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To Tweet or Not to Tweet: That Is the Professional Social Media Question

By

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**An Honors Thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of
Science in Business Administration in Accounting**

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Abstract

As university and corporate programs continue to encourage their professional faculty to post on social media as a means of spreading positive publicity, the consequences that follow social media by employees must also be inspected. This study focuses on appraising the opinion of professionals in regards to social media posts and the perceived responsibility for maintaining ethical content while posting on the web. To do this, a survey was distributed and the resulting data collected. The data shed light on the climate surrounding social media use and workplace expectations for it, as well as the degree of responsibility assumed by both employee and employer. In this paper, I use the survey results to draw conclusions which will assist employer organizations in developing and sustaining beneficial social media conduct policies, which promote productivity and inclusiveness within the work environment.

I. Introduction

It's getting dark, you're home alone, and for some inexplicable reason, you decide to turn on a horror film. At some point during the film, there will be a moment where the protagonist opens the door to a basement, cellar, attic, closet, or some other seemingly sinister room. As you watch, an eerie feeling creeps into your stomach. You know something will inevitably jump out from the exact spot that the character decides to look. You unfailingly ask yourself why he or she would walk directly into a trap.

In a similar sense, you have read articles or viewed headlines covering instances where employees have been discharged from work for their posts on social media. When you see the story, you ask yourself the same question as you did while watching the scary movie, "Why would you walk right into a trap?"

However, there is an essential difference separating the two scenarios. With the employee, he or she did not have the eerie feeling smoldering in their stomach beforehand. They did not think that their private social media accounts could be viewed and further used as a weapon against them. It may seem foolish to some, but to others, the consequences never crossed their mind. Take, for example, the case of Kristopher Brooks [6]. Kristopher was a young reporter out of New York University's graduate journalism program. He acquired an exciting job offer from an outlet called the *News Journal* out of Wilmington, Delaware. Ecstatic with his offer, Brooks posted his acceptance on social media, as many others would do in this day and age [6]. To his shock and utter dismay, he received a phone call a few hours later from the *News Journal* recruiter rescinding his offer. His post had taken the form of a press release, as Brooks had used the company logo in his post, and the news outlet decided it to be a reasonable means for his termination [6]. Despite offering to delete the post, the company stayed their decision and left Brooks baffled and jobless [6].

This incident, revealed a divide in the beliefs about social media by age groups. Many older generations supported *News Journal*, understanding that Brooks had effectively tethered his every action on social media to the journal through his so-called press release [6]. Individuals of the younger generations entering the workforce at the time were more unsettled by Brooks' release because his post was positive and excited, not negative in any way. Kristopher Brooks' unfortunate situation, if nothing else, manifested the obvious differences in opinion between older and younger social media users.

A more recent issue, however, surfaced in the news in February of 2019. Steven Salaita, a former academic, accepted a follow up interview with *The Chronicle of Higher Education* after his tenured faculty appointment to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was withdrawn in 2014 [4]. In the fall of that year, Salaita Tweeted about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His posts resulted in the dismissal of his tenured position with the University [4]. Now, Salaita drives a school bus in the Washington, D.C. area. His termination from Illinois red-flagged him for other universities, and he was forced to turn away from academia in order to provide for himself and his family [4].

Social media controversies have and will continue to be a cause for concern for human resource departments. For that reason, research into the opinions of professionals of today could provide insight as to how to deal with social media issues. This thesis contributes to the basis of knowledge on opinions of social media usage and its place in modern society. Social media and inter-work relationships affect a work environment and culture, making it a pressing matter today for companies to formulate a formal social media policy. An effective policy promotes a

positive, encouraging environment, which in turn fosters productivity and focus. On the contrary, an underdeveloped or nonexistent social media policy can add work environment anxiety and tension.

With that in mind, it is important for employers to understand the relationship between social media and comfort within a work environment. Ensuring the comfort of the employees within an organization is a positive in today's age where work-life balance is a desire within the young workforce. For that reason, I conducted research to quantify the climate surrounding social media in the workplace. I surveyed individuals currently in the workplace or who were in it at one point. Our results provide insight into the opinions of workers on how employers may wish to proactively modify their social media policies and systems.

This study attempts to look at the freedom with which people believe they can express their views electronically. The pressing question is: is it the responsibility of the organization to protect the well being of an employed individual and his views, beliefs, and values, or is it all the responsibility of the individual to abstain from any actions that would bring about any form of workplace repercussions?

II. Historical Context Behind Our Current Framework

To understand the current climate regarding social media use in the workplace, one must trace the recent progression of social media. Before beginning the study, I first define social media so as to form boundaries of the scope of our research. According to ESCP-Europe Professor Andreas Kaplan, Social media is defined as, "A group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 [*a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion*], and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content [1]." When broken down, this definition of social media is more simply understood as a group of applications that exploit the technological platforms created on the Internet to be utilized for the sharing of any content designed by a user. A broad summation is used to allow for the depth and variation between different social media: take for example YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, three extremely distinct media platforms. All three of these are generally considered social media despite their differences.

Acknowledging social media's definition, I can now unpack the timeline following its inception. It has been around since the late 1990's; however, it did not achieve the popularity that it now holds until later. Around 2010, various social media networks had enough users to incite a response from human resources in company conduct codes and from government institutions to keep labor standards up to date in regards to employee social media use. Initial standards at that time pale in comparison to the regulations of today. Policy has come a long way since 2010, largely due to documented incidences that arose over the next five years. The research dug into analysis of employees' and employers' perspectives on boundaries between professional and personal identities on social media. Precious research also defines essential key terms to propel further investigation and clarify previously ambiguous explanations.

As social media transitioned from uncommon in practice to ubiquitous in all walks of life, controversies over employee conduct outside of company time arose. Social media allows individuals to share with their friends and relatives, as well as their superiors following their accounts. These controversies led to the creation of the term network privacy, which, defined by the American Business Journal, is privacy within information's intended network and context [5]. The two key components of network privacy are the intended network and intended context.

Issues surfaced whenever an unintended viewer observed a post or whenever a viewer did not have a complete background on the post so as to comprehend the desired message of the post's author. An example cited in the same article on network privacy describes a situation in which a high school teacher was released from her position because of a Facebook status she wrote about the families who attended her school [5]. She had commented that the families were "arrogant and snobby" and that she was not excited to begin another year at the school [5]. Her intention was obviously not to anger school board members or residents, as she would have seen herself inevitably losing her job. Rather she was expressing her feelings and opinions on a space she believed to be safe for her and her intended audience to read. Numerous scenarios like this cropped up all over the country where employer interests and employee rights and freedoms were at odds with each other.

With mounting concerns for social media involvement within the workplace, work was done to outline the boundaries between professional and personal lives and the expectations of the millennials who were growing percentage of the work force. Analysts and business professionals linked the growth in employee reprimands for inappropriate social media usage to be directly related to the changing values system found in millennial workers.

Traditionally, people maintained a steady segregation of work and home life. They understood that the expectations and repercussions at work were much different than those with their family or friends. As a result, they knew that they must perform differently for their professional audience as compared to their private life audiences [5]. Their professional audiences required productivity, product results, continuous improvement, and work ethic; whereas, the freedom of private life was generally less demanding and more sensitive to the individual's emotions. In addition, private beliefs and values were segregated from the workplace because they may or may not have aligned with coworker and corporate values system. With the introduction of social media connections within a company, private lives began to bleed into professional lives [5]. Younger generations appear to have few qualms about putting personal information online where anyone, employers included, can see it. As rising numbers of the workforce built up their social media portfolio, the availability of personal information rose exponentially. The workplace gradually became more of a blend of professional and private personas [5]. In explanation, Facebook friends felt more inclined to enjoy a personal relationship with colleagues since they already had access to much of each other's external lives.

Individuals progressively gave their posts less consideration in regards to who views their accounts and how those viewers would react. Additionally, employees made more connections with bosses and colleagues on their accounts. These two changes developed a risky environment for job security. Kristopher Brooks, as mentioned above, serves as an example of the result of the clashing personal and professional boundaries set within this environment. By posting his excitement about joining his new employer, he tied everything he represented as a person on social media to the *News Journal*, and the company did not take kindly to that [6]. So, they rescinded his initial job offer. Others have faced a similar fate as a result of social media posts on private accounts that employers viewed and deemed to be inappropriate. This brings up two questions: Are social media accounts really private? Are there any guidelines as to what determines if a post is appropriate or not, and in turn if an employee dismissal is lawful or not?

Privacy has become an increasingly relative term within the context of social media. Due to variations in willingness to disclose personal information, a secure social media platform for one individual may appear to be wide-open doorway to another account holder. For example, younger workers are known for their lack of caution in submitting considerable amounts of

personal data onto their Facebook and Instagram accounts. In comparison, many within older workers would deem such behavior to be begging for security breach and privacy complications. As a result, there has not been major insight into decisively defining privacy or how private an account may be. For certain, I know that settings within social media platforms allow the user to create what appears to be a more private network. How private those accounts are in actuality remains an unsolved question.

In regards to the dilemma between lawful and unlawful termination, previous authors offers a foundation. Robert Taylor provides a broad description of behavior that would result in a justified release of a faculty member: “the conduct harms the employer’s reputation or renders the employee unable to perform his or her duties satisfactorily, leads to the refusal of other employees to work with him or her, and/or demonstrates a breach of the law or employer policies [7].” The First Amendment also serves as a pillar of the foundation to illustrate to policy writers what the government does and does not protect as free speech. In a study performed in 2009, Brian Kooy and Sarah Steiner noted the limits of free speech on social media, which can be tacked onto the guidelines I began with Robert Taylor. According to Kooy and Steiner, the First Amendment does not protect a social media post if it “violates a copyright, is libelous, or it might invade another person’s privacy [2].” Accordingly, any breach in the First Amendment dictates a constitutional termination.

Rewire senior editor Katie Moritz presents the other end of the spectrum. She discusses the scenarios of illegitimate termination. She cites the National Labor Standards Board in their review that stated employer social media policies and general practices “are found to be unlawful when they interfere with the rights of employees under the National Labor Relations Act, such as the right to discuss wages and working conditions with coworkers [3].” When social media is used as a forum to discuss workplace issues with coworkers, the law offers employees more protection, according to Moritz [3]. Wrapping these various ideas together, Taylor later comments that an essential part for all employers’ expectations is the communication of social media expectations once the company has developed their own policy [7]. Once the employees understand the social media policy, any breach of that contract represents a means for lawful termination.

The American Business Law Journal joins the conversation with an inquiry yet to be decisively solved.

“Millennials rely on others, including employers, to refrain from judging them across contexts. Their stated expectations of privacy, therefore, appear to be somewhat paradoxical: employee respondents generally want privacy from unintended employer eyes, and yet they share a significant amount of personal information online, knowing it could become available to employers and others. What is at the core of this seemingly contradictory behavior? Is it just an adolescent “have my cake and eat it too” mentality, or does it reveal something deeper about privacy and social performances? Should legal doctrines and business practices acknowledge this expectation [5]?”

The following research attempts to shed light on the question posed by Abril, Levin, and Del Riego in the journal through survey analysis of a sample group on their opinions of employer involvement within today’s social media realm.

III. Methodology

Since no public use datasets contain the measures we needed, primary data collection was done. I deployed an online survey using several emails and social media posts with links to the survey.

I recognize the potential for selection bias within the study, but we used posts targeting multiple audiences to try and minimize selection bias. Despite those efforts, the sample group heavily consists of faculty and university professionals. In explanation, some departments have recently seen increased encouragement to post on their social media accounts. Logically, social media content and its implications have become relevant for these individuals. After a push for more content from faculty members, the university will obviously monitor what its constituents put online. Seeing as the school has an affiliation with its employees, the directors will ensure nothing negative can blow back on the institution.

Due to these building circumstances, the professors and colleagues of the university serve as respondents. I also recognize, however, the elevated scrutiny that this group is under compared to other workers laboring under employers with less involved positions on social media use.

Another consequence of our study subjects being faculty and professionals was the determination that our study is exempt from review by the Institutional Review Board. Therefore, our study follows the requirements of proper research standards.

Though I provide for variances in profession, I expect that our results will align with the environment within academia as a consequence of our sample group containing a high percentage of participants under the public university category. The variances in profession will be analyzed to compare any discrepancies between those in academia and those in other fields.

Research goals

As previously mentioned, this research captures the opinions about the issue of social media protection. I then propose a conclusion on our central hypothesis regarding social media protection responsibilities. The desired statistics for analysis will be outlined in the following paragraphs.

Demographic data collected are: the age, sex, occupational discipline, and employment type (at will, unionized, or tenured). For instance, one common test associates age and frequency of social media checks in order to determine any variations between age groups. Then, I surveyed participants in order to determine the accounts used most heavily, normal usage patterns, and intended audiences of the participants. The responses within this block provide a base of general insight into preferences and views held by the sample group, as well as allow for comparison to other time periods or geographic regions within other studies. These questions constitute what I labeled the preference block.

The remainder of the survey pertains specifically to respondents' views on social media and actions on social media as a result of their views. This portion highlights the sentiment of our sample group towards our central question—does the responsibility fall on the employer or the individual to safeguard views and beliefs in the social media domain? Respondents answered their desired level of employer involvement in their social media accounts, as well as levels of feeling surrounding other aspects of posting. It is in this section that I glean insight into preferences of employer involvement and protection.

Survey Design and Distribution

To accurately and effectively collect data, different question types were used within the survey. Multiple choice was used to collect the demographic data. A matrix framework was used for the questions on account preferences, with a listing of the different accounts on the y-axis and the variable question responses on the x-axis. A grading scale from 1 to 10 was used for the final questions on protection views. Participants could slide their arrow to accurately reflect their personal feeling to the prompt.

I distributed our survey via email, Facebook, and Twitter. I expected that a majority of the respondents would access the survey by email. I distributed an anonymous survey link through massive email chains on department servers. The same anonymous link was posted to Facebook and Twitter. The exposure by means of email is much more substantial, nevertheless. As a result of our distribution method, the sample group consists of individuals who self-selected into completing the questionnaire. University faculty with email access constitute a disproportionate percent of our data in order to account for inherent bias within our sample group. Arkansas also lies in the South East part of the United States, and in turn has few labor unions compared to the coasts. Accepting a flaw in our selection bias, I inferred that discrepancies are possible due to a lack of labor unions corresponding to less protection for employees as a general rule. Responses could vary with a higher representation of unionized laborers participating. Our external validity is less significant as a result of the biases I assessed within our sampling procedure.

IV. Analysis and Conclusion

After administering the survey and collecting relevant data, tests and analysis were performed in order to apply the information. First, the raw response data illustrates multiple key points that need to be noted. To begin, Table 1 in Appendix B shows the results of question 6 in our survey, which can be consulted in Appendix A: “Regarding the following social media platforms, how many accounts do you have and whom do you interact with on those accounts?” Reading the table, one can interpret that for Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook, most people have one account for friends and family, or no account at all. In contrast, Handshake and LinkedIn users are generally for professional interaction only if the users have an account at all. This data set follows expectations, as the first four sites are used primarily for social interaction with friends and family, and the second two sites are focused on building professional relationships. Though there is no groundbreaking information here, it frames the rest of the survey so that the reader understands the purpose of the social media users I surveyed.

Next, Table 2 examines the importance that people place in social media for their professional advancement. The overwhelming majority responded “not at all important” for every social media site besides LinkedIn. For LinkedIn, “not at all important” still has the largest response rate, but it is not as dramatically ahead of the other responses. These results are interesting when viewed alongside Table 3, which illustrates the frequency of social media use by account type. Though the platforms are not deemed to be important for career advancement by the general population, they are all used regularly. This leads us to conclude that information posted to social media will be thoroughly viewed by the author’s audience; however, importance attached to posts will generally be considered insignificant to the author. As a result, the author expects his or her readers to give the same level of importance to the content in the post. Herein lies the potential for issues to arise. If authors do not see their post as important, they do not expect to receive significant repercussions from a boss or colleague who saw the post differently.

The advice from Robert Taylor, then, becomes invaluable. He writes that reminding employees of their expectations, both at work and online during off-hours, can go a long way and save a company from much inner turmoil [7]. When employees understand that their behaviors online reflect on the company, their perceived importance attached to social media posts rises and more caution will be taken.

From the raw data I was then able to compare the results of two groups that naturally separated themselves out within the study to have multiple significant differences. Significance tests showed no real variation between male and female responses throughout our survey, which can be viewed in its entirety as it appeared to respondents in Appendix A. Analysis did validate, however, significant differences in opinion between age groups. In the survey, participants had the following options regarding age groups:

- Under 30
- 30-40
- 40-50
- 50-60
- 60-70
- Over 70

I noticed age groups voting together frequently, though, and therefore created two categories with which the subdivisions could fit into: “Under 40 years of age,” and “Over 40 years of age.” In this way, the number of participants within each category was as close to each other as possible, with 89 respondents under 40 years of age and 120 respondents over 40 years of age. In the Appendix, the distribution tables are presented demonstrating the variations in response rates between the age demographics. Appendix C is comprised of data from the matrix survey questions, whereas Appendix D compares the mean numerical value for each age group.

I found that some participants chose not to answer every individual question. As a result, data collection was not completely perfect. Accepting the data deficiencies for what they are, I nevertheless composed charts in order to visualize and analyze our findings. It is from here that I extrapolate to the general public, of course recognizing all other biases and imperfections mentioned in section III on methodology.

As stated previously, I dove into the variations found between age demographics. Much of our research aligned with the insights written in the literature examined for our framework. The millennials and those in the generation following millennials that have and continue to enter the workforce differ from the older generations in their viewpoints. However, the disparity is not as large as expected. As the distribution tables demonstrate, the response rates for under and over 40 years of age frequently reflect similar figures. There are some significant fluctuations, though.

Looking into the future of corporate responses to emerging social media controversies, rigorous, descriptive policies well established through company on-boarding programs will be vital in creating stable, productive work environments. Take, for example, the Instagram and Facebook use table. There, one can see that social media use is only going to rise as younger individuals enter the work force. With a growing population of highly connected social media users, the amount of posts put out onto respective platforms by employed individuals will also grow. It is imperative then, to outline what will and will not constitute a breach in social media conduct policy so that employees can post and utilize social media comfortably.

Finally, examining the mean response in Appendix push us in the direction towards answering our central question that sparked this study. Understandably, the results do not manifest a decisive answer, but lead us to seek out a better middle ground. The survey data shows many averages to be split down the middle, or leaning slightly to one side. The question asking specifically if employers should have minimum or maximum involvement in monitoring social media posts leans considerably closer to a minimum level. With that said, the people do not appear to want their employers meddling in their business anymore than they must. Consequently, I find that responsibility falls in two different manners. First, it is the responsibility of the employers to provide guidelines and restrictions for social media conduct outside the office. Second, the responsibility then falls heavily on the individual to use caution when drafting something to put online. Knowing the expectations of the organization, it is then left up to the individual whether he decides to follow the rules or not.

As time progresses, and social norms change, the assumed responsibilities will inevitably fluctuate as well. Social media will pose interesting and complex dilemmas for years to come.

Appendix A

This survey is completely voluntary and has no monetary reward. Survey takers can exit this survey at any time if they choose. No mental or physical strain is intended to occur during the completion of this questionnaire.

While answering the set of questions, keep in mind the following statement: When you proceed, imagine the social media post in question to be regarding a controversial current event. As social media posts are not always a simple family photo, but a personal statement directed towards one's beliefs, we want both scenarios considered.

Examples of controversial topics include but are not limited to immigration, abortion, racism in society, or the war on drugs.

1. How old are you?
 - a. Under 30
 - b. 30-40
 - c. 40-50
 - d. 50-60
 - e. 60-70
 - f. Over 70

2. What is the sex listed on your birth certificate?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

3. How would you classify your current employer?
 - a. Unemployed/Retired
 - b. Self-Employed
 - c. Public University
 - d. Private University
 - e. Non-Profit Organization
 - f. For Profit Organization
 - g. Governmental Organization/Military

4. What are the terms of your employment status?
 - a. At-will employment
 - b. I work under a Union
 - c. I maintain a tenured position

5. What discipline do you closely affiliate with?
 - a. Arts
 - b. Social Science
 - c. Medicine
 - d. Engineering

- e. Law
- f. Business
- g. Language
- h. Architecture
- i. Other _____

6. Regarding the following social media platforms, how many accounts do you have and whom do you interact with in those accounts?

