

ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Social Media Expressions of Parenting and Alcohol Use: A COVID-19 Descriptive Study

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Abstract:

Social media platforms have increasingly influenced public perceptions and behaviours related to alcohol consumption. Peer-driven content, particularly in parenting communities, often normalizes and even glorifies drinking, potentially shaping attitudes and behaviours. This study aims to examine how alcohol-related parenting expressions were portrayed on social media before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. A descriptive study was conducted using data from two large, public Facebook groups known for discussions on parenting and alcohol. Metadata from each post—including publication date, caption, reactions, comments, shares, and user tags—was collected. A total of 2,718 posts, 1,309,392 comments, 5,254,458 reactions, and 3,311,022 shares were analyzed. Thematic analysis was performed using NVivo software. Four overarching themes emerged: (1) Parenthood, (2) Excessive Drinking Behaviour, (3) Stress and Coping Mechanisms, and (4) Humour. No significant thematic differences were observed between the pre-pandemic and pandemic periods. However, a notable spike in engagement at the onset of COVID-19 suggests increased alcohol consumption among mothers, potentially influenced by content that normalizes excessive drinking. Social media plays a significant role in reinforcing alcohol use as a socially acceptable coping strategy during motherhood. The findings underscore the need for public health interventions that address the normalization of alcohol consumption in online parenting communities.

Keywords: social media, alcohol consumption, motherhood, COVID-19, online posts.

Introduction

Social media is becoming an important platform for entertainment, social support and information dissemination. Pre-pandemic studies that examined the influence of social media have yielded mixed results, revealing both positive effects on psychological well-being and negative effects such as depression and stress (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Pang & Dresden, 2018; Reisdorfer et al., 2023). One significant concern is the spread of health-related information by users without medical expertise, complicating the public's ability to distinguish credible advice from misinformation. Research (Afful-Dadzie, Afful-Dadzie, Egala, 2023) noted, "social media's capacity to present content in new contextual forms and from varied authors makes it even more difficult to determine the authority, reliability and accuracy of its health information." (p.17). Over the last two decades, social media use has surged globally, engaging a broad and diverse audience (Chirumamilla & Gulati, 2021). However, not all users possess the health literacy required to evaluate the accuracy or risks associated with online content. While much of the existing literature focuses on adolescents and university students, there remains a significant gap in understanding how social media influences alcohol consumption among mothers (Strowger, Braitman, Barnett, 2022; Nagata et al., 2023).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, social restrictions, caregiving demands, and disruptions to routine profoundly impacted women's daily lives. Many mothers turned to social media not only for entertainment and distraction but also for emotional connection and coping. Additionally, alcohol consumption increased globally, with mothers reporting higher levels of stress and anxiety, often tied to childcare demands and isolation. Mothers' choices about who they follow on social media and the groups they join can greatly influence their attitudes, beliefs, and actions by shaping how risky behaviours are portrayed and discussed. Even though the combined effect of gender and motherhood was not significant in predicting alcohol use during the pandemic (Colton et al., 2023), being a wine mom is "trendy and hip and the juxtaposition between the social media fad and "high-risk drinking and alcohol use disorders" (p.121) (Crawford et al., 2020).

Social media has emerged as a critical platform for shaping beliefs and behaviours around alcohol use, especially through the visibility and normalization of drinking in peer-driven content. Mothers frequently post on social media pages to share experiences and engage with a community of their peers; however, these sites often validate and normalize alcohol use. Peer-driven social media platforms became spaces that depicted alcohol consumption as risk-free, downplaying its negative consequences (Reisdoerfer et al., 2023). Stress and alcohol use increased during the pandemic, and mothers experiencing anxiety, boredom and stress were using alcohol to alleviate these factors (Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, 2024; Leger, 2021).

Alcohol marketing campaigns reinforced this, and portrayed alcohol as a symbol of freedom, and as a strategy that was humorous, harmless and a means to cope with the demands of motherhood. Studies findings suggest that the social media content mothers engage with, along with the material promoted by social media algorithms, can shape mother's perceptions of behaviours like alcohol consumption (Lorenz, 2024) and without genuine social support systems for mothers and women, alcohol has become a common outlet for coping and finding comfort (Romo et al., 2024). Understanding the effect of social media use on the patterns of alcohol consumption of mothers of children is needed to develop policies, programs, and strategies tailored specifically to the needs of this population.

The purpose of this study is to describe alcohol-related parenting expressions in social media pre- and during the COVID-19 period. Nurses are vital members of the health care team, who frequently are in contact with mothers throughout their child's early life and have an opportunity to create space for conversations about coping and alcohol use. Through nurse-led interactions, there are opportunities to discuss healthy coping mechanisms and connections to additional services to support mothers' individual needs and promote healthy behaviours.

