

**FAULTLINES IN SINGAPORE:  
PERCEPTIONS AND MANAGEMENT  
WITH A FOCUS ON RACE AND RELIGION**

**MATHEW MATHEWS  
TEO KAY KEY  
MELVIN TAY  
and  
RACHYL POH**

February 2025  
IPS Working Papers No. 60

## **About Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)**

**The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)** was established in 1988 to promote a greater awareness of policy issues and good governance. Today, IPS is a think-tank within the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) at the National University of Singapore. It seeks to cultivate clarity of thought, forward thinking and a big-picture perspective on issues of critical national interest through strategic deliberation and research. It adopts a multi-disciplinary approach in its analysis and takes the long-term view. It studies the attitudes and aspirations of Singaporeans which have an impact on policy development and the relevant areas of diplomacy and international affairs. The Institute bridges and engages the diverse stakeholders through its conferences and seminars, closed-door discussions, publications, and surveys on public perceptions of policy.

IPS Working Papers No. 60

**FAULTLINES IN SINGAPORE:  
PERCEPTIONS AND MANAGEMENT  
WITH A FOCUS ON RACE AND RELIGION**

**Mathew Mathews**

Principal Research Fellow

Head, Social Lab

Institute of Policy Studies

[mathew.mathews@nus.edu.sg](mailto:mathew.mathews@nus.edu.sg)

**Teo Kay Key**

Research Fellow

Institute of Policy Studies

[kaykey.teo@nus.edu.sg](mailto:kaykey.teo@nus.edu.sg)

**Melvin Tay**

Research Associate

Institute of Policy Studies

[melvin.tay@nus.edu.sg](mailto:melvin.tay@nus.edu.sg)

and

**Rachyl Poh**

Former Research Associate

Institute of Policy Studies

February 2025

IPS Working Papers No. 60 (February 2025):

Faultlines in Singapore: Perceptions and Management with a Focus on Race and Religion

by Mathew, M., Teo, K. K., Tay, M., and Poh, R.

## CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Survey Methodology	9
1.2 Demographics and Representation	11
1.3 Analysis Strategy	16
<b>2. PERCEIVED CONSEQUENCES OF MISMANAGING FAULTLINES</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Consequences of Mismanaging Race	20
2.2 Consequences of Mismanaging Religion	25
2.3 Consequences of Mismanaging Immigration	29
2.4 Consequences of Mismanaging SES Issues	34
2.5 Consequences of Mismanaging LGBT Issues	38
<b>3. PERCEPTIONS OF FAULTLINE RESOLUTION MODALITIES</b>	<b>43</b>
3.1 Public Discussion	43
3.2 Government Involvement	60
<b>4. PERCEPTIONS OF R&amp;R POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>72</b>
4.1 General Perceptions	73
4.2 Importance of Race-Based Policies	87
4.3 Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others (CMIO) Framework	96
<b>5. CITIZEN ACTIONS AND ACTIVISM</b>	<b>100</b>
5.1 Acceptability of Responses to Social Media Post	101
5.2 Satisfaction with Handling of Race and Religious Issues	110
5.3 Actions Taken to Improve Handling of R&R Issues	114
<b>6. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: ABOUT THE AUTHORS</b>	<b>126</b>

# **FAULTLINES IN SINGAPORE: PERCEPTIONS AND MANAGEMENT WITH A FOCUS ON RACE AND RELIGION**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report presents findings on public perceptions of faultlines and their management, with a particular focus on racial and religious divides. It is based on the third iteration of the IPS Survey on Race, Religion, and Language, conducted from April to August 2024, involving a nationally representative sample of 4,000 Singaporean residents. This study builds on comparable data gathered in 2018 and 2013.

At the outset, the study underscores the widespread belief that mismanagement of societal divides can have serious consequences. Approximately eight in 10 respondents believe that there are significant societal consequences if issues related to race, religion, immigration, socioeconomic status (SES), or LGBT concerns are not properly managed. Among these issues, race and religion were identified by the highest proportion of respondents as the faultlines most likely to result in anger against particular communities if mishandled; nearly half indicated as such. In comparison, about four in 10 respondents held similar views regarding immigration, SES, and LGBT issues. Beyond social tensions, race and religion were also identified as the faultlines most likely to lead to violence if not managed well; about one-third of respondents expressed this belief as compared to under two in 10 who felt the same about other faultlines.

When it came to the government's role in managing faultlines, the majority of respondents expressed a desire for the status quo regarding government involvement across all societal faultlines to prevail. In particular, about two-thirds of respondents felt that the government's current level of involvement in managing racial and religious issues is appropriate, while fewer than one in 10 favoured reducing government involvement.

The government's role in fostering racial and religious harmony remains widely recognised. Over nine in 10 respondents in 2018 and 2024 agreed to varying extents that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore, and that the government should support all religious and racial groups in preserving their traditions and customs. In the same vein, there was also near unanimous agreement that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony in Singapore (93.9 per cent in 2024). The government is also seen by most to have maintained a fair system for everyone in Singapore, regardless of race or religion — the proportion of respondents who somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with this statement increased from 89.8 per cent in 2018 to 93.5 per cent in 2024, with 7 per cent more indicating emphatic agreement.

Rather than directly assessing satisfaction with individual policies, the survey examined public support for policy outcomes, such as the maintenance of racial proportions in the population, racial diversity in neighbourhoods, and representation of different races in Parliament. In general, the findings indicate broad support for policy outcomes aimed at ensuring racial harmony. Over nine in 10 respondents in both the 2018 and 2024 waves felt that it is important to have a racial mix in each housing estate, and to provide culturally sensitive assistance to the less well-off in different

communities. In addition, over eight in 10 respondents in both waves said that it is important in immigration policy to maintain the racial makeup in the population. Three-quarters of respondents in both waves agreed that it is important to know how many people of each race live in Singapore.

Another set of notable findings involved attitudes toward the Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others (CMIO) framework. Less than one in 10 respondents supported removing the CMIO framework in 2024; instead, support for keeping the CMIO framework as-is has grown since 2018, with close to six in 10 in 2024 favouring the status quo. Meanwhile, about one-third preferred to expand the CMIO framework to become more inclusive.

More than three-quarters of respondents (76.7 per cent) were satisfied or very satisfied with the handling of racial and religious issues in Singapore, although younger respondents and racial minorities were less likely to share this sentiment. Among the minority (2.8 per cent) who expressed dissatisfaction, the most common approach to addressing concerns was to engage in discussions within their social circles. Far fewer opted for public actions such as writing comments or posts discussing R&R issues on social media or organising a group advocating for R&R issues.

The survey also explored respondents' acceptance of various reactions to a hypothetical social media post about a taxi driver making racist comments. Most respondents found it acceptable to do nothing, while half found it acceptable to point out the driver's wrongdoing by commenting on the post. More confrontational actions, like initiating online petitions for the driver's termination or sharing personal details, were deemed less acceptable. Nonetheless, our study revealed that younger respondents were more likely to use online platforms for collective action, such as pointing out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post;

sharing the social media post on their own platforms and criticise the driver; or starting online petitions to call for the taxi driver's termination.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Singapore, a multicultural society with a unique tapestry of racial, religious, and cultural identities, prides itself on its harmony amidst its diversity. However, maintaining this balance in the face of evolving societal norms and external influences is a continuous challenge, owing to an intricate web of faultlines, spanning race, religion, immigration, socio-economic status (SES), and LGBT issues. These dimensions are not merely abstract categories but represent lived realities that influence the nation's social fabric.

Recent incidents in the past half-decade highlight the tangible impact of these faultlines. The repeal of Section 377A in 2022, which decriminalised consensual same-sex relations between men, sparked intense debates both online and offline, with polarised views surfacing across societal and religious lines. While some celebrated it as a step toward equality, others expressed concerns over its implications for traditional family values, leading to heightened tensions and frayed nerves in public discourse and social media platforms<sup>1</sup>. In the same vein, the Delta variant's emergence in India in 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic led to a spike in anti-immigrant sentiment, with some conflating Singapore's Indian residents with recently arrived Indian nationals, exacerbating racial tensions and stereotypes. This conflation highlighted challenges in public discourse around race and immigration<sup>2</sup>. These incidents illustrate the fragility and interconnectedness of these faultlines.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Abdullah, W. J. B. (2023). The politics of compromise: Analyzing the repeal of section 377A in Singapore. *Pacific Affairs*, 96(1), 105-118; and Wong, W. B. (2024). Representation of social actors in The Straits Times and The Independent Singapore: A comparative critical discourse analysis of the repeal of Section 377A in Singapore. *Discourse & Communication*, 17504813241257763 for academic backgrounders on the repeal of 377A.

<sup>2</sup> Mathew, M., & Tay, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Immigrant Integration in Contemporary Singapore: Solutioning amidst challenges*. World Scientific, Singapore.

The structure of this paper reflects a deliberate effort to unpack the dynamics of these faultlines in Singapore methodically. Chapter 2 anchors the discussion by highlighting public perceptions of the consequences of mismanaging faultlines. This foundational understanding is critical for grasping the stakes involved. Chapter 3 transitions to examine the adequacy of public and governmental responses, as seen in Sections 3.1 on public discussion and 3.2 on government intervention. This analysis reveals nuanced divides in public expectations across various demographics. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 focus on race and religious (R&R) related faultlines. Chapter 4 evaluates how salient various race and religion-related policy outcomes are for the population, shedding light on public satisfaction with various government measures. Finally, Chapter 5 examines citizen actions and activism, encapsulating how individuals respond to perceived gaps in institutional efforts to deal with racial and religious infractions.

This sequential structure underscores the interplay between societal perceptions, citizenry, and government. It captures the continuum of faultline management, from recognising risks to evaluating collective and institutional responses. By situating individual chapters within this broader narrative, this paper, *Faultlines in Singapore*, underscores its overarching aim: to provide policymakers, researchers, and citizens with insights to foster greater cohesion amidst diversity. It is also the second iteration of a previous 2018 study on Faultlines in Singapore<sup>3</sup>, and part of a broader umbrella research endeavour on social divides particularly race, religion, and language (RRL).

---

<sup>3</sup> Mathew, M., Tay, M., and Selvarajan, S. (2019). Faultlines in Singapore: Public Opinion on their Realities, Management and Consequences. *IPS Working Papers no. 37*, October 2019. Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore. [https://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/docs/default-source/ips/working-paper-37\\_faultlines-in-singapore\\_public-opinion-on-their-realities-management-and-consequences\\_final.pdf](https://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/docs/default-source/ips/working-paper-37_faultlines-in-singapore_public-opinion-on-their-realities-management-and-consequences_final.pdf)

The findings in ensuing chapters leverage the survey responses of 4,000 Singaporean Citizens and Permanent Residents aged 18 and above, with minority races oversampled to ensure their perspectives were well-captured.

## **1.1 Survey Methodology**

The findings presented in this paper are primarily derived from an approximately 45-minute Computer-Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) administered from April 2024 to August 2024.

Fieldwork and data collection was conducted by IPS Social Lab. In total, the full survey sample comprises 4,000 unique respondents after quality checks.

At the outset, a sampling frame comprising a list of 6,000 randomly generated residential household addresses was obtained from the Department of Statistics (DoS). Invitation letters with details of the RRL survey were sent to the residential addresses in the sampling frames, two weeks prior to surveyors from IPS Social Lab physically visiting the addresses.

Surveyors would then brief potential respondents about the study using a pre-set Participant Information Sheet, invite the individuals to participate in the study, and obtain their consent. A booster sample of approximately 1,000 Malay and Indian minority-race respondents (obtained to ensure representation and enable fine-grain comparisons across responses) was also apportioned within the target of 4,000 respondents. This booster sample was obtained by surveyors knocking on the doors of Malay and Indian households, following a prescribed process to search for such households after locating a pre-assigned address from the sampling frame.

Surveyors then administrated the survey via CAPI, whereby the respondent was provided with a tablet (e.g., iPad, Galaxy Tab) on which to answer or self-complete the survey questions. If the respondent was uncomfortable using the tablet or had difficulty reading, the option for surveyors to read out the questions and record their answers was made available. The survey was conducted in all four official languages - English, Mandarin Chinese, Malay, and Tamil.

If respondents had difficulty reading or writing, the option for surveyors to read out the questions and record their answers was made available. If participants were uncomfortable using the tablet, the surveyor handed them a paper copy of the survey for completion instead. Respondents were given \$20 (via PayNow or cash) as a token of participation upon survey completion.

Responses were then weighted to mirror the prevailing demographics of Singapore's resident population. As such, the findings are generally representative of the Singapore adult resident population. However, the RRL survey data is not exempt from the typical biases prevalent in face-to-face survey methods, including:

- Under-representation of certain profiles who have less opportunity to respond to the survey at the door during survey administration hours (e.g., individuals with certain occupations / extenuating circumstances); this was partly dealt with by fieldworkers visiting an address at different time slots and on weekdays and weekends, so that such respondents can be included in the study.
- Social desirability bias arising from respondents answering the survey in a manner ostensibly viewed more favourably as compared to more 'impersonal' or 'removed' methods such as an online survey; this is, however, partially

resolved with a CAPI method with surveyors according respondents' privacy to answer the questions.

## **1.2 Demographics and Representation**

The overall responses for survey questions reported in the ensuing chapters were weighted across age, race and gender with reference to prevailing Singapore resident demographics. In the following subsections, we explore some key demographic breakdowns of the samples in relation to the Singapore resident population.

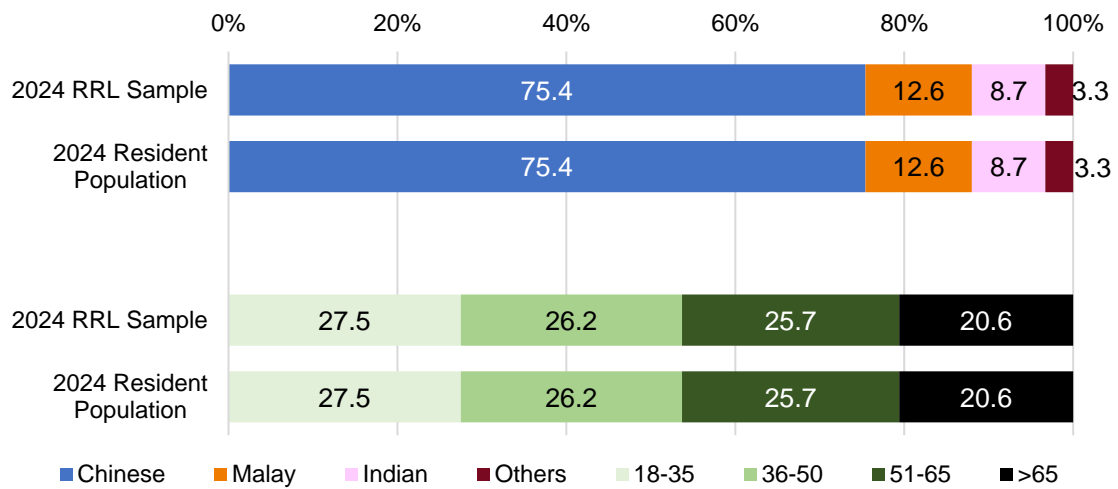
### ***1.2.1 Race and age profiles in the 2024 RRL sample mirrored the Singapore resident population after weighting***

The proportions of respondents in the 2024 RRL sample were identical to the prevailing Singapore resident population<sup>4</sup> in terms of race and age cohorts after weighting. Only respondents 18 years old and above at the time of administration were eligible to participate (see Figure 1.2.1).

---

<sup>4</sup> Using publicly available information from Singapore Department of Statistics (DoS); accurate as of 2023 End-June (M810011 - Singapore Residents by Age Group, Ethnic Group And Sex, End June, Annual).

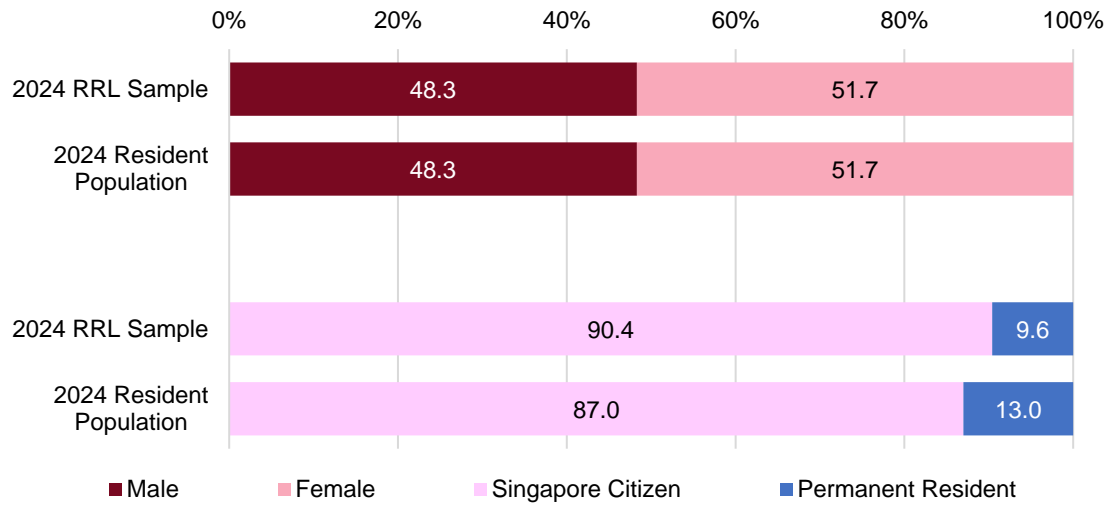
**Figure 1.2.1: Survey Sample vs Resident Population by Race / Age**



**1.2.2 Gender breakdowns for the 2024 RRL sample were also identical to the resident population after weighting; there was a slightly higher proportion of SCs surveyed relative to prevailing demographics**

The proportions of respondents in the 2024 RRL sample by gender were also identical with the prevailing Singapore resident population after weighting. There was a slightly higher representation of Singapore Citizens (SCs) compared to Permanent Residents (PRs) (see Figure 1.2.2).

**Figure 1.2.2: Survey Sample vs Resident Population by Gender / Citizenship Status**



**1.2.3 The RRL sample was underweight on individuals with secondary and below qualifications, and overweight on individuals with ITE, polytechnic, and professional qualifications relative to the resident population; it was overweight on HDB 1-3 room dwellers relative to the resident population**

There was an under-representation of individuals with secondary and below educational qualifications, and a corresponding over-representation of individuals with ITE, polytechnic, and professional qualifications in the 2024 RRL sample relative to the resident population<sup>5</sup>. In this regard, cross-tabulations to ascertain whether education impacted responses were applied to all question items at the outset. Where statistically significant, cross-tabulations of responses by education levels are presented in this report, alongside other variables.

<sup>5</sup> Numbers are for Residents aged 25 years and over, latest available 2020 from Singapore Department of Statistics (DoS) (M850581).

To capture broader trends, analyses presented aggregate reported highest educational qualifications into three broad ordinal categories: 1) secondary and below education, 2) ITE, polytechnic diplomas, and professional qualifications not amounting to a degree, and 3) bachelor's degree or higher qualifications (see Figure 1.2.3).

#### ***1.2.4 The 2024 RRL sample was overweight on public housing dwellers and underweight on private property dwellers relative to the resident population***

The 2024 RRL sample also has a higher proportion of HDB dwellers relative to the resident population<sup>6</sup>; this was primarily due to the difficulties of securing access to private property dwellers, especially those who lived in condominiums where interviewers are routinely not allowed to enter to conduct surveys.

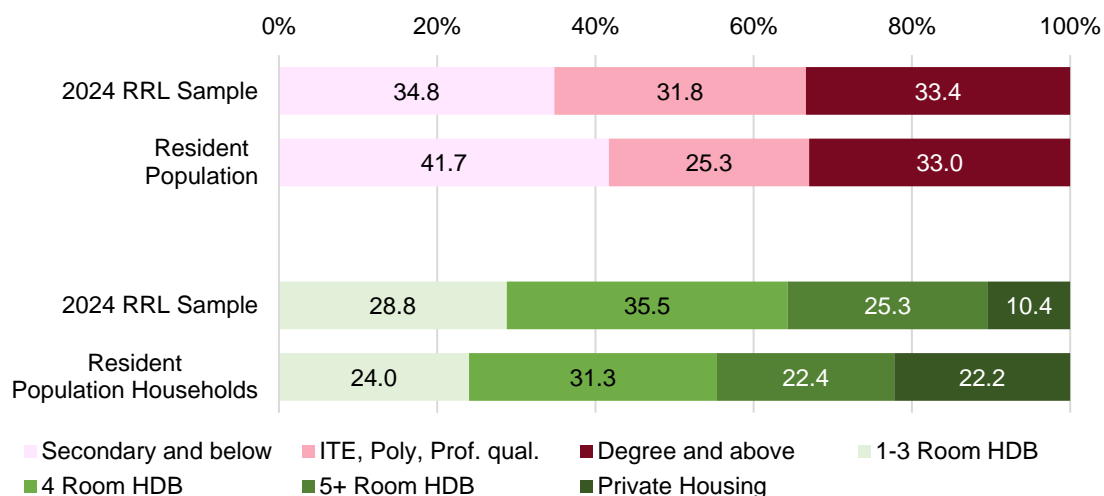
In the same vein as the education variable, housing types were aggregated into four broad ordinal categories to better capture broad trends: 1) 1-3 room HDB flats, 2) 4-room HDB flats, 3) 5+ room HDB flats including 5-room, executive, maisonette and HUDC units, and 4) Private housing, comprising condominiums, landed property, or other types of private accommodation such as shophouse units (see Figure 1.2.4).

---

<sup>6</sup> Numbers are for Resident Households by Type of Dwelling, latest available 2023 from Singapore Department of Statistics (DoS) (M810351).



**Figure 1.2.3/4: Survey Sample vs Resident Population by Highest Educational Qualifications Attained / Housing Type**



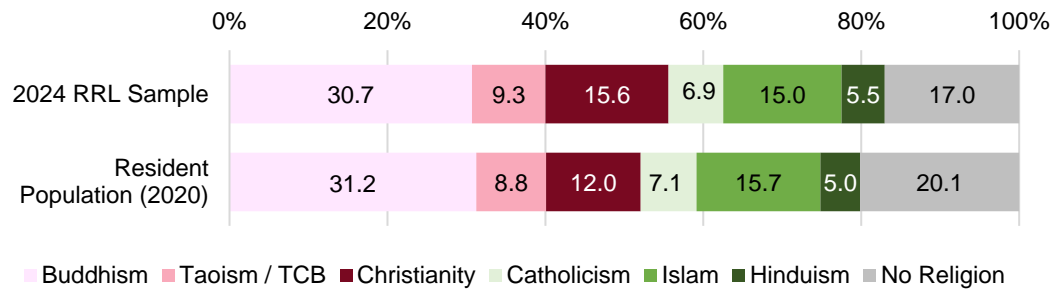
***1.2.5 The 2024 RRL sample was proportionally representative of Buddhists, Taoists, Catholics, Muslims and Hindus; Christians were over-represented while those with no religion were under-represented relative to the resident population***

There was some variance in the religion distribution for the 2024 RRL sample relative to the Singapore resident population<sup>7</sup>. While the proportions of Buddhists, Taoists, Catholics, Muslims and Hindus were relatively similar to the resident population, there was an over-representation of Christian Protestants and an under-representation of those with no religion. Hence, cross-tabulations to ascertain whether religion was a factor impacting responses were applied to all question items at the outset; this was also in line with the prevailing theoretical hypotheses guiding respondents' perceptions and views of issues associated with religion. Where statistically significant and

<sup>7</sup> Singapore Department of Statistics (DoS)'s General Household Survey 2020; retrieved from <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/-/media/files/publications/cop2020/sr1/excel/t51-57.xlsx>. Other religions omitted from full proportions for brevity.

relevant, cross-tabulations of responses by religion are presented in this report, alongside other variables (see Figure 1.2.5).

**Figure 1.2.5: Survey Sample vs Resident Population by Religion**



### 1.3 Analysis Strategy

While there was a confluence of factors impacting responses to the question items, we have condensed the myriad findings across results using a two-step approach to augment the relative accessibility of the content and ease of understanding for a non-academic, general audience:

- 1) Running ordinal logistic or ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions<sup>8</sup> with demographic responses and other salient responses as independent variables as a 'filter' to identify significant findings;
- 2) Presenting single cross-tabulations based on 1) for the most salient and significant results

<sup>8</sup> Ordinal logistic regressions are used to predict an ordinal dependent variable (which comprise the bulk of the survey responses), given one or more independent variables. This enables the determination of which of the independent variables (if any) have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable.

Step 1 was omitted from the report for brevity, and the cross-tabulations in Step 2 are featured in subsequent chapters.

## 2. PERCEIVED CONSEQUENCES OF MISMANAGING FAULTLINES

In this chapter, we aim to understand what respondents perceive as the consequences of the mismanagement of various faultlines. By exploring responses ranging from no consequences to outcomes like suspicion and mistrust, polarisation, and even violence, this chapter assesses how seriously the population views these risks and whether they anticipate tangible disruptions to harmony, thereby highlighting which faultlines are seen as dormant tensions or active threats to Singapore's social fabric.

Importantly, understanding these perceptions may allow policymakers to prioritise interventions, focusing on areas where mismanagement is likely to lead to deeper divisions or conflict. It also provides valuable insights into whether certain groups (by race, income, education, etc.) perceive the risks differently, pointing to varying levels of vulnerability or concern.

We analysed the consequences of mismanaging faultlines relating to race, religion, immigration, socioeconomic status (SES) or class differences, and LGBT issues. In the 2024 iteration across these five faultlines, the consequence that respondents were generally most likely to think would occur due to mismanagement was anger against particular communities, followed by polarisation, and suspicion or mistrust among communities.

In particular, race and religion (R&R) were the faultlines perceived by the highest proportion of respondents to result in anger against particular communities if mismanaged. Nearly half of respondents indicating as such, compared to about four in 10 respondents indicating likewise for immigration, SES, and LGBT issues.

Similar trends were observed vis-à-vis suspicion or mistrust among communities, with about four in 10 selecting this consequence for mismanaging R&R, as compared to three in 10 or less respondents for the non-R&R faultlines. In addition, R&R were the faultlines perceived by the largest proportions of respondents to potentially result in violence if mismanaged. About one-third of respondents indicated as such, compared to under two in 10 respondents for non-R&R faultlines.

However, when it came to polarisation as a potential consequence for mismanaging faultlines, the proportions of respondents selecting this option across the five faultlines were less distinct. Religion and LGBT issues were most likely to be associated with polarisation, with four in 10 or more respondents indicating as such, as compared to under four in 10 respondents for race and SES, and just one-third of respondents for immigration.

In terms of ensuing fall in levels of trust in government or politicians, respondents were more likely to associate immigration and SES faultlines with this consequence in the event of mismanagement; over one-third indicated as such. In contrast, about three in 10 indicated that mismanaging R&R could result in fall in government trust, while just one-quarter indicated likewise for LGBT issues.

Unsurprisingly, immigration was the faultline most associated with decreased national identity or sense of belonging to Singapore, if mismanaged. Over one-third of respondents indicated as such, as compared to three in 10 respondents for race, over one-quarter of respondents for religion and SES, and just one in five respondents for LGBT issues.

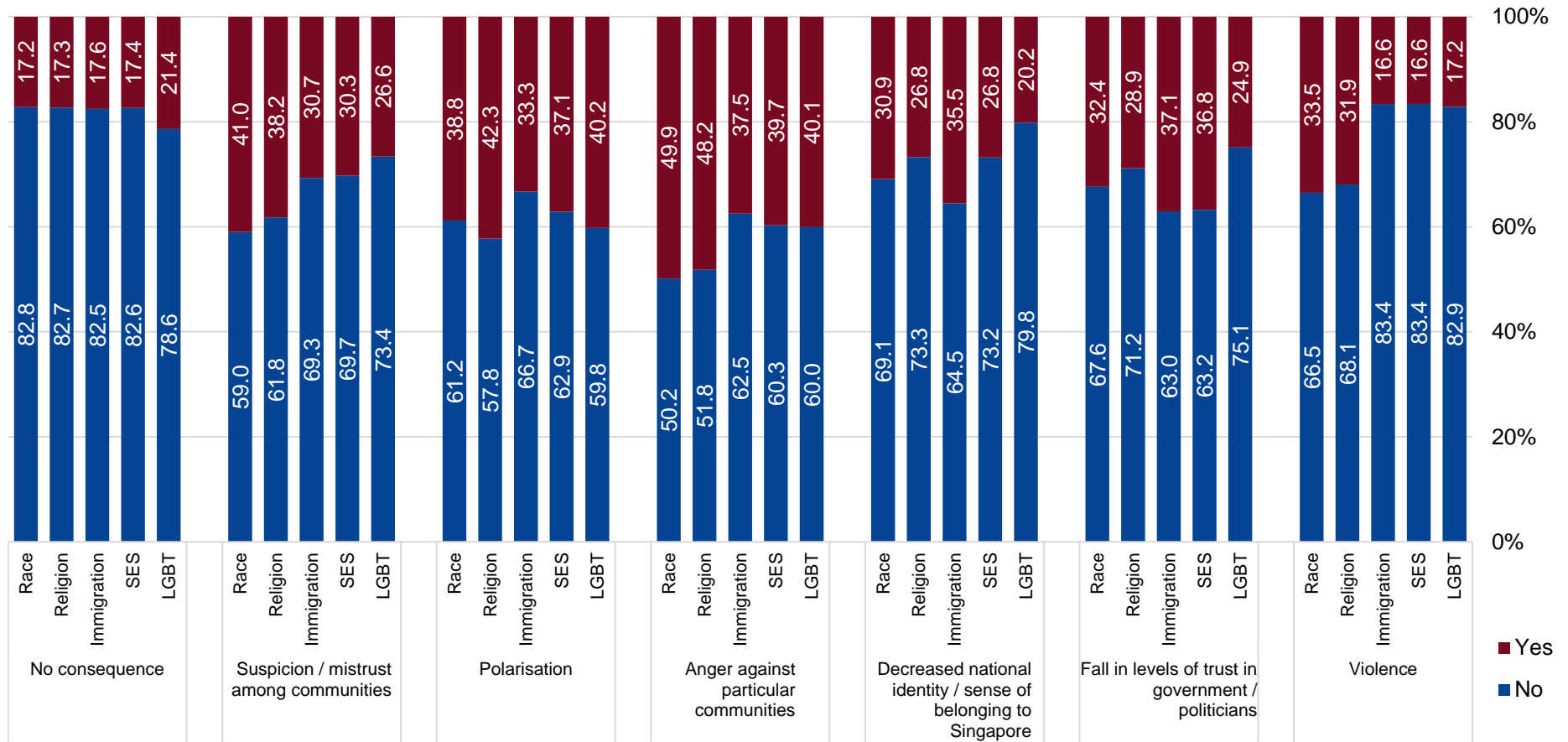
Overall, over eight in 10 respondents selected at least one or more consequence arising from the mismanagement of R&R, immigration, and SES faultlines; just under eight in 10 did likewise for LGBT issues. These proportions suggest a high baseline level of cognisance of the general population, regarding the potential consequences arising from the potential mismanagement of faultlines in Singapore (see Figure 2.0).

## **2.1 Consequences of Mismanaging Race**

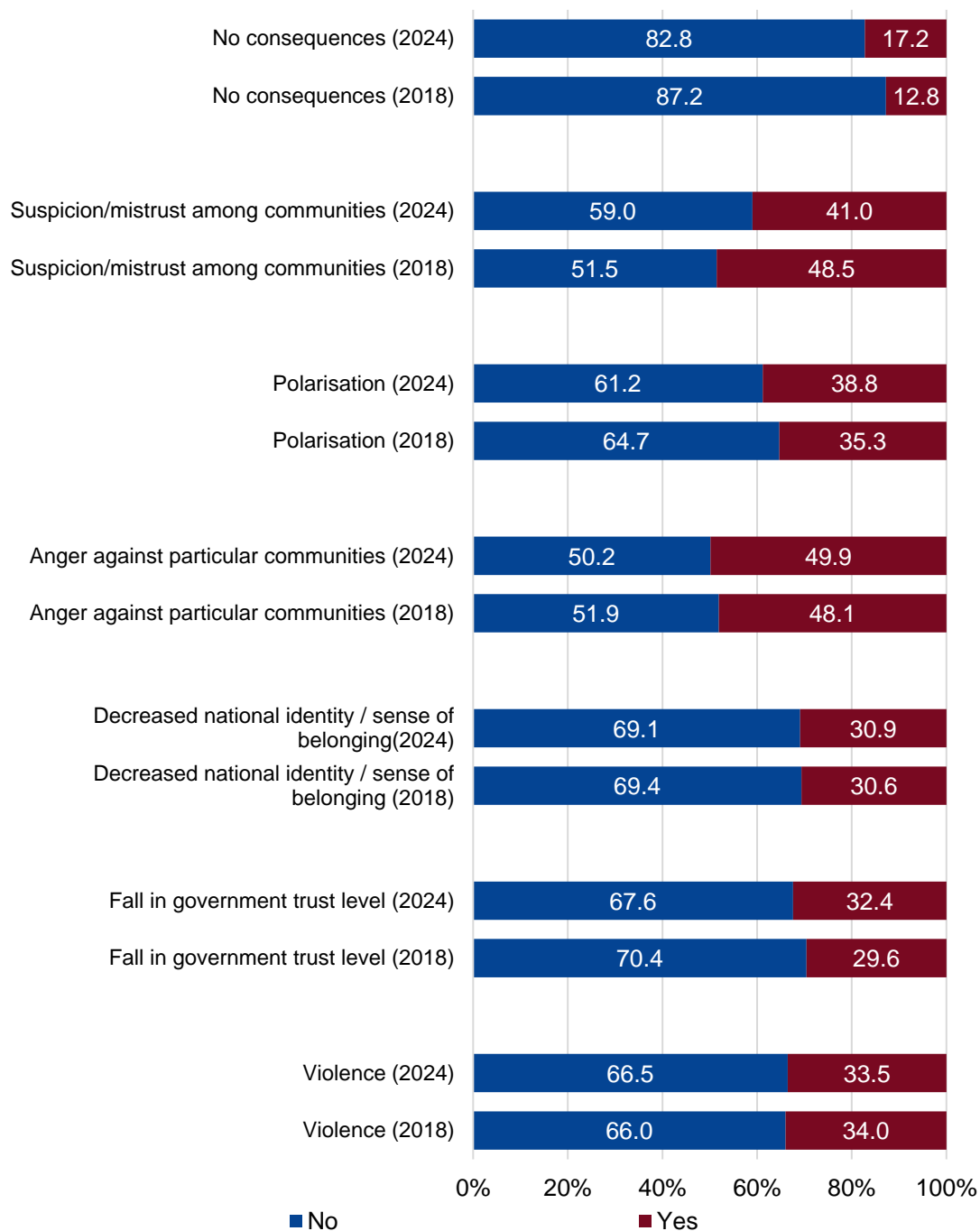
### ***2.1.1 Half of respondents identified anger directed toward particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging race-related issues; over four in 10 indicated likewise for suspicion and mistrust among communities***

Across most categories, there was a slight increase in “Yes” responses, reflecting growing concerns about the consequences of poor race-related issue management. The majority of respondents thought that there will be consequences if race-related issues were not managed well (82.8 per cent) though this was lower than the proportion in 2018 when 87.2 per cent believed this. Fewer respondents in 2024 viewed suspicion and mistrust among communities as a consequence (48.5 per cent to 41 per cent), while concerns about polarisation and declining government trust levels have slightly increased. Anger against particular communities remains the most pertinent consequence that respondents think would be a consequence of mismanaging race-related issues, with almost half of all respondents (49.9 per cent) indicating as such (see Figure 2.1.1).

Figure 2.0: Consequences of not managing faultlines well, 2024 responses by selected consequences



**Figure 2.1.1: Consequences of not managing race-related issues well, responses by wave\***



\*Item not asked in 2013.



**2.1.2 *There were no significant differences among racial groups in perceptions of anger against particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging race-related issues; approximately half of all racial groups indicated as such***

Perceptions of anger against particular communities as a consequence of poorly managed race-related issues vary across racial groups, albeit to a muted extent. Respondents who were grouped as “Others” were most likely to view it as a significant consequence (54.4 per cent), and Malays were least likely to perceive it as such (44.9 per cent) (see Figure 2.1.2). Overall, the responses suggest a shared concern across races, with differences likely reflecting varying experiences or perceptions of race-related dynamics<sup>9</sup>.

