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ASIAN WOMEN: BENEATH THE SURFACE
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

Everyone is looking East. Many papers have been written about the social, economic and political changes in the three powerhouse Asian countries - China, India and Indonesia. Increased economic power, education, equality and legislation have all had a significant impact on the lives of women, in particular. Given the growing purchasing power and autonomy of this audience, marketers have been keen to connect with them in a meaningful way.

While there are countless things that unify women across this region, the objective of this paper is to go beyond talking about ‘Asian Women’ as one big homogenous group. Instead it aims to understand how women in each market are responding uniquely to these changes, what opportunities and tensions they face today, and what this means for marketers and their brands. When it comes to finances, home life, love life, the household, to name just a few, what are the important and interesting differences?
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

We surveyed 1,500 women aged 20-45 in A&B social class in India, China and Indonesia using SONAR™, J. Walter Thompson’s proprietary online tool in Q2 2014.

J. Walter Thompson planners also provided input and analysis of trends, topics and issues pivotal to this demographic in these markets, drawing on data from our survey and from other sources. The charts in this report that draw on our survey are marked with the logo “JWT Sonar”
Overall women believe their role in society is changing for the better. Roles are evolving and traditional attitudes are being challenged—but to what extent (and how!) varies strongly from market to market.
WHAT WE’LL COVER

CHINA
1. Holding up half the sky
2. Picky Partners
3. Families in flux
4. Beauty and the boost

INDONESIA
1. Aspiring entrepreneurs
2. Independent women
3. Happy ever after
4. The tradition tightrope
5. Freed by technology

INDIA
1. Smart girls rule
2. The new marriage rules
3. Challenging stereotypes

Photos from Shutterstock
For Chinese women, success means having and being it all - educated, successful at work, attractive and having a well-rounded home life too.

China has always encouraged women to work and “hold up half the sky” (part of a proclamation originally made by Mao) but like many women around the world, Chinese women today are trying to figure out how to balance career and family, particularly within the context of a society that still prides itself on having family values at its core.

### WHAT DEFINES A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being educated</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being attractive</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a career</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being happily married</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a good mom</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owning her own home</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a strong set of values/ beliefs</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a good personality/ character</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being financially successful/ wealthy</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a good amount of friends</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being afraid to take risks</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being religious</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. HOLDING UP HALF THE SKY
CHINESE WOMEN LOOK UP TO STRONG HEROINES

The women portrayed in the media as role models are women with character, not just beauty.

Role-models tend to be the strong, independent characters who are more than just the role they represent (actress, businesswoman, the mom). These heroines are seen as aspirational, showing women how to live their lives and become ‘better’ women.

Fan Bingbing, actress: “Many girls want to marry into the purple (money/status. But that’s not my plan because I’m purple.”

Peng Liyuan, China’s First lady: “An independent woman is independent-minded. She has her own life and values.”

74% of Chinese women aspire to be like the women they see in ads, in magazines or on TV.

1. Top photo used under Creative Commons from Avery Ng
2. Bottom photo used under Creative Commons from Angelica Rivera de Pena.
Women’s participation in the labour force in China is 65% and rising, according to World Bank data. Women are increasingly taking on professional and technical roles, and more women than men are also enrolled in tertiary education.

They have also established a huge presence at the very top of China’s corporations. In 2013, women held 51% of all senior management positions in China - up from just 25% the previous year\(^2\).

But they are still underrepresented in politics - only 23% of seats in national parliament are held by women, according to the WEF Gender Gap report.
During Mao’s time (1949-76), Chinese women were needed for manual labor, for farming and for urban industrialization. To compensate for their hard work, they were given access to education and politics.

This mentality still prevails in Modern China, with women forging ahead in ‘non-traditional’ occupations.

Liu Yang, China’s first female astronaut: heralded by the government and the media, she’s been awarded a medal that recognizes role models for all Chinese women to follow.

Zhang Xin, Chinese business magnate: CEO of SOHO China, the largest commercial real estate developer in Beijing, and chairwoman of Teach For China Board of Directors.
However, although women in China today make up roughly half the workforce, many still believe that the workplace doesn’t treat men and women equally. While women are making strides along non-traditional career paths, they are still restricted, in a way that men aren’t, in the direction they can take.

The idea that there are certain jobs that women can’t or shouldn’t do still prevails. China’s education ministry bans girls from studying a variety of subjects from tunnel engineering to navigation. Beijing’s People’s Police University, has a strict quota, limiting girls to 10-15% of the student body.

And, as in many countries around the world, the workplace can still be a hostile place for women. More than 90% of female students surveyed by the All-China Women’s Federation in 2011 believed they had experienced gender discrimination by employers.
1. HOLDING UP HALF THE SKY
SOCIETY STILL VIEWS SUCCESSFUL WOMEN THROUGH THE GENDER LENS

Though Liu Yang is celebrated for being the first Chinese woman in space, the issue of her gender was still a big topic of conversation. As per China’s space program requirements she is married, but according to the newspaper China Daily it would be ‘preferable’ that female astronauts be mothers first, because of concerns that higher levels of radiation in space would “harm their fertility.”

Much was also made of her mother-in-laws decision to talk to a newspaper and reveal the Liu Yang has put “motherhood on hold” in order to focus on her career.
2. ‘PICKY’ PARTNERS
SUCCESS CAN BE A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

For Chinese women, pressure to be successful in their career has put created stress on other aspects of their lives too.

In terms of love and marriage it’s meant two things: women don’t have time to look for ‘that special someone’, and successful women are sometimes finding it hard to find partners. That’s partly because Chinese men are intimidated by their success and because women are getting more selective when it comes to their marriage criteria.

63% of Chinese women believe that more financial independence/spending power is the most influential driver of change for women

The top financial goal for Chinese women, over the next five years, is to advance their career.
This push for women to be successful in all they do has actually created a tension in their lives - well-educated, successful women often struggle to find a match they deem suitable in a society that still expects men to be superior. Many men are looking for a successful, educated partner, but not one that is more successful or educated than them.

