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Women @ Work
A global outlook

China findings



Global summary

- Responsibilities at work and at home have exponentially increased since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and **the burden is disproportionately impacting women**. Many are at a breaking point, leaving the workforce in record numbers. Yet businesses that give women the support they need to succeed have a more productive, motivated workforce – and are likely to report greater retention. Our research uncovers the **characteristics of organizations who are making tangible progress on gender equality** and steps employers can take to do the same.
- The following deck examines how women in China stand out from their global counterparts on key themes. We surveyed **500 women** in China and evaluated responses through the intersectional lenses of race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

KEY GLOBAL FINDINGS

The pandemic has negatively impacted women at work.



Today, less than half of women **rate their job satisfaction, motivation and productivity as “good,”** compared with around 3 in 4 before the pandemic.



Almost a quarter (23%) say they are **considering leaving, or are likely to leave, the workforce altogether** as a result of the impact of COVID-19.

Workplace culture has not been supportive during this time.

Just **39%** of women believe their organization’s commitment to supporting women during the pandemic has been sufficient. Less than a quarter of women (**22%**) say their employers have enabled them to create clear boundaries between work and personal hours while **63%** of women feel that their employers evaluate them based on the amount of time spent online rather than quality of output. Over half (**52%**) have experienced non-inclusive behaviors over the past 12 months and approximately **one-quarter** of women did not report these incidents because they were concerned about negative impacts to their careers.

Most employers can be doing more to help.

We identified a group of women who agree with the following three statements, indicating an inclusive, high-trust culture where women are valued and supported. We call this subset of organizations **“gender equality leaders”** (4% of the global sample) and organizations which did not meet any of these three criteria **“lagging organizations”** (31% of the global sample”).



I feel **confident to report non-inclusive behaviors**, without concern for reprisal



I feel supported by my employer to **balance work with other commitments**



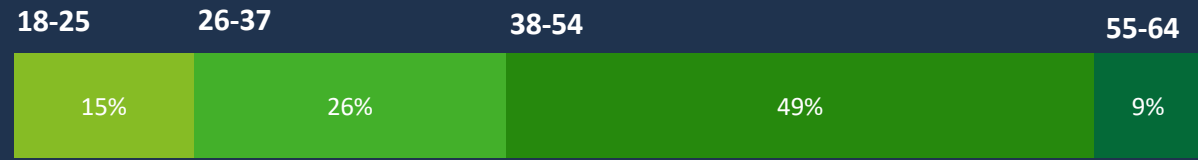
My **career is progressing** as quickly as I would like currently

Country profile

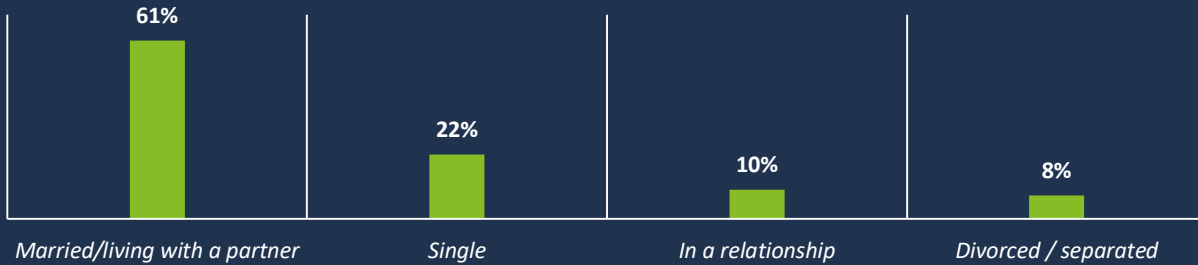
500 total respondents in China

RESPONDENT PROFILE

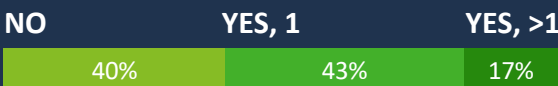
Age



Relationship status



Children?



Care for relatives?



*Note we did not ask about sexual orientation or gender identity in China.

BUSINESS PROFILE

Employment status

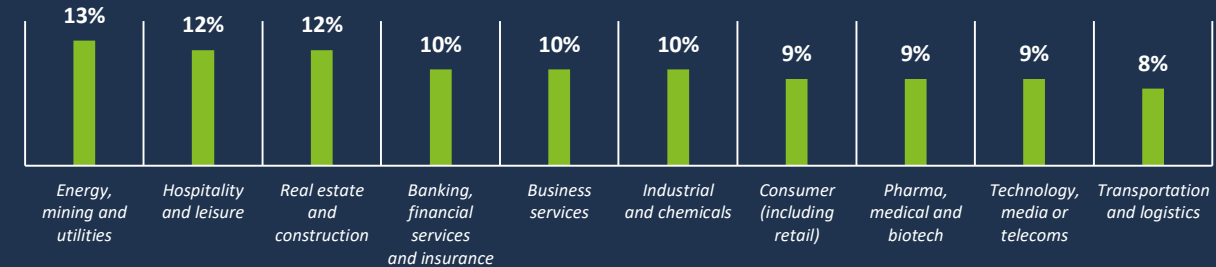


*Note this includes gig workers

Role/level



Sector of organization



Organization's total global annual revenue

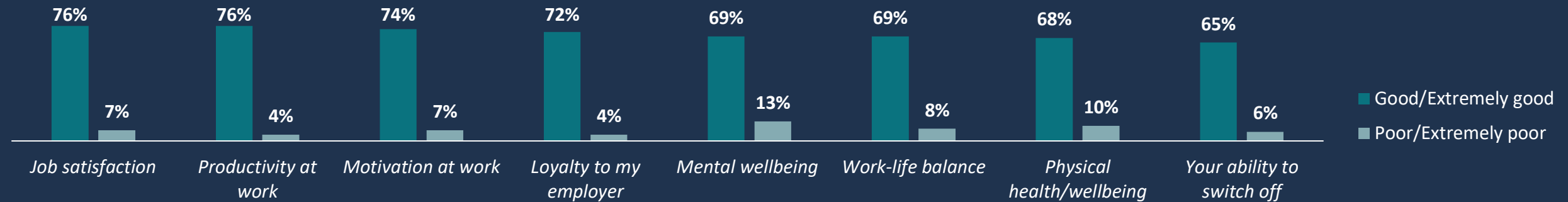




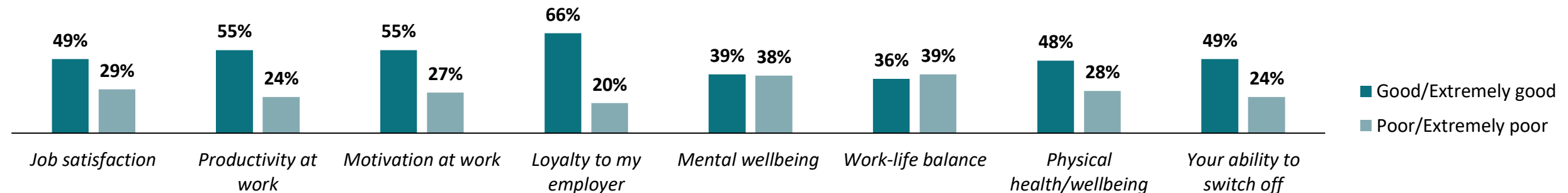
Women’s job satisfaction and wellbeing have been significantly impacted by the pandemic

- 76% of Chinese women ranked their job satisfaction as good or extremely good before COVID-19. Today, only 49% say the same.
- Women’s work-life balance has also suffered. Pre COVID-19, 69% said they had a good or extremely good work-life balance, while today only 36% say this.
- Women’s wellbeing has been negatively impacted over the course of the pandemic as well. Pre COVID-19 69% of women in China ranked their mental wellbeing as good or extremely good, while today only 36% say this.

