

Youth in Transition: **Navigating Jobs, Education, and Changing Political Scenario Post July Movement**

BRAC Center Inn | 7 July 2025

Study Team

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Background

Bangladesh is currently in a crucial phase of demographic transition.



Around **35.16%** of our population is in the age range of 15-34 years



Youth (15–34) unemployment is **13.85%**, triple the national average of 3.5%

NEET

22% youths (15-29 years) of working-age population are NEET

Source: Population and Housing Census 2022 and Quarterly Labor Force Survey 2022

The **July Movement**, started as a quota reform protest, has driven political, institutional and social reforms in Bangladesh—offering a key opportunity to gauge youth perceptions of the job market and these changes.

Objective

This study intends to

- Examine the **status quo** of youth across the country.
- Evaluate how prepared young people feel for the **current job market and** identify the types of **employment opportunities** they are considering or pursuing.
- Identify **gaps** between youth education and training and the demands available employment opportunities.
- Explore **youth perceptions** of the direction, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of **political, social, and institutional reforms** following the July Movement.
- Identify **priority areas for reform** as expressed by youth, with attention to variations across gender, geographic location, and socio-economic background.
- Assess whether **young people feel hopeful or disillusioned** about the potential for meaningful change.

Methodology & Approach

This study followed a **mixed-methods approach**, combining both **quantitative survey (conducted from May 20 to May 31, 2025)** and **qualitative interviews** to understand the diverse realities, experiences, and perspectives of young people across Bangladesh, with a follow-up survey planned after six months (October/November 2025).

Quantitative Survey

- **Target group:** Youth aged **15–35 years** (National Youth Policy, 2017)
- **Nationwide coverage:**
 - 8 divisions, 2 districts per division, 2 upazilas per district
 - Covered both **rural and urban** areas
- **Enumerator-based household survey**
 - Households selected using **random interval (every 5th household)**
 - **In-person data collection**
 - **Consent** obtained for participation in the next round.

Qualitative Component

- **17 case studies** conducted in interview style
 - Capturing life stories, challenges, struggles, successes, ambitions, demands and opinions
 - Participants: entrepreneur, job holder, freelancer, returnee migrant, unemployed youth, among others.
 - From all 8 Divisions
 - Minimum 2 case studies per division

Survey Sample Framework & Coverage

Sampling Framework

Quantitative Sampling Criteria

Total respondents: 2,000 youth

Age group: 15–35 years

Rural-urban ratio: ~50:50

Gender ratio: ~50:50

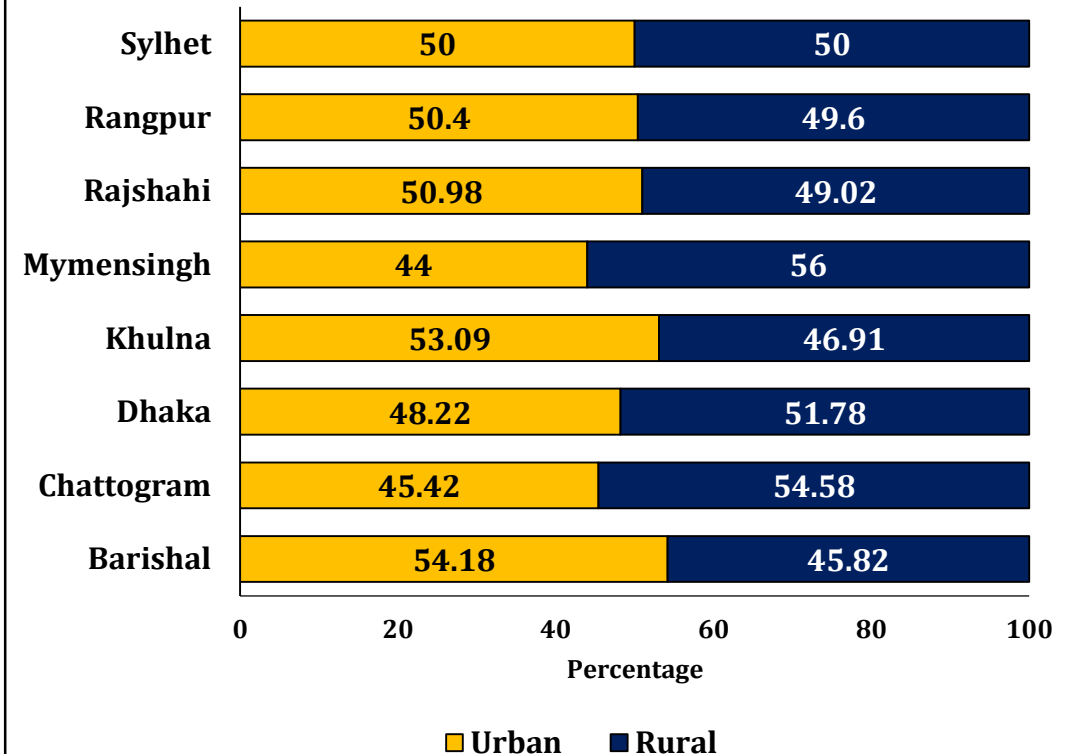
Education level: 40% below SSC, 60% SSC and above

Religion: Minimum 10% Non-Muslim representation

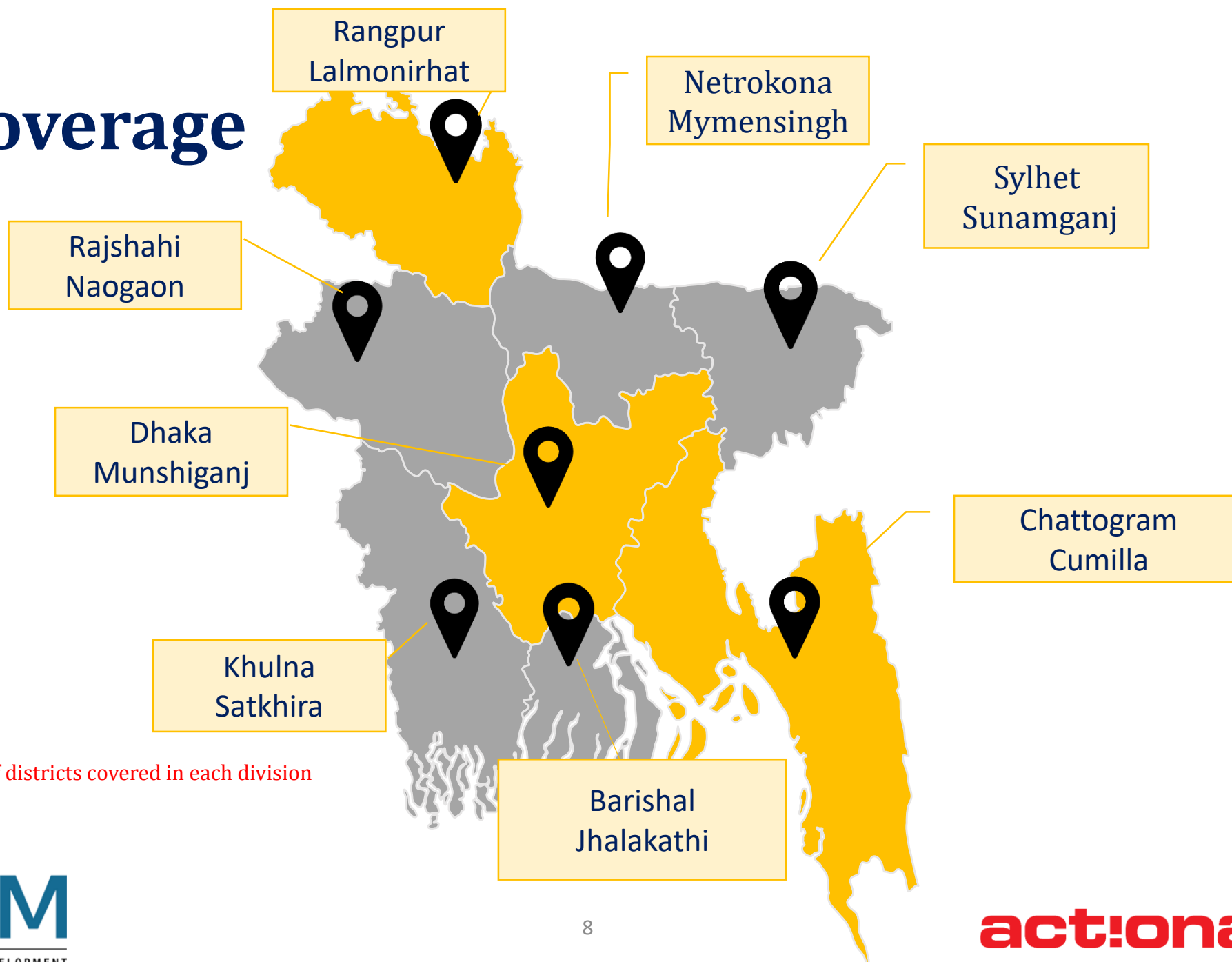
Qualitative Sampling Criteria

Case study selection: Diverse youth profiles based on region, occupation, challenges, and aspirations

Survey Coverage



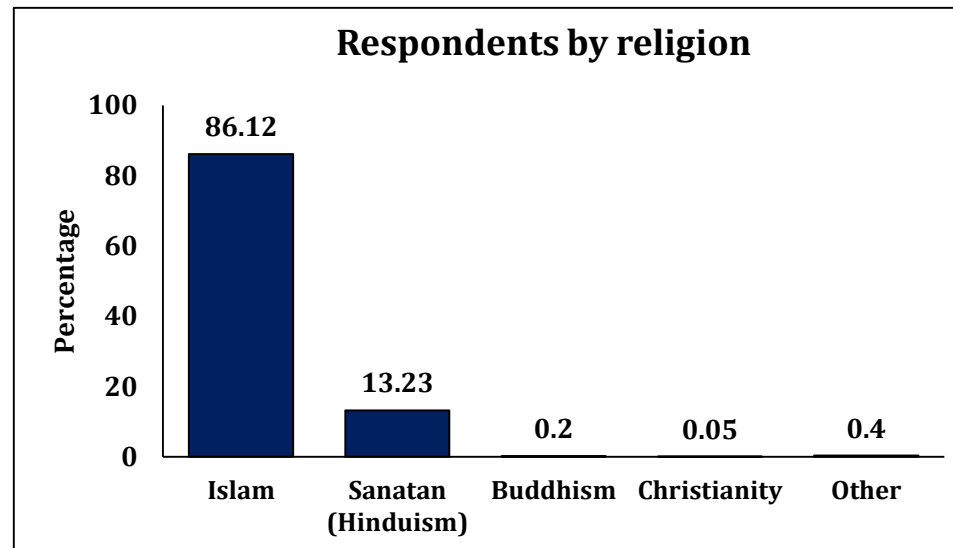
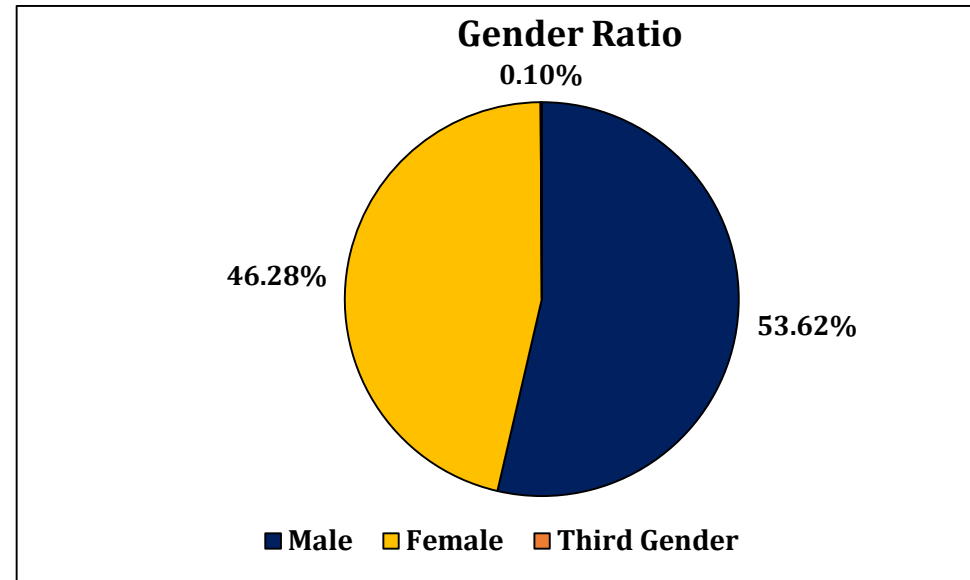
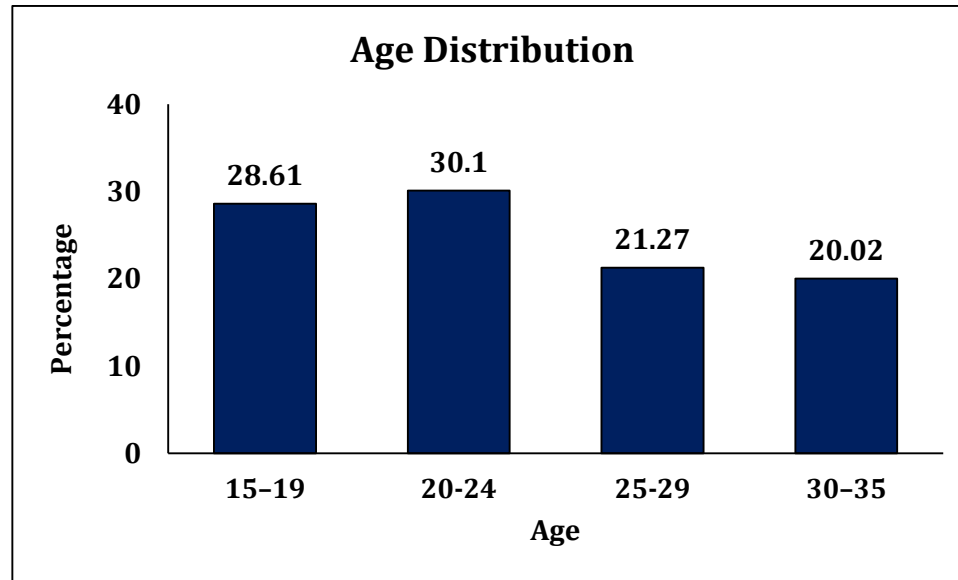
Survey Coverage



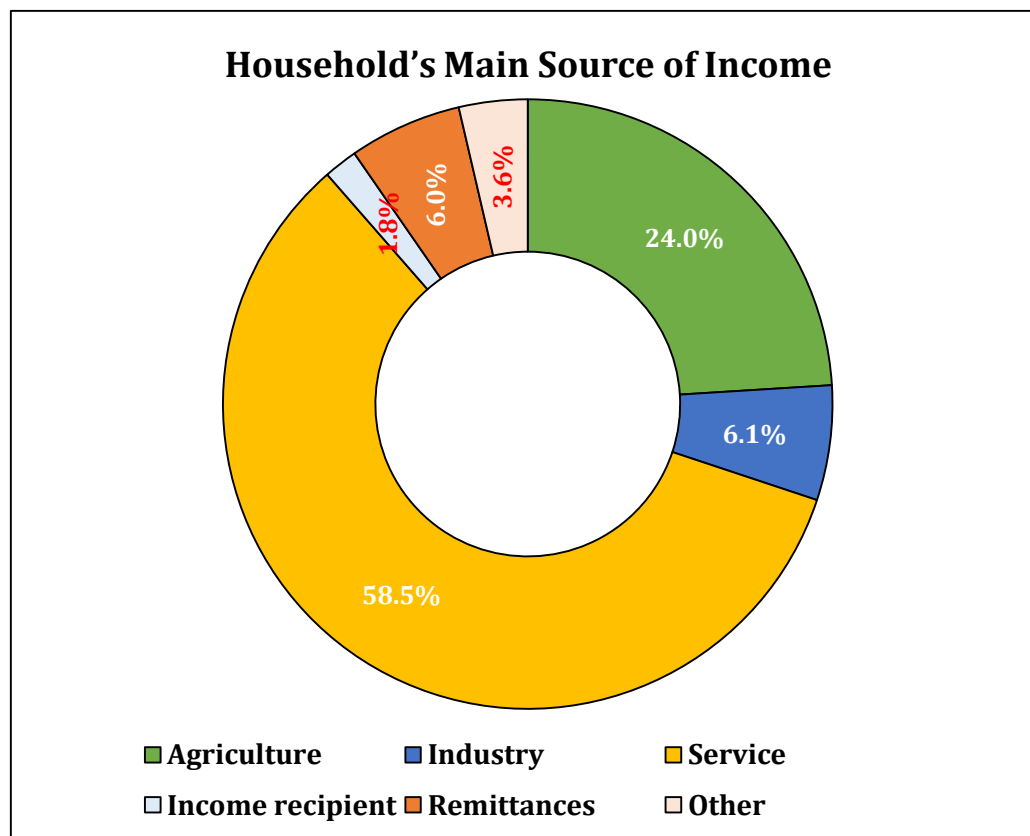
*The map highlights the list of districts covered in each division

Section A: Background Information of Respondents

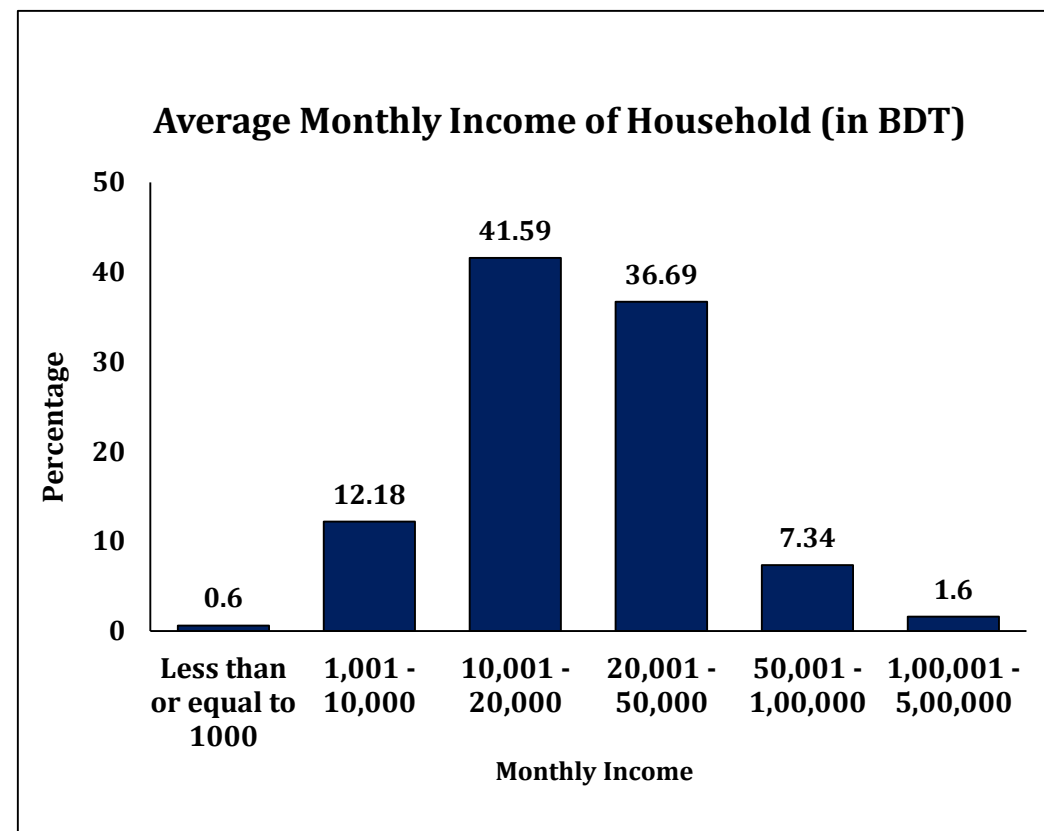
Demographic Information



Household Income Status

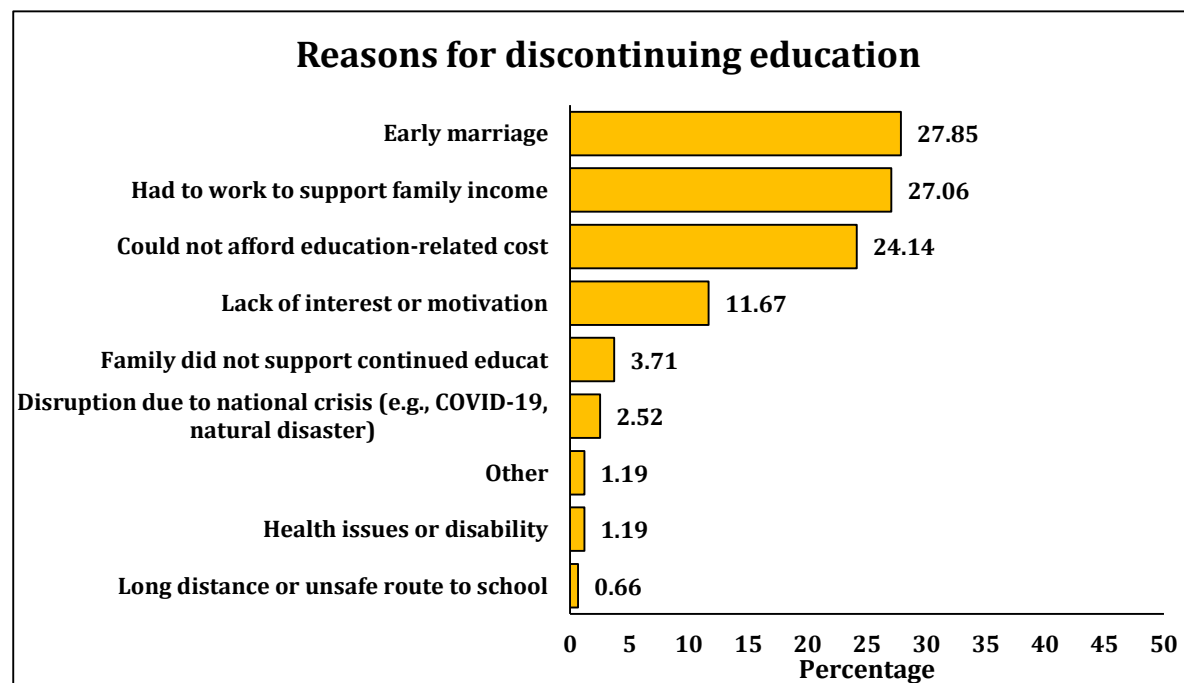
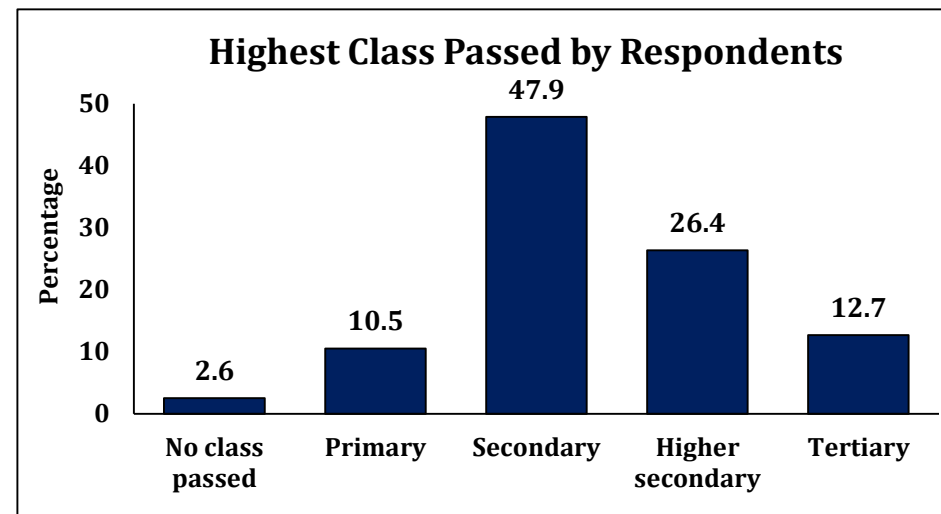
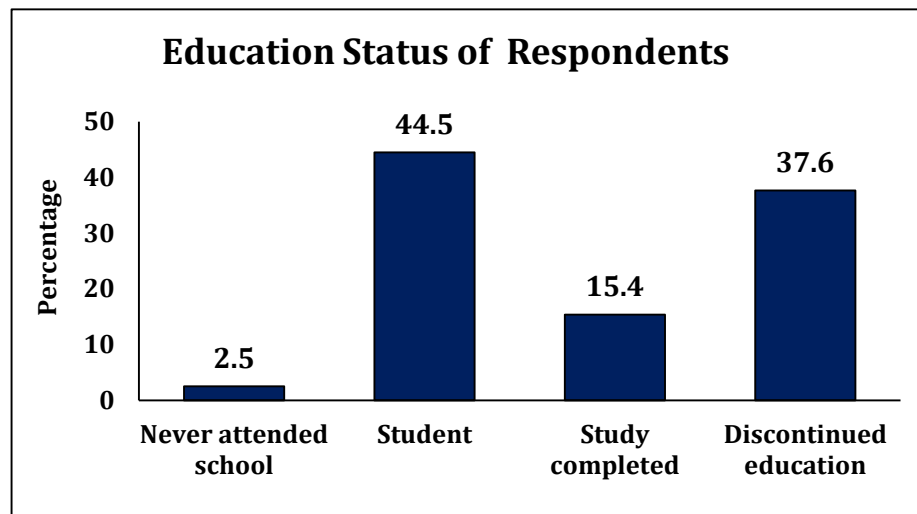


Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

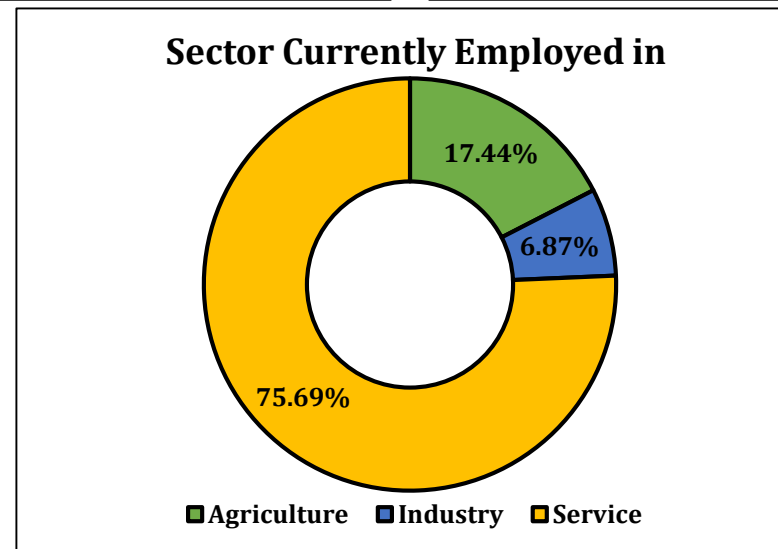
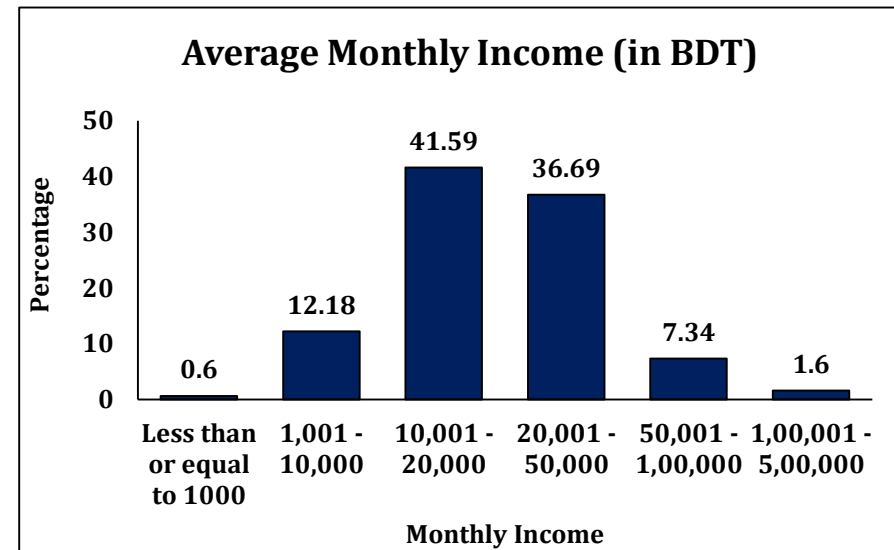
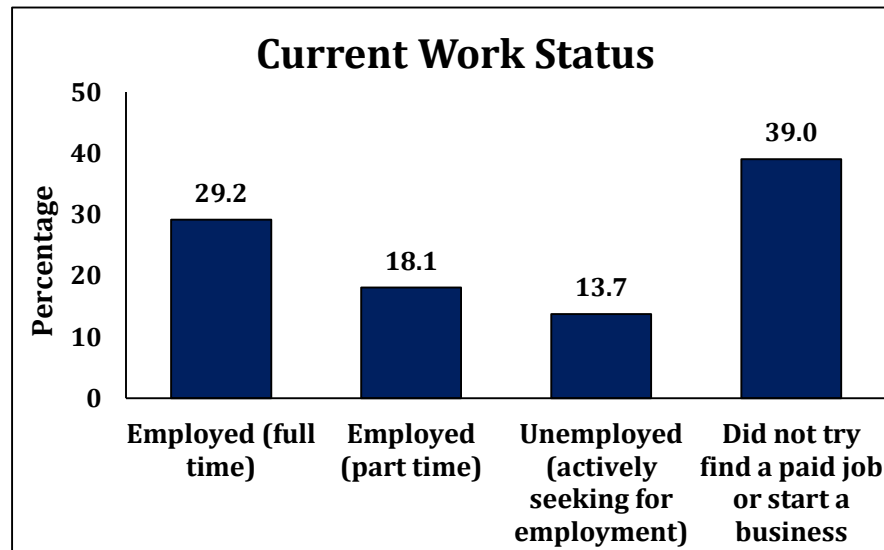


Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Respondent's Education Status

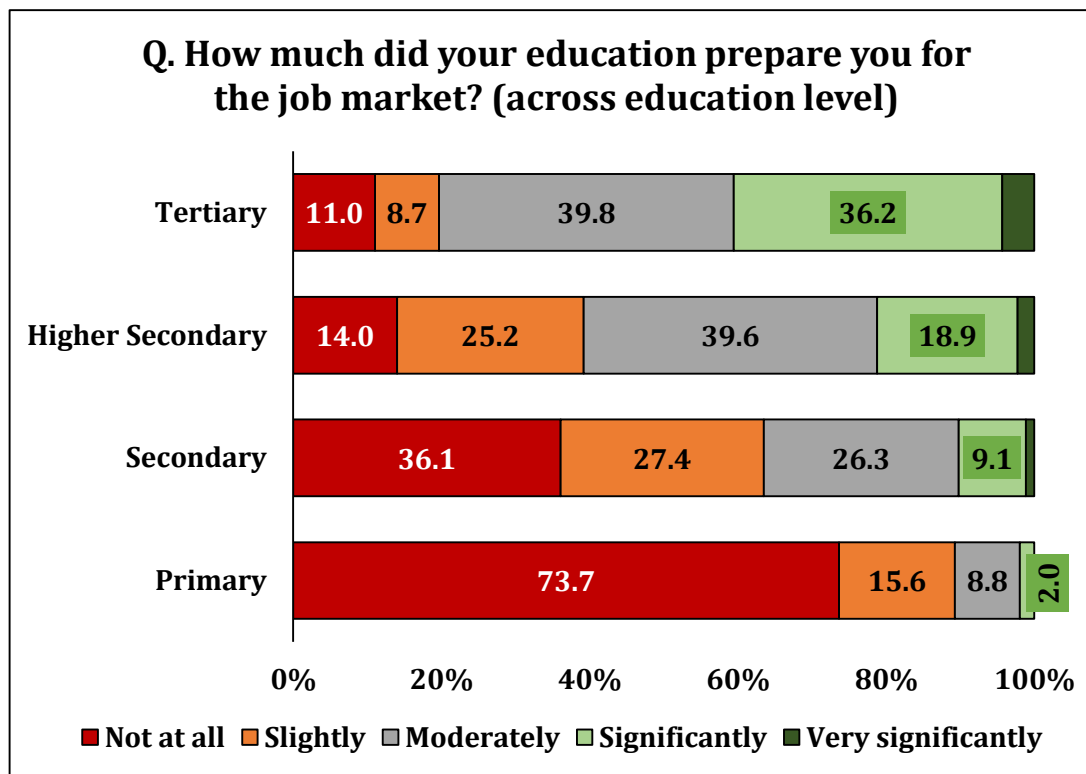
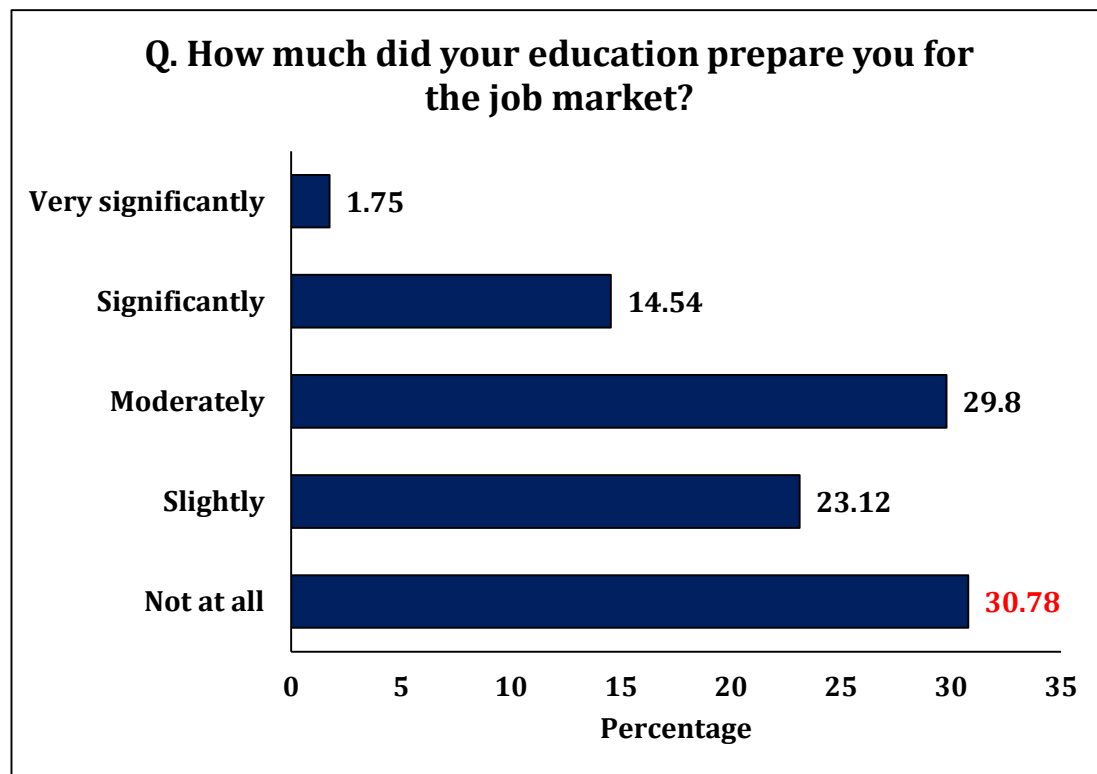


Respondent's Work Status



Section B: Youth in Job Market

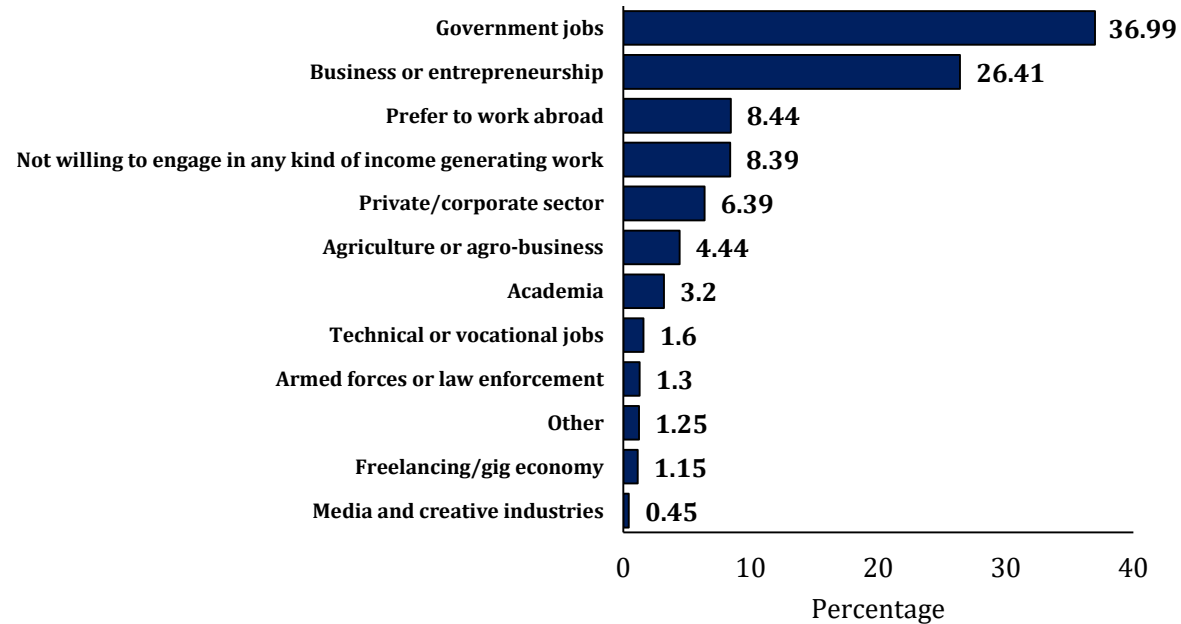
Readiness for Employment



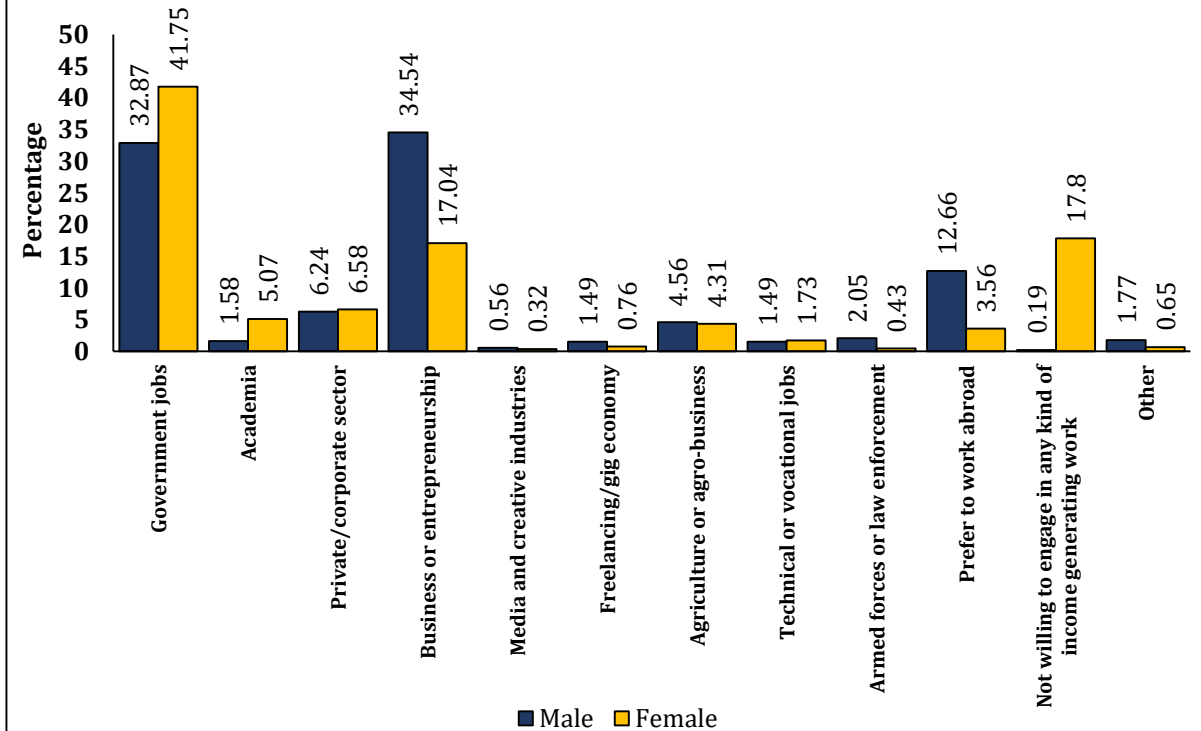
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Readiness for Employment

Q. Which of the following sectors would you most like to work in (even if you are working)?

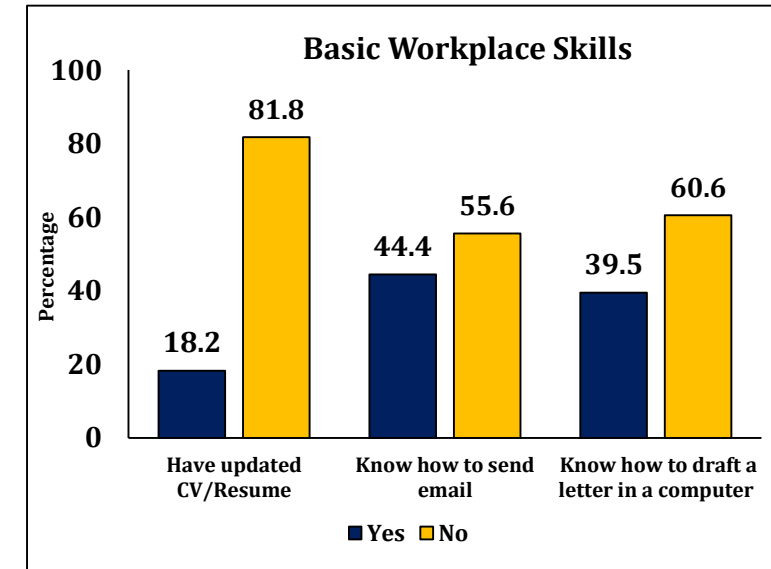
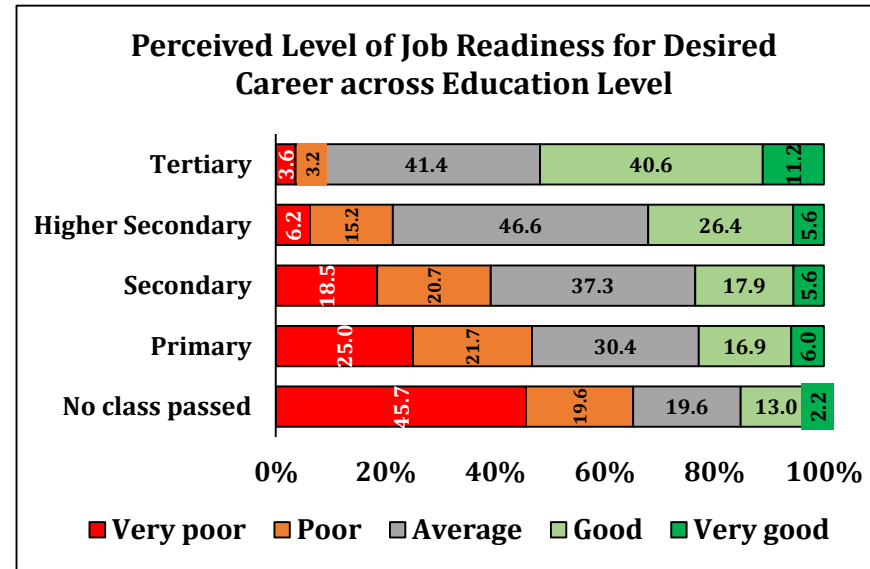
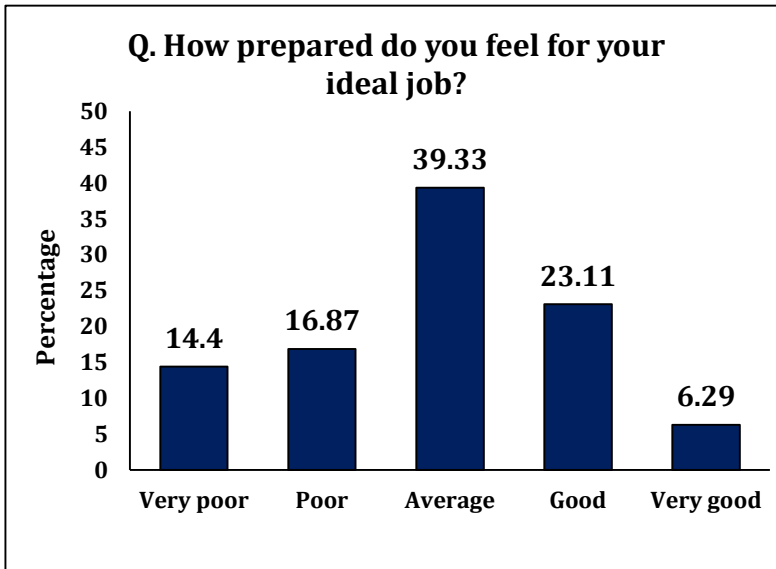


Desired Work Across Gender



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

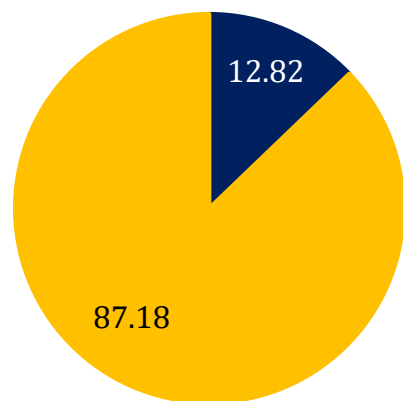
Readiness for Employment



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

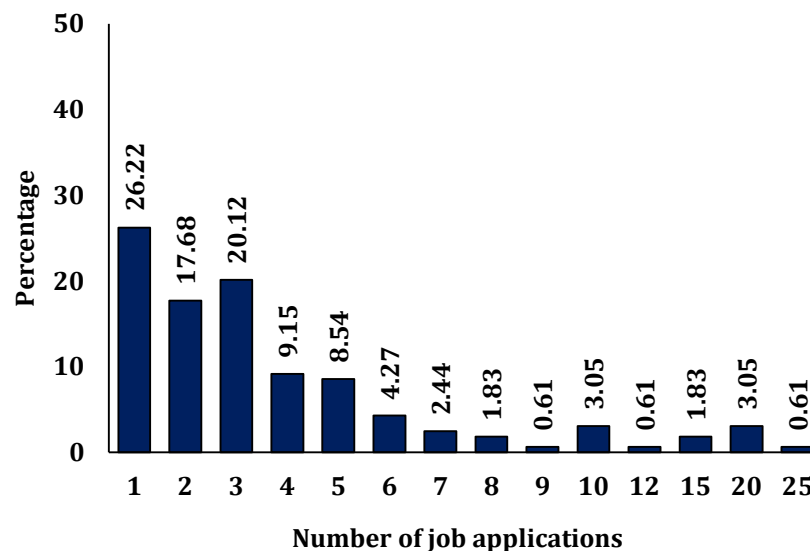
Readiness for Employment

Have you applied for any jobs in the last 12 months?

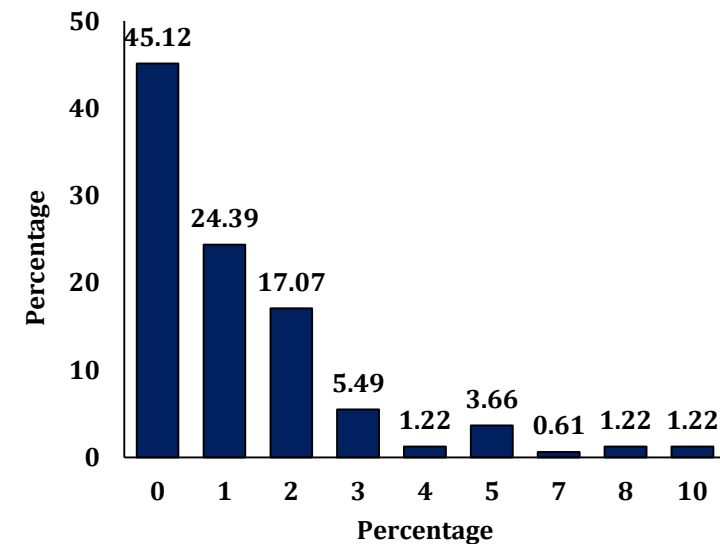


■ Yes ■ No

If yes, how many job applications have you submitted in the past 12 months?



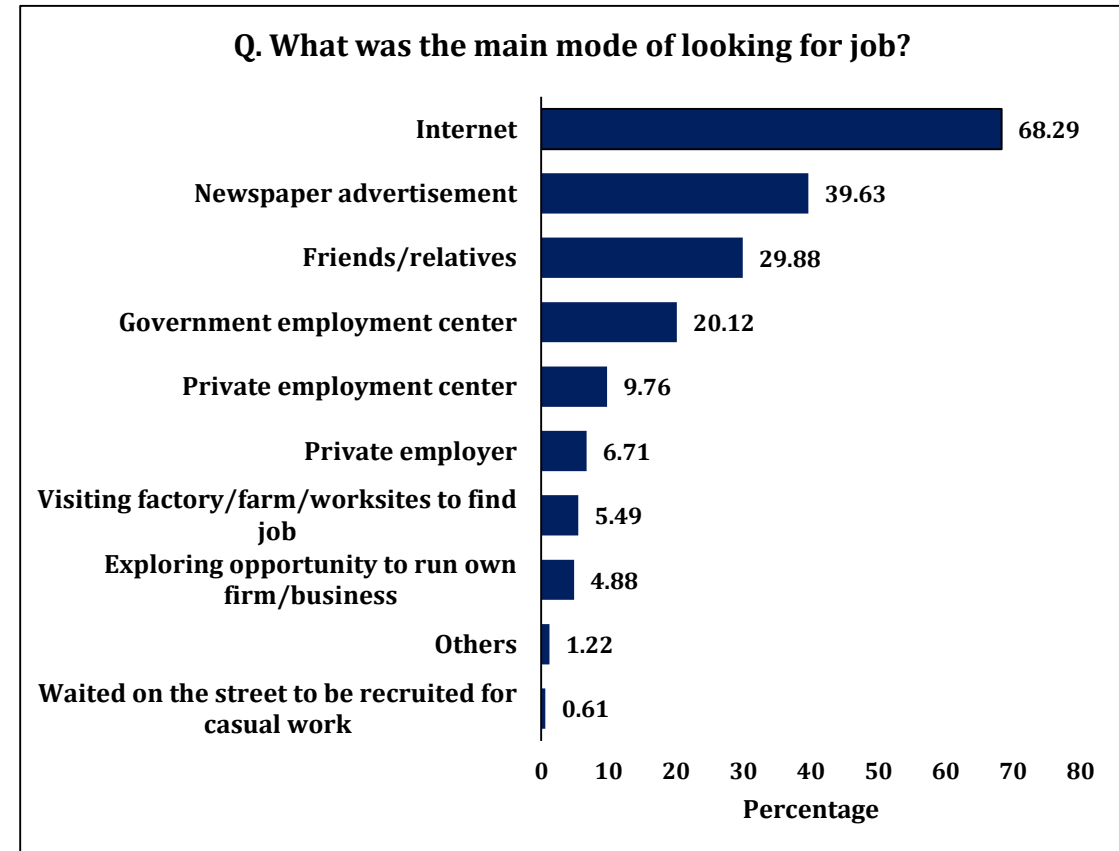
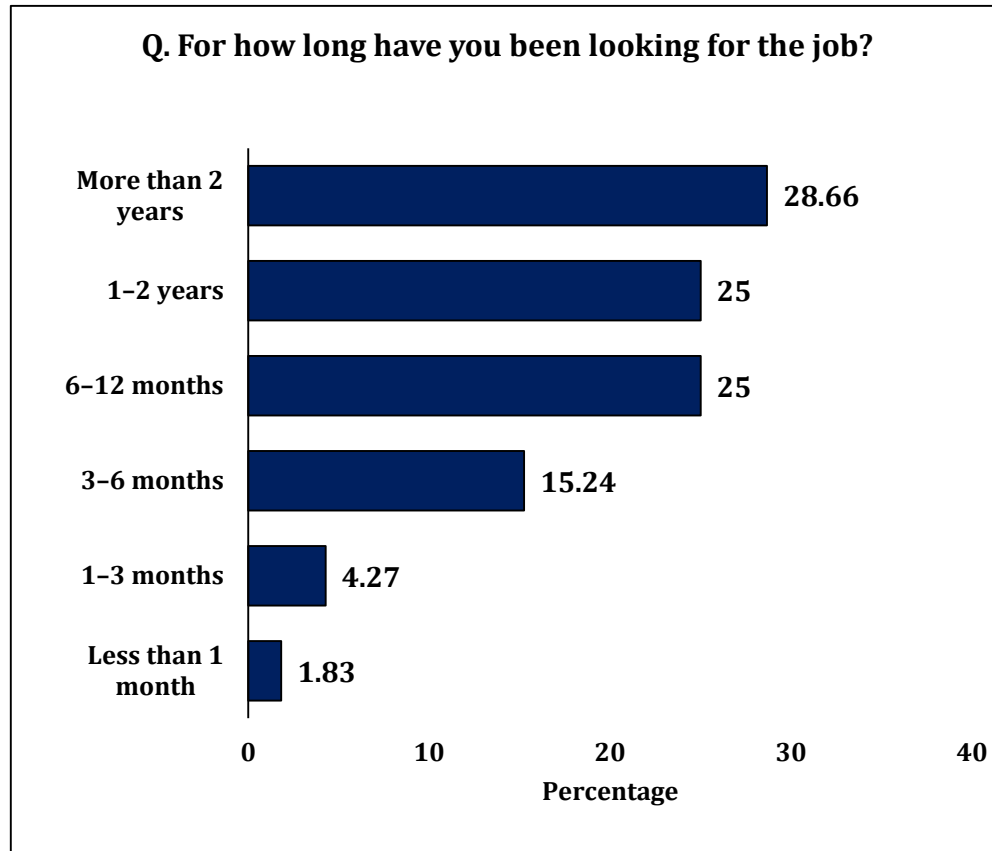
How many job interviews have you been invited to in the past year?



***Note:** The question was not asked to respondents who are fully employed or someone who is not willing to participate in any economic activity.

Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

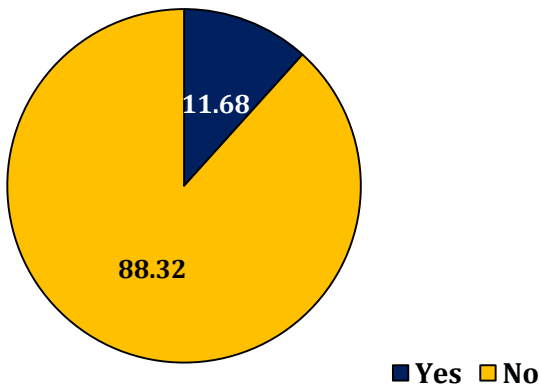
Readiness for Employment



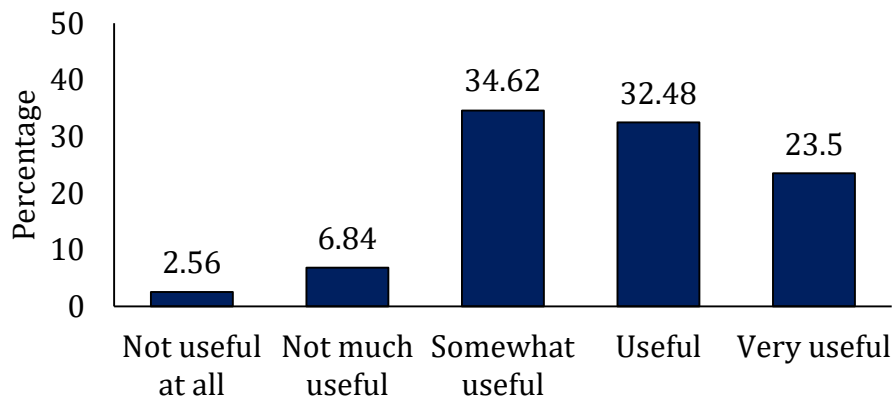
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Training

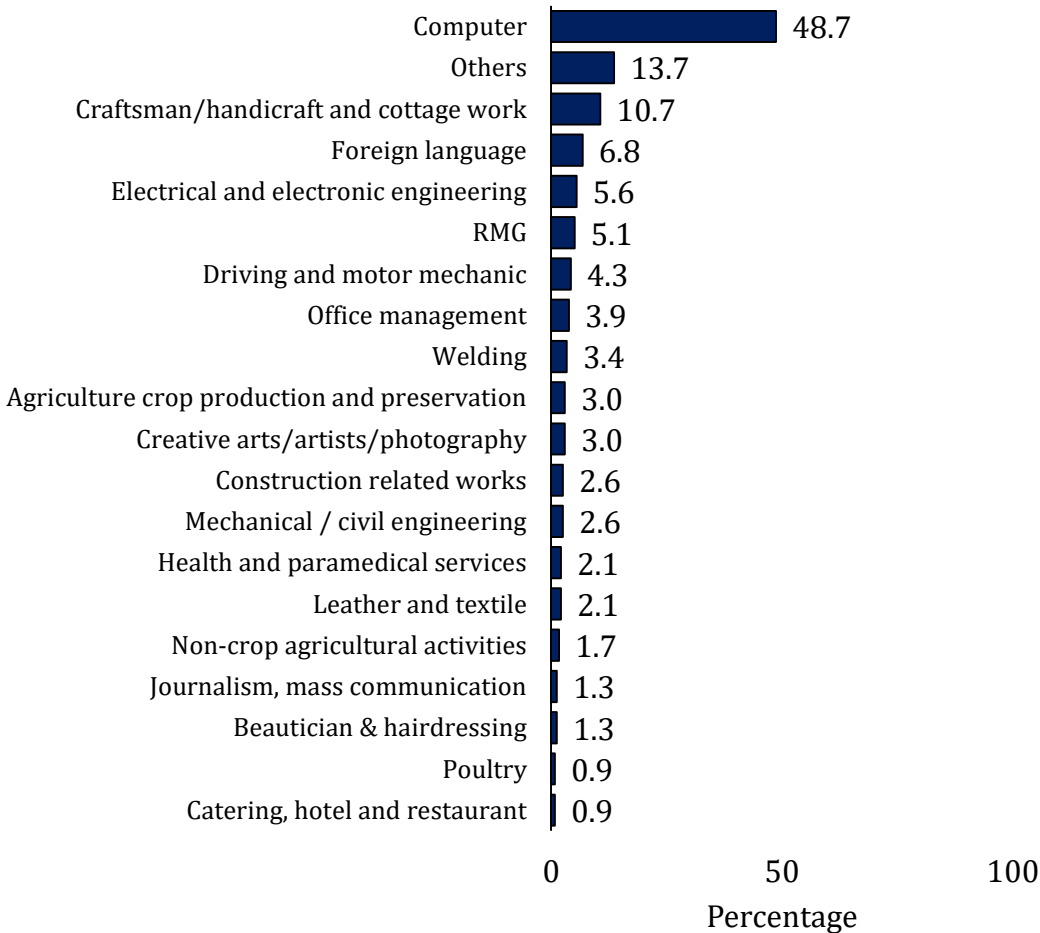
Q. In the last twelve months, have you attended any vocational training?



Q. Do you feel the training/education you are receiving is useful in getting a job?

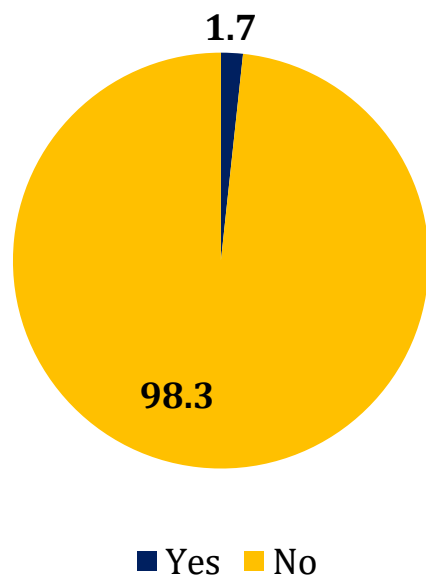


Types of training attended

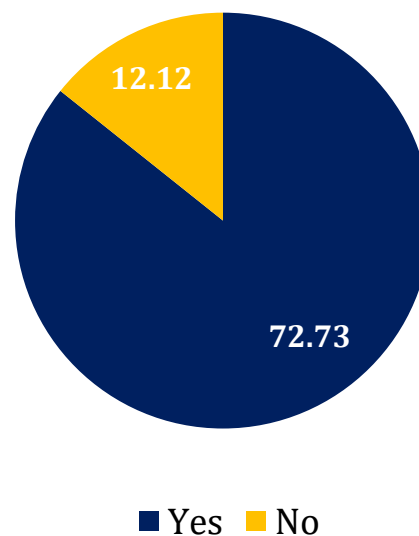


Return Migration

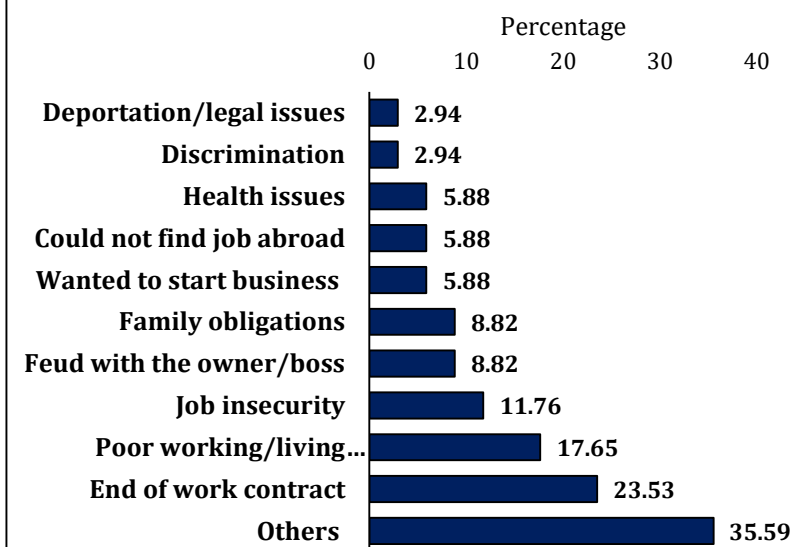
Q. Have you ever been abroad for work purpose?



Q. Would you like to migrate again in the future?

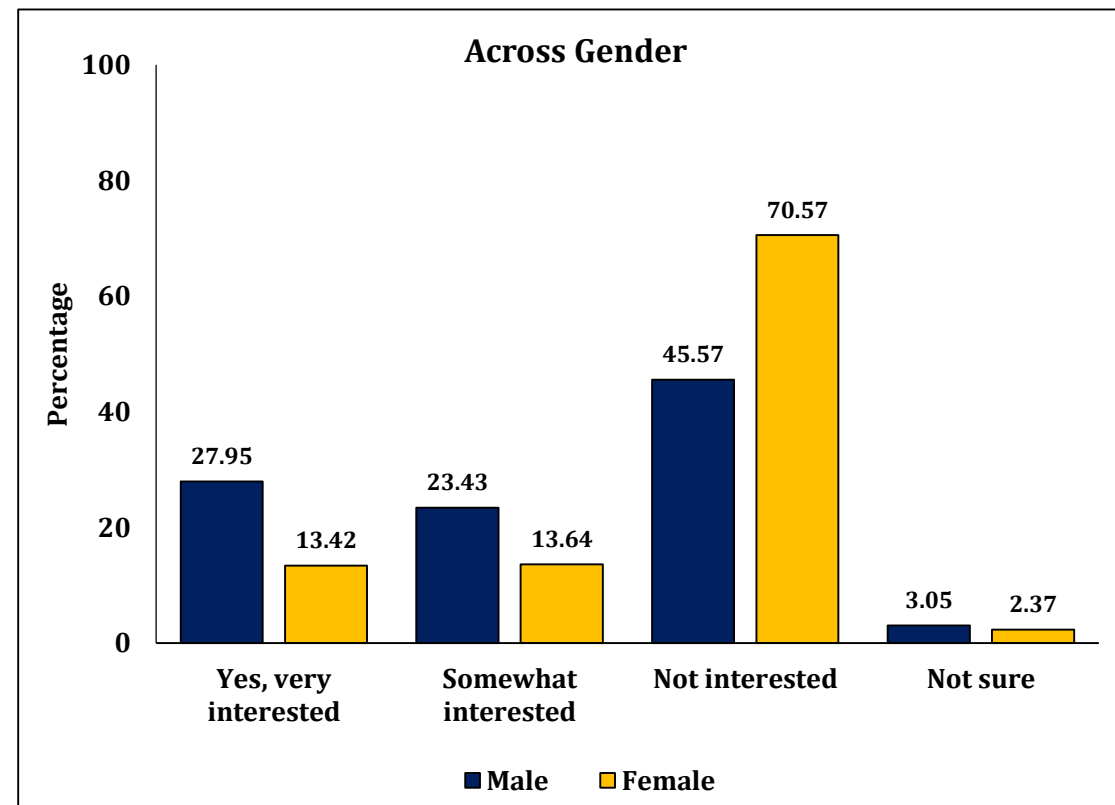
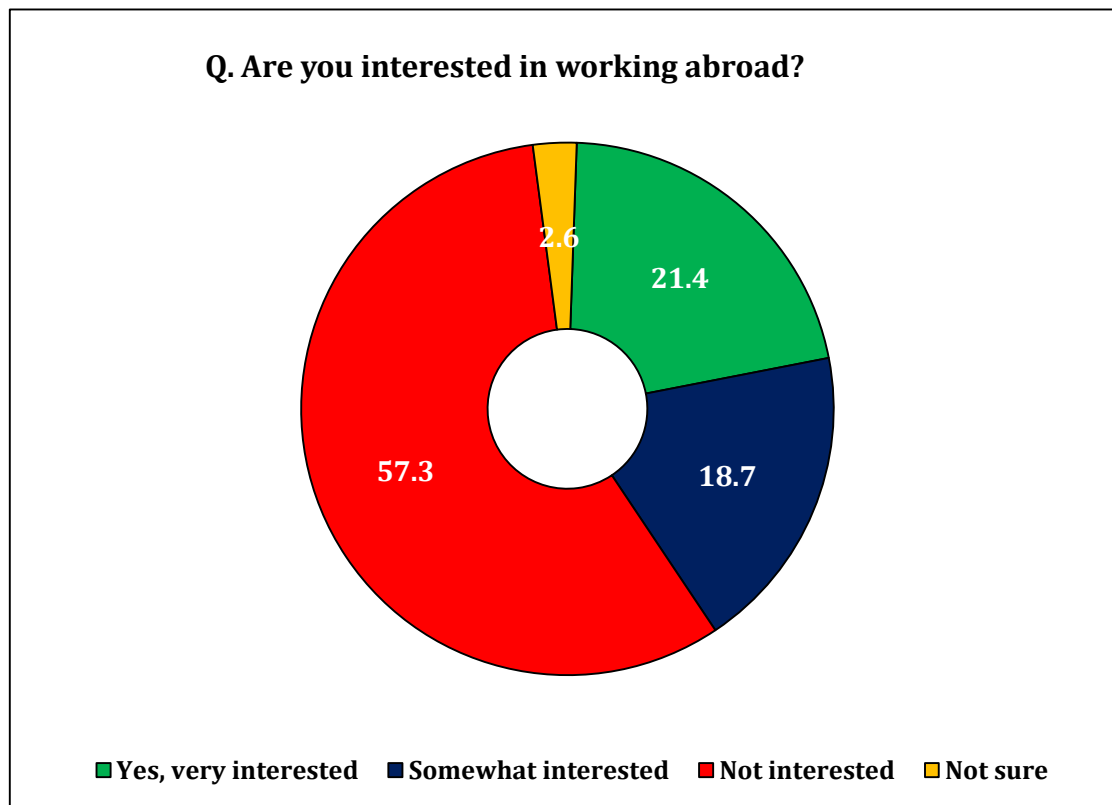


Q. What are the main reasons for coming back?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

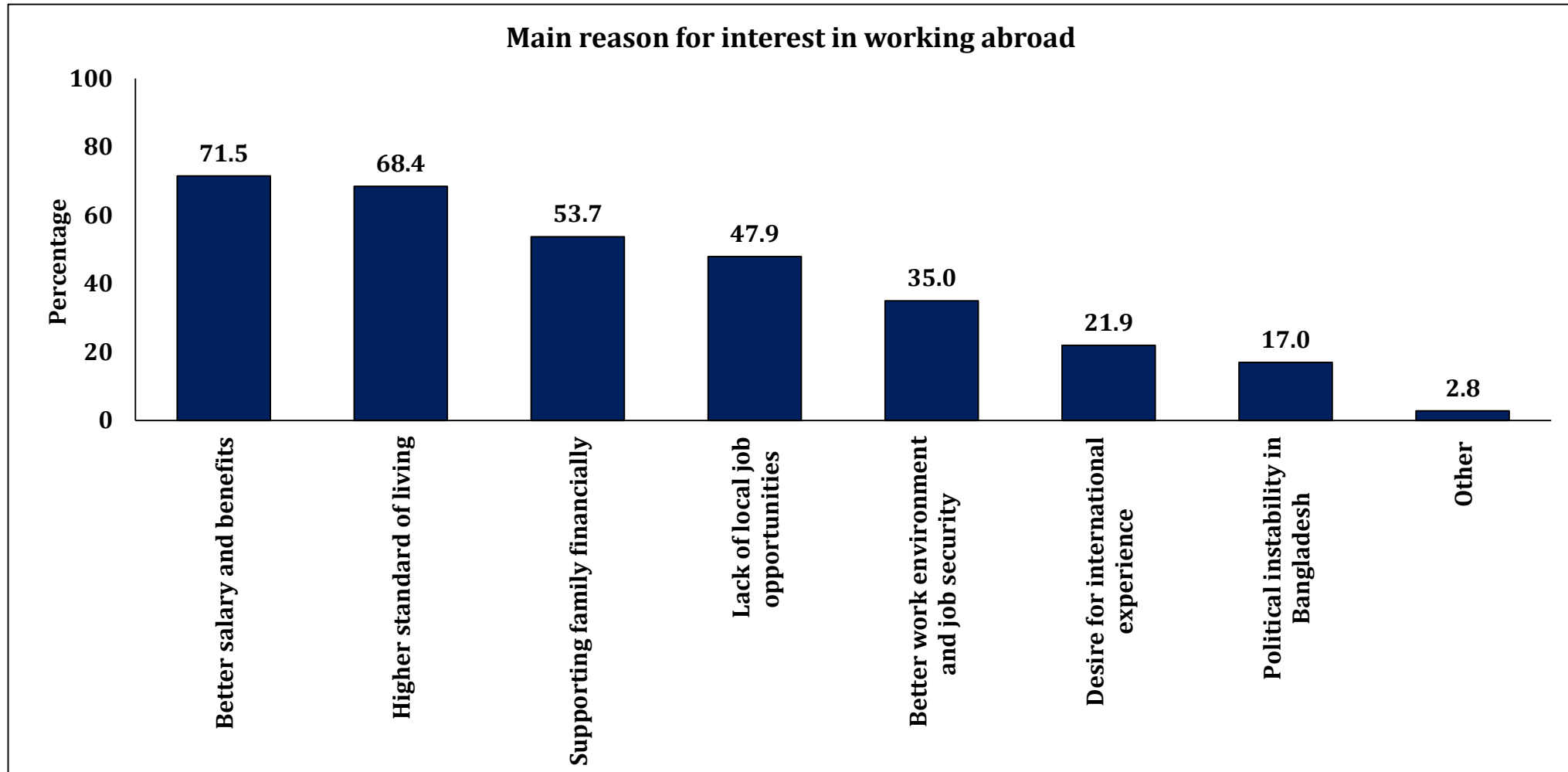
Migration



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

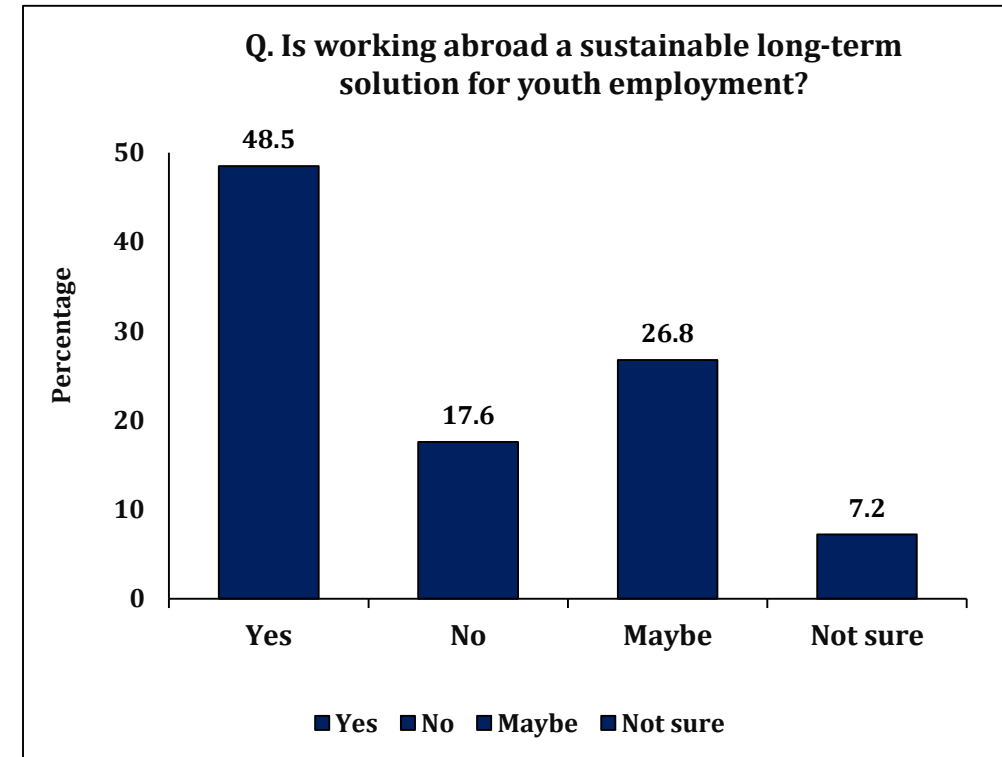
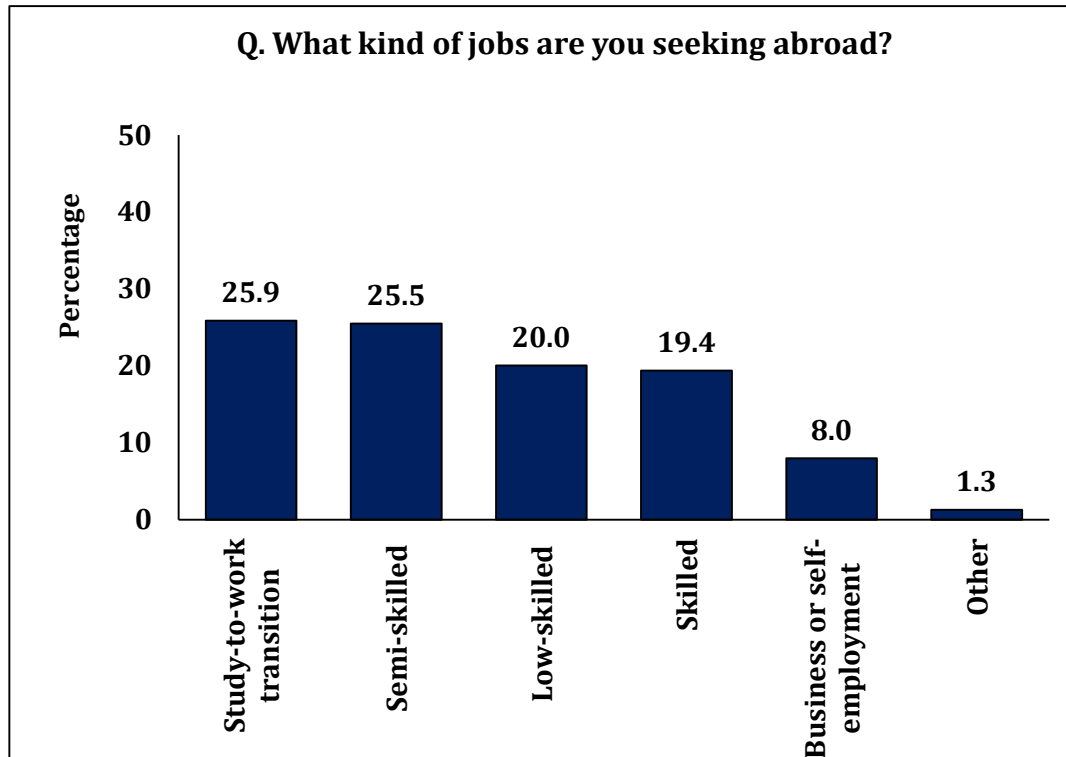
*This question was asked to the respondents who have never been abroad for work purpose

Migration



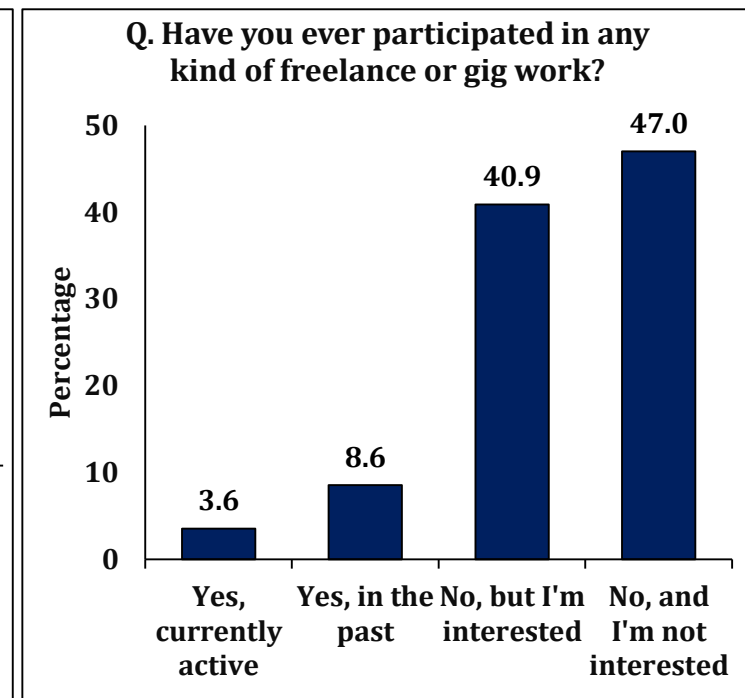
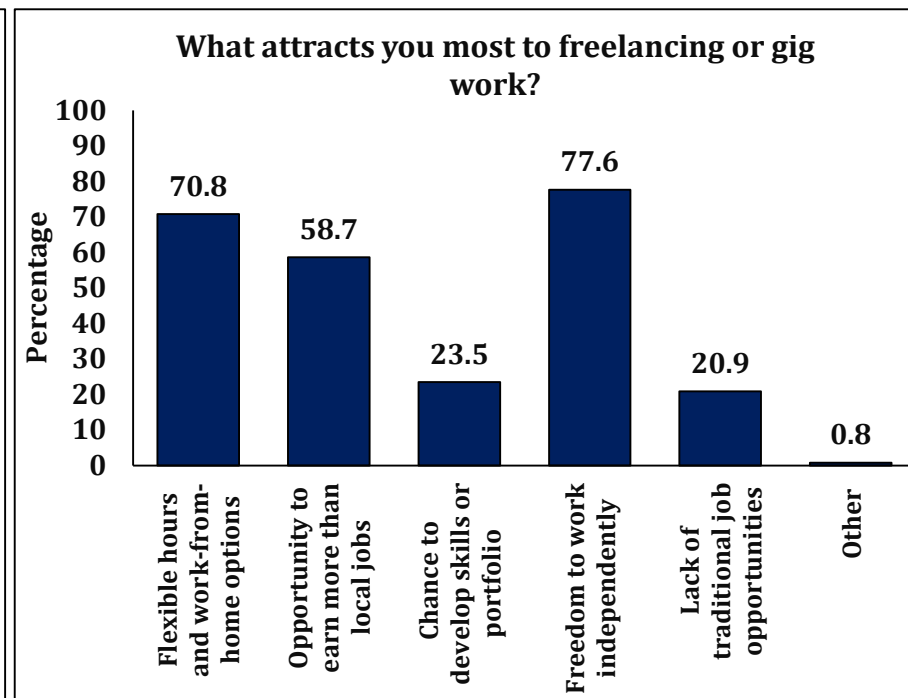
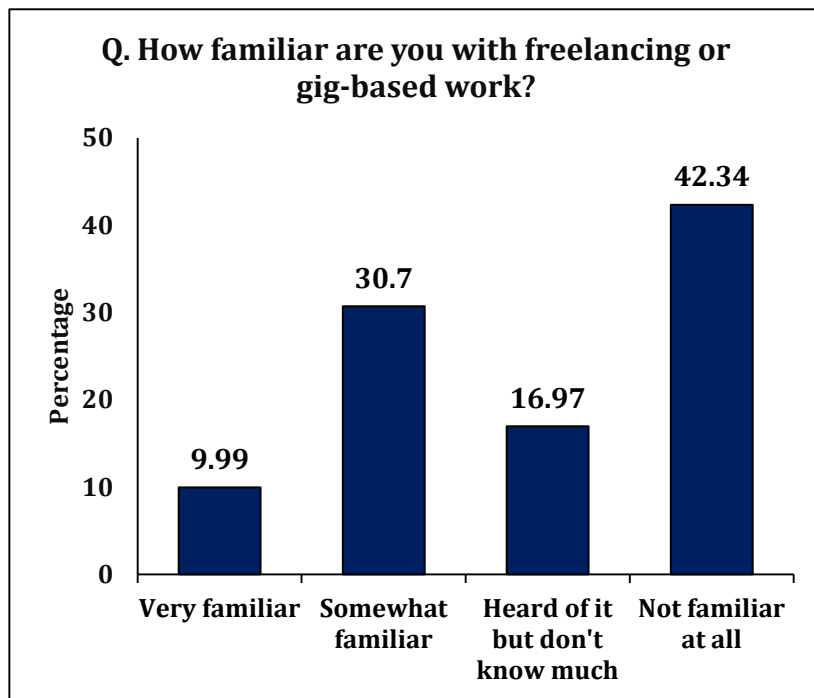
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Migration



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Freelancing or Gig Based Work

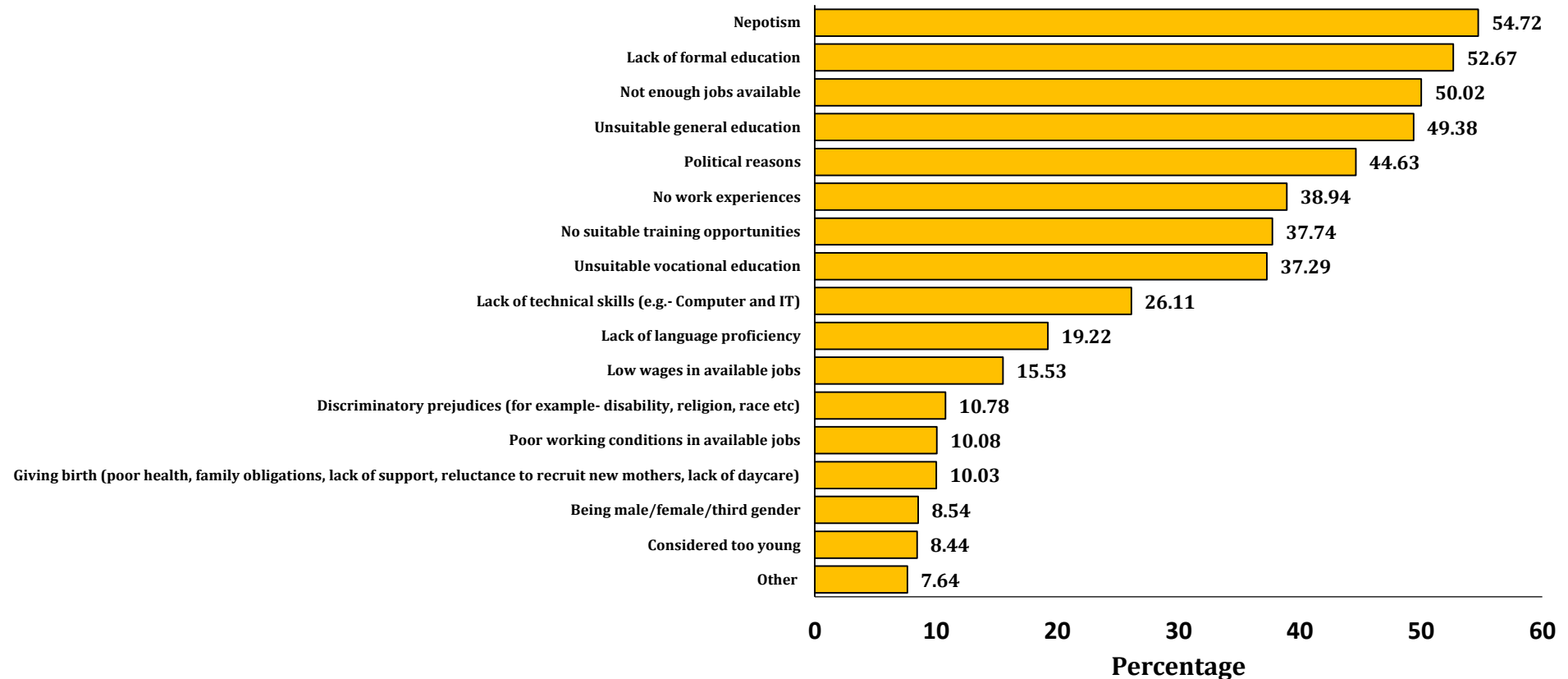


Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

“Freelancing is often not seen as a ‘real’ job in our country, even though industries like e-commerce, f-commerce, and digital marketing have been growing rapidly in recent years. I began freelancing as a student and avoided traditional job struggles, but the absence of a support system means navigating challenges alone.” – *25 years old youth freelancer from Dhaka*

Main Difficulties in Getting Jobs

Q. In your opinion, overall, what are the main difficulties in getting jobs?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Main Difficulties in Getting Jobs



“I hold an M.A. degree but earn only 5,000 taka per month. Corruption in the job market and gender-based barriers have kept me from securing a job despite my qualifications. The lack of safety for women in the country at present also prevents many women from actively seeking jobs that match their qualifications. In such cases, entrepreneurship becomes a viable alternative, but the government must provide training and low-interest loans to support women.” – ***A young single mother (a school-teacher) from Nalitabari, Netrokona.***

“I hesitate to even buy the job application form because of the corruption that exists in the recruitment process.” – ***A 30-year-old gig-worker from Rajapur, Jhalakathi.***

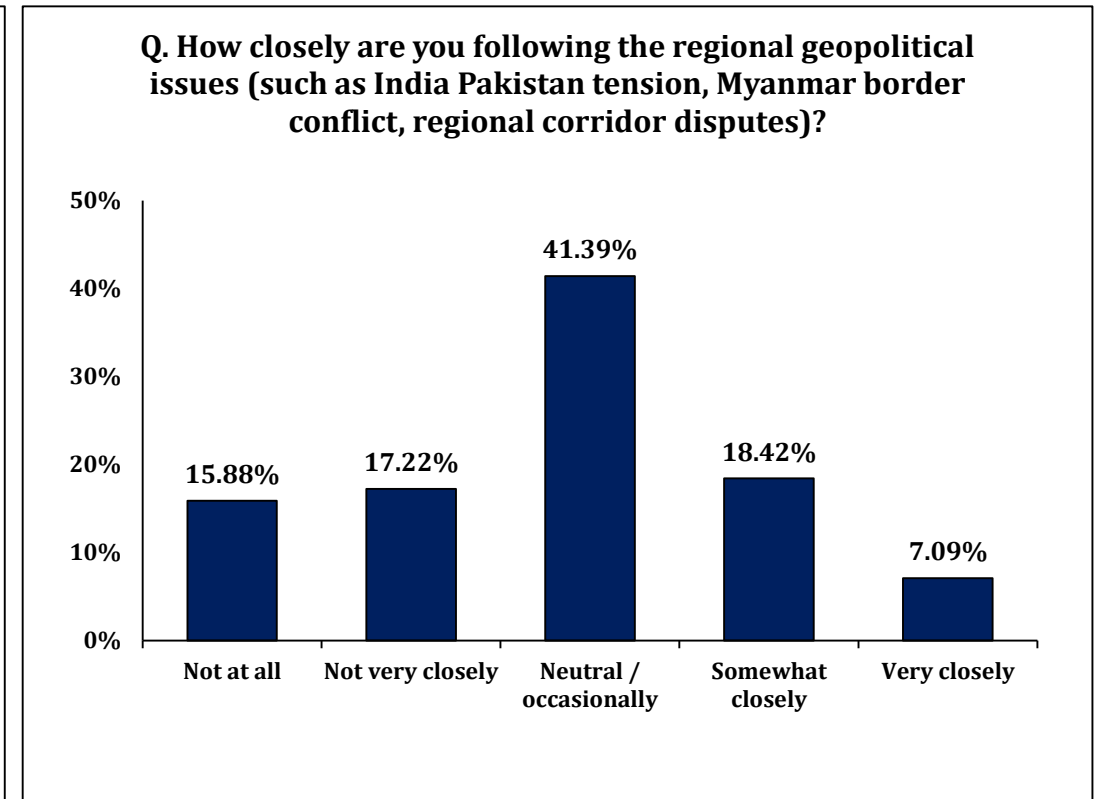
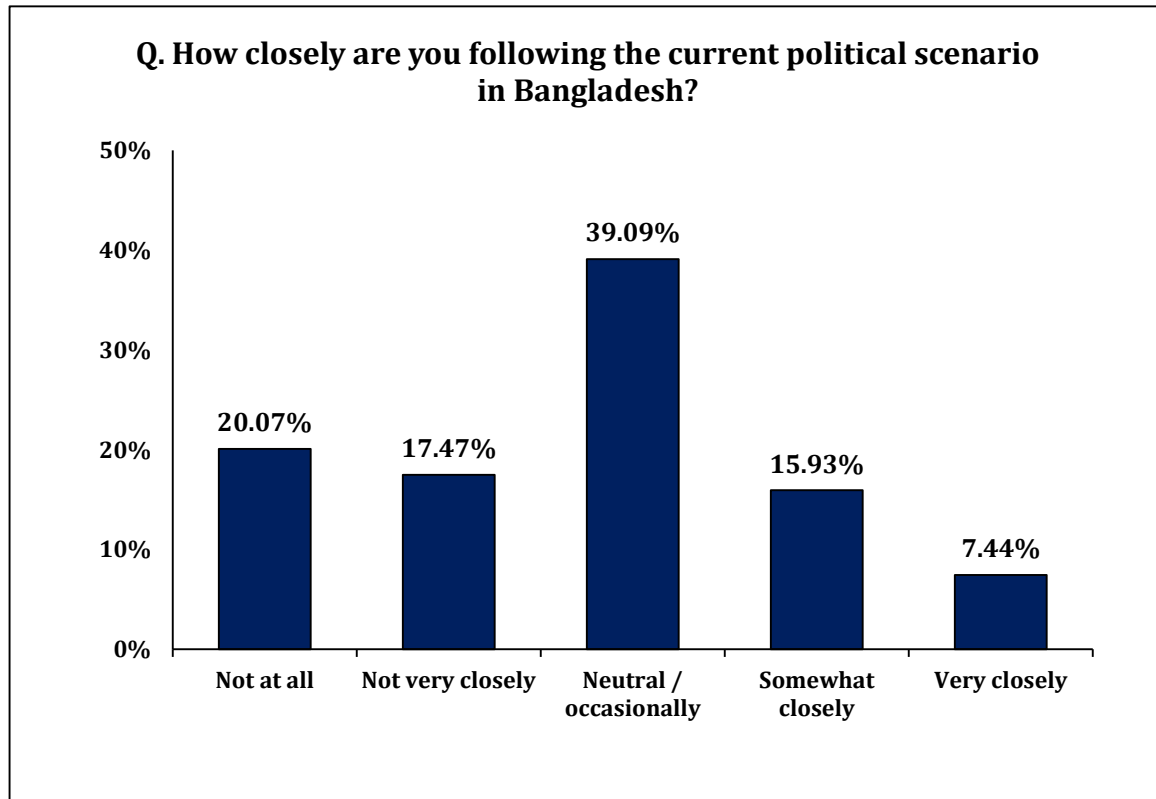
“Over the past 20 years, our education system has only declined, and vocational training remains largely inaccessible. To prepare the next generation, the government should integrate subjects like drone management, freelancing, and programming into the national curriculum.” – ***A 27-year-old SSC dropout who works in a poultry farm at Raozan, Chattogram***



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Case Study 2025

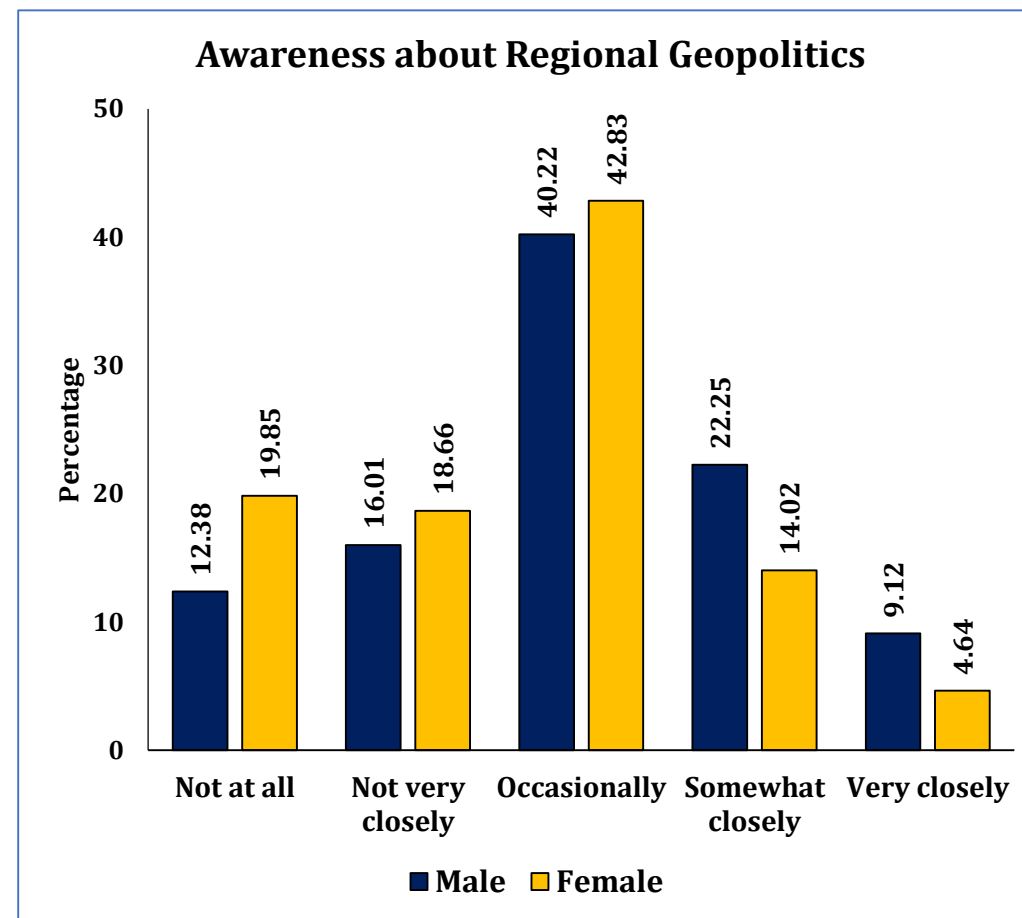
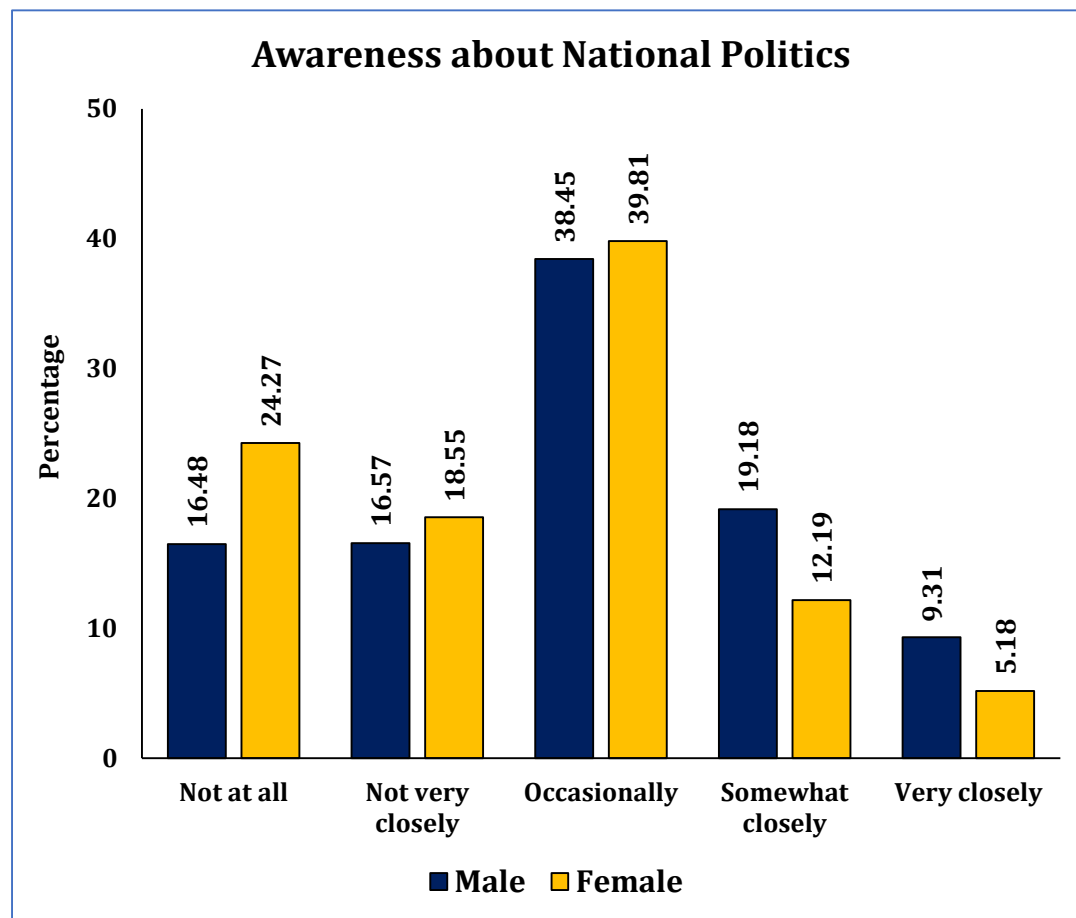
Section C: Youth's Political Perception and Awareness

Awareness about Political Scenario

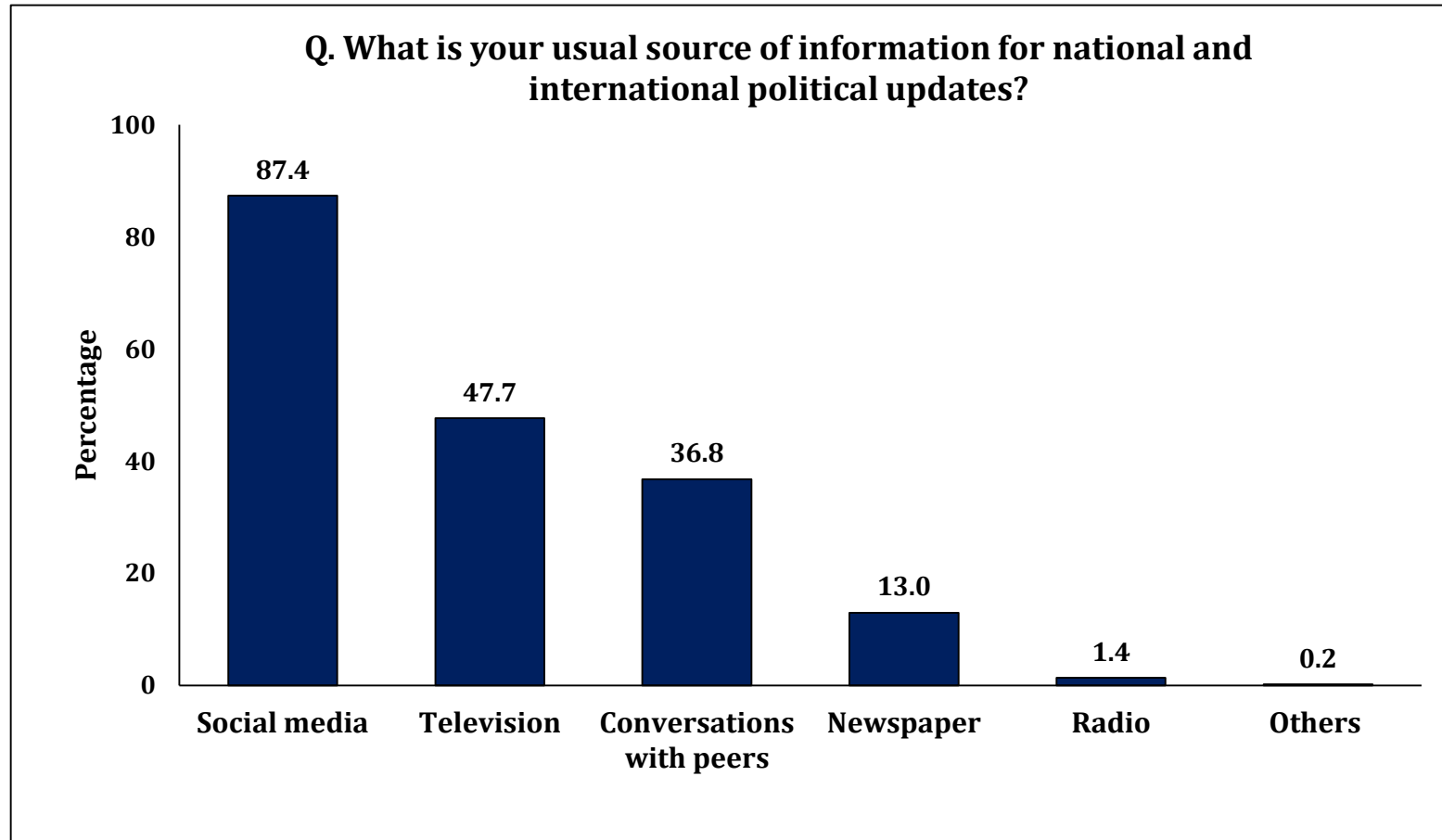


Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Awareness about Political Scenario (by gender)



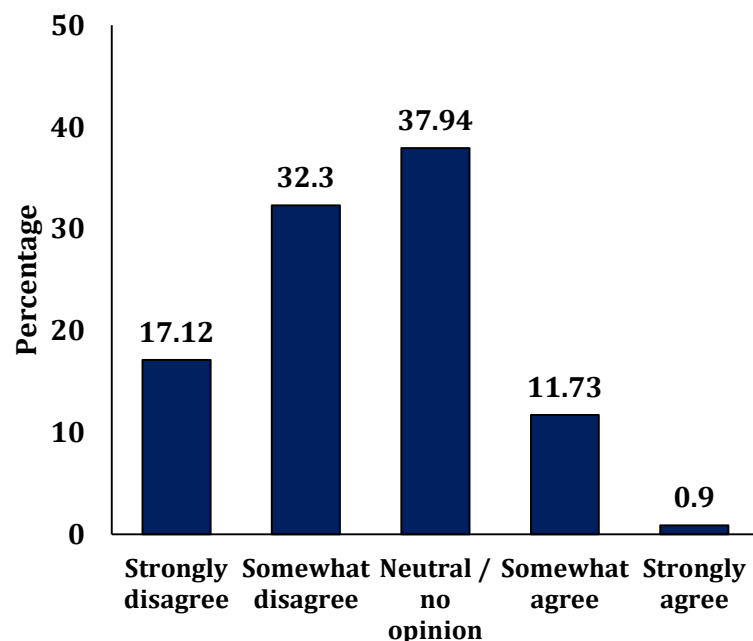
Source of Information



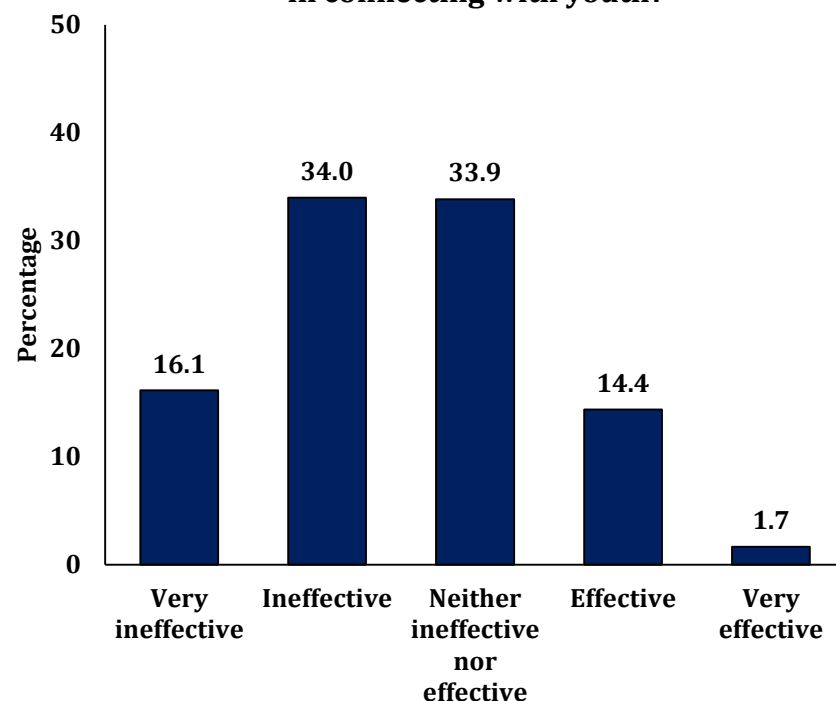
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Perception about Established Political Parties

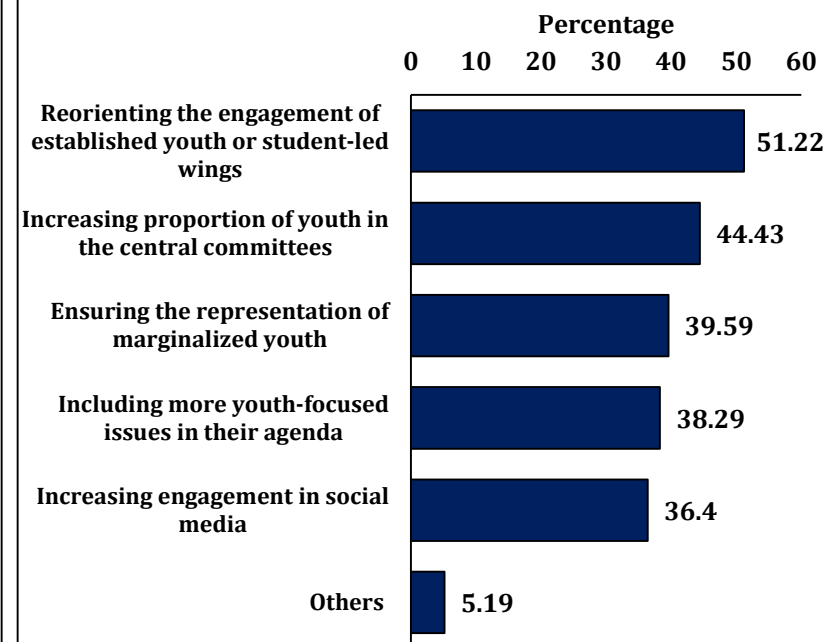
Q. Do the agenda/manifesto of political parties reflects the main issues facing the country?



Q. Are the established political parties effective in connecting with youth?

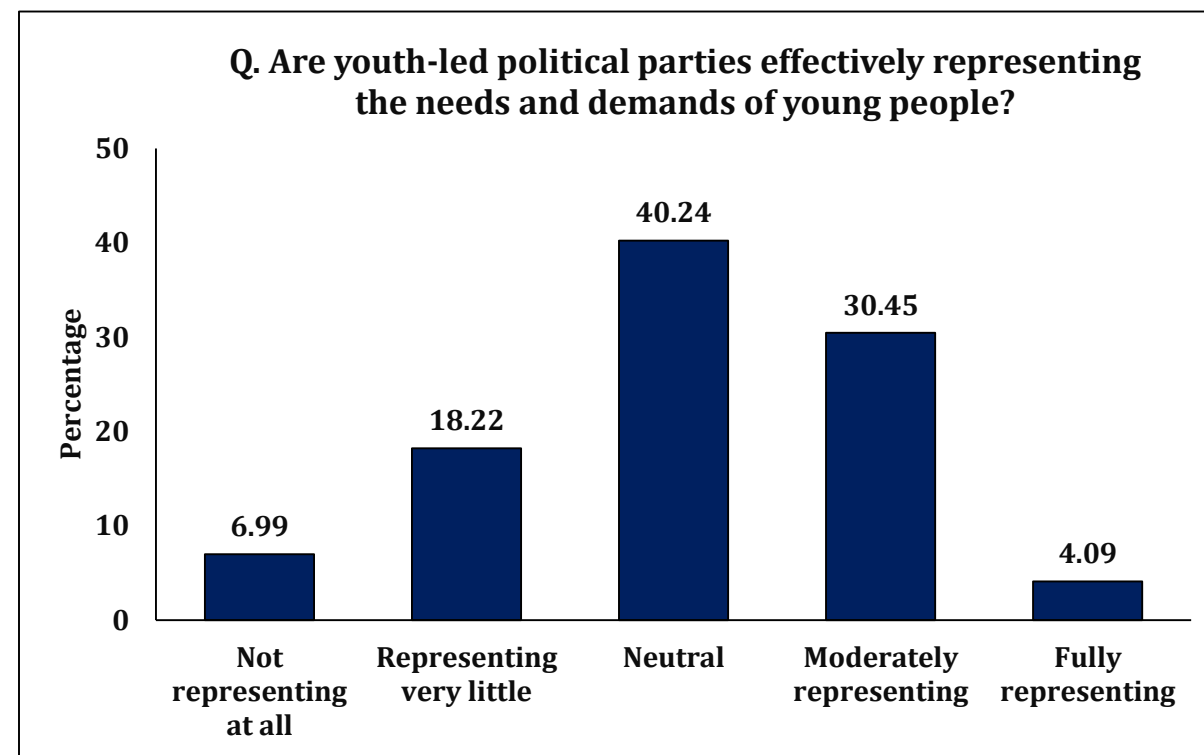
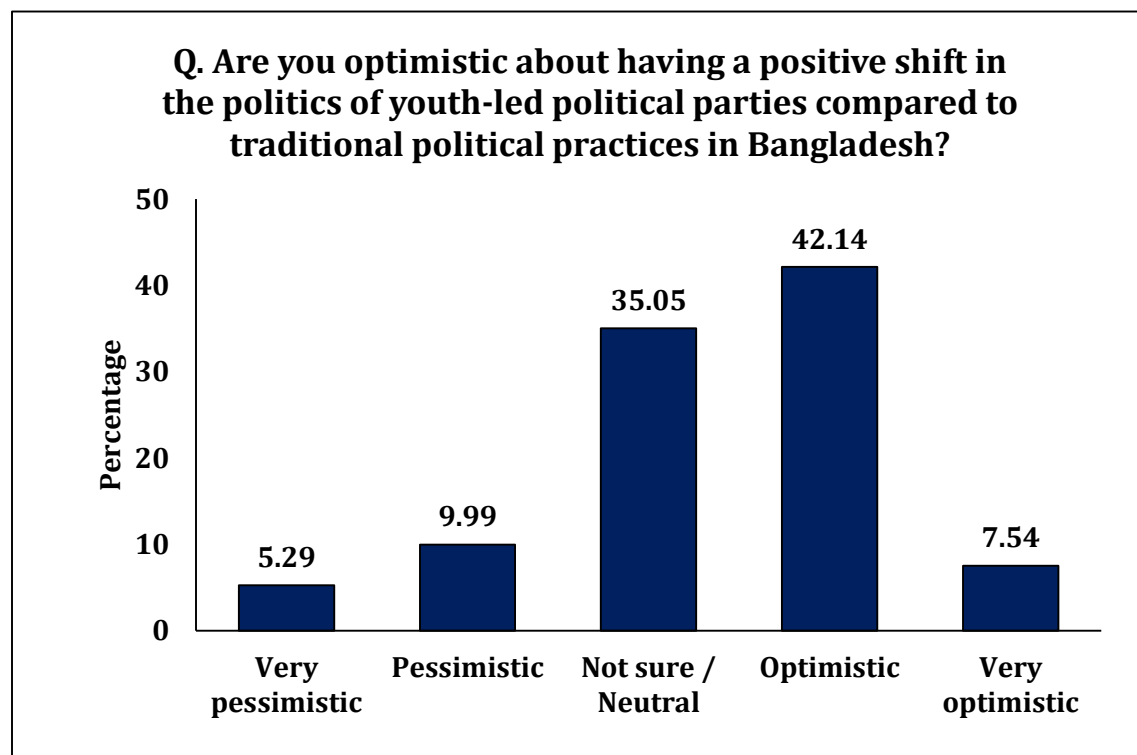


Q. What could be some effective ways for those established political parties to connect with the young population?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

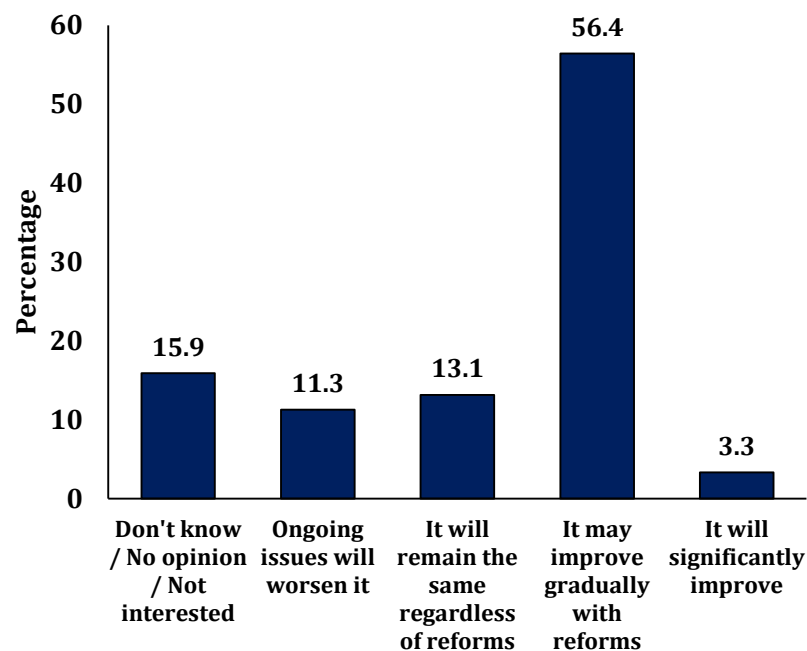
Perception about Youth-led Political Parties



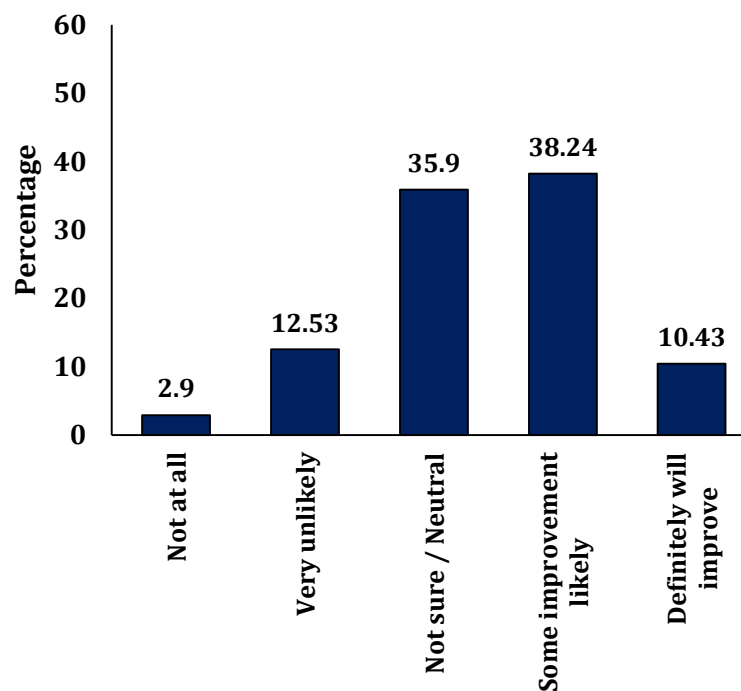
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Expectations Regarding Future Politics

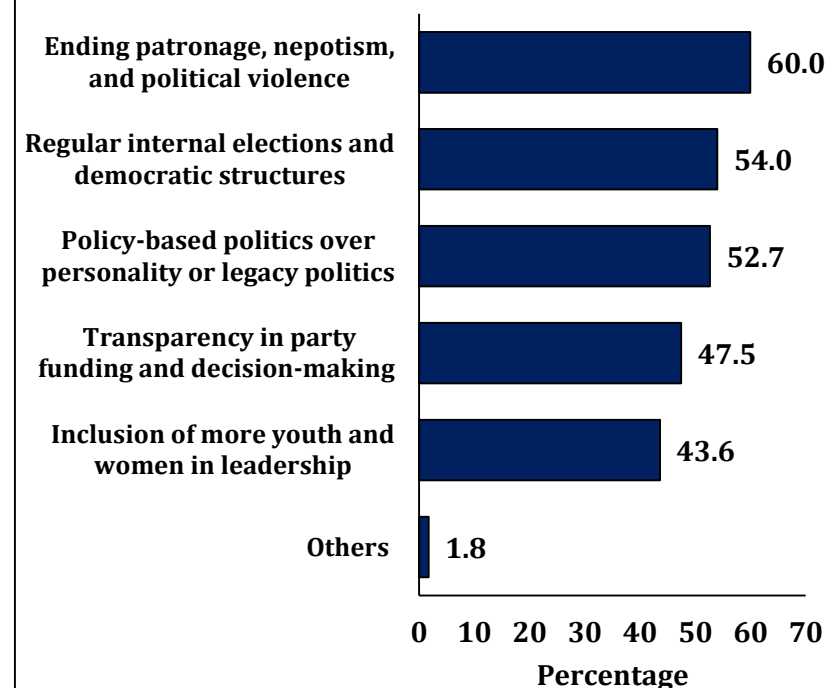
Q. What are your expectations for the future of politics in Bangladesh?



Q. To what extent do you agree that political parties in Bangladesh will have improvement in internal democratic practice?



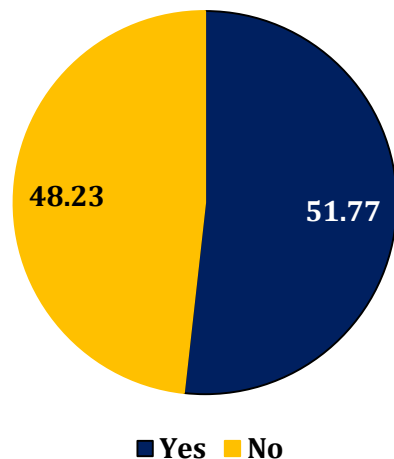
Q. What kind of reform do you expect from political parties to better serve the youth and country?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

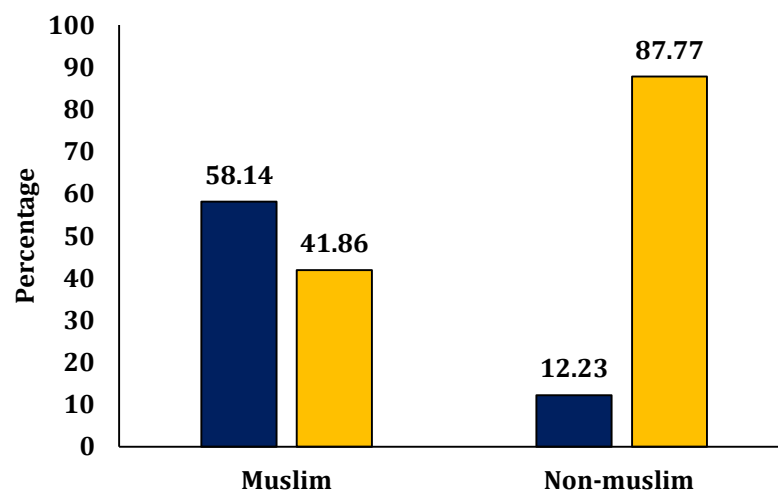
Opinions Regarding Religion Based Politics

Q. Do you think religion based politics is conducive for the development of Bangladesh?



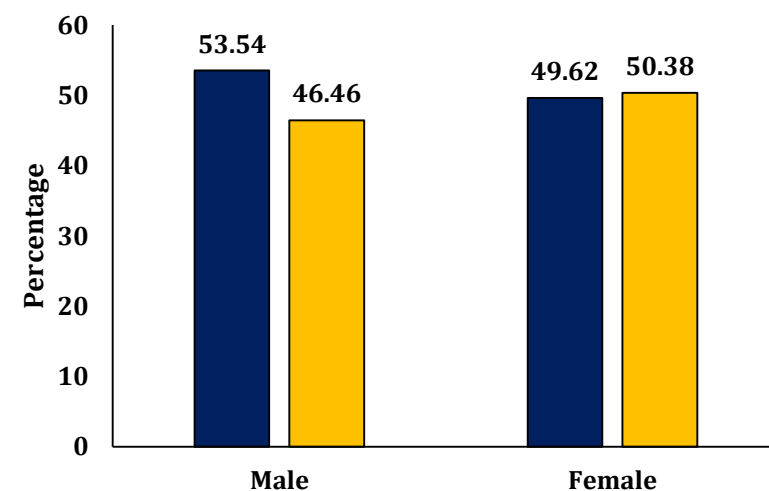
■ Yes ■ No

Across religions



■ Yes ■ No

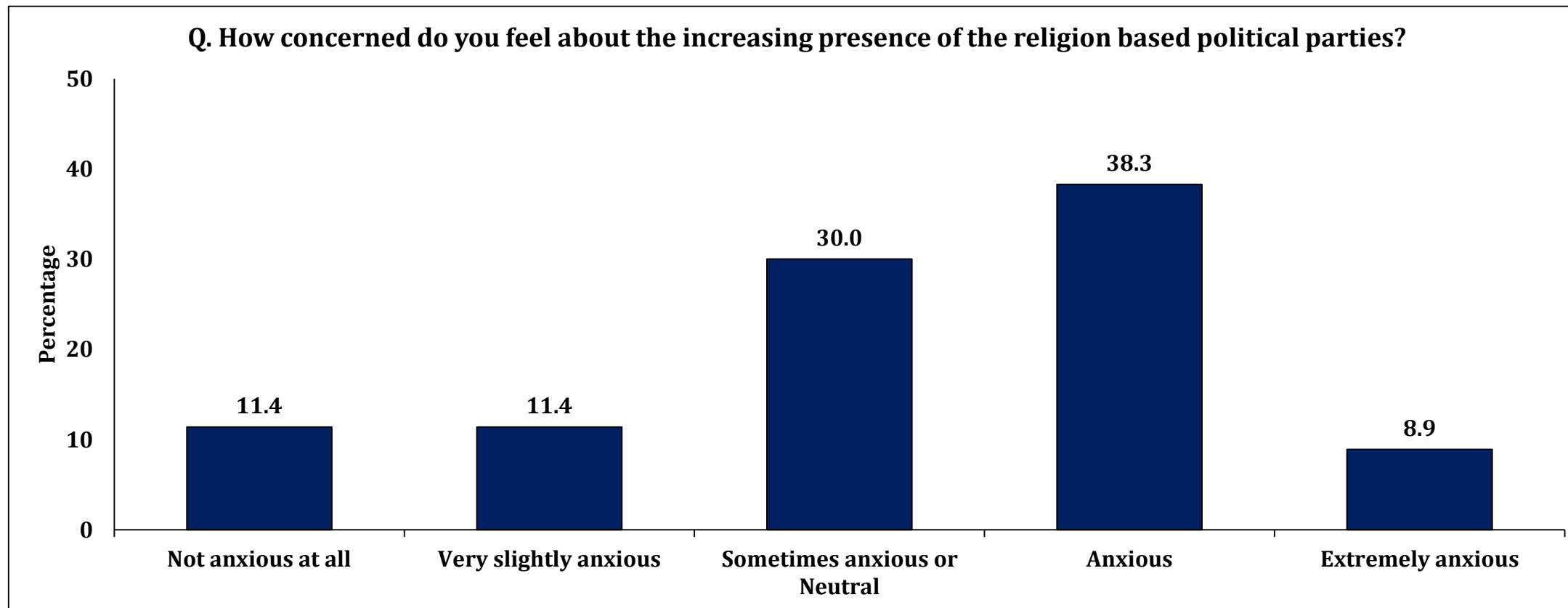
Across Gender



■ Yes ■ No

Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

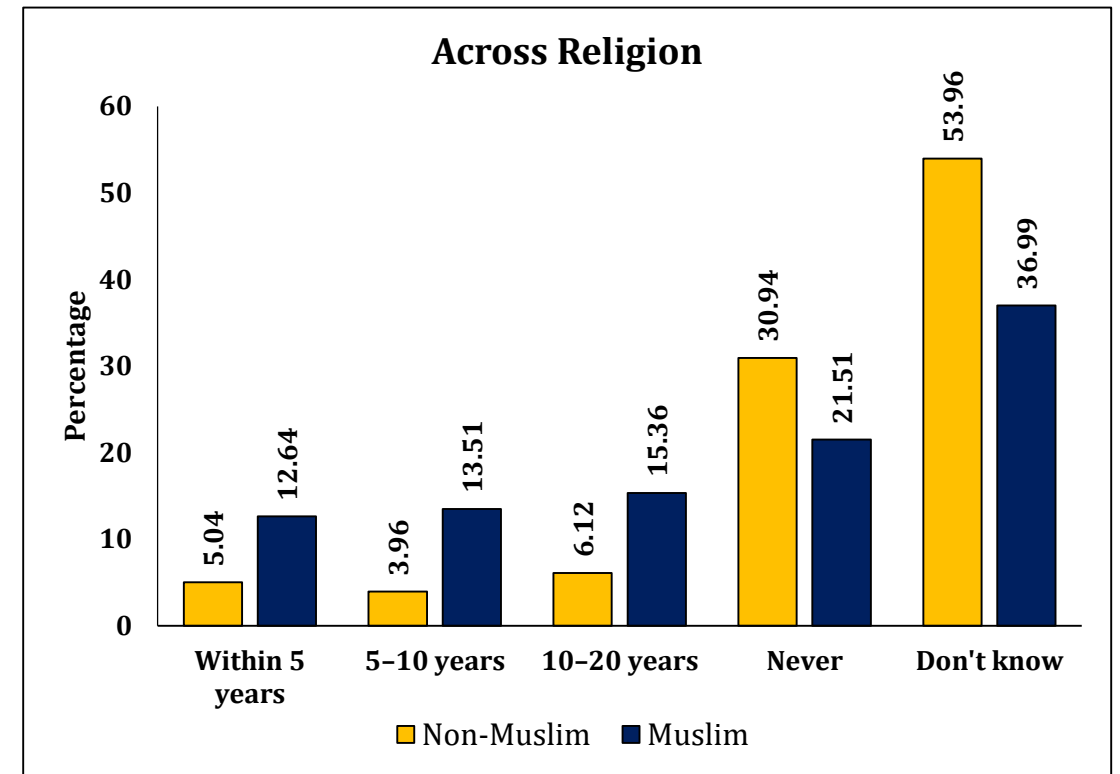
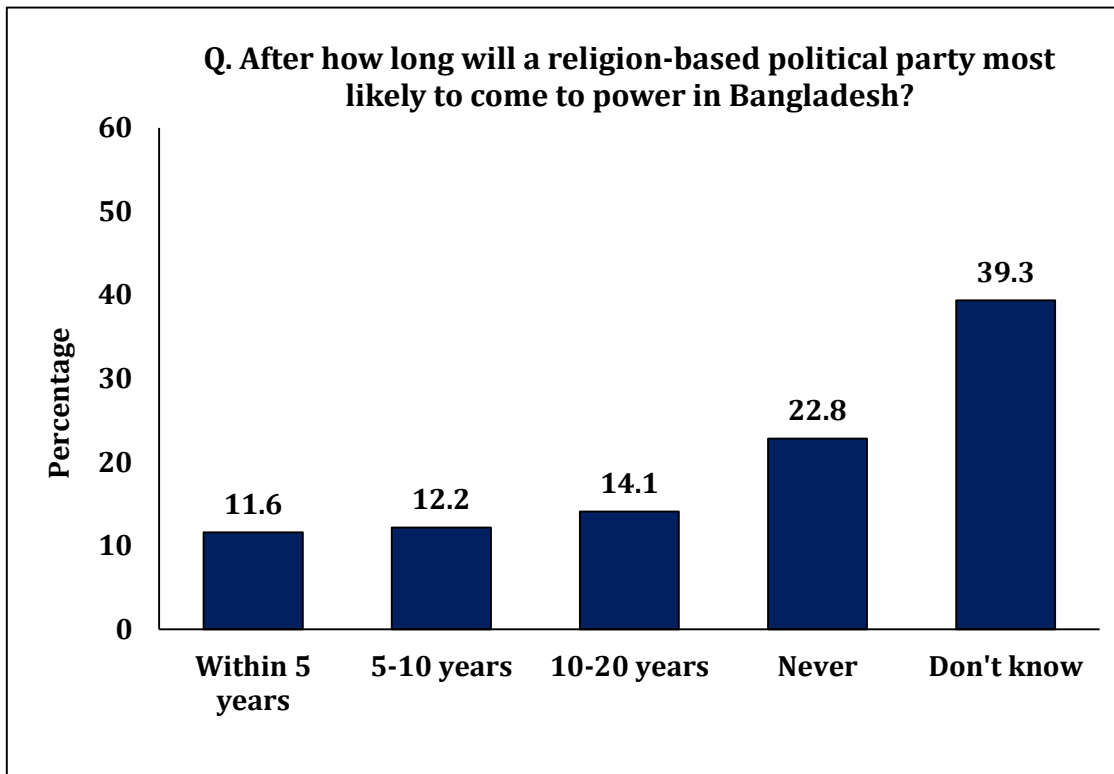
Opinions Regarding Religion Based Politics



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Note: The questions were asked to the respondents who answered 'No' in 'Q. Do you think religion-based politics is conducive to the development of Bangladesh?'

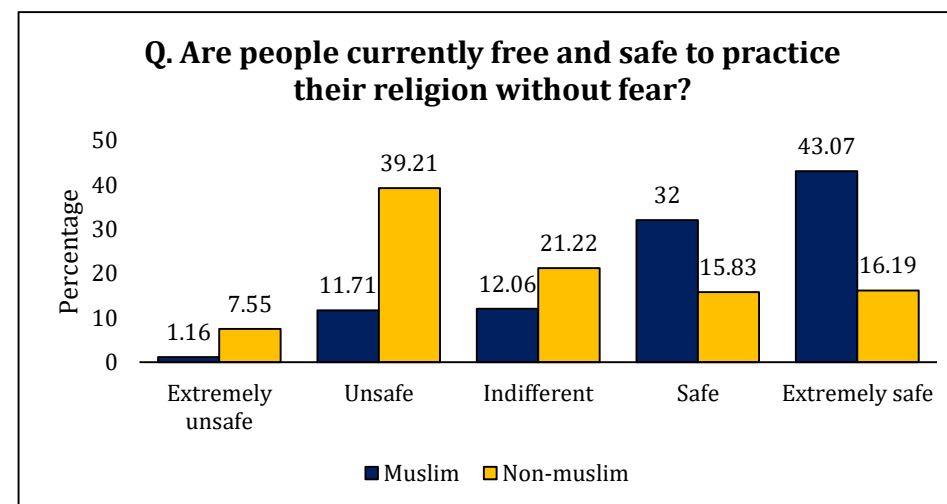
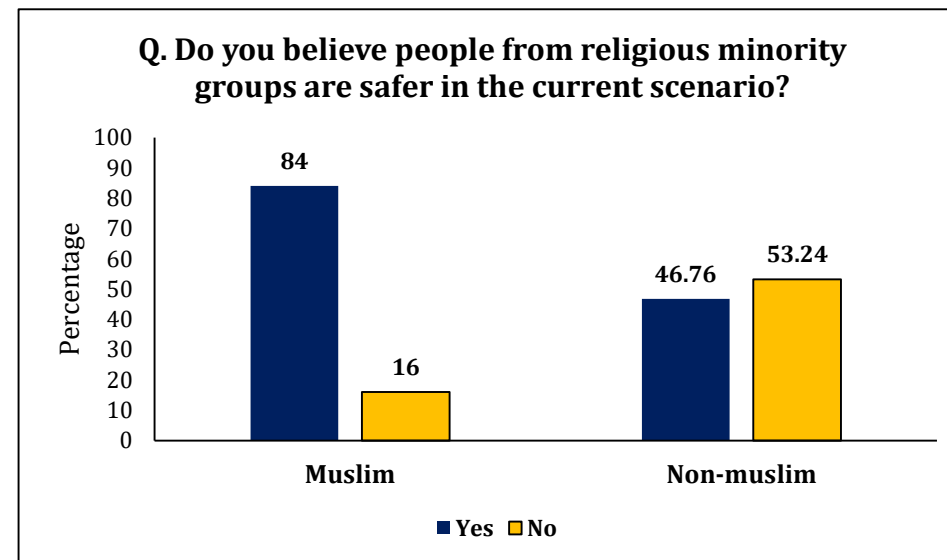
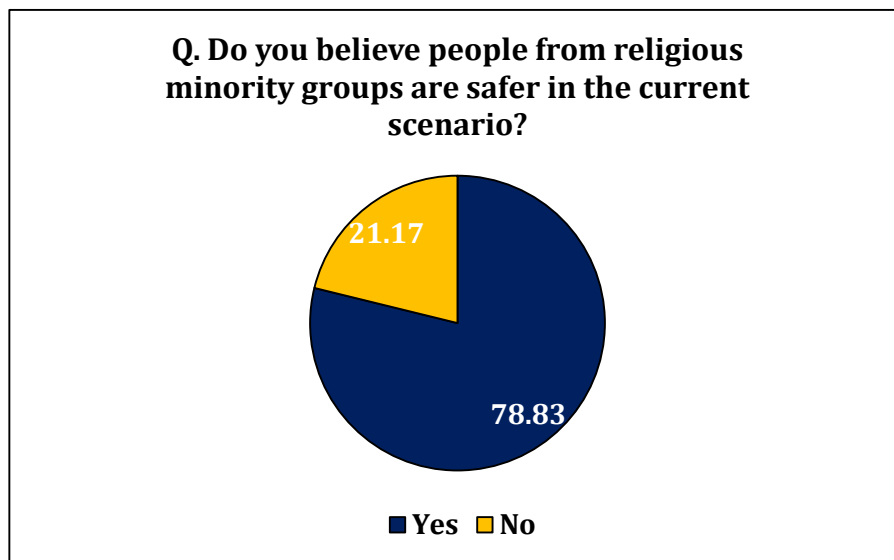
Opinions Regarding Religion Based Politics



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

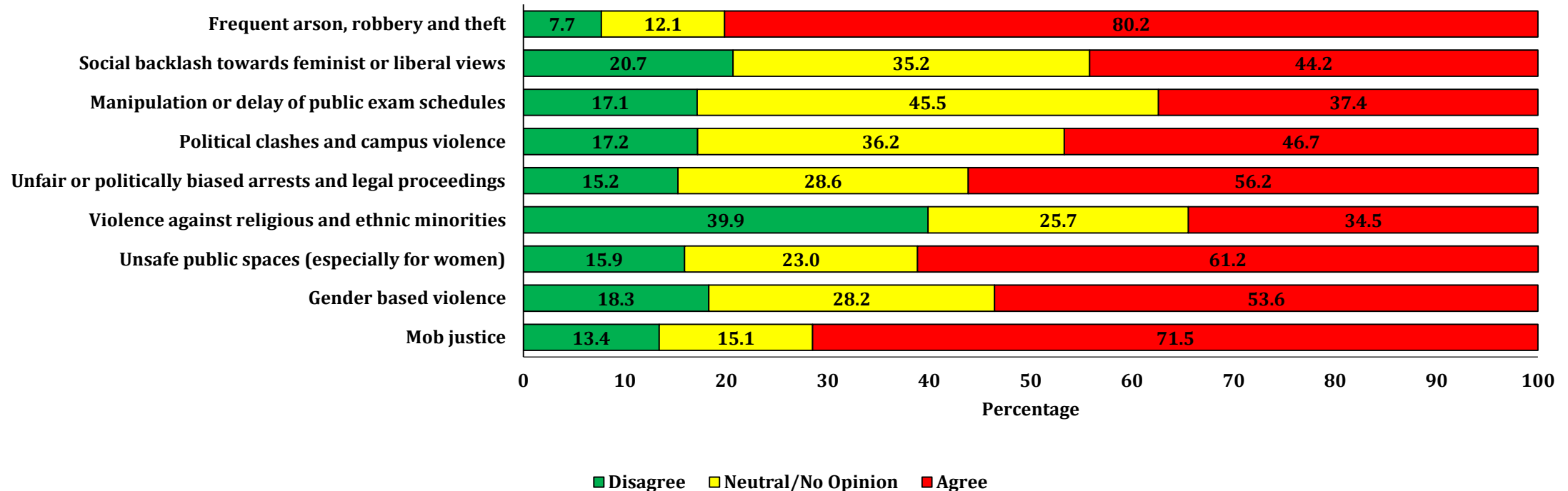
Note: The questions were asked to the respondents who answered 'No' in 'Q. Do you think religion-based politics is conducive to the development of Bangladesh?'

Safety of Religious Minority Groups



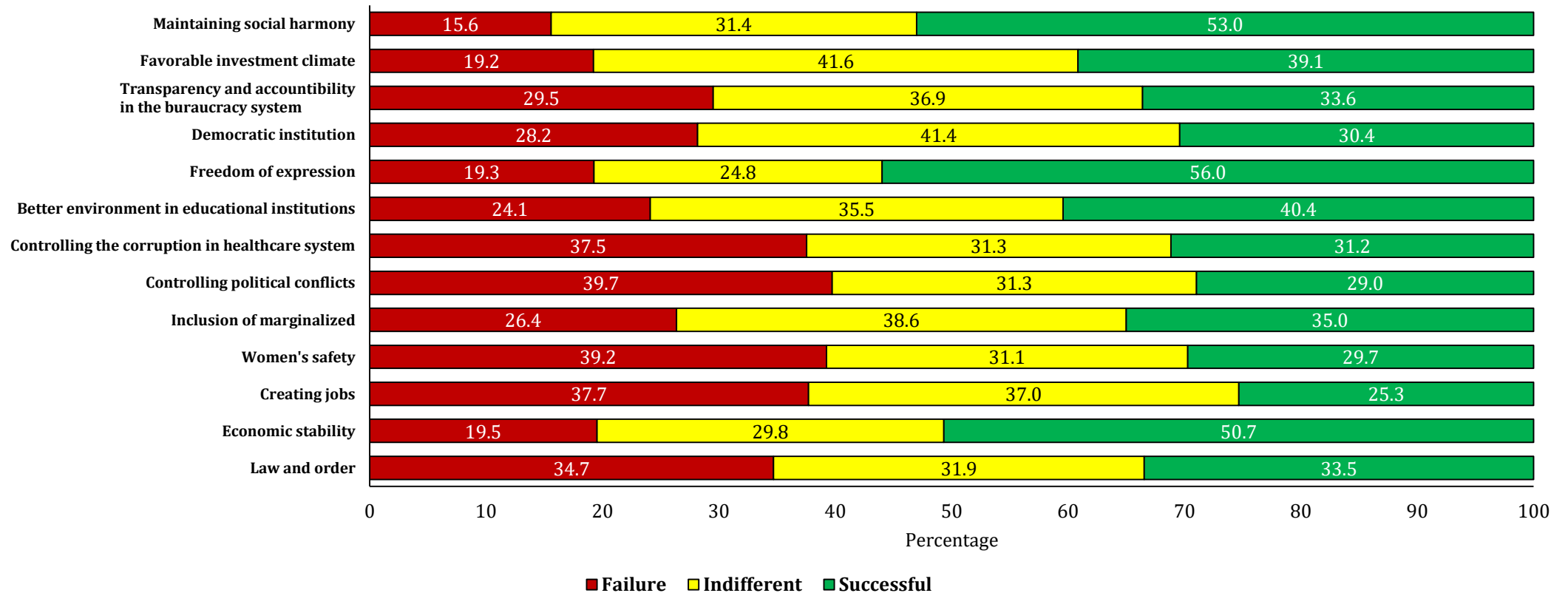
Opinions Regarding Current Sociopolitical Issues

Q: Do you agree with the statement – The following current social and political issues are increasingly affecting day-to-day life?

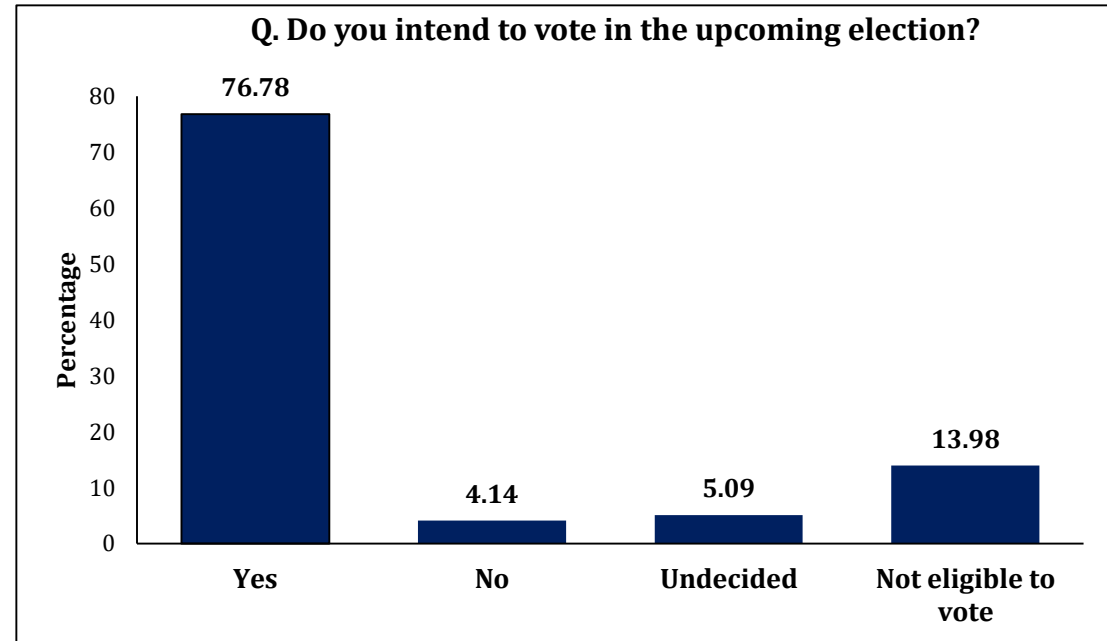
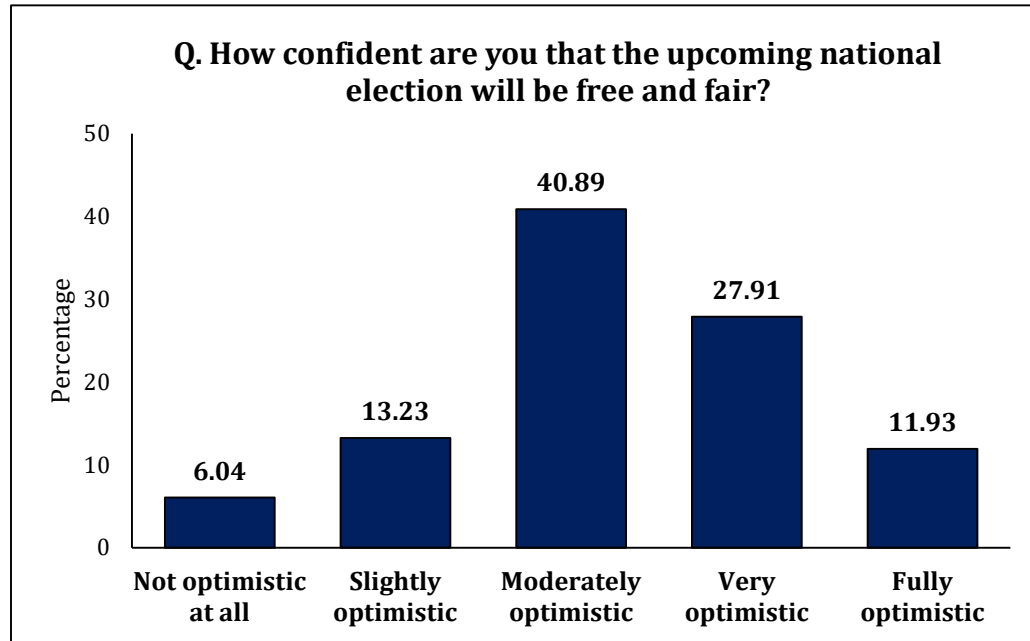


Opinions Regarding Interim Government's Performance

Q: How would you rate the interim government's performance so far on the following issues?

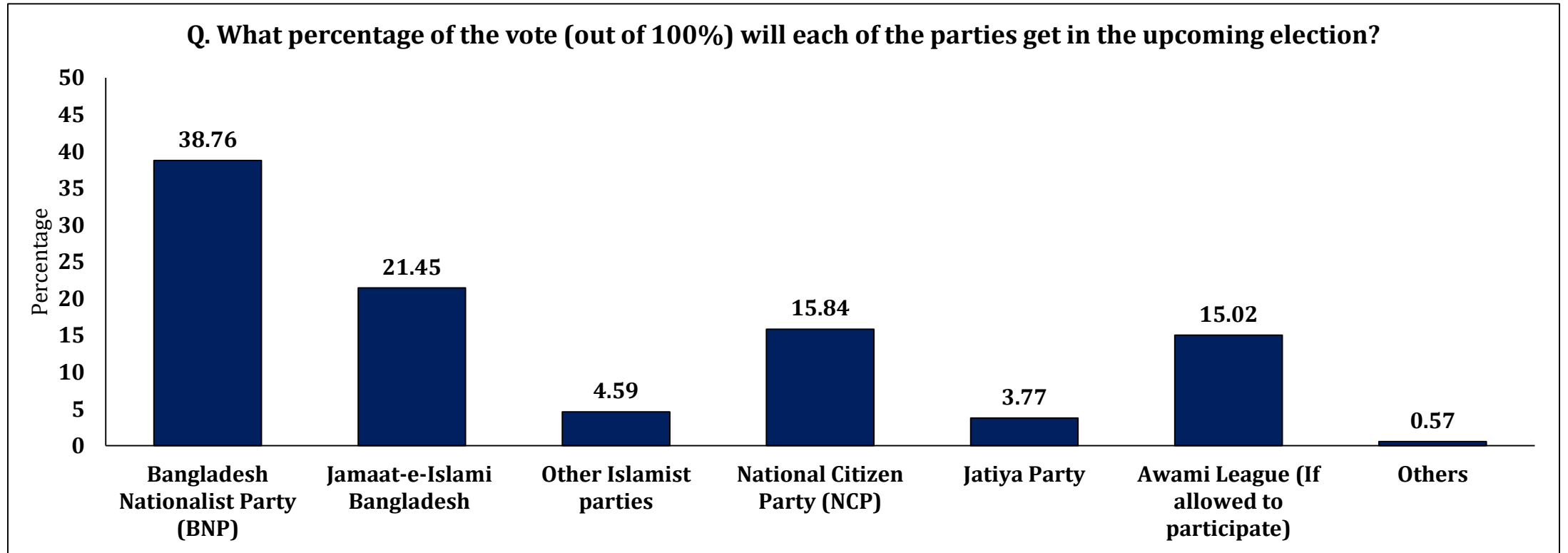


Youth's View on Upcoming Election



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

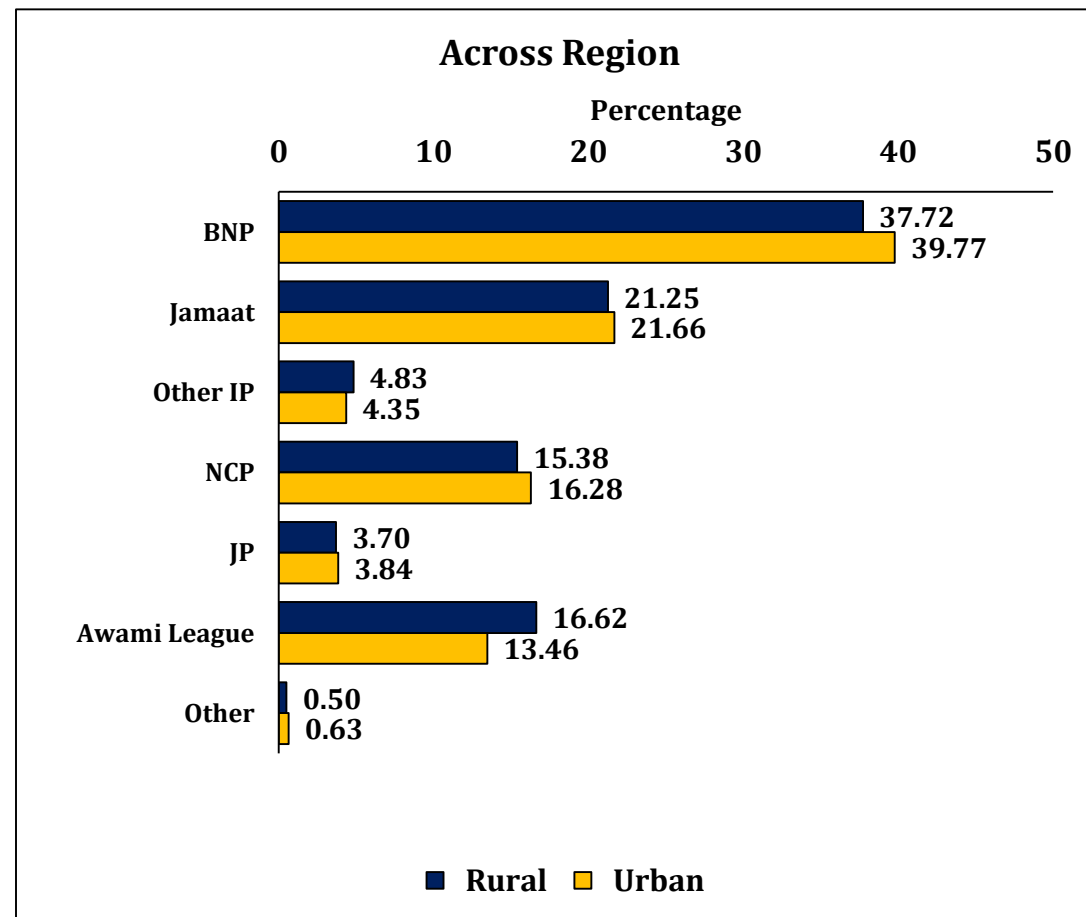
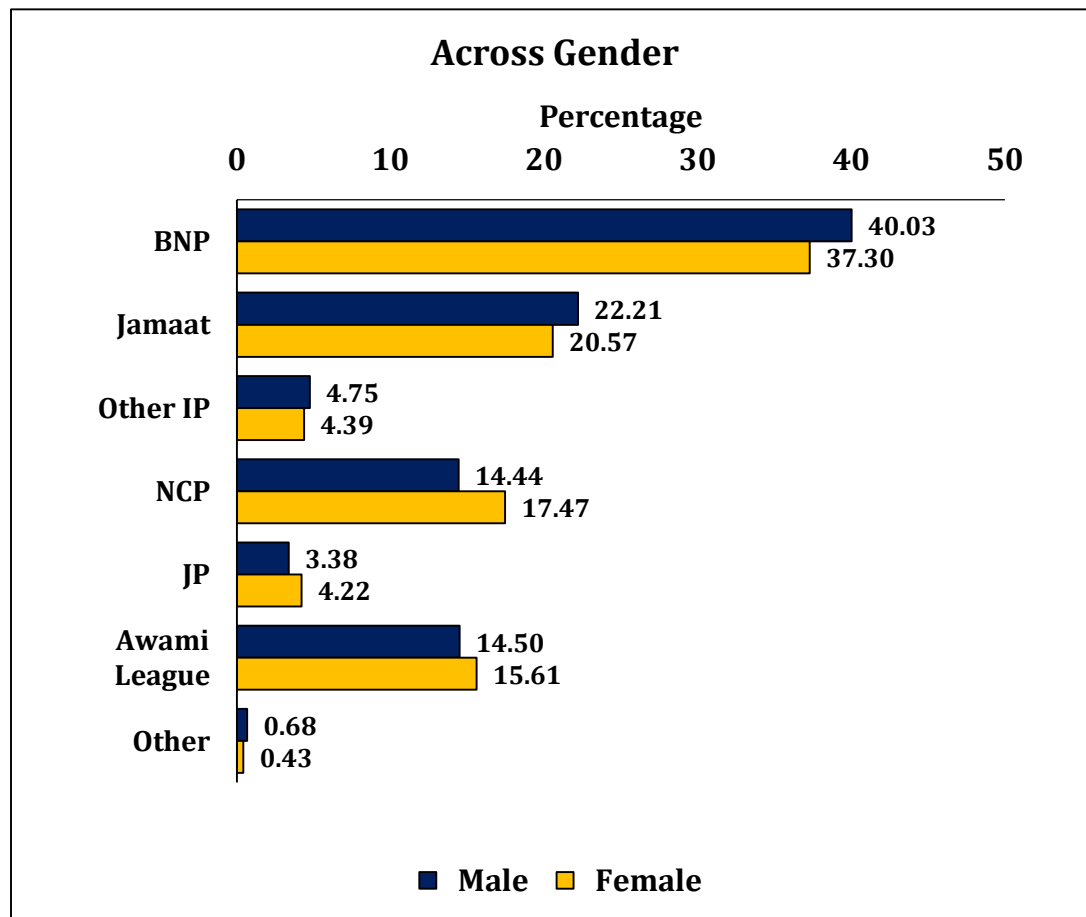
Youth's View on Upcoming Election



Note: 96.6% of the respondents answered this question (1935 out of 2003)

Youth's View on Upcoming Election

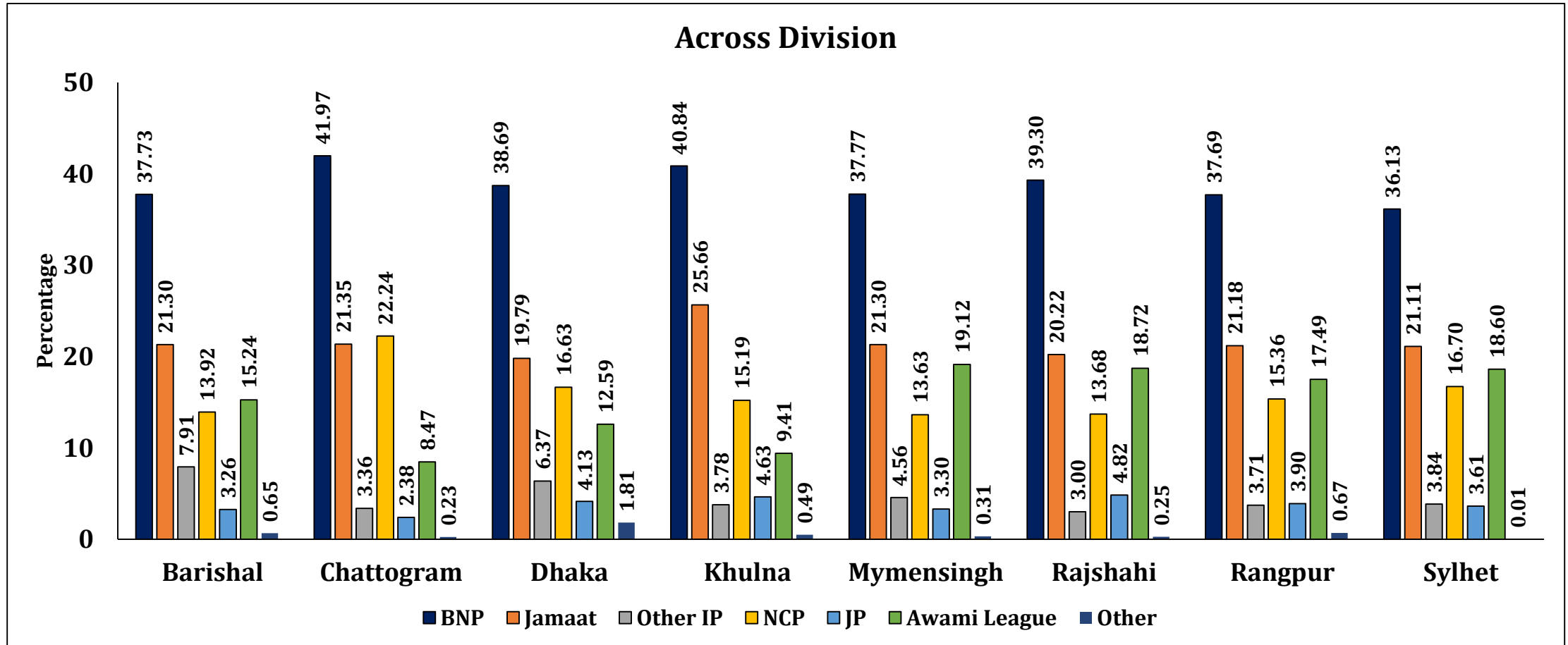
Q. What percentage of the vote (out of 100%) will each of the parties get in the upcoming election?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

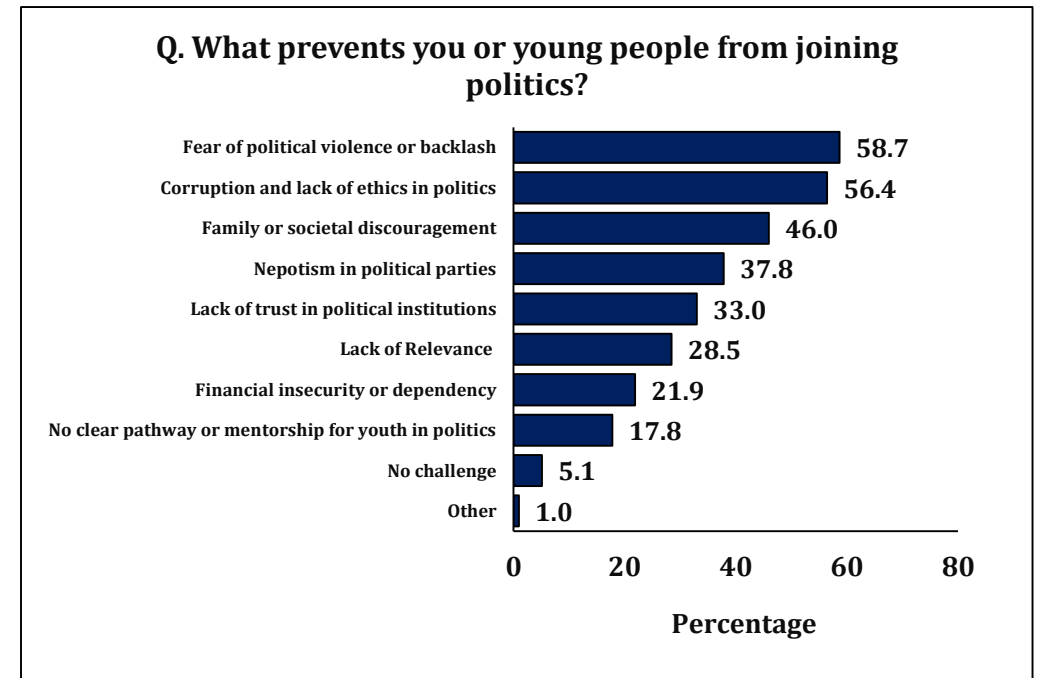
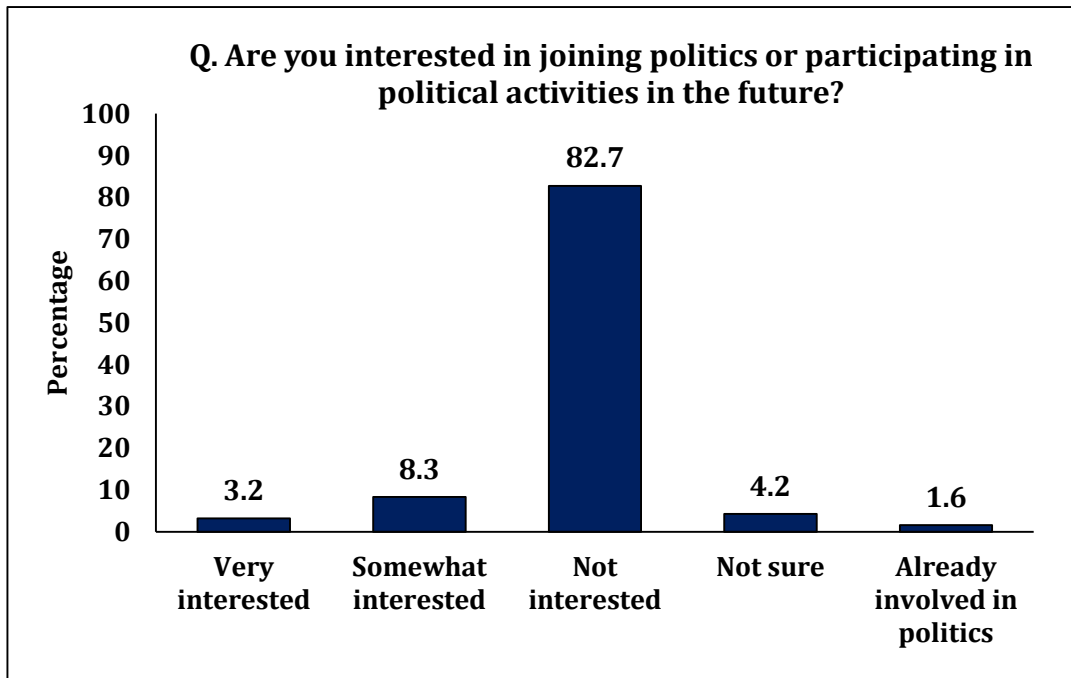
Youth's View on Upcoming Election

Q. What percentage of the vote (out of 100%) will each of the parties get in the upcoming election?



Youth's Interest in Joining Politics

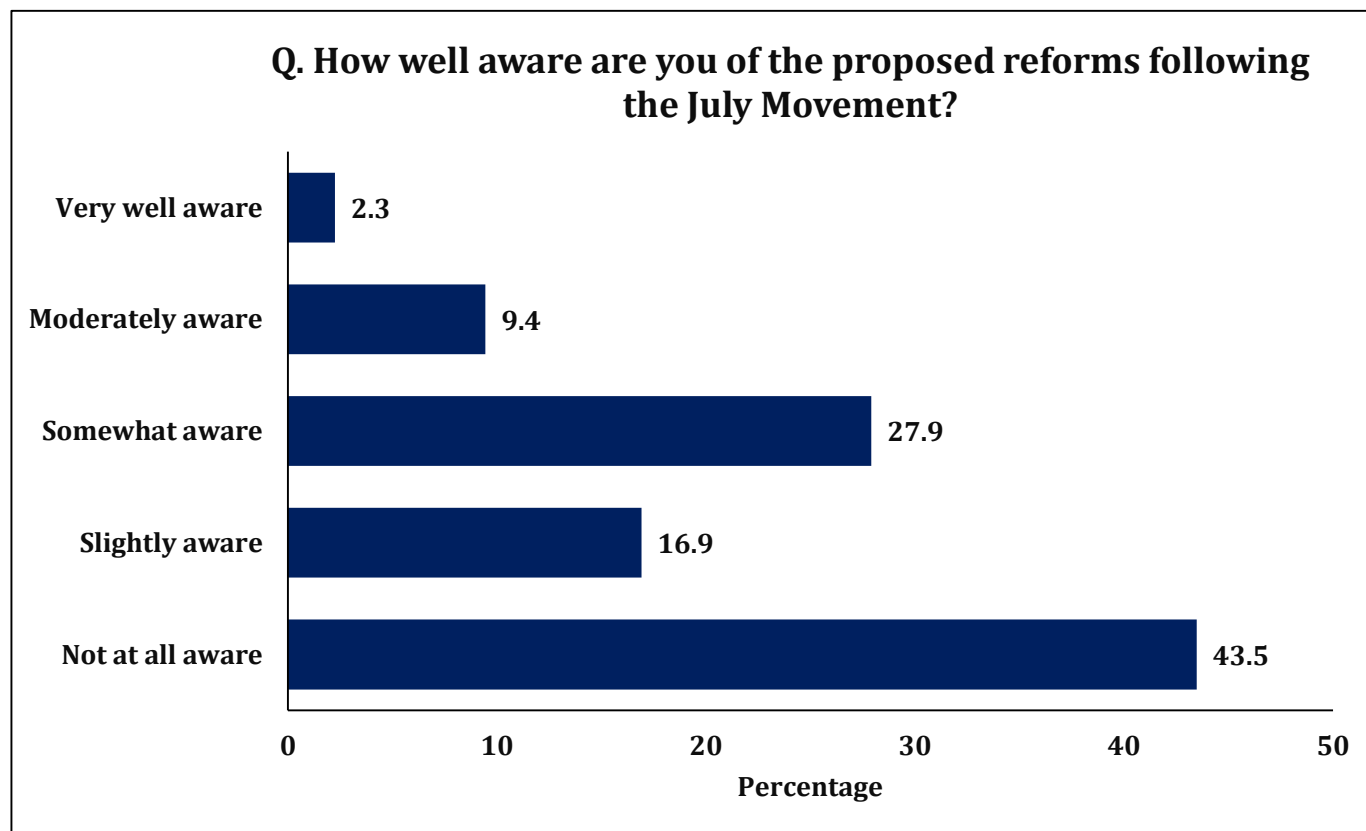
“While our country desperately needs fresh, young minds in politics, the prevailing political instability, lack of transparency and accountability, and weak governance deter many young people from getting involved.” – *A 23-year-old male youth from Bishwamvarpur, Sylhet.*



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Section D: Youth's Takeaways from Ongoing Reforms

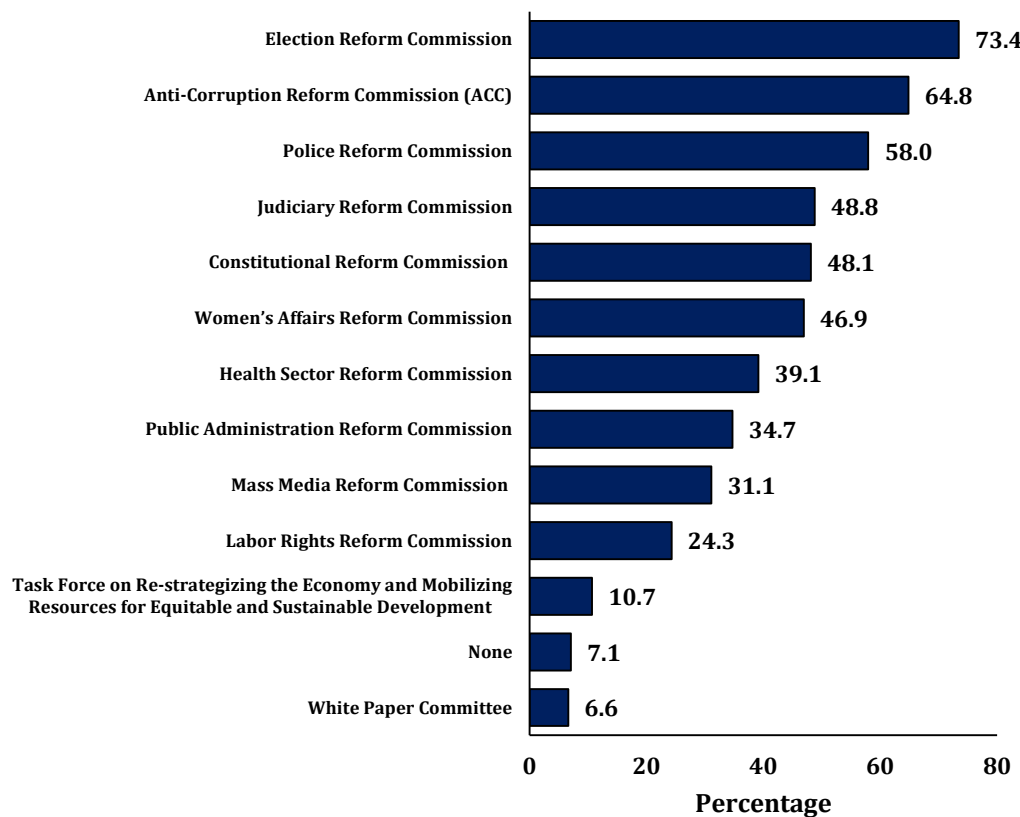
Awareness Regarding Proposed Reforms



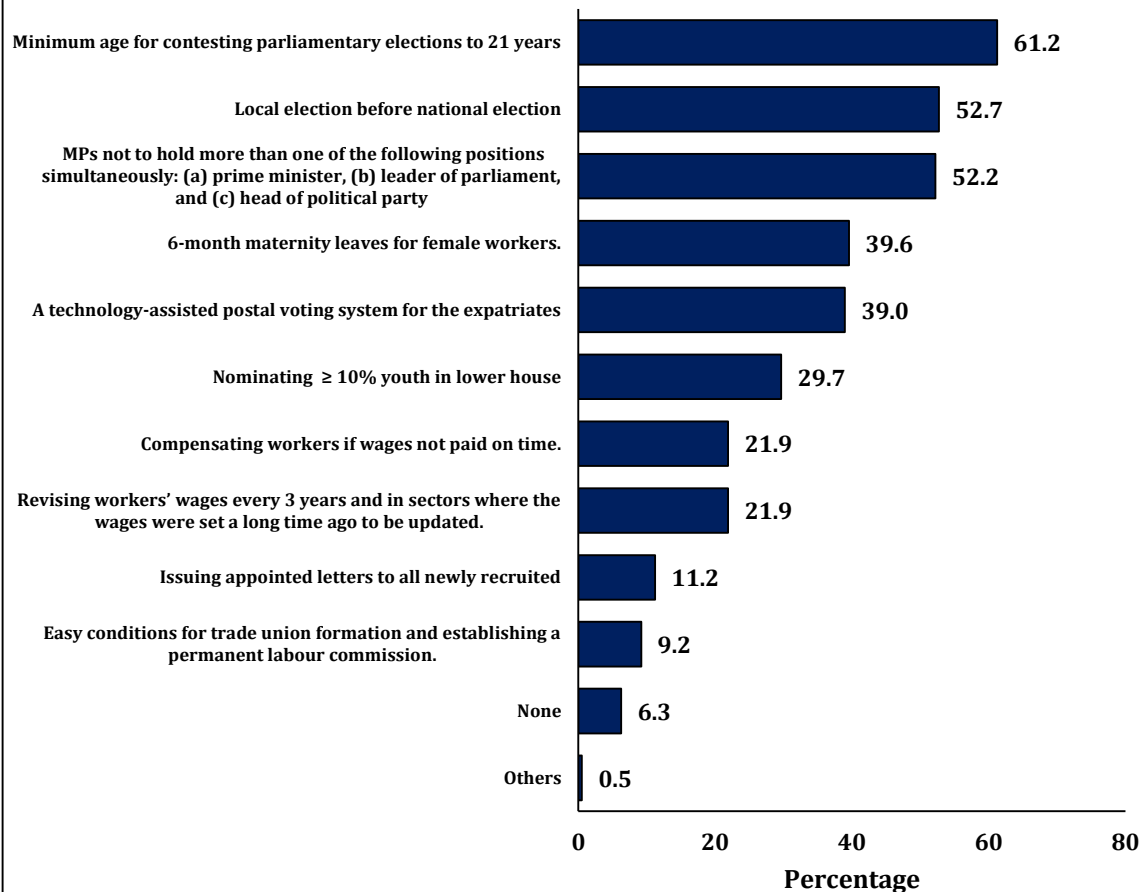
Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Awareness Regarding Proposed Reforms

Q. Are you aware of any of the following reform commissions?

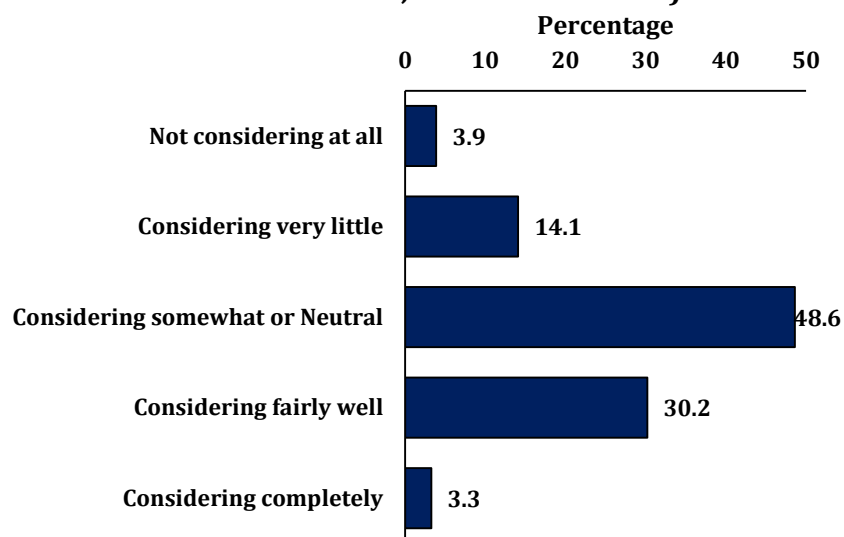


Q. Are you aware of the following reforms?

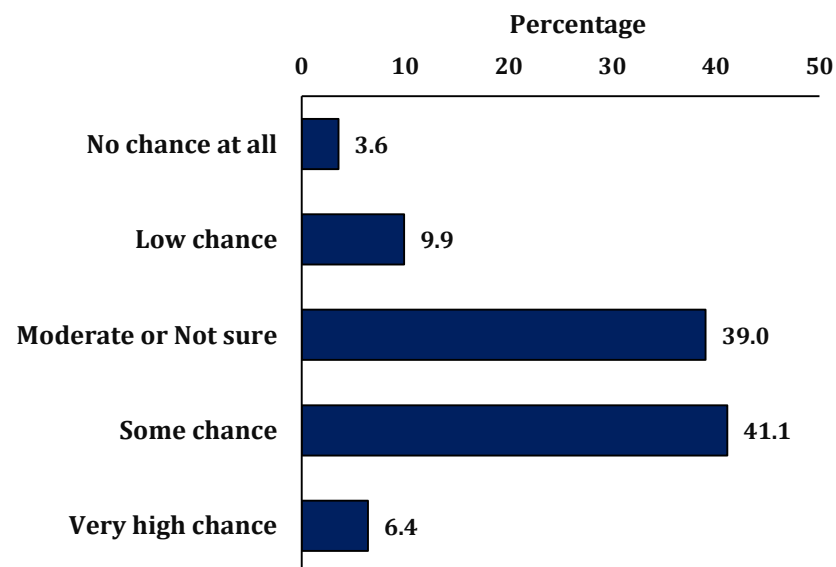


Optimism Regarding Proposed Reforms

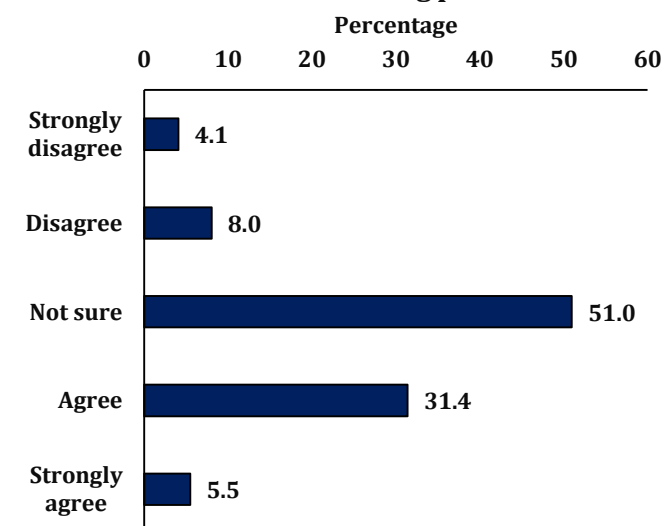
Q. To what extent do you think the proposed reforms consider the rights and participation of marginalized groups (e.g., women, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities)?



Q. How likely do you believe these proposed reforms will be implemented?

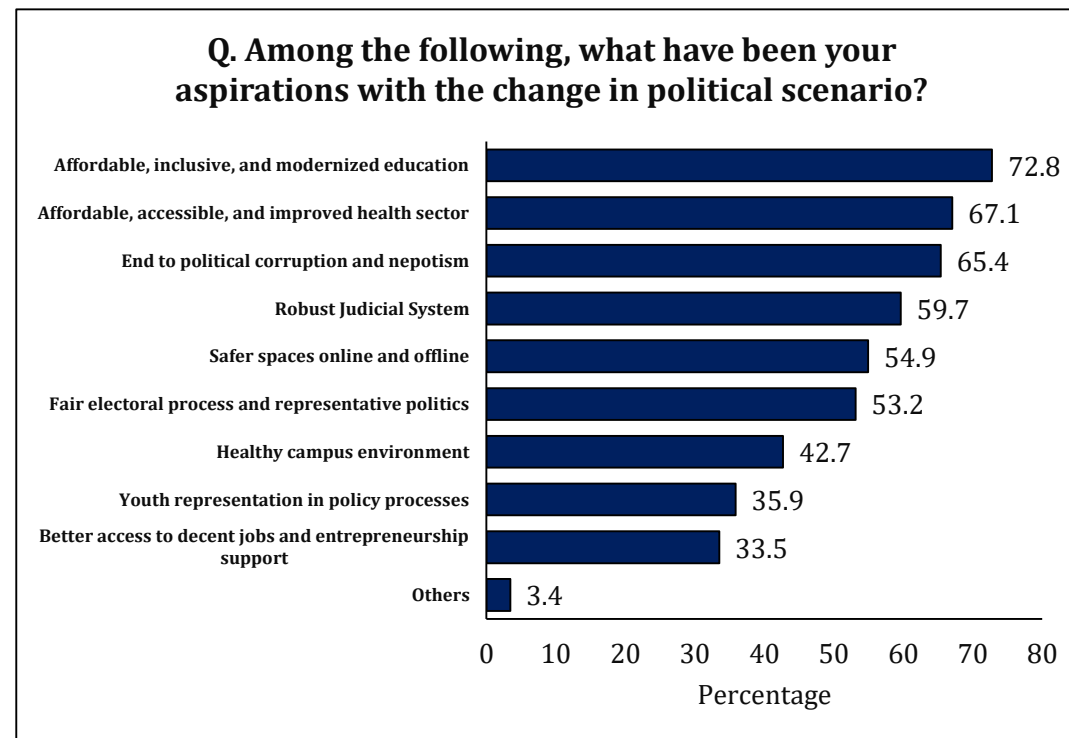
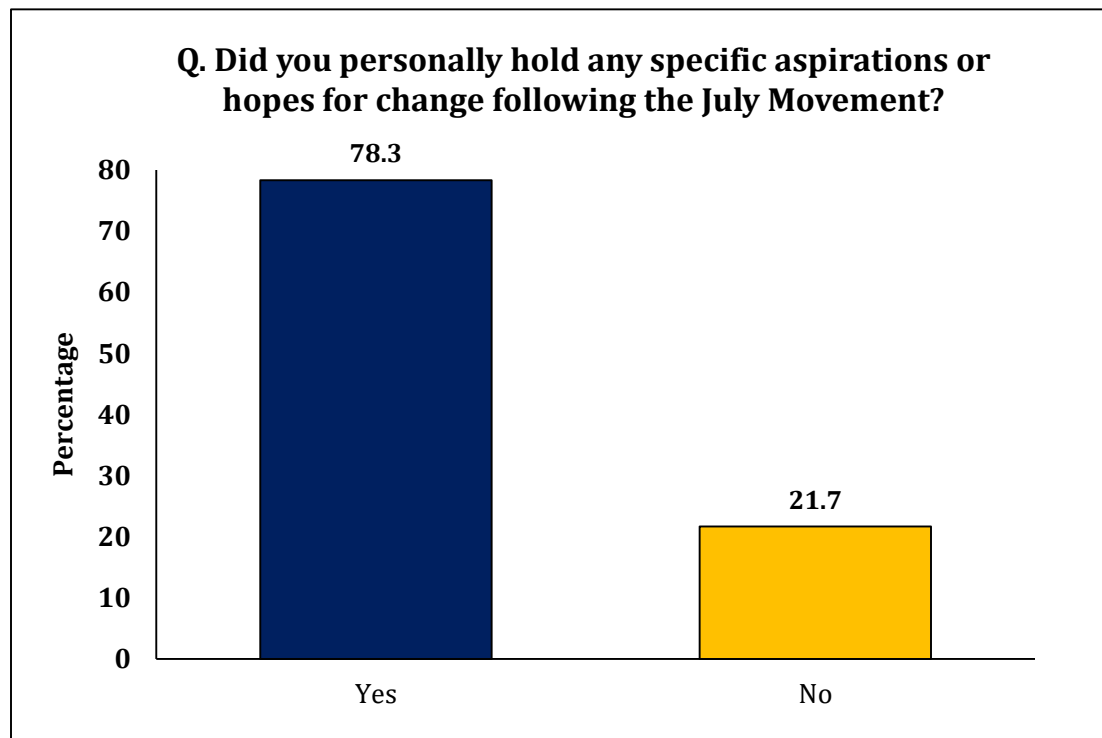


Q. Do you think these reforms would increase youth participation in politics and decision-making processes?



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

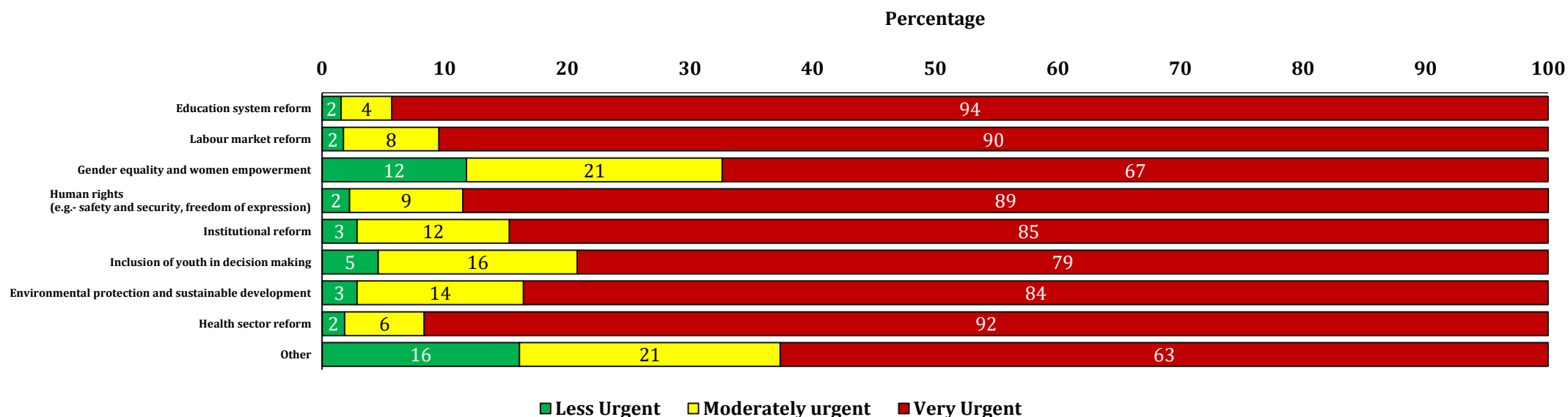
Youth's Aspiration Post July Movement



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Youth's Priorities Regarding Reforms

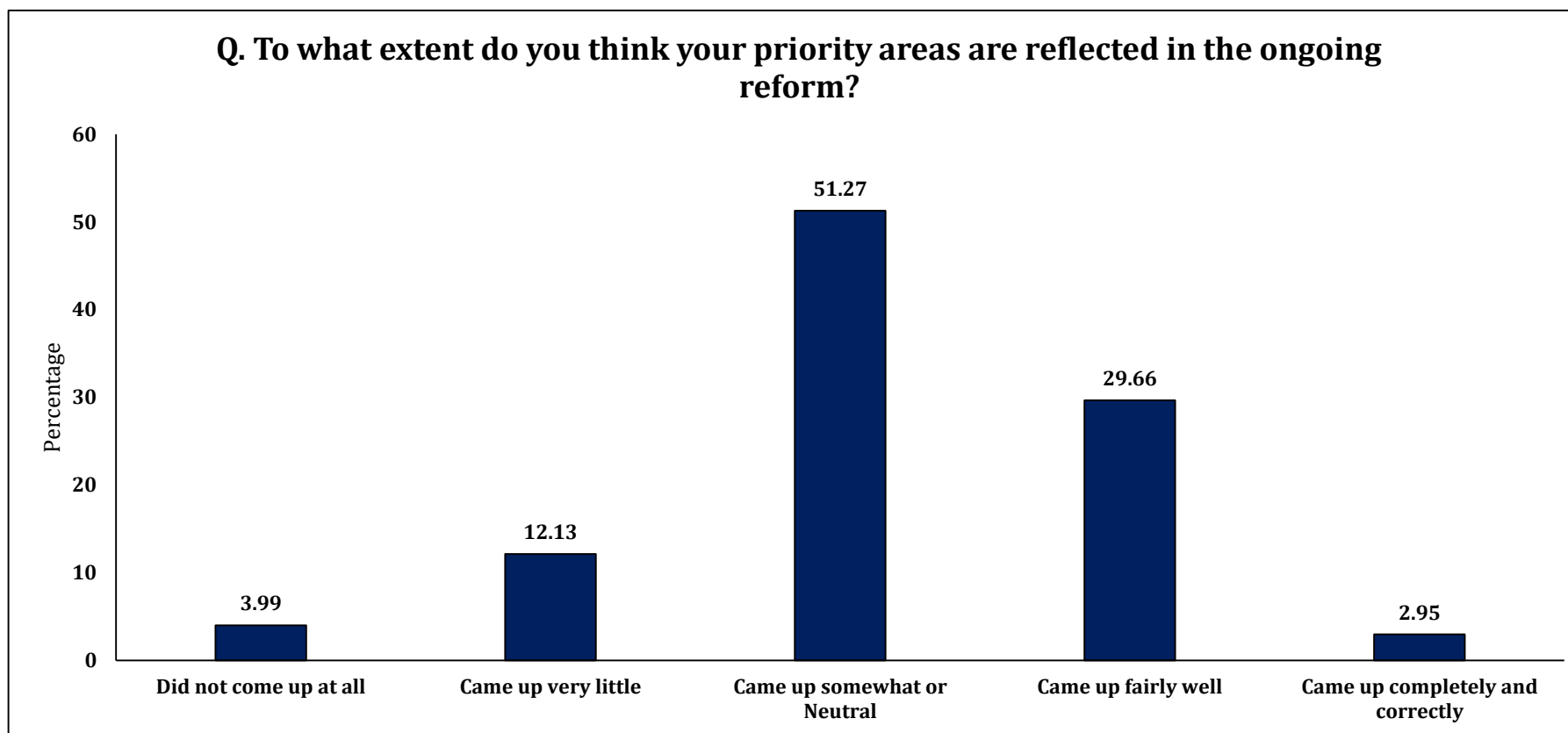
Q. Please rank the following areas in terms of their importance to you for immediate reform



I strongly feel that if there were a major reform in our education system, we could present ourselves as a developed country on the global stage – *A 22 years old female student from Raninagar, Naogaon*

Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Awareness Regarding Proposed Reforms



Source: SANEM-AAB Youth Survey 2025 (Round 1)

Expectations for the Future



I want the people of Thanchi to benefit, just like those living near the border in Thakurgaon, in Sylhet, or even in the slums of Dhaka and the upscale areas like Bashundhara. Voices from every class and every region should be heard before making any decision – ***A 21-year-old undergraduate male student from Matiranga, Khagrachhari***

I want to see a good governance-based political culture taking root in Bangladesh, where the administration and political leadership are accountable to the people. I believe that by strengthening technical education, creating more employment opportunities, and ensuring administrative transparency, we can build a truly self-reliant society – ***A 23-year-old male youth from Sunamganj***

"The government should make education more rigorous instead of easier and update vocational training to be more practical and relevant. That way, people will be encouraged to explore diverse income opportunities beyond traditional jobs, which will help grow the economy and reduce unemployment – ***A 22-year-old successful male student entrepreneur from Patgram, Lalmonirhat***

Many colleges, especially under the National University, don't have proper equipment or qualified teachers. Without hands-on experience, students can't develop real skills. I also think unused government land could be turned into job-creating projects to help reduce unemployment – ***A 22-year-old female student from Raninagar, Naogaon***



Thank You!