Family Impacts on the Career Development of Female Graphic Designers

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Abstract

This article aims to gain a better understanding of family impacts on the career development of female graphic designers (GDs), regarding different cultural backgrounds. It also attempts to explain the phenomenon in which the career experiences of female GDs are different from those of male GDs. As previously discussed, female GDs are lower in status than males in the workforce (Zhao Yue, 2014). Influential factors include stereotypes, economic policies, and gender consciousness. There are also differences between female GDs' career choices in various cultural contexts (Zhao Yue, 2018). Thus, this paper focuses on studying the family-career relationship to explore family impact factors and results on different career stages for female GDs. 42 female GDs in China and Finland were interviewed, comparing their career experiences and family member impacts according to gender and culture. Simultaneously, the study also considers family culture differences, which positively or negatively contribute to career development in a dynamic background. The phenomenon of female GDs' lower status in the workforce will also be addressed in the family culture context.

Keywords: Female graphic designer, Family-Career Relationship, career development, family member impacts, gender culture, family culture.

1. Introduction: Women's career development has various impact factors in the gender context, including social frameworks, gender stereotypes, recruitment and retention, and education and work environment (Trauth, Quesenberry, and Huang, 2006). In the author's previous research on the theme of "female graphic designers' (GDs') low labor force", the results show that the gender conscious, subconscious, and cultural background of female GDs influence their career development to some extent (Zhao Yue, 2018).

Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem theory points out that environmental factors, such as family, school, etc., affect individual development. Family is the microscopic environment, and the primary growth environment, directly impacting personal growth. However, "environment" includes, not only the microscopic environment, but also the social and cultural environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1998). Social life and family life

interact and constitute the human life, as a whole. Career is one portion of human social life, while family, as another, heavily influences the growth environment leading to that career. Work interferes with family life and vice versa (Aldous, 1969; Piotrkowski, 1979; Staines, 1980; Crouter, 1984). Work-life conflicts (WLCs) and work-life balance (WLB) are the two states directly related to career development, and family contributes to moral education, personal values, cultural tendencies, and life concepts that affect the long-term development of individual careers.

WLCs and WLB are important factors in personal career development, especially for female employees. In both Eastern and Western countries, women bear a heavy burden of housework in family life. In China, though the one-child policy has reduced childcare for married couples, the responsibilities of childcare and elderly care continue to fall disproportionately upon women, in spite of the fact that most of them work full time. As a comparison, Finnish people have equal participation in the workplace, but the situation for women is similar to that in China, with women still bearing the primary responsibility for childcare and housework (Rantalaiho et al., 1997; Osterberg and Hedman, 1988). Therefore, women are more likely to feel the pressure of WLCs than men (Chandra, 2012). In Hassan's study, the importance of family in an individual's life in Eastern cultures is shown to be different from that in Western cultures. Hassan also confirms that East and West have different views of work and family due to variations in cultural traditions, family structures, and societal institutions (Hassan, 2010). Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000) explain how gender-based socialization influences men to take "work roles" and women to take nurturing roles. Different emphasis on family and different views of family-career life are the influential factors on career development.

Based on the author's previous study, female GDs in China and Finland have a similarly low social status, operate in diversified market structures, and have career styles ranging from designers to freelancers to entrepreneurs (Zhao Yue, 2014). Under these circumstances, family, as the background of female GDs' career lives, is also an important influential factor in their career development. Therefore, aims to determine what influences comes from family, the relationship between family and career, and the differences in family influence in various cultural backgrounds. To do so, this study conducted a quantitative investigation in China and Finland among a sample of 42 female GDs, in accordance with inclusion criteria tailored to both countries. This provided comparative results on the topic from a global, cross-cultural perspective.

The major interest of this paper is to explore family influences on the career development of female GDs in different cultural backgrounds. The contents are three-fold: (1) describing typical female GDs family-career life in an Eastern country (China) and a Western country (Finland), (2) studying female GDs views of the relationship between career value and family value in different cultural contexts, and (3) illustrating points of gender-culture and family-career connectivity in the career process.

2. Methodology: A wide dimension and dynamic data are required to understand how family impacts the career development of female GDs. Qualitative data, gathered via the narrative approach, obtained chronological data, which offered accounts of events occurring over time (Soderberg, 2003). Thus, the adopted approach provides a fertile data alternative. Narrative data is relatively sensitive to language use in context, but it aims to find broader patterns alongside the textual details. Generalization to similar local contexts and more universal patterns is possible (Mäkelä, 2008). Such connections between common content provide a macro level perspective, and comparisons between individual details provide a micro level of differentiation.

