IPS Working Papers

# MAKING IDENTITY COUNT IN SINGAPORE: UNDERSTANDING SINGAPOREANS' NATIONAL PRIDE AND IDENTITY

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SEPTEMBER 2021
IPS Working Papers No. 41

Institute of Policy Studies

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**IPS Working Papers No. 41**

# MAKING IDENTITY COUNT IN SINGAPORE: UNDERSTANDING SINGAPOREANS' NATIONAL PRIDE AND IDENTITY[i,ii]

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September 2021

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[ii] The researchers are grateful for the valuable inputs and comments offered by IPS colleagues. We would like to thank Clara Lee, Melvin Tay, Daniel Cheong and Fiona Phoa for their invaluable help in preparing this report, and Alicia Wang and Dr Teo Kay Key for their assistance with the administration of the survey. This survey was part of the Making Identity Count in Asia project, funded by a Social Science Research Council Thematic Grant (MOE2016-SSRTG-020) to Asia Research Institute and led by Prof Ted Hopf, until 2020. It is currently administered by Associate Professor Ian Chong. Our thanks also to the other investigators of this study including Associate Professor Reuben Wong.

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# MAKING IDENTITY COUNT IN SINGAPORE:

# UNDERSTANDING SINGAPOREANS' NATIONAL PRIDE AND IDENTITY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This survey, which obtained responses from 2,001 Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents from a representative national sample of households, sought to understand national identity and pride in Singapore. The study is conducted against the backdrop of several global realities that make consideration of national identity and pride crucial. The COVID-19 crisis has influenced citizens in many countries to reflect on the strengths and failures of their respective societies. Identity politics have been gaining traction globally (e.g the Black Lives Matter has become much more of a global movement since the unfortunate death of George Floyd in May 2021) with increased efforts to promote the needs of marginalised segments in society and build more inclusive socieities. Globalisation, characterised by the openness of economies, the mass movement of people around the globe and increasing inequalities has resulted in populist nationalism with hatred levelled particularly against migrants. In Singapore the occasional but high signature debates on immigration and race amidst an economic downturn reveal that questions about the Singaporean identity continue to persist. Therefore, the survey aims to provide insights into the nature and character of the Singapore identity, as well as factors that influence pride and identity, in a bid to provide an evidence-based approach to national engagement.

Overall, the survey indicated that Singaporeans were proud of a range of institutions here. A comprehensive list of 24 sources of pride allowed us to distinguish which sources respondents were most proud of and which less so. On one hand, government institutions such as the healthcare system (83.8 per cent were proud or very proud), armed forces (78.7 per cent were proud or very proud), and education system (73.3 per cent were proud or very proud) were among the strongest sources of pride. Social and political institutions, such as racial equality and the manner in which democracy is practised in Singapore, provided a modest level of pride. On the other hand, Singapore's treatment of low-wage migrant workers (34.0 per cent were proud or very proud) — perhaps a realisation that they are "essential" workers" – and the level of press freedom (31.8 per cent were proud or very proud) were among the lowest sources of pride. It is also worth noting that respondents were largely proud of Singapore's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic (68.8 per cent were proud or very proud).

Clear demographic differences also emerged for some of these sources of pride. For example, higher socio-economic status (SES) and more educated respondents were less proud of the levels of meritocracy notwithstanding the fact that they would have likely benefitted from a reward system based on merit in Singapore. Highly educated respondents were also more likely to be less proud of Singapore's treatment of migrant workers, who pose no threat to their

employment security. In general, distinctions in pride levels of various domains were mainly observed across education and SES, rather than age and race.

An important component of this survey was an assessment of respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards a range of social issues, all of which have substantial bearing on national identity. Specifically, these included perceptions about societal cohesion (e.g., equality, multiracialism); governance (e.g., governing approach, political plurality); globalisation (e.g., global knowledge, Singapore as role model for other countries); media use (e.g., traditional vs alternative media); immigration (e.g., economic and social impact of immigration) and threats to Singapore's future.

On societal cohesion, results showed that there was some perception of inequality in Singapore. Overall, 64.5 per cent of respondents felt that some Singaporeans were more advantaged, in an ascribed sense, than others in achieving success in Singapore; 55.9 per cent of respondents felt that Singaporean society is unequal. About 70 per cent of respondents were of the opinion that Singapore's approach to multiracialism works well, though among minorities and younger respondents there were more who believed that Singapore's approach to multiracialism needed improvement.

Respondents had a positive view of globalisation with the great majority (83 per cent) recognising that it was positive because it aided the economy and all

Singaporeans. Few respondents chose the counter option that globalisation benefits only the wealthy and foreigners and would leave citizens poor. Despite the sense of closeness that many Singaporeans had of other countries, over 95 per cent viewed Singapore as a better country than most other countries.

On immigration, over 75 per cent of respondents acknowledged that immigration was generally good for the economy. Just over 50 per cent of respondents agreed to a moderate or great extent that immigrants took jobs away from people in Singapore, and that the government spent too much money assisting immigrants.

On threats to the future of Singapore, respondents were most concerned about the pandemic, economic downturn and distrust between races, with each of these issues seeing between 50 to over 60 per cent of respondents classifying them as a great threat. In contrast less than 20 per cent viewed weak opposition parties, growing religiosity or immigration as a great threat to the future of Singapore.

There were also clear demographic differences in attitudes to the issues raised above. For example, younger, more educated, and higher SES respondents were more attuned to inequality in Singapore, perceiving that some Singaporeans were more advantaged than others in their pathways to achieving success. Lower SES respondents were more likely to be concerned

about the prospect of job losses due to immigration than higher SES respondents.

In order to understand the character of Singapore's national identity, the survey asked respondents to rate a wide-ranging list of markers of integration. These referred to values that respondents believed were important for newcomers to Singapore who wanted to successfully integrate. Results revealed that values that support community cohesion were evaluated as most important, i.e., respect for law, tolerance, multiracialism, and equality which close to over 50 per cent of respondents' rate as very important. On the contrary, values that emphasise individualism — such as self-fulfilment and freedom of speech — were perceived as least important. This reflected that the Singaporean national identity leans towards collectivism and prioritises social cohesion and stability over individual concerns. However, this survey alone cannot conclude whether collectivism is more aspirational than actually practised in everyday life here.

Given Singapore's multiracial environment, there is a close connection between national and racial identity which is contantly being navigated. Survey results showed that while most Singaporeans view their racial and national identity as important, it was national identity that was more often chosen as "very important" to respondents' own sense of identity. Among Malay respondents, it was more common to observe approximately equal importance accorded to both racial and national identity.

An important marker of racial identities in Singapore is the use of vernacular languages. English is, on the other hand, seen as the official language, the unifying language for communication between the different ethnic communities, and thus what bolsters national identity. Among survey respondents, English was more important to respondents' sense of identity, compared to their mother tongue and Singlish. Racial minorities were however more likely to prioritise both English and their mother tongue, while Chinese respondents, especially the young and well educated, were more likely to prioritise English over their mother tongue. Younger respondents were also more likely to value Singlish as important to their identity, a possible indicator of the growing utility of Singlish as a unique identity marker, even though it is officially frowned upon. Moreover, the importance of Singlish did not differ notably across education levels.

An attempt was made in the study to create profiles of respondents through cluster analysis. Four different clusters of Singaporeans were obtained through the analysis. The first group, termed "Proud Idealists", represented those who were loyally committed to Singapore and generally supportive of what Singapore did and represented. This group made up 42.3 per cent of Singaporeans in our survey. The second group, "Concerned Patriots", represented those who were loyal and committed but were more likely to be critical of fellow Singaporeans. These made up 11.4 per cent of Singaporeans in the survey. The third group, "Moderate Idealists", were those who adopted a

more balanced view of Singapore and Singaporeans, and possessed greater tentativeness in their identity commitment. These made up 41.7 per cent of Singaporeans in the survey. The fourth group, “Dispassionate Citizens”, were those who were more likely apathetic or marginalised in society, representing about 3.0 per cent of Singaporeans in the survey. Demographic differences in these clusters are discussed in the main report.

Further analysis was also conducted to examine how national pride may be impacted by the congruence between individuals’ values and perceived societal values. That is, to the extent that society is perceived to embody the values of meritocracy, democracy, and equality, national pride levels would be the highest. Our results showed robust evidence for this congruence principle — those who valued meritocracy, democracy, and equality while also perceiving Singapore to be meritocratic, democratic, and equal were significantly prouder than those who cherished these values but observed a lack of such values in society at large. This suggests that values at the collective level do invariably shape perceptions of national pride at the personal level.

In summary, the research indicated that on the whole, national pride and identity in Singapore were healthy. Our findings have also generated new empirical evidence and insight into the nature and character of Singapore’s national identity, as well as highlighted predictors of pride and identity. In addition, cluster analysis demonstrated how various groups of Singaporeans

experienced and appraised their national identity differently. Given the vulnerability of national pride and identity to wide-ranging global and domestic socio-political events, continued research will need to be regularly conducted to promptly address emerging issues.

# MAKING IDENTITY COUNT IN SINGAPORE: UNDERSTANDING SINGAPOREANS' NATIONAL PRIDE AND IDENTITY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study is conducted against the backdrop of several global realities that make consideration of national identity and pride crucial. The COVID-19 crisis has influenced citizens in many countries to reflect on the strengths and failures of ther respective societies (Lim & Prakash, 2021). Identity politics movements such as the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has been gaining traction globally (Fukuyama, 2019). The unfortunate death of George Floyd in May 2021 set off protests amidst pandemic restrictions in many global cities. The renewed consciousness of equality and minority rights is likely to influence how countries around the world build inclusive communities (Allam et al., 2021). Globalisation, characterised by the openness of economies, the mass movement of people around the globe and increasing inequalities has resulted in populist nationalism with hatred levelled particularly against migrants.

In Singapore the occasional but high signature debates on immigration and race amidst an economic downturn reveal that questions about the Singaporean identity continue to persist.

Defining national identity in Singapore has always been a work-in-progress given our heterogeneous society and a relatively brief history of nation-building. When Singapore gained independence in 1965, it was confronted with the colossal task of fostering a sense of pride, loyalty, and national identity in its people, many of who were immigrants from around the region. They had no deep-rooted ties to the country and shared neither common history nor language. Singapore then had to embark on a process of nation-building, bringing together diverse individuals and communities and building a collective identity strong and resilient enough to withstand any challenge that might lay ahead.

National identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a nation (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Huddy & Khatib, 2007; Theiss-Morse, 2009). This identification and attachment to a nation are traditionally grounded in either civic or ethnic dimensions (Brubaker, 1992; Greenfeld, 1992). The civic model assumes a sense of political community for all its members, where they respect common institutions and laws, and are together bound by a shared set of rights and duties (Smith, 1991). Its membership boundaries are inclusive and permeable, and anyone can belong provided that he or she accepts the fundamental values and institutions of that society (Wright et al., 2012). In contrast, the ethnic model is based on the principle of common descent. Membership is ascriptive and relatively more restrictive as linguistic and cultural considerations come to the fore.

As a relatively young and culturally diverse country, the Singapore nation is a "distinctly modern and decidedly constructed phenomenon" (Ortmann, 2009) and is unable to anchor its national identity in a long history of nationalistic struggles nor a single race, language, or religion (Chang, 1968; Tilly, 1985). The civic form of national identity becomes the focus by which individuals, society, and the state come to negotiate what constitutes a "true-blue" Singaporean (Jones & Smith, 2001; Connor, 1978). Nonetheless, it is challenging to organically develop national identity and a sense of belonging in a heterogeneous society, especially when there are only few objective traits that can clearly identify national ingroups and outsiders. Not leaving it to chance, the Singapore state became actively involved in the process of developing its national identity and belonging (Koh, 2005; Kong & Yeoh, 1997) and an "imagined community" within its border (Anderson, 1983). Nonetheless, the formation of Singapore's national identity should not be seen as an entirely elite-driven top-down process; it is at the same time continuously reproduced and refashioned in the everyday mundane details of social interaction, habits, and routines (Edensor, 2002).

How we draw the boundaries of nationhood and national identity will have an influence on a range of national issues and public policy preferences. A shared national identity promotes social cohesion, trust, and solidarity, not only in virtue of being shared but also in the particular values they consist in (Holtug, 2016,

2017). It functions as a social glue that binds diverse and disparate societal groups together (Miller, 1995) and mitigates competition and animosity between subgroups (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Transue, 2007). A strong sense of collective identity is also expected to increase civic participation and political involvement (Conover et al. 2004) and leads to the prioritisation of group welfare over individualism, engendering more egalitarian outcomes — not least egalitarian redistribution — as people identify with the poor and marginalised (Rawls, 1971; Miller, 2006). The ease of admitting and integrating new members, such as new citizens and immigrants, is also contingent on whether ethnic, linguistic, and cultural similarity are prioritised over more civic and non-ascriptive elements like skills and education amongst the populace (Kunovich, 2009; Wright et al., 2012).

An important aspect of national identity is national pride, which is the "general positive affect that a person derives from one's national identity" (Smith 2007, 2009). In addition to this emotional connection, an evaluative element that assesses a nation's achievements also provides the basis for national pride (Fabrykant & Magun, 2015) especially when one is involved and shares in its accomplishments (Evans & Kelley, 2002; Raguraman, 1997). As a tiny city-state, Singapore has time and again punched above its weight and gained numerous accolades, including having a highly competitive and free economy (IMD, 2020), a world-class education system (*The Economist*, 2018), and being home to one of the world's best airport and airline (Skytrax, 2020). It has successfully hosted prestigious global events like the annual Singapore Grand

Prix and produced sporting talents such as Olympic medallists Tan Howe Liang and Joseph Schooling.

A country's domestic political and social institutions as well as the people's history and cultural practices are also possible sources of national pride (Hjerm, 2003). Reliable and competent institutions, a culturally diverse population, and unique local customs and traditions are attributes that are not only perceived positively but also enable citizens to distinguish their own nation from others. Despite national pride representing the positive, affective aspects one feels towards the country, it is important to note that these feelings should be distinguished from nationalism, which refers to the belief in the superiority of one's country over others and which represents a kind of prejudice at the national level (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989).

One's identity is not static and is often regarded as fluid, changing, and frequently contested (Han, 2017). It is less of an essence but an open-ended process of identification (Jenkins, 2014). Accordingly, the Singapore national identity is continually reconstructed and reproduced since the early days of its independence. Changing aspirations and the forces of globalisation will certainly complicate the understanding of national identity as its people endeavour to come to terms with what makes a Singaporean.

This report serves as one of the few large-scale studies on national identity and pride in Singapore, surveying 2,001 Singapore citizens and permanent residents (PRs) on their attitudes and positions on a range of issues pertaining to national identity and pride. It aims to (1) identify sources of pride and demographic differences in determining sources of pride; (2) understand Singaporeans' perceptions of pertinent social issues ranging from government and society to immigration; (3) uncover the Singapore national identity content (i.e., what it means to be Singaporean); (4) examine psychological predictors of pride and national identification; and (5) characterise different groups of Singaporeans in terms of their national identification profile.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

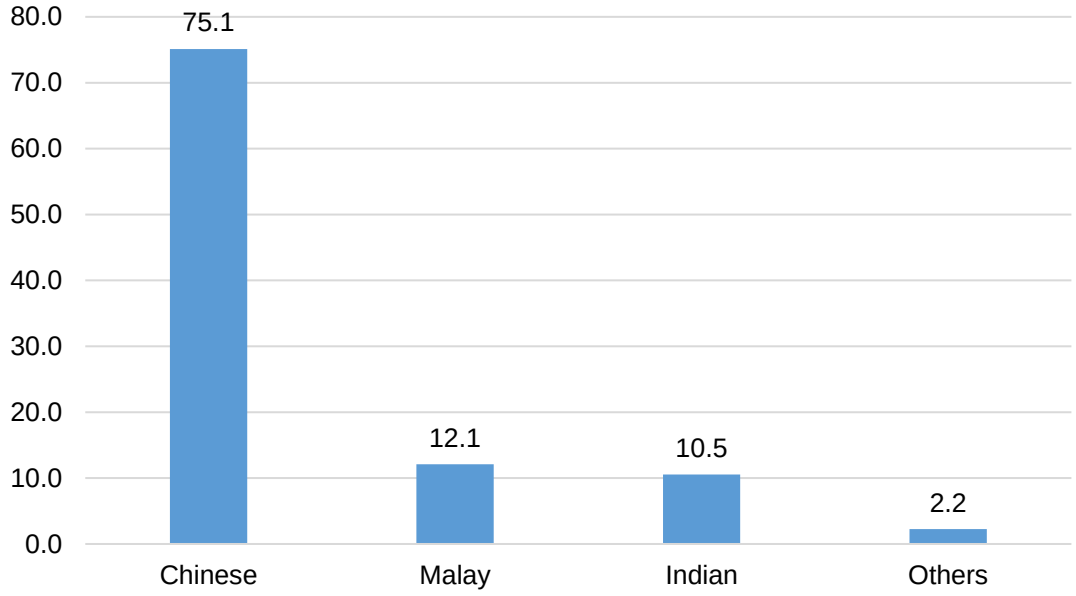
The fieldwork, using a Computer-Assisted-Personal-Interviewing (CAPI) approach, was conducted by IPS Social Lab between September and November 2020. A random listing of households that would provide a nationally representative sampling frame was purchased from the Department of Statistics (DoS). Identified households were informed through a letter about the study and a visit by an interviewer two weeks before the commencement of fieldwork. Interviewers subsequently visited households and chose a participant based on a randomised system to produce variations in gender and age of the overall sample. The identified prospective respondent was then introduced to the study using a Participant Information Sheet. Those who consented to participating in the study completed the questionnaire on a tablet on their own while the interviewer waited at a distance, ready to provide clarifications if required. To cater to elderly respondents who were not comfortable with the use of a tablet, a printed questionnaire was used for them to provide their responses. The respondent then completed the questionnaire and returned it to the interviewer. About 5 per cent of respondents completed the survey using a printed questionnaire. Respondents could respond to the survey in any of the four official languages. Survey participants received a $20 grocery voucher as a token to appreciate their time to respond to the survey. A total of 2,001 respondents completed the survey. The study achieved an overall response rate of 67 per cent. Due to the need to reduce opportunity for prolonged face-to-face interviews because of COVID-19, there was no option provided to respondents who were illiterate. Given that this portion constituted

only 2 per cent of the population, the research team proceeded with this approach.

## 3. RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

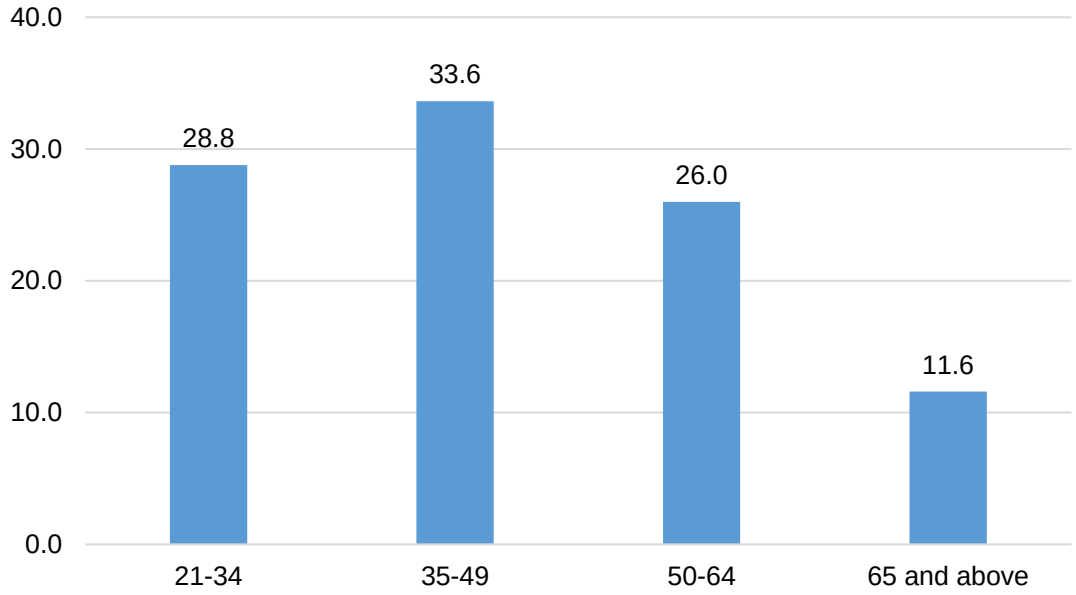
The random sampling approach used in the study ensured that the survey sample closely mirrored Singapore's resident population 21 years and older. In terms of race, 75.1 per cent of our respondents were Chinese, 12.1% Malay, 10.5% Indian, and 2.2% Others.

*Figure 1: Racial Distribution (%)*



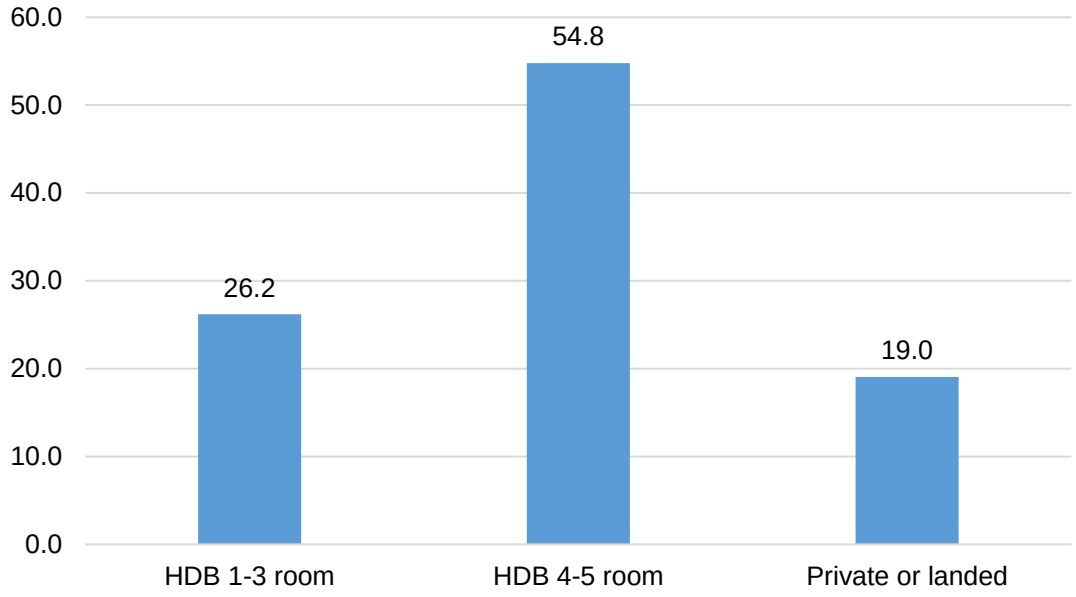

In terms of age, 28.8 per cent of our respondents were youths aged 21 to 34, 33.6 per cent were adults aged 35 to 49, 26.0 per cent were older adults aged 50 to 64, while 11.6 per cent were elderly aged 65 and above.

*Figure 2: Age Distribution (%)*



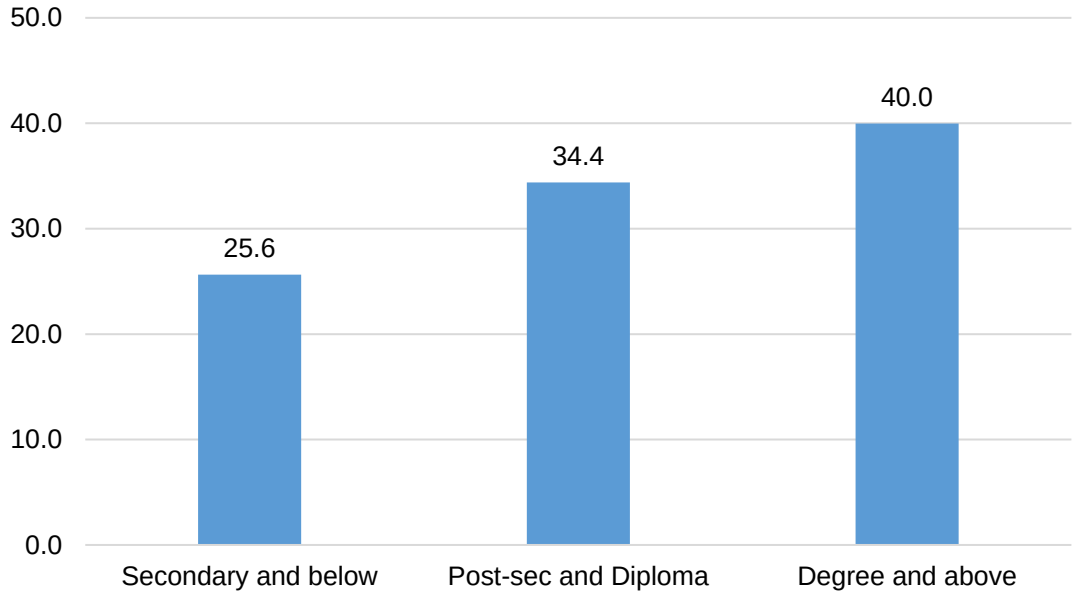

Housing type was used as a proxy to socio-economic status (SES). Majority of our respondents were of middle SES. Specifically, lower SES (i.e., categorised as HDB 3 room and below) made up 26.2 per cent of survey respondents, mid-SES (i.e., categorised as HDB 4 to 5 room) made up 54.8 per cent, while higher SES (i.e., categorised as private or landed property) made up 19.0 per cent of respondents.

*Figure 3: Housing Type Distribution (%)*




Respondents were general highly educated. Among them, 25.6 per cent attained an education level of secondary school and below, 34.4 per cent attained post-secondary (i.e., ITE) and diploma, and 40 per cent attained a degree and above (i.e., Bachelors, Masters, Doctorates).

*Figure 4: Education Level Distribution (%)*



# 4. KEY FINDINGS

## 4.1 Sources of Pride

National pride may be derived from multiple sources, each influencing national feelings in unique ways (Evans & Kelley, 2002). To better account for heterogeneity in perceptions, we developed a multi-faceted measure of national pride based on a comprehensive mix of various sources of pride.

We examined respondents' national pride based on a list of 24 sources, derived from a literature search of instruments used in other countries to measure national pride, textual analysis of local media and focus group discussions that informed the formulation of the present survey. These sources covered domains such as government institutions (e.g., healthcare system, military, education system); political institutions (e.g., style of democracy, government autonomy); social institutions (e.g., racial equality, religious diversity); the economy (e.g., economic performance, degree of global influence); significant events (e.g., management of COVID-19 pandemic); as well as Singaporean characteristics (e.g., competitiveness, environmental consciousness).

For each of these sources, respondents indicated how proud (or not) they were of Singapore on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not proud at all, 5 = very proud). This approach allowed us to obtain a comprehensive understanding of various sources of pride in Singapore, how each source compared with others, and how

different demographic groups perceived each source. The list of 24 sources ranked according to respondents' overall levels of pride is shown in Table 1.

