

# Elevate the System

2024

## SINGAPORE

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

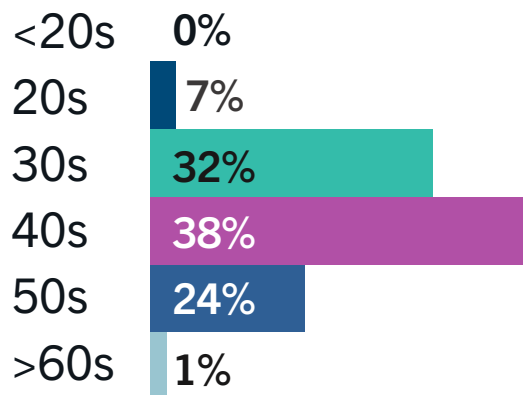
**Reality:** We do not need to change women, we need to change systems.

# About the Research

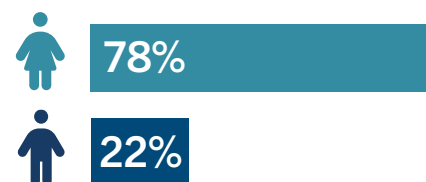
Survey (Nov. 2023 – Mar. 2024)

**176** SURVEY  
RESPONDENTS

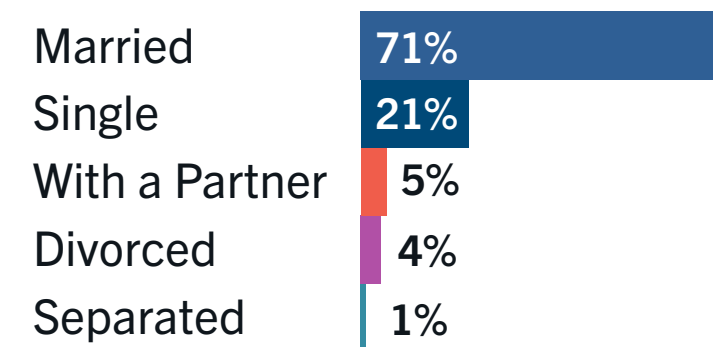
## Age:



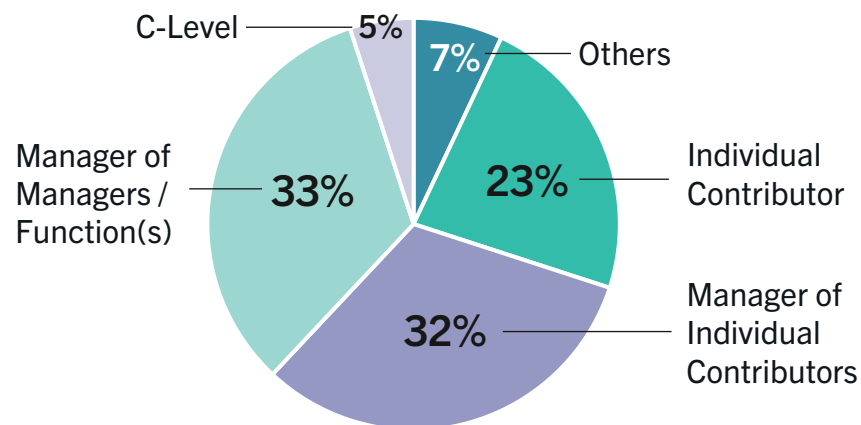
## Gender:



## Marital Status:



## Organizational Level:



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

<b>Safety</b>	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, women are hit-on or harassed related to their gender.	<b>37%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, women are hit-on or harassed related to their gender.	<b>11%</b>
<b>Pay</b>	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, there is a gender pay disparity.	<b>68%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, there is a gender pay disparity.	<b>35%</b>
<b>Opportunity</b>	In <b>MOST</b> workplaces, men and women have equal opportunities.	<b>62%</b>
	In <b>MY</b> workplace, men and women have equal opportunities.	<b>87%</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%	13%	10%
Pay	In MY workplace, there is a gender pay disparity.	18%	39%	21%
Opportunity	In MY workplace, men and women have equal opportunities.	100%	84%	-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>29%</b>	<b>38%</b>
Struggling to live a life that is consistent with my values and priorities (not other's expectations and priorities)	<b>24%</b>	<b>52%</b>

## AGENCY

		
Feeling weighed down by surrounding constraints, that it is a “limited” or “no choice” situation	<b>42%</b>	<b>55%</b>
Feeling torn in accepting the trade-offs between meeting own needs and the needs of others	<b>29%</b>	<b>49%</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)*



**76%**

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

**61%**

Organizations do not provide sufficient flexibility (e.g., flexible working hour, remote working, non-linear career path, etc.).

