

Sexual Harassment Attitudes Across Generation and Gender: Troubling Differences Between Male and Female Views

Darrell M. Crossgrove
University of Toledo

Sonny Ariss
University of Toledo

Kimberly Nigem
University of Toledo

Donald K. Wedding
University of Toledo

This paper discusses original research and data from 4,598 survey participants who offered their attitudes towards the duty of employers to proactively eliminate sexual harassment, and their feelings towards the creation of a Sexual Harassment Officer, a new position in the work environment. The findings indicate strong support for both among both males and females, and across age categories. A trend was also found for females to favor both propositions more favorably than males did, with younger females tending to show more support than older females. Additionally, data has shown to exist that between 7.8% and 14.8% of the males (depending upon their age) did not indicate they felt employers had a duty to take proactive steps to eliminate Sexual Harassment.

INTRODUCTION

With the rise in public awareness of how pervasive Sexual Harassment is, and how strong the #MeToo movement has gotten, employers have been forced to modify their procedures and protocols to address the growing change in attitudes towards sexual harassment in the workplace. Females have traditionally been the victims of workplace sexual harassment, with males making up only roughly 16.5% of the charging victims according to the EEOC.¹ Further, the extreme excesses of people like Harvey Weinstein², who was permitted to exceed all norms of decent behavior for decades, shows a core problem which the workplace has not yet found a way to cure. The Generational Differences in the Workplace Study decided to measure how strongly the various genders³ felt about the need to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace, and how they would feel about having a dedicated Sexual Harassment Officer (SHO) in charge of sexual harassment investigations. The results showed strong support for both. However, those same numbers also drew out a clear picture that demonstrates far too many males still do

not take sexual harassment as something which their co-workers have a right to be free from. Further, the numbers in support of a dedicated Sexual Harassment Officer also help illustrate the failing of the current common practice of having the Human Resources Department handle sexual harassment claims.

METHODOLOGY

In June 2018 email invitations were sent out to faculty, staff, students, and alumni of six Midwest colleges inviting them to participate in a survey being done by the Generational Differences in the Workplace (GDW) Study. They were informed that this study was being performed by the Department of Management at the College of Business and Innovation at the University of Toledo. They were informed that this was the fourth survey being done as part of the ongoing GDW Study, and given links to prior publications that had been written as a result of the prior research. These invitees were informed that the purpose of the survey was to measure their opinions on various workplace practices. They were also informed that their responses would be entirely anonymous, and if they wished to participate they should follow the link in the email to the survey software being used.

The survey itself consisted of 20 questions broken down into three basic categories:

1. Demographics information (4 total). These were year of birth, gender, household income, and current employment status.
2. Work-related attitudes and preferences (15 total). These questions asked participants to either choose their preference from a group of set options (3 questions), or asked how the participants felt about a specific work-related subject (12 questions) gauging their feelings on a 1 to 10 scale, with 1 being low, and 10 being strongly in favor of. All 15 of these questions also afforded the participants to type in an optional open-format text entry response explaining why they felt a certain way.
3. Optional final text entry. This question allowed participants to type in any comments they felt were worthwhile about any subjects they felt we had missed, or otherwise comment as they wished.

The participating institutions were: Bowling Green State University, Ferris State University, Ohio University, The Ohio State University, Old Dominion University, and The University of Toledo. Participants received an initial invitation email, a follow-up email two days later, and a final reminder two days after the first reminder. The survey was open for a total of eight days, and was then closed.

In tabulating the results, only survey responses where the participant had answered all 19 of the mandatory questions were included. Any surveys which were abandoned prior to completion of the last mandatory question were stored in a separate file apart from the completed responses, and not used for tabulation purposes in this paper. That yielded a final total of 4,598 completed surveys, with an additional 20,624 optional open-format text responses.

ASSESSING ATTITUDES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Participants were asked two questions that related to sexual harassment. These were:

18. How important is it for employers to proactively try and eliminate all forms and instances of sexual harassment in their workplaces?

- a. 1 To 10 scale, 1 being not at all, 10 being critical.

- i. Additional comments? (Optional Open Text Entry)

19. In your opinion, how beneficial would it be for an employer to designate a “Sexual Harassment Officer” (SHO) that would have the following powers:

- All instances of sexual harassment would be reported to the Officer

- All reports would remain 100% confidential unless the complainant(s) expressly waived the confidentiality in writing
- The Officer would have the authority to immediately take steps to prevent future harassment
- The Officer would have authority to investigate the allegations
- The Officer would take steps to assure the complainant(s) were not retaliated against
- The Officer’s term of duty as SHO would be set for a period of time, and they could only be fired for just cause during that time period.
- The Officer would, in their duties, report directly to the CEO of the company.

a. 1 To 10 scale, 1 being not at all, 10 being very beneficial.

i. Additional comments? (Optional Open Text Entry)

For those who work outside of a university or college environment, the Sexual Harassment Officer (SHO) described in Question 19 is roughly the equivalent of what is known as a Title IX Officer on college campuses. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 strictly prohibits any federally funded educational program or activity to engage in, permit, or otherwise not eradicate any form of sex-based discrimination⁴. On April 24, 2015 the US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, issued a letter requiring all federally funded institutions of higher learning to designate at least one Title IX Officer, and spelled out powers and responsibilities that the Title IX Officer would have⁵. These listed powers and responsibilities, again, roughly mirror what had been listed as powers and responsibilities of the SHO in survey Question #19 (SHO).

The purpose of survey Question #18 (Proactive) was to gauge how strongly the #MeToo movement had embedded itself in the mindset of participants. The purpose of survey Question #19 (SHO) was to gauge how strongly people felt the need to have at least one person in an organization be designated as the key contact point for all sexual harassment claims, and how much power and protections that person should have to be able to perform their duties.

As stated above, 4,598 participants completed those two questions. Additionally, 854 of those participants left an optional text response for Question #18 (Proactive) describing how they felt about that question and/or why they gave it to score they did, and 1,137 did the same for Question #19 (SHO).

THE RESULTS FOR QUESTION #18 (PROACTIVE) – FEMALES

The total number of females which participated in Question #18 (Proactive) was 3,020. The results for females to Question #18 (Proactive) were as follows in Table #1:

TABLE 1
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT MEAN SCORERS-FEMALE

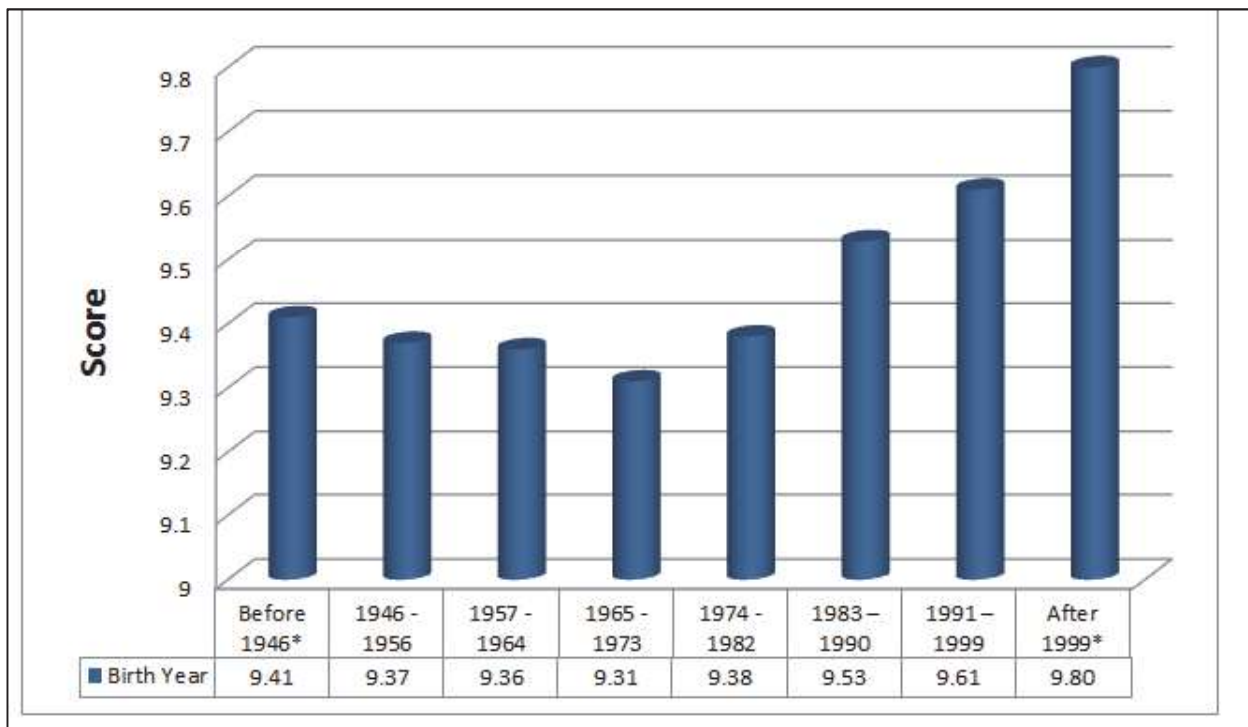
Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total	F-M
Before 1946*	Female	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	18	9.41	22	0.76
1946 - 1956	Female	1	0	1	0	7	4	2	12	26	142	9.37	195	0.71
1957 - 1964	Female	3	1	0	3	10	4	9	34	50	296	9.36	410	0.41
1965 - 1973	Female	2	1	3	0	10	5	16	48	50	317	9.31	452	0.56
1974 - 1982	Female	3	1	1	0	3	7	13	39	48	285	9.38	400	0.53
1983 – 1990	Female	3	1	0	1	8	7	14	30	40	432	9.53	536	0.61
1991 – 1999	Female	3	1	2	6	8	7	21	45	80	807	9.61	980	0.83
After 1999*	Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	22	9.80	25	0.75

