You Cannot Change What You Cannot See: Women in China's Elite Law Firms

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Female Lawyers in China: An Empirical Study of their Career Satisfaction, Male Allyship, and Workplace Stress

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"You cannot change what you cannot see"
      ---Joan Williams: Bias Interrupters

Introduction

In this chapter of the report, we adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative approach to analyze whether female lawyers in China are satisfied with their jobs, what obstacles they are facing, and whether they perceive their male colleagues as their allies. Our data were collected through online questionnaire and cover more than 440 female lawyers in China. Based on these data, we conclude that female lawyers in China are still suffering from gender bias in the workplace, and the biggest obstacle prevents them from breaking the glass ceiling lies in childbearing. While female lawyers are aware of implicit gender bias, they tend not to regard combating the bias as their foremost concern.

The first part of this chapter will introduce our methodologies of data collection, the design of the questionnaire, as well as how we analyzed the data.

The second part will be quantitative descriptive analysis. Through frequency distribution tables and graphs, we will present the basic information of the respondents, including ages, years of practice, educational background, types of law firms they are working for, positions in the firms, and their annual incomes.

The third part will present the results of the Likert scale question in the questionnaire. We first tested the reliability and validity of the data through Cronbach-α coefficient, KMO and Bartlett's test. We then applied the independent samples test to illustrate the relationships between female lawyers' fertility decision-making and their job satisfaction level, perceptions of male colleagues, and workplace stress.

The fourth part will be qualitative analysis. We will present qualitative data to represent the opinions or views female lawyers have on gender equality in China's legal industry.

1 Methodologies

In October 2020, we established the online questionnaire on wjwlkj.wjx.cn to collect information from female lawyers in China.[1] The questionnaire was distributed through WeChat, Douban, and emails. We distributed the questionnaire through our social network, sending the questionnaire to alumni, previous colleagues, acquaintances who work as lawyers, and members of the "Self-Help Group for Female Lawyers" on douban.com. Several red circle law firms and global law firms in China were also invited to participate in the research. The questionnaire has had 528 hits within two months, and 442 respondents finished the questionnaire. The average time taken to finish the questionnaire was 257 seconds. And over 80% of the respondents submitted their answers from Beijing or Shanghai.

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[1] The link to the Chinese version of the questionnaire: https://wjwlkj.wjx.cn/jq/98070310.aspx

The questionnaire consisted of thirteen multiple-choice questions, one Likert scale question divided into three dimensions and eighteen statements, two open-ended questions, and one ranking question. 225 respondents answered the open-ended questions.

The multiple-choice questions investigated the respondents' basic information, experiences of being sexually harassed, and their attitude towards impacts of childbearing on their career. The Liker scale question covered the respondents' attitude towards three dimensions, namely career satisfaction, male allyship in the workplace, and workplace stress. The ranking question invited the respondents to rank the priority of factors that affecting their fertility decision-making. The open-ended questions asked the respondents to explain their gender preference regarding leaders and request them to provide comments on gender equality in China's legal industry.

To fully understand the data, we combined quantitative analysis with qualitative analysis, which enabled us to better examine the validity of the assumptions according to the understandings and opinions of the respondents (Guinier, Fine and Balin, 1994, p. 9).

Considering the limits of collecting data through social network, we focused our attention on the experiences and attitude of young female lawyers who graduated from top law schools domestically and globally.

2 Quantitative Descriptive Analysis

	Option	Frequency	Percent (%)
Year of Birth	1960-1969	0	0
	1970-1979	0	0
	1980-1989	44	10
	1990-1999	398	90
Years of Practice	Less than 5 years	388	87.8
	6 to 10 years	39	8.8
	11 to 15 years	11	2.5
	16 to 20 years	4	0.9
	More than 21 years	0	0
Highest Degree	Bachelor's degree	134	30.3
	Master's degree (domestic)	82	18.6
	Master's degree (overseas, LL.M./J.D.)	226	51.1
	Doctor's degree and above (domestic)	0	0
	Doctor's degree and above (overseas, S.J.D/PhD)	0	0
Type of Law Firm	Red circle law firm (Top 8 domestic law firms)	155	35.1
	Boutique law firm	77	17.4
	Major law firm with no less than 5 offices across China	48	10.9
	Global law firm	145	32.8
	Sole-proprietorship law firm	10	2.3
	Others	7	1.6
Position	Partner	0	0
	Senior associate	5	1.1
	Junior associate	224	50.7
	Paralegal	127	28.7
	Intern	86	19.5
Annual Income	Less than ￥50,000	23	5.2
	￥50,001 - ￥100,000	43	9.7

	¥ 100,001 - ¥ 500,000	266	60.2
	¥ 500,001 - ¥ 1,000,000	92	20.8
	More than ¥ 1,000,001	18	4.1

TABLE I: Frequency Distribution Statistics of the Respondents

Table I demonstrates the basic information of the respondents. These data depict the ages, years of practice, educational background, types of law firms, positions, and annual incomes of the respondents.

Apart from basic information of the respondents, this part also covers other non-scale questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked to report whether they have gender preference with regard to leaders, and the underlying reasons for their preference. They were also asked about their experiences of being sexually harassed in the workplace and their reactions, as well as the results of their reactions. Lastly, respondents were inquired of their experiences and perceptions of childbearing.

2.1 Years of Birth
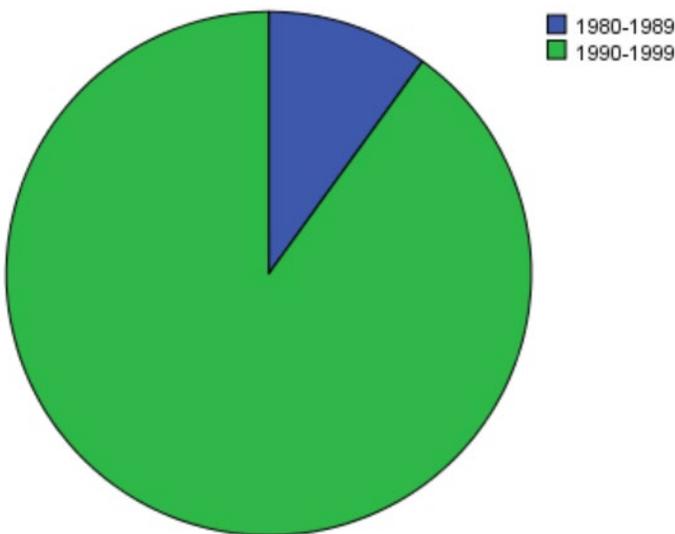
GRAPH I: Distribution of Ages

10% of the respondents were born in the 1980s, and 90% of the respondents were born in 1990s. This distribution illustrates that the research is mainly focused on the young generation of Chinese female lawyers, who were at their twenties when took the survey. This result is consistent with our expectation to investigate female lawyers who are in the process of breaking the glass ceiling in their career.
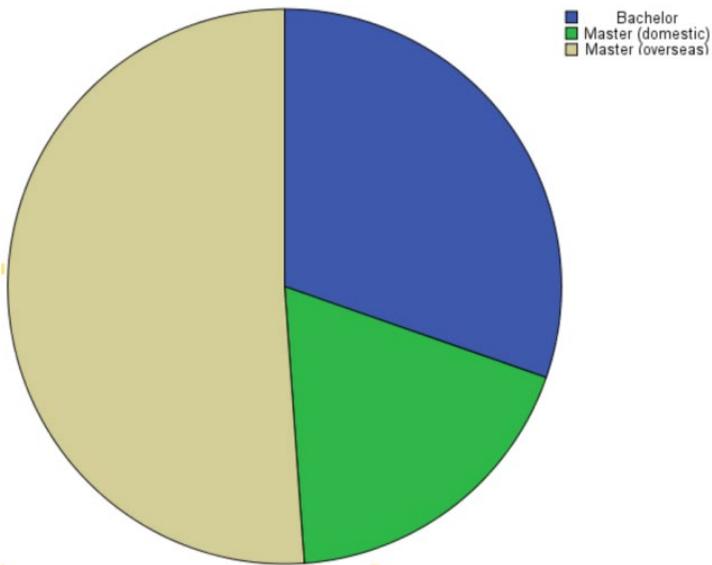
2.2 Years of Practice

