# Sustainability Literacy Assessment

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## Background

Sustainability is a concept that considers how our actions affect future generations. This includes how we exist and develop without depleting natural resources, combined with human and ecological health and social justice issues. The concept of sustainability has shaped the development of The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). The STARS assessment allows for colleges and universities to measure sustainability literacy within one system and be able to compare and improve upon their own institution in future years. Sustainability literacy is a mode of assessment that integrates environmental knowledge, sustainable values, and ecological behavior. Our goal was to create and analyze a sustainability assessment that could be utilized across multiple CSU campuses to improve students' knowledge of environmental literacy and to push the college campuses to create a more sustainable campus. The final results will be reported to a national higher education assessment rating system, STARS and used to improve CSUMB sustainability planning, education, and initiatives.

## Methods

This study utilized quantitative methods to investigate the relationships between different variables related to sustainability literacy and their impact on the overall population. A survey was conducted among a sample of 232 students who responded to 41 questions designed to measure their level of sustainability literacy. The use of quantitative methods enabled us to analyze between different variables and to build a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability literacy among the population under study.
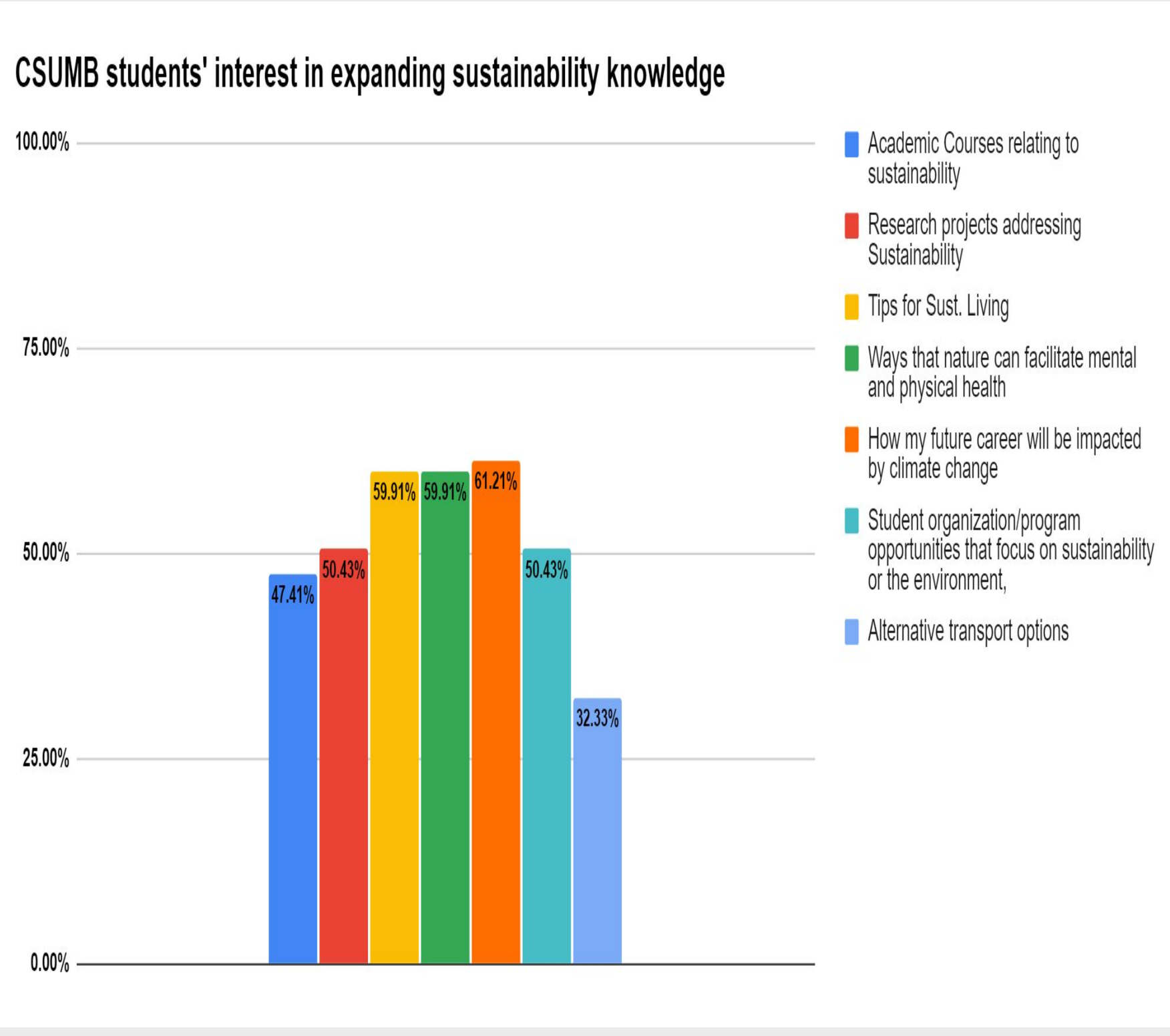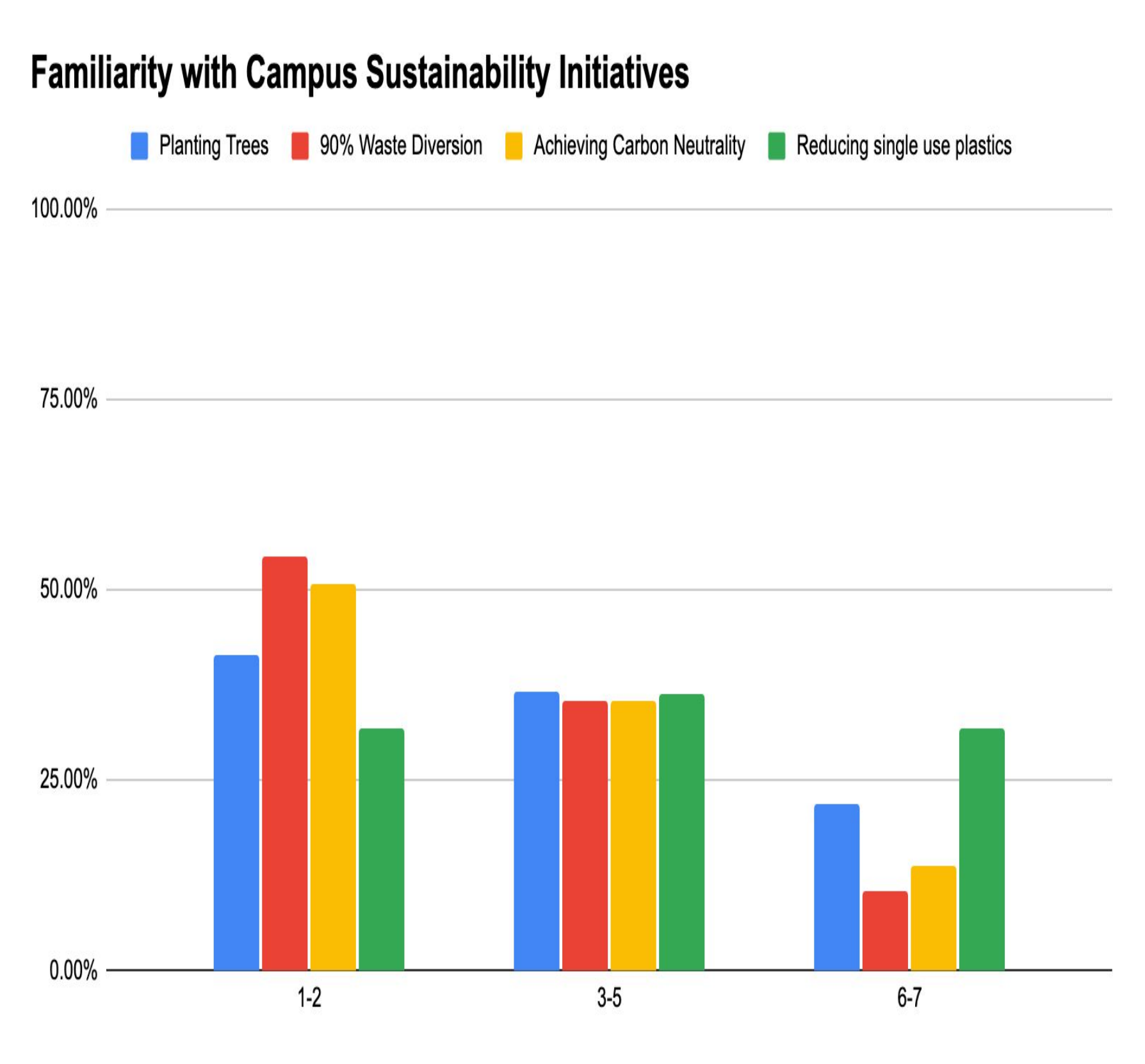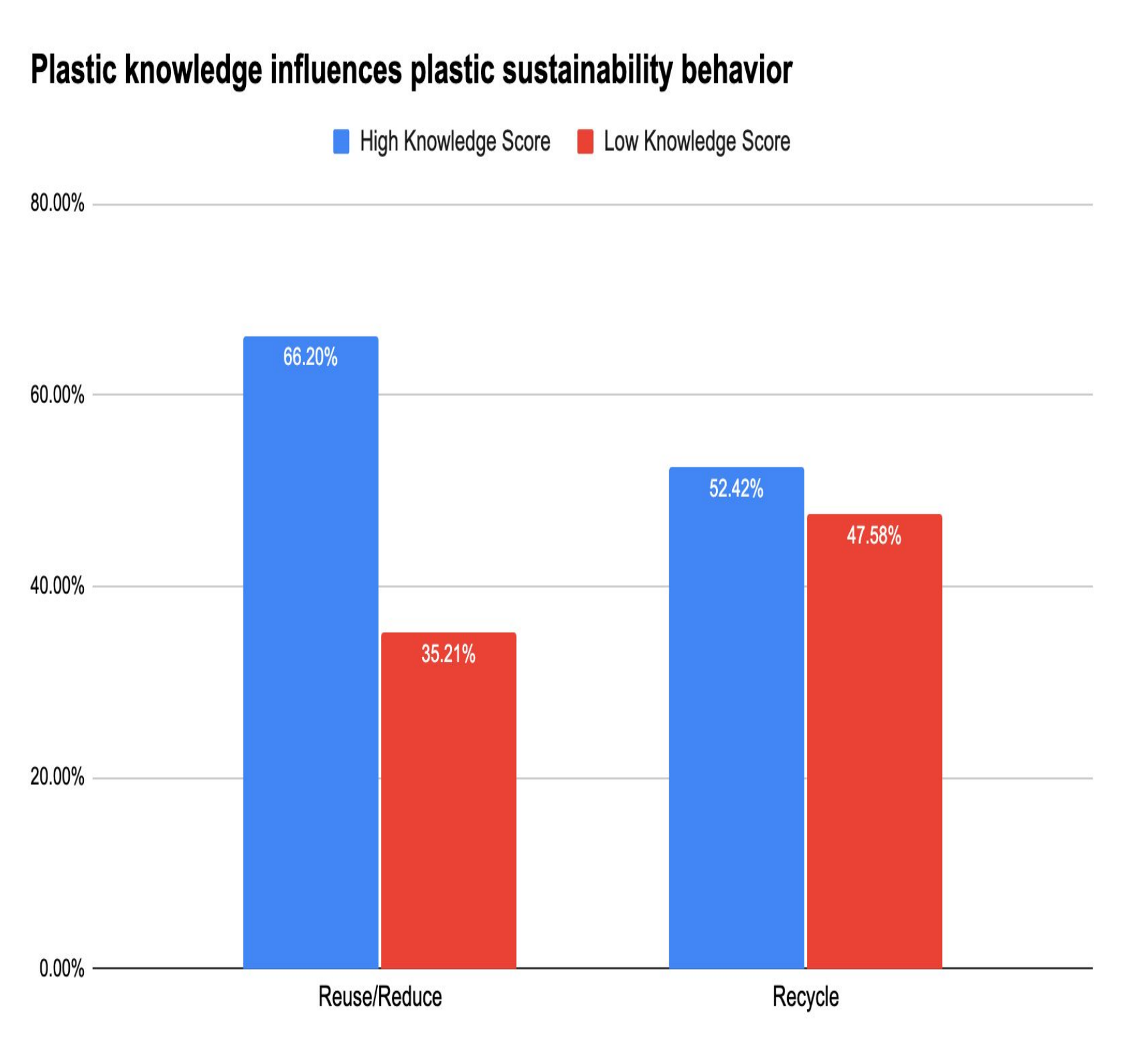
## Sample Questions

