fellowsandassociates
recruitment evolution

AWARENESS & PERCEPTIONS OF U.S. PUBLIC TOWARDS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW

Presented by Hao Dang, Baoying Peng, Harsha Handu,
Bhishma Contractor, Grace Jung, Pranindhar Reddy Emmadi

Seattle University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01. BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

02. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

03. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

04. METHODOLOGY

05. FINDING & ANALYSIS

06. LIMITATIONS

07. REFERENCES & APPENDIX

01.

BACKGROUND

The project explores public awareness and perceptions of intellectual property (IP) law in the United States, focusing on key knowledge gaps and misconceptions. It addresses demographic differences, prevalent misunderstandings, and factors influencing decisions to file for IP protection independently or with third-party assistance.

OBJECTIVES

1. Analyze demographic differences in IP law awareness, focusing on age and education levels.
2. Identify prevalent misconceptions about IP law concepts, such as copyrights, trademarks, and patents.
3. Explore the primary factors influencing decisions to self-file or use professional services for IP protection.

02.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

01. How does awareness of intellectual property law differ across ***demographic groups*** in the U.S.?

02. What are the most widespread ***misconceptions*** about intellectual property law among the U.S. public?

03. What ***drives*** individuals to file for IP protection themselves versus through third-party firms?

03.
Questionnaire Design

How We Reached 164 Responses:

- **Target Audience:** U.S. general population, aged 18 and above.
- **Strategic Distribution:**

- Online Survey: Distributed via Google Forms for accessibility and ease of participation.

- **Social Media Outreach:** Shared across platforms like Facebook, Reddit and LinkedIn to connect with a diverse and geographically dispersed audience.

- **In-Person Engagement:** Conducted random interviews in public spaces to reach individuals outside the digital sphere, ensuring a representative sample.

- **Timeline:** Surveys were distributed and responses were collected between October 17 and November 24, 2024.

03.

Questionnaire Design (cont'd)

