



MOTHERHOOD AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE MUMPRENEUR PHENOMENON

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs play a significant role in contributing to the growth of the global and local economy. Many of the contributions come from a strong emerging trend of so called “Mumpreneurs”, which describes mothers involved in entrepreneurial activities. In this chapter, the authors study the new phenomenon of integrating motherhood and entrepreneurship; about their underlying desire to create a better environment for their family and overall community. The uniqueness of being a Mumpreneur is about balancing work and life, sense of achievement and satisfaction with oneself, increasing income, gaining respect to equalize gender imbalance, and becoming independent. There are however challenges facing Mumpreneurs. These include starting ventures with lack of appropriate knowledge, resource constraints, stereotypes, balancing work and life, and limited networking opportunities. To encounter these challenges, the authors select three mini case studies, based on Australian Mumpreneurs to explore their strategies of overcoming such challenges and barriers. Ultimately, recommendations are introduced for newcomer or nascent Mumpreneurs, raising their new ventures in addition to their motherhood duties. Global and domestic economic prosperity will be maximised and sustained only when women have the equal footing with males. This calls for a change in the business environment, more effective programs from social institutions and government, to better support women being amongst others, Mumpreneurs.

Keywords: Entrepreneurs, Mumpreneurs, Family, Women.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore women and entrepreneurship, and more explicitly, those women referred to as “Mumpreneurs”. Whilst entrepreneurs are people who habitually create and develop new ventures of value around perceived opportunities (Maritz, 2004), Mumpreneurs add a whole new dimension to entrepreneurship. The new dimension is motherhood, whereby these women business owners balance the role of mother and the role of entrepreneurship. Their motivation is the altruistic desire to create a better environment for their family and overall community.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2007 identifies that women signify more than one-third of all entrepreneurs, and are expected to participate predominantly in roles in informal sectors. Informal sectors include the emergence of Mumpreneurs, whereby instead of returning to the formal workforce, Mumpreneurs create new businesses around their family environment and circumstances. Mumpreneurs also actively participate in the gender, home-based and lifestyle entrepreneurship domains.

This form of new venture business creation however has its own set of unique challenges, including fear of failure, less optimistic and confidence in business than men, and most importantly, securing start-up finance. Despite these challenges, many Mumpreneurs venture into the unknown, and then struggle in managing their growing businesses. Some successful business cases are selected to aid understanding of Australian women who have been taking this emerging role, the Mumpreneurs. Lastly, ten recommendations or tips are included for budding Mumpreneurs to start their new businesses. Budding Mumpreneurs are referred to as nascent Mumpreneurs, being those Mums with a desire to commence an entrepreneurial new venture.

The context discussed in this chapter is predominantly based in Australia. However, many approaches identified may also well be applicable in Asia Pacific. We do however lend on the literature from USA and New Zealand.

Methodology

This paper on Mumpreneurs results from an exploratory process identifying this new entrepreneurship phenomenon. It commence with a review of Women in entrepreneurship, predominantly focusing on the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. A review of the limited literature was complimented by a focus group of identified Mumpreneurs, together with thematic apperception testing of five individual Mumpreneurs. Factors were identified and graded regarding specific challenges and dynamics peculiar to this entrepreneurship segment. The thematic guide also highlighted specific recommendations for nascent Mumpreneurs. Case-study methodology was also introduced to substantiate the apperception from the limited field of reference.

Entrepreneurship and Mumpreneurs

Entrepreneurship occupies a significant role in reshaping economies and societies. It entails the new production process and the introduction of new products or services to new market segments that shapes new organizational structures (Craig and Lindsay, 2002). Generally, entrepreneurship can be defined as a practice by which an individual habitually creates and develops new innovative ventures of value in response to perceived business opportunities (Maritz, 2004). This practice creates employment opportunities, more income and family welfare.

Women have the skills, knowledge and capabilities to be as entrepreneurial as men. According to GEM 2007, there have been an increasing number of women entrepreneurs

throughout the world, who participate in early stage entrepreneurial activity and establish themselves as business owners (Allen, Elam, Langowitz, Dean, 2007). The rate significantly and quietly increased from 5 percent to 38 percent in 30 years (Nelton, 1998). An early stage of entrepreneurial activity determines business that has not been operated more than 3.5 years. On the other hand, established entrepreneurs who have been operational more than 3.5 years, in which time they have a higher chance of failure (Allen et al., 2007). Further evidence is supported by Non-profit Women's Business Research that the rate of women who start their new venture is double the rate as of men in America. Besides, there are 10.6million women-owned businesses which create \$2 trillion of income yearly. An online website for US Women's networking group such as *Ladies Who Launch* also provides workshop for the members. It is found that almost 50 percent are mothers out of 25,000 members (Bower, 2005).

