

Sharenting, Parenting, and Identifying: Can Privacy Prevail?

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Abstract

Technology and privacy are intertwined and often in conflict with each other. Nowhere is this more evident than in sharenting, the transmission of private details about children (e.g., pictures) via digital channels (e.g., social media) by an adult in charge of their well-being (i.e., parent or guardian). Sharenting can offer comfort to a parent, a sense of belonging to a community, and can give children a sense of pride from likes from family and friends. However, there are privacy and developmental risks for children from sharenting. We explore the relative roles of parent identity verification and the calculus of behavior in affecting sharenting decisions. Using data collected from 309 parents, we find that only perceived risk of sharenting affects the frequency of deleting posts while benefits and parental identity lead to a positive affect towards sharenting. Positive affect, however, is not linked to changes in frequency of deleting posts.

Keywords: sharenting, privacy, affect, calculus of behavior, parental identity

1. Introduction

Privacy serves as a gatekeeper to limit who has access to an individual's personal communications, belongings, and knowledge (Bélanger and Crossler 2011). These barriers provide individuals the power to limit with whom and how they interact with the world around them. In modern society, individual privacy protections enable autonomy by allowing individuals to establish boundaries about what they want to share and with whom (Roessler 2019). Presently, technology and privacy are both intertwined and in conflict with each other. Never have individuals had more technological capabilities to safeguard their privacy; however, the volume of data collection tools readily available to circumvent protections is equally unprecedented. Individuals' privacy is invaded through surveillance of their digital footprint of text messages, locations, social media behavior, and web browsing (Choi et al. 2015; Lin and Armstrong 2019). However, this study is not about big brother or the government invading our privacy. Nor is it about self-incrimination on social media. It is about sharenting and the decision-making process of

how parents and other adults choose to disclose information on social media about children that cross traditional privacy boundaries. Plunkett (2019) defines sharenting as the transmission of private details about a child via digital channels by an adult in charge of a child's well-being (i.e., parent or guardian).

The early days of parenthood are all-encompassing; sometimes, it takes a village. These handpicked moments captured in the photo (and video) and then posted on Instagram are often cheerful snapshots of an otherwise demanding day. The comforting connection to other adults in the outside world provided by posting that snapshot of the day can bring a sense of normalcy (Romero-Rodríguez et al. 2022; Verswijvel et al 2019). Further, almost every parent, especially new parents jump at the opportunity to brag about their child(ren). Nowhere is a parent prouder than when they show off their child(ren). In modern society, this often takes the form of an Instagram post which includes a picture or video capturing the likeness, activities, and behaviors of the unknowing child (Romero-Rodríguez et al. 2022). At this early age, it is the child's introduction to social media and the behavior of sharing personal moments. The child enjoys their parents' happiness as the post of them as the subject matter receives likes from family and friends but knows nothing of the potential risks (Brosch 2016; Verswijvel et al. 2019). However, sharenting Instagram posts also script a narrative for the child inhibiting their ability to develop their own sense of self.

The question then remains as to why parents share posts of their children given the possible risks to these children? We argue in this research that parental identity serves as an important factor in leading to a positive affect towards sharenting (which makes them post pictures of their children on Instagram, for example), but that a calculus of behavior (evaluating the benefits and risks of sharenting) may lead parents to delete these posts more frequently. Therefore, our work is guided by the following research question: What is the relative role of parent identity verification and privacy calculus evaluation in affecting sharenting decisions and behaviors?