In her book, ‘Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China’, Leta Hong refers to a woman who deliberately dropped out of employment in order to make herself “less intimidating to suitors”.

In 2007, the Women’s Federation defined “leftover women” (sheng nu ) as unmarried women over the age of 27, and China’s Ministry of Education added the term to its official lexicon. Since then, the Women’s Federation Web site has run articles stigmatizing educated women who are still single.
The stages of leftover women, according to cartoonist Leo Lee, who worked with a team to create a comic about the leftover phenomenon.

2. ‘PICKY’ PARTNERS
“LEFTOVER” WOMEN BECOME PART OF POPULAR CULTURE

Sheng-Nu Women: The Timeline

Leftover Fighters
*Sheng dou shi*, a play on the title of a popular martial arts film.
Aged 25-27 who still have the courage and energy to keep looking for love.

Bishengke Women
“doomed to be left”
Aged 28-31 who are too busy with work to look for a husband.

Leftover Goddess
*Qi tian da sheng* plays on the name of an ancient Chinese legend.
Aged 30 and above, these are the super successful career women who still cannot find a husband.
Women are now starting to recast ‘sheng’ as pioneers in modern day China. In fact, ‘sheng’ can mean success if the pronunciation remains the same but the character is changed.

‘Left-over’ women live independently in big cities and are able to enjoy the success and trappings of modern life with very little restriction. They’re financially independent and able to spend their money on what they enjoy. Though these successful women are acutely aware of the pressure society puts on them to get married. They are highly educated and financially independent there is no immediate need to find a husband to support them.

In the comic series created by Leo Lee based on a left over woman, women are beginning to take ownership of the title and turn it around. Similarly, in a cheeky response to the mocking title, women have launched “sheng nu” social clubs across the country. Some have upwards of 1,000 members.

Photo art credit: Roseann Lake, Leo Lee and Ryan Myers, The World of Chinese magazine
2. ‘PICKY’ PARTNERS
CHINA’S SHENG STAND PROUD

The ‘leftover women’ phenomenon extends online too. This song, which has gone viral and drawn nearly 9 million hits on youku, highlights the success of ‘Sheng’ - highly educated, highly paid and independent women.

“Looking around and you find tons of girly-men,
What a woman wants is a man with car and house
Marrying Mr. Right is the ultimate dream,
Do you have a car, do you have a house
If you have no car, nor a house,
Hurry off and don’t stand in my way
I also have a car, I also have a house,
As well as RMB in the bank
If you are not even as successful as I am
Don’t think of living off me, I am not your mom
[...]
If you have no car, nor a house,
How can you expect to be a groom
If you are not yet established
Why should I stay unsettled with you
You say I am pragmatic, that I admit
Call me a money worshipper, I don’t care
A man should be what a man is meant to be
No car, no house, no bride”

- Lyrics to viral video
The one-child policy and the traditional preference for boys means that 117 boys are born for every 100 baby girls. By one estimate, there could be 24 million Chinese men unable to find wives by the end of the decade. As China’s economy booms, the marriage market has become just that: a market, with new demands by women for men with apartments and cars. Every Saturday and Sunday from noon until 5 pm in The People’s Park, Shanghai, hundreds of parents hang the ‘resumes’ of their sons or daughters across the park and exchange contact information with other parents hoping to plant the seeds for a relationship to blossom.
Divorce rates are rising and a change in the residential property law means that in the event of a divorce, the person who paid for the family home - most likely the man - gets to keep it entirely.

This law was meant to curb divorce rates, but instead puts women in a much weaker position and has been dubbed "the law that makes men laugh and women cry". Because it is now hard for any Chinese woman to rely on a man in the way that their maternal ancestors did, women are more determined to make their own money, and be financially independent before they settle down.

For the seventh consecutive year, China's divorce rates rose. According to a China Daily Report a total of 3.5 million marriages ended in divorce in 2013.

Photo from Shutterstock
Momo, a flirty dating app, derives its name from the Chinese word for ‘stranger’. Since its launch Momo has amassed 100 million registered users. 40 million use it monthly and 15m daily. The ratio of men to women on the site is 2:1.

WeChat (an app that’s like a cross between Whatsapp and Tinder) is also being used as a way of meeting new friends and as a way to date. WeChat has the social function of ‘Look Around’ and ‘Shake’. ‘Look Around’ enables you to see a list of people who have their internet and GPS on ranging by their distance from you. Users can set up their profile clearly implying ‘looking for a date’ or ‘I’m single’ and connect to people near them.

The new ways the younger generation are using apps like WeChat and Momo to meet people represent a generational shift in attitudes to love, with men and women looking for quicker ways to connect - and the chance to explore less serious, short-term relationships. Triggered by urban migration and erosion of old ways of meeting in communities, technology is changing the way relationships are being formed.
BIGGER ASPIRATIONAL THEMES
A generation of working, financially independent Chinese women provide an opportunity for categories like real estate companies, banking, auto marketers and travel brands to engage with women in a customized and more meaningful way.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ROLE MODELS
In China, even beauty isn’t shallow - it encompasses personality, success, effort, not just what you look like. Advertising role models need to understand and represent this modern woman.

SISTERHOOD
Can a brand provide a platform for women to share their success and challenges? A virtual or physical space that fosters sisterhood and empowers women to talk about the issues effecting them.

NEW DEFINITION OF SUCCESS
Can a brand take the lead to define what ‘success’ means for a Chinese woman, much like Nike’s Olympic Campaign redefined ‘Greatness’?
WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS

LOOK BEYOND THE SERIOUS
Even a seemingly derogative term like “Leftover Women” has been taken and transformed by women, who now use it with a wry smile rather than taking it too seriously. Brands certainly have space to become champions and cheerleaders of women in China, but the tone is important - Chinese women want to feel empowered, certainly not needy or pitied.

