

SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY OF WOMEN: DOUBTS, BARRIERS AND DYNAMICS

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Abstract. *The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the contribution of women's entrepreneurship to the economy requires a methodological understanding of the features of its functioning. Objectively, a trend has been recorded - traditional cultural and social norms are gradually changing, especially against the background of their own and large-scale economic sanctions. Methodological approaches, methods and techniques, as well as models and specific tools applicable in a dramatically changing Russian and international business environment need clarification and adequate changes. The author believes that the barriers (financial, informational, market, business relations, educational and professional, cultural and historical) that prevent women from full-fledged independence in business (especially in micro, small, medium) must be overcome. There are social actors (public, non-governmental, private) and management tools can be created to provide women entrepreneurs with sustainable and high-quality access to the resources necessary for the successful development of their business. Is there a formula for success for women's entrepreneurial activity?*

Keywords: *women's entrepreneurship, self-employed women, enterprises owned by women, the success model, gender inequality, space of opportunities, state support for women's entrepreneurship.*

The topic stated in the title of the article is "Successful entrepreneurial activity of women. Doubts, barriers and dynamics" involves the elaboration of answers to the following research questions. Is long-term success in women's entrepreneurship possible? What are its prerequisites? Does the shift in the global economy of a post-industrial society towards the service sector increase the chances of women's entrepreneurship for long-term success? Is this success geographically localized, what are the features of localization? What is the reason for it? Is a female entrepreneur a separate social stratum and a target segment that are taken into account in government statistics, or is it a rare case among entrepreneurs? What is the difference between self-employed and just employed? Government assistance to women's business: reality or utopia? What do they expect from each other? Are the factors of luck and luck important for success(s), or are psychological personality traits required? The more profitable and competitive a women's business is, the more likely it is to be taken away or discriminated against (racketeering)? "Women's enterprises" (full, majority, joint and minority ownership, access or active participation in

management) and just an enterprise, what are the pros and cons, is there a significant difference? Do such enterprises have a measurable "cultural code", for example, in the pace and specifics of development, in the percentage of bankruptcies, in the dynamics of profitability? Where and since when does the state legislation on women's entrepreneurship (women's self-employment) exist? Is the phenomenon of "A successful woman in business" a pattern or an accident? Is there a tendency for women in the Russian Federation to move from the leadership of state structures to the management of private companies and corporations? Is there a significant difference between models of successful women's management, leadership and models of successful women's entrepreneurship? Is leadership possible in a couple: a man and a woman? Equal and unequal partnership: are losses inevitable? Is there a formula for success for women's entrepreneurial activity?

A review of the literature on the topic

As part of the topic of the article "Successful entrepreneurial activity of women", fifty-one keywords were found in the RSCI on 10/15/2025 (see Table.1) more than six hundred publications,

that is, for the entire time of monitoring publications, an average of twelve articles per keyword

(phrase). Some articles were included in several keywords.

