

Taiko in the USA and Canada: Key Findings from the Taiko Census 2016

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Key Findings

- Taiko players and practice differ significantly in the USA and Canada, with particular divergence in demographic profiles, teaching activities and remuneration, and the purchasing habits of players.
- Taiko players in both countries are typically very highly educated: 89% of respondents born in 1997 or before in the USA had experience of higher education, whereas just over 90% of players resident in Canada had at least some college experience.
- 65% of respondents based in the USA had taken part in events designed to bring players together (e.g. taiko conferences and/or gatherings). Just under 60% of players from Canada had participated in such activities.
- Players based in both countries were most likely to rely upon people as opposed to web-based resources to find out information about the taiko community. Facebook pages and groups (specifically Taiko Community and friends' posts) were more commonly used by players in the USA yet utilised by a minority of respondents.
- Respondents from Canada were much more likely to teach taiko – 44% stated that they teach taiko whereas 24% of those based in the USA identified as taiko teachers.
- Taiko teachers reported varying levels of remuneration by country. 62% of teachers in the US were not remunerated, and this figure rose to 74% when analysing taiko teachers in Canada.
- The majority of players who disclosed their expenditure paid neither membership fees nor instruction costs. Just over a quarter of respondents spent more than \$50 per month on instruction, whereas only 12% paid more than \$50 per month on membership fees.

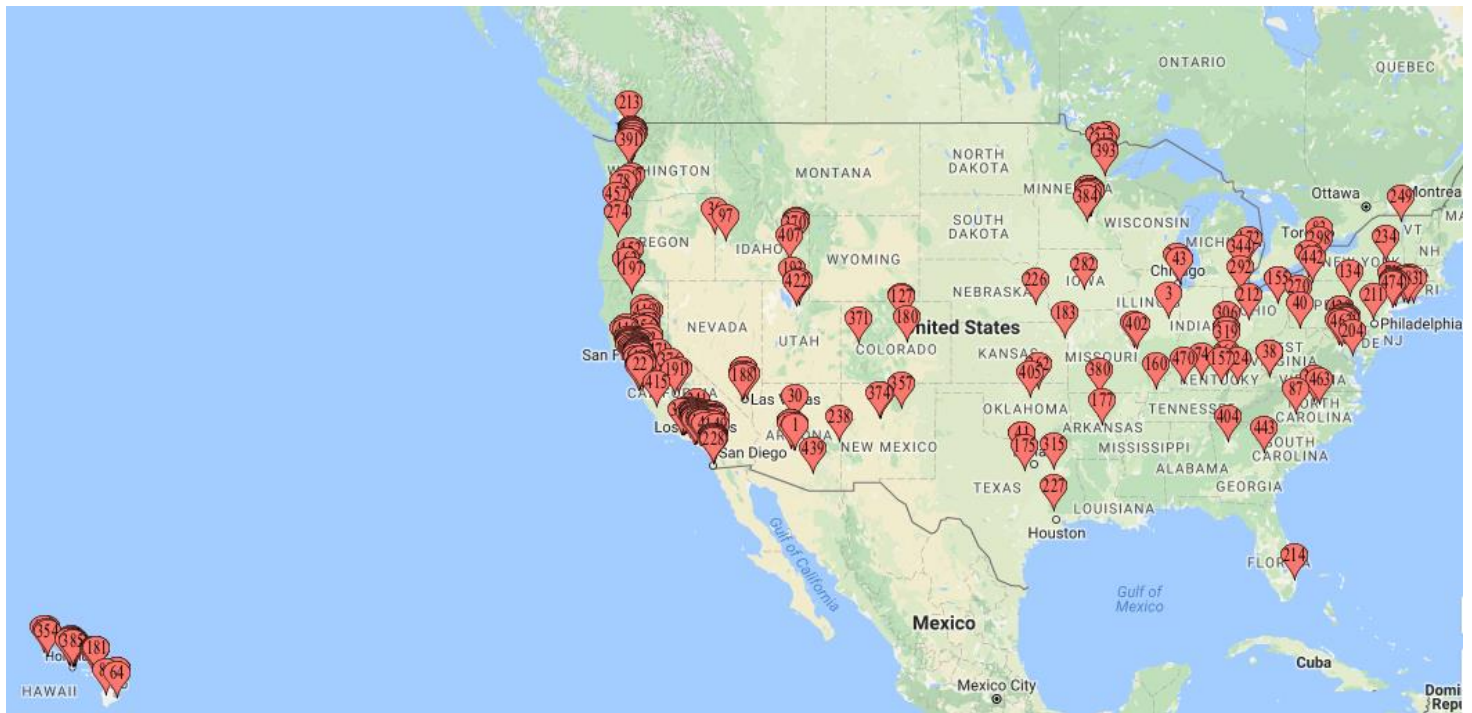
Introduction

This report presents data collected in May 2016 as part of the Taiko Community Alliance (TCA) Taiko Census initiative. It analyses responses provided by taiko players resident in the United States of America and Canada. Its purpose is two-fold: to present a snapshot of taiko as it is practiced in the USA and Canada; and to interrogate similarities and differences in the two countries. It is hoped that players in the USA, Canada and beyond will use the findings contained within this report to develop taiko – an art form that is clearly central to the lives of many census respondents.

Taiko Players in the USA and Canada: Basic Profile

A total of 1287 taiko players resident in the USA and Canada completed the 2016 TCA Taiko Census biography and supplement – 1156 (90%) from the United States of America, and 131 (10%) from Canada. While there is a significant difference in the number of respondents from each country, the sample sizes reflect the general populations in 2016 – the USA had a population of 323 million (United States Census Bureau 2017: online) whereas Canada's population was 35 million (Statistics Canada 2017: online). Furthermore, the sample sizes also broadly reflect the number of groups from both countries contained within the TCA database (464 in the USA and 54 in Canada). In other words, while the real number of respondents from Canada is comparatively small, the samples sizes from both countries are broadly proportionate to the (taiko and general) populations.

Respondents from the USA were geographically concentrated on the west coast. The largest group (48%) live in California; the second and third largest groups of respondents by location live in Hawaii (7%) and Washington (5%) respectively. Although responses were received from taiko players living in 42 states and the District of Columbia, the twenty five states with the lowest number of participants accounted for less than 9% of responses received. This is reflected in figure 1 which maps respondents by zip code.



