



Ministry of Manpower Foreign Domestic Worker Study 2015

Report on Findings

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1 Introduction

1.1 Objective and Scope of Study

As part of the Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) continued efforts to better understand the employment conditions and well-being of foreign domestic workers (FDWs) in Singapore, MOM commissioned a FDW study in 2015. This is the second time that the survey was conducted – the inaugural run was in 2010.¹

The scope of the study covers FDWs':

- Overall satisfaction working in Singapore;
- Living and working conditions and experiences during employment;
- Awareness of their responsibilities and responsibilities of their employers; and
- Preference of channels of assistance.

1.2 Sampling Methodology

Fieldwork for the survey started in October 2015 and was completed in December 2015. In total, valid responses were collected from 1,005 FDWs. The respondents were selected randomly and the sampling frame was designed to be generally representative of the FDW population profile, for example, in terms of their nationalities and years of experience.

1.3 Data Collection Methodology

The FDW study was administered by the independent company appointed by MOM through face-to-face interviews with FDWs in English or their native languages. All FDWs were assured that their responses will be kept strictly confidential and only aggregated results would be reported. All completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and logic of responses. Any discrepancies were clarified with the FDWs through call-back clarification.

¹ The 2010 report can be found [HERE](#). The FDW employer study is still ongoing and will be released at a later date.

2 Summary of Findings

The study found that the vast majority of FDWs were satisfied with their work conditions. Improvement was seen in areas such as the number of rest days they receive monthly, satisfaction with their accommodation, and access to their mobile phones, amongst others. Nonetheless, there remains scope for improvement as a small number of FDWs still report employment issues such as late salary payment. MOM will continue to monitor and provide assistance to these FDWs.

3 Overall Satisfaction Levels, Future Intentions and Factors influencing selecting Singapore as a Place to Work

3.1 Satisfaction Levels of FDWs

Generally, FDWs expressed high levels of satisfaction with working in Singapore. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being 'extremely satisfied' with working in Singapore, about 97.2% of the FDWs gave ratings of 7 and above, indicating a high level of satisfaction. This was an increase from 88.6% in 2010.

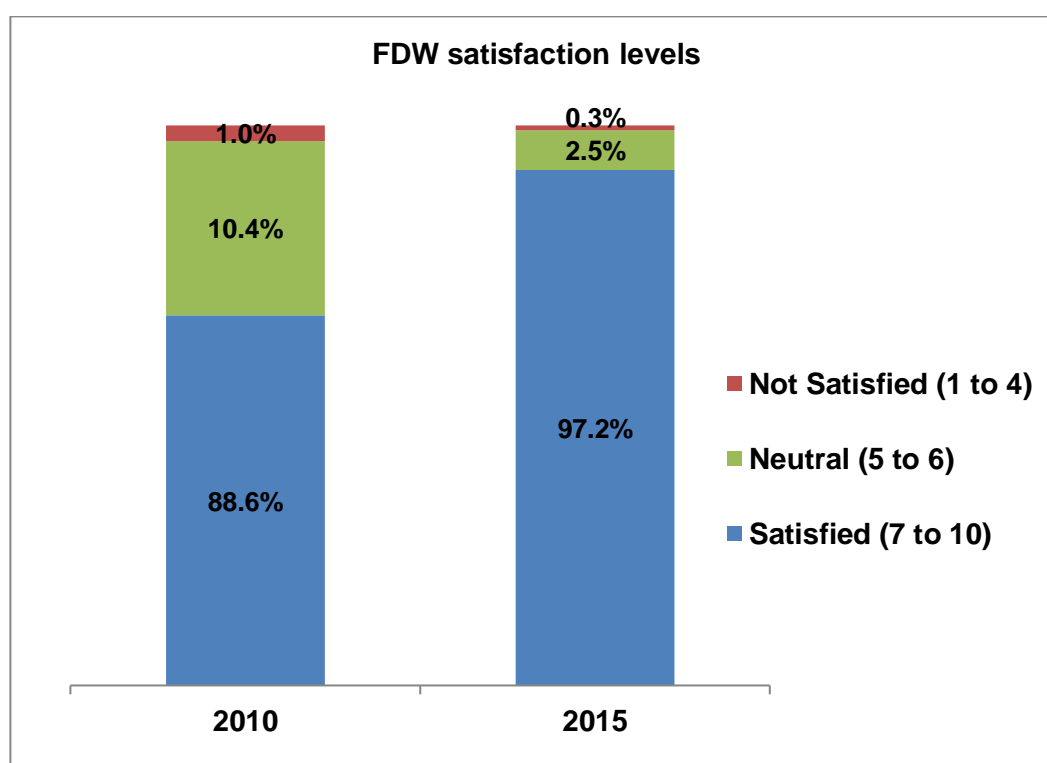


Figure 3.1

3.2 Future Intentions of FDWs

77.5% of the FDWs indicated that they intended to continue working in Singapore as an FDW, an increase from 68% in 2010.

