

# THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME

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## Work Life Balance Survey of the Hong Kong Working Population 2010

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### Final Report

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## *I. Preamble*

- 1.1 The Public Opinion Programme (POP) was established in June 1991 to collect and study public opinion on topics which could be of interest to academics, journalists, policy-makers, and the general public. POP was at first under the Social Sciences Research Centre, a unit under the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, it was transferred to the Journalism and Media Studies Centre in the University of Hong Kong in May 2000. In January 2002, it was transferred back to the Faculty of Social Sciences in the University of Hong Kong. Since its establishment, POP has been providing quality survey services to a wide range of public and private organizations, on condition that they allow the POP Team to design and conduct the research independently, and to bear the final responsibilities. POP also insists that the data collected should be open for public consumption in the long run.
  
- 1.2 In March 2006, the Community Business Limited commissioned POP for the first time to conduct a public opinion poll entitled “Work Life Balance Survey of the Hong Kong Working Population 2006”. The primary objective of the survey was to gauge the current status of Hong Kong people’s work and personal life, their satisfaction of work-life balance as well as their expectation of a balanced life. The survey was repeated every year in 2007, 2008 and 2009 to track changes in the local working population over time. In June 2010, the Community Business Limited again commissioned POP, for the fifth time, to conduct this “Work Life Balance Survey” to serve exactly the same purpose, also to gauge the working people’s opinion and sentiment in times of recovery from the financial tsunami.
  
- 1.3 The research instrument used in this study was designed entirely by the POP Team after consulting Community Business Limited, and the majority of questions were repeated from the last survey for direct comparison. Fieldwork operations and data analysis were also conducted independently by the POP Team, without interference from any outside party. In other words, POP was given full autonomy to design and conduct the survey, and POP would take full responsibility for all the findings reported herewith.

## II. Research Design

- 2.1 This was a random telephone survey conducted by telephone interviewers under close supervision. To minimize sampling bias, telephone numbers were first drawn randomly from the residential telephone directories as “seed numbers”, from which another set of numbers was generated using the “plus/minus one/two” method, in order to capture the unlisted numbers. Duplicated numbers were then filtered, and the remaining numbers were mixed in random order to produce the final telephone sample.
- 2.2 The target population of this survey was **full time workers of age 15 or above who spoke Cantonese, English or Mandarin**, and “full time workers” was defined as those who worked at least 5 days a week, or total working time not less than 40 hours a week. When telephone contact was successfully established with a target household, one person of age 15 or above currently working full time was selected. If more than one subject had been available, selection was made using the “next birthday rule” which selected the person who had his/her birthday next.
- 2.3 Telephone interviews were conducted during the period of **20 July to 3 August, 2010**. A total of **1,009 full time workers** of age 15 or above were successfully interviewed. The proportion between white collars and blue collars in this sample was around 70:30 (713 and 265 cases respectively), which was a natural distribution. Had the number of white collar subjects fallen significantly below the expected level, i.e. at least 60%, a booster sampling method would have been used at the final stage of the fieldwork to achieve a minimum quota of 600 cases. This standby procedure was not triggered. As shown from the calculation in Appendix 1, the overall effective response rate of this survey was **74.3%** (Table 1), and the standard sampling error for percentages based on this sample was less than 1.6 percentage points. In other words, the sampling error for all percentages using the total sample was less than plus/minus 3.1 percentage points at 95% confidence level.
- 2.4 As shown in Table 2 of Appendix 1, among the 33,355 telephone numbers sampled for the survey, 13,707 were confirmed to be ineligible, among them 1,071 were fax or data lines, 10,007 were invalid telephone numbers, 203 were call-forwarding numbers, while another 886 were non-residential numbers. Besides, 58 of them were invalidated due to special technological reasons, while 1,482 cases were voided because target respondents were unavailable at the numbers provided.

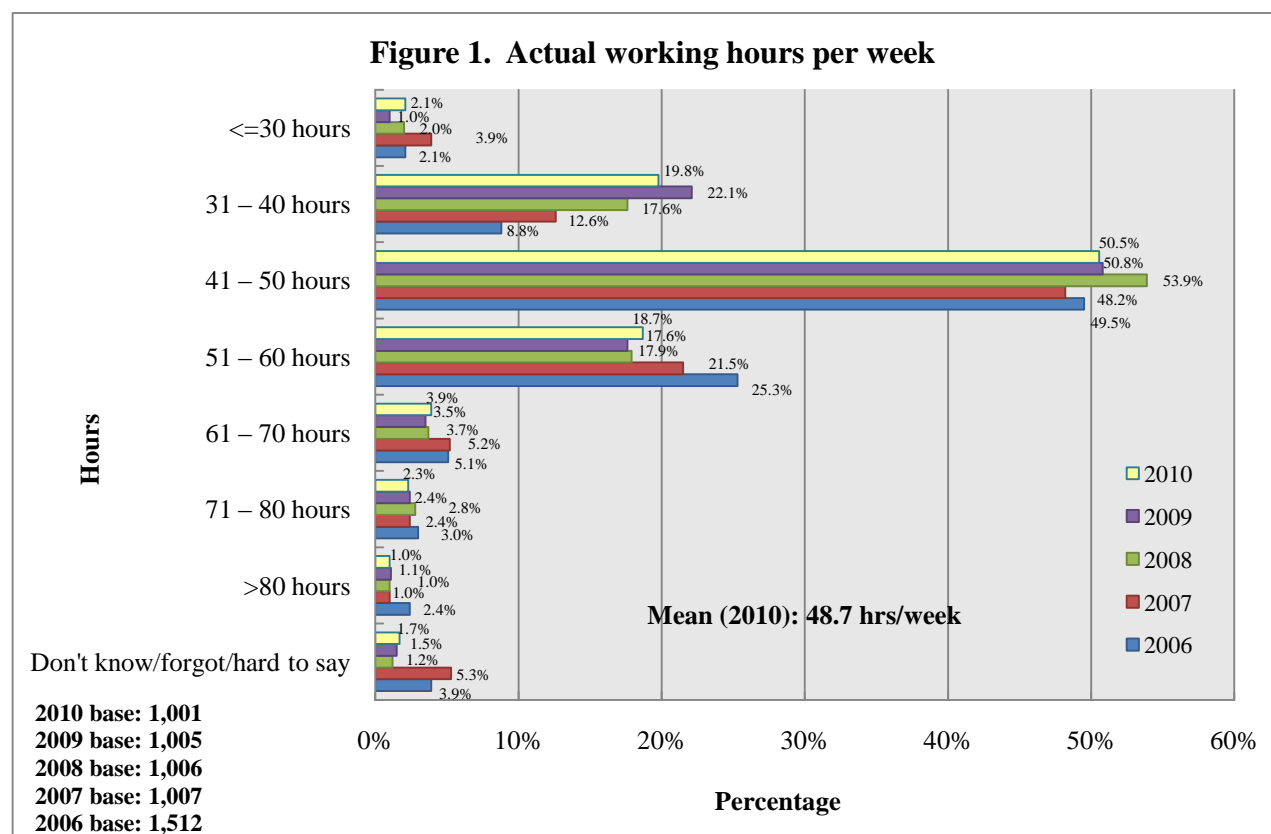
- 2.5 Meanwhile, a total of 8,406 telephone numbers were invalidated before the research team could confirm their eligibility. Among them 653 were busy lines and 6,475 were no-answer calls after making a maximum of 5 times' recalls. 291 cases were diverted to answering devices while another 115 were blocked. Moreover, 189 cases were treated as unsuccessful because of language problems, while 669 interviews were terminated before the screening question and 14 cases were voided for other problems.
- 2.6 On the other hand, 10,233 cases failed to complete the interview. Among them 32 rejected the interview immediately after their eligibility was confirmed, 10,113 were unfinished cases with appointment dates beyond the end of fieldwork period. Besides, 35 cases were incomplete due to unexpected termination of interviews, 53 were classified as miscellaneous due to other non-contact problems, and the remaining 1,009 were successful cases (Table 2).
- 2.7 Statistical tests of “difference-of-proportions” and “difference-of-means” have been applied whenever applicable, in order to check for significant differences between groups. Figures marked with double asterisks (\*\*) indicated that the variation has been tested to be statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level, whereas those with single asterisk (\*) denoted statistical significance at  $p < 0.05$  level.
- 2.8 Descriptions of findings marked with a spike (^) are subject to a sub-sample size less than 30, which is very small. It should be noted that the smaller the sample size, the larger the sampling error. Hence, such findings should be treated as rough reference only.

### III. Research Findings

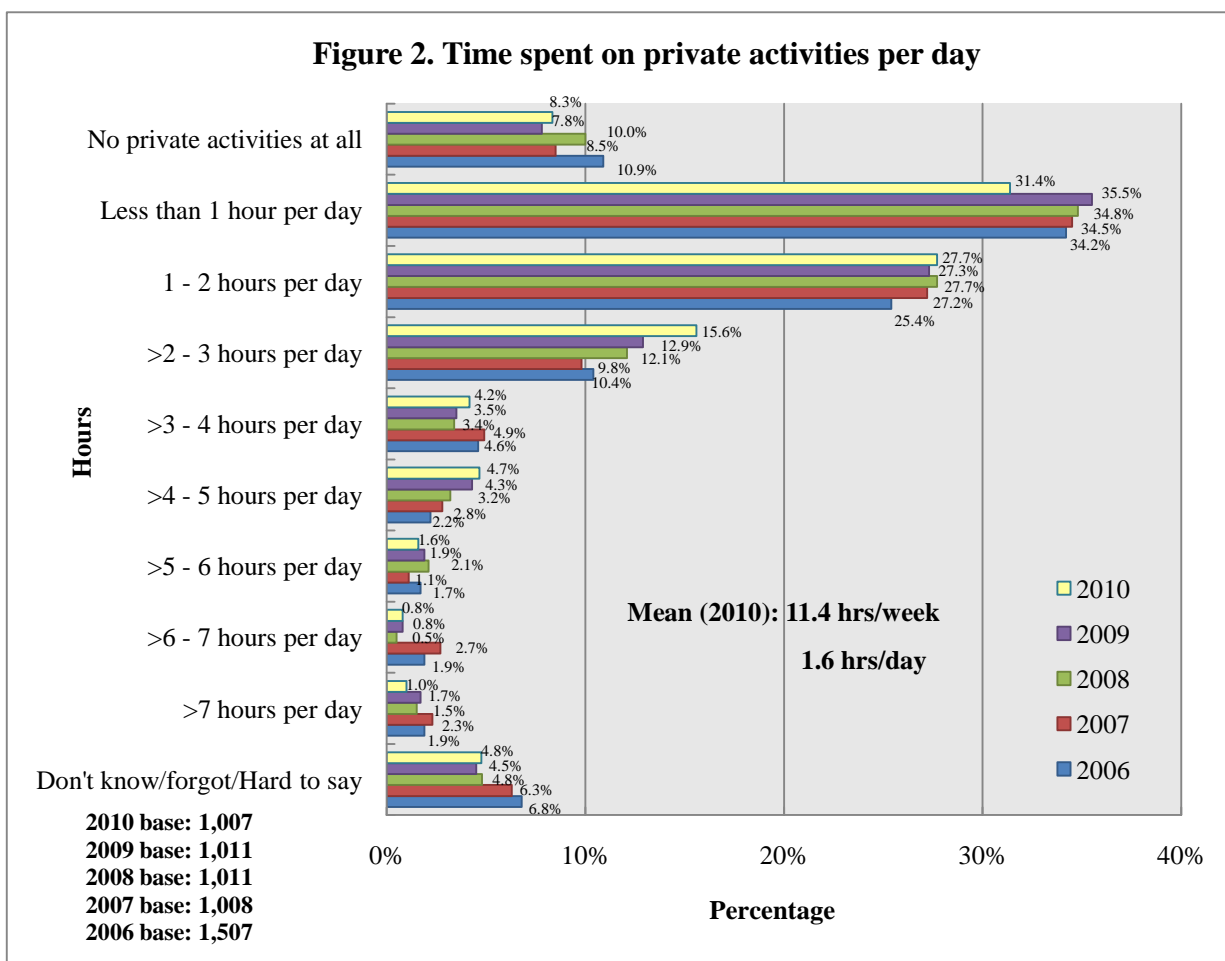
The questionnaire of this year's survey comprised two major topics, namely, "respondents' work and living patterns" and "problems of work-life balance and desired solutions", ended by mapping some standard demographics of the respondents. The key findings are summarized below under these two main topics. All frequency tables referred to in this section can be found in Appendix 2.