Table 1. Keyword search results for publications

Topic	Concept (keyword)	Quantity
Entrepreneurship	1. Women's entrepreneurship	288
Woman	2. Women's employment	121
Success	3. Success factors	103
Entrepreneurship	4. Businesswoman	45
Entrepreneurship	5. Women's business	32
Success	6. The success model	11
Woman	7. Women's reproductive behavior	7
Entrepreneurship	8. Women's entrepreneurship in Russia	4
Woman	9. Remote female employment	4
Success	10. Psychological factors of success	4
Entrepreneurship	11. High-potential women's entrepreneurship	3
Woman	12. Women's development	3
Entrepreneurship	13. "Business woman"	3
Success	14. Types of success	3
Success	15. Economic success	3
Success	16. Success factors	3
Success	17. Psychological factors of business success	3
Entrepreneurship	18. Small and medium-sized women's entrepreneurship	2
Entrepreneurship	19. State support for women's entrepreneurship	2
Entrepreneurship	20. The ecosystem of women's entrepreneurship	2
Entrepreneurship	21. Legislative consolidation of women's entrepreneurship	2
Woman	22. Women's employment and unemployment	2
Entrepreneurship	23. Success factors of an entrepreneur	2
Entrepreneurship	24. Rural women's entrepreneurship	1
Entrepreneurship	25. Male and female entrepreneurship	1
Entrepreneurship	26. Women's entrepreneurship of ethnic groups	1
Entrepreneurship	27. Women's entrepreneurship as a socio-economic and spiritual phenomenon	1
Entrepreneurship	28. Women's entrepreneurship in Russia at the beginning of the XX	1
Entrepreneurship	century. 29. Women's entrepreneurship	1
Entrepreneurship	30. Self-employed women	1
Entrepreneurship	31. Enterprises owned by women	1
Entrepreneurship	32. "Women's" business	1
Entrepreneurship	33. Linguistic representation of the concept of "business woman"	1
Entrepreneurship	34. Successful business woman	1
Entrepreneurship	35. Linguistic and cultural type of "business woman"	1
Entrepreneurship	36. Linguistic and cultural concept of business woman	1
Entrepreneurship	37. The businesswoman concept	1
Entrepreneurship	38. The concept of "business woman"	1
Entrepreneurship	39. American business woman	1
Entrepreneurship	40. Success factors of an entrepreneur	1
Success	41. Indicators and success factors	1
Entrepreneurship	42. Gender inequality of entrepreneurs	0
Success	43. Factor theories of success	0
Success	44. Cultural models of success	0
Success	45. Gender-specific attribution of successful behavior	0
Success	46. The factor of a person's external attractiveness in explaining the reasons for his success	0
Success	47. Models of social success	0
Success	48. Civilizational models of success	0
Success	49. Cross-cultural differences in attitudes to success	0
Woman	50. Combining work and motherhood	0
Woman	51. A woman's work-life balance	0
		673

Yandex Wordstat platform for the query of the phrase "successful women's entrepreneurship", all regions of the world, time interval – 01.2023-09.2025 gives the answer – "there are no suitable requests".

For the query "women's entrepreneurship", all regions of the Russian Federation, the time inter-

val – 01.2023-09.2025 gives the distribution shown in Fig.1. The peaks of requests in November are probably related to the media activity of various forums related to women's business topics. There is a downward trend in requests.

