

# Elevate the System

2024

**INDIA**

We do not need to change women —

we need to change systems.

# Elevate the System: Challenges and Realities



**DOWNLOAD  
FULL REPORT**

Please use this country report along with the Key Findings and Frameworks found in the full *Elevate the System* report that includes insights from five countries across the Asia Pacific region.

## 1 Inclusion Has Become a Dilemma

**Challenge:** With increased focus and investment on women leadership, why are we still struggling to get more women into senior roles?

**Reality:** Inclusion has become more complex and challenging to navigate.

## 2 Leaders Must Mind the Hidden Gap

**Challenge:** With all leaders facing similar hurdles in their sprint to senior positions, how can organizations make progress in ensuring a level playing field?

**Reality:** The hurdles that women leaders need to jump are considerably higher.

## 3 Feminine Superpowers Are Getting Women Leaders Into a Bind

**Challenge:** The Double Bind and Double Flex lead women to burn out at a faster rate.

**Reality:** Feminine strengths are becoming essential in the AI Era, yet women often do not get credit for displaying them.

## 4 Women Leaders Need to Ask For More

**Challenge:** Challenging job assignments and increased exposure tend to be key experiences that propel careers forward, and yet women are more reluctant to take them up.

**Reality:** Overall, women are being offered more, but are asking less.

## 5 We Must Elevate the System

**Challenge:** Without removing systemic barriers, we can not fully tackle the internal barriers that hold women back

**Reality:** We do not need to change women, we need to change systems.

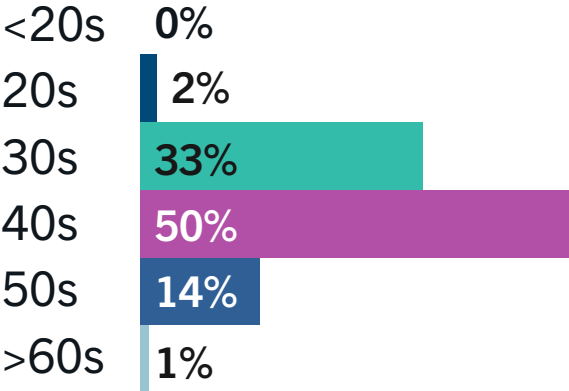
# About the Research

Survey (Nov. 2023 – Mar. 2024)

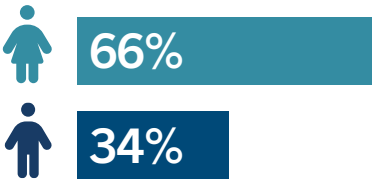
**180**

SURVEY  
RESPONDENTS

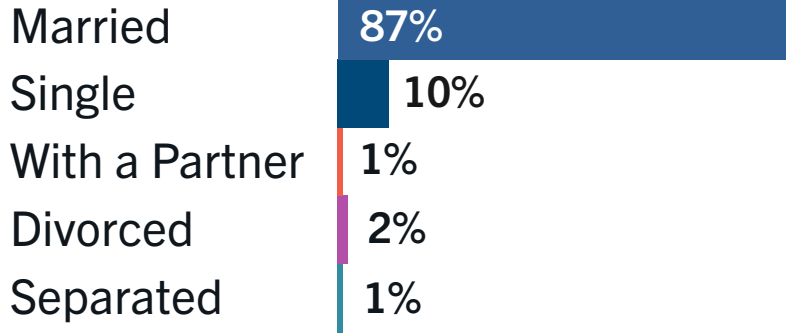
## Age:



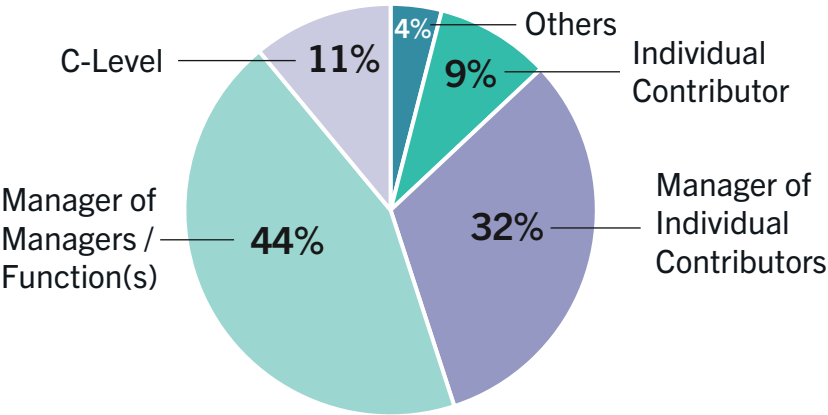
## Gender:



## Marital Status:



## Organizational Level:





Question: Select the response that best represents your opinions regarding gender equity in the workplace.

Safety	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, women are hit-on or harassed related to their gender.	<b>53%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, women are hit-on or harassed related to their gender.	<b>12%</b>
Pay	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, there is a gender pay disparity.	<b>41%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, there is a gender pay disparity.	<b>20%</b>
Opportunity	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, men and women have equal opportunities.	<b>76%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, men and women have equal opportunities.	<b>92%</b>

*Table presents % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements*



**Question:** Select the response that best represents your opinions regarding gender equity in the workplace.

				GAP (SHE SAYS-HE SAYS)
Safety	In MY workplace, women are hit-on or harassed related to their gender.	3%	16%	13%
Pay	In MY workplace, there is a gender pay disparity.	12%	37%	25%
Opportunity	In MY workplace, men and women have equal opportunities.	93%	77%	-16%



*Table presents % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements*

**Question:** Select the response that best represents your opinions regarding gender equity in the workplace.

## IDENTITY

		
Struggling with conflicting values and how I prioritize them	<b>21%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Struggling to live a life that is consistent with my values and priorities (not other's expectations and priorities)	<b>30%</b>	<b>39%</b>

## AGENCY

		
Feeling weighed down by surrounding constraints, that it is a “limited” or “no choice” situation	<b>30%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Feeling torn in accepting the trade-offs between meeting own needs and the needs of others	<b>21%</b>	<b>36%</b>

# Top 5 Factors Hindering Growth of Women Leaders

To what extent do you agree that these factors hinder women from becoming senior leaders?

*(Figure denotes % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements)*



**69%**

Our society expects women to take on more family responsibilities than men.

Our society expects women to take on more family responsibilities than men.

**96%**

**57%**

Women prioritize family over work.

Our society expects women to behave in certain ways that hinders them from becoming senior leaders.

**90%**

**56%**

Women underestimate their ability to lead.

Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.

**83%**

**55%**

Our society expects women to behave in certain ways that hinders them from becoming senior leaders.

Women underestimate their ability to lead.

**82%**

**49%**

Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.

Organizations lack formal programs that support women leadership development.

**81%**



**49%**

Organizations lack formal programs that support women leadership development.

# Top 5 Gaps in Perception

To what extent do you agree that these factors hinder women from becoming senior leaders?