#### (A) Respondents' Work and Living Patterns

3.1 In order to understand respondents' current working status, the survey began by asking their actual working hours per week in the past month. Results showed that the majority of 51% said they worked for "41-50 hours" in a week while a respective of 20% and 19% said "31-40 hours" and "51-60 hours". When compared to findings of 2009, the respondents' working hours have remained more or less the same, only the change for the answer "30 hours or less" (from 2009's 1% to 2010's 2%) is tested to be statistically significant,  $p < 0.05$ . Of the 984 respondents who gave a definite answer to this question, the mean actual working time was 48.7 hours per week. From 2006 to 2009, a downward trend in the number of working hours was observed (2006: 51.3 hrs; 2007: 49.2 hrs; 2008: 48.8 hrs; 2009: 48.4 hrs) but rebounded slightly in this year's survey (48.7 hrs). This number has continued to exceed the standard set by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which was 40 hours, across the 5 years (Table 3 and Figure 1).

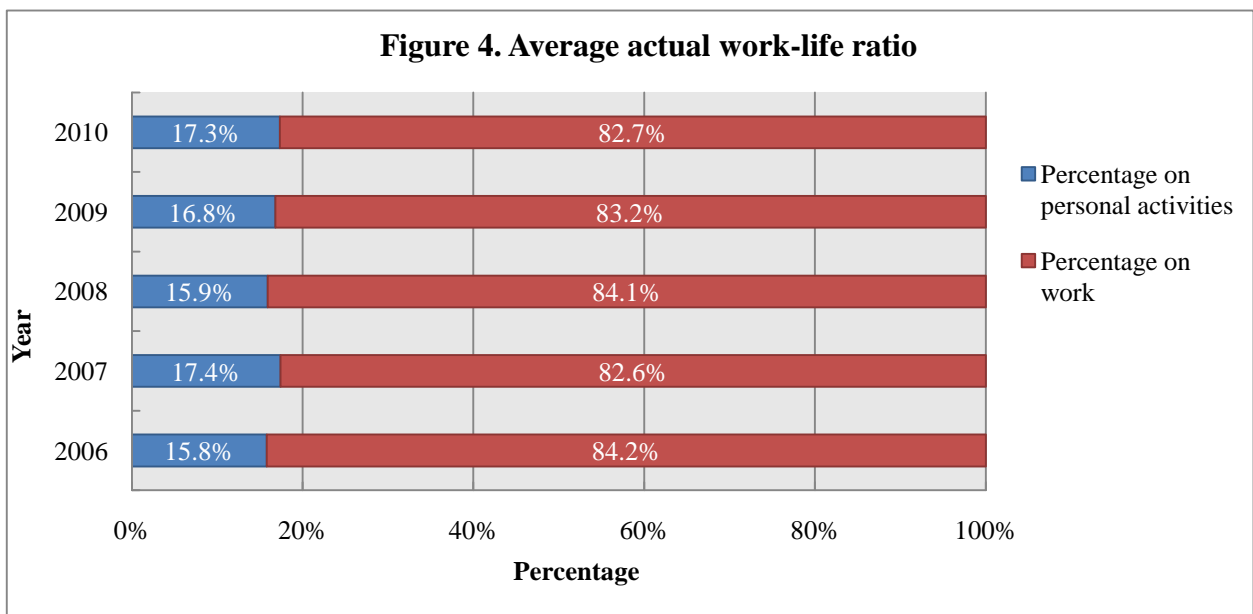
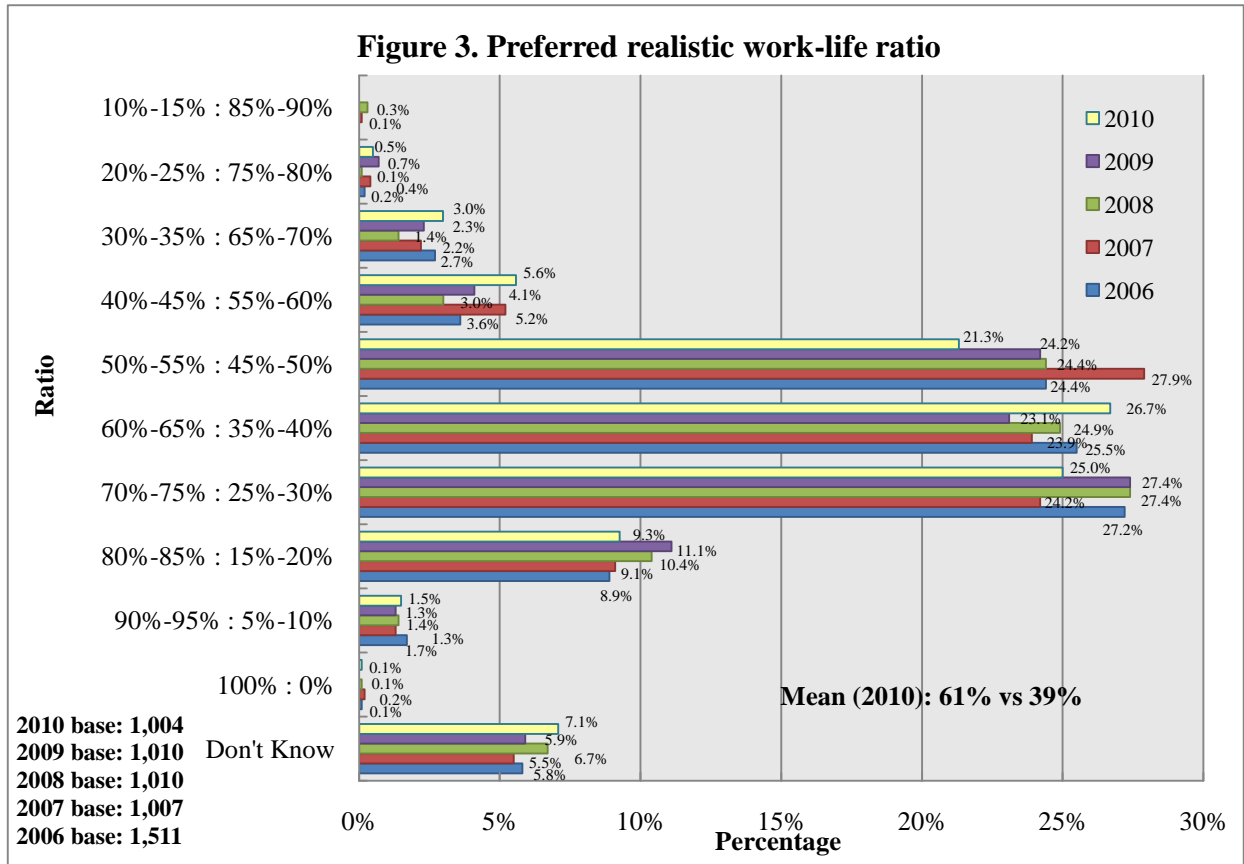


3.2 When it comes to the amount of time spent on their personal or private activities, such as meeting friends and engaging in activities for leisure like sports and traveling, the results also remained highly stable. In this survey, 31% claimed that they spent “less than 1 hour a day” on their personal activities, while 28% could afford “1-2 hours a day” and 16% could spare “>2-3 hours a day”. Taking an average, each respondent spent 11.4 hours a week (or 1.6 hours a day) on their personal or private activities. Only the decrease for the answer “less than 1 hour a day” (from 2009’s 36% to 2010’s 31%) is proved to be statistically significant,  $p < 0.05$ . Despite the slight improvement from last year (11.2 hours on average), personal time and leisure activities seems to remain a luxury to most full time workers in Hong Kong (Table 4 and Figure 2).



3.3 Regardless of their current status, the survey continued to ask the respondents what would be their preferred but realistic ratio between their working and personal time. This year’s results found that, the three most popular work-life ratios remained to be “60-65% to 35-40%” (3<sup>rd</sup> rank in 2009), “70-75% to 25-30%” (1<sup>st</sup> rank in 2009) and “50-55% to 45-50%” (2<sup>nd</sup> rank in 2009). The respective percentages of these items were 27%, 25% and 21% (Table 5 and Figure 3). As for the average ratio among 933 workers, the ideal distribution between work and life was **61:39** which was highly comparable to last year’s

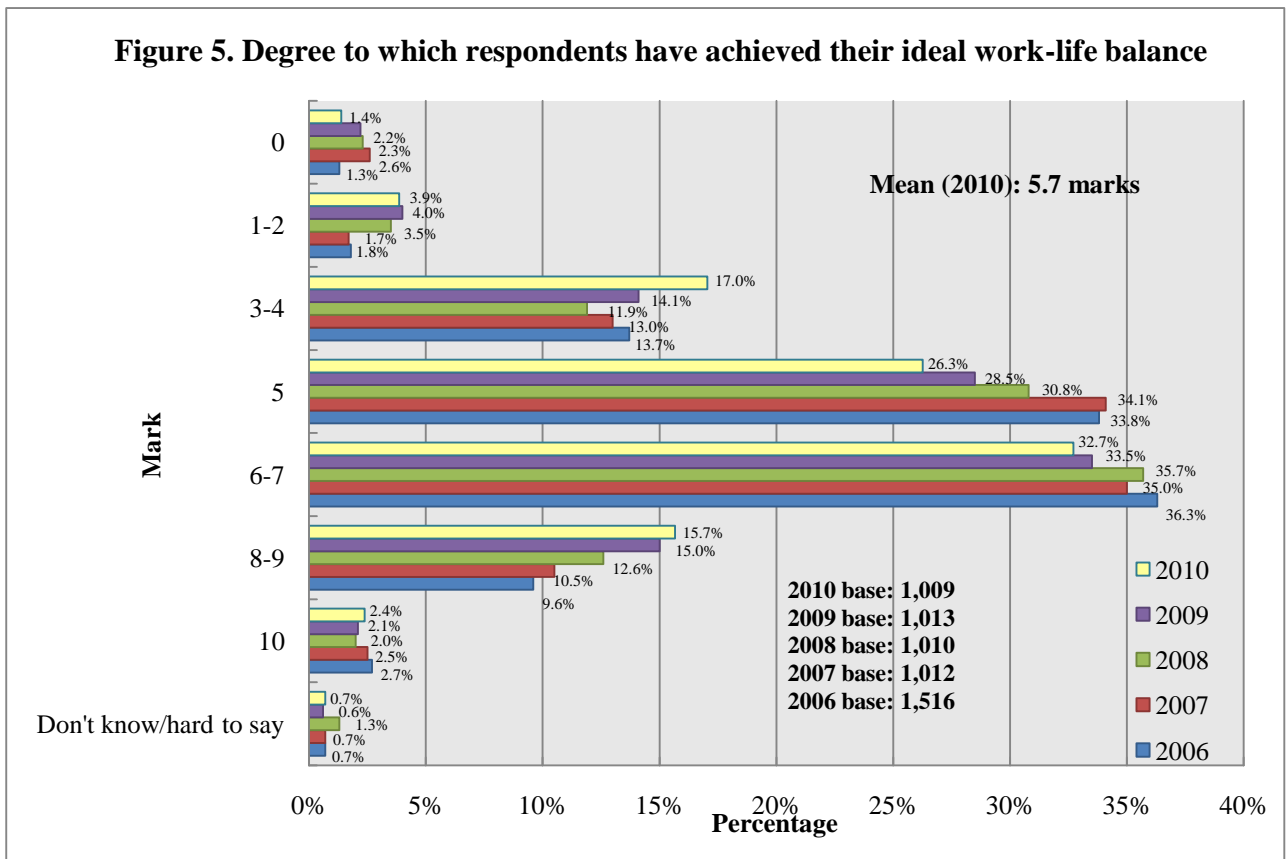
62:38 (Table 6). When compared with the actual ratio which was **83:17** (calculated by dividing the actual working hours reported in Q1 by their leisure hours in Q2), a remarkable discrepancy continued to exist and no significant improvement was observed in this regard ever since the start of this survey in 2006 (Table 7 and Figure 4).





