

Table SPSS-17

Confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public, by understanding of the scientific method: 2020

(Standard error)

Perception of the scientific method		Level of confidence in scientists			
		A great deal	A fair amount	Not too much	None at all
All respondents (<i>n</i> = 6,283)		1.0	1.1	0.8	0.4
Perception that science is iterative	Believe the scientific method produces findings meant to be continually tested and updated over time (<i>n</i> = 4,669)	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.3
	Believe the scientific method identifies unchanging core principles and truths ^a (<i>n</i> = 1,614)	1.8	2.0	1.6	0.9
Perception that science yields accurate results	Believe the scientific method generally produces accurate conclusions (<i>n</i> = 4,658)	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.2
	Believe the scientific method can be used to produce any conclusion the researcher wants (<i>n</i> = 1,511)	1.5	2.1	1.8	1.1

n = number of survey responses.^a Includes "not sure" responses and refusals.**Note(s):**

Responses are to the following:

- *How much confidence, if any, do you have in [scientists] to act in the best interests of the public?*- *Based on what you have heard or read, which of the following statements best describes the scientific method?**The scientific method produces findings meant to be continually tested and updated over time.**The scientific method identifies unchanging core principles and truths.**Not sure*- *Which of the following best describes what you think about the scientific method?**The scientific method generally produces accurate conclusions.**The scientific method can be used to produce any conclusion the research wants.***Source(s):**

Pew Research Center, American Trends Panel (2020), Wave 79, conducted 18–29 November 2020. Data provided to the authors by the center prior to public release.

Science and Engineering Indicators