Hey, Do You Have Instagram?

The blurring lines between private and professional identities on social networking sites in the context of social norms and online boundary management.

Student Name: Julia Frank
Student Number: 510373

Supervisor: Anne-Marie van Prooijen

Media & Business
Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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ABSTRACT

Smartphones and in turn social networking sites (SNS) have become daily companions for a lot of people around the globe. Social media allows for the instant sharing of the most intimate experiences with respective audiences. This potentially wide-ranging visibility of social media presences affects not only the private lives of individuals but also more and more their professional lives. It can become a risk when private and professional lives cross paths online. Whereas there are clear norms that constitute professional behavior at work, there are no such norms governing social media profiles. Consequently, the possibilities of norm violations arise which can lead to disapproval from colleagues. Yet, the appeal of social media usage is growing stronger and has started permeating not only teenagers lives anymore but also adult users lives. Therefore, adult users have to find a balance between providing information about oneself to colleagues but not violating any professional norms. This is a behavior which has been labelled online boundary management. However, research as to what determinants influence the decision to be more private or more open online in regards to co-workers is still scarce. In the context of online boundary management theory as well as the theory of planned behavior, this study examined the influence of perceived social norms at work on individuals' preference for separation between work contacts and private contacts on Instagram. An online survey was conducted where the perceived social norms at the respondents' workplace were measured in four distinct categories. Their levels of preferred separation of work and private contacts was also assessed. The concept of perceived social risk was included in the analysis as a potential mediator. The findings suggest that two out of the four measured perceived social norms aspects, work/life integration norms as well as Instagram usage norms, had significant effects on the desire to separate work contacts from private contacts on the SNS Instagram. Higher levels of perceived formalization in work/life integration norms as well as Instagram norms lead to a stronger preference for separation between contacts. Furthermore, social risk was found to partially mediate this relationship. Social norms regarding communication practices or rules and regulations did not show strong significance.

KEYWORDS: *Boundary Management, Instagram, Social Norms, Social Risk, Co-Workers*

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1. Introduction

Modern technologies, such as the smartphone, have drastically changed the way we communicate. For billions of people, their smartphone has become their daily companion. They take it wherever they go and become tethered to it (Turkle, 2011). Smartphone technology has facilitated the rise of new phenomenons such as social networking sites (SNS), also commonly known as social media. These platforms, for example Twitter or Instagram, have revolutionized how people are able to communicate and connect with each other and present themselves online. Individuals can share their personal experiences and private pictures instantly with their online audience and give the public a glimpse into their personal lives – even live streaming is possible (Von Pape, 2018). Social networking sites keep growing continuously: In June 2018, the picture-based social media platform Instagram reached over 1 billion monthly active users, a growth of more than 5% per quarter (Constine, 2018). The habit of being permanently online, permanently connected and sharing personal moments online can affect boundaries that dictate what remains part of private life and what becomes part of the public sphere (Vorderer et al., 2015).

Moreover, the influence of social media in our daily lives does not only affect the general lines between public and private, it also affects the boundaries between professional and private life. The lines or boundaries between private and professional life, and the influence of new technologies on them, have been researched before, specifically in the context of smartphones (Derks, van Duin, Tims, & Bakker, 2015; Mellner, 2016; Yun, Kettinger, & Lee, 2012). The introduction of smartphones, especially as work-issued phones, has further increased the ability to blur these boundaries. Smartphone use has, for example, led to a higher degree of expected availability after official work hours. Emails are just as accessible on the smartphone as they are at work, thereby turning the device into a virtual extension of an office desk (Derks et al., 2015; Mellner, 2016). With the emergence and continuous growth of social media however, another dimension has been added to the line that separates work life and private life: "Especially as the appeal of SNS has extended to adult and professional users, managing the online boundary between work and private life has become increasingly difficult" (Van Prooijen, Ranzini, & Bartels, 2018, p. 215). This new dimension needs to be explored in more detail. The previously mentioned studies on boundaries between work and private life have generally focused on the influence of smartphones on after-hour availability or work-related stress. The effects of private social media channels on the work environment and vice versa, however, need to be researched

further. The specific issue of how to manage the blurring lines between work life and private social networking sites has been labelled online boundary management (Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard, & Berg, 2013). Boundary management itself refers to the process of trying to maintain a balance between keeping up with professional appearances and norms but at the same time sharing private information, as it has been shown that personal self-disclosure tends to increase the degree of someone else's liking towards oneself (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). This balance also applies to the online world and the work environment, wherefore it is referred to as online boundary management. The Ketchum Global Research Network reported that 41% of people indicated that it is irresponsible to ignore or deny friend requests from colleagues (as cited in Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013, p. 647), further showing the blurring boundaries of private social networking sites and the actual work environment. However, the struggle between what is deemed as appropriate at work and what happens in private moments on social media can be a delicate issue for individuals and may lead to boundary turbulence or, in the worst case, boundary violation (De Groot & Vik, 2017). Boundary turbulence or violation occur in situations where information or pictures are shared online, by another person or oneself, which stretch the limit of workplace norms or were supposed to be kept private altogether (De Groot & Vik, 2017). In trying to keep this balance between privacy and professionalism, several strategies of online boundary management have emerged with varying degrees of separation between work and private life (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

Previous studies on online boundary management in the context of work have researched social judgements of colleagues (Van Prooijen et al., 2018), one's own perceived likability (Batenburg & Bartels, 2017), or company identification (Fieseler, Meckel, & Ranzini, 2014) as predictors. However, there is a lack of research on the effects of perceived social norms at work on online boundary management. Whereas there are norms as to what is deemed as appropriate behavior in the professional environment, there are generally less or no such widely accepted norms in the online world (Ivaturi & Chua, 2019). This difference provides a ground for potential norm violations. Perceived social norms at the workplace have been found to affect employees' behaviors before (Biron & Bamberger, 2012; Hammer, Saksvik, Nytrø, Torvatn, & Bayazit, 2004; Sanders, Oomens, Blonk, & Hazelzet, 2011; Thommes, Akkerman, Torenvlied, & Born, 2014), wherefore their potential effects on online boundary management lack sufficient research.

The above outlined importance of online boundary management, in order to avoid boundary turbulence or violation and their effects on the work environment, can be illustrated with real life examples. There have been several incidents where someone's private social media activities have affected said person's professional life (Price, 2016). One of the most well-known examples is the one of Justine Sacco, former senior director of corporate communications at IAC, an American holding company. Her now deleted tweet: "Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just kidding. I'm white!", was supposed to be an ironic joke, referencing white privilege and the discrepancies of medical support between first and third world countries. Ultimately though, the joke cost her her job (Ronson, 2015). She published this joke on her private Twitter account with only 170 followers, consisting mainly of friends, family and co-workers. While flying to Africa for business, her tweet was shared repeatedly and started trending worldwide. One of her co-workers at IAC tweeted in response: "I'm an IAC employee and I don't want @JustineSacco doing any communications on our behalf ever again. Ever," (Ronson, 2015, para. 7). After landing in Africa, Sacco received the news that her company had let her go due to the mounting public pressure following her tweet.

Incidents as such show the social risks surrounding social media, especially in regards to online boundary management. Social networking sites and people's behavior when using them privately can negatively influence one's professional life if a boundary violation occurs. This case highlights an area without a consensus as to which set of norms, from work life or private life, is the governing authority. It highlights a gap in the existing frameworks where social norms at work and social norms in private life conjoin. In Sacco's private life, such a joke, although may deemed tasteless by some, would probably not have violated any norms and been attached to social risks, such as embarrassment or disapproval (Mandel, 2003). However, due to a different set of norms in her professional life, the joke had severe repercussions for her career. It also begs the question if this boundary violation could have been prevented by a higher degree of separation in regards to Sacco's private and professional contacts on her personal social media account.

This presented gap between professional norms and private social networking norms, as well as the gap in research on social norms and online boundary management, leads to the following research question:

To what extent do perceived social norms at one's workplace influence online boundary management on private social media accounts in regards to co-workers?

Drawing on the already mentioned accompanying social risks of potential boundary violations, the following sub question developed:

To what extend does social risk influence the relationship between social norms at work and online boundary management on private social media accounts in regards to co-workers?

The platform chosen for this research is Instagram, as it is currently the fastest growing social networking site in the world, actually surpassing its parent company Facebook in terms of growth rate (Constine, 2018). Additionally, it allows for the most intimate view into someones private life due to it being a picture-based website (Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2014). Instagram also has more highly engaged users than any other social networking site, increasing the chances for a possible boundary turbulence (Leibowitz, 2018).

In the following chapters, all steps that were taken in order to find adequate answers to the research question will be presented. Chapter two, the theoretical framework, presents all utilized theories and explains in-depth why and how these theories were applied. It will be synthesized with current research on social norms, online boundary management and social risk. Ultimately, chapter two will highlight the importance of considering social norms as predictors of online boundary management with formulated hypotheses. Chapter three discusses the empirical approach of this study. Here, specifically the construction of a new scale assessing perceived social norms at work will be covered extensively and how an online survey was built in combination with previously established scales. In chapter four, all results from conducted analyses will be reported and the established hypotheses either be accepted or rejected. Finally, the discussion builds a bridge back to the introduction. A critical recap of this work is necessary in order to adequately answer the research question. It further presents the implications for existing research on the impact of the professional environment on online boundary management and vice versa.

2. Theoretical Framework

In order to find adequate answers to the above stated research question and sub-question, an appropriate theoretical framework must be given which serves as a base for this research. In the following chapter, central theoretical concepts will be presented and put into context of the research topic at hand. Furthermore, already existing studies which have researched similar concepts will be synthesized with the applied theories in order to round out an extensive theoretical background.

2.1 Social Media

Social media has been a part of the internet and the digital world for quite a while. As such, there are a number of broad definitions of what constitutes social media. It has been labeled as, for example, participatory media, user-generated content, peer-production or Web 2.0 (Fuchs, 2017). Van Dijck (2013) explains social media through the name itself, referring to it as "online facilitators or enhancers of human networks – webs of people that promote connectedness as a social value" (p. 11). Some researchers think that social media has existed before companies such as Google were founded in 1999 (Allen, 2013; Scholz, 2008). Allen (2013) argues that social networking sites such as Wiki or Classmates have existed since 1995 and that improving these already existing products led to the development of platforms such as Facebook, which were simply newer versions that would "claim to be new" (p. 264). On the other hand, social media has only started becoming a part of internet users' daily lives in the past decade. Research shows that from 2005 to 2015, social media usage in adults has risen from 7% to 65%, marking an increase of more than 800% (Perrin, 2015). As of January 2019, the number of worldwide social media users was estimated to be 3.484 billion, up 9% compared to the year before (Kemp, 2019). Facebook is still the dominant social networking site with more than 2 billion active users worldwide (Kemp, 2019). However, Instagram has recently surpassed Facebook in terms of growth rate and is currently the fastest growing network in the world (Constine, 2018). As of June 2018, Instagram had over 1 billion active users per month, marking a growth of 25% compared to September 2017 (Statista, 2018a). Instagram also has more highly engaged users than any other social networking site which means users like, comment and share more media content than on other platforms, including Facebook (Leibowitz, 2018). This has also been noticed by companies and organizations. In September 2017, Instagram had 2 million active advertisers on Instagram, a number that had doubled within six months. This number does

not include paid partnerships with celebrities or influencers (Statista, 2017). Thus, new digital platforms facilitating the interaction between people, companies and communities have been established and keep getting bigger, still.

