

BETWEEN MOTHERHOOD AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INSIGHTS ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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Abstract. *This paper aims to provide an insight into the current state of mompreneurship in the creative industries in our country. After a synthetic overview of the most important theories in the literature of entrepreneurship, the paper will present a brief secondary analysis of data based on the most relevant statistical research on entrepreneurship in general, conducted by European and Romanian institutions. The conducted empirical research will consist of two qualitative studies that had a complementary role in building a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon: the self-portrait of entrepreneurial mothers, and the institutional support provided to mompreneurs.*

Keywords: *entrepreneurship, motherhood, creative industries, mompreneurs, women entrepreneurship.*

Introduction

The number of studies regarding female entrepreneurship over the last 30 years has drawn attention to this group of entrepreneurs. Within this group, over the last decade, a subgroup has crystallized: that of entrepreneurial mothers. Although this is not a new phenomenon, it is a new concept that requires a theoretical framework and empirical validation. Although this socio-cultural and economic phenomenon of mompreneurship grew globally, it has not been approached yet by scholars in the Romanian space. For this reason, this paper aims to provide insight into the current situation of entrepreneurial mothers in the creative industries in the country.

The transition to maternity, for most women, changes choices, priorities and career preferences. Mothers' orientation towards entrepreneurship is a growing phenomenon in Romanian space, and its complexity needs to be studied through exploratory empirical research, especially since studies show that mothers build their entrepreneurial identity differently from the rest of the entrepreneurs.

The paper aims to present the main theoretical and practical aspects related to the delimitation of the mompreneurship as concept, as ways of manifestation, the motivations and the processes involved in the decision to start a business, the identification of the favorable factors and the obstacles encountered in the exercise of the double parent-entrepreneur role, as well as the study of this phenomenon in the socio-cultural and economic context of Romania. The purpose of the paper is to identify the main characteristics of the mompreneurship in the creative industries in our country, in the context of the growth of the economic and social role of the creative industries in the last years in Europe in general, and in Romania in particular.

Conceptual delimitation of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship in Romania

Schumpeter defines the entrepreneur in terms of the revolution he generates through innovation and “destructive creation” (Schumpeter, 1934, p.156). He is the first who associates the entrepreneur with the innovator (Leovaridis & Gavra, 2013, p. 76). For a specific but syncretic delimitation of entrepreneurship, Robert Paturel uses the definitions of several economists and identifies a set of keywords describing entrepreneurship: risk-taking, uncertainty, innovation, opportunity, the emergence of an organization, the combination of new resources, creating value, creating jobs; he also proposes an own definition: “starting from an idea, entrepreneurship is the exploitation of an opportunity within an organization, newly created or taken up in a first stage, receiving a new impulse through the activity of a single person or a team for which it represents an important change in life, through a process that leads to the creation of a new value or to the saving of the excessive consumption of the existing value” (Paturel, 2007, p.28). Synthesizing the different approaches in international literature, Verstraete and Fayolle (2005, p.44) delimit the research field of entrepreneurship through four paradigms: detecting or exploiting a business opportunity, creating an organization, creating value and innovation.

Over time, schools of thought have been formed to investigate entrepreneurship from different points of view. Thus, six models of entrepreneurship have emerged associated with six schools of thought grouped into four categories of themes (Ciocina, 2013, pp.45-47). Viewed as a whole, these schools of thought provide a global picture of the entrepreneur and his qualities: charismatic, innovative, motivated (the School of “Big People” in Entrepreneurship and the School of Psychological Characteristics), a person who sees opportunities and can capitalize on them (Classical School of Entrepreneurial Thinking), a person who efficiently allocates resources and whose actions and style describe the pattern of a leader (The School of Management in Entrepreneurship and The School of Leadership in Entrepreneurship), a person who constantly adapts (The School of Intrapreneurship). The importance of these schools of thought lies in the overall vision of entrepreneurship that they offer through the complementarity of the angles of interest and the themes approached by each. The main implications of entrepreneurship are divided into four categories: job creation and participation in economic growth; increasing competitiveness towards accelerating productivity; developing individual potential and fulfilling societal interests. The increased interest in the attainment of *entrepreneurial society* describes the favorable attitude towards entrepreneurship and the “valorization of entrepreneurship as a way to achieve social and societal goals” (Leovaridis & Gavra, 2013, pp.79-80).

Many studies on entrepreneurship conducted in our country raise the problem of accessing funds (92% of the entrepreneurs), of the lack of support by the Romanian legislation (58%), the lack of a fiscal environment favoring entrepreneurship (73%), the lack of cooperation between the state institutions, associations and the education system that should support entrepreneurship (87%) (Ernst & Young, 2013). However, according to *Eurobarometer 354*, most Romanian respondents who do not work on their own consider entrepreneurship to be a desirable situation for them (58%), compared with only 37% of Europeans (European Commission, 2012a, p.5). Women show a lower entrepreneurial spirit, preferring to a greater extent to work as employees (63% compared to 53% of men), while men are more inclined to entrepreneurship: 42% of men would like to open a business, compared to 33% of women (European Commission, 2012b, p.5). The research conducted by national experts comes in support of these ideas, presenting an optimistic entrepreneurial framework, in which they measured the courage and intent to start a business: more courageous are young men (25-34 years) from urban area, with higher education and high personal incomes, at the opposite end being women, elderly or low-income people, who have less enthusiasm about the intention to start a business (360insights, 2013). Another recent study conducted by Ernst&Young, *Romanian Barometer of Startups 2016*, confirms that a Romanian start-up entrepreneur typically is 25 to 35 years old, works 10 hours a day, is at the first entrepreneurial initiative, wins below 1000 euros a month and goes at least once a week to a networking event (Ernst & Young, 2016a, p.4). On the other hand, *Romanian Barometer of Entrepreneurship 2016*, based on questionnaires applied to 350 businessmen from Romania, showed the following characteristics of the "local entrepreneurial ecosystem": the experienced Romanian entrepreneur is around 40 years old, he works hard (about 9.6 hours a day) and takes risks for the success of his business (Ernst & Young, 2016b, p.4). This profile matches the European entrepreneur, only with a broader age spectrum (25-49 years old, compared to 25-40 years old for Romania) (European Commission, 2014, p.17). The same study shows that 62% of women entrepreneurs in Europe are aged between 15-49, being on average slightly younger than men entrepreneurs aged 15-49 (60%) (European Commission, 2014, pp.17-18).