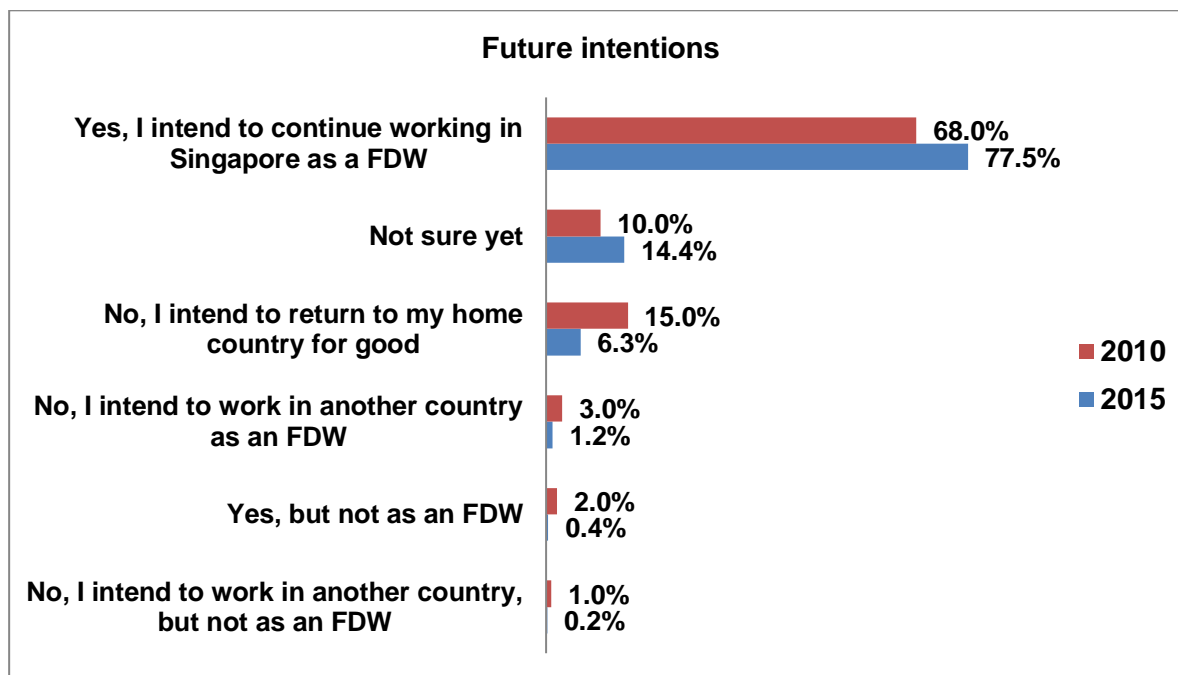


Figure 3.2a

Amongst these FDWs, the majority (83.7%) intended to continue working for their current employer, comparable to 2010.

Do you intend to...	2010	2015
Continue to work for your current employer	88%	83.7%
Request to work for another employer	12%	16.3%

Figure 3.2b

3.3 Factors influencing selecting Singapore as a Place to Work

When asked if they would recommend Singapore as a place to work, 78.6% of FDWs indicated they would recommend Singapore to their families and friends.

The top 2 factors that influenced their decisions to come to Singapore would be higher pay and good employers. In 2010, the top 2 factors were higher pay and good governance in Singapore.

Top 2 factors influencing FDW decision to work in Singapore	% of FDW responses*
Higher pay	51.7%
I find employers in Singapore good to work for	31.7%
My friends and relatives are in Singapore	22.8%
Nearer to home country	20.6%
More rest days	15.1%
Singapore is a good stepping stone to other destinations	12.8%
Employment rights are protected	11.9%
Good living conditions	10.4%
Similar culture (e.g. similar habits, languages and acceptable behaviours)	7.6%

Figure 3.3

**The responses do not add up to 100% as this is a multiple response question.*

4 FDWs' Working Conditions and Experiences during Employment

4.1 Workload

About 96.9% of the FDWs indicated that their workload is either just right for them or they can handle more. The finding is similar to 2010 (96.9%).

