequency of sharing on Instagram predicted positively the frequency of sharenting. Based on the positive relationship between the attitude toward SNSs and their use (Jang ve Dworkin 2014, Haslam ve ark. 2017), it can be claimed that the more frequent posts on Instagram is an indicator of a positive attitude toward it. As a result of this positive attitude parents might share their children's photos more frequently. Moreover, Holiday et al. (2022) suggested that parents do not consider any difference between sharing about themselves and sharing about their children, and they see both of them as a way to create their own online self-image. The positive relationship between the frequency of sharing on Instagram and the frequency of sharenting can be explained by this suggestion.

Regarding the structure of the online social networks, the number of the followers was not found to predict the sharenting frequency whereas the ratio of followers liking the photos was found to predict the sharenting frequency positively. Previously, Brosch (2016) showed the positive relationship between the number of photos shared by parents and the number of Facebook friends. The findings of the present study demonstrated that not the number of the friends or followers on SNS, but how they reacted to the shared photos is important for sharenting. Consistent with the finding of Kumar and Schoenebeck (2015), it suggested that the likes of the online social network provide reinforcements to the parents. They might be also perceived by parents as the approval of their parenthood (Kumar and Schoenebeck 2015). Furthermore, Davidson-Wall (2018) suggested that the online feedback might

have an effect on the frequency of sharing on online platforms, because it provides social support. Based on this idea, it can be claimed that the relationship between the ratio of followers liking the photos and the frequency of sharenting is resulted from the social support perceived by the parents. Related to this, in the present study the perceived offline social support was found to be a positive predictor of the sharenting frequency. This finding supports the social enhancement hypothesis. Parents who have offline social support might engage in sharenting practices to increase their support level. In addition, the positive relationship found between the perceived offline social support and the ratio of followers liking and commenting on the shared photos support this possibility.

The present study has several limitations. Although it was conducted with a large sample, the participants were middle- and high-socio-economic-class, computer literate parents living in Turkey. This structure of the sample limits the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the present study was a correlational study based on the self-report of the participants. In the future, studies that are conducted with samples which have more generalizable characteristics and recruited from parents of diverse socio-economic backgrounds; allowing cross-cultural comparisons; combining different methods such as content analysis and interviews; and based on a theoretical framework will provide more information about sharenting. Besides, there is a need for studies examining the relationship between sharenting and personal factors such as parents' personality characteristics (Günüç 2020), loneliness, stress levels, previous traumas that might influence their emotional needs; and variables related to the social media use such as reasons for use.

Conclusion

The present study examining the predictors of sharenting quantitatively contributed to the limited literature on this new concept related to parenting. It demonstrated that the frequency of mothers' and fathers' sharing of their children's photos on their own Instagram account is predicted by parents' age, the frequency of parents' sharing on Instagram, the ratio of followers liking the photos and their perceived offline social support. Although sharenting has been mostly studied with parents, its effect on the children should be also considered. Through sharing information about their children on SNSs, parents are creating a digital image for their children (Brosch 2016). How their children will perceive this image in the future, what type of consequences it has for their children and their perception of privacy are mostly ignored by parents (Brosch 2016). Moreover, parents might create a risk for their children's safety while sharing detailed information about them and make this information available to others' access without their children consent (Ammari et al. 2015, O'Neill 2015, Brosch 2016). Therefore, there is a need for preventive programs informing parents about sharenting (Fox and Hoy 2019, Kopecky et al. 2020). The findings of the present study can be useful in identifying the target group and creating the contents of these programs.

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