Through these data, rich materials and details can be obtained from designers expressing their processes and attitudes to family members. Thus, materials concerning every aspect of their families, at every stage related to their careers, can be gathered. The present investigation concentrates on how female GDs make meaning of their family-career experiences, and the qualitative data allows for a rich understanding of the theme.

To attain a comprehensive perspective on the topic, the present research sought to obtain a focus group of female GDs. The focus group contained persons with high professional education backgrounds and more five years of work experience. For equality, the conducted interviews in both China and Finland had similar proportions concerning work situation and age. Because the interviewees' family conditions could not be known ahead of time, family situation was not taken into account before the interviews.

The object of this study is to compare Eastern and Western female GDs' career experiences and the differences between their perspectives on how family impacts career in the contexts of gender and culture. The interviews focused on four main aspects: (1) the female GDs professional processes from their education to the present, (2) the influences of family members on female GDs professional processes, (3) how female GDs evaluate impacts from their family members, and (4) what family impacts relate to cultural backgrounds.

3. Data Analysis:

3.1 Interviewees' characteristics: 42 interviewees were conducted, including 23 Chinese (C) female GDs and 19 Finnish (F) female GDs between the ages of 27 and 53. All of them had high professional education backgrounds, and their work experience ranged between five and 30 years. For their current situation, 45% (58% C, 42% F) were designers working in design agencies; 14% (50% C, 50% F) were art directors; 5% (50% C, 50% F) were creative directors; 17% (57% C, 43% F) were freelancers; 12% (60% C, 40% F) were design teachers; and 7% (33% C, 67% F) were entrepreneurs (Table 1). Among them, 88% had children, and 12% were single. The interviews were mostly anonymous, because there were many issues involving personal privacy. Only five interviewees gave permission for their names to be used, so, in this paper, all data will be presented anonymously, using the interviewees' numbers to distinguish between the data points.

Table 1: The current situation of the interviewees   **Total number: 42**

	Designer	Art director	Creative director	Freelancer	Entrepreneur	Design teacher
Total	45%	14%	5%	17%	7%	12%
China	48%	13%	4%	18%	4%	13%
Finland	42%	16%	5%	16%	11%	10%

3.2 Family member impacts: Two aspects required data analysis: family member impacts (FMIs) and impact factors. To analyze the impact of family members, four groups were determined, based on the interviewees' narratives: parents, husband/boyfriend, children, and relatives (grandparents, parents-in-law, uncles, aunts, sisters, and brothers). For the impact factors analysis, the data was, first, closely considered and a list was made of relative factors influencing designers' career development in different ways and from different family members. Secondly, the data was classified into three categories: positive, negative, and other. Thirdly, based on the second classification, the content of the narrative meanings was refined and scrutinized for differences and similarities. Thus, five categories were found: supporting, determining, guiding, flexible, and negative family members. Finally, the family members' impacts were compared between the two sampled countries based on their different cultural backgrounds.

Table 2: Family influences on female GDs' career development in China and Finland

	Supporting	Determining	Guiding	Flexible	Negative
Parents	74%	10%	26%	86%	5%
Husband/ Boyfriend	36%	2%	12%	93%	5%
Children	21%	12%	14%	67%	33%
Relatives	24%	5%	17%	83%	12%

Table 3: The characteristics of every type of Chinese FMI

Family member	Categories	%	Narratives
Parents	Supporting	91%	>My father told me very seriously: "We respect your choice. As long as you think it is right, we will support you." >My parents support me in my studying and working, not only support in spirit, but also in activity.
	Determining	17%	>I wanted to be a dancer when I was young, but my father said, "Dancing is a profession that makes living depend on youth." So, father decided to teach me painting: "Painting can support your life."
	Guiding	22%	>In my professional life, my father is the educator and guider for my career process. My father is an artist, so I was influenced by art from an early age. And my father wanted

