

CLIMATE NARRATIVES FOR THE CHINESE PUBLIC

SIX SEGMENTS AND NARRATIVE PRINCIPLES



Center for Climate Communication and Risk Governance
School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University



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Center for Climate Communication and Risk Governance, Tsinghua School of Journalism and Communication

Under a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Tsinghua University and the Energy Foundation China, the Energy Foundation China supported the establishment of the Center for Climate Communication and Risk Governance, Tsinghua School of Journalism and Communication. This center is led by Professor Zeng Fanxu, with a steering committee made up of representatives from the School of Journalism and Communications of Tsinghua University and the Energy Foundation China.

The center is committed to enhancing academic disciplinary construction by conducting ongoing research, providing knowledge products and toolkits for practical application in the field, promoting industry capacity building and talent cultivation, and facilitating international knowledge exchange and cooperation to contribute Chinese insights to global environmental and climate communication.

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If you have any suggestions for *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public: Six Segments and Narrative Principles* or Center for Climate Communication and Risk Governance, Tsinghua School of Journalism and Communication, or looking forward to learn more about our future work and research outcomes or establishing a partnership in the field of climate communication, please follow our WeChat official account "Tsinghua CCC" or scan the QR code below to receive more relevant information.



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SUMMARY

Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public: Six Segments and Narrative Principles (hereafter referred to as *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public*) is a research report on climate communication practice deeply rooted in the Chinese context. The analysis and findings are based on a nationwide survey of 8,077 Chinese citizens and several focus groups and in-depth interviews with experts, climate communication practitioners, and members of the public. Through comprehensive investigation through cluster and narrative analysis of the data mentioned above, the research team was able to produce *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* as a result.

The fundamental goal of *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* is to address the common challenges and confusions in climate communication practice. Current research findings of international climate communication academia and industries indicate that the life values significantly influence their perception, attitude, and actions toward climate change. Therefore, this report draws on the life values as an underlying logic and categorizes the public into six segments: Backbone Traditionalists, Disengaged Individualists, Passionate Strivers, Easygoing Leisurists, Moderate Pragmatists, and Philosophical Observers. The report then explores the





commonalities and differences among these segments on climate issues, and formulates communication objectives and climate narrative respectively.

The report aims to help climate communication stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, NGOs, media and business sectors, etc.) and other organizations or individuals who wish to work in climate communication in China take a deeper look at the Chinese climate audience, and assist them in mapping out more effective climate communication strategies.

1. The six types of Chinese public: an audience segmentation based on the life values

First and foremost, *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* classifies the Chinese public into six distinct segments based on life values surrounding the climate issue. By doing so, it aims to provide climate communication practitioners with a fresh, practical, and stable public classification scheme.

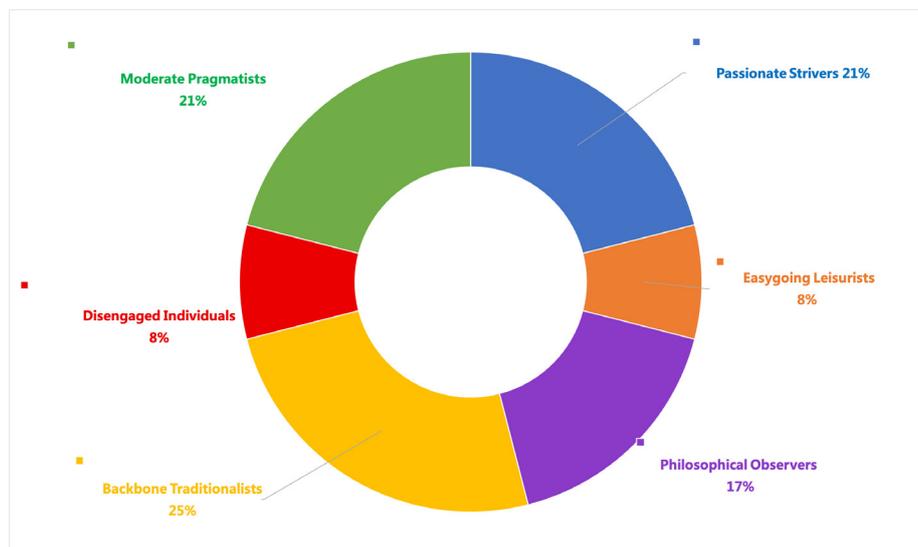


Figure 1: The six types of Chinese public

·Backbone Traditionalists

The backbone traditionalists are the largest among all segments, mainly comprised of middle-aged and elderly individuals with lower educational backgrounds. They scored the highest on most life value variables (self-enhancement, conservation, openness to change, nationalism, communitarianism, hierarchy, and fatalism). In a more specific

manner, they have a strong sense of patriotism and national identity, and believe that collective interests come before individual interests. They are willing to inspire others and take on leadership roles while having a high degree of confidence in their ability to contribute to the country and society's development.

·Disengaged Individualists

The disengaged individualists are the least active among all segments and are mainly represented by low-income urban youth. They are the segment with the lowest scores on multiple life value variables (self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservatism, openness to change, hierarchy, communitarianism, political efficacy). They often have low social status and self-evaluation, feeling that their abilities have yet to reach the level where they can participate in public affairs. As a result, they devote most of their energy to improving their living standards while showing little interest in new things and lacking motivation for self-enhancement.

·Passionate Strivers

The passionate strivers believe that “hard work can change one’s destiny” as a life tenet and adhere to such principles in everyday practice. They are represented by middle-aged and elderly middle class living in second-tier cities. Their score on the fatalism variable is significantly lower than those of other segments, while they have the highest scores on self-transcendence and political efficacy. Passionate strivers believe that personal effort is essential to create a better life, and they hope to continuously strive to achieve personal transcendence in ways that meet social expectations. They have a strong spirit of altruism, wanting to help and care for others in need. In addition, they are highly civic-minded and have a strong sense of national identity, proud of their country and nationality, and are confident that they can participate in public affairs and provide influential opinions for government decision-making.

·Easygoing Leisurists

The easygoing leisurists advocate the pursuit of pleasure, living in the moment, and adapting flexibly to various changes in life. They are predominantly represented by well-educated, relatively high-income young and middle-aged individuals in first-tier



cities. They scored very high on fatalism while having the lowest scores on hierarchy and nationalism. They yearn for a peaceful and comfortable life, and do not like to have disputes with others or get involved in arguments caused by differences in positions and attitudes. They long for equality and respect from others, while favoring viewing things with a “respect for difference” over “judgment of superiority and inferiority.”

·Moderate Pragmatists

The moderate pragmatist is the most “moderate” segment, with most of their life value scores closely in line with the average scores of the Chinese public. The segment is represented by young white-collar workers in first- and second-tier cities. Their pursuit of an ideal life is consistent with the mainstream Chinese social-cultural values, which emphasize career success and family harmony. When deciding whether to take action or not, they use the core logic of “Will it bring me practical benefits?” and “Will the cost of action be within a controllable range?” They highly advocate for individuals to form a “herd behavior” by voluntarily adopting pro-climate behavior and starting from doing the small things in daily life, thereby promoting macro-level changes in society.

·Philosophical Observers

"Focused on oneself and carefully considering whether to take action" is the most prominent characteristic of philosophical observers. They have the lowest scores in the variable of fatalism and communitarianism among all segments. Young students who have lived abroad experience are typical representatives of this segment. Generally, they possess strong critical thinking skills, are highly sensitive to their inner worlds, and try to explore diverse options in life. The unique feature is that they rarely lean toward extremes within their life values, and hold a dialectical attitude toward most things. Moreover, they have unique perspectives on social affairs but exhibit a low willingness to take practical action.

2. Understanding the commonalities and differences between Chinese public on climate change

Based on empirical research, the report sums up the commonalities in the Chinese public's understanding of climate change. These shared characteristics provided

a broader picture of the Chinese perspectives on climate change and revealed the opportunities and challenges that climate communication practitioners encounter:

- **The Chinese public generally recognizes that climate change is happening and human activity is a fundamental cause of its acceleration.** Compared with the public in Western countries where “climate skepticism” is prevalent, the Chinese public's stance on climate change is very consistent. All segments believe climate change is happening and agree that human activity is the leading cause. Consequently, the public believes humans are responsible for taking action against climate change.
- **The importance of climate change is widely recognized among the public.** The public fully recognizes the importance of climate change. All segments of the public believe climate change is a global issue that should be taken seriously.
- **Climate knowledge among the public is moderately weak.** The research reveals that there is no significant difference in climate knowledge, with an average score of 2-3 out of 7 points across all six segments. These findings suggest that there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of climate change among the Chinese public, as well as the presence of cognitive biases.
- **The public has high expectations of the role of the state.** Regardless of which segment, the public has high expectations of the state to play a central role in addressing climate change. The public generally favors the state as the primary actor and leader in addressing climate, and believes that the state should arrange and coordinate China's climate actions at the macro level.
- **The economic impact of climate change is a shared concern for the public.** While different segments have varying concerns about the effects of climate change, the impact on the economy has gained widespread public attention. All six segments have expressed varying degrees and aspects of concern regarding the economic impacts of climate change.

In addition to the commonalities, this report further explores the differences among the six segments regarding climate change. These differences form a key to understanding the Chinese public's views and can also be an essential consideration for practitioners when formulating communication strategies:

- **Backbone Traditionalists:** The segment exhibits the highest level of climate concern compared to the other segments, as they view it as a crucial issue that is closely associated with their lives. They have the highest level of risk perception concerning



climate change and are highly motivated to take action. These actions include not only making changes in their everyday lives but also advocating for climate change and encouraging others to do the same.

- **Disengaged Individualists:** In contrast, the disengaged individualists show the least level of concern towards climate change, possess little knowledge of the scientific consensus, and may even intentionally avoid information related to it. They also believe that they neither have the ability nor the obligation to take part in climate action. This makes them the most challenging group to mobilize among all segments.

- **Passionate Strivers:** They demonstrate a high degree of concern for climate change, even though they perceive it as a distant issue. Despite this, they exhibit the highest willingness to take climate action when compared to other segments. They are motivated to engage in climate action for their own benefit and the betterment of the nation and others, and are eager to respond to the national call for carbon peaking and carbon neutrality. Passionate strivers possess a high level of efficacy and believe their actions can positively impact climate change. They are particularly enthusiastic about adopting sustainable practices and advocating for climate policies.

- **Easygoing Leisurists:** The easygoing leisurists exhibit an apathetic attitude towards climate change and only pay attention when obligated to due to professional needs or occasional encounters. They acknowledge climate change but perceive the associated risks as relatively low. Additionally, they prioritize present enjoyment and do not excessively worry about issues they view as not significantly alarming. Their willingness to participate in and support climate action is weak. They believe the government should take the lead in establishing social norms for climate action rather than advocating for individuals' spontaneous changes.

- **Moderate Pragmatists:** The moderate pragmatists possess the most comprehensive climate knowledge among all segments. However, their perceptions are based on personal experiences and they tend to understand climate change as abnormal extreme weather. Their strong motivation to participate in climate action is driven by self-imposed moral constraints, but in fact, they do not believe individual actions alone can bring substantive changes to address climate change. They are more inclined to participate in climate action as individuals rather than as organizers, and their willingness to take action is mostly limited to small changes they can make in their daily lives.

- **Philosophical Observers:** They do not consider climate change as a central concern in their personal lives. Compared to other segments, their climate knowledge is relatively

weak, and they believe individual actions have minimal impact on mitigating climate change. They have taken a few practical steps to address climate change. However, they exhibit a strong willingness to participate in climate activities and advocate for NGOs to play an essential role in promoting climate policies, in addition to the government.

3. Targeted climate narratives to facilitate China's "dual carbon" goals

To recognize the key concerns, concepts, and values that unite and differentiate the Chinese public, we need to move beyond traditional climate communication strategies that categorize the public based on simplistic demographic variables. Instead, we need to adopt more effective standards and perspectives to better understand the public. The life values-orientated approach will provide climate communicators with an effective, practical, and operational narrative guideline to facilitate public involvement in climate action and better support China's national strategy of achieving carbon peaking and carbon neutrality goals.

As the research findings of *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* demonstrate that the Chinese public has reached an active consensus regarding the reality and importance of climate change, which lays a solid foundation to mobilize the public for climate action. Although the public segmentation identified in this research has distinct characteristics and is mutually exclusive, it is important to note that there is no extreme opposition. Climate change has great potential to become a key public concern for the entire Chinese population.

Furthermore, the research has developed specific and tailored communication goals for each segment based on a multidimensional analysis of their life values, climate cognition, media usage, etc. For example, a critical communication goal for disengaged individualists, who possess a low level of climate awareness, cognition, and willingness to act, is to include them as part of the target audience for climate action. This not only prevents them from becoming climate denialists but also has the potential to increase their climate perception and willingness to act. On the other hand, for philosophical observers with strong critical thinking skills, it is essential to explore their potential to become opinion leaders and play a leading role in influencing other communities. This can be achieved by cultivating their attention and participation in climate change and further nurturing them to become active discussants of climate change.

Based on the tailored communication objectives for different segments, the project further conducted focus groups, in-depth interviews, and climate narrative testing to gain deeper insight into segmented audiences' value orientations, societal concerns,



and narrative preferences. In narrative testing, researchers asked participants from all segments to highlight the sentences in the scripts that they preferred and disliked. Using the testing results, the researchers formed narrative suggestions to be adopted and avoided on the preferences and dislikes expressed by participants in each segment. Based on qualitative interviews and data collected during the research, these suggestions were then incorporated into a set of narrative suggestion tailored to the needs of each segment in climate communication.

In addition, narrative suggestions were developed for the government, NGOs, and companies to communicate effectively on climate change. The recommendations were designed based on the institutional orientation, discourse characteristics, and public perception characteristics identified during the research.

In short, *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* categorizes the Chinese public into six segments based on their life values. Although life values are closely linked to demographic variables such as gender, region, educational background, and income, we believe that using life values as the primary starting point can overcome the limitations of using a single demographic variable as a classification scheme. This approach leads to a deeper analysis of the engagement between the Chinese public and climate change, resulting in a more comprehensive and enduring public classification and narrative recommendations for climate communication practitioners.

We hope that climate practitioners will use this report in a dialectical manner, by not only identifying the commonalities of climate issues among the Chinese public but also examining the substantial differences among different segments. This can serve as a communication guide to facilitate more profound engagement with the Chinese public on climate change.

1

**CLIMATE NARRATIVE
RESEARCH BASED ON CHINESE
LIFE VALUES**



1.1 Background: The dilemma of climate communication in China

In the context of the national strategic goals for “dual carbon,” the public plays a crucial role as an essential participant in the reduction of carbon emissions. Identifying ways to mobilize the public to participate in climate action and to practice low-carbon through effective communication is an important agenda that all sectors of Chinese society must address. For the last two decades, frontline practitioners have actively sought the answer to this key question, leading to the rapid growth of the climate communication industry in China.

During this process, the industry still faces the following challenges:

- **Mismatch between the public’s high support and low action.** In general, the Chinese public trusts the decisions made by authorities and highly supports government policies related to energy conservation, emission reduction, industrial transformation, technology development, and other related issues. More than 97% of the public supports China's “dual carbon” goals, and around 90% are willing to learn more about

climate change¹. However, several polls show that despite the Chinese public gradually becoming more aware of climate change, its level of climate action remains relatively low as compared to globally². The importance of climate change has yet to be effectively translated into action. To address these challenges, *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* has been developed to respond to the dilemma of Chinese climate communication practice, which is characterized by clear inadequacy when it comes to encouraging climate action among the public.

· **The gap between elite-oriented discourse and the daily lives of individuals.** China's dominant climate narrative often relies on a single narrative, in which climate issues are primarily viewed as purely scientific and are used to advocate for specific policies. Narratives such as "global average temperature has increased by 2 degrees" and "responding to policies and jointly addressing climate change" are often used by various communication actors. As a result of these top-down, scientific, policy-advocating, and distancing narratives, the public often perceives climate change as an "important but not personal" issue. Consequently, it becomes challenging to raise the public's awareness and deepen their connection with climate change, which also hinders effective of climate action.

· **Unawareness of the transition from mass communication to targeted communication.** Public stratification has become a reality in China. However, stratification is not only limited to demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education level, and income. It is also influenced by lifestyle, social networks, interactions, and, most importantly, life values, which result in inevitable differences in the cognitive process, attitude, and behavior among different segments regarding the same issue. Based on an evaluation of the Chinese climate communication industry, the traditional method for public segmentation through population statistics is rather vague. This method does not effectively prompt the public to engage in deeper discussions about climate change, and it becomes increasingly difficult to facilitate meaningful connections between climate issues and the general public. Effectively mobilizing the public to be actively involved in climate action has become a top priority in China's national strategic agenda. Meanwhile, communicators across sectors have become increasingly aware of the importance of redefining their audience and reaching them effectively.

1 Wang Binbin (2022). Global Public Opinion on Climate Change. Cop27 China Pavillion

2 Wike, R. (2015). What the world thinks about climate change in 7 charts. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/18/what-the-world-thinks-about-climate-change-in-7-charts/>



· **Lack of specificity in targeting communication channels.** Since climate communicators have realized the importance of integrating traditional and new media channels to comprehensively reach more audiences, China has witnessed a rapid increase in the breadth of climate coverage. However, the current media channel selection lacks targeted planning and strategic content production, which leads to difficulty in matching content with the appropriate audience. Specifically, it is challenging for communicators to establish rapport with the public who have varying levels of knowledge, lifestyle, and background, and consequently leading to less-than-ideal communication effects. Yet, practitioners have not developed a reliable solution to match diverse climate content to their respective audiences to efficiently compete for their attention.

In summary, the primary issue associated with climate communication in China is the need for a better understanding of the public. The current communication practice lacks a stable and feasible public segmentation scheme, which can be improved by increasing practitioners' understanding of their audiences, and enabling the development of more targeted narratives and communication strategies. Such strategies would help establish a profound connection between the public and climate change, which further promote the public's climate action.

1.2 Our solution: Public segmentation and narrative strategies

Based on the fundamental challenges of climate communication outlined above, *Climate Narratives for the Chinese Public* intends to explore a new approach to foster strong connections and resonance between the public and climate issues through narratives, leveraging life values as a fundamental factor that is relatively stable and significantly shape public perception toward climate change.

· **Current dilemma: demographic segmentation has limited effectiveness in climate communication.** Public classification based on demographic indicators is currently the most common segmentation scheme in China's climate communication industry. Its inherent logic assumes that people of the same age, educational background, gender, or occupation usually share many similarities. However, when it comes to climate change, the effectiveness of this classification scheme is limited. Current practices often use terms such as “youth,” “middle class,” and “urban residents” to divide the public into different segments for communication purposes. Although the classification is theoretically feasible, when applied to climate communication, it rarely captures the differentiation within a segment and often only reflects relatively singular

characteristics. Furthermore, climate change is characterized by high uncertainty and complexity, making it more difficult to establish a profound connection with complex populations through the relatively simple classification standard.

· **A more feasible approach: life values as the segmentation indicator.** Compared to establishing more complicated demographic indicators, tackling the dilemma of climate communication from the perspective of life values to explore audience segmentation offers a greater degree of feasibility. As a meta-concept, life values influence our attitudes and behaviors toward the world, society, and ourselves. They are closely associated with multidimensional demographic variables and can better predict the public's cognitive processes and behavioral intentions toward climate change. In addition, life values, as a personality trait formed through long-term life experiences, have a relatively stable and enduring nature compared to demographic characteristics such as social interactions and career choices. Once formed, they are difficult to change significantly. Therefore, they can provide a simple, accurate, and stable standard system for categorizing the public.

Adopting a life value-based segmentation strategy can assist in building a stronger connection between different segments and gaining a better understanding of audience preferences in communication. Moreover, this methodology direction has been widely implemented in universities and research institutions globally, including the United Kingdom, the United States, and India, and has produced successful guiding principles for dissemination. This has also provided a methodological reference for conducting climate narrative research and carrying out relevant work in China.

1.3 Project implementation

The project is led by the Centre for Climate Communication and Risk Governance, School of Journalism and Communication of Tsinghua University, with support from the Energy Foundation China. It runs from 2022 to 2023. A questionnaire was distributed to adults aged 18 and older in China, and 8,077 valid responses were received. Additionally, seven focus group interviews were conducted, and 74 individuals from different backgrounds were interviewed in-depth to obtain their opinions on climate communication narratives. A series of workshops with various organizations and practitioners in the climate communication industry were also organized to gain a comprehensive understanding of their experiences.

Based on the comprehensive data analysis, we identified six segments of the Chinese public: Backbone Traditionalists, Disengaged Individualists, Passionate



Strivers, Easygoing Leisurists, Moderate Pragmatists, and Philosophical Observers. Instead of organizing the public's values into a binary spectrum, such as left/right, liberal/conservative, radical/moderate, we assess the public's position based on nine dimensions, including self-transcendence, nationalism, political efficacy, communitarianism, hierarchy, fatalism, openness to change, conservatism, and self-enhancement.

Our categorization is not intended to label segments simplistically but rather to grasp the characteristics of the public's life values as a whole, thus providing a reference for targeted and effective climate communication.

While analyzing the life values of the public, we also studied the existing climate communication narratives of government agencies, NGOs, and companies. We have incorporated the feedback from focus group participants on narrative materials to generate further targeted recommendations by analyzing their current climate communication practices and problems.

1.4 Project rationale

Through the report, we aim to provide a solid understanding of the life values held by the Chinese public as well as offer practical toolkits to climate communicators to promote consensus on climate action nationwide.

The significance of the research is reflected in several aspects:

First, the project goes beyond the homogenous understanding of the “public” and clarifies the differences between segments. The segmentation of the public based on life values provides rich and detailed public insights for Chinese communication practitioners, which will provide important guidance for the promotion of climate communication in China's cultural and social context. The research result of this project also helps the industry to better understand the relationship between life values of the Chinese public and climate cognition and to identify segmented populations. This will greatly improve the institutions' abilities to execute climate communication plans for the Chinese public.

Second, the public segmentation and narrative principles proposed in the research are a new attempt to deeply and accurately connect with the public, which can directly influence the promotion of public awareness and willingness to take action through communication practices. The research aspires to establish a connection between the grand narrative of climate change and individual lives based on the public's life

values so that climate communication can go beyond “informing” and “accepting” and transform into the public’s “daily” and “natural” practice. Subsequently, Chinese climate action can be seamlessly integrated into an individual’s private and public life, aligning with the country's economic and social development.

Further, the research offers communication guidance and narrative strategies for governments, companies, and NGOs to foster deeper public engagement with climate change. By starting from life values and combining this concept with demographic and media characteristics, the project created a comprehensive and detailed portrayal of public segments, enabling organizations to establish more specific and efficient connections with individuals holding different beliefs. Additionally, the descriptions of life values help communicators to anchor value orientation and meaning construction of segments, which provides a framework for designing effective narratives and developing tailored communication strategies.

As a pioneering research of climate narratives in China, this project introduced Chinese Life Values as a new perspective to understand the Chinese public. This model connects individuals' attitudes and behaviors toward climate change with their deeper life values, offering a new reference point for academic research and industry practice in climate communication. At the same time, this perspective of combining demographic and media characteristics with life values enriches the segmentation and clustering schemes for understanding Chinese public segmentation.

Overall, Chinese climate narratives should focus on how to deepen the public's understanding of climate change and inspire self-motivated behavioral change towards green and low-carbon lifestyles at the societal level. By adopting a public segmentation based on life values, we can effectively reach different segments with varying values and lifestyles and establish deep connections with them. This approach enables more targeted climate narratives that have a better potential to inspire public climate action and support the country in achieving dual carbon goals.

2

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SIX SEGMENTS

2.1 Overview

Public segmentation based on life values can assist organizations to find their audience effectively, develop targeted narrative principles, and refine communication strategies. However, it is important to remain optimistic and recognize the commonalities across segments, such as the public consensus that global warming is real and the recognition of the importance of addressing climate change. Additionally, there is a shared belief that humans are obligated to take appropriate action in response to climate change. These shared beliefs serve as the foundation for building social consensus and mobilizing collective action.

Meanwhile, it is crucial to recognize that different segments hold varying life values. Their level of awareness, emotional attitude, and willingness to take action on climate issues also varies. Organizations should carefully consider these factors before engaging in public dialogues.

- Backbone traditionalists and disengaged individualists represent the majority and minority of public segments respectively. The former pays close attention to climate





change and engages in climate action, with a high level of self-efficacy and willingness to support national decisions such as “dual carbon” goals. They are an easily mobilized segment. In contrast, the latter tends to understand grand agendas through personal experience, and their decision to participate in public affairs is highly dependent on individual experiences. They tend to remain indifferent and distant toward social concerns, with lower than average knowledge of climate issues and risk perception. This segment is the most challenging group to mobilize for climate action.

- The willingness to act differs significantly between passionate strivers and easygoing leisurists. The former firmly believes that "people are the maker of their own fate" and are eager to change the world into a better place for themselves and others through hard work. With a high level of climate risk perception, they are confident in mitigating climate crises by taking appropriate action. The latter holds the notion that life changes are largely determined by "fate" and may not recognize the severity of climate risk. Their attitude of “living-in-the-moment” causes them to maintain an open mindset toward social concerns and tend to accept current circumstances as they are. Therefore, they lack the willingness to engage in immediate action.

- Philosophical observers and moderate pragmatists exhibit opposing attitudes toward social life. Philosophical observers tend to adopt a cautious attitude when examining public affairs and are less motivated to take action. They also have a low level of self-efficacy. When it comes to social problems, they tend to critically evaluate and reflect on them but avoid active participation. Philosophical observers prioritize personal development and devote much of their energy to enhancing their mental and spiritual well-being. On the other hand, moderate pragmatists value stability in materialistic life, adhere to traditions and follow social norms. They express concern about extreme weather and possess the intent to climate action. They expect that society can achieve "herd behavior" in response to climate change by advocating self-restraint for citizens.

In terms of place of residence, each segment is relatively concentrated in provincial capitals, municipalities, as well as prefecture-level cities and county towns. Those living in super first-tier cities and rural areas are in minority, as the regional sampling of the survey sample is mainly based on provinces.

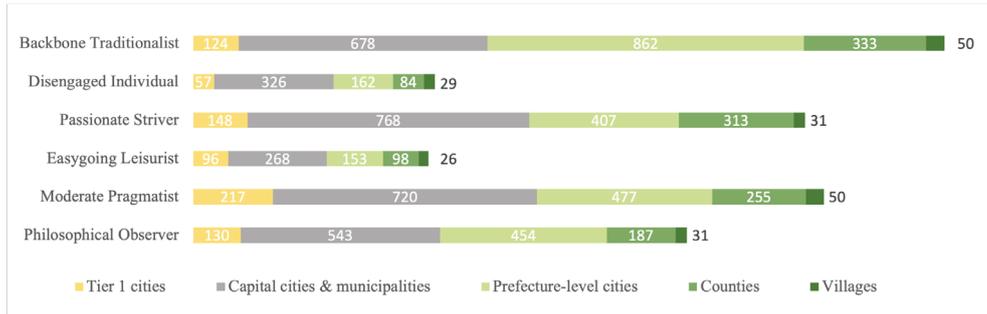


Figure 2-1 Percentage of residence by segments

Among the six segments, students, service personnel, and technical personnel represent the majority of occupations.

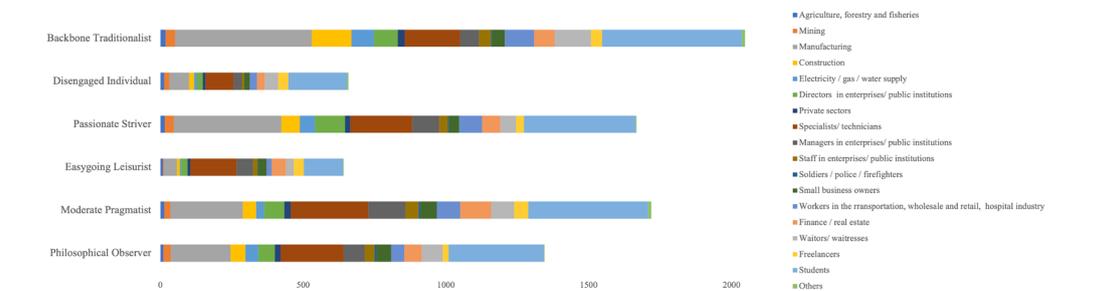


Figure 2-2 Percentage of occupations by segments

Regarding media usage, all segments spend significantly more time on social media platforms, video streaming platforms, and knowledge-sharing communities than state media and traditional media organizations. Compared to other segments, passionate strivers and backbone traditionalists spend more time on traditional media platforms for information gathering due to their longer total usage time.

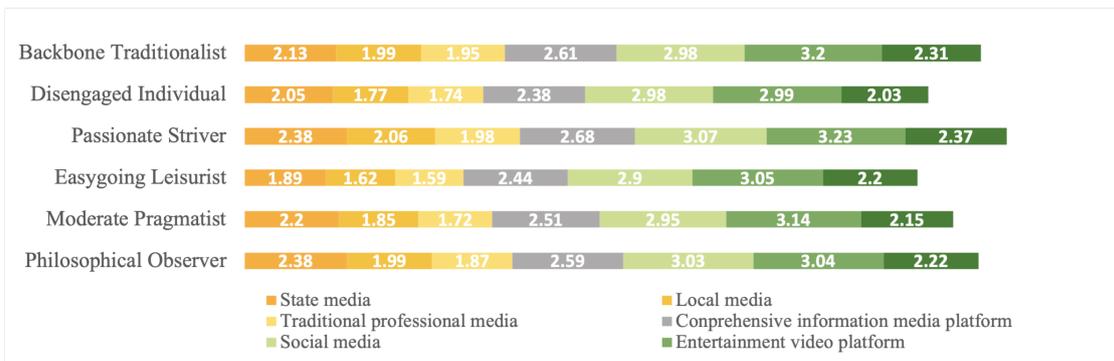


Figure 2-3 Average score of media usage habits by segments



The life values of each segment are demonstrated as below:

Table 2-1 Comparison of life values characteristics among segments

	Backbone Traditionalists	Disengaged Individualists	Passionate Strivers	Easygoing Leisurists	Moderate Pragmatists	Philosophical Observers
Self-transcendence: social awareness and concern	Moderately strong	Weakest	Strongest	Moderately weak		
Self-enhancement	Strongest	Weakest	Moderately strong			
Conservation (adhering to traditional values and social expectations)	Strongest	Weakest	Moderately strong	Moderately weak		
Openness to Change: hedonism and stimulation		Weakest				Moderately weak
Fatalism	Strongest		Weakest	Moderately strong		Moderately weak
Hierarchy	Strongest	Moderately weak		Weakest		
Communitarianism	Strongest	Weakest				Moderately weak
Political efficacy	Moderately strong	Weakest	Strongest	Moderately weak		
Nationalism	Moderately strong	Moderately weak	Strongest	Weakest		
Social trust	Strongest	Moderately weak	Moderately strong	Weakest		

2.2 Methodology of public segmentation

Extensive research on international climate communication has demonstrated that publics' life values will significantly affect their perception, attitude, and willingness

to act on climate issues¹. On the basis of such consensus, the research examines the life values of the public. We integrate relevant findings on life values from international literature and categorize² factors that have been proven to have a significant impact on climate perception, such as climate cognition and attitudes, into two different dimensions: individual intrinsic motivation and social-cultural value. A comprehensive scale for measuring Chinese life values has been developed based on the above considerations, including the incorporation of vital cultural factors into the scale such as the “face” culture, and situating the measurements within the Chinese context.

The dimension of individual intrinsic motivation includes self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, and openness to change. Nine variables are considered as the main indicators of social-cultural value, which include nationalism, political efficacy, communitarianism, hierarchy, and fatalism. As confirmed by our pilot study, the nine variables significantly influence public perception, attitude, and behavior toward climate change in Chinese society. The reliability and validity of the scale have been tested, demonstrating that the measurement is both scientifically and practically effective.

The research primarily refers to the Schwartz Value Survey³, a widely used and renowned measure for measuring the four variables of individual intrinsic motivation when constructing a scale. For social-cultural value, variables such as hierarchy and communitarianism were derived mainly from the Cultural Theory of Risk⁴. Additionally, nationalism, political efficacy, and fatalism are included in the scale as they are widely used for measuring the public’s social-cultural belief.

In terms of executing specific operational steps for public segmentation, the research first conceptualized nine life value variables drawing upon the two dimensions mentioned above. This formed a questionnaire that could be used for actual measurement (see Table 2-2 and Table 2-3 below), and ensured the reliability and

1Albizua,A. & Zografos, C. (2014). A Values-Based Approach to Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change. Applying Q methodology in the Ebro Delta, Spain. *Environmental Policy and Governance*, 24(6), 405–422. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1658>

2 Juan-Torres, M., Dixon, T. & Kimaram, A. Britain's Choice: Common Ground and Division in 2020s Britain. Retrieved March 3, 2022, from <https://www.britainschoice.uk/>

3Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values?. *Journal of social issues*, 50(4), 19-45.

4 Oltedal, S., Moen, B. E., Klempe, H., & Rundom, T. (2004). Explaining risk perception: An evaluation of cultural theory. *Rotunde*, 85 (April), 1-33. ; Understanding climate change risk perceptions in China: Media use, personal experience, and cultural worldviews. *Science Communication*, 39(3), 291-312.



validity of each variable through pilot testing and reliability and validity checks. Based on this, the research team commissioned Shanghai Zero Point Index Information Consulting Co., Ltd. to carry out a nationwide public survey (see section 6.1 for details on survey implementation such as sampling and questionnaire distribution) and collected a total of 8,077 valid responses. The research team subsequently conducted a cluster analysis using the nine life value variables as classification criteria (see section 6.2 of the report for the specific operation process) and divided the Chinese public into the following six segments: Backbone Traditionalists, Disengaged Individualists, Passionate Strivers, Easygoing Leisurists, Moderate Pragmatists, Philosophical Observers. The six segments serve as the basis for exploring the similarities and differences among Chinese citizens on climate change.

2.2.1 Individual intrinsic motivation

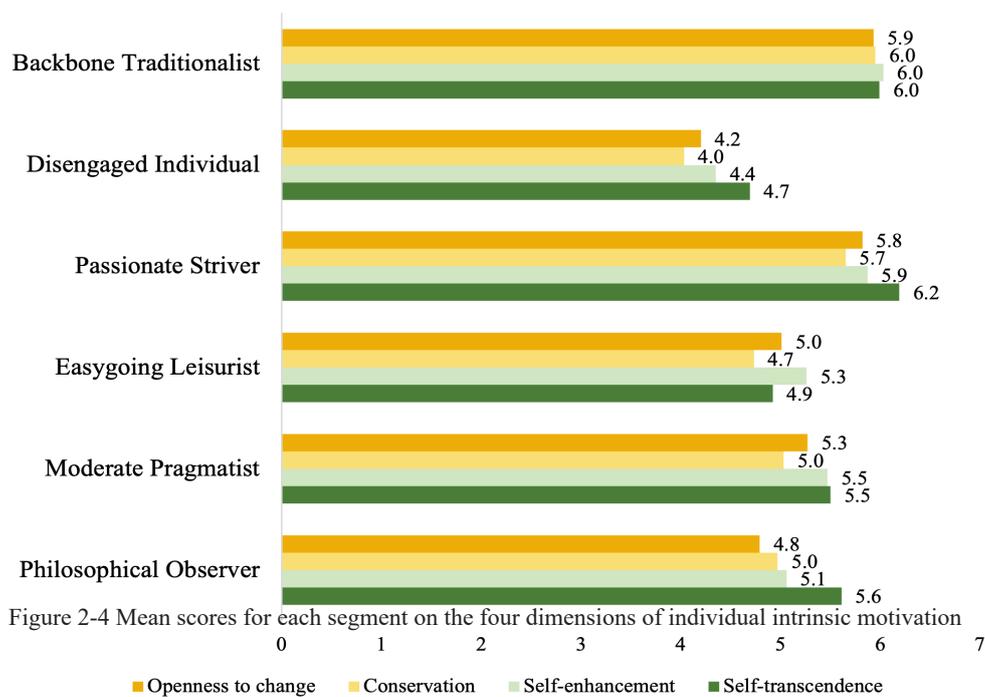
This dimension was measured using the Schwartz Value Survey, which constructed a psychological belief structure with universal cultural adaptability based on individuals' needs and motivations, and used it to explain the deeper connotations of life values. Schwartz divided individual-level into four dimensions¹: openness to change, conservation, self-transcendence, and self-enhancement, and specified the dynamics of conflict and congruence among these variables. Table 2-2 illustrates the operationalization of our 7-point Likert measurement scale using the four-dimensional structure of Schwartz and its specific measurements.

¹ Schwartz. (2006). Basic Human Values: Theory, Measurement, and Applications. *Revue française de sociologie*, 47(4), 929–968.

Dimension	Measurement
Self-transcendence	Measures the extent to which an individual is willing to go beyond self-interest and pay attention to others, society, and culture. Specifically measured by two sub-dimensions: caring and universality, with a total of four questions
Self-enhancement	Measures the intensity of an individual's willingness to enhance their personal abilities, wealth, and social status. Through four questions measuring power, achievement, and face as sub-dimensions
Conservation	Measures the extent to which an individual is willing to comply with traditional norms and social expectations through three questions measuring tradition, compliance, and security as sub-dimensions
Openness to change	Measures the extent to which an individual is willing to enjoy excitement and change in their lives through three questions measuring pleasure, self-direction, and stimulation as sub-dimensions

Table 2-2 Operationalization of individual intrinsic motivation

Results revealed that all segments scored relatively high in the dimensions of self-transcendence and self-enhancement, above the public’s average score. Among them, passionate strivers showed the highest average score of 6.19 in self-transcendence, while disengaged individualists ranked the lowest with an average score of 4.69. In terms of self-enhancement, backbone traditionalists scored the highest with an average score of 6.03, while disengaged individualists scored the lowest with an average score of 4.35. The cross-segment analysis suggests that all segments score slightly lower on the dimension of conservation and openness to change when compared to self-transcendence and self-enhancement. When analyzing the four dimensions of individual intrinsic motivation, namely self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, and openness to change, backbone traditionalists scored the highest while disengaged individualists scored the lowest.



I hope that my work can allow me to express some of my values. I can handle those overworked crazy jobs, that's fine with me, but I also hope to have time to experience life.

—Easygoing Leisurist

When it comes to work-life balance, I think work is a part of my life. I can gain a sense of accomplishment and realize my worth from within.

—Passionate Striver



The ideal lifestyle is one where you have total control over your life and improve your quality of life by actively engaging in nation-building. Also, we should strive to create more valuable things that benefit others and society in addition to ourselves.

—Backbone Traditionalist

The majority of the public aims to achieve both individual success and social contribution, seeking unity between these two goals. They strive not only for monetary success and social status but also to help others and demonstrate their self-worth to society. "Face", as a representative social and cultural concept in Chinese Confucian culture, demonstrates certain differences between segments. The percentage of backbone traditionalists who agree with "I pay great attention to maintaining my face in front of others" is higher than that of other segments (92%), followed by passionate strivers (86%). Meanwhile, the percentage of disengaged individualists who disagree with this statement is most notable (27%), followed by philosophical observers (13%).

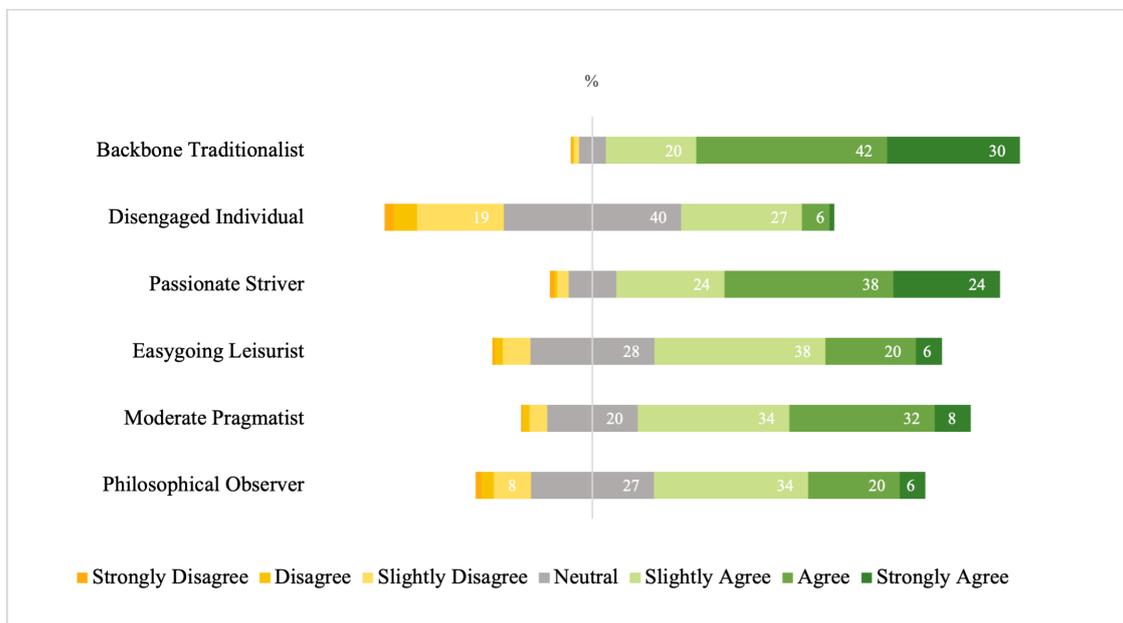


Figure 2-5 Percentage of segments' attitudes towards face culture

Levels of conservation are also diverse across segments. Passionate strivers (92%) and backbone traditionalists (94%) are the most supportive of the statement "I intentionally

maintain traditional culture, ideas, and customs," while easygoing leisurists (21%) and disengaged individualists (28%) don't. The results suggest that there is a certain division in people's attitudes toward traditional culture, ideas, and customs, where conservatives pay more attention to preserving tradition while relatively open-minded segments don't adhere strictly to traditional cultural concepts.

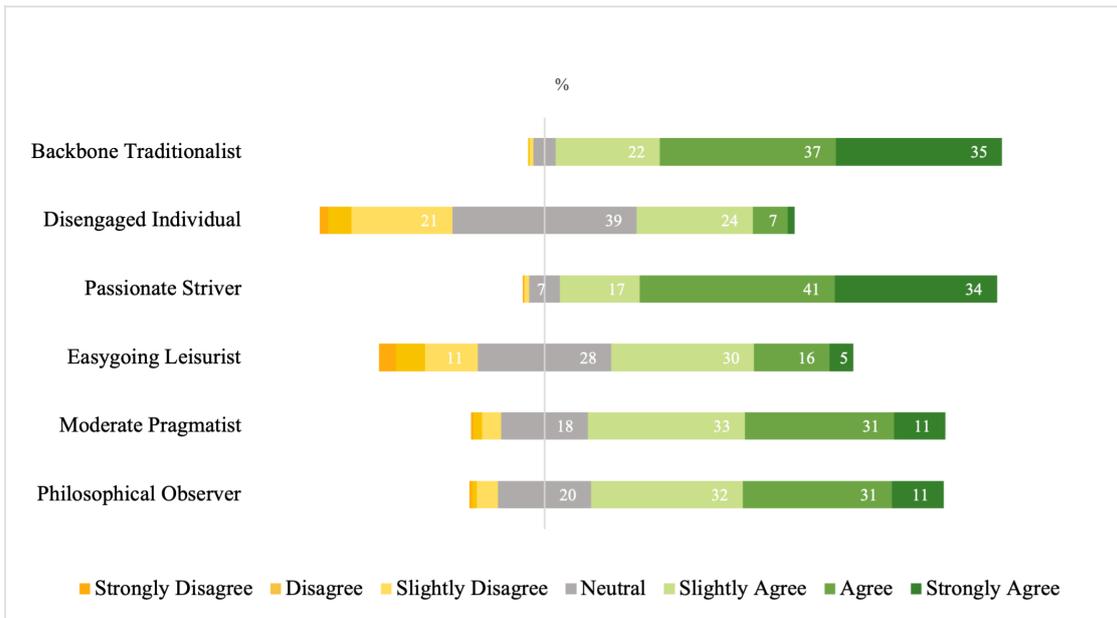


Figure 2-6 Percentage of attitudes towards conservation by segments

2.2.2 Social-cultural values

In addition to examining individual intrinsic motivation, the research also explored respondents' social and cultural beliefs, including fatalism, hierarchy, communitarianism, political efficacy, and nationalism. For each variable, we used at least two questions for measurement and the operationalization of each variable is specified in Table 2-3:

Table 2-3 Measurement of social-cultural belief

Dimension	Measurement
Fatalism	Measures the extent to which an individual believes that fate is determined by fate, and is measured through two questions
Hierarchy	Measures the extent to which an individual supports the existing social hierarchy and is willing to comply with authority, measured by three questions



Continued

Dimension	Measurement
Communitarianism	Measures the extent to which an individual supports top-down government leadership and guidance for individual development, measured by five questions
Political efficacy	Measures the extent to which an individual believes that they can influence the policy-making process, measured by four questions
Nationalism	Measures the extent to which an individual considers their own nationality to be superior and more important compared to other nations, measured by four questions

Among all segments, except for backbone traditionalists (mean 5.48) and easygoing leisurists (mean 5.27), and moderate pragmatists (mean 4.86), the fatalism scores of the other three segments are relatively low.

Likewise, except for easygoing leisurists (mean 3.84), all segments demonstrate a strong inclination towards nationalism (lowest mean score 5.16). In comparison to social-cultural variables, the nationalism score of these five segments is relatively high, suggesting that the majority of the Chinese public possesses a high level of nationalism. On the other hand, social-cultural variables such as hierarchy (lowest value 3.58, highest value 5.77), communitarianism (lowest value 4.23, highest value 6.08), and political efficacy (lowest value 4.03, highest value 6.02) are all in the average range for each segment.

