

# A STUDY OF ATTORNEYS' LEGAL RESEARCH PRACTICES AND OPINIONS OF NEW ASSOCIATES' RESEARCH SKILLS

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Conducted and Prepared by the ALL-SIS Task Force on Identifying Skills and Knowledge for  
Legal Practice

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## INTRODUCTION

In July 2011, the Academic Law Libraries Special Interest Section (“ALL-SIS”) of the American Association of Law Libraries appointed a Task Force on Identifying Skills and Knowledge for Legal Practice. The Task Force was charged with “identify[ing] the current and future research skills that law school graduates need to succeed in legal practice.” The charge observed that “[t]his information will help law schools determine how to develop their curriculum to meet the research needs of their graduates.”

The Task Force determined early on that in order to understand the research skills law school graduates need to succeed in legal practice, we must have a better understanding of how practicing attorneys conduct legal research. This is an area of inquiry that has remained largely unexplored over the years.<sup>1</sup> Recently, however, a number of authors have embarked on the study of attorney research practices—the majority through the lens of law firm librarians<sup>2</sup> and the remainder through the eyes of the attorneys themselves.<sup>3</sup> The Task Force decided to pursue both of these avenues, creating separate but similar surveys for law firm librarians and for practicing attorneys.

### I. DRAFTING THE SURVEY

The Task Force began the process of developing these surveys by conducting a thorough literature review to determine what topics needed to be revisited and if there were new topics we could cover. The Task Force drafted questions about the demographics of the respondents, their access to resources, how they used the resources, how they began their research process in new

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<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Danner, *Contemporary and Future Directions in American Legal Research: Responding to the Threat of the Available*, INT'L J. LEGAL INFO. 179, 184 (2003) (“[T]he published literature on the subject suggests that we actually know very little about how lawyers go about their research.”); Morris L. Cohen, *Research Habits of Lawyers*, 9 JURIMETRICS J. 183, 183 (1969) ([W]e know...almost nothing about the actual procedures used by lawyers in their search into the law.”).

<sup>2</sup> See, David L. Armond & Shawn G. Nevers, *The Practitioners' Council: Connecting Legal Research Instruction and Current Legal Research Practice*, 103 L. LIBR. J. 575, 579 n.16 (2011) (citing the following surveys of law librarians: Jill L. K. Brooks, *Great Expectations: New Associates' Research Skills from Law School to Law Firm*, 28 LEGAL REFERENCE SERVICES QUARTERLY 291 (2009); Joan S. Howland & Nancy J. Lewis, *The Effectiveness of Law School Legal Research Training Programs*, 40 JOURNAL OF LEGAL EDUCATION 381 (1990); Laura K. Justiss, *A Survey of Electronic Research Alternatives to Lexis and Westlaw in Law Firms*, 103 L. LIBR. J. 71 (2011); Patrick Meyer, *Law Firm Legal Research Requirements for New Attorneys*, 101 LAW LIBR. J. 297 (2009); Tom Gaylord, 2007 Librarian Survey, <http://www.kentlaw.edu/academics/lrw/future/handouts/gaylord%20-%20powerpoint.pdf> (PowerPoint prepared for Back to the Future of Legal Research Symposium, Chicago Kent College of Law, May 18, 2007); Todd M. Venie, *Essential Research Skills for New Attorneys* (2008), [http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/s\\_papers/id/1103](http://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/s_papers/id/1103).

<sup>3</sup> Armond & Nevers, *supra* note 2; Brooks, *supra* note 2; Sanford N. Greenberg, *Legal Research Training: Preparing Students for a Rapidly Changing Research Environment*, 13 LEGAL WRITING: J. LEGAL WRITING INST. 241 (2007); Judith Lihosit, *Research in the Wild: CALR and the Role of Informal Apprenticeship in Attorney Training*, 101 LAW LIBR. J. 157 (2009); Carolyn R. Young & Barbara A. Blanco, *What Students Don't Know Will Hurt Them: A Frank View From the Field on How to Better Prepare Our Clinic and Externship Students*, 14 CLINICAL L. REV. 105 (2007).

areas of law, and how they felt about the skills and training their new associates had or needed and what law schools should be teaching.

The Task Force received feedback from a sample of practitioners, and the draft surveys were reviewed for bias and completeness by the University of Chicago Library's Assessment Project Team and the ALL-SIS Statistics Committee. After incorporating all of the changes suggested by our review committees, the Task Force finalized similar surveys for attorneys and for law firm librarians. The Task Force selected SurveyMonkey as the platform for drafting and distributing the survey and collecting responses; access to SurveyMonkey was provided through the Fordham Law Library's subscription.

## II. SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

Task Force members began working with law school administrators to gain permission to distribute the survey to law school alumni of members' respective schools. The geographic mix of the Task Force's member law schools was sufficiently diverse to satisfy our survey reviewers. Direct emails were sent to the alumni of BYU, University of Chicago and Southern Illinois. Direct emails were sent to adjunct faculty at Georgetown, University of Colorado, Hofstra and Southern Illinois. Survey information was included in alumni newsletters at Fordham, Texas Tech and the University of Colorado. Alumni Facebook pages were utilized at Fordham, Georgetown and the University of Colorado. LinkedIn pages were used at the University of Colorado and Hofstra. Surveys were first distributed on February 9, 2012, and distribution continued through February, March, and April. The practitioner survey closed on April 18, 2012.

There was excellent participation: 603 respondents completed the practitioner survey. This report focuses on the results from the practitioner survey. There is still some analysis of the results that is ongoing, specifically with regards to qualitative data, and the Task Force may supplement this report in the future. Results from the law librarian survey are still being reviewed and will be the subject of a future report.

## III. QUESTIONS POSED TO PRACTITIONERS

The survey instrument distributed to practitioners was organized into four sections. The first section asked respondents to indicate the state where they conducted the majority of their practice at the time, the size of the office in which they worked, the setting that best described their working environment (i.e., the nature of their practice, such as "Private practice – Litigation"), and the length of time that they had been in legal practice, selecting from categories that we provided to them. A copy of the survey instrument listing the categories is attached as an appendix to this report.<sup>4</sup> An additional open-ended question following the "working

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<sup>4</sup> See *infra* Appendix A.

environment” selections allowed respondents to describe the nature of their practice more fully in addition to, or in place of, selecting from the categories provided.

The second section of questions focused on the research process, beginning with the percentage of time respondents spend on legal research during an average week (with response categories being “none,” “up to 15%,” “at least 15%, but not more than 25%,” “at least 25%, but not more than 50%,” “at least 50%, but not more than 75%,” and “more than 75%.”). This question was followed by a set of questions asking how frequently they use particular approaches (provided in a list) when beginning a research project and how frequently they use other approaches (from another list) during the course of researching an issue for their practice (not necessarily at the beginning of a project). Response categories for these questions ranged from “never,” to “rarely,” “occasionally,” frequently,” and “very frequently”.

The third section consisted of questions asking how frequently respondents use particular types of legal research materials (such as print and free internet sources) and specific research tools for legal research (such as practice guides, treatises, and court web sites). This set of questions used the same frequency response categories as were used with the earlier questions. The final question in this section asked whether they are using any of the following new research platforms: Bloomberg Law, WestlawNext, or Lexis Advance. An additional open-ended question relating to free internet sources allowed respondents to narratively identify other free sources they use that were not on our list.

The final section of questions was directed at respondents who work with recent law school graduates, asking them to rate the recent graduates' ability to perform each of a list of research tasks or components of the research process (ranking them as doing so “very well,” “moderately well,” “adequately,” “poorly,” “unacceptably,” or stating that the question did not apply). This section ended with an open-ended question asking respondents to share any other comments they cared to about “legal research in practice”.

#### **IV. APPROACH TO STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Statistical analysis of the data was undertaken using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 20. Standard statistical tests were used to assess possible relationships between the demographic variables and responses to the various questions posed about the research process, use of particular research tools and resources, and opinions expressed about the skill level of recent graduates.<sup>5</sup> In addition to running the analyses using the original response categories for frequency of use, separate data runs were executed using “never” and the consolidated categories “rarely or occasionally” and “frequently or very frequently” to take into account the similarity between these groups of responses.

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B for an explanation of the approach that was taken for the coding of results, the selection of statistical tests, and the way respondents who skipped a particular question were handled in running calculations.

## V. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic information was requested from respondents, beginning with the state where they were practicing the majority of the time, the size of the office they worked in, the type of practice setting (such as “Private practice – Litigation”), and the number of years they had been in practice when they completed the survey. The results are summarized below. Comparisons to national figures, where they were available to the Task Force, are provided in Appendix C.

### A. Primary Location

The first question in the survey instrument asked respondents “[i]n what state do you currently conduct the majority of your practice?” Of the 603 practitioners who responded to the survey, 574 (95.2%) completed the question. None listed Arkansas, Delaware, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, or West Virginia as their primary locus; all other states were represented, with particularly large numbers from California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, Texas, and Utah as indicated in the state by state breakdown that follows (see Appendix C for national comparison).

**Table 1. State where majority of practice is conducted**

State	Frequency	Valid Percent	State	Frequency	Valid Percent
Alabama	3	0.5	Nevada	14	2.4
Alaska	3	0.5	New Jersey	5	0.9
Arizona	22	3.8	New Mexico	86	15.0
California	43	7.5	New York	42	7.3
Colorado	25	4.4	North Carolina	3	0.5
Connecticut	1	0.2	Ohio	3	0.5
D.C.	16	2.8	Oklahoma	2	0.3
Florida	5	0.9	Oregon	7	1.2
Georgia	4	0.7	Pennsylvania	2	0.3
Hawaii	5	0.9	Puerto Rico	1	0.2
Idaho	7	1.2	South Dakota	2	0.3
Illinois	83	14.5	Tennessee	3	0.5
Indiana	5	0.9	Texas	50	8.7
Iowa	2	0.3	Utah	64	11.1
Kansas	1	0.2	Vermont	2	0.3
Kentucky	2	0.3	Virginia	8	1.4
Maryland	2	0.3	Washington	11	1.9
Massachusetts	6	1.0	Wisconsin	4	0.7
Michigan	3	0.5	Wyoming	1	0.2
Minnesota	2	0.3	International	8	1.4
Mississippi	1	0.2			
Missouri	15	2.6	Total	574	100.0
			Missing	29	
			Total	603	

*B. Size of Office*

The second question in the survey asked respondents “[w]hat is the size of the office in which you work?” and provided a list of categories to choose from. Of the 603 practitioners who responded to the survey, 588 (97.5%) completed the question, with the distribution illustrated in Figure 1 below. For national comparisons, see Appendix C.

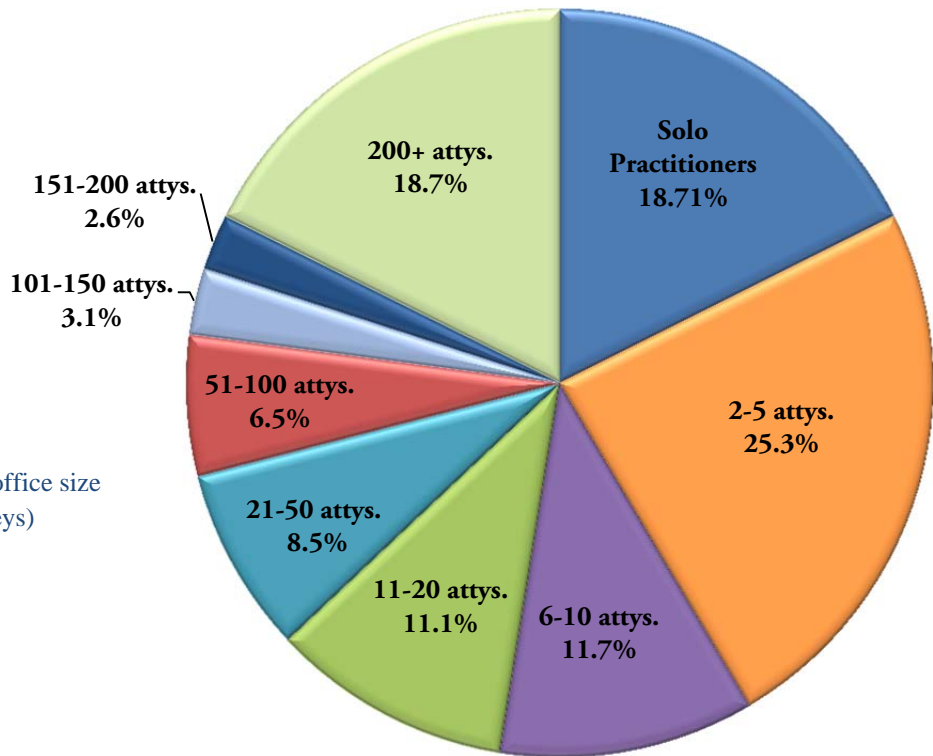


Figure 1. Respondents' office size (number of attorneys)

*C. Practice Setting*

Respondents were asked “[w]hich setting best describes your working environment?” and were provided a list of categories to choose from as well as an “other – please specify” option. All but one of the respondents (99.8%) answered the question. Respondents who did not select one of the original categories provided in the survey instrument were assigned to one of four additional categories that were created, based on analysis of responses to the “other – please specify” option, or to one of the original categories as appropriate based on their narrative answer. The final breakdown by practice setting was as follows:

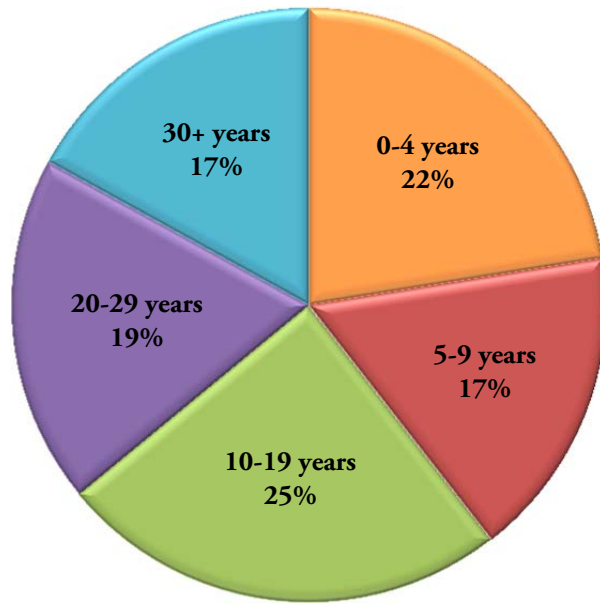
**Table 2. Setting that best describes working environment**

<b>Working Environment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Private practice/Litigation	164	27.2
Private practice/Transactional	54	9.0
Private practice/Mixed	127	21.1
In house/Corporate counsel	50	8.3
Government/Federal	34	5.6
Government/State	74	12.3
Government/Local	9	1.5
Legal Services Corporation	10	1.7
Public Interest	20	3.3
Judiciary	36	6.0
Military	5	0.8
Consulting	3	0.5
Law School	4	0.7
Other legal education	2	0.3
Non law related	2	0.3
Retired	2	0.3
Other	6	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Missing	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

*D. Years in Legal Practice*

The final demographic question asked respondents how many years they had been in legal practice, providing five categories to choose from. All but two respondents answered the question, with responses breaking down as illustrated below.

Figure 2. Respondents' years in legal practice.

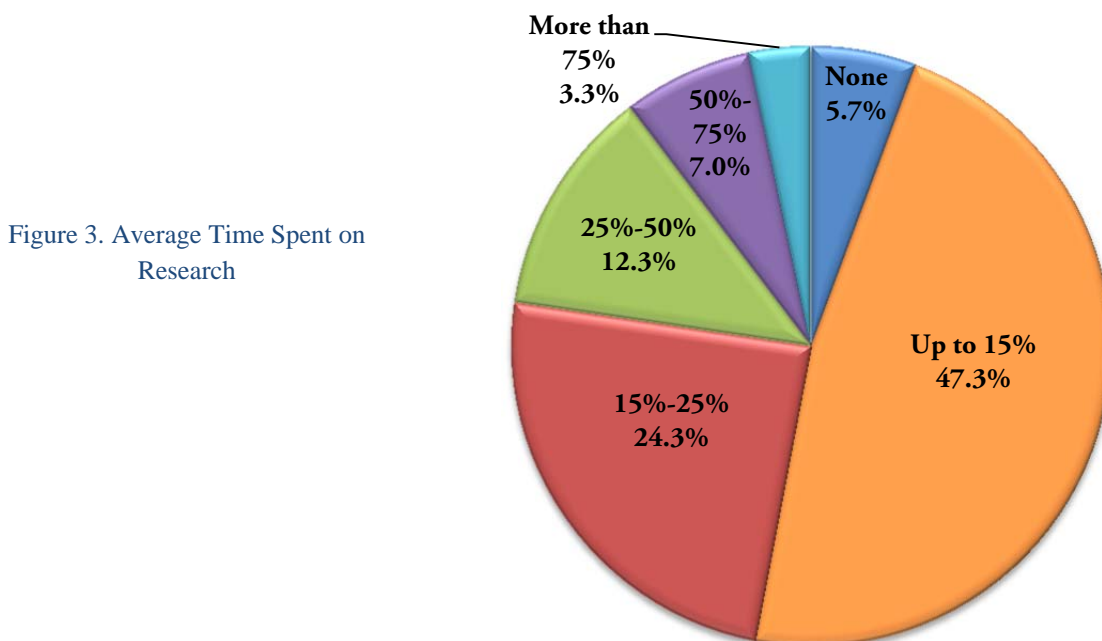


The results of the survey, including any statistically significant relationships between demographic subgroups, are contained in the sections that follow. Charts illustrate the results.

## VI. AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON RESEARCH

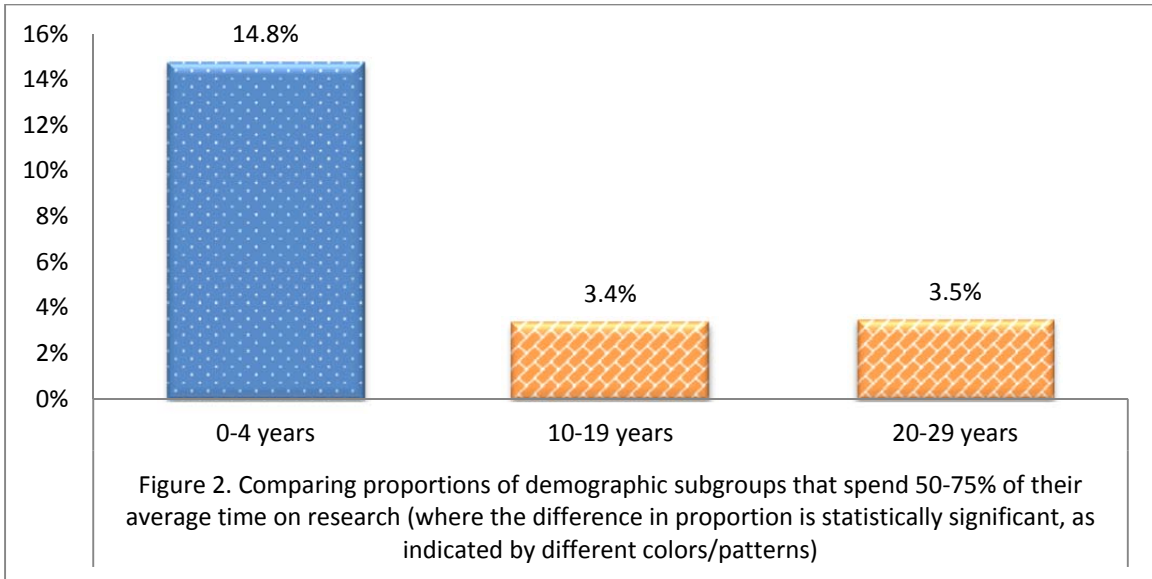
Question 5 of the survey asked attorneys to tell us how much time in an average week they spend doing legal research. Possible responses included “none,” “up to 15%,” “at least 15% but not more than 25%,” “at least 25% but not more than 50%,” “at least 50% but not more than 75%,” and “more than 75%.”

- 600 respondents
- Only 5.7% say they “never” research.
- Nearly half of respondents spend “up to 15%” of their time per week on research on average.
- 10.3% of overall respondents report spending at least half of their time conducting legal research on average.
- Approximately one-quarter of respondents spend “at least 15% but not more than 25%” of their time on research.



- ❖ There is a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years in practice and average time spent on research. *Overall, across subgroups, average time spent on research decreases with increased years in practice, generally speaking.*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience that report spending “50-75%” of their time on average on legal research (14.8%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 10-19 and 20-29 years of experience that report the same (3.4% and 3.5%, respectively).



- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience that report spending “up to 15%” of their time on average on legal research (34.1%) is significantly less than the proportion of respondents in any of the categories with 10 years or more of experience that report the same (51.0% for 10-19 years, 57.9% for 20-29 years, and 52.9% for 30+ years).

## VII. BEGINNING RESEARCH

In Question 6, practitioners were asked how they begin their research. Specifically they were asked “When beginning research, how often do you...” Seven different possible starting points were then provided to complete the question. Possible responses for each portion of this question included: “Very Frequently,” “Frequently,” “Occasionally,” “Rarely,” or “Never.”

### A. Start by Asking a Fellow Attorney for Research Advice

The first portion of this question asked attorneys how often they begin research by asking a fellow attorney for research advice.

- 586 respondents
- A majority of respondents reported that they “rarely” (27.3%) or “occasionally” (28.8%) begin a research project by asking another attorney for research advice.
- Slightly more than one-third of respondents reported that they “frequently” (19.5%) or “very frequently” (15.5%) begin research this way.
- 8.9% of attorneys surveyed reported that they “never” begin a research project by consulting another attorney for research advice.

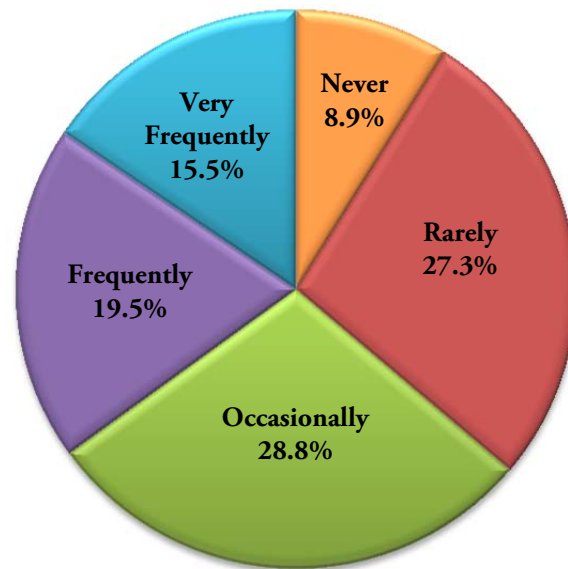


Figure 5. Frequency of Beginning Research by Asking a Fellow Attorney for Research Advice

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years in practice and the reported frequency of beginning research by asking a fellow attorney. *Overall, across subgroups, as years in practice increase, frequency of beginning research by asking a fellow attorney for research advice decreases.*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they consult a fellow attorney “occasionally” (38.3%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience reporting the same (19.0%).
  
- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a weak but statistically significant relationship between office size and the reported frequency of beginning research by asking a fellow attorney for research advice.

### B. Start with a Google Search

The second resource addressed in Question 6 was Google. Respondents were asked, “When beginning research, how often do you start with a Google search?”

- 587 respondents
- A relatively small percentage (12.8%) reported that they start with a Google search “very frequently.”
- Exactly the same percentage (12.8%) reported “never” starting legal research with a Google search.
- Nearly one-third (30.2%) reported that they started legal research with a Google search “occasionally” and 21.1 % reported that they “frequently” begin with a Google search.