	One Account/ Professional Interaction Only	One Account/ Friends and Family Only	One Account/ Professional Colleagues & Friends and Family	Multiple Accounts to interact with different groups	No Account
Twitter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

9. Which pattern most accurately reflects how frequently you post on your accounts?

	Rarely	At least Once Per year	At least Once Per month	At least Once Per week	At least Once Per day	Up to 5 Times Per day	Over 5 Times Per day
Twitter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

10. Do you actively track how many followers you have on your accounts?

	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Probably Not	Definitely not	N/A
Twitter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

11. Who is your intended audience on each account? (Choose as many as applicable)

	Students	Local Colleagues	Colleagues I know in Other Locations	Policy Makers	Friends/ Family	Public at Large	People in Profession, but Not Personally Known
Twitter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

12. It is important for my professional advancement that I have social media accounts

	Extremely Important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Twitter	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

13. Do you post personal opinions, experiences, and statements on social media?

	Yes	No
Twitter	_____	_____
Instagram	_____	_____
Snapchat	_____	_____
Facebook	_____	_____
LinkedIn	_____	_____
Handshake	_____	_____
Tumblr	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

14. How often do you abstain from making a post or edit a post on your social media due to what professional colleagues may think about it?

Slider question

	Never	Sometimes	Half of the Time	Most of the Time	Always						
Frequency:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. How much consideration do you give employment consequences, such as complete dismissal or tension with colleagues, when you make a social media post?

Slider question

	No Consideration	Little Consideration	Moderate Consideration	Significant Consideration	Full Consideration						
Feeling:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

16. Do you feel that your freedom to post your thoughts while being a faculty member under your employer is

Slider question

		Restricted		Slightly Restricted		Unaffected		Slightly Less Restricted		Unrestricted	
Feeling:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. To what degree should an employer be responsible for ensuring the comfort of employees in actively posting on their social media accounts?

Slider question

		No employer involvement							Complete employer involvement			
Responsibility: 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Level												

18. I would post personal statements more frequently if I was assured faculty members and colleagues did not have access to view them.

Slider question

		Agree								Disagree	
Feeling: 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

19. I would prefer that my employer have a social media policy protecting its employees from workplace repercussions.

Slider question

		Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree
Agreement: 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

20. I believe an intervention system whereby workplace social media bullies are met with and disciplined would be beneficial/detrimental for my organization.

Slider question

		Beneficial			Slightly Beneficial		Slightly Detrimental		Detrimental		
Feeling:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

21. What would you see as the most effective means to ensure workers' comfort in expressing their beliefs and thoughts on social media?

Open Response:

22. Is there anything else you think that we should know regarding social media use?

Open Response:

Appendix B

Table 1

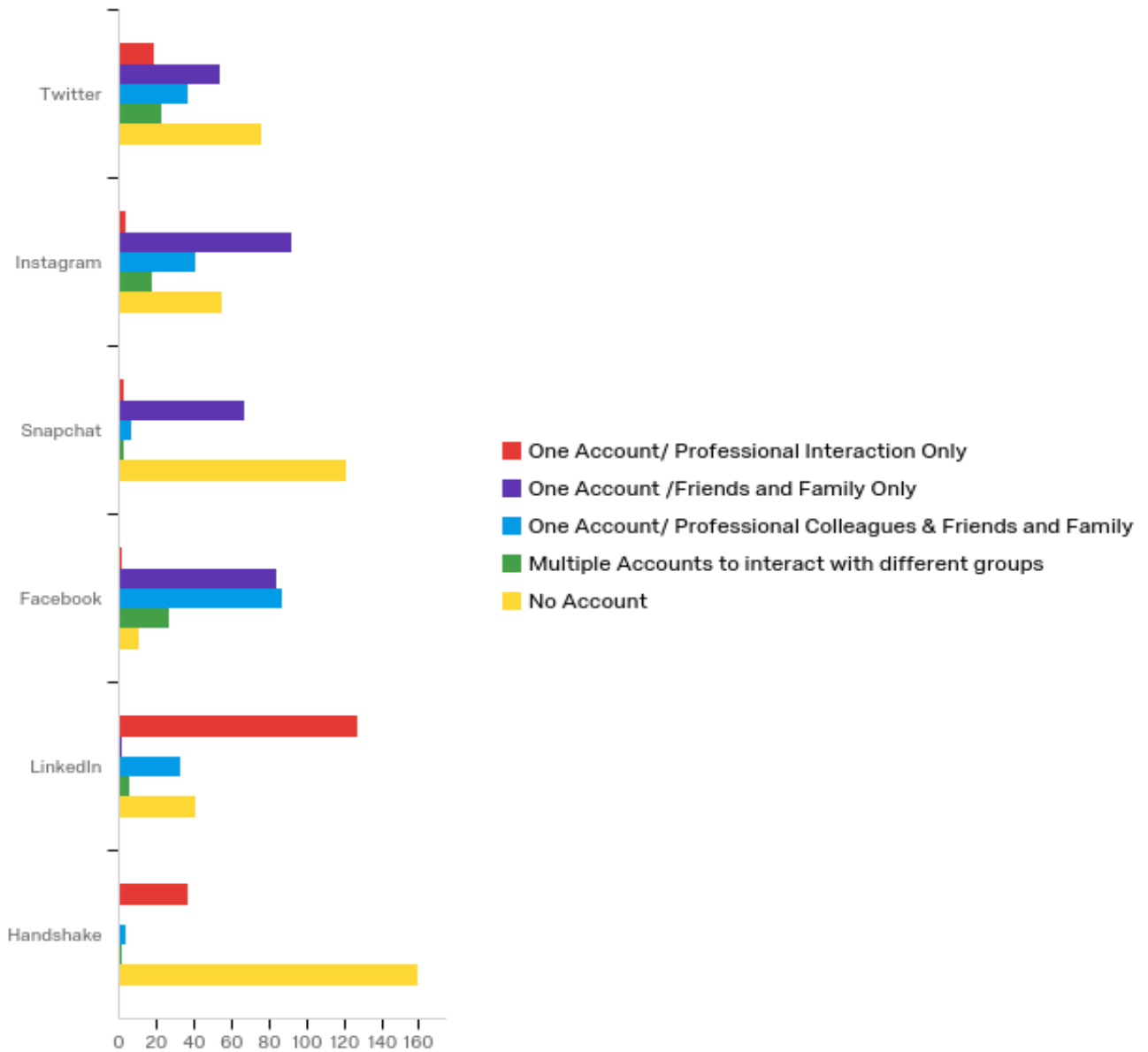


Table 1 shows the results of the following survey question:
Regarding the following social media platforms, how many accounts do you have and whom do you interact with on those accounts?

Table 2

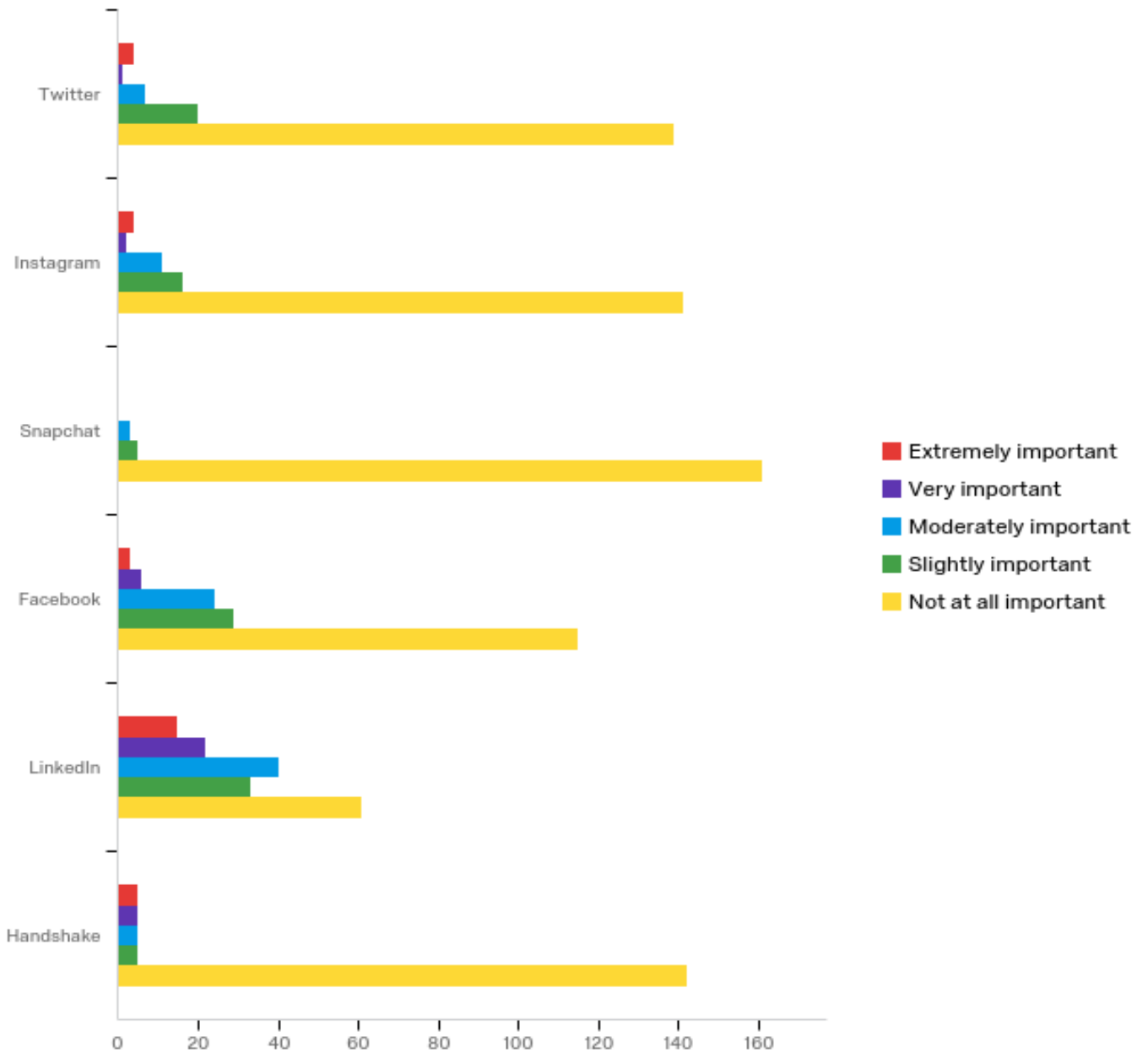


Table 2 shows the results of the following survey question:
It is important for my professional advancement that I have social media accounts.

Table 3

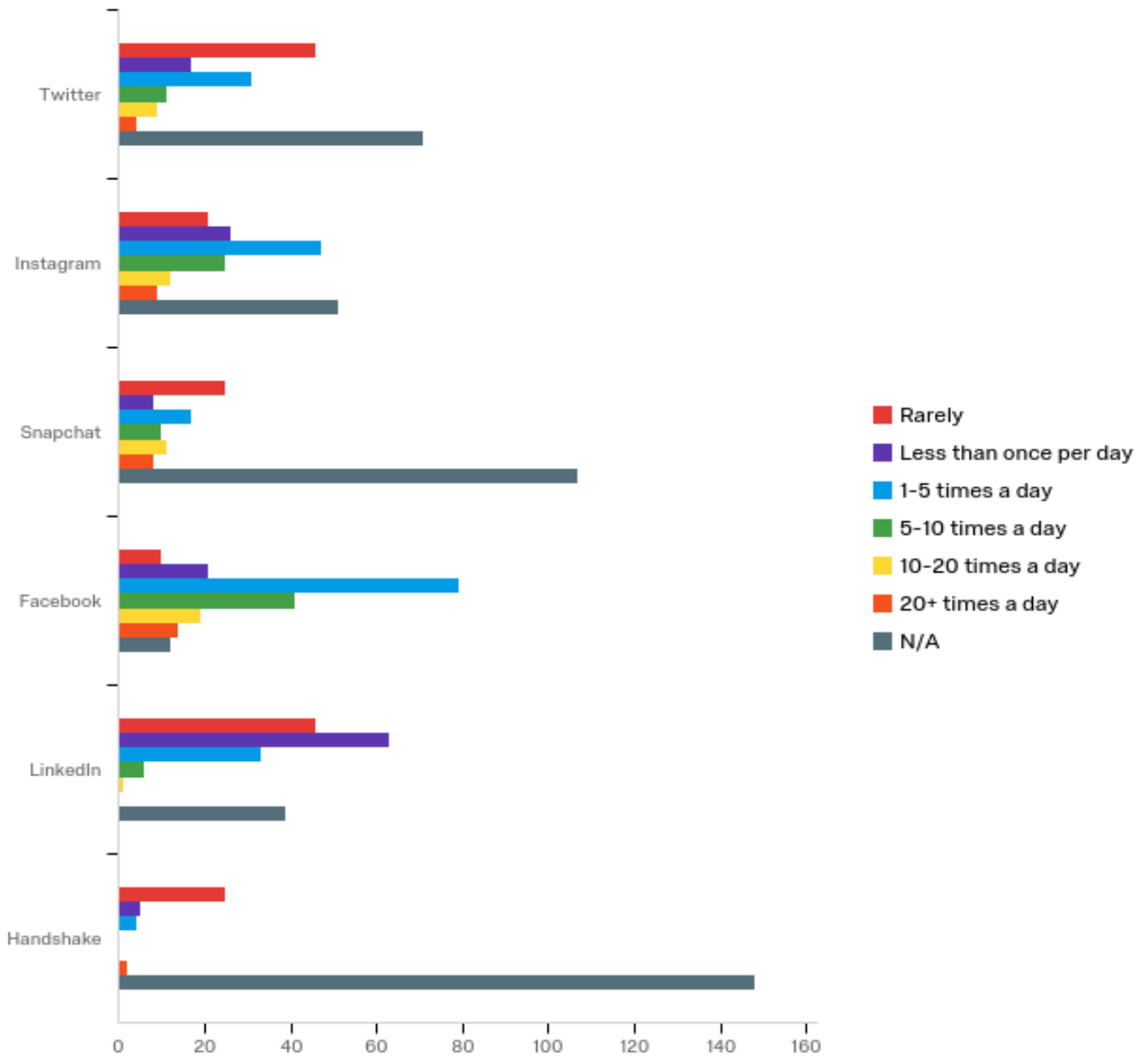


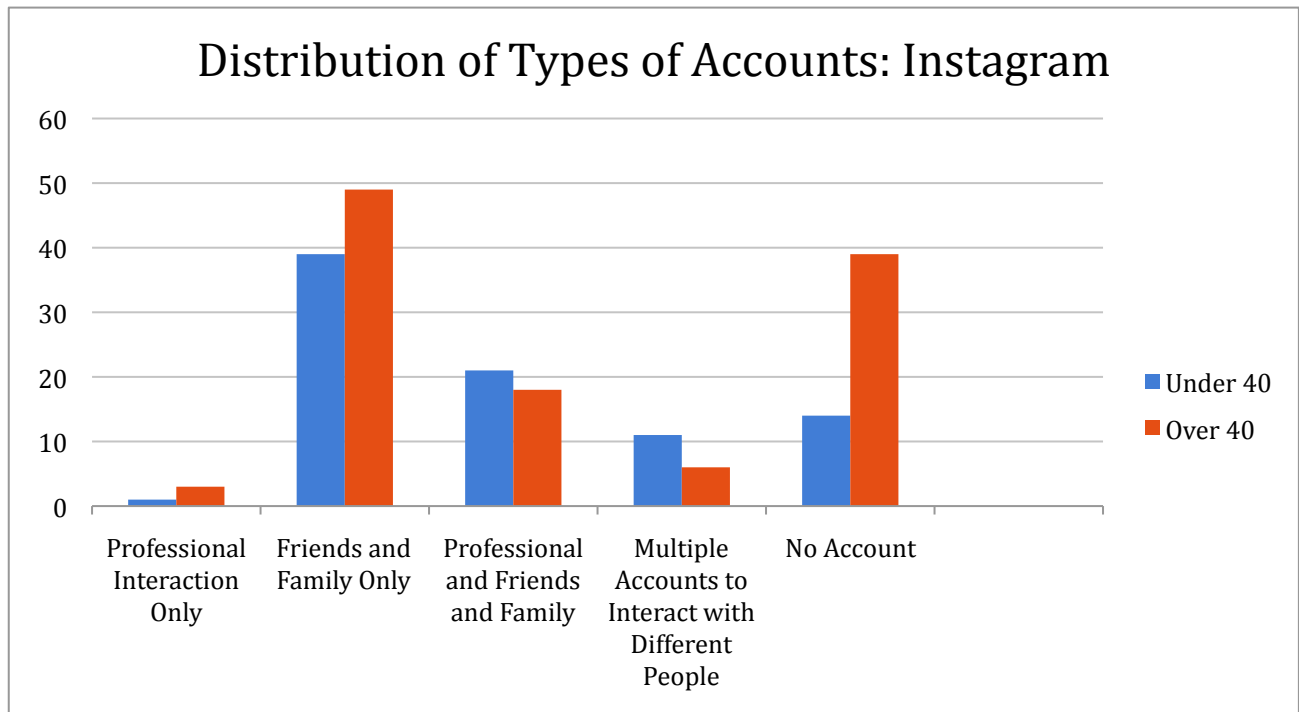
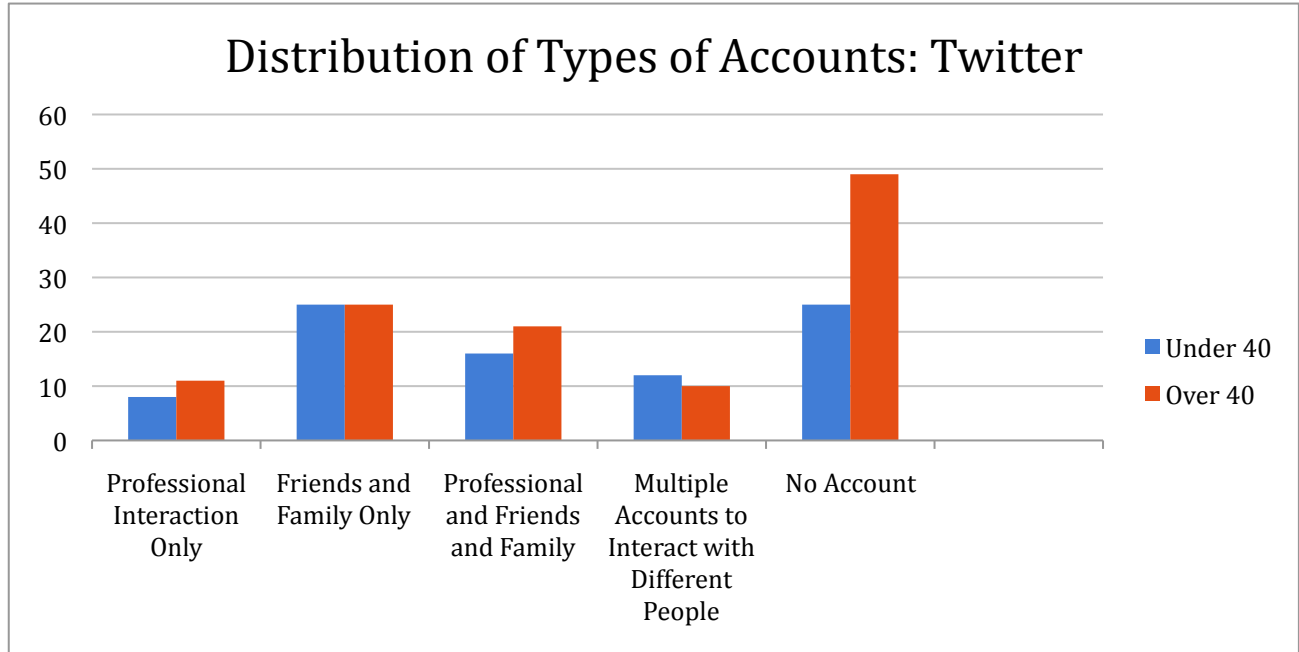
Table 3 shows the results of the following survey question:
How frequently do you check your social media accounts?