In his definition, Van Dijck (2013) further emphasizes the transformational value of social media in the media landscape itself in the past decade, as mentioned in the paragraph above:

> As a result of the interconnection of platforms, a new infrastructure emerged: an ecosystem of connective media with a few large and many small players. The transformation from networked communication to 'platformed' sociality, and from a participatory culture to a culture of connectivity, took place in a relatively short timespan of ten years. (p. 5)

Consequently, it can be argued that via social media, the media user has changed from the traditional view of just a consumer to a modern consumer-producer. In contrast to the one-to-many paradigm that traditional mass media such as newspapers or television entail, social networking sites have allowed for the inclusion of a many-to-many or many-to-one paradigm in modern media (Jensen & Helles, 2017). Social media brings forth many advantages for businesses and users, such as an increased interaction and engagement with each other. Furthermore, companies can leverage crowdsourcing more easily and it facilitates the global reach of audiences (Thackeray, Neiger, & Keller, 2012). On the other hand, being active on SNS also involves certain risks for organizations and users. The increased visibility comes with an increased transparency which means people can see more and share more information about people and organizations and dictate the news themselves. This, in turn, can lead to bad publicity or public outcries: "If there is one truism driving Web 2.0 branding, it is that everything that can be exposed will be exposed; for all intents and purposes, muckraking has become a mainstream sport" (Fournier & Avery, 2011, p. 198). What Fournier and Avery (2011) mention here has also recently become known as the phenomenon of cancel culture (Kinos-Goodin, 2018). Cancel culture refers to the act of a loud group of social media users calling for a boycott or cancellation of a certain person, product or brand, usually accompanied by hashtags with the word cancel or boycott in it (Kinos-Goodin, 2018). Everybody can be cancelled easily and quickly – something that has also been widely criticized and put a lot of pressure on companies and individuals (Bromwich, 2018). Celebrities, such as Kanye West, have been cancelled, figuratively speaking, for their political opinions which were not in conformity with the social norms of

the majority of social media users. But there are also people that have been cancelled literally, for example from their employment, regardless of their popularity – as shown by the exemplary case of Ms. Sacco who was fired from her job due to the cancel culture. She was not a celebrity or brand, only a person stating a sarcastic, arguably funny, joke. This mentioned increase in transparency has consequences which more and more people and organizations are becoming aware of: In September 2018, 45% of US social media users indicated that all of their private social media accounts were set to private, meaning a follower request has to be accepted before one is able to see a person's content. Only 19% of users indicated that all of their social media accounts were open to the public (Statista, 2018b). The risks surrounding the utilization of social media concern every user and further point to the importance of setting boundaries. Switching one's personal account to a private setting can be considered part of the online boundary management concept which will be further explained in the next chapter.

2.2 Online Boundary Management

The concept of online boundary management builds on traditional boundary management. It marks a shift from the physical space to the cyberspace. Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard and Berg (2013) refer to boundary management as the process of managing multiple identities and label it a "classic organizational challenge" (p. 646). Boundary management concerns the identities of the personal life and the professional life. There are other possible, more detailed distinctions of identities. The identity of personal life can be separated into more distinct parts. For example, it can be distinguished between the at home identity and several different "third place" identities (e.g. church or neighbourhood bars) in order to provide more detailed insights into what makes up a personal identity (Asforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000, p. 473). In this work however, a separation of the personal identity into multiple distinct third place identities will not be necessary as the main concern lies on workplace norms and social media behavior. Consequently, the term personal identity refers to all aspects outside of the work context, including but not limited to friends, family, religious settings and personal interests and hobbies, in accordance with the concept of online boundary management from Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013).

The necessity to manage these different identities arises due to the fact that usually, the workplace has clear norms and values which constitute appropriate behavior at work (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). However, these norms may not apply to the personal

identity. If information provided from the personal identity is seen as inappropriate in the organizational norms context, professional contacts may disapprove (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Thus, it would be sensible to consider never merging private and professional identities. Yet, research has shown that sharing personal information with professional contacts can improve the colleagues' liking of oneself (Collins & Miller, 1994). Therefore, boundary management is necessary in order to successfully walk the thin line between providing information from the personal identity that is considered appropriate in regards to the social norms of the professional identity.

With the emergence of social networking sites, a new dimension has been added to boundary management. Information sharing in the physical world is not the only boundary that needs management anymore, the cyberspace also warrants the need for boundaries. This is especially important when keeping in mind that the online world does not expect similar social norms as the professional environment (Ivaturi & Chua, 2019; Van Prooijen et al., 2018). Furthermore, the information provided in the personal online identity is much less "tailored" to specific people or conversations (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013, p. 647). Marwick and boyd (2010) argue that on social media, several distinct audiences are brought together, leading to a context collapse: "Social media collapse diverse social contexts into one, making it difficult for people to engage in the complex negotiations needed to vary identity presentation, manage impressions, and save face" (p. 123), reiterating the problem of less tailored content. Even if an individual has decided to keep their social media account on a private setting, audiences that would generally not meet in the real world do meet online, such as friends, family and co-workers (Marwick & boyd, 2010). Consequently, sharing information or pictures online has the potential to reach a much broader audience than originally imagined and like all things on the internet, content persists over time.

In their theoretical concept, Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) distinguish between types of integration vs. separation as well as self-enhancement vs. self-verification, leading to four different archetypal online boundary management strategies. The open boundary management behavior does not include active boundaries between private and professional contacts (integration). Individuals will not make a distinction between positive and negative content and present themselves how they perceive themselves to be (self-verifying). Consequently, professional contacts are fully integrated into the private social networks. In the case of Instagram, this would mean having a public profile and no separate close friends list for private contacts, a feature Instagram offers in order to separate contacts into close

friends and the general audience, and tailor the content accordingly. The opposite of the open boundary management is the audience management. This behavior constitutes a full separation between professional and private contacts. The audience management strategy entails that all social media profiles are set to private and friend or follower requests from work contacts will be ignored or denied, keeping up a boundary between personal and professional identities (separation). Their content may also include both negative and positive information (self-verifying), however, they choose to share this only with their peers from their personal identity. The third boundary behavior, in which some separation tactics are applied, is the hybrid boundary management. Compared to the audience boundary management, the desire for self-enhancement exists, yet there is still a preference for separation between professional and private contacts. This behavior is more complex as it firstly involves the separation between private and professional contacts and secondly presenting self-enhancing content tailored to the respective audience. This separation can take place via different lists of friends (e.g. the Instagram close friends list) or fully separate profiles. The fourth and final archetype of online boundary management as proposed by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) is content boundary management. Here, an integration of private and professional contacts happens but the content presented is of self-enhancing nature, meaning individuals do actively control the content but not who sees it. This work is specifically interested in the motives for separation vs. integration preferences. The content itself, meaning self-enhancing vs. self-verifying postings, is not distinguished here since the main focus of research is the aspect of integration and separation of workplace contacts and adding self-enhancing or self-verifying concepts would be out of scope for the thesis.

The concept of boundary management itself has been well researched in the past. However, this has mostly concerned boundary management in the offline world. Furthermore, a lot of research has mostly focused on *how* people manage boundaries between identities, and not *why* people chose one of the different strategies (Uhlmann, Heaphy, Ashford, Zhu, & Sanchez-Burks, 2013). This study would like to contribute to the concept of boundary management by expanding research on online boundary management through pinpointing antecedents that influence the choice of strategy. Since the concept of online boundary management is still rather new, which can be attributed to the fact that social media has only started permeating everyday life in the past decade, research on the underlying aspects of chosen strategies remain scarce. Previously conducted studies have found several different factors that influence the decision between separation and

integration. Van Prooijen et al. (2018) found that high levels of perceived morality and perceived sociability of colleagues lower the desire to separate private and professional contacts. Furthermore, they found that age, working hours and privacy concerns significantly affect separation desires, a higher level in each one leading to higher levels of preference for separation. Another influencing factor for online boundary management was found to be the level of identification with the organization (Fieseler et al., 2014). Higher levels of identification with one's organization as well as the greater confidence in private social media usage led to higher levels of identity overlap.

As can be seen, more research into the determinants for online boundary management strategies is necessary. The aforementioned potential risks of social media usage as outlined in chapter 2.1 have led to some employers setting up guidelines on how to use social media in the context of the work environment (Frampton & Child, 2013). However, such rules and regulations are still scarce and leave the employee with the question on whether to integrate or separate professional contacts within private social networking sites. The following chapters will present social norms in an organization as potential antecedents to the question as to why some people might prefer separation over integration. Social norms have been identified as key drivers for human behavior in group settings (Cialdini & Trost, 1998), which is why their potential relationship to online boundary management will be the main focus of this work.

2.3 Overview of Social Norms

The main part of this research is concerned with the question as to what extent social norms can have an effect on a certain behavior, in this case online boundary management. Consequently, a concise definition for social norms is needed as it serves as the independent variable in this work. Since an abundance of definitions and interpretations of what social norms are and may entail is available, clarity is especially important as to which definition of social norms applies to this research.

Although it is not clearly determinable, Sherif (1936) is oftentimes credited as the pioneer researcher to extensively examine the concept of social norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Sherif focused his research (1936) around the psychological fundaments of social norms and how norms are initially formed. In his experiment, people were at first alone in a room and had to estimate the length of a light beam, which lead to highly varied answers between participants. However, when people were in the room

together with other participants and had to estimate the light beam's length again, more congruent answers were observable. This led Sherif to conclude that contact to other individuals is important for the establishment of social norms: "The customs, traditions, standards, rules, values, fashions and all other criteria of conduct ... are standardized as a consequence of the contact of individuals'"(Sherif, 1936, p. 3). In 1977, Schwartz extended Sherif's research on norms and came to the conclusion that social norms emerge through a group setting, similar to Sherif (1936). However, Schwartz argued that there are also internalized norms, referring to a person's own sense of etiquette. These norms, in contrast to social norms, are not formed via group behavior but via one's own sense of correct behavior (Schwartz, 1977). When looking at several definitions of social norms, Shaffer (1983) found that even the three definitions that seemed most likely the same had basic differences: "... there is no single element of one definition that appears consistently in all three", (p.277). These distinctions highlight the difficulties that occur when examining social norms due to the sheer amount of available definitions. Consequently, one definition has to be chosen as the basis of this research which fits the research question and concept of boundary management best.

