

The HSBC Life +Factor Study

Key Global Findings



HSBC
Life

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The HSBC Life +Factor Study involved a study of 10,000+ people across Hong Kong, mainland China, Singapore and the UK. The study sought to gain insights into 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 and 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	Financial health enables physical and mental health, but it may be difficult to enjoy financial success without good physical or mental health
	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 among the top drivers 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

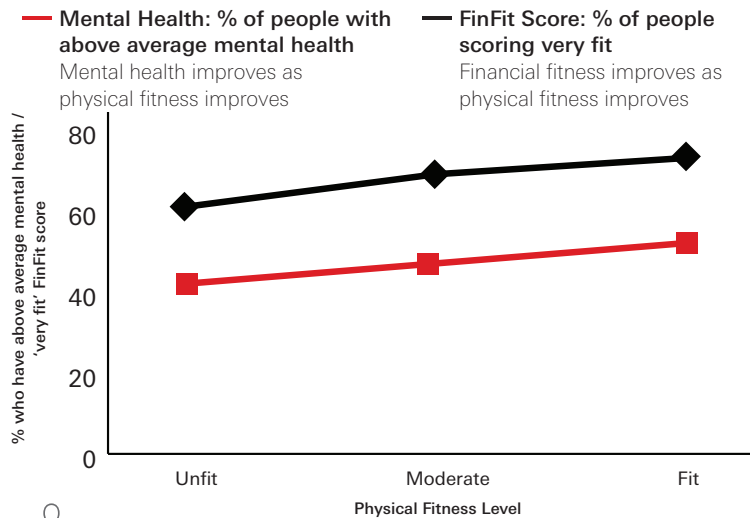
As mental health improves, both the percentage of people who are physically fit and who score very fit in financial fitness increase.

Financial Fitness

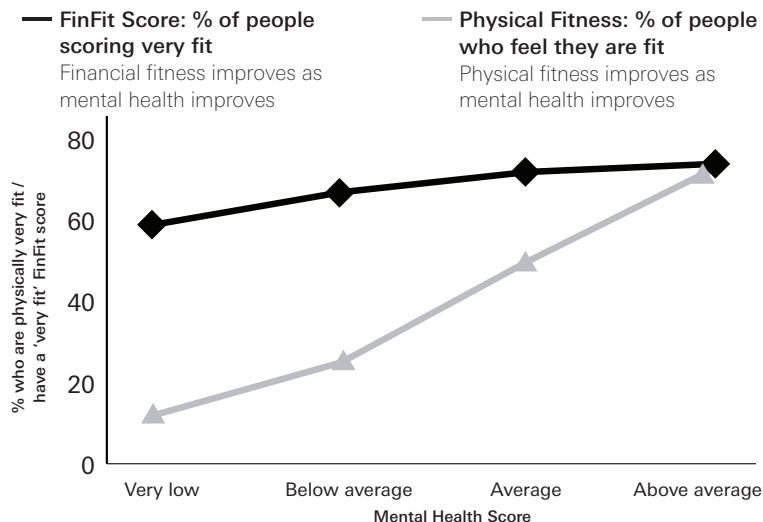
We also saw the same trend for financial fitness where the percentage of respondents who were physically fit and have above average mental health increases as financial fitness improves.



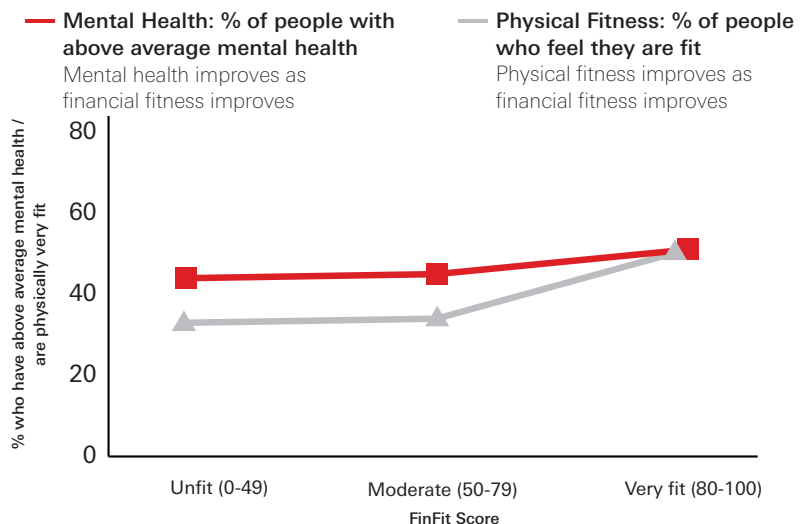
Physical fitness



Mental health



Financial fitness



Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

Answers to the following question:

