

INDIA

EXPANDING WORK-LIFE PERSPECTIVES:

TALENT MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

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EXPANDING WORK-LIFE PERSPECTIVES: TALENT MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

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MAKING THE CASE FOR WORK-LIFE EFFECTIVENESS IN INDIA

Work-life effectiveness is a key concern for employees in many Asian regions,¹ where rapidly developing local economies and work cultures often require long hours and overtime.² Despite global trends, work-life concerns play out differently within various cultural contexts, and companies need to localize their work-life approach within specific settings where they operate.³ Implementing work-life programs requires the thoughtful integration of a global approach with local customs to ensure the strategies make sense in employees’ day-to-day lives.⁴

In *Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in Asia*, Catalyst described the perspectives of 1,834 high-potential employees working in Asia and in the context of a U.S.- or

European-based multinational organization. The findings showed that both women and men were highly driven and interested in getting ahead in their careers and articulated a strong interest in managing work and personal commitments effectively.

In this country profile, we draw from the larger sample to spotlight the experiences of more than 200 high-potential employees working for multinational companies in India, one of the regions in Asia with the greatest economic impact and growth in the global marketplace.⁵ Organizations in this region are also demonstrating increased interest in work-life concerns. Respondents in this study were referred by their respective companies as promising future leaders who are among the best and the brightest employees.

TABLE 1: FINDINGS AT A GLANCE⁶

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of gender, future leaders in India are highly focused on their jobs and their career advancement; they also report a strong dual work-family emphasis and the desire to have a good work-life fit. • Despite having similar levels of career interest and ambition as men, women in India report more challenges managing work and personal life, suggesting the need for companies to consider how current work cultures and work-life policies fit the experiences of all their talent. 	
WOMEN AND MEN IN INDIA	WOMEN IN INDIA
Reported that their current focus is on their job but also reported a strong dual (work and family) focus.	Were more likely to report challenges managing work and family life.
Stated that they wanted to advance further in their careers and aspired to senior leadership roles.	
Said that having a good fit between life on and off the job was very important to them and appreciated their company’s flexibility options.	Were more likely to convey a mismatch between their flexibility needs and what the company offered.

The Work-Life Landscape in India

Demographic and Cultural Elements

In India, it is customary for parents to rely on extended families for support with work-life and family issues. For childcare, the most common arrangements include support by parents, in-laws, and paid help, followed by professional day care services. India is also witnessing considerable demographic, generational, and economic change, including a rapid increase in household incomes and the proportion of middle-class families.⁷ As India continues to develop into a stronger economic power, work-life programs are becoming an increasingly important tool for workforce effectiveness and for promoting women's advancement.⁸

Formalized Policies and Legislation

Examples of work-life-related policies and legislation in India include:

- **Safety in the Workplace:** Safety is an important issue in India and can constitute a barrier for many women employees.⁹ Safety can affect traveling and commuting to work, which can be a challenge for some women, especially in contexts where it is culturally inappropriate for women to travel alone.¹⁰ In terms of what happens in the workplace, The Union Cabinet recently passed the Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill 2010, legislation that had been pending approval since 2004.¹¹ The bill would provide protection to women employees as well as to clients, customers, or temporary workers.¹² It puts forward a definition of sexual harassment and procedures to effectively address complaints.
- **Maternity Leave Benefits Act of 1961:** This law entitles women to 12 weeks of fully paid leave for the birth of a child. Employers

cannot discharge or dismiss women during or because of maternity leave. In addition, this law allows women to take two additional nursing breaks until their child is 15 months old.¹³ The Maternity Leave Act does not have an adoption clause, but adoption leave legislation for female and male government employees has recently been introduced. For non-governmental employees, adoption leave is at the discretion of the employers.¹⁴

- **Factories Leave Act of 1948:** Employers with more than 30 women workers must provide childcare facilities for any worker's child who is younger than 6 years old. However, some companies have found ways to circumvent these laws (i.e., factories will employ 29 full-time women workers and then lots of part-time women workers so they don't need to provide childcare).¹⁵