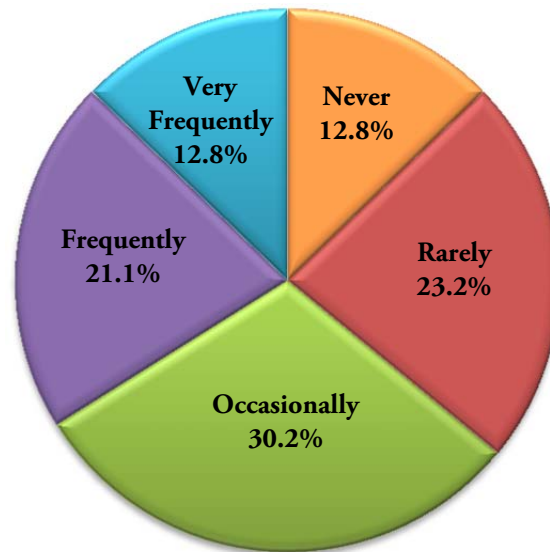
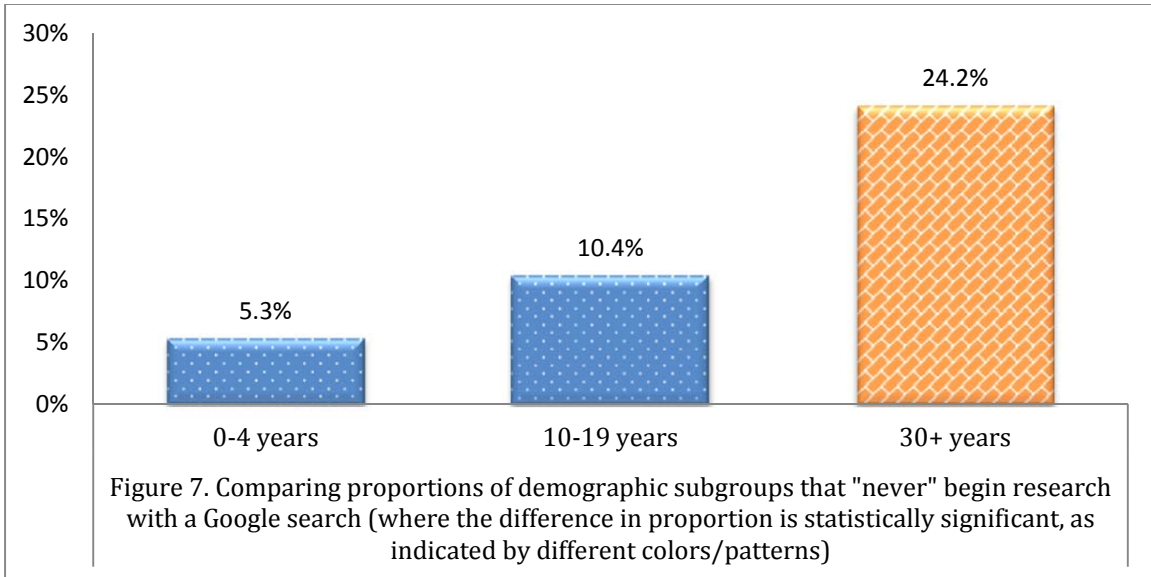


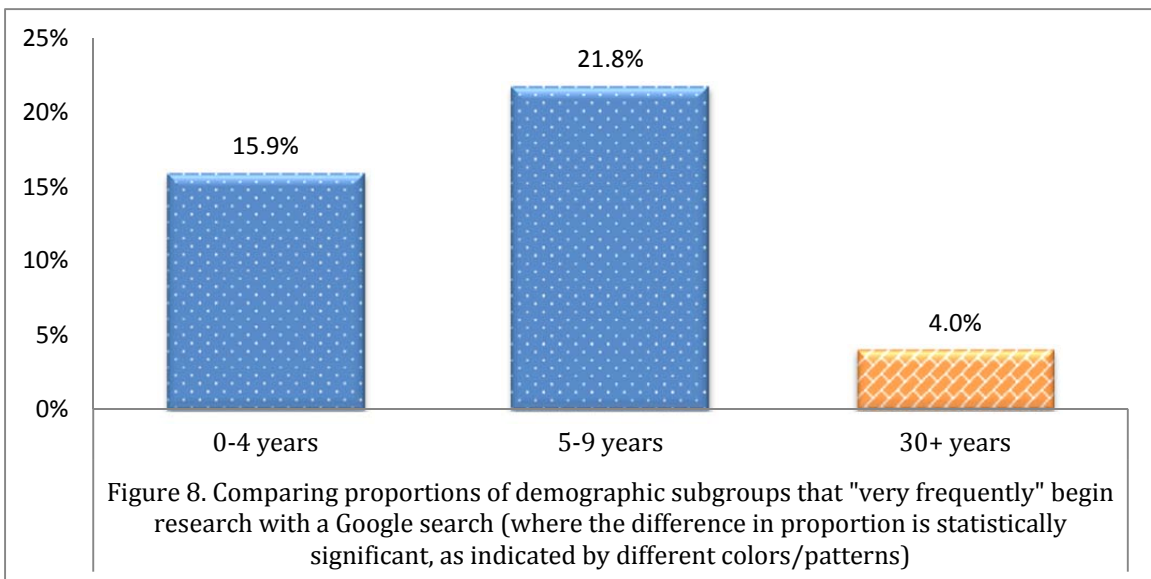
Figure 6. Frequency of Beginning Research with a Google Search

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years in practice and reported frequency of starting a research project with a Google search. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of starting a legal research project with a Google search decreases as years of experience increase.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents reporting that they began legal research with a Google search “occasionally” was significantly greater for those with 10-19 years in practice (38.9%) than for those practicing for 5-9 years (20.8%).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents reporting that they “never” begin legal research with a Google search was significantly higher for those with 30+ years of experience (24.2%) than for those with 0-4 and 10-19 years in practice (5.3% and 10.4%, respectively).



- ❖ The proportion of those reporting that they started legal research with a Google search “very frequently” was significantly smaller for those with 30+ years of experience (4.0%) than for those with 0-4 or 5-9 years in practice (15.9% and 21.8%, respectively).



### C. Start by Looking in a Statutory Database

In this portion of Question 6, attorneys were asked how frequently they begin their research by looking in a statutory database.

- 585 respondents
- More than half reported beginning research in a statutory database “frequently” (36.4%) or “very frequently” (15.7%).
- Only 6.2% of respondents say they “never” begin in a statutory database.
- Of the remaining 41.7%, those reporting they do so at least “occasionally” outnumber those reporting “rarely” by nearly two to one.

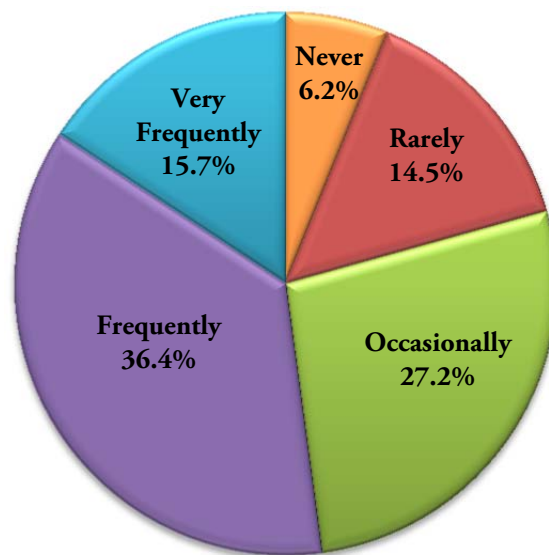


Figure 9. Frequency of Beginning Research by Looking in a Statutory Database.

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and the reported frequency of beginning a research project in a statutory database. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of beginning research in a statutory database decreases as office size increases.*

#### D. Start by Consulting In-House Work Product

Attorneys were next asked how often they begin their research with in-house work product.

- 584 respondents
- Roughly one-third (34.3%) either “rarely” or “never” begin research with in-house documents.
- Another one-third (34.7%) either “frequently” or “very frequently” do so.
- The final approximately one-third of respondents (31.0%) reported starting their research this way “occasionally.”

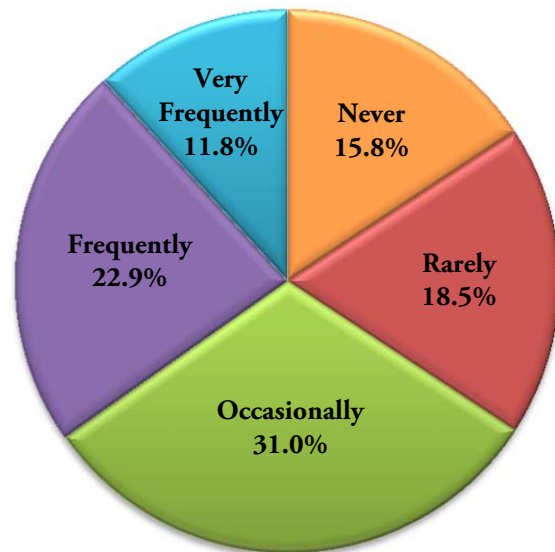
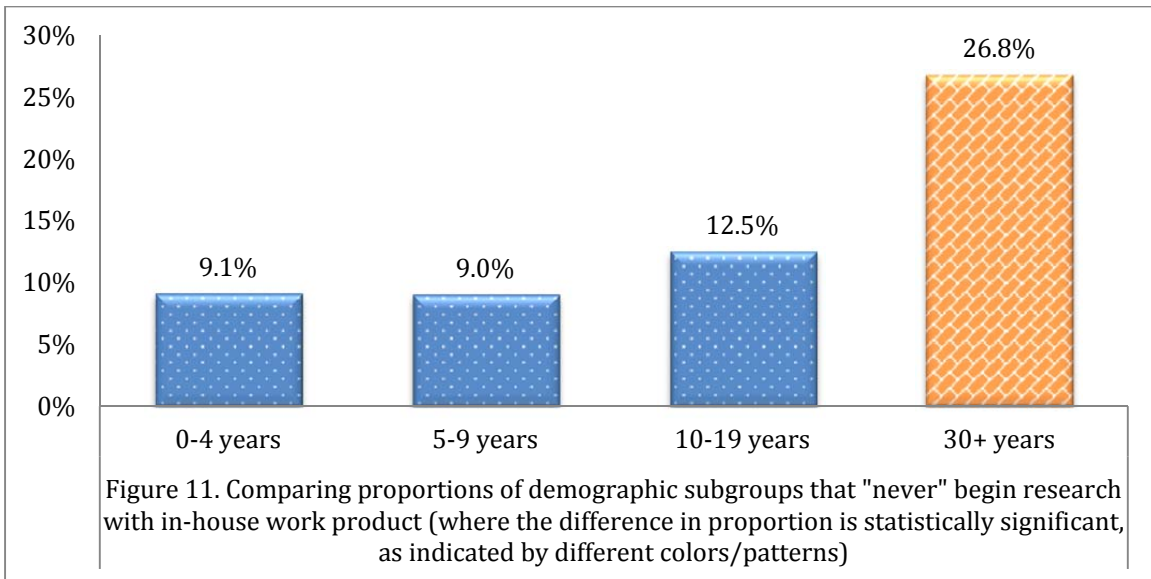


Figure 10. Frequency of Beginning Research by Consulting In-house Work Product

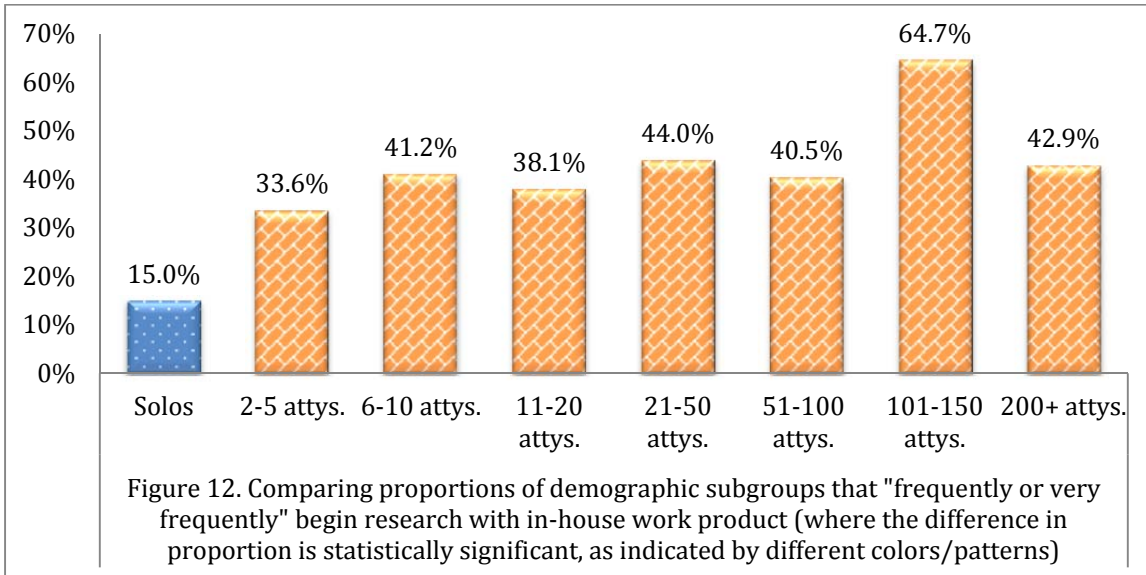
- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a moderately strong statistically significant negative relationship between years in practice and reported frequency of starting a research project by consulting in-house work product. *Generally speaking, as the years of experience go up, the reported frequency of starting research by consulting in-house work product goes down.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 20-29 years of experience (24.3%) reporting that they “never” begin research with in-house documents is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 0-4 years (9.1%) and with 5-9 years of experience (9.0%) reporting the same.

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience (26.8%) reporting that they “never” begin research this way is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents in all three categories of less than 20 years’ experience reporting the same: 0-4 years (9.1%), 5-9 years (9%), and 10-19 years (12.5%).

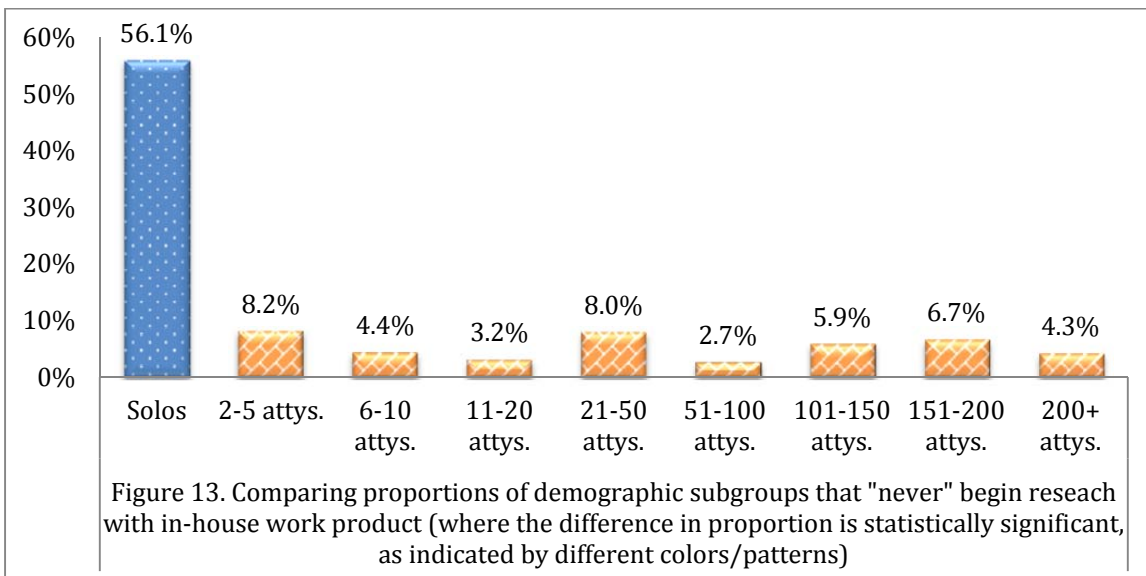


- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a moderately strong statistically significant positive relationship between office size and reported frequency of starting research by consulting in-house work product. *Generally speaking, as the office size increased, the frequency of starting research with in-house work product increased.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices of 2-5, 6-10, and 11-20 attorneys (58.2%, 54.4% and 58.7%, respectively) reporting that they started their research with in-house work product “rarely or occasionally” (consolidated classification) is significantly greater than the proportion of solos who reported the same (29.0%).

- ❖ The proportion of solos (15.0%) that reported beginning their research with in-house work product “frequently or very frequently” (consolidated classification) is significantly smaller than the proportion of respondents from any of the other office size categories that reported the same, with the exception of the 151-200 attorney subgroup (2-5 attorneys (33.6%), 6-10 attorneys (41.2%), 11-20 attorneys (38.1%), 21-50 attorneys (44.0%), 51-100 attorneys (40.5%), 101-150 attorneys (64.7%), 200+ (42.9%)).



- ❖ The proportion of solo practitioners reporting “never” starting with in-house work product (56.1%) is significantly greater than that of any of the other office size categories reporting the same (all with percentages of less than 9%).



*E. Start by Looking in a Secondary Source*

As a part of Question 6, attorneys were asked how often they begin research by looking in a secondary source.

- 581 respondents
- The majority reported that they “occasionally” (34.1%) or “rarely” (25.3%) begin their research by looking in a secondary source.
- When combined with “never” (9.3%), more than two-thirds of attorneys reported using secondary sources less than “frequently” to begin their research.
- Only 6.4% reported beginning research in secondary sources “very frequently,” while 25% do so “frequently.”

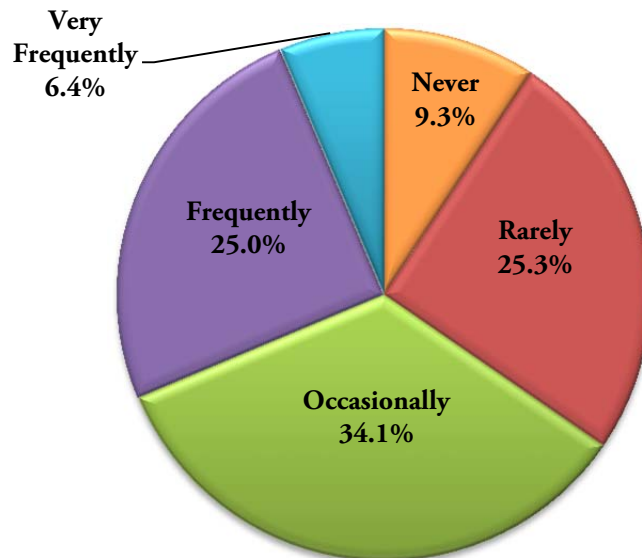


Figure 14. Frequency of Beginning Research by Looking in a Secondary Source.

- ❖ When consolidating frequency categories, analysis of the data shows a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and reported frequency of beginning research by using a secondary source. *Generally speaking, the frequency of beginning research with secondary sources decreases as years of experience increase.*

### F. Start in a Case Law Database

Attorneys were next asked how often they begin their research in a case law database.

- 590 respondents
- Over half of respondents reported starting research in a case law database “frequently” (30.7%) or “very frequently” (25.9%).
- Another 38% of respondents reported starting research this way “rarely” (17.1%) or “occasionally” (20.8%).
- Only 5.4% reported that they “never” start legal research in a case law database.

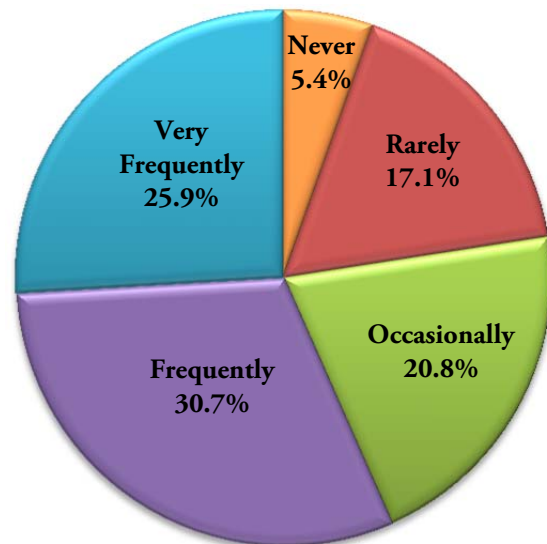


Figure 15. Frequency of Beginning Research in a Case Law Database

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and reported frequency of starting a research project in a case law database, using consolidated frequency categories. *Generally speaking the reported frequency of starting research in a case law database decreases as office size increases.*

*G. Start by Consulting a Subject-specific Practice Guide*

The final part of Question 6 asked attorneys how often they begin research by consulting a subject-specific practice guide.

- 588 respondents
- The largest group of respondents, 32%, report beginning with a subject-specific practice guide “occasionally,” with another 26.2% reporting that they “rarely” do so, together constituting more than half of respondents.
- More than one-third report beginning with practice guides “frequently” (23.5%) or “very frequently” (10.2%).
- Only 8.2% report “never” beginning research in this way.

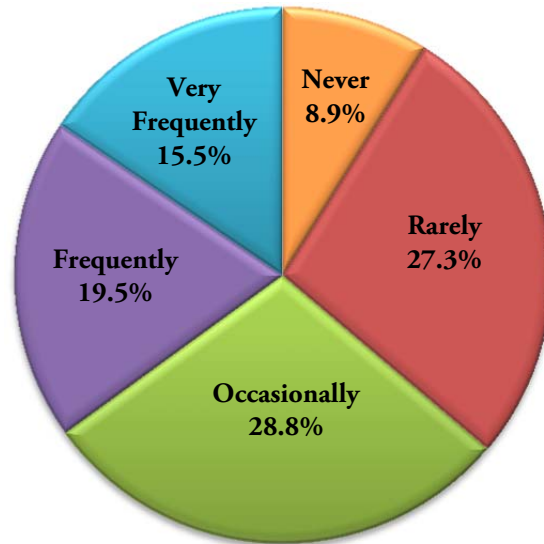


Figure 16. Frequency of Beginning Research by Consulting a Subject-specific Practice Guide

- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

## VIII. RESEARCH PROCESS

Question 7 of the survey focused on different legal research skills and techniques attorneys use during the research process. The question specifically asked, “When you are researching an issue for your practice, how often do you...” Seven different skills or techniques were listed to complete the question. Possible responses to each portion of this question included: “Very Frequently,” “Frequently,” “Occasionally,” “Rarely,” or “Never.”

### A. Case Digest or Online Equivalent to Find Topics and Key Numbers

The first portion of Question 7 asked attorneys how often they “use a case digest or online equivalent to find a topic and key number” for their research.

- 591 respondents
- More respondents (22.8%) report “never” using a digest or online equivalent to find a topic and key number than those who report doing so “frequently” (14.0%) or “very frequently” (5.4%) combined.
- More than half of respondents report “rarely” (36.7%) or “occasionally” (21.0%) doing so.

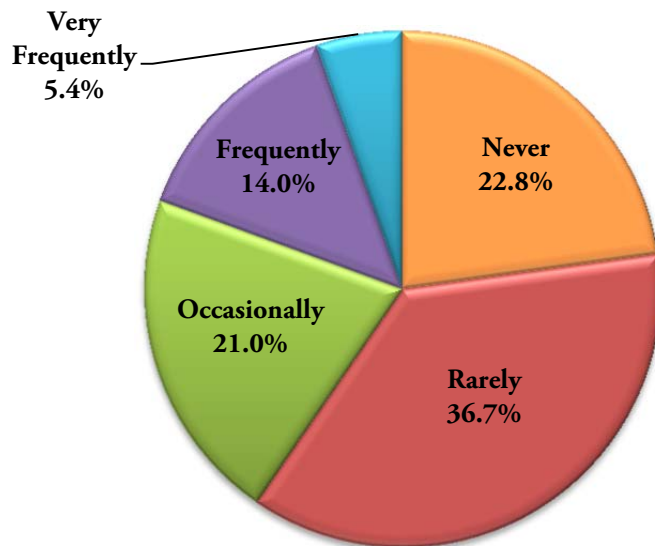


Figure 17. Frequency of Using a Case Digest or Equivalent to Find Topics and Key Numbers

- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

***B. Headnotes and Key Numbers in Cases to Find Other Relevant Cases***

As part of Question 7, practitioners were asked how often they use the headnotes and key numbers in a case they are reading to locate other relevant cases.