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the theoretical background and the hypothesis development. Section 3 provides the research methodology. Section 4

reports the analysis and results. Section 5 includes the discussion, contributions, limitations, practical implications, and potential for future research. Section 6 provides a conclusion of the paper.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings

2.1. Sharenting

Sharenting is an online social media site (SNS) phenomenon where parents publicly share content (e.g., images, videos) about their children and minors in their care on social media platforms, often without the child's consent (Plunkett, 2019; Romero-Rodríguez et al. 2022). The sharenting term - coined from "share" and "parenting" originated in 2010. Sharenting highlights the dilemma between the parents' right to express pride in their children and the children's right to privacy (Jorge et al. 2022). A section of the public believes sharenting violates the children's privacy; others believe it is an expression of pride and honoring the child. Researchers note that sharenting can have negative consequences for the minor involved (Jorge et al. 2022; Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2022; Verswijvel et al. 2019). Some issues minors face include privacy loss, distress, embarrassment, self-esteem issues, commercialization of the child, and gender bias issues (Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2022).

Researchers have created a Sharenting Evaluation Scale (SES), which assesses the extent of sharenting in parents (Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2022). Sharenting reflects some factors in the parents engaged in the practice: self-control, internet-addiction, phone-addiction, need for approval, low digital literacy, psychological difficulties, and impression management. Verswijvel et al. (2019) examine adolescents' attitudes towards sharenting, specifically, their perceptions of why parents share children's information on SNSs. They examine four motives: parental advice motives, social motives, impression management motives, and informative-archiving motives. They find that adolescents disapprove of sharenting, and the results also indicate that adolescents believe parents share based on informative-archiving motives. That is, sharenting occurs because parents want to save pictures of their children.

In a survey of children (ages 4 – 15), Sarkadi et al. (2020) find that children desire parents to ask permission before sharenting. Jorge et al. (2022) examine professional sharenting and building of influencer profiles from sharenting (mumpreneurs). The paper qualitatively examines 11 Portuguese mothers and social media influencers. It discusses the

monetization of parenting as a means of reconciling work and family in Portugal, where families are arguably discouraged from having children. Sharenting offers the practitioner benefits such as the chance to build and verify parental identity, maintain social relationships, curate memories, exchange information, debate parenting experiences, and child advocacy. Conversely, sharenting also has risks, which include access to pedophiles, digital kidnapping (stealing and posting child's pictures as theirs), commercialization of child images, embarrassment, and bullying. Parents often deal with these risks by posting only milestone pictures, limiting audiences, disguising pictures, and blotting out faces (Jorge et al. 2022).

The benefits and risks of sharenting reveal a calculus that suggests that parents consider the benefits and risks involved in sharenting. The considerations of risks and benefits while sharing private information online is not new in the information systems domain. Privacy calculus is the framework that describes the general phenomena. Specific to sharenting is the notion that the information being shared is primarily others' information. In most cases, a minor whose consent was not sought. In the following section, we revisit the privacy calculus specific to sharenting.

2.2. Calculus of behavior

Laufer & Wolfe (1977) introduced the concept of calculus of behavior when they proposed their developmental theory of privacy. The calculus of behavior served as foundation for the later development of the privacy calculus (e.g., Dinev & Hart 2006; Jiang et al. 2013). The privacy calculus is a concept that suggests that consumers' decisions to disclose or withhold private information are based on a trade-off or cost-benefit analysis, where potentially beneficial and detrimental aspects of the decision are considered (Culnan and Armstrong 1999; Dinev and Hart 2006). In the information systems literature, the privacy calculus is used when describing information privacy decisions, where information privacy refers to a person's ability to control the information they share (Bélanger and Crossler 2011).

According to Culnan & Armstrong (1999), the privacy calculus model assesses beliefs of benefits and risks that act simultaneously to affect how individuals share private information about them. The stronger belief usually overrides the weaker one to determine the behavior of sharing potentially risky private information (Dinev & Hart, 2006). In our case, it is sharenting behavior.

