

The HSBC Life +Factor Study

UK Key Findings



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Life

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The HSBC Life +Factor Study involved a survey of 3,024 people in the UK, as part of a global study of 10,000+, which also covered Hong Kong, mainland China and Singapore. The study sought to gain insights into the relationship between our physical fitness, mental health and financial fitness and to understand how these core dimensions of wellbeing are interlinked.

Respondents were asked questions about their physical fitness, mental health, financial habits, what motivates them to take care of their wellbeing and what barriers they face, especially in the context of COVID-19. The survey also included questions on societal wellbeing to gauge how people give back to the community and society at large. The study sought to identify how, by connecting together the core dimensions of wellbeing, people can live life with the +Factor.

How we assessed Physical, Mental and Financial Health¹



1. Physical Fitness

Respondents self-reported their fitness levels on a scale from 1 to 10 and were grouped by 'fit' (8 to 10), 'moderate' (6 to 7) or 'unfit' (1 to 5).



2. Mental Health






The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale® ("WEMWBS") was used which gave each respondent a mental health score: 'above average', 'average', 'below average' or 'very low'.



3. Financial Fitness

Measured using the 'FinFit' methodology developed by HSBC <https://www.hsbc.com.hk/finfit/> and respondents were grouped into 'very fit', 'moderate' or 'unfit' based on their responses to questions relating to their financial habits and knowledge.

The findings and implications of the +Factor Study

	1. Physical, mental and financial wellbeing are interconnected	Strong correlation identified across these dimensions of wellbeing. When one aspect of wellbeing improves, the other dimensions improve as well
	2. Health is wealth, but having wealth doesn't necessarily mean being healthy	Wealth cannot be enjoyed without being physically fit or mentally healthy. For the vast majority, income level does not determine a person's physical, mental or financial fitness
	3. An emerging legacy of health and wealth	Passing on healthy lifestyle habits is becoming an important part of a person's legacy alongside their financial wealth
	4. Start investing in health and wealth earlier	Exercising more, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and saving more money rank highest in advice to our 15-year younger self
	5. Healthy habits start young	Healthy habits started at a young age can lay the foundations of good physical, mental and financial wellbeing in adulthood
	6. Financial planning - a driver for wellbeing	Taking small steps to focus on long-term financial planning can have a positive impact on both mental wellbeing and physical fitness
	7. The Societal +Factor	Those with good physical, mental and financial fitness contribute more to society
	8. COVID-19 driving behaviour change	Behaviours relating to health, wealth and wellbeing, as well as giving back to society, have been impacted by COVID-19 which is now the top driver of stress

¹ For details refer to The Research section on page 10

Study findings

1. Physical, mental and financial wellbeing are interconnected

The study highlighted a strong correlation between physical fitness, mental health and financial fitness. We observed that when one aspect of wellbeing improves, the other dimensions improve as well².

Physical Fitness

As physical fitness improves, the proportion of people who have above average mental health increases as does the proportion of people who score very fit in financial fitness.

Mental Health

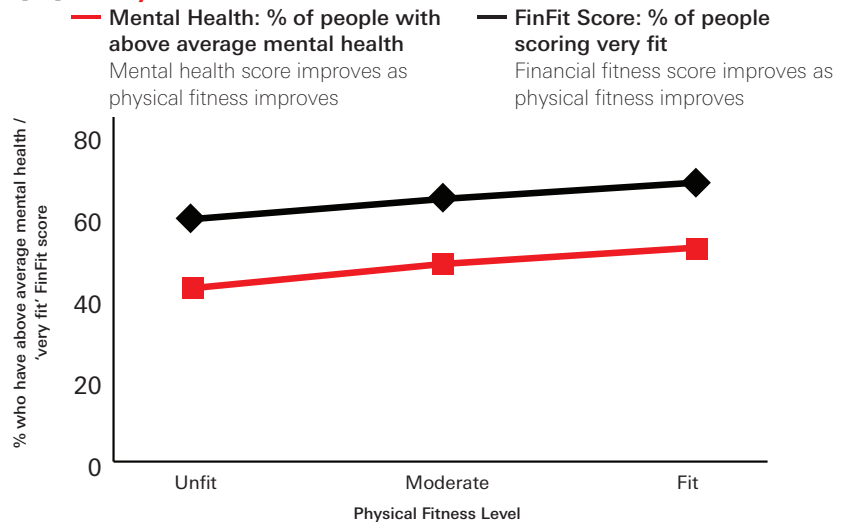
As mental health improves, both the percentage of people who are physically fit and who score very fit in financial fitness increase.

