

The role of the entrepreneur's family in choosing a career path¹

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The article is focused on the role of family as one of the main institutions of socialisation in the selection and implementation of the entrepreneurs' life trajectories. The analysis is presented using data from 16 biographical interviews with young entrepreneurs (18 to 30 years old). Here is discussed the role of family in choosing and realizing the informants' life strategies. The theoretical framework of the study is based on the results of the project «The Social Mobility Age in Russia»². Tactics devised by V. Semenova, form the basis of the analysis of the life trajectories of young entrepreneurs. The study concludes that parents' support promotes the adoption of the mobility strategy, characterized by frequent work changes and choosing work for enjoyment. By contrast, in the stability strategy, informants defend their own views despite the lack of family support.

Key words: family, entrepreneurship, life trajectories, the adaptation process, changing values, biographical choice, biographical interviews, the qualitative methodology

Entrepreneurship as a phenomenon in Russia

The transition from the planned to the market economy was associated with a transformation of the values of the Soviet «parents» to «capitalistic» values, which are characterized by individualistic attitudes and the money cult. Labor market changes have affected Russians' life strategies, forcing them to adapt not only to the narrowing opportunities, but also to reconsider their views and values. This period, which is known as the adaptation period, has led to an increase in the number of small businesses in Russia and has laid the foundation for the phenomenon of entrepreneurship in our country.

Traditional collectivism, stability and «mass» psychology, leading in the Soviet period, were rapidly supplanted by the individualistic and capitalistic ideas. That period had been described

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² We use the materials from the archive of the division of social change research using qualitative methods — ISRAS, which are obtained as a part of the biographical project «The Social Mobility Age in Russia». It covers the life span of three Russian generations from different social groups, which makes it possible to compare the informants' life trajectories in different historical periods in Russia. The study was conducted in the period from 1985 to 1993. The theoretical framework of the research was based on V. Semenova's chapter which was dedicated to the study of past generation entrepreneurs' life stories.

by V. Semenova (Semenova, 1996) as an «adaptation» period: not every Russian was ready to lose the previous guarantees of stability and state security.

Entrepreneurship as phenomenon was formed in Russia only at the end of the 20th century (Chepurenko, 2012). The adaptive behavior during the crisis period led to a sharp increase in small businesses. People who adapted quickly in the changing labor market conditions and adopted new individualistic values succeeded in business and began rapidly getting rich. The bulk of the people whose upbringing and lifestyle contradicted capitalist views were suspicious about the changes taking place in society. During that time, a negative image of the entrepreneur as a person of anti-state, anti-social, mercantile and rational was formed. These features contradict the ethnic values of Russians (Chepurenko, 2001).

A transformation of values was observed not only in the parents' generation, but also among today's youth who were born in the period of instability (1980–1990-ies.). Their basic attitudes towards entrepreneurship were formed in the family. Nevertheless, important solutions were formulated as a result of their own experience. Thus, the presence of successful entrepreneurs in their close surrounding offers them the ability to see how market relations operate.

The opportunity to earn more, the fulfillment of ambitions and independence were attractive, even though they contradicted the traditional views and family norms (Djankov, 2005).

The transition from one generation to another has led to a shift from secular-rational values, characterized by the presence of authority and the cult of rationality, order and security, to the values of self-expression. The sociologist R. Inglehart called this phenomenon as «post-modernization» (Inglehart, Welzel, 2011)³. If the parents' generation valued those qualities because they were the basis for survival, the new generation explored new horizons: the ideas of self-knowledge, civic engagement and tolerance were actively developing (Rudnev, 2011). Since social development is intended to increase human choice — «the desire for freedom is, by definition, inherent in man» (Inglehart, 2011, p. 21), — the transition to the market economy, as well as the development of entrepreneurship in Russia can be considered engines of social progress.

