

CHRISTIAN PARENTS AND SHARENTING BEHAVIOUR

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned hereby certify that this research work was carried out by **IMIANVAN EVIDENCE** with matriculation number **PSC1712836** of department of Computer Science, Faculty of Physical Sciences, University of Benin, Benin city and this work is considered adequate for consideration in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Computer Science..

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DEDICATION

This project report is dedicated to God almighty for his strength, wisdom and understanding, to my parents for their love care and support throughout my undergraduate study.

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ABSTRACT

Sharenting, the practice of parents sharing their children's images, videos, and personal information online, has become an integral aspect of digital parenting in the social media age. This study explores sharenting behaviors among Christian parents, focusing on how their faith, privacy concerns and social influences shape their decisions to share their children's lives online. The rapid expansion of social media has made sharenting a common practice, yet concerns regarding child privacy, digital footprints and ethical considerations remain relevant. This research aimed to understand the extent to which Christian values influence sharenting practices, the motivations behind parents' sharing decisions, and the perceived risks and benefits associated with online sharing. The study employed descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to analyze responses from Christian parents at Foursquare Gospel Church. The findings indicate that older parents are more privacy-conscious than younger parents. Strong religious commitment was linked to less frequent sharenting, emphasizing values like modesty, discretion, and stewardship. However, many parents acknowledged the benefits of online sharing, such as strengthening family bonds and fostering Christian community ties. Despite this, privacy concerns and potential risks, such as cybersecurity threats and loss of child autonomy, influenced their decisions. The study concludes that Christian parents navigate a balance between faith, social connection, and digital responsibility. It recommends faith-based digital literacy programs to help parents make ethical, informed decisions about sharenting.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The rapid growth of social media has revolutionized how families communicate and document their lives. Digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok have become integral to modern parenting, providing an easy way for parents to share significant moments in their children's lives. However, this increasing trend of online sharing, known as "sharenting," has raised concerns regarding privacy, security and children's long-term digital presence. The term sharenting, a blend of "sharing" and "parenting", was first introduced by Steven Leckhart (2012) in The Wall Street Journal and describes the widespread practice of parents posting content about their children online. While many parents engage in sharenting to celebrate milestones, maintain relationships and seek social support, the ethical implications of this trend have sparked debates about children's autonomy, online safety, and digital consent (Steinberg, 2014).

Sharenting is largely driven by parental emotions, societal influence, and digital culture. Many parents share their children's experiences online out of pride, nostalgia, and a desire to stay connected with family and friends. Parenthood is full of precious moments, such as a child's first steps, birthdays, and school achievements, that parents naturally want to preserve and celebrate. Parents use social media as a tool for documenting their children's lives, creating a digital record of their growth and development (Clark, 2016). This serves as a modern alternative to traditional photo albums, allowing parents to revisit and cherish these memories over time. Another major motivation for sharenting is social validation and emotional connection. The interactive nature of social media encourages parents to share content, as likes, comments, and shares provide instant encouragement and affirmation. Many parents find comfort in receiving positive feedback, as it reassures them about their parenting

efforts (Jones, 2020). Additionally, social media enables parents to engage with online communities, where they can exchange advice, seek support and discuss shared parenting experiences. However, while social media creates strong networks, it also introduces significant privacy risks for children.

Despite the benefits of sharenting, it raises critical concerns about children's privacy, online security, and consent. Since parents often share details about their children's daily lives, these digital footprints are created long before children have the ability to understand or control their own online presence. Davidson-Wall (2018) warns that sharenting contributes to a child's permanent digital identity, which may impact their future opportunities, relationships and personal security. A major risk associated with sharenting is online exploitation. Photos and videos of children, once uploaded, can be accessed, shared, or even misused by strangers. Some cases have reported instances of digital kidnapping, where individuals steal images of children and falsely claim them as their own (O'Neill, 2015). Additionally, excessive sharing of personal information such as school names, locations and daily routines could expose children to identity theft, cyberbullying or online predators.

Furthermore, sharenting raises ethical questions about children's consent. While parents have the right to document their family life, children may not agree with how they are portrayed online as they grow older. Nottingham (2019) emphasizes that parents must consider their children's autonomy and personal boundaries when sharing content, as these digital records may affect their self-esteem and public image in adulthood. Some children have expressed frustration or embarrassment about content posted during their childhood, highlighting the need for mindful and respectful digital parenting practices. Another growing concern is the commercialization of family life through sharenting. The rise of social media influencers has led some parents to transform their children's digital presence into a source of income, partnering with brands or generating revenue through sponsorships. While this can provide

financial benefits, it raises moral and ethical dilemmas about the child's role in public content creation. Unlike adults, children cannot fully understand the consequences of being featured in online marketing campaigns, leading to concerns about exploitation, loss of privacy and emotional impact.

Religion plays a significant role in shaping people's worldviews, influencing not only individual beliefs but also the way societies function. At its core, religion offers a system of faith and worship, providing answers to life's big questions: the nature of good and evil, the purpose of life and the mysteries of the afterlife. Through religion, people develop belief systems (sets of ideas and values that shape how they understand the world and how they behave). These belief systems are also a part of culture, influencing traditions, social norms, and everyday choices. One modern example of how religious belief systems can shape behavior is seen in Christian parents and their practices of sharenting. American Heritage Dictionary defined religion as, "belief in and reverence for a supernatural power recognized as the creator and governor of the universe; A particular integrated system of this expression; The spiritual or emotional attitude of one who recognizes the existence of a superhuman power or powers". Religion is also a structured set of beliefs and practices, often revolving around a higher power or supernatural force. It provides guidelines on how to live, how to treat others, and how to understand one's place in the universe. Different religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism, offer distinct ways of thinking about life, morality, and the afterlife. For example, Christianity teaches that followers should live according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, promoting values such as love, forgiveness, and salvation through faith. Islam centers on submission to Allah and emphasizes justice, charity, and the importance of following religious law. Hinduism believes in a cycle of birth, death, and reincarnation, with the ultimate goal of achieving spiritual liberation. Buddhism, on the other hand, focuses on achieving enlightenment through mindfulness, ethical behavior, and

detachment from worldly desires. Judaism emphasizes a relationship with God and living in accordance with divine laws and traditions. Each religion has its own approach to understanding life and guiding behavior, but all religions help to form belief systems (McGuire, 2019; Halbertal & Holmes, 2017).

A belief system is a framework of ideas that shapes how a person interprets the world and how they act within it. These systems are often influenced by religion but can also be shaped by secular ideas, philosophies, or cultural traditions. Importantly, belief systems are embedded within culture. Culture refers to the shared customs, traditions, and values of a group of people. It's how societies define their way of life, including what is considered right or wrong, how people should interact with each other, and how they celebrate important events. Belief systems are a key part of culture because they help establish the values that people live by. For example, in many Christian-majority cultures, religious holidays like Christmas and Easter are not just religious but also cultural celebrations. Similarly, belief systems shape attitudes toward marriage, education, and morality (Appiah, 2018; Barker & Jane, 2016).

Religion plays a major role in shaping belief systems by offering clear moral guidelines, answers to life's biggest questions, and a sense of community and belonging. Here are some of the ways religion influences belief systems:

1. **Moral Guidelines:** Many religions provide a code of ethics or set of moral rules that tell followers how to live. In Christianity, for example, the Ten Commandments guide behavior, teaching followers to honor their parents, avoid stealing, and treat others with kindness (Strawn, 2021).
2. **Worldview:** Religion also helps shape how people see the world. For instance, a Christian worldview often emphasizes the idea of life as a journey toward salvation, while a Buddhist

might view life as a series of reincarnations, where actions in one life affect the next (Flanagan, 2018).

3. Cultural Traditions: Religion is often closely linked to cultural practices. In many cases, religious beliefs are woven into holidays, family traditions, and communal events, influencing not just individual behavior but the wider culture as well (Nye, 2020).

4. Community and Social Behavior: Religion creates a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. Most religions encourage helping others, supporting those in need, and building strong communities. These values shape both individual actions and societal expectations (Tacey, 2021).

5. Views on Life and Death: Religious beliefs about life and death shape how people live and make decisions. For example, Christians believe in an afterlife where actions on Earth affect their eternal fate. This belief can influence moral decisions and how people prioritize different aspects of their lives (King, 2019).

Through these mechanisms, religion not only helps people develop a personal sense of right and wrong but also shapes the cultures and communities they belong to. In today's digital world, sharenting has become common. For Christian parents, sharenting takes on a unique dimension as it intersects with faith, values, and community engagement. Many Christian parents view their children as gifts from God, and sharing their milestones is often seen as an expression of gratitude, testimony, and celebration. Christian parents use social media as a platform to acknowledge God's presence in their families, reinforcing their faith by sharing spiritual moments, answered prayers and acts of kindness (Jones, 2015). Additionally, Christian fellowship and community play a significant role in influencing sharenting behaviors. Social media enables Christian parents to stay connected with their church community, receive encouragement, and participate in faith-based discussions. Online sharing allows Christian parents to seek guidance from fellow believers, engage in collective

prayer and strengthen their spiritual ties (Johnson, 2018). Posting about children's involvement in church activities, religious milestones, or acts of service helps cultivate a shared sense of faith and reinforces the importance of raising children with Christian principles.

However, Christian teachings also emphasize modesty, wisdom and protection, which may lead some parents to approach sharenting with caution and discretion. Livingstone & Blum-Ross (2020) highlight that Christian values advocate for the protection of the vulnerable, including children, making it essential for parents to exercise discernment in their online sharing habits. Overexposure of a child's personal life may contradict Christian principles of humility and privacy, prompting some parents to limit public sharing and prioritize family-centered communication instead. Christianity also teaches about avoiding vanity and comparison, which are common pitfalls of social media. Excessive sharenting may lead to unintentional self-promotion, encouraging a mindset of competition, materialism or pride (Hope, 2019). Many Christian parents recognize the spiritual risks of oversharing and strive to find a balance between celebrating their children's achievements and maintaining a humble, faith-centered online presence.

