

Title: **A qualitative exploration of the influence of social media on South African parents.**

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Declaration: *I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.*

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Abstract

Social media has gained popularity among parents in recent years, as either a form of entertainment or communication with other individuals. Use of social media has also shown to have influence's on parenting; causing parental distraction, acting as a supportive community for parents, a way to help parents fulfil their household needs, and overall influencing the way parents' parent.

Findings from the conducted interviews indicated that social media does influence parents, with the relationship between social media usage aiding in more positive influences than negative. Findings provided insightful data to fill in the gap of literature pertaining to South African parents use of social media in a manner that facilitates positive influences and minimises negatives, such as monitoring time spent on social media. Further studies may be conducted in the future expanding on recommendations for South African parents.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contextualisation

Social media's popularity is constantly rising, with more statistics finding that there has been an increase in social media traffic within parental households (Dworkin, Connell, & Doyes, 2013). The influence of social media is prevalent in research, but the inclusion of how social media influences parents is scarce. According to Dworkin et al, (2013), many authors have reviewed the available literature on parents and social media, finding that there is an influx of parental engagement but there is limited information on how social media influences them as parents. Social media often influences its users (Allen, 2019). As parents have become more active users of social media, they often find themselves being influenced by it. It is prevalent with any use of social media that negative and positive influences may be a possibility (Robinson,2019).

According to Robinson (2019), parents are a part of the influenced population, often facing negative influences on parenting. However, Wong (2010) argues that parenting can also face positive influences, such as influencing better parental decision-making through support-based interactions. There is an evident gap of knowledge pertaining to information on South African parents' usage of social media, with few studies conducted focusing mainly on how parents are influenced (Le Mottee, Leoschut, Leoschut, & Burton, 2016).

1.2 Rationale

Social media has gained widespread interest and engagement within the current decade, the topic has also gained interest within research communities (Le Mottee et al., 2016). According to Ante-Conteras (2016), as social media continues to be a relevant and popular presence parents have to learn to find a balance social engagement and parenting. While the amount of research on social media is vast, there seems to be a lack of research focusing on the influence of social media on parents. This present study's relevance focuses on the gaps in the literature that need to be addressed, such as a lack of information pertaining to parental usage as well as a lack of research in South Africa.

1.3 Problem statement

From studies pertaining to South Africans, it has been found that modern parenting is heavily influenced by the digital age with social media positively influencing parental care in ensuring safe online behaviour of their child. The influence of social media is prevalent in research, but the inclusion of how social media influences parents is scarce. South African non-profit organisation, The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) (2020), indicates that while there has been increased parental presence within social media research, there is a gap in information pertaining to south African parents and the influence that social media has on their parenting. According to Robinson (2019), parents are part of the influenced population. Therefore, this study explored the possible influences of social media on South African parents who are active users of social media.

1.4 Research purpose

According to Wong (2010), social media is both great as a social learning tool as it is full of potential dangers. The purpose of this study is to understand the possible influences that social media may have on parenting, from an interpretive view of parents. Some negativity may arise from engaging with social media, causing negative influences on parenting (Robinson, 2019). Wong (2010) argues that parenting may also face positive influences from social media, such as bettering parental decision-making through support-based communication. The purpose of the study is to highlight the possible influences of social media on parenting, this will assist in providing recommendations to reduce the negative influences of social media on parenting and to facilitate the positive. The main aim of the research was to assist in reducing the gap in the body of knowledge.

1.5 Research questions

- What are the influences of social media on South African parents?
- What recommendations can be made to better manage the influences of social media?

1.6 Research objectives

- To determine the influences of social media on South African parents.
- To provide recommendations on the negative influences and to mitigate the positive influences of social media on parents.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Two theoretical frameworks have been selected in aiding the explanation of this study, namely attachment theory and Heidegger's "shared-world".

As the digital age continues to thrive, many parents find themselves relying heavily on social media for parenting support (Coyne, Radesky, Collier, Gentile, Linder, Nathanson, Rasmussen, Reich, & Rogers, 2017). According to a study conducted by Ante-Contreras (2016), parents can form either negative or positive dependency to social media which may hinder or help the way in which they form bonds with their children. Bowlby (1958), proposed that attachment can be understood within an evolutionary context, he believed it can be formed when a caregiver provides safety and security to a child which is an adaptive force that increases human survival. The types of attachment behaviour by adults includes responding sensitively and appropriately to the needs of the child, which appears universal across cultures and helps aid parenting and child attachment, which influences development (McLeod, 2017). Attachment theory was coined by Bowlby and Ainsworth, with Bowlby (2005) focusing on how parents give time and attention to their children to form stronger bonds with their child, by sacrificing time spent on other interests and other activities, which results in the attachment style developed by the infant. According to D'Arienzo, Boursier, & Griffiths (2019), there are a number of studies that have found attachment styles may influence the healthy or unhealthy relationship one has with social media.

According to Bowlby (2005), it is important for younger children to form healthy attachments to parents, which can be achieved through interactions such as eye contact or skin to skin bonding with parents. Younger generation parents often struggle with this concept as they have grown up with the progression and population of social media. Many new parents form a degree of dependency on the use of social media to communicate, share, and receive information about their children, which results in some parents having difficulty with sacrificing time to parent and not engaging in social interaction (Ante-Contreras, 2016). Attachment theory can also aid in helping parents who want to be better parents to their child/children by receiving beneficial parental support and helping from better attachment styles with

their children. According to D'Arienzo et al. (2019) and Bowlby (1988), while attachment theory plays a fundamental role in childhood, the type of attachment style also provides a format for future close relationships known as scripts which are internal programmed patterns that shape an individual's way of being in similar environments. There are three attachment styles, the first style is secure attachment, which is linked to a sense of worthiness, insecure avoidant is the second style which usually refers to children who are emotionally and physically independent from the attachment figure both emotionally and physically, and the third style is insecure-ambivalent which is also known as the anxious style (Ante-Contreras, 2016). The type of attachment style developed may also result in the way a parent provides parental care, as well as affecting the type of relationship they have with social media; whether or not they have a healthy or unhealthy relationship with social media (D'Arienzo et al., 2019). Participants all provided that data that suggested that they had strong attachment styles with their children, falling mostly into the secure style.

Some studies have also stated that many young parents engage in social media to share experiences of parenting and to receive tips. Rising in popularity is shared social media communities such as blogs, which are regularly visited by new mothers (Duggan, Lenhart, Lampe, & Ellison, 2015). According to Heidegger (1927), our existence within the world may be characterised by taking care of and being concerned for others in order to find a sense of belonging. Similar to forming attachment, this theory focuses on how parents utilise social media in order to exist within the present world. According to Heidegger (1927), we create meaning by providing care to those who provided the same for us previously, this care may also be expressed in the future towards how one cares for their own child. The basis of the "shared-world," focuses on how we use other sources to perceive the world. With regards to social media, recent studies have found relations to Heidegger's "shared-world," linked to connectedness or belonging, as experiences related to others who use such spaces increases their usage within that platform (Johnson, Levine, & Smith, 2009). As Yoo (2010), argues that this usage could stem from wanting to form a connection with others in order to fit in, we see that many parents feel pressured to parenting in a manner which does not stick out to their online community. Thus, social media may influence parents to acquire certain parenting skills that allows

them to fit in. Participants provided data that stated they are influenced by social media and attempt to adapt their styles to what they learn online.

