



KANTAR

campaign

The state of gender equality in the media and marketing industry in Asia Pacific

A Campaign and Kantar study

Foreword

There is a body of undeniable business evidence to underline gender diversity's impact on business success. In 2018, most agencies and client organisations recognise the benefits of having a gender diverse workplace in the modern economy — equality leads to better creativity, engagement and business results. Yet turning this ambition into reality isn't easy.

At first glance, our second gender equality survey in partnership with Kantar makes for grim reading. Has so little really changed in a year since we came together to promote equality in the workplace and sign the Mandate for Change? As the data shows, we have to do more. With a clear view on the challenges ahead, as well as the progress made, it's more important than ever that we unite as an industry and stay committed to our campaign for change.

Atifa Silk

Brand Director
Campaign Asia-Pacific



Foreword

The discussion around gender parity has moved on a great deal since we launched our first study into the state of play in Asia Pacific last year. Back in 2017, we learnt that there was no shortage of ambition amongst women working in the media and marketing industry. However, for all the rhetoric around equality, many women felt that bias still existed and was holding them back from reaching their full potential.

Since then we've witnessed a global shift in the gender debate. The #MeToo movement exposed the prevalence of sexual harassment, especially within the workplace, whilst new transparency laws have revealed the true extent of gender pay gaps. The debate has become louder and more forceful – gender inequality is still a pervasive issue and needs to be addressed.

In this year's study, we assess how the situation has progressed, how both women and men feel about the gender dynamics in the workplace, and importantly, how awareness is changing. In doing so, we look to identify ways to push towards a culture shift that will bring about real change.

Anne Rayner

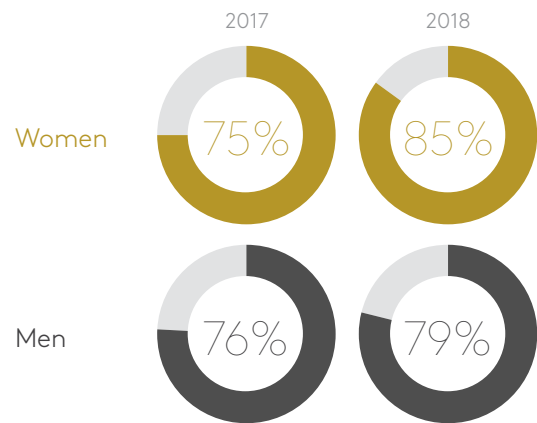
Chief Solutions Officer, Insights Division
Kantar



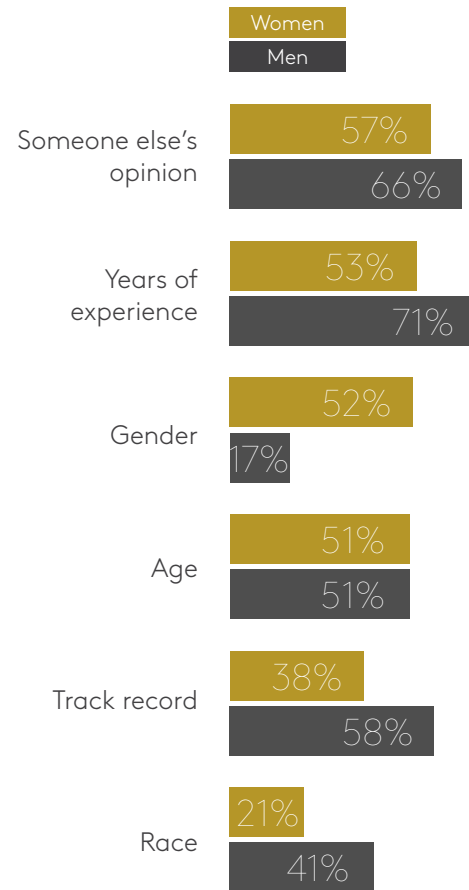
Women feel judged on who they are, not what they do

Both men and women believe that people have preconceptions about their ability, and this feeling has become more pronounced in the past year, with 85% of women and 79% of men agreeing.

Q: Agree that people form preconceived notions about their ability



However, the difference lies in the reasons why people feel they are judged. Men are more likely to believe that years of experience and their track record define their standing in the workplace, while women tend to see gender as more of a defining factor. They feel judged based on who they are, not what they have done.



This unconscious bias permeates through to how many women believe their gender affects opportunities at work. Two thirds (66%) of women said that they thought men had more opportunities to advance their career (versus 32% of men), whilst 48% of women say that they have missed out on an opportunity because of their gender.

