

The Nishma Research Profile of American Modern Orthodox Jews

Religious beliefs and practices, views on the importance of Orthodoxy as a part of life, shul life, Jewish study, women's roles, children's education, sexuality, Israel connection and advocacy, overall successes, opportunities and challenges

September 28, 2017



*Sponsored by
the Micah
Foundation*

Table of Contents

Section	Pages
Introduction	3
Survey Methodology and Responses	4-5
Summary of Key Findings	6-17
Personal Religious Beliefs and Observance	18-28
Shifting Levels of Observance and Increasing Polarization Among Denominations	29-35
How Modern Orthodox Jews Relate to Their Shul	36-40
The Role and Status of Women	41-46
Views on Expanded Women’s Roles in the Clergy ... and What About Women “Rabbis”?	47-50
Jewish Study and Learning	51-54
Assessment of Children’s Schools and Education	55-58
Israel Connection and Advocacy	59-61
Views and Attitudes Relating to Sexuality	62-65
Divorce and Agunot	66-70
Problems Facing the Modern Orthodox Community	71-78
Demographics	79-83
Appendix	84-96
– Survey Questionnaire	85-93
– Comparisons to Modern Orthodox Outside US, Chareidi, Non-Orthodox Who Attend Orthodox Synagogue	93
– Members of the Study Advisory Group	94
– About Nishma Research	95

Introduction

This survey was conducted by Nishma Research, a sociological and market research firm serving the Jewish community. Nishma means “we will hear” and our mission is to conduct research that promotes listening within and among the diverse strands of the Jewish world.

The study’s goal is to share the findings, including the areas presenting opportunities for improvements, those where respondents see problems and challenges, and those where Modern Orthodoxy has achieved successes from which the Jewish community might draw lessons. The findings are being broadly shared with the Jewish community, rabbis, educators, lay leaders and others in the hope that this will promote understanding, appreciation and discussion of the views, priorities, concerns and issues of greatest importance. It is our hope that such discussion will create productive conclusions and directions for Modern Orthodoxy.

Why This Research Was Conducted

Much research has been done among various Jewish populations, including such major studies as the 2011 Jewish Community Study of NY and the 2013 Pew Research Portrait of American Jews. But many past studies have had limited value for those who want to more deeply and specifically understand the Modern Orthodox Jewish community.

- **Limited Focus To Date on Modern Orthodoxy** – Surveys of the Jewish community often include representatively small percentages of Orthodox and Modern Orthodox (who comprise about 10% and 4%, respectively, of the US Jewish population). The studies cited above surveyed approximately 600 and 154 Modern Orthodox Jews, respectively. Small sample sizes limit the ability to examine differences within Modern Orthodoxy (by gender, age, sub-denominations, etc.), which are important to develop a deeper understanding. Our goal therefore was to draw upon a large, statistically representative sample that would enable such deeper examination.
- **Limited Coverage of Topics Particularly Relevant to Modern Orthodoxy** – Jewish communal surveys typically cover many issues aimed at the broad spectrum of Jews, including Conservative, Reform, etc., and devote only part of the survey to the issues, attitudes and concerns that are particularly – and often uniquely – relevant to Modern Orthodoxy. Our survey questionnaire was developed based on interviews and expert guidance, to ensure that we explored the issues most relevant to Modern Orthodoxy.

Research Process

The study design involved a broad literature review; individual interviews; survey development and testing by experienced researchers; and guidance by an advisory group comprised of people knowledgeable of the community, including rabbinic and lay leaders, sociologists, educators and academics.

In order to obtain a statistically reliable and representative sample of the Modern Orthodox community, the survey was fielded via outreach to rabbis and synagogues, who informed their members of the survey. See the next page for discussion of the survey’s distribution method and sample representativeness.

Thank You

- To the advisory group (see page 95) for their input and support, and to other Jewish communal rabbis and lay leaders who provided survey suggestions.
- To the RCA (Rabbinical Council of America) and Rabbi Mark Dratch, for notifying and encouraging the support of their approximately 1,000 member rabbis; and to all the shul rabbis who expressed enthusiasm for this survey, and who helped us to reach thousands in the Modern Orthodox community.
- To the members of the community who took the time to share their thoughts. We hope you enjoy reading this report and reflecting on the findings.

Sponsorship

This study is sponsored by a grant from the Micah Foundation. The foundation is directed by members of the Modern Orthodox community and its mission is to promote and enhance Jewish religious and cultural life.

Disclaimer

Nishma Research is solely responsible for conducting this survey, the questions asked, and all analysis and reporting. An advisory group participated in developing the survey questions and advised on the analysis. Rabbis and shuls throughout the US helped by informing their members of the survey, but were not involved in the analysis or reporting of this independent effort.

Mark L. Trencher
West Hartford, Connecticut
mark@nishmaresearch.com
<http://nishmaresearch.com>
September 28, 2017 .

Survey Methodology

We sought a larger sample of Modern Orthodox Jews than surveys have achieved to date, in order for the overall findings to have a high level of statistical reliability and, perhaps even more importantly, so that we could delve into sub-groups to identify possible significant differences by demographic and other characteristics.


The objective was to reach the broad community, and we did so through synagogues, primarily through the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA) – the largest Orthodox rabbinic organization in the US – which informed all of its nearly 1,000 member rabbis of the survey and asked them to participate in presenting the survey to their congregants. This achieved breadth of coverage (synagogue affiliation is virtually universal among the Modern Orthodox), and the approach employed neutral language emphasizing the desire to broadly obtain community views (see “Sample Email” to the right).

We used a web-based opt-in survey method. We did not pose the survey directly to individuals (via emails, advertising, social media, etc.), because we wanted to avoid disproportionately drawing upon “activists” who are interested in pet issues or reaching some sort of “Facebook vocal minority.”

The social research profession advises treating web-based opt-in surveys with caution. That means, for example, that we should draw conclusions only if the findings are rather pronounced and we have good theoretical reason to believe them. We follow that approach throughout our analysis. We seek findings that have statistical validity and have underlying theoretical rationale.

While two broad surveys (the 2011 Jewish Community Study of NY and the 2013 Pew Research Study) have been conducted in the past few years, their samples of Modern Orthodox are much smaller than ours and our survey questions are much broader in terms of the issues explored. These two factors limit the comparability of the survey findings. Finally, we note that, for many of the questions in this survey, there is no historical trend data. We encourage researchers and sociologists to further explore the issues probed in this survey.

Sample Email Used to Disseminate Survey to Approximately 1,000 Modern Orthodox Synagogue Rabbis



Participation in Survey of the Orthodox Community

A broad survey is about to be undertaken in the Orthodox community, and this is a very good opportunity for us to find out more about what shul congregants think across a wide range of issues. The survey is online, totally anonymous and is being conducted and funded by Orthodox researchers as a way to inform our community.

If you wish to support this worthwhile effort - and I hope you will avail yourself of this opportunity - please send an email to your congregants telling them about the survey and encouraging them to go to the link <http://bit.ly/Orthodox-Survey> to complete it. And if you can send a reminder email a couple of weeks later that would be helpful. The survey will be available online July 1 through August 31.

Here is some draft language you can draw upon in an email to your shul members:

Our shul has been invited to participate in a survey of the Orthodox community. The survey is conducted by Nishma Research and sponsored by the Micah Foundation. Both are Orthodox, as are rabbis, synagogue and educational leaders who have been guiding the study.

The survey covers a wide range of issues relevant to Orthodox Jews, such as shul and davening, Jewish education and learning, raising a family, issues of concern to women, success and challenges of living an Orthodox life in today's society, etc.

The survey is online and can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/Orthodox-Survey>. I encourage you (men and women age 18 or older) to participate.

The survey is totally anonymous. Results will be analyzed and reported for everyone combined, and not identified by any individuals or shuls. Nishma will share the findings with shul rabbis and congregants. This is a great opportunity to learn what issues are on people's minds, so we encourage you to participate.

Survey Responses




This Report Focuses on the Modern Orthodox Community

This report presents findings based on responses from 3,903 individuals in the U.S. who identified themselves as “Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox.” Top-line results (all respondents combined) are presented for all questions, often broken out by gender and age. The appendix includes summary data for Modern Orthodox in other countries, U.S. Chareidi and U.S. Non-Orthodox who attend an Orthodox synagogue (see page 94).

Sample Accuracy

All survey questions were asked of the Modern Orthodox and the overall responses for the group are accurate within $\pm 1.7\%$ at the standard 95% confidence interval.

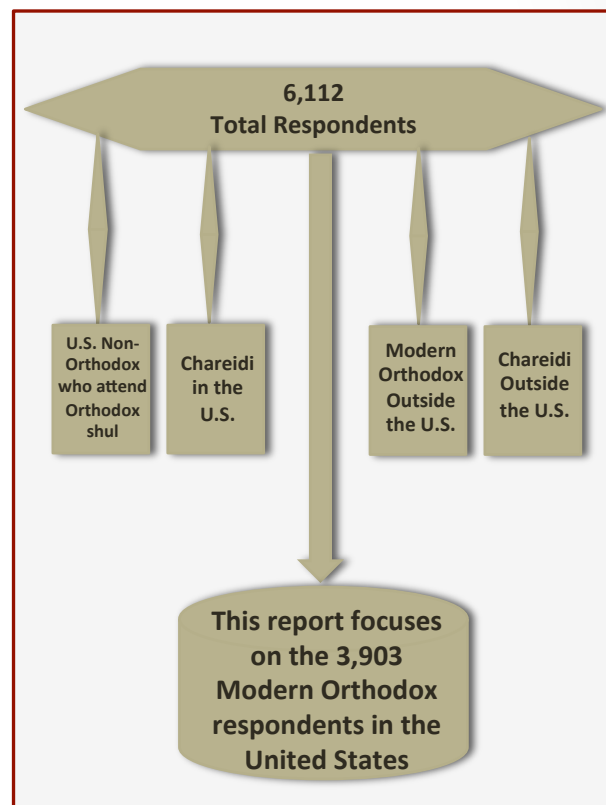
Testing the Differences Between Percentages

When showing data for sub-groups,  and  denote percentages that are higher or lower than other groups, at the 95% statistical significance level. If two groups are compared (e.g., men vs. women), a statistically significant difference is indicated by  adjacent to the higher percentage.

Terminology

In our interviews and in testing the survey, we found that the term “Modern Orthodox” is often interpreted differently. For example, while some see it as essentially “centrist observance,” others see it as more liberal. We therefore used the term “Modern or Centrist Orthodox” as more encompassing in the questionnaire, and all of the respondents self-identified as belonging to this group (see Q1 wording in the footnote below). For brevity, we use the term “Modern Orthodox” in this report when we refer to the entire broad group.

Footnotes display the wording for each question and the number of respondents (denoted as “n”) for each group reported.



Q1. Regardless of your synagogue affiliation, which of the following categories best describes your approach to Judaism? Would you say you are ... – Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox; Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah; Chasidic, Chabad; Not Orthodox – Please describe (n = 6,112). Q1 was the only mandatory question, to which a response was required.

Q2. [Asked of those who are not Orthodox per Q1] Do you regularly attend an Orthodox synagogue? – Yes; No (survey terminates); n = 357.

Geographic Location – The survey website captured respondents’ web browser geographic location, which were used to identify those in the United States and those in other countries (see pages 79-83 for demographic information on survey respondents, including geographic information).

Summary of Key Findings

Summary of Key Findings

Introduction

This profile of American Modern Orthodox Jews was conducted and supported by Modern Orthodox researchers, including an advisory group comprised of sociologists, educators, community leaders and rabbis.

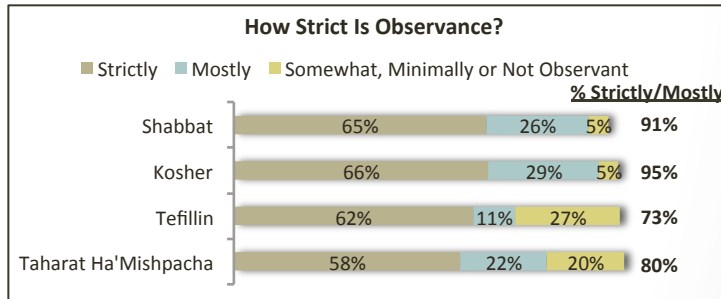
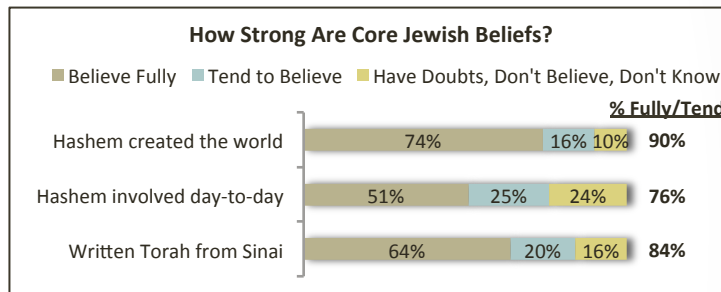
With 3,903 respondents in the US, this is the largest broad survey of the Modern Orthodox community. The community represents only about 4% of all American Jewry, with about 220,000 Modern Orthodox adults in the US (according to Pew Research*). This survey's sample size yields stronger statistical reliability than those of the relatively small Modern Orthodox segments contained in large-scale national studies of the Jewish population. Additionally, the questions asked in this study are not those that are typically asked of all American Jews (e.g., Conservative, Reform, unaffiliated, etc.), but are specifically focused on the issues most relevant to today's Modern Orthodox Jews.

This section of the report summarizes many of the key findings. The full report has much more detail on the topics explored. Additionally, the survey generated a wealth (over 130,000 words) of verbatim responses that shed great additional insight on the enormous diversity and passion of people's views, and will inform the reader in ways that go beyond the statistics.**

Beliefs and Observance

90% believe fully or tend to believe that *Hashem* created the world, but one in four (24%) have doubts or disbelieve in *Hashem's* involvement in the world's day-to-day activities.

- About two-thirds are strictly Shabbat and *kashrut* observant, and 90%+ are strictly or mostly observant.
- There is less strict observance of *taharat ha'mishpacha* among marrieds (58%) and less strict observance of *tefillin* among men (62% overall and 56% among men ages 18 to 44).



It is interesting to note that the levels of belief and observance are not dissimilar to what Pew found among American Modern Orthodox Jews.

* A Portrait of Jewish Americans: Findings from a Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews, October 1, 2013

** A large sample of the verbatim responses are in "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" – available at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>.

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

Fragmentation Within Modern Orthodoxy

Modern Orthodoxy is the branch of Judaism that attempts to synthesize traditional Jewish values and observance of *Halacha* with the secular, modern world.

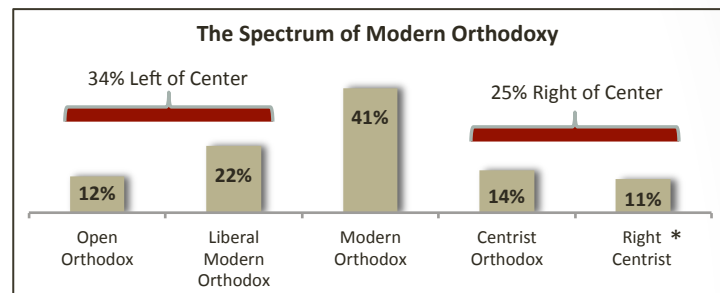
One of the issues that has been increasingly raised in recent years is that of the alleged fragmentation within Modern Orthodoxy. Some have spoken of a “schism” that could result from broadening differences in beliefs and attitudes.

To start exploring this issue, we asked respondents to position themselves across the spectrum. The “denominational” self-identification we obtained resembles a bell curve (see chart to the upper right), a plurality (41%) are in the middle, 34% on the left and 25% on the right.

As we explore the question of fragmentation, we will examine variations in views by age, gender and denominations (see, for example, the chart to the right) across a wide range of issues, including some where strong disagreements have been voiced (e.g., the role of women, an area of particular contention).

Wider variations of views suggest that it might be more difficult for the community to consider whether and how to address the differences.

We will also explore whether Modern Orthodoxy is shifting in observance “to the left or to the right,” whether the left and right are drawing further apart, and the implications of such shifts.



Variations in Belief and Observance – Across Modern Orthodoxy

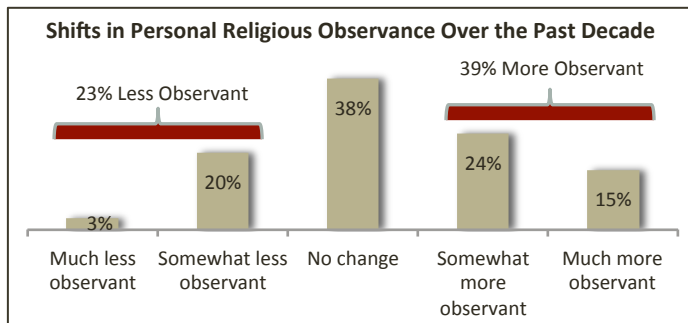
	Open Orthodox	Liberal Modern Orthodox	Modern Orthodox	Centrist & Right-Centrist
Hashem created the world (% believe fully or tend to believe)	75%	80%	95%	98%
Written Torah from Sinai (% believe fully or tend to believe)	58%	70%	92%	96%
Shabbat (% strictly or mostly observant)	82%	83%	95%	99%
Tefillin (% strictly or mostly observant)	45%	53%	76%	90%

* The survey questionnaire labeled the “right-most” segment as “Right-wing Centrist Orthodox (e.g., tending toward Yeshivish).” For brevity, we refer to it in this report as “Right Centrist.” Additionally, we may use the informal vernacular terms “to the right” or “to the left” as abbreviated ways to denote directions across the denominational spectrum.

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

Shifting Level of Observance, Polarization Within Modern Orthodoxy and the Danger of Schism

While some are moving to the left (becoming less observant or leaving the fold and going “*off the derech*”*), there is a sense and there has been conjecture that Modern Orthodoxy as a whole has been shifting toward greater observance, i.e., “moving to the right.” This survey confirms that to in fact be the case: 39% of respondents say they have become more observant and 23% say they have become less observant – a “net rightward shift” of +16%.



Women (+12%) have shifted to the right less than men (+21%), and elsewhere in this report we shall see areas of dissatisfaction among women.

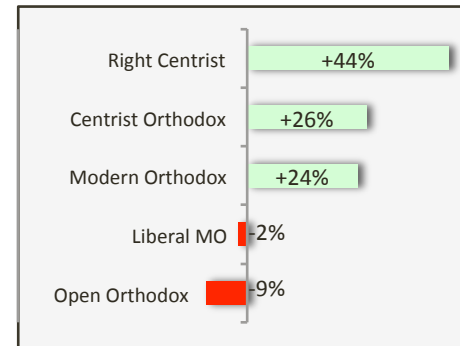
A more noteworthy trend is the differences among denominations: the right and center have shifted strongly further to the right, while the left has moved slightly more to the left (see chart in upper right). *The fabric of Modern Orthodoxy is being stretched.*

What About the Next Generation?

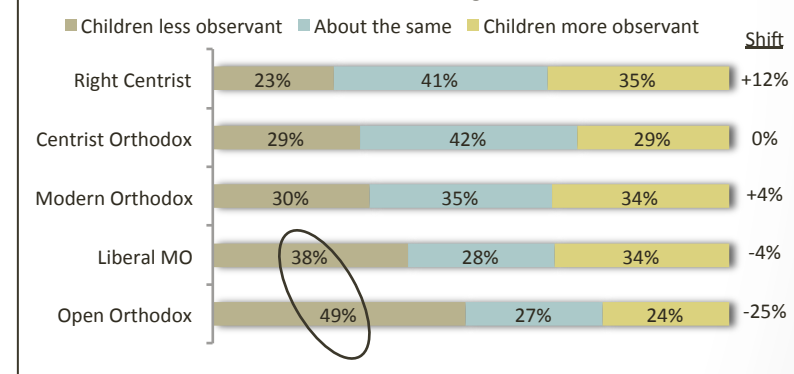
The survey shows that respondents’ children are willing to exercise prerogatives when it comes religion: one-third are less observant than their parents and one-third are more observant. This implies that many Modern Orthodox Jews are likely experiencing some levels of religious changes within their own families, and perhaps this creates an opportunity for people to consider existing attitudes.

Here, again, there are significant differences among denominations, as the liberal segments show a much higher percentage of their children being less observant. *This suggests that polarization will get worse, as well as having implications relating to the number of people leaving Orthodoxy.*

Shifts in Religious Observance Over the Past Decade



Children on “The Left” Are Becoming Much Less Observant



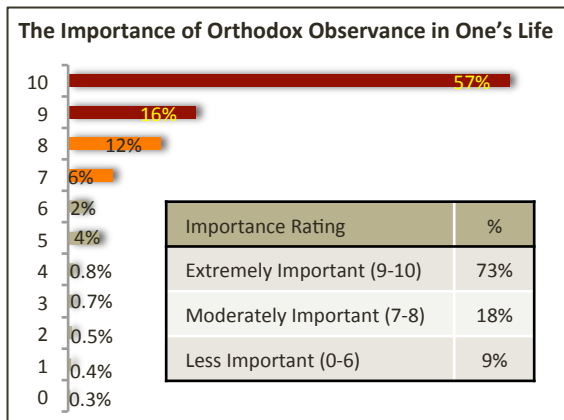
What might greater polarization across Modern Orthodoxy presage? The wide range of identities, beliefs and practices challenges perceptions of near uniformity in normative compliance and may ultimately affect the viability of there being a single camp known as Modern Orthodoxy. In the future, some Orthodox-identifying individuals may well stay within this camp, or they may seek a place in an adjacent “tradition-leaning” community.

* Nishma Research’s “Modern Orthodox - Survey of Those Who Have Left Orthodoxy - July 2016” is available at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>.

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

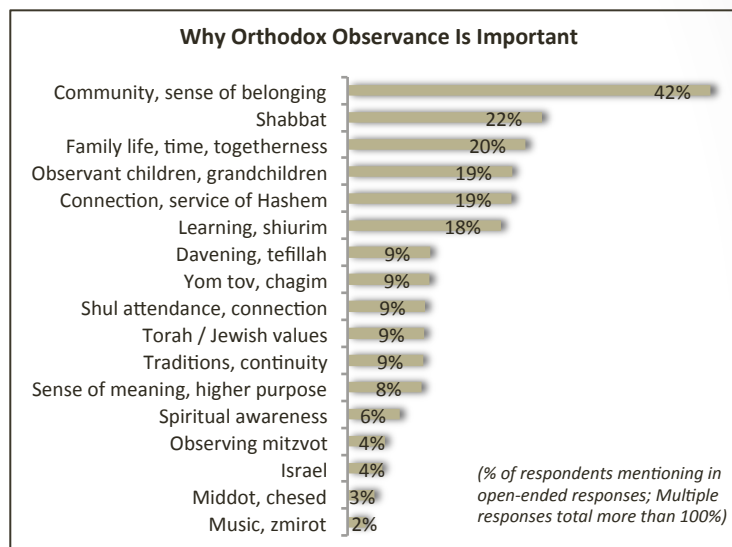
The Importance of Orthodox Observance as a Part of Life

Modern Orthodox Jews see their Orthodox Observance as an extremely important part of their life, with no notable differences between men and women, or by age.

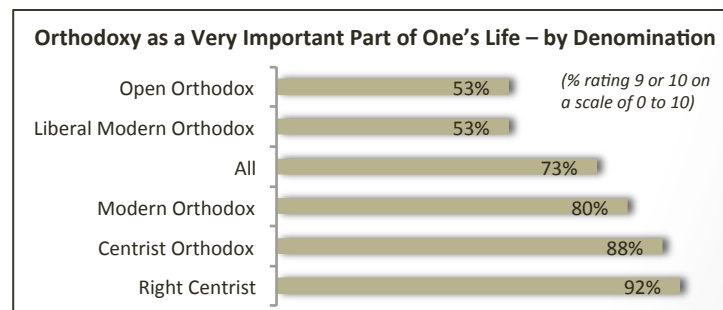


The #1 reason by a wide margin is the sense of community and belonging. Other reasons are Shabbat, family togetherness, seeing observant children, connection to *Hashem* and learning.

Torah Life subsumes many of these components, and the accompanying chart (see upper right) displays what respondents said when they were given the opportunity to explain (in an open-ended question), what gives them the most satisfaction, joy or meaning as Orthodox Jews.



Orthodox observance is a less important part of people's lives at the liberal end of the Modern Orthodox spectrum.



Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

How Modern Orthodox Jews Feel About Shul

Shuls are central to Jewishly observant lives, as places of prayer, learning and community. To what extent do Modern Orthodox Jews avail themselves of what shuls offer, and what are the reactions – positive or negative – to the shul environment, policies and practices?

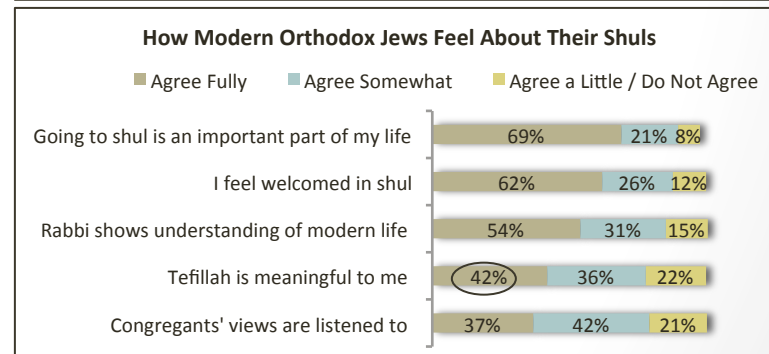
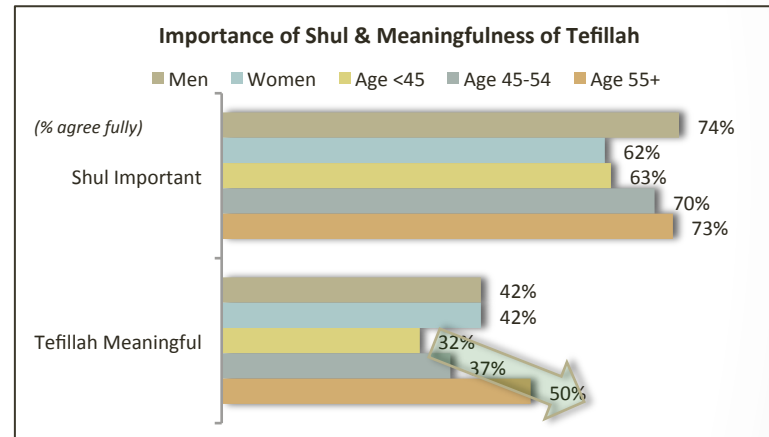
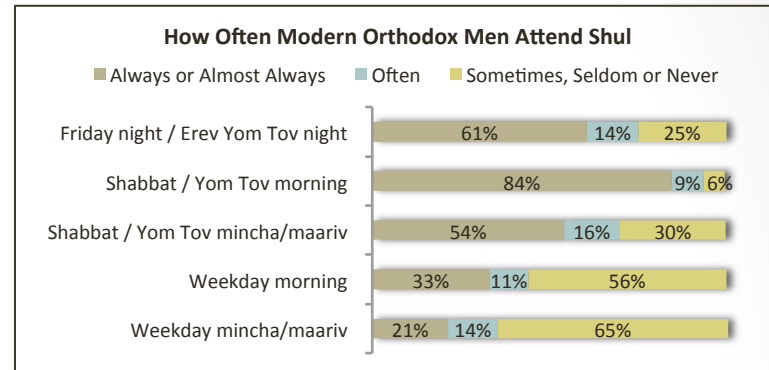
For many, attending shul services is mostly a weekend affair. 84% of men and 52% of women always or almost always attend shul on Shabbat or Yom Tov mornings (few women attend at other times), and 61% of men attend Friday night and Erev Yom Tov night. But men’s attendance during the week is much lower.

While people are comfortable in shul, feel welcomed and more than two-thirds say going to shul is an important part of their lives, fewer than half (42%) agree fully that the tefillah experience is meaningful to them.

Men find shul more important than women, although the two genders find *tefillah* of equally middling meaningfulness. Both importance of shul and meaningfulness of tefillah are lower among the young, and both rise notably with age. The meaningfulness of *tefillah* rises significantly as we move “to the right” (51% among Centrist and 61% among Right Centrist).

Shul Disconnections?

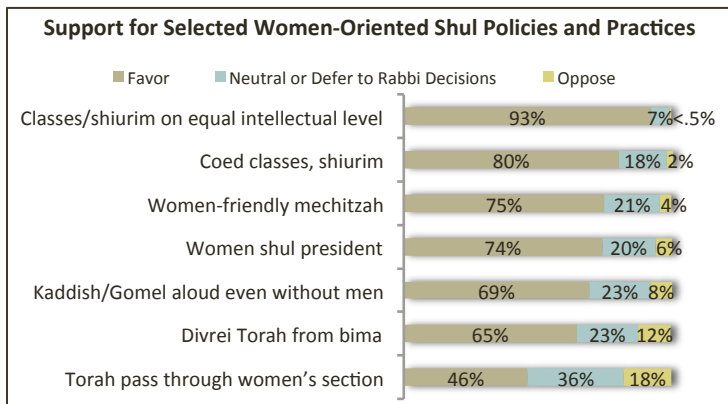
A slight majority (54%) agree fully that their rabbi’s decisions and guidance reflect an understanding of modern life, and fewer than half (37%) agree fully that they are listened to. This suggests that some may feel “disconnection” from their shul and its *hashkafa* (worldview).



Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

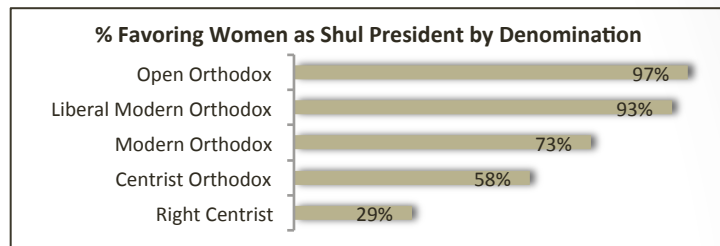
The Role and Status of Women

There is much talk about the role and status of women in shuls, institutions and the community, and there is in fact fairly broad support for a range of women-oriented shul policies and practices. An average of 72% favor the items on a list of seven shul policies and practices (see chart below). However, fewer than half (45% on average) are currently satisfied with where things stand – the progress to date on these policies and practices – in their Orthodox community .



Women as Shul Presidents

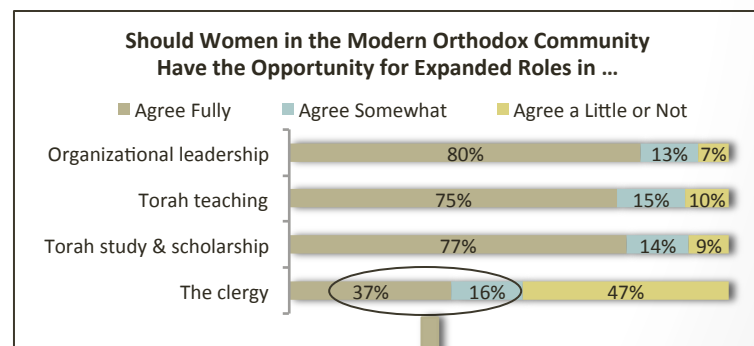
An issue of some recent contention is that of women as shul presidents, and some shuls with women presidents have faced criticism. We find broad support – across nearly all of the Modern Orthodox spectrum – for women as shul presidents. Support is below 50% only among the Right Centrist group.