In Australia, the total percentage of female business owners is surprisingly very close to men (18.43 to 23.69 respectively). Furthermore, the prevalence rates of entrepreneurial activity is equivalent to 9.87 percent as of female and 14.02 percent as of male at the early stage of entrepreneurial activity. The percentage of established female business owners is at 8.56 whereas men at only 9.67 (Allen, Langowitz, Minniti, 2006). Even though the female contribution to economic growth is increasingly important and is a key factor that should not be overlooked, little attention and support has been paid to women entrepreneurs. A study by GEM 2007 reports those women involved in entrepreneurial activity gain higher profits than men. This result suggests that women have a greater sense of leadership that connects to better corporate governance and management practices, which impacts firm profitability (Allen et al., 2007).

Mumpreneurs is a new emerging trend that takes on the concept of entrepreneurship into family businesses. It is a part of female entrepreneurship that describes women who start their

own new ventures besides taking a role of being a mother. Family entrepreneurial business is more complex than non-family business. This is due to combination of the two interacting systems: the family and the business (Davis, 1983; Landsberg, 1983). Birley (1989: 37) explains it: “Until very recently, the major role of women was seen in most Western economies by both men and women to be that of wife and mother. Indeed, even should they take employment this was almost always in addition to their role as homemaker.” Harris, Morrison, Ho & Lewis (2008) identified the link between motherhood and the entrepreneurial experience through an exploration of how the Mumpreneur orients the activities of her enterprise to her family, her child(ren) and her personal aspirations. Their title however indicates that Mumpreneurs are in the business of babies, which is not necessarily correct. Mumpreneurs do not limit their business activities within the baby products and services domain, despite research indicating such a preference.

The term “Mumpreneur” was conceptualised by Patricia Cobe and Ellen H. Parlapiano over a decade ago. Their original established online website called Mompreneursonline.com is a women’s-only networking group which draw over 7 million visitors each month. The site includes online community, blogs, lively conversations on message boards, a marketplace of unique products and services by Mumpreneurs, articles, books and business advice from experts for start-up entrepreneurial mums to work from home. Today’s technological innovations and internet capabilities further allow home-based businesses a possibility for every mother to market their products (Bower, 2005).

Scholars consent that foreseen business opportunity, social capital and self-concept are perhaps significant manipulators on entrepreneurial activity (Allen et al., 2007). However, the motives behind the business start-up among males and females are different (Cromie, 1987).

There are push and pull factors underlying the motivation to become an entrepreneur. Pull factors are positive, which refers to opportunity entrepreneurs, as driven by a business opportunity. Women in Australia are often found to be motivated through perceived opportunity. Push factors are negative, which refers to necessity entrepreneurs, as driven by unemployment, dissatisfaction with the workforce or inflexible labour markets and needs to earn money for living (Alstete, 2003; Orhan and Scott, 2001; Allen et al., 2007; Maritz, 2004).

Mumpreneurs can be driven by both pull and push factors. The primary desire is to create a better environment for their *family* and overall greater *community*.

According to Cromie (1987), women not satisfied with their previous jobs found self-employment as a way to solve the conflict of personal and work demands. Women see business ownership as the only way to make money for living while being committed to family and domestic responsibilities (Fielden, Davidson, Dawe, Makin, 2003). The motive that raises innovativeness is the frustration and dissatisfaction with the products and services available and/or not available in the domestic market. This is particular the case for baby or kid-inspired products or services, for instance, Mac & Cool— an instant cool bowl for kids or night-child care centres to avoid parent's sleepless nights (Bower, 2005; Kuchment, 2006). An unconditional love of motherhood leads mothers to innovatively develop more suitable products for their babies—being the mother of invention. Having seen an unexploited business opportunity, the initial products for their own babies then become commercialized to other mothers. This is one of the reasons why most of the women's ventures in Australia fall in consumer products in retail and wholesale industries. Nevertheless, only a small number of businesses could be claimed as totally new to every customer at the early stage of entrepreneurial activity (Allen et al., 2007).

Again it is highlighted that Mumpreneurs operate across a wide spectrum of markets and domains, not only limited to baby products and services.

Brush (1992) explains that the key motivation for female entrepreneurs is the concern in helping others. Women often integrate the business and family relationships together to the community. Mumpreneurs are motivated because they want to make a difference and contribute to the community and society. Hence, they are more client-oriented than men (Orhan and Scott, 2001). Since they get together to develop their communities and help each other in terms of preparation for their babies, resources, education and training, women are perceived to be more socially oriented than men. Generally, Mumpreneurs are also more likely to recruit other mums into partnerships and networks. . This creates jobs for other mothers and yet again helping one another to achieve greater revenues and profits. In developing countries, business practices of Mumpreneurs even decrease the effect of discrimination against women in labour market. (Weiler and Bernasek, 2001; Moore, 2003).

The uniqueness of being Mumpreneurs is that they are about balancing work and life; sense of achievement and satisfactory with oneself; increasing income; gaining respect to equalize gender, and becoming independent. The most outstanding factor about being Mumpreneurs is that *it is not all about wealth creation*. The goals for women to enter business ownership are not about financial gains, but to follow their intrinsic needs (Rosa, Carter and Hamilton, 1996). This aspect is totally different than male entrepreneurs. Each mother by nature stays intimate with her babies through pregnancy until birth. This role emphasises an important fact of being Mumpreneurs and their desire to spend more quality time on their babies and family, hence a very clear objective is set to balancing family and work, whereas the traditional workforce does not allow them to have such significant flexibility and independence. Many

women perceive entrepreneurship as an approach to earn for and better look after their families, resolving two duties in one goal.

