

Introduction

Today, pregnancy care and related information dissemination is the role of the midwife and obstetrician within the discipline of medicine, but the experience of pregnancy and motherhood is different for every individual and shaped by their social context and to what effect the pregnancy is medicalized. The web is used to a great extent for information seeking and support. Past studies have found relationships between increased health information-seeking behaviour and higher self-efficacy,



Medicine

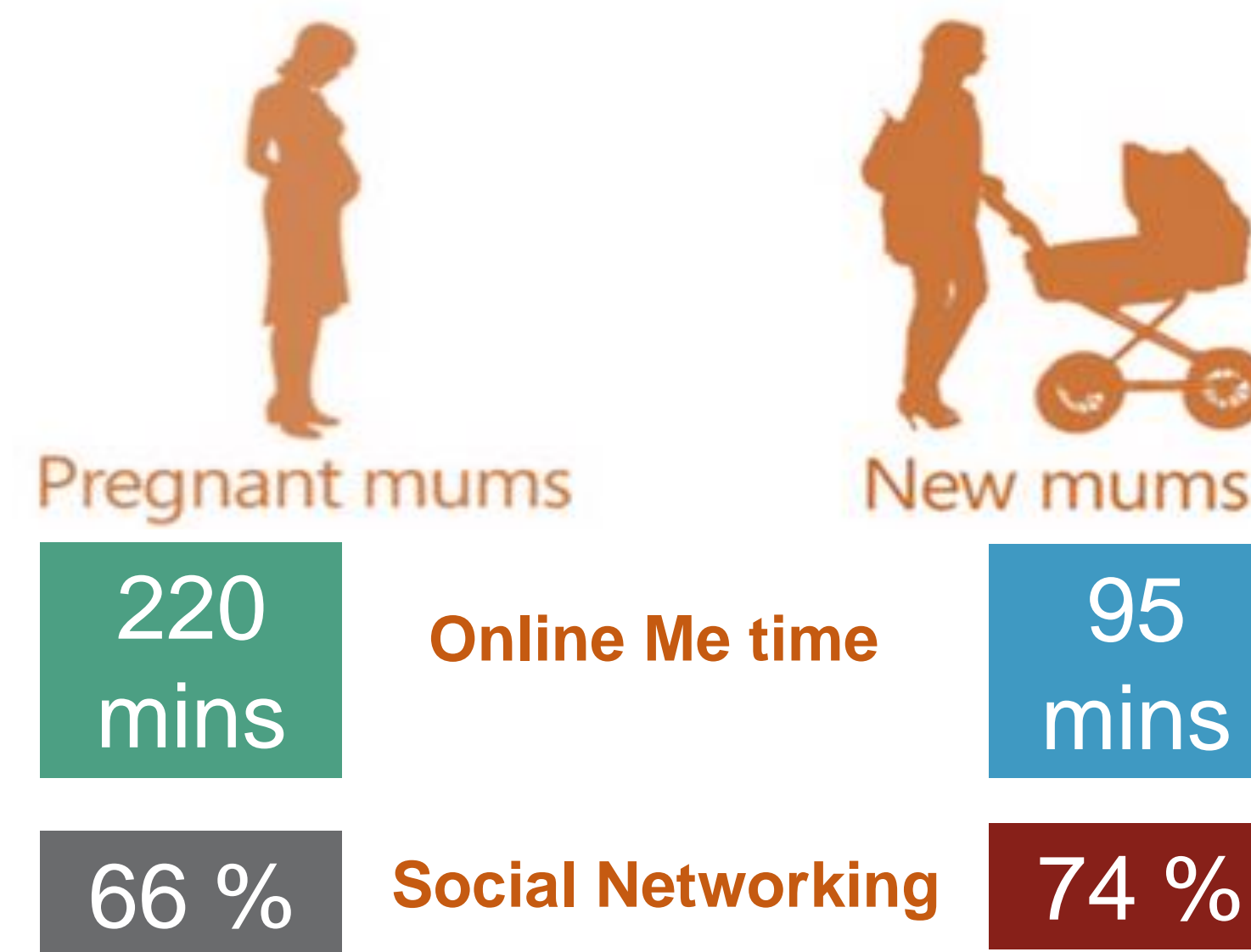
Dominant 20th century biomedical models for medicine are based on empiricism, a system based on observations and experience that combine to form evidence based medicine (EBM). It is the conscientious, judicious, and explicit use of *current* best evidence in making clinical decisions about patient care, often involving the mathematical calculation of chance benefit and/or risk. The Biomedical model of Health defines pregnancy and disease in reductive, objective terms, The three main assumptions being:

1. Disease can be isolated and treated in an appropriate area i.e hospital
2. The mind and body should be treated separately
3. Medical specialists are the only 'experts'.

Sociology

For sociologists, childbirth is a social process, in which the outcome is affected by the woman herself and her environment. Sociology uses various methods of empirical and critical analysis to develop a body of knowledge about social order, disorder and change. The sociological model of Health defines pregnancy and disease in terms of factors outside of biology:

1. Health is socially constructed and healing need not be in hospitals
2. Patient opinions, experiences and wellbeing are crucial to treatment
3. Doctors are not the the only source of information; mothers knowledge is deemed expert in this natural phenomenon.



Source: Microsoft Advertising

Conclusion

The web can provide access to a plethora of medical information and social support during pregnancy. Informational support has been associated with improved maternal mental and physical health and reduced complications during labour and delivery. Research should be used to engineer the web and related technologies to facilitate pregnancy health-related endeavours and empower parents and health professionals. The web has many roles in supporting mothers, including building confidence, providing instant information and advice professionals and experienced peers. This should become part of standardised care, with better directed web resources for mothers that come recommended from health care professionals.



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Synthesis

There is a number of overlaps between the disciplines, in terms of empirical based hypothesis testing and the use of case studies. The complementary methodologies can be combined to form a broader Health Science, linking the evolution, genetic and chemical aspects of the biological basis of pregnancy related health with the social-cultural roles, expectations and definitions of motherhood. The interdisciplinary of medicine with sociology and the web will look at the 'whole'; the mother, baby, family, community, society, web culture that interact with another online, since one cannot be understood without the others. This offers opportunities to improve women's health and pregnancy outcomes for individuals, communities and globally. Insights from both these perspectives can illuminate a brighter path of the interaction between the biology and the environment for engineering a web that better supports mothers.