- ▶ 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 who indicated they were physically fit, 85% had average or above average mental health and 52% scored very fit for financial fitness.

By comparison, just 38% of the physically unfit group had average or above average mental health and 24% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

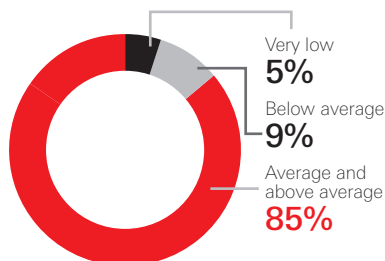
Answers to the following question:

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

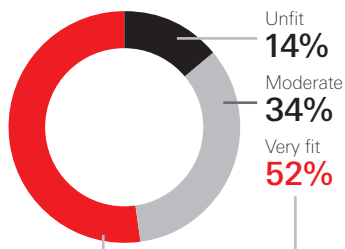
% figures denote levels of mental health and financial fitness of those who are **physically fit**



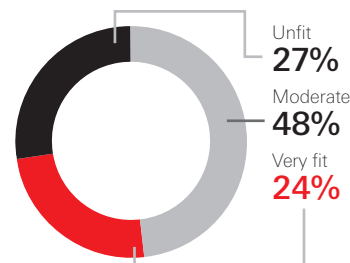
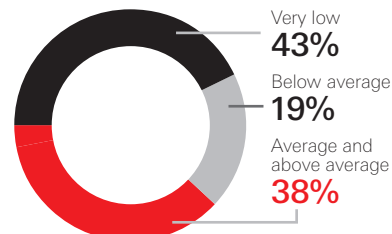
Mental health



Financial fitness



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



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

Of those with above average mental health, 73% reported that they were physically fit and 55% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Conversely, only 12% of people with very low mental health considered themselves physically fit and only 22% scored very fit for financial fitness.

Data based on:

Mental Health score attributes

FinFit score attributes

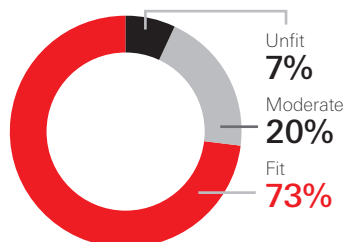
Answers to the following question:

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

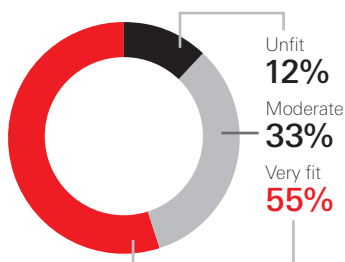
% figures denote levels of physical and financial fitness of those with **above average mental health**



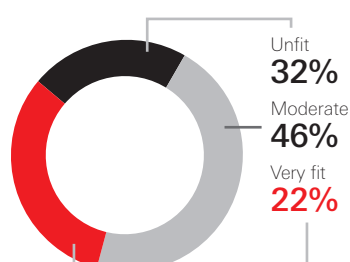
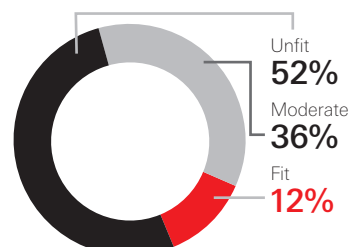
Physical fitness



