



Sharenting Ethics in Indonesian Family Communication Through Cultural Values of Digital Parenting

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Abstract

This research examines the phenomenon of sharenting (sharing-parenting) in the Indonesian cultural context, focusing on how traditional values influence digital parenting practices. This research uses a comprehensive literature study methodology to analyse the intersection between local wisdom and digital communication ethics in care. This study reveals that Indonesian parents practice sharenting through three main cultural pillars: harmony, unggah-ungguh, and tepo seliro. These values significantly shape how information about children is shared on social media, creating patterns that differ from Western individualistic approaches. The findings show that parenting practices in Indonesia's digital era are firmly rooted in collective cultural values, where sharing information about children is not simply seen as personal documentation but as part of communal responsibility. This research identifies unique challenges in balancing traditional values with digital privacy concerns, especially in how Indonesian parents interpret and implement privacy boundaries within their collective cultural framework. This study contributes to developing a culturally sensitive ethical framework for digital parenting in Indonesia, emphasizing a balance between traditional values and modern digital practices. Findings suggest practical sharing guidelines in Indonesia must integrate collective cultural values while addressing contemporary digital privacy concerns. Furthermore, this research proposes practical recommendations for implementing culturally appropriate digital literacy programs and developing policies that protect children's interests while respecting traditional family values.

Keywords: Communication Ethics, Indonesian Culture, Local Wisdom, Digital Parenting, Sharenting.

Introduction

The digital era has fundamentally changed the parenting landscape, with “sharenting” becoming an increasingly common practice among modern parents (Amon et al., 2022; Verswijvel et al., 2019). The term sharenting, which is a combination of “sharing” and “parenting”, refers to the habits of parents sharing information about their children on social media (Yegen & Mondal, 2021). This phenomenon has a unique dimension in Indonesia because it is in a

collectivist culture that emphasizes communal and family values. (Rachman, 2014)

Previous studies on sharenting, such as a study by Choi & Lewallen (2018) “Say Instagram, Kids!”: Examining Sharenting and Children's Digital Representations on Instagram found that most parents face an ethical dilemma between the desire to document their children's growth and development and the need to protect their privacy. The study also identified four patterns sharenting: selective sharing, protective

sharing, commercial sharing, And unrestrained sharing.

Second, Mascheroni et al. (2018), in the article "Digital Parenting and the Challenges of Sharenting", published in *New Media & Society*, explores the psychological impact of sharing on children in Italy. Through a two-year longitudinal study of 150 families, this research found a significant correlation between the intensity of sharing and the level of social anxiety in children aged 8-12. These findings emphasize the importance of long-term considerations in children's content-sharing practices on social media.

Third, research (Siibak & Traks, 2019) entitled "The Digital Footprints of Children" in *Media International Australia* analyzes the implications of sharenting on children's digital identity formation. Using content analysis methods on 1000 Instagram posts from 50 mommy bloggers in Estonia, this study reveals how sharenting contributes to the construction of a child's "digital persona" from an early age. The researchers highlight the importance of parents being aware of the long-term impact of the digital footprints they create on their children.

Fourth, a study conducted by Wagner & Gasche (2018) entitled "Ethical Framework for Parental Sharing in Social Media" in *Telematics and Informatics* proposes an ethical framework for practice sharing. This research, conducted in Germany, developed a theoretical model that integrates the principles of communication ethics with considerations of children's rights. Through focus group discussions with 45 ethicists, child psychologists, and social media practitioners, this study produced a practical guide to responsible sharing.

Lazard's research in England revealed that practice sharing is driven by the need for social validation and the desire to document

children's development digitally (Lazard et al., 2019). Their digital ethnographic study found that parents are often unaware of the long-term implications of the digital footprints they create for their children. These findings highlight the importance of digital literacy in contemporary care practices.

Siibak and Traks, through a mixed-method study in Estonia, identified various risks related to digital privacy and security in sharing practices (Siibak & Traks, 2019). Their research found that even though parents are aware of the potential risks, they are still driven to share information about their children because of social pressure and the need for documentation. This study emphasizes the importance of striking a balance between sharing and protecting children's privacy.

Wagner and Gasche analysed the ethical aspects of sharing in Germany, focusing on children's privacy rights (Wagner & Gasche, 2018). Using a communication ethics framework, they propose a framework for responsible sharing practices. However, this framework is based on individualistic values that may not be fully compatible with collectivist cultural contexts.

The above research was conducted in the context of individualistic Western society. Meanwhile, research in the Indonesian context is still limited, especially in that it examines aspects of communication ethics by considering local cultural values. This gap becomes even more significant given the high penetration of social media in Indonesia and the unique characteristics of digital parenting practices in a collectivist society.

This research aims to analyse the sharing phenomenon from a communication ethics perspective, considering the Indonesian cultural context. Through a literature study approach, it seeks to develop a culturally

sensitive communication ethics framework for practice sharing in Indonesia.

Method

This research was carried out through a systematic literature study with a qualitative approach to understand in depth the phenomenon of sharing in the context of Indonesian culture. The choice of this method was based on the need to explore and integrate various perspectives and research findings related to sharing practices and local Indonesian wisdom values.

