

IMMIGRANT YOUTH'S PERSPECTIVES ON 'IMMIGRANT YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAM': PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

SERPERI SEVGUR, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY NATIONAL CONFERENCE, TORONTO

OCTOBER 31ST, 2019

IMMIGRANT YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAM (IYE)

- Program offered by the Immigrant Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)
- A 30-week newcomer youth employment program designed for newcomers to overcome employment related barriers.
- Since 2016: 108 participants have graduated, predominantly of refugee background
- 300 hours of classroom learning + 600 on-the-job training –with employers- across a range of sectors.
- Financial and supplemental resources (such as child care and safety gear) are provided
- a mixed method study funded by Child and Youth Refugee Coalition: We wanted to hear back from the graduates to identify the strengths/benefits as well as the points/issues that need to be addressed or strengthened in relation to the IYE.

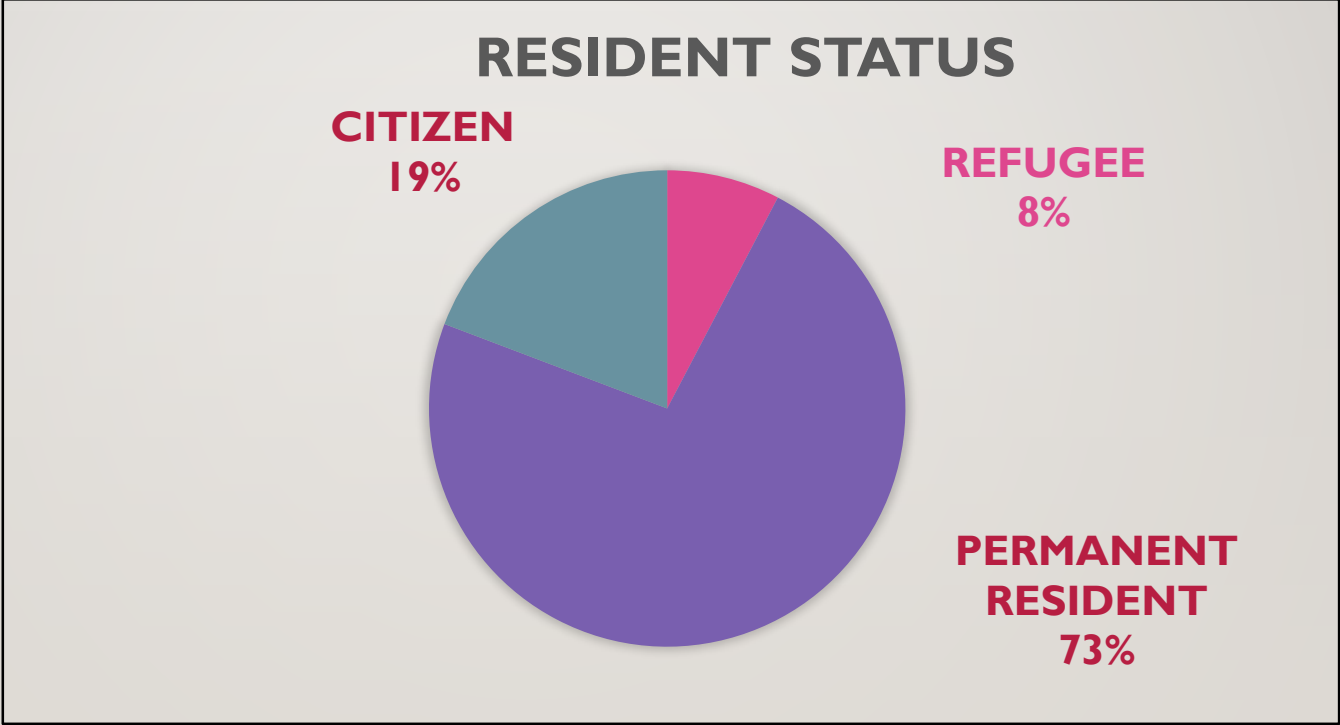
THE SURVEY

- Opinio Survey: 20 June -31 August 2019
- Contacted 101 participants: 26 responded: 25.75% response rate
- It consisted of 3 parts:
 - Demographics,
 - Work Experience: 23 Likert Scale Statements on work experience/satisfaction
 - IYE Experience: 21 Likert Scale Statements on IYE experience/satisfaction

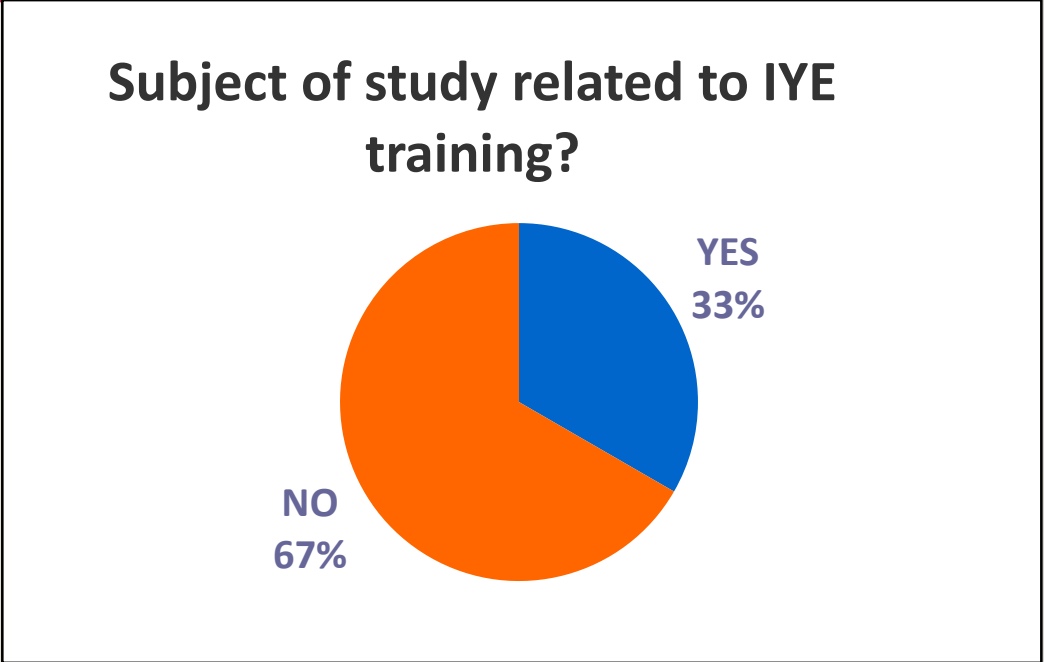
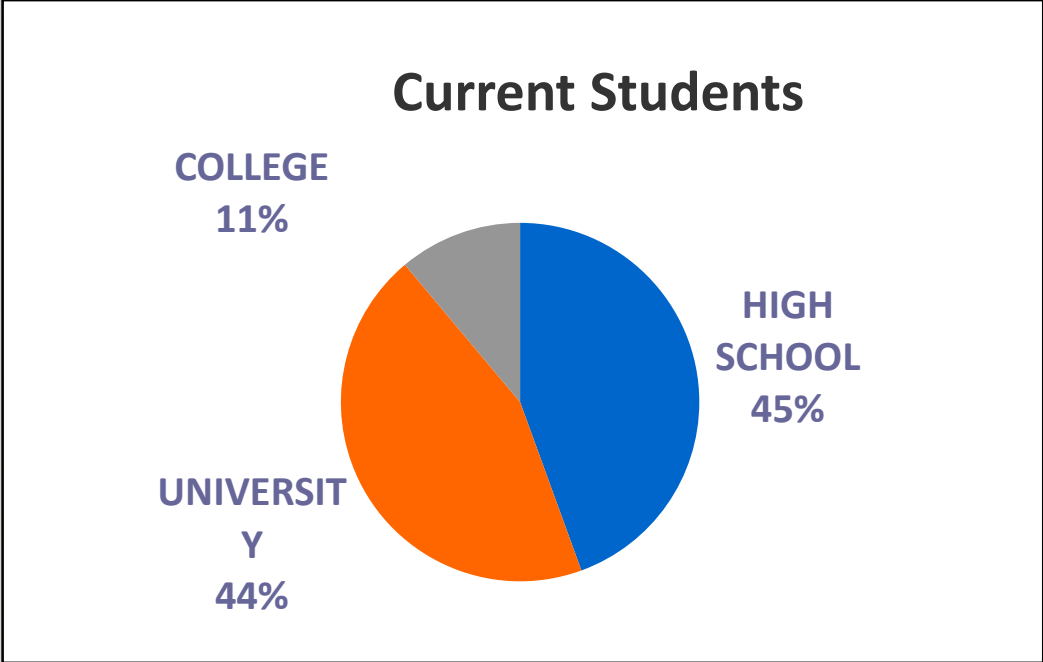
THE RESPONDENTS

- Respondents' age ranged from 19 to 32, with an average of 25.5
- 73% were female, 27% male.
- Their country of origin were: DR Congo, Syria, Eritrea, Jordan, Russia, Burundi, Somalia, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Gambia, India, Africa, Canada
- The majority live in NS, with a couple of respondents in Alberta and British Columbia.
- Time since their graduation ranged from 5 to 30 months, with an average of 15 months.
- 10% of received further degrees in Canada & 43% are students

THE RESPONDENTS



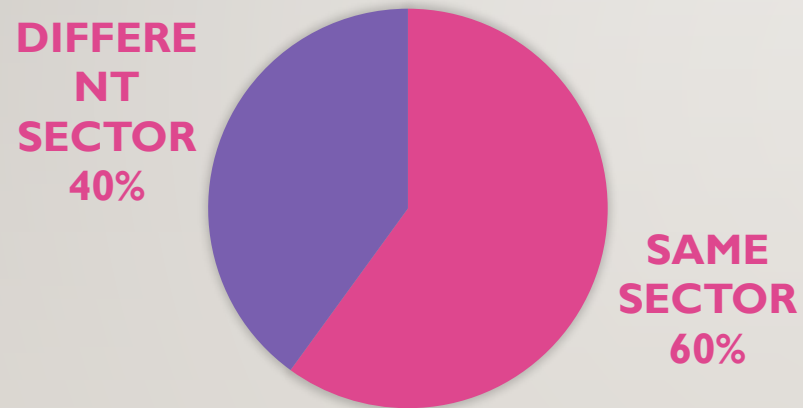
THE RESPONDENTS



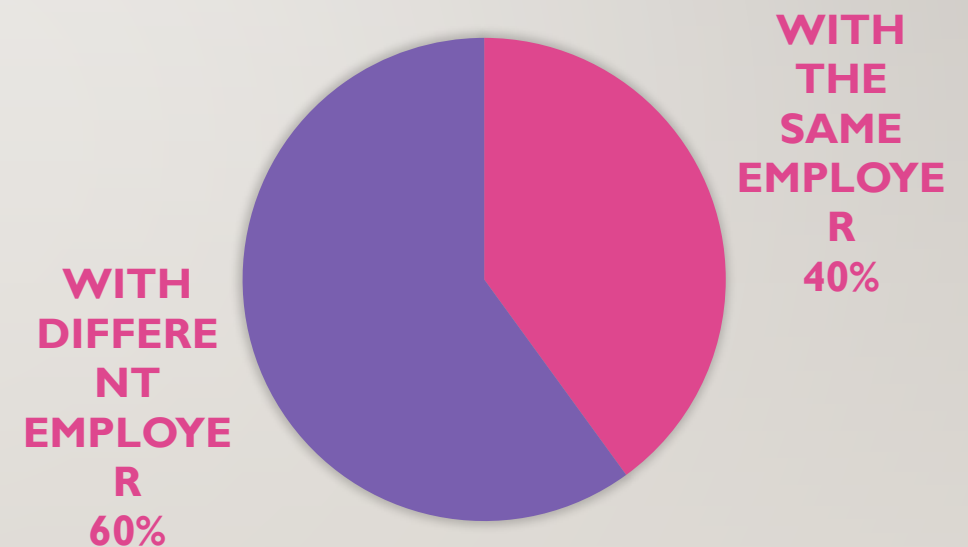
THE RESPONDENTS: CURRENT WORK STATUS

- Almost half of respondents have changed jobs in Canada (48%) and 80 % of them reported that IYE skills helped them find their other job
-

THOSE WHO WORK



THOSE WHO WORK -2

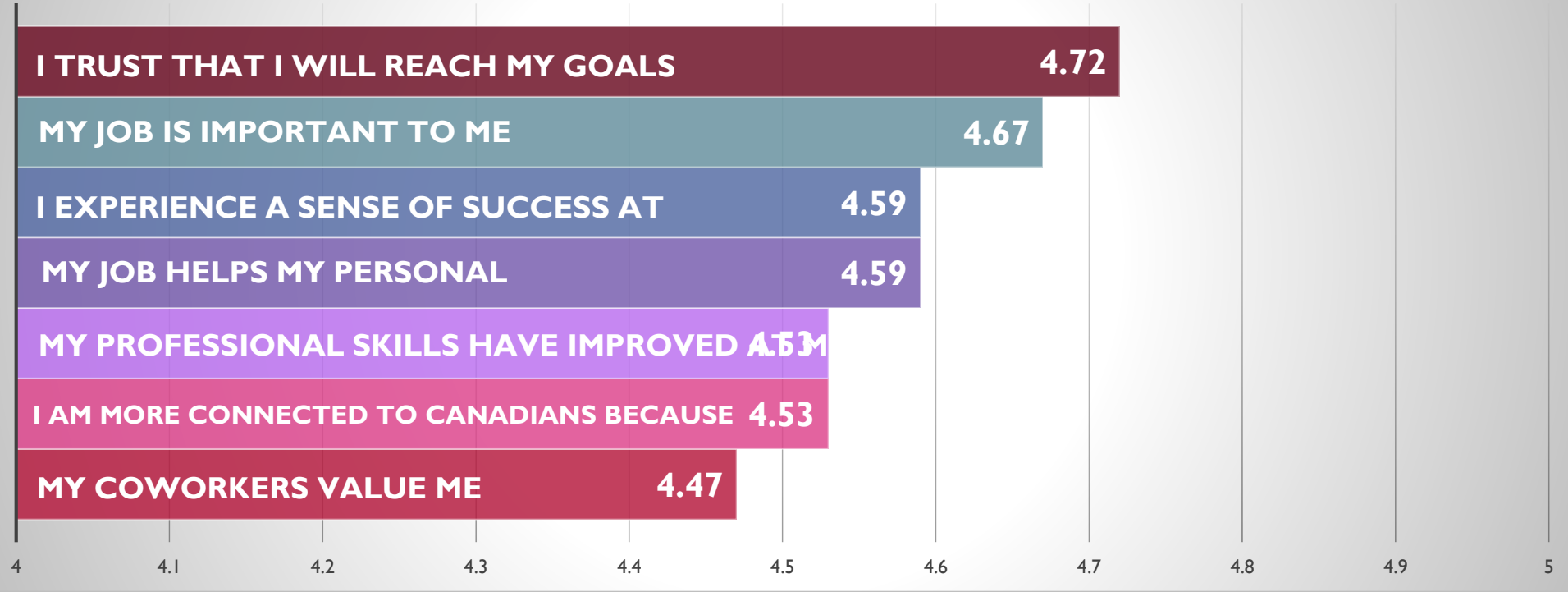


HIGH SATISFACTION RATES



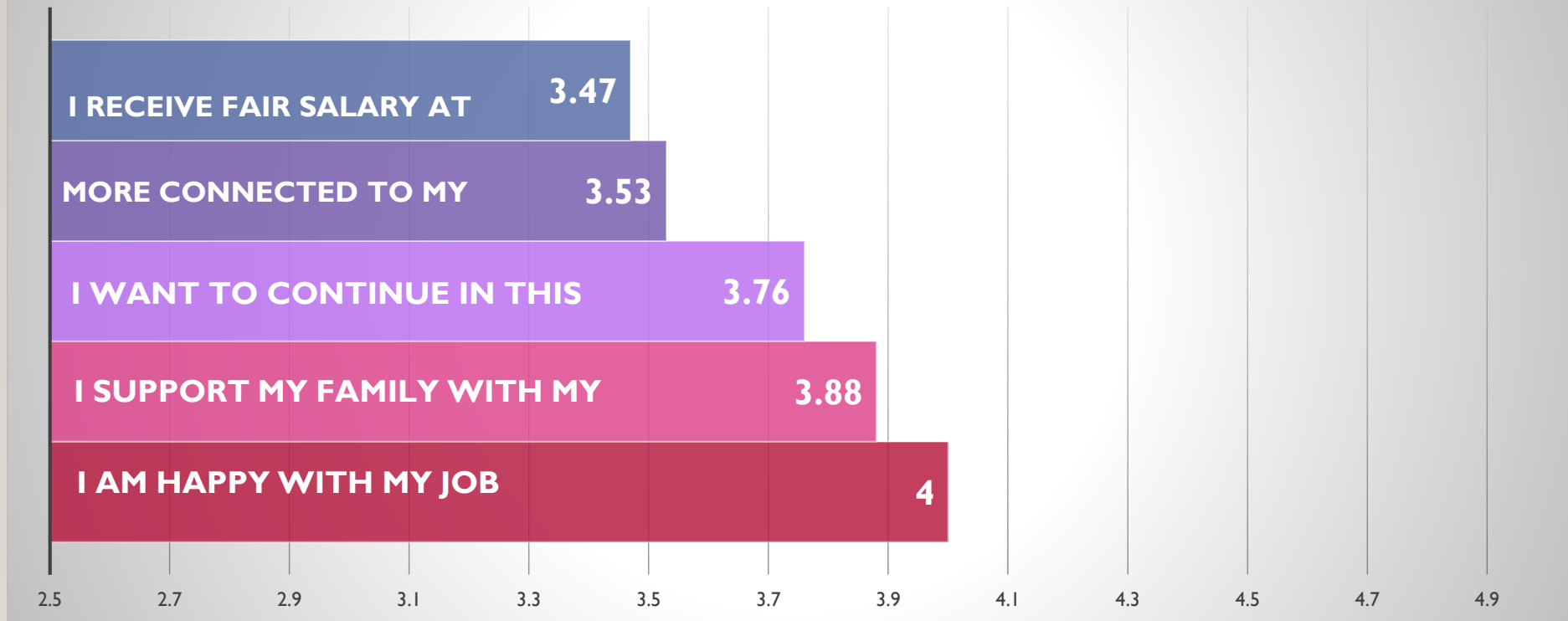
WORK EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

Top Rated 5 Work Statements



WORK EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

Lowest ranked 5 Work Statements

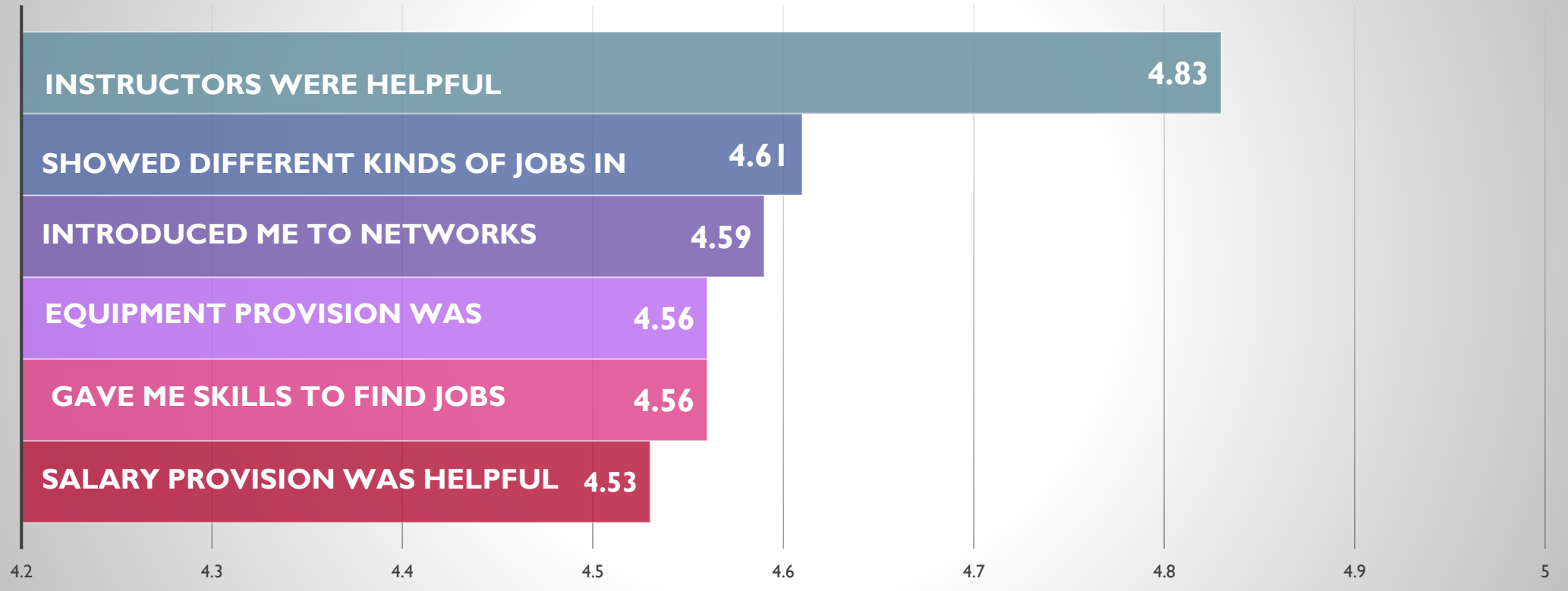


WORK EXPERIENCE

- respondent scores are high across all questions regarding their work experience, suggesting that they are pleased with their current or recent work experience, although at a lower degree than their satisfaction with the IYE (4.28/5 versus 4.4/5)
- They are quite self-confident, which is closely related to their sense of success and feelings of being valued at their job, and the Canadian job market and society. They attach great importance to their job and appreciate the opportunities that it provides to them in terms of connections and self-development.
- At the lower end: salaries are neither fair nor enough for their families.
- Still, 'I am happy with my job' –although one of the lowest rated- stands at 4/5.
- Also, the indication that respondents are likely to change jobs –and if they do so they are very likely to use the skills that they learned at IYE.