**2.1.3 *More affluent and more educated respondents were more likely to see anger against particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging race-related issues***

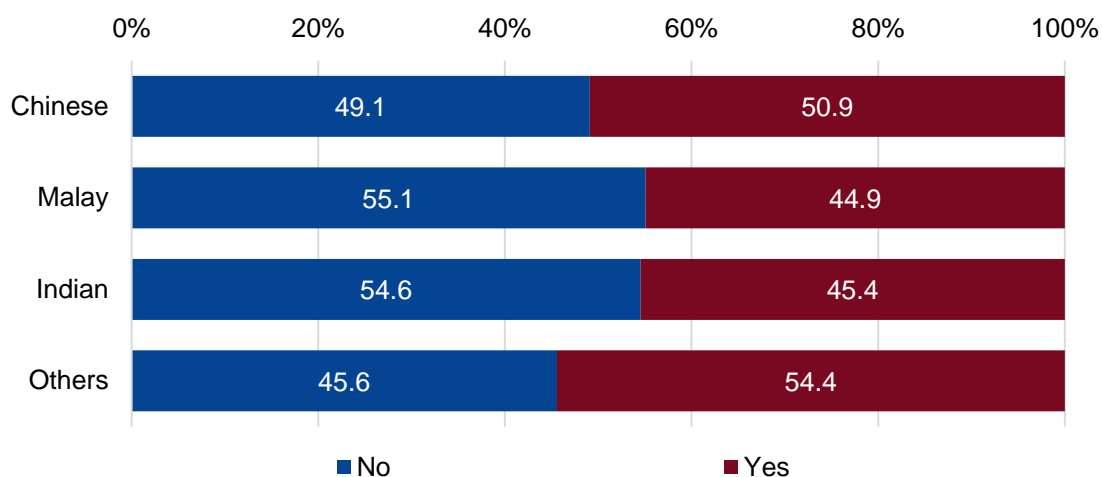
Higher-income respondents are more likely to view anger as a significant outcome, while lower-income respondents express less concern, as evidenced by the differences in response levels (43.4 per cent in the lowest-income group to 56.9 per cent in the highest-income group) (see Figure 2.1.3a). In addition, responses vary across education levels, rising from 45 per cent among those with secondary and

---

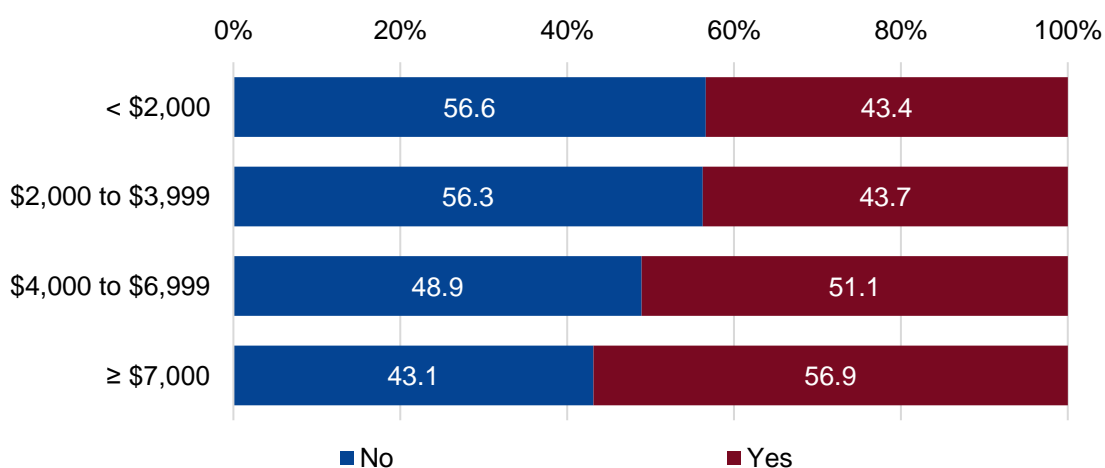
<sup>9</sup> The reader interested in examining how demographic groups may have viewed some of these questions in 2018 and whether there were changes at that level may consult the previous publication (Mathew, Lim and Selvarajan, 2019). In the interest of managing the length of this paper, we have not integrated comparison tables across the 2018 and 2024 waves for demographic cuts.

below education to 53.6 per cent among degree holders who identify anger against particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging race (see Figure 2.1.3b).

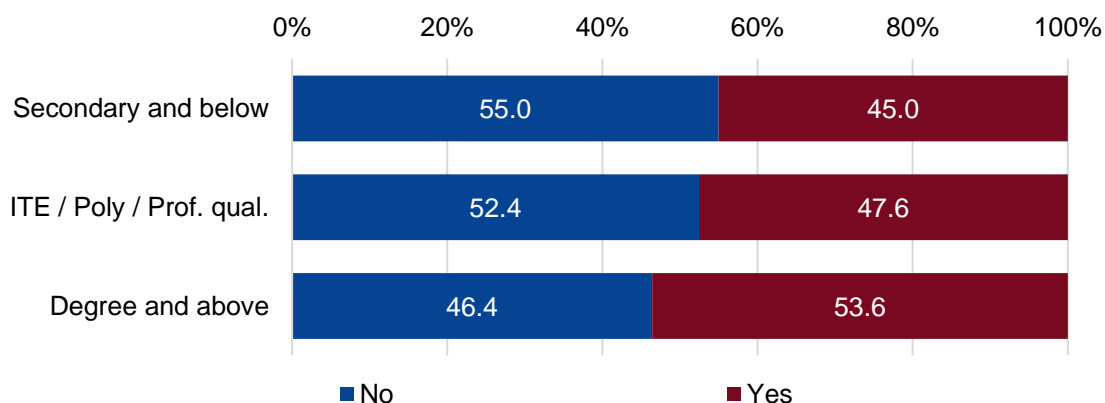
**Figure 2.1.2: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing race-related issues well, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 2.1.3a: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing race-related issues well, 2024 responses by income**



**Figure 2.1.3b: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing race-related issues well, 2024 responses by education level**

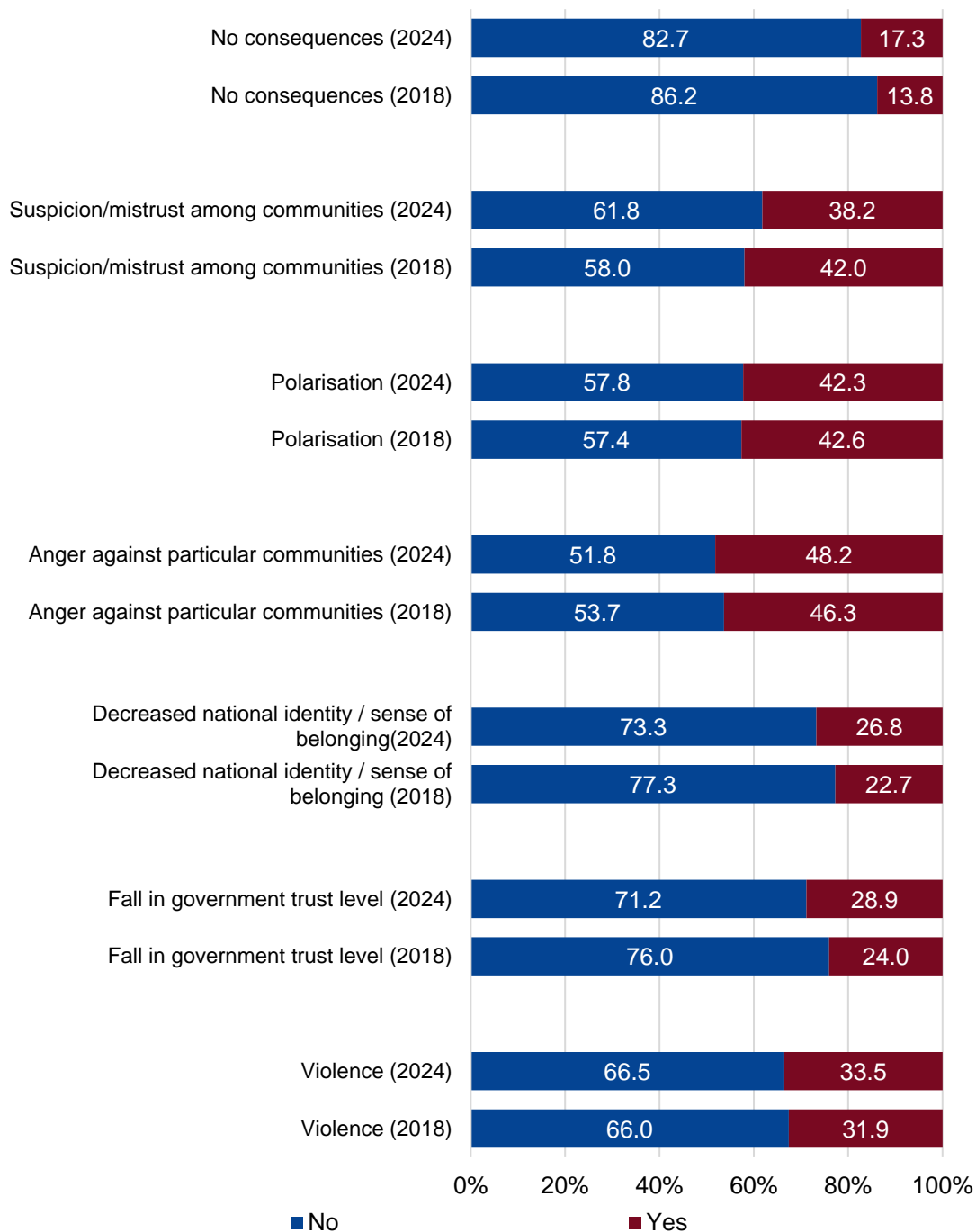


## 2.2 Consequences of Mismanaging Religion

### ***2.2.1 Nearly half of respondents identified anger directed toward particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging religion-related issues; over four in 10 indicated likewise for polarisation***

Across most categories, “Yes” responses have slightly increased between 2018 and 2024, suggesting growing awareness or concern about the consequences of mismanaging religion-related issues. Majority of respondents thought that there will be consequences if religion-related issues were not managed well (82.7 per cent). Moreover, perceived decreases in national identity and government trust as consequences have gained slightly more recognition in 2024 compared to 2018, but anger against particular communities still remain the most recognised consequence (48.2 per cent) (see Figure 2.2.1).

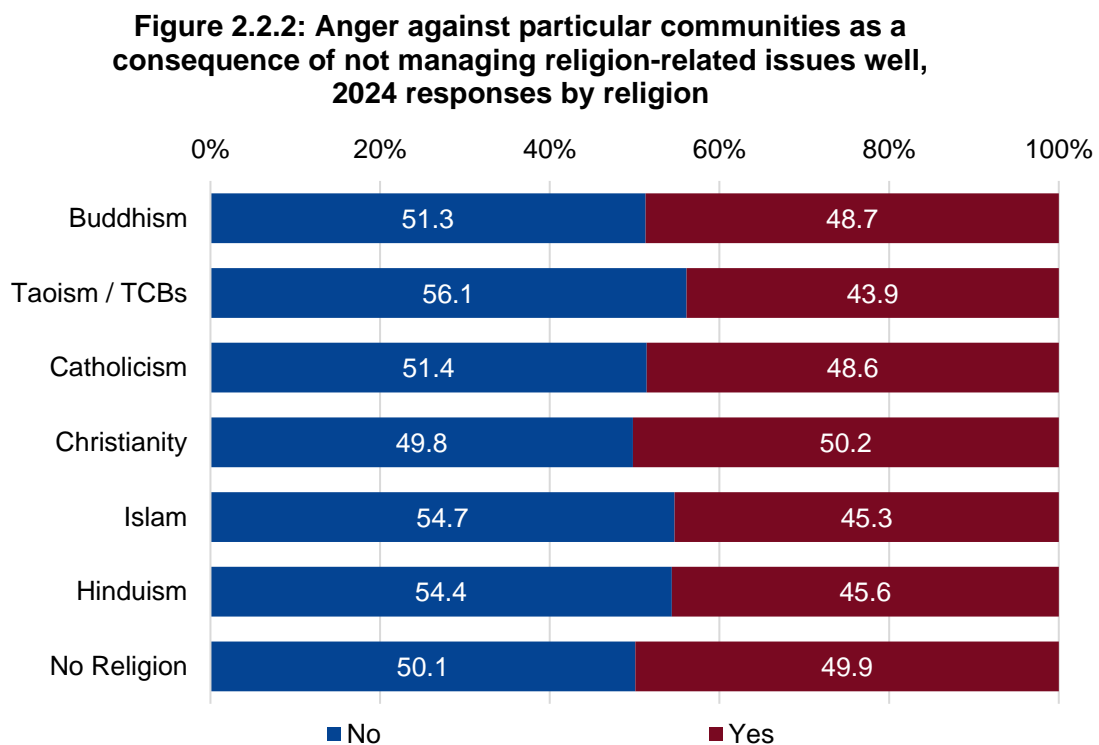
**Figure 2.2.1: Consequences of not managing religion-related issues well, responses by wave\***



\*Item not asked in 2013.

**2.2.2 There were no significant differences among religious groups in perceptions of anger against particular communities as a potential consequence of mismanaging religion-related issues; half or close to half of all religious groups indicated as such**

Across all religious affiliations, Christians (50.2 per cent) and those with no religion (49.9 per cent) are more likely than other groups to perceive anger against particular communities as a potential consequence of mismanaging religion-related issues. Muslims (45.3 per cent) and Taoists (43.9 per cent) were slightly less likely to indicate as such (see Figure 2.2.2).

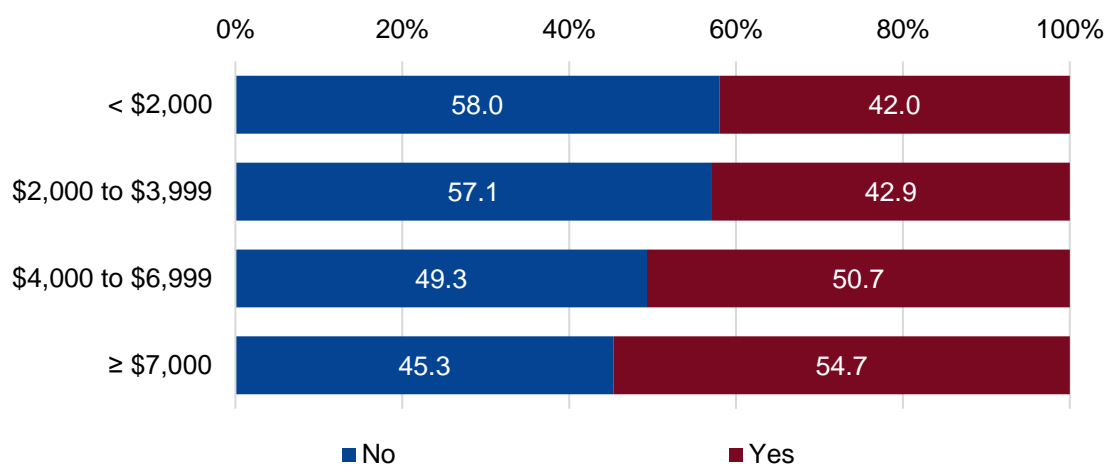


### **2.2.3 More educated and more affluent respondents were more likely to see anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing religion-related issues well**

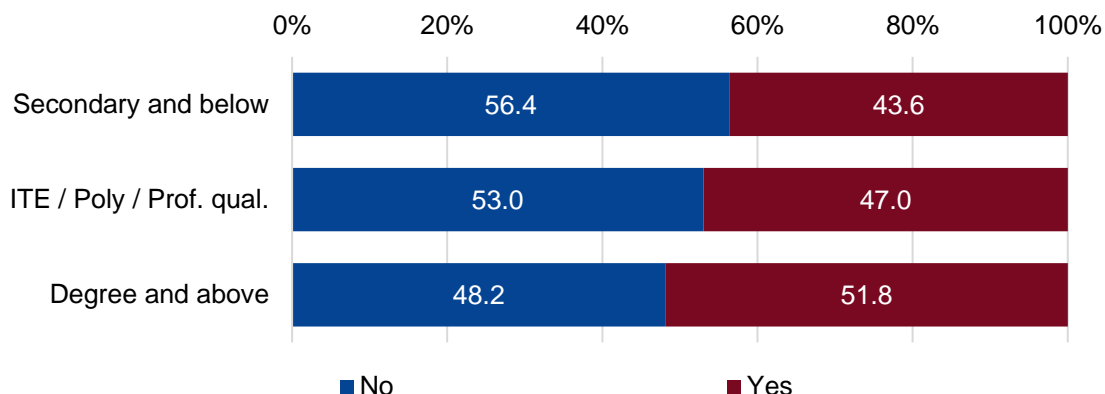
Perceptions of anger directed at particular communities arising as a consequence of poor religion-related issue management are more prevalent among higher-income and more educated respondents. The proportion of respondents agreeing increases as income rises, with 42 per cent among those earning less than \$2,000 agreeing, compared to 54.7 per cent for those earning \$7,000 or more (see Figure 2.2.3a).

Moreover, the difference in agreement proportions across education levels (43.6 per cent among those with secondary education and below; 51.8 per cent for degree holders) suggests that respondents with higher education levels may possess greater awareness of the societal impact of religion-related tensions (see Figure 2.2.3b).

**Figure 2.2.3a: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing religion-related issues well, 2024 responses by income**



**Figure 2.2.3b: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing religion-related issues well, 2024 responses by education level**

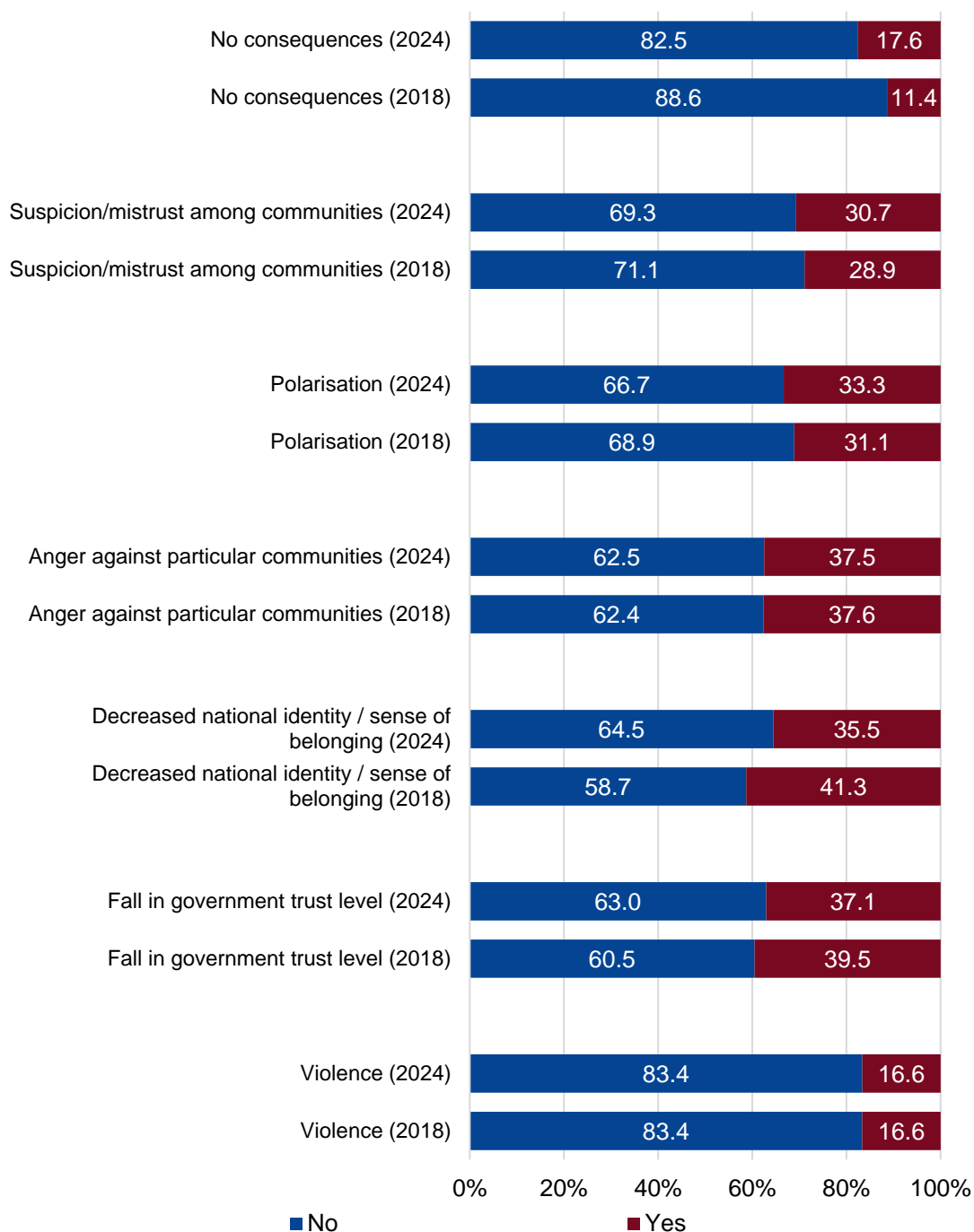


## 2.3 Consequences of Mismanaging Immigration

### ***2.3.1 Under four in 10 respondents viewed anger directed toward particular communities, falls in levels of trust in government or politicians, and decreased national identity or sense of belonging as consequences of mismanaging immigration***

When considering the consequences of mismanaging immigration-related issues, anger directed toward specific communities and falls in levels of trust in government or politicians were the two items most likely to be selected by respondents (37.5 per cent and 37.1 per cent in 2024, respectively). While decreased national identity or sense of belonging was the consequence that was selected by the largest proportion of respondents in 2018 (41.3 per cent), a lower proportion of respondents in 2024 indicated likewise (35.5 per cent) (see Figure 2.3.1).

**Figure 2.3.1: Consequences of not managing immigration-related issues well, responses by wave\***

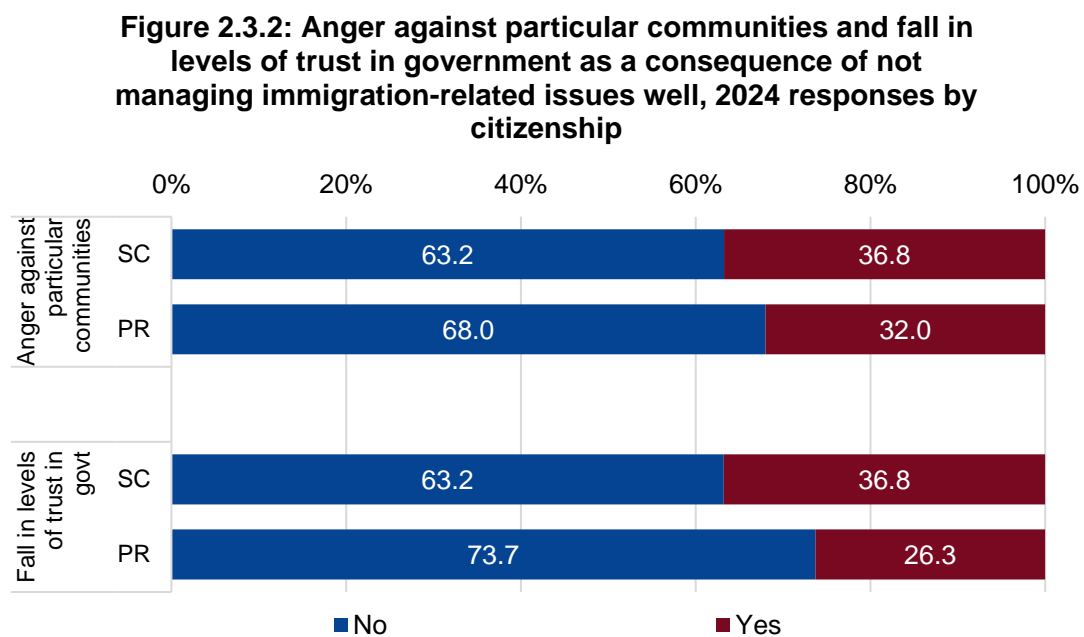


\*Item not asked in 2013.



**2.3.2 Over one-third of SCs indicated that a fall in levels of government trust would result from the mismanagement of immigration, as compared to one-quarter of PRs; SCs were also marginally more likely to indicate likewise for anger against particular communities**

When perusing results by citizenship status, we note that over one-third of SC respondents (36.8 per cent) indicated that anger against particular communities and fall in levels of trust in government or politicians (36.8 per cent) would result due to the mismanagement of immigration-related issues. The corresponding proportions for PR respondents were 32 per cent and 26.3 per cent, respectively (see Figure 2.3.2).

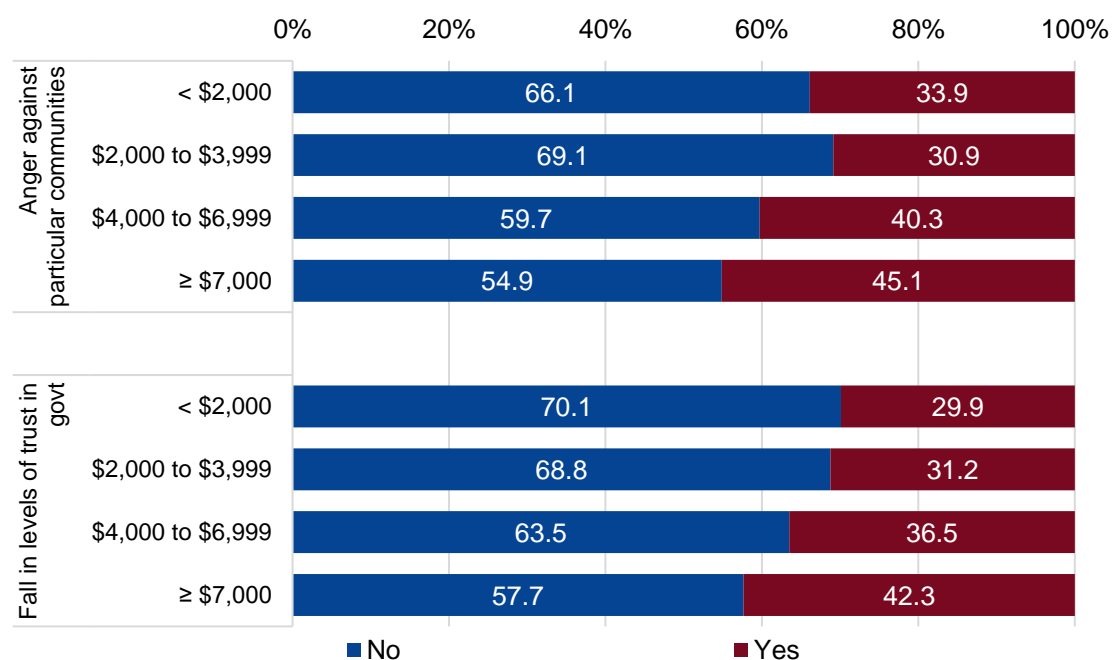


**2.3.3 More affluent respondents were more likely to feel that anger against particular communities and fall in levels of trust in government would result if immigration was mismanaged, relative to their less affluent peers**

When comparing responses across income levels, we also note that more affluent respondents were more likely to indicate that anger against particular communities and fall in levels of trust in government would result if immigration was mismanaged, relative to their less affluent peers. Just one-third of respondents earning below \$2,000 a month (33.9 per cent) selected anger against particular communities as a consequence of immigration mismanagement, as compared to under half of their peers earning \$7,000 and above (45.1 per cent).

In the same vein, under three in 10 of respondents in the lowest income group (29.9 per cent) indicated likewise for a fall in levels of trust in government or politicians arising from immigration mismanagement, as compared to over four in 10 of respondents in the highest income group (42.3 per cent) (see Figure 2.3.3).

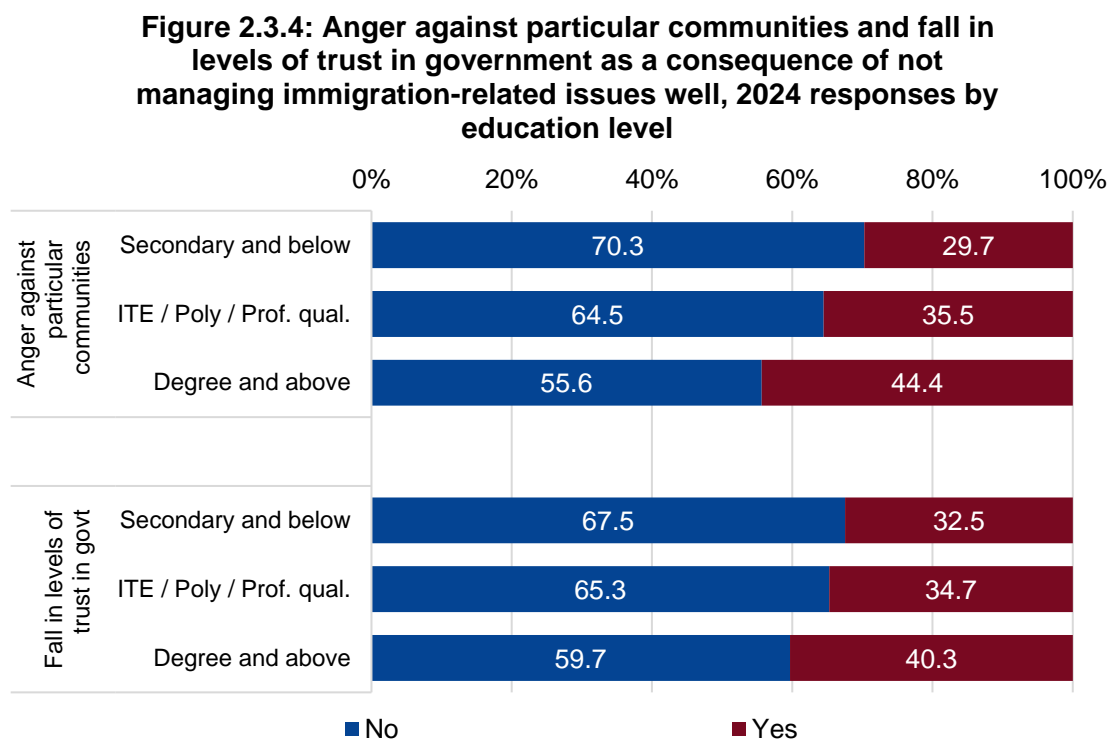
**Figure 2.3.3: Anger against particular communities and fall in levels of trust in government as a consequence of not managing immigration-related issues well, 2024 responses by income**



**2.3.4 Higher-educated respondents were more likely to feel that anger against particular communities and a fall in levels of trust in government would result if immigration was mismanaged, relative to their lower-educated peers**

Similar to trends across income levels noted in section 2.3.3, higher-educated respondents were also more likely to indicate that anger against particular communities and a fall in levels of trust in government would result if immigration was mismanaged, relative to their lower-educated peers. Under three in 10 respondents with secondary and below educational qualifications (29.4 per cent) selected anger against particular communities as a consequence of immigration mismanagement, as compared to under half of their degree-holding counterparts (44.4 per cent). The corresponding

proportions for fall in levels of trust in government or politicians were 32.5 per cent and 40.3 per cent, respectively (see Figure 2.3.4).



## 2.4 Consequences of Mismanaging SES Issues

### 2.4.1 *Four in 10 respondents identified anger directed toward particular communities as a consequence of mismanaging SES or class-related issues; over one-third indicated likewise for polarisation and fall in government trust*

When considering the consequences of mismanaging SES or class-related issues, anger directed toward specific communities was most likely to be selected by respondents in 2024 (39.7 per cent). This was followed by polarisation (37.1 per cent)

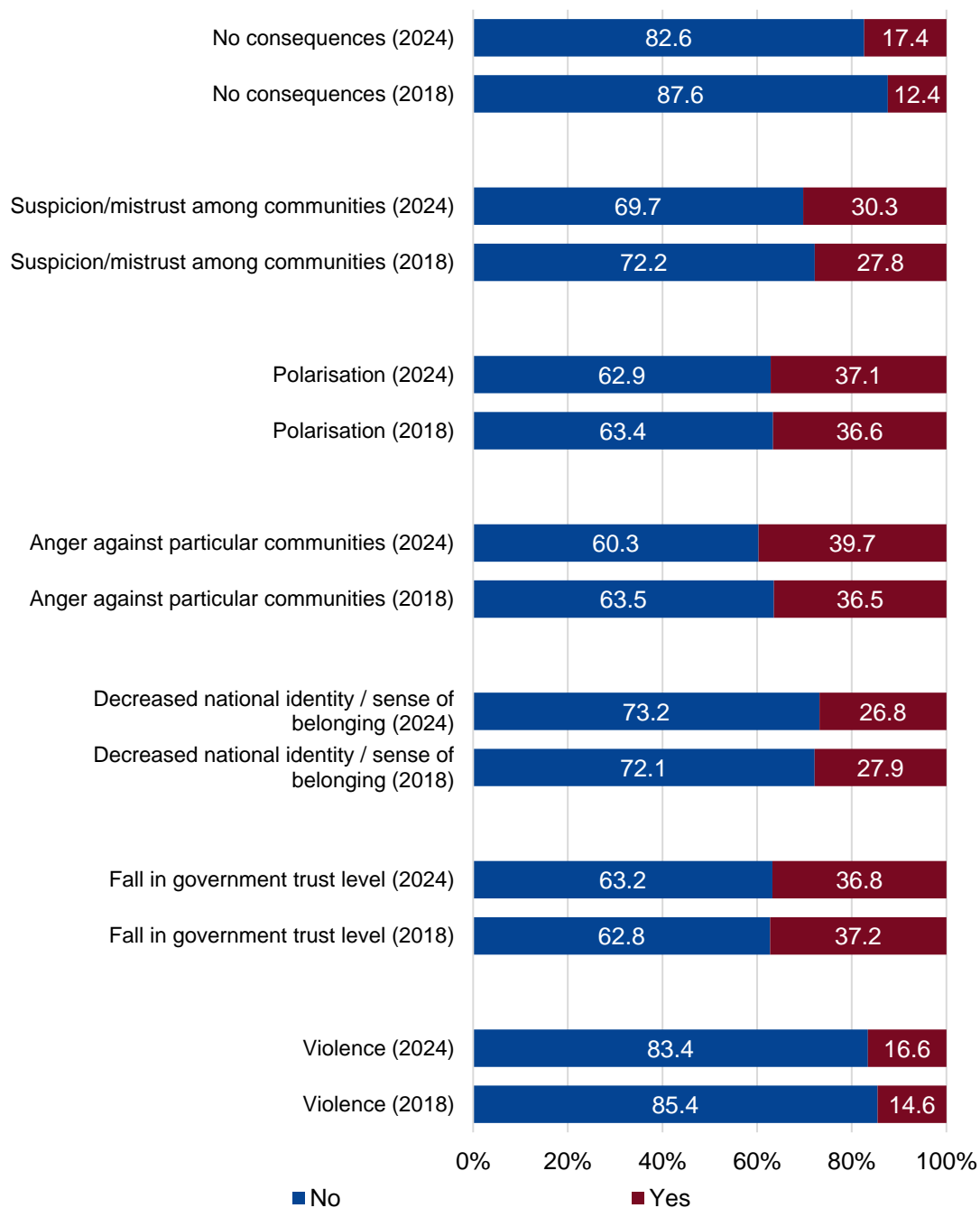
and a fall in levels of trust in government or politicians (36.8 per cent). These were also the top three most-identified consequences in the 2018 iteration of the survey (see Figure 2.4.1).

***2.4.2 Similar to findings on consequences arising from mismanaging R&R and immigration, more affluent and more educated respondents were more likely to see anger against particular communities arising as a consequence of mismanaging SES or class-related issues***

Higher-income respondents were more likely to view anger directed at particular communities as a significant outcome of mismanaging SES or class-related issues, as evidenced by the differences in response levels (34 per cent in the lowest income group to 46.7 per cent in the highest income group) (see Figure 2.4.2a).

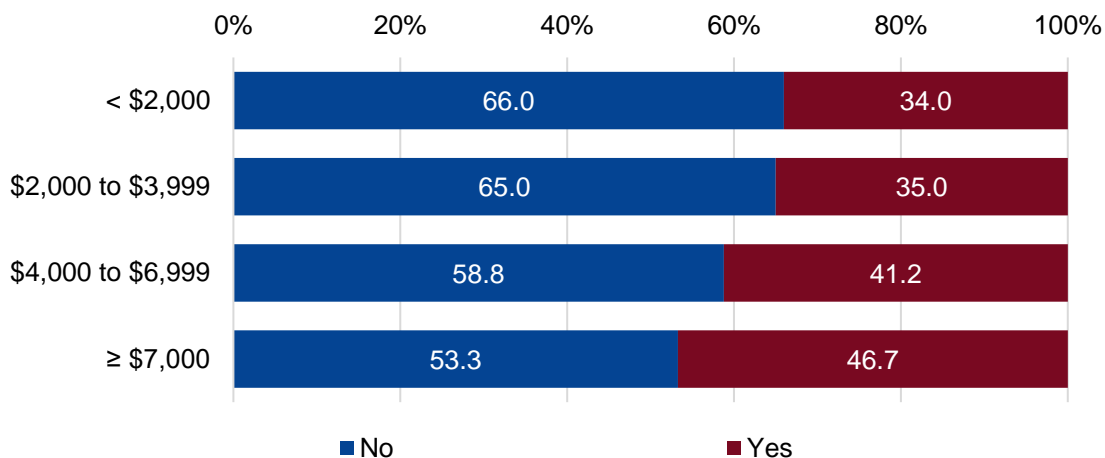
Similar trends were also noted across education levels, rising from 31.2 per cent among those with secondary and below education to 44.5 per cent among degree holders (see Figure 2.4.2b). Similar to reasons advanced in 6.1.3, this suggests that higher-educated individuals are more likely to view anger as a consequence of SES or class-related mismanagement, which may reflect greater awareness of or sensitivity to social dynamics among those with higher education.

**Figure 2.4.1: Consequences of not managing issues related to SES differences well, responses by wave\***

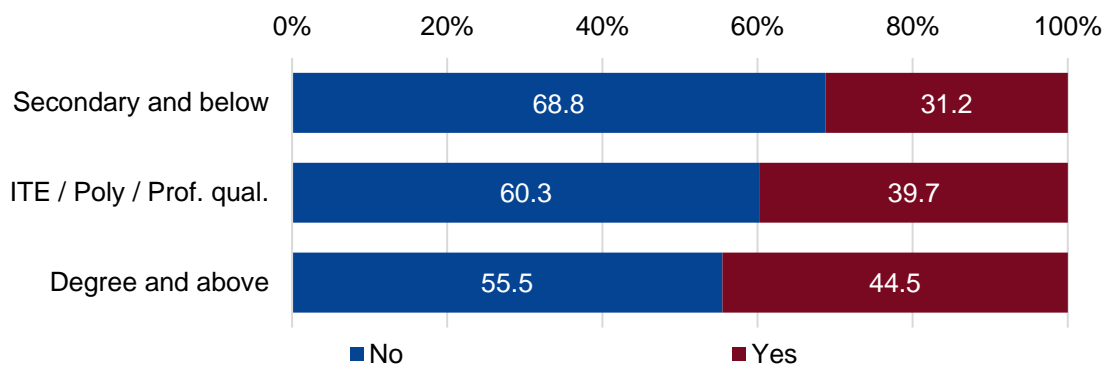


\*Item not asked in 2013.

