

THE ADVENT OF *FACEBOOK* AND EMPLOYEE IMPRESSIONS OF
FACEBOOK USAGE

by
Amar Tripathy

Clarion University of Pennsylvania,

A Thesis Submitted to Clarion University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for MS Mass Media and Journalism Degree
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
2018

_____	_____
Date	Dr. Naomi O'Neil, Committee Chair
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Hwei-Jen Yang, Committee Member
_____	_____
Date	Dr. Andrew Lingwall, Committee Member

Abstract

Facebook is a centralized platform that enables people to communicate all over the world. Additionally, it enables people to express information about their professional acumen and experiences. This study was conducted to investigate *Facebook* use and its relationship to employee impressions and support. The research survey asked participants of various professions and educational backgrounds about the multiple uses and benefits of *Facebook* within both their professional and personal lives. An online survey revealed that the majority of respondents prefer not to use *Facebook* within a professional setting and instead use it as a personal means of communication. In conclusion, it seems that while *Facebook* has many benefits for its users both personally and professionally, further research can be done to determine the appropriate steps needed to make *Facebook* a useful tool to propel the communication standards of an organization.

Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Chapter 1	
Problem	4
Chapter 2	
Introduction	8
Why do people join social media?	9
Benefits of using Social Media – Why do companies do it?.....	10
Drawbacks to using <i>Facebook</i> – Why are companies resisting it?	15
Benefits of employees using <i>Facebook</i>	16
Conclusion	19
Chapter 3	
Method	20
Results	22
Discussion	28
Further Research	29
References	31
Appendix A	36
Appendix B	40

Chapter I

Problem

The Internet is currently a vital source of information. Almost everyone has access to its readily available information. Checking and posting on social media has become a part of society's daily routine. According to the Pew Research Center for Internet and Technology in 2018, "roughly two-thirds of U.S. adults (68%) now report that they are *Facebook* users, and roughly three-quarters of those users access *Facebook* on a daily basis" (p.1). Since so many people depend on *Facebook* as their main information source, most companies view it as a positive exposure for them. Then the question becomes why is it that some employees view *Facebook* as detrimental, rather than seeing the potential for benefits? Meunier (2017) states that while many companies still have a policy against employees using social media in the workplace, companies cannot afford to ignore the significance that social media has as a marketing tool. In today's world of technology, consumers are strapped to information that is readily available at the swipe of a finger. This study will examine how social media may enhance certain skills relating to productivity and multitasking. Social media provides an avenue for employees of various organizations to connect with a broader audience and reach people who are not able to communicate through traditional means.

Some businesses view social media, *Facebook* in particular, as a detractor for employees for various reasons. Rather than taking away from employees' productiveness, there are a myriad of reasons why social media, like *Facebook*, can benefit an organization rather than harm it. Inc.5000 (2013) conducted an interview with the managing director of Evolv, an analytics firm. In this interview, director Michael Housman said of employees who use social media at work

that employees who belong to multiple social networking applications are more likely to be adept at using technology, which in turn will make them more efficient and productive employees.

Most organizations deploy a team that is dedicated to their social media accounts so that they can influence and compete in the business world. According to Toker-Yildiz, Trivedi, Choi and Young (2017), employees are just as likely to perform well when given the opportunity to network on a social platform as they would be when offered a bonus. The authors then explored social influence theories to understand the reasons why people are so eager to participate on social media and why it has as much of a pull as any other perk being offered to an employee. They found that social media provides a subconscious feeling of being "successful." Success can be defined as a psychological factor that enhances drive, dedication, and determination. Just like Pavlov's theory, it provides engagement triggers that are motivated by responses. Responses to posts supply the user with validation about his or her life decisions that lead to the drive to succeed. Like a monetary bonus, posts on social media have the potential to provide the boost many people need to keep working harder to achieve more.

People check their social media accounts periodically throughout the day; therefore, organizations need to embrace this as a global step towards a generational difference in their consumers because of the integrated technology era that we live in. Allowing employees to utilize their social media while on the clock has the benefit of, not only allowing them to foster relationships with their colleagues, but also those people outside the company as well. This includes both prospective employees, as well as potential clients. When a business can be virtually reached at any time, it propels the organization to have the capability to reach potential clients. This develops an increased level of trust and faith in a company, which enhances loyalty

and brand recognition and company services become less ambiguous. Utilization of social media will build loyalty to build new business and maintain current business (Curin, 2017).

Baym (2013) purports that "Practically everyone uses social media, and most workers use them at work. In fact, as a Microsoft study revealed this week, 84 percent of information workers use non-work social networks, and 60 percent of them use them from work at least once a day" (p. 1). A strategic move for organizations is to enable their employees to have the ability to interact with their consumers via social media when time constraints and schedules present a conflict. This increased ability to maintain communication has the potential to lead to customer retention and brand loyalty. Cao, Vogel and Zhang (2018) claim that, "The integration of media synchronicity and social capital theories offers a new theoretical lens and reasonable explanations for investigating communication performance. This would help in enhancing communicating with employees and sharing their knowledge towards a constructive communication channel of the organization" (p. 1).

A study of the various uses of *Facebook* within marketing will be analyzed, as well as the benefits *Facebook* gives employees within an organization. It is important to understand how people integrate social media, *Facebook* in particular, into their lives to promote, develop, or talk about their profession in general. The willingness to adapt to the usage of social media in any environment, both personal and professional, to promote wellness within an organization can be curtailed by set boundaries. *Facebook* has the potential to have an influence on workplace behavior, such as employee impressions of its benefits, and possibly help a company expand, grow, and be shaped by its employees.

Social media has the ability to play many roles in a business. It can be used to provide information on a variety of topics, from events to current job postings within a company or organization. It helps spread the reputation of the company as they look towards making updates and changes to the company itself. With access to the Internet at the consumers' fingertips, businesses need to capitalize and draw people in to provide them with "instant gratification." In order for businesses to gain exposure, they can advertise on *Facebook*, providing a product or service to the user that might be useful. One can look at it as "dangling a carrot" to entice the consumer. Albeit, the consumer retains the ability to make the ultimate decision as to whether or not they would like to build a relationship with that product without any obligation.

Chapter II

Introduction

What is social media and how has it risen to become the most common way of communicating in society today? Social media is the single greatest tool people have to transmit information quickly and efficiently. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how social media, *Facebook* in particular, can actually be an asset to companies by examining employees' perspectives and impressions of *Facebook* use in the workplace. First, terms such as social media, communication, impressions, and *Facebook* will be defined. Then, the question of why so many workplaces are forbidding their employees from interacting on social media, specifically *Facebook*, during work will be addressed.

Social media is defined as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos; Merriam-Webster, 2018). *Communication* is the imparting or exchanging of information or news, as well as the means of connections between people or places in particular (Merriam-Webster, 2018). An *impression* is an idea, feeling, or opinion about something or someone, especially one formed without conscious thought or on the basis of little evidence. (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Finally, *Facebook* is a means of social media described as an American online social media and social networking service company that enables its users to connect with a variety of people on line through text, photo, and video (Rouse, 2016).

Social media is becoming more prevalent in society with each passing year. Beginning with the launch of *MySpace* in 2003 to *Snapchat* in 2011, ways of communicating with individuals on all platforms all over the world are easily accessible. More than one billion

people worldwide are registered active users on *Facebook*. *Twitter* has an active 232 million users. And, *Instagram* has an estimated 800 million users (Colaiacovo, 2018). With the advent of a variety of social media platforms available to users of any age or location, communication has never been easier. It is an easy way to network, market, and connect with people all over the world.

Why do people join social media?

“While most of us understand that being on social media for our small business is a worthwhile marketing endeavor, we don't always necessarily consider why our audience is on social media in the first place, which is ironic because that may be the most important thing to consider” (Leiter, 2014, p. 1). Knowing why someone has clicked on a video, link, or picture will help guide the poster of information to provide their audience with what they want. According to *Social Media Today*, the motivating factor behind why people join and use *Facebook* is to both be a part of a group, as well as to keep abreast of current happenings.

In today's world, people have developed a sense of belonging where human interaction is defined by social media interaction. It has transpired into how many "friends" or followers one has in a social media platform, like *Facebook*, that leads to a level of status in the social media world. Days of face-to-face interaction and shaking someone's hand, where his/her word holds value are fleeting. Additionally, social media gives people the courage to say what they want and be who they want without the fear of face-to-face ridicule. Consumers may feel a sense of camaraderie by belonging to a social media group of people that supports their cause. Some of these individuals may not ever have the opportunity to meet in person, as they can be spread throughout the world. However, a sense of belonging seems to supersede the need for physical human interaction.

By belonging to social media, people are able to be a part of something larger than, prior to the advent of social media and *Facebook*, they would not have been able to join in. According to the *whypsychologymatters.com* website, by joining these groups, users “hope that [their] social media presence might provide some benefits in the form of money, jobs, advertisements, and recognition” (p. 1). This in turn expands their reach into social media and widens the opportunities available for the user. Consumers nowadays are attached to their social media devices as they desire *instant gratification* on topics whether it is a job search or an opinion on current affairs. Businesses try to reach out to a larger mass of people by having advertisements on social media like *Facebook* to draw their consumers’ interests. Social media has evolved exponentially where it now affects how a business communicates with its consumers and how its products and services are perceived by its consumers.

