

Parenting goes digital: Performing family, morality, and public identity on Instagram reels

Setyani Utami¹, Nawiroh Vera², Abdul Basit³, Dhita Widya Putri⁴

^{1,2} Faculty of Communication & Creative Design, Budi Luhur University, Jakarta, Indonesia

³ Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Indonesia

⁴ Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Debrecen, Hungary

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ABSTRACT

Background: Parenting practices that were once limited to the domestic sphere are now commonplace in public spaces, largely due to social media. These curated and displayed parenting practices have become part of an effort to construct meaning that requires audience legitimacy to become a representation of ideal meaning. **Purpose:** This study aims to examine how Yane Ardian shapes the meaning of parenting in her Instagram Reels, the ideal family values she promotes, and how she communicates her self-image as a mother. **Methods:** This study uses a qualitative method. Thematic and visual coding were employed to deliberately choose 16 Instagram Reels for study. **Results:** The findings demonstrate that the constructed meaning in parenting practices emphasizes maternal care, character-driven education, child safety, and moral accountability. Parenting is no longer just a part of family life; it may also help shape a person's identity by teaching them social and cultural values. Reels can help get closer to the audience and achieve moral validity by delivering personal stories that use emotional symbols and supporting visual elements. On the other hand, people prefer content about family life and parenting to social topics. **Conclusion:** Instagram Reels can become part of a cultural text where ideal parenting practices are represented through compassion, responsibility, and risk. **Implications:** This research theoretically expands the scope of representation studies by making the phenomenon of "parenting goes digital" an arena for constructing meaning and identity for mothers. Practically, this research contributes to the study of digital communication and public relations by showing how parenting narratives can be used to build emotional closeness with audiences in the digital space.

Keywords: Digital parenting; representation; image construction; Instagram reels; visual communication

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Correspondence: Setyani Utami, S.Sos., Budi Luhur University. Jalan Ciledug Raya RT 10/RW 2, Petukangan Utara, Pesangrahan, South Jakarta 12260. *Email:* 2471600110@student.budiluhur.ac.id

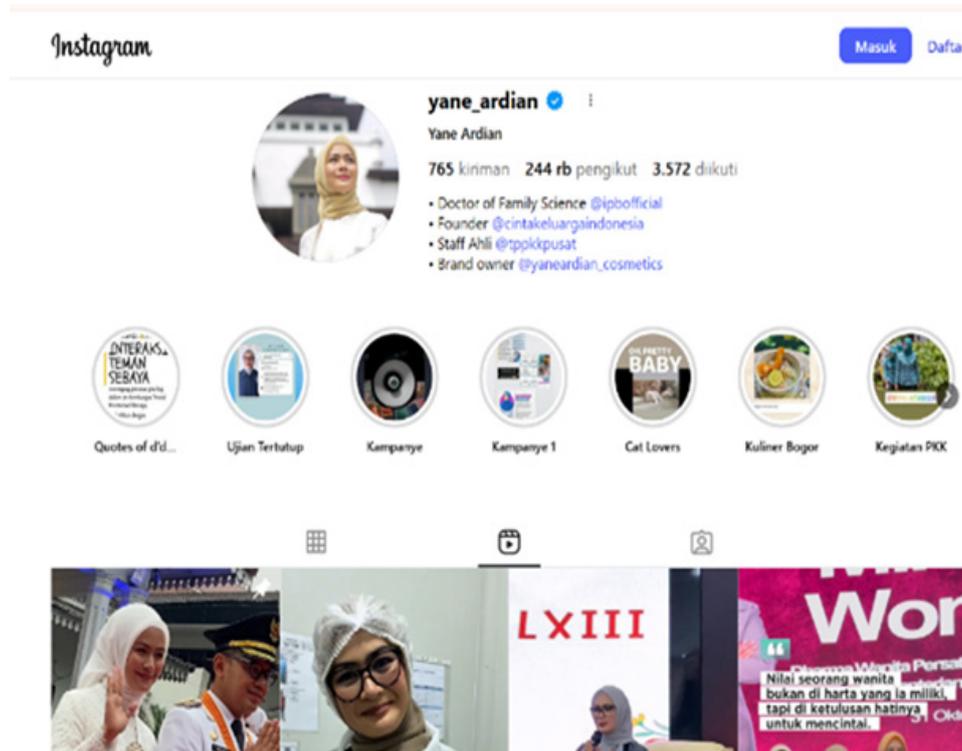
INTRODUCTION

The development of social media platforms has essentially transformed how social meaning is produced, circulated, and negotiated in contemporary digital culture. Social media are no longer limited to spaces of entertainment or interpersonal exchange but have become central arenas of public communication where visibility, identity, and moral values are constructed, displayed, and contested. In this change, daily life increasingly becomes a public narrative, shaped by visual and audiovisual representations that encourage interpretation and participation (Schroeder, 2018). Instagram shows this change most clearly through features like Reels, which let users tell short, visually interesting stories that mix personal experience, emotional expression, and public communication in algorithmically boosted settings (Alam & Rizqi, 2025).

In the broader shifts in digital culture and the rise of public visibility, parts of family life that used to be private (e.g., daily routines, interactions between family members, and how to raise children) are now more often shown, told, and shared with larger groups of people. This change has led to the rise of what is commonly called “digital parenting,” where parenting is no longer just something that happens in private but is now part of public conversation. On social

media, parenting content is not just descriptive; it is also made through moral framing, emotional storytelling, and the expression of social and cultural identities. This makes family life a sort of symbolic communication. These processes become more influential when the content creator is a public figure. This visibility turns parenting from personal into a socially mediated activity that is continuously perceived and consumed by the public. Digital parenting increases both the visibility of family life and creates new issues related to identity formation, moral demands, and the public assessment of parents.

