Navigating Parenting in the Digital Age: Understanding Parents in a Changing Media Environment

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Abstract

This research explores how parents seek support and exchange experiences regarding their children's internet usage in Facebook parenting communities. The rise of digital technologies introduces opportunities to parenting, such as enhanced communication, and challenges, including addictive online behaviour. Digital parenting involves managing children's digital technology use and adapting parenting strategies, which can impact family dynamics and heighten the need for parental support. Online communities have significant potential to offer this support. The findings of the thematic analysis revealed the following three themes: (1) Parental Mediation, (2) Digital Impact and Awareness, and (3) Integrated Digital Parenting: Safety, Cultural Alignment and Supportive Bonds. Each theme, and subsequent sub-themes, captured the complexity of the topic of digital parenting. Key findings revealed the roles of Facebook parenting groups, providing a space for parental mediation, and creating collaborative knowledge on managing digital parenting challenges. Additionally, these online communities function as a virtual community allowing for emotional support and sharing parental concerns and vulnerabilities. This study offers valuable insights into how parents use Facebook communities to navigate digital parenting. It contributes to understanding contemporary digital parenting and points out the importance of online parenting communities. Implications involve a further exploration of this topic while acknowledging the opportunities of online parenting communities.

Keywords: digital parenting, digital technologies, online parenting communities, peer support, thematic analysis

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Navigating Parenting in the Digital Age: Understanding Parents in a Changing Media Environment

Nowadays, the continuous advancement of digital technologies has brought changes, both opportunities and challenges, in family dynamics and parenting practices. New opportunities across various aspects of life are created, including enhanced communication, entertainment, and educational possibilities (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009). Digital technologies, such as smartphones and social media, provide new chances for socialising and improving knowledge and competencies by, for instance, communicating with others or acquiring application-related skills (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2021). Research by Haleem and colleagues (2022) highlights that not only formal education in schools and universities has transformed, but more individuals have gained access to online educative options. In addition, Benedetto and Ingrassia (2021), argue that social media has increased the accessibility of information exchange and fostered connections with others, enabling parents to keep track of their child's educational progress or interact with teachers. Social media's capacity to enable communication at any time and from any location has broadened networking opportunities, thereby improving social interactions (Haleem et al., 2022). Moreover, increased access to digital technologies has led to more communication between parents and children as well as more parent-child interaction online, which in turn, facilitates a stronger sense of family closeness (Hood et al., 2021).

However, alongside these opportunities, it is essential to consider the subsequent challenges. While becoming a crucial part of families' daily lives, the rapid digital development, introduces risks, such as worries about internet addiction (Livingstone & Byrne, 2018; Mascheroni et al., 2018). This accessibility to modern technologies, according to Mascheroni and colleagues (2018), presents further challenges to parenting, involving concerns about the amount of screen time or how to ensure online safety.

The current research seeks to explore how parents use online parenting communities, for example, Facebook, to seek support as well as exchange information and experiences about managing their children's digital engagement.

Digital Parenting and Parental Approaches

A key concept within this context is digital parenting, which is linked to how parents navigate their children's engagement with digital technologies, also known as parental mediation. In addition, digital parenting entails the adaption of parenting styles while integrating digital media into their daily routines and approaches (Mascheroni et al., 2018). Fidan and Seferoğlu (2020) pointed out that it comprises several elements, such as sharing

advice among parents, supporting children's educational activities by downloading educational applications and assessing necessary educational tools. Within the context of digital parenting, nowadays, two primary parenting styles are frequently used: restrictive and enabling mediation. The former focuses on controlling and supervising online actions, whereas the latter is marked by more parental involvement, guiding, and encouraging children while advising them of risks (Livingstone & Byrne, 2018). Understanding digital parenting within today's context is important as it involves guiding children to benefit from digital media while preventing online risks (Fidan & Seferoğlu, 2020).