How would you rate each of the following aspects of **your life pre COVID-19?** (China responses only)



And how would you rate each of the following aspects of **your life today?** (China responses only)

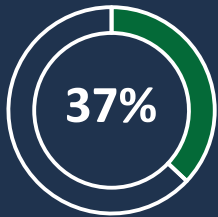




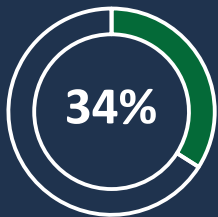
Women say that their employers' support during the pandemic has been insufficient

- 37% of Chinese women say their organization has provided sufficient support to women since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis.
- At the same time, a third (34%) of Chinese women say their career isn't progressing as fast as they would like, eight points lower than the global average. Those who say their career isn't progressing as fast as they would like cite caregiving/household responsibilities (28%) and mental health challenges (25%) as the main reasons why.

% of respondents indicating the below statements are true

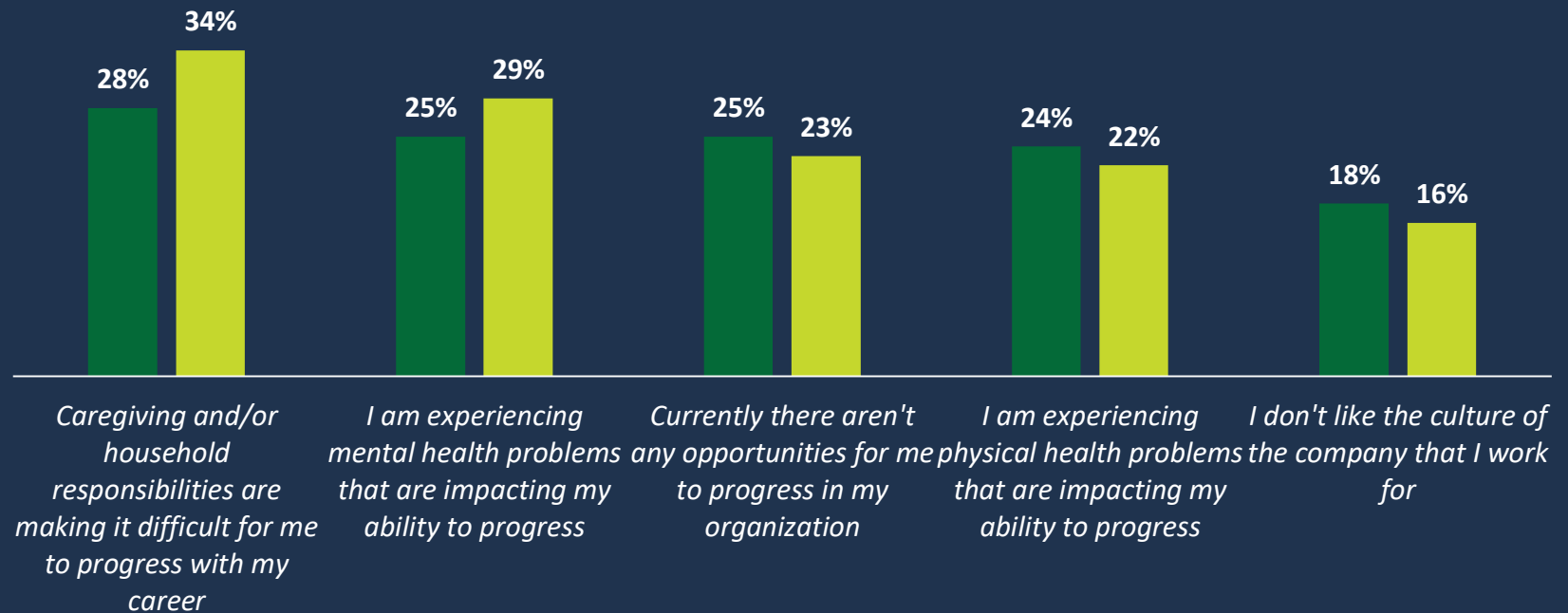


My organization's commitment to supporting women has been sufficient since the COVID-19 crisis broke
vs. 39% globally



My career isn't progressing as fast as I would like currently
vs. 42% globally

Why isn't your career isn't progressing as fast as they would like at the moment or you feel less optimistic about your career prospects than you did before the COVID-19 crisis broke?* (top 5)



■ China ■ Global

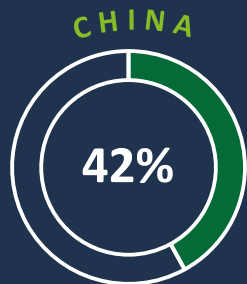
*Note "select multiple."

*Note only asked of women who said "My career isn't progressing as fast as I would like currently" n=170 China/ n=2076 Global



Women in China are less optimistic about their career prospects now than before the pandemic

- 42% of Chinese women feel less optimistic about their career prospects today compared to before the pandemic, compared to 51% of the global sample.
- Moreover, 16% are considering leaving the workforce altogether.
- An increased workload (44%) and reduced pay or working hours (25%) are the top two reasons why Chinese women are considering leaving the workforce.



of women surveyed in China feel **less optimistic about their career prospects** than before the pandemic

VS.

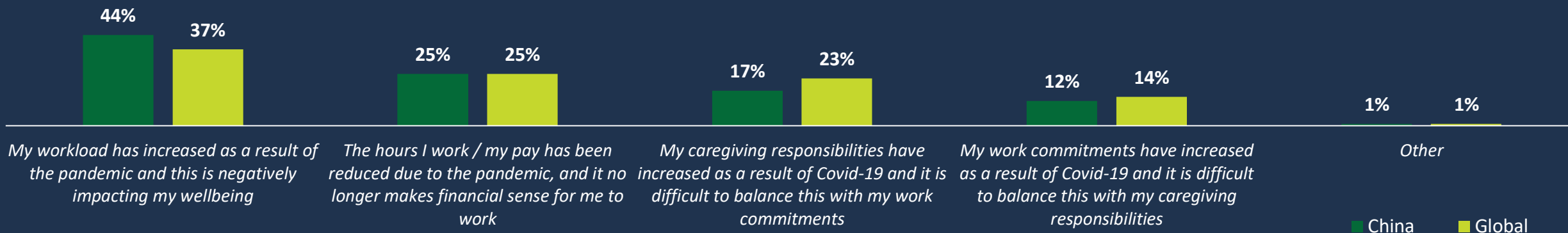


of women surveyed in China are still **considering leaving the workforce altogether** as a result of the pandemic

VS.



