



**29th ICDE World Conference**
Costa Rica, 2023
Joining Hands in Peace
for the Futures of Education

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A hopeful future?

Preparedness and feelings of optimism-pessimism about the future of post-secondary education in Canada and the USA

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Our world is changing

What does that mean for the future of post-secondary education?

As the pandemic dust settles and our new learning landscape takes shape, **it is apparent that technology-integrated learning will play a far more prevalent and pervasive role than pre-pandemic.**



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Exploring anticipated change

Research questions

- 1) To what extent do those working at post-secondary institutions **expect post-secondary education to change over the next five years** compared to the present state?
- 2) **Do they feel ready for the changes** that the future might bring?
- 3) **Are they feeling optimistic or pessimistic** about the future?



Research methods

Surveys conducted in Canada and the USA in Spring 2023

- **Canada (CDLRA):** Data collected through the CDLRA's Spring Pan-Canadian Digital Learning Survey (direct email, survey link shared by sponsors/partners, social media outreach)
- **USA (Bay View Analytics):** Direct email invitation sent to a random sample of teaching faculty, defined as those teaching at least one course



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Participants

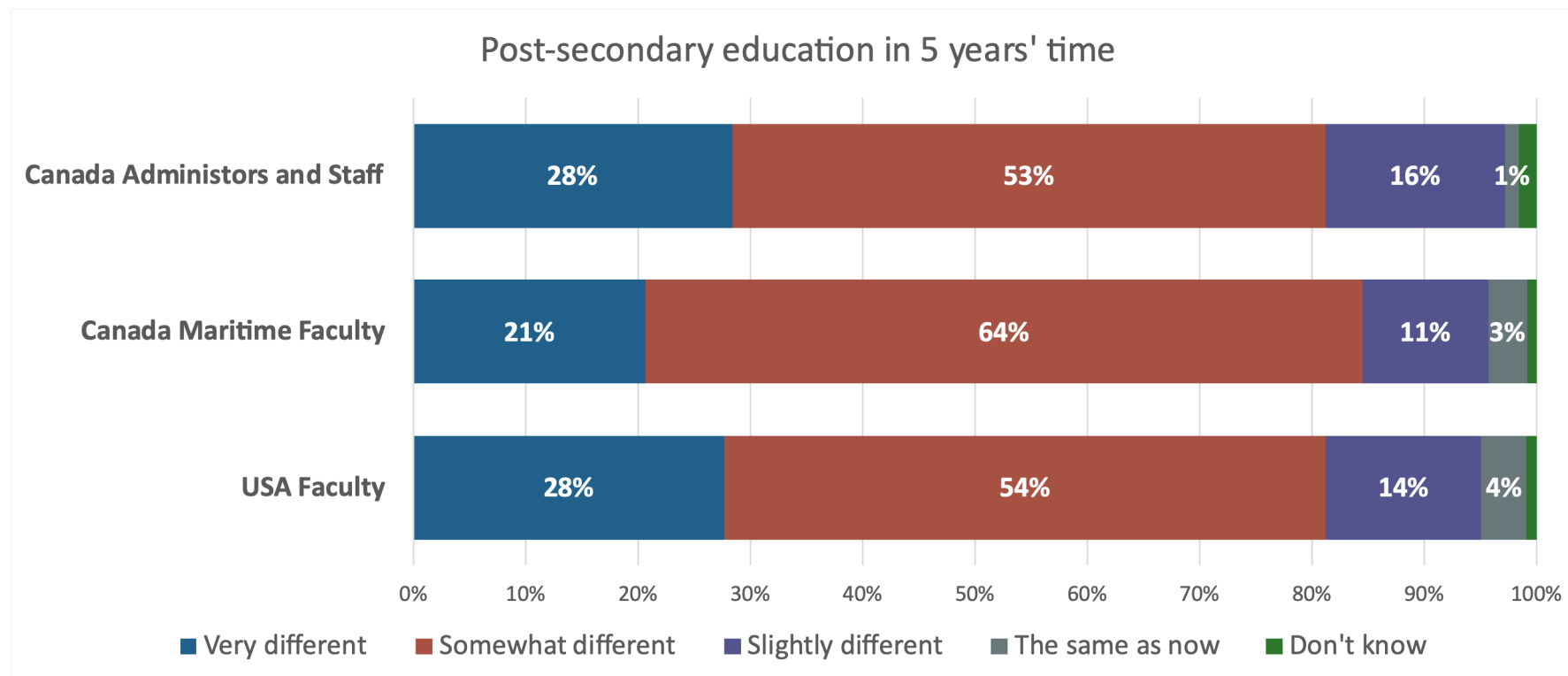
Three distinct groups totaling 604 participants