THE NEW DATING RULES
With a new generation exploring new ways to date and meet people, and women not giving in to family pressure to settle, brands can stand out by providing exciting, innovative opportunities in the dating sphere. Women increasingly are moving into the virtual world in order to find love in the real one.
Of the three markets we surveyed, only China ranked ‘getting along with your in-laws’ as the #1 key to a successful marriage. It has a lot of implications for married life, from who’s advice they take when it comes to childcare, how to share household responsibilities to who looks after the parents as they grow older.

### KEYS TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE

- **Getting along with your in-laws**: 58%
- **Having a husband who respects you**: 56%
- **Sharing household/parenting responsibilities equally**: 43%
- **Having a supportive husband**: 40%
- **Having some time to yourself every once in a while**: 31%
- **Taking the time to find the right person before getting married**: 28%
- **Getting your career on track before getting married**: 15%
- **Being open to compromise**: 13%
- **Other**: 1%
Women are seeking a more equal partnership and a husband that is willing to share parenting and household responsibilities.

Part of those responsibilities include looking after aging parents, which is often a burden on young couples. This has been such a big problem recently that the government passed a new “Elderly Rights Law” to deal with the growing problem of lonely elderly people not being visited by their adult children.

Women who migrate to a city to work need to find coping mechanism’s to take care of elderly parents and in-laws. Migration is creating a social phenomenon now called Left Behind children. 61 million children are left with aging parents as mothers move out to work.
Familial pressure on women to settle down, get married and have a baby continues to be high. And family pressure extends further into the tradition of deferring to parents or in-laws when it comes to bringing up a child. Women struggle with who’s advice they should listen to, grandmother’s or what they’ve learned themselves? Most women won’t reject tradition but instead combine them into a hybrid - advice on childcare becomes ‘grandmom + google’.

It’s up to their own discretion to make the final judgment on what direction to take - but when it comes to baby’s health women tend to look to Western Medicine for quick fixes, and for longer term problems they look to traditional remedies.

71% believe traditions are important, but 91% struggle to maintain the balance
Family duties appear to exert less influence over Chinese women’s decisions about their working lives. That’s largely due to China’s one child policy. Unlike other countries, where child care is an issue, many Chinese women have the option to go back to work soon after having a child, as there are often four doting grandparents available to look after one baby. This also means a break in a woman’s career typically doesn’t last as long.
But this means that a woman needs to have good familial relations with her in-laws.

The mother in law’s opinion is extremely important in Chinese Confucian society. And while they may not live with their in-laws, the grandparents involvement in bringing up the children can create a conflict if they have different approaches to child rearing.

Some of the tension in this relationship is inherited from the days when women in China really did marry OUT of their families and into their husband’s family, having to transfer their family loyalty but simultaneously remaining a kind of ‘outsider’.

58% of Chinese women believe getting along with your in-laws is one of the top factors in having a happy marriage.
Almost half our respondents felt that sharing household and parenting responsibilities is a key for a happy marriage. In reality, though, some Chinese men still don’t think that parenting or sharing household chores is really their responsibility. High income earners will often encourage wives to stay at home - leading to the coining of the phrase ‘married single mum’, where women feel like they’re a lone parent despite being married.

According to a 2013 JWT survey, “The State of Asian Men”, 75% of Chinese men still believe that if a parent needs to stay at home to look after children, it should be the mother and only 27% of men worry about fulfilling household responsibilities.

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WHERE’S GRANDMA?
The family dynamic is much more complicated than just the mother being in charge now. Childcare brands are just starting to include fathers in their conversation- but maybe it’s not just about including fathers but the whole extended family. Does your brand just have to talk to women? What about the father, the mother-in-law? How would the message or tone have to evolve to include them?

EMBRACE THEN EVOLVE TRADITIONS
Women are combining traditions and familial knowledge with newer discoveries from online and word of mouth. This means brands that blend traditions and knowledge with the new will make space in the heart and the head.

SUPPORT ELDERLY PARENTS
Opportunity exists for brands that understand the challenge women face in caring for elderly parents and can help make it easier. Telecom, airline packages, online retailers for remote managed deliveries, banking products could all offer solutions for parent care.
4. BEAUTY AND THE BOOST

Beauty is enormous business in China. The country’s cosmetics market is worth $26 billion a year, making it the third-biggest in the world. Euromonitor estimates it will grow 8% each year from now to 2017.

In China, beauty is not vanity, but considered an essential tool to achieve the success that women desire. Over half our respondents said they want to look beautiful to get ahead in life. There is never the ‘beauty vs. brains’ debate - both are required.

**REASONS WOMEN WANT TO LOOK THEIR BEST/BEAUTIFUL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It makes me feel confident/ good about myself</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help me get ahead in life</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To project a certain image or lifestyle</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a way to express my personality/ individuality</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing so gets me acknowledgment from others</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because that’s just what women do</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make my husband/ family proud</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep my husband/ boyfriend interested</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So people take me seriously</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To appeal to men</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To appeal to other women</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chinese women view beauty as a source of confidence and personal progress.

Attracting a member of the opposite sex is a very common trope in beauty advertising in general, but for Chinese women that doesn’t seem to be a key hook. Beauty is very personal, and often seen as key to success in the workplace - but it’s not necessarily just for show.

Tang Wei
“Beauty for me is not the face, it’s the character of a person. No character, no beauty.”

Only 13% of Chinese women want to look beautiful in order to attract men.
4. BEAUTY AND THE BOOST

“YOU’RE NOT UGLY, JUST LAZY”

But that’s not to say there isn’t pressure to be beautiful, it’s just a different kind of pressure. There is Chinese saying “There is no such thing as an ugly women, just a lazy one”. Time and effort put into appearance has a real bearing on how her character is perceived.

In *Buying Beauty: Cosmetic Surgery in China*, Wen Hua writes: “The dramatic economic, cultural, and political changes in China have produced immense anxiety experienced by women, which stimulates the belief that beauty is capital.”

