



Kidfluencers: The Rise of Capitalizing Kids as Instagram Microcelebrities in Indonesia

Desthia Amalia¹, Warto Warto², Titis Srimuda Pitana³, Sri Kusumo Habsari⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Univeristas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia
desthiamaliam@student.uns.ac.id

Abstract. Instagram is popular social media in Indonesia. There are people who gain income from Instagram, including kids. The kids who gain income on Instagram are called kidfluencers. The existence of kidfluencers becomes interesting to be connected with the regulation of Instagram where the minimum age for people to operate their own social media is thirteen years old. It becomes contradictory with the condition of kidfluencers, they exist with big fame at a young age but they are not legal by age to have an Instagram account, let alone to work as influencers. The condition makes the parents handle their kids' Instagram accounts which lead to capitalizing. This research uses qualitative content analysis method. It is hoped that this method can help the researchers to answer several problems. The problems include the forms of capital and the process of the kidfluencers become microcelebrities. Capitalizing cannot be excluded due to the condition where the kids who appear as the main actors with various capital but in reality, the owner of those capital is their parents. In this case, the kidfluencers transform into the micro celebrities where they are famous to niche audiences only and they are reciprocal in their interactions with viewers. The impact of capitalizing kidfluencers as micro celebrities is that the kids slowly lose their identity where they usually play, express and explore themselves freely. By being celebrities at a young age, kids also receive various comments about the uploaded contents.

Keywords: Kidfluencers, Instagram, Capitalizing, Microcelebrity.

1 Introduction

The use of social media in Indonesia is growing rapidly, including Instagram. At the beginning, people use Instagram to share their special moments with their closest ones. However, there are also people who get income from Instagram these days. They are known as influencers; they can be interpreted as an Instagram celebrity or someone who has popularity on Instagram [1]. Someone can be called as influencer if they obtain a lot of likes and comments [1]. Thus, the influencers' posts usually capable in attracting their followers and audiences.

Influencers come from various age ranges, including the kids who are known as kidfluencers or child influencers. There are many kidfluencers account on Instagram

although they are on other side with the Instagram regulation. In this case, Instagram sets the minimum age of someone can handle an account is thirteen years old. Meanwhile, there are many kidfluencers who are under thirteen years old but they are famous on Instagram.

Most kidfluencers under thirteen have Instagram accounts managed entirely by their parents, who play a crucial role in launching the career of kidfluencers. At a young age, the kidfluencers are having many forms of capital due to their rising fame. Beside the economic capital, they also have social capital and cultural capital [2]. However, their age prevents them from having legal control over their online persona [3]. As minors who are unable to make their own decisions, they are entirely reliant on their parents to manage their Instagram accounts. In essence, kidfluencers become unwitting actors in a performance curated by their parents.

By consistently sharing the children's lives online, kidfluencers' parents transform them into public figures. The constant exposure to the audience is often driven by their cuteness [4]. The cute side of the kidfluencers invites various comments, including the good and the bad ones. The intense exposure on social media compromises the children's privacy. As a result, the kidfluencers find themselves with early fame that robs their ability to control the accessible personal information by their followers [5].

As mentioned previously, kidfluencers accumulate capital in multiple forms, including economic, social and cultural capital. In terms of social capital, their popularity attracts a large following and generates large networking. This prominence can foster envy among other parents within their online community. Meanwhile, kidfluencers accounts embody parenting trends and ideals through the contents shared by their parents, a practice that is known as "sharenting". The moment when social media platforms enable parents to connect and exchange parenting experiences, the oversharing of personal details can diminish children to the privacy concerns and normalizing the public about the private information [6].

When kidfluencers display their capital publicly, they also transform their image. They are no longer perceived as ordinary children because their capital attracts significant online engagement. It is blurring the lines between them and the ordinary celebrities. Like celebrities, kidfluencers gain widespread recognition within specific demographics. While ordinary celebrities appeal the broad audience, then the kidfluencers cultivate a following among parents and individuals who find children as a cute object. Moreover, by sharing their children's lives with a sizeable audience, these kidfluencers also turns into microcelebrities themselves [5].

Despite possessing various forms of capital, kidfluencers lack control over their own Instagram accounts which initiates a trend of parental exploitation. The kidfluencers' status as microcelebrities have normalized the capitalization within Indonesians. However, it is about the kidfluencers' social and cultural capital that trap them in this capitalization role.