Sharenting is a complex and evolving aspect of modern parenting, blending personal expression, social engagement, and ethical considerations. While digital platforms provide valuable opportunities for connection and celebration, they also introduce significant privacy concerns and long-term implications for children's digital identities. For Christian parents, sharenting is further shaped by faith-driven principles, requiring careful discernment, modesty and wisdom in navigating online sharing. This project seeks to examine how Christian parents balance the joys of digital storytelling with the responsibility of safeguarding their children's futures. By exploring their motivations, concerns and decision-

making processes, this research aims to provide insights into faith-informed digital parenting and offer guidance on ethical, responsible, and value-driven sharenting practices.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The widespread practice of sharenting raises concerns about children's privacy, safety, and digital footprint. While some parents might view online sharing as a way to celebrate their children's lives and connect with others, potential negative consequences exist. These include; privacy violations, cyberbullying, identity theft and reputation management.

This project work aims to understand how Christian parents grapple with these issues and reconcile their faith-based values with online sharing practices.

1.3 AIMS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The main aim of this project is to investigate how sharenting affects christian parents or christian homes.

The specific objectives are to:

- Explore the perceptions of Christian parents regarding online sharing of children's content.
- Identify the factors influencing Christian parents' decisions to share or not share their children's information online.
- Examine how Christian values inform sharenting practices among Christian parents.
- Analyze the potential risks and benefits associated with sharenting from the perspective of Christian parents.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

This project will employ questionnaire as the primary research tool to explore the perceptions, factors, values, and risks related to sharenting among Christian parents. The questionnaire will be designed to gather data in order to address each of the specific research objectives

outlined. The decision to use a questionnaire stems from its effectiveness in reaching a larger sample size, as well as its ability to gather detailed, structured responses on specific aspects of Christian parents' attitudes toward sharing their children's content online. This method allows for both breadth and depth, ensuring the project can uncover general trends and unique personal experiences related to sharenting.

In order to analyze the data gathered from the questionnaire responses, a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative analyses will be employed. Responses to closed-ended questions will be statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency distributions, means, and percentages, to summarize the general trends in Christian parents' perceptions of online sharing of their children's content. Cross-tabulation and correlation analyses will also be conducted to identify potential relationships between demographic factors (such as age, education level, and frequency of religious practice) and responses to key questions about sharenting behavior and influencing factors. For open-ended responses, a thematic analysis will be conducted to capture the nuanced views and motivations of Christian parents regarding sharenting practices. Responses will be coded and grouped according to common themes, which will help in identifying recurring ideas, beliefs, or concerns related to Christian values, perceived risks, and perceived benefits of sharenting. Through this approach, the analysis will aim to uncover how Christian values inform their sharenting behavior and to identify any underlying patterns or motivations that influence their decision-making. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses will be interpreted together to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research objectives. This triangulation of methods will help validate the findings, as patterns observed in quantitative data can be compared and contrasted with the themes identified in qualitative responses, yielding a more holistic view of the sharenting behaviors and motivations of Christian parents.

The methodology for this project is designed to comprehensively explore the perceptions, factors, values, and risks associated with sharenting among Christian parents. By using a well-structured questionnaire that combines both closed and open-ended questions, the project aims to gather a diverse range of data that will provide valuable insights into how Christian parents navigate the complexities of sharing their children's content online. Through a careful analysis of this data, the project will contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of faith in shaping digital parenting practices, while also highlighting the challenges and benefits that Christian parents perceive in the practice of sharenting.

1.4 SCOPE OF STUDY

This project focuses on the complex relationship between Christian parenting and sharenting behavior. This presents a compelling case project due to the confluence of a vibrant social media landscape and a strong Christian presence. By examining sharenting in this specific context, the project aims to offer culturally relevant insights that are also applicable to a broader Christian audience.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This project acknowledges the following limitations:

- The research may not be generalizable to all Christian denominations or cultural contexts.
- The subjective nature of online behavior and parental motivations might pose challenges in data collection.
- Social media trends and platforms change frequently thereby complicating the long-term relevance of findings on sharenting behaviors.
- Evaluating parenting practices related to faith can lead to sensitive judgments; careful, objective analysis is necessary to respect personal beliefs.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter proposes a conceptual framework for understanding sharenting phenomenon specifically among Christian parents. By drawing upon theological concepts of childhood and parenting alongside empirical research on sharenting motivations and implications, this framework seeks to illuminate the unique tensions and considerations faced by this group.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Concept of parenting

Parenting, as defined by the Encarta Dictionary, refers to the process of raising children and involves the experiences, skills, qualities, and responsibilities necessary for teaching and caring for them. It is the way parents interact with their children to encourage behaviors, knowledge, and values that they believe are essential for their child's personal growth, independence, and overall well-being (Hendri, 2019). Parenting encompasses the promotion and support of a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development from infancy to adulthood. The family plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's life (Krauss, 2020), with parents being the first and most significant influence. The approach parents take in raising their children greatly impacts the development of their self-concept (Curran, 2018), which is why parenting is considered a form of education. In modern society, the role of parents in child-rearing is essential, as the family serves as the foundation of society. A well-functioning home contributes to a stable society, whereas homes that fail in their responsibilities can negatively impact the larger community. Neglecting parental duties—such as providing basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter—can expose children to social vices such as theft, fraud, substance abuse, and early pregnancy. An increase in such negative

behaviors can make society unsafe. Therefore, parents must take an active role in their children's upbringing to create a positive and secure environment.

Parenting is a lifelong journey that requires nurturing, guidance, and education to help children grow into responsible and independent individuals. It extends beyond material support, as it also involves shaping a child's character, instilling discipline, and teaching values. Parents serve as primary role models, influencing their children's self-esteem, behavior, and social interactions. The Key Aspects of Parenting includes;

1. Physical Care and Protection

Parents are responsible for providing their children with necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, and safety. Meeting these fundamental needs ensures a child's survival and creates a stable foundation for emotional and intellectual development.

2. Emotional Support and Nurturance

Emotional well-being is crucial for a child's self-confidence and resilience. Parents should provide love, affection, and a secure environment where children feel valued and understood. This helps them build strong relationships and cope with life's challenges.

3. Social and Moral Guidance

Parents play a vital role in teaching children how to interact with others, follow societal norms, and develop ethical values. This includes teaching them right from wrong, fostering empathy, and encouraging respect for others. Such guidance helps children build friendships and become responsible members of society.

4. Cognitive Development and Education

Intellectual growth is another key responsibility of parents. Encouraging education, curiosity, and problem-solving skills prepares children for success in both academic and everyday life. Learning takes place in both formal settings, such as schools, and through informal experiences at home.

In 1967, psychologist Diana Baumrind categorized parenting into four distinct styles based on the level of warmth and control parents exert;

1. **Authoritative Parenting:** This approach balances high expectations with warmth and support. Authoritative parents set clear rules while encouraging independence, fostering both discipline and emotional security.

2. **Authoritarian Parenting:** This style involves strict rules and high expectations but lacks responsiveness to a child's emotions. While it may instill discipline, it can also lead to low self-esteem and emotional detachment.

3. **Permissive Parenting:** Permissive parents are highly responsive but impose few rules. While they maintain a close relationship with their children, a lack of discipline can lead to poor self-control and responsibility.

4. **Uninvolved Parenting:** Uninvolved parents show little interest in their child's life, providing neither emotional support nor structure. This neglectful style can result in issues with self-esteem, attachment, and behavior.

Meanwhile, as technology advances, parenting has expanded into the digital world. Parents must navigate challenges such as managing screen time, ensuring online safety, and protecting their child's privacy. The rise of social media has introduced the concept of "sharenting," where parents share their child's life online, raising concerns about privacy, consent, and digital footprints. Several factors shape parenting styles and decisions, which includes;

1. **Cultural Influences:** Parenting expectations vary across cultures, with some emphasizing independence while others prioritize obedience and family values.

2. **Religious Beliefs:** Many parents incorporate religious principles into their parenting, influencing discipline, moral education, and traditions.

3. Socioeconomic Status: Financial stability affects a parent's ability to provide for their child's needs and influences the quality of their upbringing.
4. Parenting Goals: Parents' long-term aspirations for their children, such as academic success or emotional well-being, guide their parenting methods.

However, parents face various challenges throughout their child's development, including:

1. Balancing Work and Family Life: Managing professional responsibilities alongside parenting can be demanding, affecting the time and energy available for child-rearing.
2. Dealing with Behavioral Issues: Children experience different developmental phases, each with its own challenges, requiring patience and discipline.
3. Managing Peer and Media Influence: As children grow, their values and behavior can be shaped by friends and media. Parents must stay involved to guide them effectively.
4. Parental Stress and Mental Health: Parenting can be emotionally exhausting, making self-care and seeking support essential for maintaining well-being.

Parenting is a dynamic and multifaceted responsibility that involves nurturing children in all aspects of life, physical, emotional, social, intellectual and moral. Effective parenting requires adaptability as children's needs evolve. Cultural and religious influences, modern challenges and technological advancements all shape parenting practices. Ultimately, successful parenting helps raise well-rounded, responsible individuals who contribute positively to society.