The increasing influence of parenting in digital environments raises essential questions about the framing, assessment, and normalization of family life in public discourse. When parenting techniques are shared on social media, they serve as both personal stories and symbolic tools that shape identities and strengthen social norms. Digital parenting content often contains hidden rules about what it means to be a good mother, how to act emotionally, how to be morally responsible, and how to keep the family together. These portrayals influence social views on what defines a “good” parent and an “ideal” family. This phenomenon also frames parenting as a domain of moral performance and public legitimacy. In this sense, social media does



Source: Authors, 2026

Figure 1 Yane Ardian’s Instagram Account (@yane_ardian)

not merely document family life but actively participates in producing normative images of parenting that shape processes of reputation, credibility, and public identity (Boyd, 2014; Abidin, 2016; Lupton et al., 2016; Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020).

In the context of increasing visibility and normative pressure surrounding digital parenting, one public figure who exemplifies the phenomenon of “parenting goes digital” and is the focus of this study is Yane Ardian, the wife of the Indonesian Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Bima Arya Sugiarto. Through her Instagram Reels, she actively circulates visual narratives of family intimacy, maternal reflections, and everyday domestic routines. While these Reels

serve as personal documentation, they also convey particular meanings of harmonious family life, parental moral responsibility, and religiously informed parenting values. In Yane’s contents, motherhood is represented not only as a domestic role but also as a public identity that shows emotional warmth, moral authority, and social legitimacy across both domestic and public spheres.

Yane Ardian’s Instagram account (@yane_ardian) has over 250.000 followers, approximately 3.700 followings, and over 700 posts. Furthermore, Yane engages intensely with her followers (Figure 1). These factors make her Instagram account a relevant subject for in-depth study, particularly regarding how

parenting practices are constructed through Instagram. The profile on her account combines social activities and community involvement with family-oriented narratives.

Several studies have examined parenting in digital environments, particularly the increasing visibility of family life on social media platforms. Early contributions by Boyd and Livingstone & Blum-Ross highlight how digital media reshape parenting practices, positioning them within public arenas where everyday family experiences are shared, interpreted, and evaluated by broader audiences. These studies primarily emphasize how parenting narratives circulated by public figures and influencers function as references that shape norms, expectations, and moral frameworks for the wider public (Boyd, 2014; Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020; Jorge et al., 2023; Beuckels & De Wolf, 2025). In this sense, parenting is no longer confined to the private and domestic sphere but increasingly functions as a form of public communication through which emotions, values, and moral judgments are expressed and made socially meaningful.

While these studies provide important insights into digital parenting cultures, they pay limited attention to how short-video formats, particularly Instagram Reels, construct parenting as a visual and symbolic performance. This research addresses the existing gap by

analyzing audiovisual cultural texts shared on Instagram Reels from Yane Ardian's account. This research aims to enhance understanding of how parenting values and practices are constructed and negotiated in the digital public space. In particular, this study examines the construction and negotiation of the meaning of motherhood in contexts of public visibility by analyzing visual framing, narrative structuring, and public engagement with parenting.

This study employs Stuart Hall's theory of representation as its main analytical framework. The issues examined are connected to the production, circulation, and stabilization of social meaning through media. For Hall, representation is not a neutral reflection of reality but a cultural process through which language, symbols, and visual signs actively construct meaning (Hall, 1997). Within the context of Instagram Reels, narrative, voice, and visual composition operate semiotically to organize everyday experiences into recognizable forms of social reality. Accordingly, Yane Ardian's Reels can be understood as representational practices through which parenting is articulated through emotional narratives and moralized visual storytelling. These practices are not value-free. Therefore, this study positions digital parenting as a significant site for examining representation, morality, and public identity. This can contribute to broader

discussions on strategic self-representation and relational communication in contemporary public relations.

Building on this perspective, Hall's theory of representation also provides a lens for understanding how social media is strategically used to shape audience perceptions and moral evaluations. In this study, Yane Ardian's Reels are used as a form of symbolic campaigning that promotes particular ideals of motherhood, emphasizing care, emotional sensitivity, and moral responsibility while maintaining elegance and femininity. These representations picture an "ideal mother" who can balance domestic responsibilities and public visibility in a socially acceptable manner (Roberti, 2022; Silfia & Irwansyah, 2022).

This form of parenting performance reflects what Livingstone and Blum-Ross (2020) and Suhadah et al. (2025) describe as the relocation of domestic practices into public digital spaces, where family life becomes a communicative resource through which legitimacy and social trust are negotiated. In this process, the boundaries between social advocacy, moral communication, and personal branding become increasingly blurred, as visual and narrative elements are carefully curated to guide audience interpretation and emotional alignment (Hidayat et al., 2025; Vy et al., 2024). Through visual intimacy, everyday aesthetics,

and affective storytelling, moral credibility and emotional connection are enlightened as strategic communicative resources. Consistent with studies on digital motherhood, such visual strategies play a central role in how female public figures promote trust, authority, and symbolic capital in online environments (Lupton et al., 2016; Baró, 2025).

Although research on digital parenting has grown significantly, existing studies have mostly examined social media as a site of parental education, peer support, or information exchange (Aseptianova et al., 2022; Efendi et al., 2024; Sari & Basit, 2020). Relatively limited attention has been given to parenting as a representational strategy through which public figures construct family imagery and negotiate social roles. Visual culture scholars argue that social media visuals function as narrative devices that organize experience, produce persona, and stabilize social identity (Arda, 2021; Dhanesh & Rahman, 2021; Götz, 2020). Within this framework, Instagram Reels provides a platform for public figures to showcase parenting as a digital performance that displays cultural values and morality through affective communication practices (Abidin, 2016). This study addresses this gap by situating parenting content as a form of public communication that operates at the intersection of representation, performativity, and image

construction.