Gone are the days of instant messaging with *AOL Instant Messenger* or chatting with *ICQ* or *MSN Messenger*. While innovative at the time, these modes of communication had drawbacks. First and foremost, they required people to stay close to home and were not easily accessible outside of one's home. The second issue with these old ways of communicating was how limiting they were. Instant messaging was restricted to sending messages to only those that the user knew and with whom had some kind of relationship like relatives, friends, or co-workers. Current social media allows communication with those across the Internet and is much easier to obtain than messaging. It is unusual in today's day and time to find an organization that does not utilize some form of social media (Adzovie, Nyieku, & Keku, 2017).

Benefits of using *Facebook* – Why do companies use it?

The use of social media, in particular *Facebook*, is a global trend. When companies use their social media platforms to inform the public about their successes, products, job openings,

growth and reviews, they are opening themselves to the benefits of social media marketing. In this day and age of technology and instant gratification, it is vital for consumers to have the capability to get the information they desire with the swipe of a finger or the click of a mouse.

Social media has emerged as the front runner in providing the public with information.

Facebook provides a broad appeal to its users with the ability to access information from various sources, as well as regularly making updates and improvements. Social media is considered reliable when providing its users with information, whether it is in the case of an emergency or for personal use.

If we look at one of the recent natural disasters to hit the United States in the form of Hurricane Irma, government officials relied on social media to talk about their relief effort in getting help for the residents of Florida. Macmillian (2017) reported that "Florida's tourism office, a public-private partnership that is partly funded by the state, sent targeted messages to 281,000 people on *Facebook* believed to be visiting the state, advising them to take precautions" (p. 1). In addition, Mendoza (2017) stated that "*Facebook* activated its Safety Check feature for people to let friends and family know they're safe. *Facebook* spokesman Eric Porterfield said that by Monday morning, there were already more than 600 posts asking for help, mostly fuel, shelter or a ride, although one woman with broken ribs sought medical advice. (p. 1). During a disaster like a hurricane, people leave their houses, belongings and memories behind in search of higher ground. With information and alerts provided by *Facebook*, which are accessible to people all over the country, the "word of mouth" travels faster than people having access to a television report that might be viewed or updated infrequently when compared to how *Facebook* posts are updated. This enables people in those disaster areas to receive warnings immediately and are better able to prepare for emergencies.

In today's world, most people virtually live on smart phones, which gives access to the current news. Some of that information is presented live (*Facebook Live Stream*) to give the consumer unedited content. According to Shearer and Gottfried (2017) at the Pew Research Center, "Looking at the population as a whole, *Facebook* by far still leads every other social media site as a source of news. This is largely due to *Facebook's* large user base, compared with other platforms, and the fact that most of its users get news on the site. Specifically, about two-thirds of Americans (66%) use *Facebook*, and a majority of those users get news on the site, similar to 2016. Looked at as a portion of all U.S. adults, this translates into just under half (45%) of Americans getting news on *Facebook*" (p. 1). However, the level of accuracy still needs to be kept in mind. Some of the information that we receive through *Facebook* could be termed as "*Fake News*" and the live streaming is raw and uncut.

Not only does *Facebook* have a presence in the news, but it is also useful when building and maintaining business relationships. Companies are looking to cultivate and maintain good relationships with the general public. They are providing information that they deem beneficial to the end consumer. According to Wheatman (2016), there are things that can be done to "manage, maintain, and grow a positive online presence" (p. 107). Posting to *Facebook* and becoming an authority in a chosen field can be time consuming. One way to lessen the burden, but still reap the benefits of *Facebook*, is to have a dedicated team to run social media and reach out to various masses to gain desired business results. Having employees who are already familiar with features and functions of *Facebook* acts as a boon to employers, as these employees are experts in transmitting information. On the other hand, these employees are also able to get immediate feedback from the end consumer. While it has been acknowledged that this has a potential downside, the benefits of user comments cannot be ignored. By getting feedback,

companies gain the knowledge they need to improve the contents or the nature of its products and services to suit the customers' needs. This helps in engaging the consumer, building a relationship and letting the consumer know that their voices are being heard. At the end, it is about showing passion for the human ego, as we all would like for our voices to be heard and our actions acknowledged. *Facebook's* interactions help to build these business acumen and relationship with the end consumer.

Facebook is unique in its abilities to act as a hub. Wheatman (2016) states that all other social media websites can connect to a single *Facebook* account. This, in essence, is "one *network*" linked to you. The ability to create so much content on *Facebook* and share the dynamics of your personality, life, and interests makes it an awesome branding tool" (p. 108). As the world turns into a global village, businesses and organizations become intertwined with social media. The various social media platforms working together gives consumers immediate information, anywhere and anytime. Most organizations and companies have a *Facebook* page that informs readers about the company and becomes a part of its communication strategy.

Word-of-mouth is considered one of the oldest forms of advertising, but with *Facebook*, the personal one-on-one is even easier to maintain and creates an avenue to spread "information" regarding products. According to the state of Queensland in Australia (2016), there are multiple benefits that go along with using *Facebook* in a company. There is a large populace of people that connect with *Facebook* and this number grows exponentially when the "friends" of users are factored in. If one user is attracted to a post or an advertisement, clicks on it, and then talks to his/her "friends" about the experience regarding that product, the *trickledown effect* occurred. If one user talks to his/her "friends" about a product and then those friends mention the product to their own network of contacts, an increase in brand recognition occurs. This potential increase in

site traffic has the ability to increase sales for a company through indirect advertising or "word of mouth." *Facebook* effectively helps a company to push its presence out to the global community where it is able to entice consumers to buy products. A "like" posted on *Facebook* converts into a positive consumer review for the company. It promotes the brand and reputation of the company as changes occur quickly. *Facebook* potentially drives traffic toward the company's website where consumer needs can be met. For example, social media marketing entices consumers to get in touch with businesses via popups or "cookies" that appear on a *Facebook* page. It is a way for businesses to gain exposure and to entice consumers to purchase a product or service. The enticement is not a hard sell, but rather a way for consumers to have the ability to make decisions on whether or not they want products, without being obligated to buy. In a time when people enjoy the convenience of sitting at home, but having the world at their fingertips, businesses can capitalize on this promotion method and draw consumers in to give them what they need.

Companies often use *Facebook* to post career opportunities. These postings include links to websites to access job descriptions, salary levels, and human resources contact information. In turn, employees may choose to post career information on their own personal *Facebook* profile, which has the potential to reach a large populous of interested candidates. Prior to this availability, those same people would not have been as aware of the multitude of opportunities that are available at the click of a button. Cho, Park, and Ordonez (2013) agree, "Another common use of social media is for recruitment, where job openings are advertised, employment brand is managed, and even background information of job candidates is obtained. For example, information on job applicants' social media pages is often considered as crucial information for

evaluating their personalities and making hiring decisions" (p. 794). This helps employers find the best candidate fit for their organization.

With everything transitioning to the online medium, people have a plethora of choices and avenues to connect with businesses. *Facebook* provides news updates, creates relationships with business, promotes products and services, and informs the public of career opportunities. One caution is that companies now must be more open about products and services being offered to build relationships with consumers. Social media provides the outlet for both consumers and companies to express themselves.

Drawbacks to using *Facebook* – Why are companies resisting it?

With social media, in particular *Facebook*, being so ubiquitous, it plays a vital role in businesses. The presence of social media will continue to grow so businesses must be prepared to invest time, money, and resources to make it worthwhile. If commitment is not there to fulfill these obligations, the potential for negatives to occur increases. There must be a clear strategy for businesses' social media plans in order to maximize benefits.

According to the Department of Industry of Australian government (2015), one disadvantage for companies to operate social media accounts is that, unless the account is closely monitored by trusted employees, the company runs the risk of unwanted behaviors by its users. *Facebook* is a medium that may reveal the "health" of the organization by posting of consumer reviews. For example, posted testimonials may be either positive or negative, but could be considered misleading or deceptive to potential clients. In addition, everything that is posted on social media is immediately available to other users, adding to the need for constant monitoring.

Another drawback is advertising overload. While *Facebook* provides an advertising platform that is geared toward consumers' specific needs, it also has the ability to reduce users' interest in products. "Noise" is created on social media when a feed is overpopulated with advertisements and becomes overwhelming. Businesses attempt to rise above the "noise" by looking for new ways of drawing customers in and create ads that stand out above everyone else's. However, when companies go over the top with ads, they run the risk of losing a customer's interest (Ferreira, Michaelidou, Moraes, & McGrath, 2017).

Benefits of Employees using *Facebook*

As businesses grow, they are faced with a multitude of challenges every day, be it financial crisis or increasing competition. Organizations must provide their employees the tools to market their products and services and one effective tool is *Facebook*. However, set policies and procedures for companies' use of social media by its employees is crucial for productivity. Organizations that have dedicated teams to run their social media accounts can effectively market products and engage in consumer outreach. Clearly defined guidelines for the use of social media will help garner positive employee participation and relationships with the company. When looking at *Facebook* in particular, Munen and Nyaribo (2013) claim that there is more time spent by employees on average on *Facebook* when compared to some of the other social media websites like *Tumblr*, *Pinterest*, *Twitter*, *LinkedIn*, *MySpace*, and *Google+* combined. In addition, these authors propose that involvement of a team that is trained to monitor social media posts is valuable, as well as employee posts that affects the integrity and validity of company feedback. Companies should provide the flexibility to their employees to post information regarding the organization but, it should retain limits according to company

policy. The Human Resource department of the company should outline those directives in a policy and procedure manual.