Overall, nearly three-fourths (74%) favor this, including both men (70%) and women (79%). It is highest among the young (79% for ages 18-34).

Women's Opportunities for Other Expanded Roles

Beyond shul presidencies, we solicited views regarding women's opportunities for broader expanded roles, and found strong agreement that women should have the opportunity for expanded roles in organizational leadership, Torah teaching, and Torah study and scholarship.



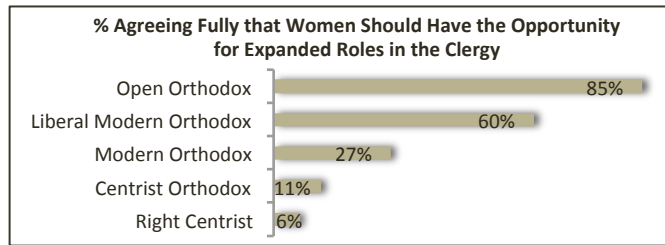
53% Agree Fully or Somewhat → Continued

Summary of Key Findings (Continued)

Views on Expanded Women’s Roles in the Clergy ... and What About Women “Rabbis”?

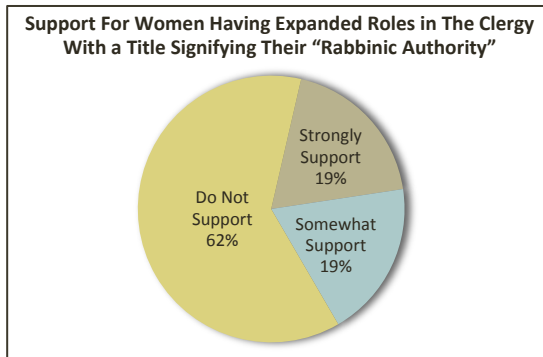
The preceding page showed that 53% of respondents believe that women in their Orthodox community should have the opportunity for expanded roles in the clergy; 37% agree fully and 16% agree somewhat.

The percentage agreeing fully is higher among women (43%) than men (31%), and much higher among women age 18-34 (52%). Support varies quite widely across the denominations.

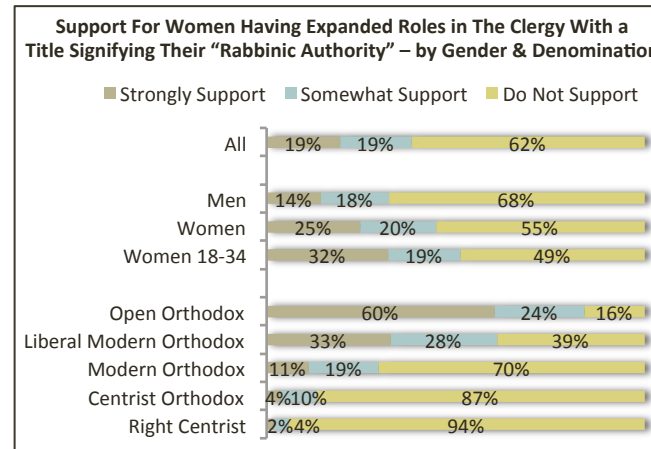


A follow-up question asked if they believe MO women with a role in the clergy should also have a “title signifying their ‘rabbinic authority.’” We did not suggest any specific title (e.g., *rabba*, *maharat*, etc.).

19% of all respondents strongly support Orthodox women in the clergy with a title, and an additional 19% somewhat support the concept (see definitions and methodology on page 49).



Here we see differences in support by gender (women support this more than men, 25% vs. 14% ... and 32% among women ages 18-34). But the most striking differences are among the denominations.



The concept of women clergy with a title has 60% support among Open Orthodox, 33% among Liberal Modern Orthodox and 11% among Modern Orthodox. Support drops into the low single digits for the right-most denominations. This is the issue with greatest divide between left and right, no matter where the “dividing line” is placed.

	Open Orthodox	vs.	The 4 Right-Most Denominations
% Strongly Support	60%		14%

	Open & Liberal MO	vs.	The 3 Right-Most Denominations
% Strongly Support	42%		8%

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

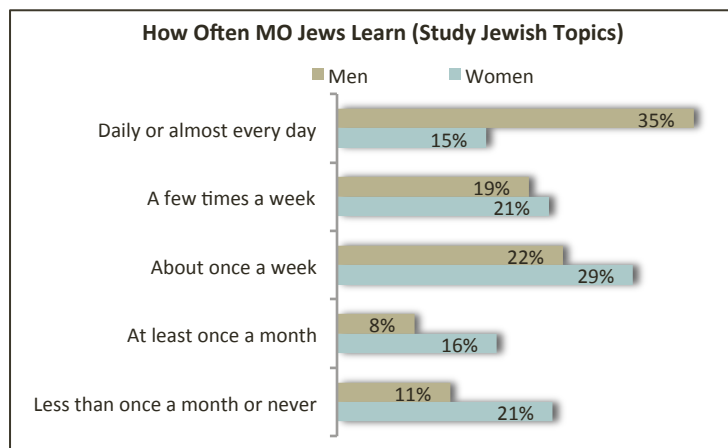
Jewish Study and Learning

Adult Backgrounds and Learning

Modern Orthodox Jews have strong religious educational backgrounds: 47% have had post-high school yeshiva and/or advanced study (54% of men and 39% of women). Younger generations are more educated (68% of those ages 18-34 have had post-high school yeshiva and/or advanced study vs. 54% for ages 35-54 and 30% for ages 55+).

MO Jews take Jewish study and learning seriously, with men on average learning a few times a week and women once a week. Among those who learn, 43% of men learn *gemara* or *daf yomi*, and 10% of women do so. Other topics (*Parsha*, *Tanach*, *halacha*, *mussar* or Jewish issues relating to the modern world) are learned more equally by men and women.

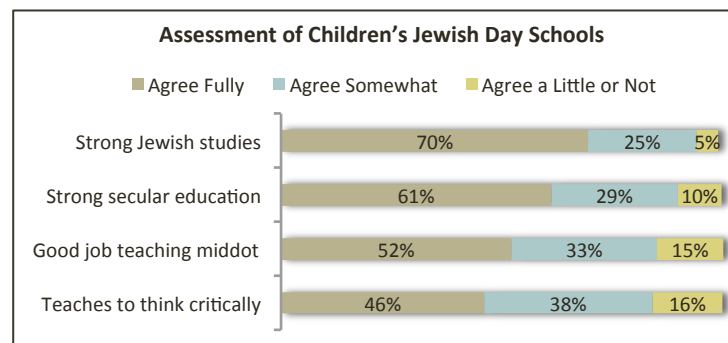
The survey gathered a substantial amount of feedback on what topics interest people (sample responses on page 54).



Children’s Education

83% of respondents’ children in grades 1-12 attend an Orthodox Jewish day school, and 75% of the schools are either fully (45%) or partially (30%) coeducational.

Schools are rated generally well – a bit stronger, though, for Jewish studies (70% agree fully) than for secular education (61% agree fully).



Elementary schools (grades 1-8) and high schools are rated equally for their Jewish studies, but high schools are better for secular studies.

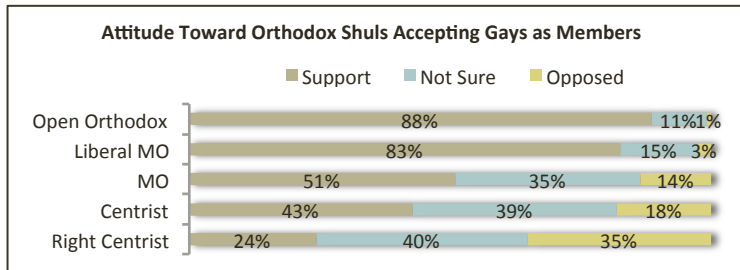
Some the other attributes rated were whether schools encourage college (92% agree fully), teach students to think critically (46%), meet special education needs (32%), teach *tzniut* (modest behavior) (22%) and sex education (22%) – the last two items were asked of parents of age-appropriate students.

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

Sexuality ... A Trend Toward More Open Attitudes

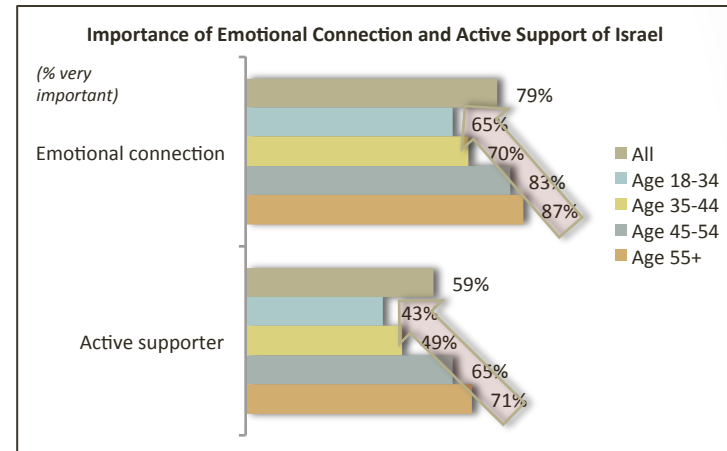
U.S. society has experienced a shift toward greater acceptance of gays. Since a tenet of Modern Orthodoxy is interaction with secular society, it is interesting to see if the secular society attitudes have permeated Modern Orthodoxy. In fact, MO has similarly become more open to gays. Overall, 58% support Orthodox shuls in general accepting gays as members with 12% opposed (29% are not sure).

About one-third have used sex education counseling or information resources, more often using secular than Jewish-g geared resources.



Connections to Israel

Overall, 79% say their emotional connection to Israel is very important, and 59% say it is important for them to actively support Israel. But both (emotional connections and support) are much lower below age 45.



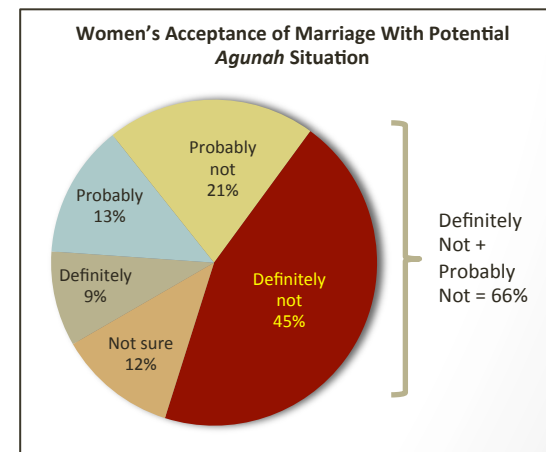
Divorce and Agunot

To see how knowledgeable people are, the survey presented five "halachic statements" relating to Jewish divorce (some were correct and some were not). Overall, an average of 71% correctly understand *halachot* about a *get*, remarriage, etc.

Among marrieds, 83% of men and 73% of women say they were aware at the time of their marriage of the conditions around the practice of a *get*.

There has been much publicity in recent years of the *agunah* problem, with the result that two-thirds of women, if they were to marry in an Orthodox ceremony, would not agree to an arrangement in which they could become an *agunah* if their husband did not grant a *get*.

85% of all respondents say they would definitely prefer that a close female relative of theirs, if to be married, would obtain a *halachic* pre-nuptial agreement.



Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

Modern Orthodox Successes and Opportunities

Successes

Modern Orthodoxy well achieves its goal of melding the observant Jewish lifestyle with participation in modern society. There are aspects of Modern Orthodoxy that are generally working notably well and may provide examples for the broader community:

- There are strong levels of belief, observance and a very powerful sense of community ... and overall religious observance is becoming *stronger*.
- Levels of Shabbat observance are very high, and respondents greatly value Shabbat for the family connectedness it fosters and for providing a needed break from day-to-day activities.
- Shuls are vibrant and well-attended centers of prayer, learning and community.
- There is a strong focus on Jewish education, both for children – including very high Jewish day school enrollment, a key driver of Jewish continuity – and for adults.
- There is much interest in and study of Jewish topics, and desires to explore an array of topics relating to Torah study as well as Judaism in the modern world.
- There is great value seen in education (61% achieve post-graduate or professional degrees, with commensurately high family incomes) and in participating in society.
- There is much satisfaction and joy in seeing the transmission of Jewish values and practices to children and grandchildren.
- There are strong emotional and activist connections in support of Israel.
- There has been growth in opportunities for women leadership in communal roles, as well as Torah teaching, study and scholarship.

Opportunities

At the same time, there are opportunities to strengthen the community by building upon what is currently in place. For example:

- There are high levels of observance of *tefillah* – Jewish prayer – but many do not find it to be very meaningful. There is room for creativity in making tefillah more meaningful for more people.
- Jewish study is highly valued, and respondents provided a very wide range of suggestions for additional topics of interest.
- There has been growth and acceptance of women in *halachic* roles, and that of the *yoetzet halachah* has been particularly well-received and heavily utilized in communities where available.
- There has been some growth and acceptance of women on shul clergy staffs. While issues relating to such positions and how they are defined still need to be resolved, there are many within Modern Orthodoxy that value this in some form.
- The *halachic* prenuptial agreement has gained acceptance as a way to mitigate the *agunah* problem, and efforts to further its use would be beneficial.
- There is a strong base of education on topics relating to both *bein adam l'makom* (relationships with Hashem) and *bein adam l'chaveiro* (relationships with other people). Given the communal aspects that people cite as problems, there are opportunities to reinforce teachings relating to the latter.
- This Profile of American Modern Orthodox Jews shows many areas where differences exist across the spectrum of Modern Orthodoxy. While there are issues that have created divisions, we hope that this study and others will ultimately help to promote respectful dialogue across denominations, spur our community to find commonalities, and help find ways to reconcile differences.

Summary of Key Findings *(Continued)*

The Biggest Problems Facing Modern Orthodoxy

Respondents were presented with 27 issues facing Modern Orthodoxy, and asked to assess which ones they saw as serious problems.

Overall, finances are seen as the biggest problem. By a wide margin, the cost of Jewish schooling ranks as the #1 problem, and also among the top 10 are the cost of maintaining a Jewish home (#4) and the adequacy of funds to meet community needs (#10).

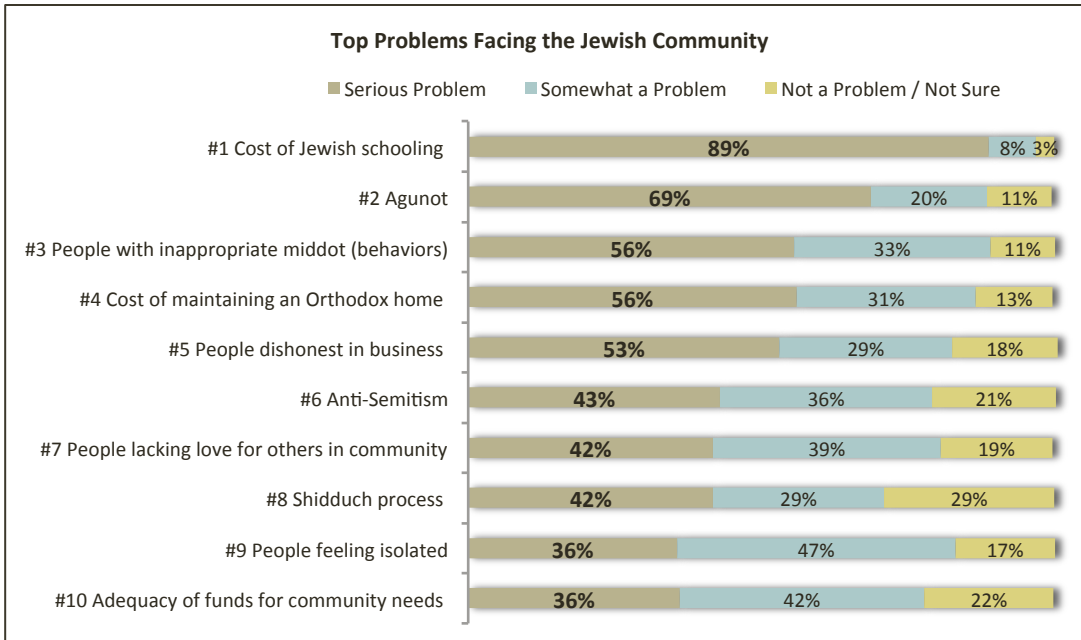
The highly-publicized *agunah* issue ranks as the #2 problem. Several other of the top problems involve interpersonal behaviors, including #3 - religious people not dealing with others with appropriate middot (proper behaviors); #5 - religious people being dishonest in business;

and #7 - people lacking love for others in the community.

There is general consistency of views across gender and age, with a few nominal variations.

Across all issues, women are slightly more concerned on average than men; and the younger (18-34) and older (65%+) are more concerned than those ages 35-64.

There are substantial variations in overall levels of concern across the denominations, with the “right” (Centrist / Right Centrist) groups expressing generally more concern across the 27 issues than the “left” (Open Orthodox / Liberal Modern Orthodox) groups.



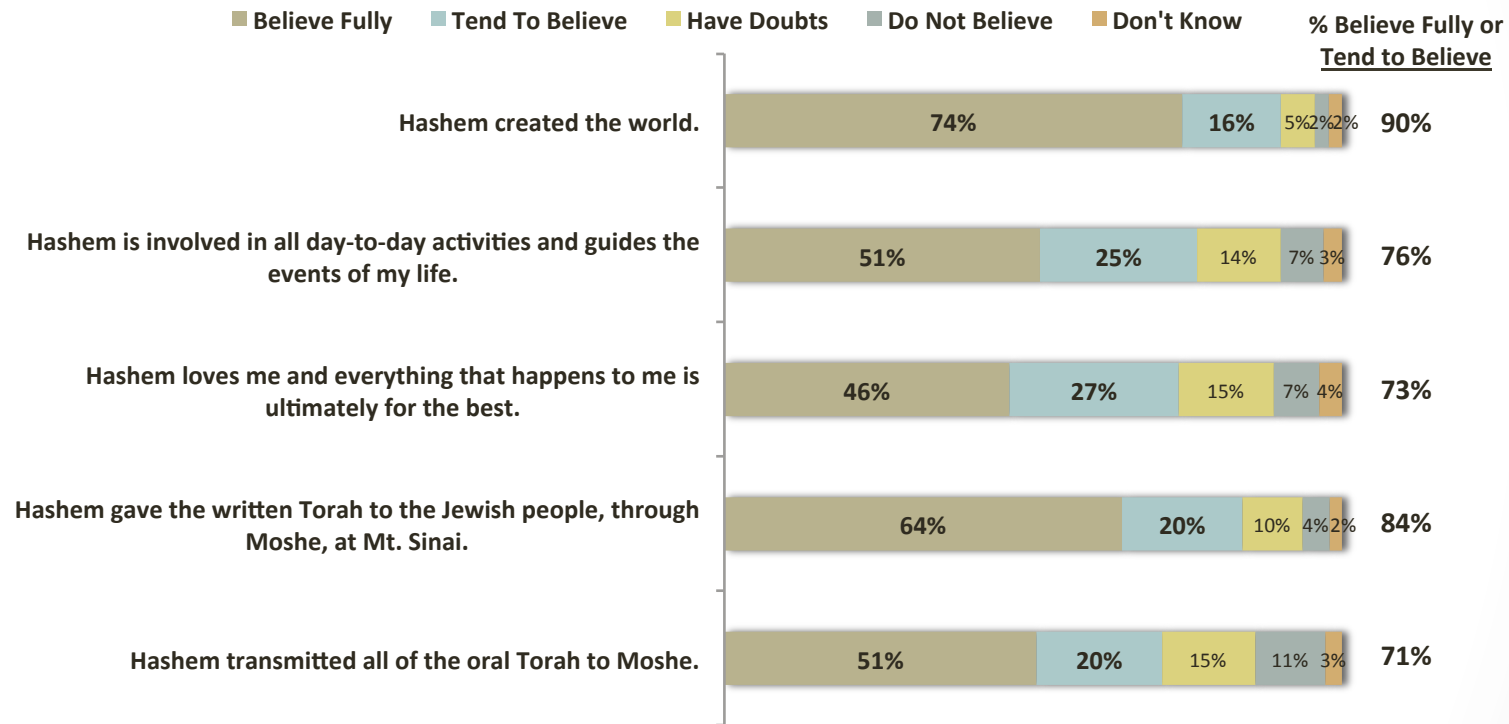
**The Rest of the List
(Issues Ranked #11-27 Overall)**

Rank	Issue	Serious
11	Observant lifestyle but little spiritual meaning	34%
12	Availability of special needs education	33%
13	Rabbis opposed to increased women’s roles	32%
14	Needs of the elderly	29%
15	Raising children with religious Jewish values	28%
16	Substance abuse	26%
17	Day school / yeshiva admission policies	26%
18	Rising divorce rates	25%
19	Physical or mental abuse	25%
20	People leaving Orthodoxy	25%
21	Poverty	25%
22	People not committed enough to religious growth	23%
23	Technological and cultural threats	20%
24	Modern Orthodoxy becoming less observant	19%
25	Not enough outreach/ kiruv	18%
26	Modern Orthodoxy becoming more observant	16%
27	Rabbis advocating for increased women’s roles	7%

Personal Religious Beliefs and Observance

How strong are Modern Orthodox Jews' religious beliefs? – Religious beliefs are generally strong. While 90% believe that Hashem created the world and 84% believe that Hashem gave the Written Torah at Sinai, about one in four has doubts or does not believe in Hashem's continuing role in our daily lives, His love of each Jew or that the Oral Torah is from Sinai.

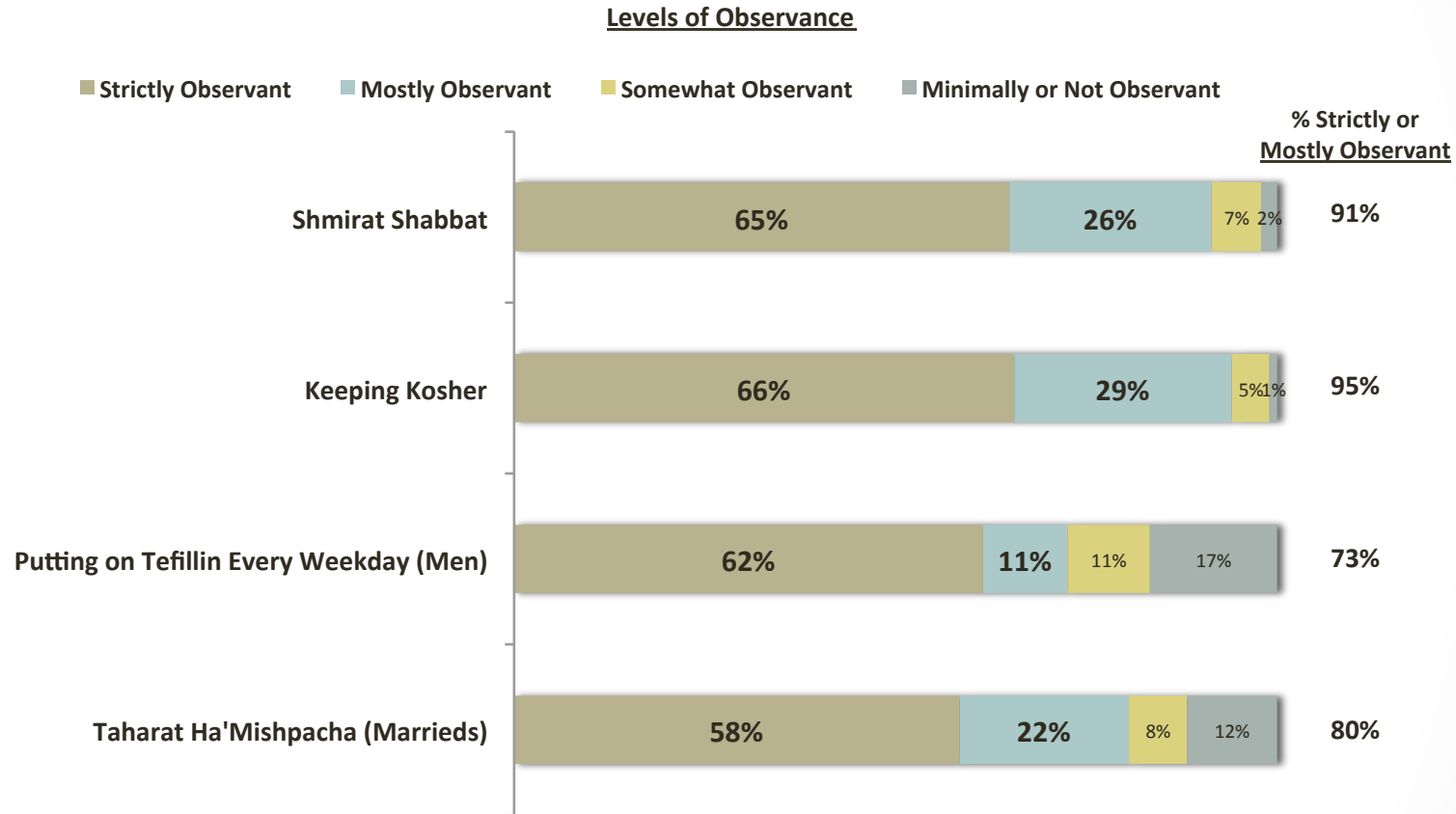
Levels of Belief



For this survey, we included a representative sample of some of the principal Modern Orthodox beliefs and observances.

Q19. How strongly do you believe that ... – Hashem (G-d) created the world; Hashem is involved in all of the world's day-to-day activities, and knows and guides the events of my daily life; Hashem loves me and everything that happens to me is ultimately for the best; Hashem gave the written Torah to the Jewish people, through Moshe, at Mt. Sinai; Hashem transmitted all of the oral Torah to Moshe. [Response Scale: I believe fully; Tend to believe; Have doubts; Do not believe; Don't know]; n = 3280.

How observant are Modern Orthodox Jews? – Observance (those strictly or mostly observant) of kashrut (95%) and Shabbat (91%) are very high, while observance of *taharat ha'mishpacha* among marrieds (81%) and *tefillin* among men (73%) is lower.



Q20. How would you rate your personal observance in the following areas? – Shmirat Shabbat - Keeping Shabbat; Keeping kosher; [Asked of males] Putting on tefillin every weekday; [Asked of marrieds] Taharat ha'mishpacha (laws of family purity, women's use of mikveh). [Response Scale: Strictly observant; Mostly observant; Somewhat observant; Minimally or not observant; Not applicable], Percentages exclude those responding "not applicable" ... these were negligible for the first three items, and represented 18% of respondents for taharat ha'mishpacha; n = 3266, 3258, 1685 and 2098, respectively.

Religious Beliefs and Observance, by Gender and Age

- **Gender** – Men and women have equally strong religious beliefs and are similarly very observant of Shabbat and kashrut. Women are a bit more observant of *taharat ha'mishpacha*.
- **Age** – Younger respondents (ages 18-34) less often believe in the divinity of the Torah, both written and oral, and less often put on *tefillin* (lower among those ages 18-44).

Levels of Belief – by Gender and Age

<i>BELIEFS – % that believe fully or tend to believe</i>	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Hashem (G-d) created the world.	90%	90%	90%	89%	91%	90%
Hashem is involved in all of the world's day-to-day activities, and knows and guides the events of my daily life.	76%	77%	76%	73%	78%	75%
Hashem loves me and everything that happens to me is ultimately for the best.	73%	74%	73%	70%	76%	72%
Hashem gave the written Torah to the Jewish people, through Moshe, at Mt. Sinai.	84%	84%	84%	78% ↓	85%	86%
Hashem transmitted all of the oral Torah to Moshe.	71%	70%	72%	62% ↓	72%	71%

Levels of Observance – by Gender and Age

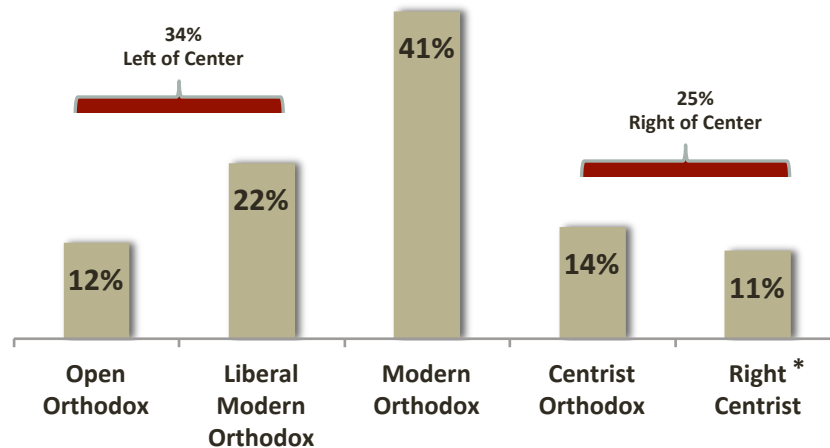
<i>OBSERVANCE – % strictly or mostly observant</i>	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-44	65+
Shmirat Shabbat - Keeping Shabbat	91%	91%	92%	93%	91%	91%
Keeping kosher	94%	94%	95%	93%	93%	95%
Putting on tefillin every weekday (men)	73%	73%	NA	69%	68% ↓	78% ↑
Taharat ha'mishpacha - laws of family purity, women's use of mikveh (marrieds)	81%	79%	82%	87% ↑	79%	79%

Q19. Beliefs – Average n = All 3280; men 1707; women 1540; Age 18-34 - 593; Age 35-54 – 947; Age 55+ - 1194 (with very small variations across items).

Q20. Observance – n = All 3280; men 1703, 1692, 1685 and 1167, respectively; women 1534, 1536 and 914, respectively; Age 18-34 – 595, 593, 271 and 352, respectively; Age 35-54 – 946, 943, 510 and 781, respectively; Age 55+ – 1194, 1193, 609 and 637, respectively.

How uniform is Modern Orthodoxy; and how fragmented? – To explore the extent of diversity within Modern Orthodoxy, we started by asking where respondents see themselves within its broad spectrum. A plurality (41%) label themselves as Modern Orthodox (the middle “denomination” of the five listed), 34% see themselves as left of center and 25% see themselves as right of center.

**How Jews Categorize Themselves Across
“Sub-Denominations” Within Modern Orthodoxy**



The chart excludes 7% that did not select any of the provided labels.

- 2% indicated they are traditional, Jewish, just Jewish, or variations of that theme, and 0.5% indicated they are Sephardic.
- The remainder either had different religious practices over time, were still evolving religiously, did not understand or see any of the labels as fitting them at this time, or objected to the concept of categorizing themselves.

Sample Responses:

- *I abhor labels. I am a proud Jew. That is the only label necessary.*
- *I am frum and all these other labels are too limiting and or contentious or without real meaning.*
- *My views vary from issue to issue.*
- *Right wing ‘Centrist’ but leaning more Chassidic hashkafically, ‘Neo Chasidic.’*
- *Right wing observance, liberal theology.*
- *Thoughtful Modern Orthodox.*
- *Most similar to open orthodox in my beliefs regarding women's roles, academic Torah/ Talmud study etc. But, not very dogmatic altogether; I don't feel I fully fit into any space but also feel comfortable in multiple spaces.*
- *I am fundamentally opposed to these groupings. I am a mix of all of the above, as are arguably most to varying degrees.*

Q23. You indicated that you are Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox. Within that group, which of the following labels best describes your personal approach to your Judaism? – Open Orthodox; Liberal Modern Orthodox; Modern Orthodox; Centrist Orthodox; “Right-wing” Centrist Orthodox (e.g., tending toward Yeshivish); Other – Please describe (Open-Ended, n=214); n = 3246.

