

**Implications of Sharenting: Exploring Kids Run the Show by Delphine De Vigan (2023)
Through the Lens of Communication Privacy Management Theory**

Abdur Rahman

iabdur.038@gmail.com

Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Malakand -Government Degree College Batkhela,
Pakistan

Uzair Afghan

uzairafghan113@gmail.com

Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Malakand -Government Degree College Batkhela,
Pakistan

Muhammad Rohaid

muhammadrohaid68@gmail.com

Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Malakand -Government Degree College Batkhela,
Pakistan

Muhammad Anwar

manwarmkd@gmail.com

Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Malakand -Government Degree College Batkhela,
Pakistan

Zohra Bibi

izohra.038@gmail.com

Department of English Literature and Linguistics, University of Malakand -Government Degree College Batkhela,
Pakistan

Corresponding Author: * Abdur Rahman iabdur.038@gmail.com

Received: 22-11-2025	Revised: 12-12-2025	Accepted: 27-12-2025	Published: 01-01-2026
-----------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------	------------------------------

ABSTRACT

This study deals with the implication of sharenting, the behavior of parents sharing content related to their children on internet, in the novel Kids Run the Show (2023) by Delphine de Vigan. It involves the exploration of the harmful effects of excessive exposure of children on social media. The aim of this study is to find out how sharenting can lead to issues for children. In this study, qualitative research methodology is employed to explore how the character Kimmy is affected by constant exposure to social media by her mother. The finding of the study reveals that excessive online exposure of children by their parents without their informed consent leads to loss of privacy boundaries, loss of autonomy, emotional and psychological distress, identity struggle, social stigmatization, loss of trust parent-child relationship, and legal and ethical challenges as reflected in the novel through Kimmy's experience. These findings emphasize on a call for raising awareness about children's privacy and encourage parents, teachers, and authorities to reinforce children's rights and to consider children not content but individuals with their own well, feelings and emotions.

Keywords: sharenting, privacy, autonomy, digital identity, digital footprints, social media, Communication Privacy Management, privacy boundary, privacy violation, anxiety, stress

INTRODUCTION

The “term “sharenting,” is the combination of “sharing” and “parenting,” and describes the increasingly popular habit of parents to share photos, videos, or other information regarding their children on their social profiles through online platforms (Conti et al. 2024).” According to Tosuntaş & Griffiths (2024), “sharenting refers to the practice of parents publicly disclosing information about their children on the internet”. Collins Dictionary (2015) defines it as “the habitual use of social media to share news, images, and so forth of one’s children”. Lazard et al. (2019) assert that the use of the word “habitual” in dictionary definitions suggests a negative connotation; it indicates the tendency among parents to excessively share images and content related to their children. This practice also raises significant concerns related to children rights, ethics and privacy.

The advancement of “mobile technologies, internet connectivity, decreased internet costs, and people’s impulse to communicate more and more” have resulted in increased usage of social media in the last decade (Maryville University.,2020). Additionally, “the invention of smartphones and the launching of new mobile applications have significantly changed the social media experience, and parents have started to content related to their children's behavior and appearance online”. This practice has been named “sharenting” in English(Ocakoğlu et al., 2023).

In sharenting, parents frequently share pictures and videos of their children participating in various activities. Depending on the parents' social media, these visuals are shared across various platforms, including Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook (Rahayu, 2023). Although the word sharenting is gender neutral, it has been observed that mothers are generally more active in sharing content on social media, particularly images of their kids and family moments. As mothers are often the primary caregivers, they may be more willing to share information about their children on internet. This indicates that while both parents engage in sharing, mothers typically take the lead (Klucarova & Hansford., 2023).

Sharenting significantly affect privacy of a child as it normalizes the culture of surveillance and interferes with a child's privacy right and identity. A child's digital identity begins to take shape when parents share posts about their child on social media, and each additional post further develops this digital profile, much like adding colors to a blank canvas (Bitdefender, 2024). The information parents choose to disclose online can harm their children, whether this is done intentionally or not. Thus, the decision to share personal details about a child on the internet can be a source of potential harm(Steinberg., 2017).

Sharenting creates a digital footprint for children, often without their consent, which includes their personal details and images(Kumar et al., 2023). As a result, these footprints may expose children to numerous risks, such as identity theft, cyberbullying, and exploitation (Digital Wellness Lab, 2023). Parents often share identifiable information, such as names, locations and personal anecdotes, without fully understanding the long-term consequences for their children's privacy and future (Humanium, 2021). In this way, parents violate their children's privacy right and put them in danger.

When children’s information is shared online without their consent, it can have profound psychological impacts. The early stages of a child's life are crucial for the development of autonomy, self-identity, and self-esteem, and the practice of sharenting can significantly influence these aspects. As social media’s content is enduring in nature and easily accessible to the public so this can negatively affect a child’s autonomy in developing self-identity and lead to identity confusion. Further, excessive exposure through sharenting convinces the child that the choices are being made for them and that they don't have any control over them (Azmil et al., 2024).

Kumar et al. (2023) assert that the act of sharing a child's life on social media may result in peer comparison and external judgments, which can affect their self-worth. Agarwala (2024) argues sharing of inappropriate or embarrassing content by parents may result in bullying and lead to severe consequences. They have the feeling of being constantly observed, even in their private space. Such behavior can cause children significant emotional distress and damage parent-child relationships. This can also increase rates of anxiety and depression in teens.

The current study will analyze the issue of sharenting and its implications that children experience as portrayed in the novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan. This study bridges the literary analysis with the contemporary discourse related to sociological, psychological and ethical debates surrounding digital parenting and children's rights in the age of social media. This study utilizes the Sandra Petronio's Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory as a theoretical framework. The researcher will use qualitative research methodology to critically analyze text through the lens of textual analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sharenting

The word sharenting is used to describe the practice of parents sharing images or videos of their children on the internet. While sharing content about children allows parents to proudly show off their children to family and friends across the world, there are potential consequences associated with it. Posting anything about a child on the internet comes under the umbrella of sharenting, and when parents constantly do it, they open their child to the risk of cyberbullying, embarrassment and humiliation, identity theft (personal information is stolen and used for fraudulent activities), and feeling of lack of autonomy and privacy (NetSafe., 2024).