Secondly, it is not just about being a mother. Women who previously had a career their whole life and after all just stay at home all day caring for their babies can become bored, lonely and unhappy. The new venture puts more meaning into their lives, creates self-fulfilment, autonomy, and self-esteem. Hence, Mumpreneurs enjoy more stimulation than motherhood alone can provide. Women deferring childbirth in preference to careers is also the factor behind the surge as they enjoy achieving things. Thirdly, income support from spouses alone may not be adequate in today's economically demanding economy. This creates the desire for wealth. The latest world economical crisis (late 2008) also contributes toward nascent Mumpreneurs wishing to supplement family income. Fourthly, the gender gap is still exists. Mumpreneurs can gain respect, social status and power while being regarded as business people. Lastly, these drive women to gain greater economic and social independence; the most frequently quoted 'pull' manipulators for female entrepreneurs (McClelland and Swail, 2005). This is especially true for young mothers or single mothers against discrimination in labour market (Allen et al., 2007).

Challenges facing Nascent Mumpreneurs

Resembling men, women can run their own businesses across a variety of markets and industries. However, it is not easy to start a business while also being a mother. Since 1930s, the trend emerged toward a "double burden" for women to concurrently and successfully take the responsibility to perform the roles of worker and mother (Allen et al., 2007). A worldwide entrepreneurship survey last year showed that women still face a variety of challenges and problems in developing and running a business (McKay, 2001; Allen et al., 2006). Many barriers still exist for them to establish and grow new ventures. The literature also supports that there are

obstacles faced by female entrepreneurs, which prevent their developments (O’Gorman, 2001). Five core challenges are identified, integrating literature with this qualitative research:

1. *Getting started with lack of knowledge:* Many mothers find it difficult to put their heads back into business after having babies. They often had no idea how to write a business plan, source manufacturers, find the market for their products and establish the new venture. Imagine women who have been staying home as housewives, many of whom may have lost business contacts. It is unclear how to seek business and legal advice, develop the knowledge and managerial skills required to establish the businesses locally and internationally. Nelson (1987) finds that women are at disadvantages in education and working experiences as they approach entrepreneurial activity. It is only the passion the mothers have to attempt to produce the products for their babies and the community as a whole. This led the mothers facing the risks of starting a new venture, a challenge calling for appropriate mentoring, assistance, education and training.

2. *Resources constraints:* It is found that female entrepreneurs have a distinct lack of financial support. Most Mumpreneurs have started their own business with their own savings or personal assets and employ little or no external funding. This is because they found the problem of securing start-up finance without having credit ratings and a formal business plan. They require obtaining capital as the most serious self-described barrier to growth in Australia (Moore 2003). “Financial aspects of venture start-up and management are without a doubt the biggest obstacles for women” (Brush, 1992: 14).

Moreover, many mothers often have the responsibilities of do-it-all domestic labours and limited assistance. Without enough savings, they cannot establish the business and find extra resources to unload their accountability. Finding suitable employees also seem to be a problem

as expressed by an Australian entrepreneur; “One of the biggest barriers for me was getting good staff who were able to work in a start-up versus a corporate culture...Being a tiny company with global clients – trying to meet their expectations of delivery, quality and service” (McClelland and Swail, 2005: 100)

3. *Women stereotype:* Women and men have different perspectives regarding how they see the world. They face different situations and react differently react to a given situation and approaches to the market place. Across the globe, women entrepreneurs express more fear of failure to start up their own businesses more than men. A mother is less optimistic about her own ability and has less self-confidence. The more risk adverse characteristic kept them away from engaging in new ventures; with more than one-third of women communicating a fear of failure. These factors are a significant forecaster of nascent Mumpreneurs. Accordingly, women’s level of confidence to successfully run the business is still less than men (43 percent and 59 percent respectively) (Allen et al., 2007).

4. *Balancing work and life:* Work family balance has been a topic of academic interest since the 1980s, and recently considered as a ‘woman’s issue’ in the study of entrepreneurship (Greene, Hart, Gatewood, Brush and Carter, 2003: 10). Many researches embrace discussion of the challenges that Mumpreneurs face in combining business and family responsibilities (see for example Brush 1997). It is not easy to balance a business while raising children. Having your own business could mean higher responsibilities and thus, balancing work and family is even more difficult. Women still face traditional culture and values, emotional attachment to family assets in which stress on their role as being a mother within the family and on the time spent on their babies or kids. There is a risk involved in terms of running their own business while setting aside the amount of appropriate time to their family responsibilities.