			me to learn art and believes I could be a fine artist in the future with a good education. That is why I still try to apply for higher education opportunities, even though I'm a little bit old. I hope to realize my father's wishes.
	Flexible	78%	>My parents let me do what I want to do. As long as it is a good choice, they will not interfere.
	Negative	9%	>My parents don't agree with me choosing art as my future career. They think it's no use for my life and living. I know it's their prejudice.
Husband/ Boyfriend	Supporting	35%	>My husband is my boss. He encouraged me to be a designer. He gave me confidence to take risks in my career process, and he always gives me some advice that helps me to be better and better.
	Determining	4%	>My husband wouldn't allow me to continue being a designer after we had a baby, and now I'm a design teacher in an Art and Design school.
	Guiding	13%	>After graduation from university, I didn't choose to be a designer, but my husband thinks I should go back to my profession. So do I.
	Flexible	87%	>I can do what I want to do. My husband gives me very flexible circumstances. He agree with my decisions and sometimes gives me some advice.
	Negative	9%	>He doesn't like me to be a designer because the work is hard; the job is unstable, and it's not a respected work at this time in China.
Children	Supporting	13%	>My son was interested in what I designed. His praise encouraged me to do better. >My children like my illustration. They imitate me in their own way. I'm so happy to see that my children do well on it.
	Determining	22%	>Yes, I am determined by my children to a certain extent. Having children let me think about other choices for my career. I have to take responsibility for my child. I should have enough time to take care of him and educate him. >I should take care of my children when they are very young, and, before they go to university, I should concentrate on my children's education. This is a matter for parents, especially for mothers. I changed to be a design teacher, so I can have more regular work hours.
	Guiding	9%	>Children cannot guide my career, but they are the motivation for me to do better. I want to be their hero and provide better conditions for their life and education.
	Flexible	57%	>I have one child. My parents-in-law took care of him until he went to primary school. He's healthy and smart, and I'm proud of his grades. I have worked as a designer for 25

			years, and I just do what I want to do. Having a child, for me, means flexibility.
	Negative	43%	>No negative influence from children directly, but, when my children were very young, the burden of taking care of them required time and money. In China now, children's education not only depends on school, but also on parents. We should pay more attention to children's education to help them have a good future. This situation greatly impacts my work. >To take care of my children, I just keep my work in an ordinary state. The work can't be very busy. I have no energy to do more.
Relatives	Supporting	35%	>I grew up in a single-parent family. When I was learning art and studied in university, my grandparents supported me a lot. I'm very appreciative of their help. They gave me the chance to learn my profession and encouraged me to work hard and be responsible for me and my mother.
	Determining	9%	>My sister is a designer. When I was in high school, she taught me design knowledge and told me which profession suited me. Actually, my sister helped me to determine my profession, because I didn't like design at the beginning. Now, design is fine, and it will be my lifelong career.
	Guiding	17%	>My grandpa is an artist, and my aunt is a design teacher. In my career life, they gave me much valuable advice. My achievements have a direct relationship with them.
	Flexible	70%	>I haven't received any influence from my relatives. They just know I'm busy, and I have a good salary. They don't care otherwise.
	Negative	22%	>My parents-in-law don't like my work. It's very hard, and I always work overtime. I do not have enough time to take care of my family. It makes them nervous.

Table 4: The characteristics of every type of Finnish FMI

Family member	Categories	%	Narratives
Parents	Supporting	100%	>My parents are supportive and always interested in what I do...My parents would like to financially support me, but they don't have much money. They have helped me with some big purchases, like when my computer broke a year ago. It is also good to know that, if my company goes bankrupt or something else terrible happens, I always have support from my parents and will not end up homeless or anything. >My parents have supported my art and design career well. >They've been very supportive when it comes to studying

			and working.
	Determining	0%	No performance.
	Guiding	32%	>My mother has always taken me to art galleries and cultural places, which has grown my interest in cultural and visual artifacts. >My parents have built my interest towards design and culture. My dad has also shown me what it is to have the attitude and courage to be an entrepreneur. >They (father, mother, grandfather) have shown me that you need to be diligent, yet humble, and work hard to afford the lifestyle you want. >My parents wanted us to educate ourselves and were very strict about school and tests.
	Flexible	95%	>I am really happy that I have had the freedom to choose my own path, because I know that this kind of a career concerns many people.
	Negative	5%	>I think they would have wanted their children to choose a career that is stable and secure financially.
Husband /Boyfriend	Supporting	37%	>My husband is supportive. >My boyfriend supports me with little daily successes.
	Determining	0%	No performance.
	Guiding	11%	>Encouragement. Also because my husband works as researcher, I perhaps got enthusiastic to read and study more, towards a doctoral degree.
	Flexible	100 %	>I love all the freedom and the fact that I can decide my vacations and how to do my job.
	Negative	0%	No performance.
Children	Supporting	32%	>Children are beginning to understand it, and they seem happy and proud. >The biggest influences for my career are maybe my children when they realize what I do and how much I can influence others with my work.
	Determining	0%	No performance.
	Guiding	21%	>I did experience burn-out when my children were small, and I tried to work as a freelancer. That teaches me a lot about self-care and timing and values.
	Flexible	78%	>Children indeed influence my job somehow, but I still can run on my path.
	Negative	21%	>When my children were small, the challenge was to find time for studying.
Relatives	Supporting	11%	>My sister has supported me a lot. She has mainly supported me in finding my own artistic touch by