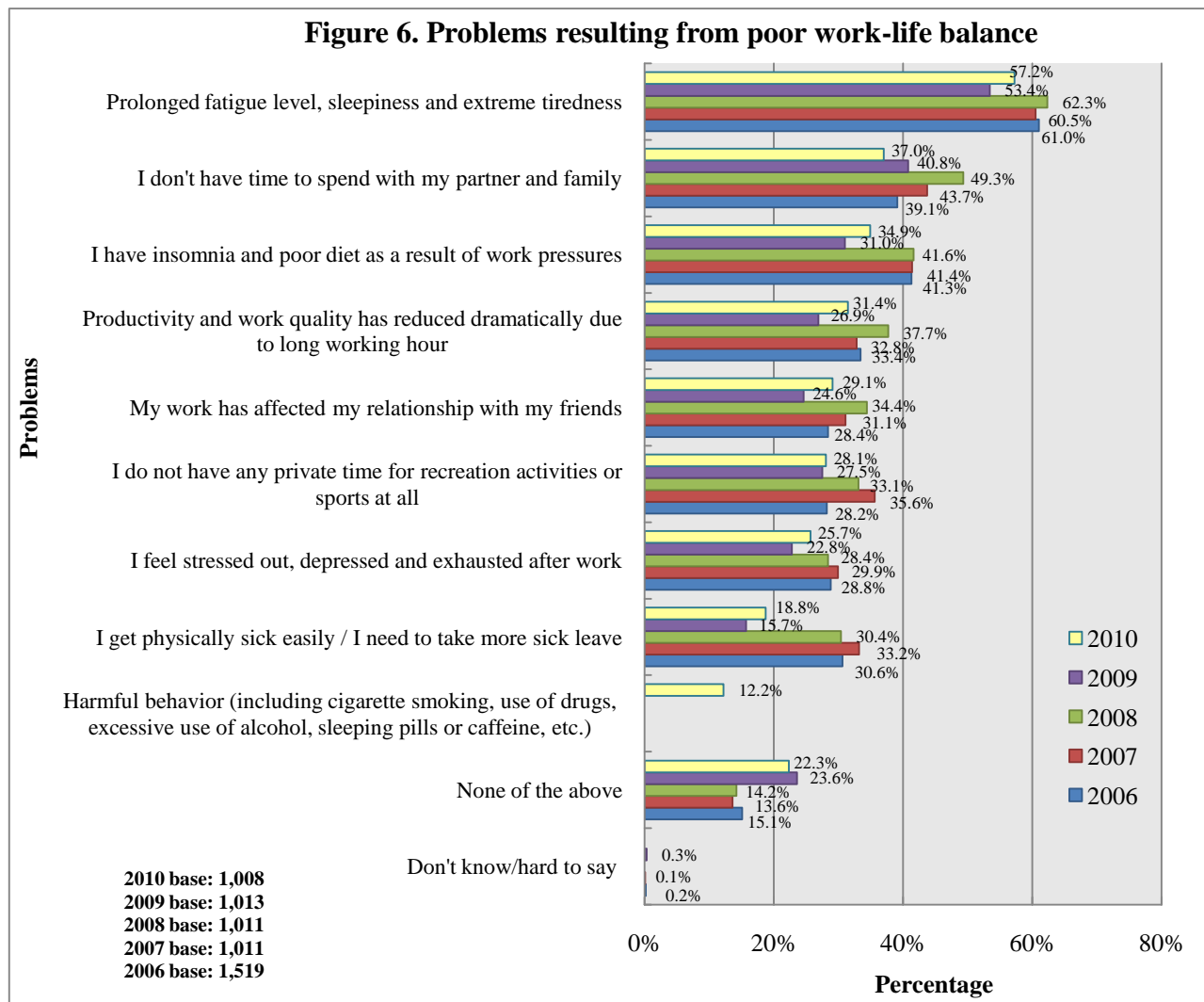
**(B) Problems of Work-Life Balance and Desired Solutions**

3.4 The next section of the questionnaire focused on the problems faced by the full time workers in Hong Kong as well as their work-life balance and their desired solutions to tackle the problems, if any. By use of a rating scale of 0-10, the survey measured how far the respondents thought they had achieved in terms of an ideal work-life balance. The higher the score, the closer they were to their ideal situation. Of the total sample, only 1% gave “0 mark” this year, 21% “1-4 marks” while 26% opted for the middle ground “5 marks”. The majority of 48% chose “6-9 marks” whilst 2% claimed they had already achieved the ideal balance by giving “10 marks”. Excluding those who said “don’t know/hard to say”, the mean score obtained remained at 5.7 marks, which had not changed much over the past 5 years (Table 8 and Figure 5).



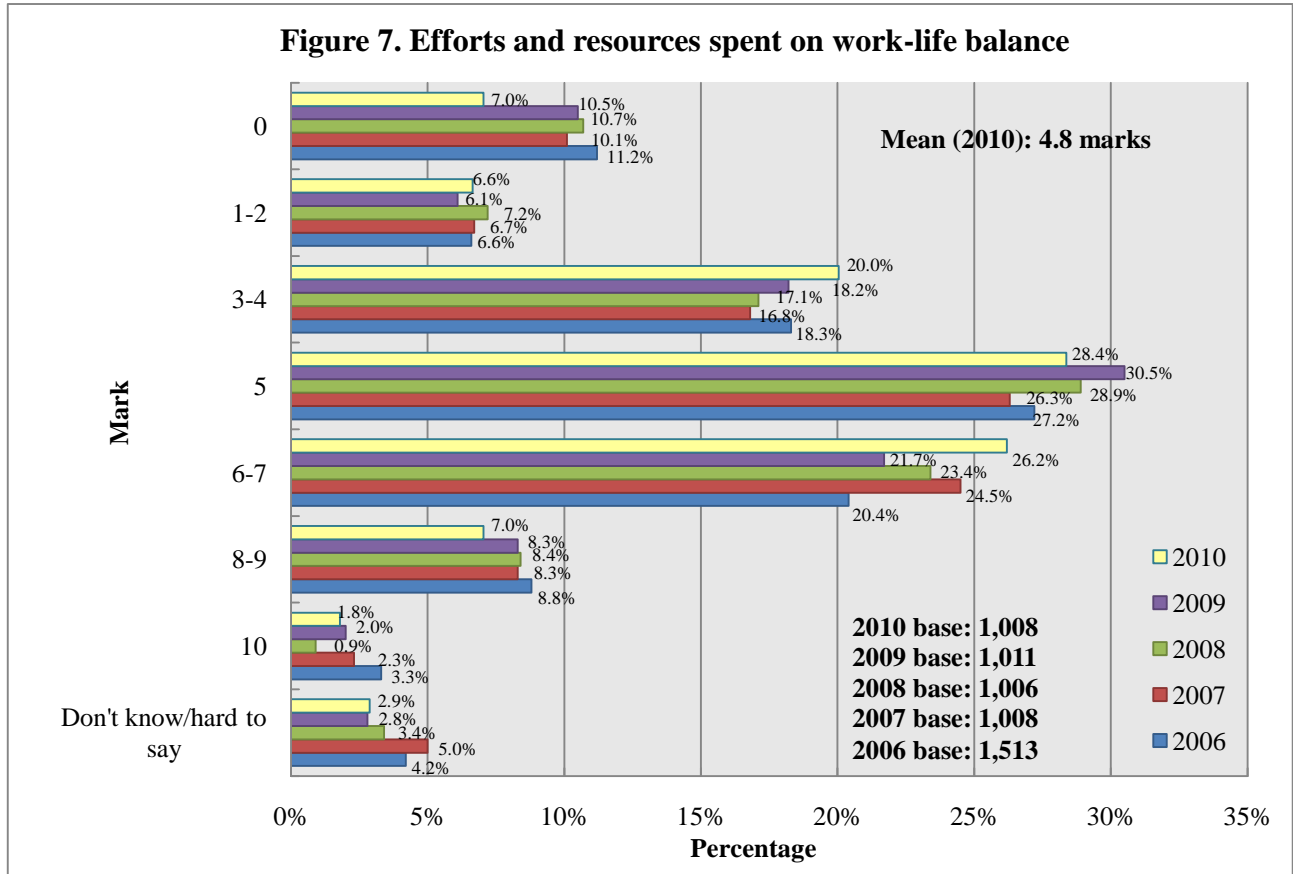
3.5 Had the local working class ever encountered any physical and social disturbances due to a disturbed work-life balance in the past 12 months? The 3 most commonly encountered problems remained to be “prolonged fatigue and extreme tiredness” (57%), “insufficient time with partner and family” (37%) and “insomnia and poor diet caused by work pressure” (35%). Meanwhile, “reduced productivity and work quality” (31%), “relationship with friends got affected” (29%), “no private time for recreation activities or sports” (28%) and “feeling stressed out and depressed after work” (26%) formed the next tier whereas the

change of the first two issues are tested to be statistically significant,  $p < 0.05$ . The number of respondents who did not encounter any of these problems in the past 12 months registered at 22% (Table 9 and Figure 6).

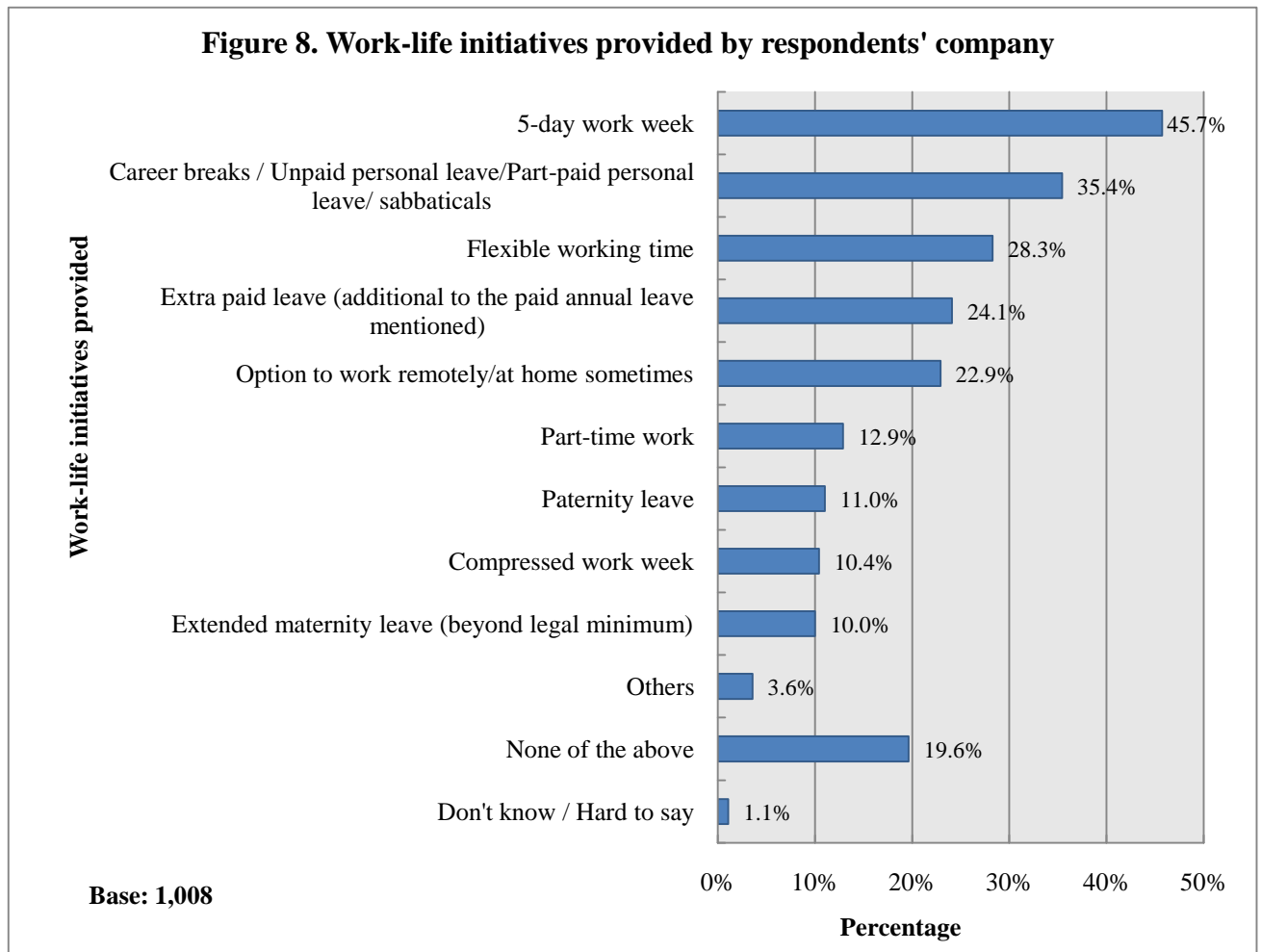


Note: Findings of 2010 can only be compared directly with those of 2009 because prior to 2009 survey, the question wordings and answer items were slightly different.

