

New Zealanders' Attitudes About Collective Action Against Climate Change In The Wake Of COVID-19

Ms. Ellen Ozarka
Dr. Catherine Cole
Prof. Nancy Longnecker



THE CENTRE FOR
SCIENCE COMMUNICATION
Te Paepae Pūtaiao



Research Question

How does a COVID-19 framing affect 1) collective efficacy beliefs and 2) intentions to participate in collective climate action?

Survey design

Pre-test: Demographics, Political Beliefs

1. Essay

- Read an essay about the effectiveness of New Zealand's collective efforts against COVID-19

2. Questions

- Answer a section of additional survey questions on the same topic as the essay

3. Control

- No intervention

Followed by scale questions about key variables for all groups

Methods

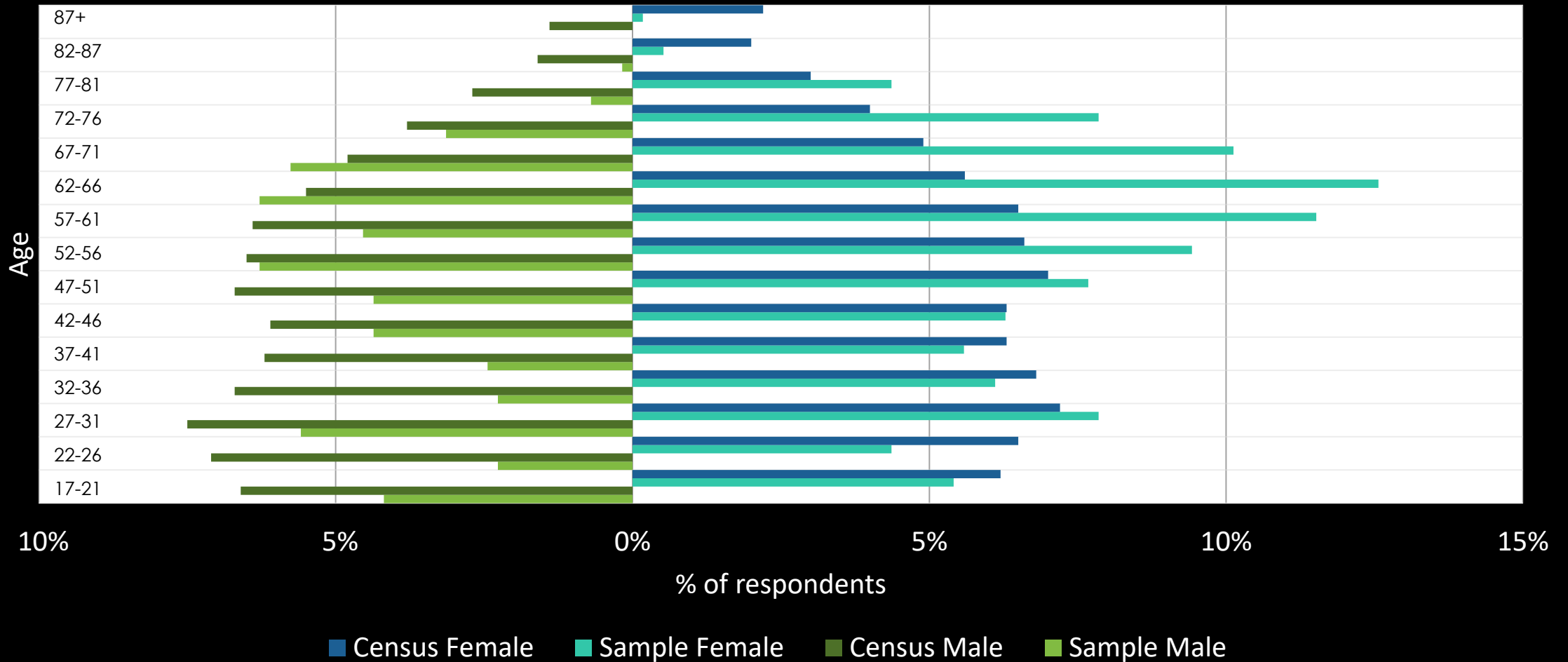
- Recruitment
 - Targeted and snowball recruitment over Facebook
 - N=842 after cleaning
- Benefits and challenges
- Timing of survey



