

# **A Comparison of the Attitudes of Male Police Officers toward Female Police Officers from 1976 to 1994**

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## *Abstract*

*The first women to be assigned to uniformed patrol duties were not exactly welcomed with open arms by the male officers. An attitude survey, conducted in 1976 at three Tampa Bay area law enforcement agencies, found that the male officers expressed consistently negative opinions about the presence, ability and effectiveness of female officers.*

*Eighteen years later that same survey was readministered to the same three agencies. Substantial positive changes in attitudes were found. Female officers, however, are still not completely accepted as equal partners. There are still differences in perception between male and female officers regarding job performance, opportunities for advancement, and sexual harassment.*

## Introduction

In the early 1970's, when the roles for women in law enforcement were expanding, research focused on determining if women could perform uniformed patrol assignments. Now, nearly twenty years later, if is no longer the question. Numerous studies have shown that women can and do perform all the duties of patrol officers. Female officers have been assigned to patrol units by practically every police department in the United States and they have risen to all ranks, including chief (Martin, 1990).

The number of women working as police officers is greater now than ever before and accounts for approximately 9% of all sworn officers (FBI, 1993). For reasons pertaining to demographics and policy, those numbers will continue to grow. In September, 1992, for example, the Los Angeles City Council voted to increase the number of female police officers on the LAPD to reach a goal of a force that is 44% female ("Los Angeles council," 1992).

Public managers are faced with a changing work force. As the "baby boom" population ages, there will be fewer younger workers entering the labor market, more minority and female workers, and white males will form a smaller percentage of the work force (Atkinson, 1989). Younger white males, the traditional source of police officers, will become a smaller part of the available labor supply. Police managers must consider alternative sources of labor to fill their ranks, one of which is women.

The nature of police work is changing, moving away from the "tough cop" mentality to a more service-oriented philosophy with growing emphasis on community policing strategies (Lord, 1986). More attention is being given to citizen satisfaction with police service as the service aspect of police work gains more prominence (Kelling & Moore, 1988). One estimate describes police agencies as 80% service-oriented, with enforcement and other duties comprising the remainder of the time (Bouza, 1975). This change may necessitate the recruitment of a different type of individual into the police profession.

That different type of individual may be female. The Christopher Commission's report on the Los Angeles Police Department found that female police officers were less likely to use excessive force and more likely to resolve potentially violent situations

without resorting to the use of force. Of the 120 officers it identified as having the most use of force reports, none were women (Yaroslavsky, 1992).

Study after study has found that women can successfully perform the job of police officer, yet artificial barriers of prejudice and discrimination remain. Police work has traditionally been considered a man's job and is still male-dominated. Prejudice and lack of acceptance as equal partners by male police officers prevents maximum performance by female officers and thus results in ineffective use of a valuable human resource.

This study measures the change in attitudes of male police officers toward female officers over an 18 year period in three Tampa Bay agencies. Although these agencies are not a representative sample of all law enforcement agencies, the results may give some indication of the potential barriers female officers face so that police managers can take steps to eliminate those obstructions.

### Literature Review

Most of the studies of female officer performance were conducted in the 1970's when departments were first assigning women to patrol duties. These studies found that women could perform satisfactorily as uniformed police officers and that gender alone was not a reason to prohibit women from patrol assignments.

The first major study comparing male and female officer performance was conducted by the Police Foundation and the Urban Institute in Washington, D. C. in 1972, the year that the Metropolitan Police of the District of Columbia first assigned women to patrol duties (Bloch & Anderson, 1974). In this study, 86 new female officers were matched with 86 new male officers, and their performance was examined for a period of one year. All the officers studied were assigned to patrol. Data to be analyzed was gathered from direct observation, police records, citizen surveys, performance evaluations, and surveys of officers.

