

5. BUSINESS AND COMPETITION

5.1 INTEREST IN AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS BUSINESS

5.1.1 INTEREST IN BUSINESS

Question

B1 Overall, how interested are you in business issues generally?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Not at all interested

in business issues

I don't follow business issues in the news

I rarely read the business section of the newspaper – I typically read other sections first

I'm not really interested in the stock market

Very interested

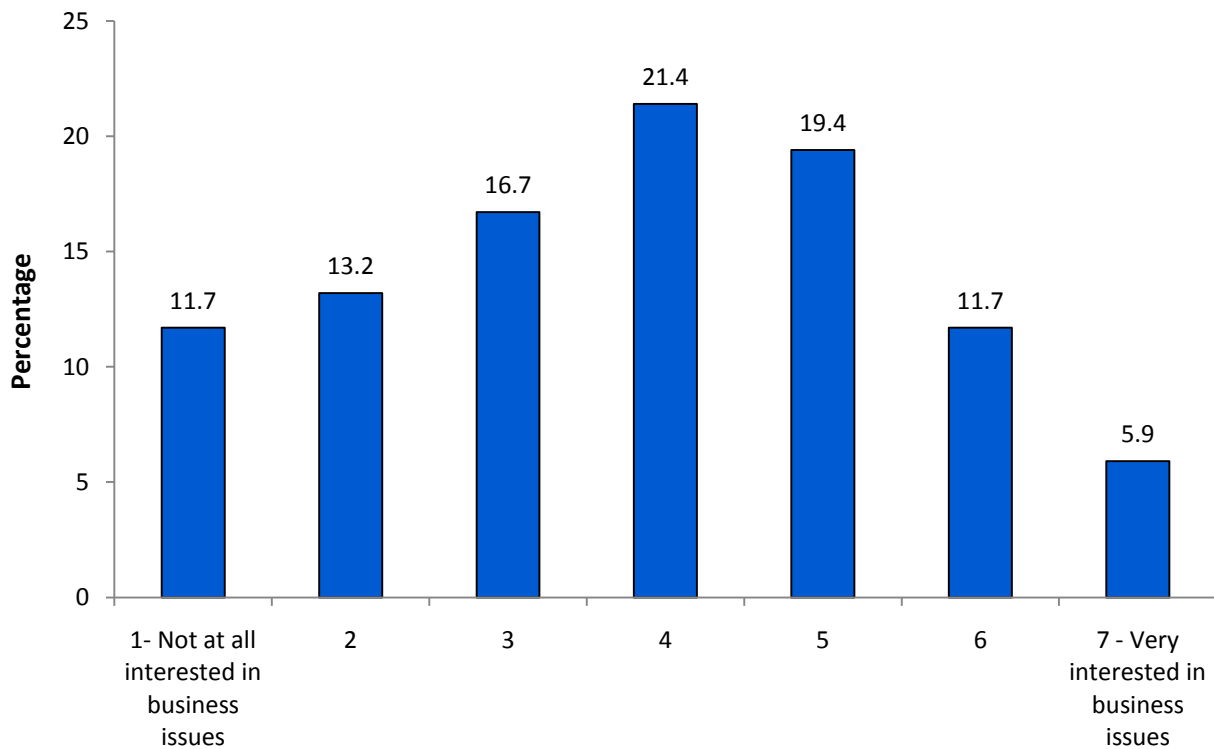
in business issues

I follow business issues in the news

I tend to look at the business section first in the newspaper

I take an interest in the stock market

Figure 5.1.1A Interest in business¹



Overall, how interested are you in business issues generally?