Mascheroni et al.,(2018) explain that the phenomenon of sharenting emerged with the widespread adoption of the internet and the advent of social media in 2000. In the analogue era, the production of photographs was limited because of cost and effort. However, today's advanced mobile phones with high-quality cameras lead to an increase in the frequency of taking pictures and sharing. As a result, parent easily document the lives of their children and share them through various networking sites (Mascheroni et al., 2018).

Putri et al. (2021) show that sharenting involves parents, grandparents and other relatives sharing content about children on the internet, but the mother is more active in it. Further, they explain that mothers shape the reality of sharenting through three recurring phases: (I) objectification, gathering information from others; (II) internalization, reflecting on appropriateness; and (III) externalization, sharing based on personal values and social norms. This process involves six steps: (1) documentation, (2) choosing, (3) editing, (4) giving captions, (5) uploading, and (6) getting responses (Putri et al., 2021).

Children's Privacy and Digital Footprints

Steinberg (2017) explains that sharenting violates children's right to privacy and creates their digital footprints. She asserts that Parent shares the personal information of their children without their consent. Parents act both as gatekeepers of their children's personal information and as narrators of children's personal stories; this dual role of the parent neglects children's right to privacy. Further, Steinberg highlights that parents' disclosure of children's personal details creates a digital footprint on children long before they are able to manage it. As internet content is enduring in nature son, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to control how it is reused or reshared by others(Steinberg, 2017).

S. Donovan's (2020) study explains that today's child is born and raised in the digital world, and parents post content about their children with little comprehension that they are crafting their children's digital footprints. In this way, they compromise their children's private identity as well as interfere with a child's right to self-actualization. This study also shows that parents ignore children's privacy for the sake of their own online connectivity. Donovan argues that today's children are the first to grow up in this digital era, and their online presence often begins with the uploading of parental scans (Donovan, 2020).

Meliani et al., (2023) explain that children have the power and motivation to control and defend their right to privacy. Yet their parent share content about them on social media without their consent. Also, children have little or no control over the information shared about them on their parent's social media. Further, their study shows that parents constantly share personal details of their children, whether consciously or unconsciously, and for a number of reasons. This sharing can have impacts on a child's development, identity and privacy, as well as their mental and emotional well-being. Because of the information shared about children on social media, their online profile is widely known, losing their privacy and becoming victims of online crime. (Meliani et al., 2023)

Psychological Impacts of Sharenting

Kumar et al., (2023) highlight that sharenting establishes a digital footprint for children, frequently without their consent, which includes their personal information and photographs. This practice can affect children's self-esteem and self-identity. Publicly sharing aspects of a child's life may result in comparison with peers and external judgments, which can affect their self-worth. Additionally, children may experience teasing or bullying as a consequence of what is shared online, and their online presence can significantly influence their social relationships (Kumar et al., 2023).

Hamilton (2023), in his study, points out that constant filming by a parent or caregiver might make children feel like they are always being observed, which can result in anxiety or stress. The regular filming routine required for influencer content creation can have psychological consequences for the children involved. The pressure to perform and entertain during daily life can create a sense of self-consciousness or feelings of being constantly on display. He explains that in the short term, this practice can result in negative psychological consequences, such as heightened anxiety, mistrust, and a sense of being under constant surveillance, even in private spaces. Additionally, it can also lead to mistrust between the child and their parents. Over time, this could contribute to more serious mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, or low self-esteem (Hamilton, 2023).

S. Agarwala (2024) shows that sharenting poses mental health risks for children by restricting their autonomy. It hinders the children's ability to manage their own reputation. Growing up in front of an online audience means children must face external judgement, which can negatively affect their self-confidence. Inappropriate or embarrassing content shared by parents may result in bullying and lead to severe consequences. Additionally, she explains that sharenting can cause the children to feel the constant need to perform. When parents frequently capture images or videos of their children for social media purposes, children internalize two key lessons: smile regardless of feelings and perceive social media as a measure of personal and social worth. Such behavior can cause children significant emotional distress and damage parent-child relationships. This can also tear down children's self-confidence and increase rates of anxiety and depression in teens (Agarwala, 2024).

Walrave et al. (2023) in his study explain that excessive sharing of children's information by parents on social media can result in significant emotional harm to their children. When parents regularly post content about their children, they deny their children's ability to establish their own identity. This behavior of parents

can lead to psychological distress and obstruct various facets of emotional growth, as a teenager's ability to form a distinct identity is crucial for developing a sense of autonomy. Moreover, they assert that by disclosing personal, embarrassing, or otherwise private details online, parents heighten the risk of their children being bullied. Excessive sharing of children's information and the privacy violations that come with it can cause serious damage to the mental health and development prospects of minors (Walrave et al., 2023).

Motivation for Sharenting

Motevalli et al. (2025) show that motivation for sharenting is influenced by both intrinsic and external extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors include emotional satisfaction and the desire to preserve memory, while extrinsic factors include the pursuit of social approval, financial benefits, and management of public image. Moreover, they highlight that Parents often engage in careful selection and curate content to project an idealized version of their parenting, sometimes placing these motivations above the privacy and autonomy of their children. Although they acknowledge the potential risk, parents often ignore the long-term consequences of sharenting, which can put at risk their children's digital identities and independence. Hence, sharenting reflects societal pressures to conform to idealized parenting norms while using digital platforms for social and economic benefits (Motevalli et al., 2025).