* The survey questionnaire labeled the “right-most” segment as “Right-wing Centrist Orthodox (e.g., tending toward Yeshivish).” For brevity, we refer to it as “Right Centrist.” Additionally, we will henceforth refer to the five sub-denominations that we defined within Modern Orthodoxy as “denominations.”

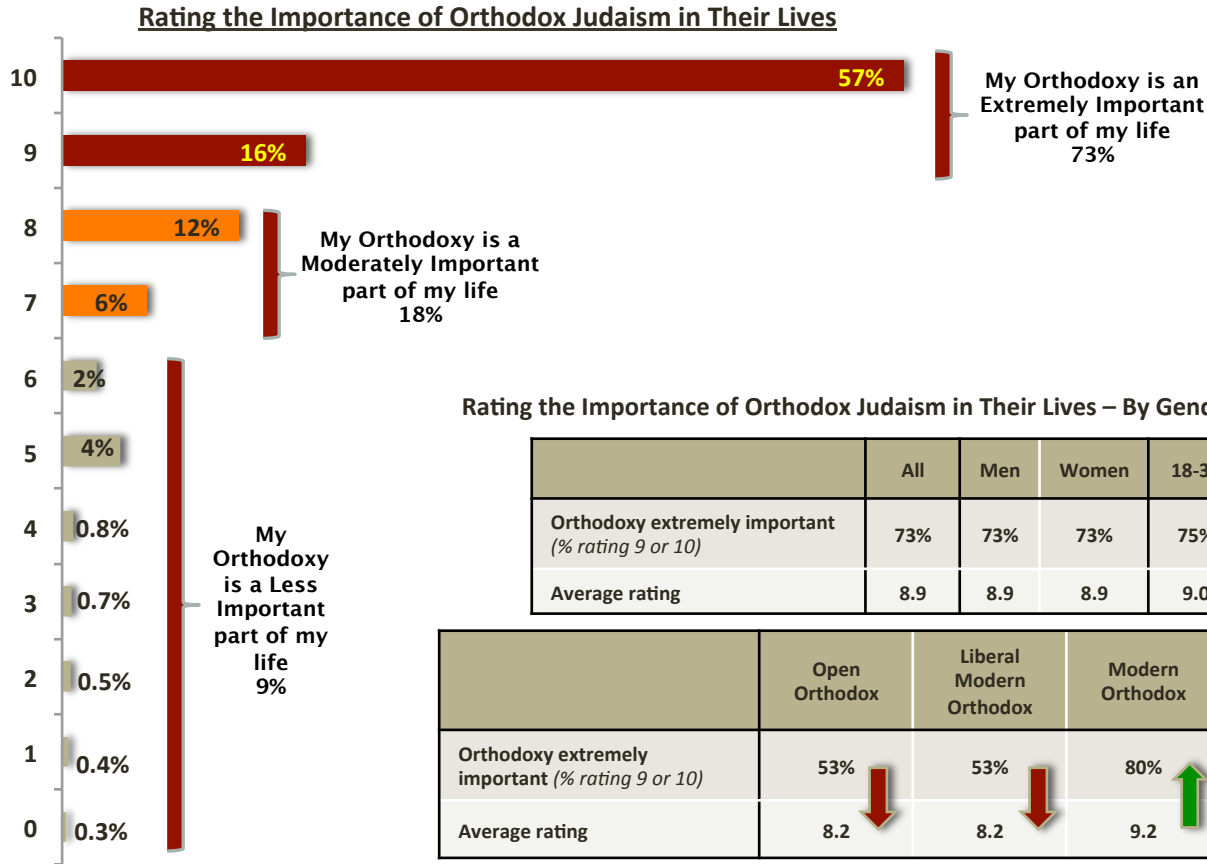
Beliefs, practices and demographics vary widely across the denominations. The more liberal segment attracts more women, more *baalei teshuvah*, more people who are politically liberal and tends to have higher incomes and more secular education (although Modern Orthodoxy overall has high incomes and education).

Levels of Belief & Observance – by Denomination

	All	Open Orthodox	Liberal Modern Orthodox	Modern Orthodox	Centrist Orthodox	Right Centrist
% that believe fully or tend to believe - Hashem created the world	90%	75%	80%	95%	97%	99%
% that believe fully or tend to believe – written Torah from Sinai	84%	58%	70%	92%	95%	98%
% strictly or mostly observant – Shabbat	91%	82%	83%	95%	98%	100%
% strictly or mostly observant – Tefillin	73%	45%	53%	76%	86%	94%
% Men / % Women	52% / 48%	44% / 56%	48% / 52%	53% / 47%	59% / 41%	58% / 42%
Median Age	51	50	50	53	51	48
% Orthodox from birth or since age 10 or younger	58%	46%	52%	62%	63%	66%
% post-graduate degrees	61%	71%	63%	58%	66%	51%
Median household income	\$158K	\$185K	\$167K	\$161K	\$156K	\$140K
% Democrat / % Republican (among those with political leanings)	48% / 52%	79% / 21%	72% / 28%	38% / 62%	31% / 69%	21% / 79%

Q23. n = 3280 for all and 361, 650, 1247, 436 and 336, respectively, for the denominations; n varies by row

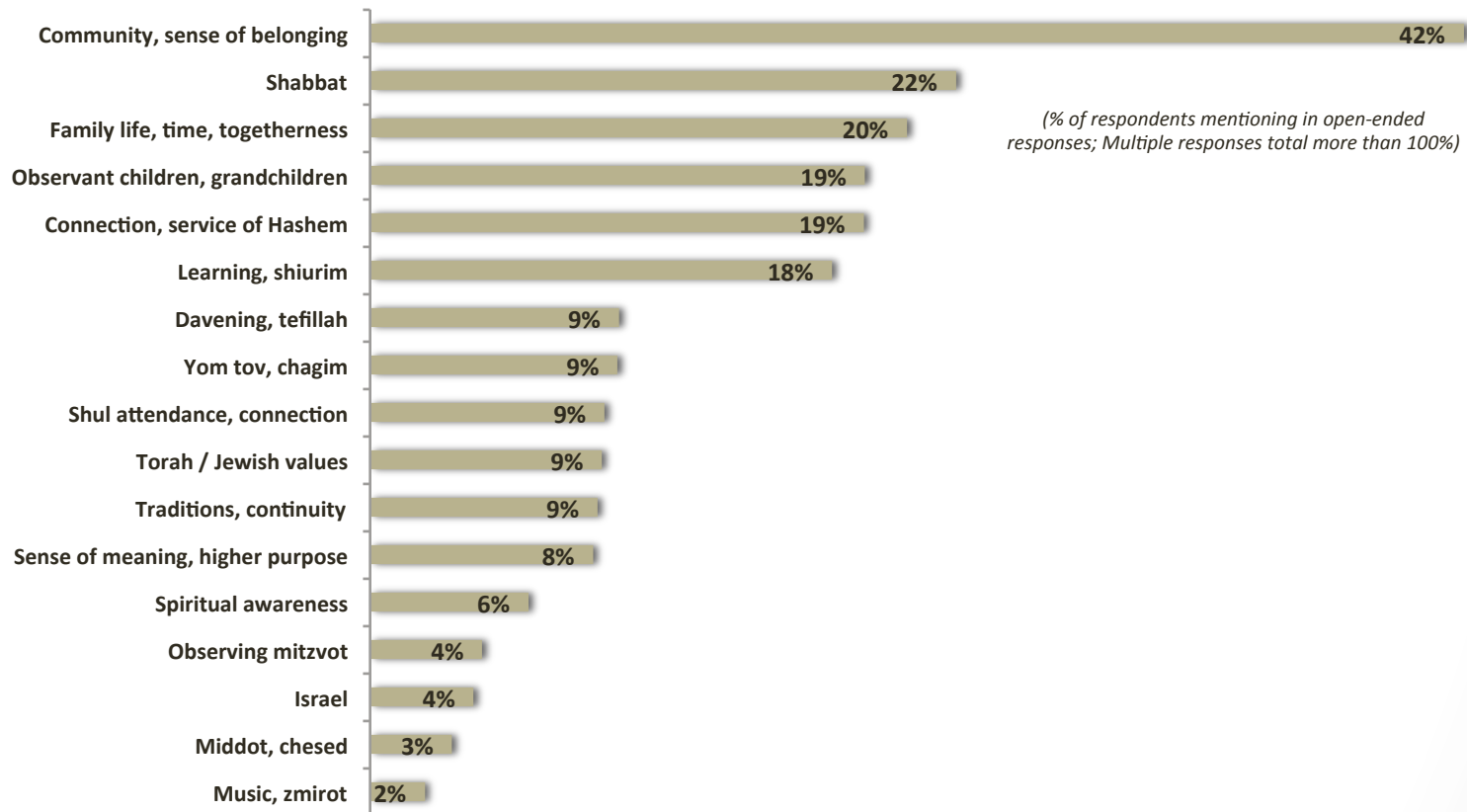
How important is Orthodox Judaism in their lives? – Modern Orthodox Jews view their Orthodoxy as a very important part of their life. 73% rate it at 9 or 10 (on a scale of 0 to 10), with an average rating of 8.9. While there are few differences overall by gender or age, ratings are lower among the liberal denominations.



Q42. On a scale from 0 to 10 — where 0 = do not agree and 10 = fully agree — to what extent do you agree with the statement: Being an Orthodox / Observant Jew is an important part of my life? Please drag the slider to the appropriate position on the scale. [Response Scale: Slider from 0 = Do Not Agree to 5 = Somewhat Agree to 10 = Fully Agree]; n = All 2745; men 1429; women 1292; Age 18-34 - 582; Age 35-54 - 922; Age 55+ - 1167; Open Orthodox 310; Liberal Modern Orthodox 557; Modern Orthodox 1017; Centrist Orthodox 373; Right Centrist 291.

What are the key drivers of Orthodox observance? – Ultimately, observance is driven by what gives the most satisfaction, joy or meaning to one’s Jewish life. The most frequently cited factor, by a wide margin, is the sense of community, followed by Shabbat, family life, relationship with Hashem and Torah study.

Why Be an Orthodox / Observant Jew? – What Gives the Most Satisfaction, Joy or Meaning



What gives the most satisfaction, joy or meaning to one's life as an Orthodox Jew? – A sample of the responses

"I think community is what gives me the greatest happiness. Being around other like-minded people who share a Torah lifestyle together is where it all starts."

"Being part of an observant community in which Shabbat and chagim and smachot are celebrated with joy."

"The strong family values and lessons for children; The "forced" breaks from everyday life to appreciate family and rest; Knowing there is more meaning to life than going to work every day and accumulating material objects."

"Trying to be a better person, including relations with others. Acting ethically according to Jewish orthodox values. Continuing to learn more to understand Hashem's direction for us in the world."

"I feel like I'm making the world a better place by being an oved Hashem."

"Seeing the children follow in the orthodox tradition and raising the grandchildren this way."

"Being part of a community that will help one another in good and difficult times and together grow in acts of Torah and chesed."

"I love my religion and community. I am blessed to be able to raise my children in such a committed community, both synagogue and schools. Shabbat is wonderful but there is so much torah learning going on during the week as well."

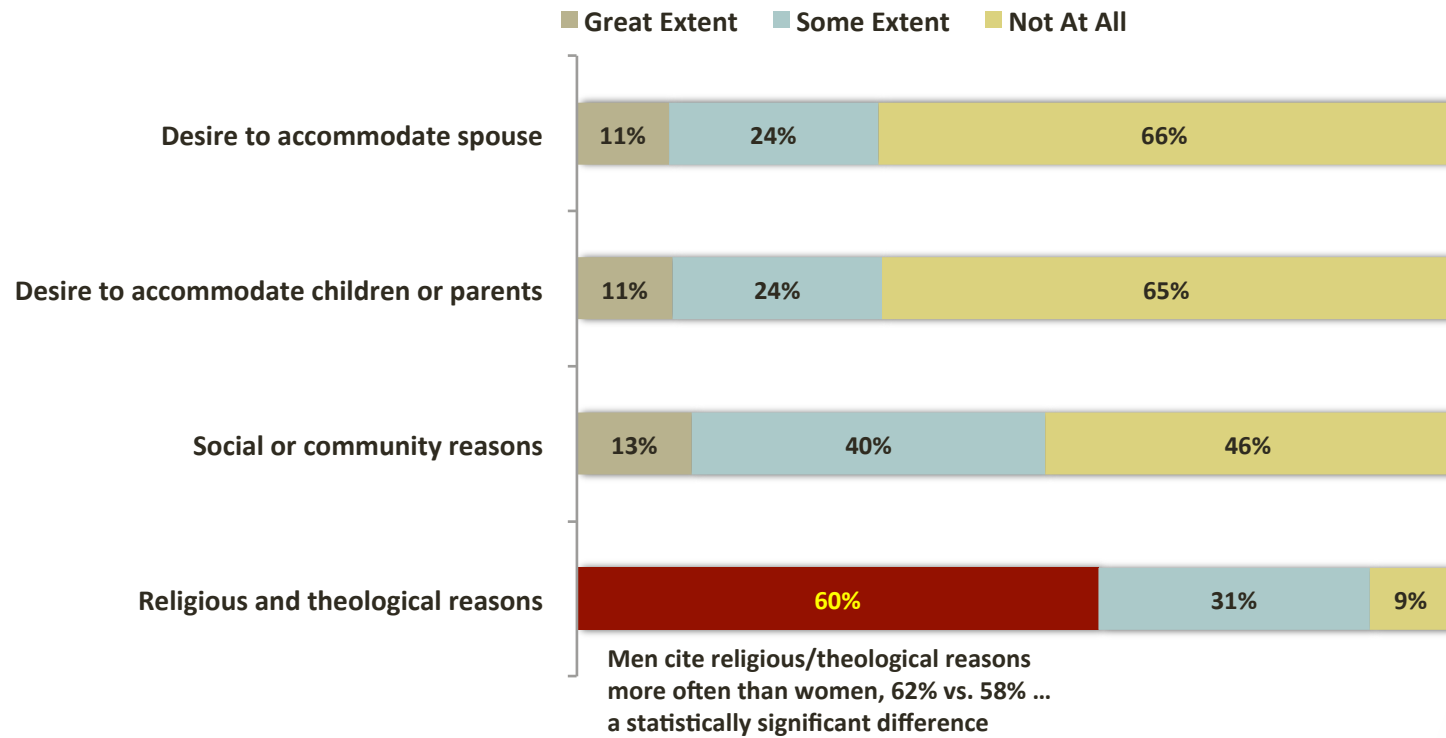
What gives the most satisfaction, joy or meaning to one's life as an Orthodox Jew? – A sample of the responses

- *Continuing the mesorah passed on through the millennia.*
- *I know that I can talk to my Creator anytime I want about anything. Community pulls together to help in crisis. I know others care deeply about my family.*
- *Sense of meaning and direction in life. Presence of G-d in all aspects of life is tremendous comfort. Orthodoxy provides source of consolation in hard times and appreciation in good times. Friendship and community adds sense of belonging.*
- *Being spiritual and living a traditional lifestyle connects me to Hashem, my ancestors, and the Jewish community.*
- *The most satisfaction is when I see my children sharing my beliefs and following in the path of modern orthodoxy as they are adults.*
- *Being part of my shul / community.*
- *Learning, davening, mitzvos, middos.*
- *Having a sense of community, which provides social, emotional and spiritual support; having a relationship with G-d and something to ground me.*
- *Feeling connected to Hashem and a sense of purpose in my life.*
- *Advocating for the needs of women in my community.*
- *Being Shomeret Mitzvot enables me to live a life of meaning and purpose, to participate in something bigger than myself and to endeavor to grow spiritually.*
- *Shabbos, Yom Tov, community love, davening, always learning and the ability to reach higher levels of feeling closer to Hashem.*
- *Most important to me is that as a member of my modern Orthodox community, I am a part of Klal Israel, the Jewish people. By going to Shul on Shabbat /holiday eves or Shabbat/holiday mornings, by being there I am re-affirming that I am a part of the Jewish people.*
- *It gives my life meaning and purpose, and a sense of community and friendship.*
- *Judaism and Eretz Yisroel are an intricate part of my heart and neshama. They are very emotional and personal for me. My Yiddishkeit brings me such gladness. It overflows.*
- *Learning Torah and doing mitzvot, while at times is hard work, gives my life purpose.*
- *Davening as a means of cultivating a sense of kedushah; Shabbat as a way of shifting out of a focus on work/money; inspiration to be more ethical; Torah as a way of discussing and re-examining perceptions of life.*
- *Transmission of purpose to the next generation. Living for and submitting to something greater than oneself. The pursuit of intellectual and spiritual opportunities throughout life.*
- *Learning torah, being part of an observant community and tradition.*
- *The holidays and yom tovs give me the most joy.*
- *Knowing that I can talk to Hashem whenever I want and thank Him for all that He has blessed me with. Knowing I can turn to Him in times of trouble as well and being assured that all that happens to me is for a good reason.*
- *Private prayers (not really shul, more davening by myself at home or in times of need) and the spirituality I have nurtured in myself to connect with God.*
- *Being part of a community with strong Jewish values and the continuity from one generation to another. Even though I wasn't raised orthodox and previously belonged to a Reform congregation (35 years ago), I've always felt that Orthodox Judaism is the most legitimate form of Judaism and is an anchor that Jews need now and in the future.*
- *Joyful being part of a community, all having a common experience, observing Shabbat together and holidays. Being required to tune out of our electronic world (phones, TV, etc.) one day a week is so beneficial to one's life and spirituality.*

Nearly two-thousand extraordinarily diverse comments were received. A large sample of the responses to this question are contained in the document "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" which is available to read or download at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>. We recommend readers peruse this document to get a flavor of the breadth of views.

Do family or communal factors drive Orthodox observance? – Religious and theological reasons drive observance much more than any desire to accommodate a spouse, children or parents. But more than half (53%) cite social or community reasons as a reason for their observance, at least to some extent.

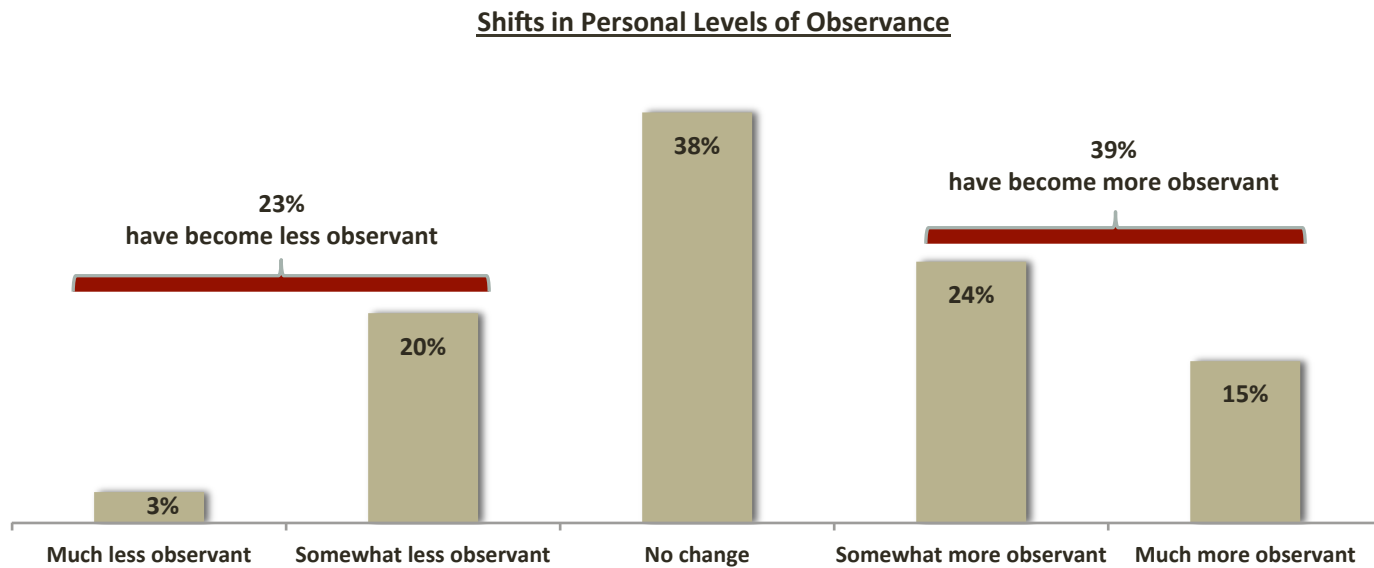
Factors That Might Drive Observance



Q22. To what extent, if any, is your religious observance due to ... – Your desire to accommodate your spouse; Your desire to accommodate your children or parents; Social or community reasons; Religious and theological reasons. [Response Scale: Great extent; Some extent; Not at all]; Average n = 3140.

Shifting Levels of Observance and Increasing Polarization Among Denominations

Have there been shifts in observance? – Most Modern Orthodox say their level of observance has changed in the past decade: 39% say they have become more observant and 23% say they have become less observant.



Q21. Has your personal level of religious observance changed over the past 10 years? – I’ve become much more observant; I’ve become somewhat more observant; No change; I’ve become somewhat less observant; I’ve become much less observant; n = 3286.

Where have shifts in observance been more pronounced? – Men have “shifted to the right” more than women, and older people (55+) have done so more than those younger.

Shifts in Observance – By Gender and Age

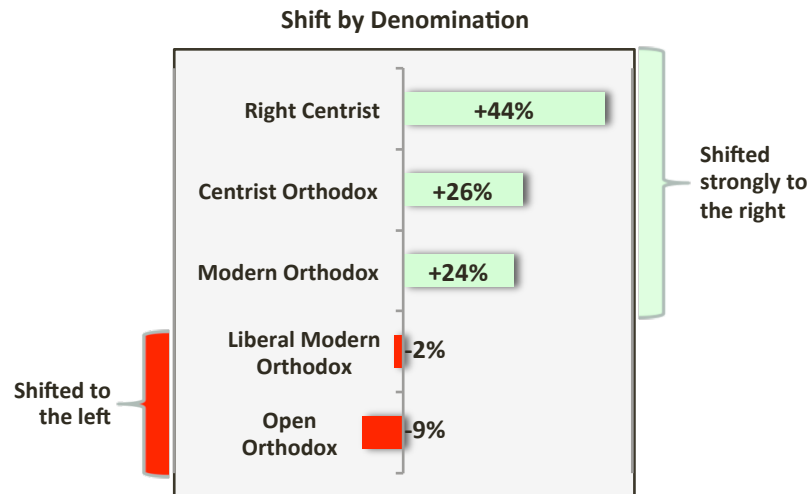
	All	All Men	Men 18-34	Men 35-54	Men 55+	All Women	Women 18-34	Women 35-54	Women 55+
Became More Observant	39%	41%	44%	37%	44%	37%	41%	30%	39%
Became Less Observant	23%	20%	27%	22%	15%	25%	33%	29%	18%
Shift (+/-)	+16%	+21%	+17%	+15%	+19%	+12%	+8%	+1%	+21%

Q21. Has your personal level of religious observance changed over the past 10 years? – I’ve become much more observant; I’ve become somewhat more observant; No change; I’ve become somewhat less observant; I’ve become much less observant; n = All 3286; Men – All 1713; Age 18-34 - 272; Age 35-54 – 518; Age 55+ - 641; Women – All 1543; Age 18-34 - 315; Age 35-54 - 427; Age 55+ - 556.

Is the perception that there has been increasing polarization correct? Is the gap between left and right widening? The perception is correct. While the right has shifted strongly further to the right, the left has shifted to the left.

Shifts in Personal Religious Levels of Observance – By Denomination

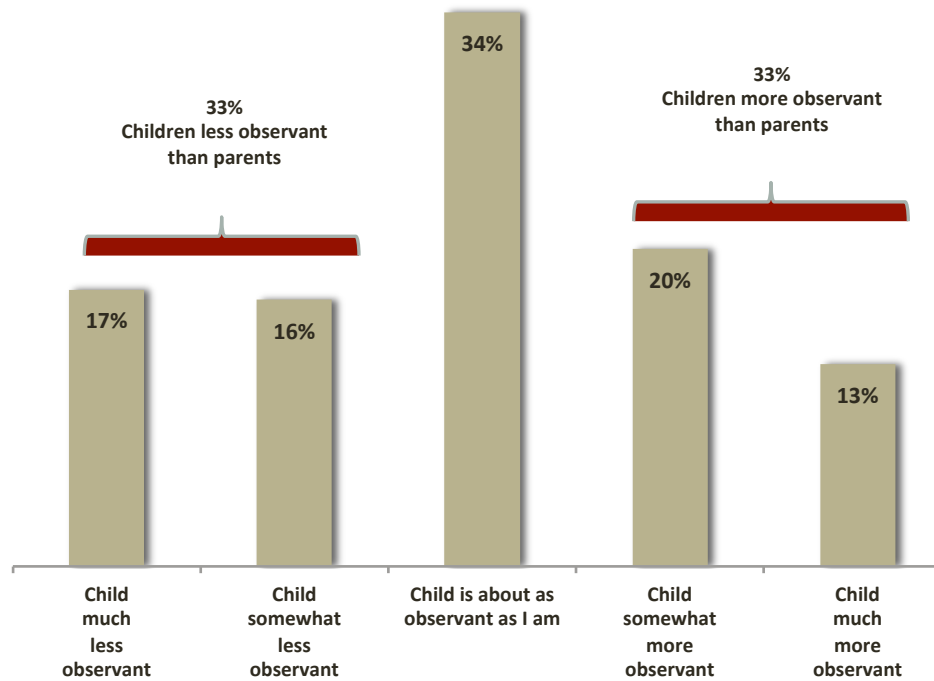
	Open Orthodox	Liberal Modern Orthodox	Modern Orthodox	Centrist Orthodox	Right Centrist
Became More Observant	28%	32%	41%	42%	54%
Became Less Observant	37%	34%	17%	16%	10%
Shift (+/-)	-9%	-2%	+24%	+26%	+44%



Q21. Has your personal level of religious observance changed over the past 10 years? – I’ve become much more observant; I’ve become somewhat more observant; No change; I’ve become somewhat less observant; I’ve become much less observant; n = Open Orthodox 360; Liberal Modern Orthodox 647; Modern Orthodox 1243; Centrist Orthodox 434; Right Centrist 334.

Are children more or less observant than parents? – On average, children are about as observant as their parents, but there is great variability, with one-third less observant and one-third more observant.

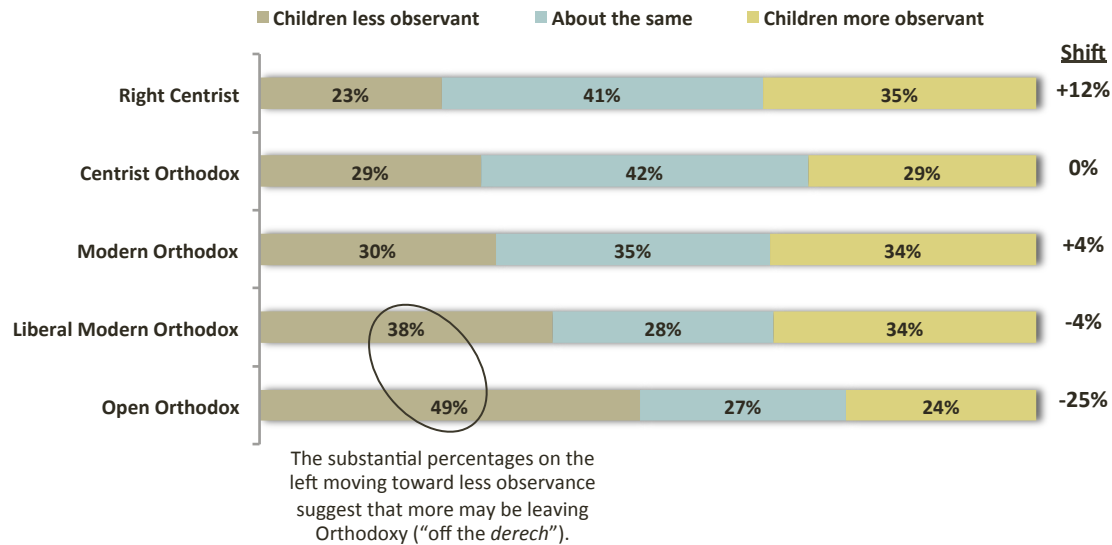
Are Children More or Less Observant Than Parents?



Q27. [Asked of those with oldest child age ≥14] Think of your oldest child. Would you say that child is more or less religiously observant than you are? – Much more observant than me; Somewhat more observant than me; About as observant as I am; Somewhat less observant than me; Much less observant than me; Don't know; Percentages exclude Don't know; n = 1776.

With respect to children being more or less observant than parents, the changes are quite substantial. A majority are either less or more observant than their parents for every denomination. Also notable is the leftward shift among the children of Open Orthodox respondents.

Orthodox Children Create Their Own Religious Paths



- The wide range of identities, beliefs and practices challenges perceptions relating to the extent of uniformity (or close to it) in normative compliance. This wide range may ultimately affect the viability of there being a single camp known as Modern Orthodox. In the future, some Orthodox-identifying individuals may well stay within this camp, or they may seek a place in an adjacent "tradition-leaning" community.

Q27. [Asked of those with oldest child age ≥14] Think of your oldest child. Would you say that child is more or less religiously observant than you are? – Much more observant than me; Somewhat more observant than me; About as observant as I am; Somewhat less observant than me; Much less observant than me; Don't know; Percentages exclude Don't know; n = Open Orthodox 192, Liberal Modern Orthodox 352, Modern Orthodox 723, Centrist Orthodox 242, Right Centrist 179.

