Youth and Politics in Singapore

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Roadmap

1. Topics

- Political attitudes towards "pluralism"
- Satisfaction with political and electoral system
- Election system reform to lowering voting age to 18

2. Some Data on Political Opinions in Singapore

- World Values Survey, November 2019 – March 2020
- IPS Post-Election Survey, July – August 2020

3. Some Hypotheses on Why

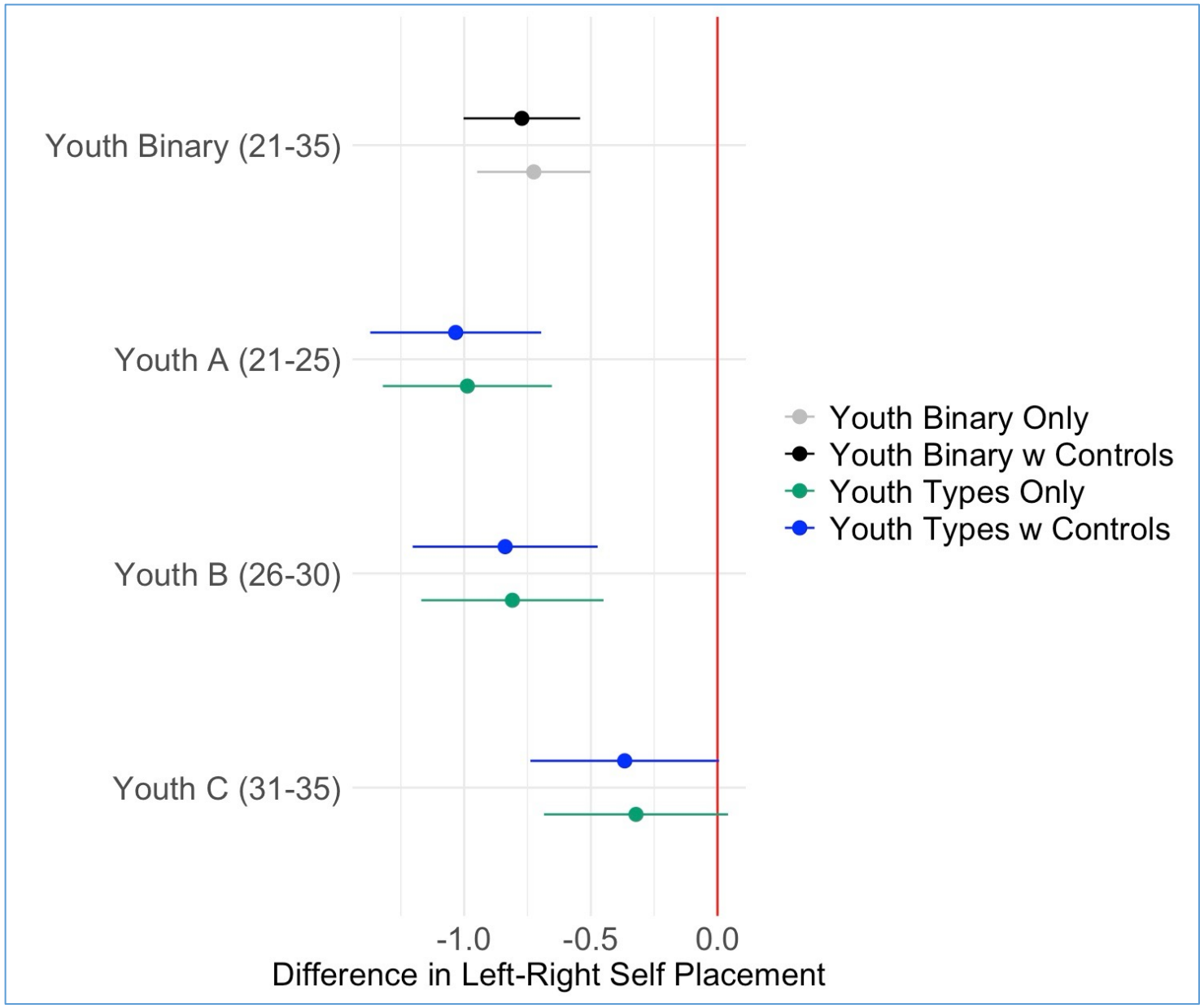
Data Analysis Strategy

1. **Select specific questions**
   - Questions on political attitudes on "pluralism"
   - Questions on satisfaction with political and electoral system