The theories above have been defined and explained in a manner that provides reasons as to why they are acceptable frameworks for explaining parent's possible engagement with social media. It has also provided some possible influences of social media on parenting which will be further discussed under the literature review.

2.2 Critical Review

Social media can be both beneficial and a deterrent to parenting. It contains influences on parenting that help facilitate better parenting while it may also act as a negative influence such as leading to distracted or conflicted parenting.

2.2.1 Social media

Social media has changed the ways we create and consume information, as well as the way in which we interact with others. According to Dworkin, Rudi & Hessel (2018), many social media platforms such as such as blogs and social networking sites have seen an increase of usage by parents over the past years, yet there have been very few empirical studies investigating how and why parents are using it; and the influences thereafter. With any use of social media there is an element of influence present. According to Robinson (2019), parents are not immune to such and also form part of the influenced population. Therefore, there is a need for these influences to be studied as such influence is scarce within literature; the gap contributes to the research problem pertaining to this study. Initially social media had set platforms that allowed for creative means of communication mainly to help maintain contact with those who are close to you, now the experience of social media has surpassed the boundaries of our social circles (Little, 2016). Social media now allows people to creatively produce profiles of themselves, while aiding in the making of relationships between users, all while functioning as a means for sharing, maintaining group membership, and conversations between others internationally (Amedie, 2015). With new forms of social media, scholars have claimed that it has become easier to engage with information with social interactions also bringing about a possibility for dysfunctional behaviour, such as unhealthy dependencies to social media (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). While the negative influences of social media may be prevalent, there also a number of positive influences (Duggan et al., 2015). A

research compilation report by Le Moette et al. (2016), covered that many South Africans use social media as a form of communicating with children. South Africa's socio-economic status is relatively therefore, the report was based on parents who have to move elsewhere to find employment and leave behind children (Le Mottee et al., 2016).

According to a study conducted by Duggan et al. (2018), a positive influence of social media can be found in the way social media platforms help expand on world-views as it initiates experience-based communication, which help parents connect with one another and provide support-based communities. This study focused on parents' social media usage and compiled a quantitative exploration report of how parents engage online (Duggan et al., 2015). The study highlighted that 75 % of parents using social media did so to provide or receive parental support. Over the past decade we have seen more active use of social media within developing countries. Le Mottee et al. (2016), stated that the internet has gained vast popularity and importance within the lives of the people living in developing countries such as South Africa, yet most of the existing literature on internet use is based on developed countries.

The study by Le Mottee et al. (2016), helps reduce the gap of information pertaining South African parents but the research problem still stands as the literature remains scarce as it focused on social media use within a South African context. This is important as it is evident that information covering South African use of social media is scarce. Many American studies that have been conducted finds that social media plays a great role in both the lives of the youth and adults, and it is important for parents to be able to set good online examples for how their children should be using social media (Dworkin et al., 2018). Le Mottee et al. (2016), find that modern parenting in South Africa is heavily influenced by the digital age and that parental involvement is crucial in ensuring that their child engages in safe online behaviour. Therefore, one of the influences of social media is the aiding of parental assistance in that parents who are educated on the use of social media can provide beneficial parental assistance in guiding their child usage (Le Mottee et al., 2016).

2.2.2 Parent's usage and social media's influence

According to Toombs, Morrissey, Simpson, Gray, Vines, & Balaam (2018), parents face many challenges, one being the shift within their social life, which often leads to parents seeking out social media in order to manage their relationships, build new friendships, allocate new support systems, and to overall help find direction within the shift. Current studies showcase how new parents have a heightened risk of reporting feelings of social isolation as a result of withdrawing from social circles which may result in psychological disturbances such as depression (Ubido & Scott-Samuel, 2014). Bowlby (2005), touches on this within Attachment theory by which parents find it difficult to sacrifice the time they spend on other interests and other activities in order to form better bonds with their child. Many single parents often find themselves lacking support and facing exclusion, this may lead to increased stress that is detrimental to their parenting capacity, this has led to some studies finding that social media support groups has helped influence better caregiving skills of single parents in that they receive the support that's lacking through these groups (Arkohac, Frazer, Hoorgan, Kracewics & Al-Naimi, 2017).

According to Dworkin et al. (2013), previous studies detailing parental usage has seen that parents engage in social media for varied reasons, including to look for information about normal development and health, to identify resources that aid parenting, and to build social support. This information provided by Dworkin et al. (2013), is heavily influenced by American and European studies. There has also been an increase in parental support social media platforms that promote sharing and experience to help parents, one such use is LGBTQ+ sharing sites (Blackwell, Hardy, Ammari, Veinot, Lampe, & Schoenebeck, 2016). The study conducted by Blackwell et al. (2016), focused on how parents of LGBTQ+ engage online and how they navigate being a parent to a marginalised group who are often targets of online bullying. This has led to parents allocating support from peer online groups. These online communities influence the parenting of LGBTQ+ members in that it aids in how parents use the online support in supporting their own children, or even allowing LGBTQ+ of allowing themselves to belong to a parenting world that is not biased to heterosexual couples (Blackwell et al., 2016). While these communities may be a safe space to share, many scholars have noted that oversharing by parents may also be negative, such as parents betraying the trust of their children by publicly

sharing their child's preferences (Arkohac et al., 2017). Negative influences are a given within any use of social media.

According to Toombs et al. (2018), over usage and high dependency on social media also provides negative influences on parenting as parents tend to portray judgmental or competitive behaviours among follow online members. This may result in distracted parenting, which Ante-Contreras (2016) suggest is a common negative influence of social media on parenting as parents tend to focus more attention onto fitting in than taking care of their children. This provides a vital view into how a possible negative influence of social media can be managed, parents should be more aware of what they post especially in regard with oversharing.

According to Hart, Nailling, Bizer, & Collins (2014), each individual's attachment style reflects characteristic cognitions, emotions and behaviour that one will present in close relationships, such as with parents or children, and our style also predicts the different ways we interact with acquaintances and strangers online. Often the pressures of social media about what ideal parenting looks like leads to parents comparing their own parenting styles to those of others and wanting to confirm to those styles instead. Intensive parenting, and the increased pressures of parental responsibility it brings (Shirani, Henwood, & Coltart, 2011). This responsibility can lead to parents becoming more attached to social media in order to become better parents, parents who have unhealthy attachments to social media tend to be influenced to lead more authoritarian styles of parenting (Ante- Contreras, 2016). Another study highlighted how parental usage of social media influences parenting in a healthy way which helps parents in being able to keep connected with their kids, to track schedules, allows for the sharing of locations privately, and it may provide a sense of security between parents and children (Dworkin et al, 2018; Wang & Wellman, 2008).

