

THE INTERSECTION OF MARRIAGE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INSIGHTS FROM MUMPRENEURS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract. The socio-economic changes in the world have brought many changes to human civilization and impacted the function of women. The phenomenon shows that women are so committed to their careers that they are trusted to hold positions in various job sectors. However, despite these women's abilities, issues have begun to arise when most of them fail to balance their responsibilities towards family and career. The surge in social cases and divorces in Malaysia has begun to stem from working women, becoming a hot topic as an element contributing to the collapse of the family institution. However, this phenomenon is still under-discussed. Using qualitative methods, the researchers used in-depth interviews with 15 mumpreneurs. The findings of this study showed that most mumpreneurs understand the concept of work-life balance. However, most of them suffered work-life imbalance due to a lack of family support. The long working hours have a negative impact, and the problem is more complicated if the woman is a young or single mother or has disabled children. This is because the care and methods for small or disabled children are complicated and require high patience. These difficulties are the main reason their business performance is stagnant and developing to a higher market. The contribution of this study opens the need for guidance and support for women entrepreneurs through business incubators, networking, coaching, mentoring, family counseling, and management.

Keywords: *low-income groups, mumpreneurs, thematic analysis, work-life balance*

Introduction

The total population of Malaysia in 2024 is estimated to be 34.0 million. The male population increased to 17.8 million from 17.4 million in the first quarter of 2023, and the female population increased to 16.1 million from 15.8 million for the same period. Overall, the sex ratio of the population is 111 males for every 100 females, while the sex ratio for the citizen population is 103 males for every 100 females. The National Women's Policy 2025-2030 was introduced as a continuation of efforts to elevate the role of women in various sectors in line with the renewal of the National Social Policy 2030 and the need to address current challenges and issues related to women. Women are the foundation of the 'first madrasah' and support the family, community, and country (Sham et al., 2021). Therefore, we must support any inclusive policy towards empowering this group of women for the well-being and progress of Malaysian women. An important preface stating that women are the main contributors to national development for future development cannot be denied, especially in Malaysia (Noor et

al., 2022). In this context, both genders play an important role as the main contributors to the country's economic, social, and political sectors. Working women are considered to have emotional and physical strength because they are competent in managing tasks and work in the organization and, at the same time, still bear the responsibilities of being a wife and mother (Lockwood, 2003). Family work demands, and conflicts often burden working women because they must do two things simultaneously. They need to ensure that all aspects and affairs in the household are completed flawlessly. The problem of work-family balance becomes even more complicated if the woman is a young mother with small children at home. This is because the methods of caring for small children are very complicated and require a high level of patience compared to caring for teenage children (Rauf et al., 2025). These things threaten the lives and feelings of working mothers because they may not have enough time to help educate their children ideally.

Work-life balance became an issue in the lives of women and families after the Industrial Revolution when many began to work formally and had to spend more time on the job than staying at home with their families (Uddin, 2021). Since then, the role of women began to change after they played an active role in the labor market. Although the involvement of women in the labor market is a positive development in national development, the increase in women's involvement in the employment sector has posed various challenges in their lives (Guo and Zhu, 2023). This is because managing the household continues as a practice and culture that is seen as appropriate to the responsibilities given to women. This means that women have two leading roles at the same time. Compared to men, women face more difficulties balancing work and life because they have family responsibilities while also having to take care of children and fulfill domestic duties, which often become an obstacle to their career advancement (Khurshid et al., 2023). Sociocultural expectations in gender often assume that women will be responsible for housework and caregiving (Salahuddin et al., 2021). Therefore, they perform additional tasks beyond their work roles. Due to this unequal distribution of housework, women cannot equally contribute to their work, where sociocultural norms consider women's professional duties to be secondary to their family and spouse's work. This sociocultural-based female priority may be a real challenge to the well-being and empowerment of women (Neneh, 2021). This raises new development issues, especially when linked to social matters. Rahman et al. (2023) stated that many working women face family responsibilities and formal work conflicts. Conflict occurs when women are said to fail to achieve the goals of tasks and can also not harmonize the family in a manageable way. In response, there is a promotion of the concept of work-life balance to overcome this problem. This concept is promoted to raise awareness among various parties to help working women with families have a more balanced work and family life (Ayatakshi-Endow and Steele, 2021).

