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Characteristics and Predictors of Institutional Incidents of Violence

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Characteristics and Predictors of Institutional Incidents of Violence

Laura Hanby

Alexa Hildenbrand

Danielle Hawthorn

&

Angela Smeth

Correctional Service of Canada

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Executive Summary

Key words: *institutional violence, ethnocultural offenders, institutional behaviour.*

Ensuring the safety and security of staff and federally incarcerated individuals in Canada is one responsibility of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). The purpose of this study was to provide an updated examination of the characteristics of institutional violence, as well as the profile, institutional experiences, and individual-level predictors of incarcerated individuals engaging in institutional violence. The sample consisted of federally incarcerated individuals who were identified as instigators in committing a violent incident between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2024 (N = 7,735) and a comparison group of incarcerated individuals with a non-violent incident during the same period (N = 13,019). Incident reports from a subsample of the study group were coded to provide context to the violent incidents (N = 1,410).

Inmate fights and assaults on inmate occurred more often than assaults on staff at men's and women's institutions. Assaults on inmate and assaults on staff occurred more often in maximum security, whereas inmate fights occurred more often in medium security institutions. A greater proportion of violent incidents occurred in the Prairie and Ontario regions. Most violent incidents occurred outside of business hours and in common areas at men's institutions but in private areas at women's institutions, likely due to the housing structure. Most incidents did not involve a weapon beyond the individual's hands and feet, and case management-related discipline and resolution decisions (e.g., incident reports, incompatible listings) were the most common incident outcomes. Use of force by staff was more frequently applied in incidents involving Black individuals, which may reflect differential threat perception or institutional response patterns that warrant further examination.

Instigators of violent incidents were most often White or Indigenous, young, single, and serving a determinate sentence. Overall, instigators of violent incidents presented with more complex needs and engagement in problematic institutional behaviour compared to those who did not instigate violent incidents. Most instigators demonstrated medium accountability and motivation, and completed the programming assigned to them at both men's and women's institutions.

Individuals in medium and maximum security were more likely to commit a violent incident than those in minimum security. Age, Security Threat Group affiliation, and previous violence were also significant predictors of violent incidents. Ethnocultural group was a significant predictor of violent incidents, with Indigenous and Black individuals more likely to be identified as instigators. These findings may reflect systemic factors such as institutional bias, differential surveillance, and broader social inequities rather than inherent risk. Impulsivity and having considerable or higher mental health needs emerged as significant predictors for men only.

The individual-level predictors of institutional violence found in the current study largely align with findings from the literature. There were variations observed by gender and ethnocultural group, highlighting some of the nuances in the predictors and characteristics of violent incidents. While this study used available administrative data and was not able to capture potential aspects at the institutional level that may impact violence, it provides a foundation for future research.

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Introduction

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) is responsible for the safety and security of staff and federally incarcerated individuals in Canada.[1] When institutional violence occurs, those involved are identified by their role in the incident, with the most common roles being an instigator or victim. Institutional violence, for the purpose of this report, encompasses several incident types. CSC defines an assault as an incident where an individual intentionally applies force to another person, threatens another individual, or accosts another person while clearly in possession of a weapon (CSC, 2016a). Institutional assaults can be distinguished between inmate-on-inmate assaults (i.e., when at least one individual can be clearly identified as the instigator of an assault on at least one other incarcerated individual) and inmate-on-staff assaults (i.e., when at least one individual can be clearly identified as the instigator of an assault on staff). Further, CSC defines an inmate fight as an assault that occurs between two or more incarcerated individuals, where all involved are identified as instigators because their roles are difficult to distinguish (CSC, 2016a).

The 2023-2024 Office of the Correctional Investigator (OCI) Annual Report (OCI, 2024) included an investigation into institutional violence for inmate-on-staff and inmate-on-inmate assaults within federal institutions. This investigation determined that the six maximum security institutions accounted for approximately one third of inmate-on-inmate assaults and 40% of inmate-on-staff assaults. Further, the incidence of assaults doubled over the past five years (OCI, 2024). The OCI 2018-2019 Annual Report (OCI, 2019) noted the highest rate of assaults for both inmate-on-inmate and inmate-on-staff assaults, with those rates reportedly tripling in 2023-2024, at the Edmonton Institution for Women (OCI, 2024). At Edmonton institutions specifically, the OCI (2019) reported concerns regarding employee safety and inmate-on-inmate violence toward "protected status individuals."[2] This study will provide additional context to these incidents by examining the profile and characteristics of institutional violence, which may help guide future CSC policy development and practices.