*low sample size 15 5 7 10 48 34 75 211 296 2319 Total 3020

When broken down by age, the lowest median score achieved by this question was 9.31 for the females born between 1965 and 1973. The highest score was a 9.80 for the female participants born after 1999⁶. Again, these numbers are on a 1-10 scale. These participants felt incredibly strongly that employers have an duty to proactively take up policies that eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Again, the wording of this question was designed to gauge not merely how much participants wished that sexual harassment would end in the workplace, but how strongly they felt employers had a proactive duty to prevent it from occurring. The focus of this question was not one of correcting past breaches, but one of preventing future incidents.

Also noteworthy is the fact that these scores for females, when broken down by age, form a curve which is higher at the two age extremes (see Table#1):

TABLE 2
Q18—FEMALE RESPONSE MEAN SCORES



As one can see from Table #2, for participants born after 1973, the younger they are, the more likely they are to have strong feelings that sexual harassment in the workplace is not to be tolerated, and there employers have an affirmative duty to eliminate it. The implications that these numbers spell out for employers is that they will see increasing numbers of female employees who will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace, and will be more prone to file complaints. Further, female jurors in civil sexual harassment cases are probably going to be less and less likely to forgive what would have been viewed as “minor infractions” a few years back, as they feel stronger than their older peers that it needs to be eliminated from the workplace.

THE RESULTS FOR QUESTION #18 (PROACTIVE) – MALES

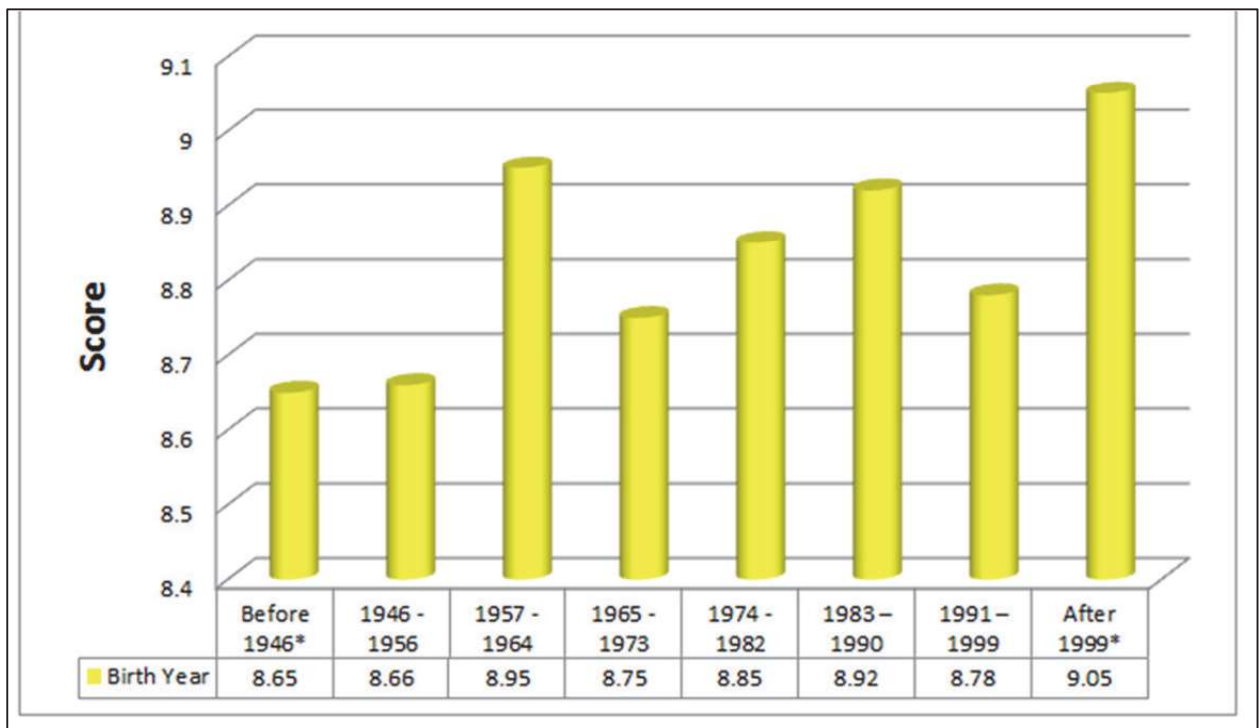
The total number of males which participated in Question #18 (Proactive) was 1,548. The results for males to Question #18 (Proactive) were as follows in Table #3:

TABLE 3
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT MEAN SCORES-MALE

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total	F-M
Before 1946*	Male	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	4	11	8.65	20	(0.76)
1946 - 1956	Male	3	2	0	1	12	3	5	8	12	76	8.66	122	(0.71)
1957 - 1964	Male	2	0	1	0	9	4	6	23	12	97	8.95	154	(0.41)
1965 - 1973	Male	2	1	0	4	9	3	13	23	16	96	8.75	167	(0.56)
1974 - 1982	Male	4	3	0	3	9	5	8	14	20	121	8.85	187	(0.53)
1983 - 1990	Male	2	0	1	3	21	9	21	28	28	193	8.92	306	(0.61)
1991 - 1999	Male	11	1	5	5	25	20	39	68	66	330	8.78	570	(0.83)
After 1999*	Male	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	14	9.05	22	(0.75)
*low sample size		25	7	7	17	87	45	95	165	162	938	Total	1548	

When broken down by age, the two oldest groups scored the lowest at 8.65 and 8.66 respectively. The high score for males, as with females, was those born after 1999. However, overall the trend for males appears to be one of decreasing tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace, as shown in Table #4:

TABLE 4
Q18 MALE RESPONSE MEAN SCORES



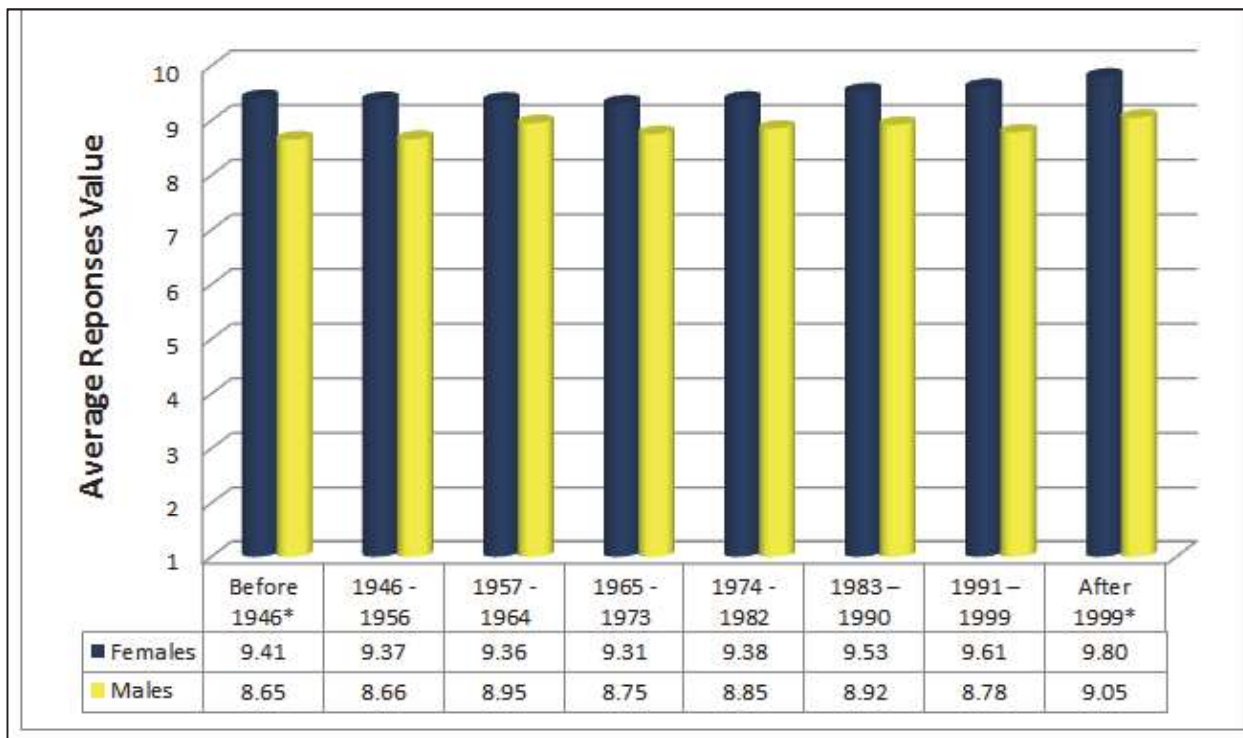
These scores show two deviations from an otherwise steady trend of younger males demonstrating less tolerance for sexual harassment: those born between 1957 and 1964, which were surprisingly high in their strong feelings, and the group born between 1991-1999 which showed a noticeable downtick in the trend. The group born between 1991 and 1999, it should be noted, are either still in the prime college-age, and if they have graduated, are likely to still be relatively new to the workforce. As for the group born