Baştemur and Kurşuncu (2022) explain that there are various reasons behind sharenting behavior. The first reason for sharenting is the mother's need for emotional and psychological support in raising babies. Second, mothers use social media to share pictures of their children to become known in their actual careers and to accept being a social media celebrity as a professional. Third, people on social media platforms usually want to appear perfect and exhibit what is good in their perception. Fourth, mother on social media often portray themselves on social media as the best and happiest; they describe their children as the most perfect, smarter and well-educated. Mothers often share photos of their children to convey the thoughts and feelings of parents to the online audience (BAŞTEMUR and KURŞUNCU, 2022).

Rahayu (2023) shows that the primary motive for sharenting is the desire to establish a social connection with others, particularly to stay in touch with their family members and relatives who reside at a distance. Additionally, parents want to look for validation from others for the way they raise their children. Furthermore, parents often use social media as a reference point to compare their parenting practices with others. Moreover, parents, especially mothers, seek a community as a place to share with people who have the same responsibilities, which are people who are involved in the process of nurturing their children. Another significant reason for engaging in sharenting is the pursuit of a supportive community which provides the safest environment for sharing. Lastly, parents do so to document and preserve precious memories with their children (Rahayu, 2023).

Research Gap

Sharenting is the practice of sharing children's information on social media by their parents. This behavior of parents ignores children's right to privacy, autonomy, and mental well-being. The existing studies have explored sharenting from legal, psychological and sociological perspectives, but there is a gap in exploring this issue in fiction. The present study aims to fill this gap by exploring the phenomenon of sharenting and its impact in *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan to show how the issue of sharenting is reflected in fiction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses qualitative research design which according to Creswell (2009) “is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individual or group ascribe to a social or human problem.” This approach is adopted to investigate the implication of sharenting on the child character Kimmy, as portrayed in the novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigen. This methodology allows us for in-depth analysis of characters, themes and plot, which can't be measured quantitatively.

Kids Run the Show (2023) by Delphine de Vigen served as a basis primary data collection for this research. The text of the novel is studied with intense care by researchers, and the main passages that are relevant to the research question are extracted. The secondary data is collected from diverse sources for the purpose of providing context to the research. These sources include scholarly articles, journals, books and authentic websites.

This study uses a close reading technique which is a “method of literary analysis which focuses on specific details of a passage or text to discern some deeper meaning present in it (Bucks Country Community College, 2019).” This help us to examine the key passages in the text of the novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023), where the practice of sharenting and its implications are illustrated. It helps to discover deeper meaning and emotional tone linked to the research study.

This study uses textual analysis which according Nicolas involves “breaking a text’s structure and content into smaller parts to seek in-depth understanding.” It is used to examine the novel’s portrayal of character, dialogues, and scenes to investigate the phenomenon of sharenting and its implications. Through detailed examination, it helps us to understand how the author develops the narrative structure to criticize social media culture

The data analysis procedure involved thorough examination of the novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) is conducted to explore the implications of sharenting on children in the digital age. Here, the main focus is on the author's presentation of the consequences of exposing a child's life on the internet without their consent and how it affects a child's emotional and social development. The data is collected according to the research question, and thematic analysis is employed for identifying and analyzing patterns of meaning in the dataset. Codes are used to capture the relevant data. Themes are analytically constructed from codes and the dataset that capture a broader pattern of meaning within the data. Finally, these themes are interpreted according to the research question to provide deeper insights into the implications of sharenting.

DATA ANALYSIS

Primary data is extracted from the novel *Kids Run The Show* and analyzed under different themes to show how the child character Kimmy is affected by sharenting. The analysis is undertaken through the lens of Communication Privacy Management theory.

Violation of Privacy Boundaries

In today's digital world dominated by social media, the distinction between public and private life has become blurred, especially for children raised in families where their lives are shared online. Lots of parents record their children's daily lives and achievements and use them as content for social media. Though it may initially appear harmless, this behavior of parents raises serious questions with regard to children's right to privacy. When minors' lives are used as content for social media, often without consent, they are

exposed to judgment, exploitation, and emotional harm. *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan highlights this issue where Kimmy Diour's privacy boundary is constantly violated by her mother.

The narrative depicts how Kimmy's personal life is invaded, recorded, and shared with millions of followers. From the moment she wakes up until she retires to sleep, her life is documented and displayed online. Her existence becomes a never-ending spectacle, directed and organized by her mother, Mélanie, who cares more for views, likes, and brand endorsement or promotions than Kimmy's emotional well-being. This total absence of privacy boundary literally transforms their home into a stage and Kimmy into a performer, one who never consented to play the role.

The privacy of Kimmy is at stake even when she is involved in an insignificant event. As Vigan describes: *"the slightest activity, the most insignificant event, the most ordinary errand became fodder for a story"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 152). This line makes it clear that Melani uses Kimmy's daily life as content for social media. Everything that happens in Kimmy's life is shared, whether they are too small or too specific. Everyday activities such as eating, visiting the park, playing, or taking a walk to the store are documented and uploaded online, not because it matters for Kimmy but because of the obsessive need to provide content for viewers constantly.

This loss of privacy boundary is further described in the narrative: *"In their beds, in their rooms, in the kitchen, the living room, on the way home from school, in front of the television, hunched over their homework or their tablets, in the street, at the supermarket, in the car, in the woods, at the swimming pool, Kim and Sam's mother filmed them"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 152). This line illustrates the extent to which Mélanie shared Kimmy's everyday life online. Kimmy is filmed when she wakes up, completes homework, plays, or does other activities. She is under the camera's eyes everywhere, even in her bedroom. The camera follows her everywhere; her daily life is constantly recorded and shared as content on social media. The camera becomes a never-blinking eye in Kimmy's life, leaving no room for her to feel safe or unobserved, as the writer describes: *"Not a single moment, not a single place (with the exception of the toilet and the shower) eluded the eye of the camera"* (Vigan 2023, p. 152).