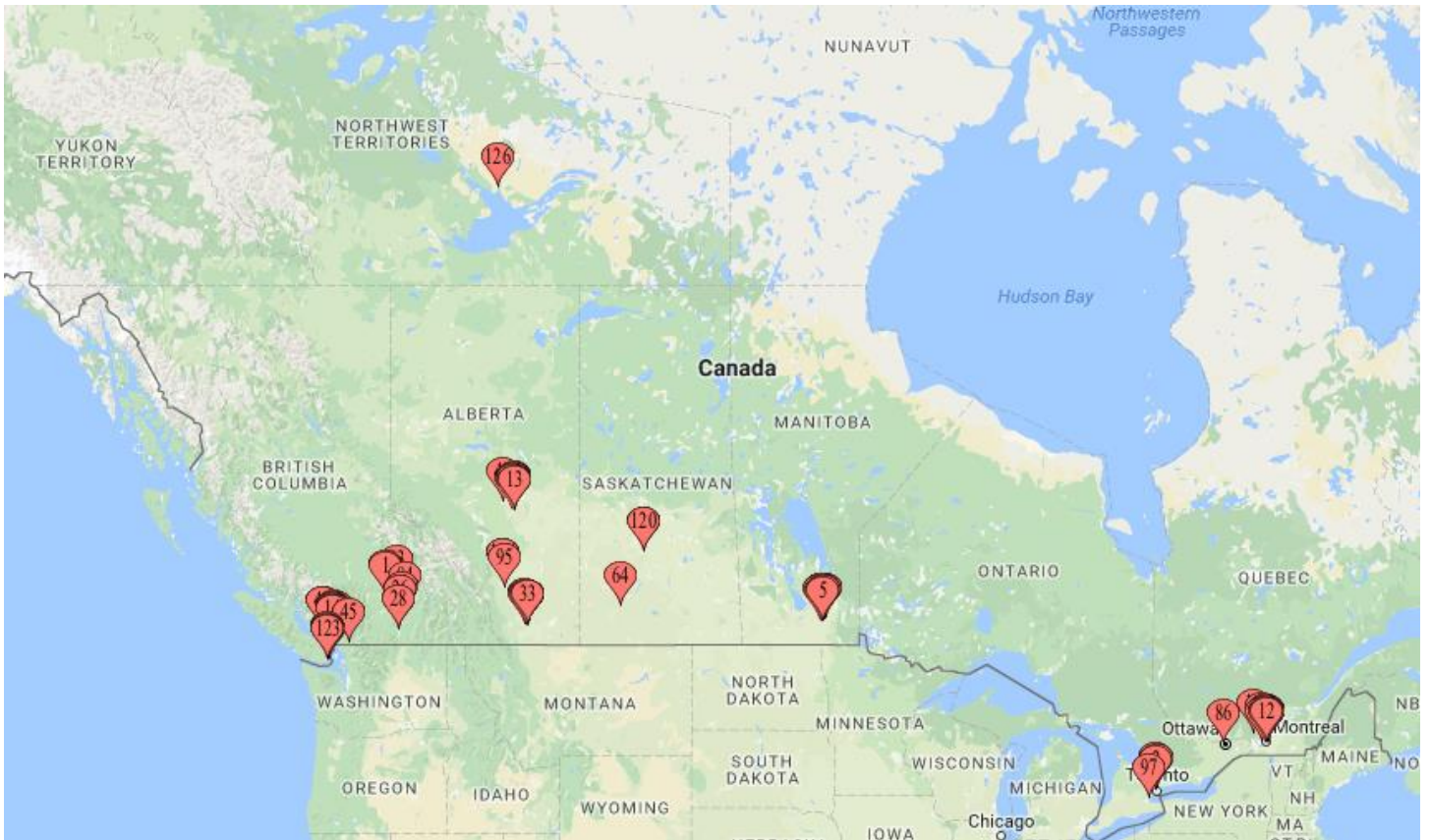


Figure 2: Location of respondents resident in Canada by postal code.

- 64% of respondents from North America identified as female, 34.5% as male, 0.5% as other, and 1% did not disclose their gender. As figure 3 demonstrates, there was a notable discrepancy in the gender make-up of players by country: Canada has a significantly higher percentage of female players and, as a result, fewer than 3 in 10 respondents from Canada were male.

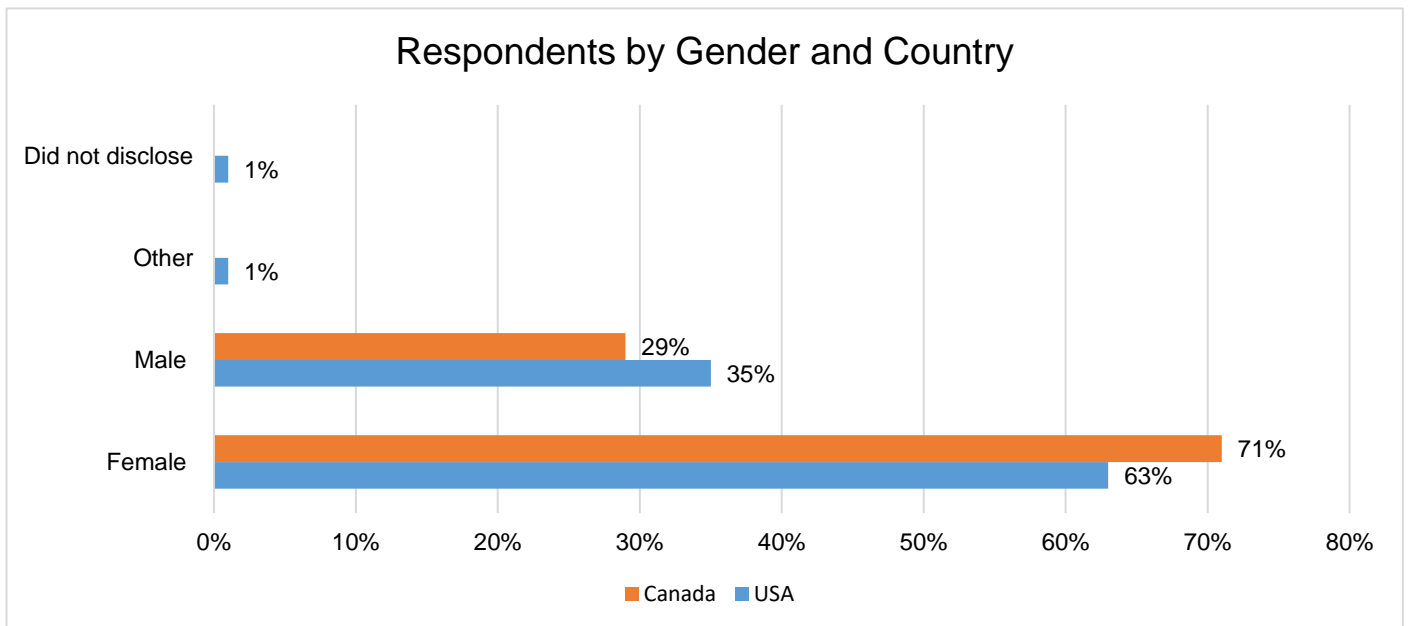


Figure 3: Respondents by gender and country.

- Respondents from the USA and Canada identified with 33 races, 26 of which were mixed races. 23 of these categories were selected by five or fewer survey participants. To ensure anonymity of survey participants, simplified results are presented¹. Figure 4 shows that just under half (49%) of respondents identified as Asian; a further 11.5% identified as Asian mixed race. The second largest group of taiko players by race (30%) was White. All other categories accounted for less than 3% of respondents.

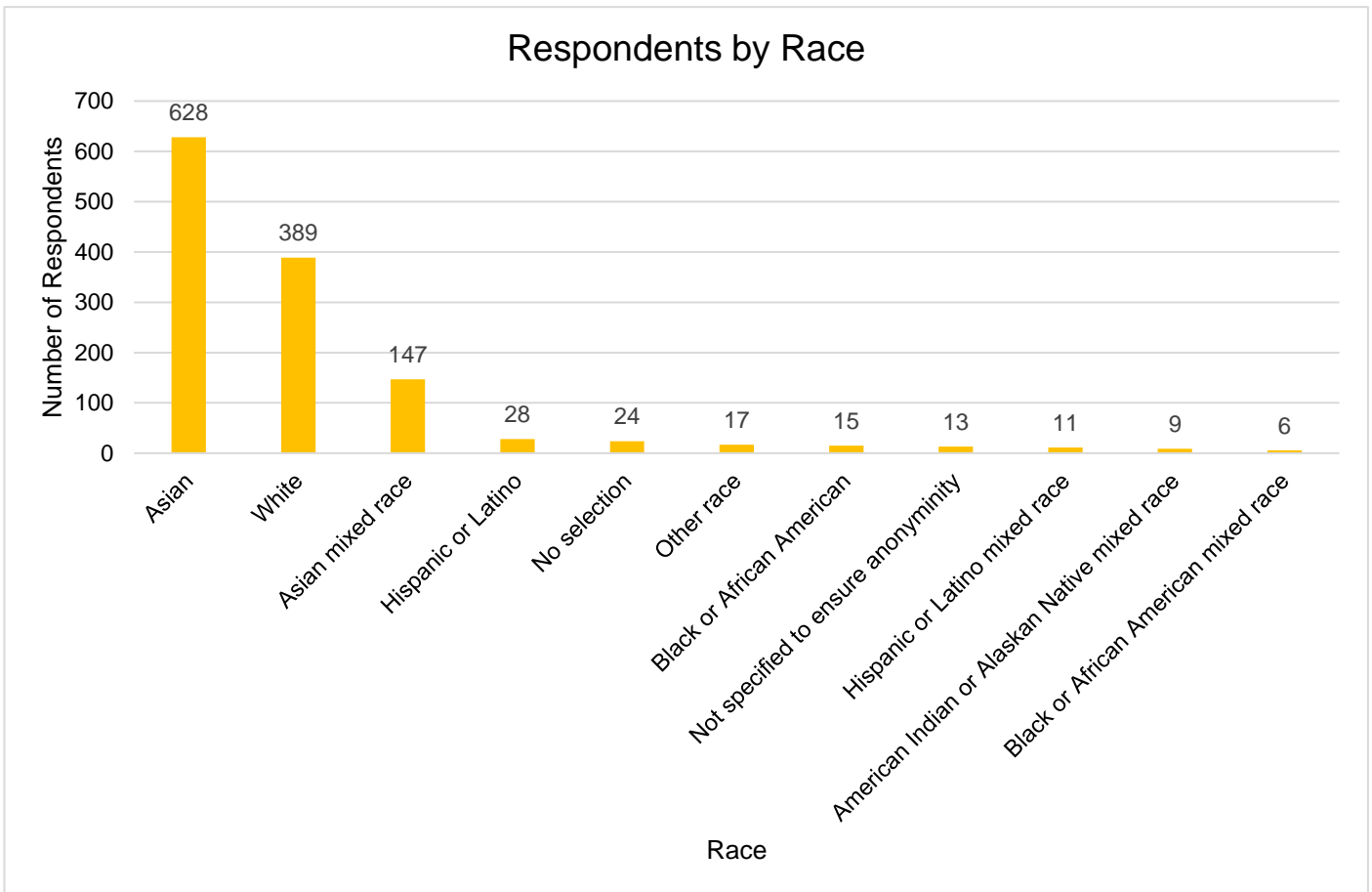


Figure 4: Respondents by race.

