

Introduction

The results in this study are concerned with the adopters of one brand of BEVs, these are Tesla BEVs, which include the Tesla Model S (n=153) and the Tesla Roadster (N=11). These vehicles cost between US\$75,000 and US\$105,000. One would expect that these adopters will be different to the adopters of lower priced BEVs, such as the \$30,000 Nissan Leaf.

Methodology

This data set of 155 BEV owners was gathered using an online questionnaire survey, with responses first being received in July 2014 and gathered until December 2014. Respondents were recruited using online electric vehicle forums. The following forums were used: Tesla Motors Official Forum, Reddit Tesla Forum, and Reddit Electric Vehicles.

Results

Figure 1 shows the socio-economic attributes of the sample, the sample is mostly male (89%), highly educated (23.9% Doctorate, 34.8% Masters, 33.5% Bachelors), with high household incomes (62.6% more than \$180,000) and a high level of car ownership at 2.5 per household (compared to US average of 1.9).

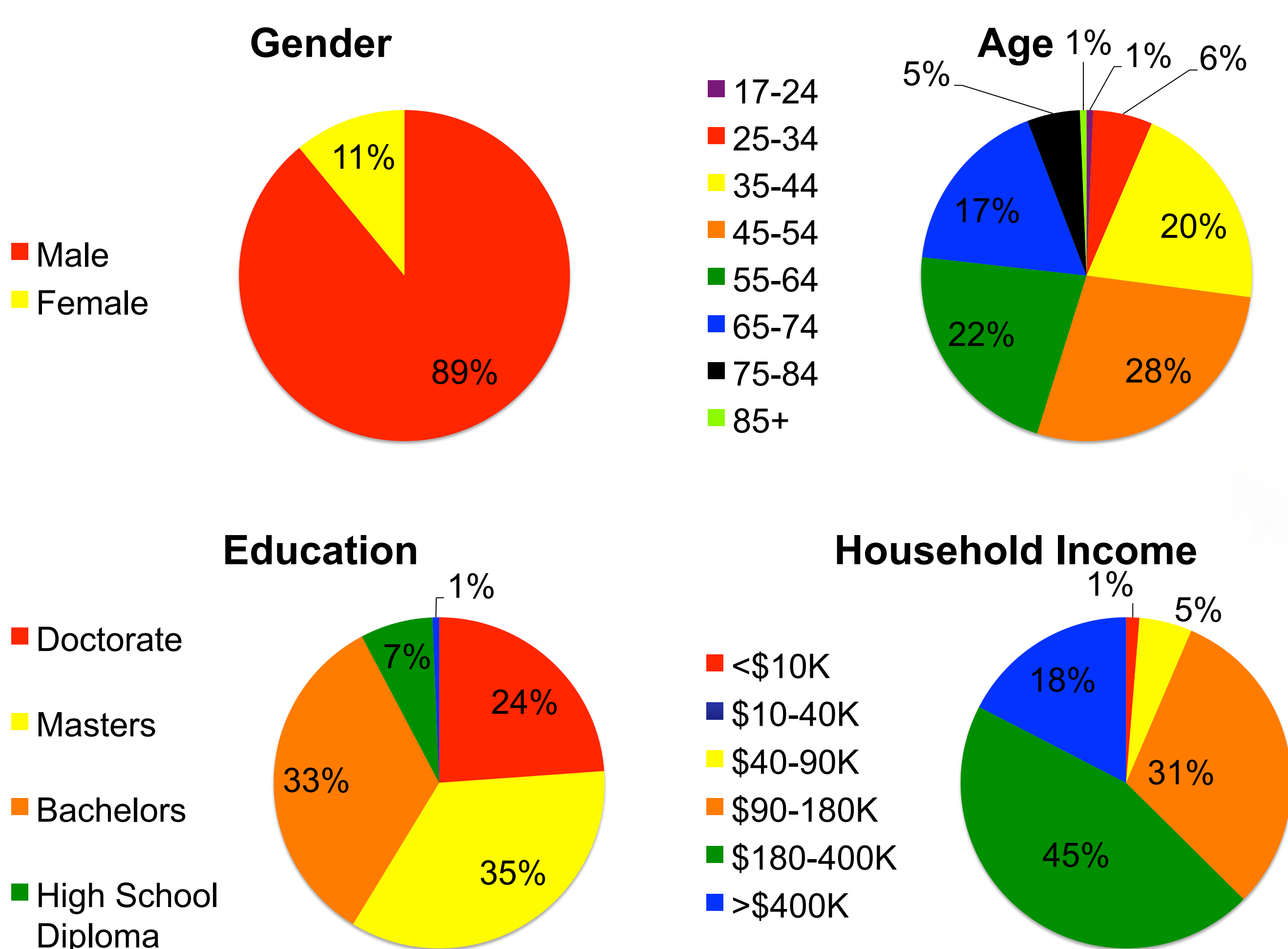


Figure 1: Socio-Economic attributes of this sample of early adopters of Tesla BEVs n=155