The narrative describes that Mélanie, Kimmy's mother, completely disregards their children's comfort and suddenly begins to record them. The novel describes: *"She would appear without warning, cell phone in hand, and she would comment on the images"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 152). This reveals that Melani's recording of Kimmy's life is not only continuous but also unpredictable. Mélanie never asks for consent, nor does she care how Kimmy feels about being filmed at any moment. Kimmy has no power over what is being documented and shared, which makes her feel helpless and defenseless.

The boundary between public and private life is blurred to the extent that Melani uses Kimmy's school tasks and personal things as content. The novel describes that: *"school notebooks, report cards, drawings, unmade beds—everything was filmed"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 152). This shows that everything in Kimmy's personal life is shared with strangers on social media. Things like her homework, school achievements, painting, and unarranged bed are used as content to share. It isn't just an attack on her private life but also diminishes the significance of her successes, achievements, and expression. Kimmy is not treated as a living being, with her own feelings and concerns about her private life, but she is constantly being considered a content for an online audience.

Kids Run the Show (2023) demonstrates how the boundaries of private and public are blurred for children in this digital era. Through Kimmy's narrative, Vigan warns about the negative consequences of sharenting, the practice of sharing content on social media. Kimmy has no control over what is documented and shared

about her on social media. Her life is recorded, edited, and displayed without her consent. This breach of privacy sets the stage for the emotional injury that befalls the rest of the tale.

Loss of Autonomy

In the development of each and every child, the opportunity to make some choices regarding what kind of clothes to wear or which game to play, when to rest and how to express oneself is essential to build self-confidence and independence. Once this opportunity is removed or denied, the child then loses touch with their own preferences and needs as well as identity; children then start living for others' expectations. In this digital age, this loss of autonomy can take place silently and even unconsciously, with children now being put on display by their parents for online audience. Their own voices are replaced by already written text; their decisions are dictated by their followers, and their worth is judged entirely by views and likes.

The novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan describes the problem of loss of autonomy through the story of Kimmy, a little girl whose life is controlled by her mother. From simple videos at first, it develops into a structured program where Kimmy must wear what she is told, pose as directed, speak the lines she has given and even feel in prescribed ways. Although it is presented as a family project, the reality is much more sinister. Kimmy is denied the right to make her own decisions, and her personal boundaries are constantly violated, all in the name of content for social media.

From the very beginning, Kimmy shows signs of hesitation. In an early scene, Vigan describes Kimmy's situation: "*The cellphone camera turns to the little girl, who takes a few seconds before agreeing, without much conviction*" (Vigan, 2023, p. 6). No matter how small this moment is, it still directly reveals something important. Her lack of enthusiasm, hesitation and meek compliance show that she finds it difficult to say no, but the camera and the person behind it expect her to say yes.

Even small, personal decisions such as choosing what kind of shoes to wear are taken out of her hands and entrusted to strangers over the Internet: "*Let me show you, closer up: one pair of gold Nike Airs from the new collection, one pair of Adidas three stripes, and one unbranded pair with a red upper. We're going to have to make our minds up, and as you know, Kimmy hates having to choose. So, sweet peas, we're really counting on you!*" (Vigan, 2023, 6). Here, Kimmy is given no chance to make a personal decision, and her autonomy is simply denied in preference to audience expectations. She is like a moving doll in the background, clothed for a show with the voice of others taking over any independence she might have had.

In an interview with a police officer, her mother claims openly that she is in charge of everything. She asserts that: "*I do it, because I'm the one who's in charge of everything". It's a lot of work and I'm the one who takes care of it all*" (Vigan, 2023, p 51). This makes it clear that Kimmy has no say in how things are carried out. Her mother, Maleni, turned her into an object that is used as content for social media. Maleni determines what will be filmed, when it will be filmed and how it will be presented. Kimmy simply follows along.

The recording schedule gets tighter and tighter. Even before she is filmed, Kimmy is told what to put on, how to appear and what role to play. As Sam, Kimmy brother, says to a police officer: "*Mom always tells us what we're supposed to wear for the shoot. She does our hair; she gets us ready and everything*" (Vigan, 2023, p. 58). This shows that Kimmy's everyday life is no longer in her control. Wherever she goes, she is filmed, her appearance predetermined for her, and her body becomes no more than a brand that publicizes audience interests. She does not express herself naturally but instead keeps up an expression designed and completed according to others' wishes. Kimmy's expressions are not real but are influenced by external manipulation.

Vigan describes how deep-seated this control is in Kimmy's mind. The novel shows that in the beginning: *"Kimmy started over several times before she was able to train her gaze in the right direction. When her eyes wandered, Mélanie waved her hand to draw her attention, then pointed to the camera lens. Before long, after a few hesitant starts, Kimmy had learned how to follow her mother's directions. In a few days it became second nature, and she no longer thought about it"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 57). This shows that Kimmy is trained by her mother to act in front of the camera. It has become routine. Gradually, she ceases to think about her actions. She performs at the instruction of her mother as if these were automatic reactions. In this case, her personal desires and personalized responses are transformed into routine, obedience and performance. This shows the consequences when a child's autonomy is constantly taken away; the child stops expressing their true feeling. Instead, they present an image that somebody else expects.

In an interview with Clara, Sam, Kimmy's brother, describes how Kimmy is emotionally manipulated to act according to her mother directions. Sam says: *"so Mom tells Kimmy to go and get changed as fast as she can, otherwise she'll never be on our videos again, and that'll be just too bad for her, no one will love her anymore "* (Vigan, 2023, p. 58). This is a form of emotional blackmailing. Kimmy has been led to believe by her mother that how much she is valued and loved depends directly upon her performance. The thrust of what has been said is clear: if you don't do what I say, everything will go to waste. This does not just exercise control; however, it is also a form of psychological bullying. It teaches Kimmy that her worth lies not in who she is but in how well she manages to entertain others.