2.2.1. Perceived benefit. There has been prior research in social media contexts that have provided evidence of a broad range of benefits to individuals associated with the use of social media sites. Randall et al. (2020) found that in the context of work using social media technologies can assist employees feel that they are a part of the social makeup of the organization. From a professional perspective, social media serves as a tool to grow your professional network. Social media is also a platform for building relationships with the ability to connect with someone at any time instantly. From a personal perspective, individuals can stay connected to friends and family. In addition, social media provides the opportunity for individuals to share their expertise that will garner attention and opportunities to connect with like-minded people. Given the benefits of sharenting, parents who share minors' pictures and videos can do so based on benefits such as the chance to build and verify parental identity, maintain social relationships, curate memories, exchange information, debate parenting experiences, and child advocacy. In the context of sharenting, the positive affect towards sharenting can reflect a parent's sense of satisfaction and fulfillment from posting picture of their child or children.

H1. Perceived benefit of sharenting has a positive relationship with positive affect.

When a parent focuses on the benefits from posting pictures of their child on social media, it is more likely that this parent will retain the pictures on such social media to get more likes and positive comments about their child. While some parents may occasionally remove posts for a variety of other reasons, those parents focusing on getting likes and seeing benefits from posts are less likely to go through and remove these posts on a regular basis. We, therefore, consider frequency of post deletion as an actual behavior of parents on social media (self-reported). In this research, we measure not only deletion behavior as yes and no, but also as a frequency of deletion (for those who do delete posts). We therefore expect that parents who perceive benefits from sharenting will be less likely to frequently delete posts.

H2. Perceived benefit of sharenting will have a negative relationship with frequency of post deletion.

2.2.2. Perceived risk. In calculus of behavior studies, there has been much research that shows that benefit is a strong antecedent of behaviors or intentions (e.g., Anderson and Agarwal, 2011; Bélanger and James, 2020; Dinev et al. 2006). In the calculus of behavior,

the counter side of perceived benefit is perceived risk. Perceived risk, however, has been operationalized in numerous ways that are not always consistent, in particular in privacy calculus studies. Sometimes the risk is measured as a privacy concern while other times the risk is specific to the domain of study.

In the context of sharenting, it might be surprising that sharenting occurs despite the potential risks for the minors whose pictures and videos are shared without their consent. The major risks cited in the sharenting literature include access to pedophiles, digital kidnapping (stealing and posting child's pictures as theirs), commercialization of child images, embarrassment, and bullying (Jorge et al. 2022). To deal with these risks, researchers have noted that parents limit sharenting by posting only milestone pictures, posting only to a few audiences, and disguising pictures (Jorge et al. 2022). In the same way that benefits they attain from posting can influence their sense of fulfillment and satisfaction, risks should reduce their general positive affect (i.e., fulfillment and satisfaction). We posit that higher perceptions of risks of sharenting will reduce the positive affect one feels towards sharenting.

H3: Perceived risk has a negative relationship with positive affect.

Overall, sharenting can result in unforeseen negative results for the minors. Yet, despite the risks to the child discussed in the literature, parents still engage in sharenting. However, it is possible that parents are made aware of such risks as they gain experience with sharenting or through conversations with others. It is also possible that parents aware of the risks post cautiously, quickly removing content after family members or friends have had a chance to view the posts. Hence, we posit that perceptions of sharenting risks will increase the frequency with which parents delete shared posts of their children

H4: Perceived risk has a positive relationship with frequency of post deletion.

2.2 Identity (parent identity)

Identity is a meaning that individuals attribute to themselves in a social role. Identity is a concept that defines an individual based on their social roles or positions (Burke and Reitzes 1991). This concept has its origins in structural symbolic interaction (Mead 1934), which suggests that society shapes self, which then shapes social behavior. In essence, identities are social artifacts that are constructed and verified through (a) naming or locating the self in social categories, (b) interacting with others, and (c)

engaging in self-presentation to negotiate and confirm the meanings and behavioral implications of the social artifact (Burke and Reitzes 1991). In addition, identities can be symbolic, reflexive, and motivate behaviors. An identity is symbolic in that it represents similar responses from different people. It can also be reflexive in that it can be used as a reference for assessing behaviors (Stryker and Burke 2000). Finally, it is a motivation for behaviors in that there is always a need to verify and confirm one's identity, which results in the corresponding behavior (Burke and Reitzes 1981, 1991; Cast 2003; Kleist 2007). Identity is a concept that connects social structure with individual behavior (Hogg et al. 1995).