This study will help increase nurses' awareness of mothers' challenges while looking for support online and the continued need to explore evidence-informed care in this field. This study builds upon a previous scoping review of the literature that highlights social media

influence on alcohol consumption among mothers of children younger than eighteen years of age (Reisdorfer et al., 2023). The purpose of the previous scoping review of the literature was to describe what is known from the literature about how social media influences alcohol consumption among mothers of children younger than eighteen years of age. The results from the scoping review indicate that women with children and adolescents who utilize social media experience considerable effects on the expectations of modern motherhood and the normalization of alcohol consumption (Reisdorfer et al., 2023).

Methods

Study Design

This descriptive study explored alcohol-related parenting expressions in social media pre- and during the pandemic period. Descriptive studies aim to systematically describe characteristics or phenomena without assessing cause-and-effect relationships (Symbaluk & Hall, 2024). A quantitative approach was employed to determine alcohol-related posts shared across two distinct timeframes: the pre-pandemic period (March 11, 2017, to March 10, 2020) and the COVID-19 period (March 11, 2020, to May 5, 2023).

The study received approval from the Research Ethics Board prior to data collection. To protect the privacy of group members, direct quotes from posts are not included, as they could potentially reveal the identity of individual users (Zhang et al., 2024).

Setting and Data Sources

The study included online content from two open and public Facebook groups chosen for their public and large membership, high volume of content, and alignment with the study's focus on parenting and alcohol-related discourse. The decision to use the groups focused on parenting and alcohol consumption was grounded in the group's relevance to the study objective. Even though one-group defines itself as a satire group, the group's themes attract members who are either interested in or engaged with the culture surrounding alcohol and parenting, where they can openly share their thoughts, experiences and humour related to the

group's focus. Furthermore, these groups may serve as an informal network where participants can express their emotions, cope with stress and navigate the challenges of parenting, behaviours that are the central focus of this study. Additional details about the selected groups are provided in Table 1.

Table 1 - Description of the Facebook groups included in the study.

Name	Creation date	Number of followers	Number of likes	Responsible for the page	Page Admin Data	Page Description
MommyDrinksWin eAndSwears (MDWAS)	January 2, 2015	754K	742K	not informed	United States (10) India (2) Armenia (1)	No Description/ Info Provided on Facebook Page
MommyNeedsVod ka (MNV)	August 17, 2012	5.1M	N/A	Goviral Inc.	United States (4) Canada (2) France (1) Israel (1) United Kingdom (1)	The Darker Side of Parenting, satirical humour, hilarity galore, and motherhood with a twist. For good laughs and great cocktails! NOTE: This page does NOT promote drinking, especially to excess. We never drink around our kids, either. "Mommy Needs Vodka" is satire, NOT to

						be taken literally. A page for anyone, whether a parent or not, whether you drink or not, with a sense of humour.
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Data collection

Data collection was conducted by all authors between June and December 2023. For each Facebook group, the following information was recorded for every post: publication date, caption, description, total number of reactions, a breakdown of reaction types (like, love, care, haha, wow, sad, angry), number of comments, number of shares, and number of user tags. To ensure a fair distribution of labour, the dataset was divided among the authors based on the following periods:

- Pre-pandemic: March 11, 2017- Dec 31, 2017; 2018; 2019; Jan 1, 2020 - March 11, 2020.
- COVID-19 Pandemic: March 11, 2020 - Dec 31, 2020; 2021; 2022; Jan 1, 2023 - May 5, 2023.

Posts were included in the dataset if they were published within the specified time frame and explicitly mentioned both alcohol and parenting-related words. Captions related to marketing campaigns were excluded from the study. A pilot data collection was carried out with all researchers to ensure data validity and alignment on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

To maintain data integrity, all information was recorded in a spreadsheet at the time of collection²⁴, ensuring consistency even if posts were later edited or deleted. Once data collection was complete, the first and second authors conducted a double verification process to ensure accuracy and consistency; this involved cross-checking a random sample of entries

from each period to confirm adherence to the inclusion criteria and accuracy of data entry. Cleaned datasets were exported as a Microsoft Excel file for qualitative coding and thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach, supported by NVivo software and an inductive, data-driven strategy. The analysis began as researchers familiarized themselves with the data, reading through posts during collection to become familiar with the language, tone, and emerging patterns while still collecting data. Once all the data had been collected from both Facebook groups during the specified periods, it was organized into pre- and post-pandemic Excel files and subsequently uploaded to NVivo for analysis. Using NVivo's auto-coding tool, the team conducted open, descriptive coding to capture repeated words and phrases without imposing interpretation. Emojis, pictures and words such as 'lol', 'LMAO', 'ha ha ha', 'ss ss', '!!!', '????' was excluded from the thematic analysis. Only full phrases (with meaningful information) were analyzed in this study, totalling 5403 comments.