Bloch and Anderson found that both male and female officers responded to similar types of calls and experienced angry, drunk or violent citizens in the same proportion. The female officers achieved similar results in handling these types of citizens. Male officers handled, overall, more patrol incidents, but this was heavily influenced by their greater self-initiated activity. Female officers handled more dispatched and service-oriented calls. Male officers made more arrests and wrote more traffic tickets.

Bloch and Anderson also found that when working with partners, female officers handled an equal share of the workload, driving and decision-making. There were too few incidents where violence was directed against police officers to be able to make any conclusions about the female officers' ability to handle those situations. Female officers on patrol, however, did not require back-up assistance at a greater rate than men.

Male officers, according to the Bloch and Anderson study, were more likely to be involved in misconduct than female officers. Regardless, both groups received similar ratings on the department's standard evaluation at the end of their first year of duty.

The patrol performance of 16 policewomen and 16 policemen was compared in St. Louis County, Missouri in 1972-73 (Sherman, 1975). This study focused on suburban, one-person patrol, as opposed to other studies in more urban areas with two-person patrol teams. The officers in the study were all from the same recruit class. Performance data were obtained through field observations, citizen interviews and

attitude surveys, performance evaluation scores, objective data from police records, and personal interviews. Sherman found that although women made fewer arrests, they were equally effective in handling angry or upset citizens, received similar performance evaluations ratings from supervisors and provided the same level of citizen satisfaction. The women patrolled in a less aggressive style than male officers and made fewer self-initiated stops of suspicious persons or cars; however, the female officers did write more traffic tickets. Instances of violence occurred too infrequently to draw any conclusions about male/female performance. Sherman concluded that women could perform the duties of one-person motor patrol in a suburban department.

A study of New York Police Department officers was conducted in 1975-76 (Sichel et al., 1978). This study matched 41 male and 41 female officers and followed their performance for a seven-month period. These officers were assigned to two-person motor patrol. The data were gathered by direct observation, citizen interviews and from police files. The researchers attempted to determine what police officers do on the job and how effectively they do it. The study focused on control-seeking behavior exhibited by the officers. Control-seeking behavior was defined as "the attempt to influence another person or persons to take a particular action" (Sichel et al., 1978, p. 12). This behavior could range from verbal requests to physically forcing compliance.

The study found no great difference in the "style" of policing for male and female officers. They both went about the job in similar fashion. The researchers found no differences in the methods or techniques used to gain control. About 75% of the control-seeking attempts were verbal. Other methods, involving physical force or use of a weapon, were employed by females at similar rates to males. Only about 10% of the control attempts involved actual physical contact of any kind, from touching to struggling. However, the female officers were slightly less successful in achieving compliance.

Female officers participated in 7% fewer control attempts than male officers. The observers found that the females seemed to defer to their male partners more often and showed some hesitation to take action. When two females were partnered together, this deference or hesitation disappeared. Interestingly, the study found that the females were much more active and assertive when working with another female officer.

Controlling for the factor that female officers were more likely to be assigned to station duty, the study found that male officers still made more arrests and wrote more traffic tickets than the females. Both groups received similar performance evaluations from supervisors. Sichel concluded that, although there were some differences in performance, they were not sufficient to deny women patrol assignments.

An examination of patrol car logs formed the basis for a comparison of male and female officers employed by the El Monte Police Department (a suburb of Los Angeles) in the early 1980s (Snortum & Beyers, 1983). Twenty-six officers were involved, half of whom were female. The patrol car logs recorded over 70 different types of police activity. Female officers performed every type of patrol activity but were found to be over-utilized for station duty and prisoner search. In contrast to the studies in Washington, D. C. and St. Louis County, this study found no significant differences in the level of self-initiated activity such as traffic stops, pedestrian checks, and vehicle stops. Arrest rates and police reports were not measured.

Snortum and Beyers found only two statistically significant differences in performance. At first, male officers were dispatched to more "high risk" calls, but as the study progressed over time, this difference disappeared. The other difference found was that while working alone, male officers made more "other observations," such as bar checks and found property, than female officers working alone. But when working with a partner just the opposite was found; male officers recorded fewer of that type of activity than females.