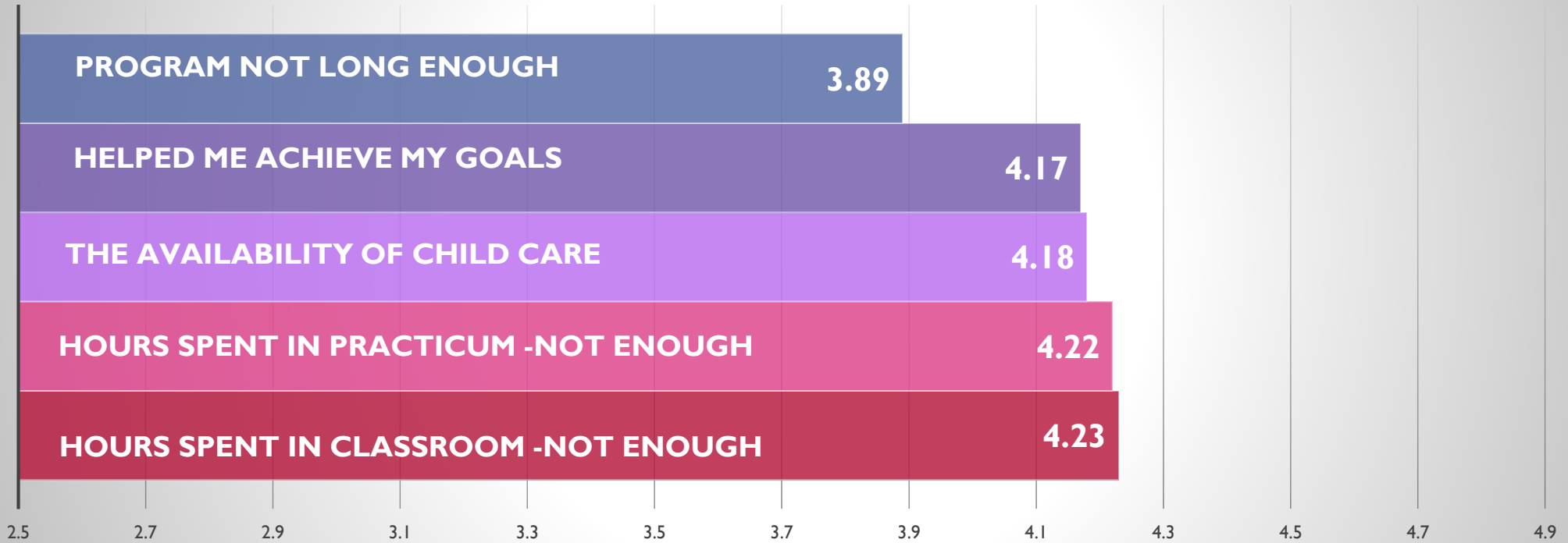
IYE EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

Top 5 strongest aspects of IYE program



IYE EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

5 lowest-graded aspects of IYE program



IYE EXPERIENCE

- respondent scores across all questions are high regarding their IYE experience, suggesting that they were very pleased with the program (4.4/5 average for all questions).
- IYE program's strong suite are its instructors and its introduction to different kinds of jobs, networks as well as skills. The provision of equipment and salary during the program are also highly appreciated.
- At the lower end we see (relative) dissatisfaction with the length of the program (both classroom and practicum hours). In relation, some respondents were (again, relatively) questioning whether the program helped them achieve their goals: this reservation may be because the program is considered to be not long enough.
- Finally, respondents did not attach as much importance to the provision of childcare as they did to the provision of equipment and salary.

CONCLUSIONS

- They have gained skills to find/change jobs!
- They think very favourably of the IYE program –instructors, provision, and access to information about different sectors/jobs and networks in the Canadian labour market
- They are happy with their jobs and what their jobs bring them: feeling values, successful with a solid sense of professional and personal development markers, they feel more connected to Canadians.
- They have not yet achieved their goals –many are back in school, many have changed jobs, and feel that they will not continue in the same sector. They are not making enough money –yet they are very hopeful that they will achieve their goals!
- Based on what the participants told us about the length of the program: Perhaps we can develop a ‘module’ approach where students can come back and attend even after they graduate (in the weekends, or once a month). It is clear that the program has benefited the participants and it has potential to do more!