Three researchers (ER, FS, and SJ) independently reviewed the NVivo codes, grouping them into potential themes by identifying shared ideas and patterns. These themes were then refined into major themes through collaborative discussion, ensuring they accurately reflected the dataset. Once finalized, each theme was clearly defined and named to convey its core meaning, supported by peer debriefing and memoing to enhance reliability. After organizing the themes, the researchers engaged in a final interpretative stage, identifying representative quotes and developing analytic insights.

Descriptive statistics were used to present the number of posts, comments, reactions, and changes before and during the pandemic. Averages were calculated for the number of posts and comments per month, as well as for the number of comments, shares, and reactions per post, across both Facebook groups combined during the specified periods.

Research team and reflexivity

This study was conducted by four researchers with extensive expertise in nursing, qualitative research, mental health and parenthood. The first author (FS) holds a Ph.D. in nursing and currently serves as an assistant professor at a Faculty of Nursing. She also has extensive clinical and research experience with parenting and families. The second author (ER) holds a Ph.D. in nursing and currently serves as an associate professor at a Faculty of Nursing. She is an expert on mental health research. The third author (SJ) holds an MSc in Health Promotion and is an assistant professor in the field of nursing. She has experience in the field of health promotion. The research was carried out in collaboration with the fourth author (KK), a retired nursing professor with extensive experience in qualitative studies, and two post-secondary students (IS, GD). The nursing professors have substantial experience as nurses and educators in nursing faculties. Their experience as healthcare professionals and academic educators enriched the study's context. To ensure the integrity of the study, all authors took deliberate steps to minimize potential biases and made careful efforts to minimize the influence of their own biases on the study.

Results

This study investigated the significance of drinking behaviour among mothers by observing their online behaviours prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Examining the impact of social media content on mothers' drinking is essential for understanding how online platforms can shape and reinforce beliefs and behaviours related to alcohol consumption. In summary, the findings evidenced a spike in the number of posts and comments at the beginning of the pandemic. When the posts were categorized, the findings suggested that mothers demonstrated the same drinking behaviour in both periods. Participants were seeking social support, normalizing alcohol drinking behaviour, coping mechanisms or associating humour to relativize alcohol consumption. Social media groups were perceived as an opportunity to discuss and vent about motherhood challenges with online friends who share similar experiences. This study makes a significant contribution by demonstrating that the main topics of discussion in

these two social media groups remained the same and did not change significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Description of posts on social media groups

During the study period, 2718 posts, 1,309,392 comments, 5,254,458 reactions, and 3,311,022 shares were recorded. As depicted in Figures 1 and 2, there was a notable increase in the number of monthly posts from March 2020 to December 2020, which coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. After reaching a peak of an average of 44 posts per month during this period, the number of posts returned to pre-pandemic levels shortly after. In contrast, the average number of comments per month decreased after March 2020 for both social media groups analyzed. Specifically, the average number of comments per month went from approximately 26,000 to 18,000.