*Table 1: Ranked sources of pride based on mean score[1] (%)*

| Sources of Pride (Ranked from Highest to Lowest) | | Very proud | Proud | Some-what proud | Not very proud | Not proud at all | Mean Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Healthcare system | 35.1 | 48.7 | 13.3 | 2.4 | 0.6 | 4.15 |
| 2 | Cleanliness | 35.4 | 41.0 | 17.5 | 4.6 | 1.5 | 4.04 |
| 3 | Singapore Armed Forces | 29.6 | 49.1 | 17.2 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 4.03 |
| 4 | Religious diversity and freedom | 28.6 | 45.7 | 19.5 | 4.8 | 1.4 | 3.95 |
| 5 | Education system | 27.7 | 45.6 | 20.2 | 4.9 | 1.5 | 3.93 |
| 6 | COVID-19 pandemic management | 31.2 | 37.6 | 21.9 | 7.1 | 2.2 | 3.89 |
| 7 | Economic performance | 24.0 | 46.1 | 24.2 | 4.5 | 1.2 | 3.87 |
| 8 | Civil service | 21.9 | 48.4 | 23.5 | 5.1 | 1.0 | 3.85 |
| 9 | Science/tech achievements | 21.9 | 47.3 | 24.7 | 5.0 | 1.1 | 3.84 |
| 10 | Racial equality | 25.5 | 42.9 | 22.4 | 7.0 | 2.2 | 3.83 |
| 11 | Degree of global influence | 18.6 | 42.5 | 30.0 | 6.8 | 2.0 | 3.69 |
| 12 | Having regular elections | 17.4 | 42.4 | 29.9 | 8.2 | 2.0 | 3.65 |
| 13 | Social welfare system (e.g., CPF, housing grants, financial assistance to the poor) | 19.7 | 37.1 | 28.5 | 10.4 | 4.3 | 3.57 |
| 14 | Justice system | 19.0 | 37.5 | 28.5 | 11.1 | 3.9 | 3.56 |
| 15 | Level of competitiveness | 14.7 | 41.2 | 31.2 | 9.8 | 3.1 | 3.54 |
| 16 | Level of environmental consciousness | 17.3 | 36.7 | 28.6 | 13.3 | 4.1 | 3.50 |
| 17 | The way democracy is practised in Singapore | 15.6 | 36.9 | 29.7 | 13.7 | 4.1 | 3.46 |

[1] Excluding Singapore PRs, which comprised 11.2 per cent of the total sample, the differences in percentages for each source of pride across all cells were small, at less than 2.5 per cent. Importantly, the overall ranking of the sources of pride also remained largely unchanged, with only the positions of SAF and Cleanliness reversed.
Do note that percentages in this and subsequent tables may not add up to 100% given rounding and occasional missing responses.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | Level of meritocracy | 13.6 | 37.0 | 30.5 | 13.8 | 5.2 | 3.40 |
| 19 | Having same ruling party for a long time | 14.7 | 32.1 | 31.1 | 14.9 | 7.2 | 3.32 |
| 20 | Government autonomy (it is able to do what it wants to do) | 11.6 | 32.6 | 31.9 | 16.7 | 7.2 | 3.25 |
| 21 | Sporting achievements | 11.0 | 31.6 | 32.6 | 18.1 | 6.7 | 3.22 |
| 22 | Arts | 8.2 | 31.2 | 37.6 | 17.7 | 5.3 | 3.19 |
| 23 | Treatment of migrant workers | 9.1 | 24.9 | 31.5 | 21.6 | 12.9 | 2.96 |
| 24 | Press freedom | 7.7 | 24.1 | 29.7 | 24.4 | 14.1 | 2.87 |

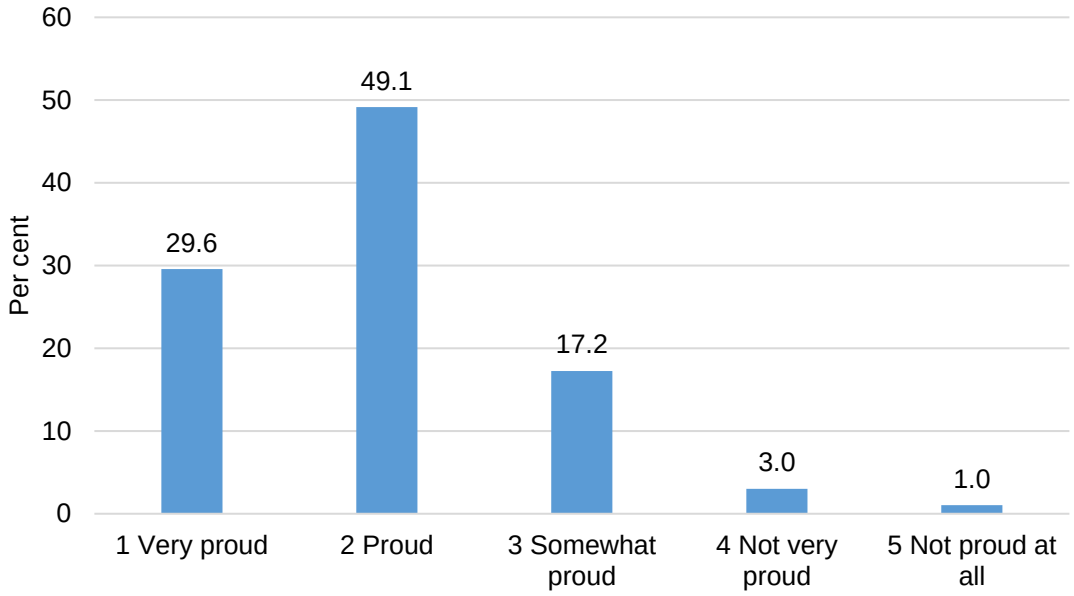
Overall, respondents were the proudest of Singapore's healthcare system, level of cleanliness, the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), religious diversity, and the education system, in that order. These represented the top five sources of pride where overall pride levels were the strongest. On the other hand, the bottom five sources representing those that respondents were the least proud of (i.e., lowest overall pride) included levels of government autonomy, sporting achievements, the arts, treatment of low-wage migrant workers, as well as levels of press freedom in Singapore.

### *4.1.1 Government institutions: Majority of Singaporeans were proud of government institutions; they were most proud of the healthcare system, followed by the SAF, education, and justice system*

We now provide some highlights in the various domains of pride. In general, majority of respondents were proud or very proud of government institutions. For example, 78.7 per cent of respondents were proud or very proud of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), 83.8 per cent were proud or very proud of

Singapore's healthcare system, and 73.3 per cent were proud or very proud of Singapore's education system. There was a slight majority of respondents (56.5 per cent) who were proud or very proud of Singapore's justice system, with 28.5 per cent reporting that they were somewhat proud. The results on pride in the justice system however must be taken with caution as the survey went into the field just after the highly publicised acquittal of Parti Liyani. The verdict by the High Court in overturning the District Court's judgment and the subsequent public discourse cast serious questions about the prosecution's handling of the case and whether there were sufficient safeguards to ensure fair trials for migrant workers. In contrast, results from the latest World Values Survey conducted in Singapore in early 2020 indicated that more than 80 per cent of Singaporeans and Permanent Residents expressed "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the courts in Singapore (Mathews et al., 2021).

*Figure 5: Singapore's armed forces*

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By Mathews, M., Hou, M., Tan, E. S., & Chua, V.

*Figure 6: Healthcare system*

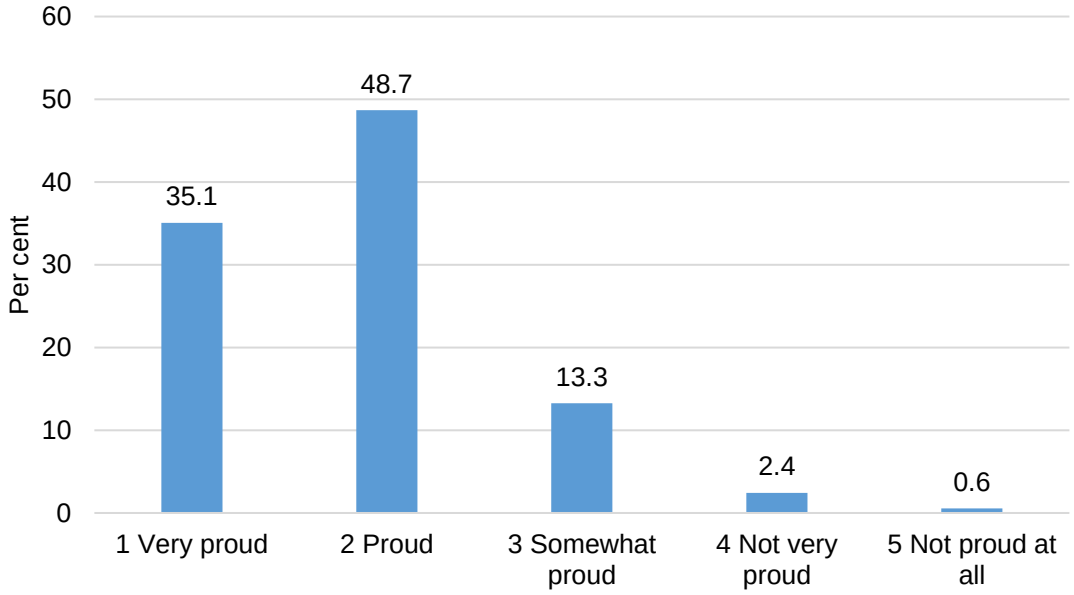



*Figure 7: Education system*

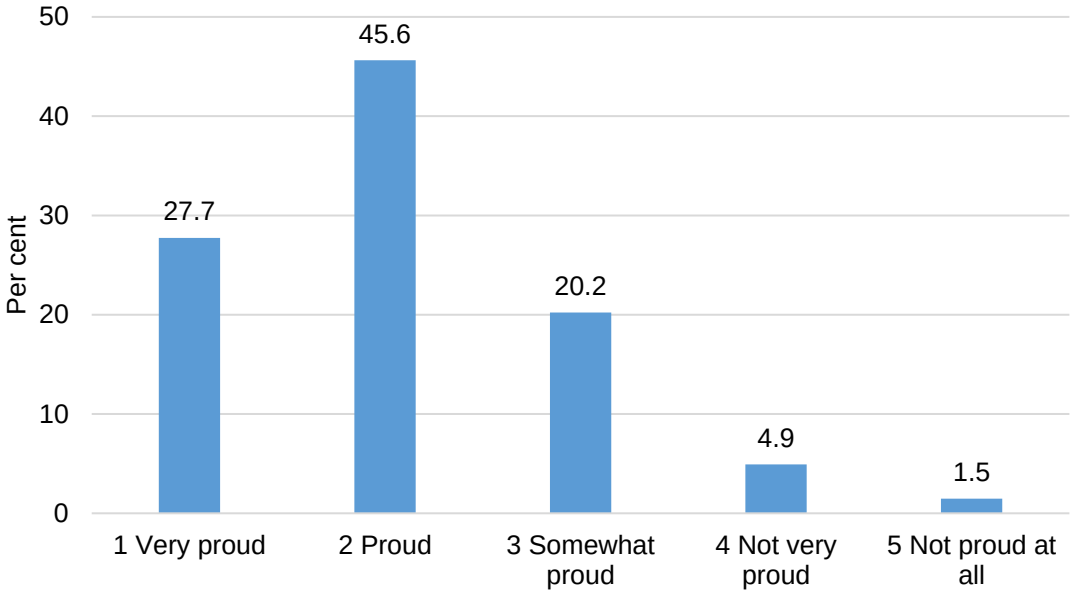
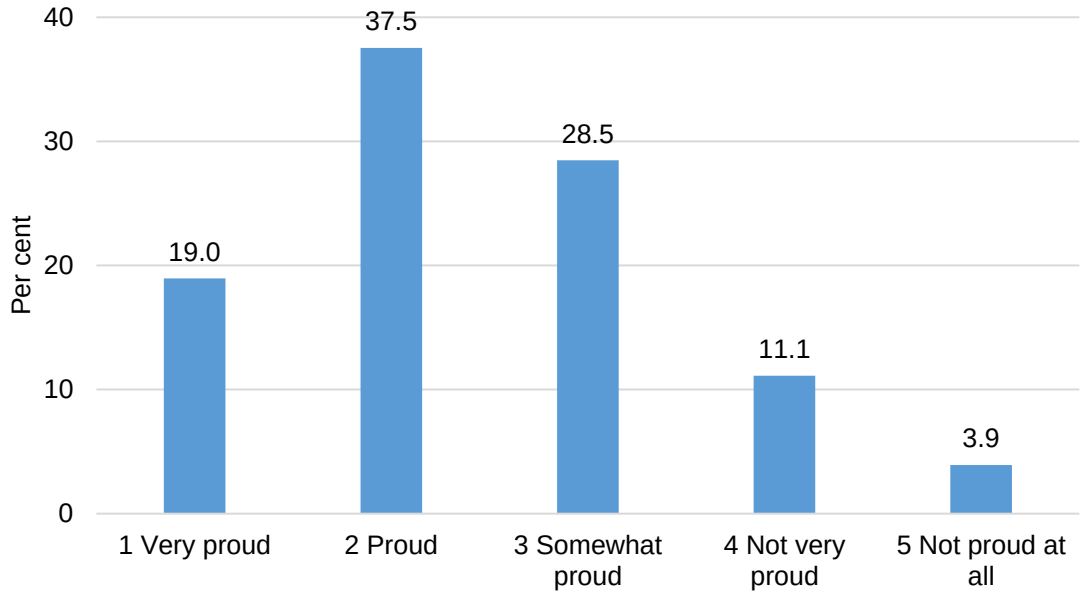


*Figure 8: Justice system*




Higher-educated and higher SES respondents were likely to be less proud of Singapore's justice system than lower-educated and lower SES respondents. For example, 20.8 per cent of lower-educated and 27.3 per cent of lower SES respondents indicated that they were very proud of Singapore's justice system, while only 19.1 per cent of higher-educated and 12.1 per cent of higher SES respondents indicated so.

*Table 2: Pride towards justice system in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level[2] | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 20.8% | 37.8% | 28.1% | 8.4% | 4.9% |
| **Mid-educated** | 17.5% | 38.9% | 28.9% | 11.2% | 3.5% |

[2] Lower educated defined as secondary and below; mid-educated defined as post-secondary and diploma; higher educated defined as degree and above

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Higher-educated** | 19.1% | 36.2% | 28.4% | 12.7% | 3.7% |

*Table 3: Pride towards justice system in Singapore by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 27.3% | 35.1% | 27.3% | 7.6% | 2.7% |
| **Middle SES** | 17.4% | 37.9% | 29.3% | 11.4% | 4.0% |
| **Higher SES** | 12.1% | 39.7% | 27.5% | 15.2% | 5.5% |

### *4.1.2 Social institutions: Level of pride in social institutions were likewise high; respondents expressed higher levels of pride in racial equality and religious diversity/freedom than in meritocracy*

In terms of social institutions, majority of respondents were proud or very proud of racial equality (68.9 per cent) and religious diversity/freedom (74.3 per cent), but less so of meritocracy (50.6 per cent).

*Figure 9: Racial equality*

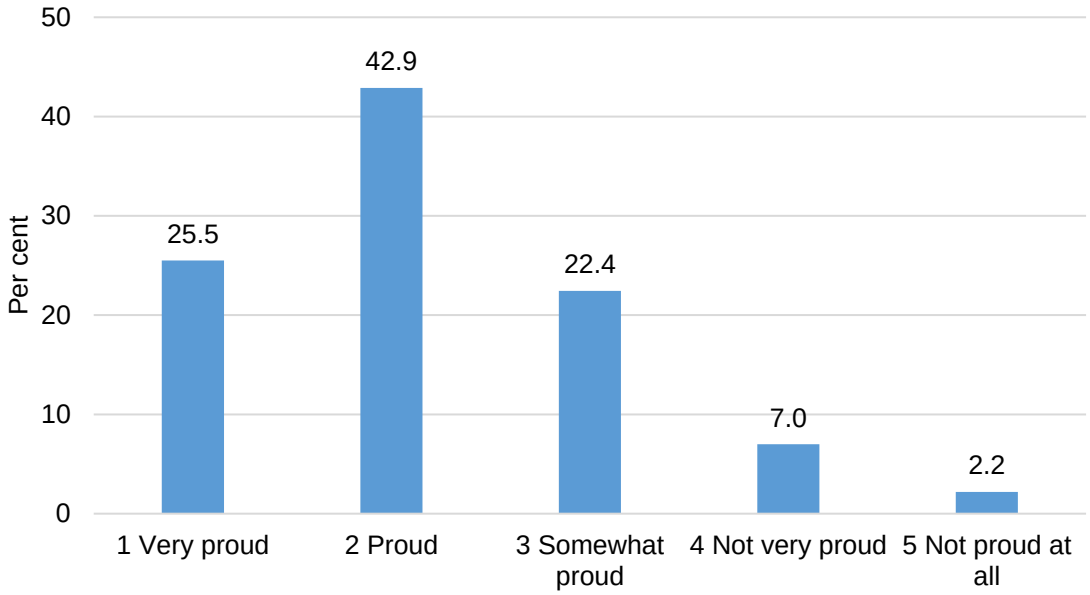



*Figure 10: Religious diversity and freedom*

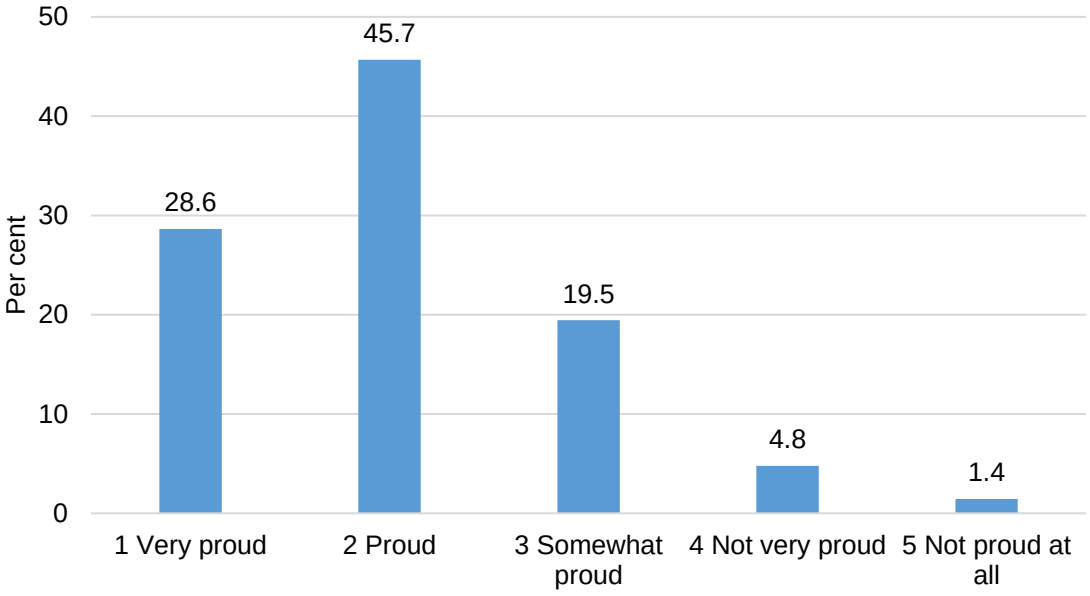
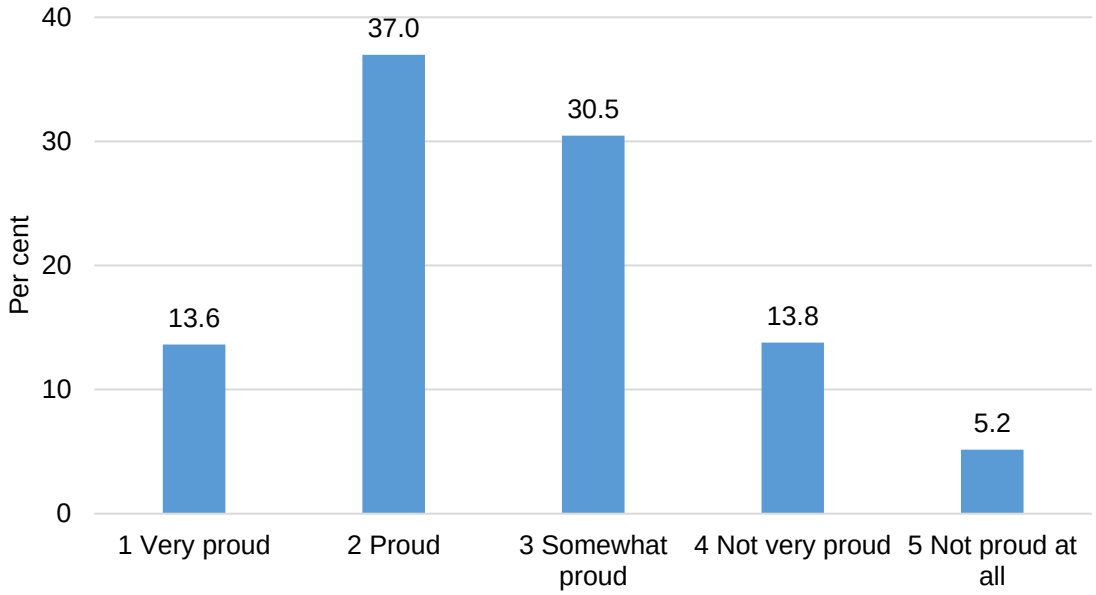


*Figure 11: Level of Meritocracy*




Higher educated respondents as well as Malays were less proud of racial equality in Singapore. Specifically, 51.7 per cent of Malay respondents were proud or very proud of racial equality, compared with 71.1 per cent of Chinese and 66.2 per cent of Indian respondents. Higher-educated respondents were also slightly less likely to be proud of racial equality in Singapore than lower-educated respondents. For example, 67.3 per cent of higher-educated respondents indicated that they were proud or very proud of racial quality, compared with 74.0 per cent of lower-educated respondents who indicated the same.

*Table 4: Pride towards racial equality in Singapore by race (%)*

| Race | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 24.6% | 46.5% | 22.5% | 5.4% | 1.0% |
| **Malay** | 19.1% | 32.6% | 26.7% | 15.3% | 6.4% |
| **Indian** | 35.7% | 30.5% | 17.6% | 10.0% | 6.2% |
| **Others** | 42.2% | 35.6% | 20.0% | 2.2% | 0.0% |

*Table 5: Pride towards racial equality in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education Level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 28.6% | 45.4% | 16.6% | 7.2% | 2.2% |
| **Mid-educated** | 22.6% | 43.0% | 24.7% | 7.2% | 2.5% |
| **Higher-educated** | 26.0% | 41.3% | 24.2% | 6.7% | 1.9% |

Higher SES and higher-educated respondents were least proud of levels of meritocracy in Singapore. Specifically, only 9.2 per cent of higher SES respondents were very proud of meritocracy in Singapore, compared with 19.3 per cent of lower SES and 12.5 per cent of mid-SES respondents. Of higher-educated respondents, 47.8 per cent were proud or very proud of meritocracy in Singapore, compared with 49.7 per cent of mid-educated and 56.6 per cent of lower-educated respondents.

*Table 6: Pride towards meritocracy in Singapore by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 19.3% | 40.0% | 28.0% | 8.9% | 3.9% |
| **Middle SES** | 12.5% | 36.9% | 31.0% | 14.4% | 5.2% |
| **Higher SES** | 9.2% | 33.2% | 32.3% | 18.5% | 6.8% |

*Table 7: Pride towards meritocracy in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 14.1% | 42.5% | 28.2% | 9.8% | 5.3% |
| **Mid-educated** | 13.6% | 36.1% | 32.8% | 12.2% | 5.3% |
| **Higher-educated** | 13.4% | 34.4% | 29.9% | 17.5% | 4.9% |

### *4.1.3 Political institutions: Respondents were divided on their levels of pride towards political institutions; they were more proud of Singapore's style of democracy and less so of having the same ruling party for a long time and of the government's level of autonomy*

In terms of political institutions, respondents were generally divided in their levels of pride, with 52.5 per cent being proud or very proud of Singapore's style of democracy, 46.8 per cent being proud or very proud about having the same ruling party for a long time, and 44.2 per cent being proud or very proud about the government's level of autonomy.

*Figure 12: The way democracy is practised in Singapore*

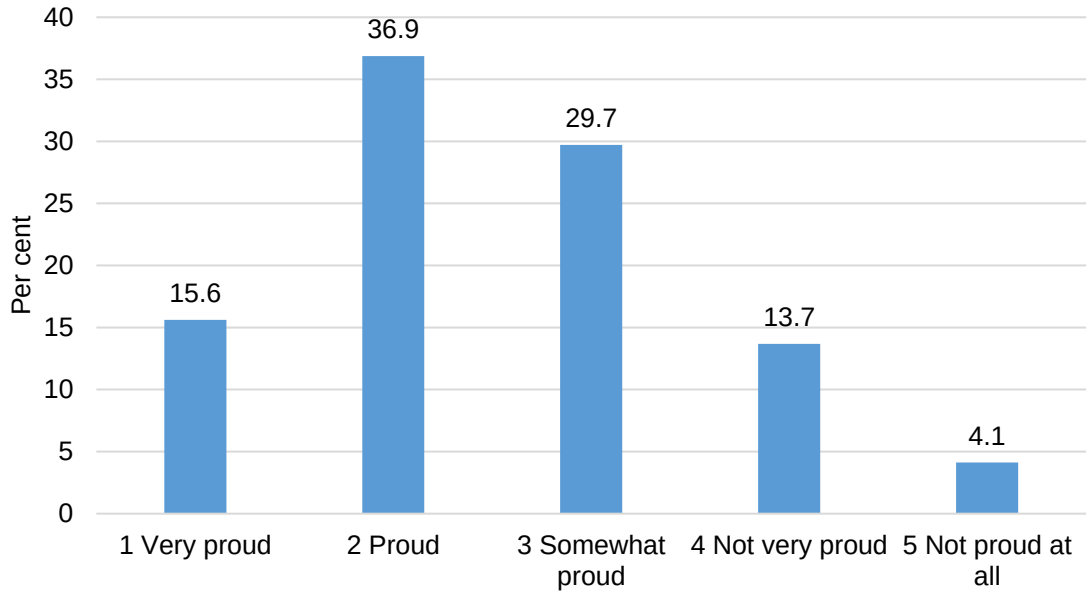



*Figure 13: Having the same ruling party for a long time*

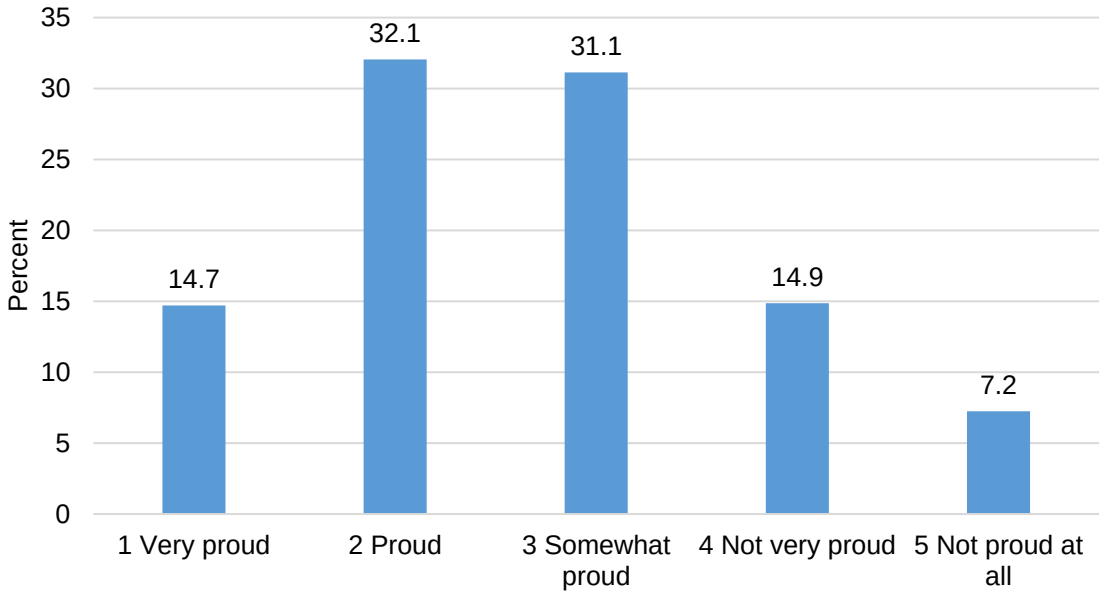
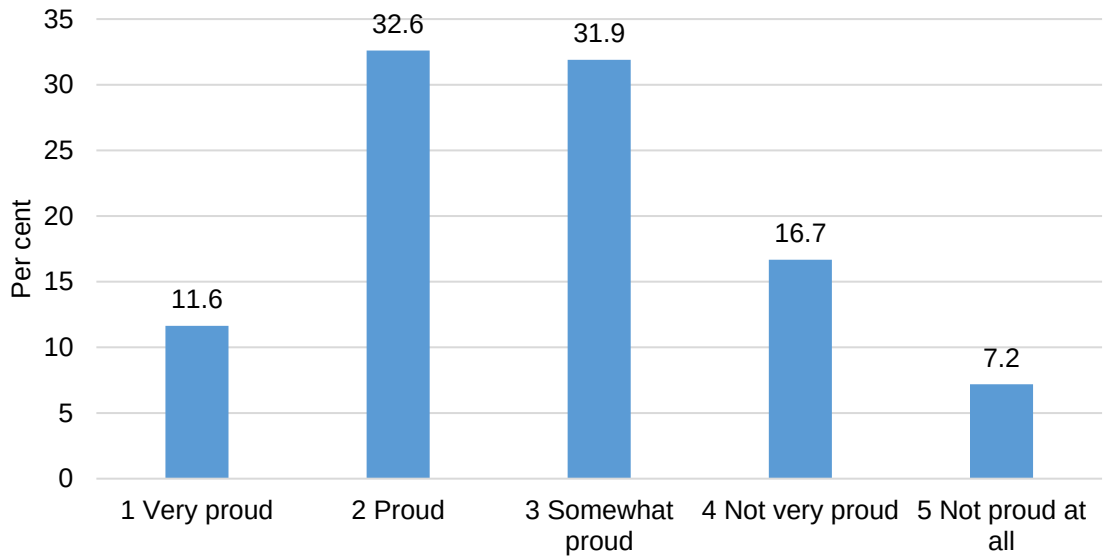


*Figure 14: The government has a lot of autonomy (it is able to do what it wants to do)*




In particular, older adults and more educated respondents were likelier to be less proud of the way democracy is practised in Singapore. From the survey, 13.6 per cent of respondents aged 35 to 49, 13.0 per cent of respondents aged 50 to 64, and 15.7 per cent of those aged 65 and above were very proud of the way democracy is practised in Singapore, compared with 20.2 per cent of those aged 21 to 34. At the same time, 49.2 per cent of higher-educated respondents were proud or very proud of democracy in Singapore, compared with 52.7 per cent of mid-educated respondents and 57.5 per cent of lower-educated respondents.

