

Is Motherhood a Motivational Factor for Moroccan Women Entrepreneurs ?



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ABSTRACT : A mumpreneur is a woman that identifies herself as a mother and a businesswoman at the same time in order to achieve a professional and family balance that is difficult to achieve in the traditional wage-earning organization. As a fast growing entrepreneurship community around the world, it is important to study this concept in the Moroccan context. This study will disclose, through a survey, the relationship between motherhood and the motivation of Moroccan women entrepreneurs and will give a demographic profile of women who are referred to as mumpreneurs.

INTRODUCTION

The entrepreneurial dynamic has experienced a real acceleration in Morocco in recent years. Indeed, according to the 2017 GEM report, three out of four Moroccans believe that entrepreneurship could be a career choice. This new dynamic places entrepreneurship as a lever for growth and economic development capable of reducing poverty and absorbing unemployment.

More specifically, entrepreneurship among women, in the Moroccan context, takes on a very particular meaning because it is considered as a creation of value and also, an indicator of women emancipation (Rachdi, 2016). The activity rate of women in Morocco in 2019, according to the HCP, is 21.5% which is considered to be on of the lowest in the world by a study conducted by the World Bank.

As a significant solution to these figures, female entrepreneurship in Morocco appears to be playing a major role in the economic dynamics of the country. It is therefore relevant to better understand the particularities of female entrepreneurship in order to better understand their needs. Indeed, in recent years, many studies have attempted to define the uniqueness of entrepreneurship among women by studying their socio-demographic profiles and portraits as well as by analyzing the motivation factors specific to women and what differentiates them from those of men. (Zouiten and Levy-tajine, 2005).

In Morocco, entrepreneurship overall is much more driven by opportunity than necessity, 77% versus 22% respectively, according to the 2017 GEM report. However, this is not the case when it comes to women who are more likely to be driven more by necessity. In the MENA region, women entrepreneurs who enter entrepreneurship out of necessity represent almost half (Omeihe et al., 2019). The literature supports this trend. Indeed, the GEM report looked at the rate of entrepreneurship in 43 countries and surprisingly, the percentage of female entrepreneurs is higher in countries with lower per capita income and where women have no other revenue to earn their living. However, in countries with higher per capita income, the proportion of female entrepreneurs is lower. This can be explained by the difference between “necessity” and “opportunity” entrepreneurship, and the latter is more common among women (Allen et al., 2006). Indeed, it seems that women in developing countries are more affected by “push” than “pull” factors.

The Moroccan government has been contributing with large efforts to develop entrepreneurship and initiating different actions to promote entrepreneurship among women. However, for its actions to be effective and efficient, it is fundamental to know more about the motivations that drive these women into entrepreneurship, numbers and figures have to be available for the decisions makers to make the most optimal decisions.

This study will disclose the impact of motherhood on the motivation of Moroccan women entrepreneurs and will give us a demographic profile of women who are referred to as mumpreneurs.

Female entrepreneurship

Research on female entrepreneurship started more than three decades ago (Jennings and Brush, 2013). Before then, the concept of entrepreneurship was understood to be male gender connected (Hisrich & Brush, 1984; Verduijn & Essers, 2013). Indeed,

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women entrepreneurs were always addressed as 'woman' next to the word entrepreneurs, as opposed to male entrepreneurs who are addressed as simply 'entrepreneurs' suggesting that the standard is associated with male gender (Lewis, 2006).

When research started discussing female entrepreneurship, it was more about finding out the differences and similarities between male and female entrepreneurship (Ferraz Gomes and al., 2014). One of the major differences between male and female entrepreneurship is identified by Aldrich and Cliff (2003) as female entrepreneurship being closely linked to the family system. They argue that business creation for women depends on the life cycle of her family. How she will perceive an opportunity and how she will act upon it is dependant of her family life stage. All her choices will be different accordingly. This is known as the concept of embeddedness in which entrepreneurship and family are codependent on each other and that each one affects the other. This is true not only for business creation but also for their motivation to create a business and the type of business they will create.

The concept of embeddedness was also discussed by Brush, De Bruin and Welter (2009) by integrating the social embeddedness of women when it comes to entrepreneurship, making the 3M model become the 5M model. The 3M model represents the three main dimensions needed to establish a business which are Market, Money and Management. However, barriers exist when some women-owned businesses attempt to access these elements. This is why it is important to build an entrepreneurial model that integrates all particularities of women entrepreneurship such as the family and environmental context of the female entrepreneur. Based on institutional theory, the 3M model becomes the 5M model, adding Motherhood and Meso/Macro environment in which the family context referred to as 'motherhood' becomes a dimension on its own. "Motherhood" is a metaphor representing the family context of the female entrepreneur. It draws attention to the importance of family/household contexts and their ability to have a greater impact on women than on men (Jennings and McDougald, 2007).

