

Socio-Political Attitudes Towards Climate Change

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01. Introduction

Climate change is not just an environmental issue—it's a political one. Public attitudes toward climate change policy are shaped by a mix of ideology, media exposure, age, and education. As information becomes more digital and polarized, understanding the social and political factors behind climate change belief becomes essential. This study examines how political media attention, party identity, and demographics interact to shape climate attitudes.

02. Hypothesis

Individuals who consume **more political and climate-related content** through social media and internet platforms are **more likely to support aggressive climate change action and policies**, especially among Democrats and younger age groups.

This hypothesis reflects prior research on selective exposure, motivated reasoning, and generational political socialization.

03. Literature Review

Previous research highlights the influence of partisan identity on climate change opinion (McCrea et al., 2016; Gurney et al., 2022). Selective exposure to ideologically aligned media sources and motivated reasoning often amplify belief polarization (Cruz & Carpenter, 2024).

Meanwhile, younger individuals and those with higher education levels are consistently more likely to express concern about climate change (Stern et al., 1993).

This study builds on that foundation by testing whether attention to political media intensifies climate concern—especially among Democrats and younger Americans.

04. Variables/Methods

Independent Variable:

- Media Attention (V202407): Follows politics via TV, radio, newspaper, internet

Dependent Variable:

- Climate Belief (V202332): Belief that climate change affects severe weather/temperature

Control Variables:

- Party ID (V201228): Democrat, Republican, Independent
- Age Group (V201507x): 18-34, 35-54, 55+
- Education Level (V201510): College vs. No college

05. Findings

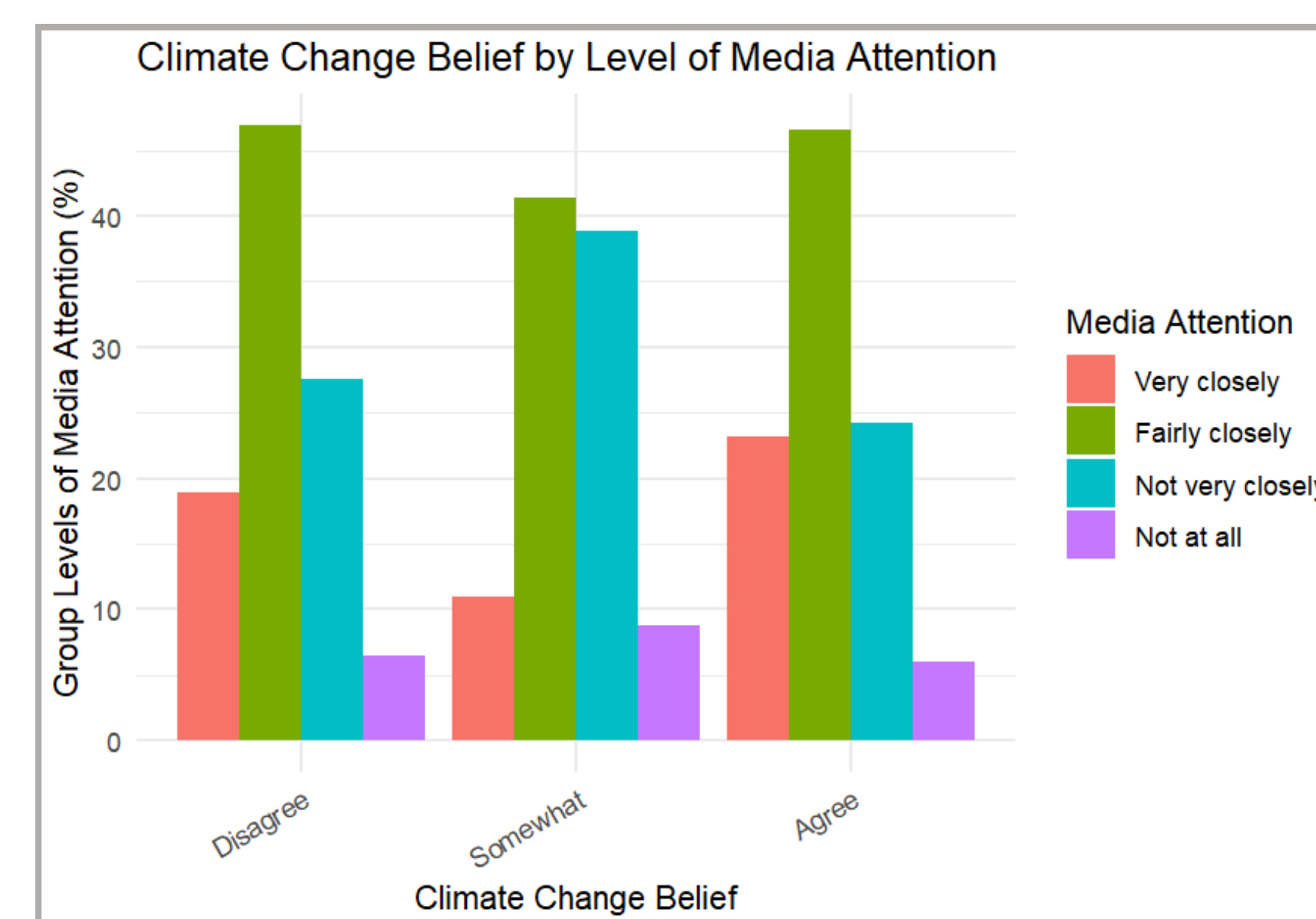
The results affirm that **media attention is positively associated with belief in climate change's effects**, especially among Democrats. Age plays a key role: **younger individuals are more likely to express concern than older groups**, rather significantly. **Education enhances belief** in climate change, however, only **among Democrats and Independents**—suggesting that partisan identity mediates how information is interpreted.