Central tendency

Average*	Median	Mode
3.83	4	4

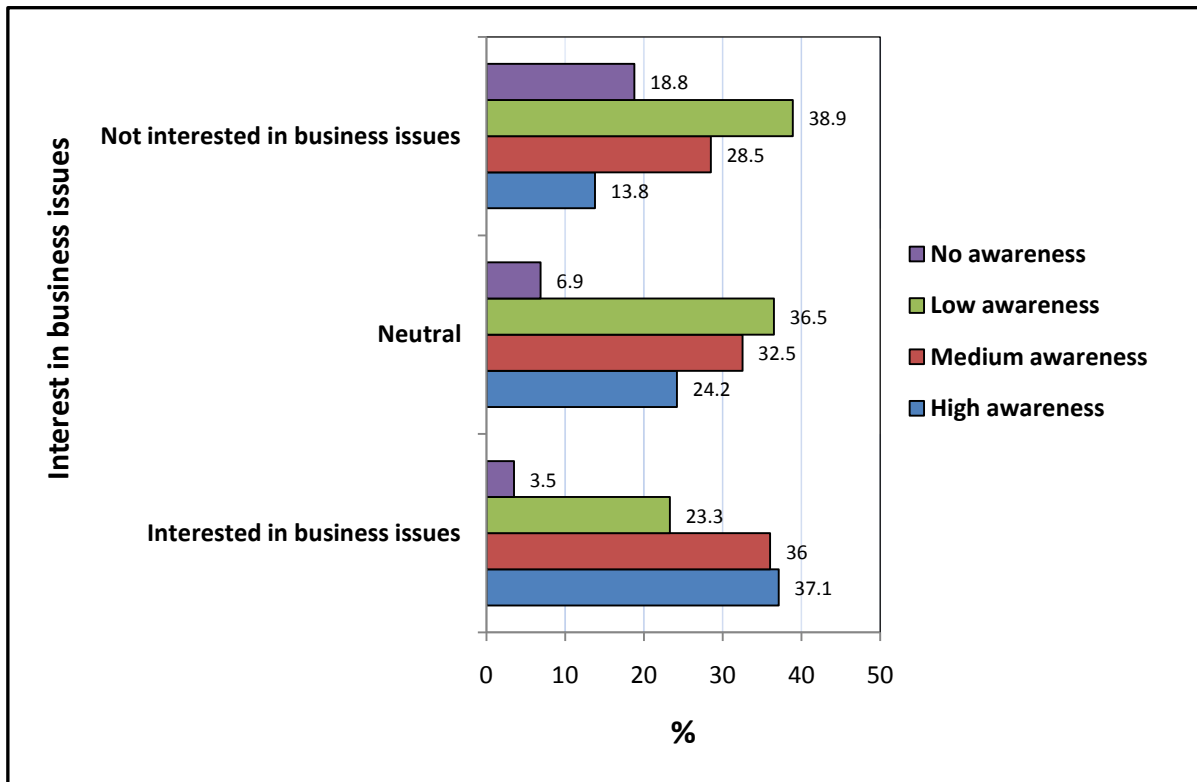
*Standard deviation is 1.71.

Comments

Overall, there was a diverse range of responses with respect to interest in business issues. Interest in business issues followed a normal distribution. The median response was neutral in that it was located midway between 'very interested' and 'not at all interested'.

¹ n=1296, all respondents.

Figure 5.1.1B Interest in business and prior awareness²



Comments

Interest in business issues was associated with level of awareness. For instance, of those with an interest in business issues 37.1% had a high level of awareness and 3.5% had no awareness, in contrast to those with no interest in business issues who had 13.8% high awareness and 18.8% no awareness.

² n=1296, all respondents. For purposes of simplifying the analysis and presentation of results, interest in business was divided into three categories – 'Not interested in business issues' (for scores of 1, 2 and 3), 'Neutral' (for a score of 4), and 'Interested in business issues' (for scores of 5, 6 and 7).

 5.1.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS BUSINESS AS TRUSTWORTHY/UNTRUSTWORTHY
Question

B2. On the scale below, where would you place your own views on the **trustworthiness of business**?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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I think business

I am reluctant

can mostly be trusted

to trust business

Business tries to provide goods and services that are safe and meet consumer needs