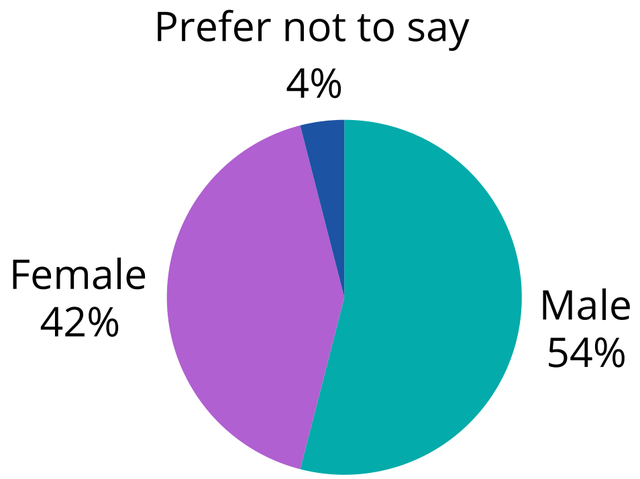
How We Designed the Questionnaire

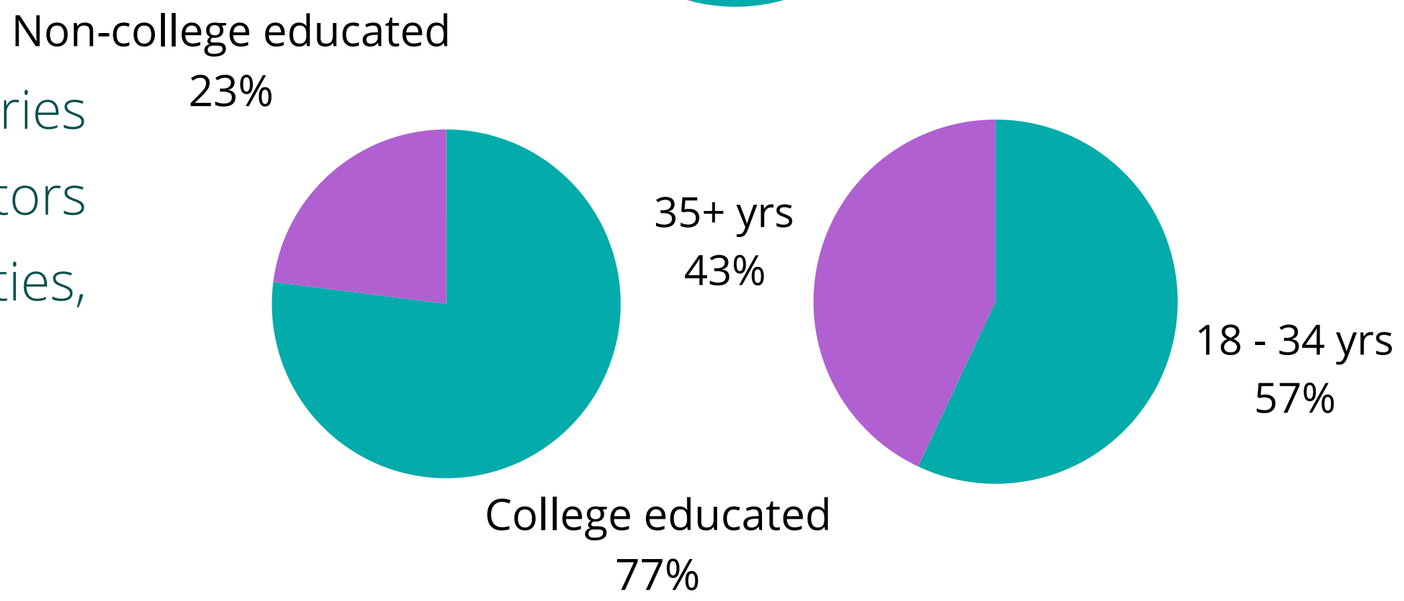
To Understand Awareness (Research Q1):

What We Asked: Demographics (age, gender, education, occupation) and basic IP knowledge (copyrights, trademarks, utility patents).

Why We Asked:

Demographics: Awareness of IP law varies across societal groups. Capturing these factors allows us to identify patterns and disparities, enabling more targeted interventions.





03.

Questionnaire Design (cont'd)

