



Mothers Online. The Content Analysis of the Mothers from Csík (Ciuc) Facebook Group

Orsolya Gergely

PhD, lecturer, Sapiientia University, Department of Social Sciences,
530104 Miercurea Ciuc, Libertății 1.
gergelyorsolya@sapiientia.siculorum.ro

Abstract. In this paper, a closed Facebook group will be presented and analysed, which has more than 2,000 members at this moment. This is a formal community on Facebook whose members do not know each other in a lot of cases; every woman can become a member who has a child and lives in Miercurea Ciuc (Romania, Harghita County) or in its closer surroundings. Since 2009, in Miercurea Ciuc, there was created a Yahoo! Groups platform for information sharing: a communication platform to formulate questions and get answers, for discussing topics, for forming smaller groups around several topics. After more than one year, a Facebook platform as well was associated to this mailing list since Facebook provided an easier way for mothers to get involved in a discussion, to make comments, or to add an opinion. This paper's aim is to analyse this Facebook profile along some main aspects. There will be analysed the main topics of the posts, the most frequent topics, the most popular topics (with a big number of comments, likes), the events of the group, the main opinion leaders, and there will be drawn a typology of the members as well as the Facebook group's impact on the mailing list will be discussed. We will use content analysis, but there will be interviews with the group administrator and moderator, and some users as well.

Keywords: virtual group, online community, social media user, peer support, Facebook, Internet

1. Introduction

In the last decade, Facebook – we may say the most popular social network service – has become a basic communication channel for everybody, without regard to age, educational level, residence, or income. Facebook has become a tool for social interaction and, at the same time, it is also a mirror of social interaction (Debatin et al., 2009). Facebook has deeply penetrated the everyday life and routine of its users (Debatin et al., 2009), it is reshaping communication habits, and it re-

evaluates a lot of personal and community values (Ulmanu, 2013). Its presence in our everyday life is obvious. By analysing more and more aspects of the virtual behaviour, we can better understand the opportunities and threats connected to it.

The online world and online presence creates an opportunity for connection through a new kind of behaviour, a “cyborg” one. This new way of connection ensures the anonymity – the cyborg behaviour appears as an opportunity of liberation in common social knowledge (Papacharissi, 2009). Since the virtual world has no boundaries, even in an Eastern European small, semi-rural region like Miercurea Ciuc and its surroundings, the virtual presence in a social networking site and the membership in virtual groups is very important (Gergely, 2010).

Social media’s immense success can be justified by the “capability of transposing everyday life dynamics on online platforms in a very intuitive way” (Martin-Borregon et al., 2014: 1). This is a necessity that originates from the collective behaviour of the mass. People tend to organize communities because of various reasons: similarity, local proximity, common interest, common conflict, or even just the need for a definition of an identity, the need to be separated by the rest of the population (Martin-Borregon et al., 2014: 1).

Increasingly, the mothers are augmenting their media diets with content from their peers. Whether it is in person or on blogs and sites such as Facebook, mothers are big on communicating with other mothers (Miley–Mack, 2009) – and not just about parenting but about other topics as well, for example literature, politics, health, education, fashion, cooking, housekeeping, sports, etc. As somebody formulated in an interview: “I get to be all of who I am at this group. I don’t have to just be a wife, I don’t have to just be the mom” (Miley–Mack, 2009: 21). Online communities have become a convenient means to exchange information and, at the same time, to support with people in similar circumstances (Bender et al., 2011). And having a small kid, being on maternity leave, being a mom is definitely a “similar circumstance”.

The studies show that mothers are “heavily engaged” in social media (Duggan et al., 2015: 2). Yet, there are a small number of recent studies that are beginning to shed light on mothers’ social networking use (Morris, 2014: 2). Social media is considered by many people as a source of “useful information and as one parenting tool among a collection of options” (Duggan et al., 2015: 3). It is used as a parenting resource slightly more often by mothers than by fathers (Duggan et al., 2015: 3). A support via networks and the role of women is highly important in both giving and receiving it (Duggan et al., 2015: 2). Analyses show that social media is very important as informational and emotional support as well. Mainly the (Facebook) groups piqued the interest of the social science and the medical research. These are almost exclusively some kind of disease-related groups: women with PCOS syndrome (Holbrey–Coulson, 2014), women with breast cancer (Bender et al., 2011), etc.

This paper's purpose is to analyse a large Facebook group of mothers from Miercurea Ciuc, Romania, who are communicating with each other on this online platform. This group has more than two thousand mothers, who live in a smaller rural region of Transylvania, Romania. It was founded by a non-governmental, non-profit organization dedicated to mothers, which is one of the first such organizations in Romania.¹ We want to get a closer look at what happens in such an online community, in a Facebook group like this. What kind of topics appear in such groups? What about the motivations of the members to be here and to be active (to post, to like, or to comment)? Which are the popular topics? What kind of online attitudes do these mothers have? Why can such a group be useful for women who are raising one or more children? Can it be defined as a support group?

About the Group

The “Csíki Anyák” (Mothers from Ciuc) Facebook group was created in 2011. This has a short prehistory, which originates from on-line events as well. In 2011, a civil organization was founded in Miercurea Ciuc, Harghita County, named “The Association of Mothers from Csík”.² The main goal of the Association is to gather mothers from this town (and its vicinity) or mothers who are from this region by birth but do not live here anymore – to gather these mothers in one (virtual) place and to represent their interests and well-being; to organize quality programmes for them and their families. The Association was founded thanks to an on-line initiative and community on the 18th of October 2009 as an informal group, based on the idea of a mother on maternity leave (Endes–Ábrahám, 2012).

The original idea was that there had been a need for an online platform for mothers on maternity leave since they are mostly on the edge of social life, of the cultural and social programmes and social interaction until the child turns 2 years of age.³ In Romania, but mainly in smaller towns such as Miercurea Ciuc, there are only very few cultural programmes which can be attended together with children. So, if someone has no other possibility for baby-sitting, they cannot take part in the 90% of the cultural and social programmes (concerts, book launches, exhibitions, openings, theatre performances, etc.). Since in the majority of the restaurants and coffee shops smoking is not prohibited, mothers with small children cannot go even to cultural happenings organized in a less formal manner in such places. They are quite isolated from social events, from a lot of cultural and entertainment programmes; they can participate only in programmes

1 The first analysis of this research was published in a conference volume with the same title: *Mothers Online* (see: Gergely, 2015).