Advanced access to increasingly complex digital technologies introduces parents to novel challenges. Particularly digital technologies that are difficult for parents to monitor or fully understand, point out difficulties in parents' ability to effectively oversee their children's digital activities (Livingstone & Byrne, 2018). Consequently, some parents are affected by having limited knowledge if not being raised with these technologies, and in turn, consider parenting more challenging compared to 20 years ago (Modecki et al., 2022). With these technological changes, parental challenges have shifted towards highlighting digital issues, for instance, navigating online risks, ways of ensuring children's safety and promoting the use of digital technologies for educational and social reasons (Gür & Türel, 2022; Mascheroni et al., 2018).

Previous research has largely considered parental opportunities and challenges introduced through digital technologies, separately. However, both have been found related, whereby frequent users of digital technologies, tend to take up more advantages, but subsequently also greater risks, and vice versa (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009). As a result, parental attempts to minimise the chance of encountering online risks by regulating a child's internet usage are likely to reduce the opportunities as well (Livingstone & Helsper, 2009).

Furthermore, Hood and colleagues (2021) pointed out that children's use of digital technologies is associated with conflicts and unease within families, potentially having consequences for their attachment. Developing a secure parent-child connection is crucial as it has implications for the child's development in various domains (Hood et al., 2021). As suggested by Livingstone and Byrne (2018), with the increasing age of children, their relationship with their parents changes. While early adolescents are less dependent on their parents, and seek more independence, they require modifying their parenting practices. Moreover, in the context of digital parenting, adolescents need a different approach compared to younger children, who have more difficulties estimating a potential online risk. Parents adopt different parenting styles, which have varying impacts on their child's development

(Livingstone & Byrne, 2018). Consequently, tailored parenting styles, considering children's different developmental stages, are crucial to mitigate family conflict and unease.

Research by Livingstone and colleagues (2015) underlined the need for support, specifically for parents having less experience with digital technologies. Accordingly, they propose to emphasise the importance of guidance in communication methods for shared digital activities and values, and how parents can address related problems with their children. Revealing the lack of support provided by schools and nurseries in guiding parental mediation, it draws attention to the necessity for online parenting support (Livingstone et al., 2015). The importance of digital parenting is highlighted by the complexity of these challenges.

Importance of Online Parenting Support

Online parenting communities have great potential to offer support in assisting parents navigate the challenges of digital parenting (Nieuwboer et al., 2013). They argue that these communities can foster a sense of community among parents while also addressing information gaps by sharing knowledge. In addition, their research investigating the impact of online parenting support has shown a positive effect by providing peer and professional support. Parents can share their experiences, post questions, help each other, or simply gather information in an "accessible, anonymous, cost-effective, and convenient" way (Nieuwboer et al., 2013, p. 525). Research by Zhao and Basnyat (2018) resulted in insights into the impact of online support for single mothers in terms of reducing feelings of loneliness and anxiety by fostering a sense of community as well as improving mothers' self-confidence in their competencies. Online resources provide diverse possibilities for parents to access support, share experiences and enhance parental well-being.

Different online resources that are available include professional and peer-to-peer support. Websites, such as Mediaopvoeding.nl, offer services where parents' media-related questions are answered by psychologists or experts in parental guidance (Mascheroni et al., 2018). Peer-to-peer support is provided through, for example, online discussion forums or groups (Nieuwboer et al., 2013). Furthermore, as stated by Lupton and colleagues (2016), websites focused on parenting have been long-established sources of support, providing information and possibilities to interact with others. Moreover, the development of blogs, social media, and parenting apps has increased, proving useful for gaining insights into parenting, sharing experiences, and communicating with others (Lupton et al., 2016).

A common pattern found in previous research is considering the concept of peer support. The purpose of peer support received online includes receiving and providing

information by sharing own experiences (Winter, 2017). Peer support refers to the informal and volunteer-based social and emotional help given by others, characterised by mutual understanding of other parents due to shared experiences (Niela-Vilén et al., 2014). In today's digital age, there are various opportunities through which the internet facilitates peer support by using online interaction. As further argued by Niela-Vilén and colleagues (2014), by offering a sense of belonging to a community, online peer support conveyed valuable information and emotional reassurance for mothers. Having the opportunity to reach up-to-date knowledge shared by peers, was valued by parents. Moreover, particularly mothers could engage in a process of giving meaning to their experiences through interacting with others online (Boursier et al., 2018). Previous research by Boursier and colleagues (2018), has shown the impact of online communities to provide needed social support to parents in different ways, for example, by creating online groups based on mutual interests such as sharing parental experiences.

