

MAGISTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Magisterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

Instagram Mothers and Online Privacy of Children

verfasst von / submitted by

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angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2019 / Vienna 2019

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet

UA 066 841

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme as it appears on the student
record sheet:

Magisterstudium Publizistik- und
Kommunikationswissenschaften

Betreut von / Supervisor:

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Katharine Sarikakis

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Wien, 2019

Abstract

Instagram has developed the full stream of influencers in various areas, including the term Instagram Mom. These are moms that daily share their stories and photos of their children and husbands with numerous followers, and through the profile, they often represent not the best but the idealized image of their life. Expansion of such “perfect” profiles, spread the pressure on today’s mothers also to social networks. Observing such maternal contents, they often start to believe that their lives are not exciting enough, that their body is not perfect and that they are not enough good mothers, wives, and women. This unhealthy comparison with Instagram, mothers often leads to anxiety and depression. Whether because of the pressure of the environment or desire to prove themselves as good parents, nowadays mothers need to share more about their kids, why many of them often face judgments on social media. So-called “sharenting” put into question also the right to privacy that every child should have. Instagram, on the other hand, has its positive sides, what confirm young mothers after childbirth, who find consolation and receive support from other mothers on this social network. This research includes interviews with 30 mothers, users of Instagram from Serbia and shows how they are facing these problems of modern motherhood.

Keywords: Instagram mothers, intensive motherhood, privacy of children

Zusammenfassung

Instagram hat eine breite Palette an Influencern in allen möglichen Bereichen hervorgebracht, dazu zählen auch die sogenannten “Instagram Moms”. Diese Frauen teilen täglich Fotos und Geschichten von sich, ihren Kindern und ihren Ehemännern und präsentieren häufig das idealisierte Mutter Dasein. Oft haben diese “Instagram Moms” sehr hohe Follower Zahlen, was natürlich Auswirkungen auf die Zuschauer hat und das Image von “perfekten” Müttern deutlich prägt. Da diese Profile meistens nur ein Zerrbild der Realität abbilden, bekommen die Betrachterinnen den Eindruck, sie würden dem Bild einer modernen Mutter nicht gerecht werden. Das beginnt bei der makellosen Körperform der “Instagram Moms”, geht weiter über den dargestellten Lebensstil und das suggerierte konfliktlose Familienzusammenspiel, das meistens auf diesen Kanälen gezeigt wird. Als Folge kann dieser ständige Vergleich zu Körperunzufriedenheit oder Depression bei den Betrachterinnen führen. Peerpressure unter Müttern, die sich gegenseitig beweisen wollen, gute Eltern zu sein, und die Erwartung, Kinder und deren Aufwachsen in schönen Momenten zu dokumentieren, sind heute wichtige Themen. Das Posten und Veröffentlichen vom Familienleben und Kinder Fotos wird oft als “Sharenting” bezeichnet, und stellt auch die Frage in den Raum, wie sehr Privatsphäre und Datenschutz für Kinder gilt, die in einer Situation sind, diesen für sich nicht reklamieren zu können. Als positiver Punkt ist zu erwähnen, dass junge Mütter nach Kindesgeburt auf diesen Kanälen oft Zuspruch und Unterstützung von anderen Follower-Müttern finden. Diese Arbeit umfasst Interviews mit 30 Müttern aus Serbien, welche auch Instagram User sind, und zeigt wie sie mit den genannten Aspekten moderner Mutterschaft umgehen.

Schlagerwörter: Mütter auf Instagram, intensive Mutterschaft, Privatsphäre von Kindern

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1. Introduction

To be a mother nowadays means to be prepared to deal with various problems of social and psychological nature. The pressure from the environment is not unknown to mothers of older generations, but in recent times, it has got an utterly new dimension. The burden on women, and therefore on mothers, doesn't come only from mainstream media, but also increasingly popular social network sites. This pressure that they feel because of becoming mothers is nothing new, and it is not a product of the virtual world, but it is undoubtedly the source of the new wave of unrealistic expectations.

Social media offers parents also many positive benefits. Modern social networks allowed mothers to express their creativity and get a sense of community. Through Instagram, mothers with different socio-economic backgrounds and level of education get an opportunity to connect, to share their motherhood experiences, and to learn from each other. Research has shown that blogging and social networking has a positive influence on motherhood stress, especially for mothers of newborns, who feel more isolated after childbirth and that helps them, for example, to be in touch with friends and relatives, without leaving home (McDaniel, Coyne, Holmes, 2011). The development of social networks also created the possibility that women, besides the primary role of the mother, can develop their careers and business life without the family being endangered. Whether it is about blogging, advertising specific brands, or starting up their own business, the social network is becoming the central "associate" of modern mothers.

However, there are also not such ideal sides of using this social network site. Mothers are flooded with the sea of various contents, unfiltered information, and unrealistic photos they can see on other women's accounts. This photocopied reality can make them feel insufficiently good, sometimes. Thus, Instagram has developed its own social norms and also a new phenomenon of Instagram moms, widespread not only among mothers of new generations but also in the scientific

world. Since Instagram is the platform for sharing photos and videos and for self-presentation, where the tendency is to show life as perfectly as possible, modern mothers often compare themselves with peers, which profiles they follow on Instagram. This comparison could negatively influence mothers' feelings and lead them to stress and dissatisfaction caused by competition with others, especially when they can't achieve the ideal standards set by social networks (Priyatna, 2017). Besides comparison and competition, there are coming to a few critical issues born with this social phenomenon of Instagram mothers. First of all, the privacy of children, which photos their mothers are posting on social networks, although it conflicts with the right to privacy that every child should have. Therefore, mothers get often negative comments and face judgment on social networks. The next problem is closely related to the previous one. By sharing photos of children on social networks, parents create their digital identity sometimes before they were born. That can bring many problems to children when they grow up.

Relying on post-modern approach to feminism, which deals with intensive motherhood and social media mothers, this research shows how Instagram using mothers from Serbia find a balance between a pressure to be ideal modern mothers and protect their children's privacy on social networks. Based on Interviews with 30 Serbian's mothers, it is discovered i.a., what are their motives, purposes and habits of using Instagram, how they are reacting to the competition among mothers, whether and with what kind of mothers they are comparing, and what are they doing to protect the online privacy of their children.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Feminism and motherhood

The perception of motherhood in society is directly related to changes in the development of feminist theories. It will be mentioned several important articles that talk about motherhood from the angle of feminism.