2 The web page of the Association: www.csikianyak.ma.

3 Since the early nineties, in Romania, childcare leave is two years and in the case of children with serious physical or mental illness is three years (Law: 61/1993).

dedicated to parents of small children, the number of which is very small in the town. Because of this, there was a real need for having a platform, a different one from the playground, where the mothers can regularly discuss common things, share their problems, have the opportunity to exchange experience, inform each other of events and happenings of common interest. Along this concept was created a mailing list on the Yahoo! Group platform for mothers from the Ciuc Basin or for mothers who are living elsewhere but are originally from this region. The Yahoo! Group mailing list seemed to fulfil this need. At first, the creator of the mailing list – who is also the administrator of it – sent out invitations to join only to friends and acquaintances, but from the initial, relatively close circle (only friends), the group has become an 800-member mailing list. After only six months, the mailing list had 230 members, after 12 months 350 mothers were participating in the common correspondence, and 24 months later there were 601 registered members. Only mothers can log in to this mailing list, nobody can get into the group automatically. Along with these correspondences and conversations, a formal association was founded as well in 2011. Since then, this association has had major community-civil activities (Endes–Ábrahám, 2012).

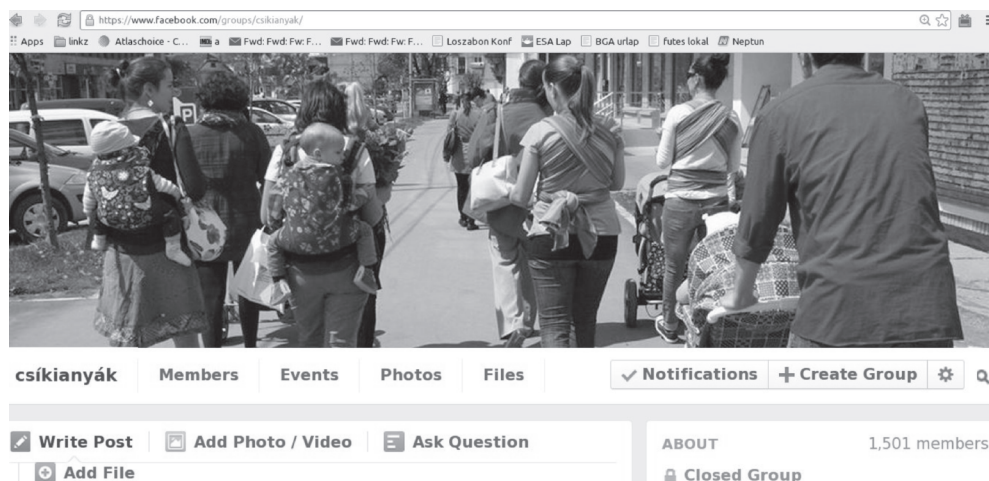


Figure 1. The cover photo of the group⁴

With the expansion of Facebook, it seemed that the Yahoo! Group mailing list was becoming less active since more and more people preferred to communicate on Facebook. As we know, groups can be more easily managed on Facebook (Ulmanu, 2013). Therefore, the Association launched a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/csikianyak/>), which was primarily picturing the

4 The current cover photo of the group in May 2015. The source of all the photos in this paper: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/csikianyak/>.

mailing list version of Facebook, for a faster and wider variety of posts. This paper is aimed at analysing this group's Facebook profile.

"By the virtual world's emerging, the given opportunities of the social media also increased, they have become increasingly popular in the online solutions, immediate responses. The efficiency was an important argument in opening this channel" – 37, mother of two, urban, university, creator of the mailing list, and President of the Association.⁵

The "csikianyak" Facebook group is a closed group. According to the administrator and moderator of the group, much more people would prefer to get acceptance into the group, but there is a quasi-severe moderation policy, and those who do not have children cannot enter the group. Those who repeatedly violate the rules of participation are banned from the list.

The description of the Facebook group reads as follows:

This is the group of the@yahoogroups.com e-mail list. The e-mail list is dedicated to Hungarian mothers living in the Csík (Ciuc) region and to mothers who are from this region but are living elsewhere, to those mothers who are open to public discussions, to different programmes for children and mothers, to give and accept advice, and to be informed. It is strictly forbidden to sell on this list.

(short description of the group⁶ – source: the Facebook group's main page)

We have to point out that this group is a heterogeneous group: the members are mothers and live or are originally from Miercurea Ciuc and its surroundings. These two are the only general characteristics; all the others can be different among the members. Different numbers of children: here are mothers with small or bigger, maybe already adult children, even pregnant women without children. Different ages of children: mothers with little children (aged under 3) but also mothers who already have teenagers or even adult kids. Different levels of education: women with medium and higher education.⁷ Different labour market

5 Part of an interview with a 37-year-old mother of two children, living in urban area, with a university degree, creator of the Yahoo! Group, President of the Association. We will use this kind of formal notation for the interview parts.

6 The number of the members: more than 1,500 in May 2015. In September 2015, this number is over 2,000.

7 Unfortunately, we do not have exact statistical data regarding the members' educational level or other demographic data. But we can make some very close assumptions regarding the educational level of the members. According to the census in 2011, in the female Hungarian (over the age of 10) population of Romania, 10.62% have higher education degree, 40.5 medium, and 48.88 basic. But in Harghita County: in the total population aged between 20 and 49, 15.24% have higher education level, 61.85% medium, and only 22.91 basic. In the female population of the town of Miercurea Ciuc (over the age of 10), there is an even higher proportion of the persons with university degree: 24%. The proportion of the medium educational level is 43.89 and the proportion of the basic level: 32.11 (source of the data: [www.insse.ro, http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/](http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/)). Since in this Facebook group there are mainly mothers aged between 20 and 50, we think that at least 35% have university degree and at least 62% have

positions: women who are on maternal leave or who are working in full-time or in a part-time job, women who are living in a small village and conduct a rural life style; others, who are living in the town and have an urban lifestyle but also a lot of other women who are living in villages but have a more urban lifestyle (kids are going to school in the town, the parents are working in the town, they are not involved in agriculture, they are originally not from that village or they keep very little contact with the village); and the opposite of this: those living in the town but actually living a more accentuated rural lifestyle: living together with the husband's parents (patrilocality), doing agriculture, the organization of the everyday life is very influenced by the relatives, neighbours.

In the group, there are women who are very up-to-date regarding modern child-raising trends and practices and whose child-raising practice is very strongly influenced by the parents, grandparents, and cultural mentality. There are women who have elaborated skills regarding Internet use and also practice in reading in English language, in finding and reading studies on several topics, on the one hand, and women who do not have such skills and routine, on the other hand. These make this group a very chaotic platform, where sensitivity is higher, the beliefs are strong and very often undisputed. All these make the research more justified, with a lot of questions needed to be answered. This study can only mark some paths along which this kind of group and its virtual presence can be described and interpreted.

Can we put the question: what brings together all these women? According to the founder of the group: the need to communicate among themselves, even if a big part of the group only "listen" (watch and read). The need to be among other women, to share the same problems, fears, and experiences. To learn from each other. And a lot of other things as well. This study may reveal some of them.