*(Figure denotes % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements)*

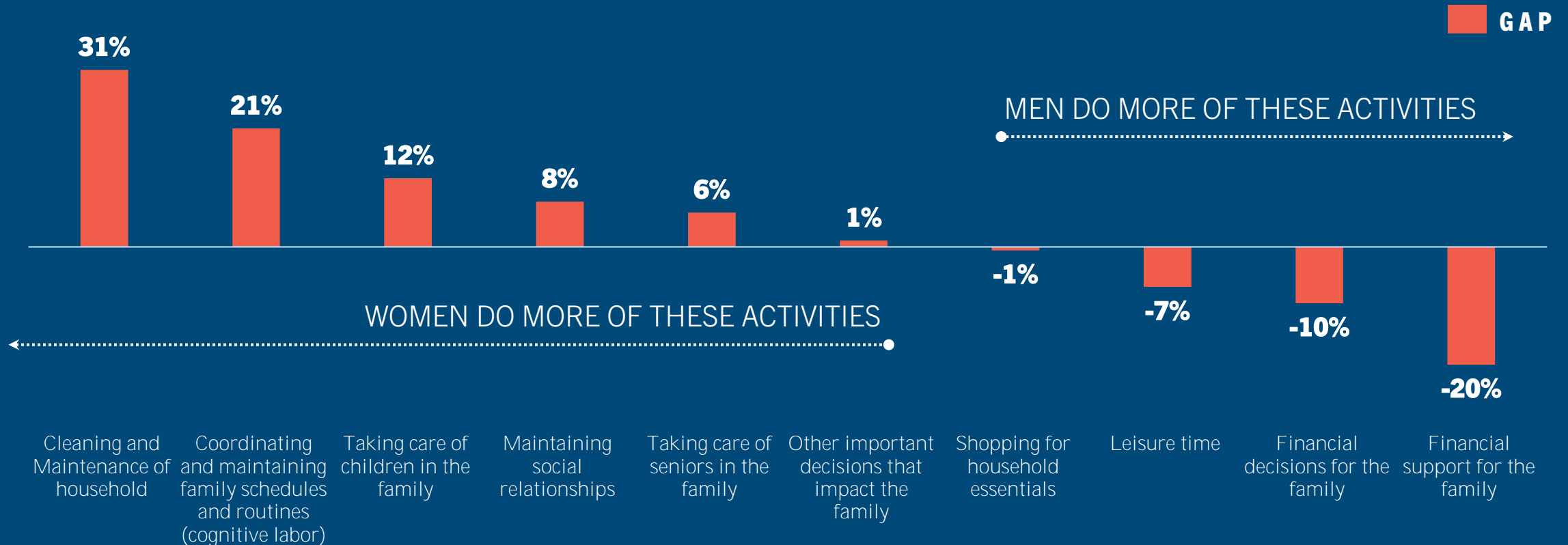
				GAP (SHE SAYS-HE SAYS)
Organization	Organizations do not provide men and women equal opportunities.	<b>12%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Organization	Organizations have a “male-centric” culture.	<b>15%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>54%</b>
Society	Our society expects women to behave in certain ways that hinders them from becoming senior leaders.	<b>17%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>51%</b>
Organization	Male managers are less likely to promote women than men.	<b>22%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Family	Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.	<b>55%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>35%</b>

*Table presents % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements*



# Division of Activities in Dual-Career Couples

How are the following activities divided between you and your spouse/partner (total 100%)?  
(Gap = % of activity that women say they do - % of activity that men say they do)