Main reasons why respondents are considering leaving the workforce*:



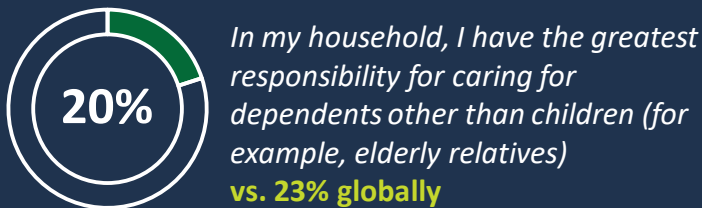
*Note only asked of women who said "I am considering leaving the workforce" n=81 China/ n=1152 Global



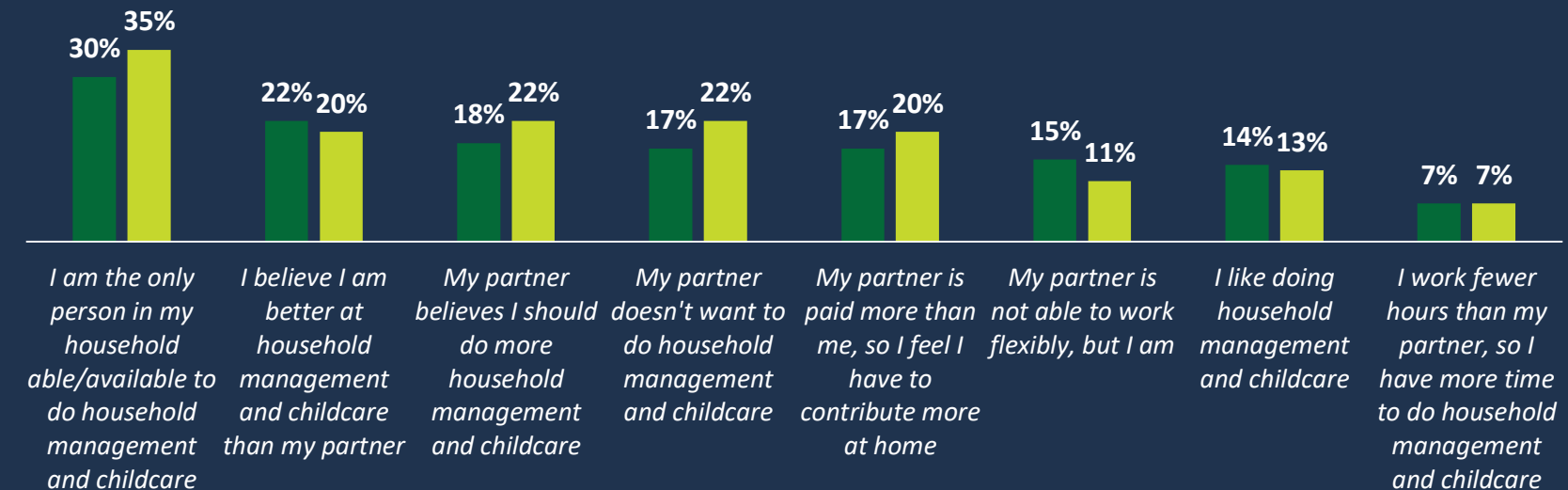
Women are bearing the brunt of responsibilities at home

- Over 6 in 10 women in China (61%) say they have the greatest responsibility for domestic tasks. 1 in 5 (20%) have the greatest responsibility for caring for dependents other than children, and more than 1 in 3 (35%) have the greatest responsibility for childcare. Of those who say they have the greatest responsibility for household management, 30% say it's because they are the only person the household available. At the same time, 15% say it's because their partner is not able to work flexibly.
- A fifth (21%) of women in China say they are less likely than their partner to return to the office when it's safe to do so, compared to 27% of the global sample.

% of respondents who indicated the below statements are true:



Reasons why women have the greatest responsibility for domestic tasks and/or household management and caregiving in their household:



*Note only asked of women who said they have the greatest responsibility for domestic tasks and/or household management and caregiving in their household. n=169 China/ n=1960 Global

■ China ■ Global



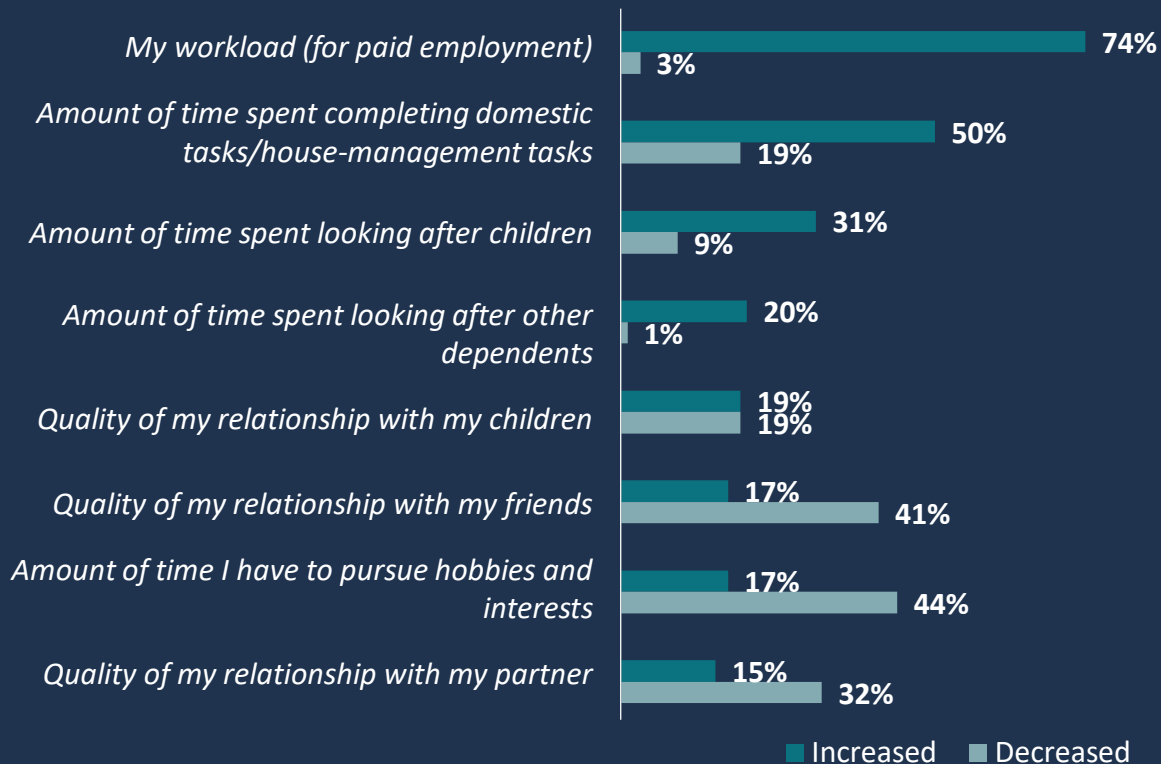
% of women who said they are less likely than their spouse to return to the office when it's safe to do so