*Table 8: Pride towards democracy in Singapore by age (%)*

| Age | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 20.2% | 37.9% | 26.9% | 11.7% | 3.4% |
| **35 to 49** | 13.6% | 38.1% | 32.3% | 12.0% | 4.1% |
| **50 to 64** | 13.0% | 35.0% | 30.9% | 16.5% | 4.7% |
| **65 and above** | 15.7% | 35.0% | 26.7% | 17.5% | 5.1% |

*Table 9: Pride towards democracy in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 18.1% | 39.4% | 24.9% | 12.7% | 4.9% |
| **Mid-educated** | 15.7% | 37.0% | 33.4% | 11.2% | 2.5% |
| **Higher-educated** | 14.0% | 35.2% | 29.4% | 16.3% | 5.0% |

More educated respondents were also less likely to be proud of the high levels of government autonomy in Singapore. For example, 41.7 per cent of higher-educated respondents indicated that they were proud or very proud of levels of government autonomy in Singapore, compared with 48.6 per cent of lower-educated respondents who indicated the same.

*Table 10: Pride towards government autonomy in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 12.6% | 36.0% | 31.2% | 12.4% | 7.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 12.8% | 31.3% | 32.7% | 17.6% | 5.6% |
| **Higher-educated** | 10.1% | 31.6% | 31.6% | 18.5% | 8.1% |

### *4.1.4 Other aspects of society: Levels of pride in Singapore's treatment of migrant workers and level of press freedom were generally low*

We also examined other aspects of society that might impact levels of national pride. Specifically, we examined how respondents felt towards Singapore's treatment of low-wage migrant workers and the degree of press freedom in Singapore. In general, respondents were not very proud of Singapore's treatment of migrant workers, with only 34.0 per cent being proud or very proud. Respondents were also not very proud of the degree of press freedom in Singapore, with only 31.8 per cent being proud or very proud.

*Figure 15: Treatment of low-wage migrant workers*

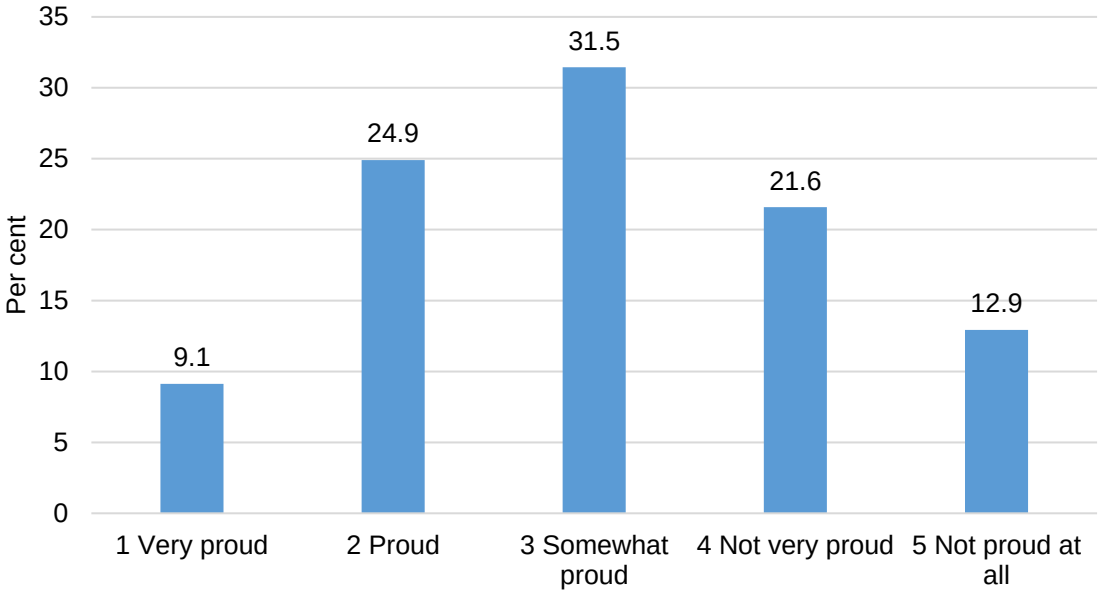
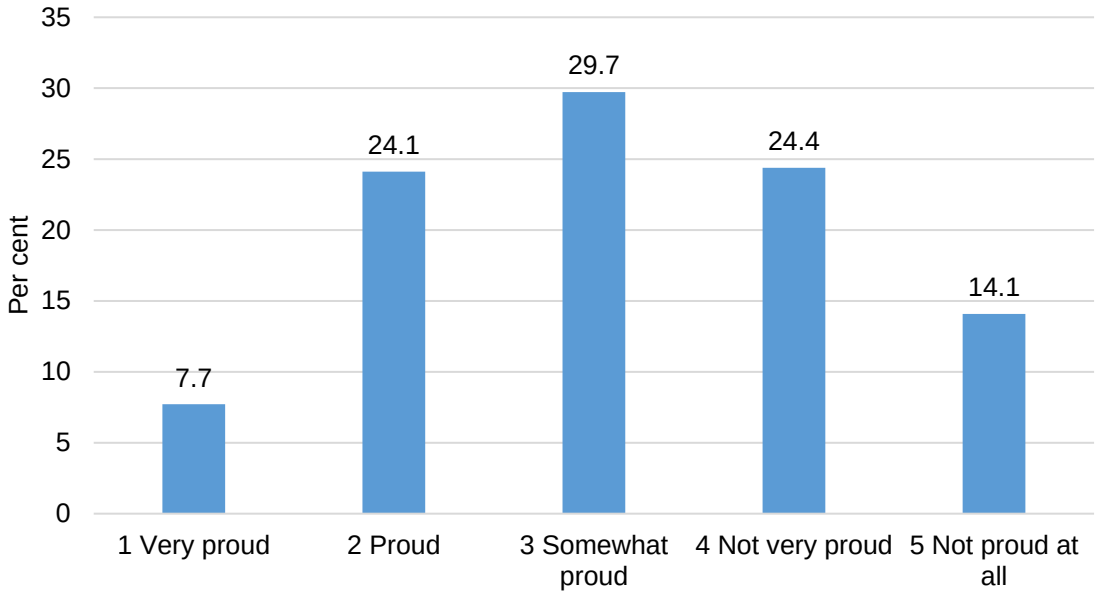


*Figure 16: Level of press freedom*




In particular, higher-educated respondents were the least proud of treatment of low-wage migrant workers. Among them, 26.4 per cent of higher-educated respondents were proud or very proud of treatment of low-wage migrant workers, as compared with 35.7 per cent of mid-educated and 44.4 per cent of lower-educated respondents. The discussions in the media surrounding the migrant workers in dormitories, many of whom were infected during the early stage of the Covid-19 pandemic, likely informed higher educated respondents about the limited levels of protection that are accorded to these workers.

*Table 11: Pride towards treatment of low-waged migrant workers in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 14.7% | 29.7% | 33.4% | 16.4% | 5.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 8.4% | 27.3% | 32.7% | 19.2% | 12.3% |
| **Higher-educated** | 6.4% | 20.0% | 29.2% | 26.7% | 17.7% |

In addition, higher-educated respondents were also less proud of levels of press freedom in Singapore. Only 22.1 per cent of higher-educated respondents were proud or very proud of levels of press freedom, compared with 34.0 per cent of mid-educated and 45.1 per cent of lower-educated respondents.

*Table 12: Pride towards levels of press freedom in Singapore by education (%)*

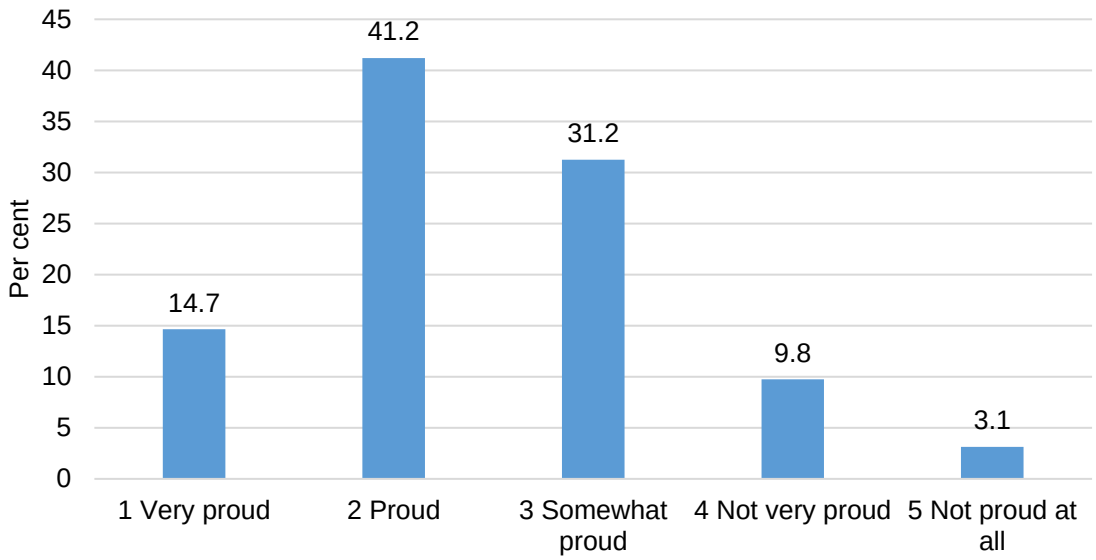
| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 12.9% | 32.2% | 28.1% | 18.0% | 8.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 6.8% | 27.2% | 31.8% | 21.7% | 12.5% |
| **Higher-educated** | 5.4% | 16.7% | 29.0% | 30.4% | 18.5% |

### *4.1.5 More than half of respondents were proud of fellow Singaporeans' level of competitiveness and the level of environmental consciousness; approximately two-fifths were proud of Singapore's sporting achievements and the arts*

We also examined competitiveness as a feature of the Singaporean characteristic. Competitiveness was defined as an eagerness to do better than

others. There was only a slight majority of respondents who were proud or very proud of Singaporean characteristic of competitiveness (55.9 per cent).

*Figure 17: Level of competitiveness (eager to do better than others)*




Lower-educated and lower SES respondents were more likely to be proud of Singaporeans' competitiveness than higher-educated and higher SES respondents. Specifically, 61.0 per cent of lower-educated and 64.3 per cent of lower SES respondents indicated that they were proud or very proud of Singaporeans' competitiveness, while only 53.7 per cent of higher-educated and 47.3 per cent of higher SES respondents indicated the same.

*Table 13: Pride towards levels of competitiveness in Singapore by education (%)*

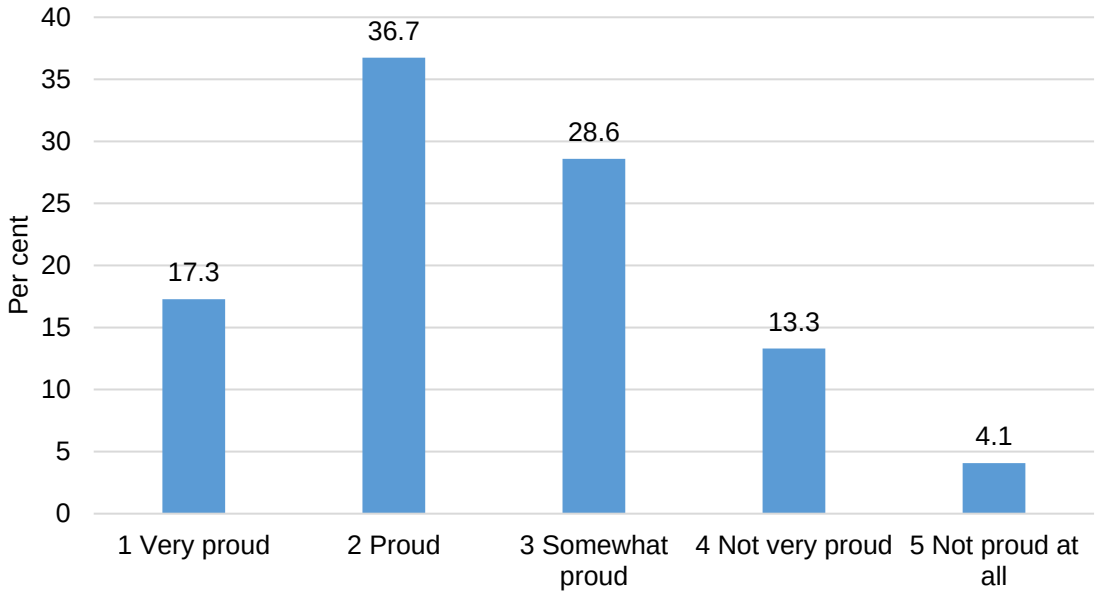
| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 17.1% | 43.9% | 29.3% | 6.1% | 3.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 12.9% | 41.9% | 32.9% | 9.4% | 2.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 14.6% | 39.1% | 31.0% | 12.2% | 3.1% |

*Table 14: Pride towards levels of competitiveness in Singapore by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 20.9% | 43.4% | 26.2% | 7.1% | 2.4% |
| **Middle SES** | 13.3% | 41.6% | 31.8% | 9.9% | 3.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 10.2% | 37.1% | 36.3% | 12.9% | 3.5% |

Respondents' pride towards Singapore's level of environmental consciousness was also examined. In general, only a slight majority of respondents (54.0 per cent) were proud or very proud of this aspect of society.

*Figure 18: Level of environmental consciousness*




Interestingly, younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to be proud of the level of environmental consciousness in Singapore, with 19.6 per cent indicating that they were very proud, while only 13.5 per cent of those 65 and above indicated the same. However, higher-educated respondents were less likely than lower-educated respondents to be proud of this aspect of Singapore, with only 15.0 per cent of higher-educated respondents indicating that they were very proud, while 20.0 per cent of lower-educated respondents indicated the same.

*Table 15: Pride towards level of environmental consciousness by age (%)*

| Age | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 19.6% | 36.6% | 25.7% | 14.2% | 3.9% |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **35 to 49** | 17.0% | 37.9% | 27.5% | 12.6% | 5.1% |
| **50 to 64** | 16.6% | 35.3% | 30.5% | 14.4% | 3.2% |
| **65 and above** | 13.5% | 36.9% | 35.1% | 10.8% | 3.6% |

*Table 16: Pride towards level of environmental consciousness in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 20.0% | 42.6% | 27.6% | 7.2% | 2.7% |
| **Mid-educated** | 18.0% | 39.2% | 30.2% | 10.1% | 2.6% |
| **Higher-educated** | 15.0% | 31.0% | 27.9% | 19.8% | 6.2% |

We also examined respondents' pride towards sports and the arts in Singapore. In general, less than half of respondents were proud or very proud of Singapore's sporting achievements (42.6 per cent) and the arts (39.4 per cent). In terms of demographic differences, larger distinctions were observed across education and SES levels than across age. For example, 12.1 per cent among those aged 21 to 34 were very proud of Singapore's sporting achievements, compared with 9.4 per cent among those aged 65 and above; whereas 18.7 per cent of lower SES respondents were very proud, compared with just 4.9 per cent of those with higher SES. Overall, higher-educated and higher SES respondents were less proud of sporting achievements in Singapore.

*Figure 19: Sporting achievements*

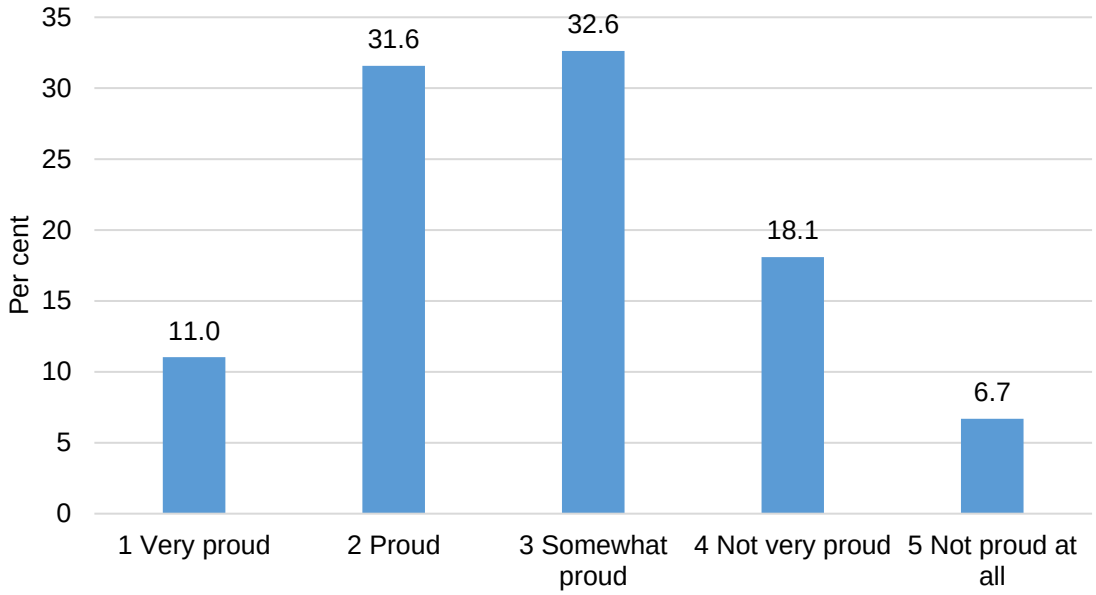



*Table 17: Pride towards sporting achievements in Singapore by age (%)*

| Age | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 12.1% | 35.2% | 31.0% | 15.9% | 5.8% |
| **35 to 49** | 10.5% | 28.2% | 32.2% | 20.3% | 8.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 11.2% | 30.1% | 35.5% | 17.4% | 5.8% |
| **65 and above** | 9.4% | 35.8% | 31.1% | 18.9% | 4.7% |

*Table 18: Pride towards sporting achievements in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 17.8% | 35.6% | 28.5% | 14.0% | 4.2% |
| **Mid-educated** | 10.9% | 36.3% | 30.1% | 16.8% | 6.0% |
| **Higher-educated** | 7.0% | 25.1% | 37.4% | 21.7% | 8.8% |

*Table 19: Pride towards sporting achievements in Singapore by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 18.7% | 38.8% | 25.7% | 11.2% | 5.6% |
| **Middle SES** | 9.6% | 30.4% | 33.9% | 19.8% | 6.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 4.9% | 25.1% | 38.4% | 22.4% | 9.2% |

Similarly, age differences in pride towards the arts were observed to be less prominent than differences across education and SES levels. For example, 42.5 per cent of those aged 21 to 34 were proud or very proud of the arts, compared with 40.7 per cent of those aged 65 and above; while 49.4 per cent of lower-educated respondents were proud or very proud of the arts, compared with 31.7 per cent among the higher-educated. Overall, higher-educated and higher SES respondents were less proud of the arts in Singapore.

*Figure 20: The arts*

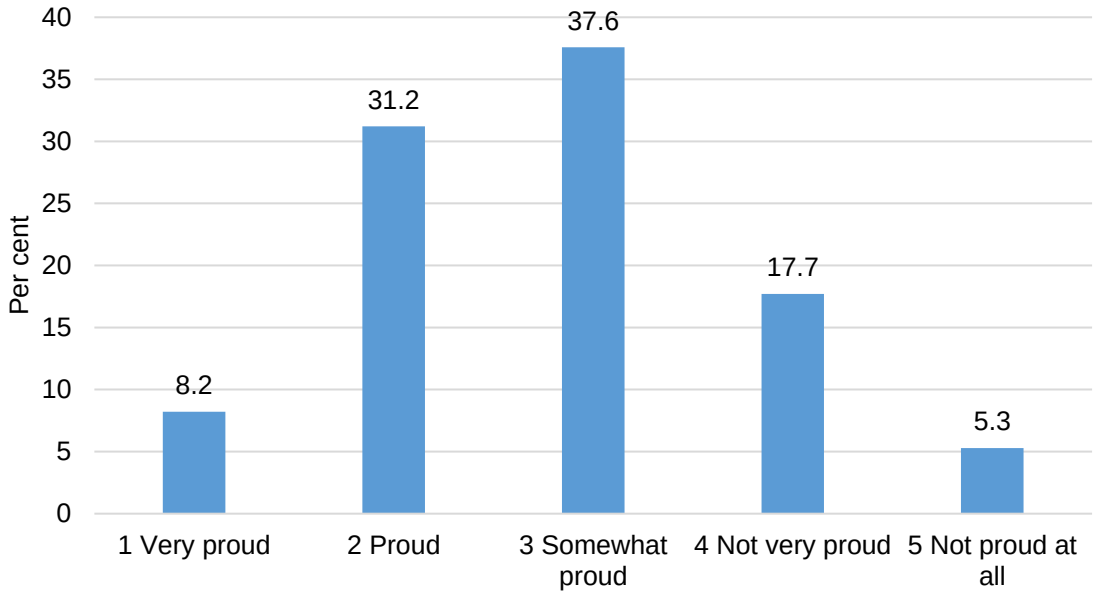



*Table 20: Pride towards the arts in Singapore by age (%)*

| Age | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 10.1% | 32.4% | 33.6% | 17.9% | 6.0% |
| **35 to 49** | 8.9% | 28.6% | 39.3% | 17.9% | 5.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 5.8% | 32.0% | 39.0% | 17.7% | 5.5% |
| **65 and above** | 6.4% | 34.3% | 39.7% | 16.7% | 2.9% |

*Table 21: Pride towards the arts in Singapore by education (%)*

| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 10.4% | 39.0% | 32.4% | 13.7% | 4.4% |
| **Mid-educated** | 9.1% | 32.6% | 39.3% | 15.5% | 3.6% |
| **Higher-educated** | 6.2% | 25.5% | 39.2% | 21.9% | 7.2% |

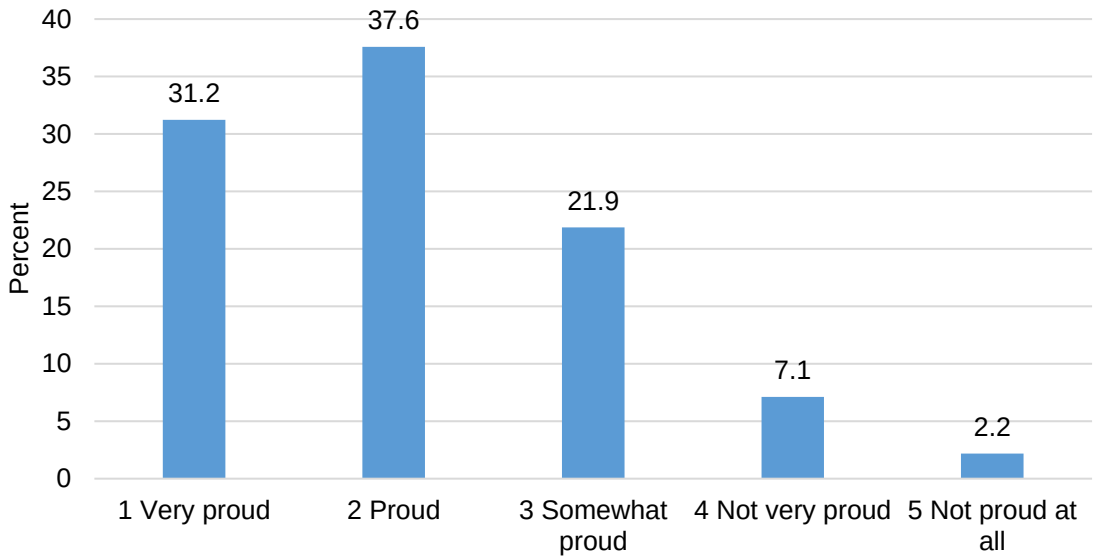
*Table 22: Pride towards the arts in Singapore by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 14.0% | 38.0% | 32.9% | 10.9% | 4.3% |
| **Middle SES** | 7.1% | 31.0% | 37.5% | 18.9% | 5.5% |
| **Higher SES** | 3.4% | 22.7% | 44.3% | 23.5% | 6.2% |

### *4.1.6 Majority of respondents were proud of Singapore's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic*

Given that the COVID-19 pandemic was a highly significant event that tested the effectiveness of the Singapore government, the survey also asked respondents to indicate how proud they were of the handling of the pandemic here. Results revealed that majority of respondents (68.8 per cent) were proud or very proud of Singapore's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Figure 21: How Singapore has handled the COVID-19 pandemic*




Notwithstanding, higher-educated and higher SES respondents remained more critical of Singapore's response to the pandemic, with only 29.1 per cent of higher-educated and 25.7 per cent of higher SES respondents being very proud of Singapore's handling of the pandemic, compared with 36.5 per cent of lower-educated and 38.0 per cent of lower SES respondents indicating the same.

*Table 23: Pride towards Singapore's handling of COVID-19 pandemic by education (%)*

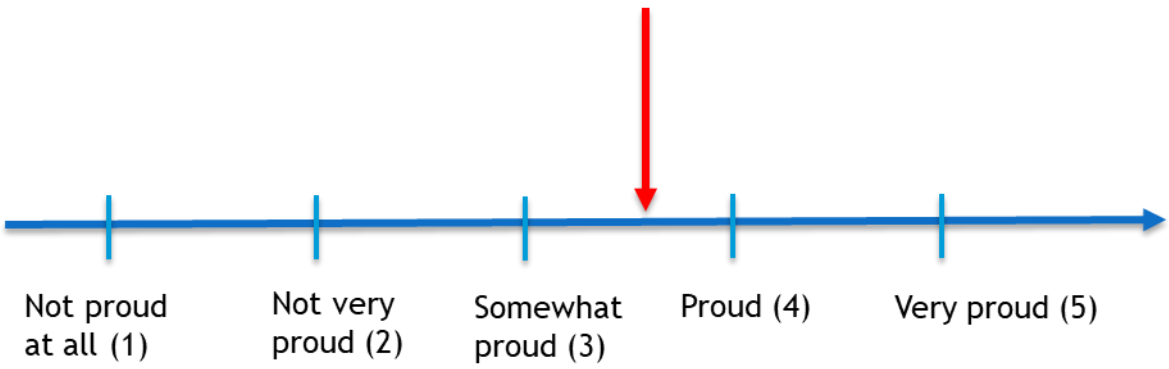
| Education level | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 36.5% | 38.3% | 15.5% | 6.9% | 2.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 29.9% | 38.0% | 21.6% | 8.5% | 1.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 29.1% | 36.8% | 26.0% | 6.1% | 2.0% |

*Table 24: Pride towards Singapore's handling of COVID-19 pandemic by SES (%)*

| SES | 1 Very proud | 2 Proud | 3 Some-what proud | 4 Not very proud | 5 Not proud at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 38.0% | 36.3% | 16.6% | 6.6% | 2.5% |
| **Middle SES** | 30.0% | 38.9% | 22.5% | 6.5% | 2.1% |
| **Higher SES** | 25.7% | 35.7% | 27.2% | 9.5% | 1.9% |

Finally, we examined the overall levels of pride that respondents had towards Singapore. In order to compute an overall index of national pride, all 24 items were averaged together. Items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not proud at all proud, 5 = very proud), with higher scores representing stronger pride. Results revealed that in general, respondents were moderately proud about Singapore, with a mean score of 3.61 out of 5.

*Figure 22: Overall index of national pride (5-point scale)*



We compared the mean scores of overall pride across various demographic variables. Results showed that higher SES respondents were less proud than lower SES respondents. Higher-educated respondents were also less proud than lower-educated respondents. Racial minorities (i.e., Malays and Indians) were prouder than Chinese, with Indians prouder than Malays. There was no significant difference across age groups in pride levels. Mean scores across demographic groups were compared based on one-way ANOVAs.