Financial Fitness

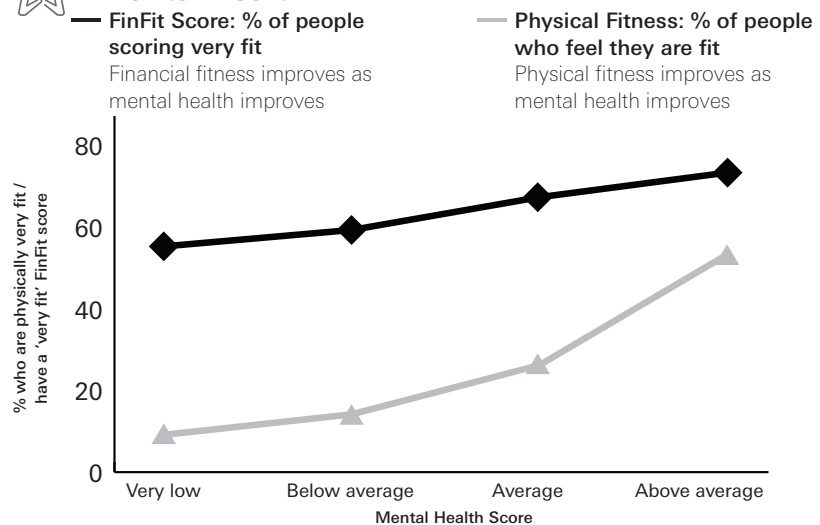
We also saw the same trend for financial fitness where the percentage of respondents who were physically fit and have above average mental health increases as financial fitness improves.



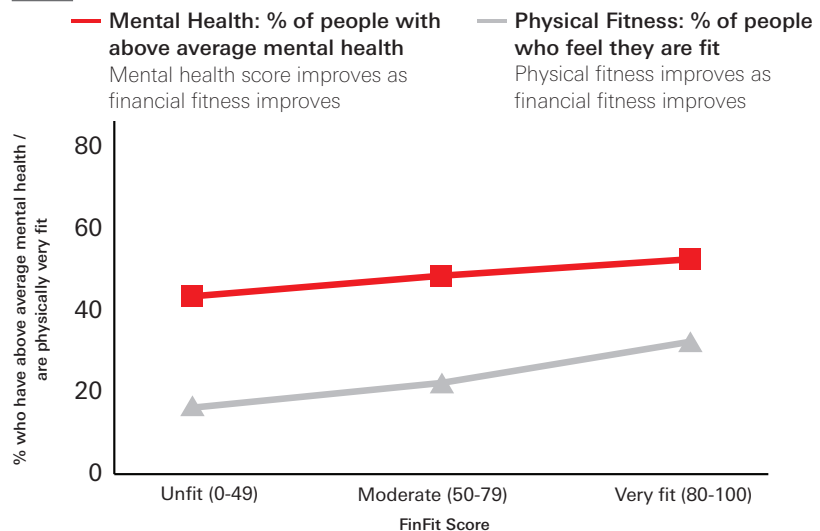
Physical fitness



Mental health



Financial fitness



Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes
FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following questions:

- How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?

² The strong correlation between physical fitness, mental health and financial fitness was proven through a Pearson's correlation test at 95% confidence level.

The better our physical fitness, the better our mental health and financial fitness

Of those in the UK who indicated they were physically fit, 83% had average or above average mental health and 37% scored very fit for financial fitness.

By comparison, just 47% of the physically unfit group had average or above average mental health and 20% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

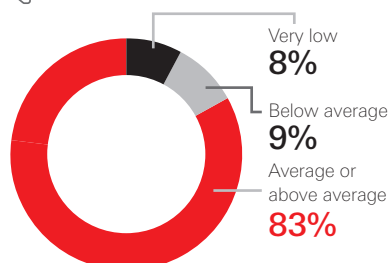
Answers to the following question:

- How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?