Less than 5 years
6 to 10 years
11 to 15 years
16 to 20 years
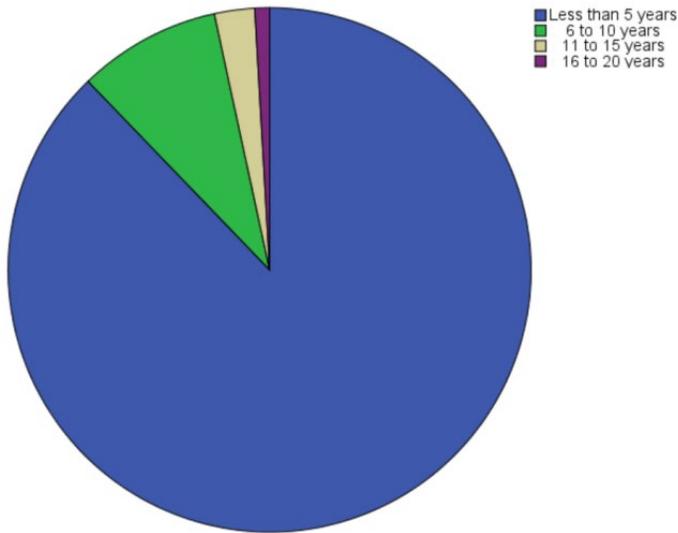
GRAPH II: Distribution of Years of Practice

Over 87% of the respondents have practiced in law for less than five years, which is consistent with the distribution of ages.

2.3 Educational Background

Bachelor
Master (domestic)
Master (overseas)

GRAPH III: Distribution of the Highest Degree

Over 50% of the respondents received LL.M. or J.D. degree outside of China, which indicates their family background and perceptions of education. This is consistent with our goal to investigate female lawyers who are young, elite, and have the highest possibility of becoming leaders in the legal industry. For the rest who received their highest degree in China, according to the methodologies mentioned in Part 1, they are likely to receive their highest degree in top law schools of China.

2.4 Types of Law Firms the Respondents are Working For
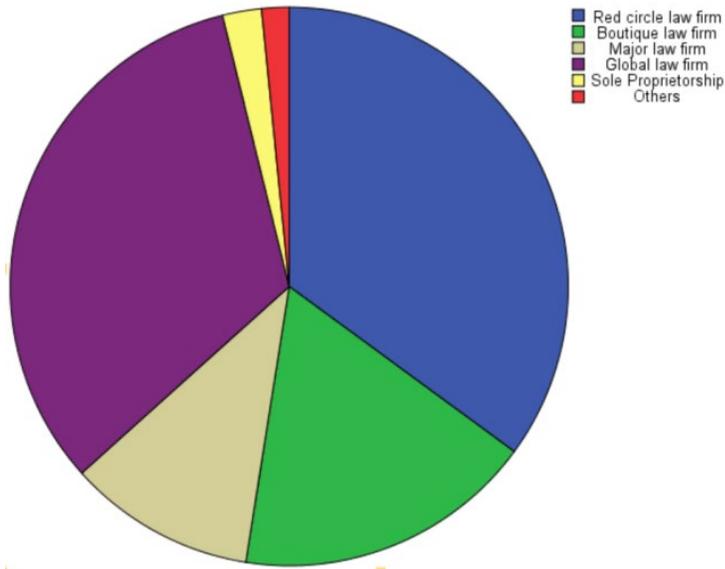
GRAPH IV: Distribution of Types of Law Firms

More than 80% of the respondents are working for red circle law firms (35.07%), global law firms (32.81%), or boutique law firms (17.42%). These firms stand as the highest caliber of law firms when law school graduates are hunting for jobs. Considering the recruitment requirements of these types of law firms, the distribution indicates that most respondents tended to achieve above average performance when they were at school.
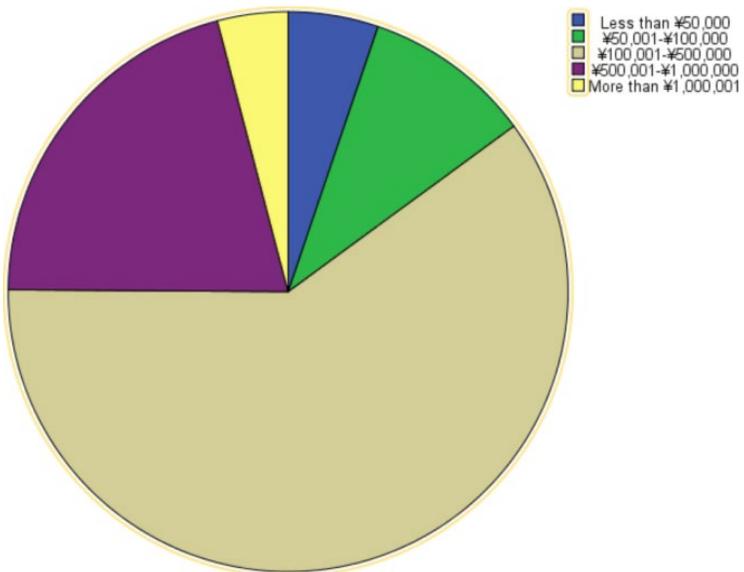
2.5 Positions in the Law Firms

Legend:
- Senior associate
- Junior associate
- Paralegal
- Intern
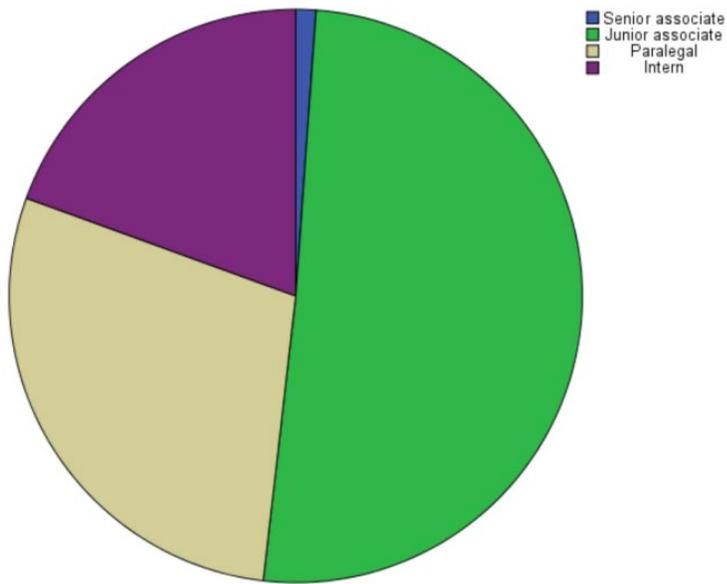
GRAPH V: Distribution of Positions in the Law Firms

Over 50% of the respondents are junior associates in their law firms, and over 28% are paralegals. This finding is consistent with their ages and years of practice.

2.6 Annual Incomes

Legend:
- Less than ¥50,000
- ¥50,001-¥100,000
- ¥100,001-¥500,000
- ¥500,001-¥1,000,000
- More than ¥1,000,001

GRAPH VI: Distribution of Annual Incomes

Income serves as a crucial indicator of the respondents' socioeconomic status. In the survey, over 60% of the respondents reported annual incomes ranging between ¥100,001 - ¥500,000. According to statistics revealed by National Bureau of Statistics of the PRC, the per capita disposable income nationwide in 2019 was ¥30,732 (NBS, 2018). Therefore, most of the respondents are in the high-income class.

