

Survey on Private Security Officers in Singapore

Union of Security Employees
Singapore University of Social Sciences

17 June 2020



1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

- This project is a collaboration between the Union of Security Employees (USE) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).
- The study aims to track changes in the wages, welfare and work prospects among private security officers (SOs) in Singapore.
- Topics include compensation and benefits, workplace conditions and dynamics, knowledge of labour laws, knowledge and use of technology, and perceived public attitudes and behaviours to SOs.

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology

- SOs who renew their licences every 5 years and obtain their new security ID card at the USE Customer Service Centre at Jln Sultan, i.e., random sampling frame
- SOs are approached to fill in survey while waiting for their ID cards
- SUSS students trained to conduct survey at the site
- Fieldwork Jan - Feb 2020
- Total of 707 respondents
- 15 minutes online survey, \$10 Fairprice voucher as a token of appreciation



3. Summary of Survey Findings

- **Satisfied with Work Prospects**
 - More than 8 in 10 said they were satisfied with the profession
 - SOs have good knowledge of technology and are willing to use technology at the workplace
- **Wages are higher than PWM but working hours are still long**
 - SOs receive basic wages above PWM, but gross wages continue to lag behind national median
 - SOs work long hours, with an average of more than than 11 hours a day and between 52 to 62 hours a week
- **More can be done to secure our security officers' Welfare**
 - 4 in 5 SOs understand Labour Laws and their employment rights
 - 32% SOs reported facing abuse at their workplaces, with the highest abuse faced from general public
 - 1 in 4 SOs are asked to do non-security duties

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics of Sample (n=707)	n	%	Education	n	%
All respondents	707	100.0	No formal education	3	0.4
Gender			Primary education	46	6.5
Male	552	78.1	Secondary education	386	54.6
Female	155	21.9	ITE / Vocational Training	86	12.2
Ethnicity			A Level/ Diploma	151	21.4
Chinese	207	29.3	Degree	34	4.8
Malay	159	22.5	DNK / Don't wish to say	1	0.1
Indian & others	341	48.2	Nationality		
Age			Singaporean	490	69.3
Up to 29	79	11.2	Singapore PR	47	6.6
30-39	144	20.4	Malaysian	170	24.0
40-49	114	16.1			
50-59	174	24.6			
60-69	152	21.5			
70 and over	44	6.2			

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Housing Type	n	%	No. of People Living Together	n	%
HDB 1-2 room	66	9.3	1 (including respondent)	101	14.3
HDB 3 room	170	24.0	2	137	19.4
HDB 4 room	252	35.6	3	151	21.4
HDB 5 room	92	13.0	4	127	18.0
Condo / Private Apt / Landed houses	102	14.4	5	111	15.7
			6	53	7.5
Others	23	3.3	7 and above	27	3.8
			No. of People Working	n	%
Home Ownership	n	%	1 (including respondent)	260	36.8
Own Flat	556	78.6	2	283	40.0
			3	95	13.4
Rented	151	21.4	4 or more	69	9.8

Marital Status	n	%
Single	172	24.3
Married	459	64.9
Divorced	55	7.8
Widowed	18	2.5
Don't wish to say	3	0.4
Monthly Household Income (SC & PR only)	n	Cumulative %
< \$1,000	18	3.4
\$1,000 to \$1,999	93	20.8
\$2,000 to \$2,999	154	49.5
\$3,000 to \$3,999	89	66.0
\$4,000 to \$4,999	65	78.2
\$5,000 to \$5,999	48	87.2
\$6,000 to \$6,999	22	91.4
\$7,000 to \$7,999	15	94.2
\$8,000 to \$8,999	9	96.0
\$9,000 to \$9,999	6	97.1
> \$10,000	16	100
DNK / Do not say (exclude from cum %)	45	7.8



Survey Findings on a. Work Prospects

- Job Satisfaction
- Knowledge of Technology

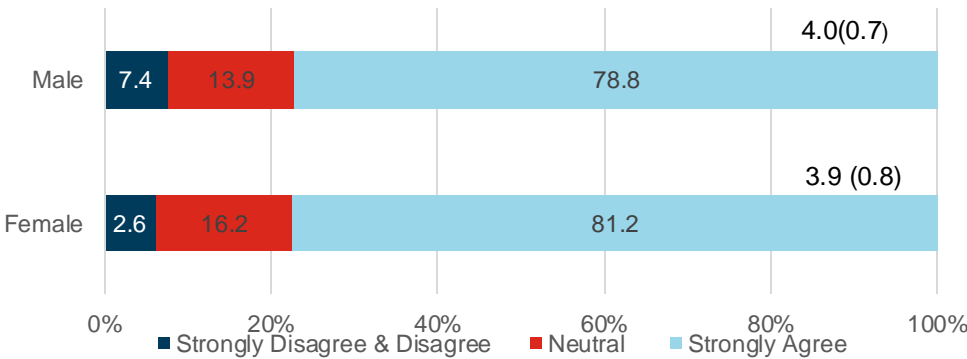


a. Work Prospects: Job Satisfaction

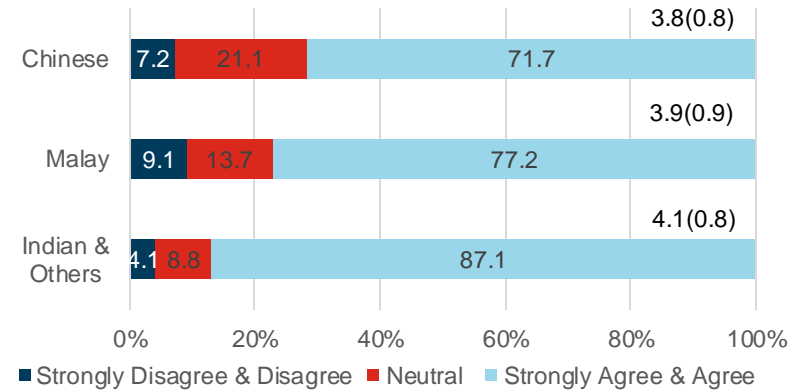
More than 8 in 10 said they were satisfied with the profession.