The **strongest agreement** appears among **highly educated Democrats and younger age groups who consume media closely**. In contrast, **Republicans show consistently low levels of agreement**, regardless of education or media engagement—indicating ideological resistance.

06. Conclusion

Belief in climate change isn't just about having access to information—it's shaped by who people are, what they believe, and where they get their news. This study shows that **media attention can strengthen concern about climate change, but the effect depends heavily on political identity and age**. Democrats and younger people who play closer attention to politics are the most likely to believe climate change is linked to extreme weather. For Republicans, however, those same factors—education and media exposure—don't shift opinions much, suggesting strong partisan filtering. These patterns point to **the need for more intentional climate communication**. For policymakers and advocates, understanding how identity shapes interpretation is key to breaking through. Looking ahead, future research could explore how different types of media shape beliefs and how these attitudes change over time in an increasingly polarized environment.

05. Data Analysis

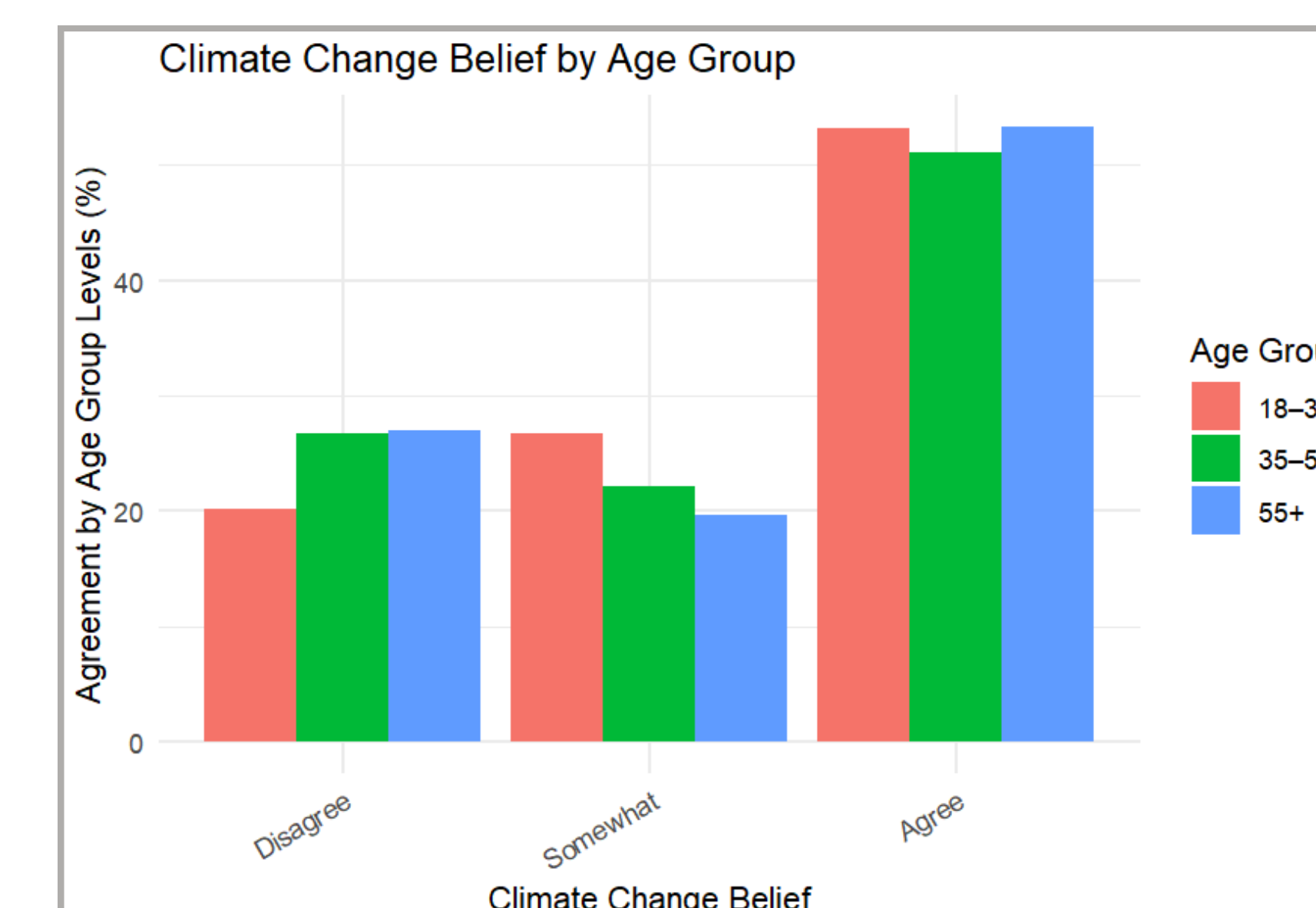
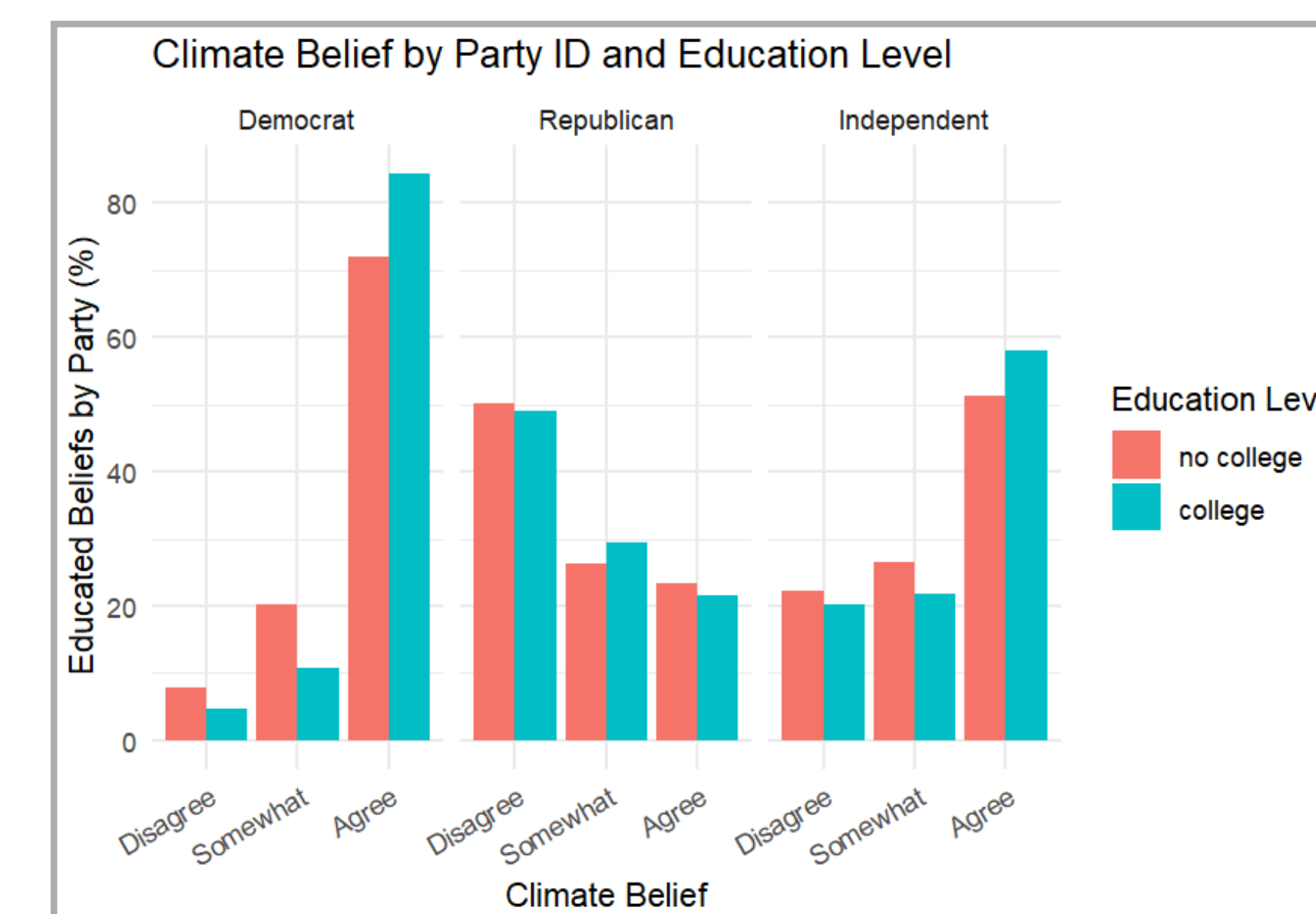


This is the independent vs. dependent variable relationship—central to hypothesis.

Data Interpretation

based on these charts, there's a strong correlation with between education level, age, media attention, political party, and the belief in climate change.

This three-way crosstab shows the powerful intersection of ideology and education, and how belief patterns shift across parties.



The hypothesis emphasizes younger Americans, this helps drive home the age division.

07. Bibliography

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