Appendix C

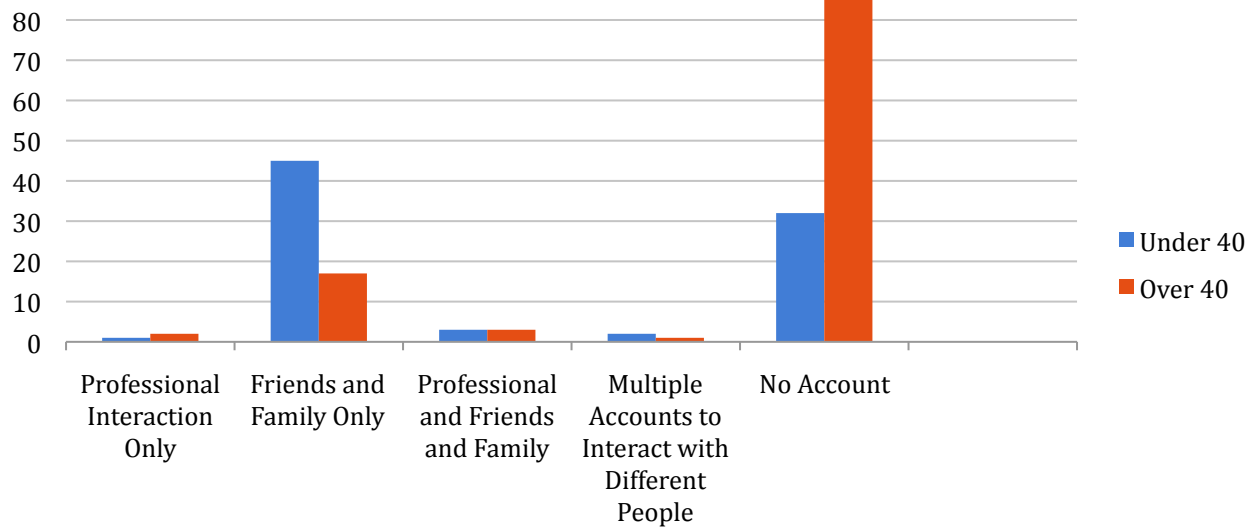
For the following tables, significant differences will be labeled according to this legend:

- P Value<0.05, 95% significance level designated by: *
- P Value<0.01, 99% significance level designated by: **

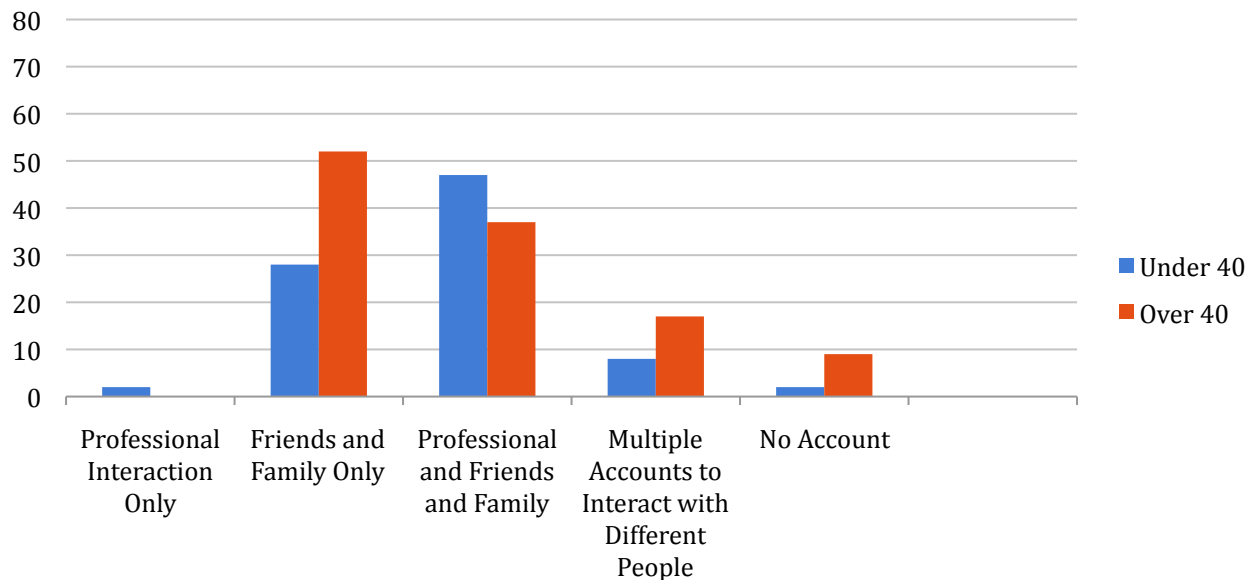
Question: Regarding the following social media platforms, how many accounts do you have and whom do you interact with in those accounts?



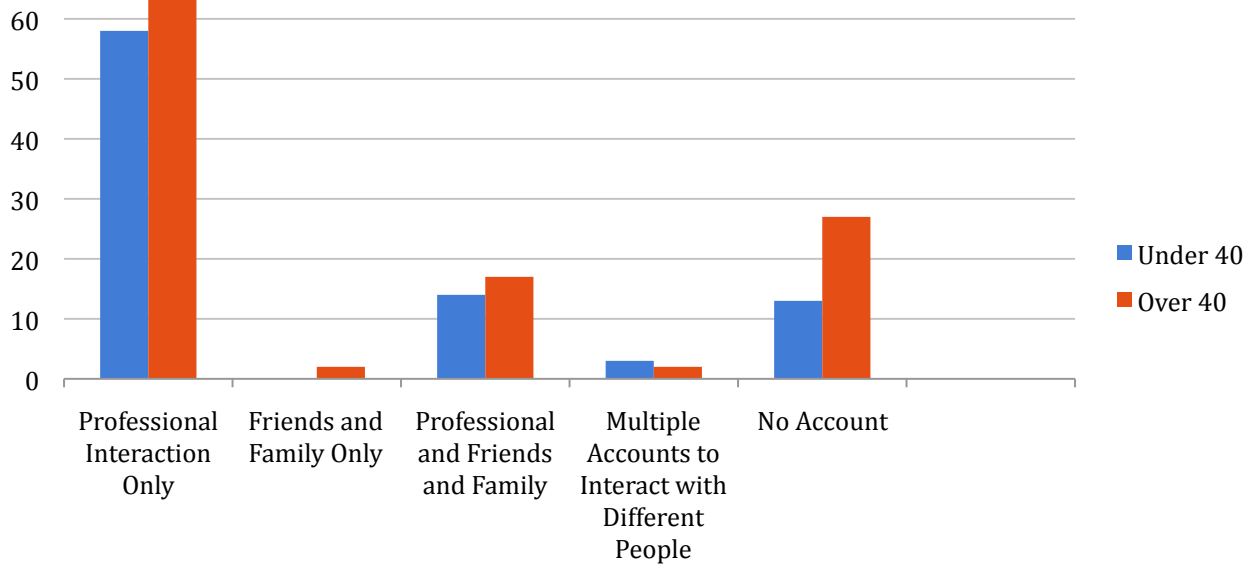
Distribution of Types of Accounts: Snapchat**



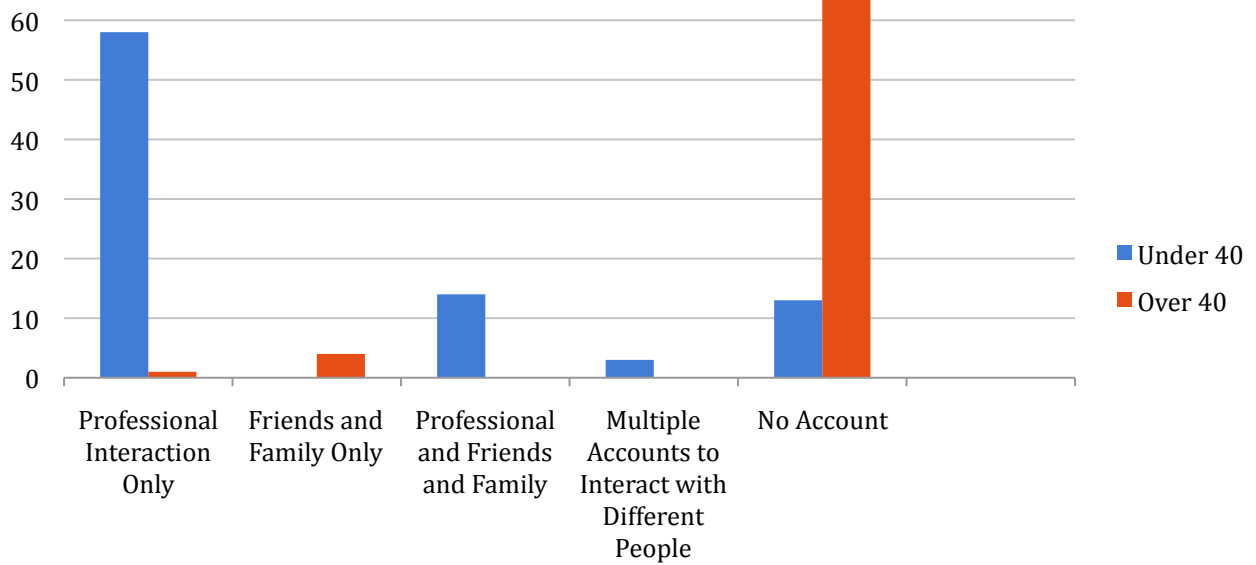
Distribution of Types of Accounts: Facebook



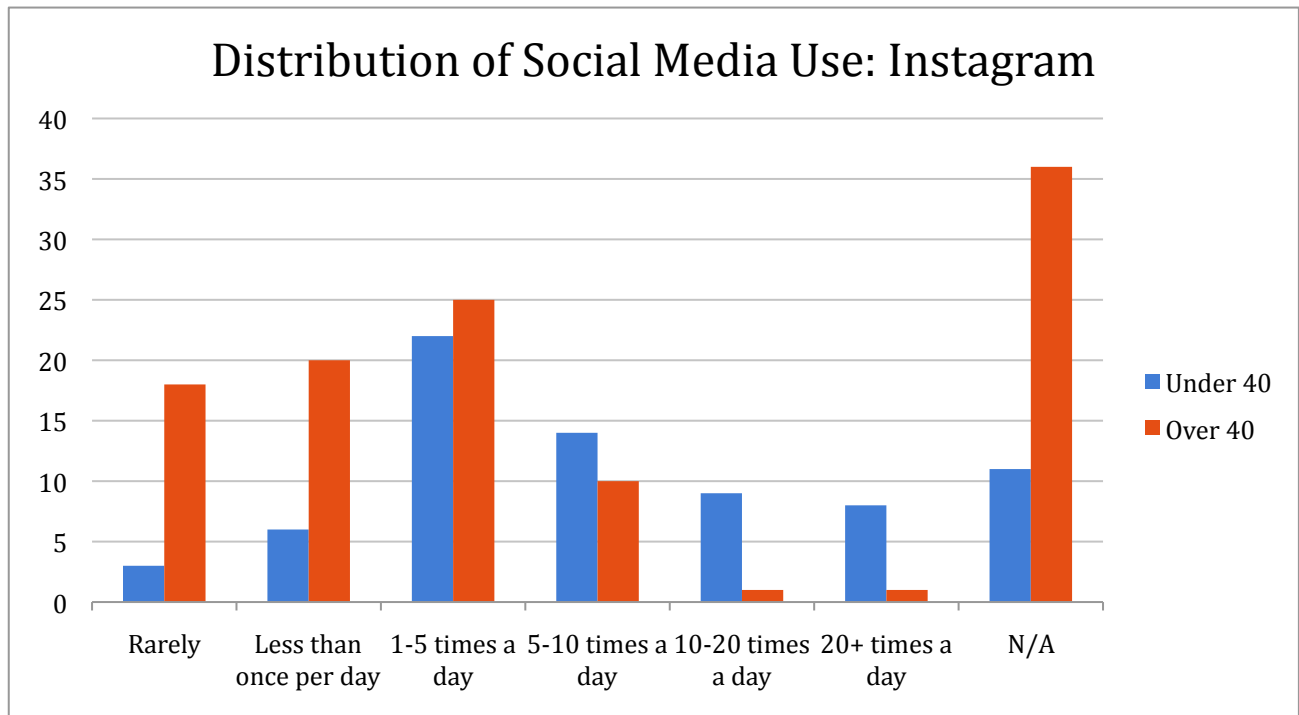
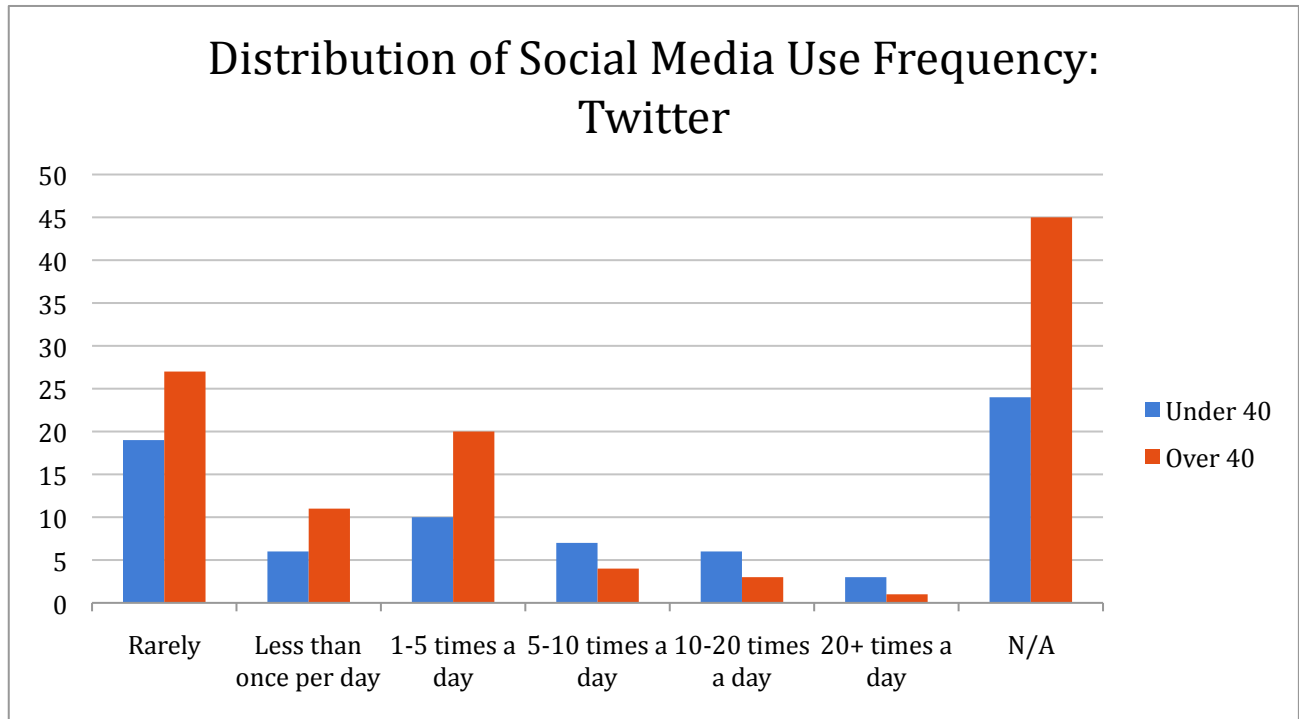
Distribution of Types of Accounts: LinkedIn



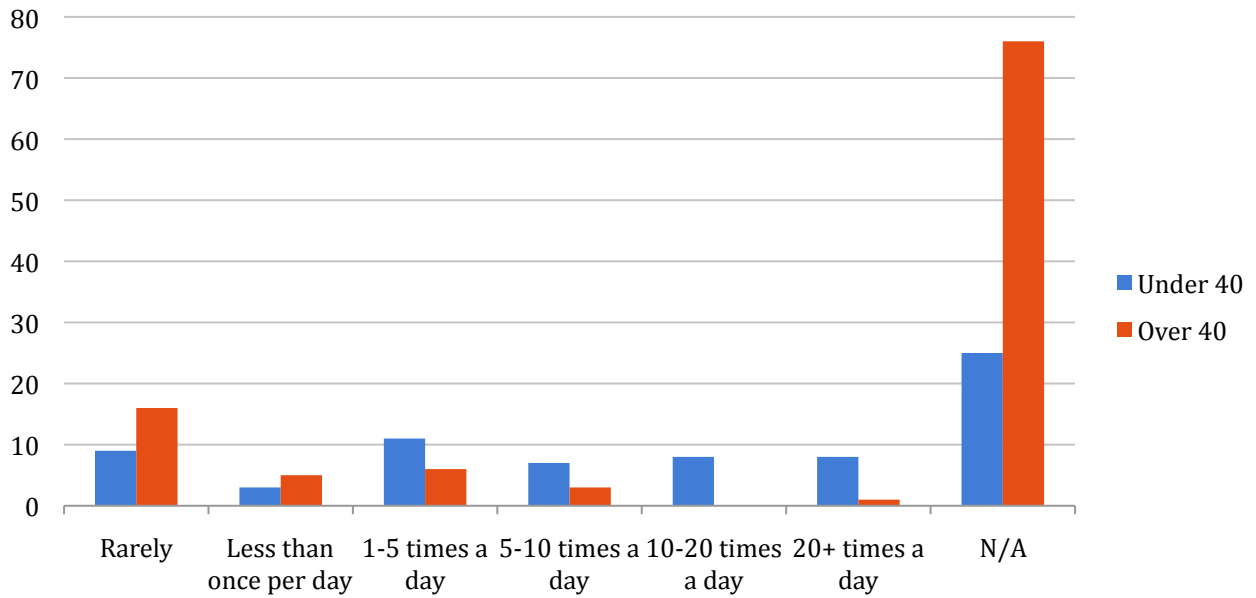
Distribution of Types of Accounts: Handshake



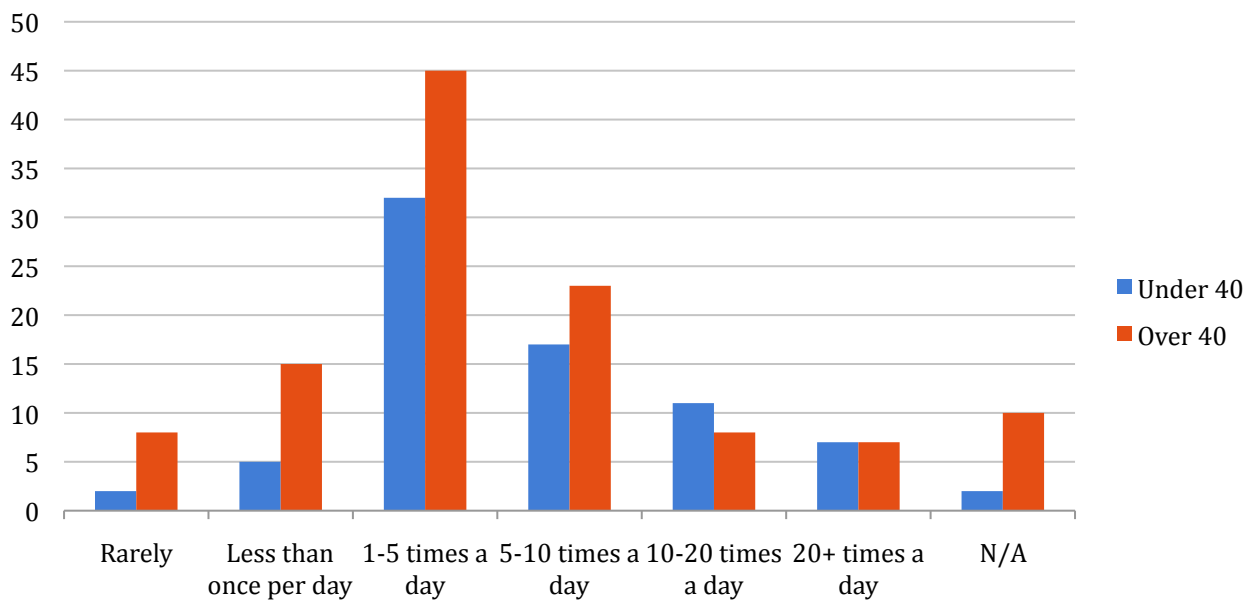
Question: How frequently do you check your social media accounts?