Today's ever-growing use and access to digital technologies present parents with the task of responsibly guiding their children (Fidan & Seferoğlu, 2020). Due to the heightened competence levels of children compared to parents, there is a risk of losing control of digital activities that children engage in. In turn, there is a need for support that provides parental guidance on how to navigate their children in the digital age (Fidan & Seferoğlu, 2020).

The Present Study

There is some understanding that parents use online communities and resources to seek support related to dominating issues involving pregnancy-, birth- or health-related information (Boursier et al., 2018; Dennen et al., 2021; Frey et al., 2022; Nieuwboer et al., 2013; Plantin & Daneback, 2009). While research shows insights into these topics of parental interest, there is limited information about how parents use online communities to navigate their children's use of digital technologies. This contributes to a considerable lack of research on understanding parents within the context of their digital parenting experiences. As digital technologies continuously change, subsequent parental challenges and concerns need to be understood and addressed. Therefore, this research aims to fill the gap by analysing online communities, namely Facebook parenting groups, to facilitate an understanding of the ways parents participate in these communities to seek support and exchange experiences. Hence, the goal of this paper is to answer the following research question: *How do parents use online communities such as Facebook to navigate digital parenting with their children?*

Methodology

Procedure

Another researcher – who is also interested in the topic of digital parenting – collected data from different private and public Turkish Facebook parenting groups. In October 2023, posts were collected that have been posted between 2021 and 2023. All data was originally in Turkish and translated into English using Google Translate, followed by a native Turkish-speaking researcher reviewing the translations to ensure accuracy. Initially, the keywords *parents*, *parenting*, *adolescent*, *parent support*, *mothers* and *fathers* were used to identify suitable groups for this research. The researcher collecting the data found 14 groups that met the criteria, including both private and public groups. Ultimately, six groups were included, and their posts were retrieved. Reasons for exclusion of groups involved the lack of relevant posts and not given permission, while the latter only applied to private groups. Additionally, ten parenting groups were excluded as they were considered out of scope. Keywords used within the groups to find relevant posts included *internet*, *addict*, *phone/mobile*, *tablet*, *social media*, *screen*, and *game/gaming*. Using these keywords, in total 28 posts – posted between 2021 and 2023 – were collected. If present, comments to the selected posts were retrieved as well, if they were primary responses directed to the post owner. To have a comprehensive overview of the data, it was compiled into an Excel file with columns comprising the Facebook group name, group ID, matched keyword, post, year of posting, number of reactions to the post, number of total comments, and selected responses.

Reflexivity Statement

To improve the credibility and transparency of this research, I critically reflected on my role as a researcher and my beliefs that might have impacted the study's findings. Shufutinsky (2020) highlighted the importance of transparency in research procedures and the need for reflection on the impact of one's assumptions on the study content. As I am a researcher without children, I do not identify as part of the target group. This position has shaped my perspective on the challenges and opportunities faced by parents. Initially, I focused on the challenges experienced by parents, and reflection helped me recognise the importance of balancing this focus with insights into opportunities. This could have influenced the representation of the data with an emphasis on the negative experiences. As qualitative research has the potential to be biased in the way the research is conducted, I remained mindful of these biases, such as the initial focus on challenges, to facilitate a rich and meaningful analysis of the data (Erhard et al., 2021). I chose reflexive thematic analysis

to comprehend and display the richness of the data, allowing for an in-depth exploration and interpretation of themes.

Data analysis

The data, particularly the Facebook posts, was analysed using reflexive thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method, suitable for qualitative research due to its flexibility, is used "for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data"(p.79), offering a detailed description (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The collected data was initially in an Excel file, and for the analysis, only the column containing the posts was considered. Columns involving responses, keyword(s), date, or number of reactions were excluded based on the research objective, which relates to understanding themes and patterns within the posts. During preprocessing, posts which seemed incomplete, such as missing parts of a sentence, were excluded (e.g., posts number 23, 24 and part of 12). For data analysis, the posts were transferred to the coding software Atlas.ti.

