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BALANCING MOTHERHOOD AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MUMPRENEUR BUSINESS RESTRAINING AND ENABLING FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, women catalyze the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are increasingly important in maintaining economic growth and providing employment opportunities. The field of entrepreneurship is very dependent on the formation of individual capabilities in the business being undertaken, and these capabilities are significantly influenced by several restraining and enabling factors. This article explores the restraints and enablers that affect the business performance of managers from the Dapur Mawar project. A total of 15 mumpreneurs were involved in this study, selected through a purposive sampling technique. This study used semi-structured interviews, and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The study reveals several restraining factors: financial problems, societal stigma, and an imbalance between work and life. Meanwhile, the enabling factors include both internal and external elements, such as mindset, attitude, personality, competencies, government and agency support, and high-quality products and services. Overall, this study provides essential input on the factors that could determine the failure or success of a mumpreneur in their entrepreneurial activities. The findings proved that internal and external factors could play an essential role in the success of a mumpreneur.

Keywords: Restraining Factors, Enabling Factors, Mumpreneurs, Business Performance, Thematic Analysis .

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is defined as the process of identifying opportunities in the market, organizing resources to achieve objectives and actions, and exploiting the needs of resources for personal and business interests in the long term (Mehmood et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2021). An entrepreneur must have several main characteristics: commitment, determination, perseverance, drive to succeed and thrive, orientation to opportunities and goals, realism, internal locus of control, integrity, and reliability (Mohd Noor et al., 2024; Postigo et al., 2021; Salmony et al., 2022). The field of entrepreneurship is not only undertaken by men but even more so by women (Basit et al., 2020). In Malaysia, women's involvement in business has existed for a long time. For example, in the states of the East Coast of the Peninsula, i.e., Kelantan and Terengganu, businesses in markets, wholesalers, retailers, and street vendors are monopolized mainly by women. Both states are known as the states with a high rate of female participation in economic activities, especially in the agricultural and small business sectors (Rekarti et al., 2019).

With the recent global economic crisis outbreak, the challenge of producing entrepreneurs in Malaysia and developing countries has become even more significant (Afshan et al., 2021; Ogundana et al., 2021). The involvement of women entrepreneurs is increasing and is shown to be a positive enabler in developing a country's economy (Dean et al., 2019). The rapid development of a country's economy encourages more women to engage in entrepreneurship actively. Some examples of prominent businesswomen in Malaysia are Noor Neelofa Mohd Noor, founder of Naelofar Hijab; Datin Vivy Sofinas Yusuf, founder of Fashion Valet; Faiza Bawumi Sayed Ahmad, founder of Beras Faiza; and Hajah Pazdilah Enda Sulaiman, owner, and founder of Butik Siti Khadijah Apparel Sdn. Bhd. These entrepreneurs are seen as more aggressive regarding thoughts, feelings, and actions. In business, women have advantages over men (Ingalagi et al., 2021), as they are often more prepared to deal with various customers and diligently manage a business (Beriso, 2021).

Mumpreneur is a trend in entrepreneurship that has been around for a while. The term "mumpreneurs" refers to women who embrace the identity of a mother and an entrepreneur, and these two identities engender role conflicts for them (Rodrigues et al., 2023). In developing countries, including Malaysia, many women take employment opportunities besides their role as mothers. E-commerce capabilities allow every mother to create and manage home-based businesses (Empong & Rusdi, 2021). Many researchers have identified challenges in business, especially among mumpreneurs. Among the determined problems are difficulty obtaining startup funds, financial management, and developing effective marketing and advertising (Abou-Moghli & Al-Abdallah, 2019; Hussain et al., 2022; Rudhumbu et al., 2020). Mixing self-employment and motherhood is acknowledged as a challenge for individual women. Although a woman may start a business by balancing work and childcare, the preferences may change as the children grow older and the business grows more extensive (Dhaliwal, 2022). Putting family first may change over time into focusing on expanding the business, which requires time, energy, hard work, and persistence. Society and cultural expectations always see an ideal mother as a married woman raising her children and always prioritizing her family (Lewis et al., 2022), which could hamper mumpreneurs from advancing their business. Low-income mumpreneur groups need more funding; thus, they are unwilling to take risks in business (Awang et al., 2021). Consequently, they become anti-ambitious, which could affect their business performance and women's development and growth in Malaysia.

