

Talk is Cheap: An Introspective Critique of Being “Green”

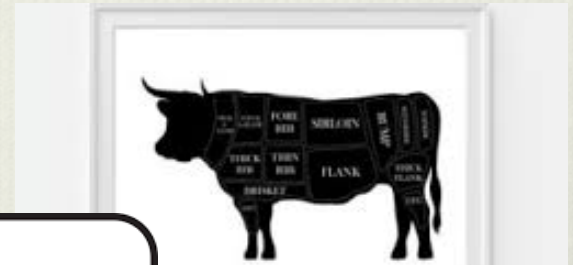
Miles Gordon, UO Senior, Political Science, Robert D. Clark Honors College
Robin Quirke, M.S., Associate Researcher, PolicyInteractive
Marcus Mayorga, M.S., Doctoral Student, UO Psychology Department

Environmental Life Choices Study



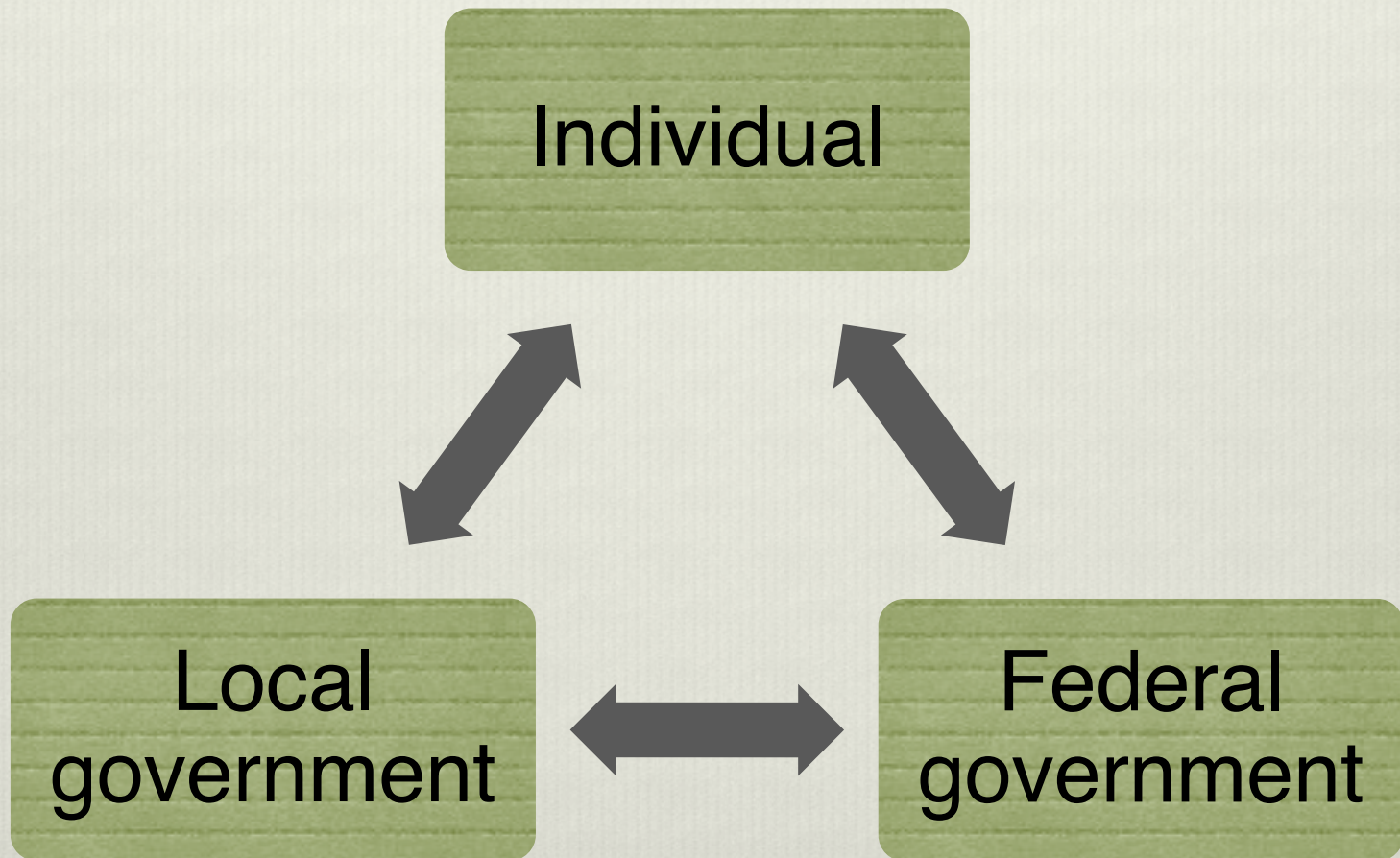
**Robin Quirke, Associate Researcher
PolicyInteractive**

Study Question



Why is individual
behavior worth
investigating?

Shifting Social Norms



Project 1

“When values and behaviors align: A study of individuals with pro-environmental values who live a low carbon lifestyle”

Fall/2014:

16 Interviews

- ❖ Strong pro-environmental values
- ❖ UC Berkeley's Cool Climate carbon footprint calculator
- ❖ Results needed to be less than 50% of similar person living in similar household

Occupations

- ❖ Construction worker
- ❖ Registered nurse
- ❖ Urban Homesteader
- ❖ Local government, city planner
- ❖ UO Computer System Administrator
- ❖ Adjunct professor, semi-retired
- ❖ Electronics tinkerer
- ❖ Teaching assistant
- ❖ Downtown business-owner
- ❖ Yoga Instructor/LMT
- ❖ Landscaper
- ❖ UO Energy Systems Program Assistant
- ❖ Wildlife Worker
- ❖ Permaculturalist/Gardner
- ❖ Retired (2)

Commonalities

Project 1: Revealed
several commonalities
among sixteen
participants



Project 2: Tested
those commonalities
on a much larger
group of people

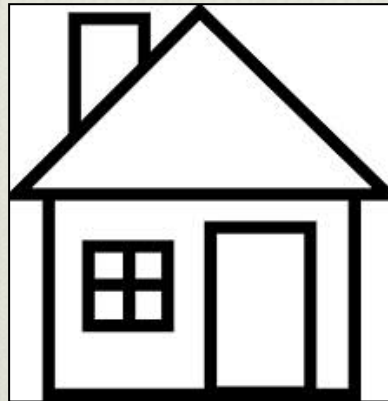
Project 2

Nov/2015

- ❖ $N = 245$ completed an online survey (dropped from data: non-Americans and minors)
- ❖ 52 from Mechanical Turk; 217 recruited through Reddit and environmental LISTSERVs
- ❖ 13 Republicans, 120 Democrats, 18 Greens, 28 Libertarians, 58 Unaffiliated
- ❖ Female $n = 120$, Male $n = 117$ (3 other, 5 refused)

Calculating CO₂ Footprint

Square footage/people in home



Calculating CO₂ Footprint

Miles do you drive or ride in a car or truck EACH WEEK
(not including work-paid driving)

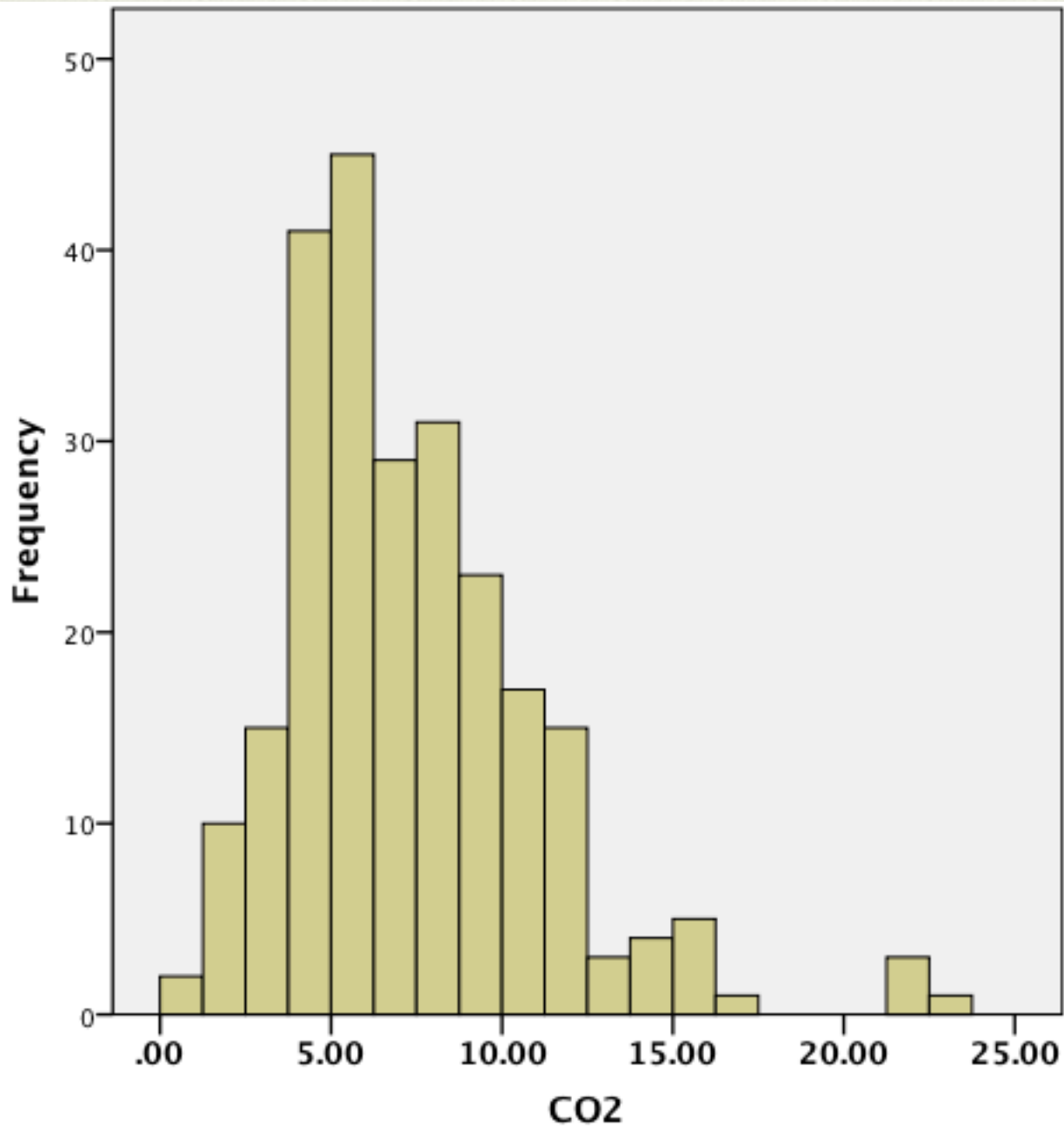
Miles per gallon



Calculating CO₂ Footprint

Hours spent flying LAST YEAR for PERSONAL REASONS (such as vacations, etc.; not work-related)