- In Canada, there were two notable differences in the data (compared to the North American average): first, a slightly higher percentage of players (just over 34%) identified as White; and second, no players identified as Black or African American. Otherwise, responses were broadly similar with the North American average.
- Taiko players in the USA and Canada span a broad age range: the eldest respondent was born in 1935 whereas the youngest was born in 2007. Of those respondents who provided their year of birth, 26% were born in the 1990s, perhaps reflecting the strength of the collegiate and youth taiko scene. The average age of respondents was 41 and the age profiles of participants were almost identical in the USA and Canada.

¹ In the survey, respondents could select specific mixed races (e.g. Asian and Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino and White). In this instance, the participant is categorised as Asian mixed race. A respondent who identified as Black or African American and American Indian or Alaskan Native and White is similarly categorised as Black or African American mixed race.

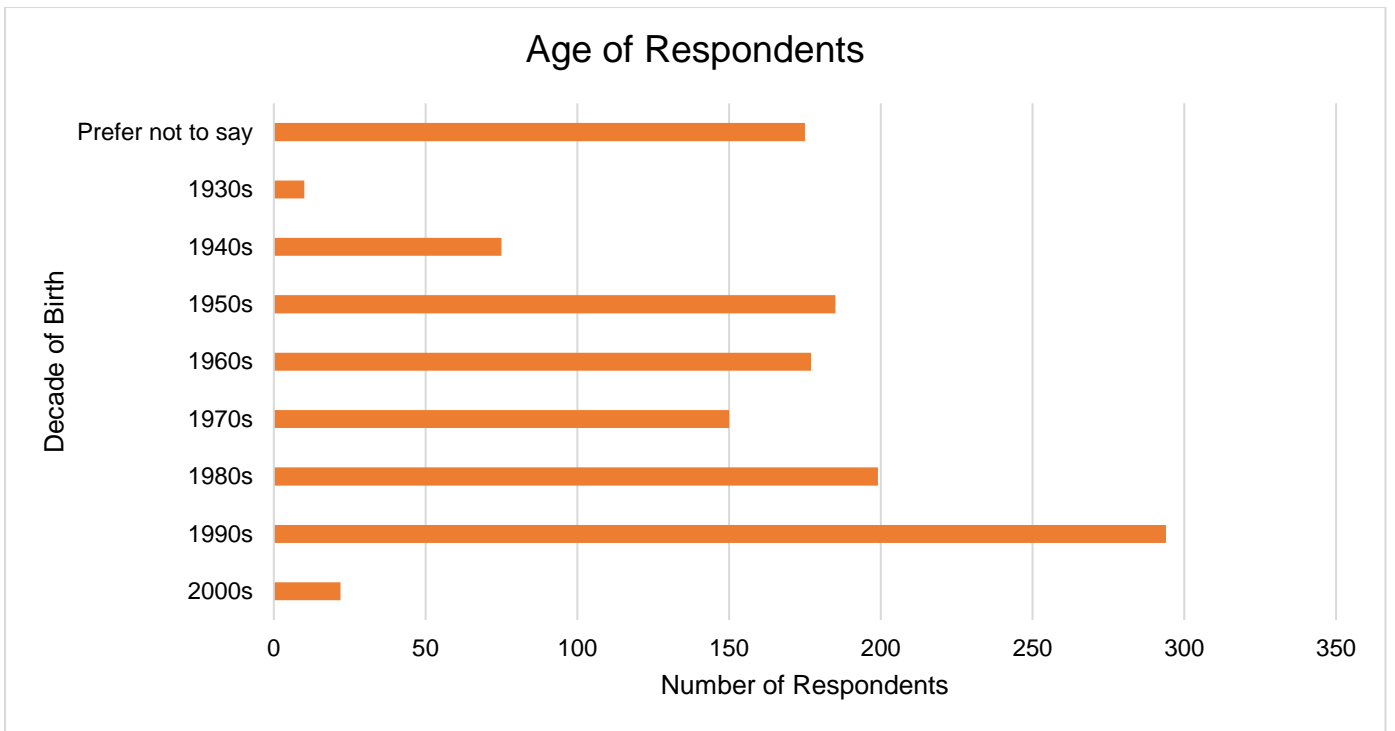


Figure 5: Respondents' decade of birth.

- Taiko players in both countries are typically highly educated: 89% of respondents in the USA born in 1997 or before had experience of higher education, whereas just over 90% of players resident in Canada had at least some college experience. The educational attainment of taiko players in both countries (presented in table 6) contrasts starkly with the general populations in both countries: in the USA, nearly 1 in 3 adults (33 percent) held a bachelor's or higher degree in 2015, rising to more than half of Asians aged 25 and older (United States Census Bureau 2016: online); whereas 25.9% of adults in Canada had a university degree in 2011 (Statistics Canada 2016: online). It is worth remembering that the scale of the collegiate scene in the USA may partially account for those with some college experience; indeed, 162 respondents were students when they completed the census.

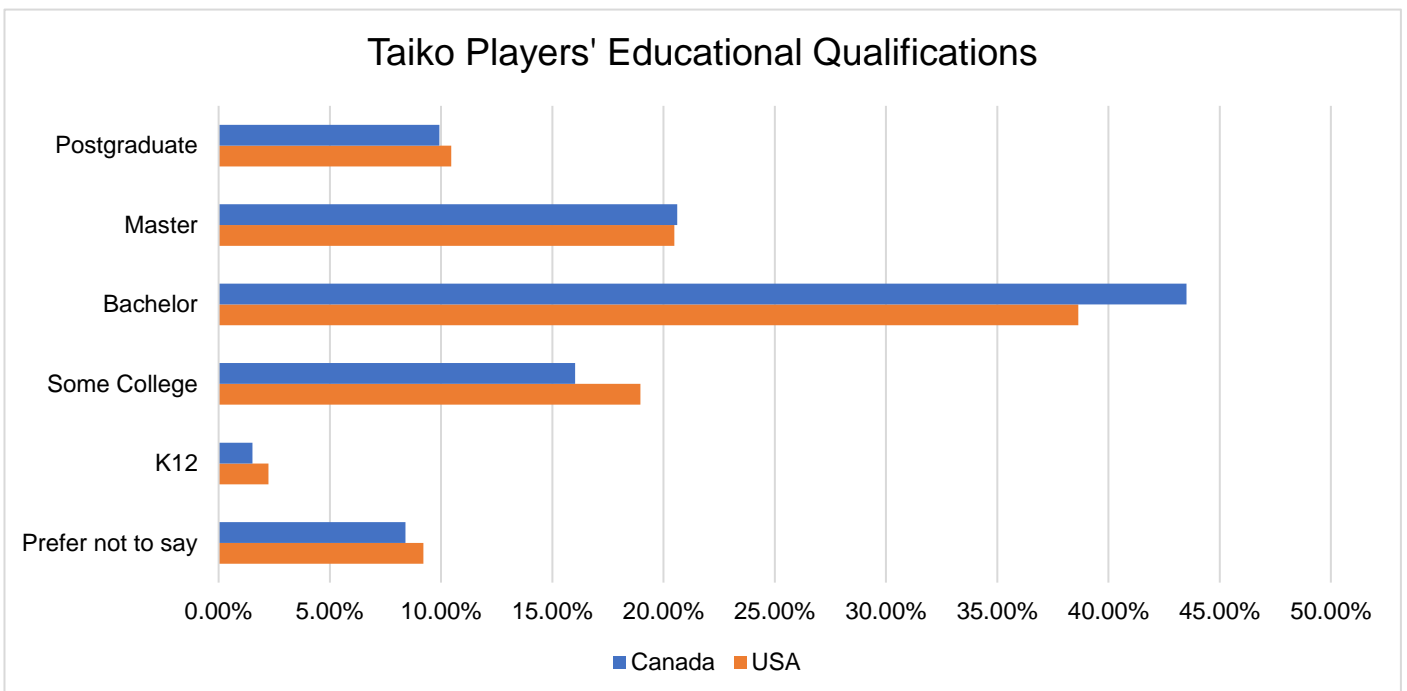


Figure 6: Highest educational qualification of respondents by country.