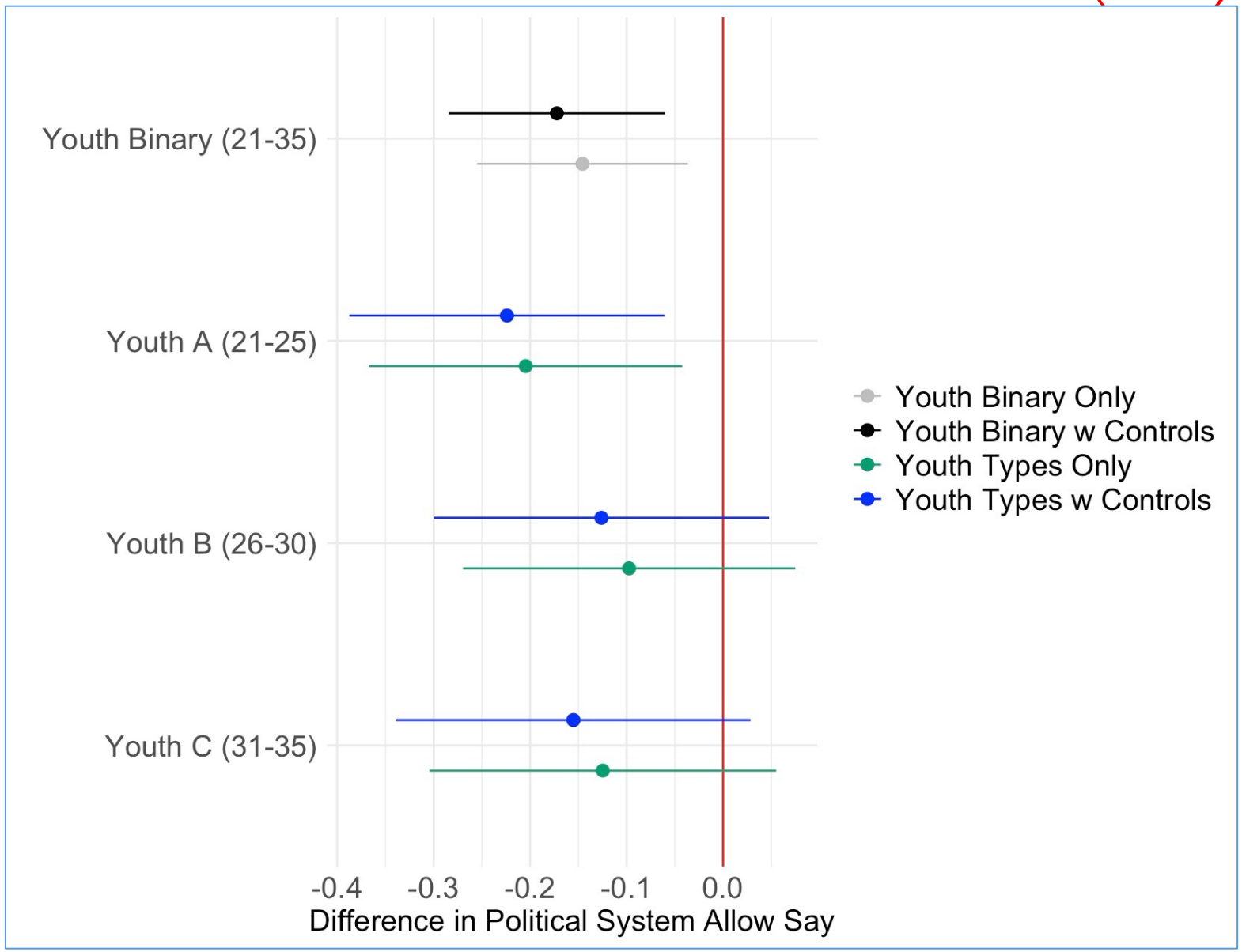
2. **Try to analyze if there is a difference**
   - Between youths (21-35 years old) and all others
   - Within youths (21-25, 26-30, 31-35 years old) and all others