**Figure 2.4.2a: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing issues related to SES differences well, 2024 responses by income**



**Figure 2.4.2b: Anger against particular communities as a consequence of not managing issues related to SES differences well, 2024 responses by education level**



## **2.5 Consequences of Mismanaging LGBT Issues**

### ***2.5.1 Polarisation and anger directed toward particular communities were the consequences most identified by respondents vis-à-vis mismanaging LGBT issues, with four in 10 indicating as such***

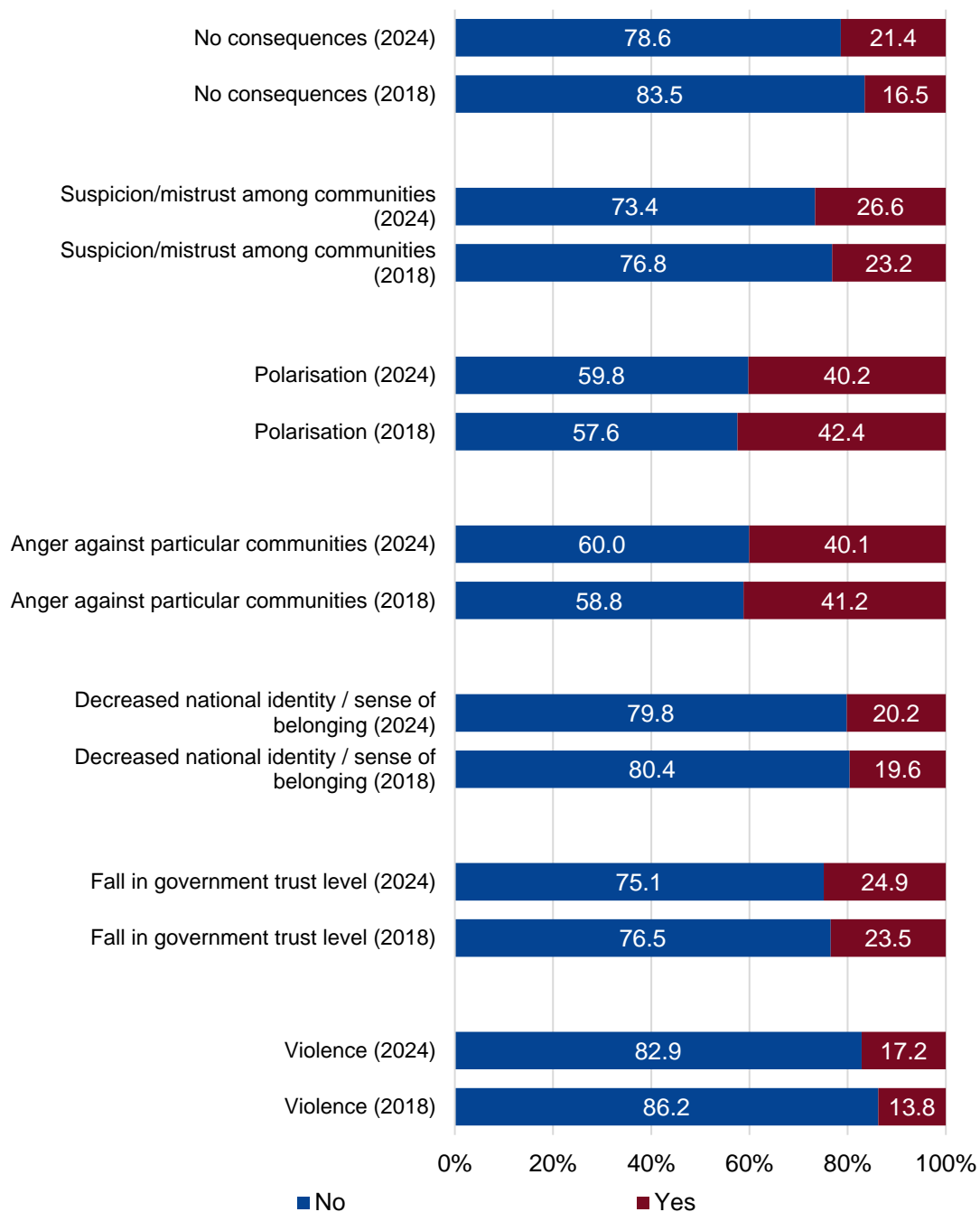
When considering the consequences of mismanaging LGBT issues, polarisation and anger directed toward specific communities were the top two options selected by respondents in 2024 (40.2 per cent and 40.1 per cent, respectively). This mirrored responses from the 2018 iteration of the survey (42.4 per cent and 41.2 per cent, respectively) (see Figure 2.5.1).

### ***2.5.2 Younger respondents were significantly more likely to indicate that anger directed at particular communities and polarisation would ensue if LGBT issues were mismanaged, relative to their older counterparts***

When perusing results by age cohort, we note that nearly half of respondents aged 18 to 35 years old (48.3 per cent) indicated that anger against particular communities would result due to the mismanagement of LGBT issues. This was significantly higher than their peers in the three older age cohorts (under four in 10). Similar trends, albeit to a more muted extent, were also noted for polarisation; over four in 10 of respondents aged 18 to 35 years old (41.9 per cent) indicated as such as compared to under in four in 10 respondents in the older age cohorts (see Figure 2.5.2).

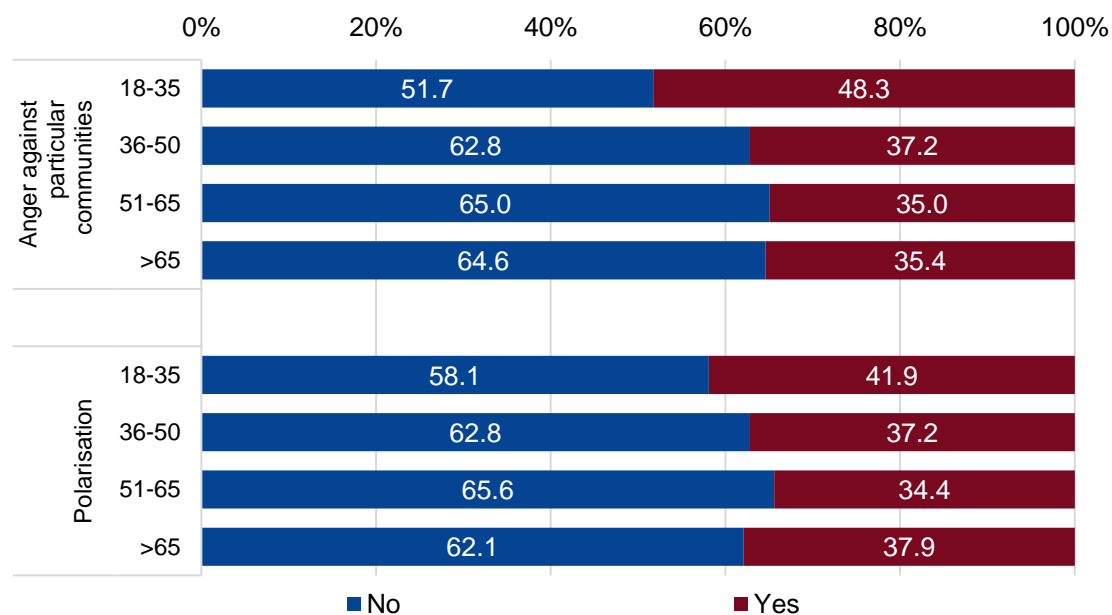


**Figure 2.5.1: Consequences of not managing LGBT issues well, responses by wave\***



\*Item not asked in 2013.

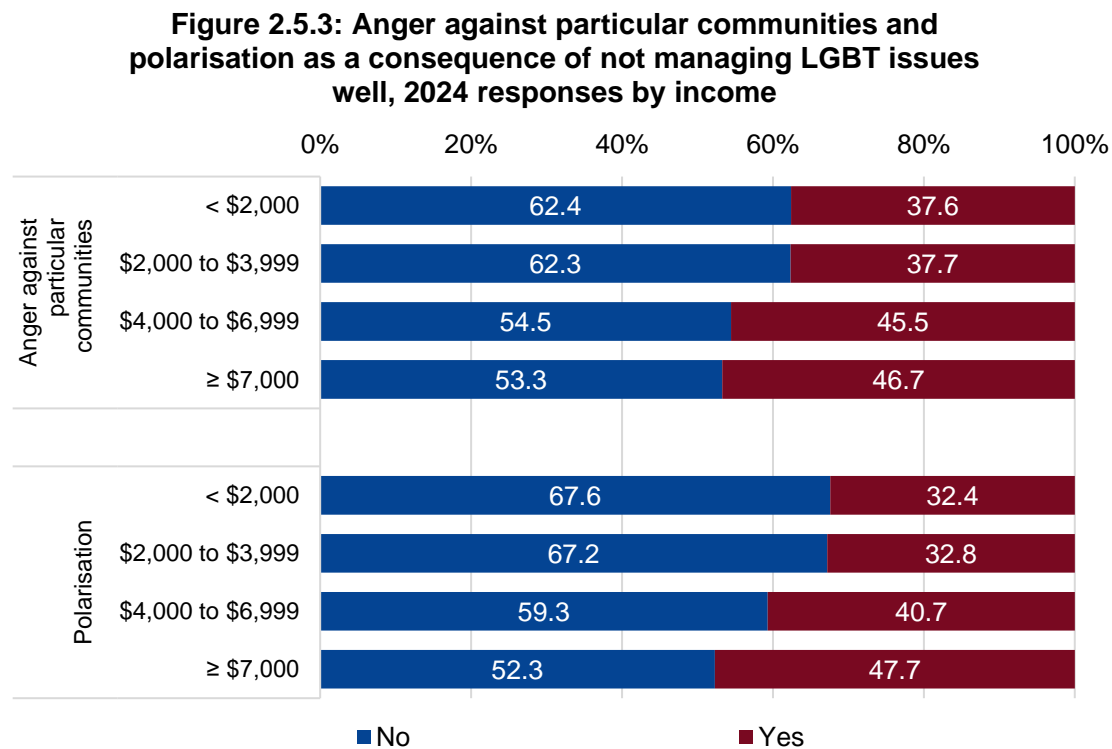
**Figure 2.5.2: Anger against particular communities and polarisation as a consequence of not managing LGBT issues well, 2024 responses by age**



**2.5.3 More affluent respondents were more likely to feel that anger against particular communities and polarisation would result if LGBT issues were mismanaged, relative to their less affluent counterparts**

When comparing responses across income levels, we also note that more affluent respondents were more likely to indicate that anger against particular communities and polarisation would result if LGBT issues were mismanaged, relative to their less affluent peers. Under four in 10 respondents earning below \$2,000 a month (37.6 per cent) selected anger against particular communities as a consequence of immigration mismanagement, as compared to under half of their peers earning \$7,000 and above (46.7 per cent).

In the same vein, under one-third of respondents in the lowest income group (32.4 per cent) indicated likewise for polarisation arising from LGBT issues mismanagement, as compared to under half of respondents in the highest income group (47.7 per cent) (see Figure 2.5.3).

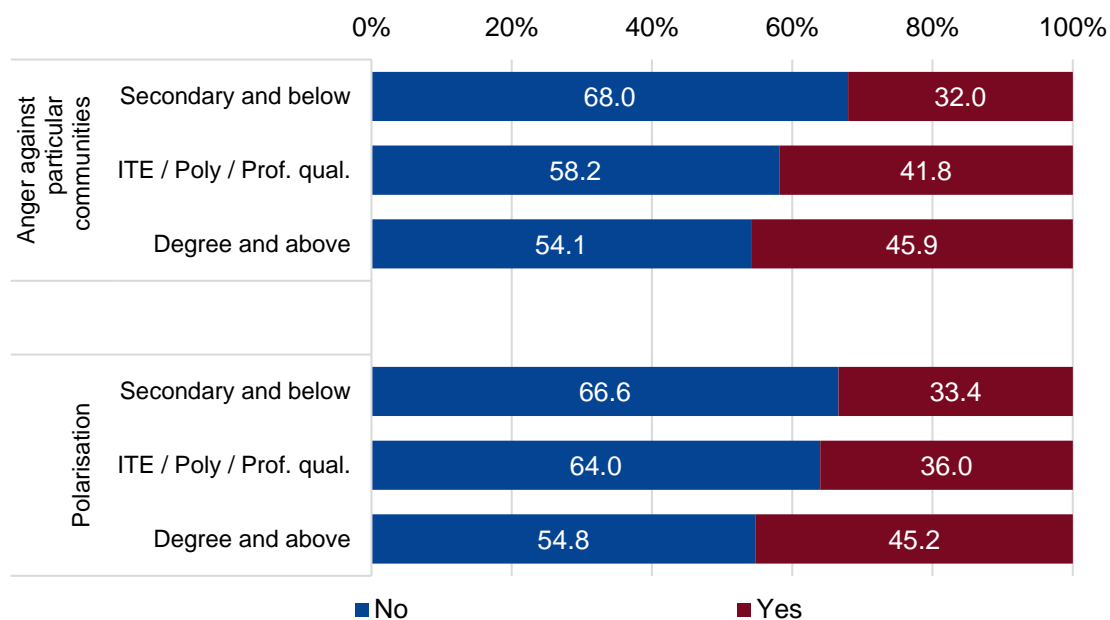


#### ***2.5.4 Higher-educated respondents were more likely to feel that anger against particular communities and polarisation would result if LGBT issues were mismanaged, relative to their lower-educated peers***

Similar to trends noted in sections 2.1.3, 2.2.3, and 2.3.4, higher-educated respondents were also more likely to indicate that anger against particular communities and polarisation would result if LGBT issues were mismanaged, relative to their lower-

educated peers. About one-third of respondents with secondary and below educational qualifications (32 per cent) selected anger against particular communities as a consequence of LGBT issues mismanagement, as compared to under half of their degree-holding counterparts (45.9 per cent). The corresponding proportions for polarisation were 33.4 per cent and 45.2 per cent, respectively (see Figure 2.5.4).

**Figure 2.5.4: Anger against particular communities and polarisation as a consequence of not managing LGBT issues well, 2024 responses by education level**



### 3. PERCEPTIONS OF FAULTLINE RESOLUTION MODALITIES

This chapter pertains to respondents' perceptions of how faultlines in Singapore should be managed in terms of public discussion and government intervention. In the 2018 and 2024 waves, respondents were asked to provide their opinions on the management of race, religion, SES differences, immigration, and LGBT issues.

In general, the majority of respondents in both waves felt that the current levels of public discussion for R&R should remain the same as they are currently, while increases were observed in the proportions who felt that the levels of public discussion for the other three issues should remain the same from 2018 to 2024. With regards to government involvement, similar sentiments were expressed. Around two-thirds in both waves felt that the current level of government intervention for R&R is desirable, while there was an increase in the proportions across the waves expressing the same sentiment for the other three issues.

#### 3.1 Public Discussion

***3.1.1 Nearly six in 10 respondents in 2024 feel that the current level of public discussion for R&R is sufficient and these proportions are similar to 2018; over half indicated likewise for SES and immigration as compared to under half in 2018; over four in 10 indicated as such for LGBT in 2024 as compared to over one-third in 2018***

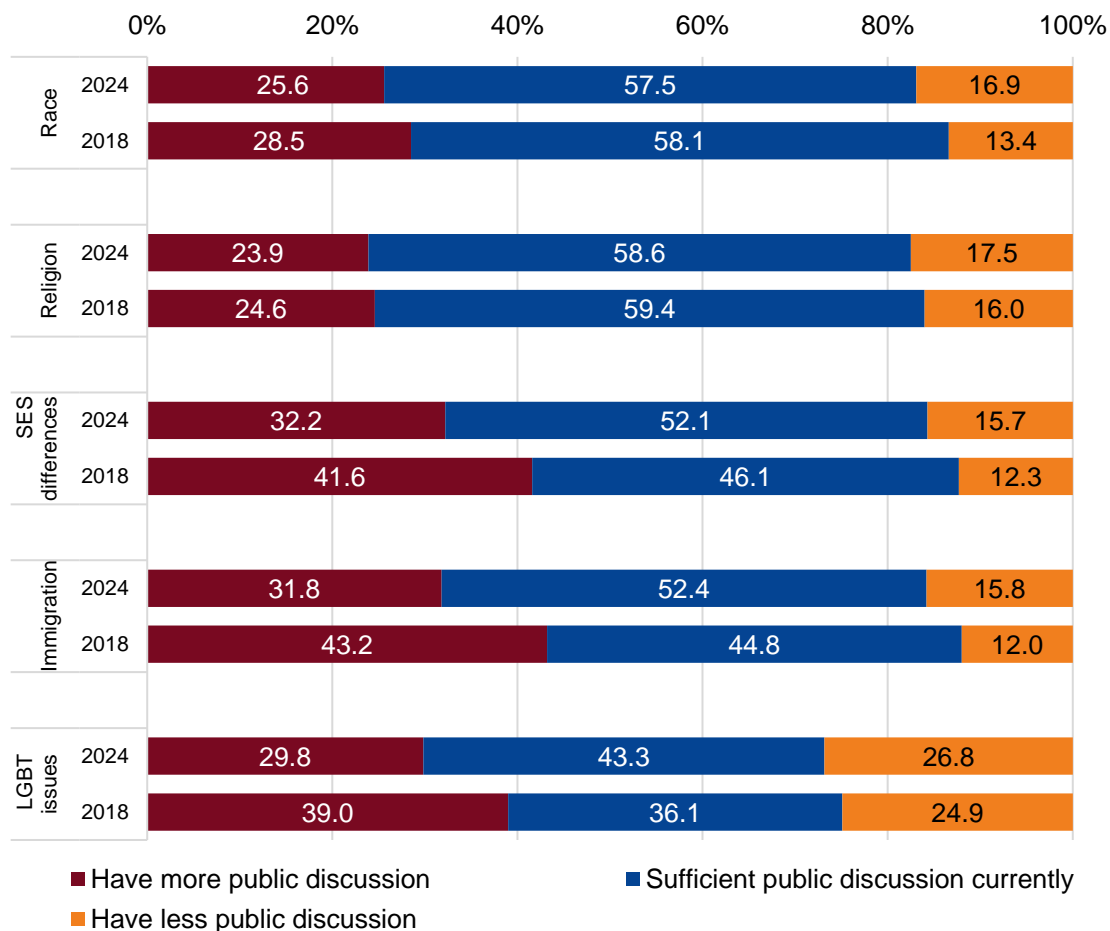
When it came to the desired level of public discussion, the most popular option for each potential faultline was to keep things the same as they are currently. Nearly six in 10 across both waves felt that this should be the case for R&R. Around a quarter in both waves felt that there should be more public discussion for these two issues, while under two in 10 felt that there should be less public discussion.

For the other three issues, respondents in 2024 were less likely to feel that there should be more public discussion, and more likely to feel that the level of discussion should remain the same as it is currently. It is possible that public discussions on these topics have indeed increased to a desirable level, and hence more people now believe that the levels of public discussion should remain as they are.

Sentiments regarding SES or class and immigration were quite similar. The proportion of respondents believing that there should be more discussion dropped from over four in 10 in 2018 to over three in 10 in 2024, while the proportion of those who felt that the level of public discussion for these two issues should remain the same increased from 44.8 to 46.1 per cent in 2018 to around 52 per cent in 2024.

When it came to LGBT issues, 29.8 per cent in 2024 felt that there should be more discussion, a reduction from 39 per cent in 2018. Correspondingly, the proportion believing that the current level of public discussion should remain increased from 36.1 per cent in 2018 to 43.3 per cent in 2024 (see Figure 3.1.1).

**Figure 3.1.1: What are your opinions on each when it comes to the desired level of public discussion?, responses by wave\***



\*Items not asked in 2013.

### ***3.1.2 Respondents who are Chinese, older, and from higher-SES backgrounds were more likely to think that the current level of public discussion on race is sufficient***

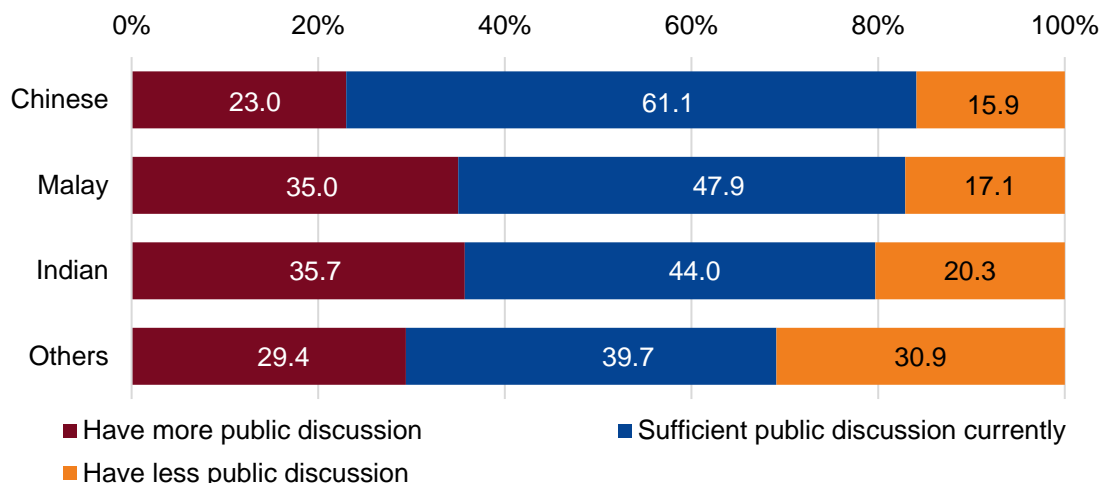
When it came to opinions on the desired level of public discussion on race, Chinese respondents were most likely to say that the current level is sufficient. While under half of the minority-race respondents said that there is sufficient public discussion currently, the proportion increased to 61.1 per cent for Chinese respondents. Meanwhile, 23 per cent of Chinese respondents, compared to around 35 per cent of Malay and Indian

IPS Working Papers No. 60 (February 2025):

Faultlines in Singapore: Perceptions and Management with a Focus on Race and Religion  
by Mathew, M., Teo, K. K., Tay, M., and Poh, R.

respondents, said that there should be more public discussion on race (see Figure 3.1.2a).

**Figure 3.1.2a: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on race?, 2024 responses by race**

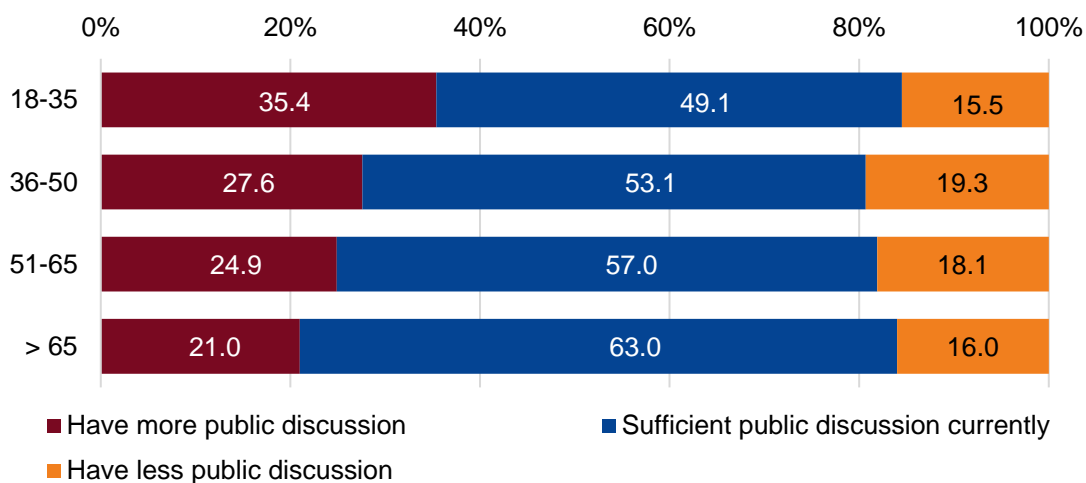


There was a clear age trend when it came to the proportion of respondents choosing whether there should be more public discussion. Younger respondents were more likely to think that there should be more public discussion about race, while older respondents tended to think that there was sufficient public discussion currently. It should also be noted that at least 49 per cent of any age group felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently. Meanwhile, the proportion of respondents across age groups who felt that there should be less public discussion about race remained similar at under 20 per cent (see Figure 3.1.2b).

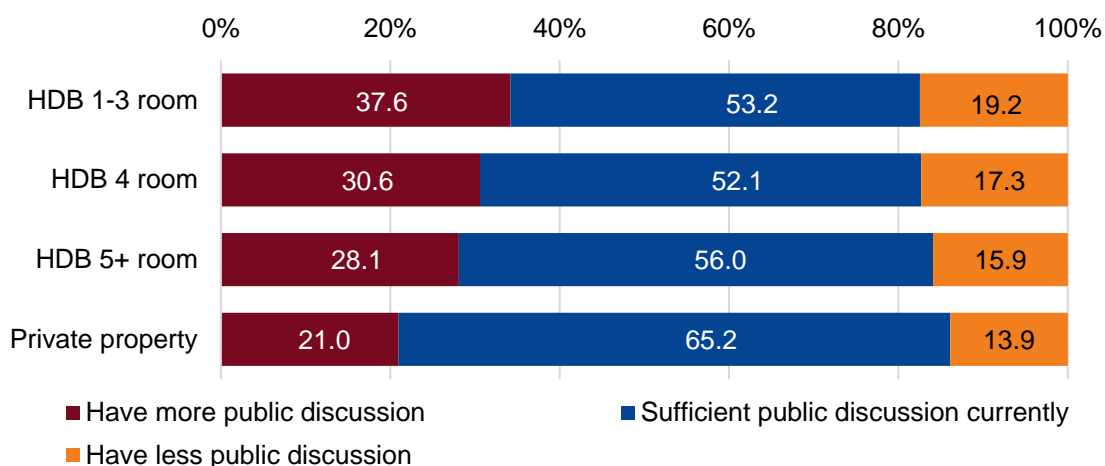
Sentiments about public discussion on race also differed across housing types. Compared to 53.2 per cent of those staying in HDB 1- to 3-room flats, 65.2 per cent of those residing in private properties felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently (see Figure 3.1.2c).



**Figure 3.1.2b: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on race?, 2024 responses by age**

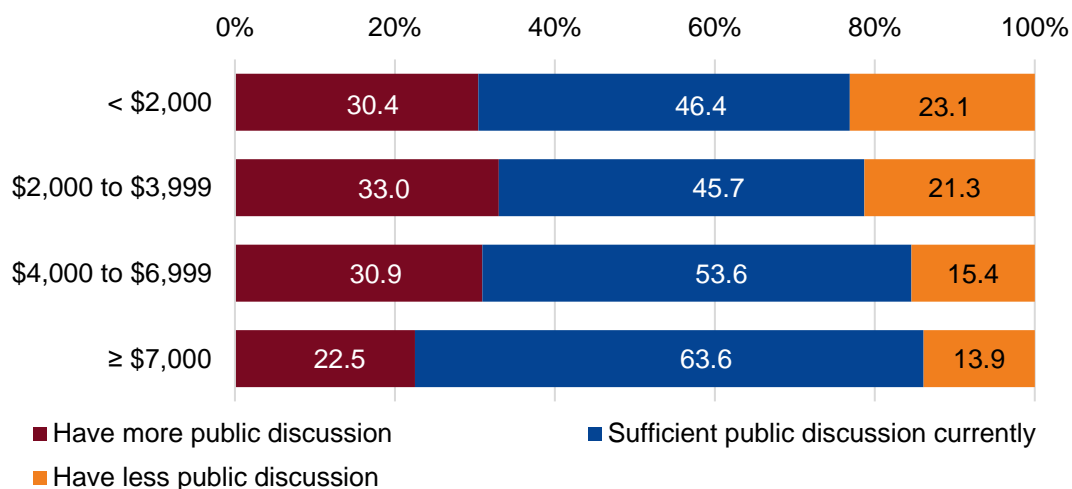


**Figure 3.1.2c: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on race?, 2024 responses by housing**



Similarly, respondents earning higher income were more likely to think that there is currently sufficient public discussion on race. While 46.4 per cent of those earning below \$2,000 felt so, the proportion increased to 63.6 per cent for those earning \$7,000 and above. Meanwhile, 22.5 per cent of those earning \$7,000 felt that there should be more public discussion, compared to over three in 10 respondents in the lower income groups (see Figure 3.1.2d).

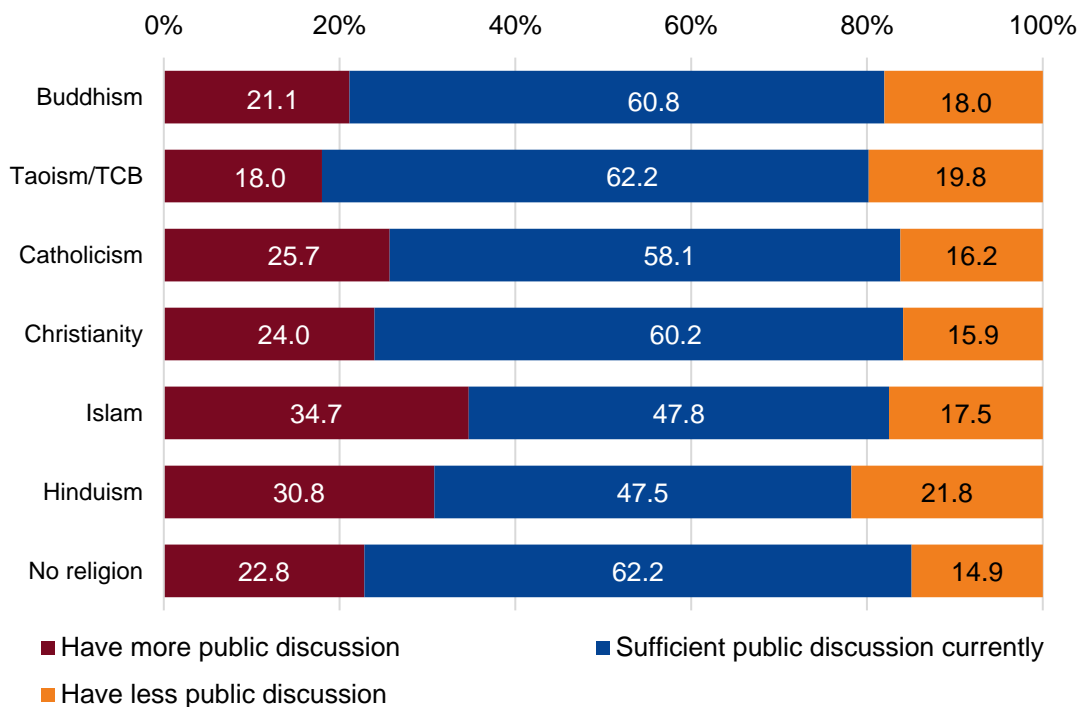
**Figure 3.1.2d: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on race?, 2024 responses by income**



***3.1.3 Respondents who were Taoists; older; did not hold ITE, polytechnic, or professional qualifications; and of higher-SES were less likely to indicate that more public discussion about religion was needed***

When compared across religious affiliations, some differences were found in sentiments about the desired level of public discussion on religion. Taoists were least likely to feel that more public discussion is needed. Meanwhile, over six in 10 Buddhists, Taoists, Christians, and those with no religion felt that the current level of discussion is sufficient (see Figure 3.1.3a).

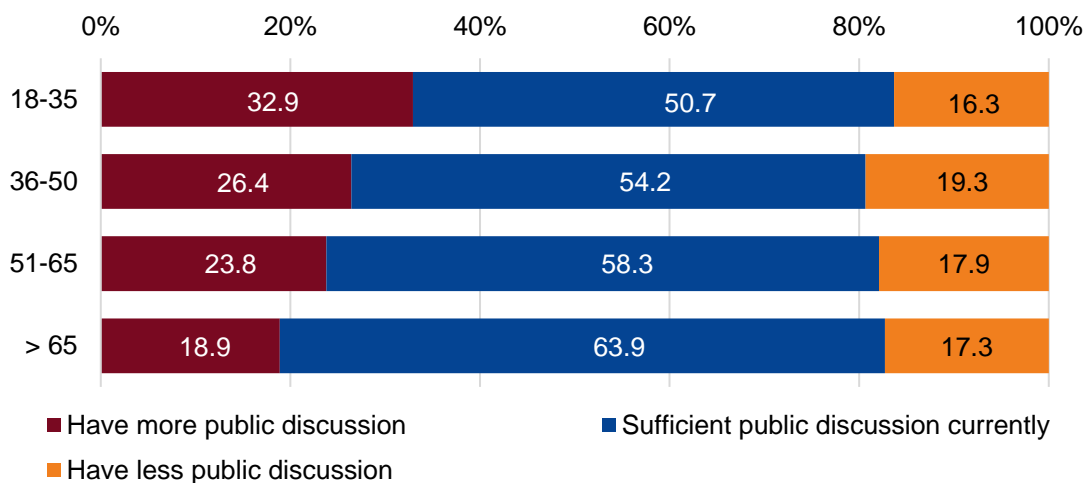
**Figure 3.1.3a: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on religion?, 2024 responses by religion**



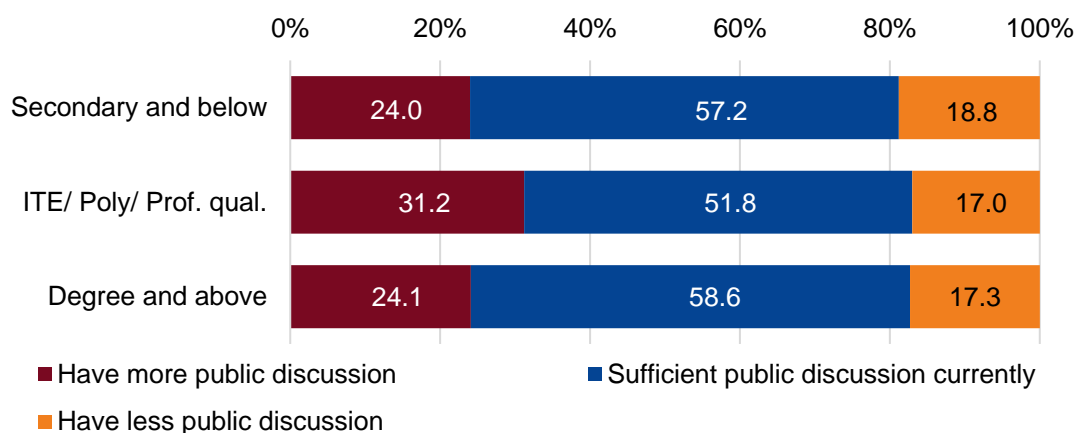
Older respondents were more likely to say that the current level of public discussion on religion is sufficient. While 50.7 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old thought so, the proportion increased to 63.9 per cent for those older than 65 years old (see Figure 3.1.3b).

In general, respondents with secondary and below qualifications as well as university graduates held similar opinions about the desired level of public discussion on religion. Around 24 per cent felt that there should be more public discussion, around 58 per cent felt that there is sufficient public discussion, while under 20 per cent said that there should be less public discussion. In comparison, those with ITE, polytechnic, or professional qualifications were more likely to think that more public discussion is needed, with 31.2 per cent indicating this (see Figure 3.1.3c).

**Figure 3.1.3b: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on religion?, 2024 responses by age**

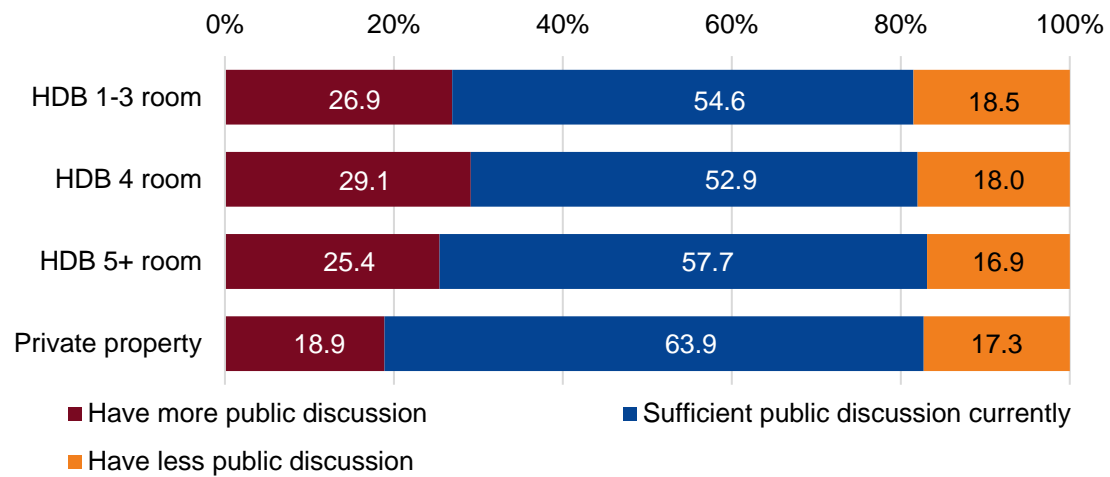


**Figure 3.1.3c: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on religion?, 2024 responses by education**



Respondents staying in private property were most likely to say that there is sufficient public discussion currently on religion. Compared to 52.2 to 57.7 per cent of respondents staying in public housing, 63.9 per cent of private property dwellers said that there is sufficient public discussion currently (see Figure 3.1.3d).

**Figure 3.1.3d: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on religion?, 2024 responses by housing**



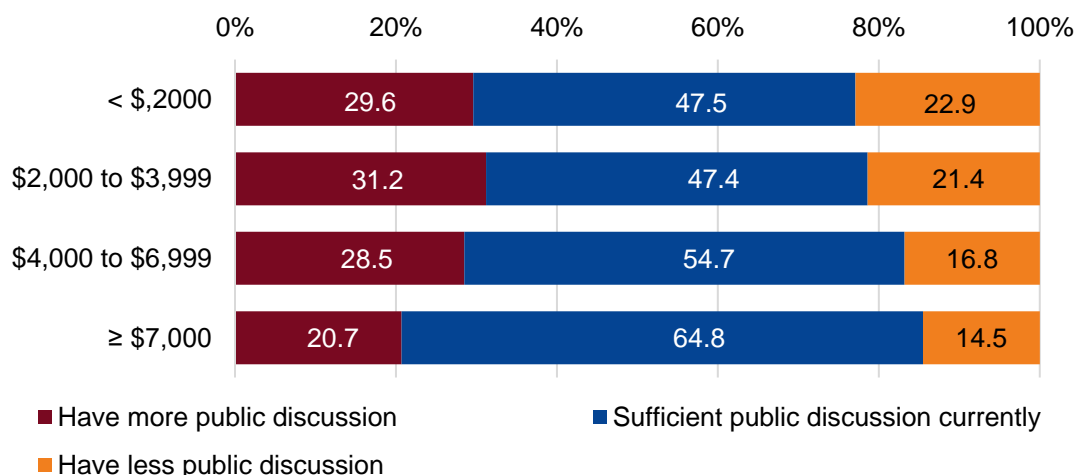
Respondents earning higher incomes were more likely to feel that the current level of public discussion on religion is sufficient. While around 47 per cent of those earning below \$4,000 felt this way, the proportions increased to 54.7 per cent for those earning between \$4,000 and \$7,000 and 64.8 per cent for those earning \$7,000 and above (see Figure 3.1.3e).