I feel satisfied with my current job

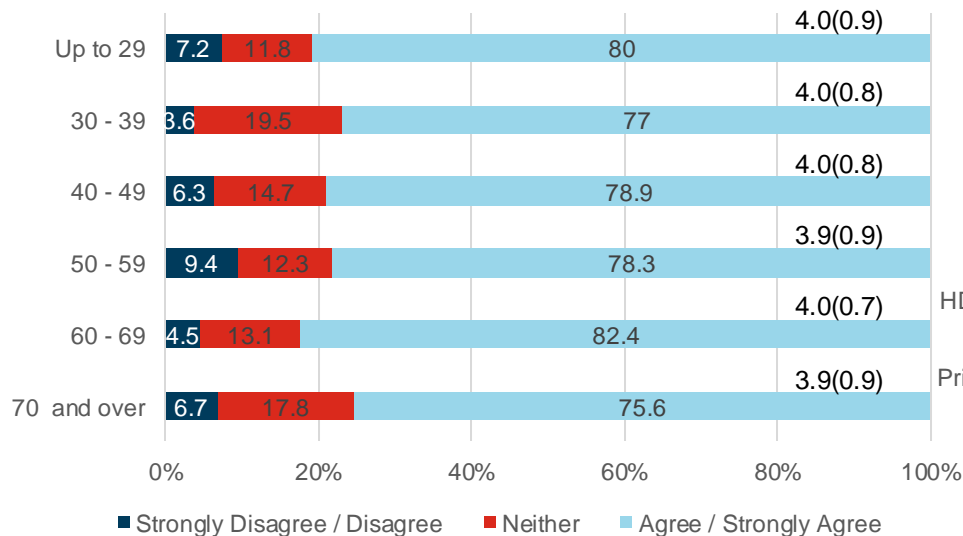
Gender



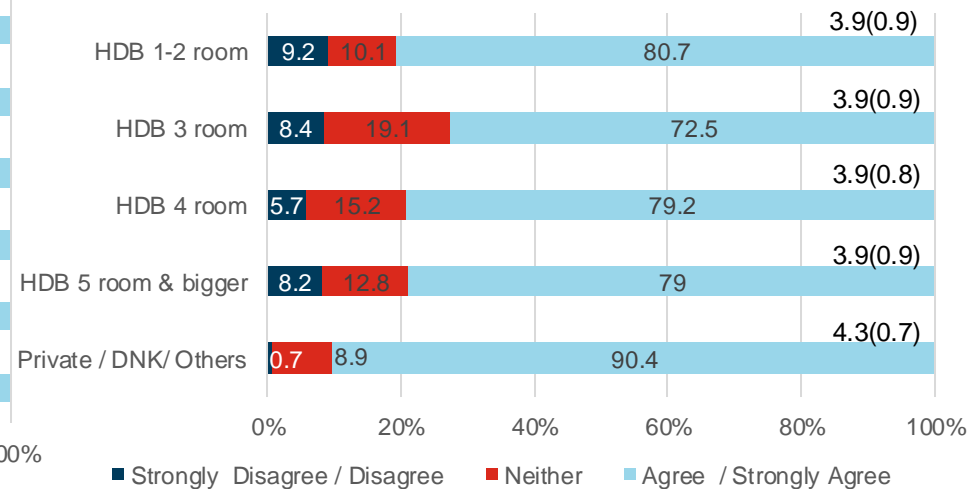
Races



Age



Housing Type

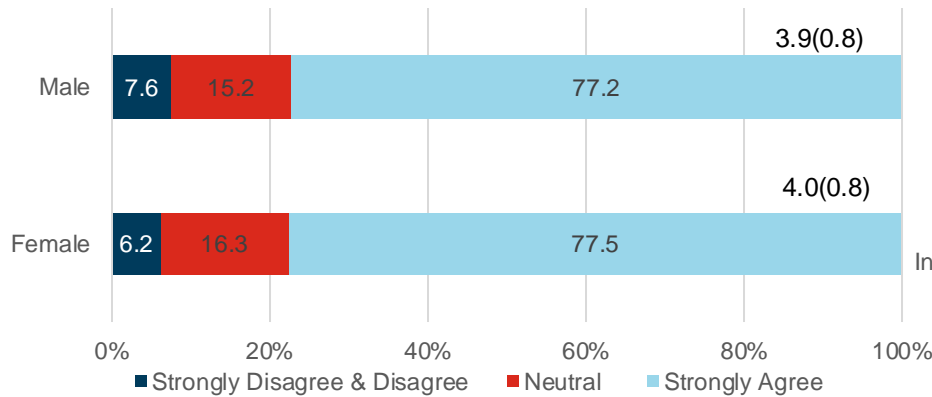


a. Work Prospects: Job Satisfaction

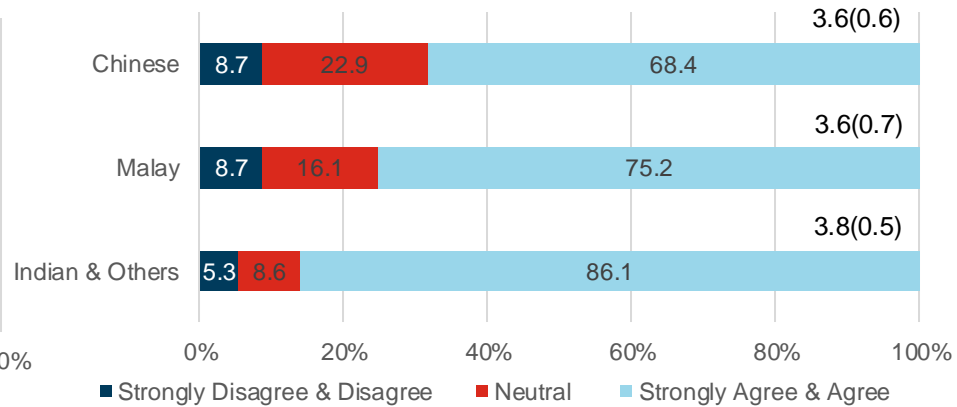
Most security officers find enjoyment in work. Malay and Indian/Others, up to 29 years old, and those living in HDB 4 room housing seemingly enjoy their work more than others.

I find real enjoyment in my work

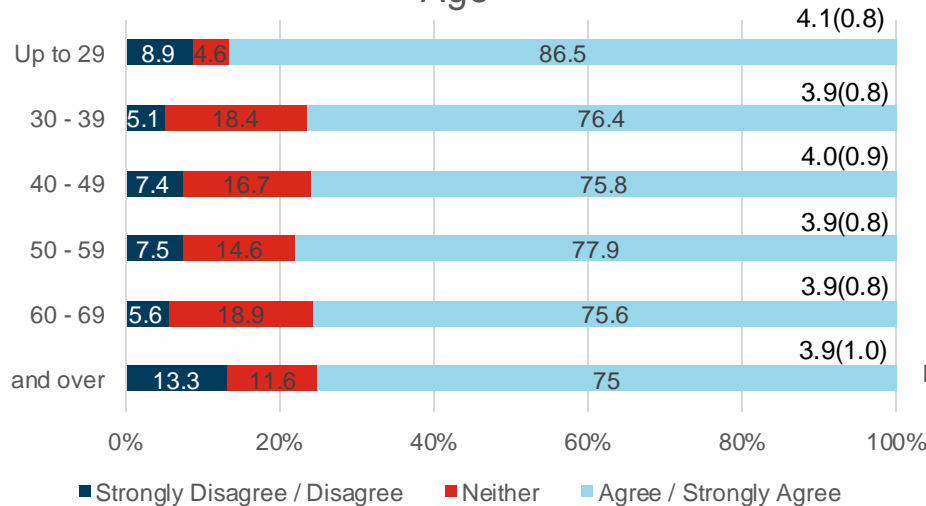
Gender



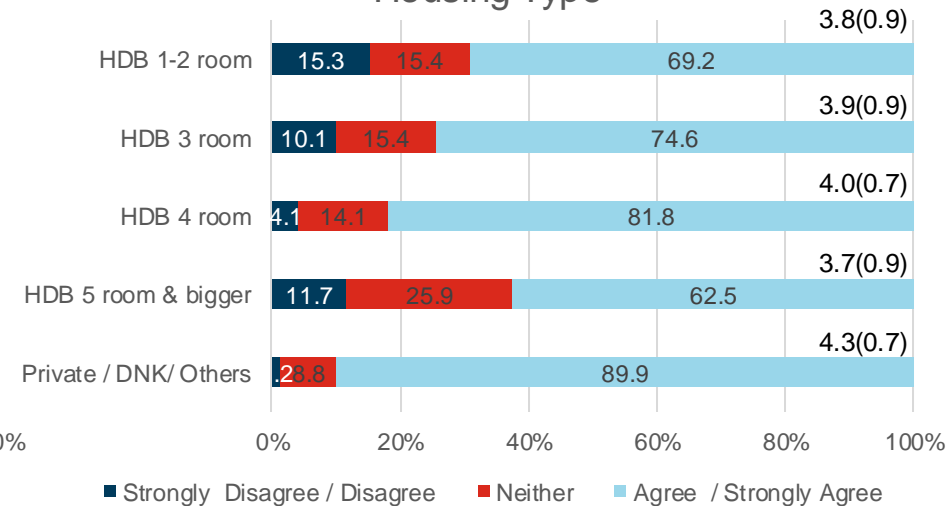
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Age



Housing Type

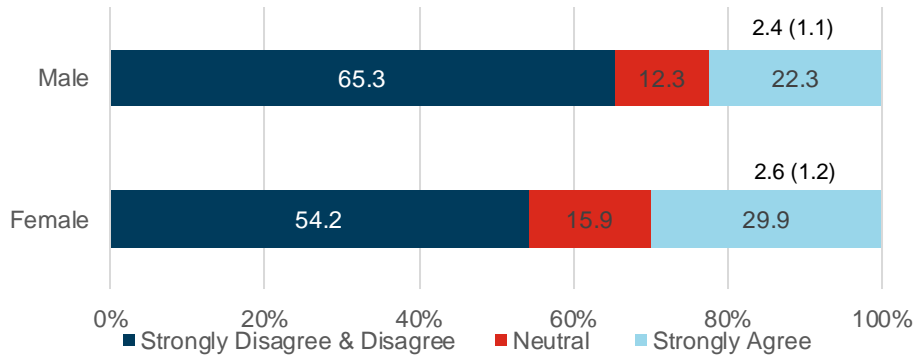


a. Work Prospects: Job Satisfaction

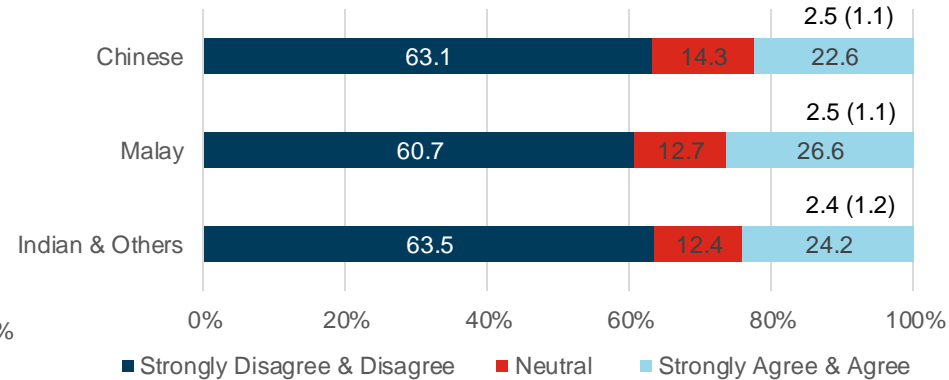
More than 6 in 10 reported no intention to leave their current job. Security officers who are female, in their 30's, and aged older security officers, and those living in HDB 3 and 5 room are more likely to think about quitting.

