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Social Media and Work Family Interface of Mumpreneurs in Eldoret City, Kenya: A Sociological Perspective

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Social Media has made it possible for entrepreneurs to connect and interact based on similar interests, and this encourages the establishment of partnerships, which promotes innovations. Continued use of social media has also shown improved performance by various businesses. The expansion and development of the internet have made it simpler for moms to become entrepreneurs than ever before. It gives them access to multiple networks and sales channels without requiring them to leave their homes. The study used Henry Tajfel's Social Identity Theory, which provides insights into how the identities of mumpreneurs shape their entrepreneurial journeys, influencing their motivations, challenges, and support systems. A purposive sampling method was employed to identify a sample of twenty respondents, who were interviewed between April and May 2024. Data analysis was conducted using NVivo software and organised into themes. The findings indicated that social media has benefited mumpreneurs by offering them income and flexibility of work in terms of time and space, thereby enhancing their mental well-being and facilitating family obligations. However, this advantage has also acted as a double-edged sword as social media has disrupted family dynamics, leading mumpreneurs to seek strategies to balance their professional and familial responsibilities. The study identified several strategies employed by these entrepreneurs, including networking with peers, seeking help with household tasks, and massaging their spouses' egos. Recommendations for the study include encouraging mumpreneurs to connect with other women in business, seek guidance from consultants, prioritise family time whenever possible and advocating for government initiatives to provide affordable and accessible internet to support their enterprises.

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INTRODUCTION

The entrepreneurial ecosystem has undergone a notable transformation in recent years, largely propelled by the rise of digital platforms and social media networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok. These platforms serve as crucial infrastructures for the initiation and expansion of ventures, concurrently offering vital spaces for branding, professional networking, and customer engagement.

Statistical data from Statista (2022) indicates the substantial use of these platforms, with Facebook exceeding 2.93 billion monthly active users, followed by YouTube (2.6 billion), WhatsApp (2.44 billion), and WeChat (1.29 billion). This expansive user base presents a novel and potentially lucrative channel for marketers and entrepreneurs seeking to broaden their client base. Moreover, social media has emerged as a significant avenue for women possessing entrepreneurial aptitude, particularly in light of prevailing socio-cultural barriers and discriminatory practices, including the absence of secure work environments and experiences of sexual harassment, which can impede their professional trajectories (Emmanuel et al., 2022).

Social Media has changed how people interact with each other. Entrepreneurs have been able to exploit social media functionalities and use them in managing their business activities such as marketing (Alalwan et al., 2017). Many businesses have realised the importance of social media in

aspects that relate to customer involvement, building customer relationships and communication (Filo et al., 2015). Among the most notable shifts is the emergence of 'mum entrepreneurs' who are mothers who juggle the demands of motherhood alongside their entrepreneurial ventures in the same geographical and social space. (Ekinsmyth, 2013)

One of the primary advantages of social media for mumpreneurs is the flexibility it affords them. Unlike traditional business models that often require physical presence and rigid schedules, social media enables women to operate their businesses from virtually anywhere. According to a survey by the Small Business Administration in 2020, 64% of women entrepreneurs reported that flexible work arrangements were crucial for their success (SBA, 2020). This flexibility allows women to juggle business responsibilities with family duties, such as childcare and household management.

Women, just like men, have the entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and capabilities to run their own businesses. A report done by GEM (2023) showed that there were increasing numbers of women entrepreneurs throughout the world who were not satisfied with their jobs found that one way to solve the conflict between personal and work demands was through self-employment. According to Fielden et al. (2003), women see entrepreneurship as the only way to earn a living while being committed to family and other domestic responsibilities. Additionally, they are concerned

with balancing work and life; a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction with oneself; raising money; earning respect; and being independent. The most notable aspect of being a mumpreneur is that it is not just about generating income, but also satisfying their inner needs (Rosa et al., 1996).

Despite the increasing number of mum entrepreneurs in the world, they are facing major challenges such as inadequate capital, strict social and time limitations. In 2021, there was a reported decline in business activity globally among women from 19.1% in 2019 to 16.7% in 2021, and this was attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic that afflicted the world. The worst hit parts were in the lower-income countries, where the startup rates dropped by half for women from 8.5%.

This study explores how social media plays a crucial role in mitigating work-family conflict for these women, allowing them to manage their professional and family lives more effectively.

Statement of the Problem

In the past, women were treated as being passive and subservient to their husbands in the society. They were supposed to sit at home and wait for their spouses to bring them food, as this was considered a preserve for the male. However, in the recent past, there has been an increase in the number of women taking up digital entrepreneurship or online businesses as they try to make ends meet due to rising living standards. This type of business enables them to manage both family and business easily because they can take care of their families, which is a key role in their gender identity as well as business, since they need income for their day-to-day needs.