3. **OLS linear regression models**
   - Without controls and with controls
   - Controls: Gender, Race, Naturalized Citizen, Dwelling, Household Income, Education Level, First Time Voter

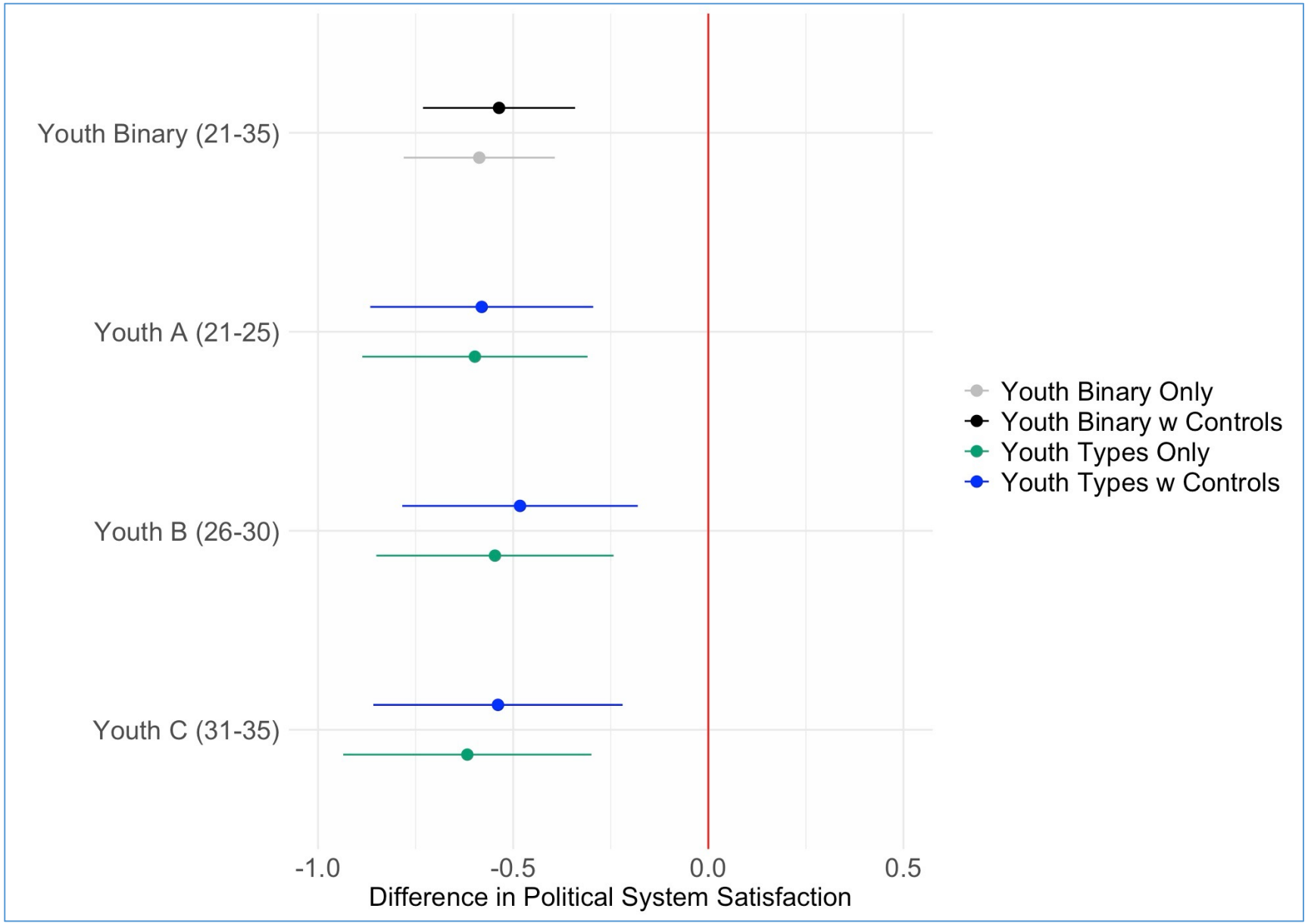
Place Your Political Views on This Scale (Left-Right)(1-10)