In this research, Yane successfully uses Instagram as a personal space to share her daily routines, selectively framing the roles of mothers, fathers, and children, creating a meeting point between power relations and aesthetic needs. Furthermore, the images intended to shape audience perceptions do not emerge organically, as the formation of structured meaning must combine visual elements, bodily expressions, narrative support, vocal intonation, and their presentation. Once the meaning is well constructed, it is the media's turn to disseminate it (Hall, 1997). Thus, the Instagram reels she uses can be used as a digital platform to investigate how a public figure campaigns for family values and ideal parenting practices on social media.

There are three interrelated questions this study aims to address: (1) how Yane Ardian constructs the meaning of parenting on her Instagram Reels, (2) what ideal family values Yane Ardian advocates, and (3) how Yane Ardian's communication strategy shapes audience perceptions (Gray et al., 2018; Pasenrigading et al., 2025). These questions also reflect how social media has become an arena for constructing identity and simultaneously competing for moral legitimacy. Therefore, her contents are approached as a space for representing meaning. The content is used to

uncover how parenting practices can become cultural narratives (the meaning of parenting), how persuasive social campaigns use visual displays, and how personal brands are built around power relations.

Hence, this study aims to analyze the representation of parenting in Yane Ardian's Instagram Reels, identify the family values embedded in these visual narratives, and examine the digital communication strategies through which these meanings are produced and circulated. A qualitative descriptive approach is employed to enable an in-depth interpretation of symbolic processes and visual signification. Grounded in Stuart Hall's theory of representation, which conceptualizes media as a cultural site where meaning is produced through ideology, discourse, and identity (Hall, 1997; Rose, 2022). This research positions digital parenting not only as a social practice but as a performative and representational project. The study contributes theoretically by extending representation studies into the domain of short-form video culture. This study also empirically demonstrates how public figures use Instagram Reels to construct moral legitimacy, emotional proximity, and family-oriented public identities in networked social spaces.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is grounded in a constructivist paradigm, which conceptualizes social reality as continuously produced through processes of meaning-making shaped by interaction, culture, and mediated communication (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Within this perspective, social media is not treated as a neutral mirror of everyday life but as a symbolic and discursive space in which meanings, identities, and social values are actively constructed and circulated. Instagram Reels, in this sense, function as cultural texts in which visual forms, narratives, and affective expressions organize everyday experiences into communicative representations.

Based on this paradigm, the study used a qualitative research approach, as it is best suited to examine how meanings are constructed, interpreted, and communicated within visual and audiovisual media. The qualitative approach enabled an in-depth exploration of how parenting is curated and framed through images, narratives, and platform-specific aesthetics, rather than being measured as fixed variables. It also allowed the researchers to interpret symbolic elements, emotional expressions, and ideological orientations embedded in the content, which are central to understanding digital parenting as a form of representational and communicative practice (Rose, 2022; Sloan

& Quan-Haase, 2017). Through this approach, the study sought to capture the complexity of visual meaning-making processes and the ways digital media mediate family narratives and public identity.

In this study, Yane Ardian's Instagram account is positioned as a visual cultural text through which parenting practices are symbolically produced and communicated. Also, Stuart Hall's semiotic and representational approach is employed as the main analytical framework (Chandler, 2022; Hall, 2020). This approach enabled the researchers to examine how visual elements, narrative structures, and symbolic resources operate together to construct meanings related to family, parenthood, and morality. Rather than treating Reels as merely content artifacts, this method situates them as signifying practices embedded in broader cultural and ideological processes.

Consistent with the constructivist paradigm, the unit of analysis is not selected to represent objective behavioral frequency but to capture meaning-making processes within representations of digital parenting. This study analyzed 16 Instagram Reels posted on @yane_ardian account from January to October 2025 (see Table 1). The Reels were purposively selected as cultural texts that actively construct and circulate meanings of parenting in the digital public sphere. The selection was guided

by two constructivist-oriented criteria: (1) thematic relevance to parenting practices, family relationships, and socio-cultural values; and (2) a high level of audience engagement indicated by views and comments, which signals the public circulation and negotiation of meaning. Through this purposive strategy, the Reels are positioned as sites where visual narratives, affective expressions, and moral discourses are produced and interpreted. This allowed researchers to trace how meanings of parenting were constructed rather than merely represented.

Data were collected through systematic digital monitoring, including visual documentation of Reels, transcription of spoken narratives and subtitles, and archiving of engagement metrics such as views and comments. In accordance with the constructivist and semiotic frameworks, the data underwent iterative examination and interpretive analysis to discern repeating visual patterns, narrative motifs, and symbolic components. The data were then organized using inductive thematic and visual coding, starting with open coding to describe units of meaning, and continuing with focused coding to link recurring signals, narratives, and affective cues. This technique allowed the researchers to compare representations, identify developing meaning structures, and categorize them into themes.

Then, parenting representations were analyzed as complex constructs of meaning that combine visual form, narrative content, and emotional communication methods (Saldana, 2018; Rose, 2022).

The research gradually mapped categories of meaning across the information through digital observation, iterative viewing, and theme-based visual coding. These clusters were not predetermined; rather, they were inductively derived from recurring visual patterns, narrative frameworks, and symbolic motifs detected throughout the Reels. At this point, the coding method helped sort the data and lay the groundwork for later semiotic analysis (Saldana, 2018). The outcomes of the first mapping guided the selection and arrangement of the Reels into broader thematic categories, as shown in Table 1.