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) suggested steps, the thematic analysis started with familiarising with the posts collected from the Facebook groups. By repeated reading, some meaningful patterns stood out, for instance, associated with seeking advice or the negative impact of digital technologies. Once familiar with the data, an initial list of codes was created which were then organised into potential themes. Given the co-occurrence of different topics within one unit, multiple layers of codes were identified and organised into multiple themes. This approach captured the richness of the Facebook posts, acknowledging the relevance of different aspects within an excerpt of the data about the research question.

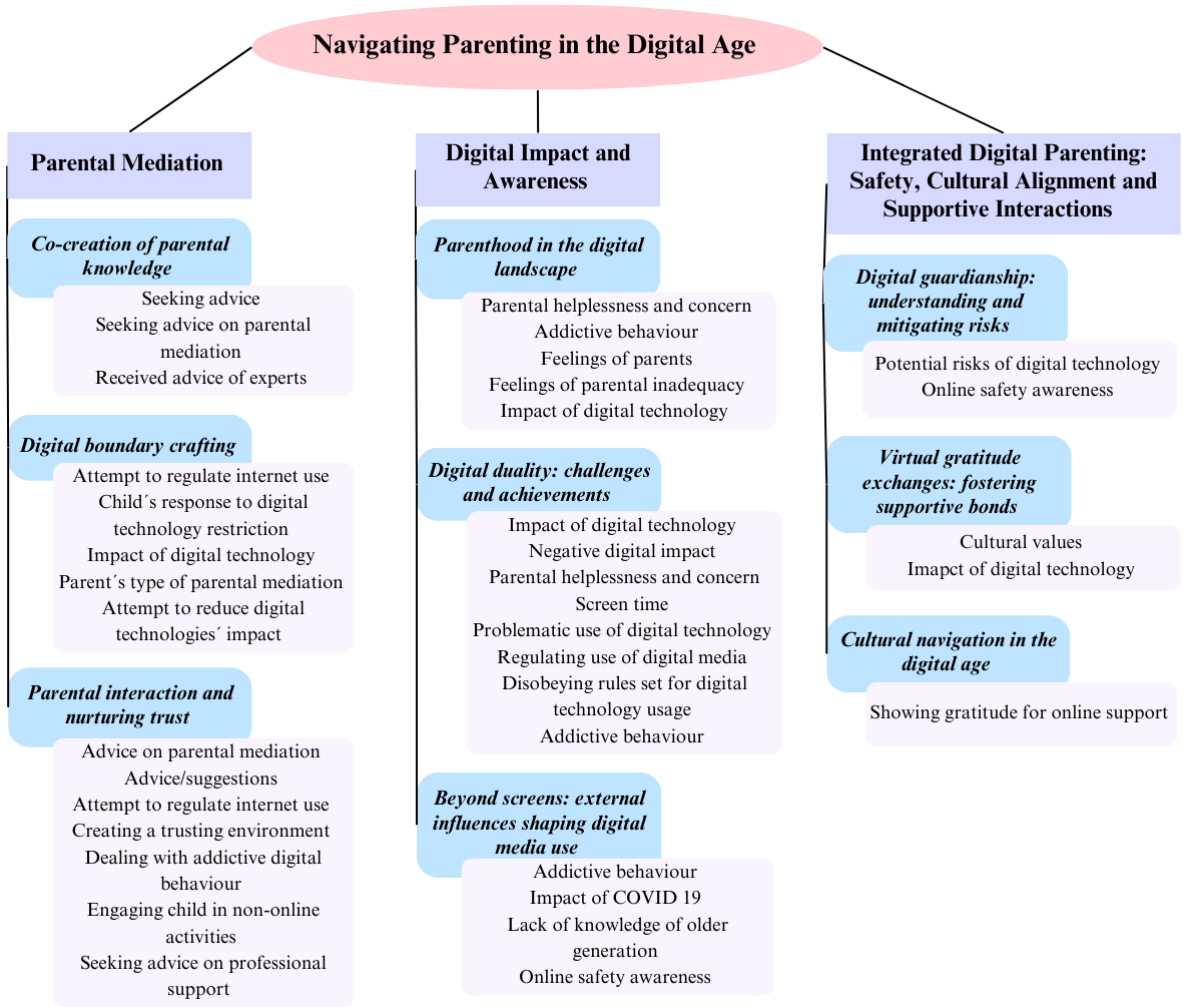
To gain more insight into the relationship between themes and codes, a thematic map was created. The initial themes were reviewed, checked whether these were sufficiently supported by the data and refined as necessary. Throughout the review process, main and sub-themes were generated. The flexibility of thematic analysis was considered, incorporating suggestions of Braun and Clarke (2022), by conceptualising themes and sub-themes as interpretative stories, referring to the core meaning, rather than summaries (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This was done by writing down all codes into a table and searching for potential themes by marking connecting codes with the same colour. Once this initial categorization, the themes were visualised in a thematic map with the subsequent codes, attempting to generate an interpretative theme name rather than a summary of all codes included. Each theme was then analysed by describing its meaning and providing an example based on the data.

