

# Do People Lie When Reporting Their Beliefs in Global Warming & Support for Green Policies?

## A Test Using the Item Count Technique

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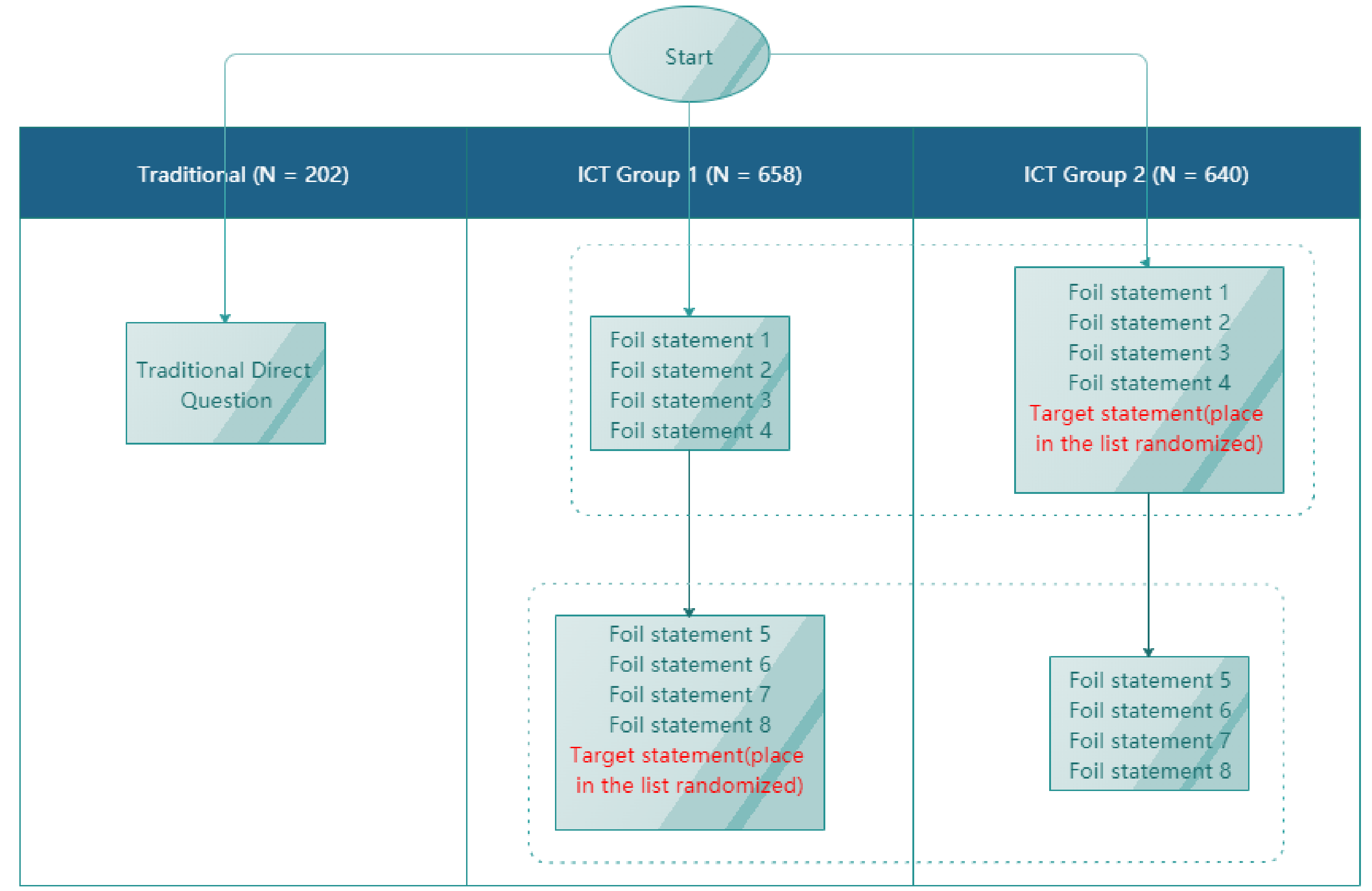


### Background

- A majority of Americans believe the global temperature has been increasing, and there is a need to combat anthropogenic climate change<sup>1</sup>.
- People may overreport or hide their green beliefs to make themselves socially desirable<sup>2</sup>.