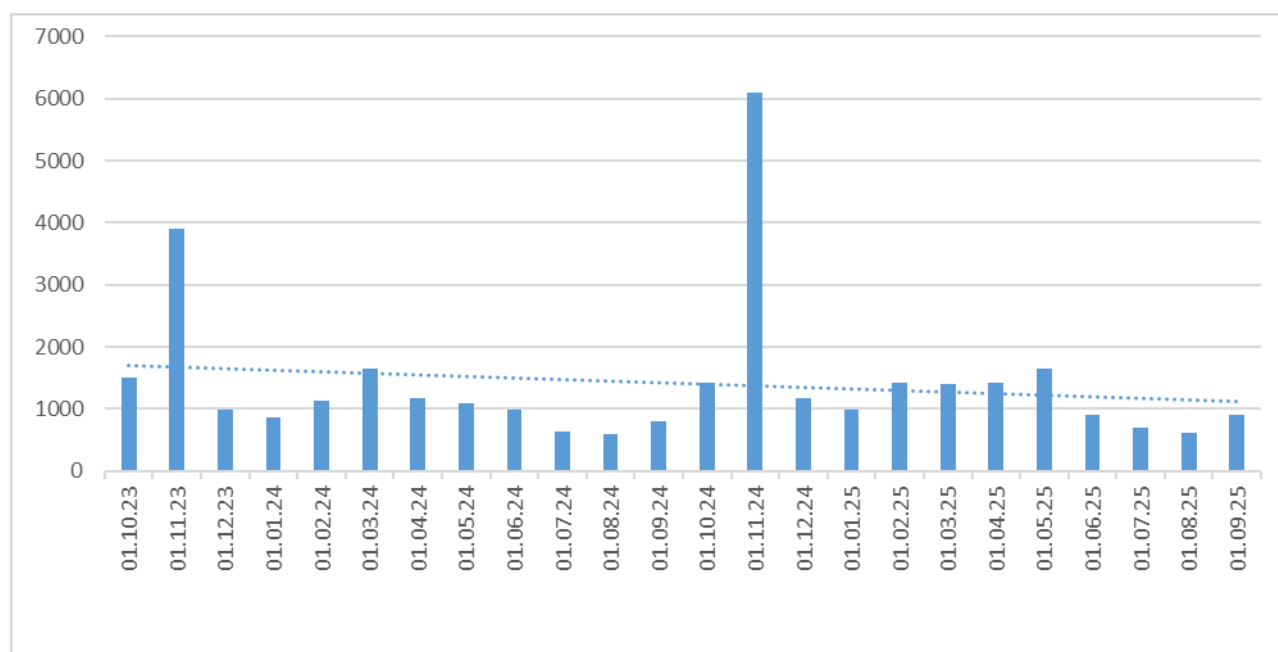


Fig. 1. Dynamics of the number of queries for the word combination "women's entrepreneurship".

There are three groups of definitions of success in the literature: internal, external, and communication. "Internal" definitions primarily speak about achieving (experiencing achievement, self-determination, self-realization, meaningfulness of life) a desirable individual (intrapersonal) goal (result) within the framework of perceived values by overcoming (internal and external) difficulties, problems, barriers and obstacles.

"External" definitions indicate the acquisition of popularity in a small or large group, the long-term recognition of significant roles for a person (e.g., the right to informal leadership) and statuses (e.g., talent, giftedness, the right to formal leadership), the subjective or objective recognition of the results of a person's activities as resource-significant for a significant person, for a membership group or reference group.

"Communication" definitions have a narrow content concerning the communication process itself (not the result, but the process of activity, the means of achievement) and its procedural success.

We can talk about success (a one-time act) and success (a long-term dynamic phenomenon). as about the coincidence of the results of an individual's internal, external and communication activities with declared and generally accepted social moral values and goals, ideals, in the process of their cultural and historical changes, dynamically smooth and not very.

It must be remembered that the principles of "Oriental" thinking (the process is more important than the result, active and passive non-action, "the samurai has no goal, the path is important") allow an Oriental person to feel successful almost always.

Today it is correct to talk about the Far Eastern (Confucian), Indian, Islamic and other civilizational models of success.

Methods of the proposed research

Biographical research method

This predominantly qualitative (understanding) humanitarian method uses as a source of empirical information information from the biographies and autobiographies of women entrepreneurs, memoirs and diary entries of them or

about them, letters and interviews (narratives), photos and videos.

Individual in-depth interviews

This non-formalized qualitative method is applicable for the simple reason that it is possible, with a well-written interview guide, to obtain undistorted or not strongly distorted first-hand information. To formulate, clarify and immediately double-check certain working hypotheses.

Surveys of different strata of the population

It is necessary to develop a questionnaire "Defining the success model of a female entrepreneur." Another variant of the name of the questionnaire is "Successful entrepreneurial activity of women." The survey should be based on the following questions: "Give ten examples of successful entrepreneurs of our time", "Give ten examples of successful entrepreneurs of the past", "If possible, explain why you chose them?", "Can you add successful female entrepreneurs to this list?", "If possible, explain why did you choose them?", "What personal characteristics (properties) should an entrepreneur possess in order to be successful in modern Russian conditions?" "What personal characteristics (properties) should a female entrepreneur have, to be successful in modern Russian conditions?"

A study (survey) should be conducted on several social strata: male entrepreneurs (small, medium and large businesses), female entrepreneurs (small, medium and large businesses), men

(young, middle-aged, mature, elderly), women (young, middle-aged, mature, elderly). Teenagers should be included in a special category of respondents.

The methodology of selecting potential female entrepreneurs.