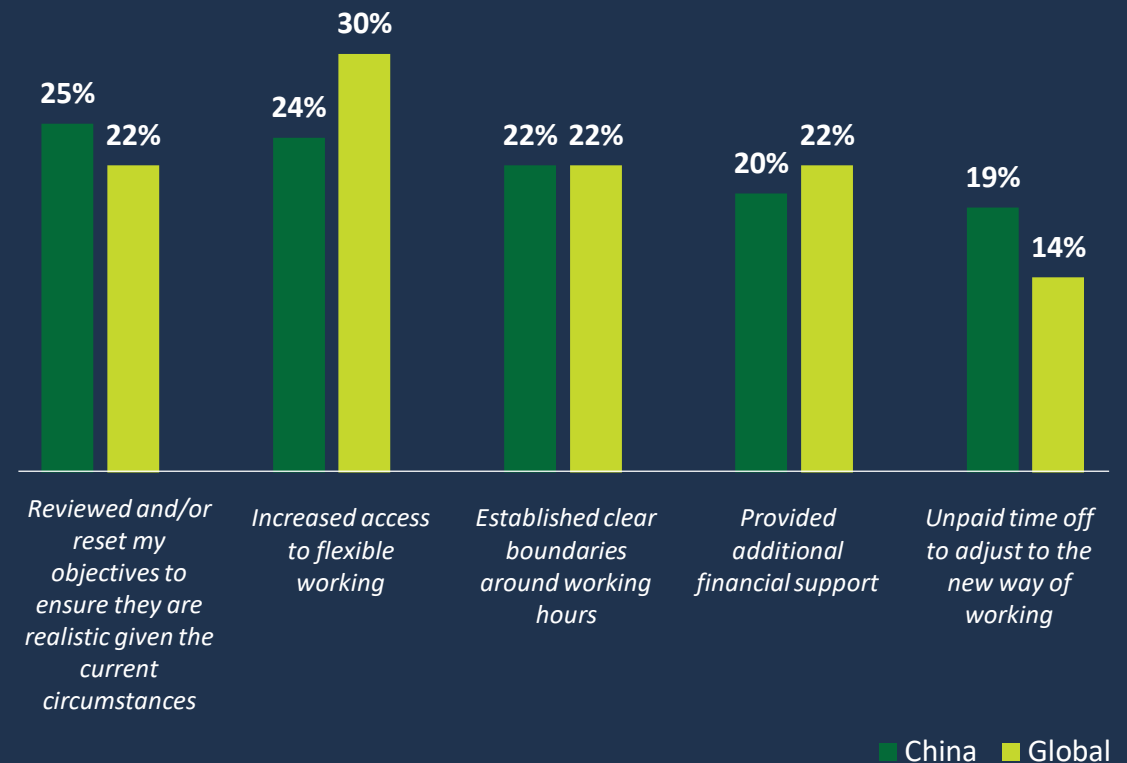
Demands at home and at work have increased, but few employers prioritize mental health

- Nearly three-quarters (74%) of women in China report their job workload has increased since the COVID-19 crisis broke. 50% say the same of household domestic tasks.
- Not surprisingly, their time to pursue personal interests and the quality of relationships with friends and family have decreased over the past year.
- Only 24% say their employer has increased access to flexible working to help alleviate the mental health impacts of the pandemic. This is lower than the global average of 30%.

To what extent, if any, have the following aspects of your life **changed since the COVID-19 crisis broke?** (China responses only)



Has your employer put in place any of the following to help mitigate the **impact of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing** of employees? (Top 5)

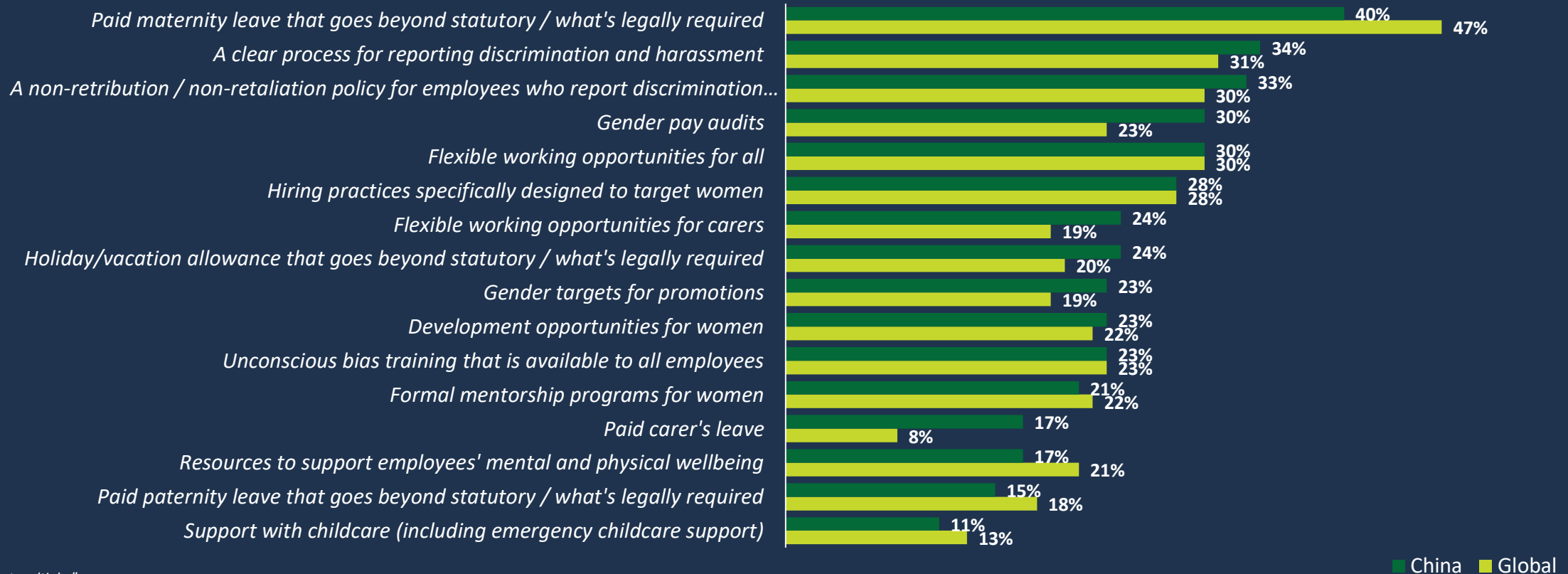




Less than half of organizations are providing women with sufficient leave and well-being support

- Employers in China could be doing more to support women during the pandemic and beyond. Just 40% of respondents in China say their employers provide maternity leave that goes beyond what is legally required, compared to 47% globally. Only 17% of organizations provide resources to support employees' mental and physical wellbeing, four points below the global average, and just 15% provide paid paternity leave that goes beyond what is statutory, three points below the global average.
- Only 34% say companies have a clear process for reporting discrimination and harassment, and just 30% have a non-retribution policy for employees who report discrimination.
- China leads the global average by seven points in providing gender pay audits (30% in China vs. 23% globally), providing flexible working opportunities for carers (24% in China vs. 19% globally), and providing vacation allowance that goes beyond what is legally required (24% in China vs. 20% globally).