2.3.1. Defining Social Norms

In this thesis, the definition of social norms is primarily derived from Cialdini, Kallgren and Reno (1991), as well as Cialdini and Trost's work (1998). Both works draw from Sherif's (1936) original definition of social norms. They define them detailed and concisely as an important determinant for human behavior and not a "vague and overly general concept", as others have been criticized (Cialdini et al., 1991, p.202). "Social norms are rules and standards that are understood by members of a group and that guide and/or constrain social behavior without the force of law" (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p. 152). Consequently, norms are not to be equated with the term law. For instance, texting while driving a car is prohibited by law. Still, research has found that speaking on the phone while driving has been labeled as somewhat socially appropriate; at least more appropriate than text messaging (Forgays, Hyman, & Schreiber, 2014). Social norms therefore guide how we behave in certain situations based on what humans think is the appropriate and socially accepted way. As a result, norms can only exist if they are shared with others. These social rules are trained behaviors that do not exist from the beginning but are taught through communication with others (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). This is where the definition of social norms differs from

Schwartz's (1977) postulation that internalized norms exist. The training of social norms can happen through direct instructions and demonstrations, but also passively and through vicarious experiences. For example, Lytton & Romney (1991) found that children are subtly encouraged to differentiate between toys for boys and toys for girls through the actions of their parents, regardless of whether this is intentional or not. As a results, children adopt the social norms for boys to play with masculine toys and girls to play with feminine toys. This shows that social norms surrounding children start influencing decisions in the earliest stages of childhood already.

Another reason why this specific definition of social norms was chosen is that it distinguishes between two types of norms, descriptive and injunctive norms, a concept which has also been frequently applied in other studies (Borsari & Carey, 2003; Christensen, Rothgerber, Wood, & Matz, 2004; Smith et al., 2012). Descriptive norms refer to how others behave in a given situation. If more people behave the same way in a certain situation, the more normal and appropriate the behavior is deemed to be (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Descriptive norms can therefore be described as seeing *what is done.* For example, the more people are lined up in a queue to receive service from a counter, the more normal it seems to form lines. In turn, it becomes more likely that lines will be formed in the future. Injunctive norms on the other hand describe the perception of how others think one should behave in a given situation (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). They have also been labeled "social pressure" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188) or "morale of the group" (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p. 157). Consequently, injunctive norms can be described as *what ought to be done.* An example of this would be automatically whispering in a library because it is assumed that speaking loudly would be met with disapproval from other library attendees since it violates the norms of silence.

Overall, the concept of social norms based on the works of Cialdini et al. (1991) and Cialdini and Trost (1998) provides the most concise concept of social norms. Both descriptive and injunctive norms are researched in this thesis in order to give a comprehensive picture of the norms' influence on online boundary management.

2.3.2 Studies on Social Norms

Social norms are present in any given social situation, whether it is in the context of public situations, private life or the work environment. People adhere to these norms in order to be accepted as part of a social group and receive approval for their actions (Cialdini

& Trost, 1998). Furthermore, the urge to follow and adhere to social norms can be greater if there is uncertainty as to what constitutes correct behavior or if the identification with the norm referent group is high (Higgs, 2015). Since Sherif's study in 1936, there has been a lot of research on social norms and their influence on people's lives. Studies have found that the perception of social norms influence, for example, one's self-image and appearance satisfaction (Strahan, Wilson, Cressman, & Buote, 2006), eating patterns and eating disturbances (Higgs, 2015; Thompson & Stice, 2001), voting patterns (Gerber & Rogers, 2009), environmental intentions (Smith et al., 2012), as well as drinking habits, drug use and sexual behavior (Martens et al., 2006; Neighbors et al., 2007). In these studies, it was found that people's intentions and behaviors are related to perceived social norms around them. However, in many cases, it was also found that these perceived norms were not always correctly estimated. Therefore, the behavior was conducted according to how respondents thought others were behaving when in fact, others were not behaving as estimated, leading to a misconception of the social norms. This was especially visible in studies on perceived social norms and their effects on drinking patterns (Martens et al., 2006; Neighbors et al., 2007; Neighbors, Dillard, Lewis, Bergstrom, & Neil, 2006; Perkins, Haines, & Rice, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, social norms also influence behaviors and intentions in the professional life which is the important aspect for this research. Social norms at the workplace, also referred to as organizational norms, "are unwritten rules that prescribe the ways in which all members of an organization should approach their work and interact with one another," (Hammer, Saksvik, Nytrø, Torvatn, & Bayazit, 2004, p. 84). Social norms in the organizational context can vary in terms of their strength, intensity as well as their longevity (Dannals & Miller, 2017). Norms that are extremely long-lasting in the organizational context are frequently referred to as institutionalized, whereas norms that emerge and disappear quickly are known as fads (Dannals & Miller, 2017).

Studies have found that social norms affected organizations and their employees' behavior in several different aspects of the work life. Thommes, Akkerman, Torenvlied and Born (2014) found that high levels of solidarity norms and high levels of punishment norms at the workplace increased the fear of a deterioration of social relations with colleagues after a strike, therefore influencing the decision whether to participate in strikes or not. Another study found that group absence norms and perceived supervisor support norms at the current workplace significantly moderated the relationship between job conditions and absenteeism (Biron & Bamberger, 2012). Sanders, Oomens, Blonk and Hazelzet (2011) found

that perceived social norms on the importance of training programs influenced lower-educated employees intentions whether or not to participate in said training programs. Other factors that were influenced by the presence of perceived social norms were productivity levels (Lichtman & Lane, 1983) and job satisfaction (O'Reilly & Caldwell, 1985). Hammer et al. (2014) examined the relationship between organizational norms and work-related stress. Their results indicate that work performance norms significantly influence job stress. These studies suggest a wide range of existing organizational norms which can also have the potential to influence social relations with colleagues (Thommes et al., 2014). Consequently, it is necessary to further examine which organizational norms could be of importance for this work, which specifically looks at the impact of social norms on online social relations with co-workers. This leads to a more detailed exploration of social norms in the context of organizational structures in the next chapter, as norms tend to be derived from structures and rules (Schneider, 1994).

2.3.4 Organizational Norms and Structures

An organization's structure is based on its mission and goals and impacts an employee's behavior on a day-to-day basis (Brooks, 2009). It is made up of many different aspects and procedures and there is no overall agreement as to which aspects specifically belong to an organization's structure (Brooks, 2009). Furthermore, there is no consensus in literature as to which factors specifically belong to the concept of organizational structure or organizational culture (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). Given the overlapping nature of the two terms and a lack of specified boundaries, both concepts will be examined for possible factors that can influence online boundary management. It has been argued that the organizational structure is made up of official formalities and rules which regulate how employees should conduct business; from which the organizational culture is then derived in terms of values and norms (de Melo Santos, Bronzo, de Oliveira, & de Resende, 2014). Organizational structure has been found not to be determined by the companies' size or economic traits (Hall et al., 1967) which is why it was decided to not differentiate between large-scale and small-scale organizations here. Schneider (1994) defines organizational culture "as the way we do things around here in order to succeed" (p.9). According to Schneider, it provides structure for its employees and tells them which activities are in bounds and which activities are likely to be judged as inappropriate. Consequently, it can be argued that "organizational structure is likely to affect the social interaction among organizational members" (Chen &

Huang, 2007, p.106). Hence, this study aims to find the aspects of organizational structures and cultures that make up social norms, as was previously established in a variety of literature, and could be of significance to online boundary management.

One aspect which is frequently included in an organization's structure and culture is the degree of formalization (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001; Hall, Johnson, & Haas, 1967; Robbins & Decenzo, 2001; Schneider, 1994). Formalization refers to the amount of rules and procedures which guide employees in their way of conducting business. Hence, high levels of formalization would point to a lot of rules and regulations which dictate employees and their assessment of what is deemed as appropriate behavior in their work life (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001; Robbins & Decenzo, 2001). Previous research has established that lower levels of organizational formalization lead to higher degrees of social interaction (Chen & Huang, 2007). Schneider (1994) refers to this as the amount of policies and procedures as well as the number of actual manuals and trainings. This is in line with Hall's et al. (1967) definition of rules and regulations which also includes trainings and additionally, the amount of orientation a new employee receives upon joining the company. These trainings are not only concerning workplace behavior anymore but are also getting more and more important for employee's social media usage, specifically in highly regulated business sectors (Holmes, 2012) where social media has been found to be the most challenging source of information leakage on employee's behalves (Molok, Chang, & Ahmad, 2010). As mentioned before, high amounts of formalization, at the core of which are rules and regulations, have been found to diminish social interactions amongst colleagues (Chen & Huang, 2007). Furthermore, it has been argued that organizations with well-institutionalized rules and regulations concerning social media usage facilitate boundary management (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006). Consequently, it is hypothesized (see summarized H1 at the end of this chapter) that high levels of formalization, specifically pointing to perceived norms on rules and regulations increase the preference for separation between work contacts and private contacts (H1a). Since this work is concerned with perceived norms, this aspect will not be focused on the amount of policies available but on the perception of how seriously these policies are taken by the employees.

According to Hall, Johnson and Haas (1967), another aspect of formalization concerns employees' communication practices, specifically mentioning the channels co-workers utilize to communicate with each other. Schneider (1994) also argues that organizational culture and its perceived norms establish communication patterns, meaning the kind of language

people use when communicating with each other. Chen and Huang (2007) found that when an organization was less formally structured, employees displayed higher levels of favourable and less formalized communication practices with other co-workers. Given the recurrent theme of communication practices in literature and previously found implications of formalization on communication, it can be argued that communication practices are an important aspect of social interactions between colleagues. Therefore, the perceived level of formalization regarding communication norms will be included in this research. Based on Chen and Huang (2007) and their findings of formalization and communication practices, it is hypothesized that higher levels of formalization in communication practices point to a higher desire for separation of professional and private contacts (H1b).

A third aspect of organizational norms which should be explored in the context of online boundary management is the overall private life integration into the work context and vice versa. This goes back to basic boundary management theory which is not yet concerned with managing identities in the online sphere but in the actual work environment (Ashforth et al., 2000). Scott and Davis (2015) point out the importance of informal social connections between employees as an aspect of any organization's structure. Furthermore, Schneider (1994) argues that the types of relationships between employees at the workplace are an important dimension in an organization's culture, for example personal vs. impersonal or formal vs. informal (p. 111). Uhlmann, Heaphy, Ashford, Zhu and Sanchez-Burks (2013) investigated social norms in the United States concerning the referencing of non-work identities in relation to the perceived professionalism of this individual. Their results suggest that frequent integration of non-work related roles was perceived as less professional and argue that these references should be kept to a minimum in order to achieve a professional reputation (p. 872). Additionally, they found that a frequent integration of non-work related roles into the professional context led to a more negative evaluation of a potential employee on behalf of recruiters. However, these results were only applicable to the United States and did not hold up for other cultural environments. This shows that high levels of formalization concerning work/life integration can impact one's professional perception, further pointing to the necessity of managing these boundaries. Consequently, one could argue that high levels of formalization regarding social norms of work/life integration warrant higher levels of boundary management in order to keep a professional image. Another study (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006) found out that when levels of role-referencing are high, ergo the formalization of work/life integration in one's professional environment is perceived as low,

reactions to role boundary interruptions were less negative. This relationship worked both ways, meaning that a higher integration of non-work roles lead to lower levels of negative reactions to the private domain infiltrating the work domain and vice versa. This shows that lower perceived levels of formalization for social norms regarding work/life integration can lead to less negative reactions when one domain crosses over to the other. Furthermore, their findings are in line with previous suggestions (Asforth et al., 2000) that integrators of work and private life have "a more difficult time creating boundaries, particularly when the norms for such boundaries are not well-institutionalized" (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006, p. 442). Based on this presented research, it can be argued that the extent of formalization regarding role-referencing other identities and the ensuing integration of work and private life domains have an impact on boundary management. Therefore, it is hypothesized that more formalization in regards to perceived social norms for work/life integration leads to a higher preference for separation (H1c).