A more recent study compared the performance of male and female police officers at the Tampa Police Department (Goethe, 1991). The study examined 283 police officers (225 male and 58 female) who were assigned to patrol duties during the entire year of 1989. The study compared their performance in seven dimensions using data obtained from public records at the department: personnel files, Internal Affairs complaint files, and the computer-aided dispatch system. It was found that there was no statistically significant difference between the male and female officers in the number of:

- self-initiated patrol incidents handled.
- assigned patrol incidents handled.
- reports written.
- arrests made.
- Internal Affairs complaints received.

It was found that the female officers used more sick time and reported more injuries.

These studies found that women were meeting the demands of police work in varying department sizes and situations. Other studies examined the attitudes of male police officers toward female police officers. Even though women were doing the job, they were still faced with lack of acceptance by male officers, sometimes to the point of obvious prejudice and hostility.

The Bloch and Anderson (1974) study included an anonymous opinion survey of police supervisors and managers. In that survey, male officers were rated higher on ability to handle violent situations and on general patrol competence. Men and women were rated equal in ability to handle upset or injured persons. An attitude survey of male patrol officers indicated that they felt that female officers, as a group, were not as capable at patrol duties as the males.

Sherman's 1975 study of police officers in the suburban St. Louis County Police Department included an attitude survey administered to all male officers prior to the assignment of women as patrol officers, and then again six months later. Both times, he found that male officers held negative attitudes toward the female officers. However, after six months of working with female officers, the attitudes became slightly more accepting. Sherman suggested that the change was due to "cooperative interdependence" of male and female officers working together with shared responsibilities, not just the mere contact or exposure to female officers. He predicted that as more and more competent female officers integrated every phase of law enforcement, that the negative attitudes and prejudices would continue to decline.

Balkin (1988) reviewed the literature of performance and attitude studies relating to female police officers. The studies showed generally positive acceptance of female officers by the public. Male police officers were found to hold consistently negative

attitudes, in every study. Balkin found that the primary objection was to the female officers' relative lack of physical strength. He concluded from his review that male police officers possessed very traditional attitudes toward women. A woman, performing a job that was traditionally identified with strength, masculinity and courage, threatened deeply rooted views of sex roles, even identity. Balkin predicted that female officers would become more accepted as new generations of men, with different values, entered police work.

Stressors facing female police officers were identified in 1980 through interviews with 25 female officers at a large California agency (Wexler & Logan, 1983). The biggest source of stress, cited by over 80% of the women, was the negative attitudes of male police officers. The negative attitudes were manifested by sexually-oriented questions, blatant anti-woman comments, and refusal to talk to female officers. Other frequently mentioned sources of stress were training, exposure to tragedy and trouble, generalization of the actions of individuals to all female police officers, and rumors.

The authors suggested four possible explanations for the male officers' attitudes and behavior:

- Fear that women entering law enforcement would lower the status of the profession.
- General feelings of frustration arising from other aspects of the job, relieved by "scapegoating."
- Doubts about the women's physical abilities.
- Questioning of the meaning of masculinity with women performing a traditionally masculine job.

A later study of job stress examined thirty female and thirty male police officers employed by small town (less than 50,000 population) police departments in Vermont (Bartol, et al., 1992). The thirty women represented 91% of the full-time female police officers in Vermont. The data were obtained from psychological evaluations (MMPI scores) administered at the time the officers initially applied for law enforcement employment, performance evaluations, supervisory stress ratings of each officer, and a stress questionnaire completed by each subject. The questionnaires asked officers to rate on a five-point interval scale how stressful they found certain aspects of police work. Female officers also rated several additional sources of stress specific to women (such as sexual harassment).