The novel clearly shows how a child's autonomy is taken away bit by bit. Kimmy is no longer treated as someone able to think, make choices, and have needs. She is treated as content, shot, styled, and directed to gain attention. Her body, her free time, and even her feelings are no longer her own. Through Kimmy's experience, we can see how sharenting affects child autonomy, where parents hold an iron grip on a child's life, especially when it is displayed for public entertainment. There is no space left for the child to grow, think, or make decisions for themselves. Moreover, when the child starts pushing back, they are often not met with words but instead with guilt and fear.

Emotional and Psychological Distress

All children need a space not just physically but also emotionally; a place to be quiet, to make errors, to rest, and to grow without being pushed. But in this digital world where every private moment is uploaded to strangers on social media, all such space disappears. So, when the children are directed to perform in front of the camera, they get tired, and both their parents and the audience are constantly looking at them, it results in deep psychological stress. The stress builds up silently, often so that adults find it hard to notice; by the time it is evident in the child's behavior, body, and mind, things have gone too far.

Kids Run the Show (2023) by Delphine de Vigna presents this heartbreaking reality through the character Kimmy. As her mother's online popularity grows, Kimmy becomes increasingly isolated and emotionally drained. Her distress is not always loud, but it is visible in her silence, her stance, her performance, and eventually in her body as well. This shows that what Kimmy's mother does to her is far worse than any other kind of despair and distress.

In one of the early scenes where, Kimmy is in the back seat of the car while her mother starts filming her. *"Kimmy is sucking her thumb and rubbing her nose with a stuffed camel toy in her hand. The little girl ignores the cell phone trained on her and doesn't smile"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 114). This moment can appear small, yet it speaks volumes. Kimmy shows no interest in making videos. She hugs a comfort object, sucks her thumb, and rejects the camera. Here, Kimmy is not acting or performing. She is just trying to stay comfortable in a world that won't let her be herself.

Over time, symptoms of emotional fatigue start to appear in Kimmy. Vigan describes that with the passage of time: *"Kimmy's enthusiasm seems to have been fading. In spite of the stunning editing and increasingly efficient effects, the little girl's reticence, or her fatigue—which she is less adept than her brother at hiding—are occasionally visible"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 114). Further, the narrative shows that in some recently recorded videos, *"her gaze slips away sometimes, as if none of this has anything to do with her. She loses interest, no longer listens, doesn't look at the camera anymore, and generally has to be called back to order by her mother"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 114). This shows that Kimmy is beginning to escape not only from the lens but also from the world around her. She no longer responds, loses her interest, and turns away her face. These are typical symptoms of stress in children. Her weary looks, her tired mind, and her lack of enthusiasm show that she no longer feels emotionally safe in a space where she compiles to live.

The most heartbreaking fact is that Kimmy's suffering does not remain invisible. It begins to be seen on her body. As an adult, in conversation with Clara, she says: When I was eight or nine, I began to experience a *"nervous tic"...then "In a few weeks the rash had spread all over. On my hands, on my neck, my stomach, like crocodile skin, really scary"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 204). These are physical signs of mental distress. Kimmy's nervous system is overburdened. Her body is speaking of the pain that she cannot describe in words. The rash, the tic, and the skin problems are not isolated instances. These are the visible symptoms of anxiety and stress of being constantly observed, regulated, and muted.

The emotional and psychological cost to Kimmy extends far beyond then simply being in front of a camera or being filmed. It is about being denied of the ability to feel, to rest, to be cared for, to make choices for oneself, and to be taken seriously. Even when she is exhausted, she is expected to perform. When she feels like crying, she is forced to smile. Even when she wants to say no, she is expected to follow directions. Melani ignores the feelings of her daughter and focuses more on content for social media.

Identity Struggle

When a parent shares their children's photos and videos on the internet, their new kind of identity begins to take shape; that is called digital identity. Children have no control over how they are presented to the outside world. As they grow up, they face identity struggles because there is a contrast between children's real identity and how they are perceived by the outside world. This is exactly the same struggle that Kimmy faces in *Kids Run the Show* (2023). Her existence, her identity, and even her feelings are beyond her control. They are curated by Mélanie for an online audience, and she feels uncomfortable and bewildered because of the pressure to adjust to public image.

The novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) demonstrates that Kimmy is confined to play a role that doesn't genuinely belong to her. Her identity is shaped by her mother's desire for content, followers' expectations, and the perception others hold of her. She never gets the opportunity to discover her true self away from the watchful eyes of the camera. Her personal life has been exposed, revised, and reshaped to match the persona shown to viewers rather than reflecting her authentic feelings and experiences. As a result, Kimmy struggles with deep uncertainty and frustration, feeling like an actress playing a role rather than living her genuine self.

Kimmy struggle with identity is quite clear in the novel. In a conversation with Clara, Kimmy reveals how others perceive her, and it is a terrible realization. Kimmy says that: *"half the people I meet think they know who I am better than I do. And if, by sheer chance, they've somehow never heard of me before, all it takes is four clicks to find me"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 202). These lines clearly show Kimmy's struggle with her identity. People do not consider her as a human being but just as a character in the video. She is judged by what others have seen of herself on the internet, not truly who she really is. There is a disconnection between the

real Kimmy and the public image which has been created by her mother. For outside people, Kimmy's online identity developed by her mother is more important than her real life. She is not able to control how she is presented on social media by her mother, and this leaves her feeling imprisoned.

As Kimmy matures, her resentment festers, and she seeks to shatter the persona imposed upon her. She disguises her looks in the hope of gaining a new one: she says: *"I dyed my hair jet black and decided to call myself Karine. I informed the headmaster and the teachers and said it was a matter of life and death"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 204). The changing of name and appearance are signs of Kimmy's desperation to shed the identity imposed on her. She thinks that her true self is now gone, and her public persona has consumed it. In a futile attempt to establish some sort of control over her identity, she even goes so far as lying to people around her about who she is. This is a very clear indication of an identity struggle; she no longer wants to be identified as the person the world sees her on social media.