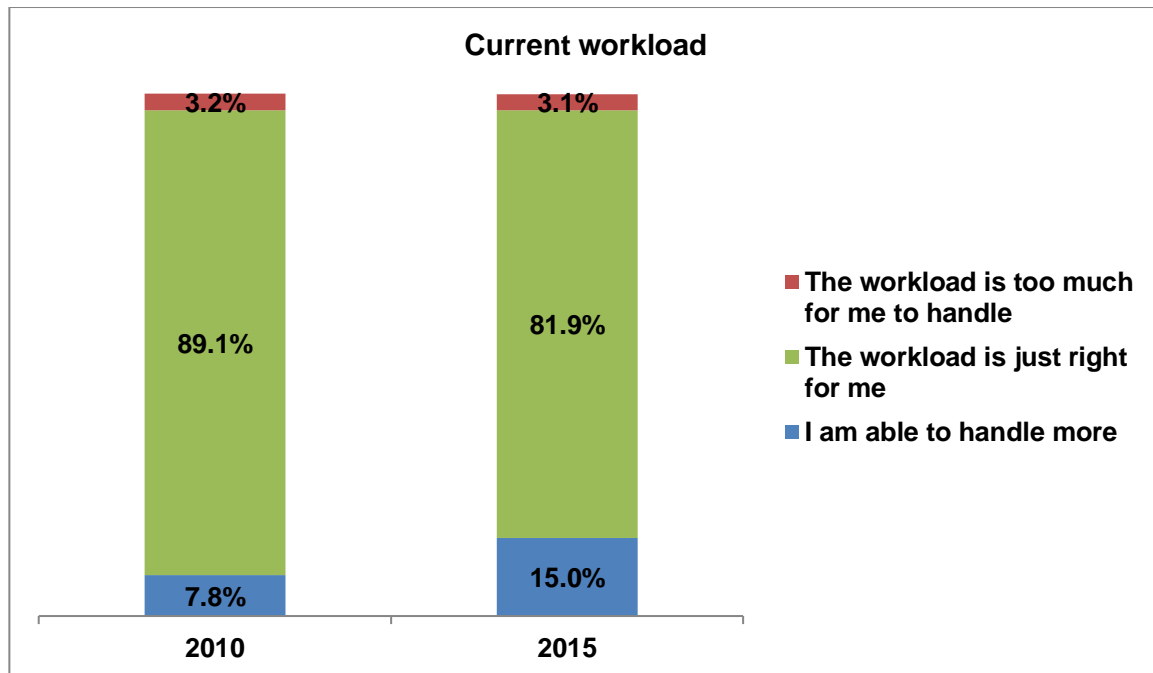


Figure 4.1

4.2 Payment of Salary

About 97.2% of the FDWs had never experienced late payment of salaries from their current employers over the last six months, slightly lower than 2010.

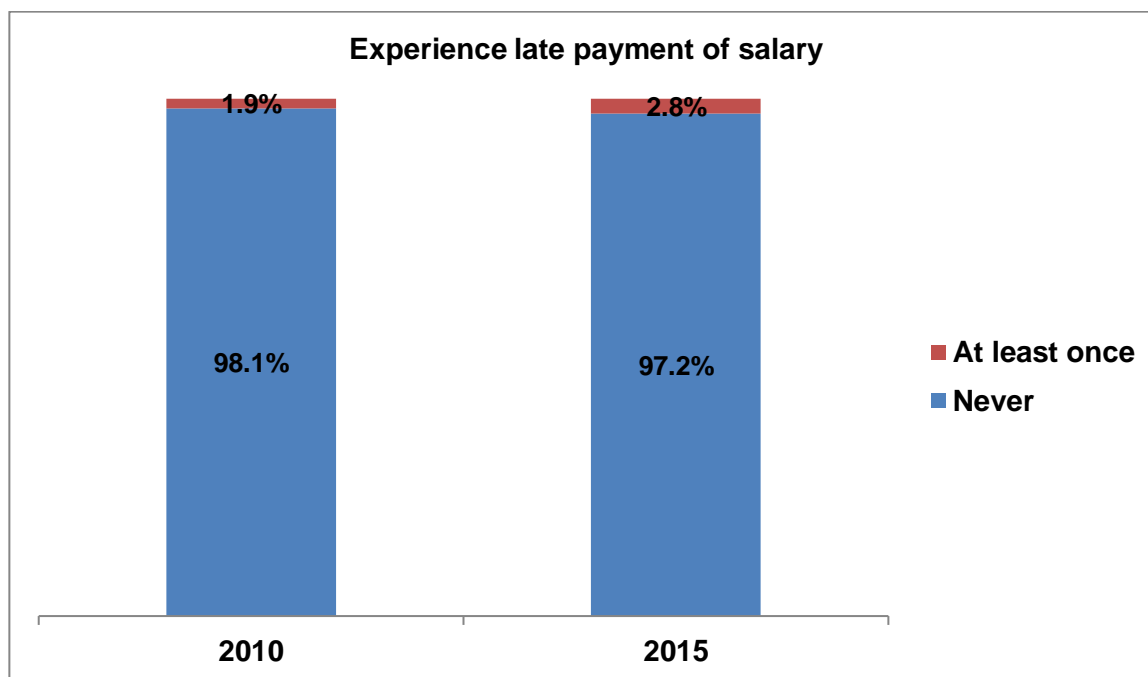


Figure 4.2a

While the vast majority of the FDWs never experienced late salary payment, 37% of the FDWs said they did not receive compensation if they did not take their rest days.