2.2.2 Concept of Christian Identity

The question, "Is everyone in the church a Christian?" requires a deeper exploration of how individuals relate to faith, church communities and Christian identity. It prompts us to distinguish between merely being associated with Christianity and having a genuine, personal belief. Understanding this issue requires first defining what it means to be a "Christian." Traditionally, Christian identity involves accepting core beliefs such as faith in Jesus Christ,

commitment to Christian teachings, and engaging in practices like prayer and worship that reflect these convictions (Olson, 2016). However, different Christian denominations emphasize different aspects of faith. For example, evangelical and Protestant traditions often focus on personal faith and conversion, whereas Catholic and Orthodox traditions place importance on participation in sacraments and connection to the broader church body (McKnight, 2016). Consequently, while some churchgoers actively embrace and practice Christian beliefs, others may identify as Christian in name only, without deep personal commitment.

Sociologists note that church membership is not always a direct reflection of religious belief but can also serve as a form of social or cultural affiliation. Ammerman (2014) suggests that many people attend church not solely for spiritual reasons but also to maintain social ties, fulfill family expectations or find a sense of community. In societies with strong Christian traditions, church participation may be more of a cultural norm than a reflection of personal faith. Research on nominal Christianity supports this idea. Baker and Perry (2017) describe nominal Christians as individuals who identify as Christian and may participate in church events like holiday services or baptisms, yet lack a deep commitment to Christian doctrine or a daily practice of faith. For these individuals, church attendance does not necessarily indicate an internalized belief in or adherence to Christian teachings.

Psychologists have explored cognitive dissonance as a way to explain why some people participate in religious communities despite struggling with or questioning their faith. Cognitive dissonance occurs when an individual's actions do not fully align with their beliefs, creating psychological tension (Festinger, 1957). In the context of church, this may happen when people attend services and engage in rituals despite having doubts about Christian teachings. Research by Smith and Snell (2019) highlights that many young people identify as Christian primarily due to family influence, societal expectations, or peer pressure rather than

personal conviction. In such cases, continued church involvement may either lead to a deepened faith or eventual disengagement from religious belief altogether.

From a theological standpoint, true Christian identity typically requires both internal belief and outward practice, not just institutional membership. Protestant and evangelical perspectives emphasize that Christianity is based on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, conversion, and living out Christian values (McKnight, 2016). Without this personal faith, church attendance alone is considered insufficient for genuine Christian identity. Catholic and Orthodox traditions also stress the importance of faith and practice but incorporate a sacramental approach, where baptism and participation in the sacraments are central to one's connection to the church. However, even within these traditions, there is a distinction between those who are baptized members of the church and those who actively live out their faith (Rahner & Vorgrimler, 2019). This highlights the ongoing distinction between nominal Christianity and a true, faith-driven commitment.

The concept of "cultural Christianity" describes individuals who identify as Christians primarily due to cultural, familial, or societal influences rather than personal religious belief. Cultural Christians may engage in church activities, celebrate religious holidays, or attend services out of tradition rather than faith. This phenomenon is particularly common in regions where Christianity is historically dominant, making church participation a part of social life rather than a personal spiritual commitment (Ammerman, 2014). For cultural Christians, the church may serve as a place of social connection rather than a setting for deepening faith, meaning their identification as Christian is based more on heritage than on belief.

Family and peer influence also play a significant role in shaping church participation and religious identity. Studies by Smith and Snell (2019) indicate that many children and adolescents in religious families adopt their parents' faith out of habit or familial obligation. However, as they grow older, some may question or move away from these beliefs if they

lack personal conviction. This dynamic shows that church involvement can sometimes reflect social conformity rather than authentic faith. For example, young adults may continue attending church to respect family traditions, even if they no longer identify with Christian teachings. This highlights how external pressures can shape religious identity in ways that may not always reflect deep, personal faith.

Ultimately, the question "Is everyone in the church a Christian?" sheds light on the broader issue of religious identity and church affiliation. While church membership and attendance indicate some level of connection to Christianity, they do not necessarily reflect personal faith or commitment. Some individuals participate in church life for social, cultural, or familial reasons rather than out of spiritual conviction. From theological, sociological, and psychological perspectives, church affiliation alone does not define someone as a true Christian. Instead, authentic Christian identity involves a transformative faith in Jesus Christ that is reflected in both belief and practice, not just in church attendance or institutional membership.

2.2.3 Concept of Christian parenting

Christian parenting is the practice of raising children according to the teachings, values, and principles of the Christian faith. It extends beyond meeting physical and emotional needs, emphasizing spiritual growth and moral development. Parents serve not only as caregivers but also as spiritual mentors, guiding their children in understanding God, the Bible, and Christian virtues. The primary goal is to nurture children who live by biblical principles and follow Christ in both their personal and communal lives (Collins, 2021). At the core of Christian parenting is a commitment to instilling faith, character and moral understanding within a Christian worldview. This parenting approach prioritizes love, guidance, discipline and fostering a personal relationship with God through prayer, scripture study, and active participation in the Christian community. It also emphasizes values such as love, integrity

and compassion, modeled after the example of Jesus Christ. Felber (2019) highlights three key ways Christian parenting principles are taught: positive examples in scripture, cultural insights into parenting, and direct biblical commands given to Christian parents. These elements help parents navigate the balance between biblical teachings and practical parenting approaches.

The Bible serves as the foundation for Christian parenting, providing wisdom and instruction for raising children. Passages such as Proverbs 22:6 ("Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it") emphasize the importance of parental guidance in shaping a child's moral and spiritual development. Parents are encouraged to integrate biblical teachings into daily life, both formally (through prayer and scripture study) and informally (through conversations and family activities) (Parker, 2020). This ensures that faith becomes a natural and integral part of a child's worldview (McCoy, 2022). The key principles of Christian parenting includes;

1. Spiritual Leadership and Discipleship

Christian parents are called to be spiritual leaders in their households, ensuring that their children not only learn about Christian teachings but also live them out (Kraft, 2018). Discipleship is a lifelong process that involves teaching children about prayer, worship, Bible study and Christian service. Parents are encouraged to model these behaviors through family devotions, church attendance and acts of service (Kern, 2020). The ultimate goal is to lead children toward a personal and enduring faith in Christ.

2. Moral and Ethical Development

A key aspect of Christian parenting is teaching children to distinguish right from wrong based on biblical principles (Matthews, 2021). Parents emphasize virtues such as honesty, humility, kindness and respect, teaching that morality is absolute, grounded in God's truth rather than

societal trends (Smith, 2019). By instilling Christ-like character traits, parents prepare their children to make ethical decisions that reflect their faith (Jones, 2023).

3. Discipline Rooted in Love

Discipline in Christian parenting is not merely about punishment but about guiding children toward righteousness (Carter, 2021). Proverbs 13:24 highlights the importance of discipline in shaping a child's character. Parents are encouraged to correct behavior with love, fairness, and consistency, ensuring that discipline is paired with encouragement and instruction. This approach helps children understand the consequences of their actions and align their behavior with biblical teachings (Morris, 2022).

4. Forgiveness and Grace

Just as God offers grace to believers, Christian parents are called to extend forgiveness to their children. This creates a loving and supportive environment where children can learn from their mistakes without fear of rejection (Towns, 2019). Teaching children to forgive others and practice grace fosters empathy, patience, and Christ-like compassion in their relationships (Ray, 2020).

5. The Role of the Church and Community

Christian parenting does not occur in isolation. The church and broader Christian community provide crucial support, reinforcing biblical teachings and offering spiritual mentorship (Rodriguez, 2023). Parents are encouraged to involve their children in church activities, where they can grow in faith through fellowship and service. Additionally, surrounding children with a network of Christian families helps strengthen their spiritual foundation (Watson, 2024).

Meanwhile, in today's rapidly changing society, Christian parents face unique challenges in raising their children with a faith-centered perspective (Fletcher, 2022).

1. Navigating Secular Influences

Secular culture often promotes values that conflict with biblical teachings, making it essential for Christian parents to help their children develop discernment (Davis, 2021). By setting boundaries on media consumption and discussing societal trends from a biblical perspective, parents equip their children to engage with the world while maintaining their faith (Keller, 2020).

2. Balancing Technology and Faith

While technology can be a valuable tool, it also presents risks such as exposure to harmful content and social media pressures (Johnson, 2023). Christian parents are encouraged to set healthy limits on screen time and ensure technology is used in ways that honor God. They can also leverage faith-based resources to strengthen their child's spiritual growth (Thompson, 2022).

3. Instilling Christian Identity in a Pluralistic Society

As children encounter diverse beliefs and worldviews, Christian parenting involves teaching them to respect others while remaining firm in their faith (Peters, 2024). Parents help children understand that while they should be kind and accepting, they must also stand by biblical truths, even when faced with opposition (Harris, 2021).

Christian parenting is a holistic approach that integrates faith into every aspect of a child's upbringing. By prioritizing prayer, biblical instruction, loving discipline, and church involvement, Christian parents strive to raise children who not only believe in Christ but also live out their faith in meaningful ways. Despite the challenges of a secular world, Christian parenting aims to equip children with a strong spiritual foundation, enabling them to navigate life with wisdom, integrity, and a commitment to God.

2.2.4 Concept of Shrenting

Sharenting refers to the practice of parents sharing information, images, and experiences about their children online, often engaging both personal and public audiences (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017). This phenomenon has emerged with the widespread use of the internet and the rise of social media in the early 2000s. The constant presence of digital platforms has transformed how families document and share their lives, making it easier for parents to capture milestones, connect with loved one and curate an online presence. As a result, sharenting has become a common practice, reflecting the ways in which modern parents engage with digital culture. Some researchers argue that sharenting is, in part, driven by a parent's desire for social attention (Klucarova & Hasford, 2021).

