

Appendix table 7-26

**Importance of process, credentials, and external validation to belief that something is scientific, by respondent characteristic: 2006**

(Mean score)

Characteristic	Process			Credentials			External validation	
	Solid evidence (n = 1,807)	Different interpretations (n = 1,783)	Repeated experiment (n = 1,788)	Advanced degrees (n = 1,801)	University setting (n = 1,787)	Laboratory (n = 1,787)	Common sense (n = 1,794)	Religious beliefs (n = 1,775)
All adults .....	3.79	3.72	3.65	3.56	3.12	3.12	3.09	1.96
Sex								
Male .....	3.79	3.71	3.65	3.54	3.09	3.10	3.08	1.87
Female .....	3.79	3.74	3.66	3.58	3.14	3.14	3.10	2.03
Formal education								
<High school .....	3.69	3.51	3.52	3.64	3.24	3.51	3.31	2.31
High school graduate .....	3.77	3.70	3.63	3.57	3.13	3.16	3.19	2.08
Baccalaureate .....	3.84	3.81	3.73	3.52	3.02	2.91	2.90	1.63
Graduate/professional .....	3.90	3.89	3.76	3.54	3.09	2.87	2.56	1.48
Science/mathematics education <sup>a</sup>								
Low .....	3.73	3.66	3.62	3.59	3.16	3.29	3.27	2.14
Middle .....	3.81	3.73	3.60	3.57	3.11	3.03	3.01	1.87
High .....	3.90	3.88	3.79	3.50	3.04	2.82	2.70	1.60
Family income (quartile)								
Top .....	3.87	3.85	3.77	3.54	3.12	2.93	2.83	1.66
Second .....	3.78	3.71	3.64	3.52	3.07	3.13	3.11	1.86
Third .....	3.80	3.76	3.62	3.68	3.18	3.18	3.15	2.10
Bottom .....	3.69	3.57	3.53	3.52	3.12	3.20	3.12	2.11
Age (years)								
18–24 .....	3.80	3.74	3.64	3.61	3.05	2.76	2.88	1.94
25–34 .....	3.72	3.70	3.61	3.52	3.08	3.10	3.05	1.91
35–44 .....	3.78	3.74	3.65	3.55	3.11	3.09	3.01	1.94
45–54 .....	3.86	3.76	3.70	3.58	3.16	3.12	3.08	1.86
55–64 .....	3.81	3.78	3.68	3.54	3.00	3.24	3.14	1.95
65+ .....	3.74	3.61	3.63	3.60	3.28	3.38	3.37	2.24
Minor children at home								
Yes .....	3.77	3.72	3.65	3.57	3.14	3.12	3.10	2.01
No .....	3.79	3.72	3.65	3.56	3.10	3.12	3.08	1.93
Factual knowledge of science <sup>b</sup> (quartile)								
Top .....	3.86	3.85	3.73	3.54	3.05	2.84	2.77	1.50
Second .....	3.85	3.75	3.70	3.61	3.16	3.09	3.02	1.94
Third .....	3.79	3.74	3.68	3.57	3.13	3.23	3.29	2.08
Bottom .....	3.62	3.50	3.45	3.52	3.12	3.37	3.31	2.41

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

NOTES: Responses to how important each of eight statements is to making something scientific. Mean importance score based on 4-point scale, where 4 = very important and 1 = not important at all. Questions asked of 1,864 survey respondents; number (n) of respondents varies by statement because mean importance score excludes responses of “don’t know.” Process statements: (1) *The conclusions are based on solid evidence*; (2) *The researchers carefully examine different interpretations of the results, even ones they disagree with*; (3) *Other scientists repeat the experiment, and find similar results*. Credentials statements: (1) *The people who do it have advanced degrees in their field*; (2) *It is done by scientists employed in a university setting*; (3) *The research takes place in a laboratory*. External validation statements: (1) *The results of the research are consistent with common sense*; (2) *The results of the research are consistent with religious beliefs*.

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