Beauty as capital means that good looks are increasingly seen as the key to better opportunities for social and career success. Cosmetic surgery has grown in China in recent years, offering a way for women to ‘work’ at being beautiful and to invest, in an extreme way, in their careers and future opportunities.

“Beauty is a life time career for women.” - Zhao YaZhi, actress

Photo credit: Instagram.com/angichiuzhaoyazhi
WOMEN DON’T WANT A TOTAL ESCAPE FROM BEAUTY
Or at least, not in the same way that Western Women appreciate messages about escaping beauty norms and pressures. Constant self improvement and enhancement is a key means to success. It’s not ‘shallow’ or about ‘vanity’; Chinese women enjoy investing time in the process of self improvement. What other ways can brands reward them for their time and investment, instead of getting them to stop or change?

IT’S NOT ABOUT WOOING THE MAN
Going beyond the ‘attract the man’ storyline presents fresh ways for beauty/cosmetic brands to talk to women. Since beauty goes far beyond appearance and reflects values like taste, confidence and perseverance it is opportune for beauty brands to be more than ‘skin deep’.
1. Female Economy

Entrepreneurialism Reigns Supreme

For Indonesian women, education is the key definer of a successful woman. Interestingly, over half of the Indonesian women we surveyed want to open their own business - much higher than any other market - and 55% want to become financially independent.

Being able to find clever ways to work around their lives as homemakers and child minders has been a big driver in enabling more women to participate in the working force.

When asked what defines a successful women, Indonesian respondents - like those in India and China - rated education and career as the top two factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being educated</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a career</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women in Indonesia are traditionally defined by roles; first a wife, then a mother and a home caretaker. Today, however, there are additional expectations to contribute financially to their household and society at large.

For some women it can be hard to know where to start, as their circumstances or location might limit access to opportunities, but the democratization of technology and social media have provided an interesting and more easily accessible pathway.

58% of Indonesian women see opportunities for work and career as the most influential driver of change for women.
Across socio-economic boundaries Indonesian women are motivated to take the driver’s seat in their own lives. Their ambition is to unleash their potential, as a way to gain recognition and respect from their husband and others.

For example, housewives don’t just stay at home. They venture out to set up small businesses and in many cases seek to become the secondary income provider of the home. This creates a tension in the lives of modern Indonesian women, who are increasingly setting their own expectations to become homemakers while contributing meaningfully to household income.

Housewives open small restaurants or warung (small kiosks) - usually in front of or near their houses. Some also venture out in food catering, like Vita Siregar who runs Blekros Diet Catering with her mother through their website & social media.

Source: Blekrosediet.com
Technology has provided a simple, quick, on the go solution for women to start their own small businesses - a wealth of platforms to showcase and sell their creations and a whole new audience to talk to. Twitter has close to 20 million active users in Indonesia, and though precise gender statistics aren’t available, it’s likely that it’s an equal gender split.

1. **FEMALE ECONOMY**

TECHNOLOGY IS THE ENABLER

**CUPCAKES COMPANY** (Food) 
Wynda Mardio & Media Aprilia

**L’RISOLES** (Food) 
Aghnia Nabila

**GOWIGASA by ELLE & JESS** (Fashion) 
Elle & Jess

1. FEMALE ECONOMY
THE RISE OF THE INSTASHOPS

Pevita Pearce
Founder & owner of Hippearce

Hippearce is an accessories online shop made by actress Pevita Pearce

Kleting Titis Wigati
Founder of KLÉ Clothing

Kesha Deisra Tajibnapis
Owner and chef Dulcet Patisserie

Dulcet Patisserie is a patisserie online cake shop on Instagram and Twitter based in Jakarta. It sells low-fat, less sugar and premium cakes.

Photo credits: 1. www.iamkle.com 2. twitter.com/Hippearce; 3. webtsa.me/n/deisra
Female participation in the labour force in Indonesia is only 53%, lagging behind men at 88%. Only 21% of Senior or Managerial positions are held by women. (Global Gender Gap Report 2013)

But 57% of Indonesia’s GDP was supported by SMEs, of which 23% is contributed by womentrepreneurs. This is growing at an average of 8%. (Source: Asia Foundation)
PT KAI (The Indonesian Railway), the government-owned operator of public railways in Indonesia, realizes the need for urban women’s mobility.

In order to facilitate that and serve the needs of the growing numbers of female commuters, KAI operates “Women-only Carriages” in some of its commuter lines around Jakarta.
More women are coming forward to promote women’s involvement in areas that have not traditionally been recognized as women’s domains. Najwa Shihab, Sri Mulyani, and Noni Purnomo are amongst the women listed in Forbes Indonesia 2014’s Inspiring Women.

**NAJWA SHIHAB (36)**
Host of Mata Najwa
Metro TV

Ms Shihab has her own talk show called Mata Najwa and has interviewed many leading figures in Indonesia, including politicians and the President.

**SRI MULYANI (51)**
COO & Managing Director
World Bank

Ms Mulyani was appointed as the World Bank’s COO on September 2013. Previously she held the position as Finance Minister until May 2010.

**NONI PURNOMO (45)**
President Director
Blue Bird Group Holding

Ms Purnomo, one of the few females CEOs in the nation, is one of the most prominent female leaders in the country today.
More women are also looking up to female figures who follow their passions in the effort to bring about change in society - and who are taking non traditional career paths.

MAIA ESTIANTY (38)
Music producer, singer, business woman
A songwriter, music producer and singer. After her divorce, she started a string of her own businesses, including a record label, artist management company, restaurants, karaoke outlets, as well as event and film production companies.

ALEXANDRA ASMASOEBRATA (26)
Female Formula racer
Indonesia’s first female race car driver. She finished 2nd at the Formula Renault Race in Shanghai, China.

NADYA HUTAGALUNG (40)
Host of Asia’s Next Top Model
Indonesian model, actress and eco-activist.

Photo credits, from left: 1. Maia Estianty’s Facebook page  2. www.alexandra-asmasoebrata.com  3. @Nadya_HutaGalng on Twitter
Some women entrepreneurs have taken their brands global - making a conscious effort to stay true to their heritage even on a world stage.