- 588 respondents
- Nearly 17% reported “never” using headnotes and key numbers in cases to locate other relevant cases.
- Approximately half of respondents reported doing so “rarely” (26.9%) or “occasionally” (24.1%).
- 21.4% reported “frequent” use of headnotes and key numbers in this way.
- The smallest percentage, only 10.9%, reported using headnotes and key numbers to find other relevant cases “very frequently.”

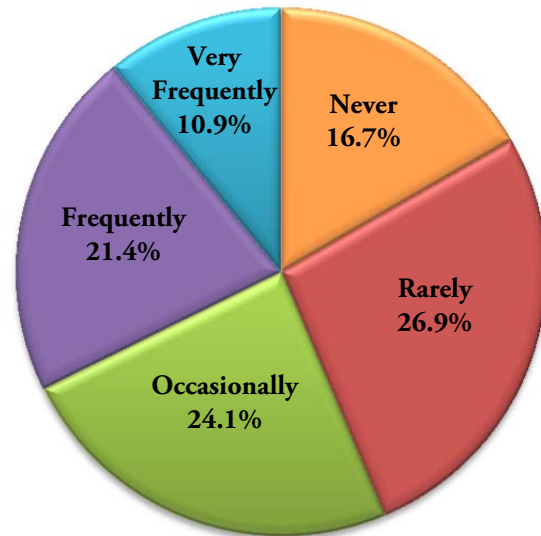
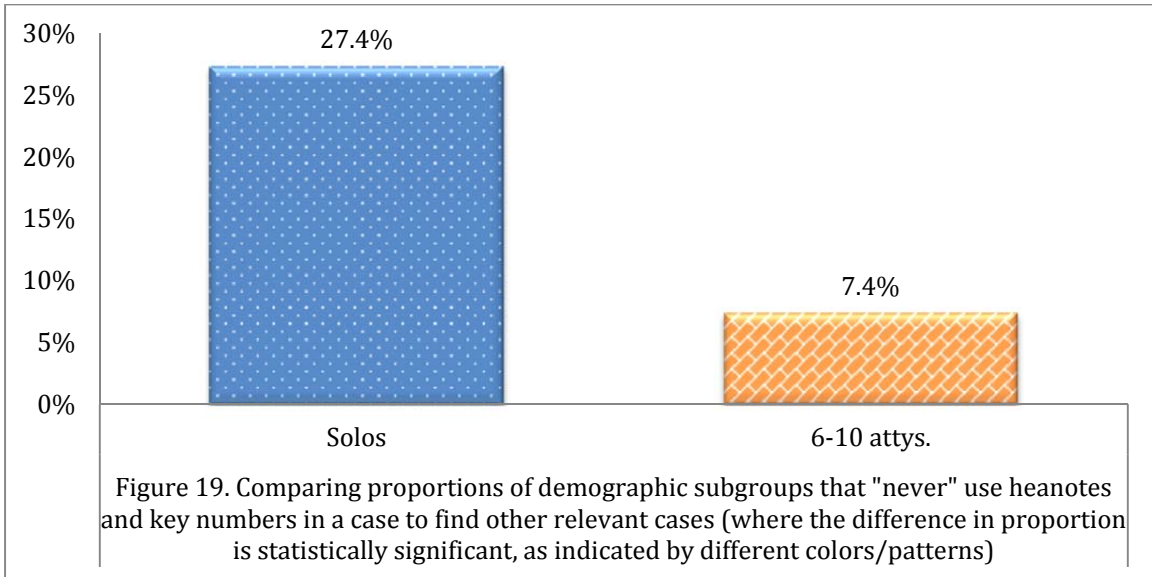


Figure 18. Frequency of Using Headnotes and Key Numbers in Cases to Find Other Relevant Cases

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship between office size and the frequency of using headnotes and key numbers to find other relevant cases. *Overall, across the office size subgroups, the frequency of using headnotes and key numbers to find other relevant cases increases as office size increases.*

- ❖ The proportion of solo practitioners reporting that they “never” used headnotes and key numbers in a case to find other relevant cases (27.4%) is significantly greater than the proportion of attorneys from offices of 6-10 reporting the same (7.4%).

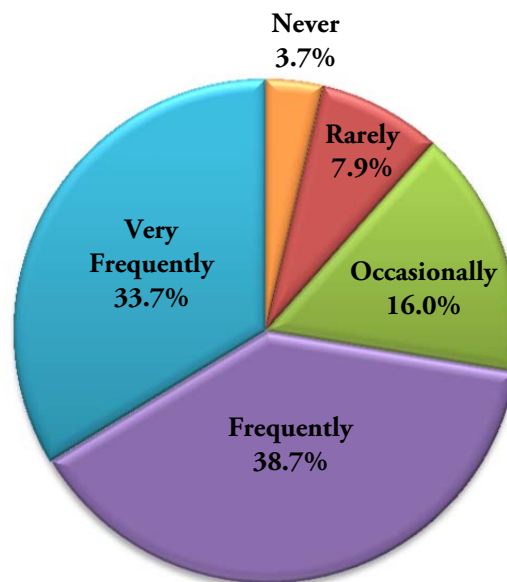


### C. Follow Citations in a Case

As part of Question 7, attorneys were asked how often they follow citations in a case they are reading to find relevant materials when they are researching.

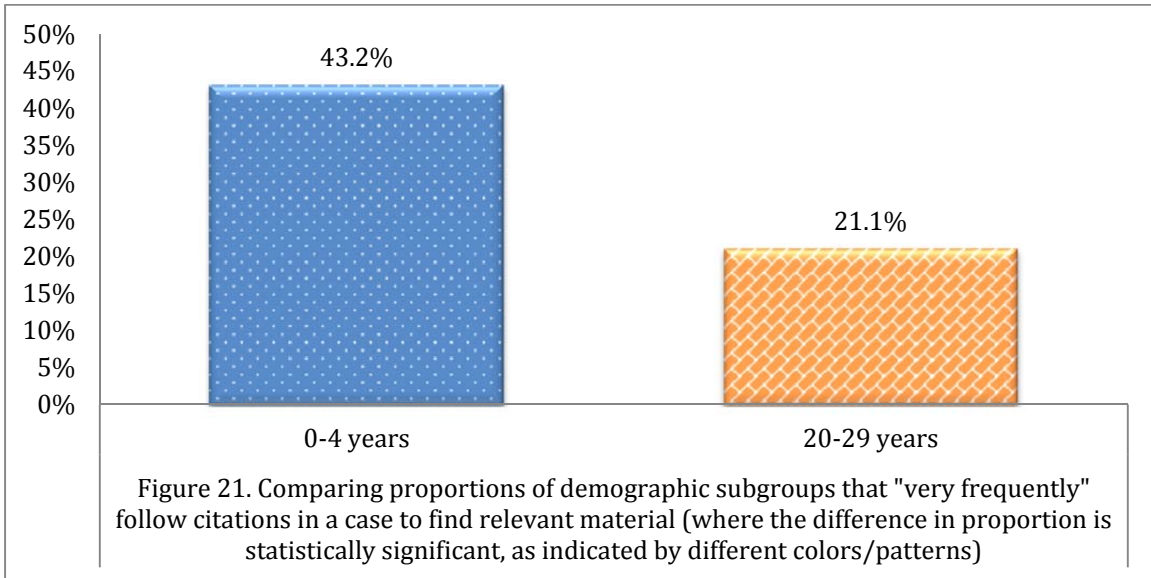
- 594 respondents
- Nearly three-fourths of respondents reported following citations in cases “frequently” (38.7%) or “very frequently” (33.7%).
- Only 3.7% of respondents reported “never” following citations in cases, while 7.9% did so “rarely” and 16.0% did so “occasionally.”

Figure 20. Frequency of Following Citations in a Case



- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of practice and frequency of following citations in cases. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of following citations in cases decreases as years in practice increase.*
- ❖ Attorneys with 0-4 years of experience were significantly less likely to report following citations “occasionally” (6.8%) than respondents with 20-29 or 30+ years of experience (23.7% and 19.0%, respectively).

- ❖ Attorneys with 0-4 years of experience were significantly more likely to report following citations in cases “very frequently” (43.2%) than those with 20-29 years of experience (21.1%).



*D. Index or Table of Contents When Researching Statutes Online*

As part of Question 7, practitioners were asked, “When you are researching an issue for your practice, how often do you use an index or table of contents when researching statutes online?”

- 588 respondents
- Only 5.6% reported “never” using an index or table of contents when researching statutes online.
- Over half of the respondents reported using an index or table of contents “frequently” (33.2%) or “very frequently” (19.4%) when researching statutes online, with “frequently” representing the highest proportion of respondents.
- More than one-quarter of respondents reported “occasionally” using an index or table of contents in this situation and only 13.3% reported that they “rarely” did so.

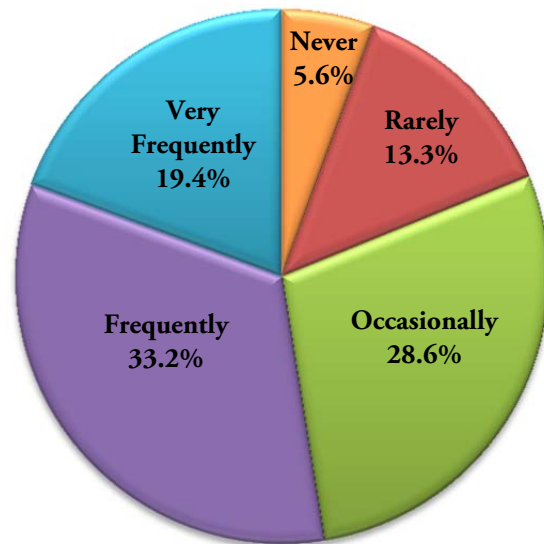


Figure 22. Frequency of Using an Index or Table of Contents When Researching Statutes Online

- ❖ Analysis of the data shows a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of using an index or table of contents when researching a statute online. *Overall, across subgroups, the reported frequency of using an index or table of contents in this situation decreases as the years of experience increase.*

*E. Follow Citations in a Secondary Source*

This portion of Question 7 asked attorneys how often they follow citations in a secondary source they are reading to find primary law and other relevant material.

- 588 respondents
- Nearly half of respondents reported following citations in secondary sources “frequently” (29.9%) or “very frequently” (16.2%).
- The largest percentage of respondents said they do so “occasionally” (30.3%), while 17.7% do so “rarely” and 6.0% never do so.

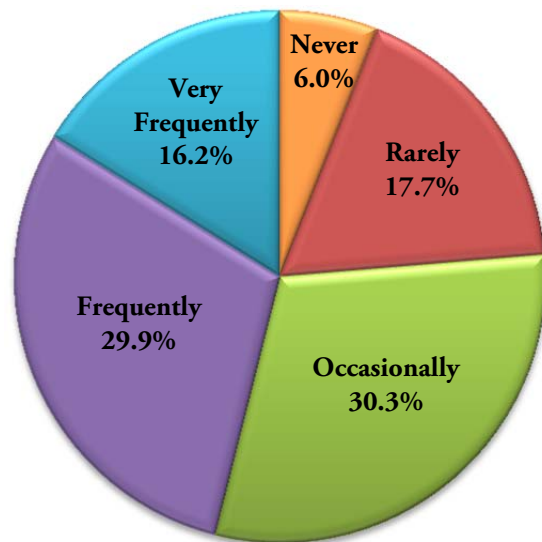


Figure 23. Frequency of Following Citations in a Secondary Source

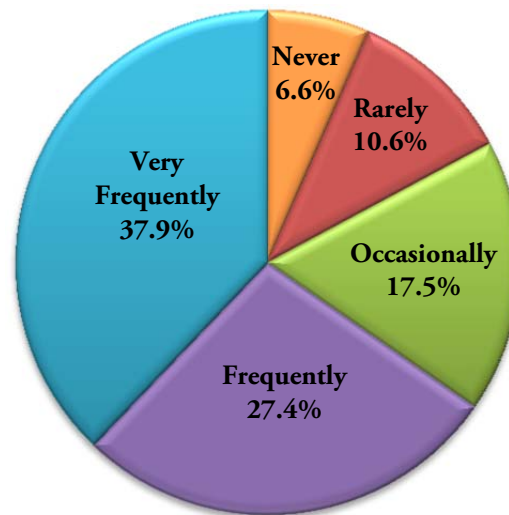
- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### F. Terms and Connectors Searching

As part of Question 7, attorneys were also asked about how frequently they used terms and connectors searching: “When you are researching an issue for your practice, how often do you use terms and connectors searching?”

- 594 respondents
- More than one-third (37.9%) reported using terms and connectors searching “very frequently.”
- More than one-quarter (27.4%) reported using them “frequently,” meaning that nearly two-thirds of respondents reported using terms and connectors searching “frequently” or “very frequently.”
- The remaining one-third reported using them “occasionally” (17.5%), “rarely” (10.6%) and “never” (6.6%).

Figure 24. Frequency of Using Terms and Connectors Searching



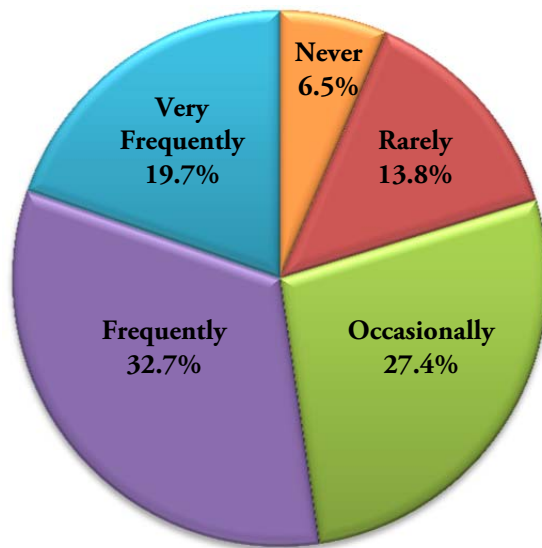
- ❖ Analysis shows a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of using terms and connectors searching. *Overall, across experience categories, the frequency of using terms and connectors searching increases as the years in practice increases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 5-9 years of experience reporting very frequent use of terms and connectors searching (50.5%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 20-29 years in practice reporting the same (27.2%).
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 20-29 years of experience that report using terms and connectors searching “occasionally” (26.3%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 10-19 years of experience that report the same (11.6%).

*G. Follow Citations in an Annotated Code*

The final part of Question 7 asked practitioners how often they follow citations in an annotated code to find relevant materials.

- 588 respondents
- The majority respondents reported following citations in an annotated code “frequently” (32.7%) or “very frequently” (19.7%).
- A small portion of respondents (6.5%) reported that they “never” follow citations in an annotated code to find relevant material, while those that did so “occasionally” outnumber those that did so “rarely” by nearly two to one.

Figure 25. Frequency of Following Citations in an Annotated Code



- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

## IX. RESOURCE USAGE

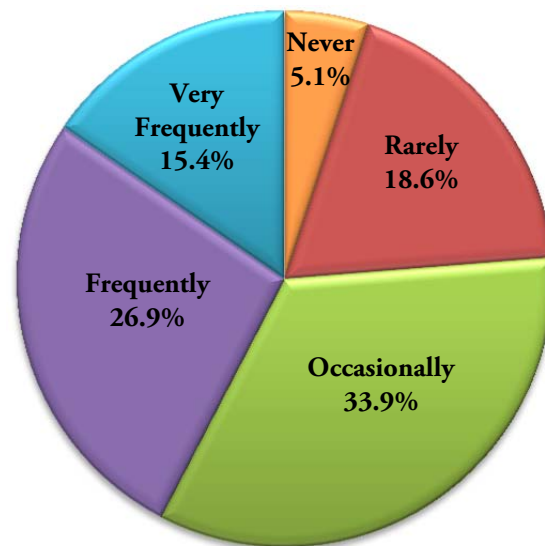
In Question 8, titled “Resource Usage,” practitioners were asked how frequently they use three general types of legal research resources: print materials, free internet resources, and fee-based databases. For each type of resource, attorneys selected one of the following responses: “Very Frequently,” “Frequently,” “Occasionally,” “Rarely,” or “Never.”

### A. Print Materials

The first part of Question 8 asks respondents, “When performing legal research for your practice, how often do you use print materials?”

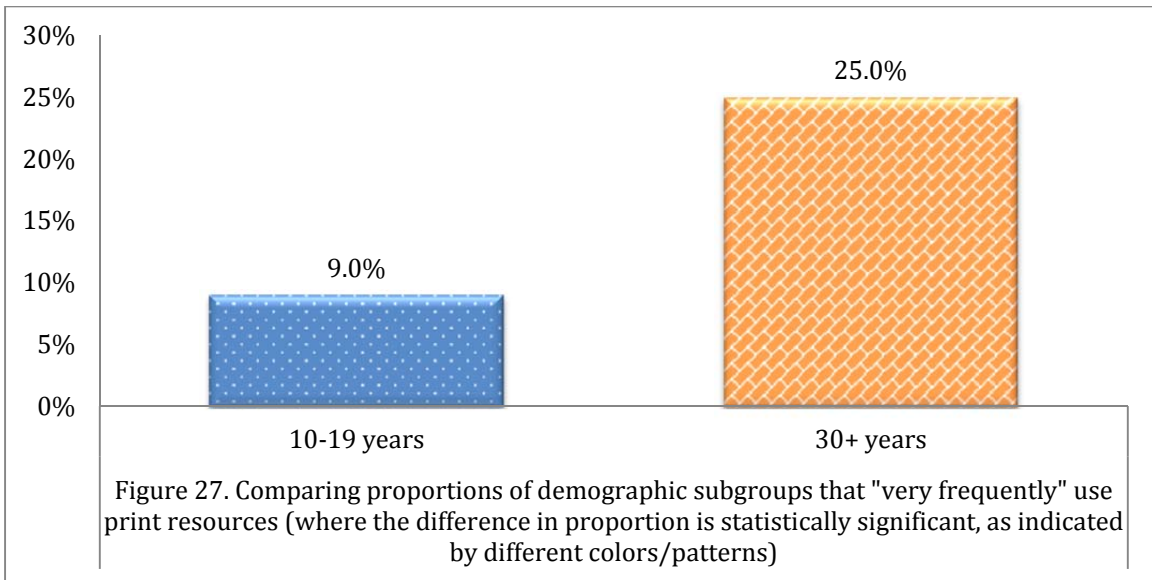
- 590 respondents
- Over 40% of respondents say they use print “frequently” (26.9%) or “very frequently” (15.4%).
- Only 5.1% of the respondents reported “never” using print materials.
- The largest percentage of respondents (33.9%) reported using print resources “occasionally,” with 18.9% reporting “rarely.”

Figure 26. Frequency of Using Print Materials for Legal Research



- ❖ Analysis of subgroups showed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of using print resources. *Overall, across all subgroups, the frequency of using print materials increased as the number of years in practice increased.*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 30+ years in practice reporting that they use print resources “very frequently” is significantly greater than for those with 10-19 years of experience (25.0% and 9.0%, respectively).



### B. Free Internet Resources

The next portion of Question 8 asked attorneys how frequently they use free internet resources in their research.

- 590 respondents
- Over 60% of respondents to this question reported using free internet resources “frequently” (30.7%) or “very frequently (30.7%).”
- One-quarter of respondents reported using free internet resources “occasionally,” while only 12.6% reported using these resources “rarely” (9.7%) or “never” (2.9%).

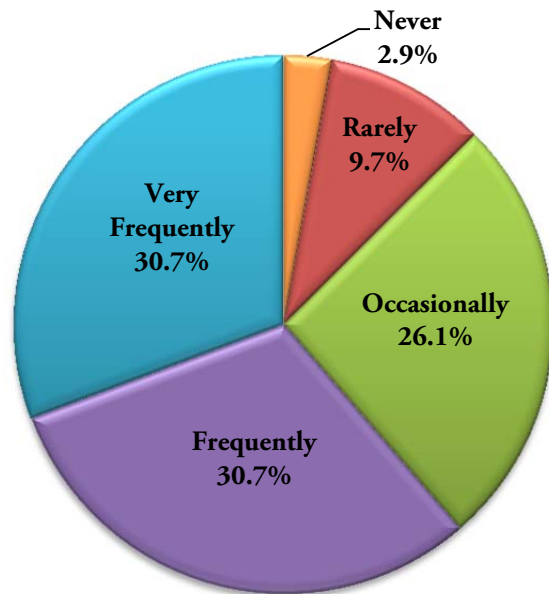


Figure 28. Frequency of Using Free Internet Resources for Legal Research

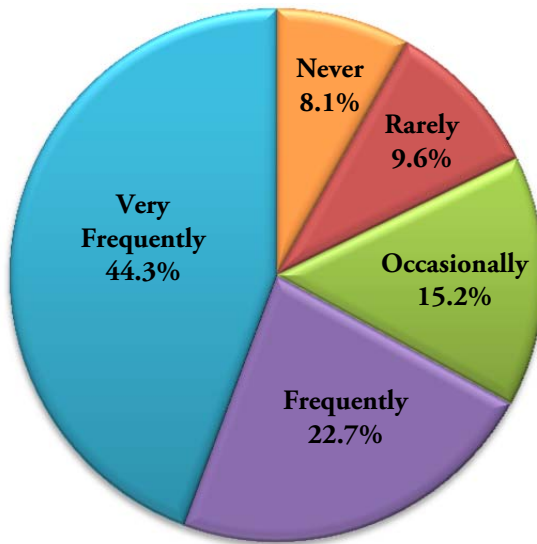
- ❖ We observed a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of using free internet resources. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using free internet resources for legal research decreases as years in practice increase.*
- ❖ We also observed a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and frequency of using free internet resources. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using free internet resources for legal research decreases as size of the office increases.*

### C. Fee-Based Databases

Question 8 also asked attorneys how often they use fee-based databases when performing legal research.

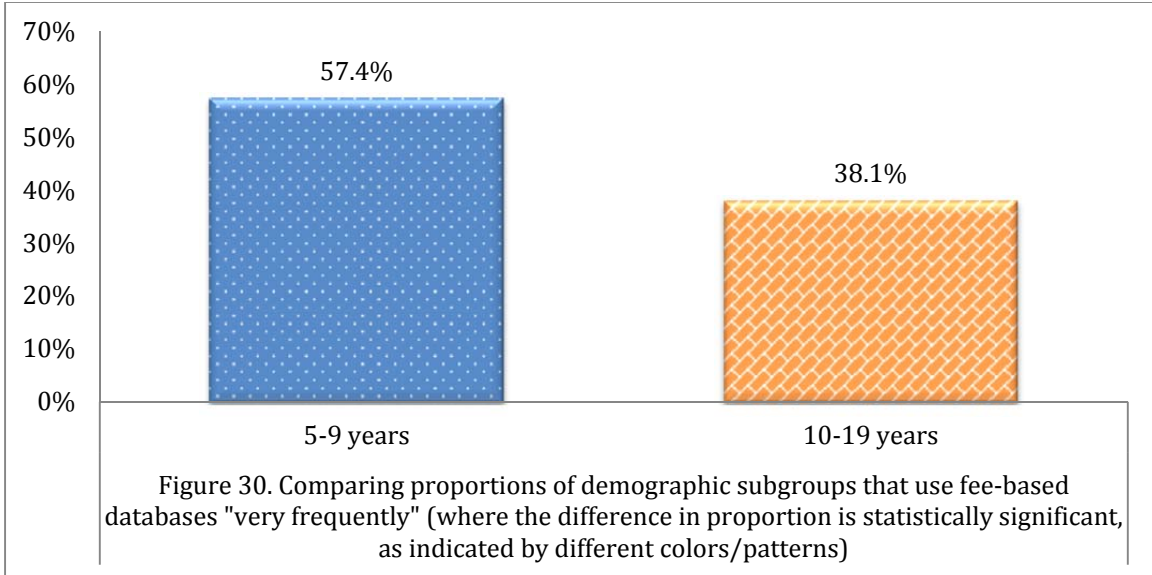
- 591 respondents
- Over two-thirds of respondents across categories reported using fee-based databases “frequently” (22.7%) or “very frequently” (44.3%).
- On the other hand, approximately 8% of respondents report “never” using fee-based databases, while nearly 10% “rarely” do so.