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top left is a profile picture of a globe with a New Zealand map overlay. To its right is the text "What are New Zealanders' attitudes about current events?" followed by three dots. Below this is the date "3 September" and a gear icon. The main text of the post reads: "We want to know what YOU think about certain current events. Click the link to below to have your say and enter to WIN a \$300 grocery voucher." Below the text is a blue link: "https://otago.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d5qYvQCzNaEwJhz". The bottom half of the image is a promotional graphic with a blue background. It features a map of New Zealand on the right side, filled with a pattern of newspaper text. To the left of the map, the text reads: "What are New Zealanders' attitudes about current events?", "We want to know what YOU think about certain current events.", and "Have your say and enter to WIN a \$300 grocery voucher, by taking the survey below."

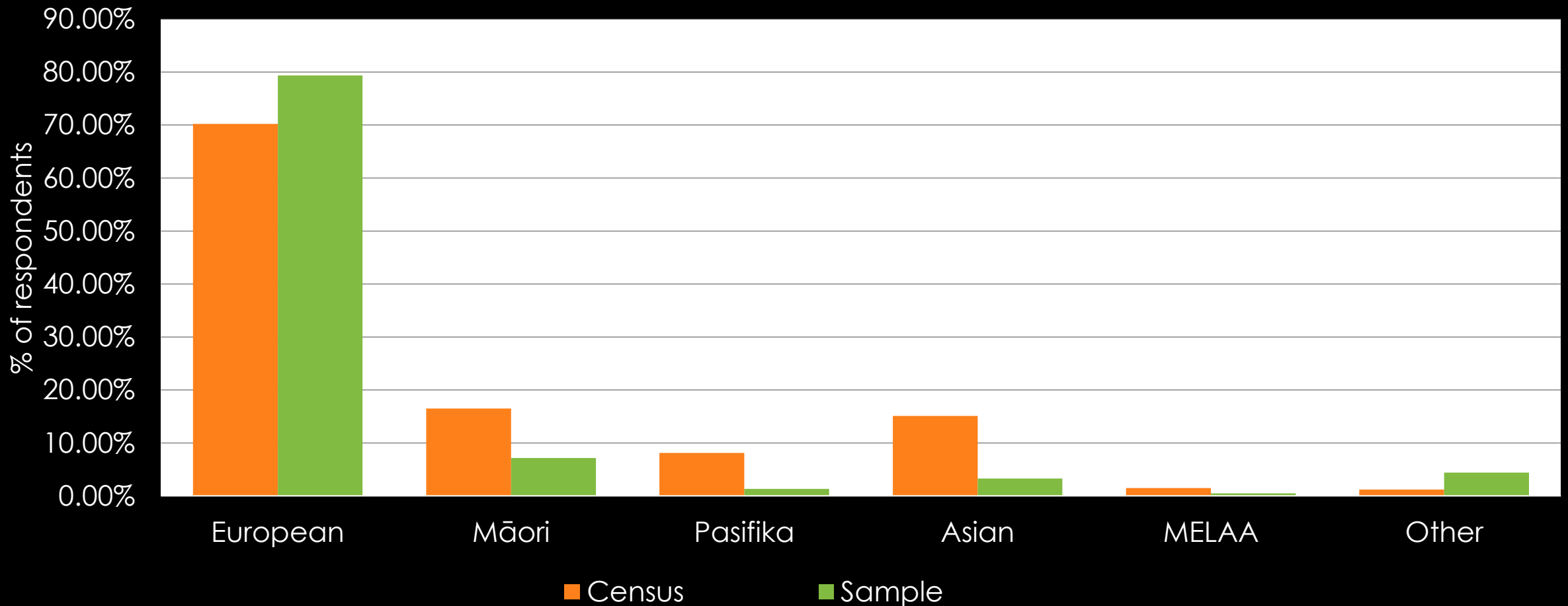
Sample Composition

Age and Gender Distribution



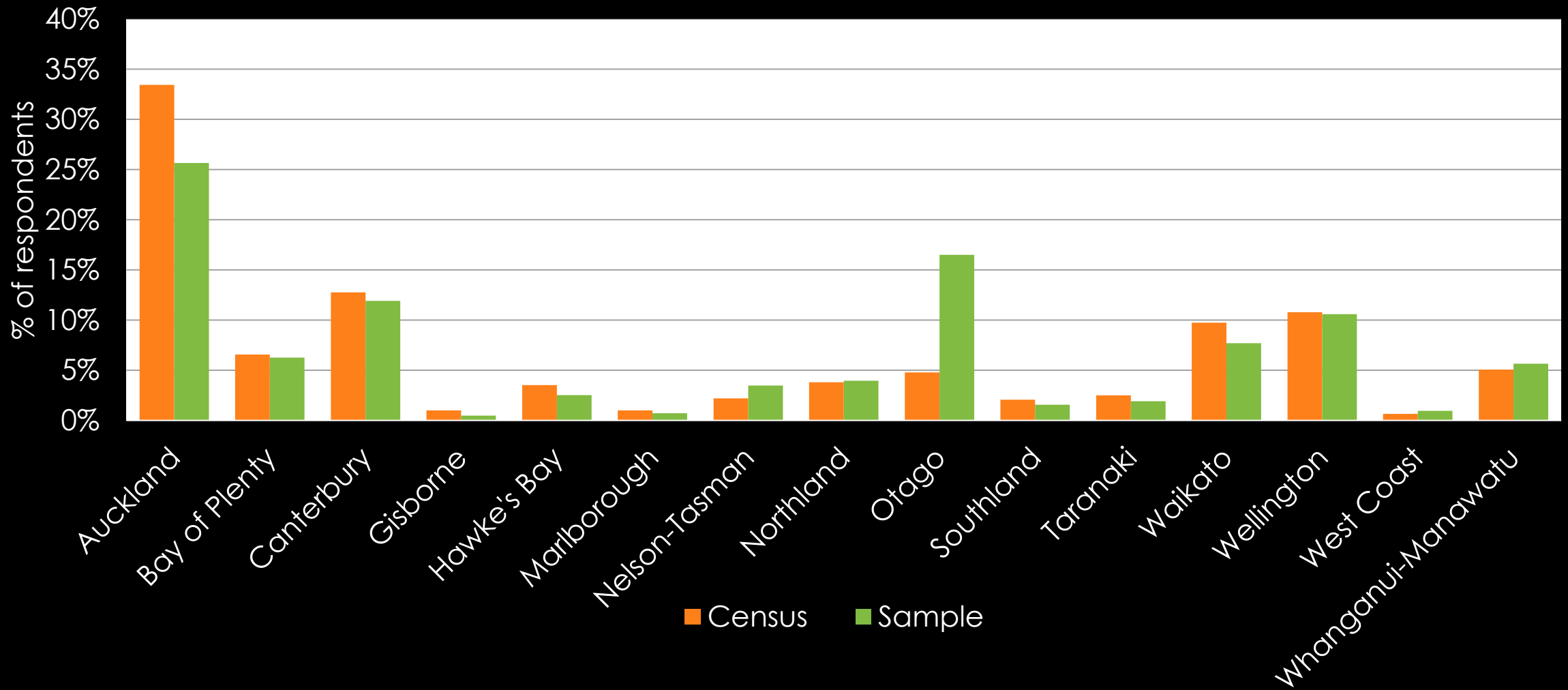
Sample Composition

Distribution of Ethnicities of Survey Respondents



