

_____ **Research Report** _____

**Aboriginal Women: An Overview
of the Correctional Process from
Admission to Warrant Expiry**

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**Aboriginal Women:
An Overview of the Correctional Process from Admission to Warrant Expiry**

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January 2015

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Christabel Martey for her assistance in identifying relevant literature, Geoff Wilton for his assistance with the programs-related data, and Stephanie Clarke for coding the social history information in women's files. The authors are also appreciative of the consultations and feedback provided by Marlene Lesage from Aboriginal Initiatives Directorate, as well as comments from members of the National Committee on Services for Aboriginal Women. Finally, editorial suggestions from Aileen Harris, Jenelle Power, and Andrea Moser are gratefully acknowledged.

Executive Summary

Key words: *social history, Aboriginal women, First Nations women, Métis women*

Aboriginal women have been identified as the fastest growing offender population, and have therefore been the focus of significant attention. Given this attention, much is known about Aboriginal offenders' backgrounds, correctional experiences, and post-release outcomes, relative to non-Aboriginal offenders. Less is known, however, about differences *within* the Aboriginal offender population, especially when considering women offenders. The primary purpose of the study was to describe and contrast First Nations and Métis women; data on Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal women were also examined. Areas of focus included information collected as part of the intake assessment (such as demographic, sentence, and offence information as well as Aboriginal social history), institutional adjustment, social support, release-related information, and post-release outcome.

The 626 women admitted to CSC on a new sentence between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2010 were included. Of these women, 124 identified as being of First Nations ancestry, 46 of Métis ancestry, and 4 as being of Inuit ancestry. Given the small number of Inuit women, they could not be examined as a separate group, but they were included in the information presented for all Aboriginal women. Information was obtained from the Offender Management System databases.

As has been found elsewhere, Aboriginal women's social histories at intake demonstrated challenging lives prior to their current incarceration with many of the women having previous traumatic experiences, difficult upbringings, and substance abuse issues. Notably, however, many of the women had some cultural and spiritual involvement in their Aboriginal community (which could include involvement through previous periods of incarceration). As expected, relative to their non-Aboriginal counterparts, Aboriginal women were more likely to be convicted of violent offences, to be assessed as higher risk, to break institutional rules, to be placed in segregation, to be granted statutory release, and returned to custody more frequently.

The examination of differences between First Nations and Métis women suggests differences exist between the two groups. First Nations and Métis women differed in terms of their social histories, offences, assessed risk, institutional adjustment, release types, and post-release outcomes, with, for example, First Nations women demonstrating higher security classification and poorer post-release outcomes. However, in contrast with this pattern, First Nations women seemed to more frequently engage in opportunities during their incarceration. For example, they received more visits, and were more likely both to complete correctional programming and to be employed.

In addition to providing updated and wide-ranging information on the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women offenders throughout their correctional experiences, the current study was the first to comprehensively examine differences between First Nations and Métis women. This information will assist CSC in the refinement of interventions and strategies appropriate for these unique offender subgroups, and lays the groundwork for further research in this area.

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Introduction

Given their disproportionate representation in federal custody relative to the Canadian population (Public Safety Canada, 2012), Aboriginal offenders have been the focus of considerable attention (e.g., Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2012; Perrault, 2009). Aboriginal women have higher rates of correctional over-representation than Aboriginal men, with 28% of women offenders under the jurisdiction of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) self-identifying as Aboriginal (Public Safety Canada, 2012). In fact, Aboriginal women have been identified as the fastest growing federal offender population (Public Safety Canada, 2012), and have consequently also received significant consideration (e.g., Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies [CAEFS], 2003; Wesley, 2012).

Given this attention, much is known about Aboriginal offenders' backgrounds, correctional experiences, and post-release outcomes, relative to non-Aboriginal offenders. Less is known, however, about differences *within* the Aboriginal offender population. While CSC studies have been completed with contrasting samples comprised primarily or exclusively of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit men offenders (e.g., Farrell MacDonald, in press; Moore, 2003; Moore & Trevethan, 2002; Motiuk & Nafekh, 2000), no similar research specific to women exists. Research conducted with the wider Canadian population, however, has found differences between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women (Quinless, 2012). As such, two studies were undertaken, both of which contrast First Nations and Métis women,¹ as well as Aboriginal women as a group and their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The first focused on patterns over time in high-level demographic, offence, and risk information (Beaudette, Cheverie, & Gobeil, manuscript under approval) while the current study aimed to provide a more comprehensive exploration of First Nations and Métis women's correctional experience.