**BAGTERIA**
Nancy Go made her own bag label, Bagteria. She has expanded her business in Asia, and her designs have been used by international celebrities such as Paris Hilton, Emma Thompson, Anggun, and Princess Zara Philips. Bagteria is marketed in more than 30 countries in the world.

**CAST EYEWEAR by Fa’**
Fahrani, 28, was born in Jakarta and lives in Bali. She is not only the creator and designer of CAST Eyewear, worn by Rihanna, Lady Gaga, Grimes and many others, but also a model, actress, singer, performer, and an environmental activist.

Indonesia’s younger women are being exposed to newer values and have more outlets to share their own opinions. Indonesians are the most prolific users of Twitter on the planet and most of the top profiles are female. Twitter provides a separate community to express themselves - one removed from the potential restrictions of the home.

- 63% of Indonesian women want to become more independent
- 50% of Indonesian women want their opinion to be more valued at home
- 45% of Indonesian women would like to become more outspoken and assertive.

LISTEN TO ME
Mothers are increasing getting ‘permission’ to work to support the new aspirations of the family. Working in the ‘public’ world, so long as it is framed as responsibility to the household, is actively encouraged. This means having a family can actually help women move towards a sustained independence.
WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS

HELP WOMEN WORK IT OUT
Work is the most influential driver of change for Indonesian women - but those in the rural Indonesia are often left out. Brands that support these women with the tools and skills they need, or provide them with opportunities and networks to work locally could become the champion of women - and create a whole new audience for its products. Mobility is also real issue - is there a way to support women commuters and help them to get around. A women only taxi company?

A NEW COMMUNITY
There is an opportunity for brands to provide a forum, virtual or real, where women can share their experiences of work or setting up a business and to help support a new emerging group of entrepreneurs. Where can your brand create a community for woman to share their working experiences? What working role model fits your brands values?
WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS

WAYS TO SPEAK OUT
Can brands provide opportunities for women to get involved and feel more empowered? Community projects where women can contribute to society, and offer them the experience of being in charge and in control of a venture outside the home.

HELP ME EXPLORE
Is there a way to provide women with the opportunity to explore more, while remaining connected to their roots? Literally, through travel companies, or exploring new passions and hobbies.

Photo used under creative commons from Pandu Adnyana
In contrast with China, where getting along with in laws was the number one driver of a happy marriage, for Indonesian women a supportive and respectful husband is the key.

**THREE KEYS TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having a supportive husband</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a husband who respects you</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being open to compromise</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing household/ parenting responsibilities equally</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making your own money</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking the time to find the right person before getting married</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting your career on track before getting married</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting along with your in-laws</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having some time to yourself every once in a while</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SariWangi aimed to position itself as a market leader in the tea bag category and differentiate itself from other tea brands.

It’s “Let’s Talk” campaign aimed to portray a more modern, equal relationship between married couples. The brand’s idea is to redefine the woman’s role, symbolize a relationship where husbands and wives communicate as equals, and stand for ‘sharing, not serving’. The company worked with marriage counsellors to identify conducive ‘tea moments’ that can be maximized by couples to communicate. The brand’s idea is expressed in the tagline “Mari Bicara”, or “Let’s talk”.
3. HAPPY EVER AFTER
BUT FINANCE IS FEMININE

Women are very much in control of the purse strings at home - even when it comes to big ticket items or financial products. Hermawan Kartajaya, cofounder of the Asia Marketing Federation, estimates that 92% of women in Indonesia’s 10 big cities have assumed ‘the role of Chief Financial Officer in their household’ in the last three years. Our survey confirms that women have a big say in major household purchases.

WHO MAKES THE FINAL PURCHASE DECISION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>My husband</th>
<th>My parents</th>
<th>My children</th>
<th>Someone else</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buy a home appliance</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy a new car</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buy a new mobile phone/ smartphone</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open a new bank account</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>14% 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase a life insurance policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>24% 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>24% 14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. HAPPY EVER AFTER
THE ROLE OF A WIFE REMAINS OLD SCHOOL

Divorce in Indonesia is rare. And roles remain relatively traditional. Our survey found that only one-third of Indonesian women expect to share household responsibilities with their husband. In contrast, more Indian and Chinese women expect men to share household and parenting responsibilities equally.

Close to 40% of Indonesian women we surveyed say that being open to compromise is a key to a happy marriage, compared to just 10% of Chinese women.
In Indonesia, beauty is more about making your husband and family proud than in the other two markets we surveyed. But like the others, it’s still mostly about personal confidence.

### REASONS INDONESIAN WOMEN WANT TO LOOK THEIR BEST/BEAUTIFUL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It makes me feel confident/ good about myself</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a way to express my personality/ individuality</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make my husband/ family proud</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help me get ahead in life</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To project a certain image or lifestyle</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because that’s just what women do</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So people take me seriously</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep my husband/ boyfriend interested</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing so gets me acknowledgement from others</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To appeal to men</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To help me find a boyfriend/ husband</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To appeal to other women</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The concept of beauty in Indonesia is still traditional, and the most important beauty features for women tend to be good skin and long hair. Women who try to look too Western are judged quite harshly for forgetting their roots. Taking care of their appearance is seen to project an image of being clean, mindful, well behaved and demonstrates pride in themselves and their family.

Agnez Mo, who recorded “Coke Bottle” with American rappers T.I. and Timbaland in 2013, is one of Indonesia’s most famous pop stars. But since she made it big internationally, there’s a growing feeling back home that she has forgotten her roots. She’s often criticized for trying to be too American rather than an International Indonesian star.