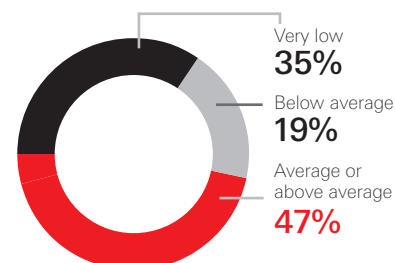
% figures denote levels of mental health and financial fitness of those who are **physically fit**



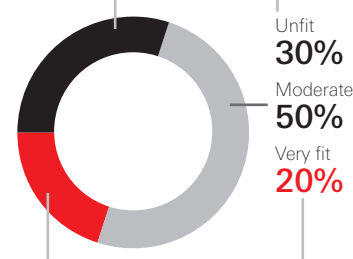
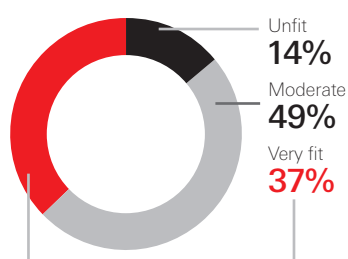
Mental health



% figures denote levels of mental health and financial fitness of those who are **physically unfit**



Financial fitness



People with above average mental health are more likely to be physically fit and financially fit

Of those in the UK with above average mental health, 53% reported that they were physically fit and 47% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Conversely, only 9% of people with very low mental health considered themselves physically fit and only 12% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

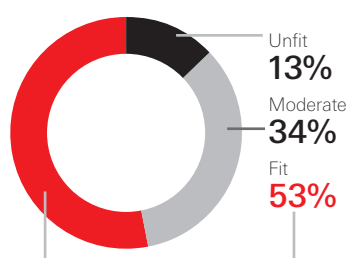
Answers to the following question:

- How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?

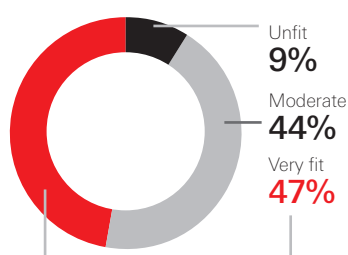
% figures denote levels of physical and financial fitness of those with **above average mental health**



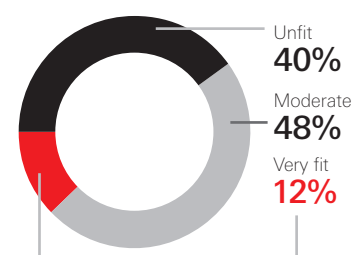
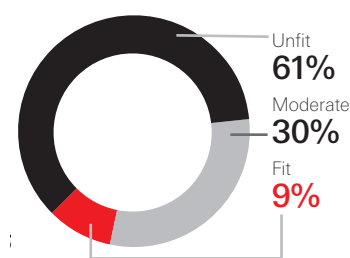
Physical fitness



Financial fitness



% figures denote levels of physical and financial fitness of those with **very low mental health**



Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2. Health is wealth, but having wealth doesn't necessarily mean being healthy

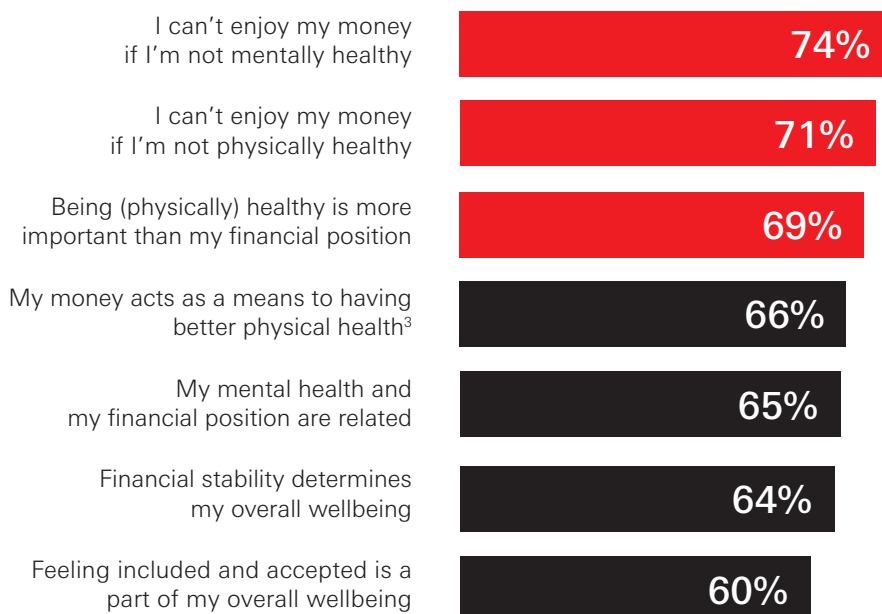
Wealth cannot be enjoyed without health

The majority of UK survey respondents believe that wealth cannot be enjoyed without being physically fit or mentally healthy.