Empirical findings have supported the idea that the challenges and obstacles can be overcome if mumpreneurs are competent in managing the business (Analoui & Herath, 2019; Rudhumbu et al., 2020). The performance of mumpreneurs is influenced by entrepreneurial competencies (Bird, 2019). Nowadays, women entrepreneurs should use new media to facilitate the business environment, finance, market access, and productivity (Kruger & Steyn, 2021). New technologies facilitate female entrepreneurs to access training and education to improve their knowledge in business (Hussain et al.,

2022). Moreover, creative, flexible, and market-oriented mumpreneurs will lead to product innovation in business (Bird, 2019; Kruger & Steyn, 2021; Mohd Noor et al., 2024). This study examines the factors that influence the success and failure of mumpreneurs in entrepreneurship. The findings highlight an accurate picture of the phenomenon being studied and further help relevant parties formulate and implement appropriate follow-up actions to improve the performance of mumpreneurs. The study objectives are: i) to study the restraining factors of mumpreneurs' involvement in the field of entrepreneurship and ii) to study the enabling factors that could improve the performance of mumpreneurs in Malaysia. The research gap between the analysis of constraints and enablers in the context of motherhood and entrepreneurship should be addressed. For the study, the current state of mumpreneurship literature needs to be charted to identify issues around the mumpreneur concept. Entrepreneurship is considered a male-gendered territory. In contrast, motherhood is associated with the feminine realm. This study aims to bring the concept of motherhood and entrepreneurship closer by further exploring new and recent discussions.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The Malaysian government has encouraged people from all walks of life to embark on the field of entrepreneurship. The National Economic Policy (NEP) 2030 aims to encourage Malaysians to engage in entrepreneurship, which contributes to the country's economic growth and community development (Othman et al., 2021). Entrepreneurship is one of the critical areas of economic development. The concept of an entrepreneur is often seen from various dimensions. Usually, entrepreneurs are equated with traders, such as grocers, hawkers, night market traders, or traders in markets and stalls. However, the meaning of entrepreneurs is more than that because they are accepted as agents of change (Rosca et al., 2020). These people can identify opportunities and connect those opportunities with consumers and subsequently create a business that produces a decent profit (Carayannis, 2020). It should be emphasized that entrepreneurs can neither be born nor be inherited. Nevertheless, entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship can be developed through various stages of the development process involving education, exposure, and even experience (Boldureanu et al., 2020).

In this increasingly complex business world, sustainability has become a significant factor for a company's survival. However, how can we formulate an effective business continuity strategy? One approach can combine Resource-Based View (RBV) and Industry Organisation View (I/O). Entrepreneurs must conduct an in-depth analysis of trends and sustainability issues relevant to their businesses. Next, they must evaluate how the business has implemented sustainability principles in its operations and development. The RBV, or resource-based view, recognizes the importance of internal resources in building strong business sustainability (Zahra, 2021). In this context, resources can include physical assets, such as buildings and equipment, human resources, technological superiority, and intellectual property (Lopes et al., 2021). The RBV concept relies heavily on resources and capabilities that are unique, valuable, and difficult to imitate to create a competitive advantage. On the contrary, the I/O model assumes that business performance will be primarily determined by external forces rather than various internal factors (Khan et al., 2021).

According to the RBV and I/O views, internal and external factors can affect the business. The business's internal factors include owners, employees, customers, suppliers, and culture. Businesses can control these factors (Lopes et al., 2021). External factors that affect the business are assessed by technology, government and policy, economic strength and elements, sociocultural factors, and international factors. These factors are beyond the control of the businesses (Khan et al., 2021). For example, suppliers are external factors that provide resources for production activities. Suppliers affect the business, whereby as a source of raw materials for production, their inability to provide the business with the resources needed for production impacts production and customer service (Huq et al., 2020). Economic forces and elements that can affect business are supply and demand and the availability and cost of capital (Gimenez-Jimenez et al., 2022). During a recession, businesses do not thrive due to low

consumer spending. Meanwhile, sociocultural factors that affect companies are consumers' demand, taste, and choice for certain goods and services at a particular time (Badghish et al., 2023). Sociocultural factors influence the values and customs that are valued by each community (Cullen, 2020). In some societies, certain foods and drinks are not consumed in public places, which affects the behavior of such businesses.

According to Rodrigues et al. (2023), mumpreneurs are female business owners actively balancing the roles of mother and entrepreneur. Research shows that mumpreneurs understand entrepreneurialism and motherhood, and they are more entrepreneurial than women without children (Van Lieshout et al., 2019). Among the challenges that mumpreneurs face are labor, financial, economic, credit problems, marketing, management and administrative, social, internal personal, production, and knowledge problems (Analoui & Herath, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2020; Ogundana et al., 2021). Mumpreneurs often face role conflict between work and family, lack of social networks, and gender inequality (Lewis et al., 2022). People are also very judgmental towards working mothers in developing countries (Farah Adibah et al., 2022). A survey shows that certain social norms and cultural values hurt mumpreneurs (Farah Adibah et al., 2022). Many mumpreneurs have quit their business due to household dynamics and conflicts (Dhaliwal, 2022).