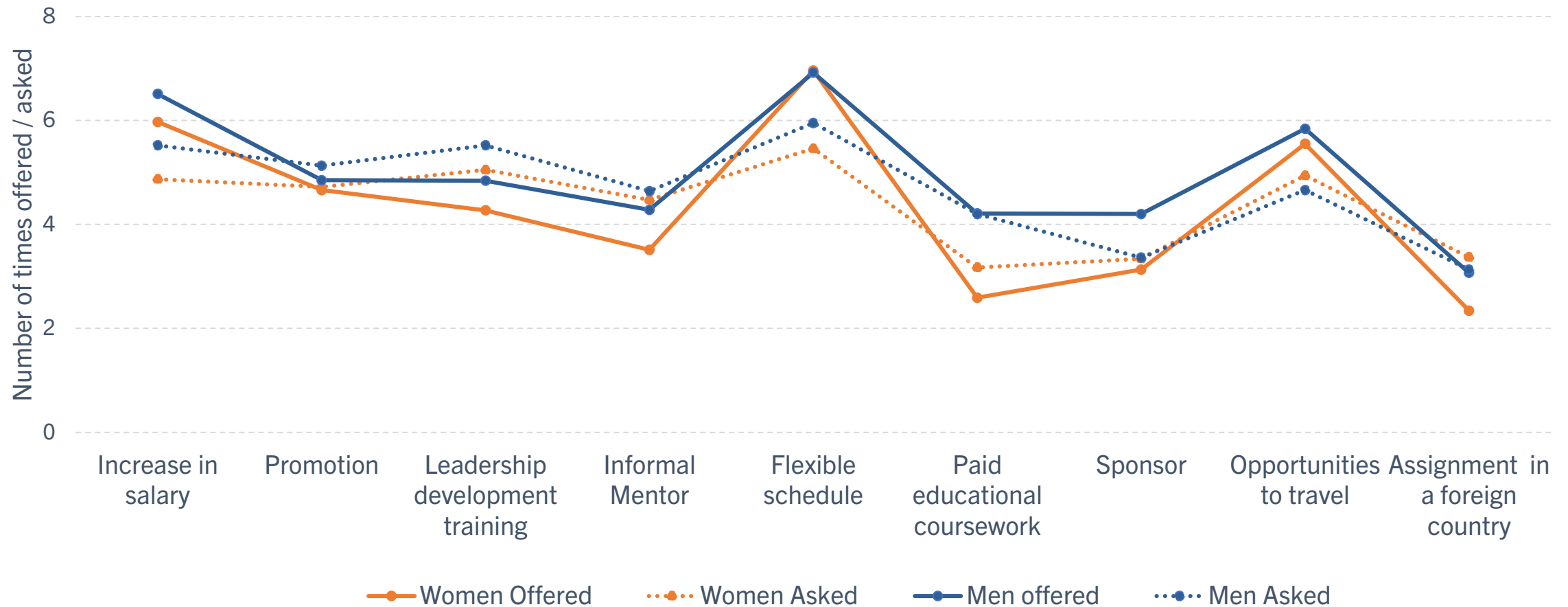


# Factors Considered Important for Career Advancement

How important are the following opportunities for your career advancement?  
(Figure denotes % of respondents rating the statements important/extremely important)



<b>BENEFITS</b>	Increase in salary	<b>99%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Leadership development training	<b>98%</b>
<b>COURSES</b>	Informal Mentor	<b>96%</b>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Promotion	<b>83%</b>
<b>BENEFITS</b>	Flexible schedule	<b>80%</b>
<b>COURSES</b>	Sponsor	<b>80%</b>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Paid educational coursework	<b>78%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Opportunities to travel	<b>70%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Assignment in a foreign country	<b>63%</b>

# Development Opportunities - Offered and Asked



*The number of times women and men had asked for or been offered career-progressing opportunities.  
From left to right, the items are in the sequence of importance level from high to low*

# Opportunities Exist to Raise the Level of Action and Advocacy

		
<b>75%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>AWARE</b> - In my organization, men are aware of the benefits brought by gender diversity.
<b>77%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>DISCUSS</b> - In my organization, men participate in the discussion of gender diversity.
<b>85%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>TAKE ACTION</b> - In my organization, men take actions to support women leadership development by being their mentors, sponsors, etc.
<b>77%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>ADVOCATE</b> - In my organization, senior male leaders advocate for gender diversity.

*Figure denotes % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements*

# Key Takeaways

01

In India inequity in terms of safety and pay is perceived by both men and women. There are significant differences between women and men however in their perceptions in these perceptions, with women observing these inequities coming up as barriers more frequently.

02

Similar to most of the APAC region, women leaders in India report a higher level of challenge with identity and agency issues compared to male leaders, often torn between conflicting needs, priorities and values.

03

Social norms and organization systems are a major factor hindering women from aspiring to senior roles in India. There is a significant gap in the perceptions between men and women on the extent to which organization systems and culture serve as a hindrance to career growth.

# Key Takeaways

04

Among dual-career couples in India, women report doing a major portion of the activities connected with coordination of routines and upkeep of the family, leading to them being stretched across too many roles with a higher risk of burnout.

05

Leadership development, paid educational coursework, mentoring and sponsorship are a few areas where there continue to be significant gaps in what men and women are being offered in India. While women are asking for assignments in a foreign country and opportunities to travel more than men, they are offered these opportunities less.

06

Women leaders in India indicate that while male leaders display an increased awareness and engage in discussions around gender diversity more, there is not enough action when it comes to their role as sponsors and allies for gender diversity.



At the Center for Creative Leadership, our drive to create a ripple effect of positive change underpins everything we do. For 50+ years, we've pioneered leadership development solutions for everyone from frontline workers to global CEOs. Consistently ranked among the world's top providers of executive education, our research-based programs and solutions inspire individuals in organizations across the world — including ⅓ of the Fortune 1000 — to ignite remarkable transformations.

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