In most societies where the woman is still expected to play multiple roles as a wife, mother, provider and a contributor to the community, the importance of a spouse who sees the struggles and aims at helping the entrepreneur alleviate the conflict is crucial in the resolution of said conflict. Most

women are forced to scale back on their entrepreneurial ambitions because such success is attached to hard work and commitment, which takes away the entrepreneur's time from the family household.

Social media has bridged this gap as it has made women do business while still taking care of their families. It serves as a powerful tool for mumpreneurs seeking to achieve work-life balance through the flexibility it provides. Therefore, women can navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship while fulfilling personal responsibilities. As more women enter the entrepreneurial space, leveraging social media will remain essential for creating sustainable and balanced business practices.

Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook not only facilitate marketing but also enable entrepreneurs to engage with their audience in real time. This real-time interaction allows women to set their own schedules and prioritise tasks according to their personal and professional needs. For example, numerous mumpreneurs use scheduling tools to automate their social media posts, allowing them to allocate more time to other responsibilities (Smith, 2021). However, despite leveraging this technology, they still encounter challenges related to role strain within their families, as they often spend considerable time responding to late-night messages and receiving frequent calls from clients. This situation can impact one aspect of their lives, either their business or family, depending on where they prioritise their role identity. In light of this, the study aims to address the following questions: What is the role of social media in mitigating the work-family conflict of mumpreneurs? What are the challenges faced by mumpreneurs in leveraging social media for their entrepreneurial ventures? What are the strategies used by the mumpreneurs to overcome these challenges?

Research Objectives

- To find out the role of social media in mitigating the work-family conflict of mumpreneurs
- To explore the challenges faced by mumpreneurs in leveraging social media for their entrepreneurial ventures
- To examine the strategies used by mumpreneurs to overcome these challenges.

Research Questions

- What is the role of social media in mitigating the work-family conflict of mumpreneurs?
- What are the challenges faced by mumpreneurs in leveraging social media for their entrepreneurial ventures?
- What are the strategies used by the mumpreneurs to overcome these challenges?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant due to the increasing prevalence of mumpreneurship, which signifies a gradual transition towards inclusive business practices that incorporate both the strengths and challenges of motherhood within the entrepreneurial sphere. The entrepreneurial trajectories of male business owners differ significantly from those of women who are also mothers, highlighting important distinctions between these two demographics. Mumpreneurs frequently face a variety of challenges, including the necessity to balance parenting and household duties while managing the demands of running a business. While technology, particularly social media, offers potential solutions for achieving work-life balance, it also introduces unintended consequences that can affect family dynamics. Consequently, mumpreneurs must seek effective strategies to mitigate these challenges.

Scope

The study sought to find out the impact of social media on the work-family conflict, and it was conducted in Eldoret City, Kenya. The research

design used was Phenomenology as it seeks in-depth information on the lived experiences of mumpreneurs.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Identity Theory (SIT), initially formulated by Henri Tajfel in the late 1960s and subsequently elaborated by Peter Stryker in the 1970s. It examines how individuals classify themselves and others into social groups, thereby influencing behaviour, self-concept, and interpersonal interactions. This theoretical framework can be aptly applied to the experiences of mumpreneurs who employ social media as a vital entrepreneurial platform.

Mumpreneurs frequently juggle multiple roles, functioning simultaneously as mothers, entrepreneurs, and members of diverse social networks. Stryker's concept of identity salience posits that individuals prioritise different aspects of their identity depending on the context, a notion particularly pertinent in the fluid environment of social media (Stryker & Burke, 2000). For mumpreneurs, their maternal identity may take precedence in specific situations, while their entrepreneurial identity is more prominent in business-related contexts. This dual identity enables them to engage with varied audiences and customise their messaging accordingly.

Social media platforms afford mumpreneurs a distinctive avenue to articulate their identities and share personal narratives. By candidly discussing their experiences of balancing motherhood with entrepreneurship, they enhance their authenticity and relatability, both of which are essential for cultivating a loyal customer base (Baker & McKenzie, 2020). This dynamic aligns with SIT, as the visibility of their multifaceted identities fortifies their social connections. Followers who resonate with either aspect of their identity are more inclined to engage, thus fostering a supportive community.

Furthermore, mumpreneurs frequently utilise social media to establish groups or networks that reflect their shared experiences. These online communities

act as valuable resources for advice, encouragement, and collaboration, thereby reinforcing their social identity as both mothers and entrepreneurs. For example, platforms such as Facebook and Instagram enable mumpreneurs to share insights, challenges, and achievements, cultivating a collective identity that enhances their business visibility and credibility (Baker, 2021).

The theory examines how mumpreneurs on social media navigate their multiple identities to forge connections and engage their target audiences. By integrating their roles as mothers and business owners, they develop a unique brand identity that resonates with their followers. This strategic alignment not only contributes to their business success but also fosters a nurturing community that supports and empowers other mumpreneurs. Thus, examining the interplay of social identities within the realm of mumpreneurship can provide valuable insights into effective social media strategies.