Studies have also highlighted that parents and families dealing with divorce or separation also use social media as a resource to facilitate voice or face contact of children and parents which allows parents to be active in their children's lives (Dworkin et al, 2015). Other studies, such as Dworkin et al. (2013), have also found that social media may influence parents to help their own skills in keeping up with digital parenting. According to South African based research, digital parenting has

become a much-needed skill in which parents have to learn how to manage their children's usage (Le Mottee et al., 2016). Such studies help understand the possible influence of social media on South African parents, which is a fundamental purpose of this study; to highlight the possible influences of social media on South African parenting, by using social media parents are able to gauge the dangers of what is online and how to deal with the negatives of the web, therefore they are able to better monitor their child's usage. Studies that focus on gender and social media have also found that mothers are more likely to engage in social media support-based interactions than fathers (Blackwell et al, 2016).

2.2.3 Gender

According to a study conducted by Nadeem, Andreini, Salo, & Laukkanen (2015), peer recommendations over social media platforms have a significantly stronger influence on attitudes of females than they do on attitudes of males. This study focused on how social media has the power of influence a change in consumer behaviour, this may be adapted to how it can influence other behaviour such as parental behaviour. In the past many academics generated interest on intensive or authoritative styles of parenting, which has predominantly focussed on mothers being primary caregivers, as they tend to sacrifice a lot more in order to be highly involved in the lives of their children (Gadsden, Ford & Breiner, 2016). When viewing parental usage of social media, we find that a larger percentage of users are female. According to Duggan et al. (2015), studies have found that mothers more frequently engage with social media, both giving and receiving a high level of support within their online communities. This information helps in better understanding influences which may in turn assist in providing recommendations to reduce the negative influences of social media on parenting and to facilitate the positive

Mothers engage online more often than fathers, specifically when researching community based social media interactions (Ante-Contreras, 2016). Another study performed on mothers, found that majority of mothers using the photo-sharing site Pinterest, reported occasionally suffering from Pinterest Stress (Amedie, 2015). As stated above, many parents tend to overshare on social media and maintaining their social media presence may become taxing. While oversharing may cause stress it may also be beneficial. When mothers engage in parental support conversations

online experience of other parents can positively influence parenting, such as new mothers learning through the experience of older parents to better navigating their own style of parenting that fit the needs of their children (Duggan et al., 2015).

According to Dworkin et al. (2013), many mothers also turn to social media for medical help while treating their children, which may negatively or positively influence parenting. Social media platforms that do not have qualified doctors may lead to harmful parenting, while the experience of those parents taking care of children with similar needs may positively influence parenting. According to Blackwell et al. (2018), parents of special needs children often engage with social media in a manner that influences a more understanding and caring style of parenting. While some engagement may facilitate positive influences on parenting styles, some engagement may not. According to Ante-Contreras (2016), many new mothers tend to overuse social media platforms which negatively influences parenting as it leads to distracted parenting ethics, and often influences a more authoritarian and distant style of parenting (Ante-Contreras, 2016). This highlights why it is important for parents to monitor their usage, as over usage or dependence on social media may hinder parent-child relationships.

Hart et al. (2014), found that individuals with an anxious attachment style were more inclination toward frequent posting and commenting on Facebook, as they were more prone to concerns about social feedback. While many studies have focused on mothers, few studies show that there has also been an increase in presence of fathers within online and support communities (Arkohac et al., 2017). Many American fathers who work away, such as military dads, often seek the help of social media to co-parent (Arkohac et al., 2017). According to an interview study conducted by Ammari & Schoenebeck (2015), fathers also use social media to document and safe guard moments throughout fatherhood, but most importantly to learn how to be a better father through online support. The study also finds that fathers tend to access social media for support on diverse family needs, such fathers who were raised by single mothers' often search for role models online, and stay-at-home fathers' use of father blogs (Ammari & Schoenebeck, 2015). Yet, fathers tend to post less when regarding their own experience as they fear privacy concern and judgmental responses relating to content shared about their children (Ammari & Schoenebeck, 2015).

2.2.4 Conclusion.

To conclude, the above critical literature review has highlighted the different ways in which parents engage with social media and how their usage may directly influence their parenting styles and skills, such as influencing the parenting styles of parents or by influencing distracted parenting. The review has also provided information that showcases mothers as being more inclined to engage in social media communities that regard parental support, with studies focusing on fathers steadily gaining interest. It is also evident that while much research has been done within parents and social media, there is a gap in literature pertaining to South African parents.

2.3 Conceptualisation

- **Social Media** has many definitions, for the purposes of this study it was defined as platforms which allow for the creation of people's profiles and visibility of relationships between users which may function as a means for sharing, relationships, group, and conversations between others on a larger scale (Amedie, 2015; Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media will be explored in terms of how parents engage with social media through their profiles and how their experience with it influences them as parents.
- **Parents** are usually the primary caregivers and most important people in the lives of young children, they often take on parental roles that help protect and care for their child in order to facilitate development and overall well-being (Gladsden et al., 2016).
- **Parenting style** can be defined as a host of parents' attitudes and behaviours toward children and how they interact with their children within an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviours may be expressed (Bi, Yang, Li, Wang, Zhang, & Deater-Deckard, 2018). Within this study, parenting styles were viewed in terms of how they may be influenced by social media usage.
- **Positive influences** of social media maybe be seen in the way of which social media platforms help expand on world-views users as it allows for that they initiate experience-based communication, which help parents connect with one another and provide support-based communities (Ante-Contreras, 2016)

- **Negative influences** maybe a possibility within any use of social media, scholars have claimed that since it has become easier to access platforms of social interactions an increased possibility for dysfunctional behaviour, such as unhealthy dependencies to social media, may also result (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017).

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research paradigm

As reality is subjective, the individualistic views helped to understand the phenomenon of social media through the lens of parents and helped in better understanding what specific influences social media has on parents subjectively. Research that is interpretivist and qualitative usual yields rich data that the researcher must interpret through rigorous and systematic methods of transcribing, coding, and analysis of trends and themes (Crossman, 2020). This facilitated in providing recommendations on combating the negative influences and to facilitate the positives in the future. For the purpose of this study the research paradigm of interpretivism was used. Interpretivism highlights that reality is complex and layered (Egbert & Sanden, 2019). This paradigm views ontology through emphasis on human interaction with phenomena dealing within daily life allowing a single event to be viewed from multiple interpretations (Egbert & Sanden, 2019). The epistemology of interpretivism is that knowledge construction can be inter-subjective (Taylor & Medina, 2013). The following study aimed to provide an interpretivist view on the influences of social media on parents by retrieving information that showcases a subjective view of parents and their epistemological knowledge on social media. This study focused intently on the participants feelings and experience which aided the data collection. Interpretivism suggests knowledge of the world is meaningful when retrieved from ones' perception and meaning can be understood through the use of interpretivist procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For the stated reasons interpretivism was the best suited paradigm for this study.