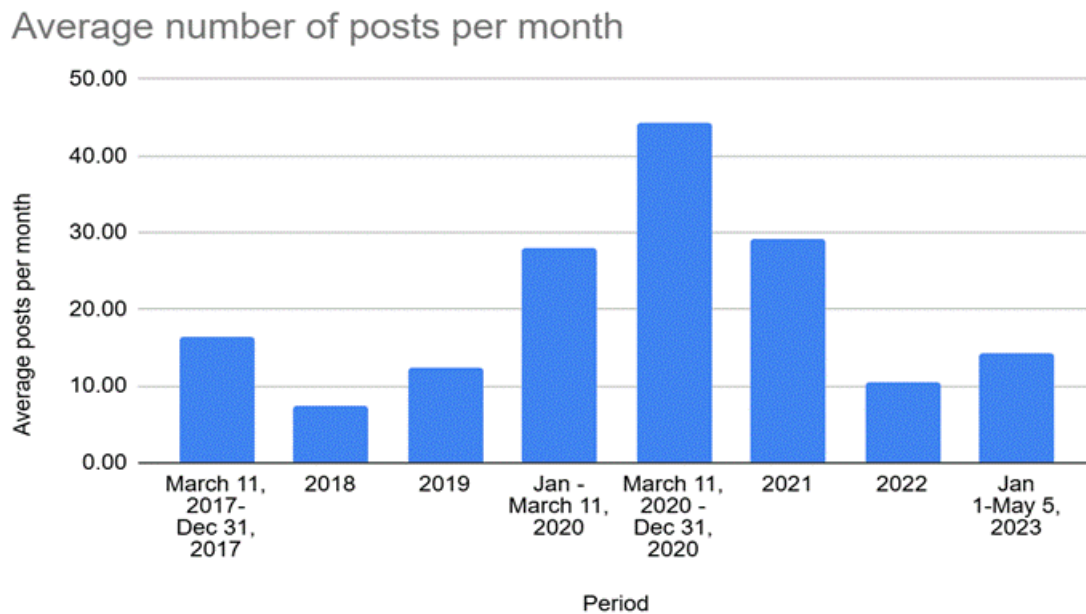


Figure 1. Average number of posts per month on Facebook Groups.

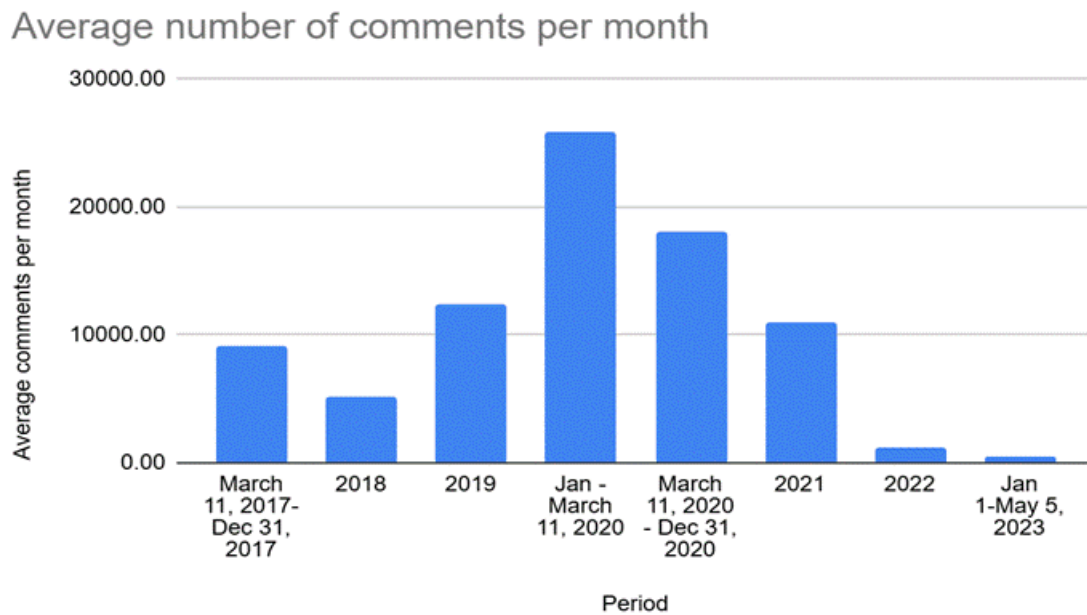


Figure 2. Average number of comments per month on Facebook Groups,

The same trend can be noticed in Figures 3, 4 and 5, as the mean number of interactions per post experienced a decrease for both groups following the pandemic outbreak. Among the different types of interactions, the average number of comments witnessed the most substantial drop. It decreased from 925 to 407 in the periods immediately before and after the onset of the pandemic. In contrast, the average number of shares and reactions experienced a relatively minor decline during both periods.