For many women, the positions of mother, worker, and entrepreneur are always at odds and contending with one another, reflecting cultural perspectives on these duties. Women entrepreneurs have various identities that are tied to parenthood, gender, and other occupations, creating conflicts, stress, and inconsistencies. These tensions and contradictions function as unpleasant experiences, compelling mumpreneurs to behave in ways that are contradictory to their true identities (Essers & Benschop, 2007). Similarly, Duberley and Carrigan (2013) stated that many mothers who developed a new business identity went through a phase of role conflict in which creating their identities as new mothers produced friction with their prior roles as full-time employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, the conversation surrounding work-life balance has gained significant traction, particularly among women entrepreneurs. The rise of social media has further complicated this dynamic, providing both challenges and

opportunities. Social media platforms offer mumpreneurs innovative ways to manage their businesses while balancing personal commitments. This section explores how mumpreneurs leverage social media to achieve work-life balance, focusing on the benefits of social media to mumpreneurs and challenges they face in business and at home.

Use of Social Media in Business

Social Media has made it possible for entrepreneurs to connect and interact based on similar interests, and this encourages the establishment of partnerships, which promotes innovations. Continued use of social media has also shown improved performance by various businesses (Olanrewaju et al., 2020).

The expansion and development of the internet have made it simpler for moms to become entrepreneurs than ever before. It gives them access to multiple networks and sales channels without requiring them to leave their homes (Richomme-Huet & Vial, 2014).

Digital services have the added benefit of empowering mumpreneurs to pursue the idea, obtain the necessary information to determine whether the product is relevant, obtain funding, manage the globalised industrial production of their products, market the product for sale, and network with potential relationships for expansion (Richomme-Huet & Vial, 2014).

Social media plays a very crucial role in the development of businesses owned by women. Social media has helped many mumpreneurs overcome financial challenges while establishing their businesses due to its affordability (Jones et al., 2015). In addition, social media is a user-friendly and economical environment which can be used to rapidly send information to different target groups, and this has enabled the growth of many women-led enterprises (Pourkhani et al., 2019).

Melissa et al. (2013) indicated that many women in Indonesia were increasingly using social media to

conduct their businesses because of the ease of using the digital platform. By using social media, the users were able to tag pictures and provide product descriptions to their potential clients with just a single click.

Due to its popularity, many mumpreneurs have embraced Facebook as one of the main social media sites to use for business. This has been made possible by Facebook making it possible for businesses to like each other, comment and communicate with each other (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

Meta (the mother company for Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp) has discovered the crucial role that the company plays in the promotion of entrepreneurship. It has made it possible to link and synchronise Facebook and Instagram business accounts and WhatsApp business account without having to create new accounts on each platform (Desk, 2023).

Benefits of Using Social Media for Mumpreneurs

One of the main reasons why many mumpreneurs use social media to conduct their businesses is that it offers mobility and flexibility. The advancements made in the field of technology have enabled many entrepreneurs to conduct their businesses virtually from anywhere, thanks to the internet, smartphones, laptops, and tablets. Because of this, mumpreneurs can take care of their families and children while taking care of their businesses (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

Using social media to conduct business has also allowed mumpreneurs to enrol for school to pursue further education while juggling self-employment due to the flexibility that has been made possible by online business (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

Social media has significantly reduced the amount of money required to set up a business. According to the OECD, women entrepreneurs face more barriers in accessing finances for starting businesses or for growing their businesses as compared to their

male counterparts. If they get funding, they receive less, pay higher interest, and are required to provide more collateral (Lassébie et al., 2019). When starting a business through social media, one does not need to have as much capital as is required when opening a traditional business, such as a physical store. Many of the mumpreneurs use their homes as stores, which further reduces the cost of doing business, and take photos of the products and promote them through their social media sites, which are relatively easy to use (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

Due to the unlimited nature of social media geographically, many mumpreneurs have been able to establish clients over a wider area. Due to this, they are able to serve clients who are in far-flung areas from their localities. Due to social media, many of the mumpreneurs are able to meet their potential mentors, business partners and also individuals who offer social support to them. With this, they are able to build a community that is relevant to them (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

The use of social media by mumpreneurs has led to the establishment of groups on social media where the mumpreneurs use such forums to gain access to information and resources. They also use these forums to develop and optimise their businesses, product recommendations and they can also seek legal help (Richomme-Huet & Vial, 2014).

Challenges Faced by Mumpreneurs Doing Business on Social Media

Due to the high number of social media users, sometimes mumpreneurs become overwhelmed by the sheer number of enquiries, comments or messages that they receive, which in turn leads to delayed customer feedback, which ultimately leads to customer dissatisfaction (Mukolwe & Korir, 2016).

