UNDERSTANDING THE CAREER-LIFE DEVELOPMENT OF MOMPRENEURS AS A RELATIONAL PROCESS (SUMMARY)

Rebecca Hudson Breen
University of Lethbridge, Canada, rebecca.hudsonbreen@uleth.ca

Aegean Leung
University of Sydney Business School, Australia

Recommended Citation
Hudson Breen, Rebecca and Leung, Aegean (2015) "UNDERSTANDING THE CAREER-LIFE DEVELOPMENT OF MOMPRENEURS AS A RELATIONAL PROCESS (SUMMARY)," Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research: Vol. 35 : Iss. 7 , Article 8. Available at: https://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol35/iss7/8
UNDERSTANDING THE CAREER-LIFE DEVELOPMENT OF MOMPRENEURS AS A RELATIONAL PROCESS

Rebecca Hudson Breen, University of Lethbridge, Canada
Aegean Leung, University of Sydney Business School, Australia

Principal Topic

The influence of family systems on the entrepreneurial experience has been recognized for some time. This influence may be especially true for women entrepreneurs with children. Drawing on relational theories of career development, which acknowledge the role of relational contexts in shaping an individual's career-life, this paper represents an initial effort to understand the career-life development of mompreneurs – a sub-group of women entrepreneurs. In the present research we examine how the relational context shapes, and is shaped by, both the choices and outcomes of career-life development of mompreneurs, as well as focusing on when individuals transit from being employed to self-employment in relation to a broader career-life context.

Method

This research employs multiple case-study methods to capture common themes across cases and make more robust theoretical propositions. Cases were selected based on the following criteria: All participants had previous employment and transited to self-employment due to consideration of their mothering role, and ventures have been in operation for two or more years, allowing us to look beyond the entry point of their entrepreneurial pursuits. All participants identify with their roles as business woman and mother, and are motivated to choose entrepreneurship as a way of balancing life roles. Data sources included interviews, a demographic survey, as well as observational and archival sources.

Results and Implications

We propose a conceptual model that captures the influence of the mothering role in shaping the transition into entrepreneurship, illuminating the reciprocal relational processes of context, choice and outcomes. As an alternative and supplementary perspective to current literature on women's entrepreneurship, which focuses mainly on the constraining effects of gender role in entrepreneurial careers, our study offers a "choice" perspective in understanding the career development of mompreneurs. The relational lens takes into account the interconnectivity of multiple roles, and how changes in one area of a relational system impacts other areas, highlighting the complex and mutually influencing interactions involved in the career-life development and multiple role management of mompreneurs. These cases illustrate the influence of the family in shaping the transition into entrepreneurship, and the reciprocal relational processes shaping the evolution of the entrepreneurship career.

CONTACT: Rebecca Hudson Breen; rebecca.hudsonbreen@uleth.ca; (T): 403-394-3946; (F): (403) 329-2668; University of Lethbridge, 4401 University Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada T1K3M4.