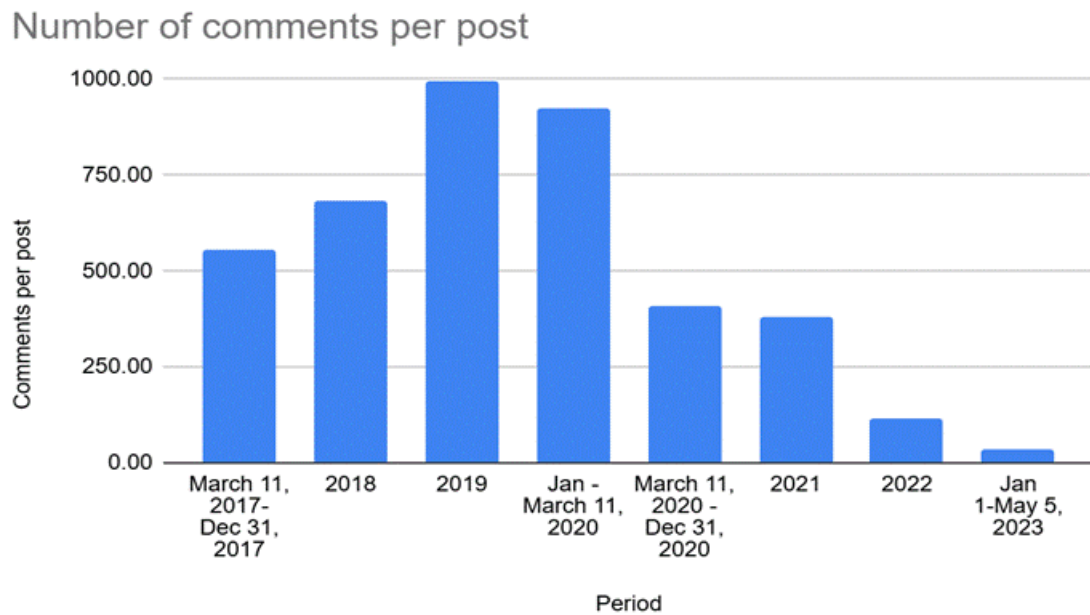


Figure 3. Average number of comments per post on Facebook Groups.

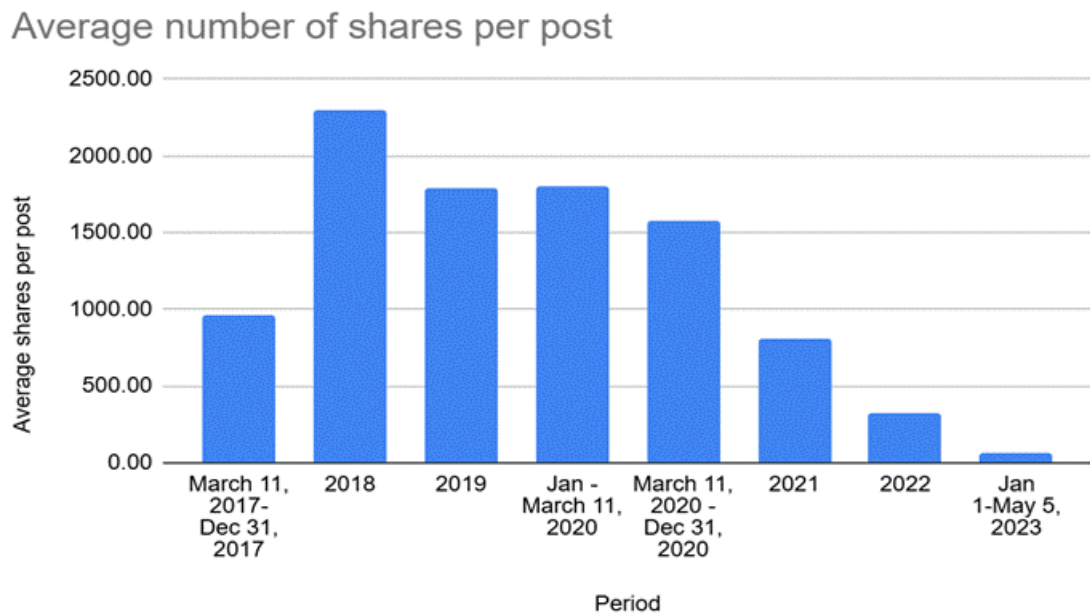


Figure 4. Average number of shares per post on Facebook Groups.