Representatives of the media, religions and other social organizations erroneously interpret the purpose and goals of feminist motherhood (Kinser, 2010), which influences people's awareness and public attitudes on this topic. It is true that feminists were originally opposed to motherhood, but that's changed drastically at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s (Kawash, 2011). Feminist theoreticians began to consider motherhood as a key woman's experience (Badinter, 2013). This has prompted many women to write about their own experiences and motherhood. One of the pioneers among the analysts of this new feminist motherhood was Adrienne Rich with her book *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (1976). After publishing this collection, motherhood has become a central theme among feminist theorists (O'Reilly, 2004). Rich notes that mothers, as a consequence of patriarchal values, are under pressure to maintain a status of "good mother" in society. Therefore, she sees motherhood as a social institution, which marginalizes this woman's experience (Price & Cole, 1990). Of woman is expected "to live up the idealized standards of motherhood, and if due to some reason they could not, they were humiliated and publicly labeled as 'bad mothers'" (Price & Cole, 1990).

Under the influence of postfeminism, the so-called "mommy culture" developed in the 2000s, create the image of a self-sacrificing mother, who became a symbol of the motherhood of the modern age. In the book *Postfeminist celebrity and motherhood: Brand mom* by Jorie Lagerwey, motherhood is represented from the perspective of celebrities, who are portrayed as successful subjects of post-feminism. A popular culture shaped and defined the mother of

post- feminism as white, fit, beautiful and rich, aged between 30 and 40 years, while being entirely focused and directed at her children (Lagerwey, 2017).

2.2. Intensive mothering and “new momism”

In its development, feminism was very critical to motherhood and mothers’ choices and behavior. Over time, this changed. In the past 20 years, we have the development of the intensive mothering ideology, where the mother is seen as an ideal caregiver of children (Hays, 1996). Sharon Hays’s *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (1996) offers a theoretical framework of this ideology, that shaped contemporary expectations of motherhood (Kawash, 2011). The women are placed in the position of self-sacrificing “ideal” mother, where business, social life or whatever is in the domain of personal is placed in the second plan (Hays, 1996). Also, Emma Gross in her article *Motherhood in Feminist Theory* (1998) explains that, according to this ideology, mothers are obliged to direct all their energy, love and time towards their children.

Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels, authors of *The Mommy Myth: The Idealization of Motherhood and How It Has Undermined Women* (2004), talk about the concept of “new momism” from the perspective of the media. So, they explain that media transformed the feminist approach to supporting intensive motherhood, putting celebrity mothers to the forefront (Hallstein, 2006). In the media, these mothers are shown as someone, who successfully handle between private life as a mother and business part as a famous person. Besides, those women are most of the time well dressed, with full makeup with also neat and obedient children. Through this striving to perfection and that kind of support of intensive motherhood, the media stimulate a sense of guilt and dissatisfaction of other mothers (Douglas, Michaels, 2004). Douglas and Michael believe that this post-feminist ideal called “new momism”, through the creation of competition and comparison among mothers, actually support their failure.

2.3. Social comparison and competition

The ideology of contemporary motherhood includes the intensive motherhood ideology, which promotes and supports competition and the comparison between mothers, which is all associated with the media (Chae, 2015). According to sociologist Festinger, the main motive for social comparison is an evaluation of oneself (Festinger, 1954). The reasons for this can be the improvement of the image of oneself (Wills, 1981), but also of their abilities (Taylor and Lobel, 1989).

Although the standards set by the media are unrealistic and hard to reach, mothers still want to compare themselves with these ideal women (Chae, 2015). However, mothers want to compare themselves with their peers too (Engeln-Maddox, 2005), which means to other mothers who are striving for the same ideals. Both are recognizable nowadays on social networks. Chae (2015) discovered in her research that more experienced mothers have already developed attitudes towards motherhood, while new mothers are going through the process of forming their identities and because of that are more often subject of comparison. In her opinion, uncertainty of those young mothers, their need to seek out the right information and to find an appropriate idol among other mothers, lead to possible comparisons. Djafarova and Trofimenko (2017) emphasize in their research the relationship between self-esteem and the use of social media. So, it is explained that mothers who have more self-confidence look positive on social networks. While those with a low degree of self-confidence feel the pressure to represent themselves perfectly online, to be in the same ranks with other mothers on social networks.

Many scholars deal with body dissatisfaction as an often and negative consequence of comparison (Cattarin, Thompson, Thomas, Williams, 2000; Heinberg, Thompson, 1995). Zoe Ann Brown and Marika Tiggemann researched in which way photos of attractive celebrities and peers affect woman's body image. They concluded that exposure to attractive images,

whether of celebrities or peers, had a negative impact on female's body image and that is caused by physical appearance comparison (Brown & Tiggermann, 2016). There are many studies about the media effects on social comparison and body dissatisfaction, but usually with teens and not so often with mothers as the target group.

Madge and O'Connor (2006) talk about motherhood in relation to the online world as a paradox. The virtual world, on the one hand, benefits the mothers and empowers them, and on the other hand it can have negative consequences by setting unrealistic standards leading to social comparison and competition.

2.4. Social support

Motherhood is one of the most beautiful but stressful periods in every woman's life. Research has shown that 15% of new mothers experience postpartum depression (Pearlstein, 2008). Social support, from both the family and husband, as well as the rest of the environment, is something that is very important especially for new mothers, which after the pregnancy feel particularly isolated (McDaniel Coyne, Holmes, 2011). One of the ways in which they try to reach a solution in the modern world is through the Internet, more precisely via social media. McDaniel, Coyne and Holmes. (2011) examined in his study the relationship between media use and maternal well-being, as well as what kind of social support mothers find in blogging and social networking. Whether the mothers themselves blog or read blogs from others, the results of the study have shown that the reasons for that are the possibility of expression, feeling of belonging and understanding, but of course also to maintain social contacts and communication.

Gjerdingen, Froberg, and Fontaine (1991) have found that social support positively affects a woman's mental health and the reduction of parental stress and depression. Consequently, blogging has shown a positive impact on the mother's well-being at all (McDaniel, Coyne,

Holmes, 2011).

On the other hand, the results of McDaniel's research have shown a different effect that social networking has on mothers compared to blogging. For example, mothers can look at profiles of other people, photos they have posted, but they do not receive necessarily the support on social networks. That means that social networking is therefore not directly related to social connection and support, but on the contrary, even sometimes it encourages the feeling of competition between parents (McDaniel Coyne, Holmes, 2011).

The results of a study by the State University of Ohio found that new mothers, who often post contents on social networks, are perfectionists who need self-certification (Sullivan, Schnoppe-Sullivan, Yavorsky, Bartgolomew, Lee, Kamp Dush, Glassman, 2016). Examined mothers have admitted that they pay attention to the comments below the pictures they publish, which gives them a confirmation or self-evidence of being good mothers. This shows that the use of social networks in cases of mothers can produce a feeling of uncertainty, if they reach not enough good feedback (Sullivan, Schnoppe-Sullivan, Yavorsky, Bartgolomew, Lee, Kamp Dush, Glassman, 2016)

A very prominent topic in both professional literature and media is that women are afraid that their babies will be taken from them if they confess to people that motherhood is hard for them and that they have problems with kids. Thus forums, blogs or social networks can be places where a woman gets the feeling that she can talk about things that she cannot talk about life (Vice, 2016).

