

# Mothers and Sociolinguistics: A Discourse Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

This study performed discourse analysis on interview transcripts using a sociolinguistic lens. From this discourse analysis, I aimed to answer two research questions: (1) Why do mothers use self-deprecating language and narratives to communicate their experiences of motherhood and (2) how do mothers use connotative language (i.e. “perfect,” “inadequate,” and “shame”) to communicate their experiences of motherhood? The findings of the first research question suggest that mothers use self-deprecating language and narratives as a coping mechanism for the oddity and awkward nature of the situations described and as a coping mechanism for the prescribed ideals/expectations of motherhood. The findings of the second research question suggest that mothers use of highly connotative language depends on their culture, experiences, values and beliefs and directly relates to sociolinguistics.

## INTRODUCTION

Motherhood and language are popular subjects and significant areas of study; however, minimal academic literature examines the intersection and interrelation of these phenomena. According to Hogan (2011):

Language choices – inferences about meaning, actions, roles, relationships, and participation – are all embedded in broader cultural matrices of recurrent practices, knowledge, and meanings, which include beliefs about who should do what and how they should do so, as well as evaluations – based on larger values and ideologies (p. 264).

Motherhood, a socially constructed role involving nurturing and caring for others, has been portrayed in a myriad of ways throughout history and these portrayals function as dominant narratives in our society (Arendell, 2000; Uttal, 1996; Vandenberg-Daves, 2014). These representations along with the range of social factors that affect individual mothers’ lived experiences prescribe various ideals and expectations of what is called good mothering that are often not attainable because they are so “formidable, self-denying, elusive, changeable, and contradictory” and are not reflective of real life, but yet play a pervasive role in shaping the discourses and language mothers’ use. (Thurer, 1995, p. xvi). According to Malmkjaer (1991), language and “discourse organize important aspects of our social lives whether in the moment-to-moment social interchanges of everyday talk or, more abstractly, in the beliefs, understandings, and principles (‘discourses’) that structure our lives” (p. 114). Because social factors, discourse, and language are pervasive to motherhood this study will focus on mothers use of language using discourse analysis grounded in the study of sociolinguistics. Discourse analysis fueled by sociolinguistics will explore the language mothers use to talk about themselves, other mothers, and their experiences/perceptions of motherhood.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To understand and analyze mothers use of language, an exploration of discourse analysis and sociolinguistics is essential. Investigating the definitions and applications of these two entities will precede a discussion of why the way mothers talk is important and how discourse analysis and sociolinguistics can be applied to mothers and motherhood.

### *Discourse Analysis*

Discourse can be understood as “all utterances or texts that have meaning and effects in the real world” (Hogan, 2011, p. 261). Discourse analysts focus on these utterances, which are not necessarily the grammatically defined clause or sentence, in their research (Coulthard, 1977). These utterances have a coherence that creates meaning and knowledge. “Discourse analysis provides a range of methodologies that are applicable to different facets of language in text and context” (Hogan, 2011, p. 265). A central concept is “preference, the idea that at specific points in conversation, certain types of utterances will be more favored than others” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 118). These preferences rely heavily on social relationships and ideologies. According to Hogan (2011), “the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief” is not always apparent to the discourse participants but is of high importance to the overall meaning of utterances (p. 262). Consequently, it became problematic for scholars to distinguish between

discourse analysis and pragmatics. Historically, discourse analysis was text-centered, static, and focused on the product where pragmatics was user-centered, dynamic, and focused on the process (Tannen et al., 2015). Each entity holds value and requires research. Thus, scholars developed a form of linguistic analysis that is “openly political and therefore draws on a more ‘social’ model of discourse” (Hogan, 2011, p. 261).

### *Sociolinguistics*

Sociolinguistics represents the intersection of sociology and linguistics. It reflects a “vast array of topics and methods” and is both the study of language in social contexts and the study of social life through language (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 482). Sociolinguistic variables are marked by social and situational differences that “reveal how numerous features of language provide clues to (or indices of) the social situation, activities, participants identities, and relationships” (Hogan, 2011, p. 264). Sociolinguistics reject the assumption that a certain grammatical system applies rigidly to all speakers and settings. “Emergent social meaning is an intrinsic quality of interaction and people’s social identities are multiple and dynamic” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 116). They believe that social factors such as age, profession, level of education, etc. account for variations in language among language users.