Another challenge that mumpreneurs face is poor internet connectivity, which may be exacerbated by the high cost of data and internet-enabled devices and a lack of relevant online content. When the

internet connectivity is poor, this means that the mumpreneur will not be able to communicate with her clients, thus affecting the business (Silvestri et al., 2020).

Using social media to conduct business exposes one to unfair competition from other businesspeople who resort to using underhanded techniques to gain more customers. People can give negative reviews or even steal your photos and use them as their own (Genç & Öksüz, 2015). Mumpreneurs using social media also have to deal with people who con them after the provision of goods and services, and they do not get paid.

Additionally, reliance on these social media platforms poses a huge risk such as businesses advertising online risk encountering algorithmic bias, whereby platforms disproportionately favour specific content or demographics. This unintended exclusion of valuable customer segments from targeted advertising and organic reach can result in inefficient ad spend and a restricted talent pool for recruitment. (SalesHub, 2025). Furthermore, there is also the challenge of account suspensions, which make accounts opaque, disrupting businesses. Roberts (2019) posits that account suspensions, whether temporary or permanent, severely disrupt a business's marketing efforts, impede customer interaction, and can lead to substantial financial losses due to halted sales, sponsorships, and partnerships. This impact is particularly devastating for influencers and small businesses, which frequently depend heavily on social media platforms for their primary revenue streams.

Work-Life Balance for Mumpreneurs

The declaration of Philadelphia by the International Labor Organization (ILO) that labour is not a commodity recognises that workers are people who have hopes, dreams and aspirations for themselves and their families. The declaration also affirms that all human beings have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom, dignity, economic

security and equal opportunity (International Labour Organization, 2022).

Work-life balance can be defined as the amount of time that one spends at work compared to the amount of time that one spends with family and doing other things that one enjoys. Work-life balance can vary from one person to another, depending on what stage of life one is in, whether married or single (Meenakshi, 2013).

Rehma and Roomi (2012) stated that many women entrepreneurs faced several challenges in achieving work-life balance, and some of the challenges included, inadequate time, lack of involvement by husbands in domestic household chores, cultural, social and norm responsibilities in the family.

Mumpreneurs work hard in managing their businesses and their domestic responsibilities. However, the quality of personal life could be disrupted as challenges may arise which hinder fulfilling some commitments, which leads to them having to sacrifice time with their families (Wijaya & Layman, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section includes the research design, target population, data collection, sampling and sampling procedures.

The research was conducted in Eldoret City in the month of April to May 2024. Eldoret is located in the Uasin Gishu County of Kenya, situated at an elevation of approximately 2,100 meters (6,890 feet) above sea level. The local economy is bolstered by agriculture, trade, and increasingly, small and medium-sized enterprises. Eldoret hosts several markets and retail outlets, catering to the needs of its growing population. It combines a rich agricultural heritage with a dynamic urban environment, making it an essential part of Kenya's economic and cultural landscape.

The Research design used was a phenomenology design, which is qualitative as it sought to find out

the feelings, perceptions and attitudes of mumpreneurs as they balance both motherhood and business. The target population was women with children who are engaging in business online. The data collection tools were primarily in-depth interviews, as they provide rich information about the respondents. The sampling used was purposive and snowball sampling, whereby the researcher interviewed 20 mothers who were conducting online businesses or businesses aided by social media, as well as taking care of their children at home. The interviews lasted for about one hour with a few interruptions, mainly caused by the mothers attending to their children, which was quite understandable. Snowball was used where the respondents led the researcher to other respondents who had more information on mumpreneurship and the use of social media. For the purpose of ethics, informed consent was sought from the respondents before engaging them in the study. The researcher assured them of the confidentiality of the study by assigning pseudonyms and promised them the complete work after the study was complete. Lastly, data was analysed qualitatively by use of NVivo and then grouped into themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following were the results obtained from the study and are arranged thematically.

Theme One: Work Flexibility and Mental Well-being

The excerpts below reveal how social media has transformed the work dynamics for mumpreneurs, enhancing their flexibility and mental well-being. By leveraging digital platforms, these women can balance their professional and personal lives, ultimately leading to reduced anxiety and increased satisfaction.

I love being able to earn money from home while still watching my children grow. In the past, I experienced anxiety attacks when leaving my kids with nannies while I went to work in town. Now, I can enjoy peace of mind knowing

I don't have to worry about my children." Zara, a 28-year-old online fruit vendor with two children.

"I cherish my freedom, but my previous accounting job didn't allow for that due to strict monitoring of computers. With an 8-month-old baby, I often worried about her, leading me to constantly check my phone, which had a CCTV app to monitor our home. I made the difficult decision to resign and start my own online logistics business. I usually promote it through TikTok. This has been the best decision I've ever made, as I now have plenty of time and can physically supervise my nanny while she takes care of my daughter." Waridi, a 31-year-old online logistics expert with one child.