A focus on performance, not the person, has long been a challenge to implement. However, with tension increasing over the impact of these negative assessments on careers, companies need to actively demonstrate how and why they are nurturing and rewarding people.

Areas to consider

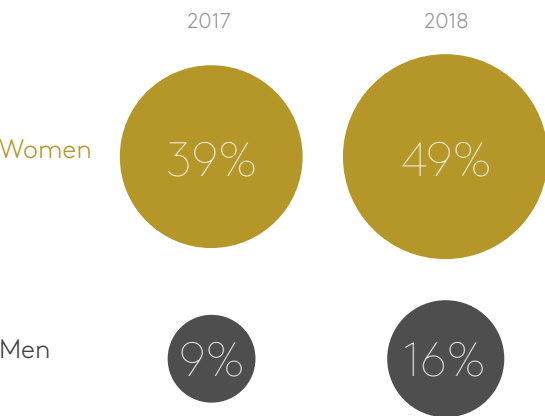
- How can you encourage employees to reflect on how they make judgements?
- What criteria are used to allocate opportunities or progression?
- Do you offer unconscious bias training?

Men get more respect

Both genders are increasingly reporting that men get more respect in the workplace – from 28% overall last year to 37% in 2018.

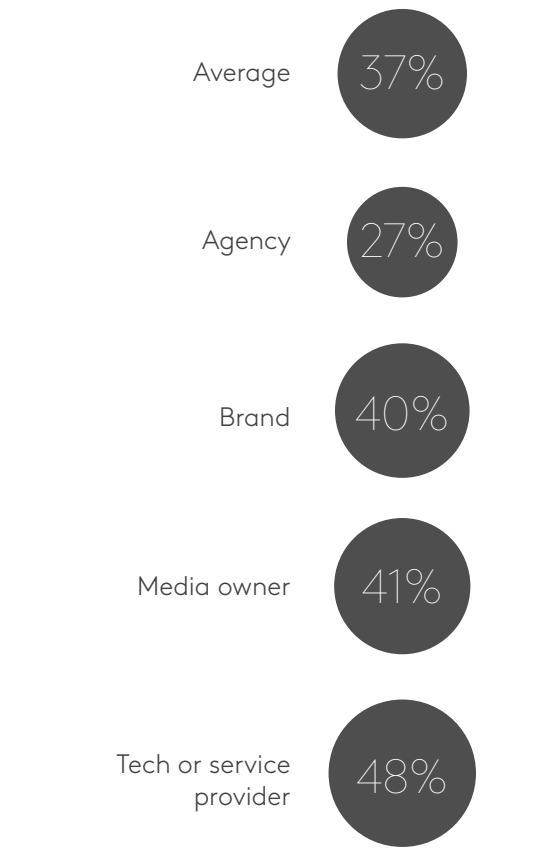
Women are more likely to say that men are more respected, with 49% saying it is true in their business. Although this belief is less common amongst men at 16% of those surveyed, it's notable that this has risen from 9% in 2017.

Q: Agree that men are respected more than women in their workplace



The sentiment is less apparent in the agencies we surveyed, and more prominent amongst those who work in-house at brands, media owners or in tech companies or service providers.

Q: Agree that men are respected more than women in their workplace



The results themselves are not something to celebrate, however the growing identification that this is a problem by both genders should serve to create an environment where unequal treatment can be called out.

“When a man is hard on his team, he is considered a good, focussed boss. However, a strict woman with strong work beliefs is not seen in the same light and is seen as simply being bitchy or just unnecessarily hard on her team.”

Areas to consider

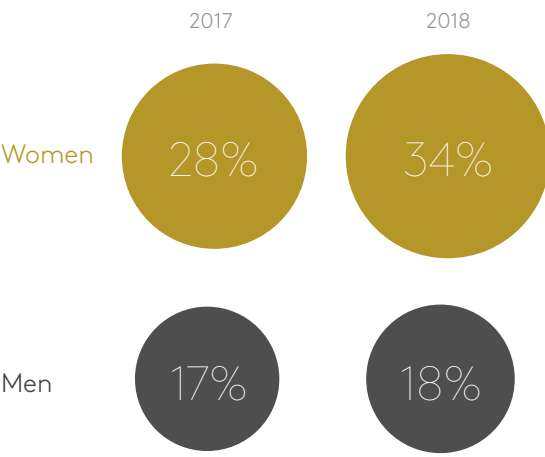
- What signals is senior leadership sending out with its actions, behaviour and language towards women?
- How can you celebrate and reward a variety of positive behaviours within the business?