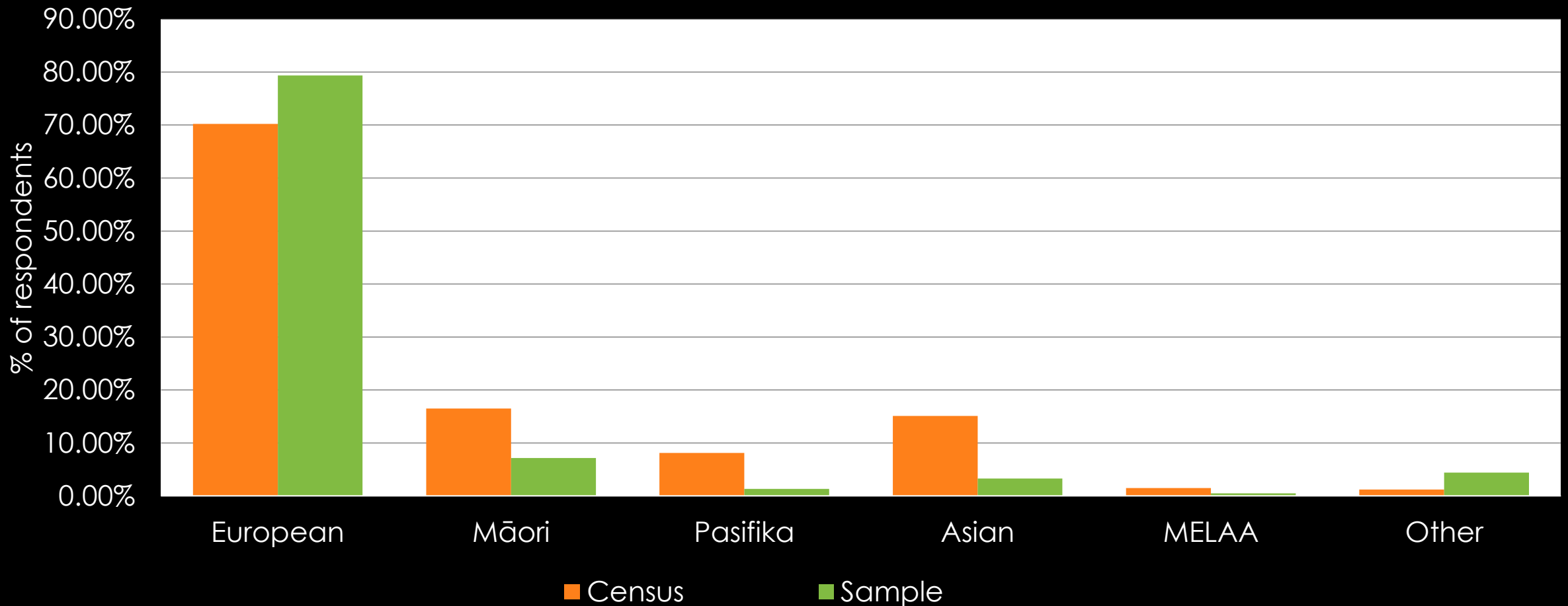
Sample Composition

Distribution of Survey Respondents by Region



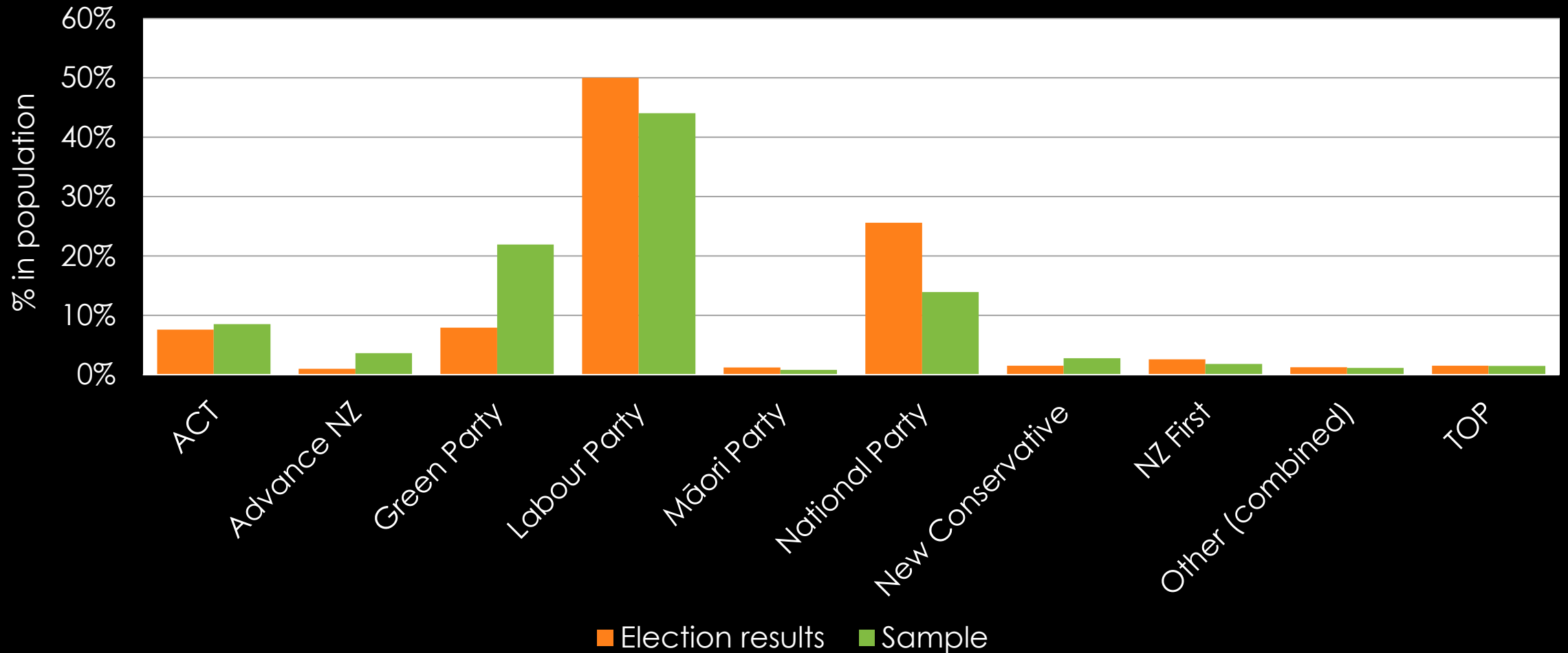
Sample Composition

Distribution of Ethnicities of Survey Respondents



Sample Composition

Party Affiliation In Sample Compared To The Election Results



Factor and Reliability Analysis

- **Political Orientation**—a scale of how strongly respondents ascribe to left or right-leaning political ideologies.
($\alpha=.869$)
- **Collective Climate Action Intentions**—the degree to which one intends to take Collective Climate Action.
($\alpha=.902$)