Reasons for starting a business are the desire to have a higher quality of life and to achieve financial independence. The main barriers to entrepreneurship are the chosen career path (21.2%), the unfavorable socio-economic context (14.6%), the lack of training or skills required by an entrepreneur (14%) (Lițoiu & Negreanu, 2012, pp.17, 42). The effort of institutional discourse in recent years to stimulate investment and involvement of Romanians in various training programs in this direction is showing result within a positive attitude of Romanians (78%) who consider entrepreneurship as an excellent career alternative compared to the European average of only 58%, doubled by the high percentage of Romanians who believe that entrepreneurs have a privileged status in the society (74%) (GEM, 2012).

Creative industries - theories, models, economic and social role, entrepreneurship in creative industries

In the last few years, different definitions have been developed to describe the specific features of the creative industries, where notions such as the "creative sector", "creative industries", "cultural industries" or "creative economy" refer to a wide range of activities involving the commercial exploitation of creative and artistic work. Some European

official institutions (European Commission, 2010, pp.5-6) make a distinction between terms such as “cultural industries” - those industries that produce and distribute goods or services that have specific attributes, uses or purposes that represent or transmit cultural manifestations, irrespective of the commercial value they carry (theatrical arts, visual arts, cultural heritage, film, DVD and video, television and radio, video games, digital media, books, music, and the press) and “creative industries” that use culture as a resource, giving a cultural dimension to the products, although the results of their work are mainly functional - architecture, graphic design, fashion design or advertising. Throsby's concentric circle model (as cited in Connor, 2010, p.56) places creative ideas in the pool of mainstream creative arts where, in the form of sound, text and image, these ideas are diffused outward through a series of “concentric circles” that delimit the cultural and commercial proportions, the decrease of cultural content being directly proportional to the distance from the center, the movement towards the outside being in a specific order: central creative arts (literature, music, performing arts, visual arts), followed by cultural industries (film, museums and libraries), wider cultural industries (heritage, publishing, audio, television and radio, video and computer games), related industries (advertising, architecture, design and fashion).

Considered one of the most promising areas in developing economies, the creative industries benefit from both a diverse mix of consumers and creative resources that drive growth in other sectors (Ernst & Young, 2014, p.4). In other words, the creative and cultural industries contributed in 2012 to 4.2% of Europe's GDP. This economic sector is the third largest employer in Europe, following the construction and food industry related services. More than 7 million Europeans are employed directly or indirectly in creative and cultural activities - 3.3% of the EU's active population. Of these, the theatrical arts (1,234,500), the visual arts (1,231,500) and the music (1,168,000) employ more than 1 million people each, followed by advertising (818,000), books (646,000) and film (641,000) (Ernst & Young, 2014, p.10).

Some authors (Marco Serrano, Rausell-Koster & Abeledo-Sanchis, 2014, pp.81-91) have shown that there is a significant bidirectional causality between regional prosperity (GDP per capita) and employment intensity in the cultural and creative industries, concluding that there is a “virtuous circle” fueled by these industries. In some European countries, creative industries report a higher level of innovation than non-creative industries: for example, in the UK over 40% of creative industries report internal use of R&D resources, over 20% report use of design and almost 35%, innovations in marketing; each of these percentages is greater than that of non-creative organizations (Bakhshi, McVittie & Simmie, 2008, pp.21-22).

Due to the dense population, its cultural market, its cultural heritage, and the highly talented creative class, Europe has long been a source of organizational leadership in creative industries, whether it's about renowned international corporations or just small avant-garde startups (Ernst & Young, 2014, p.18). These businesses take on the pioneering role in various fields, from music, where Universal Music Group is the leader, to television - Endemol, to publishers - Pearson and Hachette Book Group, to video games - Ubisoft and Supercell, and advertising - WPP and Publicis. Europe becomes more than an innovation hub, creating and developing new business services and models, such as the Swedish Spotify and the French Deezer (Ernst & Young, 2015, p.45). Colette Henry (2007) encourages the use of best practices in finding solutions to maximize the potential of creative industries in the global economy; it focuses on how

investors and entrepreneurs can work together to create new spaces for “entrepreneurial energy” within the various creative industries in these times of rapid digitization. David Rae (2004, pp.492-500) also explores how entrepreneurial abilities and identity are learned in the creative industries and media, proposing a conceptual framework of entrepreneurial learning in the creative and media sectors, based on social learning.

A study called “The attractiveness of the creative professions and entrepreneurial orientations of young people in creative fields” (Moise, Jderu & Cristea, 2012, pp.2-14) presents the results of qualitative research on the preferences of young Romanians for creative professions and their entrepreneurial orientation. Thus, in the top of the most attractive creative professions among young people, the first positions are occupied by the journalist (12.2%), the photographer (11.8%), the architect (10.9%), followed by IT programmer (9%) and fashion designer (8.3%). Moreover, 70% of young people would choose the first profession option as a creative profession. The degree of notoriety of these professions influences the perceptions of young people and maintains their desirability for these choices, which is why architecture is considered one of the most popular creative professions in society. Of the young people who mentioned the creative industries as their first job option, 57% say they would open their own firm in the chosen field if they had the necessary material resources. The preferred professions of those oriented to entrepreneurship are photographer, architect, fashion designer, IT programmer and journalist. As for the preferred business field, 26% of them say they would invest in hotels or restaurants, 22% would focus on creating online stores (online shopping sites), 10% would invest in agriculture, 9% in construction, 7% in transport, and only 6% in creative industries such as music recording studios, publishing houses, advertising etc.

Female Entrepreneurship in Romania. Mompreneurship

Towards the end of the 1990s, “female entrepreneurship” became an independent research area and was a popular topic in the media and for the political debates on economic markets and employment. In addition to the characteristics and professional achievements of female entrepreneurs, research has now extended to health, maternity issues (Williams, 2004, pp.467-485), family positioning, lifestyle and work-life balance (Schindehütte, Morris & Brennan, 2003, pp.94-107). Increased attention was paid to the study of women-led businesses that covered topics such as growth and performance, management style (Brush, 1992, pp.5-31), financing, human capital, labor markets (Bird & Brush, 2002, pp. 41-65) and social entrepreneurship (Carter et al., 2003, pp. 15-17), among others. Although important steps have been taken in the study of female entrepreneurship, this field is far from being exhausted, with a variety of extensions and further investigations to be made (Minniti, 2009, p.620).