between 1957 and 1964, those males are nearing retirement age. This paper makes no extrapolation as to how these events (beginning of a career and end of a career) might influence sexual harassment attitudes, but merely suggests the possibility of future research along these lines.

THE RESULTS FOR QUESTION #18 (PROACTIVE) – FEMALES COMPARED TO MALES

Table #1 and Table #3 (above) each have a final column labeled F-M. Those columns are the numeric value of the differences between males and females in their responses to Question #18 (Proactive)⁷. When looked at side-by-side, the difference in responses to Question #18 (Proactive) between males and females does not appear to be all that significant, as per Table #5:

**TABLE 5
Q18 RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER**



When looked at side-by-side in this fashion what becomes apparent is that both male and female genders overwhelmingly feel that sexual harassment is a critical issue, no matter what their age, and feel that their employers have a duty to eradicate it. However, as will be discussed later, those figures, when not examined further, belie a hidden problem.

THE RESULTS FOR QUESTION #18 (PROACTIVE) – OTHER WEIGHS IN

As part of the survey demographic question asking for gender, participants could choose “male”, “female”, or “other”. This was done in response to the growing societal acceptance that people be permitted to list themselves in a “non-binary gender” fashion. The total number of people who listed themselves as other was 30⁸. With such a low sampling number, it becomes unreliable to break this group down by age or any other demographic measure. As a result, their aggregate mean score for Question #18 (Proactive) is being compared to the aggregate mean scores of males and females in Table #6:

TABLE 6
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT MEAN SCORES-ALL

Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total
Female	15	5	7	10	48	34	75	211	296	2319	9.47	3020
Male	25	7	7	17	87	45	95	165	162	938	8.82	1548
Other	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	5	19	8.77	30
Total	41	13	15	27	135	80	170	378	463	3276		4598
											F-M Gap	0.65
											F-O Gap	0.70

The 8.77 aggregate score others⁹ gave to Question #18 (Proactive) is very close to the aggregate score males gave to that question, with a difference of only .05. Due to the low other sample population, it is possible their numbers are not entirely accurate. Speculation as to whether or not these results accurately portray the overall views of the other gender(s) is left for others to research and report on. For purposes of this paper it can only confidently be stated that the numbers given by survey participants who self-described as other fall very much in line with the views expressed by males in regards to the need for employers to actively eliminate all forms of sexual harassment in the workplace.

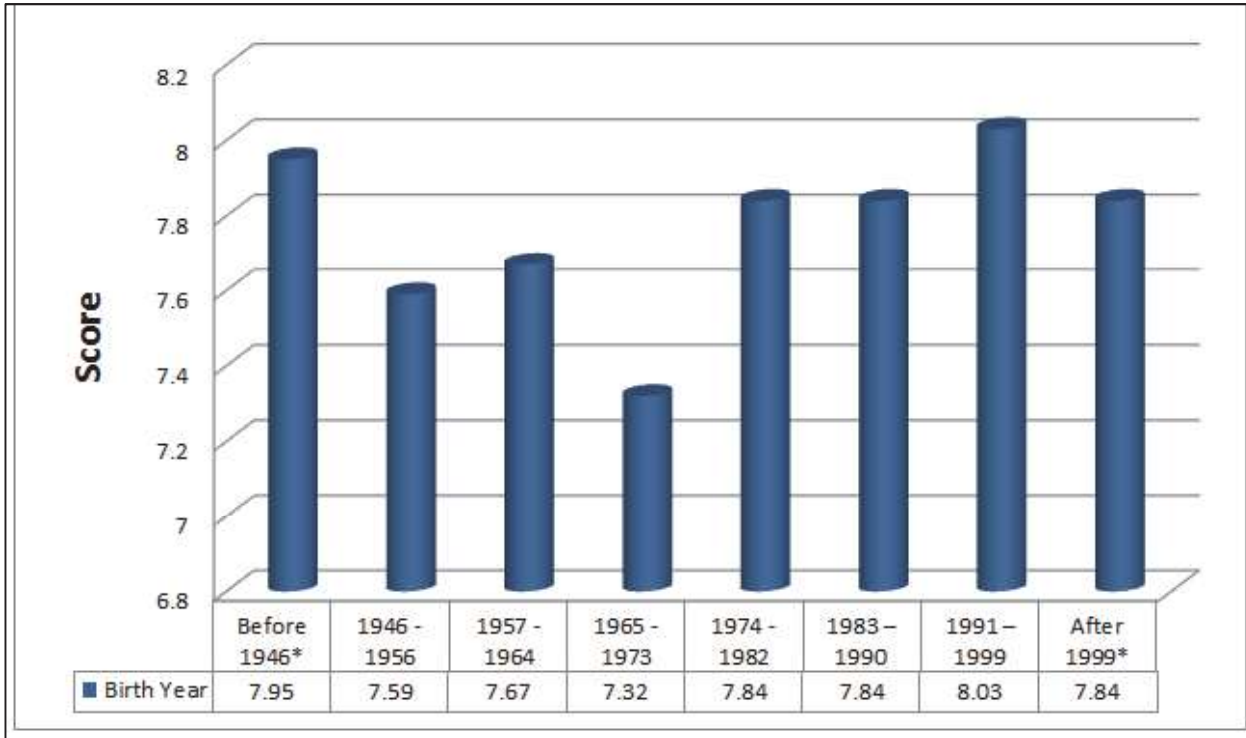
TABLE 7
BENEFIT OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER SCORES-FEMALE

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total	F-M
Before 1946*	Female	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	12	7.95	22	2.05
1946 - 1956	Female	9	4	4	2	25	14	13	38	20	66	7.59	195	1.69
1957 - 1964	Female	20	4	10	5	44	19	53	72	44	139	7.67	410	0.92
1965 - 1973	Female	27	8	10	6	63	44	46	58	52	138	7.32	452	0.57
1974 - 1982	Female	12	5	5	8	40	28	40	71	60	131	7.84	400	1.58
1983 - 1990	Female	19	7	9	8	52	31	58	99	62	191	7.84	536	1.34
1991 - 1999	Female	24	16	27	20	68	62	76	163	139	385	8.03	980	1.27
After 1999*	Female	0	1	0	1	2	3	2	4	4	8	7.84	25	1.55
*low sample size		114	45	65	50	295	202	289	507	383	1070	Total	3020	

Table #7 Shows first the range of birth years, followed by the number of respondents who chose each score (1-10) in each of the age brackets. An overall mean score is then given, along with the total number of respondents per age (Total column next to the final right column) and a total for how many times the numbers 1-10 were chose (along the bottom). The final column, labeled F-M is the difference in mean scores between male and female mean scores per age bracket.

As can be seen, females found the concept of a dedicated sexual harassment officer to be one that they thought very favorably of. Overall, the response of females was one solidly in favor of a SHO. The lowest score for an age range was for females born between 1965 and 1973 (the same group that scored Question #18 (Proactive) lowest) who gave an overall mean score of 7.32, which bucked the trend of females being generally more supportive of the position the younger they were (See Table #8):

TABLE 8
Q19 FEMALE RESPONSE MEAN SCORE



For females, the highest score was for those who were born between 1991 and 1999, while the second highest score was for those born prior to 1946. The overall trend, however, is one of the younger a female participant was, the more they favored the creation of a SHO in the workplace.

