

**GENDER AND THE PRACTICE OF LAW IN CANADA**

by

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### **Abstract**

One may ask why paralegals are shown to be the only profession in the criminal justice system that has an overrepresentation of women employees, while male legal professionals tend to be identified as attorneys – perhaps it is due to societal ideologies of male dominance. Male dominated industries and occupations, like law practice, have fewer women employees, women have a harder time excelling in their field, and are less likely to attain partnership promotion. Career expansion is difficult on women in the male-dominated field of law. Although women are completing law school at the same rate as men, higher numbers of women are leaving law (attrition) compared to men, losing their talent from the workforce, and contributing to continuing sexist attitudes. This study therefore aims to investigate the reasons why females are less likely to remain working as attorneys compared to males, despite there being approximately equal representation of males and females in law schools. This loss of women is not only important for tackling discrimination, which is an important goal for any industry, but also for reducing the loss of highly trained intelligent professionals in the law firms simply due to their gender, requiring further training of new staff. Furthermore, this research will not only confirm the high attrition of women, but will also inform the law firms on the reasons behind it, allowing counteractive measures to be developed that might increase retention of their female staff.

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## Chapter I: Research Question and Methodology

### I-1) Research Question

It is clear that women have left the legal profession and continue to do so at double the rate of men, referred as attrition (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 766). Women have arrived in the practice of law at about equal rates, but it seems they are less likely to stay. The research question is “*Why is there discrepancy between the high female law school enrollment figures and comparatively low employment figures?*” This research is exploratory because it investigates the problem with female lawyer attrition – a problem without a clear answer. As exploratory research is conducted to determine the nature of an existing problem, it does not provide conclusive results (Bhat, 2020). Exploratory research begins with a general idea and uses this research as a medium to spot issues, that may be the main target for future research (Bhat, 2020). Therefore, the use of statistical data analysis, and the verification and summary of secondary sources of information assist in the development of this particular study.

The advantages of exploratory research include setting the foundation of a research which can lead to further research, along with facilitating other researchers to recognize possible causes for the problem, which can be studied more in-depth to conclude which of them is the most predominant matter (Bhat, 2020). Some of the causes of female attrition amongst lawyers are: discrimination, sexual harassment, little opportunity for advancement, not accommodating maternity leave and family responsibilities. Therefore, understanding the reasons for female lawyer attrition is incredibly important to prevent it. Although it has been suggested that male ideals and stereotypes cause women with a law degree to stop working in legal practice, the reasons for female lawyer attrition are still not fully clear.

## **I-2) Methodology**

Previous studies have recognized female lawyer attrition rates and suggested that women have a harder time excelling in their field and are less likely to attain partnership promotion, as well as face gender discrimination. However, many of the studies focus solely on the attrition rates excluding statistics on women entering legal education at equal or even higher proportion to men highlighting a need to fill this gap in the research. Therefore, this research employs a mixed-method design, which is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data collection. It utilizes the techniques of statistical data analysis on both education and legal practice and a comprehensive literature review.

Statistical data collection from all thirteen of the Law Societies of Canada is examined to conduct an analysis of gender in the legal profession to determine the causation behind female lawyer attrition – *why women leave the practice of law and what can be done about it?* These law societies include Law Society of Alberta, Law Society of British Columbia, Law Society of Ontario, Law Society of Saskatchewan, Le Barreau du Québec, Law Society of Manitoba, Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, Law Society of the Northwest Territories, Law Society of Yukon, Law Society of Nunavut, Law Society of Prince Edward Island, and Law Society of New Brunswick. Moreover, statistical analysis will examine the number of registered female lawyers compared to male lawyers starting from the year 1998 leading up to 2017, using the statistical reports from the Federation of Law Societies of Canada.

Secondary data collection of additional studies will then provide explanations and reasons as to why women leave the law. Multiple studies will be explored and compiled to get a more conclusive answer about the problem. In doing so, a more comprehensive solution can be explored that is coupled with a combination of studies that provides insight into the problem of women leaving the profession. These secondary sources were acquired through data bases such as ProQuest, ISTOR, Sage Journals, Google Scholar and CanLII.



## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

There are several previous studies examining the role of women in law, which have used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to investigate the experiences of women and why they leave. They have found a range of reasons reported, with harassment as one of the most common reasons, but interestingly, gender-based lack of promotion as an equally important reason for leaving law. These studies collectively show that while there is little opposition to women taking up positions in law firms, some opposition exists to women becoming partners. Therefore, discrimination and a limited career outlook remain the major barriers to a long and productive career in law. Some studies span over the period of time when female representation was rapidly improving. The following literature review is limited to examining some key papers studying female lawyer attrition over the last eleven years, from 2009 onwards; including studies from some Canadian law societies, such as the Law Society of Ontario, the Law Society of British Columbia and the Law Society of Alberta.

### **II-1) Defining Male-Dominated Career**

Firstly, gender refers to “a socially constructed notion of what it means to be feminine and what it means to be masculine”, in which the characteristics of the terms vary per culture (King & Winterdyk, 2010, pp. 151-152). Generalizations about the proper expectations of female and male behaviour are reinforced in society’s social institutions, including career choices (King & Winterdyk, 2010, p. 152). When one thinks of the lawyer profession, many imagine a man being employed in this position. Male-dominated industries and occupations employ fewer women and are susceptible to masculine ideals and stereotypes. It is not unusual for stereotyping a profession as ‘men’s work’ or ‘women’s work’. Due to these stereotypes, women have a harder time excelling in a field seen as the domain of men. Moreover, gender spheres exist not only within some professions in Canada, but also in education, which includes the study of law (King & Winterdyk, 2010, pp. 153-154). Law remains a discipline with a male culture as its model; the

networking, client growth, professional style, company organisational structure, and competition expect that someone who enters the profession will practise law as it has always been practised (Robertson, 2020). As a result, women are not remaining in legal practice, leading to attrition rather than progressing in the practice of law.

## **II-2) Female Lawyer Attrition**

Despite women's enrollment in law school outpacing men, they remain significantly underrepresented within the legal industry. One of the reasons for this is attrition. Numerous studies indicate women are leaving legal practice early and more frequently than their male counterparts. One research study completed was by Kay, Alarie, and Adjei (2016), in which the population of interest were lawyers in Ontario since "the province is home to the largest proportion of lawyers" (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 775). Results of the survey established that 299 (32 percent) out of the 944 lawyers surveyed had left private practice (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 778). Women had the highest percentage of attrition, at 36 percent compared to 28 percent of men (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 778). In addition, they found that "women face a hazard of leaving private practice 46 percent greater than men" (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 778).

In British Columbia, despite women entering the legal profession in equal or greater numbers than men, women only represent approximately thirty-four percent of all practicing lawyers (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). Women make up 33 percent of private attorneys, while they make up just over 50 percent of in-house or state lawyers (The Law Society of Alberta, 2009, p. 9). However, the Law Society of Alberta identified that 57 percent of women will have departed from private practice to switch to in-house or government positions (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 1). Roughly 28 percent will have completely left the legal practice (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 1). Women continue to be well-represented in

governmental and in-house legal roles, primarily because they achieve more reasonable work hours rather than in private practice (Robertson, 2020).

Furthermore, women have entered the legal profession in British Columbia in numbers equal to or greater than men for more than a decade, and in significant numbers for thirty years (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). But women constitute only about 34 percent of all practising lawyers in the province and only about 29 percent of full-time private practise lawyers (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). In British Columbia, women's underrepresentation in private legal practise continues with the disproportionate number of women who no longer practise within five years of calling (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). Just 66 percent of all women appointed to the bar in 2003 maintained substantive status in 2008 (40 percent in private practise) (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). In comparison, 80 percent of men appointed in the same year kept status, with 66 percent in private practise (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). It is clear from the previous studies that women are leaving, especially in private practice, opting for another route in law or a different career path entirely, and they are departing at a faster rate than men.

### **II-3) Causes of Female Lawyer Attrition**

Many men will adhere to a kind of linear path after they graduate from law school – article, qualify to practice law, serve for six or seven years as an associate, and then become a partner in a law firm (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 313). However, since women lawyers have more career interruptions and are more likely to be unemployed at any stage in their career, they do not appear to have linear careers (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 313). Women continue to face gender-based barriers, which are confirmed to lead to the higher rate at which women leave the law profession. These barriers include, but are not limited to, gender discrimination, sexual

harassment, allocation of work and opportunities for advancement, along with lack of accommodation for family responsibilities (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 313).