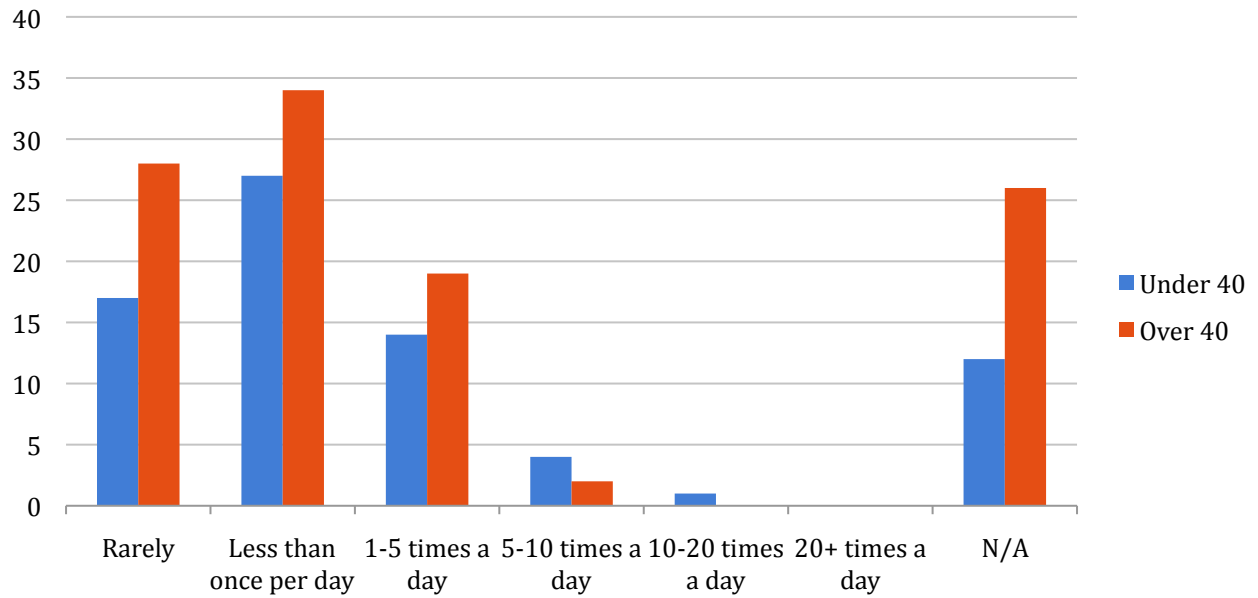
Distribution of Social Media Use: Snapchat**



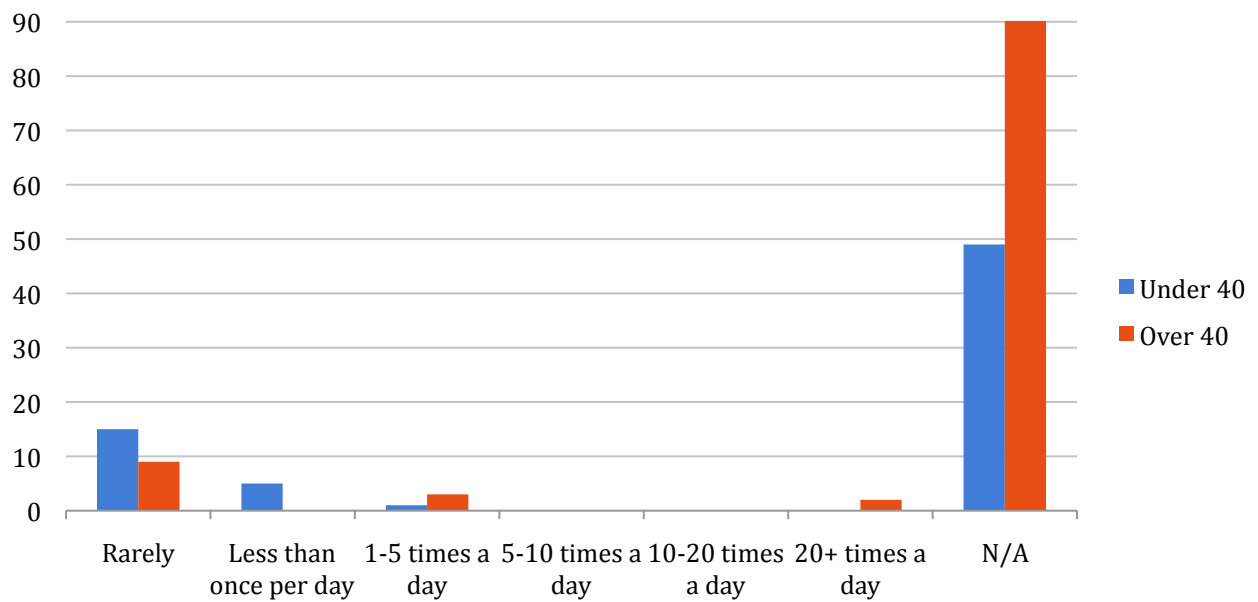
Distribution of Social Media Use: Facebook



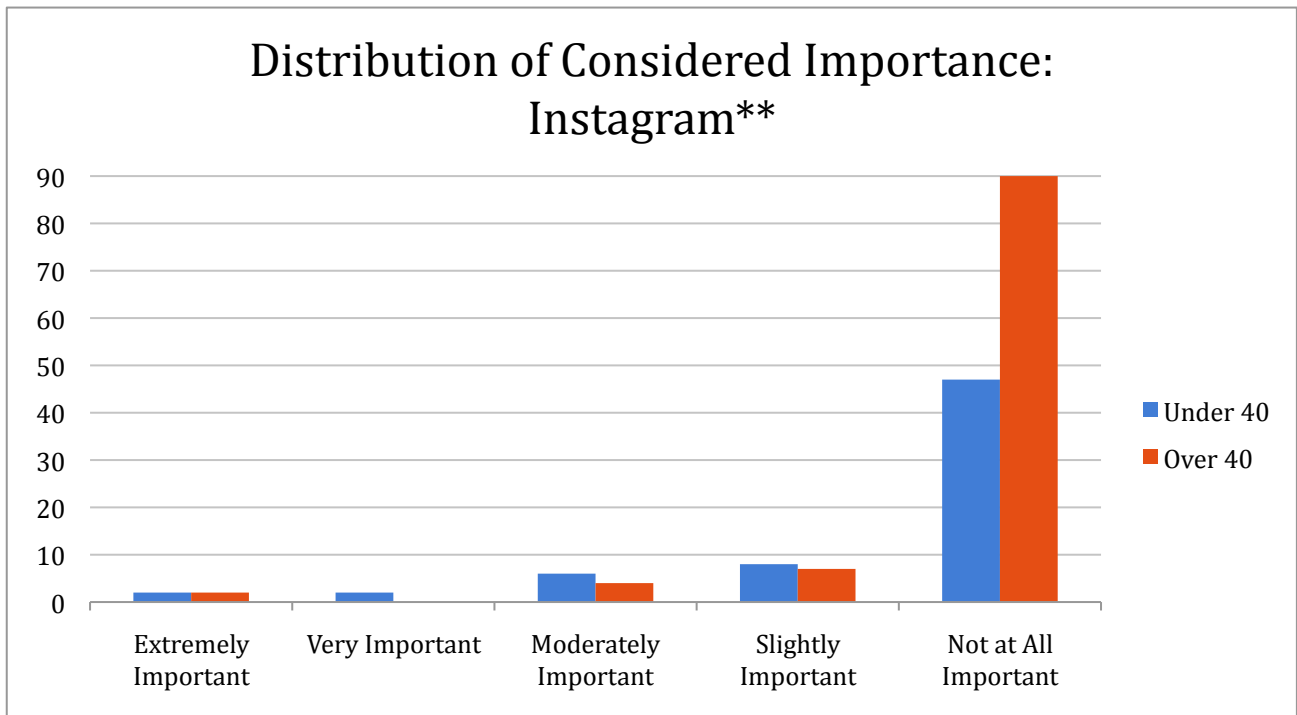
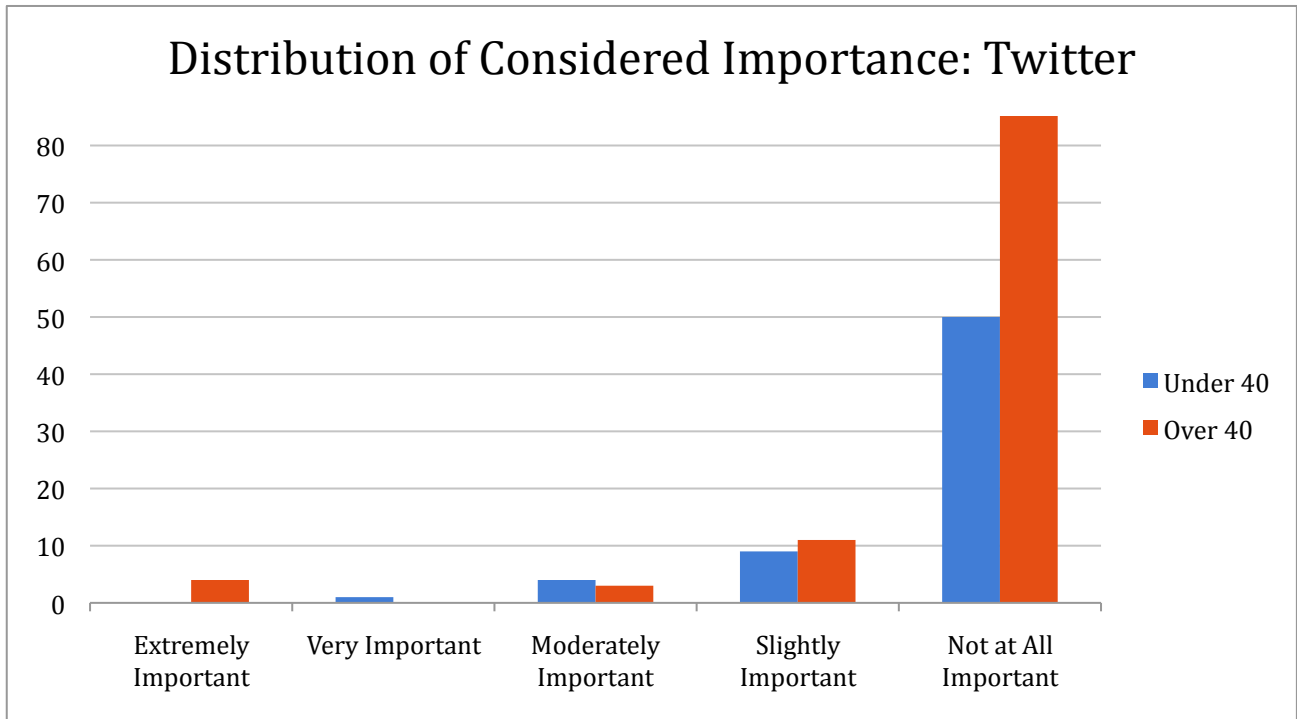
Distribution of Social Media Use: LinkedIn



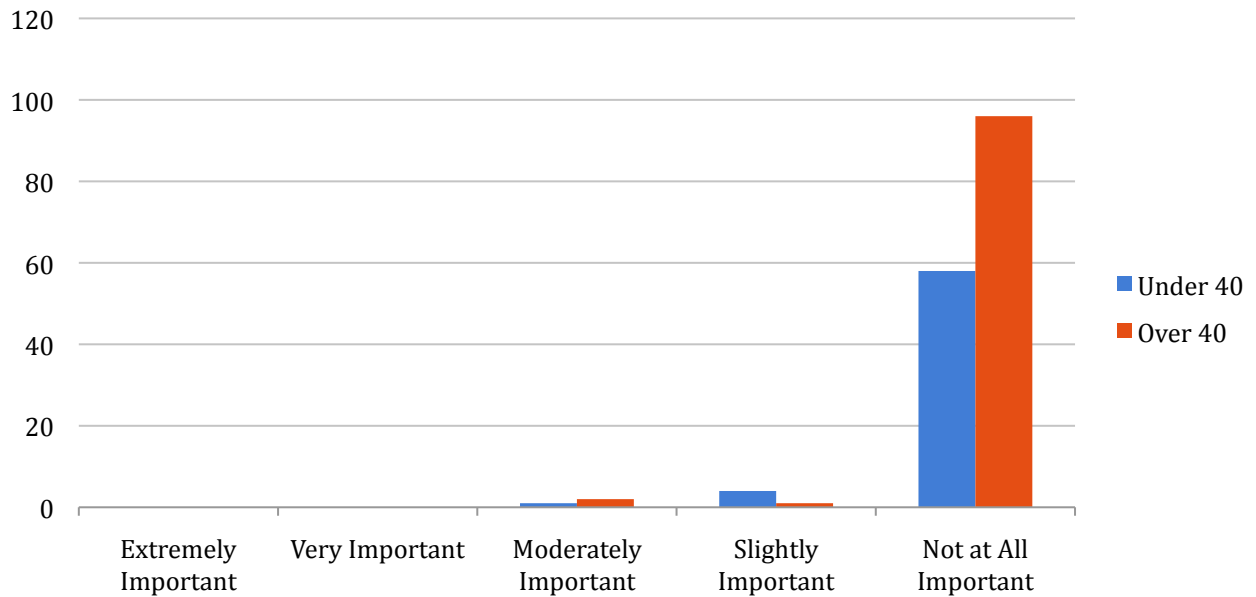
Distribution of Social Media Use: Handshake**



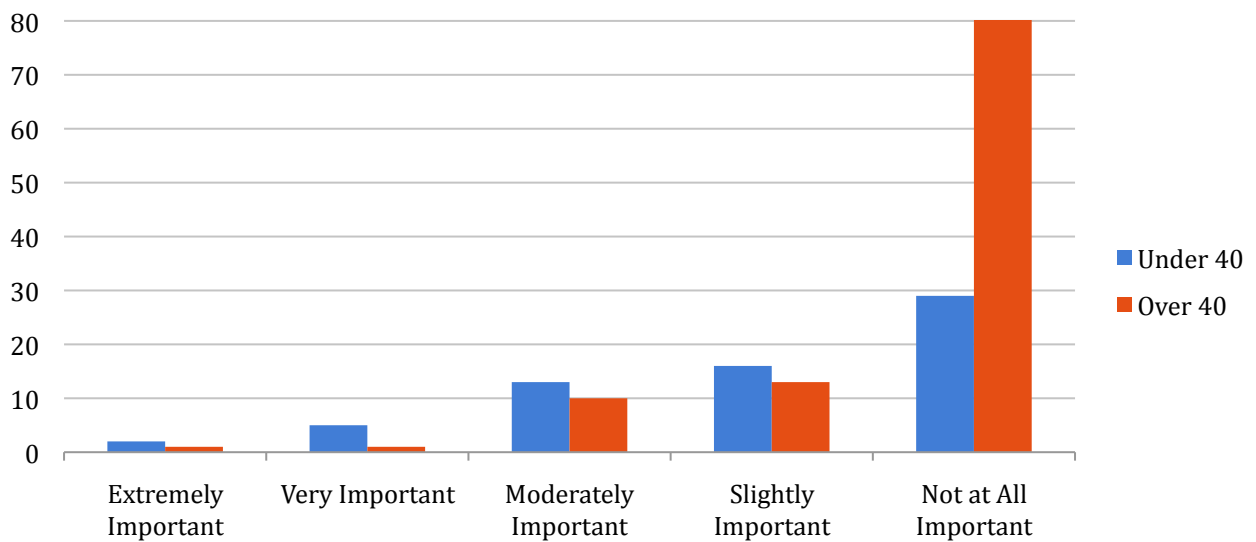
Question: It is important for my professional advancement that I have social media accounts:



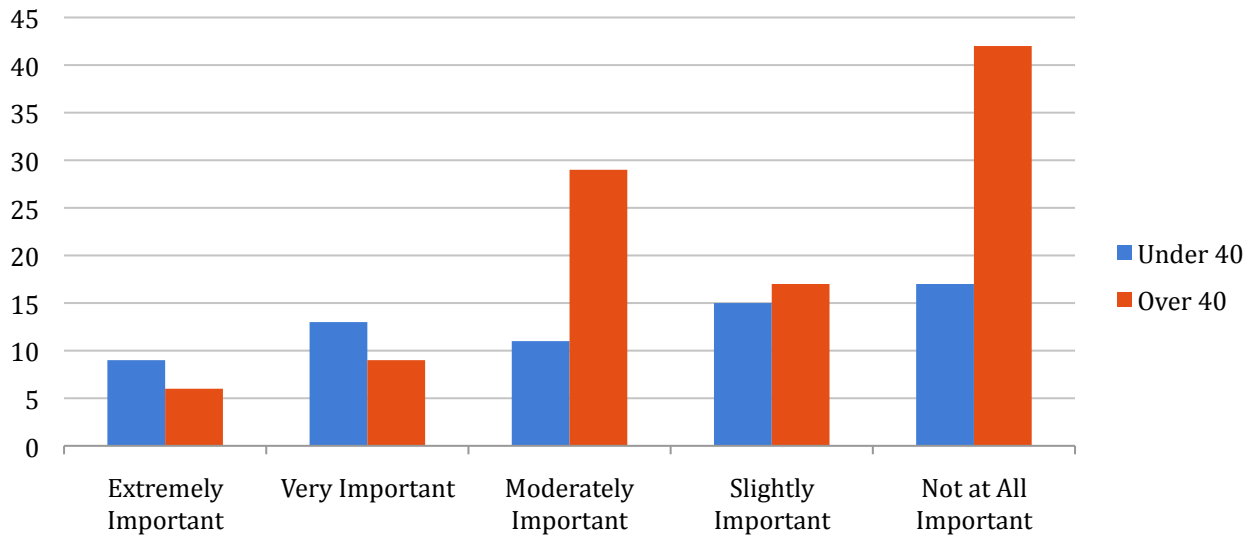
Distribution of Considered Importance: Snapchat



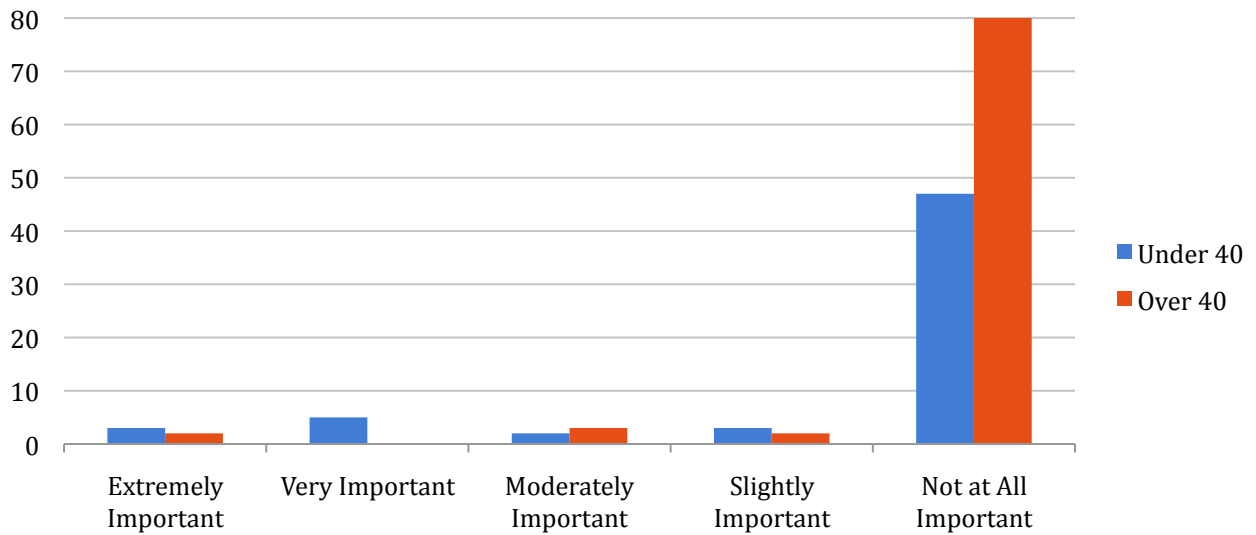
Distribution of Considered Importance: Facebook**