MALES RESPOND TO THE SUGGESTION OF A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER IN THE WORKPLACE FAR LESS FAVORABLY THAN FEMALES DO –BUT STILL SUPPORT IT

As Table #5 and Table #6 both demonstrate, males in the same age categories as their female counterparts, tend to have similar views on the need to eliminate sexual harassment. As the final column of Table #3 demonstrates, males scored Question #18 (Proactive) at most 0.83 lower than their female counterparts did (birth years 1991-1999). The closest ranking was only 0.41 different (1957-1964). The overall difference (Table #6) was 0.65.

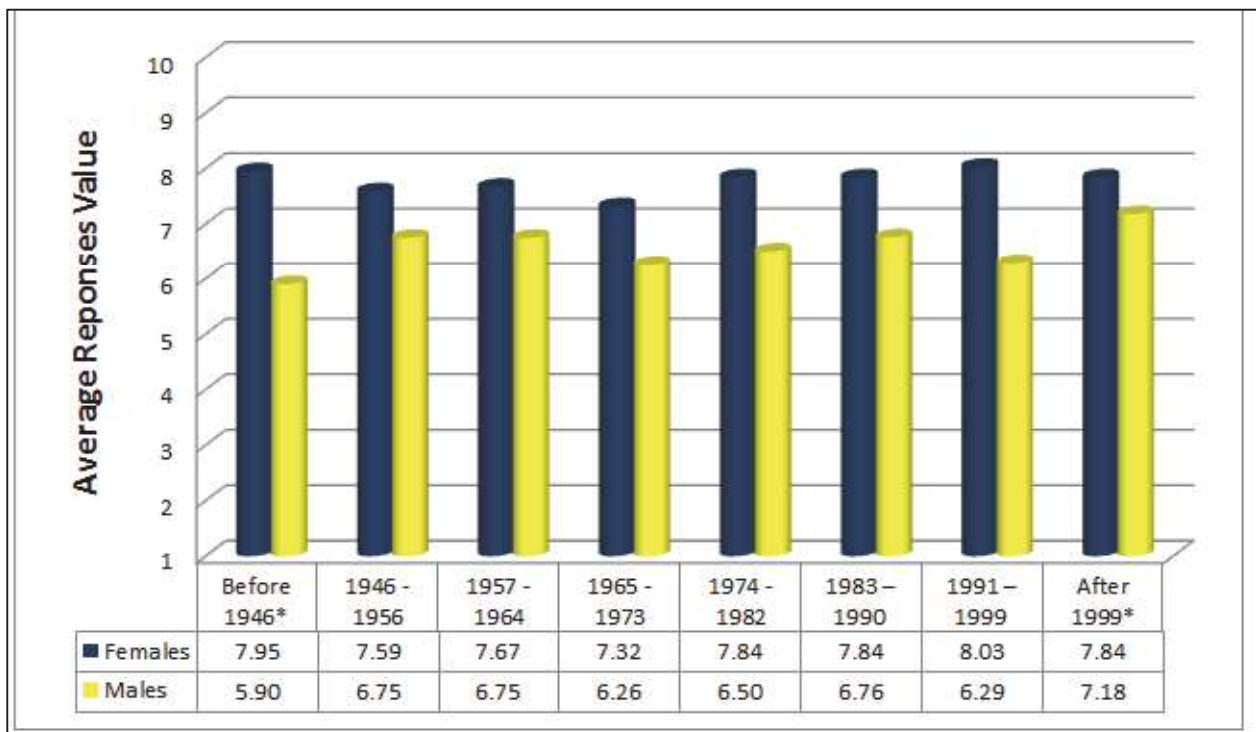
The results for Question #19 (SHO), for males – when compared to females—was far less aligned than they had been for Question #18 (Proactive).

**TABLE 9
BENEFIT OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER SCORES - MALE**

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total	F-M
Before 1946*	Male	5	0	1	0	4	0	2	2	0	6	5.90	20	(1.69)
1946 - 1956	Male	14	2	6	1	17	7	11	22	16	26	6.75	122	(0.92)
1957 - 1964	Male	17	4	4	5	21	12	15	22	16	38	6.75	154	(0.57)
1965 - 1973	Male	25	3	6	4	25	19	13	28	14	30	6.26	167	(1.58)
1974 - 1982	Male	20	8	8	5	28	11	21	28	21	37	6.50	187	(1.34)
1983 - 1990	Male	40	8	11	6	31	18	31	53	28	80	6.76	306	(1.27)
1991 - 1999	Male	75	28	31	27	60	35	63	83	41	127	6.29	570	(1.55)
After 1999*	Male	3	0	0	0	0	2	6	3	3	5	7.18	22	(0.66)
*low sample size		199	53	67	48	186	104	162	241	139	349	Total	1548	

Where the lowest scores for females was 7.32, Table #9 shows the highest score for males was only 7.18—and that was in the small sample size group born after 1999. The highest male score for the six age groups with reliable sampling sizes was a score of 6.76 for males born between 1983 and 1990 – and this group still scored 1.08 lower than their female counterparts from the same age bracket. (As with Table #3 above (page #8), the very last column shows the difference between male and female scores for the same age brackets, with the numbers being expressed negatively to demonstrate precisely how much lower each group of males scored than their female counterparts.) When compared side-by-side, the results for males and females, broken down by age categories, yields the results found in Table #10:

**TABLE 10
Q19 RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER**



As the results clearly indicate, males were mostly supportive of the idea of a Sexual Harassment Officer, but not nearly as strongly as females supported the idea. Indeed, their support of the position was far less supportive relative to female support than their belief that employers had a duty to actively eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace was relative to the female support given. To fully appreciate the differences between male and female responses consider Table #11:

TABLE 11
Q18 AND Q19 M-F DIFFERENCES IN MEAN RESPONSES BY AGE

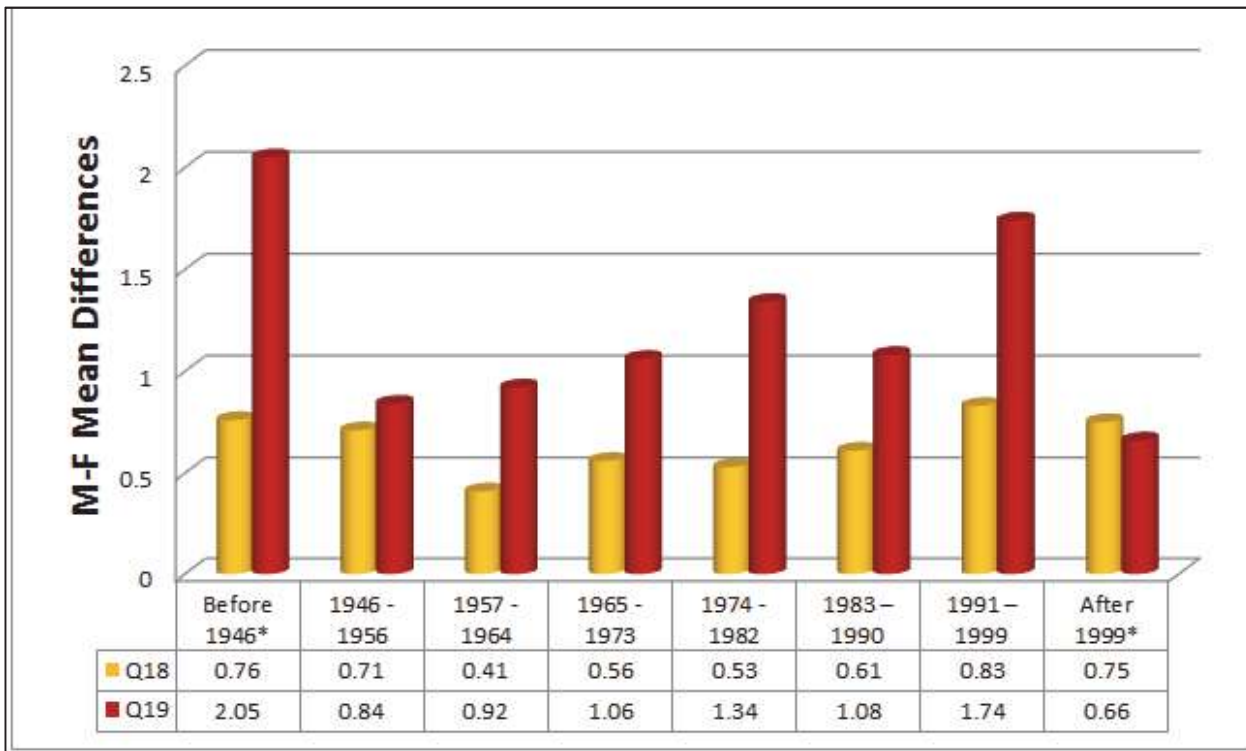


Table #11 shows the differences between male and female mean aggregate responses, broken down by age, for both Question #18 (Proactive) and Question #19 (SHO). With the exception of the male and female groups born after 1999, males not only scored the question regarding a Sexual Harassment Officer lower than females did, but they did so with differences that were often 2-2.5 times greater than the difference in their support—again relative to females— of the need to eliminate workplace sexual harassment. For example, in Table #11, for males born between 1974 and 1982, the gap between their support of a Sexual Harassment Officer and the support females of the same age gave of a SHO was 2.53 times as great as the gap between males support of eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace and the support females gave to the same question.