How do children's Jewish perspectives differ from their parents' – A sample of the responses

Children Less Observant

- *Very angry at Orthodoxy, attitudes of Orthodox Jews and no longer observant at all.*
- *Did not instill in her two grown children the same beliefs in Judaism as we taught her and her siblings.*
- *Difficulty believing in Hashem. Questioning the value of halachah.*
- *Does not appear to have any issue having a non-Jewish partner. Non-practicing; maintains an agnostic/atheistic perspective.*
- *Involvement of women in synagogue services.*
- *He is not completely shomer Shabbat*
- *His wife does not always cover her hair and occasionally wears shorts and pants.*
- *Far too liberal.*
- *Does not like shul attendance. Likes home observance. Uses electronics and will work on Shabbat.*
- *Doesn't follow halacha but has a very strong Jewish identity.*
- *My oldest child has come out as gay. I want to find a place within Judaism in which s/he feels accepted, included, and not 'b'dieved.' I don't believe this will happen in the Orthodox world.*
- *He is more left wing, but loves Israel. Many arguments about American-Israeli topics!*
- *More progressive on women's issues.*
- *We are in sync theologically and halachically. Getting him to daven regularly is a hurdle, but that's an action issue, not perspective.*
- *Although less observant, our child is maintaining traditional and cultural Judaism.*
- *Doesn't put on tefillin every day.*

Children More Observant

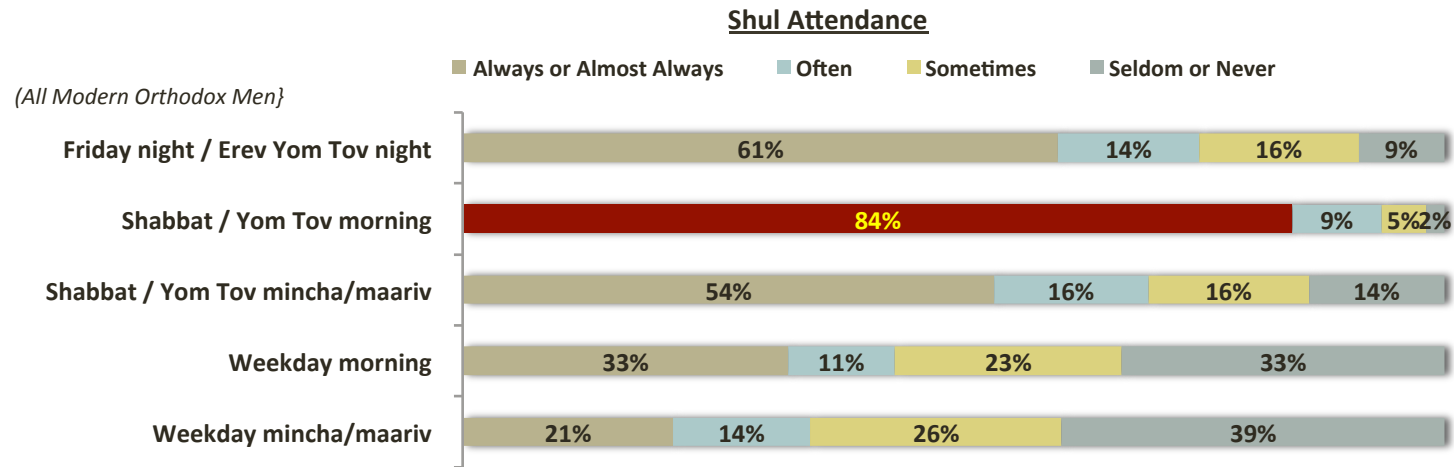
- *Covering her hair.*
- *Daas Torah. She has a "rebbe." We do not.*
- *Davens every day. Wears his Yarmulka always at work.*
- *The degree to which girls and women must cover up their bodies and hair (married women), not go mixed swimming, not use hot water on Shabbat.*
- *He is much more personally committed to Judaism as the central core of his identity.*
- *More "Yeshivish" and married to a more halachically aware person, thus they tend to be more engaged.*
- *More oriented to his Yeshiva rabbeim for guidance; desire to live a more cloistered life; less comfortable engaging with those who are not similar to him in religious observance and perspective; less comfortable pursuing college education and employment while maintaining a strong connection to torah learning.*
- *He is more politically conservative, more hawkish on Israel and less liberal in his orthodoxy, especially related to the roles of women.*
- *Much more learned and observant than I am, and proud of it.*
- *My children had yeshiva day school education through high school. He is much more knowledgeable and observant than I am. Over the years I have learned from my children.*
- *She davens three times a day and learns daf yomi.*
- *Will not come to us if we have family drive here on Shabbat or Yom Tov, covers hair in and out of home, wears panty hose all the time, won't let older boy go mixed swimming.*
- *He has fulfilled the commandment of 'yishuv ha'arezt' and has moved to Israel. I have not yet done so.*

Many hundreds of extremely diverse comments were received. A large sample of the responses to this question are contained in the document "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" which is available to read or download at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>. We recommend readers peruse this document to get a flavor of the breadth of views.

Q28. [Asked of those with oldest child age ≥ 14] Still thinking of your oldest child, what areas are there, if any, where his or her Jewish perspectives differ substantially from yours? (Open-Ended); n = 693.

How Modern Orthodox Jews Relate to Their Shul

How often do Modern Orthodox attend shul? – On Shabbat / Yom Tov, men always or almost always (84%) attend shul in the morning, and usually (55-60%) attend in the evening. But attendance is much lower on weekdays (33% morning, 21% evening). Except for Friday night / erev Yom Tov services, shul attendance generally rises with age.

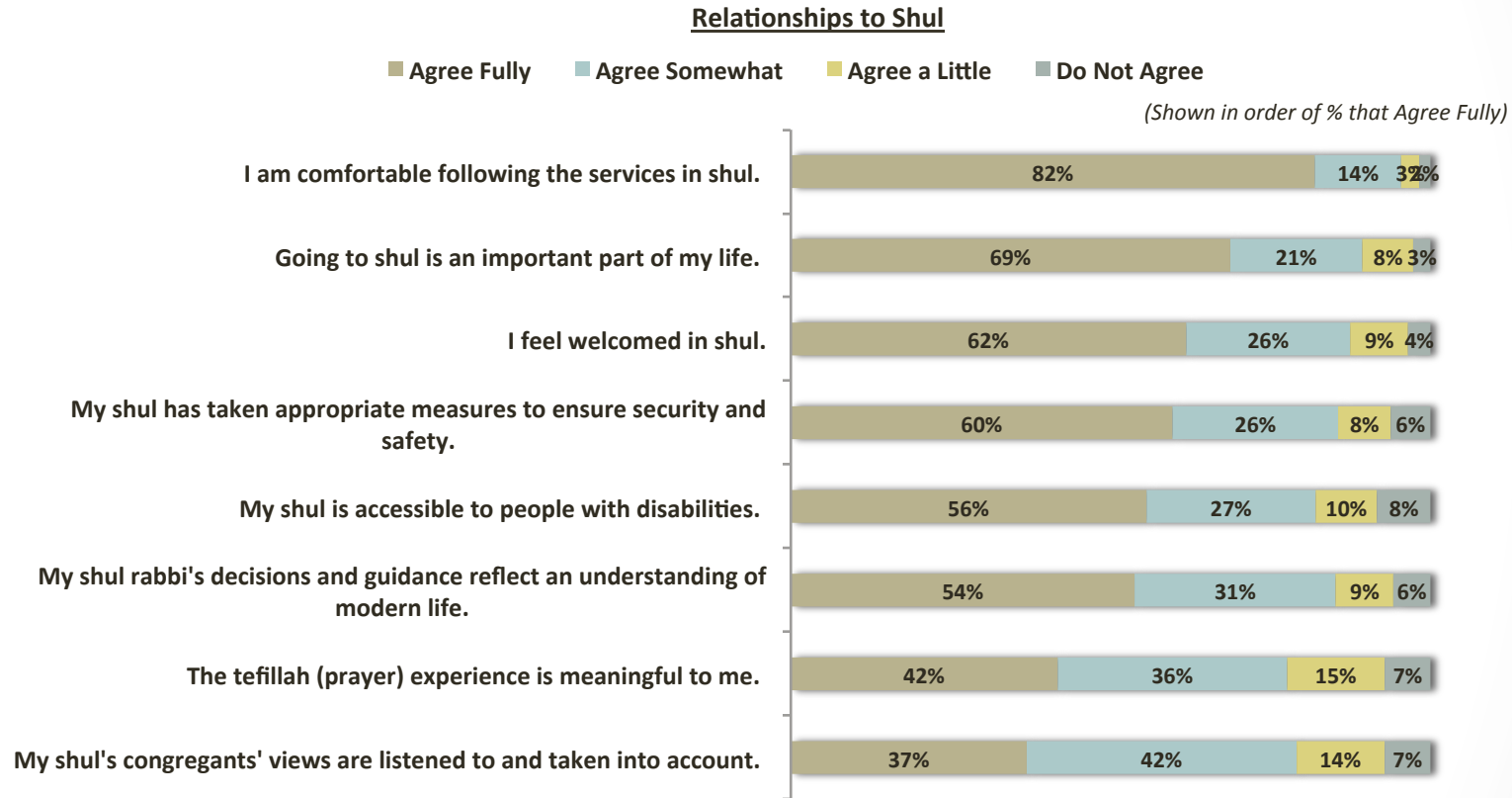


Shul Attendance – By Gender and Age

% that attend shul (always or almost always)	All Men	Men 18-34	Men 35-54	Men 55+	All Women	Women 18-34	Women 35-54	Women 55+
Friday night / erev Yom Tov night	61%	63%	55%	63%	11%	18%	8%	8%
Shabbat / Yom Tov morning	84%	76%	86%	88%	52%	42%	51%	61%
Shabbat / Yom Tov mincha / maariv	54%	52%	49%	59%	9%	9%	6%	10%
Weekday morning	33%	25%	26%	41%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Weekday mincha / maariv	21%	18%	17%	26%	1%	1%	<1%	1%

Q4. How often do you attend services in shul (synagogue)? – Friday night / Erev Yom Tov night; Shabbat / Yom Tov morning; Shabbat / Yom Tov mincha/maariv; Weekday morning; Weekday mincha/maariv [Response Scale: Always or almost always; Often; Sometimes; Seldom or Never]; Total n = 1810 men, 1559 women; Age 18-34 – 268 men, 307 women; Age 35-54 – 507 men, 398 women; Age 55+ - 612 men, 479 women.

How do Modern Orthodox relate to their shul? – Shul is an important part of their lives, and Modern Orthodox Jews feel welcomed and comfortable there. But many agree only somewhat that congregants’ views are listened to and that *tefillah* is meaningful.



Q5-6. [Asked of those who attend Shabbat / Yom Tov morning at least sometimes per Q4] Q5. Do you agree with the following statements about your personal experiences in shul? – Going to shul is an important part of my life.; I feel welcomed in shul.; The *tefillah* (prayer) experience is meaningful to me.; I am comfortable following the services in shul. Q6. Think of the shul that you most often attend. Do you agree with the following statements? – My shul rabbi’s decisions and guidance reflect an understanding of modern life.; My shul’s congregants’ views are listened to and taken into account.; My shul is accessible to people with disabilities.; My shul has taken appropriate measures to ensure security and safety. [Response Scale for Q5 and Q6: Agree fully; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree; Don’t know / Not applicable; Excludes Don’t know / Not applicable]; Average n = 3258.

How Modern Orthodox relate to their shul, by Gender and Age – There are notable variations in how people relate to their shul, for both men and women and across the age groups. Men have more positive feelings toward shul than do women, and those under age 35 generally have less positive attitudes toward their shul.

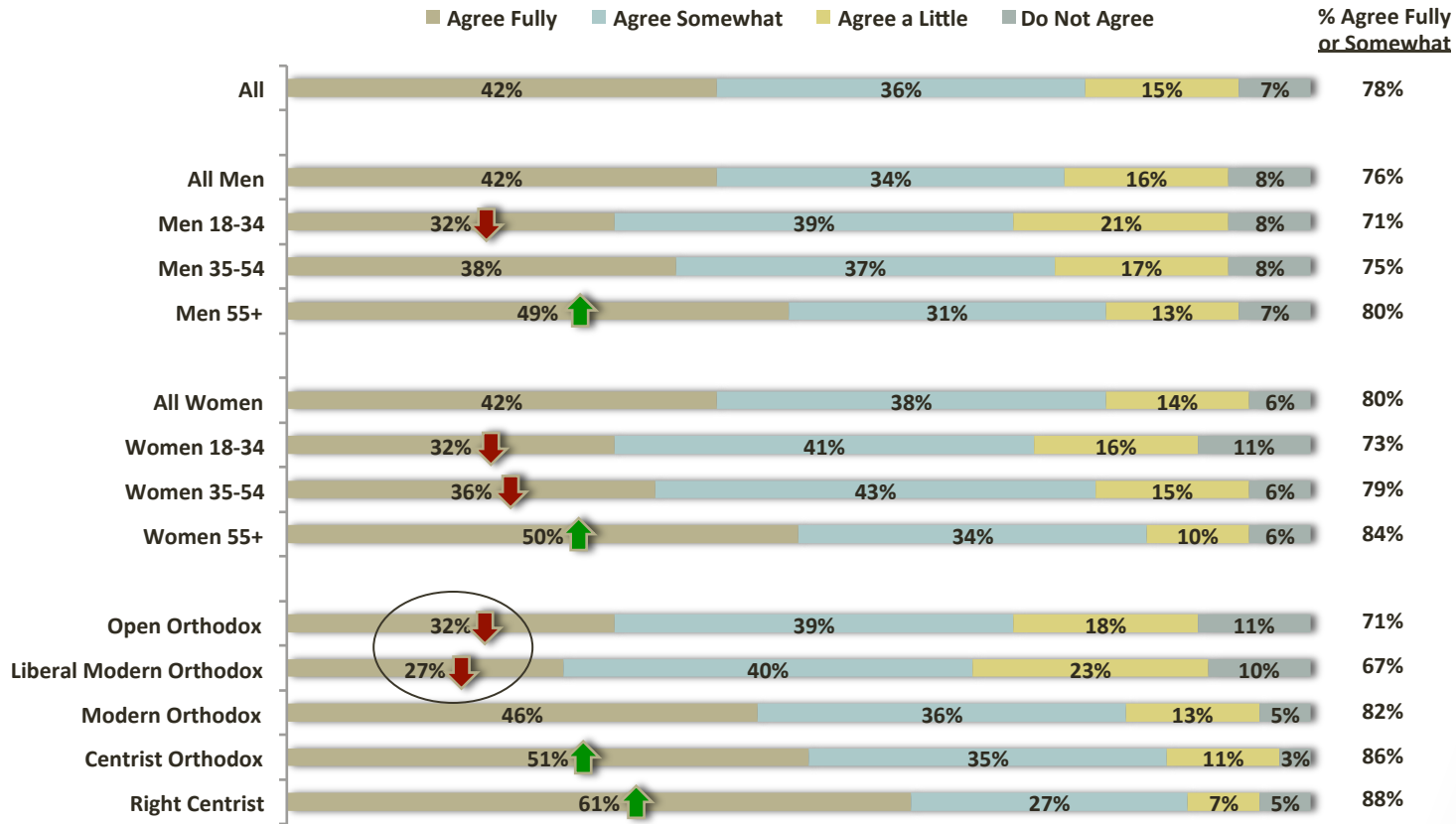
Relationships to Shul – by Gender and Age

<i>% that agree fully</i>	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
I am comfortable following the services in shul.	82%	88% ↑	75%	81%	86% ↑	81%
Going to shul is an important part of my life.	69%	74% ↑	62%	63% ↓	69%	73% ↑
I feel welcomed in shul.	62%	66% ↑	56%	55% ↓	60%	68% ↑
My shul has taken appropriate measures to ensure security and safety.	60%	57%	63% ↑	56% ↓	59%	62%
My shul is accessible to people with disabilities.	56%	58% ↑	53%	44% ↓	55%	62% ↑
My shul rabbi's decisions and guidance reflect an understanding of modern life.	54%	53%	54%	47% ↓	57%	56%
The <i>tefillah</i> (prayer) experience is meaningful to me.	42%	See additional data and analysis on the following page				
My shul's congregants' views are listened to and taken into account.	37%	36%	38%	38%	41% ↑	34%

Q5-6. Average n = All 3258; Men 1730; Women 1500; Age 18-34 – 534; Age 35-54 – 881; Age 55+ - 1123.

The Meaningfulness of Tefillah – While fewer than half (42%) agree fully that tefillah is meaningful to them, most (78%) agree fully or somewhat, with men and women responding similarly. Meaningfulness of tefillah rises as we move “to the right.”

The Meaningfulness of Tefillah

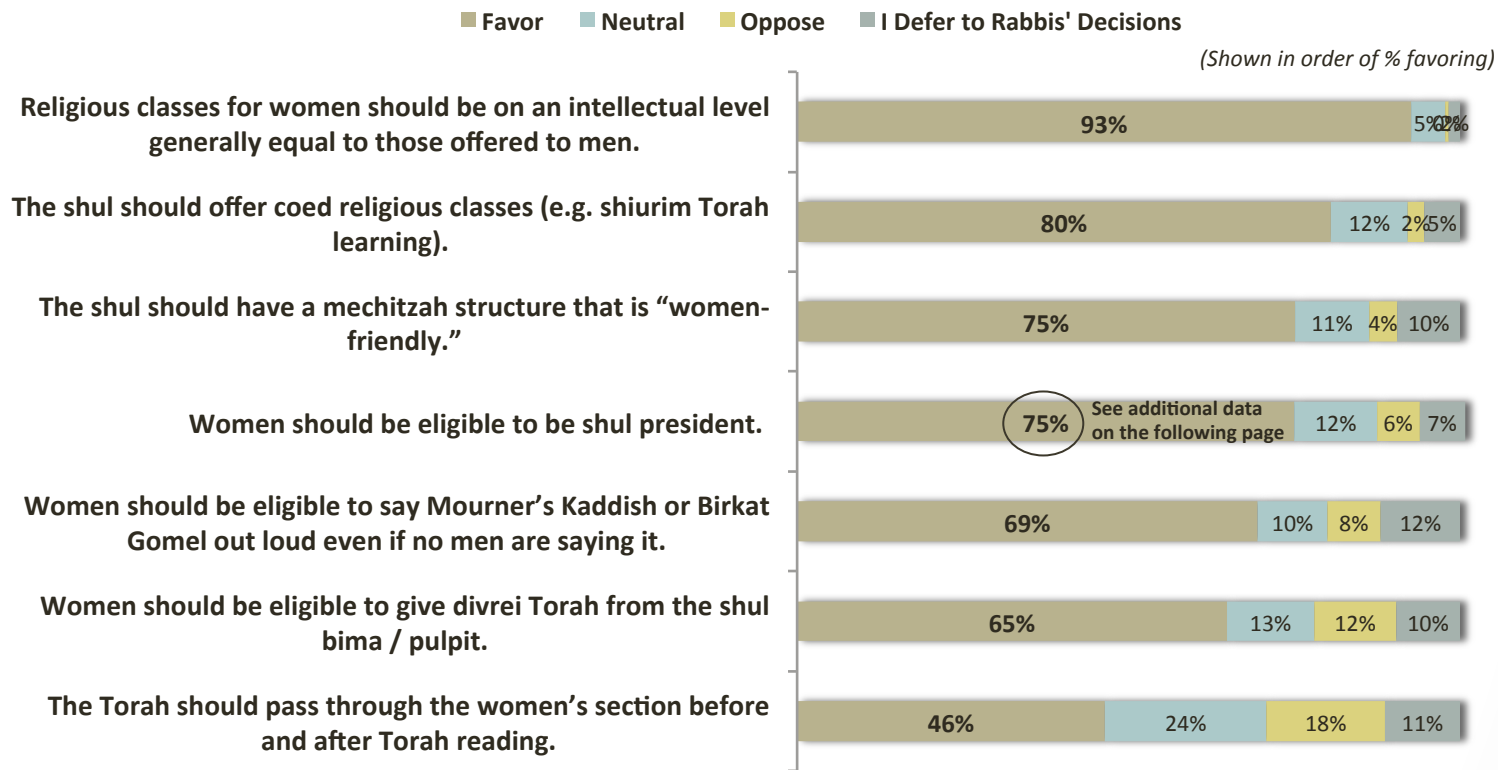


Q5 Item 3. [Asked of those who attend Shabbat / Yom Tov morning at least sometimes per Q4] Do you agree with the following statements about your personal experiences in shul? – The *tefillah* (prayer) experience is meaningful to me. [Response Scale: Agree fully; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree; Don't know / Not applicable; Excludes Don't know / Not applicable; n = 3258; Men – All 1782; Age 18-34 - 263; Age 35-54 – 502; Age 55+ - 611; Women – All 1557; Age 18-34 - 286; Age 35-54 - 389; Age 55+ - 523; Open Orthodox 324; Liberal Modern Orthodox 608; Modern Orthodox 1177; Centrist Orthodox 405; Right Centrist 311.

The Role and Status of Women

How much support is there for shul policies and practices that affect women? – Five of the seven policies and practices listed are supported by more than two-thirds of all respondents; those dealing with religious classes for women are most often supported.

Support for Shul Policies and Practices Affecting Women



Q37. Thinking of the Modern Orthodox / Centrist Orthodox community overall, what are your thoughts on the following? – Women should be eligible to be shul president.; Women should be eligible to give divrei Torah from the shul bima / pulpit.; The Torah should pass through the women’s section before and after Torah reading.; Women should be eligible to say Mourner’s Kaddish or Birkat Gomel out loud, even if no men are saying it.; The shul should have a mechitzah structure that is “women-friendly.”; The shul should offer coed religious classes (e.g., shiurim, Torah learning).; Religious classes for women should be on an intellectual level generally equal to those offered to men. [Response Scale: I favor this; I am neutral on this; I oppose this; I defer to what the rabbis decide; Don’t know or Not applicable; Excludes Don’t know or Not applicable; n = 2526.

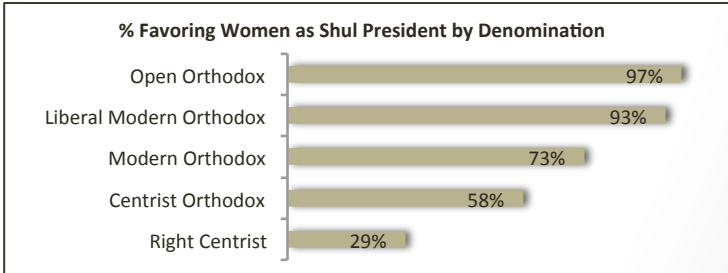
Support for shul policies and practices that affect women, by Gender and Age – The policies and practices posed in the survey are all favored more by women than by men, with the differences all statistically significant. There is strong support across most of Modern Orthodoxy for women to be eligible as shul presidents.

Support for Shul Policies and Practices Affecting Women – by Gender and Age

% that favor	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Religious classes for women should be on an intellectual level generally equal to those offered to men.	93%	91%	94%	94%	92%	94%
The shul should offer coed religious classes (e.g., shiurim, Torah learning).	80%	78%	83%	79%	78%	82%
The shul should have a mechitzah structure that is "women-friendly."	75%	70%	80%	74%	74%	77%
Women should be eligible to be shul president.	75%	70%	79%	79% ↑	75%	73%
Women should be eligible to say Mourner's Kaddish or Birkat Gomel out loud, even if no men are saying it.	69%	64%	76%	71%	68%	71%
Women should be eligible to give divrei Torah from the shul bima / pulpit.	65%	62%	68%	70% ↑	67%	61% ↓
The Torah should pass through the women's section before and after Torah reading.	46%	41%	52%	48%	45%	48%



- Support for women to be eligible to serve as shul presidents has permeated most of Modern Orthodoxy. The exception is the Right Centrist group ... but even there, a not insignificant 29% support this. (Interestingly, 16 of the 29 shul rabbis who responded to the survey favor women presidents.)

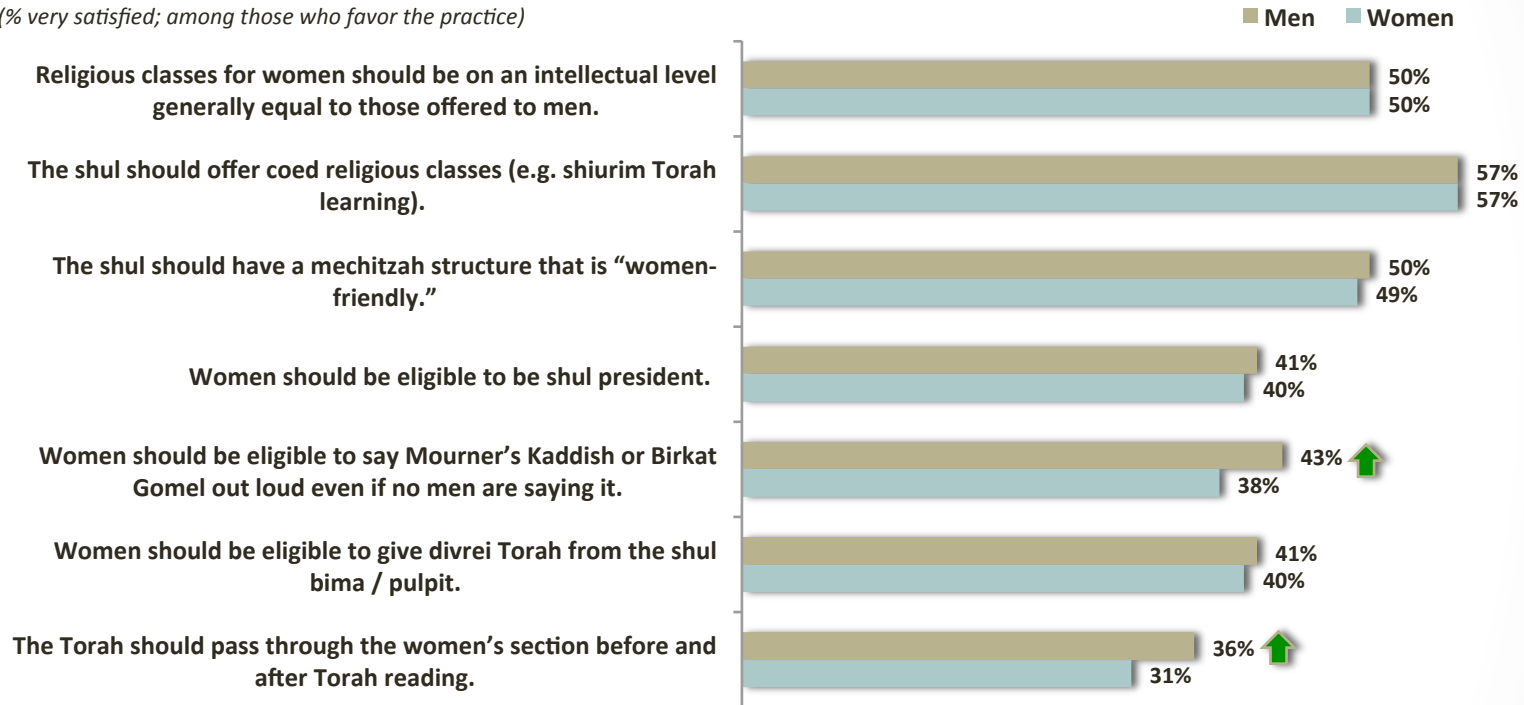


Q37. n = 2526; Men 1551, Women 1412; Age 18-34 - 585; Age 35-54 – 931; Age 55+ - 1187.

How satisfied are people with their shuls' adoption of women-friendly practices? – On average, 45% are satisfied with their shuls' adoption of the policies and practices they support – with little difference in satisfaction between men and women.

Satisfaction With Shuls' Adoptions of Policies and Practices Affecting Women

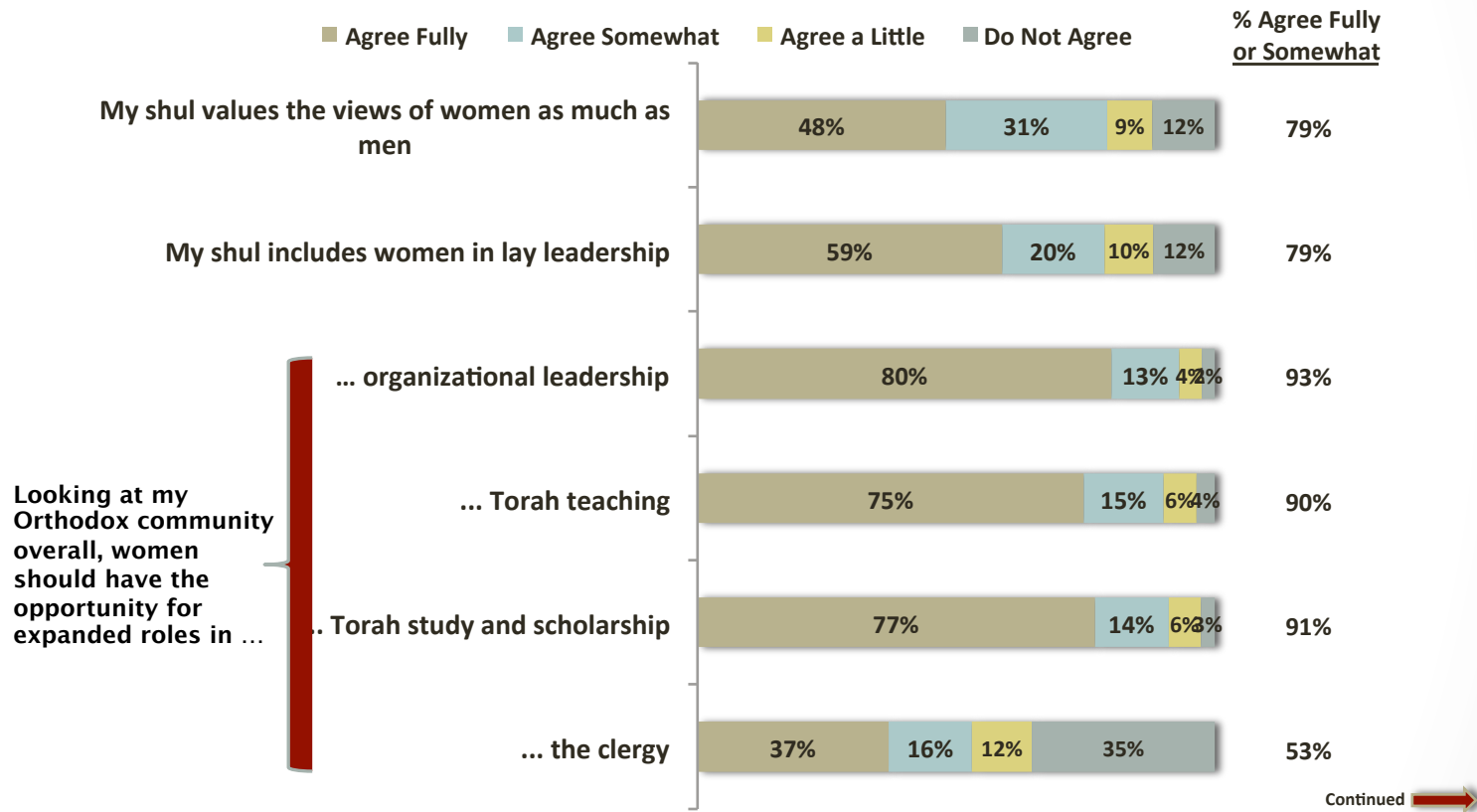
(% very satisfied; among those who favor the practice)



Q38. Thinking of the Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox shuls that you attend or are familiar with, how satisfied are you with their current practices or policies in the following areas? – [The following items were included in this question if the corresponding response in Q37 was "I favor this"] Women serving as shul president.; Women giving divrei Torah from the shul bima / pulpit.; The Torah passing through the women's section.; Women say Mourner's Kaddish or Birkat Gomel out loud, even if no men say it.; A mechitzah structure that is "women-friendly."; Coed religious classes (e.g., shiurim, Torah learning).; Religious classes for women on an intellectual level generally equal to those offered to men. [Response Scale: Very satisfied; Somewhat satisfied; Not satisfied; Don't know] Percentages exclude "Don't know". n varies depending on number favoring each item in Q37; average n = Men 948, Women 981.

What opportunities should women have for roles in their community? – There is strong agreement that women should have expanded opportunities for organizational leadership and Torah teaching and study, and some support of a role in the clergy.

Views on Women’s Opportunities for Expanded Roles in the Community



Q34-35. [Asked of those who attend Shabbat / Yom Tov morning at least sometimes per Q4] Q34. Think of the shul that you most often attend. Do you agree with the following statements about that shul? – My shul values the views of women as much as it values the views of men.; My shul includes women in its lay leadership. Q35. Looking at my Orthodox community overall, women should have the opportunity ... for expanded roles in organizational leadership; ... for expanded roles in Torah teaching; ...for expanded roles in Torah study and scholarship; ... for expanded roles in the clergy. [Response Scale for Q34-35: Agree fully; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree; Don't know]; Excludes Don't know; n = 2919.