I often think about quitting my present job

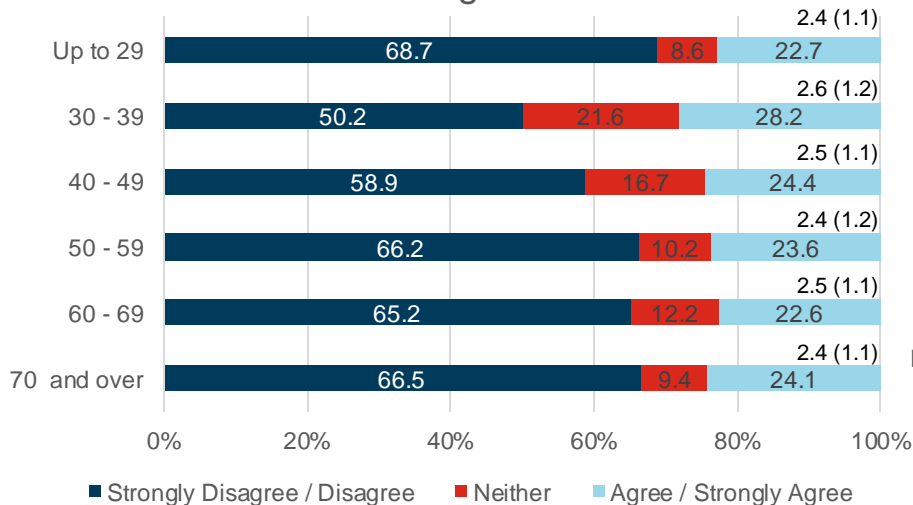
Gender



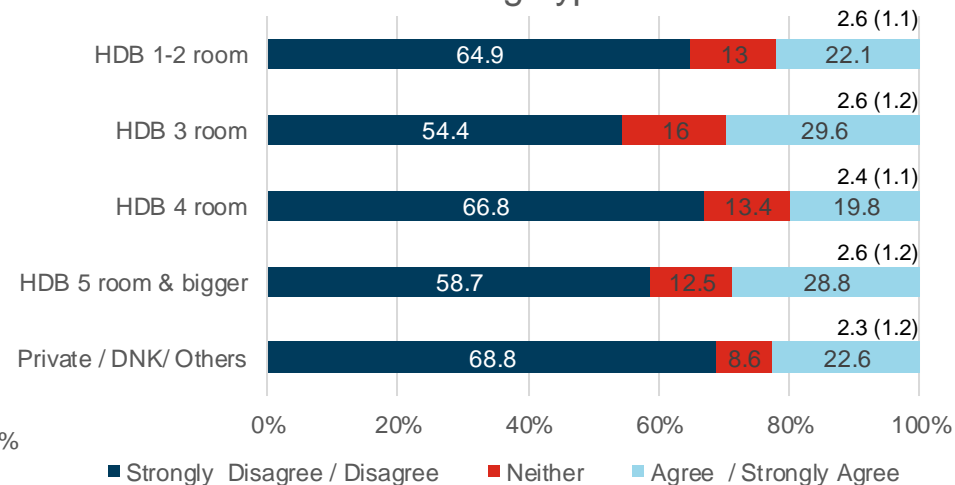
Race



Age



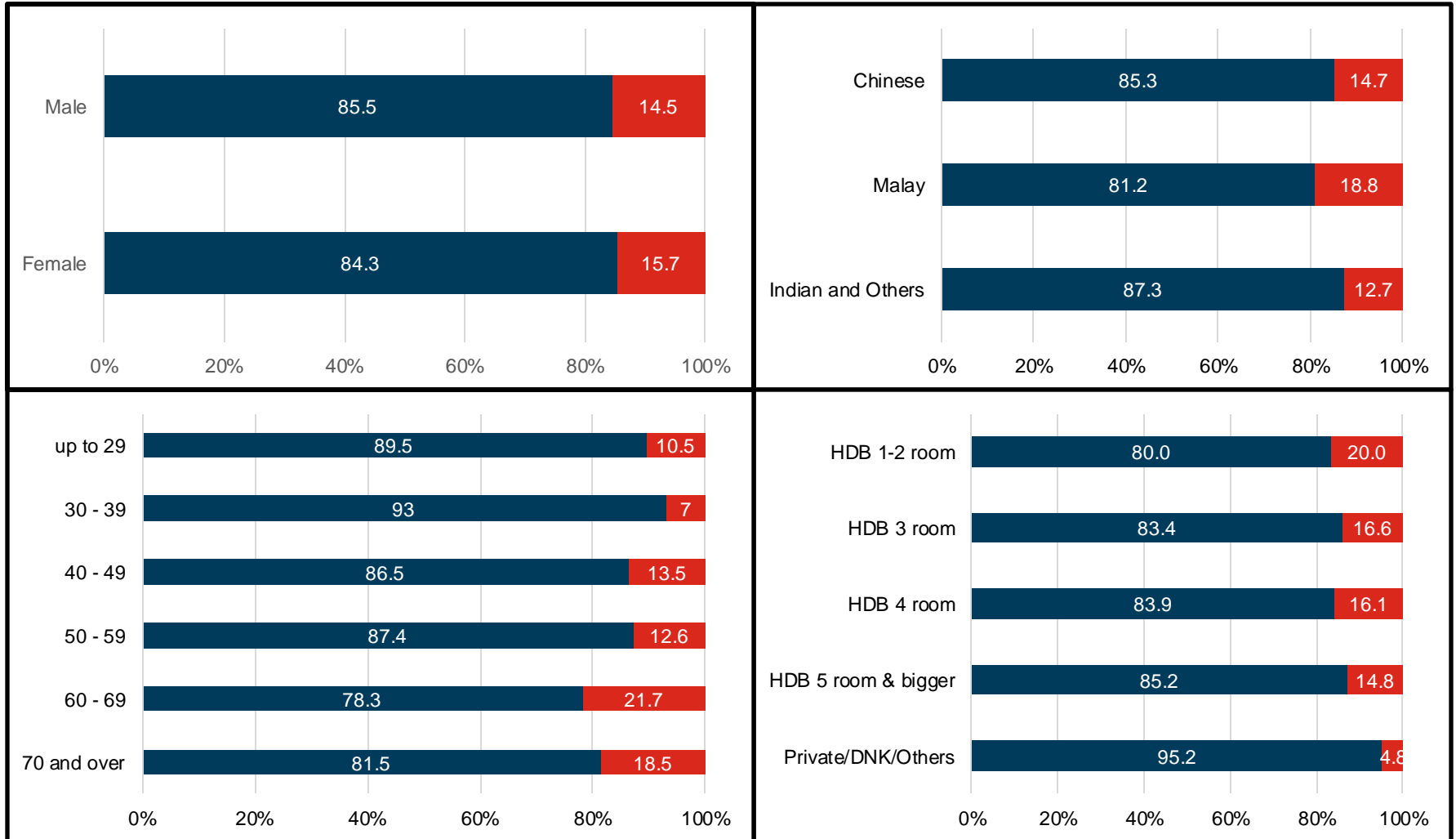
Housing Type



a. Work Prospects: Usage of Technology

Most SOs use technology at their workplaces.

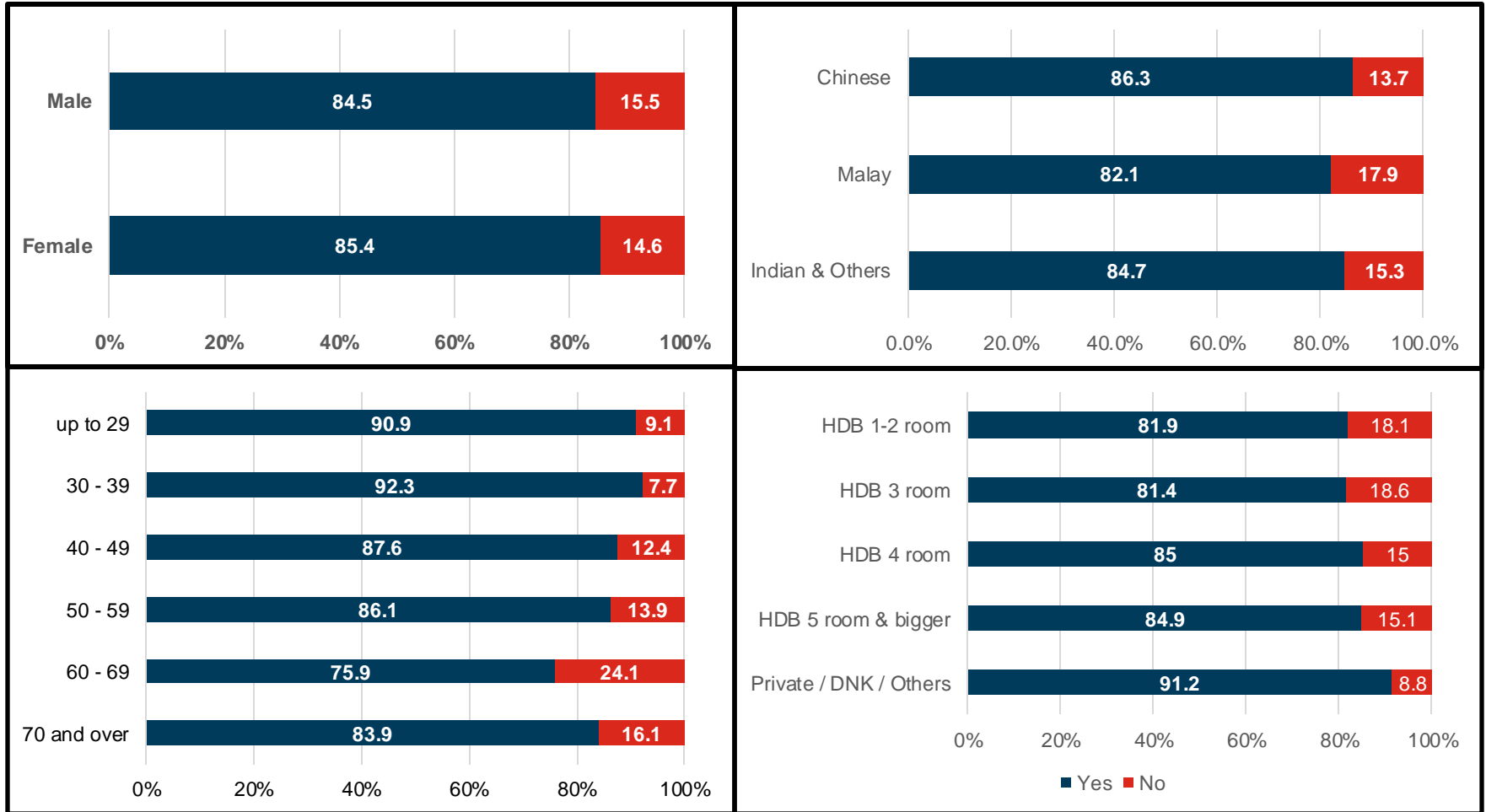
Do you use technology/security systems at your workplace?



a. Work Prospects: Usage of Technology

Security officers in their 60's and older, Malay, and those living in smaller housing types are less expected to use technology at their workplace.