Examples of Work-Life Programs in India

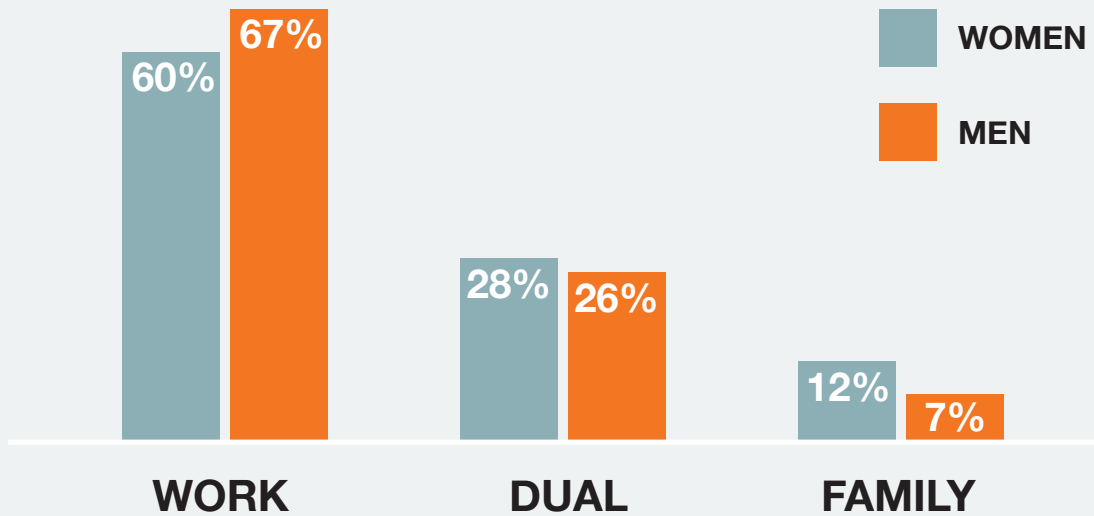
Examples of work-life programs offered by some companies in India include:

- **Procter & Gamble:** Employees can work from home or work reduced schedules.¹⁶
- **PricewaterhouseCoopers:** Commute support, women's networks, mentoring.¹⁷
- **Infosys:** Wellness programs, stress-relief programs, counseling, sabbaticals, return-to-work training, enhanced maternity leave.¹⁸
- **Wipro:** Wellness counseling, on-site "day camp" during school holidays.¹⁹
- **Tata Group:** Provides employee programs to connect parents with their children.²⁰
- **Ernst & Young:** Returnship programs for new mothers, flexible work arrangements, reduced schedules, on-site nursery.²¹
- **Google:** Taxis on-call for family and personal emergencies.²²

Women and Men in India Report High Job Focus and Interest in Advancing in Their Careers

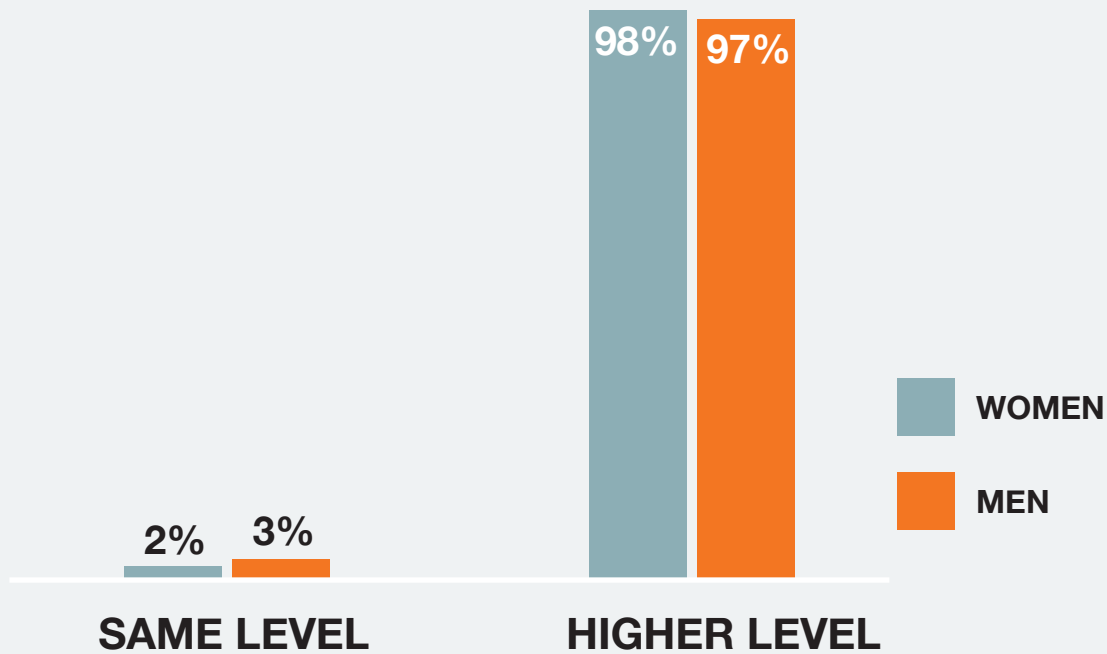
Work consistently emerged as a strong priority among both Indian women and men respondents (Figure 1). Overall, more than one-quarter of respondents reported a dual (work and family) focus, less than 10 percent said that their current focus was only their family, and there were no gender differences among respondents on either measure.²³