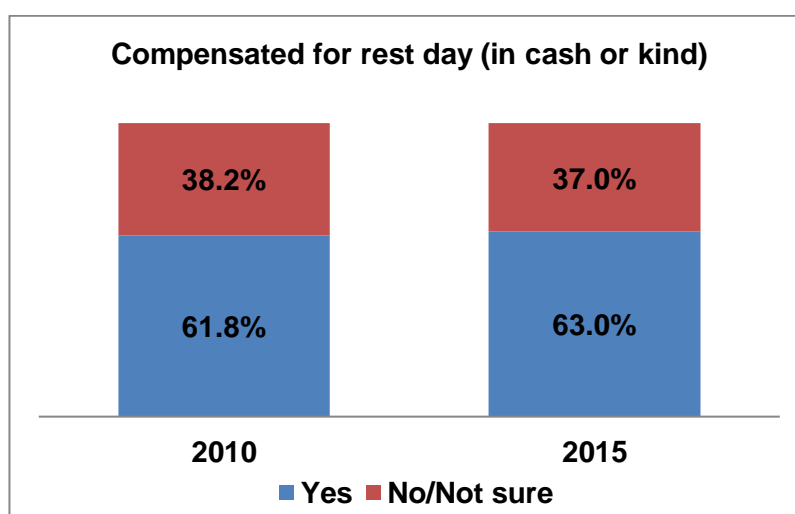


Figure 4.2b

4.3 Food

The majority of FDWs surveyed (97.4%) indicated that they had sufficient food every day. Only 0.5% of the FDWs surveyed indicated they did not have sufficient food.

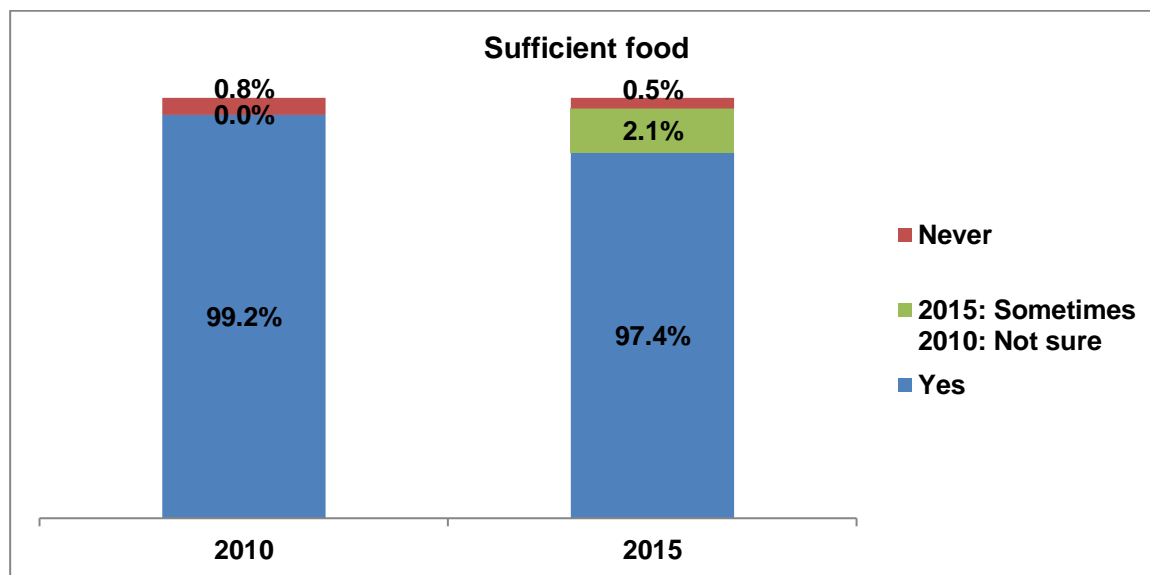


Figure 4.3

4.4 Accommodation

About 94.2% of the FDWs indicated that they were satisfied with the condition of the rooms they were living in, as compared to about 91.6% in 2010*.