Success models of women's entrepreneurship and value-motivational structures

Figure 2 shows the Venn diagram "Segmentation of options for managers to succeed in the industry" (regardless of gender).

Figures 3 and 4 show the widespread notions of human success in Russian society, regardless of their gender.

The structures of life values for men and women engaged in entrepreneurial activity are the same, but the accents and motivations are likely to differ.

It should be noted that traditionally, the leading orientations and accents of women's behavior in achieving and maintaining success have been and remain serving the group, stability and retention of the group, responsibility and caution, plasticity and orientation to compromise, while men have autonomy of behavior, combining several life styles, striving to seize resources, resisting pressure, and the ability to and willingness to make rapid changes in the process of establishing your own business, the ability to act in times of crises, risks and conflicts, demonstrativeness.

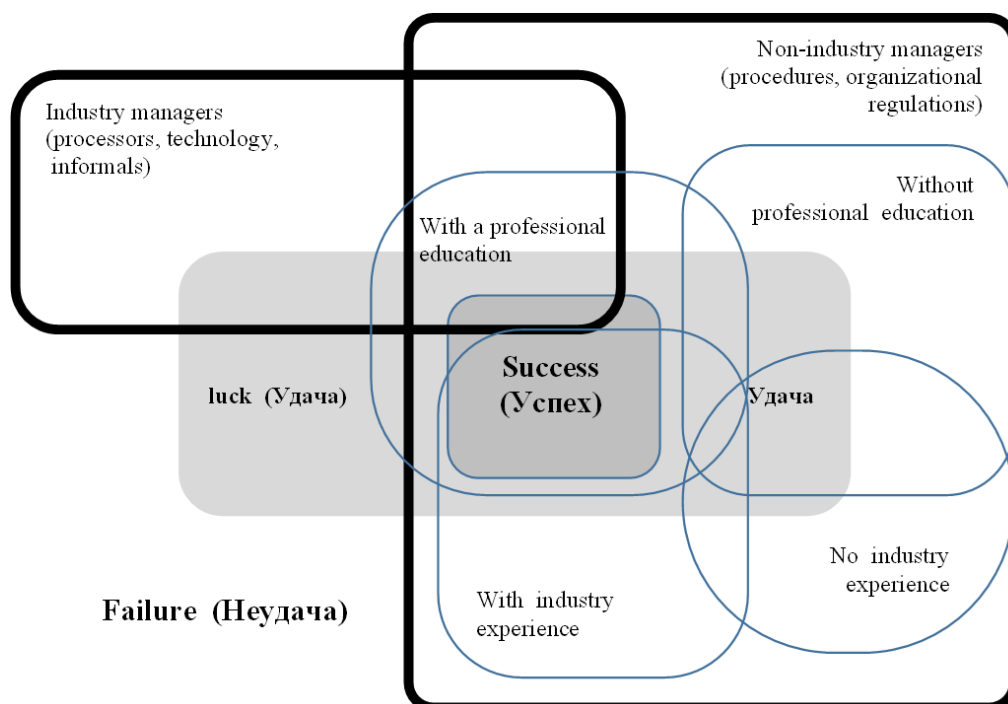


Fig. 2. Venn Diagram

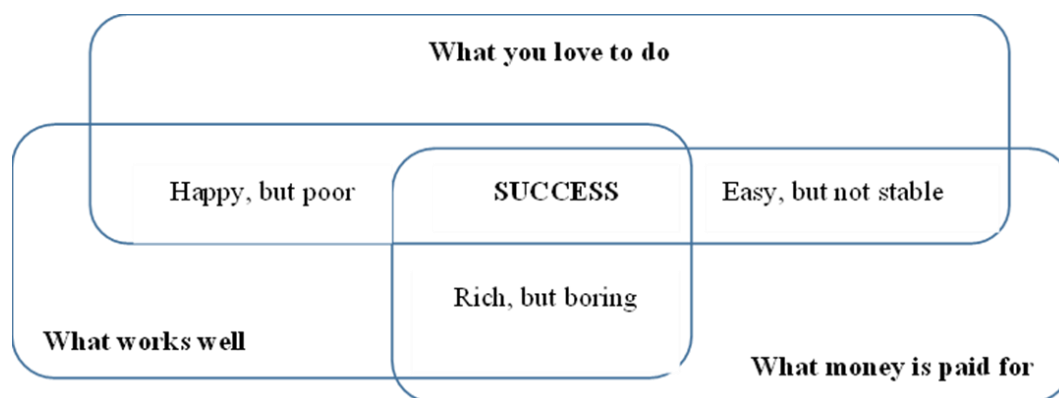


Fig. 3. The formula for success

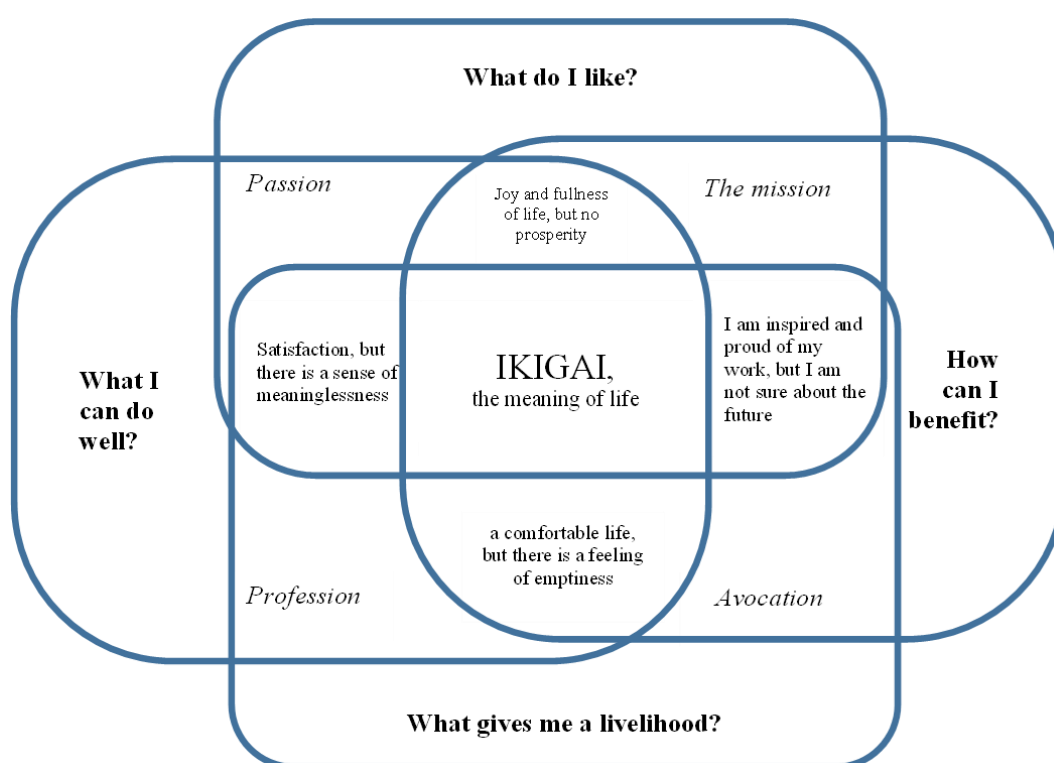


Fig. 4. Ikigai, the Japanese method of finding the "value of life"

The discrepancy between the male and female internal scales of assessment of permissible activity can lead to significantly different assessments, interpretations of the same phenomenon, behavior, action, deed. A woman in a men's team is sometimes forced to "play" according to male norms and focus on the appropriate gender role stereotypes that are important for a successful leader. For example, they can confidently, convincingly and correctly present their position (ideas), launch team-building processes from

competent people, organize processes and prioritize tasks and their sequence, maintain a balance of personal and business, maintain a sense of self-worth and their value (competence).