Meeting culture has not changed

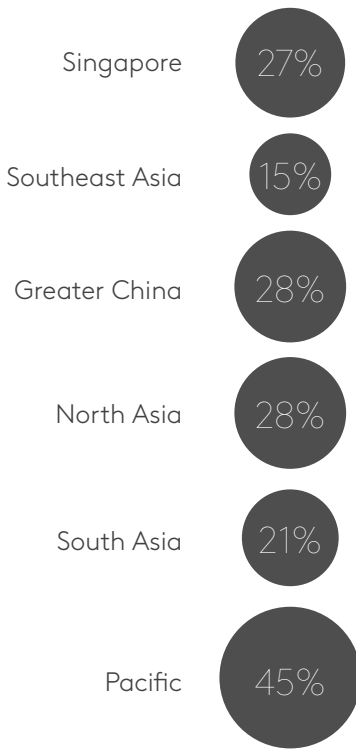
Overall, the majority of people reported that meetings are balanced environments. However, a significant and growing proportion of women still feel that meetings are dominated by male staff.

Q: Agree that meetings are dominated by male staff



There was an unsurprisingly high correlation between companies where women felt they were not treated fairly and the amount they were interrupted (59%).

Male-dominated meeting environments were also more prevalent in Australia and New Zealand, where 45% agreed, and least apparent in Southeast Asian countries where only 15% reported it to be the case.



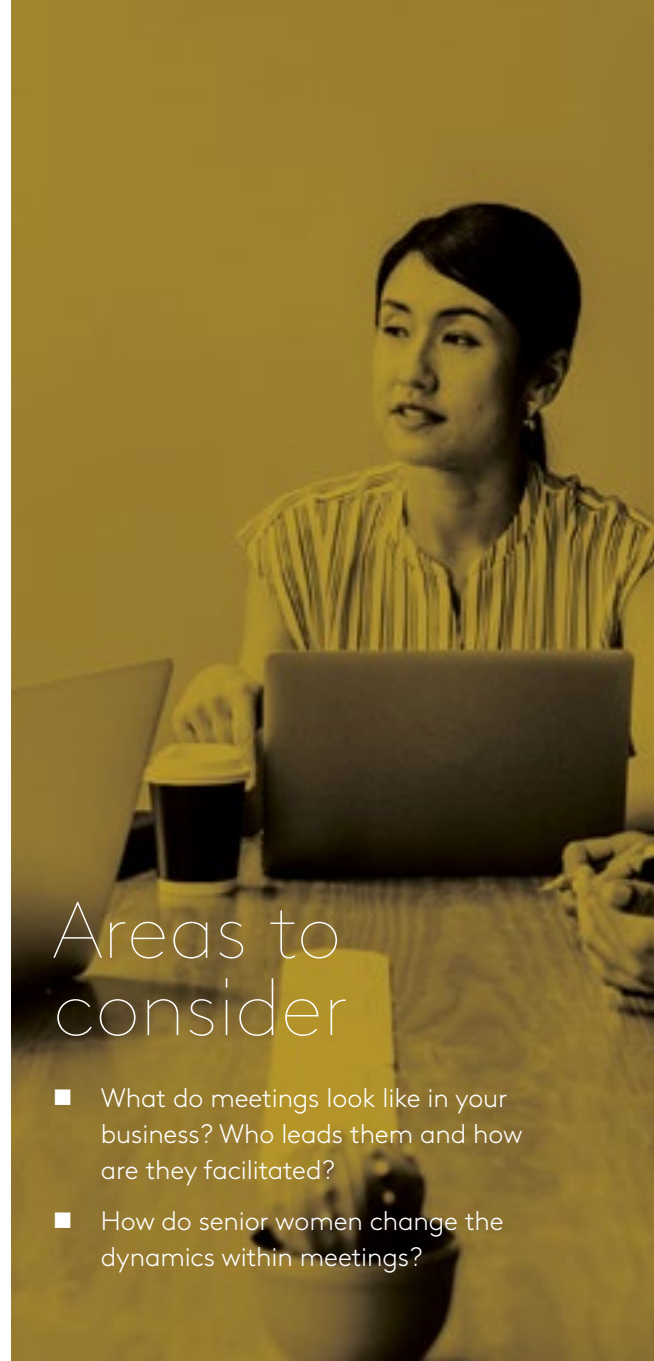
The study revealed that having women in senior leadership positions was a check on this kind of behaviour – the presence of a female CEO within a business was a factor that halved the amount of male dominance reported.

It’s clear that the meeting environment is heavily dependent on the country and culture of the organisation – many people feel comfortable, yet many others are still feeling imbalance within their workplace as behaviours fail to change.

“When a woman could have done a better job at something, I was asked to ‘lead’ because I’m male.”