The authors grouped the various items into four categories of stress sources. The study found that male and female officers rated the various stressors very similarly. They both indicated external stressors (the court system, the media, etc.) as the greatest source of stress. Organizational stressors (department politics, inadequate staffing, etc.) were next, followed by task-related (danger, etc.) then personal stressors (family responsibilities) for both groups. There were some differences between males and females within the task-related category, but the vast majority of stressors were rated equally stressful by male and female officers.

It was also found that supervisors rated male and female officers similarly on all the 11 performance measures indicating they found no difference in overall job performance. The MMPI scores also showed no significant differences by gender.

The items answered by the female officers revealed the existence of sexual discrimination. Over half (53%) of the female respondents indicated they had been sexually harassed by male officers or supervisors. Eighty-three percent stated that male supervisors had expressed negative opinions about women in policing. Eighty percent believed they had the same training opportunities as male officers, yet 60% believed they had the same promotional opportunities. On the positive side, 90% felt they were accepted as good officers by their male peers and 80% would recommend law enforcement as a career to other women. The authors concluded female officers were doing the job as well as male officers but were still faced with sexual discrimination and prejudice.

Martin (1990) reported on data gathered in a mail survey of all state police departments and all 446 municipal police departments serving populations of 50,000 or more. This survey was augmented by case studies of five urban departments which included interviews with managers, supervisors, and male and female officers.

Martin interviewed over 70 female officers in five urban departments and found that two-thirds reported at least one instance of sex discrimination and 75% reported sexual harassment on the job. She explored some of the explanations for male opposition to women as police officers and found that women's smaller physical size and lesser strength were most frequently cited. Women exercising authority and control over men was found to be threatening. It was felt that female officers could not command the respect of citizens or maintain "command presence." Women (and minorities) also interrupted the feelings of group solidarity among the male officers because the work group was no longer homogeneous.

Her interviews with the female officers and over 70 male officers indicated that more male officers are now supportive of female officers than in the past. She attributed this change to positive work experiences with female officers, many male officers being married to female officers, and the general change in attitudes of a new generation. Also contributing to this change were department policies and practices including EEO regulations; more sexual, racial and ethnic integration of police departments; greater emphasis on the service aspect of police work; and movement toward professionalism in law enforcement.

A survey of female police officers in Florida examined sexual harassment (Statistical Analysis Center, 1994). Conducted in 1993, the survey included information about agency policies as well as the individual's experiences and opinions. All female law enforcement officers in Florida were identified for the study and survey forms were successfully delivered to 3790. Approximately one-third completed the forms.

Sixty-one percent of the respondents revealed that they had been victims of sexual harassment at least once. The most common types of harassment were inappropriate gender or sexual comments. Over 40% of the respondents dealt daily with sexually oriented materials or jokes. Yet approximately 50% felt that sexual harassment was given an appropriate level of attention. Approximately 82% of the respondents indicated their agencies had written sexual harassment policies and approximately 41% indicated their agencies provided formal training on sexual harassment. The survey revealed that for many female officers, hostility and unpleasant comments from their fellow workers were a daily experience.

## Research Questions

The literature indicates that the first female patrol officers were met with distrust and hostility. Attitudes, however, may change over time. As more and more women enter law enforcement, and continue to demonstrate successful performance, the discrimination and prejudice directed at female officers may diminish.

As women are represented in greater numbers in the work force, and in policing, it is important to identify and eliminate any barriers to full performance. An understanding of the attitudes of the male officer majority is required to accomplish this. Prejudice and less than full acceptance must be addressed if found to still exist. An unfriendly, even hostile, work environment prevents all employees from performing at their optimum level. Personnel costs are usually the largest percentage of an agency's budget. To not fully utilize all human resources is inefficient. A supportive and non-discriminatory work environment is essential to maximize the performance of all employees and enhance professionalism.