Aboriginal Women Offenders

Many Aboriginal women have social histories marked by challenging events, such as direct or intergenerational residential school effects, substance abuse, or trauma (Russ, no date). In addition, a considerable body of research has accumulated to demonstrate that Aboriginal women have greater criminogenic need and risk than do non-Aboriginal women (e.g., Beaudette

¹ Inuit women could not be examined separately due to their very low numbers.

et al., manuscript under approval; McConnell, Rubenfeld, Thompson, & Gobeil, 2014). Aboriginal women have also been found to be younger (Beaudette et al., manuscript under approval; Public Safety Canada, 2012) and to more frequently live in poverty (Townson, 2005) than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. They are also more likely to have greater previous contact with the criminal justice system, to be convicted of violent offences, and to serve longer sentences (Barrett, Allenby, & Taylor, 2010; CSC, 2010a; Kong & AuCoin, 2008). Aboriginal women are often assessed as presenting a higher risk of re-offence (McConnell et al., 2014) and to be classified to higher levels of security than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Barnum & Gobeil, 2012; Gobeil, 2008). More than three-quarters of Aboriginal women are identified as presenting an elevated need for correctional programs (Bell, Trevethan, & Allegri, 2004), especially with respect to personal/emotional characteristics, substance abuse, and employment. Finally, Aboriginal women are less likely to be granted parole and to be successful after release than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Mann, 2009; CSC, 2010a).

Comparisons amongst Aboriginal Women Offenders

The one CSC study to date present results separately for First Nations and Métis women focused primarily on changing patterns over time (Beaudette et al., manuscript under approval). Relative to their Métis counterparts, incarcerated First Nations women tended to be older, to be less educated, and to receive shorter sentences. More First Nations than Métis women were convicted of a violent offence, yet lower proportions of First Nations women were assessed as presenting elevated static and dynamic risk. Overall, patterns were somewhat inconsistent, with First Nations women appearing to present higher levels of risk than Métis women for some indicators, and the reverse true for others.

Study Purpose

Due to these somewhat inconsistent results, and given that recent research has had a more narrow scope (e.g., Beaudette et al., manuscript under approval), a more comprehensive investigation of the correctional experiences of Aboriginal women was undertaken. The primary purpose of the study was to describe and contrast First Nations and Métis women, although data are also presented for non-Aboriginal women. Areas of focus included information collected as part of the intake assessment (such as demographic information and Aboriginal social history), institutional adjustment, social support, release-related information, and post-release outcome.

Method

Participants

The 626 women admitted to CSC on a new sentence between April 1, 2008 and March 31, 2010 were included in our study. Where applicable, women were followed until the end of their sentence (warrant expiry) in order to assess their full correctional experience.² Of these women, 124 identified as being of First Nations ancestry, 46 of Métis ancestry, and 4 as being of Inuit ancestry. Given the small number of Inuit women, they could not be examined as a separate group. The experiences of these women, along with those of the women from the two other Aboriginal groups, were included in all the information presented for Aboriginal women to ensure that their experiences were not overlooked.

Notable differences existed between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women with regard to demographic and risk-assessment information. The Aboriginal women tended to be younger (average age of 31 years vs. 36 years) and less than one-third reported having a partner (28% vs. 33%). With regard to assessed levels of risk, motivation, and reintegration potential, Aboriginal women were also more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be rated as having high or moderate static and dynamic risk, low to medium reintegration potential, and medium to high motivation to work on their correctional plan. Few differences between women of First Nations and Métis ancestry were noted in these areas (see Tables A.3 & A.4 in Appendix A).

Data

Information obtained from the Offender Management System (OMS³) databases was used to assess women's experiences in the correctional process. Several measures extracted from OMS were examined, such as factors related to institutional adjustment (e.g., changes in security level, involvement in institutional offences and segregations as well as disciplinary sanctions). Community support and access was examined through indicators relating to visits and escorted temporary absences. Involvement in various interventions offered at CSC was also examined and included indicators related to participation in correctional programs, mental health interventions, employment assignments, employability interventions, and educational upgrading. Aboriginal-specific interventions, such as Elder Reviews, residing on Pathways Units or at the Healing

² It should be noted that this time period was selected to ensure that an adequate sample size of Métis women was included and that the majority of women examined would have reached warrant expiry.

³ An electronic database containing all federally sentenced offenders' correctional files.

Lodge, were also considered. Finally, whether parole hearings were waived, types of release, types of special conditions, suspensions, and revocations were examined.

In addition, case file review was also conducted to collect more information regarding Aboriginal social history, which is not generally available in administrative databases. Each Aboriginal woman's file was reviewed and information was collected regarding residential school attendance, childhood factors (e.g., location of upbringing, adoption, foster care), trauma experiences, substance abuse, traditional language fluency, and traditional lifestyle involvement.