2.7 Gender Preference of Leaders
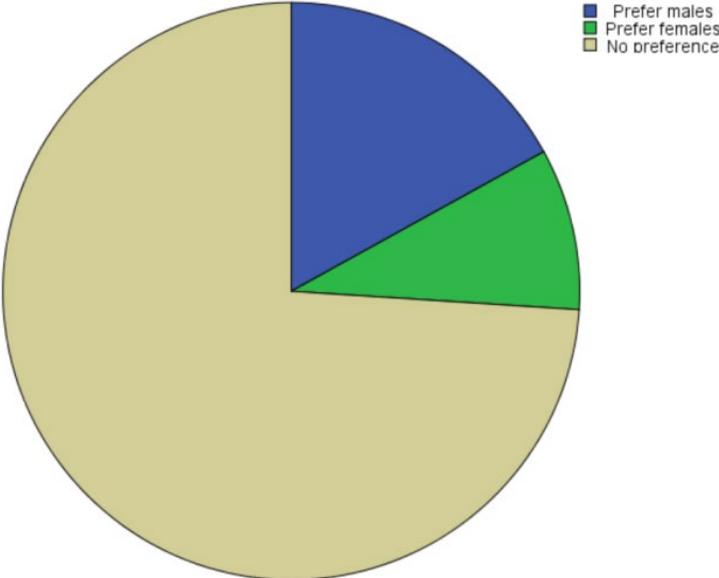
GRAPH VII: Gender Preference for Leaders

In this survey, 16.97% of the respondents reported they are more willing to work with male leaders than female leaders, while 9.05% have a preference of female leaders over male leaders. The rest of the respondents reported no gender preference. Respondents also provided reasons for their preference, which will be presented in part four of this chapter.

2.8 Sex Harassment in Workplace
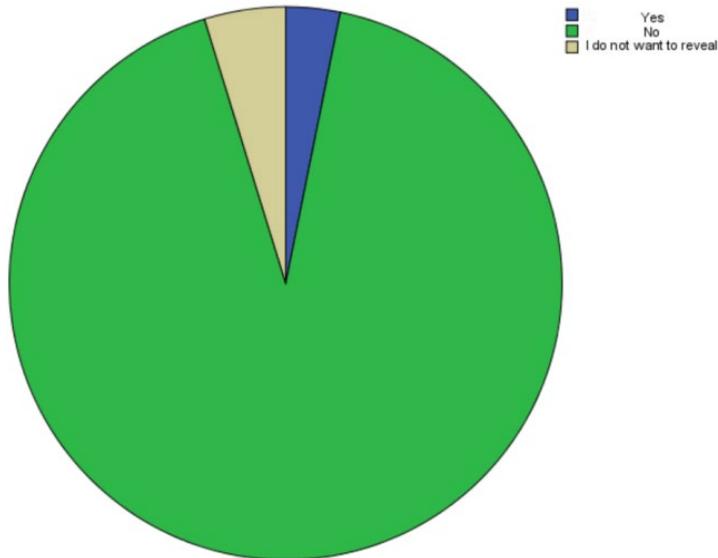
GRAPH VIII: Whether the Respondents Have Experienced Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

When asked whether they have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, only 14 (3.2%) respondents reported "yes" to the question, and 21 respondents (4.8%) reported "I do not want to reveal". This result is significantly lower than our expectation, as the #MeToo Movement revealed that about 40% women in China said they had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in 2018 (Richardson, 2018). We propose three explanations for this result. Firstly, since most respondents are members of the high-income and well-educated groups, they are more likely to interact with people from similar backgrounds in the workplace, who tend to comply with moral rules and workplace policies and refrain themselves from committing sexual harassment. Secondly, part of the respondents might be unaware of being sexually harassed, as the incidents of sexual harassment can be ambiguous, and women who are frequently harassed are less likely to detect the existence of harassment (Golden, Johnson, and Lopes, 2001, pp. 747-784). Lastly, part of the respondents might tell lies when answering this question.

For respondents who chose "yes" in this question, they were further asked whether they tried to complain to the higher authorities of the law firm and whether they were properly compensated for being sexually harassed in the workplace. Only 4 respondents (28.57%) made the complaint, and all of them were satisfied with the compensation. This result illustrates that, even among the young elite female lawyers in China, only a small proportion of the alleged victims would seek for remedies. A possible explanation may be that they did not want to be deemed as a complainer by their senior associates or partners (Rhode, 2019, pp.389-390).

2.9 Perception of Childbearing
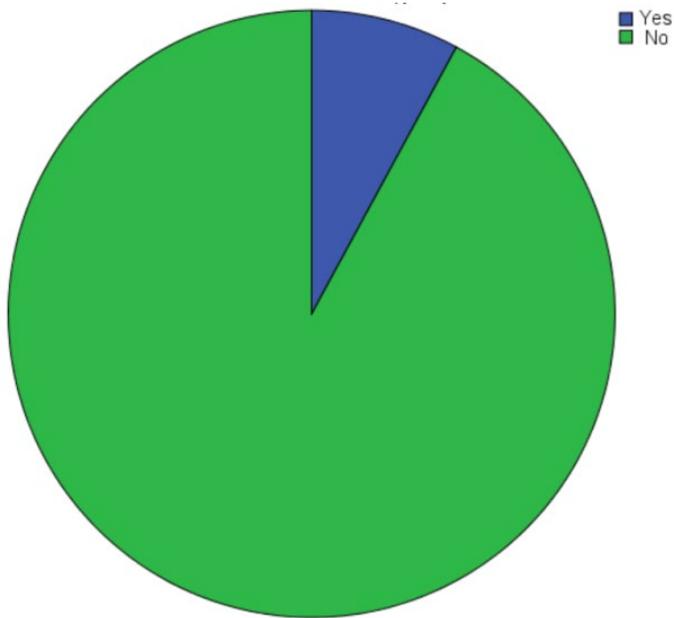
GRAPH IX: Percentage of Childbearing

	Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Have you ever taken a parental leave?	Yes	35	100
	No	0	0
How about the child's father?	Yes	15	42.86
	No	20	57.14

TABLE II: Descriptive Analysis of Parental Leave

35 respondents (7.92%) reported that they have at least one child, all of which had taken parental leaves at least once. Only 42.86% of the children's fathers were reported to have taken a parental leave. It is noteworthy that 100% of the respondents confirmed that giving birth to a child has negative impacts on their career.

Option	Average
Impacts on career	2.32
Partner's commitment and contributions	2.87
Material conditions	3.52
Balance between work and life	3.78

TABLE III: Rank of Factors Influencing Whether to Have a Child or Not

(1-Most significant; 4-Least Significant)

For respondents who do not have a child, "impacts on career" was ranked the first when they were asked to rank the significance of factors influencing their fertility decision-making.

3 Likert Scale Analysis

Likert scale is invoked in order to measure attitude of participants in a scientifically accepted and validated manner (Joshi and et al., 2015, p. 398). A typical Likert scale is a set of statements offered for a real or hypothetical situation under study. Participants are asked to show their level of agreement (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) with the given statements on a metric scale. And the statements in combination will reveal certain dimensions of the attitude towards the issue (Singh, 2006,). Following this approach, we divided the Likert scale in our questionnaire into three dimensions, which respectively reveal female lawyers' attitude towards career satisfaction, male allyship, and workplace stress in the workplace.

3.1 Reliability Test and Validity Test
3.1.1 Cronbach's α

The results of a study are reliable when they are consistent over time and accurately represent the total population under study. "If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable." (Golafshani, 2003, p. 599). In this study, we applied Cronbach's α, a common measure of internal consistency, to test the reliability of the data.

If the value of Cronbach's α is above 0.8, then the data are of high consistency and suitable for further analysis. If the value ranges between 0.6 and 0.8, the data are of above-average quality, and once the value is below 0.5, the data are not reliable and should be abandoned (Eisinga, Grotenhuis, and Pelzer, 2013, pp. 637-639).

First Dimension: Career Satisfaction

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
(1) I am satisfied with my current job.	442	1	5	3.33	1.204
(2) I can balance my work and life.	442	1	5	3.36	1.184
(3) I am satisfied with the way my compensation is determined.	442	1	5	3.36	1.127
(4) I am satisfied with my position in the law firm.	442	1	5	3.22	1.108
(5) Compared with my male colleagues, I have equal access to sponsorship.	442	1	4	2.12	1.086
(6) Compared with my male colleagues, I have an equal chance of promotion.	442	1	4	2.08	0.907
(7) I am qualified to be a leader of the law firm.	442	1	4	3.12	0.941
Valid N (listwise)	442				

TABLE IV: Descriptive Analysis of Career Satisfaction Dimension

The dimension Career Satisfaction is comprised of seven statements presented in Table IV, which depicts the extent female lawyers in China are satisfied with their jobs. Respondents were asked to indicate their attitude towards the statements (1-strongly disagree; 5-stongly agree). The average value of each statement in Table IV indicates the respondents' overall reactions to the statements. The higher the value, the respondents as a whole are more likely to strongly agree with the statement. Besides, the standard deviation of the value reflects the degree of divergence among the respondents.