Results

The concepts discussed within the analysed posts of Facebook parenting groups helped to identify three main themes. The first theme, (1) Parental Mediation, encompassed three sub-themes: (a) *Co-Creation of Parental Knowledge*, (b) *Digital Boundary Crafting* and (c) *Parental Interaction and Nurturing Trust*. The second theme, (2) Digital Impact and Awareness, included the sub-themes (d) *Parenthood in the Digital Landscape*, (e) *Digital Duality: Challenges and Achievements* and (f) *Beyond Screens: External Influences Shaping Digital Media Use*. Finally, the third theme, (3) Integrated Digital Parenting: Safety, Cultural Alignment and Supportive Bonds, consisted of the following three sub-themes: (g) *Digital Guardianship: Understanding and Mitigating Risks*, (h) *Cultural Navigation in the Digital Age* and (i) *Virtual Gratitude Exchanges: Fostering Supportive Bonds*. For an overview, see Figure 1.

Figure 1

Overview of the Main Themes, Sub-themes, and Codes



Parental Mediation

Co-Creation of Parental Knowledge

This theme identified parents' active engagement in seeking and sharing advice within Facebook parenting groups. Parents asked for advice directly by asking how to act, for example, as illustrated by the parents writing "I wanted to consult you, dear mothers, to see if there is anyone who is in this situation and has found a solution" (group: DEA, ID: a1), „Have you ever experienced something like this? [...] Do you think I should turn off the internet and resist?" (group: DEA, ID: a27) or "I wanted to exchange ideas with mothers who have experience on this subject. How can we act to ensure the safety of our children without damaging our relationship with them?" (group: DEA, ID: a24). Others asked for recommendations for professionals, supported by a parent asking "Is there a psychologist on the European side of Istanbul that you can recommend that can really help?" (group: DEA, ID: a8).

Digital Boundary Crafting

While guiding their children in today's digital age, parents described their efforts to create and negotiate boundaries and restrict their children's digital technology usage. They shared challenges in regulating internet use and experiences of resistance from their children, explained by a parent sharing the reaction of their daughter "If we turn off her internet, she gets angry with us and says she won't do any homework." (group: DEA, ID: a27). Another child's response was mentioned by a parent writing "(…) turn[ing] off the internet (…) gives an incredible response. For example, she said, "Whoever takes my phone is my enemy". For example, when her internet is shut down, she becomes aggressive and takes ours and hides them." (group: DEA, ID: a4).

Parental Interaction and Nurturing Trust

This theme points out the multifaceted role of parents in guiding and supporting their children's online experiences. Parents shared their suggestions, not directly referring to their own experiences, such as "Create an environment where they can tell you everything (…). Make them trust you." (group: ABO, ID: g3) or "Let's make our home, our relationships and our communication enjoyable. Let's have him share his life with us. I say let's get involved in his life." (group: ABO, ID: g2).