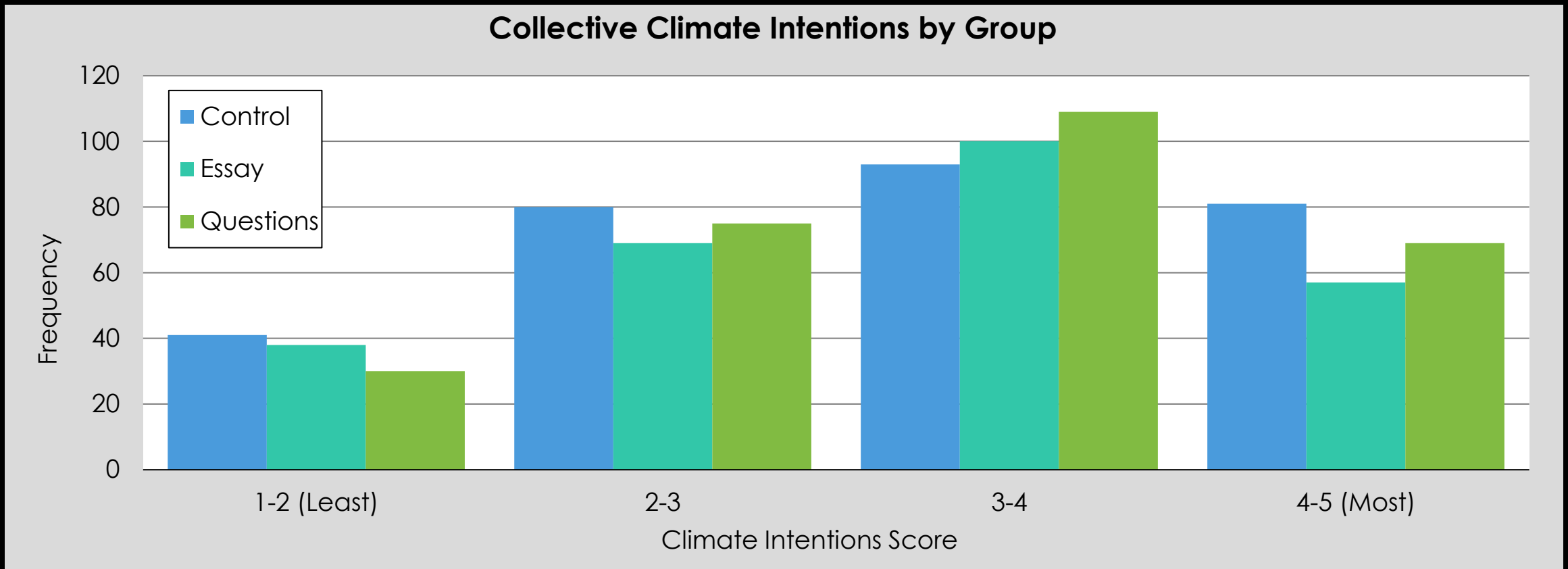
Factor and Reliability Analysis

- **Perceived Collective Efficacy**—beliefs about how possible it is to get people to work together and the effectiveness of doing so. ($\alpha=.710$)
 - EG: “It’s impossible to get large groups of people to work together on anything.”
- **Individual Collective Climate Action Efficacy**—beliefs about the respondent’s ability to participate in Collective Climate Action and the effectiveness of doing so. ($\alpha=.863$)
 - EG. “I feel capable of engaging in a conversation with family and friends about climate change.”