Following the theme and visual coding procedure, data analysis was conducted through a methodical set of semiotic interpretation steps to investigate the role of parenting representations as strategic communication strategies. Initially, visual, textual, and narrative indicators were distinguished and categorized to describe persistent representational patterns. Second, denotative analysis was used to record observable elements, such as settings, conversations, gestures, and story structures. Third, a connotative analysis was conducted

Table 1 List of 16 Analyzed Yane Ardian Instagram Reels

No	Short Reel Title	Main Theme	Representational Subtheme	Views	Comments
1	Bullying & support from parents	Parenting	Children’s emotional support	5.9K	106
2	Guiding children	Parenting	Parent–child relationship	49.3K	23
3	Children, family & childfree	Family values	Family resilience	15.2K	6
4	Strategic role of wives	Family relations	Gender roles	43.1K	32
5	Understanding husbands’ emotions	Family relations	Marital communication	16.2K	5
6	Eight family functions	Parenting	Protection & family functions	38.3K	21
7	Generation gap	Parenting	Parent–child communication	107K	60
8	Honoring one another in marriage	Family relations	Marital harmony	56.2K	56
9	Parenting adolescents	Parenting	Supervision & trust	34.8K	25
10	Bibit, bebet, bobot (marital criteria)	Family values	Marriage preparation	279K	133
11	Parental responsibilities	Parenting	Child development	83.3K	56
12	Education & public policy	Social parenting	Role of the state & schools	134K	660
13	Lion philosophy & fatherhood	Parenting	Paternal resilience & masculinity	189K	77
14	Anti–domestic violence	Family relations	Family protection	500K	278
15	Mothers & children with special needs	Parenting	Emotional resilience	27.5K	30
16	Special children & achievement	Parenting	Appreciation & parental support	57K	32

Source: Authors, 2026

to explain the contents’ symbolic meanings, emotional signals, and cultural connotations. Fourth, an ideological analysis examined the articulation and normalization of morality, motherhood, and the idea of harmonious family life.

Across these stages of semiotic reading, several recurring subthemes emerged as analytically obvious in the 16 Reels, including emotional bonding, parental guidance, moral messaging, marital interactions, child safety, and educational narratives. Subthemes were then put through continuous thematic comparison and

analytically integrated into three overarching categories: Parenting Representations, Family Values, and Visual Communication Strategies. The purpose of this categorization was not to measure how often certain information appeared, but to organize how parenting is symbolically created and shared.

In this analytical framework, Yane Ardian’s Reels are regarded not only as cultural texts but also as modalities of public self-representation that facilitate the relationship between a public person and her audience. From a Public Relations (PR) standpoint, this semiotic process enables

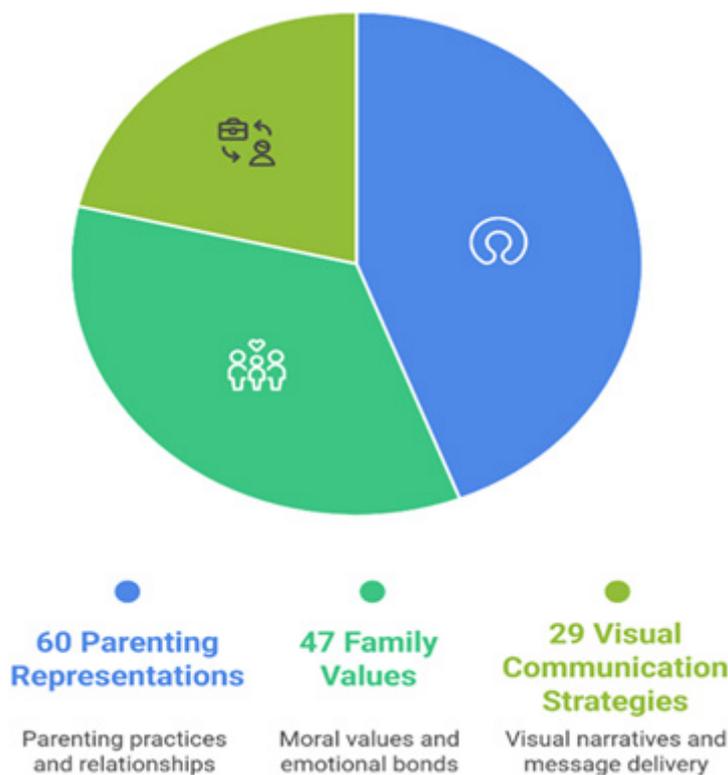
the study to examine how parenting narratives function as relational communication strategies that create values, emotional proximity, and moral credibility. The approach investigates the intentional organization of parenting meanings to raise affiliation, trust, and symbolic legitimacy in the online environment (Hall, 2020; Rose, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our analysis revealed that parenting represents a central element in Yane Ardian’s Instagram Reels. The most common subthemes are parenting techniques, family connections,

and family duties. These are the main ideas behind the pictures and stories. So, Yane Ardian uses Instagram Reels as a digital diary of her everyday life and as a primary way to create symbolic meanings about parenting, family ties, and family identity.

Figure 2 shows data where Parenting Representations has the highest score (n = 60). This means that parenting practices, parental roles, and relationships among family members are the most important subthemes. The Family Values category is next (n = 47), which shows how important moral standards, emotional ties among family members, and being together as a family. Finally, Visual Communication



Source: Authors, 2026

Figure 2 Main Categorization of Yani Ardian’s Parenting Content



Source: Authors, 2026

Figure 3 Instagram Reels by Yane Ardian Featuring a Parenting Word Cloud

Strategies (n = 29), in which the visual tactics used and effective delivery methods support the presentation of Reels. These findings suggest that Yane Ardian’s Reels emphasize the symbolic formation of parent–child interactions and familial significance over visual technical aspects. This also shows how important family life and getting along with family members are.