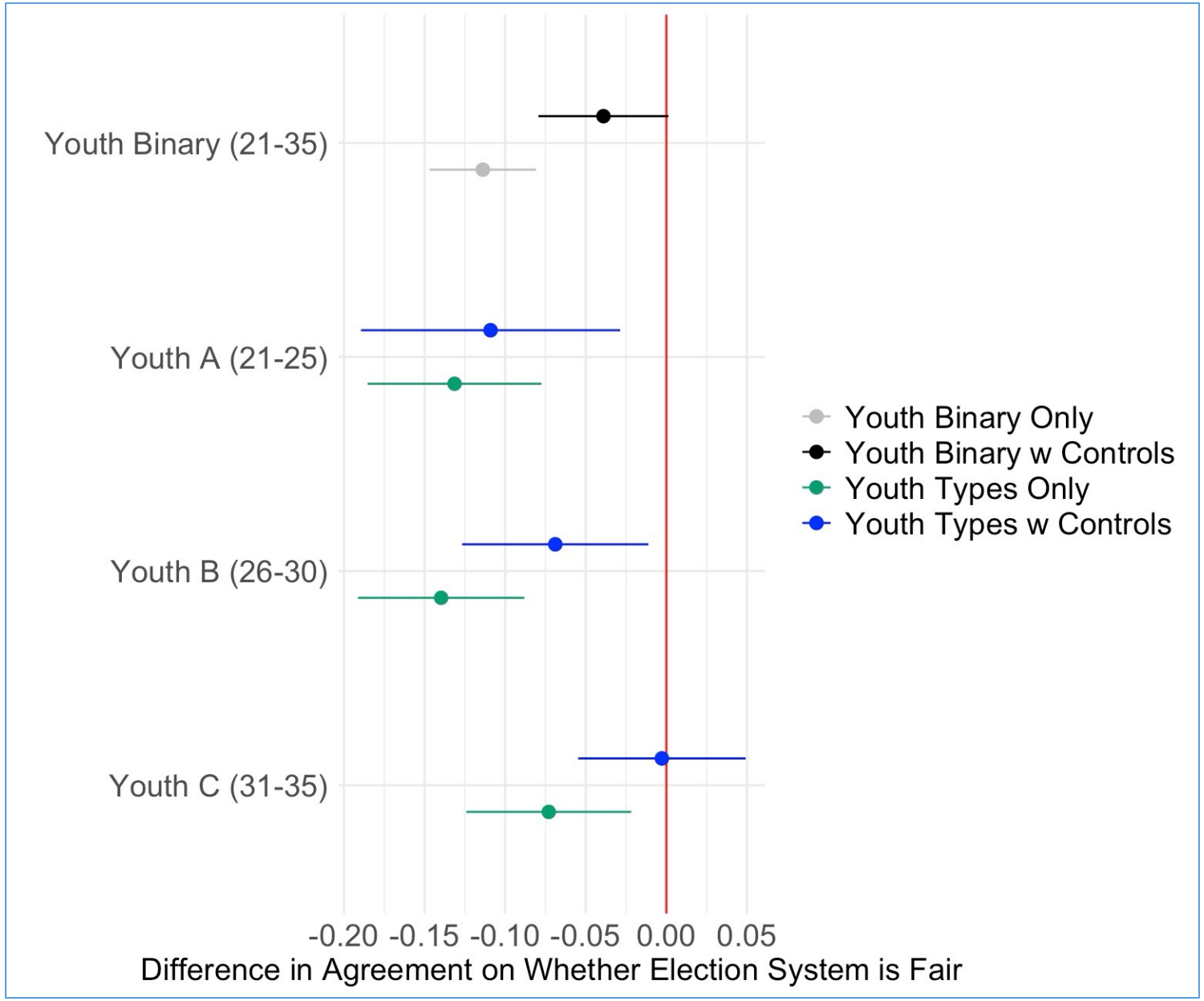
How Much Political System Allows People Like You To Have a Say In What the Government Does? (1-5)