While sharing family moments online fosters connection and preserves memories, it also raises significant concerns about privacy, identity and the long-term effects of a child's digital footprint. Parents engage in sharenting for various reasons, some wish to document their children's growth, while others use social media to maintain relationships with distant friends and family. Additionally, online sharing allows parents to showcase their caregiving role, often seeking validation through likes, comments, and shares. The evolution of Web 2.0, marked by the rise of blogs and social networking sites, has amplified this trend, making the digital documentation of family life more widespread and influencing parental decisions regarding online sharing.

Despite its benefits, sharenting presents a range of ethical dilemmas, particularly regarding a child's privacy and autonomy. One major issue is the lack of consent, children, as they grow older, may not appreciate having their personal moments publicly shared. Posts that seem harmless to parents could later become a source of embarrassment or even harm their online reputation. Additionally, oversharing personal details, such as birthdays, school locations, or full names, increases the risk of identity theft, potentially affecting a child's financial security or future opportunities. Another significant concern is the potential for online harassment.

Publicly shared images and information can be misused, exposing children to cyberbullying or even more serious threats. Since digital content can be copied, repurposed, or accessed by unintended audiences, it becomes difficult to control its long-term impact.

A key psychological aspect of sharenting is the concept of the "extended self," which suggests that parents' online representations of their children are not just documentation but also a form of self-expression. In sharing their children's lives, parents are, in essence, extending their own identities into the digital world. This form of digital self-representation allows them to construct and present a particular version of themselves to their online communities. By shaping narratives about their children, parents may also be reinforcing their own social image as attentive and engaged caregivers.

Although sharenting poses potential risks, parents can adopt responsible sharing practices to minimize harm while still preserving cherished family moments online. Open communication with children is essential, parents should involve them in discussions about what is shared and seek their consent as they grow older. Understanding and utilizing privacy settings on social media platforms can help control who has access to a child's content, reducing exposure to unwanted audiences. Moreover, parents should be mindful of what they share, avoiding sensitive details such as location tags, full names, or embarrassing images. Sharing age-appropriate and positive content ensures that a child's digital presence remains respectful and secure. Lastly, respecting a child's boundaries is crucial, if a child expresses discomfort with certain content being shared, parents should honor their wishes to foster trust and protect their digital autonomy.

Sharenting is a double-edged sword, it offers a means for connection and memory preservation but also necessitates caution and ethical responsibility. As digital culture continues to evolve, parents must find a balance between documenting precious moments and safeguarding their child's privacy. By understanding the motivations, risks, and best practices

associated with sharenting, parents can create a positive and secure online experience for their children while ensuring their digital footprint remains safe and respectful.

2.3 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDY

The rise of social media has led to the widespread phenomenon of “sharenting”, a term that describes the practice of parents sharing images, videos and personal stories about their children online. This digital-age behavior is an extension of traditional parental sharing, where families have long documented their children’s growth and milestones through photographs and storytelling. However, the advent of social media has greatly amplified this practice, allowing parents to instantly distribute content to a vast audience. In previous generations, capturing and sharing photos required significant effort, including purchasing film, developing photographs, and physically sharing them with family and friends. Today, with high-quality smartphone cameras and social media platforms, parents can effortlessly document and broadcast their children’s lives in real time. This shift has transformed parenting into a highly digitalized experience, where traditional family photo albums are increasingly being replaced by online records of childhood (Autenrieth, 2018).

A defining feature of sharenting is the expansive and often unpredictable audience that social media provides. Unlike private photo albums or home videos that remained within the family, online posts have the potential to be shared widely, sometimes even going viral. This raises concerns about privacy, safety and the ethical implications of exposing children to an online audience before they can consent. Once shared, images and videos can be saved, reposted and misused in ways beyond the parents' control. In some cases, sharenting has led to unintended consequences, such as content being accessed by child predators or used for cyberbullying. Experts warn that children's digital footprints, often referred to as "digital tattoos" can have long-term implications on their privacy and identity, as online posts can resurface years later

(Blum-Ross, 2016). In addition to privacy concerns, sharenting has contributed to a cultural shift in how parenting is publicly performed. Social media has become a platform for parents to seek validation, share parenting struggles, and connect with others through their experiences. This has led to sharenting becoming a widely accepted norm, despite the risks it poses (Brosch, 2016). While many parents engage in sharenting with good intentions—such as preserving memories, seeking advice, or staying connected with family—there is growing debate about whether children’s rights to privacy are being compromised in the process.

Sharenting is particularly prevalent among digital natives—those who have grown up in the era of the internet and social media, who are now becoming parents. Millennials, born between the mid-1980s and 1990s, make up a significant portion of today’s parents and are more likely to integrate social media into their parenting experience (Bannon et al., 2011). Unlike previous generations, who were introduced to the online world as teenagers or adults, millennials have long been accustomed to documenting and sharing their personal lives online. This behavior has naturally extended to their parenting style, where sharing updates about their children feels like a continuation of their own digital presence. However, a crucial difference between millennial parents and their children is that while millennials chose to enter the digital world, their children are being introduced to it without their consent (Autenrieth, 2018). This has sparked ethical discussions about the rights of children in the digital age. Should parents have the authority to create an online identity for their children before they can make that choice for themselves? As children grow older, they may develop their own perspectives on the content their parents have shared, potentially leading to feelings of embarrassment or resentment.

Research has identified specific patterns in the way parents engage in sharenting. Parents are most likely to share content during significant milestones, such as birthdays, holidays, first

steps, school performances, and other notable achievements (Choi & Lewallen, 2018). These moments hold sentimental value and are often seen as worth documenting and celebrating with others. Additionally, parents may use social media to seek validation for their parenting skills, share humorous or relatable moments, or receive advice and support from their online community. To mitigate privacy risks, some parents attempt to control their audience by adjusting privacy settings or limiting their posts to specific groups of friends and family. However, studies suggest that these measures are not always effective, as content can still be screenshotted, reshared, or accessed through security loopholes (Brosch, 2016).

A major concern surrounding sharenting is its impact on children's psychological well-being and their right to privacy. By sharing personal details about their children's lives, parents may unintentionally expose them to digital culture from infancy, leaving them vulnerable to future consequences. Children's identities are being shaped online before they have the cognitive ability to understand what it means to have a digital presence. A national survey conducted by the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI, 2015) revealed that nearly 20% of parents admitted to sharing content that their children might later find embarrassing. Additionally, 10% of children have asked their parents to delete posts about them, highlighting a growing awareness among younger generations about their digital privacy. One widely discussed example occurred in Nigeria in 2020 when a mother shared a video of her young son pleading for forgiveness after being scolded for misbehavior. The video, known as "Mummy Calm Down," quickly went viral, turning the child into an internet sensation. While the video brought temporary fame, the long-term psychological impact on the child remains uncertain. Similar cases exist worldwide, where children become the subjects of viral memes or online trends without their understanding or consent. Beyond privacy concerns, academic research has identified various risks associated with sharenting, including:

1. **Digital Kidnapping:** Strangers can download and misuse images of children, sometimes even creating fake profiles using these images (O’Neill, 2015).
2. **Cyberbullying:** Children may become targets of online harassment if their images or personal stories are shared widely (Nottingham, 2019).
3. **Identity Theft:** Personal information shared by parents, such as full names, birthdates, and locations, can be exploited for fraudulent activities (Otero, 2017).
4. **Long-Term Reputational Damage:** Future academic or professional opportunities could be affected if embarrassing or inappropriate content resurfaces in later years.

Some parents unknowingly contribute to child exploitation by posting images that could be misused on inappropriate websites. In one alarming case, a YouTuber discovered that seemingly innocent parenting videos had been linked to websites promoting pedophilia, prompting them to delete all child-related content (Tait, 2021).

A particularly concerning aspect of sharenting is the trend of “child shaming,” where parents publicly discipline their children through social media. This practice includes posting pictures of children holding signs that detail their misbehavior, sharing their disappointing grades, or recording punishments such as forced haircuts or public humiliation. Studies suggest that these actions can amount to emotional abuse, leaving lasting psychological scars on children (Apostolides & Harvey, 2018; Nottingham, 2019). To navigate the challenges of sharenting, some parents adopt a more mindful approach. Strategies for responsible sharenting include:

- Photographing children from behind or capturing only partial images (e.g., hands, feet)
- Using digital edits such as emojis or blurring to protect children’s identities
- Limiting posts to private groups or encrypted messaging apps
- Seeking children’s consent before sharing their images, especially as they grow older

For Christian parents, the ethical dilemma of sharenting takes on an additional layer of moral responsibility. Biblical principles emphasize protecting the dignity of children, practicing wisdom in speech and actions, and being good stewards of one's responsibilities. Christian parents must carefully balance the desire to celebrate their children with the duty to protect them from potential harm. Sharenting is a complex and evolving issue in the digital age. While it offers benefits such as social connection and memory preservation, it also presents significant risks related to privacy, safety, and ethical considerations. As technology continues to advance, parents must make informed decisions about how they document and share their children's lives online. Future research should explore how different communities, including religious groups, navigate the challenges of sharenting and develop ethical guidelines that align with both digital safety and moral values.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter details the research methodology employed to investigate the intricate world of sharenting practices among Christian parents. It delves into the study's population and sampling techniques, the instrument used for data collection, procedures for ensuring validity and reliability, data collection procedures, and the chosen method of data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted a quantitative research methodology utilizing a survey approach. This method is deemed most appropriate as it allows for the efficient collection of data from Christian parents at Foursquare Gospel Church over a period of 30 days, providing a

snapshot of their sharenting behaviors, motivations, and perceptions. This approach aligns with the research objectives, which aim to understand the prevalent nature of sharenting within this specific population group.