Photo credit: Agnez Mo on Instagram
SPEAK TO ME
While more Indonesian women control the finances, many categories are ignoring them as the key decision makers. Financial institutions, mortgage lenders, car companies tend to overlook women, whereas brands in the mobile category have done a better job at addressing them and benefitted from it.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE COMPLICATED
Relationship dynamics of couples in Indonesia need to be handled sensitively to reflect the support and adjustments both are making to support the woman’s new aspirations.
4. THE TRADITION TIGHTROPE

Tradition vs. modernity is a much discussed theme in Indonesia. There continues to be a strong desire to retain local and cultural traditions, as well as religious beliefs, and not embrace blatant Westernization. Reinterpreting tradition is the way to balance the two.

90%

Of Indonesian women say they struggle between maintaining their traditions and their desire to be modern.

Photo from Shutterstock
IKAT by Didiet Maulana
Fashion designer Didiet Maulana established Ikat Indonesia with a mission to promote and elevate ikat tenun, a traditional Indonesian woven fabric. He combines modernity with Indonesian tradition with his Ikat ensembles. Didiet has dressed many stars, and famously made a dress for Maudy Koesnadi for the 2013 Cannes Film Festival.

Indonesia’s Ikat on Gucci
Frida Giannini from Gucci, who used Ikat for one of her cocktail collections in 2010, helped raise the profile of Indonesian textiles.
Women strongly value their traditions, whether cultural or religious. Yet sometimes tradition conflicts with their quest for independence. Young Indonesia women are testing the waters, slowly pushing boundaries and learning to deftly navigate tradition and modernity.

86% of Indonesian women believe it’s important to uphold their traditions

76% of Indonesian women say tradition plays a smaller role in their life today
The portrayal of women in advertising seems to cater more to men’s perceptions of women than to how women see themselves. Indonesian women think marketers could do more to better connect with them.

### HOW DO YOU FEEL WOMEN ARE PORTRAYED IN ADVERTISING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertisers usually depict women as men would like to see them rather than as we really are</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisers could do more to connect with today’s women in advertising</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women I see in advertising usually seem a bit farfetched</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The women I see in ads tend to remind me of me and my friends</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CO-CREATE, DON’T APPROPRIATE
Designers, artists, traditional crafts – most are welcoming modern technologies and innovations as long as they don’t subsume the traditional. Creating partnerships or new paths between collaborators is one way brands can show they value Indonesian culture and can yet be contemporary and modern.

MISSING THE MARK
Predictably, categories like beauty and household products are doing are doing a better job at resonating with women. But banking, real estate and automotive brands are not fully capitalizing on the opportunity to do the same.

BE THE GLOBAL CHAMPION
Despite so many talented women surprisingly few are recognized on a global stage. Can brands showcase new local talent, to become their cheerleader and supporter?
5. FREED BY TECHNOLOGY

Social media provides the possibility to engage with other like minded women, express themselves and voice opinions that might not otherwise have a platform.

Women in Indonesia have also been able to use social media to rally support online and on the streets, against sexist comments and attacks on women. This action has been seen as a notable step for women's rights in Indonesia.

Photo from Shutterstock
5. FREED BY TECHNOLOGY
TECH ADS CONNECT BETTER

Technology stands out as one of the few categories that is doing a good job of resonating with Indonesian women, apart from those that have traditionally targeted female audiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beauty products</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine hygiene products</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion products</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology products</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home cleaning products</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groceries/food products</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houseware products/ appliances</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking/ financial</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property/ real estate</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car and automotive</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More female stars are representing technology brands, a good indicator that this sector gets that women are increasingly driving purchases. For example, Dian Sastrowardoyo for Samsung, Carissa Putri for Toshiba and singer Raisa for Sharp.

FACILITATE MORE
Indonesian women have embraced technology, and it’s time for tech brands to deepen the connection with these consumers. How could a brand provide real concrete support for women, through the simple medium of their mobile phone? Whether it’s technical training, mentoring, straightforward tutorials or even a toolbox for becoming an entrepreneur - the phone is the big gateway to connecting with a ready and waiting audience.
People have told us that certain things define a ‘successful woman’ and others do not. In your opinion, to what degree does each of the following define a ‘successful woman’, if at all? There are no right or wrong answer – we’re only interested in your opinions.

**WHAT DEFINES A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being educated</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a career</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a good personality / character</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a strong set values / beliefs</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a good mom</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being happily married</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being financially successful / wealthy</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owning her own home</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being afraid to take risks</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being attractive</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a good amount of friends</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being religious</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 3 per market
1. SMART GIRLS RULE

Access to higher education and opportunities for work, career have been the most influential drivers for change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOST INFLUENTIAL DRIVERS OF CHANGE FOR WOMEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More opportunities for work and career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More access to higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More freedom to make your own choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More financial independence/spending power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More equality in relationships with significant others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved societal attitudes toward women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved attitude of the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better portrayal of women in India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. SMART GIRLS RULE
OUTSMARTING THE COMPETITION

There has always been a focus on intellectual success in India, driven in part by the sheer population and competitive environment. People feel the best way to get ahead is to outwit or outsmart competition. This competitive drive creates a strong culture and desire for self improvement.

When asked what makes a good mom, respondents chose options that are focused on improving their child’s life and future prospects. The focus is on helping them to achieve a better life than the one they’re living. Encouraging daughters to be independent is a prime reason that education has become such an important marker of success for women.

### IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR BEING A GOOD MOM

- Teaching your children values and helping make them better people: 81%
- Encouraging your daughters to have a career and be independent: 75%
- Helping your children achieve a better life: 73%
- Always being present when your children need you: 68%
- Looking after all your children’s needs: 65%
Given the fast pace of economic development and number of women in higher education, India has an unusually low female employment rate - and it’s on the decline. India’s labor force participation rate for women fell from just over 37 per cent in 2005 to 30 per cent in 2013, according to the World Bank.

This is partly because an increasing number of women of a working age are instead continuing with their education, but also because unemployment for women has also gone up - particularly amongst the young.

The service industry is one area that’s providing new employment opportunities.