Engagement with Taiko Gatherings and Events

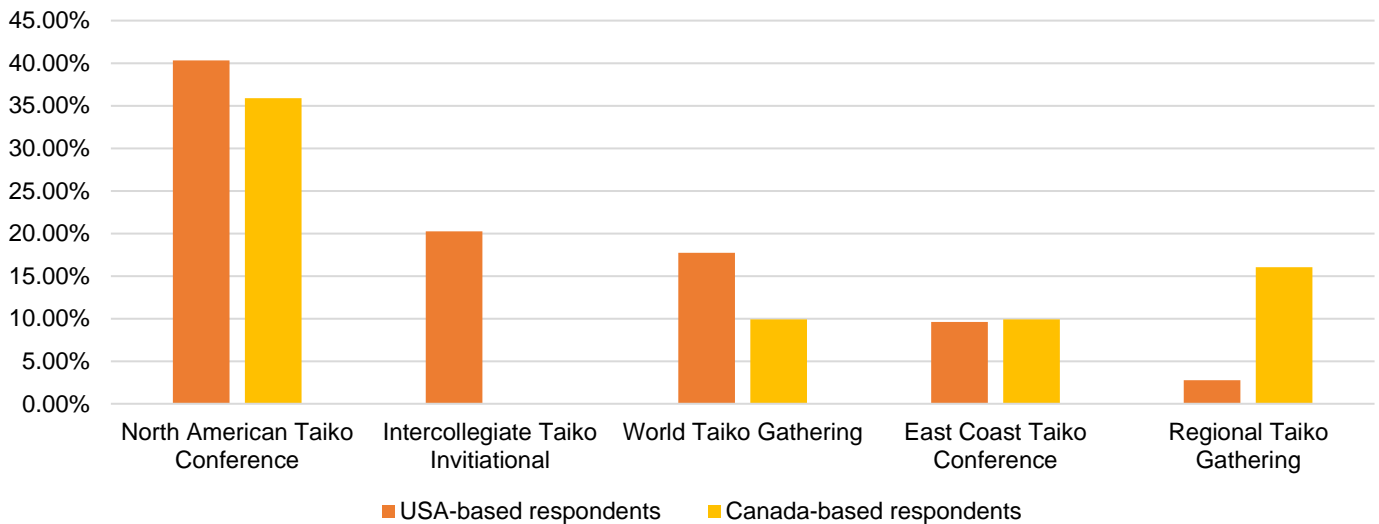


Figure 8: Participants' engagement with taiko gatherings by country.

- Participants who had attended at least one taiko gathering were asked why they attended and provided with tick-box choices as well as a free-text response option. Participants' responses to the tick-box options are presented in figure 9 and – yet again – show some differences depending on the country of residence. In particular, USA-based respondents were more likely to be motivated by performance opportunities and learning about taiko whereas players based in Canada were more likely to attend in order to network with peers. A further 27 discrete motivating factors were recorded from free-text responses, all of which were cited by less than 1.5% of respondents.

Why Players Attend Taiko Gatherings

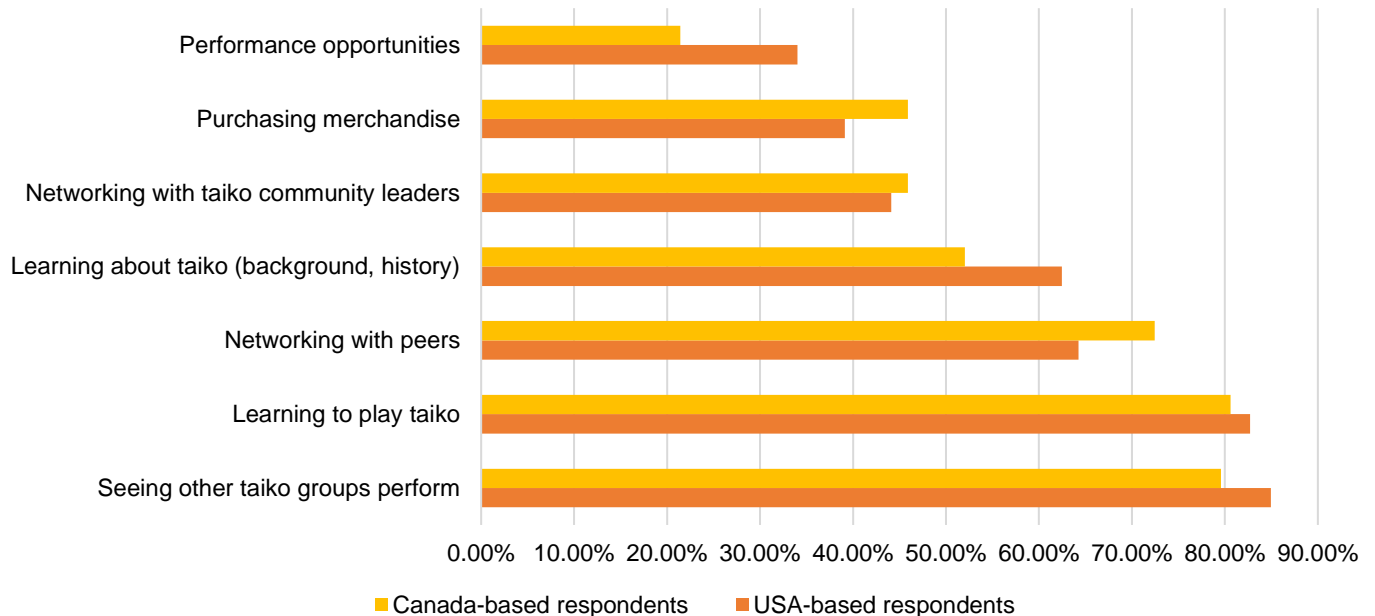


Figure 9: Why taiko players attend gatherings by country.

- Respondents who had participated in the East Coast Taiko Conference, European Taiko Conference, Intercollegiate Taiko Invitational, North American Taiko Conference and/or World Taiko Gathering were asked to consider what they enjoyed about the event(s). Amalgamated responses for all five gatherings are presented in a word cloud in figure 10.

Interest in Taiko Topics by Country

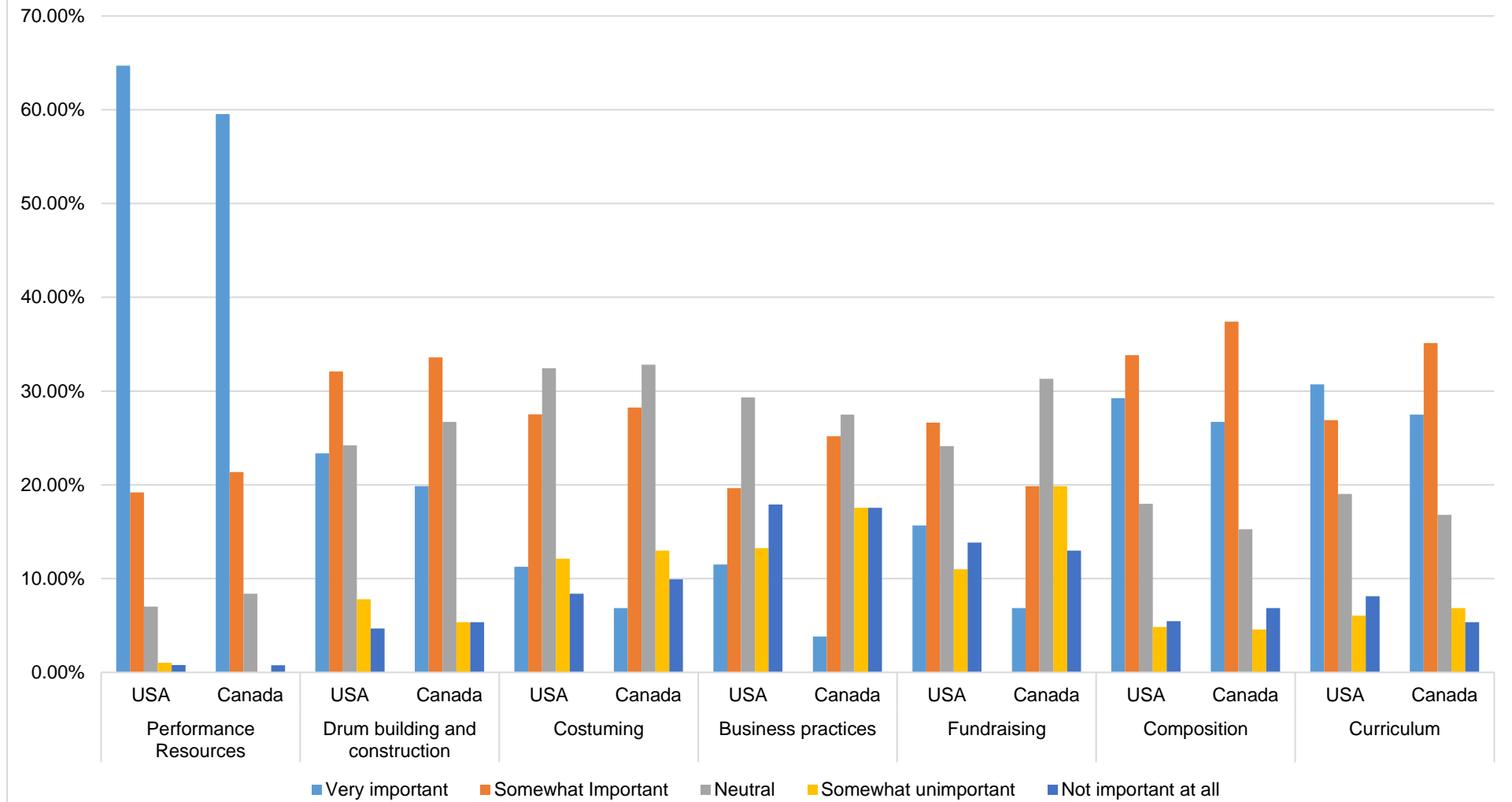


Figure 11: Interest in taiko topics by country.