**46%**

Women prioritize family over work.

**45%**

Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.

**45%**

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

**45%**

Women underestimate their ability to lead.



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

**89%**

Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.

**80%**

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

**80%**

Organizations lack formal programs that support women leadership development.

**75%**



Women underestimate their ability to lead.

**72%**

# Top 5 Gaps in Perception

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

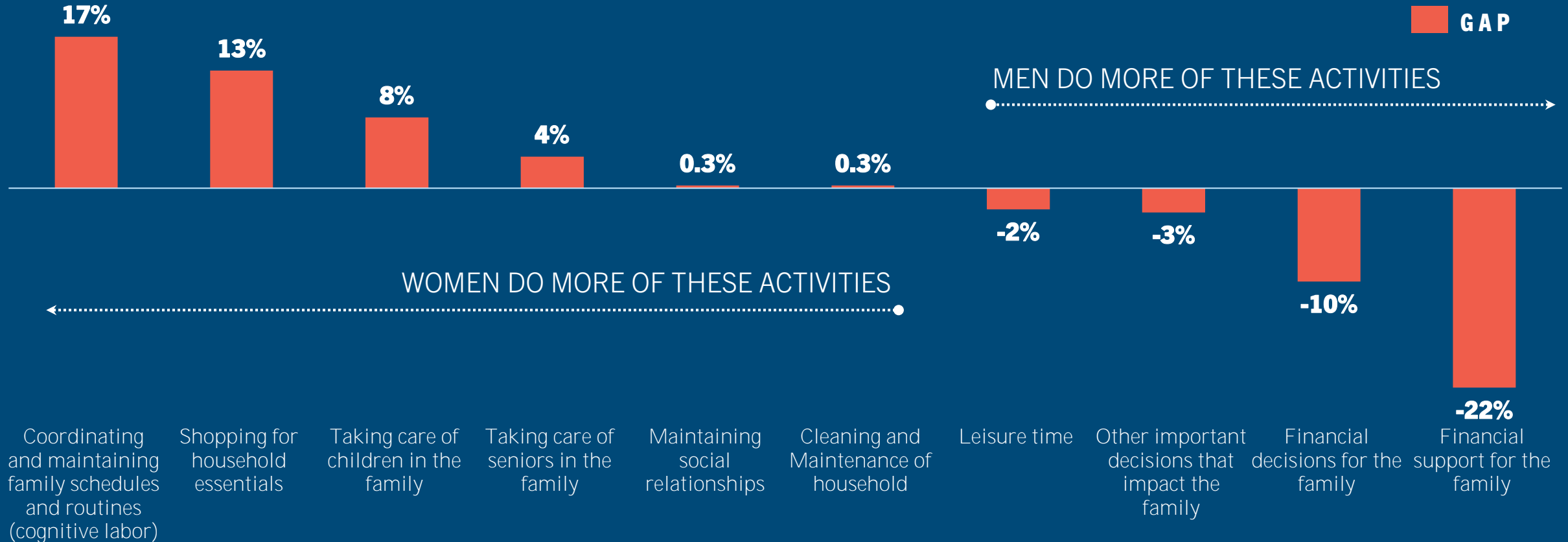
*(Figure denotes % of respondents agreeing/strongly agreeing to the statements)*

				GAP (SHE SAYS-HE SAYS)
Society	Our society expects women to behave in certain ways that hinders them from becoming senior leaders.	35%	80%	45%
Family	Men in the family do not support women being senior leaders.	3%	45%	42%
Organization	Men in the workplace do not support women being senior leaders.	8%	44%	36%
Family	Men are unaware of the bias they hold against women.	45%	80%	35%
Organization	Organizations lack formal programs that support women leadership development.	45%	75%	30%

*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)