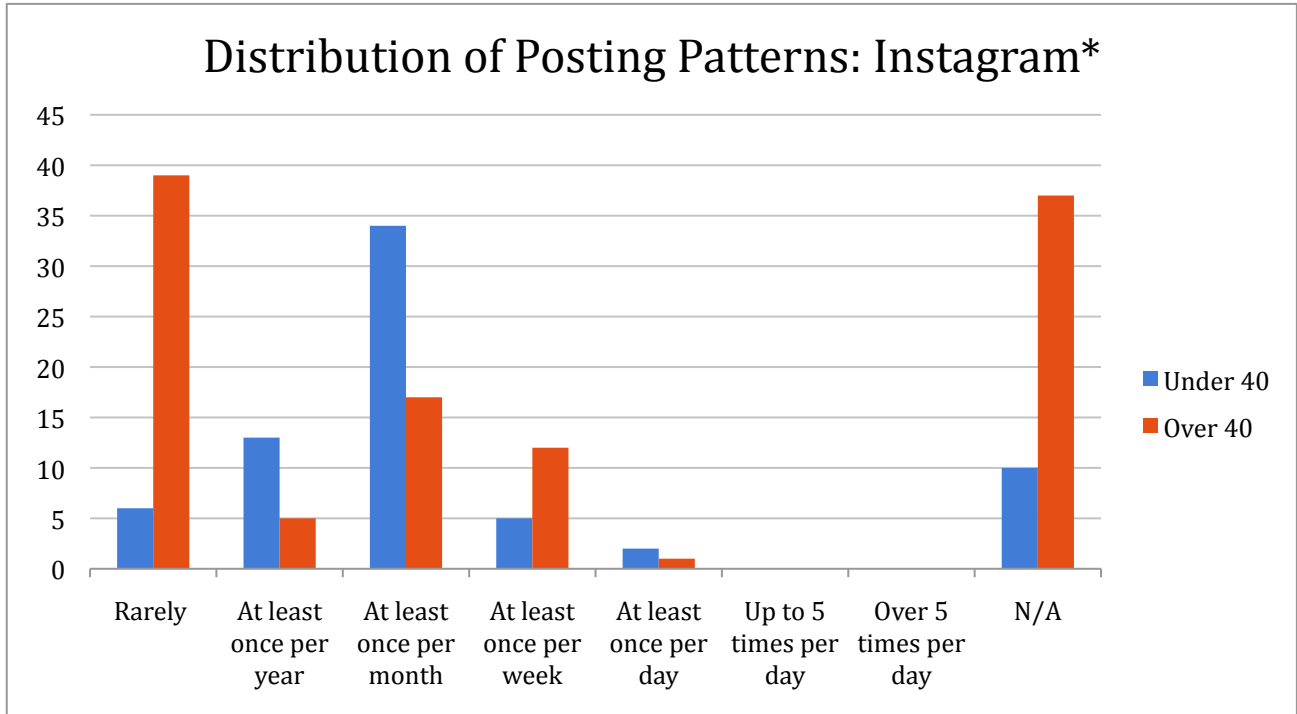
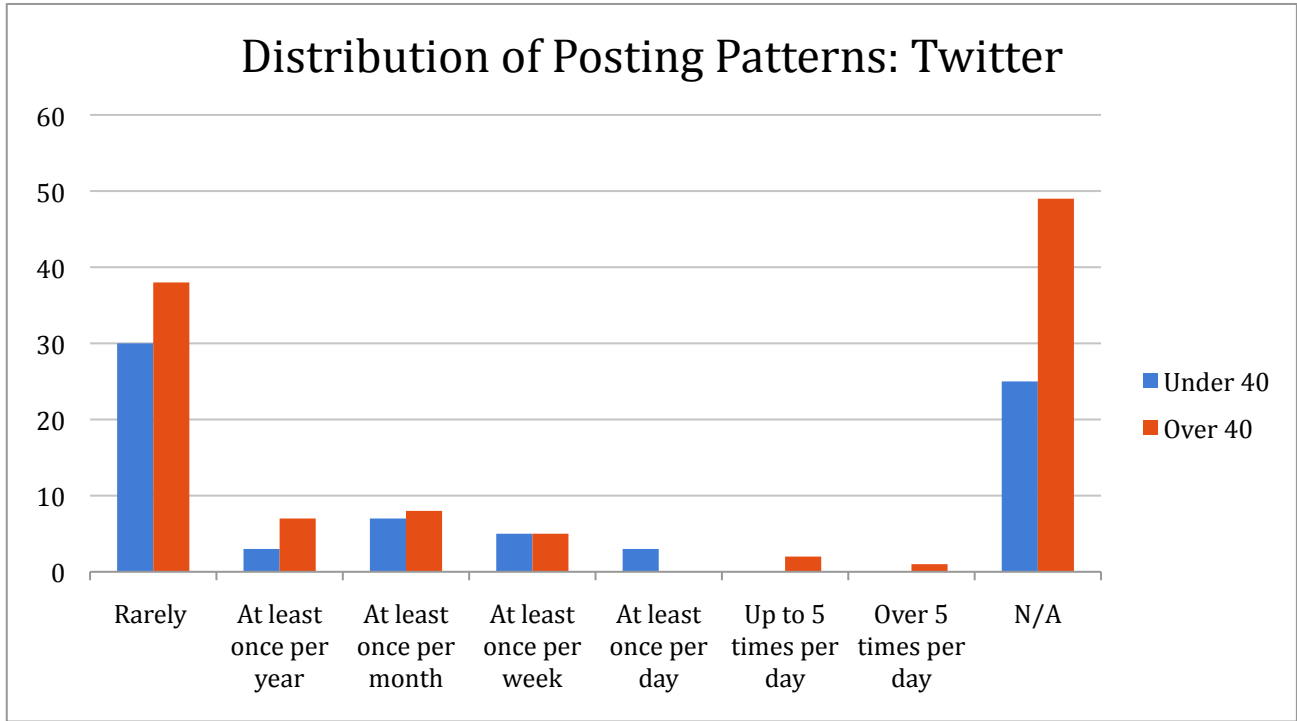
Distribution of Considered Importance: LinkedIn**



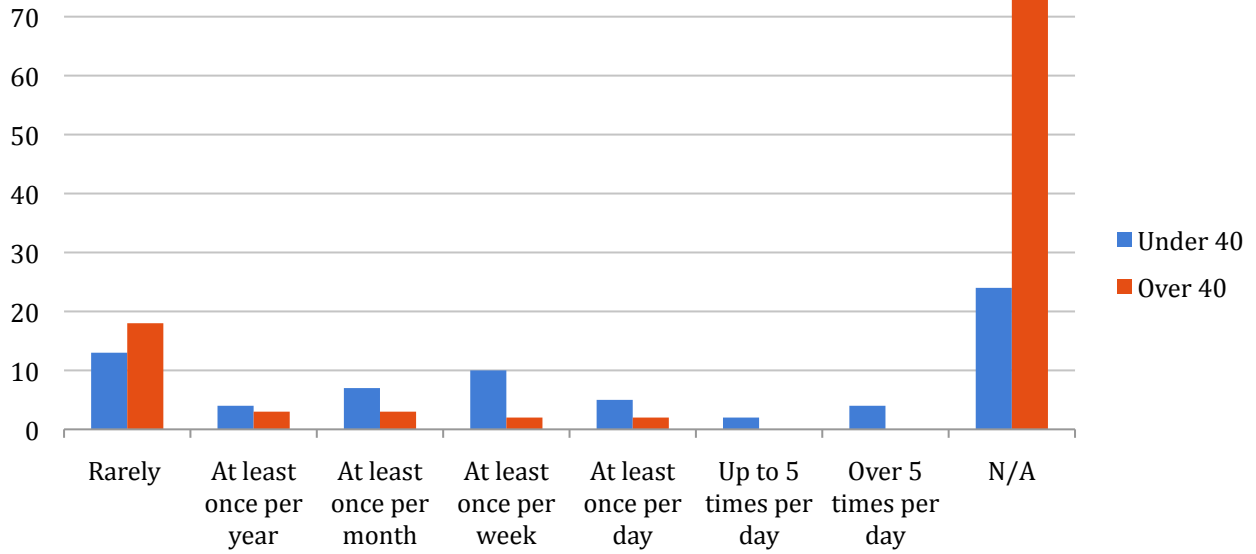
Distribution of Considered Importance: Handshake*



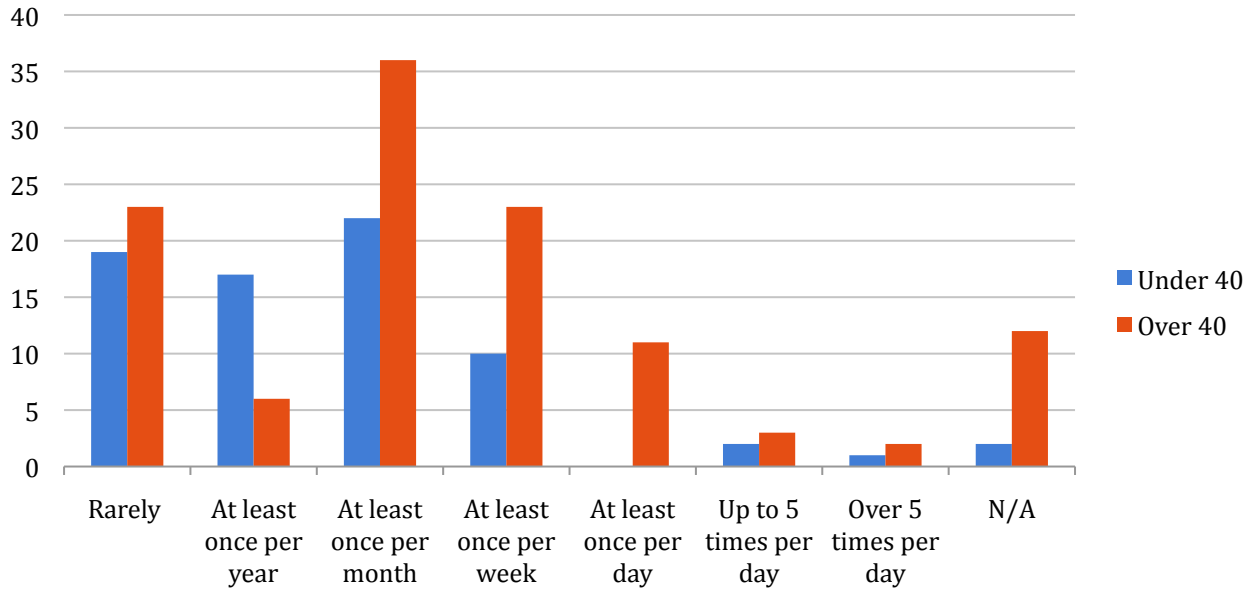
Question: Which pattern most accurately reflects how frequently you post on your accounts?



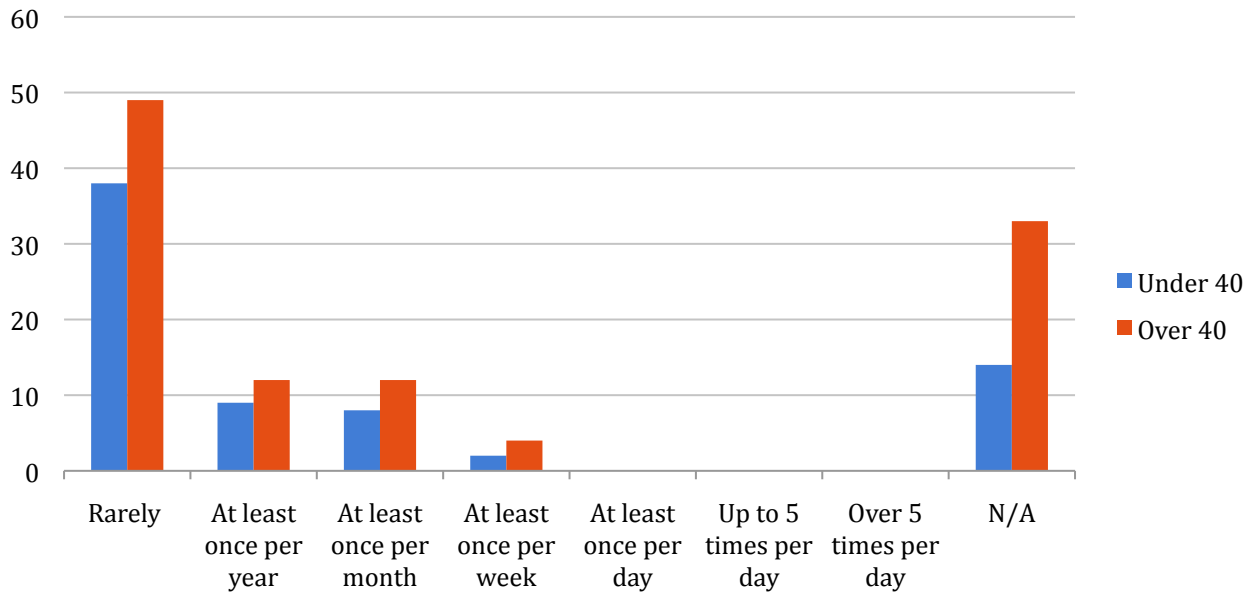
Distribution of Posting Patterns: Snapchat**



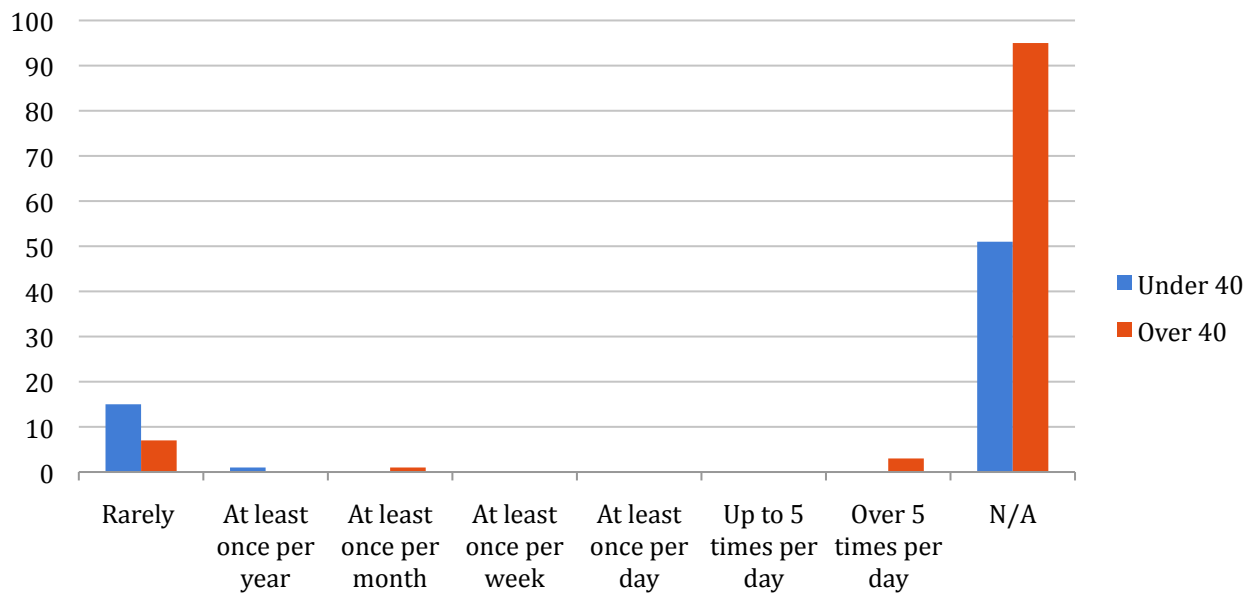
Distribution of Posting Patterns: Facebook**



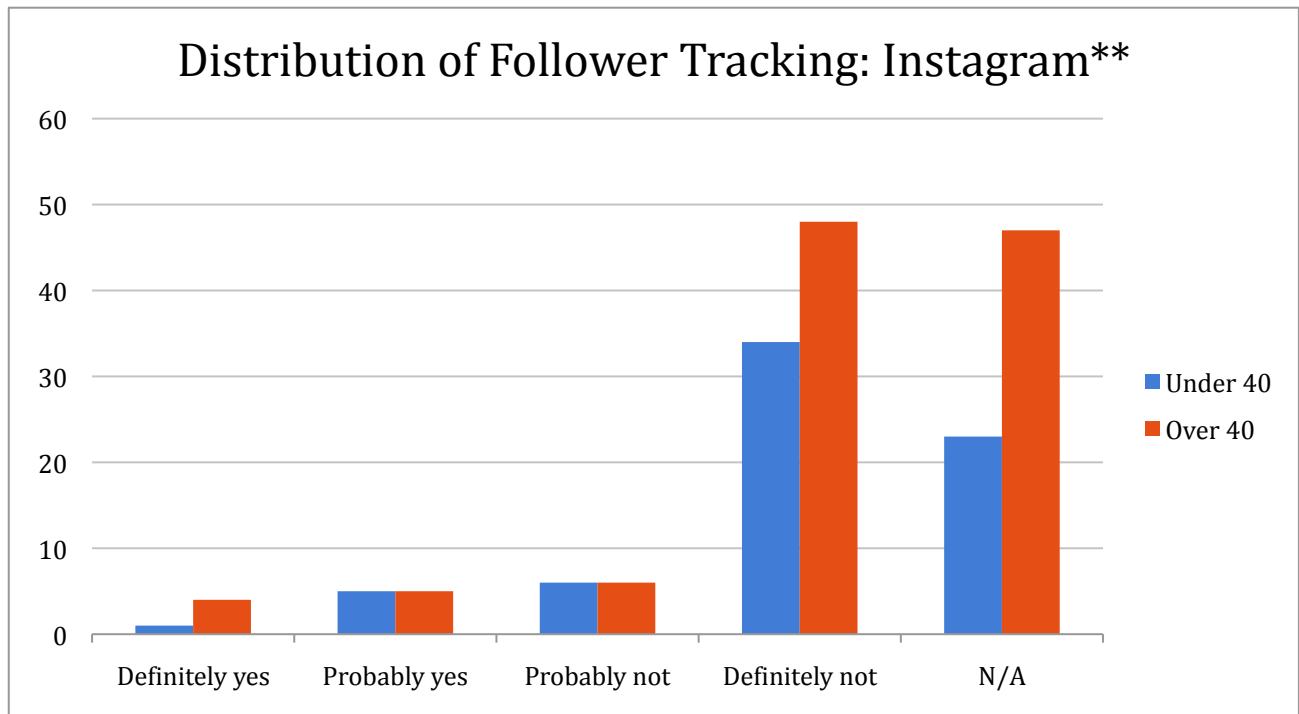
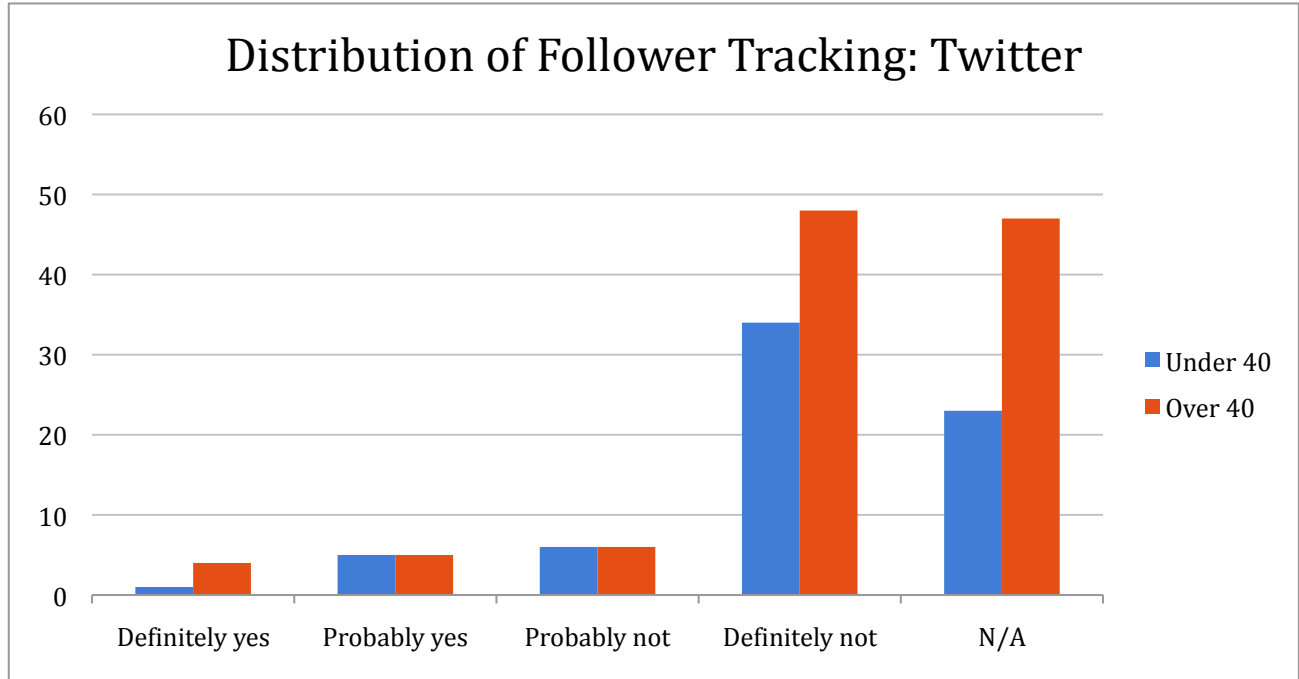
Distribution of Posting Patterns by Age: LinkedIn