- **Canada (CDLRA):**
 - Institutional administrators and staff from across Canada (n=254)
 - Faculty from the Maritime provinces (n=116)
- **USA (Bay View Analytics):**
 - Faculty from across the USA (n=234)



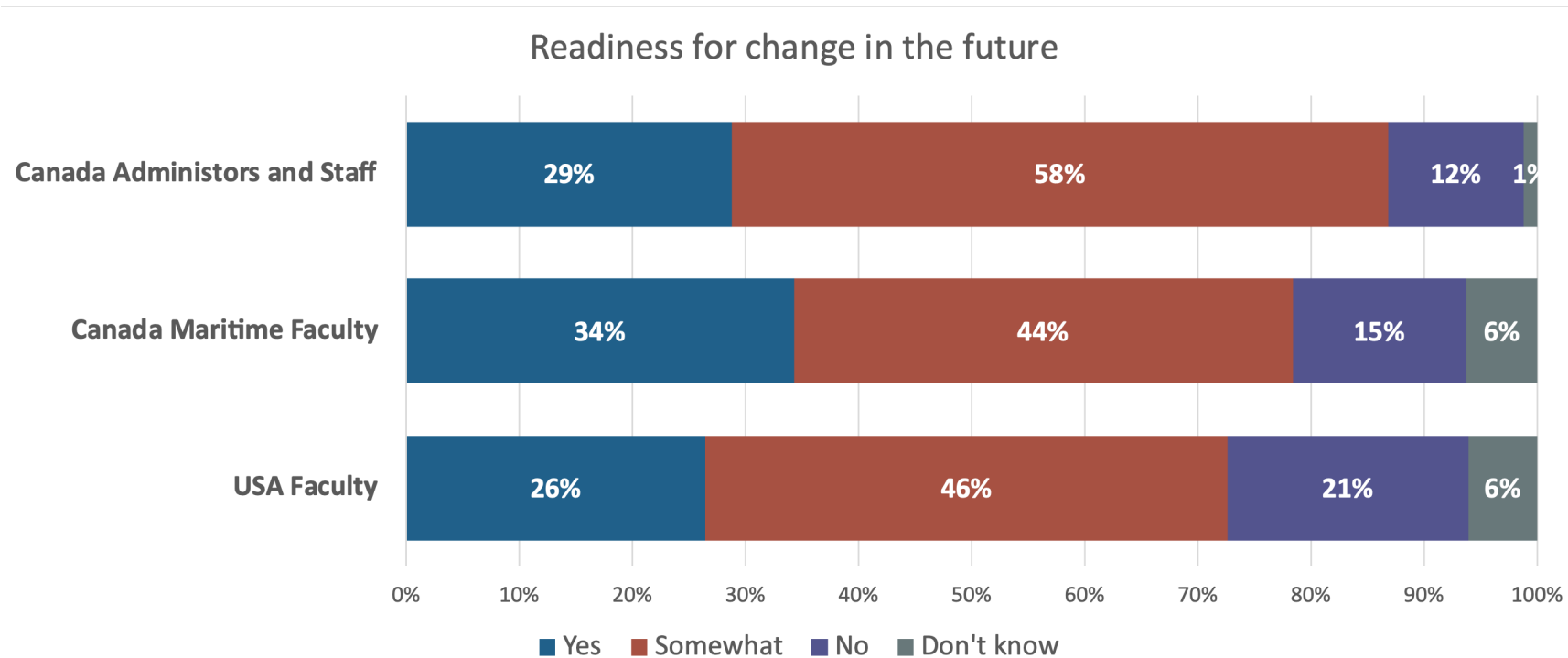
Question 1

How different will post-secondary education be from the present state in 5 years' time?