Women’s opportunities for expanded roles, by Gender and Age

Views on Women’s Opportunities for Expanded Roles in the Community, by Gender and Age

<i>% that agree fully or somewhat</i>	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
My shul values the views of women as much as it values the views of men.	79%	82% ↑	76%	76% ↓	80%	80%
My shul includes women in its lay leadership.	79%	80% ↑	76%	76% ↓	80%	80%
– organizational leadership.	93%	93%	93%	93%	92%	94%
– Torah teaching.	90%	88%	92% ↑	90%	91%	90%
– Torah study and scholarship.	91%	90%	93% ↑	92%	91%	92%
– the clergy.	53%	→ See additional data and analysis in the next section				

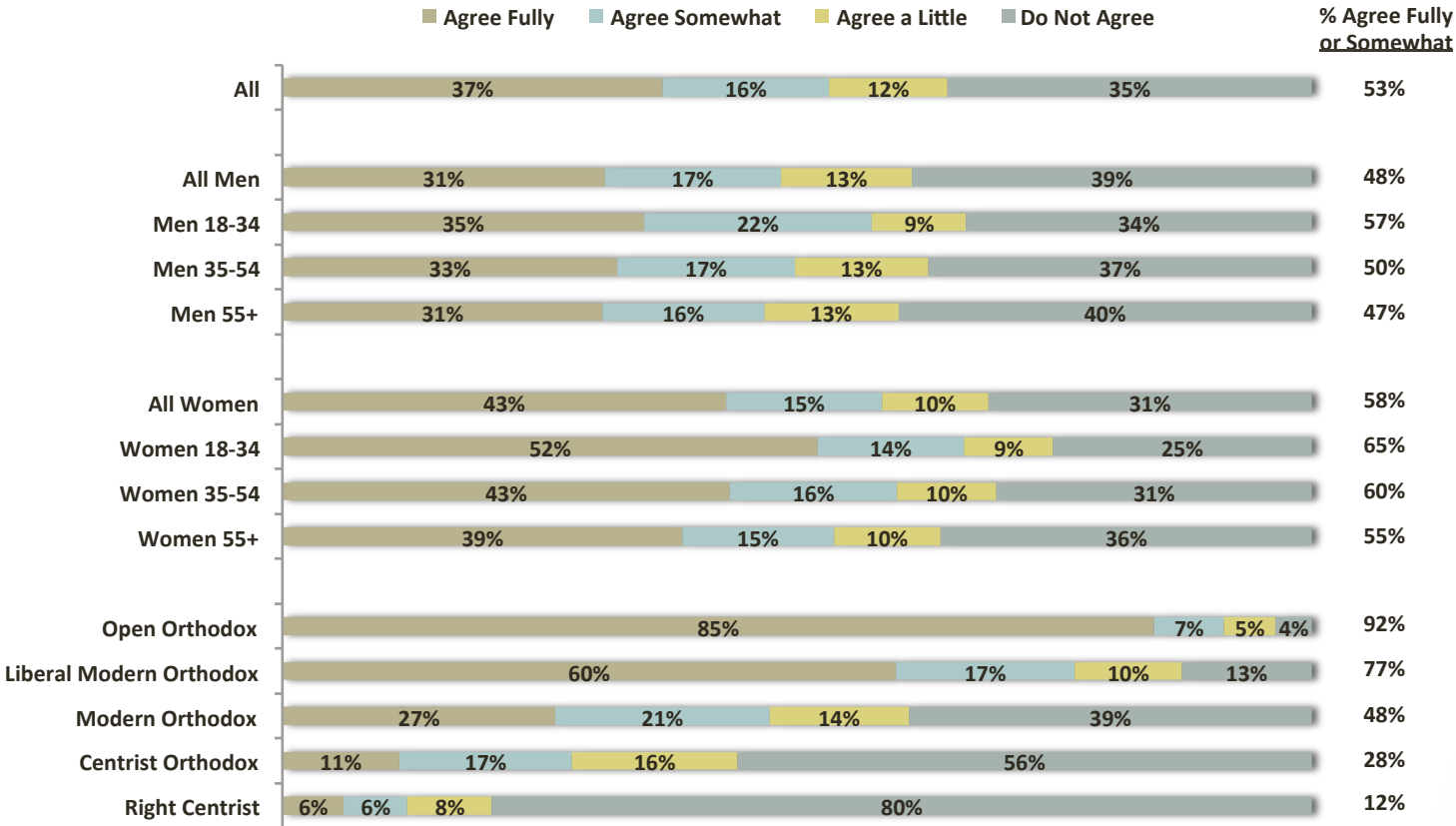
Looking at my Orthodox community overall, women should have the opportunity for expanded roles in ...

Q34-35. n = 2919; Men 1542, Women 1379; Age 18-34 - 585; Age 35-54 – 931; Age 55+ - 1187.

Views on Expanded Women's Roles in the Clergy ... and What About Women "Rabbis"?

Should women have expanded roles in the clergy? – Overall, slightly more than half (53%) agree fully or somewhat. Support is higher among women than men (58% vs. 48%), and higher among the young (ages 18-34). Support tracks very strongly with the liberal bend of the denominations.

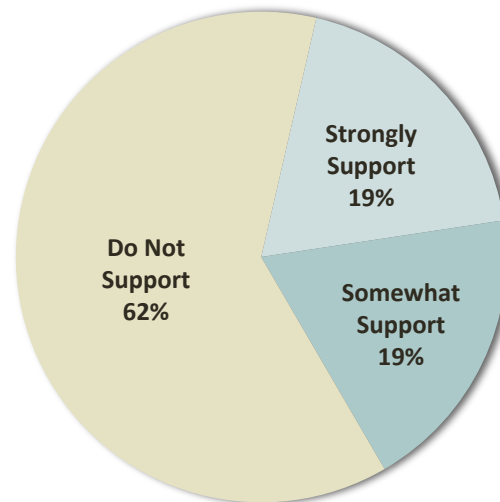
Views on Women Having Opportunities for Expanded Roles in the Clergy



Q35. [Asked of those who attend Shabbat / Yom Tov morning at least sometimes per Q4] Looking at my Orthodox community overall, women should have the opportunity ... for expanded roles in the clergy. [Response Scale: Agree fully; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree; Don't know]; Excludes Don't know; n = 2936; All Men 1538, Men 18-34 – 262; Men 35-54 – 510; Men 55+ - 630; All Women 1371; Women 18-34 - 302; Women 35-54 - 405; Women 55+ - 530; Open Orthodox 339; Liberal Modern Orthodox 604; Modern Orthodox 1097; Centrist Orthodox 387; Right Centrist 305.

How much support is there for women with expanded roles in the clergy and a title signifying their “rabbinic authority”? – Overall, 19% strongly support this, another 19% somewhat support this, and 62% do not support this.

Support for women having opportunities for expanded roles in the clergy and some sort of title signifying their “rabbinic authority” *



- There are wide variations in the level of support, by gender, age and denominations. Continued →

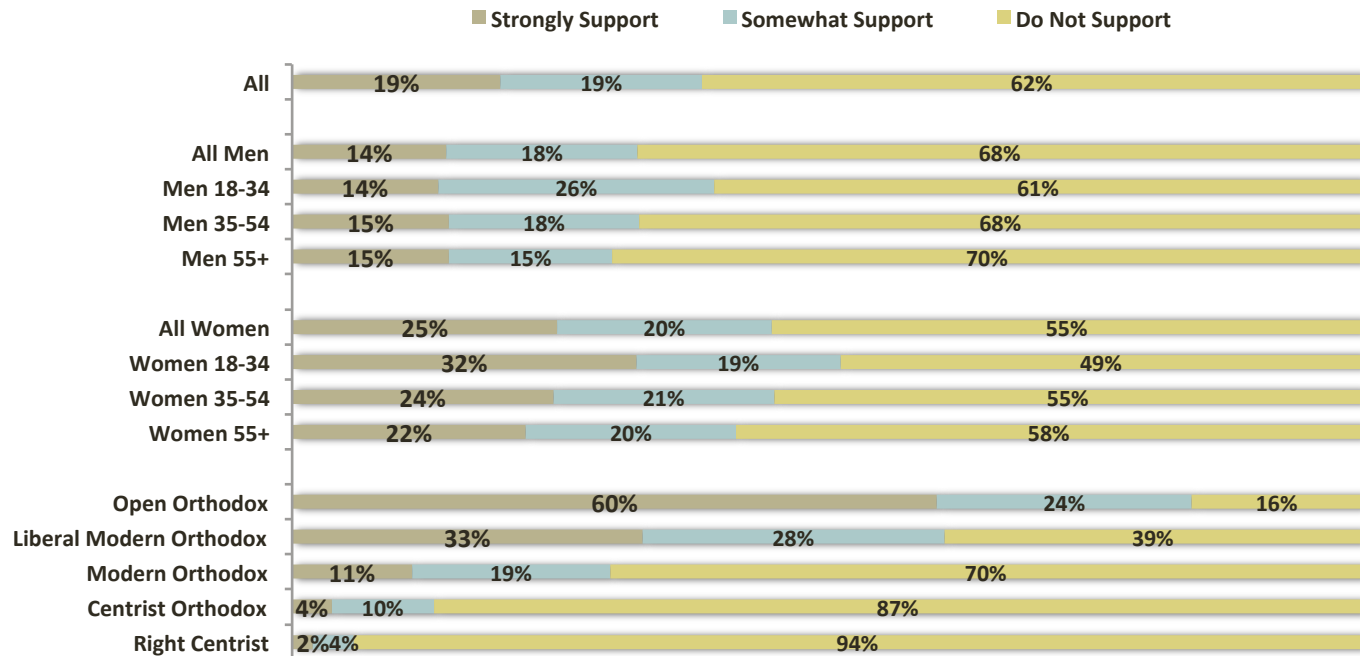
* **Terminology:** The term “rabbi” was not used in the survey; we asked whether women should “also be given some sort of title signifying their ‘rabbinic authority.’”

How Levels of Support Were Defined: Strongly Support = % agreeing fully that women should have the opportunity for expanded roles in the clergy and rating it as very important that they have a title signifying rabbinic authority. Somewhat Support = % agreeing fully or somewhat that women should have the opportunity for expanded roles in the clergy and rating it as very or somewhat important that they have a title signifying “rabbinic authority” (net of those strongly supporting). Do Not Support = All others.

Q36. [Asked of those who agreed (to a great extent, agree somewhat or agree a little) that women should have the opportunity for expanded roles in the clergy per Q35] – If Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox women are given expanded roles in the clergy, how important is it to you that they also be given some sort of title signifying their “rabbinic authority”? – Very important; Somewhat important; Not too important; Not at all important; Don’t know. The base n for all percentages in the table above is all who responded to Q35, including those who responded Don’t know; n = 3048. n for subgroups shown on the next page: All Men 1585, Men 18-34 – 271; Men 35-54 – 524; Men 55+ - 648; All Women 1436; Women 18-34 - 314; Women 35-54 - 426; Women 55+ - 554; Open Orthodox 340; Liberal Modern Orthodox 620; Modern Orthodox 1151; Centrist Orthodox 407; Right Centrist 314.

How strong and widespread is the support for women with expanded roles in the clergy and titles signifying “rabbinic authority”? – Overall, 19% strongly support this – more women (25%) than men (14%) – with sharp differences across denominations: this is the issue that most divides the left (strongly supportive) from the right (strongly opposed).

Support for women having a role in the clergy with a title signifying “rabbinic authority” *



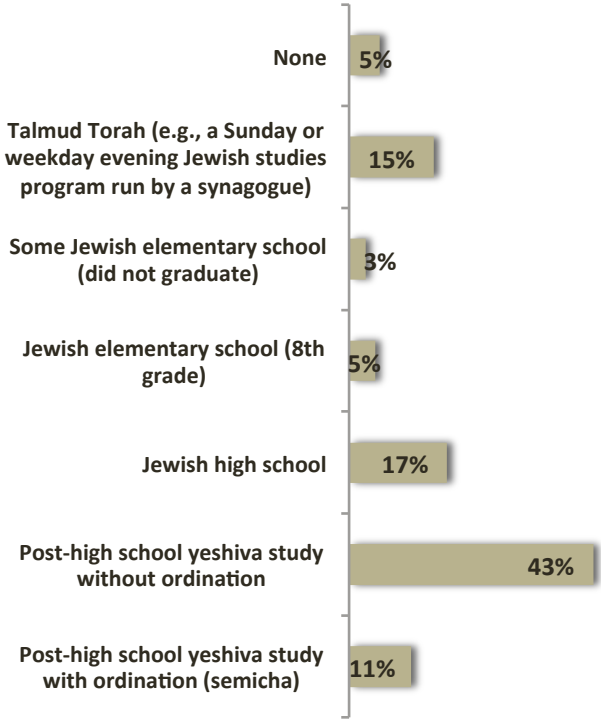
Huge Differences Between “Left and Right”

	Open Orthodox	vs.	The Rest of Modern Orthodoxy	Open Orthodox & Liberal Modern Orthodox	vs.	The Rest of Modern Orthodoxy
% Strongly Support	60%		14%	42%		8%

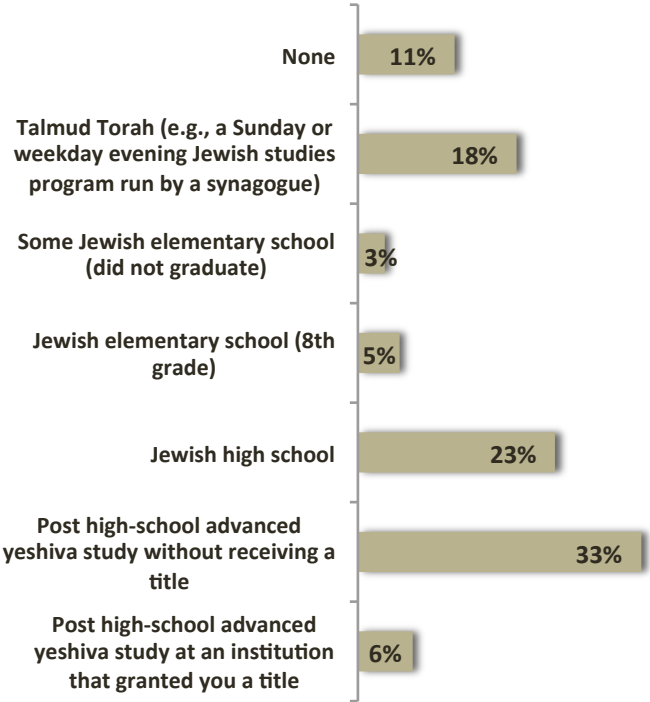
Jewish Study and Learning

What are Modern Orthodox Jews’ religious educational backgrounds? – They tend to have solid Jewish educational backgrounds. 47% have had post-high school yeshiva and/or advanced study (54% of men and 39% of women).

Men’s Jewish Educational Backgrounds



Women’s Jewish Educational Backgrounds

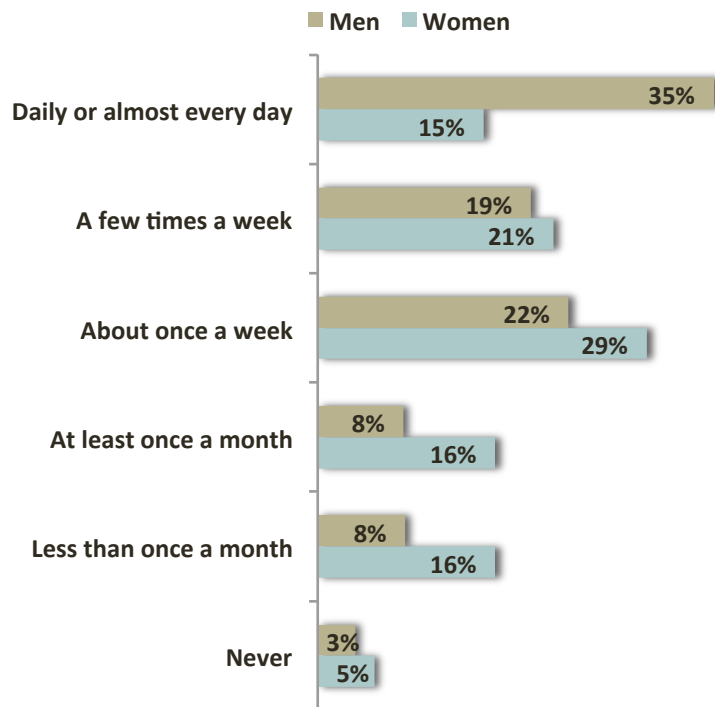


- Younger generations have significantly stronger Jewish educational backgrounds: 68% of those ages 18-34 have had post-high school yeshiva and/or advanced study, compared to 54% of those ages 35-54, and 30% for ages 55+.

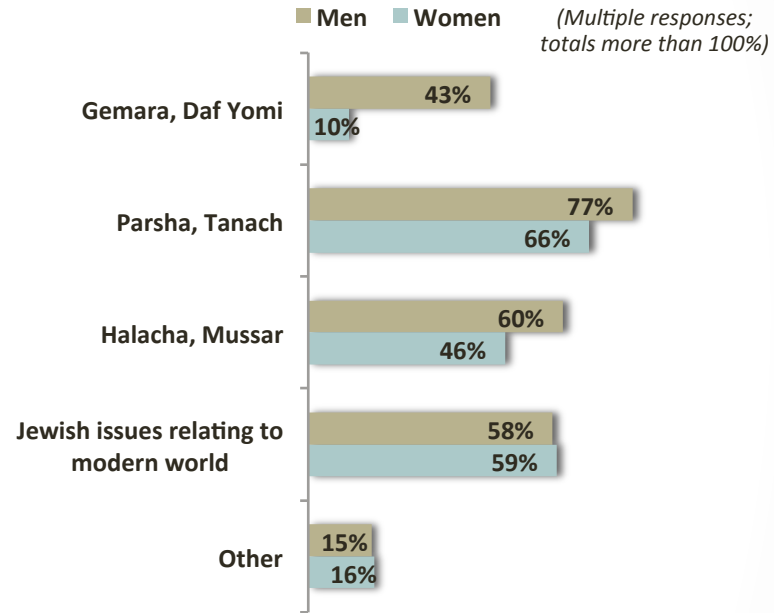
Q7. What is the highest level of formal Jewish studies you have completed? – None; Talmud Torah (e.g., a Sunday or weekday evening Jewish studies program run by a synagogue); Some Jewish elementary school (did not graduate); Jewish elementary school (8th grade); Jewish high school; {asked of males} Post-high school yeshiva study without ordination; {asked of males} Post-high school yeshiva study with ordination (semicha); [Asked of females] Post high-school advanced yeshiva study without receiving a title; [Asked of females] Post high-school advanced yeshiva study at an institution that granted you a title; n = 3465; Men 1807, Women 1673; Age 18-34 - 595; Age 35-54 - 951; Age 55+ - 1194.

How much do Modern Orthodox engage in Jewish study and learning? – 96% engage in the regular study of Jewish topics (97% of men, who tend to do so a few times each week, and 95% of women, who tend to do so about once a week). Men more often learn *gemara*, while the other topics are often learned by both men and women.

How Often People Study Jewish Topics



What Topics Are Studied



- Among other topics, those most often mentioned are Jewish history (1%), Jewish philosophy (1%), mishna (0.5%), chassidut (0.3%) and kaballah (0.3%).

Q8. How often, on average, would you estimate you've engaged in the study of Jewish topics over the past three months? – Daily or almost every day; A few times a week; About once a week; At least once a month; Less than once a month; Never; n = Men 1811, Women 1639.

Q9. [Asked of those who engaged in at least some study of Jewish topics in the past three months per Q8] Please check the Jewish topics you've studied during the past three months. Please check all that apply. – Gemara Classes, Daf Yomi; Parsha (Torah Portion), Navi, Tanach; Halacha (Jewish law), mussar (moral conduct); Jewish issues relating to the modern world (such as science, business, etc.); Other – Please describe (Open-Ended, n=500); None of the above; Percentages exclude "None of the above"; n = Men 1751, Women 1558.

What other Jewish study topics are of interest? – A sample of the responses

- Sensitivity toward shul and davening.
- Understanding that Judaism is incompatible with homophobia, Islamophobia, and all the other hatreds that so many Jews have.
- Beginner levels. Every synagogue assumes all are familiar and know all topics. Introducing basics is important for all to follow.
- Beginner Ulpan.
- Mishmar for women on Thursday nights.
- Chillul Hashem, business ethics, actual halachos of tznius (not chumros).
- Classes in learning davening for the Amud.
- Classes on how to pray, follow the Siddur. Talmud classes for women.
- Moral challenges that leaders and lay people face in the community
- Ethics and halachah as it pertains to modern life.
- The historical context of biblical and Talmudic development.
- Explanation of the prayers. Shul etiquette.
- How to afford being Orthodox.
- How to educate teachers ... to instill a love of Judaism in teenagers.
- How to engage with non-orthodox Jews in a way that is respectful to them and makes them more respectful to those who are orthodox.
- How to stay halachically sound but live in the modern world.
- A formal program of structured stepwise learning for the adult Baal teshuvah with limited or no formal learning background.
- More lectures from women. It's nice and refreshing to allow women to speak freely about topics that effect women and their daily lives.
- Training for all Rabbis and teachers in Yeshiva day schools in how to resolve seeming contradictions between science and religion and comparative religion. These are topics that many high school kids bring up and they need to be addressed.
- Practical halakha, particularly around women's issues. As a convert, I need to review a lot and do learning about everyday things.
- Modern views of the world. Gay marriage in terms of halacha as well as what seems most humane? Where do women fit into leadership?
- Jewish History.
- Jewish Meditation.
- Judaism and Science reconciliation in the modern world.
- Learning about sex and how we can adapt technology to our lives and still be observant Jews.
- Lectures on women's issues, Israel and current events,
- Integrating Judaism with the modern world. Not constantly portraying the non-Jewish world and secular knowledge as something that is only negative and to be avoided at all costs..
- More Tanach, less emphasis on gemara
- Explanations on Holidays and their meanings and practices
- More learning opportunities for teenagers.
- Modern academic tools in the study of Tanach and rabbinic sources
- Talks on being accepting and welcoming of transgender Jews.
- Mussar, Jewish Meditation, how to achieve Kavannah. How to really change? Moving away from 100% focus on the rational.
- Programs for Baby Boomers who are retiring soon and never had the opportunity to spend the ... year in Israel after high school.
- Programs related to new families/ young children.
- Progressive topics like female rabbis.
- Seriously dealing with Biblical criticism and other questions that challenge the standard Orthodox viewpoint.
- Parts of the Tanach that are not often studied.

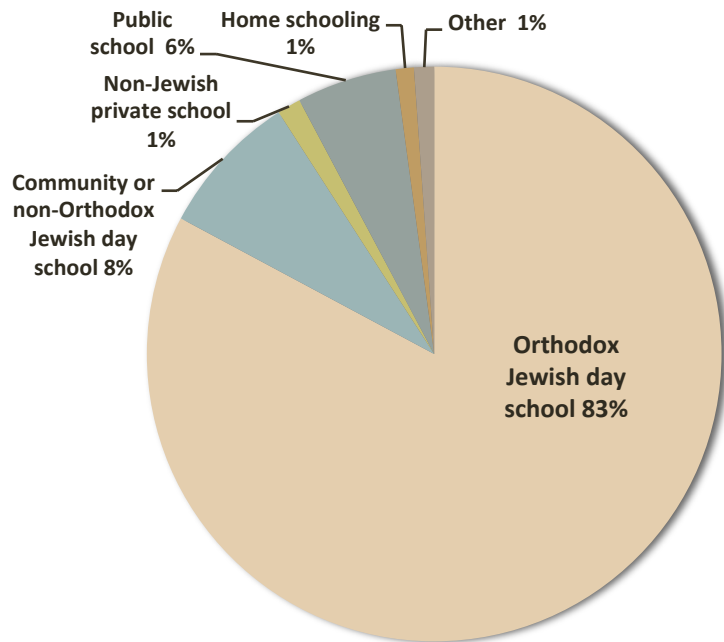
Many hundreds of extremely diverse comments were received. The responses to Q9 (see the preceding page) and Q10 are contained in the document "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" which is available to read or download at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>. We recommend readers peruse this document to get a flavor of the breadth of views.

Q10. Is there anything new or different you'd like to see available to you in areas of Jewish study (topics, programs, speakers, learning opportunities, etc.)? (Open-Ended); n = 476.

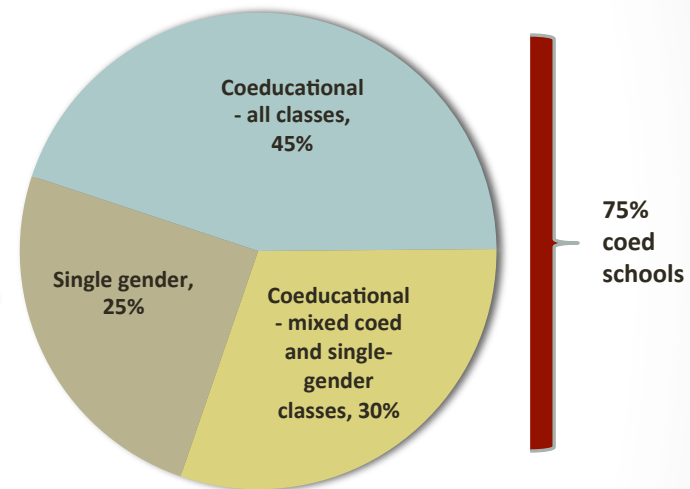
Assessment of Children's Schools and Education

What types of schools do Modern Orthodox children attend? – 83% of children in grades 1-12 attend an Orthodox Jewish day school, 75% of which are coeducational (82% for grades 1-8 and 70% for grades 9-12).

Type of Schools That Children Attend



Orthodox Jewish Day Schools Coeducational vs. Single Gender



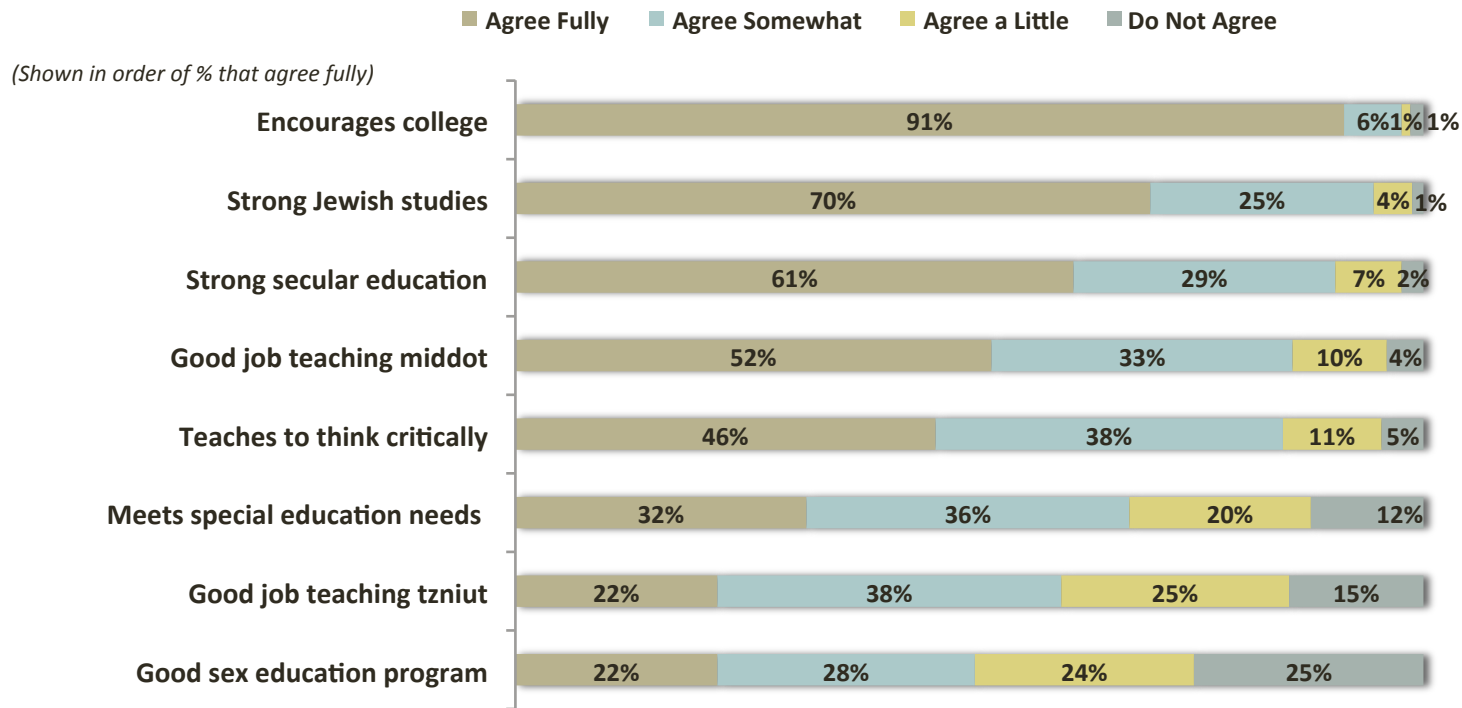
Q13. [Asked of those who have one or more children per Q12] Are any of your children in grades 1 to 12 (the just-completed school year)? – Yes; No; n = 2633.

Q14. [Asked of those who have one or more children in grades 1-12 per Q13] Thinking of your oldest child in grade 1-12 (the just-completed school year), what kind of school did that child attend? – Orthodox Jewish day school; Community or non-Orthodox Jewish day school; Non-Jewish private school; Public school; Home schooling; Other – Please describe (Open-Ended, n=11); n = 978.

Q15-17. [Asked of those who have one or more children in grades 1-12 in an Orthodox Jewish day school per Q14] Q15. Please indicate the grade that child has just completed. – [Drop-down menu ranging from 1 to 12]; Q16. Please indicate the gender of that child. – Boy; Girl (n = 614); Q17. Still thinking of your oldest child who just completed grade 1-12, please describe the gender environment of that child’s school. - It is a single gender school.; It is a coeducational school; and all of my child’s classes are coeducational.; It is a coeducational school; my child is in some coeducational classes and some single-gender classes.; n = 786.

How good a job do Orthodox Jewish day schools do? – Jewish studies are seen as stronger than secular studies (70% fully agree that Jewish programs are strong vs. 61% for secular studies). Fewer agree that the schools do a good job teaching *middot* (52%), *tzniut* (22%) or sex education (22%).

Rating the Performance of Orthodox Jewish Day Schools



Q18. [Asked of those who have one or more children in grades 1-12 in an Orthodox Jewish day school per Q14] Do you agree with the following statements relating to that child's school? – The school provides a strong Jewish studies education.; The school provides a strong secular education.; The school teaches children how to think critically.; The school does a good job in teaching children middot (positive behaviors).; The school meets students' special education needs.; (asked if grade ≥ 11) The school encourages students to continue on to college.; (asked if grade ≥ 9) The school provides a good sex education program.; (asked if grade ≥ 7) The school does a good job in teaching tzniut (laws of modesty). [Response Scale: Agree fully; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree; Don't know or Not applicable]. (Excludes Don't know or Not applicable); n = 205, 781, 789, 784, 772, 565, 464, 261, respectively (varies because some items were directed to parents of students in higher grades).