Business sometimes skimps on safety, or advertises in a misleading way

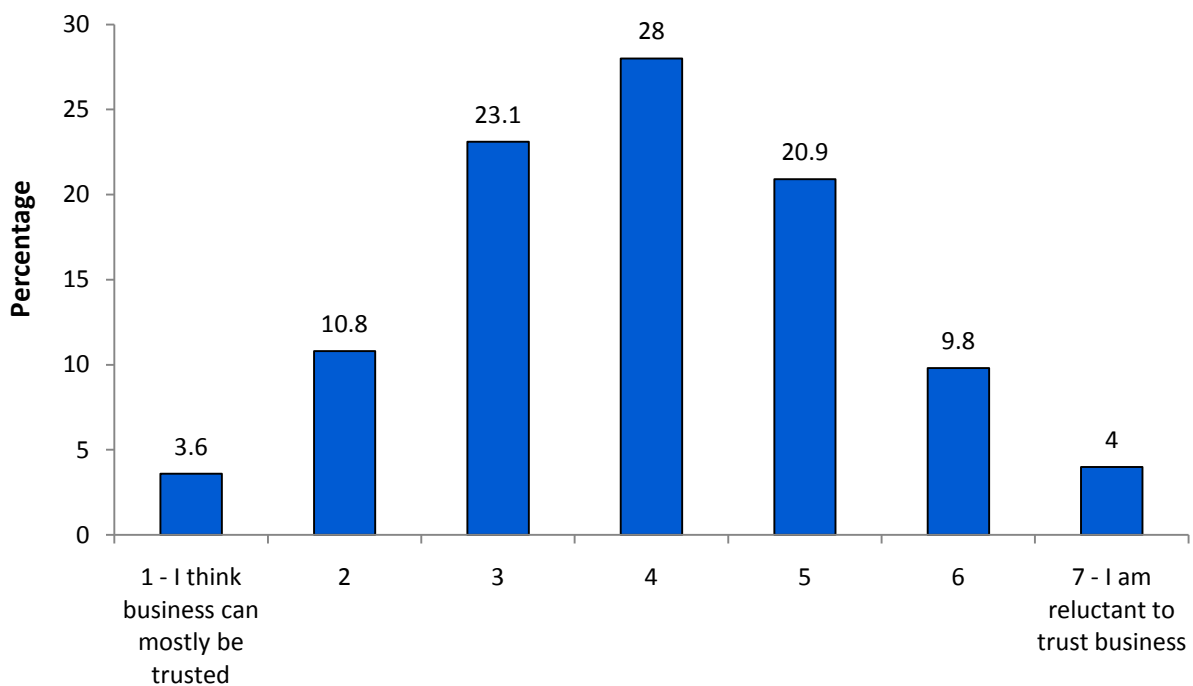
By and large business tries to be fair with employees

Business tries to get away with paying unfair wages

Business contributes to the community in various other ways

Business could do more good generally in society

Figure 5.1.2A Attitudes towards business as trustworthy/untrustworthy³



Where would you place your own views on the trustworthiness of business?

Central tendency

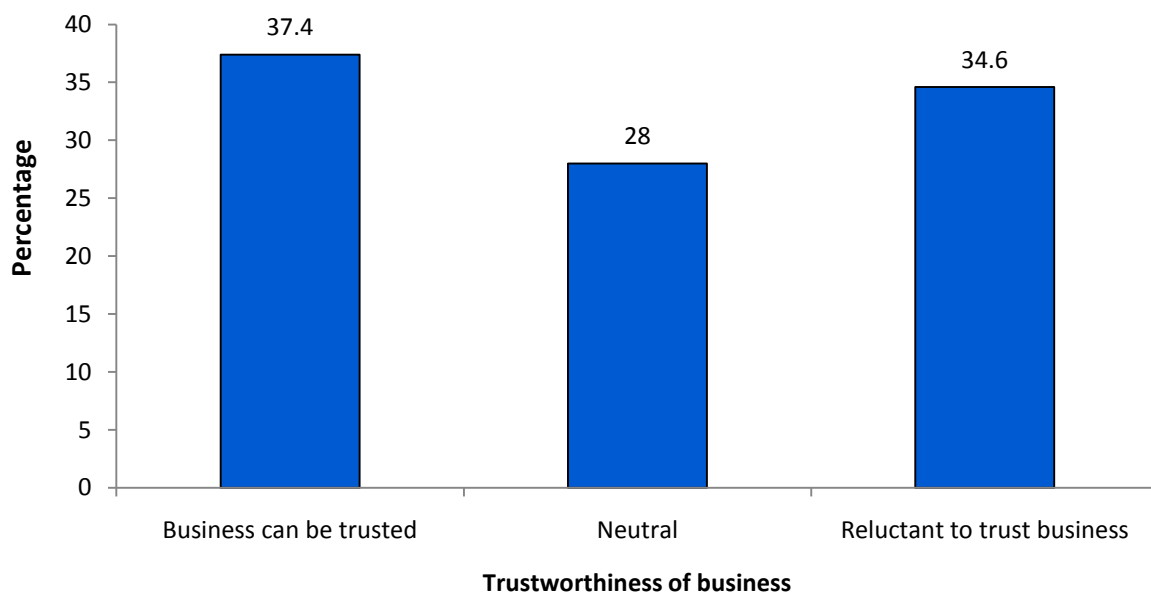
Average*	Median	Mode
3.97	4	4

*Standard deviation is 1.39

Comments

The most common response was 'midway' between mostly trusting of and reluctant to trust business.