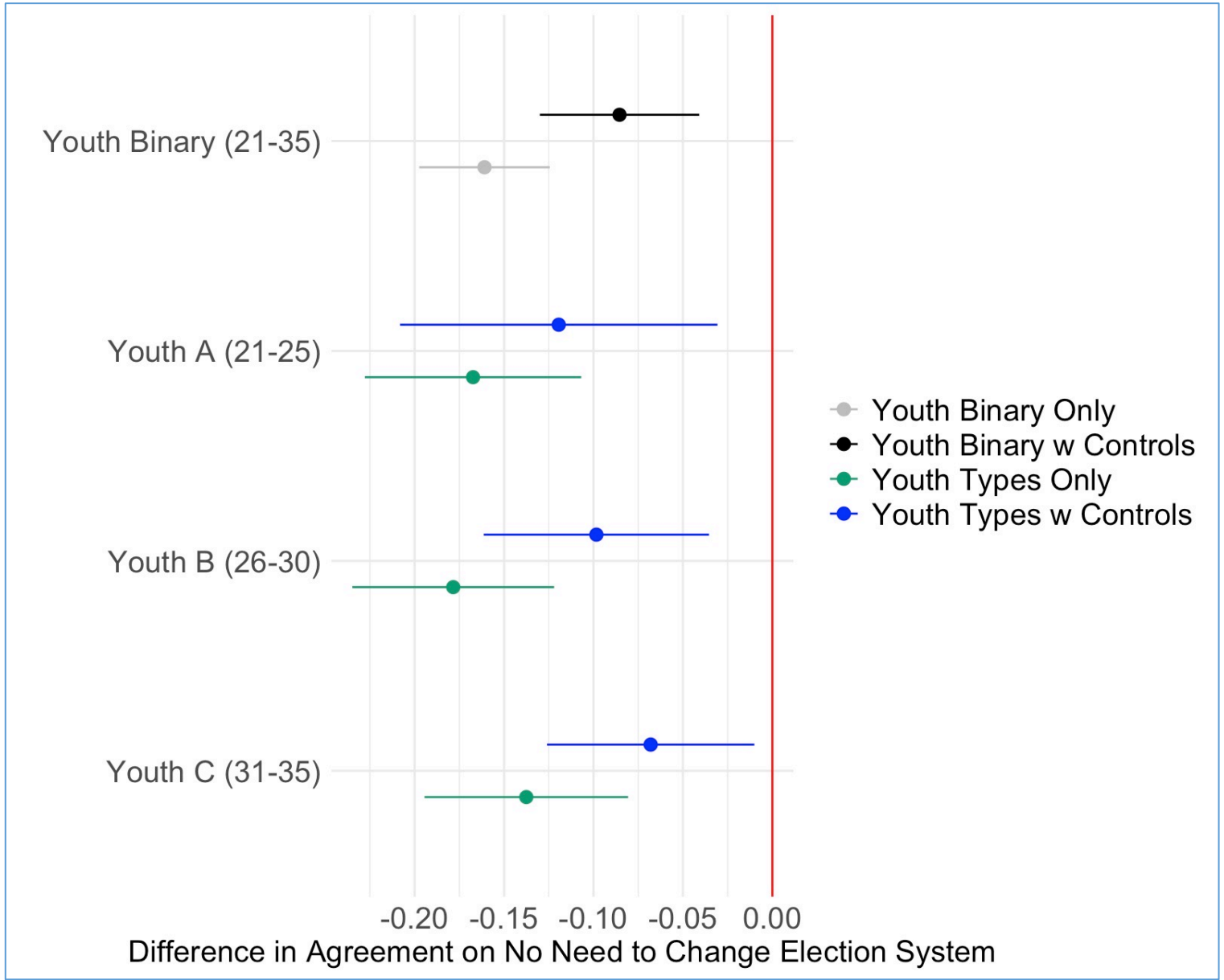
How Satisfied with Political System Functioning? (1-10)