"My husband is a high-ranking government official and often travels, which sometimes leaves me feeling bored at home, especially after the children are in school. A friend introduced me to the blockchain business, and I must say, I love how I can earn a significant income just by using my laptop and the internet. This keeps me engaged as I wait for the evening when my children return from school." Mueni, a 34-year-old blockchain expert with two children.

"I graduated from college two years ago, but wasn't fortunate enough to find a job. Coming from a poor background, I also lacked the capital to start my own business. To make matters more challenging, I have a one-year-old child and no source of income. Fortunately, my cousin introduced me to selling products for others by posting on WhatsApp and Facebook pages, earning a commission in the process. Although clients believe these are my products, they actually aren't. For now, that doesn't matter, as I can sell them and still make money without incurring any expenses." Mumbi, a 27-year-old online marketer with one child.

The excerpts above illustrate that the mumpreneurs have enhanced mental wellness as revealed by Zara's who highlights the peace of mind that comes with working from home. Her previous job caused her anxiety due to the separation from her children, but now, she can earn an income while actively participating in her children's lives. This shift underscores the psychological benefits of working in a familiar environment, allowing for direct oversight of family needs.

Additionally, Waridi experiences freedom from strict supervision, and her narrative illustrates the contrast between rigid work environments and the flexibility of entrepreneurship. Her previous job involved constant monitoring, which heightened her anxiety about her child's well-being. By transitioning to her own online logistics business, she not only gained freedom but also the ability to supervise her nanny. This autonomy has positively impacted her mental health, allowing her to focus on both her career and family.

In addition, Mueni's story demonstrates how digital work can alleviate feelings of boredom and isolation, especially when home alone. Her engagement with the blockchain business while her children are at school provides both financial independence and a sense of purpose. This engagement is crucial for mental well-being, as it fosters a productive use of her time and enhances her social interactions.

Social media provides innovative solutions for financial challenges as Mumbi's account sheds light on resourcefulness in the face of adversity. Despite lacking capital for traditional business ventures, she found a way to generate income through online marketing. This not only provides financial support but also offers a sense of accomplishment. Her ability to sell products without upfront costs reflects the adaptability of mumpreneurs in navigating their circumstances.

These findings align with those by Wullkopf and Bilal (2024), which highlight that social media,

particularly Instagram, has enabled mumpreneurs to prosper in their businesses. By utilising strategies such as storytelling, networking, and incorporating family members, mumpreneurs can easily engage with their clients, thereby enhancing family bonds and relatability with clients, resulting in increased sales volume. On the contrary, a study by Wijaya and Layman (2018) found out that in as much as mumpreneurs work hard in managing their businesses and their domestic responsibilities, the quality of personal life could be disrupted as challenges may arise which hinder fulfilling some commitments this leads to them having to sacrifice time with their families

Theme Two: Technology as a Catalyst for Economic Independence

The excerpts below illustrate how digital tools democratize access to business opportunities, reducing traditional barriers like start-up costs and formal employment constraints.

"My husband is a senior government official and travels a lot, which sometimes leaves me feeling bored at home, especially after the children are in school. A friend introduced me to the blockchain business, and I must say, I love how I can earn a significant income just by using my laptop and the internet. This keeps me engaged as I wait for the evening when my children return from school." Mueni, a 34-year-old blockchain expert with two children.

"I graduated from college two years ago, but wasn't fortunate enough to find a job. Coming from a poor background, I also lacked the capital to start my own business. To make matters more challenging, I have a one-year-old child and no source of income. Fortunately, my cousin introduced me to selling products for others by acting as a middleman by posting them on WhatsApp and Facebook pages, earning a commission in the process. Although clients believe these are my products, they aren't. For now, that doesn't matter, as I can sell

them and still make money without incurring any expenses." Mumbi, a 27-year-old online marketer with one child.

Mueni's situation highlights the dual role of digital entrepreneurship as both a source of income and a means of combating isolation. With her husband frequently away due to work, she faces periods of boredom at home, particularly during the day when her children are at school. The introduction to blockchain business has provided her with a productive outlet, allowing her to earn a significant income from the comfort of her home. This arrangement not only helps alleviate feelings of loneliness but also empowers her by transforming her idle time into a valuable opportunity for personal and professional growth. The flexibility of working online allows her to remain engaged and fulfilled while managing her household responsibilities. This reflects a broader trend where digital platforms enable women to balance family life with entrepreneurial pursuits.

On the other hand, Mumbi's narrative presents a contrasting yet equally compelling perspective. Recently graduated and facing socioeconomic challenges, she initially struggled to find stable employment. Her lack of capital further complicated her ability to start a business. However, through her cousin's guidance, she discovered an innovative way to engage in online marketing by acting as a middleman.