Naudé (2010, pp.1-12) aims to explain the gender gap in business initiation in countries with similar economic development levels, taking into account non-economic factors such as culture and institutions. The authors are particularly concerned about the impact that “gender institutions” or “gender culture” have on the decision of a person, whether male or female, to start a new firm. In this context, both a post-institutional approach based on economic studies and organizational theory seem promising (Reskin & Bielby, 2005, pp.80-86), as well as other approaches in the sphere of the economy that

integrate tools and methods from fields like anthropology and ethnography (Chamlee-Wright, 1997, pp.20-25).

The field studies developed in Romania provide a socio-demographic profile of the local female entrepreneurs. First, there are the potential entrepreneurs (not having their own business, but involved in activities to start a business) have an average age of 42 years and work experience for about 15 years, half of them (49%) have studies in management and business management; the men in this group of potential entrepreneurs are of similar age but have a lower work experience (12 years), most of them (55%) having management experience. Female owners of newly established firms (up to 2 years old) have an average age of 37 years and a 10-year work experience, most of them (73%) having studies or training in management and business management; in comparison, the men in this group are one year younger, have one year less work experience and 55% of them have management experience. In addition, more men than women have entrepreneurial examples in their families, and these examples are mostly masculine for both men and women (Driga & Gonzáles, 2009, p.12). "The main motivation women invoke for their involvement in entrepreneurship is the opportunity to improve their quality of life, followed by the possibility of earning money, and therefore to be realized on a personal level, unlike men, for whom the main entrepreneurial motivation is the opportunity to earn money, followed by the improvement of the quality of life and only for the last place they take into consideration the personal level" (Leovaridis & Gavra, 2013, pp.94-96).

In our country, of the total number of company owners (1.2% of the total population), 75% are men, so only 25% of women. Of these, 36% are aged 35-44, 32% between 45-54 years and 18% between 25-34 years, the rest being under 25 or over 55 years old. Of the self-employed (35.1%), only 28.7% are women, compared with 71.3% men. Of these, 21.9% are aged 35-44, 20% between 45-54%, and 17% aged 65 or over, with the remainder being between the 25-34 and 18-24 (National Institute of Statistics, 2017, pp. 128-132). The "Global Entrepreneurship Monitor" evaluates women entrepreneurship in Romania as being "out of necessity" rather than "seeking the opportunity". What it means is that instead of being motivated by the existence of opportunities - 20% of respondents, most women (50%) said that they would not have made it otherwise. The other 30% mentioned both variants, "being able to fit into a push-pull model, where the necessity and identification of opportunities were the entrepreneurial mobiles" (GEM, 2010).

The idea that women are more averse to risk has been a topic that has long been studied in recent decades, and studies by Rutterford and Maltby (2007) seem to confirm this: "women are more inclined towards risk-bypass behaviors and tend to take more moderate risks than men" (Ivan, 2013, p.128). The metaphorical naming of the phenomenon, *nesting instinct*, is not accidental. In their study on women's relationship with business-related risks, especially regarding investments, Rutterford and Maltby (2007, pp.315-320) stressed the existence of natural, biological precaution of women in terms of risk, protection and care of the family, but also a fearful behavior towards risk, since all interactions present a certain degree of uncertainty. "As most of the economic and entrepreneurial interactions have an above-average level of uncertainty and involve assuming risks, we can associate the concept of *nesting instinct* with female entrepreneurial behavior. If risk aversion is a biological component, innate, specific to women, with obvious adaptive valences, we can wonder to what extent a society may

want more female entrepreneurs and women involved in investment rather than in saving plans creation" (Ivan, 2013, p.128).

Davis and Shaver (2012) complement those previously written from a mother's point of view, which seem to be more prone to risk than women in general, with a desire for growth and a much higher motivation than men or women entrepreneur. Lewis and colleagues use the theory of borderless careers as a perspective to explore and analyze the moment of transition in careers for women, and specifically the event of maternity in connection with the transition from employment to self-employment (Lewis et al., 2015, pp.21-37). Introduced by some as "the new feminism", the new rapidly growing phenomenon – *momprenneurship* - is an impugnable and disputed subject. The article raises the question of whether such transformations in working practices (incorporated in the figure of a *momprenneur*) have the potential to offer more options for working mothers, or if they allow the reappearance of inappropriate expectations and arrangements within families (Ekinsmyth, 2013, pp.1230-1248).

In addition to this article, Kochman (2014) lists five reasons why mothers have the chance to be successful entrepreneurs. The author begins his argument with describing the resemblance between growing a child and growing a business, where the necessary skills intertwine, arguing that motherhood not only provides the right business training but, as other studies show, venture capital companies led by women typically earn higher earnings by 12% and start with a three times lower capital. In addition, women-led companies are more resistant to financial crises than their male-led counterparts. His question is why only 10% of the founders of a business are mothers? Professional barriers to networking, limited access to funding, and lack of models to follow can be some of the reasons why they are more reluctant, but the real reason is that most fear that they cannot combine maternity with intense entrepreneurial life. The author claims that mothers acquire many of the skills that are essential, as entrepreneurs. These include working under pressure, bargaining skills, creativity and the ability to combine the most appropriate resources, controlling pride and pursuing a greater purpose, long-term thinking, motivation to continue despite bad situations and so on. While entrepreneurs have the choice to quit their business, a mother will never be able to give up a child. This feeling of challenge and triumph regardless of obstacles turns mothers into heroines, and furthermore, in successful entrepreneurship.

Regarding gender inequalities within the creative and cultural industries (CCIs), these were insufficiently explored. Global research that has studied gender inequalities in various industries has revealed that there are patterns of women exclusion based on their social class, race or ethnicity. These inequities are amplified by the precariousness, informality, and requirements of program flexibility, general features describing work in contemporary creative industries. Moreover, women, and mothers, in particular, are disadvantaged by the interconnected boundaries between home - job roles, unpaid work – paid work, by new social pressures built around self-identity, sexist attitude and gender pay gap. Understanding the specificity of women's work in the creative industries in the neoliberal economy involves understanding their problems in regard to gender differences (Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015, pp.5-20).

Although it is not a new phenomenon, *momprenneurship* is a new concept that is still looking for a theoretical framework and empirical validation (Lewis et al., 2015, pp.21-23). Studies show that women build their entrepreneurial identity either through

resistance to gender differences or by assuming and embracing femininity (Richomme-Huet, Vial & D'Andria, 2013, pp.254-260), but entrepreneurial mothers overcome these stages guided by their natural and biological instinct called metaphorically the “nesting instinct” by researchers (Ivan, 2013, p.128).