3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study comprises of Christian parents in Foursquare Gospel Church, who use social media platforms. This group represents the totality of individuals to whom the findings of this study will be generalized. This meaning ensures a focused investigation into a population group where the intersection of faith, parenting, and digital media use is particularly relevant.

Defining "Christian parents" requires careful consideration. This study used a self-identification approach, allowing participants to identify themselves as Christian based on their personal beliefs and practices. This approach avoids imposing strict theological criteria. Insights from this specific population will be applied to similar Christian communities with comparable demographics and religious contexts, providing a broader understanding of the impact of faith on parenting.

3.4 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The sample for this study consists of Christian parents who are members of the Foursquare Gospel Church and engage in social media. These parents are selected because they can provide relevant insights into how Christian values influence sharenting practices. Since the research focuses on a specific group, this study employs purposive sampling, a method that allows the researcher to intentionally select participants who meet predefined criteria. In this case, participants must be members of the Foursquare Gospel Church and use social media to share content about their children (sharenting). Purposive sampling ensures that the study

gathers rich, meaningful data from individuals who have direct experience with sharenting within a Christian faith context. This approach is ideal because it focuses on relevance rather than randomness, making it effective for understanding how faith-based beliefs shape online parenting behaviors (Etikan et al, 2016).

A target sample size of 200 was anticipated. This sample size provided adequate statistical power to detect significant relationships and differences between variables.

3.5 INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

A structured questionnaire was the primary instrument for data collection. This questionnaire serves as a standardized tool to gather comprehensive and comparable data from all participants. The questionnaire consist of both closed-ended such as multiple-choice and Likert scales, allowing for both quantitative data analysis. The questionnaire used in this project is included in Appendix A. The structured format ensures clarity, consistency, and ease of data analysis.

The survey was conducted online using Google Forms to ensure easy access and wider participation among Christian parents in the Foursquare Gospel Church. The questionnaire is divided into sections covering demographics, Christian values, perceptions of sharenting, privacy concerns, and online behaviors. The questionnaire was divided into distinct sections, each addressing a specific aspect of the research topic:

- Demographics and social media use: This section gathered information on participants' age, gender, denomination, education level, social media usage patterns (platforms used, frequency, duration), and online privacy practices.
- Sharenting practices: This section delved into the specifics of participants' sharenting behaviors, including the frequency of posting about their children, the platforms used

for sharing, the types of content shared (photos, videos, anecdotes), and the intended audience for these posts.

- Motivations for sharenting: This section explored the underlying reasons behind participants' sharenting practices. Questions addressed motivations such as documenting and celebrating milestones, seeking social support and connection, expressing parental pride, and shaping their online identity as parents.
- Theological perspectives: This section examined participants' theological beliefs about childhood, parenting, online safety, and the intersection of faith and digital media. Questions explored their views on children as gifts from God, the importance of protecting children's innocence, and the role of technology in family life.
- Perceptions and attitudes: This section gauged participants' perceptions and attitudes towards sharenting, including their views on the benefits and risks, their awareness of children's privacy concerns, and their ethical considerations when sharing about their children online.

3.6 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

This process ensures that the study adheres to ethical guidelines and protects the rights and well-being of the participants. Participants were parents in Foursquare Gospel Church. Interested individuals were directed to an online platform (Google form) where they can access the questionnaire.

Every effort was made to ensure that objectivity and fairness were maintained throughout the data collection process. To prevent bias, the questionnaire was structured with clear, neutral questions that did not lead respondents toward specific answers. Additionally, participants were encouraged to provide honest and independent responses, ensuring that their perspectives were not influenced. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, participants were

not required to provide their names or any other personally identifiable information on the questionnaire for judgment or external pressure. This approach ensured that the collected data was authentic, unbiased and reflective of diverse experiences within the Foursquare Gospel Church community.

Hence, the questionnaire for this project was designed to explore Christian parents' perceptions, motivations and concerns regarding sharenting. It consists of several key sections:

1. Demographics

This section collects background information on participants, including: age, number of children, role of parenting, frequency of use of social media, Christian identification, faith in daily life and decisions, and level of church involvement. This data will help identify trends and differences in sharenting behaviors across different groups of Christian parents.

2. Perceptions of Sharenting

The questionnaire included questions aimed at understanding how Christian parents feel about sharenting. Participants were asked to rate their agreement with statements such as “Sharing my child’s content online helps me feel connected with family and friends” or “I feel uncomfortable sharing personal information about my child on social media”. A combination of Likert scale questions and open-ended responses captured their personal perspectives.

3. Factors Influencing Sharenting Decisions

This section explored the internal and external factors that shape parents’ decisions to share or not share their children’s content online. Key factors like privacy concerns, peer influence,

church teachings, family pressure, and digital literacy were included. The questionnaire will also examine whether factors such as church involvement and exposure to technology affect sharenting behaviors.

4. Religious Beliefs and Sharenting Practices

The questionnaire examined the role of Christian values in shaping online behavior. Parents reflected on statements such as “My faith encourages me to share my family’s milestones and blessings online” or “I avoid sharing content about my children because I believe in preserving their privacy as part of my Christian values”. It also explored how Christian principles such as modesty, stewardship and family protection influence parents’ sharenting decisions.

5. Risks and Benefits of Sharenting

This section assessed parents’ concerns about online risks such as privacy breaches, online predators and long-term digital footprints. Participants were asked to rate statements such as “I am concerned that sharing my child’s content online may expose them to online dangers” or “I worry about how my child will feel about the content I share when they are older”. The perceived benefits of sharenting were also explored, including maintaining family connections, documenting milestones, and strengthening faith-based relationships.

This structured approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of how Christian parents navigate sharenting, balancing their faith, privacy concerns and digital engagement.

3.7 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics was adopted to summarize and describe the characteristics of the sample and their responses. This includes:

- Frequencies and Percentages: To describe categorical variables, such as gender, denomination, and social media platforms used.
- Means and Standard Deviations: To describe continuous variables, such as age, frequency of sharenting, and scores on scales measuring theological beliefs and privacy concerns.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This project delved into the sensitive realm of parenting, religious beliefs, and online behavior, necessitating a heightened awareness of ethical considerations throughout the research process.

- Informed Consent: Obtaining informed consent is paramount. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence.
- Confidentiality and Anonymity: Stringent measures was taken to protect participants' identities and responses. Data will be anonymized, stored securely, and only accessible to authorized researchers.
- Potential for Harm: While the study does not involve direct interaction with children, sensitivity was exercised in handling data and discussing findings to avoid inadvertently identifying or stigmatizing any individual or family.

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in this study, outlining the steps taken to ensure rigor, validity, and ethical integrity. By

adhering to these principles, the study aims to generate meaningful and trustworthy findings that contribute to a deeper understanding of sharenting practices among Christian parents.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected from respondents. It precisely covers the descriptive analysis, interpretation and presentation of demographic information of the respondents and data received from the respondents on questions related to Christian parents and sharenting behaviour at Foursquare Gospel Church. Also, in this chapter, the regression analysis and its interpretation with respect to the hypothetical relationship of Christian parents and sharenting behaviour.

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

This section contains a descriptive analysis of the demographic data drawn from the study's respondents. The demographic variables include age, number of children, role in parenting, use of social media, Christian identification, faith in daily life and decisions and level of involvement in Foursquare Gospel Church.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

S/N	Categories	Frequency	
		No.	%
1.	Age		
	18–25	64	17

	26–35	57	32
	36–45	36	28.5
	46-55	34	18
	56 and above	9	14.5
	Total	200	100%
2.	Number of Children		
	1	27	13.5
	2-3	87	43
	4-5	78	39
	More than 5	9	4.5
	Total	200	100%
3	Role in parenting		
	Primary caregiver	73	36.5
	Shared caregiving responsibility	100	50
	Secondary caregiver	27	13.5
	Total	200	100%
4.	Use of social media		
	Daily	130	65

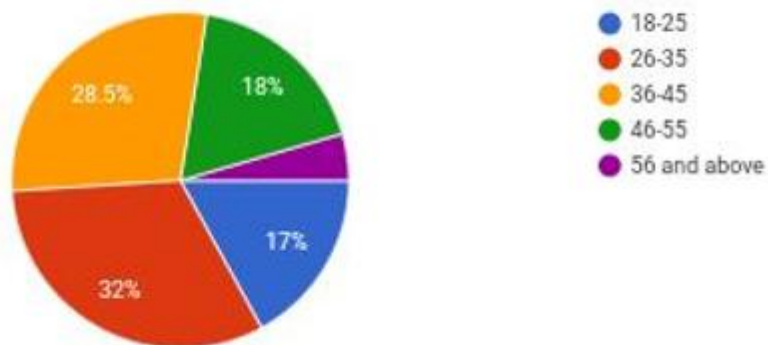
	Weekly	33	16.5
	Monthly	19	9.5
	Rarely	18	9
	Total	200	100%
5.	Christian identification		
	Yes	198	99
	No	2	1
	Total	200	100%
6.	Faith in daily life and decisions		
	Very important	118	59
	Somewhat important	50	25
	Not very important	23	11.5
	Not important at all	9	4.5
	Total	200	100%
7.	Level of involvement in Foursquare Gospel Church.		
	Very involved (e.g leadership	90	45

	roles)		
	Moderately involved	58	29
	Occasionally involved	30	15
	Not involved	22	11
	Total	200	100%

This project provides demographic details of Christian parents at Foursquare Gospel Church, focusing on age, number of children, role in parenting, social media use, Christian identification, faith in daily life, and church involvement. These factors influence sharenting (sharing parenting experiences online).

What is your age group?