Finally, since this research is looking into online boundary management, which in its core concerns online media usage, it is sensible to involve not only face-to-face norms but also specifically norms concerning social media usage. Turner, Grube, Tinsley, Lee and O'Pell (2006) conducted research on employee media usage at work, specifically e-mail and instant messenger usage patterns. Their findings suggest a relationship between the perceived norms of media usage and their own amount of time spent using them. In this organization, the more a supervisor was perceived as utilizing e-mail and instant messengers as their preferred mode of communication, the more an employee also preferred communicating via these channels. As descriptive norms suggest, the more a behavior is perceived as normal, the more it is accepted and in turn, will be adopted as appropriate behavior (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Based on this, as well as the mentioned effects of the aforementioned study (Turner et al., 2006), it is also hypothesized that co-workers' social media usage will influence online boundary management. Even though Turner et al. (2006) were looking into the supervisor behavior, it is logical to assume that the co-workers' Instagram usage behavior will have an effect as well. The more co-workers actively use Instagram and accept professional contacts, the lower will the levels of preference for separation be. On the opposite side, it can be expected that the more formalized the perceived social norms are for Instagram usage, the higher will be the desire for separation of co-workers and private contacts (H1d).

These four aspects of perceived social norms at work are summarized below and make up the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The more formalized the perceived social norms for (a) rules and regulations, (b) communication practices, (c) work/life integration and (d) Instagram usage are at work, the stronger is the preference to separate co-workers on Instagram.

It should be noted that leadership is mentioned as an important factor of organizational structure and organizational culture as well (Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994). However, this work is only concerned about immediate co-workers, since the dynamics between co-workers and management are different in nature and close relationships between colleagues have even been shown to provide a defense against supervisors and management (Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2010). Consequently, the perceived social norms on leadership style or authority relations are not further examined but could be of interest in the future.

2.4 Theory of Planned Behavior

Social norms are the main research point of this thesis. However, as social norms have not been applied to the online boundary management theory and will be measured on a newly constructed scale (see chapter 3.3), it was decided to utilize social norms within a theoretical framework which has been applied many times across different areas of research and is widely accepted. As this thesis is concerned with human behavior, more specifically the influence of social norms on online boundary management, a theoretical concept was needed which incorporates both the aspect of social norms as well as the following behavioral intentions. Consequently, the theoretical concept which is applied is Icek Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior (TPB). Simplified, in its core, the concept tries to explain how people's intentions to behave a certain way are mainly based on and driven by their beliefs and attitudes.

The theory of planned behavior was developed from the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) which postulated that people's intentions (*motivations*) to perform a certain behavior are higher if they evaluate the given behavior as positive (*attitude*) and if they think others approve of performing said behavior (*subjective norms*). Consequently, they are more likely to perform the given behavior. However, Ajzen argued that since behavioral intent does not always lead to performing said behavior, the Theory of Reasoned Action needed one more component, namely *perceived behavioral control*, completing the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

The theory of planned behavior was chosen as the main theoretical concept for several reasons. First of all, the theory has been well supported by empirical evidence across different research areas, such as health and leisure choices (Conner, Norman, & Bell, 2002), entrepreneurial intentions (Kautonen, van Gelderen, & Fink, 2015), consumer intentions (Ajzen, 2015) as well as environmental concerns (De Leeuw, Valois, Ajzen, & Schmidt, 2015; Han, 2015). Secondly, it has been successfully applied to the social media sphere before, predicting selfie-posting behavior on social networking sites (Kim, Lee, Sung, & Choi, 2016) and engagement in high-level usage of SNS (Pelling & White, 2009), making it applicable in this work's context of social networking sites. Additionally, drawing upon the previously mentioned study on workplace training participation intentions (Sanders et al., 2011) the TPB has been shown to predict workplace behavior via a specific focus on perceived organizational norms. Therefore, the application to both the organizational and social media context is sensible. Furthermore, the theory includes the component of subjective norms. As this thesis deals with the influence of social norms at work on online behavior, these said social norms can be assessed via the theory of planned behavior. Ajzen (1991) argued himself that the weight of the three components can vary according to the topic (p. 188), allowing for a flexible incorporation of both descriptive and injunctive norms. Consequently, the previous establishment of the theory as well as the ability to include a broad spectrum of social norms in the concept makes the theory of planned behavior a sensible core theory to be applied in this proposed research.

As mentioned above, the theory of planned behavior consists of three independent components that determine if the strength of intent to perform a certain task or behavior ultimately leads to performance of said task. The first determinant is called *attitude toward the behavior* which refers to a person's positive or negative evaluation of said task. The second component of the theory is called *subjective norms* and is connected to whether or not there is a perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the task in question. The final determinant is the *perceived behavioral control*, which was added in order to explain the person's perception of their ability to perform the given task and whether or not there is control of the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). These three independent determinants all influence a person's intent to perform a task: "As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm with respect to a behavior, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger should be an individual's intention to perform the behavior under consideration" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). Consequently, it can be expected that not only

the social norms aspect will affect the online boundary management but also the two other factors from the TPB.

H2a: A more positive attitude toward accepting professional contacts into private life will lead to a lower preference to separate co-workers from their private Instagram channel.

H2b: High levels of perceived behavioral control regarding Instagram usage will lead to lower levels in preference for separation regarding co-workers on Instagram.

Cialdini et al. (1991) argue that the subjective norms aspect of Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (1991), refers solely to the injunctive norms as it measures only the perceptions of how others think one should behave. However, it has been shown that descriptive norms can provide more depth to the theory of planned behavior (Rivis & Sheeran, 2003; White, Smith, Terry, Greenslade, & McKimmie, 2009). Therefore, both injunctive and descriptive norms will be measured in this research. Additionally, parts of hypothesis 1 were deducted from a study that explicitly worked with descriptive norms, further pointing to the need to include both types of social norms in this research (Turner et al., 2006).

Even though the theory of planned behavior has been extensively applied across various areas, to the knowledge of the author it has only been applied once within the broader context of online boundary management, predicting the communication of work-related topics on social media (Van Zoonen, Verhoeven, & Elving, 2014). This could lead to some more interesting insights into the functions and underlying mechanisms of online boundary management strategies. More specifically, as to why some people have a preference for differentiation (separation), in which they feel the need to separate private and professional contacts (Van Prooijen et al., 2018), and others conduct an open behavior (integration), which means no or little separation between private and professional contacts (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Given the widespread usage of the TPB as well as its proven capability to determine behavioral intentions, it is assumed that combining all three aspects will yield the best overall model for predicting motivations for the preference for separation.

H3: Combining all three aspects of the theory of planned behavior will provide the model that explains the most variance in the preference for separation regarding co-workers on Instagram.

2.5 Social Risk

Additionally, the theory of planned behavior and specifically the determinant of perceived behavioral control relates to another sphere which extends this research: social risk. "A risky situation is one in which the outcome of a decision depends on the results of future events with known probabilities" (Mandel, 2003, p.31). A social risk refers to the consequences of a performed action or behavior amongst family, friends, co-workers, and so on. Not only actions can be related to social risks, also providing information about oneself to others can be considered risky, "because the information provided could be a basis for rejection" (Mandel, 2003, p. 31). Compared to, for example, a monetary risk leading to monetary gains or losses, a social risk leads to social gains or losses. A negative outcome could be embarrassment or rejection and positive outcomes could be praise and approval (Mandel, 2003). Consequently, it can be argued that before taking action, the social risks that might follow the behavior need to be considered and weighted. In this research, the risky situation is the acceptance of co-workers into the private social networking sphere and the different possible outcomes in relation to the present social norms at the workplace. The behavior of letting professional contacts into their private sphere via social media and seeing content that may not be congruent with professional norms could be met with approval or disapproval. Therefore, it is postulated that social risk could be considered another influencing factor that affects the decision on whether or not to blur the lines between private and professional life. The effects that perceived social risks can have on a behavioral intention has been researched before. Eisingerich, Chun, Liu, Jia and Bell (2015) found that perceived social risk was a mediating factor in the world of social media. Social risk was perceived as higher when recommending something online as compared to face-to-face recommendations. Consequently, people were less inclined to offer word-of-mouth recommendations through social media than the real world, since the relationship was mediated by the perceived social risk involved in recommending something online.

In this research, social risk is postulated to influence the relationship between social norms and online boundary management as follows. Social norms dictate what is deemed as appropriate and what could lead to disapproval amongst peers. These norms influence the consideration of possible social risks before taking action. According to these considerations, online boundary management is then conducted. Consequently, including social risk as another theoretical concept will give a deeper insight into the importance of social norms in

the business environment, especially considering that to the knowledge of the researcher, social risk has not been examined in the context of online boundary management before.

Perceived social risk is applied as a mediating factor between perceived social norms and online boundary management.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived social risk has a mediating effect on the relationship between social norms and online boundary management.

3. Method

Quantitative methods were used in order to conduct this research, specifically the method of the quantitative survey. The survey took place online, using the platform Qualtrics. It was available online from April 16 until April 30 of 2019. Since this thesis was focused on the relationship between two concepts, namely social norms in the context of the theory of planned behavior and online boundary management, a quantitative survey is an appropriate tool for gathering and measuring data (Punch, 2003). Additionally, a quantitative approach allows for the results to be generalized to the population, provided that there are enough participants and the data meets certain assumptions (as discussed in chapter 3.4) (Punch, 2003). The target group for the survey was comprised of people who use the social media platform Instagram and are currently employed or have been employed in the past year. Since the target group consisted of people who are actively using social media on the internet, using an online survey did not exclude any participants because of technological constraints, e.g. people without internet access, as they were not part of the target group to begin with. Furthermore, as this study is interested in behavior on social media, spreading the survey through respective social media channels was considered as appropriate. In order to only gather data from people within the target group, filter questions were utilized in the beginning of the questionnaire to sort out people from outside of the target group. Another reason for utilizing an online study was the potential reduction of negative effects of social desirability, as all participants had no contact to the researcher and were therefore less likely to be dishonest due to perceived social pressure (Punch, 2003).