The individual's adaptation in a changing society: the first entrepreneurs (data from the project «The Social Mobility Age in Russia» 1985–1993)

Normative-value aspect of adaptive behaviour is the key in the study of entrepreneurial potential. This occupation requires the existence of certain personal characteristics, such as «business gumption, the propensity for innovation, organizational skills, high sense of responsibility, a sense of thrift and economy, the ability to risk, energy and strength of will» (Smirnov, 2005). The sociologist T. Zaslavskaya denotes the traits of the Russian businessman: «Today, the greatest chances to get rich have Russians who do not necessarily have high qualifications, knowledge, energy and talent but the presence of beneficial contacts, people who are also characterized as cheeky with the disregard for the law and morality» (Zaslavskaya, 1995, p. 18). Thus, the «successful» entrepreneur must have both human (knowledge and skills) and social capital (connections and contacts). Based on the informants' life strategies, which are

³ In the work «Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy», Inglehart and Welzel (2005), describe the theory of two shifts, which is based on the differences among three generations. The first of them, people who grew up with a lack of basic goods (food and safety), is characterized by the value of survival. The second generation, which already had these goods, began to appreciate order, authority and rationality. Children of these people's generation being provided with everything necessary for life, started to focus on self-development, environmental protection and the ideas of civic engagement. Inglehart called them — «modernization» and «postmodernization» respectively.



identified within the project «The Social Mobility Age in Russia», we observe «the role of families in the adaptation process.

According to the 40 in-depth interviews with respondents from the Tula (10 people), Kurgan (10 people) and the Moscow Region (20), two key trends in their adaptive behaviour were noted: the mobility and the stability strategies (table 1). Successful adaptation is considered as the acceptance of new self-expression values, characterized by individualism, competition and profit orientation (Semenova, 1996).

Table 1

Informant's life strategies

Strategies	Tactics	The informant's ratio	The role of family	Adaptation process
Mobility	Creative	It is important to find a fulfilling job, the financial aspect goes by the wayside	Assuming things can be done in a child like way	Adaptation is not always successful in a search for self
Stability	Conflict	Compromise (finding a balance: family versus personal goals)	Against important traditions and stability	The combination of old and new values — successful adaptation
	Returnable	Nonconformity to new market laws: it is important to feel support and be a contributor to society	Firmly establish values of solidarity and social protection in their children	An attempt is made, but the adaptation does not happen: a return to old values
	Waiting	Better to have less money but to take the honest route	Against potentially dishonest path	The adoption of only old values: adaptation does not happen

The creative type of life choices represents the first strategy: frequent job changes (sometimes 5–6 times), because the lack of demand for the informants' education in the market economy (musicians, composers, sport manager, etc.) and due to their personal characteristics (the ability to take risks, propensity for change and innovation). Parents usually do not impede their choice of creative specialties and allow them to search for their «own» way.

The adoption of new self-expression values was associated with the search for satisfying employment that would have brought not only material but also spiritual benefits. The adaptation process in this case often does not happen since professions, which bring financial stability as well as satisfaction (as in the case of a profession like seamstress), were difficult to find because of a lack of demand (e.g., music theorist).

«There is a growing contradiction between my profession as a musician and the job I am now forced to deal with. But a musician, especially a theoretician, in our country is deemed unnecessary. Such people simply are not needed. Have you noticed how many

musicians have left for the West in recent years, or have drunk themselves into oblivion, or simply left» (Igor)⁴.

Three tactics represent the stability strategy: conflict, return and expectant. It is successfully described by the psychology of «Simple soviet man» (Semenova, 1996, p. 402), where a guarantee of social security takes priority over an attempt to take risks and earn more money.

The conflict tactics, unlike the other two, involve a compromise in professional choice. Despite the fact that parents want their sons to choose a military career, none of them want to do so. The first son goes into the commercial sector, quarrels with his father, while another prefers «balancing» tactics. On the one hand, he was military three times a week carrying on the night shift and, on the other, — helping his brother to conduct his own business. In this case, adaptation occurs through the adoption of new social values without neglecting the traditional ones.

An attempt to make «fast money» in private institutions, which clash with the rules of competition, which an individual is unable to accept, is characterized as the return tactics. The concepts of solidarity, social security and mutual support are replaced by views of individualism and personal profit, which contradict the working class values, striving to be useful for society.

«I decided to come back to the factory and to my colleagues. You always know that everyone you ask for help will do so. Here everyone tries only for himself; take care of his own skin. ... Eventually all of us there (at the factory) build helicopters, which are needed for the whole country. There you feel needed. It would be better if they could pay more...» (Stepan).

In this case, adaptation will not happen. An attempt is made to adopt new views because of the workers' material needs, but it is rejected due to a different upbringing and the informant's social experience.