To the best of your knowledge, which, if any, of the following has your organization implemented?



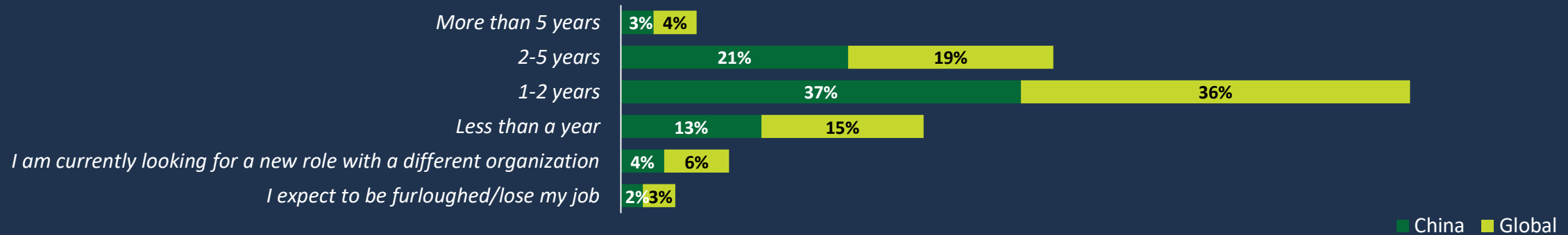
*Note "select multiple."



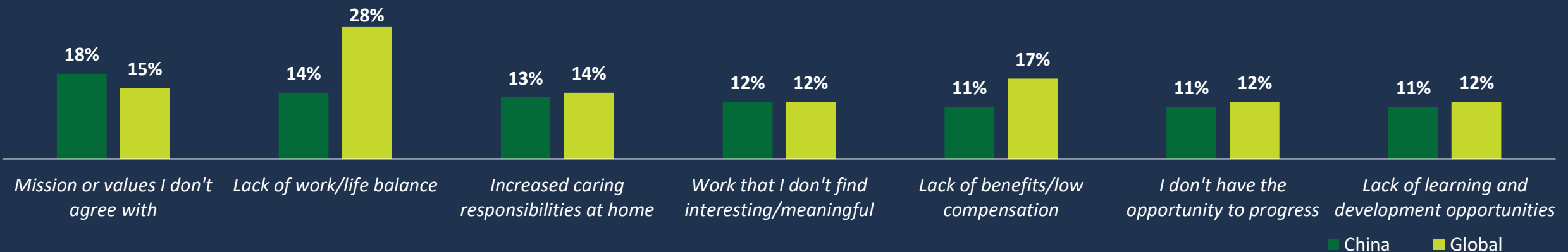
The majority of women are considering leaving their employers, citing a lack of work-life balance

- The majority of women in China surveyed — 56% — report they expect to stay with their employer for two years or less. 21% plan to stay 2-5 years, and only 3% plan to stay more than 5 years.
- Mission or values they don't agree with is the biggest reason why women are considering leaving their employer (18% in China vs. 15% globally). This is followed by a lack of work-life balance (14%).

Given the current circumstances, **how much longer do you expect to stay with your employer?**



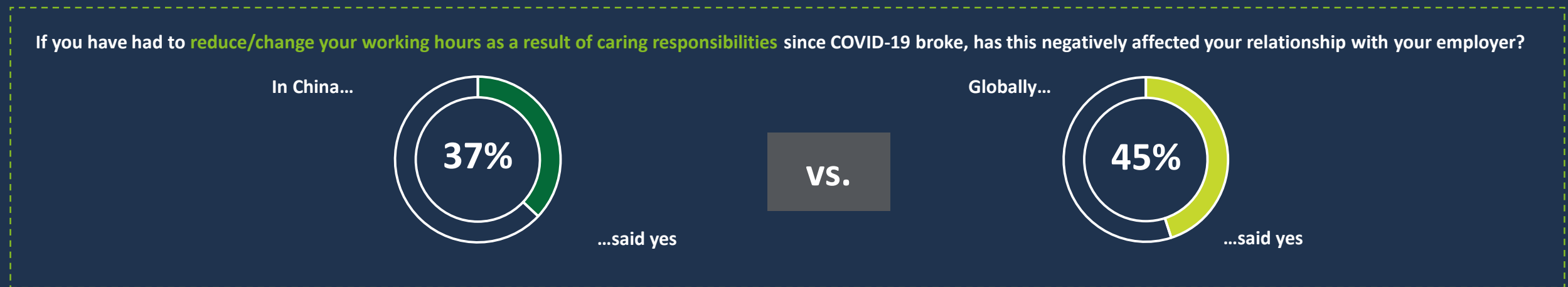
Which, if any, of the following reasons could **lead to you considering leaving** your current employment? (Top 7 of all selected)





Women report that burnout negatively impacts their relationship with their employer

- 37% of women in China report the relationship with their employer has been negatively impacted because they have changed or reduced their working hours, compared to 45% globally.
- 61% of women in China who took a reduction in working hours report feeling overworked and burned out, nine points above the global average. They also feel like they are less likely to be considered for a promotion (22%) and being given less responsibility overall (20%).



How has your **relationship with your employer** been affected as a result of the change in your working hours?



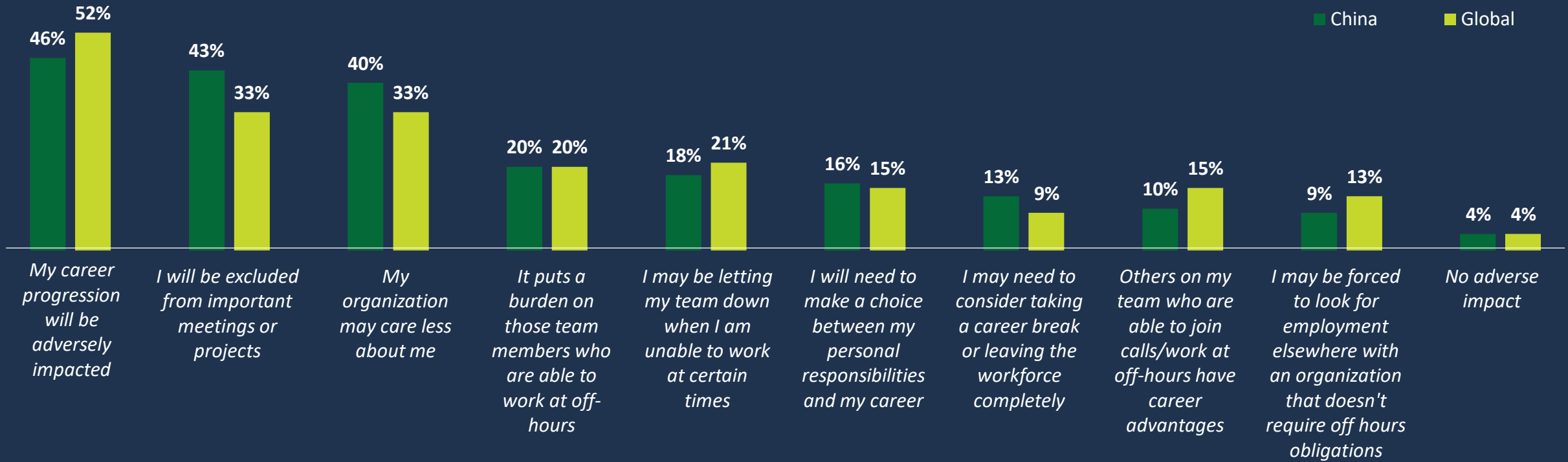
*Note only asked of women who said the relationship with their employer has been negatively impacted because they have changed or reduced their working hours n=183 China / n=2237 Global
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Women feel to need be “always on” because they fear negative impacts on their career progression

- 46% of women who find it difficult to switch off say that if they are not “always on,” their career progression will be adversely impacted.
- 43% are concerned they will be excluded from important meetings or projects, compared to just 33% globally. Moreover, 40% worry their organization may care less about them, compared to 33% globally.