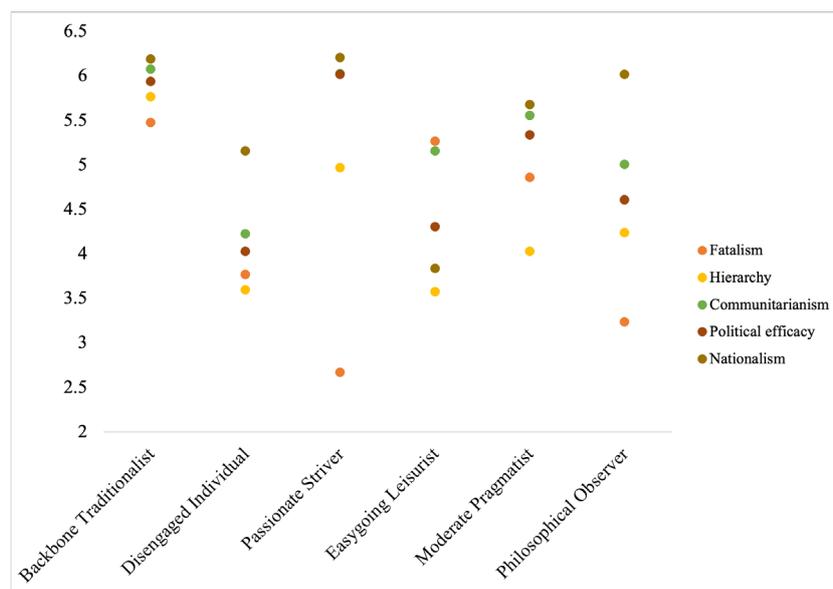


Figure 2-7 Mean scores of social-cultural value for each segment

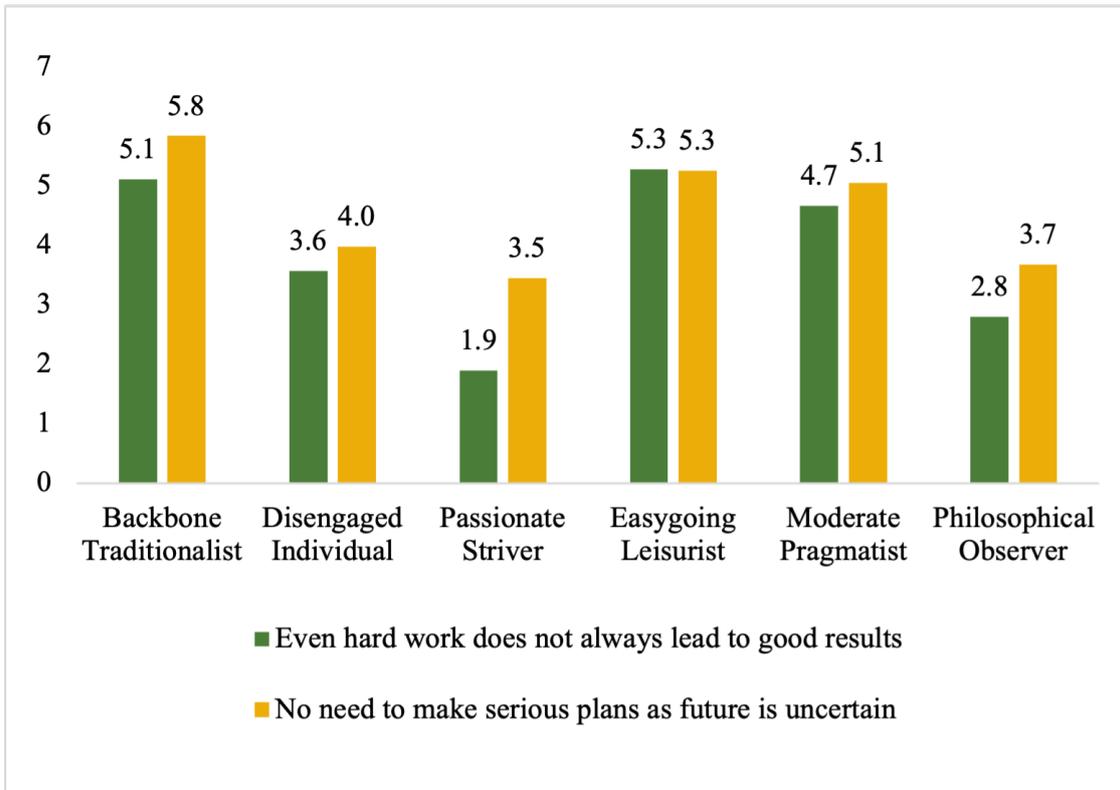


Figure 2-8 Mean scores of fatalism by segments

Different segments have significantly different attitudes toward work. The segment most accepting of the notion that "working hard doesn't always lead to good results" is easygoing leisurists (mean 5.28) and backbone traditionalists (mean 5.11). In contrast, philosophical observers (mean 2.80) and passionate strivers (mean 1.89) score the lowest, demonstrating their perception that effort and reward are positively correlated. Compared to attitudes toward work, all segments are more inclined to believe that "there is no need to make overly serious plans as the future is too uncertain" when assessing attitudes regarding future plans. However, philosophical observers (mean 3.7) and passionate strivers (mean 3.5) fall behind on the score, suggesting that even though they acknowledge that the future is uncertain, they still recognize the importance of making plans to some degree.

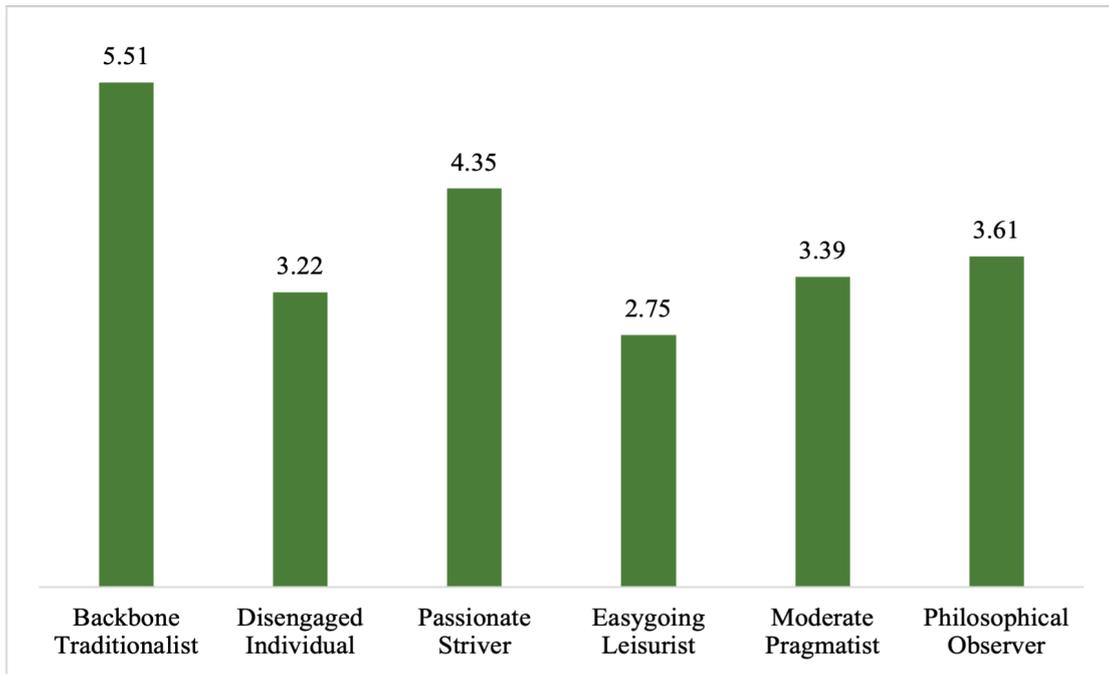


Figure 2-9 Mean value of attitudes towards “society is in trouble because people don't obey authority and those in power” by segments

Regarding social authority, segments possess different opinions. Three segments disagree with the statement that “society is in trouble because people don't obey authority and those in power”: easygoing leisurists (mean 2.75), moderate pragmatists (mean 3.39), and disengaged individualists (mean 3.22). However, this statement is accepted by philosophical observers (mean 3.61), passionate strivers (mean 4.35), and backbone traditionalists (mean 5.51).

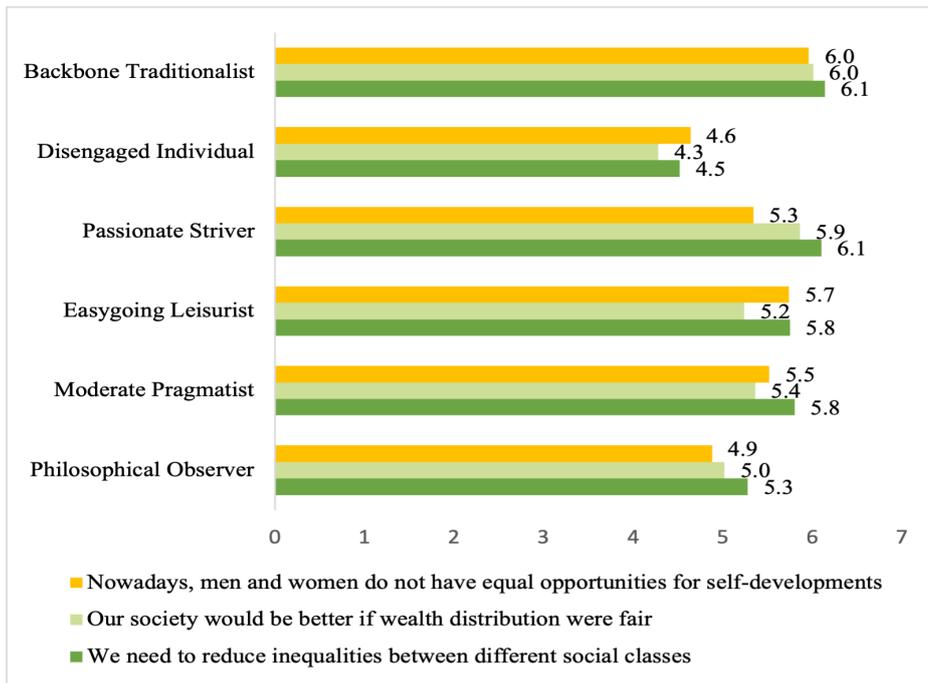


Figure 2-10 Mean values of attitudes toward social equality by segments

The attitudes of different segments towards social equality are relatively consistent (mean scores are all above 4), as all agree that "we need to reduce inequality between different classes," "our society would be better if wealth distribution were fair," and "in today's society, men and women do not have equal opportunities for self-developments." This indicates that the Chinese public generally values equality in wealth distribution, gender, and social class.

We can see that the gap between the rich and the poor in society actually exists. It's a popular saying that we are constantly "neijuan," putting more pressure on ourselves. The so-called "neijuan" reflects a phenomenon where everyone is trying to compete for limited social resources, and no one wants to be left behind.

—Passionate Striver

Gender inequality is something that I feel strongly about. For example, I am looking for a job after graduation. If a man competes with me for that position, I bet I will not succeed 80% or even 90% of the time.

—Easygoing Leisurist



There is a huge gap between urban and rural areas in terms of infrastructure, such as sanitation, water quality, education, etc. For example, counties cannot compete with Beijing or Shanghai in terms of medical and educational resources.

— *Philosophical Observer*

2.3 Segments interrelationships and key variables

By examining the scores of the six segments across different indicators, we can identify similarities that shed light on the Chinese public's attitudes toward climate action. Additionally, the significant differences among the six segments in key dimensions and variables insights into the diversity within the public.

2.3.1 Interrelationships between segments: Public affairs interest and collectivism/individualism orientation

Notable disparities among six segments in "interest in public affairs" and "collectivism/ individualism orientation" serve as key dimensions distinguishing the Chinese public towards climate change. Those who show a higher interest in public affairs and a stronger collective orientation are more likely to demonstrate a greater interest in climate change.

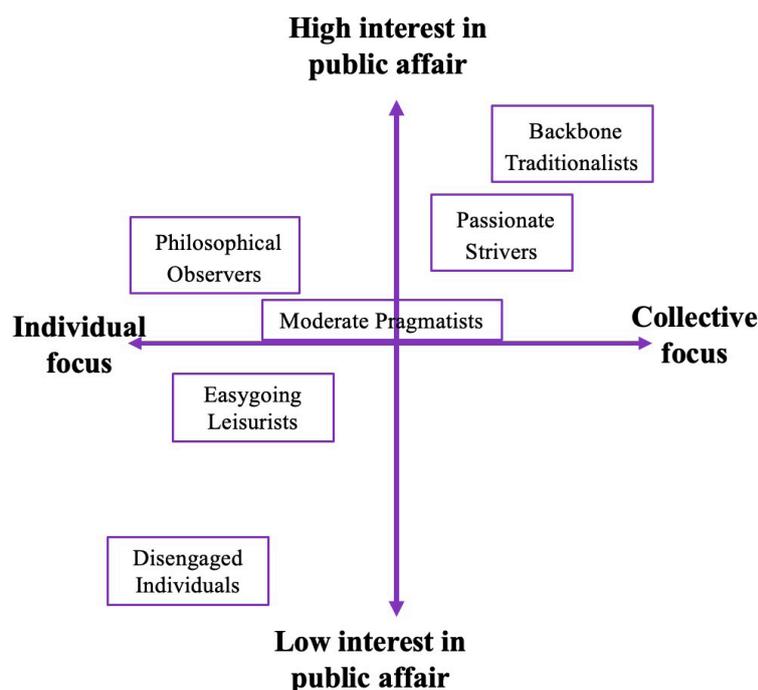


Figure 2-11 Individual/Collective orientation and interest in public affairs among different segments

Insights for climate communication strategies based on disparities in the two dimensions can be drawn. Those in the upper right quadrant are more likely to have an inherent connection to climate change, as we can rely on their interest in public affairs and narratives that emphasize collective interests to encourage climate action. For those in the lower left quadrant, it is important to explain why climate change and environmental actions are personally relevant or important to them and why they need to take action.

2.3.2 Similarities and differences in values: Intrinsic motivation, fatalism, and nationalism

Examining indicators of intrinsic motivation, the six types of publics have formed a stable pattern in their value orientation. Backbone traditionalist has the highest average scores, while the disengaged individual has the lowest. The ranking is closely related to the level of public interest in public affairs, which confirms that, to a certain extent, individuals' intrinsic motivation significantly influences their enthusiasm toward public affairs.

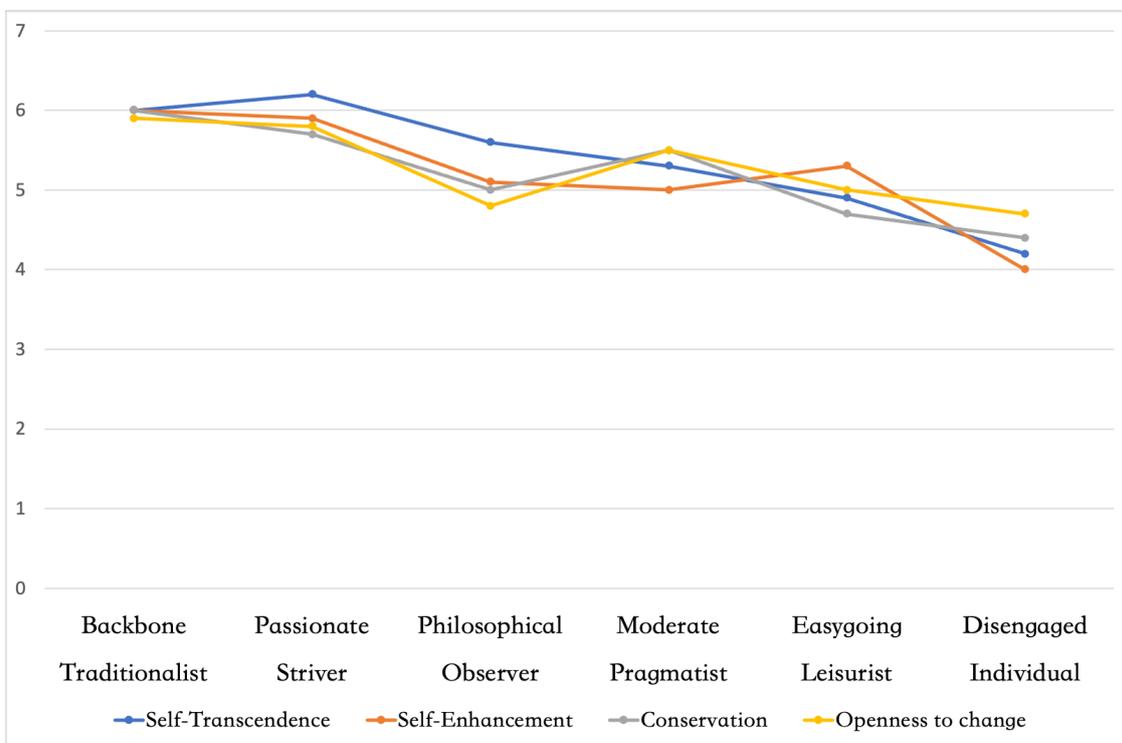


Figure 2-12 Mean value of individual intrinsic motivation across segments



The six types of public show divergence in their average scores in the dimension of socio-cultural values, particularly in the variables of nationalism and fatalism.

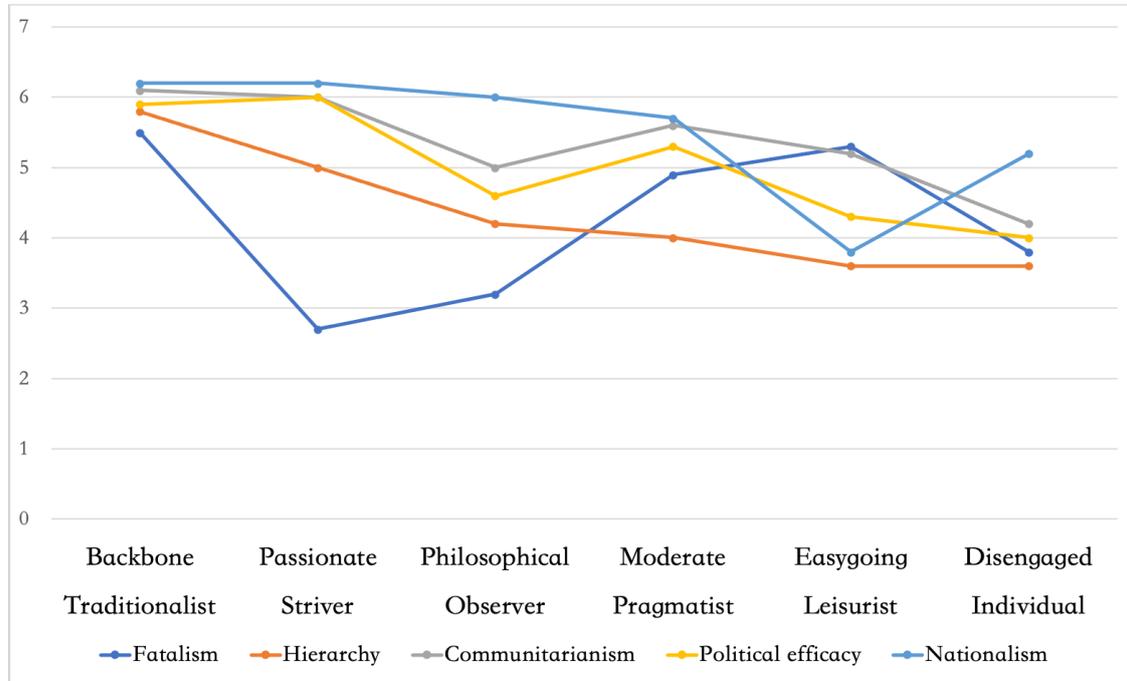


Figure 2-13 Mean value of socio-cultural values across segments

Fatalism and nationalism can provide new insights for differentiating the segments and serve as core variables for understanding the value divergence among the Chinese public. A coordinate graph (as shown in Figure 2-14) was plotted with nationalism on the horizontal axis and fatalism on the vertical axis to illustrate the positions of each segment.

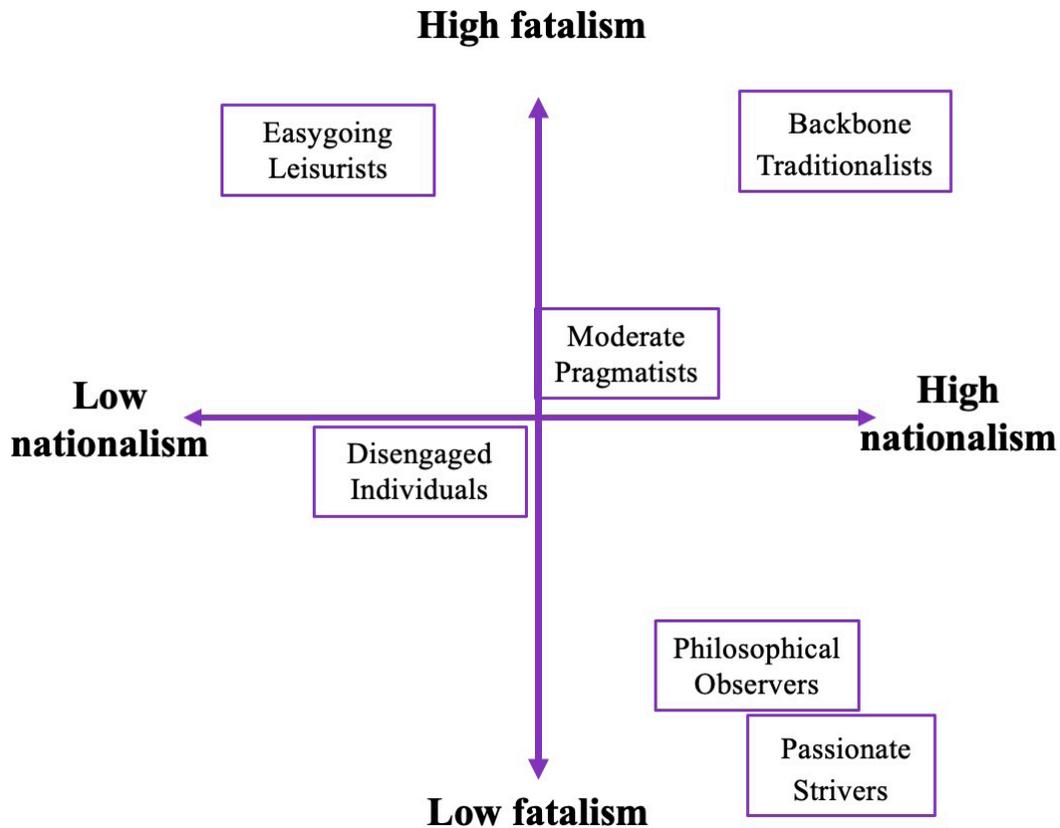


Figure 2-14 Coordinate plane of nationalism and fatalism for each segment

As depicted in Figure 2-14, the six segments can be grouped into four clusters. The first cluster comprises individuals who exhibit high levels of nationalism and fatalism, including backbone traditionalist and moderate pragmatist. They take pride in China's achievements and have a strong sense of patriotism. They tend to embrace life changes peacefully, narratives that highlight people's contented lives under the guidance of the government are more likely to resonate with them. The second cluster encompasses individuals with a strong sense of nationalism and who oppose fatalistic views, exemplified by philosophical observer and passionate striver. They highly value the superiority of the Chinese nation and do not believe that individual destinies are predetermined. Therefore, narratives that interweave personal growth with national prosperity are more likely to resonate with them. The third cluster consists of individuals with high levels of fatalism but low levels of nationalism, primarily represented by easygoing leisurist. They are less concerned with grand narratives and are not inclined towards narratives that solely emphasize individual striving. The fourth cluster includes individuals with low levels of nationalism and fatalism, predominantly



represented by disengaged individualist. They prefer narratives that link individual efforts with personal success, but lack enthusiasm for narratives that overly emphasize national superiority.

2.3.3 Age and tradition

Although age is a relatively straightforward variable, research has found significant differentiation among the six segments in terms of age. The segments primarily composed of young individuals include moderate pragmatist, disengaged individualist, easygoing leisurist, and philosophical observer, while backbone traditionalist and passionate strivers are predominantly middle-aged and elderly. This indicates that values are more diverse among the younger generation, and the differentiation within the youth segment is more prominent compared to the middle-aged and elderly segments. Therefore, to mobilize climate action among different youth segments, different narrative strategies will be required depending on which segment we aim to engage.

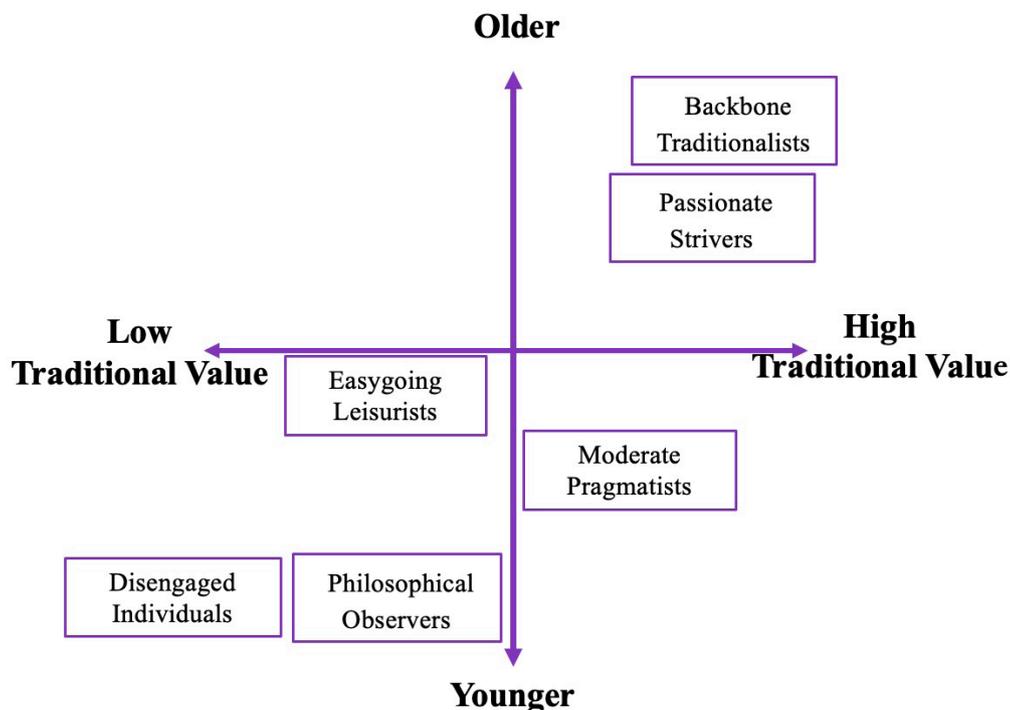


Figure 2-15 Coordinate plane of age and traditional orientation for each segment

When we compare the attitudes towards the tradition of the six segments based on their age, we find that those who adhere to traditional values include not only the middle-aged and elderly such as backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers but also the youth-dominated segment such as moderate pragmatists who score high on the conservation and hierarchy dimensions. Combining with focus groups, we found that traditional and more conservative-inclined segments are actually more easily mobilized for climate action. In contrast, the more diverse youth, especially disengaged individualists, easygoing leisurists, and philosophical observers, tend to adopt a more detached attitude towards mainstream and traditional beliefs and exhibit less engagement in public agendas such as climate change. This finding differs from the phenomenon observed in many Western countries where climate advocates and activists are primarily the young generations. One possible explanation is that Chinese traditional culture already has a strong emphasis on altruism and collectivism, making those who hold traditional values more receptive to mobilization, while the younger generation with weaker traditional values may be less easily mobilized.

2.4 Six segments on climate change

2.4.1 Common ground

Although easygoing leisurists and disengaged individualists are slightly less concerned about climate change than average, generally speaking, all segments of the public are concerned about the impacts of climate change.

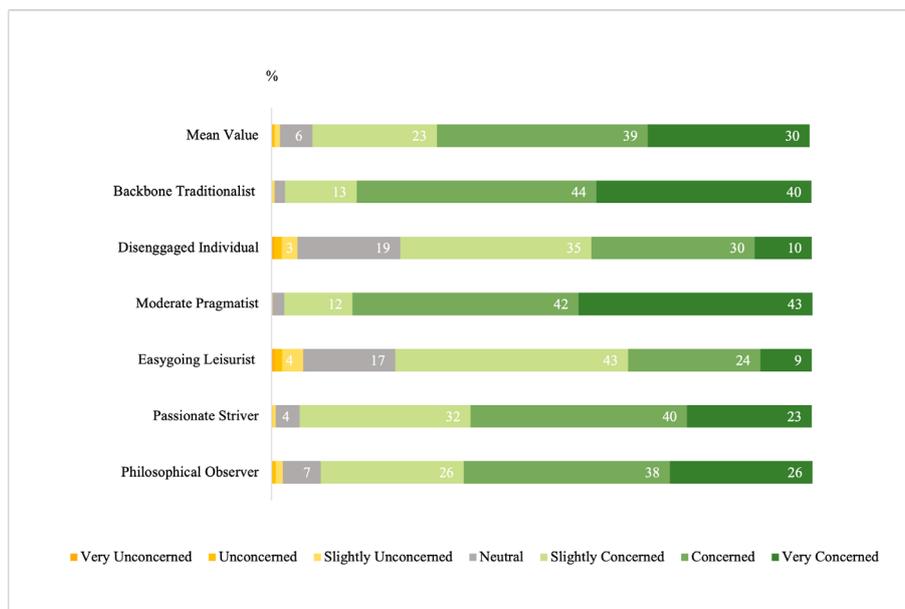


Figure 2-16 Percentage of climate change concern by segments



While all segments are concerned about climate change, the level of climate knowledge among the Chinese public is relatively low. Seven questions were used to measure the level of public climate knowledge, with each question given one point, and the total score being seven. The results showed that six segments had an average climate knowledge score of 2.73 out of seven, with the average score of each segment ranging from 2.6 to 2.9, without significant differences. The underperformance shows that the public lacks a comprehensive understanding of climate change and that misconceptions still exist.

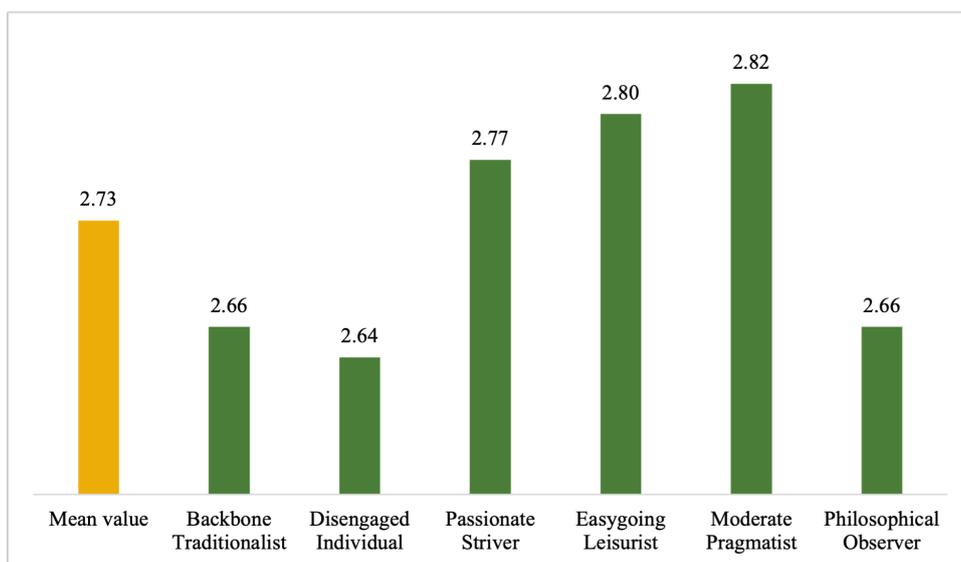


Figure 2-17 Mean values of climate knowledge by segments

When individuals are ready to act on climate change, the Chinese public demonstrates a higher willingness to take small actions such as saving electricity, using recyclable and degradable products, and taking public transport, compared to other forms of activities. However, when it comes to actions that involve social interaction, such as persuading family members and participating in climate action, the number of people willing to act drops significantly, with willingness remaining at less than 50%. The overall willingness to take personal actions that requires compromising their quality of life, such as "reducing meat consumption," is low. Only backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers have slightly higher numbers of individuals taking action compared to other segments.

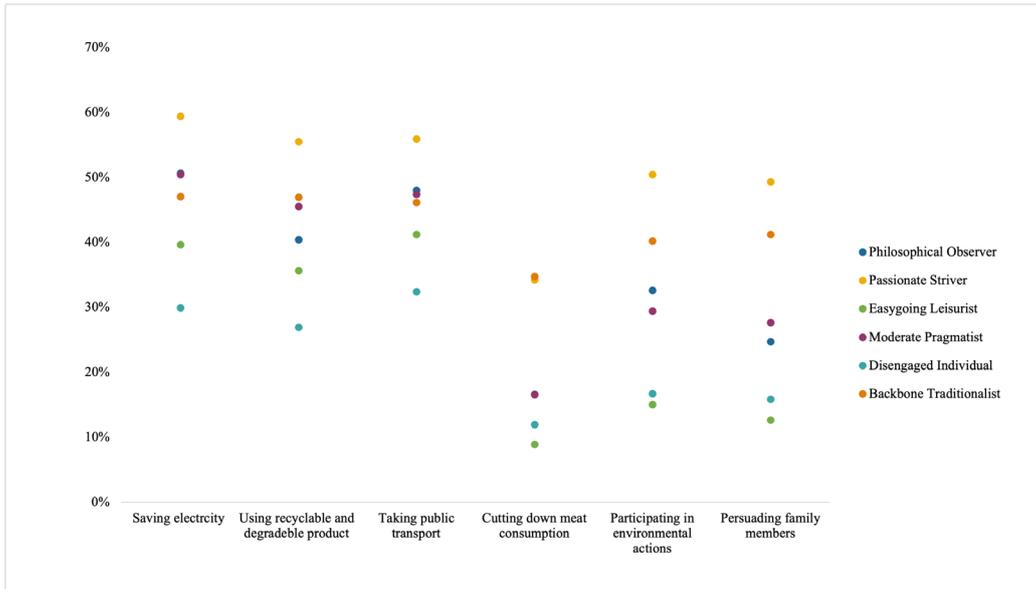


Figure 2-18 The percentage of willingness to act by segments

The public generally holds consistent views on China's responsibilities and obligations regarding climate change. Historically, it is recognized that China differs from Western countries in terms of the extent to which it is responsible for climate change. Nevertheless, there is a consensus that China, as a dependable, great power, should shoulder responsibility for the future and commit to equal obligations as other nations in international climate efforts, such as reducing carbon emissions and cooperating with other countries to address climate change.

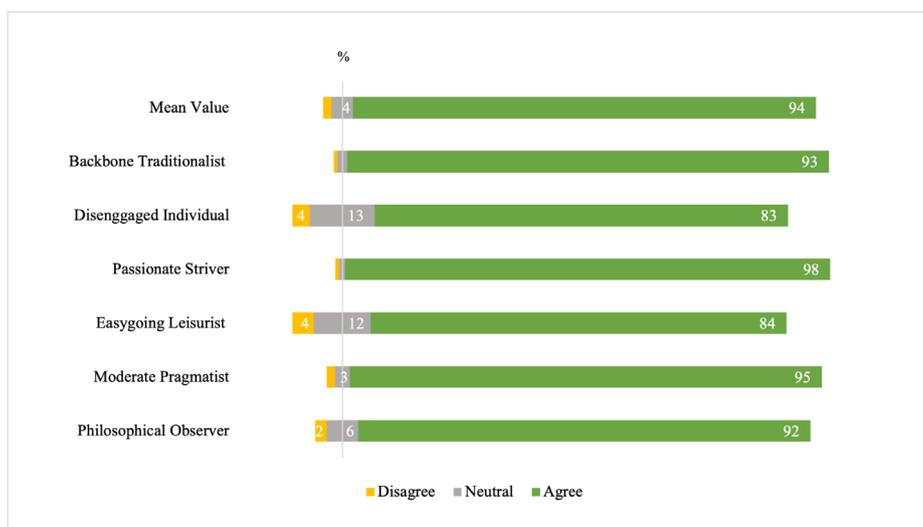


Figure 2-19 Percentage of agreement with "China should take equal responsibilities in tackling the climate crisis" across segments



Through a qualitative analysis based on data gathered from focus groups and in-depth interviews, the following consensus on climate issues emerged among the public, which reveals distinctive characteristics that are unique to China:

- **Climate action is a matter of livelihoods rather than politics.** In countries where climate change is inevitably intertwined with partisan divides, public climate perceptions and attitudes are highly influenced by individuals' political spectrum, making climate change a pressing political issue in the West. However, the situation is different in China. Climate actions do not necessarily entail many political connotations. Given the state's advocacy and high priority in addressing climate change, most Chinese see the topic as an important step to take at the national level to secure people's livelihoods in the long term. Therefore, highly political climate communication and mobilization strategies may not be effective in the Chinese context.

- **Climate change is a real threat, not a conspiracy.** As "climate skepticism" prevails in Western countries, many deny the factualness of climate change as an undergoing issue. It is noteworthy that the Chinese public, regardless of whether their lives have been directly affected by climate change, is highly convinced that climate change is happening and its impacts will continue to worsen. Therefore, the primary goal for communicators in China should not be to convince the public that climate change is a real threat.

- **Climate action is for the public and the state.** Under the high-level attention state authority pays to climate issues, the public has formed a consensus that addressing climate change requires collective action. Nonetheless, most of the public believes that state initiatives can yield twice the results with half the effort compared to individuals. The public is far from passionate about occupying a leadership position in climate action but is quite supportive and collaborative in response to government initiatives. Therefore, communication practices should prioritize state initiatives, acknowledging that mobilizing citizens to initiate campaigns can be difficult.

- **Climate change is collective but also differentiated.** There is a consensus among the public that climate change will affect every individual, not just a particular group of people. However, due to the complex interplay of geographic, economic, cultural, and social factors, the Chinese public also acknowledges that the responsibility for climate action should not be equally distributed to everyone. To a large extent, this confirms that Chinese climate communicators should gain insight into different public segments and that diverse communication strategies should be developed to target each segment.

2.4.2 Differences

First, there are differences in climate change risk perceptions across segments. Of all six segments, disengaged individualists have the weakest risk perceptions and believe in the limited impact of climate change on individuals and society. In contrast, passionate strivers have the strongest risk perception and they are very concerned about the potential hazards of climate change, with a rating of 6.08 at the individual level and 6.17 at the societal level (on a scale of 1-7). They place a high emphasis on the socioeconomic consequences of climate change.

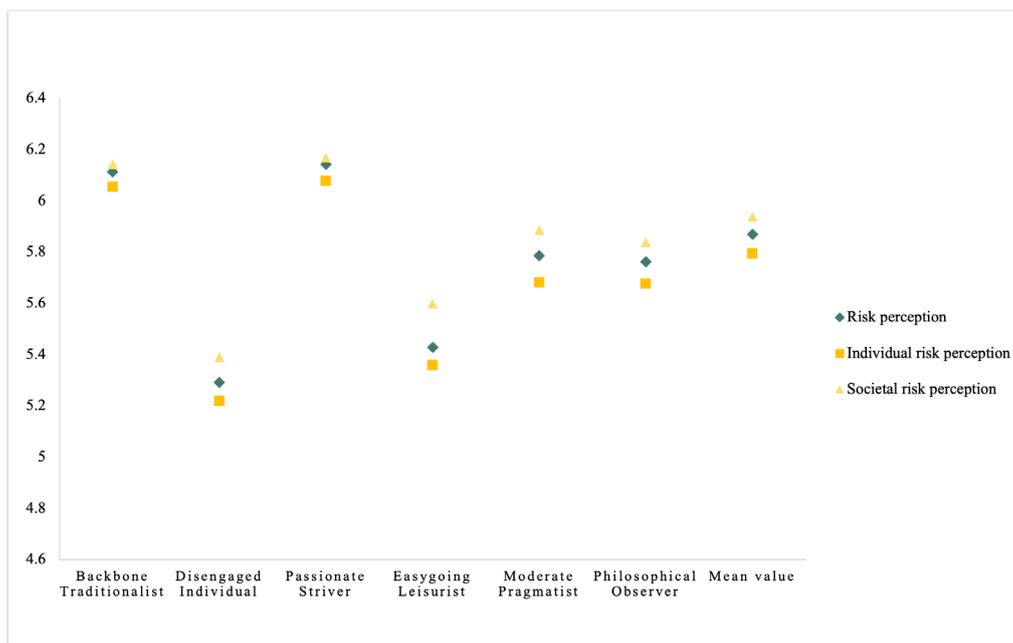


Figure 2-20 Risk perception by segments

Second, the level of support for relevant policies on climate governance varies among the segments. For policies that have a significant impact on individuals’ daily lives, such as "raising fuel prices," the level of strong support varies widely among the segments. While 25.9% of backbone traditionalists strongly favor the policy, only 3.6% of easygoing leisurists strongly support it. On the other hand, for macro-level policies such as "investing in research and development of energy-saving and emission-reducing technologies," 54.3% of passionate strivers strongly support it, while only 27.7% of disengaged individualists are in favor of it.

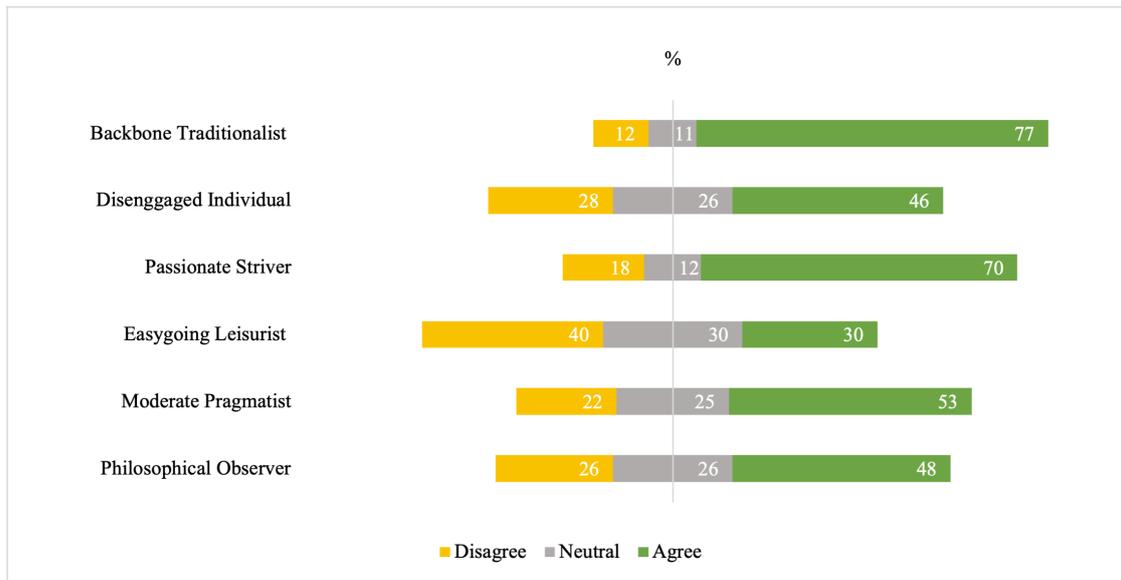


Figure 2-21 Preferences for policy by segments: raising fuel prices

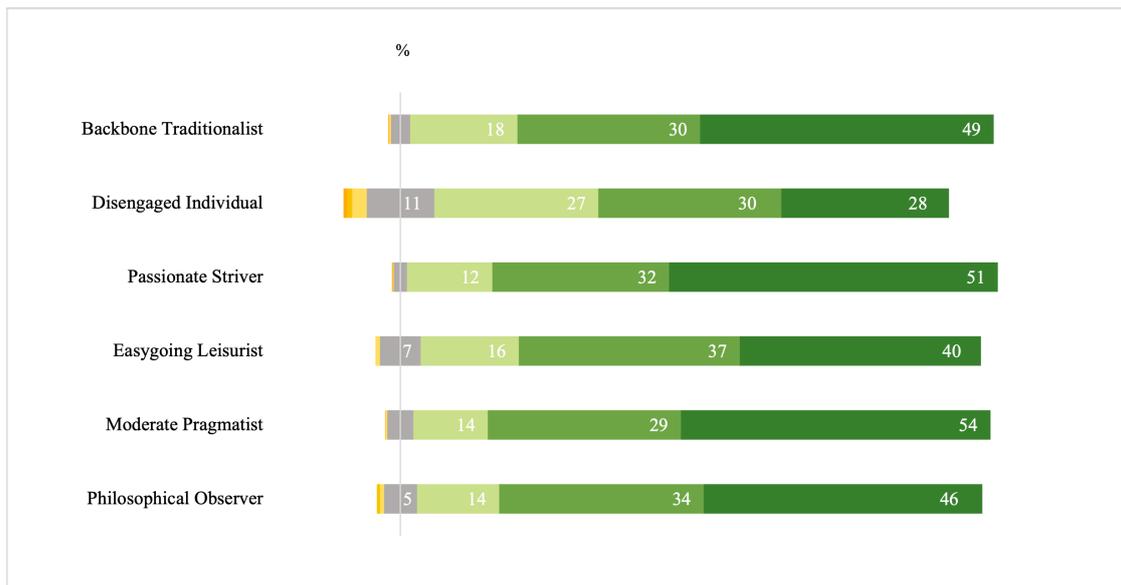


Figure 2-22 Policy preferences by segment: strengthening the research and development of energy-saving and emission-reducing technologies

Third, each segment trusts different messengers. In China, there are mainly four types of information sources for climate coverage: experts, media, NGOs, and companies. Experts are most trusted by all segments, followed by NGOs, media, and companies. In addition, people affected by climate change (i.e., victims of climate impacts) are given

high trust for their unique voices, making them persuasive to all segments. However, it is worth noting that social trust is generally low across all segments. This indicates that there is still a long way to go for existing communicators to connect with most of the population. To be more precise, NGOs need to cultivate relationships with those other than passionate strivers and backbone traditionalists. Also, companies need to pay special attention to easygoing leisurists who distrust corporations, with a trust rating of 3.80.