2.5. Online privacy of children

Stacey B. Steinberg in her study *Sharenting: Children's Privacy in the Age of Social Media* (2017) explains the meaning of the term "sharenting" as a word used in the digital world to describe how parents share information about their children online. With the development of

modern social networks, more and more parents share their experiences of parenting and photos of their children online. In this way, the digital identity of children is shaped, sometimes even before the children began to speak, and therefore without their consent (Steinberg, 2017). In extreme cases, parents create from their children even the stars of social networks and models and so make money on social media. Apart from the creation of a digital persona, children lose the right to privacy but also the decision whether they want or do not want to be part of the digital world. In the US, children's rights to online privacy began to be discussed more detailed in March, after the actress Gwyneth Paltrow has published a photo of her 14-year-old daughter skiing. She wrote then a comment on Gwyneth's Instagram profile: "Mom, we have discussed this. You cannot post anything without my consent" (What's on Weibo, 2019). On the other hand, parent's rights to control their children and freedom of speech and expression can overcome the child's rights (Steinberg, 2017). Thus, children are poorly protected, and their online identity continues to evolve. Especially on Instagram, a social network made primarily by user photos, where profiles represent something like digital ID. However, a new French law for example allows adult children to sue their parents for violation of such rights (Chazan, 2016). In California, for example, according to the law, minors are allowed to delete some content from Internet, that they posted. Also, "right to be forgotten" in Europa allows people to request deleting and removing some information from search browsers (Ammari, Kumar, Lampe, Schoenebeck, 2015). The legislation is very important in protecting children from such violations of rights, and the state's job is to regulate it. Also, more education and support are needed for parents regarding family technology use.

Parents represent themselves as protectors of the privacy of their children in the digital world, and in this sense, they are sensitive to this topic. They expect for example from schools, some social organizations, sometimes from family members to ask them for permission before they post online their children's photos (Steinberg, 2017). However, when they are personally concerned, they do not consider the violation of children's rights. Many parents often share

photos online without being informed about the long-term consequences of that act. Many of them believe that they have kept their privacy if they share photos with only that followers, who they know in private life too. Ammari, Kumar, Lampe and Schoenebeck (2015) explain in their article that mothers take more responsibility for setting up content about their children and fathers are stricter about sharing children's photos online (which this research also confirms).

Public opinion polls showed that attitudes about sharing children's photos are divided. In the UK in 2017, a survey was conducted on this topic, involving 1,000 respondents. Just over 50 percent of them do not even support the placement of children's photos on social networks, while 36 percent think they should only be available to friends on our accounts (Kostic, 2017). Half of the respondents firmly believe that the content published on the Internet cannot be permanently deleted (BBC, 2017).

However, technology has made it possible, that unfortunately the information online can be expanded at high speed and by a large number of people, because all the photos can be saved with each user separately, and thus forwarded (Steinberg, 2017).

Steinberg's article offers potential solutions how can parents find the balance between their rights to share online and the interests of children. Respecting the parental need and the right to free expression, experts recommend that parents first assess whether the potential harm or benefit of such behavior is before sharing information about the child (Steinberg, 2017). They can also better educate themselves about possible ways how can they protect data on social networks. For example, to set up a notification if the name of their children appears somewhere on the Internet, to think about the content they want to post before sharing, but also to consider the possible consequences for the mental and physical health of their child.

The Unicef's Handbook "Children in the Digital Age", which presents a guide to the safe and constructive use of technology and the Internet, provides suggestions on how parents should use the Internet as a stimulus for the healthy development of the child. Apart from the detailed

introduction to the privacy policy of specific sites and the platforms on which they share information about children, parents should also consider the possibility of anonymous sharing, hiding the location, but also the ability to get notification if their child's name appears in the search results or on some other post (Unicef, 2019). What Steinberg in his article specifically emphasized, in this handbook is repeated, that parents should be aware of the consequences of “sharenting”, and that information posted on the Internet is no longer in their property, nor can they have control over it.

Related to the development of social networks, many studies explore also ways in which young people create their identity in the digital world, but not so many which deals with children and the creation of their personalities on social networks by a third person like parents (Steinberg, 2017).

2.6. Online identity

By sharing personal information about children in a public space such as the internet, parents not only endanger their safety by exposing them to a number of risks (for example, that children’s photographs end up in the hands of pedophiles, identity thieves or criminals), but rather shape their digital identity, before children get the opportunity to become owners of personal accounts and independently make decisions.

However, the online identity can be observed from two angles in this research. It is already discussed about the creation of children's digital identity by parents. It is also necessary generally to consider how people, in this case mothers, create an online identity on social networks and try to compare it with that in the real world.

Alice E. Marwick define in her article *Online Identity* (2012) the term identity from three different angles. As subjectivity, respectively what we think about ourselves, then as representation (different aspects of identity depicted in the culture and the media) and finally

as the self-representation (how we represent ourselves to others). When it comes to online identity, especially those built on social network sites, researchers talk about the self-representation (Baym, 2010; Boyd, 2010; Papacharissi, 2002; Wynn and Katz, 1997). By choosing the information and content that we post on our online profiles, we create our digital identity on social networks. Identity is something unstable, variable and very often depending on the perception of the environment (Marwick, 2012). How our friends on these platforms use technology depends on how we understand and use it too. That means that online identity functions according to the principle of customization (Marwick, 2012). So, by looking at other profiles, we get our image of the desired online identity. People on social networks also can use all multimedia tools (smilies, pictures, videos...) to introduce themselves to others (Papacharissi, 2002).

Online identity should implicate that there is the difference between the online and offline world, or how people represent themselves in both cases (Marwick, 2012). However, in today's modern world it is difficult to completely separate these two terms. We have mobile phones for 24 hours with us and we use the social network for communication on a daily basis. We do not need longer to wait to get home to “log in” on the Internet, which means we are almost always online. This can in extreme cases mean the complete acceptance of online identity, which can be very harmful if it is far different from the real one.

2.7. Instagram mothers and bloggers

In the article *Good Mothers, Bad Mothers and Mommy Bloggers: Rhetorical Resistance and Fluid Subjectivities* (2010), Rebecca Powell speaks about American's Politics of Blame, that constructed stereotypes of the good/bad mother. It is interesting, that these stereotypes are not related to motherhood at all. Here is good mother described first of all as white middle-class woman, what can be understood as hidden rules of class and race's ideologies. While bad

mother is one who has a career, overprotective or teen mother. In this article, blogging is described as a place where this discourse of good and failed mother can be void. Thus, mothers found in blogging a “shelter” where they can feel equal and have opportunity to share their personal experiences and stories of motherhood without feeling of guilty (Powell, 2010).