³ n=1296, all respondents.

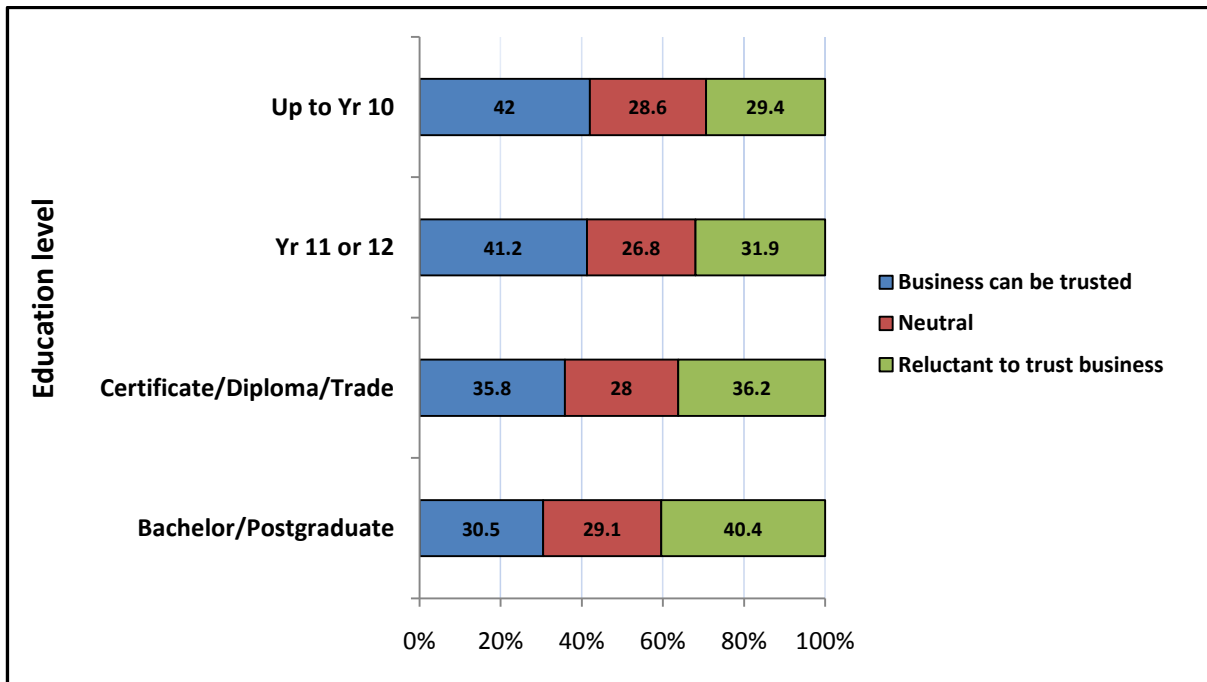
Figure 5.1.2B Attitudes towards business as trustworthy/untrustworthy⁴**Comments**

After grouping levels of trust in business it became clear that there were similar levels of trust and reluctance to trust business (37.4% and 34.6% respectively), and that respondents were highly divided on trustworthiness of business.

⁴ n=1296, all respondents. In order to simplify analysis and presentation of results, trustworthiness of business was reduced to three categories: 'Business can be trusted' (for original scores 1 to 3), 'Neutral' (for original score of 4) and 'Reluctant to trust business' (for original scores of 5 to 7).

5.1.2.1 ATTITUDES TOWARDS BUSINESS AS TRUSTWORTHY/UNTRUSTWORTHY AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Figure 5.1.2.1A Attitudes towards business as trustworthy/untrustworthy and education level⁵