A significant number of the members joined the group in the first half of the year. There appear 7-8 posts daily, the monthly average being from 180 to 250. The group moderation is particularly sensitive to the fact that only women can enter the group, and only women who have children, of course.

The condition of enrolment is the residency or place of birth in the Ciuc basin (as far as it can be verified), or at least having a bond to the place. Because of the Facebook settings, we cannot always see everything about the persons who want to join the group; so, those who cannot be easily identified are put on a waiting list while we are looking for mutual acquaintances. (...) The individual moderation is not possible (as it can be done on a mailing list. So, if someone does not behave in an appropriate way (she is trying to make business, defames, is insulting, is a panic-monger), she will get a warning

a high school or other medium level educational degree, and only a very few do not have even a high school degree (below 2-3%). So, we do not take into consideration in a more detailed way those few persons (if any!).

message in private, after which she will be removed from the list. There are two moderators: I can deal with this mostly in the evening, while the other moderator is trying to be on guard during the day – 37, mother of two, urban, university, creator of the Yahoo! Groups, President of the Association.

2. Methodology

The main purpose of the analysis was to observe and describe this virtual platform with its specific characteristics regarding its function, members, and the members' activity. Our research questions can be grouped in four categories.

1. *What is this group?* What are the characteristics of this platform? How does it function? What are the rules? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this virtual community?

2. *Who are in this group?* Who are the main actors of this group? What types of members can we identify? Can smaller groups be found inside the group? Along what demographic parameters can we describe the active members?

3. *What happens in this group?* How often does a post appear in the group? What are these posts about? What kind of topics appear in this group? What are the main issues which are important, popular, that raise interest?

4. *Why can be this group maintained?* What are the motivations of the founders and administrators? What are the motivations of the members? How can we explain the necessities of this group? Can it be defined as a support group?

Because of the complexity of the formulated questions and because it is an exploratory–descriptive research, we used several qualitative methods in the data collection.

I. First of all, we used the content analysis of the Facebook profile and timeline to be able to get a picture about the group and what happens inside the group. Since taking a sample is hard enough in a Facebook timeline, we chose a month (May 2014) and analysed all the posts from 1 May 00.01 a.m. to 31 May 23.59. p.m. We made a copy of all posts, and along these posts we created a database. Along these data, we managed to produce statistical data regarding the number of posts, likes, comments, type and topic of the post, photos and contents shared inside the group during this period. *II.* Along with the content analysis, we conducted semi-structural interviews with 13 members, who have been members of the group for at least half a year. In the selection of the interviewed mothers, a few parameters were taken into consideration: type of settlement, age, age of the child(ren), level of education, and labour market status. So, we conducted interviews with mothers⁸, who:

- are living in the town (8 persons) and in villages as well;

8 We chose the mothers for the interview with the help of the Association.

- have children under 3 years (8) and mothers with children between 3 and 10 years;
- have one child (4) and more than one child;
- are in their twenties (3) as well as thirties;
- have medium (4) as well as higher education level;
- are stay-at-home⁹ (5) or full-time working mothers.

There was a multiple purpose for the interviews: first, to be able to identify the main motives of being a group member; second, to be more successful in outlining a member typology, and thirdly to get a more detailed picture about the group's importance and function.

III. At the end, we have to mention participant observation too – since the author has been member of the group even before the analysis for more than one and a half year. Thanks to this “background knowledge”, the examples used for emphasizing and illustrating some facts or characteristics can be richer and more varied.¹⁰

At the same time, this content analysis was augmented with 13 open-ended, narrative, face-to-face interviews during May 2014. Among others, an interview was taken with the founder of the mailing group and association as well. During the analysis, we will present some interview excerpts which genuinely illustrate the statements.

In the selection of the interviewed mothers, a few points of view were taken into consideration: they had to be mothers living in urban and rural settlements as well, with smaller and older children, with one or more children, mothers in their twenties and thirties as well, and mothers with a medium and a higher education level as well. The interviews with the users bring out the usefulness and functionality of the group but also some of its shortcomings.

3. Content Analysis

Over the past three years, a lot of posts, shares, comments, invitations, and programme recommendations have appeared on the group's timeline. Their number is immeasurably great; their review – as we mentioned earlier – is not easy, moreover, it is almost impossible. Thus, we aimed to analyse the posts from May 2014.

First of all, we created a database in which we recorded the date of the posts, the type of posts, the topic of the posts, how many likes or comments arrived to the posts, and were there any photos or not. As a result, we can say the following.

⁹ On maternity leave.

¹⁰ It is important to note that the author of this paper is also a member of the group since October 2013, and since then she has been monitoring the group also with a researcher's eyes. The analysis, however, can focus only on a shorter period of time.

3.1 Overall View

Throughout one month, 241 posts were published in the group. The daily average is 7-8 posts. On an ordinary (working day), this rate is a bit higher (8-9 times is posted something in a weekday). In the weekend, the activity is a little bit lower (throughout May, there appeared only 5-6 posts on Saturdays and Sundays).

Almost every third post had an attached photo (500 photos in total). The photos are seldom individual ones but usually posters, programme calls, article illustrations.

1,724 is the total number of likes in May and 1,081 the number of all comments. In many cases, there are only a few likes or there is none, especially in the case of questions; but, at the same time, there are posts with a lot of likes. The most popular one garnered 93 likes, and there is a post to which arrived 66 comments (see *Table 1*).

Table 1. The cumulative table of the statistics of one month

Number of posts	241
Number of likes	1,724
Number of comments	1,081
Number of shared photos	500
Monthly average	7.77
Daily average – weekday	8.68
Daily average – weekend	5.55
Minimum number of daily posts	1
Maximum number of daily posts	15
Maximum number of likes/posts	93
Maximum number of comments/posts	66

3.2 Types of the Posts

We organized post variety into eight categories: questions, promotion of a programme, photo sharing, content sharing, information sharing, attention drawing, lost/found, and other (see *Table 2*).

Table 2. The cumulative statistics of the posts' type

1.	Question	138
2.	Promotion of a programme	25
3.	Photo sharing	21
4.	Content sharing (online article, videos)	22
5.	Information sharing	17
6.	Attention drawing	8

7.	Lost/Found	3
8.	Other	7
Total		241

a) Questions

The most common post type you can read in the group is the question. These questions are very different, but the major part of the group members usually require information. They do not share information, they only ask and are waiting for a very fast answer with a piece of useful information. These questions are usually very concrete: they ask for a very practical piece of information. For example, where is the medical consulting room of a specialist, when is it open, what is the telephone number of a paediatrician? (see *Figure 3*).



Figure 2. Asking for a paediatrician's (Dr. Bokor's) changed programme

Very often, with the posts, the mothers would like to solve a household problem, and are looking for a telephone number of a painter, carpenter, mason, washing machine repairmen, etc. With the contact information, they want to get references as well, they would like to know about positive and/or negative experiences (see *Figure 3*).