Expectant management is the most indicative tactic that holds conservative views in the professional field. Its typical representatives are military and intelligence (the first generation), for whom the acquired social status is more significant than the obtained material rewards.

This upbringing model is the most conservative and does not imply the adoption of new values. This affects the life choices of the next generation. Failure to accept the profession such as an entrepreneur happens «in absentia», on the ideological level: informants never dabbled in the private sector and do not want to change their habits. The environment, in which they grew up, formed a negative attitude towards entrepreneurship, emphasized its «unfair» and «greedy» character, which contradicts the family's status. In this case, adaptation will not happen.

«My parents always taught that being honest is the most important thing in life. My duty today is to teach children and I'm trying to do my best. ... I never deal with any sorts of private structures and prefer only the state trade. I just do not believe in them» (Tatyana).

Life strategies as mentioned above refer to the period from 1985 to 1993. Among 40 informants, just 10 belong to the mobile type of professional behavior, while the rest — the stable type, is characterized by the prevalence of traditional values in choosing a career path. The study which is conducted with the «new» generation of entrepreneurs — 16 informants aged 18 to 30 years (1980–1990), is intended to explain the changes in their life trajectories in terms of values transformation and the «new» upbringing model of future entrepreneurs.

⁴ Quotes are taken from the work of V. Semenova «Path to entrepreneurship, life stories of young generation» (Semenova, 1996, p. 396).



Family as an entrepreneurs' institution of socialization

Institutions of socialization — are the «sustainable forms of human activity, providing social stability and fixing the rules of social interaction. They dictate norms of social relations and legitimize inequality» (Yadov, 2006, p. 4). Family is one of the main institutions of socialization, which forms the individual's personality and attitudes towards entrepreneurship.

Based on the life strategies types, identified by V. Semenova, attention is given to those where the informant's adaptation process somehow took place: creativity and conflict tactics — and used as a basis for the research aimed at investigating the life trajectories of young entrepreneurs in Russia.

Methodology: collection and analysis of data

The study was conducted using the probability sample. Quotas include the informants' socio-demographic characteristics such as age and gender. 16 participated in the research: 8 men and 8 women, aged 18 to 30 years (table 2).

Table 2

Principle of informant's selection

	18–24 years old	25–30 years old
Men	4 people	4 people
Women	4 people	4 people

Narrative interviews consisted of 3 parts (phases): free narrative story, narrative questioning and the evaluation phase of the informant's life. The first one was characterized by the interviewer's nonintervention in the informant's life story. The individual, as a rule, began the story long ago (from childhood) and ended with modern days. In the second phase, informants were asked specific questions aimed at identifying the necessary details about their lives. In the third — narrators were asked to evaluate their lives.

Interviews were usually taken in cafes during the lunch break due to a lack of free time entrepreneurs have. This informal atmosphere facilitates communication where informants were open minded and honest: «Just do not tell anybody...», «You can guess how this happens in our country... There are always loopholes in the law», etc. Informants enjoyed talking about themselves in details and shared their personal life stories. Narration went under thematic blocks such as institutions of socialization: informant's family, education, social environment and professional experiences.

Narratives were analyzed using the method of ground theory⁵: procedures such as open and axial coding. This method makes it possible to expose qualitative data to the theoretical structuring while using analytical units and defining their relationships (Klushkina, 2000). This technique makes a transition from the informant's experience to the general categories via specific topics such as family, education, profession and social environment (table 3).

To make the further analysis more convenient, informants' life trajectories were visualized in the form of 16 trees: biographical life choices⁶. Each of 4 branches depicted the main institutions of socialization such as informant's family, education, social environment and professional experience (figure 1).

⁵ This methodology involves the use of procedures such as open, axial and selective coding. A. Strauss and J. Corbin firstly developed it in the work «Basics of qualitative research. Grounded Theory Procedures and techniques» (Strauss, Corbin, 1990).

⁶ I would like to thank E.Y. Rozhdestvenskaya for her advice regarding the data analysis and productive discussion, which brought an idea to visualize life trajectories of entrepreneurs in the form of trees.