2.5 Media characteristics across segments

As for commonalities across segments, social media and online video platforms are the most frequently-used channels, significantly more than state media and traditional media. This indicates that the Chinese public's media usage motives are mainly to learn about trending topics of their surroundings and for relaxation and entertainment needs. They have limited demand for acquiring professional information from traditional media organizations.

Each segment also exhibits its unique characteristics in media usage:

Regarding media usage duration, backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers have a higher screen time than that of other segments. These two segments consist of a higher proportion of middle-aged and elderly people who have more free time for leisure activities and rely more on media to obtain information. They are frequent users of information content platforms. In contrast, two segments that make up a relatively lower percentage of the Chinese public — disengaged individualists who are busy making money, and easygoing leisurists who are living in the moment— are mainly composed of young people and spend the shortest time on media.

Second, passionate strivers spend the most hours on various professional media outlets, such as China Central Television, Beijing Evening News, and the Southern Weekend. Meanwhile, even when pan-entertainment prevails in today's media ecology, backbone traditionalists continue to rely on traditional media as a reliable source of daily information, despite the rise of entertainment-focused media.

Third, in segments where the population is mainly composed of young people, moderate pragmatists, and philosophical observers are two segments with the heaviest reliance on traditional media as a source of information. Media platforms whose target audience is young people attract these two segments, they are loyal users of social media such as Bilibili, Weibo, and Douban.

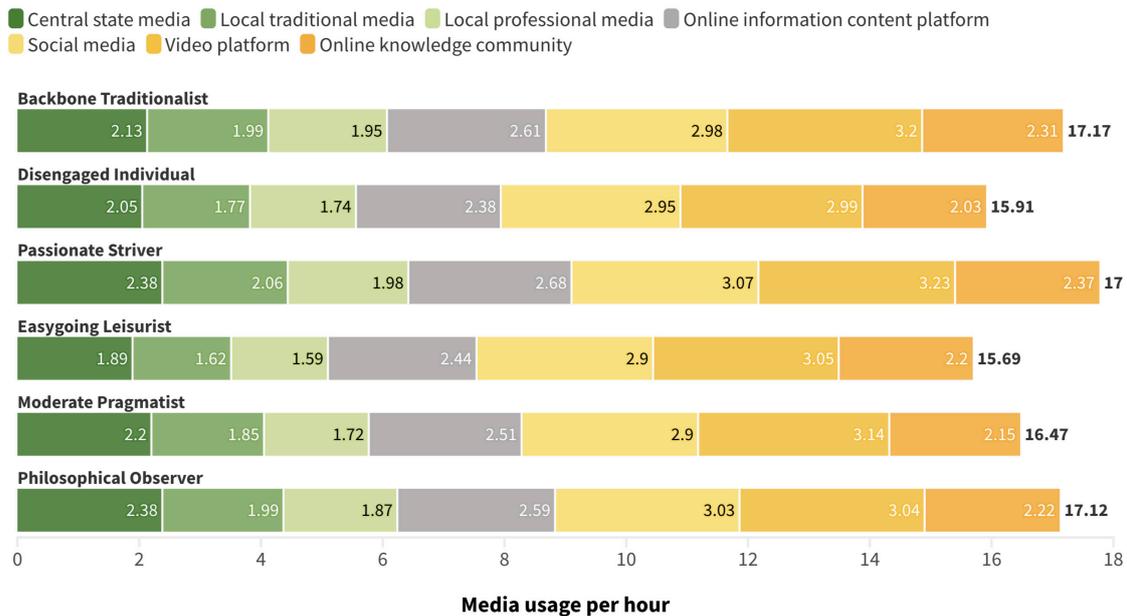


Figure 2-23 Media use across segments

2.6 Social trust across segments

As for trusted messengers, experts are the most trusted source across segments, followed closely by NGOs, media, and companies. However, the level of social trust across segments generally hit low, with an average of 5.2, indicating that better connections should be made between messengers and the Chinese public. Results show that NGOs have not yet established strong ties with the Chinese public except for passionate strivers and backbone traditionalists. Likewise, companies have not yet gained the trust of the general public in climate communication.

Furthermore, the segments vary significantly in terms of their rating on social trust.

First, each segment’s social trust rating is highly related and influenced by the segment’s life values; segments with more collectivism and nationalism inclinations generally have higher levels of social trust. Specifically, backbone traditionalists, with a rating of 5.73 out of 7, and passionate strivers, with a rating of 5.65, are the two segments that have the highest levels of social trust. Disengaged individualists and easygoing leisurists have social trust ratings of 4.83 and 4.2 out of 7 respectively, which are both below the overall social trust of the Chinese public.

Second, there is a significant divergence in the overall social trust across segments. Philosophical observers put more trust in experts (trust rating for experts 5.19) than

average (the segment’s overall social trust 5.07). This is also the case for moderate pragmatists whose most-trusted messengers are experts. The research also found that the segments with the lowest overall social trust, disengaged individualists and easygoing leisurists, rated media as their least trusted messenger, with trust ratings of 4.86 and 4.3 respectively.

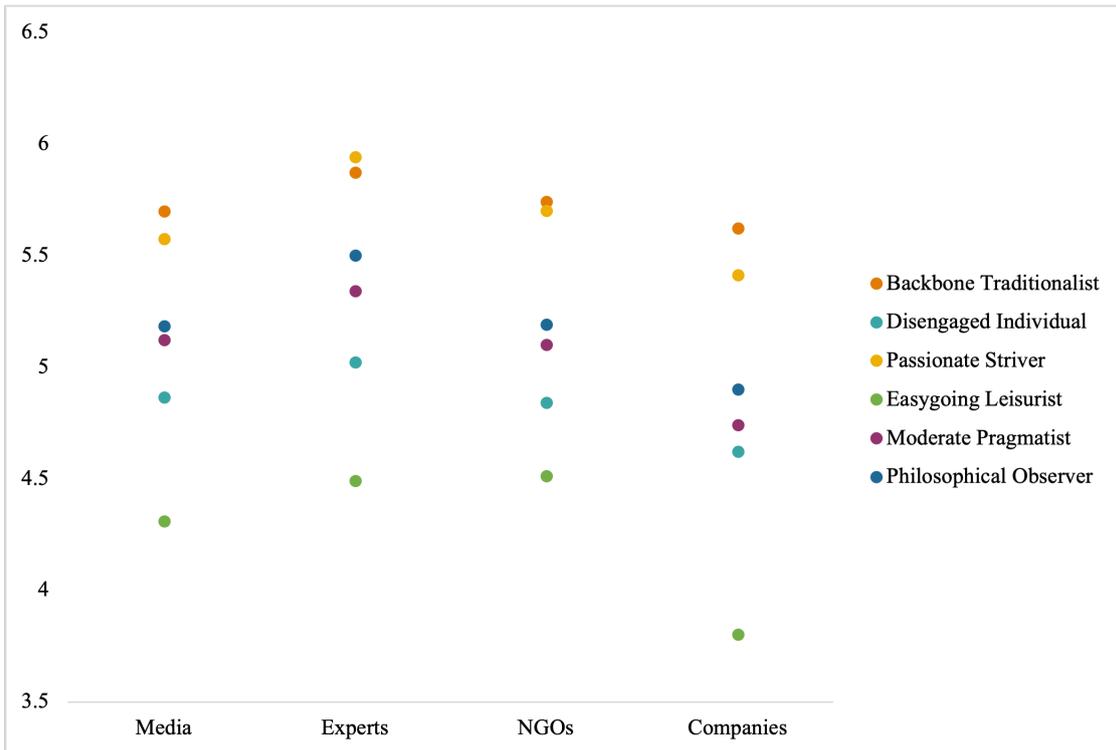


Figure 2-24 Mean values of trust in climate issues for four types of social actors by segments

3

THE SIX SEGMENTS IN DEPTH

3.1

BACKBONE TRADITIONALISTS





Backbone Traditionalists (25% of the Chinese public)

Who are Backbone Traditionalists?

Table 3-1: Portrait of Backbone Traditionalists

 Typical beliefs	 Demographic characteristics	 Societal concerns	 Trusted messengers	 Preferred media channels
Traditional thinking	High proportion of middle-aged and elderly	Livelihood security	Experts	People's Daily
Focus on self-development	Medium-to-low-income	Social equity	Government	China Central Television News
Emphasis on hierarchy	Generally, a low education level	Dissemination of harmful ideologies	Central state media	Southern Weekly
Hope to become an enlightener				Zhihu

Life values of Backbone Traditionalists

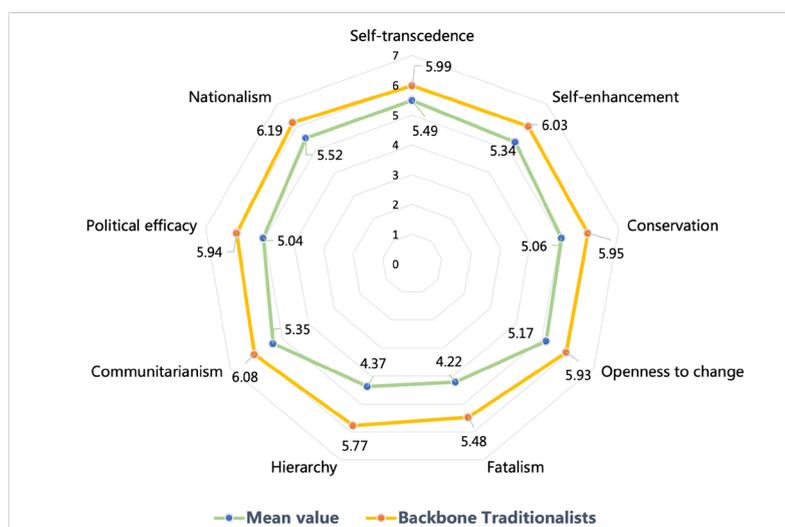


Figure 3-1 Life values for Backbone Traditionalists

1. Holding traditional beliefs

Backbone traditionalists are the largest segment of the population. The "traditional" characteristic is reflected in their general belief in long-practiced wisdom and the value they place on ancient customs. On the one hand, the segment has a strong sense of collectivism, believing that society is an organic entity with coherence and that a gradual approach should be taken to improve and perfect social order. On the other hand, they tend to prioritize "altruistic" behavior in their interpersonal interactions, striving to restrain themselves and conform to the expectations of others and society. They enjoy a safe living environment and try to avoid anything dangerous.

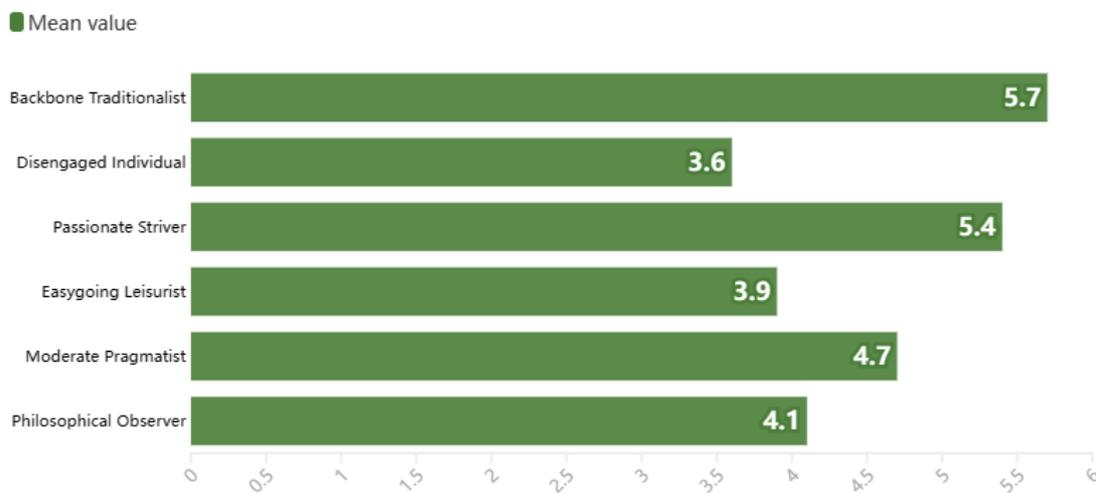


Figure3-2 Average conservatism tendency across segments

2. A strong desire for self-enhancement

In the nationwide survey, backbone traditionalists scored the highest in multiple dimensions. They are the segment with the strongest desire for self-enhancement. They pursue social power, wealth, and personal achievement on the material level ("self-enhancement" mean score 6.03). Given that they highly value China's traditional culture of "face," they are also the most conservative group, complying with social expectations in their interactions with others ("conservative" mean score 5.95). Meanwhile, they also value self-transcendence on the spiritual level. As the segment that most follow social norms, they hope that their self-development and improvement can rely on existing social norms and hierarchical structures, and that they can become



a segment of people with "discourse power" and "influence" in society.

3. Emphasis on the social hierarchy

Although this segment shows a high degree of trust in the government which is similar to passionate strivers, their logic is different. Backbone traditionalists believe that only the government, not families or companies, can truly govern our society. This aligns with the superiority of the socialist political system which emphasizes overseeing the overall situation and coordinating all parties, as demonstrated in the leadership policies of the Communist Party of China.

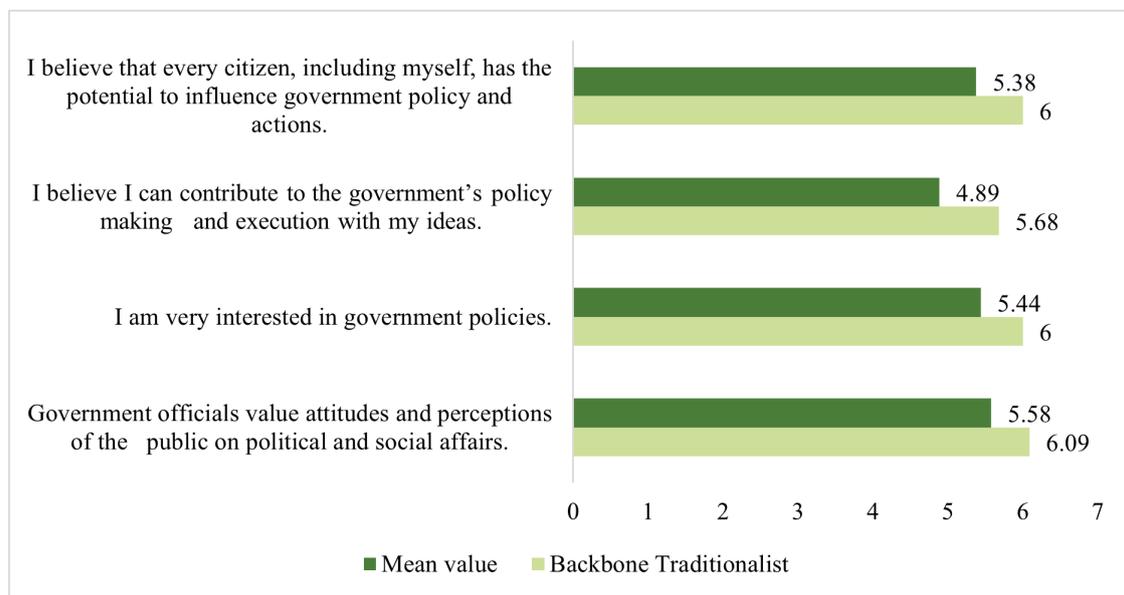


Figure3-3 Statistical chart of the political efficacy of Backbone Traditionalists

Besides, backbone traditionalists firmly believe that the government is the primary driving force and that improving societal issues depends on a top-down governance structure. The segment has a high sense of political efficacy (mean 5.94), believing that individuals' voices can be conveyed to the government through social media platforms and official channels such as the "citizen feedback portal." Additionally, they strongly agree that "government officials value the public's attitudes and opinions towards government and social affairs" and "every citizen, including myself, may influence government policies and actions," among other statements. High trust in the government also leads them to uphold a strong sense of hierarchy. In terms of actions,

they believe respecting and following what their superiors assign to them is the best way to succeed.

4. Willing to take on the role of a leader

Backbone traditionalists consider meeting livelihood needs as a necessary process for pursuing spiritual fulfillment, rather than the ultimate goal. They believe that individual spiritual realization is not solely dependent on fulfilling personal goals. Instead, they find individual spiritual realization in enlightening and helping others. They consider themselves as reliable and trustworthy who are willing to invest their time and energy in helping others. For them, the act of helping others is a source of satisfaction and fulfillment, and it contributes to their sense of purpose and meaning in life.

The ideal state of life is to be able to have control over your life. That is to say, there is no need to worry about the most basic survival needs such as food, clothing, housing, and transportation. Instead, you can pursue spiritual goals and create more valuable things, like helping more people.

Demographics and media characteristics of Backbone Traditionalists

1. Middle-aged elderly with moderately low income

Demographically, nearly 40% of backbone traditionalists are middle-aged and elderly, ranging from 46 to 65 years old. 70% of the respondents have attained a college degree or lower, indicating a relatively low educational level. Additionally, there is a low to medium level of income, with nearly 70% of households reporting monthly incomes below 13,000 CNY.

2. Highly trust authoritative media

Regarding sources of information on climate change, backbone traditionalists place the highest level of trust in the central state media. Their trust in traditional media is generally higher than in social media and information content platforms. Additionally, they view professional media, such as the Southern Weekly, as more credible than other sources. Among social media, online knowledge communities like Zhihu are considered more reliable than other entertainment and social platforms such as Douyin, Weibo, and WeChat.

traditionalists possess some basic climate knowledge, evidenced by their average score of 2.64 out of seven, which is slightly lower than the overall mean score of all segments, which is 2.73. To be specific, they understand the correlation between the use of non-clean energy, such as coal and oil, and climate change. But their knowledge of the more detailed aspects of climate change, such as global average temperature change, the impact of temperature change on weather conditions, the impact of sea level rise, carbon dioxide emissions from different kinds of transportation, and greenhouse gas emissions from food production, is relatively limited.

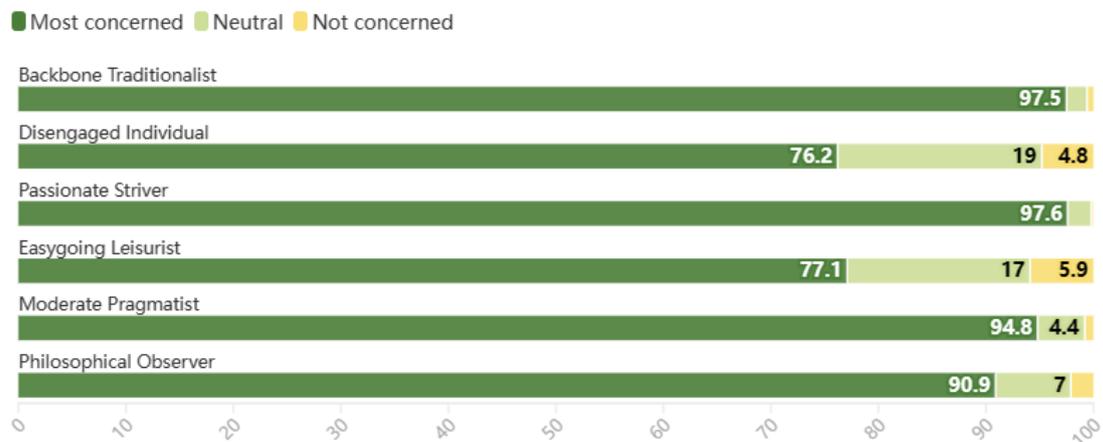


Figure 3-5 Proportion of concern about climate change among different segments

Regarding public participation, backbone traditionalists have high self-efficacy and intention to take action regarding climate change. They believe that some of their climate behaviors can have a positive impact on mitigating climate change and that their actions can also inspire others to take action. Therefore, they are motivated to make a range of efforts to mitigate climate change, such as conserving electricity, using recycled or compostable products or packaging (47%), and choosing energy-saving public transport for travel (46%). Notably, the desire to participate in environmental activities (40%) and reduce meat consumption (35%) among backbone traditionalists is very prominent.

My child participated in the United Nations Climate Change Conference, and it really got me thinking. I have been greatly influenced and have made some big changes to my daily life, such as avoiding single-use packaging, conserving water and electricity,



driving less, and reducing my carbon footprint.

Strong risk perception

The segment's overall climate risk perception is relatively strong, as illustrated by a score of 6.05 for individual-level risk perception and 6.14 for social-level risk perception. They view climate change as an important social issue, but some don't consider its impact on humans as urgent. When it comes to ranking social problems in contemporary Chinese society, backbone traditionalists generally place a lower urgency on climate issues compared to issues regarding the economy and equality.

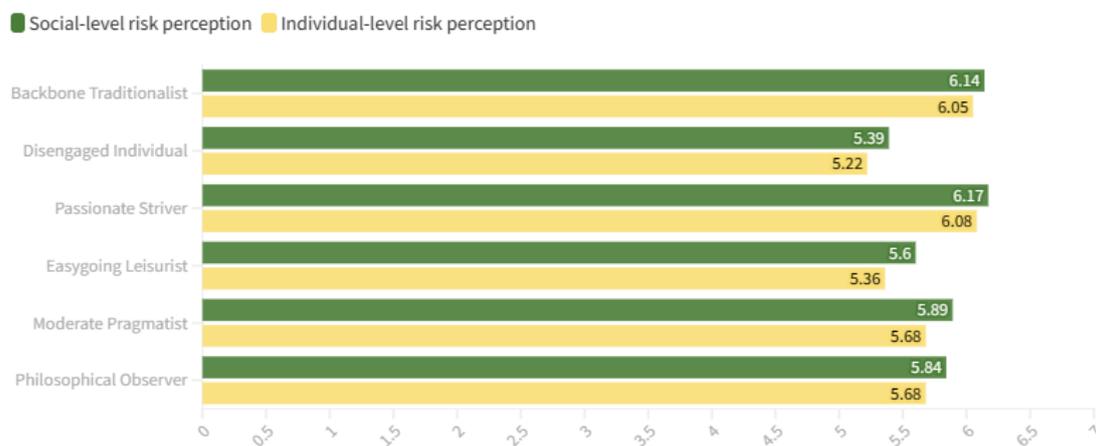


Figure 3-6 Average level of risk perception per segment

(Climate change's impact on humans) are important but not urgent. In certain areas, some people are still struggling to meet their basic needs. Climate change is a long-term issue for the future, solving the immediate survival problems is more important.

Backbone traditionalists believe that climate change is more likely to directly impact the economy, environment, and health conditions of the entire country in the short term (within ten years), and the effects on their own personal lives are relatively limited. Some respondents believe that climate change will not have a direct impact on the environment where they and their families reside. In addition, they perceive that the impacts of climate change vary across different regions, resulting in varying levels of

risk perception among people living in different areas.

If you were affected by it, the impact would be significant. For example, the drought in Chongqing and the upstream of the Yangtze River deeply affected the locals, but for people in other places, it is just a piece of news.

Highest level of social trust

Backbone traditionalists have the highest level of trust in various social actors (mean value 6.48). The high trust in media, experts, businesses, and NGOs makes them the segment most likely to change their climate behavior as a result of influence by news information. They generally believe that the government is a powerful organizer in responding to climate change, and the influence of school education is particularly important in cultivating climate awareness. Furthermore, they generally believe that other actors such as the public, media, businesses, and NGOs also need to actively join the climate action.

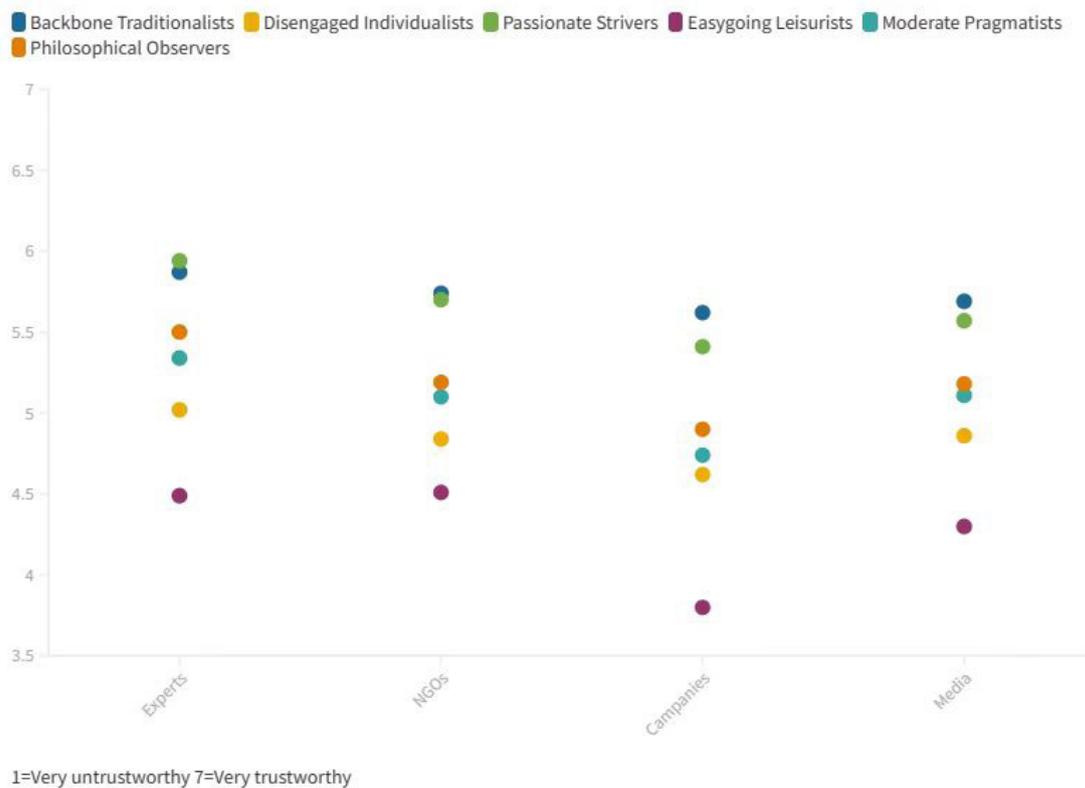


Figure 3-7 Average level of trust of social actors on climate change issues per segment



Governments should make climate change a key performance indicator (KPI) and implement it in a hierarchical manner. The government must take the lead. It is not enough to rely solely on grassroots organizations.

Policy orientation

From the perspective of government responsibility and international cooperation, the backbone traditionalist is the segment with the highest level of policy support. They generally favor the government's incentive policies, such as subsidies and carbon taxes on certain industries in order to encourage companies to reduce emissions or adopt new energy technologies. They also support the development of advanced energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies. However, the segment has relatively low support for policies such as increasing fuel prices to save energy. They believe that developed countries and developing countries have different positions, and although China has the same responsibility and obligation as other countries in addressing climate change, they believe that Western countries have politicized and ideologized the climate issue and deliberately avoided responsibilities.

Summary

- They recognize that climate change is a severe threat to human survival and is a social issue worthy of attention
- Although their level of climate knowledge is relatively weak, they exhibit a strong willingness to take action
- They have a robust overall risk perception, and consider climate change to be a crucial social issue
- They hold the highest average level of trust in social actors at all levels, and believe the government is a strong organizer
- They generally applaud the government for implementing incentive policies, such as providing subsidies and implementing carbon taxes, but they are less supportive of policies that require raising fuel prices to achieve energy savings

Societal concerns for Backbone Traditionalists

Survival guarantee for the low-income

Backbone traditionalists primarily focus on three types of social concerns. The first is practical orientated concerns. They pay great attention to public social problems related to basic living necessities and survival, especially those that affect people's livelihoods such as unemployment and obstacles to economic development. They are concerned about the essential living necessities of the underprivileged, especially issues related to the job market, economic development, and labor rights.

It is tough for university graduates to find a job. Everyone is talking about how e-commerce is developing too fast, which is squeezing out the traditional economy. Offline stores and manufacturing industries are struggling to survive, and this also causes significant social problems.

Concerned about fairness and justice

They place a high value on "distribution justice" when it comes to resources, such as addressing age discrimination in the job application process, gender discrimination at various societal levels, and unfairness of college entrance examinations across provinces. Therefore, their concerns about climate change are also centered around the perspectives of economic development, people's livelihood, and social equity.

Backbone traditionalists prioritize not only practical issues because these are the challenges they encounter in their lives- which is similar to the moderate pragmatists, but also because such issues conflict with their belief in ensuring fair wealth distribution. Nonetheless, backbone traditionalists view these issues with a rational mindset, believing that they can be resolved and that they arise as inevitable and temporary results of the country's development. They also exhibit a rational stance on climate change, opposing taking extreme measures to mitigate the problem.

The disparity between the rich and the poor, the fairness of the college entrance examination, etc. This is an inevitable situation in the transition stage of a country's development from disorder to order. Now, it is time to address them.



Dissemination of harmful ideologies

Backbone traditionalists also prioritize addressing long-term issues related to correcting unhealthy ideologies and trends, such as the negative impact of idols and internet celebrity cultures on young people's cognition. Their concern about these long-term issues highlights the importance that they place on safeguarding and guiding future generations with proper values, and this is a distinct trait of backbone traditionalists. They believe that the current entertainment-oriented cultural environment does not promote healthy values towards consumption and finance and that it misleads young people's values and ethics. They believe the issue requires concentrated efforts from both the government and educational institutions to correct.

Many young girls and boys love them (idols) like crazy. Stars may earn millions or tens of millions by shooting an advertisement. This will give middle school students a confused perception. This is a distorted idol production chain.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- Emphasize that climate change is closely related to the livelihood of the underprivileged, and climate change can be beneficial in improving people's quality of life
- Establish a proper understanding of climate justice, which requires combining climate change mitigation efforts with fair distribution of resources
- Protecting the environment is a fundamental value that young people should hold

Climate narratives and discourses of Backbone Traditionalists

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and international leadership

Core narrative: Present China's efforts and achievements in climate governance in a quantified way, arousing readers' emotional resonance.

Keywords: Chinese wisdom; political status; ranking

Experts on climate change commented that "this is the biggest climate news in the past decade," and pushed the world to reach the goal of the "Paris Agreement" ahead of schedule. (Preferred)

The proportion of China's non-fossil energy in total energy consumption has increased to 15.9%, and it has become the world's largest newly added photovoltaic market for eight consecutive years. China is the country with the largest increase in forest resources and the largest afforestation area in the world, and has become the main force for "going green" in the world. (Preferred)

The installed renewable energy power generation has increased by 2.1 times, exceeding 1 billion kilowatts, and the installed capacity of wind, solar, water, and biomass power generation ranks first in the world. (Preferred)

For backbone traditionalists, it is effective to demonstrate China's determination and achievements in climate governance through the comparison and quantitative expression of global rankings. One interviewee said: "I immediately understood China's leading position in climate governance, and I am very proud." In shaping the meaning of climate governance, the concept of a "community with a shared future for mankind" that advocates for countries to work together in common development aligns with the segment's idea of caring for the world and seeking the well-being of the people.

Note: When shaping the meaning of climate governance, don't be limited to showing how "China's contribution in the field of climate governance can enhance its political status in the international community and further prove the superiority of its political system." Although the segment agrees with such concepts, it would be better to first portray climate improvement as the pursuit of world harmony, and then mention the positive effect on China's political interests.



Curbing global warming will enhance people's well-being

Core narrative: Discuss how addressing climate change can help improve people's living environment as well as enhance employment opportunities in the market, and list out specific measures in the government's plan

Keywords: public health; food security

In terms of agents, both individuals and the government should take proactive steps to prevent and mitigate climate risks in order to truly achieve the long-term goal of sustainable development, which is the fundamental choice for improving people's livelihood and well-being. (Preferred)

To adapt to climate change, establishing a comprehensive response and disaster reduction system is essential. This includes improving disaster monitoring, warning, and response mechanisms, promoting drought-resistant and water-efficient planting techniques, and providing training on disaster prevention and reduction technology in agricultural production. By implementing these measures, we can effectively mitigate the negative impact of extreme weather and climate events on agricultural production and ensure its safety (Preferred)

Although backbone traditionalists can strongly resonate with the narrative of improving people's livelihood and well-being, the narratives must make it clear that both the government and the public should perform their duties, rather than just one agent working hard for it. The interviewee's comment on the narrative said, "although a single spark can start a prairie fire, it needs the participation of fuel and torches."

Note: In describing the beneficiaries of climate action, it is important to include a wide range of actors rather than focusing solely on the interests of a specific group. This may include highlighting the positive impacts on global well-being, national development, and employment opportunities. Furthermore, addressing climate change should not be connected with crisis narratives, as this can lead to feelings of pessimism and powerlessness in the segment. These individuals are resistant to narratives that suggest a lack of agency on the part of both individuals and the state.

Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate change and intergenerational condemnation

Core narrative: Climate change exacerbates social inequality and poverty and the next generation is most affected.

Keywords: environmental rights; inequality of the right to life

While climate change affects everyone, those who contribute the least to the climate crisis — children and our future generations — suffer the most. (Unpreferred)

Backbone traditionalists prioritize not only social equity but also value social stability. Therefore, climate justice narratives for the segment should pay special attention to balance.

Note: Do not frame the climate crisis as a problem caused by a specific generation. Each country’s ability to address climate change varies according to its specific development situation at that time.

Climate discourses of Backbone Traditionalists

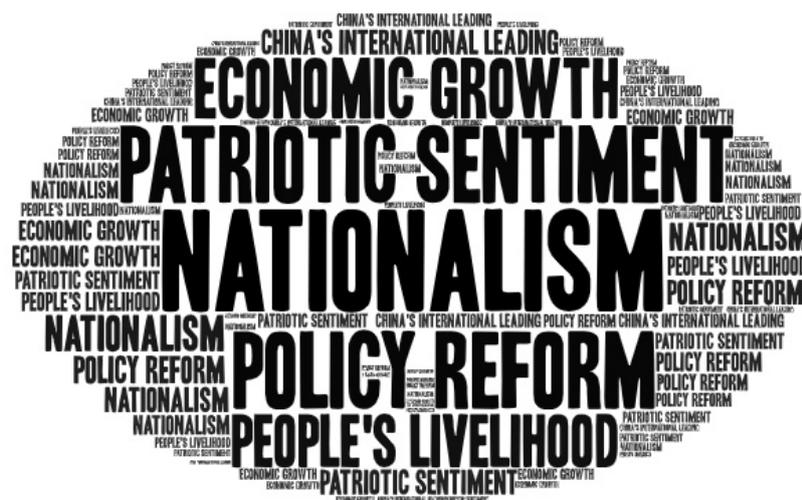


Figure 3-8 Climate discourse word cloud of Backbone Traditionalists



The narrative that backbone traditionalists prefer is similar to China's mainstream media discourse. Climate change is more likely to attract their attention when explained in terms of "patriotic sentiment" and "China's international leadership." They are more concerned about issues regarding economic development and justice, and individuals' livelihood than climate change. Therefore, combining climate issues with these themes will make it easier to gain the support of backbone traditionalists.

Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- Maintain their strong focus on climate change and their support for climate policies, making them solid supporters, active policy advocates, and enthusiastic actors in addressing climate change
- Transform their high level of willingness to act into concrete climate actions
- Encourage them to be mobilizers and leaders in climate action

Based on the segment's profile, we see great potential for backbone traditionalists in the realm of pro-climate behavior. Their higher sense of political efficacy will facilitate them to take the initiative in undertaking individual responsibilities. We recommend that the key point is to arouse their connection between climate change and national pride.

1. Encourage backbone traditionalists as leaders in pro-climate action. The backbone traditionalists are highly motivated to take action, show concern for climate change, and have the willingness to contribute to society. Climate communicators should thus encourage them to become leaders in pro-climate action, provide clear paths and guidance, and help them turn their willingness into actual actions. Additionally, narratives aimed at the segment should highlight the positive significance and value

of pro-climate action for society and humanity, as this will effectively inspire and motivate them.

2. Emphasize China's leading role in global climate governance. This segment responds well to narratives that position China as a global leader in addressing climate change, as it instills a strong sense of national pride. Communicators can also use rankings and other evidence to demonstrate China's effectiveness in mitigating climate change which resonates well with the segment. Specifically, highlighting positive coverage and high praise of China's climate actions in Western media and political circles can further bolster their pride in the country's political system.

3. Emphasize the advantages of China's political system. The narrative discourse that resonates with backbone traditionalists is one that highlights how China's political system can efficiently resolve public concerns. They perceive Western governments construct climate change as a bargaining chip to win elections and prioritize short-term interests in climate action. In contrast, the continuity and orderliness of China's political system are better suited for developing long-term and globally-minded climate mitigation policies that seek common ground while respecting differences. For example, future narratives on climate change can adopt the concept of a community with a shared future for humanity.

4. Highlight China's shared but differentiated responsibilities from other countries. Although climate change is a common challenge for all humanity, the segment thinks that global climate change is mainly caused by uncontrolled emissions from developed countries during industrialization. In developing narrative strategies, we can emphasize that China should take corresponding measures to control greenhouse gas emissions based on its own national conditions and capabilities to avoid placing climate change above national development, which could cause resentment.

5. Stress the importance of climate policy and encourage them to speak up. Backbone traditionalists have a strong sense of national pride and are deeply followed the country's policymaking progress. Therefore, in narratives, it would be effective to highlight the formulation and implementation of relevant national policies that are essential to addressing climate change. By doing so, we can motivate them to



continuously follow national policies, consider the policies' impact on climate issues, and actively speak out their opinions about policies.

6. Encourage them to actively promote and drive others' attention to climate change. Backbone traditionalists are the segment that is deeply concerned about climate change and willing to take action to address it, and they believe that their actions can inspire others. Climate narratives targeting the segment should emphasize that addressing climate change is not just about raising awareness but also taking concrete action. They should be encouraged to take practical steps and to actively lead and inspire others to participate in this collective effort to mitigate climate change. These narratives can help to translate their strong desire to act into tangible actions and further tap into the potential of backbone traditionalists as leaders in climate action.

7. Choose a trusted messenger. To reinforce the backbone traditionalist trust in climate information, narratives should be sourced from national leaders, China's special envoy for climate change affairs, meteorological experts, and Chinese academic experts. In addition, ordinary people and rural farmers who are directly affected by climate change are also trustworthy messengers.

8. Make full use of the influence of authoritative media. Backbone traditionalists show great trust in authoritative media, especially central state media. Communicators should leverage the influence of authoritative media to effectively convey climate messages. This requires communicators to have a deep understanding of the working process, tone, and discourse system of mainstream and professional media, and to provide news clues to them.

9. Avoid excessive use of “fear appeal” in climate change. The portrait of backbone traditionalists is mainly middle-aged with relatively lower income levels. Their values tend to be conservative, with relatively weaker risk-taking and crisis response capabilities. Therefore, they are very concerned about issues related to distributive justice and protecting the rights of the disadvantaged, and they prefer to see positive and constructive climate discourse. In climate narratives targeting the segment, it is essential to avoid excessive use of "fear appeals" that link climate change and its impacts to survival crisis and trigger concerns about social instability. For example,

emphasizing the number of deaths from heatstroke may trigger worries about maintaining social stability, but highlighting what government measures have been taken to reduce the occurrence of heatstroke during hot weather would be more effective. Fear appeals may increase pessimism and helplessness in the segment, and narratives should use more constructive language.



3.2

DISENGAGED INDIVIDUALISTS



Disengaged Individualists (8% of the Chinese public)

Who are Disengaged Individualists?

Table 3-2: Portrait of Disengaged Individualists

Typical beliefs	Demographic characteristics	Societal concerns	Trusted messengers	Preferred media channels
Seeking comfortable life	Most are 18-27 years old	Improvement of material life	National leaders	Kuaishou and Douyin
Indifferent and passive	A relatively low income	Key national policies	Government officials	Bilibili
Low self-esteem	Youngsters originated from county towns		Experts	

Life values of Disengaged Individualists

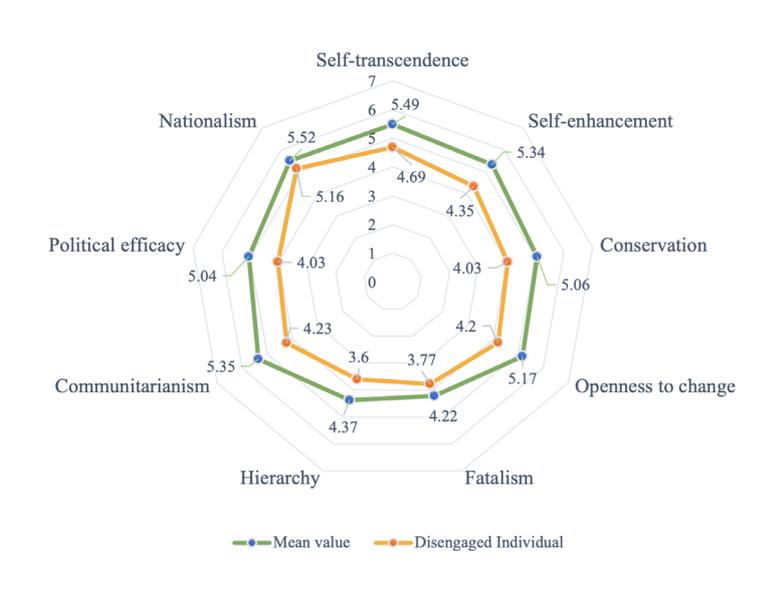


Figure 3-9 Life values for Disengaged Individualists



1. Pursuing a better-off life

Disengaged individualists are not completely satisfied with their current material conditions, but they can live with it. They envision an ideal life that revolves around material wealth and good health. Most of them feel that they have not yet established a solid "material foundation" for a prosperous life. Since improving living standards is the primary goal, they can hardly spare any attention to spiritual pursuits. However, compared to moderate pragmatists who also prioritize worldly concerns, disengaged individualists are more focused on taking care of their well-being, which they view as the key component in life.

My salary is just enough to support myself each month My ideal life is to earn more money and stay healthy. I am over forty, unmarried with no child. I'm pretty chill because raising a child is not that easy now, especially with my monthly salary.

Although they believe that individual efforts can lead to improvements in their living standard, they tend to accept the current circumstances due to external constraints and their own perceived ability levels. Their primary goal is to achieve a more comfortable standard of living rather than actively seeking change and striving for "affluence". They feel inadequate to pursue a "successful career" or a "happy family" that is valued by moderate pragmatists. Although many acknowledge the value of self-actualization, they pull it down on the list and prioritize other goals such as achieving economic independence and obtaining career stability.

2. Remaining indifference on social issues

Disengaged individualists exhibit a low level of interest in social matters, making them the most challenged segment to be mobilized for public activities. Only 5% are "very willing" to devote their time and effort to help those in need (in contrast, 44.3% of passionate strivers strongly agree with this statement), indicating a limited inclination to benefit others for the collective good of society (mean value for self-transcendence 4.69). In addition, they are less interested in improving social skills and achieving success in worldly pursuits (mean value for self-enhancement 4.35), resisting a life full of "challenges, excitement, and changes" and paying little attention to ongoing social issues such as global warming. They also demonstrate a lower level of openness to new experiences (mean value for openness to change 4.20).

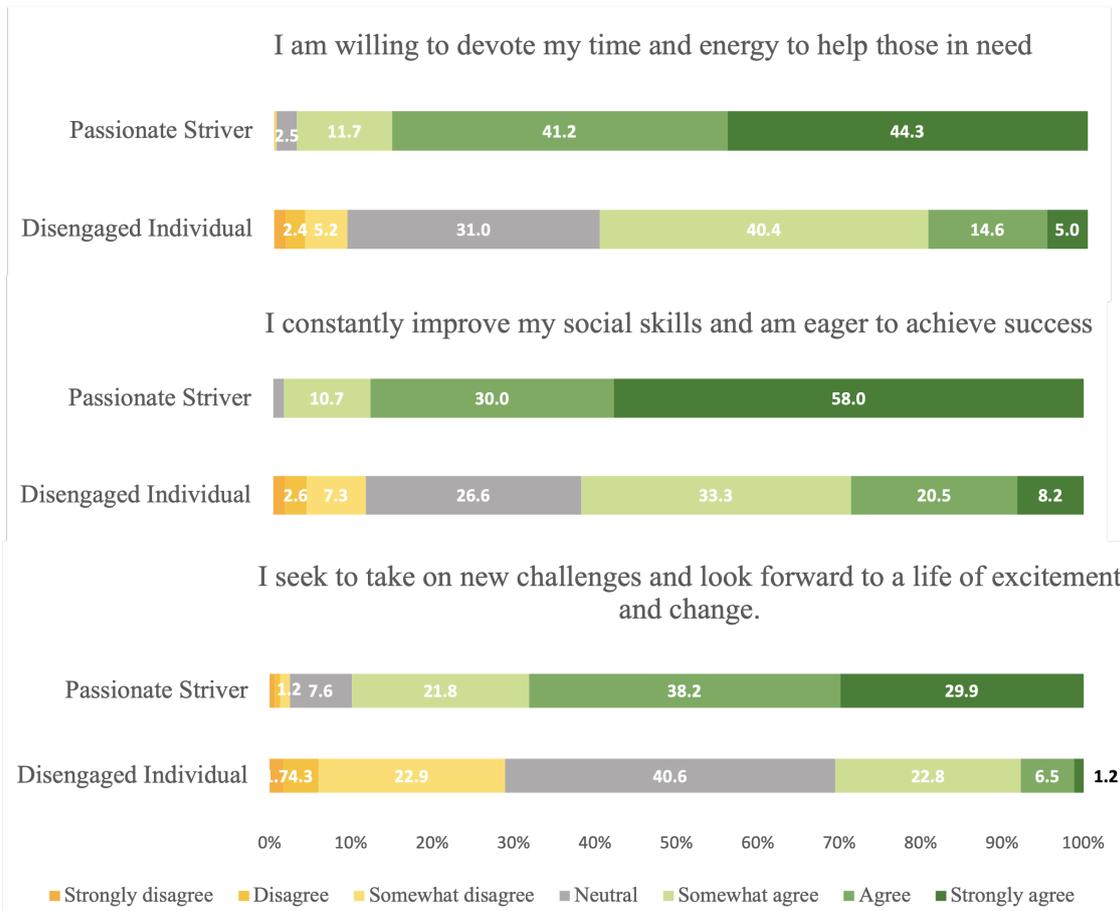


Figure 3-10 Disengaged Individualists and Passionate Strivers on self-transcendence, self-enhancement, and openness to change

3. Low level of self-evaluation

The segment has low perceived self-efficacy (mean 4.03). They are preoccupied with meeting their basic needs for a decent standard of living and lack confidence in their ability to influence social discourse through individual efforts. They tend to adopt a cautious approach to public actions and accept the status quo, and avoid involvement in climate action and contributing to social changes which appears far away to disengaged individualists.