Analytic Approach

Given the size of the cohort and the exploratory nature of the study, only descriptive statistics were used. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations are presented in tabular form in Appendix A. In some cases, time at risk was accounted for between the groups of women due to substantial differences in sentence length. The results section will only highlight differences of practical importance between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal women as well as First Nations and Métis women.

Results

The results are presented in three parts. The first section examines the social histories of Aboriginal women as detailed in their case files. The second section presents the differences in the events occurring throughout the correctional process between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and the third provides a separate examination for First Nations and Métis women. Detailed tabular information can found in Appendix A.

Social Histories: Aboriginal Women

There was considerable variability in the amount and nature of Aboriginal social history information recorded on women's files. Over half of the women reported having attended or having had a family member attend residential school (see Table A.1 in Appendix A); however, these rates were higher among First Nations than Métis women. Approximately half also reported having lived on a reserve for at least part of their childhood as well as being removed from their family home (e.g., adopted, foster care). Almost all of the women's files indicated the existence of previous traumatic experiences and this finding did not vary by ancestry. Almost all women had either a substance or alcohol use issue recorded on their file; however, substance abuse patterns also differed by ancestry, with First Nations women more often reporting issues with alcohol whereas more Métis women reported issues with drugs.

When considering specific cultural involvement, many of the women had been involved in their Aboriginal cultural communities, which included activities such as interacting with Elders or participating in sweats (see Table A.2). On the other hand, language fluency in their ancestral tongues was limited among the women, especially for Métis women.

The Correctional Process – Aboriginal Women versus Non-Aboriginal Women

When Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women were compared on indicators of their correctional process, they differed considerably in many areas. For example, Aboriginal women were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be convicted for a violent offence and have received an indeterminate sentence (see Tables A.3 and A.4).

Several indicators of institutional adjustment were also examined. Overall, Aboriginal women had poorer institutional adjustment than non-Aboriginal women (see Table A.5). Compared to non-Aboriginal women, they were more likely to be initially placed and stay at

higher levels of security during their sentence, charged and found guilty of both minor and serious institutional offences, and placed in involuntary segregation.⁴ They were also more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have received warnings, fines, segregations, and other sanctions.

Visits and temporary absences were examined to gain knowledge on the level of community support and access that women had while incarcerated (see Table A.7). Although there were no large differences in visits from partners or in private family visits between the two groups of women, non-Aboriginal women were more likely than Aboriginal women to receive visits from family members. Likely due to this difference, they were also more likely to receive visits overall. The differences in visitation patterns became most marked when the average number of visits and the time until first visit were considered (see Table A.8). Aboriginal women received about half of the visits of non-Aboriginal women and often had their first visit much later than non-Aboriginal women. In contrast, Aboriginal women were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have ever experienced escorted temporary absences. Overall, when comparing the two groups of women, access to the community through temporary absences may have been greater for Aboriginal women whereas community support, as measured through visits, was greater for non-Aboriginal women.

Involvement in correctional programming, employment assignments, and other interventions was examined. Consistent with expectations, given that policy dictates correctional programming be aligned with level of risk, Aboriginal women offenders were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be assigned to and complete correctional programming (see Table A.9). They were also more likely to receive a mental health intervention. Similar proportions of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women, however, were employed by either CSC or CORCAN⁵ initiatives. Notably, more women were employed by CSC than CORCAN. Overall, among women who had participated in these initiatives, compared to Aboriginal women, non-Aboriginal women were assigned sooner to correctional programming, employment,

⁴ In analyses focusing on the number of events experienced, differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women were minimal when adjusting for time incarcerated and limiting to only those women who had a charge, segregation, or a sanction (see Table A.6). In other words, the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women are not due to individual Aboriginal women being involved in incidents more frequently; instead, the overall number of instances is greater among Aboriginal women due to two factors: 1) proportionally more Aboriginal women are involved in these poor institutional behaviours, and 2) their sentences are longer and there is more time in which they can engage in poor institutional behaviours.

⁵ Offenders can develop their employment skills through involvement with CORCAN, which provides vocational and on-the-job skills training during incarceration.

employability interventions, and educational upgrading (see Table A.10).

Events related to release, such as parole waivers, type of first release, and percentage of sentence served, were examined next (see Table A.12). Few differences were noted in the proportion of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women who postponed parole hearings; however, Aboriginal women were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to waive a parole hearing. Aboriginal women were also more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be released on statutory release rather than discretionary release. Correspondingly, Aboriginal women generally serve a larger proportion of their total sentence prior to release. For women who were released, special conditions imposed at first release, as well subsequent suspensions and revocations were examined (see Table A.13). The majority of women had special conditions imposed while under community supervision. Aboriginal women were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have imposed conditions related to abstaining from substances, residency, and “other” conditions specifically related to their case.⁶ Aboriginal women were also more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be both suspended and revoked, with at least half of the Aboriginal women experiencing each event. Furthermore, Aboriginal women experienced their first suspension and revocations earlier in the supervision period than non-Aboriginal women (see Table A.14).