Of those respondents who indicated they find it difficult to switch off from work, % that indicated concerns of the following happening if they did:



*Note “select multiple.” Only asked of women who said they find it difficult to switch off from work n=120 China/ n=1535 Global



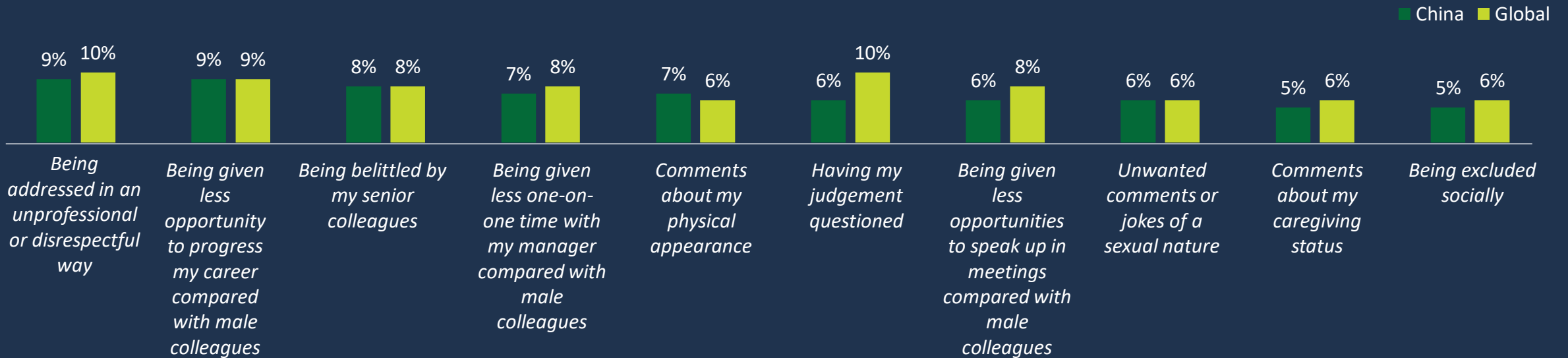
Half of women in China have directly experienced non-inclusive behaviors at work

- Half of women in China have experienced non-inclusive behavior at work in the past 12 months, which is slightly below the global average (58%).
- Being addressed in an unprofessional way (9%) and being given less opportunities to progress their career compared to male colleagues (9%) are the top two behaviors women have experienced in the past year.
- 8% of women in China also report that they have been belittled by senior colleagues.

Women who said they had experienced microaggressions in the last 12 months:



Of those who had experience microaggressions, the % who indicated experiencing the following non-inclusive workplace behaviors over the past 12 months? (Top 10)



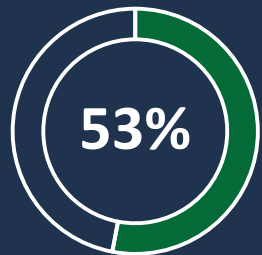
*Note "select multiple."



However, the majority of women in China do not report non-inclusive behaviors

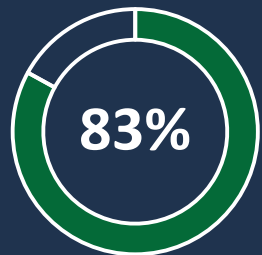
- 53% of women in China chose not to report the behaviors they experienced, compared to 57% globally. Of those, 22% were too embarrassed to report the incident (vs. 16% globally). And 18% were concerned that reporting the issue would adversely impact their career and 17% didn't feel the behavior was serious enough to report.
- The women who did report the behaviors formally, however, did see positive outcomes. 83% of women who reported incidents were satisfied with their employer's response, compared to 80% globally.

Did you **formally report** any of these behaviors to your organization?



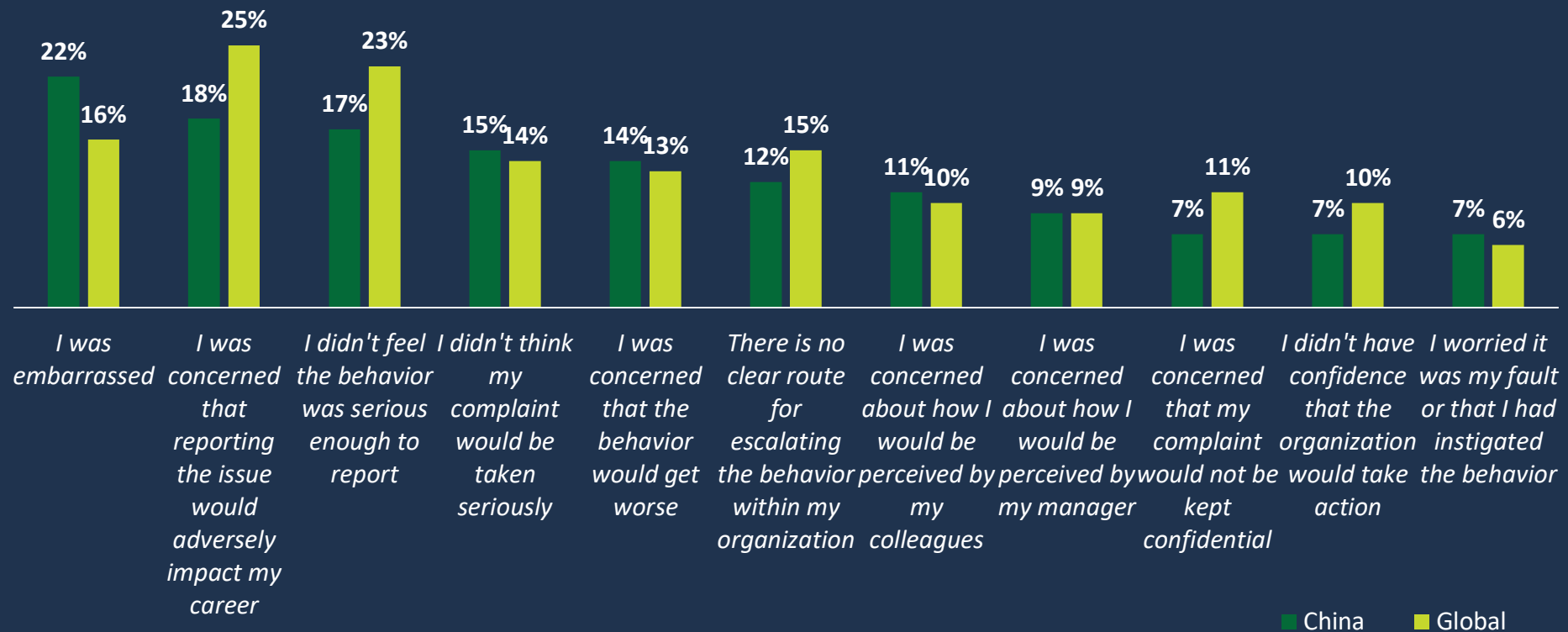
in China chose not to report
vs. **57%** globally