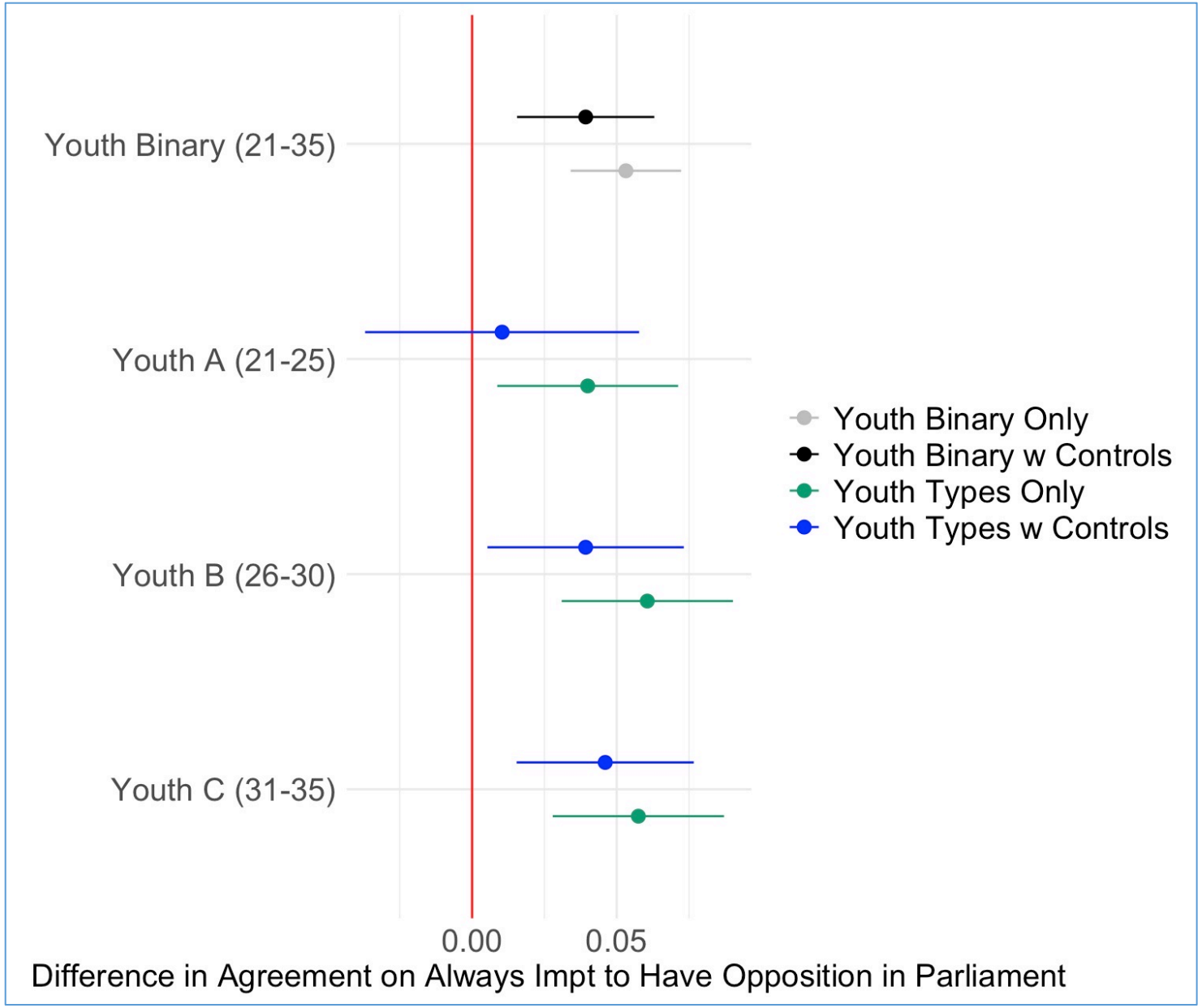
The Whole Election System is Fair to All Political Parties (0/1)



There is No Need to Change the Election System (0/1)



Always Important to Have Elected Opposition in Parliament (0/1)



Summary

1. **Persistent difference between youths (21-35) and all others**
   - Less satisfied with political system and election system
   - Desire to change political system and election system

2. **Some difference within youths (21-25, 26-30, 31-35) and all others**
   - 21-25 years old most left and unsatisfied
   - 26-30 years old moderately left and unsatisfied
   - 31-35 years old least left and unsatisfied

3. **Most differences persist without and with controls**
   - Holding other demographic variables constant, the "youth" effect lingers