Figure 1: WORK, FAMILY, AND DUAL FOCUS (India, by Gender)²⁴



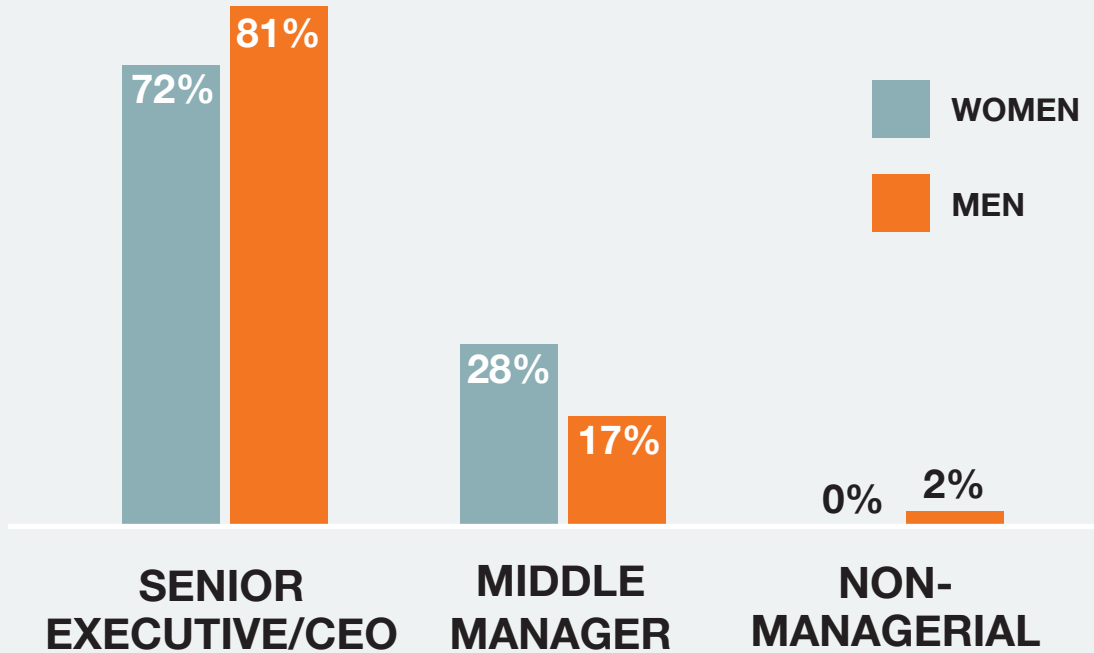
Respondents conveyed high levels of ambition to advance further in their careers, with a solid 97 percent of both women and men reporting that they were aspiring to move to a higher-level position within the next five years (Figure 2).²⁵

Figure 2: ASPIRATIONS FOR NEXT LEVEL, NEXT FIVE YEARS (India, by Gender)



Regardless of gender, high-potentials in India had strong aspirations to achieve senior executive or CEO roles in their careers. More than 70 percent of respondents (Figure 3) reported that their career goal was to move to a senior leadership position.