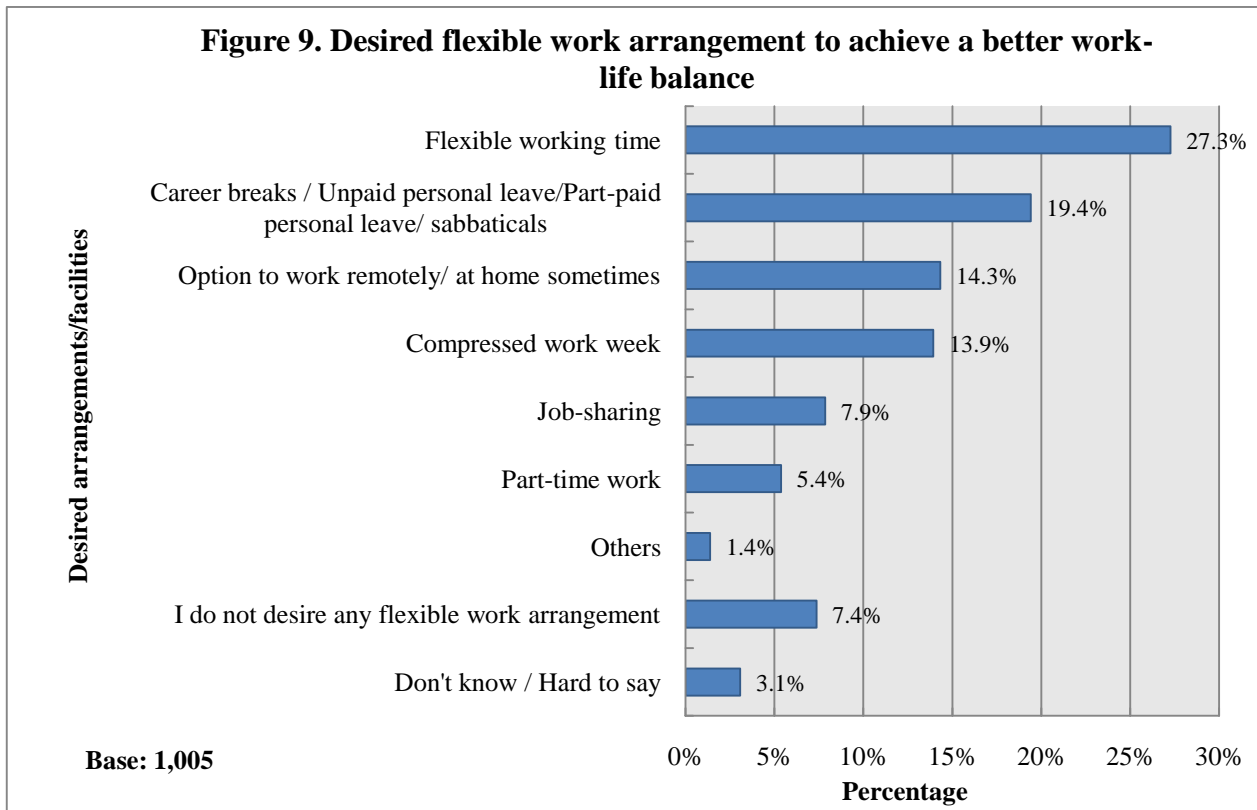
3.6 By means of a 0-10 rating scale, the survey attempted to measure the efforts and resources paid by respondents' workplace/boss to promote work-life balance, with 0 representing no effort being made, 10 all possible efforts made and 5 being half-half. Results of this year showed that 7% of the working sample gave "0 mark" to their workplace/boss, which has decreased significantly from last year's 11% while 27% chose "1-4 marks". Another 28% opted for a mid-point of "5 marks" and 33% appraised their workplace/boss positively by giving "6-9 marks". Those who gave a full mark (10 marks) accounted for 2% only. Overall speaking, of the 979 valid raters, the mean score obtained by the workplace/boss was 4.8 marks, which has been fluctuating narrowly within the sampling errors over the past 5 years (Table 10 and Figure 7).



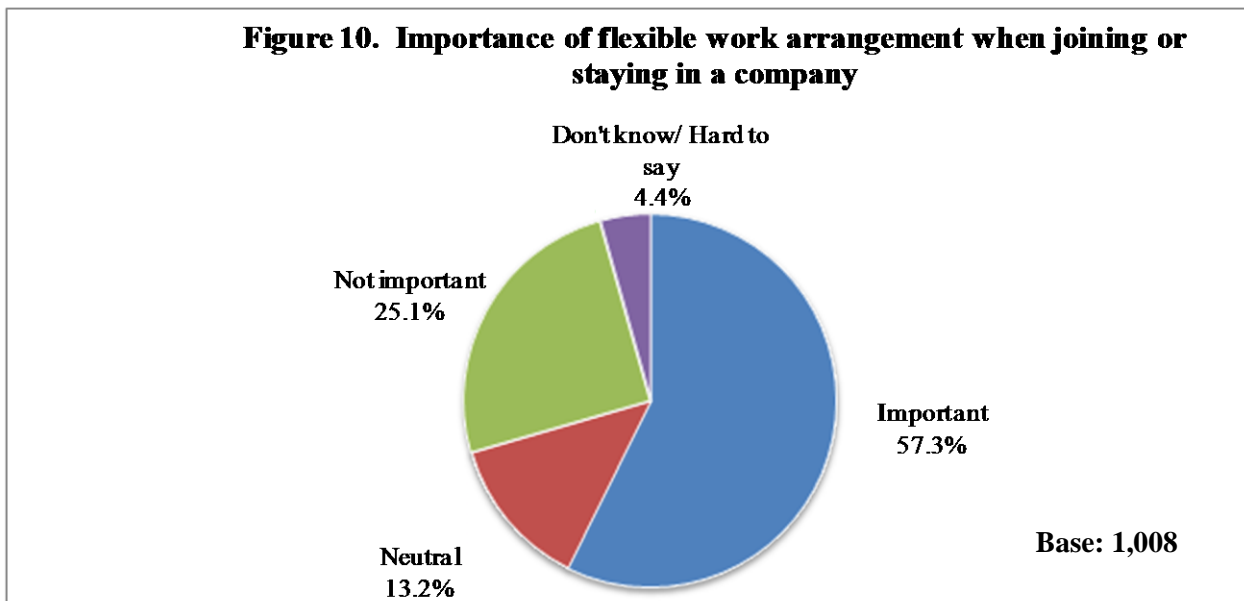
3.7 A new question has been added to gauge what work-life initiatives the local companies had offered to their staff. Results revealed that “5-day work week” (46%) topped the list, followed by “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (35%). Then, “flexible working time” (28%), “extra paid leave” (24%) and “option to work remotely/ at home sometimes” (23%) formed the next tier with percentages ranging from 23% to 28%. Other work-life measures currently available included “part-time work”, “paternity leave”, “compressed work week” and “extended maternity leave” with corresponding percentages of 13%, 11%, 10% and 10%. In the mean time, one-fifth of the sample said their company provided “none” of these work-life initiatives (20%, Table 11 and Figure 8).



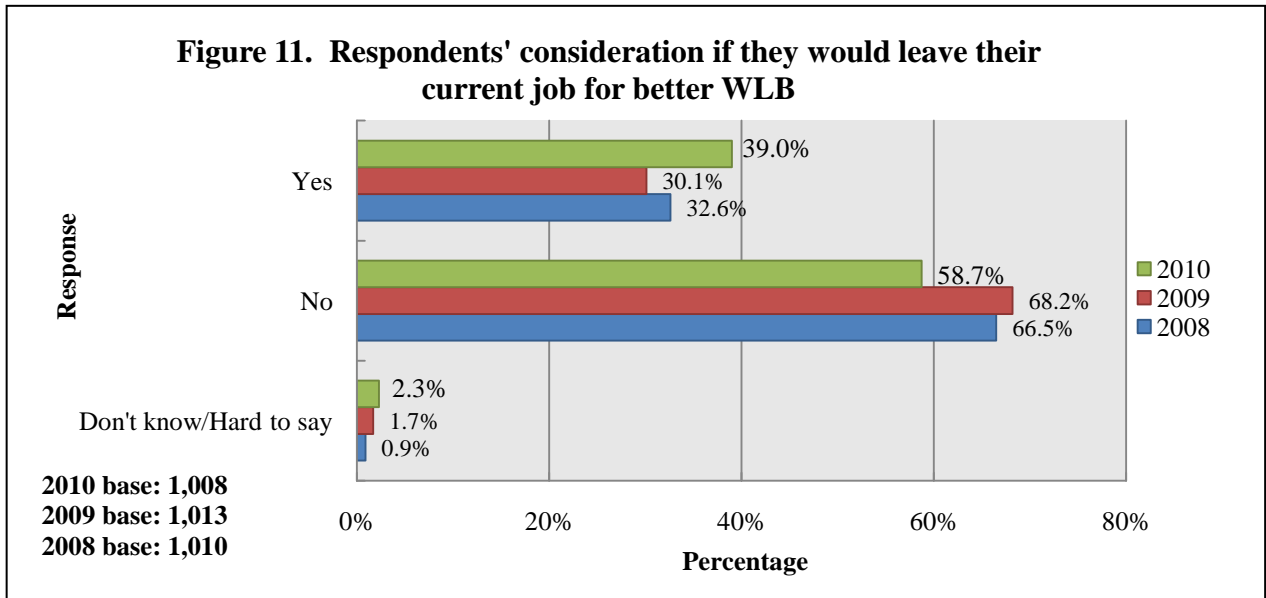
3.8 The survey went further to ask, for the first time, what flexible work arrangement the respondents would desire most in order to achieve a better work-life balance. Findings indicated that the most preferred arrangement was “flexible working time” (27%), followed at a distance by “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (19%). “Option to work remotely/ at home sometimes” and “compressed work week” shared the 3rd rank as both accounted for 14% of the total sample. Other popular flexible arrangements as cited by the respondents included “job-sharing” (8%) and “part-time work” (5%). However, 7% claimed they did not desire any flexible work arrangement to achieve a better work-life balance (Table 12 and Figure 9).



3.9 Another new question was added to understand how important flexible work arrangements were when the respondents had to make a decision on joining or staying in a company. Results had clearly showed that the majority considered it “important” (57%), as contrast to 13% who opted for “neutral” while one-quarter said “not important” (25%, Table 13 and Figure 10).



3.10 Finally, the survey ended by asking all respondents if they would consider leaving their current job to achieve a better work-life balance. This year, 39% of the total sample gave an affirmative answer, representing a 9-percentage-points increment from 2009, which is also tested to be statistically significant,  $p < 0.01$ . Such increase was echoed by a remarkable drop for the amount of people who had no plan to leave their current job, i.e. from 68% in 2009 to 59% this time (Table 14 and Figure 11).