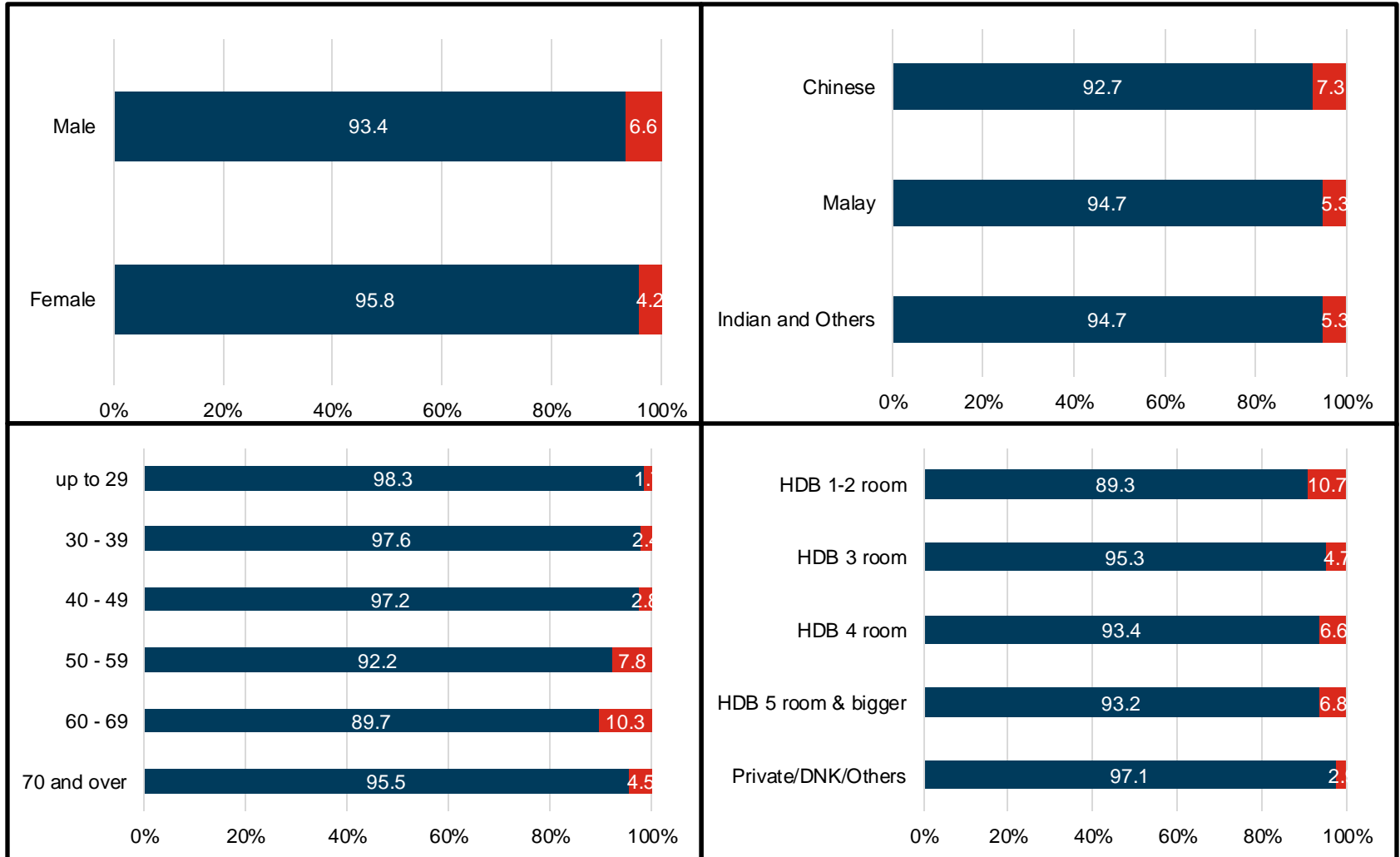
Are you expected to use technology/security systems at your workplace?



a. Work Prospects: Usage of Technology

A high proportion of SOs are comfortable to use technology. Security officers in their 50's and older, and those living in HDB 1-2 room are broadly comfortable using technology at workplace, though a larger % expressed discomfort

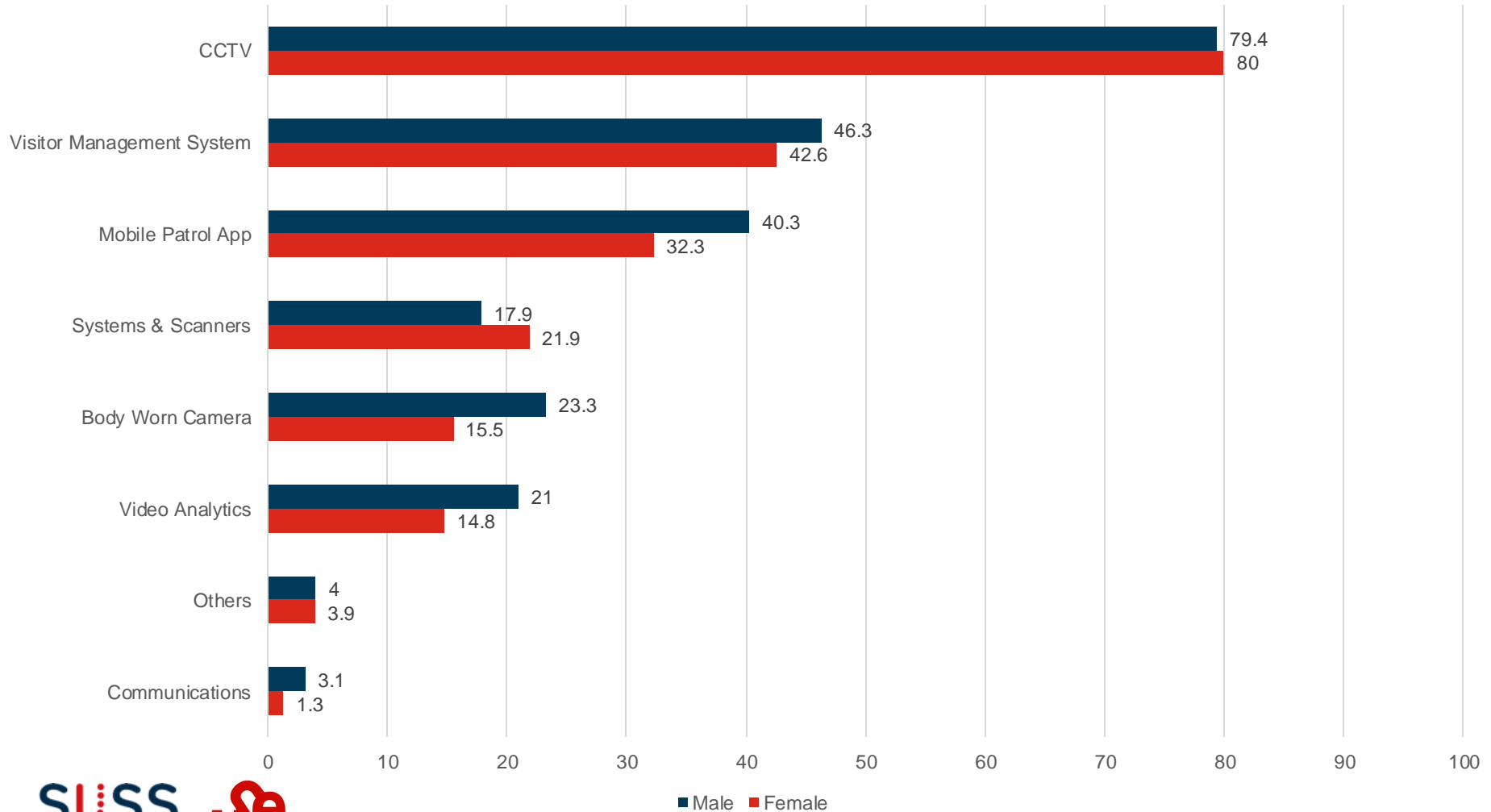
Are you comfortable using technology/security systems at your workplace?



a. Work Prospects: Usage of Technology

Most security officers use CCTV and visitor management systems at their workplace.

What kind of technology do you use at your workplace?



Survey Findings on b. Wages

- Salary
- Working Hours

b. Wages: Salary

Security officers earned a **median and mean basic salary of \$1,420 and \$1,619** respectively; and a median and mean take home salary of \$1,975, and \$1,868 after CPF deduction (include OT and allowance), respectively. **The basic wage in the sample is higher than the \$1,300 cited in the MOM survey in 2018 (see next slide).**

What is your basic wage (before OT and allowances)? SGD

	Min	Max	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qns 13	70.0	12,000.0	1,420.0	1,619.6	846.4

What is your average monthly take-home pay (after CPF deduction)? SGD

	Min	Max	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qns 14	80.0	10,800.0	1,975.0	1,868.5	810.7

b. Wages: Salary

Occupational Wages of Security Officer 2018 (Reference)

Industry	Sample Size	Basic Wage			Gross Wage		
		25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Manufacturing	110	1309	1606	1900	1978	2359	2759
Wholesale and retail trade	237	1728	1778	1918	1904	2028	2266
Accommodation and food services	140	1800	2000	2202	2010	2260	2558
Business service	3141	1200	1240	1420	1951	2235	2592
Education, health and social services	140	1933	2119	2427	2126	2395	2617
Across industries	3848	1200	1300	1600	1951	2225	2594

USE-SUSS January 2020 survey - What is your basic wage (before OT and allowances)? SGD\$

	Max	Min	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qns 13	12000	70	1420	1620	846

USE-SUSS January 2020 survey - What is your average monthly take-home pay (after CPF deduction)? SGD\$

	Max	Min	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Qns 14	10800	80	1975	1869	811

MOM report on wage practices 2018:

<https://stats.mom.gov.sg/Pages/Report-On-Wage-Practices-2018.aspx>

b. Wages: Salary

General Household Survey 2015

Security employees classified under “service and sales workers” with a median household income of “\$4,500-\$4,999”; Median national household income in GHS (2015) is \$8,000-\$8,999