The UCLA Center for Research in Language and Linguistics sponsored a conference for “sociolinguistics” in May of 1964 making this the cited “birth” of the area of study. The proceedings from the conference were published two years later and the book closes with considerations of possible applications of sociolinguistic research (Hogan, 2011, p. 782). Sociolinguistics provides a useful framework to analyze and interpret language used in interactions by connecting it to broader social dynamics (Hogan, 2011). Through this framework, researchers can answer questions like, “how do individuals and social groups define themselves in and through language?” and “how do communities differ in the ‘ways of speaking’ they have adopted?” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 482). Social class (for example, working class versus middle class) affects dialect “standards” (Malmkjaer, 1991). According to Hogan (2011):

How something is said, meant, and done – speakers’ selection among different linguistic devices as alternative ways of speaking – is guided by relationships among the following: the meanings and functions of linguistic forms in relation to the text and context in which they appear’ the social context, for example, participant identities and relationships, structure of the situation, the setting; a cultural framework of beliefs and actions (p. 266).

As one can see, social factors and ideologies contribute largely to language choices and discourse. Other contributing factors are social relationships and power relations. “How people organize their lives socially, for example their patterns of social networking, can often be indicators of language variation.” Ties between people, especially strong ones, can help explain how speech forms and retains itself over long periods of time (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 484). Additionally, “interest in the functions of language in social contexts leads to a range of other issues, for example, how a particular noun or distribution of speech can reproduce power or initiate resistance in social and political spheres” (Hogan, 2011, p. 263).

Recognizing the importance of sociology (in this case, social factors and social relations) in the field of linguistics creates exigence for studying unique and specific facets of a population to better understand that group’s use of language.

### *The Importance of Mothers’ Language*

Language is a uniquely human function not known to any other mammal. “The existence of language permits human beings to behave with a degree of purposefulness, perseverance, and consistency” (Black, 1962, p. 4). The use of language sets humans apart from other mammals and it allows us to create meaning. “Social meaning is manufactured, at least in part, during language use” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 486). One specific “meaning” that is created is the sense of community (Mercer, 2000). Mothers make up a specific community. Examining the ideology of motherhood presents several intertwining themes such as: women are defined in terms of their biological functions, the age at which women are supposed to become mothers is prescribed, motherhood and childcare are “professionalized” by experts, there are pervasive and popular ideas about motherhood, and mothers in various social circumstances experience motherhood differently (Phoenix et al., 1991). This ideology of motherhood and the way American society views mothering is not inherently right or wrong nor better or worse than any other view of mothering as “our predecessors followed a pattern very different from our own, and our descendants may hew to one that is no less different” (Thurer, 1995, p. xv). However, what is clear is that mothers share a history and collective identity that enables them to participate, both willingly and passively, in the archetypal ideals of motherhood that arise from collective thinking.

Community and collective thinking lead to a shared discourse composed of language that has direct influence on mothers’ thoughts. “Communication is, in this view, a reflexive and even a ritualized process, which

allows its participants to construct and project desirable versions of their identities, enacted in a succession of performances targeted at specific audiences” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 116). The communication, discourse, and language of mothers and the “majority of maternal decisions are influenced by physical, social, ideological, and political factors that are colored by the culture we live in” (Nathanson & Tuley, 2008, p. 91).

Not only is the language mothers use important, so are the pervasive social factors and social relations that fuel language choices and discourse decisions. “This is why detailed descriptions of particular episodes of social interaction have to be the focus of analysis” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 486). Examining one phenomena without accounting for the other would be an incomplete attempt at discourse analysis. Thus, a study must apply discourse analysis and sociolinguistics to mothers.

### *Applying Discourse Analysis and Sociolinguistics to Mothers*

As a review, discourse analysis studies specific utterances in language that create/have meaning and sociolinguistics ties sociology to linguistic study in a way that accounts for influences of social relations and social factors on language (Hogan, 2011; Malmkjaer, 1991). Together, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics provide a framework for research into the language mothers use to talk about themselves, other mothers, and their experiences/perceptions of motherhood. Initially, my research questions were very broad, but after intense narrowing and re-focusing, this study will examine the following research questions in regards to language and mothers/motherhood.