## IV. *Concluding Remarks*

- 4.1 This is the fifth consecutive year that we studied the work-life balance of Hong Kong's working population by means of representative random sample surveys comparable to international standards. In our first benchmark survey conducted in 2006, the sample size was controlled at 1,500+ successful cases. Thereafter it was controlled at 1,000+ successful cases. Sampling errors for percentage figures based on the full sample were therefore controlled to not more than plus/minus 3.1 percentage points at 95% confidence level.
- 4.2 Consistent with previous years, this survey has found that working long hours continues to be a common problem facing our workforce as the number of actual working hours has exceeded the standard set by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which is 40 hours per week. The number dropped from 51.3 hrs in 2006 down to 48.4 hrs in 2009, but has gone up again to 48.7 hrs this year. Personal time and leisure activities remain a luxury to most full time workers.
- 4.3 In terms of work-life balance, respondents' preferred work-life ratios in 2008, 2009 and 2010 were 62.3%:37.7%, 61.6%:38.4% and 61.0%:39.0% respectively while their actual work-life ratio were 84.1%:15.9%, 83.2%:16.8% and 82.7%:17.3% in corresponding order. Both ratios have dropped continuously from 2008 to 2010 though the changes are statistically insignificant. This shows that people's expectation has also changed in favour of a more balanced work-life style. Probably due to the higher expectation, respondents' self assessment of their achievement in attaining work-life balance remains unchanged at 5.7 while the effort of their workplace in promoting work-life balance has increased slightly from 4.7 to 4.8. Both figures have remained very stable across last five years.
- 4.4 To recruit or retain the best talents, the employers may need to know what flexible work arrangements their staff desire most as over half of the respondents considered such arrangements important when they considered joining or staying in a company. According to our findings, the most welcomed flexible work arrangements included "flexible working time", "career breaks / unpaid personal leave / part-paid personal leave / sabbaticals", "option to work remotely / at home sometimes" and "compressed work week".
- 4.5 To conclude, the work-life balance of Hong Kong's work force has not changed much in the past 12 months. A significant gap still exists between people's preferred work time at 61% and their actual work time at 83%. Employers shall make more flexible work arrangements and work-life initiatives in order to achieve better work-life balance in Hong Kong.

# **Appendix 1**

## **Contact Information**



**Table 1 Calculation of effective response rate**

Effective response rate
<u>Successful cases</u>
= Successful cases + Partial interview + Refusal cases by eligible respondents* + Refusal cases by prorated-eligible respondents^
<u>1,009</u>
= $\frac{1,009 + 35 + 32 + 669}{(1,009 + 35 + 32) + (1,009 + 35 + 32 + 1,482)}$ ^
= 74.3%

\* Including "household-level refusal" and "known respondent refusal"

^ Figure obtained by prorata

**Table 2 Breakdown of contact information of the survey**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Respondents' ineligibility confirmed</b>	<b>13,707</b>	<b>41.1%</b>
<i>Fax/ data line</i>	1,071	3.2%
<i>Invalid number</i>	10,007	30.0%
<i>Call-forwarding/ mobile/ pager number</i>	203	0.6%
<i>Non-residential number</i>	886	2.7%
<i>Special technological difficulties</i>	58	0.2%
<i>No eligible respondents</i>	1,482	4.4%
<b>Respondents' ineligibility not confirmed</b>	<b>8,406</b>	<b>25.2%</b>
<i>Line busy</i>	653	2.0%
<i>No answer</i>	6,475	19.4%
<i>Answering device</i>	291	0.9%
<i>Call-blocking</i>	115	0.3%
<i>Language problem</i>	189	0.6%
<i>Interview terminated before the screening question</i>	669	2.0%
<i>Others</i>	14	0.0%
<b>Respondents' eligibility confirmed, but failed to complete the interview</b>	<b>10,233</b>	<b>30.7%</b>
<i>Household-level refusal</i>	0	0.0%
<i>Known respondent refusal</i>	32	0.1%
<i>Appointment date beyond the end of the fieldwork period</i>	10,113	30.3%
<i>Partial interview</i>	35	0.1%
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	53	0.2%
<b>Successful cases</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,355</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## **Appendix 2**

# **Frequency Tables**

**Note: Figures marked with double asterisks (\*\*) in this section indicate that the variation has been tested to be statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level, whereas those with single asterisk (\*) denote statistical significance at  $p < 0.05$  level.**

### A. Respondents' Work and Living Patterns

Table 3 [Q1] Take the last month as an example, how many hours a week do you ACTUALLY work on average for your full time job?

	2006 % (Base=1,512)	2007 % (Base=1,007)	2008 % (Base=1,006)	2009 % (Base=1,005)	2010 Frequency % (Base=1,001)	
<=30 hours	2.1%	3.9%**	2.0%*	1.0%	21	2.1%*
31 – 40 hours	8.8%	12.6%**	17.6%**	22.1%*	198	19.8%
41 – 50 hours	49.5%	48.2%	53.9%*	50.8%	506	50.5%
51 – 60 hours	25.3%	21.5%*	17.9%*	17.6%	187	18.7%
61 – 70 hours	5.1%	5.2%	3.7%	3.5%	39	3.9%
71 – 80 hours	3.0%	2.4%	2.8%	2.4%	23	2.3%
>80 hours	2.4%	1.0%**	1.0%	1.1%	10	1.0%
Don't know/ forgot/ Hard to say	3.9%	5.3%	1.2%**	1.5%	17	1.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,001	100.0%
Missing	7	7	5	8	8	
Mean (per week)	51.3 hrs	49.2 hrs**	48.8 hrs	48.4 hrs	48.7 hrs	
Standard error	0.32 hr	0.36 hr	0.33 hr	0.30 hr	0.31 hr	
Base	1,453	954	994	990	984	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

Table 4 [Q2] Take the last month as an example, how many hours a week do you ACTUALLY spend on doing some personal or private activities, like meeting friends and engaging in activities for leisure such as sports and traveling? [Answers are presented in hours per day]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,507)	% (Base=1,008)	% (Base=1,011)	% (Base=1,011)	Frequency	% (Base=1,007)
No private activities at all	10.9%	8.5%	10.0%	7.8%	84	8.3%
Less than 1 hour per day	34.2%	34.5%	34.8%	35.5%	316	31.4%*
1 - 2 hours per day	25.4%	27.2%	27.7%	27.3%	279	27.7%
>2 - 3 hours per day	10.4%	9.8%	12.1%	12.9%	157	15.6%
>3 - 4 hours per day	4.6%	4.9%	3.4%	3.5%	42	4.2%
>4 - 5 hours per day	2.2%	2.8%	3.2%	4.3%	47	4.7%
>5 - 6 hours per day	1.7%	1.1%	2.1%	1.9%	16	1.6%
>6 - 7 hours per day	1.9%	2.7%	0.5%**	0.8%	8	0.8%
>7 hours per day	1.9%	2.3%	1.5%	1.7%	10	1.0%
Don't know/ forgot/ Hard to say	6.8%	6.3%	4.8%	4.5%	48	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,007	100.0%
<i>Missing</i>	12	6	0	2	2	
Mean (per week)	11.1 hrs	12.0 hrs	10.4 hrs**	11.2 hrs	11.4 hrs	
Standard error	0.36 hr	0.47 hr	0.35 hr	0.37 hr	0.35 hr	
Base	1,404	945	962	966	959	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

Table 5 [Q3] In your view, what would be the **PREFERRED** but **REALISTIC** ratio between the time you want to spend on working and the time you want to spend on personal or private activities? Please based on your realistic number of working hours and exclude sleeping time (the ratio must add up to 100%)

Working : Leisure	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,511)	% (Base=1,007)	% (Base=1,010)	% (Base=1,010)	Frequency	% (Base=1,004)
10%-15% : 85%-90%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0	0.0%
20%-25% : 75%-80%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.7%*	5	0.5%
30%-35% : 65%-70%	2.7%	2.2%	1.4%	2.3%	30	3.0%
40%-45% : 55%-60%	3.6%	5.2%	3.0%*	4.1%	56	5.6%
50%-55% : 45%-50%	24.4%	27.9%*	24.4%	24.2%	214	21.3%
60%-65% : 35%-40%	25.5%	23.9%	24.9%	23.1%	268	26.7%
70%-75% : 25%-30%	27.2%	24.2%	27.4%	27.4%	251	25.0%
80%-85% : 15%-20%	8.9%	9.1%	10.4%	11.1%	93	9.3%
90%-95% : 5%-10%	1.7%	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%	15	1.5%
100% : 0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	1	0.1%
Don't know	5.8%	5.5%	6.7%	5.9%	71	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,004	100.0%
<i>Missing</i>	8	7	1	33	5	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

Table 6 [Q3\_mean] In your view, what would be the **PREFERRED** but **REALISTIC** ratio between the time you want to spend on working and the time you want to spend on personal or private activities? Please base on your realistic number of working hours and exclude sleeping time (the ratio must add up to 100%)

	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities
Mean	61.3%	38.7%	60.2%*	39.9%*	62.3%**	37.7%**	61.6%	38.4%	61.0%	39.0%
Standard error	0.33	0.33	0.41	0.41	0.40	0.40	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42
Base	1,424	1,424	952	952	942	942	950	950	933	933
<i>Missing</i>	95	95	62	62	69	69	63	63	76	76

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

Table 7 [Q1 & Q2] The ACTUAL ratio between the time respondents spent on working and the time on personal or private activities. The number was based on ACTUAL working hours and ACTUAL personal time (the ratio is added up to 100%).

	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities	% on work	% on personal activities
Mean	84.2%	15.8%	82.6%*	17.4%*	84.1%*	15.9%*	83.2%	16.8%	82.7%	17.3%
Standard error	0.37	0.37	0.49	0.49	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42
Base	1,363	1,363	897	897	947	947	948	948	940	940
Missing	156	156	117	117	64	64	65	65	69	69

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

## B. Problems of Work-Life Balance and Desired Solutions

Table 8 [Q4] Using a scale of 0-10, how much have YOU achieved in terms of an ideal work-life balance? 0 represents the worst case possible, 10 represents already ideal, and 5 being half-half.

	2006 % (Base=1,516)	2007 % (Base=1,012)	2008 % (Base=1,010)	2009 % (Base=1,013)	2010 Frequency      % (Base=1,009)	
0	1.3%	2.6%*	2.3%	2.2%	14	1.4%
1-2	1.8%	1.7%	3.5%*	4.0%	39	3.9%
3-4	13.7%	13.0%	11.9%	14.1%	172	17.0%
5	33.8%	34.1%	30.8%	28.5%	265	26.3%
6-7	36.3%	35.0%	35.7%	33.5%	330	32.7%
8-9	9.6%	10.5%	12.6%	15.0%	158	15.7%
10	2.7%	2.5%	2.0%	2.1%	24	2.4%
Don't know/ Hard to say	0.7%	0.7%	1.3%	0.6%	7	0.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,009	100.0%
Missing	3	2	1	0	0	
Mean	5.7	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.7	
Standard Error	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	
Base	1,505	1,005	997	1,007	1,002	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

Table 9 [Q5] Over the past 12 months<sup>^</sup>, have you encountered any of the following problems due to a disturbed work-life balance? (Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer and multiple responses allowed)

Answer Code	2006	2007	2008	2009	Freq	2010	
	% of valid sample (Base=1,519)	% of valid sample (Base=1,011)	% of valid sample (Base=1,011)	% of valid sample (Base=1,013)		% of total response (Base=2,991)	% of valid sample (Base=1,008)
1	61.0%	60.5%	62.3%	53.4%	577	19.3%	57.2%
2	39.1%	43.7%	49.3%	40.8%	373	12.5%	37.0%
3	41.3%	41.4%	41.6%	31.0%	352	11.8%	34.9%
4	33.4%	32.8%	37.7%	26.9%	317	10.6%	31.4%*
5	28.4%	31.1%	34.4%	24.6%	293	9.8%	29.1%*
6	28.2%	35.6%	33.1%	27.5%	283	9.5%	28.1%
7	28.8%	29.9%	28.4%	22.8%	259	8.7%	25.7%
8	30.6%	33.2%	30.4%	15.7%	189	6.3%	18.8%
9	--	--	--	--	123	4.1%	12.2%
10	15.1%	13.6%	14.2%	23.6%	225	7.5%	22.3%
11	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Total	--	--	--	--	2,991	100.0%	
Missing	0	3	0	0	1		

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

<sup>^</sup> Question wordings used in 2006-08 were "Have you ever encountered any of the following problems due to a disturbed work-life balance?". Due to the difference in the question wordings, statistical test has only been applied for the findings of 2009 and 2010.

Code	Answer
1	Prolonged fatigue level, sleepiness and extreme tiredness.
2 <sup>[1]</sup>	I don't have time to spend with my partner and family.
3 <sup>[2]</sup>	I have insomnia and poor diet as a result of work pressures
4	Productivity and work quality has reduced dramatically due to long working hours.
5	My work has affected my relationship with my friends.
6	I do not have any private time for recreation activities or sports at all.
7	I feel stressed out, depressed and exhausted after work.
8 <sup>[3]</sup>	I get physically sick easily / I need to take more sick leave
9 <sup>[4]</sup>	Harmful behavior (For example cigarette smoking, use of drugs, excessive use of alcohol, sleeping pills or caffeine, etc.)
10	None of the above
11	Don't know/Hard to say

[1] The wordings for surveys prior to 2010 were "I don't have time staying with my partner and family"

[2] The wordings for surveys prior to 2009 were "Work pressure creates insomnia and poor diet".