### Method

- Double List Experiment<sup>3</sup>.
- Target items: 1) belief in the existence of global warming; 2) support for tax breaks to produce more electricity from water, wind, and solar power; 3) support for taxes for every ton of greenhouse gases companies put out (3 x 2 = 6 lists).
- Non-probability sample, N = 1,500.

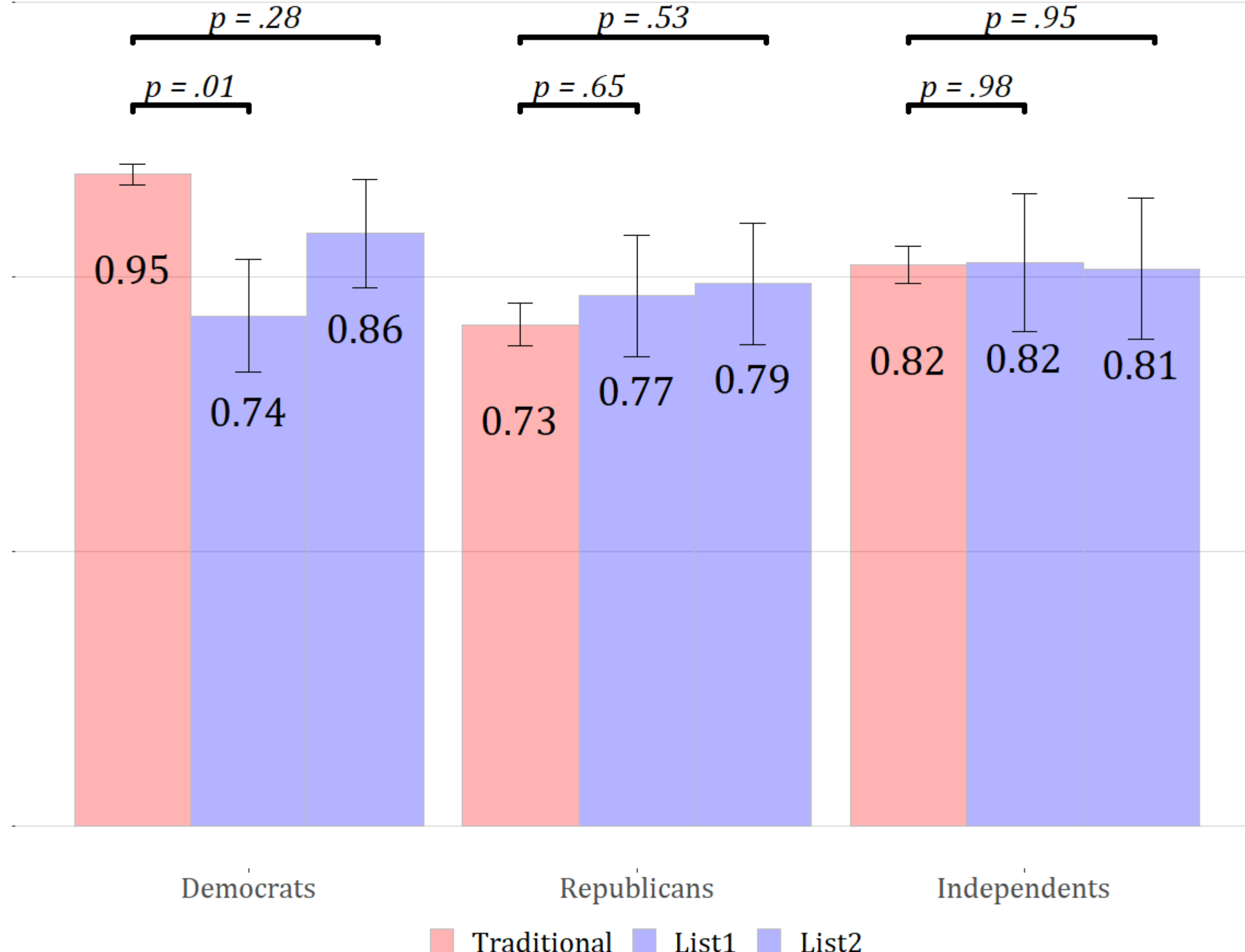


### References

- PPRG, 2020. <https://climatepublicopinion.stanford.edu/>
- Edwards, A. L. (1957). The social desirability variable in personality assessment and research.
- Droitcour et al. (1991). The item count technique as a method of indirect questioning