3.2 Research design and approach

South African non-profit organisation, The Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) (2020), indicates that while there has been increased parental presence within social media research, there is a gap in information pertaining to south African

parents and the influence that social media has on their parenting. This study attempted to address the gap within the literature by providing a qualitative exploration of the influence of social media on parents, specifically South African parents. According to Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999), the three important dimensions that the research process should encompass are ontology, epistemology, and axiology/methodology. A successful research paradigm should therefore function as an all-encompassing system of interrelated practice and thinking that define the nature of investigation within the three dimensions (Thomas, 2010).

The study had attempted to do so by retrieving personal accounts of how South African parents use social media, through the qualitative use of semi-structured-interviews, which served as the axiology of the study. This study addressed the gap within the literature by providing a qualitative exploration of the influence of social media on parents, specifically South African parents. According to Pathak, Jena, & Kalra (2013), qualitative methods are used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour, and interactions. This study had adopted a qualitative approach to possibly gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations as to why parents use social media, which aided in providing insights on how it may influence them. The study had done so by retrieving personal accounts of how South African parents use social media, through the qualitative use of interviews.

As reality is subjective, the individualistic views helped to understand the phenomenon of social media through the lens of parents and to better understand what specific influences social media has on parents subjectively. This had helped in providing recommendations on combatting the negative influences in the future. According to Maree (2019), qualitative researchers also tend to be inductive as they look for a pattern of meaning on the basis of the data that they have collected, such as through reviewing previous literature and theories. Crossman (2020), states that most qualitative researchers investigate meanings, interpretations, symbols, and the processes and relations of social life. Since this study had made use of interviews, the design approach that had been adopted was survey research. This research is non-empirical in nature as a critical review had been conducted. This was to allow for a better understanding of the current available literature and to

better access what possible influences' have been identified. According to Ante-Contreras (2016), social media and the digital age are ever changing. As the phenomenon being explored was changeable, this study had been cross-sectional.

3.3 Population

When reflecting on the word population within research terminology, the researcher is referring to a systematic community of people, organisations, artifacts, and so on, within specific characteristics that are in the researcher's interest (Battacherjee, 2011). The researcher selects a target population of which fits the characteristics of what is to be researched (Martínez-Mesa, González-Chica, Duquia, Bonamigo, & Bastos, 2016). The target population can be defined as an entire group of individuals from which the researcher may draw a sample from (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). For the purposes of this study, the population that was chosen and used were identified as South African parents. All parents were aged between 29-39 years. As this research is focused on the influences of social media on parents, the population that was selected had to be parents who are active social media users.

3.4 Sampling

According to Banerjee & Chaudhury (2010), most research studies are carried out using samples of the subject population rather than using the entire population. A sample is the group of people who take part in the investigation (Martínez-Mesa et al, 2016). This research study focused its sample on individuals, who form part of the unit of analysis. According to Trochim (2006), the unit of analysis is the who or what that the research wants to study. Therefore, the researcher had identified individuals as the unit of analysis, namely three South African parents who are active users of social media. This research had adopted a qualitative approach. Most qualitative research tends to focus on smaller samples to support the depth of case-orientated analysis that is fundamental to this mode of inquiry (Sandelowski, 1996). Therefore, the researchers sample size is justified as the sample size has not hindered the data collection process. Additionally, qualitative samples are purposive as samples are selected by virtue of their capacity to provide rich textured information, relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe, & Young, 2018). Therefore, a smaller sample size is further justified for this study as the information that the researcher had transcribed from the interviews were informative.

The sample had been reached through the method of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, purposive sampling is used when a diverse sample is necessary or the opinion of well-informed individuals within a particular field is the topic of interest (Roubille, Richer, Starnino, McCourt, McFarlane, Fleming, & Gulliver, 2015). The researcher had adopted the purposive sampling method as participants were identified as individuals belonging to the specific knowledgeable group that this study focuses on (Creswell & Planko Clark, 2011). Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative studies as the identification and selection process allows for information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources, in addition to information and experience the importance of accessibility and willingness to participate allows for more credible information with expressed experience and opinions being shared (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). The researcher had contacted the participants with the desired characteristics through Facebook. The participants had to be parents within the target population who were active users of social media. Purposive sampling is also characterised by participants who actively agree to participate (Banerjee & Chaudry, 2010).

Once contact had been made and participants were interested in participating, they were asked to sign consent forms (Annexures C & D). Interviews with the sample participants were only conducted after participants had signed consent forms. Bitsch (2005) and Anney (2015), also suggests that researchers may adopt a purposive sampling methodology to achieve the requirements of transferability, which is also an important aspect of qualitative studies. The interview schedule that was used by the research can be found attached (Annexure B).

3.5 Data collection methods

Primary data collection acts as a fundamental aspect to all research studies. Therefore, when a researcher adopts proper techniques, particularly in regards to qualitative data, it helps in ensuring that the data is collected in a manner that may allow scientific provability and consistently (Goundar, 2012). When the data is collected in the above manner it also enhances the accuracy, validity, and reliability within the findings of the research (Goundar, 2012). Ultimately, using these methods

will help to achieve the goal of carrying out high-quality research with credible information.

Interviews can be used as a primary data collection method to collect information from individuals about their own practices, beliefs, or opinions (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The researcher had selected the method of interviews for the purposes of this study. According to Valenzuela & Shrivastava (2002), researchers use interviews for a variety of purposes, such as to be used to gather information on past or present behaviours or experiences. One of the main objectives for this study was to bridge the gap in literature on the influences of social media on South African parents and to determine the influences of social media on parenting. The study in focus had given attention intently on the participants feelings and experience which had also aided the data collection, and led to the selection of interviews. The use of interviews is justified by the researcher as it has aided in collecting information that was based on the parents' experience with social media, which helps understand if there were any influences of social media on parenting. A research question for this study also looked at whether or not there are any influences of social media on parenting which was answered through the use of the interviews. The use of South African parents also helps bridge the gap in information. It is important to note that in doing so, the researcher had answered the objectives of this study. According to Neubauer, Witkop, Varpio (2019), having subjective views on a phenomenon helps better explore a phenomenon that is subjective in nature, which also aids in the quality of the data collected and its findings; which can be aided through semi-structured interviews.

In semi-structured interviewing, researchers often follow a guide that consists of questions and topics that must be covered (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The researcher selected a semi-structured design for the formation of the interview questions for this study. For most semi-structure interviews, the interviewer has some freewill about the order in which questions are asked, but the questions are standardised to ensure that the researcher covers the correct material, this kind of interview collection results in detailed information in a style that is somewhat conversational (Fox, 2009). The researcher had been guided by the research purpose and objectives while generating the interview questions, such as asking questions about what possible influences the parents may face. Semi-structured

interviews also allow for a free flow of conversation which was beneficial for the data collection process as the parents were more willing to engage. Semi-structured interviews are often used when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided (Fox, 2009). The medium that was selected by the research to obtain the data had been Skype. According to McCord & Kerson (2006), face-to-face interviews are often viewed as the best type of interviews for qualitative research. Opdenakker (2006), states that in recent years the surge in technological development has allowed for alternate interview modes which has proven to be highly beneficial.