Identity theory suggests that identity is enacted through self-verification to eliminate discrepancies between how society defines the meaning of the identity and the individual's internal held meaning (Tsushima & Burke 1999).

Identity is a self-referential description that answers the question "Who am I?" and "who we are is reflected in what we are doing and how others interpret who we are and what we are doing" (Hatch and Schultz 1997, p. 361). According to Thoits (2003), role identities define who we are ('*who am I?*') and how we are to behave in a normatively specified way ('*who am I in relation to a specific role?*'). The person's identity attached to a role (e.g., churchgoer, friend, spouse, parent) becomes a basis for the individual's self-concept (Maurer and London 2018). Each person has multiple identities, and each identity has roles attached to them that need to be fulfilled (Stryker and Burke 2000; Stryker and Serpe 1982). Individuals hold different identities for each network of relationships where they hold positions or play a role (Burke and Stets 2000). For example, an individual might consider themselves a parent, a researcher, a technologist, a republican, and a BMW enthusiast.

Identity theory has evolved over the years to include two other types of identities besides role identity: social identity and person identity. Social identity refers to meaning individuals ascribe to themselves based on their membership in a group or social category (Hogg et al. 1995; Hogg and Terry 2000). Examples of these categories are gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, organization, income level, etc. Social identity is often described in terms of organizational identity, wherein the individual in the organization ascribes their identity based on the organization. For example, Google, Amazon, Meta, and Microsoft employees are often called Googler, Amazonians, Metamates, and Softies, respectively. Social identity is the concept that supports social comparisons between ingroup favoring and out-group distinctiveness (Hogg and Terry 2000). Person identity is another evolution of the identity theory. Person

identity refers to meanings that present the self as an individual rather than tied to a role or a group (Stets and Cast 2007).

In this study, the focus is on role identity, and specifically, the parent identity. The parent role can include other associated roles like caregiver, provider, *protector*, rule enforcer, and teacher. Therefore, a parent identity can be an aggregate of self-meanings attached to the parent's different roles (Parkinson et al. 2016). Identity theory suggests that the self-agentic aspect of forming an identity allows individuals to modify an identity standard to achieve internalized goals even when opposing environmental conditions exist (Tsushima and Burke 1999). In other words, a parent can choose which aspect of the parent identity to ascribe to themselves.

There is a "digital" dilemma created with the digital environment. The dilemma creates a situation where a parent needs to balance out their parent identity by making public their child's life and at the same time being the one who is responsible for protecting the child's privacy (Blum-Ross and Livingstone 2017). Because sharenting likely reinforces a parent's identity as a proud parent (i.e., sharing pictures of their child), we argue that this can be related to a positive affect towards sharenting.

H5: Parent identity has a positive relationship with positive affect.

On the other hand, a parent's role is to protect the well-being of their child (e.g., Allen et al. 2017; Buehler 2020). At the same time, technology has created new challenges for parents in attempting to perform their developmental tasks of parenting ("meeting the physical, emotional, social, and safety needs of children"), such that many parents are ill-equipped to make privacy related decisions on technology platforms (Bélanger et al. 2022, p. 3). Without a clear understanding of the risks of sharenting by posting to social media, the effect of a stronger parental identity is thus likely to reduce the likelihood that parents proactively delete their posts on a regular basis. Therefore, we propose:

H6: Parent identity has a negative relationship with frequency of post deletion.

There is abundant research linking individual intentions to actual behaviors. In our research, however, we focused on positive affect towards sharenting. Because all individuals surveyed were already posting on Instagram and already parents, we did not measure intentions but instead whether posting (an act that has been performed) made them feel positive towards sharenting (e.g., sense of satisfaction,

fulfillment). We use positive affect as a realized intention and explore if this positive affect results in fewer deletions of posts. We argue that if parents are made to feel good after posting pictures of their children, they are less likely to remove such posts later on. In some ways, this is a similar argument to not creating cognitive dissonance by behaving in a way inconsistent with one's feelings.