They exhibit a lack of sustained and in-depth attention and understanding to social issues which they believe are beyond individual efforts to solve and place their hope for solutions on the power of the state and institutions.

In general, disengaged individualists are insensitive to most social issues, let alone climate change, making them the most challenged of all segments to be mobilized -- however, it should not be translated into the conclusion that there is no possibility of



mobilizing them to take action at all.

We delivered supplies to the front-line medical staff that take nucleic acid testing to the public. But we did it in the name of our company who is in charge of everything. I haven't got the opportunity to contribute to this as an individual.....I'm very busy with work, minding my own business. And I generally hold positive opinions about our society and there is not much to say about that.

As a member of our society, if we all contribute a little, then in the long run it can make a huge difference. But in the short term, individual contributions are just too slow, so it's up to the government to come up with some long-term plans for governance.

Demographic and media characteristics of Disengaged Individualists

1. Youngsters from county towns with low income level

Disengaged individualists are mainly from developing areas such as prefecture-level cities and towns. Compared to other segments, the segment has a relatively low overall household income, with the highest share of households earning less than 5,000 CNY per month and second to last in terms of the percentage of high-income households (earning over 17,000 CNY per month). In terms of age, young people aged from 18 to 27 account for the majority of the segment (53.5%); in terms of education, college students and technical school graduates also account for a noticeable proportion, making the overall level of education moderately low compared with other segments.

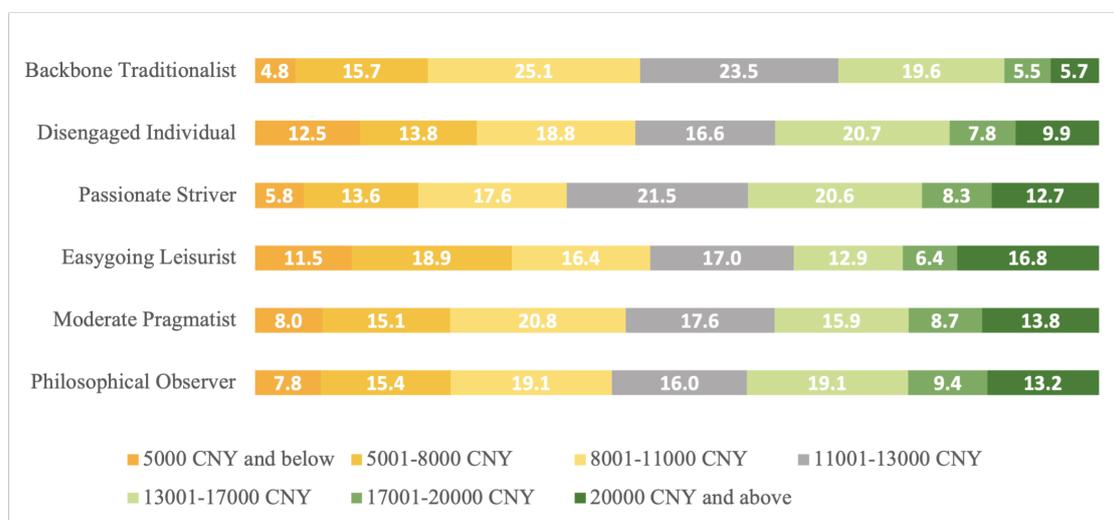


Figure 3-11 Household income across segments

2. Seeking information on short video feeds

From the perspective of media usage, the segment maintains a skeptical and cautious attitude toward most climate narratives and resists agenda-setting by the media. Their level of media trust level in climate change is significantly lower than the average public. However, the segment is an undeniably heavy user of short video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou – they are most accepted to information from self-media accounts and official channels, such as People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, and China Central Television. Meanwhile, the segment relies heavily on social media platforms such as Bilibili and Weibo to obtain information. Therefore, self-media and mainstream media official accounts on short video platforms are ideal channels to reach and engage with the segment in a systematic manner and to cultivate the segment toward climate change.



Figure 3-12 Life values word cloud of Disengaged Individualists



Summary

- Low-income youngsters originated in county towns with college or technical school educational background, pursuing a sense of security in daily life and are not interested in seeking life changes
- Have the lowest level of altruism, feeling reluctant to contribute to the common good
- Stay indifferent to most public issues
- Counting on the government to bring changes and improvements on individual lives, willing to respond to the government's call
- Have a low level of social trust, resisting agenda setting by institutions such as large companies and media. However, they hold high trust in state authority and are willing to accept information from mainstream media channels

Disengaged Individualists on climate change

Low level of climate knowledge, concern, and willingness to act

Disengaged individualists and easygoing leisurists are the two segments with the lowest level of concern for climate change. Only 10.6% of disengaged individualists are "very concerned" about climate change, and 30.2% of them are "somewhat concerned" (compared to 85.1% of passionate strivers who are "very" and "somewhat concerned"). They are generally not interested in climate change with limited knowledge and attention paid to media coverages.

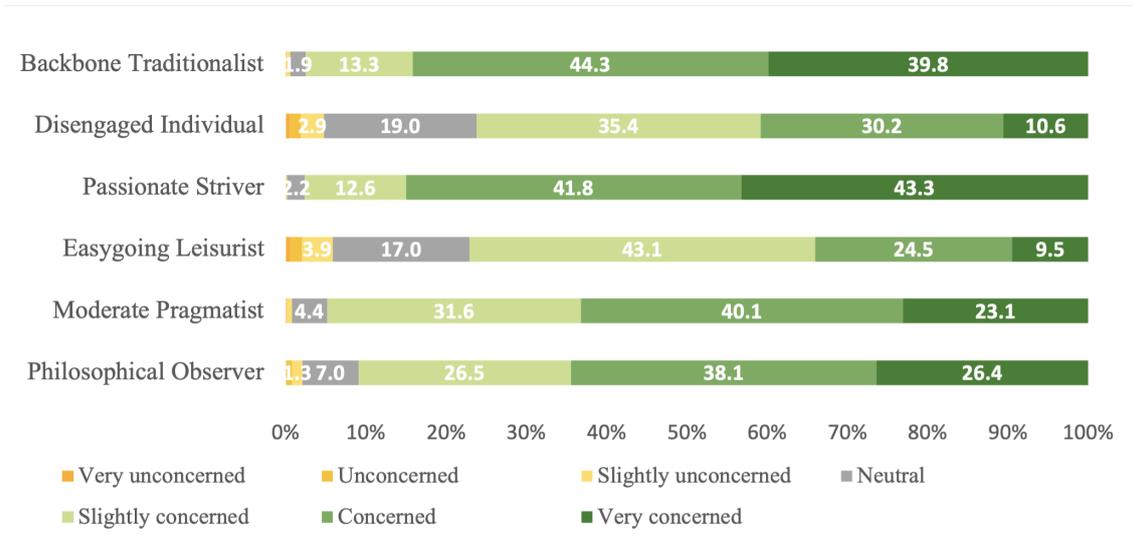


Figure 3-13 The percentage of the level of concern about climate change across segments

Compared to easygoing leisurists who also pay little attention to climate change, disengaged individualists have even lower levels of climate knowledge, hitting the bottom of all segments (2.64 correct answers on average, out of seven questions), with a significant number of them deviating drastically from the current scientific consensus and some respondents never having heard of climate change.

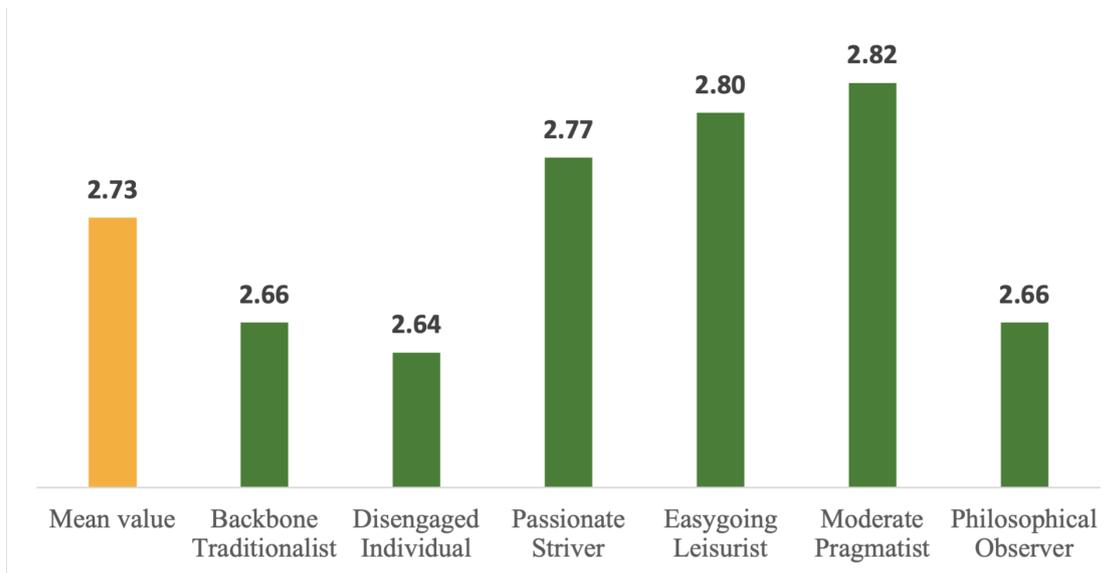


Figure 3-14 The level of climate knowledge on average across segments (7 points in total)



The disengaged individualist is the only segment who take a relatively cautious approach to the causal relationship between human activities and climate change. Although they generally believe that climate change is undeniably happening, they do not fully agree that human activities are the only cause of it, stressing how the earth's cycle can inevitably lead to global warming.

I consider climate change a natural phenomenon. There was the Ice Age, the Neoproterozoic, etc. There are ongoing changes in temperature on earth. If you say that human beings have something to do with climate change, I believe there is a reasonable element in it, but if you assert that human has to take up all the responsibilities, maybe it's a little far-fetched.

Disengaged individualists are the least willing to participate in climate action, with a rather low sense of individual efficacy and a strong desire to stick to their own way of doing things. The only motivation for the segment to participate in climate action comes from responding to state advocacies and mandatory measures.

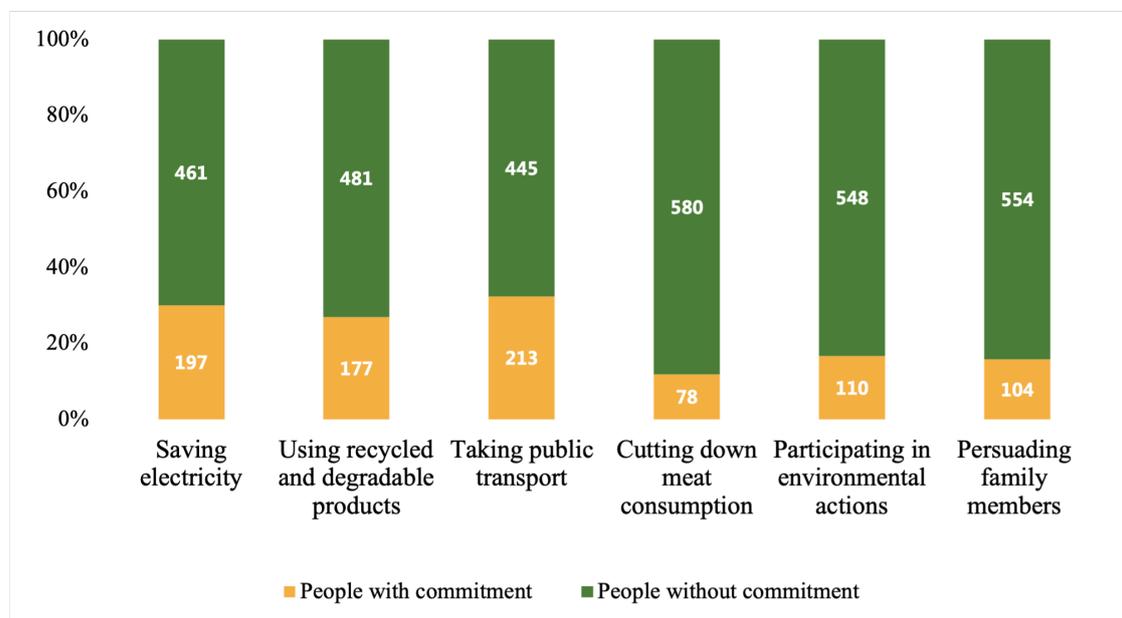


Figure 3-15 The percentage of participation in climate change across segments

Lowest level of risk perception

The disengaged individualist is the segment with the weakest perception of the impact of climate change. They have limited firsthand experience of the direct impacts of climate change on their own lives, with 5.22 and 5.39 on individual and societal risk perceptions -- the lowest levels among all segments. In addition, even those whose lives have been significantly affected by the consequences of climate change are less likely to take it seriously, as the impacts are still acceptable to them.

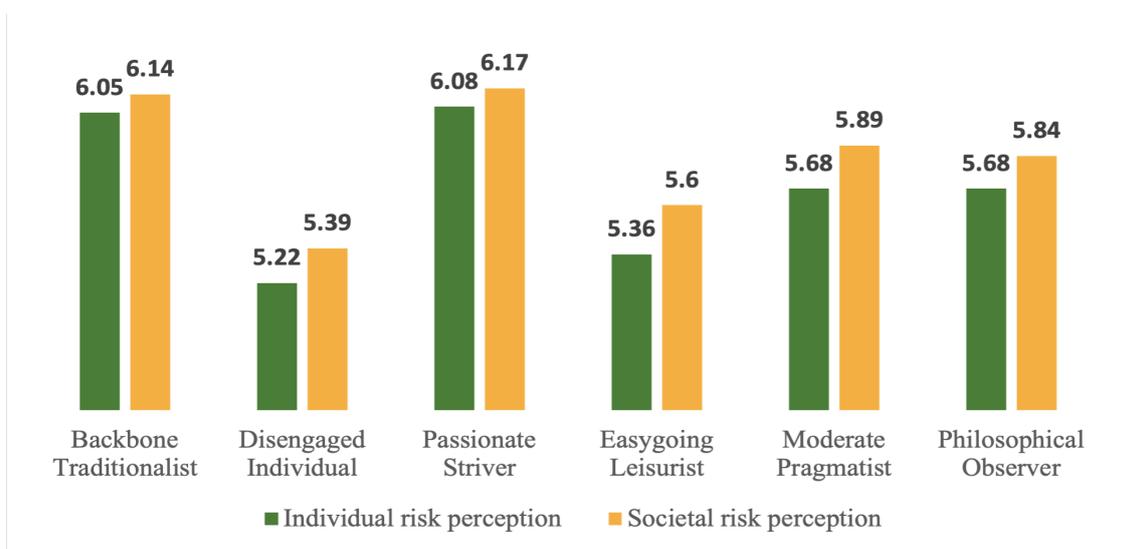


Figure 3-16 Risk perception at individual and societal level on average across segments

In Xinjiang, you bundle up in the morning and take them off at noon. You eat watermelon around the fireplace. It's always been like this since I grew up. So, I don't really feel anything special when you say the climate has changed.

The last two winters have been really foggy at where I live, and in the summer, it's boiling – still, it's not even 70 degrees. It's not a problem as long as you adapt to it. We're humans because we can adapt to changes in nature. And that's what separated us from animals.

However, disengaged individualists are not completely in denial about the factualness of climate change. They agree that climate change may bring greater harm to humans in the future. However, the uncertainty of such harm, coupled with their general belief



that it is still at a distance has largely contributed to their indifference to climate change.

The life span of human is not that long. A scholar who looks further into the future may worry about it, but for the general public, I don't think they feel the same. Why care about what will happen after you pass away?

Policy orientation

Disengaged individualists exhibit a lack of interest towards national-level government resolutions and policy changes, and possess the mildest policy preferences. Similar to other segments, disengaged individualists are more inclined to support incentive policies and reject inhibitory control. They prefer to see economic investment and policy support to promote new energy transformation (e.g., new technology research and development), as well as support for low-emission transport. On the other hand, they clearly dislike two policies, "lifting gasoline prices" and "taxing traditional energy businesses", and do not want their personal lives and economic activities to be restricted due to the policy changes.

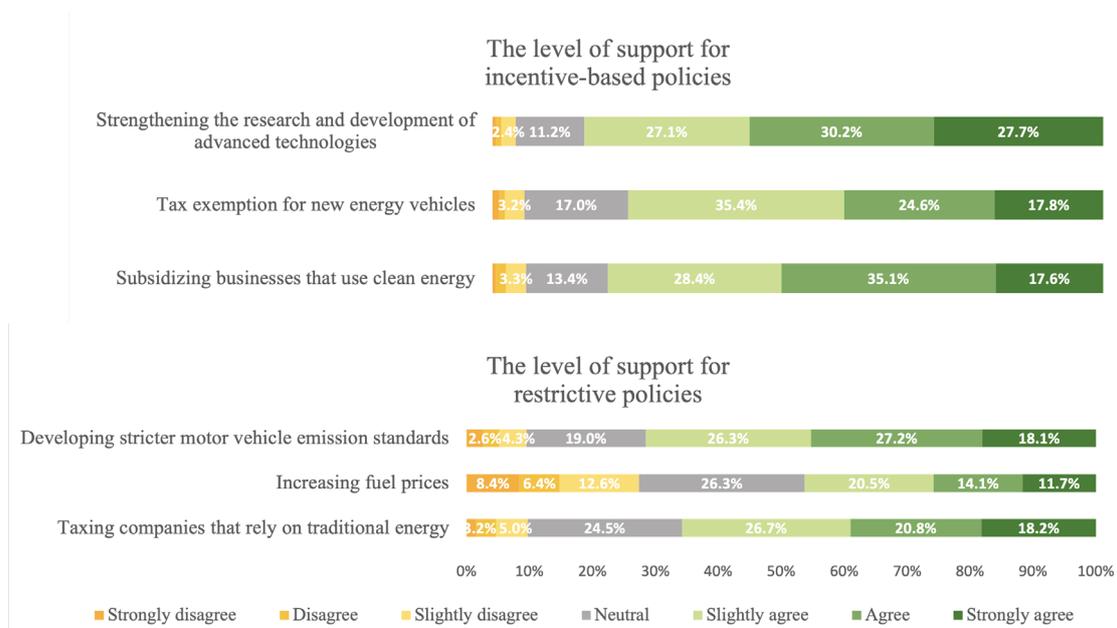


Figure 3-17 The percentage of Disengaged Individualist' level of support for incentive-based and restrictive policies

As for preferences towards different policies, the segment is very supportive of the government's tax exemption for new energy vehicle production and purchase; they also realize that government subsidies for companies to develop new technologies and use clean energy can subtly have a positive impact on individual consumption. On the contrary, policies that (in)directly restrict individual economic activities are likely to cause resistance from the segment. For example, "raising fuel prices", will raise the cost of living for those who still drive gasoline cars, thus causing significantly higher rejection than other policies.

Level of social trust

Disengaged individualists have a rather low trust in the media and companies, resisting the agenda they set on climate change and other social issues. They remain indifferent or even skeptical towards climate change. However, they are not complete climate denialists. They still agree with the factualness of climate change, which are due to their trust in state narratives on climate change, rather than industry reports from NGOs, companies or personal life experiences.



Figure 3-18 Social trust towards media, experts, NGOs and companies across segments



They seldom trust or follow events held by environmentalists and rarely believe that climate action can be mobilized. They maintain a high level of skepticism towards the view that public climate action can bring about substantial positive changes, and do not feel the need to participate in climate action as individuals.

It's hard to solve climate change for good. Everyone has their own opinions -- some are willing to join, and some are not. It's just hard to mobilize them into unified action.... You can't mobilize people like in a factory, right? You can't keep everyone on the same page.

Personally, I think it is not necessary. The energy saved by individuals who take fewer car rides or use less water can never be compared to that of a factory creating production for a few minutes. Climate action is not really what we as individuals should care too much about. But if you say it's what the government wants us to do, I would do it. Like earlier when they said we shouldn't use the supermarket free plastic bags anymore and to use recyclable bags. Then I started to opt for environmentally friendly choices, such as eco-friendly bags, even though deep down I don't really care.

Summary

- State policy narratives are major sources for them to get a sense of the factualness of climate change
- They have a low level of climate knowledge, largely deviating from the consensus of the scientific community. They fail to recognize the urgency or importance of taking climate action, believing that climate change is a result of the earth's developmental cycle rather than human activities
- They are reluctant to participate in climate action and will only do so in response to state advocacy
- Focus on policy adjustments related to personal material life or economic activities
- They prefer to support incentive-based climate policies, especially tax exemptions for new energy vehicles
- They resist agenda setting by the media, businesses, and NGOs but hold trust in state authority

Societal concerns for Disengaged Individualists

Livelihood and living security

They tend to accept the reality, considering social problems and their underlying structure as immutable and challenging to address in the near term, therefore are generally less enthusiastic about public issues. They have observed policies aimed at addressing problems often encounter significant obstacles once implemented, making it difficult to bring practical changes in the short term. Unlike other segments, they tend to discount the role of individual effort and contribution in bringing about meaningful changes, thus adopting a pessimistic and indifferent attitude with a strong detachment.

The economic and educational disparities between urban areas and the rest of the country are still large in all aspects, I can tell because I'm from a suburban area The differences are inevitable. Even though we should never accept the gap but let's just be honest, it is simply not possible to solve these problems completely.

However, they still keep an eye on issues directly related to their present material lives, such as intense social competition (so-called "Juan" and "lying back"), limited job opportunities, as well as housing security, personal savings, and medical and health care conditions. These issues are closely related to their daily lives, and to a certain degree overlaps with the impacts of climate change, such as the reduction of food production and public health crisis, as well as changes in the energy industry and public transport - all of which are of concern to the segment.

Policies given priorities at the national level

The segment has little faith in individual agency, and considers social problems as impossible to solve through individual efforts alone. Therefore, they rarely take practical actions to influence policies for solutions to existing problems. Their low perceived self-efficacy leads them to accept the existence of social problems.

However, they demonstrate a high level of trust in state policies to which they are willing to actively respond, hoping to benefit from it and seek opportunities for future development. For example, for state actions on climate change and environmental protection, they see that the quality of life can be improved by responding to the government's call for plastic reduction, garbage recycling, tax reduction for new energy



vehicles, and fuel vehicle emissions reduction. They also see the space for the growth of small businesses in the policy changes, such as traditional enterprises' transmission to the new energy. Therefore, they closely follow policy changes in environmental protection and emission reductions.

Only when the government leads the economy to grow faster and better will inequality slowly decrease or even disappear.

I'll do waste sorting for the government's initiative. If I don't do it, and he doesn't do it, then no one's going to do it. Even when we don't see changes immediately, we should put trust in the state authority's decision and follow the calls.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- Addressing climate change can have a direct and positive impact on the material life of individuals in the short term (e.g., food production, disease prevention, etc.)
- Individuals can seek to improve their quality of material living in the context of the national "dual carbon" strategy

Climate narratives and discourses of Disengaged Individualists

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and people's livelihood

Core narrative: To address climate change can enhance national capacity to safeguard basic livelihoods; Addressing climate change can bring tangible benefits in food production, green economic growth, public health prevention, and disease control, as well as species conservation.

Keywords: food security; climate economy; health crisis

The government will take active and scientific measures to mitigate the impact of climate change on agricultural production and food security in China, and to ensure that the people's food is well maintained and that the Chinese people are able to fill up their own rice bowls. (Preferred)

Taking a down-to-earth approach to climate action can bring tangible benefits such as creating jobs, boosting economic savings, opening up trade opportunities and improving the well-being of people around the world, which in turn can promote economic development in all regions and countries. (Preferred)

Environmental issues are for now and the future. They have a bearing on whether our future generations will be able to live safely and happily on Earth. (Preferred)

Climate change and national leadership

Core narrative: to highlight the state's role in addressing climate change; describing climate action as a key initiative proposed by the government that requires active responses and cooperation of the people.

Keywords: state responsibility for emission reduction; national efficacy

China has been telling its story through international communication, actively sharing its "dual carbon" experiences with other countries. China has been helping to build infrastructure including low-carbon zones, weather satellites, photovoltaic power generation systems, lighting equipment, new energy vehicles, environmental monitoring equipment, clean stoves, and other materials related to addressing climate change. China has helped many countries improve their capacity to address climate change, and also trained about 2000 officials and technicians for nearly 120 developing countries. (Preferred)

The world witnesses China's ambition in climate governance which will encourage other countries to take more responsibility in tackling challenges in climate change. (Preferred)



Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate change and individual choice

Core narrative: To address climate change is everyone’s responsibility; individuals need to make changes in aspects such as daily lifestyle and career development.

Keywords: individual responsibility

Every nation, every business, and every person should join in calling for climate action Caring for the Earth today is caring for humanity tomorrow. (Unpreferred)

When you sign up for a major in university, there’s no harm in considering those in the field of clean energy supply. You should not only go to the right university and the right major but also contribute to the "double carbon" goal. (Unpreferred)

Climate discourse of Disengaged Individualists



Figure 3-19 Climate discourse word cloud of Disengaged Individualists

Disengaged individualists trust the state authority and are willing to respond to government initiatives, therefore prefer content that highlights the role of the "state" as the initiator and promoter of international cooperation in climate action. Although they rate lower in nationalism and political efficacy than backbone traditionalists, narratives adopting the storyline that depicts "China as a large developing country that actively initiates international cooperation and takes responsibility for reducing emissions" is generally preferred and endorsed.

The segment is also very concerned about their own survival and living security. In terms of narrative preference, they prefer those that are highly relevant to their livelihood. Expressions that start with "saving money" and show that "developing environment-friendly habits can help reduce the cost of living" will also attract the attention of disengaged individualists.

On the other hand, due to their low self-efficacy, they do not like climate narratives that stress individual responsibility and agency. In addition, because their priorities are given to pursuing material gains, the segment is also more likely to reject approaches to climate action that require a large amount of effort and time. Expressions that offer a direct guide on personal choices but with no evidence support will be strongly rejected by disengaged individualists.

Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- Include the segment in climate action, and prevent them from becoming climate change skeptics
- Raise the segment's awareness on climate change, expose them to climate change related information, and guide them toward forming a scientific climate understanding
- Raise their level of risk perception by letting them aware of the ongoingness risks of climate change
- Mobilize the segment to adopt low-carbon lifestyles by offering guidelines that help mitigate climate change while lowering the cost of living, which in return helps to increase their willingness to act and self-efficacy



Disengaged individualists are the most distant segment from climate change among all people — they avoid discussions on climate change and are pessimistic about individual efforts. We need to include them in the climate action in the first place, reaching them through social media with frequent climate content exposure, so as to help them form a basic understanding of climate change and let them realize that it is an ongoing problem that hinders our daily lives. It is important to stress the ongoingness of climate change and then the urgency of joining climate activities, as well as the legitimacy of climate action at the national strategic level, therefore further boosting their motivation for climate action.

Disengaged individualists do not see themselves as responsible and capable of being part of climate action and therefore are challenging to mobilize. It is suggested to build a link through narratives between addressing climate change and securing one's material life to show them the tangible benefits of joining collective action and to remind them of the youth's responsibility in it. It is also recommended to offer ways and channels to join climate activities and lead a low-carbon life to empower individuals.

1. Offer pro-climate guidelines on how to be climate friendly while improving material conditions. Disengaged individualists are the least concerned about and willing to act on climate change. Their primary goals are to meet the basic requirements of decent living and to establish better-off lives, having no time to influence public policies or participate in public actions. It's recommended to engage the segment through their concerned topics, figuring out the overlap between improving their living standards and pro-climate behavior. The segment can be included in climate action by adopting lifestyles that are pro-climate and can save money at the same time.

2. Highlight the role of state authority in promoting climate actions and shape individual efforts as a way of supporting national advocacy. Disengaged individualists primarily engage in climate action due to national advocacy. As the highest decision makers, state authorities are the most trusted role and play a crucial role in shaping their behaviors and decision-making. The prioritized position of climate change in the state agenda is the main reason for disengaged individualists to spare attention to the issue. It is suggested that narratives should be designed to highlight public actions and activities in the national campaigns and dual carbon policy, shaping individual participation as a responsible behavior in response to the national call. It is also recommended to stress the top priority has been given by state authority to climate issues.

3. Make full use of self-media and mainstream media accounts on social media platforms. Compared to other segments, disengaged individualists tend to avoid knowledge-sharing platforms such as Zhihu and Douban, and instead favoring short video platforms such as Douyin and Kuaishou. They rely on key opinion leaders (KOLs) and mainstream media anchors who have accounts on social media platforms to obtain information, which largely shape their worldview. In terms of narrative and communication strategies, communicators can adopt the style of self-media and influencers by creating short, easy-to-understand, and fast-paced videos.

4. Highlight the impact of climate change on citizens' current livelihood. Disengaged individualists are rather indifferent to social issues and climate change. They devote most of their time and effort to personal finance and their livelihood. When composing narratives to engage the segment, highlighting the actual impact of climate change on their daily life can be an effective way to get them out of apathy attitudes. It is recommended to pinpoint positive changes climate action brings to agriculture production, economic growth, public health, poverty reduction, and welfare promotion.

5. Pinpoint the negative impacts of climate change that are already occurring at the moment. Disengaged individualists are below average in risk perception and have yet to realize that climate change is actually happening and brings consequences that affect our daily lives. This in part contributes to the lack of willingness to act. When engaging them, it is suggested to start with tangible cases of individuals' living quality being lowered or severely affected (e.g., heat waves are particularly detrimental to outdoor workers). The key is to highlight the current and potential negative impacts of climate change on individuals' lives in the short term and to let them aware of the relevance, urgency, and importance of addressing the problem.

6. Address climate action from the immediate gains it brings rather than long-term efforts it requires. Disengaged individualists dislike when they are told to exchange current benefits for long-term gains. They oppose the notion of paying the price for uncertain negative climate impacts in the future. In contrast, they are more likely to make changes for immediate benefits. When coming up with narrative strategies to engage them, care should be taken to avoid talking about climate change from a long-term perspective. Instead, emphasis should be given to the serious consequences that are already taking place and damaging people's livelihood among other impacts that may occur in the short term. Meanwhile, to address climate action from the perspective of immediate gains it brings, especially those in aspects such as agriculture production, public health, and transport.



3.3

PASSIONATE STRIVERS



Passionate Strivers (21% of the Chinese public)

Who are Passionate Strivers ?

Table 3-3: Portrait of Passionate Strivers

Typical beliefs	Demographic characteristics	Societal concerns	Trusted messengers	Preferred media channels
Communitarianism	Over 45 years old	Social mobility	Experts	People’s Daily
Strong political efficacy	Bachelor degree background	Poverty under the COVID-19	Government	Xinhua News Agency
Self-transcendence	Middle class living in second-tier cities		Media	Douyin, Kuaishou

Life values of Passionate Strivers

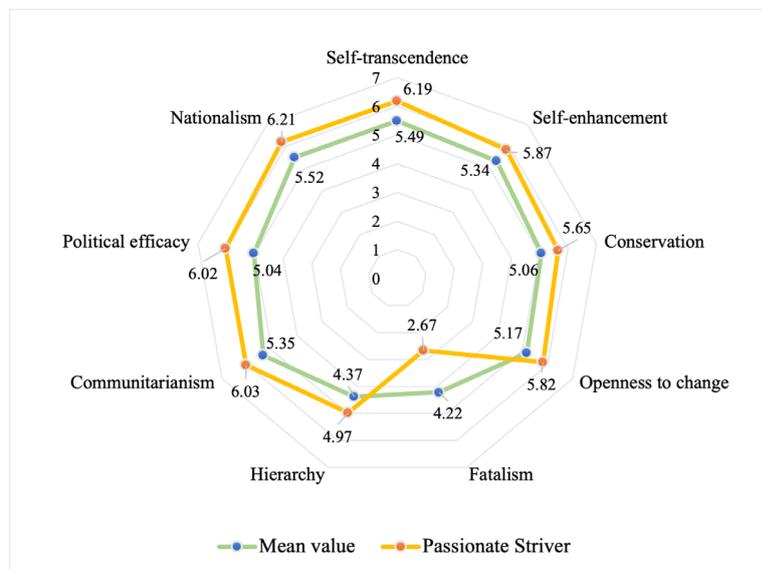


Figure 3-20 Life values for Passionate Strivers



1. Strong national pride

Passionate strivers have the highest nationalism score among all segments (mean 6.21), and hold the highest attitude of support for government policies. Their national identity not only comes from the recognition of Chinese history and cultural heritages but also from their support for the government and recognition of national spirits, such as solidarity in times of disaster, national resilience and dedication. They hold the beliefs that these qualities are important elements that differentiate the Chinese nation from others, thereby demonstrating a strong sense of national pride.

I think one thing that makes our country unique and special is the power our country has and the love we have received from the nation and from our citizens. It's something that maybe other countries don't have. Our traditional culture values unity and kindness, and as Chinese, we take pride in that. It's something that makes me very proud.

It's an individual pride, I am proud of Chinese optimism and resilience. In the face of major disasters, everyone took the initiative to self-organize. I am proud to live in this land.

I'm proud because we have a very long civilization history. And the Chinese are very kind, hardworking, and very united in the face of a great crisis. I am very proud of how the Chinese can show a great sense of camaraderie.

2. A high level of political efficacy

Passionate strivers also have the highest sense of political efficacy (mean 6.02), they do not believe in fatalism (mean 2.67), and believe that personal efforts are the key to achieving a good life for themselves, their loved ones, and the social environment. They advocate active participation in social affairs and are enthusiastic about public welfare. Among all segments, they are most confident that the government values public opinions and believes that every citizen, including themselves, can influence government policies. They are confident that their actions can mitigate climate change and engage others in climate actions (mean self-efficacy 6.02).

3. Pursue self-transcendence

Meanwhile, they also have the highest tendency to self-transcendence (mean 6.19). They are committed to promoting a happy, healthy, and sustainable lifestyle, and are concerned about the positive impact of their actions and activities on others,

society, and nature. Unlike disengaged individualists, they integrate their personal developments with social values and pursue a purposeful and meaningful life beyond themselves. They support the idea that the state and the government can gradually address structural problems in society through incremental top-down reforms and encourage positive actions to make society better.

Although they believe that hard work is an inevitable component of achieving an ideal life, they are also anxious about excessive competition, believing that effort should not be for exclusivity but for the win-win situation between self and others.

This kind of pressure sometimes feels like meaningless internal anxiety because everyone is already excellent and no one wants to be behind. The competition within the circle is a very serious phenomenon. I hope to witness the transformation of our society in which pressure can come from your internal motivation rather than this meaningless peer pressure competition.

Demographics and media characteristics of Passionate Strivers

1. Middle-class elderly living in medium-sized cities

Demographically speaking, the proportion of passionate strivers makes up more than 18% in all age groups, but the proportion is higher among middle-aged and the elderly (over 46 years old). In terms of academic qualifications, they are mainly junior college and undergraduate graduates (41.0% undergraduate, 25.9% junior college). They lead relatively affluent lives, with the highest average household income among all segments.

2. Trusted official media agencies

Passionate strivers use traditional media among all segments, have the highest usage duration for central state media at 2.38h/day (such as Xinhua News Agency, People's Daily, Chinese Central Television) and local state media at 2.06h/day (such as Beijing Daily and Zhejiang Daily). Their usage of entertainment video platforms (Tencent video and Kuaishou) is also the highest among all segments at 3.23h/day. Their media usage motivations can be summarized as obtaining news information from official media agencies and for entertainment needs as evidenced by their high level of demand for video platforms.



Figure 3-21 Life values word cloud of Passionate Strivers

Summary

- Strong sense of nationalism, taking pride in Chinese history and culture and believing in China's unique and exceptional qualities
- High level of political efficacy, having the belief that they can influence public affairs and that the government values their own opinions
- Pursue self-transcendence, upholding the integration of personal value and social value
- Middle-aged or elderly aged 46 and above with a college or bachelor's degree, living in second or third-tier cities and having a high income
- Prefer official media agencies as news sources and short videos for entertainment

Passionate Strivers on climate change

Climate knowledge and concerns

1. Extremely concerned about climate change

The proportion of passionate strivers who are concerned about climate change (score

above 4) was the highest among all segments (98.8%), and the number of people who expressed great climate concern (score 7) was also the highest proportion among segments (43.3%), revealing that they are active climate advocates and active participants.

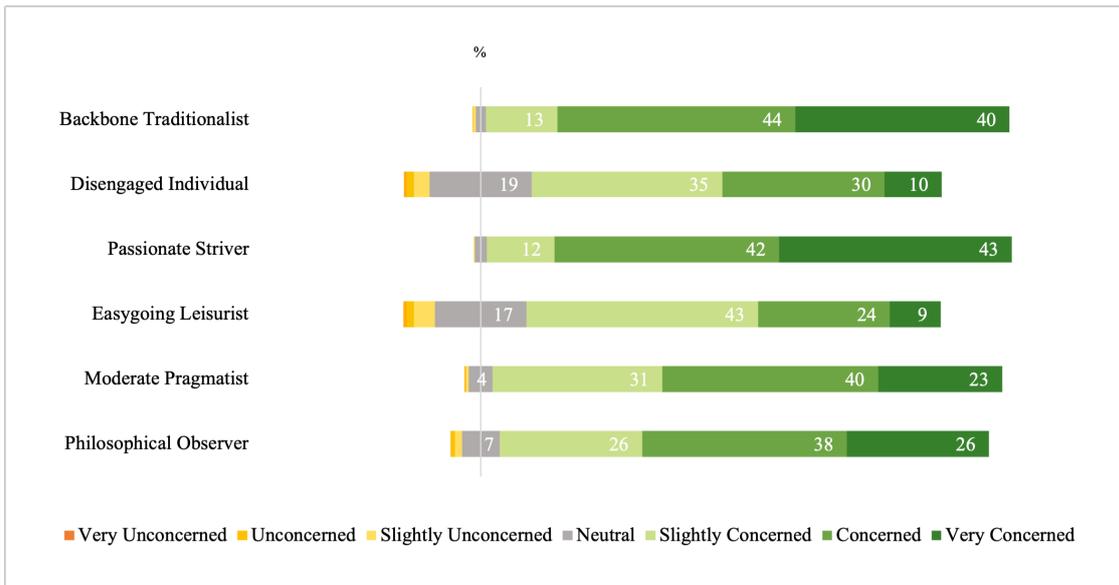


Figure 3-22 Level of climate concern in each segment

Although passionate strivers are very concerned about climate change, they perceive it as psychologically far away and can only comprehend it through personal experience and media reportages of abnormal climate events such as droughts caused by persistent high temperatures and floods resulting from exceptionally heavy rainfall, etc.

Climate change is very far away, it's too far away from us. I feel that my behaviors cannot change the environment at all, but when environmental problems are linked to health, they may be different. For example, when I was a child living in Henan province, farmers burned wheat straw every autumn harvest, which produced large smog and always choked me and made me very uncomfortable.

To be honest, in the past two years, it's not just the high temperatures but also the extreme weather conditions caused by climate change, such as floods, droughts and other natural disasters. These events have had a significant impact, including the power outages and electricity restrictions in Chongqing and Sichuan due to the high



temperature, which has affected our daily lives.

The weather in Changsha this year is particularly hot, the news said it's more than 40 degrees, and I sweat when I go out. I feel that the climate will reach 50 degrees in the future, how can I live?

2. Human is the main cause of climate change

Despite acknowledging that climate fluctuations are regular, passionate strivers believe that the irrational exploitation of nature by humans is the main reason for worsening climate change - the intensification of extreme weather is an example of human activities destroying the earth's ecological environment and accelerating global warming.

Climate change is actually (because) we as human beings don't respect nature enough and always want to change nature. From a micro view, it is caused by our waste lifestyle and irresponsible behavior.

I think [climate change] is some unnatural changes to the overall climate brought by human production activities.

Climate change is a problem caused by human development and overexploitation of natural resources, which is reflected in environment damage and an increase in extreme weather events.

3. Strongest willingness to act on climate action

Passionate strivers exhibit the highest willingness to take action toward climate change (mean 6.23). When faced with the global risks of climate change, passionate strivers are more willing to take concrete actions and believe that their efforts will contribute a positive impact on solving climate problems. Their proactive attitude is not only reflected in their willingness to reduce personal carbon emissions by saving electricity, using degradable products, and taking public transportation but also in their highest level of prosocial behavior compared to other segments – participating in environmental activities (50.4%) and persuading family members (49.3%) to do the same.

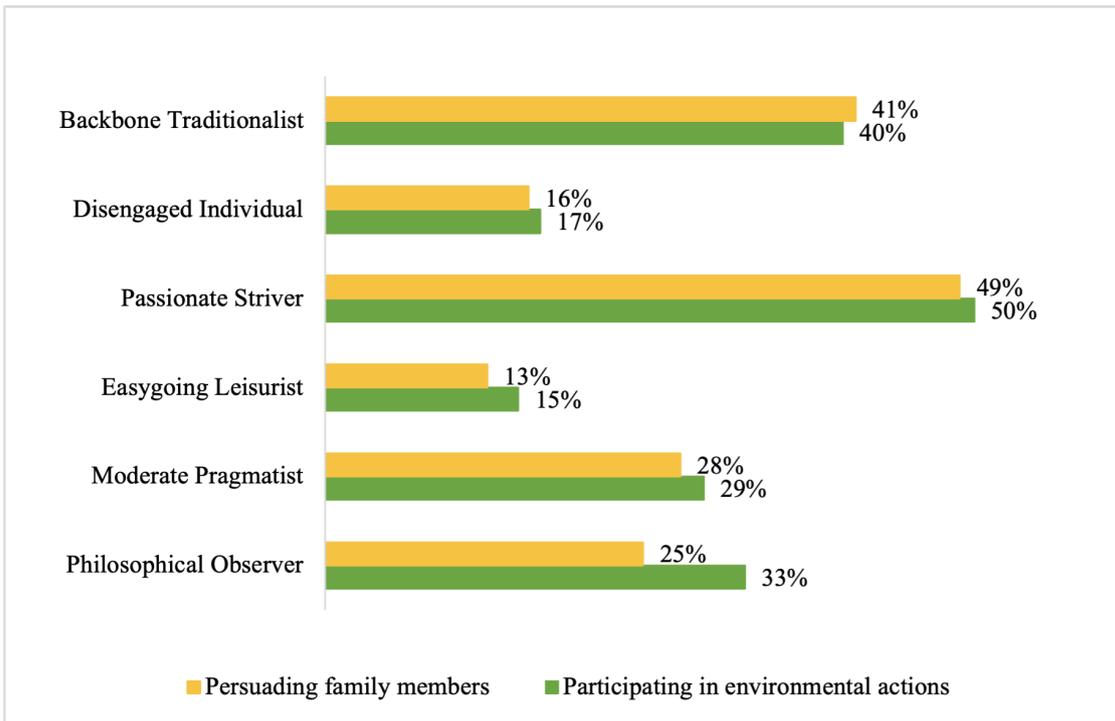


Figure 3-23 Proportion of segments who have "participated in environmental protection actions" and "persuaded their families"

Highest risk perceptions

Passionate strivers had the highest perception of climate risk (mean score 6.14 out of 7). Whether in the level of individual risk (mean score 6.07 out of 7) or social risk perception (mean score 6.17 out of 7), passionate strivers both scored the highest and that social risk perception was slightly higher than individual risk perception, reflecting their concern for the social impact of climate change which coincided with the segment’s focus on self-transcendence.

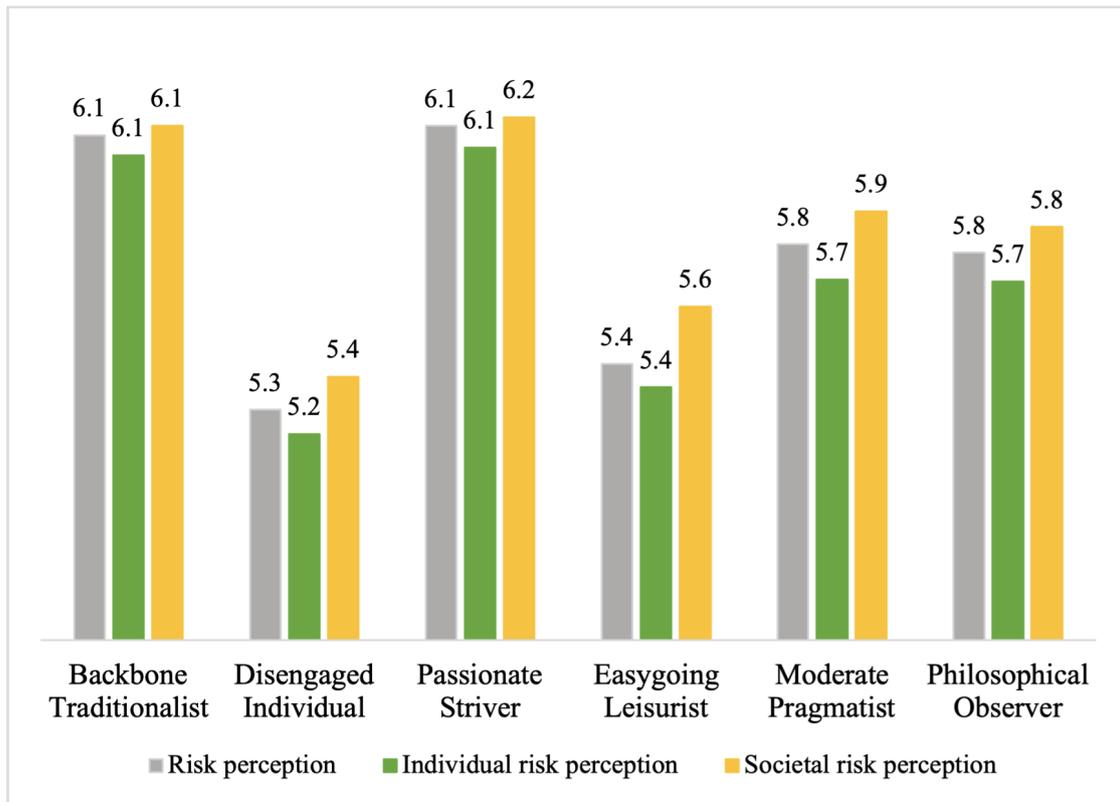


Figure 3-24 Mean risk perception of each segment

Policy orientation

Although more than sixty percent of passionate strivers (61.3%) believe that China's historical responsibility for reducing emissions is less than the United States and Europe, more than half of respondents (51.6%) strongly agree (with a score of 7) that China has the same responsibilities and obligations as other countries in cooperating with the globe to address climate change. This demonstrates that they advocate global cooperation in addressing climate change and support China's active responsibility with a cosmopolitan spirit. While passionate strivers generally support government policies, they are particularly in favor of energy and vehicle emissions reduction and greening policies – such as subsidizing clean energy (such as solar and wind energy), tax exemptions for new energy vehicles, and stricter emission standards for vehicles.