Were you **satisfied with the action your employer took** in response to you reporting the issue(s)?



in China said they were satisfied
vs. **80%** globally

Reasons for not reporting some of these behaviors:

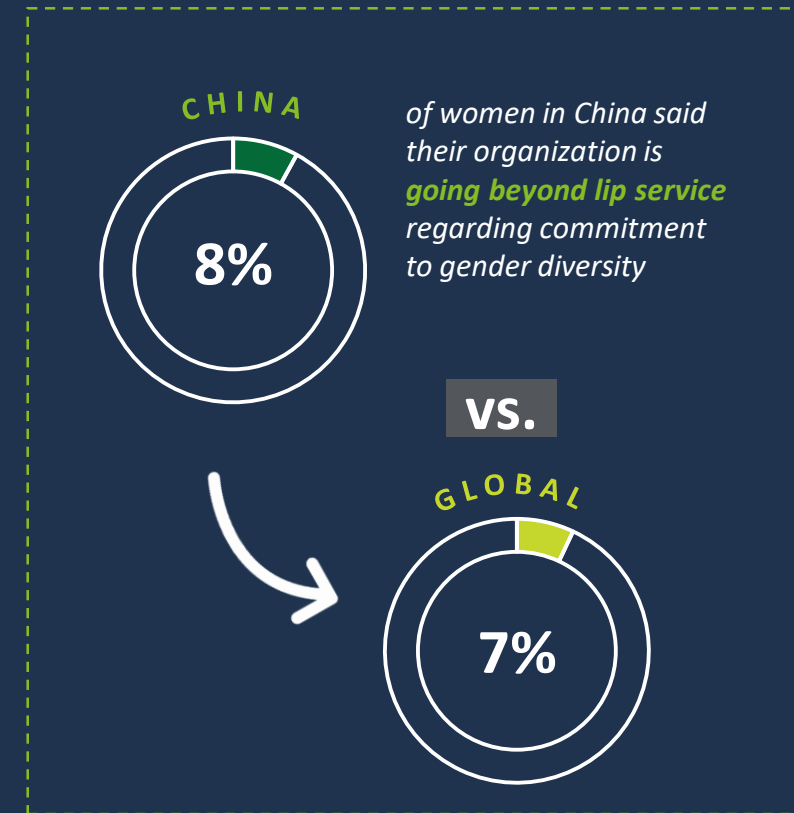
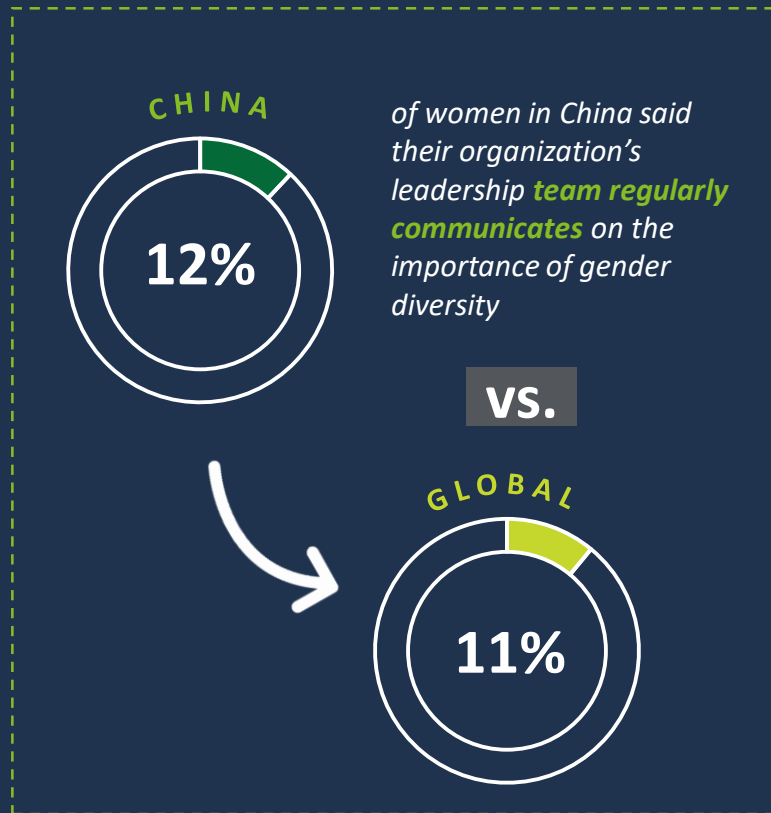
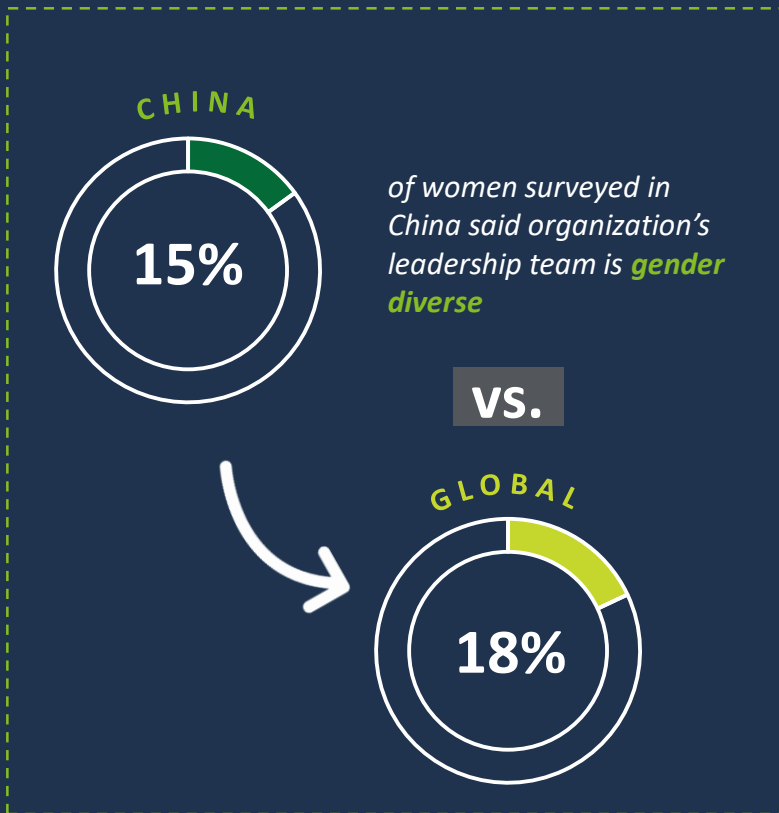




Women in China feel that their organizations could be more proactive about gender diversity

- Few women in China –15% –report their organization’s leadership team is gender diverse.
- Few women – 12% in China – also say their organization regularly communicates on the importance of gender diversity.
- Only 8% of women in China say their organization goes beyond lip service in their commitment to gender diversity. This is close to the global average (7%).