The Correctional Process – First Nations Women vs. Métis Women

In addition to examining differences between Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal women, differences *among* Aboriginal women were also investigated. Overall, differences that emerged between First Nations and Métis women were not as marked as those noted between Aboriginal women as a whole and non-Aboriginal women. In comparison to First Nations women, Métis women were less likely to have been convicted of a violent offence and much more likely to be convicted of non-violent offences (see Table A.3 & A.4). In the cohort of women examined, no Métis women received an indeterminate sentence whereas 8% of women of First Nations ancestry did.

In some cases, differences in institutional adjustment were noted for First Nations and Métis women (see Table A.5). Although likely related to offence and sentencing factors,

⁶ The details of the conditions listed as “other” were not examined, but can include such requirements as to report financial details, to report romantic relationships, to abstain from the use of telephones or computers, or to abstain from the use of pornography. Though these conditions received their own administrative categories in 2011, they were recorded simply as “other” until that time.

generally, Métis women had lower security classifications both at admission and at their most recent re-classification compared to women of First Nations ancestry. For example, no Métis women were classified to maximum security at admission whereas 13% of First Nations women were. This difference resulted in Métis women being less likely than First Nations women to have a security classification change or a re-classification to a lower security level after their initial review. Consistent with these differences in security level classification, Métis women were less likely than First Nations women to be placed in involuntary segregation. In contrast to their generally lower security level classification, however, Métis women were more likely than First Nations women to have engaged in minor institutional offences and to have received fines and other types of sanctions for their institutional offences. Notably, among women who had engaged in these poor institutional behaviours, Métis women typically did so earlier than First Nations women, although Métis women did so less frequently than did First Nations women (see Table A.6). This finding may suggest that although fewer Métis women than First Nations women experience institutional adjustment issues, when Métis women do have institutional adjustment issues, they appear sooner in their sentence.

To examine community support and access, visits and temporary absences were examined. While approximately half of the First Nations and Métis women received visits while incarcerated, Métis women were slightly less likely than First Nations women to receive visits (see Table A.7). When considering only the women who had a visit, patterns were inconsistent (see Table A.8). For example, Métis women, on average, had almost double the number of family visits compared with First Nations women whereas First Nations women received one more visit from a partner or other individual, on average, per year than Métis women. Métis women generally experienced visits sooner than First Nations women, although they received visits from their partners much later than First Nations women. With regard to community access, over half of the women had had an escorted temporary absence, with almost three-quarters of Métis women having had one. When considering the average number of absences among women with temporary absences, First Nations women had, on average, two more temporary absences a year than Métis women.

Involvement in correctional programming, employment, and other interventions was examined. First Nations women were more likely than Métis women to be assigned to and complete correctional programming, although Métis women had similar levels of assessed risks

(see Table A.9). Over half of the women were employed while incarcerated, with First Nations women being more likely than Métis women to be employed, especially in non-CORCAN opportunities. First Nations women were more likely than Métis women to have participated in a mental health intervention. Similar proportions of women of Métis and First Nations ancestry upgraded their education or participated in the National Employability Skills Program. Finally, amongst those participating in these interventions, First Nations women were assigned to correctional programming, employment and employability interventions, mental health interventions, and educational upgrading sooner than Métis women (see Table A.10).

Aboriginal-specific interventions were also examined. Over two-thirds of First Nations and Métis women had an Elder review (see Table A.11). Although the Okimaw Ochi Healing Lodge is only available to women at medium and minimum security levels, about one-third of the Aboriginal women had resided at the healing lodge at some point in their sentence, with minimal differences between First Nations and Métis women. The percentage of women residing on a Pathways Unit, however, did vary by Aboriginal ancestry, with First Nations women twice as likely to have resided on a Pathways Unit compared to Métis women.

Events related to release were examined. Overall, few Aboriginal women postponed their parole hearings; however, the percentage of First Nations women waiving their parole hearings was much greater than the percentage of Métis women, which may be related to their correctional programming being incomplete (see Table A.12). First Nations women were also much less likely to be granted discretionary release. Less than five percent of Aboriginal women participated in a Section 84 release to an Aboriginal community.