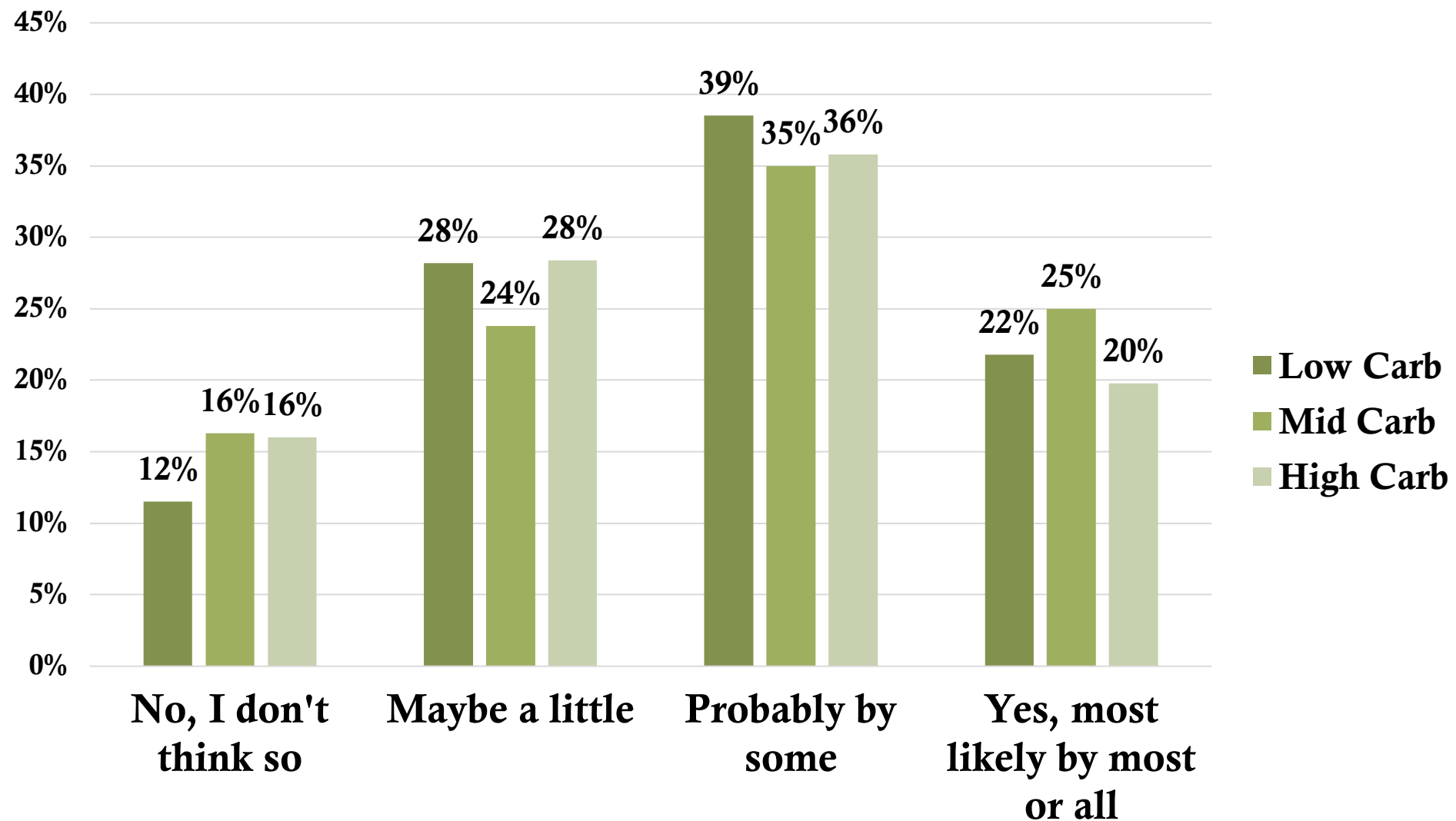


Mean = 7.34
Std. Dev. = 3.724
N = 245

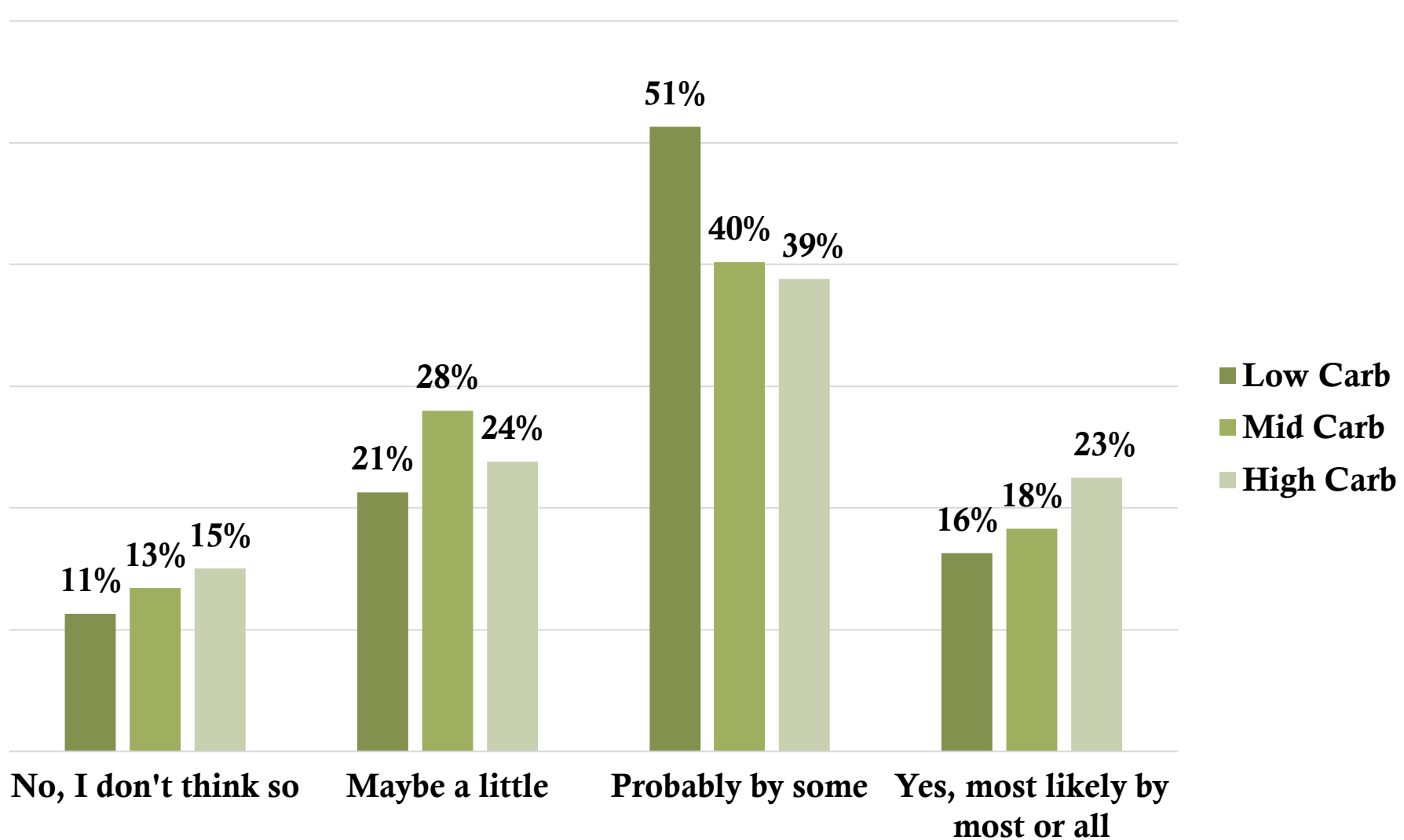
Divided into thirds
High carbon $n = 82$;
Mid carbon $n = 82$;
Low carbon third $n = 81$

1. Societally unique

Would you say you are considered eccentric and/or unconventional by co-workers?