### *Research Questions*

- 1) Why do mothers use self-deprecating language and narratives to communicate their experiences of motherhood?
- 2) How do mothers use connotative language (i.e. “perfect,” “inadequate,” and “shame”) to communicate their experiences of motherhood?

## **METHODS**

Upon IRB approval, this study performed discourse analysis on interview transcripts between real life mothers and myself. While undertaking this particular study focused on sociolinguistics and mothers I was simultaneously conducting a qualitative study that examines how the media communicates ideals of motherhood to real life mothers. After gaining informed consent from my participants, I conducted 10-12 semi-structured interviews with mothers gathered through non probability convenience sampling and snowball sampling. I combated the “observer’s paradox” by encouraging 30-60 minutes of semi-structured conversation with participants that I know personally in an effort to distract them from monitoring their speech which could render it unnatural (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 483).

Preliminary questions were asked in the interviews to determine age, occupation, race, socioeconomic status, number of children, sexual orientation, marital status, and an overview of their network of mothers. The open-ended interview questions yielded ample qualitative utterances of mothers talking about themselves, other mothers, and their experiences/perceptions of motherhood. The interview protocol can be found in the appendix below. When examining the data (transcripts) gathered from the interviews, I used thematic analysis described by Braun & Clarke (2006) as a method often used in qualitative research to identify, extract, and report themes and patterns. The method often goes deeper, though, and opens the door for interpretation on various aspects of the researched phenomena. This was an effective method to utilize on the numerous pages of transcribed interviews. Familiarizing myself with the data was achieved through several readings and re-readings and concentrated note taking/markings of utterances that are interesting and/or repeated.

Focusing on one research question (RQ) at a time, I began electronically coding for utterances in the transcripts that address each RQ by assigning each RQ a color and highlighting accordingly. I then organized these codes into electronic sections that seemed similar and used these sections to search for themes and subthemes within the content. I reviewed and refined the codes, searching for answers/insights to my research questions.

**Table 1.** Overview of Participants

	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Socioeconomic Status</i>	<i>Race</i>	<i>Number of Children</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Age</i>
A	Waitress/artist, stay at home mom for 20 years	Middle	White	4	Single (divorced)	48

B	High school teacher	Middle	White	4	Married	43
C	Teacher	Middle	White	2	Married	40
D	Professor	Middle/Upper	Asian-American	3	Married	46
E	Food safety coordinator/employee benefits manager	Middle	White	2	Married	48
F	Personal banker	Low/Middle	White	1	Single	27
G	Small business owner and RN	Middle	White	2	Single (divorced)	38
H	Stay at home mom	Upper	White	3	Married	48
I	Small business owner	Middle	Asian	2	Single	48

## RESULTS

*RQ1: Why do mothers use self-deprecating language and narratives to communicate their experiences of motherhood?*

### ***“Can kids play in dog kennels?”***

(Participant A, personal communication, 2023):

I realized after awhile that maybe people don't want to see the perfect parts like the vacations and what not on social media. Just because people are posting things that make it look like they are on vacation all the time or getting along all the time doesn't make it real. So I thought maybe people want to see the funny, unperfect parts... So I started to post funny parenting moments on Facebook like when my daughter crawled into our dog kennel. And this lady absolutely called me out and I felt like I was in so much trouble. I didn't understand because it's not like I was going to lock her in there [dog kennel] I mean come on... (lines 487-531).

### ***“Apparently there was a knife in the picture...”***

(Participant B, personal communication, 2023):

So when my daughter turned two I made this fire engine birthday cake from scratch and decorated it all cute. I sat her behind it and we were going to cut it, but I grabbed my phone and took a picture quick. I posted it to Facebook later and *apparently* there was a big knife in the picture (because we were going to cut it!) and I didn't realize this was a big deal, but people freaked out on Facebook like 'oh my god I can't believe you let your daughter play with knives' etc. etc. and I'm like holy shit seriously people I was standing right there what was she going to do, stab somebody?! (lines 492-504).