Figure 1 shows data from a qualitative question recording reasons for adoption of a BEV. The most commonly cited reason is due to the vehicles high performance. This is followed by environmental motivations second, then third because the vehicle represents a new technology. Running costs was unexpectedly low with only 17 people mentioning this as a reason for adoption.

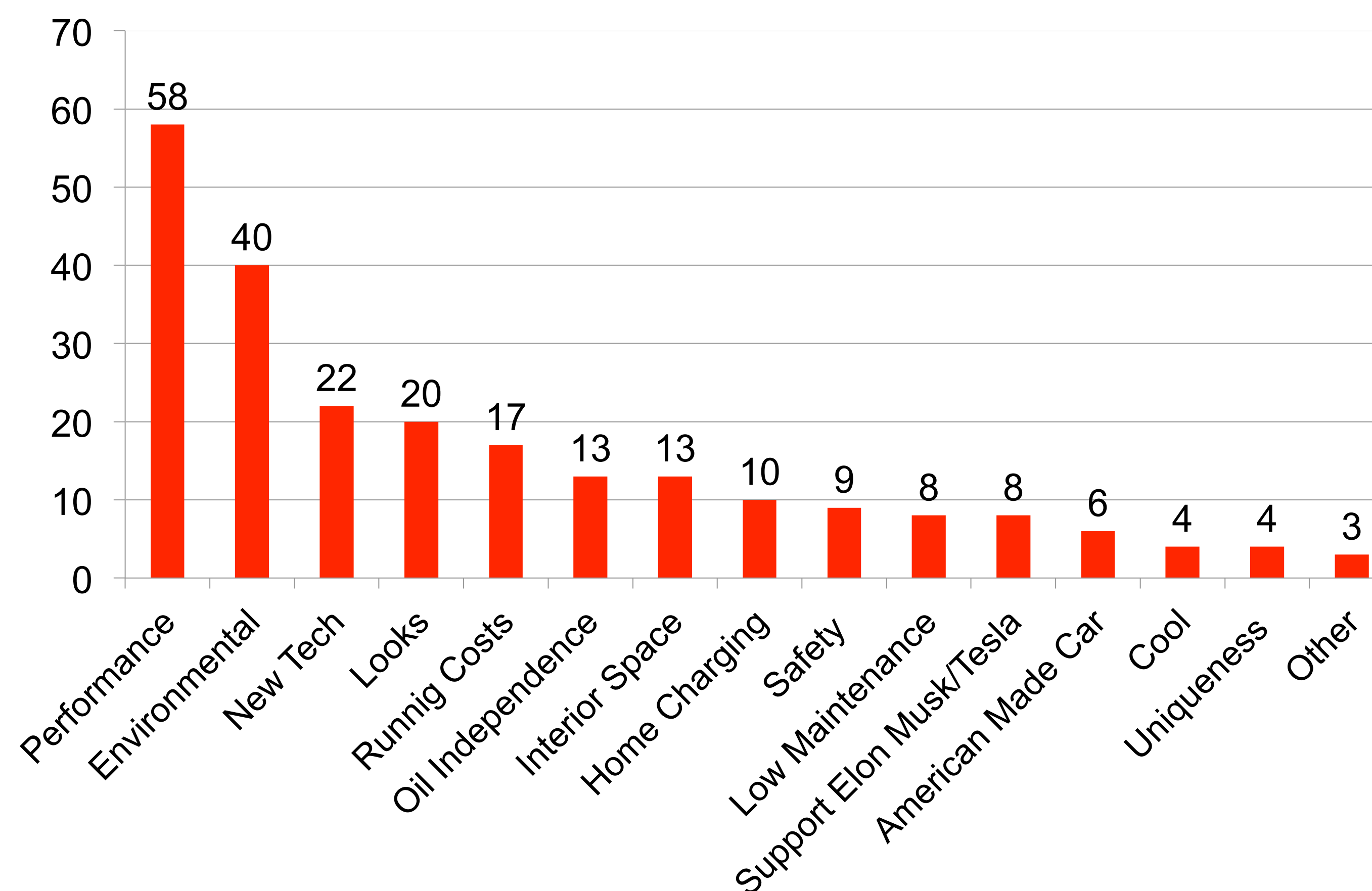


Figure 1: Responses to “Please use the space below to outline in your own words why you purchased a battery electric vehicle” n=131