74% of respondents agreed that they need to be mentally healthy and 71% indicated they need to be physically healthy to allow them to enjoy their wealth. 69% felt that being physically healthy is more important than their financial position.

66% felt that their money acts as a means to having better physical health.

When thinking about your definition of wellbeing, to what extent would you agree with the following statements:



³ Full statement: My money acts as a means to having better physical health e.g. gym membership, buying good quality food.

For the vast majority, household income does not determine a person's mental, physical and financial fitness

For the vast majority of people in the UK at annual household income levels between £25,000 and £84,999, income level does not make a significant difference to a person's physical, mental or financial fitness. Only marginal changes in physical fitness, mental health and financial fitness were observed across different levels of household income.

However, the way in which people in the UK manage their finances appears to be a bigger influence on their mental health with those who score very fit in financial fitness more able to deal with mentally stressful situations.

For example, we observed that people who feel they are able to overcome and recover from mentally stressful situations/events⁴, 57% scored very fit for financial fitness vs 25% scored unfit for financial fitness.

Annual household income	Physical fitness		Mental health		Financial fitness	
	Unfit	Fit	Very low	Above average	Unfit	Very fit
GBP 25,000 - 44,999	24%	22%	25%	20%	25%	20%
GBP 45,000 - 69,999	16%	19%	15%	16%	17%	18%
GBP 70,000 - 84,999	7%	12%	7%	10%	5%	9%

⁴ Respondents were asked: How would you rate your ability to adapt, overcome and recover from mentally stressful situations / events?

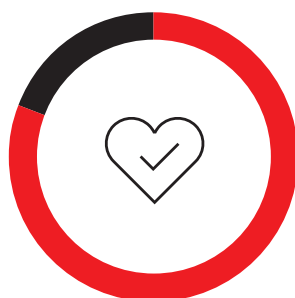
3. An emerging legacy of health and wealth

Passing on healthy lifestyle habits is becoming an important part of a person's legacy alongside their financial wealth

A significant finding of the study showed the emergence of a health legacy in the UK, challenging the traditional concept of an inheritance of wealth and property. With the enhanced focus on wellbeing, no doubt driven in part by COVID-19, people feel that their legacy is not only about the wealth they leave behind but healthy lifestyle habits too.

68% of all respondents agree that passing on healthy habits is becoming more important than passing on wealth. This health legacy phenomenon was prevalent across all age groups in the study but strongest amongst the 25 to 34 age group at 76%.

To what extent would you agree with the statement: "Passing on healthy habits e.g. exercise, eating well is becoming more important than passing on wealth to the next generation"?⁵



68%

agree that passing on healthy habits is becoming more important than passing on wealth






4. Start investing in health and wealth earlier

Exercise, maintain a healthy lifestyle and save more money rank highest in advice to our 15-year younger self

When survey participants in the UK were asked what advice they would give their 15-year younger self on physical fitness, mental health, family and money, the top three answers were: make it a habit to exercise (51%), maintain a healthy lifestyle (45%) and save more money (43%).

The differences in advice between those who are physically fit and those who are unfit indicate that even the physically fit think they should have exercised more (46%) but had fewer regrets about saving money (38%), whereas the unfit group prioritised both exercise (55%) and saving more (49%).

Looking back, what would you wish to have told yourself 15 years ago in terms of Physical Health, Mental Health, Family and Money?⁶

		Physical fitness	
		Unfit	Fit
 Make it a habit to exercise	51%	55%	46%
 Maintain a healthy lifestyle	45%	46%	44%
 Save more money	43%	49%	38%
 Consume more healthy food	38%	40%	37%
 Have more 'me time'	36%	37%	35%

⁵ Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-7 where 7 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree. The figures represent the percentage of people who completely agreed, agreed and somewhat agreed.

⁶ Respondents asked to select from 16 options.

5. Healthy habits start young

Healthy habits started at a young age can lead to better financial and physical fitness and better mental health (but it's never too late to start!)

The study also showed that people in the UK who played sport as a child were physically, mentally and financially fitter today than those who did not.

In the study findings, 75% of those who are physically fit, 72% of those with above average mental health and 74% who scored very fit for financial fitness, had a childhood sporting habit, which was 67% of the total respondents.