## Methodology

This study replicated an attitude survey originally administered in 1976 at three Tampa Bay area, law enforcement agencies (Vega & Silverman, 1982). At that time, only a few women had been assigned as patrol officers, for only a few years. The survey examined the male police officers' perceptions of women's:

- role in society.
- ability to perform patrol duties.
- effectiveness as a police officer.

It also measured the impact of college attendance, age, and work experience with female police officers on the male's attitudes. The original researchers are still employed at the University of South Florida and one provided a copy of the original instrument as well as data tables.

Most of the questions in the original survey instrument were retained, except for two questions. The request for political party affiliation was eliminated as not relevant. Another question asked the respondent's opinion on whether "most women, including those who apply for positions as police officers, panic easily." It was felt that after nearly 20 years of successful performance by women as police officers, this question was not relevant. Any individual instances of panic are dealt with as disciplinary matters. Some questions were slightly reworded using clearer or more modern terminology, but still retaining the original meaning and intent.

Two original questions dealing with the respondent's individual work experience with female officers were combined into one. One original question dealing with sexual exploitation of female officers was expanded into two questions dealing with sexually derogatory comments and unwanted sexual advances.

Six new questions were added. Two asked to rate female officers' effectiveness in arresting males and in handling violent males. Four questions were added that probably would not have been relevant when women were just entering the profession. These questions dealt with preference for women in promotions, exclusion from some assignments, and acceptance in squad social activities and in the profession.

The revised survey form contained 51 questions, compared to 47 in the original. The same format for questions was retained. Respondents were asked to rate their responses on a five-point interval scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" or to rate effectiveness on a five-point interval scale from "highly effective" to "highly ineffective." Other questions captured demographic information. Space was left for written comments at the end, if the respondent desired.

The final version of the instrument, including the new and reworded questions, was reviewed by an assistant professor of criminology at the University of South Florida who has experience in survey design and methodology.

The questionnaires were administered to all sworn officers in three law enforcement agencies: the Tampa Police Department, the St. Petersburg Police Department, and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, the same as in the original study. In 1976, this population totaled 1,350 officers of which 53 were female. There were 826 forms returned, for a response rate of 61%.

In 1994, the number of officers at the three agencies had grown to 2,151 including 299 female officers. This represented an increase of 60% in agency size, and a whopping 464% in female representation. With 1,410 forms returned, the response rate was 65.5%.

The questionnaires were administered at roll calls and to individuals (some officers or units did not have formal daily or weekly roll calls). Most forms were administered and collected the same day. Some were left with supervisors to be distributed to absent employees, then later were collected by the researcher. Every position and shift in which sworn officers were assigned was included. Return visits were made to reach officers who had been on "weekend" days off. No position or assignment was excluded. Possible explanations for the less than 100% response rate may be: Although the survey was anonymous, it was voluntary and some chose not to participate; some officers were absent due to vacation, sick leave, training days, or out on investigations. Approximately 20 officers were not reached because: 1) one midnight shift of patrol at one agency could not be scheduled, 2) the supervisors of one patrol shift at one agency were inadvertently missed. No one group, shift, or position was intentionally excluded.

The responses in both surveys were analyzed by gender and with descriptive statistics.

### Data Analysis

The current group of respondents was older, better educated, more experienced and more racially diverse than the original group. In 1976, the male respondents had a median age of 30 and 96% were white. In 1994, males averaged 37 years of age and were approximately 75% white. The female respondents in 1976 averaged 25.5 years of age and 97% were white. In 1994, they were 34 and approximately 75% white.

Approximately 85% of the male and female respondents in 1994 had attended some college. In 1976, two-thirds of the males and 80% of the females had been to college. The average number of years of law enforcement experience grew from 6 years (male) and 2 years (female) in 1976 to 12 1/3 years (male) and 9 3/4 years (female) in 1994.