Suggestions made emphasised the creation of an environment marked by trust, engaging in, and offering non-digital, family-involving activities, fostering communication within the parent-child relationship. Mentioned examples of non-digital activities, through which trust is nurtured, involved "play dough and pictures and similar things and move"

(group: AA, ID: b2) or, as stated by another parent about their son “includ[ing] him in household chores, we chat, we go out, I try to do handicrafts such as painting“ (group: WC, ID: f3).

Digital Impact and Awareness

Parents' Emotional Experiences

Parents expressed emotions of helplessness, concern, and inadequacy regarding navigating their children’s online experiences. A few parents shared feelings of inadequacy, illustrated by, for example, “I guess I’m a bad mother” (group: DEA, ID: a14) or another sharing “We made a lot of effort, but unfortunately we were not successful.” (group: DEA, ID: a33). Parental helplessness and concern were expressed in different ways: “I don't know, but I feel so helpless right now. It's like I'm a tiny ant trying to fight a giant monster. I miss my daughter“ (group: DEA, ID: a2).; “I'm very worried because she spends almost all day in bed with her phone“(group: DEA, ID: a2) and other efforts made without success, described by “I explain the harms, I even find research on these issues and send it to her, but it is of no use.“ (group: DEA, ID: a2). As demonstrated in these shared experiences, these emotions were expressed through statements of emotional struggle, ineffective effort, and ongoing worry about their children’s digital behaviours.

Digital Duality: Challenges and Achievements

Within this theme parents discussed the dual aspect of digital technologies, addressing both positive and negative aspects. These included difficulties in regulating screen time, shared by a parent whose daughter was watching phone games and videos until she was “fall[ing] asleep watching it at night and could not sleep otherwise” (group: AA, ID: b2). Another shared the great amount of digital technology usage by writing about their son “He is on the computer 24/7 and does not accept any suggestions/recommendations” (group: DEA, ID: a11). Parents also mentioned challenges related to children disobeying set rules for digital media usage. Examples, occasionally linked with a request for advice, illustrated by a parent, involved that they “set the rules when we first gave it [smartphone] to her, but she did not follow it“ (group: DEA, ID: a4).

Furthermore, parents wrote about managing the influence of digital technologies on children’s social and academic development. Particularly, the negative, harmful consequences of digital technologies were discussed by parents, illustrated by stating “Game addiction has become our nightmare. (...) it causes my son's family communication to deteriorate. It has taken precedence over his academic and all life responsibilities (…)” (group: DEA, ID: a33).

Another negative consequence shared by a parent of a six-year-old daughter referred to anxiety-producing feelings after using digital media:
"(…) she has been watching a lot of phone games and videos (…). Once she downloaded a game called Devil Baby and then she said she was afraid of it and I immediately deleted it (…) her fears have passed a little bit, but she still says that she is dreaming and looks at spaces. Not as much as the first day. It's been 4-5 days since this started." (group: AA, ID: b2).

On the other hand, one parent wrote about how her son "learns the subjects he is curious about very well. For example, he learned illustrator on the computer and made a lot of pictures and opened an exhibition at school. Now coding and animation is being worked on in a program called Scratch (…)" (group: WC, ID: f3). Considering that this perspective was only reported once, it nonetheless captured the diverse impacts of technology on children's creativity and learning.

Beyond Screens: External Influences Shaping Digital Media Usage

Parents mentioned external factors, such as broader societal and environmental factors, shaping parent's approaches to digital media usage. They illustrated the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their children's activities online, expressed by a parent explaining about their son that "He got addicted to games during the pandemic period" (group: DEA, ID: a29) and another noted that children began spending more time online once distance education started due to the lockdown.

Societal and cultural aspects can shape technological adoption and use, which in turn, influences different generations. A parent shared "Today is the internet age and it is foreign to most of our generation." (group: ABO, ID: g1), reflecting an awareness of the differing impact of the change through the digital age on generations. The rapid digital development external to individuals impacts a generational knowledge gap regarding digital competencies.