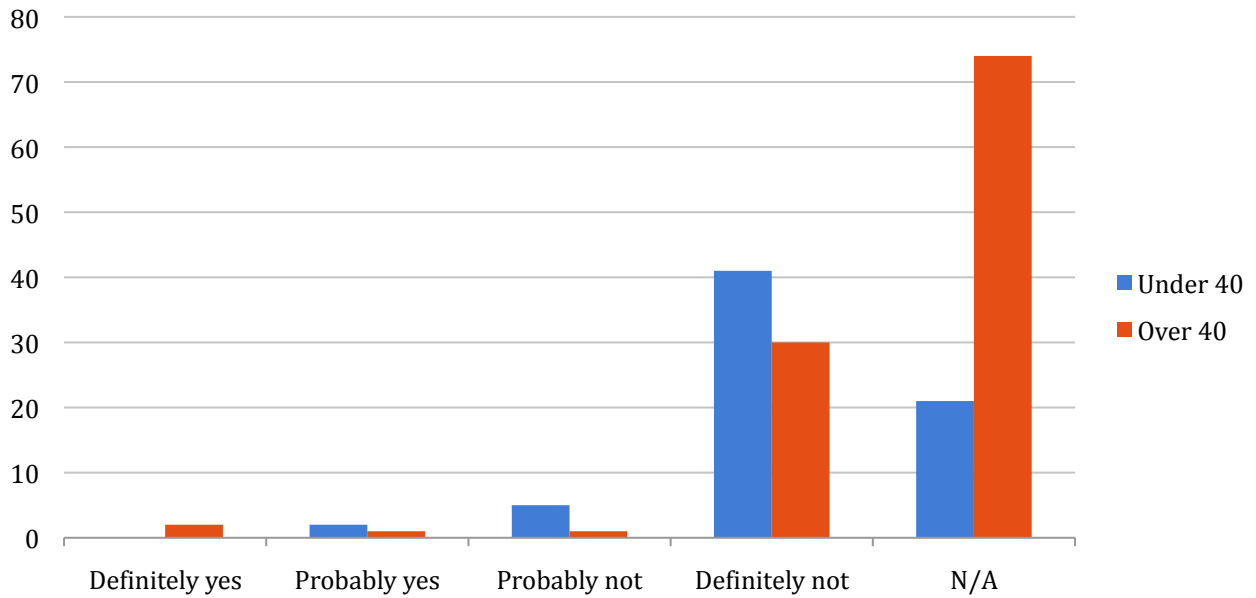
Distribution of Posting Patterns: Handshake*



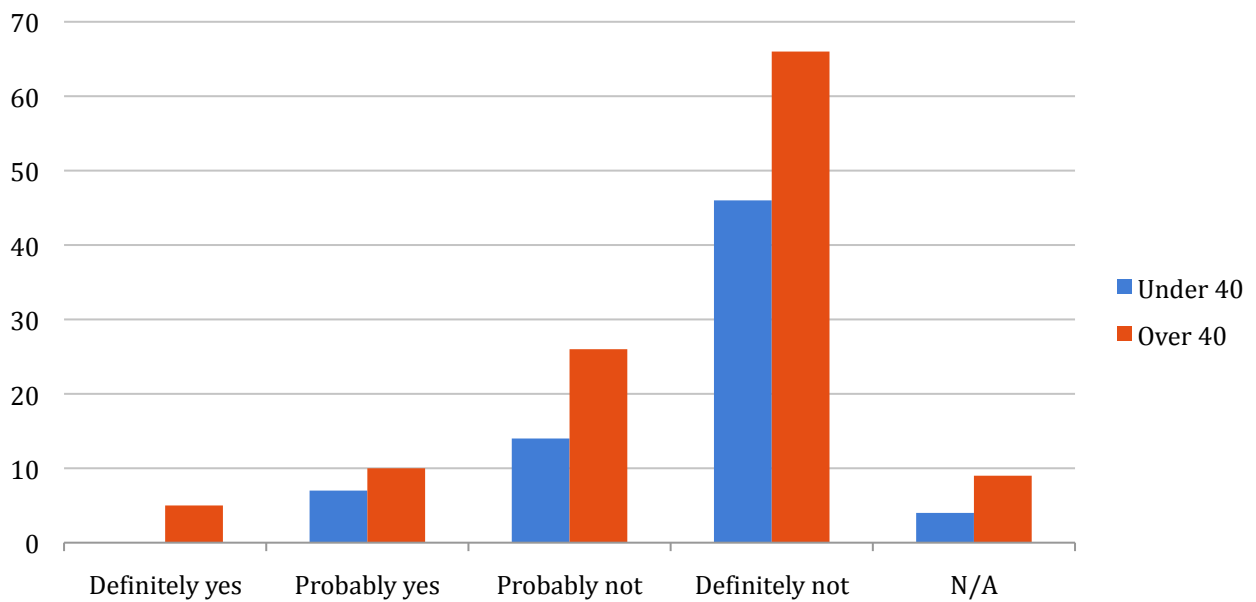
Question: Do you actively track how many followers you have on your accounts?



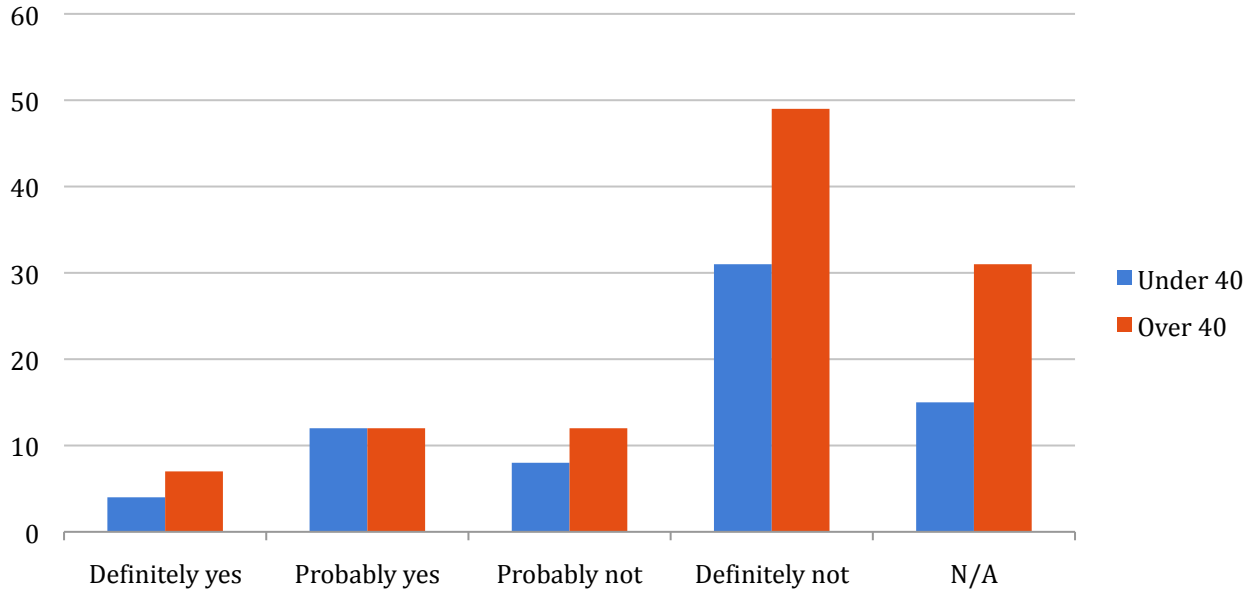
Distribution of Follower Tracking: Snapchat**



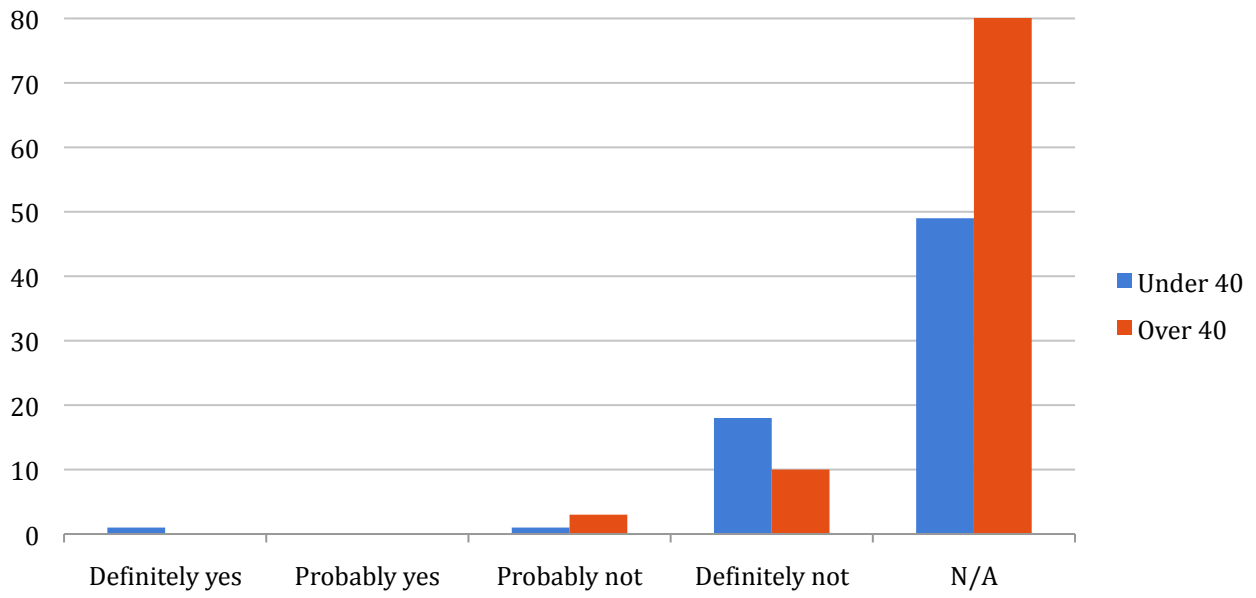
Distribution of Follower Tracking: Facebook



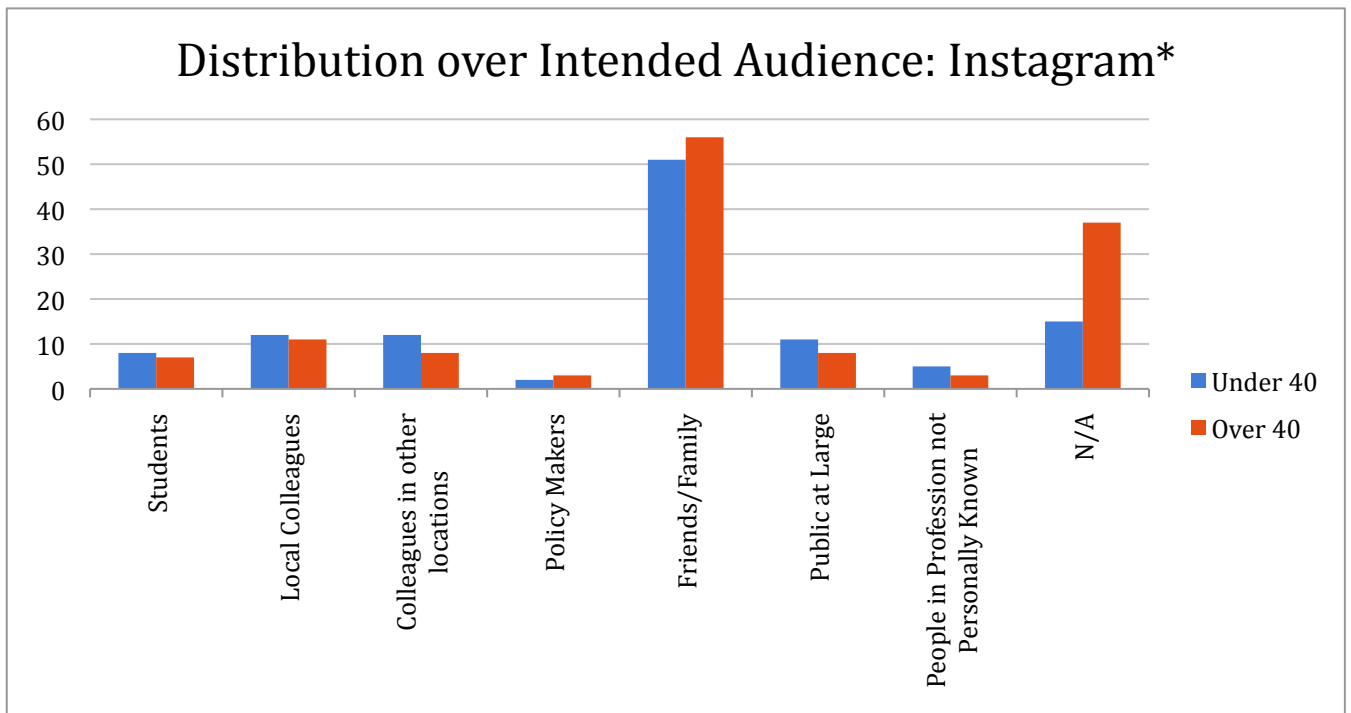
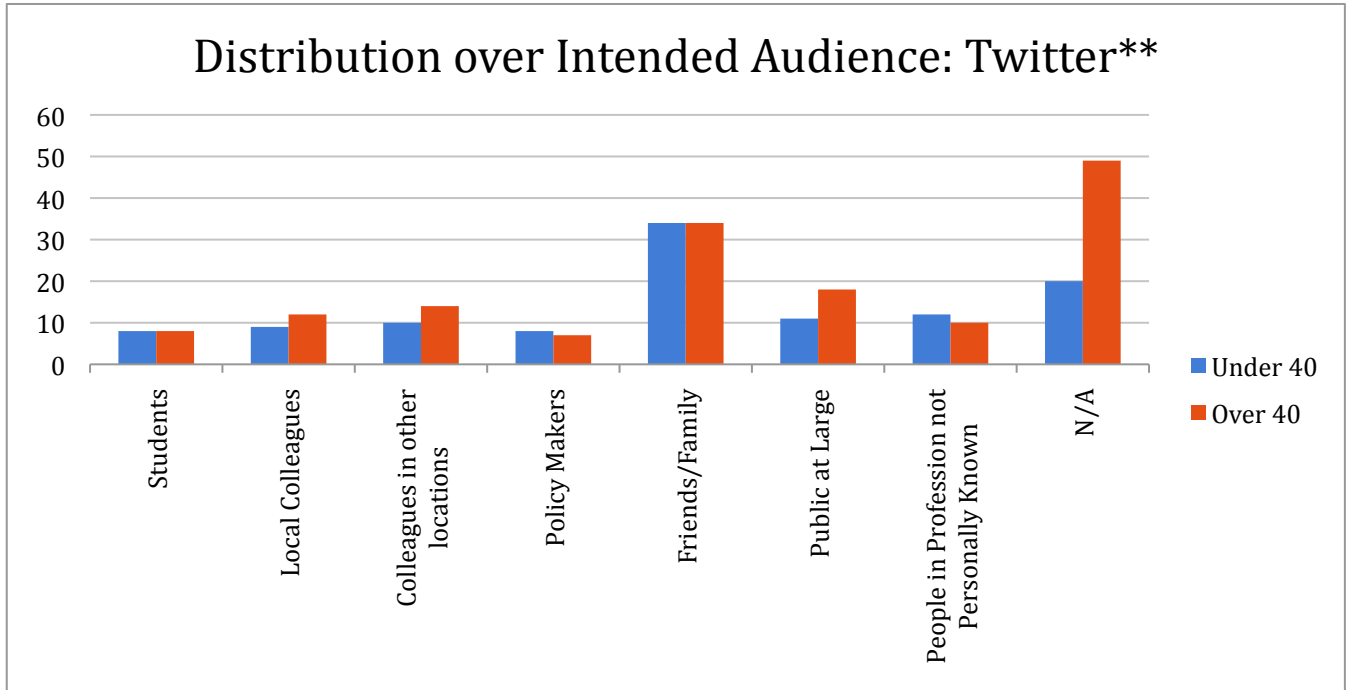
Distribution of Follower Tracking: LinkedIn



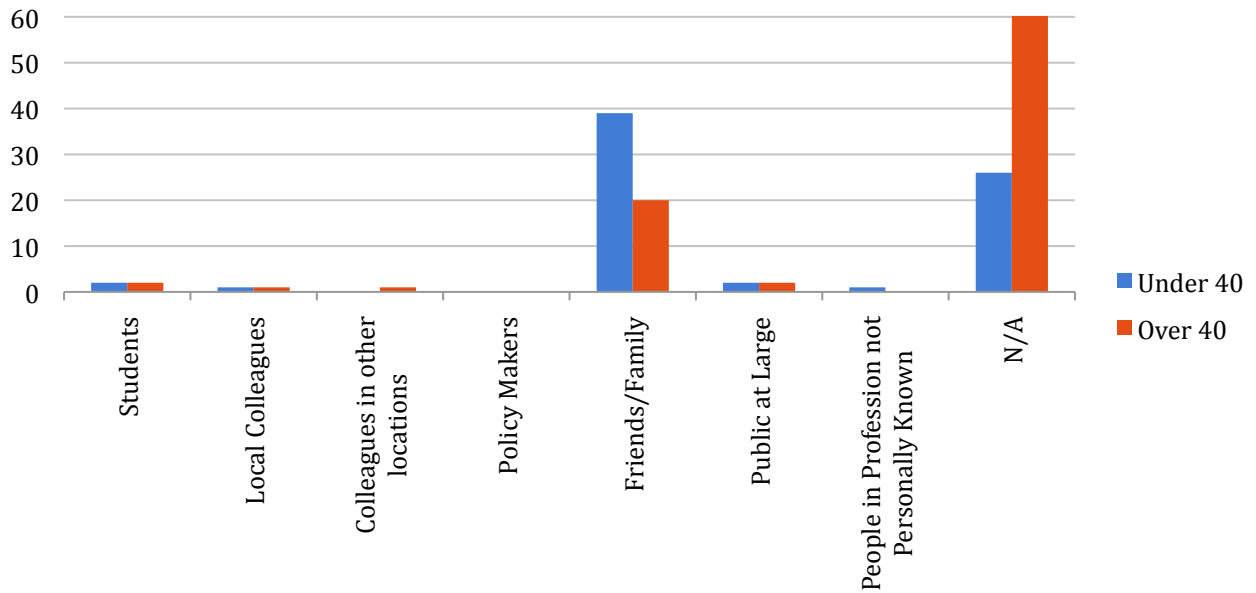
Distribution of Follower Tracking: Handshake**