- Players listed their sources of information about the taiko community. Interestingly, players based in both countries were most likely to rely upon people as opposed to web-based resources to find out information. Facebook pages and groups (specifically Taiko Community and friends' posts) were more commonly used by players in the USA yet utilised by a minority of respondents. Other social media platforms were used by fewer than 5% of players, and the TCA Facebook page was used by only a handful of respondents.

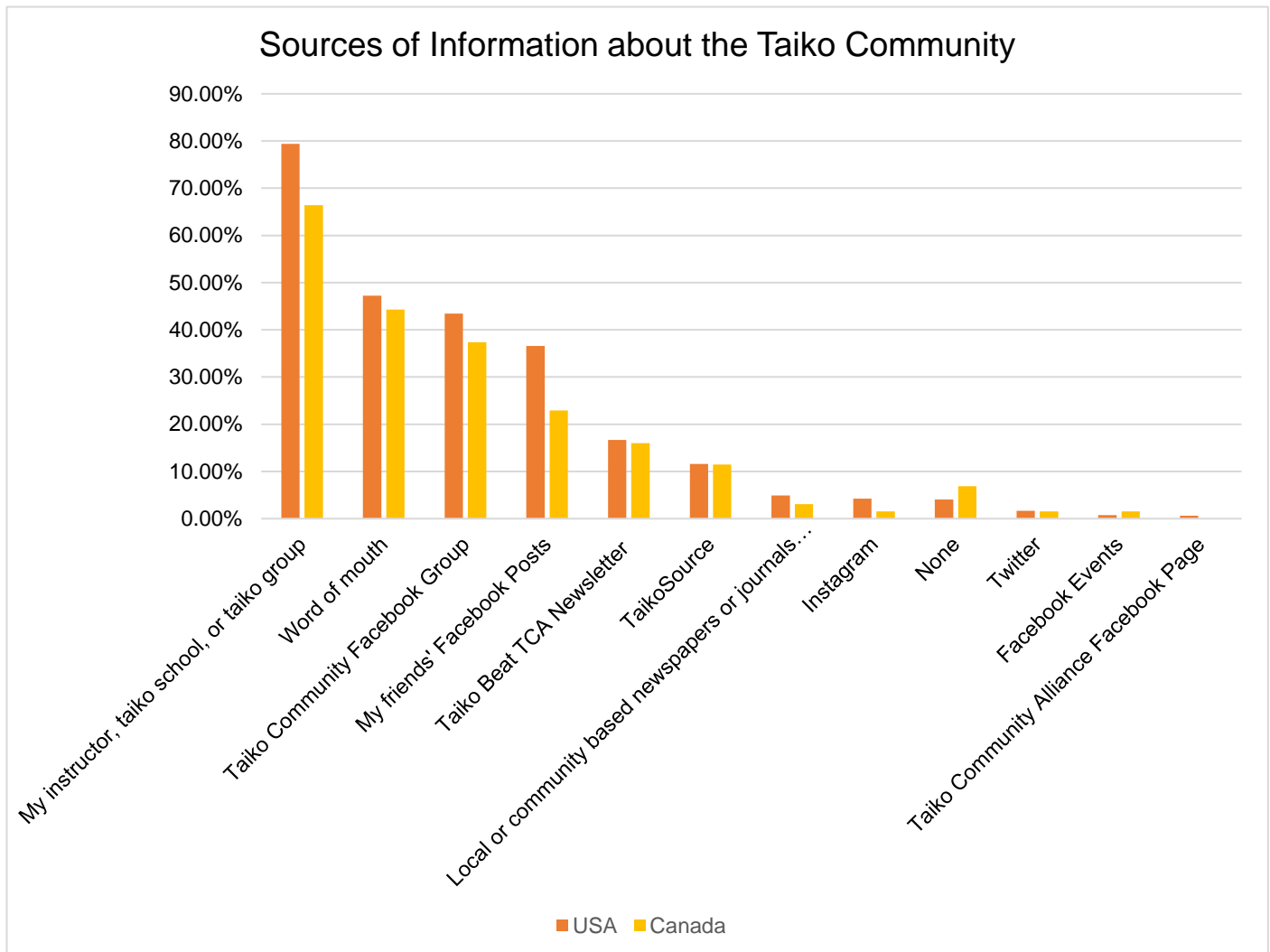


Figure 12: Sources of information about the taiko community by country.

Taiko Players in the USA and Canada: Learning and Teaching

- A small minority of players reported undertaking online learning (e.g. KaDon or Skype lessons) in the USA and Canada (10.5% and 11.5% respectively). The vast majority of learners in both countries did not engage in any online learning.
- In total, 136 players reported using online resources; of these, 123 respondents spread across the USA and Canada provided their opinions about online learning. These are summarised in figure 14. For the most part, census participants were positive about their experiences of online learning, although 11% expressly stated that face-to-face engagement with a teacher is preferable. Players also noted the need for good internet connectivity and self-discipline to benefit from the opportunities it presents. Others stated that it serves as a lifeline and allows them to continue their engagement with the art form.

- Respondents from Canada were much more likely to teach taiko – 44% of Canadian census participants stated that they teach taiko whereas 24% of those based in the USA identified as taiko teachers.
- The amount of experience held by teachers varied by country. As figure 17 shows, there were proportionately twice as many teachers in Canada with more than twenty years of experience compared to the United States. However, twice as many teachers in the USA had between 11-20 years of experience.