Beyond a company's social media team, one way to increase morale and community among employees is to allow them to interact on their company's *Facebook* page by sharing posts. The page can provide links for employees to share videos, events, and photos as well as provide the organization's history and mission statement. The company's social media dedicated team needs to monitor the *Facebook* page to eliminate unsavory posts or profanity. Another approach that encourages the value of employee interactions is to create a *Facebook intranet* account. Limited to use by only company employees, this type of *Facebook* account is beneficial because employees can use it for collaboration and participation among their ranks. Employees appreciate having their voices heard. The idea behind encouraging employees to participate in an open forum of dialogue and soliciting feedback from them is to boost employee morale. Expressing their ideas gives them a sense of control and validation in their job. This, in turn, leads to employee retention. Listening to employees' ideas and understanding what is both good and what is lacking in a company is valuable to the company and will allow employees to feel appreciated and cause them to have a greater investment in their own work. To be most effective, a visible member of leadership needs to monitor the *Facebook* site and give sincere feedback that is perceived as authentic and constructive.

Allowing employees to participate on social media during work hours has advantages for a company, but there are precautions that need to be taken to protect all users. Maintaining confidentiality is crucial so that there are no concerns about identity theft, harassment, or cyberbullying. If these things happen, there may be legal repercussions, which have the potential to tarnish the image of a company. While providing employees the flexibility to use social media

at work, there should be guidelines including a zero-tolerance clause that are set forth by the company's administrators and acknowledged by all employees.

Employees having access to *Facebook* during work hours could potentially help productivity for several reasons. One is that employees can get a "break" from the routine of work to have an opportunity to interact with their consumers. *Facebook* can provide access to potential clients and consumers who may not be able to be reached via standard methods of communication due to differences in schedules or time zones. *Facebook* can also be used as a hub for useful information communicated by employees for consumers.

Not only can the social media be used to interact with its consumers, but can also be used for internal communication and rapport building with fellow employees. As employees are transparent and supportive in this social media environment, positive growth and encouragement may be established. In turn, social support and positive working relationships are developed and cultivate a drive toward the common goal of the organization. Sharing job-related skills and expertise provides a sense of accomplishment while creating mutual friendships amongst workers (Murphy, 2013). These relationships could be nurtured through blogging sites as well. Treem, Dailey, Pierce, and Leonardi (2015) wrote that "A class of communication technologies commonly including blogs, microblogging, and social network sites—which has proliferated outside of organizations and is increasingly being adopted by companies for internal communication among workers" (as quoted in Chui et al., 2012, p. 397).

A company-only *Facebook* account can help employees get quick answers to work related questions. It also provides a table for discussions about ongoing issues, concerns, and company development and growth as others reply to discussions to understand the mindset and the health of the organization. This helps employees network internally, effectively use each

other as resources, and collaborate between departments to increase understanding of expectations and work flow of the others in the company.

Conclusion

While the reasons for using social media may vary from platform to platform, the one need is consistent - easily accessible communication. Employers should capitalize on those employees who cannot help but flick through their Twitter feed or scroll through their *Facebook* postings. These are the employees who are most likely to put out information about something happening at their place of employment. They are the ones who will advertise and network for their employers with a simple touch of the screen. Unfortunately, many employers do not see it this way. Companies should embrace the evolving ways of communication that provide the ability to impart knowledge to other people within an organization. Use of *Facebook*, in particular, has unlimited possibilities that will enable businesses to sustain productivity and ultimately grow.

Chapter III

Method

The purpose of this study was to acquire information about how users of *Facebook* are receiving both work and non-work-related support through the *Facebook* platform. Following approval from Clarion's Institutional Review Board, this researcher located participants through his place of employment, as well as through his acquaintances, by sending an email or text message requesting participation in this study. In addition, using the snowball method, the researcher requested that participants forward the survey to their friends to complete. All survey submissions were anonymous and no reward was issued for completion.

One hundred and eleven adult individuals (77% female; 23% male) responded to the online *Google Docs* survey. The participants were from various areas around the United States with about 85% gainfully employed in various jobs and 15% were retired. Additionally, the participants' ages ranged from 24 to 54 years and their education level ranged from high school to doctoral degrees. The distribution by ethnic group for this study included Caucasians, African Americans, Asians, Latinos, and Pacific Islanders.

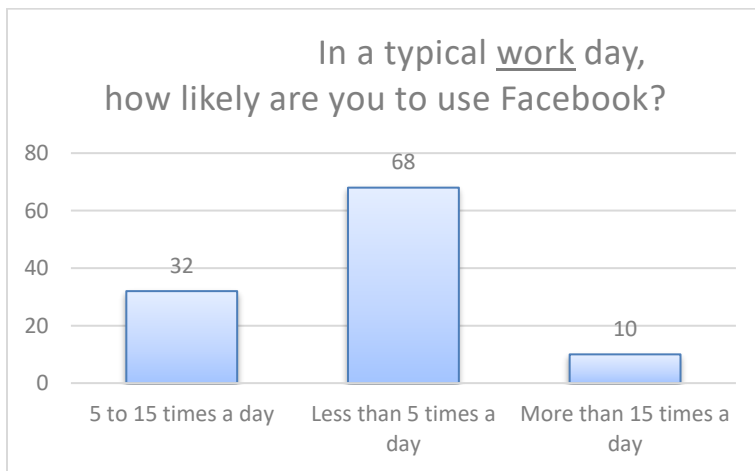
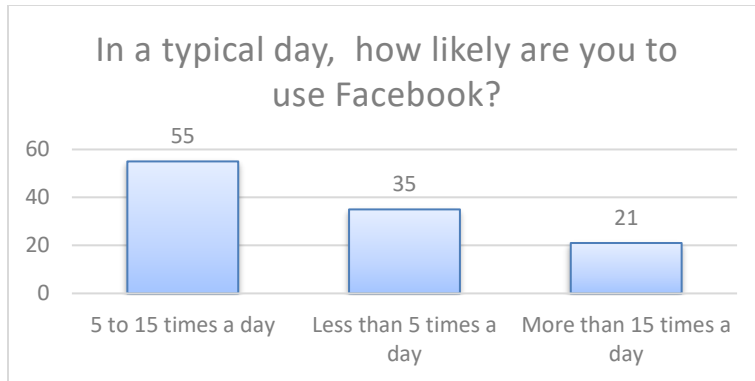
Survey takers answered a series of 25 multiple-choice or Likert-scaled questions about their *Facebook* usage. These questions included asking participants' frequency of *Facebook* usage, reasons they use *Facebook*, who they interact with on *Facebook*, and both how and when they access *Facebook* during a typical day. In order to answer these questions effectively, the participants were asked to reflect on their daily need for *Facebook* and their purposes behind maintaining and using their page. See Appendix A to view full survey.

Results

An aggregation of each survey question responses can be found in Appendix B.

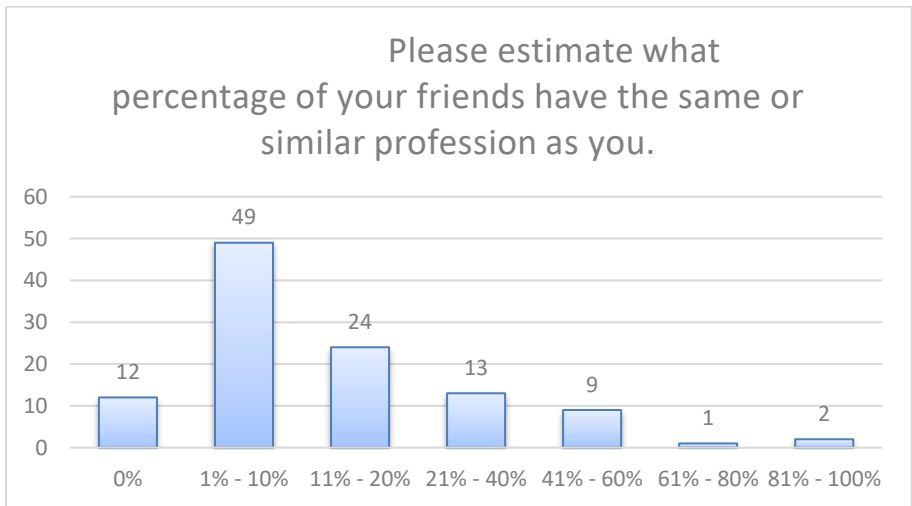
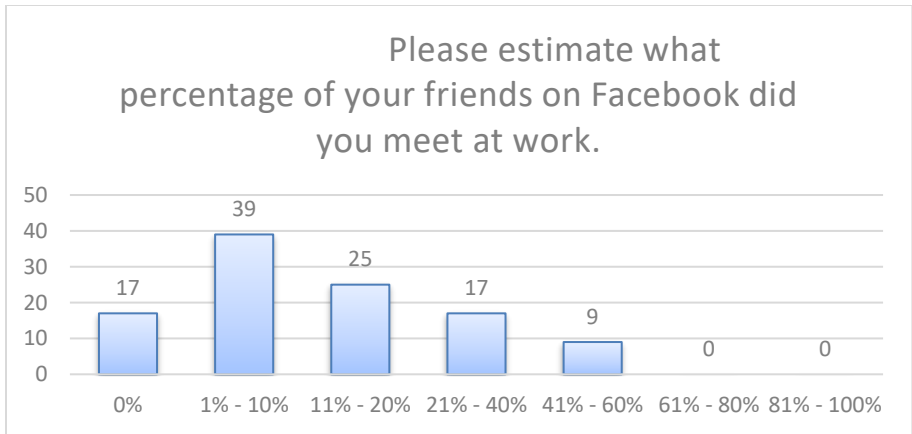
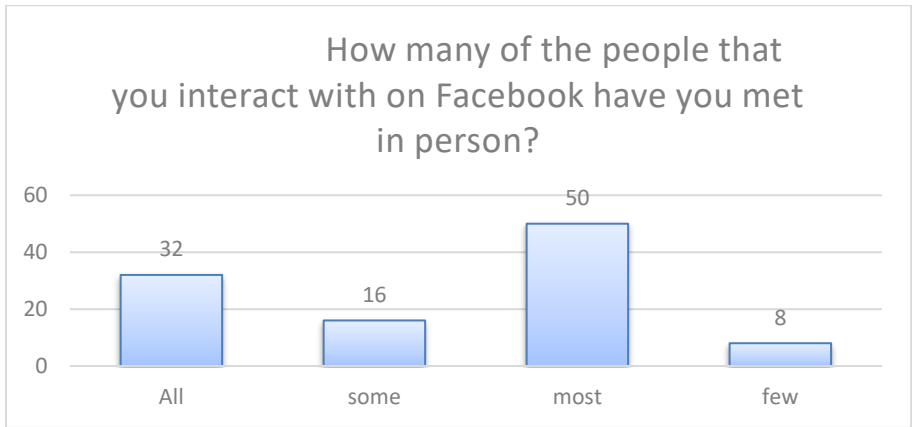
The first two questions addressed in the survey were regarding *Facebook* usage.