Figure 3. Looking for an upholsterer

A smaller group of the questions refers to household duties, housewife activities: the mothers ask for information, advice, hints about cooking, stain removal, buying fresh food, etc. (see *Figure 4*).

The issue of the holiday – mainly before the summer – often pops up. Mothers are searching for cheaper, better, baby- and child-friendly holiday spots and tips. They even ask for administrative issues such as medical insurance, passports,

luggage policy in case of flights, especially in case of travelling abroad – useful information is needed (see *Figure 5*).



Figure 4. Looking for fresh trout



Figure 5. Asking for experiences about air travel with babies¹¹

Simulated questions

Rarely, but there can be found questions which are not really questions – they are simulated or non-questions. In the statistical analysis, we did not separate this from the whole question group, but here we will make a quick remark. We could encounter posts in which the mother is not really waiting for an answer but for a confirmation, a validation. Since one and a half thousand mothers are reading the post, the intention of the mother who formulated the question is justifiable: she hopes to receive a confirmation on a decision she has already taken, but one she has second thoughts about or she saw a “bad” example, and she wants to be calm that she is doing the right thing. For example, a mother asks if she should go to the paediatric emergency because her child has fever. She also mentions what treatment methods she has used so far. She formulates the question, but she is not expecting a yes or no answer but a reassurance that everything is fine, no need to even see a doctor. We can call these non-questions since these questions do not need an objective information but a positive feedback.

Another example: a mother asks about seating her little baby. “Can I sit her with the help of some pillow? She is 3 months old and she wants to see more”. Answers: the majority of the answers are about orthopaedic warnings: only when the baby can sit alone, only when the baby starts to crawl, to walk, etc. Before these, it is highly forbidden according to orthopaedists and physiotherapists. After a lot of comments, she writes a comment as well: “Thank you all for your

¹¹ In English: Dear mothers! I ask those of you, who already have travelled by plane with a baby. Can I take the baby carriage onboard or I have to drop it off with the other luggage?

answers. I got a lot of private messages too, and a lot of mothers said that they had done the same and their child was healthy. We do not have to be afraid of anything and to accept everything what the doctors say.”

We can conclude that the mother was not curious about the orthopaedist's warning. She already decided to sit her baby even before she put the question. She wants someone to tell her: it is all right. The real question is not to sit the baby or not, but to have somebody calm her that nothing wrong will happen. And from a group with more than 1,500 members, there will be always somebody on the same opinion.

b) Programme Recommendations, Event Promotions

We can often find posts recommending a programme, promoting events. Especially those posts are popular which publicize programmes for children or mothers. Every ninth or tenth post is like this.



Figure 6. Programme for Children' Day¹²

In this post category, the most active mothers are those who are active members of the Association; mostly they are the ones to draw general attention to a programme and to give information about an event. Most often they promote the events of the Association of Mothers from Ciuc. In May, regarding the Mothers' Week event (organized by the Association), there appeared more posts about some parts of the event. Some examples are: a photo exhibition from the pictures of the small children, the music play school, the puppet show, etc. But, at the same time, there are programme recommendations in plenty of other topics: monthly hospital visits, music programmes for small children, sports activities (gymnastics

12 It is a cover photo of an event dedicated to children for children's day. "Harvív" is the water supply company of the region.

for pregnant women, zumba, gymnastics for one- and two-year old children, baby swimming), open day at a local institution (nursery, school, police, fire department, public services), which could be interesting for children and useful for parents. For example, in a post, a mother draws attention to a children's day-time activity at "Harváz", the water supply company of the region (see *Figure 6*).

To this kind of posts, there is usually a photo attached, which is often the poster or the cover photo of the programme's Facebook event.

c) Photo Sharing

The most common type of sharing is photo sharing – photos with texts often in English language. These photos are nice or funny, bring irony or melt. In general, these are current photos which are circulating on Facebook, and mothers share it on the group's timeline if they think that other mothers might be interested in them. In the case of photo sharing, we can say that the idea, the purpose of it is mainly that "I smile, so I share it, so you can smile as well". In other cases, the post wants to make a statement along a value, which is important for the person posting but for the Association as well.

The Association is dedicated to attachment parenting and breast-feeding as well. These are very important concepts in organizing the Association's programmes and in the Facebook group as well. Therefore, it happens quite often that we can find a lot of nice examples for this (see *Figure 7*).



Figure 7. Photo sharing 1. "Breast-feeding"¹³

13 In English: The little Mercedes cars are suckling :)

Similarly, attachment parenting also appears as a community value, and because of this we can see many content sharings and photos with this topic (see *Figure 8*).



Figure 8. Photo sharing 2. Attachment parenting

There are several topics, such as undisturbed birth, minimal or zero medical intervention during birth, mother and baby being immediately together after birth, which cannot be fully discussed neither on the Facebook group or Yahoo group nor during the events or personal meetings. Although compared to the national level, in Miercurea-Ciuc, huge improvements have been made in terms of hospital births, the mothers still think that every mother should prepare more consciously for the process of giving birth. Articles and photos are shared on a weekly basis on this topic.

d) Content Sharing

Almost every tenth sharing wants to draw the mothers' attention to some kind of content. It is very common that the mothers want to draw attention to an article published in a local, national, or Hungarian newspaper, and they share it because they hope others will read it and learn from it. Unlike the photos, the shared texts are mostly written in Hungarian. This can be explained by the language barrier, as the short texts next to a photo can be more easily understood – even by those who do not speak a given foreign language properly – than longer and more complex texts.

Examples of article topics: articles from the domain of child psychology (ex.: Why do toddlers bite? Why do toddlers defy their parents?), articles giving health

advice: for example, infant first aid for choking, removing leeches and treating their bites, or the evergreen topic of vaccination, which reappears as a topic every now and then, creating a huge storm among the mothers.¹⁴ Babywearing and childbirth are also topics which reappear very often.

e) Information Sharing

The mothers also feel obliged to represent interests that might be important to other mothers in a similar situation to theirs or that might be important to the community. This is why they share useful information about registration to kindergarten, administrative problems regarding childcare fees, free trainings, or when the childcare fee should be transferred to personal accounts (see *Figure 9*).

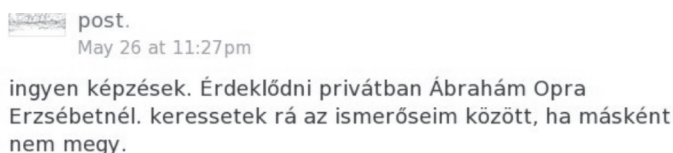


Figure 9. Information sharing¹⁵

f) Attention Drawing

There are posts which would like to draw attention to something immediate, such as a change of programme (child dance is cancelled), a TV or radio programme which is just on (see the example from below), a deadline for the submission of tenders, encouraging for voting online (for a local female business), or changes in the consulting hours of a given doctor. A post which could be a good example for this was written on a Wednesday, around noon, and it informs the mothers that Sándor Bálint, a well-known gynaecologist-obstetrician, an excellent representative of undisturbed birth, who has given several lectures in Miercurea-Ciuc and who is really popular among the mothers from Ciuc, is on air on the Kossuth Radio (see *Figure 10*).