According to Table IV, the highest values of statement (5), (6), and (7) are 4, suggesting that no respondent strongly agrees they enjoy the same access to sponsorship and promotions with their male colleagues, and none of them firmly believes they are qualified to be the leader of the law firms. Moreover, it is clear that the respondents are least likely to agree with statement (6) and (5). These findings reveal that many of the respondents are already aware of possible gender gaps in the workplace. Furthermore, while the average values of statement (1), (2), and (3) are higher, the standard deviations of these statements are also higher, suggesting that although many of the respondents tend to be satisfied with their current jobs, balance of work and life, and their compensations, a relatively large divergence within the group exists.

	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
I am satisfied with my current job.	.694	.771	
I can balance my work and life.	.688	.773	
I am satisfied with the way my compensation is determined.	.664	.778	
I am satisfied with my position in the law firm.	.665	.778	
Compared with my male colleagues, I have equal access to sponsorship.	.544	.799	.820
Compared with my male colleagues, I have an equal chance of promotion.	.544	.799	
I am qualified to be a leader of the law firm.	.127	.856	

TABLE V: Cronbach's α of Career Satisfaction Dimension

Since the Cronbach's α of the Career Satisfaction dimension is above 0.8, the data show high consistency and are of good quality. Data regarding this dimension can be used in further quantitative analysis.

Second Dimension: Male Allyship

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
(1) I am satisfied with working with my male colleagues.	442	1	5	4.19	.964
(2) My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.	442	1	5	4.09	1.001
(3) Enough women are appointed to committees and leadership opportunities.[2]	442	1	5	3.15	1.080
Valid N (listwise)	442				

TABLE VI: Descriptive Analysis of Male Allyship Dimension

The Male Allyship dimension depicts whether female lawyers in China perceive themselves as receiving enough support from their male colleagues both individually and structurally. According to Table VI, the respondents hold an optimistic attitude towards their male colleagues at the individual level, as they tend to agree or strongly agree that working with their male colleagues is enjoyable, as well as their male colleague are willing to put them on center stage. However, at the structural level, the respondents as a whole neither agree nor disagree that enough women are appointed to the leadership opportunities. Considering the fact that much more men are appointed to leadership positions than women in the legal industry, this may illustrate that even women themselves are indifferent to the lack of gender diversity in the most influential positions.

	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
I am satisfied with working with my male colleagues.	.632	.498	
My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.	.661	.496	.900
Enough women are appointed to committees and leadership opportunities.	.357	.843	

TABLE VII: Cronbach's α of Male Allyship Dimension

Since the Cronbach's α of Male Allyship dimension is 0.900, the study enjoys high reliability, and the data are highly consistent.

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[2] These statements were drawn from *Male Allyship in the Future of Work: Advancing Inclusive Leadership*, Spring 2020.

Third Dimension: Workplace Stress

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Appearance	442	1	4	2.16	.957
Age	442	1	4	2.07	.933
Income	442	1	4	3.06	.943
Health	442	1	4	3.43	.992
Marriage/intimate relationship	442	1	4	3.04	.803
Workplace relationships	442	1	4	3.44	.801
Workplace gender bias	442	1	4	3.06	.807
Career prospects	442	1	4	3.31	.863
Valid N (listwise)	442				

TABLE VIII: Descriptive Analysis of Workplace Stress Dimension

The third dimension of the Likert scale asks the respondents to indicate the degree they are worried about the eight factors (1- not worried at all; 4-extremely worried). As provided in Table VIII, health and workplace relationships are the foremost concerns of the respondents. They generally do not worry much about their appearances and ages. They tend to be concerned about workplace gender bias, but do not pay extra to this issue. Combined with the findings in Career Satisfaction dimension, while they do suspect the existence of gender disparity with regard to promotions and sponsorship, they do not regard workplace gender bias as their biggest challenge.

	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Appearance	.716	.876	
Age	.780	.869	
Income	.739	.873	
Health	.702	.877	.893
Marriage/intimate relationship	.780	.871	
Workplace relationships	.767	.872	
Workplace gender bias	.747	.874	
Career prospects	.203	.920	

TABLE IX: Cronbach's α of Workplace Stress Dimension

Since the Cronbach's α is 0.893, data collected in the Workplace Stress dimension are consistent and stable.

To summarize, the Cronbach's α tests of each dimension of the Likert scale prove that the questionnaire is stable, and the data are reliable.

1.1.2   Validity Test

Validity defines whether the research truly measures what it is intended to measure (Golafshani, 2003, p. 599). In testing validity of the data, KMO and Bartlett's Test are commonly invoked. The KMO is a statistic that indicates the proportion of variance in the variables that might be caused by underlying factors. If the value of KMO exceeds 0.9, then a factor analysis of the data can effectively measure what the research is intended to measure. If the value is lower than 0.5, the questionnaire may be designed in a problematic way, the results of which would not be useful in quantitative analysis.

The Bartlett's Test will examine whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. If the answer is yes, the variables in the research are unrelated and therefore unsuitable for stricture detection. In this test, small values indicate high validity (Chung, Kim, and Abreu, 2004, p. 66).

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.815
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1270.033
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

TABLE X: Validity Test of the Career Satisfaction Dimension

Since the KMO of this dimension is 0.815, and sig.<0.05, statements involved in this dimension are of high validity. This questionnaire can effectively measure the true attitude of the respondents towards their jobs.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.742
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	841.001
	df	3
	Sig.	.000

TABLE XI: Validity Test of the Male Allyship Dimension

Since the KMO of this dimension is 0.742, and sig.<0.05, questions involved in this dimension are of good validity. This questionnaire can be used to measure the true attitude of the respondents towards their male colleagues. The reason why the KMO of this dimension is lower probably lies in that this dimension encompasses only three statements.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.947
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2339.796
	df	36
	Sig.	.000

TABLE XII: Validity Test of the Workplace Stress Dimension

Since the KMO of this dimension is 0.947, and sig.<0.05, statements involved in this dimension are of high validity. This questionnaire is suitable to measure the extent to which respondents are worried about the factors involved.

3.2 Independent Samples Test

To test whether childbearing will influence how female lawyers perceive their jobs and their male colleagues, an independent samples test is applied to the data. This test is designed to compare means variables of the three dimensions between two groups, namely female lawyers who have at least one child and who have no child. The test assumes that variances of the two groups are the same.

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
career satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	4.416	.036	2.109	440	.036	.279	.132	.019	.539
	Equal variances not assumed			1.836	38.324	.074	.279	.152	-.029	.587
male allyship	Equal variances assumed	.423	.516	-.230	440	.818	-.0385	.164	-.359	.284
	Equal variances not assumed			-.243	41.004	.809	-.0385	.154	-.349	.274
workplace stress	Equal variances assumed	1.163	.281	.234	440	.815	.0284	.121	-.210	.267
	Equal variances not assumed			.264	42.157	.793	.0284	.108	-.189	.246

TABLE XIII: Independent Samples Test I

For a mean difference between two groups to be statistically significantly different from 0, the two-tailed p-value must be less than 0.05. According to the results of the test, since the two-tailed p-values of Male Allyship dimension and Workplace Stress dimension are respectively 0.818 and 0.815, which means that the mean difference between the two groups is not statistically significantly different from 0, whether the respondents have at least one child seems to have no impact on how they perceive their male colleagues and workplace stress. Since the two-tailed p-value of Career Satisfaction dimension is 0.036 (p<0.05), childbearing will have impacts on how the respondents perceive their jobs. However, as only 35 respondents have at least one child, the potential influences may not be completely manifested.

Then we test whether the respondents' experiences of being sexually harassed will have influence on their perceptions of the three dimensions.