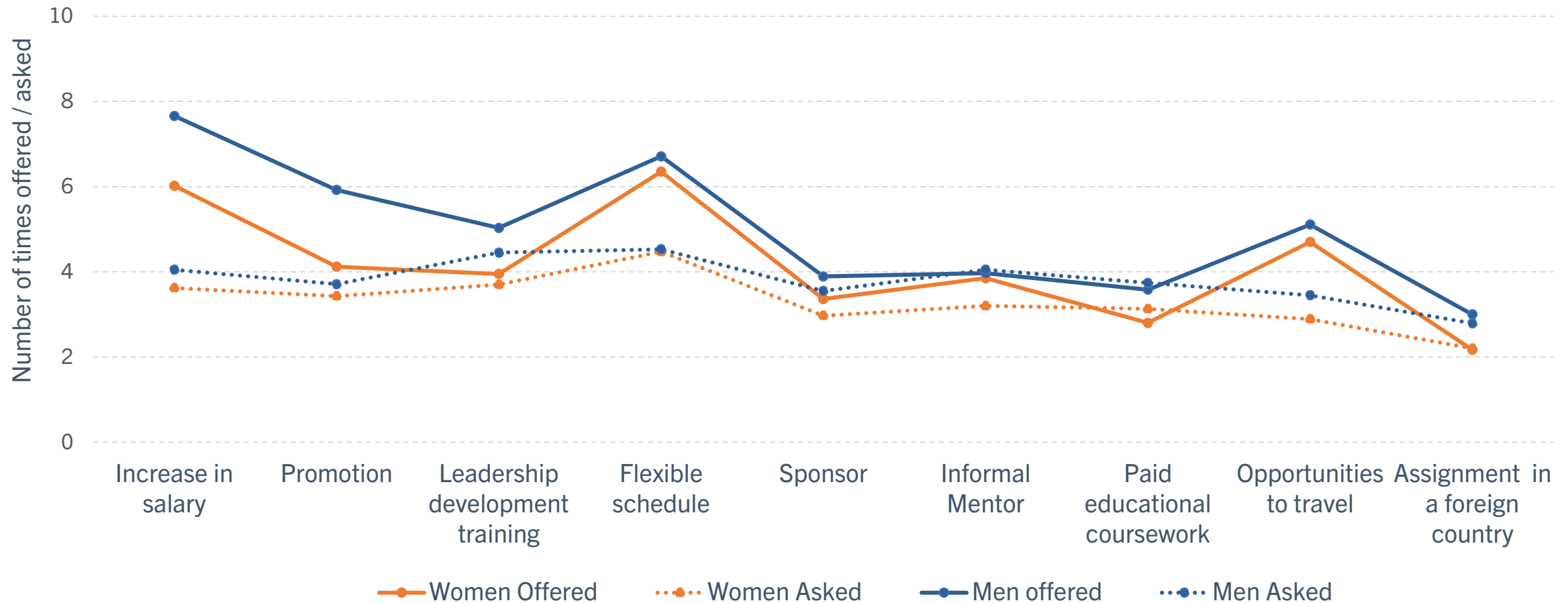


# Factors Considered Important for Career Advancement

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>95%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Promotion	<b>88%</b>
<b>COURSES</b>	Leadership development training	<b>85%</b>
<b>BENEFITS</b>	Flexible schedule	<b>80%</b>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Sponsor	<b>77%</b>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	Informal Mentor	<b>75%</b>
<b>COURSES</b>	Paid educational coursework	<b>57%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Opportunities to travel	<b>35%</b>
<b>JOB EXPERIENCE</b>	Assignment in a foreign country	<b>31%</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>69%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>AWARE</b> - In my organization, men are aware of the benefits brought by gender diversity.
<b>79%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>DISCUSS</b> - In my organization, men participate in the discussion of gender diversity.
<b>84%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>TAKE ACTION</b> - In my organization, men take actions to support women leadership development by being their mentors, sponsors, etc.
<b>87%</b>	<b>71%</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 Singapore gender inequity on safety, pay, and development continue to be perceived by both men and women. At the same time there are significant differences between women and men in these perceptions, with women observing these inequities coming up as barriers more frequently.

04

Among dual-career couples in Singapore 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.

02

Women leaders in Singapore experience a higher level of challenge with identity and agency issues compared to male leaders, often torn between conflicting needs, priorities and values.

05

Increase in salary, promotion and leadership development training are a few areas where there continue to be significant gaps in what men and women are being offered in Singapore.

03

There is a very large gap in perceptions between men and women on the extent to which societal expectations hinder women from making it to senior roles.

06

Women leaders in Singapore see a need for male leaders to play a bigger role as sponsors and allies for gender diversity.



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## **CCL REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

### **Americas**

+1 336 545 2810  
[ccl.org](http://ccl.org)

### **Europe, Middle East, Africa**

+32 (0) 2 679 09 10  
[ccl.org/emea](http://ccl.org/emea)

### **Asia-Pacific, India, Greater China**

+65 6854 6000  
[ccl.org/apac](http://ccl.org/apac)