**II-3-a) Gender discrimination and sexual harassment.** Gender discrimination is the discriminatory treatment and/or hatred towards individuals and groups based on the group's gender, rather than who they are as a person (King & Winterdyk, 2010, p. 159). In employment, gender discrimination involves treating someone unfavorably because of the person's sex, whether they are applying for a job or are a current employee (Workplace Fairness, 2017). Although women have made clear they possess the ability to perform with the same skill and success in every endeavor engaged in by men, the issue of sex discrimination still holds many women back (Workplace Fairness, 2017).

In a study by the Law Society of Alberta, it was concluded that women were more commonly influenced to not practice law compared to men, from the involuntary loss of employment, inability to find a job, discrimination, work-life balance issues and Law Society fees or dues (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 16). Even though a study indicates that discrimination decreased from 35 percent in 2004 to 20 percent by 2010, there is still evidence that discrimination is an ongoing problem in private practice (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 15). Moreover, some respondents asserted that gender discrimination continued to be prevalent in the profession (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 18). Women also seemed to be excluded from important assignments and clients; while Kay, Alarie, & Adjei (2016) state that "this experience of being marginalized increased women's subsequent intentions to quit the firm and seek work elsewhere" (p. 771). These negative experiences appear to be correlated with gender: 29% of women compared with 19% of men (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 778).

Furthermore, sexual harassment is evident within legal professions. Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or behaviour that includes sexual touching, sexual jokes and comments, displays of a sexual nature that are demeaning and humiliating to a person (Canadian

Labour Relations, 2017). Due to stereotyping women in the practice of law may be expected to play a certain role such as pet, mother, or seductress, and when this criteria is not met they may be assumed to be tough or bitchy (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 315). Workplace harassment statistics show that more than one in three women in the legal industry still experience sexual harassment (LawFuel Editors, 2017). Furthermore, a report to Upper Canada's Law Society confirmed that the experience of sexual harassment is strongly gendered with 74 percent of women reporting having experiences of sexual harassment in the practice of law, compared to only 11 percent of men (Alarie, Kay, Adjeip, 2013, p. 34). It was also found that lawyers experiencing harassment are far more likely to leave private practise 29 percent sooner than those not affected by sexual harassment (Alarie, Kay, Adjeip, 2013, p. 34). Frequent forms of sexual harassment experienced by female attorneys is the usage and manipulation of gender issues as a trial tactic by male lawyers (LawFuel Editors, 2017). Male counsels can also make comments on the personal appearance of a female lawyer during the courtroom proceedings, often to intimidate her (LawFuel Editors, 2017).

**II-3-b) Professional opportunities and barriers.** Discrimination persists in how women lawyers are treated and offered tasks; thereby creating obstacles to a long and productive legal career (Robertson, 2020). Although there is little opposition to women having jobs in law firms, some opposition exists to women making partners (Robertson, 2020). When they eventually reach partner level, few women are invited to sit on important committees such as the executive or compensation committees (Robertson, 2020). In comparison to prior decades where men represented many legal students, during the survey period women's representation in law increased from 24 percent in 1991 to 38 percent in 2009, and yet women still endured lesser chances of partnerships within the profession due to leaving law (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 775). Regarding reasons for leaving law, lawyers who reported disadvantaging experiences including being assigned tasks beneath one's level of skill and experience, not being invited to

work with senior lawyers in the firm, being excluded from social gatherings, and receiving disrespectful and derogatory comments from fellow lawyers and judges are placed at a disadvantage to advance professionally and are likely to leave private practice (Kay, Alarie, & Adjei, 2016, p. 778).

In an Alberta Law Society survey, women were significantly less pleased than men with job power, work credit, and promotion opportunities (The Law Society of Alberta, 2014, p. 16). A recent survey in Ontario also found that at the articling and junior associate level, virtually all firms reported having women in numbers equal to or higher than men (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). Nonetheless, most firms reported a gender gap in that women are overwhelmingly underrepresented at the partner and senior associate level (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 4). In addition, women often leave when they do not feel respected, when they do not get a good task or when they encounter advancement obstacles such as exclusion from informal internal networks and lack of mentoring opportunities, professional growth experience and role models (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 7).

In addition, women lawyers are considered to be disadvantaged in a variety of ways in relation to the amount of money they can earn, because the income of a lawyer is decided by firm-specific variables, including working hours, protégé status and general legal experience (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 316). It is common for female lawyers to work “standard” hours and have less experience practising law in comparison to their male colleagues (Barker & Tavcer, 2018 p. 317). Therefore, this suggests a potential reason as to why a female lawyer’s compensation is likely lower than their male colleague’s. A research report published by the University of Toronto confirmed that second-year male lawyers on average earn \$5,500 more than their female counterparts (Fish, 2015). Even in private practice, men displayed economic gains over the women in this sector of law (Barker & Tavcer, 2018, p. 318). However, in “in-house positions” that women lawyers often pursue or switch into more so than men, the average

compensation of a full-time second year male student is \$62,000, whereas for women the compensation is \$65,000 (Fish, 2015). Additionally, according to a partner at Torys LLP in Canada, Cheryl Reicin, due to the given hours many women and some men, leave private practise after the firm has spent numerous time and energy training them (Balakrishnan, 2019). Despite Cheryl Reicin's success as a woman in law, there remains obstacles for some women within private practice from flourishing (Balakrishnan, 2019).

**II-3-c) Family responsibilities.** Women often perform more childcare and household responsibilities than their husbands, and it is uncommon for husbands to stay-at-home to support them in full-time jobs (Robertson, 2020). Therefore, a work-life balance is hard to achieve for many women practising law due to frequent evening office hours, high billable hours, 'on call' availability to colleagues and customers, weekend time obligations, travel, and short or limited notice in changing schedules (Alarie, Kay, Adjeip, 2013, p. 43). According to Ontario research, maternity, parenting responsibilities and the need to provide long-term care for families are the source of numerous women leaving the legal practice before reaching partnership (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6). Around one in every two Canadian lawyers, both female and male, report feeling overwhelmed in balancing work and personal/family demands (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6).

However, women lawyers were much more likely to have been affected by childbirth and/or childcare than men (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6). When asked what factors would be relevant to consider when deciding to work in another firm women identified an atmosphere that is more tolerant of family and personal responsibilities, and more flexibility over work schedules as important variables (The British Columbia Law Society, 2009, p. 6). It has been found that providing parental leave, diminishes female attrition from law practice by 74 percent (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6). In contrast, a report to Upper Canada's Law Society discusses taking a parental leave raises the risk of women leaving private

practise by 37 per cent, while men taking a parental leave has no major effect on their risk of leaving private practise (Alarie, Kay, Adjeip, 2013, p. 38). According to Jessyca Greenwood, a leading lawyer at Greenwood Defense in Toronto, Ontario, women quit the law profession around the 10-year mark (Kapralos, 2019). This may be because women face the barrier of balancing a family with a challenging legal career, which confirms how truthful the issue is (Kapralos, 2019).

#### **II-4) Solutions**

Currently, many research studies point to women facing unfair and unique stressors in the legal workplace; arguably something that men simply do not have to face. Due to this imbalance, women are opting to forgo this career field. It is acknowledged that the early attrition of women from the legal profession reflects an incalculable loss of future years of successful and profitable work (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6). Therefore, measures must be taken by firms in order to alleviate the obstacles women face, along with to attract and retain women in law (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 7).

One approach is to raise consciousness and correct unintended/hidden prejudices and stereotypes (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 7). There could be some internal grievance procedure to allow for a confidential mechanism to deal with dispute arising between people in a firm (Macaulay, 2014). These disputes could be things such as personal conflicts, perceived sexual harassments that could be resolved without negative repercussion against a lawyer's career (Macaulay, 2014). Moreover, another practice is ensuring access to high-quality assignments, while promoting versatility in the workplace and effective mentoring (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 7). Providing lawyers with more control over their day and pace will contribute to lawyers feeling less stress and the ability to cope with challenges and problems that can cause them to resign (Macaulay, 2014). Another strategy is to foster business



development opportunities for women to support their productivity and advancement within the practice of law (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 7).