Figure 29. Frequency of Using Fee-Based Databases for Legal Research



- ❖ Analyzing subgroups of our respondents we found a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years in practice and reported frequency of use of fee-based databases. *Overall, across subgroups, reported frequency of using fee-based databases decreases with increased years in practice, generally speaking.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 20-29 years of experience who reported using fee-based databases only “occasionally” (27.7%) is significantly greater than for those with 0-4 or 5-9 years of experience (13.0% and 6.9%, respectively).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 5-9 years of experience reporting using fee-based databases “very frequently” (57.4%) is significantly greater than for those with 10-19 years of experience (38.1%).



- ❖ There is also a very weak to weak but statistically significant positive relationship between office size and frequency of using fee-based databases. *Generally speaking, the frequency of use of fee-based databases increases with office size.*

## X. RESEARCH TOOLS

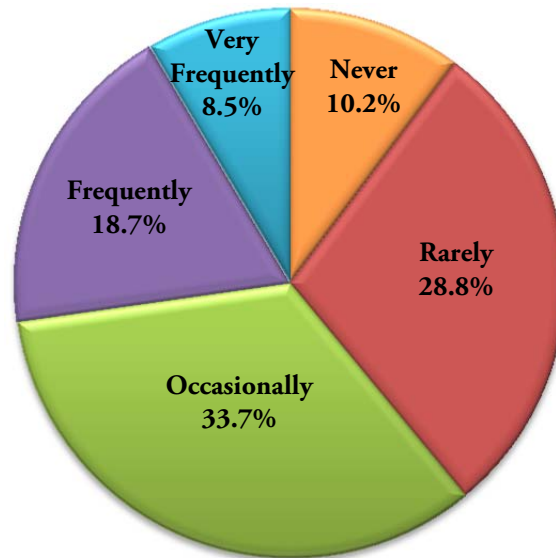
Question 9 of the survey asked attorneys how frequently they utilize certain research tools when performing legal research for their practice. Possible responses to each portion of this question included: “Very Frequently,” “Frequently,” “Occasionally,” “Rarely,” or “Never.”

### A. Legal Treatises

The first portion of Question 9 focused on how often practitioners use treatises in their research.

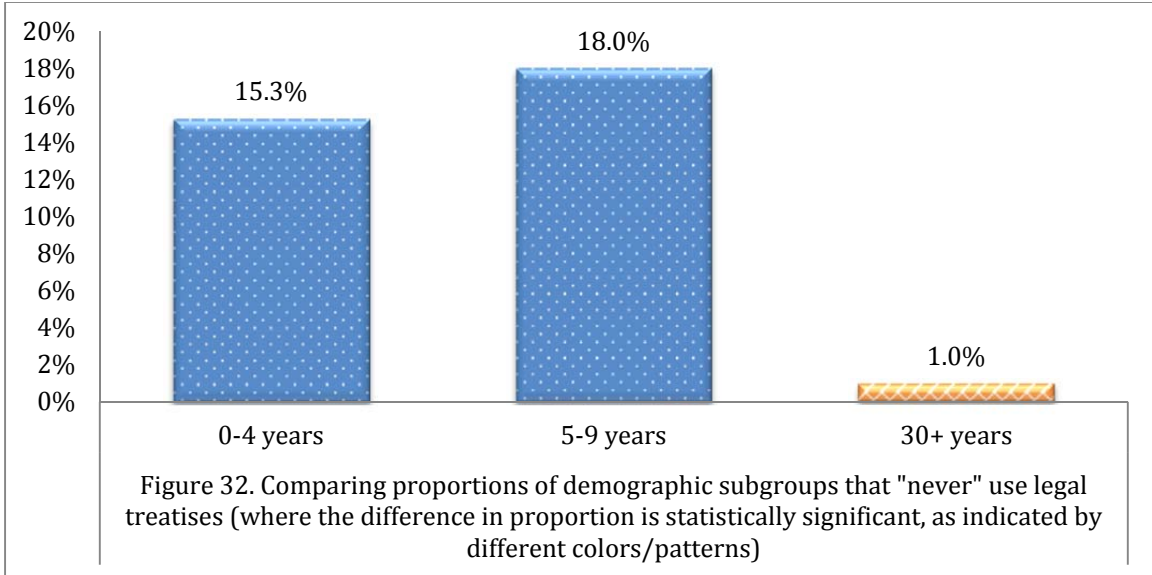
- 587 respondents
- Nearly 40% of respondents report that they “never” (10.2%) or “rarely” (28.8%) use legal treatises for research.
- Only slightly more than one-quarter of respondents report using legal treatises “frequently” (18.7%) or “very frequently” (8.5%), and one-third report using them “occasionally.”

Figure 31. Frequency of Using Legal Treatises



- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of using treatises. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using treatises increases with years of experience.*

- ❖ Respondents with less than a decade of experience are significantly more likely to report “never” using treatises (15.3% for 0-4 years of experience and 18.0% for 5-9 years) than those with 30+ years of experience (1.0%).



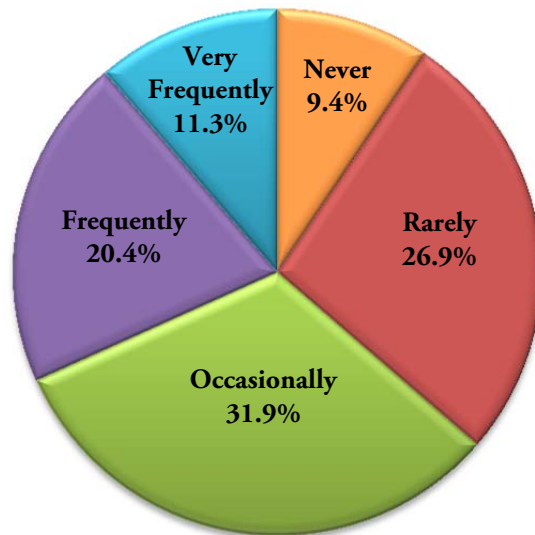
- ❖ Analysis of subgroups also shows a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between office size and frequency of use of treatises. *Generally speaking, the frequency of using treatises increases with office size.*

### B. Practice Guides

The next part of Question 9 asked attorneys how often they use practice guides in their research.

- 583 respondents
- The majority of respondents reported using practice guides “rarely” (26.9%) or “occasionally” (31.9%).
- Nearly one-third reported using practice guides “frequently” (20.4%) or “very frequently” (11.3%).
- Almost 10% say they “never” use practice guides.

Figure 33. Frequency of Using Practice Guides



- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### C. Legal Encyclopedias

As part of Question 9, attorneys were asked how often they use legal encyclopedias when performing legal research.

- 583 respondents
- A very small percentage of respondents reported using legal encyclopedias “frequently” (4.6%) or “very frequently” (1.7%) in their research.
- The vast majority reported using legal encyclopedias “rarely” (42.9%) or “occasionally” (26.2%).
- One-quarter of respondents reported “never” using legal encyclopedias.

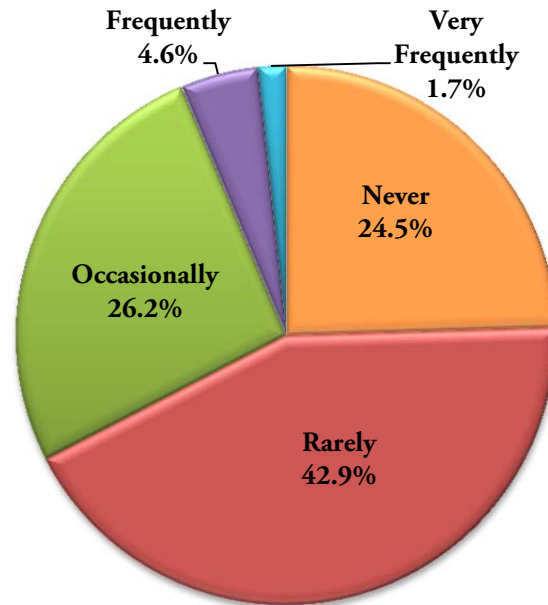
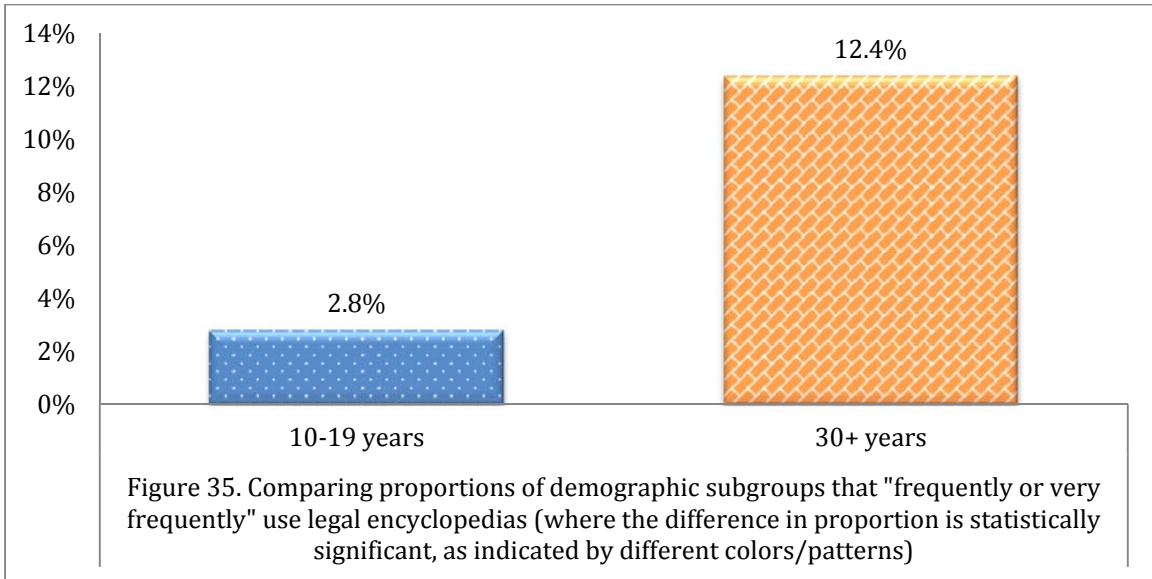


Figure 34. Frequency of Using Legal Encyclopedias

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a weak but statistically significant relationship between years of experience and frequency of using legal encyclopedias.

- ❖ Across consolidated categories of subgroups we observed that the proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience reporting that they use legal encyclopedias “frequently or very frequently” is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 10-19 years of experience reporting the same (12.4% and 2.8%, respectively).



#### D. Law Review/Law Journal Articles

Question 9 also asked practitioners how often they used law review/law journal articles when performing legal research for their practice.

- 589 respondents
- A small percentage of respondents reported using law review and journal articles “frequently” (7.3%) or “very frequently” (1.4%) in their research.
- Three-quarters of respondents reported using these articles “occasionally” (29.2%) or “rarely” (44.3%), while 17.8% reported “never” doing so.

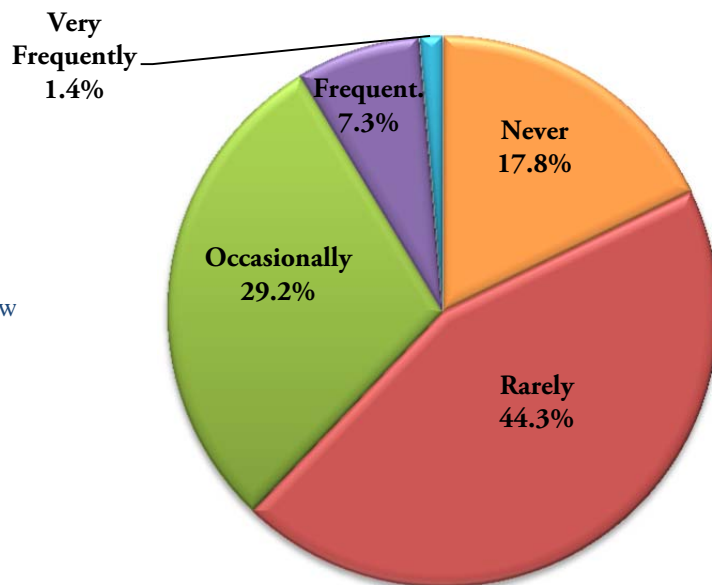


Figure 36. Frequency of Using Law Reviews/Law Journal Articles

- ❖ Analysis shows a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of law review and journal articles. *Generally speaking, across subgroups, the reported frequency of using law review and journal articles in research increases as years in practice increase.*

*E. American Law Reports (ALR)*

This portion of Question 9 asked practitioners how often they used American Law Reports (ALR) in their research.

- 588 respondents
- Only 4.4% saying they use ALR “frequently” or “very frequently” in their research.
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents report that they “never” (31.5%) or “rarely” (40.8%) use ALR in their research. Slightly under a quarter say they do so “occasionally” (23.3%).

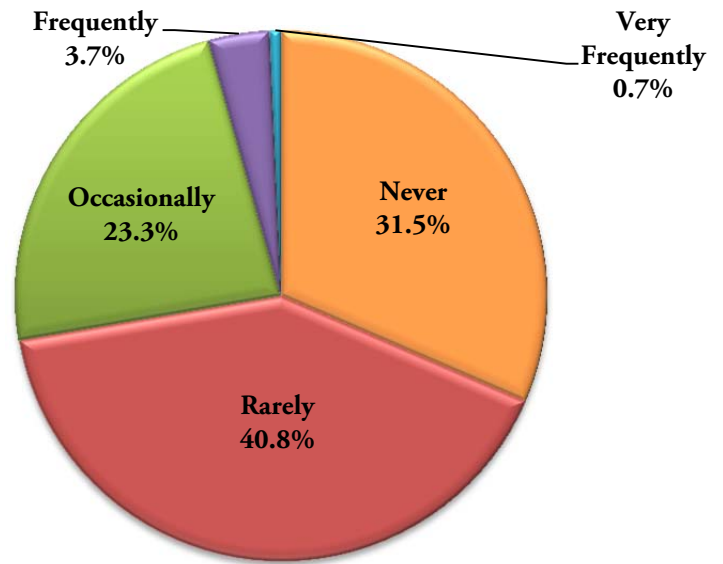


Figure 37. Frequency of Using American Law Reports

- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### F. Case Digests

As part of Question 9, attorneys were asked how often they utilized case digests when performing legal research for their practice.

- 585 respondents
- Less than 15% of respondents across all categories report using case digests “frequently” (10.6%) or “very frequently” (2.9%)
- More than 25% report that they “never” do so.
- The majority of respondents use case digests “rarely” (37.6%) or “occasionally” (23.8%).

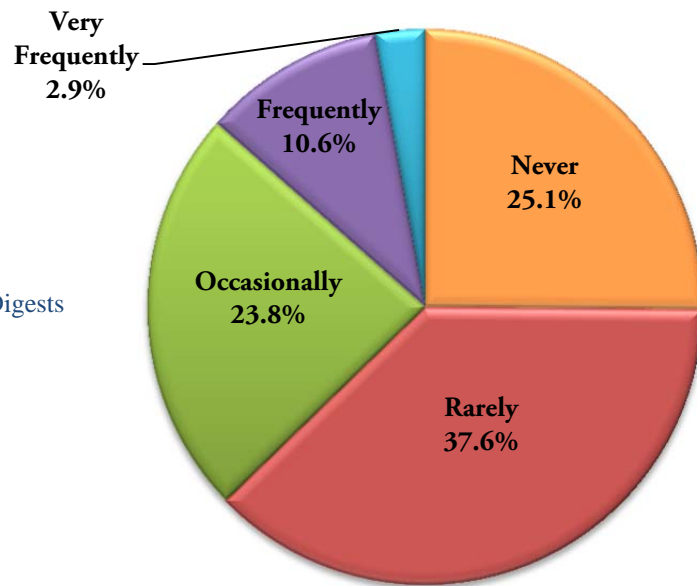
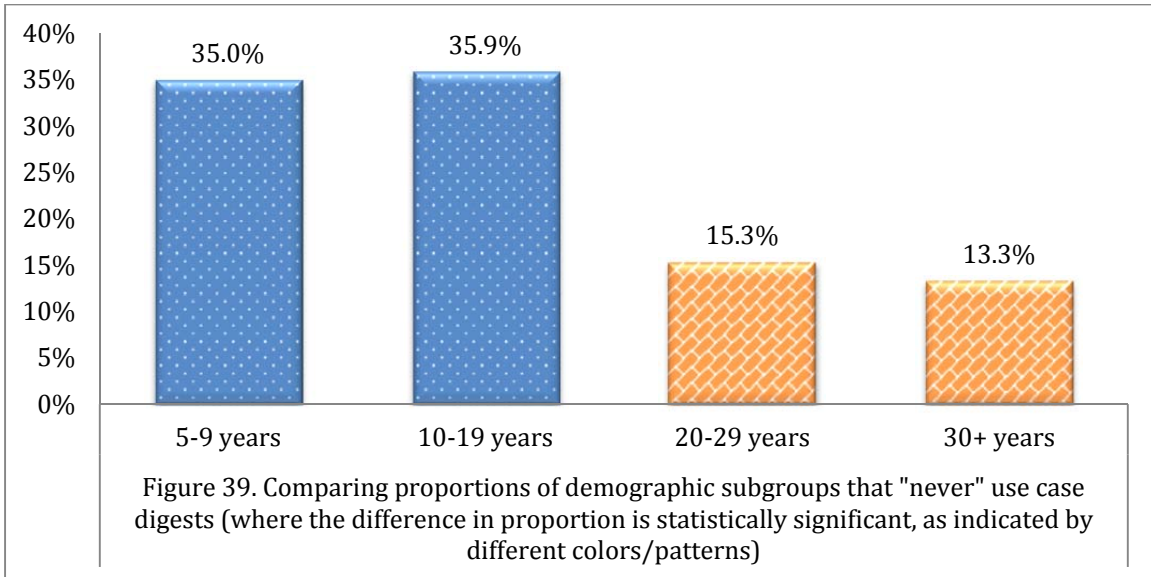


Figure 38. Frequency of Using Case Digests

- ❖ Analysis shows that there is a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of using case law digests; *as years in practice increase, frequency of using case digests increases as well, generally speaking.*
- ❖ Those with 30+ years of experience are more likely to report “occasionally” using case digests than those with 10-19 years of experience (32.7% and 16.6%, respectively).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 5-9 and 10-19 years of experience reporting they “never” use case digests (35.0% and 35.9%, respectively) is significantly greater than for those with 20-29 and 30+ years of experience (15.3% and 13.3%, respectively).

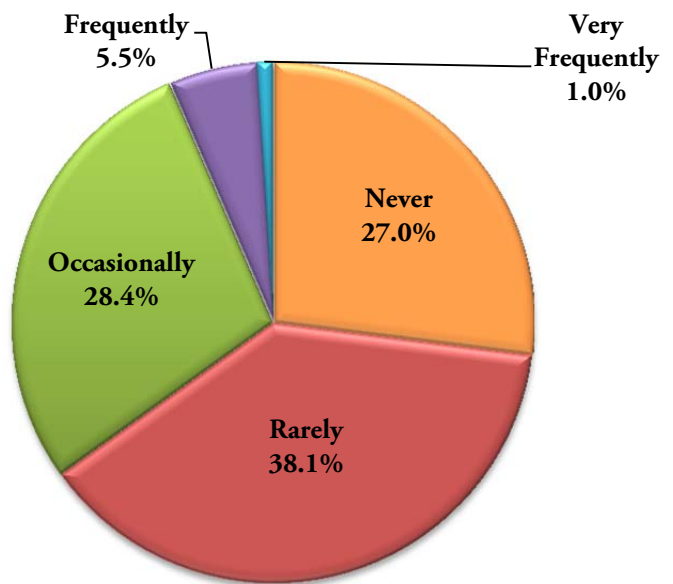


### G. Restatements

This portion of Question 9 focused on attorneys' use of Restatements in their legal research.

- 585 respondents
- Attorneys did not report heavy use of Restatements, with only 6.5% saying they use them “frequently” or “very frequently.”
- More than one-quarter of respondents reported “never” using Restatements, and another 38.1% say they “rarely” do so.
- Slightly more than a quarter (28.4%) reported using Restatements “occasionally.”

Figure 40. Frequency of Using Restatements



- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### H. Shepard's/KeyCite for Case Validation

In another part of Question 9, attorneys were asked, “When performing legal research for your practice, how often do you utilize Shepard’s/KeyCite for case validation?”

- 586 respondent
- A somewhat surprising 16.2% reported that they “never” used Shepard’s or KeyCite for case validation, while 18.6 % reported that they “rarely” used these citators for this purpose.
- Larger percentages of the respondents reported using Shepard’s or KeyCite for case validation either “frequently” (29.0%) or “very frequently” (23.0%), while 13.1% reported using Shepard’s/KeyCite for case validation “occasionally.”