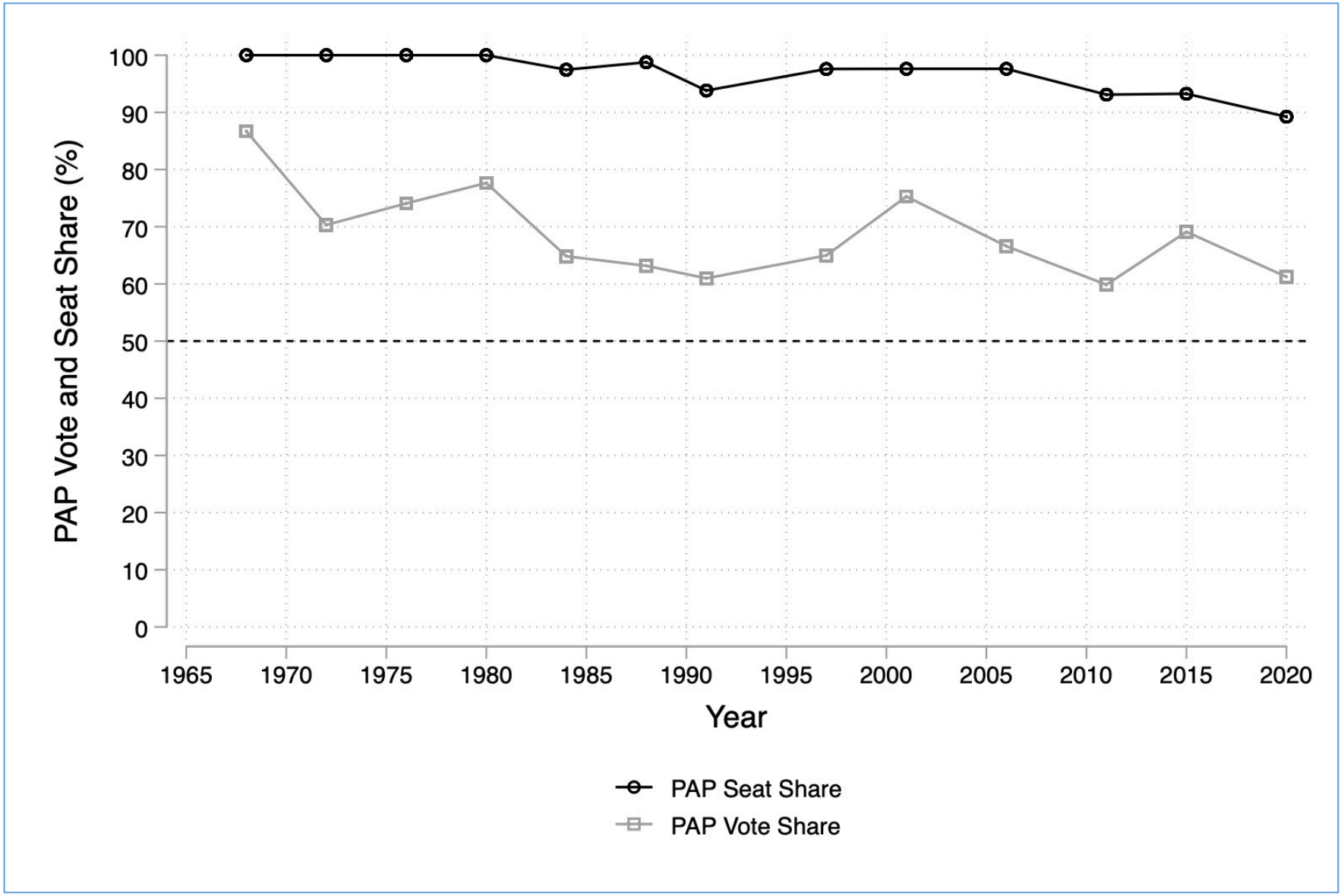
Hypothesizing where does this "Youth" effect come from?

1. **Reflects life stage**
   - Naïve, lack of life experience, don't know better.