Vega and Silverman (1982) found that male officers expressed consistently negative opinions about the presence, ability, and effectiveness of female officers. The current responses of the male officers indicated their attitudes and opinions have changed a great deal since 1976. They are much more accepting of female officers. There were many more positive, and much fewer negative, responses to questions regarding the acceptance of female officers and their overall ability, as Table 1 indicates.

The responses to questions regarding back-up indicated that now, male officers are much more willing to work with female officers and find them acceptable as partners, as Table 2 indicates. Male officers also expressed much higher opinions of the effectiveness of female officers, as indicated in Table 3.

The male officers expressed more egalitarian and "liberated" opinions of women, in general, than in 1976. As Table 4 indicates, the responses reveal the men today were more accepting of women in the workforce and viewed them more as equal participants in work and family life.

Female officers were somewhat more optimistic about equal treatment in the workplace in 1976. Approximately 21% strongly agreed/agreed that women were **not** discriminated against in the labor force. That number dropped to 8.9% in 1994. Male opinions differed from the women's but stayed about the same over time, with 30.5% agreeing in 1976 and 29.1% today.

Questions regarding promotions and assignments were not asked in 1976. In 1994, a big difference was found in the perceptions of male and female officers. Many more male officers (63.8%) strongly agreed/agreed that female officers were given preference in promotions; only

17.7% of the females concurred. Well over half, 56.2%, of the female officers felt they were excluded from some assignments, while only 28.8% of the male officers agreed.

In 1976, only 13.8% of the female officers felt they would be sexually exploited by male officers, while 36.2% of the male respondents felt so. Opinions changed by 1994, when only a small percentage of male officers always or often heard sexually derogatory remarks directed at female officers (8.1%) or felt that female officers always or often received unwanted sexual advances (7.9%). The female respondents again strongly differed in perception, with 36.3% always or often hearing sexually derogatory remarks and 22.1% always or often facing unwanted sexual advances.

Differences over time and between the sexes were again found with the responses to the statement: Female police officers are likely to use sex as a method for advancement. Male officers strongly agreed/agreed at the rate of 45.1% in 1976 and 27.8% in 1994. Many fewer female officers agreed: 13.3% in 1976 and only 8.5% today.

## Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate that great progress has been made at these three agencies since 1976 in the relationship between male and female officers. The responses of the male officers to every question were much more positive and supportive of female officers. Over 80% of the male officers considered women to be accepted members of the law enforcement profession. The presence of female officers is a "business-as-usual" situation.

Table 1: Acceptance of Female Police Officers

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Percentage of male officers who strongly agreed/agreed:

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1994</u>
Female officers are generally as effective as male officers	15.8	59.4
Women should <b>not</b> be considered for jobs as patrol officers	48.2	7.8
It makes no difference to me to work with a male or female police officer	27.9	70.8
Most female police officers are <b>not</b> assertive enough to enforce the law vigorously	42.3	10.9
Most female police officers can <b>not</b> handle violent situations	58.4	17.8
Female officers use more back-up than male officers	72.9	39.1
Most female police officers are <b>not</b> strong enough to handle patrol duties	74.1	31.0
Female officers are accepted members of the law enforcement profession	n/a	80.7

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TABLE 2. Back-Up

Percentage of male officers who strongly agreed/agreed that female officers would be acceptable as back-ups for in-progress calls:

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1994</u>
Fight	12.1	50.3
Robbery	30.8	77.6
Burglary	39.6	80.1
Domestic disturbance	47.9	80.3

Table 3. Effectiveness

Percentage of male officers who rated female officers as very effective/effective at handling:

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1994</u>
83.1 Domestic disturbances	45.0	
Arrests of drunks	31.1	70.3
Arrests of felons	24.6	73.3
Undercover assignments	87.7	91.5
Crowd control	15.6	52.9
Traffic control	74.7	94.0
Rape victims	86.9	95.1

Table 4: Attitudes toward Women

Percentage of male officers who strongly agreed/agreed:

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1994</u>
A woman's place is in the home	34.4	11.4
The first goal of a woman should be raising a family	33.5	23.5
Women should have an equal voice in home decisions	89.6	93.7
Women should be paid the same as men for equal work	90.2	93.8

Male officers now have much higher opinions of the female officers' abilities. The ratings of effectiveness increased in every category. The male officers were much more likely to be agreeable to working with a female officer.