[3] The wordings for surveys prior to 2009 were "I get physically sick easily and frequently due to heavy workload".

[4] An option newly introduced in 2010.

Table 10 [Q6] In terms of the effort and resources required to balance work and life, how much effort do you think your WORKPLACE/BOSS has paid to promote work-life balance? Please use a scale of 0-10 to measure it, with 0 representing no effort at all, 10 representing all possible efforts have been made, and 5 being half-half.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,513)	% (Base=1,008)	% (Base=1,006)	% (Base=1,011)	Frequency	% (Base=1,008)
0	11.2%	10.1%	10.7%	10.5%	71	7.0%**
1-2	6.6%	6.7%	7.2%	6.1%	67	6.6%
3-4	18.3%	16.8%	17.1%	18.2%	202	20.0%
5	27.2%	26.3%	28.9%	30.5%	286	28.4%
6-7	20.4%	24.5%*	23.4%	21.7%	264	26.2%*
8-9	8.8%	8.3%	8.4%	8.3%	71	7.0%
10	3.3%	2.3%	0.9%*	2.0%*	18	1.8%
Don't know/ Hard to say	4.2%	5.0%	3.4%	2.8%	29	2.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,008	100.0%
Missing	6	6	5	2	1	
Mean	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.8	
Standard Error	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.07	
Base	1,449	958	972	983	979	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level



Table 11 [Q7] What types of work-life initiatives does your company currently provide?  
(Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer, multiple response allowed)

	2010		
	Frequency	% of total response (Base=2,269)	% of valid sample (Base=1,008)
5-day work week	461	20.3%	45.7%
Career breaks / Unpaid personal leave/Part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals	357	15.7%	35.4%
Flexible working time	285	12.6%	28.3%
Extra paid leave (additional to the paid annual leave mentioned)	243	10.7%	24.1%
Option to work remotely/at home sometimes	231	10.2%	22.9%
Part-time work	130	5.7%	12.9%
Paternity leave	111	4.9%	11.0%
Compressed work week	105	4.6%	10.4%
Extended maternity leave (beyond legal minimum)	101	4.5%	10.0%
Others (See below)	36	1.6%	3.6%
None of the above	198	8.7%	19.6%
Don't know / Hard to say	11	0.5%	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	2,269	100.0%	
<i>Missing</i>	1		
<b><u>Other responses that cannot be grouped:</u></b>			
Staff gathering	13	0.6%	1.3%
Provision of allowance for training and interest courses by the company	4	0.2%	0.4%
Job sharing	3	0.1%	0.3%
Provision of a lounge by the company	3	0.1%	0.3%
Easy to apply leave	3	0.1%	0.3%
Work support services (e.g. employee counseling scheme, stress management training)	3	0.1%	0.3%
Medical allowance	3	0.1%	0.3%
Free sports facilities	2	0.1%	0.2%
Paid sick leave	1	<0.1%	0.1%
Can use the company's resort house	1	<0.1%	0.1%
Off duty on time	1	<0.1%	0.1%
<b>Sub total</b>	37	1.6%	3.7%

Table 12 [Q8] In order to help you achieve a better work-life balance, which of the following flexible work arrangement would you desire most? (Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer, single response only)

	2010	
	Frequency	% (Base=1,005)
Flexible working time	274	27.3%
Career breaks / Unpaid personal leave/Part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals	195	19.4%
Option to work remotely/ at home sometimes	144	14.3%
Compressed work week	140	13.9%
Job-sharing	79	7.9%
Part-time work	54	5.4%
Others (See below)	14	1.4%
I do not desire any flexible work arrangement	74	7.4%
Don't know / Hard to say	31	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	1,005	100.0%
<i>Missing</i>	4	
<b><u>Other responses that cannot be grouped:</u></b>		
5-day work week	6	0.6%
More paid annual leave	3	0.3%
6-day work week	1	0.1%
Can take the lead to arrange annual leave application	1	0.1%
Hope the culture of company can put emphasis on showing respect or enhance the balance between an individual or family and work.	1	0.1%
Paternity leave	1	0.1%
Fixed working time	1	0.1%
<b>Subtotal</b>	14	1.4%

Table 13 [Q9] How important are flexible working arrangements to you when you think about joining or staying in a company?

		2010	
		Frequency	% (Base=1,008)
Very important	) Important	173	17.2%
Quite important		405	40.2%
Neutral		133	13.2%
Not quite important	) Not important	169	16.8%
Not important at all		84	8.3%
Don't know/ Hard to say		44	4.4%
Total		1,008	100.0%
Missing		1	

Table 14 [Q10] Would you consider leaving your current job for a better work-life balance?

	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,010)	% (Base=1,013)	Frequency	% (Base=1,008)
Yes	32.6%	30.1%	393	39.0%**
No	66.5%	68.2%	592	58.7%**
Don't know/Hard to say	0.9%	1.7%	23	2.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	1,008	100.0%
Missing	1	0	1	

\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  level \*\* Statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level

# **Appendix 3**

## **Demographics**

## Demographics

Table 15 Gender

	2006 % (Base=1,519)	2007 % (Base=1,014)	2008 % (Base=1,011)	2009 % (Base=1,013)	2010 Frequency % (Base=1,009)	
Male	54.0%	51.3%	54.0%	51.7%	513	50.8%
Female	46.0%	48.7%	46.0%	48.3%	496	49.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 16 Age Group\*

	2006 % (Base=1,511)	2007 % (Base=1,004)	2008 % (Base=965)	2009 % (Base=997)		2010 Frequency % (Base=982)	
15-29 years old	18.4%	23.8%	16.9%	20.6%	15-30 years old	288	29.3%
30-39 years old	26.5%	23.3%	22.3%	22.3%	31-40 years old	227	23.1%
40-49 years old	35.3%	33.0%	35.8%	30.2%	41-50 years old	272	27.7%
50-59 years old	17.5%	17.3%	20.9%	21.3%	51-60 years old	177	18.0%
60 years old or above	2.3%	2.6%	4.1%	5.7%	60 years old above	18	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>Missing</i>	<i>27</i>	

\*Prior to 2010 survey, the age groups were categorized as "15-29", "30-39", "40-49", "50-59" and "60 years old or above".

Table 17 Education Attainment

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,513)	% (Base=1,007)	% (Base=993)	% (Base=1,008)	Frequency	% (Base=985)
Primary school or below	6.1%	6.4%	8.1%	7.7%	66	6.7%
Secondary school	48.2%	47.6%	47.1%	41.7%	384	39.0%
Matriculated	7.4%	7.4%	6.7%	6.6%	85	8.6%
Tertiary, non-degree course	8.2%	6.2%	6.6%	6.4%	79	8.0%
Tertiary, degree course	23.8%	23.8%	23.9%	27.6%	295	29.9%
Master's Degree	6.0%	7.5%	7.6%	9.1%	69	7.0%
Doctor's Degree	0.3%	1.1%	0.0%	0.8%	7	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>24</i>	

Table 18 Position

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,493)	% (Base=998)	% (Base=998)	% (Base=993)	Frequency	% (Base=978)
White collar: Professional/Manager/ Executive	25.1% )	27.9% )	24.0% )	28.5% )	306 )	31.3% )
White collar: Trader/Proprietor	6.0% ) 69.4%	5.2% ) 70.0%	5.2% ) 71.1%	2.3% ) 69.3%	39 ) 713	4.0% ) 72.9%
White collar: Office: skilled	21.6% )	18.7% )	22.5% )	22.1% )	174 )	17.8% )
White collar: Office: unskilled	16.7% )	18.2% )	19.3% )	16.4% )	194 )	19.8% )
Blue collar: Factory/Shop/Outdoor: skilled Manual worker	14.5% )	14.1% )	15.7% )	15.1% )	139 )	14.2% )
Blue collar: Factory/Shop/Outdoor: unskilled Manual worker	30.6% ) 16.1% )	30.0% ) 15.8% )	28.9% ) 13.1% )	30.7% ) 15.6% )	265 ) 126 )	27.1% ) 12.9% )
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>31</i>	

Table 19 Industry

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,487)	% (Base=1,002)	% (Base=988)	% (Base=983)	Frequency	% (Base=970)
Education	8.9%	8.4%	9.6%	10.2%	94	9.7%
Commercial Service	7.9%	7.5%	9.9%	7.2%	92	9.5%
Banks and Finance Sector	7.0%	7.2%	6.6%	7.9%	89	9.2%
Construction Industry	9.3%	7.6%	9.7%	7.6%	79	8.1%
Import/Export Trade	7.8%	7.6%	7.5%	7.4%	72	7.4%
Medical, Hygiene and Welfare Sector	5.6%	6.9%	6.7%	5.5%	66	6.8%
Government/Public Affairs	8.7%	6.0%	7.4%	6.2%	61	6.3%
Transportation Industry	6.4%	7.7%	7.2%	6.5%	60	6.2%
Manufacturing Industry	10.3%	10.1%	8.7%	8.5%	59	6.1%
Restaurants/Hotels	4.8%	5.2%	4.8%	5.3%	55	5.7%
Wholesale/Retail	5.1%	6.4%	4.8%	6.7%	53	5.5%
Law, Accountancy, Professional Information Services	1.6%	3.4%	2.6%	3.6%	36	3.7%
Other Personal Services	5.3%	4.6%	3.8%	5.2%	33	3.4%
Information Technology (IT)	3.2%	3.6%	3.2%	3.3%	26	2.7%
Media	1.1%	1.4%	2.0%	1.7%	21	2.2%
Property	2.2%	2.2%	0.9%	1.9%	19	2.0%
Telecommunication	0.8%	1.1%	1.7%	1.3%	15	1.5%
Film/Entertainment Industry	0.9%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	15	1.5%
Warehouse Duties	0.5%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	9	0.9%
Insurance	1.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.5%	8	0.8%
Oil, Energy, Resources and Utilities	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	2	0.2%
Others	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.8%	6	0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	970	100.0%
Missing	32	12	23	30	39	

Table 20 Personal monthly income

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,459)	% (Base=971)	% (Base=947)	% (Base=930)	Frequency	% (Base=885)
HK\$ 10,000 or below	28.4%	27.1%	28.8%	27.0%	286	32.3%
HK\$ 10,001~20,000	40.4%	42.2%	38.4%	36.2%	312	35.3%
HK\$ 20,001~30,000	14.1%	13.3%	14.3%	14.9%	124	14.0%
HK\$ 30,001~40,000	6.9%	6.5%	5.7%	9.0%	73	8.2%
HK\$ 40,001~50,000	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	4.0%	29	3.3%
HK\$ 50,001 or above	6.6%	7.3%	9.2%	8.8%	61	6.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	885	100.0%
Missing	60	43	64	83	124	

Table 21 Language of interview

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,519)	% (Base=1,014)	% (Base=1,011)	% (Base=1,013)	Frequency	% (Base=1,009)
Cantonese	95.5%	94.5%	95.0%	94.7%	950	94.2%
Putonghua	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0	0.0%
English	4.5%	5.3%	4.8%	5.3%	59	5.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1,009	100.0%

Table 22 District of residence

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
	% (Base=1,505)	% (Base=1,003)	% (Base=1,003)	% (Base=1,006)	Frequency	% (Base=994)
Hong Kong Island	19.9%	20.5%	20.5%	23.3%	209	21.0%
Kowloon East	15.7%	13.9%	15.9%	17.3%	135	13.6%
Kowloon West	12.6%	12.0%	15.4%	16.1%	129	13.0%
New Territories East	25.9%	27.4%	22.6%	22.5%	271	27.3%
New Territories West	25.9%	26.2%	25.6%	20.9%	250	25.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	994	100.0%
Missing	14	11	8	7	15	



**Appendix 4**  
**In-depth Analysis: Cross-tabulation**  
**for 2010 findings**

**Note: The results of in-depth analyses described in this appendix should be read in addition to the analyses described in the research findings in the main part of this research report. Items marked with (^) are subject to a sub-sample size <30. As the smaller the sample size, the larger the sampling error, findings of these items can be for rough reference only. When looking at the sub group analyses by industry, “other industries” is excluded as the nature of different items within this group can vary a lot.**

**Cross-tabulation by Demographic Variables for 2010 Findings** *(The differences of the listed items are proved to be statistically significant.)*

### **1. Actual working hours**

- 1.1 Sub-group analyses showed that, same as previous years, males (50.7 hours) worked longer hours than females (46.7 hours) in general,  $p < 0.01$ .
- 1.2 People belonging to “restaurants/ hotels” (56.4 hours), “oil, energy, resources and utilities”<sup>^</sup> (56.0 hours) and “property”<sup>^</sup> (52.6 hours) worked relatively longer hours. On the contrary, those from “insurance”<sup>^</sup> (43.1 hours), “telecommunication”<sup>^</sup> (44.0 hours) and “film/ entertainment industry” (44.8 hours) worked relatively fewer hours when compared with other industry groups,  $p < 0.01$ .