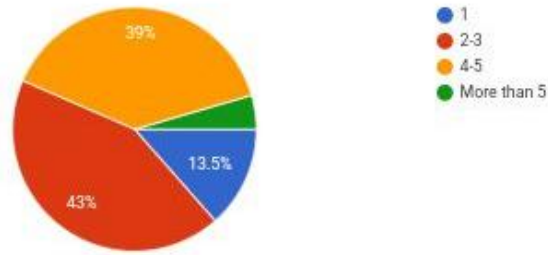
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How many children do you have

200 responses

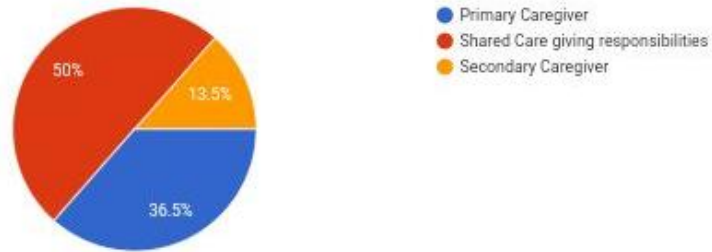
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What is your role in parenting?

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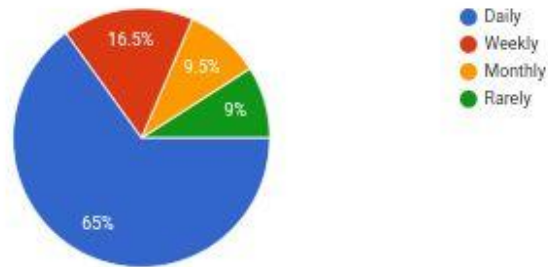
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How often do you use social media?

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Do you identify as a Christian?

200 responses

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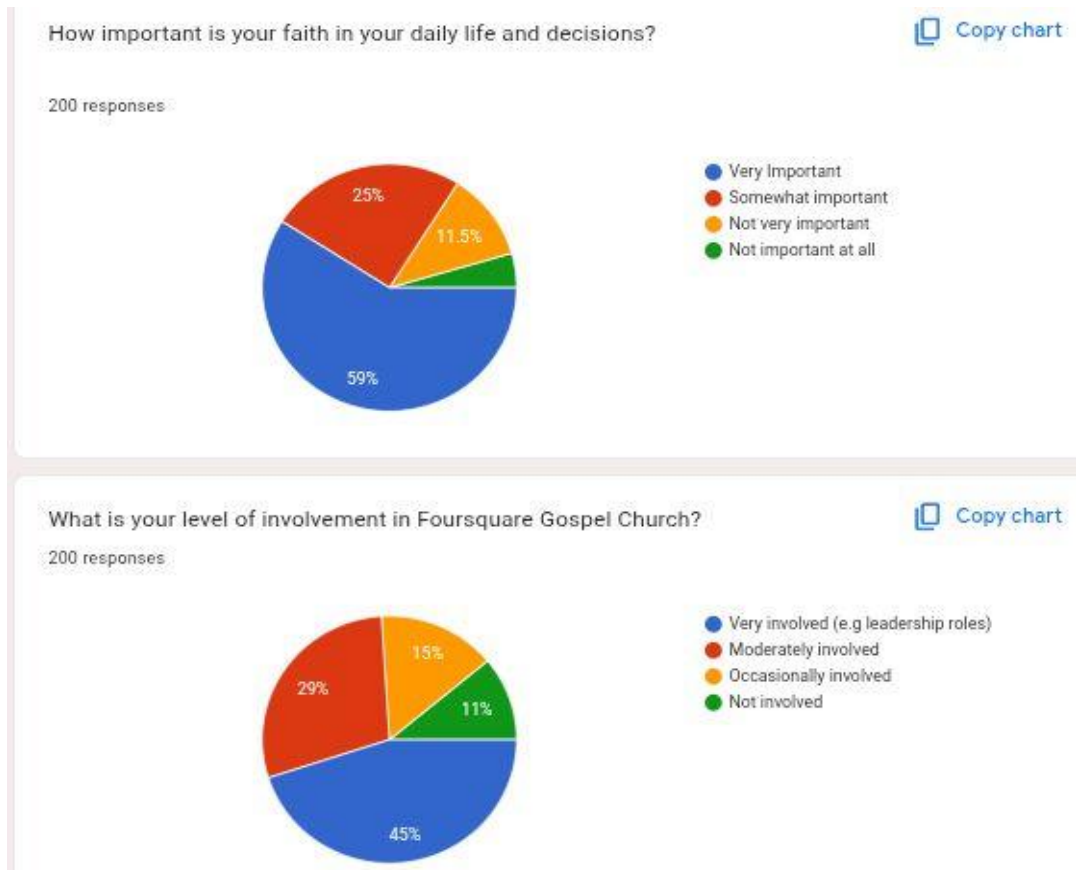


Figure 1.1 Demographics percentage of Participants

Table 4.1 presents the demographic details of the participants in the study, who are Christian parents from Foursquare Gospel Church that use social media. The demographic characteristics include age, number of children, role in parenting, frequency of social media usage, Christian identification, Faith in daily life and decisions and Level of involvement in Foursquare Gospel church. Understanding these factors helps to contextualize the findings on sharenting behavior, as different demographic groups may have varying attitudes toward online privacy, child protection, and religious values.

The age distribution of respondents indicates that the majority fall within the 26–35 and 36–45 age brackets, accounting for 32% and 28.5%, respectively. This suggests that most of the study participants are in their prime parenting years, actively raising children and making digital decisions regarding sharenting. The number of children per respondent also provides

valuable insight into the parenting dynamics of this population. The largest group (43%) has two to three children, followed closely by those with four to five children (39%), indicating that many respondents manage multiple children's digital presence.

Regarding parenting roles, half of the respondents (50%) reported sharing caregiving responsibilities with their spouse or other family members, while 36.5% identified as the primary caregiver. This highlights the collaborative nature of parenting in Christian households, where decision-making about children's online presence may involve both parents.

Social media usage patterns reveal that 65% of respondents use social media daily, emphasizing its integral role in modern parenting. A smaller proportion (16.5%) reported using social media weekly, while 9.5% and 9% stated they engage monthly or rarely, respectively. These findings suggest that digital platforms are an important space for communication and community engagement among Christian parents.

Christian identification is nearly universal among the respondents, with 99% identifying as Christian. Additionally, faith plays a significant role in decision-making, as 59% consider it very important in their daily lives, while 25% view it as somewhat important. Only a small fraction (4.5%) do not regard faith as important at all. This underscores the influence of religious beliefs on sharenting behavior, particularly in terms of privacy concerns and values of modesty and stewardship.

The level of involvement in church activities is another crucial aspect. A significant proportion (45%) are very involved in church activities, often taking leadership roles, while

29% reported being moderately involved. Another 15% participate occasionally, whereas 11% stated they are not involved at all. This suggests that faith-based teachings and community norms may influence how parents approach online sharing.

Overall, the demographic profile in Table 4.1 provides important context for understanding sharenting behaviors among Christian parents. It highlights the intersection of age, parenting roles, social media engagement, and religious commitment, all of which contribute to how parents navigate the digital world in relation to their children.

4.3 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH VARIABLES

Table 4.2: Description of Research variables

S/N	Item	Frequency							Decision
		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD	
	Perceptions of Online Sharing.								
	Sharing content about your children online is comfortable.	20	70	68	23	19	2.76	1.09	Accepted
	Sharing my child’s milestones online is an important way to stay connected with family and friends.	15	34	78	56	17	3.13	1.04	Accepted
	Society generally views parents who share content about their children positively.	17	34	78	56	15	3.09	1.04	Accepted

	Overall mean of Perceptions of Online Sharing.						2.99	1.07	Accepted
	Factors Influencing Sharenting Decisions.								
	Privacy concerns are a major factor in your decision to share or not share your child's content online.	85	58	22	17	18	2.13	1.29	Accepted
	Your friends, family, or church community influence your sharenting practices.	67	62	22	33	15	2.33	1.30	Accepted
	Cultural norms play a role in your decisions about sharenting.	30	41	80	20	29	2.89	1.21	Accepted
	You take active steps to protect my child's privacy when sharing content online.	92	69	23	9	7	1.85	1.02	Accepted
	Overall mean for Factors Influencing Sharenting Decisions.						2.26	1.21	Accepted
	Christian Values and Sharenting Practices.								
	Christian values encourage you to prioritize your child's privacy and	82	69	25	11	13	2.02	1.16	Accepted

	autonomy over public sharing.								
	Sharing your child's milestones online is a way of building a sense of Christian community.	35	52	75	28	10	2.63	1.08	Accepted
	Modesty is an important Christian value that shapes your sharenting decisions.	100	51	31	8	10	1.89	1.12	Accepted
	You believe stewardship is an essential consideration when sharing your child's information online.	75	68	35	10	11	2.07	1.12	Accepted
	Overall mean for Christian Values and Sharenting Practices.						2.15	1.15	Accepted
	Risks and Benefits of Sharenting								
	Parents should be concerned about the potential risks of privacy breaches when sharing content about their children online.	71	84	22	10	12	2.04	1.10	Accepted
	Your child might feel bad in the future about the content you share about them now.	38	50	56	46	9	2.69	1.15	Accepted
	Sharing your child's content online	2	70	59	27	15	2.65	1.11	Accepted

	has helped you strengthen bonds with family and friends.	8							
	The benefits of sharenting outweigh the risks.	21	59	84	19	16	2.75	1.01	Accepted
	Overall mean for Risks and Benefits of Sharenting.						2.53	1.14	Accepted

Source: Online Survey, 2025

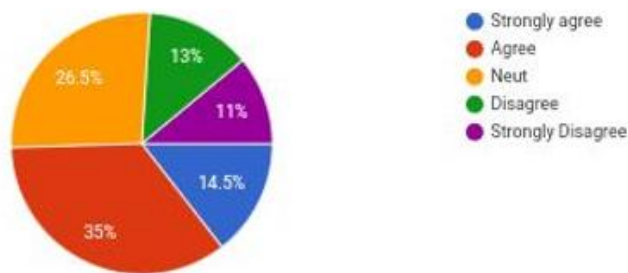
NB: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 denote strongly agreed, agreed, neutral, disagreed, strongly disagreed response rate respectively.