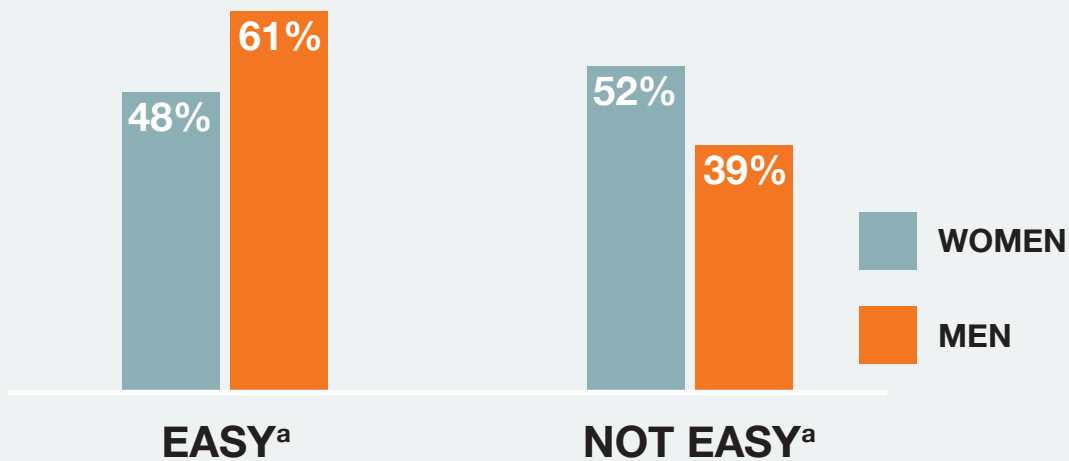
Figure 3: ASPIRATIONS, CAREER OVERALL (India, by Gender)



Women in India Report More Challenges Managing Work and Personal Life Than Men

Women in India reported higher levels of difficulty managing work and family demands compared to men, and men were more likely to say that managing work and personal life came “easy” to them (Figure 4).

Figure 4: MANAGING WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE (India, by Gender)



^aSignificant differences for p=.07.

Both women and men in India reported highly valuing work-life fit (Figure 5) and somewhat positive ratings regarding their workplace flexibility options (Figure 6).

Figure 5: IMPORTANCE OF WORK-LIFE FIT (India, by Gender)