			encouraging me to take more risks and underlining the importance of a good education.
	Determining	0%	No performance
	Guiding	16%	>My aunt and uncle have shown me that, with a visual mind, one can also pursue a career and business.
	Flexible	100%	No one mentioned their relatives interfering with their career decisions.
	Negative	0%	No performance.

In these tables, five types of FMIs are categorized. The data indicates that impacts from family members are not only of one type but are intersected and multiple. Among the interviewees, 98% of GDs' career development was influenced by family members to a certain degree. 2% were not affected by any family members. 86% of GDs were flexible, and their career development depended entirely on their own judgment and willingness; their family members gave them some advice, but they always insisted upon their own judgment and wishes. 88% of GDs were positively affected by family members' support and guidance, while 40% suffered negative influences, directly and indirectly, from family members, and 14% had their careers determined by family members. Among the impacts, the impact from children was proactive, but the influence on mother designers was straightforward.

4. Results: The results of this study are presented in the following two sections, corresponding to the investigation's purposes: (1) exploring the correlates of family influence factors and degrees of influence and (2) analyzing the relationship between family influences and cultural backgrounds.

4.1 Parents' impacts: Data from China and Finland suggest that five types of parent impacts on female GDs were expressed in the following patterns. (1) 88% of parents were supportive of designers' studying and career development. (2) 10% of parents determined what occupation the GDs should choose; this mainly occurred during the education period. (3) 26% of parents were guiding, and, though this guidance included professional choices, it, more importantly, inspired the interviewees to be aware of design and interested in graphic design; (4) 86% of parents were flexible, meaning that they did not interfere with GDs' career choices; designers could run their career processes in their own ways. (5) 2% of parents were negative, and this proportion came specifically from the interviewees who are designers. There were also some hidden phenomena outside the survey target, according to GDs narratives. They mentioned that some persons want to learn graphic design but do not, because of negative parental influence—i.e., the parents did not approve of letting their children learn design. This negation stems from the parents' own perceptions of graphic design. This phenomenon is more common in China than in Finland.

Levels of parental support given to designers' study and career development are very similar when comparing China and Finland. All the supportive parents from both countries

gave spirit and financial support as much as possible, especially during the designers' education and early careers. Furthermore, some of the parents expressed their wishes to support designers whenever necessary. However, Chinese parents are more determining than Finnish parents. 17% of Chinese designers were determined by their parents, especially when they were students or during their early careers. Finnish parents are more supportive and offer more guidance than do Chinese parents. This may be explained by the countries' different cultural backgrounds. Finnish people are more independent, while Chinese family culture is more patriarchal. Therefore, concerning career issues, parents express different impacts on designers. Finnish parents pay more attention to supporting and guiding, and Chinese parents pay more attention to supporting and determining. The negative impacts of parents' determination behavior were also extracted from the interviewees' narratives, and these illustrated that negative impacts from Chinese parents are greater than those from Finnish parents.

4.2 Husband's/boyfriend's impacts: Among the interviewees, 29 designers were married; 8 designers had boyfriends; and five designers were single. The five types of impacts from husbands/boyfriends may be described as following. (1) 33% of husbands/boyfriends were supportive; they gave designers spirit and financial support. (2) 2% of husbands/boyfriends were determining; in this case study, the determining mode was expressed from two angles, one positive and the other negative. Positive was defined as encouraging GDs to choose design as a profession; negative was defined as refusing to allow GDs to choose design as a profession. (3) 12% of husbands/boyfriends were guiding; this kind of influence was always vivid and effective, penetrating deeply into GDs personal lives. (4) 93% were flexible; this free atmosphere let designers developed their careers in their own ways. (5) 5% were negative; they did not like the GDs working as designers, especially because they were female designers. This is mainly because design work is difficult and unstable, and irregular working hours prevent designers from taking care of their families. This phenomenon occurs mostly in China.