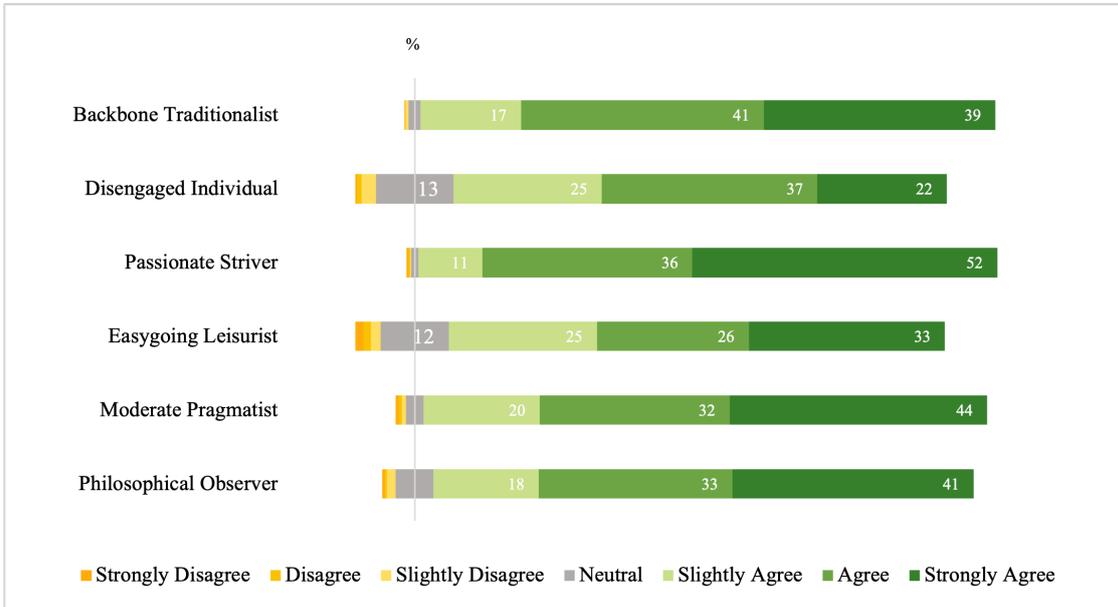


Figure 3-25 Attitudes of each segment to "China has the same responsibilities and obligations as other countries"

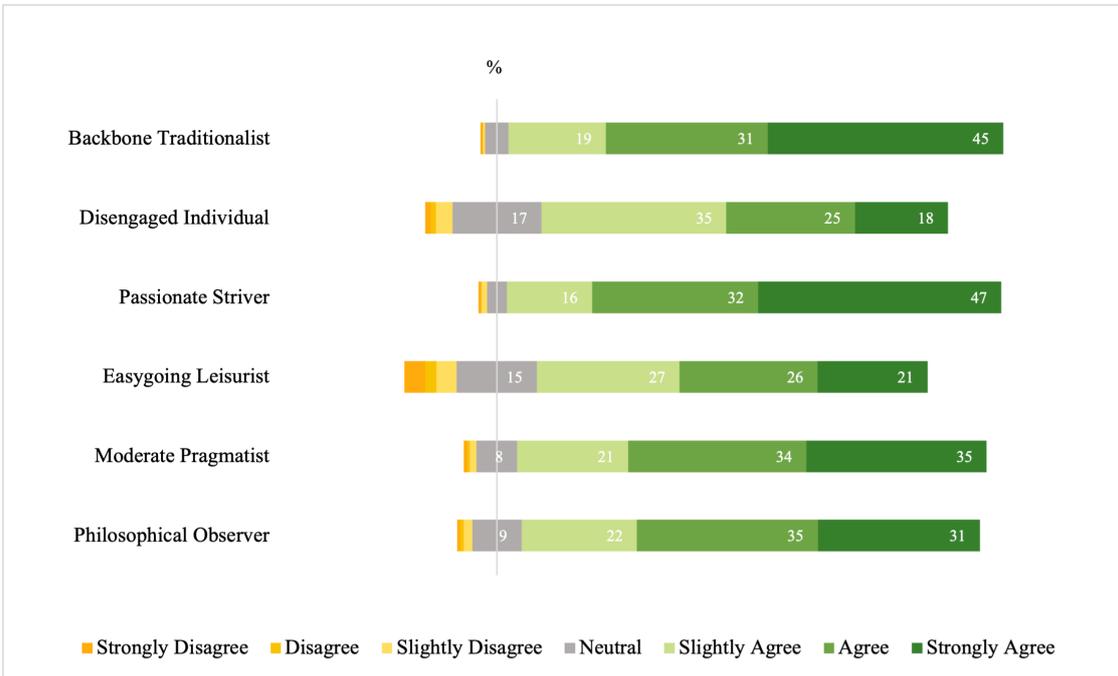


Figure 3-26 Attitudes of each segment to "tax exemption for new energy vehicles"



Level of social trust

In the public discourse on climate change, passionate strivers trusted experts (mean 5.94), the media—— especially official media (mean 5.57), and NGOs (mean 5.70) more than private companies. Most of their information comes from news reports and the official WeChat and Weibo accounts of the relevant industry. Passionate strivers have a high degree of trust in authoritative actors, especially professional experts and industry organizations and unions. Therefore, the climate narratives targeted to them need to be told by authoritative actors such as experts and scholars or quoted from them to enhance the credibility of the climate narrative.

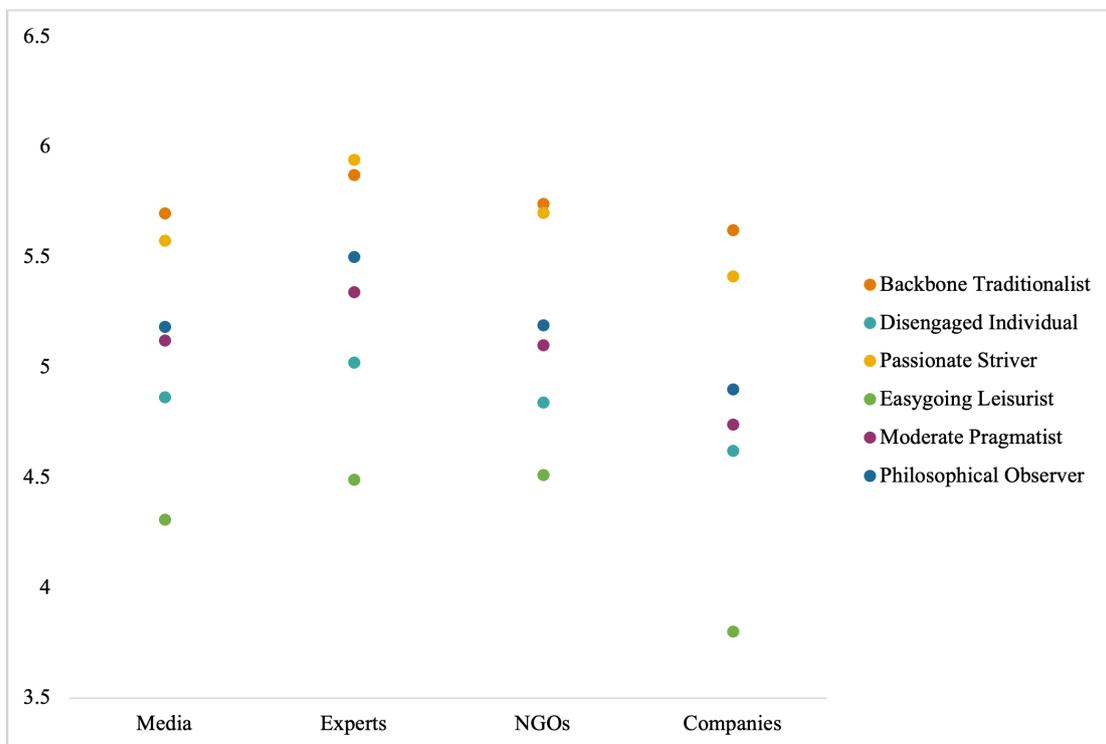


Figure 3-27 Average trust in climate change among different social actors by segments

The government can play a role in promoting public awareness through mass education and also in adjusting macro-control regulations. For example, initiatives such as "carbon peak" and "carbon neutrality" may provide a policy framework for companies to take responsibility and establish their image. NGOs and individuals can also play an advocacy role, but on a small scope or for a specific issue.

Some of our country's environmental reports lack relevant professional opinions, of course, some magazines and public accounts are very trustworthy, but their popularity is not particularly high.

I pay attention to climate change, and I also find the China Central Television news occasionally mentions that, so I pay attention to it. Other ways I heard about climate change are through iDaily Global Vision and China Daily.

Summary

- Climate concern is the highest, but psychological distance is far
- Believe that humans are the main reason of global climate change
- The willingness to participate in climate action is the highest and pro-social behavior is outstanding
- Have the highest overall risk perception, but social risk perception is higher than individual risk perception
- Advocate international cooperation and support the transformation and development of the automotive industry
- Most trusted authoritative media, especially trust the voices of climate experts

Societal concerns for Passionate Strivers

Social class mobility

Passionate strivers pay great importance to social class mobility - including the problem of educational migration, the urban-rural differences in medical security, etc. They believe that solving these problems ultimately requires further development aimed at “making the cake bigger” followed by redistribution to balance and alleviate disparities.

They hold the belief that educational resources in China are distributed unevenly,



with economically developed areas having far superior resources than those in developing regions. They are against opportunists who take advantage of loopholes in the education system to gain higher education opportunities and advocate for the redistribution of educational resources towards the Midwest and rural areas.

I remember in my sophomore year, suddenly two students transferred to our class. These students are called the migrants of the college entrance examination. Well, they didn't attend classes, they just showed up at the end of the semester and took the exams. Their hukou belongs to a region with better educational resources, but their scores can only be enough to be accepted by a second-tier university or even a junior college in their local area. They come to our region because our score line for the same university is relatively low. The educational resources here are relatively limited, so their scores should be no problem to be admitted by a key university.

I'm from Hebei Province, which is a province with fierce competition in college entrance examinations. When I was in undergraduate school, my college examination scores were 20 to 40 points higher than everyone else's in my entire dormitory and class. Because we are so close to Tianjin city and its score line is much lower than Hebei Province. So many people are applying for Tianjin hukou by buying a house there and then your Hukou can be transferred.

In addition, passionate strivers are also deeply concerned about the disparities in medical resources between urban and rural areas—the medical resources in cities are better than those in rural areas, and the medical infrastructure in developing areas is limited. They acknowledge that social disparities are a result of the current stage of social development and may persist objectively for a long time. However, they remain hopeful about achieving the modernization of medical care in less developed areas through further development and redistribution efforts.

My hometown is in a small city in the Northeast. When I was in high school, my classmate's mother had appendicitis and went to a small hospital in our area for surgery. Unfortunately, due to complications, she passed away. If this had happened in Beijing or Shanghai, it could have been avoided. It was just a small, routine surgery that should not have resulted in such a significant medical incident.

I also think that inequality is ultimately due to insufficient resources. If productivity

is highly developed and material resources are extremely abundant, we can achieve distribution according to needs.

Care for vulnerable groups under the COVID-19 pandemic

Under the COVID-19 pandemic, passionate strivers are concerned about the further intensification of social division, that is, the widening gap between rich and poor.

The unequal availability of resources across different social classes has resulted in varying levels of ability to resist risks. They think that under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, areas with limited access to medical resources and digital infrastructure, families with little savings, and manual workers who have lost their jobs have been disproportionately impacted. In contrast, urban middle-class families with knowledge and wealth and proximity to better medical resources have been less affected. In addition to self-adjustment, they believe that addressing this issue requires reallocating of social resources and adjusting social structure.

During the two-year pandemic, luxury goods consumption has surged by nearly 30% because they are targeted at ultra-high net worth individuals. Their assets have been increasing due to the rise in fixed assets, funds, stock trusts, and other investments. They are all on the rise, but meanwhile, ordinary people have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

(After the pandemic) many schools shifted to online classes. However, students from the same school live in different areas, such as rural and urban areas, and have varying access to resources. Some of them have good family conditions with access to devices such as iPad, mobile phones, computers, and even a printer for exam papers and review materials. This gap in resources still exists objectively.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- Highlight the impact of climate change on existing social inequalities
- Emphasize the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups



Climate narratives and discourses of Passionate Strivers

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and state responsibility

Core narratives: 1. Emphasize the effectiveness of the government's domestic policies to combat climate change; 2. Highlight China's positive role in international climate cooperation and the development opportunities brought about by China's participation in international climate actions.

Keywords: Positive results, development opportunities, Chinese solution, a community with a shared future, hand in hand, joint response

In 2020, China successfully achieved a reduction of 18.8% in carbon emission intensity compared to 2015, surpassing the binding target of the "13th Five-Year Plan" and effectively reversing the rapid growth of carbon dioxide emissions. The proportion of non-fossil energy in China's total energy consumption has increased to 15.9%, and has become the world's largest new photovoltaic market for eight consecutive years.
(Preferred)

Looking at global climate change as an opportunity, we can gain new chances...Combating climate change requires global action, and no country can deal with the crisis alone.
(Preferred)

Each individual may have different cultural backgrounds and values, but the risks and challenges we face are the same, and our powerlessness in facing disasters is also similar. As a whole, human being should work together to maintain ecological balance.
(Preferred)

The challenges facing international cooperation on climate change are fundamentally due to the lack of valuable guidance to examine and strengthen international cooperation from the perspective of a community with a shared future for mankind.
(Preferred)

Passionate strivers are willing to witness the tangible outcomes of China's domestic efforts in addressing climate change, and quantifiable data can demonstrate the effectiveness of climate governance efforts. At the same time, highlighting China's international responsibility aligns with its cosmopolitan outlook. It can emphasize

the global interdependence and reciprocity of climate action, and highlight that China's participation in global climate governance is not only a unilateral investment and concession but also a historical opportunity for China's transformation and development, which also shows how the climate crisis can be turned into opportunities.

Climate change and social equity and justice

Core narratives: 1. Shed light on the unequal plight of vulnerable groups such as the impoverished, women, and the elderly in bearing the consequences of climate change; 2. Highlight that addressing climate change can improve the survival and development guarantee of vulnerable groups and ordinary individuals.

Keywords: Vulnerable groups, right to life, life quality, health risks, negative impacts of climate change

We should pay attention to every individual in climate change, pay attention to the differences in people's living conditions and their right to live in a healthy environment. We should protect the poor and vulnerable groups from the most severe impacts of climate change. (Preferred)

When climate change threatens people's basic rights to life such as water, food, housing, education, employment, economic development, and even life itself, it is a matter of fairness and justice. (Preferred)

We recognize that not everyone enjoys environmental rights equally nor do they bear the environmental consequences equally. We call on other countries to pay attention to climate justice and to lead the global economy with a low-carbon transition so that the benefits of green development are shared by all and no one will be left behind. (Preferred)

Passionate strivers are attentive to the unbalanced negative consequences of climate change among different groups, and they like narratives that speak for vulnerable groups in society, such as the health risks brought about by climate change to the elderly, the poor, women, and children (such as high temperature and plague) as well as their heightened vulnerability and limited resilience to such risks. They also appreciate narratives that highlight the potential for addressing social inequality through climate actions.



Climate change and macroeconomic development

Core narratives: 1. Responding to climate change can create new employment opportunities and increase economic growth; 2. Addressing climate change can reduce losses caused by climate risks during economic developments

Keywords: economic growth index, employment opportunities, decrease of agricultural risk, economic benefits, economic development

According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2050 could create 122 million energy-related jobs which are more than double the current 58 million jobs in the industry. (Preferred)

The climate economy is a new potential driver of economic growth in the world, and it has a huge potential for development. Taking bold climate action can generate economic benefits of at least 26 trillion US dollars by 2030, which can see tangible benefits in job creation, economic savings, market opportunities, and the overall well-being of people around the world and promoting economic development in countries and regions. (Preferred)

Reducing the agricultural production risks caused by climate change is crucial to ensuring food security for the general public and securing China's food supply. (Preferred)

Against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession, passionate strivers are willing to read the narrative about the possible positive economic impact of addressing climate change. In particular, they would prefer to link the economic benefits of addressing climate change with employment and food security that are directly related to the people's interests.

Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate change and its adverse consequences

Core narrative: Climate change has caused adverse impacts on society, the economy, human health, the ecological environment, etc., and is extremely harmful.

Keywords: destruction, rarity, crisis, death

Last year, heavy rainfall in Henan, Shanxi, and other regions caused great damage to



Passionate strivers prioritize self-transcendence and attach great importance to social values in addressing climate change, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups and social fairness and justice. Therefore, they prefer the narrative that connects climate change mitigation with protecting the rights of vulnerable groups for survival and development. Emphasizing that addressing climate change itself is also a measure to promote fairness and justice among different groups with varying capacities to withstand risks.

Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- Encourage their active engagement in climate actions to benefit others, such as responding to or initiating climate activities
- Enhance their understanding of the multifaceted impacts of climate change on personal lives
- Introduce formal channels for public participation in climate policies and encourage their active involvement in the development of relevant climate policies;
- Leverage their high level of social trust to promote them to spread the voices of the state and act as a bridge between the public and the government.

Passionate strivers are characterized by their pursuit of self-transcendence, strong nationalism, and political efficacy. Demographically, they predominately originated from middle-class families in small and medium-sized cities, and they account for a high proportion of middle-aged and elderly people over the age of 45.

Therefore, the main communication objective with passionate strivers is to mobilize and harness their initiative and autonomy in climate communication and action. This requires communicators to first establish bridges between passionate strivers and other segments, leading them to participate in more climate actions and motivating them

to personally influence and inspire others to understand climate policies and engage in climate activities. They could also be encouraged to become advocates of climate initiatives, giving them the honor of being green pioneers.

At the same time, passionate strivers are highly motivated to engage and influence the policy decision-making of climate governance. Their national and national ownership spirit can be mobilized by prompting them to actively contribute their opinions and suggestions to the government. Subsequently, we should pay attention to emphasizing that combating climate change is also a historic opportunity, demonstrating China's positive attitude domestically and internationally as well as the achievement that has been made.

1. Build nation-state ownership and call for their active participation in climate policy and governance. They have a high sense of political efficacy, believe that the government represents the interests of the people and are willing to participate in climate political decisions. Communication can focus on shaping their dominant positions in climate action and global governance, highlight their sense of national and national ownership, encourage them to participate in the climate agenda as "owners of the country", and emphasize the wisdom of the people in China's response to climate change and give them the clear channels to participate in policy formulation and climate governance.

2. Narrating climate change as a necessary path for the development of the national economy. They have a strong spirit of self-transcendence and believe that effort is an essential means to change the current situation. Therefore, addressing climate change can be described as another developmental problem faced by China after the reform and opening up, and it can be viewed under the historical framework of China's economic development and framed climate efforts as another crucial milestone in its economic development.

3. Emphasize the possibility of turning crisis into opportunity. While clarifying the possible social and economic losses caused by the climate crisis, the narrative focus should be on the new development opportunities in response to climate change. Emphasizing should be placed on although climate efforts will bring contemporary financial spending, they can create new economic growth potential and large-scale employment which is conducive to the sustainable development of the country.

4. Encourage them to be climate action pioneers and play a leading role. Stressing that while climate action requires collective participation, there are variations in the level of participation and willingness among different segments. Therefore, the narratives should emphasize that climate action needs a group of pioneers with a strong



sense of social responsibility and who are proactive in action-taking. They can serve as the driving force behind social collective action and lead the translation of their strong willingness into concrete climate actions.

5. Point out the benefits of addressing climate change for economic recovery under the COVID-19 pandemic. Passionate strivers are worried about the economic downturn and the widespread shutdown of industry and commerce due to COVID-19. Climate narrative should establish a connection between the potential economic growth resulting from climate-induced economic transformation and green economic development with social livelihood issues, such as increasing taxes revenue and adequate social security investments (e.g., health care, education, and social security benefits) in the redistribution process. This will help showcase the positive aspects of the green economy development in terms of improving people's well-being and showing social care during the pandemic.

6. Actively promote climate activities that are committed to helping others. Passionate strivers possess an altruistic spirit and believe that their activities should also contribute to the well-being others. Therefore, they can be informed and encouraged to engage in climate activities that have positive impacts on others, especially describing in detail how their actions can specifically benefit others. For example, donating trees to areas affected by desertification in the Midwest can bring economic benefits to local communities, improve living conditions, and reduce the prevalence of severe climate-related health diseases.

7. Demonstrate the importance of addressing climate change to safeguard the basic rights of the lower social classes. Passionate strivers have a strong belief in fairness and justice. Narratives can highlight the disparities in resources among different social classes in terms of their abilities to resist climate risks, emphasizing that low social classes and vulnerable groups are particularly more susceptible to health risks than other segments in climate change risks. Emphasizing that taking action on climate change is a beneficial measurement to protect their basic right to survival which reflects the role of climate action in upholding social fairness and justice.

8. Avoid self-aggrandizement. They are willing to see China demonstrates positive actions in international cooperation but are uncomfortable with the narrative of China's self-proclaimed leadership, believing that this is a deliberate elevation and self-crowned. Therefore, the emphasis in the narrative of international cooperation on climate response should be on China's responsible image as an active participant in global governance, and provide tangible stories and explanations.

3.4

EASYGOING
LEISURISTS





Easygoing Leisurists (8% of the Chinese public)

Who are Easygoing Leisurists?

Table 3-4: Portrait of Easygoing Leisurists

 Typical beliefs	 Demographic characteristics	 Societal concerns	 Trusted messengers	 Preferred media channels
Go with the flow	28-45 years old young and middle-aged adult	Intergenerational differences	those who have personally experienced	Douyin
Longing for peace and freedom	Highly educated	Gender equality	Ordinary people	Weibo
Feel indifferent towards inequality	Super first-tier cities			Zhihu

Life values of Easygoing Leisurists

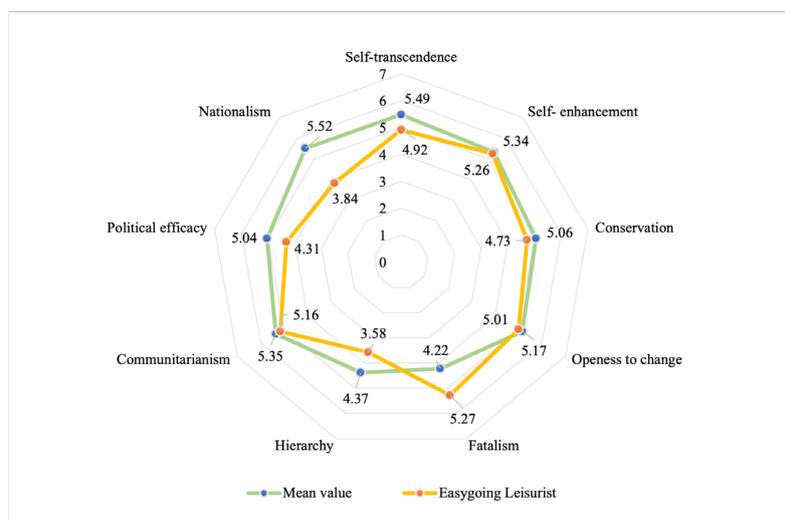


Figure 3-29 Life values for Easygoing leisurists

1. Adapting to circumstances and seeking comfort

Easygoing leisurists, like all others, pursue the realization of personal value and spiritual self-enhancement (mean 5.34) in their attitude towards life, but they do not have a strong tendency towards self-transcendence (mean 4.92). They advocate enjoying life and living in the moment, having little anxiety about the future, and believing that everything is predetermined by fate (mean 5.27). They are flexible in dealing with any changes, yearn for a free and comfortable living environment and adopt a “go with the flow” attitude toward all aspects of life. They believe that work and life should coexist, and work is an integral part of life’s meaning and value.

I think my current status is okay. I personally prefer this kind of unrestricted way of living. I can easily find my own way to peace and reconciliation with myself. I choose this lifestyle, and I feel that I will stick with this approach.

I just want to live a decent life with some respect from others, and I don't need to be wealthy or powerful. ... Although my profession could not earn a lot, what I care about is the limited flexibility and freedom in this industry, and my own mental growth.

I hope that some of my personal values come through in my work. I can accept a hectic and overtime working environment, but I also hope to have some time to experience life, and to communicate with others, in order to get some creative inspiration for work.

2. Limited willingness to participation in public affairs

Similar to other segments, the segment is proud of its Chinese identity. However, their score on nationalism (mean 3.84) is relatively low while the idea of egalitarianism is prominent. They yearn for peace and do not favor involving in disputes with others as they believe public affairs are related to the disputes of interests between different groups. They place a strong emphasis on cultural equality and believe that there are only differences between cultures but no superiority or inferiority among them. Their political efficacy (mean 4.31) is lower than the mean across the segments and their interest in engaging in public affairs is relatively limited. According to the nationwide survey, easygoing leisurists show a greater degree of opposition to the policy restricting motor vehicles.

I have a strong sense of identity as a Chinese, and of course, I love my nation and the people here. I love Chinese culture as well, but I insist that different cultures should be respected equally, and we shouldn't think that ours are better than others.

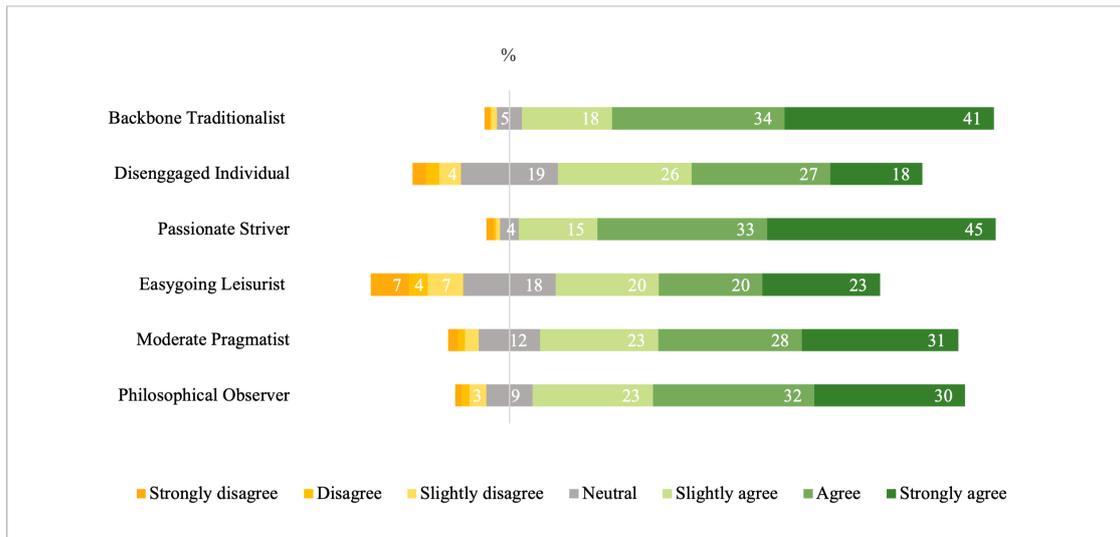


Figure 3-30 Percentage of attitudes toward "setting stricter emission standards for motor vehicles" among segments

3. Pride on historical and cultural legacy

Easygoing leisurists have a different perspective on the unique traits of Chinese people. They hold a positive and supportive attitude towards the international dissemination of Chinese arts and crafts, demonstrating strong cultural confidence. However, due to their pursuit of personal fulfillment and spiritual growth, as well as their desire for a modernized lifestyle, they maintain a reserved attitude towards relatively traditional ideas.

I am cautious when it comes to Chinese clan beliefs. For example, the traditional Chinese ideology of "parentalism", which assumes that parents have natural authority over their children. It does not respect the fact that children are independent individuals.

In addition, the traditional Chinese characteristic such as endurance, resilience, and moderation are perceived positively by the segment. Also, they are proud of the historical and philosophical heritage of the Chinese people as a whole.

Chinese people are probably the most hardworking individuals in the world. Why were we are called "infrastructure-holic"? Because Chinese people have a strong tolerance for any circumstance.

Chinese people are relatively moderate. They don't tend to act or speak in an extreme manner, which is a very good thing.

4. Being neutral toward inequality

Easygoing leisurists are concerned about the imparity of social resource distribution and the imbalances in development, which resulted in inequality in education, job opportunities, and wealth distribution. Besides, they are also focused on urban-rural and intergenerational information inequality, demonstrating certain concern for resource allocation in the information society and ecological equality. Although these social issues are aligned with other segments' concerns, they perceive societal disparity as a stage in social development and also a fact that should be acknowledged.

Demographics and media characteristic of Easygoing Leisurists: Young metropolis adults' indifference to media coverage

With a higher percentage across segments, young adults between the ages of 28 to 45 dominated the segment. Most of them have or are pursuing higher education, with the highest proportion of bachelor's degrees (60.1%) and master's degrees (11.4%) among other segments. It also has the highest percentage of residents who live in first-tier cities compared to other segments.

Easygoing leisurists have generally demonstrated a low level of trust towards social actors which include the media (mean 4.31), experts (mean 4.49), NGOs (mean 4.51), and enterprise (mean 3.80). Additionally, they do not browse media frequently. Among the seven types of media platforms, they have the lowest usage time for central state media, local traditional media, local professional media, and social media. Nevertheless, they will rely on online knowledge communities and social media such as Douyin, Weibo, and Zhihu to obtain relevant information. Due to their negative and skeptical belief that “everything is predestined” and the notion that “external changes can happen at any time,” they tend to be indifferent

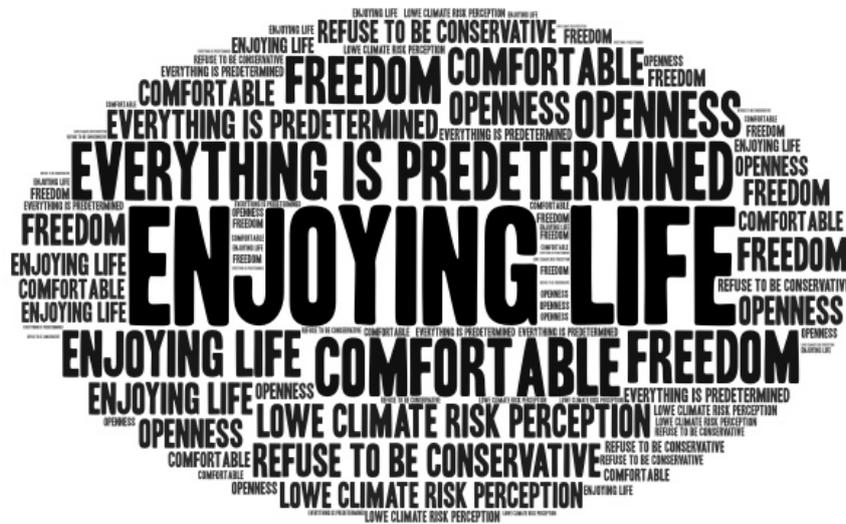


Figure 3-31 Life values word cloud of Easygoing Leisurists

Summary

- Pursuit of freedom and comfort, go with the flow, advocating enjoying life and living in the moment
- Strong sense of destiny, believing that everything is predetermined
- Adhering to cultural equality, believing that different cultures in different countries should be treated objectively and equally
- Low involvement in public affairs, generally opposed to non-incentive policies that restrict personal life choices
- Mostly 28-45 years old, living in super first-tier cities, with a bachelor's degree or higher, and earning a high income
- Lowest level of media trust and relatively low media platform usage time, rarely browsing media platforms such as traditional media platforms

Easygoing Leisurists on climate change

Climate knowledge and concerns

1. Climate change is relatively non-urgent

Easygoing leisurists also think that climate change is a crucial issue ever since the government and international organizations have acknowledged and developed strategies for addressing climate change, as well as the implementation of green policies in China. However, they believe that climate change is still not particularly urgent in comparison to the Covid-19 pandemic and the economy. The segment agrees that human activities are the primary driver of climate change, but they also think that the natural cyclical factors of the earth should be taken into consideration.

I don't think it (climate change) is as urgent as economic development, but it is still a problem that needs to be addressed.

The earth constantly undergoes various changes. There is a temperature cycle, and human activities are certainly one of the factors. But still, the decisive factor may not be human, it is just simply stoking the fire.

2. A relatively high climate knowledge

Easygoing leisurists scored a mean of 2.8 on climate knowledge, which is slightly lower than moderate pragmatists (mean 2.82) which scored the highest. In comparison with the average score of the survey (mean 2.7), it indicates that they are well-educated on climate-related knowledge which is in line with their demographic characteristics.

Despite having a stronger climate knowledge than the other segments, it is still an important communication goal to increase their climate knowledge. The segment is well-educated, has a strong sense of fatalism, is less savvy use of the media, and has a firm and coherent intrinsic value system and an individualized viewpoint. Hence, a lack of a common understanding of the urgency and importance of climate change may lead to climate change skepticism among them.

3. Limited self-efficacy and willingness to act

Easygoing leisurists acknowledge the importance of individual climate action, but still, they have a relatively low level of self-efficacy (mean 4.5). Additionally, they believe



that the individual's contribution towards the effect of climate change is immeasurable and has no feedback, which leads to a low willingness to execute climate action. Most respondents believe that climate action should be in charge by the enterprise or NGOs. Besides, there is a conceptual uncertainty in the segment, which they could not determine whether reducing plastic usage, saving energy, and recycling resources can be categorized as "climate actions".

I can reduce my daily consumption of water, power, and spend lesser, but I am not sure what practical changes these actions will bring as the factories are still wasting water. I feel that what I did is insignificant in addressing climate change. I still have doubts about this issue, so I am not sure what kind of responsibility I should bear.

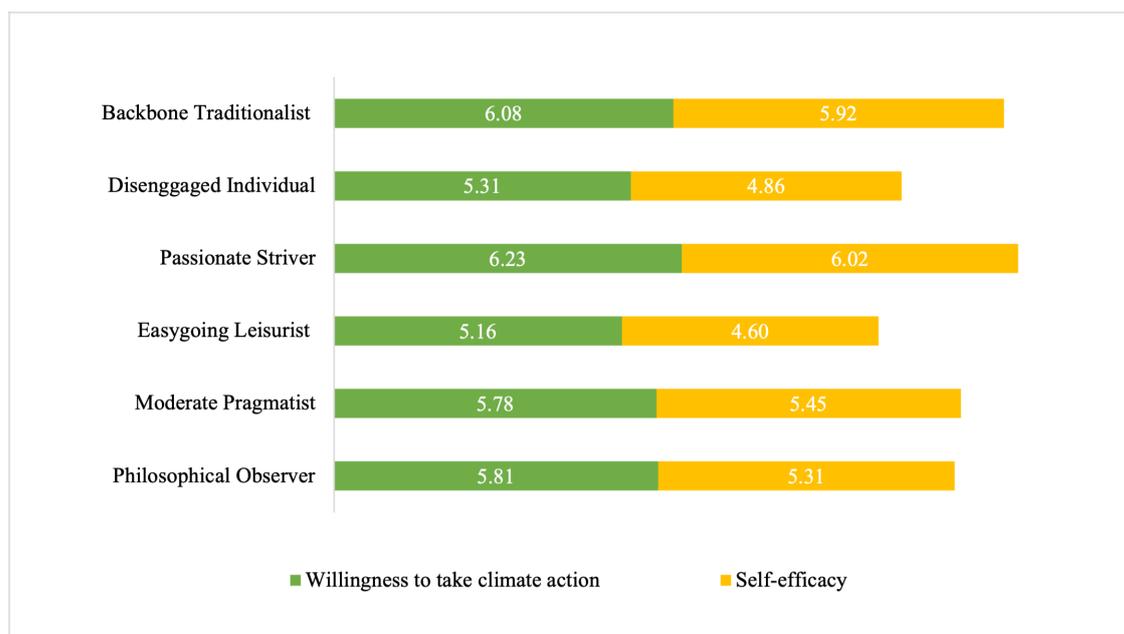


Figure 3-32 Mean values of willingness to take climate action and self-efficacy by segments

Easygoing leisurists believe that forming societal norms such as garbage sorting and reuse, increasing social awareness of environmental protection and developing consensus on emission reductions are more significant than individual efforts. From the figure below, it shows that the segment does not generally support climate initiatives with higher behavioral costs, such as persuading family members and cutting back on meat consumption.

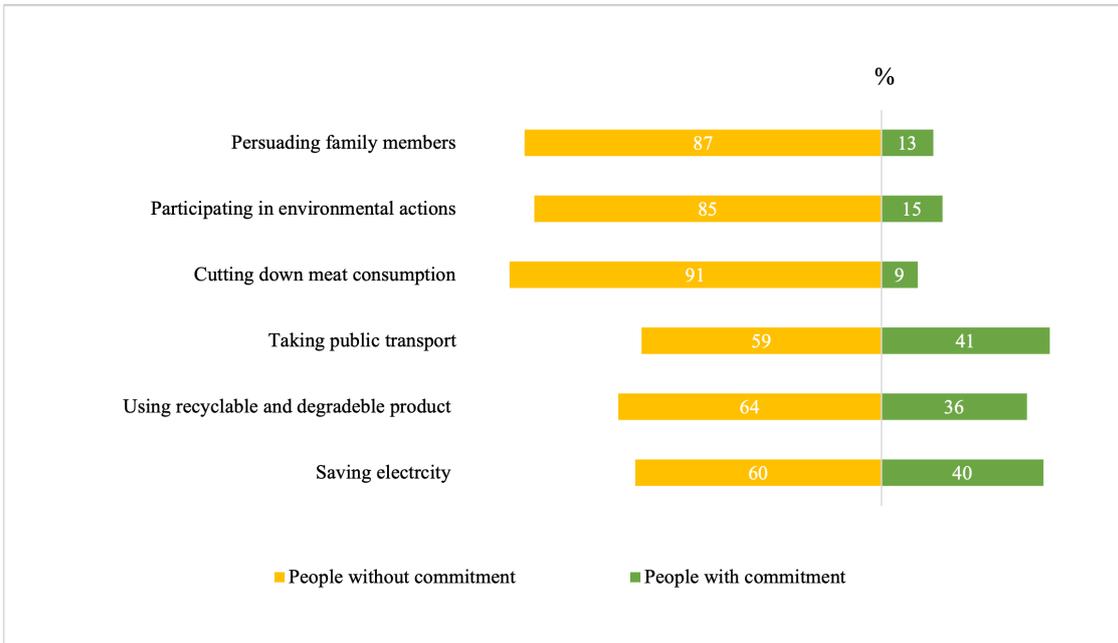


Figure 3-33: Percentage of climate actions of Easygoing leisuists

4. Low willingness to pay attention

The segment agrees that commercialized media and platforms have a social responsibility for the dissemination and governance of information about climate change. They believe that advocating and strengthening the use of green software (such as Ant Forest) by media and institutions can promote individual climate action and climate information, and shape social norms.

However, the segment does not actively search for climate change, they obtain such information when it comes across and there is a need in their professions. Although the country has implemented many green policies and strategies, such as carbon neutrality and the development of new energy, the segment believes that there is still room for improvement in public dissemination.

I learned about climate change through the knowledge taught in school and also from my own experiences in life. As an information recipient, I don't seem to see a lot of news related to climate change. Instead, I learned about climate change more from my own experience and learning. I think we need to address this problem from both top-down and bottom-up perspectives.



Low level of risk perception

Easygoing leisurists have relatively low scores across a number of dimensions in the nationwide survey. Despite having slightly higher personal and social risk perception values than disengaged individualists, easygoing leisurists have a lower risk perception (mean 5.4) compared to the other segments. Therefore, the segment does not feel anxious about the negative impacts that climate change may bring in the future, which is consistent with their characteristic of longing for comfort, freedom, and living in the moment.

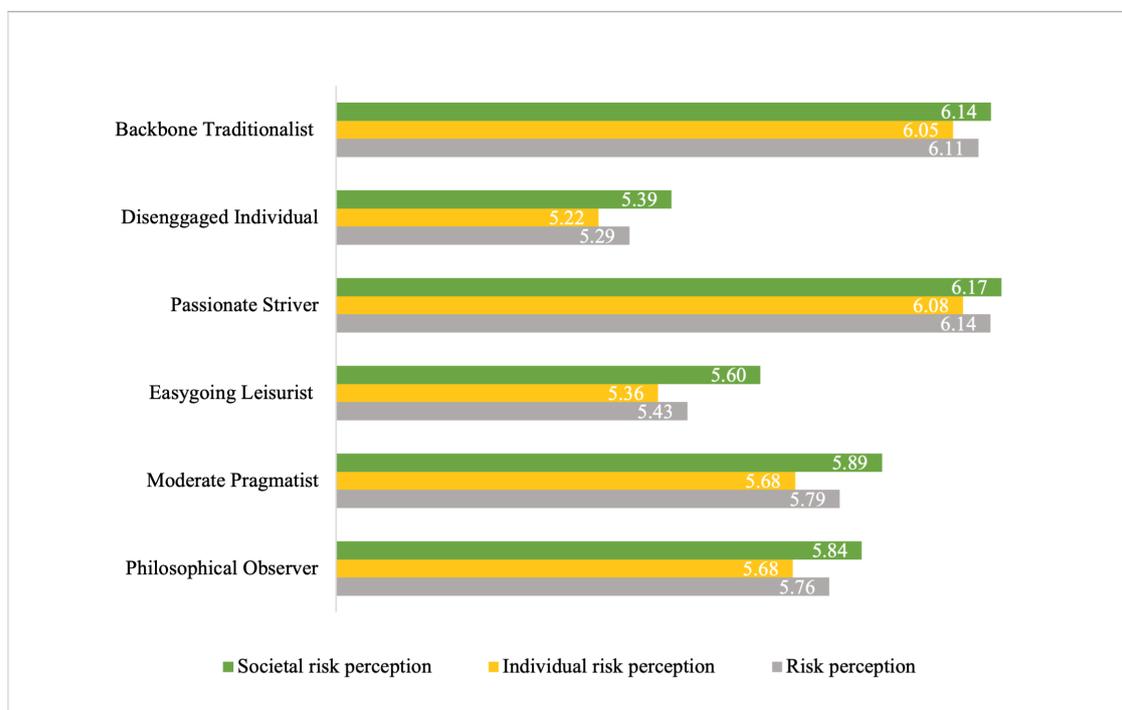


Figure 3-34: Risk perception across segments

Policy orientation

Compared with the Western countries, easygoing leisurists believe that China should not deny its responsibility simply because it is a developing country when it comes to historical emissions of carbon dioxide. They believe that China should be placed under a global perspective and fulfill its own responsibilities. In addition to recognizing the responsibilities of the government and companies (such as green

policies, including dual carbon, carbon neutrality, green finance, new energy, etc.), they believe that individuals also need to take on corresponding responsibilities, such as saving water and electricity, reducing waste of resources, etc. In short, the segment believes that climate governance should adopt a funnel-shaped management model, starting from the national level to establish rules and regulations, then influencing the enterprises, and finally to individual responsibility.

Climate change requires a relatively systematic change, such as collaboration between technology development teams and the economy. It also requires the cooperation of the entire society. At the national or international organization level, some legal constraints and regulations will be implemented to force changes in production or activities that can worsen the climate. Finally, individuals need to make changes in their own lives in a direction that is beneficial to the climate.