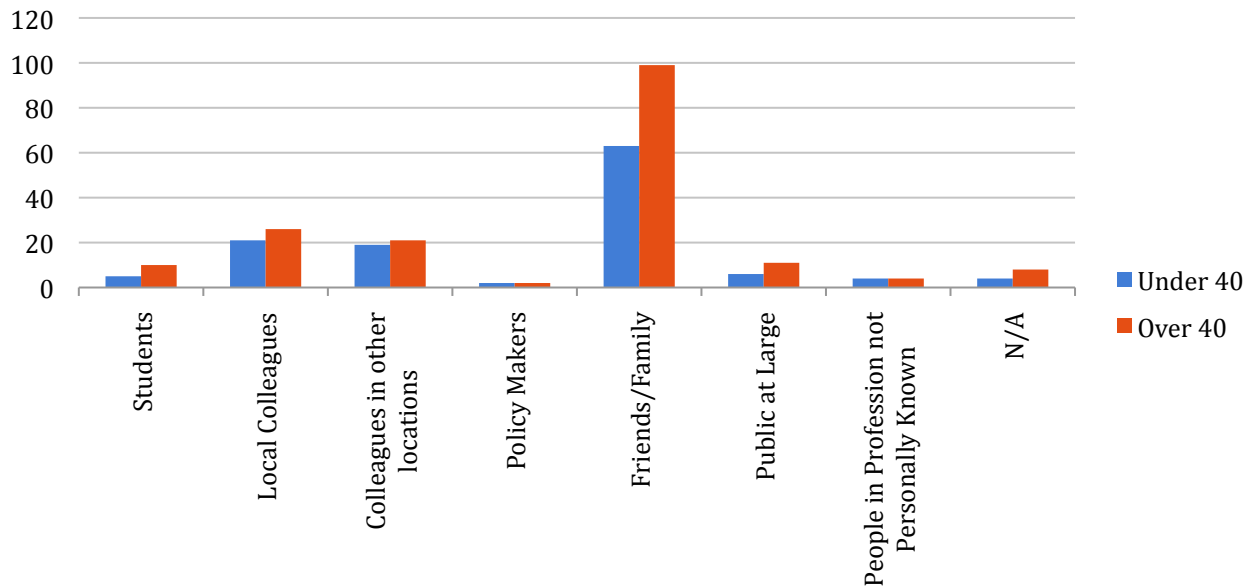
Question: Who is your intended audience on each account? (Choose as many as applicable)



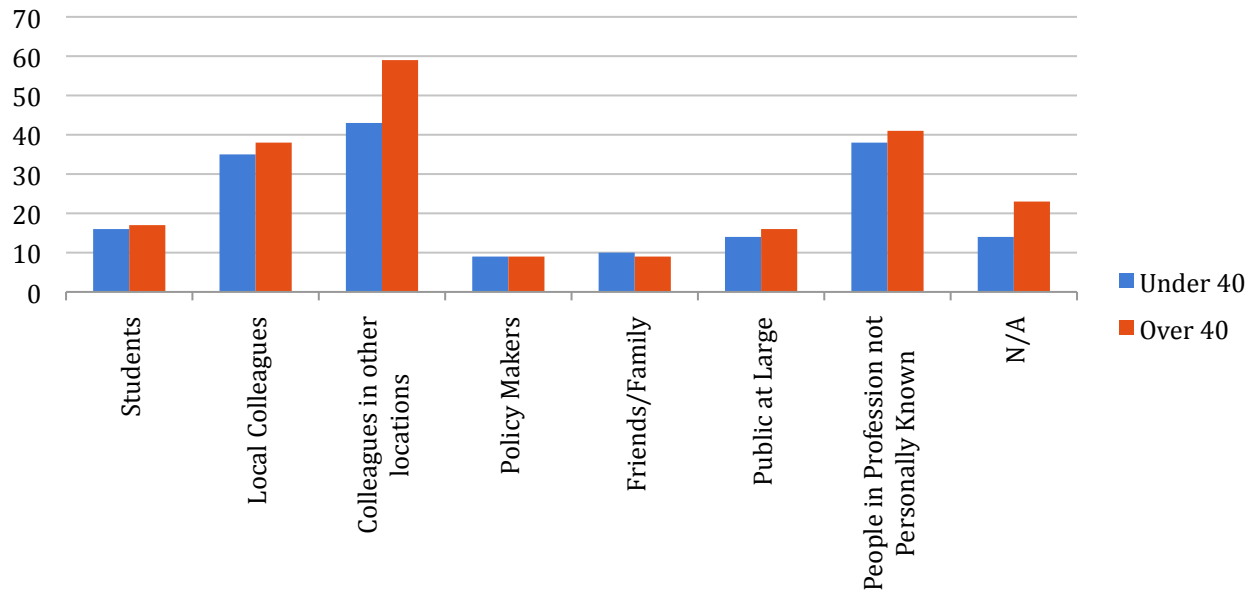
Distribution over Intended Audience: Snapchat**



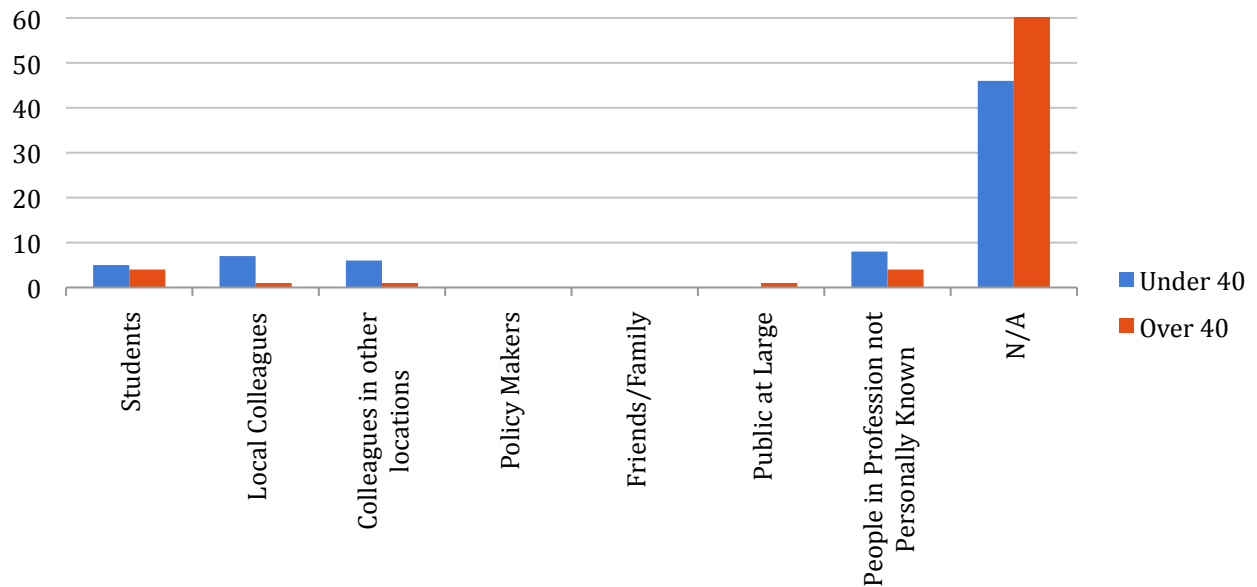
Distribution over Intended Audience: Facebook*



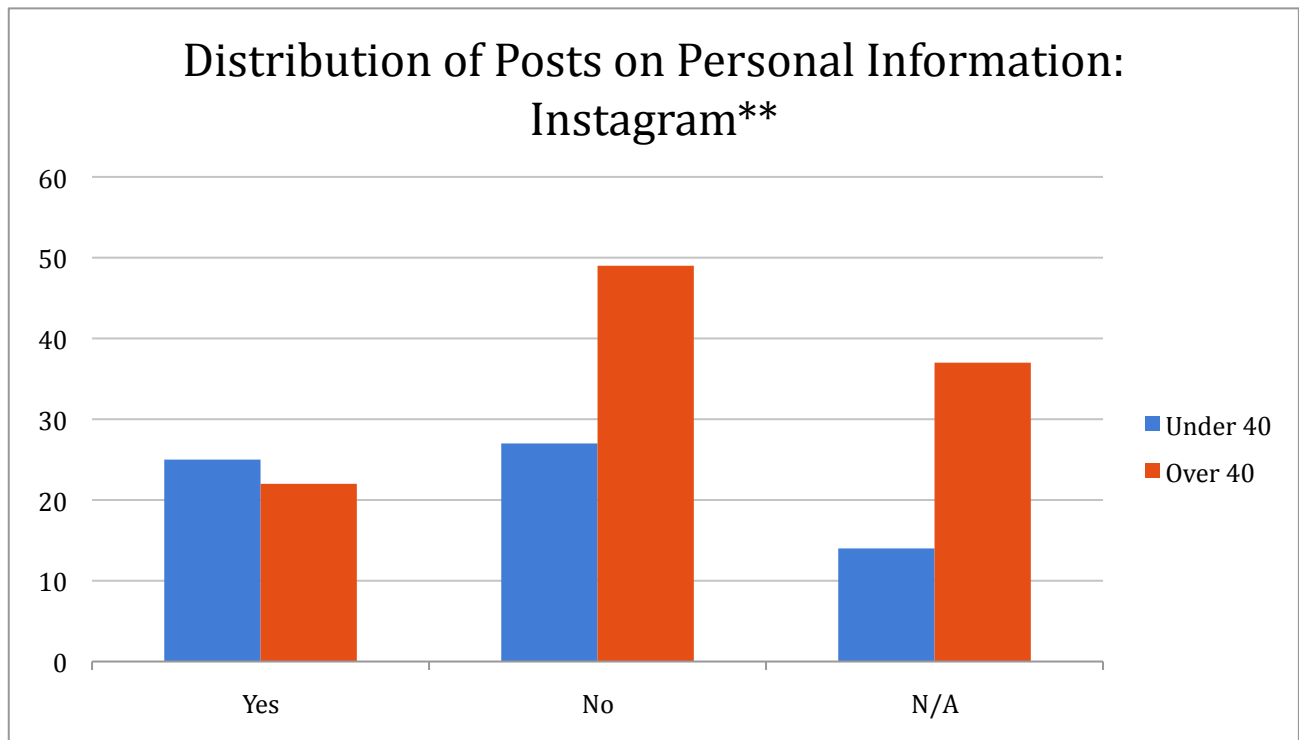
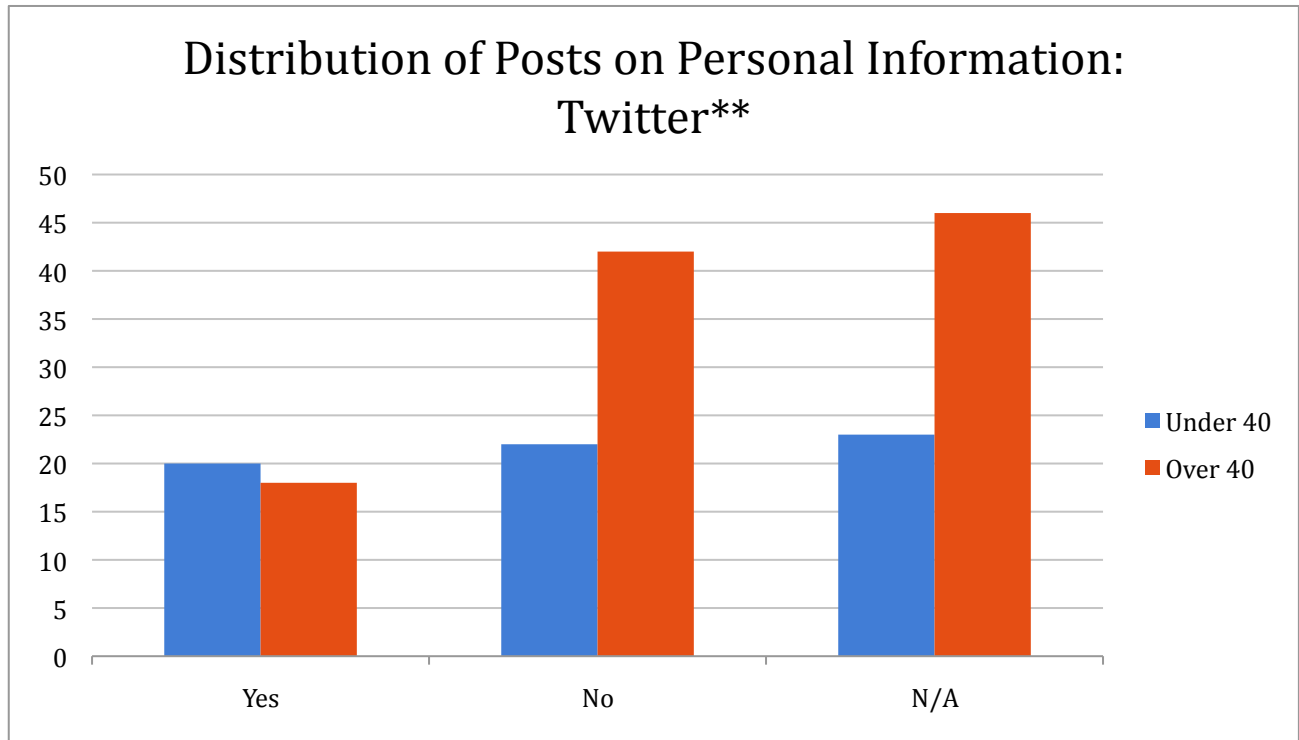
Distribution over Intended Audience: LinkedIn



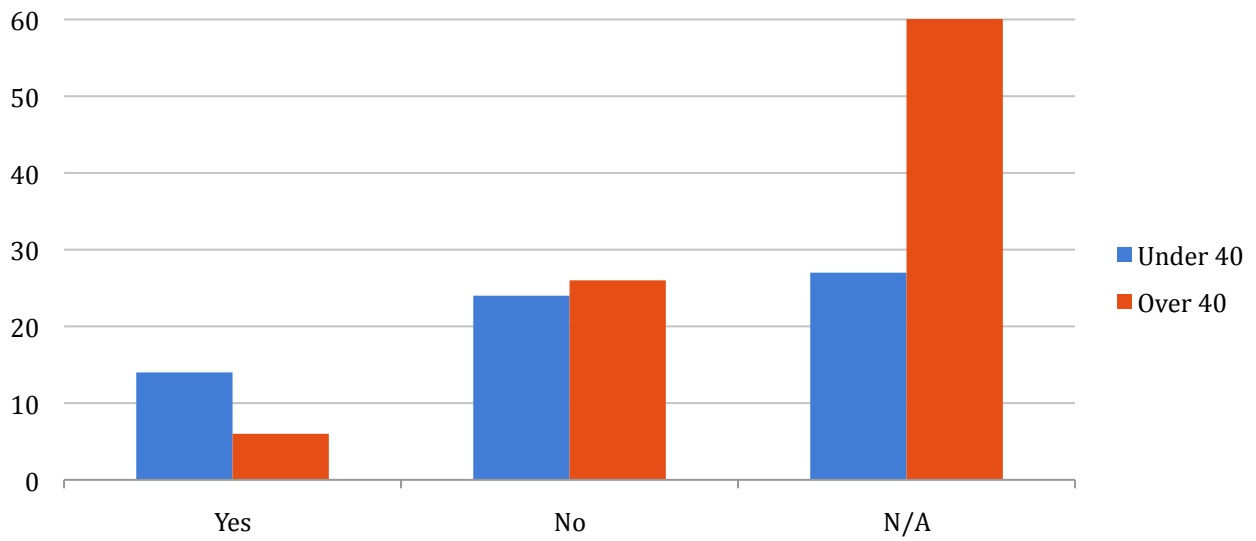
Distribution over Intended Audience: Handshake



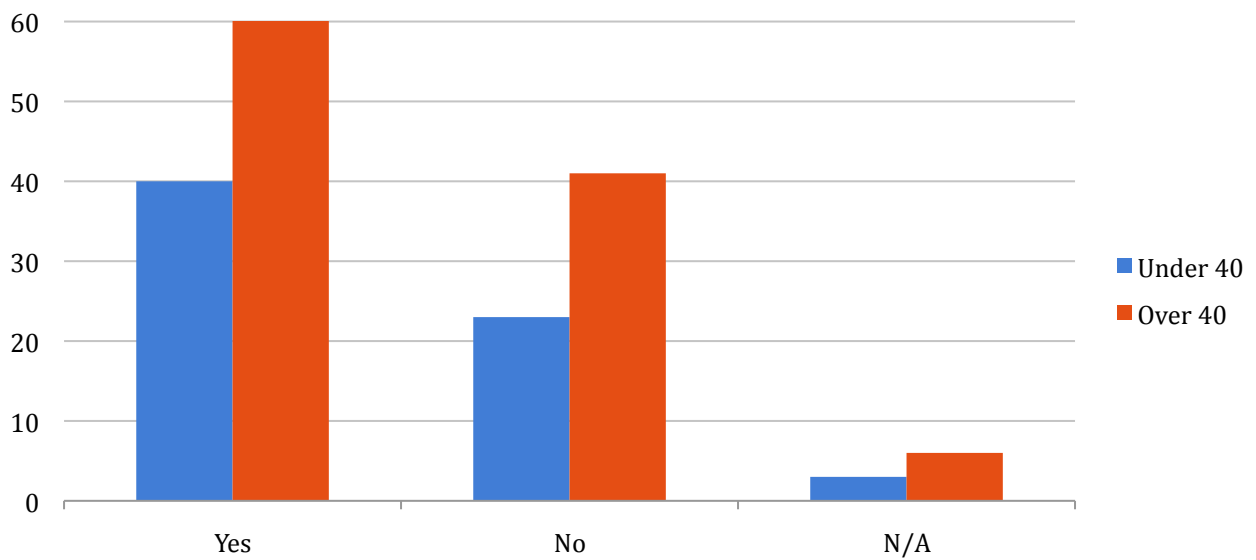
Question: Do you post personal opinions, experiences, and statements on social media?