The capitalization of kidfluencers often appears subtle because the parents take the role as educators on Instagram. They play both social and cultural capital to achieve this. Meanwhile, the social capital is not always linked to luxury stuffs, but the kidfluencers status itself is a form of social capital that could provide large networking. On the other hand, cultural capital operates more subtly through parental values and

norms transmitted to the children. This approach is rarely questioned in Indonesia, such as a crying child is often perceived as cute and harmless.

Consequently, kidfluencers' status as Instagram microcelebrities which attracts specific audiences is tied to the exploitation of their childhood through the manipulation of their social and cultural capital. The writer's interest is sparked by the social and cultural capital wielded by kidfluencers. A key question arises: who truly owns these forms of capital? Do they belong to the kidfluencers themselves, or to their parents? Given that many kidfluencers are under legal age to own or operate their Instagram accounts, then the ownership of their social and cultural capital becomes ambiguous. It appears as although the kidfluencers possesses these capitals but in reality, they are likely controlled by their parents. This phenomenon highlights the practice of capitalizing children for financial gain. This essay will hunt deeper through the types of capital associated with kidfluencers, the process of capitalizing them as Instagram microcelebrities in Indonesia, and further adverse effects to the kidfluencers well-being.

2 Method

This essay adopts a qualitative approach which relies on in-depth observation and critical analysis rather than the quantitative method [7]. The writers chose qualitative content analysis specifically for this research. As stated, the qualitative content analysis allowed to translate the visual data into categorisations, which precisely demonstrated the sharp sense of the results, identifying themes, discuss findings and advancing new concepts [8]. Due to the data used in this research is in the form of visual data, namely videos and photos then qualitative content analysis can help the writers to translate those. Additionally, Serafinelli argues photos' meanings are constrained by several socio-cultural contexts in which they are located, and these are different in different places and periods. It follows that context of experience are decisive in shaping the value of images [8]. Thus, the video and photo posts that appear on kidfluencers' Instagram accounts actually have deeper meaning than just mere posts. Especially for the posts related to cultural and social capital, which will be the focus of this research. Then, by using the qualitative content analysis method, the writers can see the meaning behind those posts clearer and deeper.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants based on specific criteria which are relevant to the research question. While the groups are chosen intentionally, it is also essential to avoid overgeneralizing findings. By carefully considering the sample and research focus, reliable data can be collected without making broader claims about the issue [7]. In this research, participants were selected purposefully based on their status as kidfluencers who are under 13 years old and demonstrate both social and cultural capital. By focusing on these four kidfluencers, the essay aims to search through the relationship between the forms of capital, the rapid growth of kidfluencers' status as microcelebrities, and the strategic investments made by their parents. The essay employs Pierre Bourdieu theoretical framework to choose and describe the data

collected from each kidfluencers, providing an understanding to the writers about the factors which contribute to kidfluencers' online influence and success.

This essay employs Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social capital to describe how these concepts influence the capitalization process for Indonesian kidfluencers. Cultural capital, deeply intertwined with both school and family values, is used to understand how its normalization can encourage parents to capitalize on their children's potential. Similarly, the writers also explore the social capital which refers to kidfluencers networking on social media. The social capital is often perceived as beneficial opportunities but wide social network can also contribute to the capitalization of kidfluencers as microcelebrities.

The complete steps undertaken by the authors in this study are as follows:

1. **Participant Selection:** The authors select participants based on specific criteria such as kidfluencers under 13 years old with followers ranging from 100.000 to 1.2 million.
2. **Capital Focus:** The authors concentrate on social and cultural capital, which have significant potential for capitalizing kidfluencers as microcelebrities. Cultural capital refers to posts which consist of values and norms, while social capital refers to kidfluencers' extensive networks. The authors use Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical framework.
3. **Caption analysis:** The authors analyze the captions from kidfluencers' uploads to identify the underlying social and cultural capital.
4. **Engagement Overview:** The authors examine the number of engagements (likes and comments) on posts to assess audience's enthusiasm for the emergence of social and cultural capital.
5. **Capitalization Explanation:** After identifying the social and cultural capital present in kidfluencers' posts, the authors explain the process of capitalizing them as microcelebrities.

3 Result and Discussion

Based on the previously chosen criteria of focusing on kidfluencers under 13 years old with followers between 100.000 – 1.2 million, the authors selected four kidfluencers who met these requirements. Additionally, the authors focus on the social and cultural capital in the Instagram posts of these four kidfluencers.