This trend was predicted, somewhat, by earlier researchers. Sherman (1975) found a very slight positive change in attitudes even after as little as six months of males and females working together. Martin's 1990 study found that male officers were more supportive of female officers than her earlier studies revealed.

Many different reasons were cited in the literature as possible explanations for greater tolerance. Certainly the existence of laws and government regulations requiring equal opportunity played a major role. These laws, at the least, provided women the opportunity to do the job and gave them a chance to perform. Once hired, the women then demonstrated that they could do the job, as the many performance studies described in the literature reveal.

It is no longer unusual to see a uniformed female police officer. Women substantially increased their representation in each of these three departments. Women have been patrol officers for approximately 20 years. Many, if not most, of the male respondents have never worked on an all-male police force. For some time, it has been entirely possible for a male rookie to be trained in a mixed-gender academy class, taught by female and male police instructors, be assigned to a female field training officer, and be supervised by a female sergeant.

This increased visibility of female officers, coupled with their satisfactory performance, may have led to the easing of many of the fears initially expressed by male officers concerning the employment of women. Doubts about their ability to physically handle the job, due to their smaller size and weaker physical strength, were disproved after women showed they could physically subdue and apprehend suspects as well as hold their own in a bar fight. Concerns about the lack of command presence and ability to command respect of the public dissipated after observing the female officers' field performance under routine and stressful conditions.

Society as a whole has changed as well. Sex-role stereotypes have become blurred. Women have increased their representation in the work force and in male-dominated professions. The male police officer not only must work with female officers, but female attorneys and judges as well.

Another reason that may have contributed to the increased tolerance was the change in the demographic make-up of the officers themselves. The current group of respondents was more racially diverse and better educated. This may have led to greater understanding and acceptance of those who were different (by race, gender or culture) from the majority.

Despite the positive changes, there is still evidence of prejudice and doubts about female officers' ability. Although there was a big increase in the number of male respondents who agreed that female officers were as effective as male officers, over one-fourth still disagreed. Over one-half felt that women were not physically strong enough to handle patrol duties and nearly one-third felt they used more back-up. A substantial number of male officers still did not want a female officer as a back-up on a fight call or felt female officers were ineffective in crowd control situations. Female officers still have not been completely accepted as full and equal partners in law enforcement.

Also discouraging was the perception that women were treated differently. Over one-fourth of the male officers thought that women would use sex as a method for advancement and almost two-thirds felt that women were given preference in

promotional decisions. Many felt that women were assigned to work in less violent areas. Police managers should be aware of these differences in perception and ensure that all employees are treated fairly.

It was also clear that the female officers felt victimized by sexual harassment yet men seemed not to be aware of its existence. Many more women than men reported hearing sexually derogatory remarks directed at women or noted that women face unwanted sexual advances. This survey confirms the existence of sexual harassment in Florida law enforcement agencies as found in another study conducted only a year earlier (Statistical Analysis Center, 1994). These studies emphasize the need for increasing the male officers' understanding of what sexual harassment is, how it is perceived by women, and its negative impact on work conditions. Every agency should have policies in place prohibiting sexual (and racial) discrimination, with training in the reason for the policies, recognition and awareness of harassment and discrimination, and the impact of such acts on worker productivity. Police managers must be aware of the existence of prejudice and be on guard to prevent instances of discrimination and harassment.

Female officers have come a long way since 1976 in terms of how they are perceived by male officers. Hopefully, this momentum can be maintained, by continued good performance and with the support of police managers, so that male and female officers can focus their total energies on combating crime rather than each other.

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