In comparison, 25% of those who are physically fit, 28% of those with above average mental health and 26% who scored very fit for financial fitness did not play sports regularly as a child, which was 33% of the total respondents.

Physical activity also had a big impact on financial and mental health in adulthood. 74% of those with above average mental health and 69% who scored very fit for

financial fitness, exercise three or more times a week.

Interestingly the data reveals that only 5% of people with above average mental health and 6% of those who scored very fit for financial fitness, rarely or never exercise.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes
FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following questions:

- ▶ How often do you exercise?
- ▶ How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?
- ▶ Did you habitually play sports in your childhood?



		Physical fitness		Mental health				Financial fitness		
	Total	Unfit	Fit	Very low	Below average	Average	Above average	Unfit	Moderate	Very fit
Childhood sporting habit	67%	58%	75%	57%	66%	69%	72%	58%	66%	74%
No childhood sporting habit	33%	42%	25%	43%	34%	31%	28%	42%	34%	26%
Exercise 3 times or more per week	57%	32%	84%	45%	52%	60%	74%	43%	57%	69%

Levels of physical fitness are also directly linked to happiness and satisfaction with quality of life. 69% of the respondents who are physically fit stated that they are very happy and 75% of the respondents who are physically fit stated that they are very satisfied with quality of life.⁷

		Physical fitness		
	Total	Unfit	Moderate	Fit
Happiness level: Very happy	43%	26%	42%	69%
Happiness level: Unhappy	22%	38%	16%	7%
Satisfaction with quality of life: Very satisfied	47%	28%	48%	75%
Satisfaction with quality of life: Dissatisfied	18%	34%	11%	4%

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes
FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following questions:

- ▶ How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?
- ▶ How satisfied are you with your quality of life?
- ▶ How would you rate your current happiness levels?

Answers on a rating scale 1 to 10:

(1-5 Unhappy/dissatisfied)
(6-7 Moderately happy/satisfied)
(8-10 Very happy/very satisfied)

⁷ Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-10 how satisfied they are with their quality of life and their current happiness levels and were grouped according to: very happy/very satisfied 8-10, moderately happy/satisfied 6-7, unhappy/dissatisfied 1-5.

6. Financial planning – a driver for wellbeing

Making small changes in long-term financial planning can make a positive impact on mental and physical health

The study highlighted significant differences in the level of mental wellbeing and physical fitness between the groups of those who do long-term financial planning and those who do not.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following questions:

- How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?
- The following sentences describe different people's habits of financial planning. Are they applicable to you?



Those who review their financial plan at least once a year

72%

Have average or above average mental health

27%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not review their financial plan at least once a year

50%

Have below average mental health

44%

Feel physically unfit



Those who have utilised financial products to increase the value of assets in the past six months

76%

Have average or above average mental health

33%

Feel physically fit

Those who have not utilised financial products to increase the value of assets in the past six months

40%

Have below average mental health

40%

Feel physically unfit



Those who have adequate protection for health care costs

75%

Have average or above average mental health

30%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not have adequate protection for health care costs

51%

Have below average mental health

47%

Feel physically unfit



Those who have a comprehensive retirement plan

77%

Have average or above average mental health

30%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not have a comprehensive retirement plan

48%

Have below average mental health

43%

Feel physically unfit



Those who ask financial advisers, insurance brokers and bank staff for professional advice whenever necessary

74%

Have average or above average mental health

29%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not ask financial advisers, insurance brokers and bank staff for professional advice whenever necessary

42%

Have below average mental health

38%

Feel physically unfit

7. The societal +Factor

Being physically, mentally and financially healthy doesn't just benefit the individual, it also has a bigger impact on the contribution to society at large

The study also uncovered a fascinating fourth dimension to holistic wellbeing – the societal +Factor. The findings revealed that people in the UK with above average physical, mental and financial fitness are more likely to contribute to society.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following questions:

- ▶ How physically fit do you consider yourself to be right now?
- ▶ What do you do to give back to society / help the community as well as your everyday purchases / habit impacting the environment?
- ▶ How frequently do you engage in the following activities?
 - Giving to charitable initiatives
 - Engage in charitable initiatives
 - Volunteer for community events
 - Opt for sustainable / ESG funds

89%

of those with above average mental health

88%

of those who feel physically fit

92%

of those who are financially very fit

give charitable donations (sometimes/often)

75%

of those with above average mental health

76%

of those who feel physically fit

78%

of those who are financially very fit

engage in charitable initiatives (sometimes/often)