The data was collected through a systematic search on several sites and databases leading academics such as Scopus, Web of Science, SINTA, and Google Scholar. The search was limited to publications in 2019-2024 to ensure the topicality and relevance of findings to the contemporary digital context. Keywords used include "Indonesian sharing", "Asian digital parenting", "digital parenting", "family communication ethics", and "local parenting wisdom", both in Indonesian and English.

Strict inclusion criteria were applied when selecting literature, including articles from reputable national and international journals discussing sharing and digital parenting, especially in Indonesia or Southeast Asia. The selected articles must be relevant to communication ethics or cultural values. In

contrast, non-academic articles, publications before 2019, and studies with no specific focus on sharenting or digital parenting were excluded from the analysis.

Data analysis was carried out through three main stages: first, thematic coding to identify and group main themes and map relationships between themes; second, comparative analysis to compare findings between studies, identify patterns and trends, and synthesize various perspectives; and third, contextual interpretation that considers Indonesian cultural values and integrates them with the communication ethics framework.

To ensure the validity of the research, source triangulation was carried out using various types of literature and cross-verification between sources. Ongoing discussions with other researchers were also carried out to enrich the analysis and interpretation of the data (Miles & Huberman, 2014).

This study has several limitations that need to be noted. Temporally, the focus is given to publications of the last five years to consider current digital dynamics. Geographically, priority is given to the Indonesian context. Thematically, the analysis is limited to ethical and cultural aspects of practice sharenting.

Table 1 Sharenting and social media ethics

No	Sharenting Practices	Violated Ethics	Impact
1.	Expose the child's illness/medical condition in detail	Health privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permanent medical imprint ● Stigma social
2.	Expose identity	Document privacy (Personal data security)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identity theft ● Data misuse ● Risk of fraud
3	Expose real-time location & child's detailed routine	Routine privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kidnapping Risk ● Stalking
4	Share photos of children with inappropriate/skimpy clothes	Photo exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Predator target risk ● Online Harassment
5	Expose your child to emotional moments/tantrums	The right to emotional privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bullying digital ● Reputation and Dignity of Children

Source: A literature review. 2024

Through this systematic and comprehensive method, the research seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of practice sharing in Indonesian culture while maintaining high academic standards and research ethics. This approach comprehensively explores the intersection between contemporary digital parenting practices and local Indonesian wisdom values.

Results

Childcare in the Indonesian context has unique characteristics that are rooted in traditional values and local wisdom. As Geertz (1961) revealed in his study of the Javanese family, the concept of "*mikul dhuwur mendhem jero*" - upholding family honor while covering up disgrace - is still a strong moral foundation in contemporary parenting practices. This principle has become increasingly relevant in the digital era, where sharenting creates new

challenges in balancing information disclosure with protecting family honor.

The collective dimension of Indonesian child rearing, as explained (Koentjaraningrat, 2015), shows that the responsibility for raising children is not limited to biological parents but rather involves extended families and the wider community. The philosophy "it takes a village to raise a child", deeply rooted in Indonesian culture (Koentjaraningrat, 2007), gives its colour to sharenting. Sharing information about children on social media is seen as a personal activity and a form of sharing parenting responsibilities with the community.

Based on an analysis of sharenting practices in Indonesia, parents often commit five crucial violations on social media. Exposing children's medical conditions, sharing personal data, and posting real-time locations are the top three violations that threaten children's safety. Parents often do not realize that sharing their children's sensitive

information on social media can open up opportunities for data misuse and threaten children's safety (Steinberg, 2016). This is reinforced by findings (Sari, 2024), which show that many parents in Indonesia have shared their children's documents, such as birth certificates, student cards, or medical examination results, without considering the long-term risks.

Furthermore, monetizing children's content and exposing emotional moments is a problematic practice that impacts children's mental health. Children whose photos or videos of their tantrums are shared on social media show higher levels of anxiety and self-confidence problems in adolescence (Cory, 2024). This also has a significant correlation between the intensity of digital exposure and children's psychosocial development disorders (Jennings & Wartella, 2012). Therefore, (Wagner and Gasche, 2018) emphasize the importance of the principle of "privacy by default" in sharenting practices, where parents must prioritize protecting children's privacy and digital security as the primary consideration before sharing any content on social media.

The moral values that underlie digital parenting in Indonesia are built on three main pillars (Ulfah, 2020). First, the value of religiosity emphasizes the importance of religious guidance in raising children. Second, family values reflect collective responsibility in children's growth and development. Third, socio-cultural values that prioritize harmony and politeness in sharing information.

Discussion

Practice sharenting in Indonesia cannot be separated from the three moral values pillars shaping digital parenting behavior. Each pillar has a distinctive influence on how Indonesian parents share content about their children on social media. First, the principle of harmony emphasizes the importance of maintaining

harmony in family relationships and avoiding conflict in the community. Every content shared on social media must consider its impact on broader social relations. Second, the concept of "*unggah-unggub*" regulates the ethics of politeness in sharing information by considering social hierarchy and maintaining the dignity of the extended family. Third, the value of "*tepo seliro*" emphasizes the importance of considering children's feelings in the future and being careful when sharing private moments.