For the Aboriginal women released on community supervision, special conditions imposed and subsequent suspensions and revocations were examined (see Table A.13). The patterns of imposed special conditions varied by Aboriginal ancestry. First Nations women were more likely than Métis women to have conditions to avoid certain places and to reside in a particular location whereas Métis women were more likely to have conditions such as avoiding certain people (perhaps due to their higher rates of drug offences), participating in counseling, following a program, or another special condition particular to their case. Over half of both groups of women experienced suspensions and/or revocations by the end of the study period or the end of their sentence. First Nations women were more likely to be suspended or revoked than Métis women with First Nations women experiencing these events earlier (see Table A.14).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to further detail differences and similarities in the correctional experiences, from admission until the end of the sentence, of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women, as well as between First Nations and Métis women. Aboriginal women's social histories, as recounted in their correctional files, were also examined. Notably, Aboriginal women's profiles differed in important ways from those of Aboriginal men offenders (Farrell MacDonald, in press); together, these differences and those between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women underscore the importance of conducting examinations focused specifically on the rapidly growing correctional population of First Nations and Métis women.

As has been found elsewhere (e.g., Russ, no date), Aboriginal women's social histories at intake demonstrate challenging lives prior to their current incarceration with many of the women having previous traumatic experiences,⁷ difficult upbringings, and substance abuse issues. Notably, however, many of the women had some cultural and spiritual involvement in their Aboriginal community (which could include involvement through previous periods of incarceration).

While many unique areas of need were flagged in examining Aboriginal women's profiles, the most notable finding was that the results for Aboriginal women were found to be more negative than for non-Aboriginal women on almost all indicators examined. Relative to their non-Aboriginal counterparts, Aboriginal women were more likely to be convicted of violent offences, assessed as higher risk, were more likely to break institutional rules, were more likely to be placed in segregation, were less frequently granted a discretionary release, and returned to custody more frequently. Given the large body of literature in the area (e.g., Beaudette et al., manuscript under approval; CSC, 2010a; Mann, 2009; McConnell et al., 2014), the present findings were expected. Indeed, Russ (no date) argues that many Aboriginal individuals' involvement in the criminal justice system stems from the many impacts of colonization, and that changes are required outside of the criminal justice system in order to lead to reductions in Aboriginal peoples' criminal justice involvement and improvements in the post-release community outcomes. CSC has undertaken many initiatives to enhance interventions for

⁷ Given the unique methodological approach used in the current study, rates of exposure to traumatic experiences are likely to differ from those found using other approaches, and, therefore, are difficult to compare to those reported elsewhere.

Aboriginal offenders (see for example CSC, 2010b) including the provision of culturally-informed programs, Pathways units, and Healing Lodges – all of which were found in this study to have been utilized by a large proportion of Aboriginal women which will hopefully contribute to improved outcomes for Aboriginal women. Indeed, CSC continues to prioritize the enhancement of interventions for Aboriginal offenders.

The second series of analyses in this report, those contrasting First Nations and Métis women, suggest the utility of investigating whether such initiatives should take into account differences between the two groups. First Nations and Métis women differed in terms of their social histories, offences, assessed risk, institutional adjustment, release types, and post-release outcomes, with, for example, First Nations women demonstrating higher security classification and poorer post-release outcomes. That said, many of the indicators on which the First Nations women's profiles appear more serious are inter-related. For example, policy requires that those convicted of homicide offences serve the first two years of their incarceration at maximum security; First Nations women's higher security classifications are, therefore, partially driven by their offending patterns. In contrast with this general pattern, First Nations women seem to more frequently engage in many opportunities during their incarceration – they received more visits and were more likely to complete correctional programming and to be employed.

While examining the reasons for all the differences between First Nations and Métis women is beyond the scope of this report – and an investigation of Inuit women was methodologically impossible – this overview does make clear that differences exist between subgroups of Aboriginal women. In addition to attempting to further examine the reasons for group differences, future research could expand on the present findings by focusing on additional areas not available using administrative data, such as physical health, which has been found to differ by Aboriginal subgroup (Gionet & Roshanafshar, 2013), or the specific challenges faced by women in reintegrating to their communities. Continued accumulation of information regarding these subgroup differences will assist in ensuring that approaches and interventions for Aboriginal women are nuanced according to each subgroup's unique profiles.

Conclusion

In addition to providing updated information on the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women offenders throughout their correctional experiences, the current study was the first to comprehensively examine differences between First Nations and Métis women.

This information will assist CSC in the refinement of interventions and strategies appropriate for these unique offender subgroups, and serves to lay the groundwork for further research in the area.

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Appendix A: Tabular Results

Table A.1

Social History Factors by Aboriginal Ancestry.