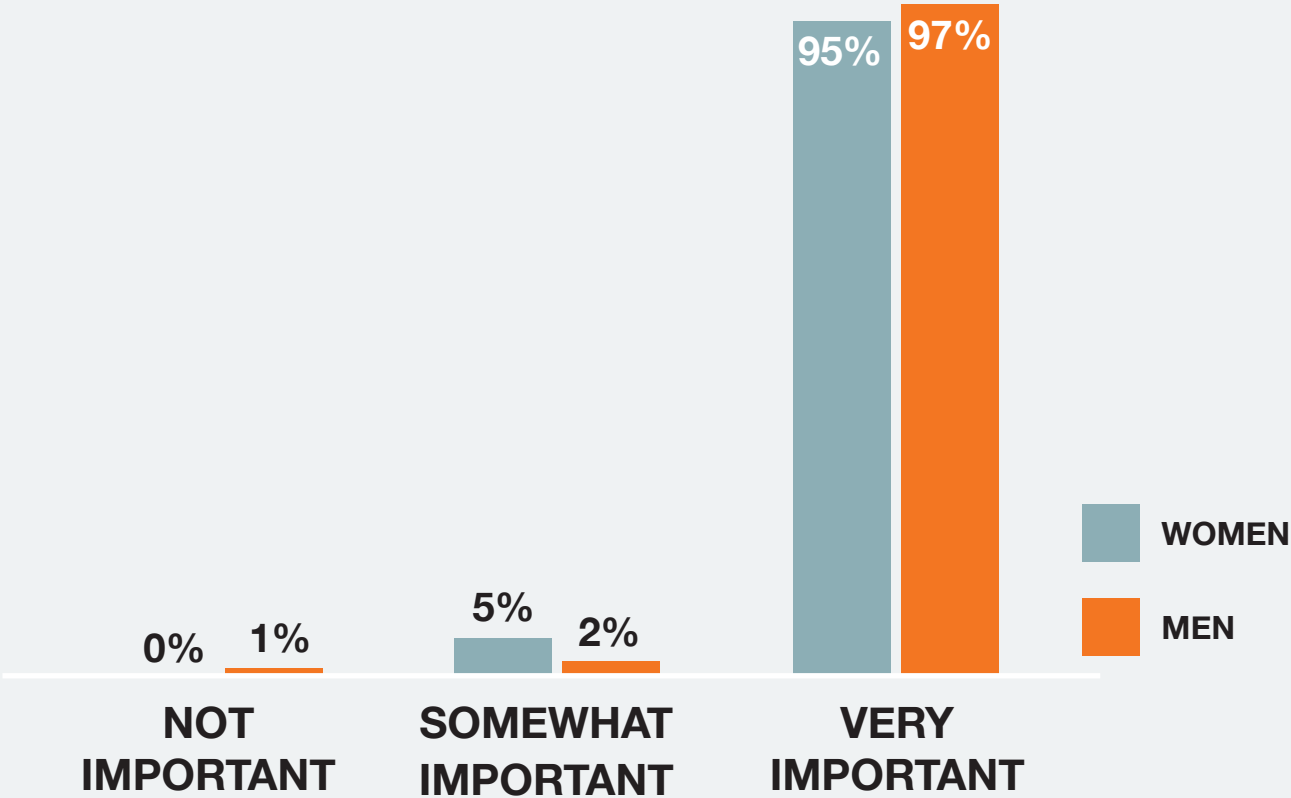
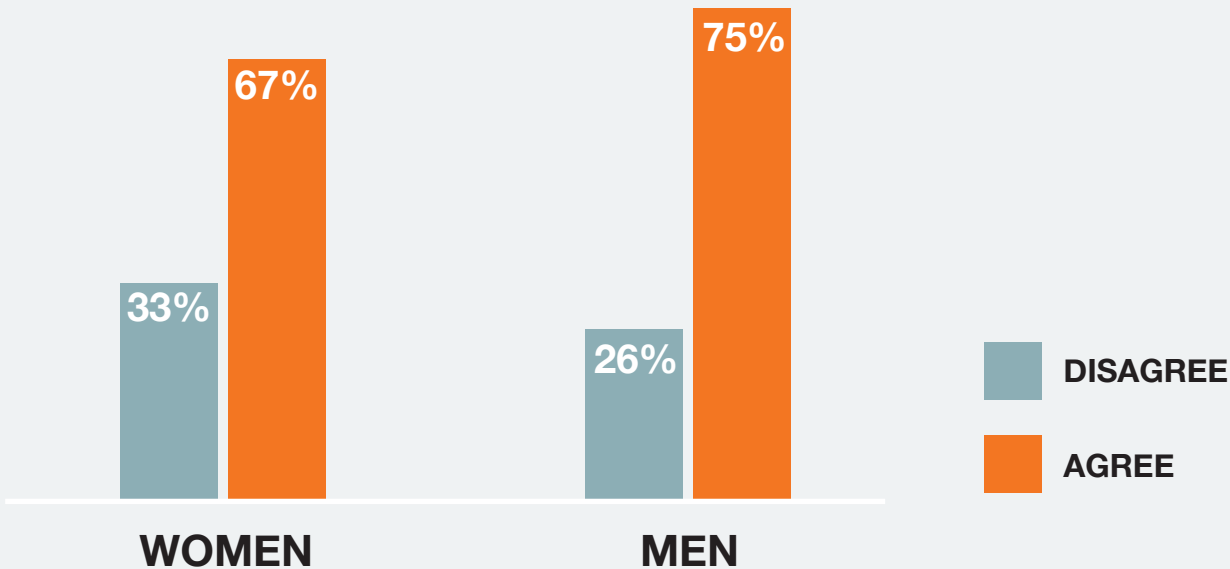