Monthly Household Income from Work (\$)	Total	Legislators, Senior Officials & Managers	Professionals	Associate Professionals & Technicians	Clerical Support Workers	Service & Sales Workers	Craftsmen & Related Trades Workers	Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers	Cleaners, Labourers & Related Workers	Others
Total	963,600	222,700	176,500	164,300	73,000	96,200	55,300	99,300	67,200	9,000
Below 1,000	16,600	400	800	1,500	900	4,000	1,100	1,800	5,900	100
1,000 - 1,499	28,500	1,400	300	1,400	2,100	5,500	1,600	5,100	10,700	100
1,500 - 1,999	25,900	700	100	1,500	2,600	6,000	1,900	6,300	6,500	100
2,000 - 2,499	29,600	1,700	600	2,100	3,900	7,200	2,000	6,800	5,100	100
2,500 - 2,999	26,100	1,300	500	2,700	4,100	6,000	2,000	5,300	4,200	-
3,000 - 3,499	27,300	2,300	900	4,100	3,800	4,900	2,900	5,000	3,200	200
3,500 - 3,999	27,000	2,400	1,400	5,100	4,600	3,700	1,700	5,300	2,600	100
4,000 - 4,499	32,500	2,700	2,500	5,700	4,800	4,400	3,800	5,000	3,600	-
4,500 - 4,999	27,600	2,200	2,000	5,100	4,100	4,600	2,900	4,500	2,300	-
5,000 - 5,999	60,100	6,200	7,100	12,000	7,300	7,800	5,700	9,400	4,600	100
6,000 - 6,999	61,000	8,100	7,100	14,000	6,400	7,300	4,600	8,600	4,300	700
7,000 - 7,999	57,300	7,100	8,500	14,400	5,700	7,200	4,800	6,200	3,000	400
8,000 - 8,999	57,400	9,900	10,500	15,000	4,700	4,800	3,800	5,800	2,200	800
9,000 - 9,999	51,900	9,600	10,000	14,900	3,200	3,800	3,000	4,400	2,200	600
10,000 - 10,999	47,400	10,000	11,500	11,300	2,400	3,700	2,700	3,800	1,400	600
11,000 - 11,999	42,000	9,200	10,200	8,500	3,000	3,300	2,200	3,400	1,700	500
12,000 - 12,999	40,200	11,700	11,100	8,000	1,900	2,500	1,500	2,900	400	300
13,000 - 13,999	33,300	8,900	9,800	5,800	1,600	1,700	1,400	2,300	1,000	700
14,000 - 14,999	30,500	9,600	8,100	5,800	1,300	2,100	1,100	1,900	300	300
15,000 - 17,499	58,600	21,100	16,700	10,200	2,100	2,600	2,000	2,300	800	900
17,500 - 19,999	43,300	16,800	14,500	5,600	900	1,600	1,200	1,500	700	600
20,000 & Over	139,800	79,300	42,300	9,700	1,500	1,600	1,400	1,800	400	1,800

b. Wages: Salary Breakdown by Age Group

The average monthly take-home pay (after CPF deduction, incl. OT and allowance) is the highest for security officers in the 30-39 age group and it decreases thereafter.

What is your average monthly take-home pay (after CPF deduction)? SGD

Age Group	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
up to 29	65	1,728.0	803.4
30 - 39	103	2,021.0	830.4
40 - 49	109	1,955.6	1,164.6
50 - 59	173	1,869.4	825.9
60 - 69	191	1,719.1	704.7
70 and over	67	1,584.6	662.6

b. Wages: Salary breakdown by rank and nationality

Singaporeans/PRs earn higher average **basic wage** than Malaysians at every employed PWM rank. For median **basic wage**, Singaporeans/PRs earn more than Malaysians until the SS rank*.

Basic wage by employed PWM rank	Singaporean / PR			Malaysian			PWM 2020 (SG/PR)
	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	
Rank							-
Security Officer	1,544.6	1,400.0	736.1	1,188.2	1,100	391.9	1,250
Senior Security Officer	1,584.7	1,420.0	600.8	1,201.1	1,100	284.1	1,420
Security Supervisor	2,042.3	1,753.6	932.6	1,527.9	1,415.0	569.4	1,620
Senior Security Supervisor	2,302.8	1,900.0	1,118.6	2,043.1*	2,531.4	1,042.3	1,820
Chief Security Officer	3,601.1	3,650.0	2,635.9	1,600.0*	1,600.0	-	-

* The sample comprised just one Malaysian CSO and four Malaysian SSS.

b. Wages: Working Hours

Security officers work approx. 11 hours each day regardless of age. Older security officers seemingly work less on a weekly basis.

How many hours are you stationed at your designated site?

Age Group	n	Hours in a day		Hours in a week	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
up to 29	65	11.6	1.6	61.8	15.0
30 - 39	103	11.1	1.7	59.5	15.9
40 - 49	109	10.9	1.9	57.7	18.3
50 - 59	173	10.9	2.4	56.0	18.5
60 - 69	191	11.1	1.8	54.8	18.3
70 and over	67	11.1	1.7	52.4	15.5

b. Wages: Working Hours

Both male and female security officers work approx. the same number of hours per week.

How many hours are you stationed at your designated site?

Gender	n	Hours in a day		Hours in a week	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	546	11.1	1.9	56.3	17.5
Female	162	11.0	2.1	57.8	17.8

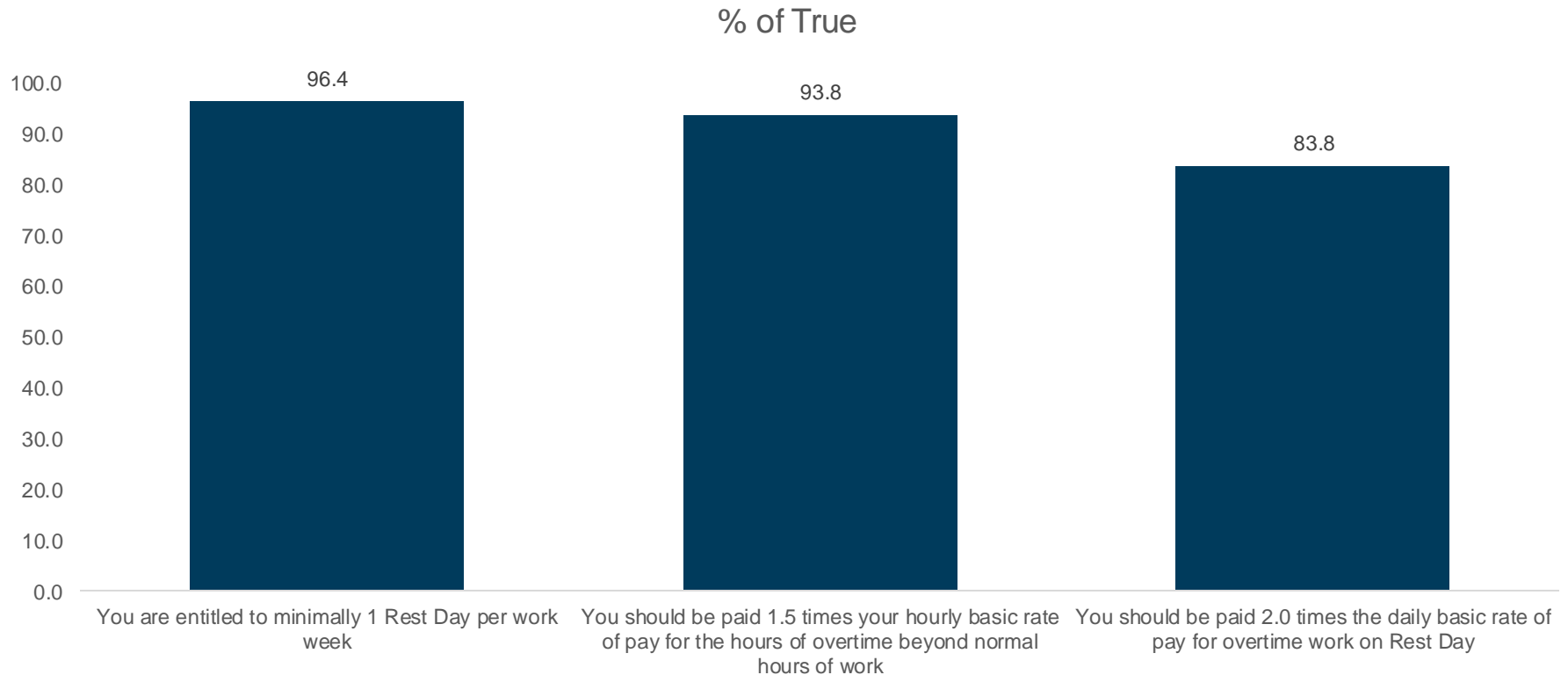
Survey Findings on c. Welfare

- Knowledge on Labour Laws
- Abuse faced at workplace
- Working conditions – Performing non-security duties