The overall gap in mean scores between all males and females for Question #18 (Proactive) was 0.65 (Table #6). For Question #19 (SHO) that almost doubled to 1.29 (See Table #12).

TABLE 12
Q19 BENEFIT OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER MEAN SCORES - ALL

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total
Female	114	45	65	50	295	202	289	507	383	1070	7.79	3020
Male	199	53	67	48	186	104	162	241	139	349	6.50	1548
Other	5	0	0	0	2	0	5	5	2	11	7.27	30
	318	98	132	98	483	306	456	753	524	1430		4598
											F-M Gap	1.29
											F-O Gap	0.52

Thus, what we have so far is:

1. Females and Males both feel employers must proactively eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace (Question #18 (Proactive)).
2. Males scored it high, but females scored it noticeably higher.
3. Females and males both feel a Sexual Harassment Officer as described would overall be positive (Question #19 (SHO)).
4. Males scored it as a positive, but females scored it noticeably higher.
5. The gap between female and male scores when moving from Question #18 (Proactive) to Question #19 (SHO) more than doubled, and was 2.53 times as large.

Interestingly, while people who self-categorized their gender as other ranked support for Question #18 (Proactive) at 0.05 lower than males and 0.70 lower than females, their support for the Question #19 (SHO) came in at only 0.52 lower than the aggregate female mean response, but 0.77 higher than the aggregate male mean response. Thus, they did not feel as strongly about the need to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace, and aligned very closely with males. When it came to creating a Sexual Harassment Officer, however, they were slightly more aligned with females than in the previous question, and were far more closely aligned than the males were.

WHY THE INCREASED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES IN SUPPORT OF A DEDICATED SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER?

First, a few basic numbers. The number of females that took the survey was 3,020, or almost twice as many as males that numbered 1,548. Thus, while the mean score for each category is an important metric to use to convey the scores, other methods must be used to help illustrate the nuances of those numbers. Take, for example, Table #13:

TABLE 13
Q19 BENEFIT OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER PERCENTAGES – ALL

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total
Female	3.8%	1.5%	2.2%	1.7%	9.8%	6.7%	9.6%	16.8%	12.7%	35.4%	7.79	3020
Male	12.9%	3.4%	4.3%	3.1%	12.0%	6.7%	10.5%	15.6%	9.0%	22.5%	6.50	1548
Other	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	6.7%	36.7%	7.27	30

This table shows that females were 63% more likely to rate a Sexual Harassment Officer as a “10” concept than males were. Conversely, males were 3.39 times as likely to rate it as a “1” than females were. That means while females were almost 10 times as likely to give a SHO a “10” as they were a “1”, males were less than twice as likely give it a “10” as they were a “1”. And as Table #13 demonstrates, for all scores between two and nine, males and females were usually within 3% of each other. Only a score of

"9" broke this pattern by a little bit, with females scoring it 3.7% higher than the males did¹⁰. Females gave a score of "8" or "9" a little bit more often than males did as a matter of overall percentage. Conversely, males were a little more likely to give a score ranged from "2" to "5" than females were. Both males and females gave a score of "6" 6.7% of the time. The major difference between males and females was at the two extremes of "1" and "10". Females were far more likely than males to wholeheartedly embrace the idea of the Sexual Harassment Officer, while males were far more likely than females to loathe the idea.

These numbers clearly illustrate the trend(s) of the differences between male and female responses, but do not explain why males responded so much less positively than females did. In order to shed some light into the "why", the optional text entries were examined. Again, these are open-ended text responses which people were free to draft however they saw fit, and thus they cannot be tabulated against each other. Instead it was decided that the responses would be categorized into basic themes, and then those would be counted. Further, it was decided to examine the text responses of only those people that had selected "1" for Question #19 (SHO) , as those were more likely to have people candidly express why they strongly disliked the concept of a Sexual Harassment Officer.

Out of the 114 females that opted for a selection of "1" on Question #19 (SHO) , 68, or 59.6% of them provided a comment. Out of the 199 males that opted for a selection of "1" on Question #19 (SHO) , 96, or 48.2% of them provided a comment.

The process of categorizing these responses involved looking for the basic concept they expressed, and then grouping that response with others that had the same basic concept. For example, the comment "HR rep would do just fine as long as the matter is taken seriously" was placed in the category of "HR should already do this", while comments like "'He made me feel uncomfortable' is pretty much grounds enough to ruin someone's career...but it's also a form of bullying that men have no defense against" and others like it were labeled "False claims would be a problem". The results of the top 6 categories can be found in Table #14:

**TABLE 14
COMMENTS FOR Q19 CATEGORIZED**

	Males	Females	Other
HR should already do this	19	13	
Simply not needed	18	14	
Too much power for one person	18	5	
Should be a team of people	14	12	1
False claims would be a problem	6	1	
Let police handle it	5	2	

Note: While "Too much power for one person" and "Should be a team of people" might sound close, the two different categories were created because of the fact that: 1. Some comments focused on the fact that there should be a Sexual Harassment Team to help assure that all claims are followed-up on properly, and prevent a single SHO acting on the whims of the CEO or playing favorites, and, 2.) Other comments tended to focus on the fact that a single SHO would be too likely to abuse their inherent power. I.e. the focus of the former comments was to highlight the limits that a single person might run into, while the latter focused on a fear of the abuses if such power was held by a single person.

It should also be pointed out that "Too much power for one person" and "False claims would be a problem" both appear to be expressing a concern of SHO abuses against people accused of sexual harassment who are innocent. Logically, a SHO could not abuse their power over an accused person in the workplace, unless the accused is in fact innocent—if the person did in fact commit the act they are

accused of, any workplace action up to and including termination would not be viewed as an abuse of power. The “False claims would be a problem” objection logically plays out in the exact same fashion—a false claim would be made, and the SHO would act unfairly, whether innocently or malevolently, on it. Thus, it appears that both of those two categories are expressing a different focus on what would be effectively the same event—a false claim is made and the SHO uses their power to harm the wrongly accused innocent employee.

#METOO SOLIDLY IN THE WORKFORCE

The numbers gathered from this study paint a picture that demonstrates that younger workers are generally less tolerant of sexual harassment in the workplace than their older peers. This mirrors the fact that in society, once mighty people of power—almost exclusively males—are being brought down and ostracized over sexual harassment incidents that just a few years ago society was willing to turn a blind eye to. Ailes, Cosby¹¹, Weinstein, O’Riley, Lauer, Rose, Wynn, Meehan, Keillor, Franken, Louis C.K. are a few of the more notable ones. The NY Times on Nov 17, 2017 posted a list of 71 such men¹². Time Magazine’s Person of the Year for 2017 was “The Silence Breakers”—the women who had spoken out against male harassers and caused society and the media to finally be willing to expose the Harvey Weinstains of the world and eliminate their access to power¹⁴. What was acceptable behavior last year, or last decade, is no longer tolerated by society. Naturally the work environment is mirroring that trend. Yes, women are the majority of the ones standing up and demanding, “Enough!” The survey numbers left no room for doubt—in response to Question #18:

18. How important is it for employers to proactively try and eliminate all forms and instances of sexual harassment in their workplaces?

- b. 1 To 10 scale, 1 being not at all, 10 being critical.
- c.

The option #10 was selected by women 76.8% of the time:

**TABLE 15
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT PERCENTAGE – ALL**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean	Total
Female	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	1.6%	1.1%	2.5%	7.0%	9.8%	76.8%	7.79	3020
Male	1.6%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%	5.6%	2.9%	6.1%	10.7%	10.5%	60.6%	6.50	1548
Other	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	6.7%	16.7%	63.3%	7.27	30

That leaves no room for doubt—over three-quarters of females in the workplace felt it was critical for their employers—and all employers—to take proactive steps to eliminate all forms of workplace sexual harassment. In fact, the percentage of females that placed this as being in the 1-5 range was a mere 2.8%. Males and others rated this as critical 16.2% less of the time. Simply put, women felt far more strongly about the issue of Sexual Harassment than males did.