H7: Positive affect has a negative relationship with delete frequency.

Figure 1 illustrates the seven hypotheses relating to the proposed model.

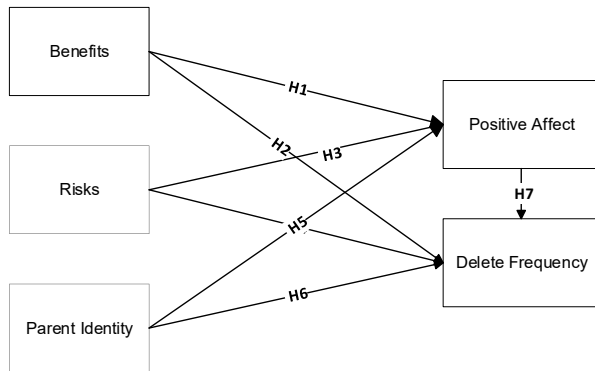


Figure 1. Research model

3. Method

This research was conducted via a survey of parents with at least one child, including young adult children. The research was from a positivist perspective, collecting primary cross-sectional data. Analyses were conducted via Structural Equation Modeling to test hypothesized relationships.

3.1. Survey development

Questions for the survey instrument were compiled from validated instruments in the literature, and wording was modified (Moore and Benbasat, 1991) to fit the sharenting context. Risks and deletion items were adapted from (Romero-Rodriguez et al., 2022), benefits items from (Jorge et al., 2021), parent identity items from (Farmer et al., 2003), and positive affect items from (Tsai & Bagozi, 2014). The set of items were then included in random order, except for demographics questions that were presented last to avoid fatigue effects. Most questions were adapted to 5-point Likert-type scales. Academics pre-tested the instrument, identifying ambiguous or poorly worded items. Minor modifications were made following the pre-test.

3.2. Sample

To obtain broad participation over a large geographic area, participants were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is considered a reliable source of data if reasonable data-quality controls are used (Buhrmester et al., 2011; Lowry et al., 2016; Steelman et al., 2014). Nevertheless, we validate collected data (Hunt and Scheetz 2019) and dropped participants that failed attention checks. Surveys that were partially completed and participants who failed the validations were omitted from the sample to ensure accuracy. Valid participants received \$2, but extra funds were used to ensure that participants were pre-qualified as parents of at least one child in the home. We collected 315 responses from Amazon MTurk (after blocking individuals who missed attention checks). After removing the responses with missing data, we retained 309 usable responses.

Table 1. Demographic information

Variable	Category	Count (%)
Education	Some high school	1(0.3%)
	High school	11(4%)
	Two-year /Associate	6 (2%)
	Bachelor's degree	180 (58%)
	Master's Degree	107 (35%)
	Doctorate	3 (1%)
Employment Status	Full time	261 (85%)
	Part time	4 (1%)
	Self-employed	32 (10%)
	Retired	3 (1%)
	Not working	6 (2%)
	Looking	3 (1%)
Race/ Ethnicity	African/African Am.	10 (3%)
	Asian	62 (20%)
	Latin /Hispanic	4 (1%)
	White /Caucasian	233 (75%)
Type of school for child(ren)	Public	97 (31%)
	Private	159 (52%)
	Religious	30 (10%)
	Home school	18 (6%)
	No longer in school	3 (1%)
	Other	2 (1%)
Annual Household Income	Under \$10,000	11 (4%)
	\$10,000 - \$29,999	12 (4%)
	\$30,000 - \$49,999	63 (20%)
	\$50,000 - \$69,999	115 (37%)
	\$70,000 - \$89,999	65 (21%)
	\$90,000 or more	43 (14%)
Age	Mean	33.1 yrs
	Range	20–69 yrs
	Standard Deviation	9.5

Some demographic information of respondents is shown in Table 1. Most parents had two children (57%), a bachelor's degree (58%), and were employed full time (85%). Surprisingly, there were more children in private school (52%) than other types of schools. The average age of parents was 33.1 years old.