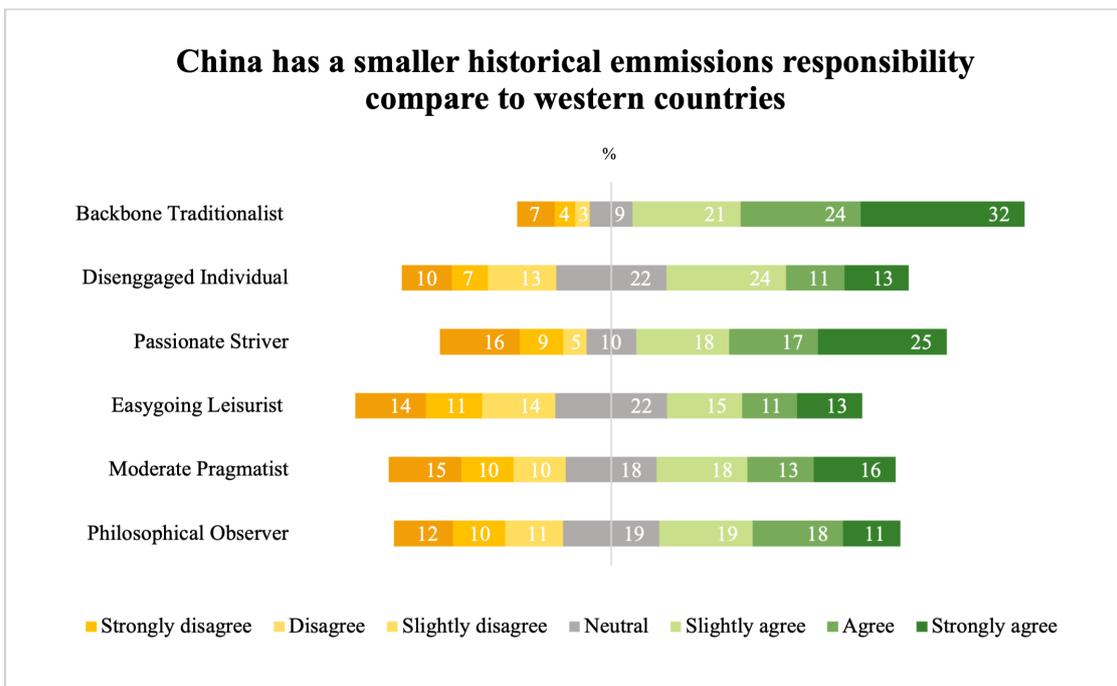


Figure 3-35: International responsibility across segments

Level of social trust

Compared to the idea of “everyone is the maker of their own fate”, easygoing leisurists enjoy living in the moment and believe that “everything is predestined.”



They have a weak sense of self-efficacy and possess a firm and coherent thinking logic of their own, resulting in them being less accepting and convinced by external views. Therefore, they have the lowest level of trust in various social entities including media (mean 4.31), experts (mean 4.49), NGOs (mean 4.51), and enterprises (mean 3.80). Among all sources, climate content from experts or NGOs is slightly more convincing than the information from media or companies. Due to the relatively low score on hierarchical value (mean 3.58), the most trusted social entity for this segment is expected to shift from official sources to “ordinary people” who have real experience of the effects of climate change.

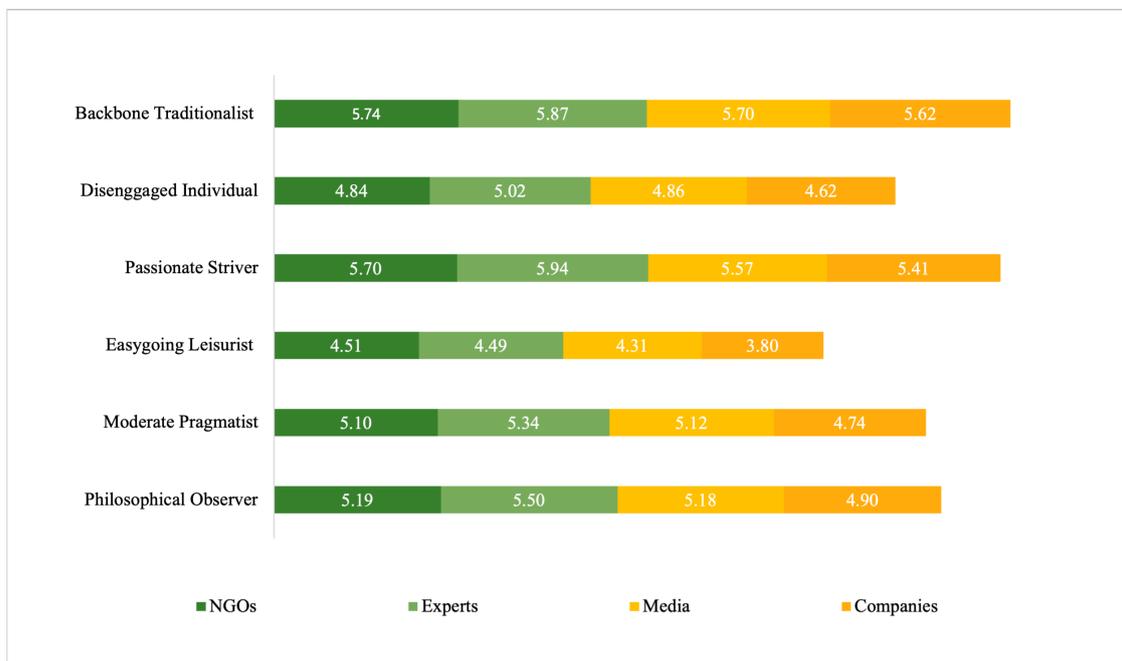


Figure 3-36: Mean values of trust in climate issues of four types of social actors by segments

Summary

- Believe that climate change is relatively not an urgent issue
- Obtain climate knowledge when it comes across and do not intentionally search for climate knowledge
- Believe actions that establish social norms is more effective than individual climate action
- The funnel-shaped government management approach and increased promotion by the media can enhance climate action
- Do not feel anxious about the future negative impacts of climate change
- Strongly opposes to restrictive climate policies that limit personal lifestyle choices
- Have low levels of trust in most social actors, but trust “ordinary people” who have personal experience with climate change

Societal concerns for Easygoing Leisurists

Intergenerational difference

Easygoing leisurists believe that some inequalities in society are inevitable in the process of social development. They are highly concerned about information and intergenerational inequality and interpret differences in information resources as a consequence and manifestation of class divisions.

Inequality is determined by many factors, such as social classes and the economy, which are more fundamental. However, when it comes to external manifestations of inequality, such as inequalities in information and education, I think these are urgent issues that need to be addressed.



Gender equality

The segment also concerns the issues of gender inequality, particularly from the perspective of education opportunities, job opportunities, and societal expectations of gender roles. However, they also think that making rash changes to the current situation could further intensify social conflicts, and therefore, approaches and methods of problem-solving must be carefully considered.

The government has introduced many measures to protect women's rights and change this inequality. But gender issues are complicated to reconcile. If women want to reclaim their rights, it will inevitably affect the interests of other people. This is not only a conceptual issue but also a problem of resource allocation.

Similar to other segments, the segment is conscious of numerous societal issues, but they do not show a strong sense of resistance or intention towards them. Instead, they adopt a more open mindset towards perceiving the issues and contributing to their resolution on the basis of a "live in the moment" mentality.

I still experience a lot of it in my life. However, I hope to adapt and achieve internal harmony through my own efforts.

But I'm not sure what kind of flowers and fruits the seeds I'm sowing will bear. I think we shouldn't think about the future results too much. If you do what you do now, it is the right thing to do.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- Climate change will exacerbate the wealth gap and deepen social problems
- The negative effects of climate change will intensify the current relatively controllable social conflicts

Climate narratives and discourses of Easygoing Leisurists

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and nation's responsibility

Core narrative: limitation of individual climate action; emphasize China's responsibility and commitment to promoting the positive effects in advancing climate action; leading international cooperation; demonstrating self-dedication.

Keywords: individual limitation; responsibility; commitment; main actor; join efforts

China solemnly declares to the world that it will strive to achieve carbon peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060, demonstrating China's strong commitment and responsibility in addressing climate change. (Preferred)

The proportion of non-fossil energy in China's total energy consumption has increased to 15.9%, and it has become the world's largest newly added photovoltaic market for eight consecutive years. It is the country with the largest growth in forest resources and the largest area of artificial forestry in the world which makes China become the world's leader in "greening". (Preferred)

China's ambitions in climate governance have attracted worldwide attention, which will also encourage other countries to take on more responsibilities and jointly address the challenge of climate change. If we see global climate change as an opportunity, we can seize new opportunities. China's contributions to climate governance can enhance its political status in the international community and further demonstrate the superiority of its system, which is related to China's long-term political interests. (Preferred)

Climate change and long-term economic benefit

Core narrative: Moderately emphasize the existing achievements in response to climate change and the developments and opportunities it brings, highlighting long-term benefits.

Keywords: social and economic development; innovation and achievement; long-term benefits

At the same time, we have trained around 2,000 officials and technicians in the field of climate change response for around 120 developing countries. This not only enhances



China's positive international image and expands its global influence but also creates a more favorable international political and economic environment for our social and economic development. (Preferred)

In the past decade, China has made significant progress in the green and low-carbon transformation of its energy sector. The installed capacity of renewable energy has exceeded 1 billion kilowatts. The installed capacity of hydropower, wind power, solar power, and biomass power generation has made China rank first in the world. (Preferred)

Practical climate action could generate economic benefits of at least \$26 trillion by 2030, with tangible benefits to be seen in job creation, economic savings, market opportunities, and improved well-being for people around the world. This will promote economic development in all countries and regions. (Preferred)

Climate change and care for basic human survival development

Core narrative: Highlighting caring for basic human survival and development, describing climate change from the perspective of its impact on people's lives and livelihoods.

Keywords: people's livelihood; future generations; security

Agriculture and food security are the top priorities of the national economy and people's livelihood. The impact of climate change on agricultural production cannot be ignored, relevant actions must be taken urgently. (Preferred)

Agricultural production is related to the national destiny and the people's livelihood. Actively adopting scientific measures to address climate change will help to slow down the impact of climate change on our country's agricultural production and food security, truly ensuring food security for the people and keeping the Chinese people's "rice bowl" secure. (Preferred)

While climate change affects everyone, those who contribute least to the climate crisis – children and future generations – are the most affected. We are born into a world shaped not by us, but by countless generations before us; and we will influence the world in our own way, ultimately for future generations to inherit. Future generations urgently need us to do something now in order to leave them a chance to mitigate climate change. (Preferred)

Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate change and “patriarch” narrative

Core narrative: Connecting climate change with politics, using a “patriarch” narrative style, grand language, and broad content to discuss climate change.

Keywords: political interest; scrutiny; a united community

The challenges of international cooperation on climate change are fundamentally due to the lack of value guidance that examines and enhances international cooperation. (Unpreferred)

Climate discourses of Easygoing Leisurists



Figure 3-37: Climate discourses word cloud of Easygoing Leisurists

With a low political efficacy and a high sense of fatalism, easygoing leisurists think that individual climate action is relatively limited compared with climate action promoted by the country or the government. They show a positive attitude towards the narrative that highlights China's great responsibilities and commitment to global climate action. The narrative that starts from "China can promote positive effect in international



climate action" which portrays longing for a great future and highlights China's important role as a leader in promoting international cooperation in climate action, reflecting a profound spirit of dedication can gain the recognition of the segment.

In addition, a narrative that moderately highlights China's accomplishments in addressing climate change, such as the low-carbon transition brought about by technological innovation and the rise in the share of renewable energy can be effective to them. Furthermore, the segment can be won over by highlighting the economic development opportunities brought by China's response to climate change, emphasizing the individual's long-term benefit from both economic transformation and emission reduction.

Easygoing leisurists are also proud of China's culture. Therefore, emphasizing climate narratives that underlie the care of the bottom-up community and intergenerational responsibility is preferable for them. Telling the story from the perspective of inheritance that should be passed down through the blessings of our predecessors, which removes the adverse effects that future generations will bear from the picture. Real and positive climate information can also attract their attention, but lengthy data listings, dogmatic conclusions, bragging, and emotional words will raise doubts, and excessive descriptions of the terrifying consequences of climate change will also make the segment feel averse.

Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- Encourage further improvement of climate knowledge and dissemination of related knowledge on the basis of their relatively strong climate knowledge, and turning into promoting climate action
- Increase their positive perception of climate action and foster a positive attitude towards it
- Enhance their self-efficacy in climate issues, helping them to understand that both individuals and society play an important role in addressing climate change

A hollow or slogan-like appeal will not elicit a positive response from this segment. Information about the climate that is optimistic and upbeat, and uses words like responsibility, achievement, and commitment can arouse them to feel responsible for climate change. The most effective way to engage Easygoing leisurists is through a personal narrative that deals with health, safety, and other facets of daily living. This segment has a strong sense of “freedom” and “fatalism”; therefore, they frequently have a negative reaction to messages that limit their freedom or place an excessive emphasis on individual agency. Moreover, exaggerating the negative impact of climate change, particularly the horrifying consequences, can also trigger their skepticism.

1. Tell a real and forward-looking story based on China's responsibilities as a major country. Depicting the terrifying consequences of climate change is not the best narrative for Easygoing leisurists. On the contrary, emphasizing China's (economic) position in the international community, highlighting China's responsibility as a great power, and explaining that climate change is a shared responsibility of the world can promote global cooperation and enhance the national pride of this segment, thus increasing their support for climate action. Such narratives highlight the responsibility and commitment of great powers but note to avoid using extensive data to depict future scenarios.

2. Climate action is a long-term investment with returns. Bureaucratic narratives will not have a positive impact on this segment. This segment of people's involvement in climate action is not due to their contribution to combat climate change but rather because they recognize the benefits it brings which are conducive to their own development and the realization of their self-worth. Therefore, when discussing climate economy, narrative connections can be made from the social welfare and development opportunities that can benefit people's livelihoods as a result of climate-related economic and industrial development.

3. Link climate to positive and uplifting messages. The segment values their personal growth and development, and also seeks to keep up with the changes and development of the times. Therefore, social or economic issues related to their personal values and growth are their top priority. Climate-related issues are not their primary concern among a variety of social challenges, and they may become more resistant to climate change if the attention is drawn to the suffering experience of vulnerable groups. To address this, emphasizing the positive impact of climate action on society and the economy, ensuring a more resilient economy can be used as narrative themes to place the climate change issue in the core agenda for social progress.



4. Use “resilience” and “a sense of togetherness” as narrative themes. Owing to their relatively high level of cultural confidence, utilizing cultural capital along with their Chinese life values and civic awareness can increase their support for climate action. This segment upholds the idea of win-win cooperation between government, institutions, and individuals, and believes that combating climate change requires both a both top-down and bottom-up operating model. This segment also has a relatively low sense of self-efficacy in acting on climate change, as they believe that there is limited long-term feedback on the effectiveness of climate action, but they do appreciate and admire traditional Chinese characteristics such as hard work and resilience. Addressing this characteristic of the segment, the narrative theme of “resilience” is suggested, linking the resilience and perseverance that the Chinese nation has shown in the face of difficulties in the past with the challenges of climate change. Showcasing the beautiful qualities of the Chinese nation’s unwavering spirit in facing difficulties and solving problems, as well as the promising prospects of effective response to climate change. Meanwhile, emphasizing that this is a long-term collective effort, which can generate more resonance among them and encourage them to join climate action.

5. Emphasize the role of public can play in addressing climate change. Easygoing leisurists have a relatively strong climate knowledge among the six segments. However, they believe that individual climate actions do not provide feedback, cannot be measured, and question the effectiveness of such action, resulting in a lower sense of climate efficacy and being skeptical toward the effectiveness of climate action. Therefore, the narrative that highlights the role and responsibility that the public can play in addressing climate change can promote their sense of climate efficacy and mobilize their participation in climate action. By adhering to “every little bit counts”, storytelling can extend from personal lifestyle and consumption habits to community collective climate action, which raises their awareness in realizing that the public is a crucial participant in climate change.

6. Tell a real and positive story. Emphasizing the negative impact of climate change may trigger distrust and skeptics for this segment. Instead, promoting a positive vision of a low-carbon future built on the foundation of the nation's successful economic and technical development will be more effective for Easygoing leisurists, which is a segment that is economically comfortable and has trust in the prosperity of the country.

7. Link climate to personal health. Easygoing leisurists have the lowest level of social trust and a relatively weak risk perception across the segments. Consequently, linking climate action with issues related to personal health may be a breakthrough to inspire this segment to care about climate change. Narratives such as “I don't

order food delivery primarily because it's unhealthy, and secondly is to reduce white pollution and carbon emissions” can effectively inspire the segment who value personal values and development.

8. Tell positive stories of climate action with ordinary people as messengers. This segment acknowledges that climate change is real, yet the typical “environmentalist” narrative and patriarch narrative will deepen their skepticism towards climate change. They have a relatively low level of trust in the government, media, experts, NGOs, and enterprises, which resulted in ignorance of “green” messages from these social actors. Hence, finding some credible sources such as “ordinary people” whose work is improving because of climate action can draw their attention to the issue of climate change.

9. Talk about “fairness” instead of “justice”. The word “justice” does not resonate with this segment, whereas their need for “fairness” is relatively clear. For them, “fairness” means what is right for everyone, while “justice” implies that past wrongdoings need to be compensated.



3.5

MODERATE PRAGMATISTS



Moderate Pragmatists 21% of the Chinese public

Who are Moderate Pragmatists?

Figure 3-5: Portrait of Moderate Pragmatists

Typical beliefs	Demographic characteristics	Societal concerns	Trusted messengers	Preferred media channels
Moderation	Bachelor's degree	Pursing personal economic interests	Experts in the industry	Douyin
Pragmatism	Firsthand second-tier cities	Physical and mental health	NGOs	Local mainstream media
Pursue conventional success	18-35 years old	Disregarding inequality		Weibo
Advocate for doing small things	Moderate income			

Life values of Passionate Strivers

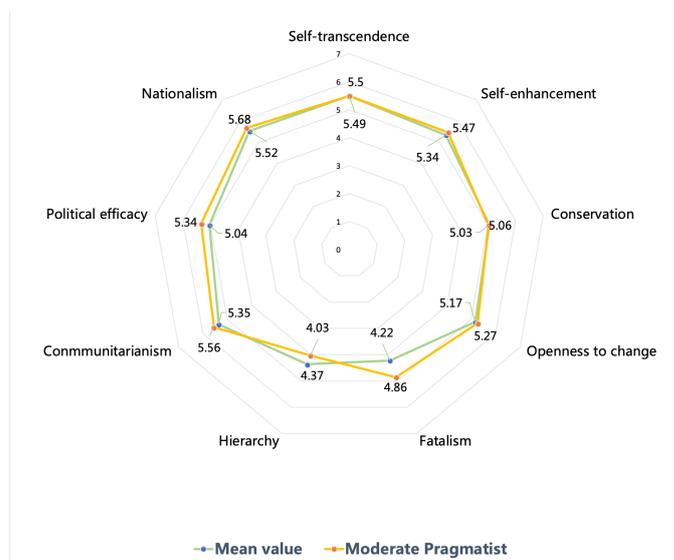


Figure 3-39 Life values for Moderate Pragmatists



1. Pursuit of practical value

The pursuit of practical value is the most prominent feature of this segment. Their understanding and definition of issues often start from a relatively micro perspective based on their own life experience. Their self-perception is formed more from their observations of the outside world and the impact it has on their lives. When deciding whether to act, they consider whether it can bring actual benefits and whether the cost is within the acceptable range as the core logic.

I am a very realistic person and my principle is that I will only consider doing something if it can bring me actual benefits and I have the ability and energy to do it, without violating public order or morals. Of course, the benefits are not only about materials, but spiritual satisfaction is also an important factor.

2. A moderate life philosophy

Moderate pragmatists adhere to the traditional Chinese concept of "Zhongyong", a dialectical approach to understanding the dual nature of the world and everything within. Other indicators of this segment are very close to the overall average, with the exception of fatalism which is slightly higher than the overall average. They maintain a "moderate enthusiasm" – neither completely embracing nor opposing them – toward hierarchical structures, nationalism, and self-enhancement. Therefore, it is imperative to demonstrate the multi-faceted nature of climate change to them in information dissemination.

3. Pursuit of a Chinese traditional success

Moderate pragmatists are highly aligned with mainstream success beliefs in Chinese society when it comes to defining an ideal life. A successful career, a happy family, and respectable social status are the values commonly pursued by this segment. In spite of the fact that many respondents strongly support "realizing their individualized values", they also generally acknowledge that achieving individualized values is a much higher level of value realization that requires attaining conventional foundational values such as economic independence, a stable career and life, etc.

The most important thing is to have a good job and income, so your family can be

materially secure and improve their standard of living. The housing and living price are quite high, living decently isn't easy, and personal goals should be discussed based on that.

4. Advocate for forming a "herd behavior" in society

Moderate pragmatists are generally less enthusiastic about participating in public affairs, especially political affairs. They believe that political affairs belong more to the work of the government and that participating in and influencing political decision-making isn't their primary responsibility. At the same time, they firmly believe that macro-level social changes need to be achieved through the collective actions of individuals. Although they are not willing to participate directly in relevant public affairs, they strongly advocate that citizens should restrain themselves in daily life and do small things to form a "herd behavior" to promote change in public affairs.

I think many big issues are not something that ordinary people like us can decide... but when it comes to matters involving public interests, we should still take action within our own capabilities. When you do a little, I do a little, and when everyone comes together, we can truly bring about change.

Demographics and media characteristics of Moderate Pragmatists

It is worth noting that more than 61% of the segment is composed of young people (under 35 years old), and more than 61% have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Almost 70% of the population lives in provincial capitals, municipalities directly under the central government, and other prefecture-level cities, which largely represent the common appearance and value choices of the current young generation in China. Moderate pragmatists earn a moderate income and are found to align closely with the mean value of the six segments. Concerning the media channel usage, Moderate pragmatists maintain a high degree of consistency with their demographic and value choices. Localized mainstream media is a common-used source to learn about information closely related to their lives, and they enjoy short video and streaming platforms such as Douyin and Bilibili, as well as microblogging platforms such as Weibo.

Summary

- Highly pursue practical value and regard tangible benefits with controllable cost as the premise for action
- Maintain a moderate and dialectical view toward all things
- Pursue success in a traditional Chinese sense, expect to have a successful career and a happy family
- Advocate self-restraint and doing small things well to form a "herd behavior" and promote public affairs change
- Aged between 18 to 35, white-collar workers residing in first and second-tier cities, with a majority having received undergraduate education

Moderate Pragmatists on climate change

Climate knowledge and concern

1. Relying on individual experience to perceive climate change

In line with the rest of the segments, moderate pragmatists agree that climate change is an important issue (over 95% think climate change should be seriously addressed). It is worth noting that their perception and understanding of climate change are often highly associated with their life experience and are generally concerned about extreme weather. The majority of them are concerned about extreme weather events, and they believe that climate action is of greater urgency than other segments.

My most intuitive feeling about climate change is that the winter in Guangdong is getting shorter and shorter. It is November now, and we are still wearing short-sleeves and shorts. This change deserves attention, and it has reached the point where action cannot be delayed.

There have been an increasing number of extreme weather events and this summer's



heat has lasted so long, which appears to be related to the eruption of the Hunga Tonga–Hunga Ha’apai volcano. Additionally, I am from Guangxi, which is a very southern region. It had never snowed before, but it has snowed in the past two years.

2. Highest level of climate knowledge

Compared to other segments, moderate pragmatists have the highest level of climate knowledge. Their scores in climate knowledge are significantly higher than the mean of all segments, and they are the highest level among all segments, indicating that they have a high level of understanding about climate change.

While the knowledge level of the segment is relatively high, the average score is still just 2.82 (out of 7 points), and there is considerable room for improvement. It is still necessary to pay continuous attention to providing climate knowledge education to the segment.

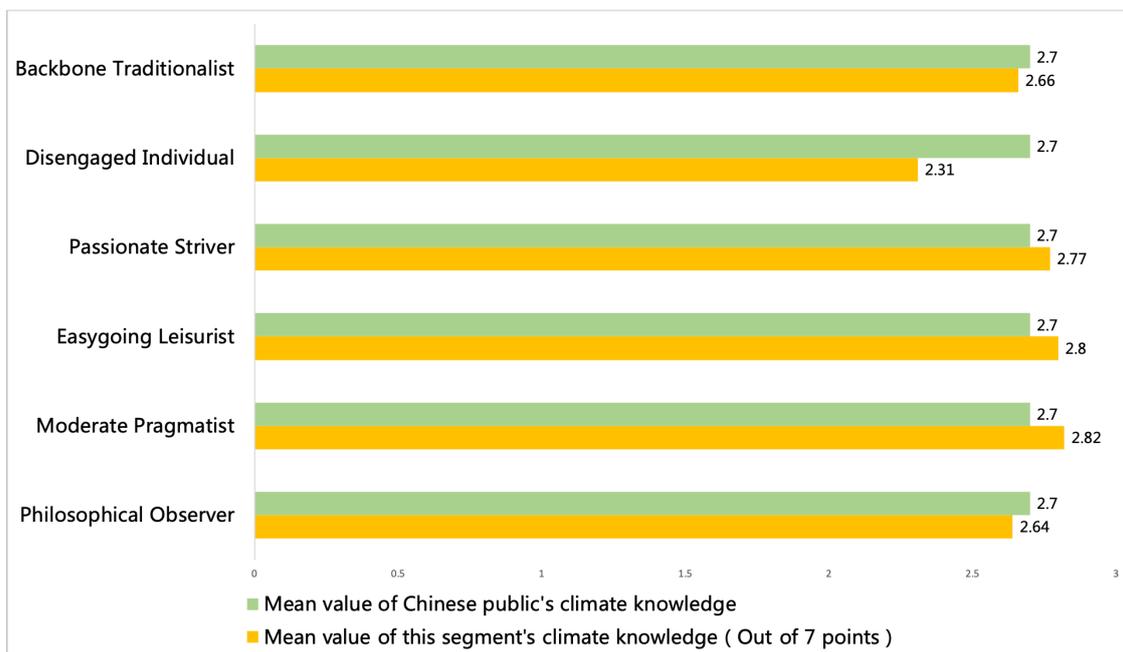


Figure 3-42: Mean climate knowledge levels of each segment

3. Strong willingness for climate action

Moderate pragmatists do not avoid their responsibility to address climate change; on the contrary, they have a strong willingness to participate in climate action. Statistics show that Moderate pragmatists generally take more climate action than the average level and are also one of the most active groups participating in climate action. The actions they are willing to take include: persuading family members, participating in environmental protection activities, taking public transportation, using recycled/ degradable products, saving electricity, etc. Their willingness to reduce meat consumption is lower than the average level, perhaps because this approach, while beneficial for addressing climate change, may significantly harm their own interests.

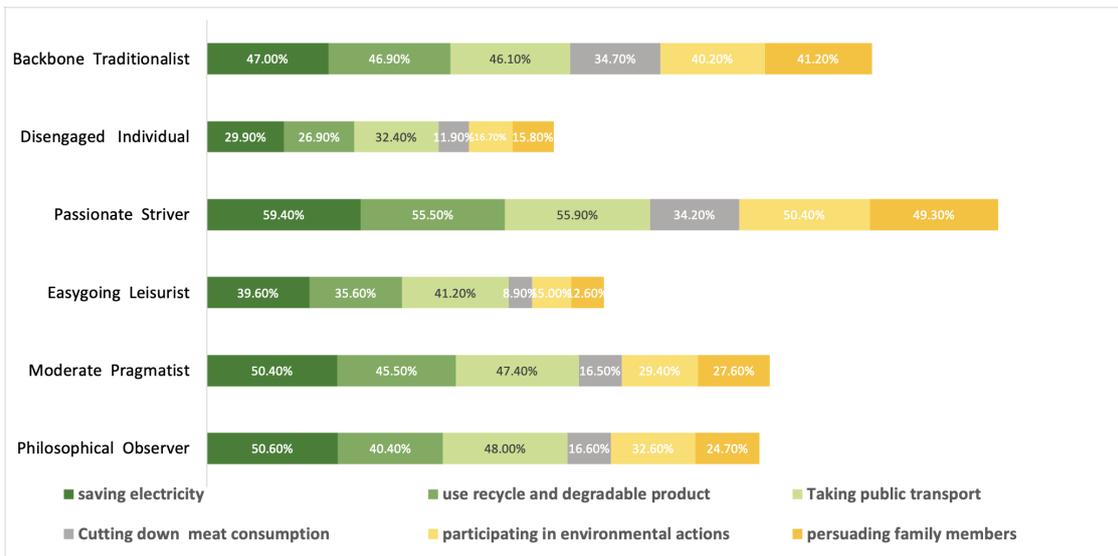


Figure 3-43: Percentage of willingness to take climate actions across segments

However, it is worth noting that they prefer to participate in climate action as participants rather than initiators. Currently, the core reason hindering their participation in climate action is the lack of convenient channels and corresponding initiators. Moderate pragmatists are sometimes unaware of these channels, reflecting the current gap in the promotion of climate action with this segment.

The only thing I have done is donates old clothes. There are too few opportunities to take part in.



I have participated in some garbage pick-up activities on the beach. But many times, I have felt that the problem should be addressed at the source. I believe there are many people interested in environmental protection, but don't know where to find suitable activities.

4. Willingness to take small steps

Moderate pragmatists strongly agree with the view that "individuals should take actions to slow down climate change" and are willing to act in this regard. However, they believe that their actions will have a limited impact on climate change since they only act out of belief that it is their duty to do so. In fact, they believe individuals have limited capabilities to deal with climate change.

I feel as if there is no way to deal with climate change. I think we should be saving electricity, starting from individuals, etc. ...for the next generation, we should do something.

We individuals can work on protecting the environment, but most of the carbon emission is not caused by individuals.

For moderate pragmatists, large-scale organizations such as businesses, NGOs, governments, and the international community should take responsibility for climate change and also actively take action to address it. This is because moderate pragmatists view the effects of individual efforts as limited, and organizations as the largest contributors to carbon emissions.

Concerning carbon emissions, large-scale organizations like factories are the only ones that can have a great impact. I think companies should take more responsibility.

High degree of future anxiety

Moderate Pragmatist' overall risk perception (mean value 5.8), individual risk level (mean value 5.7), and social risk perception (mean value 5.9) all fall in the high-risk range, demonstrating that they still believe that their personal lives and society have a lot of potential risks. At the same time, they generally have strong concerns about the lasting negative impact of climate change. Most of them express concern that the

impact of climate change will affect their lives and the lives of future generations in a more significant way as time passes. They show great concern especially for the impact of extreme weather, which is an actual and tangible consequence of climate change.

The future impacts of climate change may affect everyone's basic needs such as housing and living lifestyles, as well as our material and spiritual lives.... Particularly, I am concerned about the negative impacts on the next generation.

In Chongqing this year, the high temperatures caused the electricity bill to double, and we've had more extreme weather in recent years. Now it's just barely affordable, but in the future, I'm worried that this situation will worsen.

Policy orientation

Just like the other segments, moderate pragmatists tend to support incentive-based policies to mitigate climate change at the macro level, with higher support for policies such as "providing subsidies to companies that use clean energy" and "tax exemptions for new energy vehicles" instead of "raising fuel prices" and "restricting high-emission motor vehicle travel" and other restrictive policies.

What is particularly unique about the segment is that, compared to other segments, they especially support and look forward to mitigating climate change through technological innovation. Their support for the policy of "strengthening the research and development of advanced energy-saving and emission-reducing technologies" is at the highest level among all segments, with more than half of the respondents expressing strong support for the policy.

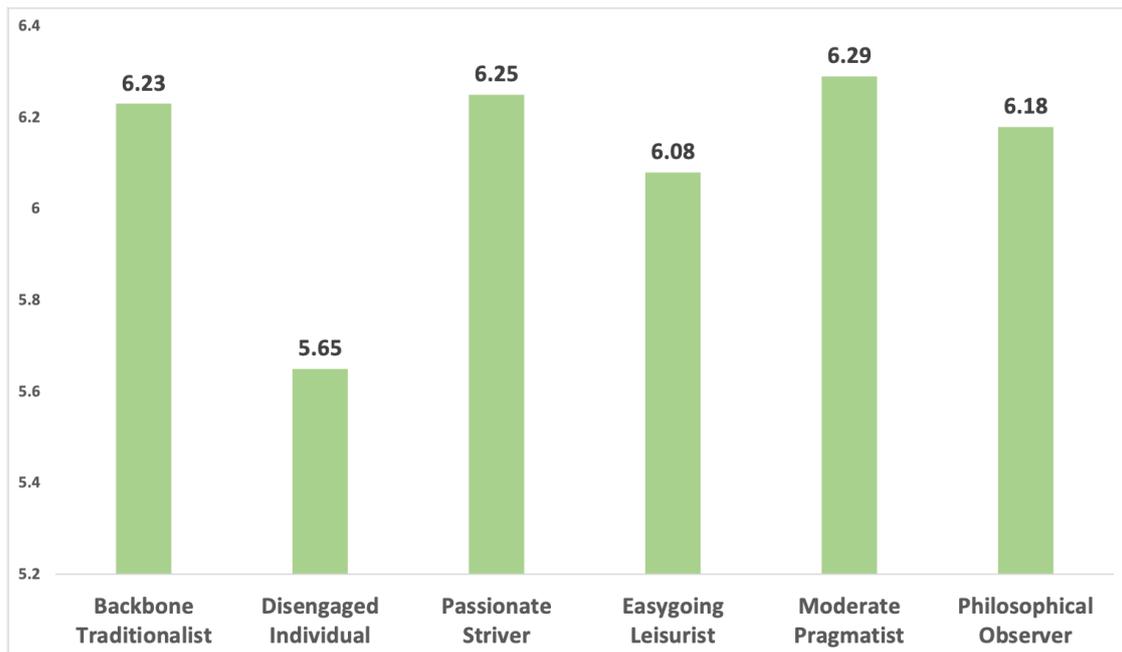


Figure 3-44: Support for "strengthening R&D of advanced energy-saving and emission reduction technologies" by segments

Level of social trust

In terms of trust in climate-related information sources, Moderate pragmatists have an average level of trust in all communicators (mean 5.1), ranking fourth among all segments. They believe that most information about climate change is credible, but are critical of the "greenwashing" behavior of some commercial enterprises. Like other segments, moderate pragmatists place the greatest trust in experts on climate issues, followed by NGOs, and have the least amount of trust in businesses.

There are many companies now advertising that they are pro-environment, but I find most of them not credible. Industrial development and environmental protection are inherently contradictory. To a large extent, companies are unlikely to be paying active attention to climate change; many claims that their packaging is environmentally friendly, which is more likely to be a cover-up of the damage they are doing to the environment during their production and raw materials selection, which they certainly don't mention. Personally, I have some reservations about their statements.

Summary

- Rely on personal life experience to perceive climate change as urgent and important
- Have the highest level of climate knowledge, but still need to work on improvement
- Strong willingness to participate in climate action, and more willing to do small things in daily life
- Believe that individual-level actions are limited
- Have strong anxiety about the future impact of climate change
- Tend to support incentive-based climate policies, and especially energy technology innovation
- Trust climate experts the most, and are more cautious about climate information released by companies

Societal concerns for Moderate Pragmatists

Personal economic benefits

Moderate pragmatists adhere firmly to the notion that "the economic foundation determines the superstructure," believing that high-level pursuits must be based on a solid economic foundation. Therefore, they are particularly concerned about social issues that are closely related to their economic interests. Almost all members of the segment are highly concerned about it and have high hopes of improving their personal income and savings.

Young people are particularly concerned about employment difficulties and agree that it is a widespread problem in society, and even those with excellent academic backgrounds are concerned about finding suitable employment. People who have jobs are concerned about their career prospects, fearing that their occupation or industry may not meet the needs of the times, leaving them with bleak career prospects. Practitioners in a few specific industries have been severely impacted by the pandemic,



and they are particularly concerned about their prospects of professional development.

I have been a sports practitioner for years, I've seen many sports events being postponed, and the pandemic has really affected us. What I'm worried about now is the development of the field.

Prioritize health and disregarding social inequalities

Moderate pragmatists place high importance on physical and mental health in addition to individual economic benefits. Food safety is their top priority, and they are concerned with issues such as how to ensure food safety for delivery food, as well as junk food proliferation. Additionally, Moderate pragmatists also find that modern people suffer from a high level of stress, and that their anxiety can't be relieved.

For social issues, I think the prominent issue is health anxiety in terms of exercising and eating. For example, takeaways and junk food are making people quite anxious. The second is that people are under so much mental pressure these days.

In contrast, moderate pragmatists tend to be less interested in social equality. They mostly view the privileges held by few and inequalities as a stage in social development and tend to adapt themselves to the overall social environment.

I don't think it's possible to seek absolute equality.

Society is unequal. A lot of the inequality in society can often be attributed to your own lack of effort.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- The economic consequences of climate change, emphasizing its impact on employment, different industries, and purchasing power
- The economic opportunities brought by climate change, including potential income for individuals
- The impact of climate change on individual physical and mental health
- Avoid the exacerbation of social inequality caused by climate change

Climate narratives and discourses of Moderate Pragmatists

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and economic development

Core narrative: By linking climate change to economic development, we can clearly identify the consequences of highly polluting development in comparison to sustainable development.

Keywords: sustainable development; pollution; transformation

As human society and economy rapidly expand, the overuse of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas exacerbates the greenhouse effect on Earth, and the problem of climate change is becoming increasingly prominent. At the same time, the expansion of production capacity has pushed up energy prices, greatly increasing the cost of economic development. (Preferred)

More and more companies are making sustainable development a strategic focus, creating a large number of new job opportunities, such as chief social responsibility officers, sustainable development managers, etc. Other positions also incorporate green skills as a measure of candidate evaluation when recruiting. (Preferred)



When formulating recovery plans, there are two choices: either lock down high-polluting, inefficient, high-carbon, and unsustainable development methods or accelerate the necessary transformation, develop low-carbon, reasonably priced energy and sustainable urban and transportation systems, thus creating long-term economic and social benefit. The latter is the direction we should choose. (Preferred)

Climate change and immediate actions

Core narrative: Emphasizing the severe consequences of climate change in the future and highlighting the necessity of taking climate action immediately.

Keywords: immediate action; individuals; vulnerable communities

The use of disposable plastic and wooden utensils for take-out food also leads to a series of environmental tax issues, such as energy consumption, ecological damage, land desertification, and so on. (Preferred)

We need to focus on every individual affected by climate change, pay attention to the differences in people's living conditions and their right to live in a healthy environment, and protect poor and vulnerable groups from the most serious impacts of climate change. (Preferred)

The health impacts of extreme heat waves are the most significant and direct. (Preferred)

Moderate pragmatists prefer narratives that call for practical action. They recognize the physical and psychological health risks that climate change may bring to individuals; emphasize the most direct and intuitive effects that climate change may have on their lives; emphasize the importance of "starting with simple things," highlighting the small, climate-friendly behaviors that are closely associated with ordinary people's lives, and encouraging such behaviors (such as avoiding take-out food and using disposable utensils).

Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate change and China's international status

Core narrative: Climate change is an opportunistic agenda for China to enhance its international political status, and China's contribution to climate governance can enhance its own political position.

Keywords: political status

If we view global climate change as an opportunity, we can gain new opportunities. China's contribution to climate governance can enhance its political position in the international community and further prove the superiority of its system, which is related to China's long-term political interests. (Unpreferred)

They do not like to highlight the political perspective of climate change, also feel that the narrative of international relations is distant from individuals' life.

Climate discourses of Moderate Pragmatists



Figure 3-45: Climate discourses word cloud of Moderate Pragmatists



Moderate pragmatists support narratives that emphasize the impact of climate change on economic development. While acknowledging that climate change may cause economic losses, they suggest that climate action may benefit economic development. They generally support narratives that emphasize the benefits of the energy transition for economic development and employment.

Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- Make the audience realize that they are the key players in solving future climate problems
- Encourage them to become practitioners of low-carbon living among the young generation
- Provide various ways, information, and advice for climate action, and transform their high climate anxiety into practical climate actions
- Encourage them to go beyond daily actions and participate in public climate activities
- Encourage them to actively voice climate issues on the Internet and promote group effects
- Enhance their understanding of the significance of climate action, thereby improving their sense of climate efficacy

According to demographic characteristics, moderate pragmatists represent the mainstream Chinese young generation to a large extent. It is imperative that they comprehend that they are the driving force behind China's climate action in the future. Considering their high effectiveness in action-taking, we can encourage them to maintain action and form a demonstration effect in society, enabling them to become a leading group in the low-carbon living movement. Aside from further promoting their action-taking, moderate pragmatists can also participate in public activities. Further,

the majority of members of this group are active social media users, which allows them to influence public opinion on climate issues.

The key to mobilizing the moderate pragmatists to join the core of climate action lies in fully making the segment aware of the various aspects of climate change and how it relates to their daily lives, especially the potential impacts on the issues they care about most. This can be achieved by starting from a micro-level perspective and providing them with direct, practical, and actionable ways to take action. Moderate pragmatists are also active respondents in climate change mitigation, and efforts should be made to connect them with other groups and actors who are actively advocating for climate mitigation.

1. Emphasize the direct impact of climate change on individual lives, especially on economic lives. Moderate pragmatists' perception of climate change and their actions are largely based on how they connect their own experiences with climate change. When engaging Moderate pragmatists in climate communication practices, we can emphasize the impact of climate change on savings and financial management, employment, price fluctuations, and social welfare, while demonstrating the threats and opportunities that climate change poses to the personal economy. In addition, the negative effect of climate change on individual physical and mental health, life comfort, and other aspects can also serve as a point of reference.

2. Encourage them to actively discuss and speak out on climate issues on the internet platform. While moderate pragmatists have a slightly shorter duration of internet usage than other segments, they are keen to use social media platforms such as Weibo and Zhihu which are the main arenas for influencing online public opinions. By utilizing such platforms, we can engage them actively in the discussion, transforming their high level of interest in climate change into actual voices in the discussion.

3. Emphasize "common responsibility" and encourage "individual action". Emphasizing that climate change is a shared responsibility of the entire world and all of humanity highlights the important role that global citizens play in addressing climate issues. In climate communication practices, providing moderate pragmatists with practical and feasible climate action plans, encourages the segment to adopt a climate-friendly lifestyle and helps shape the resolution of climate issues as a collective effort that requires everyone's participation in a "every little bit counts" process.

4. Shape the identity as "the protagonist of future climate change" and create a certain "future anxiety". In light of their youth characteristics, moderate pragmatists are likely to be the "main bearers" of future climate change consequences. They have



a universal concern about the future impact of climate change, even for those who are not currently affected by climate change. Through storytelling, the segment should be made aware that they are the "main bearers of the consequences of climate change" and the "masters of addressing climate issues." Creating and emphasizing this future anxiety can better cultivate a sense of "taking action for our own future" within the segment, thereby triggering their attention to and further action on climate issues.

5. Emphasize the "collective power" of young people. The moderate pragmatists are mostly young people living in first- and second-tier cities. Although they are not very willing or enthusiastic to participate directly in public actions, they strongly believe that they should restrain themselves and do their own small actions to form a "herd behavior" and promote improvements in public affairs. Therefore, when mobilizing them to participate in climate action, we can emphasize the "collective action" of young people on climate issues, highlight the positive effects of typical cases of collective climate action, and encourage the group to follow.

6. Combining the economic benefits of climate action at the macro and micro levels and formulating win-win effects. Moderate pragmatists are most concerned about economic benefits, as they see economic security as a fundamental need. They also pay high attention to various levels of economic development issues. When providing climate action plans or seeking public support for climate policies, it is important to emphasize the potential macro and microeconomic benefits of such plans or policies and highlight their positive impact on macroeconomic development and individual economic growth.

7. Organize convenient climate activities and mobilize through communication. They are highly motivated to engage in climate action, but they also consider the costs associated with the efforts. It is often easier for them to engage in climate activities that are geographically close to them which are less costly and time-consuming, such as community climate events, campus climate events, street climate events, etc. Efforts by environmental NGOs can be devoted to this area.

8. Explain climate policies from a personalized perspective. Moderate pragmatists have low enthusiasm for political participation and are averse to purely political narratives. In order for climate policies to be more effective, the policies can be explained from a personal perspective, particularly by explaining the impact of macro policies on their personal lives – including their physical and mental health – in a simple and understandable manner.

9. Avoid portraying the climate issue as a purely political issue. The segment

has a relatively high level of trust in the government, but not much enthusiasm for political engagement. If climate issues are framed purely as political agendas, they may perceive climate change solely as the government's responsibility, increasing the risk that climate actions will be rejected by the group. As a result, a narrative based solely on political discourse may easily elicit opposition from the audience.

10. Downplay the connection between climate issues and fairness. Moderate pragmatists are insensitive to social injustice, thus emphasizing the unfairness of climate issues may not help them fully comprehend the severity of climate change.

3.6

PHILOSOPHICAL OBSERVERS



Philosophical Observers (17% of the Chinese Public)

Who are Philosophical Observers?

Table 3-6 Portrait of Philosophical Observers

Typical beliefs	Demographic characteristics	Societal concerns	Trusted messengers	Preferred media channels
Focus on spiritual well-being	Bachelor and master student	Vulnerable communities	Climate Experts	Caixin
Do not do unto others what you do not want done unto you	18-27 years old	Migrant workers	NGO	People's Daily
Think critically but lack in action	Privileged life		Media organization	Niche media platforms

Life values of Philosophical Observers

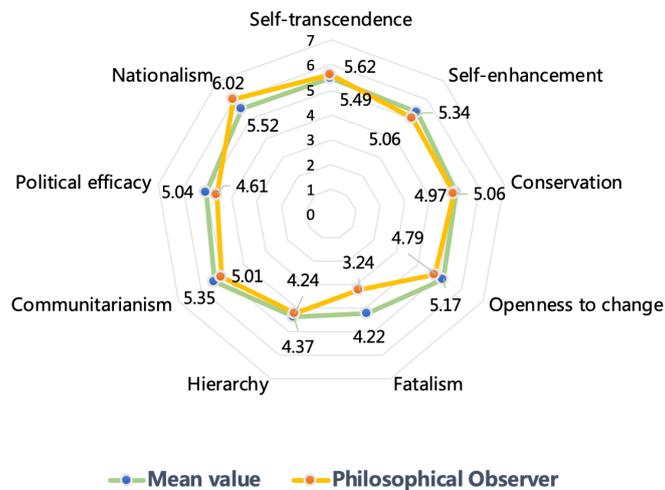


Figure 3-46 Life values for Philosophical Observers



1. Emphasize spiritual fullness

Philosophical observers consider life as a process of experience, and they value the quality of a rich inner world and ease of living. They do not make value judgments about various professions and hope to explore and broaden the scope of their lives through reading and travel to better understand themselves. This segment has a lower level of self-enhancement in social success and a relative disregard for pragmatism standards such as money and power.