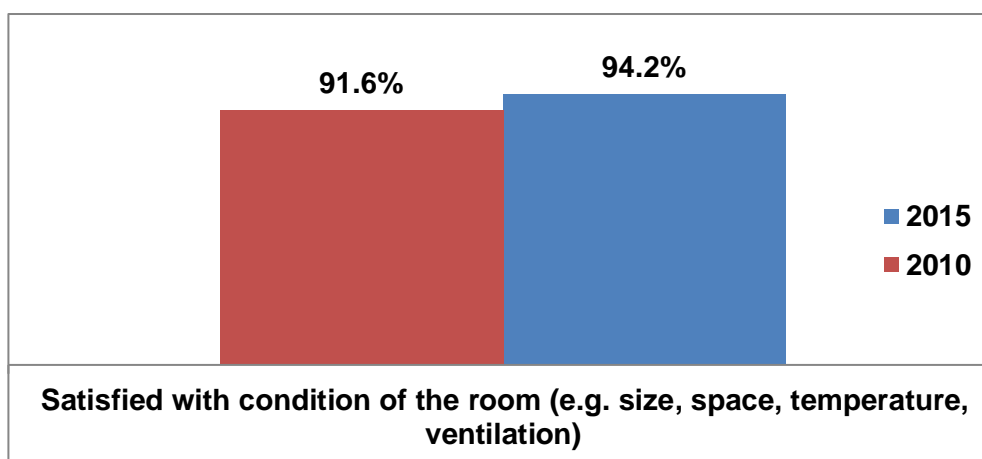


Figure 4.4

*The 2010 result was an average of the positive responses to four similar questions related to the condition of the room. Satisfaction was defined as a rating of 7 and above.

4.5 Safety

In both 2015 and 2010, more than 90% of FDWs indicated that their employers had taught them to operate electrical appliances in a safe manner.

More than 80% of FDWs indicated that their EAs explained the window cleaning safety agreement to them. This agreement was implemented in 2012 to help both employers and FDWs understand MOM's guidelines in cleaning windows safely, so as to ensure the safety of FDWs performing this task.

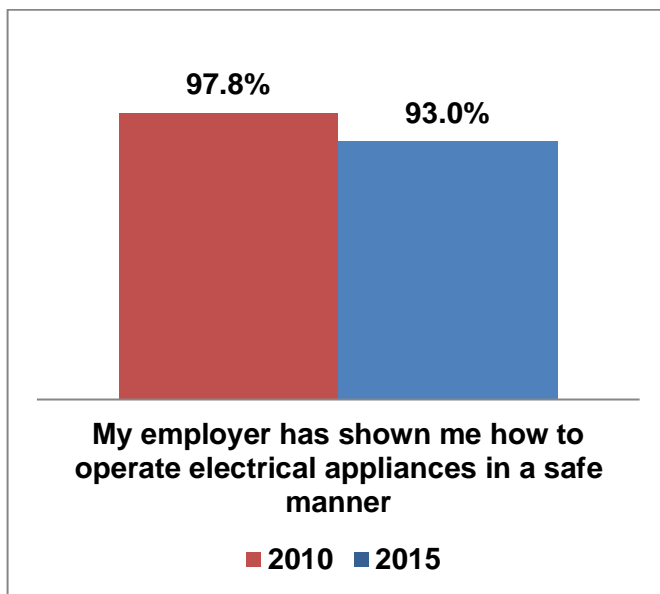


Figure 4.5a

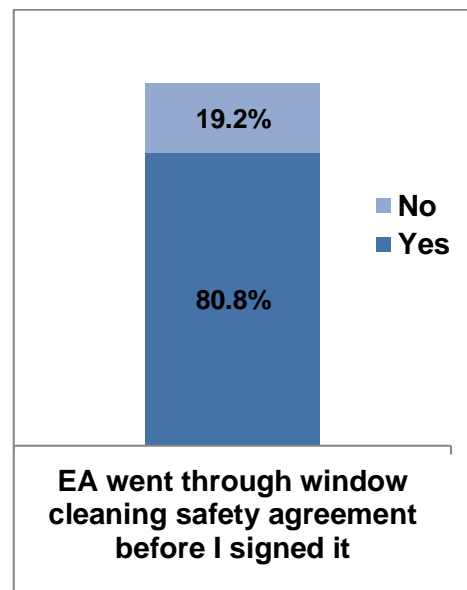


Figure 4.5b

4.6 Rest Days

97.5% of FDWs had at least one rest day a month, up from 53% in 2010. 55.8% had four rest days a month as compared to 25% in 2010.