This study examines motherhood and entrepreneurship, which is crucial in determining how mumpreneurship is supported in Malaysia. Mothers are busy individuals with time constraints, and they juggle many things, including business and household (Ahmad & Yaacob, 2021). Moreover, mumpreneurs face various difficulties since many must work without adequate financial support (Awang et al., 2021). They need a guarantor or business advisor to obtain a loan from the bank or financial institution. Interestingly, a study on mumpreneurs revealed that many used personal savings to start their businesses (Ojong et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2019). With sufficient capital, the business will thrive, and sometimes, the risk of closing or terminating the business can even be avoided (Begenau, 2020). Many mumpreneurs also lack business skills, and they should have skills in recording and managing cash flow and be able to invest in their business operations (Baporikar & Akino, 2020; Mohd Noor et al., 2024). Over time, these challenges and experiences have facilitated the business and life of mumpreneurs. However, the advancement of mumpreneurship in Malaysia has been impeded due to their multitude of responsibilities (Embong & Rusdi, 2021). Scholars have discovered that family support, social relationships, and internal motivation have a positive and significant effect on the success of mumpreneurs (Neumeyer et al., 2019).

Aboobaker (2020) advises that business success requires rigorous training to increase entrepreneurial competition in the market. Meanwhile, empirical studies revealed that among the factors critical to success are management experience, industry experience, economic conditions, and planning skills (Elia et al., 2020; Paoloni et al., 2020). Therefore, skills are essential to entrepreneurship and must be present in every mumpreneur to succeed (Khan et al., 2019). Moreover, mumpreneurs must think and act creatively to produce unique product ideas, which include physical and non-physical asset resources. The physical aspect encompasses product production, packaging, and branding. On the contrary, the non-physical aspect comprises a network of social relationships with family members, customers, and society (Daou et al., 2019).

In addition, the exclusive value created is considered a non-physical innovation. Cyberspace, with various technology applications, provides opportunities for mumpreneurs to improve social relationships with others who eventually become their customers, agents, or suppliers (Gupta et al., 2020). With this advantage, mumpreneurs will have more opportunities to promote their products and acquire potential customers more easily through cyberspace networks, electronic mail, and social media, such as blogs, Facebook, and Instagram (Elia et al., 2020). Paoloni et al. (2020) explained that entrepreneurs need information, capital, skills, and workforce to start business activities. This notion is supported by Hanifah et al. (2022), who revealed that entrepreneurs generally have the ability and skills to form good human relationships and determine customer needs. Therefore, various skills need to be

considered to guarantee the success of entrepreneurship. Continuous support renders an entrepreneur to be more motivated and strives to move forward. According to Xie et al. (2021), support from the government comes in various forms, such as capital, technical assistance, training development, information consultation, and others. Mohd Noor et al. (2023) reported that all government support factors, such as finance and credit, training and development, service advice and consulting opportunities, and government infrastructure, can help increase women entrepreneurs' success. In addition, support for entrepreneurship and government policies related to business rescue and the availability of risk capital and financial resources are also closely related to successful entrepreneurs in Malaysia (Alene, 2020).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach and phenomenology design. Phenomenology positions humans as research subjects, not as research objects. Qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach attempt to capture various problems that exist in society and reveal the meaning contained in them. The study was conducted based on an interpretive research paradigm. A total of 15 mumpreneurs (aged between 30 and 50) from the Dapur Mawar program served as the informants for this study. They were selected through a sampling technique among the mumpreneurs who participated in the Dapur Mawar program and have consistently maintained their business. Moreover, the selected informants are also micro-enterprise business owners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia can be divided into three categories: micro, small, and medium. These three categories are differentiated based on the total annual sales and the number of employees of an SME. For micro-enterprises, the annual sales are below RM300,000, with only five employees.

Table 1 shows the participants in this research, who are mumpreneurs with legal businesses and have kids, and all of them have been operating their businesses for more than two years. The informants are aged between 31 to 45. Of the 15 informants, 14 are full-time business owners. Meanwhile, only one mumpreneur is working part-time. All informants are involved in the food and beverage business. Semi-structured interviews were conducted because of their flexibility. The participants were very enthusiastic in providing information regarding their context, background, business, business challenges, and enabling factors that drive them to remain in business. The main questions have been formed in advance. Data from the interviews were analyzed using the thematic method. Thematic analysis was used to categorize the data and form corresponding themes to answer the research questions in the study. Thematic analysis begins with the initial stage of analyzing the data. It is followed by an advanced process that enters the code construction section and ends with the data presentation section in the form of a diagram to facilitate the reader to examine the research findings obtained. NVivo was employed as a qualitative data analysis software package.