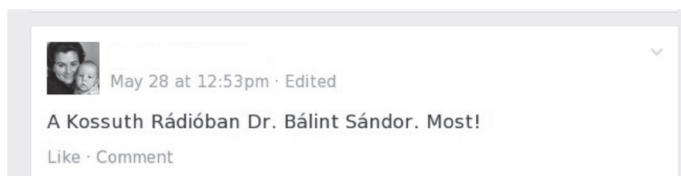


Figure 10. Attention drawing¹⁶

¹⁴ The Association does its best to remain impartial in the issue of vaccination. Usually, the discussions degenerate into ugly personal remarks and then the moderator has to interrupt the conversation and kindly ask the participants to continue the discussion in private.

¹⁵ It is a post about free trainings aiming at the integration and reintegration of vulnerable groups on the job market, dedicated to people without a stable job or to those who would like to change profession.

¹⁶ In English: Dr Sándor Bálint on Kossuth Radio. Now!

3.3. Topics of the posts

The topics are quite varied whether we talk about questions, article sharing, or information sharing. Analysing the posts from May, we distinguished the following topic categories: (1) programmes for children, (2) useful information and contacts, (3) health problems, (4) household, (5) dress, shoes, articles for children, (6) programmes for mothers, (7) giving birth, breast-feeding, (8) health-related conservation, prevention, (9) cosmetology, (10) administrative problems, (11) child-rearing leave administration, (12) attachment parenting, carrying, (13) the life of a mother, (14) articles for women, (15) Association of the Mothers from Csík (Ciuc), and (16) other (see *Table 3*).

Table 3. Topics of the post

1.	Programmes for children	27
2.	Useful information, contacts	27
3.	Health problems	21
4.	Household	20
5.	Dress, shoes, articles for children	20
6.	Programmes for mothers	17
7.	Giving birth, breast-feeding	16
8.	Health conservation, prevention	17
9.	Cosmetology	10
10.	Administrative problems	9
11.	Child-rearing leave administration	8
12.	Attachment parenting, carrying	7
13.	Life of a mother	7
14.	Articles for women	4
15.	Association of the mothers from Csík	3
16.	Other	28
Total		241

Trying to group the posts according to different topics, it has become obvious again that almost all of the topics are related to parenting. The most common topics are those concerning infant illnesses and their treatments. In the category of useful information, we listed posts which require information regarding the consulting hours of a paediatrician, hospital night duties or the consulting hours of a consultant, where children can be taken as well.

The topic of kids' shoes, clothes, or toys is present in every twelfth post (8.3%), whereas the topic of mothers' shoes and clothes is only present in four posts (1.6%).

a) Popularity

We also wanted to see which topics are the most popular, which are those topics, issues, questions which generate the most likes and comments to see which are the mainstream topics and issues for the mothers from Ciuc. In the case of content (photo or article) sharing, there are mostly likes and almost no comments; in the case of questions, however, there are more comments and less likes. There are *important topics*, *less important topics*, and *problematic (scandalous) topics*. a. "Less important topic" does not mean that this topic is not important for the mothers, but that this kind of topic is not so popular based on the number of likes and comments. Some examples for these kinds of topics: borrowing traditional folk costumes, IKEA-related questions, domestic or international package delivering, etc. Before major holidays, it happens that the mothers would like to borrow traditional folk costumes for their children, for themselves, or for a relative. However, only a few have traditional folk costumes, so, obviously, there are no public offerings to these requests. It might happen that they write private messages, but, obviously, we cannot see these. It seems that another less important topic is that of the IKEA. It happens quite often that mothers would like to buy small household items from the IKEA in Bucharest, and they make this wish public on the group's timeline. Even though this topic keeps reappearing on the group's timeline, these posts have never been liked, with the exception of the person posting, while those who comment also have a wish list. It also happens quite frequently that someone would like to hitch-hike online (alone or with children), or that they are looking for someone to transport a package for them (to Budapest, Cluj-Napoca, Vienna, Sfântu Gheorghe, Odorheiu Secuiesc, or Gheorgheni). There are no likes or comments in the case of these posts either.

b. In the case of the *important topics*, the number of likes or comments increases. Examples of these topics: childhood diseases, contacts, information or personal experiences regarding a certain doctor (mainly: paediatrician, gynaecologist, allergologist, ophthalmologist), asking advice regarding the health of children, buying orthopaedic shoes, household topics. We can also analyse how soon answers are given to questions concerning doctors on duty, for example. This also shows that there are *sensitive* topics which mobilize the mothers: they immediately jump in to help, to give the necessary information. It is very probable that when it comes to doctors and diseases, a lot of the mothers have already had some kind of experience, and this is why they are able to provide an answer.

c. *Problematic (scandalous) topics* are those ones which are very divisive and cause an agitation in this virtuality. At such remarks or questions arrive a lot of comments, but the discussions usually turn into quarrels and end without a real argumentation. Very often the administrators have to calm the spirits by moderating out some comments or deleting the whole question. In principle, homeopathic medicines, the question of vaccination, potty training, the use

of playpen, complementary feeding, and non-breast-fed infant nutrition are examples of such critical topics. In the case of one “scandalous” post, 105 comments arrived within 24 hours. A mother asked advice in potty training her 6-month-old baby. The first comments have been supportive, success stories have been told about early potty training. But after that the following thirty comments emphasized the disadvantages of the too early potty training. The discussion degenerated into malicious personal remarks because the members of the group originate from very different social backgrounds, they have different qualifications and educational levels, they are of different ages, they have different experiences with their family members and different experiences in terms of parenting. In these cases, it might happen that the person who asked the question, deletes the post, putting an end to the discussions this way, although changing experiences is one of the main aims of the group – *but lots of the members will not tolerate an opinion that is different from theirs.*

4. Behind the Numbers

Using a semi-structured questionnaire, we wanted to find answers to questions regarding the Facebook group’s membership, how often mothers visit the group, how often they write a post or a comment, what kind of topic they like, whether they write comments or not (and, if yes, how often and in what topics), for how long they have been a member of the group, how often they follow the topics in the group, and what is their opinion about the group.

4.1 Facebook Group Presence

The mothers who were interviewed became members of the group during 2012–2013, all of them having been group members for at least 12 months. Three of them joined the group at the very beginning (those who were already mothers in 2011), while the others joined only later, when some questions arose or when they wanted to be informed about topics related to parenting. It is also noticeable that due to the retrogression of the mailing list the Facebook group started to be more popular.