Furthermore, firms could allow flexibility in scheduling work, since some firms have very unreasonable expectations for annual billing hours (Macaulay, 2014). Some lawyers would appreciate a better balance between work and life in order to have fulfilling careers while being parents (Macaulay, 2014). Lastly, male employees and even female employees could encourage one another to help their women colleagues combat these obstacles rather than exacerbate the issue. Law firms need to be aware of these problems, and work diligently to bring women to the forefront and treat them fairly. A lawyer and the founder of Mazo Chowbay in Toronto, Ontario, Alisa Mazo, states "As women, we need to inspire one another and see the possible future leader or great future lawyer in each of those young professionals within our organisation" (Kapralos, 2019). Firms that take steps and initiatives to retain women not only differentiate themselves from the majority of their colleague businesses, yet also have enjoyed tremendous success in adopting unique policies and procedures aimed at ensuring the retention and advancement of women in their firms (The Law Society of British Columbia, 2009, p. 6).

## Chapter III: Statistics on Gender Differences in Law School Admissions at Canadian Universities

### III-1) Canadian Law Schools

Within Canada, there are currently twenty-four law schools, which include five in Quebec, seven in the Western region, nine in Ontario, and three in the Atlantic region (Council of Canadian Law Deans, n.d.). All of the law schools offer a professional degree in one or both Canadian systems of law which are, common law and civil law (Council of Canadian Law Deans, n.d.). However, the research for this section of the chapter will only identify a sample of the Canadian law schools, as not all twenty-four schools will be examined. The full list of law schools across Canada includes:

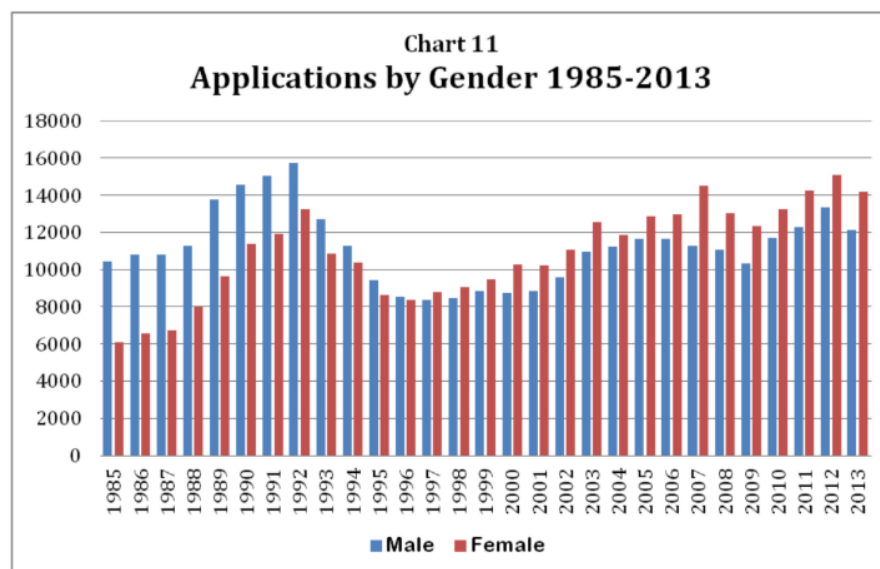
- 1) University of Alberta – Faculty of Law (*Edmonton, Alberta*)
- 2) University of British Columbia – Peter A. Allard School of Law (*Vancouver, British Columbia*)
- 3) University of Calgary – Faculty of Law (*Calgary, Alberta*)
- 4) Dalhousie University – Schulich School of Law (*Halifax, Nova Scotia*)
- 5) Lakehead University – Bora Laskin Faculty of Law (*Thunder Bay, Ontario*)
- 6) Université Laval – Baccalauréat en Droit (*Québec City, Québec*)
- 7) University of Manitoba – Robson Hall Faculty of Law (*Winnipeg, Manitoba*)
- 8) McGill University – Faculty of Law (*Montreal, Quebec*)
- 9) Université de Moncton – Faculté de Droit (*Edmundston, New Brunswick*) (*Moncton, New Brunswick*) (*Shippagan, New Brunswick*)
- 10) Université de Montréal – Faculté de Droit (*Montréal, Québec*)
- 11) University of New Brunswick – Faculty of Law (*Fredericton, New Brunswick*)
- 12) University of Ottawa – Common Law (*Ottawa, Ontario*)
- 13) University of Ottawa – Droit Civil (*Ottawa, Ontario*)
- 14) Université du Québec – Faculté de Science Politique & Droit (*Montréal, Québec*)
- 15) Queen's University – Faculty of Law (*Kingston, Ontario*)
- 16) Ryerson University – Faculty of Law (*Toronto, Ontario*)
- 17) University of Saskatchewan – College of Law (*Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*)
- 18) Université de Sherbrooke – Faculté de Droit (*Sherbrooke, Québec*)
- 19) Thompson Rivers University – Faculty of Law (*Kamloops, British Columbia*)
- 20) University of Toronto – Faculty of Law (*Toronto, Ontario*)
- 21) University of Victoria – Faculty of Law (*Victoria, British Columbia*)
- 22) University of Western Ontario – Western Law (*London, Ontario*)
- 23) University of Windsor – Faculty of Law (*Windsor, Ontario*)
- 24) York University – Osgoode Hall Law School (*Toronto, Ontario*)

(Council of Canadian Law Deans, n.d.)

## II-2) Statistics on a Sample of the Canadian Law Schools

The number of women who have accepted a place to study law in Canada has been approximately more than the number of men who have done the same. Though this information is based on a sample of law schools across Canada, the percentage of women studying law has been steadily increasing for years. The law schools examined include University of Victoria, University of Calgary, York University, University of Windsor, University of Toronto, University of Western Ontario, and Queens University. In addition, this work will include tables from a report on Canadian common law school admissions written by the former dean of the University of Saskatchewan – College of Law, Professor Brent Cotter.

**Table 1: Applications by Gender for Common Law Schools**



*Note.* From *Report on Canadian common law admissions information and statistics: 2012, 2013 and historical perspective 1985-2013*, p. 12, by B. Cotter, 2014.

Historically, from 1985 to 1996 as shown in the graph above, men were more represented in the admission application statistics in Canadian common law schools (Cotter, 2014, p. 12). However, from 1997 to 2013, women overtook the men in admissions into Canadian common law schools (Cotter, 2014, p. 12).

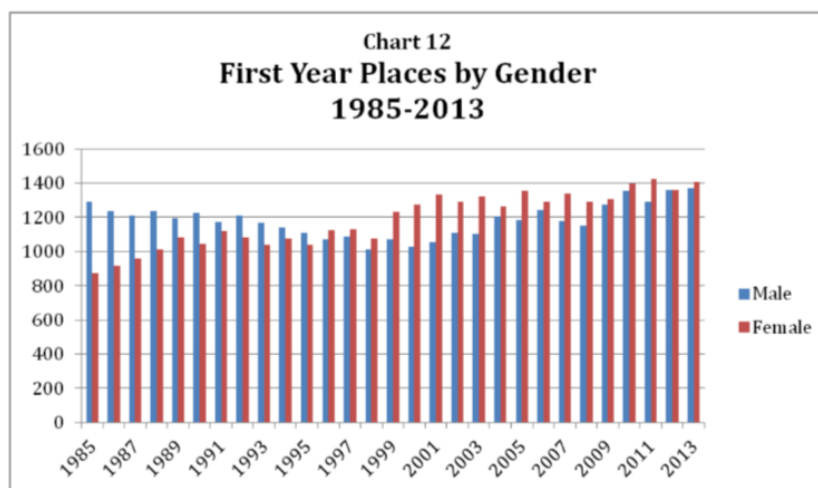
**Table 2: Breakdown of Numbers for Applications and Offers by Gender**

**Chart 4**  
**Male and Female Applications, Offers, Registered**  
**2011-2013**

Year	Application %		Offer %		Registered %	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2011	46.5	53.5	46.5	53.5	47.5	52.5
2012	46.9	53.1	49.0	51.0	50.1	49.9
2013	46.9	53.1	49.0	51.0	49.4	50.7

*Note.* From *Report on Canadian common law admissions information and statistics: 2012, 2013 and historical perspective 1985-2013*, p. 6, by B. Cotter, 2014.

