

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody – In-Custody Indicators among Women

Compared to other groups of women, a greater proportion of Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women experienced several positive in-custody outcomes.

Why we did this study

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has an ethnoculturally diverse offender population. Study 2 of a three-part study examined in-custody indicators, looking for differences among ethnocultural, White, and Indigenous offenders. This summary focuses on results for women. It is important to identify differences as they can inform CSC of areas for further examination and action to support a diverse offender population.

What we did

In-custody measures for all federally sentenced offenders admitted into CSC custody between April 1, 2016 and September 30, 2018 were examined (N = 893 women), with some outcomes examined prior to Day Parole Eligibility Date (DPED; N = 813 women). Ethnocultural groups with over 20 individuals were examined, with the remaining groups categorized as ‘Other’. Due to sample sizes, this resulted in four groups: White, Black, Indigenous and Other Ethnocultural women offenders. Offender ethnocultural group is based on self-reported data collected as part of an intake assessment.

What we found

Table 1. In-Custody Results Summary among Women

	Black	Other	Indigenous	White (%)
OSL at Min.	+++	+++	---	54
CRS>OSL	+++	+	+	15
Incs. I/A	---	--	+++	52
Any Visit	--	+	---	54
Ed. Ach.	+++	+++	+++	64
ETA	+++	++	++	31
CSC Emp.	++	-	++	67
CORCAN	--	++	-	23
Pgm. Enroll	---	--	--	87
Pgm. Comp.	+	++	--	68

Note. Symbols denote trends in relation to comparison group (White offenders). ○ = +/-2% - = -2% to -5%. -- = -5% to -10%. --- = -10% or less. + = +2% to +5%. ++ = +5% to +10%. +++ = +10% or more. † = Information suppressed due to n less than 5. OSL at Min = Initial Placement in Minimum Security. CRS>OSL = CRS recommended a more restrictive setting than actual security placement. Incs. I/A = Incidents as Instigator/Associate. Ed. Ach. = Educational achievements by DPED of those without a high school education. ETA = Escorted Temporary Absence by DPED. CSC Emp. = CSC Employment by DPED. Pgm. Enroll = Enrollment in moderate or high intensity correctional program by DPED. Pgm. Comp. = Moderate or high intensity program completions by DPED among those enrolled.

As per Table 1, women identifying as Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural were more likely to have initial security placements in a less restrictive setting than White women, and were more likely to be placed in a lower security level than recommended by the Custody Rating Scale.

Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were less likely to be involved in institutional incidents as an instigator or associate, had greater participation in Escorted Temporary Absences (ETAs) by DPED, and had higher educational achievements by DPED (among those without a high school education) as compared with White women.

Black women had greater participation in CSC employment but lower participation in CORCAN by DPED than White women. The reverse trend was observed for women of ‘Other’ ethnocultural identities. Lower CORCAN participation may be due to a number of factors, including participation in other interventions and activities identified in offenders’ correctional plans. ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were slightly more likely than White women to have at least one visitor, whereas Black women were less likely. Finally, women identifying as Black, ‘Other’ ethnocultural identities and Indigenous were less likely to enroll in moderate or high intensity correctional programs when eligible than White women. However, of those enrolled, Black and ‘Other’ ethnocultural women were most likely to complete programs.

Results indicated that Indigenous women tended to have higher initial security ratings, greater involvement in institutional incidents, and a lower proportion receiving at least one visitor compared to other women. Conversely, compared to White women, a greater proportion of Indigenous women demonstrated educational achievements by DPED (for those without a high school education), participated in ETAs by DPED, and had obtained CSC employment by DPED.

What it means

CSC’s offender population continues to be increasingly diverse. Understanding differences across various indicators, including those related to in-custody experiences for women, can identify opportunities for CSC to enhance the support of offenders from different ethnocultural groups.

For more information

Correctional Service of Canada. (2022). *Ethnocultural Offenders in Federal Custody: An Examination of Admission, In-Custody, and Community Supervision Indicators* (Research Report R-446). Ottawa, Ontario: Correctional Service of Canada.

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