3.5.1 Application of data collection

For the purposes of this study the researcher had chosen to collect data through skype based semi-structured interviews. Due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and safety measures, face-to-face interviews were not permitted. Therefore, interviews were conducted through screen interventions. One of the alternatives to face-to-face interviews is video calling which provides the interviewer similar patterns of seeing and hearing the interviewee which is more or less the same as face-to-face interviews (Bertrand & Bordeau, 2010). Skype based interviews also have many advantages apart from being cost and time efficient (Krouwel, Jolly, & Greenfield, 2019). Video calling had allowed for easier access to all participants. An advantage of using the Skype based-interviews had been the option to have access to participants between geographical points (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). All three participants live in different areas of South Africa: Cape Town, Richards Bay, and Durban. While Skype was convenient in terms of allowing easier geographical access of participants, the researcher notes that poor internet connections and service updates proved to cause difficulty during most interviews which lead to rescheduling or lags between interviews. However, Hanna (2012), also notes that conducting interviews over video call may facilitate as safer interactions for both the interviewer and participant as the location is familiar to both and may be chosen independently. Skype-based interviews allowed for the participants to feel more comfortable as their space had not been intruded, which had assisted in allowing for questions to be answered more freely and honestly. Lastly Irvine (2011), also highlights that video call interviews also holds to be better in terms of other technological based interviews, such as telephonic interviews, as

interviewees may be more willing to engage and answer follow-up questions. All interviews conducted allowed for follow-up questions from previous answers which was beneficial as themes and patterns were found during the analysis. For the following reasons, video call interviews proved to be the most applicable to this study.

The interview consisted of both in-depth and semi structured open-ended questions which allowed for free flow of conversation and data given by the participants. A down fall found was that some participants often deterred from the topic but they were easily navigated back toward the topic. In-depth, semi-structured interviews are verbal interchanges where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person by asking questions offering participants the chance to pursue issues they feel are important, while collecting information on a diverse range of experiences (Longhurst, 2009). The chosen structure of the interview questions had allowed for the participants to not feel obligated or manipulated to answer questions, which will uphold the trustworthiness of the data that was received. Thus, making the data more reliable. The questions had also allowed for the inclusion of follow up questions and discussions. The interview had been considerate of time and questions were limited to allow for half an hour session per participants, two interviews extended this time frame but all interviews were under one hour. The interview consisted of questions relating to the parent's usage of social media and how it may influence their parenting, which had been recorded for transcription and analysis. The researcher had chosen a specific interview structure that had used designs to elicit open and detailed responses from the study participants. This had allowed opportunities to the participants which resulted in them being able to share their own personal experiences, which is subjective to them and accepting of an interpretivist study. The language used within the structure questions had refrained from jargon.

3.6 Data analysis method

According to Creswell (2014) the methodological step of data analysis is one of great importance as this step allows for useful information to be retrieved from previous data and to further provide direction on decision making on data collection. Thematic analysis has been selected to analyse the data retrieved from the interviews, it was

also used during the collection and analysing of literature that focuses on the influences of social media on parents which aided the critical literature review. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is an inspection process whereby the researcher focuses on analysing meaning across a data set or by inspecting one particular aspect of a phenomenon, further analysing the data, and interpreting patterns or themes within the qualitative data. As thematic analysis focuses on qualitative research it fits well with this particular research study. Smith (2015) and Braun & Clarke (2006), discuss the six phases in thematic analysis as becoming familiar with the data and points of interest, generation of codes, searching the themes, review of the themes, defining and naming of themes, and report and presentation. The researcher, therefore, selects to use the thematic analysis as it proves to be the best suited of the phenomena wanting to be explored, the thematic analysis approach is flexible and will allow for the research to generate themes from the interviews and reviews of previous literature.

An early step in thematic analysis is coding and searching themes. The initial review of literature provided insight to some of the influences that social media may have on parents. The data collected from the interviews had been categorised according to themes that arose from the review, these themes were accessed in relation to the initial themes, and were further explored. These themes did not differ from the predicted themes noted in the critical review. Each participants' interview had been transcribed verbatim to uphold the integrity of the data that the participant had provided. The information that had been collected from the participant interviews were further analysed with specific focus to answer the research questions; which focused on the influences of social media on parenting and how to manage them and was successful in doing so. Therefore, the chosen analysis proved to be successful for this study.

3.6.1 Application of data analysis methods.

Each participant's interview was also transcribed verbatim to uphold the integrity of the data that the participants had provided. The information that was collected from the participant interviews had been analysed with specific focus in attempting to answer the research questions and objectives; which focuses on the influences of social media on parenting and how to manage them. The researcher had undertaken

a line by line analysis, looking for themes that would confirm the themes that were previously found. The researcher has also used inductive thematic analysis for further inspecting the information for new themes that arose from the data within the transcripts itself.

The thematic analysis approach is flexible and had allowed for the research to generate new themes from the interviews. An early step in thematic analysis is coding. The initial review of literature had provided an insight to some of the influences that social media may have on parents, these influences were coded as initial themes accordingly. Once the interviews were conducted, the researcher had then conducted transcriptions which were analysed against the previous themes. These themes were grouped in terms of the initially generated themes. The data collected was categorised according to themes that had arose, the themes had then been accessed in relation to the initial themes, which were further analysed. Further analysis resulted in the generation of new themes, all themes matched the initial themes and further expanded on the influences. This was already predicted by the researcher as it is a common feature of inductive thematic analysis. Overall, the researcher noted that thematic analysis had provided results that accepted most of the themes that were initially generated

3.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an important aspect of qualitative studies and consists of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. According to Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey (2016), credibility concerns the internal validity of any qualitative study as it evaluates the truth value of the data, which is achieved through the representation of data that is true to the opinions and feelings of the participants. The aspect of credibility for this study attempted to be satisfied through the comments and feedback that were received from the research lecturer and supervisor which had aided in improving the validity of the data. For the researcher to allow transferability, sufficient information on the context of the study has to be provided as it will allow for the reader to decide whether the prevalent environment is similar to another situation with which he or she is may be familiar with and whether the findings can justifiably be applied to the other setting (Shenton, 2004).

Bitsch (2005) and Anney (2015), suggests researchers adopt a purposive sampling methodology to achieve the requirements of transferability. This study has selected the purposive sampling method which had in turn insured transferability. According to Shenton (2004), meeting the requirements of dependability may prove to be difficult in qualitative studies. One way to achieve dependability, which is closely related to credibility and focuses on stability of findings overtime, is through researchers striving to enable a future investigator to repeat their study (Anney, 2015). Finally, to achieve confirmability, the researcher had taken steps to demonstrate that the findings are representative of the data and not predispositions of the researcher. This study had also undergone many reviews before being submitted, it had made use of member checks and peer-reviews as it was accessed by fellow honours students, supervisors, and an ethics committee. According to Guba (1981), conducting reviews and checks aids in the quality of the data.

4. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Presentation of findings

The purpose of this study was to highlight the possible influences of social media on parenting and assisting in providing recommendations to reduce the negative influences and to facilitate the positive. Themes generated were found to be supportive of social media influenced. Mainly, the information aided in reducing the gap of South African literature. Most themes and sub-themes were found to be interacting or overlapping. The following section summarises the findings from the interview in terms of the themes and sub themes that had emerged.

Theme	Sub-theme
1. Social media	1.1 Why it is used 1.2 Time spent 1.3 Acceptance of influence

The theme of social media is viewed as platforms that allow for the creation participants profiles, visibility of relationships between users which may function as a means for sharing, relationships, group, conversations between others on a larger

scale, and the influence it may have on its user. Sub-themes had emerged in regards to how social media was used by the participants, whether or not they had trouble with the time they spent on social media, and if they accepted that it may influence them. While all parents accepted that they did use social media not all were accepting of the influence on their parenting particularly **Participant 1** who stated, *“I don’t think social media influences me as a parent at all, or how I am toward my boys...”*, yet she had accepted that she used sites such as medical blogs when treating her kids for common illnesses.

2. Parents and social media	2.1 Frequented sites 2.2 Relation to parenting 2.3 Positive influences 2.4 Negative influence
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The theme of parents and social media focuses on the role’s parents adopt in order to facilitate development and overall well-being of their children, and how social media may hinder or support it. Sub-themes that had emerged suggested that parents most used sites and reasoning had both negative and positive influence on the parents. Overall, all participants stated that social media possesses many advantages to parenting that previously did not exist. **Participant 2** stated that social media is an advantage to parenting within the digital age and she finds influence on her parenting in many ways such as, *“I use social media to manage my own schedule as well as my child’s, it even helped me when I had trouble with my 5-year olds eating habits. Like, I learnt better techniques on how to get her to eat better...”*.

3. Gender	3.1 Vague answers 3.2 Spouse approval
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The theme of gender refers to how answers may differ from fathers as opposed to mothers. The findings saw that most answers were similar amongst parents with the exception that the female participants were more open when answering personal questions opposed to the male participant being vague. This was seen when the

participants were asked “How would you describe your relationship with your parents in comparison to the relationship you have with you child/ children?”.

Both female participants had listed the downfalls of their relationships with their parents such as **Participant 2** stated that, *“My parents were divorced and sometimes we didn’t really get to have such a close relationship, which is why my brothers and I made a pact to always stick together no matter what...”*. While the male participant, who also shared a similar circumstance of divorced parents, stated, *“... uh I have a very good relationship with my parents so I mean I try the best to, to have a good relationship with my child similar to that...”*. Thus, this resulted in the sub-theme of vagueness. Spousal approval among the mothers also found to be lower as they were not as reliant on parenting in a manner that their spouse did.

4.2 Interpretation of findings

The themes generated by this study has provided useful insights into whether social media influences parents and how parents can manage the effects such influences. All participants had stated that they had experienced influences of social media, mostly positive influences. A common trend of positive influences of social media were found when, it was used in a manner that was deemed appropriate.

Participant 2 stated, *“social media is very beneficial. From the way in which I help my child to the way in which I help myself be a better parent. I even use social media to check on the best ways that I can communicate with my children...”*. Thus, social media was found to be beneficial in supporting parents and aiding them to fulfil the roles that they had identified as useful within their household. **Participant 1** stated that she used social media in a manner that fitted to her adopted a parenting style that suited the needs of her children. While she had stated so she had also denied influence on her parenting.

The research findings also suggested that the negative influences such as distracted parenting can be managed if parents become aware users that are more attentive to their children then they are toward social media. **Participant 3** had also highlighted that time spent on social media has to be limited for the positive influences to be facilitated, he stated that he now takes note of his time spent on social media, *“...its either on charge or I put it away and focus on the kids, or spend time with my kid.”*. This provides useful information on how one may reduce the time spent on social

media to reduce the negative influence of distracted parenting. **Participant 2** also suggests that social media should not be used to compare the lives or the quality of a parent one is, which is a negative influence of social media, they should instead, *“... learn and adapt how you parent according to what your child needs not according to what celebrities like Aisha Baker say is right...”*. Most parents indicated that their social media use related to parenting was used in a manner that was in line with their familiar needs.

Overall, findings indicate that social media does influence parents, even though some parents are not accepting of such influences it does exist. It has also provided suggestions on how parents may be able to manage such influences.

4.2.1 Findings in context

Two theoretical frameworks had been selected in aiding the explanation of this study, namely attachment theory and Heidegger’s “shared-world. Bowlby (1958), proposed that attachment can be understood within an evolutionary context, he believed it can be formed when a caregiver provides safety and security to a child which is an adaptive force that increases human survival. The types of attachment behaviour by adults includes responding sensitively and appropriately to the needs of the child, which appears universal across cultures and helps aid parenting and child attachment (McLeod, 2017). **Participant 2** stated that the attachment that she shared with her parents during her childhood was not ideal as they were divorced, which is why she tries to have a, *“... very close relationship with my girls and I make sure that they know that they are loved. Which is why I always find ways on blogs and social media to aid my parenting ...”*. This supports the theory in that the participants experience motivates her to be a better parent which she finds is helped by her social media usage.

Ante-Contreras (2016), also suggests that unhealthy attachments to social media may also hinder parenting and reduces the bond between child and parent. Bowlby (2005), stated that it is also important for younger children to form healthy attachments to parents, which can be achieved through interactions such as eye contact or skin to skin bonding with parents. Younger generation parents often struggle with this concept. Many new parents form a degree of dependency on the use of social media to communicate, share, and receive information about their

children, which results in some parents having difficulty with sacrificing time to parent and not engaging in social interaction (Ante-Contreras, 2016). This sentiment was acknowledged and accepted by all parents. **Participant 3** stated, “... *on my social media and it takes up time uhm time with my child... I make a note of my usage to prevent this...*”

This also highlights that all themes that was discovered in the literature review (social media, parents and social media, and gender) is supported with the addition of new sub-themes being discovered after the interviews were analysed. According to the literature study when viewing parental usage of social media, we find that a larger percentage of users are female and studies have found that mothers more frequently engage with social media, both giving and receiving a high level of support within their online communities (Duggan et al., 2015). This is supported by the information received by the two female participants who stated that they both read online parenting forums as a form of support in terms of whether or not they are doing a good job with their children. This differs in relation to **Participant 3** as he often stated that, “...*most of the stuff by the way (laugh) Rebecca was doing (my wife), so when it came to me ...*”, when he was asked about why he used a certain site or how social media had helped his parenting.

While the literature had covered all points, a key sub-theme had been missing and that is acceptance of the influence of social media on parenting. According to Ante-Contreras (2016) many parents are not willing to accept that social media influences their parenting as they may feel it deteriorates from the type of parents they are.