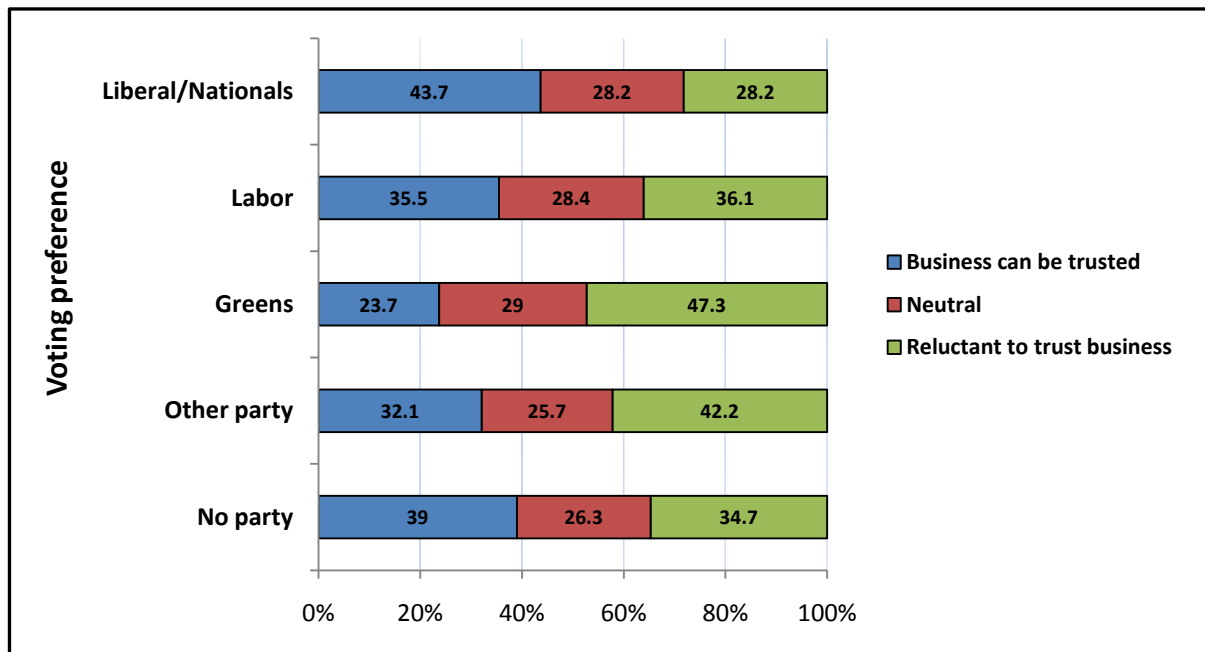


Comments

Higher levels of formal education were associated with higher levels of reluctance to trust business. 29.4% of respondents with up to Year 10 education level were reluctant to trust business, in comparison with 40.4% of respondents with a bachelor or postgraduate education.

⁵ n=1296, all respondents.

Figure 5.1.2.1B Attitudes towards business as trustworthy/untrustworthy and voting preference⁶



Comments

Respondents with a voting preference for the Liberal/Nationals were similar to respondents favouring Labor or the Greens in terms of neutrality on trustworthiness of business. However, 43.7% of respondents with a voting preference for the Liberal/Nationals indicated that business can be trusted, in comparison to 35.5% of those with a voting preference for Labor and 23.7% of those with a voting preference for the Greens. At the same time, 28.2% of those with a voting preference for the Liberal/Nationals were reluctant to trust business, in comparison to 47.3% of those with a voting preference for the Greens and 36.1% with a voting preference for Labor.

⁶ n=1296, all respondents.

5.2 ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPETITION

Question

C1. On the scale below, where would you place your own views on **competition** between businesses?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Competition