[1] While legislation refers to "offenders", this report has chosen to avoid that terminology where possible to acknowledge that it further stigmatizes those who are incarcerated, and to focus its language on persons sentenced to imprisonment or incarcerated persons. Further references to "person", "individual" or "people" are also used throughout.

[2] The term "protected status individuals" is not a specific CSC term, but rather a general descriptor used by the OCI for groups that require additional protections and considerations within correctional facilities.

Theoretical Frameworks

Several theoretical frameworks have been developed to explain institutional violence. One theory, the importation model, interprets institutional violence as a product of the characteristics individuals bring with them when they are incarcerated (Camlibel et al., 2021). Research posits that demographic factors (e.g., age, ethnicity), personality, and history can affect an individual's risk to engage in violent behaviour while in an institution (Camlibel et al., 2021; van Ginneken & Wooldredge, 2024). Specifically, incarcerated individuals who are younger, from racialized groups, and have a criminal and violent history may be more frequently identified as engaging in institutional misconduct (van Ginneken & Wooldredge, 2024).

In contrast, the deprivation model interprets institutional violence as a product of the institutional environment, given that individuals encounter multiple new stressors during the experience of being incarcerated (Camlibel et al., 2021). Research suggests that coping with stressors related to confinement, social support, physical conditions, and new regulations is associated with whether the individual engages in violent behaviour (Camlibel et al., 2021). Specifically, incarcerated individuals who have poor relationships with staff, are in larger institutions, and are housed in higher security institutions are more likely to engage in misconduct (van Ginneken & Wooldredge, 2024).

The general strain theory encompasses both the importation and deprivation models, proposing that institutional violence occurs as a product of situational and individual characteristics (Blevins et al., 2010). Specifically, institutional environments may act as a source of strain, where adaptation and coping strategies are selected based on their individual characteristics (Blevins et al., 2010; Butler et al., 2022; Wooldredge, 2020). There are a number of other theories that have been developed which place varying degrees of weight on individual incident and/or institutional predictors. However, there is a lack of consensus in the literature on which theory best explains institutional violence.

Profile of Incarcerated Individuals Engaged in Institutional Violence

Multiple risk individual variables have been extensively studied as risk factors for violence. Age, marital status, education, history of violence, Security Threat Group (STG)[3]

[3] CSC defines an STG as any formal or informal ongoing inmate/offender group, gang, organization or association consisting of three or more members. Most Security Threat Groups encountered in a correctional setting fall into one of the following basic categories: street gangs, prison gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, traditional organized crime, Indigenous gangs, white supremacy groups, subversive groups, terrorist organizations and hate groups (CSC,

affiliation, personality, and antisocial attitudes are unique personal characteristics that have been found to be associated with institutional violence (Cihan & Sorensen, 2019; McGuire, 2018; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Taaka et al., 2024). In support of these findings, other studies have found that assaults were less likely to be perpetrated by individuals who were older, had been incarcerated longer, had social supports, engaged in programming, had low aggression, and had no mental health needs (McNeeley, 2021; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Interestingly, Taaka and colleagues (2024) found that more than half of staff assault perpetrators only had one incident of institutional violence.

It is important to recognize the nuances present in individual predictors of violence, such as mental health needs. Glazener and Nakamura (2020) found that there were more violent misconduct occurrences when the institutional population had a higher prevalence of mental health needs. Other research has found that victimization was more likely to occur to individuals with mental health needs that were deemed non-serious (e.g., anxiety; Wolff et al., 2009), and that those with mental health needs are actually more likely to be victimized (Listwan et al., 2014). Although mental health may be predictive of involvement in institutional violence, as a victim or perpetrator (Listwan et al., 2014; Steiner et al., 2014), other research has found that mental health may better be examined in combination with other factors. For instance, increased institutional violence may occur when an individual has both substance use and mental health needs (Henry, 2020; Wood & Buttaro, 2013). On the other hand, while mental health needs are associated with violence, specific symptoms, rather than general needs, have also been linked to violent behaviour (McGuire, 2018).

It is also important to consider an individual's STG affiliation in relation to institutional violence, especially in cases where individual and institutional factors are considered together (DeLisi et al., 2019). For example, in examining behavioural disorders (e.g., antisocial personality disorder), DeLisi and colleagues (2019) found that the influence of STG affiliation became insignificant for predicting severe offending when also considering behavioural disorders. Worrall and Morris (2012) found that there were more inmate-on-inmate assaults when there were more STG groups within the same institution. On the other hand, more recent research found that STG-affiliated individuals were more likely to engage in violent and rule-breaking behaviour (Sorensen et al., 2024).