Social History Factors	Ethnicity of Women					
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
History of Residential School						
Woman attended						
Yes	20	17	†	†	15	18
No	80	68	†	†	85	102
No specific details on file	^a	39	†	†	^a	54
Woman's parents attended						
Yes	66	51	29	9	55	61
No	34	26	71	22	45	49
No specific details on file	^a	47	^a	15	^a	64
Woman's grandparents attended						
Yes	62	33	36	9	54	42
No	38	20	66	16		36
No specific details on file	^a	71	^a	21	^a	96
Other family member attended						
Yes	55	21	†	†	40	23
No	45	17	†	†	60	34
No specific details on file	^a	86	†	†	^a	117
Family history						
Foster care						
Yes	61	62	41	16	55	79
No	39	40	59	23	45	65
No specific details on file	^a	22	^a	7	^a	30
Adoption						
Yes	11	10	15	5	12	15
No	89	78	85	29	88	109
No specific details on file	^a	36	^a	12	^a	50
Ran away from family home						
Yes	55	29	50	12	53	41
No	45	24	50	12	47	37
No specific details on file	^a	71	^a	22	^a	96

Table continued.

Social History Factors	Ethnicity of Women					
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Alcohol use in family home by caregiver						
Yes	90	82	82	28	88	112
No	10	9	18	6	12	15
No specific details on file	^a	33	^a	12	^a	47
Substance use in family home by caregiver						
Yes	50	30	68	19	56	49
No	50	30	32	9	44	39
No specific details on file	^a	64	^a	18	^a	86
Lived on reserve during childhood						
Yes	74	80	28	11	61	91
No	26	28	72	28	39	58
No specific details on file	^a	16		7	^a	25
Traumatic Experiences						
Physical abuse						
Yes	92	103	92	35	92	141
No	8	9	8	3	8	12
No specific details on file	^a	12	^a	8	^a	21
Sexual abuse						
Yes	80	76	81	21	80	98
No	20	19	19	5	20	25
No specific details on file	^a	29	^a	20	^a	51
Witnessed domestic abuse in childhood						
Yes	71	52	68	17	69	69
No	29	21	32	8	31	31
No specific details on file	^a	51	^a	21	^a	74
Other trauma						
Yes	93	83	†	†	95	121
No	7	6	†	†	5	7
No specific details on file	^a	35	†	†	^a	46
History of Substance Abuse						
Alcohol						
Yes	93	100	75	24	90	128
No	7	7	24	8	10	15
No specific details on file	^a	17	^a	14	^a	31

Table continued.

Social History Factors	Ethnicity of Women					
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Drug use						
Yes	88	99	†	†	91	143
No	12	13	†	†	9	15
No specific details on file	^a	12	†	†	^a	16
Injection drug use						
Yes	36	20	23	5	31	25
No	64	36	77	17	69	55
No specific details on file	^a	68	^a	24	^a	94
Language fluency						
Do not understand or speak	43	19	†	†	45	26
Understand and/or speak at least some	25	11	†	†	26	15
Understand and speak fluently	32	14	†	†	29	17
No specific details on file	^a	80	†	†	^a	116

^aPercentage only calculated out of information present in the case file; however, the number of case files with no information was retained for more detailed information. † Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5 in one category.

Table A.2

Percentage of Case Files Indicating Woman had Involvement in Aboriginal Cultural Communities.

Traditional Involvement Factors	Ethnicity of Women					
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Ceremonial/spiritual involvement	83	103	72	33	80	139
Elder	72	89	52	24	67	116
Sweat	59	73	54	25	56	98
Sacred circle	27	33	30	14	28	48
Cultural/social involvement	64	79	41	19	57	99

Note. Available data did not allow separate analysis of traditional involvement in the community and after admission to CSC.

Table A.3

Demographic and Sentence Measures

Measures	Ethnicity of Women							
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	% or <i>M</i>	(<i>n</i>)	% or <i>M</i>	(<i>n</i>)	% or <i>M</i>	(<i>n</i>)	% or <i>M</i>	(<i>n</i>)
Demographic information								
Age at admission	31	(124)	32	(46)	31	(174)	36	(452)
Relationship status								
Has partner	28	(35)	30	(14)	28	(49)	33	(149)
Does not have partner	72	(89)	70	(32)	72	(125)	67	(301)
Sentence information								
Sentence length								
3 years or less	72	(89)	67	(31)	70	(122)	71	(323)
3 years or more	20	(25)	33	(15)	24	(42)	27	(120)
Indeterminate	8	(10)	0	(0)	6	(10)	2	(9)
Offence type								
Homicide	22	(27)	†	†	18	(32)	6	(25)
Robbery	21	(26)	20	(9)	20	(35)	12	(55)
Assault	20	(25)	11	(5)	17	(30)	6	(29)
Other Violent	5	(6)	†	†	6	(10)	4	(17)
Drug	13	(16)	39	(18)	20	(34)	39	(175)
Property	9	(11)	11	(5)	9	(16)	20	(92)
Other non-violent	10	(12)	†	†	9	(15)	10	(44)
Had violent offence	69	(85)	46	(21)	63	(109)	31	(140)

Note. Missing information varies by item examined. † Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5 in one category.