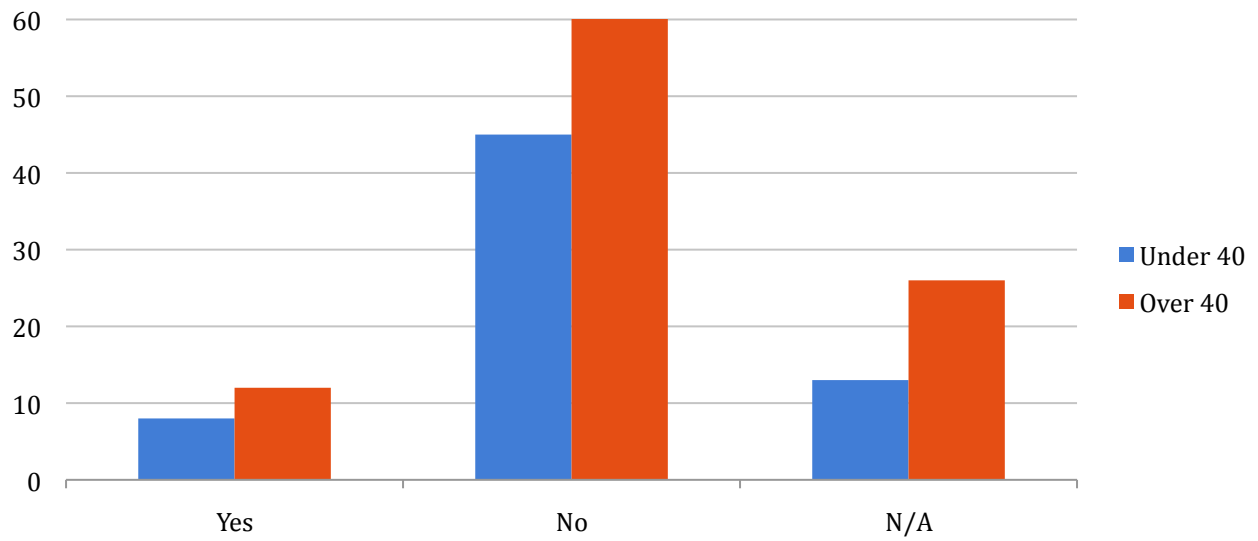
Distribution of Posts on Personal Information: Snapchat**



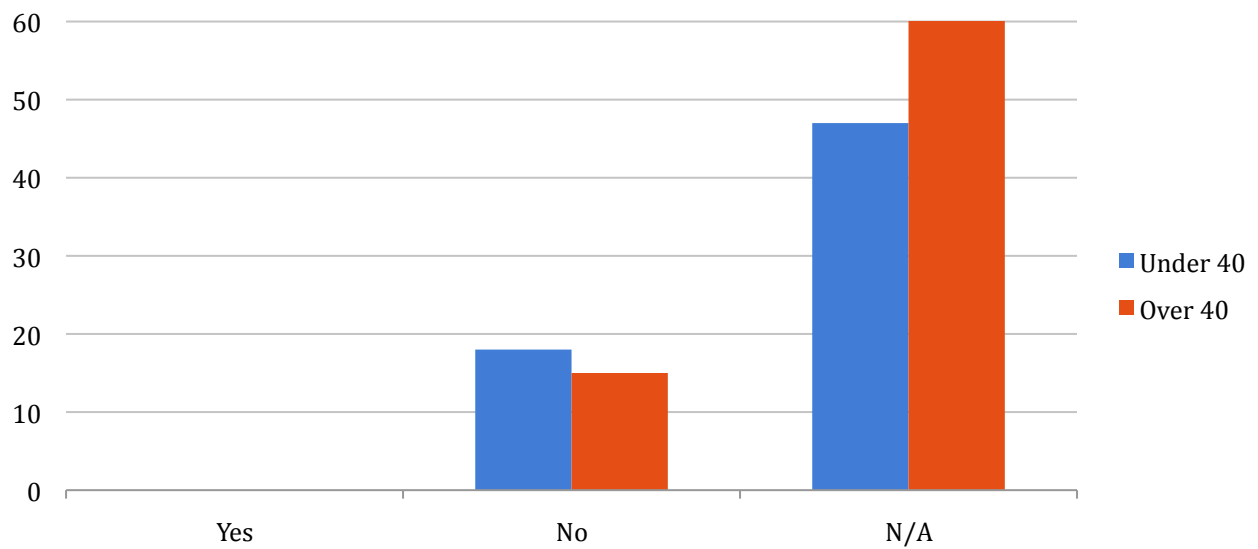
Distribution of Posts on Personal Information: Facebook



Distribution of Posts on Personal Information:
LinkedIn

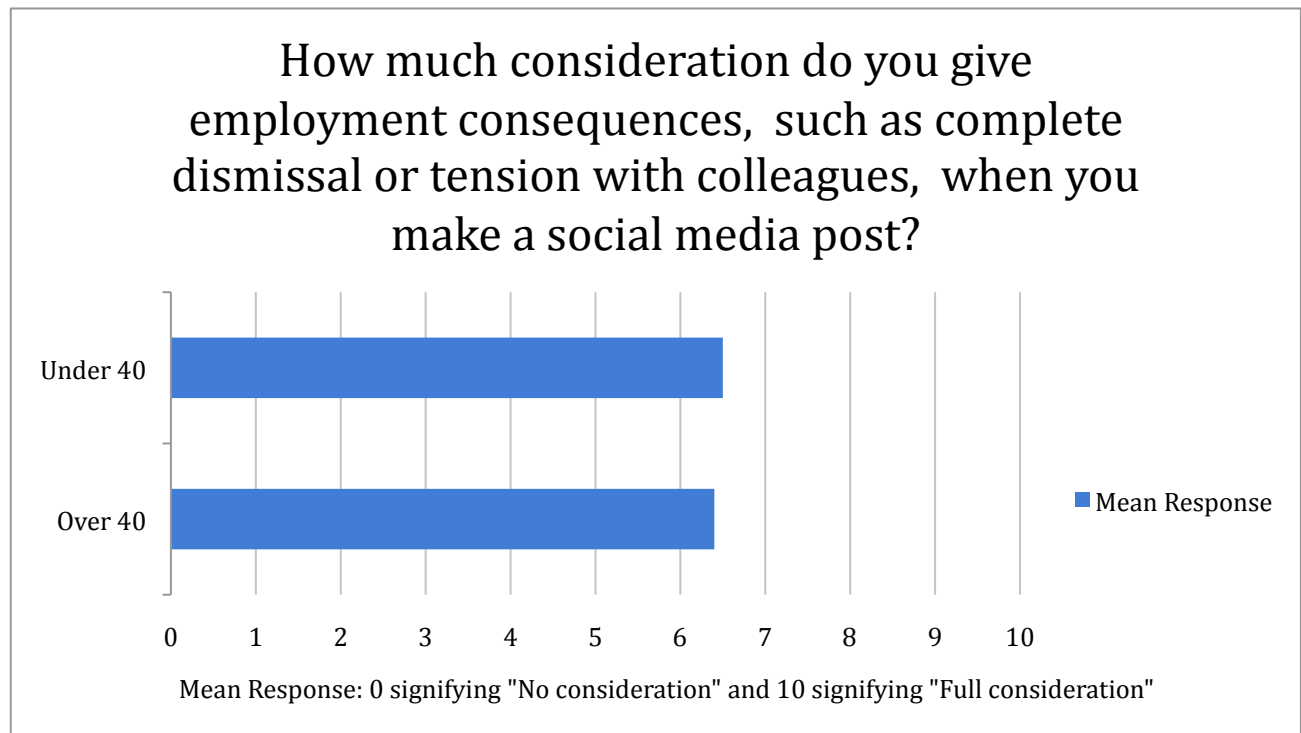
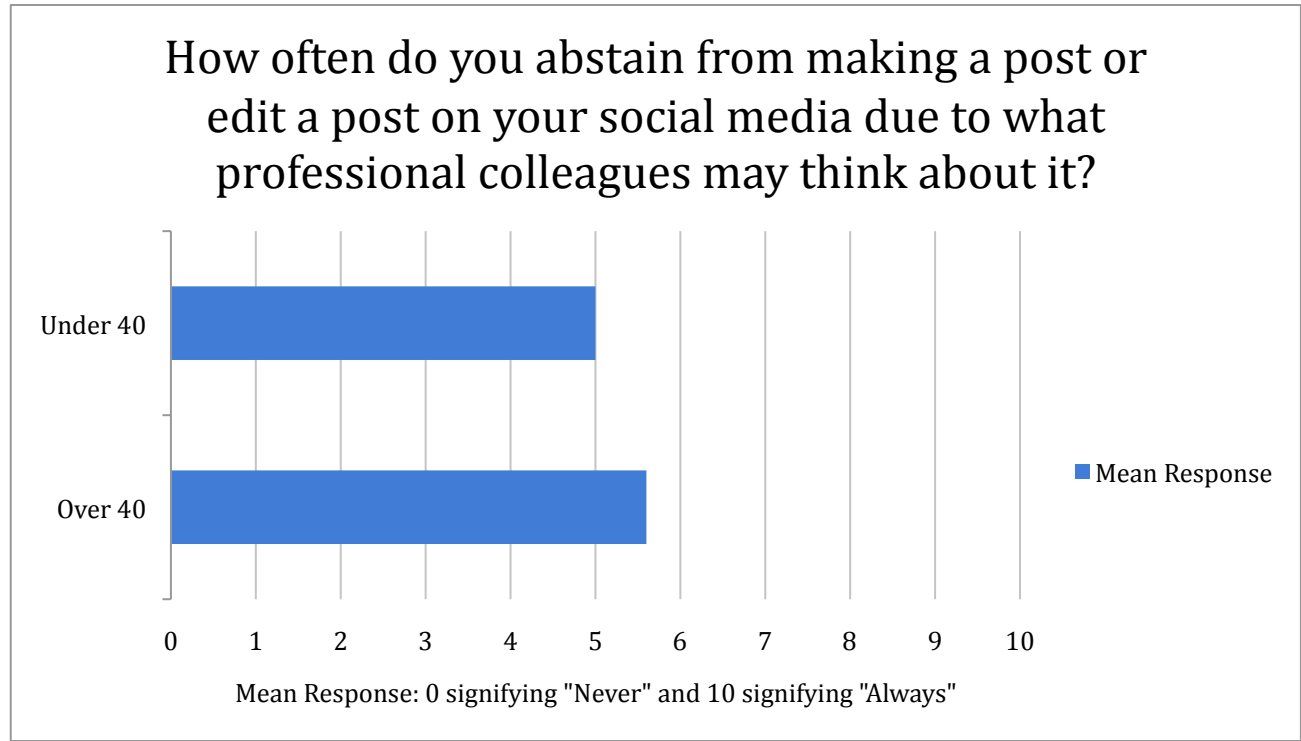


Distribution of Posts on Personal Information:
Handshake*

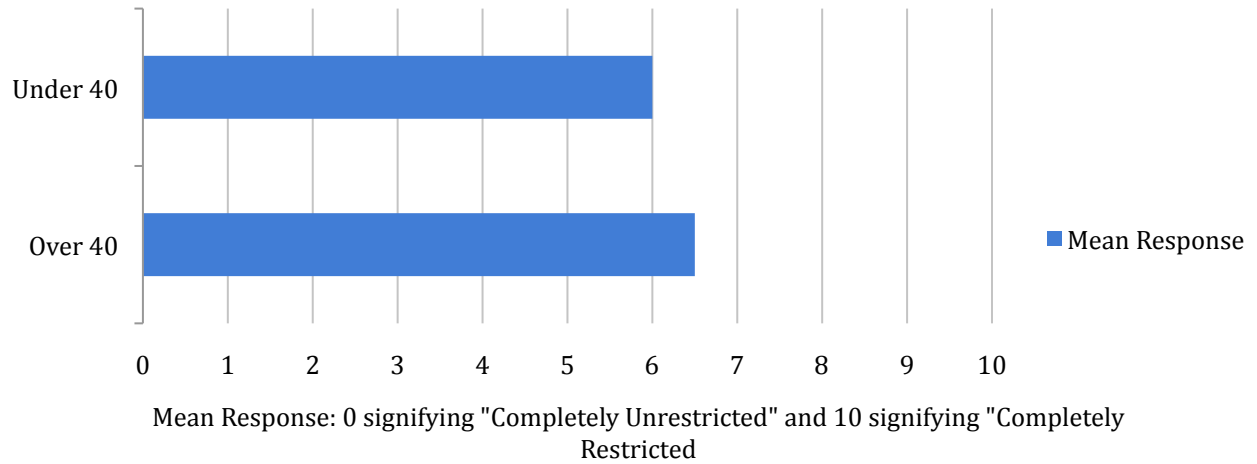


Appendix D

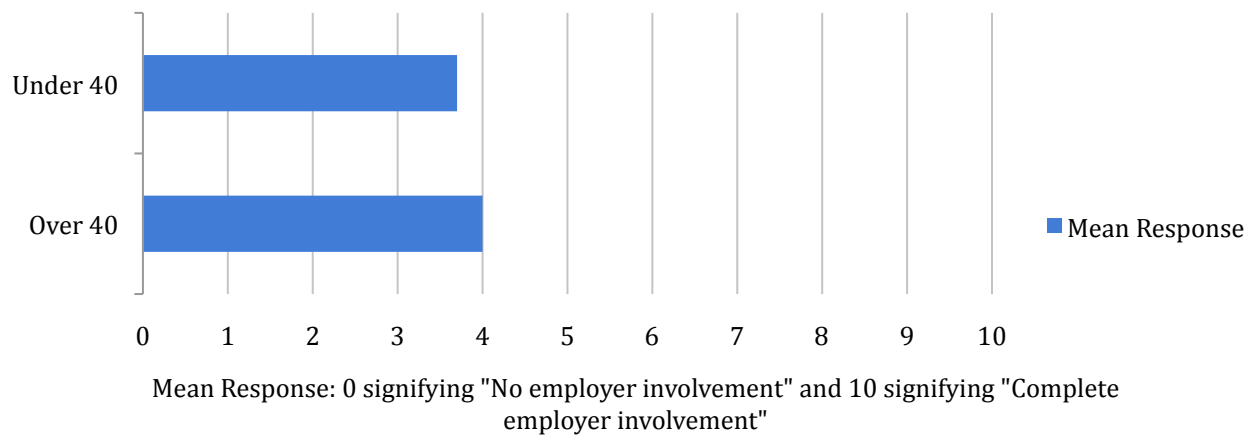
*****All tables in Appendix D have a significant difference between responses for Under 40 and Over 40, as provided by T-Test analysis. Significance level for all: 99%.*****



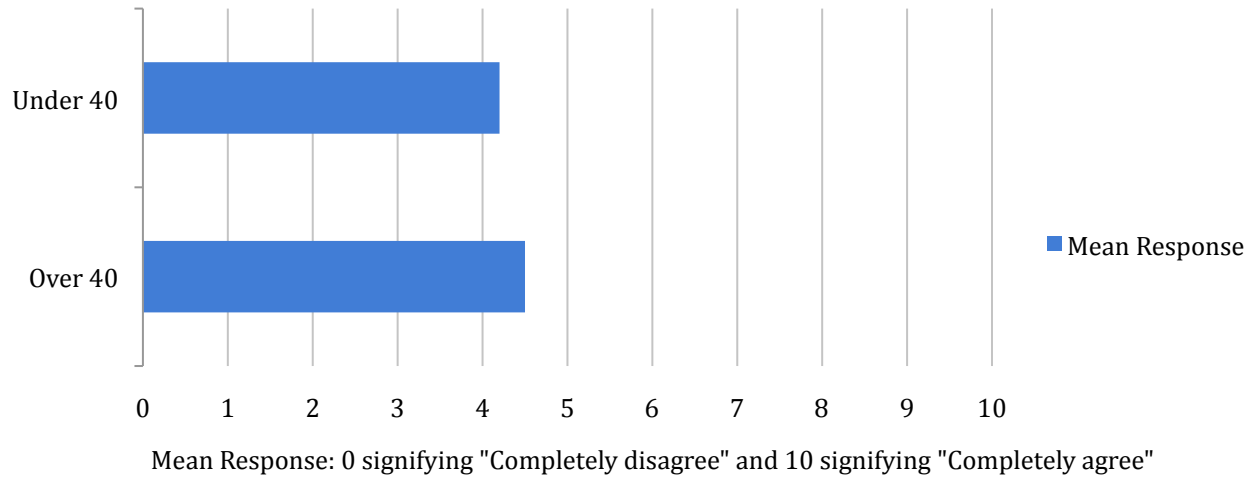
Do you feel that your freedom to post your thoughts while being a faculty member under your employer is?



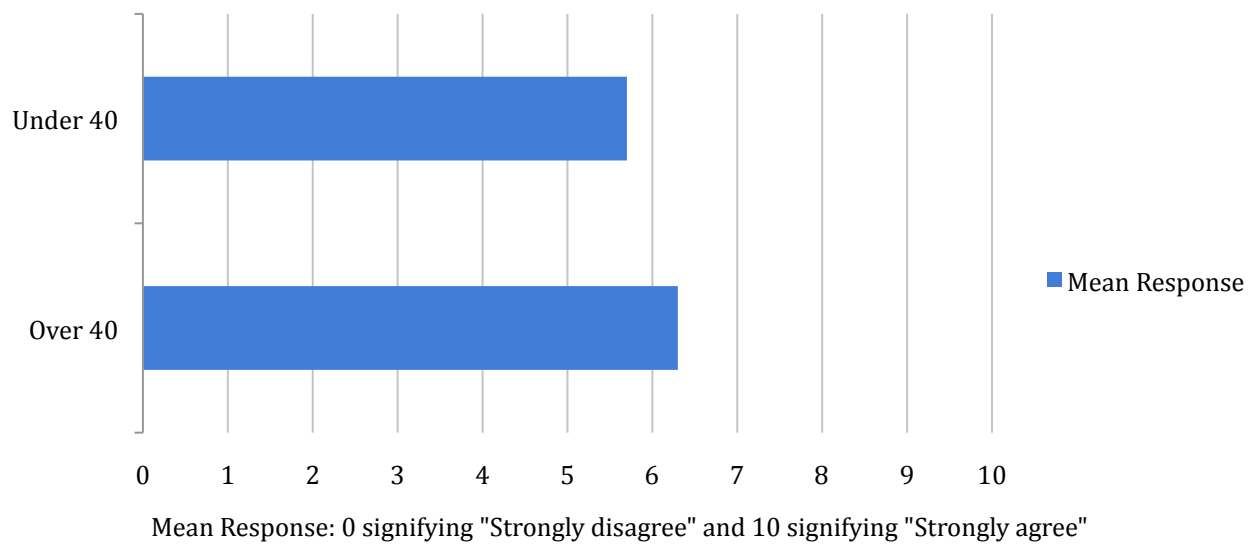
To what degree should an employer be responsible for ensuring the comfort of employees in actively posting on their social media accounts?



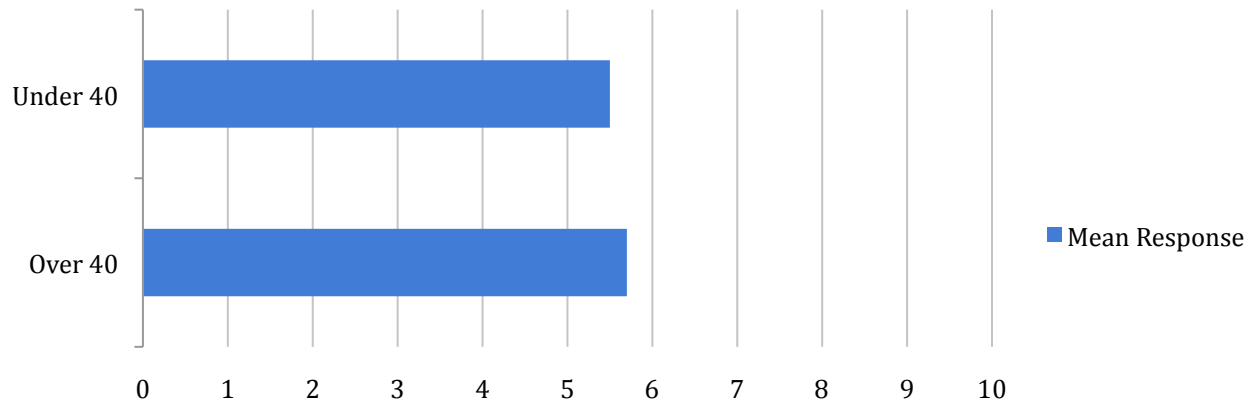
I would post personal statements more frequently if I was assured faculty members and colleagues did not have access to view them.



I would prefer that my employer have a social media policy protecting its employees from workplace repercussions.



I believe an intervention system, whereby workplace social media bullies are met with and disciplined, would be beneficial/detrimental for my organization.



Mean Response: 0 signifying "Detrimental" and 10 signifying "Beneficial"

References

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6. Stillman, J. (2012). Would you fire someone for blogging about your job offer. Retrieved 03/30, 2019, from <https://www.inc.com/jessica-stillman/would-you-fire-someone-for-blogging-about-your-job-offer.html>
7. Taylor, R. C. (2013, February). E-commerce & information technology: Protection from social media traps *The Bottom Line*, pp. 14.