Female entrepreneurial motivation:

The development of one of the first theories around entrepreneurial motivations can be summed up in the classification of motivations into two categories of factors, Push and Pull (Hakim, 1989; McClelland et al., 2005; Schjoedt and Rasoir, 2007; Segal et al., 2005). Push factors are characterized by personal or external factors, and often have negative connotations. Alternatively, pull factors are those that attract people to launching businesses – such as identifying an opportunity (Hakim, 1989).

In the case of women entrepreneurs, the push/pull approach has been extensively used to discuss female entrepreneurial motivations (Orhan and Scott, 2001; McGowan et al., 2012). The research has shown that push motivational factors for women include lack of work, frustration at work as well as the lack of childcare facilities. For Ducheneaut (1997), the push factors that motivate women are job dissatisfaction economic necessity and the need for flexibility. Moulton and Anderson (2005) highlight insufficient income, dissatisfaction with work, unemployment and the need to balance work and family responsibilities.

Regarding pull motivational factors, the authors mainly agree on their intrinsic character such as the desire for independence, the need for achievement. The same is true for both Holmen and Min (2011) and Jennings and Brush (2013) who highlight the discovery of a business opportunity, the desire for independence, personal fulfillment, self-realization and greater job satisfaction as the pull factors for women entrepreneurs.

However, over time, research started relying more on specific studies about motivational factors than the push and pull approach. Indeed, authors were interested in investigating the diversity of women entrepreneurs and the first typologies of female entrepreneurs were proposed in 2004 by Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio. They argue that there are seven groups of women entrepreneurial motivations: women who are seeking employment following unemployment, who are considering entrepreneurship as a main long-term strategy, who are seeking to break the glass ceiling problem, who are seeking work-family balance, who are re-entering working life after having left their job to take care of their family, who follow an entrepreneurial family tradition and ultimately, the feminist woman.

Other authors, such as Hughes (2006) and Rahmouni and al. (2012), have also developed a classification of their own of women entrepreneurs based on their motivations. The first one suggest to classify women according to their motivations also into three groups: the classic entrepreneur, the woman who wants to balance between her work and her family and the forced entrepreneur, the one that has no choice but to start a business to have a revenue. The second ones distinguish six profiles of women: those who get into entrepreneurship after having children, after having been unemployed, the student entrepreneur, the female manager looking for more me-time, the ones looking for a new challenge and those who get into entrepreneurship after the age of fifty.

One of the recent articles written in 2016 by d'Andria and Gabarret, indicate that there are three profiles of female entrepreneurial motivation that have been largely discussed and keep coming back in the literature: women in necessity, in career transition and new mothers also known as mumpreneurs. The first profile represent women who have no other revenue and have

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to create their own to secure one. A profile that correspond to a push factor. This is particularly the case in developing countries where women tend to create their own business out of necessity (Omeihe et al., 2019). The second group profile are women who are in search of self-fulfilment and self-realization and find them in entrepreneurial activities. The third group includes women who aspire to find a balance between their professional and motherhood duties. They are referred to in the literature as mumpreneurs and they are generally mothers of young children who started to transition between their full time job entrepreneurial activities during pregnancy. According to the authors, they are mostly driven by business opportunities related to motherhood.

Other authors such as Moulton and Anderson (2005), however, chose not to develop a specific classification of women. Rather, they argue that some motivational factors are to be related with the woman stage of life. Women will be in need for some flexibility between work and family when family responsibilities are overwhelming. But as children get older, other factors will be more important than the work family balance.

The concept of mumpreneurs in the literature

Richomme-Huet and al (2013) define a mumpreneur as a woman identifying herself as both a mother and a businesswoman. The mumpreneur decides to create a new company in which she is the owner and manager, in order to achieve a professional and family balance that is difficult to achieve in the traditional wage-earning organization. Her business opportunity is generally related to the experience of having children. For Cobe and Parlapiano (2002), mumpreneur suggest that there is a new reality for female entrepreneurship where the baby and the new company have been conceived almost simultaneously, referring to mumpreneurs. The fact is that for these women, entrepreneurship is perceived as a tool to adjust their careers to their new family responsibilities, giving them more autonomy and flexibility (Simonin, 2006).

Other authors point out that mumpreneurs are still a fast growing entrepreneurship community despite the actions large companies have taken to better integrate the needs of new mothers returning to work after their maternity leave. Indeed, large companies have offered more flexible hours and work-from-home option to new mothers. However, there is a perceived understanding that the new family duties refrain the career advancements of female executives (McGowan and al., 2012). Similarly, a study, done by Cromie back in 1987, in which respondents were young women with families show that a number of them had given up secure, well-paid employment to start their own business. Business creation allows more flexibility in terms of hours and place of work in accordance with the needs of children.

In 2011, Ekinsmyth run a study among women entrepreneurs in the region of Birmingham in England. A region which has suffered, then, from a significant economic decline resulting in high unemployment rates only to show that mumpreneurs are a subgroup of women entrepreneurs. Duberley and Carrigan (2012) complete this research by investigating the motivations behind the mumpreneurs of this region and find out that these women create their own business at the time of the arrival of a child. A way for these women to become independent while escaping the idea of being perceived as stay-at-home mums.