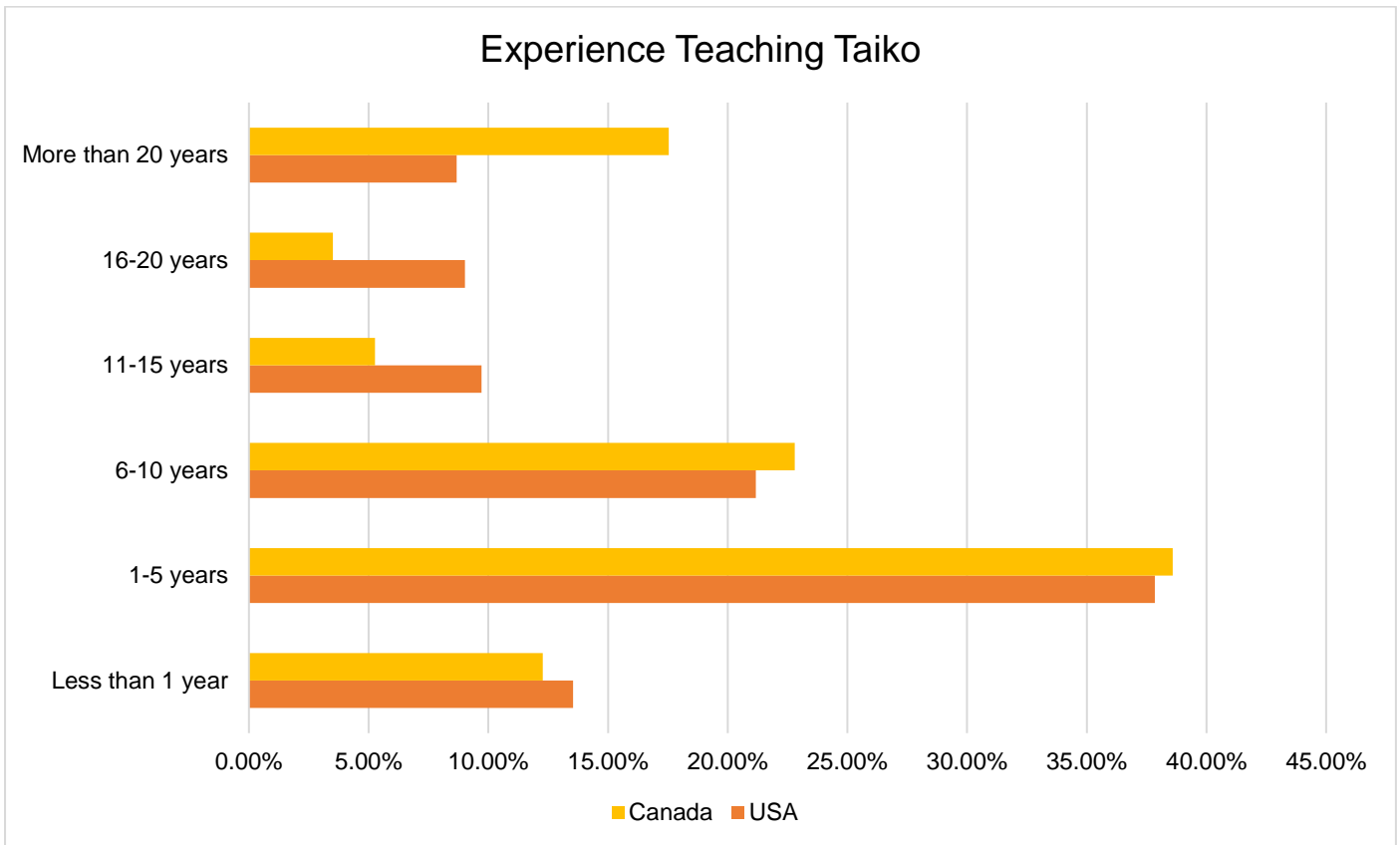


Figure 17: Years of experience teaching taiko by country.

- The forms of instruction offered by teachers in different countries varied significantly. The table below shows that teachers in the USA are significantly more likely to offer collegiate education and somewhat more likely to offer ongoing lessons and K-12 education. A notably higher proportion of teachers in Canada offered workshops.

Form of Teaching	%age of teachers in USA delivering this form	%age of teachers in Canada delivering this form
Lessons (organized ongoing instruction for individuals or groups)	83.82%	72.41%
Workshops (one-time or short-sprint instruction)	54.04%	74.14%
K-12 Education (practical taiko classes as part of an elementary, middle, or high school)	22.06%	17.24%
Collegiate Education (practical or historical taiko curriculum)	14.71%	1.72%
Online lessons (such as kaDON or private Skype lessons)	4.04%	0.00%

Figure 18: Forms of teaching offered by players in the USA and Canada.

- Taiko teachers reported varying levels of remuneration by country. 62% of teachers in the US were not remunerated, and this figure rose to 74% when analysing taiko teachers in Canada. Twice as many teachers in the US (proportionately) stated that taiko instruction contributed significantly to their annual income compared to Canada.

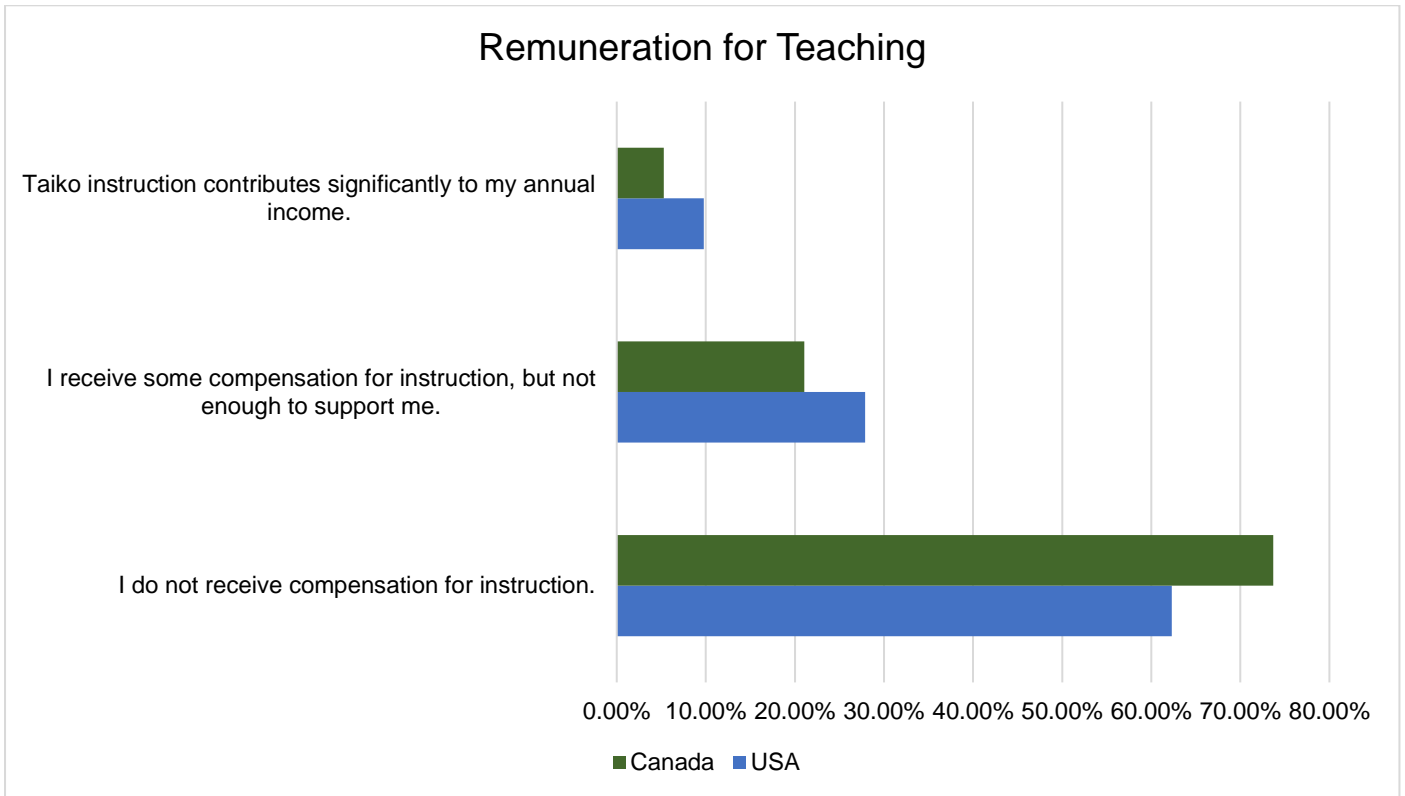


Figure 19: Remuneration of teachers by country.

- Participants shared how much time they spent on taiko per week. Figure 20 shows a higher proportion of players in Canada spent between 2-10 hours per week on taiko in comparison to their US counterparts. However, players in the States were more likely to spend the least time (less than 2 hours) or most time (more than 10 hours) compared to respondents based in Canada.

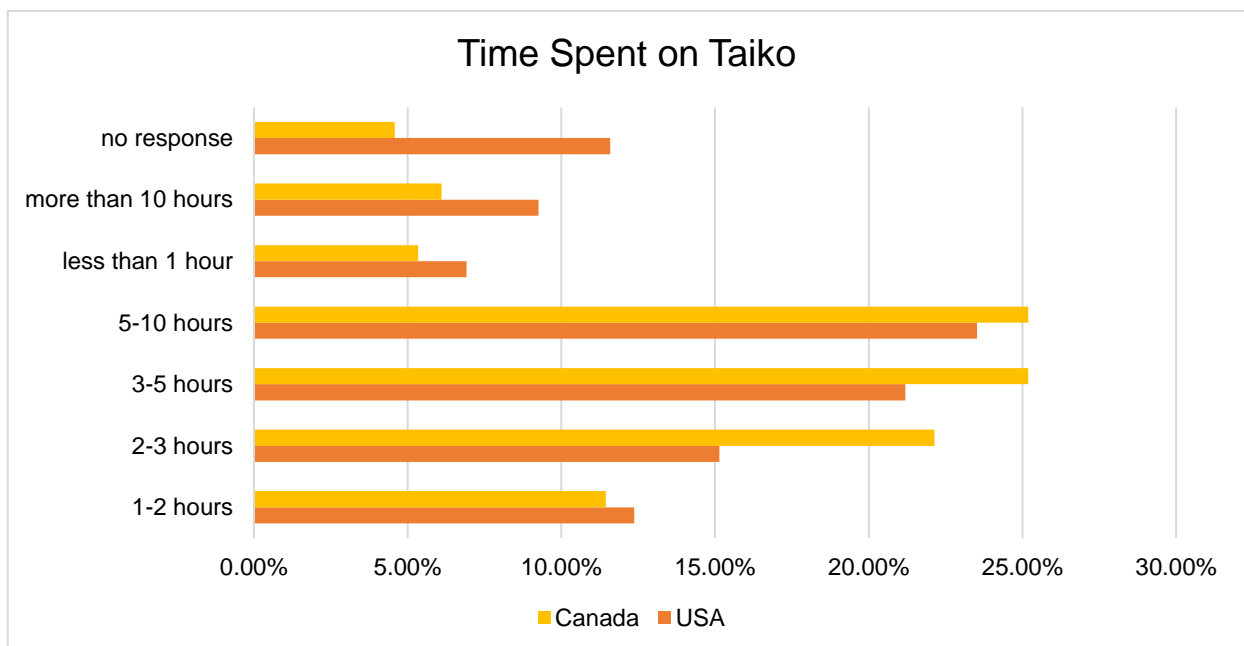


Figure 20: Time spent on taiko per week by country.

