



Research in Brief

Gender Differences in the Factors Related to Non-engagement

KEY WORDS: *women offenders, offender engagement*

What it means

The factors associated with offenders' non-engagement¹ in their correctional plan vary among men and women. However, both groups share three common factors including: age at admission, length of sentence, and security level. Gender-specific factors associated with non-engagement could be taken into consideration when trying to identify ways to re-engage men and women offenders in their correctional plans. Increasing engagement through enhancing offenders' responsibility and accountability could contribute to their successful rehabilitation.

What we found

In total, 25% of men and 10% of women were considered to be non-engaged in their correctional plan after completion of their intake assessment. Among men, the only factor not associated with non-engagement was being assessed as medium security level compared to minimum security. Only three factors were important for women (see Table). Specifically, older women, women serving longer sentences, and women in maximum security were considered to be non-engaged more often than younger women, women serving shorter sentences, and those in minimum security.

Why we did this study

In order to determine if factors associated with non-engagement in offenders were similar among women and men, this study replicated previous research.² The current research included factors such as gang affiliation, marital status, first security level, and self-injury, which were associated with an offender being non-engaged in their correctional plan in the previous research. Further understanding of how the factors associated with non-engagement vary by gender will assist Correctional Service Canada (CSC) in

developing interventions that could more effectively address offender motivation and accountability of non-engaged women and men.

Factors Associated with Non-engagement for Men and Women

	Men	Women
Age 40 or older at admission	✓	✓
With partner	✓	✗
Gang affiliation	✓	✗
Committed a violent offence	✓	✗
Aggregate sentence		
Three years or less vs. indeterminate	✓	✗
More than three years vs. indeterminate	✓	✓
First security level		
Medium vs. minimum	✗	✗
Maximum vs. minimum	✓	✓
Any self-injury	✓	✗

Note. ✓ signifies the indicator was associated with non-engagement; ✗ signifies no association with non-engagement.

What we did

This study included 33,022 men and 1,962 women offenders who had a first assessment of their engagement in their correctional plan between September 2009 and April 2014. Overall, the composition of men and women offenders did not vary greatly. Generally, majority of both the men and women were single, aged 39 years or younger at admission, and classified as medium security for their first security level placement. Men were more likely than the women to be serving a sentence of more than three years and to be convicted of violent offences.

The association between previously identified factors and non-engagement was analyzed using logistic regression for men and women separately.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the website for a full list of research publications.

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¹ Non-engagement refers to the denial of responsibility for the offence, failing to recognize the need for change (see Commissioner's Directive 705-6, 2012).

² Forrester, T., & Power, J. (2014). *What factors are related to disengagement in offenders?* (Research Snippet RS 13-10). Ottawa, ON: Correctional Service Canada.