***3.1.4 Respondents who are Chinese, older, and hold secondary and below qualifications were more likely to feel that current levels of discussion on immigration is sufficient***

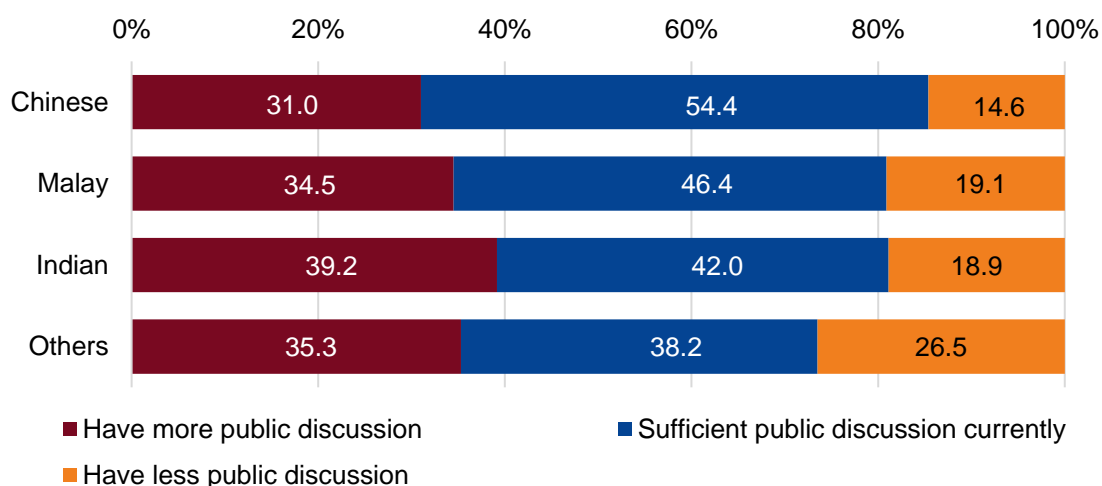
When asked about the desired level of public discussion on immigration, Chinese respondents were most likely to say that there is sufficient public discussion currently. Compared to 46.4 per cent of Malay respondents and 42 per cent of Indian

respondents, 54.4 per cent of Chinese respondents felt that there was sufficient discussion already (see Figure 3.1.4a).

**Figure 3.1.3e: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on religion?, 2024 responses by income**



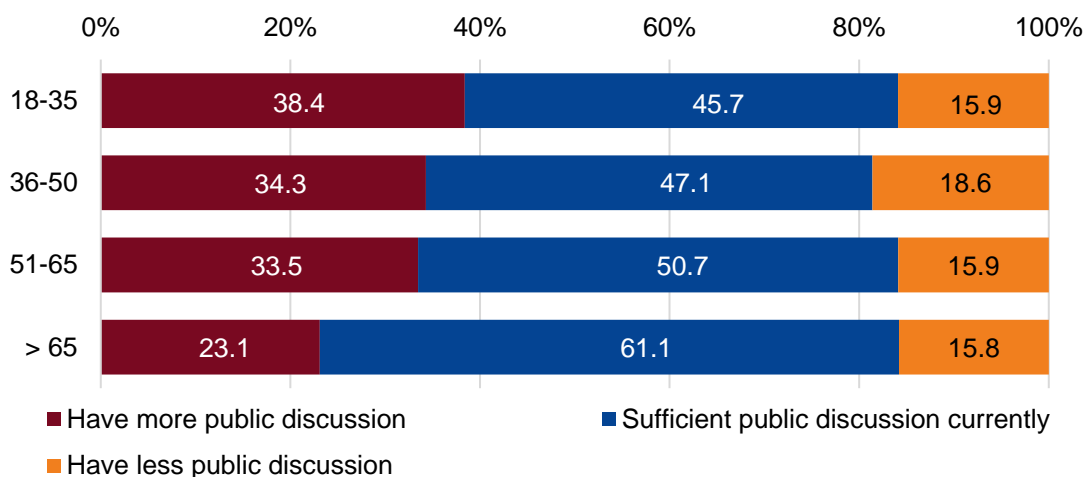
**Figure 3.1.4a: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on immigration?, 2024 responses by race**



Respondents belonging to the oldest age group were most likely to feel that there is already enough public discussion on immigration. While 45.7 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 47.1 per cent of those aged 36 to 50 years old, and 50.7 per cent

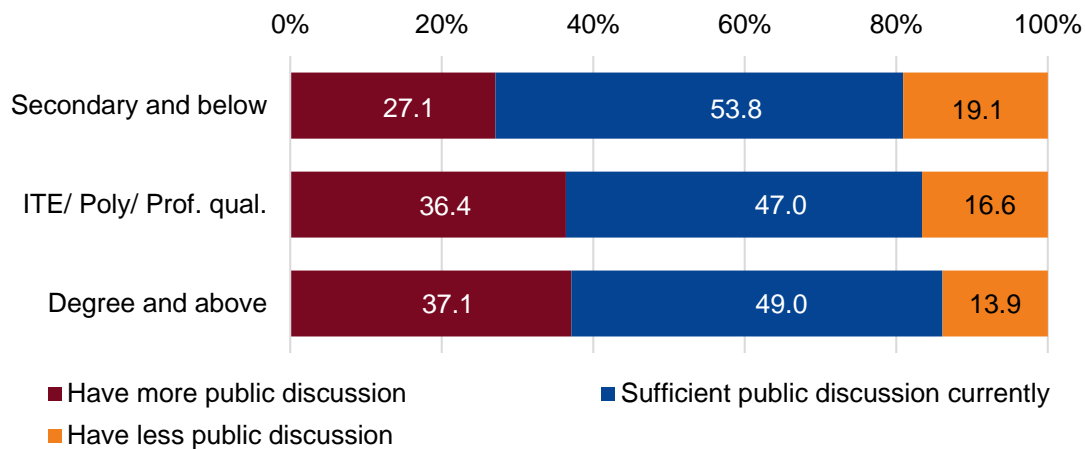
of those aged 51 to 65 years old felt this way, the proportion increased to 61.1 per cent for those older than 65 years old (see Figure 3.1.4b).

**Figure 3.1.4b: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on immigration?, 2024 responses by age**



Sentiments on the desired level of public discussion on immigration differed between those with secondary and below education and the other educational groups. While under half of those with higher education levels felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently, the proportion was higher at 53.8 per cent for those with secondary and below education (see Figure 3.1.4c).

**Figure 3.1.4c: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on immigration?, 2024 responses by education**



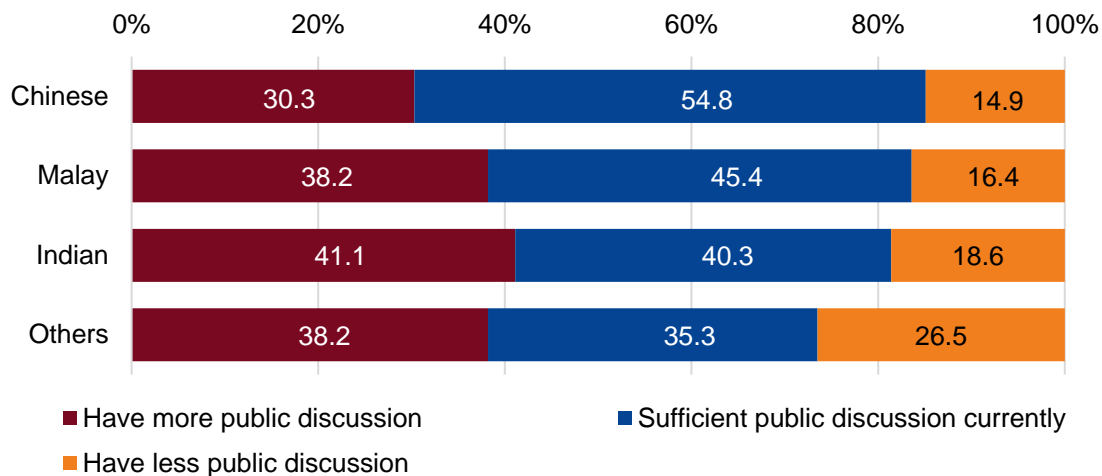
***3.1.5 Respondents who are Chinese, older, hold secondary and below qualifications, and wield higher income were more likely to think the current level of public discussion on SES or class differences is sufficient***

Chinese respondents were most likely to say that there is sufficient public discussion currently on SES or class differences. Compared to 45.4 per cent of Malay respondents and 40.3 per cent of Indian respondents, 54.8 per cent of Chinese respondents felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently (see Figure 3.1.5a).

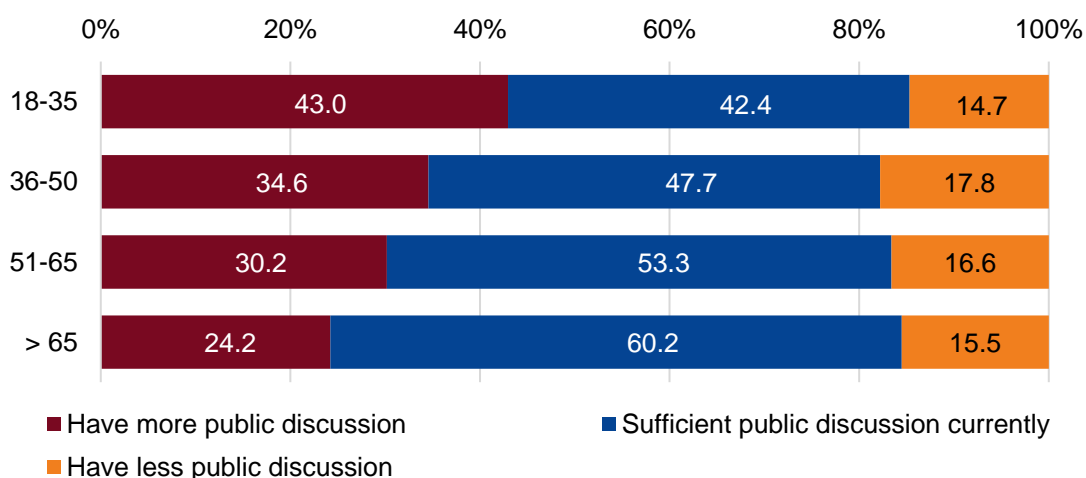
There were clear age differences when it came to opinions on the desired level of public discussion on SES or class differences. Older respondents were more likely to feel that there was sufficient public discussion currently, while younger respondents were more likely to indicate that there should be more public discussion (see Figure 3.1.5b).



**Figure 3.1.5a: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by race**

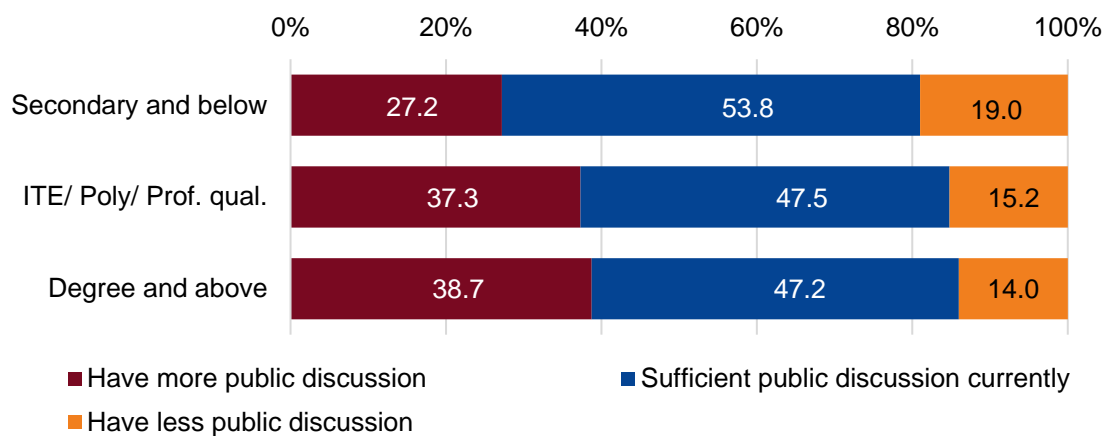


**Figure 3.1.5b: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by age**



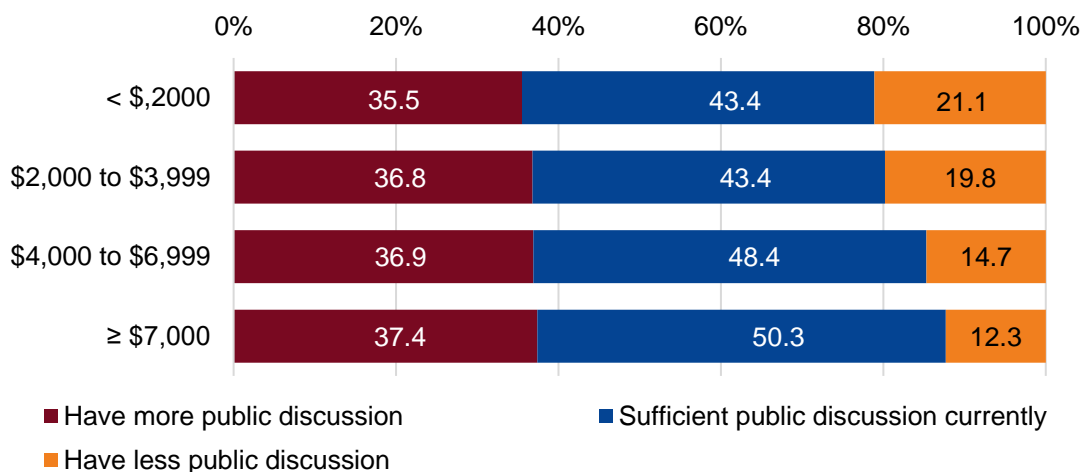
Respondents with secondary and below education were more likely than other respondents to say that there is currently enough public discussion on SES or class differences. Meanwhile, over one-third of respondents with ITE or above education level felt that there should be more public discussion, compared to just 27.2 per cent of respondents with secondary and below education (see Figure 3.1.5c).

**Figure 3.1.5c: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by education**



When compared across income levels, the proportion of respondents who felt that there should be more public discussion on SES or class differences remained relatively constant at just over one-third. Meanwhile, respondents with higher income were more likely to indicate that there is sufficient public discussion currently, while respondents with lower income were more likely to say that there should be less public discussion (see Figure 3.1.5d).

**Figure 3.1.5d: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by income**



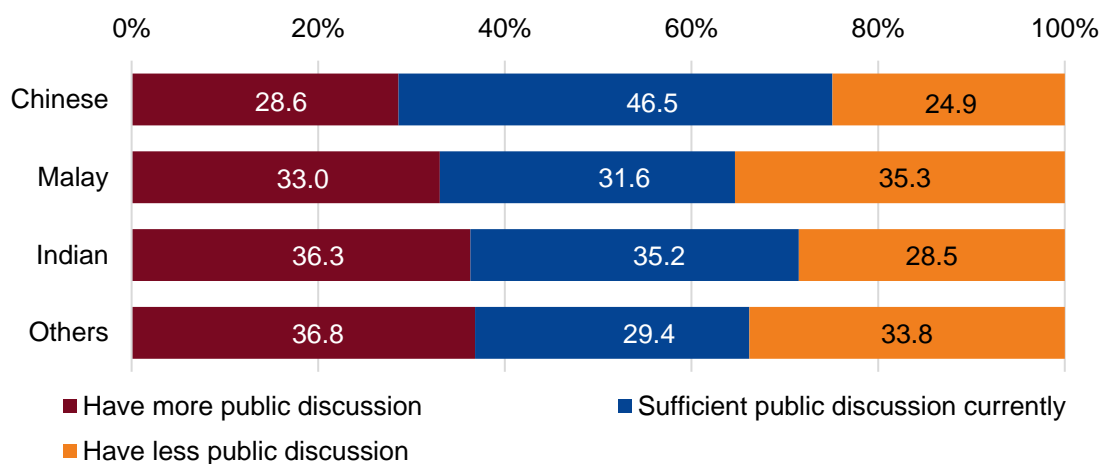
**3.1.6 Respondents who are Chinese; Buddhists, Taoists or non-religious; older; and hold either secondary and below qualifications or a degree were more likely to think that the current level of public discussion on LGBT issues is sufficient**

Chinese respondents were more likely to indicate that there is sufficient public discussion currently on LGBT issues, with 46.5 per cent. Meanwhile, Malay respondents were quite evenly split between the three options, with having less public discussion having a slight edge over the other two. Indian respondents, on the other hand, were more likely to either say there should be more public discussion or that there is sufficient public discussion currently (see Figure 3.1.6a).

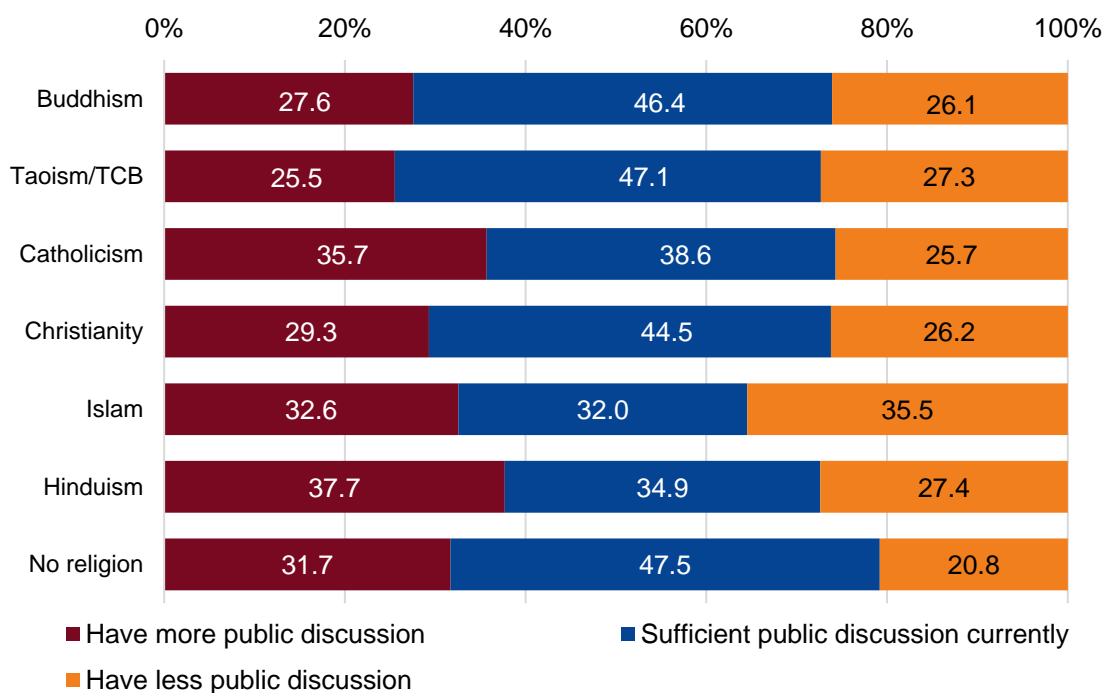
When persuing results by religion, we note that over four in 10 respondents who are Buddhists, Taoists, Christians, or have no religion felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently on LGBT issues, compared to around one-third of Catholic,

Muslim, and Hindu respondents. In fact, among Muslims, 35.5 per cent felt that there should be less discussion on LGBT issues (see Figure 3.1.6b).

**Figure 3.1.6a: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by race**

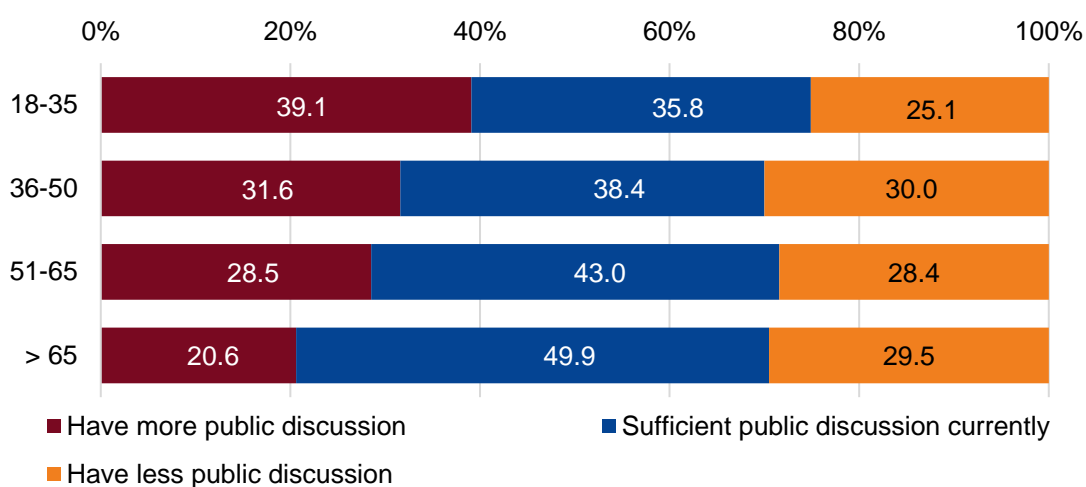


**Figure 3.1.6b: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by religion**



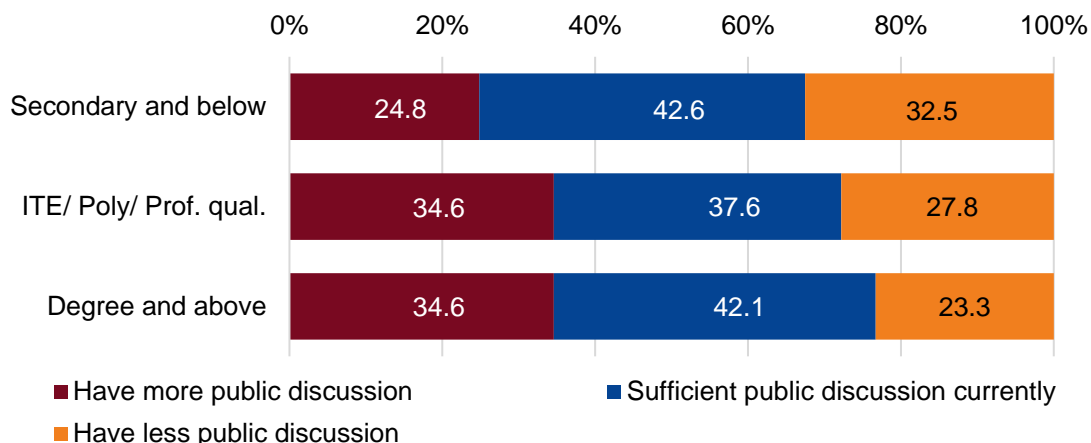
Compared to 35.8 per cent of respondents aged 18 to 35 years old, 49.9 per cent of those older than 65 years old felt that there is sufficient public discussion currently on LGBT issues. In contrast, younger respondents were more likely to feel that there should be more public discussion compared to older respondents (see Figure 3.1.6c).

**Figure 3.1.6c: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by age**



Respondents with secondary and below education held different opinions on the desired level of public discussion on LGBT issues. They were less likely to indicate that there should be more public discussion, and more likely than the other groups to say that there should be less public discussion (see Figure 3.1.6d).

**Figure 3.1.6d: What are your opinions on the desired level of public discussion on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by education**



## 3.2 Government Involvement

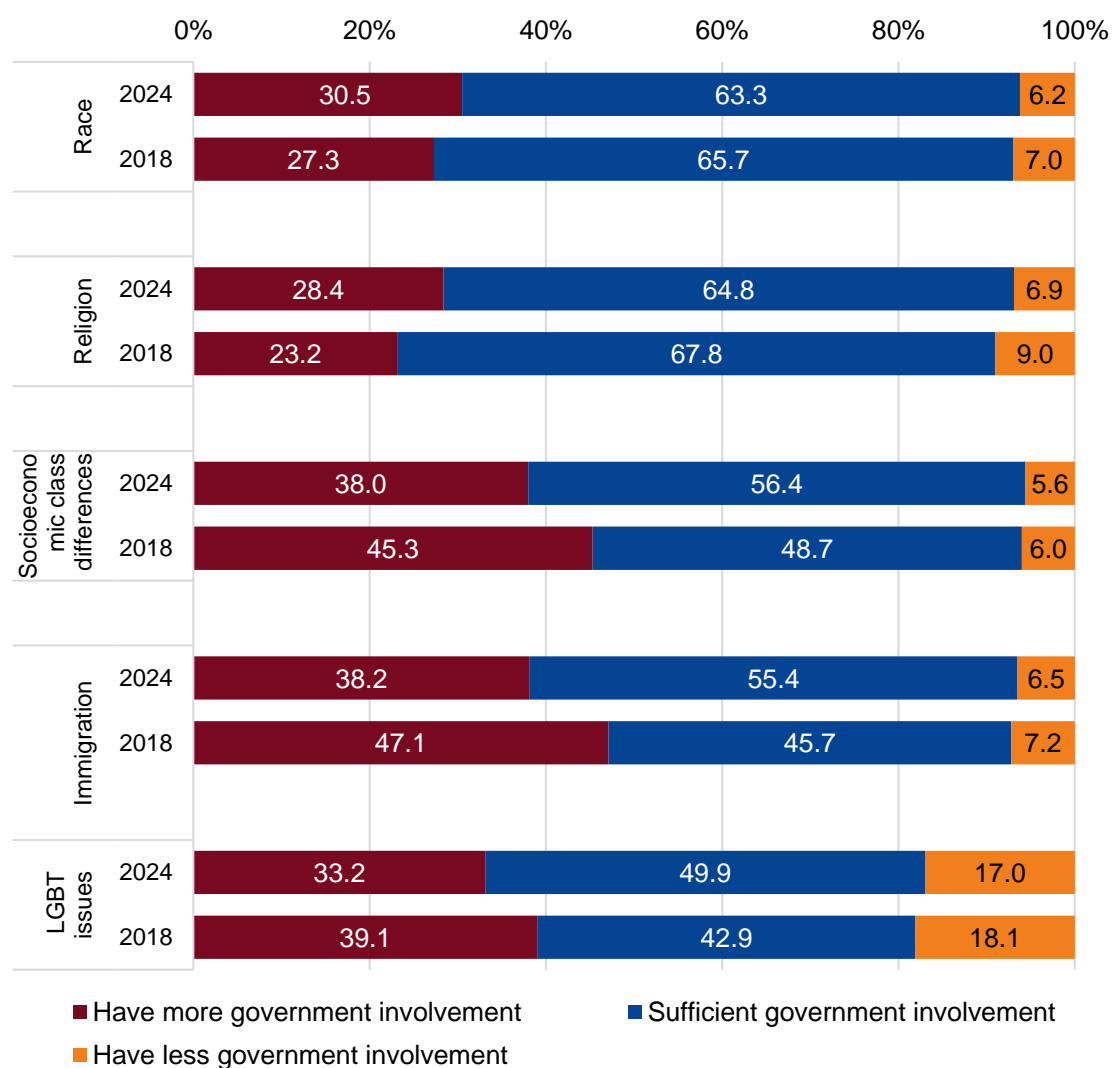
### 3.2.1 *Around two-thirds in both waves feel that current levels of government involvement for R&R are desirable; over half indicated likewise for SES differences and immigration; half indicated as such for LGBT issues*

Respondents were also queried on their desired level of government involvement for the five faultlines. The most popular option for all five was that it should remain the same as it currently is. Around two-thirds of respondents in both waves felt that the current levels of government involvement for R&R are the desired levels, compared to around one-third of those who feel that there should be more, and under one in 10 who believe that there should be a lower level of involvement.

Meanwhile, the proportion of respondents who felt that the current level of government involvement is desirable for SES differences and immigration increased from under

half in 2018 to over half in 2024, together with a proportionate drop in those who felt that there should be a higher level of government involvement for these two issues from above 45 per cent in 2018 to around 38 per cent in 2024. When it came to LGBT issues, 33.2 per cent in 2024, compared to 39.1 per cent in 2018, felt that there should be a higher level of government involvement. Correspondingly, the proportion of respondents who felt that the current level is desirable increased from 42.9 per cent in 2018 to 49.9 per cent in 2024 (see Figure 3.2.1).

**Figure 3.2.1: What are your opinions on each when it comes to the desired level of government involvement?, responses by wave\***

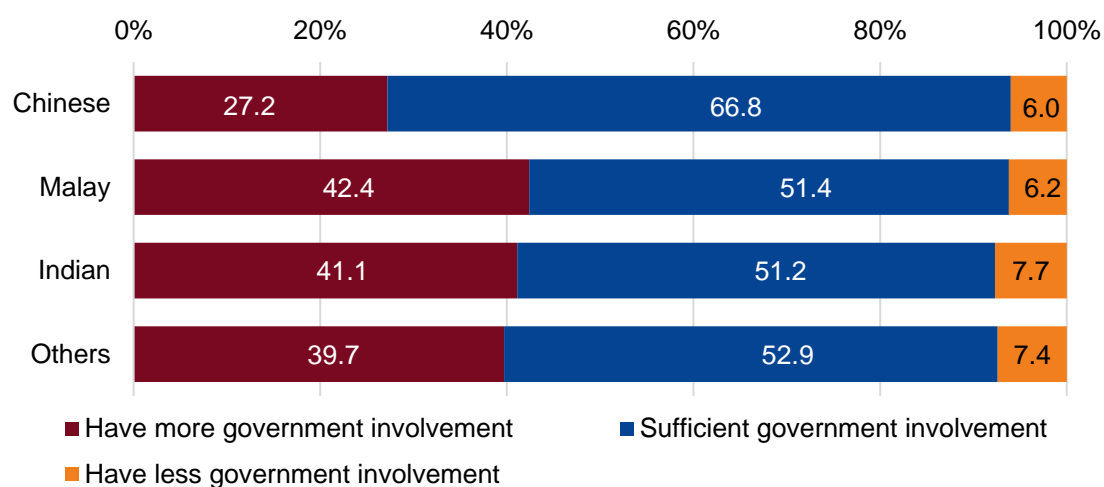


\*Items not asked in 2013.

**3.2.2 Respondents who are Chinese, older, or earn higher income were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement on race should remain the same**

While slightly over half of the minority-race respondents felt that the current level of government involvement in race is desired, the proportion increased to 66.8 per cent for Chinese respondents. Meanwhile, minority-race respondents were more likely than Chinese respondents to indicate that there should be more government involvement (see Figure 3.2.2a).

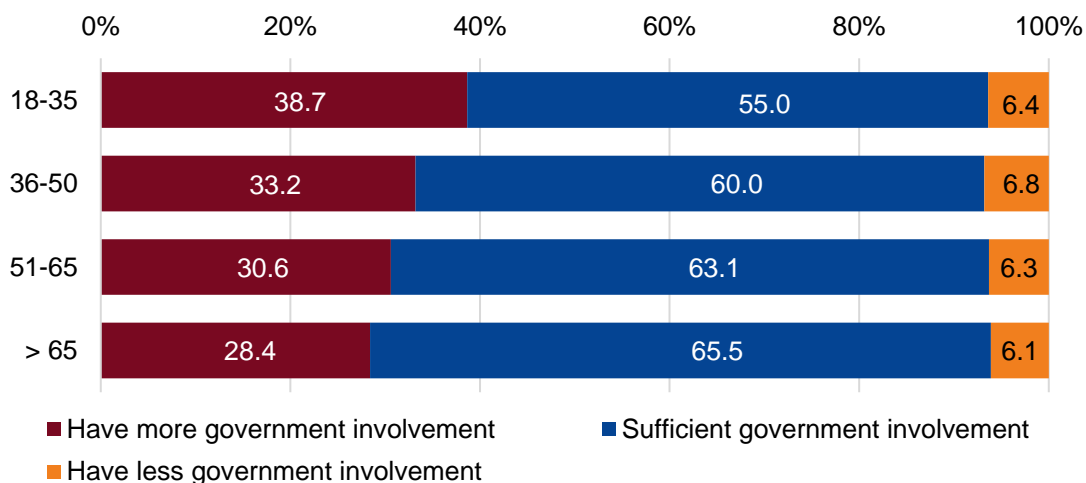
**Figure 3.2.2a: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on race?, 2024 responses by race**



Older respondents were more likely to say that the level of government involvement on race should remain the same – 65.5 per cent of those older than 65 years old, compared to 55 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, indicated so. Meanwhile, younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to indicate a desire for more government involvement (see Figure 3.2.2b).



**Figure 3.2.2b: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on race?, 2024 responses by age**

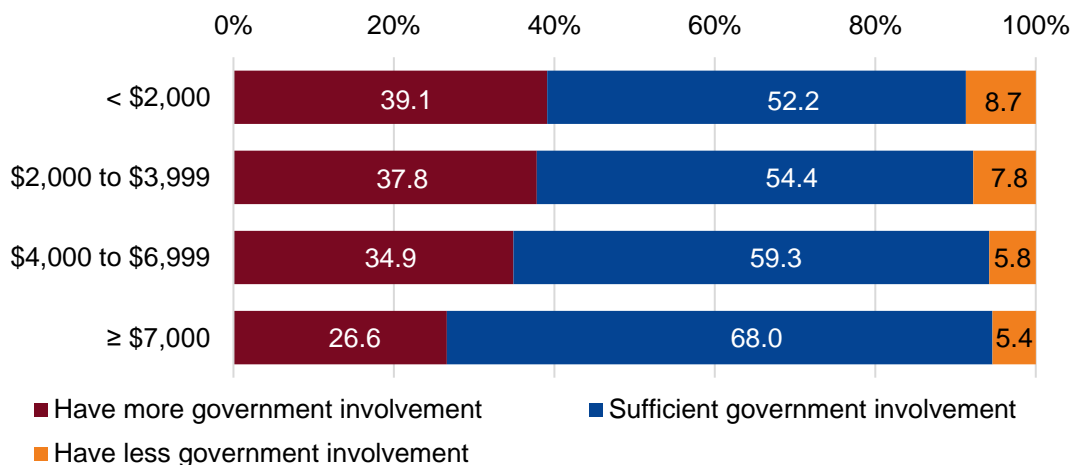


Respondents earning higher income were more likely to say that the level of government involvement on race should remain the same as current levels. Compared to 52.2 per cent of those earning below \$2,000, 68 per cent of those earning \$7,000 or higher felt this way (see Figure 3.2.2c).

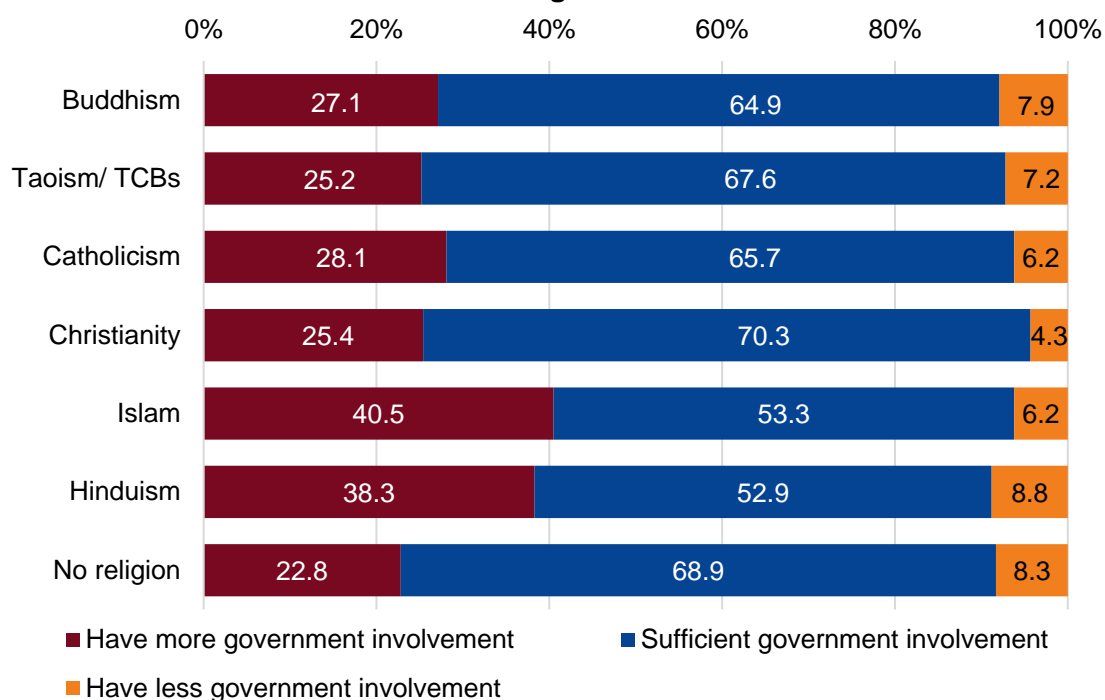
### ***3.2.3 Respondents who are Christian, older, or earn higher income were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement on religion should remain the same***

When asked their opinions on the desired level of government involvement on religion, 70.3 per cent of Christian respondents, compared with around two-thirds of Buddhists, Taoists, Catholics, and those with no religion, as well as over half of Muslim and Hindu respondents, felt that things should remain the same (see Figure 3.2.3a).