As known, the growth of social media including Instagram brings us to know influencers. The influencers come from various range of age, including children. They are known as kidfluencers or child influencers. Child influencers refer to children who star in content such as reviews, vlogs, or skits for an audience on social media platform [9]. The existence of kidfluencers also brings to a phenomenon called sharenting. It is where a parent shares images and stories about their family on public social media platforms [9].

The moment when the parents share their family life to the social media especially the children, that brings a whole new world to them. The kids who are close with the

world full of playing and having fun slowly changes when they become kidfluencers. Therefore, the existence of Internet especially social media opened up new realms for sharing private information of kids with people, including strangers [10]

Being kidfluencers means they are followed by big exposure and followers as well. Through the contents they made on their Instagram accounts show their differences with other kids especially in terms of capital. The moment when the other kids are doing things which they like, then the kidfluencers are working in disguise through their contents on Instagram page. Thus, the kidfluencers are surrounded by many forms of capital at immature age. The essay focuses on social capital and cultural capital [2] which own by the four kidfluencers and their parents. The two types of capital described kidfluencers into a unique work environment and brought several effects, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Kidfluencers and Capital

Number	Data Text	Types of capital	The effect of capital
1	Kidfluencer 1 A girl is showing some good examples to be an older sister to her younger sister. For example, the girl is feeding, helping, playing with her little sister.	Cultural capital	Kidfluencer loses their natural honesty as they are forced to conform to the expectations of cultural capital, which often demands good norms and values.
2	Kidfluencer 2 A boy is taking picture while holding the YouTube silver button.	Social capital	Early exposure to a wide online network can rob kidfluencers of their carefree childhood. As in the Instagram post of kidfluencer 2, the silver button is a symbol of their online success and it highlights the intense effort they have put in at a young age.
3	Kidfluencer 1 A girl is watching YouTube during her online classes. Her mother records her crying while asking whether what she has done is right or not.	Cultural capital	Kidfluencer sacrifices her privacy while expressing emotions like crying. Especially if their parents prioritize the cultural capital over their children’s emotional well-being.
4	Kidfluencer 3 A boy is filming his daily activities while promoting a brand of facial foam and face wash.	Social capital	Kidfluencer is frequently used as tool for showcasing social capital through sponsored content or endorsement. The endorsements frequently revolve around the children’s daily life, as see in the post made by kidfluencer 3. While the content

			may appear authentic, it often serves as subtle display of social capital
5	Kidfluencer 4 A mother is recording her son while saying that her son is not sad when his score is bad but he is sad when he cannot date the girl he likes. The boy is crying on the video when it is recorded.	Cultural capital	The demands of being kidfluencer can limit personal space of kidfluencer for emotional expression. The contrast between the kidfluencer's romantic disappointment and the bad score reflects the pressure to conform cultural capital.

As shown in Table 1, there are four kidfluencers who have cultural and social capital through their posts on Instagram. Although the kidfluencers are the stars of their Instagram account but in fact their parents are the real holders of their accounts. Thus, it tickles the researchers' point of view, who is actually the real owner of those capitals? Is it the kidfluencers or their parents?

3.1 Cultural Capital

The kidfluencers at an early age are in hard position for not following what their parents talk to them especially in the term of cultural capital. One of the central ideas of Bourdieu's work is the idea that there are different forms of capital. Not only economic capital (i.e., material wealth in the form of money, stocks, shares, properties, etc), but also cultural capital (i.e., knowledge, skills, and other cultural acquisitions as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications), symbolic capital (i.e., accumulated prestige or honour) [2]. Furthermore, Bourdieu explains the cultural capital which is related to the relationship between the educational system and the family [11].

In caption 1, caption 2, and caption 3 uploaded by kidfluencer 1 and kidfluencer 4 demonstrate the cultural capital which includes the educational values from parents to their children as well as the effects which come from the application of cultural capital to kidfluencers well-being.

Table 2. Kidfluencer 1 on Instagram caption 1

Caption	Likes	Comments
"A girl is showing some good examples to be a big sister to her younger sister. For example, the girl is feeding, helping, playing with her little sister." [12]	10.726 likes	236 comments

In kidfluencer 1's post on April 15, 2023, we see a heartwarming video featuring kidfluencer 1 and her younger sister. In the video, kidfluencer 1 exemplifies excellent older sister behavior by feeding, assisting, and playing with her younger sibling. Through this post, kidfluencer 1 is portrayed as a role model for ideal sibling relationship, demonstrating positive values. Kidfluencer 1's parents have cultivated the

image of a kind and caring older sibling through the caption 1 and the uploaded video. This portrayal makes kidfluencer 1 as the protector of her younger sister. The values conveyed in the post about the qualities of a compassionate and helpful older sibling can be considered as cultural capital. The cultural capital embedded in kidfluencer 1’s post has sparked 10.726 likes and 236 comments from the public, primarily expressing admiration for her positive attitude toward her younger sister. This cultural capital serves as benchmark for other parents to emulate. As a result, the parents of kidfluencer 1 have garnered significant support through the post showcasing cultural capital.