Eveline (1999: 5) states “The traditional disengaged father still predominates in Australia, as in most randomly sampled studies elsewhere” This is because men “face important economic, policy and cultural constraints to their involvement” (Flood 2003: viii). Only mothers are encouraged to provide intensive care and nurturing for their children (Pocock, 2005). This stereotype requires some Mumpreneurs to do it all on domestic and emotional labour. Hence, Mumpreneurs may face the “feelings of ambivalence, parental stress and work/ family conflict” (Eveline 1999:4). It is a cultural contradiction to motherhood. Resistance from family shows the greatest obstacles for female entrepreneurs in developing countries (Babaeva and Chirikova, 1997). Pocock (2005) regards this clash as the “work/ life collision”. The literature also indicates that such family obligations restrict the strategic decision making of Mumpreneurs.

5. *Fewer networking opportunities:* Having a role model, access to information and social networking are important for entrepreneurs regardless of gender. However, there is an argument supported by GEM 2007 that there is less opportunity for women than that of men (Allen et al., 2007). Birley (1989) finds that often women do not have the opportunity to basically socialize in the commercial networks in their previous employment. They only gain their first managerial experience in their home-based businesses. Women have a lack of connection with smaller business networks to start and promote the growth of the business; lack of high-level network contacts that men can draw on to advance the businesses including the work around legal deficiencies (Carter and Rosa, 1998). Additionally, it is due to societal factors that women have less time for both informal and formal networking (Ibarra, 1993). Thus, with existing qualifications, they often became entrepreneurs through hobby-related small-scale privatization of shops and restaurants.

Mini Case Studies of Australian Mumpreneurs

Although being Mumpreneurs contribute many benefits to women, a few Mumpreneurs have failed to continue their new ventures. Others have lost the balance between work and family, often resulting in domestic disputes. These are predominantly due to the challenges and barriers as previously described. However, Australian women are a lot more active in starting up new business compared to some other high income countries, for instance Italy, Japan, Germany and France. On average, 25-34 year old women are involved in entrepreneurial activity in early stage, and then grow into established entrepreneurs at age 35-44. When entrepreneurial activity is motivated by opportunity, less fear of failure was expressed in Australia (Allen et al., 2007). More cases found that Australian Mumpreneurs have successfully been managing businesses well. Many Mumpreneurs who started their own businesses with inspiration after motherhood are now becoming instant millionaires. The selected case studies entail how they approach, the challenges and the methods they use to operate the businesses and reflect to family life. They are extraordinary women with successful businesses, and thus studying and learning from real-life Mumpreneurs present valuable lessons.

“SINGLE - MUM”-PRENEURS: UNTOXCITY SOAP WITH BODY SHOP AUSTRALIA

Many young mothers can struggle to start a business when they have a lack of experience. However, many nascent Mumpreneurs have received assistance from the Body Shop Australia. The Body Shop and the Australian Federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) developed their project in Victoria, New South Wales and Brisbane in early 2006 called “Babes in Business (BiB): An enterprise education project for young mothers and young women”, which offers 11 days of business training, creative workshops, mentoring, teamwork and other long-term support for women entrepreneurship (Studdert, 2007). Their objective is “to build the innovation and enterprise skills of young mothers and women to assist

in developing alternative income streams and re-engagement in local communities” (Cunniffe, 2006). This encourages mothers to start their small home-based business to balance work and family. The program provides assistance in developing personal and business-related skills for mothers to seek for perceived business opportunities. Many Mumpreneurs do not know that all their skills of motherhood in fact can be transferred into business. Raising a child includes commitment, day-to-day/ short and long term plan, communication, scheduling and organisation, creativity and so forth; all of which can be used to run a business (Cunniffe, 2006). For instance, the daily activities require a mother to be very organized to schedule time to prepare meals, pick up their kids or pay attention to small details to even remember where the kids left their socks at home.

In the course of its great benefits to young women, positive social change and community as a whole, it recently attracted American Express who offers up to \$5000 loans-without-interest and the Red Cross to be committed as the sponsors (Studdert, 2007). The program also covers costs of business registration for start-ups. BiB catered around 15 participants aged between 18 and 25 via wide range of supportive partner community agencies such YWCA (Cunniffe, 2006).

Melisa Bentaberry, a young single mother who has a passion and desire to run a natural soap business, is one of the first graduates from Melbourne course. She had suffered terribly from eczema, was unemployed and has to raise a child with chronic sleeping problems alone, all of which left her at difficulties. Melisa has limited experience but found her passion in nursing, organic and natural healing. From the interview with the Australian Newspaper says Melisa “I needed special soaps and shampoos for my skin. It seems a natural development to begin making them myself. But I also got interested in the healing power certain plants have, in their scents and essential oils and wanted to combine those with the soaps”. In addition, she says “*I was ready to*

make the commitment to setting up my own business but I had no money, no credit rating, and knew I'd never get a loan" (Studdert, 2007). This is the dilemma that many Mumpreneurs face prior to start up. The program manager, Paula Cunniffie articulates "Many say they felt very poorly judged as young mums, but find that after the program they get treated with respect as business people" (Studdert, 2007). Many people have the attitude towards stereotype of young single mothers that their lives will be ruined. This supports the argument to one of the motives that being Mumpreneurs is to equalize gender and to gain respect proving that those people are wrong. Also, it was apparent that Melisa would need to increase income being a single mother.