*Table 25: Demographic breakdown of overall pride levels (numbers shown are mean scores)*

| Age | Mean Pride Score | Race* | Mean Pride Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 3.66 | **Chinese** | 3.54 |
| **35 to 49** | 3.60 | **Malay** | 3.70 |
| **50 to 64** | 3.56 | **Indian** | 3.91 |
| **65 and above** | 3.61 | **Others** | 3.97 |
| **SES*** | **Mean Pride Score** | **Education*** | **Mean Pride Score** |
| **Lower SES (HDB 1 to 3 Room)** | 3.78 | **Lower-educated (secondary and below)** | 3.69 |
| **Mid-SES (HDB 4 to 5 room)** | 3.59 | **Mid-educated (secondary and diploma)** | 3.61 |
| **Higher SES (Private/landed)** | 3.40 | **Higher-educated (degree and above)** | 3.54 |

*Note: * indicates statistically significant difference across groups based on one-way ANOVA*

## 4.2 Singapore's National Identity Content

### *4.2.1 Racial vs national identity: While respondents generally identified more strongly with their national identity than their racial identity, Malays identified strongly with both the nation and their race*

Research has shown that individuals' ethnic and superordinate national identity can both be important sources of one's own sense of identity. This may be especially so for minorities in a society where their influence in constructing the meaning of national identity may be limited when compared with the majority (e.g., Devos & Mohamed, 2014; Phinney et al., 2001). It is important for governments to be aware of the dynamics between ethnic and national identity, as strong levels of ethnic and national identity indicate a healthy integration, while high ethnic identity but low national identity may indicate marginalisation.

In the present survey, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of their race and Singapore to their own sense of identity, each on a 4-point scale (1 = very important, 4 = not at all important). Results revealed that across all racial groups, more respondents viewed national identity as a more important source of identity than race.

Overall, 87.3 per cent of respondents indicated that their race was important or very important to their sense of identity and 95.6 per cent indicated that Singapore was important or very important to their sense of identity. In particular, minorities demonstrated a stronger dual sense of identity, with high levels of importance accorded to both racial and national identity. In particular,

Malays possessed the strongest dual sense of identity, with approximately equal importance accorded to both race and nation. As indicated in Table 26, 71.1 per cent of Malays reported race to be very important to their sense of identity, while Table 27 shows that 78.1 per cent of Malays felt that Singapore is very important to their sense of identity. Among minorities, a greater proportion of Indians (84.8 per cent) deemed Singapore to be very important to their identity when compared with Malays (78.1 per cent), as shown in Table 27.

*Table 26: How important is your race to your own sense of identity?*[3]

| Race | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not at all important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 44.5% | 42.2% | 11.6% | 1.7% |
| **Malay** | 71.1% | 23.1% | 4.1% | 1.7% |
| **Indian** | 60.2% | 23.2% | 12.3% | 4.3% |
| **Others** | 53.3% | 33.3% | 13.3% | 0.0% |

*Table 27: How important is Singapore to your own sense of identity?*[4]

| Race | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not at all important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 66.9% | 28.2% | 4.3% | 0.5% |
| **Malay** | 78.1% | 18.2% | 2.9% | 0.8% |
| **Indian** | 84.8% | 13.7% | 1.4% | 0.0% |
| **Others** | 73.3% | 22.2% | 4.4% | 0.0% |

[3] There were no significant changes in percentage breakdowns after excluding PRs.
[4] There were no significant changes in percentage breakdowns after excluding PRs.

### *4.2.2 Relational closeness: Respondents generally felt closer to Singapore than to their racial group; Malays expressed similar levels of closeness to Singapore and their racial group*

We also examined respondents' feelings of closeness to various groups — specifically, to their racial group as well as to Singapore. Respondents were asked how close they felt to people of their race and to Singapore on a 4-point scale (1 = very close, 4 = not close at all).

Overall, 92.3 per cent of respondents felt close or very close to people of their own race, while 95.6 per cent reported feeling close or very close to Singapore. The differences were more apparent when comparisons were made on those who chose the "very close" category – it was 54.6 per cent for those who chose "very close" to Singapore compared to 36.0 per cent for their own race. Similar to identity importance, results suggest that minorities felt closer to both their racial group as well as Singapore, when compared with Chinese respondents. Specifically, 59.1 per cent of Malays and 46.0 per cent of Indians felt very close to their racial group, compared with 31.0 per cent of Chinese who felt the same; and 55.0 per cent of Malays and 69.7 per cent of Indians felt very close to Singapore, compared with 52.0 per cent of Chinese who felt the same.

The results also suggest that Malays were more likely to feel close to both racial group and Singapore, with approximately equal proportions who felt very close

to both. On the other hand, Indians and Chinese were more likely to feel closer to Singapore than their racial group.

*Table 28: How close do you feel to people of your race?*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not close at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 31.0% | 62.1% | 6.2% | 0.7% |
| **Malay** | 59.1% | 36.0% | 4.5% | 0.4% |
| **Indian** | 46.0% | 40.3% | 10.4% | 3.3% |
| **Others** | 31.1% | 48.9% | 17.8% | 2.2% |

*Table 29: How close do you feel to Singapore?*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not close at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 52.0% | 43.8% | 3.9% | 0.3% |
| **Malay** | 55.0% | 38.4% | 5.4% | 1.2% |
| **Indian** | 69.7% | 25.6% | 4.7% | 0.0% |
| **Others** | 66.7% | 31.1% | 2.2% | 0.0% |

We also examined other demographic differences in terms of their feelings of closeness to Singapore. Lower SES and lower-educated respondents were more likely to feel very close to Singapore than higher SES and higher-educated respondents. Specifically, 59.9 per cent of lower SES respondents and 67.3 per cent of lower-educated respondents indicated that they felt very

close to Singapore, compared with 49.3 per cent of higher SES and 47.1 per cent of higher-educated respondents.

These patterns of results were similar to the importance respondents accorded to Singapore to their own sense of identity — that is, lower SES and lower-educated respondents likewise perceived Singapore to be more important to their identity than higher SES and higher-educated respondents. In addition, these patterns of results were also similar to levels to pride towards Singapore as reported in the previous section, where lower SES and lower-educated respondents were also more likely to be prouder of Singapore compared with higher SES and higher-educated respondents.

In terms of age group differences, younger respondents were also less likely to feel close to Singapore than older respondents. For example, 38.5 per cent of youths below 35 felt very close to Singapore, compared with 76.3 per cent of elderly aged 65 and above. These patterns of results were similar to the importance respondents accorded to Singapore to their own sense of identity — that is, younger respondents were less likely than older respondents to perceive Singapore as being important to their own sense of identity.

It is interesting to note that despite these differences in closeness and identity importance across age groups, there was no significant difference in pride levels towards Singapore across age groups as reported in the previous

section. This could suggest that pride and relational closeness may be somewhat distinct psychological constructs; that is, it may be possible for one to feel proud of a group without being highly identified with the group, such as when identification serves an instrumental purpose (Cialdini et al., 1976).

*Table 30: How close do you feel to Singapore?*

| Age, Class, Education | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not close at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 38.5% | 53.6% | 7.5% | 0.3% |
| **35 to 49** | 50.8% | 45.2% | 3.6% | 0.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 67.5% | 30.0% | 2.1% | 0.4% |
| **65 and above** | 76.3% | 22.0% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 59.9% | 37.2% | 2.3% | 0.6% |
| **Mid-SES** | 53.8% | 41.1% | 4.8% | 0.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 49.3% | 45.9% | 4.5% | 0.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 67.3% | 30.4% | 1.8% | 0.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 53.8% | 41.1% | 4.7% | 0.4% |
| **Higher-educated** | 47.1% | 47.6% | 5.1% | 0.1% |

*Table 31: How important is Singapore to your own sense of identity?*

| Age, Class, Education | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not important at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 60.1% | 33.7% | 5.7% | 0.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 66.6% | 28.5% | 4.5% | 0.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 80.8% | 17.1% | 1.7% | 0.4% |
| **65 and above** | 83.2% | 13.8% | 2.2% | 0.9% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 73.7% | 22.7% | 3.2% | 0.4% |
| **Mid-SES** | 71.9% | 23.9% | 3.6% | 0.6% |
| **Higher SES** | 61.2% | 33.1% | 5.5% | 0.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 79.9% | 17.2% | 2.1% | 0.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 69.0% | 27.2% | 3.1% | 0.7% |
| **Higher-educated** | 65.3% | 29.0% | 5.6% | 0.1% |

### *4.2.3 Importance of language to one's identity: English was an important source of identity, followed by one's mother tongue and Singlish; racial minorities were more likely to prioritise English and their mother tongue than Chinese respondents*

An important marker of one's racial identity in Singapore is the ability to speak in the vernacular language associated with the racial group. Based on a 2017 survey on ethnic identity, at least 86 per cent of respondents across all ethnicities found it at least "somewhat important" for someone who considers himself or herself as a Singaporean Chinese, Malay, or Indian to be able to read, write and speak Mandarin, Malay and Tamil respectively (Mathew et al., 2017, 21-22). On the other hand, the use of English, deemed Singapore's official language, is viewed as crucial for the development of a national identity given that it is neutral to all the major racial groups and acts as a lingua franca

for inter-ethnic communication (Wee, 2018). Singlish, a creole stemming from language contact here, is regarded by over half of the population based on an IPS study as giving Singaporeans a sense of identity (Mathew et al., 2000)

Given the significance of language, we examined the importance of language to respondents' sense of identity. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of their mother tongue, English, and Singlish to their own sense of identity on a 4-point scale (1 = very important, 4 = not at all important).

Overall, English emerged as the most important for respondents' sense of identity (62.9 per cent indicated very important), followed by one's mother tongue (45.2 per cent indicated very important), and finally, Singlish (27.4 per cent indicated very important).

Racial minorities were more likely to prioritise both English and their mother tongue than Chinese respondents. For example, 76.0 per cent of Malays and 82.9 per cent of Indians indicated that English was very important, and 64.0 per cent of Malays and 66.4 per cent of Indians indicated that their mother tongue was very important. In comparison, 57.6 per cent of Chinese indicated that English was very important, while only 39.6 per cent of Chinese indicated that their mother tongue was very important.

In terms of age differences, younger respondents were more likely to view Singlish as important to their sense of identity. Of those aged 21 to 34, 35.9 per cent indicated that Singlish was very important, compared with less than 25 per cent of respondents from other age groups indicating the same. There was no significant difference across education levels in terms of the importance accorded to Singlish for one's identity.

*Table 32: Vernacular importance (%)*

| Overall, by race, language, age, education | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not at all important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **English** | 62.9% | 28.4% | 7.8% | 0.8% |
| **Mother Tongue** | 45.2% | 39.8% | 13.5% | 1.4% |
| **Singlish** | 27.4% | 38.7% | 25.2% | 8.5% |
| **English** | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 57.6% | 31.9% | 9.7% | 0.9% |
| **Malay** | 76.0% | 19.4% | 3.7% | 0.8% |
| **Indian** | 82.9% | 16.1% | 0.5% | 0.5% |
| **Others** | 77.8% | 20.0% | 2.2% | 0.0% |
| **Mother Tongue** | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 39.6% | 43.5% | 15.5% | 1.4% |
| **Malay** | 64.0% | 27.3% | 8.3% | 0.4% |
| **Indian** | 66.4% | 27.0% | 4.7% | 1.9% |
| **Others** | 33.3% | 44.4% | 17.8% | 4.4% |
| **Singlish** | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 25.7% | 40.6% | 26.0% | 7.7% |
| **Malay** | 36.5% | 35.7% | 19.9% | 7.9% |
| **Indian** | 31.3% | 30.3% | 24.6% | 13.7% |
| **Others** | 20.0% | 33.3% | 31.1% | 15.6% |
| **English** | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 60.9% | 29.9% | 8.3% | 0.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 61.5% | 30.9% | 7.0% | 0.6% |
| **50 to 64** | 66.0% | 26.5% | 6.7% | 0.8% |
| **65 and above** | 65.4% | 22.1% | 11.3% | 1.3% |

| Overall, by race, language, age, education | Very important | Somewhat important | Not very important | Not at all important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mother Tongue** | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 42.2% | 40.6% | 15.5% | 1.7% |
| **35 to 49** | 45.3% | 40.4% | 12.9% | 1.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 47.7% | 39.6% | 11.3% | 1.3% |
| **65 and above** | 47.0% | 36.6% | 15.5% | 0.9% |
| **Singlish** | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 35.9% | 37.8% | 20.3% | 5.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 24.6% | 38.5% | 27.5% | 9.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 24.3% | 41.1% | 26.3% | 8.3% |
| **65 and above** | 22.0% | 36.6% | 28.4% | 12.9% |
| **Lower-educated** | 28.4% | 39.4% | 24.3% | 7.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 28.2% | 39.0% | 25.7% | 7.1% |
| **Higher-educated** | 26.3% | 38.3% | 25.4% | 10.1% |

Respondents' frequency of using various vernaculars was also assessed based on their race. Specifically, we examined respondents' use of English, their mother tongue, as well as Singlish by asking them to indicate how often they used these languages socially with friends (1 = never, 5 = very often or always).

Overall, Indian respondents were most likely to predominantly use English rather than their mother tongue. Specifically, Chinese respondents were more likely to use English than Mandarin, with 56.4 per cent indicating that they used English very often or always, compared with 44.9% who used Mandarin very often or always. Malay respondents were more likely to use Malay than English, with 60.3 per cent indicating that they used Malay very often or always, compared with 58.7 per cent who used English very often or always. Indian

respondents used English much more than Tamil, with 80.5 per cent indicating that they used English very often or always, compared with only 36.7 per cent who used Tamil very often or always. The use of Singlish across all racial groups remained around 25 to 30 per cent, which was lower than the use of English and mother tongue languages.

*Table 33: Vernacular frequency of usage (%)*

| Vernacular | Never | Rarely | Some-times | Often | Very often or always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | | | | | |
| **English** | 2.1% | 3.7% | 10.6% | 27.1% | 56.4% |
| **Mandarin** | 1.8% | 4.5% | 11.9% | 36.9% | 44.9% |
| **Singlish** | 9.6% | 9.0% | 26.0% | 28.1% | 27.2% |
| **Malay** | | | | | |
| **English** | 2.5% | 3.7% | 7.4% | 27.7% | 58.7% |
| **Malay** | 3.3% | 1.7% | 6.6% | 28.1% | 60.3% |
| **Singlish** | 12.4% | 7.0% | 23.6% | 26.0% | 31.0% |
| **Indian** | | | | | |
| **English** | 4.8% | 0.5% | 4.3% | 10.0% | 80.5% |
| **Tamil** | 24.8% | 4.3% | 12.9% | 21.4% | 36.7% |
| **Singlish** | 18.5% | 12.3% | 22.3% | 20.4% | 26.5% |

### *4.2.4 Markers of integration: Values related to community cohesion were regarded to be more important than individualistic ones when determining markers of integration*

Next, we examined Singapore's national identity content (i.e., what it means to be Singaporean) through markers of integration. This construct was measured by asking respondents how important a list of 12 values was for newcomers to successfully integrate into Singapore (1 = not important at all; 4 = very important). Not only does this construct directly reveal the relative importance placed on immigrants' attributes for effective integration, it also indirectly signals what respondents believe might be the defining characteristics of being a Singaporean.

The ranked order for markers of integration reflected that respondents conceived most important national values as those that support community cohesion (e.g., respect for law, tolerance, equality) while less important values were those that are more individualist (e.g., freedom of speech, self-fulfilment) in nature (see Table 34). For example, 66.4 per cent of respondents indicated that respect for law was very important for integration into Singapore as did about 53 per cent in the case of tolerance and multiracialism, while only 27.0 per cent of respondents indicated that freedom of speech was very important. Other ideals such as democracy (where 39.0 per cent indicated as very important) and self-fulfilment (where 21.0 per cent indicated as very important) were also ranked low in the range of values. This showed the Singaporean

national identity to be more universalist and collectivist in nature, characterised by a demonstration of concern for others, and a prioritisation of social cohesion and stability.

*Table 34: How important are each of these values for newcomers to Singapore to adopt in order to successfully integrate into Singapore? (Ranked based on mean scores; Proportions shown in %)*[5]

| Value (Ranked) | | Very important | Important | Not important | Not at all important | Mean Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Respect for law | 66.4 | 31.3 | 1.7 | 0.5 | 3.64 |
| 2 | Tolerance | 53.9 | 42.4 | 3.0 | 0.5 | 3.50 |
| 3 | Multiracialism | 52.8 | 42.0 | 4.3 | 0.7 | 3.47 |
| 4 | Equality | 48.8 | 46.8 | 3.4 | 0.8 | 3.44 |
| 5 | Environmental protection | 51.4 | 40.2 | 6.7 | 1.6 | 3.41 |
| 6 | Traditional family values | 43.5 | 47.9 | 6.7 | 1.7 | 3.33 |
| 7 | Human rights | 43.3 | 47.2 | 8.0 | 1.2 | 3.33 |
| 8 | Meritocracy | 39.7 | 51.7 | 7.2 | 0.9 | 3.31 |
| 9 | Democracy | 39.0 | 51.9 | 7.5 | 1.3 | 3.29 |
| 10 | Self-fulfilment | 32.0 | 56.9 | 9.3 | 1.4 | 3.20 |
| 11 | Religiosity | 36.6 | 45.3 | 14.6 | 3.2 | 3.16 |
| 12 | Freedom of speech | 27.0 | 53.7 | 16.7 | 2.3 | 3.06 |

We then examined which demographic group might be more likely to perceive democratic/individualist ideals (i.e., freedom of speech, democracy, self-fulfilment, human rights) as more important. These four items were averaged to form a scale. Cronbach's alpha was 0.81, indicating good internal reliability. A one-way ANOVA showed that younger ($F(3,1996) = 16.29$, $p < .001$) and mid-

[5] There were no significant differences in ranks of these values even after excluding PRs.

educated (F(2,1997)=7.08, p=.001) respondents were more likely to perceive these ideals as important for integration in Singapore.

*Table 35: Age and education level differences in mean scores of importance of "Western" ideals*

| Age | Mean score | Education level | Mean score |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 3.32 | **Lower-educated (secondary and below)** | 3.17 |
| **35 to 49** | 3.24 | **Mid-educated (post-secondary and diploma)** | 3.28 |
| **50 to 64** | 3.13 | **Higher-educated (degree and above)** | 3.20 |
| **65 and above** | 3.09 | | |

### *4.2.5 Perceived valence of stereotypical traits: More than nine in 10 respondents perceived conformity, adherence to rules, multiculturalism, and cleanliness to be positive traits of the Singaporean identity*

In addition, we sought to highlight ground perceptions about the valence (i.e., positivity vs negativity) and relevance of a range of traits that are commonly used to describe Singaporeans in a stereotypical fashion. Specifically, respondents rated whether each of the following traits represented a positive or negative aspect of the Singaporean identity, or was not a part of the Singaporean identity.

Results showed that Singaporeans overwhelmingly perceived conformity, adherence to rules, multiculturalism, and cleanliness positively, with more than 90 per cent of respondents indicating that those traits represented positive features of the Singaporean identity. In addition, competitiveness and hard work also featured prominently, with more than 70 per cent indicating that those traits represent positive features of the Singaporean identity. On the other hand, respondents were more divided about whether challenging authority and risk-aversion (i.e., preferring to stick to what is familiar) were positive or negative features of the Singaporean identity. Last but not least, the lack of creativity was perceived negatively, with 57.9 per cent indicating that the lack of innovation was a negative aspect of the Singaporean identity.

*Table 36: Valence and relevance of stereotypical traits to the Singaporean identity (%)*

| Traits | Positive | Negative | Not a part of Singaporean identity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Singaporeans are law-abiding citizens | 92.7 | 5.8 | 1.4 |
| Singaporeans are multicultural and live peacefully with all races and nationalities | 91.3 | 6.3 | 2.3 |
| Singaporeans conform and follow rules | 90.9 | 6.1 | 2.9 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Singaporeans are clean and tidy | 90.7 | 5.7 | 3.4 |
| Singaporeans value close family relationships | 89.6 | 6.6 | 3.7 |
| Singaporeans strive to work hard and succeed in their job or career | 88.6 | 7.9 | 3.4 |
| Singaporeans are privileged when compared with people from other countries | 82.9 | 12.3 | 4.8 |
| Singaporeans are helpful and kind to strangers | 78.9 | 12.7 | 8.3 |
| Singapore media follows government guidelines | 74.2 | 21.8 | 3.9 |
| Singaporeans are competitive and work long hours | 70.2 | 25.1 | 4.7 |
| Singaporeans prefer to stick with what is familiar | 58.0 | 34.6 | 7.2 |
| Singaporeans are passive and never challenge rules or regulations | 44.1 | 46.7 | 9.0 |
| Singaporeans value material things over ideals | 43.7 | 46.4 | 9.6 |
| Singaporeans are not creative; we copy rather than innovate | 25.1 | 57.9 | 16.8 |

Demographic differences in perceived valence of these stereotypical traits were then examined. Specifically, we focused on the three traits that had fairly mixed perceptions. First, we examined demographic differences on challenging authority, encapsulated by the statement that Singaporeans are passive and never challenge rules or regulations. Results revealed that the clearest differences were across education, SES, and race. For example, while a greater proportion of lower-educated respondents were likely to perceive this trait as positive (54.4 per cent) than negative (38.6 per cent), this trend reversed for higher-educated respondents, who were more likely to perceive this trait as negative (55.0 per cent) than positive (32.4 per cent). Similarly, Chinese respondents were more likely to perceive this trait as negative (51.8 per cent)

than positive (39.1 per cent), while Malay and Indian respondents were more likely to perceive this trait as positive (65.3 per cent and 56.4 per cent, respectively) than negative (27.7 per cent and 33.2 per cent, respectively).

*Table 37: Perceived valence about the statement "Singaporeans are passive and never challenge rules or regulations"*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | Positive | Negative | Not a part of Singaporean identity |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 48.4% | 43.1% | 8.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 43.7% | 46.4% | 9.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 41.5% | 49.8% | 8.5% |
| **65 and above** | 40.5% | 49.6% | 9.5% |
| | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 52.1% | 38.5% | 9.2% |
| **Mid-SES** | 44.3% | 47.1% | 8.6% |
| **Higher SES** | 32.8% | 56.7% | 10.2% |
| | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 53.4% | 38.6% | 7.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 50.9% | 43.0% | 6.0% |
| **Higher-educated** | 32.4% | 55.0% | 12.5% |
| | | | |
| **Chinese** | 39.1% | 51.8% | 9.0% |
| **Malay** | 65.3% | 27.7% | 7.0% |
| **Indian** | 56.4% | 33.2% | 10.0% |
| **Others** | 42.2% | 40.0% | 17.8% |

Second, we examined demographic differences on risk-aversion, encapsulated by the statement that Singaporeans prefer to stick with what is familiar. Across demographic groups, respondents were more likely to perceive this trait as positive rather than negative. However, the proportion of respondents who

viewed this trait as negative was higher for higher SES and higher-educated respondents. For example, only 31.5 per cent of lower SES and 29.4 per cent of lower-educated respondents perceived risk-aversion as negative; on the contrary, 40.2 per cent of higher SES and 42.4 per cent of higher-educated respondents viewed risk-aversion as negative.

*Table 38: Perceived valence about the statement "Singaporeans prefer to stick with what is familiar"*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | Positive | Negative | Not a part of Singaporean identity |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 57.3% | 34.2% | 8.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 55.0% | 37.1% | 7.9% |
| **50 to 64** | 59.4% | 34.4% | 5.6% |
| **65 and above** | 65.1% | 28.9% | 6.0% |
| | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 62.0% | 31.5% | 6.5% |
| **Mid-SES** | 58.6% | 34.2% | 7.1% |
| **Higher SES** | 50.7% | 40.2% | 8.7% |
| | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 66.5% | 29.4% | 3.7% |
| **Mid-educated** | 64.5% | 29.7% | 5.8% |
| **Higher-educated** | 46.9% | 42.3% | 10.8% |
| | | | |
| **Chinese** | 55.9% | 36.7% | 7.2% |
| **Malay** | 67.4% | 26.9% | 5.8% |
| **Indian** | 63.0% | 29.4% | 7.6% |
| **Others** | 53.3% | 31.1% | 15.6% |

Third, we examined demographic differences on perceived materialism, encapsulated by the statement that Singaporeans value material things over ideals. Once again, the clearest distinctions emerged across SES and

education levels. Specifically, lower SES respondents were more likely to perceive materialism positively (50.6 per cent) than negatively (40.1 per cent), while higher SES respondents were more likely to perceive materialism negatively (55.4 per cent) than positively (35.2 per cent). Likewise, approximately 45 per cent of lower-educated respondents were likely to perceive materialism positively and negatively, while a greater proportion of higher-educated respondents were likely to perceive materialism negatively (51.8 per cent) than positively (34.9 per cent).

*Table 39: Perceived valence about the statement "Singaporeans value material things over ideals"*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | Positive | Negative | Not a part of Singaporean identity |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 47.9% | 42.5% | 9.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 44.9% | 44.1% | 10.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 38.7% | 52.9% | 7.7% |
| **65 and above** | 40.9% | 47.8% | 10.8% |
| | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 50.6% | 40.1% | 9.0% |
| **Mid-SES** | 43.3% | 46.3% | 10.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 35.2% | 55.4% | 8.7% |
| | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 45.4% | 44.4% | 9.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 52.6% | 41.6% | 5.7% |
| **Higher-educated** | 34.9% | 51.8% | 13.1% |
| | | | |
| **Chinese** | 40.7% | 48.7% | 10.3% |
| **Malay** | 55.4% | 36.0% | 8.3% |
| **Indian** | 53.6% | 40.3% | 5.7% |
| **Others** | 33.3% | 53.3% | 13.3% |

### *4.2.6 Self-perceptions of Singaporeans: Respondents perceive the typical Singaporean to be law-abiding, peaceful, obedient, multicultural, and helpful, while at the same time being stressed and materialistic*

Next, to identify the self-perceptions of Singaporeans, we sought to examine what type of characteristics respondents typically associated Singaporeans with. We provided respondents a list of 34 traits and asked them to rate the extent to which Singaporeans embody these traits on 7-point scale (1 = almost all, 7 = almost none). The objective of this measure was to clarify how Singaporeans commonly viewed other fellow Singaporeans.

Overall, based on the top 10 scores, Singaporeans were generally perceived to have a mixture of both positive and negative traits. These included being law-abiding, peaceful, obedient, multicultural, and helpful on one hand, and being stressed, and materialistic on the other. That is, these traits were seen as being possessed by the majority of Singaporeans. The traits that were least likely to be perceived to characterise the majority of Singaporeans included being racist, ungrateful, uncreative, change-resistant, entitled, and Chinese-centric.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that despite these negative traits being less likely to characterise majority of Singaporeans, the mean scores of many of these traits (with the exception of being ungrateful and racist) remained below the mid-point of 4.0. In other words, a substantial proportion of Singaporeans

(about half) were still seen to possess these negative traits (see Appendix B for percentage breakdown). This suggests that critical perceptions about Singaporeans were quite prevalent among our respondents.

*Table 40: Ranked order of perceived Singaporean traits*
*(Note: lower scores represent perceptions that more Singaporeans possess those traits; 1 = almost all, 4 = half of the group, 7 = almost none)*

| Rank | Trait | Mean Score | Rank | Trait | Mean Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Law-abiding | 2.26 | 18 | Cautious | 2.89 |
| 2 | Peaceful | 2.37 | 19 | Polite | 2.90 |
| 3 | Stressed/overworked | 2.39 | 20 | Cosmopolitan (open to foreign cultures) | 3.01 |
| 4 | Competitive | 2.54 | 21 | Conservative | 3.09 |
| 5 | Obedient | 2.60 | 22 | Treats everyone fairly | 3.21 |
| 6 | Endorse multicultural and multiracial values | 2.69 | 23 | Anxious | 3.23 |
| 7 | Advantaged compared with people from other countries | 2.70 | 24 | Entitled | 3.24 |
| 8 | Hardworking | 2.70 | 25 | Chinese-centric | 3.34 |
| 9 | Materialistic | 2.70 | 26 | Need to be told what to do and how to think | 3.47 |
| 10 | Helpful | 2.72 | 27 | Welcoming to foreigners | 3.50 |
| 11 | Friendly | 2.75 | 28 | Outspoken about issues they are unhappy about | 3.53 |
| 12 | Complaining | 2.75 | 29 | Well to do financially | 3.53 |
| 13 | Honest | 2.75 | 30 | Do not want to change | 3.57 |
| 14 | Pragmatic | 2.76 | 31 | Arrogant | 3.80 |
| 15 | Clean and tidy | 2.76 | 32 | Not creative | 3.82 |
| 16 | Value family over everything else | 2.77 | 33 | Ungrateful | 4.14 |
| 17 | Trustworthy | 2.79 | 34 | Racist | 4.59 |

## 4.3 Psychological Predictors of Pride and Identity

### *4.3.1 Perceived warmth and competence of Singaporeans positively predict respondents' pride towards the country and the importance of Singapore to one's own identity*

Social psychological research has long identified warmth and competence as two universal dimensions of social cognition across cultures (Fiske et al., 2007; Cuddy et al., 2008). Specifically, warmth traits ("heart") pertain to a group's perceived sociability, trust, likeability, etc., while competence traits ("head") pertain to the group's perceived capability, effectiveness, etc.