“Because it outperforms all other cars in its price range”
Respondent 8

“The Model S is a compelling vehicle that is transformative that embodies style, performance, safety, and is the most fun car I have ever driven.”
Respondent 9

“I wanted a near zero carbon footprint vehicle with good performance and comfort.”
Respondent 41

“It was one of the very few things I could do to reduce my families carbon emissions.”
Respondent 100

“We purchased a Tesla to support the cause of helping the environment and to support Elon Musk because we believe in his ability to bring electric cars to all”
Respondent 86

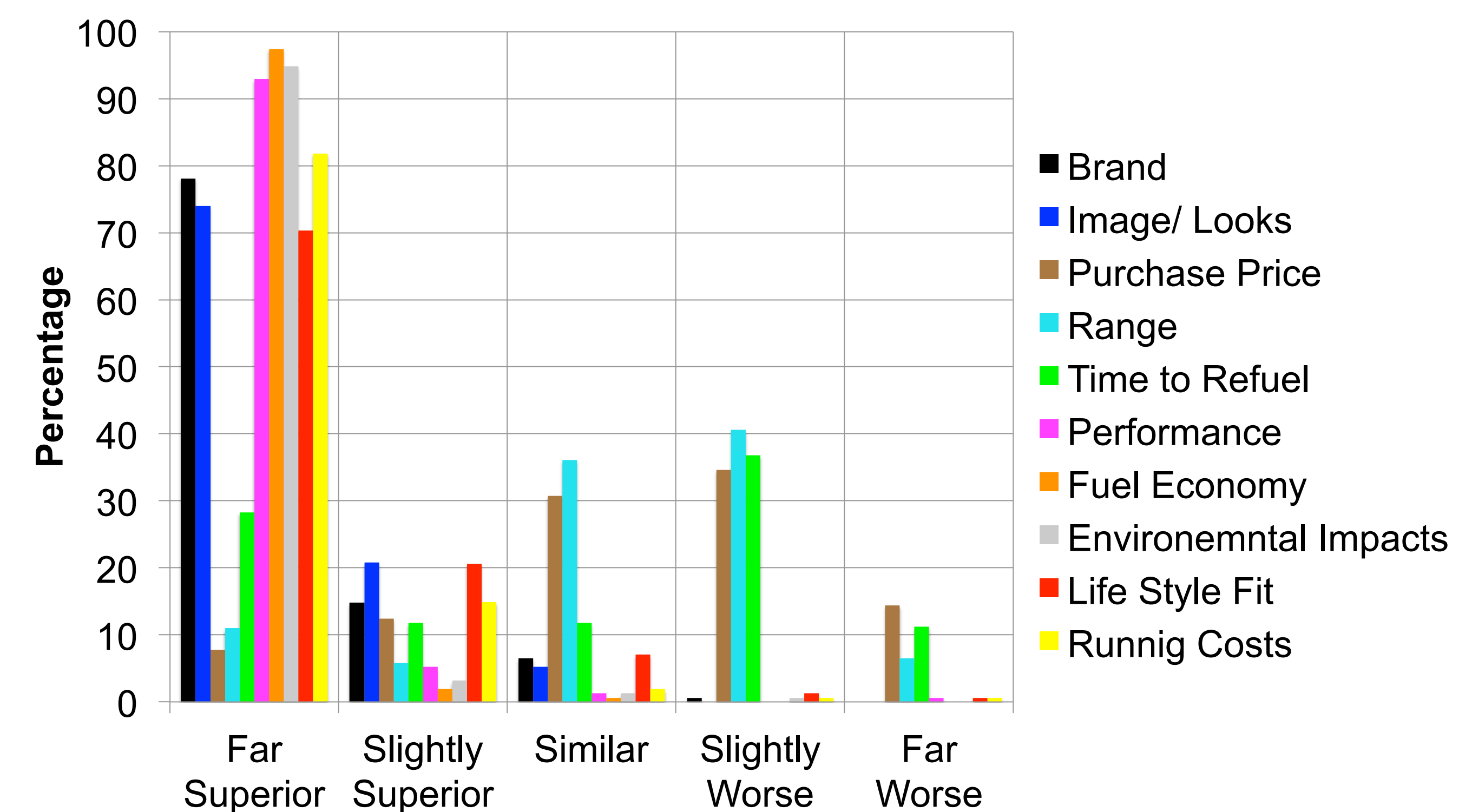


Figure 2: Responses to “Considering each of the following attributes how do you think your BEV compares to a gas powered car?” n=154

