

# THE LACK OF TRUST IN THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DUE TO THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

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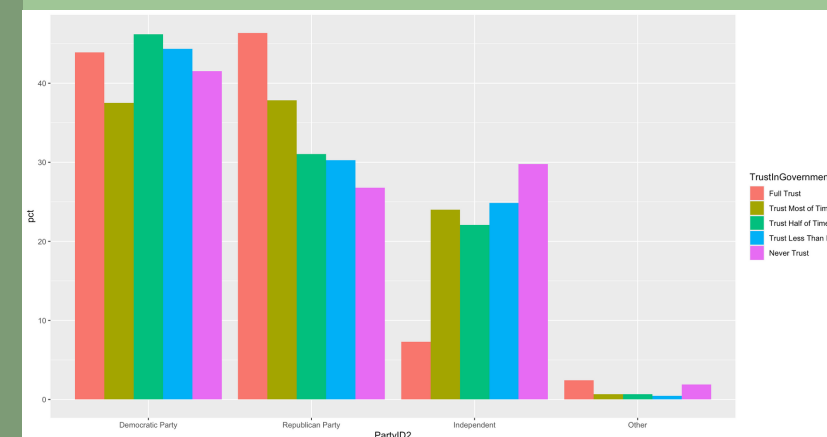
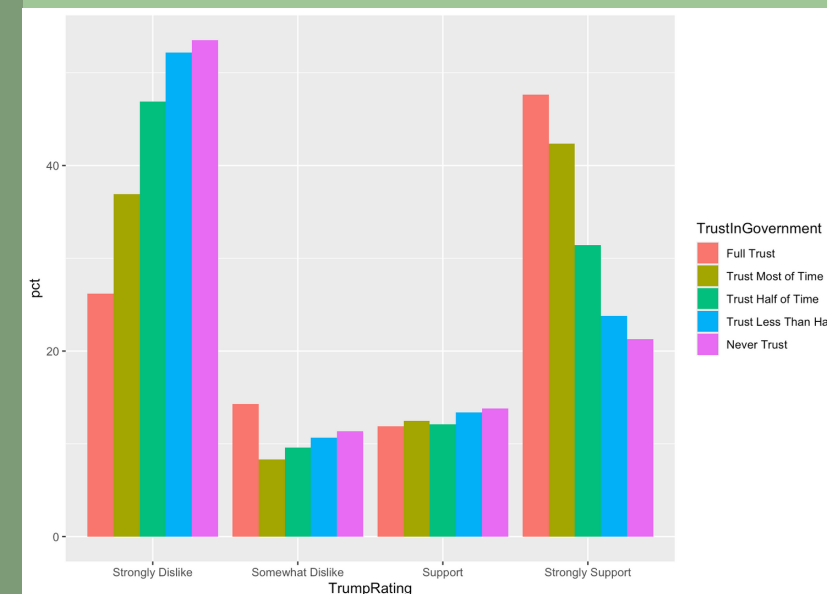
## INTRODUCTION

The following data analysis is an in-depth exploration of how the Trump presidency, from 2017-2021, affected the American people's trust in government. It is quite common in the United States that citizens have low levels of trust in the federal government. This prompted the idea that the reason that citizens currently have low levels of trust in the government is due to the policies and leadership qualities of the Trump presidency.

## VARIABLES

- Dependent Variable = Trust levels in the U.S. government
- Independent Variable = Rating of the Trump presidency
- Control Variables = Trust in the media, approval of the U.S. COVID-19 response, trust in political experts, and political party identification

## DATA ANALYSIS



## RESOURCE METHODS

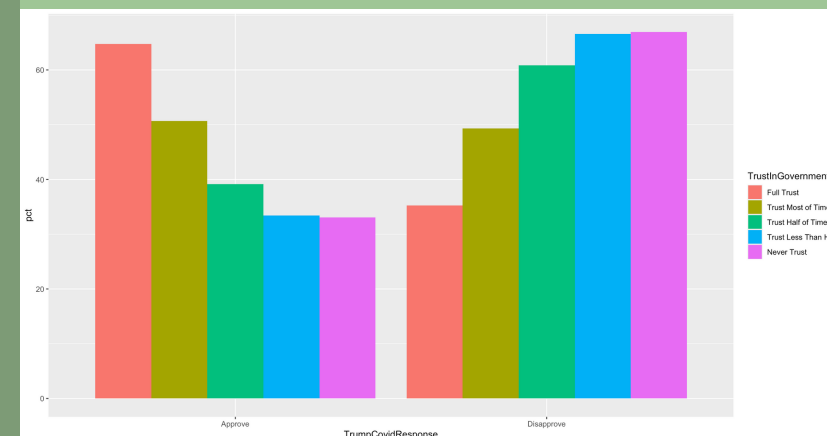
For this project, the data software R-Studio is implemented to perform data functions and analysis. The data used in this study is taken from the 2020 ANES Survey. Throughout this study, cross-tabulations are utilized to analyze the data, along with techniques of data correlation and graphing. The cross-tabulations helped to showcase the correlations between different variables.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, the Trump presidency has played a part in the low levels of trust towards the United States federal government. However, while it has played a part, it is not the only factor that has contributed to this low trust level phenomenon. Most importantly, trust towards the federal government has been declining for decades. Lastly, the Trump presidency in combination with distrust in media, political experts, COVID-19, and divisive party ties have all together helped to create low trust levels.

## HYPOTHESIS

The Trump presidency is the cause of widespread low trust levels towards the federal government in the United States among the average citizen.



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## LITERATURE REVIEW

The common consensus among the peer reviewed journals and articles that are on this topic, are that the low trust levels in the federal government in the United States are caused by a multitude of factors. Firstly, in a dissertation by John Segal, he evaluates the fluctuation of trust towards the government from the 1960s to the early 2000s using survey questions from the ANES survey data set. He comes to the conclusion that drops in trust towards government are usually sparked by a multitude of factors, and that trust in the U.S. government has been on the decline for decades (Segal). Furthermore, due to Trump's constant attacks towards the credibility of the media, political experts, COVID-19 information, and the U.S. government, he has caused low levels of trust amongst his supporters towards all of these institutions (Bourgignon and Sprenger).

## FINDINGS

To analyze how the Trump presidency is the cause of low levels of trust in the government, I used data regarding how people trust government and a thermometer rating of the Trump presidency. These two variables are cross-analyzed against each other, which shows that people who strongly dislike Trump tend to have low levels of trust in the government, while people who strongly support Trump have high levels of trust. Furthermore, cross-tabulations between the other control variables of trust in media, trust in experts, approval of Trump's COVID-19 response, and party identification shows that while there is correlation between these variables and trust in government, it is not determinable that they have large effect in low levels of trust. In a final analysis of the data, it is determined that all of these factors play a part in low levels of trust including the Trump presidency, but none of them are the sole cause of low trust levels.