The number of male applications and offers of admissions in recent years continues to be lower than their female counterparts (Cotter, 2014, p. 5-6). The number of women attending law schools that are studying common law in Canada has surpassed the number of men each year since 1996 (Cotter, 2014, p. 5-6). Male students for the first time in 20 years have slightly exceeded women, registered in law schools in Canada in 2012 (Cotter, 2014, p. 5-6). Nevertheless, in 2013, women again exceeded in numbers their male counterparts (Cotter, 2014, pp. 5-6).

**Table 3: First Year Places by Gender**

*Note.* From *Report on Canadian common law admissions information and statistics: 2012, 2013 and historical perspective 1985-2013*, p. 13, by B. Cotter, 2014.

According to the University of Victoria Faculty of Law there are about 59 percent of female students in comparison to only 41 percent male students for *Juris Doctor* admissions (University of Victoria, 2019). The University of Calgary Faculty of Law stated a 48 percent male to 52 percent female student ratio in their 2018 viewbook (University of Calgary, 2018, p. 2). In 2019, the University of Calgary had an equal number of men and women law students (University of Calgary, 2019, p. 3). According to Osgoode Hall Law School at York University, the class of 2018 consisted of 55 percent of woman and 43 percent of men (Osgoode Hall Law School, 2016). Furthermore, the class entering 2019 contained a percentage of 56 women, while the percentage of men was 41 (Osgoode Hall Law School, 2016). These statistics propose that the number of women arriving into Osgoode Hall Law School is exceeding men over the coming years. In addition, the Faculty of Law at University of Windsor had 58.9 percent female students, along with only 39.4 percent male students (University of Windsor, 2020, p. 11).

Furthermore, the University of Toronto had 48 percent of female law students in comparison to 52 percent of male law students from 2015 to 2016 (University of Toronto, 2019). In 2016 to 2017, the number of students that were females decreased to 45 percent, while the percentage of male students increased to 54 percent (University of Toronto, 2019). However, women started excelling the fifty percent mark from 2017 to 2020, representing 53 percent of law students in 2017 to 2018, 57 percent in 2018 to 2019, and 58 percent in 2019 to 2020 (University of Toronto, 2019).

**Table 4: University of Toronto Admissions by Gender**

2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	Identity
58%	57%	53%	45%	48%	Female
41%	42%	46%	54%	52%	Male
0%	0%	<1%	0%	0%	Another gender
1%	1%	<1%	1%	0%	Prefer not to answer/no response

*Note.* From *JD First Year Class Profile 2019*, by University of Toronto, 2019.

In University of Western Ontario Law, as of September 23, 2019, had a class composition of 46 percent female and 45 percent male, but 9 percent was undeclared (Western Law, 2019). Western Law also conducted a diversity survey which involved identifying gender for class graduates of 2020, 2021, and 2022. The results indicate that in 2020, there will be 47 percent of women and 51 percent of men. In 2021, there will be 50 percent females and 49 percent males; and in 2022 it is projected that admission will be 53 percent female students, along with 45 percent male students (Western Law, n.d., p. 1). It is obvious that over the years the number of women enrolling at Western Law is approximately equal to or becoming greater than men.

Queen's University Faculty of Law in their class of 2014 consisted of 58 percent female students in comparison to 48 percent male students (Queen's University, 2020). The graduating class of 2015 had 48 percent females (52 percent male), while the class of 2016 had 45 percent females (55 percent male) (Queen's University, 2020). However, in 2017 and 2018, there were more women than men, with 51 percent female (49 percent male) law students in 2017 and 52 percent female (48 percent male) law students in 2018 (Queen's University, 2020). Moreover, Queen's University in their 2019 class had 47 percent of women (53 percent men) and following in their 2020 class it will be 51 percent of women (49 percent men) law students (Queen's University, 2020). The class of 2021 will likely contain 48 percent of females (48 percent male), but only 46 percent of females (49 percent male) in 2022 (Queen's University, 2020). Despite Queen's University predicting a decrease in female law graduates over the years, they remain close in number to men.

**Table 5: Queen's University Admissions by Gender**

Class Profile	Class of '22	Class of '21	Class of '20	Class of '19	Class of '18	Class of '17	Class of '16	Class of '15	Class of '14
Age	24	23	23	23	23	23	24	23	23
Mature Age**	29	29	33	27	35	34	36	31	32
Female	46%	48%	51%	47%	52%	51%	45%	48%	52%
Male	49%	48%	49%	53%	48%	49%	55%	52%	48%
No Response	5%	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

\*\*Average age of those over 26

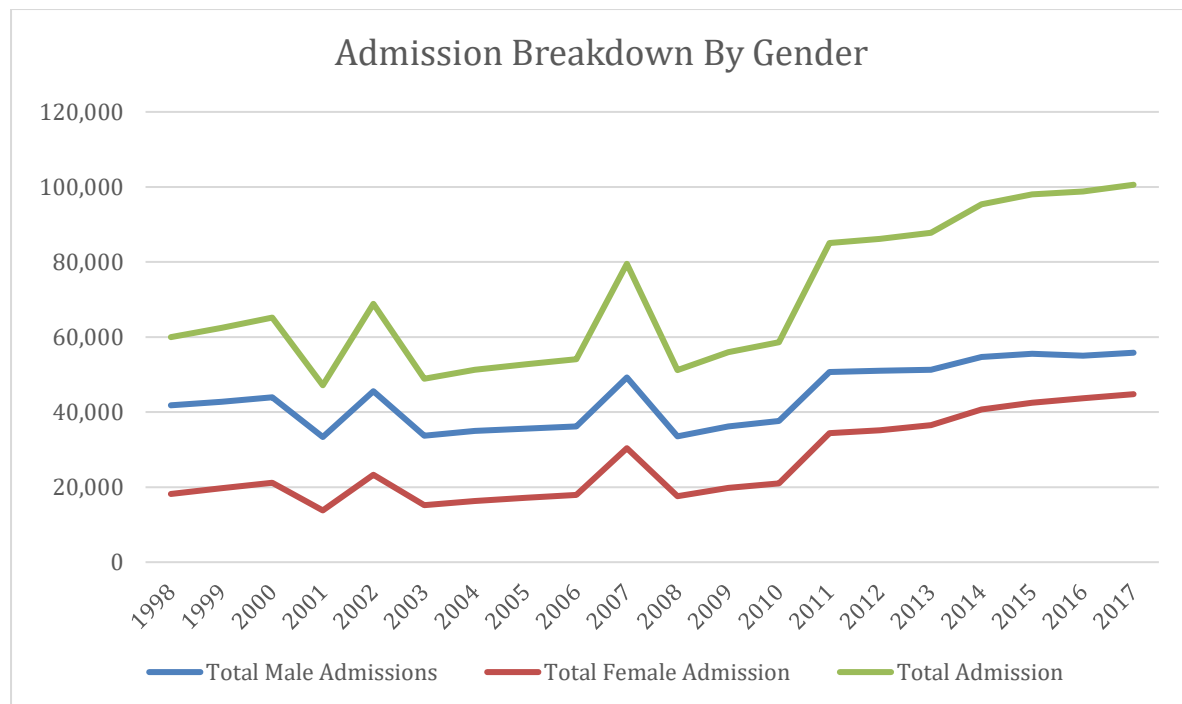
*Note.* From *Class Profile*, by Queen's University, 2020.