Conversely, while kidfluencer often serves as positive role model, her emphasis on portraying ideal behavior can accidentally create a distorted perception of childhood. Kidfluencer 1’s youthful charm makes her contents appealing, particularly those which emphasize positive behavior. These examples are often used by audiences as benchmark for the image of well-behaved children. However, as kidfluencer 1 becomes accustomed to showcase her good behavior on camera, she may unknowingly lose her genuine childlike qualities. The honest feeling of childhood can be eroded by the audiences’ expectations on kidfluencer 1’s Instagram posts, especially related to the cultural capital they typically portray.

Caption 1 displays the cultural capital in the form of educational as well as positive values and norms. In this case, kidfluencer 1 is portrayed as a good and kind older sister rather than a chaotic one. Therefore, kidfluencer 1 is perceived by audiences as ideal example through the caption by highlighting the good norms and values presented as cultural capital.

Table 3. Kidfluencer 1 on Instagram Caption 2

Caption	Likes	Comments
“A girl is watching YouTube during her online classes. Her mother records her crying while asking whether what she has done is right or not.” [13]	8.296 likes	151 comments

In August 7, 2023, kidfluencer 1 is shown crying after being scolded by her mother for watching YouTube during online lessons. The video captures a candid moment of emotional vulnerability, highlighting the challenges of balancing online learning and personal distractions. This post can be categorized as cultural capital where the mother of kidfluencer 1 teaches her child about good values and norms. While this content can be seen as valuable lesson in self-discipline, it also raises questions about privacy and the appropriate sharing of personal moments. The video itself could capture 8.296 likes and 151 comments from the public.

While kidfluencer 1’s behavior in caption 2 is clearly inappropriate, the video raises questions about the effectiveness of the mother’s disciplinary approach. Regarding the values and norms introduced by her mother do not run both ways. The questions and statements asked by her mother in the video are mostly answered through tears. Therefore, the kidfluencer 1’s emotional response, primarily tears. The presence of tears could suggest a complex interplay of regret, frustration, and perhaps resentment towards the public exposure of her mistake.

The contrast between the positive portrayal in caption 1 and the negative behavior depicted in caption 2 highlight the complexities of child development. The persona as an obedient and good child in caption 1 becomes a broken concept in caption 2 because kidfluencer 1 makes a mistake that contradicts the persona of an obedient and kind child. The idealized image of a well-behaved child can be shattered by moments of disobedience. It leads to social confusion and questioning the authenticity of the kidfluencer 1's persona. In other words, the audiences can be chaotic when their expectations of kidfluencer 1's cultural capital experience a defect.

The post through caption 2 reveals a concerning dynamic where kidfluencer 1 is used as an example, even when she misbehaves. In this case, the mother plays cultural capital on kidfluencer 1 by teaching norms and values, but at the same time the mother's disciplinary approach accidentally invades the child's emotional privacy. In this case, it refers to the moment when kidfluencer 1 is crying. The way of the mother prioritizing cultural capital over her child's emotional well-being may bring negative effects to the emotional health of the child.

Table 4. Kidfluencer 4 on Instagram Caption 3

Caption	Likes	Comments
"A mother is recording her son while saying that her son is not sad when his score is bad but he is sad when he cannot date the girl he likes. The boy is crying on the video when it is recorded" [14]	124.053 likes	3.572 comments

Caption 3 is a post from kidfluencer 4 on June 14, 2024. The post is a video showing kidfluencer 4 crying because he cannot date the girl he likes. The video attracts 124.053 likes and 3.572 comments from his followers. Furthermore, the caption which is written by his mother, states that kidfluencer 4 would rather cry over a girl than cry because of having bad score. In other words, the caption suggests that kidfluencer 4 prioritizes his emotional distress over academic performance. Thus, caption 3 demonstrates a form of cultural capital in the terms of academic performance which is compared to personal feelings.