The refusal of her public image is further illustrated in the scene where Kimmy is confronted by her classmates. She says: *"when people asked me if I was Kimmy Diore, I said she was my cousin, a real stupid bitch. My classmates understood soon enough not to press the issue"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 204). Here, too, Kimmy is attempting to bend her online identity, rejecting the persona everyone wants her to become. She doesn't want to be Kimmy Diore, the child star, any more, and her refusal comes out in anger and defiance. Her decision to lie about her identity is an illustration of her identity struggle. She doesn't want to be that figure of detest that other people have turned her into, and yet she can't help herself.

Kimmy can't escape public gazes in her everyday life. Wherever she goes, she can't escape from the persona created by her mother. The narrative describes that: *"She will never be free; she will never be invisible; she knows that. In spite of the hood, the cap, and the drab grey colours, there will always be someone who'll stare insistently or burst out laughing there in the street. She will never be cleansed of all those gazes that have tarnished her, worn her down, and spoiled her with the help of the screen"* (Vigan, 2023, p. 239). In this passage, the narrator perfectly describes the inner battle Kimmy is waging. No matter what she does, whether alter her appearance, enshroud her face with a hood or just attempt to blend in, she's unable to fully escape from her public identity. The constant scrutiny, the relentless expectations, and the judgment of strangers on the internet have tarnished her. 'Gazes' of others have become part of her reality, from which she can't escape. It is as if she was forever lost behind this public image, she found herself forced to construct.

Kids Run the Show (2023) reveals the implications of using children as content for social media. Kimmy can't find her true self because she never got the chance to have herself in the first place, because of living in a world where nothing is private, nothing is a secret, and the expectations of adults to perform in a particular way keep her away from having a genuine self at all. This loss of self is not unimportant. It is the very effect of what sharenting does, and demonstrates ignorance of parents who share content related to their children without considering the long-term consequences of child identity.

Social Stigmatization

Childhood is a moment to explore, learn, and make friends in a space that feels safe. But when a child's private life is exposed in front of the world without giving their consent, it can influence their future experiences with other people. They're judged and teased based on how others see them online. When a child is transformed into a public persona before they even comprehend what that means, school, playground and social life are not welcoming spaces for them: they are simply sites of humiliation, isolation and shame.

In *Kids Run the Show* (2023), this harsh truth is revealed when Kimmy faces the implications of being famous on the internet. She's no longer just a schoolgirl; she's "*Kimmy from Happy Recess*", a child actor whose every look, word or mistake is accessible to strangers on the internet. Her classmates also watch her videos, and many had already formed opinions about her before they ever spoke a word to her in real life. Which brings teasing, judgment and emotional burden, piles of the stuff no child should have to bear and which they should especially never have to feel when the spotlight was something they never asked for.

The playground is typically a place to play and form friendships; it becomes a place for Kimmy to feel naked. Madame Chevalier, Kimmy's teacher, told Melani that "*on the playground, whenever a kid says 'Happy Recess' to her, Kimmy would clap her hands over her ears*" (Vigan, 2023, p. 165). This clearly shows emotional rejection. Kimmy puts her hand over her ears to prevent herself from being reminded of the existence of the show. She doesn't just like to talk about it; she can't bear to hear about it. These are not moments of which she's proud; they are moments that wounded her. The way she responds shows her emotional fatigue and a desperate wish to break from the public persona others are repeatedly bringing up.

Vigan shows that because of her online presence; Kimmy is subjected to direct bullying by fellow children. As the narrator describes, some of the children in school call her "*Dirty Baby or Camel Baby*" (Vigan, 2023, 165). These are just mean names that were taken from her YouTube videos to use against her. The moments that were captured to be funny or cute online have now become fodder for mockery. What's worse, the bullying is a result of her from her real, documented past. Her own life has been used against her by children.

Kids Run the Show (2023) reveals that there are real-world implications of turning child life into content for entertainment. These implications do not only come online but come to school, to the playground, in whispers, in giggling, and in calling the wrong names. Kimmy becomes the alien in her own world, not by her own hand but by the hands of others.

Even worse, Kimmy never wanted this; she never sought to become a public figure. But she has to face the judgment, the teasing, the emotional aftermath of something that she had no control over. Kimmy's story, in *Kids Run the Show* (2023), reveals how public exposure can hurt children in silence. It hurts their relationships, their self-confidence and their self-respect. When children are turned into content, their actual social life begins to suffer. And when that content results in judgment or laughter, they pay the price alone by humiliation and emotional torture.

Loss of Trust in Parent-Child Relationship

Trust is the core element of any parent-child relationship; the sense that a parent will keep them safe, respect their privacy, and put their emotional needs above their own creates a strong bond between children and parents based on trust. Children depend on parents for protection from shame, fear and exploitation. When that trust is betrayed repeatedly, it creates wounds that are hard to repair. In *Kids Run the Show* (2023), Delphine de Vigan examines this issue through Kimmy's understanding that her mom was never really protecting her; she was just only using her as content.

The language that Kimmy uses is full of pain, anger, and betrayal as a young adult. Reflecting on her past, she explains how helpless she felt as a child when her mother exposed her personal life to the world. She says to Clara: "*What was I supposed to do? Say to my mother, 'get out of my room with your fucking telephone and your fucking sweeties—half of them are probably masturbating while they look at these lovely images you share with the whole world?' No, obviously, children don't talk like that. They don't think that way. But now I'm eighteen years old and I can speak like that*" (Vigan, 2023, p. 202). These lines show the

depths to which Kimmy was frustrated. She was a child and didn't have the language or power to protest against what was happening. She could not articulate, but she felt the harm all the same. Now, as an adult, she can express all the anger, betrayal and confusion that had been buried within.