The validity and reliability of the data in this study involved several steps. The first step is the verification of the thematic findings with the respondents. After completing the text transcript, the researchers handed the copy to the respondents involved so they could read back the contents and information from the meaning of the conversation. The researchers provide a space for respondents to evaluate and register the transcript text. Correcting facts, confessions, and confirmations improved the validity and reliability of the data. Secondly, this study used two inter-raters to agree on the constructed theme. Interrater reliability measures the agreement between people observing or assessing the same thing. A summary of the thematic analysis used in this study is shown in Figure 1. Table 1 shows the information on the study's key informants.

Table 1:*Key Informants Information*

No.	Key Code	Informant	Age	Business Product	Business Orientation
1	Zarina		40	Chocolate lollipop	Full-time
2	Nor		45	Rempeyek	Full-time
3	Zizah		39	Maruku	Full-time
4	Mila		35	Dessert (Tart & Pudding)	Full-time
5	Asmah		42	Kek batik	Full-time
6	Normah		40	Popia & popcorn	Part-time
7	Mek		37	Chicken rice	Full-time
8	Bibi		38	Takoyaki & lunch set	Full-time
9	Ummi		40	Cookies	Full-time
10	Sofia		41	Kerepek	Full-time
11	Mimi		45	Popcorn	Full-time
12	Sue		35	Baby pancake	Full-time
13	Ina		33	Bread & chocolate muffin	Full-time
14	Nora		31	Fruit cocktail	Full-time
15	Yana		40	Pudding caramel	Full-time

4.0 RESULTS

Restraining Factors

The study revealed several restraining factors: financial problems, societal stigma, and an imbalance between work and life.

Financial Problem

Since the Movement Control Order (MCO) 1.0 until the end of 2021, many entrepreneurs have been affected by decreasing profits. Some have had to sell property they own to cover expenses or debts to maintain their existing businesses. Therefore, every entrepreneur needs to have initial preparation to deal with any possibility in business and as an encouragement in the future. This study shows that frequent problems with debt and lack of business capital are critical challenges most managers face. The problem of the lack of business capital is closely related to the problem of cash management. The verbatim quotes are as follows:

Women entrepreneurs from low-income groups cannot run away from debt. I receive monthly assistance of RM200 from Zakat, but it is not enough to support my family life... I admitted that I cannot run from debt. I need it for running my business. I am not eligible for a business loan from the bank. (Zarina, 40 years old)

The biggest challenge is when we had to always [borrow] from other people... Sometimes, we cannot pay the debt, and even siblings can become our enemy... I need money to buy raw materials for my products, and sometimes my sales income is insufficient because I need to use the money for my family matters. (Zizah, 39 years old)

Meanwhile, Mila, 35, revealed, "I was living in debt around my waist. With an irresponsible ex-husband who does not give alimony to my children ... That is the only option..."

The increasingly challenging economy led to many entrepreneurs needing more capital to expand their businesses. The rising prices of raw materials and management costs often hamper their continued growth. The more challenging a country's economy is, the harder it is for businesses to survive.

Stigma from Society

Since the beginning, women have often faced difficulties in various aspects. They start with education, economy, and career and move on to personal life. Until now, there are still many stigmas and negative perceptions of society towards women with careers. In addition, many women also experience difficulties in entrepreneurship, which is due to the stigma that is still rooted in society. For example, there are still many perceptions that women cannot succeed, low-income families will remain poor, and disabled and old age cannot succeed. The verbatim quotes are as follows:

Honestly, there are married men who want to hang out with me for business reasons and want to become my friend... This is because I am a widow at a young age... I have mixed feelings because I know he is married, and I am afraid of his wife and public view... Being attacked, criticized, and false acquisition have been thrown to me... (informant crying)... (Mila, 35 years old)

Asmah, 42, responded, "I am a poor, single mother, and have disabled children. I am often being insulted."