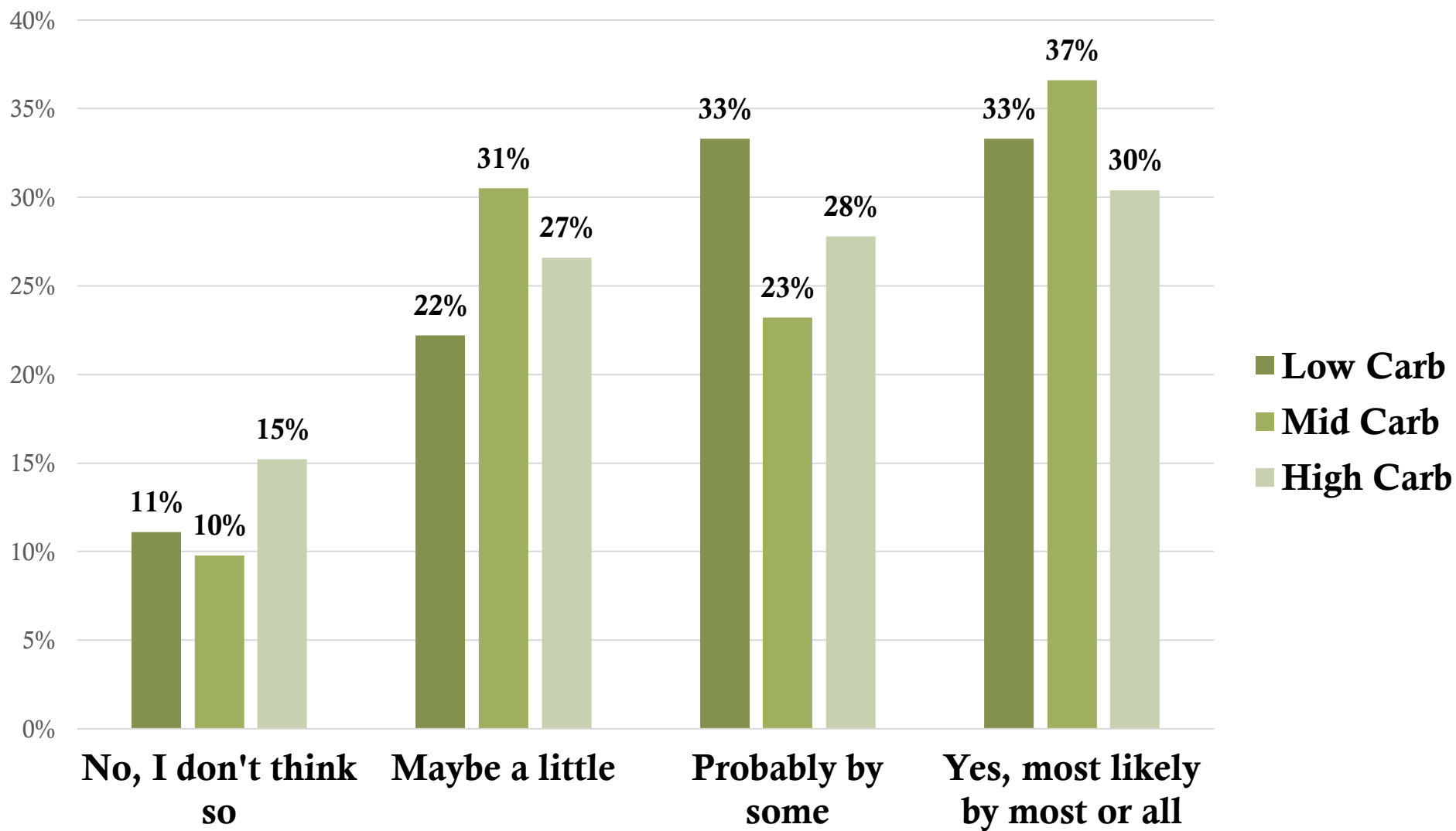
Would you say you are considered eccentric and/or unconventional by acquaintances?



2. Different from their family

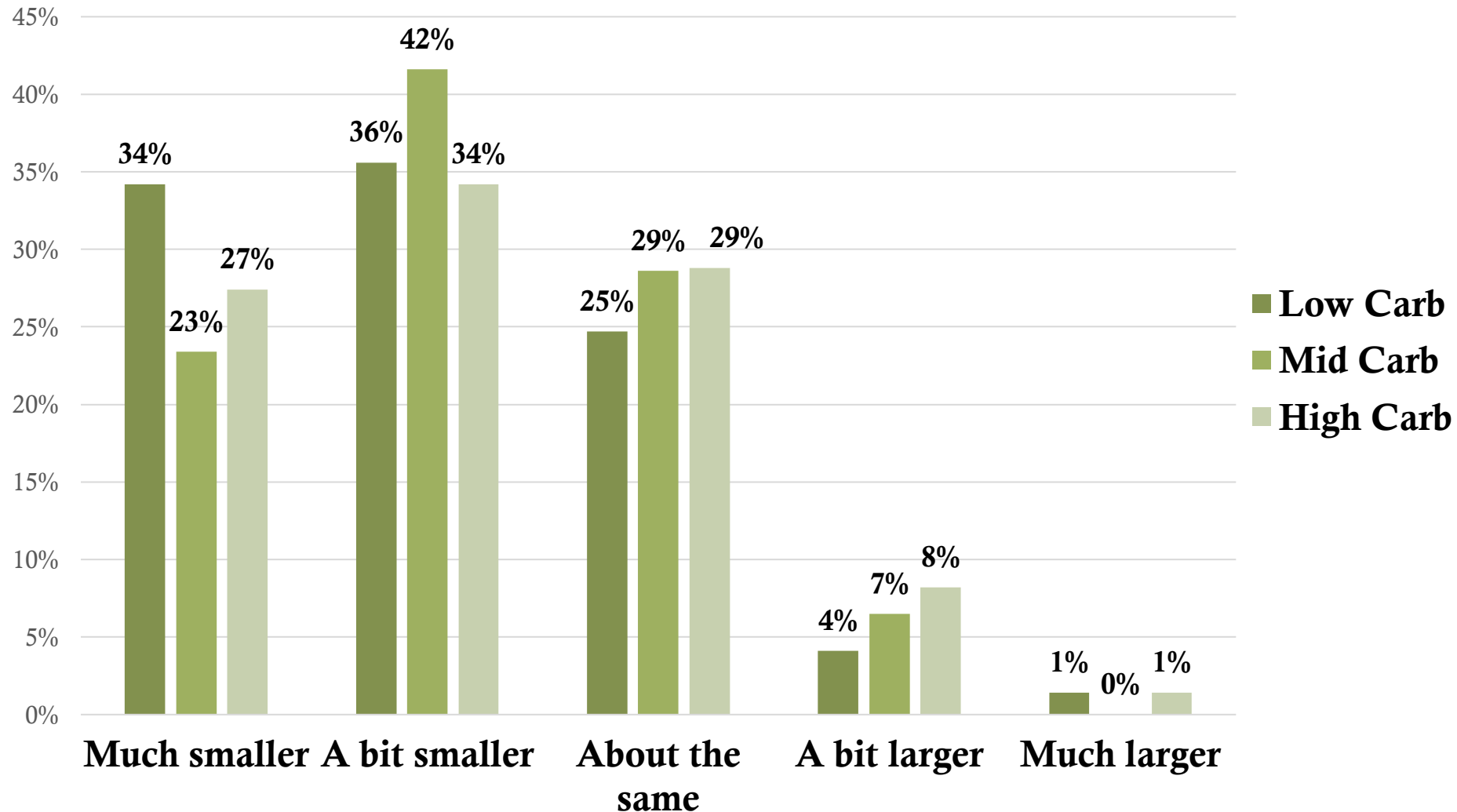
Would you say you are considered eccentric and/or unconventional by close relatives?

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 81$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 79$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $\chi^2 = .831$, $p = .362$)



Thinking about how you spend money, generally speaking, about how similar do you estimate your carbon footprint to be compared to the SIBLING(S) you grew up with?

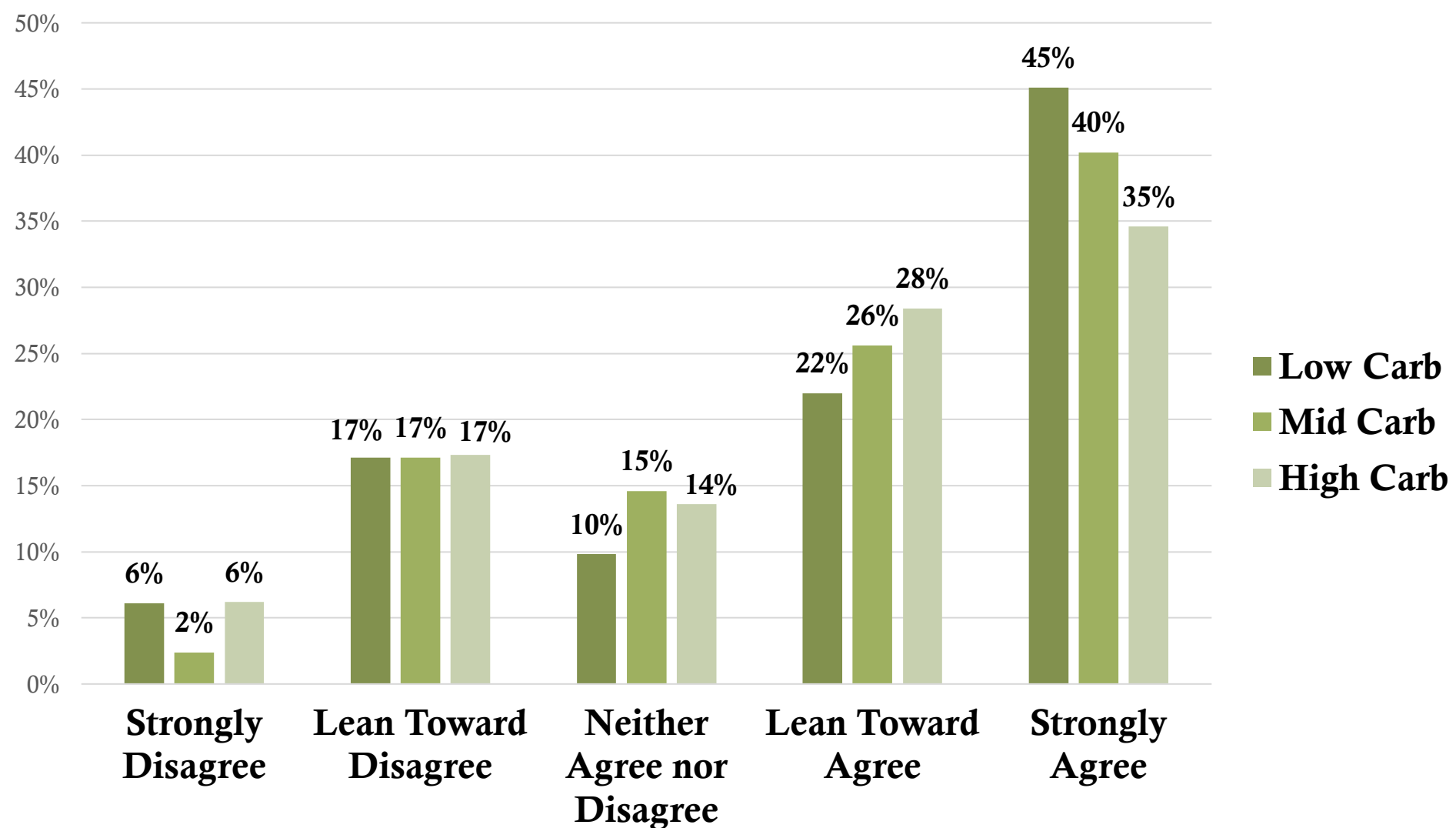
(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 73$, Mid $n = 77$, High $n = 73$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $\chi^2 = 1.427$, $p = .232$)