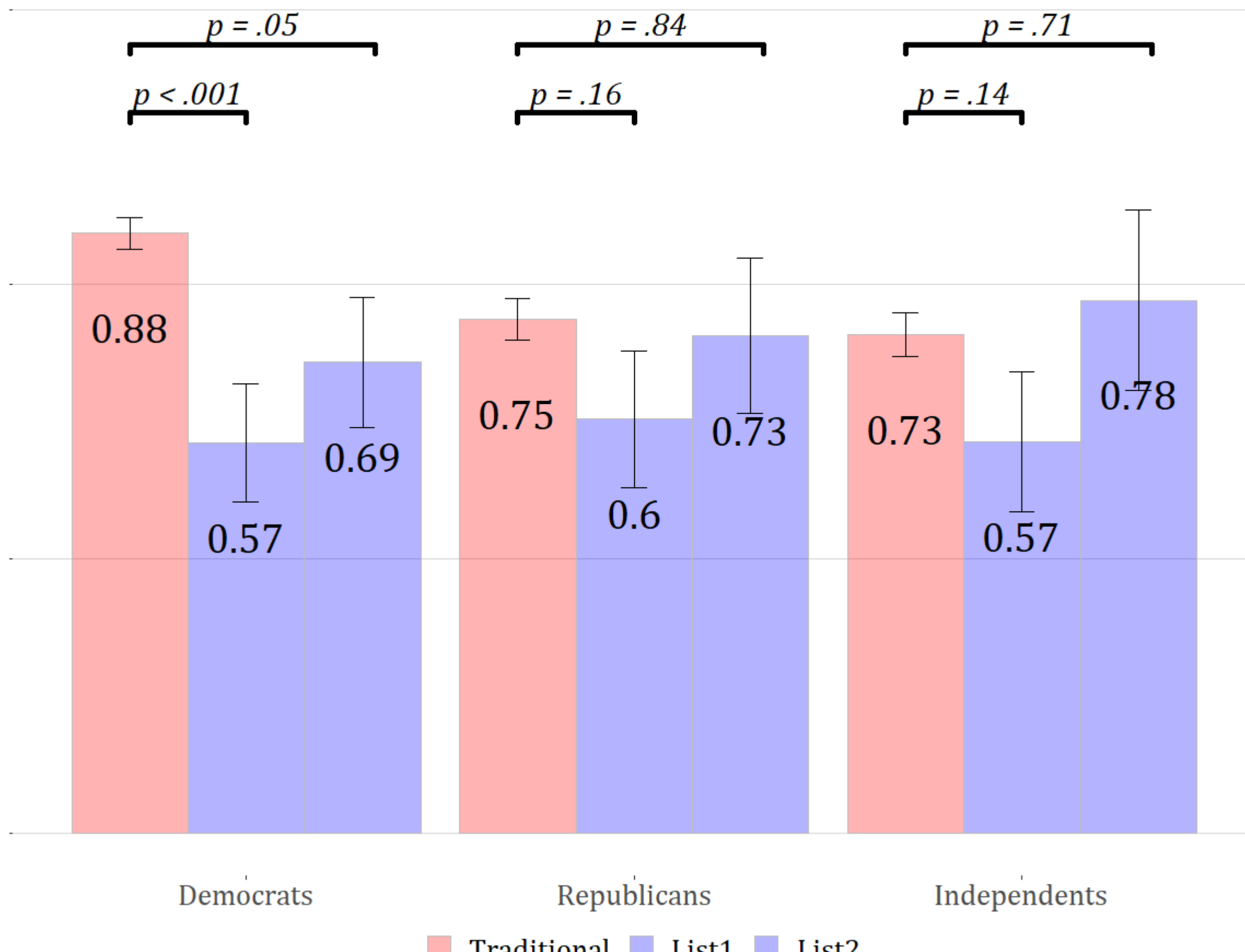
### Results

#### Study 1: Belief in the Existence of Global Warming



- According to List 1, Democrats overreported their belief in the existence of global warming ( $p = .01$ ). No evidence of over/underreporting among Democrats was found according to List 2.
- No evidence of over/underreporting among Republicans or Independents.