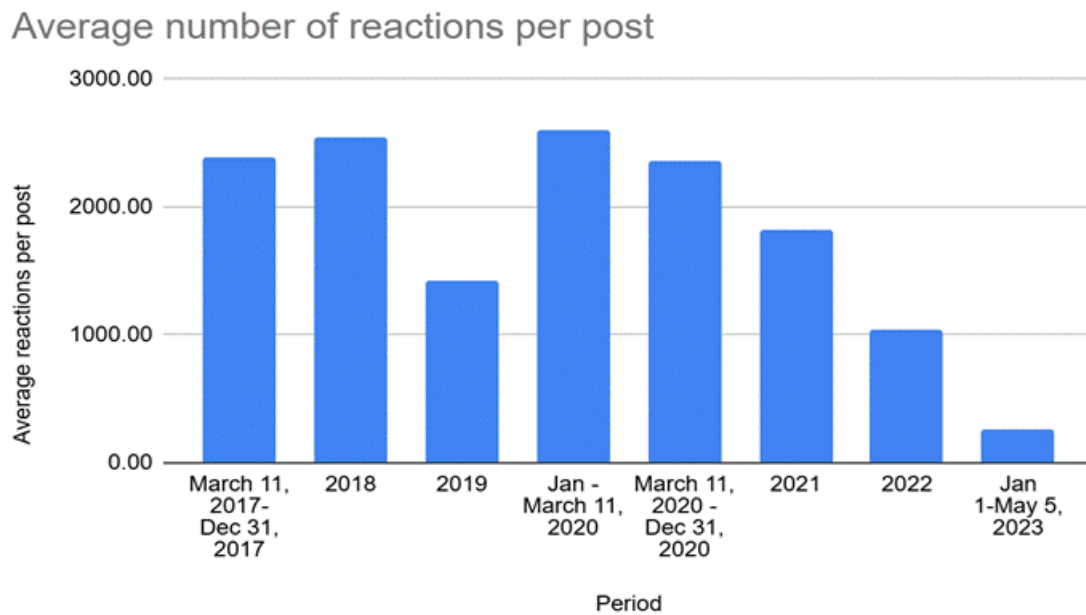


Figure 5. Average number of reactions per post on Facebook Groups.

It is indisputable that the COVID-19 pandemic affected almost every aspect of human life, including health, work, and social life (Lee & Jang, 2022). Social media usage was higher during COVID-19 than before the pandemic (Dixon, 2024), as observed in our study. Social media was the mainstream channel for seeking information (Drouin et al., 2020) and a main source of social support (Cellini et al., 2020). In Canada, more than 75% of Canadians 15 years of age and older were more engaged in online activities (Statistics Canada, 2021). Alcohol use was also higher during the pandemic. In Australia, they found out that 20% were drinking more than before the pandemic due to stress and anxiety (Tran et al., 2020). In Canada, 25% of the population aged 35-54 were drinking more during the Covid-19 pandemic due to a lack of regular schedule, boredom and stress (Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, 2020); by March 2021 from a total of 783 females participating in a national Canadian study, 37% of them living with young kids reported moderate-to-severe anxiety, childcare stress was more common among females in households with kids (14%), and 16% reported more problematic alcohol use (Leger, 2021).

Another noticeable finding of this study was a decrease in comments, shares and reactions per post after the pandemic outbreak. Some reasons for this decrease could be related to a shift in priorities in social media, such as individuals might have been more interested in topics related to mental health, family, or financial stability rather than alcohol-related content. Additionally, as there was a surge in content about the pandemic and its effects, posts about alcohol might have faced more competition for attention, leading to decreased engagement.

Emerging themes of the Social Media groups' posts on alcohol behaviour

Thematic analyses revealed four intersecting and overarching themes: 1) Parenthood, 2) Excessive Drinking Behaviour, 3) Stress and Coping Mechanisms, and 4) Humour. No differences between the themes generated pre- and post-pandemic were found.

Parenthood

For the participants, parenthood may lead some parents to share alcohol-related content as a way to bond with other mothers or seek validation for their choices. Comments blending humour with the realities of parenthood, often using alcohol as a punchline, were observed in the comments. For example, many participants commented on drinking to be able to provide childhood care, or wine play dates, drinking as an escape from a busy day. Frequent words used were wine meal, kids, surviving mood, happy meal, alcoholic menu, and winemom.

Alcohol consumption among mothers may happen for various reasons, such as dealing with motherhood, socializing, and family parties, as well as a coping mechanism to deal with life stress. Positive comments such as “happy,” “love,” and “healthy” were identified in this study; however, we also found comments related to “sober,” “alcoholic mom,” and “stress.” Pre-pandemic studies investigating the influence of social media have shown mixed outcomes, including both positive effects on psychological well-being (1- 3) and negative effects such as depression and stress (Lup et al., 2015; Marino et al., 2018). Likewise, research exploring the effects of social media usage during the COVID-19 pandemic has yielded varied and inconclusive

results (Ahmad & Murad, 2020; Drouin, 2020; Cordos et al., 2021; Pennington, 2021; Saud et al., 2020). Overall, the findings suggest that the impact of social media on individuals can differ based on the varying underlying mechanisms involved.

By taking into consideration that motherhood was one of the themes that emerged in our study, it makes sense to analyze the role of social media groups in motherhood. Motherhood encompasses a set of behaviours and values that women embody, often shaped by social and cultural norms. Women are considered "good mothers" when they demonstrate behaviours such as being attentive caregivers, maintaining a pristine home, and practicing impeccable self-care (Harding et al., 2021). Those who fall short of these high standards risk being labelled as "bad mothers" and facing shame or ostracism. Impossible demands and unrealistic expectations associated with being a mother have women seeking alcohol consumption and participation in online communities to endure the pressures of motherhood (Newman & Nelson, 2021).