Of course, people look bad at people like me, especially when I am a single mother... Some women, when they know I am a single mother, do not want to buy my product... I am disappointed since I am looking for halal sustenance for livelihood. (Normah, 40 years old)

Imbalance Between Work and Life

The role of women as contributors to the family economy cannot be denied. Work-life balance is a concept in which an individual prioritizes work and life. This balance occurs when individuals appropriately allocate limited mental, physical, and emotional resources to achieve desired goals. Work-life balance does not mean time is divided into 50 percent work and 50 percent home affairs. This misunderstanding often renders a person feeling guilty about spending more time at work than at home or vice versa. Everyone has different needs, and the individual knows how to prioritize to achieve balance. Some informants have admitted that balancing business and daily life is challenging. Here are some confessions from the informants:

Besides selling food and beverages, I am willing to go to people's houses, and I am not ashamed to sell cheap beauty products. Most of the time, I must bring my children together to help my business. I do not have any workforce... my children will help deliver my products. I do not know how to drive a car, and my husband is sick... Indeed, I always tear up when I see my children exhausted. (Ummi, 40 years old)

I always feel burned out and stressed. I wanted to excel in business; however, I have disabled family members. Thus, I always restrain myself... For me, spiritual, mental, and physical strength is significant. As women, we need to manage stress by doing activities we like... I am always content and grateful for all provision. (Asmah, 42 years old)

Yes, the education of my children is, honestly to say, sometimes neglected... I have many children and do not have time to look at them... I am going back to work late in the night. Go back and forth with a

house full of children, I will decide to take a break... I do not care about my children, and I feel very sinful. (Sue, 35 years old)

Enabling Factors

In addition, the enabling factors include internal and external factors, such as mindset, attitude, personality, competencies, government and agency support, and high-quality products and services.

Mindset, Attitude, and Personality

The field of entrepreneurship has gained attention in the context of developing the economy and is crucial in building a person's positive attitude and identity. Many factors affect an entrepreneur's success, but none can equal the importance of the attitude or personality of the entrepreneur. Western perspective looks at the psychological aspect of personality that affects a person's ability, while Islam, from a broader perspective, also incorporates the spiritual aspect. Some informants in this study state that they could succeed in business due to their high interest and positive attitude, as presented in the following quotes:

I want to step into the world of online business, and if we do not try, we do not know. When we try, we know, right... Sometimes, when we want to try, but when we do not dare, we regret it. At the beginning of my business, it was fun, but from time to time, with more and more customers, it makes me feel fun... then it changed from an interest to a livelihood. (Nora, 31 years old)

I am trading because of interest and motivation. If we do business but there is no interest, it will not work. You must be in high spirits and dare to take risks. Sometimes, profit and loss are expected in business. I believe in sustenance... I have been interested in doing business since I was a child because I used to help my mom at the store. From there, I learned how to trade... It is not easy to trade if you do not have knowledge and interest. (Sofia, 41 years old)

..when doing business, you must be patient... when I started, I knew my salary was not much... Everyone says that I am brave enough to act... With my diploma certificate, I can get a salary of RM2000 at that time... It is easy, right... However, I decided to do online business. My first salary is around RM300 to RM500 per month... However, now my income has increased to five figures. (Yana, 40 years old)

Who else wants to believe us if not ourselves? Sometimes, people around us have a hard time believing us...we need to prove that we can do it ...I do business because I believe I can, and Allah will give in proportion. It is our business... Do not give up in the fight. We should believe in ourselves and ignore people's negative views. (Sue, 35 years old)

An informant also added:

It is nice to be successful in this business. First, you must be interested in doing business. Sometimes, you must have an extra strong attitude in yourself... do not be lazy, do not give up too soon... I do not care about hostile people. Jealousy can be one of the factors that make people struggle to advance in business. This trait has become a synonym for Malay people. I always show a good attitude, have good intentions, and pray for each other to get halal sustenance. I am always positive and not envious if I see someone more advanced in business. (Mek, 37 years old)

Competencies

Entrepreneurial skills are critical, especially for mumpreneurs who want to develop and expand a business. Entrepreneurs must identify and evaluate existing and foreseeable business management skills. Entrepreneurial skills can be learned, formed, and mastered by an individual who has undergone the entrepreneurial education process or experience. Some informants in this study confessed to being successful in business due to high entrepreneurial skills. The verbatim quotes are as follows:

Before this, I did not know how to use social media. I learned by going to an online social media class. For me, we need to interact with the customers to get to know them better and know what kind of content is appropriate to show them... Now, I can make a survey poll about the product, use relevant hashtags for each piece of content, and be able to write effective copywriting. (Mimi, 45 years old)

Knowledge for managing business is important... I have learned a lot over the past two years... Apart from bookkeeping, a two-year projection is very useful for me. It helps me plan my business in a more advanced direction. (Sofia, 41 years old)

Earlier, I did not have any skills in financial management, especially accounting. What should I do? If I do not manage my finances properly, my business will be affected later... I never stop to learn, especially about management and finance... Without good financial management, it is difficult for a business to perform well... Before this, I only knew about basic cash flow management. However, now I can understand financial management, such as insurance, investment, tax, and estate planning... Knowledge is an extension of every journey. With knowledge, a person can go further with success. We need accurate knowledge to make the best plans. (Zarina, 40 years old)