With support from the BiB program, she has now been able to start up her own hand-made soaps business and work from home. A good concept of Melisa to create balance to the bodies to different people's lifestyles using soap has translated into entrepreneurship. The weekend workshops at premises also include childcare support and nursery facilities making it easy for young mothers to attend. The three stages cover 1) Discovering innovation and enterprise, 2) Developing enterprise and 3) Implementing and evaluating enterprise. Generally, it goes through all business essentials to develop required business skills, the entire business plan including supplies, finance and marketing, networking and alliances to put inspiration to action. Regular meeting is done throughout the program by teamwork to review progress, discuss ideas and advice provided by visiting experts including emotional support. Mentoring and personal/business networking also allows participants to build sustainable businesses and stronger community in the long run (Cunniffe, 2006).

KIDSPOT.COM.AU PTY LTD – THE MUMPRENEURS PARTNERSHIP

The Two Mumpreneurs, Katie May and Dani Gurrie, both mothers of two kids together started an online privately owned business Kidspot Australia, a website that simplifies activities

of parenthood. In 2005, it all began from Katie's idea, the former marketing director of www.seek.com.au; Australia's number one job site. It was when her daughter was reaching five years old and Katie the 39-year-old mother expressed her frustration of unable to find a jumping castle on the Internet for her daughter. She decided to put together her ideas and came up with nearly entire business plan to show her co-worker, Dani the 38-year-old mother who is now in the partnership (O'Brien, 2007). As earlier mentioned, the study supports this evidence that Mumpreneurs often call in other mums into partnership (Allen et al., 2007).

Katie and Dani started off with their own savings and kept their day jobs while doing market evaluation. It initially presented only as a directory of maternity, baby and kid related products and activities. In June 2006, US-born Katie has moved back to the US with her husband a former Australian cricketer Tim May. She manages the home-based business in Texas with monthly visit to the South Melbourne office-with twelve employees. After a few years, the website has become very popular with hundreds of companies listed for organizing kid's parties, a market to buy and sell kid-inspired products, a rich community and private forum/ chat for mums to share experiences. All in all, the information feedbacks to Katie and Dani to customize content what parents need to know and editorial to match the interests. Due to its popularity, it eventually attracted the founding investor of www.seek.com.au, Irvin Rockman to come on board to support the financial aspect (O'Brien, 2007).

By being Mumpreneurs give Katie and Danie the flexibility; the motive to balance work and life. "I'm taking kids to activities which used to be outsourced. I may have to work to midnight, but I' m much more satisfied with my balance in terms of being a mum" says Katie. Danie also enjoys bringing her kids to the Melbourne office where she is in charge and having home-based business two days per week. She emphasises the fact that a support from her

husband, Ashley whom with IT background, is critical, “He is extraordinarily supportive, as are my in-laws” says Danie (O’Brien, 2007: 152).

Partnership between Katie and Danie, the two mothers bring forward the case of women entrepreneurship and their uniqueness in term of being social-oriented in the community. They help each other to turn their good ideas into great profitable business, and this is true for Katie as she expresses “Dani gave me the confidence to keep going. When you have a partner, there’s a sense of obligation – I wouldn’t have done it without her” (O’Brien, 2007: 152). Generally, Mumpreneurs tie a strong bond between each other; that is what makes the difference between men entrepreneurs and Mumpreneurs.

CUDDLEFISH.COM.AU – GOING INTERNATIONAL

International trade is a significant avenue for worldwide economic growth. Women owned businesses that operate internationally have shown to be more successful than those domestic-focused (McKay, 2001). Thus, it is important for businesses to seek out new markets and expand customer base. However, the exact numbers of women entrepreneurs who involve in international trade are still uncertain. The National Foundation for Women Business Owners (1998) has done several interviews, and the result shows that 12.5 percent to 33 percent of the female entrepreneurs were engaged in international trade (McClelland and Swail, 2005). Koreen (2001); cited in McClelland and Swail (2005: 87) points out that “comprehensive studies are lacking and there exist important gaps in statistics on the small firm in international trade broken down by gender”.

Only some of women entrepreneurs have lived in other countries than their own, which aid them to expand the business internationally (Allen et al., 2007). As otherwise, to start-up a business for mothers already seem difficult. Significantly, it is found that 100 percent of the

women entrepreneurs in Australia were trading internationally. The majority of the businesses could be seen as born global from the beginning (McClelland and Swail, 2005).

Caroline Hume a 37-year-old mother is one of the Mumpreneurs in Melbourne, who takes the advantage of overseas experiences to expand her business internationally. She used to live in Hong Kong, Switzerland, and London with her husband and worked overseas in marketing and event management. Even though she never had a dream to become a Mumpreneur when she was a teacher in 2001, during her holiday visit to France, Caroline brought a buoyancy suit for her one-year-old daughter, Isabella. There were many interests from people about where they can get the kind of buoyancy suit that has a 50+ UV sun-protection and very stylish. Afterwards, the products became unavailable and Caroline struggled to find it for her younger daughter, Eva. It was the passion to find the product for her daughter that drove her. Before long, Cuttlefish was founded (O'Brien, 2007).