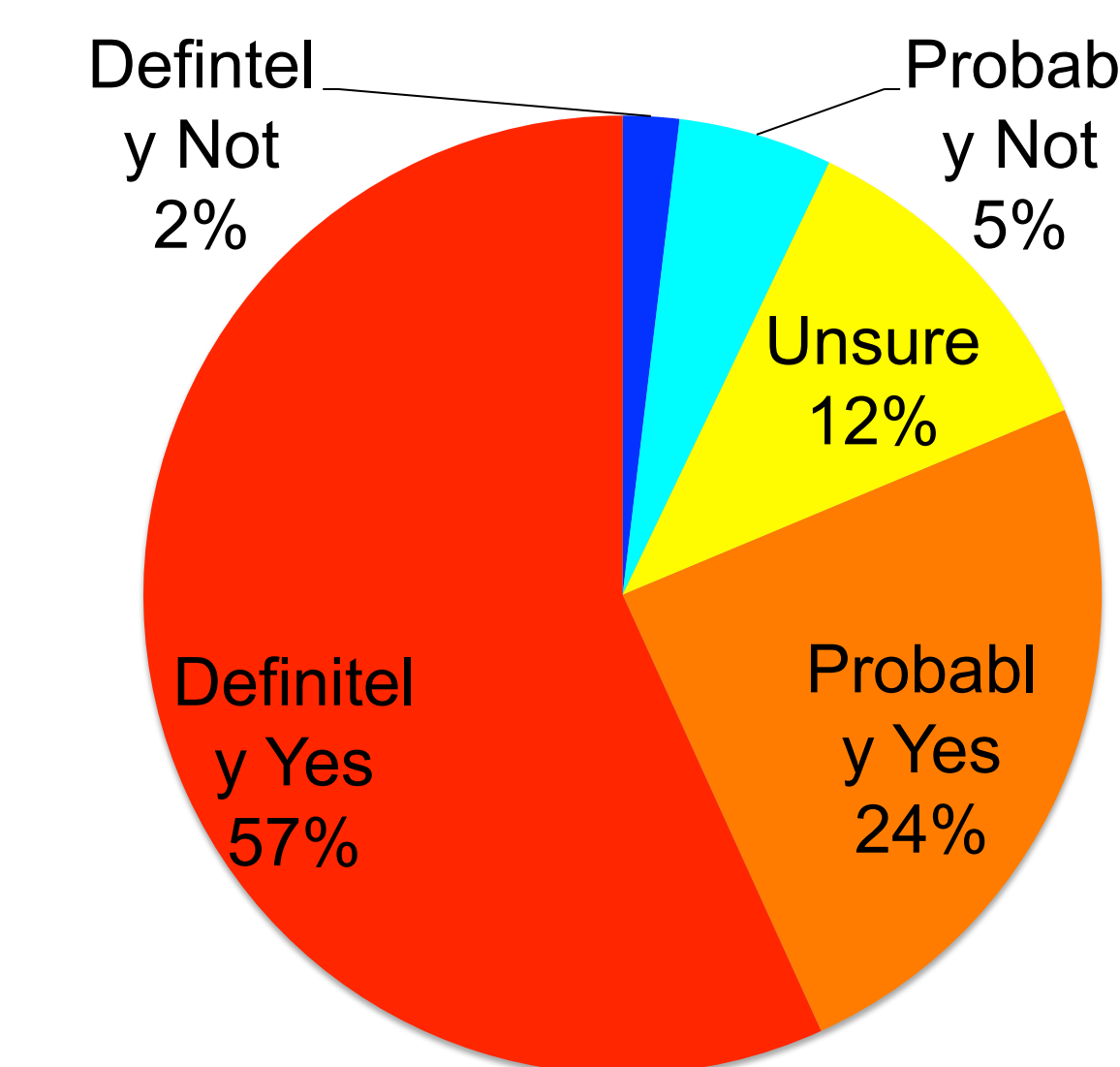


Figure 3: Responses to “Will your next car be another battery electric vehicle?” n=155