is healthy

Competition means lower prices for consumers

Competition leads to better quality goods or services

Competition provides greater choice for consumers

Competition

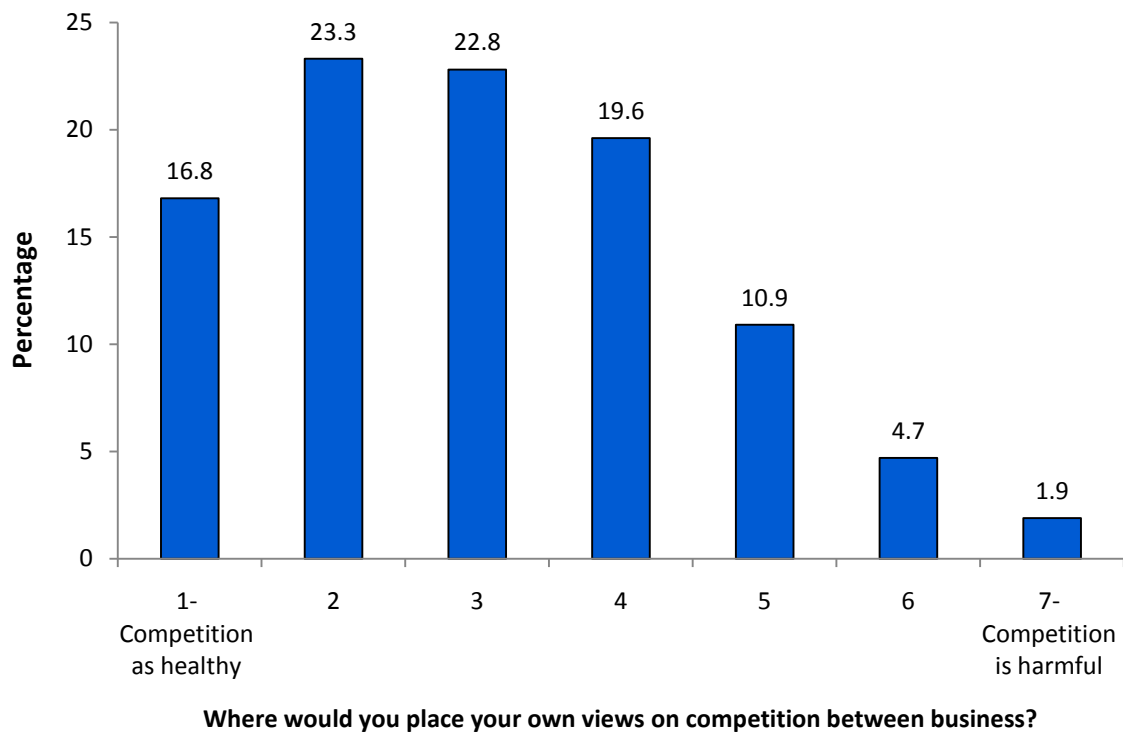
is harmful

Competition makes it hard for small businesses to have a 'fair go'

Competition results in cost-cutting and may lead to lower wages

Competition can disadvantage consumers in rural or regional areas

Figure 5.2A Attitudes towards competition as healthy/harmful⁷



Central tendency

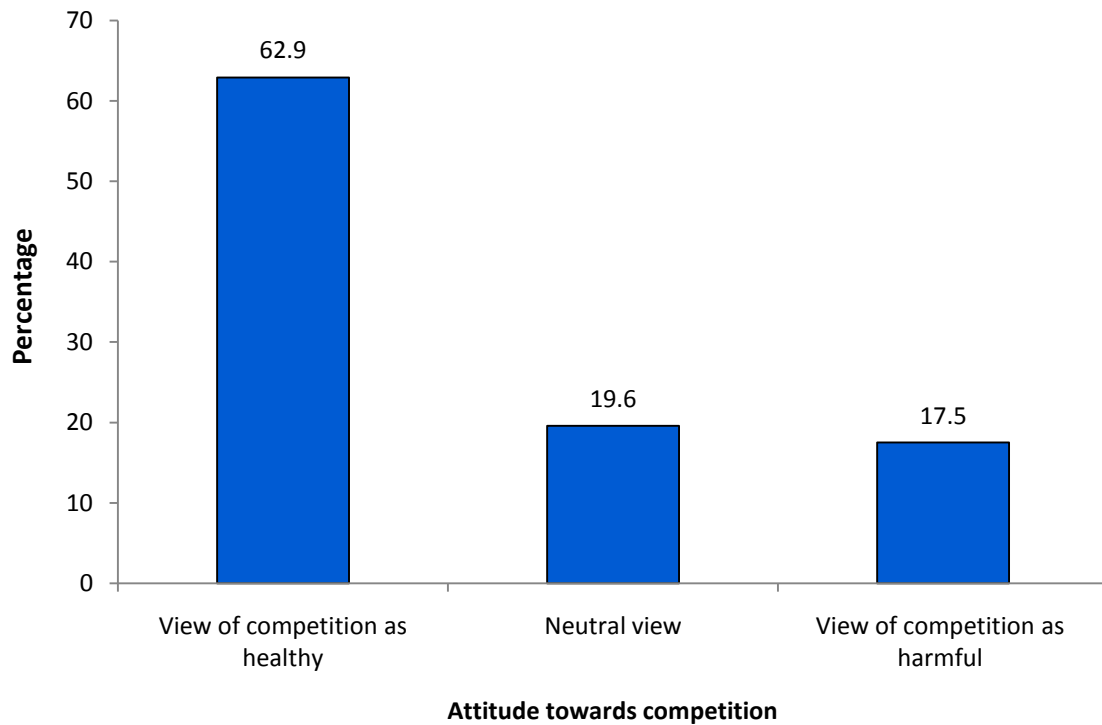
Average*	Median	Mode
3.06	3	2

*Standard deviation is 1.50

Comments

Overall respondents leaned towards been in favour of competition as healthy.