Areas to consider

- What do meetings look like in your business? Who leads them and how are they facilitated?
- How do senior women change the dynamics within meetings?



Gender stereotypes inhibit both men and women

One of the most notable findings this year was the reminder that gender constructs don't just hinder women. Half of those surveyed, both men and women, said that they felt the pressure to conform to gender stereotypes.

This feeling of needing to conform was particularly strong in companies where men and women believe they are not treated equally (75%), highlighting that institutional sexism is self-perpetuating. Businesses that do not create an equal environment for employees are increasing the pressure to conform for both genders.

The study found that the existence of stereotypes was strongest in South Asia in comparison to the rest of the region, with 77% of women and 57% of men stating that they felt the need to act in a way that was fitting with notions of how their gender should behave.

Q: Feel pressure to conform to gender stereotypes

49%

Women

46%

Men

In many cases, these stereotypes are entrenched by seemingly benign company policies such as dress codes or group activities that lean towards one gender or another. Yet it was clear that the respondents felt passionately about the divisive effect of stereotypes.

“

Being a 'vocal' or 'assertive' female can 'intimidate others'.

“

I've been told to act like a woman and put some lipstick on.

“

Meetings with clients require being able to talk about things like basketball and football, especially as a guy. It's what men do otherwise one's masculinity is questionable.

Areas to consider

- How are stereotypes perpetuated within your business?
- Are there legacy policies that should be reviewed and changed?

Recognising sexual harassment

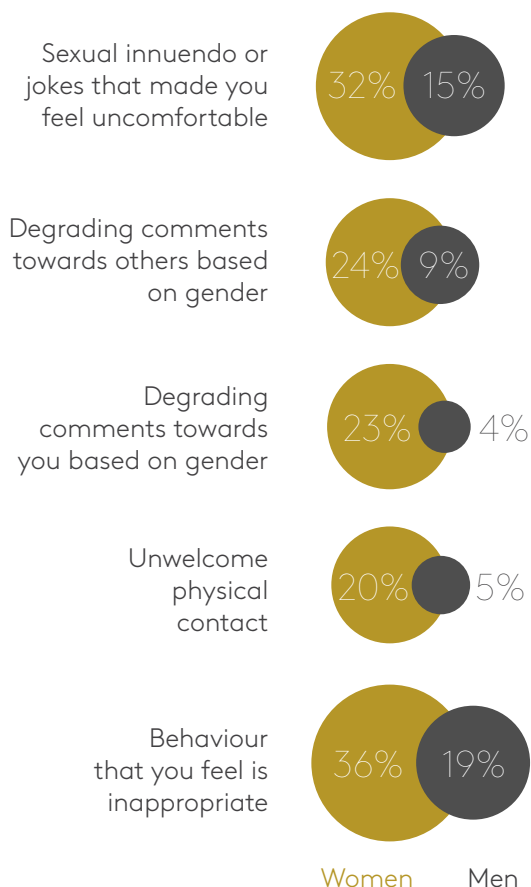
The #MeToo showcased the prevalence of sexual harassment across the world, and the results of the study painted a similar picture. Half of all women surveyed and a quarter of men reported that they have personally experienced harassment – physical or verbal – within the workplace. In addition, two in five women and one in five men said that they have observed it happening to others. In short, 53% of women and 30% of men have seen or experienced this behaviour – it is in plain sight.

Q: Have experienced or observed sexual harassment



The most commonly experienced form of harassment was degrading comments or sexual innuendo, with particularly high levels in countries with a more masculine office culture such as in Australia and New Zealand.

Q: What sexual harassment have you experienced at work?



However, there were signs of what could be done to address the problem. Organisational involvement is rare, with only 14% of those who have experienced it or seen it telling an employer. Those surveyed said that the most important thing that would increase the likelihood of reporting is the knowledge that their career would not be damaged.

In addition, where men and women feel equally respected by top management, a smaller number of people had experienced or witnessed harassment – and vice versa in companies that have a poor gender equality culture.

Although the frequency of harassment is shocking, it's important to note that people are recognising what constitutes improper behaviour. Businesses now need to create an environment in which people feel comfortable to call it out.

“

De-stigmatising sexual harassment so I don't feel embarrassed about it, like it was somehow my fault and I am to blame or are now unclear.

“

As a man, reporting an incident of sexual harassment will destroy my career and credibility.

Areas to consider

- How have reports of harassment been dealt with in the past? How does reporting affect careers?
- What reporting processes do you have in place and how well known are they amongst employees?