De Clercq and Brieger (2022) emphasized that the variables affecting work-life balance among working women are role conflict, organizational culture, life culture, dynamic work requirements, insufficient social support, career orientation, career stage, and poor coping strategies. Rashmi and Kataria (2022) emphasized that work-life balance advantages employees and employers. Employees will be more committed, motivated, and productive in their work, which will, in turn, positively impact their organization. Entrepreneurs are just like ordinary people who have emotions and feelings. Especially when they face various challenges; even though they have been taught about high spirits and professional attitudes, they sometimes experience feelings

of sadness, anger, worry, and other feelings from time to time (Emon and Nipa, 2024). An entrepreneur is a busy person who plans, implements strategies, chairs meetings, manages employees, meets new customers, and does other things that need to be done (Neneh, 2021). Sometimes, work pressure increases, so they start to feel stressed. Such feelings reduce efficiency and hinder business productivity (Banu et al., 2025). Efficient time management is one of the most important skills for busy entrepreneurs to keep their businesses running smoothly (Rastogi et al., 2022). Therefore, the objective of this article assumes that work-life balance is necessary for women to support their lives, and the researchers aim to explore factors influencing women entrepreneur's work and family roles. Thus, the information will help stakeholders provide more effective programs to empower women's entrepreneur support systems and capabilities. This study tries to resolve several research gaps. First, most of the research in this area is focused on Western backgrounds, and there are not many studies focusing on work-life balance issues of women entrepreneurs (Guo and Zhu, 2023), and much of the literature has comprised samples of both men and women (Adah et al., 2025). Most of the work is about the ensuing psychosomatic effects of conflict/stress because of imbalance (Boamah et al., 2022), and very few studies examine the solutions and approaches that can mitigate work-family conflict. This research seals this gap in the literature by concentrating on women entrepreneurs, fostering an understanding of entrepreneurial behaviors related to complementary personal obligations and reaching professional purpose.

Literature review

Border theory

Border theory describes when the conflict remains and provides a framework for individuals and organizations to negotiate to achieve work-family balance (Desrochers and Sargent, 2004). Thus, the essence of this theory is how individuals can balance work and family by providing a framework for the individual to be border-crossers and creating organizations with permeable and flexible boundaries, as border-crossers are working women. Related to border-crosser, or participation in both realms, individuals must have control over their involvement in work and family (Vodanovich et al., 2006). The good involvement in fieldwork and family shows that border-crossers identify the realm by commitment to the realm and want to form it with a way to make them contribute and excel (Desrochers and Sargent, 2004). This condition is also related to culture, especially the Malay culture. It means how a person's perception of working women will determine their participation in the workplace. If a woman adheres to traditional or feminine beliefs, the main priority is family, not a job. Thus, they will be responsible for domestic work, such as managing their husband, children, and all housework. Thus, if a woman has a traditional perception, then the role of women is only limited to the domestic area, namely serving and managing a household. If involved in the economic sector, this is only to help her husband (Dunn, 2025). On the contrary, women with a more modern perception consider that women and men have equal opportunities to develop their abilities in various sectors of life (Vodanovich et al., 2006). In addition to being responsible for the domestic sector, women can also work. Meanwhile, border-keepers or boundary-keepers in the work field are superior and partners in the realm of family. Other realm members can only be influential in defining realm and limitation but not possess power over border crossers (Adisa and

Gbadamosi, 2021). In this, border-keepers who do not have authority over border crossers are colleagues in the realm of work, and in the family realm, they are children.

Related to a partner, if the husband believes he is more modern and supports his wife in working, the working woman will feel more comfortable leaving the family to work. However, if the husband has a traditional view, it will be difficult for women to work outside the home. The husband will demand that the wife always be at home; of course, the wife serves all the husband's needs. To bridge between realms, work, and family, one of which can be done through communication between border crosser and border keeper. Tahir (2025) suggested that communication is important in achieving a balance between family and work. Eventually, communication will improve functionality at work and in the family. This is because when the individual can communicate problems with superiors and people involved in her work and is communicating problems with her husband or family member, it will be more straightforward to achieve a work-life-to-work-life balance. Communicating the problem is hoped to bring about a bright spot in the solution or at least something of a relief to share (Adisa and Gbadamosi, 2021).