We took this opportunity to examine the implications of warmth and competence perceptions on Singaporeans' national pride and identification. That is, how would respondents' perceptions of Singaporeans as warm vs competent predict levels of pride and their perceived importance of the Singapore identity?

Respondents rated their perceptions of Singaporeans in terms of the following traits (1 = almost all, 7 = almost none). In the warmth dimension, the traits were friendly, helpful, honest, trustworthy, and values multiculturalism. In the competence dimension, the traits were competitive, hardworking, pragmatic,

and financially well-off. Cronbach's alphas were 0.87 and 0.76, respectively, indicating good internal reliability of scale items.

Hierarchical regression was then conducted to examine the effects of warmth and competence perceptions on overall pride index as well as the importance of Singapore to one's own identity as two dependent variables. Age, race, education, and SES were entered at the first step while perceived warmth and competence were entered in the second step. Doing so allowed us to isolate the unique contributions of perceived warmth and competence as psychological predictors of pride and identity, over and above demographic differences.

Results of the final regression model with pride as the dependent variable are shown in Table 41. Controlling for age, education, SES, and race, the perceived warmth and competence of Singaporeans positively predicted respondents' pride towards Singapore. Perceived warmth ($b = 0.25$, $p < .001$) and competence ($b = 0.26$, $p < .001$) have approximal equal effect sizes on pride, indicating that both psychological variables are equally influential in their impact on pride. More notably, these psychological variables were more important than demographic variables (i.e., age, race, education, SES) in predicting national pride, based on the differences in effect sizes as shown by the standardized coefficients. Specifically, the impact of perceived warmth and competence is about 3 to 4 times that of other demographic variables.

*Table 41: Regression coefficients with national pride as dependent variable*

| Final Regression Model | | Standardised Coefficients | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | |
| Variables | (Constant) | | 0.000 |
| | Age | 0.072 | 0.001 |
| | Education | 0.064 | 0.004 |
| | SES | 0.095 | 0.000 |
| | Race | -0.060 | 0.003 |
| | Perceived warmth | 0.248 | 0.000 |
| | Perceived competence | 0.260 | 0.000 |

A hierarchical regression model was also performed, this time with national identity importance as the dependent variable. Controlling for age, education, SES, and race, the perceived warmth and competence of Singaporeans once again positively predicted the importance of Singapore to one's own identity. More importantly, perceived warmth emerged as a stronger predictor ($b = 0.17$, $p < .001$) than competence ($b = 0.07$, $p = .042$) in national identification. In other words, perceived warmth is more crucial than perceived competence in predicting how important one's national identity is to one's own sense of identity.

*Table 42: Regression coefficients with national identity importance as dependent variable*

| Final Regression Model | | Standardised Coefficients | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Beta | |
| Variables | (Constant) | | 0.000 |
| | Age | -0.166 | 0.000 |
| | Education | 0.013 | 0.592 |
| | SES | 0.040 | 0.088 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Race** | -0.088 | 0.000 |
| | **Perceived warmth** | 0.173 | 0.000 |
| | **Perceived competence** | 0.066 | 0.042 |

Taken together, the results in this section suggest that how warm Singaporeans are perceived to be not only exerts a direct impact on respondents' pride, it also has an important impact on how likely respondents are in identifying with Singapore. While the present results remain correlational in nature, they do suggest that the "heart" aspect of a group's self-perceptions may indeed be a crucial element in fostering a strong national identity — perhaps even more so than how capable or successful a group is perceived to be.

## 4.4 General Perceptions of Singapore

We next examined respondents' general perceptions towards various domains in Singapore given that these shape national identity and pride. These included perceptions of society, perceptions of government, perceptions of globalisation, media usage, perceptions of immigrants, and perceptions of threat. Demographic differences in these perceptions are also reported.

### *4.4.1 Perceptions of society: Younger, higher-educated, and higher SES respondents were more likely to regard Singapore society to be unequal*

To assess respondents' perceptions of Singapore society, a series of binary questions was asked and respondent were required to select the statement that

came closer to their view. First, to examine perceived equality of society, respondents were asked to choose between the statements, “All Singaporeans are equally able to succeed in Singapore” and “Some Singaporeans are more advantaged than others in achieving success in Singapore”. Nearly two thirds of respondents (64.5 per cent) reported taking the latter view. The younger, more educated, and higher SES respondents perceived Singapore society to be less equal. For example, 70.5 per cent of those aged 21 to 34, 71.6 per cent of those who were higher-educated, and 76.6 per cent of those with higher SES believed that some Singaporeans are more advantaged than others in achieving success in Singapore, compared with 54.7 per cent of those 65 and above, 52.6 per cent of lower-educated respondents, and 53.1 per cent of lower SES respondents.

*Figure 23: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

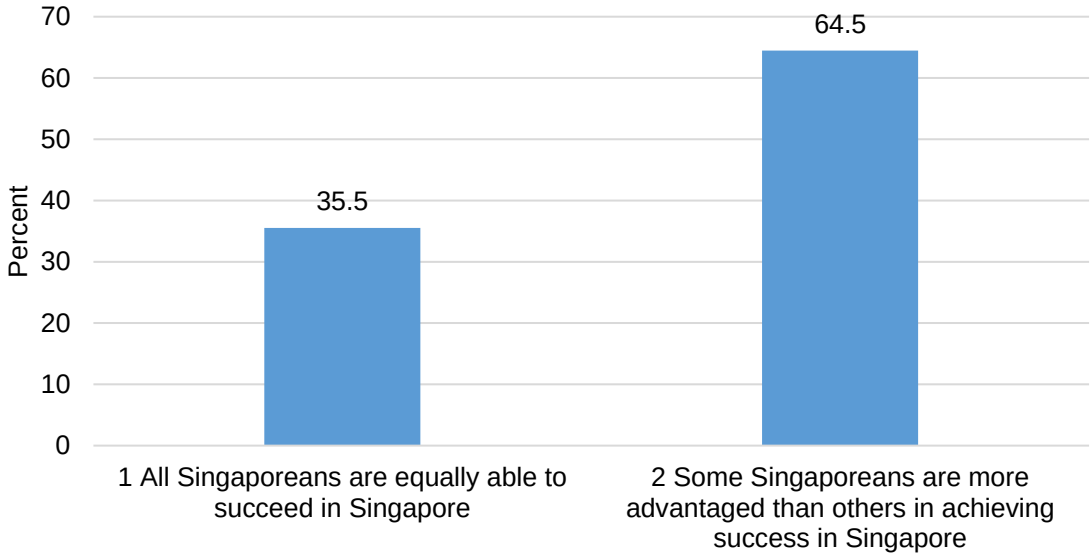



*Table 43: Demographic differences in perceived equality of society*

| Age, Education, SES | 1 All Singaporeans are equally able to succeed in Singapore | 2 Some Singaporeans are more advantaged than others in achieving success in Singapore |
|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 29.5% | 70.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 35.7% | 64.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 37.7% | 62.3% |
| **65 and above** | 45.3% | 54.7% |
| | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 47.4% | 52.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 35.0% | 65.0% |
| **Higher-educated** | 28.4% | 71.6% |
| | | |
| **Lower SES** | 46.9% | 53.1% |
| **Mid SES** | 34.3% | 65.7% |
| **Higher SES** | 23.4% | 76.6% |

In terms of perceived income and wealth equality in Singapore, more than half of respondents (55.9 per cent) chose the option “Singaporean society is unequal” over “Singaporean society has a more or less equal distribution of income and wealth.” Younger, more educated, and higher SES respondents perceived Singapore society to be less equal in income and wealth. For example, 57.6 per cent of those aged 21 to 34, 62.6 per cent of higher-educated respondents, and 69.0 per cent of higher SES respondents were more likely to believe that the Singaporean society is unequal, compared with 50.0 per cent of those 65 and above, 43.9 per cent of lower-educated, and 44.7 per cent of lower SES respondents.

*Figure 24: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

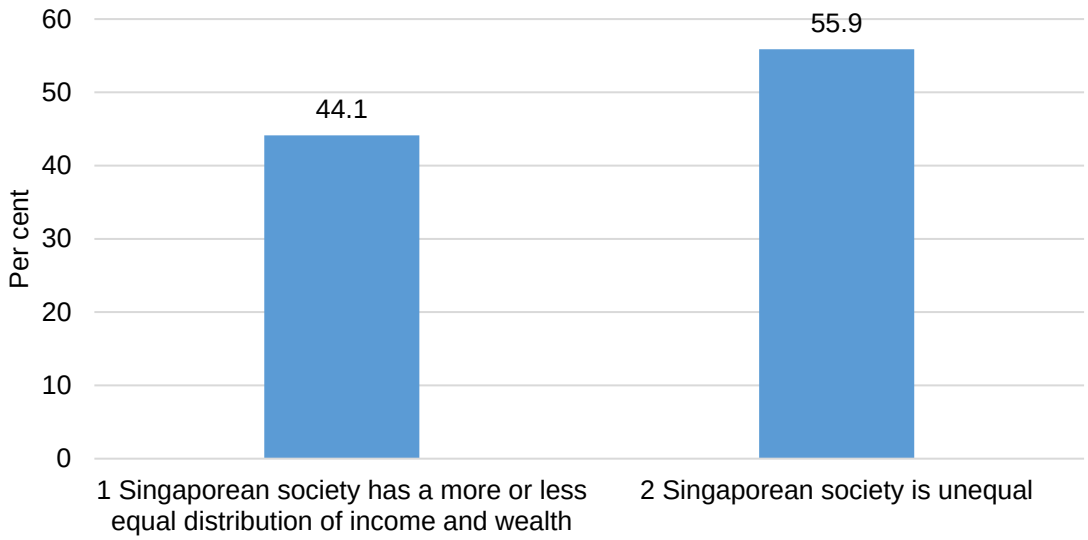



*Table 44: Demographic differences in perceived income equality of society*

| Age, Education, SES | 1 Singaporean society has a more or less equal distribution of income and wealth | 2 Singaporean society is unequal |
|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 42.4% | 57.6% |
| **35 to 49** | 42.8% | 57.2% |
| **50 to 64** | 45.2% | 54.8% |
| **65 and above** | 50.0% | 50.0% |
| | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 56.1% | 43.9% |
| **Mid-educated** | 43.0% | 57.0% |
| **Higher-educated** | 37.4% | 62.6% |
| | | |
| **Lower SES** | 55.3% | 44.7% |
| **Mid SES** | 43.3% | 56.7% |
| **Higher SES** | 31.0% | 69.0% |

Next, we examined respondents' perceived racial equality in Singapore. About 70 per cent chose the option "Singapore's approach to multiracialism works

well" over "Singapore's approach to multiracialism raises issues we need to work on." However, younger respondents and Malays were more likely to believe that Singapore's multiracialism approach requires improvement. Specifically, 51.5 per cent of Malay respondents believed that Singapore's approach to multiracialism raises issues that needed work, compared with only 25.2 per cent of Chinese respondents and 37.0 per cent of Indian respondents. At the same time, 35.4 per cent of those aged 21 to 34 were more likely to believe in that statement, compared with 29.0 per cent of those 65 and above.

*Figure 25: Of these statements, which comes closest to your point of view?*

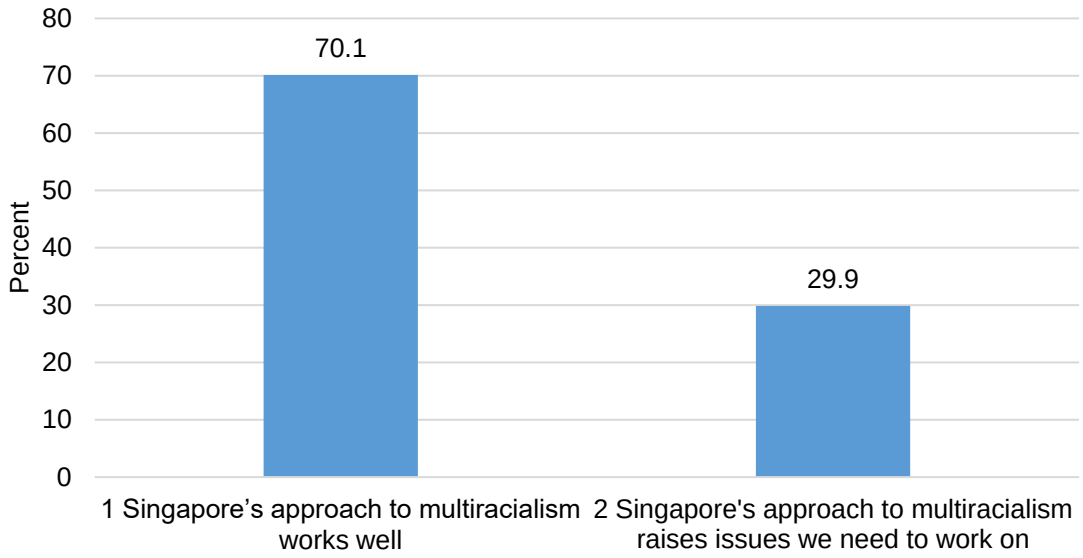



*Table 45: Demographic differences in perceptions of multiracialism in society*

| Age, Race | 1 Singapore's approach to multiracialism works well | 2 Singapore's approach to multiracialism raises issues we need to work on |
|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 64.6% | 35.4% |
| **35 to 49** | 74.1% | 25.9% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **50 to 64** | 70.8% | 29.2% |
| **65 and above** | 71.0% | 29.0% |
| | | |
| **Chinese** | 74.8% | 25.2% |
| **Malay** | 48.5% | 51.5% |
| **Indian** | 63.0% | 37.0% |
| **Others** | 62.2% | 37.8% |

In terms of perceptions of cultural dominance in Singapore, nearly two thirds of respondents (64.1 per cent) chose the option “Singapore is not dominated by any single culture” over “Singapore is largely dominated by Chinese culture.” However, younger, more educated, and Malay respondents were more likely to believe that Singapore is dominated by Chinese culture. For example, 50.5 per cent of those aged 21 to 34 believed in that statement, compared with only 18.5 per cent of those aged 65 and above. Overall, 55.4 per cent of Malay respondents believed in that statement, compared with only 32.3 per cent of Chinese respondents and 38.4 per cent of Indian respondents.

*Figure 26: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

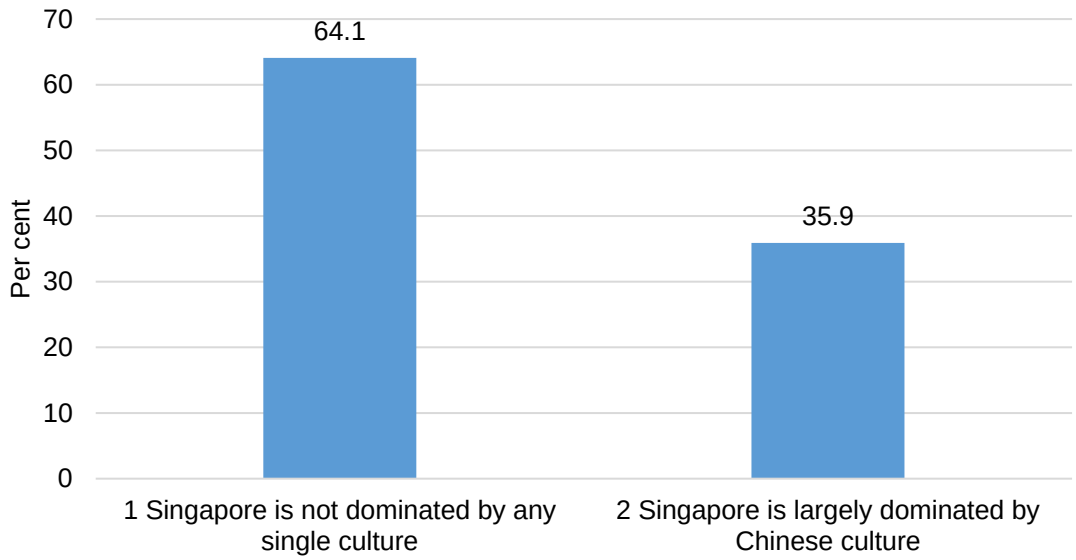



*Table 46: Demographic differences in perceptions of cultural dominance in society*

| Age, Race, Education | 1 Singapore is not dominated by any single culture | 2 Singapore is largely dominated by Chinese culture |
|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 49.5% | 50.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 64.6% | 35.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 71.9% | 28.1% |
| **65 and above** | 81.5% | 18.5% |
| | | |
| **Chinese** | 67.7% | 32.3% |
| **Malay** | 44.6% | 55.4% |
| **Indian** | 61.6% | 38.4% |
| **Others** | 60.0% | 40.0% |
| | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 74.3% | 25.7% |
| **Mid-educated** | 65.1% | 34.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 56.7% | 43.3% |

### *4.4.2 Perceptions of government: Majority of respondents perceived the government to be non-consultative. Majority were also in support of political plurality; nonetheless they believed that obeying authority is beneficial to Singaporeans*

Firstly, perceptions of government style were assessed by asking respondents to select between three statements that came closest to their view. 40.8 per cent of respondents chose the statement “The government makes decisions then asks for views from Singaporeans”, 36.9 per cent chose “The government takes the views of Singaporeans into account before making decisions”, while 22.3 per cent chose “The government generally makes the right decisions without asking for the views of Singaporeans.” Respondents aged 45 to 64 years old and more educated respondents were more likely to perceive the government as non-consultative. Specifically, more than 40 per cent of those aged between 35 and 49 believed that the government makes decisions before asking for views from Singaporeans, compared with about 33 to 38 per cent of respondents from other age groups. Among higher-educated respondents, 42.5 per cent also believed in that statement, compared with 36.9 per cent of lower-educated respondents.

*Figure 27: Of these statements, which comes closest to your point of view?*

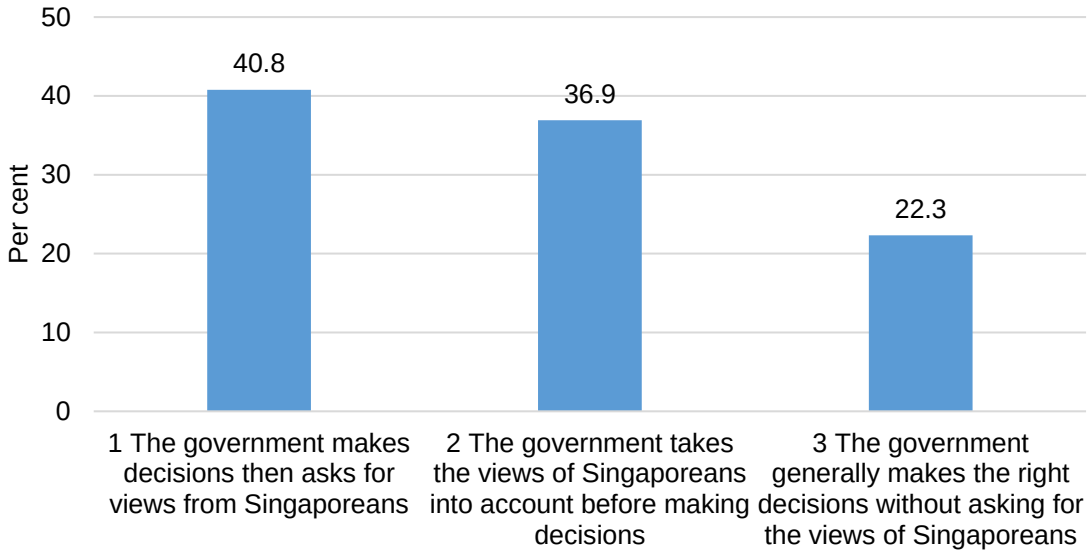



*Table 47: Demographic differences in perceptions of government*

| Age, Education | 1 The government makes decisions then asks for views from Singaporeans | 2 The government takes the views of Singaporeans into account before making decisions | 3 The government generally makes the right decisions without asking for the views of Singaporeans |
|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 38.2% | 34.5% | 27.3% |
| **35 to 49** | 42.2% | 34.9% | 22.9% |
| **50 to 64** | 45.2% | 37.5% | 17.3% |
| **65 and above** | 33.0% | 47.4% | 19.6% |
| | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 36.9% | 40.6% | 22.5% |
| **Mid-educated** | 41.6% | 37.6% | 20.8% |
| **Higher-educated** | 42.5% | 34.0% | 23.5% |

Next are attitudes towards challenging authority. Majority of respondents (77.0 per cent) chose the statement “Singaporeans benefit from following the rules

and obeying authority" over "Singaporeans lose out by following the rules and not challenging authority." Higher SES and more educated respondents were more likely to believe in challenging authority. Specifically, 32.6 per cent of higher SES respondents and 25.5 per cent of higher-educated respondents endorsed the view that Singaporeans lose out by not challenging authority, while only 19.7 per cent of lower SES and 18.6 per cent of lower-educated respondents endorsed that view. No clear differences in this attitude were observed based on age groups.

*Figure 28: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

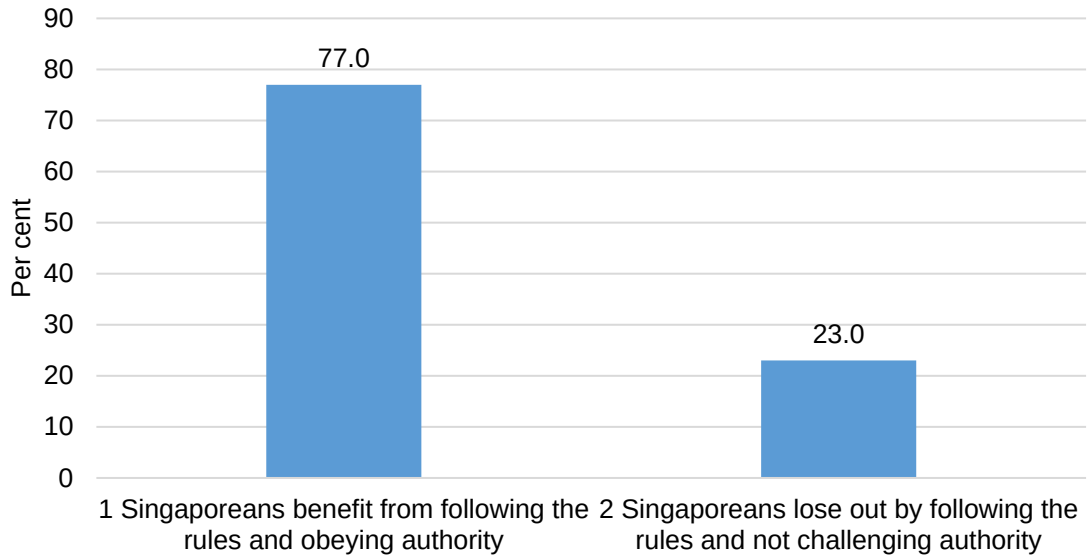



*Table 48: Demographic differences in attitudes towards challenging authority*

| Age, Education, SES | 1 Singaporeans benefit from following the rules and obeying authority | 2 Singaporeans lose out by following the rules and not challenging authority |
|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 76.0% | 24.0% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **35 to 49** | 77.7% | 22.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 76.3% | 23.7% |
| **65 and above** | 78.9% | 21.1% |
| | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 81.4% | 18.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 76.6% | 23.4% |
| **Higher-educated** | 74.5% | 25.5% |
| | | |
| **Lower SES** | 80.3% | 19.7% |
| **Mid-SES** | 78.7% | 21.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 67.4% | 32.6% |

Third, on attitudes towards political plurality, respondents were asked to choose between two statements, “Having more political parties in Parliament would not benefit Singapore” and “Singapore would benefit from having more political parties in Parliament.” Respondents expressed strong support for political plurality. Moreover, proportions were similar across demographic groups, with almost 70 per cent of respondents indicating a preference for political plurality.

*Figure 29: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

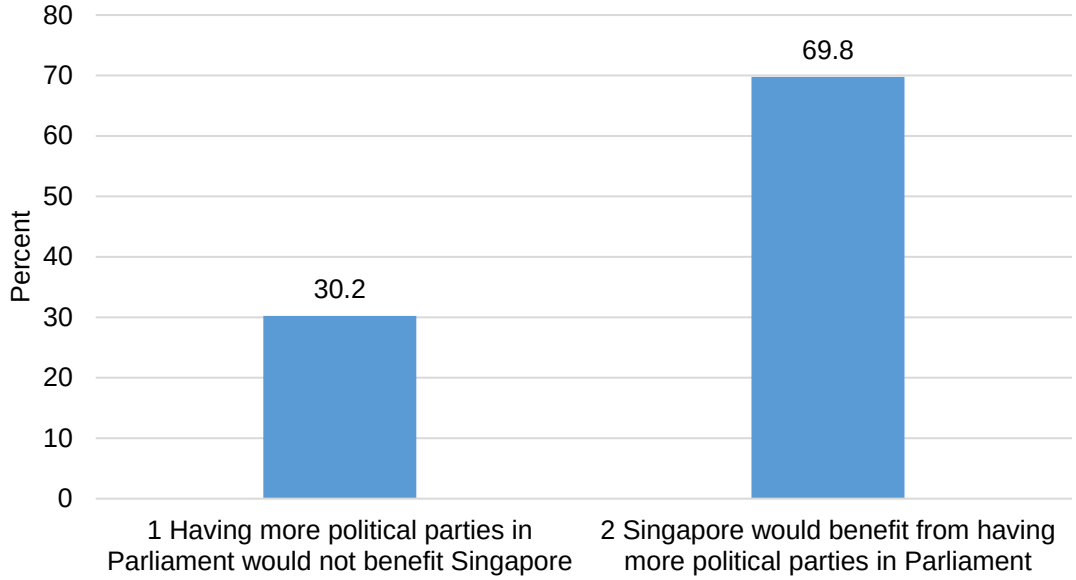



*Table 49: Demographic differences in attitudes towards political plurality*

| Education, SES, Age, Race | 1 Having more political parties in Parliament would not benefit Singapore | 2 Singapore would benefit from having more political parties in Parliament |
|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 31.0% | 69.0% |
| **Mid-educated** | 29.1% | 70.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 30.8% | 69.3% |
| | | |
| **Lower SES** | 34.7% | 65.3% |
| **Mid-SES** | 30.0% | 70.0% |
| **Higher SES** | 24.8% | 75.2% |
| | | |
| **21 to 34** | 29.9% | 70.1% |
| **35 to 49** | 30.2% | 69.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 30.6% | 69.4% |
| **65 and above** | 30.6% | 69.4% |
| | | |
| **Chinese** | 29.0% | 71.0% |
| **Malay** | 27.7% | 72.3% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Indian** | 39.3% | 60.7% |
| **Others** | 42.2% | 57.8% |

### *4.4.3 Perceptions of globalisation: Globalisation is considered by many to be beneficial to Singapore; majority also believed that Singapore is a better country than most other countries and would be a good model for the rest of the world*

Perceptions of globalisation were also assessed by asking respondents to choose between two statements, “Globalisation is generally good for Singapore because it helps the economy and all Singaporeans” and “Globalisation is generally bad for Singapore because it benefits wealthy people and foreigners, and leaves poor citizens behind.” Majority of the respondents (82.9 per cent) perceived globalisation as beneficial for Singapore’s economy and citizens. Less educated respondents had poorer perceptions of globalisation. Specifically, 22.4 per cent of lower-educated respondents believed that globalisation is generally bad as it leaves poor citizens behind, while only 10.4 per cent of higher-educated respondents believed that statement.