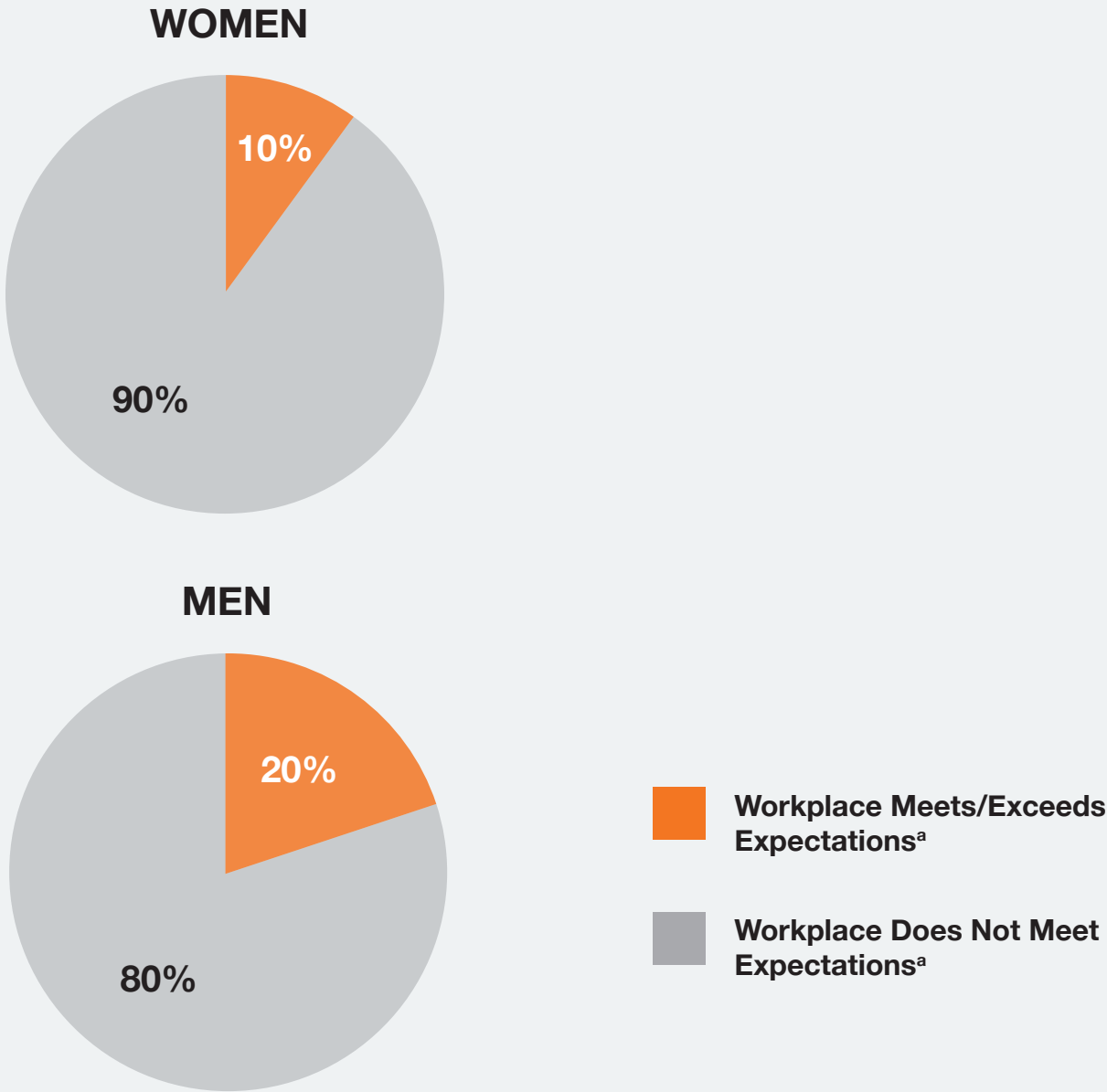
Figure 6: COMPANY PROVIDES ENOUGH FLEXIBILITY (India, by Gender)^a



^aGroup percentages were rounded up; some totals amount to more than 100 percent.