Since the birth of my baby, when I had the time, I constantly checked if there had been an incoming mail on the mailing list. In the beginning (*member since December 2012*), 10 to 12 letters arrived in a day; I had to delete them on a regular basis. Then, I do not know what happened, but now there are not so many letters, not in a week. So, after a while, I joined the Facebook group. I had known about it a long time ago, but I deliberately did not want to join because I’m on the Facebook all day long, even so, I’m also a member of several other Facebook groups, I did not want to deal with this too. But there

was no one to “correspond with” on the mailing list after a while... – 33, one child (2 years old), urban, university.

Since this is a very heterogeneous group, the presence of the members is not homogenous as well. It is not homogenous even regarding presence and activity. The interviews point out that there are mothers who follow the group’s activity every day and there are mothers who visit the group only once in a while, once or two times monthly. Among the interviewed mothers, there is one who follows the group every day whenever she logs in to Facebook. She has even changed the settings in her Facebook profile to get notification after every post in the group. Another one enters the group only once in a week.

“I usually read the posts every 2 days, I read them always, even retroactively. And I read the post even when I get a notification that one of my friends has written a comment” (34, mother of two [3 and 1], on maternity leave, rural, university).

Others visit the group’s Facebook profile when they need information or they want to write a post. There are also mothers who visit the group only when a Facebook friend has posted or commented in the group, and they get a notification about this.

“I do not really follow the group, I cannot do it, and I don’t even need a lot of things from there. I follow the baby–mommy stuff group because I buy from there. But with the ‘csikianyak’ group is not the same. Only just when I am really interested in something, and I cannot get the information from somewhere else, such as a phone number or something else” (26, one child, on maternity leave, rural, medium).

Analysing their own case and thinking of the case of a close friend or an acquaintance, the interviewed mothers say that the most active members are those who have recently had their first children and mothers whose children are from 6 to 24 months old. The two-year-long maternity leave is considered in general to be a hard period when it comes to the social activities of the mother, who is shut off from the “world”. In the virtual world, however, social interaction can be much easier and it is reachable with the help of smart phones or laptops, even during breast-feeding or walking.

My daughter was a few months old, I could not go anywhere. We moved to the countryside in that period, too; we started to refurbish the house, I had no time, I could not go anywhere. Nowhere. I didn’t have time to meet and chat with my friends, only if they decided to visit me, but they barely came by because I could never tell when we sleep, when we eat, when we might be out for a walk. So, I started to look for the company of those who have similar problems, similar questions, similar fears. Usually, I do not write comments, but I follow the events, and I learn a lot from the experience of the others” (29, one child, on maternity leave, rural, university).

In the course of the content analysis, we delimited mostly the same topics the respondents named popular and attractive. Most of the comments are written to posts dealing with controversial issues such as someone being pro or against vaccines, using and recommending homeopathy or being against the homeopathic products, evidencing the importance of breast-feeding or recommending the early complementary nutrition, etc. (see Section 3.3: Problematic Topics).

Usually, there are a lot of comments when the topic somehow stimulates those mothers who usually read the posts, and comment at home in silence. Such topics are: Should we choose vaccination? Traditional medicine versus alternative cures. What are the suggestions and why? Breast-feeding until when? Formula milk? In these cases, much more mothers are writing than usually. Because these topics are not so innocent, and somehow every mother has an opinion about this (33, mother of two, urban, medium).

During content analysis, in the database, we did not pay attention to persons who had written the post, a comment or who had given a like. So, we did not include in the content analysis the member's personal information, only in numbers. But the interviews can help in filling this gap. Who comments and who posts?

"There are returning posters and commenters. As far as I can see, those who have been members of the group for a longer time are more active. Or there is a trustful closer group inside the group (23, one child, urban, university).

As we could see even from the interviews, the members are different, even regarding to comment writing as well. There are members in the group who write comments to a lot of topics, but there are a lot of mothers, who usually do not comment at all.

I don't like to comment, and usually I don't do it. I do not have time for these, I read the posts very late when it is already out of date, the topic is quasi-closed. However, sometimes I feel that I must say a word. Because the opinions are coming, the commenters are amplifying each other, and the young mother, who is a beginner in such topics, gets an opinion which is not good, not proper, furthermore, it can be dangerous. And nobody tells that this is not right, this is wrong, please do not give such advice... Sometimes I feel I have the duty to make a statement. But as far as I can see, those mothers who were writing comments on a regular basis before, nowadays are very passive. So, I do not always write a comment. But I do it sometimes. A few months ago, for example, there was a post. A mother was asking what to do if her little baby has constipation. The baby was a few weeks old, he was only breastfed. The commenters began to suggest apple juice, chamomile tea, orange juice, etc. I could not believe it! Then I tried to explain politely that according to the professionals before the baby turns six months it is not advisable to give them anything but breast milk, I advised her to contact a

nutritionist, a doctor, and told her that I would not give anything from these things to my baby at this age. But I did not always undertake this. It is easier not to waste the time, and then not to have a reason to get angry... (33, one child, urban, university).

4.2. Membership Benefits

The group's main positive effect is information. Most of the mothers state that they get a lot of good tips in the education of their children, in problem handling, or if they need some information they can get it at short notice.

"I visit the group every day since there are often new posts. Mothers often share videos and articles or they formulate a good question, and I learn a lot from these" (23, one child, urban, university).

Everybody agrees that this is a useful platform, that there is a need for this group, but the opinions and the pieces of advice are not recipes for everything, they cannot handle every problem, and they cannot substitute a specialist's expertise.

I always cry out when I read posts, I mean questions regarding a serious health problem. We are not doctors, we are not medical assistants here. We are moms who were maybe in the same or similar situations, but it is not a substitute for a specialist's knowledge. In case of a runny nose, yes, in the case of choosing a sunscreen, yes. But with a 39.5-degree fever it is not advisable to write here but to consult a doctor immediately! And what if we, more than forty-three mothers, say that a cold compress will solve it and everything will be okay? And if it does not? Sorry, we are not doctors. So, the issues should be dealt with a little more caution. There are topics which are suitable for such group, and there are issues which not" (33, one child, urban, university).

However, some negative remarks have been expressed, without asking for them: for example, the impersonal aspect of the communication, the lack of confidence, the very short answers, the ambiguity and misspellings, the different levels of problem definition and message interpretation.

"Facebook is a popular space, but a group of this size cannot depend on specific trust factors. Because of this, it is more superficial, more impersonal, more 'one-line sentence'. At least those posts which go public. I hope that the detailed comments which are sent in private are much more humane" (37, mother of two, urban, university).

