

Gender Effects on Labor Market Outcomes in Russia, 1985-2001: Institutional Change, Family Structure, and Regional Variation

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We analyze the factors influencing the evolving effects of gender on labor market outcomes in contemporary Russia. Using 7,167 employment histories spanning 1985-2001 collected in the *Survey of Stratification and Migration Dynamics in Russia* (SMDR), we estimate gender differences in the rates of employment events (employment entries and exits, job changes) and in career trajectories (upward and downward mobility conditional on a job change taking place). We take advantage of the unprecedented scope and statistical power the SMDR offers to address several research questions that are central to the understanding the relationship between institutional change and gender inequality in the labor market:

1) *How have the institutional changes associated with Russia's market transition affected gender differences in access to employment and career trajectories through jobs of different quality?* The Soviet Union collapsed at the end of 1991 and the new Russian government introduced sweeping market reforms in January 1992. Thus, the SMDR's employment histories span the last seven years of the Soviet era and the first decade of the market transition era. Prior analyses of labor market transitions in contemporary Russia (Gerber 2001; 2002), including an analysis focusing on gender dynamics (Gerber and Mayorova 2006), have used employment histories covering January 1991-January/March 1998. The narrow window of Soviet-era observation renders the findings regarding the impact of institutional change in these studies inconclusive. Also, the truncation of the observation window in early 1998 prevents definitive conclusions about longer-term patterns of change during the market transition era, because 1998 was a watershed year for the Russian economy (which, following a severe crisis at the end 1998, has exhibited robust growth since 1999).

2) *What roles do marital status and fertility play in shaping the labor market transitions of Russian women and men during the late-Soviet and post-Soviet era?* Studies of women's labor force participation and career patterns often place a central emphasis on the role of family structure. By incorporating measures of both men's and women's marital status and fertility in our models, we test broad hypotheses regarding the impact of marriage and fertility on women's labor market outcomes relative to men's (e.g. Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Budig and England 2001), as well as specific hypotheses regarding the impact of market transition on the work/family nexus for women (Adler 2004; Trappe and Rosenfeld 2004). Gender roles in the household have figured prominently in explanations of post-Soviet gender dynamics in the Russian labor market (Ashwin 2002; Gerber and Mayorova 2006), but these explanations have not been explicitly tested due to lack of suitable data. The SMDR contains marital and fertility histories in addition to employment histories, permitting time-varying measures of marital status and number of children of various ages to be incorporated in event history models of labor market transitions and career patterns.

3) *Do the dynamics of gender differences in labor market outcomes vary by region and type of locality in a context of market transition?* The possible role of local variations in labor market conditions in shaping gender inequality within a country has begun to receive scholarly attention (e.g. McCall 2000). Contemporary Russia offers a promising setting in which to explore systematic regional variations in men's and women's relative labor market outcomes because several regional dimensions (urban vs. rural localities, capital vs. provincial cities, and European vs. Northern and Eastern regions) are broadly understood to affect labor market conditions there, particularly after the introduction of market reforms, when regional variations in labor market institutions and conditions have increased (Gerber 2002, 2006; Andrienko and Guriev 2004). The SMDR data also contain residential mobility histories spanning the same time frame as the employment and family structure histories. These permit us to test for the first time for systematic variations by regional characteristics and locality type in how gender affects labor market outcomes in Russia. The results reveal patterns whereby geography shapes gender differences that may be relevant in other national contexts.

A previous study (Gerber and Mayorova 2006) provides initial hypotheses regarding changes over time in the effects of gender during the course of market transition. Analyzing employment history data spanning January 1991 – January/March 1998 using event history models and conditional logit models, the study found that, not surprisingly, gender affects both access to employment and the quality of new jobs. Gender differences in human capital and structural location do not account for these effects. The effects of gender on these outcomes changed during the course of market transition. But the transition has been neither uniformly harmful, nor uniformly beneficial to women relative to men. The pre-transition period (1991) was marked by considerable female disadvantage in exposure to layoff, opportunities for employment (re-)entry, and, among those without college education, access to jobs outside of one's current firm. In the course of market transition, the first two of these disadvantages declined and reversed. On the other hand, while women gained greater access to jobs as the transition progressed, the gender gap in the *quality* of those new jobs has widened. Even as the labor market has opened up to women in terms of opportunities for employment, it has become more segmented on the lines of gender in ways that increase women's economic disadvantages. Although these two trends appear to be opposite, Gerber and Mayorova (2006) argue that they are in fact closely related, and both are connected to the process of market transition.

One objective of the present study is to replicate and further test these findings using longer employment histories. In addition, we derive new hypotheses regarding the impact of marital status, fertility, and geographic context on gender differences in labor market transitions and career trajectories from broader theories of gender inequality and prior studies of how the relationships between these variables changed for women in particular as a result of the transition from socialism. Labor market outcomes analyzed include: inter-firm job shifts, layoffs, voluntary employment exit (quits), and employment entry (from non-participation or unemployment). Measures of job quality (career trajectories) include occupational earnings and occupational percent female (both calculated using Russian surveys), employment in an occupation involving "care work"

(see England 2005), industry of employment (high-wage vs. low-wage), and sector (private vs. state). We use event history models for repeated events with time-varying covariates to model labor market transitions, and logistic regression models, estimated on the sample of job changes, to model career trajectories. We test hypotheses regarding change over time in gender effects and in the effects of other covariates using a variety of interaction terms involving time.

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