Participants were asked *in a typical day, how likely are you to use Facebook?* and *in a typical work day, how likely are you to use Facebook?* Out of the 111 people surveyed, 55 people (approx. 49.5%) reported that they are likely to use *Facebook* 5 to 15 times a day, while 69 people (approx. 62.2%) said they use it less than 5 times a day at work.



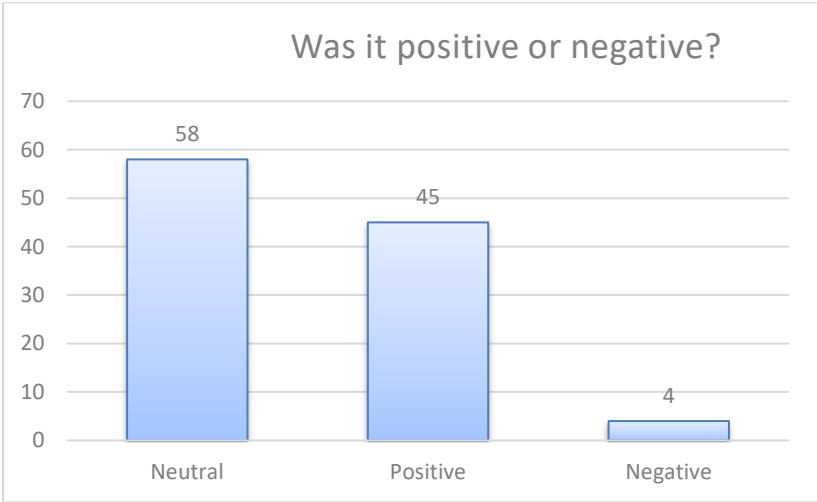
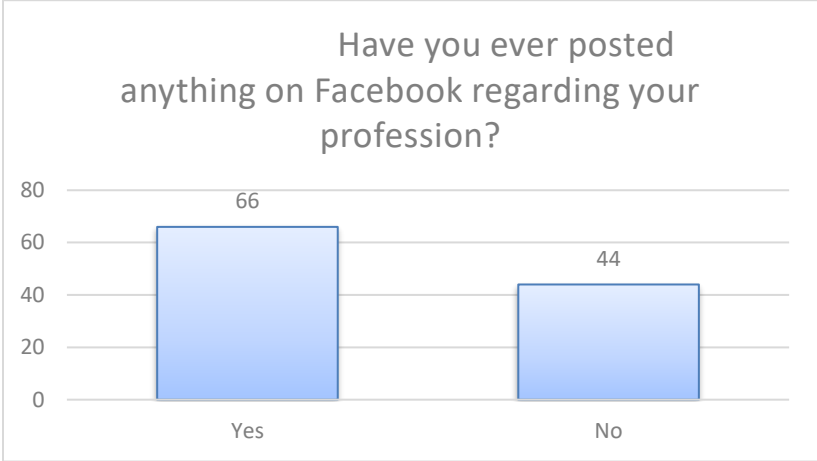
Participants were questioned about their friends on *Facebook*. They were asked to identify how many of them they knew from work, how many had the same profession as they did, and how many of those people they had befriended on *Facebook* had they had actual real-life interaction. Out of the 111 people surveyed, 39 people or 35.1% of participants said, of all their friends on *Facebook*, they had only met 1 - 10% of those people at work. The majority of participants (50 people or 45%) said they only share a profession with 1 - 10% of their *Facebook*

friends. Finally, of all the people they were friends with on *Facebook*, 50 people or 45% said they had met most of the people they followed on *Facebook*.

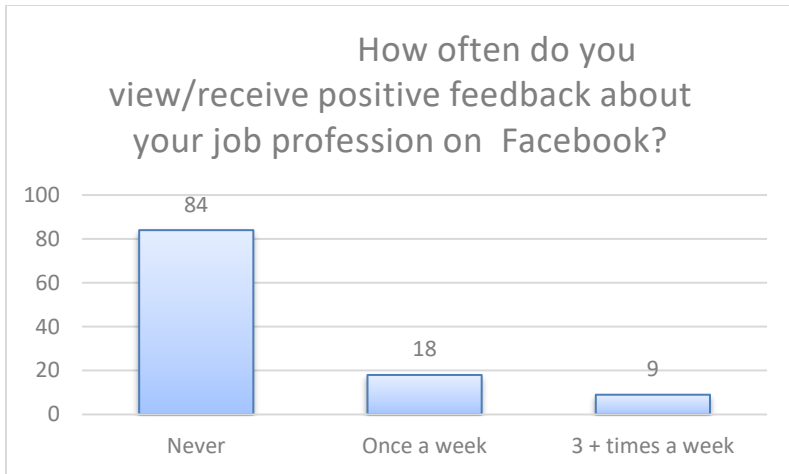


Next, the survey asked if participants had ever posted anything on *Facebook* regarding their workplace and if they had, was the posting positive, negative, or neutral? The majority of

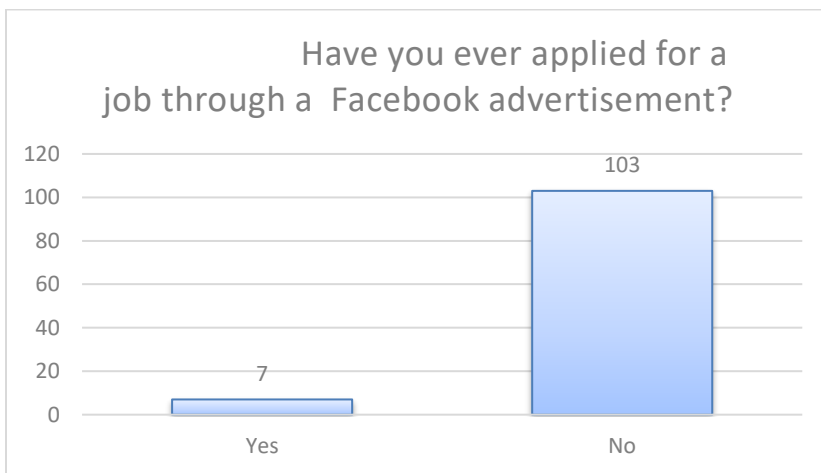
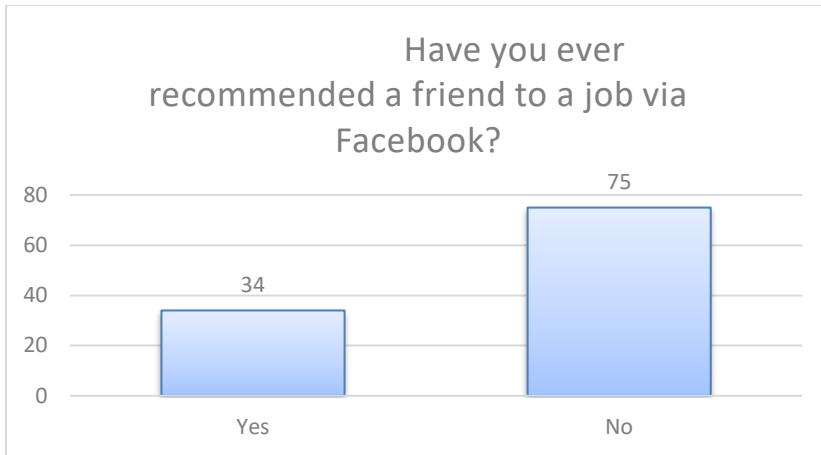
people who said that they had posted on *Facebook* regarding their profession (59.5% or 66 people) said that their posts were neutral (54.2%).