Government and Agencies Support

The experience of the government and financial institutions in recognizing and understanding the problems faced by the small business sector in Malaysia allows these institutions to submit support schemes to develop the small business sector. In Malaysia, the government is taking a significant initiative to help the small business sector. The government's role can be seen through the establishment of the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development. The institution is responsible for forming financial and taxation policies to coordinate the support system for small and medium businesses. The support provided by financial institutions and the government can be broken down into five parts,: 1) business and marketing opportunities, 2) financing and financial facilities, 3) consultation service, 4) entrepreneurship training scheme, and 5) research and development (R&D). The following are excerpts of the interview with the informants:

Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) gives me a loan for initial business capital... we must pay once a week... Besides AIM, I also getting help from the politicians... Countless agencies have helped me... I also received a loan from Agrobank. (Mimi, 45 years old)

There is a lot of business aid provided by the government for financing facilities, especially for female entrepreneurs in Malaysia. I received a loan from TEKUN Nasional worth RM30,000. Besides that, I also received guidance and support services and business [networks]. (Mek, 37 years old)

I received much support under TEKUN, and I received worth RM10,000... The service charge is also only 4% per year compared to Ah Long, which charges high interest rates and exposes borrowers to various risks. (Ina, 33 years old)

Under the BMT 1.0 program, I received ... assistance from the Economic Planning Unit (EPU)... Among them are entrepreneurship training and guidance, equipment such as freezers and microwaves,

packaging, labeling, and certification...Indeed, every success will not come rolling... Appreciating the environment and the people around you is important because it can inspire your success. (Normah, 40 years old)

High Quality of Products and Services

Quality control is a business activity performed to ensure that the products meet the set quality standards. Managing quality means striving to achieve excellence and focusing on continuous improvement. Excellent and continuous quality management can increase the value of the product. What is more important is that quality control can give confidence and satisfaction to the customer and improve mumpreneurs business performance. Among the verbatim quotes regarding quality control are as follows:

My cakes are fresh and delicious. I always ensure my cakes are fresh because I want to give people something fresh to eat...If people order in the morning, I will prepare it early in the morning...I want to maintain quality and ensure my customers receive hot and fresh baked cake. (Zarina, 40 years old)

The quality must be taken care of, and I will always do R&D for products... I create quality bread products by preparing them with the best and freshest raw materials. In addition, the processing quality is clean and hygienic... In addition to maintaining the product's taste and quality, I also focus on quality product packaging. For example, my product packaging is unique, durable, and can potentially attract the attention of consumers. (Ina, 33 years old)

I store [the] chips in an airtight container since the chips will become limp in the presence of wind... I make chips when I receive orders to ensure I do not leave chips exposed and not stored. Chips will be easily chewed and eaten by ants... I also ensure the chips are away from heat and not directly to the sun. It will cause the taste and color of chips to change quickly. (Sofia, 41 years old)

I am using 100% premium nuts such as almonds, cashew nuts, peas, and hazel nuts. The moist cookies are made using Anchor brand pure butter imported from New Zealand... For cookies that use chocolate, chocolate from Beryl's brand was chosen. From the quality of the cookies and the taste, I care about the quality of the cookies and do not skimp on ingredients. (Ummi, 40 years old)

Thus, mumpreneurs must pay close attention to their product quality and services to ensure their businesses continue finding a place in the hearts of consumers. With continuous quality control, mumpreneurs will gain several benefits, such as saving production costs due to less wastage, increased customer trust and confidence due to product quality that is always within standards, and food products with maintained taste. Mumpreneurs should attend quality-related courses to improve their understanding of suitable quality control methods.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The business field has become a phenomenon that has attracted much attention, especially among women, since it has the potential to provide economic opportunities that can generate a decent income. However, the participation rate of women in economic development is still low compared to men's. This problem is linked to gender issues that are difficult to erode from society's assumptions. Women are also seen to be less interested in conventional entrepreneurship due to the high risk and commitment. Thus, the study aims to identify restraining factors and business enablers among mumpreneurs. The study first found several restraining factors: financial problems, societal stigma, and an imbalance between work and life. The findings are supported by Analoui and Herath (2019), Dhaliwal (2022), Nguyen et al. (2020), and Ogundana et al. (2021). Being a mumpreneur is not an easy feat, and they

need to balance business work and household life, often facing discrimination and gender imbalance (Van Lieshout et al., 2019). In addition, due to insufficient time, many need more appropriate knowledge, resource restraints, and adequate networking prospects (Ojong et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2019). Many mumpreneurs also have informal businesses (e.g., home-based business owners, small producers, or street vendors) in developing economies, which are often linked with minimal productivity, poor governance, and poverty and income inequality (Begenau, 2020; Embong & Rusdi, 2021).