3. Low materialism

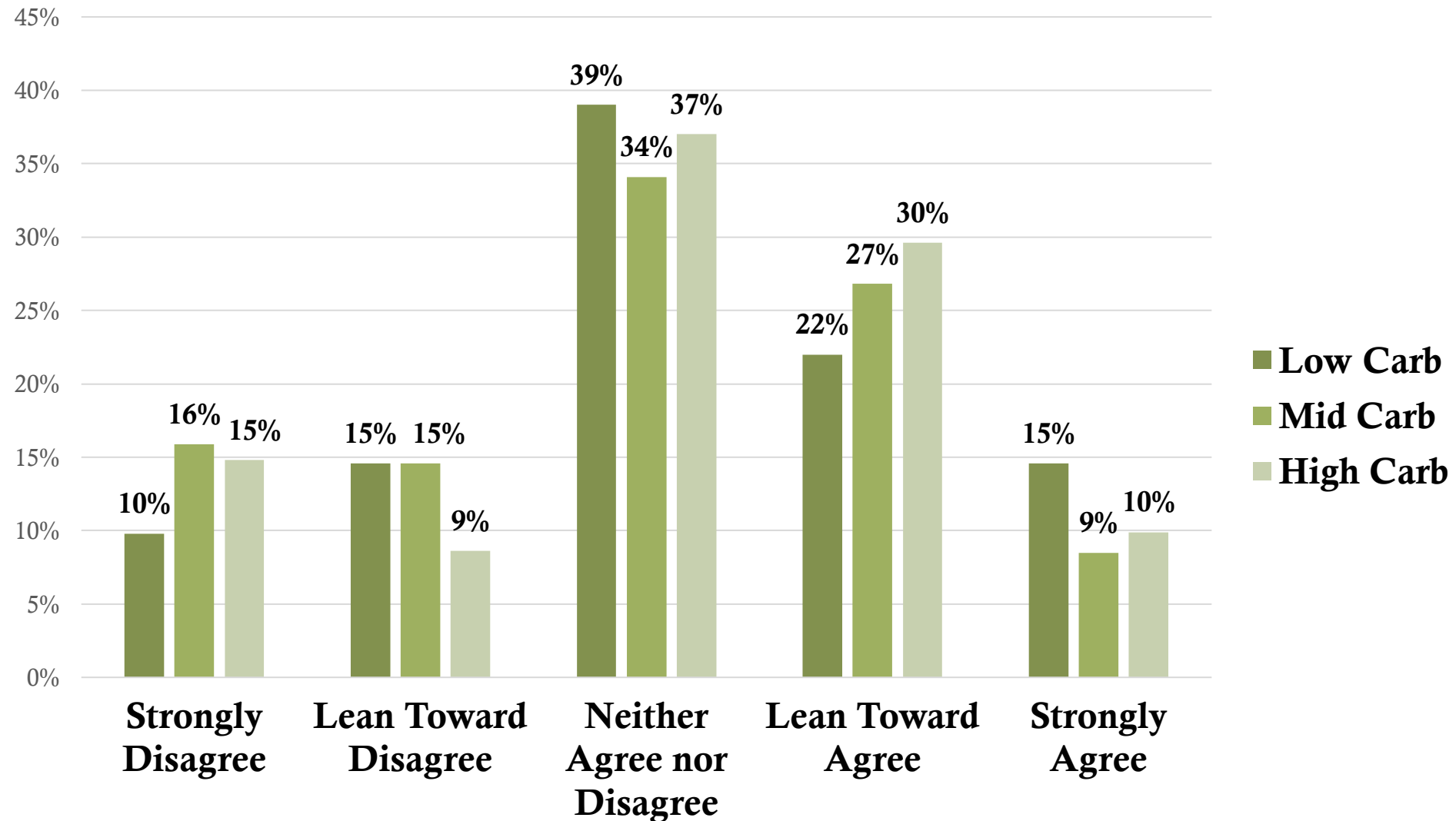
I avoid recreational shopping.

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $\chi^2 = .955$, $p = .328$)



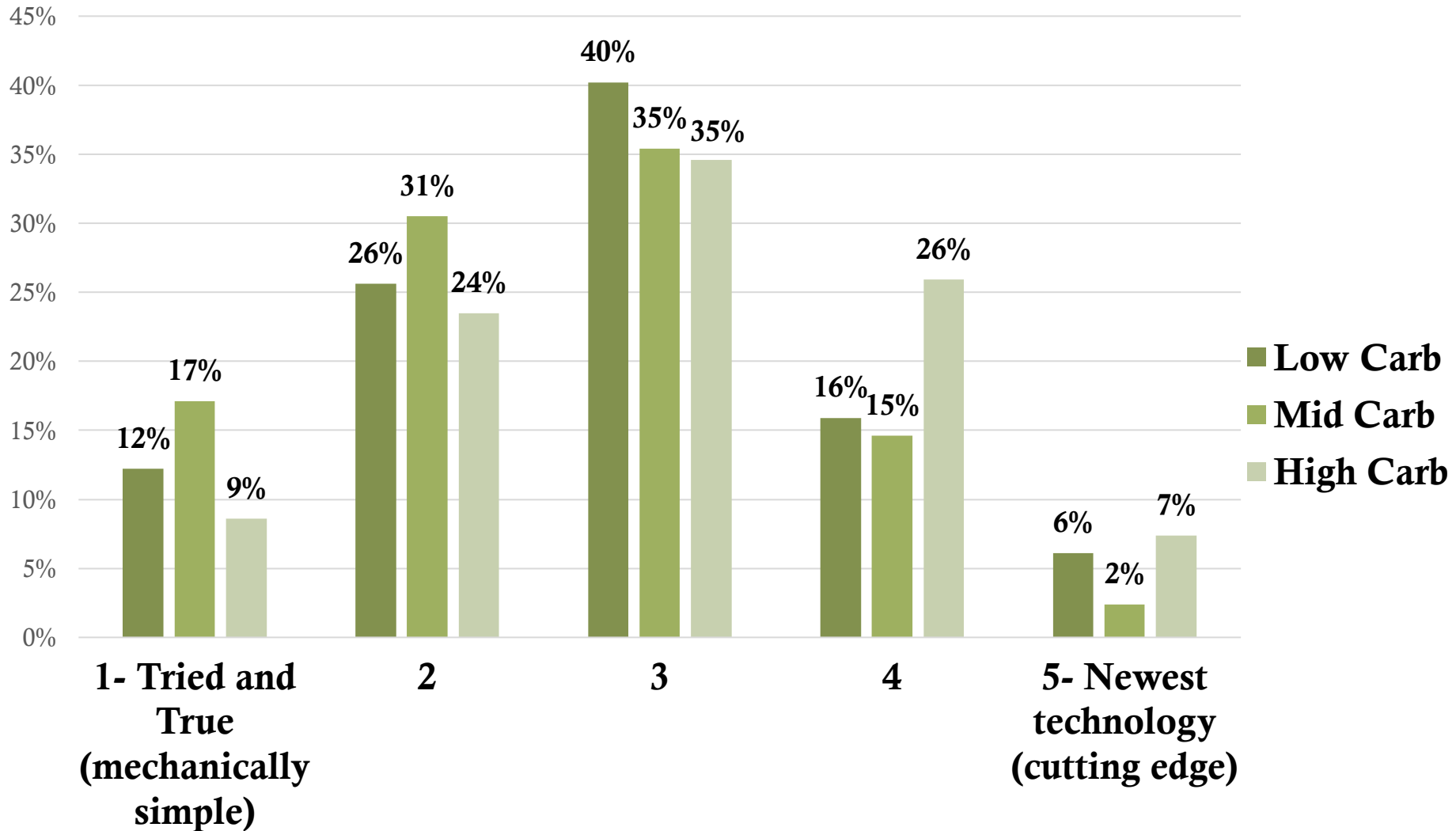
I admire people when they fly overseas for vacation.

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $\chi^2 = .006$, $p = .937$)



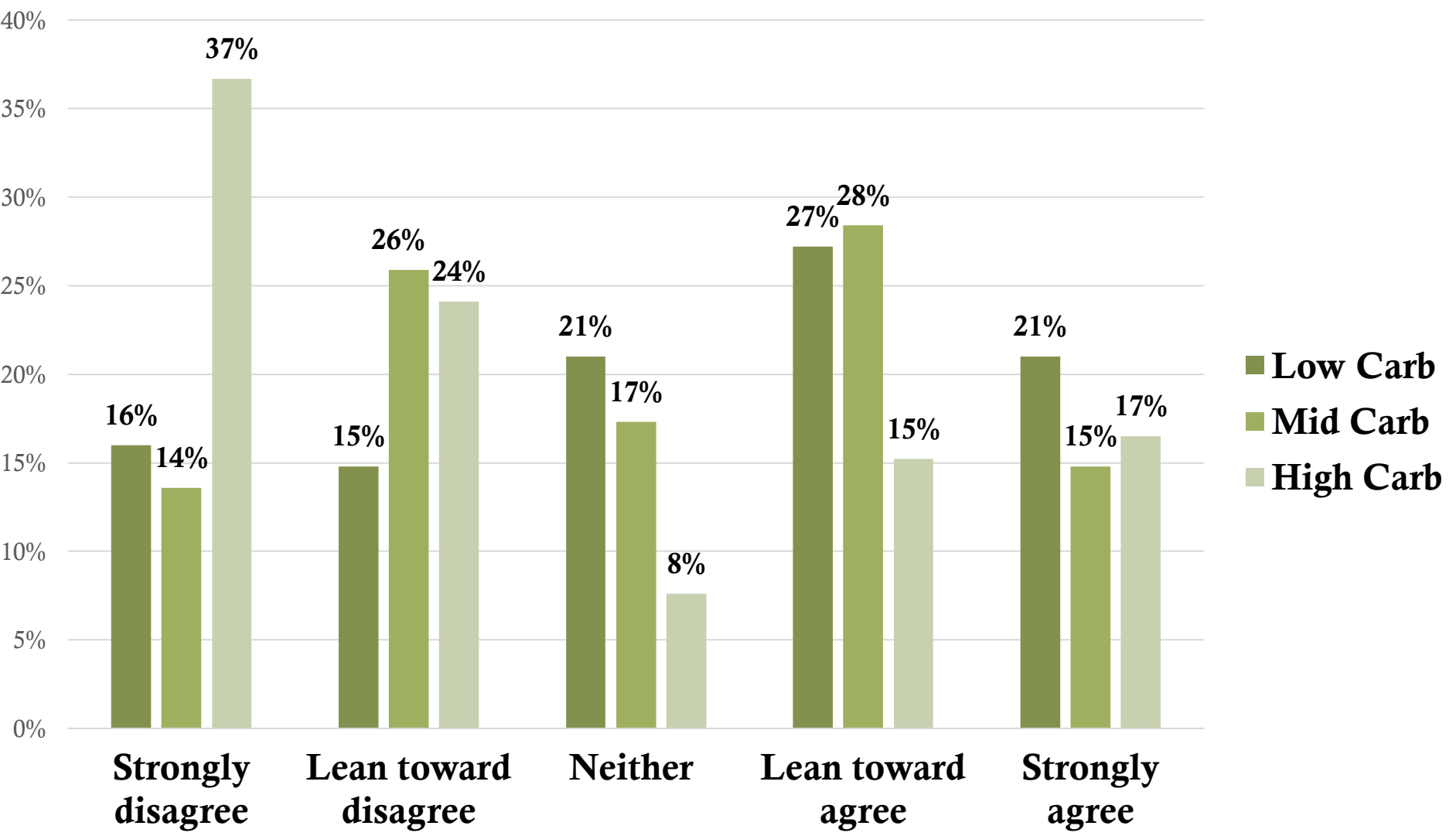
When you think of everyday tools and devices, what do you prefer?