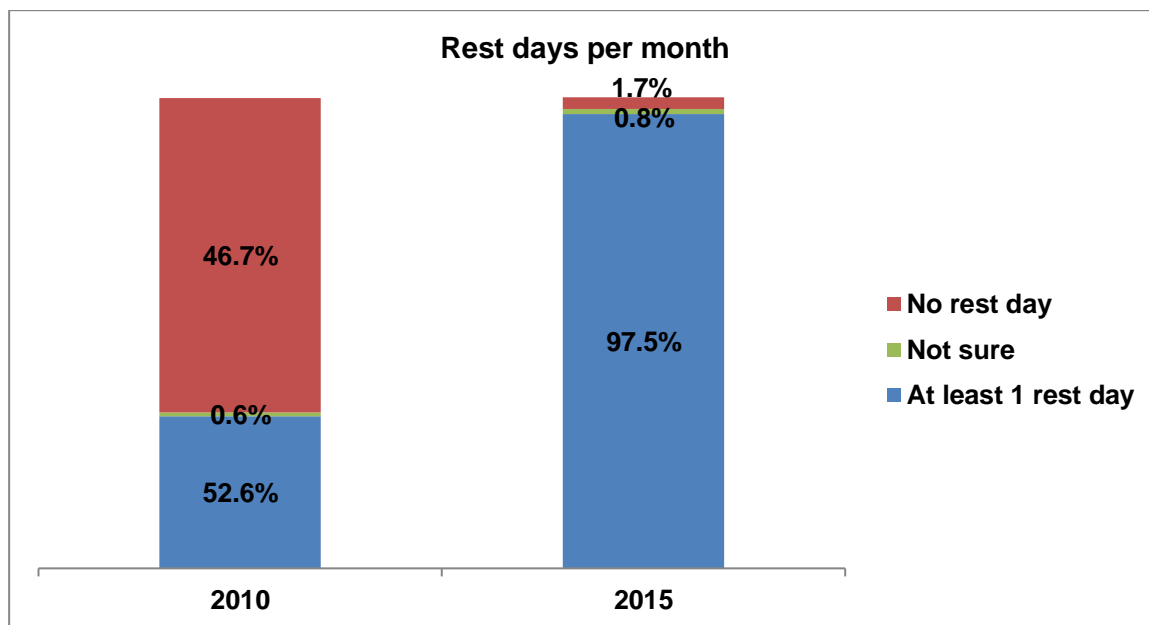


Figure 4.6a

On their rest days, most FDWs would frequent shopping malls (75.6%) and outdoor spaces (67.2%).

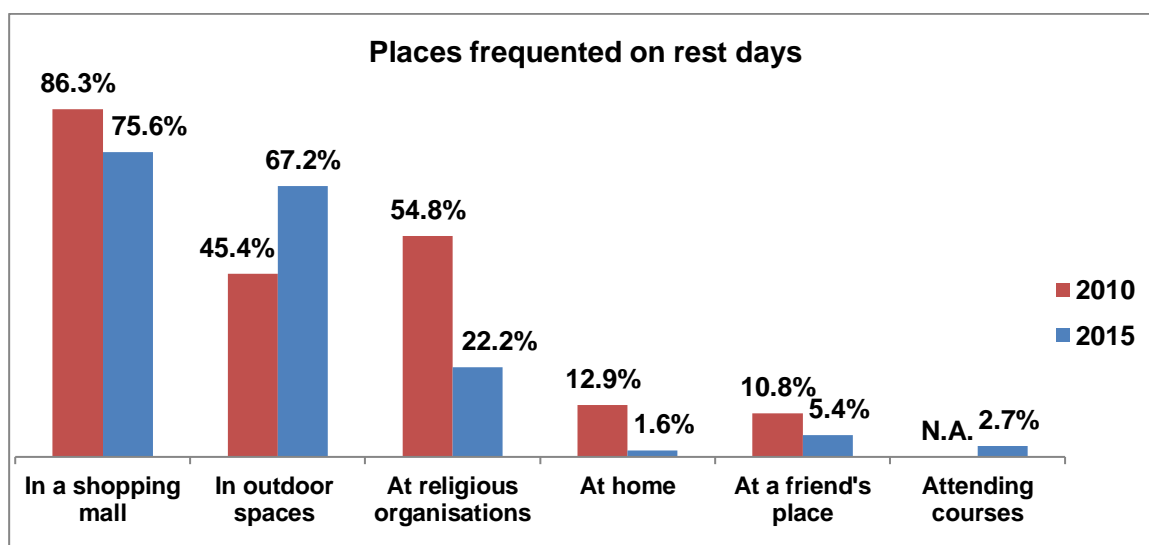


Figure 4.6b

5 Communication, Awareness levels, Channels of Support and Assistance

5.1 Communication

About 98.2% of FDWs had their own mobile phones, as compared to 70.5% in 2010. The majority of these FDWs (at least 96.6%) were able to use their phones to keep in touch with friends and family overseas.