On the other hand, it should be noted that by choosing an online questionnaire, there is little to no control about conscientiousness on the participants side. Additionally, participants can easily terminate the survey by simply closing their web browser. These potential outliers were identified as best as possible in the initial data analysis and excluded from the final sample.

3.1 Sampling

Participants were recruited through social media accounts and apps, mainly Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram. In total, 227 people participated in the questionnaire. The two filter questions in the beginning eliminated 41 individuals as they indicated not to have an Instagram account or not to have been employed within the past year. 31 participants were

excluded of the sample due to not finishing the whole questionnaire or being identified as outliers due to their extreme values that did not fit with the rest of the collected data. The final sample consisted of 155 participants of which 118 were female (76.1%) and 35 were male (22.1%). Two participants declined to indicate their gender. The youngest participant was 18 years old and the oldest participant 50 years old (M = 24.51; SD = 4.45). The majority of people indicated to having their Instagram account set to private (69%) and the average time spent on Instagram per week was almost 8 hours (M = 7.85; SD = 8.74). Additionally, 12.9% of people said they were not currently employed and used their previous employer as a reference to participate in the survey. Of those participants currently working, 42.6% work full-time and 56.1% part-time. The majority of participants have been at their current workplace for roughly two years (M = 1.87; SD = 2.12).

3.2 Procedure

The online questionnaire which participants completed consisted of ten pages. An additional final page informed participants they had completed the survey. All questions were phrased in English. The questionnaire consisted of 41 items in total. Before the start, all participants were informed about the goal of the study, the understanding of social media behavior in relation to one's workplace environment. They were also reminded of the anonymity of their answers. The first two questions were used to sort out participants that did not meet the target group, asking whether they possess an Instagram account and if they were currently employed or had been employed within the past year. The questionnaire then utilized the theory of planned behavior, questioning participants' attitude toward the behavior, extensively assessing the perceived social norms at work, followed by the perceived behavioral control of using Instagram. Further, the perceived social risk and then the preference for separation on social networking sites were measured. Participants were informed that these questions were in relation only to immediate co-workers and not supervisors or managers. As a control variable, participants were asked to indicate their current levels of separation regarding private and professional contacts on Instagram in order to asses actual behavior congruent to the intention. Finally, their overall Instagram habits were assessed and the questionnaire closed with demographic questions.

3.3 Measures

Perceived Social Norms. To assess the perceived prevalence of social norms at the participants workplace, the theory of planned behavior was utilized as the basic model to measure social norms as an independent variable. "The relative importance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in the prediction of intention is expected to vary across behaviors and situations" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). Because of said expected variations in importance and the main focus of this research being the influence of social norms, the most extensive part of the model utilized was the social norms aspect, one aspect of the theory of planned behavior. However, the two other components could not be omitted as they are important parts that complete the model. Therefore, the attitude toward the behavior and the perceived behavioral control were gathered through two-item and one-item scales, respectively.

Since there was no previously validated scale available that fitted this research, a new scale to measure one's perceived social norms at the workplace was constructed. The scale was drawn closely from Ajzen's (2002) recommendations on how to construct a TPB questionnaire. The *subjective norms* determinant was assessed through the construction of a scale which entailed items about both injunctive and descriptive norms in order to have a comprehensive insight into the influence of social norms (Cialdidni & Trost, 1998). It was decided to approach this social norms scale according to the four hypothesized dimensions of perceived social norms, as discussed in chapter 2.3.4. Questions were related to the four different aspects concerning the degree of formalization within the organization, specifically focused on immediate co-workers. Each of those four aspects was assessed via at least one injunctive norms question and one descriptive norms question. The first set of questions asked about the three perceived social norms aspects of the organization based on Schneider (1994) and Hall et al. (1967), namely rules and regulation, work/life integration and communication practices. They excluded the perceived norms specifically focusing on social media as they were assessed separately and without the questions being based on previous literature on organizational structures. The perception of social norms on the organizations rules and regulations was assessed by drawing on Chen and Huang (2007) and their items on organizational formalization in terms of seriousness of policies (e.g. "It is expected of me to take mandatory compliance trainings that are provided at my workplace seriously and participate responsibly"). Furthermore, the way of communication between co-workers was assessed through formalized communication practices according to

Schneider (1994) (e.g. "Informal language when communicating with co-workers is generally not approved"). Thirdly, the integration of private life in the professional context was measured, hereby drawing on previously conducted research on role-referencing and integration of work and private life (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006) (e.g. "My co-workers frequently share stories about their private lives at work" or "My colleagues don't meet with each other outside of work").

Table 3.1

Different aspects of perceived social norms at work. Item loadings on a three factor principal components solution.

Item	Communication	Work/Life Overlap	Rules & Regulation
My co-workers contact other employees through formal e-mails or telephone calls at work.	.314		
It is important to contact co-workers formally, for example via e-mail, rather than a casual chat.	.626		
My co-workers do not use informal language when they communicate with each other.	.793		
Informal language when communicating with co-workers is generally not approved.	.720		
My colleagues don't meet with each other outside of work.		.719	
My colleagues would approve of spending leisure time together outside of work.		.753	
Telling co-workers private stories from outside of work is not approved.		.416	
My co-workers frequently share stories about their private lives at work.		.532	
It is expected of me to take mandatory compliance trainings that are provided at my workplace seriously and participate responsibly.			.778
My co-workers take compliance regulations seriously and consider them carefully in their daily job routine.			.881
Cronbach's alpha	.65	.61	.60
Eigenvalue	2.92	1.46	1.10

A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) using a varimax rotation was conducted to assess the dimensionality of the outcome variable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was .72, which indicates that the sampling was adequate for the PCA to yield reliable factors. Bartlett's test of sphericity suggested that the correlations between items were sufficiently large, $X^2(45) =$ 262.52, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 54.8% of the variance in social norms. As intended, the items loaded onto three factors according to the first three dimensions of social norms, presented in Table 3.1. The factors found were:

Communication. The first factor included four items all related to communication practices between co-workers. This included the degree of informal language as well as communication channels utilized for contacting others. The internal consistency of the social norms communication scale was $\alpha = .65$.

Work/Life Integration. The second factor found included four items which were linked to the integration of private life into the work environment. The internal consistency of the social norms work/life overlap scale was $\alpha = .61$.

Rules and Regulations. The two items which were included in this factor related to rules and regulations that are in place at the company, such as compliance trainings. The internal consistency of the social norms rules and regulations scale was $\alpha = .60$.

The second dimension of the social norms scale was self-developed and focused specifically on perceived social norms in regards to social media usage since the previously used frameworks for organizational norms did not yet include modern social media technology (Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994). Again, there were items for both injunctive and descriptive norms (e.g. "Most of my co-workers are active users of Instagram" or "I think sending a co-worker a follower request on Instagram would be approved by him/her"). A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) using a varimax rotation was conducted to assess the dimensionality of the outcome variable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin was .70, which indicates that the sampling was adequate for the PCA to yield reliable factors. Bartlett's test of sphericity suggested that the correlations between items were sufficiently large, $X^2(6) =$ 108.28, $p < .001$. The resultant model explained 52.1% of the variance in Instagram social norms. As intended, the items loaded onto only one factor, presented in Table 3.2, which was labeled *Instagram norms*. However, after running a reliability test using Cronbach's α, it was decided to remove one item ("I think rejecting a co-worker's follower request on

Instagram would result in his/her disapproval"), as this increased the scale's reliability dramatically (from α = .40 to α = .72).

All items relating to the perceived social norms were coded in such a way that a higher score on each respective scale points to higher levels of formalization.

Table 3.2

Different aspects of perceived Instagram norms at work. Item loadings on a one factor principal components solution.

Item	Perceived Instagram Norms
Most of my co-workers are active users of Instagram.	.771
I think rejecting a co-worker's follower request on Instagram would result in his/her disapproval.	.510
My colleagues follow each other on Instagram.	.826
I think sending a co-worker a follower request on Instagram would be approved by him/her.	.738
Cronbach's alpha	.72
Eigenvalue	2.08

Another determinant of the theory of planned behavior, *attitude toward the behavior*, was assessed by asking about the overall attitude towards accepting professional contacts into the private sphere via two items. One item was focused specifically on the social media sphere and one item assessed general pleasure of having contact to co-workers outside of work ("For me, allowing co-workers to follow my private social media accounts is pleasant" and "I find having contact with co-workers outside of work enjoyable"). The reliability of the two-item scale was measured at α = .76.

The final determinant in the theory of planned behavior is *perceived behavioral control.* Like the above determinant, *attitude toward the behavior,* this was also measured as a control variable. Perceived behavioral control assesses how likely one is able to perform a certain behavior, wherefore the item was developed to capture the respondents' capability: "I feel confident that my co-workers only see what I want them to see if I accept their follower request on Instagram". This obtains the perceived degree of control and ability to display only intentional content online. All items were based on a 7 point Likert-Scale (1 = *strongly disagree* ; 7 = *strongly agree*).

Social Risk. The hypothesized mediator social risk was assessed by using a three item scale which had been utilized in previous research (Eisingerich et al., 2015). The scale was

previously developed in regards to word-of-mouth recommendation on Facebook and provided an excellent internal consistency (α = .98) in its original study. Consequently, the scale had to be adapted to the Instagram and social norms context. For example, one item was adapted from "I am worried that people may disapprove of me when I recommend the company/products on social sites such as Facebook" to "I am worried that my co-workers may disapprove of me when they see what I post on my private Instagram account". All items were assessed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* ; 7 = *strongly agree*). The internal consistency of the social risk scale was good (α = .84).

Online Boundary Management. The dependent variable was connected to the concept of online boundary management, in this case measuring the degree of preference for separation between professional contacts and private social media accounts, specifically Instagram. A 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* ; 7 = *strongly agree*) with eight items was used to measure this variable, utilizing a previously developed scale (Van Prooijen et al., 2018). In this previous study, the scale was utilized to assess Facebook boundary management and showed good internal consistency (α = .87). Thus, the scale was slightly adapted to fit the context of Instagram. An adapted item was for example changed from "I would more carefully select the information that I share on Facebook with these colleagues" to "I would more carefully select the stories and pictures that I share on Instagram with these colleagues". The internal consistency of the online boundary management scale was good (α = .88).

3.4 Assumptions for Data Analysis

In order to successfully test the hypotheses with statistical methods, the collected data had to be examined as to whether or not it meets certain prerequisites. This includes the assumptions concerning normality, linearity, homoscedasticity as well as no auto- and multicollinearity (Field, 2013). After removing outliers, visualizing the variables on histograms lead to the conclusion that the assumption of normality was met. To test for linearity and homoscedasticity, scatterplots were created with studentized residuals and unstandardized predicted values of the predictor and outcome variables of importance. The criterium of linearity was met since the all residuals in the P-P Plot clustered around the line, suggesting linearity. Furthermore, the scatterplot appeared rectangular, suggesting that the criterium of homoscedasticity was also met. Using the Durbin–Watson test, all variables were tested for autocorrelation where a regression analysis was conducted. The tested

variables all showed values closely around 2 which points to no autocorrelation (see individual analysis in chapter 4 for exact values). Additionally, all VIF values appeared closely to 1, suggesting no multicollinearity. Consequently, all assumptions for data analyses were met.