% of respondents who agree with the following statements






A small group of “gender equality leaders” are cultivating inclusive, high-trust cultures for women

- 4% of the global sample, or around 200 respondents, reported working for organizations that consistently led the overall sample in their support of women. We were able to isolate the “leaders” from China and the global sample based on their female employees’ agreement with **all three** statements below.
- In contrast, 31% of the global sample work for “lagging organizations,” which have not committed to these three actions and the development of an inclusive, high-trust culture.

Most employers can be doing more to help.

We identified a group of women who agree with the following three statements, indicating an inclusive, high-trust culture where women are valued and supported:

-  I feel **confident to report non-inclusive behaviors**, without concern for reprisal
-  I feel supported by my employer to **balance work with other commitments**
-  My **career is progressing** as quickly as I would like currently

Women who agree with all three statements report higher levels of mental wellbeing, job satisfaction, motivation and productivity compared with women who disagree with the above three statements. They also plan to stay with their employer for longer. We call this group of employers the gender equality leaders.

Breakdown of gender equality leaders and lagging organizations in China:

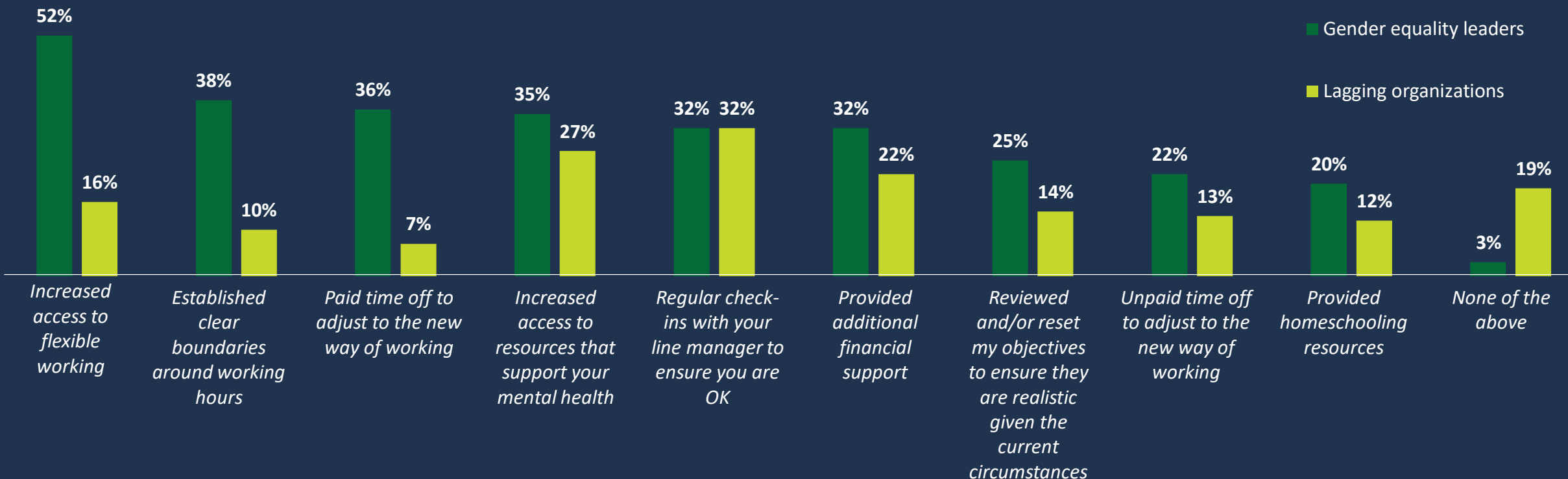




Global gender equality leaders are more likely to have taken steps to support women

- Gender equality leaders are more likely to have increased access to flexible working than lagging organizations, established clear boundaries around working hours, and provided paid time off during the pandemic, much more so than the lagging organizations.
- Nearly one-fifth of lagging organizations have taken none of these actions to support women’s mental wellbeing.

% who say their employer has put in place the following to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing of employees

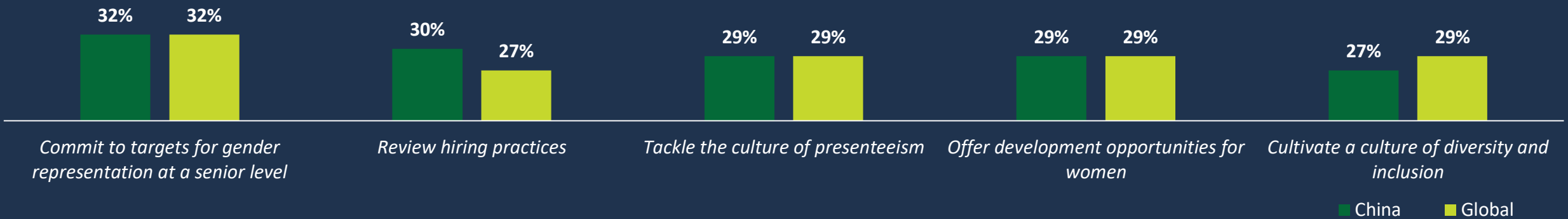




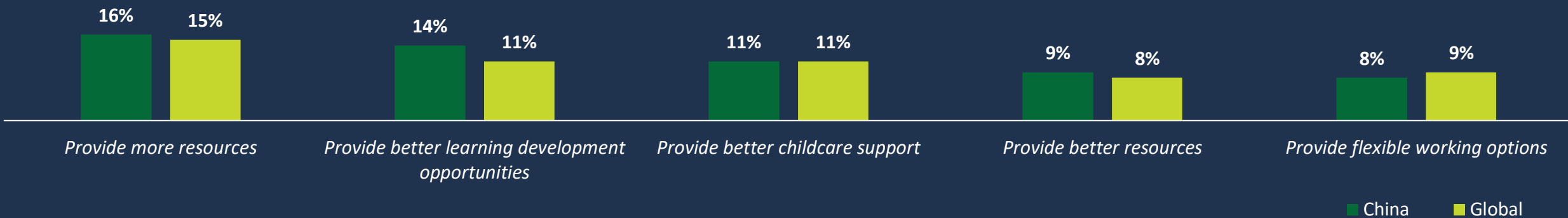
Employers can improve gender equality at work by committing to gender representation at the senior level

- 32% of women in China say that to improve gender equality in the workplace, their employer should commit to targets for gender representation at a senior level.
- In addition, 30% of women in China want to see their employers review hiring practice while 29% want organizations to tackle the culture of presenteeism where they are judged more by time online and in the office than the quality of their contributions.
- Providing more resources (16%) is the most beneficial thing that employers can do to support women’s career development. This is closely followed by providing better learning opportunities (14%).

What do you think your employer could do to improve gender equality in your workplace? (Top 5)



Aside from increasing your pay, what would be the most beneficial thing(s) your organization could do to support your career development and ensure you stay at this company in the long term? (Top 5)





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