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
career satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.000	.995	-.083	440	.934	-.018596223536143	.224716086287275	-.460246504813230	.423054057740943
	Equal variances not assumed			-.079	13.791	.938	-.018596223536143	.234064447028118	-.521329055297582	.484136608225295
male allyship	Equal variances assumed	.001	.982	-.142	440	.887	-.035714285714286	.252177959402931	-.531337311828253	.459908740399680
	Equal variances not assumed			-.135	13.776	.895	-.035714285714286	.264970424108759	-.604886387586029	.533457816157456
workplace stress	Equal variances assumed	.212	.646	.617	440	.537	.115561489393261	.187230706541302	-.252416146626811	.483539125413333
	Equal variances not assumed			.545	13.661	.594	.115561489393261	.211899813590865	-.339978061132243	.571101039918766

TABLE XIV: Independent Samples Test II

Since the two-tailed p-values of the three dimensions are all higher than 0.05, the mean difference is not statistically significantly different from 0. The influence of being sexually harassed in the workplace is not manifested, probably because the sample of alleged victims is too small.

3.3 Correlations

Correlations

		career satisfaction	male allyship	obstacles in workplace
career satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.476**	- .303**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	442	442	442
male allyship	Pearson Correlation	.476**	1	- .315**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	442	442	442
workplace stress	Pearson Correlation	- .303**	- .315**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	442	442	442
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

TABLE XV: Correlations among the Three Dimensions

A correlation analysis was applied to the three dimensions. The results demonstrate that the three dimensions and inter-correlated with each other (p<0.05). The Pearson correlation coefficient of Career Satisfaction and Male Allyship is positive, which means that these two dimensions are positively correlated. Respondents who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to enjoy working with their male colleagues, and vice versa. The Pearson coefficient between Workplace Stress and the other two dimensions are negative, suggesting that they are negatively correlated. Respondents who find their jobs stressful are less inclined to be satisfied with their jobs and male colleagues.

Moreover, to explore the relations between childbearing and the statements of each dimension, the correlation test is applied to childbearing and every statement of the Liker scale. Two correlations are found.

Correlations		childbearing	I am qualified to be a leader of the law firm.
childbearing	Pearson Correlation	1	.095[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.046
	N	442	442
I am qualified to be a leader of the law firm.	Pearson Correlation	.095[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.046	
	N	442	442
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

TABLE XVI: Correlation between Childbearing and Leadership

Whether the respondents have at least one child is positively correlated with the degree they deem themselves as qualified to be a leader. The results show that once a female lawyer becomes mother, she is more likely to be confident in her leadership.

Correlations		childbearing	My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.
childbearing	Pearson Correlation	1	-.100[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	442	442
My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.	Pearson Correlation	-.100[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	442	442
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

TABLE XVII: Correlation between Childbearing and Male Colleagues

Whether the respondents have at least one child is negatively correlated with the degree they believe their male colleagues will put them on center stage. Once a female lawyer has a child, they may find their male colleagues less willing to give them major opportunities.

3.4 Conclusion

By dividing the Likert scale into three dimensions, this part firstly shows that the questionnaire, as well as the data collected, are consistent, reliable, and valid. Secondly, this part statistically demonstrates the respondents' attitude towards their career, male colleagues, and workplace stress. This part depicts the correlations among different dimensions, as well as the influence of childbearing on respondents' perceptions of leadership and male counterparts. To summarize, the respondents may be overly optimistic about male allyship in the workplace, as such allyship is challenged when they give birth to a child. And while they do suspect the existence of gender gaps in the workplace, they do not perceive gender bias as their foremost concern.

4 Qualitative Analysis

4.1 Gender Preference for Leaders

For respondents who admitted they have gender preference with regard to their leaders, they were asked to account for their preference. The representative reasons were selected.

  Respondents who prefer male leaders:
    "Male leaders are not that sensitive and emotional."
    "Male leaders are more rational."
    "Male leaders are more easy-going."
    "Male leaders only care about the results of the assignments, while female leaders also mind one's mood, attitude and other details."

  Respondents who prefer female leaders:
    "My female colleagues are generally more proficient in work than males."
    "Female leaders are more friendly and considerate."
    "Female leaders are more likely to understand my situations, and I don't need to worry about sexual harassment."
    "Females should support each other."

The qualitative analysis of this question discloses that when described male leaders, respondents frequently adopted words including calm, rational, tolerant, and easy-going. When female leaders were described, words such as sensitive, emotional, friendly, and considerate were invoked.

4.2 Comments on Gender Equality in China's Legal Industry

Regardless of fertility status, many respondents indicated that giving birth to a child would have negative impacts on their career:

"I tend to believe females are less likely to be promoted than their male counterparts. After gave birth to my first child, I have to spend enormous amount of time and energy taking care of my child. It is true that I spend less time and efforts on my job."

"There are much more male partners in our law firm. Most female lawyers decide to leave the law firm and work as in-house counsels before they become senior associates, especially after they have a child."

"If we want to achieve gender equality, we shall first achieve economic equality. It is a pity that all the female lawyers I have encountered inevitably reduce their time and efforts spent on their career after having a child. It is even more pitiful that one of my male partners claimed that he had fulfilled the task of taking care of his newborn baby, he was satisfied that he could focus all his energies on growing his business instead of family in the coming year. Even in the legal industry, where women are facing less discrimination, the burden caused by fertility is hard to ignore."

One of the respondents mentioned the idea of mandatory parental leave for both genders:

"Once female lawyers take a parental leave, their clients would be grabbed by other lawyers. To endure fairness, I think the only solution is to have mandatory parental leave on both female and male lawyers. Although there are superwomen who can reply to emails before delivery, I do think it is a pity of the society. I am still single, but I am so worried."

Some respondents criticized that law firms did not appoint women to committees and leadership opportunities:

"Domestic law firms should place emphasis on this problem. The only female in our committee is in charge of administrative work. It is ridiculous that no one finds this unreasonable."

"There are too few female managing partners in our firm, and the performances of females are not fairly evaluated."

"Despite the superficial equality in workplace, female lawyers have less access to resources and sponsorship."

A respondent expressed similar idea to Levinson (2010, p. 209) that due to negative stereotypes of women, the decision makers continue to prioritize men over women with regard to leadership opportunities in the legal industry.

"People of last generation still hold gender stereotypes, and those people are controlling young lawyers' promotion. The biggest pressure faced by female lawyers is the duty to give birth to and take care of children."

Meanwhile, one of the respondents argued that gender bias should not be regarded as the major conflict in the workplace:

"There are so many female lawyers in the field of non-litigation that I seldom have chance to work with male lawyers. I believe the major conflict in workplace, however, lies in the stark reality that the bosses want to achieve higher performance with fewer lawyers. The main pressure comes from the intensity of work, instead of gender inequality. Whether a lawyer can continue his or her career depends on whether his or her body can sustain such grindingly hard work. I hope females in China can grasp the nature of the conflict, and avoid any misleading information based on superficial conflicts between genders. We should cooperate any possible allies."

About 62 respondents answered that they found no gender bias in the workplace.

"I believe there is no gender inequality in our firm. Media tend to create tension between men and women."

"Promotion is determined by one's performance and abilities. Gender is not that important. We should not overly emphasize gender inequality."

"Females do not have advantage over males in face of jobs that require long working hours and extensive business tours."

"It is also wrong to prioritize women over men. Reversed discrimination should be avoided."

There are also comments calling for more feminist movements and studies:
"Women, be aggressive!"

"It is a pity that there exists few discussion [sic] about gender bias in the legal industry in China."

5 Conclusion

Based on both quantitative and qualitative data, this research reveals that while female lawyers in China are to a certain extent aware of implicit gender bias in the workplace, they tend to be overly optimistic about male allyship, and they do not perceive gender bias as their biggest challenge in breaking the glass ceiling. However, they do believe, nearly unanimously, that having a child will have negative impacts on their career, suggesting their failure to view the problem of gender bias from a structural perspective.