*Figure 30: Of these statements, which comes closer to your point of view?*

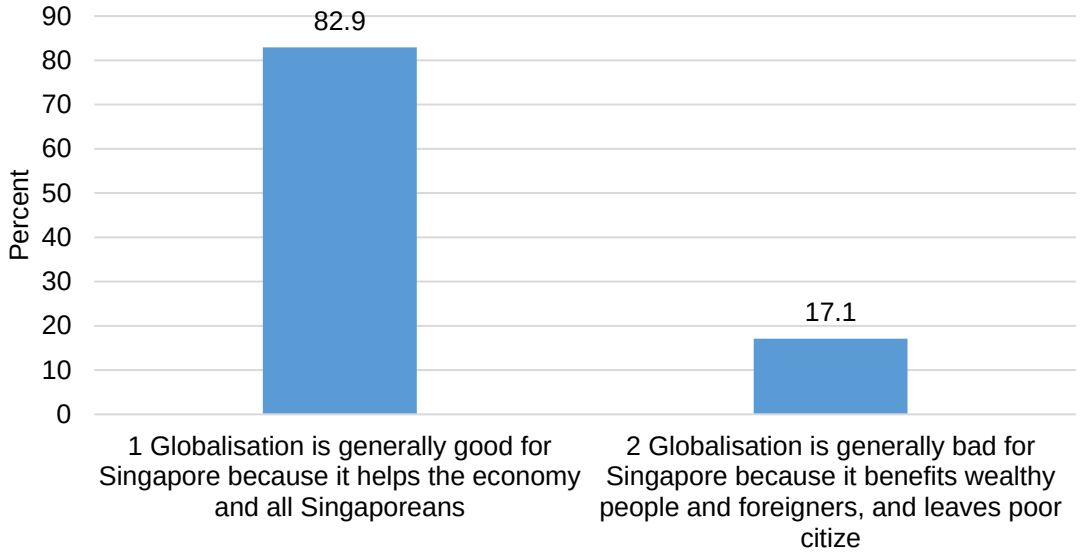



*Table 50: Demographic differences in attitudes towards globalisation*

| Education | 1 Globalisation is generally good for Singapore because it helps the economy and all Singaporeans | 2 Globalisation is generally bad for Singapore because it benefits wealthy people and foreigners, and leaves poor citizens behind |
|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 77.6% | 22.4% |
| **Mid-educated** | 79.1% | 20.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 89.6% | 10.4% |

Second, comparing Singapore with other countries, respondents were asked about their level of agreement with a series of statements on a 4-point scale (1 = to a great extent, 4 = not at all). In terms of perceived superiority, 96.4 per cent agreed to a moderate or great extent that Singapore is a better country than most other countries. When comparing among those who indicated their

agreement to the statement to a great extent, older, less educated, non-Malay, and lower SES respondents were more likely to perceive Singapore as better than most other countries.

*Figure 31: To what extent do you agree that Singapore is a better country than most other countries*

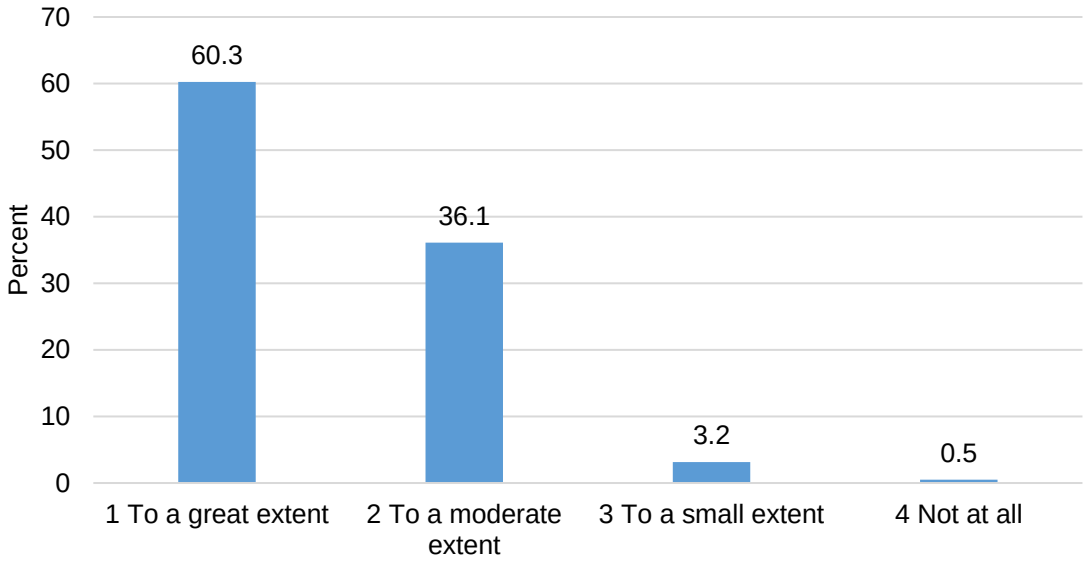



*Table 51: Demographic differences in perceived superiority of Singapore as compared with other countries*

| Education, SES, Age, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 53.0% | 42.0% | 4.5% | 0.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 58.9% | 38.2% | 2.4% | 0.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 66.5% | 30.6% | 2.3% | 0.6% |
| **65 and above** | 68.1% | 27.6% | 3.9% | 0.4% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 66.3% | 30.0% | 2.9% | 0.8% |
| **Mid-educated** | 57.8% | 37.7% | 4.2% | 0.3% |
| **Higher-educated** | 58.5% | 38.6% | 2.4% | 0.5% |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 62.2% | 34.0% | 3.2% | 0.6% |
| **Mid SES** | 60.9% | 35.5% | 3.0% | 0.5% |
| **Higher SES** | 55.6% | 40.7% | 3.4% | 0.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 60.0% | 37.0% | 2.5% | 0.5% |
| **Malay** | 53.3% | 40.1% | 5.4% | 1.2% |
| **Indian** | 69.7% | 25.6% | 4.7% | 0.0% |
| **Others** | 62.2% | 33.3% | 4.4% | 0.0% |

Respondents were also asked if Singapore was a good model for the rest of the world, and overall, 80.9 per cent agreed with the statement to a moderate or great extent. When comparing among those who indicated their agreement to the statement to a great extent, older, less educated, and lower SES respondents were also more likely to believe in Singapore as a model for the rest of the world.

*Figure 32: To what extent do you agree that the world would be better place if people from other countries were more like Singapore*

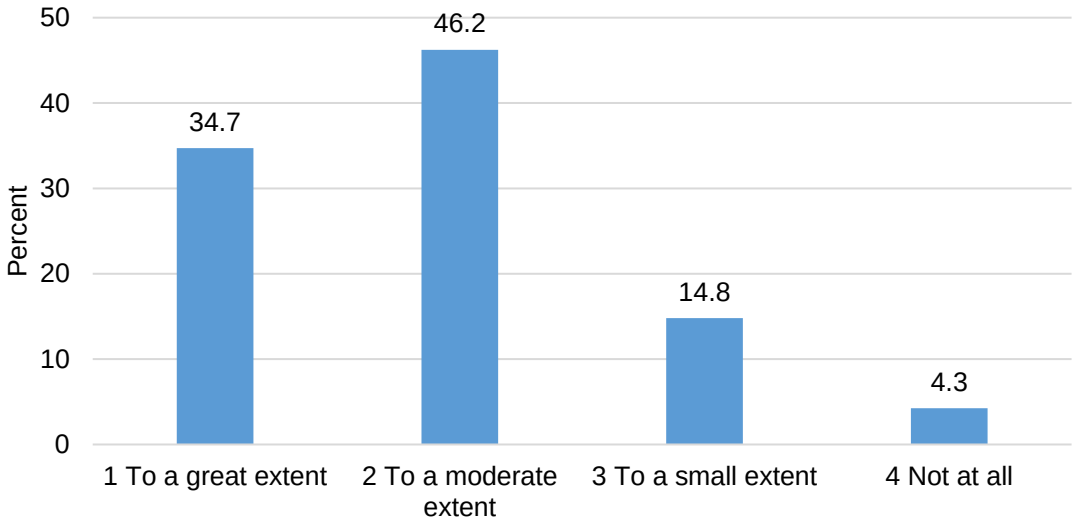


*Table 52: Demographic differences in beliefs in Singapore as a model for the rest of the world*

| Age, Education, SES | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 29.5% | 47.2% | 18.4% | 4.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 35.3% | 46.3% | 14.8% | 3.6% |
| **50 to 64** | 34.8% | 47.1% | 13.5% | 4.6% |
| **65 and above** | 45.7% | 41.4% | 9.1% | 3.9% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 43.9% | 41.6% | 10.2% | 4.3% |
| **Mid-educated** | 32.0% | 47.5% | 16.2% | 4.4% |
| **Higher-educated** | 31.1% | 48.1% | 16.6% | 4.1% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 39.9% | 44.5% | 11.6% | 4.0% |
| **Mid SES** | 34.6% | 46.7% | 14.7% | 3.9% |
| **Higher SES** | 27.8% | 47.2% | 19.4% | 5.5% |

Third, respondents' feelings of closeness with other countries/places were measured by asking them how close they felt to a list of 18 places on a 4-point scale (1 = very close, 4 = not close at all). The ranked order of closeness revealed that cultural (e.g., racial composition, shared history), ideological (e.g., democracy), and economic (e.g., developed) commonalities were likely to influence feelings of closeness. For example, places with shared culture (e.g., Malaysia and Indonesia) and stage of economic development and ideology (e.g., Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan) were felt as closer than those that did not share these attributes (e.g., Laos, Russia) (See Appendix C for percentage breakdown).

*Table 53: Feelings of closeness with other countries/places ranked by mean score (Note: lower scores represent stronger closeness)*

| Feelings of closeness (ranked) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Malaysia | **10** | UK |
| **2** | Indonesia | **11** | Vietnam |
| **3** | China | **12** | USA |
| **4** | Thailand | **13** | Philippines |
| **5** | Taiwan | **14** | India |
| **6** | Hong Kong | **15** | Myanmar |
| **7** | Japan | **16** | Cambodia |
| **8** | Brunei | **17** | Laos |
| **9** | South Korea | **18** | Russia |

Of note, we also examined closeness to other countries/places based on our respondents' race. Specifically, we examined if different racial groups amongst our citizen respondents felt differentially closer to the countries/places typically associated with their ancestry. Our data showed that Chinese respondents felt closer to China, compared with Malays and Indians, $F(3, 1769) = 10.75$, $p < .001$, with 57.7 per cent indicating that they felt close or very close to China.

*Table 54: Feelings of closeness with China by race*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 15.2% | 42.5% | 26.2% | 16.1% |
| **Malay** | 16.9% | 23.4% | 26.8% | 32.9% |
| **Indian** | 16.1% | 25.8% | 29.0% | 29.0% |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Others** | 12.0% | 28.0% | 32.0% | 28.0% |

Moreover, the closeness that Chinese respondents felt towards China was mainly driven by age, such that older respondents felt closer than those younger, $F(3, 1358) = 4.90$, $p = .002$. There were no significant differences based on education level or SES.

*Table 55: Feelings of closeness with China by age (Singaporean Chinese respondents only)*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 10.2% | 41.5% | 29.4% | 18.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 15.8% | 41.0% | 26.2% | 17.0% |
| **50 to 64** | 17.8% | 44.0% | 26.5% | 11.7% |
| **65 and above** | 18.3% | 44.6% | 19.4% | 17.7% |

Likewise, Indian respondents felt closer to India, compared with Chinese and Malays, $F(3, 1765) = 58.63$, $p < .001$, with 63.9 per cent indicating that they felt close or very close to India. Among Indian respondents, there was no significant difference across age, education level, or SES in feelings of closeness to India — that is, the distribution of responses across these demographic factors were similar amongst Indian respondents.

*Table 56: Feelings of closeness with India by race*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 3.1% | 16.6% | 39.7% | 40.6% |
| **Malay** | 3.9% | 18.6% | 39.4% | 38.1% |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Indian** | 26.5% | 37.4% | 21.9% | 14.2% |
| **Others** | 8.0% | 20.0% | 40.0% | 32.0% |

Notably, no such patterns were observed for Malay respondents' feelings of closeness to Malaysia. There was no significant difference across racial groups in terms of closeness to Malaysia — in general, all racial groups in Singapore felt similarly close to Malaysia, with 79.5 per cent of Chinese, 80.2 per cent of Malays, and 76.8 per cent of Indians indicating that they felt close or very close to Malaysia.

*Table 57: Feelings of closeness with Malaysia by race*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 39.3% | 40.2% | 12.2% | 8.3% |
| **Malay** | 44.6% | 35.6% | 12.4% | 7.3% |
| **Indian** | 49.7% | 27.1% | 12.9% | 10.3% |
| **Others** | 32.0% | 32.0% | 28.0% | 8.0% |

Interestingly, Singaporean Malays felt closer to Indonesia, compared with Chinese and Indians, $F(3, 1766) = 10.42$, $p < .001$, with 66.6 per cent of respondents indicating that they felt close or very close to Indonesia. Furthermore, among our Malay respondents, there was no significant difference across age, education level, or SES in feelings of closeness to Indonesia — that is, the distribution of responses across these demographic factors were similar.

*Table 58: Feelings of closeness with Indonesia by race*

| Race | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 14.9% | 35.4% | 29.6% | 20.1% |
| **Malay** | 29.4% | 37.2% | 20.3% | 13.0% |
| **Indian** | 28.4% | 29.0% | 18.7% | 23.9% |
| **Others** | 28.0% | 28.0% | 28.0% | 16.0% |

### *4.4.4 Media usage: Younger and higher-educated respondents were more likely to use alternative media platforms while older respondents were more likely to use traditional media platforms; English was found to be the predominant language medium across all media platforms*

Respondents' use of various types of media was also examined. Specifically, we measured respondents' traditional media use with three items (i.e., daily newspaper, TV news, radio news) and alternative media use with two items (i.e., social media, e.g., Facebook; online news, e.g., Mothership), each on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never, 5 = very often/always). We then performed correlational analyses with age and education levels to examine the relationship between these demographic variables and usage of traditional vs alternative media.

*Age and education level differences in media use*. Zero-order correlations revealed that younger respondents were more likely to use alternative media ($r = .34$, $p < .001$), while older respondents are more likely to use traditional media

($r = .32$, $p < .001$). In addition, more educated respondents were more likely to use alternative media ($r = .25$, $p < .001$), while education level did not relate to differences in the use of traditional media. These findings are reflective of the digital divide seen in many developed societies today.

*Type of media use predicts support for political plurality*. More importantly, type of media use significantly predicted support for political plurality. A binary logistic regression was performed with traditional and alternative media use as the predictors, and respondents' attitudes towards political plurality as the categorical dependent variable (1 = having more political parties in Parliament would not benefit Singapore; 2 = Singapore would benefit from having more political parties in Parliament).

Results of the logistic regression revealed that increased use of traditional media predicted reduced support for political plurality, $b = -0.15$, $p = .002$. On the other hand, higher use of alternative media predicted marginally higher support for political plurality, $b = 0.08$, $p = 0.08$. Directions of coefficients remained the same even after controlling for demographic variables of age, education, and SES.

Next, we examined the differences in preferred language medium across media platforms. Overall, respondents indicated that English is the predominant language medium across all media platforms. English language use was even

more prevalent in alternative media (more than 80 per cent), compared with traditional media (about 60 to 75 per cent ).

*Table 59: Respondents' use of language medium in various media platforms*

| | English | Malay | Mandarin | Tamil | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Daily newspaper** | 74.4 | 4.4 | 18.3 | 1.3 | 0.9 |
| **TV news** | 64.8 | 5.1 | 26.8 | 2.4 | 0.6 |
| **Radio news** | 59.3 | 6.5 | 26.9 | 3.8 | 2.5 |
| **Social media (e.g., Facebook)** | 83.3 | 1.9 | 11.0 | 0.3 | 2.6 |
| **Online news (e.g., Mothership)** | 81.8 | 1.9 | 11.9 | 0.8 | 2.8 |

In terms of age differences, younger respondents were more likely to use various media platforms in English compared with older respondents. For example, 86.8 per cent of those aged 21 to 34 read the daily newspaper in English, compared with 55.6 per cent of those aged 65 and above. In addition, 95.0 per cent of those aged 21 to 34 accessed social media in English, compared with 61.6 per cent of those aged 65 and above.

*Table 60: Age differences in use of different language mediums*

| Age | English | Malay | Mandarin | Tamil | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Daily Newspaper** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 86.8% | 3.3% | 7.8% | 1.0% | 0.7% |
| **35 to 49** | 77.1% | 4.8% | 14.6% | 2.1% | 1.0% |
| **50 to 64** | 65.4% | 4.4% | 28.3% | 0.8% | 0.6% |
| **65 and above** | 55.6% | 6.5% | 32.8% | 1.3% | 2.2% |
| **TV News** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 75.3% | 5.0% | 17.0% | 2.1% | 0.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 66.0% | 4.3% | 24.7% | 3.7% | 0.9% |
| **50 to 64** | 56.9% | 6.0% | 34.6% | 1.5% | 0.8% |
| **65 and above** | 52.6% | 5.6% | 39.7% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| **Social Media (e.g., Facebook)** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 95.0% | 1.0% | 2.8% | 0.3% | 0.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 87.5% | 1.0% | 8.9% | 0.4% | 1.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 74.6% | 3.5% | 17.5% | 0.4% | 3.5% |
| **65 and above** | 61.6% | 3.0% | 23.3% | 0.0% | 61.6% |
| **Radio News** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 72.9% | 7.3% | 15.5% | 2.6% | 1.2% |
| **35 to 49** | 57.5% | 5.6% | 27.9% | 5.3% | 2.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 52.9% | 6.5% | 34.2% | 3.3% | 2.1% |
| **65 and above** | 44.8% | 7.3% | 36.2% | 3.9% | 6.0% |
| **Online News (e.g., Mothership)** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | 94.6% | 1.0% | 3.1% | 0.5% | 0.7% |
| **35 to 49** | 85.1% | 1.5% | 10.1% | 1.2% | 1.6% |
| **50 to 64** | 73.3% | 2.7% | 18.5% | 0.6% | 4.0% |
| **65 and above** | 59.5% | 3.9% | 24.1% | 0.9% | 9.1% |

Different racial groups also indicated different extent of media consumption in their mother tongue. Across all racial groups and for all platform types, older respondents were more likely to consume media in their mother tongue than younger respondents. The use of mother tongue by older respondents appeared more prevalent among traditional media platforms such as daily

newspaper, TV news, and radio news, compared with alternative media such as social media and online news sources.

*Table 61: Age x race differences in use of different language mediums*

| Age | Type of Media | English | Mandarin | Malay | Tamil |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Daily Newspaper** | 87.9% | 10.9% | | |
| **35 to 49** | | 78.1% | 20.2% | | |
| **50 to 64** | | 62.6% | 35.5% | | |
| **65 and above** | | 56.3% | 39.6% | | |
| **21 to 34** | **TV News** | 75.5% | 23.8% | | |
| **35 to 49** | | 64.1% | 34.0% | | |
| **50 to 64** | | 55.1% | 43.5% | | |
| **65 and above** | | 51.0% | 47.9% | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Radio News** | 76.7% | 21.6% | | |
| **35 to 49** | | 57.5% | 38.6% | | |
| **50 to 64** | | 53.1% | 42.8% | | |
| **65 and above** | | 47.4% | 43.8% | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Social Media (e.g., Facebook)** | 95.1% | 3.9% | | |
| **35 to 49** | | 86.0% | 12.4% | | |
| **50 to 64** | | 73.7% | 22.0% | | |
| **65 and above** | | 59.9% | 28.1% | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Online News Sources** | 94.9% | 4.4% | | |
| **35 to 49** | | 83.5% | 14.0% | | |
| **50 to 64** | | 72.5% | 23.2% | | |
| **65 and above** | | 58.9% | 29.2% | | |
| **Malay** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Daily Newspaper** | 78.7% | | 20.2% | |
| **35 to 49** | | 59.2% | | 40.8% | |
| **50 to 64** | | 62.3% | | 37.7% | |
| **65 and above** | | 26.3% | | 68.4% | |
| **21 to 34** | **TV News** | 70.2% | | 28.7% | |
| **35 to 49** | | 63.2% | | 36.8% | |

| Age | Type of Media | English | Mandarin | Malay | Tamil |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **50 to 64** | | 49.1% | | 50.9% | |
| **65 and above** | | 42.1% | | 57.9% | |
| **21 to 34** | **Radio News** | 55.3% | | 41.5% | |
| **35 to 49** | | 52.6% | | 46.1% | |
| **50 to 64** | | 39.6% | | 56.6% | |
| **65 and above** | | 15.8% | | 78.9% | |
| **21 to 34** | **Social Media (e.g., Facebook)** | 92.6% | | 6.4% | |
| **35 to 49** | | 90.8% | | 7.9% | |
| **50 to 64** | | 71.7% | | 22.6% | |
| **65 and above** | | 63.2% | | 36.8% | |
| **21 to 34** | **Online News Sources** | 92.6% | | 6.4% | |
| **35 to 49** | | 88.2% | | 10.5% | |
| **50 to 64** | | 71.7% | | 18.9% | |
| **65 and above** | | 52.6% | | 47.4% | |
| **Indian** | | | | | |
| **21 to 34** | **Daily Newspaper** | 90.0% | | | 10.0% |
| **35 to 49** | | 81.7% | | | 15.1% |
| **50 to 64** | | 88.1% | | | 7.1% |
| **65 and above** | | 75.0% | | | 18.8% |
| **21 to 34** | **TV News** | 78.3% | | | 20.0% |
| **35 to 49** | | 72.0% | | | 26.9% |
| **50 to 64** | | 76.2% | | | 16.7% |
| **65 and above** | | 75.0% | | | 25.0% |
| **21 to 34** | **Radio News** | 70.0% | | | 25.0% |
| **35 to 49** | | 55.9% | | | 38.7% |
| **50 to 64** | | 54.8% | | | 38.1% |
| **65 and above** | | 37.5% | | | 56.3% |
| **21 to 34** | **Social Media (e.g., Facebook)** | 96.7% | | | 3.3% |
| **35 to 49** | | 92.5% | | | 3.2% |
| **50 to 64** | | 81.0% | | | 2.4% |
| **65 and above** | | 81.3% | | | 0.0% |
| **21 to 34** | **Online News Sources** | 95.0% | | | 5.0% |
| **35 to 49** | | 88.2% | | | 8.6% |
| **50 to 64** | | 76.2% | | | 7.1% |

| Age | Type of Media | English | Mandarin | Malay | Tamil |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **65 and above** | | 68.8% | | | 12.5% |

To decipher the effect of media use on "Western" values, a series of correlational analyses was also conducted — to examine if type of media use predicted respondents' evaluation of "Western" democratic/individualist ideals (i.e., freedom of speech, democracy, human rights, self-fulfilment). Results suggested that both traditional media use (r = .03, p = non-sig) and alternative media use (r = -.04, p = non-sig) did not predict endorsement of these values.

Nevertheless, the use of English-language media across all platforms (except TV news) significantly predicted higher endorsement of such "Western" democratic/individualist ideals, as shown by their significant positive correlation.

*Table 62: Correlation between use of English language platform and endorsement of "Western" values*

| English language platform | Correlation | p-value |
|---|---|---|
| **Daily newspaper** | .12 | <.001 |
| **Radio news** | .13 | <.001 |
| **Social media (e.g., Facebook)** | .24 | <.001 |
| **Online news (e.g., Mothership)** | .21 | <.001 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TV news** | .00 | non-significant |

### *4.4.5 Perception of immigrants: While lower-educated and lower SES respondents were more likely to perceive immigrants as economic threats, a majority of respondents acknowledged the economic and cultural contributions of immigrants and were not worried about the safety and security concerns stemming from immigrants*

To assess perceptions of immigrants, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with a series of statements relating to immigration. While just over 50 per cent of respondents agreed to a moderate or great extent that immigrants took jobs away from people in Singapore, and that the government spent too much money assisting immigrants, the great majority of respondents acknowledged the economic and cultural benefits of immigration

*Figure 33: To what extent do you agree that immigrants take jobs away from people born in Singapore*

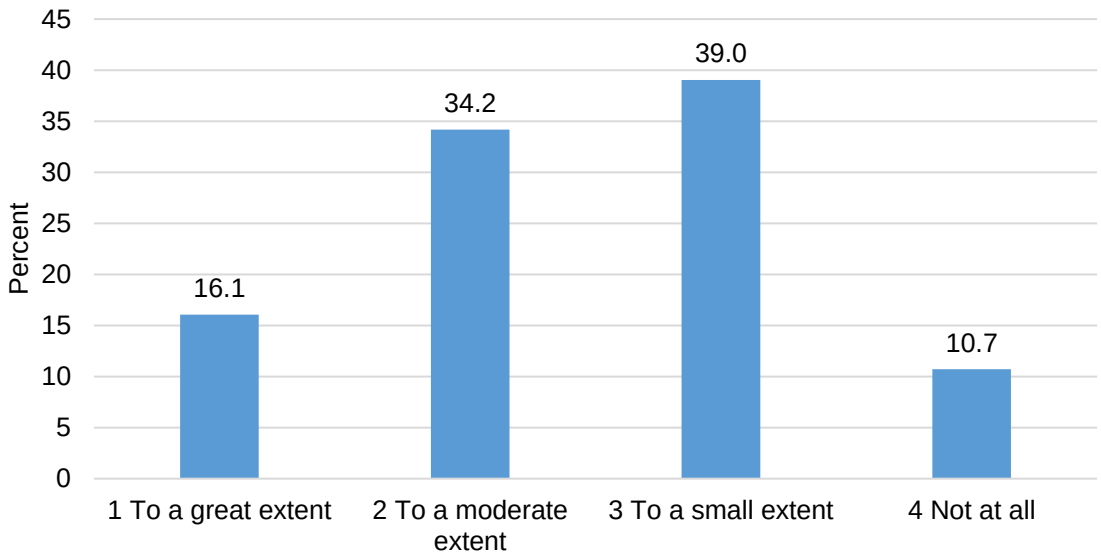
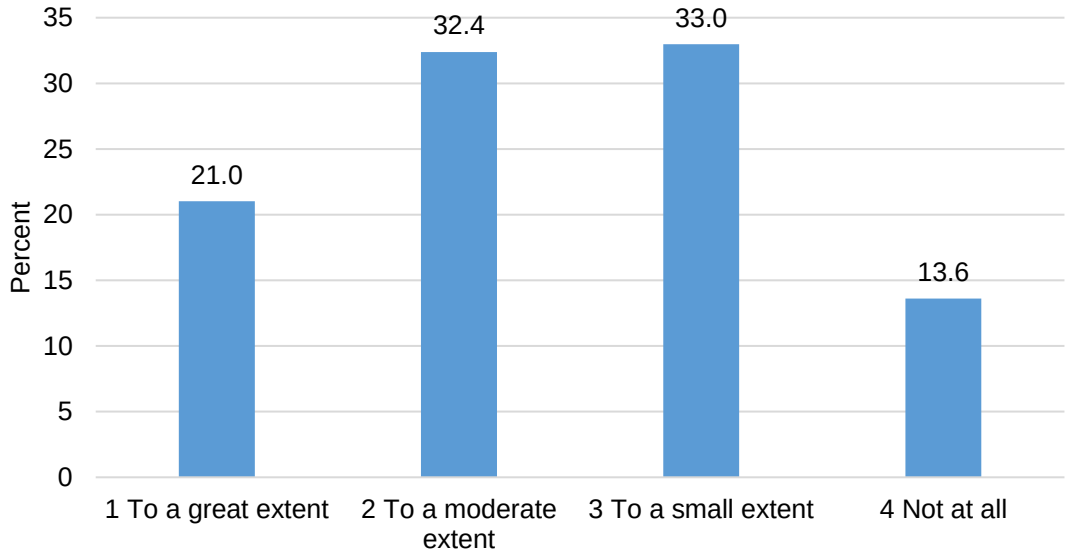



*Figure 34: To what extent do you agree that the government spends too much money assisting immigrants*




Lower-educated and lower SES respondents were more likely to perceive such economic threat from immigrants to be higher. This is clear when we compare those who agreed to the statement to a great extent. For example, 21.9 per cent of lower-educated and 17.9 per cent of lower SES respondents agreed to

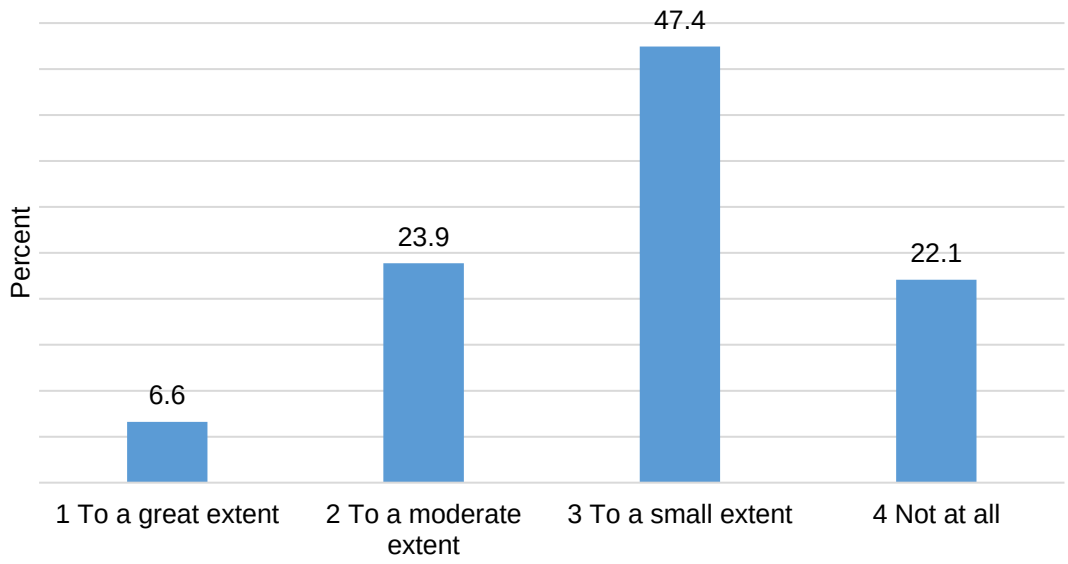
a great extent that immigrants took jobs away from people born in Singapore, as compared with only 9 per cent of higher-educated and 13.9% of higher SES respondents.