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 1.826$, $p = .177$ TREND)



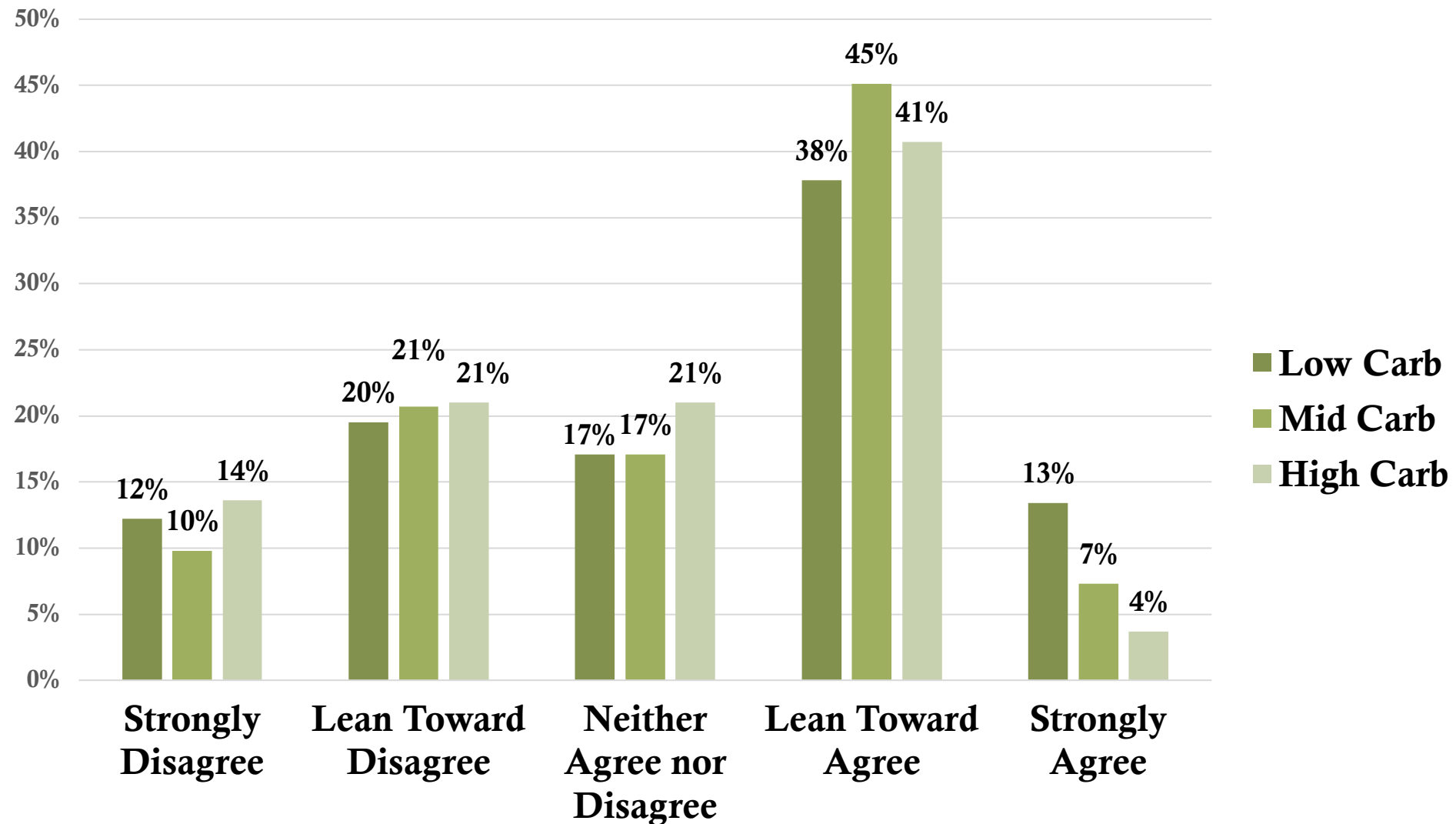
I would feel a bit embarrassed to own a brand new car, even if it were electric.

(YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 81$, Mid $n = 81$, High $n = 79$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 9.237$, $p = .002$)



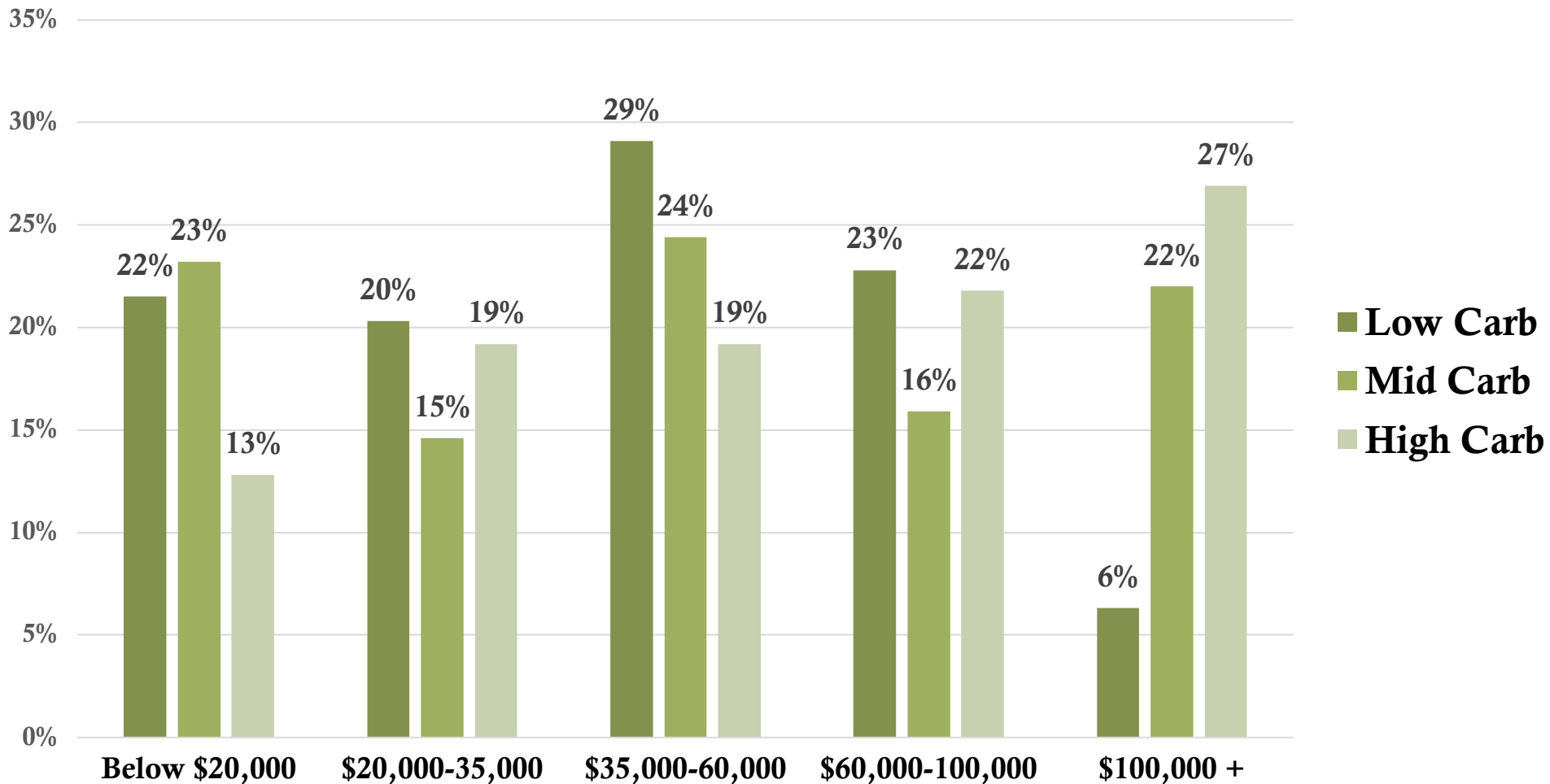
I am somewhat envious of people who make more money than I do.