### **2. Amount of time spent on private activities**

- 2.1 A trend was observed when looking at the age group analysis. The younger the respondents, the longer hours they spent on leisure activities per week (aged 15-30: 13.3 hours; aged 31-40: 11.4 hours; aged 41-50: 10.6 hours; aged 51 or above: 8.7 hours),  $p < 0.01$ .
- 2.2 Another trend identified was the higher the income group, the more time they spent on personal/private activities a week (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 9.9 hours; HK\$ 10,001 ~ 20,000: 10.8 hours; HK\$ 20,001 ~ 30,000: 12.5 hours; HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000: 13.4 hours and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 14.1 hours),  $p < 0.01$ .

### **3 Actual work-life ratio**

- 3.1 Consistent with previous years, the younger the generation, the more balanced their work-life ratio was (aged 15-30: 80:20; aged 31-40: 82:18; aged 41-50: 83:17 and aged 51 or above: 87:13),  $p < 0.01$ .
- 3.2 Similar to the age group analysis, the higher the income group, the more balanced their life appeared to be (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 85:15; HK\$ 10,001 ~ 20,000: 83:17; HK\$ 20,001 ~ 30,000: 81:19; HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000: 80:20 and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 79:21),  $p < 0.01$ .

#### **4 Preferred but realistic work-life ratio**

- 4.1 Relatively speaking, females (60:40) preferred to lead a more balanced work-life ratio than their male counterparts (62:38),  $p < 0.05$ .

#### **5 Degree to which respondents have achieved their ideal work-life balance**

- 5.1 Respondents within “medical, hygiene and welfare sector” (6.5 marks), “government / public affairs” (6.2 marks) and “media” (6.0 marks) gave themselves a higher rating when compared with other industries. On the other hand, people working in “oil, energy, resources and utilities” (3.0 marks), “wholesale / retail” (5.0 marks) and “property” (5.2 marks) were far lagging behind in this aspect,  $p < 0.05$ .
- 5.2 Expectedly, higher income groups (HK\$ 20,001 ~ 30,000: 6.1 marks; HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000: 5.8 marks and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 6.3 marks) managed to achieve a better work-life balance when compared with the lower income groups (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 5.3 marks; HK\$ 10,001 ~ 20,000: 5.6 marks),  $p < 0.01$

#### **6 Problems arisen from disturbed work-life balance**

- 6.1 The majority of both male (56%) and female respondents (59%) suffered from “prolonged fatigue level, sleepiness and extreme tiredness” due to the disturbed work-life balance over the past 12 months. Yet, the second most serious problem for males was “having no time to spend with their partner and family” (38%) while females tend to “have insomnia and poor diet as a result of work pressure” (38%).
- 6.2 Across all age groups, “prolonged fatigue level, sleepiness and extreme tiredness” was the most common problem but the occurrence rate among the “post 80s” (63%) and “post 70s” (61%) was significantly higher when compared with the older generations (aged 41-50: 53% and aged 51 or above: 52%),  $p < 0.01$ .
- 6.3 Likewise, a rather large proportion of respondents across all income groups suffered from “prolonged fatigue level, sleepiness and extreme tiredness” but it was most common among people earning HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000 and HK\$ 10,001 or below (both at 63%),  $p < 0.01$ .

#### **7 Work-life initiatives offered**

- 7.1 The top three work-life initiatives currently enjoyed by males were “5-day work week” (44%), “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals”
-

(36%) and “flexible working time” (29%). The work-life-balance measures were very similar among females and they were, in descending order, “5-day work week” (47%), “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (35%) and “extra paid leave” (28%),  $p < 0.01$ .

- 7.2 “5-day work week” was the most common work-life initiative offered by respondents’ companies for all age groups (aged 15-30: 45%; aged 31-40: 54% and aged 41-50: 45%), except for the eldest one (35%). Rather, a relatively higher percentage of people aged “51 or above” were offered with “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (37%) instead,  $p < 0.01$ .
- 7.3 For respondents of the lowest income group, the most commonly offered work-life measures were “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (33%) while “5-day work week” was most common for other income groups. It should also be noted that the higher the income group, the larger the proportion of respondents who were having “5-day work week” (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 31%; HK\$ 10,001 ~ 20,000: 40%; HK\$ 20,001 ~ 30,000: 54%; HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000: 66% and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 72%),  $p < 0.01$ .

## 8 The most desired flexible work arrangements

- 8.1 Among the measures put to test in this survey, “flexible working time” was the most desired flexible work arrangement across all age groups while the newly introduced concept, “compressed work week” won the favour of the younger generation, in particular the “post 80s” (20%),  $p < 0.01$ .
- 8.2 More respondents from the “oil, energy, resources and utilities”<sup>^</sup>, “telecommunication”<sup>^</sup>, “film/ entertainment industry”<sup>^</sup>, “construction industry”, “law, accountancy, professional information services”, “commercial service”, “other personal services”, “banks and finance sector”, “import / export trade”, “government/ public affairs”, “medical, hygiene and welfare sector”, “education” and “manufacturing industry” opted for “flexible working time” as the most desired arrangement. The percentage registered was as high as 100% for “oil, energy, resources and utilities”<sup>^</sup>. “Career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” was most popular within “warehouse duties”<sup>^</sup>, “wholesale/retail”, “transportation industry”, “medical, hygiene and welfare sector” and “restaurants/hotels” while respondents of “warehouse duties”<sup>^</sup> (56%) wanted it most,  $p < 0.01$ .

- 8.3 It is highly consistent across all income groups that “flexible working time” topped the list when it comes to the desired arrangement for a better work-life balance. Yet, lower income groups also preferred “career breaks/ unpaid personal leave/ part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals” (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 24% and HK\$ 10,001~20,000: 20%) while significantly more respondents coming from the higher income groups longed for “option to work remotely/ at home sometimes” (HK\$ 20,001~30,000: 20%; HK\$ 30,001~40,000: 19% and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 24%) as well,  $p<0.01$

## 9 Importance of flexible work arrangement when joining or staying in a company

- 9.1 An interesting trend was observed that the younger the respondents, the more of them considered flexible work arrangement an important factor when joining or staying in a company (aged 15-30: 68%; aged 31-40: 59%; aged 41-50: 54%; aged 51 or above: 46%). Specifically, two-thirds of the “post 80s” said so, which was 22 percentage points higher than the eldest group,  $p<0.01$ .
- 9.2 Flexible work arrangement was an important consideration for respondents across all industries, with “oil, energy, resources and utilities”<sup>^</sup> (100%) topping the list and “telecommunication”<sup>^</sup> (40%) at the bottom,  $p<0.05$ .
- 9.3 More respondents from the lower income groups regarded flexible work arrangement important when joining or staying in a company (HK\$ 10,000 or below and HK\$ 10,001~20,000: both at 60%) than those with higher income (HK\$ 20,001~30,000: 53% and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 50%),  $p<0.01$ .

## 10 Tendency to leave current job for a better work-life balance

- 10.1 A common trend has developed over years that the younger the respondents, the more likely they would consider leaving their current job for a better work-life balance (aged 15-30: 61%; aged 31-40: 39%; aged 41-50: 31%; aged 51 or above: 20%) and the positive figure of the “post 80s” was much higher than that of other age groups,  $p<0.01$ .
- 10.2 Significantly more respondents from the lower income groups would consider resignation for a better work-life balance (HK\$ 10,000 or below: 46%; HK\$ 10,001~20,000: 43%) than their counterparts earning higher income (HK\$ 20,001~30,000: 34%; HK\$ 30,001~40,000: 29% and HK\$ 40,001 or above: 34%),  $p<0.05$ .

# **Appendix 5**

## **Bilingual Questionnaires**

# **Work Life Balance Survey of the Hong Kong Working Population 2010**

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**Questionnaire (English)**

**Final Draft**

5 May 2010

## Part 1 Introduction

Good evening, sir/madam, this is Mr/Ms X, an interviewer from the Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong. We would like to ask for your opinion on some work life issues which would only take you a couple of minutes. Please be rest assured that your phone number is randomly selected by our computer and your information provided will be kept strictly confidential.

- (R1) Verification of telephone number
- (R2) Living district
- (R3) Household size

The target of this interview is **full time worker of age 15 or above who speak Cantonese, English or Mandarin.**

## Part 2 Selection of Respondents

(S1) Is there any full time worker in your household of age 15 or above? Since we need to conduct random sampling, if there is more than one available, I would like to speak to the one who will have his / her birthday next. (If the target is not available at the moment, make an appointment to recall.)

Yes

No

Refuse to answer



Terminate interview, skip to end.

(S2) Are you currently working full time? (Interviewers read out: "Full time workers" can be defined as those who work at least 5 days a week, or total working time not less than 40 hours a week.)

Yes

No

Refuse to answer



Terminate interview, skip to end.



## Part 3 Opinion Questions

### I. Respondents' Work and Living Patterns

[Q1] Take the last month as an example, how many hours a week do you ACTUALLY work on average for your full time job?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours (Insert exact figures)

Don't know / Hard to say

Refuse to answer

[Q2] Take the last month as an example, how many hours a week do you ACTUALLY spend on doing some personal or private activities, like meeting friends and engaging in activities for leisure such as sports and traveling?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours (Insert exact figures)

Don't know / Hard to say

Refuse to answer

[Q3] In your view, what would be the PREFERRED but REALISTIC ratio between the time you want to spend on working and the time you want to spend on personal or private activities? Please base this on your realistic number of working hours and exclude sleeping time (the ratio must add up to 100%)

\_\_\_\_\_ % on work and \_\_\_\_\_ % on private life

Don't know / Hard to say

Refuse to answer

### II. Problems Facing in terms of Work-Life Balance and Desired Solutions

[Q4] On a scale of 0-10, how much have YOU achieved in terms of an ideal work-life balance? 0 represents the worst case possible, 10 represents already ideal, and 5 being half-half.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Exact figure from 0-10)

Don't know / Hard to say

Refuse to answer

[Q5] Over the past 12 months, have you encountered any of the following problems due to a disturbed work-life balance? (Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer and multiple responses allowed) [Interviewers read out: I am going to read out a few options, and you can choose multiple answers]

Productivity and work quality has reduced dramatically due to long working hours.  
 Prolonged fatigue level, sleepiness and extreme tiredness.  
 I get physically sick easily / I need to take more sick leave  
 I do not have any private time for recreation activities or sports at all.  
 My work has affected my relationship with my friends.  
 I don't have time to spend with my partner and family.  
 I feel stressed out, depressed and exhausted after work.  
 I have insomnia and poor diet as a result of work pressures  
 Harmful behavior (For example, cigarette smoking, use of drugs, excessive use of alcohol, sleeping pills or caffeine, etc.)  
 None of the above  
 Don't know / Hard to say  
 Refuse to answer

[Q6] In terms of effort and resources required to balance work and life, how much effort do you think your workplace/boss has paid to promote work-life balance? Please use a scale of 0-10 to measure it, with 0 representing no effort at all, 10 representing all possible efforts have been made, and 5 being half-half.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Exact figure from 0-10)  
 Don't know / Hard to say  
 Refuse to answer

[Q7] What types of work-life initiatives does your company currently provide? (Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer, multiple response allowed) [Interviewers read out: I am going to read out a few options, and you can choose multiple answers]

Flexible working time  
 5-day work week  
 Option to work remotely/at home sometimes  
 Paternity leave  
 Extended maternity leave (beyond legal minimum)  
 Career breaks / Unpaid personal leave/Part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals  
 Extra paid leave (additional to the paid annual leave mentioned in the contract) (e.g. Birthday/Marriage/Condolence Leave)  
 Compressed work week  
 Part-time work  
 Others (Please specify)  
 None of the above  
 Don't know / Hard to say  
 Refuse to answer

[Q8] In order to help you achieve a better work-life balance, which of the following flexible work arrangement would you desire most? (Read out each answer, order to be randomized by computer, single response only) [Interviewers read out: I am going to read out a few options, and you can choose one answer only]

- Flexible working time
- Part-time work
- Option to work remotely/ at home sometimes
- Job-sharing
- Career breaks / Unpaid personal leave/Part-paid personal leave/ sabbaticals
- Compressed work week
- Others (Please specify)
- I do not desire any flexible work arrangement
- Don't know / Hard to say
- Refuse to answer

[Q9] How important are flexible working arrangements to you when you think about joining or staying in a company? [Interviewers to probe intensity]

- Very important
- Quite important
- Neutral
- Not quite important
- Not important at all
- Don't know / Hard to say
- Refuse to answer

[Q10] Would you consider leaving your current job for a better work-life balance?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know / Hard to say
- Refuse to answer

## Part 4 Demographics

We would like to ask you some personal information for further analyses.