4. Results

Table 4.1 presents the means and standard deviations as well as the zero-order correlations of each of the variables addressing the thesis' hypotheses and research question. Participants displayed moderate levels of preference for separation (M = 3.31, SD = 1.27). Furthermore, the index for the mediator, perceived social risk showed a moderate mean of M = 3.13 and a standard deviation of SD = 1.50. The overall attitude toward having co-workers in respondents' private sphere was relatively high (M = 4.78, SD = 1.34), meaning the attitude toward the behavior was rather positive. Concerning the different aspects of perceived social norms, participants reported moderate levels of formalized communication norms (M = 3.22, SD = 1.18). The work/life integration norms (M = 2.55, SD = .87) as well as Instagram norms (M = 2.93, SD = 1.16) were relatively low, whereas the rules and regulation norms were relatively high (M = 4.55, SD = 1.48).

Table 4.1

Means, Standard Deviations and Zero-Order Correlations

Measure	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Attitude Toward the Behavior	4.78	1.34	—							
2. Communication Norms	3.22	1.18	−.31**	—						
3. Work/Life Overlap Norms	2.55	.87	−.58**	.48***	—					
4. Rules & Regulations Norms	4.55	1.48	.03	.20**	.10	—				
5. Instagram Norms	2.93	1.16	−.52**	.30***	.56***	.18**	—			
6. Perceived Behavioral Control	4.85	1.47	.19*	−.08	−.13	.01	−.15	—		
7. Social Risk	3.13	1.50	−.55***	.29***	.49***	−.03	.42***	−.22**	—	
8. Preference for Separation	3.31	1.27	−.55***	.33***	.51***	−.03	.45***	−.24**	.75***	—

*Note. N = 278. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001*

Concerning the correlations, as assumed in the hypothesis, the aspects of perceived social norms all showed correlations with the mediator, social risk, as well as the outcome variable, online boundary management. Only the perceived formalization regarding rules and regulations norms did not show any correlation with the hypothesized variables and was therefore excluded from further analysis.

4.1 Effects of Social Norms on Boundary Management

The first step was to find out which aspect of the perceived social norms would affect online boundary management, in this case the preference for separation on Instagram. In order to test for hypothesis 1a, b, c and d, the positive relationships between the perceived formalized social norms at work and preference for separation, an ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple linear regression analysis with the preference for separation as the outcome variable was conducted. Predictors were three different aspects of perceived social norms at work which had previously been found as correlating with the outcome variables: communication practices norms, work/life integration norms as well as Instagram norms. Since the perceived social norms for rules and regulations did not significantly correlate with the outcome variable, hypothesis 1a was already rejected.

The model was found to be significant, $F(3, 151) = 22.19$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .31$. Both work/life integration ($\beta = .47$, $p < .001$) and Instagram norms ($\beta = .27$, $p = .003$) were found to be significant predictors for online boundary management. The higher the perceived levels of formalization in work/life integration and Instagram norms, the higher was the desire for separation between private and professional contacts. Only communication norms ($\beta = .11$, $p = .185$) were found not to be a significant predictor in the model. The data met the assumption of independent errors (Durbin-Watson = 2.02). Consequently, H1b was rejected, whereas H1c and H1d were accepted.

In accordance with the theory of planned behavior it was hypothesized in H2a and H2b that aside from the social norms aspect, both the attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control would affect online boundary management negatively. Both variables were utilized as control variable in this research. An OLS multiple regression analysis was conducted, using attitude towards the behavior and perceived behavioral control as predictors and preference for separation as the outcome variable. The model was found to be significant, $F(2, 152) = 36.09$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .32$, with both attitude toward the behavior ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .001$) and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = -.12$, $p = .045$) as

significant negative predictors for preference for separation. This means that higher levels of positive attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control lead to lower levels of preference for separation. Consequently, H2a and H2b were accepted.

For further analysis within the theory of planned behavior model and in accordance with hypothesis 3, an OLS hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. This included the two different aspects of the TPB model, attitude towards the behavior and perceived behavioral control, as well as the two significant social norms aspects, work/life integration and Instagram norms. In the hierarchical regression analysis, preference for separation was the outcome variable. The previously found significant social norms, work/life integration and Instagram norms, were entered in the first block, as they were the main research point and highly significant. In the next block, the two other aspects of the TPB model, attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control, were entered (see Table 4.2 for beta weights and values for explained variance). When the perceived social norms were used as the only predictors, 29.8% of variance was explained.

Table 4.2
Standardized beta weights and R^2 of the hierarchical regression analyses with ratings on the online boundary management scale as the outcome variable.

	Model 1	Model 2
Predictor		
Work/Life Overlap Norms	.37***	.22*
Instagram Norms	.25***	.15
Attitude Toward the Behavior		−.33***
Perceived Behavioral Control		−.13
	$R^2 = .29$	$\Delta R^2 = .09$
	$p < .001$	$p < .001$

Note: N = 155. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

The second block showed that when attitude towards the behavior and perceived behavioral control were added, perceived Instagram norms was no longer a significant predictor. However, neither was perceived behavioral control. The two remaining factors, work/life integration norms and attitude toward the behavior explained 38.4% of the variance in online boundary management, which is rather high. In light of these findings, hypothesis 3 could only be accepted in part since the model including all aspects of the TBP

did predict the highest variance for preference for separation, yet perceived behavioral control was not significant. The significant variables were attitude toward the behavior and perceived social norms for work/life integration.

4.2 Social Risk as a Mediator

With regards to hypothesis 4 of this research, a mediation analysis had to be conducted with social risk as the proposed mediator between social norms and online boundary management. To conduct this analysis, the PROCESS macro of Hayes (2013) was utilized as a plug-in for SPSS.

The mediation model utilized work/life integration norms as the independent variable since the previously conducted hierarchical regression revealed it as the most important predictor from the four hypothesized social norms aspects. As illustrated in the mediation model in Figure 1, the regression of work/life integration norms with preference for separation, ignoring the mediator, was significant, $b = .27$, $p = .002$. This significance of work/life integration norms on online boundary management was already established in chapter 4.1. Furthermore, the unstandardized regression coefficient between work/life integration norms and social risk was also statistically significant, $b = .83$, $p < .001$, as was the unstandardized regression coefficient between social risk and preference for separation $b = .57$, $p < .001$. In the present study, the 95% confidence interval of the indirect effects was obtained with 5,000 bootstrap samples. The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was $b = 0.47$, CI95% = [0.335; 0.612]. Thus, the indirect effect was statistically significant, since the confidence intervals were both positive numbers. Consequently, social risk partially mediated the relationship between work/life integration norms and the preference for separation. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was accepted.

Figure 1
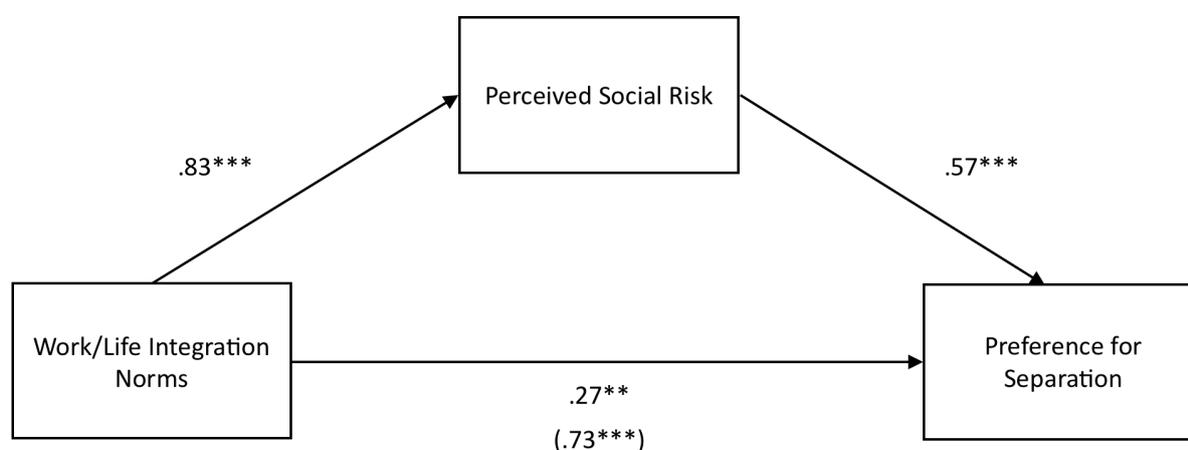
Unstandardized regression coefficients for the relationship between work/life overlap norms and preference for separation as mediated by perceived social risk. The unstandardized regression coefficient between work/life overlap norms and preference for separation, controlling for perceived social risk is in parenthesis.
Note: N = 155. $p^{**} < .01$, $p^{***} < .001$

4.3 Additional Findings

On top of the results for the stated hypotheses, additional findings concerning online boundary management were obtained in order to control for other effects on preference for separation. Testing for a link between Instagram account privacy settings and online boundary management, a t-test was conducted. Online boundary management was the dependent variable and the private or public setting of the personal Instagram account the grouping variable. The account privacy setting was assessed through a single-choice item ("Is your personal Instagram profile currently open to the public?"). On average, participants who had their Instagram account set to private showed higher levels of online boundary management ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.28$) than those with a public Instagram account ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.16$). The difference of .53, BCa 95% CI [−.959; −.097], was significant, $t(152) = −2.42$, $p = .017$. This means that people who currently have their Instagram account set to private also prefer higher levels of separation.

Furthermore, it was tested whether or not the time that an individual has been working at a company, had any effects on online boundary management. This was measured with Pearson's correlation coefficient, using the years spent at the current (or latest) workplace

and preference for separation on the online boundary management scale. The results showed no significant relationship between years spent at the workplace and the preference for separation, $r = -.08$, $p = .339$. Similar results could be observed when using Pearson's correlation coefficient considering the average weekly time spent using Instagram and preference for separation, $r = -.02$, $p = .828$, as well as whether or not the respondent posts work-related content on their private Instagram account, $r = -.02$, $p = .779$

As mentioned in the theoretical framework (see chapter 2.3.4), it has been argued that it can be difficult to create boundaries if there are no guidelines on the employer's side. Even though not hypothesized, it was decided to run another independent samples t-test with the preference for separation as the dependent variable and the existence of guidelines concerning social media usage from the employer as the grouping variable ("Does your employer have specific rules and guidelines in place when it comes to work-related content in your private social media channels?"). This test was also conducted in order to reaffirm earlier results that showed that perceived social norms on rules and regulations did not affect an individual's preference for separation. On average, participants who indicated that their employer had specific guidelines for social media usage in place showed higher levels of online boundary management ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.45$) than those whose employer did not provide specific guidelines ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.20$). However, the difference of .34, BCa 95% CI [−.116; .800], was not significant, $t(152) = 1.48$, $p = .142$. Accordingly, even though higher levels of preference for separation were visible for respondents with guidelines from their employer, this difference was not significant. These results overlap with the previous findings in chapter 4.1, in that the perceived social norms regarding rules and regulations did not significantly affect online boundary management.