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 1.366$, $p = .243$)



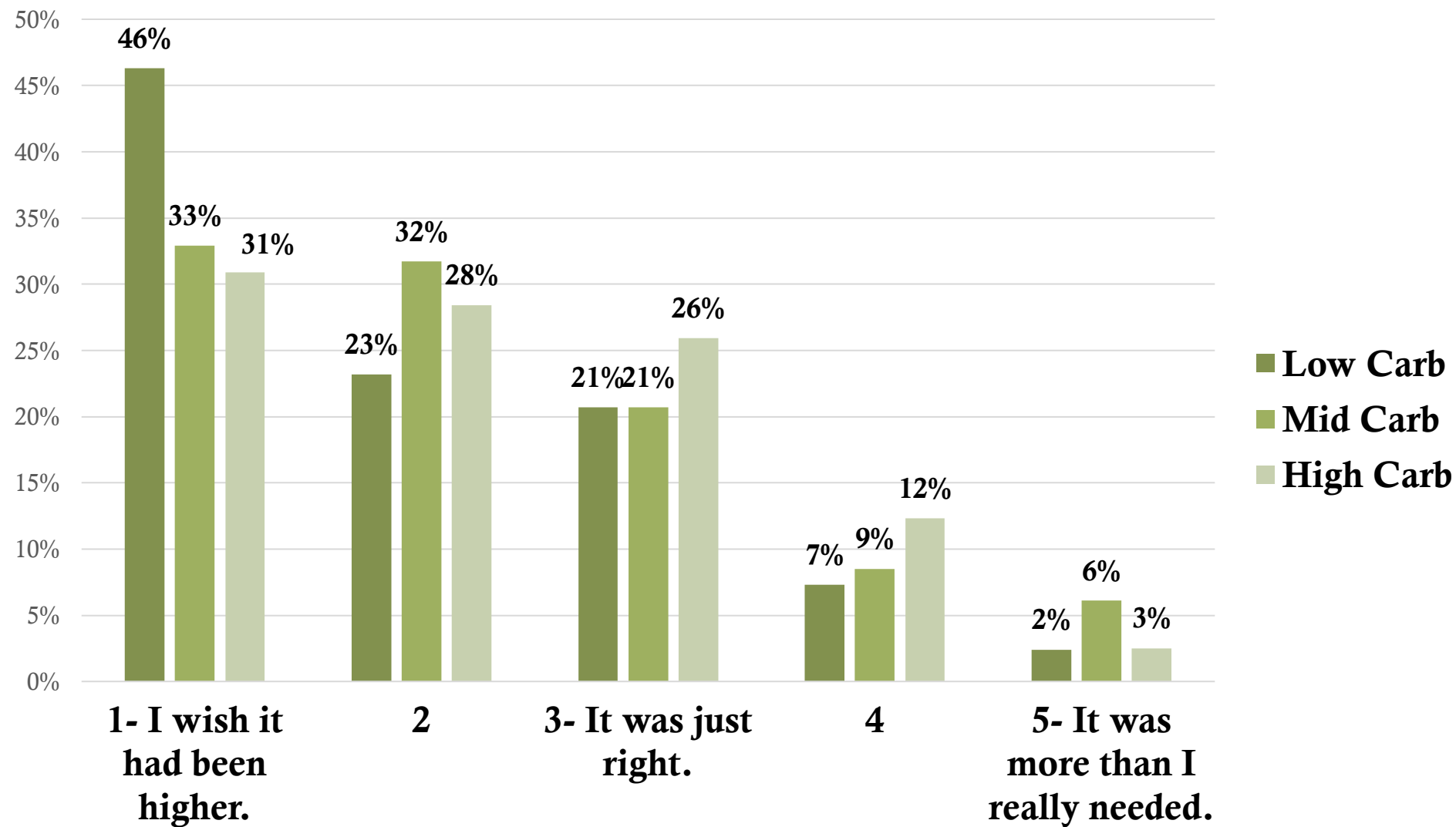
2014 Income (gross)

**(YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 79$, Mid = 82, High $n = 78$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 7.396$, $p = .007$)**



How satisfied were you with your household's 2014 income?

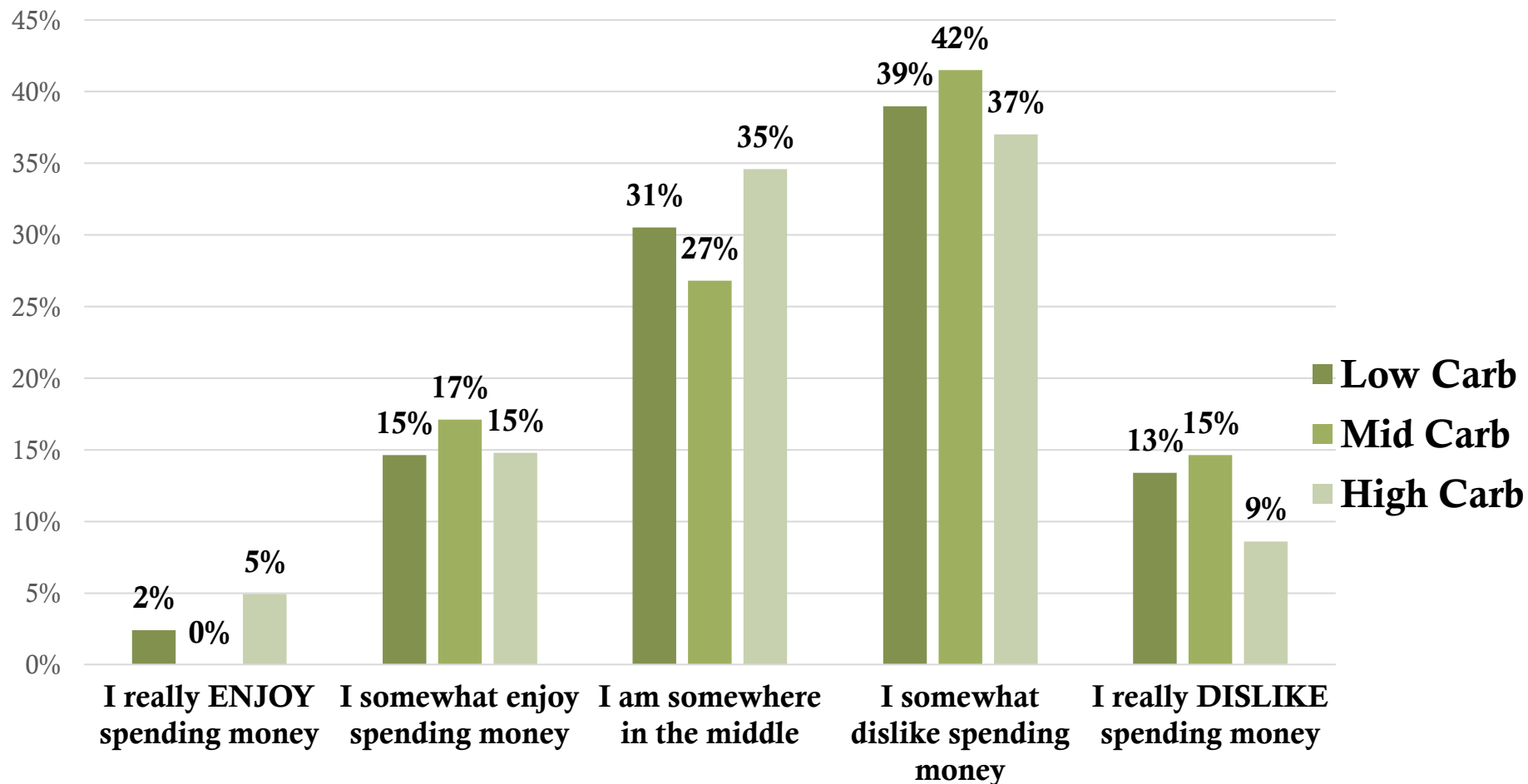
(**NEAR SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH:** Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 3.709$, $p = .054$, TREND)



4. Frugal

Thinking about how you generally feel when you spend your money, which one of these statements most closely describes you?

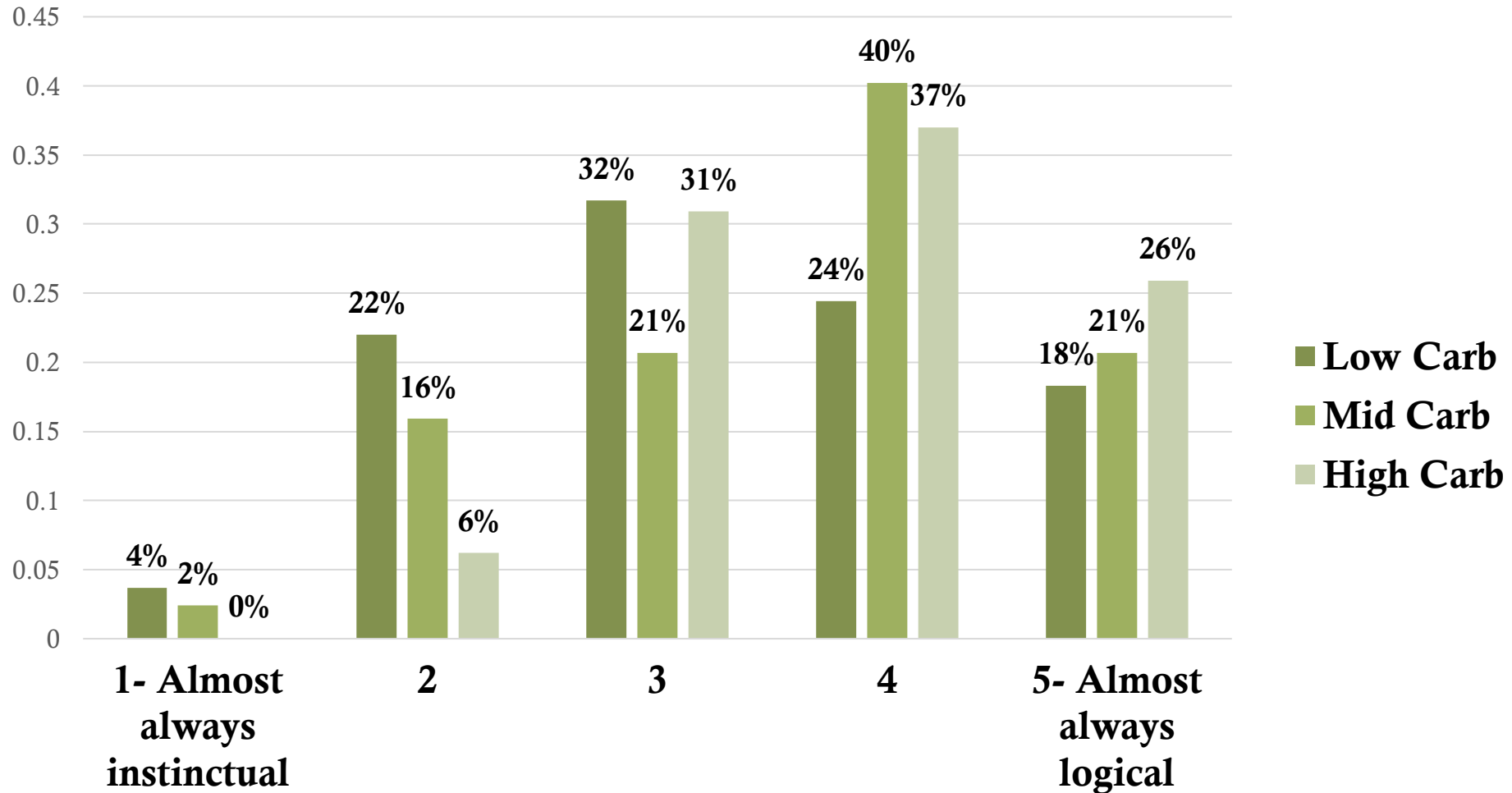
(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 1.047$, $p = .306$)