Women entrepreneurship

The entrepreneur is an individual who has the goal of getting out of the constraints of financial or non-financial factors by running a business that will produce profits. In addition, the definition of an entrepreneur is an individual who drives any economic activity with competitiveness and resilience, seeks opportunities and opens employment opportunities, and can manage these activities with various risks. Effectiveness and success in work-family balance can be achieved well if time and emotional planning can be done positively and systematically consistently (Nieto-Aleman et al., 2025). According to a report submitted by Ahmed et al. (2025), female entrepreneurs are assisted by digital business platforms. Through online businesses, many women can generate income even though they do not have a real job. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many women have taken the initiative to run businesses online to help the family economy. This view is magnificent and significant in forming a peaceful and prosperous family. Furthermore, the report presented by Alias (2020) shows that more than 190,000 female entrepreneurs involved in micro-businesses and the service sector have had their income affected during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also found that 70 percent of female traders contribute to family income for collective family support. There are many factors why entrepreneurs venture into the business world.

One of them is the interest factor. Some individuals who venture into business are already involved in other work, such as salaried work in the public or private sector. They have also worked for themselves in various fields such as agriculture, handicraft enterprises, fisheries, and other non-business work. However, they are not free, and feelings of dissatisfaction arise in terms of income, and they must work under the direction of others (Mahat et al., 2021). This makes them want to try to open their own business. Some entrepreneurs venture into business due to compelling circumstances, such as not having a job due to no qualifications or having inappropriate qualifications. Under the pressure of life and family or friends, the individual starts doing business either on a small scale or on a large scale, depending on the capital, ability, experience, and support of the people around them (Ślusarczyk et al., 2023). In the current Malaysian economic situation that has not fully recovered, many workers have been laid off, and many degree and diploma holders are still unemployed. Therefore, it

encourages these unemployed people to venture into entrepreneurship as a compelling circumstance because opportunities for paid work are limited (Prabawanti and Rusli, 2022). In the economic field, women do not miss the opportunity to contribute their energy to further enliven the field of entrepreneurship.

In terms of systems, many support systems in Malaysia care for and assist women in their careers, such as the National Women's Policy, where women are guaranteed an equitable share in the ownership of resources and information, opportunities and benefits of development, integrating women in the national development sector based on their abilities and needs. The National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID), the Prime Minister's Office, is also working on a global action plan for women in national development. Pertubuhan Hal Ehwal Wanita dan Keluarga (HAWA Malaysia) also monitors and evaluates services provided by the public and private sectors to benefit women. There are many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that also support systems for women, such as the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO), Pertubuhan Tindakan Wanita Islam Malaysia (PERTIWI), and others. The government of Malaysia has tried to empower women in economic development with various initiatives by opening a broad and flexible space to continue and increase the role of women. However, the issues and challenges women entrepreneurs face are due to internal problems such as lack of family support and cultural perspectives (Prabawanti and Rusli, 2022).

Working women's issues

Women are a group that plays an important role in a society's structure. This role refers to going beyond the national level or even at the most minor unit level in society, namely the family institution. This recognition can be seen through a process that began centuries ago, where there is awareness among society about the need for women to contribute to various forms together with men. The role of a woman in the family in today's context, the role of this group is one of the important pillars in ensuring family harmony (De Clercq and Brieger, 2022). Nowadays, the role of women is much different than before. Many women now have careers in their respective fields of expertise. However, balancing the demands of being an employee and responsibilities to the family is a challenge and not an easy task. The role of women is not only in managing the household but as contributors to the family economy. This responsibility is not only borne by married women but also becomes part of the responsibility of those who are not married (Emon and Nipa, 2024). This means that the role of women in the family is that of children, who obey both parents; wives who obey their husbands and always take care of themselves; and mothers who prioritize their children with perfect religious upbringing. In addition, from a societal perspective, they are involved in charitable work and contribute to education, economics, and politics. The social changes brought about by economic development require more women to be active outside the home. Often, unknowingly, in the efforts to be efficient and dedicated workers, we neglect our responsibilities.

The challenges of working women are very high because they need to get approval from their husbands. In tense situations, a few women work without getting permission from their husbands. Kalliath and Brough (2008) explained that work-family conflict is difficult to overcome if a female worker has problems and wisdom in fulfilling tasks in the household institution and the need to bear the burden of work simultaneously. Work-family conflict refers to the problems due to the clash between work and family

that working women need to fulfill simultaneously (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). This includes commitments at work and the burden of work tasks that affect and limit commitment to the family (responsibilities as a wife and mother). In addition, issues of misunderstanding from husbands and families can cause emotional disturbances and chronic physical fatigue (Shah et al., 2025). As a result, it will affect psychological and physiological health. In discussions on the management of working women, it can be concluded that women still need to make all commitments and responsibilities to their families even though they are working (Sobral et al., 2025).

