



As the sun sets on yet another year of impactful initiatives, we are reminded of a simple truth:
Behind every statistic, There is a story.

Introduction: Samarth program was started by Raah Foundation in 2022 with the objective of bridging the gap of employability for our youth from Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The 35-day training curriculum encompasses a variety of essential topics, including basic computer skills, sales and marketing, tally, and interview skills, among others, to ensure their success during their employment tenure.

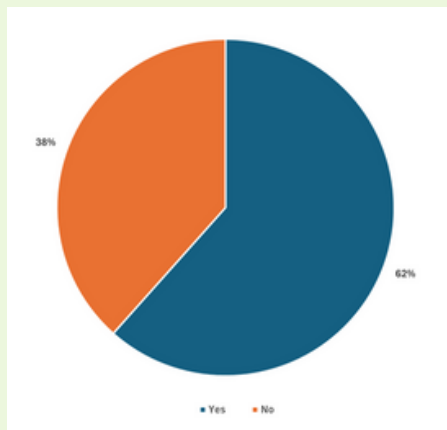
Despite Samarth program being a success, many youths show hesitation in accepting jobs offered through our recruitment program. The reason behind rejecting a placement offer could be multi-faceted and addressing these issues require a deeper understanding of the youth's personal and professional needs

In order to address these challenges, a comprehensive survey was conducted to capture preliminary data to understand the obstacles encountered in pursuing career goals, the industries and job qualities that are most relevant to the youth, and social and personal factors impacting their career aspirations.

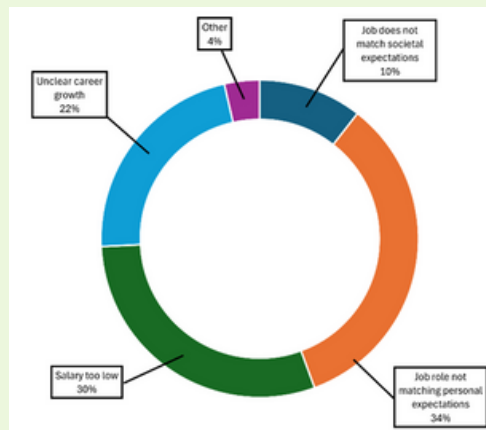
This edition of the newsletter will be a focused piece explaining some of the interesting insights from the survey conducted by the Samarth program with 602 current and former students across our 16 centers.

Survey Results:

1. Have you ever turned down a job offer?

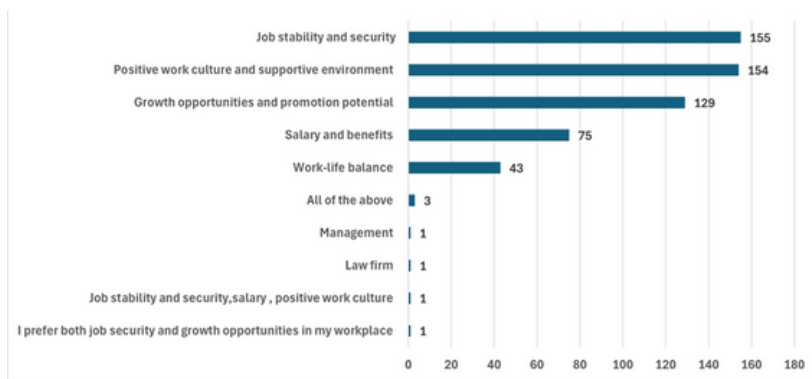


2. Reason to turn down the offer



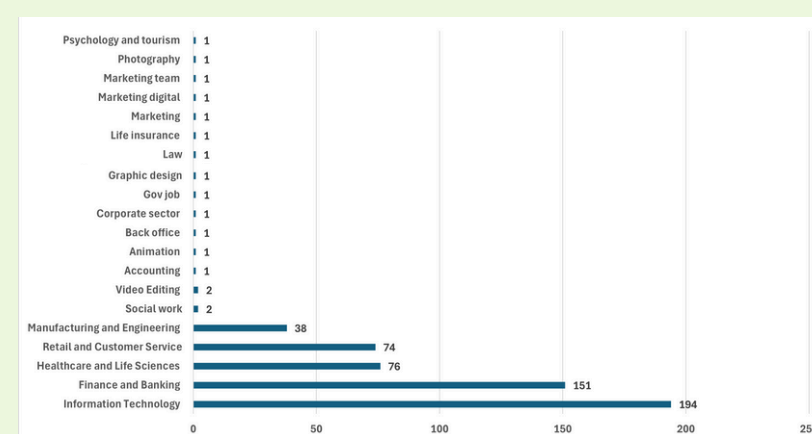
Employers should ensure alignment between job roles and candidate expectations, communicate competitive salaries, and clarify career growth opportunities. Cultural and societal factors should also be addressed to make job offers appealing to a broader range of candidates.

3. What do you value most in a workplace?



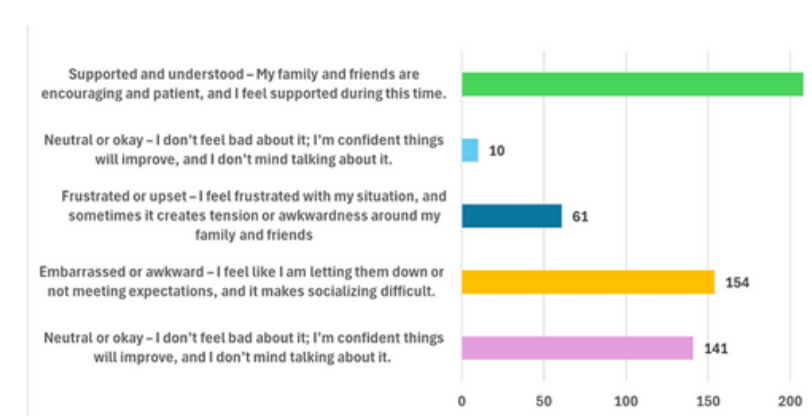
The high prioritization of both job stability and growth opportunities suggests employees desire a secure foundation coupled with pathways for advancement. Nearly equal emphasis on positive work culture signifies that interpersonal relationships and organizational support significantly influence job satisfaction. Salary and work-life balance, while still relevant, take a backseat to more fundamental concerns like stability and culture.

4. What industry do you feel has the most job opportunities?

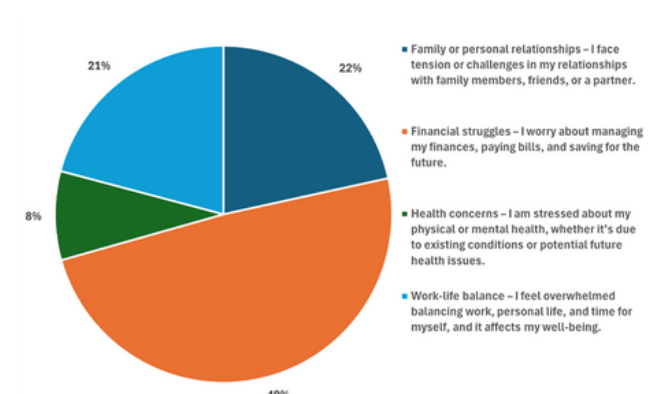


IT and Finance are key areas for job growth and opportunity, signalling a need for continuous investment in skills and training in these sectors. Healthcare and Retail sectors are also significant and need targeted efforts to attract and retain talent. Industries with fewer responses might benefit from awareness campaigns or targeted initiatives to showcase career opportunities. This graph demonstrates a clear preference for established and fast-growing industries, reflecting broader economic trends.

5. How does being unemployed make you feel around your family and friends?

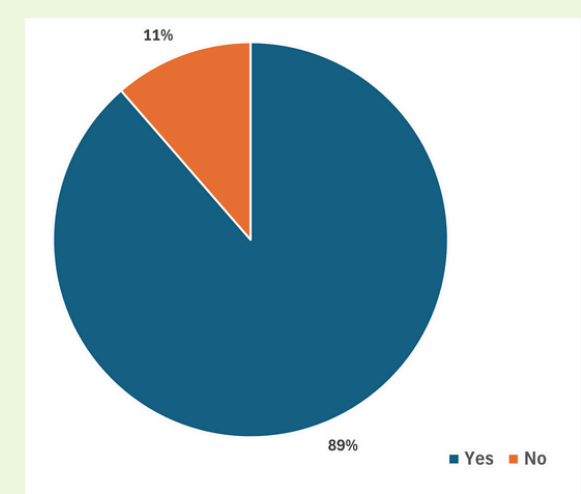


6. What are your main sources of stress or worry in daily life besides unemployment?

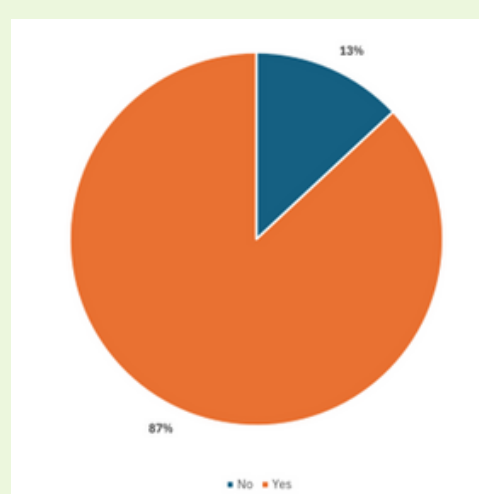


Unemployment and financial insecurity are deeply intertwined, as both graphs underscore the significant role of financial challenges in driving stress. While many feel supported during unemployment, relationship stress remains a key issue, indicating that supportive environments are not universal. Health and Work-Life Balance are less significant stressors, suggesting that financial and relational pressures overshadow concerns about health or balancing personal/professional life.

7. Do you feel you have a support system (friends, family, community) to discuss the challenges in your life?



8. Do you think having a counselling service to overcome challenges in your personal life help you achieve your professional goals?



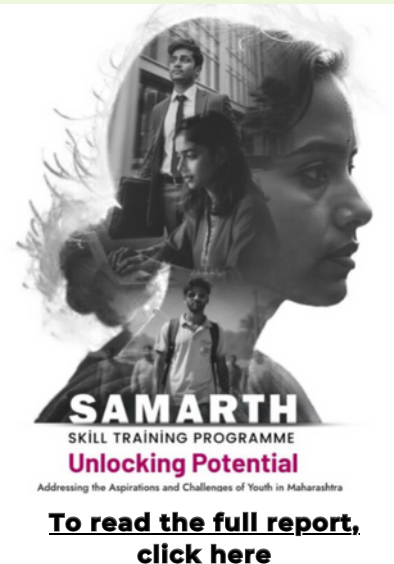
Both graphs demonstrate that individuals value having a mechanism for addressing challenges. While 89% feel supported by their social networks, a similar 87% believe in the role of counselling services, showing a complementary relationship between informal and formal support. Some individuals (the 11% lacking informal support systems) might see counselling as essential to fill the gap in their lives, aligning with the high belief in its importance (87%). The higher percentage of respondents relying on informal support systems (89%) suggests that familial and community ties remain primary for many, with counselling seen as a secondary but significant option. A small percentage in both graphs (13% and 11%) either lack support systems or do not see counselling as beneficial. This group may require targeted outreach to understand and address their unique needs.

Conclusion:

The initial survey report suggests a need for a comprehensive solutions involving job market alignment, targeted interventions, and enhanced support systems to address the youth's career challenges comprehensively.

Creating more awareness amongst the youth about the current market conditions is important to bridge the gap between the expectations and the reality. Career counselling, exposure visits and talks by industry experts will help mitigate this gap to a certain extent.

A further investigation of these survey results with in-person interviews and focus groups with the youth will help us dig deeper into the problem and come up with possible solutions catered to the specific needs of the youth.



~ Monica Rao