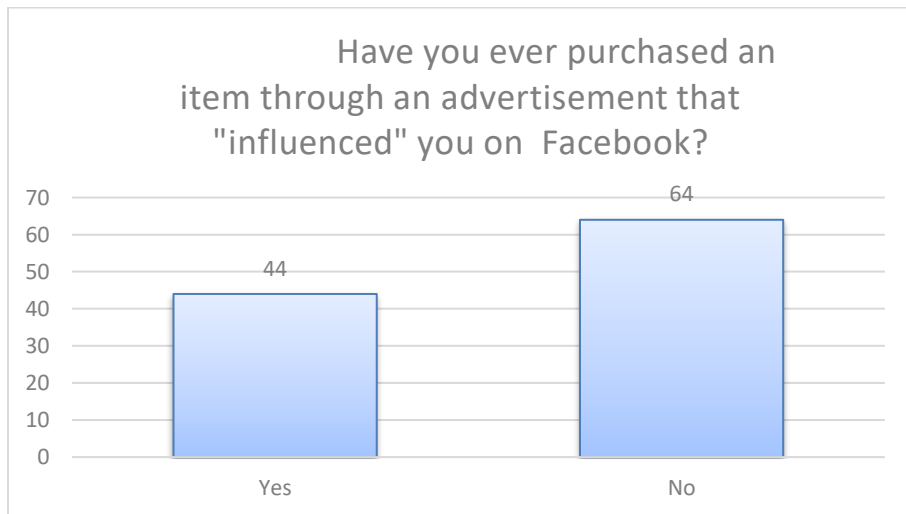
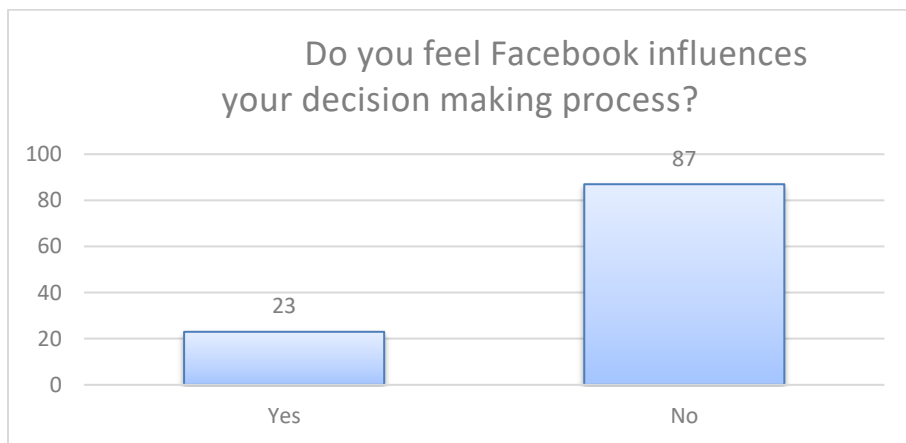
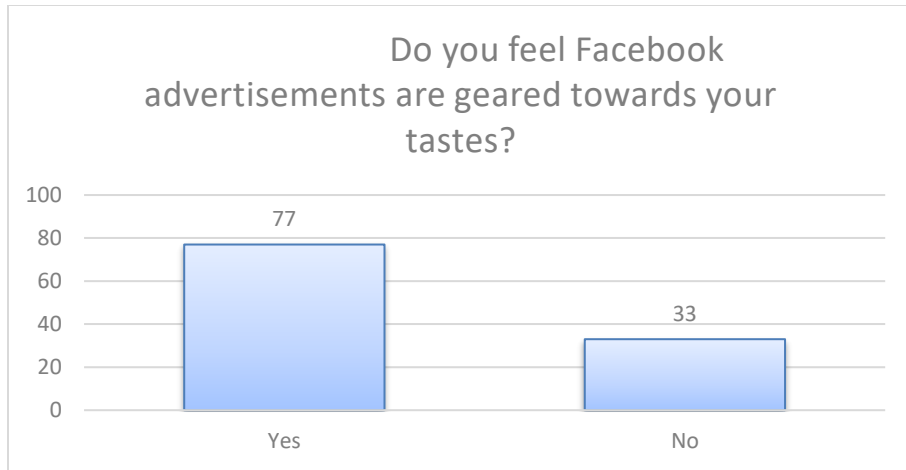
Additionally, survey takers were asked how frequently they received or viewed feedback on their profession, both positive and negative. In an overwhelming response, the majority of people have never received any feedback, neither positive (75.7% or 84 people) or negative (87.4% or 97 people).



The next set of questions dealt with the participants' view of *Facebook*. These questions included asking if they had ever recommended a friend to a job on *Facebook* or if they, themselves, had ever applied for a job through *Facebook*. An overwhelming number of the 111 survey participants said that not only had they never applied for a job posted on *Facebook* (93.7% or 104 people), but also that they had never recommended a job to a friend (68.8% or 76 people).

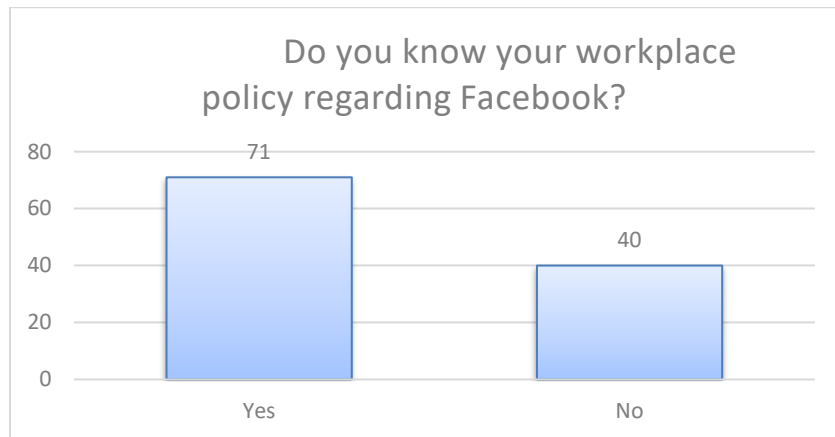


The survey also asked about *Facebook* advertising, in particular, whether advertisements were geared toward the users' tastes, if they had ever purchased anything based on a *Facebook* advertisement, or if *Facebook* impacts their decision-making processes. While 69.4% of participants (77 people) said that *Facebook* was able to focus on their wants and interests, only 20.7% or 23 out of 111 people said that they were actually influenced by what they were seeing and 59.5% or 65 out of 111 participants have *never* made a purchase from something they saw advertised on *Facebook*.



The final question of interest from the survey questioned whether those who use *Facebook*, whether it was at work or not, were aware of their company's *Facebook* or social

media policies. Of the 111 people surveyed, 71 people (64%) said that, yes, they knew the policy of their workplace.



Discussion

Based on the responses of the individuals participating in the survey, the majority do not use *Facebook* for work-related thought and conversation. The majority of the job-related questions were regarded with a neutral answer, rather than a definitive positive or negative. In fact, it seems that most do not even use *Facebook* during the work day. The *Facebook* usage definition included checking, posting and commenting. More than half of the participants said that *Facebook* is geared toward their tastes and interests; however, less than that have purchased items through *Facebook* based on suggestions. This may be a result of the large number of people who no longer have faith in *Facebook* to maintain privacy. So even though the participants admit that *Facebook* is an outlet they use to conduct other activities, like shopping and communicating with others; they prefer to keep their work life separate.

Social media is such a prevalent source of communication, but many people still fear using these venues when it comes to their jobs. In fact, most respondents admit that they met a very small percentage of their *Facebook friends* at work. This may indicate that they are worried about potential consequences that may arise from using such a platform that they cannot trust to

keep their privacy and, as such, refrain from utilizing it as a means to get acquainted with others at work. In addition to concerns people have about *Facebook* privacy settings, unintended meanings could be construed from social media posts, so it can be inferred that people are protecting themselves when avoiding a topic such as work on *Facebook*. The finding that a small fraction of respondents correspond with other employees or others in a similar profession may reveal that people may use *Facebook* as an outlet to escape the confines of their workplace. They do not view it as an extension of their work, but rather as a way to meet or interact with other people when so much of life is taken up by a career. As a result, they may not be willing to air grievances about their professions because users are not viewing it as the appropriate platform to do so.

Further Research

Further research could be done to explore the specific advantages of *Facebook* in the workplace. The concept of a *Facebook* hub should be an appealing one to many organizations. This single social media platform has the capability to connect 1.35 billion people around the world with family, friends, and businesses (Aguilar, 2016). It has the capability to increase productivity, not just economically from a business aspect, but also employees' psychological approach to work. Having a social media account would be beneficial, not just for a business, but also for the employees.

To expand this research, psychological effects on people should be examined such as how employees feel valued and understood in the workplace and how these feelings affect their work habits. Employees need to feel confident in their jobs and to be reassured that they are doing what is necessary to do their jobs the best they can. In the same vein, they need a way to ask questions and voice concerns, while being assured they will get prompt feedback from those

in upper management who can actually answer those questions or provide support. In turn, this has the potential to act as an incentive for employees, which can then lead to increased employee productivity (*10 Tips to Increase Productivity for Employees*, 2016).

How *Facebook* is a useful tool in creating a positive work environment should be examined. A key to getting a more productive workplace atmosphere is to look at the employees' surroundings and give them the authority to make choices. Further inquiry could research how allowing employees to make their own choices in how they interact with each other, with customers, and with upper management could ultimately lead to them working harder and more efficiently. Rather than referring to employees as one faceless group of people, *Facebook* provides each employee an individual identity. When people are trusted to independently make decisions, they tend to be more effective and will stay in positions longer (Hoskins, 2017). A gratified employee has the potential for longevity, over someone who is unhappy and looking for something better.

Social media is not the harmful addiction that it was originally thought to be. In fact, Meister (2013) found that using social media platforms, in moderation, is a benefit rather than a detriment in the workplace. People who participate on one or more social media platforms tend to have better interaction with other people because they tend to be more socially adept, both with colleagues and clients. They are also more likely to be creative and to think outside the box when providing solutions. While the majority of companies are using social technology, most are still not using them to the fullest benefit possible (Meister, 2013).