Photo credit: Van Heusen India
"I was at a function to felicitate a girl who had stood first in the entire district after the eighth standard exams. After she was done smiling for the cameras, she came running towards me and told me, ‘Aap please papa ko boliye na ki mujhe aage padhaye!’ (Please tell my dad to educate me) Her parents said, ‘Ghar pe kaam to karna hai, padh ke kya karegi?’ (When there’s so much of work at home, why should she study?) Unless this mindset changes, there’s no point in dreaming about women empowerment and bragging about how women are occupying top positions in corporate jobs. Trust me, the numbers tell a different story.”

- Smriti Irani, Human Resources Development Minister

As women become more economically active and gain greater independence through working and financial stability, traditional gender roles are being redefined. But that doesn’t mean everything is equal.

Photo credit: Smriti Irani’s Facebook page
Indian women need to balance two sides: the intellectual achievement-driven, ambitious part of themselves, which is often downplayed in public, and the more traditional role that they’re expected to show, of being a daughter, wife and a mother.

They do feel pride in these traditions and strive to balance both. In fact, new narratives are celebrating traditions while reinterpreting them with a new twist.

Indian women say they manage to ‘balance my traditions and my desire to be independent and assertive’.

91%
1. SMART GIRLS RULE
THE EVOLVING BALANCING ACT IS A KEY THEME IN POPULAR CULTURE

In a recent popular Hindi film “Queen” the lead character, Rani, never gives up her traditional identity during her pursuit of self discovery. Ditched at the alter, she travels the world on her own and thoroughly enjoys her newfound independence. She explores life, breaks many boundaries, and discovers a new side of herself. The film ends with her balancing her new identity while staying connected with her traditions.

Photo: Bollywood Life
CELEBRATE EVERYONE

In a country where the pressure to be at the top can be overwhelming, can brands create new definitions of success? They can go beyond textbook success, celebrate talent and encourage women to find their unique identity.

STORIES AND SPOKESWOMEN WITH SUBSTANCE

Advertising in India has evolved in many ways - we observe that some of the most successful ad campaigns are the ones that treat this audience intelligently and have a social commentary.

Tata Tea gives ‘Power of 49’ wake-up call to politicians

Conceptualised by Lowe Lintas, the ‘Power of 49’ campaign, an extension of the brand’s ‘Jago Re’ campaigns, aims to make people aware of a simple statistic – that women constitute 49 per cent of the vote-bank – and they can make and break politicians and governments.

BestMediaInfo Bureau | Mumbai | August 30, 2013
Indian women value a partner who respects her and supports her choices. These ranked most highly when asked what the key to a happy marriage was. In contrast, women in China ranked getting along with their in-laws as number one.

### KEY TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key to a Happy Marriage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting along with your in-laws</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making your own money</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having some time to yourself every once in a while</td>
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<td>Sharing household/parenting responsibilities equally</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a husband who respects you</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a supportive husband</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Television serials are a good reflection of the changing values in society. Many today depict men who encourage their wives to work, and who stand up for the wife with their own families. So do the stars who portray those roles.

2. NEW MARRIAGE RULES
THE SUPER SUPPORTIVE SPOUSE IS THE NEW HERO, ON AND OFF SCREEN

My husband is supportive of my work: Anita Hassanandani

Last Updated: Tuesday, December 17, 2013 - 13:47

New Delhi: Newly married actress Anita Hassanandani is happy to have a supportive partner in Rohit Raddy, who pushes her to work hard.

Anita, who married this October, is making a comeback on TV after a gap of two years with new show "Yeh Hai Mohabbatein".

"I haven’t taken a break after marriage. Just two days after my marriage I was in Chandigarh promoting my Punjabi film. All this has become possible because of my supportive husband. In fact, I will work more now. He is the one who always tell me to call back if I miss a call from work when I am at home. He is really pushy about my work," Anita said.

In the soap opera, Anita will be seen in a grey role of an ex-wife for the first time.

"It is an exciting role because as a performer the role was challenging for me. I have never done something of this sort. It’s slightly grey and selfish character. It is not an out-and-out negative character. But after this role I am prepared for hate mails from my fans," she said.
Support is mutual. Tennis star Sania Mirza and cricketer Shoaib Malik have both been very publicly supportive of each other’s sporting tribulations.

64%

Of Indian women strongly agree their opinion is valued at home, compared to 50% in China and 53% in Indonesia.
The traditional competitiveness between the mother and daughter-in-law is changing. We are witnessing a new equation.

The depiction of the mother-in-law in popular culture has evolved from an overbearing, iron-fisted person to an empathetic, understanding figure. That portrayal reflects society, where urban mothers in law are typically extending support to share domestic duties & even actively encouraging their daughter-in-laws to pursue interests outside the domestic domain.

As a younger generation of girls become more educated and independent, the relationship continues to evolve. One manifestation of this changing relationship is evident in them shopping together, and discussing fashion, beauty etc. Many mother-in-laws feel a sense of pride in having an educated, independent daughter-in-law who also contributes to the household income.

Source: Indiaopines.com
JWT’s survey found that Internet search and price comparison on websites are the two biggest research resources used before of a purchase.

### Who Makes the Final Purchase Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Me</th>
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<th>My children</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open a new bank account</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase a life insurance policy</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
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<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. NEW MARRIAGE RULES

WOMEN DRIVE SPENDING DECISIONS
Embracing convenience is no longer seen as a short-cut but a sign of smartness: online shopping, ready to cook food, and reliance on appliances all help save time and deliver results.

Local Banya is Mumbai’s first online supermarket, providing all familiar products sold in a traditional Mom and Pop shop with the convenience of delivery - and at cheaper prices. It also tries to maintain a relationship with its customers, and has even provided a section to cater to requests for hard to find items.

Source: Local Banya.com
INVOLVE MEN TOO
Some categories are in danger of an entrenched gender bias - talking to women as if they are the only ones shopping or looking after children. While all may not be equal at home, Indian women feel particularly supported at home and by their partner. The way appeal to women is no longer to solely cater to them but include their husbands in the conversation.