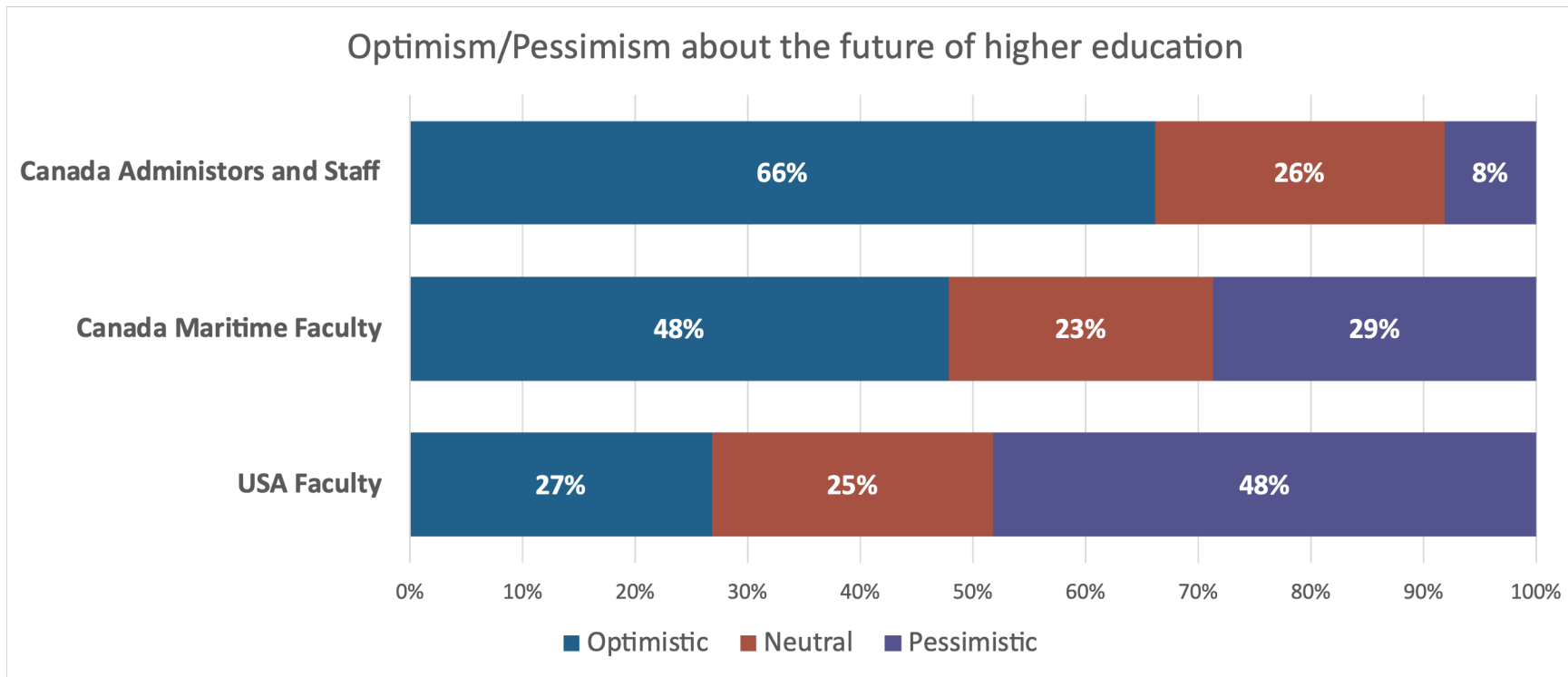
Question 2

Do you feel ready for the changes that the future might bring to your institution?



Question 3

Are you optimistic/pessimistic about the overall future of higher education over the next 5 years?



Open-ended comments (n=239 representing all groups)

Reasons for optimism, pessimism, neutrality

Theme	Description	N
Adaptability	An individual's or institution's ability to adapt to new technologies or institutional/societal demands. Some respondents also described adaptation through adopting new teaching practices or course delivery options.	20
Artificial intelligence (AI)	Thoughts and opinions about AI (e.g., its role, concerns with AI use, opportunities for AI to improve teaching and learning).	17
Change	Thoughts and opinions about changes that have occurred or might occur in the future, including comments about the potential for positive change and resistance to change	74
Institutional issues	Thoughts and opinions related to leadership, faculty burnout, institutional constraints, and support.	15
Students	Thoughts and opinions related to students including student competencies, student outcomes, and student well-being.	30
Systemic issues	Complex issues that impact the post-secondary system as a whole, including corporatization, funding, politics, and the role of post-secondary education.	71



Reasons for optimism

- The belief that their institution was adaptable
- Opportunities for innovation and the adoption of new practices
- Confidence in leadership at institution

Reasons for pessimism

- Institutional rigidity and resistance to change
- Faculty burnout
- Lack of preparedness among students for post-secondary
- Student mental health
- Corporatization
- Lack of government/societal support
- Political climate



Takeaways

What do the findings tell us

- Participants expect the near future of post-secondary education to be different, and are feeling somewhat ready for these changes
- Canadian participants are far more optimistic than their counterparts in the USA
- There are no unique reasons for pessimism in the USA, just a greater frequency of the common reasons for pessimism



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Final Thoughts

Fostering hope

Understanding the prevalence of optimism and pessimism and the accompanying reasons is important for fostering a sense of hopefulness about digital transformation.

- Participants who reported optimistic (or hopeful) feelings described feeling supported and well-positioned to adapt to change. Optimistic participants also focused on the benefits of change and the opportunity to improve the educational experience for students.
- Participants who felt pessimistic about the future of post-secondary education tended to describe factors beyond their control.



Find Out More

Bay View Analytics and CDLRA Reports

Bay View Analytics:

- www.bayviewanalytics.com/publications
- info@bayviewanalytics.com

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Thank you!

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