c. Welfare: Knowledge of Labour Laws

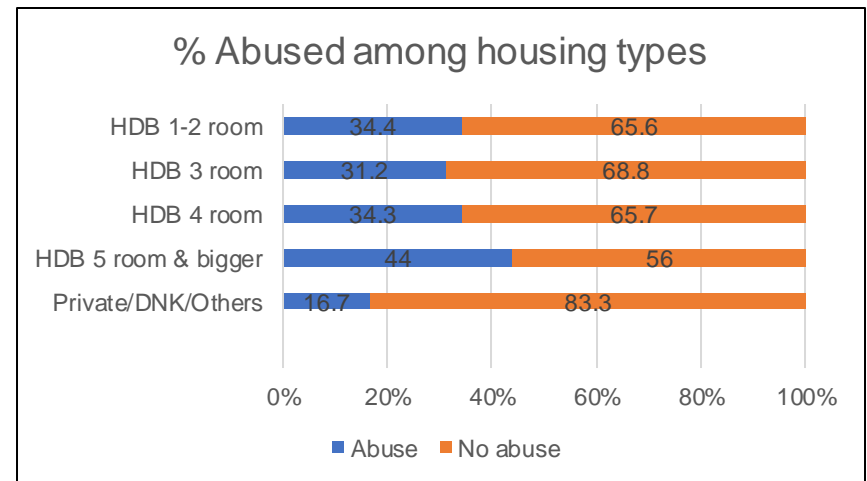
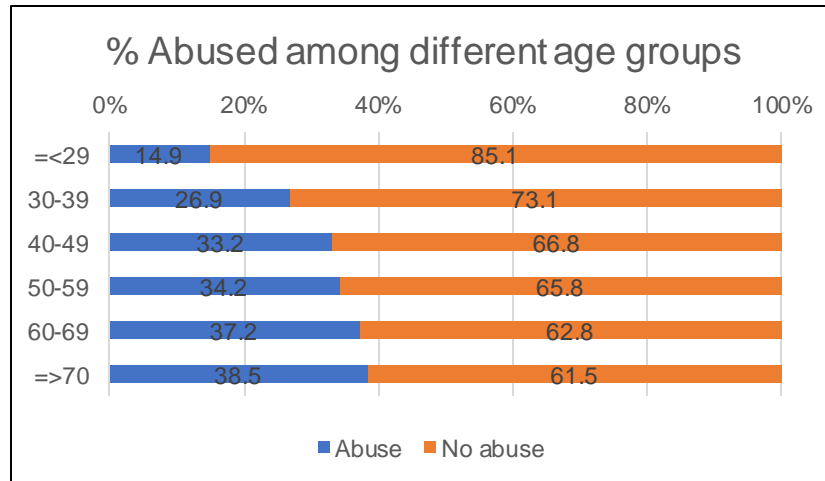
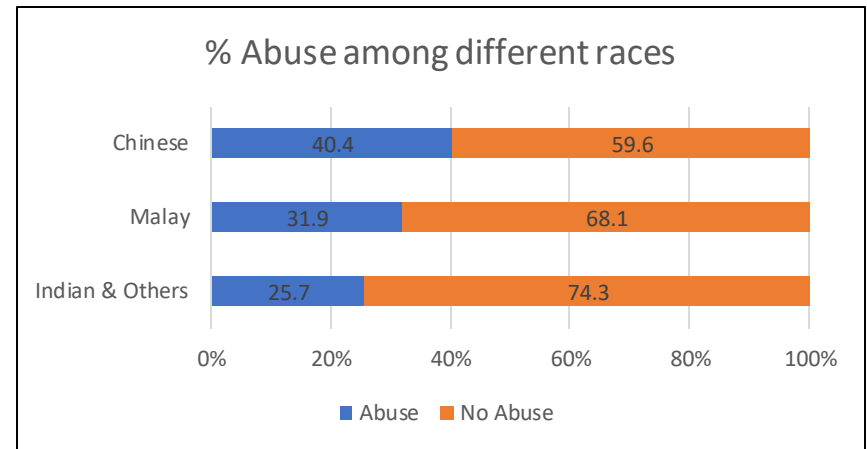
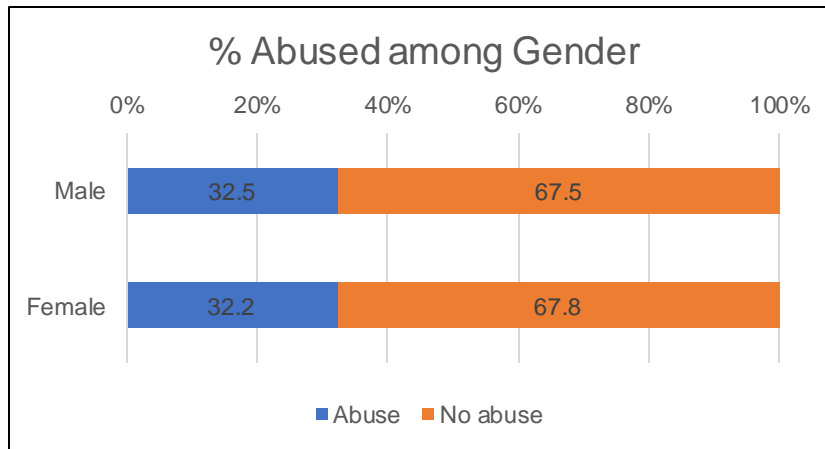
Generally officers are aware that they are entitled to minimally 1 Rest Day per work week (96.4%) and should be paid 1.5 times their hourly basic rate of pay for the hours overtime beyond normal hours of work (93.8%). 83.8% were aware that they should be paid 2.0 times the daily basic rate of pay for overtime work on Rest day.



c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace

1. Regardless of gender, the percentage of security officers being abused is around 32%.
2. For age, it is observed that the older the security officers are, the higher chance they reported abuse at their workplace.

Have you experienced any verbal abuse or physical abuse at your site?

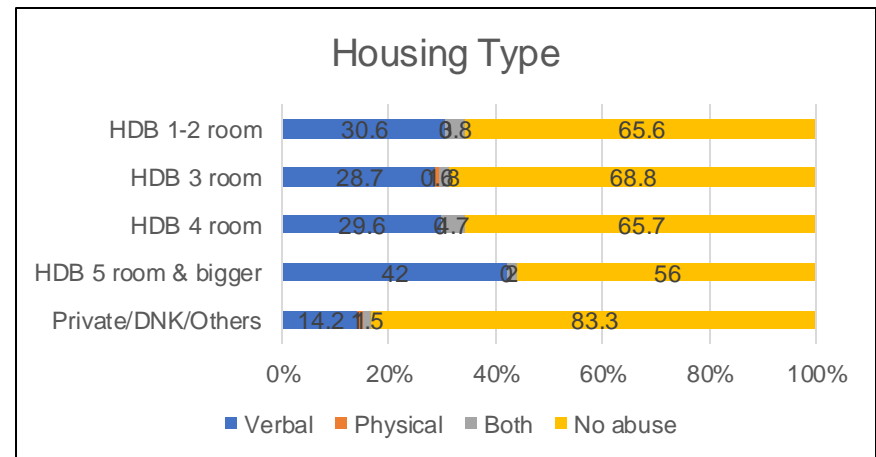
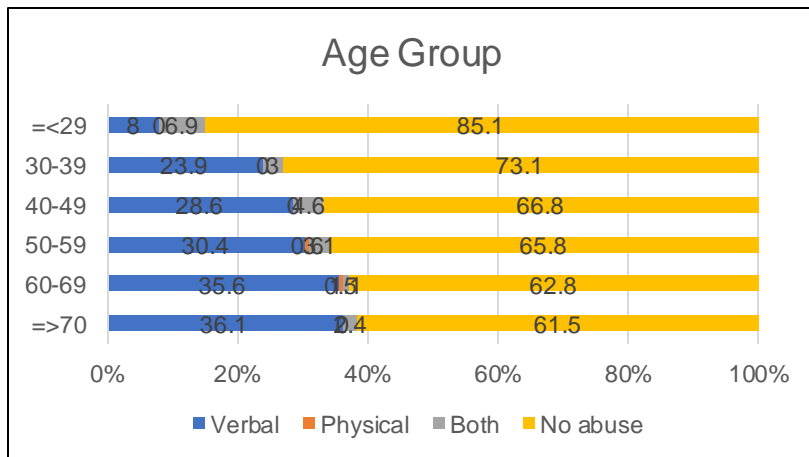
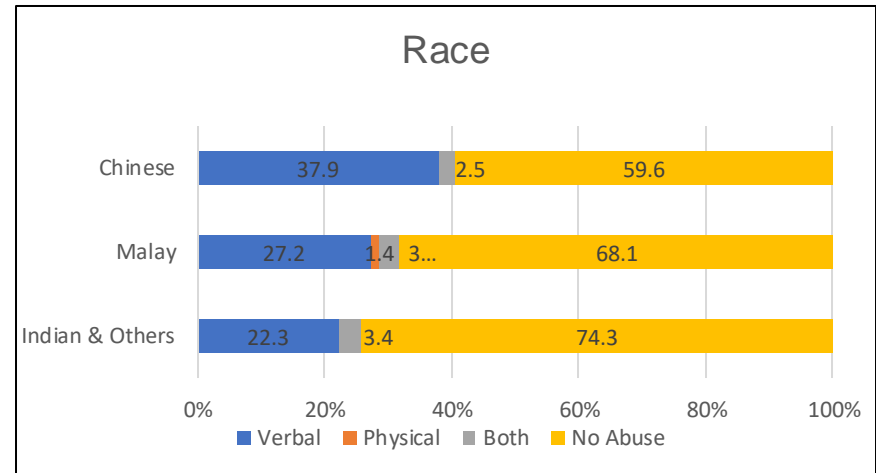
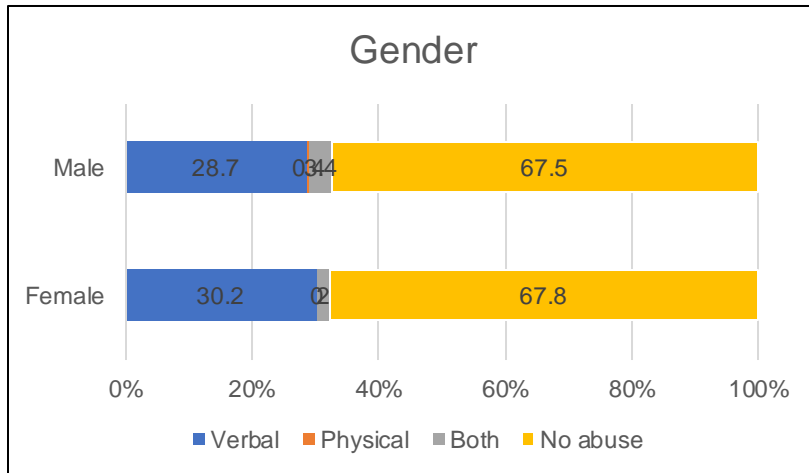


c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace

Breakdown by type of abuse shows verbal abuse as most common, followed by both physical and verbal abuse, then physical abuse only.

Have you experienced any verbal abuse or physical abuse at your site?