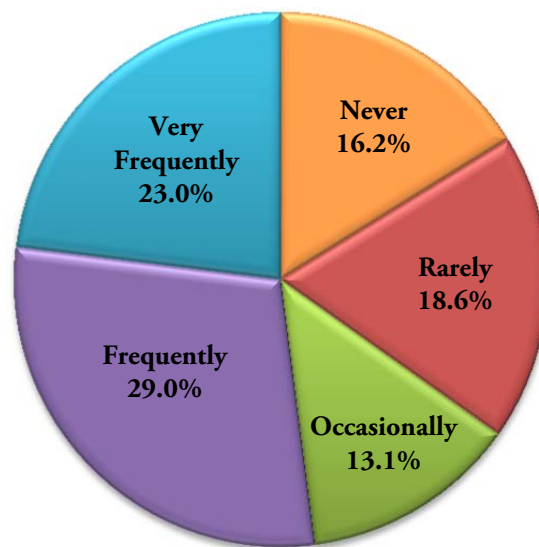
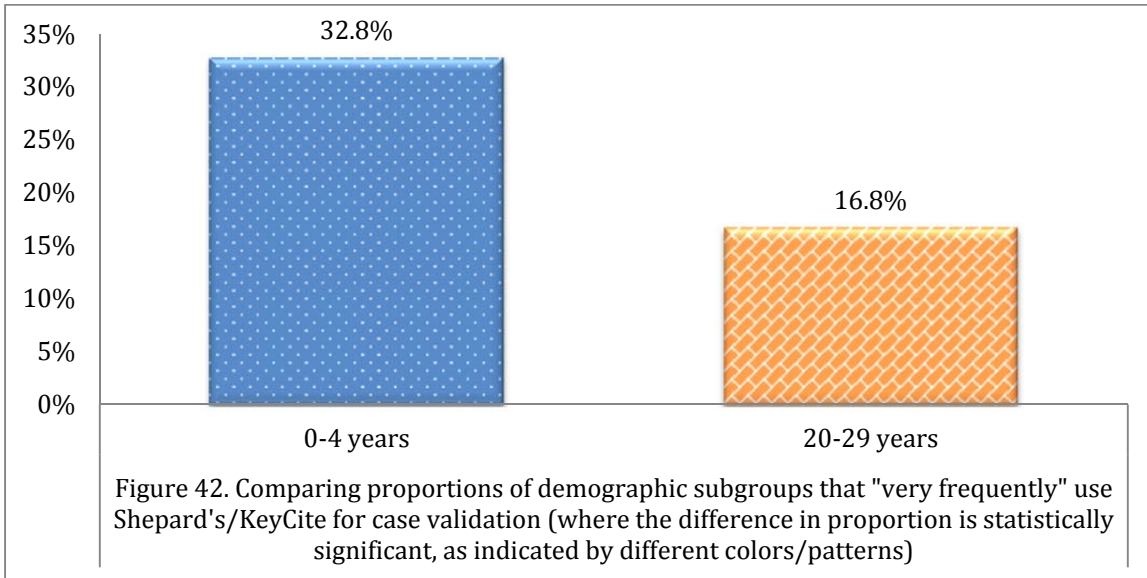


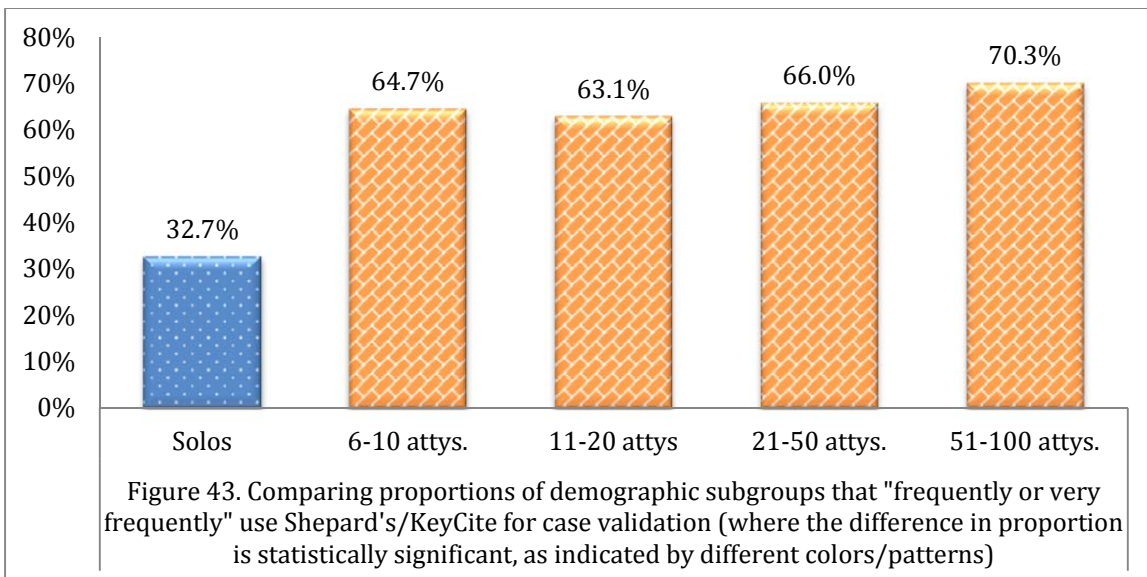
Figure 41. Frequency of Using Shepard’s/KeyCite for Case Validation

- ❖ We found a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and reported frequency of using Shepard’s or KeyCite for case validation. *Overall, across all subgroups, as years of experience increases, the reported frequency of Shepard’s/KeyCite use for case validation decreases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience reporting that they “occasionally” use Shepard’s or KeyCite for case validation (22.7%) is significantly greater than for those with 20-29 years in practice (13.3%).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “very frequently” use either of the citators in this way (32.8%) is significantly greater than for respondents with 20-29 years of experience (16.8%).



- ❖ We also found a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between size of office and frequency of using Shepard’s or KeyCite to validate cases. *Overall, across categories, the frequency of using these citators for case validation increases as office size increases.*
- ❖ The proportion of solo practitioners reporting that they use Shepard’s or KeyCite for validation “frequently or very frequently” (consolidated category) is significantly smaller (32.7%) than the proportion of respondents in offices of 6-10, 11-20, 21-50 or 51-100 attorneys reporting the same (64.7%, 63.1%, 66.0%, and 70.3%, respectively).



- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices with 200+ attorneys reporting that they “frequently or very frequently” use Shepard’s or KeyCite for case validation (36.6%) is significantly smaller than the proportion of respondents from offices of 6-10 or 51-100 attorneys reporting the same (64.7% and 70.3%, respectively).

### I. Shepard's/KeyCite for Further Research

Question 9 also asked practitioners how often they used Shepard's or KeyCite for "further research," as opposed to using these citators for case validation.

- 588 practitioners
- The highest percentage of respondents reported that they used Shepard's or KeyCite for further research "frequently" (26.9%).
- Other categories were fairly evenly split, with 20.2% reporting they "very frequently" use Shepard's/KeyCite for further research, 19.6% reported they "rarely" do, 18.0% saying "never," and 15.3% reporting "occasionally."

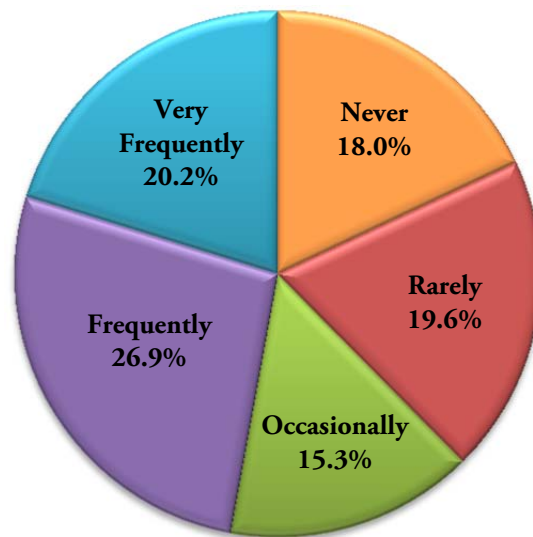
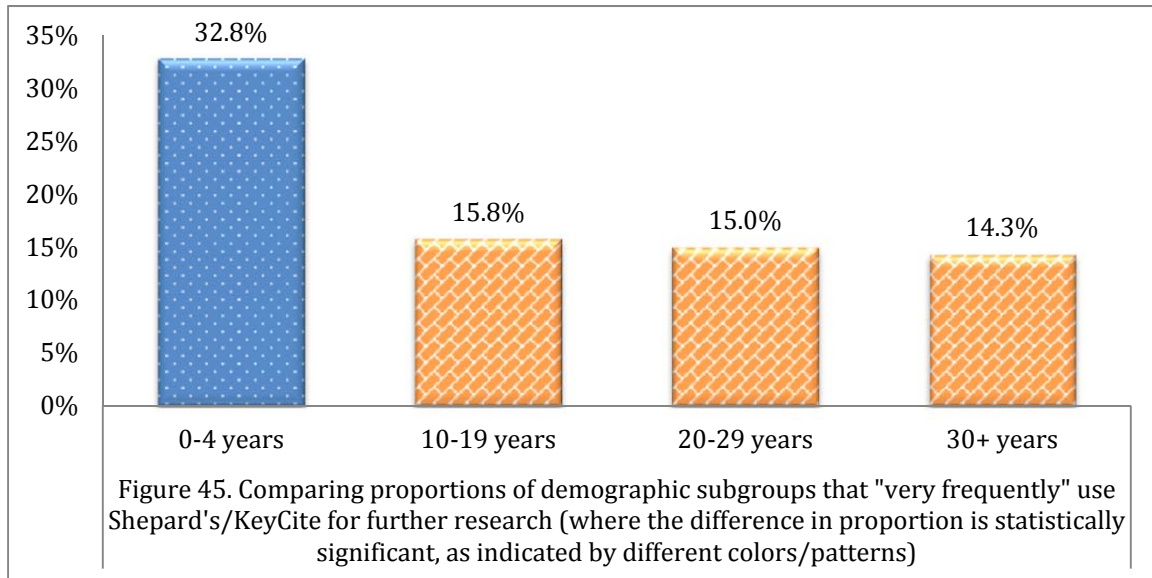


Figure 44. Frequency of Using Shepard's/KeyCite for Further Research

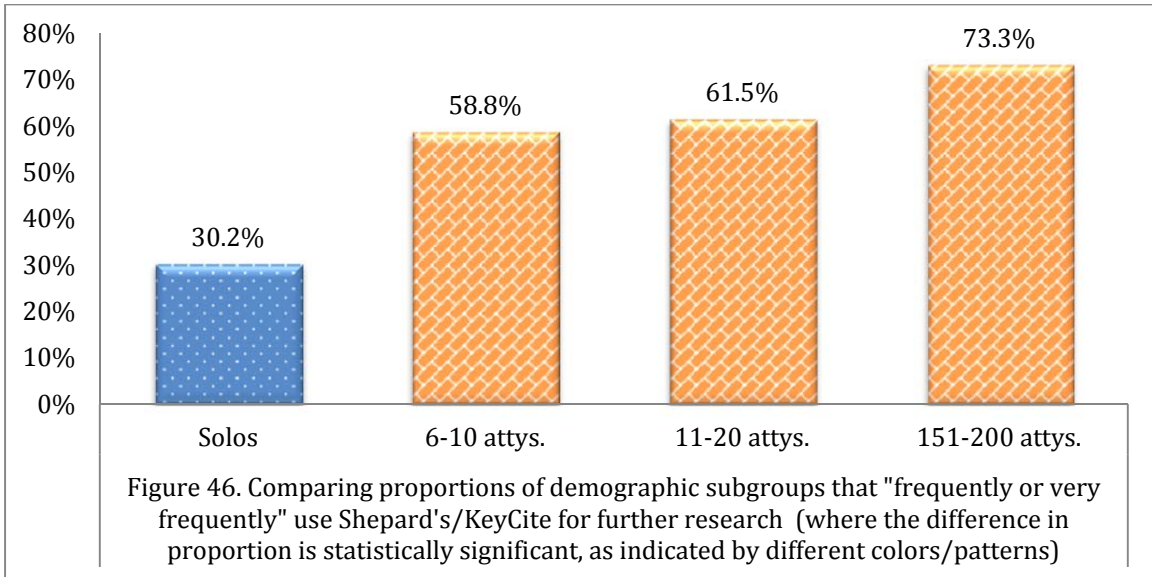
- ❖ Analysis of subgroups showed a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of using Shepard's or KeyCite for additional research. *Overall, across all subgroups, the frequency of using the citators for further research decreased as years in practice increased.*

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they use the citators for further research “very frequently” (32.8%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 10-19, 20-29, or 30+ years in practice who do so (15.8%, 15.0%, and 14.3%, respectively).



- ❖ We also found a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between size of office and frequency of using Shepard's or KeyCite for additional research. *Overall, across subgroups, as the size of office increases by subgroup, the reported frequency of using the citators for further research increases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices of 11-20 attorneys reporting that they “frequently or very frequently” do so is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents from offices of 200+ attorneys reporting the same (61.5% and 32.4%, respectively).

- ❖ Using consolidated categories, the proportion of solo practitioners reporting that they “frequently or very frequently” use these citators for additional research (30.2%) is significantly less than the proportion of respondents from offices of 6-10, 11-20, or 151-200 attorneys who do so (58.8%, 61.5%, and 73.3%, respectively).



### J. Looseleaf Services

Another research tool asked about in Question 9 was looseleaf services. Respondents were asked, “When performing legal research for your practice, how often do you utilize looseleaf services?”

- 585 respondents
- 40.3% reported “never” using looseleafs; one-third (33.3%) reported “rarely” using them; and 18.1% reported using them “occasionally.”
- Of those reporting more frequent use, 6.3% reported using them “frequently” and less than 2% reported using them “very frequently.”

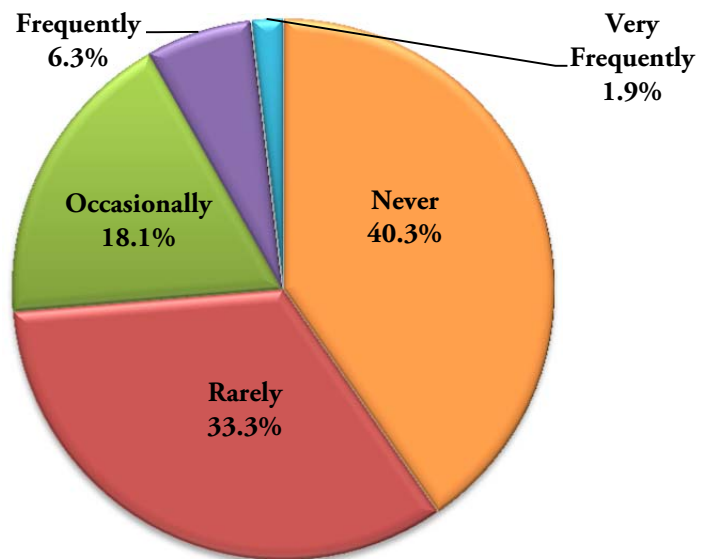
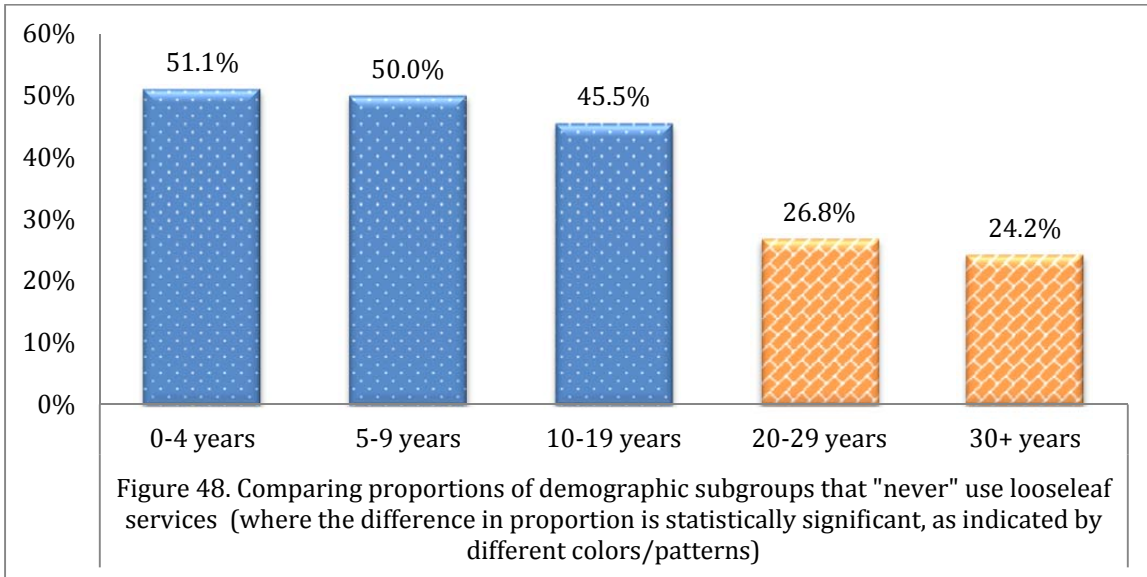


Figure 47. Frequency of Using Looseleaf Services

- ❖ We observed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of looseleaf services. *Overall, across subgroups, as the number of years in practice increases by category, the reported frequency of looseleaf use increases as well.*
- ❖ The proportion of those with 5-9 years of experience (8.2%) reporting occasional use of looseleafs is significantly less than the proportion of respondents with either 20-29 years (23.2%) or 30+ years of experience who do so (23.2%).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4, 5-9, or 10-19 years of experience (51.1%, 50%, and 45.5%, respectively) reporting that they “never” use looseleaf services is significantly greater than the proportion of those with either 20-29 or 30+ years in practice that report the same (26.8% and 24.2%, respectively).



### K. Sample Legal Forms

Question 9 also asked attorneys how often they use sample legal forms when performing legal research for their practice.

- 582 respondents
- Only a small percentage of respondents reported using sample forms “frequently” (13.2%) or “very frequently” (2.7%).
- The majority reported doing so “rarely” (29.7%) or “occasionally” (28.5%), while just over a quarter reported “never” using sample legal forms.

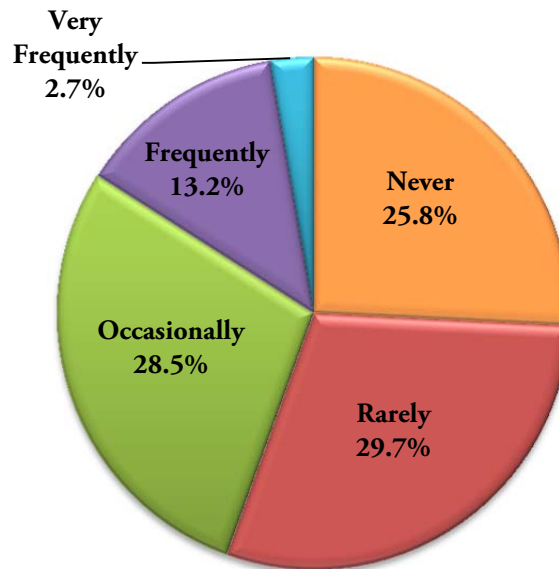
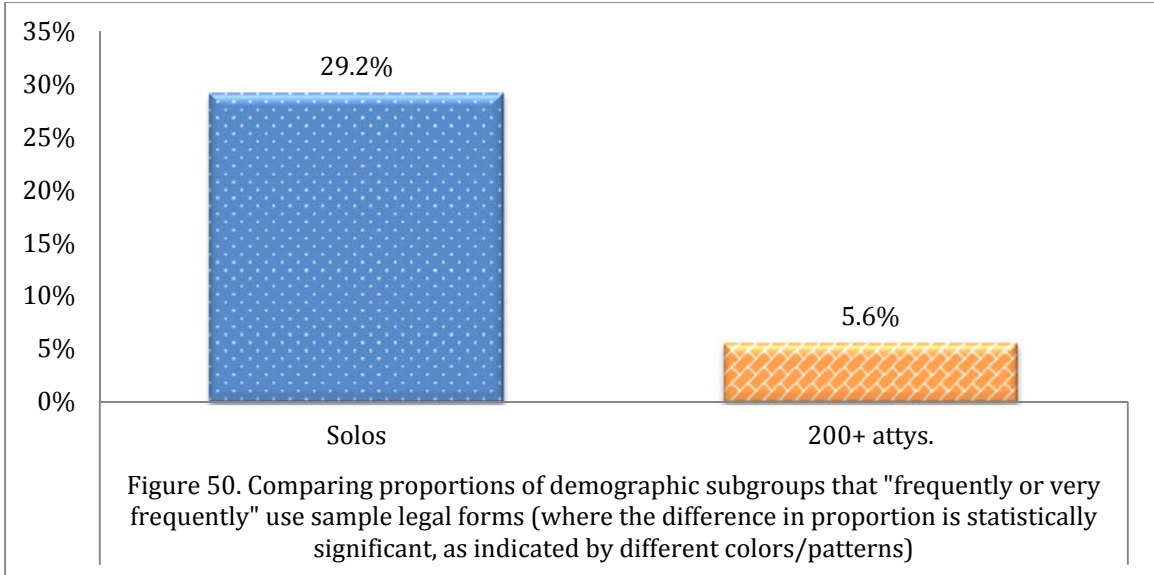


Figure 49. Frequency of Using Sample Legal Forms

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a moderately strong statistically significant negative relationship between office size and frequency of use of sample legal forms, *with frequency of use increasing as office size decreases*.
- ❖ The proportion of solos reporting they “never” use sample forms (14.2%) is significantly less than for those in offices of 200+ (42.3%), but also for those in offices of 11-20 (35.9%).

- ❖ Comparison of subgroups using consolidated categories showed that the proportion of solos reporting they “frequently or very frequently” use sample forms is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents in offices of 200+ reporting the same (29.2% and 5.6%, respectively).



### L. Litigation Resources

A portion of Question 9 asked attorneys how often they use litigation resources/discovery, jury instructions, etc. when performing legal research for their practice.

- 588 respondents
- Slightly more than half of respondents to this question reported using litigation resources “rarely” (27.6%) or “occasionally” (23.5%).
- Slightly less than a quarter of respondents reported “never” using these resources (22.1%), while slightly more than a quarter reported using them “frequently” (19.7%) or “very frequently” (6.6%).

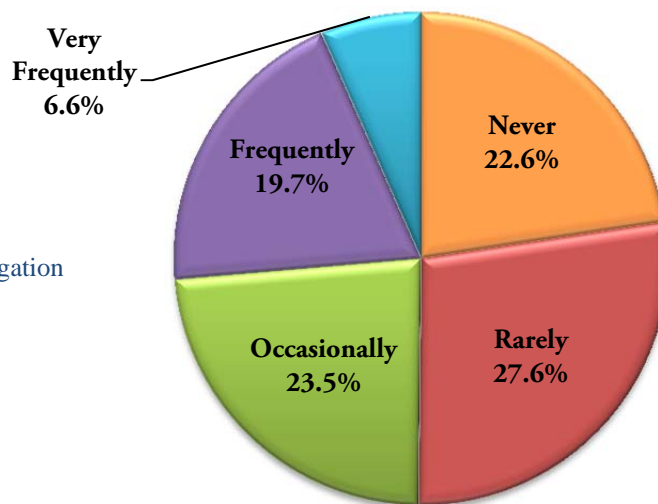
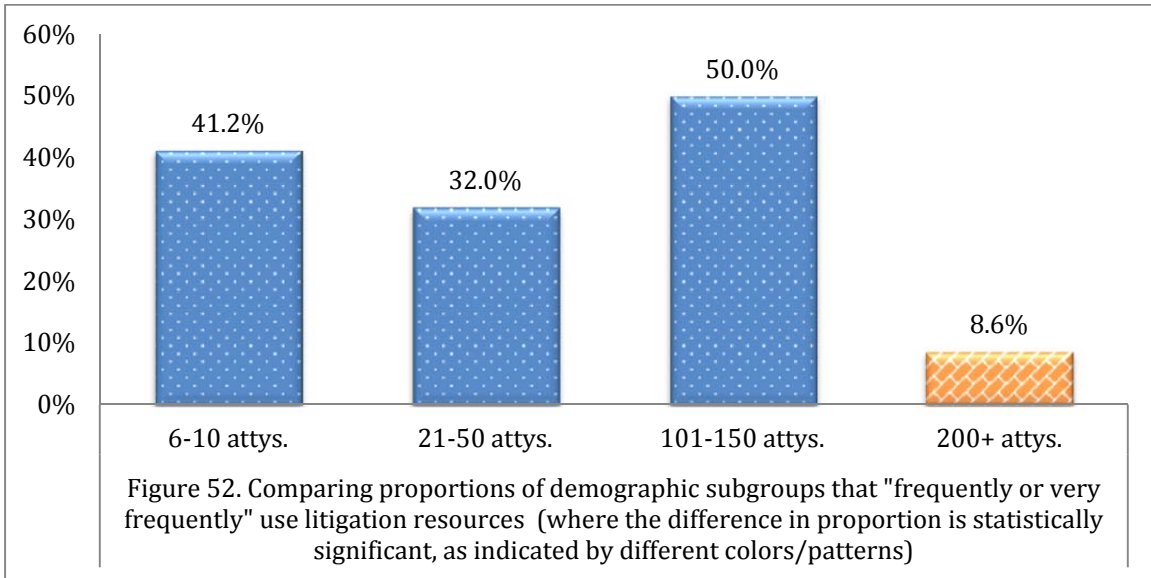


Figure 51. Frequency of Using Litigation Resources

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between office size and frequency of use of litigation resources, *with frequency of use increasing as office size increases*.
- ❖ Comparison of subgroups shows that the proportion of respondents from offices of 200+ reporting they “never” use litigation resources is significantly greater than for those from offices of 6-10 (38.6% and 11.8%, respectively).

- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices of 6-10 (41.2%), 21-50 (32.0%), or 101-150 (50.0%) reporting they use litigation resources “frequently or very frequently” is significantly greater than for those from offices of 200+ who report the same (8.6%).



### M. Transactional Resources/Guides

The next part of Question 9 asked attorneys how often they used transactional resources/guides when performing legal research.

- 588 respondents
- Only 15.5% of respondents reported using transactional resources “frequently” (10.8%) or “very frequently” (4.3%).
- Over one-third of respondents reported “never” using these resources, while nearly one-half reported using them “rarely” (28.1%) or “occasionally” (21.6%).

