

APPENDIX TABLE 7-15

Public assessment of benefits and harms of scientific research, by respondent characteristic: 2016

(Percent)

Characteristic	Benefits strongly outweigh harmful results	Benefits slightly outweigh harmful results	Benefits are about equal to harmful results	Harmful results slightly outweigh benefits	Harmful results strongly outweigh benefits	Don't know
All adults (<i>n</i> = 1,390)	45	27	12	6	2	8
Sex						
Male (<i>n</i> = 571)	47	27	13	7	2	4
Female (<i>n</i> = 819)	44	27	12	6	2	10
Formal education						
Less than high school diploma (<i>n</i> = 169)	18	34	15	9	4	20
High school diploma (<i>n</i> = 415)	38	29	17	8	2	7
Some college (<i>n</i> = 388)	42	30	13	6	2	7
Bachelor's degree (<i>n</i> = 263)	62	22	6	4	1	5
Graduate or professional degree (<i>n</i> = 151)	77	17	2	*	2	2
Science and mathematics education ^a						
Low (<i>n</i> = 776)	37	28	15	7	2	11
Middle (<i>n</i> = 262)	50	29	10	6	3	2
High (<i>n</i> = 275)	65	25	7	1	*	1
Family income (quartile) ^b						
Bottom (<i>n</i> = 336)	33	30	13	8	4	12
Third (<i>n</i> = 281)	39	28	15	7	2	9
Second (<i>n</i> = 324)	48	31	10	6	2	4



Characteristic	Benefits strongly outweigh harmful results	Benefits slightly outweigh harmful results	Benefits are about equal to harmful results	Harmful results slightly outweigh benefits	Harmful results strongly outweigh benefits	Don't know
Top (<i>n</i> = 318)	63	23	8	3	1	3
Age (years) ^b						
18–24 (<i>n</i> = 115)	33	38	17	8	0	5
25–34 (<i>n</i> = 269)	44	29	15	6	2	5
35–44 (<i>n</i> = 206)	43	28	12	8	1	9
45–54 (<i>n</i> = 223)	50	25	10	4	4	7
55–64 (<i>n</i> = 264)	50	21	11	7	3	8
65 or older (<i>n</i> = 310)	47	25	10	4	2	12
Trend factual knowledge of science scale (quartile) ^c						
Bottom (<i>n</i> = 250)	26	30	14	9	2	20
Third (<i>n</i> = 387)	37	30	14	6	3	9
Second (<i>n</i> = 437)	49	28	11	7	2	3
Top (<i>n</i> = 316)	64	19	10	2	1	3

* = < 0.5% responded.

^a For science and mathematics education, "low" equates to five or fewer high school and college science or mathematics courses, "middle" is six through eight courses, and "high" means nine or more courses. Categories do not add to total *n* because "don't know" responses and refusals to respond are not shown.

^b Categories do not add to total *n* because "don't know" responses and refusals to respond are not shown.

^c See notes to Appendix Table 7-2 for an explanation of the trend factual knowledge of science scale.

Note(s)

Responses to *People have frequently noted that scientific research has produced benefits and harmful results. Would you say that, on balance, the benefits of scientific research have outweighed the harmful results, or have the harmful results of scientific research been greater than its benefits?* Percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Source(s)

NORC at the University of Chicago, General Social Survey (2016).

Science and Engineering Indicators 2018