Caroline did her market research, discussed with family and friends and prepared her new swimwear range to launch in 2003. By doing so, she made few appointments with the shop owners in Brighton beach and showed them the samples of her buoyancy swimsuits, and received great feedback. In 2007, the Australian made best-selling suit with built-in flotation went global to Hong Kong, America, England, Belgium, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore and many more. A great idea of the product made locally is now being exported internationally and throughout Australia. The company started up cost was \$10,000 from the savings of Caroline and her husband. It became profitable in year 2005 and met its target in the following year (O'Brien, 2007).

According to an objective of being a Mumpreneur, Caroline emphasises that her daughters "have always come first". She manages to work from home with a warehouse nearby

her place. Home-based business allows her to have more time for her kids; “I don’t have to rush the children out the door and I’m there for every single pick-up” says Caroline (O’Brien, 2007: 150). However, she has set her own boundary to make it work. This is an important part, as one of the tips, to remembering the objective is to balance work and family. Thus, managing and dedicating time to the kids is more than important. Caroline has two phone lines to separate between running daily business and personal life; no personal calls during working hours and no more working hours after five. Mumpreneurs have to be able to separate working hours and time spent for their family. “It’s like a mathematical sum – how much time you can give your business for it to work and how much time you can give your children to achieve the balance that people talk about” (O’Brien, 2007: 151). After all, “my business is just part of my life and I couldn’t be happier” says Caroline (O’Brien, 2007: 150). The underlying motive of having sense of achievement and self-satisfaction was there. Growing the business for Mumpreneurs especially going international may be difficult, but it is not impossible.

The headline author, Dr Alex Maritz was invited to participate on National Television (Channel 10) in 2007, with an Australian Mumpreneur. See <http://video.aol.com/video-detail/9am-alex-maritz-and-julie-haines-interview/3178958642>. With more and more Australian women trying to juggle the role of mum and managing director, the phrase Mumpreneur has been coined for all those mothers who’ve started a business from home. Business Expert, Dr Alex Maritz, and Small Business mum, Julie Haines, shared some tips on how to get started in your own small business. We share these with you in the next section.

Recommendations for Nascent Mumpreneurs

The roles and responsibilities for work and family are doubling up for Mumpreneurs, but nonetheless, it is amazing how many mothers can strive to earn incomes to support their children

and balance work and life. This is because they have the skills of being a mother, which can be used in businesses. Increasingly many mothers are developing new ventures while their babies are sleeping, as evident by the mini case studies. But what is however the right approach to facilitate success and how to?

We introduce these ten tips for newcomers to becoming Mumpreneurs, to raise the kids as well as raising a new business— as another baby of your own.

1. Passions and talents drive: Realising the full potential of your own true passions and talents is the ultimate drive for daily work life. As a Mumpreneurs, working seems like a fun job when you enjoy what you love and be able to do what you are skilled at. This could start from evaluating your interests like hobby, personality and skills to scope your viable business project (Parlapiano and Cobe, 2007). As found in the mini case studies, many mums are creating kid-inspired products to solve their problem they have experienced as parents.

Marry Toniolo, the founder of Bella products, a million-dollar toy company that has won many awards such Girl Toy of the Year at the American International Toy Fair from Dancerella Home Ballet Studio, an instructional video, ballet barre and mat says “Fun still drives me. I couldn’t work this hard unless I enjoyed it and, if you’re having fun, it’s not hard work”. “The financial rewards will come because you’ll be better at it” (O’Brien, 2007: 150).

2. Do market research: This is an important part to make certain that customers would buy the product or service from you. Internet and state/ local libraries are good sources to evaluate product/ service’s newness, analyse competitors, find suppliers, setting price, investigating trademarks and testing the potential customers in the market. Mumpreneurs are encouraged to do full of research to study the local or international market to stay competitive (Parlapiano and

Cobe, 2007). In high income country like Australia, the survey found that more than half of early-stage entrepreneurs expect to face many competitors (Allen et al., 2006).

3. Go niche with your business plan: You don't just jump into the franchise or business opportunities. The focus business should distinguish and "fit-in" with the talents and skills. Evaluation includes finding an attractive business niche, setting objective, mission/ vision statement, business goals, marketing, earning expectations (start-up costs, budgeting, turnovers, and taxations). Assistance accountant or attorney can help to project cash flow, work out financing, and plan on patent fees including insurance (Parlapiano and Cobe, 2007). Through the studies, it is found that all successful Mumpreneurs had their business plan before going into the market. They understand that businesses counting from start-up can take three to five years to become profitable.