## Chapter IV: Statistics on Gender Differences in Canadian Law Societies

### IV-1) Gender Numbers of Admissions Within the Law Society

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Male Admissions</b>	<b>Total Female Admissions</b>	<b>Total Admissions</b>
<b>2017</b>	55,814	44,767	100,581
<b>2016</b>	55,068	43,708	98,776
<b>2015</b>	55,542	42,487	98,029
<b>2014</b>	54,681	40,696	95,377
<b>2013</b>	51,283	36,527	87,810
<b>2012</b>	51,023	35,151	86,174
<b>2011</b>	50,698	34,375	85,073
<b>2010</b>	37,597	21,007	58,604
<b>2009</b>	36,196	19,807	56,003
<b>2008</b>	33,572	17,596	51,168
<b>2007</b>	49,200	30,349	79,549
<b>2006</b>	36,142	17,923	54,065
<b>2005</b>	35,539	17,152	52,691
<b>2004</b>	34,976	16,307	51,283
<b>2003</b>	33,668	15,178	48,846
<b>2002</b>	45,574	23,297	68,871
<b>2001</b>	33,356	13,792	47,148
<b>2000</b>	43,979	21,178	65,157
<b>1999</b>	42,763	19,722	62,485
<b>1998</b>	41,804	18,184	59,988





Legal practise has changed from being predominantly a male-dominated profession, to one that has evolved into seeing more women. In 1998, total male admissions were 70 percent compared to total female admissions of 30 percent; but in 2017 the ratio was more equal in number with total male admissions of 55 percent and female admissions of 45 per cent. Furthermore, admission of men and women followed approximately the same pattern, but the number of women admitted has consistently been lower. With more women now practising law than in the past, they continue to remain under-represented in firms opposed to their male counterparts. From 1998 to 2017, it is clear that in all thirteen law societies across Canada, there are still more male practising lawyers compared to females. Although it might appear that women are breaking barriers in the legal profession compared to before, women are still facing obstacles and unconscious prejudice contributing to their lower numbers as lawyers. Some data was unavailable, so the numbers underestimate in certain years.

**IV-2) Gender Numbers of Practising Lawyers Within the Law Society**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Law Society of British Columbia</b>		<b>Law Society of Alberta</b>		<b>Law Society of Saskatchewan</b>		<b>Law Society of Manitoba</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>2017</b>	7,124	4,777	6,218	4,034	1,440	917	1,300	792
<b>2016</b>	7,098	4,558	5,923	3,797	1,371	787	1,295	769
<b>2015</b>	7,089	4,438	5,926	3,749	1,354	764	1,283	750
<b>2014</b>	7,014	4,246	5,823	3,584	1,321	724	1,286	742
<b>2013</b>	7,152	4,213	5,711	3,427	1,307	731	1,322	730
<b>2012</b>	7,105	4,066	5,639	3,270	1,271	713	1,304	717
<b>2011</b>	8,388	5,312	5,574	3,138	1,300	627	1,307	682
<b>2010</b>	6,711	3,691	5,547	3,045	1,288	641	1,270	631
<b>2009</b>	6,701	3,557	5,467	2,918	1,082	529	1,267	630
<b>2008</b>	6,669	3,434	5,468	2,816	1,085	507	1,256	594
<b>2007</b>	6,696	3,448	6,696	2,733	1,097	487	1,266	570
<b>2006</b>	6,542	3,121	5,344	2,590	1,090	472	1,263	556
<b>2005</b>	6,450	2,971	5,249	2,462	1,063	435	1,288	537
<b>2004</b>	6,369	2,845	5,191	2,365	1,069	434	1,299	509
<b>2003</b>	6,315	2,742	5,119	2,228	1,076	426	1,303	475
<b>2002</b>	6,257	2,656	4,960	2,043	1,167	435	1,303	466
<b>2001</b>	6,293	2,589	4,864	1,973	1,160	421	1,311	449
<b>2000</b>	6,246	2,563	4,888	1,906	1,106	483	1,298	439
<b>1999</b>	6,230	2,461	4,797	1,777	1,172	403	1,303	428
<b>1998</b>	6,123	2,336	4,717	1,690	1,096	360	1,291	408

<b>Year</b>	<b>Law Society of Ontario</b>		<b>Le Barreau du Québec</b>		<b>Law Society of New Brunswick</b>		<b>Nova Scotia Barristers' Society</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>2017</b>	24,623	18,414	12,324	13,918	795	536	1,212	821
<b>2016</b>	24,457	17,902	12,264	13,502	795	531	836	1,181
<b>2015</b>	24,412	17,445	12,464	13,420	798	505	1,190	767
<b>2014</b>	23,695	16,408	12,510	13,073	799	505	1,190	767
<b>2013</b>	20,403	12,873	12,341	12,712	811	483	1,201	751
<b>2012</b>	20,277	12,377	12,387	12,227	829	473	1,189	717
<b>2011</b>	20,096	11,813	12,266	11,817	882	508	N/A	N/A
<b>2010</b>	19,876	11,314	N/A	N/A	824	459	1,196	695
<b>2009</b>	19,529	10,931	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,196	660
<b>2008</b>	18,156	9,710	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>2007</b>	18,930	9,967	11,501	11,597	848	430	1,218	640
<b>2006</b>	18,795	9,621	N/A	N/A	861	422	1,206	633
<b>2005</b>	18,395	9,210	N/A	N/A	868	412	1,192	618
<b>2004</b>	18,070	8,726	N/A	N/A	870	395	1,178	582
<b>2003</b>	17,950	8,444	N/A	N/A	887	390	N/A	N/A
<b>2002</b>	17,438	7,873	11,346	8,527	889	335	1,197	527
<b>2001</b>	16,746	7,087	N/A	N/A	888	353	1,193	529
<b>2000</b>	16,547	6,733	10,971	7,877	889	335	1,123	461
<b>1999</b>	16,283	6,360	10,905	7,430	N/A	N/A	1,160	481
<b>1998</b>	17,316	6,958	9,201	5,624	N/A	N/A	1,146	453

<b>Year</b>	<b>Law Society of Prince Edward Island</b>		<b>Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador</b>		<b>Law Society of Yukon</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>2017</b>	136	102	449	323	193	133
<b>2016</b>	141	103	438	315	189	127
<b>2015</b>	139	99	440	301	183	113
<b>2014</b>	137	98	474	296	180	112
<b>2013</b>	134	103	452	271	172	111
<b>2012</b>	134	102	453	274	158	93
<b>2011</b>	N/A	N/A	451	261	159	92
<b>2010</b>	120	102	441	250	61	64
<b>2009</b>	120	105	431	241	164	91
<b>2008</b>	119	102	430	238	150	89
<b>2007</b>	118	99	434	211	162	76
<b>2006</b>	126	93	443	214	161	71
<b>2005</b>	122	93	427	209	161	67
<b>2004</b>	37	40	416	212	167	70
<b>2003</b>	127	83	421	204	163	64
<b>2002</b>	126	82	424	190	148	50
<b>2001</b>	126	79	419	187	147	52
<b>2000</b>	126	73	419	174	164	59
<b>1999</b>	126	71	417	164	166	56
<b>1998</b>	130	66	419	153	155	54

<b>Year</b>	<b>Law Society of the Northwest Territories</b>		<b>Law Society of Nunavut</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>2017</b>	267	140	N/A	N/A
<b>2016</b>	261	136	N/A	N/A
<b>2015</b>	264	136	N/A	N/A
<b>2014</b>	252	141	N/A	N/A
<b>2013</b>	277	122	N/A	N/A
<b>2012</b>	277	122	N/A	N/A
<b>2011</b>	275	125	N/A	N/A
<b>2010</b>	263	115	N/A	N/A
<b>2009</b>	239	145	N/A	N/A
<b>2008</b>	239	106	N/A	N/A
<b>2007</b>	234	91	N/A	N/A
<b>2006</b>	202	83	109	47
<b>2005</b>	198	85	126	53
<b>2004</b>	197	84	113	45
<b>2003</b>	203	82	104	40
<b>2002</b>	215	75	104	38
<b>2001</b>	209	73	N/A	N/A
<b>2000</b>	202	75	N/A	N/A
<b>1999</b>	204	91	N/A	N/A
<b>1998</b>	210	82	N/A	N/A

### **IV-3) Law Society of Alberta**

The Law Society of Alberta had 4,717 male active lawyers, compared to 1,690 female active lawyers in 1998 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). In 1999, the Law Society of Alberta had 4,797 male practicing lawyers, along with 1,777 female practicing lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). Moreover, in the 2000 statistical report, the Law Society of Alberta had 4,888 male lawyers and 1,906 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were 4,864 male lawyers in comparison to 1,973 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). The Law Society of Alberta had 2,043 female lawyers and 4,960 male lawyers in 2002 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2).