When comparing respondents' flexibility needs and their ratings of what their companies offered, a gap emerged.²⁶ More than 80 percent of both women and men in India rated the existing work-life policies in their organizations lower than what they needed to achieve a good fit between life on and off the job (Figure 7). Furthermore, the analyses indicated that women were less likely than men to convey that their workplace met their expectations in terms of flexibility (Figure 7).

Figure 7: GAP BETWEEN CURRENT WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY AND WORK-LIFE NEEDS (India, by Gender)



^aSignificant differences for $p < .05$.

INTEGRATING GLOBAL AND LOCAL CONCERNS INTO WORK-LIFE FLEXIBILITY PROGRAMS IN INDIA

INSTRUCTIONS: This section includes questions on key dimensions to consider as you integrate both global and local concerns into an effective work-life flexibility program for your organization. Please review the questions, and note your answers in the space provided.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND WORK-LIFE PROFILE

- ▶ What does your employee population look like in this region? Consider characteristics such as gender, age, location, and family status. Focus on those relevant to your location, industry, and business.

NOTES: _____

- ▶ What are the most prevalent work-life needs among your employees? What are their work-life concerns and challenges? Do these needs and concerns vary between women and men? If so, how?

NOTES ON WORK-LIFE NEEDS, CONCERNS, AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES:



NOTES ON WORK-LIFE NEEDS, CONCERNS, AND CHALLENGES OF MEN EMPLOYEES:

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WOMEN'S AND MEN'S WORK-LIFE NEEDS, CONCERNS, AND CHALLENGES:

AVAILABILITY AND USE OF PROGRAMS

▶ What work-life programs are offered by your organization?

NOTES: _____

▶ What are the cultural norms regarding using flexible work arrangements?

NOTES: _____

▶ Do employees understand these programs as intended?

NOTES: _____

▶ Do employees talk about using these programs? If so, how do they talk about them?

NOTES: _____



▶ Do employees use the programs that are available to them?

NOTES: _____

▶ List examples of how employees use work-life programs at your company (e.g., for emergencies only).

NOTES: _____



ENDNOTES

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2. Ng; Ng and Vernon; Wharton and Blair.
3. Anne Bardoel and Helen De Cieri, "Developing a Work/Life Strategy in a Multinational Enterprise (MNE)," *Sloan Work and Family Research Network Encyclopedia* (2006).
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5. India is among the top 10 countries in the world for GDP (real growth rate) and ranks among the top 50 for both industrial production growth rate and labor force. Source: *CIA World Factbook*.
6. This report focuses on the experiences of high-potential employees working in India. For a summary of the research and findings among a larger sample of survey respondents working in Asia, as well as for comparative analyses between India and other individual countries, see *Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in Asia* (Catalyst, 2012).
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17. *Ibid.*
18. Srivastava.
19. Rajadhyaksha; Srivastava.
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22. *Ibid.*
23. In *Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in Asia*, respondents from India reported a high dual (work and family) focus compared to respondents from other countries.
24. Out of the 226 respondents who worked in India, 164 (73%) were men and 62 (27%) were women. Consistent with Indian demographics, a majority of respondents were below 35 years of age, 30 percent between 36 and 45 years, and the remaining 12 percent were 46 or older. Seventy-five percent of respondents from India were married or partnered and the remaining 25% were single, divorced, or widowed. Among married/partnered respondents, 81 (48%) were in a dual-income family, while 87 (52%) said their spouse/partner wasn't currently employed. Sixty percent of respondents (N=118) reported having at least one child under 18 living at home, and 58 percent (N=127) said that they were also involved with taking care of an older relative.
25. These findings are consistent with what was found in the larger Asian sample as well as with existing literature on the topic. See, for example, "Gender Diversity Benchmark for Asia 2011," *Community Business* (September 2011).
26. A repeated-measures MANOVA was also conducted to confirm differences in scores between respondents' work-life fit values and their ratings of workplace flexibility options.

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