4. It's the brand image: Trade marking protects the brand name to be unique. It is an ongoing marketing that includes several methods of promotion and advertisement. Mumpreneurs should target the market for their products or services and make sure to list their business names in such local newspapers, related magazines and telephone books. Building the "brand" also requires repetitive marketing for people to remember. A memorable name and well-designed publishing materials make the business outstands. Having business cards, Mumpreneurs can promote their businesses while attending local women's business events, community centres or wherever they go. A good website displays logo with navigation that is user-friendly. Contents should contain good comments from satisfied customers, press releases and recent news as well as links from other web sites to boost traffic (Parlapiano and Cobe, 2007).

5. Support from spouse and family: Family capital is the "Relationship between children and parents and, when families include other members', relationships with them as well"

(Coleman, 1988: S110; cited in Allen et al., 2007: 33). Constant family support has a positive and strong impact on the chance of becoming and continuing to be Mumpreneurs. On average, women with family base size from six people and above have higher chances of becoming an entrepreneur (Allen et al., 2007). Family support is a must, especially a support from spouse is very important in term of taking care of the babies or offering business and emotional support. Spouse must understand that there may be some changes in role and expectations as well as giving encouragement to their wives to raise their confidence.

Doily Couture's Sarina Tomchin, the founder of fashionable sleepwear as well as a 41-year-old mum says "My husband, Michael, has taken over a lot of the grocery shopping, helping with the girl's homework and all the driving around for their extra-curricular activities" (O'Brien, 2007: 152). This is about how a couple, in entrepreneurial activity, intimates and finds the balance between work and family life.

6. Remember your objective: "Moms have critical entrepreneurial skills such as patience, stamina and persistence" says Tamara Monosoff, author of *The Mom Inventors Handbook*. "They know how to prioritize and are master schedulers" (Dver, 2006). This is about time management. Mumpreneurs should keep a schedule and prioritize their tasks. The key point is about remembering the goal – the most important aspect in life, the kids and family. Afterwards, you can shape your business around the kids, work out the daily task on which needed done first and complete them in order. Being motivated and organized or even multi-tasking are important while taking roles of a mother and being one's own boss.

Mumpreneurs have to protect work and family time, as otherwise there will be no boundary unless you put in there. You have to separate and set working hours as child-free time, for instance children's nap time, and do not overwork on the weekend. Considering few days of

childcare, dividing household duties to spouse, housekeepers, part time assistant or part time nanny can help to sort out the time, maintain family balance and give customers the assistances they need. You can be more productive, stress-free and able to concentrate on the work much better when the kids are well taken care of (Parlapiano and Cobe, 2007). “It was my mum who said, you’re cleaning the bathroom in between everything else – this is crazy, you need to get a housekeeper” says Katie May of kidspot.com.au (O’Brien, 2007: 152).

7. Build your own networks: Social capital is “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures” (Portes, 1998: 6). The literature reviews that social capital enhances higher life satisfaction and healthier mentality. This social network that includes other entrepreneurs also increases the likelihood for a mother to become Mumpreneurs. It is also found that that being employed allows women greater access to resources, social capital, and ideas that may assist in developing new venture. The percentage of employed women engaging in early entrepreneurial activity is as high as 74.3 compared to 21.6 for those who is not working (Allen et al., 2007). They seem to have more confident and skills to proactively look for market opportunities.

Thus, it is vital to develop connections with co-workers, customers and other mothers through online and face-to-face networks. Mumpreneurs can join in associations, professional organizations, women’s business groups and online message boards/ chat or forum to be in the community relevant to their businesses. Having social network and peer support builds a stronger community between women to share ideas and information like lesson-learned, help each other in developing knowledge and skills required to start up and maintain the businesses as well as marketing the products without expenses (Parlapiano and Cobe, 2007). Kidspot.com.au is one of the businesses that found its partnership through networking.

8. Seek resources and knowledge: Male entrepreneurs may seek out their own ways to reach their business goal, whereas women entrepreneurs will look for help and support to achieve the objective (Druxman, 2007). Greater household income means greater likelihood for women to be involved in managing and owning a business (Allen et al., 2007). But not everyone will have enough savings to establish the business. Many non-profit organizations and online community, for instance BiB, provide resources and expertise to help Mumpreneurs to maximise their success to start the business. Resources include financing and easy-to-use calculators, mentoring, marketing and technology tools that Mumpreneurs need. Another good Australian website is www.showmummythemoney.com.au, which acts as an online community offering interesting articles, great advices for mothers going in or already in business. Additionally, Women's Business Centres is a community-based centre which provides education, training, and technical assistance for women entrepreneurship. Their programs are available in Australia and many other countries, specializing to women's interests to best suit their needs to build relationships and networks nationally, access to opportunities and role modeling.

