Appendix table 7-28

Public perceptions of science and engineering occupations, by respondent characteristic: 1983, 2001, and 2012

(Mean agreement score)

Question/year	Formal education				Science/mathematics education[b]			Trend factual knowledge of science scale (quartile)[c]			
	< High school	High school diploma or associate degree[a]	Bachelor's degree	Graduate/ professional degree	Low	Middle	High	Top	Second	Third	Bottom
Scientists/engineers are helping to solve challenging problems.											
1983: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,557)	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0
2012: scientists (*n* = 1,124)	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1
2012: engineers (*n* = 1,037)	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1
Scientific/engineering researchers are dedicated people who work for the good of humanity.											
1983: scientific researchers (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientific researchers (*n* = 1,503)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
2012: scientific researchers (*n* = 1,103)	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.2
2012: engineering researchers (*n* = 996)	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.1
Most scientists/engineers want to work on things that will make life better for the average person.											
1983: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,526)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
2012: scientists (*n* = 1,101)	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
2012: engineers (*n* = 1,025)	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1
Scientific/engineering work is dangerous.											
1983: scientific work (*n* = 1,562)	2.9	2.6	2.3	2.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientific work (*n* = 1,519)	2.8	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.8
2012: scientific work (*n* = 1,084)	2.8	2.7	2.3	2.1	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.7	2.7
2012: engineering work (*n* = 998)	2.9	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.7	2.7
Scientists/engineers are apt to be odd and peculiar people.											
1983: scientists (*n* = 1,567)	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,514)	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.4
2012: scientists (*n* = 1,073)	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.4
2012: engineers (*n* = 989)	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.3
Scientists/engineers are not likely to be very religious.											
1983: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,381)	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
2012: scientists (*n* = 990)	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.3
2012: engineers (*n* = 869)	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2

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(Mean agreement score)

Question/year	Formal education				Science/mathematics education[b]			Trend factual knowledge of science scale (quartile)[c]			
	< High school	High school diploma or associate degree[a]	Bachelor's degree	Graduate/ professional degree	Low	Middle	High	Top	Second	Third	Bottom
Scientists/engineers have few other interests but their work.											
1983: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,437)	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.5
2012: scientists (*n* = 1,022)	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.5
2012: engineers (*n* = 947)	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.2
A scientist/engineer usually works alone.											
1983: scientist (*n* = 1,567)	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientist (*n* = 1,532)	2.2	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.2
2012: scientist (*n* = 1,075)	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.3
2012: engineer (*n* = 995)	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.2
Scientists/engineers don't get as much fun out of life as other people do.											
1983: scientists (*n* = 1,500)	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = 1,438)	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.4
2012: scientists (*n* = 1,032)	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.3
2012: engineers (*n* = 960)	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.2
Scientists/engineers earn less than other people with equally demanding jobs.											
1983: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientists (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2012: scientists (*n* = 937)	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1
2012: engineers (*n* = 940)	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1

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(Mean agreement score)

Question/year	Formal education				Science/mathematics education[b]			Trend factual knowledge of science scale (quartile)[c]			
	< High school	High school diploma or associate degree[a]	Bachelor's degree	Graduate/ professional degree	Low	Middle	High	Top	Second	Third	Bottom
A job as a scientist/engineer would be boring.											
1983: scientist (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2001: scientist (*n* = NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2012: scientist (*n* = 1,090)	2.3	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1
2012: engineer (*n* = 985)	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1

NA = not available, question not asked.

[a] Includes "some college" category in 2001 and 2012.
[b] Low = ≤ 5 high school and college science/mathematics courses; middle = 6–8 courses; high = ≥ 9 courses.
[c] See notes to appendix table 7-8 for an explanation of the trend factual knowledge of science scale.

NOTES: Responses to *Now I'd like to read you some statements about scientists/engineers. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each one. If you feel especially strongly about a statement, please say that you strongly agree or strongly disagree.* Mean agreement score is based on a 4-point scale, where 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree.

SOURCES: National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology (1983, 2001); University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey (2012).

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