In this case, the cultural capital related to the concept of good grades indicates that achieving high academic performance is considered a form of socialization of cultural norms within the family. Therefore, receiving good or bad grades becomes a benchmark within the family where a child can express their happiness or sadness. The concept of obtaining good grades can also be viewed as the transmission of cultural capital between generations. When achieving good grades is a cultural capital valued by the mother's parents, then the concept of academic excellence becomes intergenerational, passing from the mother to the kidfluencer 4.

In the caption 3, kidfluencer 4 is shown crying due to heartbreak, but the emotion expressed by him is compared to crying because of bad grades. Critically, the concept of crying for mother of kidfluencer 4 is more appropriate if it is motivated by the failure to achieve good grades compared to the sadness due to heartbreak at young age. That is where the mother plays a role in the socialization of cultural capital by emphasizing

the importance of academic values, which is compared to the outpouring tears from kidfluencer 4 due to the heartbreak.

The cultural capital displayed by the mother of kidfluencer 4 in caption 3 can have an impact on the personal space of the kidfluencer, especially his personal space in expressing various forms of emotions. The comparison that emerged between kidfluencer 4 crying due to heartbreak and the appropriateness of crying for a child due to the bad grades suggests a subtle coercion to fulfill the cultural capital imposed by the mother on kidfluencer 4. In short, kidfluencer 4 does not need to be scolded for choosing to cry over his failed romantic story than bad grades. Kidfluencer 4 has the freedom as a child to cry for whatever the reason, and he also has the right to express his emotions without being captured by the camera, let alone to be uploaded to social media which can invite various comments from the public.

3.2 Social Capital

Beside the cultural capital, there is social capital around the kidfluencers. Due to the fame that they got from young age, they have a lot of privileges which the normal kids do not own. In this case, the social capital refers to social connections, honorability, and respectability that is essential to win and keep the confidence of high society [15].

In caption 4 and caption 5 uploaded on the Instagram accounts of kidfluencer 2 and kidfluencer 3, social capital is demonstrated through their networks as kidfluencers. The writers selected the form of networks in the form of endorsement and partnership. Additionally, the writers also focus on the effects from social capital for the kidfluencers.

Table 5. Kidfluencer 2 on Instagram Caption 4

Caption	Likes	Comments
“A boy is taking picture while holding the YouTube silver button” [16]	20.358 likes	168 comments

Caption 4 is an upload made by kidfluencer 2 on June 7, 2024, featuring a photo of kidfluencer 2 holding a YouTube silver button. This post can be categorized as social capital because it is related to the network that kidfluencer 2 has built from a young age. Kidfluencer 2 who is not yet of legal age to work, even if it is online, demonstrate the social capital evident in the uploaded content. The photo itself gathers 20.358 likes and 168 comments from the followers.

The YouTube silver button is a symbol indicating that kidfluencer 2 has achieved 100.000 subscribers on his YouTube channel. These 100.000 people represent a vast network he has built. The presence of kidfluencer 2 as an influencer has attracted numerous viewers who are interested in learning about his life and his uploaded contents. Moreover, the 100.000 subscribers on YouTube also symbolize the child’s hard work. While social capital may not be immediately apparent, a deeper interpretation of the silver button in the photo reveals the underlying network.

Through the upload of caption 3 and the silver button which kidfluencer 2 holds, it exemplifies a child who has achieved early success through social capital that

demonstrates their extensive network and financial success. The YouTube silver button featured in kidfluencer 2's post speaks volume beyond the 100,000 subscribers he has garnered and the income he earns from the engagement of his videos on YouTube. Consequently, the social capital utilized by parents in kidfluencer 2's post showcases the child's significant effort and dedication, despite he is not at legal age to work.

However, the extensive network of kidfluencers which have been built from a young age, invades the world of children's freedom. Kidfluencers have strived to maintain social capital through the strong social network which is established early on. The children world which is originally centered around freedom and world of playing, has been transformed as kidfluencers who work diligently to preserve social capital. As evidenced by the YouTube silver button uploaded by kidfluencer 2, it shows the symbol of his hard work in acquiring a vast network.

Table 6. Kidfluencer 3 on Instagram caption 5

Caption	Likes	Comments
"A boy is filming his daily activities while promoting a brand of facial foam and face cream." [17]	494 likes	30 comments

Caption 5 features an upload from kidfluencer 3 on April 20, 2024. In the uploaded video, kidfluencer 3 showcases his daily activities. In the end of the video, he closes his day by washing his face with a facial foam from a particular brand then he applies face cream from the same brand. The relationship between kidfluencer 3 and the brand illustrates a form of online networking which is closely associated with social capital.