60%

of those with above average mental health

59%

of those who feel physically fit

61%

of those who are financially very fit

volunteer in community events (sometimes/often)

56%

of those with above average mental health

61%

of those who feel physically fit

56%

of those who are financially very fit

opt for sustainable / ESG funds (sometimes/often)

20%

of those with very low mental health

18%

of those who feel physically unfit

25%

of those who are financially unfit

never give charitable donations

46%

of those with very low mental health

42%

of those who feel physically unfit

43%

of those who are financially unfit

never engage in charitable initiatives

66%

of those with very low mental health

62%

of those who feel physically unfit

60%

of those who are financially unfit

never volunteer in community events

66%

of those with very low mental health

66%

of those who feel physically unfit

63%

of those who are financially unfit

never opt for sustainable / ESG funds



8. COVID-19 driving behavioural change

The pandemic has changed our lifestyle and behaviours

The study, which was conducted in the UK between March and April 2021, also explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on lifestyle and behaviours. It has discovered that COVID-19 has become the major cause of stress. It is also influencing people to save more money and impacting how they are giving back to society.

The COVID-19 pandemic itself was rated as the highest driver of stress, followed by the stress of not seeing close friends and family due to lockdown. These pandemic-related factors along with mental health were the top three reasons given by 22% of respondents who said they were stressed.

When assessing life pre-COVID-19 and their current lifestyle, 24% of all respondents indicated that their behaviours around finances had changed, 24% said their behaviours around mental health had been impacted and 22% stated their behaviours around physical health had changed.

The changes in behaviours relating to finances driven by COVID-19 included an intention to save more money, being more conscious of daily spending, and undertaking better financial planning to ensure sufficient funds for the future.

There were also impacts on behaviours relating to giving back to society and helping the environment, with 17% saying their societal contributions and support had changed when comparing life pre-COVID-19 to their current lifestyle.⁸

Top three causes of stress



The COVID-19 pandemic



Not seeing close friends and family due to lockdown/the pandemic



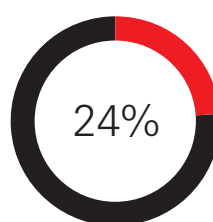
Mental health

Economic impact

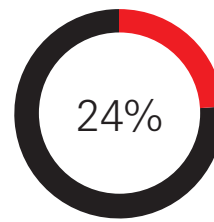


Always worry about the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

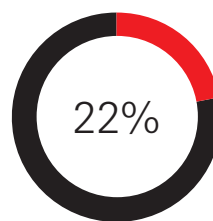
Changes to behaviours pre-COVID-19 to current lifestyle⁸



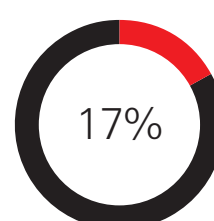
Behaviours around finances



Behaviours around mental health



Behaviours around physical health



Behaviours around giving back to society

⁸ Findings based on respondents' answers to the question: Thinking about life pre-Covid and your current lifestyle, to what extent has your behaviour changed in general?

The Research

In March and April 2021, a 20-minute online survey was conducted amongst a total of 10,659 people aged 18 to 80 across four global markets: Hong Kong (n=2,016), mainland China (n=3,560), Singapore (n=2,059) and the UK (n=3,024). The study sought to assess how physical health, mental wellbeing and financial fitness are interconnected to achieve holistic wellbeing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and to assess the drivers of employee wellbeing.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to study the interconnected relationship between the various aspects of overall wellbeing – physical, mental and financial. A series of scales were employed to study responses to each individual variable. The Likert scale of 1-10 where 1 is 'Not Fit' and 10 is 'Extremely Fit' allowed respondents to self-report their physical fitness as Unfit (1 to 5), Moderate (6 to 7) and Fit (8 to 10).

Mental wellbeing was tracked using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale© ("WEMWBS"), respondents were given a mental health score ('very low', 'below average', 'average', 'above average'). WEMWBS was developed by the Universities of Warwick, Edinburgh and Leeds in conjunction with NHS Health Scotland. ©University of Warwick, 2006, all rights reserved.

Financial fitness was measured using the FinFit methodology previously developed by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited <https://www.hsbc.com.hk/finfit/> through which respondents are evaluated on 15 questions across 4 areas including financial habits, financial knowledge, financial planning, financial security.

The research was conducted by Engine Group. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Disclaimer

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