Social media groups began as a way for women to connect and address the challenges of motherhood, highlighting a concerning indication that women's needs are not being seriously addressed. A scoping review on motherhood, alcohol behaviour, and social media identified that modern motherhood values the support of virtual communities. These communities were seen as helpful for reducing stress and coping, with mothers feeling supported and encouraged to thrive in their maternal roles (Ahmad & Murad, 2020). A notable example is the "wine mom" culture, which encourages mothers to drink alcohol as a coping mechanism to handle the stresses of motherhood, resist traditional maternal expectations, find community, and embrace an identity beyond caregiving. Even during the pre-pandemic era, this culture has gained widespread popularity in mainstream media discussions (Fetters, 2020), as well as being identified in our study in two categories - motherhood and excessive drinking behaviour. However, these messages may promote alcohol consumption at the expense of mothers' health (Fetters, 2020; Adams et al., 2021) they may also support risky drinking behaviours, which are normalized and encouraged within these groups (Crawford et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified mental health demands and underscored the increasing burden on women as they juggle multiple roles (Cluver et al., 2020). Families found it challenging to keep their children engaged and safe at home (Cluver et al., 2020). Mothers were at risk for high levels of stress due to managing at-home schooling and ongoing domestic responsibilities (Seguin et al., 2021). Even in 2022, stress remained significant for mothers due to financial worries, lack of support, and the pressures of perfectionism (Hoskin, 2022).

Excessive drinking behaviour

The excessive drinking behaviour word cloud demonstrates the group's participants might have been humorously exposed to content glorifying excessive drinking, including the words 'winelove', 'winner,' and 'happy'; however, words such as 'sober' 'daily' and 'breakfast problem,' may indicate binge consumers of alcohol. At the same time, they often reflect a humorous take on stress or celebration.

Additionally, the finding suggests that they are being exposed to posts that glorify drinking as a positive culture. Excessive heavy drinking can potentially result in alcohol use disorder, impacting individuals of all ages, genders, and socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds (Vaillant & Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 1996). On that note, social media users often share posts highlighting the positive effects of alcohol, such as socialization, relaxation, and stress relief, which may trigger social media users. Additionally, alcoholic beverage companies create advertisements on drinking as a positive behaviour (Nagata et al., 2023). Social media has a unique capacity to shape alcohol expectations due to the public visibility of alcohol-related posts and the interactive features that allow users to "like," react, and comment on these posts (Lorenz & Behm-Morawitz, 2024; Meisel et al., 2022). Our results may also indicate that the participants are building positive personal beliefs about their behaviour, emotions and cognitive effects of initiating or maintaining drinking (Siegel et al., 1999). In the end, alcohol-related content may encourage risky drinking behaviours, and the choice of social media accounts and groups that mothers follow is significant (Lorenz & Behm-Morawitz, 2024).

Stress and Coping Mechanisms

Posts ('wine yoga,' life,' 'nightmare,' 'breakfast beer,' 'happy hour') related to stress and coping mechanisms showed that alcohol may turn into a quick fix, especially if they perceive it as a socially acceptable coping mechanism.

In our study, comments categorized as "Stress and Coping Mechanisms" suggested the participants were seeking social support by sharing similar experiences as well as validation for their choices (Reisdorfer et al., 2023). Individuals use social media platforms to share their alcohol use experiences and to seek support during challenging times with their families and children (Crawford et al., 2020; Adams et al., 2021; Bosma et al., 2021; Harding et al., 2021). Society often judges women for their alcohol use, and social media is where mothers go to find a community of acceptance and social support (Paradis et al., n.d.). Pre-pandemic maternal anxiety levels were linked to lower coping strategies, more strained relationships, and greater alcohol consumption during COVID-19 (Racine et al., 2021).

During the COVID-19 lockdown, experiencing enhanced social support and a sense of togetherness has been linked to greater resilience in coping with the pandemic (Luchetti et al., 2021). Many individuals turned to social media to boost their subjective happiness and self-assessed mental health (Khodabakhsh et al., 2021; Ledbetter, 2021; Lee & Jang, 2022) and to alleviate stress (Ngien & Jiang, 2022). Exposure to alcohol-related social media posts targeting mothers can influence normative beliefs about using alcohol as a coping mechanism for the stresses of motherhood. Mothers who had previously viewed alcohol-related issues showed higher evaluations of perceived acceptability and social approval regarding alcohol consumption (Lorenz et al., 2024).

Humour

Finally, mothers may share or engage with humorous posts about drinking when they reflect on their daily lives and routines, such as 'husband,' 'children,' 'groceries,' and 'vegetables.'

The persuasive impact of humour on advertising has garnered significant attention, resulting in literature reviews (Eisend, 2009; Weinberger & Gulas, 2019). Specific message

strategies in alcohol advertisements—such as employing activating emotions like amusement and humour (Berger & Milkman, 2012) can influence interpersonal communication and subsequent alcohol consumption.

