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Mothers: Their changing role in the family business

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bettertogether

Purpose

- Focus on real life, with a research backing about the changing role.
- What roles? What does past research tell us about this?
- What roles do mothers in family businesses have now?
- What is changing?

The Roles Women Play

- **Wife**
- **Mother**
- **Stepmother**
- **Daughter**
- **Daughter-in-law**
- **Sister**
- **Sister-in Law**
- **Sole owner?**



Source: Women in Family Business: What Keeps You Up At Night?
Annino, P. M. et al [2009]

In the past, what has the role of women been in family businesses?

- **Women integrate into the FB in order to help – accidental involvement**
- **Opportunities to access traditionally masculine industry**
- **Secretarial, pay clerk or billing clerk functions**
- **Women work in FB, also outside the FB, and are in charge of sound functioning of the family**
- **Activity of women is different paid and unpaid tasks.**
- **Women more likely to take part where business was founded by the husband**

(*

Rowe & Hong, 2000;Dumas,1998, 1992) Rowe & Hong, 2000; Cappuyns ,2007; Lee et al.; 2006)

Women as leaders, managers?

- **Women are increasingly represented in managerial positions**
- **Considered as potential successor**
- **Founders – neglected area of study**
- **Difficulties in developing managerial careers – underrepresented**
- **Occupational segregation and stereotypical roles**
- **Subtle roles**
- **Non recognition of contribution of women**

*(Cromie & O'Sullivan, 1999; Curimbaba, 2002; Dumas, 1992, 1998; Frishkoff & Brown, 1993; Brush, 1992; Cadieux et al., 2002; Cole, 1997; Vera & Dean, 2005).

Focus of research so far...

- Invisible women
- Role of women in transitions
- Mother as the buffer

Types of Invisibility

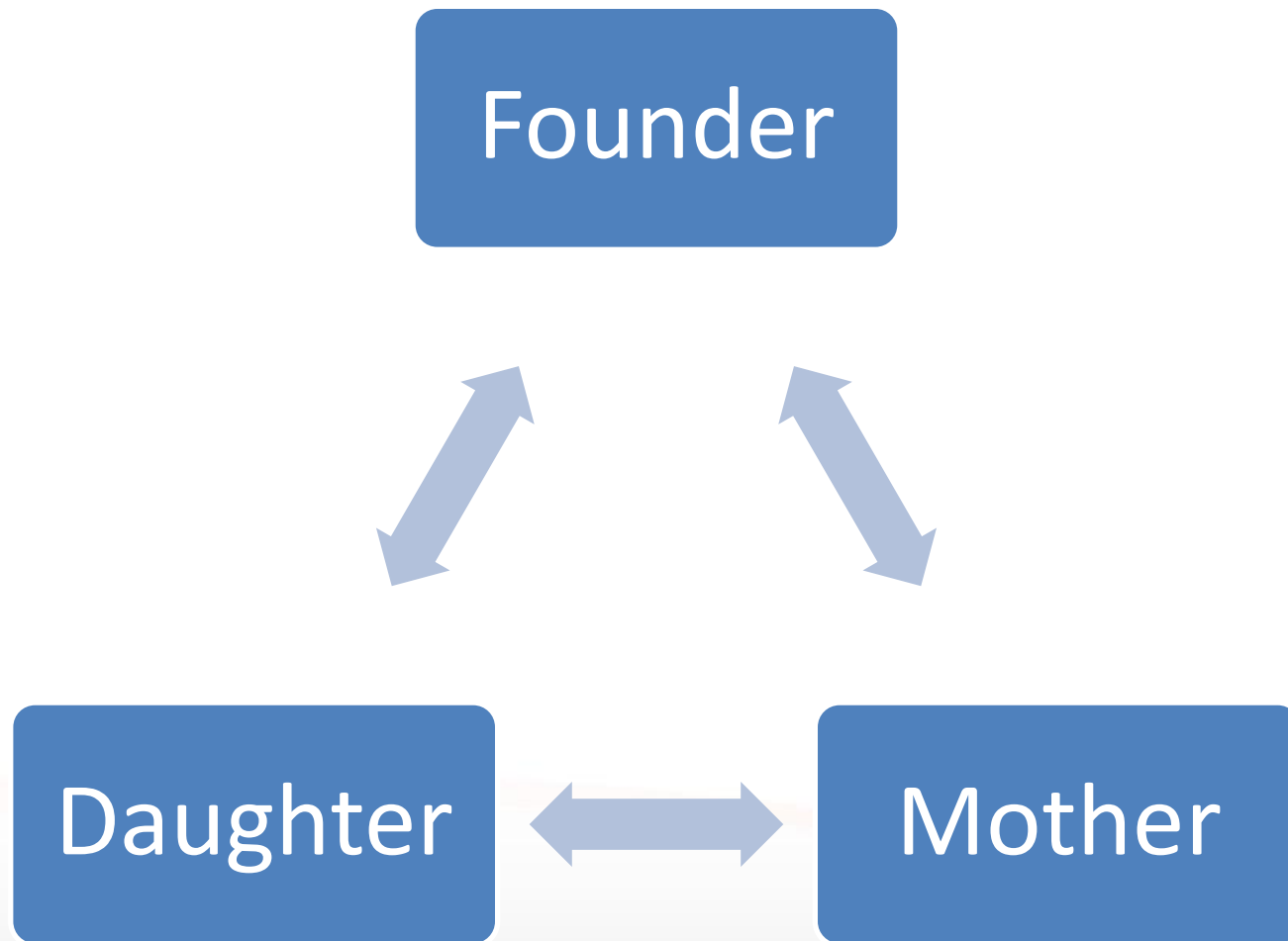
- **Physical Visibility** [ranges from daily presence to complete absence]
- **'Influence' Visibility** [Family Systems Theory]
- **Making the Invisible Visible**
 - Assessment
 - Intervention