**Figure 3.2.2c: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on race?, 2024 responses by income**



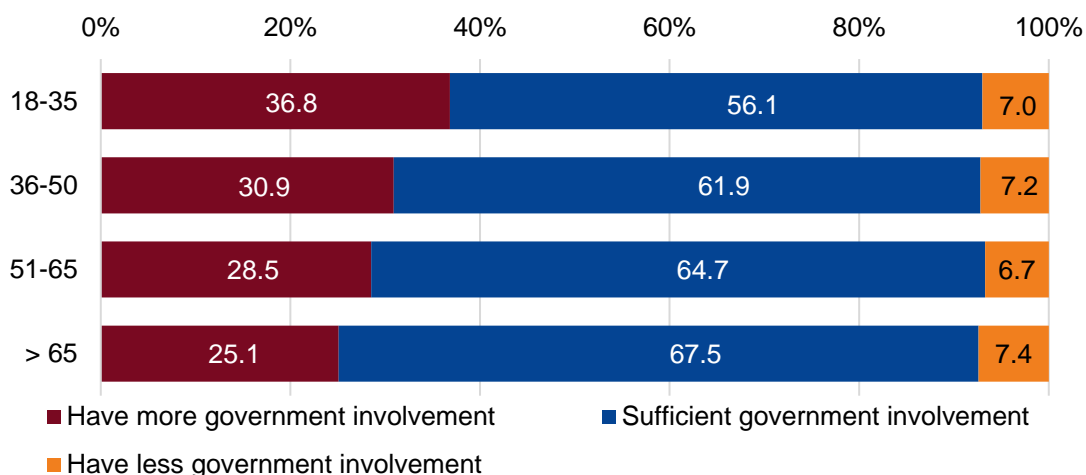
**Figure 3.2.3a: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on religion?, 2024 responses by religion**



Older respondents were more likely to feel that things should remain the same as currently when asked about their desired level of government involvement in religion. Compared to 56.1 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 67.5 per cent of those older than 65 years old felt that things should remain the same. In comparison, younger

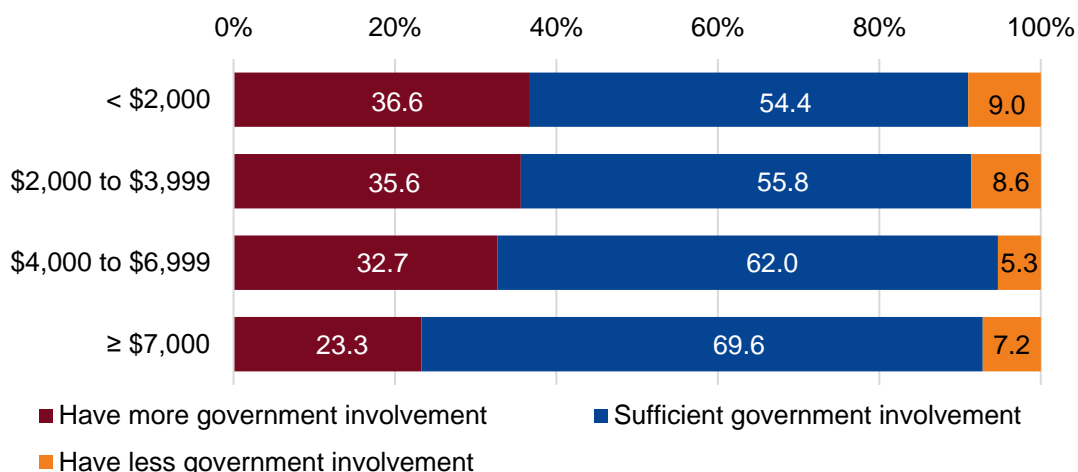
respondents were more likely than older respondents to say that there should be more government involvement (see Figure 3.2.3b).

**Figure 3.2.3b: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on religion?, 2024 responses by age**



Respondents earning \$7,000 or higher were most likely to say that the current level of government involvement in religion is what is desired. Meanwhile, respondents earning lower income were more likely than this group to say that there should be more involvement by the government (see Figure 3.2.3c).

**Figure 3.2.3c: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on religion?, 2024 responses by income**

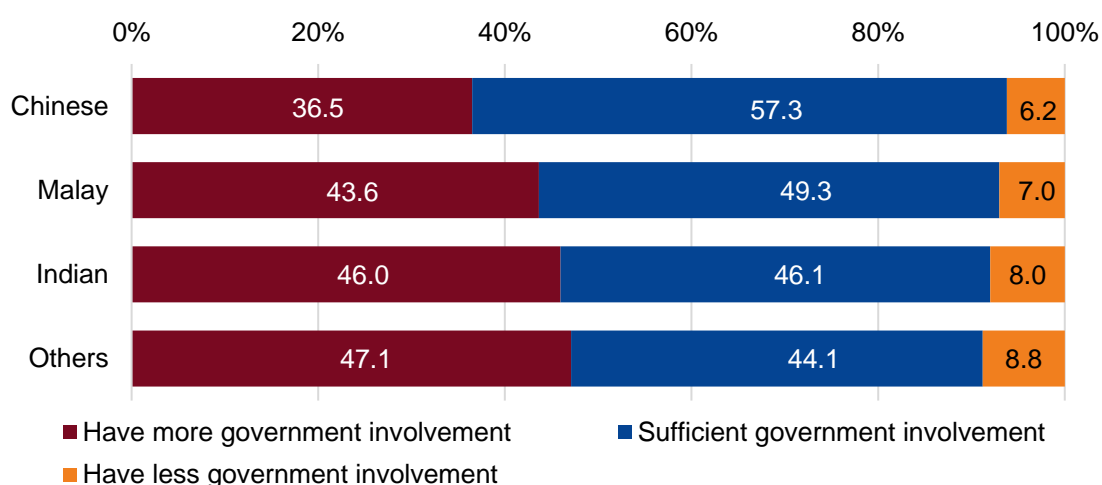


### 3.2.4 Respondents who are Chinese or older were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement in immigration should remain the same

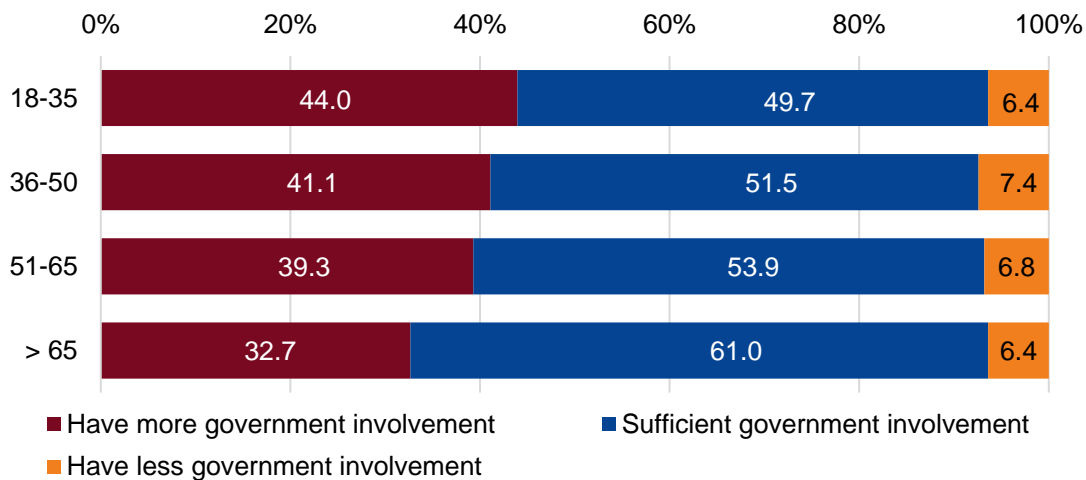
Compared to minority-race respondents, Chinese respondents were most likely to think that the current level of government involvement in immigration is what is desired. Meanwhile, minority-race respondents were more likely to say that there should be more involvement (see Figure 3.2.4a).

Older respondents were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement should remain the same for immigration. Compared to 49.7 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 61 per cent of those older than 65 years old felt this way. In comparison, 44 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, compared to just 32.7 per cent of those older than 65 years old, felt that there should be more government involvement (see Figure 3.2.4b).

**Figure 3.2.4a: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on immigration?, 2024 responses by race**



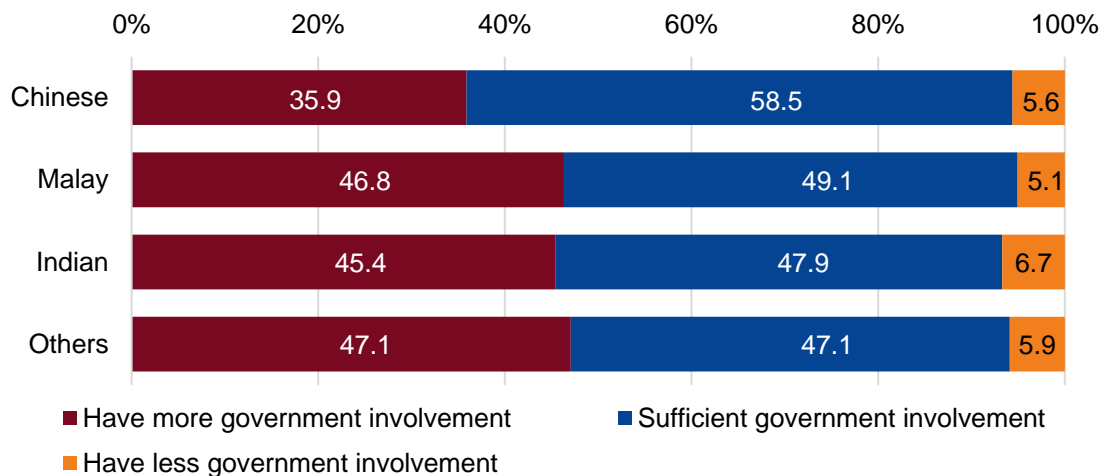
**Figure 3.2.4b: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on immigration?, 2024 responses by age**



**3.2.5 Respondents who are Chinese, older, or lower-educated were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement in SES differences should remain the same**

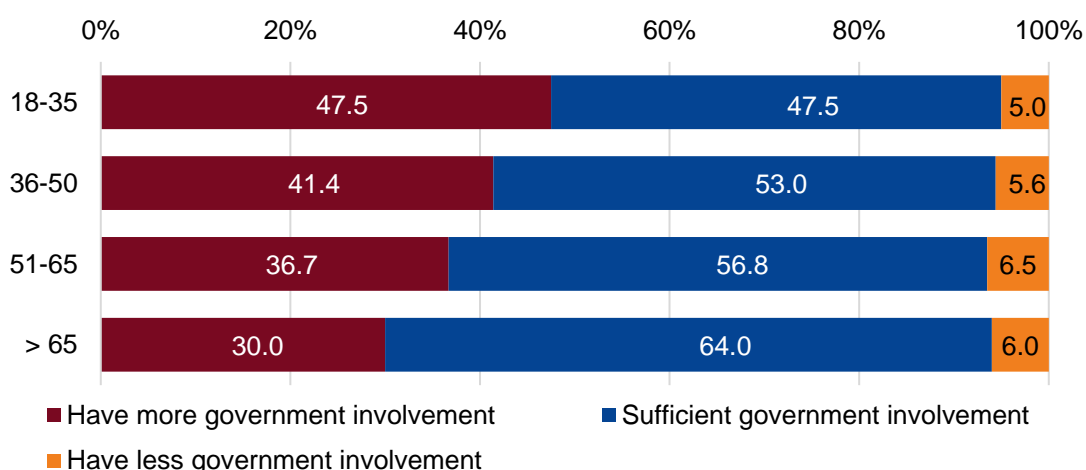
While 58.5 per cent of Chinese respondents felt that the current level of government involvement in SES differences is what is desired, under half of minority-race respondents felt the same. In comparison, minority-race respondents were more likely than Chinese respondents to feel that there should be more government involvement (see Figure 3.2.5a).

**Figure 3.2.5a: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by race**



Older respondents were more likely to feel that the current level of government involvement in SES differences is desired. Compared to just 47.5 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 64 per cent of those older than 65 years old felt this way (see Figure 3.2.5b).

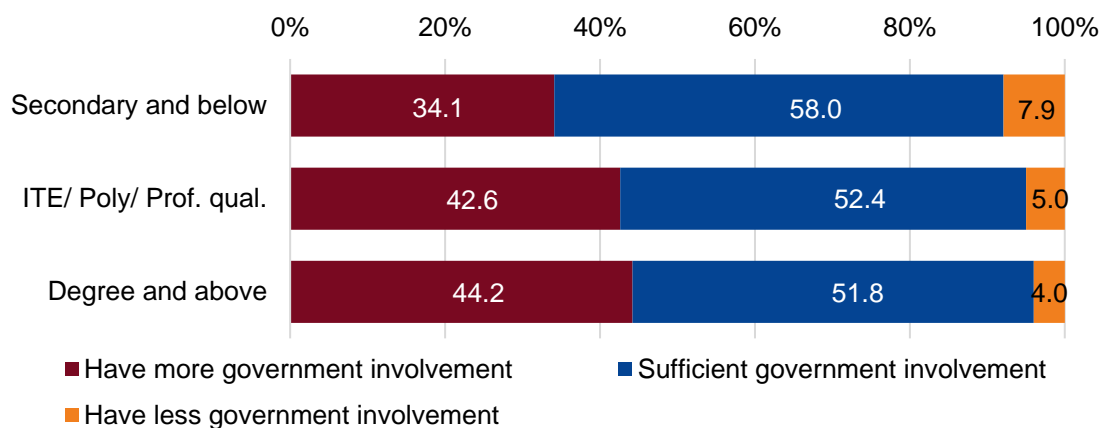
**Figure 3.2.5b: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by age**



Respondents with secondary and below education were more likely to say that the current level of government involvement for SES differences is desired. While 51.8 per

cent of university graduates and 52.4 per cent of those with ITE, polytechnic, or professional qualifications felt this way, the proportion increased to 58 per cent for those with secondary and below education (see Figure 3.2.5c).

**Figure 3.2.5c: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on socioeconomic class differences?, 2024 responses by education**

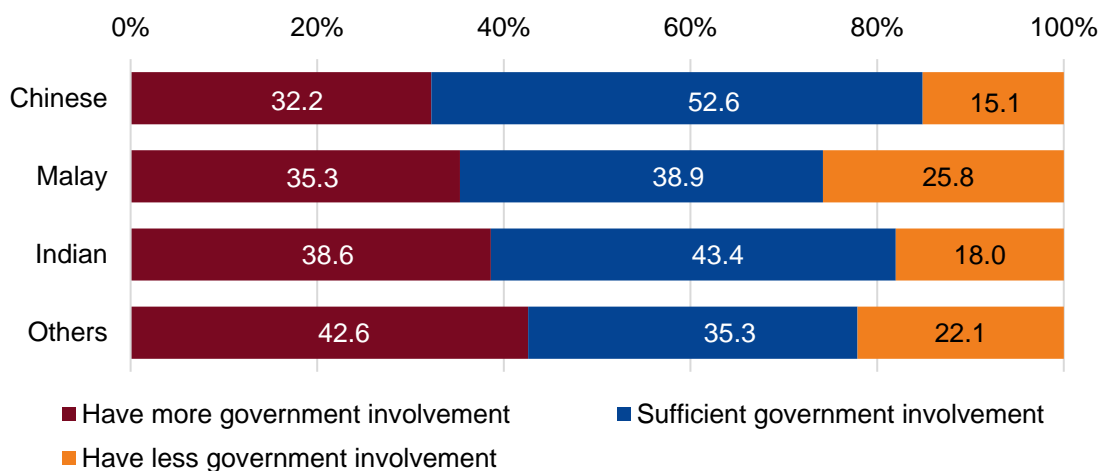


### ***3.2.6 Respondents who are Chinese, Buddhists, Taoists, or have no religion, or older were more likely to feel that the level of government involvement in LGBT issues should remain the same***

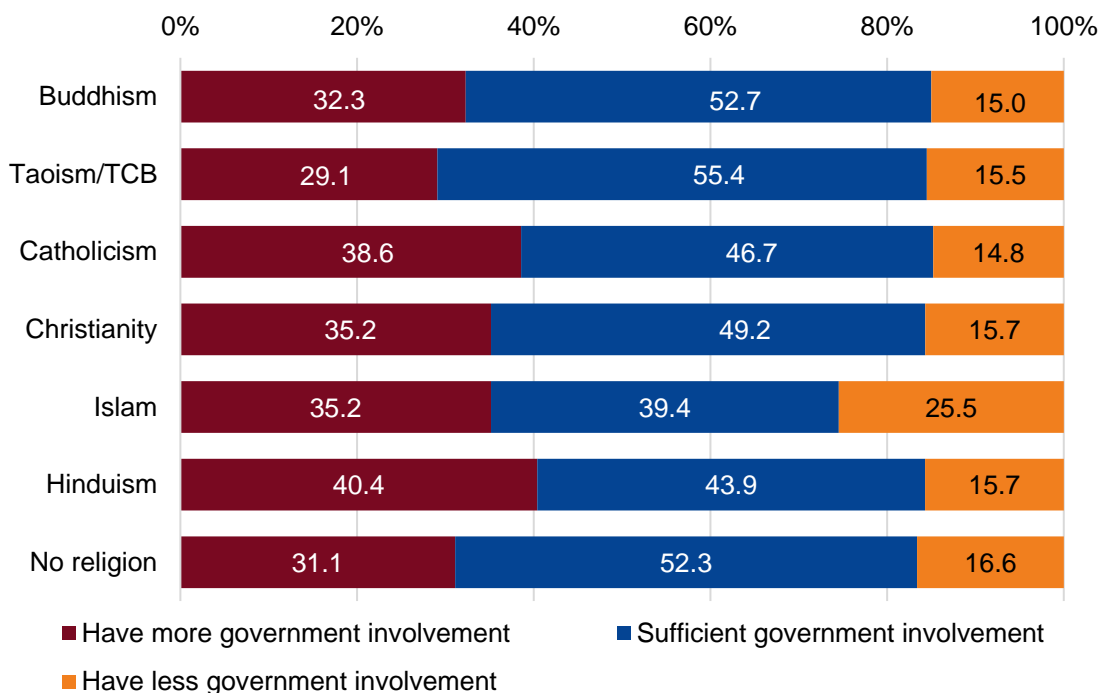
When it came to government involvement in LGBT issues, Chinese respondents were most likely to say that the current level is what is desired. Overall, 52.6 per cent of the Chinese respondents, compared to 38.9 per cent of Malay respondents and 43.4 per cent of Indian respondents felt this way (see Figure 3.2.6a).

Over half of respondents who are Buddhists, Taoists, or who have no religion felt that the current level of government involvement on LGBT issues is what is desired. This is compared to over four in 10 Catholics, Christians, and Hindus, and 39.4 per cent of Muslims (see Figure 3.2.6b).

**Figure 3.2.6a: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 3.2.6b: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by religion**

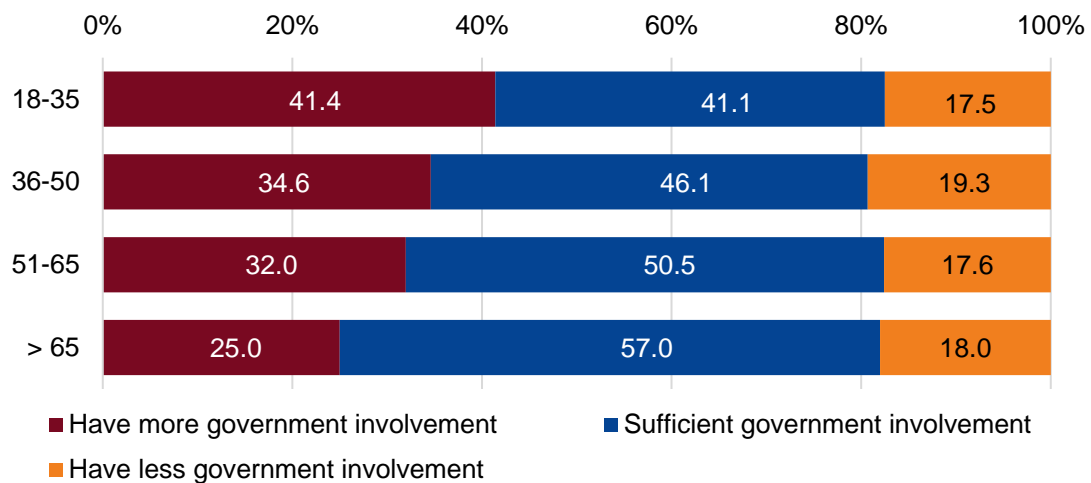


Older respondents were more likely to be happy with the current level of government involvement in LGBT issues compared to younger respondents, while younger respondents were more likely to want more involvement. Comparing the spread of



respondents, the most popular choice for the oldest cohort was that things should remain the same, while 82.5 per cent of the youngest cohort was nearly evenly split between having more discussion and having things remain the same, with the remaining 17.5 per cent saying that there should be less government involvement (see Figure 3.2.6c).

**Figure 3.2.6c: What are your opinions on the desired level of government involvement on LGBT issues?, 2024 responses by age**



#### **4. PERCEPTIONS OF R&R POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT**

Singapore employs a range of policies to manage its diverse population, including in areas of race and religion (R&R). In general, sentiments towards these policies are positive, with respondents expressing satisfaction with these policies, and indicating preferences for equal treatment of all racial and religious groups in the population. There is also strong consensus over having government involvement in managing issues related to R&R.

Respondents also expressed general support for race-based policies, particularly with regard to having a racial mix in housing estates and providing culturally-sensitive support for the less well-off in different communities.

When asked specifically about the CMIO (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others) framework, which is periodically raised in public commentary as highly problematic and antithetical to preserving good racial harmony, only 6 per cent of respondents believed that this categorisation should be removed; a larger proportion of respondents in 2024 felt that the CMIO framework should be retained as-is when compared to respondents in 2018.

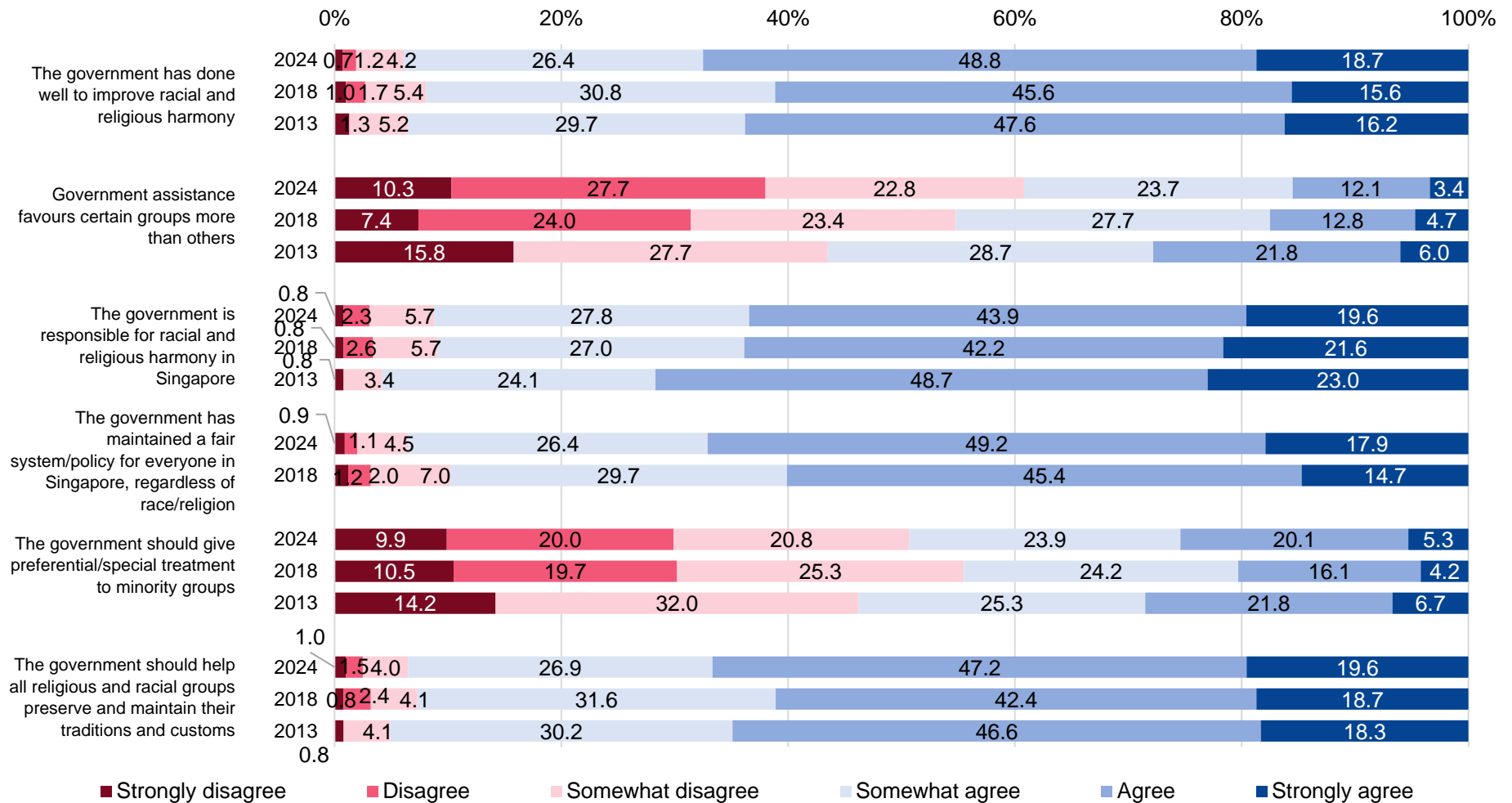
## 4.1 General Perceptions

### ***4.1.1 Support remains high for government management of R&R issues with nine out of 10 agreeing that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore***

Respondents were asked specific questions about their sentiments towards different aspects of government treatment of the different groups. Overall, agreement rates were higher for the statements expressing fair treatment of all groups, while statements mentioning preferential or unequal treatment were less popular. At the outset, over nine in 10 respondents in 2018 and 2024 agreed to some extent that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore, and that the government should help all religious and racial groups preserve and maintain their traditions and customs (see Figure 4.1.1).

There was also near unanimous agreement that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony in Singapore (93.9 per cent in 2024). The government is also seen by most to have maintained a fair system for everyone in Singapore, regardless of race or religion; the proportion of respondents expressing agreement to varying extents increased from 89.8 per cent in 2018 to 93.5 per cent in 2024, with 7 per cent more agreeing more emphatically (i.e., agreeing, or strongly agreeing). Meanwhile, respondents were less inclined to say that government assistance favours certain groups more than others, with the proportion agreeing dropping from 45.2 per cent in 2018 to 39.2 per cent in 2024. However, there was a slight uptick in agreement from 44.5 per cent in 2018 to 49.3 per cent in 2024 with the statement that the government should give preferential or special treatment to minority groups (see Figure 4.1.1).

**Figure 4.1.1: How much do you agree with the following statements?, responses by wave\***



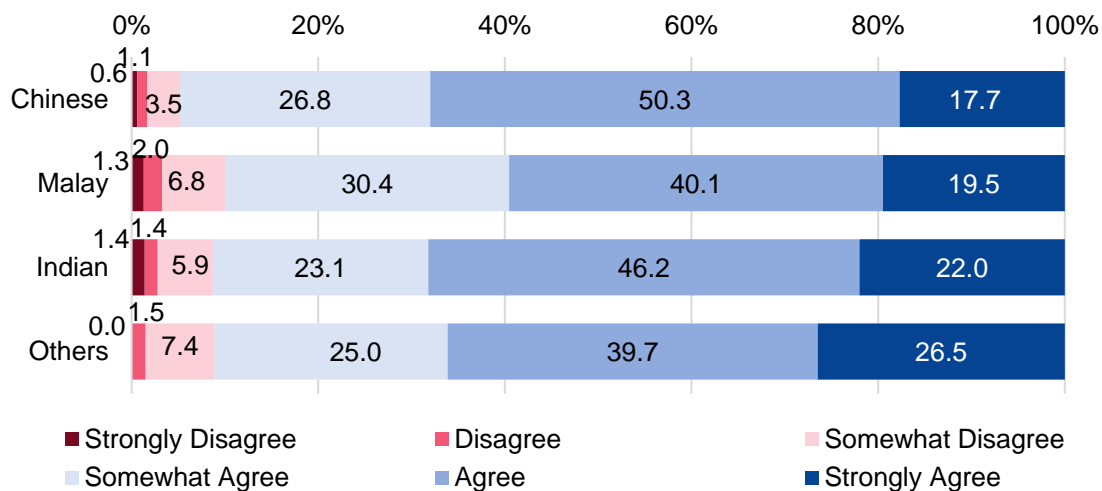
\*Items asked in 2013 wave had differing Likert-scale options proffered to respondents, and hence not directly comparable to 2018 and 2024 waves, but included for completeness

#### ***4.1.2 Respondents who are Chinese, Christians, or older were more likely to agree that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony***

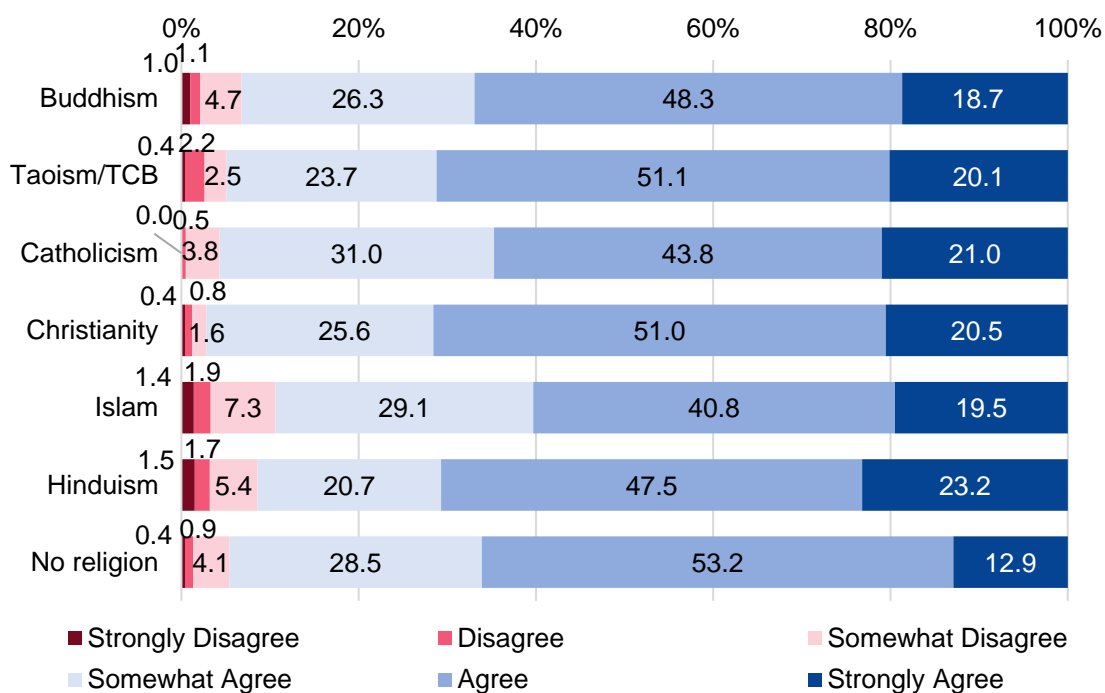
While over nine in 10 of each racial group agreed to some extent that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony, Chinese respondents were more likely to indicate overall agreement. In total, 94.8 per cent of Chinese respondents agreed to varying degrees that the government has done well, compared with 90 per cent of Malay respondents and 91.3 per cent of Indian respondents. When comparing proportions indicating “strongly agree”, however, Chinese respondents were the least likely to indicate so (see Figure 4.1.2a).

Around nine in 10 of respondents across religious affiliations agreed to some extent that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony. When comparing the proportions indicating either “agree” or “strongly agree”, some differences were found. Just over seven in 10 Taoists, Christians, and Hindus agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, compared with two-thirds of Buddhists and those with no religion, and over six in 10 Catholics and Muslims (see Figure 4.1.2b).

**Figure 4.1.2a: The government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 4.1.2b: The government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony, 2024 responses by religion**

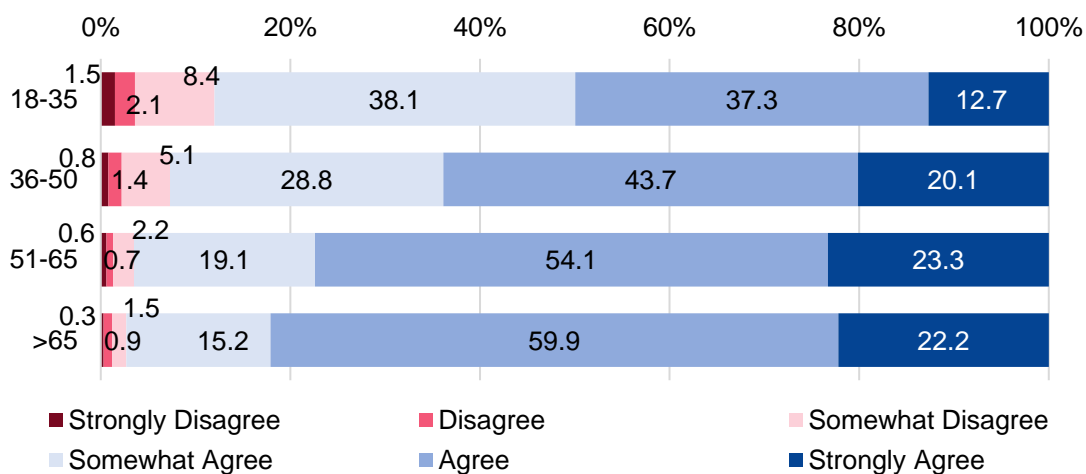


Older respondents were more likely to indicate agreement with the statement that the government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony. Compared to 88.1 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 97.3 per cent of those older than 65 years old agreed to different extents with the statement (see Figure 4.1.2c).

IPS Working Papers No. 60 (February 2025):

Faultlines in Singapore: Perceptions and Management with a Focus on Race and Religion  
by Mathew, M., Teo, K. K., Tay, M., and Poh, R.

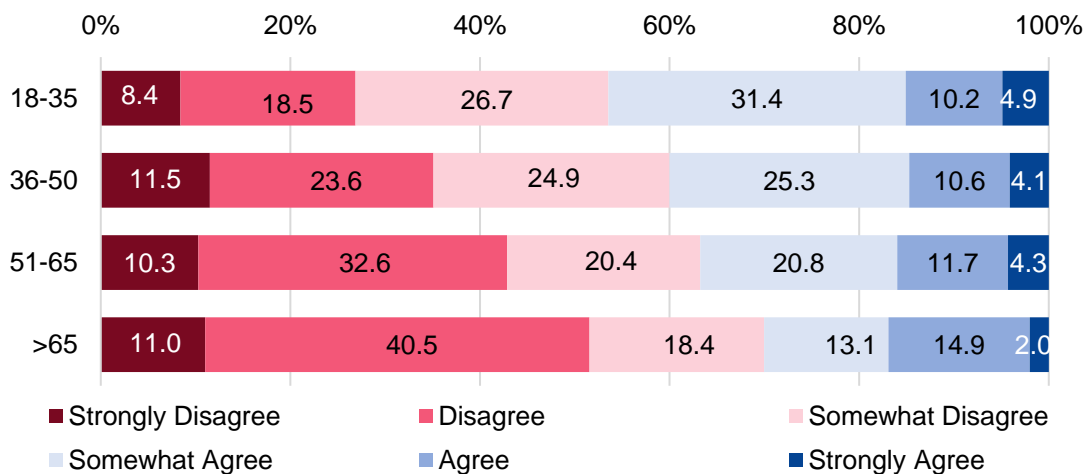
**Figure 4.1.2c: The government has done well to improve racial and religious harmony, 2024 responses by age**



#### ***4.1.3 Respondents who are older and less educated were more likely to disagree that government assistance favours certain groups over others***

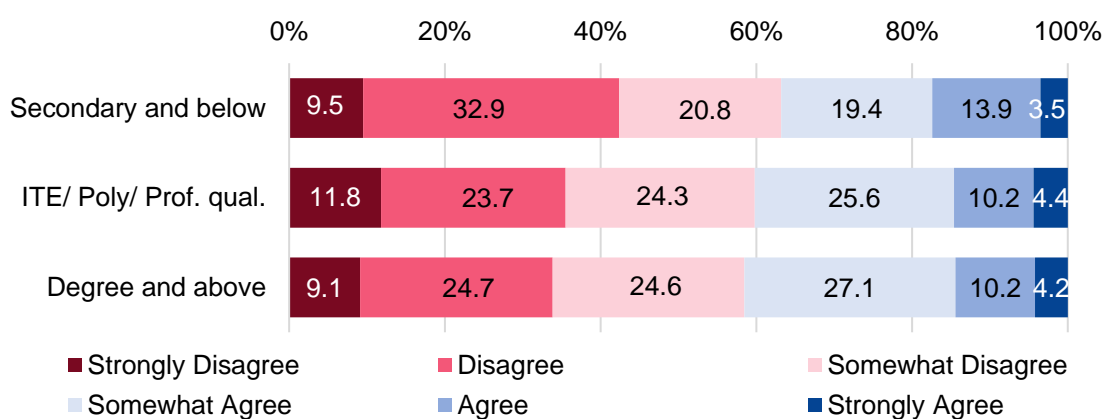
There were clear age differences in sentiments about whether government assistance favours certain groups over others. Older respondents were much more likely to disagree – compared to 53.6 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, 69.9 per cent of respondents older than 65 years old disagreed to some extent that government assistance favours certain groups over others (see Figure 4.1.3a).

**Figure 4.1.3a: Government assistance favours certain groups more than others, 2024 responses by age**



The differences between educational groups were less marked, but still indicated that those with lower education were less likely to think that there are differences in the treatment of different groups when it comes to government assistance. While 58.4 per cent of degree holders disagreed with the statement, 63.2 per cent of those with secondary and below education felt the same (see Figure 4.1.3b).