4 Analysis and results

4.1 Measurement model

In the analysis of the measurement model, we used SPSS 27 to examine the reliability and validity of the constructs to ensure their soundness for further analysis. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliabilities for constructs with more than one item are between .78 and .81, which are greater than the threshold of 0.70 and regarded as reliable with the exception of positive affect with an alpha of 0.65. However, the construct has a strong composite reliability (0.85) and constructs with fewer than three items often tend to have low alphas (Nunnally, 1978). Deletion Frequency is not evaluated since it is measured with one item only (frequency of deleting posts – a behavior).

All items loaded on their respective factor with loadings ranging from 0.963 to 0.967, which are all greater than the cutoff of 0.707 (Chin, 1998), suggesting adequate convergent validity. Furthermore, the AVE values are from 0.57 to 0.73, exceeding 0.50, indicating sufficient convergent validity (Hair et al., 2014). A summary of the scale means, standard deviations and reliability statistics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability

	Mean	S.Dev	CR	AVE	Alpha
Ben	3.58	.756	0.87	0.57	.811
PaID	3.79	.663	0.87	0.58	.788
PoAff	3.77	.779	0.85	0.73	.649
Risk	3.53	.787	0.86	0.61	.777

Note: Ben: Perceived benefit, DelFeq: Delete frequency, PaID: Parent identity, PoAff: Positive affect, Risk: Perceived risk; CR: Composite reliability; AVE: Average variance extracted; Alpha: Cronbach's alpha

Table 3. Correlations and AVEs (on diagonal)

	1	2	3	4
1 Ben	0.75			
2 PaID	0.69	0.76		
3 PoAff	0.69	0.61	0.86	
4 Risk	0.35	0.19	0.20	0.77

Discriminant validity was evaluated by considering the variance shared by a construct with its indicators that should be greater than the variance shared with other constructs (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). All constructs have the square root of their average variance extracted (Fornell and Bookstein 1982) greater than their correlations with other constructs (Chin 1988), as shown in Table 3.

4.2 Structural Model

We used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed research model. SEM allows the testing of multiple variables simultaneously (Chin, 1998). Specifically, we used SmartPLS 3.0 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). Path significance was assessed using bootstrap statistics with 5000 samples. The model explains 7% and 50.8% of the variance in Delete Frequency and Positive Affect, respectively. Table 4 and Figure 2 show the results of the tests. Three of the hypotheses were supported: perceived benefit and parent identity are positively related to positive affect towards sharenting while perceived risk is positively related to frequency of post deletion on Instagram.

Table 4. Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Coeff.	T Stats	PVal
H1 Ben → PoAff	0.530	7.730	0.000
H2 Ben → DelFeq	-0.175	1.697	0.090
H3 Risk → PoAff	-0.035	0.686	0.492
H4 Risk → DelFeq	0.283	5.039	0.000
H5 PaID → PoAff	0.248	3.994	0.000
H6 PaID → DelFeq	0.010	0.109	0.913
H7 PoAff → DelFeq	0.067	0.710	0.478

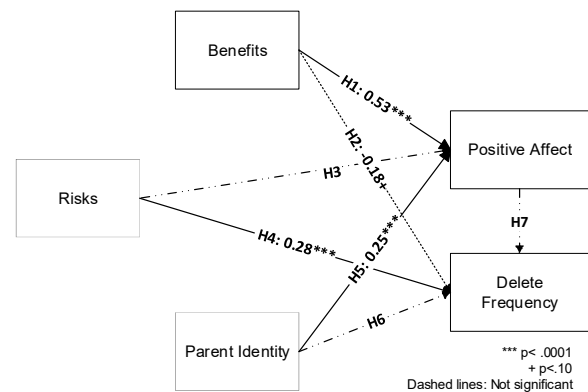


Figure 2. Research results

5. Discussion

This research explored the relative role of parental identity validation and the calculus of behavior in explaining positive affect towards sharenting and the frequency of deleting posts of children pictures as a behavior.