2016b).

Several demographic factors have also been found to affect institutional violence. For example, Sorensen and colleagues (2011) found that Black incarcerated individuals were more likely to assault staff members but were less likely to assault a Black staff member. Research has also found that older inmates are less likely to engage in violent misconduct (Glazener & Nakamura, 2020; Listwan et al., 2014) and be victimized (Howard et al., 2020), whereas younger inmates are more likely to engage in misconduct (Steiner et al., 2014) and be victimized (Steiner et al., 2017; Wolff et al., 2009). Although little research has compared differences in violence by gender, one study found that male incarcerated persons who engaged in violence had longer sentences, poor relationships with staff, and outside family stressors, whereas females who engaged in violence were impulsive, experienced stress from staff, and had outside family stressors (Camlibel et al., 2021).

Additionally, research has found that victimization within institutions is lowered when there are better interpersonal relationships within the institution (Wolff et al., 2009). Individuals who were younger, White, and/or had a sex offence were more likely to have been victimized while incarcerated (Wolff et al., 2009). Another study found that experiencing victimization prior to incarceration was associated with being re-victimized and engaging in institutional misconduct (Meade et al., 2021). Those who identified as being involved in misconduct reported more difficulty adhering to rules, concerns regarding their future, and a lack of autonomy within the institution (Rocheleau, 2013). Sentence length may also affect institutional violence, as one study found that being incarcerated for violent offences with longer sentences decreased the likelihood of committing staff assaults (Cihan & Sorensen, 2019), whereas another study found the reverse (Sorensen et al., 2011). Further, Lahm (2009) found that staff members were more likely to be assaulted when the incarcerated individual is close to release. One explanation suggested that individuals with no parole eligibility may feel as though they had nothing to lose; however, research found that while there was increased violence during the beginning of their sentences, the rate decreased to match parole eligible individuals (Sorensen & Reidy, 2019).

Characteristics of Violence Incidents

The literature has identified predictive factors of institutional violence at the incident level. Specifically, research has found that assaults on staff occur more often when there is one staff member and one incarcerated individual (Sorensen et al., 2011; Steinke, 1991), and when they are in private locations such as in or around cells (McNeeley, 2021; Sorensen et al., 2011;

Taaka et al., 2024). In contrast, inmate-on-inmate assaults have been found to occur more often in common areas (Steinke, 1991). Further, two studies found that assaults on staff were more likely to occur when incarcerated individuals were in disciplinary or restricted movement areas (Steinke, 1991; Taaka et al., 2024), with few serious assaults occurring in common areas (Taaka et al., 2024). While McNeeley (2021) found that inmate-on-staff assaults commonly occurred during third watch (i.e., 2:30 to 10:30pm), another study found staff assaults commonly occurred during business hours (i.e., 8am to 4pm; Taaka et al., 2024). In terms of weapons, research has found that staff assaults did not often include a weapon outside of individuals' hands, feet, and/or mouths (Sorensen et al., 2011) and did not often result in injury (Taaka et al., 2024). This finding was partially supported by Rodriguez and Waggoner (2023) who found that weapons such as food, liquids, and small items were most commonly used during inmate-on-staff assaults.

Impact of Institutional Environment on Violence

A multitude of institutional-level factors have been examined in relation to institutional violence, though some appear more relevant than others. For example, institutional security level has consistently been found to be associated with institutional violence rates, such that incarcerated individuals were more likely to be convicted of an institutional charge when they resided in higher security institutions (Gobeil, 2014). Further, research has found increased levels of institutional violence in higher security institutions (McCorkle et al., 1995; Steiner et al., 2017) and decreased rates of victimization in lower security institutions (Pérez et al., 2010). Ricciardelli and Sit (2016) suggest that there is less violence at lower security institutions as a result of strategies and services that help facilitate less violent behaviour (e.g., more prosocial activities, strict rule enforcement, programming). Relatedly, a lack of work assignments and engagement in programming has been found to be related to increased likelihood of engaging in violent behaviour (McGuire, 2018). Feelings of boredom also increased the likelihood of engaging in misconduct and violence (Rocheleau, 2013), with lower victimization experienced by individuals with longer daily employment tasks (Howard et al., 2020).