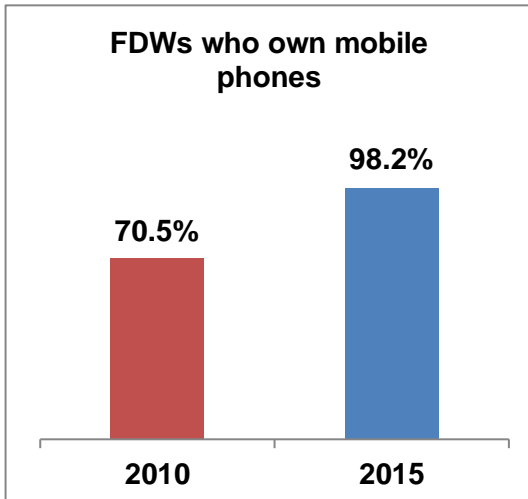


Figure 5.1a

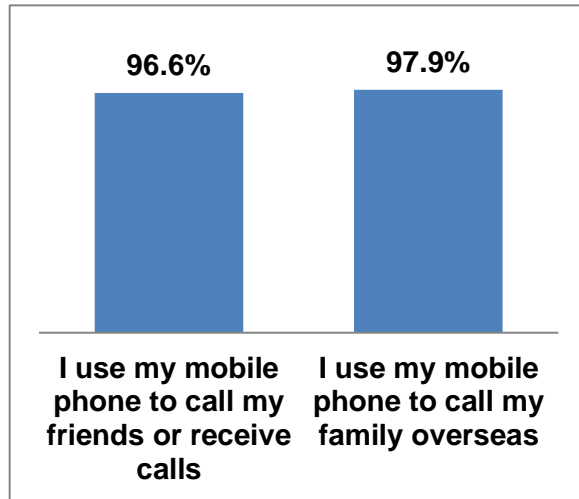


Figure 5.1b

5.2 Awareness levels

Similar to 2010, most FDWs were aware of their rights, employer responsibilities and believed in MOM being able to render assistance should they encounter problems.

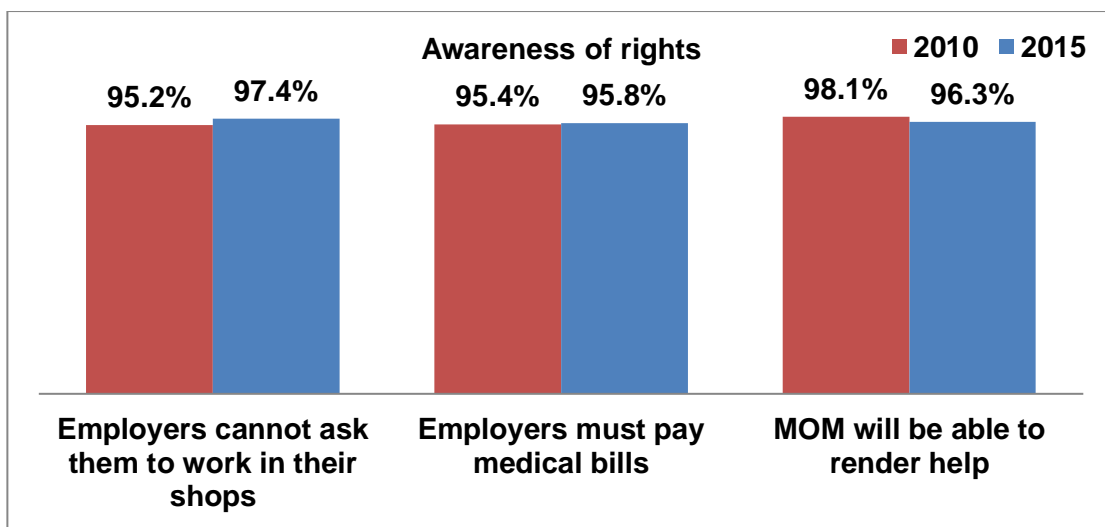


Figure 5.2

5.3 Settling-In Programme

On average, 95% of FDWs found the Settling-In Programme, implemented in 2012, useful in educating them on issues related to working in Singapore such as safety, rights and responsibilities.

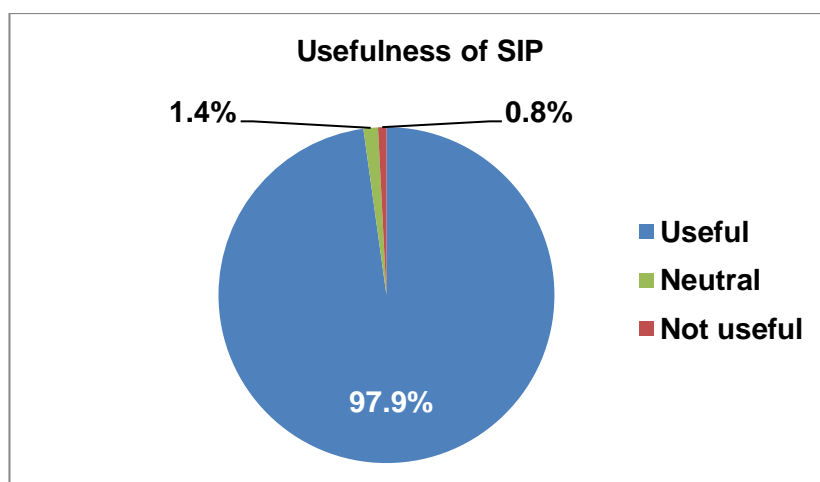


Figure 5.3

5.4 Channels of Support and Assistance

About 93.2% of FDWs indicated that they had sufficient emotional and social support while working in Singapore, including support from their friends and relatives.