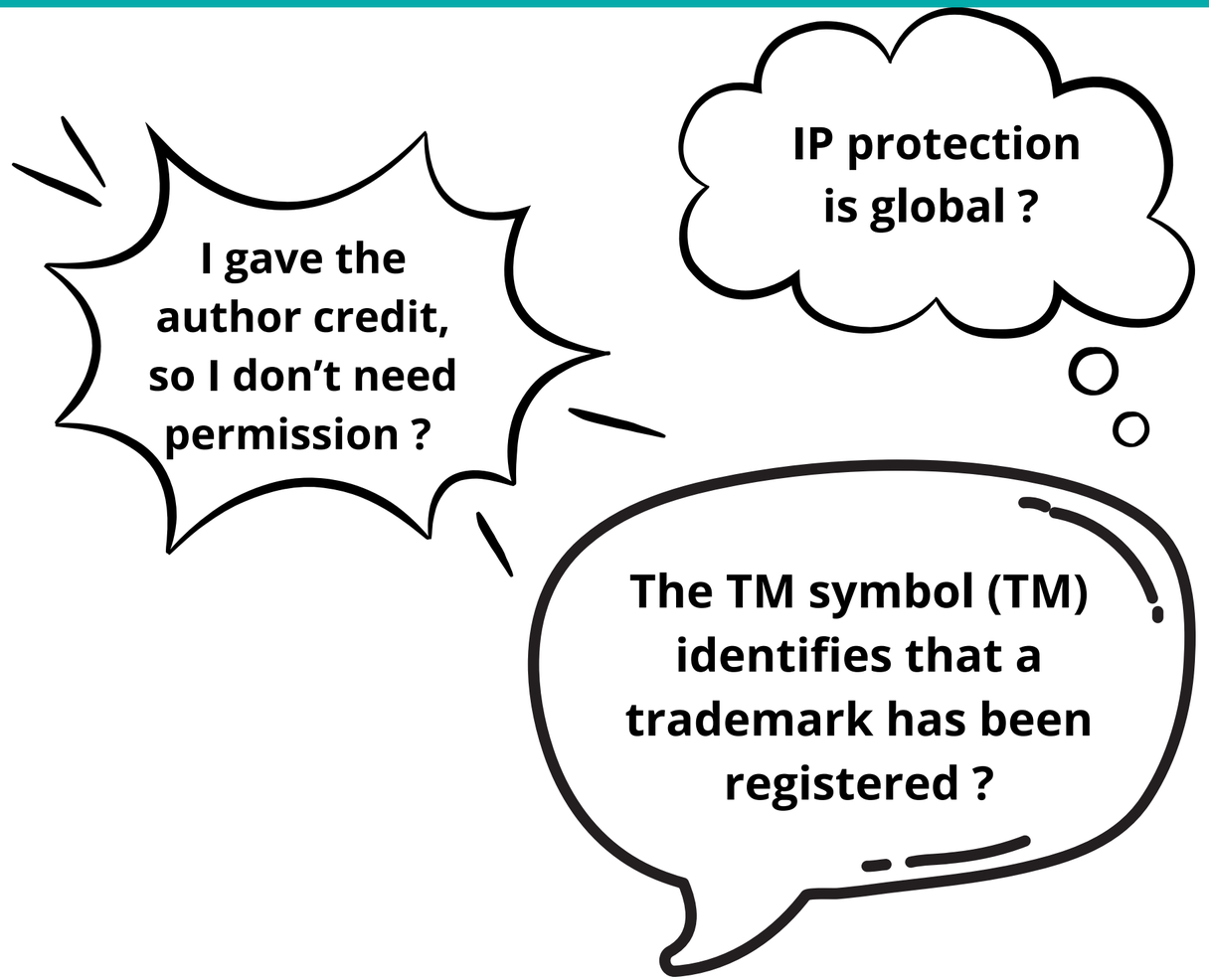
How We Designed the Questionnaire

To Identify Misconceptions (Research Q2):

What We Asked: Misconceptions were drawn from observed trends on X and Reddit.

Why We Asked:

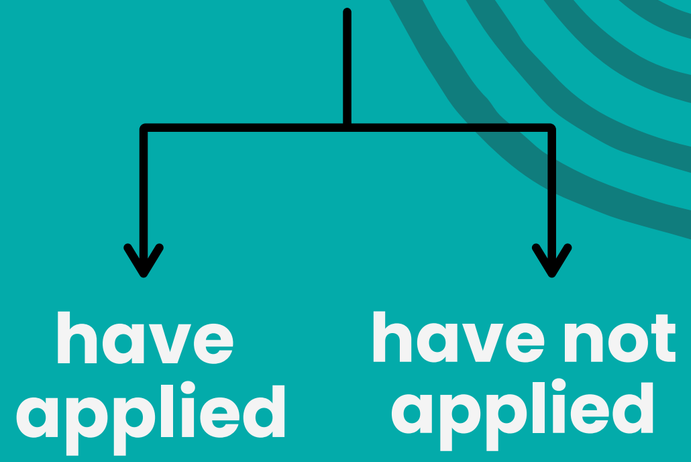
Social media often reflects public misconceptions. By focusing on frequently misunderstood concepts, we aim to identify and address the most critical gaps in understanding.



03.

Questionnaire Design (cont'd)

How We Designed the Questionnaire



To Examine Filing Decisions (Research Q3):

- **What We Asked:** Separate questions for two groups:
  - Those who have applied for IP protection (focusing on their experiences and challenges).
  - Those who haven't (focusing on perceived barriers and decision-making factors).

- **Why We Asked:**
  - By splitting these groups, we gain insights into practical influences like cost, complexity, and risk perception, offering nuanced recommendations for improving the application process.

04. METHODOLOGY

DATA CLEANING	DATA AGGREGATION & TRANSFORMATION	EDA
• Removed duplicate responses. • Handled missing values: All questions were marked as required, ensuring completeness in responses. • Standardized formats: Simplified categories for gender, education, and other fields. Example: Excluded categories with very minimal responses, such as "Prefer not to say," to maintain focus on meaningful data.	• Consolidated categories to create meaningful and manageable groups. Example: Age was grouped into 18–34 and 35+ categories, while education was reclassified into college-educated and non-college-educated groups.	• Conducted descriptive statistics to summarize key variables. • Performed preliminary statistical analysis to detect patterns or correlations. • Developed visualizations to effectively illustrate identified trends, making insights more accessible to stakeholders.