In Romania, a key issue in the discussion of women's savings versus investments trends is the 'financial literacy', namely their education in this respect, both at the level of their competencies and knowledge, as well as in the level of confidence and interest towards knowledge in the financial or economic area, since gender-differentiated schemes are also closely related to this. The value context and the cultural-religious space play as well a particularly important role in building the environment in which these entrepreneurial programs develop. In some countries, “working with money” is considered to be especially the men's job, a “dirty” action that dishonors the woman, so financial literacy programs are facing real challenges (Ivan, 2013, p.134). These aspects of culture are reflected directly in the small number of women entrepreneurs, both in Muslim religion countries, where the percentage of female entrepreneurs is only 5% and in countries that strongly adhere to paternalistic values: Romania, Russia, Latvia, where gender roles indicate rather an association between the financial power and the masculinity (GEM, 2010).

“Mompreneur” is a neologism made up of the terms “mother” and “entrepreneur”, and starts to have its own place in the dictionary of the researchers interested in the contemporary aspects of entrepreneurship. The “mompreneur” embodies the transition from offline to online in the era of digitization, US News & World Report attempting to dismantle the myth of “mothers with ideas working from home” on the grounds that any innovative idea sells, putting mothers among first-time innovators (Palmer, 2011). Creating associations to support this trend was inevitable. Pioneers from Canada started what now became the largest online resource website, *Mompreneurs*, with the purpose of providing support, education and national promotion to all mother entrepreneurs. This online community has become a milestone in the world of mompreneurship through its many projects and events, including the Mompreneur Awards, an event that rewards successful mothers, or the Mompreneur Momentum, the nonprofit organization dedicated to helping mothers access resources. The core values of this association are collaboration, integrity, unconditional support, inclusiveness, trusting community and empowerment.

In Romania, there are two such communities: Happy Moms and Mamprenoare. The purpose of Happy Moms association is “to offer support in the harmonious and healthy personal and/or professional development of pregnant women, mothers, children and family in general” (see Study B). By creating the *Business Mom* program, an entrepreneurial school of mentoring and motivation addressed to mothers, a large community of entrepreneur moms was created. They are participating in conferences (M.A.M.A.), educational training, personal enhancement groups or free courses available to them for personal and professional development as entrepreneurs. Moreover, they are encouraged to participate in the business ideas contest developed with the purpose of sharing resources through an incubator of start-ups for entrepreneur-mothers.

The Mamprenoare community is created as a sub-company supported by Level up Vision, a training firm in the areas of branding, communication, public speaking, and leadership. Its mission is to “provide support, education, and inspiration to

entrepreneur mothers, and to be there in their first steps towards entrepreneurship in a business environment” (see Study B) by providing a unique platform where mompreneurs connect and promote their businesses in Romania. The founder herself offer strategic business advice, by organizing meetings periodically and locally with entrepreneur-mothers to exchange views and get support from the community, by providing ideas and solutions to promote themselves with a small budget and last but not least, by organizing courses, seminars and conferences on various business-related themes. Among the most well-known events of this community are the “Successful Mother and Entrepreneur”, an event that takes place regularly in the big cities of Romania, but also “Children and Money” a financial parenting workshop which helps mothers juggle with their finances for both their businesses and their children.

Besides the above-mentioned communities, a WAHM Romania networking community was created as part of the global Work at Home Moms phenomenon, as “social initiative to support active mothers and make them aware of their vital importance within the family”. From the very first few days since the launch of the idea, the community grew remarkably thanks to the hundreds of interested mothers who enthusiastically joined the Facebook page dedicated to Work at Home Moms. The project then crystallized by setting up the Work at Home Moms Association. “This association aims to support creativity and innovation by defending intellectual property rights” (see Study B). The group relies on creating a community where mothers can communicate and can provide support to each other, where they can collaborate, discuss work ethics or the legislation in place, organize seminars or meetings on various business-related themes and prepare mothers for the competitive market.

Field research on mompreneurship in the creative industries in Romania

Research methodology

In choosing the research methodology we took into account the specificity of the investigated topic and the questions we want to answer. Being an unexplored field in the scholar literature in Romania, our study focuses on investigating systematically a new area of interest regarding female entrepreneurship to serve as a starting point for further quantitative studies. The decision to choose qualitative methods, with their limits and advantages, was encouraged by our desire to explore a newly formed socio-cultural and economic phenomenon, rather than measuring the intensity of its manifestation. The choice of research tools thus proceeded from the nature of the selected methods and techniques. To conduct in-depth exploratory interviews, we have built a semi-structured interview guide for entrepreneur mothers and another semi-structured interview guide addressed to representatives of institutions involved in creating the socio-cultural and economic context for mother entrepreneurs. Data collection was done using face-to-face interviews with previously prepared interview guides. Each interview lasted between 60-90 minutes and the responses were noted on the spot by the interviewer. Interviews with the first group of subjects took place between April 5-30, 2017 and with the second group of subjects, between May 2-15, 2017.

The overall objective of this study is to outline the profile of mompreneurs in the creative industries in Romania and to identify the main characteristics of mompreneurship in this sector. In fulfilling this objective, the research was divided

methodologically into two different studies, complementary to compiling a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon: the self-portrait of entrepreneur mothers (A) and institutional support for mompreneurship (B).

The empirical data of the first study (A) was collected through in-depth exploratory interviews addressed to a number of 21 entrepreneur mothers working in the creative industries in Romania. The goal was to discover the experiences and challenges faced by them in balancing the double responsibility of maternity and business leadership. A respondents' selection strategy was adopted, in which participants were recruited by searching for different networks and clusters, articles and blogs about mompreneurship, provided they were entrepreneurs in the creative industries. The subjects of the first part of the research were selected from different localities, age groups, levels of education, and having different businesses as seniority and specificity. Their businesses vary from decorative arts, architecture, branding and communication consultancy to fashion design or francophone publishing. Their age ranges from 27 to 55, the level of education between high school and masters. Most women are married (17), some are in a second marriage (3), and the rest are single mothers. The 'age' of business varies from 6 months to 17 years. Mothers' locations cover areas of interest in Romania and extend from Bucharest to Cluj, from Constanta to Iasi, Brasov, Suceava, Barlad, Deva, Craiova and others. The specific objectives of this study (A) were: 1. To identify the grounds and factors that have led mothers to establish a business in the creative industries. 2. To identify the favorable factors and barriers to business development. 3. To explore the characteristics of the mother's status in relation to the launch of the business. 4. To explore the opinions on governmental, social and cultural support to entrepreneur mothers.