Integrated Digital Parenting: Safety, Cultural Alignment and Supportive Interactions

Digital Guardianship: Understanding and Mitigating Risks

This theme covered aspects regarding online safety awareness, focusing on parents discussing the need to be aware of online risks to protect their children accordingly. For example, one parent shared their experiences: "(…) just some of the findings in question that many cartoons designed for children's world make them rebellious, dissatisfied, even make them dependent on themselves and hinder the development of their abilities." (group: ABO, ID: g0). This reflects parental concerns about the impact of online risks.

Cultural Navigation in the Digital Age

Content discussed within this theme highlighted the importance of considering cultural sensitivity by integrating cultural values into the digital environment. A parent suggested creating content “that suits our beliefs, traditions and cultural values“ (group: ABO, ID: g0), pointing out the reflective process of incorporating cultural aspects and traditions into the digital world.

Virtual Gratitude Exchanges: Fostering Supportive Bonds

By capturing the expression of gratitude for receiving online support within the parenting community, this theme involved appreciation shared by parents. This is illustrated by, for example, a parent writing “I would like to say that I am glad that this group exists, I am glad that you all exist, because you are truly a solution (…)” (group: DEA, ID: a12). By showing appreciation for each other online, supportive interactions are facilitated, creating a unique sense of community.

Discussion

This research aimed to facilitate an understanding of the ways parents participate in online communities to seek support and share their digital parenting experiences. By doing so, it contributed to filling the research gap of limited information on how parents utilize online communities, such as Facebook parenting groups, to guide their children’s usage of digital technologies. Researching and comprehending digital parenting in today’s changing digital age is crucial because it encompasses supporting children to make the most of digital media while also protecting them from online dangers (Fidan & Seferoğlu, 2020).

The evolving digital landscape, considering increased accessibility to digital technologies, emphasizes both opportunities and challenges through digital technologies in family dynamics and parenting practices. To understand parents’ digital parenting experiences, Facebook posts collected from Facebook parenting groups were analysed using thematic analysis.

By exploring the content shared by parents in these parenting groups, the analysis revealed different functions of online parenting communities. One key function that emerged was that parents actively engaged on Facebook and emphasize collaboration with other parents facing similar experiences. It reveals the joint effort of navigating parental challenges, exchanging experiences, and providing general advice and solutions while highlighting the importance of communication and connection among parents. Parents obtain parenting information and social support through Facebook parenting groups, which is in line with previous research showing that social media is a source for providing these aspects (Hooper et

al., 2022). Included Facebook groups represent the role of online parenting communities by fostering supportive connections among parents. This finding was supported by parents' expressions of gratitude, nurturing a community of reciprocal support and virtual bonds among others. Findings by Sjöberg and Lindgren (2017) support this by highlighting the purpose of Facebook parenting groups to provide a social network for parents.

Furthermore, these findings represent a creation of collaborative knowledge by sharing experiences and solution-oriented approaches which help parents manage digital parenting challenges. This finding is consistent with prior research by Dennen and colleagues (2021), who emphasize that parents can learn from each other through social media platforms by, for instance, sharing their experiences and knowledge.

In addition, the results of the current study are in alignment with previous research that also highlights digital parenting issues such as screen time (Bartau-Rojas et al., 2018; Livingstone et al, 2018). While the current study recognizes the opportunities and negative impacts of digital technologies, the results demonstrate a focus on challenges, such as excessive screen time and disobedience of rules set for digital media. Parents perceive difficulties in finding a balance between setting boundaries while maintaining a good parent-child relationship. This could further represent a need for advice in managing these parental challenges.

Parental approaches shared by parents emphasized different strategies to navigate and mediate their children's use of digital technologies. Previous studies about the adoption of digital parenting approaches, highlighted restrictive and enabling mediation, as primarily utilized styles (Fidan & Seferoğlu, 2020; Livingstone & Byrne, 2018). In line with this, parents particularly shared experiences about using restrictive mediation, marked by setting rules and boundaries, such as parents who restrict their children's access to the internet.