05.

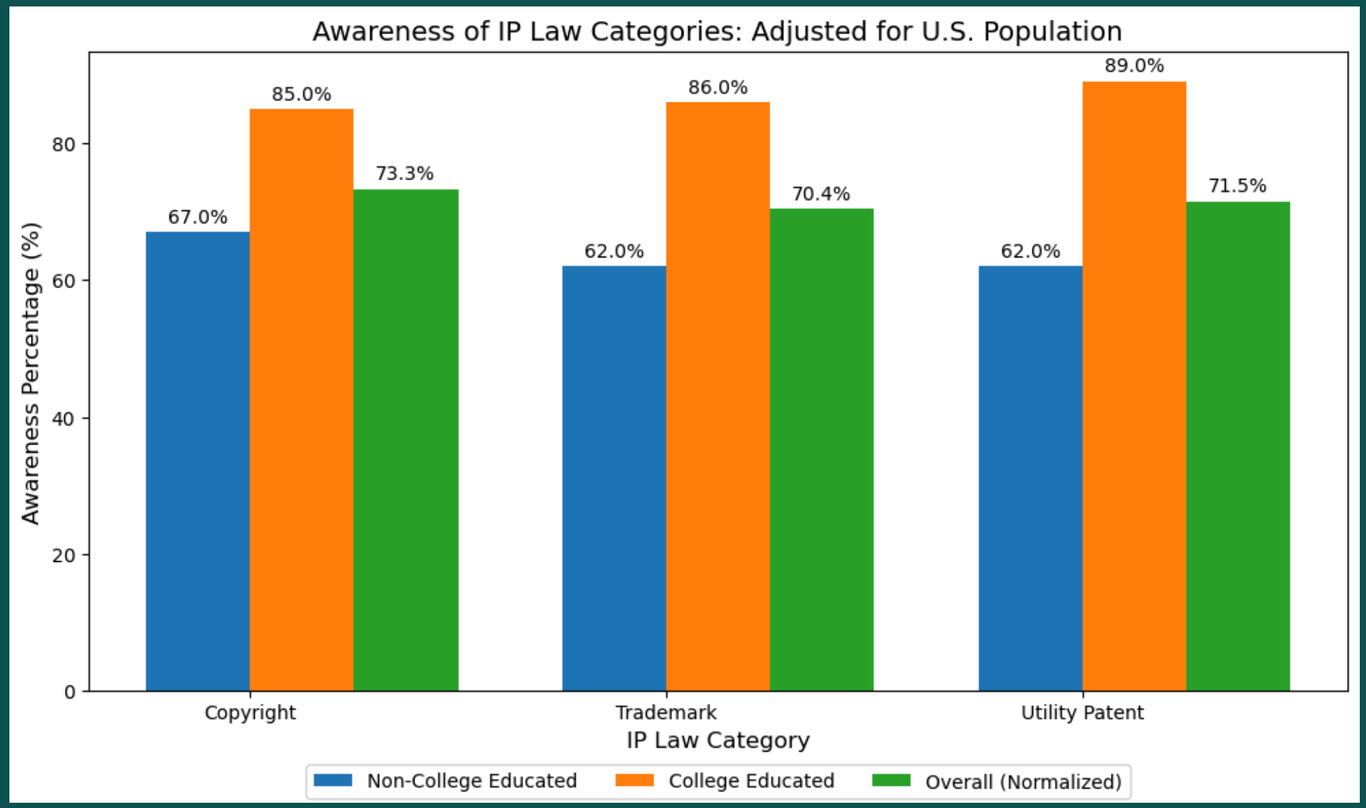
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Research question 1:

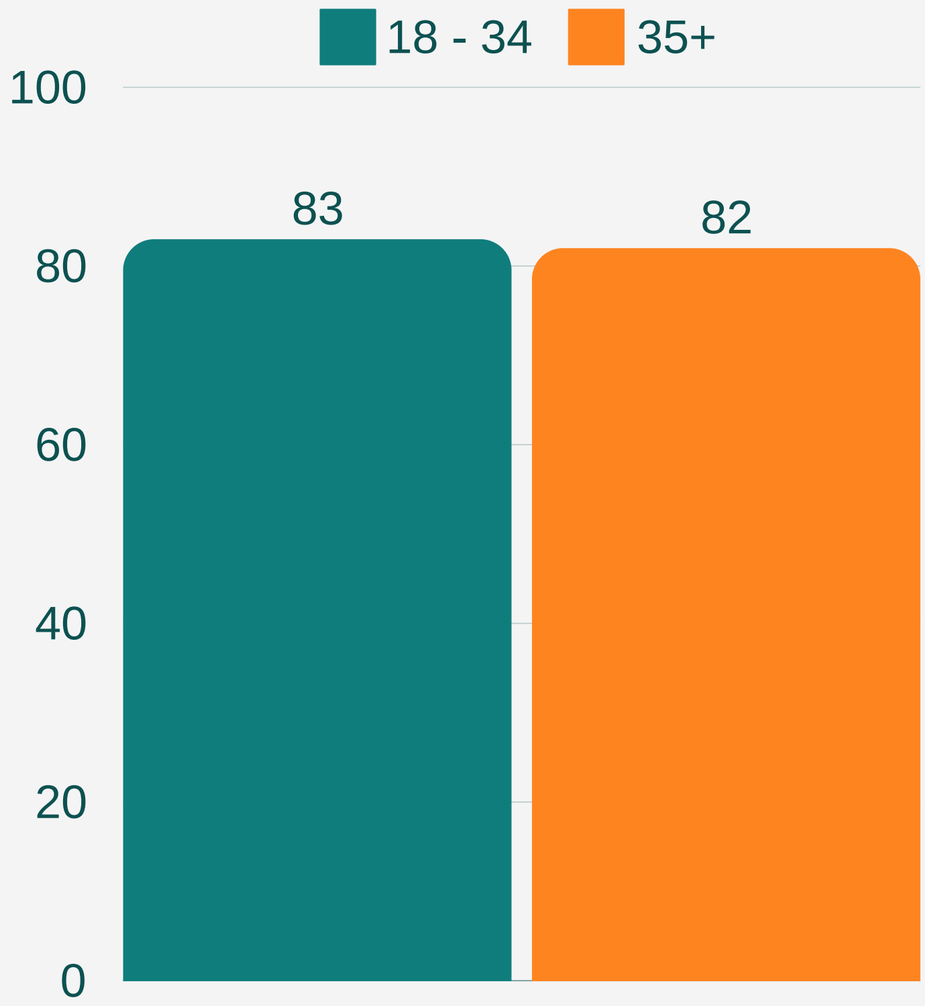
How does awareness of intellectual property law differ across demographic groups in the U.S.?

U.S. Public Awareness of Intellectual Property Laws

- Awareness levels vary significantly by education: college-educated individuals show higher familiarity across all IP categories (e.g., 85% vs. 67% for copyright).
- Normalized data reveals that 75% of the overall U.S. population demonstrates awareness of copyright, adjusted for education proportions (48% college-educated, 52% non-college).
- Targeted educational initiatives could bridge the knowledge gap, especially for patents and trademarks.