*Table 63: How much do you agree that "Immigrants take jobs away from people born in Singapore"?*

| Education, SES | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 21.9% | 35.9% | 31.6% | 10.5% |
| **Mid-educated** | 20.0% | 33.7% | 37.5% | 8.9% |
| **Higher-educated** | 9.0% | 33.5% | 45.1% | 12.4% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 17.9% | 32.4% | 38.4% | 11.3% |
| **Mid SES** | 15.9% | 35.4% | 37.5% | 11.2% |
| **Higher SES** | 13.9% | 33.2% | 44.5% | 8.4% |

On the other hand, safety and security concerns about immigrants were relatively low, with about 30 per cent of respondents indicating to a moderate and great extent that immigrants increased crime rates.

*Figure 35: To what extent do you agree that immigrants increase crime rates*




In terms of immigrants' contribution to society, there were considerable levels of recognition of the economic and social benefits of immigration. Here, 75.3 per cent of respondents acknowledged to a great and moderate extent that immigrants were generally good for the economy, and 61.5 per cent of respondents agreed to a great and moderate extent that immigrants improved Singaporean society by bringing in new ideas and culture.

*Figure 36: To what extent do you agree that immigrants are generally good for the economy*

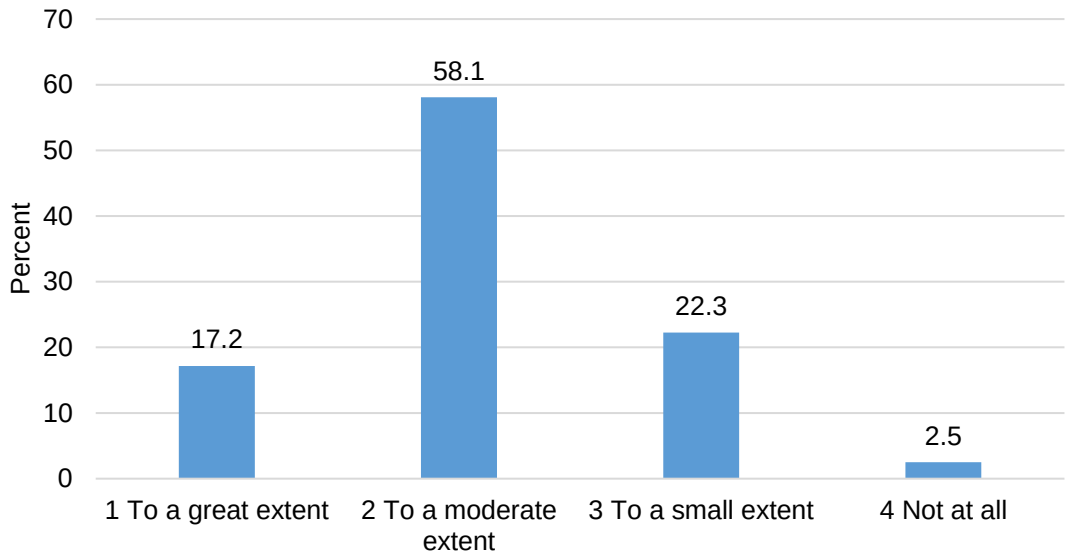
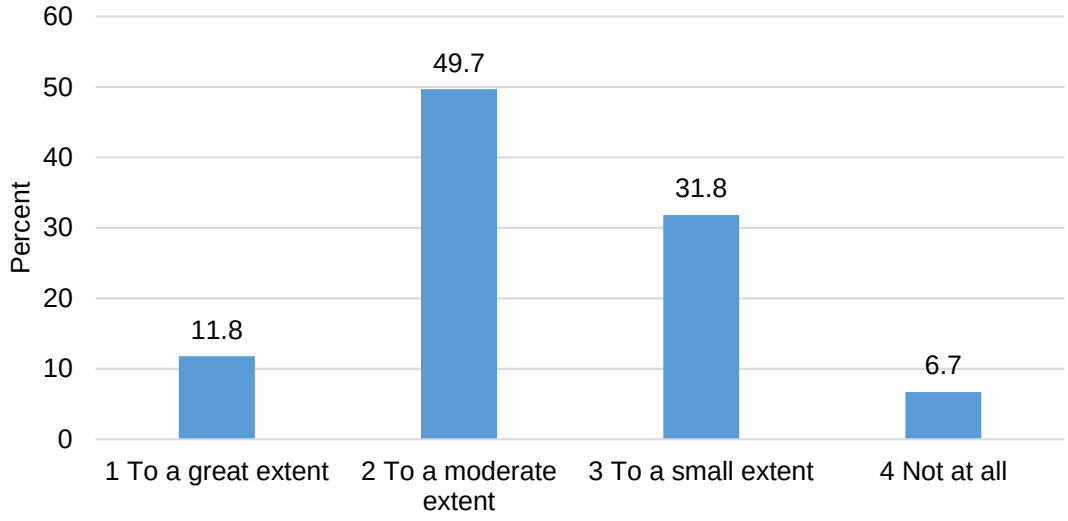



*Figure 37: To what extent do you agree that immigrants improve Singaporean society by bringing in new ideas and culture*




In particular, higher-educated respondents were more likely to appreciate the socio-cultural contributions from immigrants, with 68.2 per cent agreeing to a moderate to great extent that immigrants improved Singapore society with their

new ideas and culture, as compared with 54.4 per cent of lower-educated indicating the same.

*Table 64: How much do you agree that "Immigrants improve Singaporean society by bringing in new ideas and culture"?*

| Education | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 9.6% | 44.8% | 35.5% | 10.1% |
| **Mid-educated** | 9.0% | 49.9% | 34.6% | 6.5% |
| **Higher-educated** | 15.6% | 52.6% | 27.1% | 4.6% |

### *4.4.6 Perception of threat to the future of Singapore: Respondents were most concerned about Singapore facing threats of pandemics, economic downturn and distrust between races and less concerned with weak opposition parties, growing religiosity and immigration.*

Respondents were asked to indicate on a 4-point scale (1 = to a great extent, 4 = not at all) the extent to which various events or sources could threaten the future of Singapore.

Overall, results suggested that the greatest sources of threat were those that more directly threatened the survival of Singapore. These included the pandemic and economic downturn, which formed the two most threatening events. Distrust between races was also among the top sources of threat, indicating that harmonious and stable race relations were likely perceived as fundamental to the sustenance of Singapore's multiracial society. Sources that

were seen as less threatening included alternative family values, political competition, growing religiosity, and immigrants.

*Table 65: Perceived threat from various events and sources in ranked order (%)*

| Source of Threat | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pandemic** | 63.2 | 26.5 | 7.9 | 2.5 |
| **Economic downturn** | 55.2 | 32.4 | 9.6 | 2.8 |
| **Distrust between races** | 51.3 | 31.4 | 13.7 | 3.8 |
| **Ageing population** | 45.8 | 40.8 | 10.5 | 2.9 |
| **Complacency** | 40.9 | 42.6 | 13.5 | 3.0 |
| **Climate change** | 42.8 | 37.7 | 15.6 | 3.9 |
| **Low fertility rate** | 39.8 | 41.1 | 15.8 | 3.4 |
| **China-US relations** | 41.3 | 39.0 | 14.6 | 5.1 |
| **Lack of social mobility** | 32.8 | 47.6 | 16.0 | 3.5 |
| **Foreign relations with our neighbours** | 38.1 | 37.1 | 17.1 | 7.8 |
| **A.I./Tech disruptions** | 29.3 | 44.5 | 20.1 | 6.1 |
| **Partisan competition (competition between political parties)** | 24.9 | 41.4 | 26.2 | 7.6 |
| **Alternative family values** | 22.9 | 44.1 | 24.8 | 8.3 |
| **Weak opposition parties** | 22.6 | 41.2 | 27.4 | 8.8 |
| **Growing religiosity** | 19.1 | 41.7 | 30.5 | 8.7 |
| **Immigrants** | 14.1 | 34.7 | 34.4 | 16.8 |

We then examined demographic differences in threat perceptions, focusing on the more prominent threats: pandemic, economic downturn, distrust between races, ageing population, complacency, and climate change. It is worth noting that across the different types of threat, clearest demographic differences in threat perceptions emerged based on education and SES levels in general, compared with age and racial categories.

In terms of the threat of pandemic, higher SES and higher-educated respondents were more likely to perceive it more severely than lower SES and lower-educated respondents. This is clear when you compare those who agreed to the statement to a great extent. Specifically, 74.8 per cent of higher SES and 69.1 per cent of higher-educated respondents believed that a pandemic would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent, compared with 55.2 per cent of lower SES and 54.2 per cent of lower-educated respondents. Differences across racial and age groups were less notable.

*Table 66: Demographic differences in perceived threat from pandemic*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 63.0% | 28.0% | 7.8% | 1.2% |
| **35 to 49** | 61.5% | 27.3% | 8.9% | 2.2% |
| **50 to 64** | 66.5% | 22.9% | 7.7% | 2.9% |
| **65 and above** | 61.5% | 28.1% | 5.2% | 5.2% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 55.2% | 32.6% | 9.9% | 2.3% |
| **Mid SES** | 63.1% | 25.9% | 8.0% | 3.1% |
| **Higher SES** | 74.8% | 19.7% | 4.7% | 0.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 54.2% | 30.7% | 9.4% | 5.7% |
| **Mid-educated** | 63.1% | 27.3% | 8.1% | 1.5% |
| **Higher-educated** | 69.1% | 23.0% | 6.6% | 1.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 64.8% | 25.4% | 7.4% | 2.4% |
| **Malay** | 60.3% | 30.2% | 7.9% | 1.7% |
| **Indian** | 54.5% | 31.8% | 9.5% | 4.3% |
| **Others** | 68.9% | 15.6% | 15.6% | 0.0% |

In terms of the threat of economic downturn, higher SES and higher-educated respondents were more likely to perceive it more severely than lower SES and lower-educated respondents. Specifically, 68.0 per cent of higher SES and 62.3 per cent of higher-educated respondent believed that an economic downturn would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent, compared with 48.3 per cent of lower SES and 47.4 per cent of lower-educated respondents. Chinese respondents (57.9 per cent) were also more likely than racial minorities (45 to 49 per cent) to indicate the same belief.

*Table 67: Demographic differences in perceived threat from economic downturn*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 52.6% | 37.0% | 8.5% | 1.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 55.4% | 31.8% | 10.5% | 2.2% |
| **50 to 64** | 59.5% | 28.9% | 7.9% | 3.7% |
| **65 and above** | 51.5% | 30.3% | 13.4% | 4.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 48.3% | 36.8% | 11.3% | 3.6% |
| **Mid SES** | 54.1% | 32.6% | 10.4% | 2.8% |
| **Higher SES** | 68.0% | 25.5% | 5.0% | 1.6% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 47.4% | 34.2% | 12.9% | 5.5% |
| **Mid-educated** | 52.9% | 34.9% | 10.2% | 2.0% |
| **Higher-educated** | 62.3% | 29.0% | 7.0% | 1.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 57.9% | 30.7% | 8.7% | 2.7% |
| **Malay** | 45.0% | 41.3% | 12.0% | 1.7% |
| **Indian** | 48.8% | 35.1% | 11.8% | 4.3% |
| **Others** | 51.1% | 26.7% | 15.6% | 6.7% |

In terms of the threat of racial distrust, higher SES and higher-educated respondents were more likely to perceive it more severely than lower SES and lower-educated respondents. Specifically, 61.4 per cent of higher SES respondents and 58.8 per cent of higher-educated respondents believed that racial distrust would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent, compared with 44.3 per cent of lower SES respondents and 40.2 per cent of lower-educated respondents. Interestingly, the difference across racial categories on the perceptions of the threat of racial distrust was not as notable, which is indicative of a common prioritisation of racial harmony across racial groups.

*Table 68: Demographic differences in perceived threat from racial distrust*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 54.9% | 29.9% | 11.8% | 3.5% |
| **35 to 49** | 49.3% | 33.1% | 14.3% | 3.3% |
| **50 to 64** | 52.4% | 28.5% | 14.5% | 4.6% |
| **65 and above** | 45.3% | 36.2% | 14.7% | 3.9% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 44.3% | 37.0% | 14.5% | 4.2% |
| **Mid SES** | 51.1% | 29.6% | 15.2% | 4.2% |
| **Higher SES** | 61.4% | 28.6% | 8.1% | 1.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 40.2% | 34.8% | 18.4% | 6.6% |
| **Mid-educated** | 50.7% | 32.8% | 13.8% | 2.6% |
| **Higher-educated** | 58.8% | 27.9% | 10.5% | 2.9% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 52.3% | 31.0% | 13.4% | 3.3% |
| **Malay** | 49.2% | 33.5% | 14.5% | 2.9% |
| **Indian** | 47.9% | 30.3% | 14.7% | 7.1% |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Others** | 42.2% | 37.8% | 11.1% | 8.9% |

In terms of the threat of ageing population, elderly respondents were more likely to perceive it more severely than younger respondents. Of those aged 65 and above, 52.6 per cent believed that an ageing population would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent, compared with 43.9% of those aged 21 to 34. Similar patterns were observed across SES and education levels, where those higher in SES and education were more likely to perceive the threat of an ageing population more severely.

*Table 69: Demographic differences in perceived threat from ageing population*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 43.9% | 42.5% | 10.9% | 2.6% |
| **35 to 49** | 43.4% | 42.5% | 11.7% | 2.4% |
| **50 to 64** | 48.2% | 40.0% | 8.7% | 3.1% |
| **65 and above** | 52.6% | 33.6% | 9.5% | 4.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 39.5% | 46.2% | 11.3% | 3.1% |
| **Mid SES** | 46.7% | 38.4% | 11.6% | 3.3% |
| **Higher SES** | 52.1% | 40.5% | 6.1% | 1.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 43.9% | 38.8% | 12.2% | 5.1% |
| **Mid-educated** | 44.0% | 43.8% | 10.5% | 1.7% |
| **Higher-educated** | 48.6% | 39.6% | 9.4% | 2.4% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 48.1% | 40.4% | 9.1% | 2.3% |
| **Malay** | 33.5% | 50.0% | 12.8% | 3.7% |
| **Indian** | 42.7% | 36.5% | 15.2% | 5.7% |
| **Others** | 51.1% | 26.7% | 20.0% | 2.2% |

In terms of the threat of complacency, SES and education levels once again emerged as the strongest factors that demonstrated differences in perceived severity. Here, 52.0 per cent of higher SES and 51.1 per cent of higher-educated respondents believed that complacency would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent, compared with 32.7 per cent of lower SES and 28.5 per cent of lower-educated respondents. Age and racial differences were not as notable.

*Table 70: Demographic differences in perceived threat from complacency*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 44.6% | 41.8% | 11.6% | 1.9% |
| **35 to 49** | 38.4% | 44.6% | 14.1% | 2.8% |
| **50 to 64** | 40.0% | 42.0% | 14.9% | 3.1% |
| **65 and above** | 40.7% | 40.3% | 13.0% | 6.1% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 32.7% | 49.1% | 14.7% | 3.4% |
| **Mid SES** | 40.9% | 40.7% | 15.2% | 3.2% |
| **Higher SES** | 52.0% | 39.4% | 6.8% | 1.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 28.5% | 47.2% | 18.3% | 5.9% |
| **Mid-educated** | 38.1% | 45.6% | 14.5% | 1.7% |
| **Higher-educated** | 51.1% | 37.1% | 9.5% | 2.3% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 42.3% | 43.1% | 11.9% | 2.7% |
| **Malay** | 35.7% | 45.6% | 17.0% | 1.7% |
| **Indian** | 37.0% | 37.4% | 19.4% | 6.2% |
| **Others** | 40.0% | 35.6% | 17.8% | 6.7% |

In terms of the threat of climate change, younger respondents were more attuned to it than older respondents, with 48.3 per cent believing that climate change would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent. Similar patterns were observed once again for SES and education differences, with higher SES and higher-educated respondents perceiving the threat of climate change more severely than those lower in SES and education.

*Table 71: Demographic differences in perceived threat from climate change*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 48.3% | 33.3% | 14.6% | 3.8% |
| **35 to 49** | 39.4% | 38.4% | 18.2% | 4.0% |
| **50 to 64** | 39.6% | 42.5% | 15.1% | 2.9% |
| **65 and above** | 46.6% | 35.8% | 11.6% | 6.0% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 40.1% | 39.3% | 16.4% | 4.2% |
| **Mid SES** | 41.1% | 37.7% | 16.7% | 4.5% |
| **Higher SES** | 51.6% | 35.5% | 11.1% | 1.8% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 38.7% | 37.0% | 18.6% | 5.7% |
| **Mid-educated** | 43.2% | 36.8% | 16.4% | 3.6% |
| **Higher-educated** | 45.2% | 38.9% | 12.9% | 3.0% |
| | | | | |
| **Chinese** | 42.7% | 38.2% | 15.3% | 3.7% |
| **Malay** | 39.3% | 40.5% | 16.9% | 3.3% |
| **Indian** | 47.4% | 32.7% | 14.2% | 5.7% |
| **Others** | 44.4% | 28.9% | 22.2% | 4.4% |

In addition, we examined demographic differences in perceived threat from immigrants. SES, education levels and race emerged as the strongest factors that demonstrated differences in respondents' perceptions of threat from immigrants. Lower SES and lower-educated respondents were more likely to perceive threat from immigrants in comparison to respondents of higher SES and higher education levels. Specifically, 57.1 per cent of lower-educated compared to 38.1 per cent of higher-educated respondents believed that immigrants would threaten the future of Singapore to a moderate or great extent. In terms of race, 22.0 per cent of Indians believed that immigrants would threaten the future of Singapore to a great extent. There were no significant differences found across age groups.

*Table 71a: Demographic differences in perceived threat from immigrants*

| Age, SES, Education, Race | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 12.2% | 34.9% | 34.5% | 18.4% |
| **35 to 49** | 14.6% | 31.2% | 37.3% | 16.9% |
| **50 to 64** | 15.6% | 39.2% | 30.5% | 14.7% |
| **65 and above** | 14.0% | 34.5% | 34.1% | 17.5% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 16.0% | 37.4% | 28.8% | 17.7% |
| **Mid SES** | 13.6% | 33.2% | 37.8% | 15.5% |
| **Higher SES** | 12.9% | 35.4% | 32.3% | 19.4% |
| | | | | |
| **Lower-educated** | 17.5% | 39.6% | 28.4% | 14.5% |
| **Mid-educated** | 17.3% | 37.7% | 31.7% | 13.2% |
| **Higher-educated** | 9.1% | 29.0% | 40.4% | 21.4% |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 12.5% | 33.5% | 37.3% | 16.7% |
| **Malay** | 18.2% | 47.1% | 24.8% | 9.9% |
| **Indian** | 22.0% | 30.6% | 24.9% | 22.5% |
| **Others** | 6.7% | 28.9% | 31.1% | 33.3% |

### *4.4.7 Perceptions of economic outlook: While respondents were largely indifferent in terms of their economic outlook, they were most optimistic about the Singapore economy and were least optimistic about prospects of work-life balance*

Respondents were asked about their outlook regarding their personal livelihoods as well as the Singapore economy. Specifically, respondents rated five items on a 3-point scale (1 = better, 2 = the same, 3 = worse) how they felt about the future in the next five years regarding their personal income, job, quality of life, the Singapore economy, and time to spend outside work concerns.

Overall, respondents were most optimistic about the Singapore economy (35.3 per cent) while they were the least optimistic about work-life harmony as measured by their expected time to spend outside work concerns (23.6 per cent). The vast majority of respondents possessed a cautious outlook, with about 50 per cent indicating no change in outlook across all items.

*Table 72: Perceptions of economic outlook in the next 5 years (%)*

| | **Better** | **The same** | **Worse** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **The Singapore economy** | 35.3 | 42.0 | 22.7 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Your quality of life** | 31.6 | 51.1 | 17.3 |
| **Your personal income** | 31.5 | 47.5 | 21.1 |
| **Your job** | 28.2 | 52.3 | 19.5 |
| **Time to spend outside work concerns** | 23.6 | 53.5 | 22.9 |

Demographic differences in respondents' economic outlook in terms of SES were then examined. The five items were first averaged to form a scale, with lower scores representing greater optimism. Cronbach's alpha was 0.87, indicating good internal reliability. A one-way ANOVA was performed to determine if there were any significant differences across SES in respondents' economic outlook. Interestingly, results suggested that lower SES respondents (mean = 1.86) and mid-SES respondents (mean = 1.88) were significantly more optimistic than higher SES respondents (mean = 2.03) in their economic outlook, $p < .001$.

For example, more than 30 per cent of lower and mid-SES respondents felt that their personal income would be better in the future, compared with 22.8 per cent of higher SES respondents who felt the same. Similarly, more than 30 per cent of lower and mid-SES respondents felt that their quality of life would be better in the future, compared with 23.4 per cent of higher SES respondents who felt the same. Only in the domain of work-life harmony did all three SES categories scored similarly in their outlook (about 23 per cent felt this would be better).

*Table 73: SES differences in perceptions of economic outlook in the next 5 years (%)*

| SES | Better | The same | Worse |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Your personal income** | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 31.0% | 52.0% | 17.0% |
| **Mid SES** | 34.7% | 44.6% | 20.7% |
| **Higher SES** | 22.8% | 49.5% | 27.8% |
| **Your job** | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 28.2% | 55.7% | 16.1% |
| **Mid SES** | 31.2% | 50.0% | 18.8% |
| **Higher SES** | 19.7% | 54.4% | 25.9% |
| **Your quality of life** | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 34.0% | 52.2% | 13.8% |
| **Mid SES** | 33.4% | 48.7% | 17.9% |
| **Higher SES** | 23.4% | 56.3% | 20.3% |
| **The Singapore economy** | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 37.5% | 45.0% | 17.5% |
| **Mid SES** | 37.8% | 40.9% | 21.2% |
| **Higher SES** | 25.0% | 40.8% | 34.2% |
| **Time to spend outside work concerns** | | | |
| **Lower SES** | 23.6% | 55.6% | 20.9% |
| **Mid SES** | 23.8% | 51.7% | 24.5% |
| **Higher SES** | 23.0% | 56.1% | 20.9% |

Moreover, we asked respondents to what extent they worried about the possibility of losing their jobs, on a 4-point scale (1 = a great extent, 4 = not at all), with lower scores representing increased worry. A one-way ANOVA was likewise performed to examine SES differences in concerns about job loss.

Results indicated that lower SES (mean = 2.30), and mid-SES (mean = 2.39) respondents were significantly more worried about the possibility of losing their jobs, compared with higher SES respondents (mean = 2.77), $p < .001$. For

example, 30.8 per cent of lower SES and 26.3 per cent of mid-SES respondents indicated that they worried about the possibility of losing their jobs to a great extent, compared with only 17.5 per cent of higher SES respondents.

*Table 74: To what extent do you worry about the possibility of losing your job? (%)*

| SES | To a great extent | To a moderate extent | To a small extent | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 30.8% | 27.6% | 22.6% | 19.0% |
| **Mid-SES** | 26.3% | 28.2% | 25.6% | 19.9% |
| **Higher SES** | 17.5% | 21.8% | 27.3% | 33.4% |

Taken together, the results from this section suggest that lower and mid-SES respondents experienced greater optimism towards their personal and societal economic outlook, despite the fact that they had greater concerns about their job security. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic had likely disproportionately affected lower SES individuals more so than those of higher SES, hence resulting in the disparities in perceptions of job security.

## 5. PROFILING SINGAPOREANS' NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

Our findings so far have revealed the differential levels of national identity among our respondents. However, in addition to varying levels of national identity as a singular metric, there may be important differences in the quality of identification among the respondents — that is, the manner in which people identify with the nation may differ. For example, some may be highly identified to Singapore as a result of a very positive appraisal of Singapore and Singaporeans. On the other hand, others may have a very critical view of Singapore and Singaporeans, yet experience a similarly high level of identification. In other words, national identification can differ qualitatively across individuals. It is important to understand these differences given that after all, not every critic is disloyal.

In the present section we report the results of a cluster analysis, aimed at identifying diverse groups of Singaporeans based on their national identification profile. Cluster analysis is an approach to split a sample into typologies based on within-cluster homogeneity and between-cluster heterogeneity (Prokasky et al., 2016) across a series of variables. Five variables were selected in this cluster analysis.

The first variable is national pride. This overall index of pride was measured based on the average of all 24 sources of pride (1 = very proud, 5 = not proud at all). Items included levels of pride in government institutions (e.g., SAF,

healthcare system, education system); political institutions (e.g., democracy in Singapore, having regular elections); social institutions (e.g., racial equality, religious diversity); economic and global influence (e.g., economic performance); and others (e.g., pandemic management, environmental consciousness, sporting achievements, arts). The index measures how proud respondents are towards Singapore on the whole. Cronbach's alpha was 0.95, indicating good internal reliability.

The second variable is national identity centrality. This single-item variable was measured based on how important Singapore is to respondents' own sense of identity (1 = very important, 4 = not important at all). Lower scores represented greater importance. Such single-item measures of social identification have been shown to possess good reliability and validity, and can provide in some cases a more direct measure of social identity than multi-item scales (Postmes et al., 2012).

The third variable is positive characterisation. This scale measured the extent to which respondents associated Singapore with a range of 14 positive characteristics (1 = to a great extent, 4 = not at all), as derived from an earlier component of textual analysis and focus group discussions that informed the formulation of the present survey. These characteristics were: orderly, safe, democratic, rule-abiding, multicultural, clean, fair income distribution, affordable, excellence, fairness to everyone, meritocratic, globalised,

internationally respected, and welcoming to foreigners. Lower scores reflected a more positive characterisation of Singapore. Cronbach's alpha was 0.85, indicating good internal reliability.

The fourth variable is criticalness towards Singaporeans. This scale measured the extent to which respondents viewed Singaporeans as possessing a range of 11 negative traits (1 = almost all, 7 = almost none). These traits were: materialistic, entitled, arrogant, anxious, uncreative, racist, change-resistant, complaining, ungrateful, need to be told what to do or how to think, and Chinese-centric. Lower scores reflected a more critical view towards Singaporeans. Cronbach's alpha was 0.84, indicating good internal reliability.

The fifth variable is the endorsement of shared values. This scale measured the extent to which respondents believed a list of eight shared values were personally important to them (1 = to a great extent, 7 = not at all). These values were: multiracialism, meritocracy, democracy, equality, tolerance, human rights, gender equality, and environmental protection. Lower scores reflected a stronger endorsement of these shared values. Cronbach's alpha was 0.89, indicating good internal reliability.

The five predictor variables were first standardised into z-scores. K-means clustering was then conducted, with a four-cluster framework fitting the data the best. Table 75 displays the mean scores of each variable across clusters.

Overall, the cluster analysis was able to classify more than 95 per cent of respondents.

The first cluster (n = 753, or 42.3 per cent), which we termed as Proud Idealists, consisted of respondents who had a high degree of national pride and whose national identity was highly important to their sense of identity. Moreover, this group of respondents strongly viewed Singapore through a positive lens and were unlikely to be critical towards fellow Singaporeans. In addition, Proud Idealists have a high level of endorsement of shared values, indicating a congruent alignment with what Singapore represents. In terms of demographic variables, baby boomers aged 50 to 64 (45.7 per cent) and lower SES (46.9 per cent) respondents were more likely to be Proud Idealists.

The second cluster (n = 203, or 11.4 per cent), which we termed as Concerned Patriots, consisted of respondents who had a high degree of national pride and a moderately high degree of national identification. Nevertheless, the starkest characteristic of this group was its highly critical perceptions towards Singaporeans coupled with their modestly positive characterisation of Singapore. In other words these respondents, while likely to be committed to Singapore, simultaneously held the most critical view of fellow Singaporeans. In terms of demographic variables, lower (16.4 per cent) and middle SES (11.4 per cent), as well as more elderly aged 65 and above (15.4 per cent), and lower-

educated respondents (17.4 per cent) were more likely to be Concerned Patriots.