In addition, the enabling factors of mumpreneurship include internal and external factors such as mindset, attitude, personality, competencies, government and agency support, and high-quality products and services. Factors such as entrepreneurial thinking, skills, support system, and attitudes need to be improved holistically and strategically to reduce their dependence on government support and be able to be independent in managing business to guarantee mumpreneurs obtain entrepreneurial success (Elia et al., 2020; Paoloni et al., 2020). Mumpreneurs with high enthusiasm will continue to look for opportunities to boost their business level (Paoloni et al., 2020). Ideally, mumpreneurs should cultivate innovation and creativity to explore new products and services. Mumpreneurs need to improve their knowledge and skills through education and training. Previous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between competencies and the success of entrepreneurs, while the level of education also has a positive relationship with economic development (Xie et al., 2021; Mohd Noor et al., 2023; Mohd Noor et al., 2024). The summary of thematic findings is shown in Figure 1.

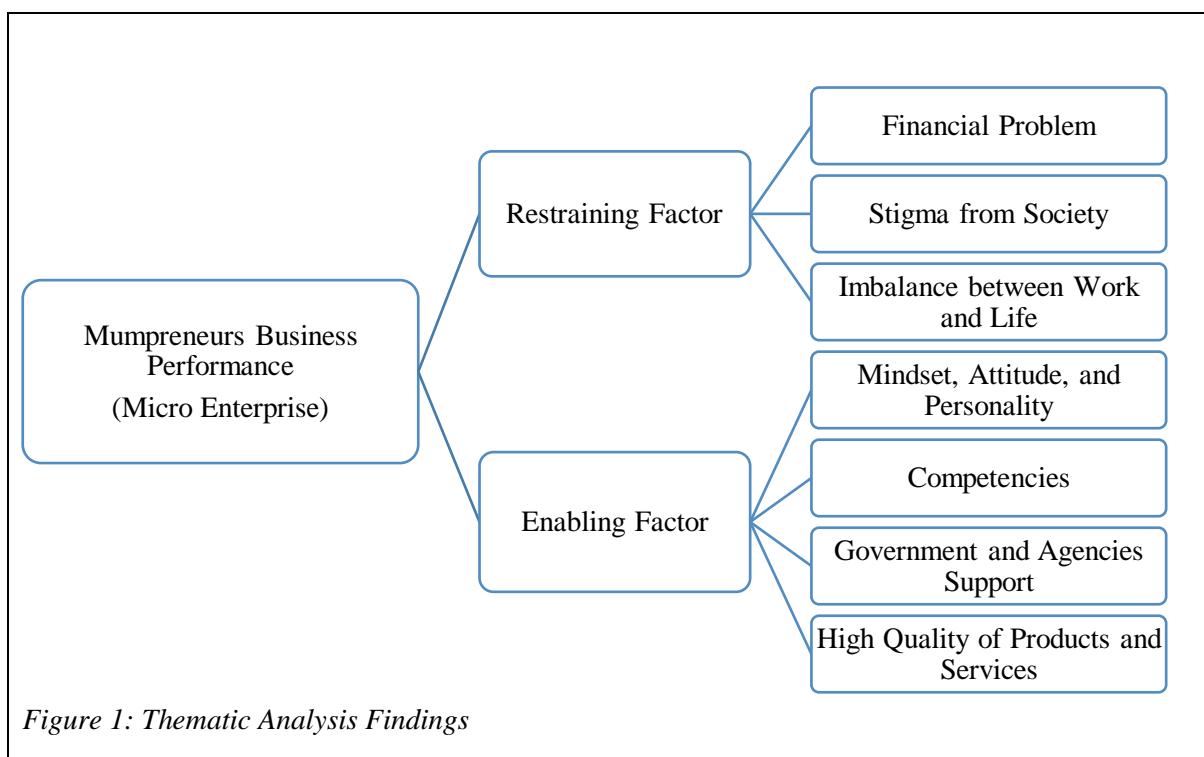


Figure 1: Thematic Analysis Findings

As an implication, mumpreneurs need to have positive attributes to continue to be successful. Among the positive traits they must possess are self-confidence, perseverance, diligence in learning new knowledge, willingness to share the secret of success with other entrepreneurs, and always having a good attitude (Byrne et al., 2019; Lopes et al., 2021; Mohd Noor et al., 2023). Due to their attitude, most mumpreneurs face challenges in their quest for success. Entrepreneurs should apply a positive business culture within their network circle. Moreover, mumpreneurs need to realize that skills and education are closely related to the success of women entrepreneurs (Kyrgidou et al., 2021).