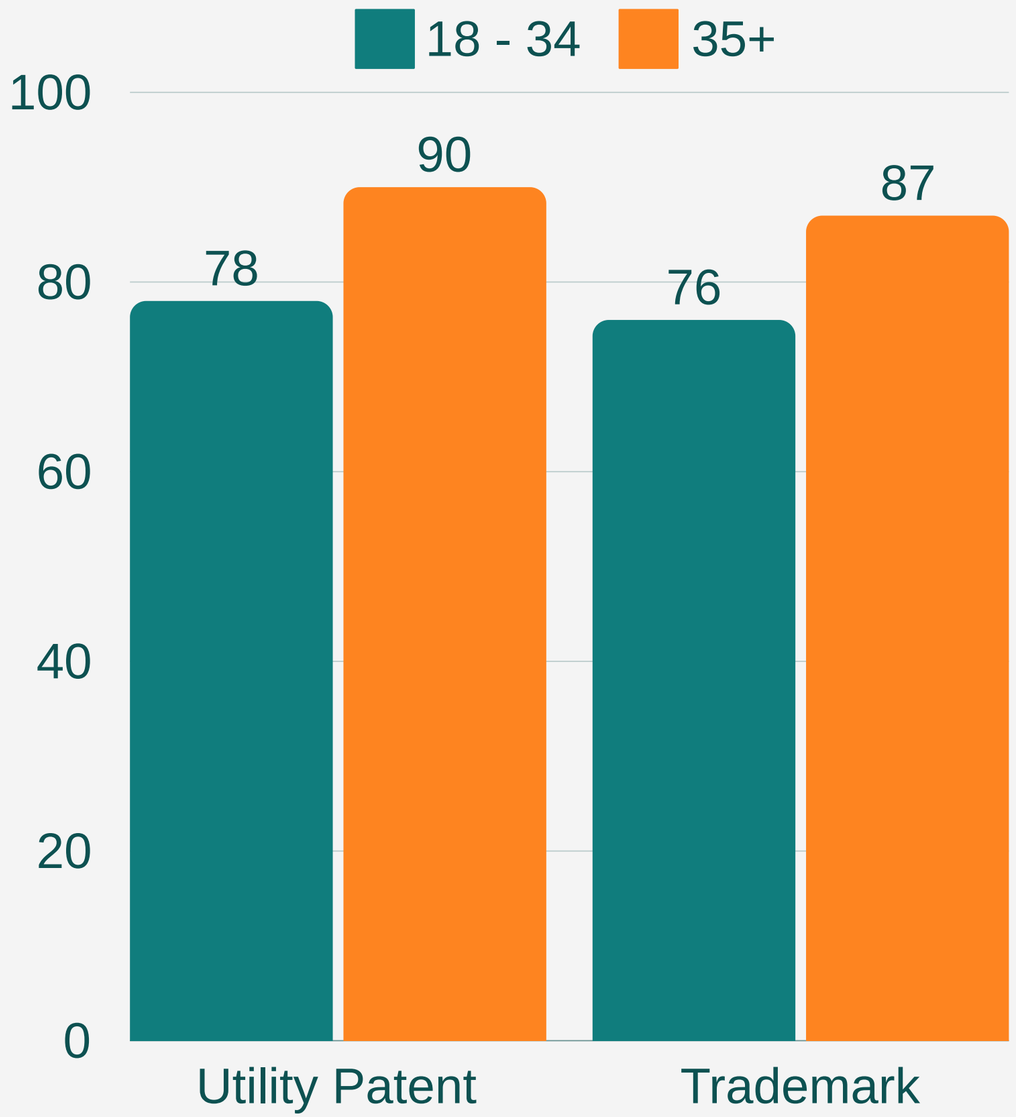
AGE-BASED DIFFERENCES



Finding 1: Copyright Awareness is Consistent Across Age Groups

- Copyrights: Awareness levels are almost equal between the two groups (83% for 18–34 and 82% for 35+).
- Interpretation: This aligns with the widespread exposure to copyrighted materials (e.g., music, movies) in everyday life for all age groups.