Participant 1 was admitting in that social media did not influence her parenting yet, she often stated how she would use social media for finding home remedies for her children or how she would use social media to monitor her own children’s usage Furthermore, the research findings had assisted in reducing the gap in the body of literature as it provided a South African interpretation of parents within the digital age. This will further be beneficial in aiding local parents who experience influence of social media on parenting.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Research Questions, Problems, Objectives addressed

The findings have answered the research questions, problems and objectives. Social media does have large influence on parents. Findings have showed that South African parents are of no exception, with most influences being positive in nature such as aiding the way parents take-care of their children, or how it provides online support for parents. The first question of this study was to find out what the influences of social media on South African parents were with the objective wanting to determine the influences on South African parents. The main influences of social media were seen through the aiding of parenting as it helped with doing everyday tasks such as feeding children and providing medical advice, or as **Participant 1** stated, *“I use social media to also plan holidays for my sons. I check out safe and kid friendly areas and places that I know my children will like.”*

While other parents stated that it was beneficial in providing support, they also stated negatives, which can be seen in the competitive nature of social media in promoting ideal parenting or milestones, or distracted parenting. Recommendations were also found through the analysing of additional sources such as the literature review and furthermore by the data derived from the interviews. For instance, **Participant 3** stated that he restricts *“the time he spends on his phone to prevent over usage which distracts from parenting and the bond one shares with their child.”*

This research question and objective had been addressed as the data collected provided sufficient information that social media does influences both positive and negative influences on South African parents with the main influences being parental distraction, acting as a supportive community for parents, a way to help parents fulfil their household needs, and overall influencing the way parents' parent.

The second research question focused on what recommendations could be made to manage the negative and facilitate the positive influences, with the objective being to provide such recommendations. Findings aided in sufficiently addressing the question and objective as it was found that negative influences such as parents who are susceptible to distracted parenting can learn to monitor the amount of time spent online to minimize the effect. A large amount of finding suggests that proper use of social media maybe a tool which post parents said older generations lacked. Furthermore, all interview questions were created with importance given to the research questions and objectives as it formed the core of the research problem.

This has helped capture data that directly answered the questions and objectives of the study, providing information on how there are more positive influences than negative. Therefore, the questions, problem, and objectives were successfully addressed and reached.

The research problem was also successfully addressed as the problem focused on the evident gap in information pertaining to South African parents and the influence that social media has on their parenting. Therefore, this study addressed the problem by exploring the possible influences of social media on South African parents who are active users of social media and provided data that will apply to a South African context.

5.2 Ethical considerations

- Approval: Prior to the commencement of the study, the research proposal will be submitted to a Research supervisor and an ethics board. Data collection only commenced once the research proposal was deemed ethical (Annexure B).
- According to Shivyayogi (2013), the term “vulnerable population” refers to the disadvantaged sub-segment of the community which may requiring utmost care, specific a considerations and augmented protections when engaging in research. The sample population for this particular study was selected to include participants that do not fall under the vulnerable population such as minors. Including vulnerable populations often result in participants who are unable to protect their freedom or themselves from risks, which may result in decreased freewill to make informed choices (Shivyayogi, 2013). For these reasons this study did not use research participants from within vulnerable populations.
- Informed consent: Once participants have shown interest in partaking in this study, they were provided with a consent form for participation and audio recording (Annexures C & D). According to Nijhawan, Janodia, Muddukrishna, Bhat, Bairy, Udupa, & Musmade (2013) informed consent is both an ethical and legal requirement for research that involves human participants. This study focuses on parents therefore it is important to receive informed consent of participation before commencing with data collection. Informed consent

may follow a procedural route where a participant is informed about aspects of the study, which allows for the participant to make a decision on whether they will voluntarily confirm participation (Nijhawan et al, 2013). Prior to the commencement of the study, the research proposal was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at Varsity College. An ethics checklist form (Annexure B) was completed by the researcher. An informed consent form must be completed each participant prior to the interview. The consent form was available in English to ensure that the English-speaking participants receive information about the study in the language in which they are proficient. The participants were informed that their privacy and confidentiality was maintained throughout the study to respect their personal autonomy. Participation was voluntary and free of charge throughout, and participants did not receive payment for their participation. This allowed for the data received to be more reliable as participants were not coerced into participating (Grady, 2005). All information provided in the consent form was protected through password protected files and names were not released ensuring anonymity and confidentiality.

- Confidentiality and anonymity: According to Wiles, Grow, Heath, & Charles (2006; Oliver, 2003; Gregory, 2003), when viewing the ethics within a body of literature confidentiality is commonly associated to the principle of privacy. Confidentiality is as vital to the integrity of the research as it is to societal beliefs of the participant, which allow the participants to feel important while having the right for information to be private.. To assure a sense of confidentiality and anonymity the data collected were not be repeated without permission from the participants and the participants names will also not be released. The notion of confidentiality and anonymity was also raised and discussed with research participants prior to their participation in research. The information provided by the interviewees was protected by password coded files, as it contained personal information and participants were referred to as participant 1 to participant 3 when referring to data collected. Only the researchers directly involved in the research project will have access to this data. To ensure anonymity participants were informed that participation is entirely voluntary and that they are under no obligation to take part in the

study. They are also allowed to withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so.

- **Beneficence and non-maleficence:** The principles of beneficence and nonmaleficence involve an ethical obligation to provide benefits for the study participants and to balance such benefits against risks, this requires that no harm is done to the participant by the researcher as well any foreseeable harm should be prevented and removed by the researcher (Townsend, Cox, & Li, 2010). There are no potential risks involved or posed to the participants by participating in the study. No harm or potential harm will be posed to the participants either, as participants will partake in interviews from the comfort of their own homes through their choice of online based communication such as Skype or messenger. However, a potential inconvenience to participants might be the time taken to complete the individual interview. If the participants report concerns over privacy they would be contained with the assurance by the researcher that all personal information was classified and the participants may also withdraw at any given point. A potential benefit of the study is to enhance the parents' awareness the possible influences of social media on parenting such as possible changes to parenting styles.

5.3 Limitations

- **Time constraints**

This study did face limitations of time constraints as interviews had to be kept to a timeframe to ensure that the interviewee does not lose interest, as well as to meet requirements of submission. The timeframe also aids in refining the questions, meaning questions in the interview should be sufficient in answering the research problem. This study is also cross-sectional which did impose limitations on dependability.

- **Population and sample size**

Generalisation across parent populations may be hindered as the sample size only includes 3 parents with the population parameter focusing on 29-39-year-old South African parents, this could make the data received to be less

applicable to all South Africans as it would not be a true representation of the entire South African population

- Education level of sample used

All participants are from highly educated backgrounds. This could hinder the answers as most parents may have answered in a manner that they felt was socially desirable.

5.4 Heuristic value

As reality is subjective, the individualistic views and subjective expressions of the parents had helped to understand the phenomenon of social media through the lens of parents and to better understand what specific influences social media has on parents subjectively. The study in concern had discovered that a complex relationship between social media usage and the influence it has on parenting does exist and this was explored throughout this research study. Through the use of interviews, the data concluded indicated largely positive influences of social media on parenting and added data that provided recommendations to managing influences. While the data provided by this study aided in attempting to close the gap within South African literature, there is room for further research focused on social media usage and parenting. More specifically further recommendations on managing the influences could be looked into using larger South African samples. Other research may also be conducted using different methods of data collection in order to ensure less likelihood of receiving socially desirable answers.