DIGITAL FRIENDSHIPS
Women are just as likely to turn to the internet than they are to a friend for information, and brands clearly have an opportunity to build enduring online trusted friendships with them. Mobiles are being enlisted at the point of purchase by savvy shoppers.


Godrej home appliances launched a campaign targeting young couples, where the man played an equal part in the story.
Indian women have long been portrayed in advertising and cinema in a stereotypical way and in clichéd roles: the mean mother in law, the wife who suffers in silence, the self-sacrificial mother.

The Hindi film, Mary Kom, tells the true of a world champion boxer and mother of three who was coached and supported by her husband.

Brands, too, are beginning to recognize that women are more multifaceted and are becoming partners in this fight against stereotypes.

‘Indian women have to fight too many stereotypes’
- Smiriti Irani, Human Resource Development Minister
3. CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES
NEW TRADITIONS: STAYING TRUE TO YOU

The new narrative in cinema is about being confident in who you are and not being forced to change for the sake of others.

OLD:
Traditional wife loses her husband to modern woman, wins him back by turning into a seductress

NOW:
A clubbing, drinking seductress who can’t relate to her mother-in-law loses out to the balanced, girl next door

OLD:
Traditional wife loses her husband to modern woman, wins him back by turning into a seductress

Photo credits: 1. Squarefashion.com; 2. Rediff.com; 3. farahlurvesallu.blogspot.in; 4. Sulkeha.com
3. CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES
IN INDIA, ADVERTISERS GET WHAT MODERN WOMEN WANT...

HOW DO WOMEN FEEL ABOUT ADVERTISING?
(% Strongly/Somewhat Agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ads offer me valuable information about new products</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are these ads they spoil my favourite TV shows</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising is a good source of entertainment</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy watching TV ads</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Women in India seem to enjoy and relate to advertising the most - perhaps because many ads have started to offer a more nuanced portrayal of women and seek to connect with them on a deeper level.
Indian women perceive that advertising of most categories are doing a good job of resonating with them. The exception is real estate. These numbers are far higher than Indonesia and China.

**Categories Doing a Good Job Resonating with Women**

- Beauty products: 56%
- Feminine hygiene products: 50%
- Fashion products: 55%
- Home cleaning products: 51%
- Groceries/food products: 56%
- Technology products: 58%
- Houseware products/appliances: 55%
- Banking/financial: 45%
- Car and automotive: 43%
- Property/real estate: 23%
- None: 2%
Amongst a set of ads tested with respondents, the Tanishq advertisement fared well. The ad, which is themed around remarriage, shows a dusky bride and her young daughter getting ready for the ceremony. The daughter accompanies her mother and is carried by the groom around the sacred fire (Hindu marriage ritual).

Most advertisements show fair brides but the Tanishq advertisement broke several stereotypes by showcasing a dusky complexioned woman, celebrated remarriage and her husband’s open acceptance of her daughter.

Photo credit: Tanishq Jewellery via Youtube
3. CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

Reason “Tanishq Wedding” Is Very Appealing

This ad is just perfect. Firstly a dark skinned girl. Then remarriage. Then the man accepting her daughter as his own...giving respect to the women and the relationship. Just perfect and beautiful...what every girl wants.

It shows changing attitude of society towards remarriage and acceptance of new members to family

Path breaking, talks about changing perceptions of society about women and their life choices like remarrying and isn't fairness obsessed

The ad puts forth a very bold concept that only a few in the society accept currently but the ones open to it are on the rise.

Consumers we surveyed voiced their approval of the progressive portrayal of women in this campaign.
3. CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES
RURAL WOMAN PUSH FOR CHANGE TOO

The Pink Gang are an all-women vigilante organization based in Bundelkhand, a region in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh known as the badlands of India. They fight for the rights of women, the lower castes and the poor. Their leader, Sampat Devi Pal has been instrumental in fighting for women’s rights and is a role model in her own right.

3. CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES
RURAL WOMAN PUSH FOR CHANGE TOO

It’s not just urban, educated women who are challenging stereotypes. Rural women are pushing back, too.

Sampat Devi is very typical rural women who was married off at the age of 12 and had the first of five children by 15. Her in-laws tried to restrict her mobility, force the purdah[veil] onto her and turn her into a household servant.

She always fiercely resisted attempts by others to control her. She achieved financial independence early on in life by teaching herself how to sew. Her work gave her an increasing amount of freedom until, in her forties, she became an entrepreneur and an activist for other rural women.

Photo credit: [www.gulabigang.in](http://www.gulabigang.in)
WHAT IT MEANS FOR BRANDS

TAKE INSPIRATION FROM A CHALLENGE OR CAUSE
Many successful adverts or campaigns over the years have had a strong cause underlying the storyline. Although a brand might not be an overt champion of a challenge, cause or problem faced by women, even just showing it acknowledges real issues can spark a national conversation. A forward thinking representation is appreciated.

TAKE THE LEAD IN ‘NON TRADITIONAL’ CATEGORIES
Traditionally auto, technology, finance, real estate categories have primarily addressed male audiences. As women’s opinion at home and work becomes more important and they make purchase decisions across a host of new categories, marketers that take the lead in engaging with their new audience will be rewarded. With brand preference and perceived as more progressive.
CONCLUSIONS

• There are many common themes of progress, growing opportunities and equality for women across Asia. What’s interesting however, is the difference in implications and manifestations across different countries based on their cultural context.

• Brands and marketers can play a meaningful role in women’s lives by helping them navigate some of the new social and personal tensions these changes are creating.

• Tensions that come with the desire to be successful in all areas of life are being handled differently in the three countries. New social dynamics are evolving - role of grandparents in China, home entrepreneurs in Indonesia and supportive husbands in India are some.

• Innovative coping mechanisms, real and online support communities, new dating/relationship rules are emerging that marketers can champion.

• The meaning of beauty varies, reflecting personal progress in China, family pride in Indonesia and personal pride in India.

• Asian societies, and women, are changing fast; advertisers need to keep pace and reflect, or even lead, popular culture, when it comes to how they portray women.