The results indicate that the positive side of the calculus, perceived benefit, positively influences the development of positive affect towards sharenting, as does a strong parental identity. Together, these results can explain why so many parents are willing to post pictures of their children on Instagram and other social media platforms. Perceived benefit has often been found to be a strong antecedent of intentions to use a technology. Our findings suggest that it also is a very strong antecedent of affect towards the use of that technology. Future research should consider whether affect or attitude towards a technology should be used as a mediator between the benefit construct and the ultimate behavior of interest. In terms of privacy calculus studies, this means that perceived benefit outweighs or overrides the effect of perceived risk of sharenting. As a result, this also means the sharenting may still prevail even in the midst of potential risks. Furthermore, the effect of parent identity on positive affect confirms and validates the identity literature on identity and emotion (Stets, 2005; 2007) and suggests that future research needs to consider the role of identity in technology usage since the literature suggests that the verification of an identity results in positive affect (e.g., satisfaction) (Stets, 2005).

We would have expected that parents with lower affect towards sharenting would have a higher frequency of deleting posts of their children on Instagram. We did not find support for this. We believe that several reasons can explain this. First, the respondents to the survey were all Instagram users. It is therefore likely that they all have positive affect towards the platform. While this may not translate into effect towards sharenting (which is the measure used in our study), it may be related. It is highly possible that individuals who are opposed to or afraid of sharenting would not even have an Instagram account. Future studies should therefore ensure to measure affect towards the platform as well as affect towards the particular use of technology that is of interest. Second, it is possible that individuals with high affect towards sharenting may not understand the risks. Therefore, and given the importance of risk in affecting the actual behavior of deleting pictures more frequently, future research should measure actual understanding of the risks associated with the use of technology that is being studied. We only captured perceived risk but not whether individuals really understood the risks associated with sharenting. We

also note that perceived benefits of sharenting marginally was related to deletion frequency. While we cannot consider this link significant (at 0.09), it does suggest that future research continue to compare risks and benefits specifically contextualized to the domain of interest. Another possible explanation for the lack of significance for the effect of affect on deletion frequency is that parents use stories more than posts on Instagram if they are worried about the risks to their children since stories or reels do not remain live. We need further testing of this possibility. In a post hoc analysis, we examined which features are used most for posting about babies (0-2 years old), children (3-12 years old), teens (13-17 years old) and young adults (18-21 years old). For babies and children, the most used features are stories (27.5% and 28.8%) and reels (28.5% and 27.2%) while for teens and young adults the most used features are reels (25.6% and 24.6%) or no posting (26.2% and 28.2%). Therefore, most parents refrain from using permanent posts.

Finally, it is important to note that those with higher perceptions of risks of sharenting tend to more frequently delete posts. This suggests that we need further education for parents on what those risks are and what they can do. Therefore, we encourage more research to explore whether privacy risk can prevail in reducing sharenting behaviors or increasing protective measures such as post deletion. This remains a far-reaching quest as perceptions of risk may continue to be overshadowed by other factors like parental identity and perceptions of benefits.

6. Conclusion

Sharenting is a popular behavior on social media, in particular on Instagram, which was the target of the current study. Why parents share posts of their children given that the literature highlights the risks posed to children from having their pictures online is at the core of our research. Our findings highlight that a better understanding of the risks would be more likely to lead to deletion of posts. While the most protective behavior would be to not post at all, the perceived benefits of posting including the identity verification as a parent make it such that posting does occur. Then, ensuring that parents regularly delete their posting is the next best approach. This will require better educating parents about the risks of sharenting.

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