Finally, to assess whether or not the independent variable worked as intended, a simple linear regression analysis was run, this time with preference for separation as the independent variable and the current separation of private and professional contacts as the outcome variable ("To what extent do your private contacts overlap with your work-related contacts on Instagram?"). The overlap of current contacts was assessed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *completely separated*, 7 = *completely overlapping*). The model was significant, $F(1, 152) = 29.37$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .16$. Preference for separation had a highly significant negative influence on the current overlap of co-workers and private contacts on Instagram ($\beta = -.40$, $p < .001$). This indicates that the preference for separation strongly affects the actual separation of private and professional contacts, indicating that the independent variable

measured what it was supposed to measure and that the intention of the behavior leads to the actual behavior, as specified by the theory of planned behavior.

When these two additional factors where found to be significant, it was decided to rerun the OLS hierarchical regression analysis (see chapter 4.1). This time, Instagram account privacy settings and current overlap of professional and private contacts were included as independent variables in order to see whether this model would explain more variance in online boundary management. The previously found significant social norms, work/life integration and Instagram norms, were entered in the first block again. In the next block, the two other aspects of the TPB model, attitude toward the behavior and perceived behavioral control, were entered. Instagram privacy settings and current overlap of private and professional contacts were entered into the third block. Preference for separation was the dependent variable (see Table 4.3 for beta weights and values for explained variance). Similar to the first hierarchical regression, when perceived social norms were used as the only predictors, 28.3% of variance was explained. The second block showed that including attitude towards the behavior and perceived behavioral control, perceived Instagram norms was no longer a significant predictor. This model explained 38% of the variance in online boundary management, which is in line with the previous findings. When adding the variables that were found to be significant predictors in the additional findings, the model did not yield much better results. All variables together explained 40% of variance, only a 2% increase when account privacy settings and current overlap of contacts were included. The work/life integration norms as well as the attitude toward the behavior were still significant predictors, so was the current overlap of contacts. However, due to the model only explaining 2% more variance and being a lot less significant, it was decided to keep the second model, as concluded in chapter 4.1.

Table 4.3

Standardized beta weights and R² of the second hierarchical regression analyses with ratings on the online boundary management scale as the outcome variable.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Predictor			
Work/Life Overlap Norms	**.36***	**.22***	**.21***
Instagram Norms	**.25***	.14	.09
Attitude Toward the Behavior		**−.33***	**−.28***
Perceived Behavioral Control		−.12	−.12
Account Privacy Settings			−.10
Current Overlap of Work and Private Contacts			**−.15***
	R^2 = .29	**ΔR^2 = .09**	**ΔR^2 = .02**
	$p < .001$	**$p < .001$**	**$p = .044$**

Note: N = 153. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

5. Discussion

Social norms affect human behavior every day. They influence how decisions are made based on other people's behavior and provide guidance as to what is deemed as appropriate in the society we live in (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Ever since smartphones and social media have become aspects of many people's daily lives (Turkle, 2011), it appears logical to examine an important concept like social norms in the context of digital technology. This is especially sensible due to the aforementioned differences in online social norms and social norms within an organizational setting (Ivaturi & Chua, 2019). Since the appeal of social networking sites has more and more permeated adult's lives as well as organizations itself, managing boundaries online has become increasingly important (Van Prooijen et al., 2018), in particular when keeping in mind the many cases of boundary violations in the past, such as Ms. Sacco losing her job because of a statement on her private Twitter account (Ronson, 2015). Consequently, the disparities between social norms at work and online social networking norms were investigated in the context of online boundary management. The aim of this study was to add to the existing research on online boundary management, specifically if perceived social norms of the workplace can be considered additional antecedents for a preference for separation. Previous studies have focused on online boundary management in the context of company identification (Fieseler et al., 2014), social judgement of colleagues (Van Prooijen et al., 2018) or the own perceived likability (Batenburg & Bartels, 2017). Yet, there is no research on the impact of social norms on online boundary management, even though an individual's daily decisions are based on perceived social norms (Cialdini et al., 1991). Considering the previously pointed out differences of accepted social norms at work and in private life, as well as the consequences that these disparities can bring with them, the potential relationship between social norms in the professional environment and a preference for separation on social media was the main focus.

The main factor which was utilized in order to assess how social norms were perceived in an organization was the degree of formalization regarding different aspects of organizational structures and cultures, and in turn their resulting social norms (Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994). Through several different studies, it was established that the varying degrees of formalization have an effect on social relationships between co-workers (Chen & Huang, 2007; Thommes et al., 2014; Scott & Davis, 2015). Based on organizational culture and structure theories (Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994), four different factors of perceived

social norms were concluded as important aspects of an organization's structure and culture and measured accordingly: the perceived social norms for rules and regulations, communication with co-workers, work and private life integration as well as social media usage. The results provided new insights into the reasons why some people prefer a separation between private and professional contacts and some do not. The two important social norms that were significantly affecting the preference for separation were the degrees of perceived formalization concerning work/life integration norms as well as the specific Instagram norms. As hypothesized, higher levels of formalization regarding these social norms lead to a higher desire for separation between private and professional contacts on Instagram. For work/life integration, this means that if it is considered appropriate to reference the private identity at work and there is some spillover between professional and private life, for example via non-work related contact outside of regular working hours, the preference for separation on social networking sites is lower. This makes sense as the private and professional identities have previously overlapped in the offline world, wherefore the same can be assumed to take place in the online world. As such, the perceived social norms concerning the overall practice of integrating private life in the work context outside of the online world had high implications for boundary management in the social networking world. These results add to previous findings that social aspects between colleagues, for example sociability and perceived liking, influence boundary management (Batenburg & Bartels, 2017; Van Prooijen et al., 2018) since the core of private and work life integration is based on social relations between co-workers. As such, this study expanded the already existing research on the effects of social relationships on online boundary management in that it was not solely focused on the participant's perception of social relationships between co-workers but on the actual integration of work life and private life with colleagues.

Additionally, perceived social norms concerning Instagram usage itself were found to be a significant predictor for online boundary management. In line with previously conducted studies on media usage at work (Turner et al., 2006), results found that the less formalized social norms on Instagram usage are in the work field, the lower were the levels in preference for separation. If many colleagues utilize Instagram and follow each other, it will be more likely that co-workers will be accepted into the private social networking sphere. This result also relates back to the basic function of social norms. The more often a behavior is conducted within a group, the more likely it is to be accepted as the appropriate behavior and to be followed (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

Contrary to expectations, the actual norms regarding rules and regulations did not influence online boundary management. This was hypothesized as it has been found that high amounts of rules and regulations diminish social interactions amongst colleagues (Chen & Huang, 2007) and that well-institutionalized rules and regulations concerning social media usage facilitate boundary management (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006). However, the perceived norms on rules and regulations did not correlate with preference for separation. This was surprising due to the relatively high score on the corresponding scale, pointing to high formalization of rules and regulations which, according to previous research, diminishes social interactions among colleagues (Chen & Huang, 2007). Nonetheless, these results were reaffirmed with the conducted t-test in chapter 4.3. The t-test found that the presence of specific rules or guidelines concerning social media usage in one's organization did not significantly affect online boundary management. Consequently, it could be argued that the social relationships between co-workers, in accordance with work/life integration norms, are more important in determining online boundary management than the rules and regulations specified by an organization. This result is further strengthened by the fact that there was no correlation between the perceived levels of formalization regarding rules and regulations and the work/life integration variables. Hence, these results contradict previous findings that higher levels of formalization in rules and regulations lead to lower levels of favorable social interactions between colleagues (Cheng & Huang, 2007). These findings further highlight the previously mentioned importance of co-worker relationships and that working with the same people every day can lead to strong bonds between colleagues which in turn become more important than an organization's rules and regulations (Deery et al., 2010). It is also in line with previously mentioned research on online boundary management that found aspects of social relations between colleagues as significant antecedents to online boundary management (Batenburg & Bartels, 2017; Van Prooijen et al., 2018).

Lastly, the fourth aspect of examined social norms, perceived communication norms, did correlate with online boundary management. Yet, in the multiple regression model it was found not to be a significant predictor. Even though communication practices and patterns have been found to be important aspects of an organization's culture and structure (Chen and Huang, 2007; Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994), they did not significantly affect online boundary management in the multiple norms model. The social norms regarding communication practices were therefore an influencing factor, however, compared to work/life integration not as important. Consequently, it could be argued that for online boundary

management, it is more important what co-workers communicate with each other and not how.

Relating these results on social norms back to the original research question, which was "*To what extent do perceived social norms at one's workplace influence online boundary management on private social media accounts in regards to co-workers?*", it can be argued that distinct aspects of perceived social norms which point to high levels of formalization within an organization positively influence the preference for separation. Here, the most important finding is that perceived social norms regarding work/life integration predicted online boundary management best. Consequently, social norms that make up co-worker's social relationships from the work environment do in some ways translate to the online realm.

Further, the results from the theory of planned behavior model indicate that aside from the social norms aspect, the attitude toward the behavior is another highly important factor for whether or not a separation is preferred. It was interesting to see that perceived behavioral control was significant when tested without the other factors, but lost its importance when the TPB model was tested with all components in the hierarchical regression analysis. It should be noted that these findings are similar to studies on social networking sites usage (Pelling & White, 2009; Van Zoonen et al., 2014). Comparable to the results here, Pelling and White (2009) found that perceived behavioral control was not a significant predictor for high-level SNS usage within a hierarchical regression analysis utilizing the theory of planned behavior. Van Zoonen et al. (2014) concluded that it was not a predictor at all for social media usage. It could be attributed to the fact that overall, scores for perceived behavioral control were rather high ($M = 4.85$; $SD = 1.47$). Therefore, it indicates that most people feel confident in using social networking sites, wherefore it loses its importance as a predictor. The TPB model also showed that the respondents' intentions and actual behaviors were congruent. Results suggest that the intention to perform the behavior (preference for separation) is associated with the actual behavior (current overlap of contacts), further confirming the decision to use the theory of planned behavior as the basic theoretical concept.

Finally, another influencing factor that was found to be significant to the concept of online boundary management was social risk. As expected, the perceived social risk of accepting work contacts onto the private Instagram account partially mediated the relationship between work/life social norms and online boundary management. These

results are in line with the previously found results of perceived social risk in the online context (Eisingerich et al., 2015). In turn, the posed sub-question "*To what extend does social risk influence the relationship between social norms at work and boundary management on private social media accounts in regards to co-workers?*", can be answered according to the results of the analysis, in that the perceived social risk is a partially mediating aspect of preference for separation. The model shows that when levels of formalization in work/life integration norms are high, meaning little to no overlap, the perceived social risks of accepting co-workers into the private Instagram account were also a lot higher. This makes sense since little integration between work and private life points to low levels of knowledge about other people's private life. Consequently, the chances for disapproval are higher as knowledge about co-workers' behavior outside of the work context is low. Accordingly, when the perceived social risks were higher, preference for separation was also higher in order to diminish the risks of embarrassment. This leads to the conclusion that the perceived social risks are actually evaluated in relation to the perceived social norms at work before accepting professional contacts into the private social networking sphere. This result only applies to the dimension of social norms on work/life integration due to it being the only significant social norm within the TBP model.