**Figure 4.1.3b: Government assistance favours certain groups more than others, 2024 responses by education**



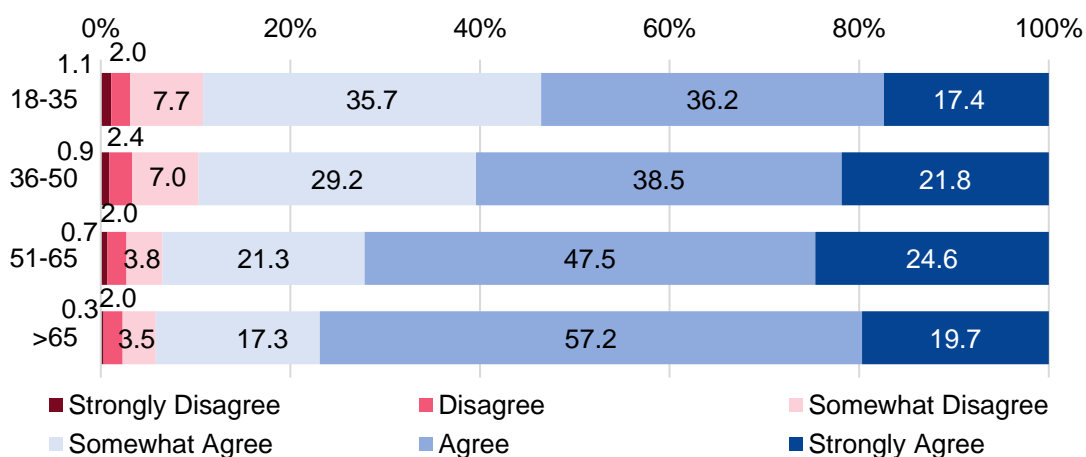


#### 4.1.4 Respondents who are older or less educated were more likely to agree that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony

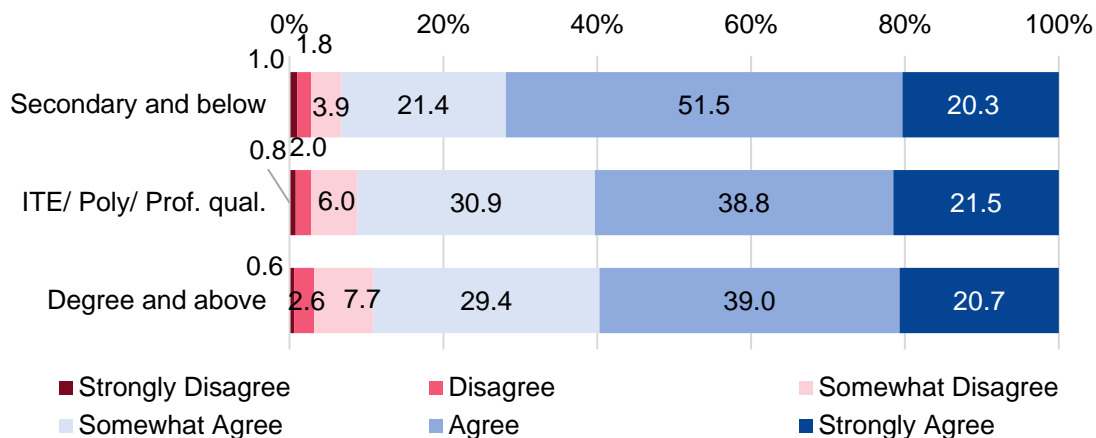
While over nine in 10 respondents across age groups agreed to some extent that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore, there were differences in the extent to which they agreed to this statement. Older respondents expressed stronger agreement with the statement – while 53.6 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, the proportion increased to 76.9 per cent for the group aged over 65 years old (see Figure 4.1.4a).

Meanwhile, respondents with secondary and below education were more likely than other respondents to say that they agree or strongly agree with the statement. Compared to around six in 10 of those with ITE or higher qualifications, 71.8 per cent of those with secondary and below education agreed or strongly agreed that the government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore (see Figure 4.1.4b).

**Figure 4.1.4a: The government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore, 2024 responses by age**



**Figure 4.1.4b: The government is responsible for racial and religious harmony in Singapore, 2024 responses by education**



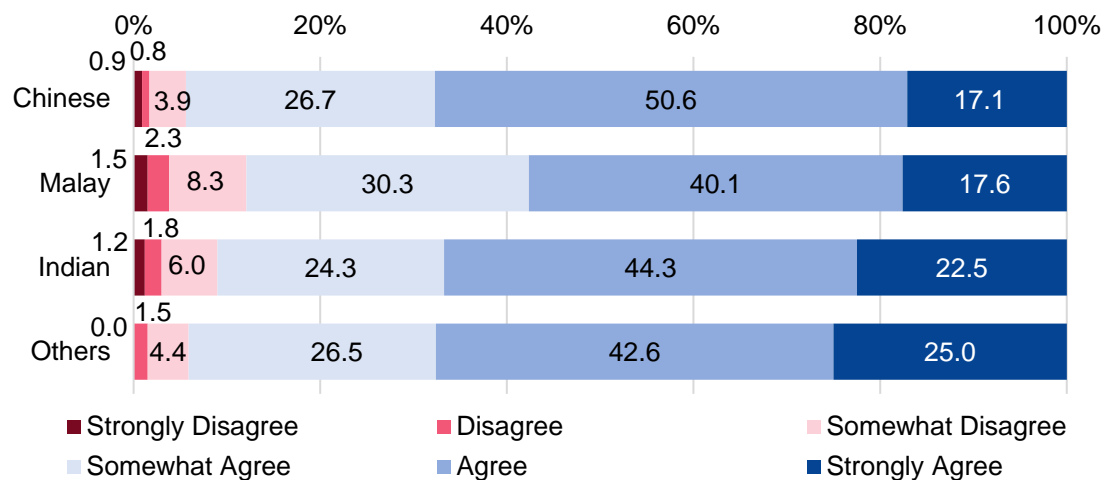
#### ***4.1.5 Respondents who are Chinese, Christians, or older were more likely to agree that the government has maintained a fair system for everyone***

Chinese respondents were more likely to somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree that the government has maintained a fair system or policy for everyone in Singapore. In total, 94.4 per cent agreed with this statement, compared to 88 per cent of Malay respondents, 91.1 per cent of Indian respondents, and 94.1 per cent of Others respondents (see Figure 4.1.5a).

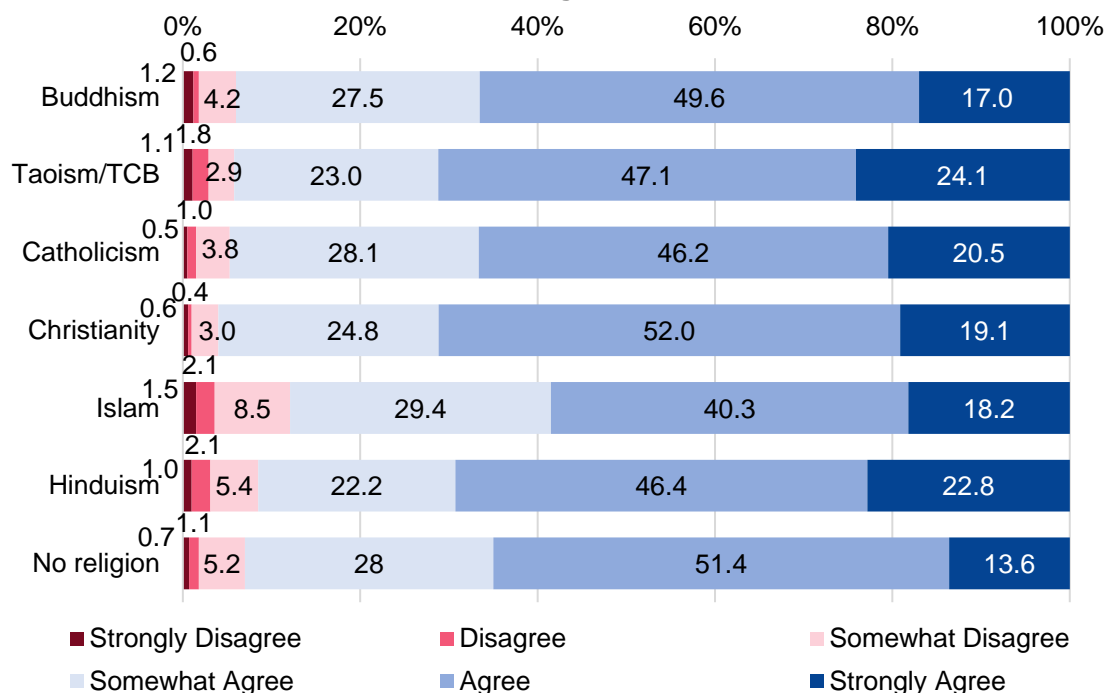
Comparing across religions, the group most likely to indicate agreement that the government has maintained a fair system for everyone was Christians, followed by Catholics, Taoists, and Buddhists. For these four groups, 94 per cent or more stated that they somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement (see Figure 4.1.5b).

Older respondents were more likely to express stronger agreement with the statement. While 49 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 agreed or strongly agreed that the government has maintained a fair system or policy for everyone, the proportion was much higher at 81.9 per cent for those older than 65 years old (see Figure 4.1.5c).

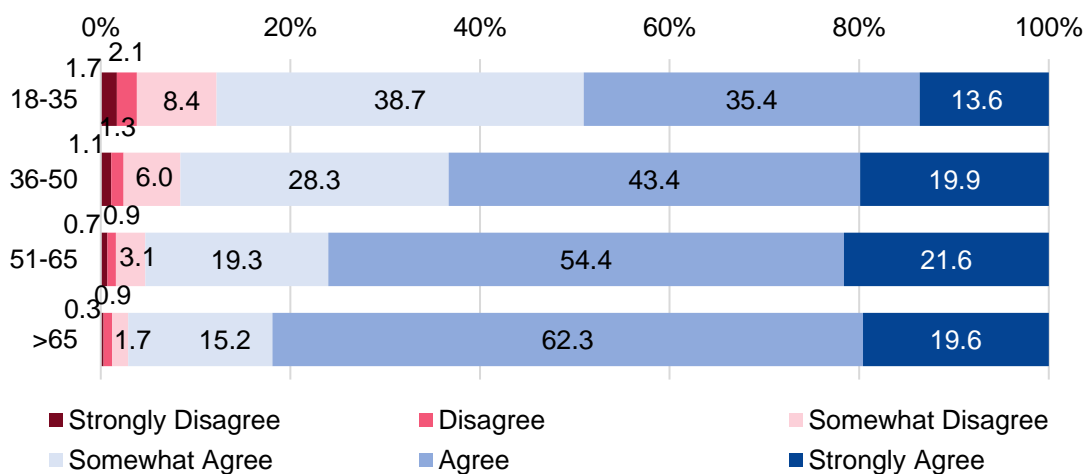
**Figure 4.1.5a: The government has maintained a fair system/policy for everyone in Singapore, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 4.1.5b: The government has maintained a fair system/policy for everyone in Singapore, 2024 responses by religion**



**Figure 4.1.5c: The government has maintained a fair system/policy for everyone in Singapore, 2024 responses by age**



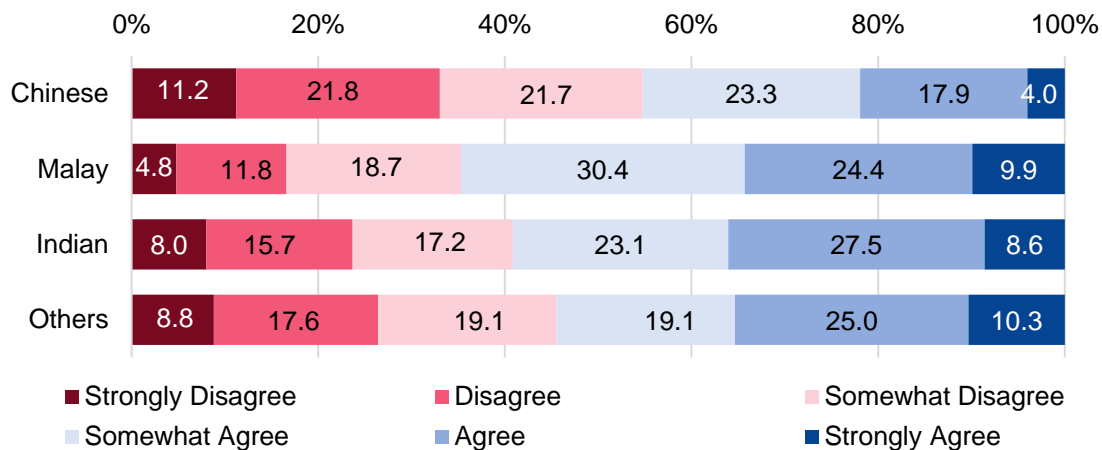
**4.1.6 Respondents who are Chinese, have no religion, or of higher SES backgrounds were less likely to agree that the government should give preferential treatment to minority groups**

When asked their opinion to the statement on whether the government should give preferential treatment to minority groups, Chinese respondents were least likely to express agreement. Compared to 64.7 per cent of Malay respondents, 59.2 per cent of Indian respondents, and 54.4 per cent of Others respondents, 45.2 per cent of Chinese respondents agreed with the statement to some extent (see Figure 4.1.6a).

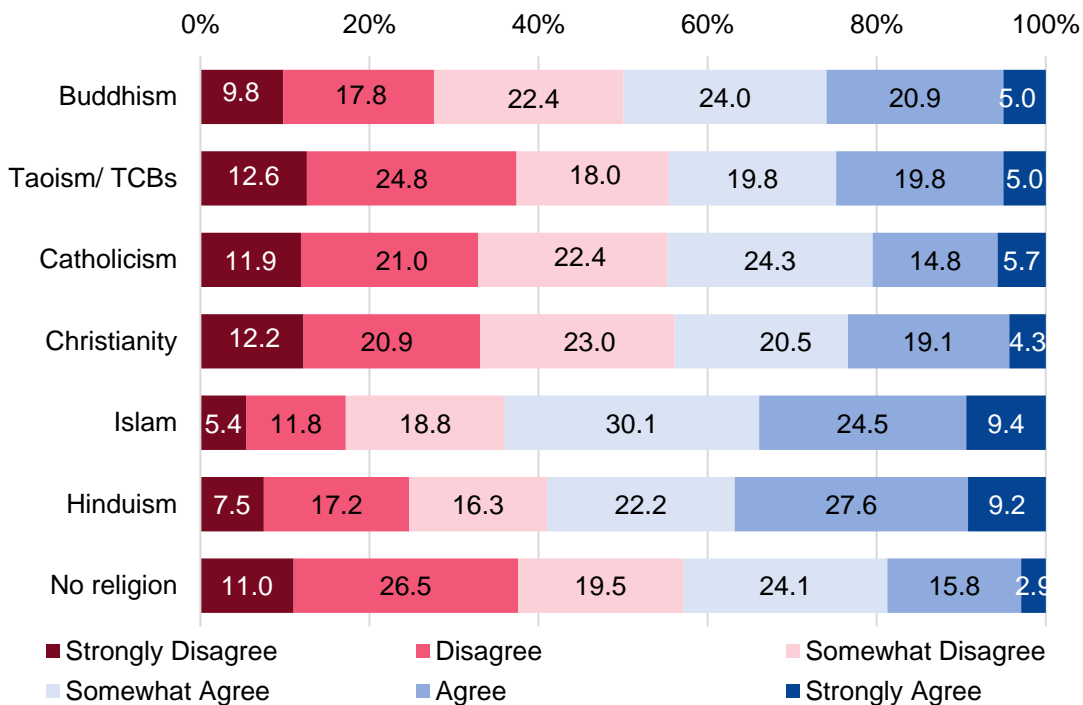
Comparing across different religious affiliations, those with no religion were least likely to agree to preferential treatment for minority groups, with just 42.8 per cent indicating agreement to some degree with the statement. Less than half of respondents who were Buddhists, Taoists, Catholics, and Christians indicated agreement with the statement,

while 59 per cent of Hindu respondents and 64 per cent of Muslim respondents did so (see Figure 4.1.6b).

**Figure 4.1.6a: The government should give preferential/special treatment to minority groups, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 4.1.6b: The government should give preferential/special treatment to minority groups, 2024 responses by religion**

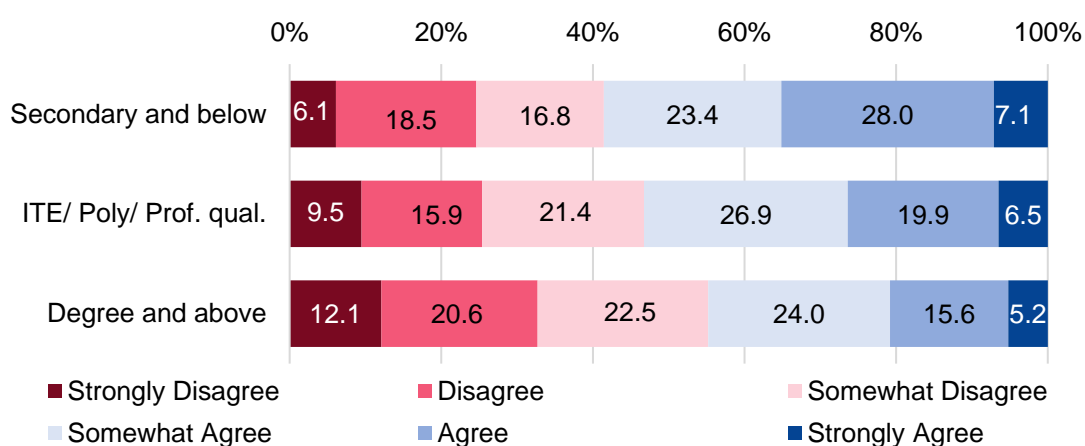


Respondents with higher education were also less likely to agree to preferential treatment of minority groups. Compared to 58.5 per cent of those with secondary and below education, 44.8 per cent of those with university degrees somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement (see Figure 4.1.6c).

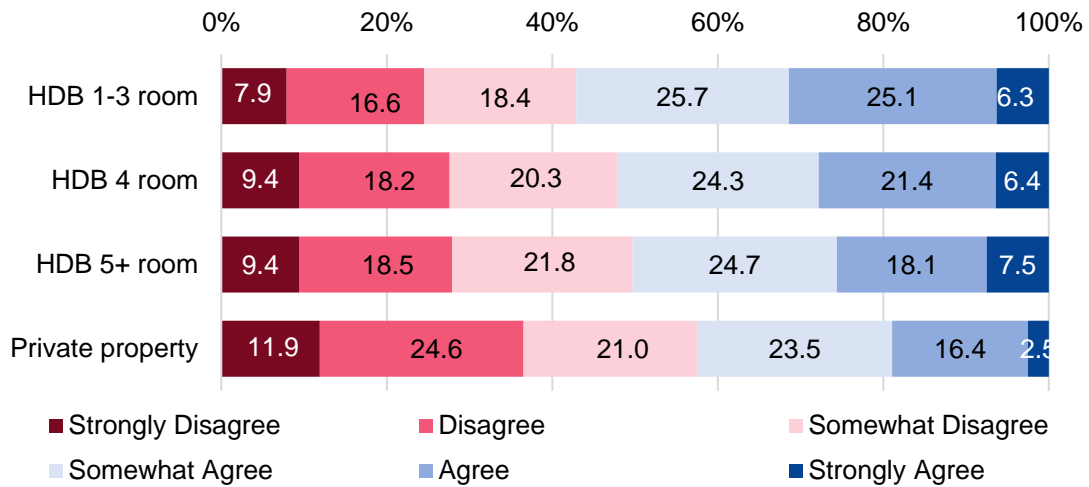
Respondents residing in larger housing types were also less likely to indicate agreement to preferential treatment. While 57.1 per cent of those living in 1- to 3-room flats said they agreed with the statement to some extent, the proportion dropped to 42.4 per cent for those staying in private properties (see Figure 4.1.6d).

Those with higher incomes were also less likely to express agreement. For those earning \$7,000 or more, 41.8 per cent agreed to some extent that the government should give preferential treatment to minority groups. In comparison, 59 per cent of those earning below \$2,000 expressed the same sentiments (see Figure 4.1.6e).

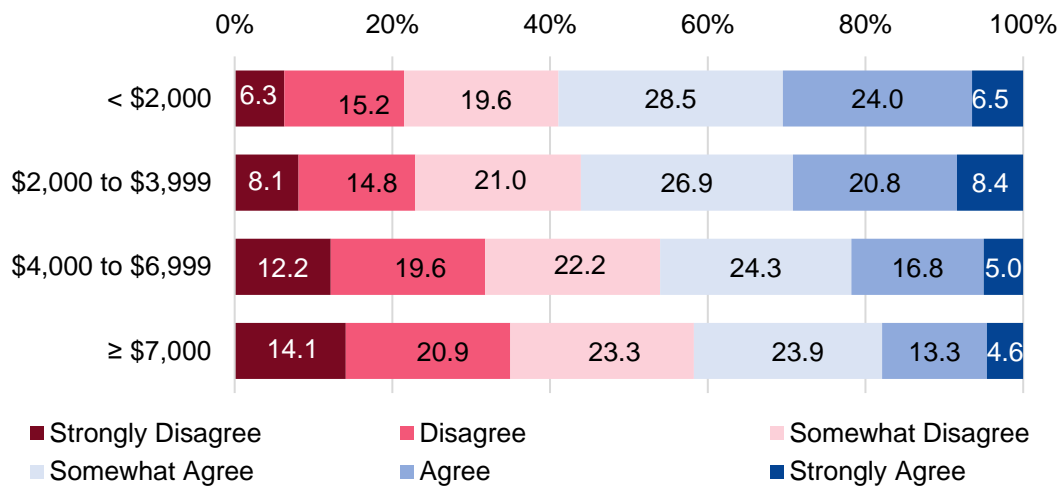
**Figure 4.1.6c: The government should give preferential/special treatment to minority groups, 2024 responses by education**



**Figure 4.1.6d: The government should give preferential/special treatment to minority groups, 2024 responses by housing**



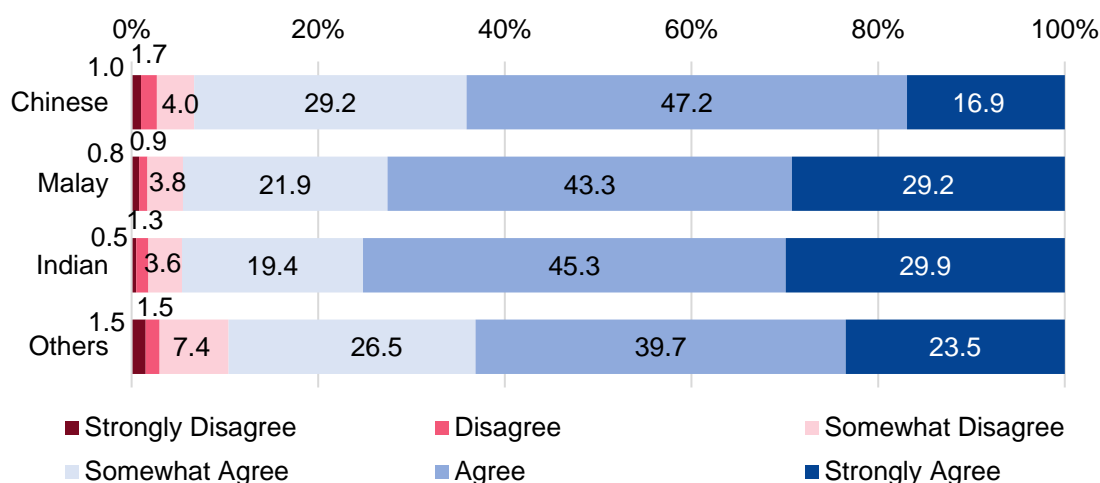
**Figure 4.1.6e: The government should give preferential/special treatment to minority groups, 2024 responses by income**



#### 4.1.7 Indian and Malay respondents were more strongly in favour of the government helping all R&R groups preserve and maintain their traditions and customs

While around nine in 10 of each racial group agreed to some extent that the government should help all religious and racial groups preserve and maintain their traditions and customs, there were some differences when comparing the proportions who agree or strongly agree. Indian and Malay respondents were more likely to express agreement or strong agreement with the statement, with around three-quarters indicating so. In comparison, 64.1 per cent of Chinese respondents, 72.5 per cent of Malay respondents, and 63.2 per cent of Others respondents said the same (see Figure 4.1.7).

**Figure 4.1.7: The government should help all religious and racial groups preserve and maintain their traditions and customs, 2024 responses by race**





## 4.2 Importance of Race-Based Policies

### ***4.2.1 Over nine in 10 respondents support having a racial mix in housing estates and providing culturally sensitive help for the less well-off in both 2018 and 2024; eight in 10 agreed to varying extents that it is important in immigration policy to maintain the racial make-up of the Singapore population, and for proportional representation of minorities in Parliament***

There are several race-related policies and programmes in Singapore designed to ensure racial harmony and preserve multiracialism here. These include the Ethnic Integration Programme, the CMIO racial categorisation system, Ethnic-based Self-Help Groups and the Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs). Discussion of how the population views a range of these and other policies which maintain racial and religious harmony can be found in a separate publication<sup>10</sup>).

In the 2018 and 2024 waves, rather than asking respondents about these policies directly, respondents were asked about various policy outcomes such as the maintenance of racial proportions in the population, racial diversity in neighbourhoods and representation of the races in Parliament. In general, support for each statement that represented policy outcomes to ensure racial harmony, was quite high. In particular, over nine in 10 respondents in both waves felt that it is important to have a racial mix in each housing estate (currently enabled through the Ethnic Integration

---

<sup>10</sup> Mathew, M., Teo, K. K., and Nah, S. (2022). Attitudes, Actions and Aspirations: Key Findings from the CNA-IPS Survey on Race Relations 2021. *IPS Exchange Series no. 22*, April 2022. Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore. <https://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/docs/default-source/ips/ips-exchange-series-22.pdf>

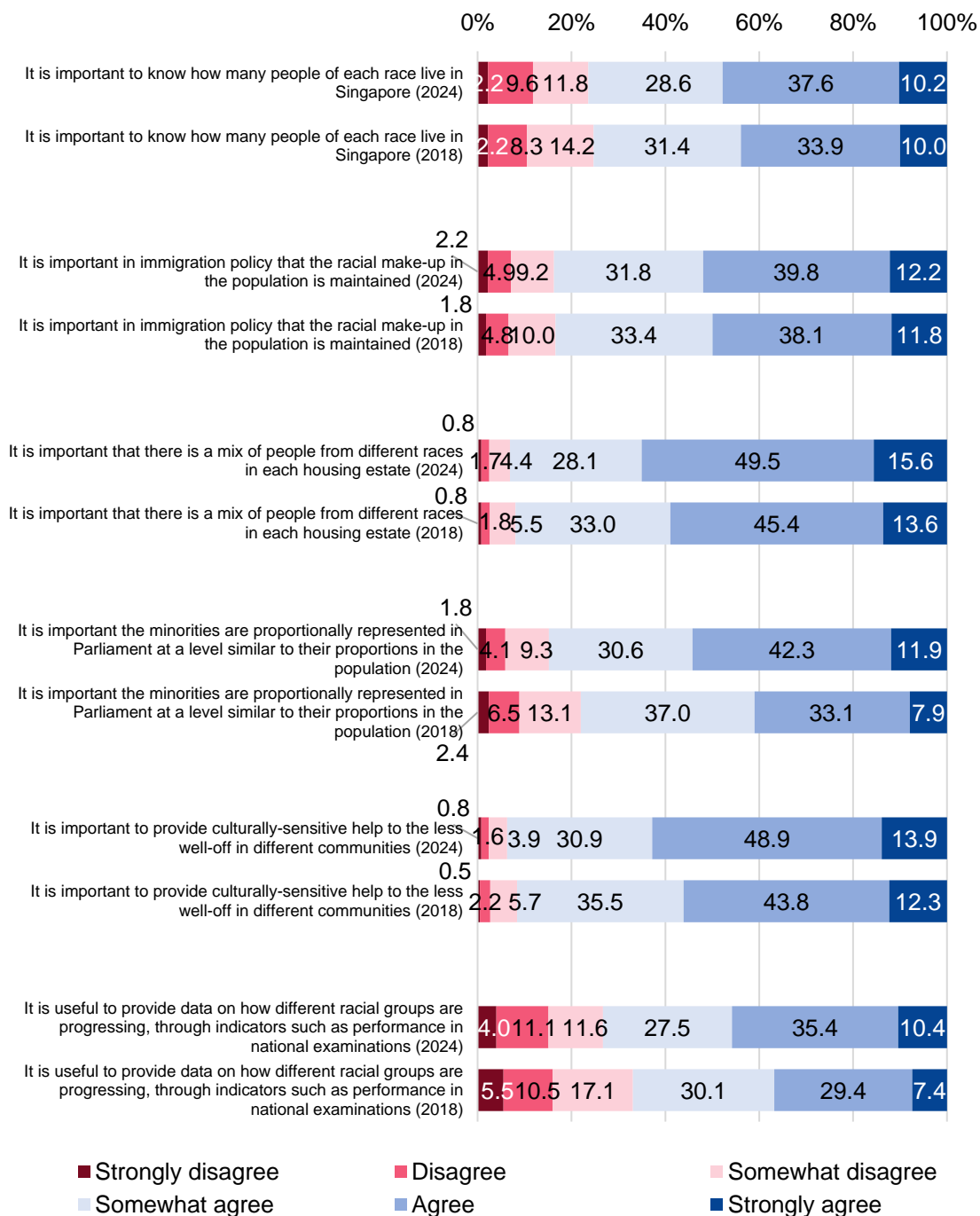
Programme), and to provide culturally sensitive help to the less well-off in different communities (as managed currently through the Ethnic Self-Help Groups).

In addition, over eight in 10 respondents in both waves (83.3 per cent in 2018; 83.8 per cent in 2024) said that it is important in immigration policy to maintain the racial make-up in the population (made possible through maintaining the CMIO system of racial classification). Three-quarters of respondents in both waves agreed that it is important to know how many people of each race live in Singapore.

Some differences were observed across waves for two of the statements. While 78 per cent in 2018 said that having proportional representation of minorities in Parliament is important (currently guaranteed through the GRC system), the proportion increased to 84.8 per cent in 2024. There was also a higher proportion who agreed that it is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing – compared to 66.9 per cent in 2018, 73.3 per cent agreed to this statement to different extents in 2024.

No strong demographic differences were found in responses with regard to knowing the numbers of each racial group living in Singapore and having a racial mix in housing estates. This suggests an overall consensus on these aspects of race-based policies (see Figure 4.2.1).

**Figure 4.2.1: How much do you agree with the following statements?, responses by wave\***



\*Items not asked in 2013.

#### ***4.2.2 Older respondents were more likely to agree that maintaining the racial make-up in the population is important for immigration policy***

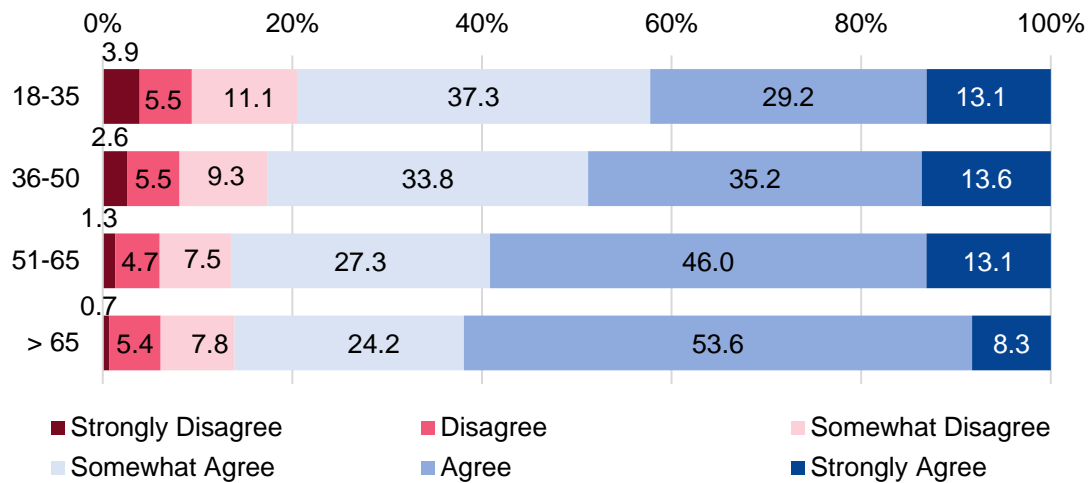
Some age differences were found in sentiments regarding immigration policy, with older respondents more likely to think that maintaining the racial make-up is important. This was expressed by around 86 per cent of those older than 50 years old, compared to 82.6 per cent of those aged 36 to 50 years old and 79.6 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old (see Figure 4.2.2).

#### ***4.2.3 Respondents of different races and age groups view proportional representation of minorities in Parliament somewhat differently***

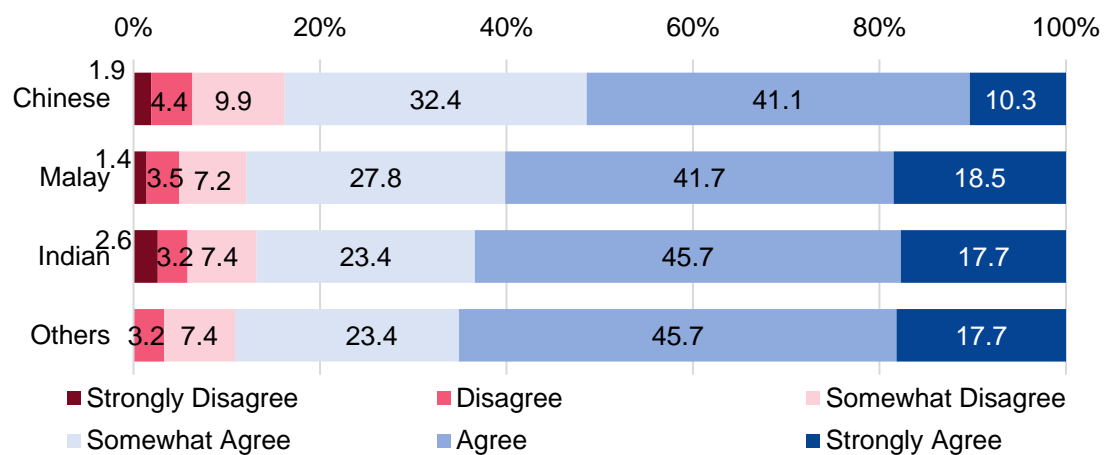
Chinese respondents were slightly less likely to agree that it is important to have a proportional representation of minorities in Parliament. Compared to over 86 per cent of minority-race respondents, 83.8 per cent of Chinese respondents said somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed that it is important for proportional representation of minorities in Parliament (see Figure 4.2.3a).

Respondents in the youngest age cohort were most likely to strongly agree that proportional representation of minorities in Parliament is important – compared to 7.7 per cent of those older than 65 years old, 17.7 per cent of the youngest respondents expressed strong agreement with the statement. When looking at overall agreement rates, however, the oldest group (87.7 per cent) was the most likely to say they agree with the statement, with the youngest cohort following close behind at 86 per cent (see Figure 4.2.3b).

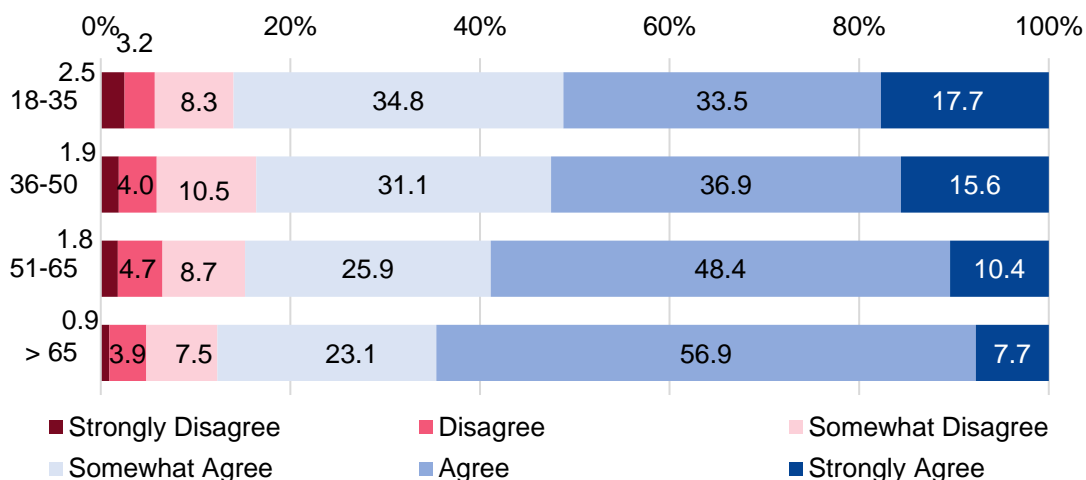
**Figure 4.2.2: It is important in immigration policy that the racial make-up in the population is maintained, 2024 responses by age**



**Figure 4.2.3a: It is important that minorities are proportionally represented in Parliament at a level similar to their proportions in the population, 2024 responses by race**



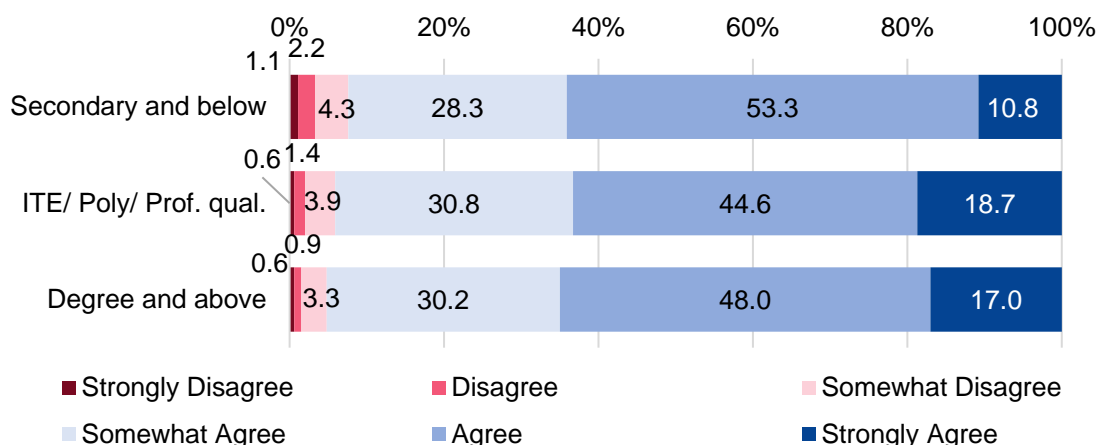
**Figure 4.2.3b: It is important that minorities are proportionally represented in Parliament at a level similar to their proportions in the population, 2024 responses by age**



**4.2.4 Over nine in 10 agree that culturally sensitive help is important, but respondents with secondary and below education least likely to strongly agree**

Over 92 per cent of respondents across different educational backgrounds agree that it is important to provide culturally-sensitive help to the less well-off in different communities. However, a smaller proportion of those with secondary and below education expressed strong agreement to the statement – compared to 17 per cent or more of those with ITE or higher qualifications, 10.8 per cent of those with secondary and below education selected this option (see Figure 4.2.4).