The third cluster (n = 741, or 41.7 per cent), which we termed as Moderate Idealists, consisted of respondents who were relatively balanced across all variables. They held moderate levels of national pride and national identity centrality, and viewed Singapore and Singaporeans through a more balanced lens, rather than one that is overly positive or critical. Importantly, they had a high endorsement of shared values, indicating that their sense of identity was generally aligned with what Singapore represented. In terms of demographic variables, youths below 35 (46.9 per cent), and working adults aged 35 to 49 (41.8 per cent), more educated (48.9 per cent) and higher SES (50.7 per cent) respondents were the most likely to be Moderate Idealists.

The fourth cluster (n = 53, or 3.0 per cent), which we termed as Dispassionate Citizens, consisted of respondents who scored low in every aspect. They did not experience high levels of national pride, nor did they perceive the Singapore identity as central to them. Furthermore, their views towards Singapore and Singaporeans were disengaged, with low levels of both positive and negative appraisals, as well as low levels of endorsement of shared values. Together, this set of results is indicative of apathy. In terms of demographic variables, the elderly aged 65 and above (4.5 per cent), as well as those with lower education (5.5 per cent) were most likely to be Dispassionate Citizens.

*Table 75: Comparison of mean scores in variables across clusters (Note: with the exception of media use, lower scores indicate stronger levels/more positive appraisals)*

| | **Proud Idealists** | **Concerned Patriots** | **Moderate Idealists** | **Dispassionate Citizens** | **P-value based on ANOVA** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| National Pride | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.83 | 3.34 | <.001 |
| Identity Centrality | 1.18 | 1.42 | 1.37 | 1.92 | <.001 |
| Criticalness | 3.87 | 3.04 | 3.18 | 4.17 | <.001 |
| Shared Values Endorsement | 1.31 | 2.25 | 1.39 | 2.40 | <.001 |
| Positive Characterisation | 1.59 | 2.01 | 1.97 | 2.49 | <.001 |
| Alternative (Traditional) Media | 3.79 (3.35) | 3.70 (3.12) | 3.86 (3.15) | 3.42 (3.25) | <.001 |

*Table 76: Summary demographic characteristics of clusters*

| **Demographics** | **Proud Idealists (42.3%, n = 753)** | **Concerned Patriots (11.4%, n = 203)** | **Moderate Idealists (41.7%, n=741)** | **Dispassionate Citizens (3.0%, n=53)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age** | More baby-boomers (50 to 64) | More elderly (65 and above) | More youths (below 35); more working adults (35 to 49) | More working adults (35 to 49) and elderly (65 and above) |
| **Race** | Fewer Malays | - | More Chinese and Malays | - |
| **Education** | Evenly distributed | Less educated (secondary and below) | More educated (post-secondary and diploma; degree and above) | Less educated (secondary and below) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SES** | Lower SES (HDB 1-3 room) | Lower and Middle SES (HDB 1-3, 4-5 room) | Higher SES (private/landed housing) | - |
| **Media use** | High in both alternative and traditional | More alternative, less traditional | More alternative, less traditional | Low in both |

*Table 77: Comparison of age differences across clusters*

| Age | Proud Idealists | Concerned Patriots | Moderate Idealists | Dispassionate Citizens | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **21 to 34** | 41.6% | 9.9% | 46.9% | 1.6% | 100% |
| **35 to 49** | 42.1% | 12.5% | 41.8% | 3.6% | 100% |
| **50 to 64** | 45.7% | 10.6% | 40.3% | 3.3% | 100% |
| **65 and above** | 42.5% | 15.4% | 37.6% | 4.5% | 100% |

*Table 78: Comparison of SES differences across clusters*

| SES | Proud Idealists | Concerned Patriots | Moderate Idealists | Dispassionate Citizens | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower SES** | 46.9% | 16.4% | 34.4% | 2.3% | 100% |
| **Mid SES** | 41.9% | 11.4% | 43.0% | 3.7% | 100% |
| **Higher SES** | 41.2% | 6.1% | 50.7% | 2.0% | 100% |

*Table 79: Comparison of education differences across clusters*

| Education | Proud Idealists | Concerned Patriots | Moderate Idealists | Dispassionate Citizens | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lower-educated** | 44.3% | 17.4% | 32.8% | 5.5% | 100% |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Mid-educated** | 41.2% | 13.3% | 42.8% | 2.7% | 100% |
| **Higher-educated** | 43.8% | 5.7% | 48.9% | 1.5% | 100% |

*Table 80: Comparison of race differences across clusters*

| Race | Proud Idealists | Concerned Patriots | Moderate Idealists | Dispassionate Citizens | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Chinese** | 42.4% | 11.6% | 42.7% | 3.4% | 100% |
| **Malay** | 39.2% | 11.5% | 46.7% | 2.6% | 100% |
| **Indian** | 49.7% | 12.9% | 36.1% | 1.3% | 100% |
| **Others** | 72.0% | 4.0% | 24.0% | 0.0% | 100% |

Taken together, the cluster analysis provided insights into the qualitative differences in Singaporeans' national identification. In general, Proud Idealists are likely to be loyal and committed to Singapore, and are likely to display enthusiastic and steadfast support for Singapore. These individuals are also likely to possess an optimistic outlook towards society and it is also possible that they are less likely to question various governmental policies critically.

Concerned Patriots, on the other hand, can be expected to be harsh in their criticisms of Singaporeans. They may come across as naysayers, but it should be noted that they nevertheless have the interest of Singapore at heart. In other words, they should be most optimally thought of as loyal critics.

Moderate Idealists may require the most attention from policymakers. These are individuals who may be fence-sitters when it comes to identity commitment,

and may therefore engage in some extent of identity exploration. Their identity commitment to Singapore may be contingent on the specific policies, narratives, achievements of Singapore, as well as their interactions with other Singaporeans. Accordingly, their levels of pride and identity centrality may vary across time and events. Based on our earlier findings on the primacy of warmth perceptions in promoting national identification, it may be useful for policymakers to encourage dialogue and community participation as part of a more targeted engagement effort towards Moderate Idealists.

Finally, in any society, it is inevitable that a small minority are disengaged. Indeed, we found that about 3 per cent of our respondents were Dispassionate Citizens. These individuals are generally apathetic towards society and may fundamentally differ in opinion or values from what Singapore represents. They may be more likely to be marginalised in society, and less likely to engage in integration within the community.

## 6. EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF VALUE CONGRUENCE ON NATIONAL PRIDE LEVELS

Social psychologists have long identified value congruence between individuals and their social environment as a crucial element in predicting important social outcomes. For example, in employee job satisfaction, research has underscored the importance of congruence between the values of employees and the organisations in which they belong (see Edwards & Cable [2009] for a review). Specifically, "when employees hold values that match the values of their employing organization, they are satisfied with their jobs, identify with the organisation, and seek to maintain the employment relationship" (Edwards & Cable, 2009, p. 654).

In the present research, we similarly apply the congruence principle in examining how national pride may be influenced by the match (or mismatch) between individuals' endorsed values (i.e., how important certain values are to them) and perceived societal values (i.e., how much society is perceived to embody these values). Specifically, we posit that national pride levels should be the highest when individuals' endorsed values and perceived societal values are congruent; on the other hand, national pride levels should be lower when individuals' endorsed values and perceived societal values are incongruent.

We focused on three values — democracy, meritocracy, and equality — which are foundational values in Singapore society. First, to measure individuals'

endorsement of these values, respondents were asked how important these values were to them on a 4-point scale (1 = to a great extent, 4 = not at all). Next, to measure individuals' perceptions of societal values, respondents were asked the extent to which they associated these values with Singapore as a country on a 4-point scale (1 = to a great extent, 4 = not at all). Of note, equality in this case refers to having a just and fair income distribution in society.

For each value, responses in individuals' endorsement and perceived societal value were then coded based on a median split (0 = low, 1 = high), resulting in four groups based on a 2 x 2 design (endorsement of value: high vs low x perceived societal value: high vs low).

To test our hypothesis based on the congruence principle, three separate two-way ANOVAs were then performed for each value (i.e., democracy, meritocracy, equality) to examine the interaction between individuals' value endorsement and perceived societal value. The dependent variable, national pride, was measured based on the multi-item national pride index as described in Section 5.

Results revealed robust evidence in accordance with the congruence principle. Across all three values, the two-way interactions were highly significant. The strongest levels of national pride were expressed among individuals who highly

endorsed each value and at the same time, perceived Singapore to represent this value as well.

Specifically, individuals who highly valued democracy and perceived Singapore to be democratic (mean = 3.78, SD = 0.67) expressed significantly stronger levels of pride than those who valued democracy but perceived Singapore to be un-democratic (mean = 2.91, SD = 0.62), $F(1, 1987) = 35.76$, $p < .001$. Individuals who highly valued meritocracy and perceived Singapore to be meritocratic (mean = 3.75, SD = 0.67) expressed significantly stronger levels of pride than those who valued meritocracy but perceived Singapore to be un-meritocratic (mean = 3.16, SD = 0.66), $F(1, 1990) = 24.20$, $p < .001$. Individuals who highly valued equality and perceived Singapore to have fair and just income distribution (mean = 3.81, SD = 0.64) expressed significantly stronger levels of pride than those who valued equality but perceived Singapore to lack fair and just income distribution (mean = 3.24, SD = 0.67), $F(1, 1987) = 8.29$, $p = .004$.

*Figure 38: National pride as a function of endorsement of democracy x perceived democracy in society*

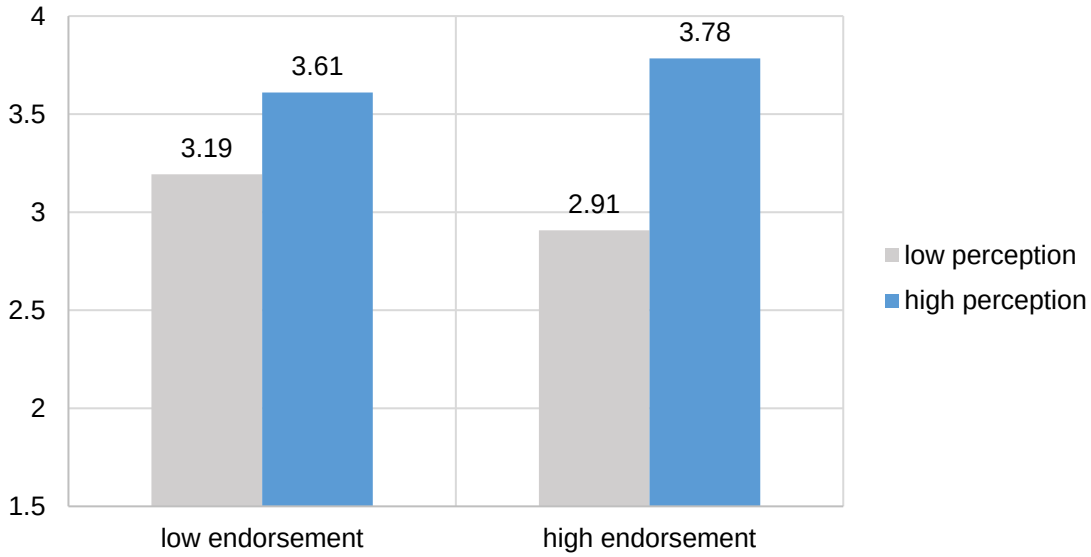



*Figure 39: National pride as a function of endorsement of meritocracy x perceived meritocracy in society*

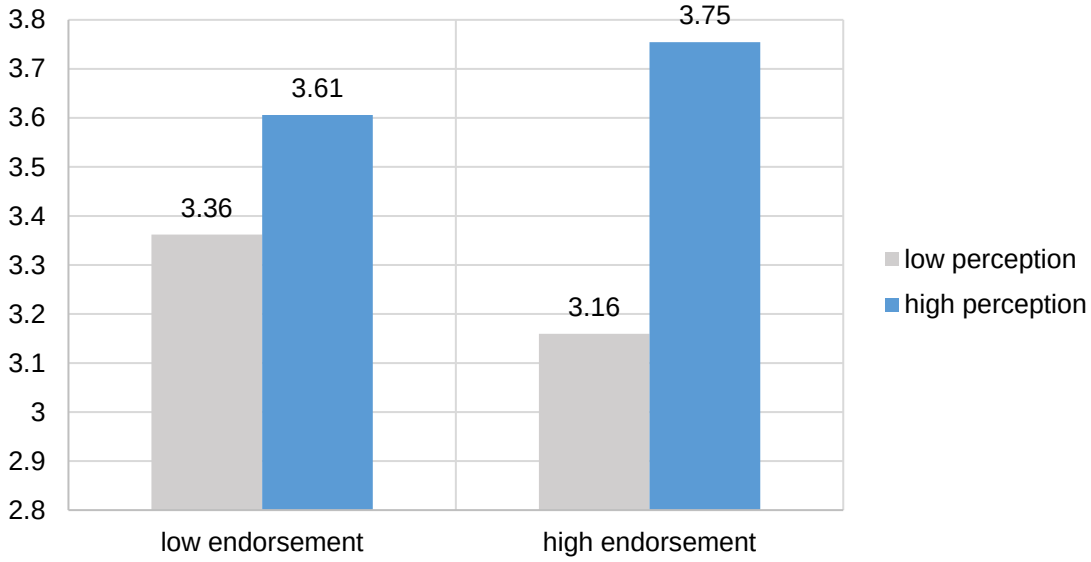
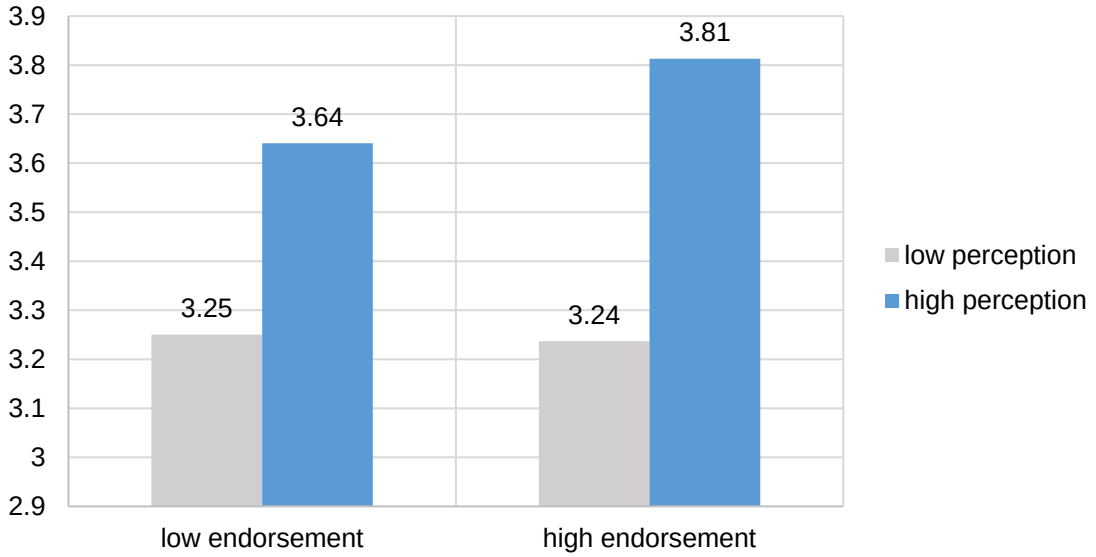


*Figure 40: National pride as a function of endorsement of equality x perceived equality in society*




Taken together, results from the present analyses indicate that national pride depends on the congruence between one's values and perceived societal values — the best outcomes for national pride arise when there is a match between these two elements. Put differently, these results suggest that in order to foster strong levels of national pride, it is not enough to inculcate within our population the values that are deemed crucial for societal functioning. Instead, it is also paramount to ensure that society, as a whole, walks the talk. Indeed, perceptions that society does not adequately live up to important values such as democracy, meritocracy, and equality negatively impacts absolute levels of pride. As such, in order to be truly proud of one's nation, one must see these cherished values — democracy, meritocracy, and equality — in action.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In summary, the research indicated that on the whole, national pride and identity in Singapore were healthy. Findings revealed differences in how proud respondents were across different domains, with the highest levels of pride accorded to areas where there have been considerable amount of state management and global recognition. These included our military, healthcare and education systems, and how Singapore has by and large managed the COVID-19 pandemic relatively well. Similarly, the areas where fewer Singaporeans take pride in are also well publicised as areas that differ, or fall short based on international benchmarks. For instance, better educated respondents reported press freedom as something they were not proud of; possibly given their awareness that Singapore occupies the 160$^{th}$ spot on the 2021 World Press Freedom Index.

Given Singapore's small size, comparisons with international standards or validation from outside Singapore has often provided us confidence in our institutions and practices. While this has allowed Singapore to progress and reach heights of international reputation, it also means that Singaporeans may not derive pride from local institutions which do not hold such acclaim. Less than half of respondents reported that they were proud or very proud of the arts and sporting achievements here. Perhaps it is time for serious deliberation to redefine what we can be proud of as a nation – it may not always be what reflects international standing, and its underlying values, but possibly what has local appeal and benefit.

Nonetheless, areas that many Singaporeans do not feel proud of deserve sustained attention, one of the most obvious being our treatment of low wage migrant workers. That many Singaporeans do not feel proud of this aspect of our society should spur us to consider how we can collectively do better to support and preserve the dignity of those more vulnerable in society.

As a nation of immigrants, we also cannot neglect how immigration and globalisation have and will continuously shape our national identity. In this regard, our findings illustrated that most Singaporeans do recognize the benefits and importance of globalization. Specifically, immigrants are recognized for their importance to the economy and enrichment of society and culture, and are generally not seen as a threat to the future of Singapore. However, our analysis also revealed that immigration remains a delicate matter especially to the more economically vulnerable in society. For immigration to continue to be an important approach to augment Singapore's labour force needs, there needs to be ample protection of the local workforce. The recent government announcements of workplace anti-discriminatory legislation which will further tackle discriminatory hiring based on nationality and greater enforcement on companies which flout immigration laws is a step in the right direction. While it is inevitable that some locals may lose jobs because of immigration, adequate support for them to access other good employment opportunities is crucial. It is also important that immigrants are well integrated

within society. The key markers of integration that can facilitate immigrants' integration, as evaluated by survey respondents, include values that support community cohesion (such as respect for law, tolerance, multiracialism, and equality); these need to be emphasised. Navigating the fine balance to ensure effective integration while addressing our local community's concerns about immigration will continue to be a difficult but important challenge.

The present study also examined respondents' perceptions on societal cohesion (such as towards equality and multiracialism in Singapore) and governance (such as governing approach and political plurality) issues in Singapore. Differences in attitudes towards these important aspects across class, race and age may not be new, but given their existence as ever-present (potential) faultlines in our diverse society, should nevertheless be continuously monitored and addressed in a timely fashion.

While most respondents believed that the majority of Singaporeans embodied many positive traits such as being law-abiding, peaceful and hardworking, we also note that respondents believed that there are comparatively fewer Singaporeans who are welcoming of foreigners and cosmopolitan. Perhaps respondents' interaction with xenophobic comments found online may have shaped this belief. Moreover, we note that in appraising fellow Singaporeans as part of this continuing conversation on national identity amongst us, individuals may take a more critical stand when evaluating other Singaporeans.

But this is often with the best interests at heart – a reflection of the common desire for Singapore's improvement.

Recognising the concerns of different segments of the population are crucial since they do not have necessary always have similar aspirations and life experiences. This is clearly illustrated when we examine results in the survey related to multiracialism. While the overall population figures tend to show high levels of support, when we examine the views of some minority community, it is apparent that there might be some discontent.

Moreover, insights gleaned based on cluster analysis of the qualitative differences in Singaporeans' national identification can also inform more precise policymaking. Based on the various demographic make-up present in these clusters as well as their unique characteristics in terms of values and their attitudes towards Singapore and Singaporeans, policymakers may find it useful to develop more targeted engagement approaches in order to more effectively address concerns of each cluster.

One such observation which should propel more engagement pertains to those who we typed as Moderate Idealists. They are certainly not die-hard patriots but then, as the analysis shows, they do have a balanced view of the nation. They do recognise that institutions and policies are good, even if they do not

view them as the best. Despite being critical, they are not dismissive of Singapore and Singaporeans.

Many of those who are Moderate Idealists do come from high socio-economic profiles. It was apparent from the results of the survey that those who are from this profile are more concerned about higher-order values such as social justice and inequality. Given their concern about these issues, there should be ways to better engage them and employ their passion and skills to tackle some of the problems that society faces. Engagement efforts based on a warmth dimension that encourage their contributions and participation in strengthening a greater sense of community may be helpful.

It is hoped that the present report has shed light on the state of Singapore's national pride and national identity, as well as provided insights as to areas of vulnerability, and how they may be strengthened. Given the susceptibility of national pride and identity to wide-ranging global and domestic socio-political events, continued research will need to be conducted regularly to promptly address emerging issues. After all, as Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong mentioned at the 8th S Rajaratnam lecture in 2015, Singapore's "national identity will always be work-in-progress".

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A

Index of national pride was measured by asking respondents to indicate how proud they were of Singapore in across 24 sources (1 = not proud at all, 5 = very proud).

**How proud or not proud are you of Singapore in each of the following areas? (For each of the areas, a general understanding is sufficient)**

| S/N | Domain | S/N | Domain |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Singapore Armed Forces | 13 | Racial equality |
| 2 | Healthcare system e.g., hospitals, polyclinics, Medisave | 14 | Religious diversity and freedom |
| 3 | Government institutions e.g., the civil service | 15 | Economic performance |
| 4 | Education system | 16 | Arts |
| 5 | The way democracy is practised in Singapore | 17 | Degree of global influence |
| 6 | Having regular elections | 18 | Level of environmental consciousness |
| 7 | Having the same ruling party for a long time | 19 | Level of cleanliness |
| 8 | The government has a lot of autonomy (it is able to do what it wants to do) | 20 | Level of meritocracy (people get success or power because of their abilities, not because of their money or social position) |
| 9 | The way the justice system (or courts) function in Singapore | 21 | Level of competitiveness (eager to do better than others) |
| 10 | Scientific/technological achievements | 22 | Treatment of low-wage migrant workers (e.g., foreign domestic workers and service staff) |
| 11 | Sporting achievements | 23 | Level of press freedom |
| 12 | Social welfare system e.g., CPF, housing grants, financial assistance to the poor | 24 | How Singapore has handled the COVID-19 pandemic |

**Appendix B**

A list of 34 traits was provided to respondents to rate the extent to which Singaporeans embody these traits (1 = almost all, 7 = almost none). Traits are ranked based on mean scores with proportions provided in percentages as shown below.

**How would you rate Singaporeans IN GENERAL on this scale for the following characteristics?**

| Trait | Almost all | A majority of the group | More than half | Half of the group | Less than half | Small minority of the group | Almost none |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Law-abiding | 19.2% | 49.5% | 21.3% | 7.5% | 1.4% | 0.7% | 0.5% |
| Peaceful | 19.9% | 41.9% | 24.4% | 10.9% | 1.9% | 0.7% | 0.3% |
| Stressed/overworked | 20.5% | 40.5% | 24.9% | 9.9% | 3.0% | 0.9% | 0.4% |
| Competitive | 14.4% | 38.6% | 31.4% | 11.9% | 2.7% | 0.8% | 0.5% |
| Obedient | 9.6% | 43.8% | 30.4% | 11.9% | 2.7% | 1.3% | 0.5% |
| Endorse multicultural and multiracial values | 11.0% | 36.6% | 32.2% | 14.8% | 3.5% | 1.5% | 0.5% |
| Advantaged compared with people from other countries | 12.5% | 36.2% | 29.7% | 15.6% | 3.6% | 1.6% | 1.0% |
| Hardworking | 12.6% | 33.9% | 32.2% | 15.8% | 4.0% | 1.1% | 0.6% |
| Materialistic | 10.7% | 38.8% | 30.8% | 12.7% | 3.4% | 3.1% | 0.5% |
| Helpful | 10.9% | 34.6% | 33.9% | 14.8% | 4.0% | 1.4% | 0.4% |
| Friendly | 11.0% | 33.9% | 32.7% | 16.3% | 4.1% | 1.4% | 0.4% |
| Complaining | 17.3% | 32.3% | 25.4% | 15.0% | 4.7% | 4.4% | 1.1% |
| Honest | 8.1% | 36.4% | 34.6% | 16.2% | 2.9% | 1.3% | 0.5% |
| Pragmatic | 9.5% | 35.2% | 33.7% | 16.4% | 3.3% | 1.4% | 0.7% |
| Clean and tidy | 11.8% | 31.7% | 32.2% | 19.2% | 3.6% | 1.0% | 0.5% |
| Value family over everything else | 11.3% | 32.3% | 32.0% | 18.5% | 4.4% | 1.1% | 0.5% |
| Trustworthy | 7.4% | 34.8% | 36.1% | 16.4% | 3.5% | 1.4% | 0.3% |
| Cautious | 8.8% | 30.9% | 33.0% | 20.2% | 4.8% | 1.9% | 0.5% |
| Polite | 8.7% | 30.6% | 33.2% | 19.6% | 5.7% | 1.9% | 0.4% |
| Cosmopolitan (open to foreign cultures) | 6.9% | 28.7% | 34.1% | 20.7% | 6.7% | 2.2% | 0.7% |
| Conservative | 5.4% | 25.6% | 35.9% | 24.2% | 6.0% | 2.5% | 0.4% |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Treats everyone fairly | 6.0% | 22.8% | 31.9% | 26.8% | 9.0% | 2.8% | 0.8% |
| Anxious | 5.7% | 24.6% | 30.4% | 25.3% | 8.5% | 4.8% | 0.6% |
| Entitled | 6.5% | 23.6% | 31.2% | 23.2% | 9.4% | 5.4% | 0.7% |
| Chinese-centric | 4.7% | 22.8% | 33.1% | 23.5% | 7.5% | 6.3% | 2.2% |
| Need to be told what to do and how to think | 4.8% | 20.3% | 29.6% | 24.7% | 11.9% | 7.0% | 1.9% |
| Welcoming to foreigners | 4.3% | 17.0% | 29.9% | 29.3% | 13.8% | 4.9% | 1.0% |
| Outspoken about issues they are unhappy about | 6.7% | 18.9% | 25.7% | 23.3% | 16.1% | 8.5% | 1.0% |
| Well to do financially | 4.4% | 13.8% | 32.6% | 28.8% | 15.3% | 4.5% | 0.6% |
| Do not want to change | 4.1% | 18.9% | 29.1% | 25.6% | 11.3% | 8.6% | 2.4% |
| Arrogant | 3.6% | 16.4% | 22.1% | 26.8% | 18.0% | 12.2% | 1.2% |
| Not creative | 2.7% | 14.1% | 24.4% | 39.7% | 17.8% | 9.7% | 1.8% |
| Ungrateful | 2.4% | 11.5% | 19.2% | 25.6% | 21.5% | 17.8% | 2.1% |
| Racist | 2.2% | 8.2% | 14.4% | 19.0% | 21.4% | 29.3% | 5.5% |

**Appendix C**

A list of countries/places was provided to respondents to rate how close they felt towards them.

**How close do you feel to the following countries/places? (1 = very close, 4 = not at all close).** Table below shows results based on ranked mean scores.

| Country/Place | Very close | Close | Not very close | Not at all Close |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Malaysia | 42.4% | 37.0% | 12.7% | 7.9% |
| Indonesia | 18.8% | 34.9% | 27.4% | 18.9% |
| China | 16.6% | 37.9% | 26.4% | 19.0% |
| Thailand | 12.1% | 38.6% | 29.8% | 19.4% |
| Taiwan | 11.6% | 38.8% | 30.2% | 19.4% |
| Hong Kong | 11.0% | 36.9% | 32.9% | 19.2% |
| Japan | 9.8% | 35.8% | 33.2% | 21.2% |
| Brunei | 13.6% | 24.9% | 33.3% | 28.1% |
| South Korea | 5.9% | 32.6% | 38.1% | 23.5% |
| UK | 7.2% | 26.1% | 38.9% | 27.7% |
| Vietnam | 6.8% | 26.4% | 39.6% | 27.2% |
| USA | 8.9% | 24.8% | 35.6% | 30.7% |
| Philippines | 7.5% | 24.6% | 38.0% | 29.9% |
| India | 6.8% | 19.2% | 37.7% | 36.3% |
| Myanmar | 4.5% | 20.5% | 40.9% | 34.1% |
| Cambodia | 4.0% | 19.0% | 42.5% | 34.6% |
| Laos | 3.0% | 14.2% | 42.1% | 40.7% |
| Russia | 2.1% | 7.9% | 39.6% | 50.4% |

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