On social networks, it is often possible to follow closely, as on the scanner, all (not)important moments from the child’s life: from the appearance of the first teeth and steps, through birthday celebrations, holidays until the first day of school. Mothers use social networks for various reasons, such as communication with friends and family, social support, finding an advice, but a factor of fun is also crucial (Kaufmann & Buckner, 2014). The research of State University of Ohio distinguishes two types of mothers that share children’s lives online: those who feel pressure to be perfect and who care for their environment’s reaction, and others, who are very identified with the role of the mother and want to show that child is the most important feature of their identity (Politika, 2016). The other group often refers to mothers with careers who have the need to prove that their children are in the first place, regardless of work, and thus break down stereotypes about an employed mother (Sullivan *et al.*, 2016).

The mothers of the modern age used social media also to develop business from home. This can be another positive side of using social networks. In this way, they have the opportunity to dedicate themselves to children, but at the same time to be fulfilled in the business plan. Thus, many of them began advertising their business on Instagram or they became themselves so-called influencers, which others pay for their posts. The influencer moms advertise products for both children and adults, from food to cosmetics. Apart from being mothers, some of them belong to lifestyle, fashion or travel influencers. The popular Instagram moms have become idols, inspiration and mark for the carefree lifestyle of modern mothers. Thus, motherhood is, from this angle on Instagram, presented as an easy and very nice experience (Dawson, 2016). Social network users have the need to show their lives much more ideal than it is in reality (Chiang and Suen, 2015), and virtual world allows them that. So, blogger Mothers create their

own construction of motherhood, which they represent to others. Readers or followers, on the basis of this, choose which blog or profile they will follow, interpret them and adapt their understanding of motherhood to theirs (Powell, 2010).

3. Context

The newspapers and web portals in Serbia are flooded with pictures of fit and beautiful women, as well as headlines like “These mothers on Instagram look fantastic. What is your excuse?” (Blic Zena, 2017). Although women have a sub-consciousness that along with Instagram goes photoshop routine and filtering, regular observation of such content affects their psyche. In addition to the fact that the number of Instagram users in Serbia is rising, and that most users are women (even 650 thousand), there are no official statistics on the specific number of mothers online (Ellecta Digital, 2017). However, every citizen of this country, who has at least one pregnant woman or mother as a friend on his Instagram profile, will notice that they are happy to share their children's pictures as well as the daily routine of a mother. In addition to the celebrity mothers, who are expected to show life idyllic, nowadays there are increasingly popular bloggers or lifestyle mothers. Whether they advertise their business or have their blog, popular mommies are followed by other mothers from Instagram. Looking at them, ordinary mothers are striving for this “perfection”, and what is especially in Serbia notable, they engage professional photographers in creating a set of photos for Christmas and New Year, organizing huge themed birthday parties for children and of course sharing all that on their Instagram profiles. What is also interesting is the fact that Serbia occupies the seventh place, among the largest users of social networks in Europe, after Iceland, Norway, Malta, Denmark, Sweden and Great Britain (Blic, 2014).

The research by the agency McCann Truth Central Belgrade (2013), presented an average Serbian mother from the 21st century in her study “The Truth about the New Serbian Mom”.

Results have shown that today's mothers do not want to be victims and they do not want to ignore any aspect of their life regardless of the role of the mother. Each one considers herself the best mother, and even two-thirds of them do not care if other mothers condemn them. A large percentage of the surveyed mothers (79%) consider that there is too much pressure on them that they should achieve so much in different fields. Also, the research has shown that two-thirds of the surveyed Serb mothers do not believe that super perfect moms exist (McCann, 2013).

Another research, conducted on a sample of about 1,500 mothers from Serbia, has shown that the biggest problem is financial situation and unemployment, especially among young moms (Blic, 2018). Even 30 percent of respondents either do not work at all or do short-term jobs black. That is why many of them choose to start their own business, very often over the Internet, or social networks, in order to successfully handle family and business life (Blic, 2018).

3.1. Legal framework

The development of information technologies, as well as the popularization of social media, has brought various advantages. Keeping in touch with friends from other cities and countries, finding a job online, using it for free advertising and marketing is just some of the benefits. However, the availability of information has both good and bad sides. On the one hand, for example, there is an opportunity for finding a doctor in the environment for a minute, but personal data has become more and more available to other people. A special issue is the placement of photos, videos, and personal data of underage children into social networks, which are published by their parents or third parties without their consent. Although some sports and educational institutions have recognized the importance of protecting data of underage children, there is no law protection in Serbia in terms of privacy

protection related to sharing children's photos on social networks. In particular, it is not regulated by the law; for example, the excising of necessary consent by parents for placing children's photos into social networks by a third person (Kostic, 2017). If educational institutions need to post some content about juveniles, for example, on the school's website, it is necessary special permission from parents (UNICEF form). However, no law at the national level prescribes the obligation to obtain consent for sharing children's photos on some accounts on social networks.

Serbian laws in this sphere are quite obsolete and do not follow the development of modern communication systems. If someone violates the right to privacy by publishing a photo, a chat or a recording of a conversation without the permission of the person from that photo or video, there is no real punishment, but the possibility of remitting damages or the removal of that content from the Internet. A fine or prison sentence (up to 2 years) are possible only in cases if the criminal offense has been committed by such publishing (Bebac, 2018).

While in Serbia campaigns aimed at protecting children on the Internet and preventing abuse only in the beginning, the European Union adopts a new program aimed at increasing the safety of children on the Internet every four years, since 1999 (Yumama, 2018). The most important legal regulation of the European Union, related to the protection of consumer privacy is the Data Protection Directive (Directive 95/46 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995), which represents the basis for the development of other legislative acts, related to the privacy in the field of electronic communications (Kostic, 2017). However, the European Union, with its resolutions, regulates the general protection of the right to privacy, which is not directly related to the Internet and online world. For this reason, it is really necessary to improve national legislation in this sense.

According to international and national regulations, the interests of minors should be considered and protected by parents as the legal representatives of children (Kostic, 2017). However, also on their part, misuse can happen. Some of them make from children social

network stars, use them as a "marketing tool," as models, form digital identity before the children created and founded it in the real world by themselves and so on. For this reason, French law allows minor children to sue parents, who published some of their information or photos without their consent (Chazan, 2016). Given that it is not rather clear what is going on after with the photos posted on social networks, the problem can also be if the parents do not agree with each other whether or not the photos of children should be shared at all (Kostic, 2017).