Results: Across The Whole Sample

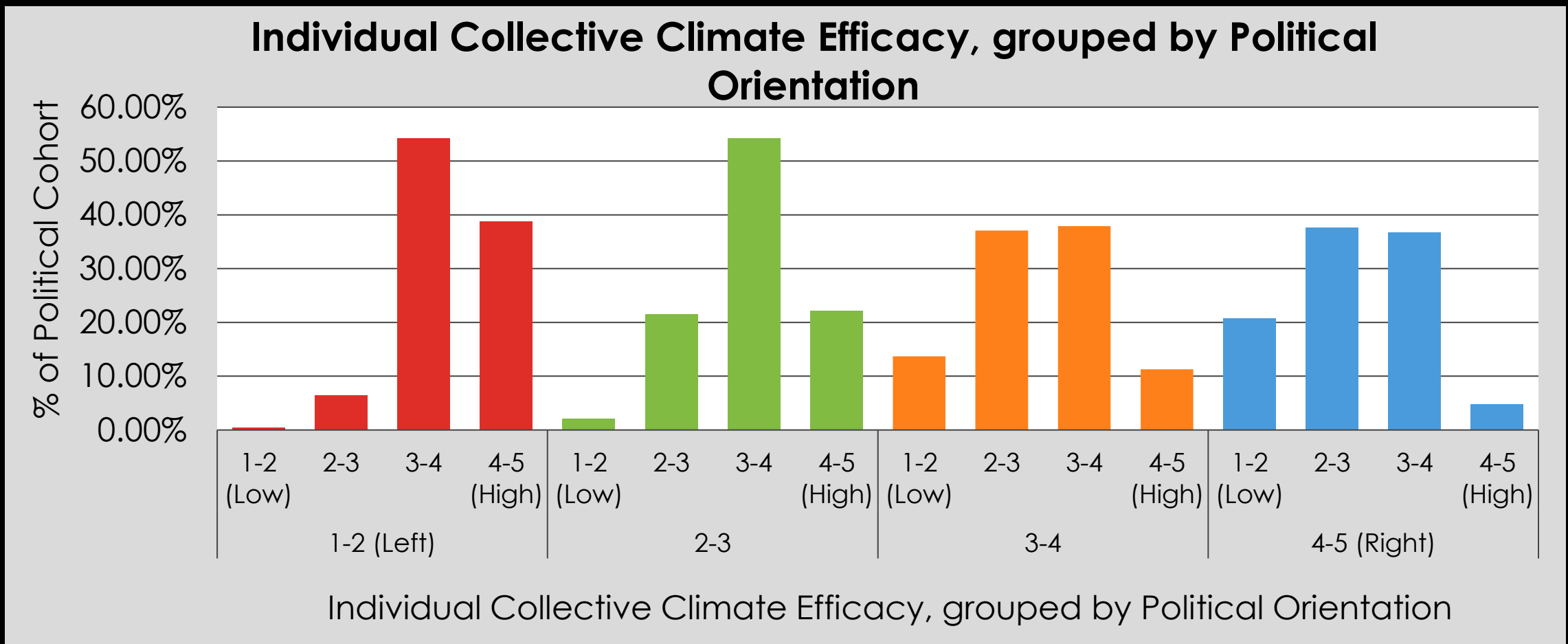
There was no significant effect in Collective Climate Action Intentions ($p=.660$).