BREAKDOWN BY TYPE OF ABUSE

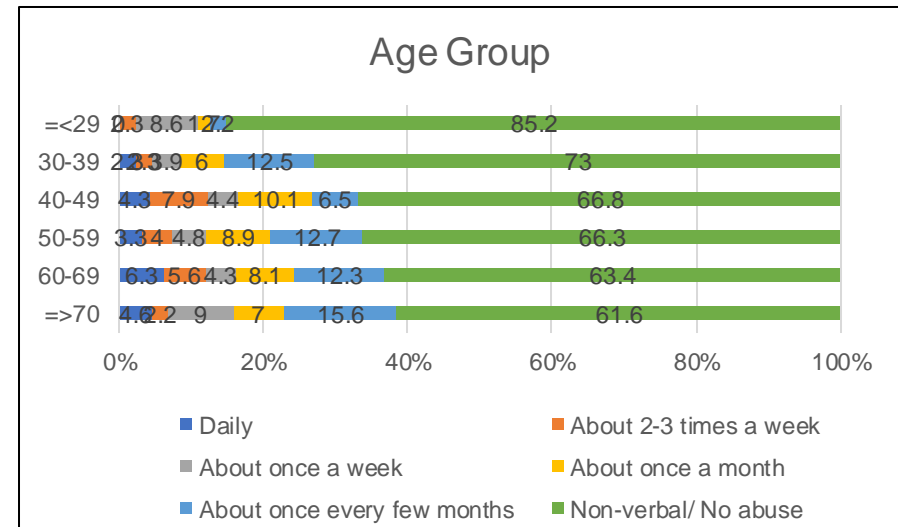
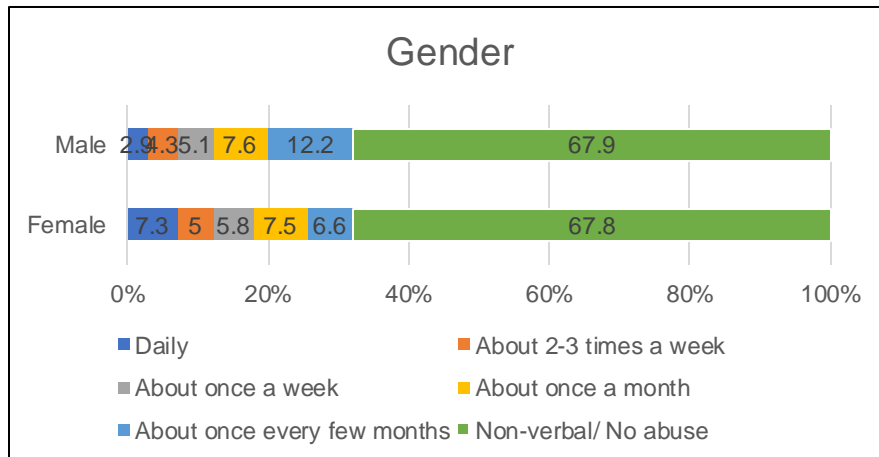


c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace (verbal)

The following are findings from each respective data set on the frequency of verbal abuse

1. Female security officers have a high proportion facing verbal abuse daily
2. Older security officers experience more verbal abuse, but those in their 40's and 60's face verbal abuse more frequently

AMONG THOSE WHO SAID 'YES, EXPERIENCED VERBAL ABUSE': How often do you experience verbal abuse at work?

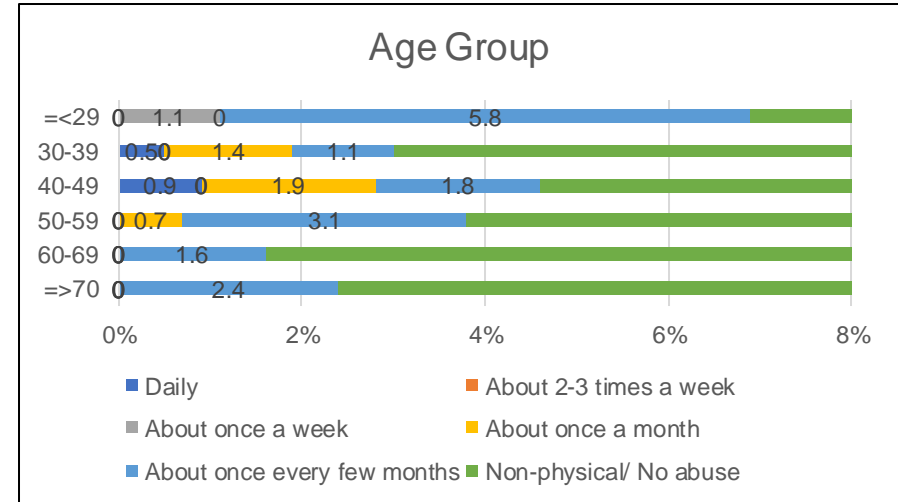
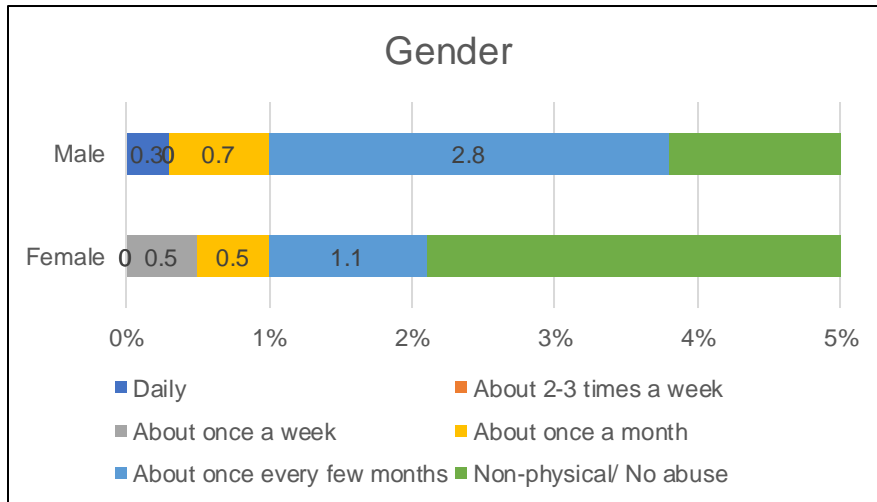


c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace (physical)

The following are findings from each respective data set, on the frequency of physical abuse

1. Majority of male security officers face physical abuse about once every few months whilst majority of female officers do not face it.
2. Security officers below 29 years old form the largest group that faces physical abuse about once every few months.

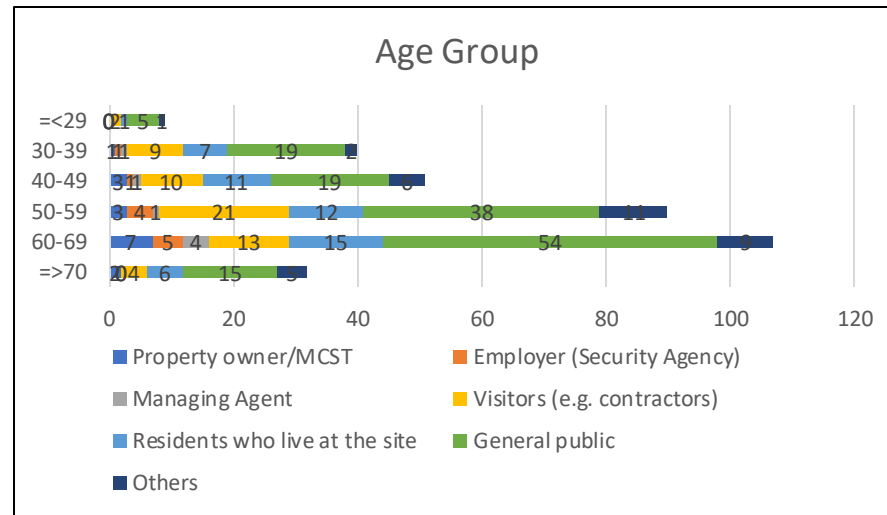
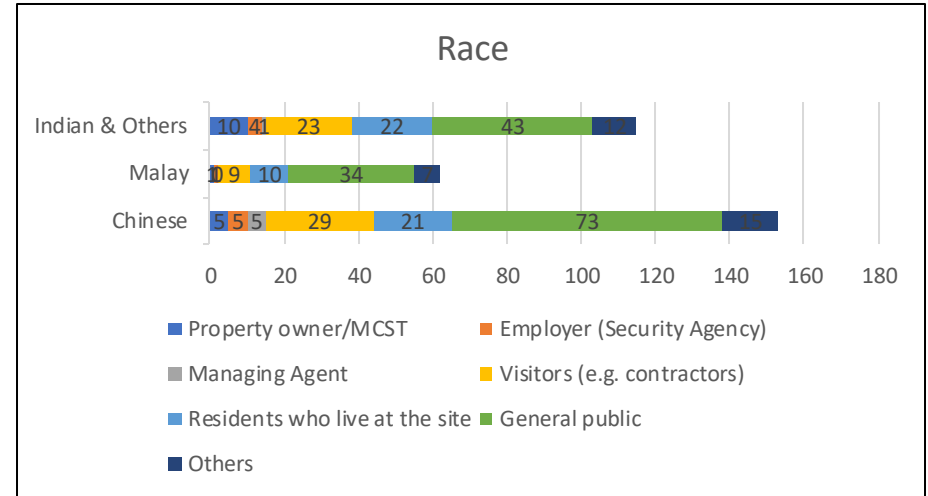
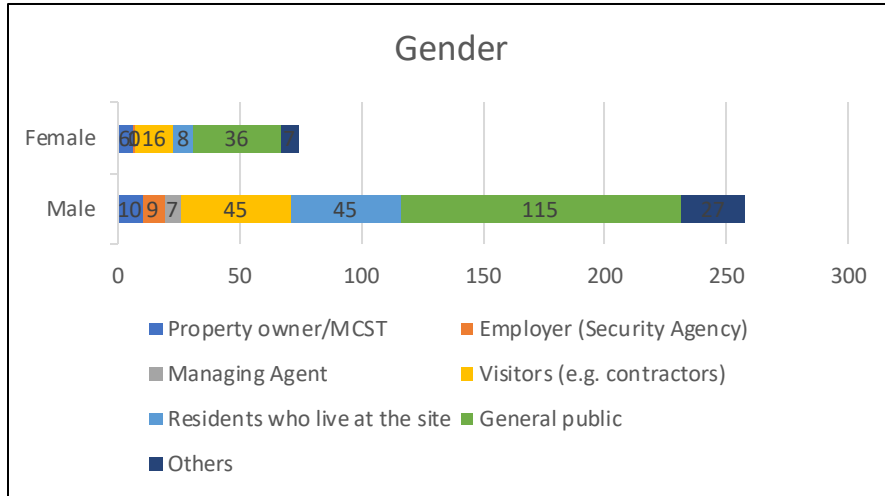
AMONG THOSE WHO SAID 'YES, EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL ABUSE': How often do you experience physical abuse at work?