2. Avoid forcing others for self-approval

The ideal state of life for them is to live self-sufficiently and to adhere to the principle of “do not do unto others what you would not wish for yourself.” Regarding personal affairs, they have strong, independent opinions, lead their lives as they wish, and do not accept external constraints. They also do not force their opinions on others, and if they are strong enough, they hope to break the restrictions of traditional Chinese concepts such as marriage, career choice, and lifestyle. In this way, people may freely choose their preferred lifestyles and remain true to themselves.

One distinctive characteristic of the segment is that it does not lean toward extreme values and does not show much enthusiasm for any particular belief, largely due to its "cautious" attribute.

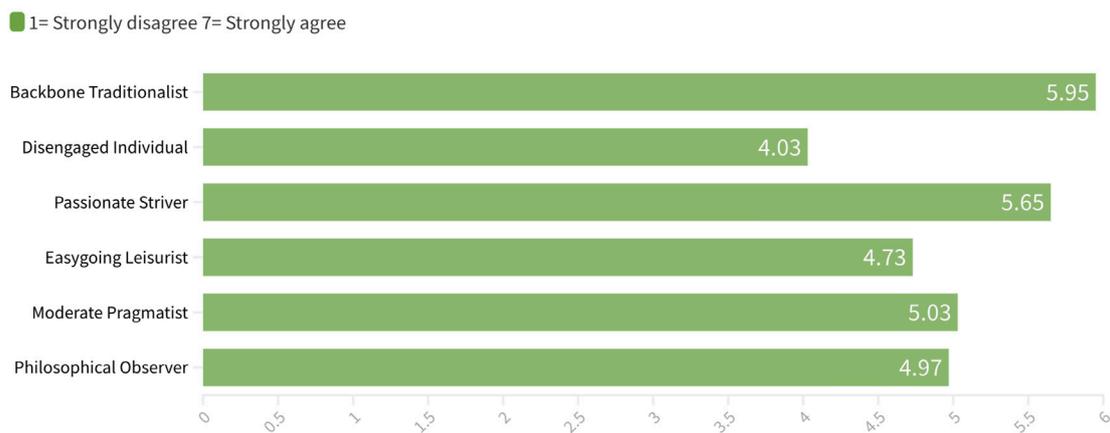


Figure 3-47 Mean value of attitudes toward "government should tell people how to live" by segments

It's enough for me to live a fulfilling life. After all, life is just an experience. At the same time, I hope to learn about topics that interest me, explore philosophical knowledge, and

gain a more rational understanding of the world. On the other hand, I also hope to have a broaden my perspective of the world, visit various places, see all sorts of things, and meet all kinds of people.

My ideal career is as a librarian, hoping to read as many books as possible while ensuring the most basic living conditions.

3. Critical thinkers but neglect in actions

Philosophical observers maintain a certain distance when it comes to social affairs. Despite being broad-minded, they are generally skeptical of all "isms" . However, in reality, they have profound personal reflections regarding societal problems. They are reserved about extreme emotional discussions and hasty conclusions based on individuals' prejudices. Rationality and critical thinking are the most valuable weapons in addressing the complicated world they live in.

The philosophical observers have unique insights into public affairs due to their critical thinking, they oppose the bonds of social hierarchy on individuals while possessing a strong sense of social justice. They often limit themselves to reflection and lack action. As a result, they tend to focus more on themselves, their surroundings, and their feelings.

Demographics and media characteristics of Philosophical Observers

1. Young intellectuals who are concerned with the "truth" of news

Paying attention to the richness of inner selves, opposing 'ism' and preaching, rejecting external social constraints, being rational patriots, and demonstrating high critical thinking... Demographically, they are predominantly belonging to Generation Z and have either received or are pursuing higher education at prestigious domestic or international institutions. Besides being students, they occupy upper-middle-class positions such as senior or middle-level management and professional or technical roles, and have often traveled or lived abroad for extended periods. They tend to reside in provincial capitals or super-first-tier cities and enjoy a relatively affluent lifestyle, with the proportion of high-income households (earning over 17,000 CNY per month) ranking second across segments, differing by only 0.1% compared to the top-ranking easygoing leisurists. They have little material concern and prioritizing fulfilling their spiritual needs.

Regarding media consumption, philosophical observers selectively choose media



platforms based on the types of news topics they cover. In addition to spending the most time with central state media platforms such as China Central Television, they also prefer and trust media platforms like The Paper and Caixin. Fact-checking and social responsibility are among the most valued attributes for philosophical observers. Newsletters, NGO industry reports, and self-subscribed WeChat official accounts are also important sources of information for them.

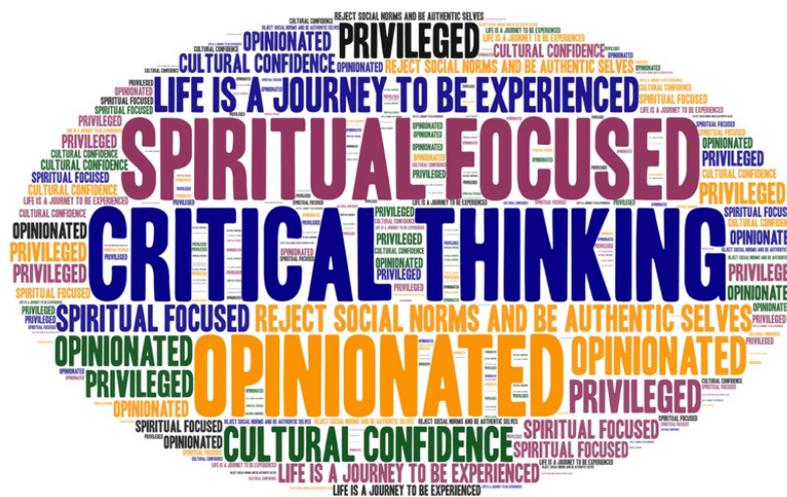


Figure 3-48 Life values word cloud of Philosophical Observers

Summary

- Focus on fulfillment of the spiritual world and have strong opinions on the personal affair
- High level of critical thinking and maintaining a calm and rational approach to social affairs
- Strong willingness to act but lack of actions
- A lower tendency toward fatalism and communitarianism
- Highly educated young individuals between the ages of 18 and 27, living in super first-tier cities with privileged family background

Philosophical Observers on climate change

1. Caution about consensus on climate conclusions

Philosophical observers place less proactive attention toward climate change and instead consider issues related to people's livelihoods to be more urgent. Their understanding of climate change mostly comes from extreme weather and the "dual-carbon" policy, and their knowledge about climate change is slightly lower than the average level of the Chinese public. Female respondents demonstrate a higher level of awareness of climate change and are able to discuss it in connection with biodiversity reduction, environmental pollution, and inequality between regions and populations.

Philosophical Observers do not unquestioningly accept the definitions of climate change found on the Internet. Instead, they exercise their critical thinking skill to question why it is receiving attention at this specific moment. This leads to alternative and sometimes unscientific deductions based on the international situation and political economics.

Keeping in line with the profile of the philosophical observers, they are indifferent to preachy policy advocacy. Some philosophical observers have intentionally distanced themselves from news about climate change, and their understanding of climate change comes primarily from their daily lives and literature reading. While philosophical observers are not climate change skeptics, they are cautious and will not easily adhere to any viewpoint. Instead, they are cautious and require data, reliable sources, and a logical chain of evidence before they believe it.

The attention given to climate change is influenced by media framing. Extreme weather patterns are cyclical, climate change has not been an issue since ancient times, nor is it something that has only emerged recently. Climate change is still a matter of international power battle, and it's often the countries that are least resilient to risk are likely to be affected most by climate change. On the other hand, severe droughts are happening in some parts of Africa, but they are often overlooked.

There have been many irreversible changes in the ecological environment due to climate change, including the pollution caused by artificial chemicals and the loss of ecological diversity. It has aggravated the problem of inequality between countries, regions, and communities. Most of the negative consequences are borne by a small number of vulnerable parties.



2. Climate as urgent and pessimistic

Philosophical observers generally adopt a pessimistic outlook toward climate change. From a broader perspective, 32% feeling angry, 29% feeling sad, and 34% feeling fearful - far above the national average for Chinese citizens. They argue that most companies and individuals lack a robust understanding of climate issues, and that individual actions can only have limited effects. However, other respondents expressed cautious optimism, suggesting there is still time to change the course of climate change, given that certain individuals and organizations are actively working to combat it. Notably, the growing climate consciousness among young people fills them with hope, as they take practical steps such as practicing "leave no trace" camping or packing out all trash when climbing mountains. Young people are set to become the key pillars of society, and the group believes that their climate actions will lead to significant positive effects.

Everyone talks about advocating for carbon neutrality, but we don't actually know how to get there. For example, the electricity used to produce batteries for new energy electric vehicles is generated by thermal power plants, which are not environmentally friendly at the source. The journey towards environmental protection remains long and arduous.

Several years ago, I used to feel anxious about climate change and wanted to take action. Lately, I have been feeling more helpless because despite numerous efforts, there seems to be little impact and the process seems irreversible and actions only have a minimal effect.

3. Concerned about societal risk

Philosophical observers have a lower individual-level risk perception but a higher societal-level risk perception compared to the average Chinese public. They are aware of the severe consequences of climate change, including more frequent natural disasters such as heavy rains, extreme heat and droughts, low temperatures and cold damage, but they believe it is unlikely for them to experience extreme weather events and health risks as a result of climate change. Instead, they emphasize systemic issues such as the destruction of ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, the reduction of food production, and the increase of infectious diseases.

4. Focus on NGO action-taking and individual consumption

Philosophical observers believe that humanity should bear the consequences of climate

change, and most of them think that individual power is limited. They believe it is more effective for the government and private companies to take the initiative and address the issue from the source. They place particular emphasis on the importance of NGOs in raising public awareness of climate change and encouraging public participation in public administration. This segment thinks that the government should take the lead in responding to climate change by involving large companies and factories as key players, using the media as indispensable watchdogs, and relying on NGOs to integrate social forces and assist government departments with governance. Although individual actions are limited, they can still slow down the rate of climate change. Responsible green consumption can force the production end to adjust the traditional production concept continually. As a result of building the general consensus that "non-green production will lose consumers," the manufacturing industry will gradually develop a more conducive working environment for its products.

Social organizations such as NGOs should bridge the gap between society and the government. There are many well-developed NGOs that play a crucial role in western governance ... we need NGOs to be more proactive in providing advice and suggestions to the government to influence policy formulation.

It's common to think that producers create so much waste, they're the ones responsible, but each individual's choice determines what is available in the market, and personal environmentalist choices will force producers to make more environmentally friendly products. The choices of each individual, and the choices of the community as a whole, can have a huge impact on environmental issues.

5. Willing to start from daily pro-climate behavior

In order to mitigate climate change, philosophical observers express the willingness to undertake small actions, such as driving less, using renewable products, and turning off lights when not in use. Respondents state that their support of environmental protection should not compromise their lifestyle, and they find it unacceptable to have their behavior choices regulate by carbon emissions. They do not wish to sacrifice their current lifestyles, including calculating the carbon footprint of flying, avoiding takeout plastic packaging, or eliminating meat consumption. As philosophical observers state, "I still want to live and not live so miserably. If it is necessary to harm myself for the benefit of others, I cannot do it", which also illustrates the self-focused nature of the participants.



It is worth noting that the segment is more willing to participate in environmental activities than the other segments. Among the respondents who participated in in-depth interviews, more than half had taken part in environmental activities. These activities include preserving the Sanjiangyuan area, volunteering while traveling, educating people about plastics and popularizing knowledge, conducting research on water safety in remote areas, interning in NGOs and UN agencies, and more. Many young people have consciously participated in climate actions, practicing ecological civilization while expanding their horizons and enhancing their sense of accomplishment and pride. However, it is important to note that sometimes the gimmick of engaging in commercialized or cross-border environmental activities can be more significant than the environmental cause itself. Small and consistent actions within individual capacities are more effective in making a difference.

Interviewee A: I previously signed up to go to Australia to protect sea turtles.

Interviewee B: What I'm trying to say may sound a little offensive, but my intention is well. The carbon footprint of a flight taken to save sea turtles abroad is probably higher than preserving sea turtles. It is more effective for local people to take action in their own communities.

6. Hesitation to act due to lack of guidance

The segment shares a similar climate action willingness (mean 5.80) with the average Chinese public (mean 5.86). They have a strong desire to take action on climate issues. However, the current path for participation in climate change mitigation is unclear. This is fundamentally due to the vacuum phenomenon in climate reporting, where extreme weather events and urgent situations are used to highlight climate change, resulting in readers feeling pessimistic and helpless without a clear solution being provided.

The media in the past two years have made me feel like climate change is an urgent and pessimistic issue. The debate over climate change has already been settled, so the next step is figuring out what to do. Arguing "how to do" is harder than arguing "whether climate change is real". For example, how should the media convey green messages? How should we reduce carbon? And how to ensure transition justice Climate change has left us with a sense of uncertainty, but we must act nonetheless"

7. Policy orientation and social trust

Incentive policies, such as subsidies for companies using clean energy, strengthening research and development of advanced energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies, and tax exemptions for electric vehicles, are supported by philosophical observers. However, they tend to be neutral toward restrictive policies related to personal life, such as raising fuel prices or implementing stricter emission standards for motor vehicles and disqualifying those from traveling.

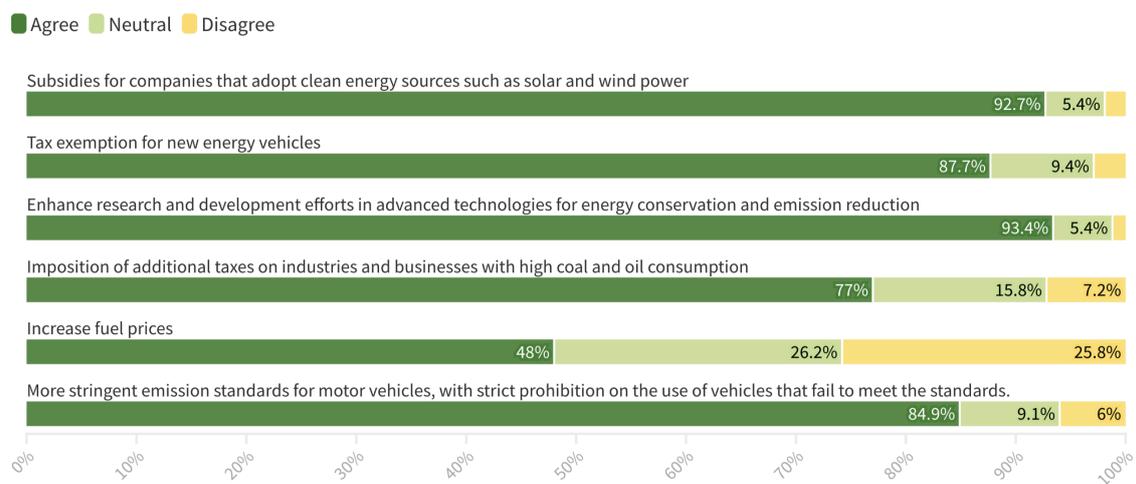


Figure 3-49: The proportion of Philosophical Observers with regards to their attitude towards climate change policies

Philosophical observers exhibit a lower trust in news sources for climate change information compared to the average Chinese public. Their ranked order of trustworthy sources is climate experts and scientific results, NGOs, media organizations, and companies.



Summary

- Have a relatively low level of climate knowledge and are cautious about consensus concepts
- Feel pessimistic about climate change but are encouraged by youth climate action
- Have a lower perception of individual risks and are more concerned about the social risks brought about by climate change
- Have high expectations of NGOs, as they play an important role in mobilizing public participation in climate action and filling gaps in government public management
- Have a strong willingness to participate in environmental protection activities, with over half of the respondents having participated in environmental projects
- Hope that the media can provide a clearer path for climate action rather than solely emphasizing its urgency
- Have a lower level of trust in climate change information sources than the public average.

Societal concerns for Philosophical Observers

1. Physiologically vulnerable groups

Philosophical observers pay attention to less visible issues in society, there is a strong concern for physically vulnerable groups, such as those with disabilities or rare diseases. Measures should be taken to improve accessibility and convenience for these groups in their daily life.

How can people with disabilities live a normal life in society when they face unfair treatment? How should social resources be distributed to them? For example, the visually

impaired community needs a wider range of braille . Another example is how can they read the station signs when they take the bus? How they can use the elevator to go up and down the stairs? These issues require reallocating social resources and we need to distribute more resources to them.

The most memorable experience for me was related to a rare disease project. The crew paid for a friend with a rare disease to come to Beijing to audition and be an extra in the movie. However, it's quite difficult for the crew because they basically had no income and relied mainly on donations and attention from friends.

They believe that limited resources inevitably lead to social inequalities, and hence, the allocation of social resources towards disadvantaged groups must be coordinated at the national and policy levels. They believe in the power of bystanders and consider that sustained social attention can raise awareness among decision-makers to address such issues and push for resolution through policy formulation and implementation.

In China's Internet environment, bystanders equal to power. When a topic is brought up, it means something is already sprouting. So, one of my reposts, one of my views, one of my discussions, one of my debates are meaningful.

I know many people and organizations are working hard to do things in all aspects, and every little agenda always gets more or less attention. My approach is to follow their steps and learn from them to see how they think and act.

2. Rights and interests for migrant workers

Philosophical observers place great importance on issues related to migrant workers in the service industry, including food delivery drivers, express delivery personnel, and online ride-hailing drivers. They are committed to enhancing society's respect for and sense of belonging towards these workers. Migrant workers are seen as an essential group in society, improving the convenience of citizens' lives and supporting urban development. This aligns with their belief in not making value judgments about any profession. While philosophical observers recognize that improving the public's attitude towards service industry workers may take time, they aim to establish measures that demonstrate respect for these workers and promote their social belonging.



For example, delivery workers face challenges navigating stairs during peak hours. Is it possible to provide them with elevator and showing greater tolerance? Some respectful measure like this could help improve the negative consequences of inequality.

Inequality arises when a person holds inequalities in his or her mind. The person does not place himself/herself and others in an equal position, which results in various forms of inequality.

Connection between societal concerns and climate change

- Connect climate change with physically vulnerable groups, such as how it affects their physical and mental health, personal safety, and well-being
- Emphasize the health risks of climate change to outdoor workers including food delivery drivers and construction workers
- Use social media platforms, including Weibo and Douyin to disseminate climate information and stimulate bystanders' interests to pay attention to and the discuss the topic

Climate narratives and discourses of Philosophical Observers

Preferred climate narratives

Climate change and quantitative expression

Core narrative: Quantifying and specifying the positive benefits of taking climate actions, as well as the impacts of climate change on human society.

Keywords: number of people being affected; economic loss; economic benefits; the amount of money

As a result of meteorological disasters and secondary geological disasters, around 300 million people in the country were affected annually, resulting in a direct economic loss

of 289.7 billion CNY. (Preferred)

Taking ambitious measure to tackle climate change has a potential to generate economic benefits of at least \$26 trillion by 2030. (Preferred)

In 2020, China's carbon dioxide emissions declined by 18.8%, surpassing the target set in the 13th Five-Year Plan, and effectively reversing the trend of rapid growth in carbon dioxide emissions. (Preferred)

The credibility of information is the basis to convince philosophical observers. They are highly sensitive to discerning the reliability of information sources and unfavored unfounded judgments. When it comes to climate change, they prioritize understanding the quantifiable impact of climate action and the extent to which climate change will affect society.

Climate change and vulnerable groups

Core narrative: Vulnerable groups are more at risk for climate change. It can exaggerate social inequalities exacerbate their risk to the impact of climate change.

Keywords: vulnerable groups; poverty; environmental rights

We should consider every individual's circumstance when addressing climate change and prioritize their right to a healthy environment. This approach is particularly important for protecting vulnerable and marginalized communities from the most severe impact of climate change. (Preferred)

As we know, not everyone enjoys the same environmental rights, nor all people equally impacted by environmental change. Climate change, in particular, has a disproportionate effect on the poorest in developing countries, who may live in more vulnerable areas and experience greater economic instability. Women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities are also particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. (Preferred)

Philosophical observers are deeply concerned about vulnerable groups who are disproportionately impacted by climate change. Narratives that address the issues faced by the disabled community have particularly resonated with them. However, they prefer to have constructive discussions about climate equality and dislike emotional complaints and venting. Interviewees in focus groups noted that some testing narrative



expressions were unclear in their reference to certain groups and could provoke group opposition rather than encouraging evidence-based discussions about climate inequalities. For example, expressions such as "when wealthy people spend money to avoid heat, hunger, and conflict, other groups are suffering" were not considered helpful.

A simple approach to climate change

Core narrative: Climate action is simple and does not cause too much unnecessary disruption to my life.

Keywords: lifestyle; consumption; transportation

Rational consumption is the first choice to reduce waste. (Preferred)

In terms of lifestyle, you might consider using an induction cooker instead of liquefied gas to adapt to future kitchen lifestyles gradually. Try to take more public transportation instead of private vehicles in everyday transportation. (Preferred)

In the interviews, philosophical observers have expressed a preference for simple and feasible climate action recommendations rather than grand narratives. For those who are enthusiastic about participating in climate activities, emphasizing the simplicity and feasibility of climate action can further consolidate their understanding.

Unpreferred climate narratives

Climate Change and the glorification of suffering

Core narrative: Overly sensationalized narrative that drawing upon the historical experience of national heroes to persuade individuals to take action on climate change.

Keywords: Glorifying suffering

Qian Xuesen lived in an old building for decades; while Yuan Longping often wearing T-shirts worth at only ten CNY, he said farming was his happiest time. (Unpreferred)



Climate narrative recommendations

Communication Objectives

- To encourage young people with high education and income, who have unique insights in life, to become opinion leaders on climate change and support youth climate actions
- To change the group's pessimistic attitude towards climate change and help them aware that the current climate change is still within control
- The segment is strongly willing to take action and values the role of NGOs in climate action. Encourage them to participate in climate action initiatives led by relevant organizations

In general, philosophical observers are a group of highly educated young adults and influential individuals who possess considerable discursive power. They tend to exhibit a critical approach and are rationally detached towards public affairs, but are opinionated on personal matters. A crucial communication objective with the segment is to enhance their sense of group participation and self-efficacy in climate action while also ensuring that they possess accurate climate knowledge. By doing so, it could help them overcome pessimistic climate emotions and reduce the likelihood of becoming cynical. Additionally, joining climate activities could reshape their cognitive schema of linking climate change with grand narratives, which can increase their level of proactive attention paid to climate change.

It is important to avoid creating an opposition in the narrative and instead celebrate their efforts to decarbonize their daily lives and appreciate those who participate in charity work. As the saying goes, “the fire burns high when everyone brings wood to it”, and it is important to acknowledge and affirm the self-efficacy of philosophical observers in their climate action.

1. Use highly recognized international organizations as sources. With a global perspective and rationality thinking about societal issues, it will be more convincing to

demonstrate the causes of climate change through a combination of data support and in-depth case studies. It can be necessary to use multiple sources of information, such as domestic and international scientific research institutions and NGO reports, to cross-validate and popularize correct knowledge of climate change to the group.

2. Avoid sloganeering patriotism, describe social reality and practical policy measurements. Philosophical observers believe that government should not only be focused on improving the country's image and serving national interests, but also should address societal issues related to people's livelihoods. For example, the government should address public concerns by providing information about inadequate responses to certain issues, pragmatic measures that have been taken to address them, and changes that have been made.

3. Highlight the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups. Although climate change is not the most important issue to them, combining it with physically vulnerable groups can help increase their interest in climate change. For instance, during climate crisis, people with disabilities face higher incidence and mortality rates, and their access to emergency assistance is limited. By emphasizing the needs of people with disabilities in disaster response and risk management regulations, this segment can be encouraged to care more about climate change.

4. Encourage sharing of climate knowledge on the Internet. As this segment has an overall higher education level, they may become an elite group in the future. It would be beneficial to encourage them to share their climate knowledge on internet platforms, which can improve their collective efficacy and a sense of individual accomplishment. By encouraging them to take action, we can facilitate their transformation from climate change pessimism to an act of pleasing selves.

5. Focus on stories of youth action and encourage them to actively support. One strategy to engage this segment, who is mainly self-focused and have individualized concerns, is to shift away from the focus of treating the society as a whole. Using feature stories that explore how young people are using their own power to make their voices heard by companies, NGOs, and government decision-makers to promote greater fairness and justice in society could be very inspiring for the segment. This could also encourage them to actively support youth-led climate action initiatives.

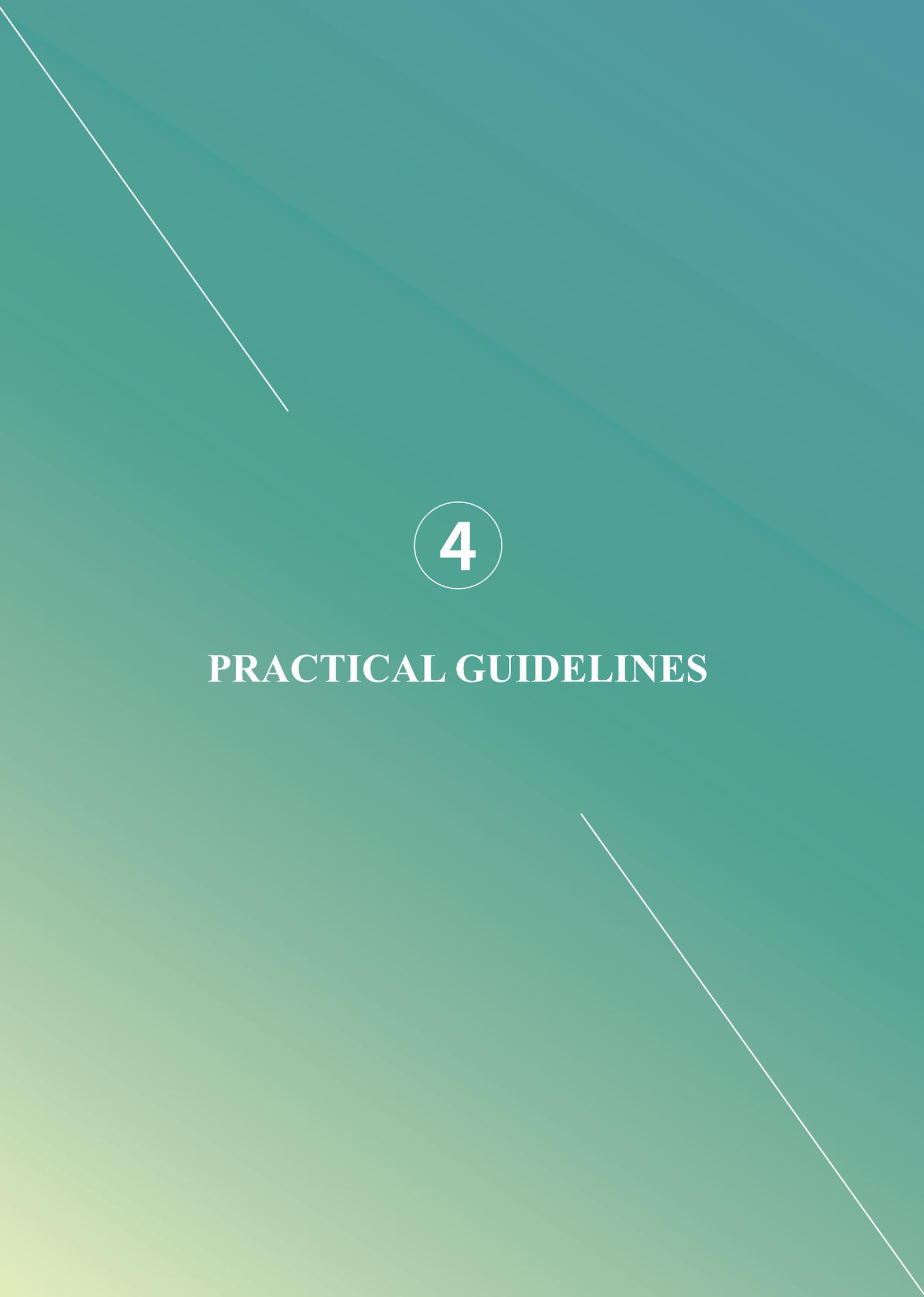
6. Use case studies to emphasize that climate change is still in a relatively controllable and manageable stage. Philosophical observers exhibit a willingness for self-enhancement and a low tendency towards fatalism. To enhance their willingness to participate, it is important to inform the public that climate change is still manageable.



Providing specific and real-life case studies can help achieve the goal. Such examples should not be limited to traditional news platforms, but should also include comprehensive and multi-dimensional sources such as industry research reports, climate science popularization WeChat official accounts, and NGOs.

7. Using a cautiously optimistic narrative, avoiding urgent and pessimistic narratives. Avoid adopting biased expressions toward climate change, whether it is overly optimistic or pessimistic. Instead, present the facts of climate change in a practical and non-sloganeering manner. Utilize the concept of "two-sided hints" in communication studies to discuss optimistic prospects while also acknowledging the risks and challenges involved.

8. Use critical expressions and avoid absolute expressions. Philosophical observers do not like the use of absolute terms such as "must", and prefer to avoid making arbitrary causal inferences about climate change. Such statements tend to create the impression that there is no room for discussion and lack rigor in the argument, as they limit the space for discussion and lacks precision in expression.



4

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES



4.1 How to apply main takeaways in practice

The report aims to offer valuable insights for segmenting the public and provide communicators with a rich reference to find common ground while respecting differences between segments and to build alliances. In addition, by emphasizing the differentiation of segments' life values, communicators can create a more solid emotional bond with the audience, viewing from their perspective and speaking on their behalf, which can better facilitate pro-climate behaviors.

In this chapter, we outline the key features of various audience types and provide climate communicators with a practical and effective set of guidelines to identify their audience, cultivate them with a more profound climate concern, and foster an internal drive for engagement in action taking. Furthermore, the chapter details when and how to utilize the report's findings and provides a case study for practitioners to use as a reference. While using the core findings and narrative principles to develop communication strategies specifically tailored to engage with the diverse Chinese public, we have listed questions that can help government policymakers, climate communicators, and other stakeholders in crafting communication strategies and content production.

Practically speaking, our insights hope to help you with:

- Gaining a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the target audience, including enduring personality values such as individual intrinsic motivations and social-cultural values. By discovering more innovative climate narratives, communicators can enhance the appeal of their content and engage their audience more effectively
- Effectively identify target audiences through online and offline means and establish personalized content production
- Provides solid scientific support for international negotiations, showcasing the latest findings in public climate knowledge and attitudes. Encourage policymakers to formulate climate policies based on stable individual intrinsic values
- Offers empirical support for academic research on climate communication and provides a valuable measurement tool

Questions for the team discussion:

- Who is our target audience, and which of the six public audience segments do they fall under?
- What media platforms does the target audience typically use, and how can we effectively engage with them by selecting the appropriate media channels?
- Are the communication objectives specific enough and sufficiently aligned with the life values and climate perception of segmented audiences?
- How can we tailor our content on climate change to the specific features of each audience segment?
- **Backbone traditionalists** have high political efficacy but also believe that the government is primarily responsible for addressing climate change. How can we mobilize this group more effectively and consolidate their high attention and support for climate change and climate policies, turning climate action into a nationwide movement ?
- How can we show **disengaged individualists** that we genuinely hope to incorporate them into the agenda of climate actions. We are genuinely hoping to utilize climate change as an opportunity to create more green job and improve their quality of life, rather than just paying lip service to the issue?
- When it comes to **passionate strivers**, how can we use patriotism and national pride



to foster a sense of national ownership in addressing climate change without alienating other groups with lower political efficacy? Given that middle-aged and the elderly make up a significant proportion of passionate strivers, can we identify a collective memory that can tap into their group identity and emotions to resonate with their values and experiences?

- For **easygoing leisurists**, how can we connect their appreciation for art, nature, and aesthetics with a positive climate outlook to encourage them to take climate-friendly actions that align with their values and lifestyle?
- **Moderate pragmatists** prioritize practical value and highly agree with "herd behavior". How can we leverage such traits to strengthen their commitment to energy conservation and using biodegradable products? How can we increase their willingness to actively seek change rather than passively waiting for a pro-climate social environment to force them to change their behavior?
- How to better combine **philosophical observers'** focus on intrinsic spiritual needs with climate-friendly behavior? How to avoid that they are being "excessively rational" in social affairs, resulting in not making any value judgments and being unwilling to empathize with others?

When producing content for specific segments, communicators can discuss the following questions:

- How well has the audience understood the climate knowledge, and how motivated are they to act based on it?
- What practical benefits could they gain from taking action to address climate change?
- What topics do the audience value the most?
- Is the narrative overly didactic?
- Is the writing logic compelling enough to hold the audience's attention?
- Are we using language and emotions that resonate with the audience to convey the message effectively?
- Does the message include some social issues or specific topics that they concern?
- Would presenting it in artistically creative media, such as digital multimedia, be more effective?

If policymakers and practitioners want to enhance climate mobilization and engage the public in climate governance, they may consider the following questions:

- Are we fully recognizing that environmental governance requires top-down national efforts, bottom-up social responses and independent actions from all societal actors?
- NGOs and companies can facilitate social mobilization as informal voices. Is there potential to enhance the capacity and opportunities for other social actors to take action towards mitigating climate change?
- Have we adequately considered the role of local communities in mobilizing the public to engage in climate-friendly behavior?
- Could we change the narrative approach to engage the public and encourage their greater sense of ownership over climate change?
- Have we communicated with the public as equal partners, and whether necessary conditions and facilities are provided for public participation to take place truly?

4.2 Demographic characteristics and typical personas

The six segments of the Chinese public display distinct characteristics across multiple dimensions of life values, closely associated with their demographic and social attributes such as age, education level, and occupation. The identification of the target audience can be guided by demographic indicators including but not limited to age, education level, profession, monthly income, place of residence, and occupation. These indicators play a crucial role in shaping public attitudes toward climate change.

The demographic characteristics of each segment are as follows:

Backbone Traditionalists

1. The proportion of middle-aged groups aged 46 to 65 is higher than that of other segments
2. The majority live in second and third-tier cities
3. A moderately limited monthly household income, with 70% earning less than 13,000 CNY per month
4. The majority of them exhibit a stable tendency in their careers and families, with some savings, and are most concerned about their family's health. Among them, people aged 56 to 65 are enjoying retirement



5. Occupations mainly concentrate on manufacturing, construction, and other secondary industries

·Typical characters

1. A manufacturing technology employee aged 46-55 living in Qingdao, Shandong. Have a strong desire to learn and stay up to date with the latest trends in social development. Manage finances by relying on their savings and show a preference for purchasing household appliances by using JD.com and Tmall. Prioritize the well-being of the entire family. When it comes to staying informed, the person trusts China Central Television and Xinhua News Agency the most, keeping a close eye on international affairs and current events. The person is also a user of Toutiao, Ireaders, and non-paid video platforms.

2. A young retired individual aged 56-55 living in Jingzhou, Hubei, is an active silver-haired netizen. Enjoy participating in group activities and has a strong need for social interaction. The young retired has much free time at their disposal. Trusts the People's Daily above all else and frequently uses Toutiao's speedy version and Himalaya, with a particular interest in humanities and historical content. The young retiree prefers offline consumption.

Disengaged Individualists

1. Most of them are young people between the age of 18-27, and the majority of them are technical school or associated college graduates

2. The majority of them originated from or resided in economically developing areas such as prefecture-level cities and counties

3. A high proportion are engaged in building decoration, hygiene and cleaning, online car-hailing drivers, takeaway drivers, restaurant waiters, and other domestic service positions

4. A relatively low household monthly income. The proportion of high-income households (earning over 17,000 CNY per month) ranks second to last, and the proportion of low-income groups (household monthly income of less than 5,000 CNY) is the highest

·**Typical characters**

A food-delivery man aged 18 to 27 living in Chongqing, he or she is a user of Oppo mobile phone, Kuaishou, WeChat, and QQ

Passionate Strivers

1. Elderly aged 46 years old and above obtains a high proportion
2. Majority of them have undergraduate or college degrees
3. Residing in economically prosperous regions or county-level towns of second and third-tier cities
4. Most have relatively high income and the highest average monthly household income across segments, with many being mid-to-senior level managers in government and state-owned enterprises, or retired government officials

·**Typical characters**

1. A senior manager of public institutions aged 36-45 living in Urumqi. Pays attention to workplace crises, parenting education, and chronic diseases. Moreover, they like to go on self-driving tours. They are users of the WeChat Official Account, iQIYI, Guokr, Taobao, Douyin, Zuoyebang/TAL(Tomorrow Advancing Life).
2. A employee or retired employee aged 56-65 residing in Haikou. The daily life mainly involves activities such as exercising in parks, taking care of their grandchildren, listening to and reading books, gardening, and enjoying group buying in their community. He/she is a user of Sohu News and Douyin, and still has a habit of watching television.

Easygoing Leisurists

1. Age range is between 28-45 and the majority of them are living in super first-tier cities
2. Among all segments, they have the highest proportion of undergraduate and graduate degrees, with majors in humanities and social sciences. After graduation, they mainly work in a specialized technical position
3. A relatively high-income level. They account for the highest proportion of segments with a monthly household income of 17,000 CNY and beyond



4. They enjoy a free and comfortable lifestyle, advocate living in the moment, and do not have the same level of anxiety about the future as other segments

·Typical characters

1. A 32-year-old employee in the marketing department of a state-owned enterprise, living in Shanghai. Frequently use apps such as Fliggy, Dewu, Dianping, Xiaohongshu, and Jianying. He/she is interested in visiting tourist destinations and has niche hobbies such as photography and fitness. He/She also enjoys going to exhibitions and museums, likes to read magazines such as Sanlian Life Weekly, Renwu, and Vista to see the world, and uses social media platforms such as Douyin, Weibo, and Zhihu.

Moderate Pragmatists

1. The majority of this group are from 18 to 35 years old, they account for more than 60% of the segment, representing the mainstream of China's young generation
2. Majority of them have a bachelor's degree and have lived in first-tier cities and second-tier developed cities for a long time
3. Pragmatism is their distinguishing characteristic. They prioritize achieving economic independence in the short-term and long-term pursuit of traditional values of "a successful career and a happy family" in the long term
4. The majority are urban white-collar workers
5. A moderate level of household income per month, with the average income being close to the overall Chinese income level

·Typical characters

1. Living in Nanjing and working in the Internet industry. They are between 28 to 35 years old and pay attention to industry trends, critical illness insurance, and financial management. The frequently used apps include Autohome, Meiyou, Qinbaobao, Maimai, Lianjia, and Pinduoduo. They frequently use Xiaomi appliances and drink Luckin Coffee. They read media such as Wall Street News, The Paper, Southern Weekend, and WeChat Reading.

2. They live in Hangzhou and are local civil servants aged 18 to 27. They pay attention to career development and personal savings, and frequently use Dongfang Caifu. They

use social media platforms such as Weibo, Bilibili, and Douyin. In daily life, they frequently use service apps like Xianyu and Zhiroom, and pay attention to brands like Liangpinpuzi, Li Jiaqi, and Dingxiangyisheng. They are also users of 36Kr, Huxiu, China Central Television, and NetEase Open Courses.

Philosophical Observers

1. They mainly live in super first-tier cities and have privileged lifestyles. The proportion of high-income households with more than 17,000 CNY per month is high, second only to easygoing leisurists with a difference of only 0.1%
2. The majority are undergraduate or graduate students aged 18 to 27, or working in fields related to their expertise. Most of them have oversea travel or living experience
3. They value spiritual fulfillment and prioritize a life focus on inner selves rather than conforming to others' expectations
4. Rarely express their own views on public affairs, but they possess a profound understanding of social phenomena, and critical thinking is their most remarkable characteristic

·Typical characters

1. Lives in Beijing and are undergraduate or graduate student in management aged 18 to 27. He/she is a user of Douban, Kanlixiang, Xiaoyuzhou, and Xiaoshuimian, and follows industry research reports and NGO reports on Zhishixingqiu. He/she likes to read books on social philosophy and is a seasoned movie enthusiast. Enjoys traveling and experiencing different cultures.

4.3 Media preferences of six segments

In addition to demographic variables such as age, education, occupation, and income, the media consumption habits of each segment are also different. To achieve precise audience targeting, it is necessary to consider their preferred media platforms, media usage duration, media trust, and other media consumption.



The media use habits of each segment are as follows:

Backbone Traditionalists

1. Have plenty of free time and spend the most time using various media platforms
2. Their primary source of information is Toutiao, a platform which they prefer to gather comprehensive information that integrates various features such as search engine, graphics, text, and Q&A
3. The media platforms that they trust the most are central state media such as the People's Daily and China Central Television
4. Their first choice for entertainment and relaxation is short video platforms, and they rarely use online video platforms such as Tencent Video and iQiyi on their phone.
5. They still obtain the habit of watching TV dramas and movies on television

Disengaged Individualists

1. They use media platforms for relaxation and entertainment
2. Rarely read serious long articles from Xinhua News Agency, Tencent News, or WeChat official accounts, and hardly pay attention to China Central Television's television channels. Nevertheless, they maintain a high level of trust in the information provided by central state media
3. They prefer social media platforms with strong emotions and visual stimulation to watch film clips and humorous videos. They also spend more time on short video platforms like Kuaishou than on WeChat Moments

Passionate Strivers

1. They use media mainly to satisfy their relaxation needs for leisure and entertainment
2. They frequently use online entertainment video platforms such as Kuaishou and Tencent Video
3. Their news outlet relies heavily on central state media (such as People's Daily) and local mainstream media (such as Zhejiang Daily)
4. Strong learning ability, willingness to acquire more professional knowledge in leisure time, and higher usage of online knowledge communities compared to the general public in China.

Easygoing Leisurists

1. Among all segments, easygoing leisurists are the least enthusiastic about using media platforms to obtain news.
2. Their media platform usage are limited to social media and online knowledge communities, such as Douyin, Weibo, and Zhihu.

Moderate Pragmatists

1. They spend less time on various media platforms compared to the average Chinese public
2. They spend most of their time on entertainment video platforms such as Douyin and social media networking platforms like Weibo
3. They pay most attention to news published by local media, especially in localized information published by local mainstream media and social media platforms

Philosophical Observers

1. When interested in specific topics, they use different media platforms depending on the different attributes of the news content
2. They use mainstream media such as Xinhua News Agency to verify the authenticity of news and read in-depth reportages mainly from traditional professional media such as Caixin
3. They turn to niche content platforms to learn about the latest beauty, technology, business, and entertainment trends

4.4 Communication objectives for six segments

In the process of climate communication with a segmented audience, it is necessary to develop targeted communication objectives based on the characteristics of each segment's life values, demographic characteristics, climate perception, and other aspects. The following content can provide a reference for developing communication goals targeting segmented audience:



Backbone Traditionalists

1. Maintain their strong focus on climate change and their support for climate policies, making them solid supporters, active policy advocates, and enthusiastic actors in addressing climate change
2. Transform their high level of willingness to act into concrete climate actions
3. Encourage them to be mobilizers and leaders in climate action

Disengaged Individualists

1. Include the segment in climate action, and prevent them from becoming climate change skeptics
2. Raise the segment's awareness on climate change, expose them to climate change related information, and guide them toward forming a scientific climate understanding
3. Raise their level of risk perception by letting them aware of the ongoingness risks of climate change
4. Mobilize the segment to adopt low-carbon lifestyles by offering guidelines that help mitigate climate change while lowering the cost of living, which in return helps to increase their willingness to act and self-efficacy

Passionate Strivers

1. Encourage their active engagement in climate actions to benefit others, such as responding to or initiating climate activities
2. Enhance their understanding of the multifaceted impacts of climate change on personal lives
3. Introduce formal channels for public participation in climate policies and encourage their active involvement in the development of relevant climate policies
4. Leverage their high level of social trust to promote them to spread the voices of the state and act as a bridge between the public and the government

Easygoing Leisurists

1. Encourage further improvement of climate knowledge and dissemination of related knowledge on the basis of their relatively strong climate knowledge, and turning into

promoting climate action

2. Increase their positive perception of climate action and foster a positive attitude towards it
3. Enhance their self-efficacy in climate issues, helping them to understand that both individuals and society play an important role in addressing climate change

Moderate Pragmatists

1. Help the audience realize that they are the key players in solving future climate problems
2. Inspire them to become practitioners of low-carbon lifestyles among the younger generation
3. Offer various ways, information, and suggestions for addressing climate action, and transform their high climate anxiety into practical climate actions
4. Encourage them to engage in climate activities, go beyond their daily routines
5. Encourage them to actively speak out on climate related issues on the Internet to generate heard behavior
6. Enhance their understanding on the significance of climate action, thereby enhancing their sense of climate efficacy

Philosophical Observers

1. Encourage them to become opinion leaders on climate change and support youth climate actions
2. Shift their pessimistic attitude towards climate change and help them realize that the climate situation is still within control;
3. The segment is actively willing to take action and values the role of NGOs in climate issues. They can be encouraged to participate in climate actions held by relevant organizations

4.5 Diversified narrative strategy for six segments

After setting specific communication goals for each segmented audience, it is necessary to further identify the narrative preferences of the target audience and develop narrative



strategies that align with those preferences. The segmented climate communication narrative strategies are as follows:

Backbone Traditionalists

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Encourage backbone traditionalists as leaders in pro-climate action
2. Emphasize China's leading role in global climate governance
3. Highlight the advantages of China's political system
4. Highlight China's shared but differentiated responsibilities from other countries
5. Stress the importance of climate policy and encourage them to speak up
6. Encourage them to actively promote and drive others' attention to climate change
7. Choose a trusted messenger
8. Make full use of the influence of authoritative media

· **Try to avoid:**

1. Avoid excessive use of “fear appeal” in climate change

Disengaged Individualists

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Offer pro-climate guidelines on how to be climate friendly while improving material conditions
2. Highlight the role of state authority in promoting climate actions and shaping individual efforts as a way of supporting national advocacy
3. Make full use of self-media and mainstream media accounts on social media platforms
4. Highlight the impact of climate change on citizens' current livelihood
5. Emphasize the short gains resulted from climate actions

· **Try to avoid:**

1. Avoid taking a long-term perspective when discussing climate change and instead focus on short-term benefits

Passionate Strivers

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Build nation-state ownership and call for their active participation in climate policy and governance
2. Narrating climate change as a necessary path for the development of the national economy
3. Emphasize the possibility of turning crisis into opportunity
4. Encourage them to be climate action pioneers and play a leading role
5. Point out the benefits of addressing climate change for economic recovery under the COVID-19 pandemic
6. Actively promote climate activities that are committed to helping others
7. Demonstrate the importance of addressing climate change to safeguard the basic rights of the lower social classes

· **Try to avoid:**

1. Avoid deliberate exaggeration and self-aggrandizement

Easygoing Leisurists

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Tell a real and forward-looking story based on China's responsibilities as a major country
2. Climate action is a long-term investment with returns
3. Link climate to positive and uplifting messages
4. Use “resilience” and “a sense of togetherness” as narrative themes
5. Emphasize the role of public can play in addressing climate change
6. Tell a real and positive story
7. Link climate to personal health
8. Tell positive stories of climate action with ordinary people as messengers

· **Try to avoid:**

1. Avoid starting with "justice" and focus more on "fairness"



Moderate Pragmatists

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Emphasize the direct impact of climate change on individual lives, especially on economic lives
2. Encourage them to actively discuss and speak out on climate issues on the internet platform
3. Emphasize "shared responsibility" and encourage "individual action"
4. Shape the identity as "the owners of future climate change" and create a certain "future anxiety"
5. Emphasize the "collective power" of young people
6. Combine the economic benefits of climate action at the macro and micro levels and formulate win-win effects
7. Organize nearby climate activities and mobilize through communication
8. Explain climate policies from an individual perspective

Should avoid:

1. Avoid portraying the climate issue as a purely political issue
2. Try to avoid discussing climate from the perspective of fairness and justice

Philosophical Observers

· **The emphasis should be on:**

1. Use highly recognized international organizations as sources
2. Highlight the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups
3. Encourage sharing of climate knowledge on the Internet
4. Focus on stories of youth action and encourage them to actively support
5. Provide clear and actionable pathways for climate action
6. Use a variety of case studies to emphasize that climate change is still in a relatively controllable and manageable stage.