By leveraging social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, Mumbi can sell products without the burden of upfront costs. This ingenuity not only provides her with a source of income but also fosters a sense of agency and accomplishment. Her ability to navigate her circumstances demonstrates resilience and adaptability, essential traits for aspiring entrepreneurs. These findings are similar to those of Richomme-Huet and Vial (2014), who reveal that the expansion and development of the internet have made it simpler for moms to become entrepreneurs than ever before. It gives them access to multiple networks and sales channels

without requiring them to leave their homes. This puts them in a better position to work and still take care of their families. Moreover, Pourkhani et al. (2019) posit that social media is user-friendly and this has enabled the growth of many women-led enterprises.

However, selling products for another person may raise an ethical issue of honesty in selling because if a product is not good, a seller may refuse to disclose this to the client since they need to make a commission. Clickbank (2023) reveals that affiliate marketing usually puts business people in a dilemma, especially when products they sell are of inferior quality and they advertise or portray them to be of a superior quality so as to lure the clients. A fundamental ethical mandate requires that all representations concerning a product or service be rigorously truthful and adequately substantiated. Disseminating exaggerated benefits, offering unsubstantiated assurances, or deliberately omitting pertinent drawbacks to facilitate a transaction constitutes a breach of ethical conduct and can result in significant consumer dissatisfaction, alongside potential legal ramifications.

Theme Three: Struggles with Work-Family Boundaries

Balancing work and family always wears out any mumpreneur, as both are equally important. These excerpts illustrate the challenges of managing remote work while maintaining personal relationships and parenting responsibilities.

"My husband often complains that I'm glued to my phone, texting, as he believes I'm chatting with others instead of paying attention to the children." Atieno, a 35-year-old online book vendor with 4 children.

"Sometimes, I can't respond immediately to my clients' inquiries on Facebook at night because my baby wakes up frequently, and I need to attend to him. In this online business, it's a 24/7 operation, and if you don't reply quickly, you risk losing customers to more prompt

competitors. It's a fast-paced environment where clients can place orders or make inquiries at any time. Unfortunately, no one understands that I have a young child, and they may misjudge me as lazy or uninterested in my business." Chebet, a 24-year-old online retailer with a 1-year-old child.

"My boyfriend often feels ignored because I'm frequently answering calls from clients in the middle of our conversations. He thinks I prioritise my business over him. Sometimes, I find myself confused, wondering how I would manage without my clients and their referrals." Bosibori, a 26-year-old online shoes vendor with 2 children.

The narratives illustrate that Atieno's husband interprets her frequent phone usage as a form of neglect toward their children, which is the same case with Bosibori's boyfriend, who perceives himself as sidelined due to her business obligations. Chebet's experience underscores the difficulties of managing a demanding online business while raising a young child. The expectation for instant communication in digital commerce conflicts with the unpredictability of parenting, leading to misjudgement from clients who perceive delayed responses as inefficiency. These accounts underscore a prevalent issue in digital work environments, wherein the expectation of constant availability to clients obscures the boundaries between professional and personal time, frequently resulting in relational misunderstandings. Furthermore, the subsequent excerpts elucidate the complexities associated with balancing familial responsibilities and professional commitments, as discussed below:

"With cryptocurrency, I find myself fully engaged on my phone or laptop, which makes me feel like a bad mother because I can't give my son the attention he needs. It's challenging to balance my time, as both my work and my child require my presence, even when I'm at

home." Gathoni, a 37-year-old cryptocurrency expert with one son.

"I have a passion for numbers and typically analyse quantitative data. This work demands speed and precision, as some of my clients are students needing analysis, while others are government officials requiring data for policy-making. However, working from home presents challenges, as my children often interrupt me, making it hard to focus. Any small error can be costly, leading to misleading information that could result in losing clients." Kanini, a 37-year-old freelance data analyst with 3 children.

The excerpts above reveal that Gathoni's apprehension about feeling like a "bad mother" highlights the emotional distress that can arise from digital work when parenting responsibilities are compromised. Similarly, Kanini's role as a freelance data analyst presents another dimension of remote work: the demand for accuracy and concentration despite home distractions. Her concern about costly errors due to interruptions underscores how remote work requires intense focus, which can be challenging in a home setting where there are frequent interruptions from children.

These findings corroborate those of Mukolwe and Korir (2016), who reveal that due to the high number of social media users, sometimes mumpreneurs become overwhelmed by the sheer number of enquiries, comments or messages that they receive, which in turn leads to delayed customer feedback, which ultimately leads to customer dissatisfaction. This then leads to a loss of customers and can be detrimental to a business.

Theme 4: Strategies of Dealing with Work-Family Conflict

a) Seeking help with house chores and family

Balancing family responsibilities and work can be a significant challenge for mumpreneurs, often leading to conflicts between personal and

professional obligations. When one area is prioritised, the other may suffer, creating a cycle of stress and inefficiency. However, strategies such as hiring help or leveraging family support can empower mumpreneurs to manage both spheres more effectively. This is shown in the excerpts below:

"I work from home but still have a nanny, which makes me focus on my work more while she focuses on house chores and taking care of the children. This eases my work as I only play a guiding role in home management." Zara, a 28-year-old online fruit vendor with two children.