Gillis-Donovan and Moynihan-Bradt [1990], Martinez-Jimenez [2009]

Roles of women in transitions

- Very little research focused on female involvement in family firms during critical period of generational transition
- Some mention of maternal involvement; however, this is in relation specifically to daughters, and ensuing triangular relationship that emerges between founder, successor (daughter) and mother

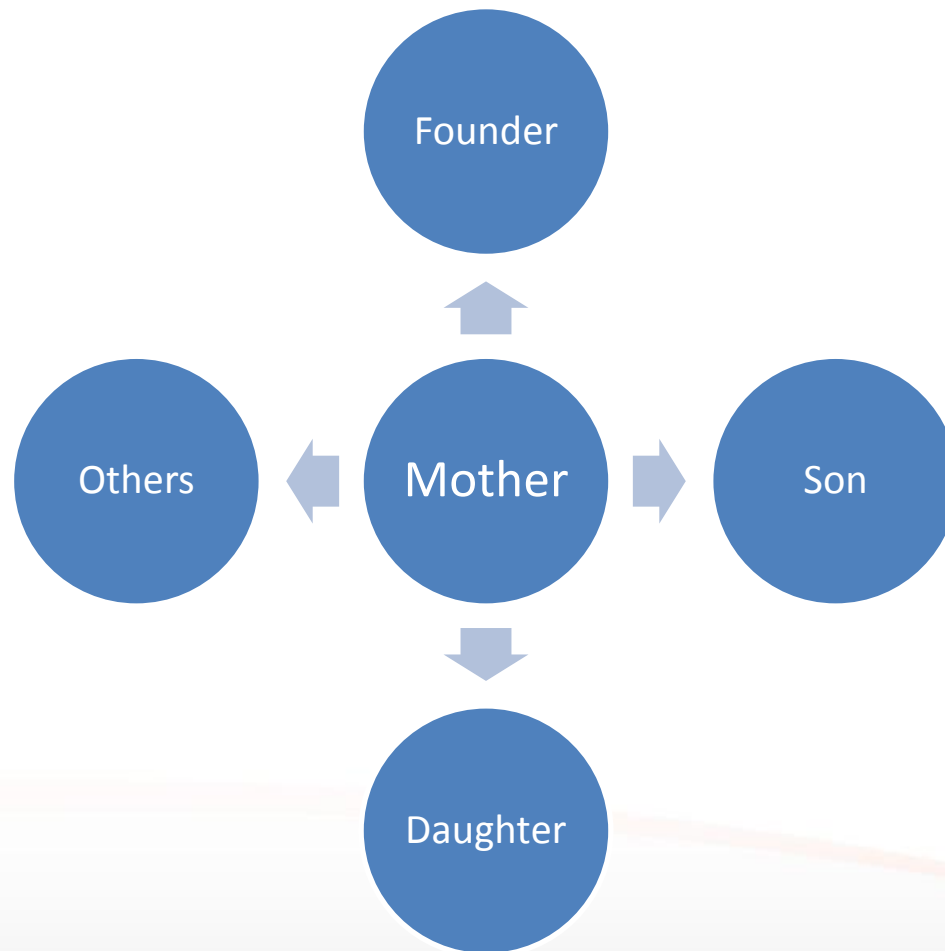
Research focus so far...