The next phase of the study investigates how Yane Ardian formulates the concept of parenting. Although parenting is the primary focus of Yane’s Reels content, a more in-depth analysis of the text and visuals shows that Yane tends to frame parenting as an emotional relationship among family members. She also

frames it as a process by which values are formed within the family. The narratives that emerge show that parenting is not just about raising children but also about building emotional relationships and instilling values (morality). With these two things, Yane symbolically tries to build an ideal family identity.

The composition in Figure 3 (a silhouette of a mother holding a child) supports the finding that the parent–child relationship is central to Yane Ardian’s representation in her Instagram Reels. The repeated use of terms such as parenting, affection, family, family values, and parental roles indicates that emotional connection, moral orientation, and parental responsibility are the

family.

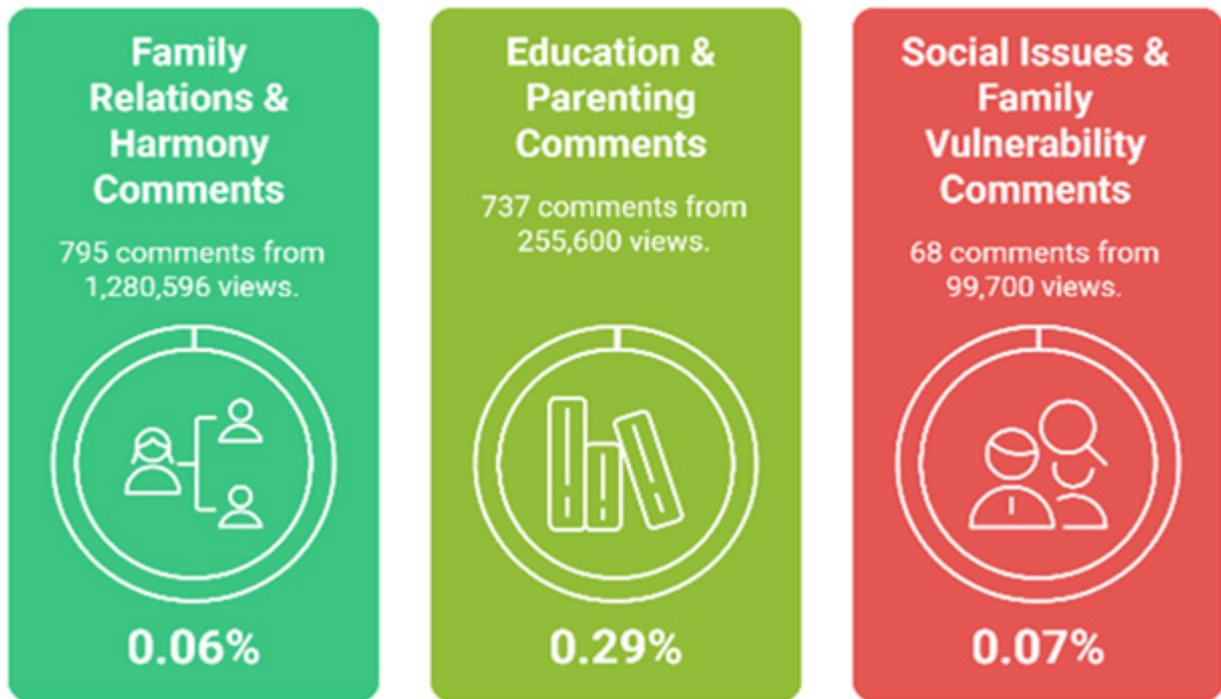
Moreover, Figure 4 illustrates a theme representation of parenting, including familial affection, ideals or ethics, efficient communication, and accountability. It also stresses that parenting approaches cannot work on their own. To put it another way, parenting has many interconnected parts. Love, harmony, protection, education, and guidance are some of the ideas that are shown visually as parts that work together to shape the meaning of parenting. The concepts are all connected, which leads to the main goal of the representation: creating a loving, safe, and supportive family. This image portrays the family not only as a social unit but as an environment influenced by love and values (morality), where children are safeguarded, directed, and engaged in active interactions within the familial context.

Further results demonstrate that meaning formation in Yane Ardian's Reels is facilitated not only through the visual and thematic integration of images and tales but also through the deliberate use of music as an affective semiotic resource. The analysis shows that music regularly serves as an emotional structuring mechanism in her parenting Reels. Most of the content uses gentle instrumental music, slow-tempo pop tunes, and sometimes spiritually charged themes. These sound selections serve as affective signs that shape

how people understand visual settings and family interactions. Music does more than only set the scene; it also helps people feel warm, reflective, grateful, and close to each other. In this context, music forms an essential element of the representational process through which parenting is perceived both cognitively and emotionally.

Beyond emotional framing, music also contributes to narrative coherence and memorability. The repeated use of similar musical styles across different Reels creates affective continuity, linking separate videos into a recognizable emotional landscape. This audio repetition strengthens recall and stabilizes the moral atmosphere of the content, allowing audiences to associate Yane Ardian's representations of parenting with particular emotional tones. Through this pattern, music supports the construction of an affective identity that complements visual symbolism and thematic consistency. Thus, music prepares the affective conditions through which parenting narratives become emotionally resonant, relatable, and publicly engaging.