Section B: Perceptions of Online Sharing

Sharing contents about your children online is comfortable?

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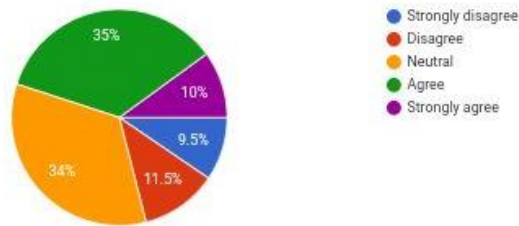
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Sharing my child's milestone online is an important way to stay connected to friends and family

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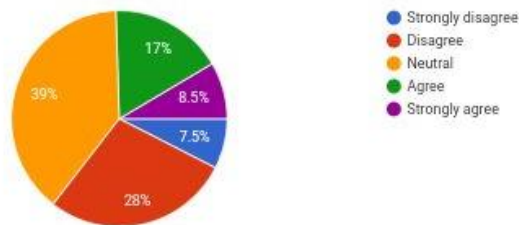
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Society generally views parents who share content about their children positively.

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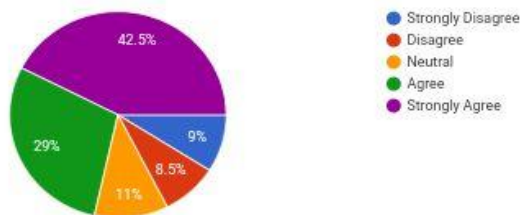


Section C: Factors influencing sharenting decisions

Privacy concerns are a major factor in your decision to share or not share your child's content online.

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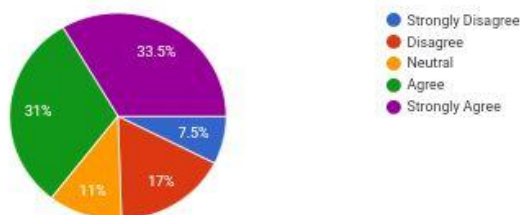
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Your friends, family, or church community influence your sharenting practices.

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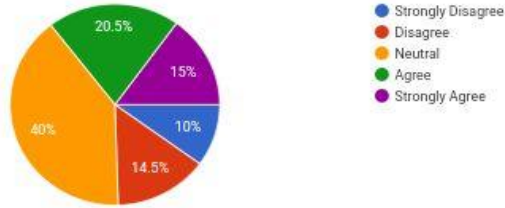
200 responses



Cultural norms play a role in your decisions about sharenting.

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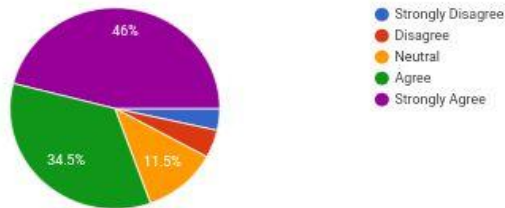
200 responses



You take active steps to protect my child's privacy when sharing content online.

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200 responses

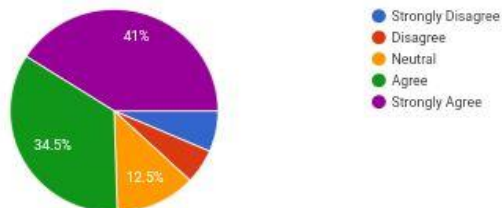


Section D: Christian Values and Sharenting Practices

Christian values encourage you to prioritize your child's privacy and autonomy over public sharing.

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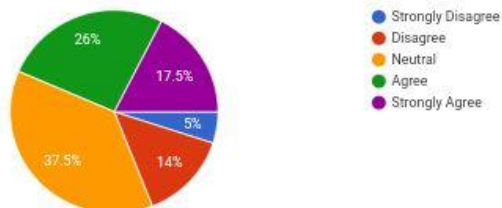
200 responses



Sharing your child's milestones online is a way of building a sense of Christian community.

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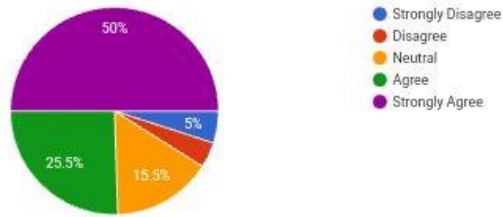
200 responses



Modesty is an important Christian value that shapes your sharenting decisions.

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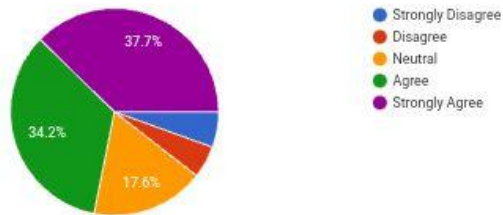
200 responses



You believe stewardship is an essential consideration when sharing your child's information online.

[Copy chart](#)

199 responses

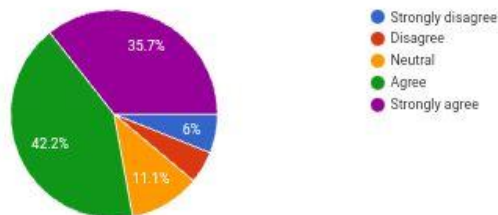


Section E: Risks and Benefits of Sharenting

Parents should be concerned about the potential risks of privacy breaches when sharing content about their children online.

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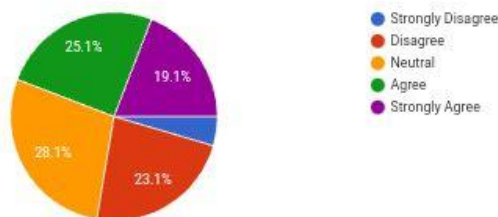
199 responses



Your child might feel bad in the future about the content you share about them now.

[Copy chart](#)

199 responses



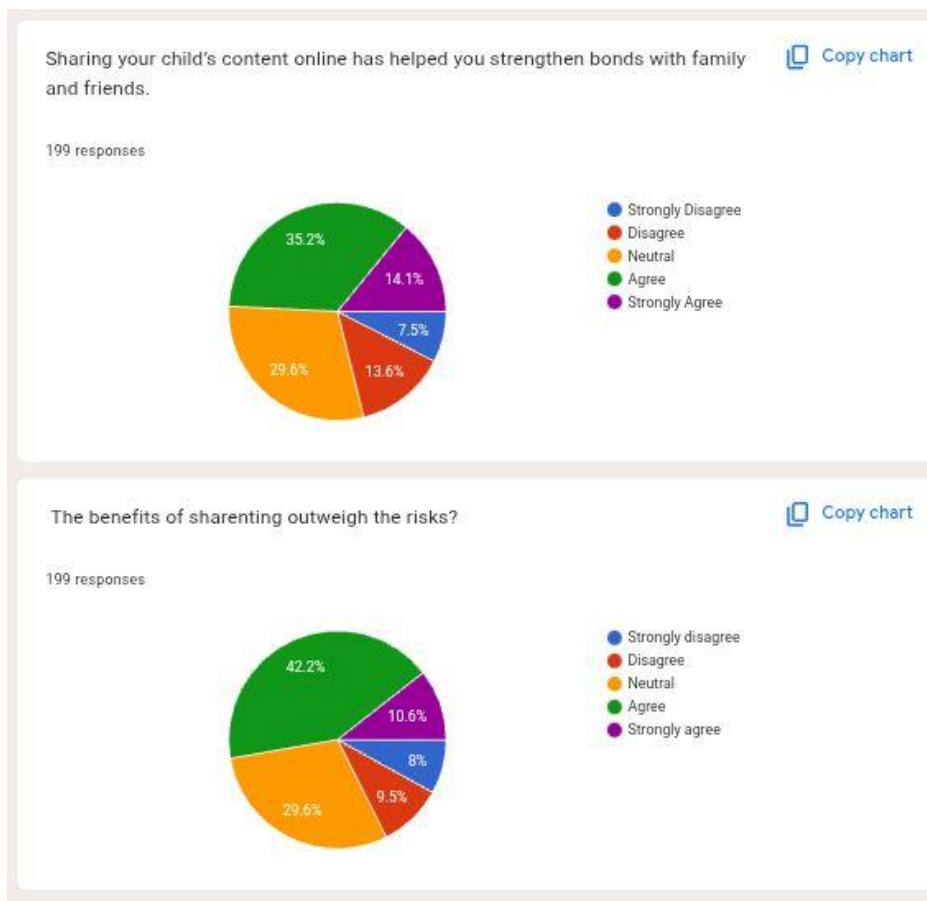


Figure 4.2 Description percentage of Research Variable

Table 4.2 presents key variables related to Christian parents' sharenting behavior, focusing on their perceptions of online sharing, the factors influencing their decisions, the role of Christian values and the perceived risks and benefits of sharenting.

For the perceptions of online sharing, the results indicate mixed views on online sharing among Christian parents. A significant number of respondents (mean = 2.76, SD = 1.09) agreed that they are comfortable sharing content about their children online, though some expressed hesitation. Similarly, many parents acknowledged that sharing their child's milestones helps them stay connected with family and friends (mean = 3.13, SD = 1.04). However, responses regarding societal perception of sharenting were more neutral, with a mean score of 3.09. The overall mean for this category (2.99) suggests that while parents recognize the benefits of online sharing, they are also aware of potential concerns.