The saddest thing of all is that she never felt safe anywhere; she says: *The worst is that we weren't safe anywhere. There was nowhere we could go and be beyond her reach.*” (Vigan, 2023, p. 203). This line shows the boundarylessness of Kimmy's world. Her room wasn't a refuge. Her home wasn't a shelter. The eyes of camera and her mother were always there, watching and ready to record. When all the privacy is invaded, and the one who is doing it is the one who is supposed to protect you, it becomes difficult to trust.

The loss of trust is clearly shown in the final section of the novel, as the narrative describes: *“she understood one thing: she can live without her parents”* (Vigan, 2023, p. 240). This is not an assertion of independence. It is a declaration of submission. For Kimmy, giving up on her parents is not an exercise of strength but of survival. This is the kind of thing that happens when the people who are supposed to protect you should do the most damage. When you don't even trust your parent to keep your privacy, your dignity prefers your emotional well-being, then what remains to maintain that relationship?

In *Kids Run the Show* (2023), Kimmy and her parent's relationship is not just strained; it has been irreparably damaged through constant privacy boundary violations, emotional manipulation, and public exposure. As a result, the bond made by trust lead to fear, shame and anger. The novel clearly demonstrates that when a parent prefers their own fame and sense of self-importance over the child's privacy, the bond between them winds up with the loss of the child's love and trust.

Ethical and Legal Concerns

When parents regularly share photos and videos of their children online, particularly in large quantities, without their permission, the question is no longer of one personal preference but of ethics and of law. Now, what seemed like innocent storytelling or social-media bonding is increasingly being called into question by the very children who were featured in this content. However, as these kids mature, they become aware of how much of their lives have been depicted on the internet and take action to claim back their privacy rights. *Kids Run the Show* (2023) tackles head-on, demonstrating the change from passively accepting to legally resisting it.

As Kimmy grows up, she is no longer silent. The narrative shows that she makes a dramatic step to confront the damage done to her by her mother. Melani was listening on the radio that: *“Kimmy Diore, the former YouTube star, has voiced her intention to take legal action against her parents for unlawful use of her personal image, breach of privacy and poor choices with regard to her upbringing”* (Vigan, 2023, p. 231). This is not just her emotional outburst; it is a legal proclamation. Kimmy is among an increasing number of kids who have decided to push back against the long-term implications of turning their lives into content for social media. She claims her right to determine what is shared about her on the internet and holds her parents responsible for having violated that right in her childhood.

Through Kimmy's story, Delphine de Vigan shed light on one of the most urgent issues of the present day: the rights of the child in a world dominated by digital media. The novel reveals the long-term consequences of turning a child into online content without their consent. The narrative is a reminder that behind every post, video, and photo, there is a real individual, a real human being, one who is going to grow up, will look back and potentially ask: Who the hell gave you the right to share my everyday life as a content on social media?

CONCLUSION

The overall research study is concerned with the impacts of sharenting on children. It focuses on how excessive exposure of children to social media by their parents, without their consent, negatively affects them. Delphine de Vigan's novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) is used as a context for exploring this issue. This research study is guided by the research question: How does sharenting lead to issues for children in the novel *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan? Qualitative research methodology is used for identifying the implication of sharenting in Kimmy's life. The Communication Privacy Management theory is used as a theoretical framework to analyze how Kimmy is affected by sharenting.

The finding of the study shows that the practice of sharenting, as portrayed in the novel, leads to multiple issues for Kimmy. These issues include loss of privacy boundaries, loss of autonomy, emotional distress, social stigmatization, identity struggle, and legal repercussions. Kimmy's character represents the long-term impacts of children's exposure to social media. However, the fictional character of Kimmy shows the suffering and struggle of children in the digital age.

This study focuses on the implications of sharenting on children, specifically on Kimmy, in *Kids Run the Show* (2023) by Delphine de Vigan. Other researchers can explore the implication of sharenting character of Sam, they can also explore how fictional narratives, such as *Kids Run the Show* (2023), raise awareness about children's rights and privacy in the digital age and the pursuit of fame and its consequences in the digital age in *Kids Run the Show* (2023). The main purpose of this research is to bring awareness among parents and high authorities to consider the issue of sharenting with full attention. Moreover, this study will help to focus on children's rights and ongoing discourse on digital parental ethics.

REFERENCES

- Agarwala, S. (2024). When sharing isn't caring: Children's reputations and sharenting. *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 51, 1–49. Retrieved from <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4773923>
- Azmil, A. A., Borhan, L., Periasamy, V., & Abu Hassan, S. (2024). To post or not to post: Psychological and ethical concerns. *ANP Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 5(1), 18–24. <https://doi.org/10.53797/anp.jssh.v5i1.3.2024>
- Baştemur, Ş., & Kurşuncu, M. A. (2022). Sharenting: Why parents share their children's photos on social media? *ODÜ Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi* (ODÜSOBİAD), 12(3), 2911–2928. <https://doi.org/10.48146/odusobiad.1137855>
- Bitdefender. (2024). The impact of sharenting: How the digital identity you create for your child today could affect their future. Retrieved from <https://www.bitdefender.com/en-us/blog/hotforsecurity/the-impact-of-sharenting-how-the-digital-identity-you-create-for-your-child-today-could-affect-their-future>
- Brosch, A. (2016). When the child is born into the internet: Sharenting as a growing trend among parents on Facebook. *The New Educational Review*, 43(1), 225–235. <https://doi.org/10.15804/ner.2016.43.1.19>
- Buitrago-Ropero, M. E., Ramírez-Montoya, M. S., & Laverde, A. C. (2023). Digital footprints (2005–2019): A systematic mapping of studies in education. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 31(2), 876–889. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1814821>