Furthermore, the analysis focuses on audience reception. Figure 5 compares audience engagement across three parenting categories: Family Relations & Harmony, Education & Parenting, and Social Issues & Family Vulnerability. From a PR perspective, views are



Source: Authors, 2026

Figure 5 Comparison of Views and Comments by Content Category

interpreted as indicators of message circulation and symbolic visibility, while comments are approached as relational traces through which audiences participate in the communicative construction of meaning. Engagement patterns, therefore, reveal how different representations function as relational and reputational resources rather than as direct measures of audience sentiment.

The Family Relations & Harmony category achieves the highest visibility and interaction (1.280.596 views; 795 comments), indicating that emotionally affirmative portrayals of family life are most effective in generating symbolic and moral impact. The high level of participation suggests that this category is related to which audiences align emotionally

with, express identification with, and reinforce a warm and credible public image. In PR, these representations are affective assets that help build trust, closeness, and moral validity.

The Education and Parenting category has a more moderate reach (255.600 views) but a higher comment activity (737). This suggests that people are more interested in having conversations than being seen. In this context, parenting content is a communicative space where audiences debate meanings, legitimize practices, and express collective concerns. This trend indicates that educational narratives facilitate relational maintenance by portraying the public figure as introspective, accountable, and ethically conscious.

On the other hand, the Social Issues &

Family Vulnerability category has the fewest views and comments (99.700 views and 68 comments). This suggests that content centered on danger, violence, and vulnerability elicits restricted relational involvement. It shows audience preference for themes that promote emotional comfort and moral affirmation. From a PR perspective, this also shows that there are strategic limits to how well certain types of stories relate to specific audiences. For example, positive family stories work better as tools for stabilizing an image and aligning emotions.

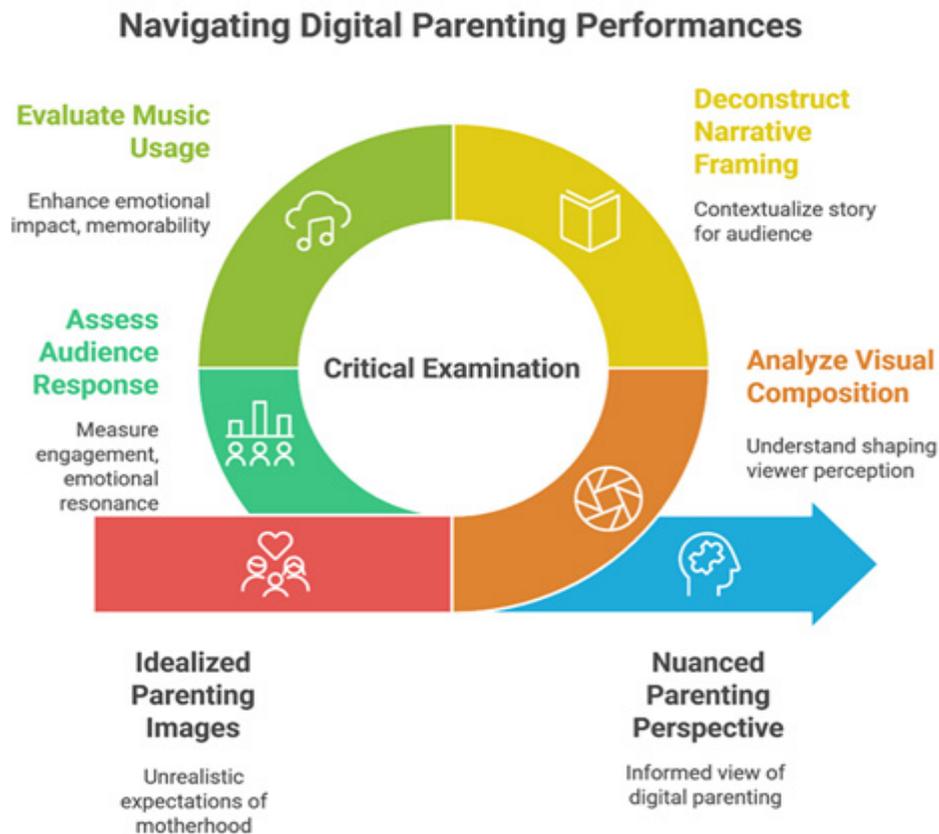
These patterns of engagement show that Yane Ardian's Reels work as both cultural representations and purposeful relational spaces. By using emotionally positive parenting stories, the content helps people develop relationships, set moral standards, and gain symbolic credibility. This strengthens Instagram Reels' role as a digital public relations space.

Stuart Hall sees social media as a cultural place where people create, share, and negotiate meaning (in visual form) (Hall, 2020; Rose, 2022). In this context, Instagram Reels can be seen as a digital space that is not free of values or interests. In this context, parenting, peaceful family relationships, and affection are symbolically constructed to foster social understanding.

The novelty of this study lies in how a public figure utilizes Instagram Reels to

showcase parenting practices in which she plays a central role. The performance finally becomes a space for symbolic communication, identity construction, and strategic image management. This study also differs from previous studies that focused solely on parenting discourse in digital spaces, influencer branding, or visual storytelling. This study, which explores how values within parenting practices are built and displayed through short videos (Abidin, 2016; Avlonitou & Papadaki, 2024; Khamis et al., 2017), is analyzed by integrating visual representations, emerging themes in parenting practices, and audience responses.