The social capital demonstrated by the parents of kidfluencer 3 through caption 5 is relatively subtle. As the chosen content focuses on the daily activities of kidfluencer 3. Besides, the usage of facial foam combined with face cream is to maintain their good skin condition in the middle of his busy schedules. The approach of showcasing daily content fosters a sense of community, making kidfluencer 3's upload relatable to the viewers.

It can be seen the video successfully attracts 494 likes and 30 comments from the followers. This relatability can inspire other parents whose children's daily life may be similar to what kidfluencer 3 portrays in the uploaded content, leading to increased sales of the facial foam and face cream brand. Ultimately, those who are interested in purchasing these products can expand kidfluencer 3's network through endorsements, enabling this social capital to generate income for the kidfluencer 3 and his parents. Kidfluencer 3 in this upload serves as a tool to showcase the social capital, particularly through endorsement. The uploaded content, which revolves around the daily activities, fosters a sense of closeness between the kidfluencers' uploaded content and their viewers. The closeness which appears between them can also contribute to the expansion of the kidfluencer's network. The closer the endorsement content to its audience, the greater the possibility that the content can generate income for the kidfluencers' parents.

With the fact that kidfluencers are used by their parents to create content that contains endorsements, then it is contrary to the nature of kidfluencers as children. They

are not yet legal to work but through social capital they transform as workers, although they work through online contents only. At a very young age, kidfluencers can even make money for their parents through endorsements and the large engagement they had from their followers for those paid contents.

3.3 Capitalizing Kidfluencers as Instagram Microcelebrities

The cultural capital displayed in caption 1,2, and 3 by kidfluencer 1 and 4 reflects the values and norms produced by their parents. Initially, the cultural capital which is initiated by kidfluencers' parents solely focused on teaching good values and norms to the children. However, the situation becomes more complex as the kidfluencers gain popularity among the public and gather significant followers, likes and comments on Instagram. As a result, the cultural capital which originally serves as a platform for parents to convey values and norms then it evolves into a form of capital used by parents to shape the online persona of the children.

The online persona which emphasizes good values and norms can boost the popularity of kidfluencers in the form of followers, comments and likes on their Instagram accounts. However, this growing popularity and online persona can gradually distance kidfluencers from their world as children. While children typically thrive in a world full of freedom, kidfluencers often find themselves trapped in a parent-created Instagram world that is essentially a realm of work. Although the cultural capital of parents teaching values and norms may disguise some facts; kidfluencers are pressured to showcase cultural capital that appeals to their followers. The situation often sets aside the honesty of the children and the freedom for the children to express their emotions without being captured by the camera and being uploaded to social media. In this case, the parenting contents or sharenting practices are purposefully commodify and exposure driven to what their mothers curate the children identity [10].

Parents who exploit kidfluencers by compromising the authenticity of childhood and often ignore the children's privacy, become a concerning trend. What motivates these parents to prioritize popularity over their children's well-being? One potential factor is the cultural capital combined with social media fame. The number of likes and comments gathered through contents featuring norms and values can raise the popularity of kidfluencers. On the other hand, the contents which show their children's popularity create the sense of validation and achievement for these parents. As kidfluencers gain attention and followers, they become increasingly visible to the public. The exposure can lead to significant engagement, including likes and comments. Then, the engagement can generate income for the kidfluencers, primarily benefiting their parents as the real capital holders.

On the other side, the social capital displayed in caption 4 and caption 5 by kidfluencer 2 and 3 showcase their network as influencers on Instagram. Through social capital, kidfluencers can establish connection along the endorsement and partnership. They are often used as models of success at a young age in the public eye. Despite not being legal for working age, in fact kidfluencers can earn significant income through their social capital. Through partnership and endorsement, kidfluencers who are close with cute image can benefit the brand and their parents financially. This challenges the

notion that children should be prohibited from working until they reach legal age. Kidfluencers are no longer children who enjoy freedom and play; they have been actively building their network and social capital from a young age.

The trend of parents exploiting underage children as influencers for personal gain becomes concerning. Despite the legal restrictions for children to run their own Instagram accounts, parents prioritize social capital and financial benefit over their children's well-being. These parents often ignore the fact that their children are too young to have Instagram accounts, let alone to work. The social media fame and potential financial rewards can motivate parents to push their children into influencer world. By capitalizing on their children's online presence, parents can build a network of followers and attract brand partnerships. The engagement coming from kidfluencers in the form of likes and comments can lead to profitable opportunities, in essence of benefiting the parents. Despite the legality for kidfluencers to work, parents are more interested in expanding the children's social capital which in the end could make them having financial benefit from it.