Work-life balance

Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to allocate time and energy effectively between work and other aspects of life, such as family, social relationships, health, and entertainment (Brough et al., 2022). According to Althammer et al. (2021), this balance is not just an equal division of time but rather an effort to achieve psychological well-being through stress management, flexibility, and a role that can be played well in personal and professional life. In organizational psychology, this balance can be seen as an interaction between two mutually influencing domains: work and personal life. Although they are often considered two opposite things, the reality is that they are interconnected and influence each other. Stress experienced at work can negatively impact the quality of personal life; on the other hand, stress that appears in personal life can also affect performance at work (Marques and Berry, 2021). Many factors affect the balance between work and personal life. Some relevant internal factors include high workload and continuous job demands, and roles in personal life obligations and responsibilities in personal life, such as the role of parent, spouse, or another family member, can also affect balance (Stanley and Sebastine, 2023). In addition, external factors such as community culture and economic conditions also affect individual perceptions of work and personal life balance. Therefore, a social support system must be established to make it easier for each family member to deal with problems that arise in this era of rapid economic development (Dewitt et al., 2023). With today's technological advancements and Internet access, individuals are constantly preoccupied and focused on work to the point that it is challenging to balance work and life, let alone spend time with family, friends, and oneself. Today's reality is that both men and women work from morning until late at night. If this continues, the effects will cause emotional stress, mental and physical exhaustion, domestic unrest, divorce, declining work productivity, and quitting (Guo and Zhu, 2023). The life of a working woman will have its challenges and conflicts in finding a balance between work and life, especially for those who shoulder the responsibility of being a wife and mother. It is not an easy task for them to achieve that balance. There are undoubtedly various emotions and pressures that women must experience, whether positive or negative. Failure to overcome these emotions will majorly impact their career due to loss of focus and productivity at work and neglecting responsibilities towards their family (Ayatakshi-Endow and Steele, 2021).

Work-life balance can be interpreted as a person's ability to balance job demands with personal and family needs (Edeh and Ikpor, 2025). According to Lockwood (2003), a balanced work life is interpreted as the situation being balanced on the two claims where the work and life of an individual are the same. In line with the explanation, Nieto-Aleman et al. (2025) defined work-life balance as the individual's ability to fulfill work and family commitments and work responsibilities and activities

with others (such as social activities). Work-life balance could improve employees' performance, positively impacting the company's progress (Fayaz and Gulzar, 2025). Prentice et al. (2025) stated that there are three components of balance, namely: (1) time balance, about the amount of time given to work and roles outside of work; (2) involvement balance, which pertains to psychological level involvement or commitment to work and outside of work, and (3) satisfaction balance, level of work satisfaction and outside of work. There are some strategies for forming a work-life balance. These include: (1) alternating strategy done by a person by organizing alternative activities, such as relaxing in the middle of busy work, (2) outsourcing strategy done by a person who can represent some side jobs or become a second priority but does not forget to hold the mandatory job, (3) tecflexing strategy done by someone who takes advantage of the sophistication of technology to complete work so that the time used can be more flexible, and (4) simplifying strategy done by someone in reducing some jobs that are less needed and based on needs, economic value, and the profit that will be obtained by the individual (Syed et al., 2025; Brough et al., 2022).

Materials and Methods

This study uses qualitative methods to collect research data. One of the important methods used mainly to understand the phenomenon is through interview techniques. Therefore, fifteen informants were selected using purposive sampling as study respondents. The informant is a mother who must own a full-time or part-time business with more than one year of experience. They must live with family and stay in Kuala Lumpur or Selangor. Moreover, informants must also come from low-income groups. B40, M40, and T20 are terms used to divide Malaysians into groups or groups based on household size. B40, M40, and T20 are abbreviations for Bottom 40%, Middle 40%, and Top 20%, and these terms refer to the ratio of the number of households in each group to the total number of households in Malaysia. The family salary and household income category for low-income groups is RM4,850 per month and below. *Table 1* shows the information on the study's key informants.

Table 1. Key informants information.