7. Which of the following is an example of environmental justice? *
○ Urban citizens win a bill to have toxic wastes taken to rural communities
○ The government dams a river, flooding Native American tribal lands to create hydro-power for large cities
○ Stakeholders from an indigenous community are involved in establishing guidelines for a protected fores...
○ Multi-national corporations build factories in developing countries where environmental laws are less strict

6. The majority of U.S. greenhouse gases come from which source? *
○ Agriculture
○ Energy consumption
○ Transportation
○ Landfills

## Results


Plastic knowledge influences plastic sustainability behavior
High Knowledge Score / Low Knowledge Score


Familiarity with Campus Sustainability Initiatives
Planting Trees / 90% Waste Diversion / Achieving Carbon Neutrality / Reducing single use plastics


CSUMB students' interest in expanding sustainability knowledge
- Academic Courses relating to sustainability
- Research projects addressing Sustainability
- Tips for Sust. Living
- Ways that nature can facilitate mental and physical health
- How my future career will be impacted by climate change
- Student organization/program opportunities that focus on sustainability or the environment,
- Alternative transport options

- Overall, sustainability knowledge was 71%
- Level of environmental concern was high, with an average of 5 or higher
- Interest in expanding knowledge was high

| Sustainability Score Percentile | Interest | Standard Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| Upper percentile | 4.35 | 1.87 |
| Middle percentile | 3.73 | 0.68 |
| Lower percentile | 3.27 | 1.62 |

## What's Next ?

- We will thoroughly analyze the data, focusing on Demographics, Sustainability score, Knowledge, and CSUMB initiatives. This analysis aims to delve deeper into the data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the findings.

- Our final report will be given to the CSUMB sustainability department for future planning and development.

## Acknowledgements

photo credit: J.L. Matthews