Try to avoid:

1. Avoid using urgent and pessimistic narratives, and adopt a cautious and optimistic

story telling narrative

2. Avoid absolute expressions and instead use critical expressions
3. Avoid sloganeering patriotism narratives, describe social reality and practical policy measures

4.6 Common narrative for six segments

In addition to revealing different narrative strategies for mobilizing diverse audiences, our research also summarizes common narrative strategies that can connect multiple segments of the public. These narrative strategies can provide practitioners with relatively efficient communication plans, especially for organizations with limited resources or seeking interaction with a broader audience. When conducting climate communication in China, it is recommended to consider utilizing these common narrative strategies.

4.6.1 The role of the state

Regardless of the segment types, “the priority attention country is given to climate change” is an important motivation for the public to be concerned about climate change, and “the strong advocacy of individual action by the country” is an important reason for them to adopt pro-climate behavior. The country is seen by all segments as the key actor in climate action. Therefore, emphasizing the image of climate action as an “important national strategy” should be considered a crucial common narrative strategy.

4.6.2 Material living standard

The standard of living is a high concern for all six types of audiences. Lower-income segments (disengaged individuals) and moderate-income audiences (backbone traditionalists, moderate pragmatists) are highly eager to further improve their own material living standards. On the other hand, higher-income groups (passionate strivers, easygoing leisurists, and philosophical observers) are more concerned about maintaining their current living standards and are vigilant against the decline in life quality and consumer downgrading. Interpreting the close relationship between climate change and personal material living standards and emphasizing the impact of climate change on material living will bring collective attention from the Chinese public to climate change to a large extent.



4.6.3 Immediate impact and short-term benefits

Chinese audiences generally show less interest in the future scenarios and long-term impacts of climate change and are more inclined to focus on the impacts that have already occurred, as well as the specific benefits that may result from individual actions in the short term. Therefore, emphasizing the impacts of climate change that have already occurred through tangible and relatable examples, as well as portraying the short-term benefits of climate action, is more likely to achieve large-scale mobilization.

4.6.4 Caring for vulnerable groups

Backbone traditionalists, passionate strivers, and philosophical observers all highly prioritize issues concerning vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, migrant workers, and the unemployed, and have a strong sense of morality and responsibility toward their livelihood and mental well-being. These three segments represent a significant portion of the Chinese population (63% of the total population), with the backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers having a strong sense of efficacy and aspiring to be leaders in action and policy influencers, while the philosophical observers possess higher levels of knowledge and unique insights, with the potential to become opinion leaders. Emphasizing the impact of climate change on vulnerable groups in narratives, and highlighting the current situation of vulnerable groups being affected by climate change can better mobilize these three key segments to take action and gain public support in terms of actions and opinions.

4.7 Case study: Engaging Beijing university students in climate action

- **Use the key findings to guide the work process:**
- **Clarify the mission and vision of the organization:** Establish the organization's identity and responsibilities in addressing climate change. Take a forward-looking approach for the next five to ten years and envision the organization's development and achievements.
- **Gain insights into the target audience:** Understand the differences in life values, climate cognition and attitudes among the public in different age groups, social classes, and residing cities.
- **Determine concrete goals for the communication activity:** After identifying the target age groups (such as young retirees, middle-aged professionals, or Generation Z),

explore which audience segments they belong to and specify their life values based on demographic characteristics.

- **Strategy selection and content production:** Select suitable media channels for content promotion and craft tailored narratives that resonates with the target audience's life values and external social concerns. This will help to establish a deeper connection with the audience and foster more effective communication.

Case Study

Assuming that the communicator is targeted university students in Beijing as the audience and aims to inspire young people to take concrete actions to combat climate change. In this context, climate communicators can employ the following methods to use the report's key conclusions.

- **Insight into the audience:** University students in Beijing are not a homogeneous group, with the age group ranging from 18 to 25 years old, mainly distributed among three segments: Moderate pragmatists, philosophical observers, and disengaged individualists. However, disengaged individualists are primarily distributed in fourth and fifth-tier cities in China and do not need to be considered a priority audience. From a balanced perspective, moderate pragmatists represent the mainstream of the current Chinese youth, while philosophical observers have a relatively low overall proportion. When developing communication strategies for university students, more effort and resources should be focused on connecting with moderate pragmatists to reach more young people and achieve optimal communication effects. Philosophical observers have strong opinions on personal affairs and hope to live by the principle of "Do not do unto others what you wish not to be done to you." Therefore, massively disseminating information may not lead to an ideal communication effect. It is essential to tailor communication strategies to fit their life values and deepen their understanding of the audience to promote climate-friendly behavior better.

- **How to reach the audience:** For the younger age group, such as moderate pragmatists and philosophical observers, are active on social media sites like Weibo, Bilibili, Zhihu, Douban, etc. Different segments have diverse concerns about social issues, leading them to follow different types of online KOLs. For example, on Bilibili, moderate pragmatists tend to focus on topics related to personal development. University students who share this trait will likely follow knowledge-sharing bloggers covering topics like life hacks, campus studies, and resource sharing. They also enjoy contents that offer comedic relief or suggest fun weekend activities. On the other



hand, philosophical observers are more drawn to social commentary videos produced by influencers such as Luo Xiang on criminal law, the Laowai Research Association, and Observer Net. To effectively engage with these segments on youth-oriented platforms, communicators should first anchor the content types they are interested in. Collaborating with influential KOLs with a large following among university students in super tier-1 cities can lead to better communication effects. It is also crucial to understand the niche social media that philosophical observers prefer, such as Xiaoyuzhou, to find their gathering media platforms more accurately.

- **How to set communication goals:** To effectively communicate the importance of climate action to university students, communicators should start by setting specific goals. For example, moderate pragmatists who seek traditional success and have a strong desire to participate in climate action can be encouraged to become supporters, advocates, organizers, and mobilizers of pro-climate behavior. Certificates could be provided to boost their spirit, which aligns with their pragmatic nature and can address their low personal efficacy towards climate action. This, in turn, creates a virtuous cycle. On the other hand, for philosophical observers who think rationally and dialectically, the goal should be to identify them as supporters and promoters of China's fair transition. They believe in the power of "bystanders" and hold a high degree of recognition for promoting social justice and fairness. This helps to enhance their sense of self-efficacy and willingness to take action on climate change.

- **Developing climate narratives:** Young pragmatists are increasingly concerned about the practical impacts of climate change on individuals in the present. Communicators can leverage the perspective of recent graduates to help them understand new climate policies and how these policies and regulations can reshape the future of the industry and the job market, as well as how to reposition themselves in the job market under this background. We should also listen to the authentic stories of ordinary people, as philosophical observers asserted high trust in their voices. This approach does not contradict the narratives that pragmatists prefer and can even be integrated.



5

**NARRATIVE
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
STAKEHOLDERS**



5.1

Narrative recommendations for government



1. Find the connection between climate policies and the public interest. Future narratives should avoid portraying climate change as a distant and grand issue. Instead, they need to connect the climate policies with the personal life of the public and raise their concerns. Our research shows that the majority of the population favor and supports incentive climate policies, such as “subsidizing for companies that use clean energy,” “tax exemption for new energy vehicles”, and “strengthening research and development of energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies.” These policies are very closely linked to climate issues and personal interests, which is also a leverage point for government to attract public attention to climate change. Moreover, segments such as moderate pragmatists have much support for technological innovation, and they believe that energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies are vital measures to deal with climate change. Therefore, the government is suggested to highlight efforts made to stimulate technological innovation as a demonstration of its efficient action. Clear communication with the public on how to achieve climate goals and providing specific individual climate mitigation actions may become an essential driving force in the government's narrative.

2. Discover the multi-dimensional aspects of climate change, emphasizing the positive impact on the economy and health. Although the government needs to play a leading role in climate governance, it should also avoid paying too much attention to the political aspect of climate change. Across the segments, moderate pragmatists, easygoing leisurists, and philosophical observers have a low sense of political efficacy, which results in a simple political discourse that cannot mobilize them to act. Instead, these segments are more concerned about the connection between climate change and their lives. The future climate narrative should start from an individualized perspective, combined with a macro perspective, and explain the positive impacts of climate change on individuals and social development, such as improving personal health and a better living environment, providing more green employment opportunities, ensuring food security, promoting resilient city development, and accelerating green and high-quality economic growth (such as carbon pricing, green financing) among other practical benefits. Such narratives can increase the willingness of the public to participate, especially in fostering engagement among low-efficacy populations.

3. Encourage backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers to become role models in climate action. The government should find the key target groups to achieve an audience-oriented communication effect. Hence, backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers should be the main targeted audience. These two segments have a high level of political efficacy and nationalism, and a very high degree of



social trust. They uphold the highest support for various policies established by the government and have a strong identification with the nation-state identity. Their extremely high communitarianism also prompts them to most likely practice the country's "dual carbon" goals. As the government is a source they trust and support the most, it can also become the most effective channel to enhance their action toward climate change; it can also leverage the political efficacy of these segments and call on their participation in the climate agenda as the "owner of the nation." It helps to shape the public's position as a critical player in climate action and global governance, and highlights the importance of people's wisdom in China's response to climate change.

4. Avoid absolute statements and translate macro policies into narratives with local realities. Almost all respondents mentioned that they dislike empty policy preaching and incomprehensible policy documents. Hence, local governments who provide responses to the central-level government policy are suggested to form more integrated climate narratives with local realities. The difference in the actual situation in each region not only includes the uniqueness of the local natural environment but also covers the industrial and economic structure in the sectors of energy and environment. For example, what economic impacts will occur in provinces that rely heavily on fossil energy structures, and how cities that are more affected by extreme weather will be able to protect their people's lives. These narratives can deeply analyze how climate change affects local development and people's livelihood. It also further illustrates how different social actors actively promote the protection mechanism against future shocks for climate-vulnerable groups. This will help in building individual participation under the grand narrative and enhance the public's political efficacy in general.

5. Focus on segments that are dominated by youth and cultivate their long-term pro-climate behaviors. Youth are the main participants in addressing climate change in the future, and their climate perceptions and cognitions will shape the future paradigm of coping with climate change. Drawing on our research, we can see that youth are mainly distributed in segments such as disengaged individualists, philosophical observers and moderate pragmatists, who have low self-efficacy and social efficacy, and remain detached from most social issues. This reveals that the segments might be less willing to engage in pro-climate behaviors because they do not believe that their actions can produce value. However, at the same time, it is also observed that they have a high level of trust in the government, they even take the call of the government as an essential motivation for self-participation in public affairs. Therefore, government agencies can utilize these traits to emphasize the value and significance of individual behavior especially for youth in response to climate change to increase

their willingness to participate and to shape climate action into a process that requires the efforts of all people with an attitude of "many a little makes a mickle", as well as encourage youth to develop climate-friendly lifestyles.

6. Promote diversified climate popularization and improve climate awareness among segments such as philosophical observers. The public survey reveals that the current climate literacy level of the Chinese public is generally weak. In a more specific manner, segments such as philosophical observers, disengaged individualists, and backbone traditionalists have a significantly lower climate literacy level when compared to the average score. It is crucial to effectively popularize climate science knowledge and improve the scientific understanding of climate change among the public as a whole, especially among those who may have climate-skeptical tendencies, such as disengaged individualists. Most traditional climate science content is confined to a single listing of scientific data compilation. However, the government could efficiently coordinate various communication resources and greatly enhance the situation. For example, the government can encourage local science museums or academic research institutions to carry out regular lectures and science knowledge popularization activities. They can also use their communication channels (such as WeChat and Weibo official accounts) to continuously produce easy-to-understand information, to attract the segments since they perceive these platforms as high authority platforms and could help the broader public to form a more comprehensive understanding of the scientific consensus on climate change.

7. Continue to shape a positive and responsible leadership image of China. The survey reveals that all segments believe that the Chinese government should be the "pioneer" and "leader" of climate change, and an authoritative player in the "top-level design" of China's climate action. In future narratives, further emphasizing the leadership of the Chinese government will help to increase the importance of climate change in the minds of the public and will also bring confidence to climate actions of the public.

8. Emphasizing the international collaboration on climate change. The government narrative should first emphasize the shared benefits for the global community in combating climate change before addressing China's political interests. In other words, climate narratives should pay more attention to China's efforts in the international community's joint response to climate change, thus highlighting China's image as a major state that actively shoulders global governance responsibilities and practices a "community with a shared future of mankind."



5.2

Narrative recommendations for NGO



1. Use experts as the main information source. This research indicates that the public generally has a higher degree of social trust in experts when compared to media and companies. They are more likely to believe the information from meteorological experts and research reports published by professional institutions. Therefore, NGOs are recommended to keep up with the latest domestic and international climate related research progress, conferences, and document signings, screen through reliable sources and information on climate change for the public, and use issues related to individual lives as an entry point to enhance public awareness. Through this, NGOs can play a better key role in connecting academia and the public by heightening the public's climate awareness.

2. Guiding passionate strivers to shape public opinion and influence climate policy. The passionate strivers mainly contain middle-aged individuals who are the backbone of the social economy and obtain plenty of resources at both individual and societal levels. They have a more extraordinary ability to promote the formation of common interests as they possess corresponding discourse power and influence. The characteristic of passionate strivers highly overlaps with the urban middle-class consumers or households, who are the current focus of NGOs in climate communication. It is recommended that NGOs continue to establish a sense of "ownership" for passionate strivers in climate action, provide operational guidelines, and fully leverage their influence and role in building public opinion for low-carbon transformation.

3. Launch public climate activities and mobilize moderate pragmatists to participate. Moderate pragmatists also accounted for a significant part of the "urban middle-class consumers or households" with a high level of climate risk awareness and a willingness to participate in climate action. The main reasons that hinder them to engage in climate action are low self-efficacy and unclear participation channels. Hence, they seek to contribute to climate mitigation through nearby community activities or by making small changes in their daily lives. It is recommended that NGOs establish a sense of connection with them through local and daily activities (such as second-hand commodity trade exhibitions, environmental protection cultural festivals, community waste management) and clearly convey the positive impacts of climate action, thus including the segment into the larger climate action agenda.

4. Encourage philosophical observers to become climate opinion leaders of Gen Z. Along with the "urban middle-class families," another key target audience for NGOs is "youth activists (Generation Z)." Generation Z is mainly distributed across three segments, which are philosophical observers, moderate pragmatists, and disengaged individualists with different demographic and value orientations. Mobilizing



philosophical observers is particularly vital as they highly value the roles of NGOs in bringing social forces together and helping government agencies in governance. Their income, education level, and media literacy are relatively high, making them potentially the most influential segment among the young generation. Additionally, they possess strong critical thinking abilities and hold their unique views on public and climate change, while highly applauding the climate action of young people. NGOs can leverage these characteristics to actively encourage the segment to become climate opinion leaders of Gen Z, providing them with platforms and opportunities to speak out and increasing their willingness and participation in climate action.

5. Deep dive into the connection between the public's concerns with climate change. NGOs have a natural connection with societal concerns that matter to the public. Therefore, they can identify and focus on core public concerns that intersect with climate issues. For example, disengaged individualists are concerned the most with material improvement. Therefore, NGOs can highlight the potential of climate action in saving money and increasing income to engage the segment.

6. Provide a more detailed guideline towards low-carbon living. All segments are willing to make small changes in their lives and participate in climate action, but they are reluctant the restriction in their personal development and consumption choices. To address this, NGOs should shift the communication focus from "rational consumption" to "green consumption", and use the public's current lifestyle as a starting point to guide them toward consuming environmentally friendly low-carbon products. This will help to cultivate a culture of low-carbon consumption, and integrate climate action into people's daily lives, as well as promote public participation. Additionally, these NGOs are suggested to provide practical and multi-dimensional low-carbon life guidelines with examples, which helps to promote an ideal low-carbon lifestyle and achieve public mobilization through the use of role models.

7. Leveraging multi-dimensional media to compensate on the lack of public attention to the NGO. Due to limited control over communication resources, NGOs face challenges in effectively promoting climate content. Therefore, NGOs should aim to influence the agendas of mainstream media and self-media that are popular among all segments to promote climate communication which this approach has proven effective worldwide. In addition to the Chinese social media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo, and Douyin which are popular among the Chinese public, there are differences in media choices for each segment. NGOs need to consider the media usage habits of different segments and collaborate with different types of media to make up for their limited communication resources and increase the impact of their existing content creation.

5.3

Narrative recommendations for business sector





1. Enhance public trust through environmental information disclosure. The national survey shows that six segments have the lowest level of social trust in companies regarding to climate change. At present, most of the environmental information related to corporate environmental initiatives is currently kept in a “black box”, with little voluntary disclosure and low completeness. This makes it difficult for the public to become aware of and engage with. Therefore, companies should make a concerted effort to disclose environmental information as part of daily communication efforts to reinforce public disclosure of environmental information, and enhance public trust as a whole as the top priorities for companies in climate narratives. In addition to highlighting companies’ positive contributions to turning green and low-carbon, they should also objectively display the negative impacts on the environment caused by the production process of companies in terms of emissions and energy consumption. In this way, the environmental information can become more transparent, and enhance public trust, thereby providing the public with a better understanding of how their consumption choices can support the green transformation.

2. Emphasize the measures taken by companies in response to national environmental protection policies and provide tangible evidence. The research indicates that all segments believe that a “funnel-shaped systemic management model” should be adopted to address climate change. The government should serve as the top policy designer and implementation leader, while companies are important actors that actively participate in climate action under government guidance. To convey their commitment to climate action and partnership with the government, companies can highlight their contributions and cooperation with government-led initiatives, and weave in the national narratives of climate change. By positioning themselves as the intermediary between the government and individuals, companies can demonstrate their proactive response to national sustainability goals and take ownership of climate responsibilities. Companies can track the implementation of their sustainable initiatives and provide real-time updates to the public on showcasing their ongoing efforts.

3. Encourage backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers to form positive public opinion. These two segments constitute a relatively high proportion of the Chinese public and have a high willingness to take climate action, making them a crucial target audience for companies seeking to build public support for their sustainability efforts. They are also highly concerned about climate change and have the highest level of trust in companies. In terms of occupational distribution, passionate strivers have the highest proportion of people engaged in mining and manufacturing. They are very familiar with such industries that are prone to energy consumption and

pollution. Therefore, companies can use this advantage to encourage them to build a friendly social opinion base with information on other industries, such as sustainable initiatives, innovative technology breakthroughs, etc. Both backbone traditionalists and passionate strivers have a strong sense of nationalism and political efficacy, and they place a high level of trust in experts, government, and central state media. Companies can leverage these trusted messengers and emphasize the positive impact of pro-climate action on national development, such as industrial transformation and deepening reforms, to win both segments' trust and support.

4. Utilize philosophical observers and moderate pragmatists as potential targeted audiences. Philosophical observers and moderate pragmatists have moderate trust in companies and can be mobilized using different techniques. Philosophical observers are concerned about the health and well-being of climate-vulnerable groups, such as disabled individuals, delivery workers, and construction workers. Companies can launch public welfare activities and use profits from the public's green consumption to improve the lives of vulnerable communities. Meanwhile, they can use the voices of ordinary people to tell stories about how their lives benefit from companies' pro-climate behavior to elicit empathy from philosophical observers and moderate pragmatists. On the other hand, moderate pragmatists are particularly supportive of mitigating climate change through technological innovation and have the highest level of support for the policy of "strengthening the research and development of advanced energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies" among all segments. Companies can emphasize their investment in the research and development of energy-saving and emission-reduction technologies to persuade them.

5. Eliminate suspicion of companies greenwashing for philosophical observers. At the moment, the public, especially philosophical observers, has a low level of trust in companies due to the criticism of greenwashing, which means using environmentalism as a marketing tool to achieve business interests. Dispelling this suspicion is crucial in gaining their trust and support. Narratives that only talk about environmental protection in product design are insufficient in convincing the public of a company's environmental commitment. Instead, narratives should emphasize the whole chain of the environmental protection process, from production to transportation and sales. Actual data and cases should also be used to highlight the companies' significant sacrifices that companies make to prioritize environmental protection.

6. Emphasize the important impact of public purchase on climate change to moderate pragmatists. The research indicates that moderate pragmatists, philosophical observers, and easygoing leisurists have a moderate willingness to



participate in climate action, but lack a sense of efficacy. Many respondents believe that individual actions have little effect, and companies should bear the main responsibility for positive change. However, for companies to make fundamental changes, they require public support. Therefore, companies should raise public awareness about the significant impact of their power on green and low-carbon consumption. In the narrative, companies should emphasize that unilateral actions by themselves are not sustainable and they require actual purchase and support from consumers. To enhance trust in companies, it is essential to provide clear data demonstrating the impact of consumers' purchases. Companies can quantify the specific contribution of their individual behaviors to climate change, such as planting trees through Alipay Ant Forest, to make climate actions transparent, visualized, and concrete.

7. Fully unleash the leading potential of easygoing leisurists in green consumption and low-carbon lifestyle. As a segment aged mainly between 18-27 years old and 28-45 years old, easygoing leisurists have an open attitude towards new ideas and knowledge, and a keen interest in exploring new lifestyles. They are more willing to embrace the concept of green consumption by adopting changes in consumption behavior. From the perspective of climate economy and investment returns, companies can leverage their products to provide easygoing leisurists with more high-quality, high-return, and eco-friendly consumption choices that align with their consumption behavior with green values. In addition, companies can also promote and advocate for a long-term sustainable lifestyle, inspiring the segment to adopt green consumption, embrace low-carbon living, and leverage their influence to inspire others.

8. Highlight the positive impact of companies on economic development and employment. Many segments, such as moderate pragmatists, are concerned about social issues of economic development and employment. By connecting climate change with personal interests, such as economy and employment, companies could attract their attention. Therefore, companies can highlight the benefits of their climate action for economic development and employment. Also, consciously fulfilling their social responsibilities while paying attention to the interests of low-income groups can gain the support of the Chinese public.



6

METHODOLOGY



The findings and conclusions presented in this report are based on the systematic analysis of a large amount of data and materials collected by the research team.

The research work took approximately one year and went through various stages, including research design, feasibility assessment, data and empirical material collection and analysis, drawing preliminary conclusions, scientific evaluation of conclusions, and report formation. At each step, the team invited various experts and scholars from academia and industry to provide suggestions and guidance, enhancing the scientific nature and relevance of this project.

In terms of research methods, the project employed public surveys, cluster analysis, focus groups, narratives workshops, in-depth interviews, and expert and stakeholder workshops. The specific operation processes are as follows:

6.1 Public survey

The team measured variables such as life values, climate knowledge, and climate risk perception of the Chinese public nationwide through online questionnaire surveys. A total of 8,077 valid questionnaires were collected during the research phase, and the distribution of demographic variables such as gender, age, education, occupation, and region of the samples were all in line with the distribution characteristics of China's population structure.



The public survey was divided into three stages:

Questionnaire design and modification

The stage took approximately one month. In the early phase, the team collected, organized and analyzed a considerable amount of existing international literature and measurement tools. They also referred to numerous studies on culture and life values based on the Chinese context to extract key variables and measurement questions. Furthermore, the team adjusted the phrasing of many internationally accepted measurement questions to better suit the Chinese context.

In addition to the necessary demographic variables, the overall structure of the questionnaire was designed to be divided into two sections of A/B variables. Among them, variable A mainly composed of the life values of the Chinese public, while variable B was mainly used to measure key information such as the Chinese public’s cognition, attitude, and behavior toward climate change (refer to Chapter 2 of the report for the specific explanation of variables).

After completing the preliminary questionnaire design, the team invited research experts from Climate Outreach, the School of Journalism and Communication of Tsinghua University, the School of Sociology of Tsinghua University, the School of Sociology of Fudan University, and the School of Communication of Soochow University. The first questionnaire draft was reviewed through one-on-one communication and workshops. The team further made preliminary revisions to the questionnaire based on the suggestions put forward by experts.

Pilot Study

The phase took about half a month. Using an online questionnaire platform, the team digitized the first draft of the questionnaire and conducted a pilot survey in collaboration with China News Network. A total of 566 valid questionnaires were collected.

The team conducted a preliminary analysis and tested the reliability and



Figure 6-1 China News Network published a link to the questionnaire on Weibo



validity of each variable based on the collected data. They found that a small number of variables did not meet the standards for reliability and validity (Cronbach's coefficient <0.7 , KMO <0.6), so they were adjusted and modified to ensure the overall quality of the questionnaire.

Public survey distribution

The formal research phase took one month. The team cooperated with Shanghai Zero Point Index Information Consulting Co., Ltd., a well-known Chinese research company, to conduct a formal nationwide public survey. The data collected on the first day were used as the second trial survey data to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The results showed that all variables meet the required standard (Cronbach's coefficient >0.7 , KMO >0.6), ensuring the quality of the data and variables needed for the test.

A total of 8,077 valid questionnaires were collected and divided into two parts: the random pool and the quota pool, which were conducted simultaneously. Among them, 6,077 valid questionnaires were collected from the random pool, and the five demographic variables that significantly affect citizens' life values and awareness of climate issues, namely gender, age, education, occupation, and region, were controlled to match the demographic distribution of China's population based on the seventh national census data. A total of 2,000 valid questionnaires were collected from the quota pool. The age variable was limited to 18-27 years old, and the occupation variable was adjusted to "student" and "employed" based on age characteristics. The population variables of gender, education and region were controlled to fit the distribution characteristics of China's population structure. However, due to the structure of the sample library in online research and the relevant ethical and legal regulations for conducting online research on minors, the research sample of this study does not include minors, and the sample of rural populations is relatively low. The specific sample distribution is as follows:

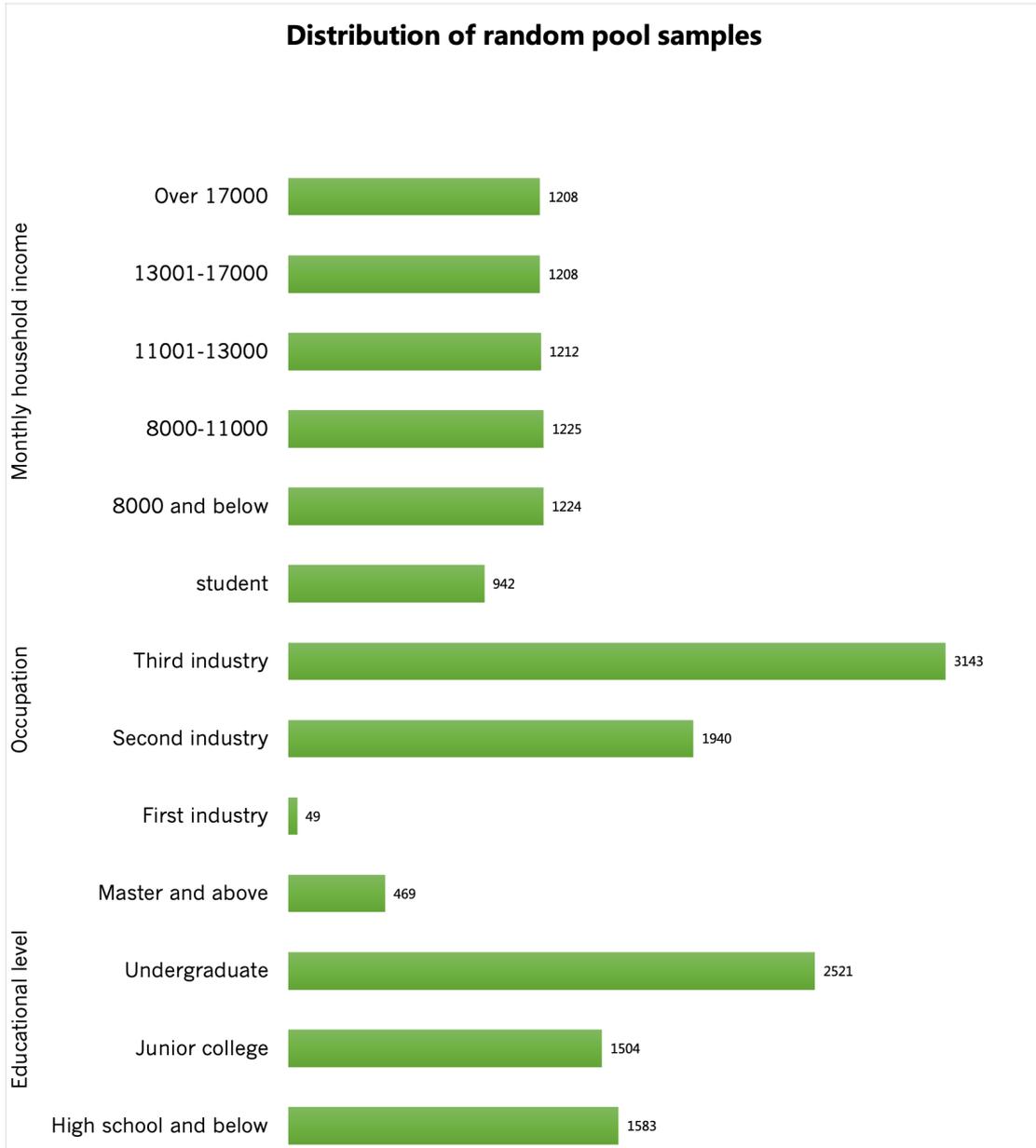


Figure 6-2 Distribution of random pool samples

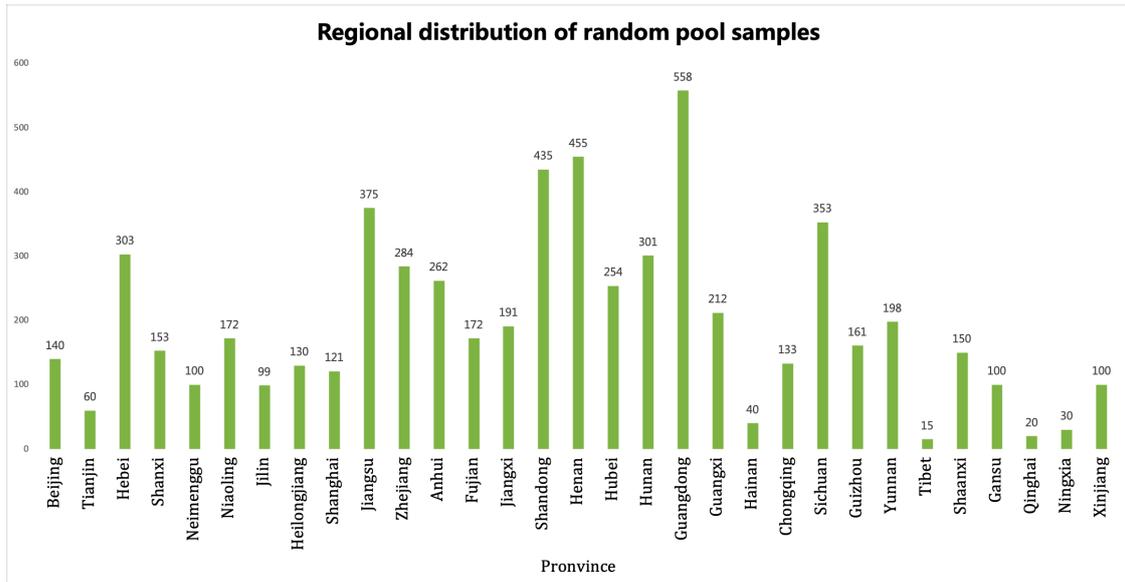


Figure 6-3 Regional distribution of random pool samples

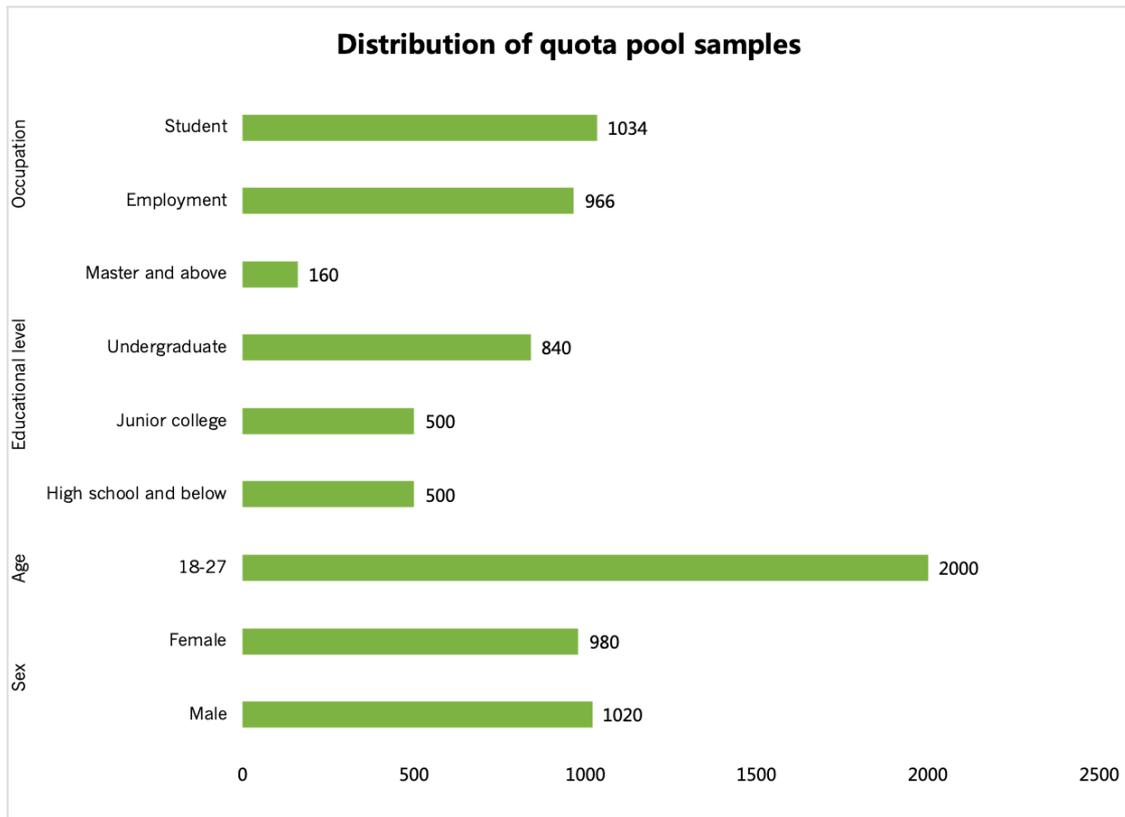


Figure 6-4 Distribution of quota pool samples

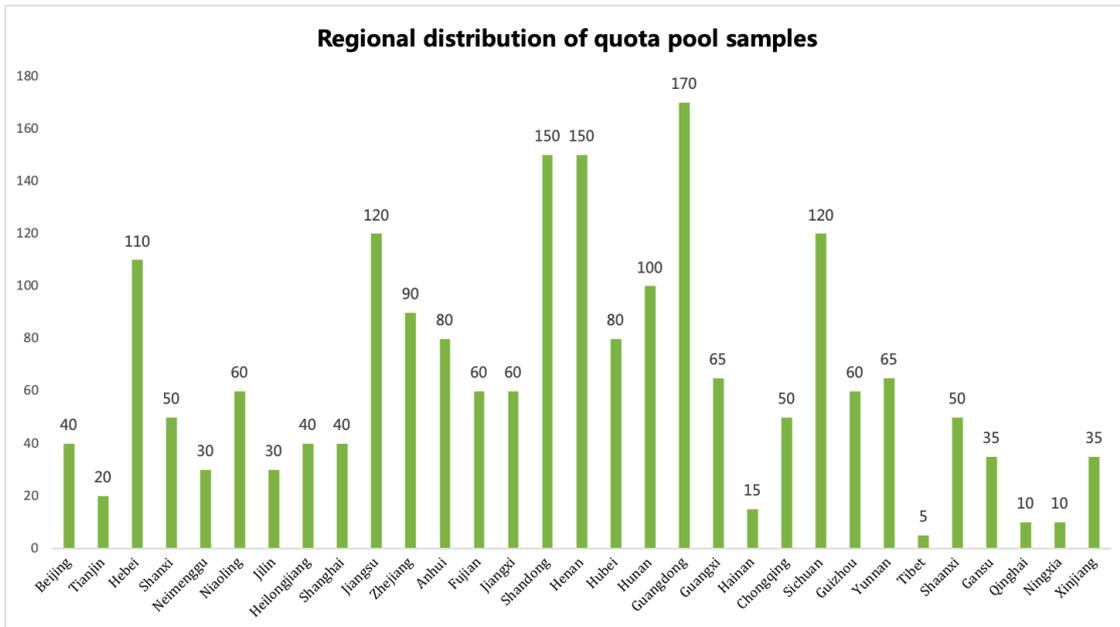


Figure 6-5 Geographic distribution of quota pool samples

6.2 Cluster analysis

The research adopted cluster analysis to analyze and classify the public. The specific process involved the following steps:

First, determining the segment index. The research used the life values variable as the main indicator to determine public segmentation. The segmentation indicators include nine variables: self-transcendence, self-enhancement, conservation, openness to change, fatalism, hierarchy, communitarianism, political efficacy, and nationalism.

Second, the team performed cluster analysis. We used hierarchical cluster analysis to determine the appropriate number of clusters and screen for outliers. Subsequently, we adopted K-means to obtain the optimum numbers of clusters. All clustering schemes were filtered and evaluated based on the characteristics of each cluster variable, the degree of mutual exclusion between clusters, and the abilities of clusters to explain public segmentation in the Chinese context. Each cluster was given a name based on the scores of variables and combined with the cognitive characteristics of the public's life values in the Chinese context.



6.3 Focus group

After classifying the public and conducting a preliminary analysis of A/B variables, the team conducted in-depth focus groups to collect valuable insights into individual-level factors, such as reasoning, life course, and social network.

The focus group was carried out with six groups of individuals based on the public classification, with each group participating in a separate focus group session. The work lasted approximately 40 days.

In recruiting interviewees, the team incorporated a survey question about their willingness to participate in further interviews conducted by the research group in the preliminary public survey questionnaire. After collecting the questionnaire responses, the team members categorized the respondents and ensured that the five demographic variables of age, gender, occupation, region, and education level were as diverse as possible. Based on the phone numbers provided in the survey, interviewees were invited and successfully recruited.



Figure 6-6 Focus group interview scene

A total of seven focus groups were carried out, including one pilot interview and six formal interviews. The offline focus groups were held in the conference room of the School of Journalism and Communication, Tsinghua University, and the online focus group were conducted on the Tencent Meeting platform. The trial interview was used to explore whether the focus group interview outline was reasonable and to accumulate relevant experience for conducting formal focus groups. Since materials collected in the trial interview were considered representative and important, they were also included in the analysis process of this report.

Each focus group was limited to 2-3 hours and included 8-10 interviewees, one moderator, one recorder and one organizer. The focus group was carried out in a semi-structured manner, and the discussion direction was consistent with the A/B variable structure of the questionnaire, including understanding the life attitudes and life values of different groups of people through exchanges on "ideal living conditions" and "social issues of concern." The team used questions such as "how to view climate change" and "willingness of climate action" to gather in-depth information of different groups' climate awareness and climate action.

6.4 Narrative workshop

After the focus groups, the team organized narrative workshops for the interviewees.

The public narrative workshop utilized a qualitative research approach developed by Climate Outreach, which involved asking respondents to evaluate common narratives on a given issue. Respondents marked sentences and phrases they liked and disliked with different colored marker pens, and shared their reasons for their preferences in the subsequent group discussion. The workshop aimed to engage the public, who are often considered "passive" recipients of information, in the conversation about climate communication. By appropriately evaluating the effects of news dissemination, communicators can form better discourse strategies and tell more convincing stories to different groups of people. Compared to traditional focus groups, group discussions in narrative workshops were rooted in the life values of the interviewees. Instead of emphasizing the importance of climate change through complex and abstract scientific paradigms, the narrative workshops can better enlighten the audience's motivation for pro-climate behavior by understanding what they care about, their pursuit of the meaning of life, and their expectations for a better life.



The operational process of the narrative workshop was divided into two stages.

First stage: Composed narrative test samples and conducted pre-testing

Step 1: To ensure that testing samples include various narrative styles from different communicators, the team first collected the existing narratives from government agencies, NGOs, companies, and media organizations, and then categorized them according to different topics. Next, the team reviewed academic research on climate narrative and conducted structured interviews with stakeholders to identify the gaps in narrative topics. Based on the result, new topics were added to the list.

Step 2: The team rewrote the narrative testing samples based on assumptions about different climate attitudes and social classes. The narratives followed the writing structure of "Central Statement—Actor's Action and Motivation—Current Problem, Solution, Purpose—Meaning and Identity." The different target audiences for each narrative also led to differences in narrative topics, sentence patterns, and corresponding assumptions.

Step 3: Recruit participants for a pre-test on the samples, and adjust the narratives based on feedback from participants. Participants were recruited through sharing posters on WeChat Moment and peer-to-peer invitations. To ensure project controllability, the team invited participants with diverse educational backgrounds and political trust levels to enhance the diversity within the homogeneous group. After the pre-test, in-depth interviews were conducted with group members to understand their concerns and preferred narratives, leading to a new round of narrative revision.

Step 4: Finalized the narrative samples. In total, fifteen narrative themes were formed, including five major themes, including survival needs, new growth of climate and energy transition, trendy lifestyle, emotional bonding related to family and community, and spiritual beliefs linked to national pride and cultural heritage.

Second stage: Hosting narrative workshops and analyze narrative feedbacks

Before the end of the focus group, the narratives were distributed to the participants for feedback. Using green markers for words they liked, red markers for words they disliked, and leaving the neutral parts untouched, then participants were invited to provide comments explaining their choices. A qualitative explanatory analysis was conducted by combining the narrative feedback with the results from the interviews.

Quantitative statistics were conducted on the number of keywords and phrases marked in the narratives. The narratives, words, and phrases that were marked green or red by a majority of participants indicated that they were able to elicit consensus from the segment. Conversely, sentences that were rarely marked implied that the narrative was not resonating with the audience. The team then analyzed the high-frequency keywords and narrative techniques to draw general conclusions. Additionally, word clouds were used to identify narrative keywords related to the life values of the people, and generate focused narrative suggestions based on the characteristics of the audience.



Figure 6-7 Example of climate narratives

6.5 In-depth interview

The in-depth interview was primarily employed to validate and supplement the findings from the focus group. The team conducted targeted training for over 20 students from Tsinghua University to serve as interviewers. Together with the interviewers, the team conducted in-depth interviews with various segments of the Chinese public to collect relevant data.

A total of 74 individuals representing different segments of the Chinese public were interviewed. The interviews involved first inviting the interviewees to complete the public survey questionnaire, categorizing them into different segments based on the results, and then conducting in-depth interviews. The interview outline was consistent



with the outline of the focus group interviews, and some representative interviewees were also invited to provide comments on the narratives.

6.6 Expert and stakeholder workshop

During the project, a total of six workshops were held with experts and stakeholders.

First, expert workshops were held during the project initiation, mid-term, and completion stages by inviting experts from the China National Expert Panel on Climate Change, China Academy of Urban Planning and Design, Distributed Energy Professional Committee of the China Energy Research Society, Centre for Environmental Education and Communications of Ministry of Ecology and Environment, China News Service, National Institute of Advertising, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, Soochow University and other institutions.

Second, the public survey questionnaire was reviewed by Climate Outreach, an internationally renowned climate communication research institution, to enhance the design of survey variables. Additionally, Climate Outreach provided valuable feedback on the relevant conclusions of the report after its completion and offered constructive suggestions for improvement.

Third, inviting media and NGOs such as The Paper, Greenpeace, WildAid, and Friends of Nature to participate in the Climate Narrative Salon to share their own experience and case studies in climate communication. This significantly contributed to the team's research, such as acting as a reference for case studies collection, context research, and narrative sampling design. Upon the formal completion of the research, the project team invited nearly 20 media and NGOs, including Southern Weekly, The Paper, All-China Environment Federation, Friends of Nature, and WildAid, to participate in a project result-sharing meeting to promote the application of the project results in practical work.

End

Disclaimer

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