No.	Key informant code	Age	Business product	Period of business	Business orientation
1	A1	40	Catering	More than five years	Full-time
2	A2	45	Cookies and cakes	More than eight years	Full-time
3	A3	39	Beauty product	More than five years	Full-time
4	A4	35	Home appliance	Less than two years	Full-time
5	A5	42	Cloth and Apparel	Less than two years	Full-time
6	A6	40	Dessert	More than five years	Part-time
7	A7	37	Lunch Set	More than five years	Full-time
8	A8	38	Popcorn and cookies	More than five years	Full-time
9	A9	40	Food Vendor	More than five years	Full-time
10	B1	41	Food Vendor	More than five years	Full-time
11	B2	45	Cookies	More than five years	Full-time
12	B3	29	Feedlots	More than five years	Full-time
13	B4	29	Ice-cream and Marketing	More than five years	Full-time
14	B5	32	Food Catering	More than five years	Full-time
15	B6	63	Pillow	More than five years	Full-time

Next, the data was analyzed using thematic methods. In this case, each interview was transcribed and coded according to the theme set by the researchers, and then conclusions were drawn from the interview data. Conversations between researchers and the respondents in this interview were confidential and would not be published

publicly. Here are the interview questions: (1) Tell me some about your background and life journey to this point. (2) What do you understand about work-life balance? (3) How do you organize time between careers and family? (4) What is the main challenge of being a working woman? (5) Regarding the challenge, how do you solve the problem?

Results and Discussion

Understanding of work-life balance

Sufficient time for family, hobby and social matters

Based on the interviews, fourteen informants believe that work-life balance is a situation where individuals have sufficient time to organize and divide between work responsibilities, family life, and other responsibilities. Thus, there is no conflict between family life and work career. Moreover, a balanced life is not only about work and family but also includes self and social life. The informants believe it is closely related to being productive at work, but they can still enjoy their free time with their closest people and have time to pursue a hobby. Surprisingly, ten informants have admitted to having an imbalance in work-life. Among the verbatim are the following:

“I understand that work-life balance is where I have enough time and rest. I am not tired because the time distribution for business and family is balanced. For example, I have time to manage food orders, and I have time to manage the children, such as dropping them off and picking them up at school” (A6).

“Life is balanced when we still have time with our family and children. Even though business is busy, the important thing is at least to have time with our family. Balanced when we are still able to do what we like. For example, traveling, playing sports, and leisure activities. I am grateful that I can still do my hobbies: mountain climbing and traveling. Let us divide our time wisely” (B1).

Achieving happiness and productivity

Work is a big part of our lives, and we all want to feel we all want to feel happy at work. Eight informants believe happiness in life is an indicator of work-life balance. This happiness can be achieved if entrepreneurs can solve problems and manage their time efficiently and wisely. Two informants admitted that productivity is also an indicator of work-life balance. Individuals can manage their time and energy more efficiently by achieving a work-life balance. They can rest sufficiently, directly contributing to increased work focus, creativity, and motivation. Thus, work-life balance improves an individual's quality of life, productivity, and work performance. Among the verbatim are the following:

“Work-life balance is subjective to everyone. It is when I am busy, but I feel happy and not tired. So, it means I experience a balance between work and family. It is true that, in running this business, we are free to choose our working hours, but it is not as easy as we think because our time can be until midnight, and sometimes we must sacrifice weekends. However, if it does damage happiness and health, then life is not balanced” (B4).

“In life, we need to be happy. For example, most entrepreneurs who run this business are because they are interested in this work. They are willing to wake up early and sleep late. However, they are not stressed, and their family responsibilities are balanced. Therefore, this shows that there is a balance in life. Some people do not like to do business because they fear being tired. However, everyone is different” (A8).

“If we look at successful and productive entrepreneurs, most are busy but not tired because their lives are balanced. Unsuccessful entrepreneurs fail to manage their time” (A7).

Securing good mental and physical health

Constant stress can hurt the mental health of working women. Excessive workload and lack of rest can lead to emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, they must take time, adopt a healthy lifestyle, and seek emotional support when needed. Four informants also stated that work-life balance is when they have a specific time to rest because it is essential in maintaining mental and physical health. Activities such as adequate sleep, a healthy and sound eating routine, and exercise can help them maintain energy throughout the day. Imbalance is when they cannot have rest time, which can cause fatigue and lead to decreased performance and work productivity. Among the verbatim are the following:

“The important thing is to work as much as possible if it does not harm your health. Do not work until you get sick. For example, my friend does business and does not rest until he gets heart disease and high blood pressure. My friend wakes up early to cook, is busy doing business on TikTok in the middle of the night, and does not even eat or drink. How can he not get sick” (B3).