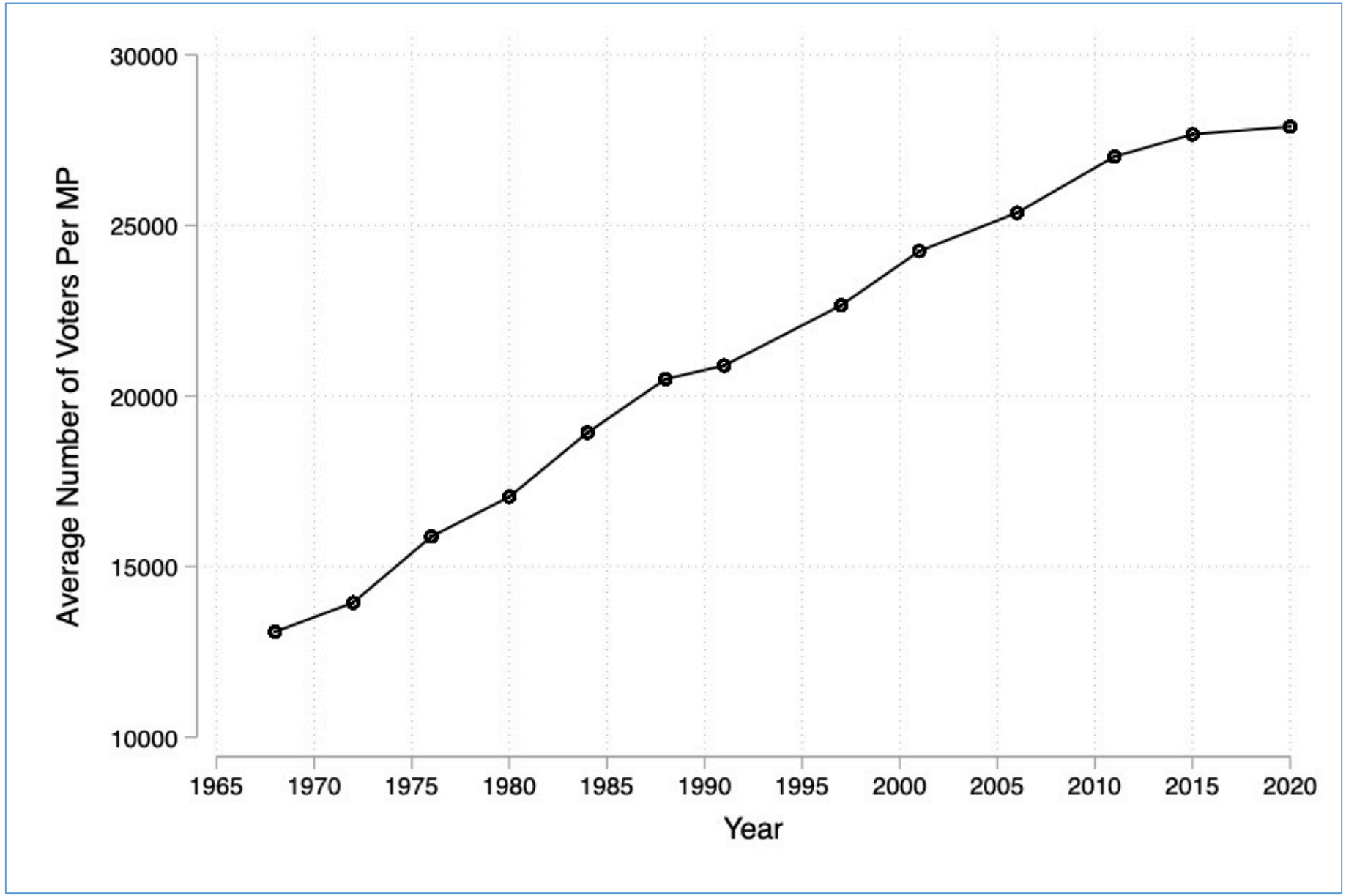
2. **Lack of attention and substantive reforms to "youth issues"**
   - Climate change, mental health well-being, relentless pace of life, income and wealth inequality, treatment of foreign workers

3. **Feel under-represented in politics?**
   - Under-representation or mis-representation in the legislature
   - Under-representation on a per MP basis

PAP Legislative Dominance



Increasing MP Burden



Conclusion on Electoral Reforms

1. **Lowering Voting Age to 18**
   - Might enhance youth satisfaction with political system
   - Give youths a stronger stake in their country

2. **Enhancing proportionality of vote-seat share**
   - Might enhance youth satisfaction with political system

3. **Reducing number of electors per MP**
   - MPs have more bandwidth to engage with youth voters and bring concerns to parliament
   - Cabinet ministers have more bandwidth to pursue policy innovation