Prevalence of Work-Life Harmony Initiatives in Singapore 2022
Key Findings



Manpower Research and Statistics Department

Singapore

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Background

1.1 Work-Life Harmony (WLH) is a state in which an individual can achieve both professional and personal goals as two interdependent elements that are increasingly intertwined.[1] Initiatives which promote WLH can take the form of annual leave entitlements, flexible work arrangements (FWA), non-statutory leave (NSL) benefits and employee support schemes (ESS).[2]

1.2 This report is based on the Survey of Employees' Working Conditions conducted by the Manpower Research and Statistics Department. The latest survey in 2023 covered a total of 3,500 residents in the labour force (excluding full-time National Servicemen), of whom 3,000 or 85.9% responded. The reference period for the data is for calendar year 2022. The data in this report pertains to resident employees aged 25 to 64 and are in full-time employment, unless otherwise stated.

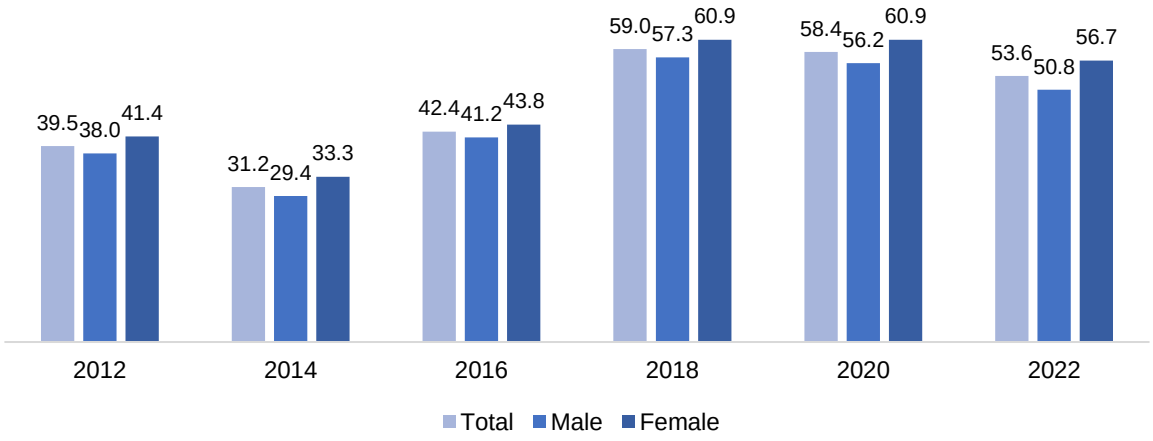
[1] "Employment Practices: Work-Life Harmony." *Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices,* www.tal.sg/tafep/employment-practices/work-life-harmony. Accessed 16 June 2023.

[2] There are basic provisions in the Employment Act on paid annual leave and sick leave for employee's well-being, and employers may give more days than those statutorily required. In 2021, a new Tripartite Standard on Work-Life Harmony was created to further boost WLH in light of Singapore's adjustment to the post-pandemic normal. It built upon the 2017 Tripartite Standard on Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) — an essential building block to achieving WLH. More progressive workplace practices will open more flexible pathways for individuals to achieve WLH in a way that meets both businesses and workers' needs.

2 Flexible Work Arrangements

2.1 **Demand for FWAs has increased.** The proportion of employees who require FWAs have increased from 39.5% in 2012 to 53.6% in 2022 [Chart 1]. Findings also show that across industries, employees who required FWA were more likely to turn down firms or to leave the firm if it does not offer any FWA. Going forward, we expect a continued increase in demand for flexible work arrangements as care-giving needs grow with an ageing population.[3]

Chart 1: Proportion of employees who required at least 1 scheduled FWA (%)



Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:

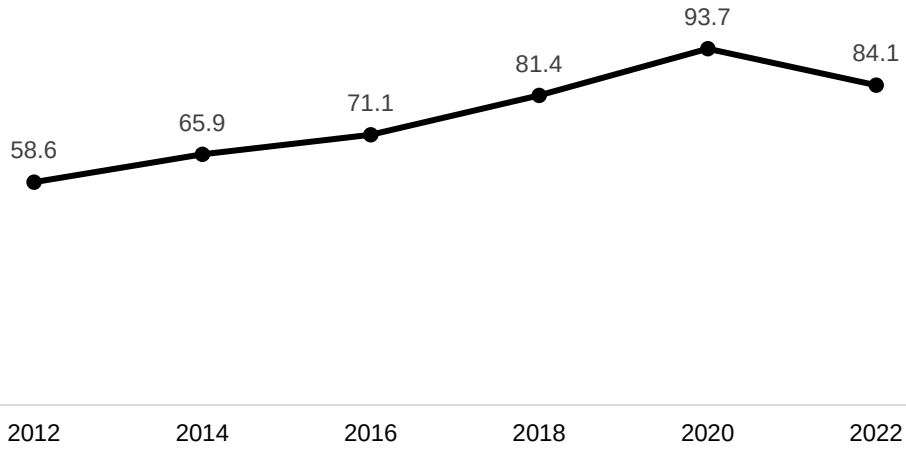
(1) 'At least 1 scheduled FWA' covers part-time work, staggered hours, flexi-hours, scheduled tele-working, home-working, job sharing, and compressed work-week.

(2) There are newly collected types of FWA in 2022. They include three types of scheduled FWA (employees' choice of days off, shift swapping, time banking), as well as the non-scheduled FWAs (time-off to attend to personal matters, non-scheduled tele-working). The percentage of employees who required at least 1 scheduled FWA would be 62.0% in 2022 if the newly collected types of scheduled FWA were included.

2.2 **There has been significant progress made by employers to provide FWAs.** Among employees who required FWA, 84.1% were provided with at least some form of FWA in 2022, higher than 58.6% in 2012 [Chart 2]. Growth sectors such as *Information and Communications*, *Financial and Insurance Services* and *Professional Services* had the highest share of employees provided with the FWA they require, reflecting the competitive benefits of these sectors.

[3] The median age of citizens in 2022 was 42.8 years, an increase compared to a decade ago of 39.6 years.

Chart 2: Proportion of employees who were provided with at least 1 FWA they required (%)



Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

Notes:

(1) 'At least 1 FWA' covers part-time work, staggered hours, flexi-hours, scheduled tele-working, home-working, job sharing, and compressed work-week.

(2) There are newly collected forms of FWA in 2022. They include three types of scheduled FWA (employees' choice of days off, shift swapping, time banking), as well as the non-scheduled FWAs (time-off to attend to personal matters, non-scheduled tele-working). The figure in 2022 would be 88.2% when the newly collected types of scheduled FWA are included.

2.3 **FWA supports the mental wellness of workers.** Employees[4] who were provided with tele-working had a statistically significant[5] lower mean work stress and work burnout scores compared to the scores among those who were not provided with it.

Chart 3A: Predicted mean work stress score of employees

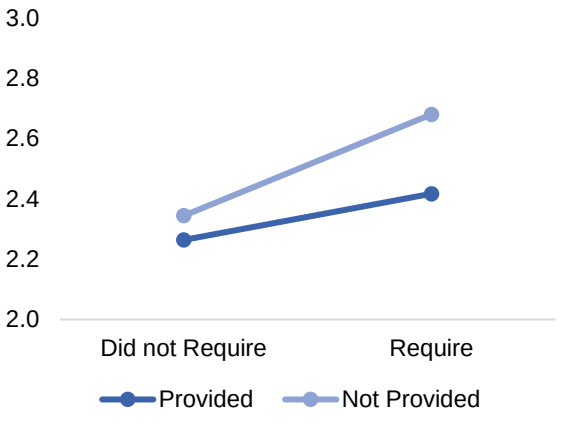
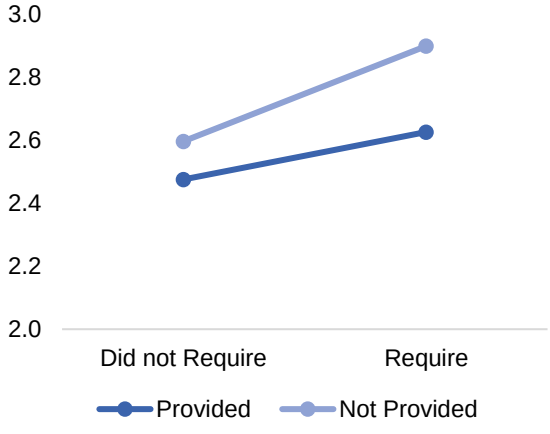