“A balanced life is when I do not work until I am sick and stressed. So far, I am still healthy and always in control of my schedule. If I get sick, I stop the business. That is the advantage of doing business over working with people. We can balance work and family life” (B4).

Challenges in achieving work-life balance

Working women play an important role in society's economic and social development. However, in their efforts to succeed in their careers, women also face significant challenges in ensuring a balance between work and home. Work and home responsibilities require perseverance, wise time management, and firm support.

Lack of support system

Women entrepreneurs can be successful if they are given solid support if they participate in the business, but the opposite is true if they do not receive good support. Lack of emotional support can cause most of them to face problems of not believing in themselves to be involved in the business. Here are their words:

“When I first got involved, there was no family support or trust. Our children were the only ones who supported us. They were not sure I could do it...” (A2).

"I am a single mother and have disabled children. It is hard to divide my time. Sometimes it takes me a week to close business since I must manage everything from A to Z" (B2).

"My husband does not want to help. I manage the business alone. Sometimes, I must support my family. Moreover, there are no employees to help. How can a small business like mine afford to hire employees?"(A6).

"I manage all aspects of the business, especially the fiscal management, marketing, and ordering aspects. Sometimes during the festive season, I hire an employee to help with the packaging process of Raya cookies, but I am still unmanageable" (A3).

Based on the confessions of the informants above, they admitted that family members did not play the fundamental role of a family's function, namely, not providing support. At the same time, they were involved in the business.

Doing multiple jobs

Heavy burdens such as critical financial problems force women entrepreneurs not to rely on just one source of income. Although not all informants support their lives by doing multiple types of jobs, some of them must do so after completing their primary jobs. Here is the confession of some informants:

"It was also challenging. I am a single mother and had to support my family alone. I am selling cakes; however, it was not enough. Thus, I also work as a cleaner at public agencies and freelancer house cleaner..."(B2).

"Even though I am running a catering business... if I am free, I would go to the night market and sell chicken rice... with a little knowledge, sometimes friends would ask me for massages...I do multiple jobs" (B5).

Job insecurity

This is a big issue for small business owners. The instability of the business market affects many entrepreneurs, and some live in fear of losing, which can be more detrimental to their health. Feelings of uncertainty and anxiety may push them to take on more tasks at work until the work schedule starts to interfere with their personal life. Here are their words:

"I have three employees who will help with the marketing business. Therefore, I cannot stop looking for organizations that need our services. Otherwise, who will pay the salaries of my employees? It is also a headache to think about this. Every day, I will make sure to approach at least 10 companies. Sometimes, if customers want to meet, I must cancel family-related things. For example, going back to my hometown" (B4).

"That is right, this business is uncertain. Sometimes, this month, we lose, and sometimes, we make a profit. To avoid losses, we must sacrifice time and life. For

example, when there is a flood in this feedlot business, I spend much time in the fields to ensure my livestock is safe. Sometimes I sleep in the office” (B3).

Strategies for achieving work-life balance

Working women face many challenges in maintaining a balance in their lives. However, with family support, innovative time management, and the ability to adapt to change, they can succeed in their careers and maintain harmony in their homes. This section discusses the strategies used by women entrepreneurs to ensure they have achieved work-life balance.

Time management

One way to achieve work-life balance is to set clear and realistic work priorities. Entrepreneurs need to know their duties and responsibilities and what they can do. They must prepare a list of tasks in order of importance. For example, in the context of work, task priorities should be given priority to tasks with an earlier deadline and tasks that are important and impact the organization. This daily schedule should include work time, break time, time with family, and time for recreational activities. By effectively allocating time between work and personal life, they can manage their time better, increase productivity, reduce stress, and maintain well-being. Here are their words:

“Entrepreneurs need to be smart. We need to focus on completing work. Do not always procrastinate. For example, take care of something later. When we procrastinate, the accumulated work will cause us stress” (B1).

“Women entrepreneurs need to have a strict schedule. For example, I will make kekabu pillows from dawn until 10 am. After that, I stop and will do other work. The processing time in the morning is ideal because it is cool, and afternoon is no longer suitable because the weather is hot” (B6).