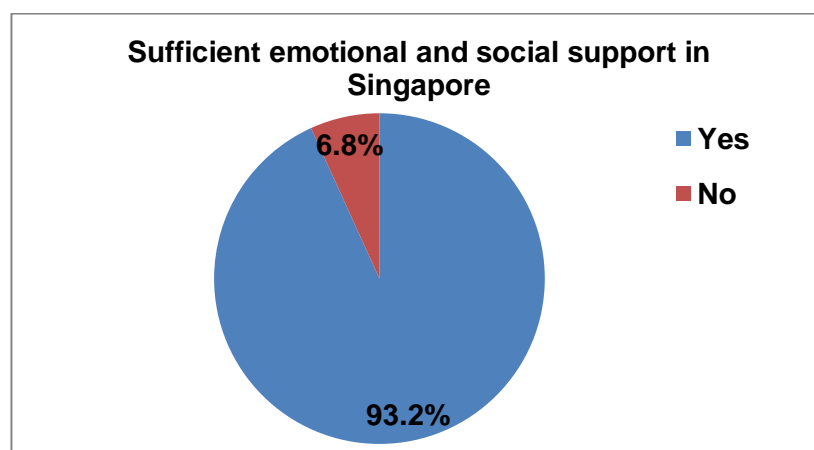


Figure 5.4a

The top three channels of assistance in 2015 were the same as in 2010*.

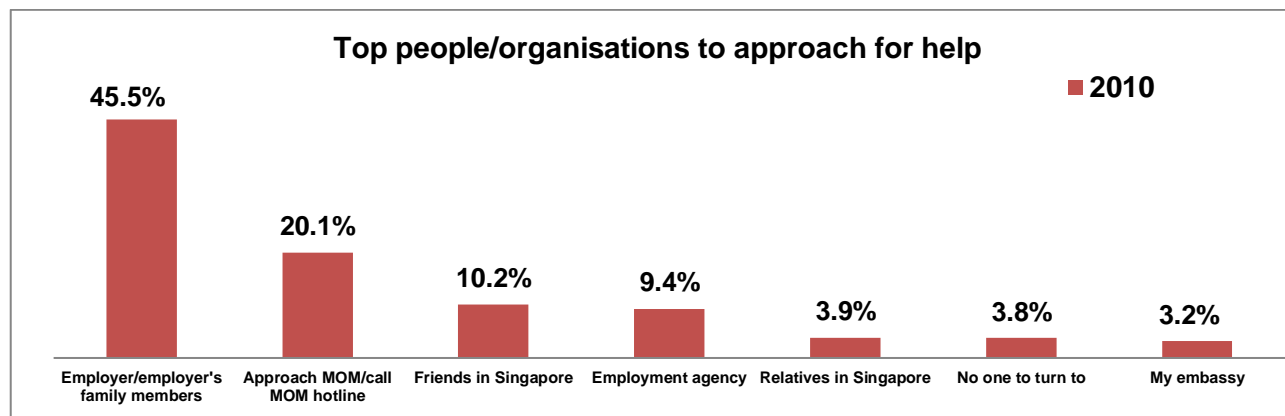


Figure 5.4b (2010)

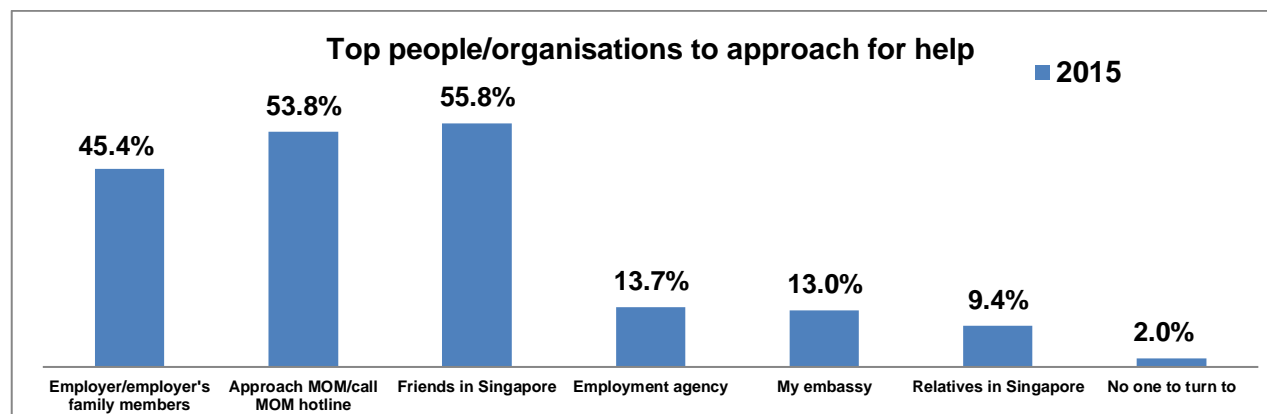


Figure 5.4b (2015)

*This was a multiple-answer question in 2015 and a single-answer question in 2010.