AGE-BASED DIFFERENCES



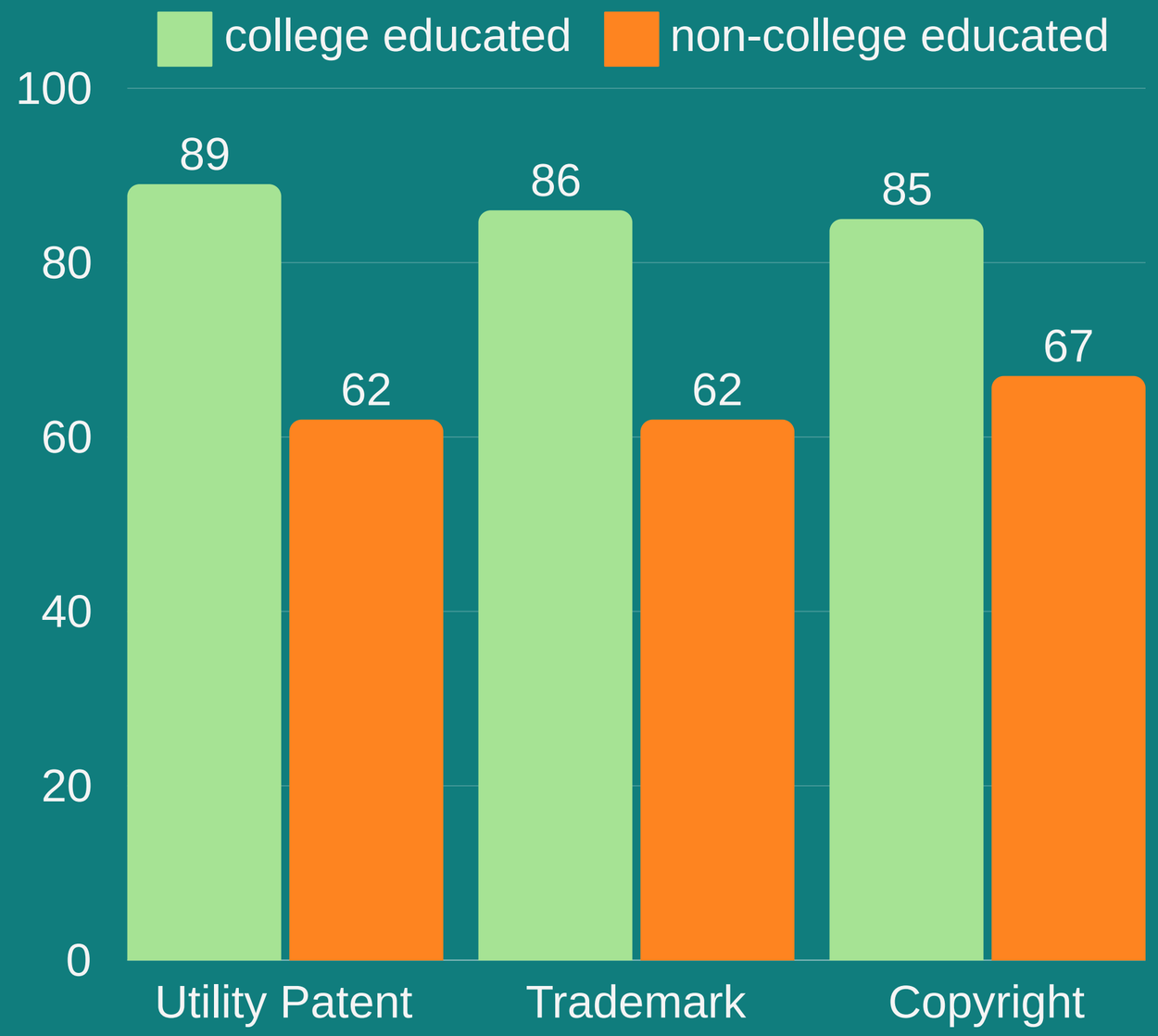
Finding 2: Patents and Trademarks Show the Larger Gaps across Age group

- Patents: The 35+ group has a significantly higher awareness level (90%) compared to the 18–34 group (78%).
- Trademarks: The 35+ group is substantially more aware (87%) than the younger group (76%).
- Interpretation: Older individuals may engage more with brand protection issues or encounter utility patents, and trademarks in business transactions, while younger respondents may be less familiar with the legal distinctions of these IP types.