“Entrepreneurs need to be smart. For example, minimize the number of orders. For example, every month, I will make sure that the number of biscuit orders is only a maximum of 50 jars because I know that if I order more than that, I will have to sacrifice time with my family and rest time” (A2).

Strong family and social support

Some respondents have responsibilities to parents and other families. They feel that work-life imbalance occurs when they cannot spend quality time with their parents, especially when living with more; husbands' support for women entrepreneurs is critical. The informants stated that husbands are the most significant source of support, and without husbands' support, it would be challenging to balance their work and family responsibilities. Social support also plays a key role in dealing with mental health problems. Communicating with family, colleagues, or friends can provide an outlet to share feelings and seek advice. This support can provide emotional relief and build a positive social atmosphere. Here are their words:

“To divide time, you need family support. For example, I am very dependent on my husband. I will cook the ordered food, and my husband plays a helping role in

delivering it. The children are very understanding. They help with packaging and ordering. I am incredibly grateful that my family is invaluable" (B5).

"I am grateful that all family members help me. The children help take care of my sick husband. I also manage the business from home. The children also help to buy raw materials. If all I must do is do it, I will not be in business" (A4).

Setting boundaries

To achieve work-life balance, informants believe women entrepreneurs must set clear boundaries between business work and personal life. By setting boundaries, they can prevent work from taking over their personal life and vice versa. Set healthy work-life boundaries by ensuring they have enough time for rest and activities outside the business and should not mix work and personal matters. Here are their words:

"Women entrepreneurs need to balance work with business. If you are not feeling well or stressed, there is no need to force yourself. Do not be afraid to refuse a task you cannot commit. For example, the customer wants to meet you, but you are responsible for picking up your child. You need to have the courage to refuse politely and professionally to explain the real situation. Therefore, do not be afraid to say no" (B2).

Promoting healthy lifestyle

Women entrepreneurs need to care about their physical and mental well-being. Healthy and energetic entrepreneurs can perform their tasks more efficiently and productively, while those who experience stress can affect their business performance. Therefore, they must care about their diet, build a healthy lifestyle, get enough sleep, and conduct leisure activities to improve their physical and mental health. Finding a hobby or activity they enjoy outside work can also help reduce stress. Here are their words:

"This business will always be stressful. Therefore, practice a healthy lifestyle such as exercise or healing activities. When I am stressed, I go to the spa and get a massage. To maintain my health, I watch what I eat and drink. I also take health supplements" (A4).

"I make sure I do a brisk walk every day. If I am stressed, I will relax by going on a trip with friends or family. We have worked hard; when there is a little profit, go and treat yourself"(A7).

"To reduce stress immediately, simple ways include deep breathing, light exercises such as walking or stretching, and rest. Getting support from my family is also one of the effortless ways to cope with stress" (B3).

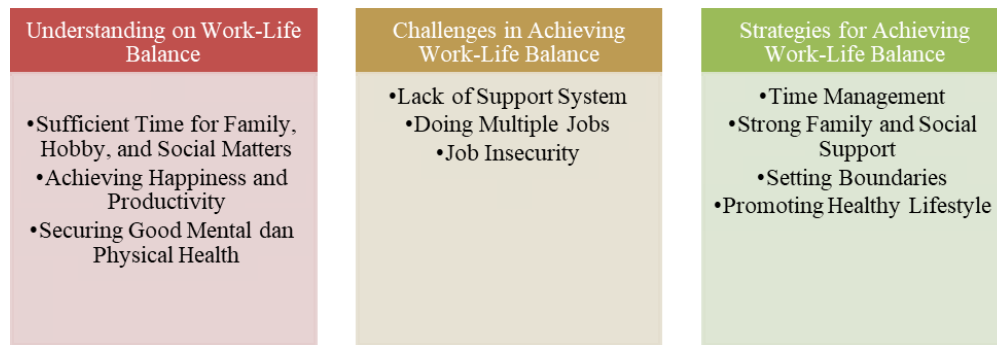


Figure 1. Thematic findings.