Taiko Players in the USA and Canada: Spending Patterns and Resources

- Respondents were asked whether they purchased or made taiko accessories (performance attire, performance headbands, wristbands, obi or tabi); or taiko hardware (odaiko, odaiko stands, chudaiko, okedo, naname stands, beta stands, shimedaiko, shimedaiko stands or bachi); and, if so, whether as individuals or as groups. Significant differences emerge by country vis-à-vis how players acquire resources. Herewith a summary of the key points:
 - A much higher proportion of US-based taiko players make their own taiko accessories in comparison to their Canadian counterparts; for certain items, players in the USA are more than twice as likely to make their own.
 - Canadian groups are more likely than their US-based counterparts to purchase taiko accessories as a group. For instance, 36% of US-based respondents reported buying happi as a group compared to 58% of Canada-based participants.
 - With the exception of shimedaiko, players based in the USA are more likely to individually purchase and make drums and stands in comparison to their Canada-based counterparts.
 - Group purchases of drums and stands are far more common in Canada compared to the USA, particularly for odaiko and chudaiko.

Individual Purchasing Habits: Accessories

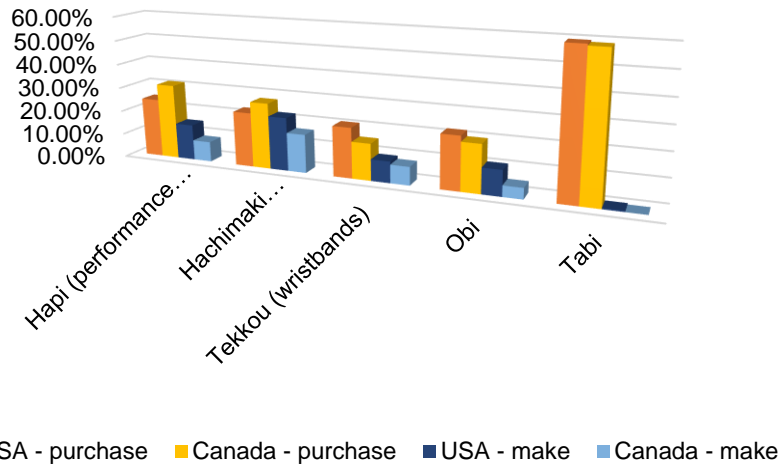


Figure 21: Individual purchasing habits (accessories)

Individual Purchasing Habits: Equipment

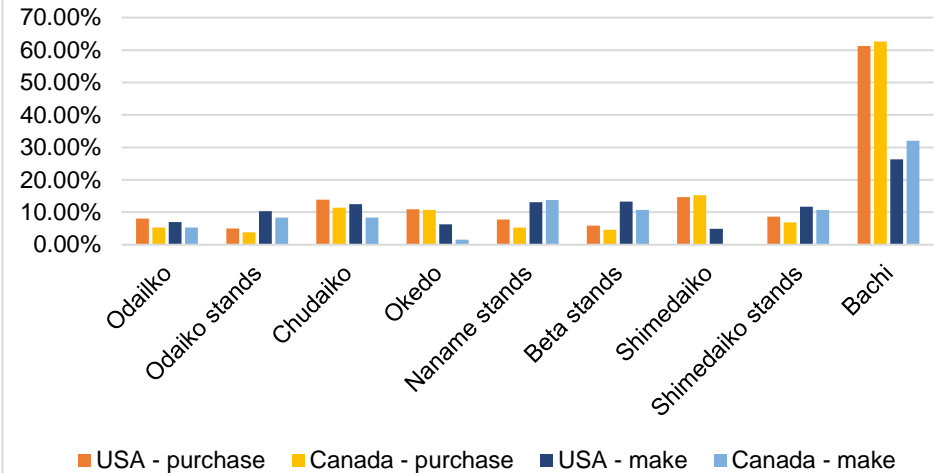


Figure 22: Individual purchasing habits (equipment)

Group Purchasing Habits: Accessories

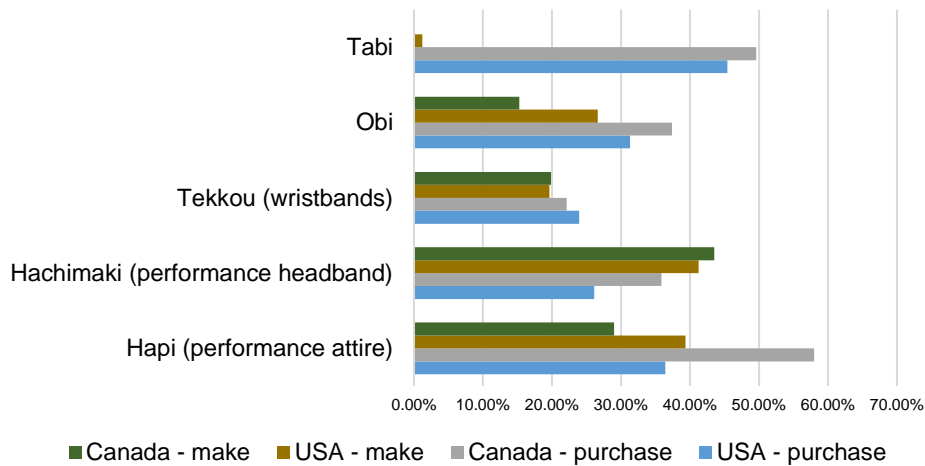


Figure 23: Group purchasing habits (accessories)

Group Purchasing Habits: Equipment

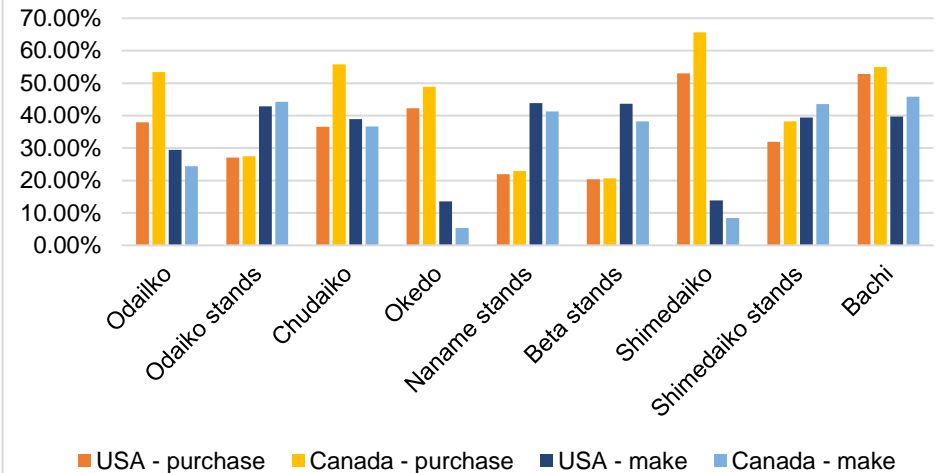


Figure 24: Group purchasing habits (equipment)

- Players detailed how much of their income they derive from taiko. As shown in figure 25, a higher percentage of respondents in Canada earn no income from taiko. Interestingly, however, proportionately more players in Canada earn 75%-100% of their income from taiko.