(DM1) Gender

Male  
Female

(DM2a) Age

\_\_\_\_\_ (Exact age)  
Do not want to tell

(DM2b) 【For those who do not want to tell their exact age】 Age interval (Interviewer can read out the intervals)

15-20  
21-25  
26-30  
31-35  
36-40  
41-45  
46-50  
51-55  
56-60  
60 years old above  
Do not want to tell

(DM3) Education Attainment

Primary school or below  
Secondary school  
Matriculated  
Tertiary, non-degree course  
Tertiary, degree course  
Master's degree  
Doctor's degree  
Refuse to answer

(DM4) Position (Pls refer to attached “occupation” sheet for detailed categorizations)

**White collar:**

Professional / Manager / Executive

Trader / Proprietor

Office: skilled

Office: unskilled

**Blue collar:**

Factory/Shop/Outdoor: skilled Manual worker

Factory/ Shop/Outdoor: unskilled Manual worker

Refuse to answer

(DM5) Industry

Banks and Finance Sector

Commercial Service

Construction Industry

Education

Film / Entertainment Industry

Government / Public Affairs

Import / Export Trade

Information Technology (IT)

Insurance

Law, Accountancy, Professional Information Services

Manufacturing Industry

Media

Medical, Hygiene and Welfare Sector

Oil, Energy, Resources and Utilities

Other Personal Services

Property

Restaurants / Hotels

Telecommunication

Transportation Industry

Warehouse Duties

Wholesale / Retail

Others (Please specify)

Refuse to answer

(DM6) Your personal monthly income, including bonus, is...?

HK\$ 10,000 or below

HK\$ 10,001 ~ 20,000

HK\$ 20,001 ~ 30,000

HK\$ 30,001 ~ 40,000

HK\$ 40,001 ~ 50,000

HK\$ 50,001 or above

Refuse to answer

*Thank you for your time. If you have any questions regarding this interview, you can call XXXX-XXXX to talk to our supervisor, or the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties of the University of Hong Kong at XXXX-XXXX during office hours to verify this interview's authenticity and confirm my identity. Good-bye!*

**\*\*\*\*\* End of questionnaire \*\*\*\*\***

# 香港在職人士的生活及工作平衡調查 2010

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問卷(定稿)

2010年5月13日

## 第一部分 自我介紹

你好，我姓 X，我係香港大學民意研究計劃既訪問員，我地宜家做緊一項意見調查，想訪問你一 D 有關個人生活及工作既問題，我地只會阻你幾分鐘時間，請你放心，你既電話號碼係經由我地既電腦隨機抽樣抽中既，而你提供既資料係會絕對保密，請問可唔可以呢？

[R1] 核實電話號碼

[R2] 居住地區

[R3] 住戶人數

呢個調查既訪問對象係 15 歲或以上操粵語、國語或英語既香港全職人士。

## 第二部分 選出被訪者

[S1] 請問你屋企有冇 15 歲或以上既全職人士係度，因為我地要隨機抽樣，如果多過一位，請你叫即將生日果位黎聽電話。(如被訪者暫未能接受訪問，訪問員另約時間再致電。)

有

冇

拒答

→ 訪問完成，多謝合作，拜拜。(結束訪問)

[S2] 請問閣下宜家係唔係全職工作人士？【訪員讀出：全職的定義為每星期最少工作 5 天，或一星期總工作時間不少於 40 小時】

係

唔係

拒答

→ 訪問完成，多謝合作，拜拜。(結束訪問)



## 第三部分 意見部分

### 一. 被訪者的生活及工作模式

[Q1] 就以你上個月既全職工作為例，你平均每個星期實際工作咗幾多個鐘頭？

\_\_\_\_\_ 小時 (入實數)

唔知/難講

拒答

[Q2] 就以上個月為例，你每個星期實際有幾多個鐘頭參與個人或私人既活動，好似同朋友聚會或者參加一 D 閒餘活動，例如運動以及旅行？

\_\_\_\_\_ 小時 (入實數)

唔知/難講

拒答

[Q3] 對你黎講，你覺得最理想但合乎現實既工作同埋私人活動既時間分配比例應該係點樣？時間分配必須係一個合乎現實既比例，以及扣除瞓覺時間。(比例相加必須等如 100%)

\_\_\_\_\_ % 工作及 \_\_\_\_\_ % 私人活動

唔知/難講

拒答

### 二. 生活及工作平衡所面對的問題及理想解決方法

[Q4] 請用 0-10 分評價一下你自己，達到最理想生活及工作平衡方面既邊個階段？0 分代表現時情況非常差，10 分代表已達到非常理想階段、5 分代表一半半。

\_\_\_\_\_ [入實數]

唔知/難講

拒答

[Q5] 係過去既 12 個月，你有冇試過因為生活及工作失去平衡而遇到以下既問題？【訪員依照電腦排序讀出首 9 項答案，可選多項】（訪員讀出：我宜家會讀出一 D 答案，你可以選出多項）

- 因長時間工作而令生產力及工作質素嚴重下降
- 經常感到疲累，渴睡及極度疲倦
- 我很容易生病/我要請多左病假
- 我完全冇私人時間進行閒餘活動或運動等
- 我既工作影響我同朋友既關係
- 我有時間同自己既伴侶或家人相聚
- 每次工作後我感到身心崩潰、抑鬱及氣餒
- 因為工作壓力導致我失眠及冇胃口
- 做出危害健康或生命既行為（例如吸煙、濫藥、酗酒或咖啡因類食品等）
- 以上全部沒有
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

[Q6] 以你公司/上司所付出既資源黎講，你覺得佢地有幾努力去提昇公司員工係生活及工作既平衡？請用 0-10 分評價，0 分代表完全冇付出任何努力、10 分代表付出很多努力、5 分代表一半半。

- \_\_\_\_\_ [入實數]
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

[Q7] 請問你公司而家有乜野安排或措施以提昇員工既生活及工作平衡呢？【訪員依照電腦排序讀出首 9 項答案，可選多項】（訪員讀出：我宜家會讀出一 D 答案，你可以選出多項）

- 彈性上班時間
- 五天工作週
- 間中在家或其他地方工作
- 男士產假
- 享有比法例規定更長既女士產假（現法例規定產假為 10 星期）
- 短暫休假/無薪假期/半有薪假期/停薪留職
- 享有比合約訂明更多既有薪假期（例如：生日/結婚/喪事假期）
- 壓縮工作週（即員工用較少既工作日數完成同樣既工作）
- 轉為半職工作
- 其他（請註明）
- 以上皆否
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

[Q8] 為咗達到一個較佳既生活及工作平衡，你最希望得到以下邊一項彈性工作既安排？  
【訪員依照電腦排序讀出首 6 項答案，只可選一項】（訪員讀出：我宜家會讀出一 D 答案，你只可以選一項）

- 彈性工作時間
- 轉為半職工作
- 間中在家或其他地方工作
- 工作共享
- 短暫休假/無薪假期/半有薪假期/停薪留職
- 壓縮工作週（即員工用較少既工作日數完成同樣既工作）
- 其他（請註明）
- 我唔需要任何彈性工作安排
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

[Q9] 你認為彈性工作安排對你考慮加入或繼續留係一間公司工作係重要定唔重要？（訪問員追問程度）

- 非常重要
- 幾重要
- 一半半／中立
- 幾唔重要
- 完全唔重要
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

[Q10] 你會唔會考慮辭職或者轉工以達到更好既生活及工作平衡？

- 會
- 唔會
- 唔知/難講
- 拒答

## 第四部分 個人資料

我想問你些少個人資料，方便分析。

[DM1] 性別

男  
女

[DM2a] 年齡 (Age)

\_\_\_\_\_ (準確數字)

唔肯講

[DM2b] 【只問不肯透露準確年齡被訪者】年齡 (範圍)[訪問員可讀出範圍]

15-20 歲  
21-25 歲  
26-30 歲  
31-35 歲  
36-40 歲  
41-45 歲  
46-50 歲  
51-55 歲  
56-60 歲  
60 歲或以上  
唔肯講

(DM3) 教育程度

小學或以下  
中學  
預科  
專上非學位  
專上學位  
碩士學位  
博士學位  
拒答

(DM4) 職位(Pls refer to attached “occupation” sheet for detailed categorizations)

**白領:**

專業人士／經理／行政人員

商人／東主

辦公室:技術白領人士

辦公室:非技術白領人士

**藍領:**

工廠/舖位/戶外:技術藍領人士

工廠/舖位/戶外:非技術藍領人士

拒答

(DM5) 行業

銀行及金融

商業服務

建造業

教育

電影／娛樂事業

政府／公共事務

出入口貿易

資訊科技

保險

法律、會計、專業資訊服務

製造業

傳媒

醫療、衛生及福利

石油及能源

其他個人服務

房地產

食肆／酒店

通訊業

運輸

倉務

批發／零售

其他(請註明)

拒答

(DM6) 請問你既個人每個月既平均收入大約係....?(包括花紅)

HK\$ 10,000或以下

HK\$ 10,001~20,000

HK\$ 20,001~30,000

HK\$ 30,001~40,000

HK\$ 40,001~50,000

HK\$ 50,001或以上

拒答

問卷已經完成，多謝你接受訪問。如果你對呢個訪問有任何疑問，可以打熱線電話XXXX-XXXX同我地既督導員聯絡，或者係辦公時間打XXXX-XXXX向香港大學操守委員會查詢今次訪問既真確性同埋核對我既身分。拜拜！

\*\*\*\*\*問卷完\*\*\*\*\*

## **Appendix 6**

# **Definition of Occupation Categories**

**Definition of Occupation Categories:****Working:****Prof (Professional)/ Mgr (Manager)/ Exec (Executive) 專業人士／經理／行政人員**

- company directors and managers
- members of recognised professions/ university and secondary school teachers
- administrative and executive officers in the civil service
- gazetted officers in the uniformed services
- editors/ journalists
- technologists
- artists/ actors/ musicians/ designers

**Trad (Trader)/ Prop (Proprietor) 商人／東主**

- self-employed merchants
- owners of shops and other properties

**Office: skilled 技術白領人士**

- office supervisors
- secretaries
- nurses
- kindergarten and primary school teachers/ private tutors
- inspectors and sergeants in public services
- reporters
- models
- singers
- sales representatives
- auditing, account and surveyor clerks

**Office: unskilled 非技術白領人士**

- general clerks
- receptionists
- typists

**Factory/Shop/Outdoor : skilled 技術藍領人士**

- factory supervisors
- carpenters
- cooks
- drivers
- foremen



- farmers/ fishermen/ gardeners
- blacksmiths/ mechanics
- policemen/ soldiers
- tailors/ shoemakers/ barbers
- photographers
- captains (hotel/ restaurant)
- monks
- outdoor sales
- life guards
- soccer players
- detectives
- escorts/ tourist guides
- jockeys
- herbalists

**Factory/ Shop/ Outdoor: unskilled 非技術藍領人士**

- factory workers
- cleaners
- labourers
- messengers
- postmen
- seamen
- servants
- waiters
- shop assistants
- hawkers
- security guards
- shop sales
- cashiers

***Non-working:***

Retired/ Unemployed

- exclude non-working housewives

**Student**

- includes full-time students only
- those that claim to be full-time students but have part-time jobs are also considered in this category

**Full-time housewife**

- not working