The findings of this study demonstrate how visual communication practices on Instagram Reels shape parenting meanings, ideal values in family life, and the intimate relationships between content creators and audiences. These processes do not work in isolation; they are interconnected. Furthermore, this shows the connection among content production strategies, the framing of parenting experiences in visual displays, and audience interaction to gain legitimacy (Bilici & Polatlar, 2025; Couldry & Hepp, 2018) in particular, has introduced new opportunities and challenges for parents by creating an alternative public sphere with interactive features. Among social platforms, Instagram stands out as a preferred source of information for digital parenting.



Source: Authors, 2026

Figure 6 The Flow of Digital Parenting Representation Practices on Instagram Reels

This article examines how parents' sources of information on child-rearing have changed over time, with special attention to Generation Y (Millennials). To synthesize these aspects, we propose a conceptual model that explains the stages through which public figures produce parenting meanings.

Empirical findings also indicate that the parenting practices portrayed in Yane Ardian's Reels involve a complex process of how visual displays are produced, how symbolic meanings are constructed, and audience acceptance. Therefore, the digital communication strategies used are not limited to producing visual parenting

content, but also to shaping how family values are accepted by the public and how to build intimate relationships with audiences (Archer, 2019; Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2019; Jorge et al., 2023; Tabatabaei et al., 2024) with some mum bloggers now earning a significant income from their personal 'brand' and role as social media influencers. As 'prosumers' (i.e. consumers turned producers).

Based on this analysis, the study formulates a model that maps the relationship among content production, representational structures, and audience response. As illustrated in Figure 6, digital parenting performance emerges as

a strategic communicative practice through which image, legitimacy, and moral narratives are produced in the digital public space.

Yane Ardian's Reels, which are dominated by the parenting and family categories, function as a cultural space for shaping meanings of the "ideal family." Parenting is not positioned as a purely private activity, but as a social narrative that is continuously packaged, framed, and circulated. Within Stuart Hall's perspective, representation is understood not as a reflection of reality but as an active process of meaning production through signs, visual codes, and discursive practices (Hall, 1997, 2020). These Reels provide audiences with an interpretive framework for understanding motherhood, parent-child relations, and family harmony.

In the case of public individuals, this construction is fundamentally strategic. Social media practices of public figures involve curating everyday life to build moral narratives, symbolic credibility, and emotional proximity (Abidin, 2016; Listianto et al., 2025; Tse et al., 2018). Yane Ardian's portrayal of parenting does not merely describe domestic roles; it aims to promote warmth, authenticity, and social legitimacy. This supports the argument that parenting representations serve as instruments for image formation and moral positioning in digital culture (Arindita, 2019). From this point, the discussion is elaborated through three

interrelated thematic dimensions.

The lexical and thematic patterns indicate that parenting is constructed as a complex emotional practice centered on affection, responsibility, character education, and child protection (Rohmalimna et al., 2022; Zheng et al., 2017). Family values are not articulated in abstract or normative terms, but translated into relational and affective language. As Livingstone and Blum-Ross (2020) argue, digital parenting is connected to the negotiation of emotions, identities, and values in online spaces, rather than merely to technical parenting practices.

The terms associated with psychology, protection, and risk further suggest that parenting content integrates reflective narratives about the vulnerabilities and challenges of modern family life. This aligns with research indicating that digital representations of parenting often combine discourses of love, care, and risk management (Tan et al., 2025). Hence, family values are shaped not only by harmony but also by moral responsibility and social awareness. Instagram Reels thus function as a medium for articulating values, positioning the family as a protective, emotional, and educational space.

Visual tactics increase the meaning-making process of parenting. Reels communicate not only through verbal narration but also through framing, facial expressions, gestures, sound, and narrative rhythm. From a visual culture

perspective, images are not secondary to text; they form the primary mode through which meaning is produced and felt (Morra & Smith, 2010; Pan & Lee, 2024; Schreiber, 2017). In this sense, Reels transform parenting into an affective experience rather than a purely informational one.

Building on this visual and thematic integration, further analysis reveals that meaning construction in Yane Ardian's Reels is organized through images and narratives, and supported by the strategic use of music as an affective semiotic resource. Most content employs soft instrumental tracks, slow-tempo popular songs, and occasionally religiously nuanced melodies that operate as affective cues, framing how family interactions are interpreted. The music reinforces moods of warmth, reflection, gratitude, and intimacy, enabling parenting representations to be experienced both cognitively and emotionally. In addition, the repeated use of similar musical styles across different Reels creates affective continuity, strengthening memorability and stabilizing the content's moral atmosphere. Through this pattern, music helps shape an affective identity that complements visual symbolism and thematic consistency. It prepares the emotional conditions through which parenting narratives become resonant and publicly engaging. These findings are consistent with recent

research showing that audio or music choices in short-form videos significantly increase viewer engagement and emotional responses, highlighting the importance of affective multimodal elements in digital communication strategies (Li et al., 2025; Sando & Valentina, 2023)

The short-video format strengthens the performative quality of the parenting portrayed. Van Dijck's concept of platformed sociality explains how personal experiences are shaped by platform logics, brief, emotional, visually intimate, and easily circulated (van Dijck, 2013). Within this framework, parenting becomes a form of digital performance that bridges private family life and public visibility. The notion of affective communication also supports this, as a produced meaning can only be communicated emotionally (Kirjakovski, 2023; Tan et al., 2025). Thus, the parenting content presented in Yane Ardian's Reels successfully creates a warm, intimate atmosphere, allowing audiences to relate to their own experiences.

The representation approach also includes developing audience engagement. View counts in the categories of Family Relations & Harmony and Education & Parenting are high, suggesting that viewers find this material appealing. Meaning, in Hall's view, is fluid and subject to negotiation with the audience, each of whom brings their own unique perspective

to the table (Hall, 1997). At the same time, the audience's varied comments demonstrate that they are doing more than just looking; they are actively contemplating, identifying, and feeling. The Reels intentionally organize affective circumstances through which meanings are experienced, remembered, and emotionally internalized. This is shown by the comprehensive use of visual, narrative, and aural tactics that go beyond merely presenting parental situations. When considering viewers' reactions and interactions in the online public space, this emotional structure becomes more important.