There are several books for Mumpreneurs. The Mom Inventors Handbook: How to Turn Your Great Idea into the Next Big Thing by Tamara Monosoff also offers useful steps and advice for putting Ideas into I do. It also includes guideline for product development from ideas to market research, manufacturing, licensing til product launch. Trillion-Dollar Moms: Marketing to a New Generation of Mothers is another book for Mumpreneurs who target other mums, by Bailey and Bonnie Ulman. This book integrates the strategies to study buying behaviours of today's mothers and marketing tactics. Moms Business Magazine is another resource for Mumpreneurs to fill up their knowledge. Such magazine can provide how-to and easy-to-follow

guide to start up and develop a new business venture. Furthermore, Working Mother is published countrywide to helping Mumpreneurs to enjoy their work and family lives (Druxman, 2007).

Regardless of how Mumpreneurs seek resources to start the businesses, the great aspect to remember is that someone else has experienced all those challenges before you (Druxman, 2007). Hence, this requires for Mumpreneurs to rely upon more than ambition, self-motivated and a good idea.

9. Deliver every promise: The reality is there is no secret in this world. Mumpreneurs should be honest with clients and contacts about family commitments. They should be honest with families about running the business and not to hide the fact that they are mothers. Cuddle Fish's Caroline Hume, the founder of the global company selling kids-buoyancy product says "People are understanding if you are upfront with them and if you get your orders out on time and have a good product" (O'Brien, 2007: 151). Mumpreneurs can earn the respect by being professional business women and quality mothers.

10. Managing business growth: The business can just grow along as your kids grow. Mumpreneurs need to streamline the Internet-based/ business processes, and recruit extra people to delegate tasks and keep the work family balance. Cathy Slatter, a 32-years-old mother of 6 months-old daughter and the owner of corporate cake-delivery service from home, says "The main drawback is the danger of getting too big because you can't keep saying 'no' to new clients. It's maintaining a nice rate of growth so you can still stay at home. If that doesn't happen, you then ask yourself why you were doing it" (Herald Sun, 2007: 2). Julie Hanies, a 32-years-old mother of 8 months-old daughter and the owner of InviteMe — a personalised invitations for children's birthday and events, says "You have to be mindful of why we've done

this, to spend time at home with our babies, not build a big business” (Herald Sun, 2007: 3).
Eventually, it is not about money. It is all about being a mother first.

Conclusion

This section examines the emerging trend of Mumpreneurs, particularly in Australia. The underlying motivation for women entrepreneurs is the desire to help the overall community, environment or disadvantaged groups in society. Increasing numbers of Mumpreneurs and the rapid growth of their businesses have shown no reason why a mother cannot succeed as an entrepreneur. Women have the capabilities of breaking through the obstacles that hinder their business developments. Nevertheless, the rate of opportunity entrepreneurship and level of confidence to start a business successfully for men is remarkably outperforming that of women. A Significant gender gap still exists between countries as men believe themselves to have sufficient knowledge and skills for operating a business.

Global and domestic economic prosperity will be successful and sustained when all citizens regardless of gender are proactive and empowered in entrepreneurial activities. Political, legal and cultural factors also directly manipulate the development of the activities of the country. This calls for a change in business environment, social institutions and government to better support women being Mumpreneurs to develop their social and financial capital, and boosting self-confidence to establish the business. All in all, increasing the likelihood of starting a business is very much underpinned by a high level of self-confidence and opportunity identification. Thus, the position of the Mumpreneurs within the larger community is critical as it affects their capability to study role models and obtain resources. The policies should be customised to local context. More effective programs aimed at supporting Mumpreneurs would allow them to be more optimistic about their own ability, have greater valuable knowledge,

networking opportunities and more role models to guide the way in exploiting market opportunities.

A better understanding of the potential contribution of Mumpreneurs to the world's well-being and social equity will frame the importance of designing more satisfactory programs to enhance their participation in the market. As Nobel Peace Prize winner, Muhammad Yunus states "Economic growth and political democracy cannot achieve their full potential unless the female half of humanity participates on an equal footing with the male" (SPIEGEL, 2006).

We invite academics, entrepreneurs and practitioners to further enhance the research and study of this significant phenomenon, the Mumpreneurs. Furthermore, with the emergence of more and more males accepting the childcare role of "stay-at-home-Dads", research into this phenomenon may well introduce a new phenomenon of "Dadpreneurs". It will be interesting to see similarities (and differences) between genders within the Mumpreneurs and Dadpreneur phenomena.

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Download full-text PDF. Motherhood and entrepreneurship: The Mumpreneur phenomenon. Article (PDF Available) · January 2010 with 1,092 Reads. How we measure 'reads'. Mumpreneurs is a new emerging trend that takes on the concept of entrepreneurship into family businesses. It is a part of female entrepreneurship that describes women who start their. The often-used 'mumpreneur' label was branded as patronizing. Research from payments specialist moneycorp also revealed 65% of respondents believed that "mumpreneur", which has been used for over a decade to describe those who combine motherhood with running their own business, was a negative term. The top complaint, raised by nearly half (49%), was that the term is patronizing. "I dislike the term 'mumpreneur.' It implies to me that you're a mum also running a cute little business on the side, right? Why would a dad who runs a business be an entrepreneur, or a businessman, and a mum doing the same be a mumpreneur? It's condescending and, for me, there's more to what I am than a mum.