Chart 3B: Predicted mean work burnout score of employees



Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM, figures based on estimation from a linear regression analysis using SEWC 2022 data.

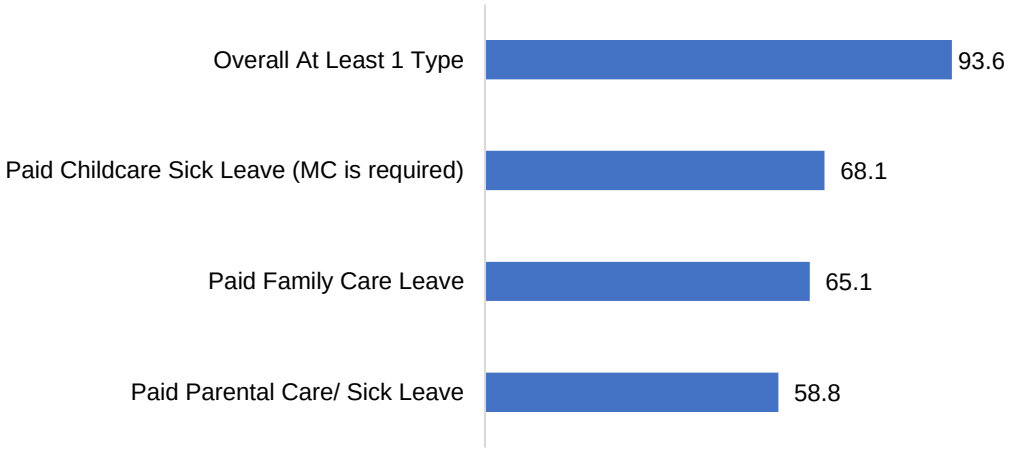
[4] Among pool of employees who required tele-working

[5] At the 95% level of confidence.

3 Non-Statutory Leave Benefits

3.1 **Most employees who require NSLs were provided with them.** Majority of employees (93.6%) who required at least one type of NSL was provided with it in 2022, comparable to previous years. Most employees have access to the caregiving NSLs required, that includes, child sick leave (68.1%), parental care/sick leave (58.8%), and family care leave (65.1%) [Chart 4]. However, females, who tend to be primary caregivers,[6] continue to fall behind males in having access to the caregiving NSLs required.

Chart 4: Proportion of employees who were provided the NSLs required (%), 2022



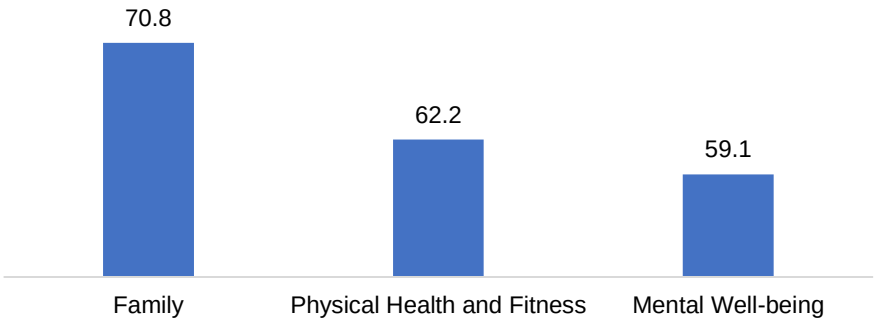
Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

[6] In 2022, 95.9% of residents who are out of labour force due to family responsibilities were females. 36.4% of females were out of labour force due to family responsibilities while only 2.6% of males were out of labour force for that reason.

