Appendix table 7-12

Public assessment of benefits and harms of scientific research, by respondent characteristic: 2006

(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 (n = 1,864)	48	22	17	4	2	6
Sex						
Male (n = 804)	51	21	15	4	3	5
Female (n = 1,060)	46	23	19	4	1	7
Formal education						
<High school (n = 227)	27	20	28	8	3	13
High school graduate (n = 1,115)	45	24	17	5	2	6
Baccalaureate (n = 346)	57	19	15	3	1	4
Graduate/professional degree (n = 176)	76	13	8	2	1	—
Science/mathematics education[a]						
Low (n = 1,042)	38	24	21	6	3	8
Middle (n = 359)	53	24	14	3	1	5
High (n = 408)	70	15	11	2	1	2
Family income (quartile)						
Top (n = 311)	60	22	11	3	3	2
Second (n = 420)	53	23	16	3	1	5
Third (n = 419)	46	25	20	5	1	3
Bottom (n = 462)	41	22	19	6	3	8
Age (years)						
18–24 (n = 157)	46	26	14	5	3	6
25–34 (n = 341)	43	21	22	5	2	7
35–44 (n = 382)	49	22	18	5	2	5
45–54 (n = 386)	51	19	19	4	3	4
55–64 (n = 272)	56	20	14	2	2	5
65+ (n = 321)	44	25	15	5	1	11
Minor children at home						
Yes (n = 588)	47	22	19	4	3	6
No (n = 1,276)	49	22	16	5	2	6
Factual knowledge of science[b] (quartile)						
Top (n = 455)	72	17	8	1	—	2
Second (n = 470)	51	22	17	5	2	3
Third (n = 479)	41	25	18	6	3	7
Bottom (n = 460)	28	23	27	5	3	14

— = ≤0.5% responded

[a]Low = ≤5 high school and college science/math courses; middle = 6–8 courses; high = ≥9 courses.
[b]See notes to appendix table 7-4 for explanation of "factual knowledge of science scale 1."

NOTES: 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 that the harmful results of scientific research have been greater than its benefits?* Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

SOURCE: University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey (2006).