Humour reduces anxiety and enhances well-being during crises (Martin & Ford, 2018; Morgan et al., 2019). Viewing humorous messages likely helped alleviate negative emotions and boost positive ones, making them particularly valuable as mood enhancers during crises (Strick, 2021). People coped with the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects by using humour, such as sharing memes on social media (Strick, 2021). However, using humour in social media posts can have negative effects. Research on humour in alcohol advertisements suggests that it increases both the frequency and positivity of conversations about the message, which in turn shapes how people perceive alcohol (Hendriks & Strick, 2021). Humour reduces skepticism toward the ad and enhances the desirability of alcohol use (Austin et al., 2006). Consequently, it is anticipated that humour in alcohol ads will lead to more frequent and prolonged discussions about alcohol and the advertisement compared to other messages (Hendriks & Strick, 2021).

The impact of humour varies based on individual humour styles. Humour about excessive drinking can backfire if it leads to positive conversations about alcohol consumption. A study found that being instructed to discuss binge drinking positively or negatively can shape attitudes toward binge drinking and perceived behavioural control (Hendriks & Strick, 2021). Specifically, individuals with a self-enhancing humour style may use humorous content to cope with the stress of COVID-19 and drinking problems by reframing their situation in a more light-hearted manner. Conversely, those with a self-defeating humour style might use the cartoons in a self-disparaging way, putting themselves down to avoid confronting their problems and negative feelings (Ford et al., 2017).

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The present study has limitations that suggest directions for future studies. The findings are based on a retrospective cohort study that observed how the content shared by the participants might have been influenced over time. As such, the results should be interpreted

with caution. For example, we used only two Facebook public groups that accept only posts written in English. The results should be used with caution in different cultural contexts. We acknowledge that our findings lack external validity to a certain degree because there are cultural differences in how people utilize social media. As COVID-19 is a worldwide phenomenon, more studies should be conducted to examine whether our observed findings can be replicated across cultures or countries.

Despite the limitations, this study makes significant contributions by demonstrating that even though a spike in comments was seen at the beginning of the pandemic, the main reasons women and mothers participate in these social media groups remained the same. However, it is crucial to recognize the potential impact of such content and promote balanced, healthy approaches to alcohol consumption among mothers, considering the unique challenges they face in their roles as caregivers. Social media seems to be a primary mode of information-seeking, social support, and entertainment for billions of users worldwide. Numerous studies have examined its effect using various approaches, theories, and concepts. However, as demonstrated in this study, the challenges of using social media for motherhood have yet to be further explained and investigated. We suggest continued and concerted research efforts that can advance our knowledge about deeper insights into the motivations, perceptions, and experiences of mothers regarding alcohol use.

Conclusion

Alcohol-related content posted by mothers on social media platforms likely influenced their drinking behaviours through various channels, including normalization, coping mechanisms, societal judgment, stress relief, and humour. Mothers may share or engage with humorous posts about drinking without fully considering the implications on their own behaviour or health.

A spike of comments at the beginning of COVID and a return to pre-pandemic numbers shortly after may indicate more women and mothers were consuming alcohol, even though the reasons seem to be the same prior to and during the pandemic. Social Media group participants

might have been exposed to content glorifying excessive drinking, which may significantly impact motherhood; it is a period of women's lives when mothers seek ways to bond with other mothers or seek validation for their choices, including using alcohol as a quick fix, especially if they perceive it as a socially acceptable coping mechanism.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been investigated due to the potential adverse impact on the population's behaviour. Researching the relationship between social media use and alcohol consumption among mothers can provide valuable insights into Canadian public health policy. The results may inform the development of targeted interventions aimed at promoting healthier drinking behaviours among mothers. It can lead to the development of targeted interventions and public health campaigns aimed at this population. It is crucial to recognize the potential impact of such content and promote balanced, healthy approaches to alcohol consumption among mothers, considering the unique challenges they face in their roles as caregivers. Eye-tracking evidence indicates that people look longer and more frequently at health messages that contain humour, suggesting that humour can mitigate the tendency of target audiences to avoid confrontational health messages (Brigaud, 2021).

The alcohol industry should be encouraged to establish a 'not-to-target' list on social media marketing. Collaborating closely with big tech companies to implement these policies algorithmically on social media platforms is essential. Without cooperation to mitigate the negative impact of alcohol marketing on public health, policies alone will be ineffective, as these posts will still engage vulnerable consumers (Katainen et al., 2020).

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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Data Availability Statement

The datasets generated/analyzed for this study are available upon request.

CRedit

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CRedit statement author 4: The corresponding author contributed to conceptualization, methodology, supervision and project administration.

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CRedit statement author 6: Methodology, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization.

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