

Key Insights

RESEARCH STUDY ON
WELL-BEING
OF WORKERS
IN SINGAPORE



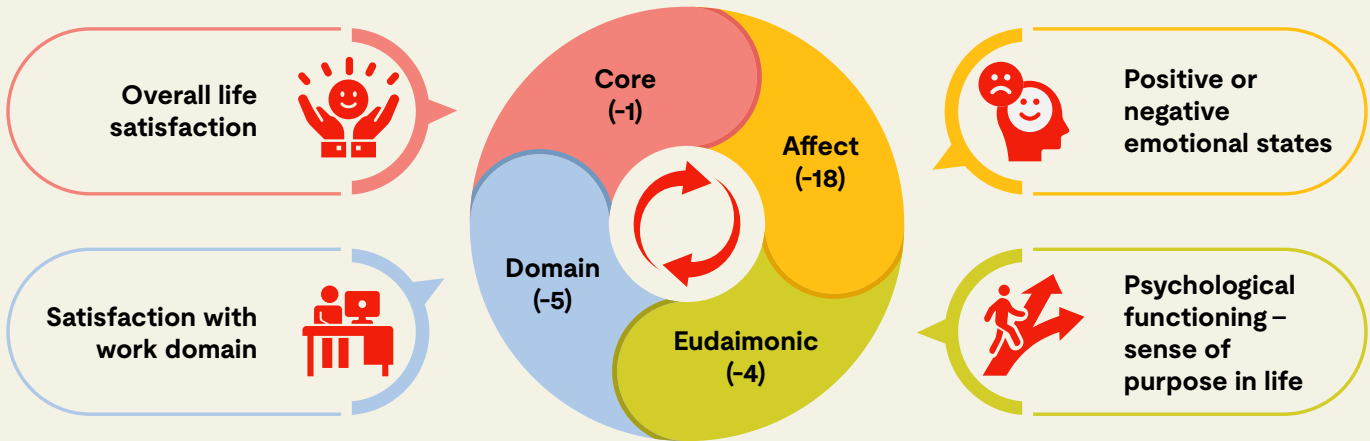
Human capital is one of the most important resources in Singapore’s strategic economic plan. Accordingly, to drive higher productivity and economic growth, Singapore must support the health, resilience, and well-being of workers. This mixed-methods approach study* investigates the well-being of workers in Singapore and seeks to understand the factors affecting worker well-being to provide appropriate support.



What is Well-being?

In this study, well-being refers to “good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives and the affective reactions of people to their experiences” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, [OECD]). Well-being is measured across four dimensions adapted from the OECD: Core, Affect, Domain, and Eudaimonic.