References

- Aguilar, A., & Deloitte's Economic Consulting Team. (2016, June 10). The global economic impact of *Facebook* | Deloitte UK. Retrieved from <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/technology-media-and-telecommunications/articles/the-global-economic-impact-of-Facebook.html>
- Baym, M. (2013, June 01). Get over IT! Social @Work is smart (and inevitable). Retrieved January 28, 2018, from <https://socialmediacollective.org/2013/06/03/get-over-it/>
- Benefits of *Facebook* for business. (2018, February 01). Retrieved March 18, 2018, from <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing/Facebook/benefits>
- Cao X, Guo X, Vogel D, & Zhang X. (2016). Exploring the influence of social media on employee work performance. *Internet Research* [serial online]. 26(2):529-545. Accessed January 23, 2018.
- Cho, J., Park, D. J., & Ordonez, Z. (2013). Communication-oriented person-organization fit as a key factor of job-seeking behaviors: Millennials' social media use and attitudes toward organizational social media policies. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior & Social Networking*, 16(11), 794-799. doi:10.1089/cyber.2012.0528
- Colaiacovo, K. (2018, January 17). An interesting timeline of the evolution of social media. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://www.pepperitmarketing.com/Facebook/evolution-social-media>

- Communication. (n.d.). Retrieved March 12, 2018, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/communication>
- Curin, B. (2017, September 13). The impact of social media on work productivity. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <https://www.currentconsulting.co.za/impact-social-media-work-productivity/>
- Daniel, E. A., Isaac, E. N., & Janet, A. K. (2017). Influence of *Facebook* usage on employee productivity: A case of university of cape coast staff. *African Journal of Business Management, 11(6)*, 110-116. doi:10.5897/ajbm2017.8265
- Department of Industry. (2015, October 27). Pros and cons of using social media for business. Retrieved March 18, 2018, from <https://www.business.gov.au/info/run/advertising-and-online/pros-and-cons-of-social-media>
- Fenzi, F. (2013, April). Social media: Not the productivity killer you thought? Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <https://www.inc.com/francesca-fenzi/social-media-not-the-productivity-killer-you-thought.html>
- Ferreira, C., Michaelidou, N., Moraes, C., & McGrath, M. (2017). Social media advertising: Factors influencing consumer ad avoidance. *Journal of Customer Behaviour, 16(2)*, 183-201. DOI: 10.1362/147539217X14909733609398
- Hoskins, D. (2017, September 07). Employees perform better when they can control their space. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2014/01/employees-perform-better-when-they-can-control-their-space?utm_source=Socialflow

- Impression. (n.d.). Retrieved November 8, 2018, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/impression>
- Leiter, M. (2014, June 23). Why do people use social media? Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/content/why-do-people-use-social-media>
- MacMillan, D. (2017, September 11). In Irma, emergency responders' new tools: *Twitter* and *Facebook*. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/for-hurricane-irma-information-officials-post-on-social-media-1505149661>
- Meister, J. (2013, April 19). Want to be a more productive employee? Get on social networks. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeannemeister/2013/04/18/want-to-be-a-more-productive-employee-get-on-social-networks/#4b246597753d>
- Mendoza, M. (2017, September 12). Social media gets the word out during Irma emergency. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <https://apnews.com/3e853b5317f744b4a0c8a107b7f76396>
- Munene, A. G., & Nyaribo, Y. M. (2013). Effect of social media predication in the workplace on employee productivity. *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics*, 2(2), 141-150.
- Murphy, H. J. (2013). *Social media use among employees: Influences of organizational climate, job involvement, and organizational commitment* (Master's thesis, Clemson University, 2013). Clemson: Tiger Prints.
- Social media. (2018, March 11). Retrieved March 12, 2018, from [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social media](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/social%20media)

- Rouse, M. (2016, September). What is social media? Retrieved February 20, 2018, from whatis.techtarget.com/definition/social-media.
- Shearer, E., & Gottfried, J. (2017, September 07). News use across social media platforms 2017. Retrieved February 22, 2018, from <http://www.journalism.org/2017/09/07/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2017/>
- Social media, fame, and the need to belong. (2015, September 1). Retrieved from whypsychologymatters.wordpress.com/2015/09/01/social-media-fame-and-the-need-to-belong/
- 10 Tips to Increase Productivity for Employees. (2016, May 12). Retrieved from <https://redbooth.com/hub/productivity-for-employees/>
- Toker-Yildiz, K., Trivedi, M., Choi J., & Ryung Chang S. (2017, June). Social interactions and monetary incentives in driving consumer repeat behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research (JMR)* [serial online]. 54(3):364-380.
- Treem, J. W., Dailey, S. L., Pierce, C. S., & Leonardi, P. M. (2015). Bringing technological frames to work: How previous experience with social media shapes the technology's meaning in an organization. *Journal of Communication*, 65(2), 396-422.
doi:10.1111/jcom.12149
- Wheatman, D. D. (2016). Use social media to manage your online reputation and support your brand. *Career Planning & Adult Development Journal*, 32(2), 107-113.

Appendix A

Facebook Usage Survey

Participation in completing this survey is voluntary. This is a random survey to be submitted via Google Forms. All the information from this survey is confidential and will be used for research purposes. No identifying information will be requested and your submission to Google Forms is anonymous. Please DO NOT include your name on the survey. Your voluntary completion of this survey is the indication of your permission to use your responses for research purposes. You may stop taking the survey at any point if you decide to not participate.

Indicate your best response:

1. In a typical day, how likely are you to use *Facebook*?
 - Less than 5 times a day
 - 5 to 15 times a day
 - More than 15 times a day

2. In a typical work day, how likely are you to use *Facebook*?
 - Less than 5 times a day
 - 5 to 15 times a day
 - More than 15 times a day

3. How many of the people that you interact with on *Facebook* have you met in person?
 - Some
 - Most
 - All
 - Few
 - None

4. How many times do you post on *Facebook* during the work day?
 - Less than 5 times a day
 - 5 to 15 times a day
 - More than 15 times a day

5. Have you ever posted anything on *Facebook* regarding your profession?
 - Yes
 - No

6. Was it positive or negative?
 - Positive
 - Neutral

- Negative
7. Have you ever recommended a friend to a job via *Facebook*?
- Yes
 - No
8. Have you ever applied for a job through a *Facebook* advertisement?
- Yes
 - No
9. Have you ever posted about your job/company on *Facebook*?
- Yes
 - No
10. How often do you receive positive feedback about your job profession on *Facebook*?
- 3 + times a week
 - Once a week
 - Never
11. How often do you receive negative feedback about your job profession on *Facebook*?
- 3 + times a week
 - Once a week
 - Never
12. Please estimate the percentage of your friends on *Facebook* that you met at work.
- 0%
 - 1% - 10%
 - 11% - 20%
 - 21% - 40%
 - 41% - 60%
 - 61% - 80%
 - 81% - 100%
13. Please estimate what percentage of your friends that have the same or similar profession as you.
- 0%
 - 1% - 10%
 - 11% - 20%
 - 21% - 40%
 - 41% - 60%

- 61% - 80%
- 81% - 100%

14. Do you know your workplace policy regarding *Facebook*?

- Yes
- No

15. Do you have the *Facebook* application on your smart phone at work?

- Yes
- No

16. How do you access your *Facebook* account? (check all that apply)

- Smartphone (Android/iPhone)
- Tablets
- iPads
- Laptop/Desktop
- All of the above

17. Do you use the *Facebook* application on your smart phone *after* work hours?

- Yes
- No

18. Do you feel *Facebook* advertisements are geared towards your tastes?

- Yes
- No

19. Have you ever purchased an item through an advertisement that "influenced" you on *Facebook*?

- Yes
- No

20. In light of current events, do you trust *Facebook* to protect your privacy?

- Yes
- No

21. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- No education completed
- High School Diploma / GED
- Some College
- College Degree
- Master's Degree

- Doctoral Degree
- Trade / Certifications

22. What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

23. Are you employed?

- Yes
- No

24. Do you feel *Facebook* influences your decision-making process?

- Yes
- No

25. What is your age?

- 18 – 25 years
- 26 – 40 years
- 41 – 55 years
- 55+ years

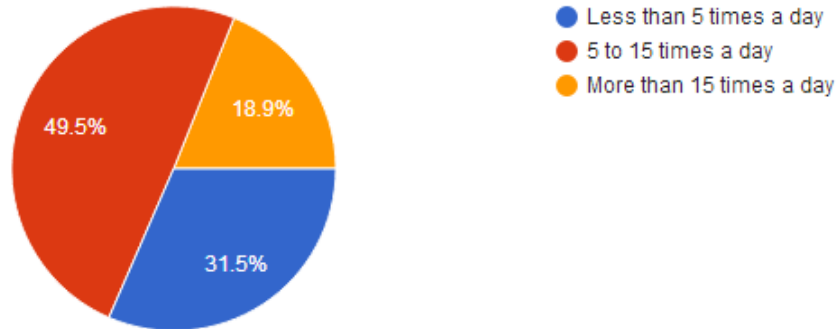
Thank you for your participation.

Appendix B

Survey Results

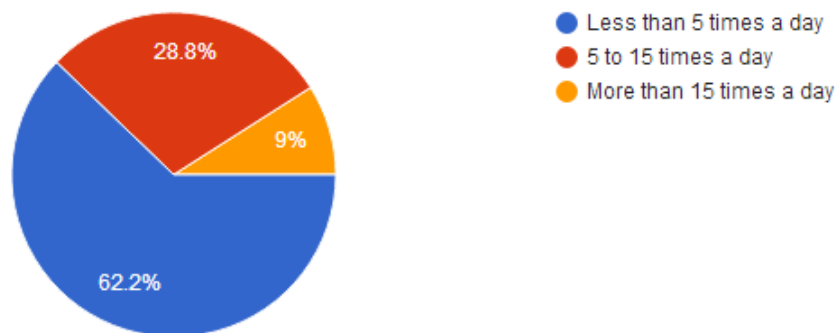
1. In a typical day, how likely are you to use Facebook?