### ***“I'm the mom with the screaming kid...”***

(Participant C, personal communication, 2023):

I was always really worried because my kid has special needs and I was concerned about what other people would think. What am I going to do? I'm going to be *that* mom with the kid freaking out in the store... well it happened at a restaurant. He's having an absolute meltdown because we sat in at a table instead of a booth and I'm like okay so now we're going to sit on the floor in the middle of the restaurant and we're going to take deep breaths and we're going to calm down and I'm *not* going to get all agitated about what everyone else thinks because no one really cares. At the end of the day, he is him, I am me, and it is what it is. We're all going to figure it out (lines 399-411).

### ***“Mom, what's an orgasm?”***

(Participant D, personal communication, 2023):

So, one day I'm picking my kid up from school and she gets in and I'm like 'hey how was your day?' Good, good and she asks how my day was and then goes 'so mom, what's an orgasm?' And you have to act cool so I'm like yeah awesome question that I'm totally prepared to answer at 3 o'clock on a Tuesday... Being a mom is challenging and hard but it's often very funny so when I talk about it and interact with other moms I try to lead with the funny aspects. I don't try to foster or engage in any sort of competitiveness with other moms or any other woman for that matter. It's not in my nature so I lead with the funny stuff (lines 939-967).

*Self-deprecating Storytelling as a Coping Mechanism*

Humorous as they may be, it is my understanding that these narratives also function as a coping mechanism for the oddity and awkward nature of the situations described and as a coping mechanism for the prescribed ideals/expectations of motherhood. As stated in the literature review, “motherhood and childcare are ‘professionalized’ by experts, there are pervasive and popular ideas about motherhood, and mothers in various social circumstances experience motherhood differently” (Phoenix et al., 1991). The pressures placed upon mothers by society and social factors presents a uniquely difficult dynamic for mothers to navigate and operate within. Through self-deprecating storytelling, mothers can use humor to cope and relate to other mothers. This facilitates a sense of community and allows mothers to forge relationships. However, not all relationships are healthy and not all mothers have the privilege of using humor online and in other spaces as social factors and situations are easily affected by the judgment of outsiders.

Three out of the four participants mentioned have the privilege of “whiteness” and all of the participants mentioned have the privilege of a middle-high socioeconomic status. This is where the intersection of sociolinguistics and mothers’ narratives intersect. It’s valuable to consider how these stories might have changed or been different for a mom of low socioeconomic status or of a non-white racial identity. What if a poor mother living in low-income housing had posted a picture of her daughter in a dog kennel? What if a Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color (BIPOC) mother had posted a picture of her daughter next to a knife? By considering these varying social factors and social situations, we can examine how implicit biases can lead to ambivalent conclusions and opinions of mothers who may be from less privileged backgrounds.

*RQ2: How do mothers use connotative language (i.e. “perfect,” “inadequate,” and “shame”) to communicate their experiences of motherhood?*

The following tables display the utterances of specific connotative language during the interview process and their respective percentage of occurrence out of the nine interviews. For example, if the word “perfect” was used by all nine mothers, the table will display 100%. Similarly, if the word “infallible” was used by one mother, the table will display 11%.

**Table 2.** Utterances of Perfect

“Perfect mom”	“Infallible”	“Pinterest mom”	“Does it all”	“Supermom”
100%	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	66.7%

**Table 3.** Utterances of Inadequate

“Failure”	“Inferior”	“Hot mess”	“Couldn’t be like them”	“I’m not enough”
22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%

**Table 4.** Utterances of Shame

“Shame”	“Guilt”
33.3%	44.4%

*Highly Connotative Language*

Every single one of my participants used the word(s) “perfect” and/or “perfect mom” during their interview. It was valuable to realize through my participants’ perceptions and experiences that this idealized “perfect mom” didn’t just mean a perfect mom. This meant a perfect house, a perfect body, a perfect husband, and yes, perfect kids. When asked about a memorable portrayal from the media a participant noted that “you [mom] should always be available, always be patient, always be serving home cooked organic meals, always be engaging them [kids] in some kind of creative activity... it’s really intensive perfect mothering.” Another participant noted the intensity of parenting magazines when she said “they [parenting magazines/experts] say if you want your kids to be happy, healthy, and smart then you have to do *exactly* this...” What’s “this” a mom might ask? Perfection. The ideal/expectation of perfection is undeniably erosive to mothers’ lived experiences especially when “perfect” holds associations and implications that expand far beyond the literal meaning of the word. One’s connotative understanding of “perfect” depends on their culture, experiences, values and beliefs and directly relates to sociolinguistics. “Connotation refers to a meaning that is implied by a word apart from the thing which it describes explicitly and connotative words carry cultural and emotional associations or meanings in addition to their denotative meanings” (LibreTexts, 2019). In the case of “perfect,” a manifold of implications are manifested and created. The word “perfect” is unique because connotations are typically positive or negative, but the verbiage and