Another type of problem can be that the social networks have own rules and regulations, for example, that 13 years children can already legally by themselves open accounts on Facebook and Instagram (prescribed by the US Children's Online Privacy Protection - COPPA).

Perhaps, some solution would be to move this age limit so that children until adulthood without the consent of their parents cannot join any social network. However, statistics show that more than 90 percent of younger school children use social networks daily without parental control, without taking into account potential dangers (Yumama, 2018).

4. Research questions

Some previous research shown that even 75% of parents have profiles in social networks, among them young mothers, who have children under five, are the most active users (Cohen, 2015). Mothers also belong to the first three groups of the most active online users in general (Kaufmann and Buckner, 2014). Social media has proven to be a place for the indirect overcoming of parental stress (McDaniel, 2011), but also the place where are created special social norms (Chae, 2015). These standards create also the pressure for mothers to be perfect and they began to compare themselves with other mothers. Considering both positive and negative social networking, this research includes various aspects of using Instagram among new generation's mothers from Serbia. The focus is on an understanding of the "new

momism” approach on social media, exploring the motives for using Instagram as much as giving solutions to problems of children’s online identities and privacy.

Based on the literature review and background, main topics and context, this study is supported by this research question and four related sub-questions:

RQ: How Serbian mothers, who are Instagram users, protect their children’s privacy online and endure the pressure imposed by modern ideologies of motherhood?

SQ1: What are the main motives for mothers to have an Instagram account?

SQ2: How the mothers have accepted the new principles of the ideology of intensive motherhood?

SQ3: What are the effects of comparison and competition among mothers on social networks?

SQ4: How Instagram mothers protect the privacy of their children?

5. Method

The qualitative social research used in this study includes semi-structured interviews, where questions are pre-prepared and formulated, but the order is open and free and had led to new topics and more questions during interviews. All conversations, however, require many key questions. By using this kind of interview, participants have more space for their formulation of the answers, and thus the possibility to express their attitude towards a particular topic.

By selecting this method of research, I guided by the view that many data in social sciences cannot be numerically recorded. And whenever they can, they get limited and, in some ways, generalized data and results. Social phenomena as objects of research require interpretative basis that qualitative research can provide. For this research, interviews were conducted in order to understand and discover which type of Instagram user is the most common among

young mothers from Serbia, to discuss about their personal concerns related to modern motherhood and pressure on mothers to be “ideal”, as well as their opinions about protection of children’s privacy on social networks and creation their digital identities.

5.1. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 30 mothers, Instagram users, from Serbia. The research involves women with different demographic backgrounds (age, education, place of residence...). Based on the number of followers and the type of Instagram account (business or not, public or private), the nature of the Instagram user was defined. This means that the interviews include not only active users, so-called bloggers, who make money on this social network, but also ordinary people who are not so much active and that Instagram uses exclusively for fun and entertainment. Mothers of different profiles were selected consciously, in order to get a wider picture of this topic. The survey did not include celebrities’ mothers (not counting here bloggers and influencers), because they have different habits and behaviors related to social networks, where it is also expected from them to show private life in public. Participants of the research were mostly open to communication, interested in the topic and ready to show their opinion. Also, they were interested in the ultimate results of this research. It could be noted that mothers often wanted to give socially acceptable answers, and sometimes they sounded contradictory.

The questions are divided into four parts, based on the four main areas and the focus of research, so the mothers were questioned about the motives for using Instagram, about comparing and competition among women, as well as about the privacy of children in social networks (Appendix A). The fourth part consists of demographic data, which have also been shown as relevant in analyzing the results.

5.2. Interviews Protocol

The interviewed mothers were informed that research has the scientific purpose as master thesis at the University of Vienna and that after the defense, the results will be used for one more University project with the same subject, which will also include mothers from other European countries. They were referred to the main topics of the interview, and some of them have asked to see questions before they agreed to participate in this research. All interviews were done in Serbia. The locations were different, but the mostly at participant's home, what I consider as a good, not only because for women is more comfortable but also because the researcher has the opportunity to get acquainted with the mother's daily routine, or with her behavior in a natural environment. Sometimes children were also present, during the interview, which opened some other topic, related to babysitting. Very often, a sister or grandmother was there, so mothers could swimmingly answer the questions without any pause. So, it was also possible to observe the mother's concentration and the attention she wanted to direct to the interview, while a little child is in the same room. In two cases, we waited for mothers to sleep babies so that the interview could start or continue.

All mothers received a participation form before the interview, so that they could be informed about the use as well as protection confidentiality of their data from interviews. By the voice record the interviews were filmed. They were mostly conducted in Serbian, and later in transcription, they were translated into English. The transcripts were made in order to compare later the interviews and make conclusions. The questions are divided into four parts, so we use that to take a break between the two parts when it was necessary. The second part of the interview required the most attention and the longest discussions, related to the concerns of modern motherhood, comparison and competition among women. The interviews lasted individually for about 30 minutes.

5.3. Results

The interviews were conducted with 30 mothers from Serbia. The prerequisite for participation was having the Instagram account, but not the scope of the engagement on the same, so there are all women included, from less active to a very active user, who even earns from Instagram. Except for the degree of activity, accounts of these mothers also differ in a number of followers. So, this research is involved mothers with at least 150 followers up to a maximum number of 125 thousand. Less than a thousand followers have 15 mothers, while the other half have more than a thousand people who follow them. Even 21 women live in the city, while others come from smaller towns or villages. The survey included women aged between 24 and 40, who have 1-4 children, aged up to 5 years. The most interviewed mother, even 25 mothers out of 30 examinees, are highly educated, 18 mothers are currently employed (see Table 1). A large number of surveyed women have a babysitter, or they are getting the help of some family member. Except Instagram, 23 mothers have accounts also on Facebook, four on LinkedIn, three on Twitter, and two of them use Pinterest (see Table 2).