Are there differences by child's gender? By grade level? – Parents of boys and parents of girls rate schools similarly, although high schools are rated better for secular education, teaching critical thinking and special education. Parents rate fully coed schools best overall, while single gender schools are rated best for Jewish studies and teaching tzniut.

Rating the Performance of Orthodox Jewish Day Schools – by Student Gender, Grade and Coeducational Status

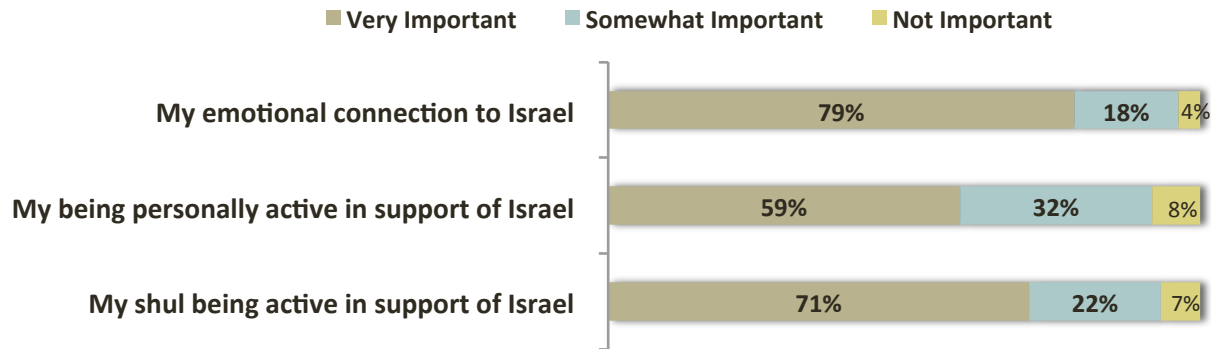
<i>% that agree fully</i>	All	Boys	Girls	Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12	All Coed	Mixed Coed	Single Gender
Encourages college	91%	90%	92%	Not Asked	91%	96%	96%	82% ↓
Strong Jewish studies	70%	70%	69%	70%	69%	72%	60% ↓	79% ↑
Strong secular education	61%	63%	60%	57%	66% ↑	73% ↑	50% ↓	55% ↓
Good job teaching middot	52%	53%	52%	54%	51%	58% ↑	49%	49%
Teaches to think critically	46%	45%	48%	41%	52% ↑	59% ↑	34% ↓	39% ↓
Meets special education needs	32%	34%	31%	27%	38% ↑	39% ↑	20% ↓	37% ↑
Good job teaching tzniut	22%	25%	19%	24%	22%	17%	16% ↓	38% ↑
Good sex education program	22%	21%	23%	Not Asked	22%	33% ↑	13% ↓	13% ↓

Q18. Average n = All 578; Boys 298; Girls 280; Grades 1-8 - 299; Grades 9-12 – 279; All Coed 259; Mixed Coed 176; Single Gender 143.

Israel Connection and Advocacy

How strong is the connection to Israel? – Modern Orthodox Jews rate as very important their emotional connection to Israel, their personal support and their shul’s support of Israel. Both connection and support decline substantially among younger respondents, and both are rated highest in the center of the denominational spectrum, and lower at both the left and right ends.

Strength of Connections to Israel



Strength of the Connections to Israel – by Gender, Age and Denominations

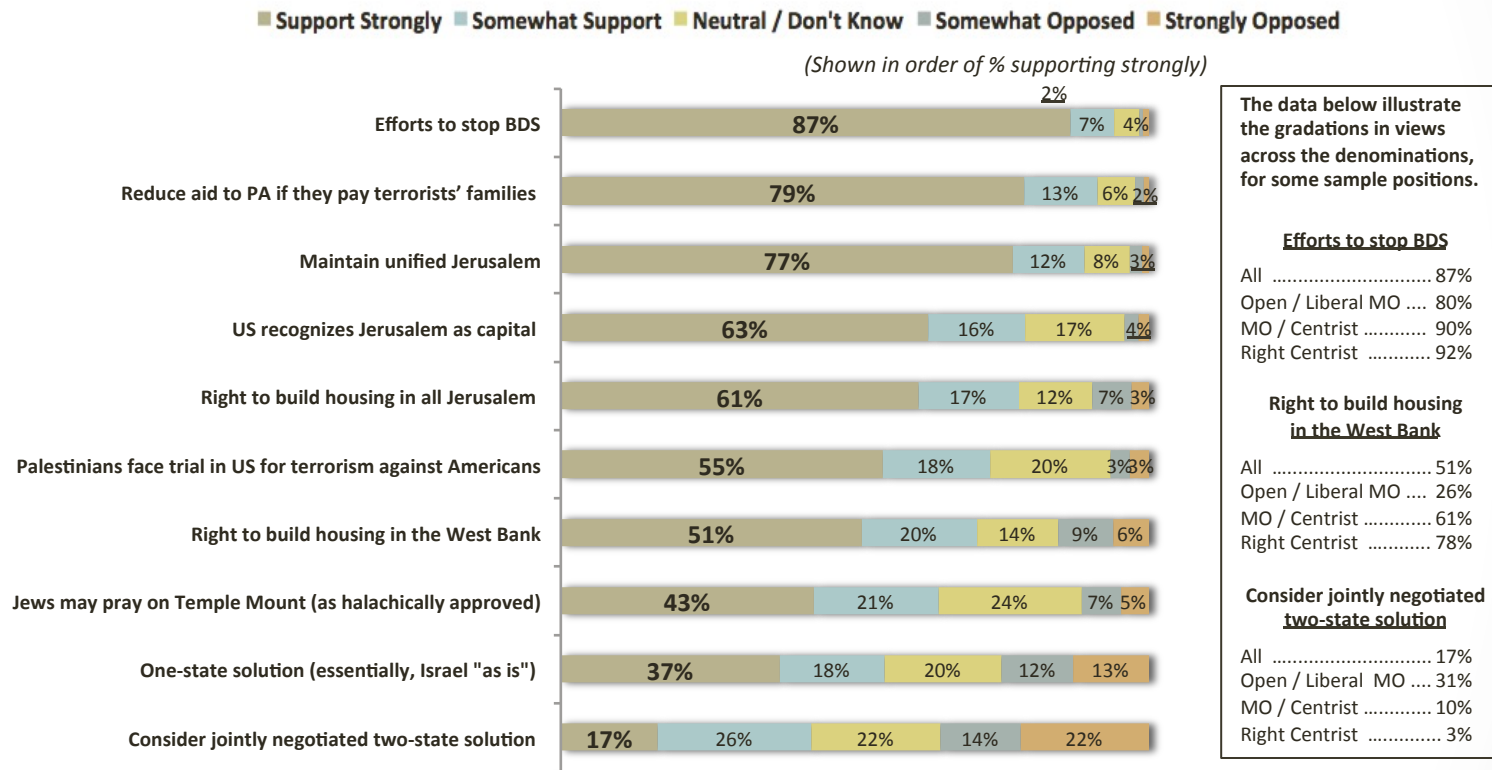
% rating very important	All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	Open / Liberal MO*	MO / Centrist *	Right Centrist
My emotional connection to Israel.	79%	80%	78%	65%	76%	87%	74%	82% ↑	78%
My being personally active in support of Israel.	59%	60%	59%	43%	57%	71%	54%	65% ↑	55%

Q24. How important are each of the following to you? – My emotional connection to Israel; My being personally active in support of Israel; My shul being active in support of Israel [Response Scale: Very important; Somewhat important; Not important; Average n = All 3147; Men 1640, Women 1479; Age 18-34 - 535; Age 35-54 – 948; Age 55+ - 1199; Open Orthodox and Liberal Modern Orthodox 1016; Modern Orthodox and Centrist Orthodox 1639; Right Centrist 333.

* The grouped denominations shown above and on the next page had similar results.

What are the views relating to Israel advocacy? – Modern Orthodox support an array of what are generally viewed as “pro-Israel advocacy initiatives,” although, not surprisingly, positions vary substantially across the denominations.

Support for Various Israel Advocacy Positions

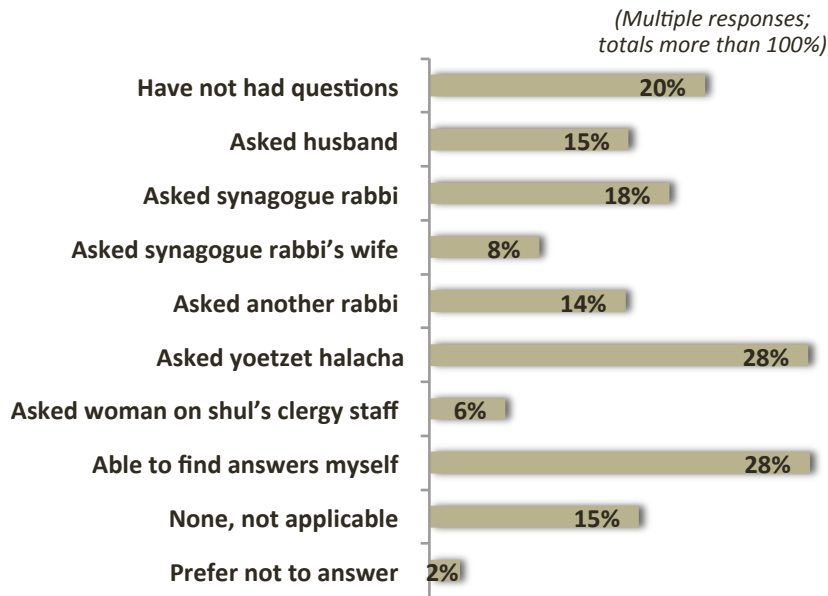


Q25. Do you support the following issues or initiatives relating to Israel? – Advocating for a one-state solution (essentially, Israel “as is”); Consideration of a future jointly negotiated two-state solution; Maintaining a unified Jerusalem as part of Israel; Israel’s right to build housing in the West Bank / Judea and Samaria; Israel’s right to build housing anywhere in Jerusalem; U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital; Efforts to stop the BDS (boycott, divest, sanction) movement; Bringing Palestinian terrorists who injure or kill Americans to the US to face trial; Legislation to reduce aid to the Palestinian Authority if they make payments to terrorists’ families; Extending to Jews, who choose to do so in a Halachically approved manner, the right to pray on the Temple Mount [Response Scale: Strongly support; Somewhat support; Neutral; Somewhat opposed; Strongly opposed; Don’t know; Percentages shown as underlined, e.g., 2%, signify a combined percentage for the two right-most bar segments; n = All 3110; Open Orthodox and Liberal Modern Orthodox 1005; Modern Orthodox and Centrist Orthodox 1617; Right Centrist 329.

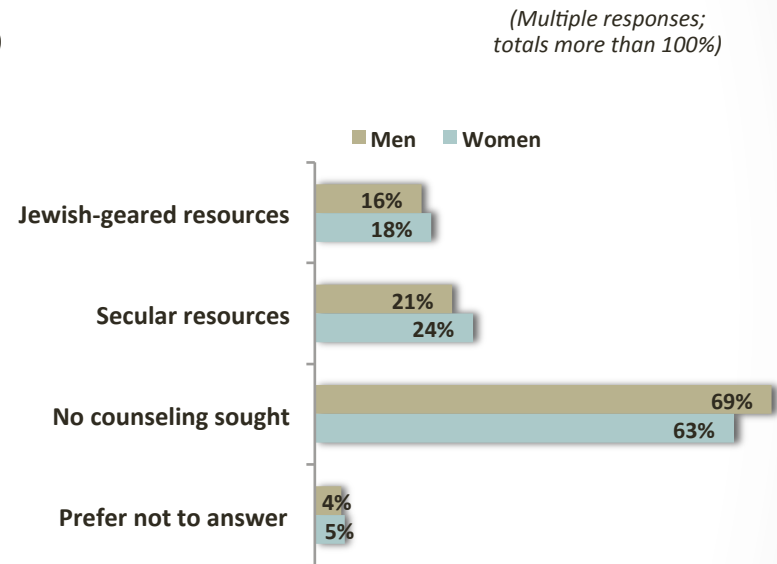
Views and Attitudes Relating to Sexuality

Where do Modern Orthodox get answers on sexuality? – Women with questions on *taharat ha'mishpacha* most often find answers themselves (28%) or ask a *yoetzet halacha* (28%). About 30% of men and 35% of women have sought sex education counseling, more often drawing upon secular resources than Jewish-g geared resources.

**Where Women Go for Answers
to Questions on *Taharat Ha'Mishpacha***



**Utilization of Sex Education
Counseling or Information**

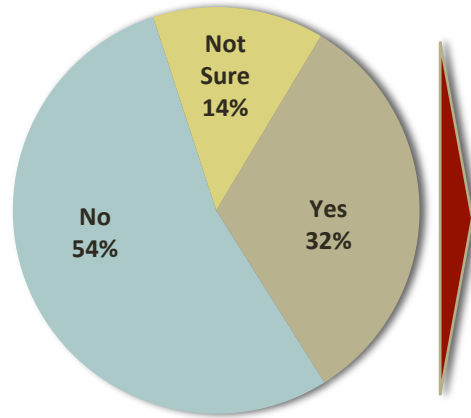


Q29. [Asked of females at least somewhat observant of Taharat Ha'mishpacha per Q20] On issues of taharat ha'mishpacha (laws of family purity, mikveh, etc.), have you used any of the following resources in the past 3 years to answer your questions? If so, please check all that apply. – I have not had questions I asked my husband; I asked our synagogue rabbi; I asked our synagogue rabbi's wife; I asked another rabbi; I asked a yoetzet halacha (a woman certified as an advisor to women with questions on this topic); I asked a woman who has a position on the shul's clergy staff; I was able to find answers myself; None of the above, not applicable; I prefer not to answer; n = 805.

Q30. Have you ever used any sex education counseling or information resources? Please check all that apply. – Yes, Jewish-g geared resources; Yes, secular (not Jewish-g geared) resources; No; I prefer not to answer; n = Men 1628; Women 1465.

Have attitudes on sexuality changed? – One-third say their attitudes have changed, most often citing more acceptance of gays (34%), more openness in general (33%), more knowledge and experience (24%), acceptance of one’s own sexuality (11%) and more traditional and *halachic* attitudes (9%).

Have Attitudes Toward Sexuality Changed?



How Have Attitudes Changed? – A Sample of the Responses

- Recognizing that sexual preferences and gender identity in many cases is truly 'nature' vs. 'nurture.' Culturally, as a Klal, there are difficult discussions to be had to acknowledge the times we live in.
- Advocate for acceptance of LGBT Jews who wish to remain in the modern orthodox community.
- I have recognized that sexuality is fluid and exists on a spectrum of sorts.
- As an 30 year old single in the Jewish community I look back on the way shomer negiah was taught and enforced in my community with a mix of horror and shame. We do not cultivate healthy conversations around sexuality and the expressions thereof in general and especially not for those who are single.
- As I have become an observant Jew, I've increasingly incorporated laws and values of tzniut into my personal conduct, eventually becoming shomer negiah (with a couple of lapses).
- Believe that homosexuality as committed to marriage, family, children should be reclassified and treated positively. This includes same sex marriage. Believe that the halachah should approach sexuality and expression of love more favorably, warmly, more expressively.
- Became more religious recently, have developed a slightly more traditional view of sexuality recently.
- From an opinion very critical of gay Jews who identify as Orthodox to one of understanding that there is little

choice in sexuality and most would chose to be heterosexual if possible. Would like to see them accepted in shuls, but must appreciate it is still deeply complicated.

- Halakhah and shomer negiah were not designed for singles in their thirties. Developing an ethical approach to intimate physical activity outside the scope of halakhah is an important part of my adulthood.
- I agree with Torah. I have gay and lesbian friends. That being said, I believe they are entitled to a civil union, but marriage is a holy act between a man and woman.
- I am less accepting of demonstrative sexuality and advocate greater privatization of sexual expression.
- I am very accepting of any Jew as long as they are ethical and a mensh.
- I feel that the harchakot laws are extremely outdated and could create harm to marriages as they first start out. It took a couple years until my husband calmed down and we were able to find a balance that worked for us and didn't make me feel subordinate.
- I have a better understanding of homosexuality, but I still believe that it is against Jewish law.
- I have become very concerned that we are too modest in our discussions of sexuality.
- sexuality is an important part of human experience ... Orthodox Jews need to become more comfortable in discussing this from earlier ages with our kids.

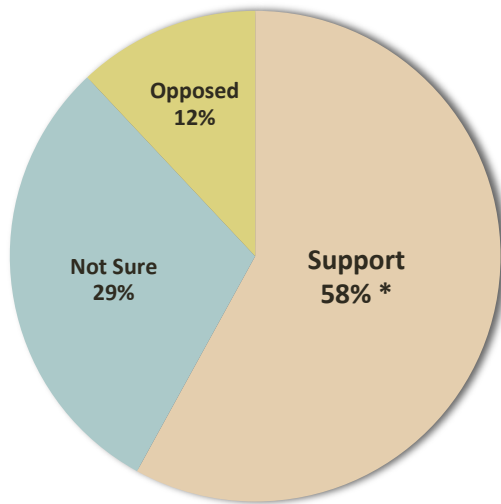
Many hundreds of extremely diverse comments were received. A large sample of the responses to this question are contained in the document "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" which is available to read or download at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>. We recommend readers peruse this document to get a flavor of the breadth of views.

Q31. Have your attitudes toward sexuality changed over the past few years, in terms of your knowledge, personal expectations, etc.? – Yes; No; Not sure; n= 3066.

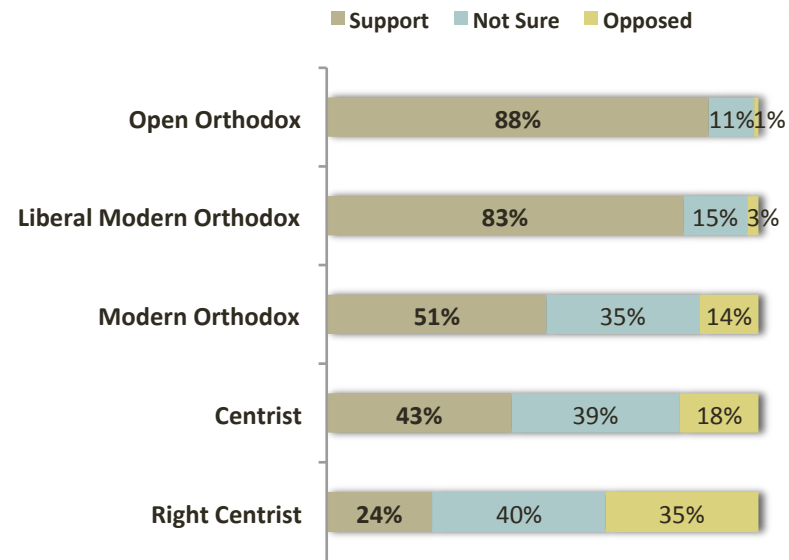
Q32. [Asked of those whose attitudes toward sexuality have changed per Q31] How have your attitudes toward sexuality changed over the past few years? (Open-Ended); n=537.

What about shuls accepting gay members? – A majority support Orthodox shuls in general accepting gays as members. Support is highest in the liberal denominations, but there is some support on the right as well.

Support for Shula Accepting Gays



Support for Shuls Accepting Gays – by Denomination



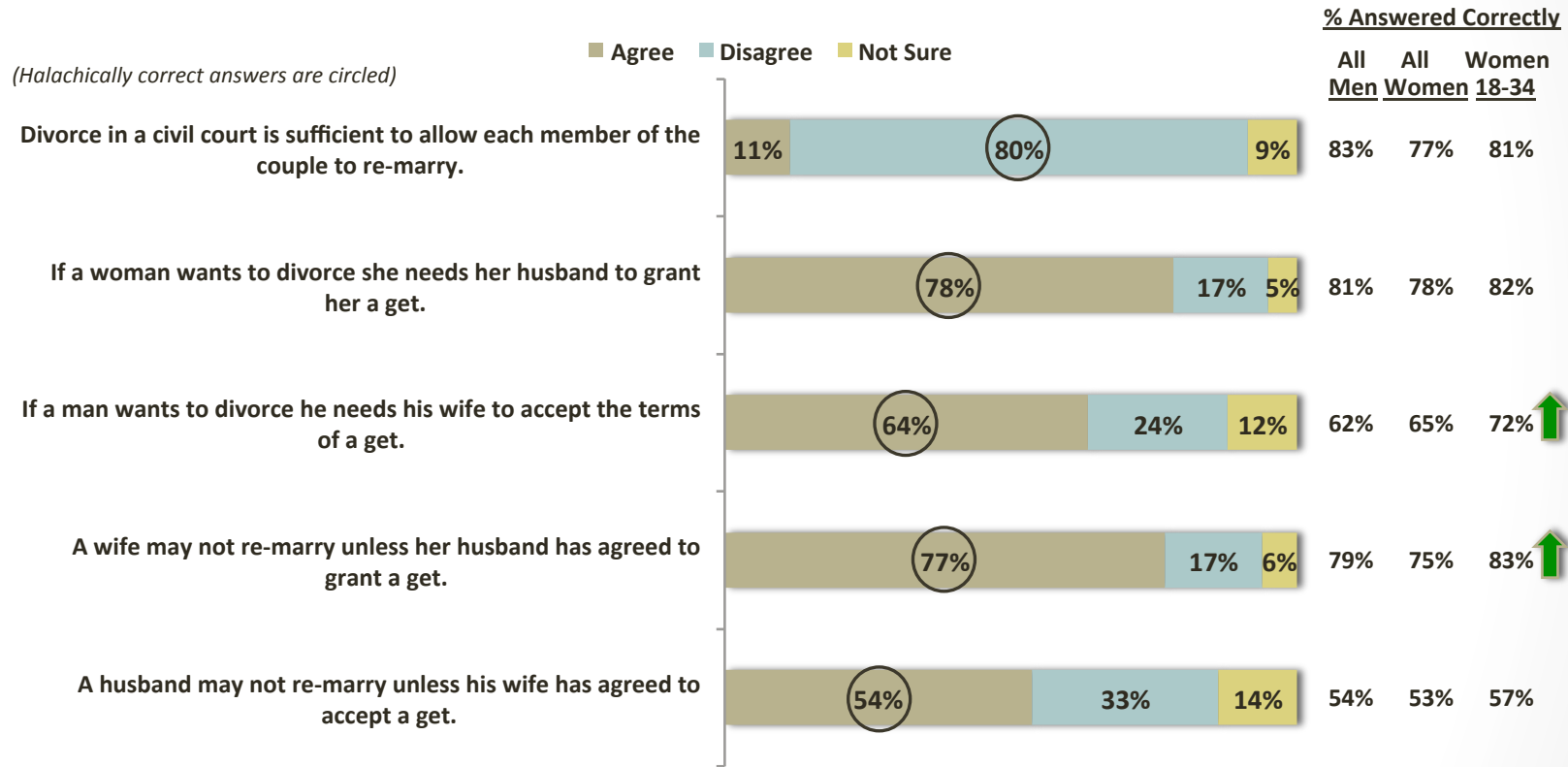
* This question provided an opportunity to explore the impact of wording on results. Response option #1 was originally stated as “I am open to the idea” and a respondent commented that this wording was weaker than the options (“I support ...” or “I favor ...”) used in other questions. The wording was changed to “I am open to / support the idea” and then subsequently changed to “I support the idea.” Through the three wording iterations, the responses were: Wording #1 – Open 72%, Opposed 9%, Not sure 19%; Wording #2 – Open/Support 62%, Opposed 13%, Not sure 25%; Wording #3 (results shown above) – Support 58%, Opposed 12%, Not sure 30%. The difference between “I support” and “I am open” suggests that 58% support this and another 14% do not actively support it but would be open to it if their shul was considering it. Note, though, that this question did not explore attitudes toward accepting a gay couple into a shul, which would have implications for support of gay marriage.

Q33. Do you have any opinion on Orthodox shuls in general accepting gay people as members? – I support the idea; Not sure; I am opposed to the idea; n = Overall 1945; Open Orthodox 226; Liberal Modern Orthodox 385; Modern Orthodox 789; Centrist Orthodox 271; Right Centrist 193.

Divorce and Agunot

How knowledgeable are Modern Orthodox about Jewish *halachic* issues relating to divorce and remarriage? – More than half answered correctly, but between 20% and 46% responded incorrectly or did not know the answers to some basic questions about the *halachot* relating to divorce. Younger women (ages 18-34) were only slightly more knowledgeable.

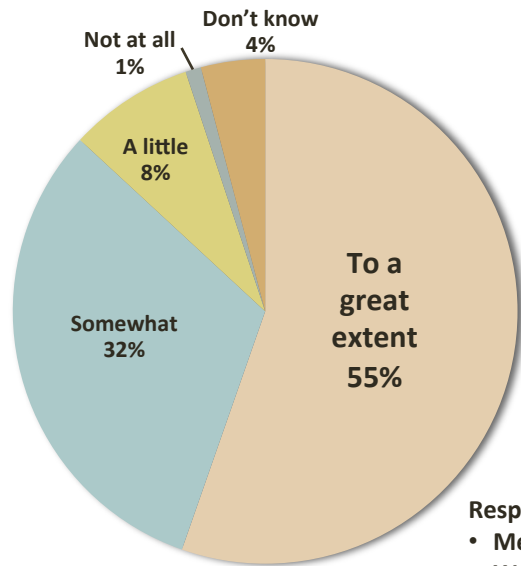
Assessing Knowledge Levels Relating to Jewish Divorce Halacha



[Questions in this section were asked of Modern Orthodox who indicated willingness to respond in Q56] Q57. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? According to *halacha* (Jewish law) ... divorce in a civil court is sufficient to allow each member of the couple to re-marry; if a woman wants to divorce, she needs her husband to grant her a *get* (Jewish bill of divorce); if a man wants to divorce, he needs his wife to accept the terms of a *get*; a wife may not re-marry unless her husband has agreed to grant a *get*; a husband may not re-marry unless his wife has agreed to accept a *get*. [Response Scale: Agree to a great extent; Agree somewhat; Agree a little; Do not agree at all]; n = 1566; Men 827; Women 724; Women Ages 18-34 – 389.

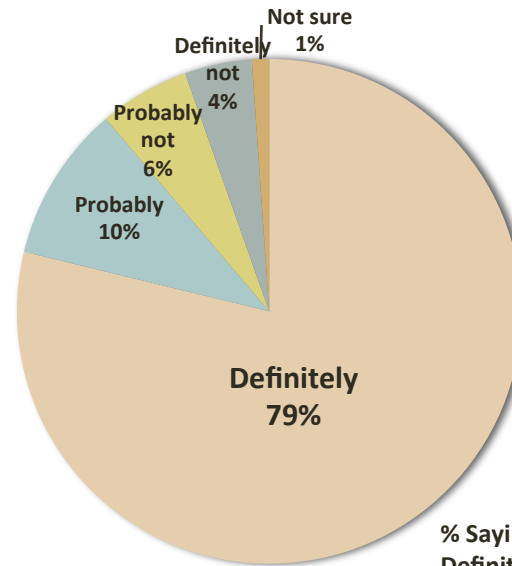
How aware were people when they got married of the halachic aspects of divorce? – The view among all respondents is that women are generally knowledgeable and 73% of women say they were “definitely” knowledgeable of this practice at the time they got married (93% of women aged 18-34).

How Knowledgeable Are Women?



- Responses by:**
- Men - 59%
 - Women - 52%
 - Women 18-34 – 49%

Did You Know About This Practice?



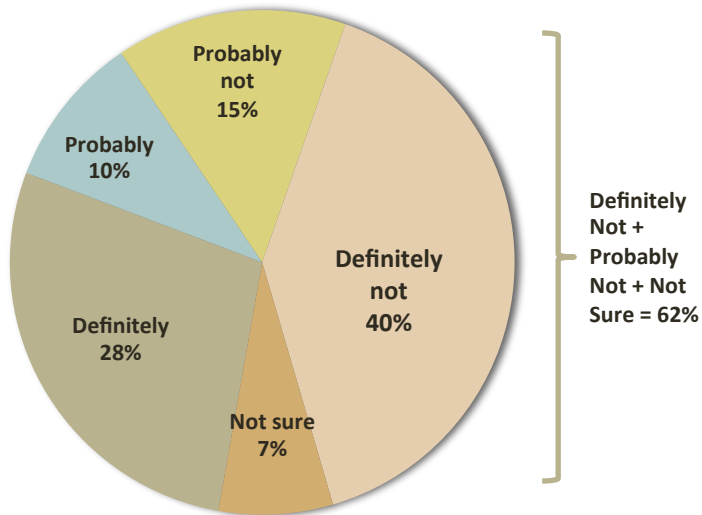
- % Saying they were Definitely Knowledgeable:**
- Men - 83%
 - Women - 73%
 - Women 18-34 – 93%

Q58. As you may know, according to traditional Jewish practice, a divorce is done by the husband giving his wife a get, or bill of divorce. If he refuses, she continues to be married, even if the couple is estranged or has a civil divorce. The woman is an agunah – a “chained woman” – and may not re-marry under Jewish law. To what extent do you think that Modern Orthodox women know about this practice at the time they enter into marriage? To a great extent; Somewhat; A little; Not at all; Don't know; n = 1567; Men 827; Women 728; Women Ages 18-34 – 389.

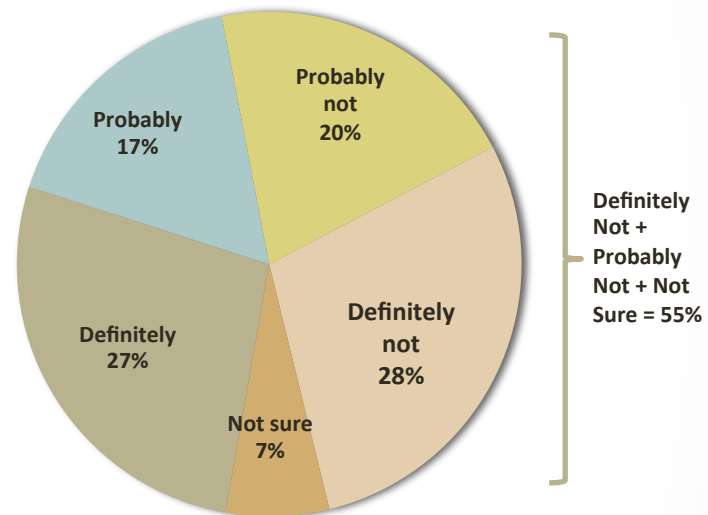
Q59. [Asked if married per Q11] Did you know about this practice at the time of your marriage? Definitely; Probably; Probably not; Definitely not; Not sure; n = 1219; Men 707; Women 504; Women Ages 18-34 – 93.

Was there knowing acceptance of a possible future *agunah* situation? – 62% of men and 55% of women did not knowingly accept the possibility of a future *agunah* situation at the time they were married – i.e., a majority were not actively aware of or considered it as a possibility.