**An example of the informant's narrative analysis
(Family as an institute of socialization)**

Institution of socialization	Categories (axial coding)	Codes (open coding)	Quotations
Family	The motivation for doing business (acted against family)	Family did not support	I cannot say that my family supported my idea to become an entrepreneur. I do not have my father and my mother is a pensioner. She had been always against my ideas to go to Moscow, America or China. She wanted me to stay in my home city — Bryansk, and did nothing. I did what I personally found right and what other people recommended, not my family. Thus, there was no business education in my childhood at all.
		Grew up without father	
		Mother against Moscow and any other business trips	
		Did what I personally found right and what other people recommended, not my family	
		There was no business education at all	

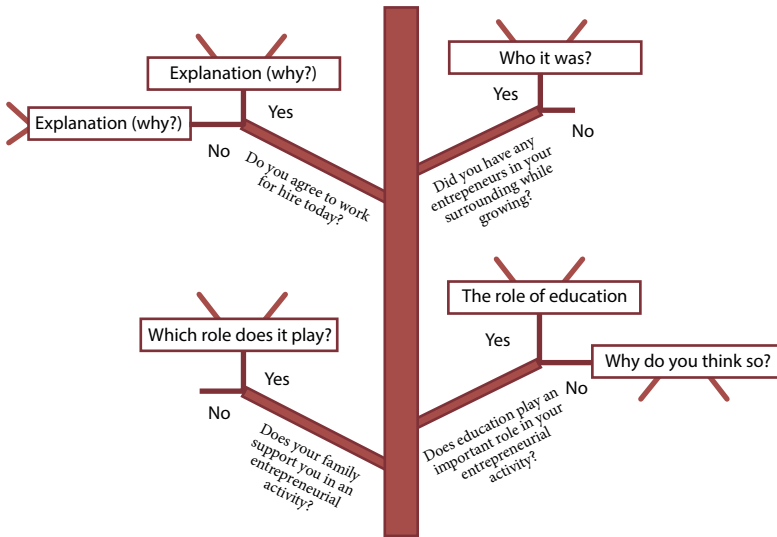


Figure 1. Example of the tree

For every tree branch I assigned codes, which I picked from informants' narratives. Thus, I have got 16 trees of biographical choices for each informant.

The method of analytic induction⁷ offers the ability to identify the presence of common feature: family support (or lack thereof) depends on informants' characteristics such as

⁷ Method of analytical induction in qualitative research represents the logic of theoretical knowledge from the «the particular case» to «general». There forms the phenomenon on the basis of typical signs (Gotlib, 2014).



gender and the city of socialization (the role of family in individual's decision to become an entrepreneur will be specifically discussed in the next section). These two factors formed the basis for the entrepreneurs' life trajectories construction. This study could be continued while using the mixed methods procedure (qualitative and quantitative) and the principle of «sequential contributions» (Morgan, 2013, p. 270). It builds a continuity chain between the data: the results of qualitative research can be used for further quantitative study. Thus, this approach will integrate the results of both research types (Gotlib, 2014). As a result, qualitative research data could be extended to the macro-level by using quantitative method: entrepreneurs' survey.

The role of family in forming the life trajectories of young entrepreneurs

During the study, it was found that creative and conflict tactics, which describe the life trajectories of young entrepreneurs, are determined by gender. In addition, the fighting tactic was created, which is characterized by the negation of «old» values in favor of individualistic views and profit motives. Thus, the conflict tactic includes two: «compromise» and «fight» (figure 2).