**Figure 4.2.4: It is important to provide culturally-sensitive help to the less well-off in different communities, 2024 responses by education**

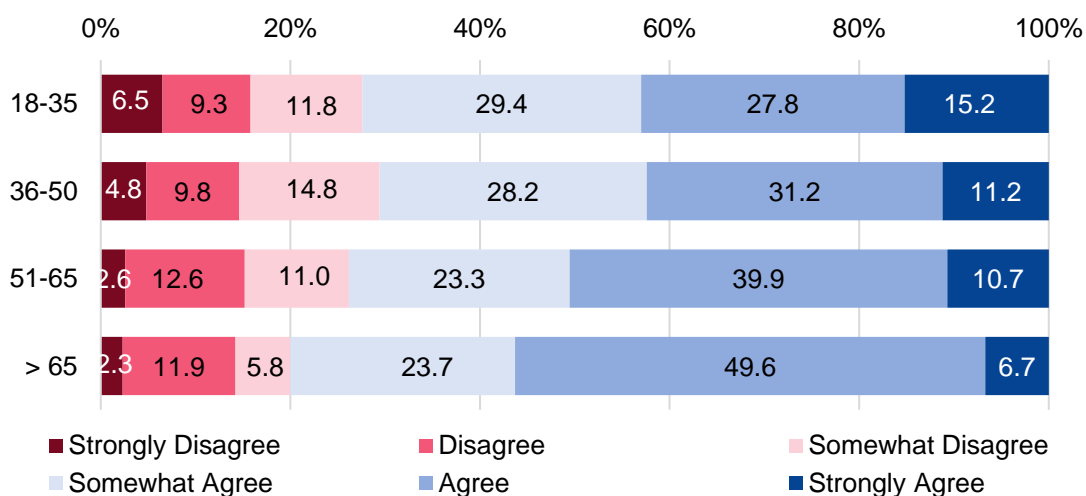


#### ***4.2.5 Older or lower-SES respondents were more likely to agree that data on the progress of different racial groups' progress is useful***

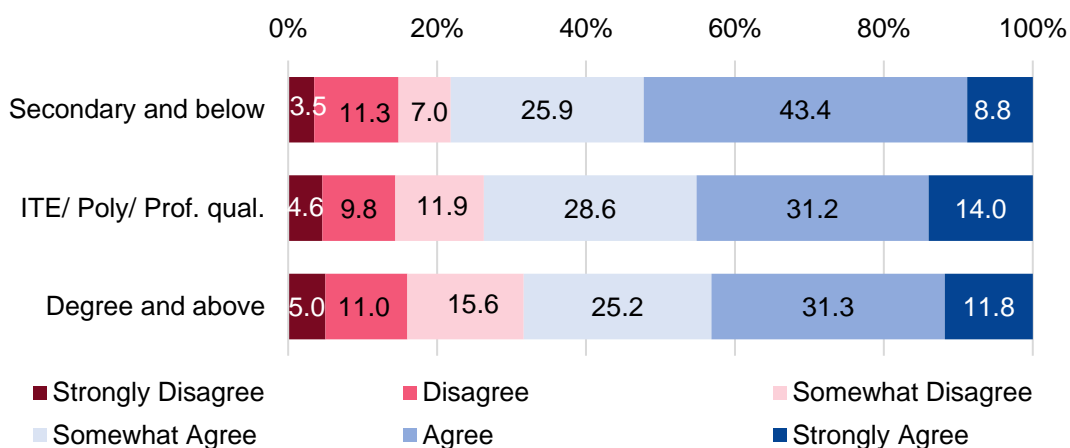
Respondents belonging to the oldest age cohort were most likely to express agreement that data on how different racial groups are progressing is useful (an outcome made possible currently because of CMIO racial categorisation). Compared to 73.9 per cent of those aged 51 to 65 years old, 72.4 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old, and 70.6 per cent of those aged 36 to 50 years old, 80 per cent of the oldest cohort agreed with the statement (see Figure 4.2.5a).

There were some educational differences in sentiments as well. Respondents with higher education were less likely to agree to this statement – while 78.1 per cent of respondents with secondary and below education agreed to the statement to varying extents, the proportion decreased to 68.3 per cent for those with university education (see Figure 4.2.5b).

**Figure 4.2.5a: It is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing, through indicators such as performance in national examinations, 2024 responses by age**



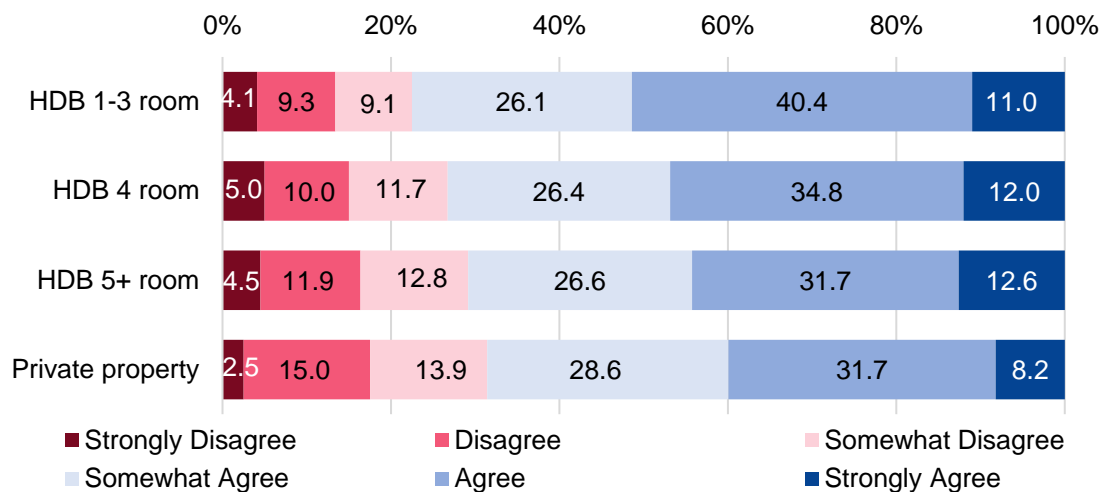
**Figure 4.2.5b: It is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing, through indicators such as performance in national examinations, 2024 responses by education**



Respondents staying in smaller housing types were more likely to agree that it is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing. While 68.5 per cent of private property dwellers agree that it is useful, 77.5 per cent of those staying in 1- to 3-room flats said the same (see Figure 4.2.5c).

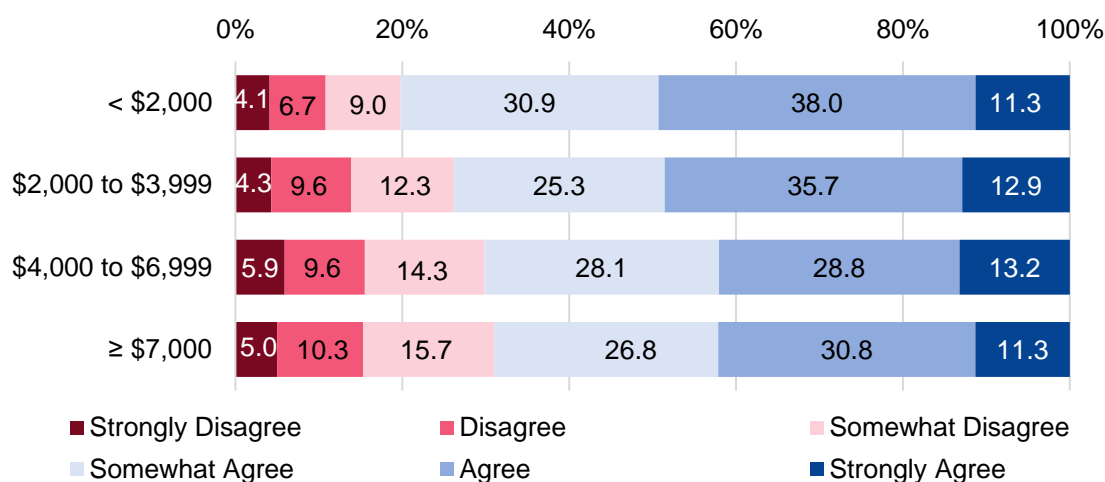


**Figure 4.2.5c: It is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing, through indicators such as performance in national examinations, 2024 responses by housing**



Respondents earning below \$2,000 were more likely to say that it is useful to provide data on the progress of the different racial groups, with 80.2 per cent indicating so. In comparison, 68.9 per cent of those earning \$7,000 or more said the same (see Figure 4.2.5d).

**Figure 4.2.5d: It is useful to provide data on how different racial groups are progressing, through indicators such as performance in national examinations, 2024 responses by income**



### 4.3 Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others (CMIO) Framework

#### ***4.3.1 Less than one in 10 respondents want to remove the CMIO framework; close to six in 10 support keeping the CMIO as-is and this proportion has increased since 2018; about one-third preferred to expand the CMIO framework to become more inclusive***

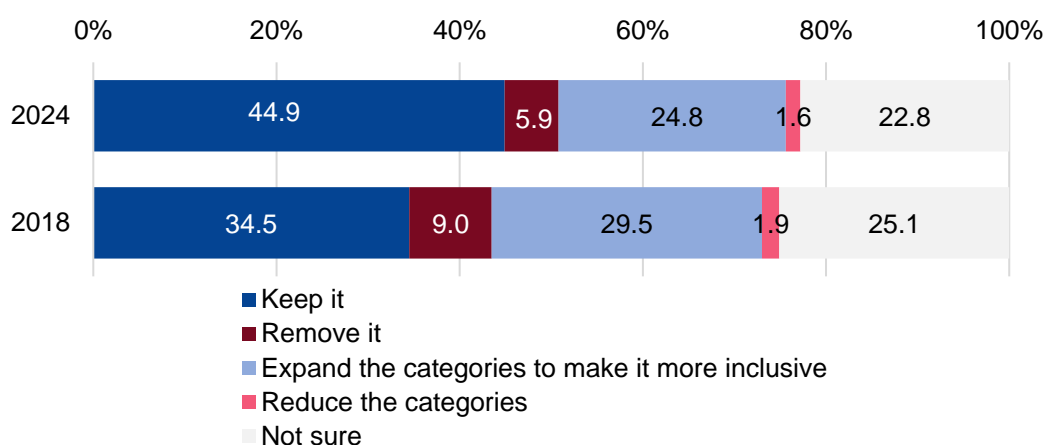
In the 2018 and 2024 waves, respondents were queried for their sentiments regarding the CMIO framework governing race-related policies. Respondents were informed in a preceding question in the survey that “All Singaporeans are classified into Chinese, Malays, Indians or Others (CMIO) and that. some feel this classification framework should be removed.”

They were then asked the direct question “Do you think we should keep, remove, or change the CMIO framework?” The options provided were to “keep it”, “remove it”

“expand the categories to make it more inclusive (for instance to include mixed races)”, “reduce it” or “not sure”.

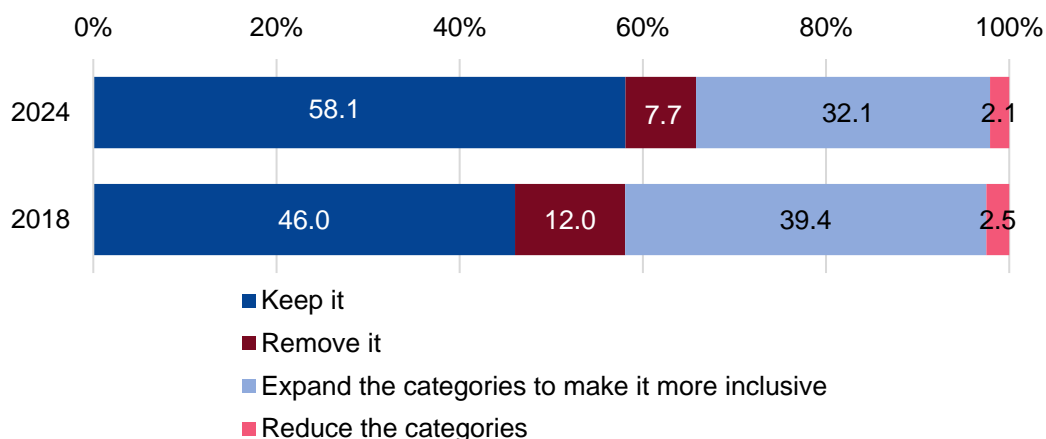
In order to make sense of the responses from those who had an opinion about the matter, we removed those who said they were “not sure” from the analysis (see Figure 4.3.1a for the results which include those who are not sure). Among those who had an opinion on the framework, responses differed somewhat across the two waves. While 12 per cent wanted the CMIO framework to be removed in 2018, this had come down to 7.7 per cent in 2024. Currently, more want to keep the framework, with nearly six in 10 (58.1 per cent) choosing this option up from 46.2 per cent in 2018. There was also a significant portion (32.1 per cent) in 2024 who wanted the CMIO framework to be expanded to be more inclusive, but this had come down from 39.4 per cent in 2018 (see Figure 4.3.1b).

**Figure 4.3.1a: Do you think we should keep, remove, or change the CMIO framework?, responses by wave\***



\*Item not asked in 2013.

**Figure 4.3.1b: Do you think we should keep, remove, or change the CMIO framework?, responses by wave\*^**



*\*Item not asked in 2013. ^Responses for "not sure" removed*

#### **4.3.2 Younger and those classified as "Others" were more keen to support expanding the CMIO categories**

We further examined the profile of respondents who chose the option "Expand the categories to make it more inclusive". Across racial groups, respondents who belong to the "Others" category were the most likely to select this option compared to the others. Compared to under four in ten Chinese, Malay, and Indian respondents, 46.4 per cent of Others respondents selected this option.

There was also a clear age trend in how likely respondents were to select this option. While just 12.6 per cent of those aged above 65 years old felt that this should be the case, the proportion increased to 51.6 per cent for the cohort aged 18 to 35 years old.

**Table 4.3.2: Proportion of respondents who chose “Expand the categories”, by race and age<sup>^</sup>**

Demographic variable	% Selected “Expand the categories to make it more inclusive”			
	<b>Race</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Malay</b>	<b>Indian</b>
	31.6%	38.4%	32.9%	46.4%
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-35</b>	<b>36-50</b>	<b>51-65</b>	<b>&gt; 65</b>
	51.6%	37.3%	25.0%	12.6%

<sup>^</sup>Responses for “not sure” removed

## 5. CITIZEN ACTIONS AND ACTIVISM

In this chapter, we examine responses to survey items pertaining to what respondents believed was appropriate to do in the face of infractions involving race and religious sensitivities. The chapter spotlights some of what is referred to as the “call-out culture” or “cancel culture”, which can be loosely defined as the phenomenon where individuals or groups are collectively ostracised, boycotted, or subjected to social and professional consequences for behaviours, statements, or affiliations deemed offensive or objectionable by a significant portion of society. We queried respondents’ acceptance of various responses, after a hypothetical scenario involving their reading a social media post about an incident regarding a taxi driver who made racist comments to a passenger.

The majority of respondents found it completely acceptable, moderately acceptable, or acceptable to do nothing in response to a social media post regarding a racist incident, while half of the respondents found it acceptable to various extents to point out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post. In general, confrontational means, such as starting online petitions calling for the termination of the taxi driver’s employment, or finding out the taxi driver’s personal details and releasing them online, were considered to be less acceptable.

Nonetheless, our study revealed that younger respondents were more likely to use online platforms for collective action, such as pointing out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post, sharing the social media post on their own platforms and criticise the driver, or starting online petitions to call for the taxi driver’s termination.

In addition, we sought to understand the level of satisfaction that people have with the way issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore over the past few years, and gauge the range of actions people are willing or unwilling to take to address their dissatisfaction. Willingness to take action to improve the way issues regarding R&R are handled can reflect broader societal norms. A high willingness across a population might indicate a shift towards greater social responsibility and collective action, which can potentially create momentum for social change.

We found that the majority of the respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the way issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore over the past few years, although younger respondents and racial minorities were less likely to feel this way. Out of the few respondents (2.8 per cent) who reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way issues regarding R&R have been handled, we observed that having conversations within their social networks (i.e., family, close friends, classmates or colleagues) was the most popular option to improve the status quo.

## **5.1 Acceptability of Responses to Social Media Post**

### ***5.1.1 Seven in 10 respondents found it completely acceptable, moderately acceptable, or acceptable to do nothing in response to a social media post regarding a racist incident***

Survey respondents were queried on their acceptance of various responses to a hypothetical scenario. The latter involved reading a social media post about an incident regarding a taxi driver who made racist comments to a passenger. Majority of the respondents (70.3 per cent) found it completely acceptable, moderately acceptable, or

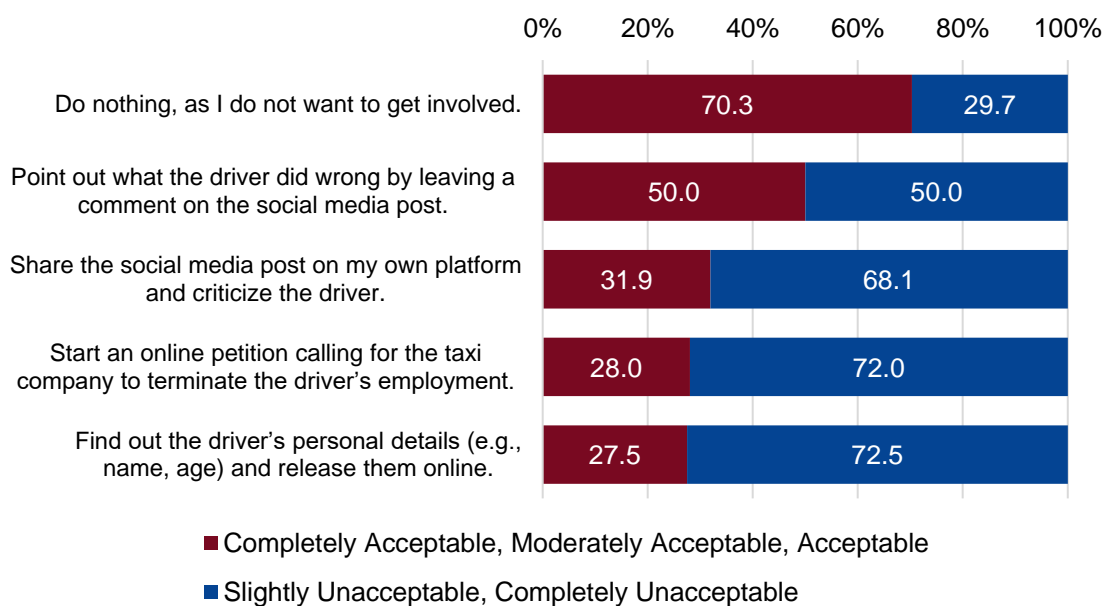
acceptable to do nothing, for they do not want to get involved (see Figure 5.1.1). These respondents may find doing nothing to be acceptable for various reasons – some may feel that their response will not make a meaningful difference in addressing racism, while others may not personally identify with the victim or the context of the incident and therefore may feel less compelled to respond.

Half of the respondents (50 per cent) found it acceptable to various extents to point out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post, while about three in 10 respondents would share the social media post on their own platforms and criticise the driver (31.9 per cent).

Doxxing and petitions can be ways to bring attention to a particular issue, especially if individuals believe that public awareness is necessary to prompt change, or if they feel a strong sense of moral outrage in response to the issue. While these options were perceived as slightly unacceptable or completely unacceptable by most respondents, almost three in 10 respondents (28 per cent) found it acceptable to “cancel” the driver by starting an online petition calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver’s employment, and 27.5 per cent of them found it acceptable to dox the driver by finding out and releasing the driver’s personal details online.



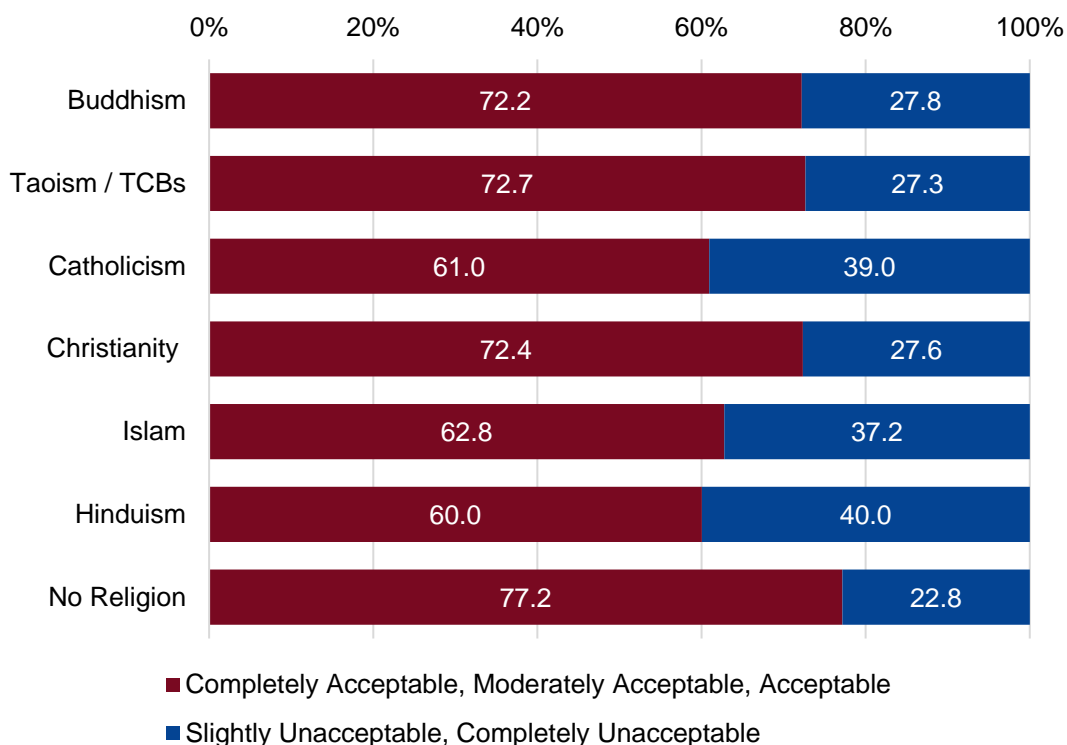
**Figure 5.1.1: Suppose you read a social media post about an incident regarding a taxi driver who made racist comments to a passenger. How acceptable do you think it is to respond in the following ways, 2024 responses**



**5.1.2 Compared to other religious groups, Muslim, Hindu and Catholic respondents were more likely to find it unacceptable to varying degrees to do nothing in response to a social media post regarding a racist incident**

When analysing the data by religion, we found that close to four in 10 Muslim (37.2 per cent), Hindu (40 per cent) and Catholic (39 per cent) respondents found it slightly unacceptable or completely unacceptable to do nothing in response to a social media post regarding a racist incident. In comparison, under three in 10 Buddhist (27.8 per cent), Taoist (27.3 per cent) and Christian (27.6 per cent) respondents felt the same way. Respondents who are non-religious are the least likely to think that it was slightly unacceptable or completely unacceptable to do nothing in response to a social media post regarding a racist incident (see Figure 5.1.2).

**Figure 5.1.2: Do nothing, as I do not want to get involved, 2024 responses by religion**



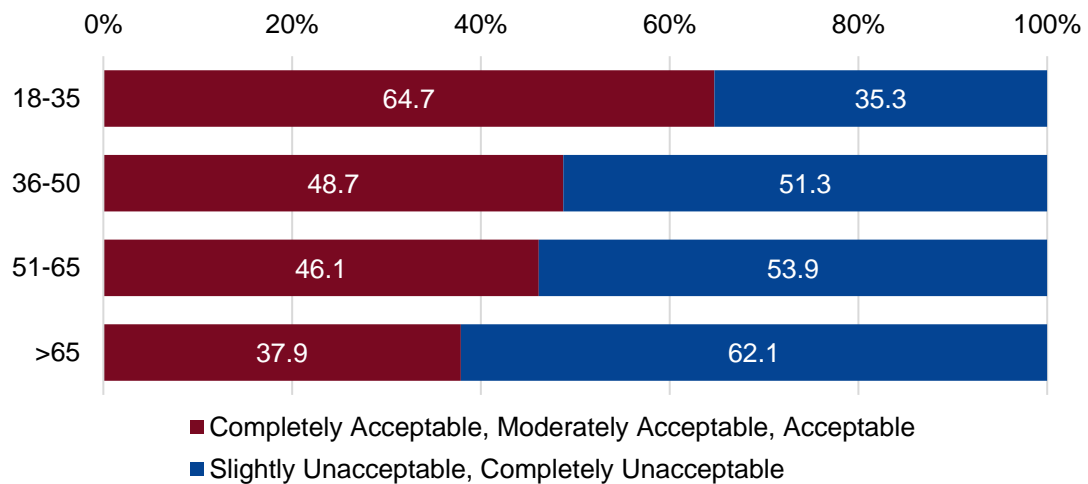
**5.1.3 Younger respondents were most likely to point out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post, as well as share the social media post on their own platforms and criticise the driver**

While less than half of respondents aged 36 – 50 (48.7 per cent) and respondents aged 51 – 65 (46.1 per cent), and slightly less than four in 10 respondents above 65 years old (37.9 per cent) found it acceptable in varying extents to point out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post, nearly two-thirds of respondents aged 18 – 35 (64.7 per cent) shared such beliefs (see Figure 5.1.3a).

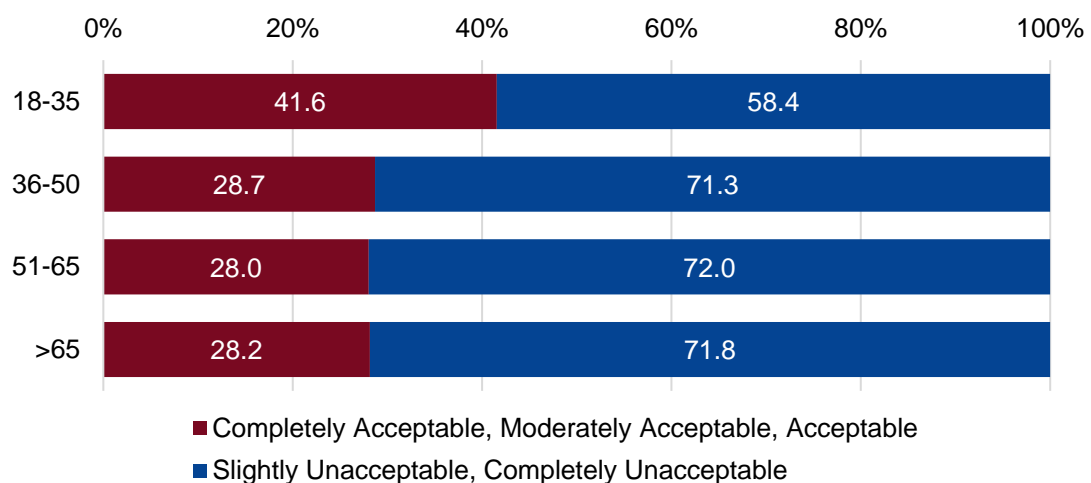
In addition, over four in 10 respondents aged 18 – 35 (41.6 per cent) thought it was appropriate to share the social media post on their own platforms and criticise the

driver, while only about three in 10 respondents aged 36 – 50 (28.7 per cent), 51 – 65 (28 per cent), and above 65 (28.2 per cent) voiced similar feelings (see Figure 5.1.3b).

**Figure 5.1.3a: Point out what the driver did wrong by leaving a comment on the social media post, 2024 responses by age**



**Figure 5.1.3b: Share the social media post on my own platform and criticise the driver, 2024 responses by age**

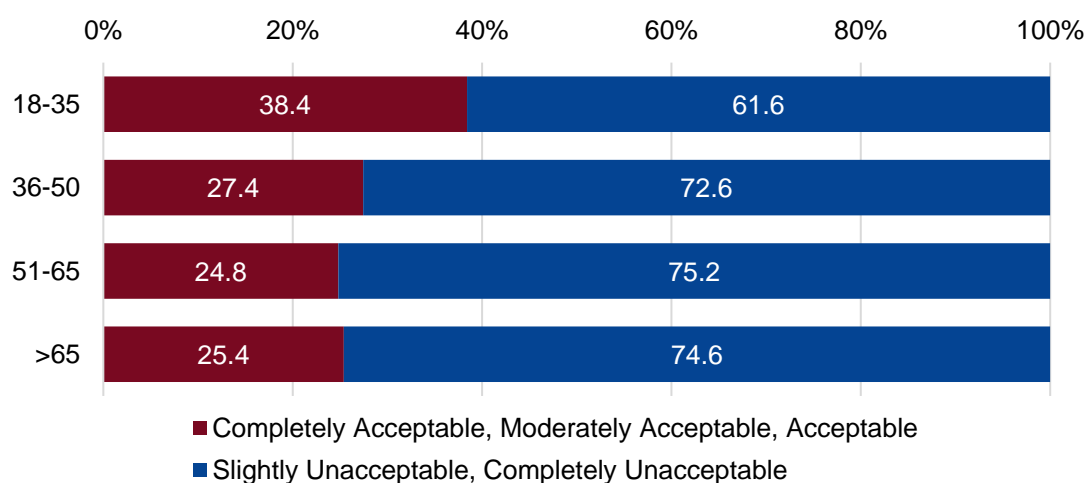


#### 5.1.4 Younger respondents were most likely to find starting online petitions calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver's employment acceptable

Online petitions provide an easy way to rally like-minded individuals and create a sense of community around a cause, reinforcing collective action. Similar to the above finding, we also found that although the majority of respondents thought starting online petitions calling for someone's job termination was unacceptable to varying extents, younger respondents were more likely to find starting online petitions calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver's employment within reason.

While close to four in 10 respondents aged 18 to 35 (38.4 per cent) thought it was acceptable to do this under three in 10 respondents aged 36 to 50 (27.4 per cent), 51 to 65 (24.8 per cent), and above 65 years of age (25.4 per cent) expressed such opinions (see Figure 5.1.4).

**Figure 5.1.4: Start an online petition calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver's employment, 2024 responses by age**

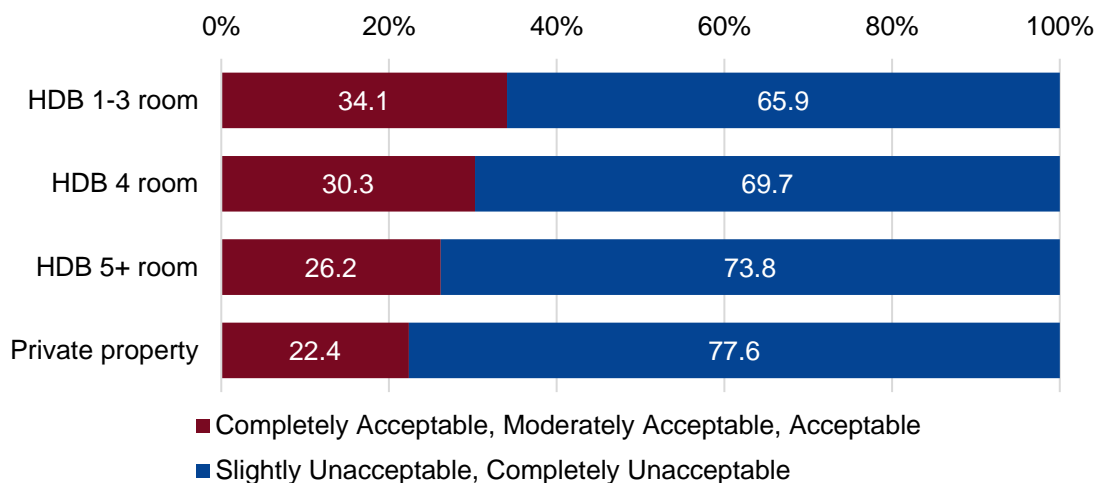


**5.1.5 In response to the social media post about an incident regarding a taxi driver who made racist comments to a passenger, more affluent respondents were less likely to find doxxing behaviours or online petitions acceptable**

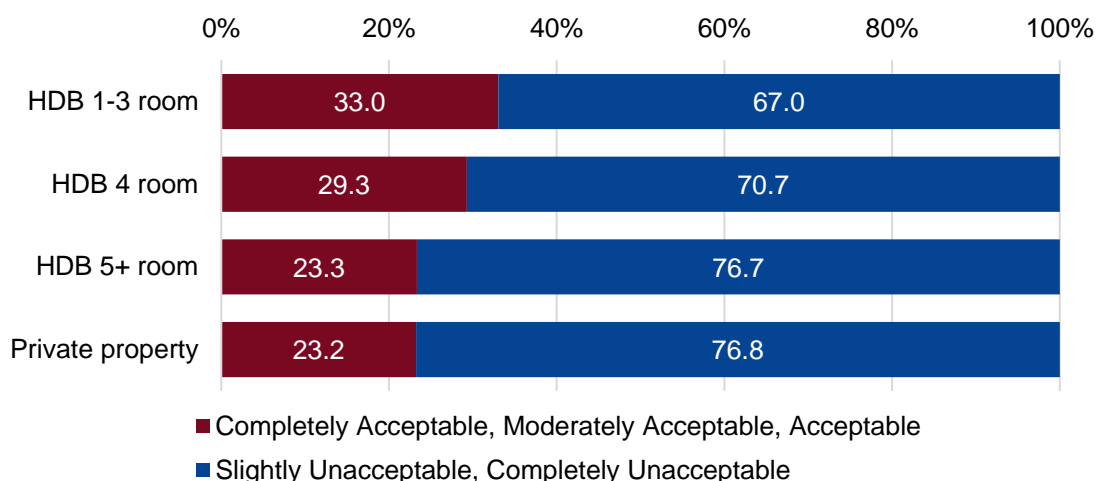
Using housing type as a proxy variable for affluence, we observed that as the affluence of respondents increased, the likelihood of them thinking that doxxing behaviours or online petitions were acceptable in response to the social media post scenario, decreased.

Private property dwellers were least likely to find that starting an online petition calling the termination of the taxi driver's employment, or finding out the driver's personal details and releasing them online was acceptable to varying extents, with only 22.4 per cent of them thinking that about starting online petitions and 23.2 per cent of them indicating likewise about doxxing behaviours. In comparison, we see that respondents who reside in HDB 1- to 3-room flats were most likely to find starting an online petition (34.1 per cent) and doxxing the taxi driver (33 per cent) acceptable in varying degrees (see Figures 5.1.5a and Figure 5.1.5b).

**Figure 5.1.5a: Start an online petition calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver's employment, 2024 responses by housing type**



**Figure 5.1.5b: Find out the driver's personal details (e.g., name, age) and release them online, 2024 responses by housing type**

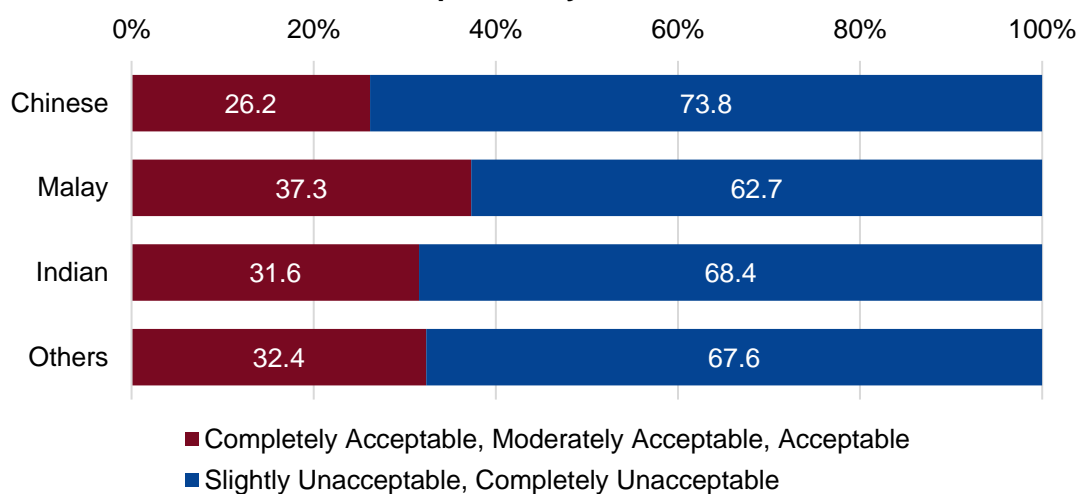


**5.1.6 Compared to other racial groups, Chinese respondents were less likely to find doxxing behaviours or starting online petitions calling someone's job termination fitting responses**

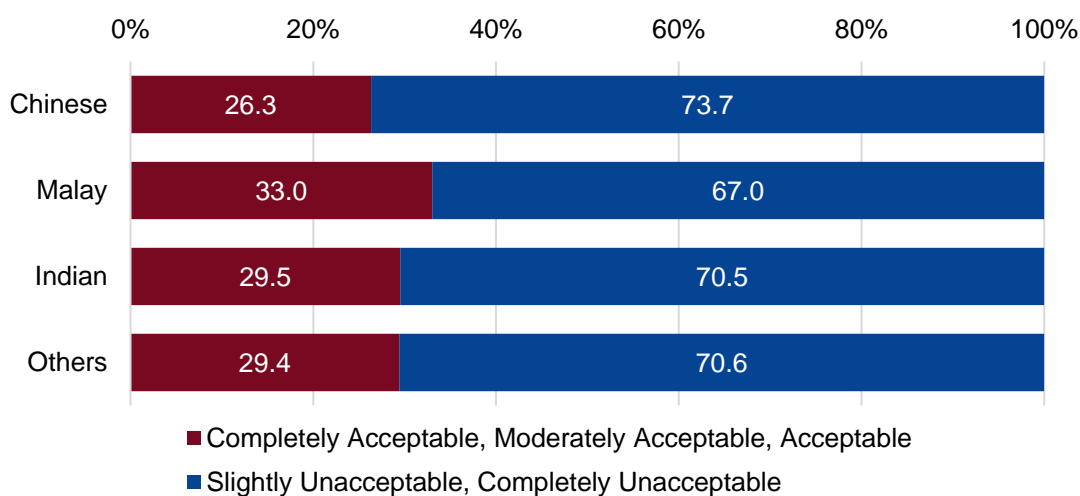
Chinese respondents were less likely to find launching online petitions advocating for the termination of someone's employment, or obtaining the driver's personal

information and publishing it online, acceptable to varying extents. For instance, while 26.2 per cent of Chinese respondents found it completely acceptable, moderately acceptable, or acceptable to start an online petition, 37.3 per cent of Malay respondents felt the same way (see Figures 5.1.6a and 5.1.6b).