The second study aims to analyze the situation of the mompreneurs in terms of institutions recognized as having an important role among entrepreneur mothers (LevelUp Vision, Happy Mom - Business Mom, Work at Home Moms), or entrepreneurs in general (Start Up Nation, Chamber of Commerce, Directorate of Entrepreneurship and Programs for SMEs). Semi-structured interviews aimed to identify the characteristics of the mompreneurs from an external perspective to their group, thus guiding the discussion towards the role of mompreneurs in society, as well as vice versa - the influence of society on the development of this subgroup of female entrepreneurs, all from an objective point of view, external to the group. For this part of the survey, we interviewed 5 representatives of private and state institutions: Start-Up Nation, Level Up Vision, Happy Moms, Chamber of Commerce, Directorate of Entrepreneurship and Programs for SMEs. The specific objectives of this second part of the research are 1. To identify the main characteristics of the entrepreneurial mothers in the creative industries. 2. To analyze the external factors that influence mompreneurship in starting a business. 3. To identify the measures taken to support this subgroup of female entrepreneurs.

Research Results

A. The self-portrait of mother entrepreneurs. Analysis of data obtained through interviews with entrepreneurial mothers

By pursuing the specific objectives, the study begins with the analysis of the motivations, aspirations, and factors that encouraged mothers to start a business in the creative

industries sector. For a more in-depth analysis, we grouped the answers into pull and push categories. As defined by the authors Schjoedt and Shaver (2007), push factors are elements specific to the field of necessity, such as inadequacy of family income, lack of job satisfaction, difficulty in finding a stable job, need for a flexible program due to family responsibilities. Pull factors refer to the desire behind an action, like the desire for independence, the need for self-fulfillment, the desire to become an entrepreneur, the desire for social status and financial prosperity.

The study on entrepreneurial mothers revealed that the main motivation, and the most often cited (14 of 21 possible mentions), is the desire to turn passion into a source of income, or simply to turn a hobby into a business. This is followed closely by push factors such as *“the desire to have a flexible program tailored to the needs of children”* (P.O., 34, Constanța), the desire to work remote, the freedom to choose clients and the freedom to influence the direction of the business, as well as the education of their children (*“I did not want to raise my children with a babysitter...”* (B.P., 36, Iași). Other mompreneurs mentioned that they are highly motivated by their clients - receiving positive feedbacks from happy customers makes them want to grow the business, evolve, do what they like and work for themselves in order to acquire financial independence. We find that there is a balance between the need and the desire to start a business, and although the pull factors seem dominant, financial interest is the cornerstone of the development of any business. The specificity of creative industries has an important role for entrepreneur mothers in terms of their freedom of expression, opening up the market and increasing demand in recent years for various products and services in the sector.

The study also aimed to identify those factors that encourage and facilitate the start of a business by mothers. The responses of entrepreneurial mothers were related mostly to the help of the partner and family, proof of the mentality change regarding the role of a woman in the house. Other encouraging factors include high demand in the areas in which they operate, opportunities for online promotion (especially Facebook) and previous experience in the field.

We studied then the obstacles and barriers that entrepreneurial mothers have encountered in creating or developing businesses. The challenges faced by mompreneurs have varied origins and reflect, on the one hand, the old-fashioned mentality and, on the other hand, the lack of preparedness and support from the state. The main obstacles faced by entrepreneurial mothers are the lack of institutional or government support (and hence the lack of capital), the bureaucracy - which is very complicated and difficult, high taxation and the lack of organization of legislative services (*“I stood for 2 hours at number 2 counter, where I was guided after spending another half an hour on the queue, to find out that in my case the problem could only be solved at the number 1 counter, because only that person was competent”* (I.A., 29, Râmnicu Vâlcea). Another challenge for mothers is the copying of business and the unfair competition. A specific reason mentioned by one of the mothers - *“the home area (rural area), where I have internet only through a router that is very slow [...] and the nearest courier company is at 30 km”* (A.B., 27, Suceava) - draws attention to the need to develop an infrastructure that allows the development of the phenomenon of mompreneurship (and not only) in rural areas as well.

An extremely important barrier to starting a business as a mother is the lack of credibility on the market, as a consequence of a mentality that cancels the woman's role

outside the home. *"We face a hostile environment"* (S.T., 38, Sibiu), *"with stereotypes and old-fashioned thinking - condemning us that instead of taking care of the children and the husband who brings home money, we are looking after businesses and money, not after the saucepan"* (A.B., 27, Suceava). Moreover, *"although many businesswomen are mothers, this is not brought forward, on the contrary, it is diminished in order not to show weakness"* (E.A. 33, Bucharest); *"The general attitude is a suspicious one and a little discriminatory..."* (M.A., 46, Bârlad); *"Mother entrepreneurs are often confused with people who do something funny while the baby is asleep to feel useful"* (N.I., 31, Alexandria); *"I would like to convince the world that entrepreneur mothers are responsible, serious women, that deliver quality products and services"* (L.T., 40, Bacău).

Exploring the characteristics of the motherhood status in relation to the launch of the business was a key point of this study. According to the data, mother entrepreneurs started their businesses no sooner than 6 months after their birth, but this time varies for each mother, as some mothers have started their businesses only after their children have grown up. Often the idea of building something on their own started on prenatal leave, either because of the desire to experience something new, either due to an attempt to *"fill up the free time which I was not used to"* (P.F., 28, Deva).

In our attempt to study how mompreneurs relate to entrepreneurial success, we included in the research questions related to business specificity, number of employees, legal form. Our research revealed that mompreneurs are especially dedicated to small businesses or medium-sized businesses because they can thus fulfill their family-work responsibilities this way. They have between 2 and 9 employees. Each entrepreneur has its own perception of the importance of success. Some look outward, measuring success through traditional business parameters (income, customer satisfaction, loyalty etc.); others use qualitative criteria that reflect self-esteem. However, mothers measure success differently from men (who rather think about job creation, profitability) because of their motivation, as we find out in our study, it is not purely economic, but personal: such as the desire for independence, to follow their passion, the desire for self-fulfillment etc.