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Annexure A: Annexure A: Final Research Report Summary Document Template

Title: A qualitative exploration of the influence of social media on South African parents.

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors /Sources	Lit Review Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data collection Method (s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	Recommendations
To bridge the gap in literature on the influences of social media on South African parents and determine the influences of social media on parenting	What are the influences of social media on South African parents?	To understand the influences of social media on parenting, from an interpretive view of parents	Bowlby Dworkin Heidegger	Theme 1: Social Media Theme 2: Parents and social media Theme 3: Gender	Qualitative	Interpretivism Epistemology: Add on the body of knowledge in a South A context Ontology: Subjective to the parents and the influence of social media on them and how reality is governed by social constructs Axiology: Subjective view to understand their reality of social media	Semi-structured interviews Recorder over video calling app (Skype)	Informed consent. Anonymity and confidentiality. Right to withdraw Benevolence and non-maleficence	Social media has a large influence on parenting as it is easily accessible and has readily available information/content on parenting.	Further research could be conducted using a more South African participants to allow for a better representation of the population. Future research could incorporate participants of different educational backgrounds Future research could be done to further aid in filling the gap within literature.
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses/ Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories	Population		South African parents who use social media. Aged 29- 39 years	Data Analysis (s)	Limitations	Key Contribution	
The influences of social media are prevalent in research but, the inclusion of parental influences specifically on South African parents is scarce. Therefore, there is a gap within the literature, which this research aims to fill.	What recommendations can be made to better manage the influences of social media? To determine the influences of social media on South African parents. To provide recommendations on the negative influences and to mitigate the positive influences of social media on parents.	Parents Parenting styles Social media Negative influences Positive influences	Attachment theory Heidegger's shared-world	Sampling			Thematic analysis. Review and coding of themes retrieved from transcription and critical review	Time constraints Population and sample size Education of participants	To add to the body of knowledge in a South African context. To provide Recommendations on managing the influences	

Annexure B: Ethics Clearance



5 August 2020

Student name: Alisha Moonsamy

Student number: 16009028

Campus: Varsity College Durban North

Re: Approval of HPS1 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

HONOURS RESE, RESM and RMET ETHICS CHECKLIST

Student name: Alisha Moonsamy

Title of the research: A qualitative exploration of the influence of social media on South African parents.

	Yes	No	Comment: supervisor/ navigator/lecturer
Are you using human subjects in your research?	x		
I intend to use human subjects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I understand that I will not conduct research with human subjects under the age of 18 and other vulnerable groups. I understand I can only proceed once I receive an ethical clearance letter. 			
Interviews/ Focus groups An example of the <i>written consent form</i> I intend to use is attached.	x		
I will record the interview/focus groups and the sample of the letter where I ask for permission to do so is attached.	x		
I plan to use an interview schedule: The example of my research instrument is attached.	x		
I plan to use a questionnaire: The example of my research instrument is attached.		x	
I plan to use a gate-keepers letter: The example of my letter is attached.		x	
I plan to do research on an IIE site/with IIE students/staff/artefacts and I filled in the application for permission to do so. The application is attached. I understand I can only proceed once I receive IIE Approval for this.		x	

Signed: student.....

Annexure C: Consent form to Participate in interview

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants

To whom it may concern,

My name is Alisha Moonsamy and I am a student at Varsity College Durban North. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Suhaila Ameer about the influences that social media may have on parents. Social media has gained widespread interest and engagement within the current decade, the topic has also gained interest within research communities. As social media continues to be a relevant and popular presence, parents have to learn to find a balance social engagement and parenting. While the amount of research on social media is vast, there seems to be a lack of research focusing on the influence of social media on parents. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the influence of social media on parenting in order to allow for better management of the influences, and I also hope it will help lessen the gap in the literature pertaining to South Africa.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because I believe that your subjective insight as a parent who engages on social media will be beneficial to this study as well as to yourself, as this study aims to better manage the possible influences. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to conduct an interview with you over skype on questions related to your social media usage and different aspects of parenting.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your actual experiences with social media and how it may be influencing you as a parent. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Varsity College Durban North will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I

discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Alisha Moonsamy

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Suhaila Ameer

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by [INSERT YOUR FULL NAMES AND SURNAME] about [INSERT AIM OF RESEARCH/BRIEF SUMMARY OF EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE RESEARCHING].

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature	Date

Annexure D: Consent form for audio or video recording

Consent form for participants					
<p>I, _____, agree to allow Alisha Moonsamy to audio record my interviews as part of the research about the influences that social media may have on parents. Social media has gained widespread interest and engagement within the current decade, the topic has also gained interest within research communities. As social media continues to be a relevant and popular presence, parents have to learn to find a balance social engagement and parenting. While the amount of research on social media is vast, there seems to be a lack of research focusing on the influence of social media on parents. In the hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the influence of social media on parenting in order to allow for better management of the influences, and lessen the gap in the literature pertaining to South Africa.</p> <p>This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private. 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer. 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. 					
<hr/>					
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 75%; height: 40px;"></td> <td style="width: 25%; height: 40px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Signature</td> <td style="text-align: left;">Date</td> </tr> </table>				Signature	Date
Signature	Date				

Annexure E: Interview Schedule

Q: How would you explain being a parent within the digital age to someone older in age?

Q: If you had to describe social media in three words what would they be?

Q: Which social media sites do you engage on the most?

Q: Could you elaborate on why you think those are your most used sites?

Q: There are a lot of social media communities online that allow for discussions and tips on parenting, what are your thoughts on them?

Q: How would you describe the type of parent you are or the parenting style you have adopted?

Q: Following from the previous question, do you feel like social media has influenced the way you parent and if so how?

Q: How would you describe the bond you share with your child/children?

Q: From your personal experience as a parent and a social media user has social media hindered you as a parent in anyway?

Q: Do you find any similarities with the way you engage online and the way in which you engage with your children?

Q: How would you describe your relationship with your parents in comparison to the relationship you have with your child/ children?

Q: If you could only use one social media site what would it be and why?

(Annexure E: Safe Assign Report on VC LEARN)



RESE8419_2020_HPS1_VCDN1 - RESE8419_VCDN1

Safe Assign Plagiarism Practice

Alisha Moonsamy

on Wed, Oct 28 2020, 4:33 PM

100% highest match

Submission ID: 63501fed-7c23-4006-b7af-dc9ffad81716

Attachments (1)

- RESEARCH A7.docx 100%
Word Count: 15,534
Attachment ID: 3619532087

RESEARCH A7.docx

Title: **1 A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SOUTH AFRICAN PARENTS.**

Student name: **2 ALISHA MOONSAMY STUDENT NUMBER:** 16009028