It is very important to describe clear criteria for the formulation of a particular success model. Example. The success model (according to O.Y. Klochkova), which distinguishes Protestant (American), Soviet, ascetic, hedonistic and compromise success models [Klochkova, 2003], can be transformed into the matrix shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Success models

The success model		Primary focus on satisfaction of needs		
		Public	A compromise	Individual
The primary focus on the acquisition of benefits	Материальных	"American" (Protestant). Adherents, as a rule, are supporters of the "European path" for Russia, although some of the respondents in this group chose the "special path" for our country as their preferred one.	The Compromise Group ...	Hedonistic. Hedonists rate their standard of living somewhat lower than representatives of other groups (perhaps this is due to the fact that they are more "fixated" on material problems).
	A compromise	The Compromise Group ...	A compromise group. Amorphous. They consider their standard of living to be average. It is a very conformist model, adherents prefer to "go with the flow", accept the prevailing postulates and stereotypes in society and their small group, and do not set themselves ambitious goals. "To be no worse than others."	The Compromise Group ...
	Spiritual	The Soviet one. Increased interest in politics, sympathy for a wide variety of political forces, with a low level of political distrust. They prefer a "special path" for Russia.	The Compromise Group ...	Ascetic. Those who have chosen the ascetic model have no sympathy for any political forces and have no preferences when answering the question of which historical path Russia should follow.

Barriers for women who are entrepreneurial

Financial barriers

Sometimes there is a significant difference in starting opportunities even for the heirs of entrepreneurs, especially if they cannot succeed.

Legal barriers

There is a trend in the Russian Federation for women to acquire the status of self-employed. The business community has recognized the need for legal regulation of women's entrepreneurship as a socio-economic phenomenon with significant potential for micro and small businesses. Legal research on this topic is extremely sparse and fragmentary. There is no state doctrine of women's entrepreneurship in the Russian Federation. There is also no in-depth study of the relevant terminology and legal mechanisms. Sometimes we have to talk about legitimizing the very term "women's entrepreneurship" because It should be defined by gender as opposed to male

entrepreneurship, which is difficult to do. Entrepreneurship is a universal form of activity, and the existing legislation has no gender differences. [Index of women's entrepreneurial activity].

Information barriers

Digitalization as a factor in the development of women's business has a positive effect on meeting the information needs of self-employed women. However, the horizons of businesswomen are not broad and systematic, they are usually less informed and methodologically prepared [Kashina, 2020].

Market barriers

It is possible to list a limited number of sectors of the Russian economy where there is a significant representation of women, for example, service, trade and maintenance, consulting, manufacturing, transport, construction, medicine. In these industries, women have the opportunity to engage in entrepreneurship.

Barriers to business relations

Women sometimes underestimate the role of personal contacts and connections, the benefits of mutual services, protectionism and informal relationships. Suspicion and intolerance towards possible rivals, and rivals include all those who, at least in some way, stand out from the general mass, do not allow women to unite into one "team" and cooperate effectively, helping each other. However, there are associations of businesswomen or committees in business communities for the development of women's entrepreneurship.

Educational and professional barriers

These barriers exist and are gradually being smoothed out.

Socio-psychological barriers

The inertia of mass consciousness, values, and stereotypes, sometimes negative, regarding successful women's entrepreneurial activity. Women are more emotional, their mood is more subordinated to physiological processes, sometimes there is a low level of pretensions to success and a lack of professional ambition. If many people expect a woman to be diligent, accurate, and punctual, then she loses her initiative, independence, determination, and independence. There are such phenomena as self-doubt, risk aversion. However, a career woman tends to have a high level of ambition and high self-esteem. On average, women start taking care of their personal careers much later than men. The results of sociological surveys, especially among teenagers, indicate that men (78%) are more often mentioned (remembered) as successful people than women (21%) [Bukhalenkova, 2014]. We must remember that there are fears of loss of femininity, attractiveness to men, and possible retribution for success - social rejection.; underestimating (belittling) one's professional competence, prospects, and achievements in order to maintain relationships; concern about maintaining meaningful family relationships, and lack of attention and time devoted to family members. Family support is very important for a female entrepreneur. Remote employment is attractive for women, which makes it possible to ensure successful parenthood (motherhood).