Entrepreneurial success, according to the interviewed mothers, consists in the freedom to support yourself from pursuing a passion, trusting your road to success, work, perseverance, innovation (*"high-quality products, customer satisfaction, impeccable execution, fair prices, and customer satisfaction are factors that ensure long-term success"*, L.I., 39, Timișoara). Mothers are recognized for their involvement in the delivery of services or products (*"I dedicate myself to every client as if they were my only client"* - P.F., 28, Deva), succeeding where many big companies do not: an exceptional customer service. Self-confidence and work satisfaction are also important parameters in measuring success. Another important part of success is building relationships with customers, community members, and other businesses. Networking between mother entrepreneurs is also a source and a resource for them. Community support is very important to mothers, it is the place where *"you can affirm yourself outside the business, within a community"* (E.B., 48, Miercurea Ciuc).

Furthermore, the researchers wanted to identify the extent to which entrepreneurial success interferes with success as a mother, which is why we have emphasized on the exercise of this double role. Interviews with entrepreneurial mothers revealed that success is subjective and that although they are interested in financial profit, this is not

their main purpose, but the balance between the roles is crucial. From mothers' answers, we could identify three main factors that help balance the dual role: the family - the help of partners, grandparents, uncles, aunts; the community of mother entrepreneurs ("*I have no one, but to the online community of mothers*" (L.T., 40, Bacău), and factors that derive from personal skills ("*Balance comes from the fact that I am a very well organized person, who knows how to prioritize their activities very well*" - N.M., 31, Buzău; "*Balance comes from chaos, if you're struggling with chaos means you're doing something*" - D.L., 29, Gherla).

The following questions aimed to identify the internal and external factors that might influence the mompreneurs community. Internal factors refer, first of all, to the affiliation of entrepreneurial mothers to groups dedicated to them, to participation in conferences or training addressed to them, but also to building their image within the group through the specifics that the role of mother brings to the status of an entrepreneur. External factors portray the external image reflected in society, the social perceptions, and thus the advantages or disadvantages they face because of the status of mother entrepreneur. We look back at the internal factors and note the particular importance that affiliation to the entrepreneur mothers' group has on these women: "*Yes, with the help of the Work at Home Moms community I can say that we have found real help in networking especially through real and constructive feedback we give and receive from each other*" (I.B., 55, Bucharest). The activity of the mothers in these groups includes networking, promotion within the group, mutual support, exchange of opinions and feedbacks related to products or services, or simply advice for various situations that might arise. However, many mothers admit they are not affiliated with these groups, or that they do not participate in training addressed to them because "*until recently I did not even know about the existence of these groups*" (L.I., 39, Timișoara).

The views on the socio-cultural context and the opening of the market to the entrepreneurial mothers are of a positive overall tone, and the hope of a prosperous future is dominant: "*I think we are mompreneurs at the right timing, culturally speaking, and I trust that things will get even better in the future*" (P.O., 34, Constanta); "*I think that society is beginning to be more open in this regard and to support as much as possible the mother entrepreneurs by promoting them and buying the products they make*" (N.M., 31, Buzău); "*We have some advantage when we have clients who will be future parents or have children already because they can empathize with our efforts*" (B.R., 40, Bucharest).

In terms of financing modalities and the role of state institutions in business development, entrepreneurial mothers prefer to use their own economies and self-finance themselves, believing that "*the Government has no contribution in supporting entrepreneurs, the bureaucracy is burdensome and the tax measures are inappropriate for starting a business: the taxes are too high... I really understand the mothers who want to work "underground" ... it is almost impossible to sustain your business, at least in the first year...*" (L.T., 40, Bacău); "*Although I filed financing requests, my projects were all rejected. The reason: reticence towards art as a prosperous business. The government has no contribution to our success... cannot count on it even for free advice...*" (M.A., 46, Bârlad); "*I prefer to call on specialists to teach me to grow my business because I do not trust government or European funds at all*" (E.B., 48, Miercurea Ciuc).

Although there is an upward trend towards supporting female entrepreneurship, the legislative measures are yet inexistent. The proposals of mothers related to changes in

legislation are varied and most of them concern the economic area: *"I propose the creation of a special legal form, with free of charge establishment and free of taxes for one year; it would be like a probationary year in which you can test the market, invest money in promotion, advertising, in events that make you known..."* (D.L., 29, Gherla); *"Mompreneurs could be supported by granting special credits, for example"* (P.O., 34, Constanta); *"Legislation that allows exposure of creations (products) without the imposition of a legal form would give a greater chance to increase the community of entrepreneur mothers"* (I.B., 55, Bucharest); *"A lower tax on profit would also be helpful"* (N.M., 31, Buzău); *"The state should provide us with the possibility to authorize us more easily, provide the option of submitting requests/ necessary documents online, provide free counseling for mothers, and some tax incentives for the first year of activity..."* (B.P., 36, Iași); *"First of all, I would try to boost entrepreneurship among mothers by providing benefits, cutting taxes, facilitating discussions between institutions in this sector because a state-supported mother could produce as much value as 10 employees"* (B.R., 40, Bucharest). An important step would be *"to set up NGOs to support mother entrepreneurs and address the legislative issues on their behalf"* (E.B., 48, Miercurea Ciuc).

By asking them to define themselves as mompreneurs, the participants in the interview defined mompreneurship as *"a fulfilled dream", "the proof that dreams come true", "the chance to work out of passion and to teach the children to be independent", "a challenge", "a quest of originality and perseverance", "a lifestyle", "a woman fulfilled on all plans", "the courage to do something for the family"*.

The recommendations of entrepreneurial mothers to future entrepreneurial mothers put emphasis on this quality of being a parent before being an entrepreneur: *"we shall not forget that children are more important than any business. A business can be replenished but the time we do not spend with our little ones cannot be recovered"* (N.I., 31, Alexandria), but also highlight the efforts that come with this dual role – *"At this moment, the mompreneurship for me is, on one hand, the joy to spend time with my little girl, and on the other hand, the many white nights of work. There are times when I'm thinking about giving up, just imagining myself knocking on a multinational company's door, but then I remember that this is the only way to have time for my little girl"* (B.P., 36, Iasi).

B. The institutional support provided to the mompreneurs. Analysis of data obtained through interviews with representatives of some organizations in the field

For a complete picture on mompreneurship, we added a second field research to the study, having as interviewees with the representatives of some of the institutions involved in the development of this subgroup of entrepreneurs. The importance of this study is given by the objective, external perspective on the group of entrepreneurial mothers, exploring how their role in the society is seen from the outer world, as well as their importance in the creative sector. Also, the study aims to identify the measures taken in the Romanian space to encourage them.