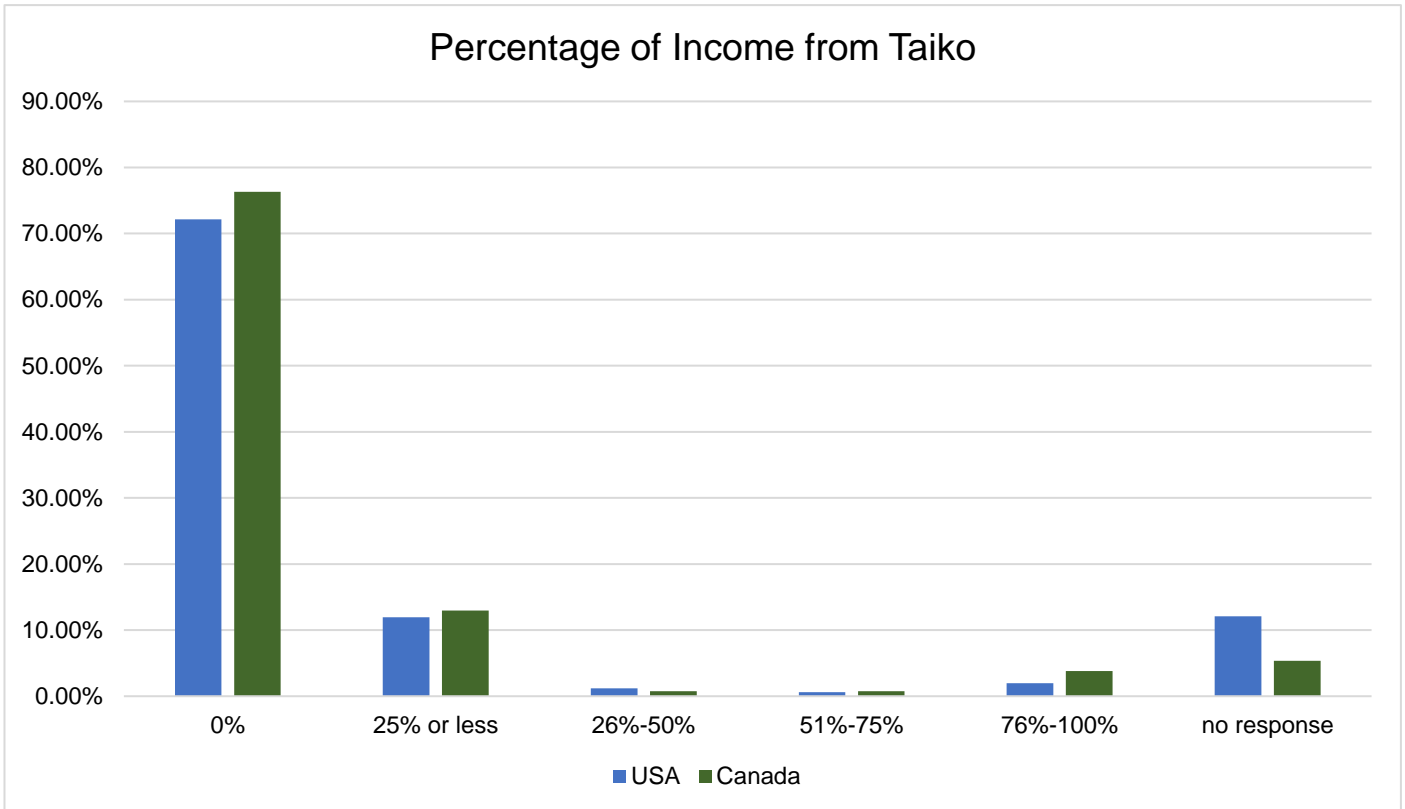


Figure 25: Percentage of income derived from taiko by country.

- The data presented in the following figures suggests that taiko is an accessible art form in the United States (i.e. not dependent upon excessive expenditure). The majority of players who disclosed their expenditure paid neither membership fees nor instruction costs. Just over a quarter of respondents spend more than \$50 per month on instruction, whereas only 12% pay more than \$50 per month on membership fees. Similarly, more than 60% of players reported spending less than \$100 per year on taiko products (i.e. equipment, bachi etc.). Notably, the majority of players (55%) spend less than \$100 per year on taiko events, such as concerts and intensives.

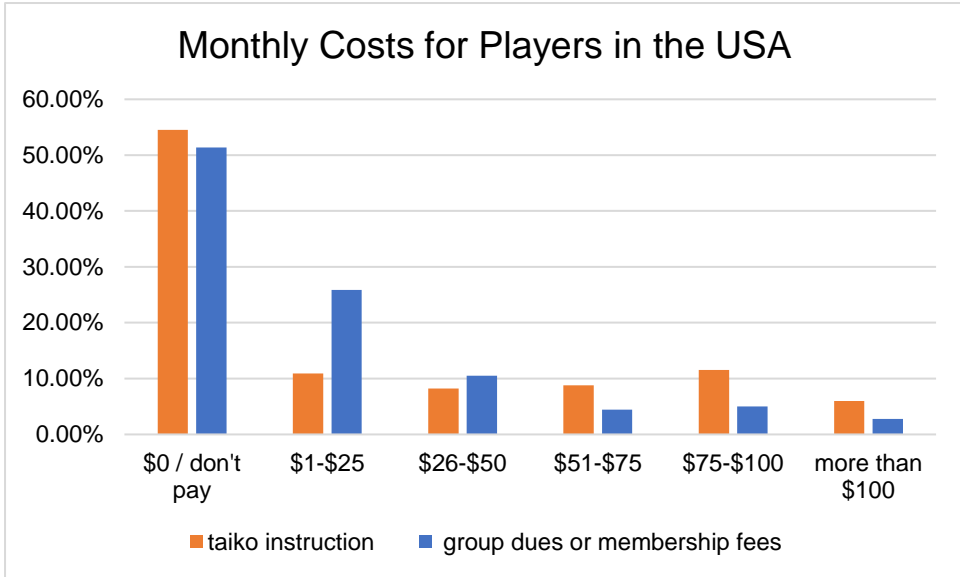


Figure 26: Monthly cost for instruction and membership fees (USA)

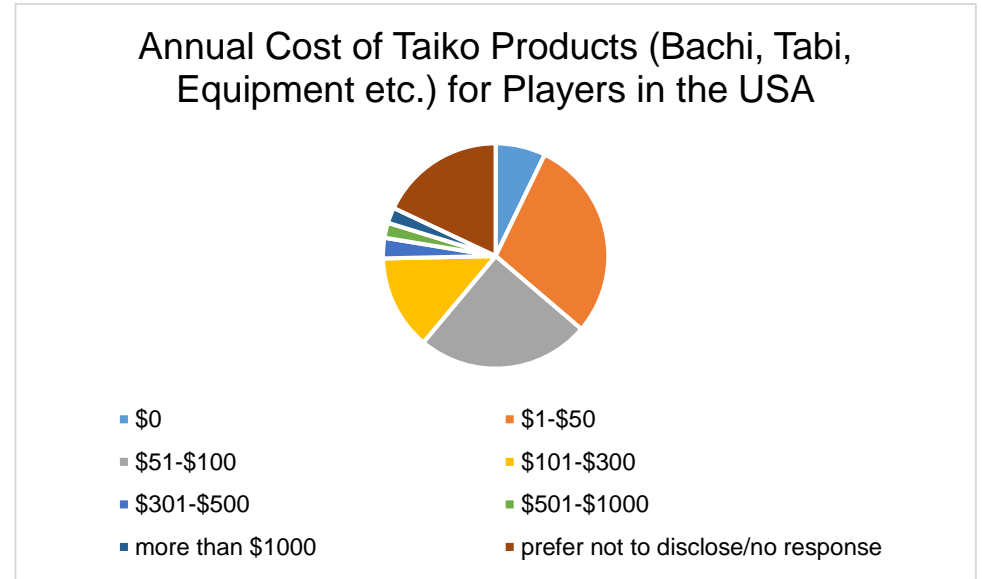


Figure 27: Annual cost of taiko products (USA)

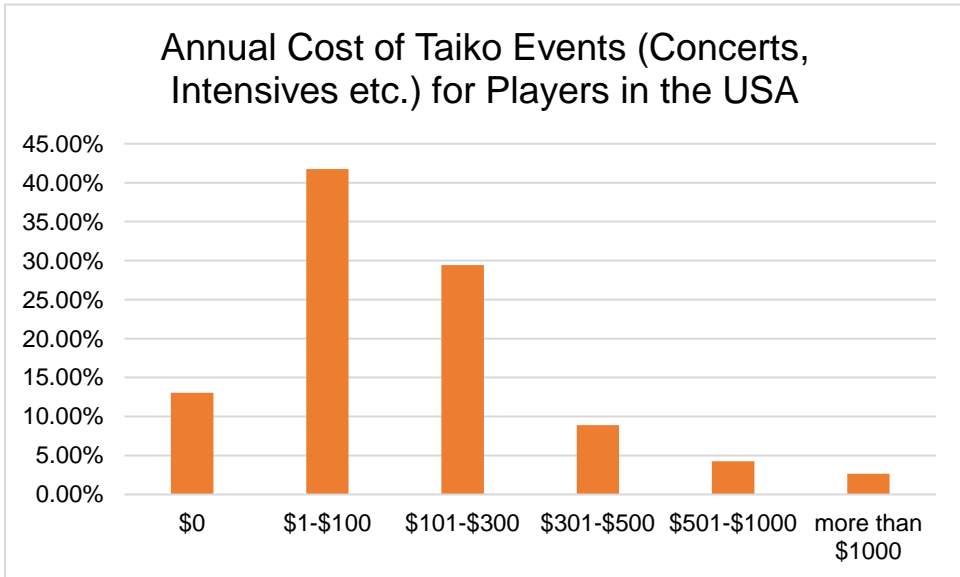


Figure 28: Annual cost of taiko events (USA)

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