Mothers "like" posts, share contents and comments if the topic is close to their personalities, if they agree with the statements. In terms of leaving a comment, however, they have a much poorer involvement. The interviewed mothers have an indisposition especially for posting and commenting. They usually read most

of the posts, even comments if they are interested in the topic, but they decide to write a comment only in very few special cases. These exceptional cases are of three types: a) if they know that the answer to a given question would be helpful immediately (e.g. a phone number), b) if they think they have the necessary skills in the case of specific issues, problems, and they feel competent to comment, c) if the post or the comments are going in a very wrong direction, against their strong beliefs and principles. They enter the debate only in such cases. In other cases, they think there is not much sense in writing a comment because after that leaving the discussion might be difficult.

It is often mentioned that they are only readers, they learn from the posts, comments, they choose to be a bit of outsiders, observers, as one respondent formulated. We can say that they do not contribute significantly to the content of the group. They do not influence the contents, the evolution of the group, neither with posts nor with comments.

“I comment rarely. I write a comment only in those cases when I feel very competent in the subject or if I feel that my opinion is significant regarding the subject. Otherwise, I usually prefer just to read, to be an ‘external observer’” (34, mother of two, on maternity leave, rural, university).

However, it seems that they would leave a comment more often if the group were smaller or more familiar. They do not write comments because of the number of people they have never met in person and because the written communication might be often misunderstood or it could be offensive, even without intention. A lot of people think that there are mentality barriers: even though in the group’s definition the term “openness” appears, a lot of members of the group do not share this characteristic.

It’s hard to convince people about another opinion, another point of view, and perhaps it is not even a duty for anyone to educate people. Because there are people who read about issues, ask questions about certain problems, who are open. But there are those who come with the mentality that “even we grew up like this,” her mother said so, she saw this, etc., and in these cases there’s no one to talk to. Anyone who is not like this, can find the answers, there is no need to enlighten her here (29, one child, on maternity leave, rural, university).

4.3. “Many Mothers, All Kinds of”

4.3.1. Activity

“Usually, those mothers write comments who spend more time in front of the PC. The rule of the big numbers... Or those who have the opportunity to follow Facebook at work. They know a lot of people – this community is not so big,

and it has a well-defined nucleus. They have an opinion in everything, they have a lot of experience, and children” (34, mother of two, on maternity leave, rural, university).

Thanks to the interviews, we can say that there are two types of active group members; *regarding activity* – posting or commenting –, there is a smaller group, the *usually active mothers*. They seem to live their motherhood in a more active way in their private lives as well, they do volunteer work, they are members of the Association, and they mostly know each other personally. They often participate in various programmes, they are more confident in sharing a post, leaving a comment. And there are the *occasionally active mothers*, who follow the posts and events almost every day, but they only write a comment when they feel very affected by the topic or by the content of the comments.

“Usually, experienced mothers comment, share opinions and experiences ... The truth is that the advice of a mother with two or three children is more reliable, so those who have only one child, even if they think or feel what is the right answer, they do not want to interfere because – in their opinion – they do not have enough experience” (33, mother of two, urban, medium).

4.3.2. Motivation

And what about the motivations? Why does this group have such a huge number of mothers? Why is this number increasing? We can outline 3 types of motivations. There are those who want to be “inside” mainly *(I.) to have a connection with the “world”*. On the basis of the interviews, we can say that in the very first months, after giving birth to their first child, a lot of women have problems with keeping contact with friends, colleagues, and other persons, except other mothers with children of the same age. So, a group like this offers a connection with the world of mothers; it is an approachable, accessible platform to gather information about programmes and events, and about new and contemporary trends in child raising (for example: mother–baby gym, folk dance, or musical activities for smaller children). For a smaller group of members, the most important motive is to pass on, *(II.) to propagate the experience*. During the first 2-3 years of child raising, the mothers have a lot of experiences in very different “domains”: medical services, nutrition, education, children’s programmes, shopping, organizing holidays, birthday events, and so on. Even if it is not as obvious as the first two, for a lot of women, it is an important motive to *(III.) get validation for fears, frustrations, and problems* through contents, posts, photos, comments, likes, etc. These fears and doubts are often the main articulated problems of the (fresh) mothers, but about which there is no other place and forum to discuss. (“I am not the only one with such kind of problems and questions.”) The region’s mentality is not open to discussing this kind of topics at the family or local community level. And thanks

to the answers, the person who formulated the question can get a “good” answer: an advice, a choice which is the closest to her opinion and belief.¹⁷

4.3.3. Footprint

“I think, mainly those mothers ask who are raising their first child. And those who are commenting, answering, those are the mothers with more children or who are more mature and ‘expert’ in the topic” (37, mother of two, urban, university).

Thanks to the narration of the interviewed mothers, we can delimit a few categories of those who are active within the group. This is a low number if we compare it to the high number of the total membership. At the most, 10 per cent can be named active according to the interviewed mothers – that means at most 150 persons. We define as active members those who comment and share information and content. Those who post a question, are not necessarily active members. So, among the commenters, it is more interesting to draw up a few dichotomous types of commenters. Regarding activity: there are *frequent* and *rare* commenters. Regarding the objectivity of the information: there are *objective (empirical)* and *subjective (emotional)* commenters.

Objective (empirical) argumentation	
CASUAL ADVISERS	RESPONSIBLE COMRADES
Rare commenter	Frequent commenter
INDIGNANT FELLOWS	GENERAL EXPERTS
Subjective (emotional) argumentation	

Those who comment frequently and use objective ground are the *responsible comrades*: they read a lot about that topic, have such problems with their own

17 Some examples: 1. Questions regarding the new-born’s crying, sleeping: “Why does my baby cry all day long and/or often all night long? Is it ill? What can I do?” “My mother/mother-in-law/doctor/neighbour says not to feed it during the night and to let it cry. Shall I do this?”; “My baby sleeps only 20–30 minutes 3 times a day. What can I do? 2. Questions regarding medical recommendations: “The doctor recommends to feed my baby with milk powder because the baby does not grow according to the medical normative table. What shall I do?”

children, and know much more about them thanks to their job or profession. And they are convinced that they have to give help to those who are less convinced, more half-hearted, and get less help from their physical medium (family, friends, rural or urban communities). Those who comment rarely but with the same objectivity are the *casual advisers*. They write only when they are really competent in a question topic, but they do not have time and or motivation to always follow the group's timeline. For example: a doctor who links a new study about the unnecessary antipyretic treatment. But she usually does not comment to other posts, not even other posts regarding illness.

Those who comment in a more subjective way are very emotional and they cannot debate in a normal way: if someone's opinion is opposite to theirs, they get to personal remarks and unhealthy conflicts. There are *indignant fellows* and *general experts*. The *indignant fellow* does not comment very often, only when something (somebody's post or comment) upsets her. In this situation, she writes her opinion in a very emotional way.

Example from May 2015: there is some discussion in the group about local gynaecologists, known by almost everybody. The person who wrote the post asked only the telephone number and working programme of the doctor.