**Figure 5.1.6a: Start an online petition calling for the taxi company to terminate the driver's employment, 2024 responses by race**



**Figure 5.1.6b: Find out the driver's personal details (e.g., name, age) and release them online, 2024 responses by race**

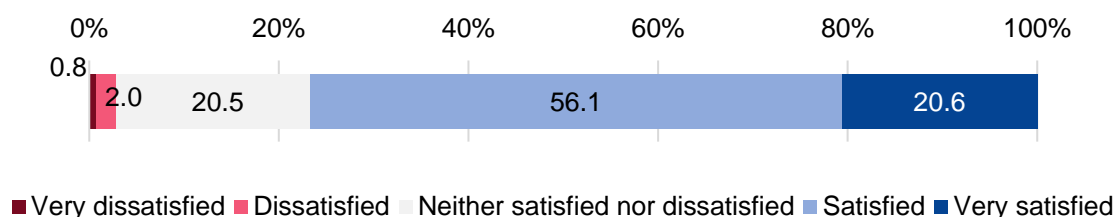


## 5.2 Satisfaction with Handling of Race and Religious Issues

### 5.2.1 Over three-quarters of respondents express satisfaction with how issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore

In the 2024 wave, respondents were asked a summative question about how satisfied they were with the way issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore over the past few years. Over three-quarters indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied – specifically, 56.1 per cent said that they were satisfied and 20.6 per cent said they were very satisfied. Meanwhile, 20.5 per cent indicated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, leaving just 2.8 per cent indicating dissatisfaction to some extent (see Figure 5.2.1).

**Figure 5.2.1: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore over the past few years? (2024)**





### ***5.2.2 Respondents who are Chinese, Taoists, older, lower-educated, or earn higher income expressed higher satisfaction with Singapore's management of R&R issues***

Some demographic differences were found in how satisfied respondents were with the way issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore. Chinese respondents were most likely to say they were satisfied or very satisfied – compared with 64.2 per cent of Malay respondents, 72.7 per cent of Indian respondents, and 67.6 per cent of Others respondents, 78.9 per cent of Chinese respondents said they were satisfied to some extent with Singapore's management of these issues (see Figure 5.2.2a).

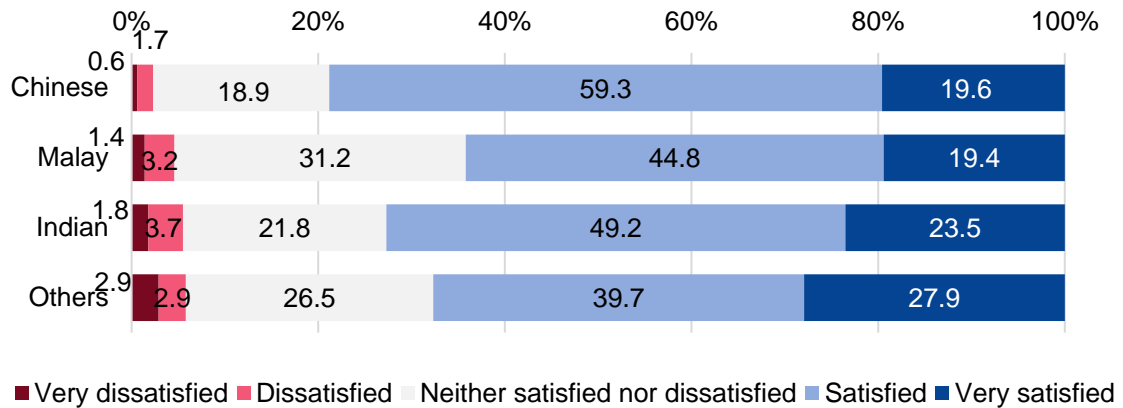
Compared across religions, Taoists, followed by Buddhists and Christians, were more likely to indicate that they were satisfied or very satisfied with how issues related to R&R have been handled in Singapore (see Figure 5.2.2b).

There was also a clear trend when responses were compared across age groups. Older respondents were much more likely to say they were satisfied or very satisfied with Singapore's management of R&R issues with 90.2 per cent older than 65 years old stating this compared to 57.3 per cent of those aged 18 to 35 years old. More than a third (36.6 per cent) of the youngest group chose the neutral option of "Neither satisfied or dissatisfied" (see Figure 5.2.2c).

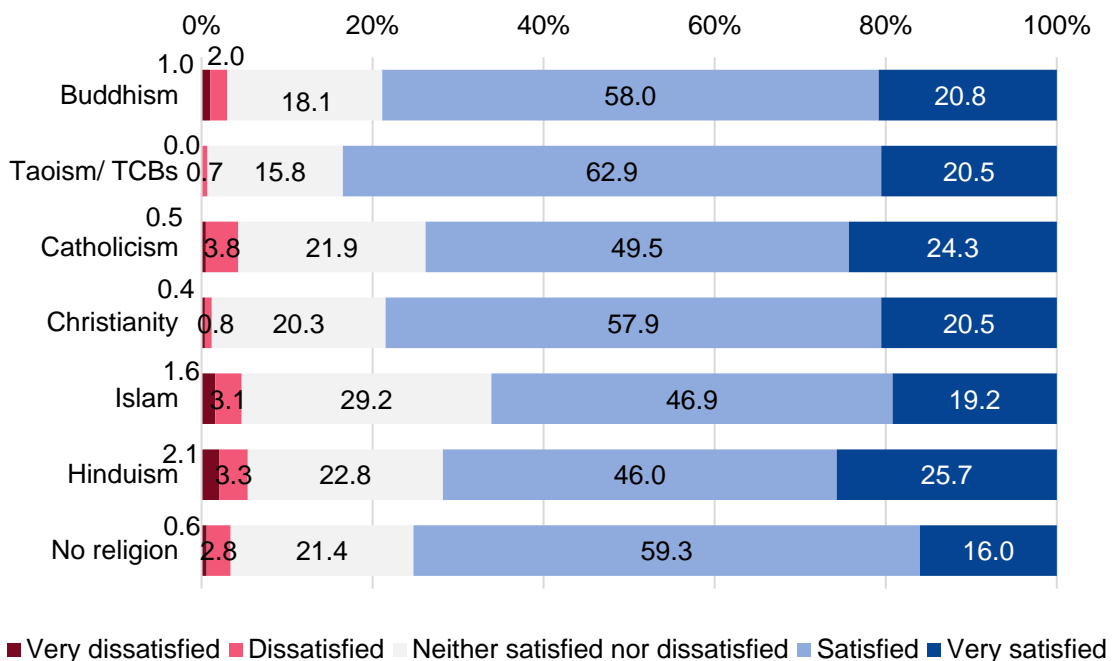
Respondents with secondary and below education were more likely to say they were satisfied or very satisfied with how R&R issues have been handled in Singapore. Compared to 69.4 per cent of respondents with ITE, polytechnic or professional qualifications as well as 73.4 per cent of respondents with at least a degree, 79.8 per

cent of respondents with secondary and below education said they are satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 5.2.2d).

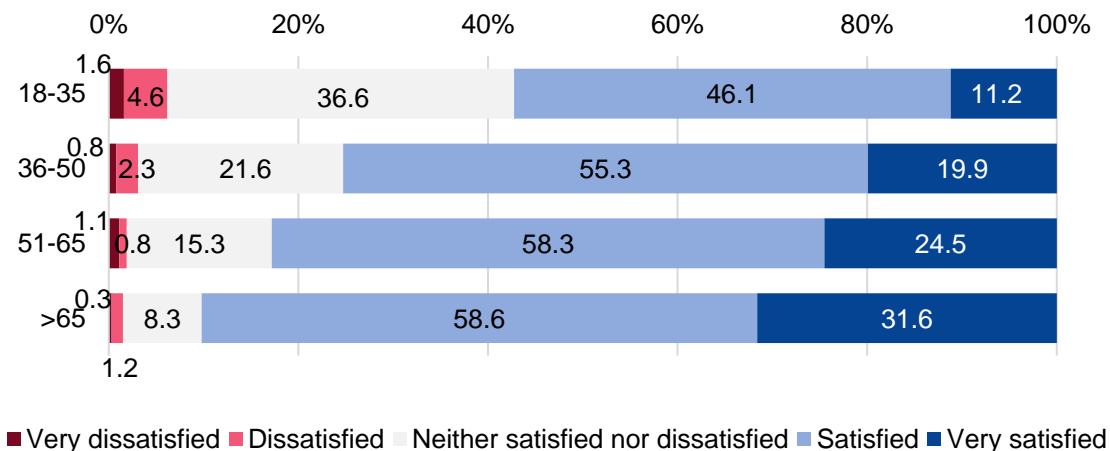
**Figure 5.2.2a: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore?, 2024 responses by race**



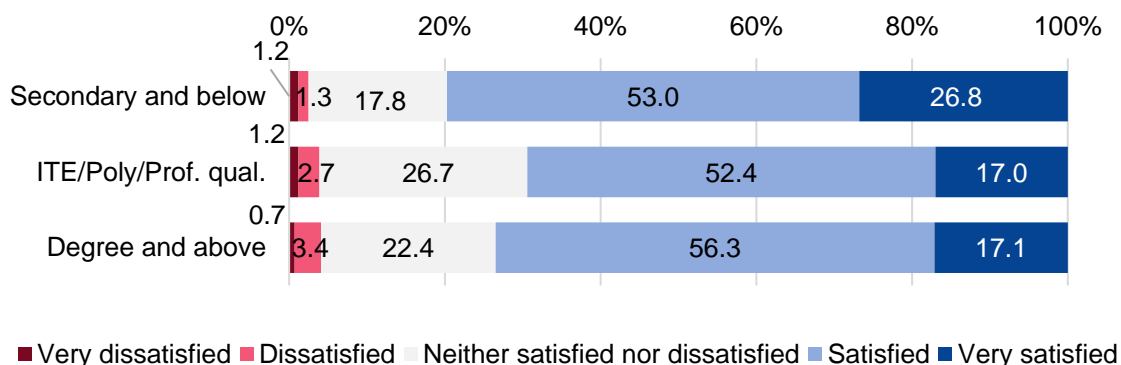
**Figure 5.2.2b: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore?, 2024 responses by religion**



**Figure 5.2.2c: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore?, 2024 responses by age**

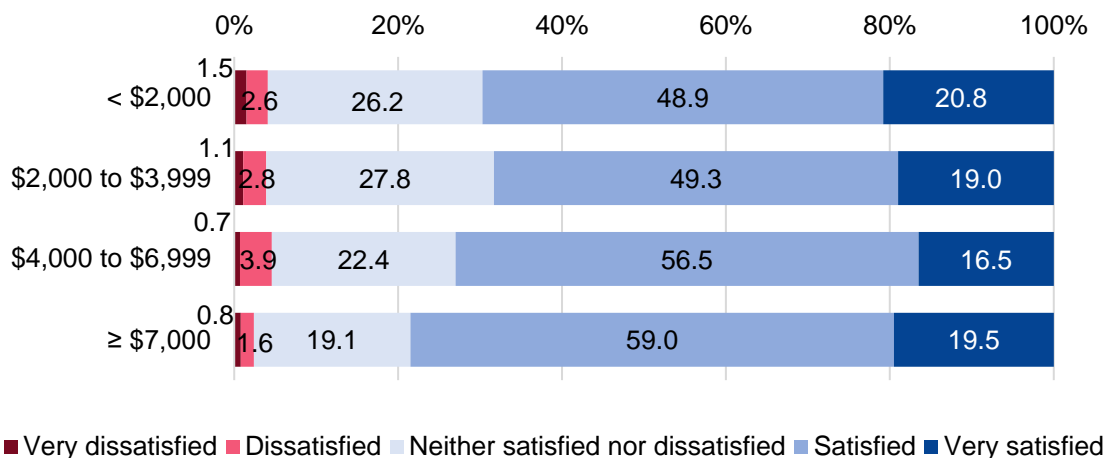


**Figure 5.2.2d: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore?, 2024 responses by education**



Respondents earning higher income indicated higher satisfaction levels compared with other respondents when they were asked about the way issues regarding R&R have been handled in Singapore. While 69.7 per cent of those earning less than \$2,000 said they are very satisfied or satisfied, the proportion increased to 78.5 per cent for those earning \$7,000 or more (see Figure 5.2.2e).

**Figure 5.2.2e: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way issues regarding race and religion have been handled in Singapore?, 2024 responses by income**



### 5.3 Actions Taken to Improve Handling of R&R Issues

#### 5.3.1 *For respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way R&R issues were handled, having a conversation within their social networks was the most popular option to improve the status quo*

Respondents who reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way issues regarding R&R are handled (detailed in section 5.2) were further given the option to select the actions they would consider in order to improve the status quo.

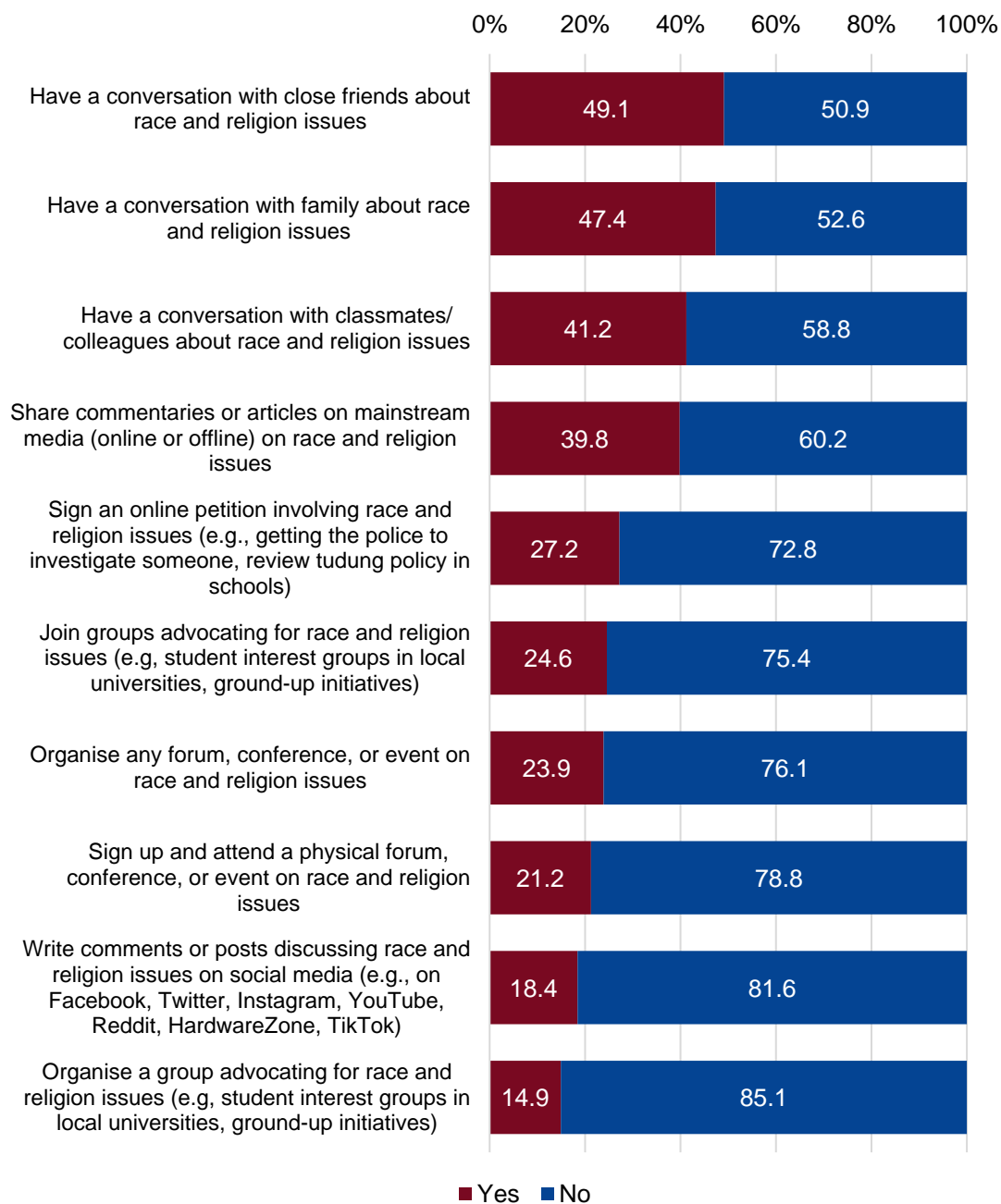
Close to half of these respondents preferred having a conversation about R&R issues with close friends (49.1 per cent), or with family (47.4 per cent), while close to four in 10 respondents preferred to have these conversations with classmates or colleagues (41.2 per cent) or share commentaries or articles about R&R issues that were published on mainstream media.

Fewer respondents said they would sign an online petition (27.2 per cent), join groups advocating for R&R issues (24.6 per cent), organise any forum, conference, or event on R&R issues (23.9 per cent), or sign up and attend a physical forum, conference, or event (21.2 per cent). The least popular actions were writing comments or posts discussing R&R issues on social media (18.4 per cent) or organising a group advocating for R&R issues (14.9 per cent) (see Figure 5.3.1).

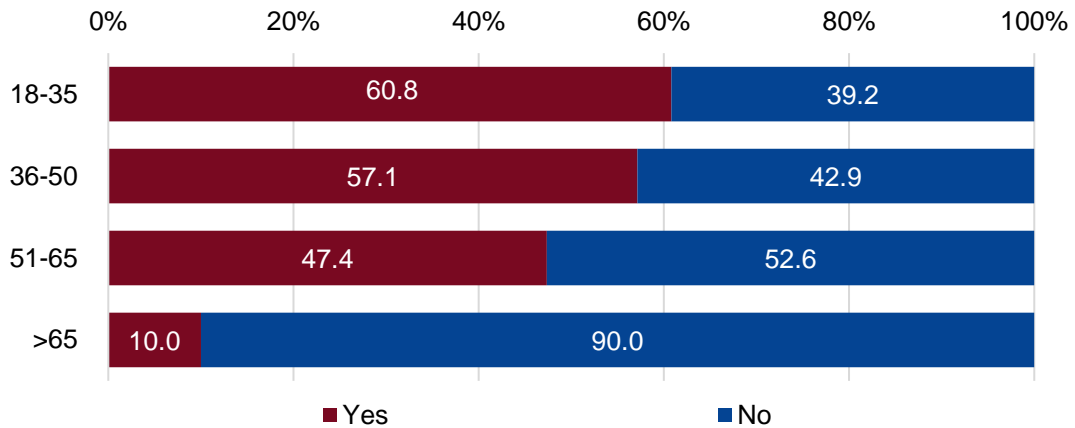
### ***5.3.2 Younger respondents were more likely than their older peers to have conversations about R&R with their family, close friends, and classmates or colleagues***

More than any other age groups, respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way R&R issues were being handled, and are within the 18 – 35 age group, were likely to have conversations with their families (60.8 per cent), their close friends (67.6 per cent), and their classmates or colleagues (63.5 per cent) (see Figures 5.3.2a – 5.3.2c).

**Figure 5.3.1: What are some of the actions you will consider taking to improve the way issues regarding race and religion are handled, 2024 responses**

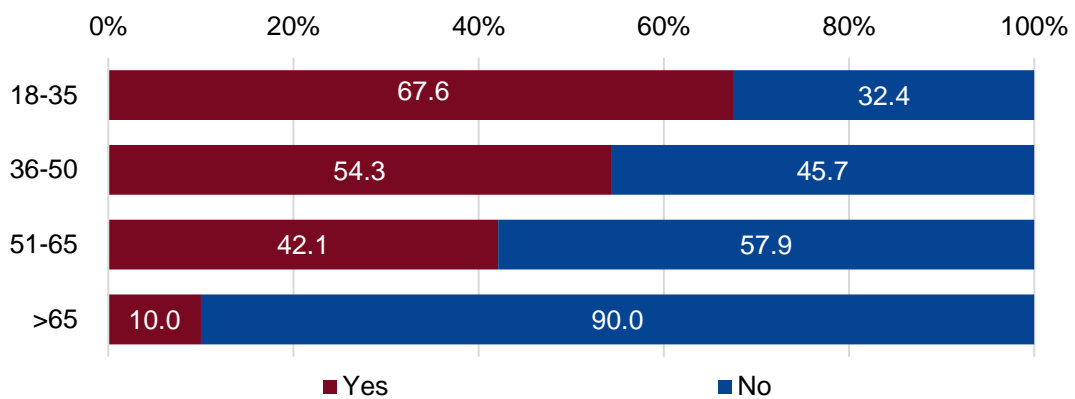


**Figure 5.3.2a: Have a conversation with family about race and religion issues, 2024 responses by age\***



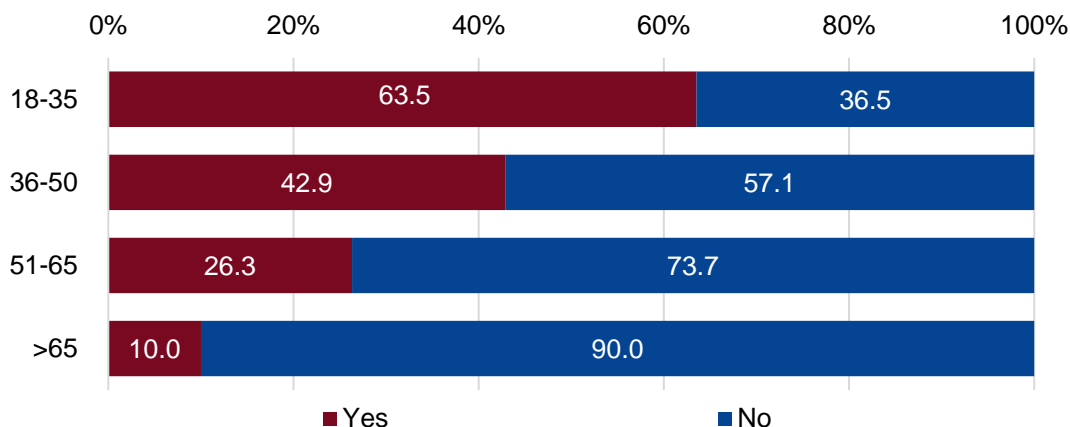
\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for >65 respondents is small (n=10)

**Figure 5.3.2b: Have a conversation with close friends about race and religion issues, 2024 responses by age\***



\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for >65 respondents is small (n=10)

**Figure 5.3.2c: Have a conversation with classmates/ colleagues about race and religion issues, 2024 responses by age\***



\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for >65 respondents is small (n=10)

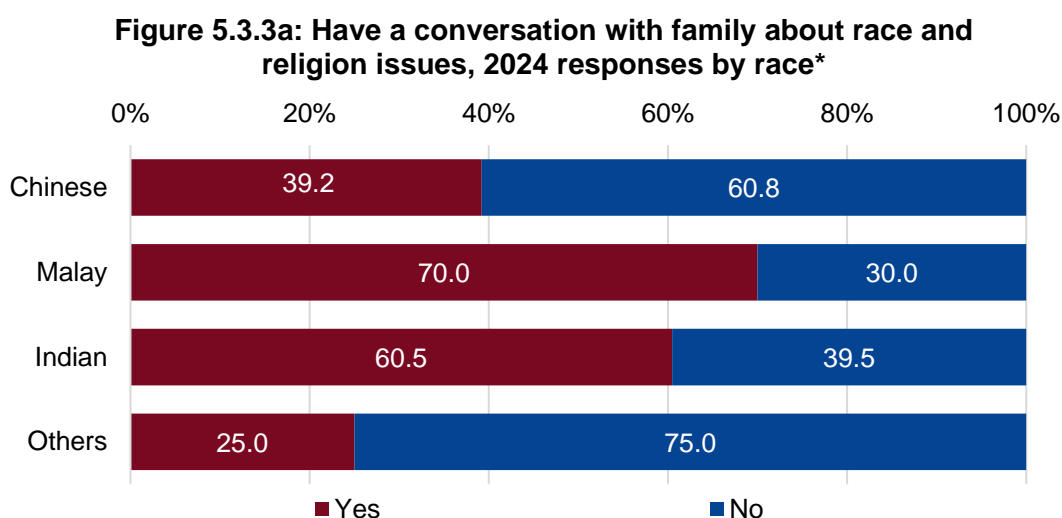
**5.3.3 Compared to other races, Malay and Indian respondents were more likely to have conversations about R&R with their family, close friends, and classmates or colleagues, and share commentaries or articles from mainstream media about R&R issues**

For Malay and Indian respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way R&R issues were being handled, we found that they were more likely than respondents of other races who felt the same way, to have conversations about R&R within their social networks. Close to seven in 10 Malay respondents said that to improve the current way in which R&R issues were handled, they would have a conversation with family members (70 per cent) or with close friends (72.5 per cent), while six in 10 Malay respondents said they would have a conversation with their classmates or colleagues (60 per cent) (see Figures 5.3.3a – 5.3.3c).



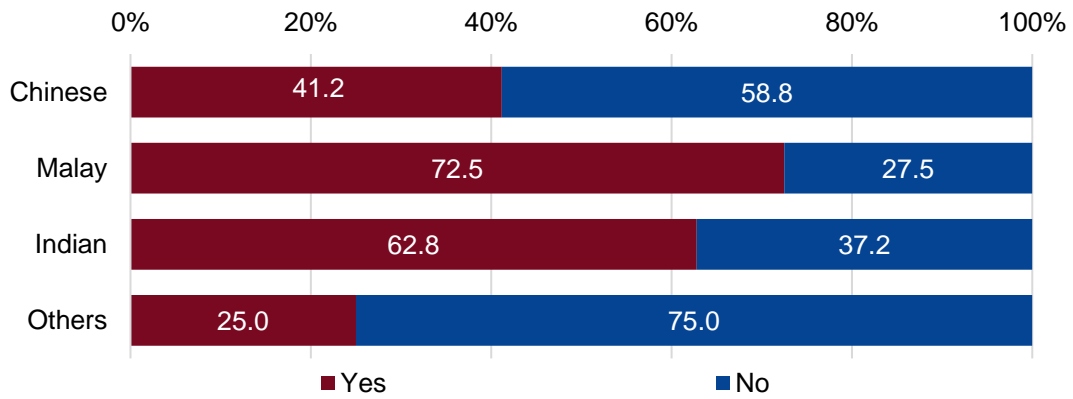
Furthermore, more than six in 10 Indian respondents said they would have a conversation with family members (60.5 per cent), with close friends (62.8 per cent), or with classmates or colleagues (60.5 per cent). Racial minorities might find having conversations about R&R more effective, as they often face more direct experiences of racism or religious discrimination, and these experiences can prompt frequent discussions within their social networks, where they are more likely to feel understood and supported. Having conversations about R&R may provide a way to process shared experiences and explore ways to cope or resist.

Moreover, more than half of the Malay respondents (55 per cent) and Indian respondents (53.5 per cent) who said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way R&R issues were handled said that they would share commentaries or articles about R&R on mainstream media. In comparison, about three in 10 Chinese respondents and slightly more than two in 10 respondents belonging to the “Others” racial group said so (see Figure 5.3.3d). Sharing media on R&R can be a catalyst for starting conversations, both within their communities and with broader audiences.



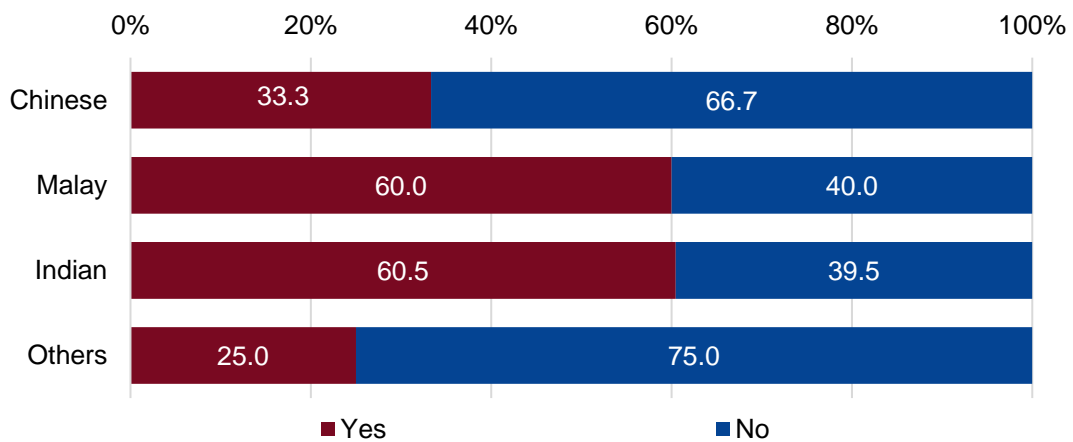
\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for Others respondents is small (n=4)

**Figure 5.3.3b: Have a conversation with close friends about race and religion issues, 2024 responses by race\***



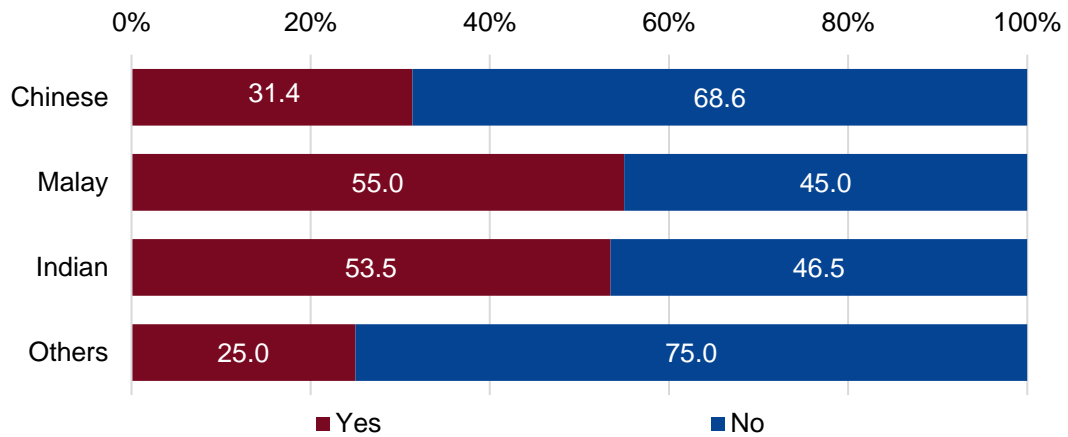
\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for Others respondents is small (n=4)

**Figure 5.3.3c: Have a conversation with classmates/colleagues about race and religion issues, 2024 responses by race\***



\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for Others respondents is small (n=4)

**Figure 5.3.3d: Share commentaries or articles on mainstream media (online or offline) on race and religion issues, 2024 responses by race\***



\*Results should be interpreted with caution as sample size for Others respondents is small (n=4)

## 6. CONCLUSION

This paper has examined how Singaporeans perceive societal faultlines and their management, particularly those related to race and religion. The findings show that the vast majority of Singaporeans recognise the importance of managing these divisions, as failure to do so can lead to anger, mistrust, polarisation, and even violence.

Among the various societal faultlines, race and religion are perceived as the most volatile, with a greater potential to trigger unrest compared to other issues such as immigration, SES and LGBT matters. This heightened sensitivity can be attributed to the deep-rooted role of racial and religious identities in shaping personal and collective self-perception. Furthermore, historical and regional influences reinforce these concerns. Instances of ethnic and religious violence in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries highlight the risks of escalation, while Singapore's own history — particularly the 1964 racial riots — serves as a stark reminder of the destructive consequences of racial and religious discord.

Given these concerns, it is unsurprising that most Singaporeans support the government's active role in managing racial and religious issues. While some may argue that race and religion are already highly regulated in Singapore through various policy measures, very few respondents in the survey favoured reducing government intervention in this space. In fact, more than three-quarters of respondents expressed satisfaction with how these issues have been handled, reinforcing public expectations that the government remains responsible for maintaining harmony and ensuring a fair and inclusive environment for all racial and religious communities.

Public discussions have often scrutinised policies such as the CMIO framework. While there have been calls to expand the framework to be more inclusive — especially for mixed-race individuals — strong support remains for preserving the policy outcomes it facilitates. These include tracking racial proportions, ensuring balanced immigration policies, and maintaining racial diversity in housing estates. However, younger Singaporeans, in particular, have voiced concerns about the potential downsides of such policies, including the risk of reinforcing rigid identity markers or stereotypes. Moving forward, it will be crucial to continually assess the relevance of these policies and explore alternative ways to achieve racial harmony without inadvertently entrenching social divisions.

While government intervention is widely accepted, an over-reliance on state-led management of racial and religious issues carries risks. Passive dependence on government initiatives may stifle grassroots efforts and community-driven approaches that are essential for long-term societal cohesion. Strengthening bottom-up engagement and fostering a culture of collective responsibility will be key to building a resilient and inclusive society.

Notably, younger Singaporeans demonstrate greater openness to new forms of activism, particularly in the digital space. They are more likely to engage in online discourse, social media advocacy, and other forms of collective action to address issues of race and religion. In fact, younger cohorts were also more likely than their older peers to desire for more public discourse on SES and LGBT issues. While these aspirations reflect a desire for more participatory approaches, it is important to strike a careful balance — ensuring that diverse voices are acknowledged and empowered while maintaining social stability and unity across different communities.

Ultimately, managing Singapore's faultlines requires a multi-faceted approach—one that leverages government policies while also fostering civic engagement and inter-community dialogue. As societal attitudes evolve, particularly among younger generations, it will be imperative to adapt governance strategies to balance public expectations, inclusivity, and long-term social cohesion. By complementing state efforts with grassroots initiatives, Singapore can continue to strengthen its multicultural fabric while navigating the complexities of an ever-changing social landscape

## APPENDIX 1: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While the four of us have had the privilege of bringing this comprehensive publication to life, it would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our colleagues and partners, whose dedication over the past year made this study a reality.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Operations team at IPS Social Lab, whose tireless fieldwork and meticulous data collection efforts were instrumental in shaping the 2024 iteration of the RRL survey. Special thanks go to Tan Gek Jee, Tang Hwee Noy, Hong Gao Qiang, Alicia Chong, Anira Binte Abdullah, Musdalifa Binte Mohamed, Anderson Tan, Julie Tay, and Kelvin Lua, whose contributions were pivotal in ensuring the success of this project.

We are immensely grateful to Janadas Devan, Director of IPS, for his steadfast encouragement of the broader RRL initiative. Special thanks also go to Christopher Gee, Carol Soon, and Justin Lee, whose support were essential to this study; as well as Izzul Haziq and Emmanuel Mathew for providing much-needed research assistance.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the IPS Finance team – Choo Yen Ping, Chanel Ang, Vika Kazi, Karen Kuet, and Lim Pei Wen – whose careful management ensured the smooth running of this project, as well as the Public Affairs team – Liang Kaixin, Cai Dewei, Ruan Xinpei, and Muhammad Asyraf Bin Jamil – for their steadfast support in amplifying the impact of this project.

As the saying goes, “great research is never a solo act,” and this publication is a testament to the collective effort of many.

## APPENDIX 2: ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**MATHEW MATHEWS** is Head of IPS Social Lab and Principal Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies, National University of Singapore. He also leads the IPS Programme on Race, Religion and Intergroup Cohesion. To date, Mathews has led over 60 research projects, most of them addressing social policy issues. These have included research using both quantitative and qualitative methods on race, religion, immigrant integration, family, ageing and poverty. He also studies the impact of social programmes and has been involved in a number of evaluations on the usefulness of various government initiatives. Mathews has taught courses on social policy and has published in a range of outlets. He currently sits on various boards including OnePeople.sg.

---

**TEO Kay Key** is Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies Social Lab. Dr Teo's current projects examine a myriad of issues in Singapore, including attitudes towards the family, social norms and values, and national identity. She graduated with a PhD in Political Science from the National University of Singapore, and holds a Master's in Political Behaviour from the University of Essex in the United Kingdom. Her research interests are an amalgamation of the varied experiences she has had, and include voting behaviour, public opinion, and Singapore society. Prior to joining IPS, she worked in the Singapore Civil Service for nearly three years doing strategic planning, training, and policy work.

---

Rachyl **POH** was formerly a Research Associate at the Institute of Policy Studies' Social Lab. She is currently a PhD student at Kings College, London. She has a deep



interest in conducting policy-relevant research that investigates the intricate mechanisms driving human social behaviour. Her research spans areas such as civil conflict, political polarisation, race and ethnicity in multicultural societies, and the evaluation of social policies and programs. Before joining IPS, Rachyl served at the Ministry of Home Affairs, where she undertook a diverse portfolio of studies on the complex challenges facing contemporary governance, such as the dynamics of race and ethnicity in multicultural societies, political extremism, and foreign interference. Rachyl also worked at the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre, where she managed mixed-methods projects on studies on altruism and cooperation among individuals and institutions, as well as socioeconomic trends affecting the non-profit sector in Singapore and beyond.

Rachyl holds a Master of Science in Strategic Studies with a Certificate in Terrorism Studies from Nanyang Technological University, a Master of Arts in International Relations from the University of Warwick, and a Bachelor of Business Management from Singapore Management University.

---

Melvin **TAY** is Research Associate at the Institute of Policy Studies' Social Lab. His research interests lie at the intersection of politics and society; with a focus on societal faultlines, their significance, and their management via policy instruments and community platforms. He has scoped, managed, and contributed to several public sector-commissioned projects on race, religion, immigration, class, sexuality, age, and education – key faultlines in Singapore. Alongside his research role at the Institute, Melvin recently completed his PhD at the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy, where he examined issues of social trust and capital, and their intersection with the use of artificial intelligence. Melvin previously worked in the

corporate strategy team at a top consulting firm, and contributed to strategy and visioning projects for key public sector agencies.

Melvin is a recipient of the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Public Policy Doctoral Fellowship, and the NUS Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Master's, and Undergraduate Scholarships. He has a Master of Social Sciences (Political Economy), and a Bachelor of Social Sciences (1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours) in Political Science and Philosophy from the National University of Singapore.

### **About IPS Working Paper Series**

The IPS Working Papers Series is published in-house for early dissemination of works-in-progress. This may be research carried out by IPS researchers, work commissioned by the Institute or work submitted to the Institute for publication.

The views expressed in the Working Papers are strictly those of the author(s) alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the IPS.

**Comments on the Working Papers are invited. Please direct your comments and queries to the author(s).**

IPS Working Papers are available from the IPS at \$7.00 each (before GST). Postage and handling charges will be added for mail orders.

For more information, please visit [www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips](http://www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips) or contact email: [ips@nus.edu.sg](mailto:ips@nus.edu.sg).

**Institute of Policy Studies**

Lee Kuan Yew School of Public  
Policy National University of  
Singapore  
1C Cluny Road House 5  
Singapore 259599

Web: [www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips](http://www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips)  
Registration Number: 200604346E