Another finding represents the role of Facebook online communities as a space where parent's feelings of helplessness, concern, and inadequacy can be expressed. Navigating their children through the digital world seems to be experienced as a challenge. It points out the emotional resilience and vulnerability faced by parents while managing their children's experiences online. These results align with previous studies showing that parents share similar emotions online, and seek help. It highlights the significance of using online communities, such as Facebook parenting groups, to share and seek emotional support (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Moreover, previous research supported that parents deal with feelings of insecurity about how to guide their children (Bartau-Rojas et al., 2018). Hence, online

parenting communities, such as those on Facebook, offer a virtual supportive environment for parents to connect with others facing similar challenges.

Strengths and Limitations

Alongside these findings, it is important to highlight the strengths of this research. As the collected data, namely the Facebook posts, were posted between the years 2021 and 2023, it can be argued that these are recent experiences of parents. While considering the increasing development of digital technologies, parents' digital parenting experiences can change. Therefore, this research's strength lies in providing up-to-date information on how Facebook parenting groups are used by parents to navigate their children's internet use.

Moreover, choosing a qualitative approach, particularly thematic analysis, can be considered another strength. Thematic analysis is a flexible and valuable method, allowing the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the Facebook posts. Through the methods' ability to be adaptable, it enables the exploration of complex, meaningful patterns and themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This research's results need to be considered in light of some limitations. The translation process of the collected data can be considered a potential source of bias. Decisions made about the translation procedure unavoidably influence the research process and its conclusions (Abfalter et al., 2020). Considering that translations are never objective, as stated by Erhard and colleagues (2021). Translating the original data from Turkish into English was done as objectively as possible by considering challenges that can arise and reflecting on these. Throughout the translation, one difficulty of Google Translate was the distinction between 'he' and 'she', subsequently, leading to the possible loss of specific nuances. Hence, one of the most crucial aspects to keep in mind is that there will always be a bias and limitation due to the translation process. Different translation applications might interpret the same data differently. To prevent that, a native Turkish-speaking researcher was involved to review whether the translated version displays the meaning of the data.

Another limitation is the subjectivity given the lack of interrater reliability, which, according to Gisev and colleagues (2013), refers to the level of agreement between different coders when assessing the same data independently. It measures the consistency of their evaluation, and in turn, improves the credibility and validity of the data and the findings (Gisev et al., 2013). Although taking the advances of interrater reliability into account, the decision was made to not involve another researcher's assessment of the content of the Facebook posts. Therefore, there might be a bias. By reflecting on the subjectivity of the

codes and subsequent generation of themes, used, possible biases were addressed. After creating the initial list of codes, these were reviewed and adjusted subsequently.

Implications

These findings imply that parents use online parenting communities, such as Facebook parenting groups, to seek support for their digital parenting experiences. By considering the great potential of online communities, strengthening parental support networks can create a place where sharing experiences, seeking advice, and accessing resources – involving professional guidance – is possible. Furthermore, future research should address parents' feelings of helplessness and inadequacy by reflecting on the development of educational online interventions for them. In turn, these could minimise the digital knowledge gap between generations which is applicable to some parents through the increased development of digital technologies. Moreover, making aware of the positive, beneficial impact digital technologies can have on children, parents and family dynamics could consequently shift the focus away from challenges, facilitating a balanced view of digital parenting.

Future research is necessary to gain insights into the experiences of parents of children of different ages. It must be investigated what other aspects, such as different cultures, play a role in digital parenting and how these can be addressed. The function of online communities and consequently, how these are used, might change depending on the child's age. Lastly, the research could inform stakeholders, parents, educational institutions, policymakers, and everyone involved to develop interventions.

Conclusion

To conclude, these findings provide valuable insights into the function of Facebook parenting groups. It highlights the purpose of online communities to function as a virtual community for parents, where they can seek advice and share their digital parenting experiences, while acquiring knowledge and receiving peer support. By taking into account the offered possibilities and functions of online parenting communities, future research should explore this topic further to gain more insights into parents' experiences and needs. Hence, these insights can inform everyone involved in digital parenting and improve parents' perceptions of received online support.

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