Discussion

According to the small number of publications given in the literature review, the problems of women's success in entrepreneurship have not yet been sufficiently developed. Existing research is

mainly devoted to motivation or avoidance of success, criteria for evaluating specific successful activities, and the personal gender characteristics of women entrepreneurs.

It is probably necessary to strive for a balanced combination of three mutually complementary approaches in public policy.:

- Women's entrepreneurship is a reserve for economic growth that can outpace the growth of entrepreneurship as such.

- Women's self-employment makes a significant contribution to the creation of additional jobs and helps to reduce unemployment, which reduces social tension in the country.

- Women's economic independence and its enhancement affect the cultural values of society and the goals of society's development based on them, from education (education and upbringing) of the younger generation to foreign policy issues, goals and achievable intermediate and final results.

Conclusion

Success is a multi-valued psychological phenomenon reflecting gender-based social beliefs and stereotypes. The concept of success is understood as career growth in a profession, an event of recognition, a high social and public assessment, a sense of satisfaction from achieving a difficult goal, a high prestigious status in the self-realization (self-improvement) of a person's personality.

Gender stereotypes that dominate in society distort the concept of "success", introducing a domestic focus into the conventionally feminine spheres of activity, a domestic family focus, and professional career ones into men's ones. The "natural" division of labor (activity) into purely male and female is overcome, but with great difficulty and difficulties, by gender barriers. For this reason, any theoretical and empirical research on changing the social roles and statuses of women, including women entrepreneurs, is relevant.

The strengthening of the position of women engaged in entrepreneurial activity in modern Russian society is an economic, political and social trend, but it generates a whole range of problems and problems, starting with private harmonious or inharmonious relationships in the family and ending with dramatic changes in the demographic situation in the country.

It is important to understand the specifics of ideas and the dynamics of doubts of different segments of the male population about the successful entrepreneurial activity of women. The behavioral strategies of a woman (successful in life and/or in work) who performs traditional and non-traditional roles, acquires traditional and

non-traditional statuses are interesting and useful for the development of society and its economy.

The answer to the research question posed in the introduction: "Is there a formula for success for women's entrepreneurial activity?" is likely to be positive.

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УСПЕШНАЯ ПРЕДПРИНИМАТЕЛЬСКАЯ АКТИВНОСТЬ ЖЕНЩИН: СОМНЕНИЯ, БАРЬЕРЫ И ДИНАМИКИ

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Аннотация. Актуальность данного исследования состоит в том, что вклад женского предпринимательства в экономику требует методологического осмысления особенностей его функционирования. Объективно, зафиксирована тенденция – традиционные культурно-социальные нормы постепенно меняются, особенно на фоне СВО и масштабных экономических санкций. Методологические подходы, методы и методики, а также модели и конкретный инструментарий, применимый в условиях драматически меняющейся российской и международной бизнес-среды нуждаются в уточнениях и адекватных изменениях. Автор считает, что барьеры (финансовые, информационные, рыночные, деловых связей, образовательно-профессиональные, культурно-исторические), препятствующие полноценной самостоятельности женщин в бизнесе (особенно в микро, малом, среднем) должны быть преодолены. Существуют у социальных акторов (государственных, неправительственных, частных) и могут быть созданы управленческие инструменты, обеспечивающие женщинам-предпринимателям устойчивый и качественный доступ к ресурсам, необходимым для успешного развития принадлежащего им бизнеса. Существует ли формула успеха для предпринимательской активности женщин?

Ключевые слова: женское предпринимательство, самостоятельно занятые женщины, предприятия, принадлежащие женщинам, модель успеха, гендерное неравенство, пространство возможностей, государственная поддержка женского предпринимательства.