context surrounding “perfect” in my interviews often suggested a range of emotional inferences. Each mom consistently used “perfect” or “perfect mom” to suggest the pervasive archetype of supermom who can do it all. However, the emotional reactions to “perfect” existed on a spectrum. Most of the mothers demonstrated a clear objection to the perfect notion and therefore the connotation appeared more negative. Some of the mothers, though, spoke admirably about the perfect notion which manifested in a positive connotation.

The complexity and range of connotative reactions can also be observed through the mothers use of “inadequate” and “shame.” Similarly to “perfect,” mothers use of these words appear to be connotatively different depending on each individual mothers’ experiences, culture, and beliefs. The use of connotative language is pertinent to the study of sociolinguistics.

My research into motherhood and the language mothers use is intended to widen the scope of sociolinguistic study and to provide attention to the complexity and range of mothers language. After completing the interviews and studying the transcripts, the connection to English studies and sociolinguistics was clear as were the personal implications of this research. As a woman who has always been open about wanting children, this research certainly affects the ways in which I view and understand the enterprise of motherhood. There is a heavily engrained archetype of motherhood which exists at the cultural level and infiltrates the lives of individual mothers. Dominant narratives of motherhood are pervasive and often hinder mothers’ ability to succeed in the eyes of society. Knowing this and accepting this, though, is a way to dislodge the “supermom” archetype. It is my belief that my research into motherhood and the first-hand experience from my participants will improve my ability to communicate with and understand mothers, and increase my aptitude for mother work in the future.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to perform discourse analysis on interview transcripts using a sociolinguistic lens. From this discourse analysis, I aimed to answer two research questions: Why do mothers use self-deprecating language and narratives to communicate their experiences of motherhood and how do mothers use connotative language (i.e. “perfect,” “inadequate,” and “shame”) to communicate their experiences of motherhood? Each research question yielded valuable data and analysis. Self-deprecating narratives seemed to be used as a coping mechanism for the oddity and awkward nature of the situations described but also as a coping mechanism for the pervasive archetype of the “perfect mother” that is prescribed to mothers in real life. Mothers also used language during the interviews that manifested in a range of connotations depending on the mothers’ culture, experiences, and beliefs. These findings are consistent with sociolinguistic variables which are marked by social and situational differences that “reveal how numerous features of language provide clues to (or indices of) the social situation, activities, participants identities, and relationships” (Hogan, 2011, p. 264).

Identities, specifically mothers’, can be examined using Goffman’s (1955) concept of face and relationships between mothers can be examined using politeness theory coined by Brown & Levinson (1987). Concept of face theory assumes that people ultimately want to be viewed in a positive light while politeness theory assumes that individuals also want to appeal to other peoples’ positive face by building their self-esteem and making them feel good (Goffman, 1955; Brown & Levinson, 1987). It is my belief that the mothers in this study used self-deprecating narratives of motherhood to make light of potentially embarrassing stories that could be harmful to their image. Simultaneously, these mothers are forging relationships with other mothers who may hear these stories and are supporting their positive face by making them feel good/not alone if they have had similar uncomfortable experiences.

In this way, language and narratives are used to form identity, build relationships, and create meaning. “Emergent social meaning is an intrinsic quality of interaction and people’s social identities are multiple and dynamic” (Malmkjaer, 1991, p. 116). The complexity and range of social meaning and social identity is why sociolinguistic analysis is necessary when conducting discourse analysis.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Future discourse analysis and research could always benefit from a sociolinguistic perspective as the intersection of socioeconomic factors and language is largely prevalent and important. I also believe the concept of face/face theory (Goffman, 1955) presents a rich area for exploration into motherhood and mothers’ identities. The identity of mothers and their development through narratives is compelling and deserves future academic attention. Additionally, the intersection of politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and women who choose not to be mothers would be an interesting avenue to explore. The overwhelmingly negative connotation surrounding women who choose not to bear children and the knowledge behind politeness theory are somewhat contradictory and therefore provoke questions that merit exploration.