Table 1. Means (SD) and percentages for participants on personal background variables

Characteristic	<i>n</i> (30)	%
Number of children		
One child	19	63.4%
Two children	8	26.6%
Three children	1	3.4%
Four children	2	6.6%
Place of residence		
City	21	70%
Village	9	30%
Level of education		
High School	3	10%
University	27	90%
Occupation		
With occupation	20	66.7%
Without occupation	10	33.3%

5.3.1. Social Media

The first part of the interview was generally focused on the questions related to the way, purpose, and frequency of using social networks among participants, but with a primary focus on Instagram. Most of them made an Instagram account 4-5 years ago, when it became popular in Serbia because everyone in their surroundings had it at that time. Mothers described different purposes of using this social network in its way. A few of them use it just for fun like one mother explained: *“because it is more exciting than Facebook”*. Others want to be in touch with some friends and relatives, who are not leaving in Serbia, or not in the same city as they, and they communicate through Instagram. Third group includes mothers, who are using this App for business reasons. Even 11 out of 30 mothers have a business account on Instagram (see Table 2). Regarding that some of those mothers earn money from Instagram, they talked about the numbers of followers from a business perspective. Which means, if they have a public business account, it is more important to have a significant number of people who are following them. Interviewed mother with 125K followers, which is the most significant number among respondents, is a model and blogger, and her husband is a famous singer in Serbia. As economists confirm, the social network Instagram quickly emerged as a top marketing channel and a kind of online bazaar where young entrepreneurs turn their profiles into the online stand. The world market, the chance to be own boss and to work at home, has also attracted many moms to start a business through Instagram. So, it would be allowed to young mothers to handle well between family and business life. Thus, one of the mothers from this research also launched her business - the sewing of children's blankets, that she sales successfully through this social network. A few mothers point this out as their primary purpose of using Instagram (mothers with business accounts). More detailed research on this topic does not include this work, but indeed represents one of the most interesting subjects related to the motherhood of the new age.

In the interviews, the mothers also mentioned the time during and almost after pregnancy as a period when they used this App more often: *“I am with the baby in the apartment mostly alone, it is some kind of communication with a wide circle of friends, and again some art of pastime. Alternatively, someplace, where I can forget everyday problems, that are normal in mother's life”*. As already explained in the theoretical part, social networks are also used as a form of social support, which was also confirmed by interviewed mothers. Dolores is a very active Instagram user, who gladly shares her motherhood experiences with her followers because as she said *“when I share my concerns through an Instagram Story, I have moms that write me and saying not to be upset because of such things. Moreover, it is really useful to me sometimes, to have such support”*. It was interesting to see how the mothers also see and use Facebook compared to Instagram, taking into consideration that one mother describes Facebook App as *“old fashion”*. From all 30 women, seven do not have a Facebook account at all, while the rest 23 use it very rarely (see Table 2). The vast majority retained an account on this social network only for the reason that they would keep in touch with some friends and relatives (mostly older) who do not have an Instagram. They also do not have a habit to share automatically to the Facebook photos that they posted on the Instagram profile (only two mothers do this). The conclusion is definitely that Instagram, compared to Facebook, attracts far more significant attention among mothers in Serbia, and that it is much more used.

Regarding the availability of information and the receipt of some tips from social networks, they believe that Facebook groups can be useful to get some specific information related to motherhood. *“There was a situation when I needed some information as soon as possible, and I found it there in a few seconds, so such groups can be very useful in my opinion”*, as one mother explained. On the other hand, mothers have different opinions about getting advice from mothers on Instagram. *“I do not like that kind of advice because they are usually what moms like to hear and not what is real”*, as one explained. Alternatively, another mother who sees checking other women's profiles as a place, where she can find *“good*

recommendations for child's books, toys, games and that can be helpful”.

All mothers, who participated in the survey share photos and videos of their children on the Instagram, with a difference whether they hide child face with some sticker, take photos of a child from the back or long distance, or they post everything without hiding. It was often an explanation that sharing children's photos is something normal, because they are mothers, that is the primary role at this moment in their lives, and the children are part of that. Some of them understand Instagram also as *“a digital photo-album”*, where they can have everything saved in one place. They also made a big difference between Instagram stories and regular posts. The contradiction was mirrored in the following: for example, several mothers said they did not consider themselves as active Instagram users simply because they do not regularly share some posts on their account, even if they post Instagram stories several times a day. They experience it as a note of some interesting or exciting moments, and as they said, it is harmless because it disappears after 24 hours. Statistics have shown that over 500 million people use Stories every day, whose popularity has been confirmed also in this research among mothers (Hootsuite, 2019).

There were also some discussions about what kind of Instagram user they belong to because only two choices were offered to them: Instagram blogger or regular user (see Table 2)? As it already mentioned, among the examined mothers, there were also very active users, and some even that who earn money from Instagram, unusual responses to this question were received. A mother from Belgrade, a journalist by profession, who is sharing her motherhood experiences for 5 years on the Instagram, whose child with her funny videos has become an Instagram attraction, described herself as an ordinary user because as she said *“Instagram bloggers are people who intentionally promote something, whether it's a fashion, a healthy, etc. I am not narrowly oriented in any direction, and my profile is a little bit of everything”*. The second mother, who promote different products, who is also known for her sharing of advice for young moms, she also mentioned that she *“cannot be a blogger because she does*

not have a blog, only IG account". Another mother used to name herself as an influencer rather than a blogger, because of the large number of followers, she can have some influence on others. The way a question was asked, opened a new topic about how people define themselves and how others define them differently, considering what they offer on social networks. Contrary to the above examples, one mother interprets these terms through the activity in this social network. She described herself as a blogger, although she has only 200 followers and private account on IG, she publishes some content daily. The conclusion is that people have different understandings of these terms and their definitions.

Table 2. Means (SD) and percentages for participants regarding social media use

Characteristic	<i>n</i> (30)	%
Type of Instagram account		
Private	12	40%
Public (Business)	18 (11)	60% (36%)
Type of Instagram user		
Regular User	20	66.7%
Blogger	8	26.7%
Influencer	2	6.7%
Number of followers		
Less than 1000	15	50%
More than 1000	15	50%
Using of other SNS		
Facebook	23	76.7%
LinkedIn	4	13.3%
Twitter	3	10%
Pinterest	2	6.7%

5.3.2. Modern motherhood

The second part of the interview is focused on modern motherhood and how respondents understand this concept. Nowadays mothers are under increasing pressure, *“children “must” have many toys, many clothes, to attend a lot of activities next to the school. On the other hand, even the moms themselves “must” look perfect, although many do not look, the picture of a perfect mother is imposed as an important item”*. Because each mother strives to be the best for her child, as well as the fact that in today’s world, there is much talk about perfection, questions about ideal mothers were inevitable. The goal was to hear from every respondent what constitutes an ideal mother for them, to describe such a mother, and what they think, is this a realistic concept at all? The answers were different, especially what generally the term “ideal” means. *“Anything is never ideal, and I do not think it should be. If so, what we would strive for”*, explained one of the interviewed mothers. Some of them think that they are already ideal moms for their children or others, who *“want to be like super moms, who can achieve a lot of things; they manage to get up early, make breakfast, lunch, put on make-up, a new dress, they exercise, prepare a child for school”*. Most of these women believe that attention and time that a mother dedicates to children, but also finding a balance between home and herself, should be crucial and important characteristics of ideal mom.