Well-being ranking difference between Singapore vs OECD countries

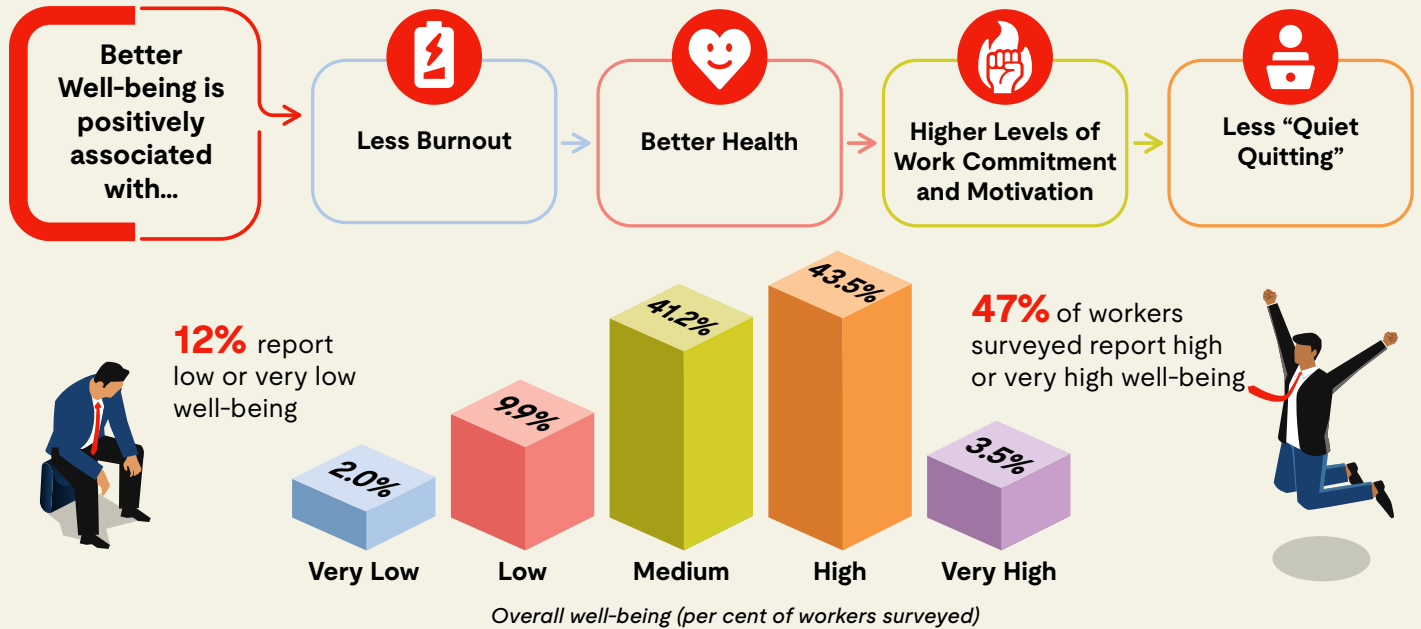


Profile of Workers Experiencing High vs. Low Well-being

Low Well-being ☹️	High Well-being 😊
Aged 30 – 39 years	Aged 40 years and above
Rank-and-file worker (i.e. non-managerial or non-professional worker)	Have attained a degree, relative to diploma-level qualifications
Employed on fixed-term or short-term contracts	Have job security, regardless of contract type
Experience job insecurity	Do not work excessive hours (i.e. not over 50 hours a week)
Work long hours, especially over 50 hours per week	Do not experience high work intensity
Perform highly repetitive tasks	Have work autonomy and able to make decisions about their work tasks
Undertake complex work	Participate in training, both structured and informal
Lack work autonomy and are unable to make decisions about their tasks	Engage in workplace learning
Do not have access to employer well-being programmes and resources	Have access to employers’ well-being programmes and resources
Work in environments with poor working relationships	Work in an environment with strong working relationships

* The study comprised an online survey of 2,000 local workers and follow-up focus group discussions (FGDs) with 13 participants, conducted from May to August 2024.

Findings



Key Recommendations

► Recommendations for the Government:

Conduct targeted studies on the incidence of workplace mental health issues, and long-term and short-term effects on our workforce; consider annual workforce well-being surveys to identify groups with low and very low well-being

Targeted support for workers who are repeatedly on temp/fixed-term contracts, who may be at risk of lower well-being due to job insecurity, providing enforceable guidelines and pathways to guide them to convert to permanent contracts

Work with industry unions and employers to provide clear, enforceable guidelines to limit excessive working hours and guarantee adequate rest for suitable occupations, similar to fatigue risk management legislation for air transport workers and guidance issued by CAAS

For identified groups with low and very-low well-being, empower Health Promotion Board (HPB) and Workplace Safety and Health Council (WSHC) with more levers to intervene in these companies/sectors

► Recommendations for Employers:

Consider offering comprehensive well-being programmes and resources including FWAs through a culture of trust, fairness, and inclusivity to help workers feel supported and valued at work

Conduct risk assessment for psychosocial hazards, similar to how it is done for physical hazards at dangerous worksites

Train managers and supervisors to mitigate workplace stressors, practice regular monitoring and fair distribution of staff workload, support career planning, and promote teambuilding

Encourage workers to exercise autonomy, especially in highly complex work, through appropriate training, streamlining reporting processes, providing access to information and resources for decision-making, and adopting supportive technology

► Recommendations for NTUC and Unions:

Raise awareness of health risks such as cardiovascular diseases and other chronic conditions linked to lower mental and physical well-being, to encourage a healthier lifestyle and improve well-being

Identify workers who experience excessive working hours, and who need more protection and the best channels to effect such protection

Collaborate with tripartite partners to develop industry-specific FWA frameworks, on top of Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests (TG-FWAR), since some employers still hesitate to grant FWAs due to concerns about productivity and staff control, and encourage leadership to lead by example

Offer more well-being programmes and resources for members who are more likely to experience low well-being, i.e. aged 30-39 years workers, R&F workers, fixed-term or short-contract workers, and those without access to employers' well-being benefits

Continue to provide adequate financial support for training in a wide range of courses for industry relevant skills, given that an improved outlook on job prospects and job security can enhance worker well-being

**Every
Worker
Matters**