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English Language Version of Questionnaire on Female Lawyers in China

1. Year of birth:

Option
1960-1969
1970-1979

1980-1989
1990-1999

2. How long have you practiced law?

Option
Less than 5 years
6 to 10 years
11 to 15 years
16 to 20 years
More than 21 years

3. Please indicate your highest degree:

Option
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree (domestic)
Master's degree (overseas, LL.M./J.D.)
Doctor's degree and above (domestic)
Doctor's degree and above (overseas, S.J.D/PhD)

4. Please indicate the type of law firm you are working for:

Option
Red circle law firm (Top 8 domestic law firms)
Boutique law firm
Major law firm with no less than 5 offices across China

Global law firm
Sole-proprietorship law firm
Others, please explain

*The option "Others" covers public office lawyers.

5. Please indicate your position in the law firm:

Option
Partner
Senior associate
Junior associate
Paralegal
Intern

6. Please indicate your annual income:

Option
Less than ￥ 50,000
￥ 50,001 - ￥ 100,000
￥ 100,001 - ￥ 500,000
￥ 500,001 - ￥ 1,000,000
More than ￥ 1,000,001
I cannot answer this question

7. Do you agree with the following statements? (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree)

Statement
I am satisfied with my current job.
I can balance my work and life.

I am satisfied with the way my compensation is determined.
I am satisfied with my position in the law firm.
Compared with my male colleagues, I have equal access to sponsorship.
Compared with my male colleagues, I have an equal chance of promotion.
I am qualified to be a leader of the law firm.

8. Do you agree with the following statements? (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree)

Statement
I am satisfied with working with my male colleagues.
My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.
Enough women are appointed to committees and leadership opportunities.

9. Are you worried about the following issues?

Statement
Appearance
Age
Income
Health
Marriage/intimate relationship
Workplace relationships
Workplace gender bias
Career prospects

10. Do you prefer to work with female or male leaders (partners, senior associates)?

Option
Male leaders
Female leaders
I do not have a preference

11. Why do you prefer male leaders or female leaders?

12. Have you ever experienced sexual harassment in workplace?

Option
Yes
No
I do not want to reveal

If the participant chooses "yes" in Q12:

13. Did you try to complain to higher authorities of the firm?

Option
Yes
No

If the participant chooses "yes" in Q13:

14. Are you satisfied with the result of the complaint?

Option
Yes
No

15. Do you have a child?

Option
Yes
No

If the participant chooses "yes" in Q15:

16. Have you ever taken a parental leave?

Option
Yes
No

17. How about the child's father?

Option
Yes
No

18. Does giving birth to a child have negative impacts on your career?

Option
Yes
No

19. If you are considering whether to have a child, please rank the significance of the following factors. (1- the most important, 5- the least important)

Option
Balance between work and life

Material conditions
Partner's commitment and contributions
Impact on career

20. Do you have any comments on gender equality in China's legal industry?

Survey on Female Lawyers in China: The Raw Data

5. Year of birth:

Option	Number	Percentage
1960-1969	0	0%
1970-1979	0	0%
1980-1989	44	9.95%
1990-1999	398	90.05%
Total:	442	

6. How long have you practiced law?

Option	Number	Percentage
Less than 5 years	388	87.78%
6 to 10 years	39	8.82%
11 to 15 years	11	2.49%
16 to 20 years	4	0.9%
More than 21 years	0	0%
Total:	442	

7. Please indicate your highest degree:

Option	Number	Percentage
Bachelor's degree	134	30.32%
Master's degree (domestic)	82	18.55%
Master's degree (overseas, LL.M./J.D.)	226	51.13%
Doctor's degree and above (domestic)	0	0%

Doctor's degree and above (overseas, S.J.D/PhD)	0	0%
Total:	442	

8. Please indicate the type of law firm you are working for:

Option	Number	Percentage
Red circle law firm (Top 8 domestic law firms)	155	35.07%
Boutique law firm	77	17.42%
Major law firm with no less than 5 offices across China	48	10.86%
Global law firm	145	32.81%
Sole-proprietorship law firm	10	2.26%
Others, please explain	7	1.58%
本题有效填写人次	442	
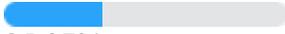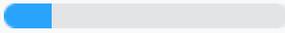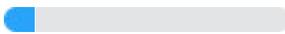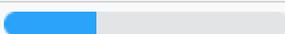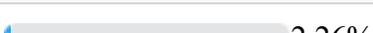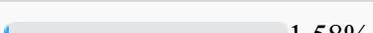
*The option "Others" covers public office lawyers.

5. Please indicate your position in the law firm:

Option	Number	Percentage
Partner	0	0%
Senior associate	5	1.13%
Junior associate	224	50.68%
Paralegal	127	28.73%
Intern	86	19.46%
Total:	442	
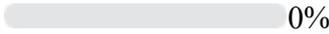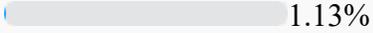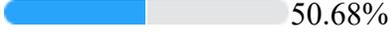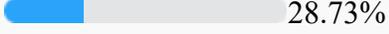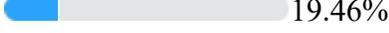
6. Please indicate your annual income:

Option	Number	Percentage
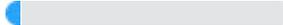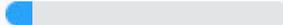
Less than ¥ 50,000	23		5.2%
¥ 50,001 - ¥ 100,000	43		9.73%
¥ 100,001 - ¥ 500,000	266		60.18%
¥ 500,001 - ¥ 1,000,000	45		10.18%
More than ¥ 1,000,001	18		4.07%
I cannot answer this question	47		10.63%
Total:	442		
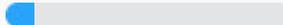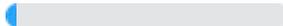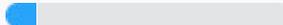
7. Do you agree with the following statements? (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree)

Average of the matrix: 3.47

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Average
I am satisfied with my current job.	14(3.17%)	51(11.54%)	143(32.35%)	209(47.29%)	25(5.66%)	3.41
I can balance my work and life.	55(12.44%)	148(33.48%)	106(23.98%)	113(25.57%)	20(4.52%)	2.76
I am satisfied with the way my compensation is determined.	29(6.56%)	117(26.47%)	155(35.07%)	66(14.93%)	75(16.97%)	3.09
I am satisfied with my position in the law firm.	30(6.79%)	93(21.04%)	171(38.69%)	83(18.78%)	65(14.71%)	3.14
I am satisfied with working with my male colleagues.	0(0%)	14(3.17%)	56(12.67%)	205(46.38%)	167(37.78%)	4.19
My male colleagues are willing to put me on center stage.	0(0%)	14(3.17%)	66(14.93%)	230(52.04%)	132(29.86%)	4.09
I am qualified to be a leader (partner, senior associate) of the law firm.	10(2.26%)	25(5.66%)	177(40.05%)	141(31.9%)	89(20.14%)	3.62
Subtotal:	138(4.46%)	462(14.93%)	874(28.24%)	1047(33.83%)	573(18.52%)	3.47

1. Do you agree with the following statements? (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree)

Average of the matrix：2.52

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Average
I am asked to deal with trivial issues more often than male colleagues.	237(53.62%)	120(27.15%)	44(9.95%)	34(7.69%)	7(1.58%)	1.76
Male colleagues are more likely to be promoted	46(10.41%)	125(28.28%)	153(34.62%)	74(16.74%)	44(9.95%)	2.88
Female partners are too few in our firm.	50(11.31%)	123(27.83%)	104(23.53%)	141(31.9%)	24(5.43%)	2.92
Subtotal	333(25.11%)	368(27.75%)	301(22.70%)	249(18.78%)	75(5.66%)	2.52

9. Are you worried about the following issues?

Average of the matrix：2.12

Statement	Not at all	Sometimes worry	Frequently worry	Extremely worry	Average
What to wear tomorrow	234(52.94%)	201(45.48%)	7(1.58%)	0(0%)	1.49
Appearance	128(28.96%)	222(50.23%)	87(19.68%)	5(1.13%)	1.93
Age	154(34.84%)	170(38.46%)	95(21.49%)	23(5.2%)	1.97
Income	24(5.43%)	298(67.42%)	72(16.29%)	48(10.86%)	2.33
Health	69(15.61%)	188(42.53%)	106(23.98%)	79(17.87%)	2.44
Marriage/intimate relationship	166(37.56%)	111(25.11%)	114(25.79%)	51(11.54%)	2.11

Workplace relationships	48(10.86%)	215(48.64%)	122(27.6%)	57(12.9%)	2.43
Workplace gender bias	175(39.59%)	186(42.08%)	71(16.06%)	10(2.26%)	1.81
Career prospects	45(10.18%)	157(35.52%)	171(38.69%)	69(15.61%)	2.6
Subtotal:	1043(26.22%)	1748(43.94%)	845(21.24%)	342(8.6%)	2.12

10. Do you prefer to work with female or male leaders (partners, senior associates)?

Option	Number	Percentage
Male leaders	75	16.97%
Female leaders	40	9.05%
I do not have a preference	327	73.98%
Total:	442	
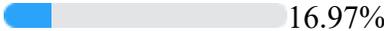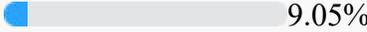
11. Why do you prefer male leaders (similar answers are omitted)?