In 2003, the Law Society of Alberta had 2,228 female lawyers, with 5,119 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). There were 5,191 male lawyers and 2,365 female lawyers following in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Moreover, in 2005, there were 5,249 males, along with 2,462 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). The Law Society of Alberta had 2,590 female practising lawyers and 5,344 male practising lawyers in 2006 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). In 2007, the number of active males were 6,696 and active female were 2,733 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). Additionally, there were 5,486 males and 2,816 females in 2008 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). In 2009, the number of men lawyers were 5,467 and the number of female lawyers were 2,918 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2008 and 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was not available”. Following, in 2010, the Law Society of Alberta consisted of 5,547 men, along with 3,045 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

In 2011, there were 3,138 females and 5,574 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1). In 2012, there consisted of 3,270 women and 5,639 men, active within the Law Society of Alberta (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there were 5,711 male practising lawyers and 3,427 female practicing lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). The Law Society of Alberta contained 5,823 males, along with 3,584 females in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, there were 3,749 females and 5,926 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). There were 3,797 female lawyers, along with 5,923 male lawyers in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 the number of males were 6,218, with 4,034 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-4) Law Society of Saskatchewan**

In 1998, there were 1,096 male lawyers and 360 female lawyers within the Law Society of Saskatchewan (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, the number of active male lawyers were 1,172 along with 403 female lawyers in 1999 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). In 2000, the number of male lawyers decreased to 1,106, and the number of females increased to 483 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). The 2001 statistical report for the Law Society of Saskatchewan displayed an increase to 1,160 practising male lawyers, along with 421 female practicing lawyers, which had decreased from the previous year (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). In 2002, there consisted of 1,167 males and 435 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2).

The numbers decreased in 2003, with 1,076 male Saskatchewan lawyers and 426 female Saskatchewan lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). In 2004, the law society consisted of 1,069 men and 434 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). The Law Society of Saskatchewan had 1,063 male lawyers, along with 435 female lawyers in 2005 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). In 2006, there were 472 women and

1,090 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). There were 1,097 males and 487 females in 2007 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). In 2008, the number of practising male lawyers decreased to 1,085, while the number of practising female lawyers increased to 507 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). Additionally, in 2009 the numbers became 1,082 for males and 529 for females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2008 and 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was not available”. The Law Society of Saskatchewan had 1,288 males, along with 641 females in 2010 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

In 2011, there were 627 females and 1,300 males practising law (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1). The number of male lawyers decreased to 1,271, while the number of female lawyers increased to 713 in 2012, from the previous year (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there were 731 females and 1,307 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). Moreover, in 2014 the Law Society of Saskatchewan had 1,321 male lawyers and 724 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, there consisted of 764 women, along with 1,354 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). There were 1,371 male lawyers and 787 female lawyers in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in the year 2017, the law society consisted of 917 females and 1,440 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-5) Law Society of New Brunswick**

In the years 1998, 1999, 2008, and 2009, the Federation of Law Societies of Canada reported “data not available” for the Law Society of New Brunswick. The Law Society of New Brunswick had 889 male lawyers, along with 335 female lawyers in 2000 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were 888 men and 353 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). Additionally, in 2002 the number of men were 889 and the



number of women were 335 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, there were 887 males and 390 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). The number of male lawyers were 870, along with 395 women in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). In 2005, there were 412 females and 868 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2).

In 2006, the number of men were 861, along with 422 women within the Law Society of New Brunswick (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). The 2007 statistical report displayed 848 men and 430 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). In 2010, there were 459 women and 824 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2). However, the society had “data not available” for the “Practicing – Non-Resident” column in the 2010 statistical report. In 2011, the number of females were 508, while males were a number of 882 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1).

In 2012, the society consisted of 473 women and 829 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there were a decrease of males to 811 and an increase of females to 483 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). The Law Society of New Brunswick had 505 females and 799 males in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, the number of women stayed the same at 505, but men decreased to 798 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The number of males were 795, with the number of women at 531 in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). In 2017, the number of male lawyers remained 795, but the number of women increased to 536 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-6) Law Society of Nunavut**

From the years 1998 to 2001 and 2007 to 2017, the Federation of Law Societies of Canada had “data not available” for the Law Society of Nunavut. The Law Society of Nunavut did not report by gender in each statistical report. In 2002, the number of male lawyers were 104,

along with 38 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). Moreover, in 2003, there remained 104 males, but the number of females increased to 40 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). In addition, there were 45 women and 113 men practising law in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Following in 2005, there were 126 males and 53 females within the Law Society of Nunavut (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). Lastly, women decreased to 47 in number, along with 109 men in 2006 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2).

#### **IV-7) Law Society of Ontario**

In 1998, the Law Society of Ontario had 17,316 male lawyers and 6,958 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, in 1999, the number of male lawyers were 16,283, along with female lawyers at 6,360 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). In 2000, there were 16,547 males and 6,733 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). Furthermore, the Law Society of Ontario had 16,746 male lawyers and 7,087 female lawyers in 2001 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). In 2002, the Law Society of Ontario consisted of 17,438 male members along with 7,873 female members (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). Following in the year 2003, the Law Society of Ontario had 17,950 male lawyers and 8,444 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). In 2004, the number of male lawyers within the Law Society of Ontario were 18,070 and female lawyers were 8,726 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). The Law Society of Ontario, in 2005, had 18,395 males and 9,210 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). In 2006, the Law Society of Ontario had 9,621 women lawyers and 18,795 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2).

In 2007, the number of females were 9,967 and the numbers of males were 18,930 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The Law Society of Ontario, in 2008,

consisted of 9,710 women lawyers, along with 18,156 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). However, the 2008 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. In 2009, the number of female lawyers were 10,931 and the number of male lawyers were 19,529 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. The Law Society of Ontario in 2010 had 19,876 males, along with 11,314 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

In 2011, there were 20,096 male lawyers, and 11,813 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1). The Law Society of Ontario had 20,277 male practising lawyers, along with 12,377 female practising lawyers in 2012 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there were 12,873 female lawyers, and 20,403 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, the number of men were 23,695, along with 16,408 women in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, male lawyers were at 24,412 and female lawyers were at 17,445 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). There were 24,457 males and 17,902 females within the Law Society of Ontario in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017, there consisted of 24,623 male practising lawyers and 18,414 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-8) Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador**

The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador reported 419 male lawyers, along with 153 female lawyers in 1998 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, in 1999, there were 164 women and 417 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). The Law Society of Yukon had 419 males and 174 females in 2000 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were again 419 male lawyers, but an increase to 187

female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1). Following, in 2002, the Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador had 424 men and 190 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, there were 204 females and 421 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2).

According to the 2004 statistical report, the number of women were at 212, with the number of men at 416 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Additionally, in 2005 there were 427 males, along with 209 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). The 2006 statistical report displayed 443 males and 214 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). In 2007, there were 434 men lawyers and 211 women lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2008, had 430 practising male lawyers and 238 practising female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). In 2009, the total number of practising lawyers were 241 women and 431 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2008 and 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. In 2010, the number of men lawyers were 441 and women were 250 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2011 consisted of 261 women lawyers, along with 451 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 1). In 2012, there were 453 practising male lawyers, and 274 practicing female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador had 271 females, along with 452 males in 2013 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). In 2014, there were 474 male lawyers and 296 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, there were 440 men lawyers, and 301 women lawyers practicing law (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador had 438 men and 315 women in the year 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada,

2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 the Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador consisted of 449 male lawyers, and 323 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-9) Law Society of Yukon**

In 1998, the Law Society of Yukon consisted of 155 male lawyers, along with 54 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, in 1999, there were 56 women and 166 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). The Law Society of Yukon had 164 males and 59 females in 2000 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were 147 male lawyers and 52 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1). Following, in 2002, the Law Society of Yukon had a number of 148 men and 50 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, there were 64 females and 163 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2).