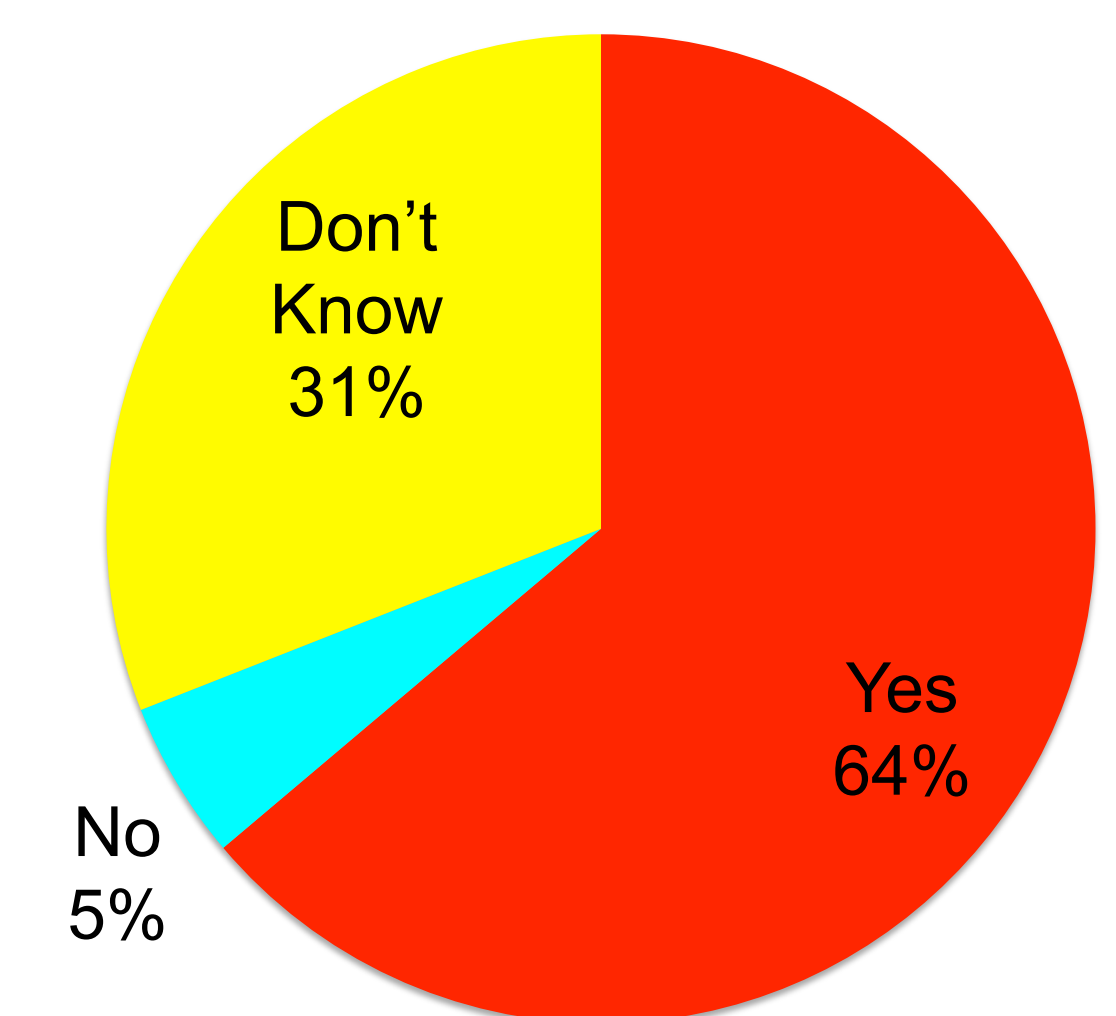


Figure 4: Responses to “Will your next car be another Tesla battery electric vehicle?” n=155

Figure 2 shows adopters opinions of their own vehicles, this shows that they largely view their vehicles as positive. Fuel economy was viewed as the most superior, followed by environmental impacts, performance, running costs and brand. Range, purchase price and time to refuel were perceived as being similar or slightly worse.

Figure 3 & 4 show future purchase intentions, with 81% likely to continue with BEV ownership and 64% continuing with Tesla ownership.

Conclusion

Tesla adopters are of high socio-economic status, reasons for adoption are mainly due to performance, environmental, technology and aesthetic reasons. They view their vehicles positively and are likely to continue with BEV ownership with future vehicle purchases.