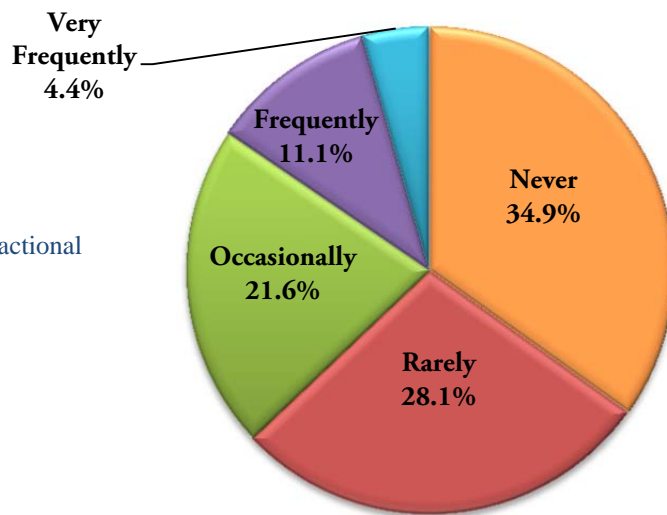


Figure 53. Frequency of Using Transactional Resources/Guides

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of transactional resources. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using transactional resources increases with years in practice, generally speaking.*
- ❖ There is a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and frequency of use of these resources, *with frequency of use decreasing as office size increases.*

## XI. SPECIFIC FREE INTERNET SOURCES

In Question 10, practitioners were asked about their use of specific free internet sources or source categories: “In the course of your normal practice, how often do you use the following free internet sources for legal research?” For each source listed, they were to select one of the following responses: “Very Frequently,” “Frequently,” “Occasionally,” “Rarely,” or “Never.”

### A. Google

The first free internet source asked about was Google.

- 593 respondents
- Only 6.7% reported “never” using Google for legal research.
- A full 28.7% of the respondents reported “very frequent” use of Google for legal research, the highest percentage of any category.
- Another 25.0% of the respondents reported using Google “frequently,” while 25.1% reported using it “occasionally” and 14.5% “rarely.”

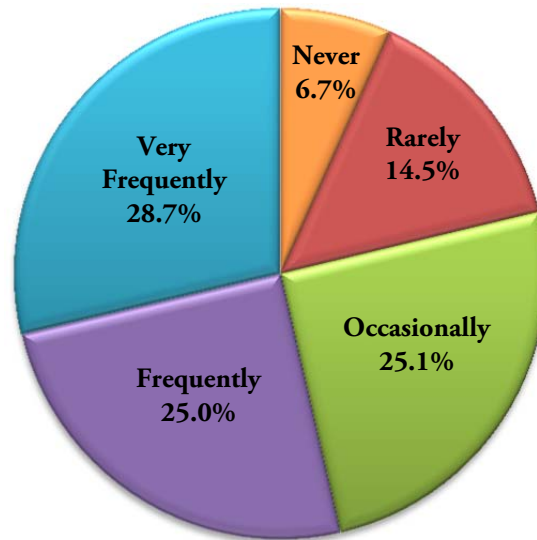
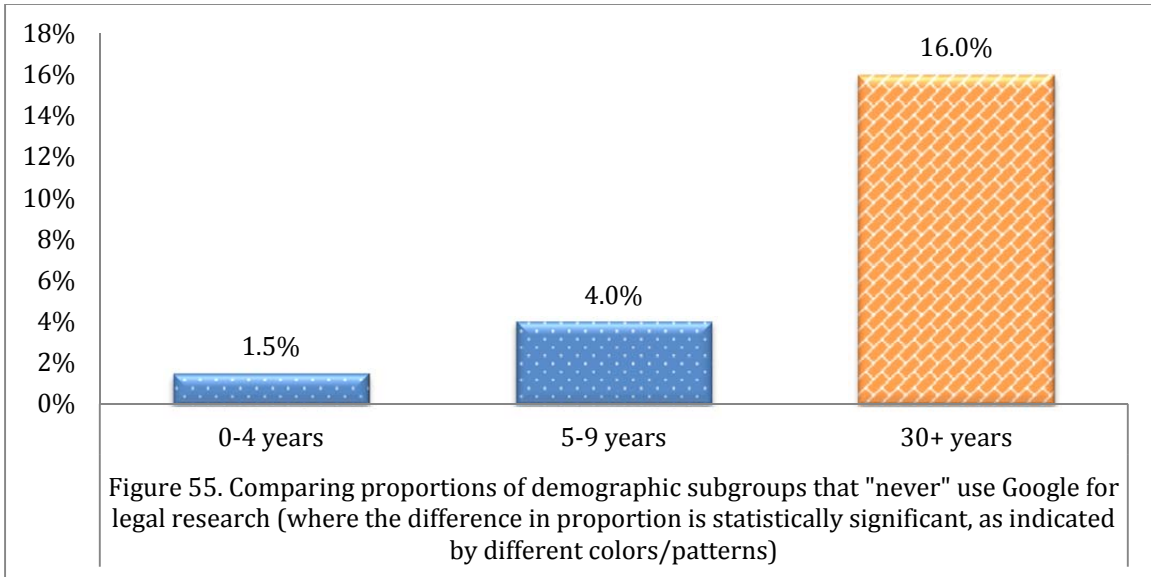


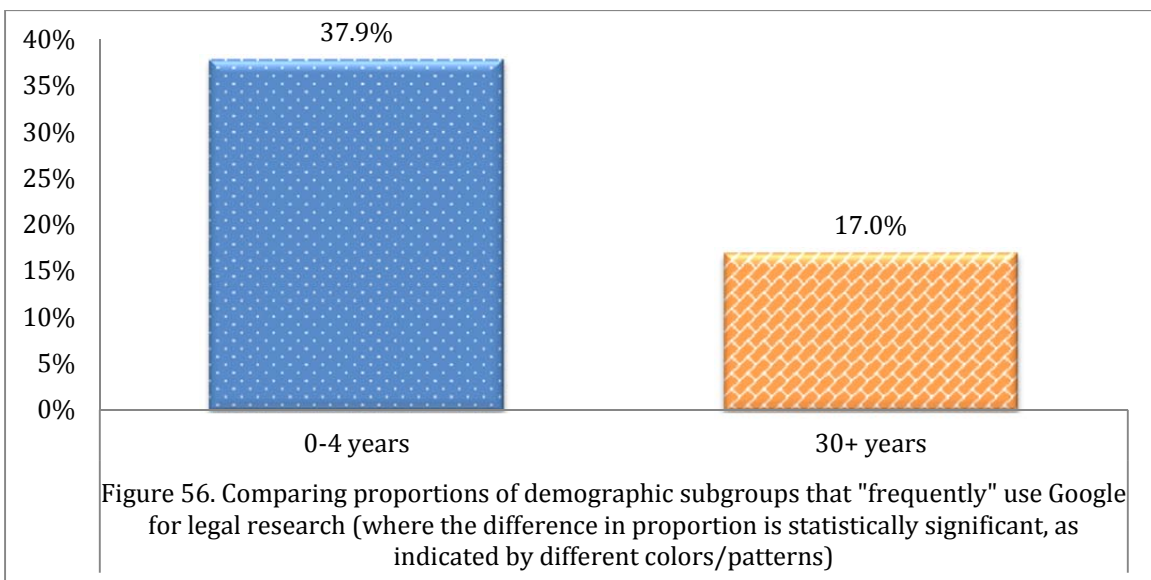
Figure 54. Frequency of Using Google for Legal Research

- ❖ We found that there is a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of Google in legal research. *Overall, across all subgroups, as years in practice increases, frequency of Google use in research generally decreases.*

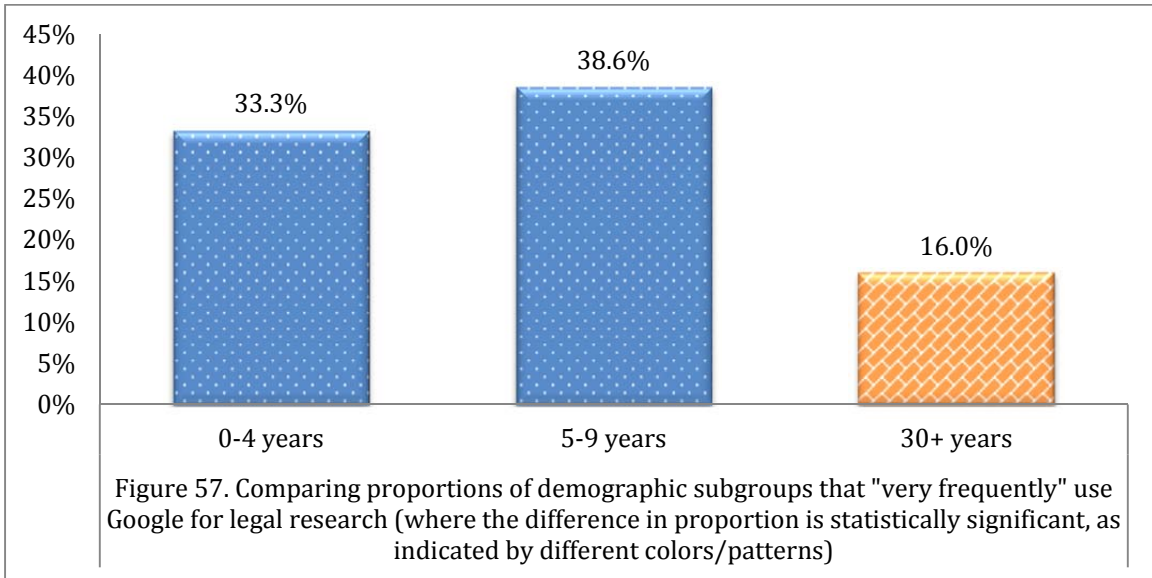
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience reporting that they “never” use Google in legal research (16.0%) is significantly greater than the proportion of those with 0-4 or 5-9 years of experience reporting “never” using Google for legal research (1.5% and 4.0%, respectively).



- ❖ The proportion of those with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “frequently” use Google for legal research is significantly greater than for those with 30+ years in practice (37.9% and 17.0%, respectively).



- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 or 5-9 years of experience reporting that they use Google “very frequently” (33.3% and 38.6%, respectively) is significantly greater than for those with 30+ years of experience (16.0%).



### B. Google Scholar

In Question 10, respondents were next asked how frequently they use Google Scholar for legal research.

- 581 respondents
- Perhaps surprisingly, well over half (56.5%) of respondents reported that they “never” use Google Scholar for legal research.
- 16.5% reported “rarely” using Google Scholar, while 11.4% reported using it “occasionally.”
- The percentages reporting more frequent use were even smaller, with 9.0% of respondents reporting using Google Scholar “frequently” for legal research and only 6.7% reporting using it “very frequently.”

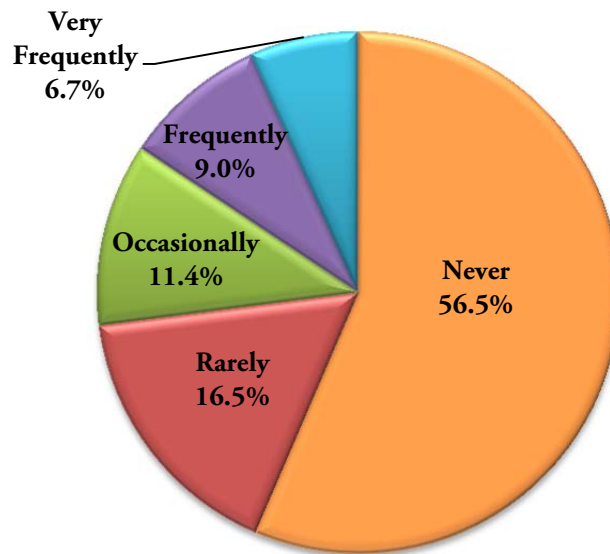
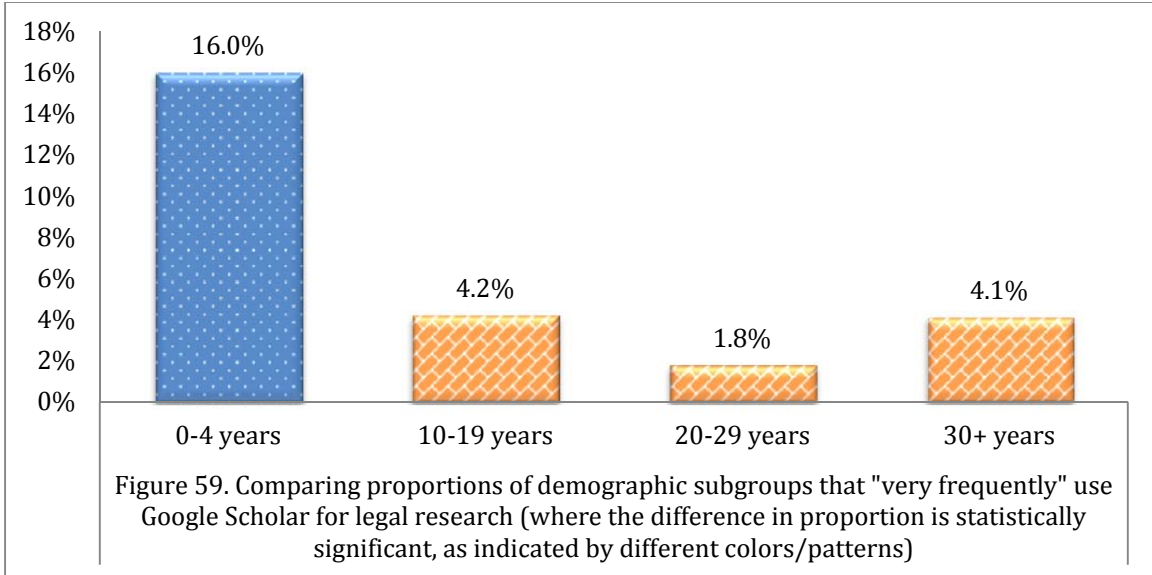


Figure 58. Frequency of Using Google Scholar for Legal Research

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups showed a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of Google Scholar. *Overall, across all subgroups, as years of experience increases, frequency of Google Scholar use for legal research decreases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “never” use Google Scholar for legal research (40.5%) is significantly smaller than the proportion of respondents with 10-19 or 20-29 years of experience reporting the same (62.0% and 67.3%, respectively).

- ❖ The proportion of those with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “very frequently” use Google Scholar (16.0%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents with 10-19, 20-29, or 30+ years of experience that report the same (4.2%, 1.8%, and 4.1%, respectively).

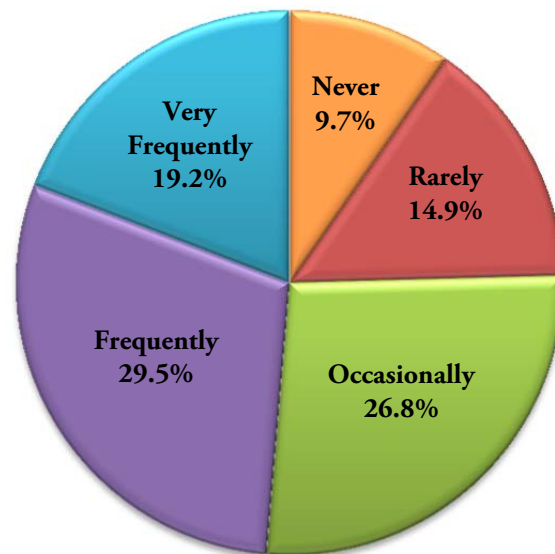


### C. Court Websites

As a part of Question 10, practitioners were asked how often they use free court websites for legal research in the course of their normal practice.

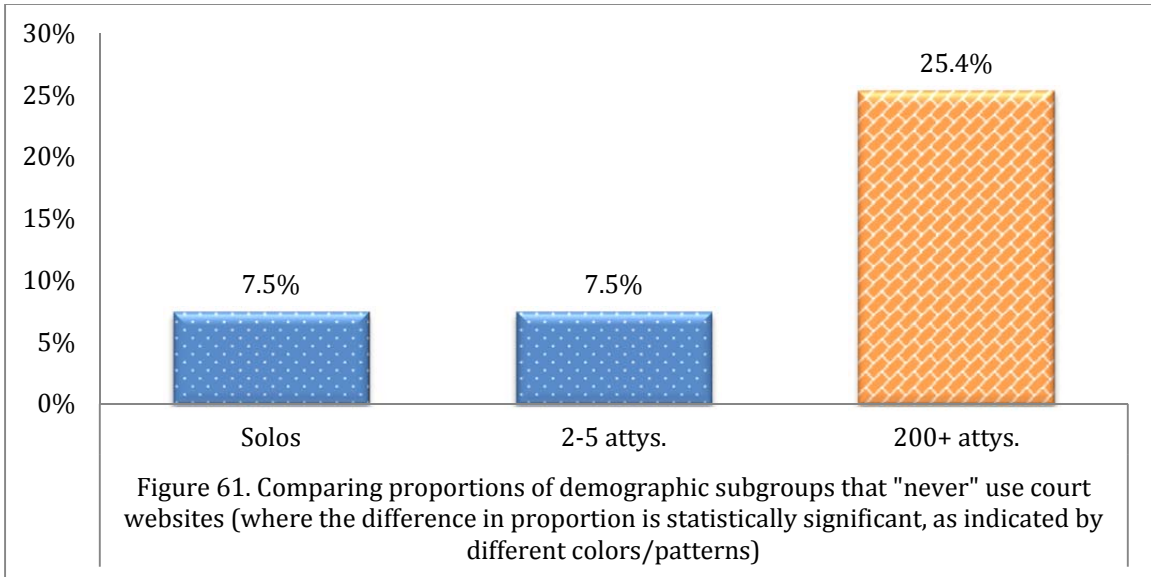
- 590 respondents
- Nearly half of respondents reported using court websites “frequently” (29.5%) or “very frequently” (19.2%).
- Over a quarter of respondents use court websites “occasionally” (26.8%), while the final quarter report using such websites “rarely” (14.9%) or “never” (9.7%).

Figure 60. Frequency of Using Court Websites for Legal Research



- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and frequency of use of court websites. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using court websites for legal research decreases as office size increases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices of 6-10 attorneys reporting they “rarely or occasionally” use court websites (22.1%) is significantly less than for those from offices of 2-5 (39.3%), 11-20 (50.8%), or 21-50 (52.0%) reporting the same.
- ❖ The proportion of respondents from offices of 6-10 attorneys reporting they “frequently or very frequently” use court websites is significantly greater than for those from offices of 2-5 that report the same (69.1% and 45.2%, respectively).

- ❖ When using consolidated frequency categories, we found that respondents from offices of 200+ attorneys were more likely to report “never” using court websites (25.4%) when compared with solos or those from offices of 2-5 attorneys (both 7.5%).

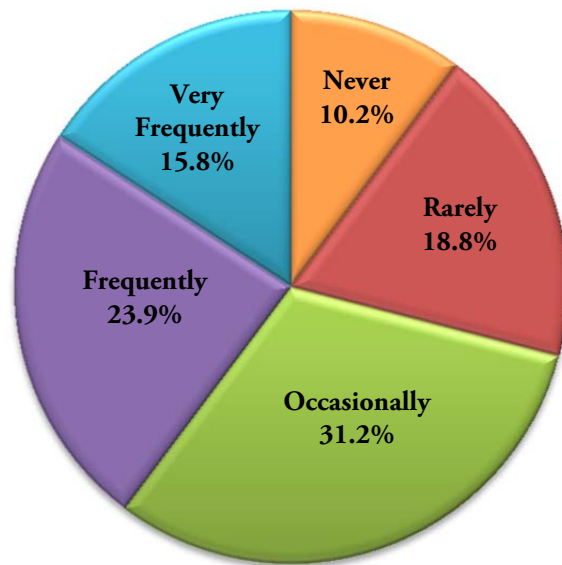


*D. Government Legislative Websites*

Question 10 also asked attorneys how often they use government legislative websites.

- 589 respondents
- Half of respondents reported using government legislative websites “rarely” (18.8%) or “occasionally” (31.2%).
- More than one-third report doing so “frequently” (23.9%) or “very frequently” (15.8%).
- Approximately 10% of respondents report “never” using government legislative websites.

Figure 62. Frequency of Using Government Legislative Websites for Legal Research



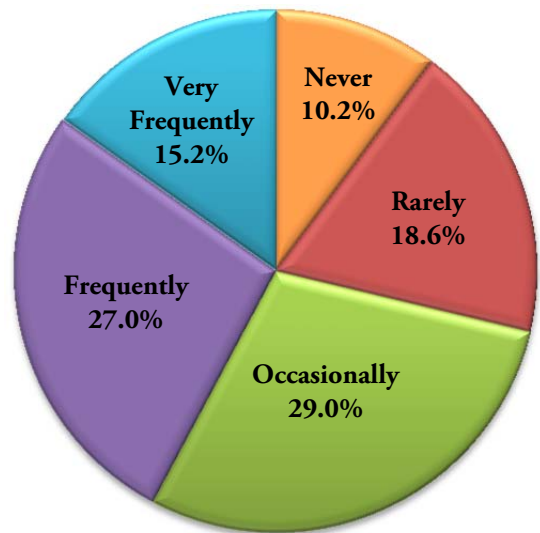
- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

*E. Government Agency Websites*

A portion of Question 10 asked practitioners how frequently they use government agency websites.

- 587 respondents
- Over 40% reported using agency websites “frequently” (27.1%) or “very frequently” (15.2%).
- Less than half reported doing so “occasionally” (29.1%) or “rarely” (18.6%).
- Similarly to legislative websites, approximately 10% of practitioners say they never use agency websites.

Figure 63. Frequency of Using Government Agency Websites for Legal Research



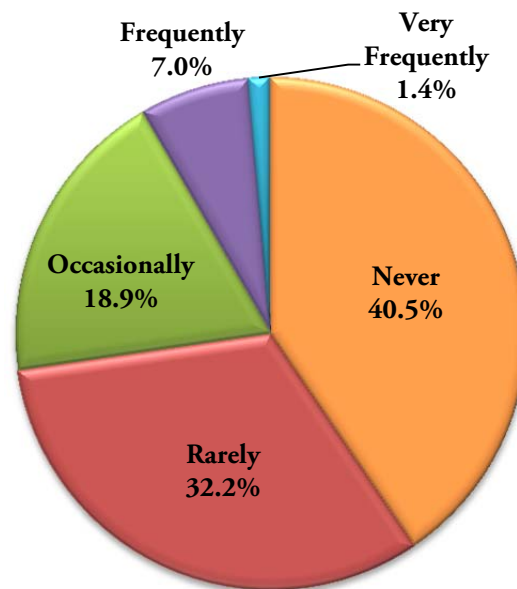
- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### F. Legal Blogs

Question 10 also asked attorneys how frequently they use legal blogs in their legal research.

- 587 respondents
- The majority of respondents reported “rarely” (32.2%) or “occasionally” (18.9%) using legal blogs for legal research.
- The largest proportion of respondents reported “never” (40.5%) using these resources.
- Only 8.3% of respondents say they use legal blogs “frequently” or “very frequently” for legal research.

Figure 64. Frequency of Using Legal Blogs for Legal Research



- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

### G. Law Firm Websites

As part of Question 10, practitioners were asked, “In the course of your normal practice, how often do you use law firm web sites for legal research?”

- 587 respondents
- Nearly 40% reported that they “never” use law firm web sites, while approximately the same number reported “rarely” using them.
- The percentage of respondents using them “occasionally” dropped to 15.8%.
- Only 4.4% of the respondents reported using law firm web sites “frequently”, and only 1.4% reported very frequent use of them.

