

People with More Education Have a More Positive View of the Internet

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dropped from 90 percent in 2014.

The share of online adults who say the internet has been good for society is on the decline. While 76 percent in 2014 said the internet has been "mostly" good, by 2018, the proportion sharing that sentiment had dropped to 70 percent. Among older adults, those 65 and older, the shift was starkest, dropping from 78 percent in 2014 to 64 percent this year. Young people — ages 18 to 29 — were slightly more upbeat; 79 percent said the internet has been mostly good for society in 2014 compared to 74 percent in 2018.

These results came from a phone survey of 2,002 adults, 18 years or older, run by the Pew Research Center during January 2018.

Researchers found that people aren't nearly as harsh regarding connectivity for their personal lives. Nearly nine in 10 people (88 percent) said the internet had been "mostly a good thing" for them personally; that

Those with more education are also more likely to view the impact of the internet more favorably. While 81 percent of those with a college degree said the effect on society has been mostly good, just 65 percent of those with a high school diploma or less agreed.

What do Americans like about the internet? In an open-ended question, two-thirds (62 percent) of those with a positive view referenced how online access makes getting information much easier and faster. A quarter (23 percent) mentioned the ability to connect with or stay in touch with people.

Among those who view the internet as a "bad" thing for society, the most common issue that stood out (cited by 25 percent) was how it isolates people or pushes them to spend too much time on devices. Sixteen percent talked about the spread of fake news; 14 percent were concerned about its impact on children; and 13 percent suggested that it "encourages illegal activity."

Researchers also found that the number of homes with access to broadband is slinking downward. Just two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) said they subscribe to a traditional broadband service at home; that was 67 percent in 2015. Those who use only their smartphones for home internet service are also "disproportionately less likely" to have gone to college compared to those who said they have traditional broadband. They also have lower income households. While 31 percent of people with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 are smartphone-only internet users, the share drops to just nine percent for those earning \$75,000 or more.

The survey also found that 15 percent of people are off the internet at home; they lack broadband services at home and a smartphone. Most of this group also don't use the internet or email anywhere else. The complete findings are available on the Pew website.

Source: THE [Journal](#) ↗