According to the 2004 statistical report, the number of women were at 70, with the number of men at 167 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Additionally, in 2005 there were 161 males, along with 67 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). The 2006 statistical report displayed the same number of males at a number of 161, and 71 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). In 2007, there were 162 men lawyers and 76 women lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). Furthermore, in 2008, the number of women became 89, with men at a number of 150 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). However, the 2008 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. In 2009, there were 164 men lawyers, along with 91 women lawyers within the Law Society of Yukon (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). The Federation of Law

Societies of Canada had had a decrease in lawyers in 2010, with women slightly higher at 64 and men at 61 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

In 2011, there were 159 men and 92 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1). The Law Society of Yukon had 93 females, along with 158 males in 2012 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, the number of males were 172, along with 111 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). There were 180 men and 112 women in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, there were 113 female and 183 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The Law Society of Yukon had 127 females, along with 189 males in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 there were 193 men lawyers and 133 women lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-10) Nova Scotia Barristers' Society**

The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society had 1,146 male lawyers and 453 female lawyers in 1998 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 2). Following in 1999, there were 1,160 males, along with 481 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). In 2000, the number of men were 1,123 and the number of women were 461 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). There were 1,193 male lawyers, along with 529 women lawyers in 2001 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). Moreover, in 2002 there were 527 females and 1,197 males (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, 2008, and 2011 the Nova Scotia Barrister's Society had "data not available" in the statistical report from the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. The number of females consisted of 582 and 1,178 males in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3).

In 2005, there were 1,192 men and 618 women within the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). Additionally, there consisted of 1,206 males, along with 633 females in 2006 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p.

2). In 2007, there were 640 women and 1,218 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). There was a decrease in the number of men lawyers to 1,196, with an increase of women lawyers to 660 in 2009 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. In 2010, the number of men stayed the same at 1,196, but women increased to 695 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2). In 2012, there were 1,189 men and 717 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1).

Furthermore, the number of women went to 751 and 1,201 men in 2013 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). In 2014 and 2015, there consisted of 1,190 males, along with 767 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1) (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society saw a decrease of men to 836, but an increase of women to 1,181 in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Contrastingly, in 2017 there were an increase of male lawyers to 1,212 and a decrease of female lawyers to 821 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-11) Le Barreau du Québec**

In 1998, Le Barreau du Québec had 9,201 male lawyers and 5,624 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, there were 10,905 males, along with 7,430 females in 1999 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). Le Barreau du Québec had 10,971 practising male lawyers and 7,877 practising female lawyers in 2000 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, 2003 to 2006, along with 2008, Le Barreau du Québec had “data not available” in the statistical report from the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. In 2002, there were 11,346 males and 8,527 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). Following in 2007, the number of women lawyers were slightly more than men at 11,597 members, while the number of male members were 11,501 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). Moreover, in the 2009 statistical report from the

Federation of Law Societies of Canada, Le Barreau du Québec reported “data not available” other than 2 female and 8 male lawyers under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column. Furthermore, in the 2010 statistical report, there were 5 female and 8 male lawyers under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, as they had “data not available” for the number of practicing male and female lawyers. Le Barreau du Québec in 2011 had more men (12,266) than women (11,817) (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1).

In 2012, the society remained consistent with more male lawyers at a number of 12,387, and 12,227 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). There were more women than men in 2013, with 12,712 female lawyers, along with 12,341 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). Continuing from 2014 to 2017, the number of female lawyers increased in comparison to male lawyers. In 2014, there were 13,073 female lawyers, along with the number of male lawyers at 12,510 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). Le Barreau du Québec consisted of 13,420 women and 12,464 men in 2015 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). Following in 2016, there were 12,264 males, along with 13,502 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). In 2017, the number of female lawyers of Le Barreau du Québec were 13,918 female lawyers and male lawyers were 12,324 (Le Barreau du Québec, 2018, p. 13).

#### **IV-12) Law Society of British Columbia**

In 1998, the Law Society of British Columbia consisted of 6,123 male lawyers and 2,336 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). The Law Society of British Columbia in 1999, had 6,230 males, along with 2,461 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). Following, in 2000, the Law Society of British Columbia consisted of 6,246 male members and 2,563 female members (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, British Columbia contained 2,589 female lawyers, and 6,293 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). The 2002, the Law Society of British Columbia, had



6,257 male lawyers, along with 2,656 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2).

In 2003, the statistics shows a number of 6,315 males and 2,742 female lawyers within the Law Society of British Columbia (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). The Law Society of British Columbia consists of 2,845 women lawyers, along with 6,369 male lawyers in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Following in 2005, the number of females were 2,971 and the number of males were 6,450 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). In 2006, the Law Society of British Columbia had 3,121 women lawyers, along with 6,542 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). Moreover, in 2007, the number of males were 6,696 and women were 3,448 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The Law Society of British Columbia, in 2008, had 6,669 practising male lawyers and 3,434 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). However, the 2008 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. Moreover, in 2009 the total number of practising lawyers were 3,557 women and 6,701 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”.

In 2010, the number of men lawyers were 6,711 and women were 3,691 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2). The Law Society of British Columbia in 2011 consisted of 5,312 women lawyers, along with 8,388 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 1). In 2012, there were 7,105 practicing male lawyers, and 4,066 practicing female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). The Law Society of British Columbia had 4,213 females, along with 7,152 males in 2013 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). In 2014, there were 7,014 male lawyers and 4,246 female lawyers practicing within the Law Society of British Columbia (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1).

In 2015, there were 7,089 men lawyers, and 4,438 women lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The Law Society of British Columbia had 7,098 men and 4,558 women in the year 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 there were 7,124 male lawyers, and 4,777 female lawyers within the Law Society of British Columbia (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-13) Law Society of Manitoba**

The Law Society of Manitoba had 1,291 male active lawyers and 408 female active lawyers in 1998 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). In 1999, there were 1,303 male practicing lawyers in comparison to 428 female practicing lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). Moreover, in the 2000 statistical report, the Law Society of Manitoba had 1,298 male lawyers and 439 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were 1,311 male lawyers, along with 449 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). The Law Society of Manitoba had 466 female lawyers and 1,303 male lawyers in 2002 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, there were 475 female lawyers, but the number of male lawyers stayed that same at 1,303 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2).

There were 1,299 male lawyers and 509 female lawyers following in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Moreover, in 2005, there were 1,288 males, along with 537 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). Moreover, in 2006, the number of men decreased to 1,263, but women increased to 556 within the Law Society of Manitoba (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). The 2007 statistical report reported 1,266 men and 570 women (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The Law Society of Manitoba in 2008, had 1,256 practising male lawyers and 594 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). In 2009, there were 1,267 men lawyers, along with 630 women lawyers within the Law Society of Manitoba (Federation of Law Societies of Canada,

2009, p. 2). However, the 2008 and 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”.

In 2010, there were 631 women and 1,270 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2). In 2011, the number of females were 682, while males were a number of 1,307 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2011, p. 1). Furthermore, in 2012, the society consisted of 717 women and 1,304 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there were 1,322 males and 730 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). The Law Society of Manitoba had 742 women lawyers, along with 1,286 males in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, the number of women practising law became 750, while the number of men practising law became 1,283 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The number of males were 1,295 and the number of women were 769 in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, the Law Society of Manitoba reported male lawyers at 1,300 and women lawyers at 792 in 2017 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-14) Law Society of Prince Edward Island**

The Law Society of Prince Edward Island had 130 male active lawyers, compared to only 66 female active lawyers in 1998 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). In 1999, the Law Society of Prince Edward had 126 male practicing lawyers, along with 71 female practicing lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). Moreover, in the 2000 statistical report, the Law Society of Prince Edward Island continued at 126 male lawyers and 73 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were again 126 male lawyers in comparison to 79 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). The Law Society of Prince Edward Island had 82 female lawyers and remained at 126 male lawyers in 2002 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). In 2003, the Law

Society of Prince Edward Island had 83 female lawyers, with 127 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2).

There were fewer male lawyers at a number of 37 in comparison to 40 female lawyers in 2004 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). However, the 2004 statistical report did not include data under the “Practicing Members – Insured” column, since “data was no available”. Moreover, in 2005, there were 122 males, along with 93 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). The Law Society of Prince Edward Island remained at 93 female practising lawyers and increased to 126 male practising lawyers in 2006 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2). In 2007, the number of active males were 118 and active females were 99 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The Law Society of Prince Edward Island, in 2008, consisted of 102 women lawyers, along with 119 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). In 2009, the number of female lawyers were 105 and the number of male lawyers were 120 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). However, the 2008 and 2009 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”.