Table A.4

Measures of Risk Assessment

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Static risk				
Low	19 (23)	26 (12)	20 (35)	43 (191)
Medium	39 (48)	37 (17)	39 (68)	40 (179)
High	43 (53)	37 (17)	41 (71)	17 (76)
Dynamic risk				
Low	7 (9)	2 (1)	6 (10)	19 (83)
Medium	29 (36)	30 (14)	29 (51)	44 (195)
High	64 (79)	67 (31)	65 (113)	38 (168)
Reintegration potential				
Low	31 (38)	26 (12)	30 (52)	13 (56)
Medium	41 (51)	46 (21)	42 (73)	38 (169)
High	28 (35)	28 (13)	28 (49)	50 (223)
Motivation level				
Low	2 (3)	4 (2)	3 (6)	4 (19)
Medium	52 (64)	48 (22)	51 (88)	44 (198)
High	46 (57)	48 (22)	46 (80)	52 (231)

Note. Missing information varies by item examined.

Table A.5

Measures of Institutional Adjustment

Measures	Ethnicity of Women							
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Security level								
First placement								
Minimum	25	(31)	47	(21)	31	(53)	62	(275)
Medium	62	(76)	53	(24)	60	(130)	34	(153)
Maximum	13	(16)	0	(0)	9	(16)	4	(18)
Last or most recent placement								
Minimum	45	(55)	62	(28)	49	(84)	65	(291)
Medium	42	(52)	31	(14)	40	(69)	32	(142)
Maximum	13	(16)	7	(3)	11	(19)	3	(13)
First security level change								
Lower level	29	(36)	20	(9)	26	(45)	9	(39)
No change in level	56	(70)	65	(30)	60	(104)	84	(380)
Higher level	15	(18)	15	(7)	14	(25)	7	(33)
Charges								
Had minor institutional charges	55	(68)	65	(30)	58	(101)	45	(202)
Had serious institutional charges	31	(38)	28	(13)	30	(52)	21	(94)
Sanctions								
Had any warning	35	(44)	35	(16)	35	(62)	27	(122)
Had any sanction considered for suspension	18	(22)	20	(9)	19	(33)	22	(99)
Had any sanction of a fine	47	(58)	57	(26)	50	(87)	32	(146)
Had any other type of sanction	19	(24)	13	(6)	17	(30)	8	(37)
Segregation								
Had any involuntary segregation	41	(51)	30	(14)	39	(67)	24	(110)

Note. Missing information varies by item examined.

Table A.6

Rate of and Time to First Event for Women Experiencing Events Related to Institutional Adjustment

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
Security level change				
Median days until first change	335	207	303	350
Charges				
Average number of minor institutional charges per woman	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.9
Median days until first minor institutional charge	122	97	120	96
Average number of serious institutional charges per woman	1.8	1.2	1.7	2.0
Median days until first serious institutional charge	264	208	257	140
Sanctions				
Average number of warnings per woman	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2
Average number of sanctions considered for suspension per woman	1.4	1.9	1.4	1.8
Average number of fines per woman	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2
Average number of other type of sanctions per woman	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.4
Segregation				
Average number of involuntary segregations per woman	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2
Median days first involuntary segregation	153	120	154	107
Median total days ^a spent in involuntary segregation	17	19	17	9

Note. Means are adjusted for time incarcerated and it estimated on a per year basis. Median days refer to the day by which 50% of the women would have experienced their first event. ^aMedian total days refers to the total number of days for which 50% of the women were segregated.

Table A.7

Additional Events in the Correctional Environment

Measures	Ethnicity of Women							
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Visits								
Had any visit	53	(66)	46	(21)	51	(89)	58	(263)
Had any family visit	38	(47)	28	(13)	35	(61)	48	(218)
Had any visit by a partner	21	(26)	13	(6)	18	(32)	20	(91)
Had any other type of visit	23	(28)	24	(11)	23	(40)	24	(110)
Had any private family visits	10	(13)	11	(5)	10	(18)	12	(54)
Temporary Absences								
Had an escorted temporary absence	56	(70)	70	(32)	61	(106)	37	(166)

Table A.8

Rate of and Time to First Event for Women Experiencing Additional Events in the Correctional Environment

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
Visits				
Average number of visits per woman	9.5	9.7	9.4	20.8
Median days until first visit	105	100	107	58
Average number of family visits per woman	5.0	9.4	5.7	14.1
Median days until first family visit	134	116	134	29
Average number of visits by partner per woman	9.8	9.0	9.7	16.7
Median days until first visit by partner	74	184	80	36
Average number of other type of visits per woman	3.5	2.5	3.3	7.6
Median days until first other type of visit	225	100	203	107
Average number of private family visits per woman	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.8
Median days until first private family visit	326	215	272	194
Temporary Absences				
Average number of escorted temporary absences per woman	8.8	6.8	8.3	6.5

Note. Means are adjusted for time incarcerated and it estimated on a per year basis. Median days refer to the day by which 50% of the women would have experienced their first event.