The engagement in the form of likes and comments from kidfluencers contents which consist of cultural and social capital raises the main problem where the parents follow what they consider as their taste instead of the kids' to be posted on Instagram. Then, it makes the situation ambiguous who is the holder of those capital? The answer is their parents, not their kids. The parents are the ones who push their kids to be famous and make them as kidfluencers.

Through the cultural and social capital shown in kidfluencer's Instagram contents, as seen in caption 1 to 5, kidfluencers have achieved fame. Their popularity stems from followers who actively commenting and liking on every post that appears on their Instagram accounts. As a result of this engaged followers, kidfluencers become microcelebrities. According to Abidin, microcelebrities were ordinary celebrities, famous to only a niche audience and who were reciprocal in their interactions with viewers [10]. Kidfluencers often attract other parents who become their Instagram followers to engage with their contents, particularly when the posts focus on cultural and social capital. The high volume of comments on these posts can pique the interest of kidfluencers' parents, leading them to engage with other parents in the community. In essence, the contents shared by kidfluencers on Instagram can generate excitement and stimulate a sense of connection among parents and audiences. Consequently, the interactions that happened between the audiences and the parents of kidfluencers shape the contents of those children to follow the demand of the audiences. Although, the kidfluencers are the main actors on their Instagram account but they are not the real holder of any capital. They are curated by the parents to follow the audiences' excitement which can bring more online fame and engagement to them.

Critically, at the moment the parents show the cultural capital and social capital to the public then it indicates the beginning of capitalizing phase. The children who are locked within the capital, online persona, and the status as microcelebrities, they have zero freedom to express their world and what they want. In the end, the kidfluencers have no choice other than following the audiences demand to maintain their capital as well as the fame. Moreover, the kidfluencers who do not have any control over their

social media, they only follow what their parents shape them into. It includes the parents' excitement to interact with the audiences.

In addition, the capitalization of kidfluencers through cultural and social capital brings financial benefits to their parents as capital holders. In Instagram, posts that can attract public interest can generate large engagement which can bring income and fame. This also happens to kidfluencers; their existence as cute children can ultimately attract people interest and generate income for their parents.

4 Conclusion

In this essay, the authors focus on the cultural and social capital of four kidfluencers. Cultural capital, which is closely related to the norms and values taught by parents to their children, can actually cause several effects; kidfluencers start to lose the honest side of being children, lose the freedom of their world that is close to the world of playing, and sacrifice the privacy of kidfluencers as children in pouring out their emotions without being captured by camera and uploaded to social media.

In addition to cultural capital, kidfluencers are also closely related to social capital which consists of the extensive network of kidfluencers from an early age. This social capital is an important issue because it is related to Instagram's own regulation in determining the minimum age for someone to have a personal Instagram account. Kidfluencers in this context are not yet legal in terms of age but they already have a wide network through endorsement and partnership with various brands. Then, through the endorsement and partnership, the parents of those kidfluencers could earn financial income.

The cultural and social capital which surround kidfluencers also make them famous. The fame can be assessed through their Instagram engagement in the form of likes and comments. The more likes and comments that the kidfluencers get, the more famous their Instagram accounts. With the large number of followers who interact with these kidfluencers through likes and comments, they eventually become microcelebrities. The status of children as kidfluencers and microcelebrities who bring in money for their parents indicates their parents have capitalized on the kidfluencers.

Disclosure of Interests. The writers have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

References

1. Sakinah S. Selebgram: Meraih popularitas melalui cyberspace. *ETNOSIA : Jurnal Etnografi Indonesia* [Internet]. 2018 Jun 29 [cited 2024];3(1):48–71. Available from: <https://journal.unhas.ac.id/index.php/etnosia/article/view/4158>
doi:10.31947/etnosia.v3i1.4158
2. Bourdieu P, Thompson JB. *Language and Symbolic Power* Pierre Bourdieu ; edited and introduced by John B. Thompson ; translated by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson. Cambridge, UK: Polity; 1991.