Although there may not be as pervasive of an archetype for fathers and fatherhood as there is for mothers and motherhood, I believe future research involving fathers and the language/narratives surrounding fatherhood presents an abundant source of under-explored knowledge. Overall, the research conducted for my particular study represents a relatively small fraction of the time and energy required to understand, at depth, the intersection of discourse analysis, sociolinguistics and any specific population. However, it does constitute an intentional investment into the language of mothers and is a project I take pride in conducting and completing.

## LIMITATIONS

It was my intention to interview 10-12 participants for this study. My 10th participant was unable to find the time for a 30-60 minute interview and since I had reached data saturation after nine interviews I decided to respect the limitations of this working mother and move onto the analysis phase of my research with the data collected from nine interviews. All of the synchronous interviews took place over Zoom while two asynchronous interviews were conducted through written questions and written responses. This manifested in relatively minor limitations for this study, but is worth addressing nonetheless.

Ideally, the participants would have also represented a range of ethnic backgrounds and would have included members of the LGBTQ+ community. Due to my nonprobability convenience sampling and network recruitment, I was unable to access any members of the LGBTQ+ community, but I was able to interview two Asian-American mothers for this study which resulted in rich and relevant data that addressed various cultural factors.

## CONCLUSION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As stated in the literature review, “the existence of language permits human beings to behave with a degree of purposefulness, perseverance, and consistency” and allows for the creation of meaning among communities (Black, 1962, p. 4). Motherhood, as a linguistic community, carries a range of meanings and implications for women who are mothers and women who intend to become mothers. Instances of highly connotative language and self-deprecating language in this study suggest that the way mothers talk about themselves, other mothers, and their experiences with motherhood is particularly complex and distinct. Sociolinguistic analysis of the language choices mothers make can provide insight into the compelling art of mothering especially in the current cultural context where motherhood is heavily influenced by socioeconomic factors and pervasive media narratives.

I want to express my sincere gratitude and admiration for the nine mothers I interviewed for this study and for the strong mother figures in my own life that inspired this project. I see you, I hear you, I’m learning from you.

Along with my participants and my inspirations, I’d like to thank Dr. Darci Thoun for her guidance and support through this semester.

And to my momma, I love you #BME.

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## APPENDIX

### *Preliminary Interview Questions*

- A. Please answer the following demographic questions:
- a. Age
  - b. Occupation
  - c. Race
  - d. Socioeconomic status (social class, tax bracket)
  - e. Number of children
  - f. Sexual orientation
  - g. Marital status
  - h. Please give me some insight into your mother network/circle of moms

### *Interview Questions*

1. How did you learn to mother/be a mom?
2. How often do you engage with forms of media such as TV, magazines, streaming services, etc.?  
a. Why do you use these forms of media?
3. How often do you engage with forms of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, etc.?  
a. Why do you use these forms of social media?
4. When engaging with these differing forms of media, how do you see motherhood being portrayed?  
a. What are some memorable portrayals?
5. In your opinion, what kinds of ideals/expectations are communicated about motherhood through the media?  
a. What are some memorable ideals/expectations?
6. When you see these ideals/expectations about motherhood in the media, how do they affect the way you see yourself as mother?  
a. ... how do they affect the way you enact your mothering in real life?  
b. ... how do they affect the way you see other women as mothers?  
c. ... how do they affect the way you engage with other mothers on social media?  
d. ... how do they affect the way you engage with women who are mothers in your personal life?  
e. Overall, how “accurate” are these ideals/expectations? (If you need clarification about what I mean... Are they attainable? Do you think they are “fair?”)
7. Clearing House Questions  
a. Is there anything you’d like to expand on?  
b. Is there anything else you’d like to bring up?  
c. Is there anything you have any questions about?  
d. Do you know any other mothers who may be interested in participating in this study?
8. Thank you! I so appreciate your time and insight☺