I sell clothes online where nearby customers pick them up from my house. For those far away, I usually send my boda boda rider to deliver to them. That way, I can still take care of my child and be in business full time. Kaleche, a 32-year-old online business lady with two children.

Daycare has helped me a lot to manage both my business and my child, as I take my son to daycare at 8 am and pick him up at 1 pm. That way, I can do so much freelance writing. Wango, a 26-year-old freelance writer with one child.

From the narratives above, we find that Zara's experience as an online fruit vendor illustrates the advantages of employing a nanny. By outsourcing household chores and child care, she can concentrate fully on her work while assuming a supervisory role in managing her home. This arrangement not only alleviates the burden of juggling multiple responsibilities but also allows her to maintain a focus on her entrepreneurial goals. The presence of a nanny enables Zara to create a productive work environment, striking a balance that enhances her overall effectiveness.

Additionally, Kaleche's approach to her online clothing business further exemplifies how strategic planning can facilitate work-life balance. By

utilising a boda boda rider for deliveries, she efficiently manages her sales while ensuring she remains present for her children. This method allows her to engage fully in her business without sacrificing parental duties. Kaleche's strategy reflects the importance of creative solutions in managing time effectively, enabling her to operate her business on her terms.

Furthermore, Wango's reliance on day care demonstrates another effective strategy for balancing work and family life. By enrolling her son in day care, she creates a structured routine that enables her to focus on freelance writing during the day. This arrangement not only provides her with dedicated time for her work but also ensures her child is cared for in a supportive environment. Wango's experience highlights the value of structured child care in allowing mumpreneurs to pursue their professional aspirations while also being attentive parents. The findings of this study are similar to those of Wijaya and Layman (2018), who found that it is easier for a mumpreneur to focus on her work when she gets support at home. The support from a spouse is particularly important for a mumpreneur who feels understood, appreciated and can focus better on her business as well as taking care of children.

b) Network and Collaborate

Building relationships with other entrepreneurs can provide significant advantages, fostering a collaborative environment that enhances business opportunities and personal well-being. The experiences of Naliaka and Sanaipei illustrate how such connections can not only expand market reach but also create a supportive community that benefits both personal and professional growth.

I usually bake from home, and this gives me ample time with family and also works well. When I get many orders, such as during weddings and birthdays, I ask other cake bakers to help me, and I sell to my clients without their knowledge. In this sector, you have to learn to

work with others since you cannot let a customer down. Naliaka, a 34-year-old home-based cake vendor with four children.

Motherhood has its fair share of ups and downs, and when I am feeling drained, I do get away with my friends. This recharges me and I am able to come back energised for my family as well as creative for my business. Sanaipei, a 37-year-old online Insurance consultant with two children.

Naliaka's approach to managing her baking business highlights the value of collaboration within the entrepreneurial landscape. By partnering with other cake bakers during peak demand periods, such as weddings and birthdays, she ensures that she can meet customer expectations without compromising quality. This strategy not only allows her to fulfil a higher volume of orders but also strengthens her network within the industry. Such collaborations can lead to shared resources and knowledge, enabling entrepreneurs to navigate challenges more effectively. Naliaka's practice of discreetly selling cakes sourced from other bakers emphasises the importance of trust and mutual support in business relationships. This approach exemplifies a broader trend where entrepreneurs learn to leverage collective strengths to enhance their own brand visibility and reliability.

Similarly, Sanaipei's experience underscores the emotional and mental health benefits of connecting with fellow entrepreneurs. The ups and downs of motherhood, combined with the demands of running a business, can be overwhelming. By taking time to recharge with friends, she not only revitalises her energy but also fosters creativity that positively impacts her work as an insurance consultant. This highlights the necessity of a supportive community in entrepreneurship. Engaging with peers provides not just professional insights but also emotional support, creating a balanced environment that allows entrepreneurs to thrive. Sanaipei's strategy of taking breaks to recharge reflects a crucial aspect of sustainable

entrepreneurship: the need for self-care and social interaction to maintain productivity and creativity.

These findings corroborate a study by Newhouse (2018), who reveals that an entrepreneur needs support from other entrepreneurs in order to survive in the entrepreneurship ecosystem. In the same vein, Mukolwe and Korir (2016) reveal that due to social media, many of the mumpreneurs can meet their potential mentors, business partners and also individuals who offer social support to them. With this, they can build a community that is relevant to them. This underscores the importance of a strong social support, either professionally or socially.

c) Massaging their spouses' ego

The reliance on technology for managing orders and client communications can lead to periods of intense work, necessitating a supportive home environment. By involving their spouses in household tasks through clever tricks, the mumpreneurs can focus on their craft without compromising their family responsibilities. This is illustrated by the excerpts below:

"My husband usually has issues with me sleeping late because of responding to texts from clients till late at night. However, if I promise to buy him a good time afterwards, he does not complain." Nyaboke, a 30-year-old online boutique with 2 children.