Knowing Acceptance by Men



Knowing Acceptance by Women

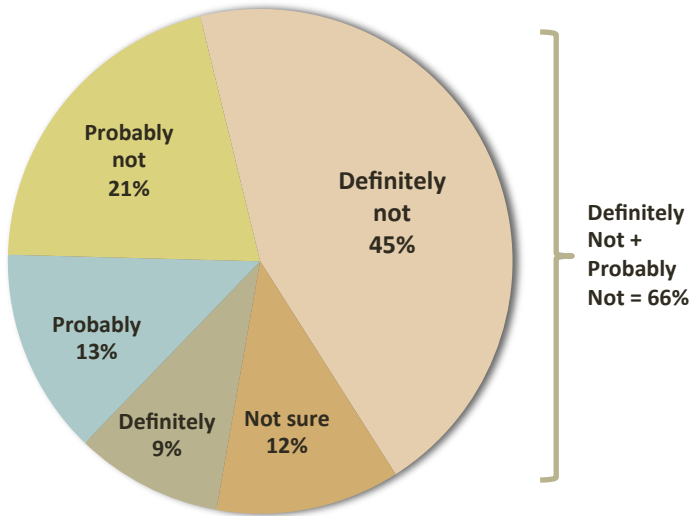


Q60. [Asked if Male per Q3, and knew about practice Definitely/Probably per Q59] At the time of your wedding under the *chuppa*, did you knowingly accept the possibility that your wife might some day become an *agunah*? - Definitely; Probably; Probably not; Definitely not; Not sure; n = 643.

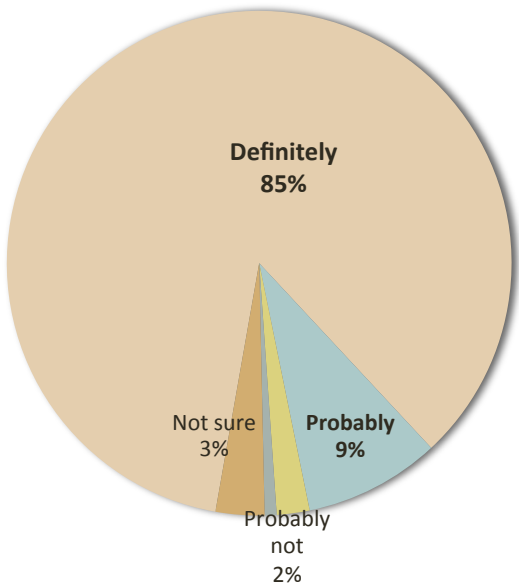
Q61. [Asked if Female per Q3, and Knew about practice Definitely/Probably per Q59] At the time of your wedding under the *chuppa*, did you knowingly accept the possibility that you might some day become an *agunah*? - Definitely; Probably; Probably not; Definitely not; Not sure; n = 423.

Where do attitudes toward divorce and *agunah* stand today? – Two-thirds of women would not currently agree to an arrangement in which they could become an *agunah*; and 85% of all respondents would definitely prefer that a close Orthodox Jewish female relative of theirs about to get married get a *halachic* pre-nuptial arrangement.

**Women’s Current Acceptance of Marriage
With Potential Agunah Situation**



Preference For Halachic Pre-Nuptial Agreement



Q62. [Asked if Female per Q3, and Not Married per Q11] Knowing the current conventional practice in Orthodox marriage, were you to marry in an Orthodox ceremony, do you think you’d agree to the arrangement in which you could become an *agunah* if your husband did not grant a get? - Definitely; Probably; Probably not; Definitely not; Not sure; n = 212.

Q63. Some rabbis have proposed that Orthodox marriages include a pre-nuptial agreement that would compel the future husband to grant a *get*, in the event of a marital breakdown, or, alternatively, annul the marriage retroactively if the husband cannot or will not grant a *get*. If a close Orthodox Jewish female relative of yours (sister, daughter, etc.) were about to get married to an Orthodox fiancé, would you prefer that she obtain such a pre-nuptial agreement? - Definitely; Probably; Probably not; Definitely not; Not sure; n = 1570.

Problems Facing the Modern Orthodox Community

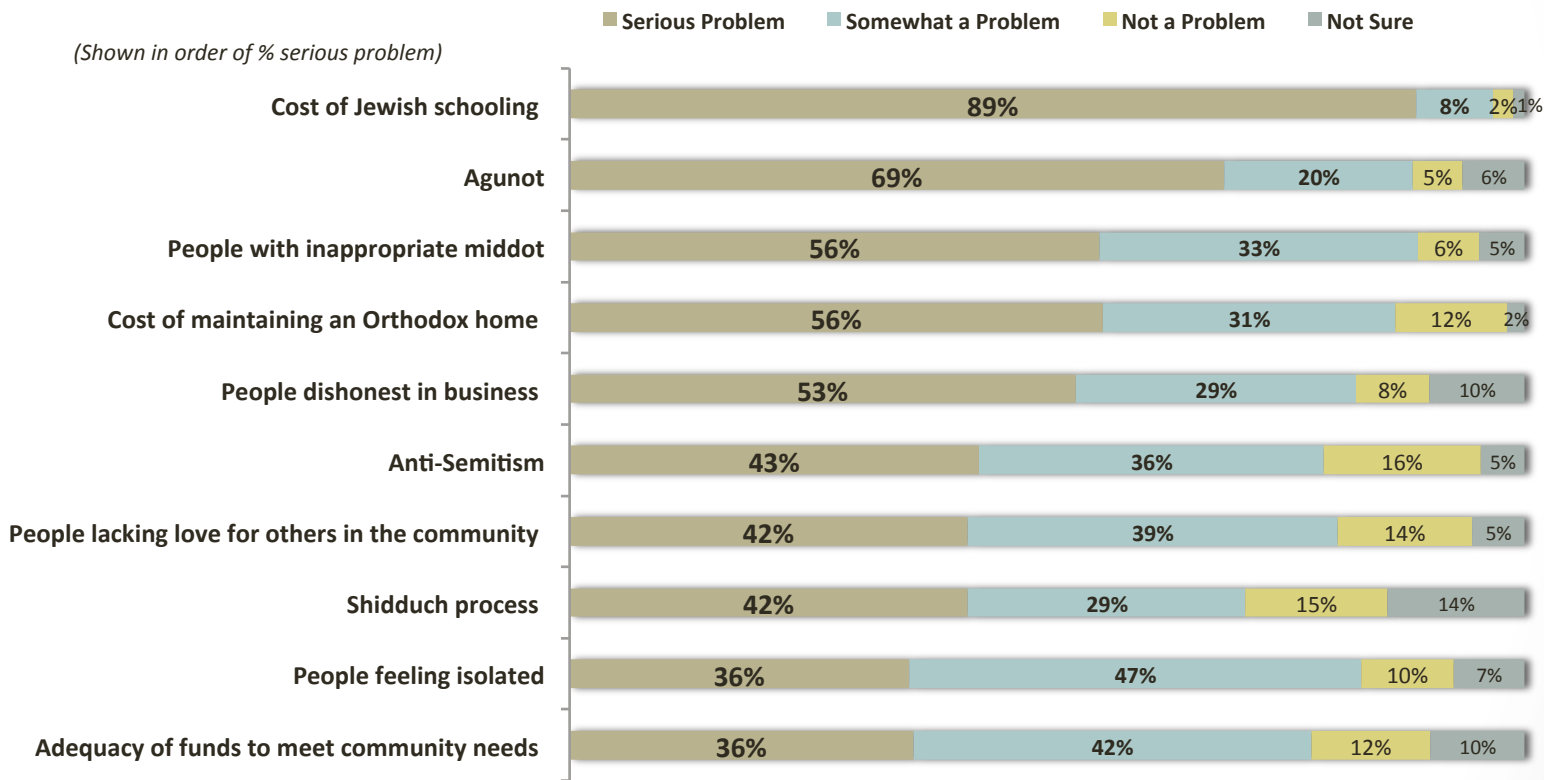
What are the biggest problems facing the Modern Orthodox community? – Respondents were asked to assess 27 issues facing their Jewish community.

Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community?	
Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy becoming more observant (as some say, "moving to the right")	Physical or mental abuse (sexual, spousal, children, etc.)
Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy moving "to the left" (becoming less observant)	Substance abuse (alcohol or drugs)
The cost of maintaining an Orthodox home	Impact of technology and cultural threats
The cost of Jewish schooling	People living an Observant ("frum") lifestyle, but with little spiritual meaning
The <i>shidduch</i> (marriage matchmaking) process	People leaving Orthodoxy (going "off the derech")
<i>Agunot</i> ("chained women" who cannot re-marry)	People not being committed enough to their religious growth
Anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions	Religious people being dishonest in business
Rabbis advocating for increased women's roles	Religious people not dealing with others with appropriate <i>middot</i> (proper behaviors)
Rabbis opposed to increased women's roles	People lacking love for others in the community
Adequacy of funds available to meet the community's needs	Not enough outreach (" <i>kiruv</i> ") to non-Orthodox or unaffiliated Jews
Poverty	Rising divorce rates
Needs of the elderly	Raising children to have religious Jewish values
Jewish day school / yeshiva admission policies	People feeling isolated and not part of the community
Availability of Jewish education for children with special needs	

Q39-41. [Split into three questions to facilitate response] Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community? – *Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy becoming more observant (as some say, "moving to the right"; *Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy moving "to the left" (becoming less observant); The cost of maintaining an Orthodox home; The cost of Jewish schooling; The *shidduch* (marriage matchmaking) process; *Agunot* ("chained women" who cannot re-marry); Anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions; *Rabbis advocating for increased women's roles; *Rabbis opposed to increased women's roles; Adequacy of funds available to meet the community's needs; Poverty; Needs of the elderly; Jewish day school / yeshiva admission policies; Availability of Jewish education for children with special needs; Physical or mental abuse (sexual, spousal, children, etc.); Substance abuse (alcohol or drugs); Impact of technology and cultural threats; People living an Observant ("frum") lifestyle, but with little spiritual meaning; People leaving Orthodoxy (going "off the derech"); People not being committed enough to their religious growth; Religious people being dishonest in business; Religious people not dealing with others with appropriate *middot* (proper behaviors); People lacking love for others in the community; Not enough outreach ("*kiruv*") to non-Orthodox or unaffiliated Jews; Rising divorce rates; Raising children to have religious Jewish values; People feeling isolated and not part of the community [*Asked if Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox] [Response Scale: Serious problem; Somewhat a problem; Not a problem; Not sure]

What are the problems of greatest concern? – The biggest concern by a wide margin is the cost of Jewish schooling (89%), followed by *agunot* (69%). The cost of maintaining an Orthodox home is seen as a problem (56%). Other concerns are in areas of interpersonal behaviors, i.e., inappropriate *middot* (56%) and dishonesty in business (53%).

Top Ten Issues That Are Perceived as Problems Facing the Modern Orthodox Community



Continued →

Top items from Q39-41 (see preceding page). Average n = 2892.

Top problems facing Modern Orthodoxy – A sample of verbatim responses relating to the top challenges

"The cost of educating my children. The stress it causes us as parents takes away from whatever benefit they have going to a Jewish day school."

"The lack of total and unanimous acceptance of the halachic prenuptial agreement and the lack of unanimity in support for Agunot/unwillingness to be an active supporter."

"Religion is a personal choice. How you behave and conduct yourself and your middot ben adam l'chavero are much more important."

"The cost of the lifestyle is debilitating ... Food, tuition, and housing! Some of us work three jobs to pay it all. It has pushed me away emotionally. It also caused me to stop having children."

"Orthodox Jews who are dishonest and unethical in their business and every day lives yet outwardly want the appearance to mask the reality of who they are."


"Anti-Semitism is all around us. Nothing has really, really changed in the last 100 years!"

"I live in a big community with tons of shuls, schools, grocery stores, and kosher restaurants. However, it feels like people are unfriendly, not interested in meeting new people, and just don't care."

Assessing all potential problems facing Modern Orthodoxy – There is general consistency of views across gender and age, with all groups tending to find the same issues to be of greatest concern.

Assessment of Issues Facing the Modern Orthodox Community – by Gender and Age

Overall Rank		All	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+	More Concerned Group
1	Cost of Jewish schooling	89%	89%	88%	91%	91%	86%	
2	Agunot	69%	63%	74%	67%	63%	74%	Older Women (55+)
3	People with inappropriate middot	56%	56%	55%	62%	53%	55%	Younger (18-34)
4	Cost of maintaining an Orthodox home	56%	58%	53%	69%	62%	44%	Men 18-44
5	People dishonest in business	53%	55%	51%	57%	50%	54%	
6	Anti-Semitism	43%	40%	46%	38%	37%	49%	Older Women (65+)
7	People lacking love for others in the community	42%	41%	43%	49%	42%	39%	Men 18-44
8	Shidduch process	42%	38%	46%	36%	35%	49%	Older Women (55+)
9	People feeling isolated	36%	33%	38%	43%	36%	32%	Younger Women (18-34)
10	Adequacy of funds to meet community needs	36%	38%	34%	29%	39%	37%	Men 35-44
11	Observant lifestyle but little spiritual meaning	34%	34%	34%	38%	38%	30%	All 35-44
12	Availability of special needs education	33%	31%	35%	32%	30%	36%	
13	Rabbis opposed to increased women's roles	32%	29%	37%	40%	30%	31%	Younger Women (18-34)
14	Needs of the elderly	29%	28%	29%	24%	24%	34%	Older (65+)
15	Raising children with religious Jewish values	28%	30%	24%	24%	27%	30%	Men
16	Substance abuse	26%	27%	26%	24%	25%	28%	
17	Day school / yeshiva admission policies	26%	26%	26%	21%	24%	29%	
18	Rising divorce rates	25%	25%	24%	17%	21%	31%	Older (65+)
19	Physical or mental abuse	25%	25%	26%	30%	22%	26%	Younger (18-34)
20	People leaving Orthodoxy	25%	26%	24%	25%	24%	26%	
21	Poverty	25%	25%	24%	23%	25%	25%	
22	People not committed enough to religious growth	23%	25%	21%	24%	25%	23%	
23	Technological and cultural threats	20%	20%	20%	14%	23%	20%	
24	Modern Orthodoxy becoming less observant	19%	23%	16%	20%	20%	19%	Men
25	Not enough outreach/ kiruv	18%	20%	16%	11%	18%	22%	
26	Modern Orthodoxy becoming more observant	16%	16%	16%	13%	16%	18%	
27	Rabbis advocating for increased women's roles	7%	9%	6%	5%	7%	8%	

 Indicates greater concern (statistically significant difference of 5% or more)

Q39-41. Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community? [See question text on page 72.] Average n = All 2892; Men 1501, Women 1359; Age 18-34 - 592; Age 35-54 - 948; Age 55+ - 1192.

How do the top challenges vary by denomination – There are substantial variations in concern, with the “right” (Centrist / Right Centrist) showing more concern across the 27 areas than the “left” (Open Orthodox / Liberal Modern Orthodox).

Assessment of Issues Facing the Modern Orthodox Community – by Denomination

Overall Rank		All	Open Orthodox / Liberal Modern Orthodox	Modern Orthodox	Centrist / Right Centrist
1	Cost of Jewish schooling	89%	88%	88%	91%
2	Agunot	69%	72%	70%	65%
3	People with inappropriate middot	56%	56%	55%	56%
4	Cost of maintaining an Orthodox home	56%	55%	54%	60%
5	People dishonest in business	53%	54%	51%	54%
6	Anti-Semitism	43%	38%	49%	44%
7	People lacking love for others in the community	42%	45%	39%	42%
8	Shidduch process	42%	31%	44%	53%
9	People feeling isolated	36%	37%	33%	35%
10	Adequacy of funds to meet community needs	36%	33%	36%	41%
11	Observant lifestyle but little spiritual meaning	34%	30%	28%	47%
12	Availability of special needs education	33%	33%	31%	35%
13	Rabbis opposed to increased women’s roles	32%	56%	25%	13%
14	Needs of the elderly	29%	26%	30%	30%
15	Raising children with religious Jewish values	28%	20%	28%	36%
16	Substance abuse	26%	22%	27%	30%
17	Day school / yeshiva admission policies	26%	21%	28%	27%
18	Rising divorce rates	25%	15%	27%	35%
19	Physical or mental abuse	25%	25%	25%	27%
20	People leaving Orthodoxy	25%	13%	26%	39%
21	Poverty	25%	21%	26%	27%
22	People not committed enough to religious growth	23%	15%	22%	38%
23	Technological and cultural threats	20%	13%	18%	32%
24	Modern Orthodoxy becoming less observant	19%	6%	19%	38%
25	Not enough outreach/ kiruv	18%	18%	19%	19%
26	Modern Orthodoxy becoming more observant	16%	31%	11%	4%
27	Rabbis advocating for increased women’s roles	7%	5%	6%	12%

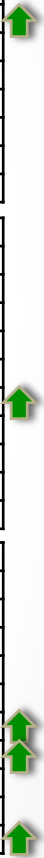
Indicates greater concern (statistically significant difference of 5% or more)

Top Problems for Each Denomination

Open Orthodox / Liberal Modern Orthodox		
1	Cost of Jewish schooling	88%
2	Agunot	72%
3	Inappropriate middot	56%
4	Rabbis oppose women’s roles	56%
5	Cost maintaining Ortho home	55%
6	Dishonest in business	54%
7	Lacking love for others	45%
8	Anti-Semitism	38%
9	Feeling isolated	37%
10	Special needs education	33%

Modern Orthodox		
1	Cost of Jewish schooling	88%
2	Agunot	70%
3	Inappropriate middot	55%
4	Cost maintaining Ortho home	54%
5	Dishonest in business	51%
6	Anti-Semitism	49%
7	Shidduch process	44%
8	Lacking love for others	39%
9	Adequate communal funds	36%
10	Feeling isolated	33%

Centrist and Right Centrist Orthodox		
1	Cost of Jewish schooling	91%
2	Agunot	65%
3	Cost maintaining Ortho home	60%
4	Inappropriate middot	56%
5	Dishonest in business	54%
6	Shidduch process	53%
7	Little spiritual meaning	47%
8	Anti-Semitism	44%
9	Lacking love for others	42%
10	Adequate communal funds	41%



Q39-41. Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community? [See question text on page 72.] Average n = All 2892; Open Orthodox or Liberal Modern Orthodox 917; Modern Orthodox 1079; Centrist Orthodox or Right Centrist 696.

What Causes the Most Pain or Unhappiness as an Orthodox / Observant Jew?

– A Sample of the Responses (Page 1 of 2)

- *High costs of Orthodoxy make it extremely difficult. Community too wrapped up with halachik details rather than engaging in real life problems. Right and wrong/non accepting mentality of the people who claim to be most observant.*
- *Lack of a community. Severe lack of ahavat yisrael. Occasional racism. Misogyny. General intolerance/superiority complex. Lack of spirituality and valuing pure textual knowledge over middot.*
- *People who claim that they are otherwise religious and yet are morally corrupt on levels that are frequently shocking.*
- *Fundamentalism, lack of nuance, struggling to integrate modern values in conflict with halacha.*
- *Patriarchy. Rabbinic power-wielding.*
- *The dismissal of women's leadership and intellectual abilities within the Jewish world*
- *Trouble connecting to the davening and I don't put in enough effort to grow spiritually and to learn.*
- *Even with two moderate incomes you can't afford living, food, tuition ... without needing assistance - and who in their 40's should be asking parents to help pay for camp because they can't? It's embarrassing. Non-Jews look at us like we are insane. and we are. It's really upsetting and awful. And nothing is done by the Rabbeim or any organization.*
- *The fundamental lack of change on issues that are simple (e.g., agunah) coupled with a real crisis in education.*
- *I hide the fact that I converted as I have seen and heard so many horrible things said of gerim. It pains me so much to see how much lashon hara and judgment goes on towards gerim.*
- *Shul is for married couples with children. If you're not one of these types of people, you don't belong in shul. It's a club that I am shut out from.*
- *Long davening.*
- *Isolationism. No tolerance for the nuance of alternate views. Not being a goy kadosh and a light unto the nations.*
- *Lack of unity across the categories -- ahavat chinam is sorely missing, and we must learn to include ALL Jews, regardless of affiliation or non-affiliation.*
- *Parochialism. Halakhic life as a lifestyle or as a slavish preoccupation with the force of the written word. Lack of spirituality and the preoccupation with material wealth.*
- *Many member of the community are judgmental if you observe differently than they do or if you have different views on orthodoxy than they do.*
- *The current day school model is difficult to sustain. The costs are astronomical and only increasing. I don't know how the model can sustain itself. I worry that my daughter will find it difficult to provide a Jewish education for her children when the time comes.*
- *Guilt about not being shomer shabbat enough, and not Kosher enough-have a very hard time with all the limitations in Halacha even though I believe that's how I should be living my life.*
- *So-called "Frum" people who lack basic middot.*
- *The judgment that many Orthodox people have for others that are not 'just like them'. Anyone who is slightly different is looked down upon and this is very wrong.*
- *The main center of Jewish gathering is shul, and that is something I find extraordinarily boring.*
- *When we embarrass ourselves and our community. Our inability to get along with one another from liberal to charedi.*
- *agunot and treatment of LGBT, not enough money to live.*
- *The prevalence of observant Jews who observe the letter of the law, but not the spirit (e.g., tzniut, honesty, chilul hashem and more).*
- *Seeing Orthodox Jews behave badly.*

Continued 

Approximately two-thousand extraordinarily diverse comments were received. A large sample of the responses to this question are contained in the document "Modern Orthodox Survey Comments October 2017.pdf" which is available to read or download at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>. We recommend readers peruse this document to get a flavor of the breadth of views.

Q44. What, if anything, causes you the most pain or unhappiness as an Orthodox / Observant Jew? (Open-Ended); n = 1988 responses received.

What Causes the Most Pain or Unhappiness as an Orthodox / Observant Jew?

– A Sample of the Responses (Page 2 of 2)

- *Alienation of community members based on their personal beliefs or choices - general lack of ahavas yisrael.*
- *It's painful when there is so much derision in the Orthodox community, when I speak to others particularly on social issues, and issues related to Israel and politics.*
- *The high prices for an orthodox life, crazy housing prices, crazy food kosher food prices and incredibly unreasonable day school pricing.*
- *As a gay, married (to a man) orthodox Jew, I feel that me, my spouse, and children are not welcomed in some communities, shuls and school.*
- *Harshness and lack of compassion masquerading as strict religious observance. Dishonestly in business not being considered an averah.*
- *I am saddened that Orthodox Jews cannot debate religious, halachik and theological issues without fracturing and alienating one another. The leading voices (Roshei Yeshiva, Shul Rabbis, seminary heads, etc.) should be models of thoughtful and respectful disagreement where they differ and unity where they don't. I am sad about the fragmentation I see around me along controversial issues and the polemical relationship that different kinds of Orthodox Jews have with one another.*
- *That people judge you by the way you cover your hair.*
- *Orthodoxy has been unwilling to deal meaningfully to many modern challenges, including women's issues, gay issues, cultural issues (especially with regard to children), and academic issues (like Biblical scholarship and other challenges to traditional faith).*
- *As a 50 year old never married woman I do not feel welcome or accepted as a full member within the Orthodox community. While it has not lessened my personal observance it has isolated me from the "spirit" of community I grew up in.*
- *The existential threat to Israel and the Jewish community of terrorist and anti-Semitic violence.*
- *Many people are fine to just go along with an Orthodox lifestyle but they leave out the most geshmak parts of yiddishkeit, which is torah and a personal connection and relationship with Hashem.*
- *The prohibitive cost of Jewish private school, rent in Orthodox neighborhoods, and Kosher food has put us in financial peril.*
- *How much it costs to send the kids to Jewish school, eat kosher, shul membership, camps, etc. etc.*
- *Dishonesty by religious Jews in business and lack of respect for other less observant Jews. Also the Shidduch Crisis and the Agunah issue.*
- *There are too many who we disenfranchise: women who cannot get a get, homosexuals who feel they do not have a place in orthodoxy, women in positions of Jewish leadership. How can we tell Our daughters they can truly be anything they want to be in 2017 but they cannot serve as clergy? How can we afford to draw from only 50% of our talent base to lead our people?*
- *Modern Orthodoxy no longer means living in both worlds as an observant, halachic Jew, but it seems to have taken on a connotation of license to be flexible where desired (e.g., half Shabbos). I am deeply concerned and unhappy with this trend, which I feel will lead to a deep dilution of tradition. Having said that, I think it is important to grow our social awareness and understand certain areas which have long been neglected. I do not believe that the LGBT community should be alienated. Do we really want to alienate people who are already struggling and dictate their relationship with Hashem? Another issue is drugs; It's more prevalent than we realize and proactive measures should be taken to help those potentially afflicted from falling into this in the first place.*
- *Cost of Jewish Day Schools is out of control.*
- *The dishonesty among many in the community, and the attempts to limit women's roles in the Orthodox world.*
- *The deepest pain is the role of women in typical local Orthodox synagogues.*
- *Being part of such a close knit community comes at a cost. The judging and lashon hara can be fierce at times. The "well-meaning" statements are sometimes crude and uncalled for. It adds a level of nervousness and self-consciousness to my daily life and makes me nervous to represent myself fully in the way I believe Hashem wants me.*
- *The cost of yeshiva; I have already accepted the high price of food. Yeshiva cost hurts the Jews in the middle. Those on the lower end get scholarship, upper have no problems affording. The middle has to spend all their money on tuition and cannot enjoy life.*
- *Two of my three children are no longer religious. My granddaughter will be raised non-religious.*

Demographics

Demographics (Page 1 of 4) – Respondents cover a wide range of ages (with a median in the early 50s); a majority live in the Northeast US; most are of Ashkenazi origin; and most have been observant from birth or from an early age, although one-third started to identify as Orthodox at age 18 or older.

Gender	%
Male	52%
Female	48%
Non-Conforming	<0.5%
n = 3,744	

Jewish Ancestry	%
Ashkenazi	91%
Sephardi	3%
Mixed	4%
Other	2%
n = 2,779	

Age	%
18-24	5%
25-34	17%
35-44	17%
45-54	17%
55-64	18%
65-74	19%
75 or Older	7%
n = 2,763	

U.S. Geographic Location of Survey Respondents

Survey responses were received from 27 countries. Those from the USA came from 41 states and DC. States accounting for 3% or more of total responses were as follows:

- New York 40% (New York City 32%)
- New Jersey 18% (Northeast NJ / Teaneck area 6%)
- Florida 10% (Boca Raton 5%, Hollywood/Ft. Lauderdale 3%)
- Maryland 6% (Silver Spring 4%)
- California 5% (Los Angeles 3%)
- Massachusetts 4% (Newton 1%, Brookline/Boston 1%)
- Connecticut 4% (West Hartford 1%, New Haven 1%)

Age When Started to Identify as Orthodox	%
Birth to age 10	58%
Ages 11 to 17	9%
Ages 18 to 24	14%
Ages 25 to 39	14%
After age 40	6%
n = 2,795	

Q3. What is your gender? – Male; Female; Non-conforming, other

Q48. What is your Jewish ancestry? – Ashkenazi or primarily Ashkenazi; Sephardi or primarily Sephardi; Mixed Ashkenazi and Sephardi; Other – Please describe (Open-Ended)

Q46. What is your age? – 18 to 24; 25 to 34; 35 to 44; 45 to 54; 55 to 64; 65 to 74; 75 or older; Prefer not to answer

Q47. At what stage in life did you begin to identify yourself as belonging to the Orthodox community? – From birth, or at a young age (10 or younger); Between ages 11 and 17; Between ages 18 and 24; Between ages 25 and 39; After age 40

Demographics (Page 2 of 4) – The typical respondent is married, and three-fourths have between 2 and 4 children.

Marital/Relationship	%
Married	79%
Single	13%
Divorced	4%
Separated	<0.5%
Widowed	3%
Living with partner	1%
n = 3,379	

No. of Children	%
None	9%
One	10%
Two	25%
Three	32%
Four	17%
Five or More	7%
n = 2,895	

Age of Oldest Child	%
30 or Older	42%
25-29	10%
21-24	6%
18-20	6%
14-17	8%
13 or Younger	28%
n = 2,468	

Q11. What is your current marital/relationship status? – Married; Single; Divorced; Separated; Widowed; Living with a partner or in a long-term relationship

Q12. [Asked of those married, divorced, separated or widowed per Q11] How many children do you have in total? – None; One; Two; Three; Four; Five or More

Q26. [Asked of those with one or more children per Q12] How old is your oldest child? – 30 or older; 25 to 29; 21 to 24; 18 to 20; 14 to 17; 13 or younger; No children

Demographics (Page 3 of 4) – The typical respondent is highly educated, with a post-graduate degree, and employed full-time.

Education	%
Less than H.S. graduate	<0.5%
High school graduate	1%
Some college, no degree	5%
Two-year Associate's Degree	2%
Four-year Bachelor's Degree	21%
Some post-graduate, professional	10%
Post-graduate, professional degree	61%
n = 2,780	



Colleges cited by 2% or more:

- Yeshiva Univ. / Stern 19%
- Brooklyn Coll. 7%
- Columbia Univ. / Barnard 7%
- Queens Coll. 4%
- City College of NY 4%
- Brandeis Univ. 3%
- Univ. of Pennsylvania 3%
- Univ. of Maryland 2%
- Rutgers Univ. 2%
- Touro Coll. 2%
- American Univ. 2%

(n = 2645)

Employment Status	%
Employed full-time	53%
Employed part-time	8%
Student	6%
Work/volunteer, unpaid	2%
Self-employed full-time	7%
Self-employed part-time	4%
Retired	16%
Not employed	4%
n = 2,793	

Q49. Which of these best describes your current employment status? – Employed full-time; Employed part-time; Student; Working or volunteering - non-paid; Self-employed full-time; Self-employed part-time; Retired; Not presently employed

Q50. What is the highest level of schooling you have completed? – Less than high school graduate; High school graduate; Some college, no degree; Two year associate degree; Four year Bachelor's degree; Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no postgraduate degree; Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree

Q51. [Asked of those with at least some college per Q50] What is/was your undergraduate college or university? – Drop-Down list; Other – Please enter name (Open-Ended); None, Not Applicable

Demographics (Page 4 of 4) – The typical respondent is affluent, with 71% having household income of \$100K or more; they are politically diverse, with 36% liberal or moderate Democrat and 43% moderate or conservative Republican.

Household Income	%
Under \$30,000	4%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	19%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	14%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	10%
\$250,000 or more	28%

Median \$158K

n = 2,067 (Nearly 30% chose not to respond to this question; it may be that incomes among all respondents are lower than what the response data shows)

% With Jewish Organizational Positions	%
Jewish school principal, administrator, etc.	2%
Jewish school Judaic studies teacher	3%
Jewish school secular studies teacher	2%
Jewish school lay leadership	4%
Synagogue rabbi	1%
Synagogue staff	2%
Synagogue lay leadership	14%
Other Jewish organization position	12%

n = 2,822

- 34% have some type of position (professional or lay leadership) with a Jewish organization (multiple responses).

Political Leanings	%
Progressive, Liberal Democrat	11%
Moderate Democrat	25%
Independent, Unaffiliated	14%
Moderate Republican	24%
Conservative Republican	19%
Libertarian	2%
None, Not Political	6%
Other	4%

n = 2,714

Q53. What is your annual household income? – Under \$30,000; \$30,000 - \$49,999; \$50,000 - \$74,999; \$75,000 - \$99,999; \$100,000 - \$149,999; \$150,000 - \$199,999; \$200,000 - \$249,999; \$250,000 or more; Prefer not to answer

Q54. Which of the following best describes your political leanings? – Progressive, liberal Democrat; Moderate Democrat; Independent, not affiliated with either party; Moderate Republican; Conservative Republican; Libertarian; None, I am not political; Other – Please describe (Open-Ended)

Q52. Please indicate if you currently hold a position at an Orthodox Jewish institution or organization. Please check all that apply. – I do not hold any position within the Orthodox Jewish world; Jewish school principal, administrator, etc.; Jewish school Judaic studies teacher; Jewish school secular studies teacher; Jewish school lay leadership; Synagogue rabbi; Synagogue staff; Synagogue lay leadership; Other Jewish organization position – Please describe (Open-Ended)

Appendix

Survey Questionnaire (Page 1 of 9)

Nishma Research Survey of The Orthodox / Observant Jewish Community– June 26, 2017
Survey instructions and related notes are shown in red

INTRODUCTION Section titles are not shown in the online survey

What are the views of the Orthodox Jewish community? What do **you** think about the major questions facing Jewish life, your community, your family and yourself? This survey addresses these and related questions. The aggregated results will be clearly communicated to both synagogue leaders and congregants.