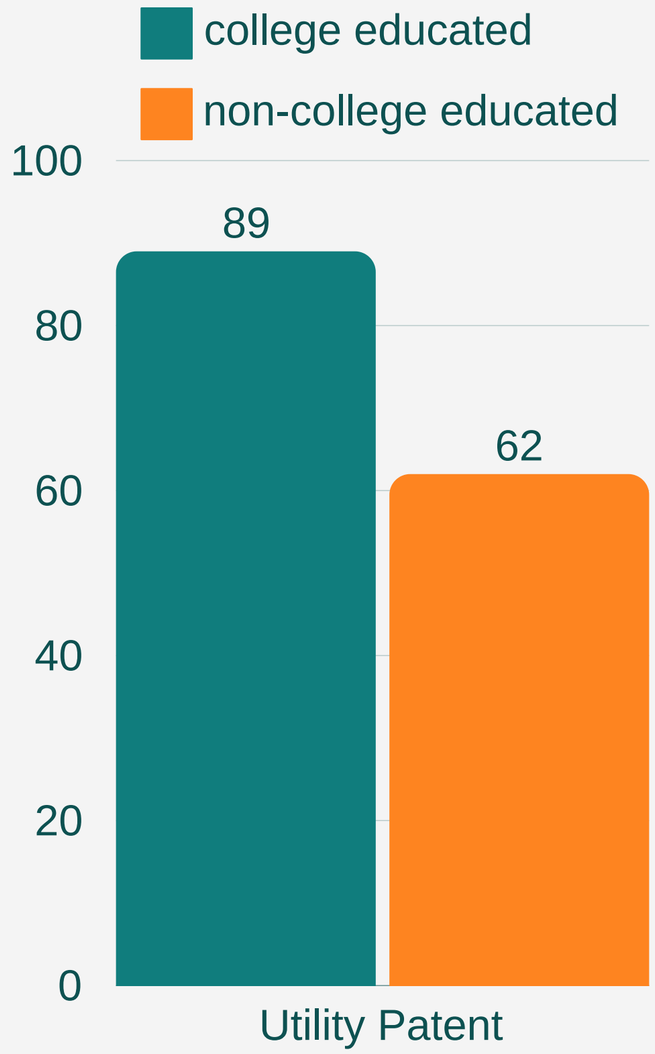
EDUCATION-BASED DIFFERENCES

Finding 3: Higher Education Correlates with Higher Awareness Across All Categories

- College-educated respondents have significantly higher awareness compared to non-college-educated respondents.
- This suggests that higher education contributes to better exposure to and understanding of intellectual property (IP) concepts, likely due to greater engagement with academic and professional environments where IP topics are more relevant.



EDUCATION-BASED DIFFERENCES



Finding 4: Patents Show the Largest Awareness Gap among Different Level of Education (27%)

Possible explanation: Patents are often discussed in technical or professional settings, such as engineering, science, and entrepreneurship, which are more common among individuals with higher education. Non-college-educated respondents may lack exposure to patents due to limited interaction with these contexts.

05.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Research question 2:

What are the most widespread misconceptions about intellectual property law among the U.S. public?

Finding 5: Most Common Misconceptions About IP Law are:

84%

respondents agreed that

The TM symbol (™) identifies that a trademark has been registered

76%

respondents agreed that

You do not automatically own the copyright to your work as soon as it is created

68%

respondents agreed that

You cannot trademark a color, sound, or smell.

32%

respondents agreed that

Content available on the internet can be freely used if no copyright notice is visible

05.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Research question 3:

What drives individuals to file for IP protection themselves versus through third-party firms?

Finding 6: Among respondents who have applied for IP protection before, cost is the dominant concern.

- 57% of respondents cited the cost of hiring a third party as the most significant factor.
- Only 33.3% of respondents considered avoiding legal risks a significant factor.

Finding 6: Among respondents who have NOT applied for IP protection before, complexity of legal procedures is the dominant concern.

- Lack of experience leads to heightened concerns about complexity and risks, while experienced applicants focus primarily on practical issues like cost.

06.

LIMITATIONS

- **Limited Scope of Questions:**

  The survey assessed understanding of trademarks, patents, and copyrights with only two questions per category. While this provided a general sense of respondents' knowledge, it may not fully capture the complexity or depth of their understanding of IP law.

- **Response Guidance Through Options:**

  To maintain survey brevity and encourage higher participation, we intentionally provided predefined answer options. However, this approach may have constrained the depth of insights into respondents' understanding of IP law, introducing a limitation in capturing more nuanced perspectives.

- **Sample Size Constraints:**

  The sample of 164 participants may not fully reflect the diversity of the U.S. population, particularly in terms of geography, age, and education level, which could limit the generalizability of the findings.

07. REFERENCES & APPENDIX

Survey link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjgpzRaxLETvFtLdrgqBeU_SxJan7StSEu5LZhdrQB-8X9Kw/viewform

External resources:

1.https://www.luminafoundation.org/news-and-views/a-stronger-nation-new-federal-data-show-more-adults-earning-college-degrees/

2.https://usafacts.org/state-of-the-union/education/

Thank You