In addition for the factors influencing sharenting decisions, the strongest factor affecting sharenting behavior is privacy concerns, with 85 respondents strongly agreeing that privacy plays a major role in their decision to share content about their children (mean = 2.13, SD = 1.29). Additionally, family, friends, and church communities influence parents' sharenting habits, with a mean score of 2.33, indicating that social circles play a role in their decision-making. The impact of cultural norms was also noted, though with more variation (mean = 2.89, SD = 1.21). Overall, parents appear to be aware of privacy issues and take steps to minimize risks associated with sharenting (overall mean = 2.26).

However, for Christian values and sharenting practices, Christian beliefs significantly shape parents' sharenting habits. Many respondents agreed that Christian values encourage them to prioritize their child's privacy and autonomy over public sharing (mean = 2.02, SD = 1.16). Furthermore, modesty as a Christian value strongly influences sharenting decisions, with 100 respondents strongly agreeing (mean = 1.89, SD = 1.12). There was moderate agreement that sharing children's milestones online helps build a sense of Christian community (mean = 2.63, SD = 1.08). The findings suggest that religious beliefs encourage responsible sharenting, focusing on protecting children's dignity and privacy (overall mean = 2.15).

Meanwhile, risks and benefits of sharenting shows that a large number of parents expressed concerns about privacy breaches when sharing content about their children online (mean = 2.04, SD = 1.10). Another significant finding is that some parents worry their child may regret content shared about them in the future (mean = 2.69, SD = 1.15). On the positive side, many parents believe sharenting helps strengthen family and community bonds (mean = 2.65, SD = 1.11). However, the belief that the benefits of sharenting outweigh the risks received a

mixed response (mean = 2.75, SD = 1.01), with many parents remaining neutral on this issue. The overall mean for this category (2.53) suggests that while parents recognize the social and emotional benefits of sharenting, privacy concerns remain a significant factor in their decision-making.

Table 4.2 highlights the complex relationship between Christian values, privacy concerns, and digital parenting practices. While many parents acknowledge the social benefits of online sharing, they also recognize the potential risks and take steps to protect their children's privacy. Christian beliefs, particularly regarding modesty and stewardship, play a key role in shaping sharenting behavior, reinforcing the need for cautious and responsible online sharing among Christian parents.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Christian parents at Foursquare Gospel Church are conscious of their sharenting practices. Also, Privacy concerns and Christian values are the strongest influences on decision-making. The need for community connection motivates parents to share but is balanced by concerns for their children's privacy. Meanwhile, Parents are divided on whether the benefits of sharenting outweigh the risks.

This project highlights that Christian parents approach sharenting with caution, balancing social connection with privacy concerns. Christian values play a crucial role in shaping their online sharing behaviors, emphasizing modesty, stewardship, and child autonomy.

4.5 IMPLICATIONS

The findings have several practical and ethical implications:

1. For Parents: There is a need for greater awareness about digital privacy and responsible online sharing. Parents should be encouraged to adopt protective

measures, such as adjusting social media privacy settings and being selective about the type of content they share.

2. For Churches: Faith-based teachings on modesty, digital responsibility, and child protection should be incorporated into Christian parenting discussions. Churches can provide guidance on ethical sharenting and emphasize the importance of safeguarding children's digital identities.
3. For Policymakers: Stronger regulations on child data protection and online consent should be implemented to safeguard children's rights. Parents need clearer guidelines on ethical online sharing practices to prevent unintended exposure of their children to digital risks.
4. For Social Media Platforms: Platforms should offer better privacy controls, content moderation, and parental advisory features to help parents manage their children's digital presence responsibly.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 FINDINGS

This study explored the sharenting behaviors of Christian parents in the Foursquare Gospel Church community, focusing on factors influencing their online sharing practices. The key findings include:

1. Older parents (above 46 years) are more privacy-conscious, whereas younger parents (18–30 years) are more comfortable sharing their children’s content online, showing a generational divide in digital parenting attitudes.
2. Christian values strongly influence sharenting behavior. Parents with deep religious commitments tend to limit online sharing due to concerns about modesty, stewardship, and protecting their children's autonomy.
3. Perceived benefits encourage sharenting. Many parents believe that sharing their children’s achievements and experiences helps strengthen family bonds, foster community connections, and create lasting memories.
4. Privacy concerns discourage sharenting. Parents who are aware of online risks, such as cybersecurity threats, misuse of children's images, and digital footprints, tend to be more cautious about sharing their children’s lives online.

5.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This study makes several important contributions to the existing literature:

1. **Religious Perspective on Sharenting:** Unlike most research on digital parenting, this study explores how Christian beliefs influence sharenting decisions, providing a faith-based understanding of digital responsibility.
2. **Age and Privacy Awareness:** The study highlights that older parents prioritize privacy more than younger parents, suggesting that generational differences affect attitudes toward online sharing.
3. **Balancing Risks and Benefits:** By analyzing parents' motivations and concerns, the study provides new insights into how Christian parents weigh the benefits of sharing against potential privacy risks.
4. **Guidance for Faith-Based Digital Parenting:** The findings offer practical recommendations for Christian parents, church leaders, and policymakers on balancing faith, technology, and privacy in the digital age.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the sharenting behavior of Christian parents and the key factors influencing their decisions to share or withhold their children's personal information online. The findings reveal that gender, age, religious values, and privacy concerns play a significant role in digital parenting choices. Religious values were a major factor limiting sharenting behavior. Many Christian parents believe that modesty, discretion, and stewardship are essential aspects of digital responsibility, leading them to be more selective about sharing personal information. However, some parents saw sharenting as a means of fostering church community and family connections, suggesting that faith-based digital parenting varies among individuals.

The study also found that while many parents recognize the benefits of sharenting, such as maintaining family ties and documenting special moments, concerns about privacy, child autonomy, and digital footprints remain prevalent. The findings highlight the need for digital awareness programs within religious communities to educate parents on responsible online sharing. The study concludes that Christian parents navigate a complex intersection of faith, technology, and privacy when making decisions about online sharing. While social media provides a platform for family connection and community engagement, it also introduces risks such as cybersecurity threats, unauthorized use of children's images, and loss of privacy. Faith plays a critical role in shaping digital parenting choices, with many Christian parents opting for limited sharenting due to religious values emphasizing modesty, humility, and child protection.

However, some parents view online sharing as a way to strengthen Christian community ties and celebrate family life. Given the increasing presence of children in the digital world, it is crucial for Christian parents to adopt responsible and ethical sharenting practices. Parents should be cautious about overexposing their children online, use privacy settings effectively, and educate themselves on digital risks. Churches, policymakers, and educators must

collaborate to develop faith-based digital literacy programs that help Christian families make informed decisions about online sharing. Moving forward, further research is needed to examine long-term effects of sharenting on children, explore how digital parenting evolves with technological advancements, and assess the role of religious teachings in shaping responsible online behaviors. By addressing these concerns, Christian parents can uphold their faith-based values while ensuring their children's privacy and security in the digital age.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Invitation to Participate in a Survey on Sharenting Behavior

Dear Parent,

My name is Imiavan Evidence, and I am a student at the University of Benin in the Department of Computer Science. As part of my ongoing research, I am conducting a survey to explore how Christian parents approach the practice of sharenting, the act of sharing their children's lives on social media. Your participation is incredibly valuable. By sharing your experiences and thoughts on sharenting, you will help us gain deeper insights into how Christian parents navigate the decision to share their children's content online. Your responses will remain completely anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for research purposes.

The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

Section A: Demographics

1. What is your age group?

- a) 18-25
- b) 26-35
- c) 36-45
- d) 46-55
- e) 56 and above

2. How many children do you have?

- a) 1
- b) 2-3
- c) 4-5

d) More than 5

3. What is your role in parenting?

a) Primary caregiver

b) Shared caregiving responsibilities

c) Secondary caregiver

4. How often do you use social media?

a) Daily

b) Weekly

c) Monthly

d) Rarely

5. Do you identify as a Christian?

a) Yes

b) No

6. How important is your faith in your daily life and decisions?

a) Very important

b) Somewhat important

c) Not very important

d) Not important at all

7. What is your level of involvement in your Foursquare Gospel Church?

a) Very involved (e.g., leadership roles)

- b) Moderately involved
- c) Occasionally involved
- d) Not involved

Section B: Perceptions of Online Sharing

8. Sharing content about your children online is comfortable?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

9. Sharing my child's milestones online is an important way to stay connected with family and friends.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

10. Society generally views parents who share content about their children positively.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

Section C: Factors Influencing Sharenting Decisions

11. Privacy concerns are a major factor in your decision to share or not share your child's content online.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

12. Your friends, family, or church community influence your sharenting practices.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

13. Cultural norms play a role in your decisions about sharenting.

a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

14. You take active steps to protect my child's privacy when sharing content online.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

Section D: Christian Values and Sharenting Practices

15. Christian values encourage you to prioritize your child's privacy and autonomy over public sharing.

- aa) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

16. Sharing your child's milestones online is a way of building a sense of Christian community.

- aa) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

17. Modesty is an important Christian value that shapes your sharenting decisions.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

18. You believe stewardship is an essential consideration when sharing your child's information online.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

Section E: Risks and Benefits of Sharenting

19. Parents should be concerned about the potential risks of privacy breaches when sharing content about their children online.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

20. Your child might feel bad in the future about the content you share about them now.

- a) Strongly agree

- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

21. Measures should be taken to minimize risks, such as limiting the audience of my child-related posts.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

22. Sharing your child's content online has helped you strengthen bonds with family and friends.

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Disagree
- e) Strongly disagree

23. The benefits of sharenting outweigh the risks?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree