

501(c)3

RISE

Understanding Participants' Major Pain Points



Overview

RISE

In September of 2020, The Mom Project founded RISE as a response to the impact of COVID-19 on moms, particularly moms of color, when at least 2.1 million working moms were forced out of the workforce, with Black and Hispanic moms being most disproportionately impacted.

Removing financial barriers and providing access to community, RISE is an upskilling certification program designed to empower moms and women of color, supporting and fast tracking career advancement, earning potential, and achievement in the tech industry.

RISE participants receive multifaceted support to gain access into tech and other emergent industries, to overcome barriers to program completion, and to accelerate access to greater economic opportunities.

PARTICIPANTS

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and the impact of RISE, Werklabs, the research division of The Mom Project, fielded a comprehensive survey to program participants and gathered 520 responses. Among the survey respondents who are people of color, many were Black/African Americans.

90% female

70% people of color

83% moms

Using results from in depth interviews, and a subsequent survey, RISE received valuable and meaningful insights from its participants both past and present.

Findings

PAIN POINTS

Participants report facing and needing to overcome major personal and career-related needs and challenges as they join RISE and complete their certification. The 9 major pain points encountered by participants are: (1) childcare, (2) flexibility, (3) financials, (4) job search, (5) career entry or reentry, (6) career navigation, (7) reaching out, (8) wellness, and (9) workload.



Childcare (54%*)

Maneuvering limited daycare availability and inconsistent school schedules



Career Navigation (56%†)

Lacking tools and resources for career guidance and opportunities



Flexibility (94%‡)

Lacking flexibility at work and certification programs



Reaching Out (60%*)

Hesitating and feeling uncomfortable to ask for help



Financials (71%*)

Providing necessary income for current and future needs



Wellness (64%*)

Experiencing mental and physical strain from taking on many responsibilities



Job Search (74%*)

Submitting applications with limited time and energy



Workload (80%§)

Keeping up with various commitments



Career (Re)entry (90%†)

Reentering the workforce or breaking into new industry

“With all these [resume] gaps and not that much experience, it’s hard for me to show...I’m capable of this...I just I don’t know where I fit in.”

Note:

* Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with having a hard time managing specific pain points when thinking about their day-to-day life.

† Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with the need or desire for specific pain point as a motivating factor to join RISE.

‡ Percentage of survey respondents who agreed with optimism working at an organization that offers flexibility.

§ Average percentage of household responsibilities and workload RISE participants manage.

PAIN POINTS AND BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS

In day-to-day life, close to **80% of the Black/African American participants** experience the sense that they need to be strong and resilient. Moreover, **50% of Black/African American participants** shared experiences as single parents with no partner or spouse with whom they co-parent, often compounding stressful situations.

OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

While many participants face challenges on a daily basis, the majority feel optimistic about the opportunity to work for an organization that values diversity, respects work-life balance, offers flexibility, and appreciates their unique work background.

92% value work-life balance

94% value diversity & flexibility

Through understanding participant experiences, including lack of support as well as other pain points, RISE is actively working to reverse the backslide trend by removing barriers of upskilling and providing access to community, so that moms can find work that meet their needs and elevate themselves and their families.

Research Process & Methodology

QUALITATIVE PROCESS

To begin, Werklabs interviewed 26 RISE program participants. All interviews were 20-30 minutes, one to one, and confidential. An open-ended, semi-structured approach was used during interviews meaning that, while the topic areas of interest are covered, the conversations are intentionally broad so that participants can discuss whatever matters most to them. All interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Then, a rigorous line-by-line coding of each transcript was performed, using a qualitative coding software for analysis. From this analysis, key themes arise and are clearly defined.

QUANTITATIVE PROCESS

Based on findings from 1:1 interviews, Werklabs crafts a survey instrument written in the voice of RISE participants to empirically test themes. The survey instrument is fielded to program participants and gathered 520 responses. Results are analyzed. Groupings are formed based on survey items that hang together and labels are then given. The survey is designed to hold up well across time allowing for subsequent re-measures to assess the impact of program changes on participant experiences.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about Werklabs, please visit [werklabs.com](https://www.werklabs.com) and to learn more about RISE, please visit [momproject.org](https://www.momproject.org)