The survey is conducted by Nishma Research and is sponsored by The Micah Foundation. The study researchers and foundation benefactors are Orthodox Jews; the foundation's mission is to promote and enhance Jewish religious and cultural life.

This survey is for people age 18 and older. Among couples, we encourage both spouses to take the survey separately, so that we know how each individual thinks about the issues. The survey takes about 18-20 minutes to complete. (Each screen has a "Save and Continue Later" option you may click at the top, if you do not have the time to complete the survey ... if you use this option, then please return to complete the survey within three days.)

This survey is 100% anonymous. At the end of the survey, you will have the opportunity to get the results sent directly to you. Additionally, you'll be able to sign up for a **chance to win one of ten \$100 Gift Cards.**

If you have any questions about the survey, please email Mark Trencher of Nishma Research at mark@nishmaresearch.com.

ORTHODOX DENOMINATION

Mandatory Response

Q1. **Note:** This is the only survey question with a mandatory response. We do, however, encourage you to respond to all the other questions as well.

Regardless of your synagogue affiliation, which of the following categories best describes your approach to Judaism? Would you say you are ...

- Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox (Note: You will have the opportunity later in the survey to further define this)
- Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah
- Chasidic, Chabad
- Not Orthodox – Please describe **Open-Ended**

Ask if Q1 = Not Orthodox

- Q2. Do you regularly attend an Orthodox synagogue?
- Yes
 - No **Skip to Termination Screen**

All survey questions are asked of the "Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox." Some questions are asked of the other Orthodox (Yeshivish/ Litvish/Agudah or Chasidic/Chabad), and some are asked of those Not Orthodox who regularly attend an Orthodox synagogue. Where there is no indication to the contrary, questions are asked of all respondents.

Ask of All

- Q3. What is your gender?
- Male
 - Female
 - Non-conforming, other

SHUL / SYNAGOGUE

Ask of All

Q4. How often do you attend services in shul (synagogue)?

- Friday night / Erev Yom Tov night
- Shabbat / Yom Tov morning
- Shabbat / Yom Tov mincha/maariv
- Weekday morning
- Weekday mincha/maariv

Scale:

- Always or almost always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Seldom or Never

Ask of All and Q4-2 ("Attend services Shabbat / Yom Tov morning") = Always or almost always, Often or Sometimes

Q5. Do you agree with the following statements about your personal experiences in shul?

- Going to shul is an important part of my life.
- I feel welcomed in shul.
- The *tefillah* (prayer) experience is meaningful to me.
- I am comfortable following the services in shul.

Scale:

- Agree fully
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree
- Don't know / Not applicable

The Nishma
Research
Profile of
American
Modern
Orthodox
Jews



85

Continued

Survey Questionnaire (Page 2 of 9)

Ask if Orthodox (Q1 = Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox, Yeshivish / Litvish / Agudah, or Chasidic, Chabad) and Q4-2 (“Attend services Shabbat / Yom Tov morning”) = Always or almost always, Often or Sometimes

Q6. Think of the shul that you most often attend. Do you agree with the following statements?

- My shul rabbi’s decisions and guidance reflect an understanding of modern life.
- My shul’s congregants’ views are listened to and taken into account.
- My shul is accessible to people with disabilities.
- My shul has taken appropriate measures to ensure security and safety.

Scale:

- Agree fully
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree
- Don’t know / Not applicable

JEWISH STUDY

Ask of All

Q7. What is the highest level of formal Jewish studies you have completed?

None

- Talmud Torah (e.g., a Sunday or weekday evening Jewish studies program run by a synagogue)
- Some Jewish elementary school (did not graduate)
- Jewish elementary school (8th grade)
- Jewish high school
- **Include if Q3 = Male** Post-high school yeshiva study without ordination
- **Include if Q3 = Male** Post-high school yeshiva study with ordination (semicha)
- **Include if Q3 = Female** Post high-school advanced yeshiva study without receiving a title
- **Include if Q3 = Female** Post high-school advanced yeshiva study at an institution that granted you a title

Ask of All

Q8. How often, on average, would you estimate you’ve engaged in the study of Jewish topics over the past three months?

- Daily or almost every day
- A few times a week
- About once a week
- At least once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never

Ask if Orthodox; Skip if Q8 (“participated in Jewish learning over the past three months”) = Never

Q9. Please check the Jewish topics you’ve studied during the past three months. Please check all that apply. **Multiple Responses**

- Gemara Classes, Daf Yomi
- Parsha (Torah Portion), Navi, Tanach
- Halacha (Jewish law), mussar (moral conduct)
- Jewish issues relating to the modern world (such as science, business, etc.)
- Other – Please describe Open-Ended
- None of the above **Mutually exclusive**

Ask if Orthodox

Q10. Is there anything new or different you’d like to see available to you in areas of Jewish study (topics, programs, speakers, learning opportunities, etc.)? **Open-Ended**

CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

Ask of All

Q11. What is your current marital/relationship status?

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed
- Living with a partner or in a long-term relationship

Ask of All and Q11 Marital Status = Married, Divorced, Separated or Widowed


Q12. How many children do you have in total?

- None **Skip to Next Section – Q19**
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five or More

Ask of All and Q12 = Have one or more children

Q13. Are any of your children in grades 1 to 12 (the just-completed school year)?

- Yes
- No **Skip to Next Section – Q19**

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 3 of 9)

Ask of All and Q13 (Have children in grades 1-12) = Yes

Q14. Thinking of your oldest child in grade 1-12 (the just-completed school year), what kind of school did that child attend?

- Orthodox Jewish day school
- Community or non-Orthodox Jewish day school
- Non-Jewish private school
- Public school
- Home schooling
- Other – Please describe **Open-Ended**

Ask of All and Q14 = Oldest child attends Orthodox Jewish day school

Q15. Please indicate the grade that child has just completed.

[Drop-down ranging from 1 to 12]

Ask of All and Q14 = Oldest child attends Orthodox Jewish day school

Q16. Please indicate the gender of that child.

- Boy
- Girl

Ask of All and Q14 = Oldest child attends Orthodox Jewish day school

Q17. Still thinking of your oldest child who just completed grade 1-12, please describe the gender environment of that child's school.

- It is a single gender school.
- It is a coeducational school; and all of my child's classes are coeducational.
- It is a coeducational school; my child is in some coeducational classes and some single-gender classes.

Ask of All and Q14 = Oldest child attends Orthodox Jewish day school

Q18. Do you agree with the following statements relating to that child's school?

- The school provides a strong Jewish studies education.
- The school provides a strong secular education.
- The school teaches children how to think critically.
- The school does a good job in teaching children *middot* (positive behaviors).
- The school meets students' special education needs
- **Include if child's grade (Q15) \geq 11** The school encourages students to continue on to college.
- **Include if child's grade (Q15) \geq 9** The school provides a good sex education program.
- **Include if child's grade (Q15) \geq 7** The school does a good job in teaching *tzniut* (laws of modesty).

Scale:

- Agree fully
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree
- Don't know or Not applicable

PERSONAL RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Ask of All

Q19. How strongly do you believe that ...

- *Hashem* (G-d) created the world.
- *Hashem* is involved in all of the world's day-to-day activities, and knows and guides the events of my daily life.
- *Hashem* loves me and everything that happens to me is ultimately for the best.
- *Hashem* gave the written Torah to the Jewish people, through *Moshe*, at Mt. Sinai.
- *Hashem* transmitted all of the oral Torah to *Moshe*.

Scale:

- I believe fully
- Tend to believe
- Have doubts
- Do not believe
- Don't know

Ask of All

Q20. How would you rate your personal observance in the following areas?

- *Shmirat Shabbat* – Keeping Shabbat
- Keeping kosher
- **Ask if Q3 = Male** Putting on *tefillin* every weekday
- **Ask if Q11 = Married** *Taharat ha'mishpacha* (laws of family purity, women's use of mikveh)


Scale:

- Strictly observant
- Mostly observant
- Somewhat observant
- Minimally or not observant
- Not applicable

Ask if Orthodox

Q21. Has your personal level of religious observance changed over the past 10 years?

- I've become much more observant
- I've become somewhat more observant
- No change
- I've become somewhat less observant
- I've become much less observant

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 4 of 9)

Ask if Orthodox

Q22. To what extent, if any, is your religious observance due to ...

- Your desire to accommodate your spouse
- Your desire to accommodate your children or parents
- Social or community reasons
- Religious and theological reasons

Scale:

- Great extent
- Some extent
- Not at all

Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)

Q23. You indicated that you are Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox. Within that group, which of the following labels best describes your personal approach to your Judaism.

- Open Orthodox
- Liberal Modern Orthodox
- Modern Orthodox
- Centrist Orthodox
- "Right-wing" Centrist Orthodox (e.g., tending toward Yeshivish)
- Other – Please describe **Open-Ended**

ISRAEL

Ask of All

Q24. How important are each of the following to you?

- My emotional connection to Israel
- My being personally active in support of Israel
- My shul being active in support of Israel

Scale:

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

Ask if Orthodox

Q25. Do you support the following issues or initiatives relating to Israel?

- Advocating for a one-state solution (essentially, Israel "as is")
- Consideration of a future jointly negotiated two-state solution
- Maintaining a unified Jerusalem as part of Israel
- Israel's right to build housing in the West Bank / Judea and Samaria
- Israel's right to build housing anywhere in Jerusalem
- U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital
- Efforts to stop the BDS (boycott, divest, sanction) movement
- Bringing Palestinian terrorists who injure or kill Americans to the US to face trial

- Legislation to reduce aid to the Palestinian Authority if they make payments to terrorists' families
- Extending to Jews, who choose to do so in a *Halachically* approved manner, the right to pray on the Temple Mount

Scale:

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Neutral
- Somewhat opposed
- Strongly opposed
- Don't know

CHILDREN

Ask if Orthodox and Q12 = Has one or more children

Q26. How old is your oldest child?

- Age 30 or older
- Age 25 to 29
- Age 21 to 24
- Age 18 to 20
- Age 14 to 17
- Age 13 or younger
- No children

Ask if Orthodox and Q26 = Age of Child \geq 14

Q27. Think of your oldest child. Would you say that child is more or less religiously observant than you are?

- Much more observant than me
- Somewhat more observant than me
- About as observant as I am
- Somewhat less observant than me
- Much less observant than me
- Don't know

Ask if Orthodox and Q26 = Age of Child \geq 14

Q28. Still thinking of your oldest child, what areas are there, if any, where his or her Jewish perspectives differ substantially from yours? **Open-Ended**

Survey Questionnaire (Page 5 of 9)

SEXUALITY

Ask if Orthodox and Q3 = Female and Q20-4 (“How would you rate your personal observance in ... *Taharat ha'mishpacha*) = Strictly observant, Mostly observant, or Somewhat observant Q29. On issues of *taharat ha'mishpacha* (laws of family purity, mikveh, etc.), have you used any of the following resources in the past 3 years to answer your questions? If so, please check all that apply. **Multiple Responses**

- I have not had questions **Mutually exclusive**
- I asked my husband
- I asked our synagogue rabbi
- I asked our synagogue rabbi's wife
- I asked another rabbi
- I asked a *yoetzet halacha* (a woman certified as an advisor to women with questions on this topic)
- I asked a woman who has a position on the shul's clergy staff
- I was able to find answers myself
- None of the above, not applicable **Mutually exclusive**
- I prefer not to answer **Mutually exclusive**

Ask if Orthodox

Q30. Have you ever used any sex education counseling or information resources? Please check all that apply. **Multiple Responses**

- Yes, Jewish-g geared resources
- Yes, secular (not Jewish-g geared) resources
- No **Mutually exclusive**
- I prefer not to answer **Mutually exclusive**

Ask if Orthodox

Q31. Have your attitudes toward sexuality changed over the past few years, in terms of your knowledge, personal expectations, etc.?

Yes

No

Not sure

Ask if Orthodox and Q31 (“Have your attitudes toward sexuality changed ...”) = Yes

Q32. How have your attitudes toward sexuality changed over the past few years? **Open-Ended**

Ask if Orthodox

Q33. Do you have any opinion on Orthodox shuls in general accepting gay people as members?

- I support / am open to the idea
- Not sure
- I am opposed to the idea

ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN

Ask of All and Q4-2 (“Attend services Shabbat / Yom Tov morning”) = Always or almost always, Often or Sometimes

Q34. Think of the shul that you most often attend. Do you agree with the following statements about that shul?

- My shul values the views of women as much as it values the views of men.
- My shul includes women in its lay leadership.

Scale:

- Agree fully
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree
- Don't know

Ask if Orthodox

Q35. Do you agree with the following statements? Looking at my Orthodox community overall, women should have the opportunity ...

- ... for expanded roles in organizational leadership.
- ... for expanded roles in Torah teaching.
- ...for expanded roles in Torah study and scholarship.
- **Include if Centrist / Modern Orthodox** ... for expanded roles in the clergy.

Scale:

- Agree fully
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree
- Don't know

Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1) and Q35-4 = agree to a great extent, agree somewhat or agree a little

Q36. If Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox women are given expanded roles in the clergy, how important is it to you that they also be given some sort of title signifying their “rabbinic authority”?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Not at all important
- Don't know

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 6 of 9)

Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)

Q37. Thinking of the Modern Orthodox / Centrist Orthodox community overall, what are your thoughts on the following?

- Women should be eligible to be shul president.
- Women should be eligible to give *divrei Torah* from the shul *bima* / pulpit.
- The Torah should pass through the women's section before and after Torah reading.
- Women should be eligible to say Mourner's Kaddish or *Birkat Gomel* out loud, even if no men are saying it.
- The shul should have a *mechitzah* structure that is "women-friendly."
- The shul should offer coed religious classes (e.g., *shiurim*, Torah learning).
- Religious classes for women should be on an intellectual level generally equal to those offered to men.

Scale:

- I favor this
- I am neutral on this
- I oppose this
- I defer to what the rabbis decide
- Don't know or Not applicable

Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)

Q38. Thinking of the Modern Orthodox or Centrist Orthodox shuls that you attend or are familiar with, how satisfied are you with their current practices or policies in the following areas? **Items displayed if the corresponding response in Q37 = "I favor this"**

- Women serving as shul president.
- Women giving *divrei Torah* from the shul *bima* / pulpit.
- The Torah passing through the women's section.
- Women say Mourner's Kaddish or *Birkat Gomel* out loud, even if no men say it.
- A *mechitzah* structure that is "women-friendly."
- Coed religious classes (e.g., *shiurim*, Torah learning).
- Religious classes for women on an intellectual level generally equal to those offered to men.

Scale:

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Not satisfied
- Don't know

ISSUES FACING ORTHODOXY – COMMUNAL / SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Ask if Orthodox

Q39. Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community?

- **Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)** Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy becoming more observant (as some say, "moving to the right")
- **Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)** Modern or Centrist Orthodoxy moving "to the left" (becoming less observant)

- The cost of maintaining an Orthodox home
- The cost of Jewish schooling
- The *shidduch* (marriage matchmaking) process
- *Agunot* ("chained women" who cannot re-marry)
- Anti-Semitic acts against community members or institutions
- **Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)** Rabbis advocating for increased women's roles
- **Ask if Modern Orthodox (per Q1)** Rabbis opposed to increased women's roles

Scale:

- Serious problem
- Somewhat a problem
- Not a problem
- Not sure

Ask if Orthodox

Q40. Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community? (*Continued*)

- Adequacy of funds available to meet the community's needs
- Poverty
- Needs of the elderly
- Jewish day school / yeshiva admission policies
- Availability of Jewish education for children with special needs
- Physical or mental abuse (sexual, spousal, children, etc.)
- Substance abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- Impact of technology and cultural threats

Scale:


- Serious problem
- Somewhat a problem
- Not a problem
- Not sure

ISSUES FACING ORTHODOXY – PERSONAL ISSUES

Ask if Orthodox

Q41. Do you regard the following as problems facing your Jewish community? (*Continued*)

- People living an Observant ("*frum*") lifestyle, but with little spiritual meaning
- People leaving Orthodoxy (going "off the *derech*")
- People not being committed enough to their religious growth
- Religious people being dishonest in business
- Religious people not dealing with others with appropriate *middot* (proper behaviors)

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 7 of 9)

- People lacking love for others in the community
- Not enough outreach (“kiruv”) to non-Orthodox or unaffiliated Jews
- Rising divorce rates
- Raising children to have religious Jewish values
- People feeling isolated and not part of the community

Scale:

- Serious problem
- Somewhat a problem
- Not a problem
- Not sure

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ORTHODOX / OBSERVANT JEW

Ask if Orthodox

Q42. On a scale from 0 to 10 — where 0 = do not agree and 10 = fully agree — to what extent to you agree with the statement: Being an Orthodox / Observant Jew is an important part of my life?

Please drag the slider to the appropriate position on the scale.

Slider from 0 to 10 in increments of 1; Labeled at 0 = Do Not Agree, 5 = Somewhat Agree, 10 = Fully Agree

Ask if Orthodox

Q43. Thank you so much for taking this survey. We're up to the final two questions dealing with your views on Judaism. These questions are open-ended so please tell us as much as you like; we would really love to hear a bit more of your key thoughts.

First, what gives the most satisfaction, joy or meaning to your life as an Orthodox / Observant Jew? **Open-Ended**

Ask if Orthodox

Q44. And ... what, if anything, causes you the most pain or unhappiness as an Orthodox / Observant Jew? **Open-Ended**

Ask if Not Orthodox

Q45. You indicated that you are not personally Orthodox, but you primarily attend an Orthodox synagogue. Why do you attend that synagogue? **Open-Ended**

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ask of All

Q46. What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44

- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older
- Prefer not to answer

Ask if Orthodox

Q47. At what stage in life did you begin to identify yourself as belonging to the Orthodox community?

- From birth, or at a young age (10 or younger)
- Between ages 11 and 17
- Between ages 18 and 24
- Between ages 25 and 39
- After age 40

Ask if Orthodox

Q48. What is your Jewish ancestry?

- Ashkenazi or primarily Ashkenazi
- Sephardi or primarily Sephardi
- Mixed Ashkenazi and Sephardi
- Other – Please describe **Open-Ended**

Ask if Orthodox


Q49. Which of these best describes your current employment status?

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Student
- Working or volunteering - non-paid
- Self-employed full-time
- Self-employed part-time
- Retired
- Not presently employed

Ask of All

Q50. What is the highest level of schooling you have completed?

- Less than high school graduate
- High school graduate
- Some college, no degree
- Two year associate degree
- Four year Bachelor's degree
- Some postgraduate or professional schooling, no postgraduate degree
- Postgraduate or professional degree, including master's, doctorate, medical or law degree

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 8 of 9)

Ask if Orthodox and Q50 = at least Some college, no degree

Q51. What is/was your undergraduate college or university?

- Alphabetical list of most common colleges or universities for Jewish students
- Other Please enter name **Open-Ended**
- None, Not Applicable

Ask if Orthodox

Q52. Please indicate if you currently hold a position at an Orthodox Jewish institution or organization. Please check all that apply.

- Multiple Responses
- Mutually Exclusive I do not hold any position within the Orthodox Jewish world
- Jewish school principal, administrator, etc.
- Jewish school Judaic studies teacher
- Jewish school secular studies teacher
- Jewish school lay leadership
- Synagogue rabbi
- Synagogue staff
- Synagogue lay leadership
- Other Jewish organization position – Please describe **Open-Ended**

Ask of All

Q53. What is your annual household income?

- Under \$30,000
- \$30,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- \$150,000 - \$199,999
- \$200,000 - \$249,999
- \$250,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer

Ask of All

Q54. Which of the following best describes your political leanings?

- Progressive, liberal Democrat
- Moderate Democrat
- Independent, not affiliated with either party
- Moderate Republican
- Conservative Republican
- Libertarian
- None, I am not political
- Other – Please describe **Open-Ended**

THANK YOU SCREEN

Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts. Your response is very important to us.

Ask of All

Q55.

- Check here if you would you like to get a free summary report of the survey results.
- Check here if you would you like to be entered into the raffle for a chance to win one of ten \$100 Gift Cards.

Show if either box in Q55 is checked

Please let us know your email address, so that we can contact you as appropriate. **Your email will be totally confidential. It will not be used for any other purposes, and will not be attached to your survey responses.** **Thank you!** **Small Text Box, formatted for email address**

Q56.

- **Ask if Orthodox** We have a few more questions on the topic of divorce and *agunot* (“chained women” unable to get remarried). Check here if you would like to respond to those questions at this time.
- **Ask if Orthodox** We will be doing a survey in the near future exploring additional aspects of sexuality. Check here if you would to receive a link to that survey when it is released.
- **Ask of All** Check here if you would consider participating in other future research on topics of interest to the Jewish community.

Show if box #2 or box #3 is checked in Q56 and no email provided in Q55

Please let us know your email address, so that we can contact you as appropriate. **Your email will be totally confidential. It will not be used for any other purposes, and will not be attached to your survey responses.** **Thank you!** **Small Text Box, formatted for email address**

DISQUALIFICATION SCREEN (SHOWN ONLY TO THOSE NOT ORTHODOX AND NOT ATTENDING AN ORTHODOX SYNAGOGUE)

Sorry, you do not qualify to take this survey, as it is aimed at the Orthodox segment of the Jewish population.

Continued 

Survey Questionnaire (Page 9 of 9)

This section asked if Modern Orthodox and indicated willingness to respond in Q56

Q57. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

According to *halacha* (Jewish law) ...

- ... divorce in a civil court is sufficient to allow each member of the couple to re-marry.
- ... if a woman wants to divorce, she needs her husband to grant her a *get* (Jewish bill of divorce).
- ... if a man wants to divorce, he needs his wife to accept the terms of a *get*.
- ... a wife may not re-marry unless her husband has agreed to grant a *get*.
- ... a husband may not re-marry unless his wife has agreed to accept a *get*.

Scale:

- Agree to a great extent
- Agree somewhat
- Agree a little
- Do not agree at all

As you may know, according to traditional Jewish practice, a divorce is done by the husband giving his wife a *get*, or bill of divorce. If he refuses, she continues to be married, even if the couple is estranged or has a civil divorce. The woman is an *agunah* – a “chained woman” – and may not re-marry under Jewish law.

Q58. To what extent do you think that Modern Orthodox women know about this practice at the time they enter into marriage?

- To a great extent
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all
- Don't know

Ask if Married (per Q11)

Q59. Did you know about this practice at the time of your marriage?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Not sure

Ask if Male (per Q3) and knew about practice Definitely/Probably (per Q59)

Q60. At the time of your wedding under the *chuppa*, did you knowingly accept the possibility that your wife might some day become an *agunah*?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not

- Definitely not
- Not sure

Ask if Female (per Q3) and Knew about practice Definitely/Probably (per Q59)

Q61. At the time of your wedding under the *chuppa*, did you knowingly accept the possibility that you might some day become an *agunah*?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Not sure

Ask if Female (per Q3) and Not Married (per Q11)

Q62. Knowing the current conventional practice in Orthodox marriage, were you to marry in an Orthodox ceremony, do you think you'd agree to the arrangement in which you could become an *agunah* if your husband did not grant a *get*?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Not sure

Q63. Some rabbis have proposed that Orthodox marriages include a pre-nuptial agreement that would compel the future husband to grant a *get*, in the event of a marital breakdown, or, alternatively, annul the marriage retroactively if the husband cannot or will not grant a *get*.

If a close Orthodox Jewish female relative of yours (sister, daughter, etc.) were about to get married to an Orthodox fiancé, would you prefer that she obtain such a pre-nuptial agreement?

- Definitely
- Probably
- Probably not
- Definitely not
- Not sure

A Comparison of Selected Responses to Modern Orthodox Outside the US, Chareidi and Non-Orthodox Who Attend an Orthodox Synagogue

Because the survey was distributed through RCA rabbis, responses were received from groups other than just US Modern Orthodox (M.O.). The latter were the focus of this study, and the data below is presented to show some interesting similarities and differences among groups:

- **Modern Orthodox (Israel) have levels of belief and relationships to their shul similar to US Modern Orthodox, but more observance and Jewish study.**
- **Modern Orthodox (Canada) are older, have levels of belief similar to the US, lower levels of observance and study of Jewish topics, but strong emotional connections to Israel. Overall, they rate being Orthodox as somewhat less important to them.**
- **Chareidi (US) have much higher levels of belief, observance, Jewish study and the meaning of prayer, but not as strong connections to Israel.**
- **Non-Orthodox (US) who attend an Orthodox shul have lower levels of belief, observance and Jewish study, but very strong relationships to shul and tefillah.**

	M.O. (US)	M.O. (Israel)	M.O. (Canada)	Chareidi (US)	Non-Orthodox (US)
Median Age	51	47	59	47	56
Median Household Income	\$158K	\$83K	\$129K	\$112K	\$160K
% Orthodox from birth or since age 10 or younger	58%	68%	58%	64%	NA
Hashem (G-d) created the world. (<i>% believe fully or tend to believe</i>)	90%	89%	91%	99%	66%
Hashem is involved in all of the world's day-to-day activities, and knows and guides the events of my daily life. (<i>% believe fully or tend to believe</i>)	76%	72%	76%	99%	50%
Shmirat Shabbat - Keeping Shabbat (<i>% strictly or mostly observant</i>)	91%	94%	77%	99%	50%
Putting on tefillin every weekday – men (<i>% strictly or mostly observant</i>)	73%	85%	60%	97%	41%
Importance of Being an Orthodox/Observant Jew (<i>% rating at 9 or 10</i>)	73%	78%	58%	94%	NA
Going to shul is an important part of my life. (<i>% agree fully</i>)	69%	70%	70%	77%	82%
The tefillah (Prayer) experience is meaningful to me. (<i>% agree fully</i>)	42%	45%	48%	66%	64%
Engaged in study of Jewish topics daily or almost every day (<i>%</i>)	25%	41%	18%	61%	19%
Women should have the for expanded roles in the clergy. (<i>% agree fully</i>)	37%	33%	30%	NA	NA
Emotional connection to Israel (<i>% very important</i>)	79%	90%	86%	62%	77%

NA = Not applicable (e.g., question not asked of this segment). n = 3,903 Modern Orthodox (US); 182 Modern Orthodox (Israel); 101 Modern Orthodox (Canada); 646 Chareidi (US); 211 Non-Orthodox (US). Note that the groups other than Modern Orthodox are not representative of their overall population, although they are members of a shul with an RCA rabbi – a distinct subgroup of their denomination.

Members of the Study Advisory Group

- **Rabbi Nissan Antine** – Senior Rabbi of Beth Sholom Congregation in Potomac, MD; president of the International Rabbinic Fellowship; summa cum laude graduate of Case Western Reserve University in Philosophy and Religion.
 - **Steven Bayme, Ph.D.** – Director of Contemporary Jewish Life of the American Jewish Committee and of the Koppelman Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations.
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Brander** – Rabbi, Young Israel of West Hartford; ordained at Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and summa cum laude, Yeshiva College, in mathematics; Executive Editor of *Gesher - Yeshiva University Journal of Jewish Studies*; Wexner Graduate Fellow.
 - **Frayda Gonshor Cohen, Ed.D.** – Senior Project Leader at Rosov Consulting; an expert in educational research with broad experience in a variety of Jewish educational contexts; Wexner Graduate Fellow/Davidson Scholar.
 - **Prof. Steven M. Cohen, Ph.D.** – Research Professor of Jewish Social Policy, HUC-JIR/New York, Director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive at Stanford University; noted authority in Jewish sociology and research, author of hundreds of scholarly articles, policy-related reports and a dozen books; lead researcher on the Jewish Community Study of New York and a consultant to the Pew study of American Jews.
 - **Prof. Sylvia Barack Fishman, Ph.D.** – Joseph and Esther Foster Professor of Contemporary Jewish Life, Brandeis University, co-director of the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute; author of eight books and many articles on Jewish social issues.
 - **Rivka Kahan** – Principal, Ma’ayanot Hebrew High School, Teaneck, NJ; teaches and shapes all aspects of academic and religious life at this girls’ school; B.A. from Barnard College, M.A. in Bible from Bernard Revel Graduate School, Certification in Talmud and Jewish Law from Drisha Scholars Circle.
 - **Ann Pava, West Hartford, CT** – Active in Jewish Federation leadership, including Immediate Past Chair of National Women's Philanthropy of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA). Currently chairs JFNA's Jewish Education and Engagement Committee and serves on the inaugural Board of Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools.
 - **Jeremy Pava, West Hartford, CT** – CFO at Aspen Square Management; a trustee of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation; Managing Trustee of the Micah Foundation, founder and past president of the Hebrew High School of New England.
 - **Nechama Price, Ph.D.** – Professor on the Judaic Studies faculty at Stern College; director and an alumna of the Stern College Graduate Program of Advanced Talmudic Studies (GPATS); serves as a Yoetzet Halacha in five communities and regularly gives shiurim throughout the greater New York area.
 - **Rivka Press Schwartz, Ph.D.** – Associate Principal, General Studies at SAR High School; lectures widely both on the history of science and on Jewish topics; Rebbetzin of the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center in Washington Heights, where her husband, Rabbi Ezra Schwartz, is rabbi.
 - **Yael Weil** – Teacher of adult education classes; has counseled brides, provided tutoring for bat mitzvah, ba'alot teshuva and women studying for conversion; well-known guest lecturer and scholar in residence; teacher at Ma’ayanot previously at Yeshivot in California, NY and NJ.
 - **Rabbi Elie Weinstock** – Rabbi at Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun, the preeminent Modern Orthodox synagogue in New York City, member of Talmud faculty at Ramaz School.
- The questions in the section “Divorce and Agunot” (pages 65-69) were developed by Prof. Steven M. Cohen (Research Professor of Jewish Social Policy, HUC-JIR/New York and Director of the Berman Jewish Policy Archive at Stanford University), Rabbi Dr. Michael J. Brody (professor of law and senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Law Religion at Emory University) and Dr. Shulamit Magnus (Emeritus Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Oberlin College and Professor at Hebrew University).

About Nishma Research

- Nishma was founded in 2015 by Mark Trencher, a former financial industry executive, professor and Jewish communal lay leader.
- Nishma Research conducts sociological studies in the Jewish community and provides marketing research to Jewish organizations.
- Nishma is a full-service research firm that supports synagogues, schools, community organizations and researchers. Nishma conducts custom research, data collection, analysis and presentations employing both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. In 2016, Nishma conducted the first-ever broad, quantitative survey of people who have left Orthodoxy (“off the *derech*”), several Jewish organizational member surveys, demographic studies, provided consulting to educational organization, and shared research findings at several synagogues and conferences. Most recently, Nishma has released Shul Survey – a service for synagogues to conduct quality surveys easily and affordably.
- “Nishma” means “we listen” – and our mission includes conducting more than 50% of our research on a pro bono basis, on topics that will promote greater listening among the diverse strands of the Jewish people. Findings and additional information are available at: <http://nishmaresearch.com>).