"When I receive orders from clients, I usually ask my partner to help me with packing and delivering by calling him sweet names like sweetheart and Jatelo, which makes him soften and happily help me." Adhis, a 27-year-old online shoes vendor with one child.

There are times, especially during holidays and special occasions, when I get overwhelming orders from clients, making me work late into the night. I politely request my husband to help with housework by calling him names like Mfalme and Kiongozi so that I can focus on

sewing clothes.” Mwajuma, a 39-year-old clothes designer with 4 children.

From the above excerpts, the study found that Nyaboke’s situation exemplifies a common challenge faced by entrepreneurs who utilise technology for client communication. The pressure to respond promptly to messages often results in late nights, which can strain personal relationships. This scenario underscores the conflict between entrepreneurial obligations and family commitments. To manage this, Nyaboke negotiates with her husband, offering quality time in return for his understanding. This reflects a broader trend in which entrepreneurs must skilfully balance their time and relationships, often relying on personal connections to alleviate the stresses of their professional duties. Furthermore, Adhis’s strategy of involving her partner in business tasks illustrates the collaborative aspect of entrepreneurship. By using affectionate language to encourage her husband’s assistance with packing and deliveries, she fosters a supportive environment that benefits both her business and their relationship. Equally, Mwajuma’s experience of handling a surge of orders during peak times highlights the crucial role of support systems in entrepreneurship. Her courteous requests for help, accompanied by affectionate terms, exemplify a strategy designed to promote teamwork at home, which not only aids in managing her business but also enhances familial bonds.

In the same vein, Dhaliwal (2022) demonstrates that it is significant for a mumpreneur to look for strategies to manage both business and family if she is to be considered successful. Lack of strategies will lead to the failure of either side and cause role strain.

CONCLUSION

This study reflects the duality of working from home in that while it enables financial independence and flexibility, it also introduces challenges in setting boundaries, maintaining relationships, and

ensuring parental presence. Work-family conflicts in digital professions require intentional efforts to establish balance, whether through structured schedules, designated workspaces, massaging spouses’ egos or networking with peers. The excerpts collectively highlight a broader societal shift, where technology redefines work-life balance, requiring new coping strategies to navigate evolving expectations, ultimately enhancing both family well-being and business success. The Social Identity theory provides insights into how the identities of mumpreneurs shape their entrepreneurial journeys, influencing their motivations, challenges, and support systems. Many mumpreneurs identify with a community of other mothers and entrepreneurs, which provides support and shared experiences. This group identity can enhance their confidence and motivation.

Furthermore, engaging in networks with fellow women entrepreneurs offers crucial benefits, including specialised networking opportunities, mentorship, and tailored resources addressing the distinct challenges of integrating work and domestic responsibilities. Through the effective application of work-family management strategies, they can cultivate a multifaceted identity as accomplished mumpreneurs, diligent spouses and nurturing mothers. This self-constructed identity is pivotal, as it profoundly shapes external perceptions and interpersonal dynamics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent years, the rise of mumpreneurs has significantly reshaped the entrepreneurial landscape. Many of these women have harnessed social media as a powerful platform to promote their businesses, connect with their audiences, and foster supportive communities. This study proposes the following recommendations:

a) Provide Training

The government needs to facilitate training programs for mumpreneurs and ensure access to stable, reliable internet to prevent disruptions in

their work. This is because social media has enabled mothers to launch businesses, granting them financial independence. The training should focus on managing online businesses and safeguarding against online scams.

b) Create valuable content

By positioning themselves as experts and offering useful information, mumpreneurs can attract and retain followers. This can include educational posts, tips, tutorials, and insights that resonate with their audience.

c) Engage authentically with their audience.

Authenticity is crucial for establishing genuine connections with potential customers. By discussing their journeys, such as the challenges of balancing work and family or the thrill of achieving business milestones, mumpreneurs make their brands more relatable. This authentic engagement encourages followers to interact, ask questions and share their own experiences, fostering a sense of community around the brand. Additionally, these lead to mental well-being, making them more creative, rejuvenated and increasing productivity.

d) Create time for self-care

Mumpreneurs should prioritise self-care by allocating time to recharge. This is crucial for maintaining focus on family and business responsibilities. Taking care of themselves enables greater creativity and innovation, ultimately leading to improved sales and overall well-being.

Suggestions for Further Research

- Investigate the mental health implications for mumpreneurs who are active on social media, including the effects of online scrutiny, comparison, and the pressure to maintain a certain image.
- A comparative study of how consumers perceive mumpreneurs on social media compared to traditional business owners. This

could explore trust, brand loyalty, and purchasing decisions.

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