Competency has become the core of the success of an entrepreneur's life (Neumeyer et al., 2019). An entrepreneur must have sufficient knowledge to operate a business (Kruger & Steyn, 2021). In addition, mumpreneurs also need to strengthen themselves with social and language skills. Language skills are critical for mumpreneurs to ensure that they can communicate better at the global level.

Environmental factors are also one of the catalysts for the success of mumpreneurs (Liñán & Martín, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2020). This is because we live in a social community. Therefore, a positive society can encourage entrepreneurs' success, while a hostile society becomes an obstacle to the success of women entrepreneurs. In Malaysia, we do not have a problem of inequality between men and women. However, some look down on the ability of female entrepreneurs. This kind of perception needs to be changed because it is an unhealthy culture and can undermine the spirit of women entrepreneurs (Analoui & Herath, 2019). The government and relevant agencies need to nurture the spirit of buying Malaysian products. If society puts more emphasis on local products, the products of mumpreneurs can grow more rapidly. Next, it is common for mumpreneurs to experience capital problems when expanding their business. It cannot be denied that government and private agencies in Malaysia have helped mumpreneurs. However, sometimes, bureaucratic red tape makes it difficult for these entrepreneurs to get help. Therefore, government and private agencies must be essential in helping these entrepreneurs compete at various levels.

Furthermore, support from the family, particularly the husband, is critical in balancing the work and lives of working mothers. Shared household responsibilities led women to experience less conflict between their gender and work identity (Uddin, 2021). The share of housework between partners or spouses is a critical factor for women's work identity and career aspirations. This statement also shows that the family and husband contribute appropriately to promoting women's overall quality of life. Thus, education and awareness are essential in understanding family members' need to help each other with household affairs. Women must focus on arranging and managing affairs in advance and ensure that they can divide time as best as possible (Brough et al., 2020). It is also essential to delegate specific tasks to the children and manage personal needs at home according to their ages. In this regard, women's self-motivation and mental and physical strength are the primary keys to their capabilities (Hjálmsdóttir & Bjarnadóttir, 2021). Training them to distinguish between business work and family time is essential.

The government, entrepreneurship bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or relevant agencies are encouraged to introduce apprenticeship mentoring programs for mumpreneurs. Unbiased viewpoints and knowledgeable opinions from the mentor can help identify the shortcomings and improvements that can be made to propel the mumpreneur's business. A mentor or role model will take the managers out of their comfort zone and give them the opportunity to try new experiences to make the business more exclusive (Gan et al., 2021). Entrepreneurs must always be active and quick to generate new ideas to bring innovation to the business (Hanaysha et al., 2022). This role requires the entrepreneur to always be open-minded and make observations to generate ideas to address persistent issues. For example, they are selling instant or ready meals, such as organic cereals, instant soups with natural ingredients, or snacks low in sugar and salt.

Another example is the development of ready-to-eat food products sold in eco-friendly packaging. Mumpreneurs can also focus on innovation in presentation and packaging. For example, they are developing edible packaging to reduce plastic waste or food products with a unique presentation, such as character-shaped cakes or colorful foods. Nevertheless, product innovation is a costly strategy. Hence, mumpreneurs must have good business networking skills and always seek collaboration to support these efforts. Every opportunity is used to the best advantage. Promising entrepreneurs will ensure that the opportunity brings extraordinary results for the benefit of the business and the consumer.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The power of women today is undeniable, as can be seen in many successful women entrepreneurs in various fields. The economic success of mumpreneurs depends on their efforts and skills, besides the many forms of support from the government (Byrne et al., 2019). Women entrepreneurs can be positioned to play an essential role in promoting sustainable practices in the economy, social, and ecological systems (Ogundana et al., 2021). Today, many opportunities to start new businesses are available for mumpreneurs. Women-run enterprises continue to grow worldwide, contributing to household incomes and national economic growth (Dean et al., 2019). However, mumpreneurs often face physical and social constraints that limit their ability to grow their businesses. Thus, support factors, such as finance and credit, training and development, service advice and consulting opportunities, product innovation, mentoring, and infrastructure can help increase the success of women entrepreneurs (Aboobaker, 2020; Gan et al., 2021; Hanaysha et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2019). The researchers have identified some potential aspects that can be suggested for future research. Among them are (1) the use of a quantitative approach to explore many mumpreneur samples, (2) to widen the study context by relating the restraining and enabling factors with business profit and growth, and (3) to extend the study to other locations or populations, such as Kelantanese mumpreneurs, single mumpreneurs, and small and medium enterprise entrepreneurs.

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