Comparing the motherhood sometimes and now, modern mothers were generally unable to decide when it was easier and for whom, them or their mothers in the same life role, because they consider that every period has own positive and negative things. Of course, many mothers mentioned the availability of information, as the best thing of this modern world, but on the other hand, as one mother explained *„it is much more difficult nowadays because we do not have more real privacy. Everything is available for everyone”*. During the conversation with these young women, the impression was gained that mothers of this modern

age don't want to be slaves of their children, that they tend to be balanced in all fields, which does not mean that children should be neglected, but be dedicated equally to the family, social life and career. That is quite contrary to the views of the women of the older generations, especially in Serbia, who were house wives and one hundred-point-oriented to children. However, in Serbia nowadays it became popular to be a mother. „*The child becomes the status symbol somehow. If you don't have a husband and a child, you failed*”, explained mother of 2-years daughter. Therefore, it is not a surprise that much more moms than fathers are on social networks and much more women who publish photos of their children and family moments than men. One of interviewed mom also spoke about her personal experience, that her husband disagrees with the publishing private things on social networks, especially children's photos. As another mother explained, social networks can be bad for those who use them wrong: „*In no small majority, this affects the attitudes, thoughts, and ways in which they will raise their children, which is very bad because you need to build your personality independently of others*“.

5.3.3. Comparison and competition

Close related to the topic of modern motherhood is certainly two other terms: the comparison and competition. The examined mothers agreed that comparison and competition exist among the mothers of the modern age. The questions were consciously neutral and generalized asked in order to get a real insight, what comes first into their mind when we are talking about the comparison between women and what are the things and topics in which they compete. A large number of these women mentioned their mother as a subject, with whom they compare. Some of them look at it as a behavior pattern that they need to repeat with their children, but there are also those who want to learn from the mistakes of their mothers and to be completely different mothers than they were. Although all mothers agreed

that such a thing like a comparison definitely exists in their environment, but the majority denied that they need for that, especially not with mothers from Instagram. However, some of them consider that comparison can be healthy and positive: *“My motivation is - I can also do it -, and I think that is decision and attitude of successful people, who view the success of others as a motivation for their own rather than hacking over their destiny”*. However, some women see that as a wrong attitude: *“In no case should we compare ourselves with some people from Instagram, where they show themselves perfectly, what is not a real picture of their lives”*. The majority of the interviewed mothers agree that unhealthy comparison among women based on physical appearance can lead to body dissatisfaction, in extreme cases, even to the depression. Particularly sensitive can be women after or during pregnancy. One of the examined mothers shared her hard-personal experience related to the depression and observing some perfect content on Instagram: *“I had postpartum depression. I actually didn’t know what it was until I started visiting my psychiatrist. I followed all of the perfect girls that were single actually, and that traveled every week twice, and I was following perfect moms that are perfect in every sense, their appearance, perfect boobs, nose, they have perfect lips, perfect hair, perfect body, the perfect life, house, financial situation. Also, that can cause much stress, and that can cause depression”*. This mother emphasizes that it is very important, whom we are following on social networks. *“Afterwards, I started looking at other Instagram accounts of other mothers, and I saw that they are feeling pretty similar to me. So, I started following real moms, who are true to herself and that is not lying on Instagram and who are not exposing some perfect life that is it is not like that”*. One of the mothers said that she knew what observing such contents can cause, so she tried to use Instagram less as possible: *“During the pregnancy I had a lack of self-confidence related to my physical appearance, so I tried to look at the pictures of those thin women as little as possible, I knew that they could only affect my dissatisfaction further”*. There are also mothers, who have an opinion that dissatisfaction comes from inside, and that it does not have to be directly related

to other people. The fitness mothers represent a special group on social networks. It has become so popular to train, go to the gym and to be a mom, that it turned into trend and fashion. Certainly, this type of representation on social networks can help some mothers, as motivation not to allow their body to lose shape after pregnancy. However, it can also be very stressful for all that woman, which may have poorer physical predispositions, genes, or hormone problems. *“The blind follow-up of fitness moms’ trainings after and during pregnancy is wrong. They are the whole life in training, and their body and organism function quite differently. Also, she cannot advise somebody who was ten times at the gym”*, explained one mother. She has also talked about, how is it on the Instagram generally too big focus on physical appearance: *“So, if someone emphasizes physical appearance on its account, she needs a confirmation that she is beautiful, fit, etc.”*. As with the body’s emphasis, the surveyed women consider that all those mothers who publish a lot about motherhood and herself and mostly positive things want to get some confirmation, through social networks, that they are good mothers. However, support through social networks, by other people, friends, and women, can be critical and helpful, especially for young moms, after the pregnancy, when they feel lonely. One of the interviewed mothers shared her experience about social support on social networks: *“I didn’t know, for example, that is normal to cry more than usual after you give birth. I was feeling like I was crazy because I was crying all the time. Then women from Instagram told me that crying is normal in that period. I was thinking about why I didn’t know that early. From such things, it is good that we are talking about such things and to get some support from others, sometimes, even from total strangers”*.

The women were also asked to share their attitudes about the competition among mothers, and what are usually the topics that they are competing with each other? The most answers were related to children’s development, but also among women, who is the better mother. As one of mother explained there is also a difference in how old a child is, and thus, the criteria

for the competition change: *“Young mothers, who have babies (up to one year old), compare themselves about which child first began to walk, to talk...it’s all about physical development of child. And later, when they go to school, whose child has better grades, typical for Serbia”*. Another mother has talked about competition among modern moms from the material angle *“whose child is a bigger Instagram star, model or wears brand clothes,”* or what is typical for Serbian women *“who has better make-up and clothes”*. So, she believes that this “contest” is conducted on an unhealthy basis and that mothers nowadays compete with each other in the wrong things. She was not the only one with such an attitude. One of the exanimated mothers presented her perceive prototype of one modern mother from Serbia in the way that such a woman competes with others in that *“who has better married, who is more skinny or prettier, or where they are traveling on vacation”*. Organizing of luxurious children’s birthday parties with different animators, over 200 guests and the biggest cake has become an unavoidable trend in Serbia and some symbol of wealth and power. It brings us to the conclusion that mothers of new age from Serbia compare themselves and compete with others mostly in material things.