- Bucks County Community College. (2019). Close reading [PDF]. Retrieved from <https://www.bucks.edu/media/bcccmcdialibrary/tutoring/documents/writingareahandoutrevision/literature/Close-Reading.pdf>
- Conti, M. G., Del Parco, F., Pulcinelli, F. M., Mancino, E., Petrarca, L., Nenna, R., Di Mattia, G., Matera, L., La Regina, D. P., Bonci, E., Caruso, C., & Midulla, F. (2024). Sharenting: Characteristics and awareness of parents publishing sensitive content of their children online. *Italian Journal of Pediatrics*, 50(1), Article 17. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13052-024-01704-y>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Collins Dictionary. (2015). Sharenting. In Collins English Dictionary. Rederived from <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/sharenting>
- de Vigan, D. (2023). *Kids run the show* (A. Anderson, Trans.). Europa Editions. (Original work published 2022)
- Digital Wellness Lab. (2023). Sharenting: Understanding the impact on our children's privacy and well-being. Rederived from <https://digitalwellnesslab.org/articles/sharenting-understanding-the-impact-on-our-childrens-privacy-and-well-being/>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Donovan, S. (2020). 'Sharenting': The forgotten children of the GDPR. *Peace Human Rights Governance*, 4(1), 35–59. <https://doi.org/10.14658/pupj-phrg-2020-1-2>
- Gotwald, B., Gregod, B., & Kowalczyk, M. (2024). Parental perspectives on sharenting: Attitudes, privacy concerns, and children's digital footprint. *European Research Studies Journal*, 27(3), 1242–1250.
- Hamilton, B. E. (2023). *Anything for views parenting: Framing privacy, ethics, and norms for children of influencers on YouTube* (Master's thesis, Duke University). Rederived from <https://hdl.handle.net/10161/27145>
- Humanium. (2021). Children's rights and digital technologies: Children's privacy in the age of social media – The perils of sharenting. Rederived from <https://www.humanium.org/en/childrens-rights-and-digital-technologies-childrens-privacy-in-the-age-of-social-media-the-perils-of-sharenting/>
- John, N. A. (2017). *The age of sharing*. Polity Press.
- Kaspersky. (n.d.). What is a digital footprint? Rederived from <https://www.kaspersky.com/resource-center/definitions/what-is-a-digital-footprint>
- Klucarova, S., & Hansford, J. (2023). The oversharing paradox: When frequent parental sharing negatively affects observers' desire to affiliate with parents. *Current Psychology*, 42(7), 6419–6428. Rederived from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01986-z>
- Kumar, S., Ramachandran, P., & James, A. (2023). Psychological impact of sharenting: A comprehensive review. *EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 9(11), 198–210.

<https://doi.org/10.36713/epra2013>

- Lazard, L., Capdevila, R., Dann, C., Locke, A., & Roper, S. (2019). Sharenting: Pride, affect and the day-to-day politics of digital mothering. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 13(4), e12443. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12443>
- Leaver, T., & Nansen, B. (2017). Infancy online: An introduction. *Social Media + Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117707193>
- Maryville University. (2021). The evolution of social media: How did it begin, and where could it go next? Rederived from <https://online.maryville.edu/blog/evolution-social-media/>
- Mascheroni, G., Ponte, C., & Jorge, A. (Eds.). (2018). Digital parenting: The challenges for families in the digital age. Nordicom, University of Gothenburg. <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1265024/FULLTEXT02.pdf>
- Meliani, F., Hidayati, N., Sulaeman, E., & Casta. (2023). Sharenting: Sharing moments or violating children's privacy? *Scientia: Social Sciences & Humanities*, 2(2), 44–49. <https://doi.org/10.51773/sssh.v2i2.228>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Meikle, G. (2016). *Social media: Communication, sharing and visibility*. Routledge.
- Motevalli, S., Razak, R. A., Bailey, R. P., Madihie, A. B., Mehdinezhadnouri, K., & Pan, Y. (2025). Parents' sharenting behaviours: A systematic review of motivations, attitudes, perceptions, and impression management. *F1000Research*, 14, 488. <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.161540.1>
- NetSafe. (2024). Sharenting. Rederived from <https://netsafe.org.nz/parents-and-caregivers/sharenting>
- Ocakoğlu, F. T., Ocakoğlu, B. K., Mutlu, C., Duran, B., Güneş, A., & Karaçetin, G. (2023). Why 'sharenting'? Is it related to parents' or children's psychiatric symptoms? *Turkish Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 30(1), 44–52. <https://doi.org/10.4274/tjcamh.galenos.2022.47965>
- Putri, N. R., Harkan, A. A., Khairunnisa, A. A., Nurintan, F., & Ahdiyat, M. A. (2021). Construction of "sharenting" reality for mothers who share children's photos and videos on Instagram. *Advances in Social Science, Education, and Humanities Research*, 558, 782–788. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210531.099>
- Ranzini, G., Newlands, G., & Lutz, C. (2020). Sharenting, peer influence, and privacy concerns: A study on the Instagram-sharing behaviours of parents in the United Kingdom. *Social Media + Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120978376>
- Rahayu, Y. M. (2023). Sharenting in the digital age: Investigating motives and examining consequences for children. In *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Integrated-Holistic Early Childhood Education (ICIHECE)* (pp. 180–188). <https://doi.org/10.24090/icihece>
- Steinberg, S. B. (2017). Sharenting: Children's privacy in the age of social media. *Emory Law Journal*, 66(4), 839–884. <http://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/facultypub>

- Tosuntaş, Ş. B., & Griffiths, M. D. (2024). Sharenting: A systematic review of the empirical literature. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 16(3), 525–562. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12566>
- Walrave, M., Robbé, S., Staes, L., & Hallam, L. (2023). Mindful sharenting: How millennial parents balance between sharing and protecting. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1171611. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1171611>