Financial fitness



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



Percentages in the charts are rounded up to one decimal point

2. Health is wealth

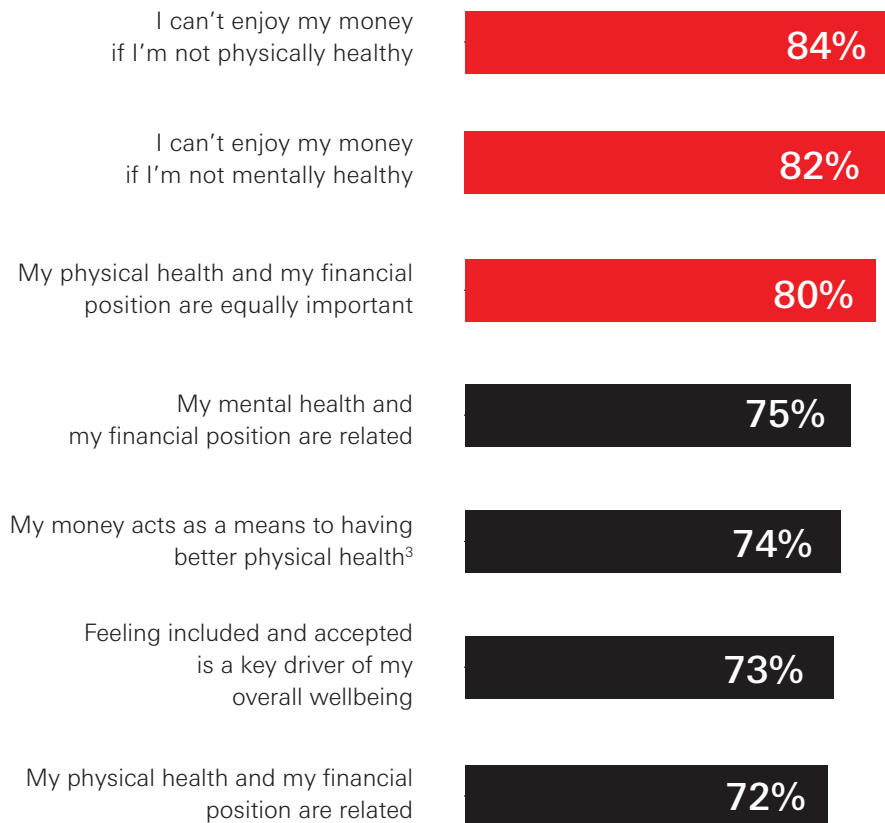
Wealth cannot be enjoyed without health

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

84% of respondents agreed that they needed to be physically healthy and 82% felt they needed to be mentally healthy, to allow them to enjoy their wealth. 80% felt that their physical health and financial position were equally important.

Additionally, 75% felt that their mental health and financial position were related.

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.

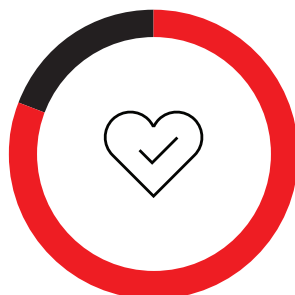
3. An emerging legacy of health and wealth

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, 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.

81%⁴ of all respondents agreed 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 84%.

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"?⁴



81%

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

⁴ 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.