- Male leaders are not that sensitive and emotional.
- Male leaders are more rational.
- Male leaders are more easy-going.
- Male leaders only care about the results of the assignments, while female leaders also mind one's mood, attitude and other details.

12. Why do you prefer female leaders?

- My female colleagues are generally more proficient in work than males.
- Female leaders are more friendly and considerate.
- Female leaders are more likely to understand my situations, and I don't need to worry about sexual harassment.
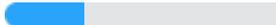- Females should support each other.

13. Have you ever experienced sexual harassment in workplace?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	14	3.17%
No	407	92.08%
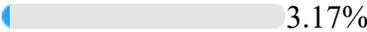
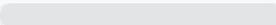| I do not want to reveal	21	4.75%
Total:	442	
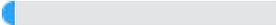
If the participant chooses "yes" in Q12:

14. Did you try to complain to higher authorities of the firm?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	4	28.57%
No	10	71.43%
Total:	14	

If the participant chooses "yes" in Q13:

15. Are you satisfied with the result of the complaint?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	4	100%
No	0	0%
Total:	4	

16. Do you have a child?
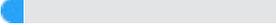
Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	7.92%
No	407	92.08%
Total:	442	

If the participant chooses "yes" in Q15:

17. Have you ever taken a parental leave?
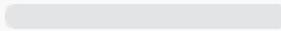
Option	Number	Percentage	
Yes	35	100%	
No	0	0%	
Total:	35		

18. How about the child's father?

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	42.86%
No	20	57.14%
Total:	35	

19. Does giving birth to a child have negative impacts on your career?
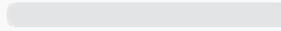
Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	100%
No	0	0%
Total:	35	

20. If you are considering whether to have a child, please rank the significance of the following factors. (1- the most important, 5- the least important)

Option	Average
Balance between work and life	3.78
Material conditions	3.52
Partner's commitment and contributions	2.87
Impact on career	2.64
Others, please explain	2.04

*Participants who chose "others" answered: I decided not to give birth to a child, the reason is irrelevant to the aforementioned factors.

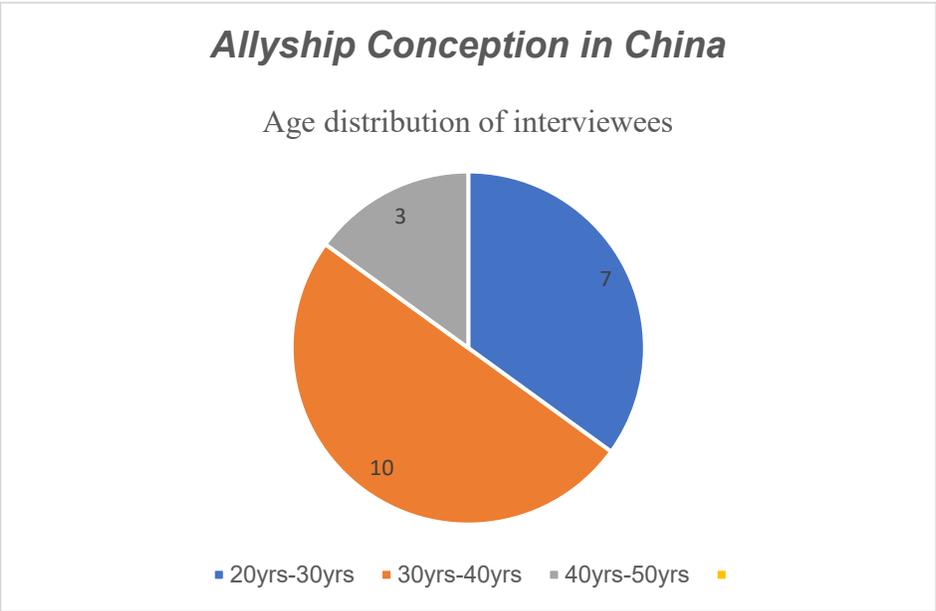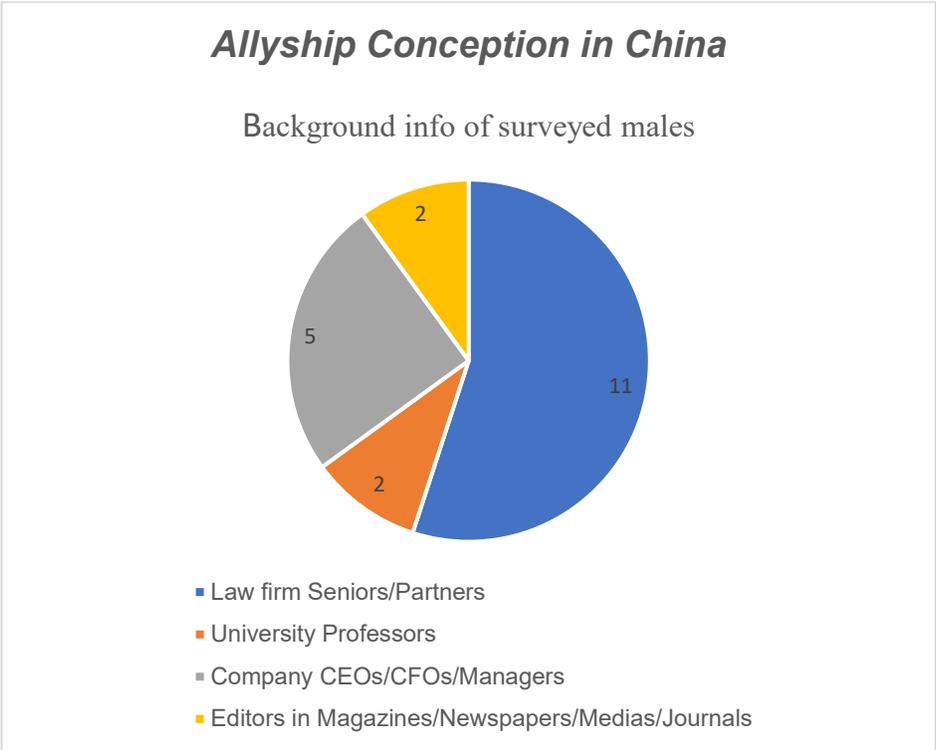21. If you have any comments on gender equality in China's legal industry:

- Females should be freed from household affairs.
- I tend to believe females are less likely to be promoted than their male counterparts. After gave birth to my first child, I have to spend enormous amount of time and energy taking care of my child. It is true that I spend less time and efforts on my job.
- There are much more male partners in our law firm. Most female lawyers decide to leave the law firm and work as in-house counsels before they become senior associates, especially after they have a child.
- People of last generation still hold gender stereotypes, and those people are controlling young lawyers' promotion. The biggest pressure faced by female lawyers is the duty to give birth to and take care of children.
- There are so many female lawyers in the field of non-litigation that I seldom have chance to work with male lawyers. I believe the major conflict in workplace, however, lies in the stark reality that the bosses want to achieve higher performance with fewer lawyers. The main pressure comes from the intensity of work, instead of gender inequality. Whether a lawyer can continue his or her career depends on whether his or her body can sustain such grindingly hard work. I hope females in China can grasp the nature of the conflict, and avoid any misleading information based on superficial conflicts between genders. We should cooperate any possible allies.
- There are too few female managing partners in our firm, and the performances of females are not fairly evaluated.
- Despite the superficial equality in workplace, female lawyers have less access to resources and sponsorship.
- Some female lawyers do leave the legal industry due to the high intensity of work. Females do not have advantage over males in face of jobs that require long working hours and extensive business tours.
- Domestic law firms should place emphasis on this problem. The only female in our committee is in charge of administrative work. It is ridiculous that no one finds this unreasonable.
- If we want to achieve gender equality, we shall first achieve economic equality. It is a pity that all the female lawyers I have encountered inevitably reduce their time and efforts spent on their career after having a child. It is even more pitiful that one of my male partners claimed that he had fulfilled the task of taking care of his newborn baby, he was satisfied that he could focus all his energies on growing his business instead of family in the coming year. Even in the legal industry, where women are facing less discrimination, the burden caused by fertility is hard to ignore.
- Once female lawyers take a parental leave, their clients would be grabbed by other lawyers. To endure fairness, I think the only solution is to have mandatory parental leave on both female and male lawyers. Although there are superwomen who can reply to emails before delivery, I do think it is a pity of the society. I am still single, but I am so worried.
- As female lawyers, we should not set limits for ourselves. We shall be more aggressive.

- Global law firms are much better than domestic firms, as both compensation and promotion are evaluated transparently.
- I feel sad that there exists no discussion about gender bias in the legal industry in China.

Conception of Male Allyship In China: The Impressions of Male Chinese Leaders
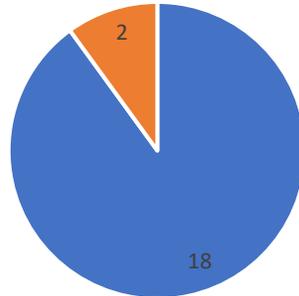
Yujie Zhang

Data Visualization and Summary:

Allyship Conception in China

### Background info of surveyed males

- Law firm Seniors/Partners
- University Professors
- Company CEOs/CFOs/Managers
- Editors in Magazines/Newspapers/Medias/Journals

Allyship Conception in China

Age distribution of interviewees

- 20yrs-30yrs
- 30yrs-40yrs
- 40yrs-50yrs

Allyship Conception in China

Do you know the term "Male Allyship"

- Men in leadership answered "Yes"
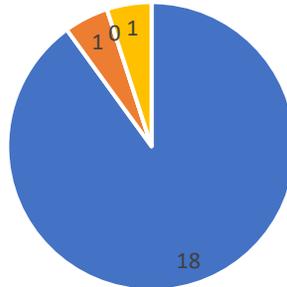- Men in leadership answered "No"

Allyship Conception in China

Have you volunteered to help any women?
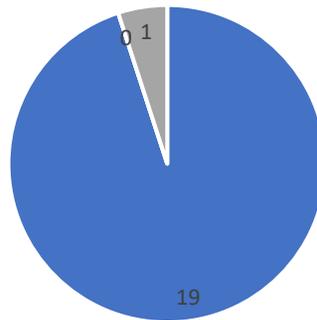
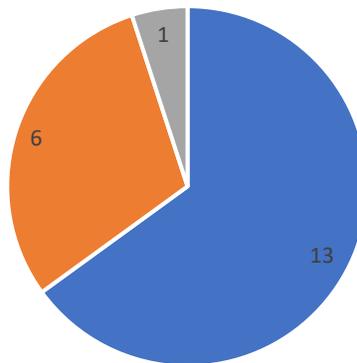- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Allyship Conception in China

followed-up question: Why do you decide to help them?

- Out of personal matters
- Inspired by organizations
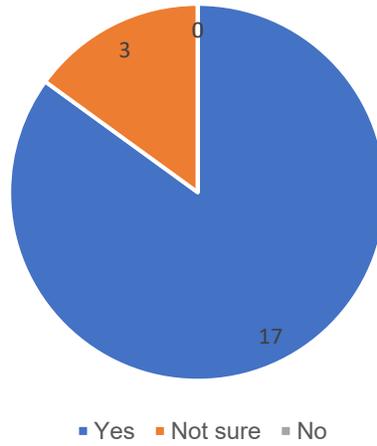- Inspired by Allyship
- Unsure

Allyship Conception in China

Will you initiate any events aimed at helping female employees,
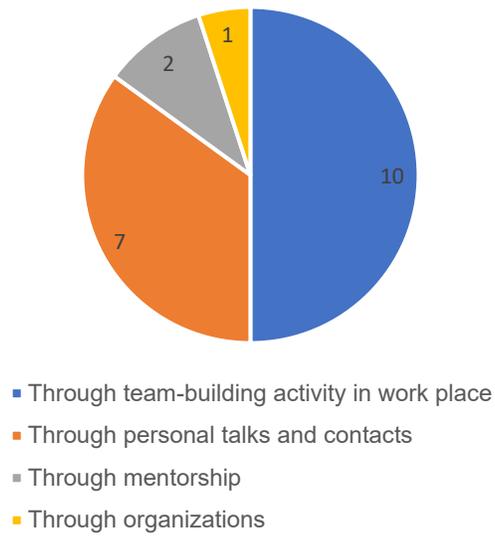and would you like to take the lead?

- Yes
- Not sure
- No

Allyship Conception in China

Do you think female employees in your company/law firm are satisfied with their work, including working environment and their co-workers?
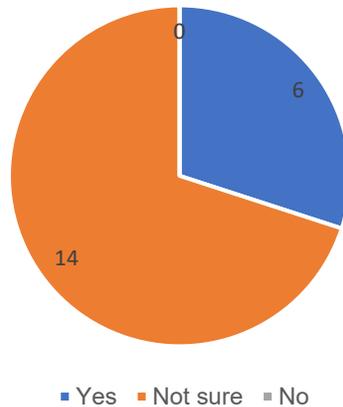
0

3

17

- Yes ■ Not sure ■ No

Allyship Conception in China

How do you help women in general?

1

2

10

7

- Through team-building activity in work place
- Through personal talks and contacts
- Through mentorship
- Through organizations

Allyship Conception in China

Do you think Allyship can be a good way to improve women's situation in China?

0

6

14

■ Yes   ■ Not sure   ■ No

Based on the interviews and short talks of 20 male interviewees in leadership of big law firms, university positions, and companies, it is clear that most of them (90%) have not touched the concept of allyship yet. Only two participants (10%) acknowledged that they have seen the notion when studied overseas.

Allyship is a new concept to most of the Chinese males in leadership in developed regions in China, like Shanghai and Beijing, financial capitals and administrative capitals. Interestingly, nearly all of their response shows that they are willing and even voluntary to help women in general. But they also indicate that they have their ways. And for the question why they want to do that, it is almost out of their personal connection with women they are already familiar with, which means they are initially motived by women they know instead of any organized events with particular theme about women.

Although the notion of allyship is not consciously acquired by men I interviewed, a willing heart to help women out can be noted. And when they are asked whether to initiate any program to do so, some of them did not give positive answer, who indicate that there are already governmental and autonomic organizations to help women, especially women lawyers, e.g. China National Association of Women Lawyers, where women's voice can be properly heard. But it is worth to mention that these organizations are mainly composed by women, that is being said that it is not in a sense of allyship because I think the most important element is missing—collaborative efforts across biological sexes. It is worthy to note that their notion of helping women is based on the fact that women they know, and women also have their way to help themselves through the organization mentioned before.

Therefore, according to the data and substance, I can conclude that they deem their help is private and substitutable. "Private" means they offer help in terms of some situation, like in China's drinking culture and CV selections and team-building events or mentorship through personal talks, but no joint organized events across genders. "Substitutable" means their help is only optional to provide to the women, and they believe there are other organizations specifically designed for women. As we can see, this might be the biggest difference U.S. and China allyship notion have.

Speaking of the faith they have in building future allyship, most male interviewees (70%) are willing to accept this notion but also they are not quite sure about how to carry out this allyship and the they doubt the effect it can produce in China context since as they all said "This notion is totally new to us and needs a lot more scrutiny but we will wait and see how it works".