5.3.4. Online privacy of children

Social networks, their options, and functions are prescribed by their own rules, so the respondents were asked how they control the privacy on their accounts and whether they check these settings from time to time, taking into account the fact that they all publish children’s photos on SNS. Although even 70% of mothers do not know all of the people that follow them, even 20 of 30 mothers never checked privacy settings on the Instagram, mostly because they believe that having a private account is enough protectable (see Table 3). On the other hand, those who have public or business profile think that sharing a child’s photos cannot be something very problematic, especially if they do not publish some extravagant

content. However, what did they mean to say with that? One of the mothers explained that in this way: „*The only good thing in this evil is that maybe such people (pedophiles) are not interested in children with clothes. So, we, with such normal photos, cannot be a target for such people*”. However, taking pictures of children while bathing, or while lying on a bed undressed, is not a new trend, that was something popular in ex-Yugoslavia. “*Our parents often took pictures of us naked. But they didn’t put such photos on the wall or showed to everyone. That was something for a private photo album. So, that should be like that also today*”, as one of the interviewed mothers drew the parallel between now and then, how it was 20 years ago. As it already mentioned, some mothers (four of all examined women) hide child’s faces in different ways (stickers, smiles, or taking photos from the back), so they believe they can protect children’s pictures from misuse in this way (see Table 3). Although there is a possibility of personal control and some privacy settings on Instagram, some mothers consider that full control on the Internet does not exist. “*I always think positive about that, today everything is available, and because of that, it is difficult to control something like that. I don’t want to be in a panic, because of something I cannot control*”, explained some mother. Thus, the mothers showed a collective attitude that they know that Instagram is not completely safe, but they believe that something bad will not happen to them and their children. Interestingly, the majority of mothers (regardless of whether they are mothers with a large or small number of followers) emphasized in the interviews that they think well and deeply before they publish anything on their social network’s accounts because they are aware what the digital world represents. They were also asked about personal experiences related to the abuse of children’s photos, and only one of the interviewed mothers had some bad situation and wanted to talk about that. “*My husband posted once our daughter’s photo with a full face, and after three days some lady wrote to us and told that is her daughter...There were cases that a few people create fake profiles and posting our daughter’s photos. After a while, we started to ignore this, and all that stops by the time, it is not*

interesting anymore, but that is all proof that we should protect our children's privacy better". This examined mother is a partially public person because her husband is a popular singer in Serbia, she has almost 125K followers on her IG account, but she publishes her daughter's photos only from the back, without showing the face. This phenomenon of stealing children's photos, posting on some other accounts (very often a fake profiles) and creating fictional parental relationship has even got its name in the digital world - *baby role-playing* (Washington Post, 2014). For such reasons but other too, the mothers, who are very sensitive about online privacy of children, demand from their close social circle to ask for permission if they want to share some photo of their children on social networks. For example, one mother made a deal with close people, that only pictures that she sends to them, can be uploaded to their profiles. Another mother always makes a decision together with her husband about which photos they should both publish on Instagram profiles. However, some mothers were also asked to remove some photos, that they have already posted on IG accounts. Husbands of even four interviewed women are against publishing specified photos because they believe she should keep private things for themselves. When it was discussed about, what would be for them too personal to share on social networks, except naked photos, some mothers mention a discouraging trend not only in Serbia but worldwide, the publishing photos of breastfeeding. Also, one interviewed mother was warned by some friends to remove one photo from her IG account, where she is breastfeeding her baby. About this interesting topic is discussed a lot, both on social networks and in the media, whether it is inappropriate or normal to post such photos. Unfortunately, this research does not include this issue, but future research could be more profoundly concerned with this topic, which would surely trigger other similar concerns related to modern motherhood. At the very end of the interviews, the mothers made suggestions and talked about it what would they do to keep their children protected online? The most common answers were related to the education of children and also parents about the negative consequences of using the Internet. Except for having private

accounts, acceptance of requests only from people that we know personally, some mothers think that hiding of children's faces on photos can also be some solution. But not all mothers agreed with it, like this mother for example - *"If I were concerned, I would never post some photos of my children, because that makes no sense that I share something and then I put some sticker on the face of my kid. Then it is better not to share at all. Otherwise, what is the point?"*. The majority of mothers believe that is also very important to make a good selection, what is appropriated or not for sharing on some social network site and then guided by it to make decisions.

Table 3. Means (SD) and percentages for participants regarding online privacy of children

Characteristic	<i>n</i> (30)	%
Personal relationship to followers		
With all	9	30%
With none or few	21	70%
Managing of privacy settings		
Periodically	10	33.3%
Never	20	66.7%
Identifiability of children		
Yes	26	86.7%
No	4	13.3%

6. Conclusions

Most conclusions drawn in the theoretical part were confirmed in this research with mothers from Serbia. They agree that in this modern world, there is huge pressure on women and then also on mothers, to be perfect in all fields, which is especially emphasized on social networks. This research has shown that observing such (perfect) content on social networks has an impact on the mental condition of the observer, in this case, mothers, and leads to self-, body dissatisfaction, or sometimes even to depression. As shown in theory, but also practice, particularly sensitive, are pregnant women or young mothers after birth, when hormones are amplified. When it was asked for their opinion, is it more challenging to be a mother now or in the past, they could not give a concrete answer because they believe that each time has own advantages and disadvantages. The availability of the information is mentioned as one of the advantages, and the lack of real privacy as the big problem of the new age. Also, the impression is that modern mothers do not want to be “the slaves” of their children, but to successfully handle between mothers’ lives and own social and business life. This research has confirmed that comparison and competition among mothers exist, especially when it comes to the development of children. However, there are particularly notable comparisons on the material level among Serbian mothers.

The results showed that these mothers spend much time on Instagram, compared to Facebook, or any other social media sites. The reasons for using this social network are different, from fun, contact with friends, through business, to seeking advice, information, and support. The importance of social support for mothers, especially newborns, is described in the theoretical part, and this research confirmed that further. Depending on the reasons for using, it is discussed about the importance of the number of followers, and so, mothers with business accounts have the most significant number of people who follow them. All of them gladly share their children’s photos and parts of their private family life, thus “sharenting” is

confirmed as a trend amongst Serbian mothers. Those who in some way want to save their privacy, but still to share lives' moments in this social network, use private, locked accounts, where they can choose which people can follow them. These mothers consider that as one of the best ways to protect privacy as well on SNS. Also, hiding the child face with stickers, or taking photos from the back, were some of the suggestions for this kind of protection.

Mothers consider that those who have a fear, should not share children's photos at all, but also that the danger exists in the real world too. Considering the creation of child's digital identity, the interviewed mothers had a collective attitude that they are parents and have the right to decide for them while they are little children. The importance of partnership relations and the agreement about sharing children's photos were mentioned. The research showed that fathers are certainly less interested in sharing private life on social networks. In general, this research confirms that mothers in Serbia want to share their motherhood' moments on social networks, that they do not want to think much about negative consequences, but that they are aware what are problems of modern motherhood. Some of the goals of this research were also to draw attention to the problem of insufficient legal support related to the online privacy of children, both at the national and international level. A set of new topics, spontaneously initiated by this research, can be used as ideas for further research, like sharing photos of breastfeeding on social networks, making accounts for babies by parents, as well as using children for advertising purposes.

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8. Appendices

8.1. Transcripts

Due to environmental considerations the transcripts were not included in this version of the master thesis. If you are interested in the interview transcripts, please send an e-mail to me or Prof. Sarikakis. Thank you very much for your understanding.