⁷ n=1296, all respondents.

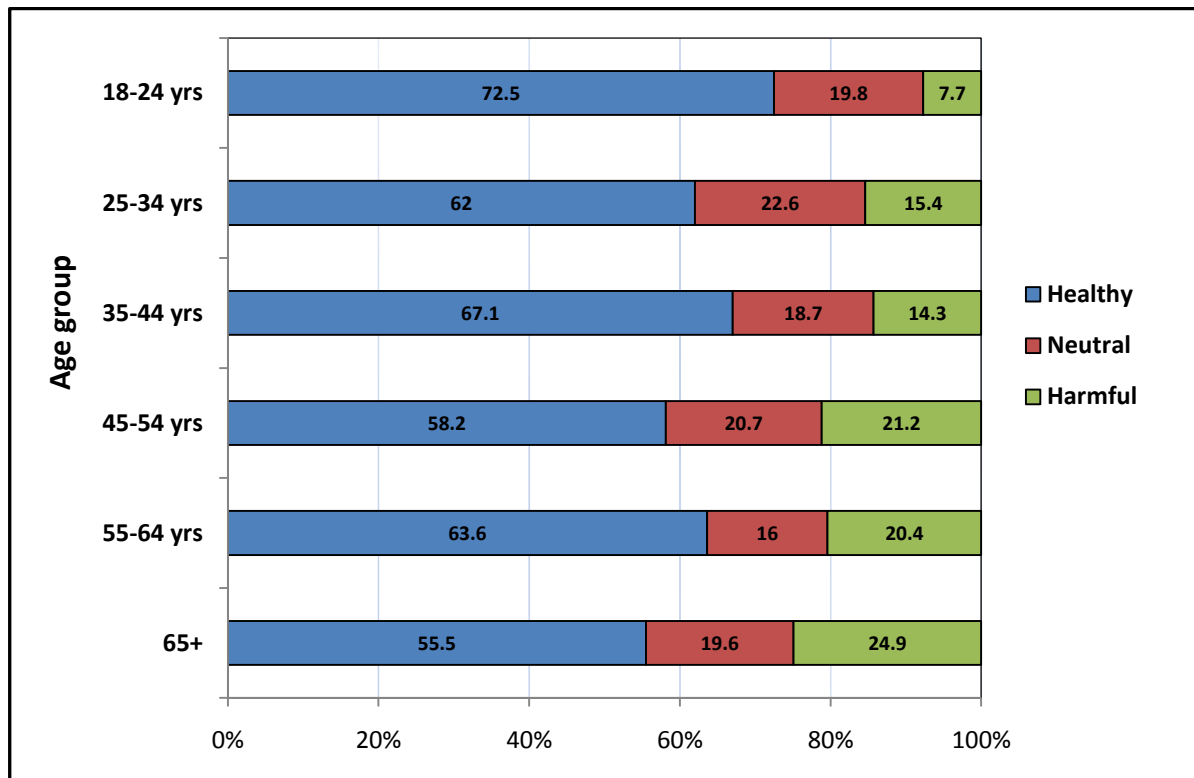
Figure 5.2B Attitudes towards competition as healthy/harmful⁸**Comments**

62.9% of respondents viewed competition as healthy compared to 17.5% of respondents who viewed competition as harmful. There were similar proportions of those who held a 'neutral' view and those who viewed competition as harmful (19.6% versus 17.5%).

⁸ n=1296, all respondents. In order to simplify analysis and presentation of results, trustworthiness of business reduced to three categories: 'View of competition as healthy' (for original scores 1 to 3), 'Neutral' (for original score of 4) and 'View of competition as harmful' (for original scores of 5 to 7).

5.2.1 ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMPETITION AS HEALTHY/HARMFUL AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Figure 5.2.1 Attitudes towards competition as healthy/harmful and age⁹



Comments

The oldest age group (65+ years) was more likely to view competition as harmful than view competition as healthy. In contrast to this, the youngest age group (18-24 years) was more likely to view competition as healthy, than view competition as harmful.

⁹ n=1296, all respondents.