MILLENNIAL FEMALES BREAK AWAY FROM MALES AND OLDER FEMALES

The next two Tables (16 and 17) convert the data from the Question #18 (Proactive) responses into percentages:

TABLE 16
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY
PERCENTAGE – FEMALES

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1-5	6-10
Before 1946*	Female	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	4.5%	81.8%		9.1%	90.9%
1946 - 1956	Female	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	3.6%	2.1%	1.0%	6.2%	13.3%	72.8%		4.6%	95.4%
1957 - 1964	Female	0.7%	0.2%	0.0%	0.7%	2.4%	1.0%	2.2%	8.3%	12.2%	72.2%		4.1%	95.9%
1965 - 1973	Female	0.4%	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	2.2%	1.1%	3.5%	10.6%	11.1%	70.1%		3.5%	96.5%
1974 - 1982	Female	0.8%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.8%	1.8%	3.3%	9.8%	12.0%	71.3%		2.0%	98.0%
1983 – 1990	Female	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	1.5%	1.3%	2.6%	5.6%	7.5%	80.6%		2.4%	97.6%
1991 – 1999	Female	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%	2.1%	4.6%	8.2%	82.3%		2.0%	98.0%
After 1999*	Female	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	4.0%	88.0%		0.0%	100%

*low sample size

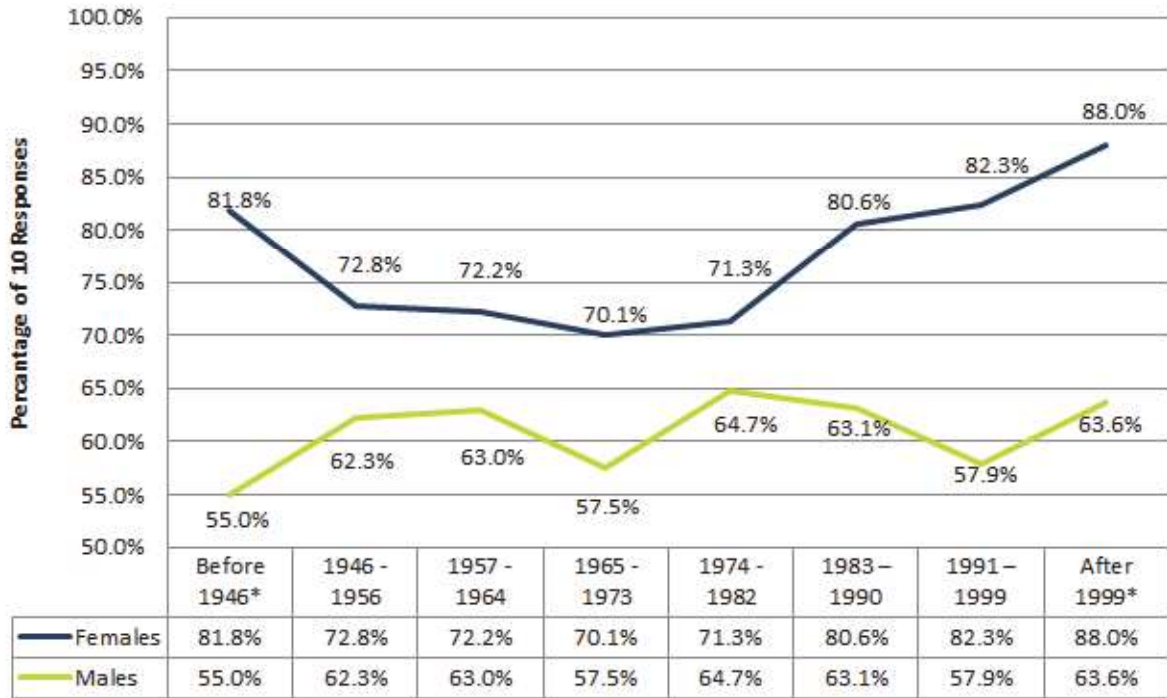
TABLE 17
Q18 PROACTIVELY ELIMINATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY
PERCENTAGE – MALES

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1-5	6-10
Before 1946*	Male	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	20.0%	55.0%		15.0%	85.0%
1946 - 1956	Male	2.5%	1.6%	0.0%	0.8%	9.8%	2.5%	4.1%	6.6%	9.8%	62.3%		14.8%	85.2%
1957 - 1964	Male	1.3%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	5.8%	2.6%	3.9%	14.9%	7.8%	63.0%		7.8%	92.2%
1965 - 1973	Male	1.2%	0.6%	0.0%	2.4%	5.4%	1.8%	7.8%	13.8%	9.6%	57.5%		9.6%	90.4%
1974 - 1982	Male	2.1%	1.6%	0.0%	1.6%	4.8%	2.7%	4.3%	7.5%	10.7%	64.7%		10.2%	89.8%
1983 – 1990	Male	0.7%	0.0%	0.3%	1.0%	6.9%	2.9%	6.9%	9.2%	9.2%	63.1%		8.8%	91.2%
1991 – 1999	Male	1.9%	0.2%	0.9%	0.9%	4.4%	3.5%	6.8%	11.9%	11.6%	57.9%		8.2%	91.8%
After 1999*	Male	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	4.5%	18.2%	63.6%		4.5%	95.5%

*low sample size

Additionally, a new pair of columns was added to the right side of the table—the first shows the percentages of people who scored each question at a score of 1-5, and the last column shows the percentages for a score of 6-10. Overall, the positive (i.e. 6-10) responses for males and females showed similar percentages. That would appear to denote at most a slight difference in support of employers eliminating sexual harassment, with females slightly favoring it more than males did. However, when a side-by-side comparison is made for an answer of “10”, the strongest weight allowed and specifically labeled “critical”, a sharp distinction appears when broken down by age and gender:

TABLE 18
PERCENTAGE OF Q18 “10” RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER



The view of Millennial males remains more or less consistent with their peers from older generations. Millennial females, however, show a dramatic shift towards placing a duty upon employers to actively root out sexual harassment in the workplace. The scores for females born between 1946 and 1982 remain within 2.7% of each other, but within the next three age brackets, the percentage of “10” scores steadily rises within each bracket. Simply stated, the younger Millennial females see it as their employer’s duty to provide them a workplace that is free from all sexual harassment—with younger meaning more of a duty upon the employer. Those Millennial females are either in, or about to join the workforce, and they are not happy with the workplace attitudes they are encountering. In the words of one Millennial female who scored both Question #18 (Proactive) and Question #19 (SHO) as “10”:

“I’ve only been out of college for 4 years, and in those 4 years, I have seen way too much harassment in the workplace.”

Whether or not Millennial females have somehow encountered more sexual harassment than their Baby Boomer counterparts, and it has increased their distaste for it, is research for another day, although it seems unlikely that would be the case. More likely is that Millennial females are either more observant of harassment activity, or possibly less tolerant of it. Regardless, Millennial females, despite being younger, appear likely to continue the current #MeToo intolerance of harassment activity, and are likely to increase it.

FEMALES WANT A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER, MALES ARE MUCH LESS RECEPTIVE TO THE IDEA

First, the responses to Question #19 (SHO) broken down by age and score chosen, converted to averages per, for male and female genders . Females are Table #19, Males are Table #20:

TABLE 19
Q19 IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER BY
PERCENTAGE – FEMALES

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1-5	6-10
Before 1946*	Female	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	9.1%	9.1%	54.5%	18.2%	81.8%
1946 - 1956	Female	4.6%	2.1%	2.1%	1.0%	12.8%	7.2%	6.7%	19.5%	10.3%	33.8%	22.6%	77.4%
1957 - 1964	Female	4.9%	1.0%	2.4%	1.2%	10.7%	4.6%	12.9%	17.6%	10.7%	33.9%	20.2%	79.8%
1965 - 1973	Female	6.0%	1.8%	2.2%	1.3%	13.9%	9.7%	10.2%	12.8%	11.5%	30.5%	25.2%	74.8%
1974 - 1982	Female	3.0%	1.3%	1.3%	2.0%	10.0%	7.0%	10.0%	17.8%	15.0%	32.8%	17.5%	82.5%
1983 – 1990	Female	3.5%	1.3%	1.7%	1.5%	9.7%	5.8%	10.8%	18.5%	11.6%	35.6%	17.7%	82.3%
1991 – 1999	Female	2.4%	1.6%	2.8%	2.0%	6.9%	6.3%	7.8%	16.6%	14.2%	39.3%	15.8%	84.2%
After 1999*	Female	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%	8.0%	16.0%	16.0%	32.0%	16.0%	84.0%