4.3 Children's impacts: The categories of children's impacts included the same five types: supporting, determining, guiding, flexible, and negative. However, these are different from other influences because most of them are active, rather than passive. Children's impacts are unconscious, but their very existence and growth influence parents' lives and careers—especially for mothers. Based on these results, children's impacts were characterized as follows. (1) 21% of children were supportive; they were interested in their mothers' work; they were proud and imitated their mothers' actions, which incentivized mothers to do well and be better. (2) 12% of children were determining; taking care of children put a heavy burden on mothers. (3) Therefore, 33% of children negatively influenced their mothers' careers, and this resulted in mothers' making or changing career choices. (4) These career choices were reflected in the 14% of children who had guiding impacts on their mothers' career development.

Comparing the data from China and Finland, Chinese GDs, who were mothers, were more influenced by their children than were Finnish GDs, who were also mothers. In

Chinese maternity leave policy, puerpera have a six-month leave to take care of their babies. Amongh these interviewees, 86% of Chinese GDs who were mothers took care of their children with the help of parents or parents-in-law, some before the children begin kindergarten and some after. In Finland, the length of maternity leave is approximately ten months, beginning at the expected delivery date. Collective labor agreements may include agreements on salary payment during maternity leave (Frilander and Taskinen, 1999; Tyoministerio, 2006a, 2006b). Comparing the different maternity leave policies in the sampled countries, Chinese GDs, who are mothers, suffered heavier burdens than do Finnish GDs, who are also mothers. Therefore, the Chinese mothers bore more negative influences from their children than did Finnish mothers. However, the positive influence from children was direct and far-reaching, and it encouraged mother designers to be and do better.

4.4 Relatives' impacts: Impacts from relatives include the influence of grandparents, parents-in-law, aunts, uncles, sisters, and brothers. In the data, 38% of impacts came from relatives, and the five types of relatives' impacts can be expressed as follows. (1) 24% of relatives' impacts were supportive, including both encouragement and financial support. (2) 5% of relatives' impacts were determining, which is always based on the influence and respect due to eldership. (3) 17% of relatives' impacts were guiding—concerning different aspects and from different people. (4) 12% of relatives' impacts were negative, but the data shows that this only occurs in Chinese families. Among the five cases with negative impacts, one involved sister; three involved parents-in-law; and one involved grandparents. In all cases, the relatives did not approve of the GDs work as a designer because it is hard work with an unstable incomes that allows less time for the GDs to look after their families. However, the reason for this phenomenon is mainly because of the patriarchal family culture and the understanding of GDs' work.

Comparing the data from both countries, relatives' impacts in China were more extensive than those in Finland. This is because of the different family culture in China, where the family includes three to four generations usually living together or having frequent communication. China also has a long patriarchal history, and daughters-in-law should respect the will of their parents-in-law after they join their husbands' families. Contrarily, Finnish people have a relatively independent living space, and the career development of Finnish female GDs is relatively less affected by surrounding people.

In summary, FMIs concerning female GDs' career development are multifaceted and multilayered. The five types of positive and negative impacts may be analyzed the positive as follows. Supporting and guiding contributed to female GDs spiritual and financial wellbeing and positively influenced their career development. Determining impacts were mostly positive for female GDs, who have continued well on their path toward graphic design, while it was negative for those, who missed or gave up graphic design due to family members' determining their career choices. The flexible impacts have no influence on female GDs, but they allowed the GDs to move freely in their own ways; therefore, it was also positive, in a certain sense. The negative impacts accounted for 10% of the overall

proportion, mainly from children and family care, and China's negative impacts were more serious than those in Finland. Overall, the FMIs affecting the career development of female GDs overlap and are ambiguous, but the impacts of family members has greater and deeper influence on Chinese female GDs than on Finnish female GDs.

5. Discussion: As a multiple check on family members—including parents, husband/boyfriend, children, and relatives—the present research used these items as the independent variable and the impact types as dependent variables. Multiple effects on female GDs career development were obtained concerning the mutual relationship among family culture, gender culture, and government policy. Through these comparisons, the FMIs and hidden problems of the influence on female GDs' career development were more clearly defined.

5.1 The correlates of FMIs and the degree of influence:

5.1.1 Multilayered FMIs: From the above analysis of the data, FMIs were categorized into five types: supporting, determining, guiding, flexible, and negative. All the interviewees stated that family members influence their career development. Most interviewees were differently influenced by two or three types of FMIs, and more than half were influenced by more than three types of FMIs. This means the FMIs for female GDs' careers are multilayered, indicating that female GDs' career development is effected by family members to a certain extent, and, sometimes, positive and negative impacts exist simultaneously.