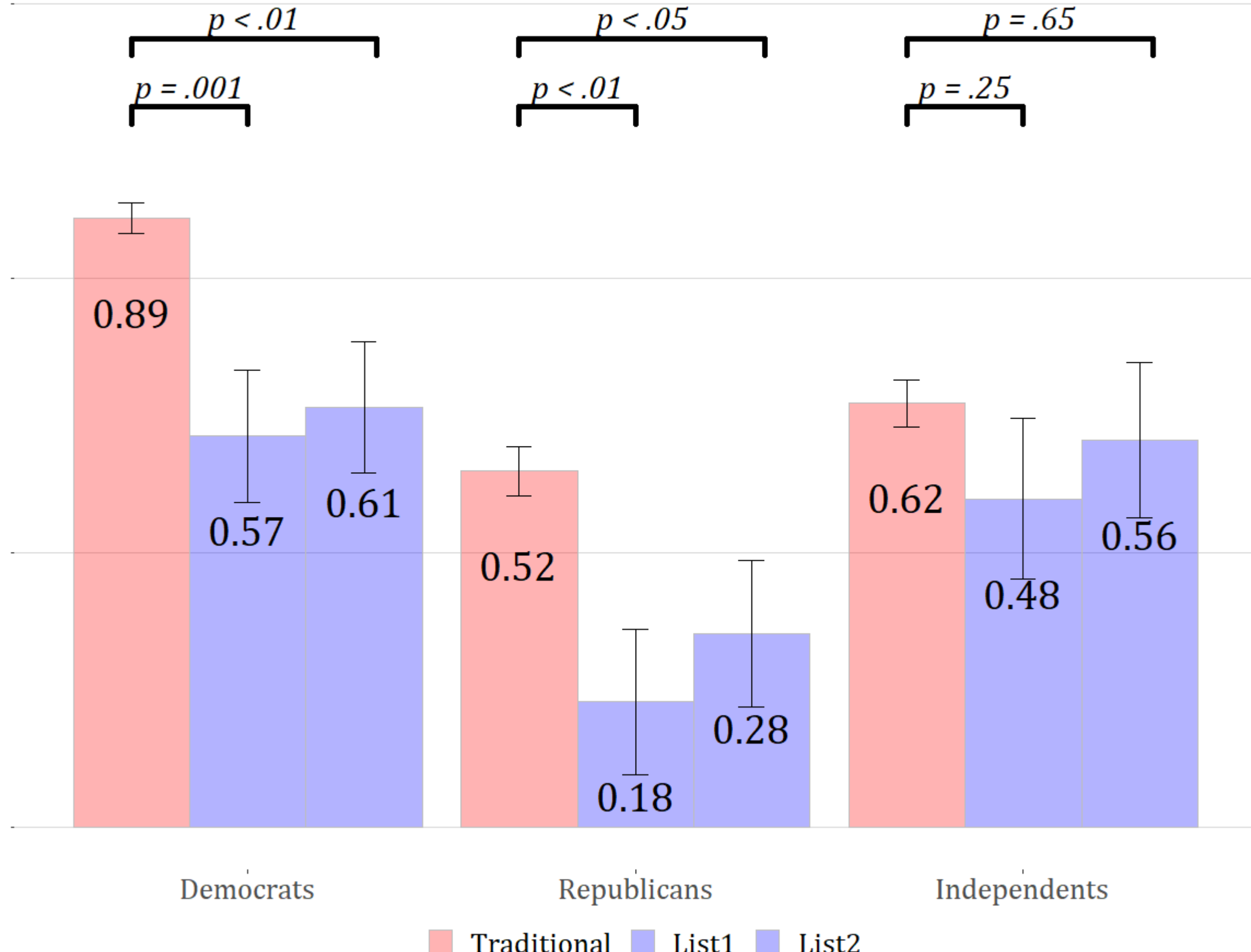
#### Study 2a: Support for Tax Breaks for Renewables



### Study 2a Results cont'd

- Democrats overreported their support for tax breaks for renewables ( $p < .001$  in List 1,  $p = .05$  in List 2). No evidence of over/underreporting found among Republicans or Independents.

#### Study 2b: Support for Taxes for Greenhouse gases



- Democrats overreported their support for taxes for greenhouse gases ( $p = .001$  in List 1,  $p < .01$  in List 2).
- Republicans also overreported their support for taxes for greenhouse gases ( $p < .01$  in List 1,  $p < .05$  in List 2).
- No evidence of over/underreporting found among Independents.

### Discussion

- Possible reasons for Democrats to overreport their green beliefs: social desirability bias & social group identity.
- Overestimating the “green will” among the public?