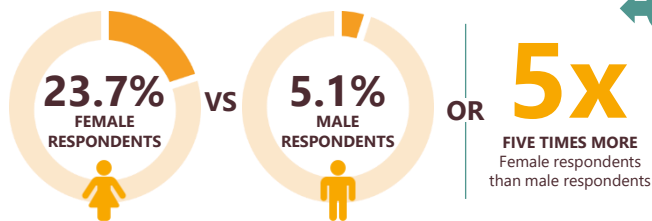


Mayer Brown and Women In Law Hong Kong (WILHK) have embarked on an initiative to uncover behaviours that women in the Hong Kong legal industry have to deal with every day including gender biases and micro-aggressions: the everyday, subtle, often unintentional comments and interactions that may in aggregate contribute to gender inequality. Accenture Greater China supported this initiative by advising on the data collection, the analytics and deriving key takeaways from the insights generated. The report lists out the key findings of our survey conducted in 2022 which drew responses from more than 360 women and men who are currently working or have worked in the Hong Kong legal sector.

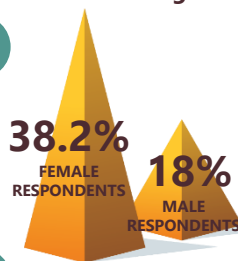
Women are often "advised" to change career paths or to take up a different specialty based on their gender



Told to change their specialty in law or to change their career paths purely due to their gender

The lasting impact is that women have their confidence, either in continuing their career path or in maintaining their chosen practice area, undermined

Caregivers are discriminated against



Felt they have been left out of career-building opportunities because of their gender or caregiving responsibilities

2x

Twice as many women as men say that they are not able to progress their careers either because of the male-dominated environment in which they work or because family or care commitments lead to them being overlooked for advancement



Women consistently face false assumptions that just because they are now caregivers, they are no longer committed to work or are not in a position to take up new challenges

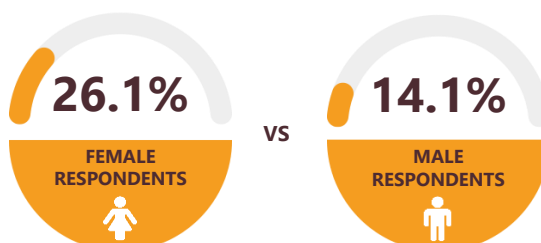
Women suffer from biases and face low awareness of their presence in key settings



Negative experiences of clients directing questions or queries to a more junior colleague of a different gender

Many women in the Hong Kong legal sector reported that they are sometimes overlooked or discredited in meetings as a result of either lack of awareness of biased behaviours such as "mansplaining" or biases that people hold such as women being less able than men

Women often receive unwanted comments about their dress, appearance or behaviour



Negative experiences of receiving comments or advice about the clothes they wear at work



Female respondents reported that they continue to receive unwanted comments about their dress/appearance or behaviour

Microaggressive behaviour against women increases as they become more senior



Senior female respondents reported that women in leadership face more, and not fewer, instances of microaggression as they become more senior



Felt left out on business-related opportunities because of their gender



Senior female respondents reported that they are allocated assignments of a lesser status or given more menial administrative tasks than their male counterparts

1. People: Start from the top

- Hold senior leadership accountable for workplace experience
- Toxic leaders should not be rewarded and their behaviour should be addressed
- A holistic approach with both meaningful gender targets and enablers to better attract, retain and promote females

2. System: A multidisciplinary approach

- Improving HR systems and talent management practices with a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) lens
- Impactful DEI trainings instead of tick-the-box exercises
- Billable system of including work on DEI to be recognised and rewarded to incentivise DEI involvement
- Have systems in place to intervene when non-inclusive behaviours happen

Please refer to the report for the full recommendations

CALL FOR ACTION