c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace

Regardless of demographics, most SO reported face abuse from general public, follow by residents, and contractors (multiple answers are allowed; thus frequency count is most appropriate)

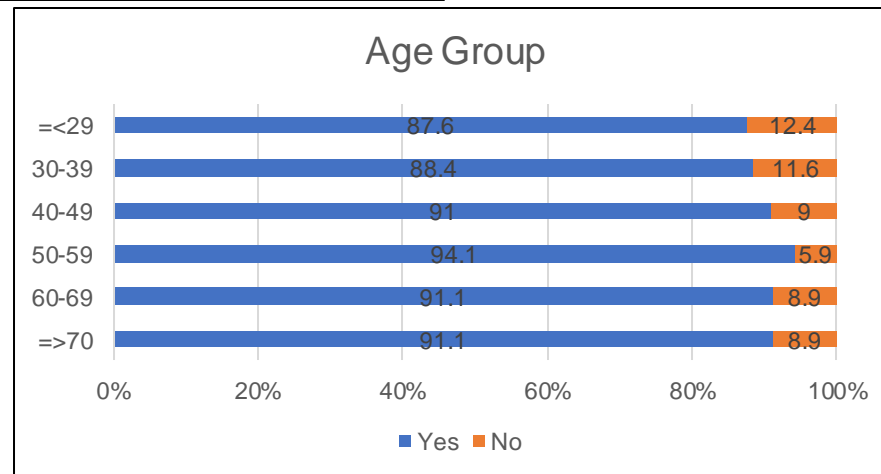
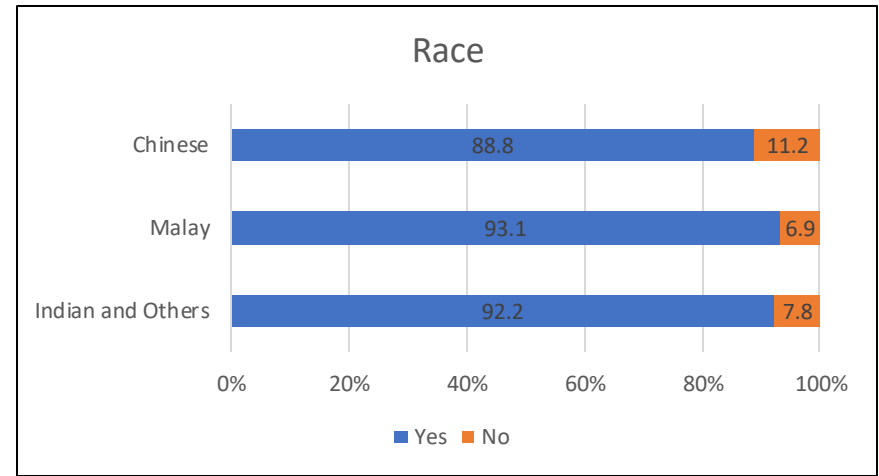
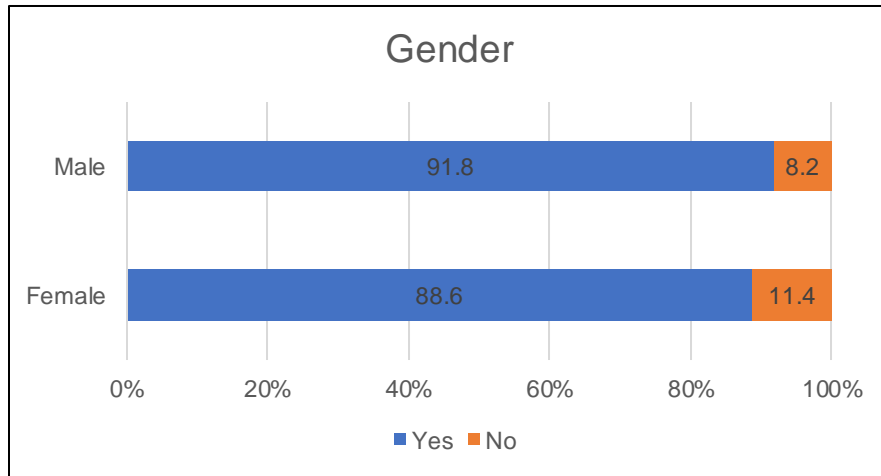
By whom do you receive abuse from at the workplace?



c. Welfare: Abuse faced at workplace

Marginally higher percentage of male security officers know where to seek help when they are abused. Younger security officers do **not** know where to get help when they are abused.

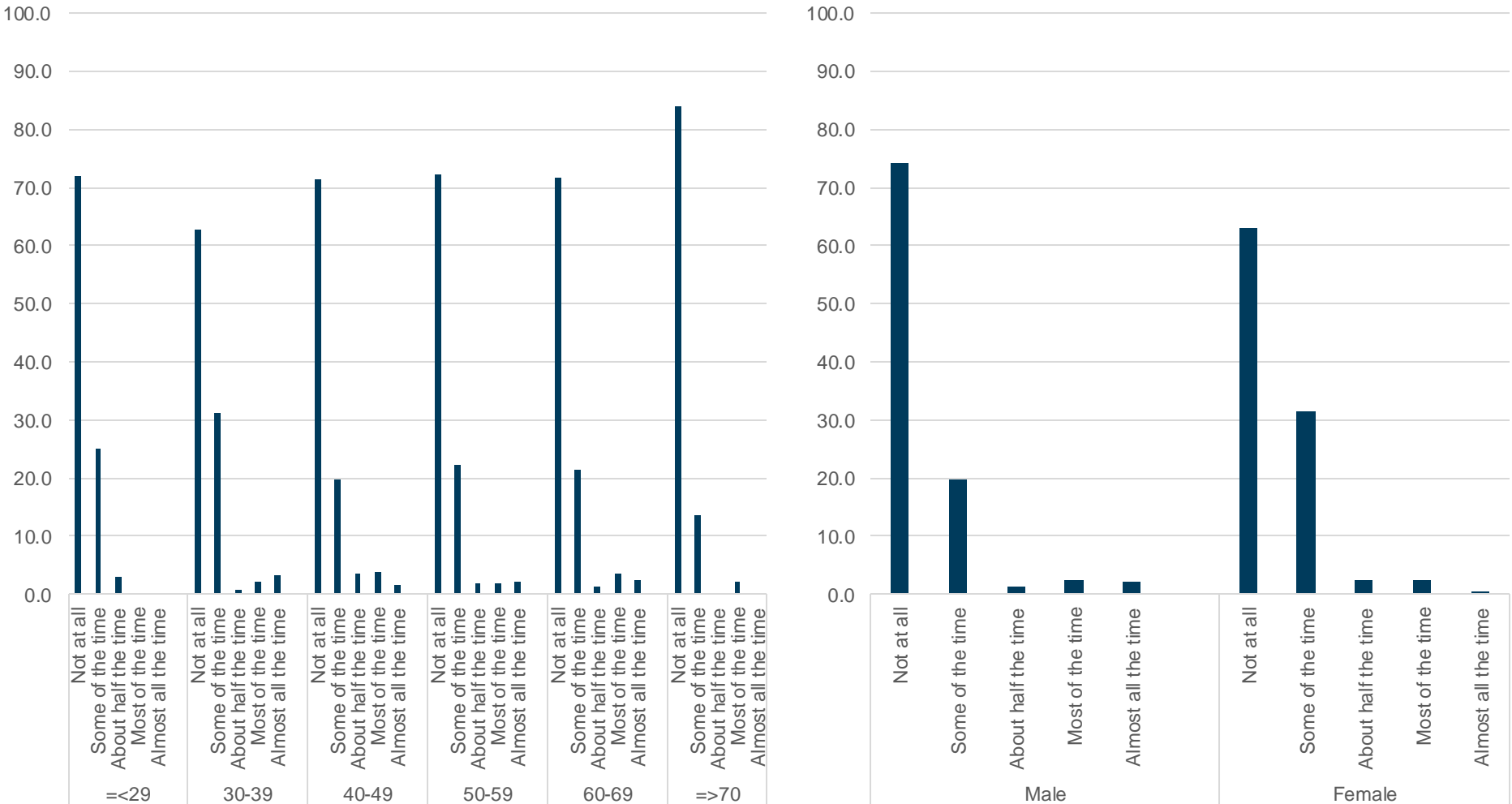
Do you know who to get help from when you are abused?



c. Welfare: Performing non-security duties

About one in four security officers were asked to take on non-security related tasks at the workplace

How often do you perform other non-security duties outside your PWM functions?



4. Recap – Summary of Survey Findings

- **Satisfied with Work Prospects**
 - More than 8 in 10 said they were satisfied with the profession
 - SOs have good knowledge of technology and are willing to use technology at the workplace
- **Wages are higher than PWM but working hours are still long**
 - SOs receive basic wages above PWM, but gross wages continue to lag behind national median
 - SOs work long hours, with an average of more than than 11 hours a day and between 52 to 62 hours a week
- **More can be done to secure our security officers' Welfare**
 - 4 in 5 SOs understand Labour Laws and their employment rights
 - 32% SOs reported facing abuse at their workplaces, with the highest abuse faced from general public
 - 1 in 4 SOs are asked to do non-security duties

5. Background on USE-SUSS Collaboration Study

- **Collaboration**
 - A 2-year project, bi-annual surveys
 - The first longitudinal tracking survey on private security officers
 - Robust fieldwork and analysis to provide an accurate benchmark on job sentiment, PWM, and working conditions
- **Union of Security Employees (USE)**
 - Results provide the basis for the union to secure better wages, welfare, and work environment for low wage workers
 - Understand how the security sector evolves overtime
- **Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS)**
 - SUSS students completed the fieldwork, analysis, and report preparation, guided by SUSS Principal Investigator and USE
 - Opportunity for students to learn how labour policies are practised in the private security industry
 - Experience end-to-end survey project management cycle, insights to the rigours expected in data collection, analytics, and presentation