The first part of the interview addressed to institutional representatives covered the subject of the increased interest in the creative industries and the factors that encourage women to start their businesses in this sector. Although Romania is still in its early stage of development of creative industries, *"changing the focus of funding programs from agriculture to creative industries has an important role in opening up to the international*

markets" (Start-Up Nation). Women are particularly encouraged to apply because these industries benefit them: *"the times when entrepreneurs were encouraged to have technical knowledge, especially from the real sciences have fallen, not that I imply that women are not good in this field, not at all - we have some great women engineers, hats off to them... but all of the business ideas from this sector were overwhelmed by heavy production, physical effort, and industrialization... Let's work with our heads as well"* (Chamber of Commerce). Among the factors that encourage women to build start-ups in the creative industries, the respondents named previous experience in the chosen domain, the desire to have a self-made career, the possibilities of self-financing, and the opportunity to call experienced consultants and trainers: *"Anyone can succeed, the market is prosperous, opportunities are everywhere... all we have to do, culturally speaking, is to get rid of this "we know them all" attitude and call on specialists when it's the case. If the Romanians learn to make long-term strategies and seek specialized help, a large part of the bankrupt companies will be saved"* (Level Up Vision). The major impediment, on the other hand, would be the *"tangled, confusing and unclear bureaucracy"* noted the representatives. Happy Moms Association draws attention to psychological factors such as the fear of failure, common among women who are prone to think this way regarding economical endeavors because of early socialization of their role in society.

The following questions explored the differences between female entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial mothers, and therefore the recognition and confirmation of the existence of this subgroup of female entrepreneurs in society. The representatives of the institutions take into consideration the statistics that show an *"increase in the birth rate, which leads to an increase in the number of mothers, which logically leads to a sabbatical period and implicitly to a professional reinvention and changes in the field of interests regarding the family/children versus the career relationship"* (Happy Moms). Also, the *"increased interest in documented parenting (reading blogs, books, attending courses and workshops) entails greater involvement of parents in family life, especially of mothers, who want to be with their children through their most important moments of their lives, to give them all the necessary attention for a better development, all reasons for which they are no longer interested in selling their time and energy to a corporation. Investing in a business that allows both time flexibility and consistent revenue seems the right choice for them at the moment"* (Level Up Vision).

The socio-demographic profile of mompreneurs as a distinct group of entrepreneurs, as described by the interviewed representatives, is the following: women aged 29-40, with higher education, urban, with a career of at least 5 years old, who already have a domain they can exploit in their own business development, who are open to the online environment for both business growth and promotional purposes (unlike men, for example), especially concerned with health, culture, parenting, well-being, interested either in developing businesses in the crafts area of handmade products creation in the north-west of the country, and in creating businesses in the service sector, in the southern area of Romania.

Exploring the phenomenon of mompreneurship in the Romanian space from the perspective of its institutionalization, we found that *"there are three tendencies among mompreneurs: (1) the copying, when the mothers stubbornly start a business without having an idea, a mission or purpose, just because they saw other mothers succeeding in the field; (2) the investments, a reckless action characteristic to mothers who just quit their*

corporate job, who have a certain amount of knowledge and a higher level of resources, which is why they engage in businesses that require large amounts of capital for initiation, risking large debts without market testing or experience in business management and (3) businesses that start from passions, from their own values, hobbies - these are the authentic ones who have a stable, organic growth” (Level Up Vision); “The phenomenon of mompreneurship is not yet recognized as such, but considering the avalanche of news, reports, programs, articles that have appeared in the past few months, it becomes more and more popular, shaping and strengthening the public image and the profile of the mompreneurs” (Happy Moms); “I think it is a more controversial phenomenon in urban areas, I believe that rural areas are completely lacking the culture of mompreneurship” (Chamber of Commerce); “Although not yet recognized as such, the advantage of this subgroup, from the client’s perspective, is important - moms are regarded as responsible, empathetic, involved business people, warmer and nicer than traditional firms adopting a more masculine, colder culture and style. However, the size of the phenomenon is increasing, although there is greater coagulation in Cluj, signs of development begin to appear all over the country” (Level Up Vision).

The study addressed to representatives of the various institutions interested in the entrepreneurial mothers' group revealed an *intermediate* way of measuring business success: the ratio between economic profitability and familial success.

The involvement of institutions in the development of this phenomenon was a key point of this study. The questions were derived from a specific research objective, namely to identify the measures taken to support this subgroup of female entrepreneurs from a socio-cultural and economic point of view. Among the activities to facilitate the process of setting up a business by encouraging their entrepreneurial spirit, we found interesting initiatives, such as the launching of projects that prepare them for the competitive market. Take for example the *“Entrepreneurial Mothers School, which provides training, mentoring and advertising services. In 2 years, we grew 10 businesses and we have already started our third edition in March” (Happy Moms-Business Mom)*. Also, organizing motivational conferences or networking sessions for mothers is an important aspect to their success: *“Our goal is to simplify the process by which anyone can access these funds. We provide information, support, counselors, financial support in our programs, mentoring, even moral support by encouraging ideas [...] we are open to everything new and mothers turn out to be a breath of fresh air in this business area” (Start-Up Nation)*. Level Up Vision offers specialized business and branding consulting services, from documentation preparation to business or communication strategies: *“Our help contributes to organic business development through intervention on production and promotion, but that is not all that we do. Our goal is to leave a footprint. We are working on building the “Mamprenoare stamp” for the products so they can be easily recognized (inspired by the Made in Romania example), a symbol to draw attention to this subgroup of entrepreneurs dedicated to both businesses and children, who want to provide education and a prosperous environment for their families and communities [...] anyone can empathize with this, and we believe in the success of this project [...], but there is a need for consensus and clustering of groups to promote state support and interest to this phenomenon” (Level Up Vision)*.

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to create a profile of mompreneurs and to identify the main characteristics of entrepreneur mothers from the creative industries in Romania, by investigating the motivations of starting a business, the favorable factors and the obstacles they've encountered, as well as the economic and social context in which they find themselves. The two studies we undertake had a complementary role in building a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon: the self-portrait of entrepreneurial mothers (A), and the institutional support provided to mompreneurs (B).

The context of the research has amplified the need to study this phenomenon at an early stage. Although the number of women starting a business is much higher than any demographic group, and the number of mompreneurs is steadily increasing in the Romanian space, research on entrepreneurial mothers is still limited. Our study aims to identify the characteristics of entrepreneurial mothers as perceived inside and outside the group in order to outline the main aspects of the phenomenon, from the social and economic perspective, as well as from the cultural perspective. And, most importantly, prepare the ground for future research that targets this subgroup of female entrepreneurs.