The additional findings further revealed that people with private account settings showed higher levels of preference for separation. This points to the argument that having a private account is a strategy of managing boundaries in itself, as it can be considered to be a part of the audience management strategy (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

5.1 Limitations and Future Research

In order to fully comprehend the results of this study, the work has to be critically reviewed and several limitations need to be taken into account. First and foremost, the sampling was not completely randomized. Even though the distribution of the survey via social media can be considered appropriate due to it being the target group, more variety concerning employment would have been preferable. Overall, the mean amount of years at the current workplace was very low. A wider distribution of years at the workplace may bring more interesting findings for the relationship between years at the employer and online boundary management since it has been found that company identification is a predictor for online boundary management (Fieseler et al., 2014). Yet, it is questionable if these low levels of time spent at one's workplace can already lead to distinct levels of

identification with it. In addition, the overall Instagram population was not appropriately represented. Even though the age group was well met, since the majority of Instagram users are under 30, females were overrepresented in this study. On Instagram, both genders are virtually evenly distributed (Statista, 2019).

Regarding the nature of the quantitative survey, it must be noted that self-reportings can be susceptible to errors, either intentional or unintentional. The researcher cannot control for mistakes on the behalf of the participants and is not able to guarantee that all participants answered carefully and truthfully. Additionally, the cross-sectional design of this quantitative study does not allow for causality between the given variables. This can only be achieved via an experimental research design, which this study did not apply.

In terms of the quality of research, it has to be noted that the scales which measured perceived social norms were questionable in their internal consistency. Even though the scales were constructed utilizing both descriptive and injunctive norms, their levels of internal consistency were rather low (*communication* α = .65; *work/life integration* α = .61; *rules and regulations* α = .60). It might be more feasible and reliable to distinguish scales between injunctive and descriptive norms in the results for future research (Rivis & Sheeran, 2003). An additional caveat that concerns the social norms aspect is that these results only apply to the western European area. This can be attributed to the survey's distribution mainly in Germany and the Netherlands. There are big differences in perceived social norms across the world, especially social norms concerning the workplace (Hofstede, 1980; Uhlmann et al., 2013). Keeping these differences in mind, it would be an interesting addition to the given research to see how perceived social norms in other cultures affect online boundary management. Specific focus could also be placed on the United States since the exemplary case of Ms. Sacco and her sarcastic Tweet took place there.

This study has contributed to the concept of online boundary management, specifically which determinants contribute to preferences for separation between professional and private contacts. Since this work did only account for the preference of separation, future studies could further investigate the other archetypes of online boundary management, as proposed by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013). Furthermore, it should be noted that in the mentioned concept, the factors of self-enhancement and self-verification play a role. These factors could be explored more in-depth in relation to perceived social norms as personality traits. Finally, it is impossible to include all possible social norms that make up the organizational culture or structure. Consequently, it can be assumed that there are

additional aspects of social norms that contribute to online boundary management. One factor that was briefly discussed earlier was the hierarchy practice or authority relationships (Hall et al., 1967; Schneider, 1994). Since this initial study on social norms only examined boundary management in relation to immediate co-workers, hierarchy was not included as part of this work. Hence, future studies on social norms and online boundary management could include the perceived norms regarding authority relations or supervisor support as predictors, since supervisor support has been shown to influence job satisfaction in employees (Deery et al., 2010). Additionally, it has been mentioned before that employees tailored their media usage according to their supervisor's media usage preferences (Turner et al., 2006). In this context, it would also be of interest if one's own current position (e.g. intern, associate or management) influences online boundary management as higher positions usually entail elevated potential for conflicts and lower levels of peer support (Skakon, Kristensen, Christensen, Lund, & Labriola, 2011).

5.2 Concluding Remark

Overall, this study contributed to the existing research on online boundary management with the perception of social norms at one's workplace as a significant predictor. The perceived social norms concerning the integration of work life and private life were the most relevant ones in predicting a preference for separation. Furthermore, the research added the concept of social risk as an additional aspect influencing the desire for a separation between private and professional contacts. Another interesting result of this work is that perceived behavioral control, an aspect of the theory of planned behavior, did not prove to be significant in the analysis that considered the TPB model as a whole, raising the question whether the behavioral control aspect of the TPB applies to the rather technical spheres as well as it does to areas concerning psychological volition.

The most important finding of this study proves to be that the social relations between co-workers are the main predictor as to why some people prefer to have an overlap of private and work contacts, regardless of an organization's rules and regulations. This shows the impact that work relationships can have on one's work life as well as one's personal life and is further in line with Schneider's (1994) point: namely that co-worker relationships form one of the most essential dimensions of any organization's culture.

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Appendix A – Online Survey

Dear participant,
Thank you for taking part in my survey which is conducted for my Master Thesis at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

The survey is focused on social media usage and the workplace. It takes about 8 minutes to complete all questions. Please read each question carefully and answer honestly. There are no right or wrong answers, only your personal opinion is important to me.

The study is for scientific research purposes only. Of course, your data will remain anonymous and no conclusions can be drawn on your person.

It is recommended to complete this survey on a computer for the best view.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions regarding this survey:
510373jf@student.eur.nl

Many thanks!
To start, please click on "next".

(By clicking next, you agree to take part in this survey)

1. Do you have a profile on the social networking site Instagram?

       o Yes

       o No

2. Are you currently employed or have you been employed in the last 12 months? (This can include internships, working-student positions, part-time or full-time positions)

       o Yes

       o No

3. I am now interested in your work environment. When co-workers or colleagues are mentioned, I mean employees that work with you in your team, no supervisors or managers. If you are not currently employed, please think of the last job you had.

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree.

I find having contact with co-workers outside of work enjoyable.
       o Strongly disagree
       o Disagree
       o Somewhat disagree
       o Neutral
       o Somewhat agree
       o Agree
       o Strongly agree

For me, allowing co-workers to follow my private social media accounts is pleasant.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

4. Please read the following statements carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree.

*Compliance training refers to the education of employees on laws, regulations and company policies which are important in your day-to-day job responsibilities. This can take place in the form of an online program, a presentation or workshops.

It is expected of me to take mandatory compliance trainings that are provided at my workplace seriously and participate responsibly.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My co-workers take compliance regulations seriously and consider them carefully in their daily job routine.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

Informal language when communicating with co-workers is generally not approved.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My co-workers do not use informal language when they communicate with each other.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree

o Strongly agree

It is important to contact co-workers formally, for example via e-mail, rather than a casual chat.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My co-workers contact other employees through formal e-mails or telephone calls at work.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My co-workers frequently share stories about their private lives at work.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

Telling co-workers private stories from outside of work is not approved.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My colleagues would approve of spending leisure time together outside of work.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

My colleagues don't meet with each other outside of work.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree

o Agree
    o Strongly agree

Most of my co-workers are active users of Instagram.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Neutral
    o Somewhat agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

I think rejecting a co-worker's follower request on Instagram would result in his/her disapproval.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Neutral
    o Somewhat agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

My colleagues follow each other on Instagram.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Neutral
    o Somewhat agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

I think sending a co-worker a follower request on Instagram would be approved by him/her.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Neutral
    o Somewhat agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

5. Please read the following statement carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree.

I feel confident that my co-workers only see what I want them to see if I accept their follower request on Instagram.
    o Strongly disagree
    o Disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Neutral
    o Somewhat agree
    o Agree
    o Strongly agree

6. Please read the following statements carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree.
Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

I feel that it is risky to accept co-workers into my Instagram account.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

I am afraid that I may be embarrassed or look stupid by letting co-workers see what I post on my Instagram account.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

I am afraid that my co-workers might disapprove of me when they see what I post on my Instagram account.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

7. I am now interested in how you would use Instagram related to your co-workers. Again, when co-workers or colleagues are mentioned, I mean employees that work with you in your team, no supervisors or managers.
If you are not currently employed, please think of the last job you had.

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree.

I would accept a follower request from my co-workers on Instagram.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

I would feel uncomfortable if one of my colleagues would send me a follower request on Instagram.
- o Strongly disagree

o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would separate my co-workers from my private contacts on Instagram, for example via the close friends list.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would allow my co-workers to see all the pictures and stories that I share on Instagram.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would use a separate profile for these colleagues on Instagram.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would not make a distinction between private contacts and my colleagues when it concerns the stories that I share on Instagram.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would shield some of the personal stories on Instagram from my co-workers.
o Strongly disagree
o Disagree
o Somewhat disagree
o Neutral
o Somewhat agree
o Agree
o Strongly agree

I would more carefully select the stories and pictures that I share on Instagram if my co-workers follow me.
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

8. The following questions are now about your current usage of Instagram. Please read the question and indicate to what extent you currently separate your private contacts (friends/ family) from your professional contacts (colleagues/ supervisors).

To what extent do your private contacts overlap with your work-related contacts on Instagram?
- o Completely Separated
- o Separated
- o Somewhat Separated
- o Neither separated nor overlapping
- o Somewhat overlapping
- o Overlapping
- o Completely Overlapping

Does your employer have specific rules and guidelines in place when it comes to work-related content in your private social media channels?
This can also include other channels, such as Facebook or LinkedIn.
If you are not currently employed, please think of the last job you had.
- o Yes
- o No

Is your personal Instagram profile currently open to the public?
- o Yes
- o No

How many hours per week do you usually use Instagram?
If you are unsure of this, iPhones present this information to you in Settings --> Screen Time.
- o Text field

9. Please read the following statement carefully and indicate how much you tend to agree or disagree. Again, if you are not currently employed, please think of the last job you had.

The company I work for utilizes social media channels such as Instagram extensively for marketing and information purposes
- o Strongly disagree
- o Disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Neutral
- o Somewhat agree
- o Agree
- o Strongly agree

I post work-related content on my private Instagram account.
  o Strongly disagree
  o Disagree
  o Somewhat disagree
  o Neutral
  o Somewhat agree
  o Agree
  o Strongly agree

10. Demographic Questions

Gender: I am…
  o Male
  o Female
  o Prefer not to answer

How old are you?
  o Text field

My current work position is:
(if you are not currently working, use the last position you held)
  o full-time
  o part-time

My current work contract is:
  o permanent
  o temporary
  o I am not currently working

How many years have you worked at your current workplace?
(If you are not currently working, use your last workplace)
  o Text field

Thank you so much for participating in my survey!

You may close this window now.

For any questions, please email me: 510373jf@students.eur.nl