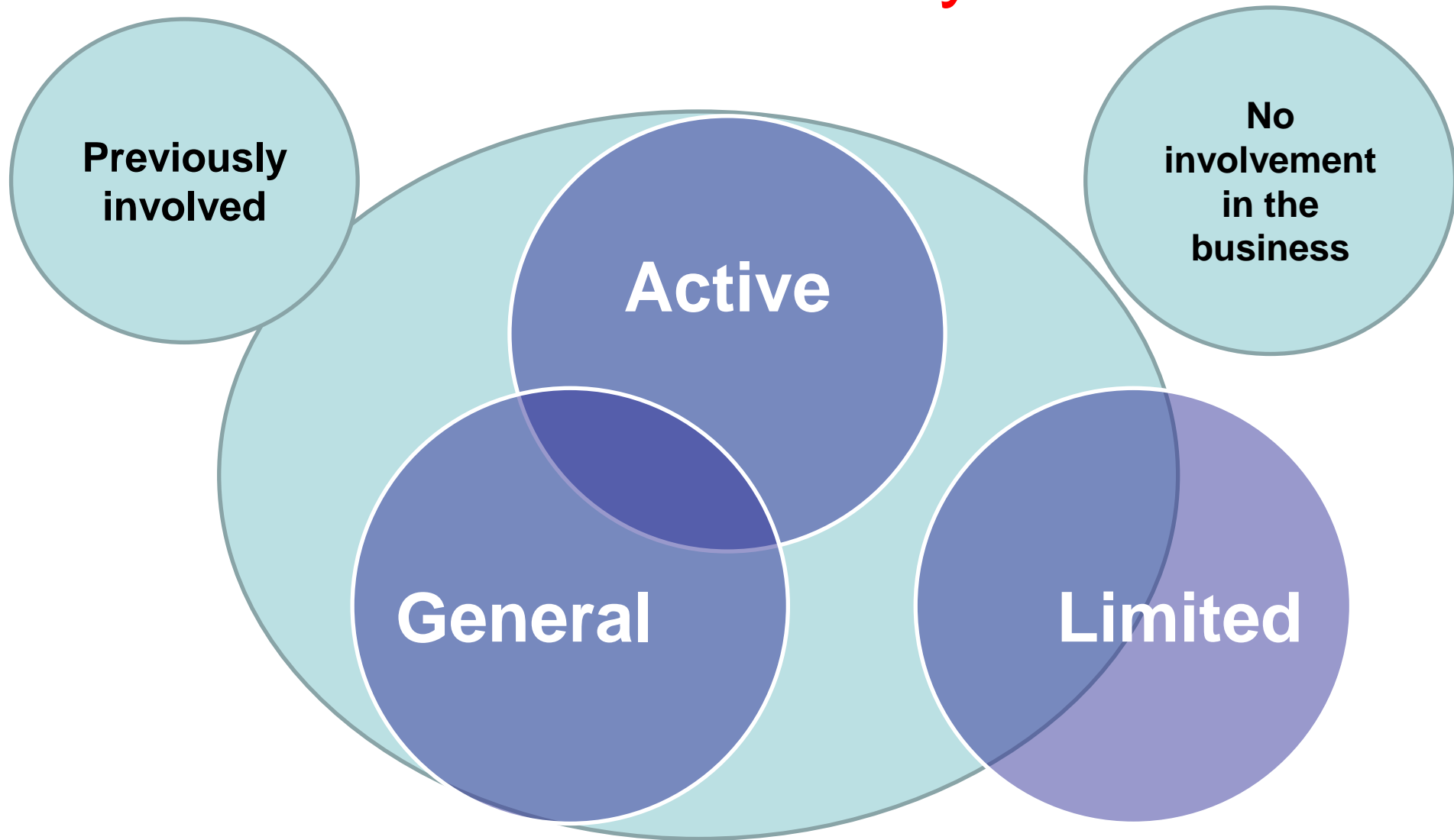
Do we need to re-vision the role of mothers in family businesses?

- Considering role of mother as a constructive force during generational transition
- Considering the maternal role as integral to development of transition arrangements

Research focus in future?