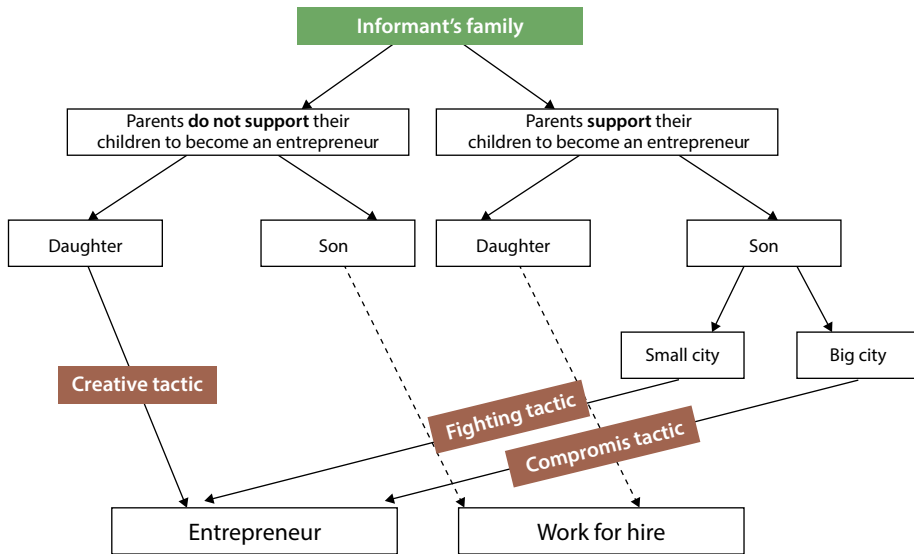


Figure 2. The role of family in choosing the professional path

Figure 3 illustrates the role of family in choosing the professional path, depending on their differences in gender and the city of socialization. Dotted lines show tactics (returnable and waiting), which are characterized by non-acceptance of the new capitalist values, and therefore, mean the individual's choice to work for hire. These tactics tend to stick the sons whose parents are more positive about their choice to become an entrepreneur, and the daughters who do not receive this support. Since the study examined only the life trajectories of businessmen, it was not possible to further explore the individuals' strategies, who prefer to work for hire. Thus, their motives and the family's role in choosing their career path, remain unaddressed. The solid lines mark tactics, which would more likely contribute to the individual's selection of entrepreneurial path. It can be noticed that the support of daughter's entrepreneurial endeavors, is the important factor of their career

decision. By contrast, sons' decision to choose the entrepreneurial career, do not need their parents' approval. Interestingly, their professional tactics vary, depending on their city of socialization.

Creative tactic

This tactic is peculiar to individuals who stick to the mobility strategy and searching for a fulfilling job. Narratives' analysis showed that creative tactics are mostly typical for women — entrepreneurs. According to them, they were growing in a family support, where parents encouraged daughters' aspirations, even if their ideas contradicts their own views. The way of earning money, as well as the financial aspect goes by the wayside: «*Parents have contributed to everything that I like, whether it is a science or a business*» (Irina, 23, Dubossary, 02.03.2014).

Even sharing traditional values, families allow daughters to choose their professional path by themselves, so they could follow their own aspirations and desires: «*My mother still wonders about my professional choice, she cannot understand me (I do not have father, just mother). She cannot understand why I am not interested in a stable income. Especially, it happens that there are no orders it all. Mother always wants me to have stability, she just brought up differently. However, she never tried to stop me, because she saw that generally things are doing well and I like what I am doing*» (Margo, 25, Moscow, 14.03.2014).

Some informants noted that their parents used to have their own businesses in Soviet time, so they fully support the entrepreneurial initiatives of their daughters: «*Generally, I can say that I have a symbiosis. Mother is also in a leadership position, but in a restaurant business, she is a chef. Father has always had some business ideas even in Soviet times: he bred chickens, calves, and pigs. Thus, my mother's organizational skills and father's enthusiasm have a huge impact on me*» (Alena, 30 years old, Podolsk, 03.04.2014).

An interesting trend was noticed while taking the interviews with women: almost each of them first attempted to run their own business only in the final years at the University or even after the graduation. Most of informants worked for hire and combined it with things that they enjoyed doing, which later started bring a stable income. Entrepreneurship was the way of self-realization and did not originally planned to become a «core» employment. Parents often provided them with a financial support and allowed them to choose their own career path. They contributed to the development of informants' business activities, mainly due to their moral support: there was no pressure from the outside as well as no fear of making a mistake.

Conflict tactic

This tactic characterizes the men's life trajectories, whose family did not support their entrepreneurial efforts. This phenomenon can be explained by gender theory in terms of family's role distribution. Man, as head of the family and the main «breadwinner» should bring home a stable income, providing his family with everything necessary (Lytkina, 2004). Entrepreneurship, being a risky activity, goes against this theory, which explains the parents' (especially mothers) disapproval, for whom stability is the key element of the successful family relations development: «*Mother treats entrepreneurship as a bad thing because she concerns about security. It is clear that women used to concern about their family' hearth safety*» (Roman, 24, Novosibirsk, 22.03.2014). Despite the fact that informants' family did not support their decision to become an entrepreneur, however, the reasons for this were different, which are determined their further life strategies.