4. Start investing in health and wealth earlier

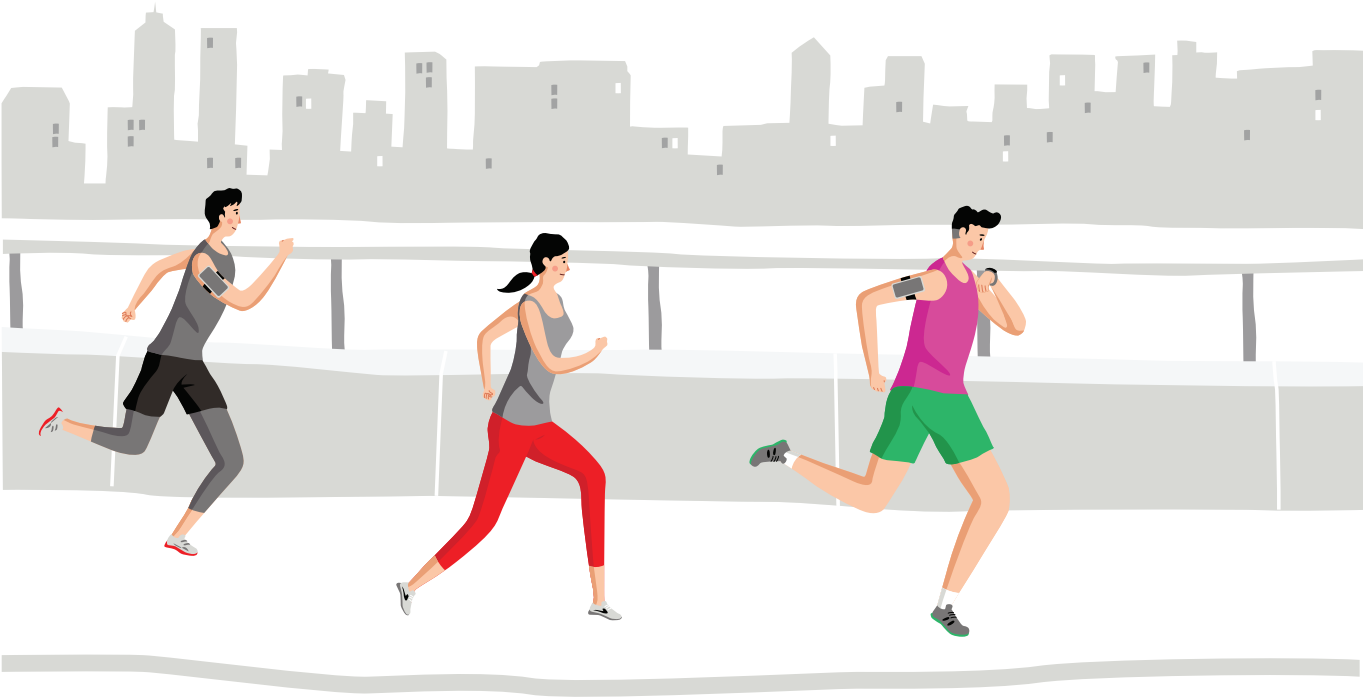
Exercise, maintain a healthy lifestyle and save more rank highest in advice to our 15-year younger self

When survey participants 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: to make it a habit to exercise (49%), maintain a healthy lifestyle (49%) and to save more money (44%).

The differences in advice between those who are physically fit and those who are unfit indicate that even those who are physically fit think they should have exercised more (44%) but had fewer regrets about saving money (36%), whereas the unfit group prioritised both exercise (56%) and saving more (55%).

Looking back, what would you wish to have told yourself 15 years ago in terms of Physical Health, Mental Health, Family and Money?⁵

		Physical fitness	
		Unfit	Fit
 Make it a habit to exercise	49%	56%	44%
 Maintain a healthy lifestyle	49%	50%	49%
 Save more money	44%	55%	36%
 Consume more healthy food	43%	41%	44%
 Spend more time with my family	34%	37%	33%



⁵ 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 who played sport as a child were physically, mentally and financially fitter today than those who did not.

In the study findings, 84% of those who are physically fit, 83% of those with

above average mental health and 83% of those who scored very fit for financial fitness, had a childhood sporting habit, which was 74% of the total respondents. In comparison, 16% of those who are physically fit, 17% of those with above average mental health and 17% of those who scored very fit for financial fitness, did not play sports regularly as a child, which was 26% of the total respondents.

Physical activity also had a big impact on financial and mental health in adulthood. 78% of those with above average mental health and 67% of those who scored very fit for financial fitness, exercise three or more times a week.

Interestingly the data reveals that only 3% of people with above average mental health and 3% 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?



	Total	Physical fitness		Mental health				Financial fitness		
		Unfit	Fit	Very low	Below average	Average	Above average	Unfit	Moderate	Very fit
Childhood sporting habit	74%	58%	84%	59%	70%	79%	83%	58%	72%	83%
No childhood sporting habit	26%	42%	16%	41%	30%	21%	17%	42%	28%	17%
Exercise 3 times or more per week	57%	27%	77%	33%	49%	63%	78%	43%	52%	67%

Levels of physical fitness are also directly linked to happiness and satisfaction with quality of life. 76% of the respondents who are physically fit stated that they are very happy and 80% of the respondents who are physically fit stated that they are very satisfied with quality of life.⁶