The Law Society of Prince Edward Island, in 2010, remained consistent with the 120 males, but decreased to 102 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2). In 2011, the Law Society of Prince Edward Island had “data not available” in the statistical report from the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. Additionally, in 2012, the number of female lawyers remained at 102, and male lawyers increased to 134 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1). In 2013, there remained 134 male lawyers, and female lawyers increased to 103 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, the number of men were 137, along with 98 women in 2014 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, male lawyers were at 139 and female lawyers were at 99 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). There were 141 males and 103 females within the Law Society of Prince

Edward Island in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 there consisted of 136 male practising lawyers and 102 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

#### **IV-15) Law Society of the Northwest Territories**

In 1998, the Law Society of the Northwest Territories had 210 male lawyers and only 82 female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 2). Moreover, there consisted of 204 males, along with 91 females in 1999 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1999, p. 2). The Law Society of the Northwest Territories had 202 practising male lawyers and 75 practising female lawyers in 2000 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2000, p. 2). In 2001, there were 73 women, along with 209 men (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2001, p. 2). In 2002, there were 215 males and 75 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2002, p. 2). There were 203 male lawyers in comparison to 82 female lawyers in 2003 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2003, p. 2). In 2004, the Law Society of the Northwest Territories had an increase of female lawyers to 84, with a decrease of male lawyers to 197 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2004, p. 3). Moreover, in 2005, there were 198 males, along with 85 females (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2005, p. 2). The Law Society of the Northwest Territories had 83 female practising lawyers and 202 male practising lawyers in 2006 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2006, p. 2).

In 2007, the number of active male lawyer were 234 and active females were 91 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2007, p. 2). The 2008 statistical report consisted of 106 female lawyers, along with 239 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2008, p. 2). However, the 2008 statistical report did not include data under the “Practising – Canadian Legal Advisor” column, since “data was no available”. Following in 2009, the number of men members remained at 239, while the number of female members increased to 145 (Federation of

Law Societies of Canada, 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, in 2010 there were 115 female and 263 male lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2010, p. 2).

The Law Society of the Northwest Territories, in 2011, consisted of 125 women lawyers, along with 275 men lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 1998, p. 1). In 2012 and 2013, there were 277 practicing male lawyers, and 122 practicing female lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2012, p. 1) (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2013, p. 1). In 2014, there were 252 male lawyers and 141 female lawyers practicing within the Law Society of the Northwest Territories (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2014, p. 1). In 2015, there were 264 men lawyers, and 136 women lawyers (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2015, p. 1). The Law Society of the Northwest Territories had decreased to 261 male lawyers, but the number of female lawyers remained at 136 in 2016 (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in 2017 there were 140 women practising lawyers, and 267 men practising lawyers within the Law Society of the Northwest Territories (Federation of Law Societies of Canada, 2017, p. 1).

## Chapter V: Findings and Conclusion

*“The power I exert on the court depends on the power of my arguments, not on my gender.”*  
– Sandra Day O’Conner

### V-1) Summary of Key Research Findings and Implications

Currently, the number of women enrolled as law students is either equal to the number of men or has moved beyond the fifty percent mark. Theoretically, there should be around equal number of men and women practising law, but the number of women in law compared to men has not increased drastically. Unfortunately, the legal sector continues to be a profession classified as a male-dominated field, as indicated in the Federation of Law Societies of Canada’s statistics. This is true for all the jurisdictions in Canada except for Quebec. In 2007, and from 2013 to 2017, there were more practising women lawyers than men within Le Barreau du Québec. However, the Law Society of Yukon had a significant decrease in both male and female lawyers in 2010, with women (64) higher than men (61) in number. Moreover, in 2016, the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society contained 59 percent women in contrast to only 41 percent men. Also, with little data obtained from the Law Society of Nunavut from 2002 to 2006, it even established that men were highly represented within the jurisdiction.

It is strongly suggested through statistical analysis on a sample of Canadian law schools that women seem to remain the minority in the workplace of lawyers, despite there being more or just as many females as males choosing to pursue a career in law. Women tend to perform equally or outperform their male counterparts academically, but significantly lag behind them in their career achievements. In the past, Canadian law school enrollment has always been observed as a male-dominated, with law school admission statistics consisting of majority of men from 1985 to 1996. It was not until 1997 that women became more represented. Additionally, current statistics from 2018 to 2020 continue to demonstrate women’s overrepresentation in Canadian law schools, compared to their male peers. The University of Victoria Faculty of Law had about 59 percent of female students in 2019, and the University of Calgary Faculty of Law had 52

percent women in 2018. Furthermore, Osgoode Hall Law School consisted of 55 percent of woman in 2018 and 56 percent of woman in 2019. In addition, the Faculty of Law at University of Windsor had 58.9 percent female students in 2020. The University of Toronto Faculty of Law contained 53 percent of female law students in 2017 to 2018, 57 percent in 2018 to 2019, and 58 percent in 2019 to 2020. In the near future, Western Law is expected to have a graduation class of 50 percent women in 2021, along with 53 percent women in 2022. Lastly, Queen University Faculty of Law had a percentage of 51 female students in 2017 and 52 percent in 2018.

Moreover, women overtook the men in admissions into common law schools across Canada yet remain significantly underrepresented in numbers within the legal practice. Overall, the conclusion of all the above studies reviewed here shows the common theme that despite women's graduation from law school in relatively equal numbers to men, they remain significantly underrepresented in leadership and power positions across areas of the legal profession. It is clear from the diversity of locations in these studies, that this is a phenomenon reflected across Canada. Moreover, it is identified quantitatively and qualitatively that women and men within the legal community are treated differently. The reason for differential treatment includes gender discrimination, professional opportunities and barriers, along with familial responsibilities. Due to this imbalance, women are forgoing high-level law positions and the women who could fill these positions are often faced with gender stereotypes and even discrimination. The key to stopping these workplace biases is to determine why the loss of women in law continues to happen. If this imbalance can be clearly understood and quantitatively proven, law firms and society can be diligent in recognizing and addressing these issues in an appropriate way.



**V-2) Limitations and Other Considerations**

A limitation of exploratory research is a chance of the data obtained through secondary sources could be outdated (Bhat, 2020). However, although this thesis consisted of secondary research, the data gathered is mainly current with some data that was substantially older. The recognition of female lawyer attrition is becoming more prevalent, as some of the law societies in Canada have conducted research on this issue. This fact confirms the importance of this issue and the need to prevent women from completely leaving law.

Data collection on gender differences for all thirteen Canadian law societies and Canadian law school admissions was challenging. Much of the information needed to complete this thesis was not easily accessible through online resources. Contacting each individual law society was required. It was discovered that the Federation of Law Societies of Canada contained statistics from 1998 to 2017 on all Canadian law societies. This established a considerable historical overview along with current generation of the numbers of women in law. The statistics regarding Canadian law schools relied on a small sample size of all Canadian law schools. This is another limitation of this study. Since Canada contains twenty-four law schools, and the information online is limited, contacting and getting a prompt reply from each individual law school took up considerable time. With the time constraint of finishing this thesis in six months, it was more realistic to resort to what was already accessible online.

**V-3) Conclusion**

Overall, despite some limitations, this study clarifies why female lawyers leave practice and whether harassment levels or lack of promotions are correlated. The law remains a difficult profession for women that stems from sexual innuendos, or jokes made at the expense of the women. Gender discrimination and sexual harassment are illegal under federal, provincial, and city statutes. Although many strides have been made to make the workplace a fair and equal environment for all, many instances of gender discrimination and sexual harassment still exist.

Most law firms and law makers need to work more diligently to treat female lawyers fairly. It is unfair that some women are entering a career in law and are forced to leave as a result of gender inequality caused by their male counterparts. Aspiring to be a lawyer is already challenging and competitive. Consequently, the evidence of female lawyer attrition can create substantial pressure and barriers for aspiring female lawyers, possibly averting women altogether to pursue legal practice. This study's findings may allow firms to understand the reasons for female lawyer attrition and to improve working conditions causing them to leave. It is a key piece of research that is essential to overcoming this division within law and ensuring women have fair representation at all levels of the legal profession. As we consider the future, we must be diligent in recognizing these issues, and addressing them in an appropriate way. Underrepresentation in the practice of law is a dangerous reality for women. When continually swept under the rug, women will continue to be in mediocre second place.

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