5.1.2 Long-term family influence on female GDs' career development: 90% of positive FMIs occurred during the GDs education periods and early careers. The positive influences can provide female GDs with inspiration, rewards, professional guidance, spiritual encouragement, and financial support. The negative influences were less impactful than the positive ones—mainly involving maternity leave, childcare, and opposition to design work. This influence mainly occurs in the short-term of a GD's entire career. However, the negative impacts were expressed more seriously in China because care for family is a long-term burden for women, which influences their career choices and leads them to leave the design field.

5.2 The relationship between family impacts and culture backgrounds:

5.2.1 The range of family impacts correlated with national gender culture: In general, influence from family members was mainly positive. Comparing the influences between China and Finland, Finnish female GDs were more positively influenced than Chinese female GDs, while Chinese female GDs were more negatively influenced than Finnish female GDs. As the data suggests, Finnish family members are more independent; Finnish people respect individual wishes; and people have more freedom to decide their own affairs. The proportion of positive impacts (supporting and guiding) on Finnish female GDs was approximately 20% higher than the impacts on Chinese female GDs. However, China has a long, patriarchal history, and Chinese family members have a closer relationship than those

in Finland. In China, parents always provide much guidance and advice for their children's study and work, and many times their opinions are decisive. The positive impacts on Chinese female GDs was approximately 85%. The deterministic ratio was 30%, but it cannot be directly defined as positive or negative, because it depends on the individual designer's satisfaction with the results. In this case, half of the reseults were considered to be good. Therefore, the positive impact on Chinese GDs was, in total, 80%, similar to the situation in Finland. The negative impacts in China were at approximately 50%, while they were found to be 21% in Finland. As previously discussed, negative impacts from Chinese family members depends on Chinese family culture, gender culture, maternity policy, and market acknowledgements, which are embodied in Chinese traditional concepts, modern family concepts, and educational concepts. Cultural differences were the main reason for the differences in family influences between China and Finland. It is worth noting that the influences made on female GDs mainly stemmed from peripheral cognition and self-awareness.

5.2.2 The relationship between family influence and family gender culture: Based on the data analysis, positive influences contributed to the career development of female GDs in both countries. Spiritual and financial support positively promoted career development, and no participants mentioned that support had gender differences. However, concerning negative influences, there were obvious differences between the countries. In China, negative influences mostly concerned family care. With the increasingly fierce competition among Chinese talents, children's education has received more and more attention. Mothers always spend much energy on caring for children and arranging educational programs. This is why, in the interviews, more than half of the Chinese interviewees stated that caring for children was a major negative impact on their career development. This phenomenon is mainly due to Chinese family gender culture, in which caring for the family and children is the mother's duty. This is so even in modern society. Men and women have equal status under the law, but, in fact, traditional gender culture still has long-term impacts on modern Chinese gender views. This negative influence also occurs in Finland, but, as it is a European country and a feminist nation, mothers and fathers have relatively balanced responsibilities and obligations. That is why Chinese GDs, who were mothers, received more negative influences from their families than their Finnish counterparts.

5.3 Career choice in policy context: Maternity leave is an inevitable experience that GDs, who are mothers, experienced. Maternity leave policies, as a background condition, are also important impact factors for female GDs' career development. Maternity leave in Finnish law is four months longer than that in China. This has reduced the burden on Finnish GDs for raising children. It is also the reason why Chinese GDs, who are mothers, feel more pressure concerning childcare issues.

6. Conclusion: The results of this multidimensional analysis confirms two points. (1) Family members are important, external impact factors for female GDs, and their influences are multilayered and multifaceted. (2) Family impacts are closely related to gender and culture. This is especially true in China, which has a long, patriarchal history, making the

influences related to gender culture and family culture more serious. This study has also highlighted that avoiding negative effects is one way to change female GDs' conditions. This requires efforts from the national government and related organizations to improve the social environment, making it more suitable for the development of female GDs. However, this also raises further questions concerning how designers perceive external influences, deal with the relationship between family and work, and deal with the conflict between cultural traditions and the needs of the modern market. Taking this into consideration, then, female GDs should change their mindsets to better adapt to the competition and development of modern society—e.g., to change the action, first change the mind.

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