5. Logical

****In thinking about how you most often make decisions in your life, where would you place yourself on this scale?

(YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 8.861$, $p = .003$)

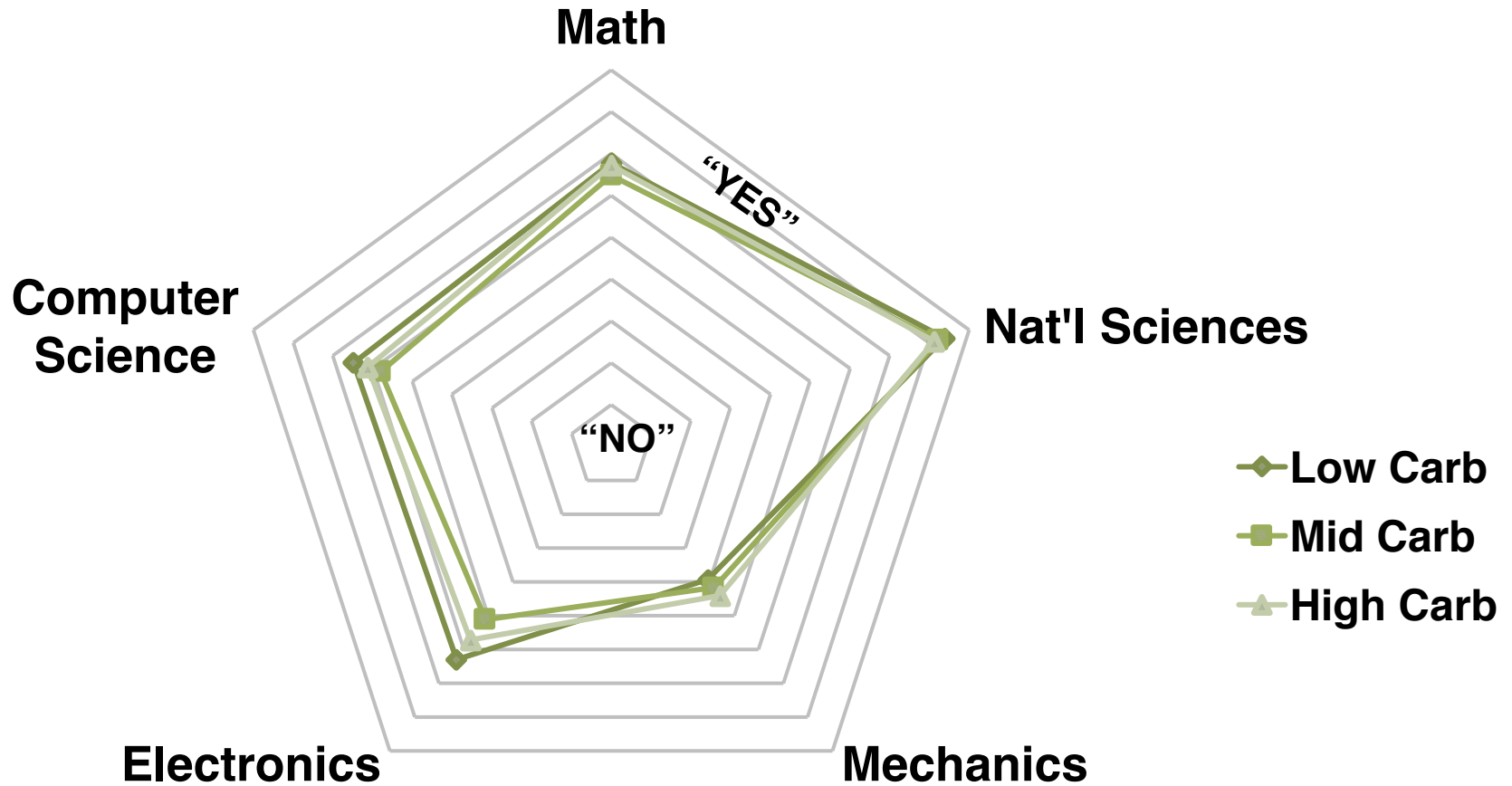


6. Scientific intelligence

Have you enjoyed and/or excelled at...

(NO SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH

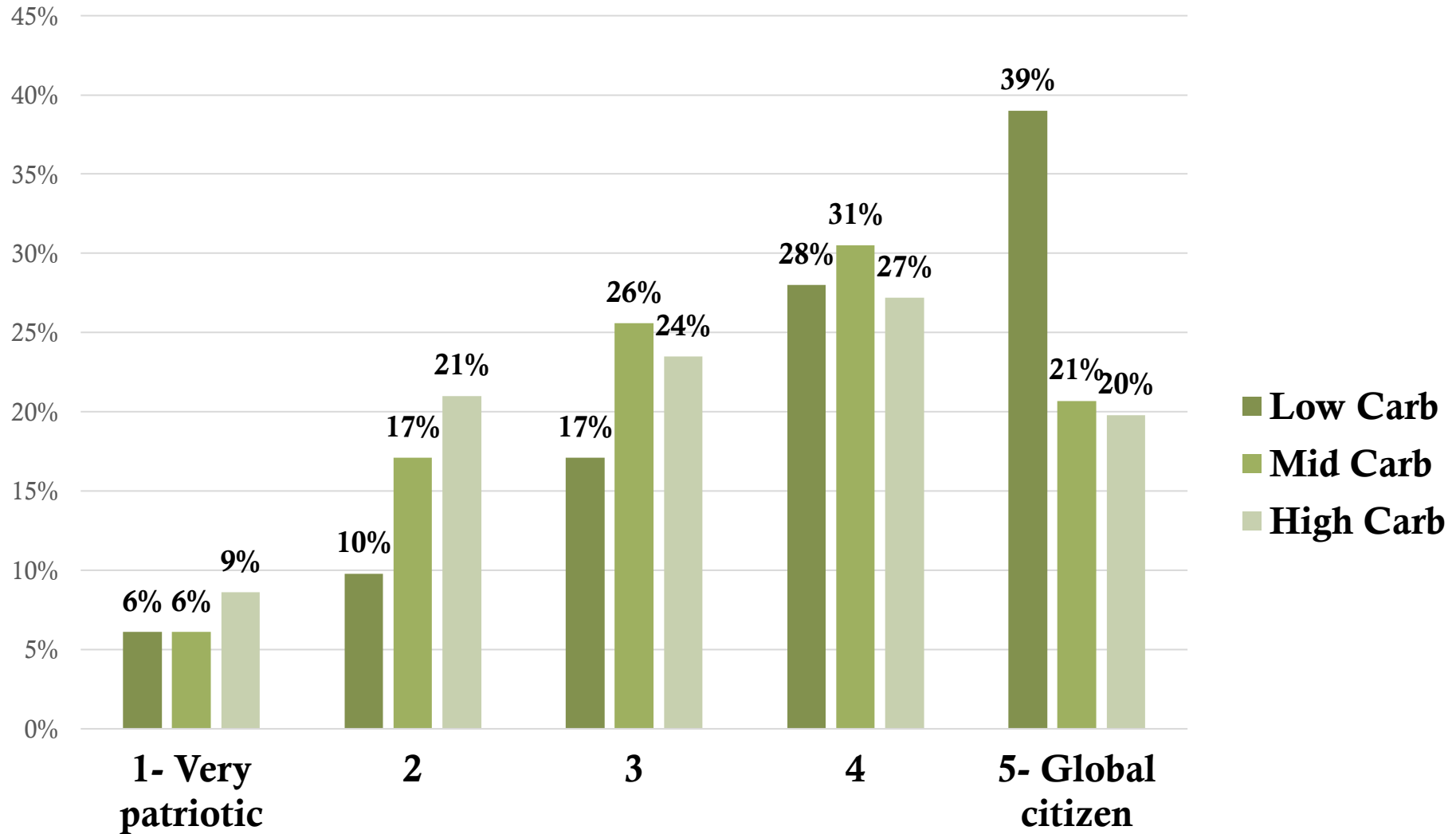
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 < 1.0$, $p = .425$ TO $.935$)



7. Egalitarian

***Where would you place yourself on this scale?

(**YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH:** Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 8.809$, $p = .003$)