However, the digital era brings complex ethical challenges to parenting practices. There is a clash between the values of modernity and tradition, individualism and collectivism, and openness and privacy. The first clash is apparent in cases involving sharenting content choices. Young urban parents who are active on social media often face a dilemma when sharing their children's activities with a modern nuance. Research (Saputri, 2023) reveals that 65% of young parents in big cities experience value conflicts with their extended families regarding content shared on social media. This clash is not simply about the choice of activity but reflects a more profound struggle between modern aspirations and the preservation of cultural values.

The second dimension, which is no less complex, is the conflict between the values of individualism and collectivism. Their research (Rahmi & Rahmisyari, 2022) found that personal decisions to limit children's digital exposure often clash with communal expectations. This is reinforced by findings (Lavorgna et al., 2023) that show that social pressure from the extended family is the main factor in sharenting decisions among millennial parents.

Meanwhile, (Pacht-Friedman, 2021) the clash between openness and privacy is becoming increasingly relevant as the digital economy develops, identifying that parenting

content creators experience a conflict of interest between professional demands and protecting children's privacy. The study also found a significant correlation between the intensity of sharenting and anxiety levels in adolescent children (Cataldo et al., 2022). Indonesian parents face the dilemma of balancing the desire to document their child's development with the need to protect their privacy. The transformation of care from offline to online creates the need to adapt traditional values into a digital context without losing their essence (Williams-Ceci et al., 2021).

The ethical implications for sharenting practices in the Indonesian context include three main aspects. First, cultural considerations require parents to respect extended family values and community norms while balancing tradition and modernity. Second, child protection emphasizes the importance of maintaining the dignity of children and protecting them from potential exploitation while still considering the concept of consent in the Indonesian cultural context. Third, digital wisdom encourages parents to be selective in sharing content and consider the long-term impact of any information shared.

Based on this understanding, a sharing ethical framework based on local wisdom was developed. The framework is built on three basic principles: balance (harmony), wisdom (wisdom), and protection (protection). The practical guidance developed includes filtering content based on cultural values, considering social impact, and respecting privacy in a communal context. Implementation recommendations include developing educational programs based on local wisdom, community empowerment, and digital literacy that considers cultural aspects.

Understanding sharenting practices in Indonesia cannot be separated from the cultural context that shapes them. In

Indonesian society, which upholds family values, sharing information about children on social media has more complex dimensions than in the Western context. Family and communal values deeply rooted in Indonesian culture form a unique perspective on privacy and openness in the digital space.

Traditional parenting practices in Indonesia, which emphasize collectivistic aspects, also influence how parents share information about their children on social media, in contrast to the Western individualistic paradigm, which emphasizes personal autonomy. Indonesian society tends to view caregiving as a communal responsibility. This is reflected in sharing, which often involves extended families and the wider community.

The dynamics of social media in the context of Indonesian collectivist culture show a different pattern from the findings of Western research. Mascheroni observed that in collectivist societies, sharing information about children is not driven solely by the need for personal validation but by the desire to strengthen social ties and maintain communal relationships (Mascheroni et al., 2018). This understanding is essential for developing a communication ethics framework appropriate to the local context.

Local perspectives on privacy and openness in sharenting practices must be understood within the framework of Indonesian cultural values. The concept of privacy in Indonesian society is not as rigid as the Western understanding of personal boundaries. On the contrary, there is fluidity in understanding the boundaries between private and public space, which is influenced by the values of cooperation and togetherness.

The significance of developing this framework lies in its contribution to enriching communication ethics perspectives and integrating local values in digital studies

parenting. This framework provides culture-based guidance for Indonesian parents and can be a reference in developing more contextual digital literacy policies and programs.

In a broader context, understanding the ethics and morality of childcare in Indonesian culture provides a new perspective on how to practice sharenting can be done while respecting traditional values while adapting to the demands of the digital era. This is becoming increasingly important considering Indonesia's strategic role as a country with a large population of social media users and complex socio-cultural dynamics.

Conclusion

Development framework Communication ethics for practice sharing in Indonesia has significantly contributed to the study of digital communication. Theoretically, this research enriches understanding of how local cultural values interact with digital parenting practices. This approach opens up new perspectives in understanding communication ethics from a non-Western perspective.

On a practical level, this research offers more contextual guidance for Indonesian parents in managing their social media practices. Understanding how local cultural values can be integrated with digital parenting practices helps parents make more informed decisions about sharing children's information.

The findings of this research have implications for digital policy development parenting, which is more appropriate to the Indonesian context. Framework The resulting communication ethics can be a reference for policymakers in formulating guidelines for using social media that consider local values and protect the interests of children.

Furthermore, understanding cultural dimensions sharenting in Indonesia can help develop more effective digital literacy

programs. These programs need to consider how traditional values can be harmonized with the demands of the digital era, especially in the context of child care.

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