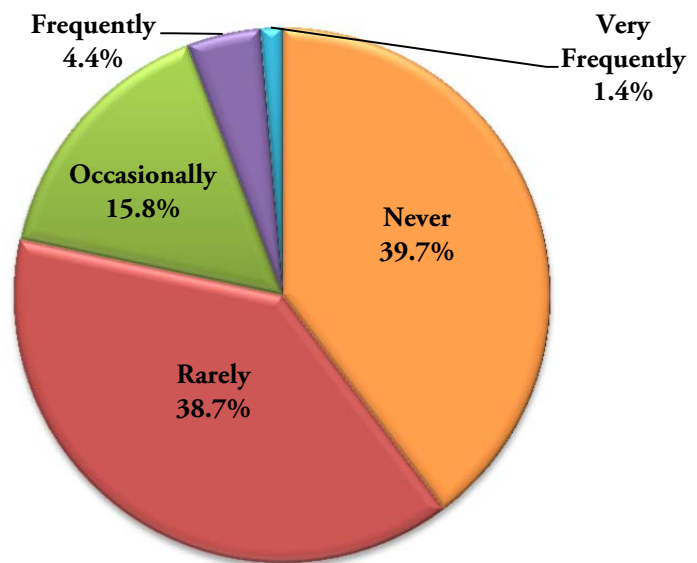


Figure 65. Frequency of Using Law Firm Websites for Legal Research

- ❖ We found a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of law firm web sites. *Overall, across subgroups, as the years of experience by subgroup increases, the frequency of use reported decreases. No significant differences between subgroups were observed.*

### H. Law School Library Websites

As part of Question 10, practitioners were asked how often they use law school library websites for legal research.

- 589 respondents
- Over half reported “never” using law school library websites for legal research.
- Nearly half reported doing so “rarely” (32.8%) or “occasionally” (12.4%).
- Only a small percentage reported using law school library websites “frequently” (2.4%) or “very frequently” (2.0%) for legal research.

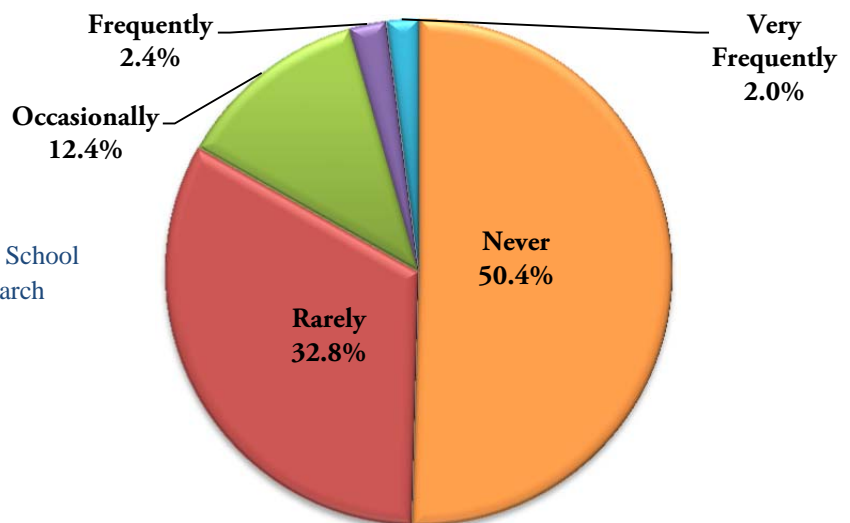
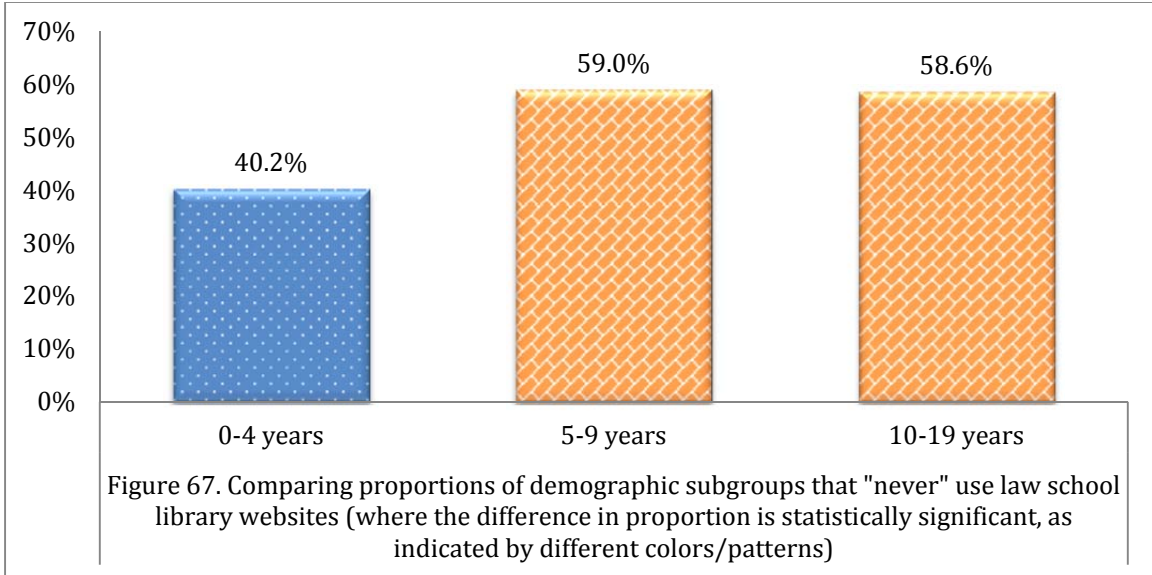


Figure 66. Frequency of Using Law School Library Websites for Legal Research

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups using consolidated frequency categories shows a weak but statistically significant relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of law school library websites.

- ❖ When comparing subgroups we found that the proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “never” use law school library websites (40.2%) was significantly less than the proportion of respondents with 5-9 or 10-19 years of experience reporting the same (59.0% and 58.6%, respectively).



- ❖ There is also a weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and frequency of use of law school library websites, *with frequency of use decreasing as office size increases, generally speaking.*

### I. Non-profit Organization Websites

In this portion of Question 10 attorneys were asked how frequently they use free non-profit organization websites in their research.

- 572 respondents
- Slightly more than three-quarters of respondents reported that they “never” (44.6%) or “rarely” (32.5%) use non-profit websites.
- Only a handful reported doing so “frequently” (5.6%) or “very frequently” (2.3%).
- Fifteen percent of respondents reported using non-profit websites “occasionally.”

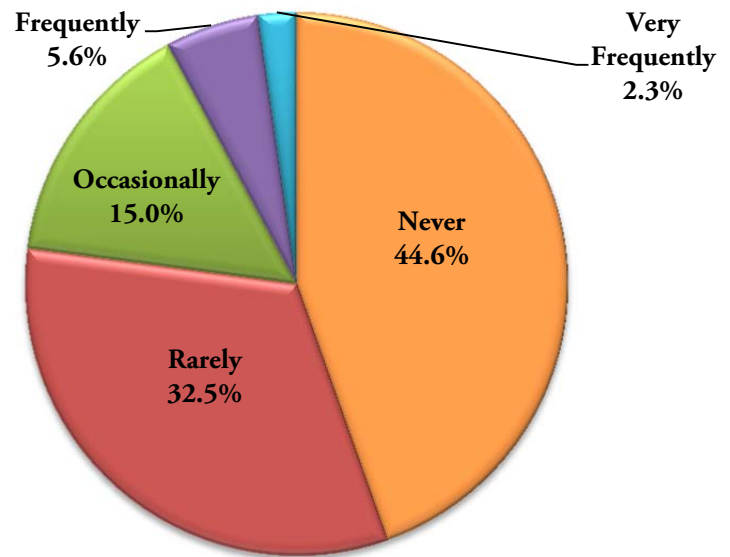


Figure 68. Frequency of Using Non-profit Organization Websites for Legal Research

- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows that there is a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between years of experience and frequency of use of nonprofit websites, *with frequency of use decreasing as years of experience increases.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 0-4 years of experience reporting that they “rarely” use nonprofit websites is significantly greater than for those with 10-19 years of experience (39.4% and 23.2%, respectively).
- ❖ Analysis of subgroups also shows a very weak but statistically significant negative relationship between office size and the frequency of use of nonprofit websites, *with frequency of use decreasing as office size increases.*

## XII. NEW RESEARCH PLATFORMS

Question 11 of the survey asked attorneys which of the new research platforms they were using. Respondents were asked to select all answers that applied. Possible responses included “Bloomberg Law,” “Lexis Advance,” “WestlawNext,” and “None of these.” This question received 588 responses.

### A. Bloomberg Law

- Only 2% of respondents reported that they were using Bloomberg Law at the time of the survey.

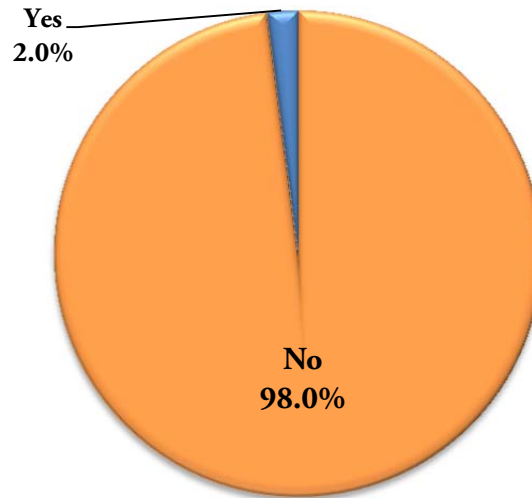


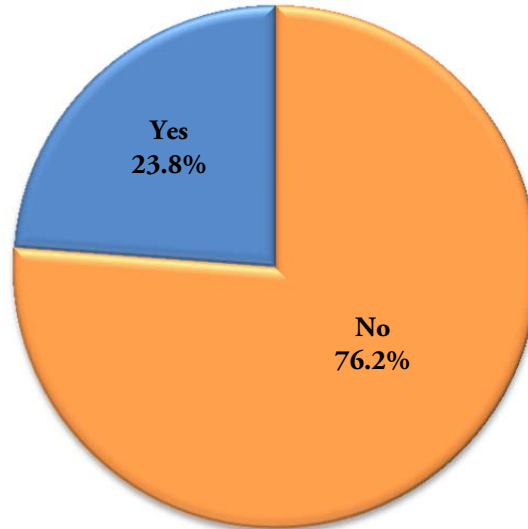
Figure 69. Frequency of Using Bloomberg Law

- ❖ No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years in practice or office size for this question.

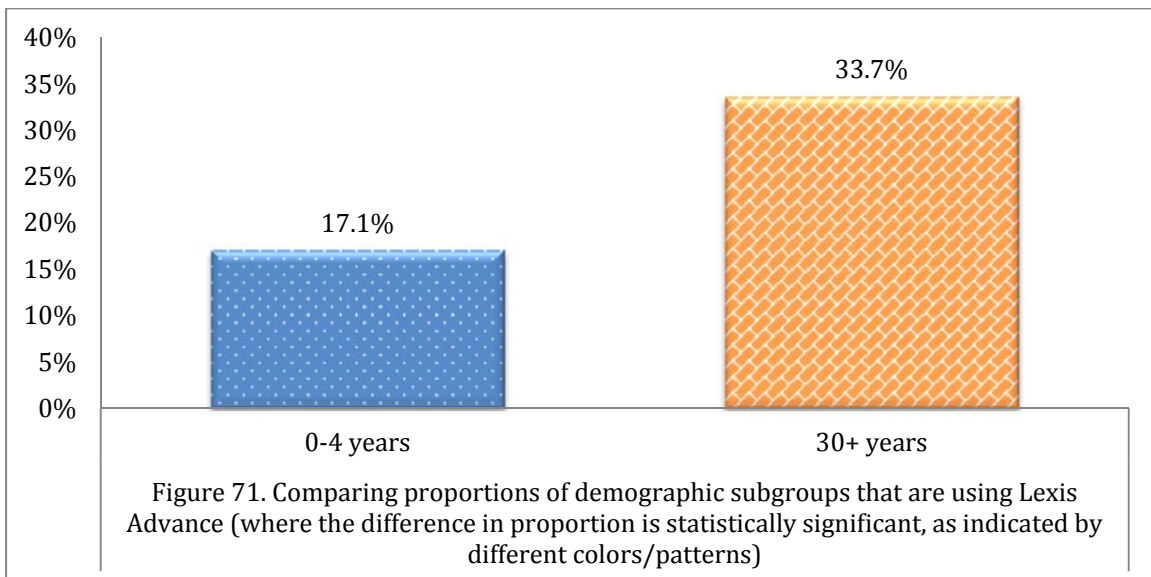
*B. Lexis Advance*

- Only 23.8% of respondents reported that they were using Lexis Advance at the time of the survey.

Figure 70. Use of Lexis Advance



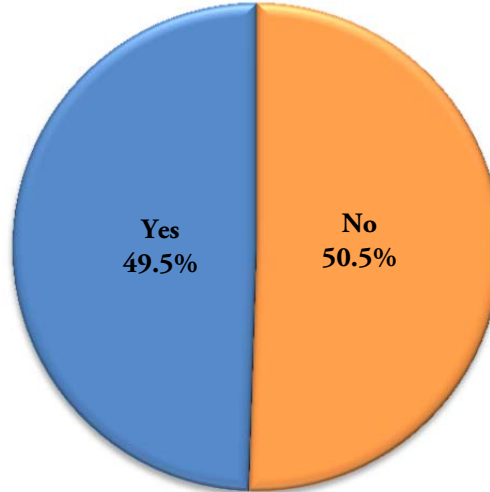
- ❖ We found a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between years of experience and the use of Lexis Advance at the time of the survey. *Overall, across all experience categories, the percentage of respondents reporting that they use Lexis Advance increases with years of experience in practice.*
- ❖ The proportion of respondents with 30+ years of experience reporting that they used Lexis Advance was significantly greater than for those with 0-4 years of experience (33.7% and 17.1%, respectively).



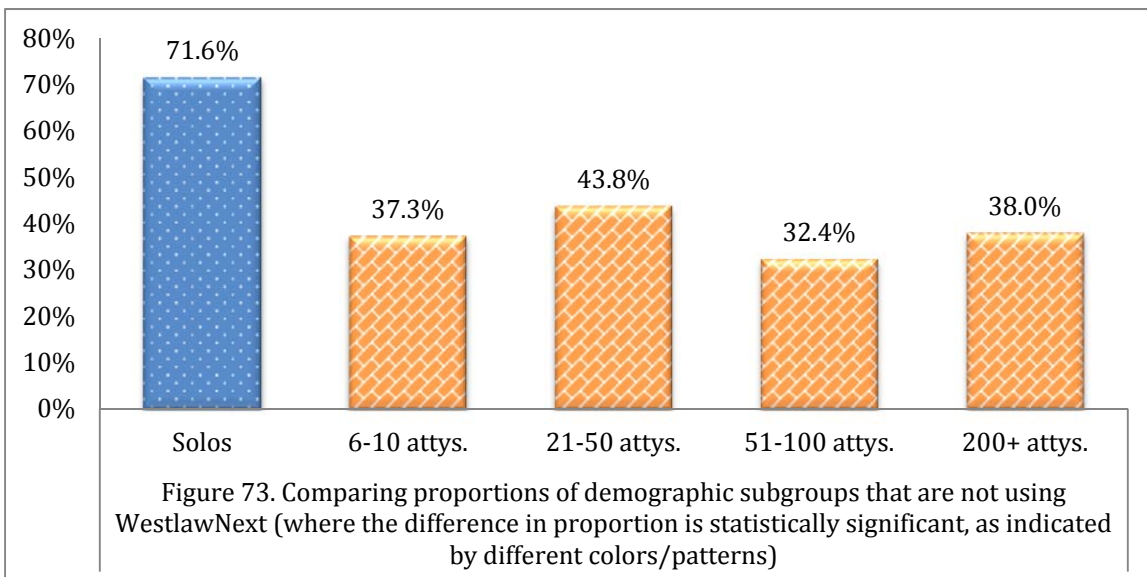
### C. WestlawNext

- Nearly half of respondents reported using WestlawNext at the time of the survey.

Figure 72. Use of WestlawNext



- ❖ We found a moderately strong statistically significant positive relationship between office size and use of WestlawNext. *Generally, across all office size subgroups, the proportion of respondents reporting use of WestlawNext increases with office size.*
- ❖ In terms of differences between subgroups, the proportion of solo practitioners reporting that they are not using WestlawNext (71.6%) is significantly greater than the proportion of respondents of offices with 6-10 attorneys (37.3%), 21-50 attorneys (43.8%), 51-100 attorneys (32.4%) and 200+ attorneys (38.0%).

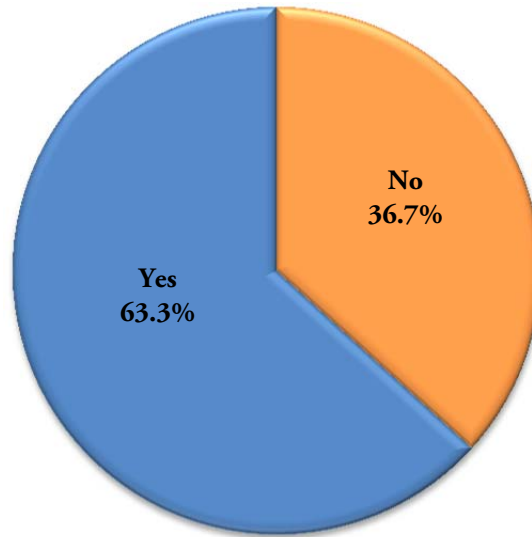


### D. New Research Platforms

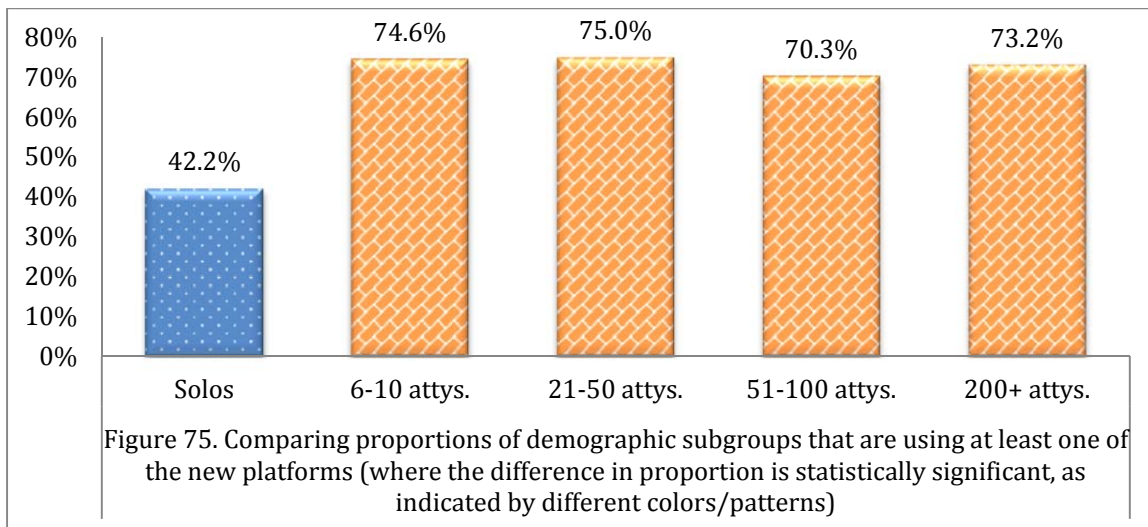
The final part of Question 11 allowed respondents to indicate whether they were not using any of the new research platforms.

- A sizeable minority of respondents—more than one-third—reported they were not using any of the new research platforms at the time of the survey.

Figure 74. Use of at Least One of the New Platforms



- ❖ We found a moderately strong statistically significant positive relationship between office size and use of one or more of the new platforms. *Overall, across subgroups, the frequency of using one of the new platforms increases as size of office increases.*
- ❖ Analysis of subgroups shows that a significantly smaller number of those using the new platforms are solo practitioners (42.2%) when compared to those in offices of 6-10 (74.6%), 21-50 (75.0%), 51-100 (70.3%), and 200+ (73.2%).



### **XIII. RESEARCH SKILLS OF RECENT LAW SCHOOL GRADUATES**

Question 12 asked attorneys to rate the research skills of recent law school graduates. The question specifically asked, "In your opinion, how well do recent law school graduates perform the following components of legal research?" Possible responses included: "Very Well," "Moderately Well," "Adequately," "Poorly," or "Unacceptably." Attorneys were asked to skip the question if they did not work with recent law school graduates. They were also given an option of selecting "N/A" when answering any of the specific questions. Because of this, the response rate was quite a bit lower for this question than for previous questions, ranging from a low of 174 respondents (28.85% of the total responding to the survey as a whole) to a high of 255 (42.28%). Analysis was carried out to see if the respondents that answered the question about at least one of the listed research components differed from those that did not. The two groups were not found to be distinguishable on the basis of years of experience but a moderately strong statistically significant positive relationship was observed between size of office and responding to at least one of the questions. Generally speaking, as size of office increases, the likelihood that a respondent answered at least one of these questions increased as well. No statistically significant relationships were observed on the basis of years of experience or office size on any of part of Question 12.

*A. Develop Effective Research Plans*

This question asked attorneys how well recent law school graduates do developing an effective research plan.

- 253 respondents
- Nearly half of respondents said that recent law school graduates were “adequate” (45.8%) at developing an effective research plan.
- Just over one-third said they did so “moderately well” (27.3%) or “very well” (7.1%), meaning approximately 80% said recent law school graduates develop effective research plans adequately or better.
- A very small percentage (1.6%) reported that recent graduates performed “unacceptably” in this area, while 18.2% said they did so “poorly.”

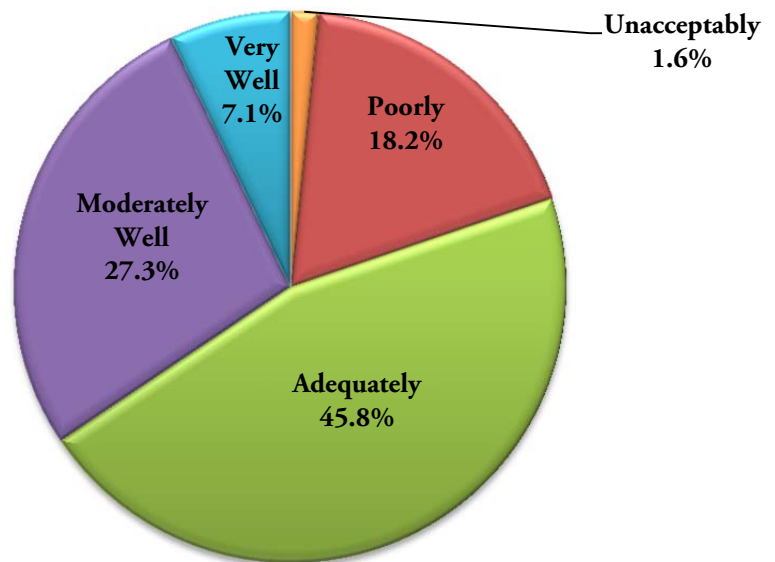


Figure 76. Develop Effective Research Plans

### B. Using Secondary Sources Effectively

Attorneys were next asked how well recent graduates perform at using secondary sources effectively.

- 240 respondents
- Slightly less than half of respondents reported that recent law school graduates were “adequate” at using secondary sources effectively.
- Nearly 30% said they did so “moderately well” (22.5%) or “very well” (7.1%), meaning three-quarters of respondents believe recent graduates are adequate or better at using secondary sources effectively.
- The other quarter of respondents said recent graduates performed “poorly” (23.7%) or “unacceptably” (2.5%) in this area.