The objectives of the first study aimed to create the self-portrait of entrepreneurial mothers by identifying the reasons for starting a business in the creative industries, the favorable factors and barriers to business development, by exploring the characteristics of the mother's status in relation to the launch of the business, as well as the opinions on government support, and the social and cultural context. In relation to the specific objectives, our study revealed that women face a higher degree of complexity when making career decisions after childbirth as they try to balance childcare activities with work and home care. Under the conditions of exercising these multiple roles, their limits translate into space and temporal limits, and the consequences of choices in social and economic constraints. For this reason, the influence of the socio-cultural context is also reflected in their motivations as it influences the values and attitudes of the mothers, their self-confidence, and ultimately affects their interests and their choices. The push and pull motivations and factors that have triggered a business launch in the creative industries lead to different perceptions of success. Our results show that mompreneurs' perceptions on entrepreneurial success derive from family background, from the values to which they adhere, their social experiences, and are tied to their motivations to start a business. As our lot was comprised by a small number of entrepreneurs to support our qualitative research, a quantitative analysis could help get more complex responses to the phenomenon.

One of the most important factors in starting a business is, according to our studies, the influence of family and society in general on women who want to open a business. A family that understands the economic value of entrepreneurship will encourage mothers to be interested in pursuing this endeavor. The community also has an important role to play in starting a business and in developing entrepreneurship by delivering benefits, feedback, inspiration, and networking among moms. However, entrepreneurial education must not be neglected. This has a special role to play in developing entrepreneurial skills and competences. The effectiveness of training programs, counseling or motivation conferences has been demonstrated by the results presented by the institutions participating in the research.

The perceived barriers are primarily related to financing, taxation, and bureaucracy. In the first phase, mompreneurs have a greater chance of developing their business in an informal context, free of taxes or administrative rules that limit the social capital needed to develop the business. Socio-cultural factors are important not only in motivating entrepreneurial mothers to start a business but also in removing the social and cultural barriers they face. These include the lack of market credibility, mentalities that do not support gender equality, and traditional customs that focus on the role of mothers for taking care of the family and home.

The second study has contributed to shaping a more comprehensive picture of entrepreneurial mothers by investigating the external points of view on this group of entrepreneurs, namely belonging to the representatives of the institutions that support mompreneurship. The specific objectives were to identify the main characteristics of the entrepreneurial mothers in the creative industries, to analyze the external factors that influence the entrepreneur mothers in starting a business and to identify the measures taken to support this subgroup of female entrepreneurs. Unrecognizing the group of mompreneurs as such, underestimating them or canceling their entrepreneurial qualities because of the "mother" status they have, are attitudes often encountered by entrepreneur mothers. However, the growing interest of the institutions supporting this group of entrepreneurs, their involvement in promoting the image of mompreneurs, encouraging and facilitating actions aimed at educating mothers to start their businesses redirects the socio-cultural discourse and economic goals. Moreover, the media and the educational system play a particularly important role in creating the image of entrepreneurial mothers and can avoid the formation of negative attitudes in the future.

Although the group of mompreneurs is part of the homogeneous group of Romanian entrepreneurs, our study revealed that the neutral reporting of the state to this subgroup of entrepreneurs is not beneficial. Decision makers and experts should consider evaluating alternative policies for tolling small and medium businesses, modifying the design of an application for funding projects, as well as providing technical support and ensuring a healthy business environment based on equal opportunities. National policies play an important role in business development and have a critical role in facilitating success or in business failure. Under the obsolete legislation and taxation of our country, an interesting subject to study arises: how would the Romanian entrepreneurial mothers in the diaspora relate to entrepreneurship in the creative industries, eliminating the economic or socio-cultural barriers specific to the countries with a lower tradition in entrepreneurship, such as Romania. Moreover, as the socio-demographic data presented by the representatives of the institutions that participated in the study reveal, the mompreneurs are mainly from the urban area. It would be interesting to study why this phenomenon does not spread in rural areas, especially that as we have seen in previous studies, mother's qualities can greatly prepare entrepreneurial skills.

The complementarity of the studies has allowed a thorough analysis of the phenomenon through a comparative analysis that complemented the image of entrepreneurial mothers, first as they perceive and describe themselves, with the understanding of the motivations and the correlation between the expectations and fulfillment regarding

their double role, and secondly as viewed by the representatives of the institutions in the field from outside the group.

Thus, after analyzing the collected data, we aimed a comparative interpretation from the two undertaken studies, delineating the main characteristics of the entrepreneurial mothers from the creative industries in the Romanian space. This comparative analysis served as a base for outlining the profile of the mompreneurs as it resulted from the research. The first step was to delimit this subgroup of entrepreneurs through socio-demographic characteristics: 25-40-years-old, urban area provenience, generally women with higher education and careers in diverse areas - banking, human resources, medical, advertising, marketing, psychology etc. This information lead to a broader area of interests and skills of the mothers: professional experience in managing clients, understanding the needs in the sectors they have worked in, orientation towards the creative industries in terms of increased interest in health, culture, parenting, wellbeing, online marketing. Regarding the specifics of their business, the studies show that mompreneurs from Transylvanian and northwestern parts of the country are more focused on the production businesses: handicrafts, handmade products, Romanian products, personalized products etc., while those located in the southern area prefer businesses in the services sector: therapy, consultancy, various services focused on child development or parenting (for example, financial parenting coaching or baby sleeping counseling), event planning, make-up or styling courses etc. Next, we analyzed the phenomenon of mompreneurship from the perspective of the lifestyle assumed by the mothers, the psychological, emotional and behavioral characteristics deriving from this status. In this context, entrepreneurial mothers describe *mompreneurship as a lifestyle, a state of freedom they are fortunate to have* (compared to past generations), a phenomenon that emphasizes the *family life-professional development balance, a dream came true, an accomplished woman on all levels*, a phenomenon with a growing network, the opportunity to do what you want, *or the best choice for mothers*.

This study aims, on one hand, to create a fresh theoretical framework, both by creating original correlations between the studied basic concepts and by implementing new ways of analyzing this phenomenon from a social, cultural, economic point of view. On the other hand, this paper initiates the bases for future studies on mompreneurship through insights and results. Quantitative studies at the national and European level are expected to be undertaken in order to analyze, validate or extend our observations. Another purpose of this study is to draw the attention of authorities in the field to encourage and support the businesses belonging to mothers in the creative industries, taking into account the results of our study when creating new public policies for childcare support, maternity leave, or when implementing new financial regulations over small and medium enterprises.

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