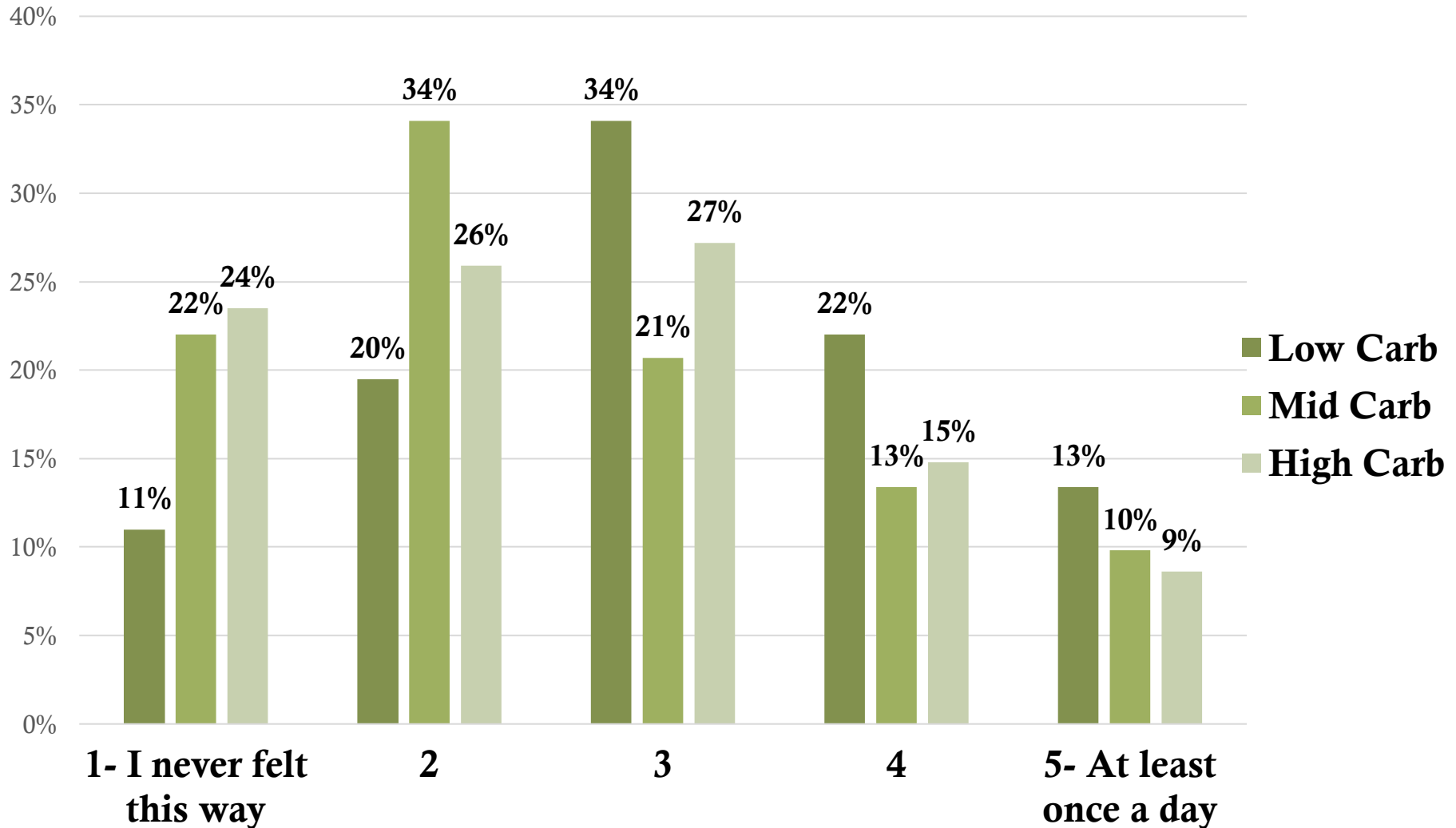


8. Melancholic

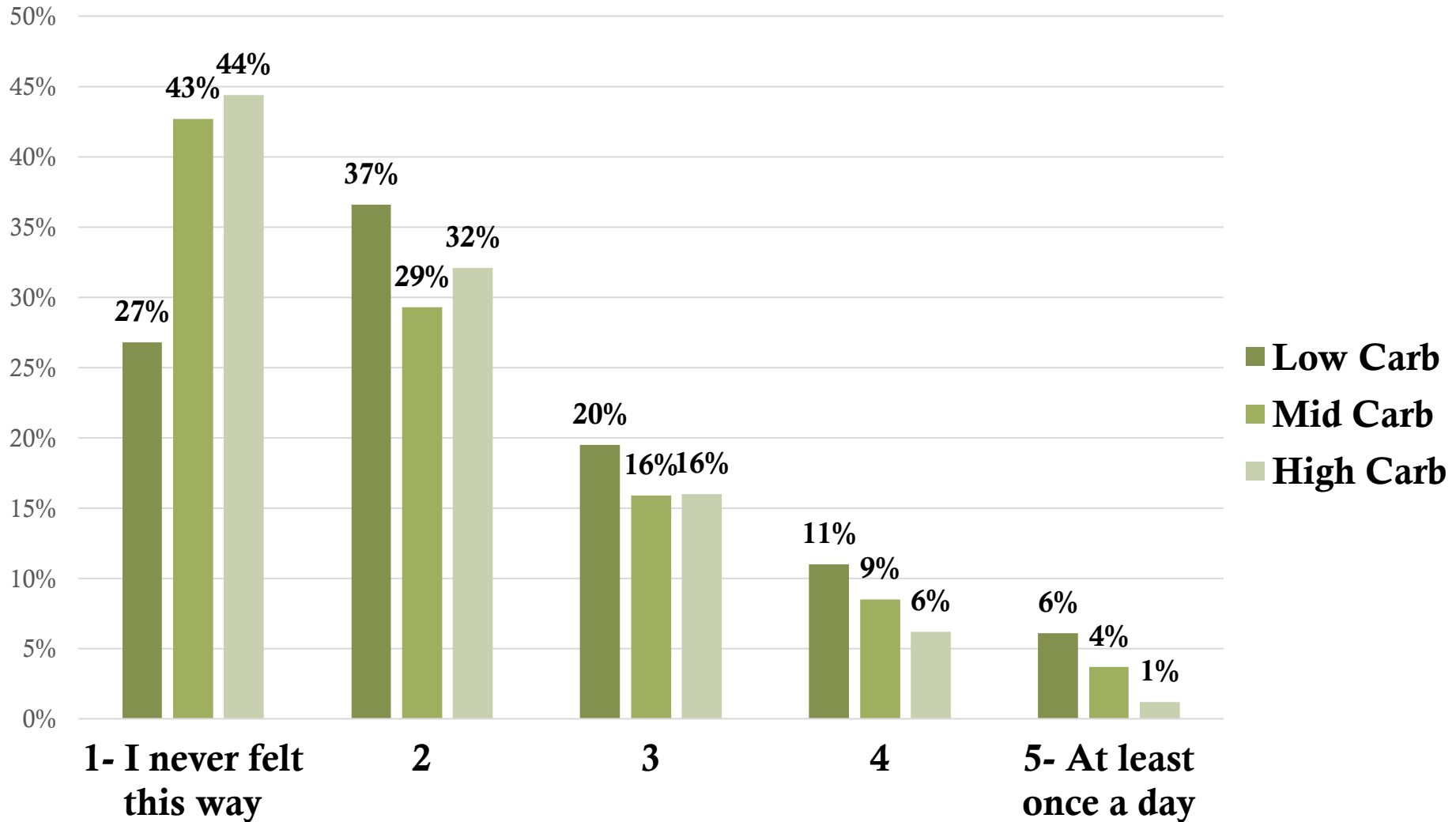
003: [Through tears] “I struggle a lot with the place that we’re in, and especially what feels sort of inevitable. [...] There’s this sense of hopelessness...”

***Feeling nervous, anxious or on-edge.

(YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN HIGH & LOW: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 6.389$, $p = .011$)

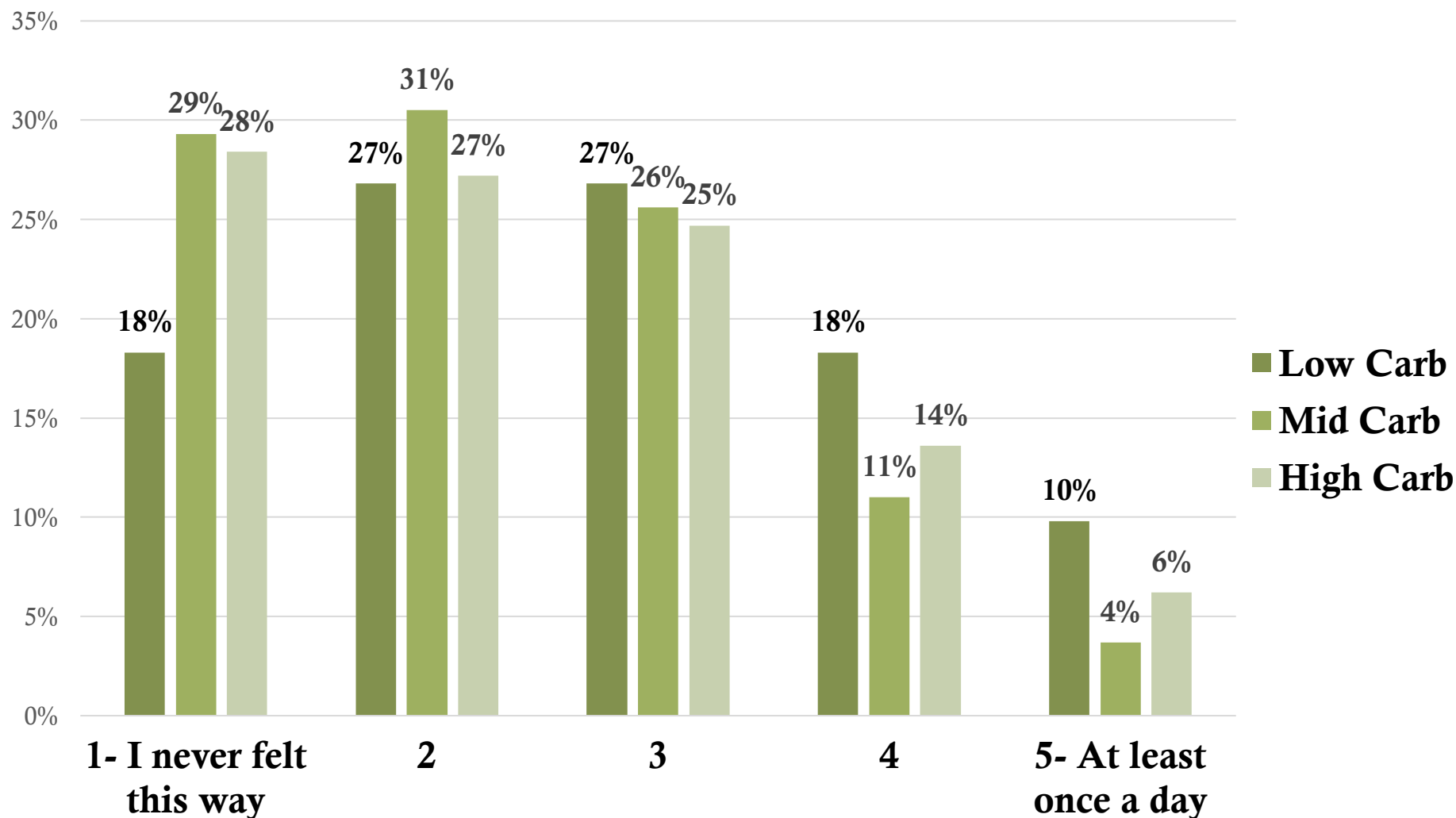


*****Not being able to stop or control worrying.**
(YES SIG DIFF. BETWEEN HIGH & LOW: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 6.661$, $p = .010$)



Feeling down, depressed or hopeless.

(NOT QUITE SIG DIFF. BETWEEN LOW & HIGH: Low $n = 82$, Mid $n = 82$, High $n = 81$,
Kruskal-Wallis Test: $X^2 = 2.853$, $p = .091$ TREND)



Future Research

- ❖ Influence of baseline cortisol and testosterone levels on carbon footprint
- ❖ Focus study 3 on egalitarianism