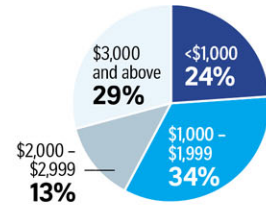
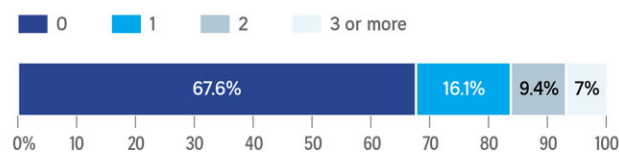


Survey of food delivery riders

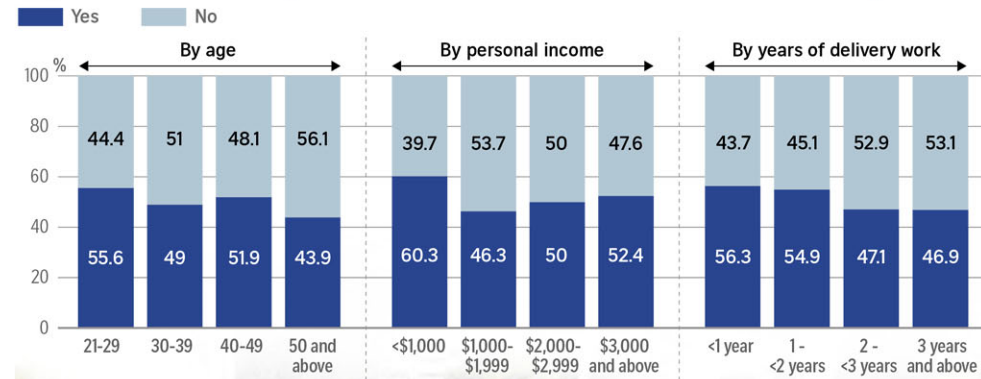
Respondents by monthly income from food delivery



Number of accidents that required medical attention



Respondents on whether they want Central Provident Fund contributions from food delivery work



Source: INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

1 in 3 food delivery workers required medical aid after accidents: IPS poll

Kok Yufeng
Transport Correspondent

About a third of food delivery workers here have been in at least one accident that required medical attention, and those who worked longer hours and earned more were more likely to encounter a mishap.

Of the 1,002 food delivery workers surveyed by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in July and August, 16.1 per cent said they have been in an accident that was serious enough to require medical help.

About 9.4 per cent have been in two such accidents, and 7 per cent said they have been in three or more.

The IPS poll also found that 38.3 per cent of delivery riders who worked for 51 hours or more each week had met with at least one accident.

At a media briefing on Friday, the researchers said these findings were disconcerting, and echoed a straw poll conducted in October at a dialogue with about 60 platform workers, which included those doing deliveries. In that informal poll, six in 10 said they suffered injuries while on the job.

Dr Mathew Mathews, principal research fellow and head of Social Lab at IPS, said: "It does make it clear to us that if you take this job fairly seriously and put in quite a lot of hours to it to get what will be a decent wage, then you are susceptible to accidents."

An advisory committee, set up in 2021 by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) to better protect platform workers, has said that it is looking at whether the Work Injury Compensation Act can be applied to food delivery workers to provide greater financial protection for them when they are injured.

The committee is expected to deliver its recommendations to the Government by the end of 2022.

Meanwhile, a set of guidelines for the delivery service sector was put up for public consultation by the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council on Oct 28, after a spate of fatal accidents involving delivery workers shone a spotlight on the issue.

Between January 2021 and July

SENDING THE RIGHT SIGNAL

It is important that platform companies find ways to reward those who follow the rules.



DR MATHEW MATHEWS, principal research fellow and head of Social Lab at the Institute of Policy Studies.

2022, five platform delivery workers died on the road, and the WSH Council also noted that the number of delivery riders among fatal motorcycle accident victims has been rising.

The latest IPS survey found that 17.7 per cent of food delivery workers who used motorcycles or electric bicycles rode faster than normally allowed to increase their earnings. This group was more likely to meet with an accident.

Said Dr Mathews: "Riders, we know, want to be responsible. But where there are concerns about wages and earnings, people sometimes may resort to different methods... It is important that platform companies find ways to reward those who follow the rules."

The IPS poll also found a majority of food delivery workers were either unaware or dissatisfied with the benefits that their platforms provide. These include medical benefits and personal accident insurance.

Meanwhile, 46.6 per cent of the food delivery workers polled believed that paying a small membership for an association to represent and negotiate for their interests would be better for their well-being.

About 39.5 per cent of the respondents were members of the National Delivery Champions Association (NDCA), but only 9.1 per cent had asked for help from the NDCA or similar associations.

Those who did so mainly asked for cash assistance.

yufeng@sph.com.sg