Using qualitative methods, the researchers used in-depth interviews with 15 mumpreneurs. The findings of this study showed that most mumpreneurs understand the concept of work-life balance. The work-life balance includes four main components: sufficient time for family, hobbies, and social matters, achieving happiness and productivity, and securing good mental and physical health. However, most of them suffered work-life imbalance due to a lack of support system, multiple jobs or roles, and job insecurity. The long working hours have a negative impact, and the problem is more complicated if the woman is a young or single mother or has disabled children. Some strategies used and recommended by informants include time management, strong family and social support, setting boundaries, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. The contribution of this study opens the need for guidance and support for women entrepreneurs through business incubators, networking, coaching, mentoring, family counseling, and management. First, there needs to be a support system for managing the family at home. This requires a change in basic societal assumptions regarding the role of the division of duties between spouses at home (Welsh et al., 2021). There needs to be a fair division of family affairs so that both spouses have equal responsibilities. It is necessary to educate children to conduct specific tasks and manage personal needs at home according to their ages. Family support, especially from the husband, is critical. For example, a husband should help ease the burden on his wife at home, who is tired of working all day. In addition, effective communication between spouses is also important, and the role of taking care of children is a shared responsibility and should not be left to the wife alone. Likewise, women, work, and family affairs should be divided equally, and the burden should be borne together (Saoula et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurs must always be positive and calm in all matters and situations. A healthy lifestyle needs to be given priority (Rashmi and Kataria, 2022). A healthy lifestyle will support all body functions, both physical and spiritual. Moreover, time management is important as a strategy for planning available time and controlling the amount of time spent on specific tasks or activities without compromising work-life balance (García-Salirrosas et al., 2023). Without good time management, a person will produce poor quality work, miss deadlines especially if given tasks with a deadline, increase stress levels, disrupt work-life balance, and damage professional reputation (Stanley and Sebastine, 2023). Moreover, adequate allocations would be made to establish childcare centers in the local community. With the existence of these childcare centers, working mothers no longer need to worry about childcare problems while they are out working. Gender awareness program needs to be further improved to help eliminate the stigma and perception that domestic tasks are the right of women only but are instead a shared responsibility for every couple who has established a household.

Therefore, what needs to be done is that campaigns and programs need to be held in the mainstream media to change this perception so that gender harmony continues to increase for the well-being of the institution of a family. Moreover, the media can also increase the number of programs with a counseling element, where viewers can express their problems and try to find solutions based on the guidance of a counselor. Programs like *Bicara Hati* broadcast on TV may be helpful for family institutions in our country. By making broadcasts like this, not only one family's problem is being solved, but many other families facing the same problem can benefit from it. Finally, a skills and entrepreneurship training program specifically for women needs to be intensified to provide training for participants in commercializable skills, help participants increase their potential to become economically independent after acquiring skills, and open the minds of participants who consist of low-income women, homemakers, and single mothers towards increasing self-confidence and providing motivation so that they are encouraged to develop themselves. Moreover, the training program could provide emotional support and motivation to overcome entrepreneurial challenges and offer guidance and counseling services to improve mental well-being. Additionally, there are several strategies that they can apply to achieve work-life balance. First, working women need to know the limits. It means not forcing the ability more than its portion. When tired, they need to rest; when the mind is complicated, they need to calm down. Thus, according to the portion, working mothers can accommodate energy, time, and mind. Finally, focus on spiritual/religious activities. Spiritual activities include praying, reciting, listening to lectures, and attending studies for Muslims. Getting closer to the creator is an obligation that cannot be forgotten. Worship gives them a more meaningful life. By increasing their spirituality, they can also find the essence and meaning of life and work at a higher level (Ali et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Working women play an important role in society's economic and social development. However, in their efforts to succeed in their careers, women also face significant challenges in ensuring household balance. Work and home responsibilities require perseverance, wise time management, and strong support from their families. One of the main challenges of working women is the burden of double responsibility. This includes caring for children, preparing food, cleaning the house, and caring for their families' welfare. A high workload can cause stress and fatigue, ultimately affecting their mental and physical well-being. To overcome challenges, women can adopt strategies such as sharing tasks with their partners and family members, using support services such as childcare or a maid, practicing effective time management by prioritizing tasks and prioritizing mental health by taking time for themselves. Awareness of the importance of mental and physical well-being must also be prioritized to promote better life balance. There are several suggestions for future studies about this subject matter. First, the sample size for future studies could be increased to obtain results with better precision and potential power. Furthermore, as a conversation, an interview is open to falsification, deception, exaggeration, and distortion of facts. Significant discrepancies can exist between what the respondent or informant says and does. Future studies could explore quantitative approaches to examine the subject matter.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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