*low sample size

TABLE 20
Q19 IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER BY
PERCENTAGE – MALES

Birth Year	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1-5	6-10
Before 1946*	Male	25.0%	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%	30.0%	50.0%	50.0%
1946 - 1956	Male	11.5%	1.6%	4.9%	0.8%	13.9%	5.7%	9.0%	18.0%	13.1%	21.3%	32.8%	67.2%
1957 - 1964	Male	11.0%	2.6%	2.6%	3.2%	13.6%	7.8%	9.7%	14.3%	10.4%	24.7%	33.1%	66.9%
1965 - 1973	Male	15.0%	1.8%	3.6%	2.4%	15.0%	11.4%	7.8%	16.8%	8.4%	18.0%	37.7%	62.3%
1974 - 1982	Male	10.7%	4.3%	4.3%	2.7%	15.0%	5.9%	11.2%	15.0%	11.2%	19.8%	36.9%	63.1%
1983 – 1990	Male	13.1%	2.6%	3.6%	2.0%	10.1%	5.9%	10.1%	17.3%	9.2%	26.1%	31.4%	68.6%
1991 – 1999	Male	13.2%	4.9%	5.4%	4.7%	10.5%	6.1%	11.1%	14.6%	7.2%	22.3%	38.8%	61.2%
After 1999*	Male	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	27.3%	13.6%	13.6%	22.7%	13.6%	86.4%

*low sample size

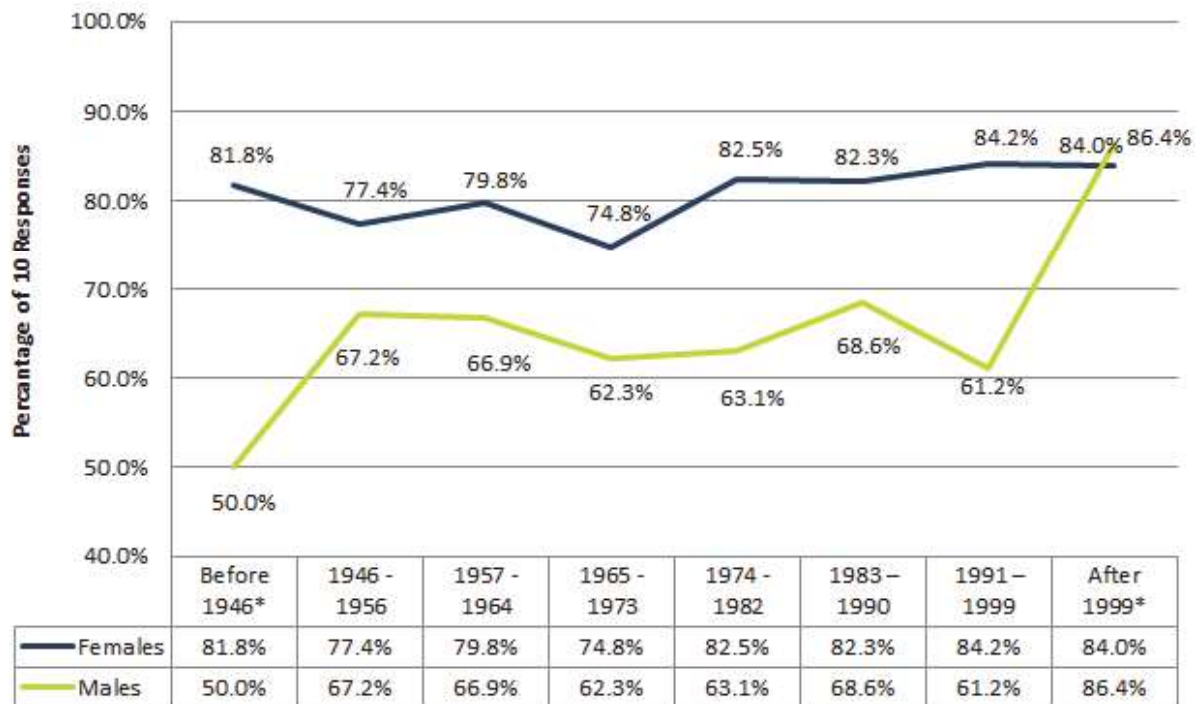
The percentage of “10” scores for both females and males was significantly lower than for Question #18 (Proactive), with females still selecting “10” significantly higher than males did. Overall, the “10” responses for males and females breaks down to what can be seen in Table #21:

**TABLE 21
PERCENTAGE OF Q19 “10” RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER**



Aside from the elevated percentages found for the most senior male and female age groups, the responses appear more or less similar across the age ranges. But this table examines only those who scored Question #19 (SHO) as a “10” (“critical”). When looked at in groups of responses, however, a different trend appears. If all female and male responses are placed into two groups—those that answered in the 1-5 range, and those than answered in the 6-10 range, the following appears (Table #22):

**TABLE 22
PERCENTAGE OF Q19 “6-10” RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER**



This demonstrates is that across the age ranges, males tended to favor a dedicated Sexual Harassment Officer, while females solidly favored such a position. Aside from the two age extremes, males favored a SHO between 61.2% and 68.6% of the time. Females for the same ages chose within the score range of 6-10 between 74.8% and 84.2% of the time.

ONE SIDE-NOTE: THE OLDER MALE DICHOTOMY

One very curious pair of numbers is that males born in 1945 and before gave Question #18 (Proactive) a “10” at the lowest percentage of any age bracket with an percentage of 55%--yet for Question #19 (SHO) that same group chose “10” 30% of the time, which was the highest rate for any male age bracket. It is true that the two age extremes for both genders had low sampling rates, and thus it is possible to attribute this to an issue that might correct itself with a larger sample size. But the question that is raised by the comparison of the two disparate percentage rates for males born before 1946 can be summarized as such:

Why would the very same age group of males that were least receptive to placing a duty on employers to eliminate sexual harassment also be the same age group that was the most receptive towards the creation of a sexual harassment officer?

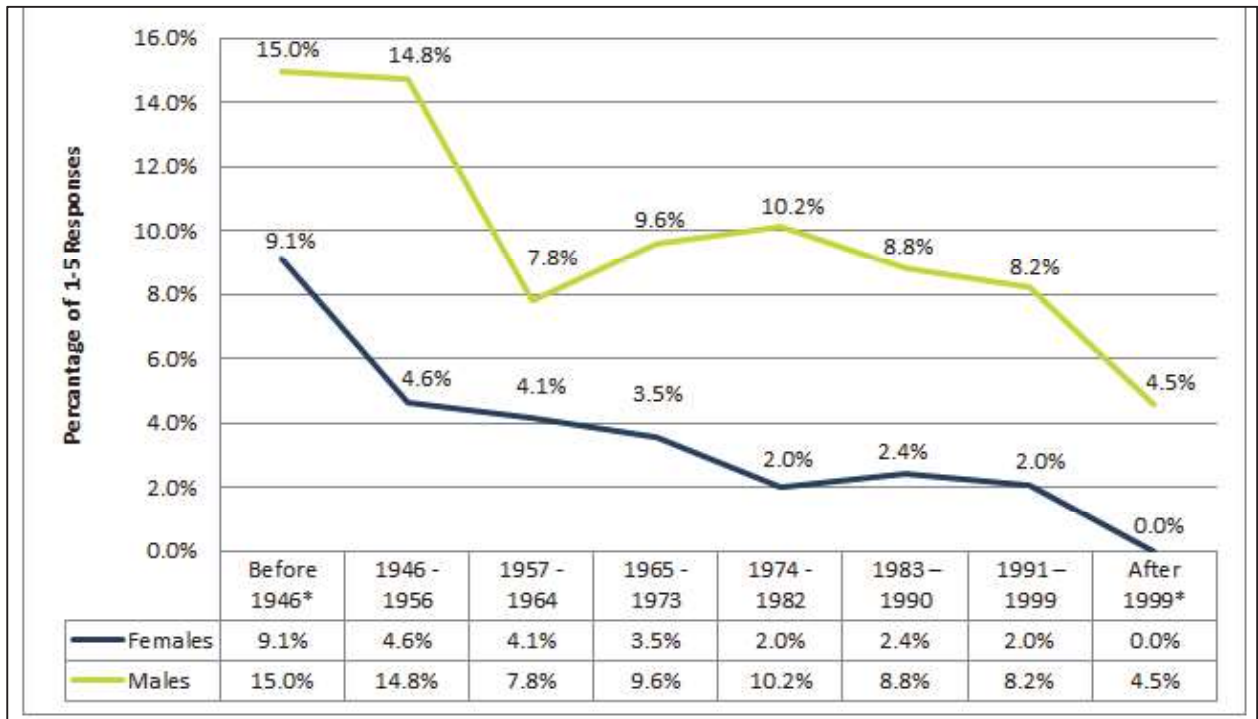
The text comments offer no clue as to why this dichotomy exists. The survey was not designed to uncover such hidden psychological drivers. Further research focused on the “why” may be warranted—this paper merely reports the apparent disconnect so others might be tempted to study it.