In addition, Jean and Forbes (2012) show that the entrepreneurial motivations of Canadian mumpreneurs in Ontario would be exclusively dependent on push factors. From the study of twenty cases, they find that mumpreneurs create their own business in order to be able to combine their professional project with their family life.

Research have found that while the primary objective for mumpreneurs is to seek a better environment for their families, there are other objectives that motivate new mothers to get into entrepreneurship. According to Nel and al. (2010) case studies of Australian mumpreneurs, the latter are motivated by both push and pull factors: balance between professional and family life, the desire to fulfillment, personal satisfaction, increased income, opportunity to gain respect on gender issues and becoming independent.

Currently, the development of associations and networks of mumpreneurs in Europe and around the world in general shows how dynamic is this new entrepreneurial figure. Indeed, a recent study in 2015 shows that in Switzerland, half of female business creation is from mumpreneurs. (D'Andria & Gabarret, 2017)

Therefore, the impact of motherhood on entrepreneurial motivators needs to be looked at more closely by researchers. In Morocco, no research as such has been conducted and there are no indicators about the number of mumpreneurs in the kingdom. The questions to be asked then are: What is the correlation between motherhood and the motivation of Moroccan women entrepreneurs ? What is the demographic profile of women who are referred to as mumpreneurs in Morocco ?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To answer these questions, a quantitative methodology has been used. Specifically, a descriptive study has been adopted to examine the correlation between motherhood as a motivation and entrepreneurship.

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The descriptive research is known to be used to determine the relationships between variables. Although, it doesn't prove the causality, it can help to determine important concepts and less important ones and phenomenon that should be studied in depth and could explain the subject under study eventually.

For this paper, data was collected through questionnaires from 38 Moroccan female entrepreneurs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of the sample:

Age	63% are between 25 and 35 years old 34% are between 36 and 45 years old
Marital status	More than 75% have been married once (13% divorced) 23% are single
Children	68% have at least one child with nearly 40% have 2 children
Educational background	100% have been to university
Entrepreneurial experience	58% have been entrepreneurs since at least 3 years 34% have started
Legal status of the company	68% are registered as SARL 26% are registered as Auto-entrepreneur
Wage-earning experience	90% have already worked in a traditional wage earning companies and 60% of them have worked at least 4 years before going into entrepreneurship
Life stage at the launch of the entrepreneurial career	24% at graduation 42% at the arrival of children (23% at the arrival of the 1 st child) 34% split between other events or milestones (divorce, before marriage, nothing in particular, before having kids...)

Reasons behind the launch of the entrepreneurial career

- Balance between professional and personal life : 25 out of 38
- Flexible hours : 24 out of 38
- Opportunity identification:17 out of 38
- Financial independence : 16 out of 38
- Self- realization : 14 out of 38

The Moroccan Mumpreneur profile:

According to our sample, the Moroccan mumpreneur is aged between 35 and 45 years old, married with a university educational level and has a young entrepreneurial career sliding between one and five years. It appears that the chosen activity sector is mostly related to children as mentioned by Richomme-Huet and al (2013). The mumpreneur has worked in a tradition wage organization for at least four years. She launches her entrepreneurial career seeking primarily a balance between her personal and professional life and having flexible hours. The faced obstacles have to do with the administrative steps to launch a business, networking and financing her project.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As discussed earlier, the existing literature confirms that becoming a mother is a motivational factor to launch an entrepreneurial career. Through this research, this has been verified in the Moroccan context as well. Motherhood is a motivational factor for Moroccan women to start their business. They do so for non economic related reasons as 90% of them have chosen their objective to be primarily a balancé between their personal life and their professional one. Rather, it is more a context related factor where

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the context here is the new family she wants to be available for and the professional life she doesn't want to let go of, seeking self realization in both areas.

These results show also that the limitations of the push and pull factors to classify the motivational factors of entrepreneurs. Indeed, while mothers feel 'pushed' to start their own business to find a balance between the professional and the personal life, it is still not an entrepreneurship by necessity as defined in the literature. Seeking this balance has not a negative connotation either as the push factors have. Motivational factors as this one is a complex multidimensional factor that can't be classified as this simple (D'Andria & Gabarret, 2017). Rather, they suggest to take into consideration three dimensions to understand better motivational factors, the economic ones, the psychological ones and the environmental ones. This multidimensional classification allows us to follow the different life stages of the entrepreneur considering that the motivational factors change throughout life and the context evolution. The push and pull classification as a binary approach disregard the contextual environment of both men and women who launch their business for non economic or opportunity reasons.

Moreover, it is also important to mention that this category of entrepreneurs is very interesting to study as they were not planning to become entrepreneurs at the beginning of their career as they all worked, in our sample, in a traditional wage earning organization. It's more of a career choice they made because of a new context. However, this new context might evolve in few years and it would be interesting to observe if their entrepreneurial intentions are still the same or it was just a transition in their career following their life stage at that moment.

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