	Control	Essay	Questions
Mean	3.13	3.07	3.15
St. Dev.	1.04	1.03	0.98



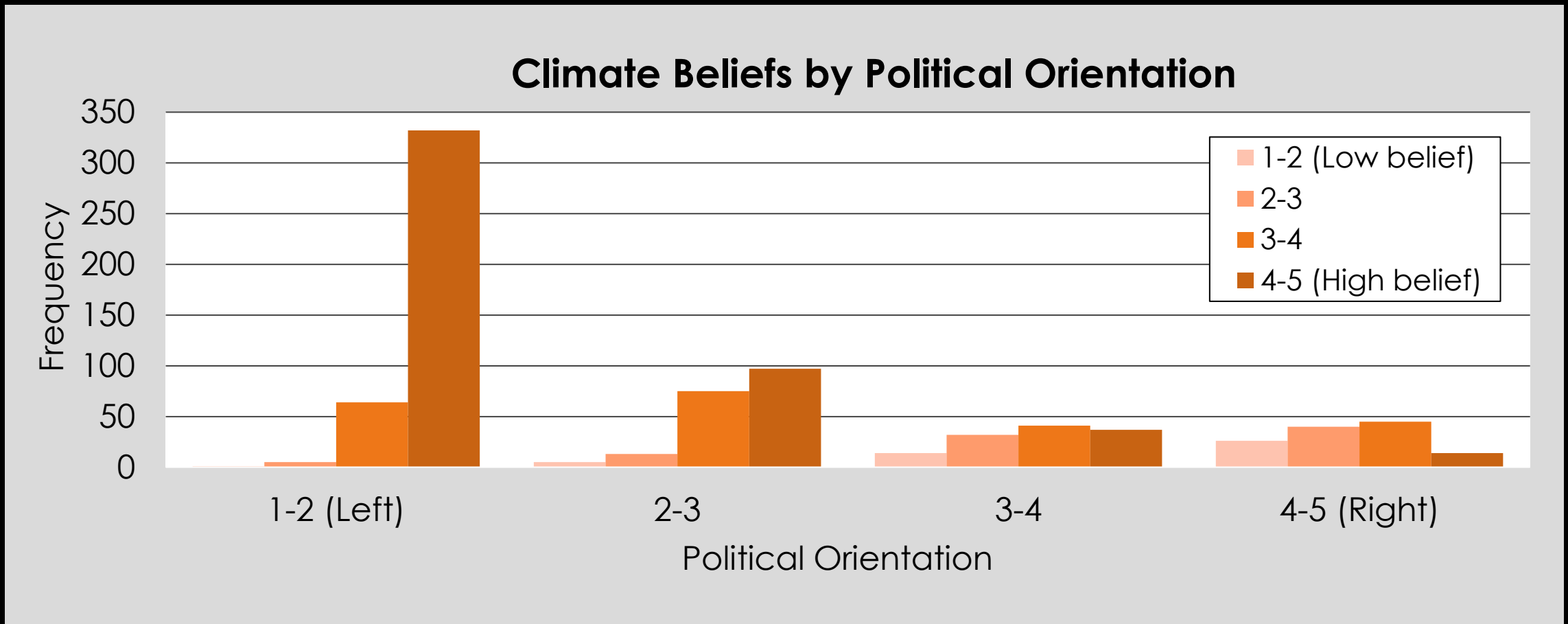
Results: By Political Orientation

Collective Climate Action Efficacy was higher among left-leaning respondents and lower among right-leaning respondents.



Results: By Political Identity

Climate change beliefs fell along political lines.



Qualitative Data

There was a notable amount of conspiratorial thinking on both issues.

- “Yes covid is a joke, a tool being used to manipulate society. The media are muppets asking the wrong questions and breeding fear.”

Qualitative Data

A small number commented that individuals are not to blame, or that they have low faith in individual action.

- “Climate change is not the fault of the individual consumer. ...The implication that [I] ought to think about solutions or changes [I] could make is [asinine].”
- “As an individual , it’s hard to take meaningful actions as the solutions are systemic”

Qualitative Data

Many New Zealanders have a clear grasp of individual lifestyle changes they can make.

- “Plant trees and be a more conscious consumer”
- “Change of diet... eat less or no farmed meat, grow own veges”

Voting is potentially the most commonly mentioned collective action.

- “Vote for parties or candidates that prioritize solving climate change through policy.”

What's next?

- COVID-19 impact as a covariate.
- Exploratory model analysis.
- Qualitative analysis.
- Suggestions for future research.
 - Cross-cultural comparison.
 - Look for other variables, such as Support for Collective Action.
 - Repeat outside of an election year.



FEEDBACK