Table A.9

Involvement in Correctional Programming, Other Interventions, or Employment Assignments

Measures	Ethnicity of Women							
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Correctional Programming								
Assigned to a mainstream correctional program	89	(110)	89	(41)	89	(155)	66	(297)
Completed a mainstream correctional program	73	(90)	63	(29)	71	(123)	42	(192)
Assigned to an Aboriginal correctional program	53	(66)	28	(13)	47	(81)	†	†
Completed an Aboriginal correctional program	39	(48)	22	(10)	34	(59)	†	†
Mental Intervention								
Assigned to a mental health intervention	34	(42)	24	(11)	31	(54)	21	(94)
Employment assignments								
Any CSC or CORCAN	75	(93)	57	(26)	71	(123)	73	(328)
Any CSC employment assignment	71	(87)	46	(21)	64	(111)	67	(305)
Any CORCAN employment assignment	14	(17)	20	(9)	16	(28)	17	(76)
Any participation in NESP	17	(21)	17	(8)	17	(29)	15	(67)
Education Upgrade								
Any ABE level achieved	17	(23)	17	(8)	19	(33)	15	(66)

Note. CSC = Correctional Service of Canada. NESP = National Employability Skills Program. ABE = Adult Basic Education. † Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5 in one category.

Table A.10

Days until First Event and Total Time for Women Involved in Correctional Programming, Other Interventions, or Employment Assignments

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
For those assigned to correctional programming				
Median days until first mainstream correctional program	142	130	131	104
Median days until first Aboriginal correctional program	231	197	220	†
For those assigned to any CSC or CORCAN employment				
Median days until first employment	87	61	87	45
Median total days ^a employed	264	178	254	168
For those upgrading education level				
Median days until first ABE level upgrade	164	72	111	51
For those participation in NESP				
Median days until first NESP	306	240	306	168

Note. CSC = Correctional Service of Canada. NESP = National Employability Skills Program. ABE = Adult Basic Education. Median days refer to the day by which 50% of the women would have experienced their first event. ^a Median total days refers to the total number of days for which 50% of the women were employed. † Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5.

Table A.11

Involvement in Aboriginal-Specific Interventions

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations		Métis	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
Had an Elder review	72	(89)	65	(30)
Resided at a Healing Lodge	30	(37)	35	(16)
Resided on a Pathways Unit	30	(37)	13	(6)

Table A.12

Release-Related Information

Measures	Ethnicity of Women							
	First Nations		Métis		Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Parole Waivers								
Had a postponed release hearing	12	(15)	11	(5)	13	(22)	10	(43)
Waived a release hearing	26	(32)	15	(7)	22	(39)	14	(63)
First Release								
Has not occurred to date	11	(14)	†	†	8	(15)	3	(13)
Discretionary release	50	(62)	57	(26)	52	(91)	77	(347)
Non-discretionary release	35	(43)	39	(18)	36	(62)	19	(85)
Other type of first release	4	(5)	†	†	4	(6)	1	(7)
Had a Section 84 release to an Aboriginal community	5	(6)	†	†	4	(8)	-	-
Amount of sentence at time of first release	49		44		48		34	

† Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5 in one category. - This type of release is not applicable in this case

Table A.13

Supervision-Related Information

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Conditions Imposed				
Abstain from alcohol and/or drugs	87 (91)	91 (40)	88 (135)	67 (290)
Avoid certain people	75 (79)	89 (39)	78 (120)	80 (347)
Avoid certain places	15 (16)	† †	13 (20)	18 (78)
Reside in particular location	15 (16)	† †	12 (19)	4 (17)
Participate in counselling	29 (30)	36 (16)	32 (49)	31 (134)
Follow programming	73 (77)	89 (39)	78 (119)	73 (317)
Other	65 (68)	80 (35)	68 (104)	55 (237)
Suspension				
Had at least one suspension	53 (56)	43 (19)	50 (77)	29 (124)
Revocations				
Had any revocation	55 (58)	50 (22)	54 (82)	33 (144)

† Information suppressed due to frequency fewer than 5 in one category.

Table A.14

Suspension and Revocation Information

Measures	Ethnicity of Women			
	First Nations	Métis	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
For those experiencing suspension(s)				
Median days until to first suspension	38	44	41	57
Average number of suspensions	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3
For those experiencing revocation(s)				
Median days until first revocation	200	242	206	251

Note. Median days refer to the day by which 50% of the women would have experienced their first event.