111 responses



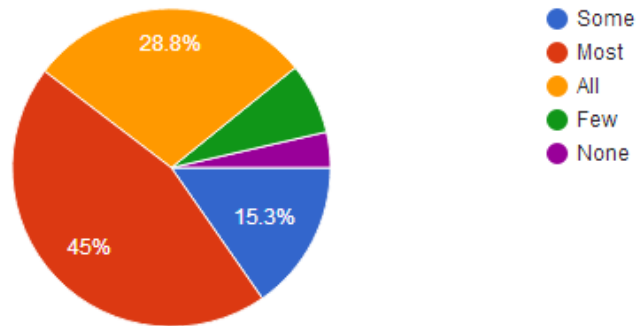
2. In a typical work day, how likely are you to use Facebook?

111 responses



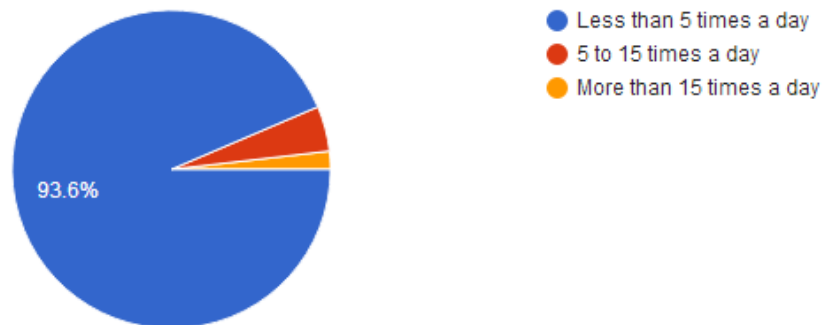
3. How many of the people that you interact with on Facebook have you met in person?

111 responses



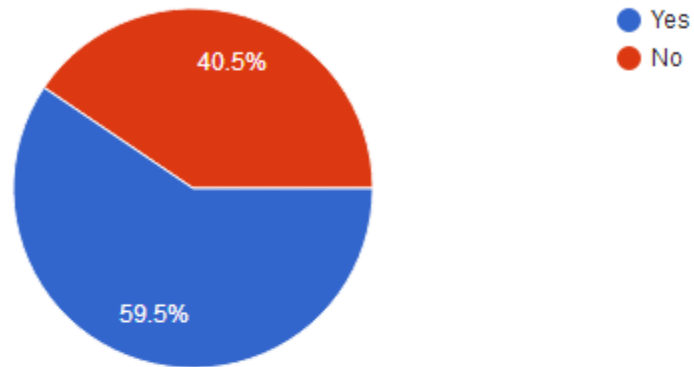
4. How many times do you post on Facebook during the work day?

109 responses



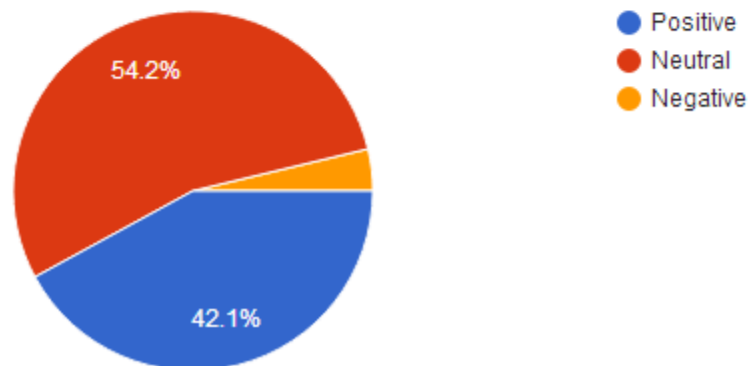
5. Have you ever posted anything on Facebook regarding your profession?

111 responses



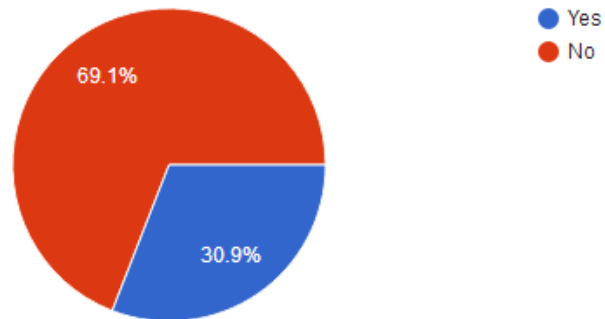
6. Was it positive or negative?

107 responses



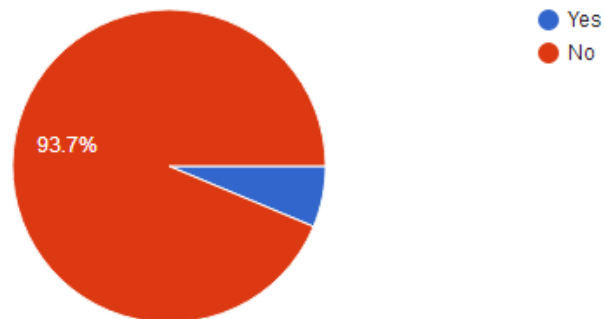
7. Have you ever recommended a friend to a job via Facebook?

110 responses



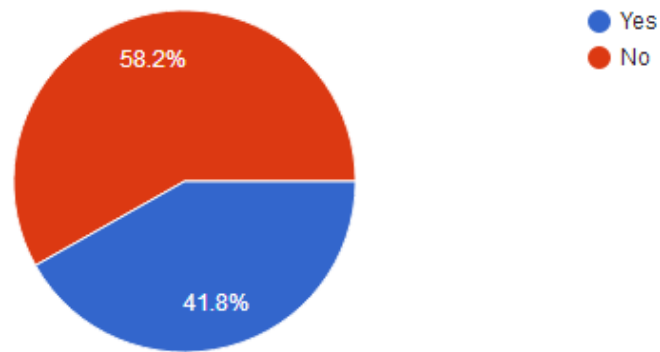
8. Have you ever applied for a job through a Facebook advertisement?

111 responses



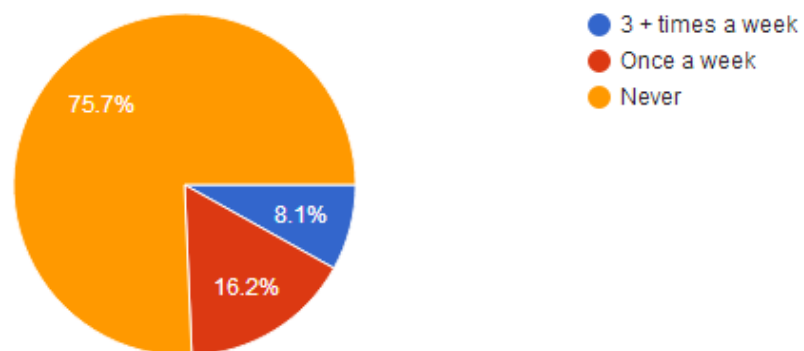
9. Have you ever posted about your job/company on Facebook?

110 responses



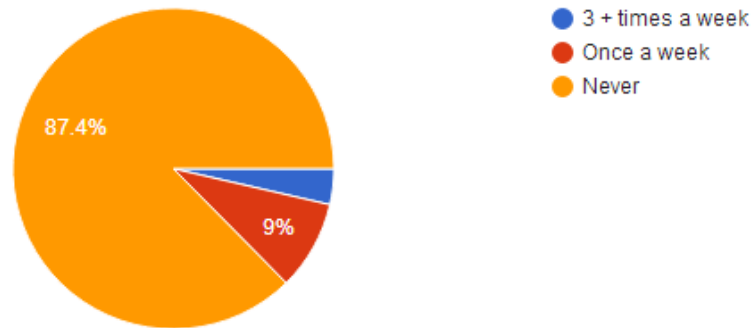
10. How often do you view/receive positive feedback about your job profession on Facebook?

111 responses



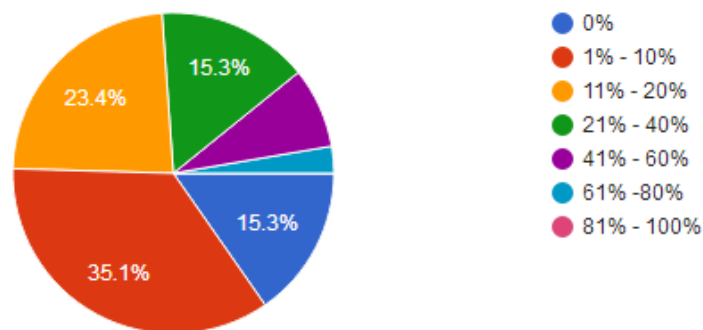
11. How often do you view/receive negative feedback about your job profession on Facebook?

111 responses



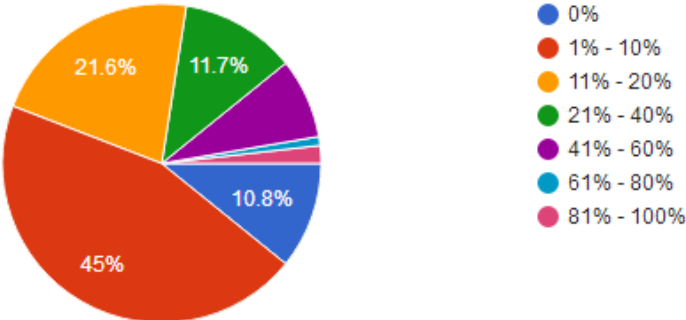
12. Please estimate what percentage of your friends on Facebook did you meet at work.