Engaged social media users are more than just a means to an end; they are a relational resource that helps build public trust and symbolic legitimacy in the setting of digital public communication. According to new research in digital PR, social media has shifted PR's focus from disseminating information to strategically managing reputations and fostering relationships through two-way dialogue (Abdullah et al., 2024). From this perspective, audience responses, such as views and comments on Yane Ardian's Reels, can be understood as indicators of discursive engagement. This means that people actively negotiate meanings and validate representational practices rather than simply consume content. Such participatory dynamics align with contemporary digital

public relations studies that highlight the centrality of interaction, dialogue, and emotional connectivity in fostering trust and public identity in online environments (Wardhani et al., 2025). Thus, high engagement with family-oriented parenting narratives reflects the effectiveness of relational communication strategies and affective alignment between the public figure and her audiences.

Extending this discussion on emotional connectivity and relational engagement, these findings are consistent with Wróblewski & Grzesiak's (2020) argument that symbolic and emotional bonds with audiences play a central role in shaping a public figure's digital identity. High levels of audience interaction in the Family Relations & Harmony category indicate that representations of intimate family life and emotional closeness make affective legitimacy, whereby audiences emotionally relate to the image of an ideal family.

In contrast, the relatively low engagement with content addressing social vulnerability and family risks suggests a more selective pattern of audience participation. Audiences appear to prefer narratives that offer emotional affirmation and relational warmth over content that highlights discomfort, risk, or moral tension. This pattern supports recent findings that audience interaction in digital environments is shaped more by emotional preference

and thematic comfort than by informational importance alone (Maihasni et al., 2025).

From a PR perspective, this indicates that Yane Ardian's digital communication strategy operates not only through the construction of parenting meanings. Her strategy also involves adaptive relational positioning, in which content selection and framing respond to audience sensibilities in order to sustain emotional connection, trust, and public engagement. From a broader perspective, the parenting content presented by Yane Ardian portrays parenting as a symbolic practice that integrates emotional relationships within the family, narrative visual displays, and strategies for building a self-image as a public figure. Therefore, the parenting content displayed cannot be considered self-expression or educational content only. It also functions as a way for constructing self-image, shaping the meaning of parenting, and building emotional connections with audiences.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrated analysis, in which Instagram Reels is positioned as a space for visual text, representational practices, and interaction. In doing so, this study broadens Stuart Hall's theory of representation into the context of short-form digital video and contributes to communication scholarship by explaining how public figures construct family images and parenting values within contemporary online cultures.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Yane Ardian's Instagram Reels function as a digital public relations space where parenting, family values, and public figure identity are strategically produced through patterned visual narratives, thematic consistency, and affective communication. Parenting is not represented as a private domestic routine, but as a relational and performative practice centred on affection, moral responsibility, character formation, and emotional intimacy. It is reflected in the dominance of parenting representations, recurring emotional framings, and the systematic visualization of family harmony. In line with Stuart Hall's theory of representation, the Reels do not reflect family reality; rather, they actively frame and normalize the meanings of motherhood and ideal family life within the digital public space.

The results indicate that visual storytelling, emotional symbolism, and the recurrence of parenting-focused themes change ordinary family experiences into public moral tales. Through the aesthetics of short videos, parenting becomes a digital performance that connects private life with public awareness, creating symbolic credibility, tenderness, and moral validity. Patterns of audience participation further support the idea that these representations

are not simply cultural texts but also public relations tools that help develop relationships. A qualitative analysis of interaction patterns and audience comments reveals trust, ethical positioning, and participatory intimacy.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study is the conceptualization of digital parenting performance as an integrative framework that connects visual techniques, representational structures, and audience reactions. This viewpoint expands Stuart Hall's framework to short-form digital video and enhances public relations and digital communication studies. It illustrates how family tales function as relational, reputational, and moral assets in online image formation.

In practice, this study shows that parenting narratives have strong symbolic value in shaping public trust and relational closeness, particularly when organized through emotionally resonant storytelling and consistent family-centered representations. At the same time, the findings emphasize the importance of digital literacy so that audiences can critically interpret family content as a strategic representation validated through interaction, rather than as a transparent reality. This study is limited to one public figure and one platform. Future research should develop cross-platform, comparative, and audience-centered analyses, including mixed-method or sentiment-oriented approaches.

These efforts can help to deepen understanding of how digital family narratives are effectively negotiated, legitimized, and utilized within modern public relations practices.

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AI declaration: Artificial intelligence tools were used in a limited capacity to assist with editing and language refinement, specifically in clarifying sentence structure and translating complex Indonesian academic terms into precise English expressions. The use of AI was limited to improving readability and linguistic accuracy. All substantive aspects of the research, including conceptual development, methodological design, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and formulation of conclusions, were conducted independently by the authors.

Ethical clearance: This research adheres to established ethical standards in digital communication and media studies. The study analyzed publicly accessible content on social media and did not involve direct interaction with individuals, intervention, or the collection of confidential or sensitive personal information. All materials were reviewed responsibly, with due regard for privacy considerations and ethical principles governing online research. Because this study relied solely on publicly available data and did not involve the participation of human subjects, formal institutional ethics approval was not required.

Data Availability Statement: The data supporting the findings of this study are not publicly available because they are curated social media documentation and qualitative coding materials. However, the data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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