3. Dwiarsianti A. Sharenting Dan Privasi Anak: Studi Netnografi Pada unggahan instagram dengan tagar #anakku. *Jurnal Komunikasi Global* [Internet]. 2022 Jun 28 [cited 2024];11(1):1–20. Available from: <https://jurnal.usk.ac.id/JKG/article/view/24803> doi:10.24815/jkg.v11i1.24803
4. Astuti ID. Reality and Hyperreality Behind the Kidfluencer Phenomenon. *Ultima Comm: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* [Internet]. 2022 Feb 10 [cited 2024];14(2):251–66. Available from: <https://ejournals.umh.ac.id/index.php/FIKOM/article/view/2743> doi:<https://doi.org/10.31937/ultimacomm.v14i2.2743>
5. Abidin C. Micromicrocelebrity: Branding Babies on the internet. *M/C Journal* [Internet]. 2015 Oct 14 [cited 2024];18(5). Available from: <https://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/1022> doi:10.5204/mcj.1022
6. Brosch A. Sharenting – why do parents violate their children’s privacy? *The New Educational Review* [Internet]. 2018 Dec 31 [cited 2024];54(4):75–85. Available from: <https://czasopisma.marszalek.com.pl/en/10-15804/tner/3179-tner2018406> doi:10.15804/tner.2018.54.4.06
7. Messenger Davies J, Mosdell N. *Practical research methods for media and cultural studies: Making people count*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; 2006.
8. Serafinelli E. *Digital Life on instagram: New Social Communication of Photography*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited; 2018.
9. Lynn A. Kidfluencing: The Mental Impacts of Posting on Social Media can have on Children and Parents. *Research Archive of Rising Scholars* [Internet]. 2023 Oct 2 [cited 2024];1–13. Available from: <https://research-archive.org/index.php/rars/preprint/view/537/version/674> doi:10.58445/rars.537
10. Abidin C. #familygoals: Family influencers, calibrated amateurism, and justifying young Digital Labor. *Social Media + Society* [Internet]. 2017 Apr [cited 2024];3(2):1–15. Available from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305117707191> doi:10.1177/2056305117707191
11. Bourdieu P. *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press; 1990.
12. Zhuo CI. Crystabelle Ingrid Zhuo on Instagram: “Ketika kesabaran bebel setipis Tisu YG dibagi 2 🤔” [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2024 Aug 23]. Available from: https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cp4416RNKgC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA
13. Zhuo CI. Crystabelle Ingrid Zhuo on Instagram: “Nonton YouTube sesekali itu GK masalah di era Teknologi Skrg Ini, Tapi Kalo nontonnya Pada Saat Jam Sekolah online sedang berlangsung Dan Nontonnya Juga Gak Cuma 1-2 kali. tapi tiap Hari Belajar Online Bebel Ketahuan Ada Buka browsing YouTube, Jadi Ini YG Membuat Kami Sebagai Ortu Utk Ngasih Pemahaman Ke Bebel Kalo Ini Bukan Suatu Hal YG Baik. Mau Berbeda Pendapat Silahkan yak, Harap Bijak sebelum berkomentar 🙏” [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2024 Aug 23]. Available from: https://www.instagram.com/reel/CvopORnt6VV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
14. Yuliantara L. Baby Levino Yuliantara on Instagram: “Uda Tau Lagi Ujian Asik Telponan mulu uda kayak org pacaran, Giliran Mau di block Nangis Bombay Kan sampe makan Pun Dah ga Nafsu 🤔 Baca Doa Salah LG LGSG Di Bisikin sama lala Apakah Ini pertama Nono Sudah Mau puber 🤔 #levinoyuliantara” [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Aug 23]. Available from: https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8L6Amdymcy/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
15. Bourdieu P. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; 1984.

16. Fain R. Ruby Fain on Instagram: “Terimakasih Onty Uncle udah support abang 🥰 #rubyfain #silverbutton” [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Aug 23]. Available from: https://www.instagram.com/p/C75o-uTyq8u/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
17. 1. Arvano D. V A N O 🎮🏀 on Instagram: “Kegiatan Boleh Banyak, Tapi Jangan sampe Lupa Setelah Berkegiatan Cuci Muka Pake foaming cleanser Dari @littlefabkids Pembersih Wajah Yang Bisa menghilangkan kotoran Dan Minyak berlebih.. Juga Jangan sampe lupa pake face Creamnya Yaa.. Penting Banget ITU! Kenapa? Karena face Cream Dari @littlefabkids Mengandung: - probiotic - witch hazel extract - manuka honey - pure aloe vera extract fungsinya untuk: - menghidrasi dan menutrisi kulit wajah - membuat kulit lebih lembab, lembut dan Halus - Tidak menyumbat Pori2 Wajah Aman Banget Buat anak2 Mulai Dari 3 Tahun 🥰” [Internet]. 2024 [cited 2024 Aug 23]. Available from: https://www.instagram.com/reel/C5-2nRexk0c/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