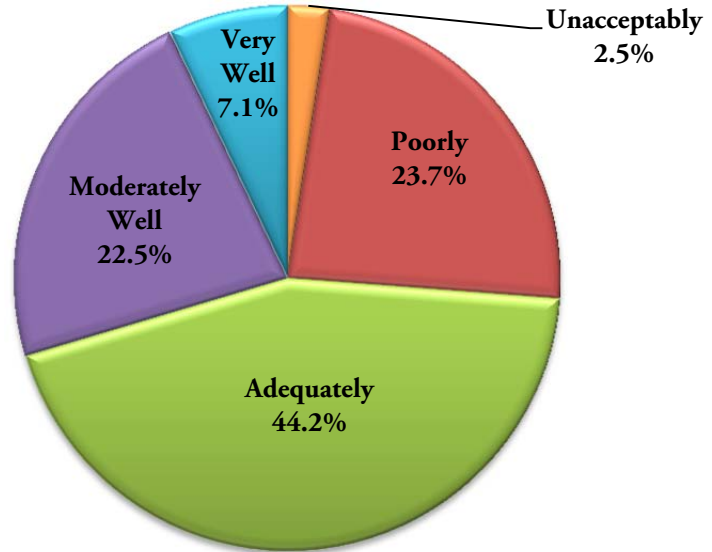


Figure 77. Use Secondary Sources Effectively

### C. Critical Thinking in Evaluating Relevance

This question asked respondents how well recent law school graduates use critical thinking to evaluate the relevance of case law and other primary authority.

- 255 respondents
- Four-fifths of respondents said recent graduates do this adequately or better, with 42.4% saying it is done “adequately,” 30.6% saying “moderately well,” and 7% saying “very well.”
- Nearly 20% said “poorly” and only 2% said “unacceptably.”

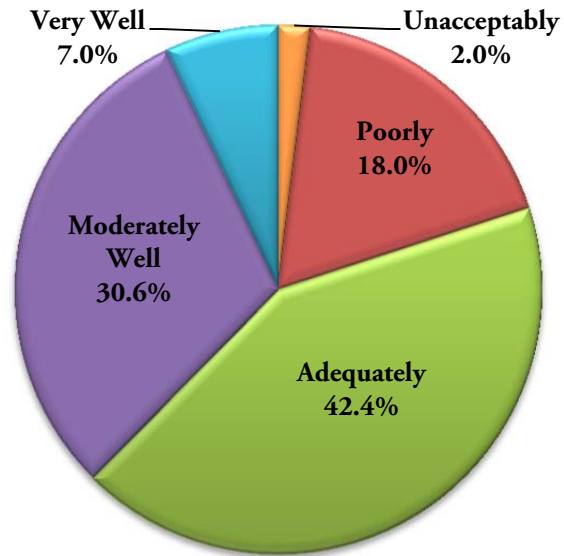


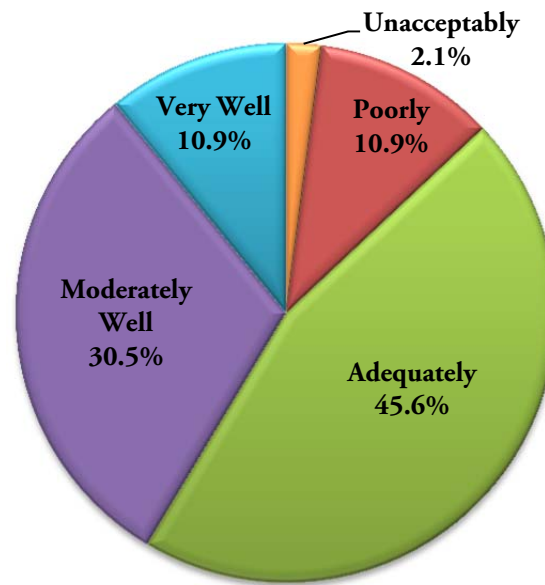
Figure 78. Critical Thinking in Evaluating Relevance

*D. Develop Appropriate Search Protocols*

This question asked attorneys their opinion on how well recent law school graduates develop appropriate search protocols, including terms and connectors.

- 239 respondents
- Nearly 90% say recent graduates develop appropriate search protocols “adequately” (45.6%), “moderately well” (30.5%), or “very well” (10.9%).
- Only 13% say recent graduates perform “unacceptably” (2.1%) or “poorly” (10.9%) in this area.

Figure 79. Develop Effective Search Protocols

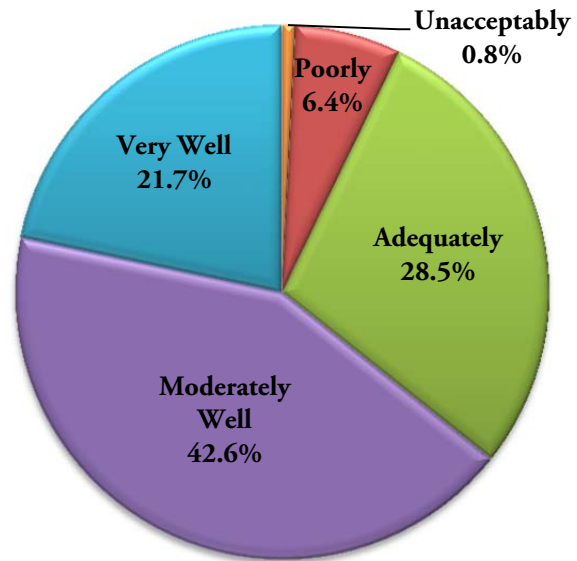


*E. Research Case Law*

Attorneys were then asked how well recent graduates research case law.

- 249 respondents
- Over 90% said recent law school graduates research case law adequately or better.
- Nearly two-thirds say they do so “moderately well” (42.6%) or “very well” (21.7%).
- Only a small percentage of respondents say recent graduates research case law “poorly” (6.4%) or “unacceptably” (0.8%).

Figure 80. Research Case Law



*F. Research Statutes*

The next question focused on how well recent graduates research statutes.

- 250 respondents
- Nearly 90% of respondents to this question said recent law school graduates research statutes adequately or better.
- Over half said “moderately well” (38.8%) or “very well” (16.8%), while nearly one-third said “adequately” (32.4%).
- 12% indicated that recent graduates research statutes “poorly” (10.0%) or “unacceptably” (2.0%).

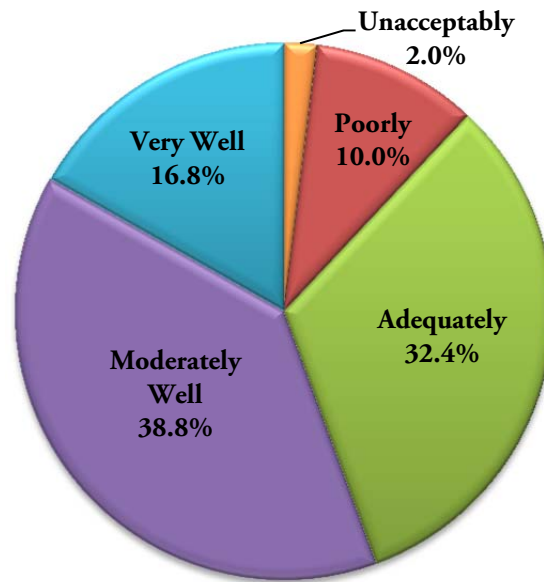


Figure 81. Research Statutes

### G. Research Regulations

Attorneys were then asked how well recent graduates research regulations.

- 223 respondents
- One-quarter said recent law school graduates research regulations “poorly” and 4% said they did so “unacceptably.”
- Approximately 38% indicated recent graduates research regulations “adequately,” while nearly one-third say they do so “moderately well” (24.2%) or “very well” (8.5%).

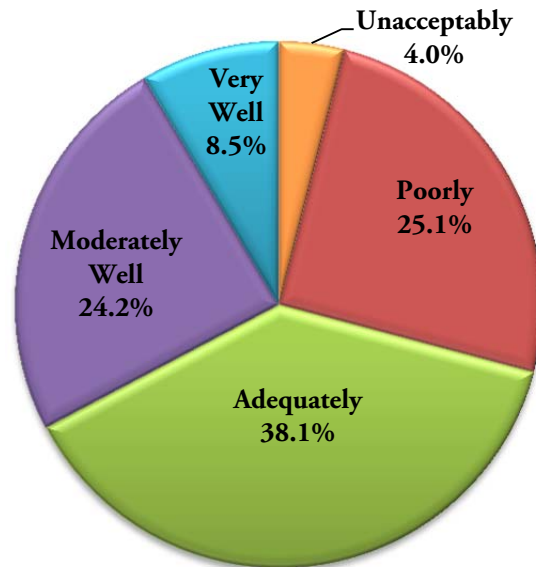


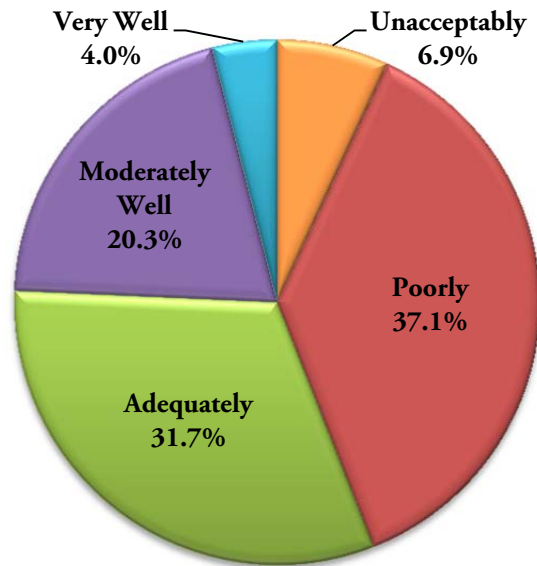
Figure 82. Research Regulations

### H. Research Administrative Decisions

This portion of Question 12 asked how well recent law school graduates research administrative decisions.

- 202 respondents
- 44% of respondents indicated that recent law school graduates research administrative decisions “poorly” (37.1%) or “unacceptably” (6.9%).
- Nearly one-third said recent graduates research administrative decisions “adequately,” 20.3% said “moderately well,” and 4% said “very well.”

Figure 83. Research Administrative Decisions



### I. Research Legislative History

Attorneys were also asked how well they thought recent law school graduates researched legislative history.

- 210 respondents
- Nearly half of respondents said that recent graduates researched legislative history “poorly” (35.7%) or “unacceptably” (12.0%).
- Only 30.9% said recent graduates researched legislative history “adequately,” while 17.1% said “moderately well” and 4.3% said “very well.”

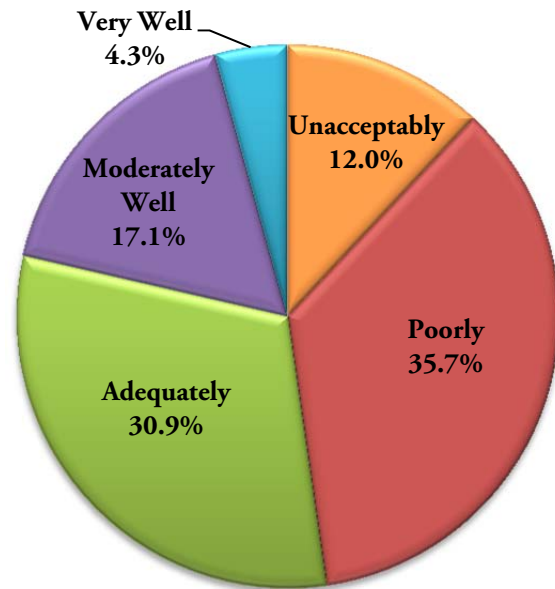


Figure 84. Research Legislative History

*J. Understand the Difference Between Statutes and Regulations*

This question focused on how well recent law school graduates understand the difference between statutes and regulations.

- 229 respondents
- Over 85% of respondents said recent law school graduates understand the difference between statutes and regulations “adequately” or better.
- Slightly more than half said recent graduates understand this difference “moderately well” (25.3%) or “very well” (24.9%).
- Over one-third said this understanding was “adequate,” while only 14.4% indicated it was “poor” (13.1%) or “unacceptable” (1.3%).

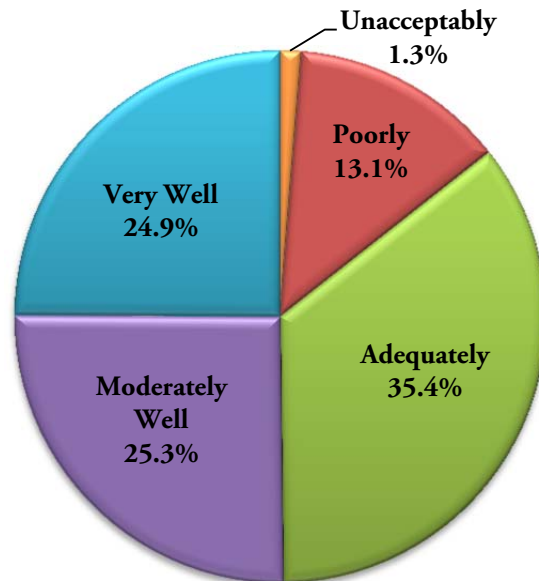


Figure 85. Understand the Difference Between Statutes and Regulations

*K. Update Legal Sources with a Citator*

Attorneys were next asked how well recent graduates update legal sources with a citatory. The question specifically mentioned Shepard's and KeyCite.

- 229 respondents
- More than 90% of respondents said recent law school graduates update legal sources with a citator at an adequate or better level.
- Over 60% indicated recent graduates do this research task “moderately well” (33.2%) or “very well” (27.1%), while 30% said they did so “adequately.”
- Only 7.7% of these respondents indicated recent graduates' performance in this area was “poor” (6.0%) or “unacceptable” (1.7%).

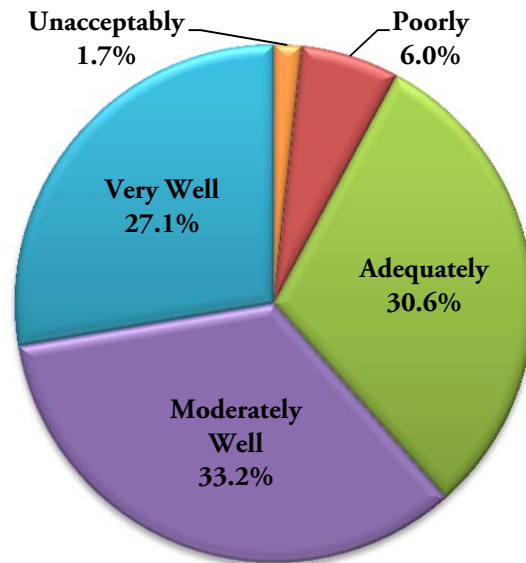


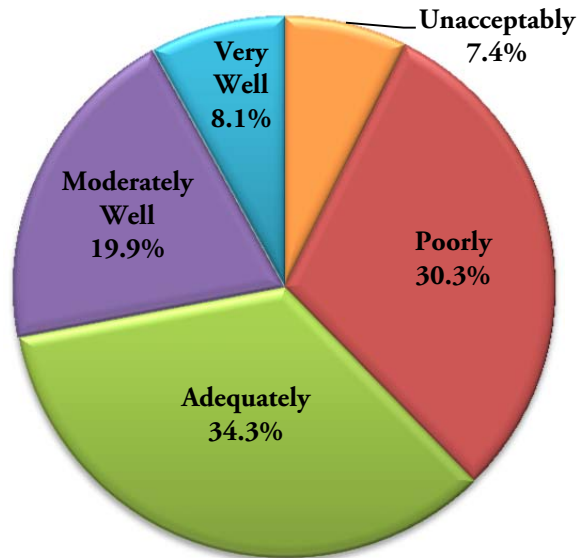
Figure 86. Update Legal Sources with a Citator

*L. Perform Cost-effective Research*

Attorneys were then asked how well recent law school graduates perform cost-effective research.

- 231 respondents
- Nearly 40% said recent law school graduates perform cost-effective research “poorly” or “unacceptably.”
- The largest percentage of respondents answered “adequately” (34%), followed closely by “poorly” (30.3%).
- Nearly 20% of these respondents reported that recent graduates performed cost-effective research “moderately well” (19.7%), and 8% said “very well” as opposed to 7.3% who said “unacceptably.”

Figure 87. Perform Cost-effective Research



*M. Use Westlaw Efficiently*

Attorneys were next asked how well recent graduates performed at using Westlaw online services efficiently.

- 213 respondents
- Nearly 90% of respondents said recent law school graduates use Westlaw efficiently at a level of “adequate” or better. One-third of these respondents say recent graduates do so “adequately,” 31.0% say they do so “moderately well,” and 19.2% say they do so “very well.”
- Those respondents that say this research skill is “poor” or “unacceptable” in recent graduates make up 13.6% and 2.8% of these respondents, respectively.

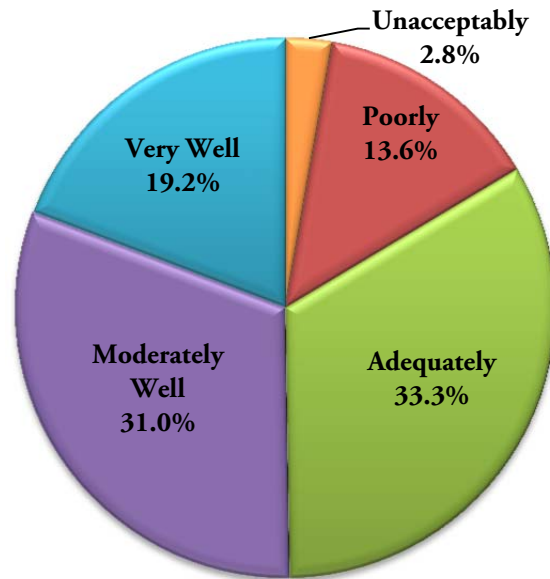


Figure 88. Use Westlaw Efficiently

*N. Use Lexis Efficiently*

The next portion of this question focused on the efficient use of Lexis online services.

- 182 respondents
- Over 80% of respondents said recent law school graduates use Lexis efficiently at an “adequate” level or better; with 35.2% saying they do so “adequately,” 20.2% saying “moderately well,” and 15.9% saying “very well.”
- Approximately 20% say recent graduates performance is “poor” (15.9%) or “unacceptably” (2.7%) in this area.

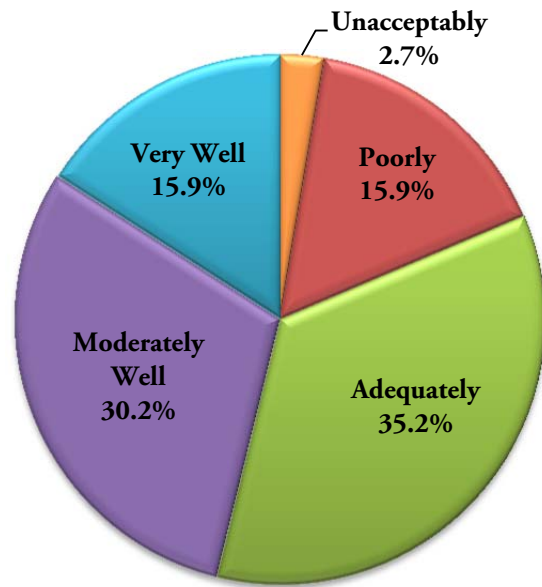


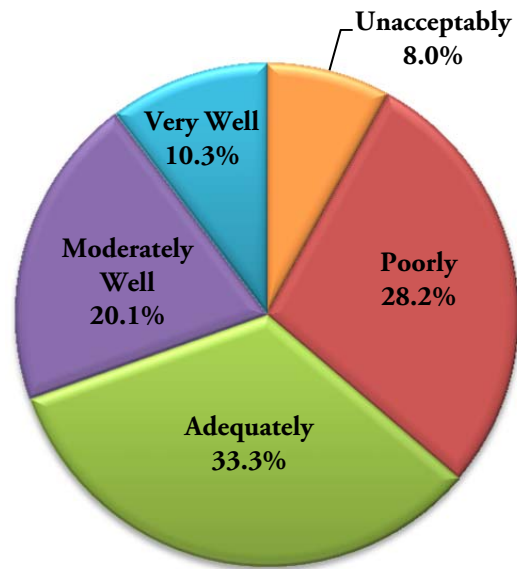
Figure 89. Use Lexis Efficiently

*O. Use an Online Service Other than Westlaw or Lexis*

The survey also asked attorneys their opinion regarding how well recent law school graduates use an online service other than Westlaw or Lexis.

- 174 respondents
- 63.7% of respondents said recent graduates used such a service “adequately” or better, with 33.3% saying “adequately,” 20.1% saying “moderately well,” and 10.3% saying “very well.”
- Over one-third of respondents, however, said that recent graduates’ use of an online service other than Westlaw or Lexis was “poor” (28.2%) or “unacceptably” (8%).

Figure 90. Use an Online Service Other than Westlaw or Lexis



*P. Research Pleadings, Motions, and Other Court Documents*

Attorneys were also asked how well recent graduates researched pleadings, motions, and other court documents.

- 221 respondents
- One-third of respondents indicated that recent graduates researched these types of documents “poorly” (24.4%) or “unacceptably” (8.6%).
- Nearly 40% said that recent law school graduates research pleadings, motions, and other court documents “adequately,” with 24.4% saying they do so “moderately well,” and 5.0% saying they do so “very well.”

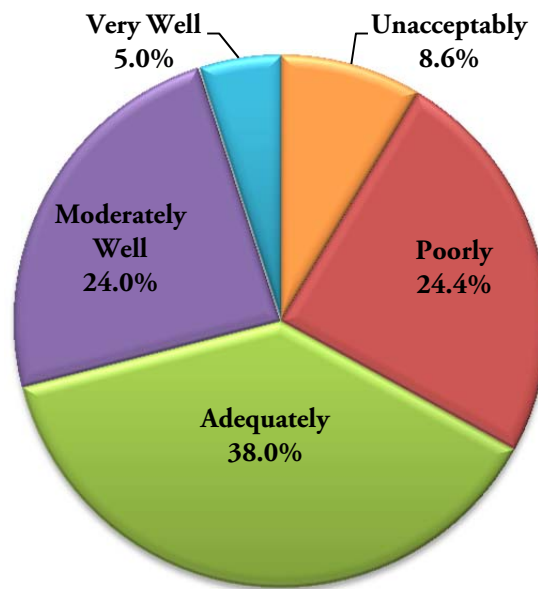


Figure 91. Research Pleadings, Motions, and Other Court Documents

*Q. Know When to Stop Researching*

This portion of Question 12 asked attorneys how well they thought recent law school graduates did at knowing when to stop researching.

- 246 respondents
- The largest percentage of respondents said that recent graduates did this “adequately” (35.0%), but this was followed closely by “poorly” (30.5%).
- Nearly 12% of respondents said recent graduates’ ability to know when to stop researching was “unacceptable,” while only 2.4% said that they did this “very well.”
- Slightly more than 20% indicated that recent graduates did “moderately well” in knowing when to stop researching.

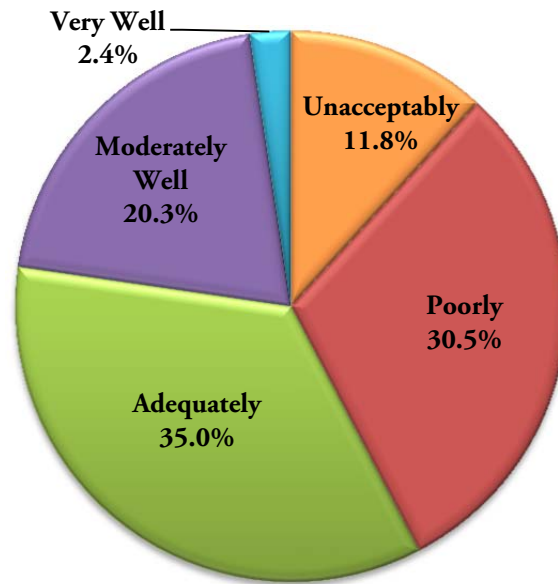


Figure 92. Know When to Stop Researching

### R. Finding Non-Legal Information

The final part of Question 12 asked attorneys how well they thought recent law school graduates were able to find a variety of non-legal information, such as statistics and economic data.

- 212 respondents
- Over 40% said recent graduates did this “poorly” (31.1%) or “unacceptably” (12.2%).
- Slightly more than one-third indicated they did so “adequately,” while 18.4% said they did so “moderately well” and 3.8% said “very well.”

Figure 93. Finding Non-Legal Information