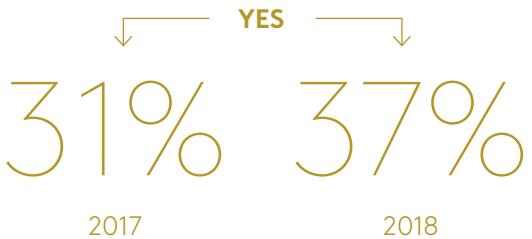
'Much more' change needed

Following the results of the first Gender Study in 2017, industry leaders in APAC signed the Mandate for Change, agreeing to put in place steps to drive change:

- 1. Create an equality action plan
- 2. Offer flexible work options
- 3. Development and mentoring of women
- 4. Pay parity review

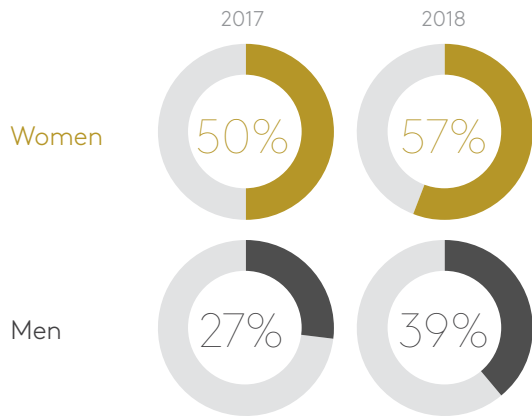
Some progress has been made over the past year, however not fast enough. Only one third of organisations have an action plan for gender equality, while only 11% have announced the results of a pay parity review.

Q: Does your organisation have an action plan for gender equality?



It's no surprise that many respondents believe their companies could be doing much more. This includes a steep rise in the number of men – up 12% – who agree that their businesses should be trying harder. Tension is mounting as companies fail to act.

Q: Believe that their organisation could be doing much more to drive gender parity



Men want to see more unconscious bias training and flexible working. Women want a broader range of changes – pay parity was top of the list, however the results call for a whole package of improvements, from development opportunities to flexible working practices, with many singling out remote working as a favoured option.

Mentors were seen to make a difference - they prevent people from missing out on opportunities and help chart career progression. The good news is that a similar number of men and women - 57% and 52% respectively - reported to have a mentor. The results also showed a virtuous cycle around mentoring and a culture of gender equality.

“At a senior level, many jobs are self-selecting as they require a significant amount of travel, time away from home, late nights, etc. If we're going to reduce gender inequality then we need to make our jobs realistic for more people overall, beyond just type-A workaholics.

“Actions speak louder than words. While senior management may talk about gender and diversity, it is a certain type that consistently gets promoted.

Areas to consider

- Who is responsible for I&D in your business?
- Do you know what changes your employees feel will have the biggest impact?





Call to action

The results from this year's study show a heightened awareness of gender inequality amongst everyone. Yet although there is more visibility of gender as an issue, it's also clear that people feel there has been very little progress within companies in terms of culture and action.

The unconscious is becoming conscious but behaviour has not changed. We need to talk now about specific actions and behaviours to change, such as meeting culture.

Gender stereotypes inhibit both men and women, so creating a culture where women can succeed also helps create a culture where different versions of masculinity can thrive

Recognise that sexual harassment exists, and is visible, in our workplaces. Provide a safe reporting mechanism, and ensure action is taken.

Inclusion and Diversity initiatives are still not the norm. Continue the drive to implement flexible (remote) working, unconscious bias training, and pay parity reviews

Mentors make a difference to people's careers and opportunities, and contribute to a virtuous cycle of empowerment for women. Continue to invest in mentoring, particularly of leadership successors.

“

The standard
you walk past
is the standard
you accept.

General David Morrison,
during investigation into
bullying and harassment in
the Australian military



Conclusion

The 'gender culture' of a business permeates all aspects of day to day work – respect for women, meeting dynamics, chance of harassment – and needs to be shifted if change is to happen. As people open their eyes to the gender realities and accept that there are imbalances, we should be observing more carefully and calling out bad behaviours and stereotypes. As an industry, we still need to reach a cultural tipping point that will drive real change.

About the study

The Diversity Study investigates men and women's perceptions and experience of gender within the workplace. The study interviewed 300 people in the media and marketing industry, both agency and non-agency, across Asia Pacific. The fieldwork was undertaken in March and April 2018.

About Kantar

Kantar is one of the world's leading data, insight and consultancy companies. Working together across the whole spectrum of research and consulting disciplines, its specialist brands, employing 30,000 people, provide inspirational insights and business strategies for clients in 100 countries. Kantar is part of WPP and its services are employed by over half of the Fortune Top 500 companies.

KANTAR **campaign**