THE MAIN TAKEAWAY

#MeToo is not going away. It is not a fad. The force of it might be at brand new levels, but those exist because the victims of sexual harassment—primarily women—are not willing to tolerate it quietly any more. They are not as afraid of being ostracized if they speak up, they are not as afraid of being fired, and they are not as wary of taking an employer to court if need be. They are sanding up en masse, supporting one another, and collectively announcing to the world that, “I’m as mad as hell, and I’m not gonna take this anymore!”¹⁵ When they come into the workplace, they expect their employer to guarantee a sexual harassment free environment, and overwhelmingly feel it is critical for their employer to provide such.

Males, while not as strongly, appear to be getting the message. Their scores ran somewhat lower in demanding employers prevent sexual harassment, but they still overwhelmingly felt that such was an employer’s duty. But even that has a major problem that should give pause to all ethical employers, and suggest the need for extensive orientation and training to be given to the reach all, but it should especially train the male employees. This last chart (Table #23) shows the percentage of males and females that scored Question #18 (Proactive) at a score of between 1-5:

TABLE 23
PERCENTAGE OF Q18 “1-5” RESPONSES BY AGE AND GENDER



Depending upon the age, again leaving out the low-sample population ages of people born before 1946 and after 1999, somewhere between 2.0% and 4.6% of the female population gave Question #18 (Proactive) a score of 1-5. The females that scored it there did not feel strongly enough about the issue of workplace sexual harassment—at least not enough to require employers actively try to eliminate it. Either they have not encountered it, or they don’t mind it very much. It would be wrong to judge them for their scores, as they were asked how they felt about the issue, and they presumably answered honestly. If 96.5% of the females born between 1965 and 1973 feel strongly about the issue, and 3.5% do not, that is simply how each individual female feels, and the above numbers are nothing more than a calculation of their collective responses.

The problem, however, is that sexual harassment does not occur in a vacuum. It requires at least two people in order to exist—one person to be the victim, and one person to either unknowingly or intentionally violate the rights of the victim. That is why the male numbers from Table #23 raise serious concern. Leaving out the low-sample size young and old, males scored Question #18 (Proactive) in the bottom half of the scale between 7.8% and 14.8% of the time. That is a large percentage of males who simply don't think eliminating workplace sexual harassment is very important.

That bears repeating—when broken down by age ranges, between 7.8% and 14.8% of the males indicated they felt at most lukewarm to the concept of employers needing to eliminate sexual harassment.

Those are the same males that will be interacting with the 95.4% and 98% of the females that feel strongly that sexual harassment in the workplace needs to be eliminated.

The numbers indicate that the vast majority of males understand that sexual harassment needs to be removed from the workplace. It would be wrong to paint this problem as one where only females are the victims. But the reality is that far too large a percentage of males have not gotten the message yet—they think of sexual harassment as minor, or possibly non-existent problem. Even those who think it is a serious problem that needs to be eliminated feel far less positive about having a specific officer in charge of investigating sexual harassment and preventing it from recurring. And that means it is up to employers to step up and get serious about eliminating even a hint of tolerance of sexual harassment in the workplace.

A CALL TO ACTION

It is probably time for sexual harassment prevention and investigation to be removed from the province of Human Resources. A large number of males felt strongly that there needed to be a Sexual Harassment officer as described above. An even larger percentage of females felt even stronger in favor of such a position. That alone says that the current popular model of having HR deal with sexual harassment issues is a failed attempt in the eyes of the employees. They overwhelmingly want a dedicated office to handle sexual harassment. Having said that, there were many people, across all scores, expressed that the “Officer” should be a team of people, or that instead of reporting to the CEO the officer/team should instead report to:

1. The Board of Directors or
2. The shareholders/owners or
3. Corporate or (probably) Outside counsel for the company.

In retrospect, those are probably wise safeguards to be implemented. As was stated above, the proposed Sexual Harassment Officer was styled after the Title IX Compliance Officer which the Department of Education has made mandatory for colleges and universities that receive Federal funding. For the private sector, the proposed changes sound like improvements that would be wise to implement. Additionally, it is also suggested that the officer or team take over sexual harassment training protocols, so that there is not a conflict between the sexual harassment officer/team and the members of Human Resources.

Even a Sexual Harassment Response Team (SHRT) would not have to be a full-time team for smaller companies. In a company of 20 employees, it could be a team of 3 people who meet 1-2 hours a month to discuss training and possible issues. When a report of possible sexual harassment is made, the team would step in and investigate the matter, giving full confidentiality to the people reporting.

It is very easy to have nay-sayers step up and point out all the problems that could happen with a SHRT—someone might break confidentiality, or they might show favoritism, or a member of the team might be vindictive against someone and use their position of authority to “get even”. But those, and other possible concerns, can be leveled against any form of response mechanism for any possible problem(s) in the working world. Those concerns are not to be ignored, but rather addressed and prevented. People work better in teams. They are more productive in teams, and the team is less likely to stray away from protocol or permit personal feelings to interfere because the team members will help anchor each other.

Finally, there is one certainty all employers face—there are still employees out there who still do not understand the gravity of how strongly females have decided to stop sexual harassment in the workplace. Those employers can either take active steps to correct that issue within their employee pool, or those companies will face the wrath of lawsuits and public scorn as the tenacity of #MeToo continues to become the norm.

ENDNOTES

1. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Charges Alleging Sex-Based Harassment (Charges filed with EEOC) FY 2010 - FY 2017, from: https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/sexual_harassment_new.cfm
2. Moniuszko, Sara, and Kelly, Cara, Harvey Weinstein scandal: A complete list of the 87 accusers, USA Today, Oct 27, 2017 <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/people/2017/10/27/weinstein-scandal-complete-list-accusers/804663001/>
3. Participants were allowed to select “Female”, “Male”, and “Other”.
4. Title IX Final Common Rule for 21 Federal agencies: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance (65 Fed. Reg. 52857).
5. U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights “Dear Colleague Letter” of May 24, 2015. See: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201504-title-ix-coordinators.pdf>
6. Unsurprisingly, the number of participants born before 1946 and after 1999 were lower than the other age ranges. There is an (*) in the charts pointing out their sample sizes were low, and are being reported here for completeness.
7. Table #4 expresses this value as a negative number because it is the male score subtracted from the female score.
8. This 30 out of 4,598 may seem very low. However, it yields a result of 0.65%, which correlates strongly with the current estimate of transgender Americans in the US at 0.6%, See: The Williams Institute, “Updated estimates show 1.4 million adults identify as transgender in the US, doubling estimates from a decade ago”, June 30, 2016, <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/press-releases/updated-estimates-show-1-4-million-adults-identify-as-transgender-in-the-us-doubling-estimates-from-a-decade-ago/> Again, we are not suggesting everyone who is transgender would list as “other”. Nor would we suggest all non-binary people are transgender. We merely note the positive correlation to show that the figure is consistent with other studies.
9. We apologize for using the label “other” in such an awkward fashion, but we feel duty bound to use that phrase as that is what people selected.
10. Again, when it comes to the people who self-described their gender as “other”, the sample numbers are simply too low to do anything other than suggest possible trends that future research might verify or refute. We include them here to encourage such and to give a complete picture of all the numbers that we have on this question.
11. For some of these, the harassment went far enough to also qualify as sexual assault.
12. Alkmukhtar, Gold, and Buchanan, After Weinstein: 71 Men Accused of Sexual Misconduct and Their Fall From Power, New York Times, Nov 17, 2017. Updated Feb. 8, 2018. See: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/11/10/us/men-accused-sexual-misconduct-weinstein.html>
13. Zacharek, Docketerman, and Edwards, The Silence Breakers, Time Magazine, Dec 18, 2017. See: <http://time.com/time-person-of-the-year-2017-silence-breakers/>
14. Again, the self-described other gender(s) were too small a sampling to be broken down at all.
15. From the iconic speech by character Howard Beale in the 1976 movie “Network”, winner of 4 Academy Awards and 4 Golden Globes.