Commenter X: "Please, never ever go to that doctor. He is a slaughterman."

Commenter Z: "Please, don't write something like that. We don't know everything about a situation, it is not nice the vilification of a doctor. Write it in a private message if you want, but this is not nice."

Commenter X.: I know what I know! I have the right to my opinion!!! I know what I know about all the doctors. I don't care if you or somebody does not like me or my opinion."

After all, the person who wrote the post, deletes it to put an end to the very long and very emotional discussion.

The *general expert* writes in the same, emotional way, but often. The administrator and the members who follow the group daily can name at least 20–30 persons who comment very often, and they do not use a suitable language and are not the most correct discussion partners.

An example from May 2015: Commenter Y.: "All of us are raising a child, we don't need to be indoctrinated. Trust me, I know this better. I don't care about your opinion or what links you put here. I read nothing what you write. I always get angry when I see your name."

4.3.4. Attitude

Regarding the attitude and type of manifestation, there can be defined 5 types of users: (1) *activist*, (2) *curious*, (3) "*natural born*" *mother*, (4) *Facebook philosopher*, and (5) *passive user*.

The activist mother's educational principles are modern, up-to-date, fashionable, and liberal. She is very confident regarding mainstream topics such as breast-feeding, child nutrition, child birth, health and education, and considers very important that she inform others about these. She has a strong critical opinion regarding the previous generations (the parents). She rejects all kinds of opinions which approve of the previous educational principles and counsels: when someone writes a comment like these, there is a storm coming: "I was not breast-fed by my mother, I had no illness in my childhood, not even afterwards." "We would also receive vaccinations, antibiotics when we were kids, but I'm healthy." "Our parents did not take us to early childhood development, still, we were not stupid." "At 3 months old, we also ate apples, crackers, and still, no problem with my stomach". In this category, there are at most 3–5% of the members, around 50–75 persons.

The *interested mother* often tries to be informed, she is seeking for advice, for help. Even if she does not formulate a question, she follows the topics, puts a comment, or asks for more information in a comment. This is usually because of the lack of a concrete parental pattern or the rejection to accept and follow the model of her mother and/or mother-in-law. She is usually raising her first child. This type of member makes up about 20% of the group.

The *natural born mother* is very confident, experienced; she is raising her second, third, or umpteen child. She takes child-rearing skills for granted, believing they are instinctual. She often forgets that once she was inexperienced as well, with a lot of doubts, since she gives advice like "be there for your child and you will understand his/her wishes..." – sentences which cannot be interpreted for mothers with their first child. Around 5% of the members can be considered like this.

The name "Facebook philosopher" labels those mothers who have an inclination to share contents and often philosophical thoughts about the meaning of life, family, children, or health (vaccination, homeopathic healing), but for them the Internet is the (only) unquestionable expert. At least 5% of the members could come under this category.

Example 1 / topic: should orange juice be given to a 3-month-old baby for constipation?

Commenter V. "I read it on the Internet that you can give it to it! Don't you [another, previous commenter] dare saying me I am not right!!! You should read some more, I think."

Example 2. / topic: should a 6-month-old baby be put into a playpen?

Commenter W. "I saw a lot of webshops which sell playpens. If it were unhealthy, they could not sell it. And in forums they write a lot of good things about it. So!?!? Feel free to use it."

The *passive member* from this group is very hard to be characterized since her attitude, opinion, and beliefs do not appear in the group's timeline, among the

comments, through the posts. But we can firmly believe that this is the biggest (around 60% of the group) and the most heterogeneous group, with at least four categories: (a) here are those mothers who have no time to follow the activity of the group, (b) those mothers who are really not the “on-line” type, or (c) those not so self-confident to manifest themselves. And here are (d) those mothers as well who wanted to be members of this Facebook group because they did not want to miss out something so important, where there are “all the mothers,” but they are not so interested in this group’s activity.

5. Conclusions

This paper’s purpose was to analyse the closed Facebook group of the mothers from Ciuc, which had more than 1,500 members from Miercurea Ciuc and the surroundings during the research. There was conducted a long linear content analysis and a shorter one focused on the posts of May 2014. In addition to these, there were interviews done. One interview was done with the founder of the Association, who is the administrator and moderator of the group in one and the same person, with 12 other mothers, who had all been members of the group for at least one year. The paper was based on the analysis of all these quantitative indicators and qualitative observations, relating opinions and the presented categorizations.

During the analysis, we found out that within a month there appear more than two hundred posts on average on the group’s timeline. The majority of the posts are questions. The most frequent topic is related to problems and questions regarding health, diseases, treatments, but the interest for programmes for children and families is also significant. The most popular posts usually involve sensitive issues, topics which divide people, such as homeopathy, vaccination, cloth diaper, potty training, etc. These kinds of posts have the most comments. But the comments do not always assure a healthy debate atmosphere within the group; debates sometimes degenerate into ugly personal remarks, the commenters’ behaviour and language is sometimes inappropriate.

We can conclude that this group is a necessary communication channel and a very useful information-sharing platform. It seems, however, that this type of communication platform can by no means substitute e-mail correspondence, which is more detailed and more personal. But the most important are the personal encounters, physical group experiences, and connections. The group is a virtual platform, but it is not a virtual community. There is a smaller virtual community, but the members of this are more or less the members of a non-virtual community first of all. The majority of the members are only users of the group. The interviews revealed that this is the retaining reason for members not

being more active: a significant part of the mothers opt for a passive presence because they do not want to get in a dispute. Some people resent that the group is too big and too impersonal, and most of the members are only “consumers” who want something and want it right away, but, on the other hand, they do not “bring” to the group something from their own life, they only “take” something: information, knowledge, good practices, or useful tips.

A major strength of the group is *readiness: instant confirmation, immediate advice*. This is very important for mothers who do not really have time and possibilities to get the answers from somewhere else. The significant *empathy, understanding, and supportive attitude* is another highly remarkable characteristic of the group – or, at least, the sense of this. The confirmation of a value, of some norm is immediate as well, but it is *virtually “measurable” and has an opinion-shaping effect* as well.

A further remark: in the virtual world, it is easier and faster to “like” someone’s opinion, to share someone’s belief, *to have a united destiny*. And *the quasi-strangeness potentiates* the questioning and answering as well. It is easier than in the physical reality, for example on the street.

Everything what happens in the group can be observed without any engagement: even the very modern ideas, practical insights may be *without commitment*. Even within a traditional community, there are very significant transformations taking place. The child-raising “mainstream” pattern seems to change – and this is freely joinable. The “virtual” advice and experiences override the earlier generation’s patterns, “rules,” and expectations.

Personal *beliefs, experiences*, and their particular character *are highly appreciated* (within the group). Moreover: these personal statements and confessions have very substantial power – they can build social reputation and can ground one’s personal social capital.

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