Compromise tactic

Compromise tactic is mostly common among men from big cities⁸. Their parents, as a rule, were dissatisfied with their sons' professional choice, considering entrepreneurship useless to society. According to informants, their parents have traditional views. Prestigious professions for them are those, which are approved by society: such as teacher, doctor, engineer and etc.: «No, family never supported my idea to become an entrepreneur as they found it useless. The big problem is my parents still think that I am doing something nonsense» (Eugene, 29, Moscow, 29.03.2014).

This tactic is mostly peculiar to entrepreneurs aged 25 to 30 years old, whose business is successful and brings considerable income. Informants emphasized that they did not want to quarrel with already elderly parents, because they understand that their own generation and their parents' generation — are very different. Thus, the majority of male from big cities combine their own business with the work for hire. The second job they mostly take for social approval and, in some cases, — for self-satisfaction (ex.: teaching at the university).

Fighting tactic

Fighting tactic is mostly common among men from small cities⁹. Collisions happen not only with their parents, peers and teachers, but also with themselves. This type is characterized by huge ambitions, commitment and desire to improve their lives: change the environment they originally grew up.

They changed their friends' circle and interests: «Those guys who stayed in Bryansk — they are different from me. I can go with them for a drink, but that's it. I had a classmate who had always been an excellent student. Today he is working at the plant for 12 thousand rubles! I told him that he has such a smart head and he can easily find a better job. Nevertheless, he does not understand it. Better to work with your brain, not — hands» (Andrew, 24 years old, Bryansk, 17.03.2014).

Entrepreneurs from small towns, who moved to Moscow, indicate a lack of family support. Informants consider that parents (especially mothers) do not support entrepreneurship activity as they find it very risky, dangerous and unstable.

However, according to informants, it is only stimulates their business. It is important to prove yourself and others that you can achieve a lot. Even in the case of «failure», they continued to stubbornly defend their position by launching new business projects: «Of course, my parents do not want me to leave Kishinev, but what am I supposed to do there? Now I am involving in business projects, have recently returned from MIT. I have my own plans and way to follow» (Sergio, 22, Kishinev, 02.03.2014).

Men use fighting tactic to satisfy their own ambitions. Capacity of the financial assets and self-realization become paramount. This path is associated with isolation from peers and parents who shared old values and attitudes. Thus, the negative adaptation is happening: new values completely replaced by those in which informant raised. Figuratively speaking, there is a rejection of the «old self» in favor of «successful self».

Conclusion

Social changes, characterized by ideological and value-normative transformations, became the driving factor for the development of entrepreneurial activity in our country. The adaptation process for Russians went differently: for some people through the rejection of new

⁸ According to the Lappo's classification (Lappo, 1996) from the largest cities and megalopolises with a population over 500000 people.

⁹ According to the Lappo's classification (Lappo, 1996) from the small, middle and big cities with a population less than 500000 people.

capitalist values, for someone — by rethinking of existing foundations, for others — through the displacement of old values in favor of new ones. Family has a huge impact on individual, mostly defining which characteristics he or she will acquire. It also influence on child's decision: particularly, which professional path to choose. If the adaptation process of new values did not take place, as in cases of «return» and «delaying» tactics, the individual would not pick an entrepreneurial path, as it contradicts the values of solidarity and social protection. If old values were replaces by new ones (negative adaptation, fighting tactic), its representatives will promote the active growth of entrepreneurial activity, but their choice might have a negative impact on their relationships with parents and peers, who are still holding the traditional views.

Creative tactic can be considered as a successful adaptation strategy, which is mostly used by women. In this case, moral and financial family support plays an important role. However, business, which is interesting for informants, does not always become profitable, considering their frequent occupation changes. Thus, they can complete their business on its inception stage and start working for hire.

In terms of increasing the level of entrepreneurial activity in Russia, the compromise tactic is the most suitable one. Despite the fact that parents have a rather negative attitude toward children's professional choice, considering entrepreneurship useless to society, however, compromise tactic combines their business activity with participation in social projects, allows entrepreneurs to find a balance between satisfying their own ambitions and parental wishes.

Thus, informants' professional trajectories are largely formed by their family and determined by their upbringing values. The study also showed that career path choices vary due to gender differences and the city of socialization.

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