Involvement in the family business



Mother as 'buffer'

- Role of buffer between different generations
- Reinforces hidden nature of maternal involvement in familial dynamics
- Result this is a status often unrecognized by family members
- Source: Janjuha-Jivraj (2004)

The go-between - differences in perceptions

- ***‘She [wife] doesn’t get involved with the business too often, sometimes would discuss things with her and she would come to me, but that doesn’t happen now’***
- ***‘She [mother] doesn’t get involved in the business, there are enough of us involved already!’***

- *Early on she (wife) helped a lot. She wrote a recipe book and attended exhibitions. Now she has no active involvement in the business, but I discuss products and ideas with her .*
- *My mother was initially a very strong support to my father, but she has become very ill recently. When we were re-branding the product she went on roadshows to exhibitions, such as The Ideal Home Show, and worked with an advertising agency to produce a cookbook as a way of introducing our ingredients and products.*

- *Dads says: She [my wife] has an influence. When Sally wants something, she talks to me. I usually give in.*
- *Yeah, Dad doesn't mind. It's more a like habit now. Now very rarely do I use my mum, at first it was a lot. The way me and my dad are now, we really can speak to each other about business matters. It's not like there's this barrier like there used to be.*

What relevance to advisors?

- Success of mother's intervention depends on her 'invisibility' amongst active family members.
- Advisors need to be aware of this fundamental player when providing help to businesses during transitions and succession.

So one role for mother is as a buffer between family members....

- Is that the sum of their roles?
- What is changing in the family?
- What does the future hold?

The Roles Women Play...+

- **Wife**
- **Mother, Stepmother**
- **Daughter, Daughter-in-law**
- **Sister, Sister-in Law**
- **Sole owner?**

- **Grandmother, Step-Grandmother**
- **Cousin, Step-Cousin**

Challenges arising from these?

- Grandmothers – seeing grandchildren if relationships break down
- They are often fearful of losing their grandchildren and break up of family
- Mothers often find themselves in the peacemaker role, the mediator role and are often torn between loyalty to their partner/husband and the kids.

How is the role of the mother changing in the family business?



http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.businesswings.co.uk/uploads/Working-mum.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.businesswings.co.uk/articles/Unemployed-mums-keen-on-business&usg=__3gl7RfIT-2xATv0LVYFsgOq_mml=&h=344&w=425&sz=86&hl=en&start=71&zoom=1&tbnid=ksM3qmpqwwkNCM:&tbnh=119&tbnw=151&prev=/images%3Fq%3Di mages%2Bor%2Bmothers%2Bin%2Bbusiness%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26rls%3Dcom.microsoft:en-gb:IE-SearchBox%26biw%3D1341%26bih%3D558%26tbs%3Disch:1&um=1&itbs=1&iact=rc&dur=1094&ei=BDasTNnBGouRjAfcqNy4Bw&oei=1zWsTMGKDcK7jAfiqYDMCw&esq=2&page=4&ndsp=21&ved=1t:429,r:11,s:71&tx=75&ty=70

Changing age of motherhood

- **In 2009** there were 706,248 live births in England and Wales.
- 114,288 of these were to women aged 35-39
- 26,976 births to women over 40, compared to 14,252 births in 1999.
- The birth rate for women aged 40 and over increased fastest, by over 6% from 11.5 per 1,000 women aged 40-44 in 2005, to 12.2 in 2006.

Rise in Mumpreneurs!

1 in 10 mums say starting a business is a dream (BT Business)

- 62 % said choosing hours they work was reason they wanted to start-up
- 50 % wanted a better work/life balance
- 38 % liked the idea of being their own boss

Summary

- Women have power as drivers of economic growth
- Women are choosing to become mothers later in life – what does this mean for FBs?
- A dearth of studies which look at women in family businesses in UK – we need to find out more about the experience of women in family businesses.
- Many research gaps – power; board rooms; theoretical frameworks; generational shifts; changing roles and status; contribution that women in leadership make to performance. No shortage of areas to explore.
- What should we researching?

- Tabitha Potts, mum-of-two and owner of kids clothing site Mimimyne, says:
‘I know many women that are balancing their family life, run their own business and are the major bread winner. The internet has opened up a world of new business possibilities.’
- Of the 128 mothers aspiring to start-up, one-third said they want to run a company from home

The final word from a mother...

The mission statement of my company, Kathy Ireland Worldwide, is to find solutions for families, especially busy moms. I'm reaching out to busy moms because that's what I am. That's what I know, and I know this woman has been underserved.

Kathy Ireland – kathyireland.com

*

http://www.woopidoo.com/business_quotes/woman-quotes.htm

Thank you

Any questions?

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