	Total	Physical fitness		
		Unfit	Moderate	Fit
Happiness level: Very happy	49%	19%	35%	76%
Happiness level: Unhappy	17%	47%	15%	4%
Satisfaction with quality of life: Very satisfied	52%	19%	39%	80%
Satisfaction with quality of life: Dissatisfied	14%	44%	10%	2%

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)

⁶ 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

73%

Have average or above average mental health

46%

Feel physically fit

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

46%

Have below average mental health

31%

Feel physically unfit



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

71%

Have average or above average mental health

48%

Feel physically fit

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

39%

Have below average mental health

31%

Feel physically unfit



Those who have adequate protection for health care costs

74%

Have average or above average mental health

47%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not have adequate protection for health care costs

49%

Have below average mental health

34%

Feel physically unfit



Those who have a comprehensive retirement plan

77%

Have average or above average mental health

51%

Feel physically fit

Those who do not have a comprehensive retirement plan

47%

Have below average mental health

31%

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

50%

Feel physically fit

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

43%

Have below average mental health

30%

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 with above average physical, mental and financial health 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

93%

of those with above average mental health

90%

of those who feel physically fit

91%

of those who are financially very fit

give charitable donations (sometimes/often)



25%

of those with very low mental health

21%

of those who feel physically unfit

26%

of those who are financially unfit

never give charitable donations

86%

of those with above average mental health

90%

of those who feel physically fit

86%

of those who are financially very fit

engage in charitable initiatives (sometimes/often)



42%

of those with very low mental health

21%

of those who feel physically unfit

38%

of those who are financially unfit

never engage in charitable initiatives

80%

of those with above average mental health

81%

of those who feel physically fit

78%

of those who are financially very fit

volunteer in community events (sometimes/often)



57%

of those with very low mental health

56%

of those who feel physically unfit

47%

of those who are financially unfit

never volunteer in community events

78%

of those with above average mental health

81%

of those who feel physically fit

76%

of those who are financially very fit

opt for sustainable / ESG funds (sometimes/often)



57%

of those with very low mental health

59%

of those who feel physically unfit

49%

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

The COVID-19 pandemic was rated as the top driver of stress, alongside employment status and environment, by 32% of the respondents who said they were stressed.

More than a quarter (28%) quoted the economic effects of COVID-19 as a financial concern. One in five felt that the pandemic and the resulting gym closures were a barrier to their physical fitness.

When assessing life pre-COVID-19 and their current lifestyle, 28% of all respondents indicated that their behaviours around finances have changed, whereas 26% said that their behaviours around mental health and physical health have been impacted.

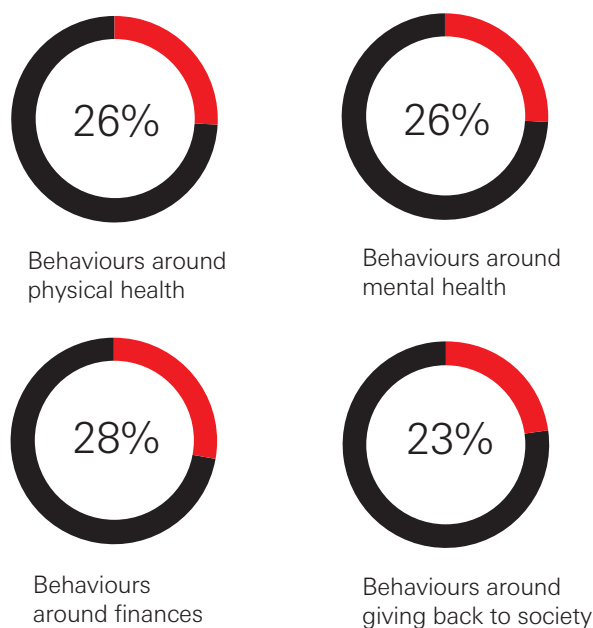
The changes in behaviours relating to finances driven by COVID-19 included an intention to save more money, being more conscious of daily spending, and undertaking better financial planning to ensure sufficient funds for the future.

There were also impacts on behaviours relating to giving back to society and helping the environment, with 23% saying their societal contributions and support had changed when comparing life pre-COVID-19 to their current lifestyle.

Three major reasons for stress



Changes to behaviours pre-COVID-19 to current lifestyle⁷



Economic impact



⁷ 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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