111 responses



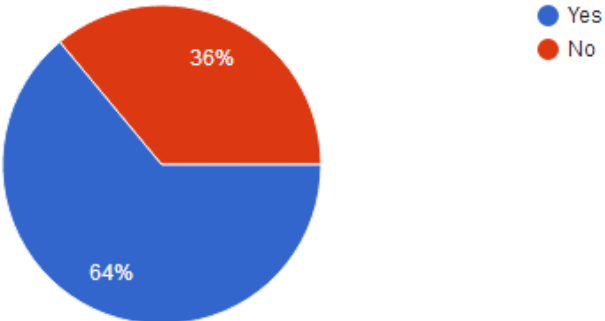
13. Please estimate what percentage of your friends have the same or similar profession as you.

111 responses



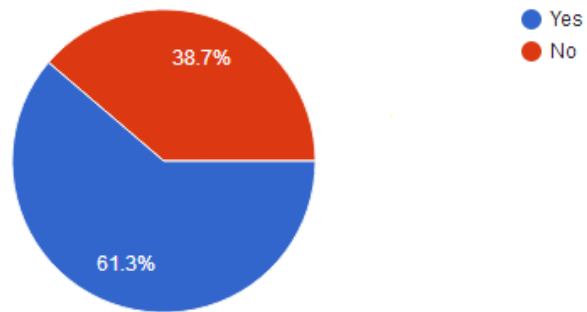
14. Do you know your workplace policy regarding Facebook?

111 responses



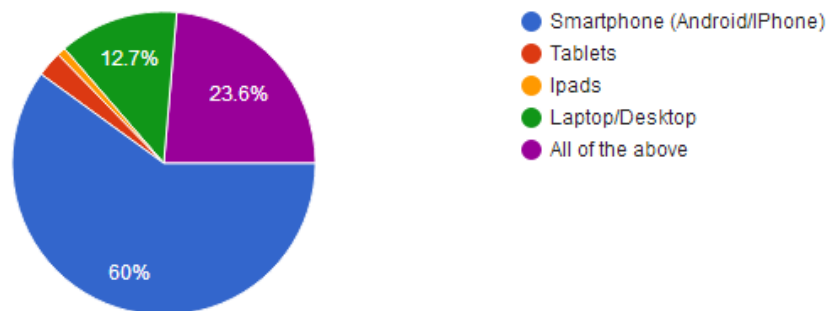
15. Do you have the Facebook application on your smart phone at work?

111 responses



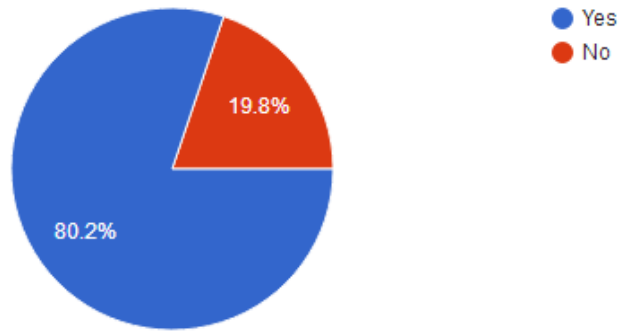
16. How do you access your Facebook account?

110 responses



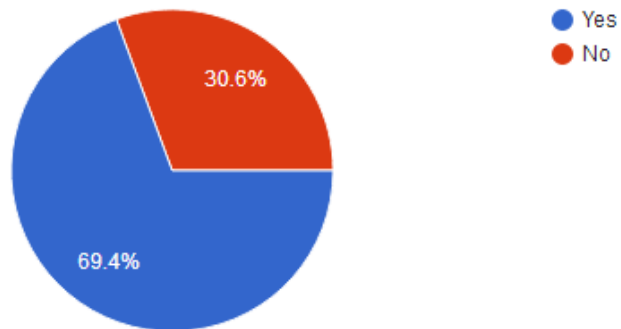
17. Do you use the Facebook application on your smart phone after work hours?

111 responses



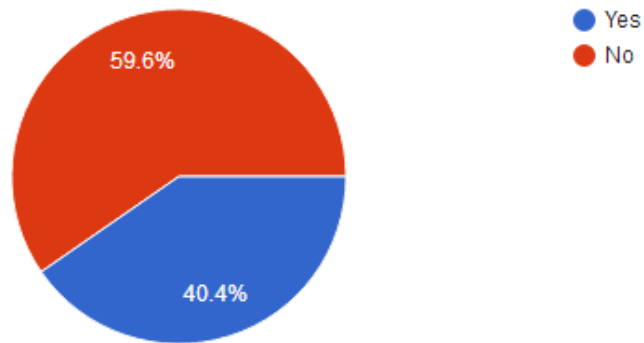
18. Do you feel Facebook advertisements are geared towards your tastes?

111 responses



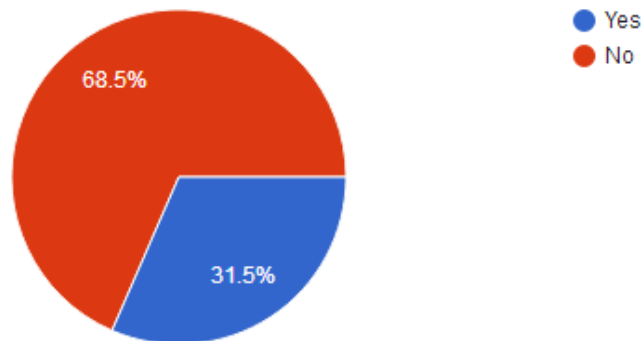
19. Have you ever purchased an item through an advertisement that "influenced" you on Facebook?

109 responses



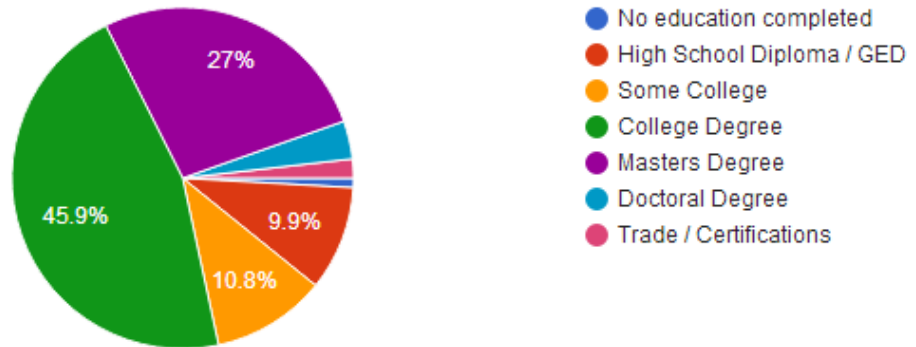
20. In light of current events, do you trust Facebook to protect your privacy?

111 responses



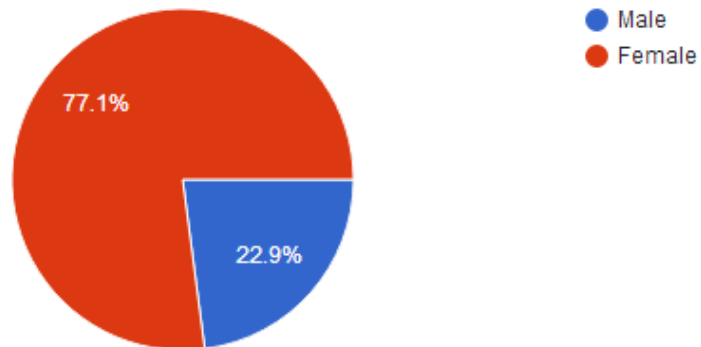
21. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

111 responses



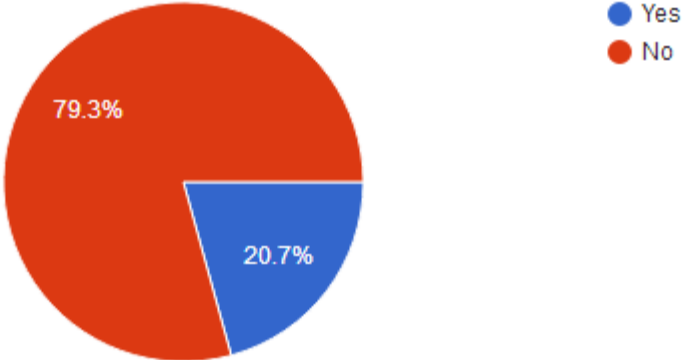
22. What is your gender?

109 responses



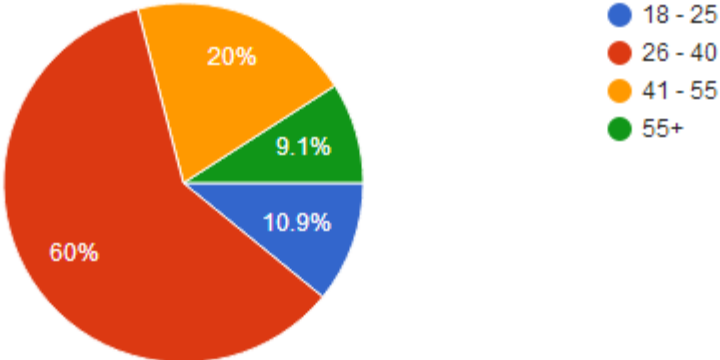
23. Do you feel Facebook influences your decision making process?

111 responses



24. What is your age?

110 responses



25. Are you employed?

111 responses