4 Employee Support Schemes

4.1 **There is a need to encourage more employers to adopt relevant ESS to support the mental health needs of their employees.** In 2022, only one in two employees (51.2%) were provided with mental well-being related ESS. Amongst employees who required mental well-being-related ESS, only 59.1% were provided with it [Chart 5].

Chart 5: Proportion of employees who were provided with the required ESS (%), 2022

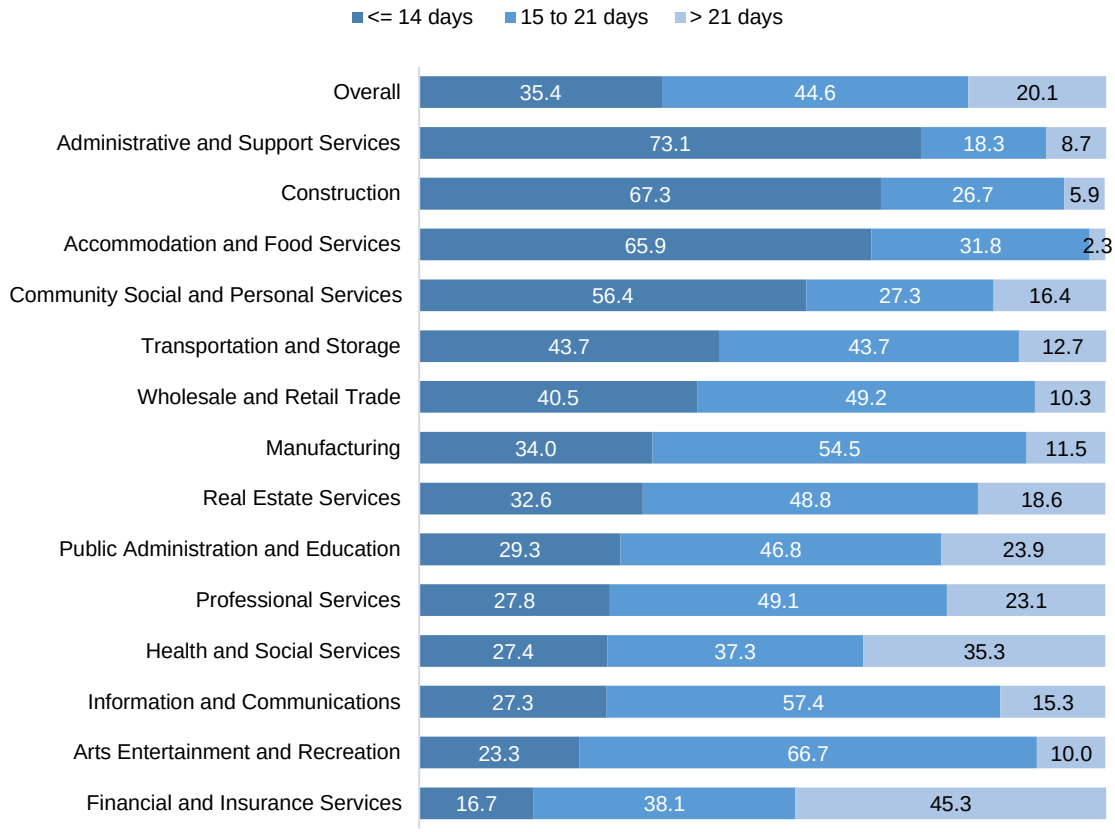


Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM

5 Annual Leave Entitlement

5.1 **Annual leave entitlements were more generous than legally required for most employees,** and more so in sectors where competition for talent is keener. The majority (64.7%) of full-time resident employees had 15 days or more of annual leave entitlement [Chart 6]. Employees in *Financial & Insurance Services*, *Health and Social Services* and *Professional Services* were more likely to have 15 days or more of annual leave, with a sizeable percentage with more than 21 days of leave.

Chart 6: Proportion of employees by annual leave entitlement (%), 2022



Source: Survey on Employees' Working Conditions, Manpower Research & Statistics Department, MOM