While several studies have found that institutional violence occurs more often when there is overcrowding within the institution (e.g., Baggio et al., 2020; Glazener & Nakamura, 2020; Williams & Porter, 2016), one study found no significant effects of crowding (Howard et al., 2020) and a review found a weak effect of overcrowding on its own (McGuire, 2018). Instead, environmental factors of the institution (e.g., perceptions of staff, physical conditions, rule

consistency) were found to influence institutional behaviour (McGuire, 2018). Further, Glazener and Nakamura (2020) suggested that the effects of overcrowding on misconduct could better be explained by institutional management factors (e.g., staff are unable to monitor each individual).

Other studies have demonstrated support for the notion that the institutional environment affects misconduct. For example, inmate-on-staff assaults have been found to occur more often when there is dissatisfaction with staff (Wolff et al., 2009) and verbal misconduct toward staff was increased when there was more inmate-staff conflict (Rocheleau, 2013). Additionally, the physical environment of the institution has been found to be influential, with increased violence occurring in physical conditions perceived to be poor (Bierie, 2012) and increased victimization occurring when conditions were perceived to be hostile (Listwan et al., 2014).

Current Study

Given the concerns raised regarding increases in institutional violence, the purpose of this study is to provide an updated examination of the profile and characteristics of institutional violence. While individual-level predictors are well established in the literature, this study will explore some of the nuances to lay the foundation for future research directions, such as differences in profile by gender and ethnocultural group. This study will examine the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of violent institutional incidents?
2. What is the profile of incarcerated individuals involved in violent incidents?
3. What is the institutional experience of incarcerated individuals involved in violent incidents?
4. What are the individual-level predictors of institutional incidents of violence?

Method

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of all in-custody federally incarcerated individuals with a violent incident between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2024 (N = 7,735). Violent incidents included all assault-related incidents and death-related incidents specific to murder of an inmate.[4] Violent incidents were grouped into the following categories: assault on inmate (i.e., inmate-on-inmate assault), inmate fight, assault on staff (i.e., inmate-on-staff assault), murder/attempted murder, and other violent incident (e.g., forcible confinement, sexual assault, assault on visitor). The sample was restricted to those identified with the role of instigator in the incident and an involvement qualifier of "committing" the incident.[5] For individuals with multiple incidents, the last incident during the study period was selected. Lastly, the sample was restricted to CSC institutions, including both men's and women's Regional Treatment Centres (RTCs) as well as CSC-operated Healing Lodges.[6] In addition, a comparison group was created consisting of in-custody federally incarcerated individuals with an incident that was not categorized as violent during the same study period (N = 13,019).[7] This comparison group was selected to identify the key differences between those with a violent incident and those with other problematic institutional behaviour, as opposed to the general incarcerated population.

The region and Offender Security Level (OSL) of the incarcerated individuals at the time of the selected incident are presented in Table 1. In each of the study groups, the regions at the time of the incident were more commonly in the Prairie and Ontario regions. In addition, most of the incidents occurred at medium security levels. The proportion of incidents occurring at RTCs was low for both men's and women's institutions.

[4] The remaining death related incidents were excluded (e.g., suicide, overdose, natural causes).
[5] Incidents with other identified incident roles (e.g., witness, associate) were excluded from the sample as their involvement is potentially less direct. In addition, other involvement qualifiers (e.g., suspected, attempt to commit) were excluded as direct involvement is sometimes unclear.
[6] This excludes federally incarcerated individuals at a Section 81 facility.
[7] Examples of non-violent incidents include contraband/unauthorized related (e.g., dealing in contraband), property related (e.g., damage to government property) and behaviour related (e.g., under the influence) incidents.

Table 1

Location and Offender Security Level at the Time of Incident

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 19,300)				Women's Institutions (*N* = 1,454)			
	Violent (*n* = 7,151)		Non-Violent (*n* = 12,149)		Violent (*n* = 584)		Non-Violent (*n* = 870)	
Type	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Region								
Atlantic	8.5	609	9.7	1,176	16.8	98	15.4	201
Quebec	18.4	1,314	17.0	2,065	8.9	52	8.5	74
Ontario	24.2	1,728	33.7	4,091	24.8	145	31.4	273
Prairie	36.3	2,599	25.4	3,084	34.9	204	33.0	287
Pacific	12.6	901	14.3	1,733	14.6	85	11.7	102
Offender Security Level[a]								
Maximum	3.2	215	19.0	2,113	6.6	35	26.7	201
Medium	60.6	4,076	72.9	8,123	70.4	371	69.2	522
Minimum	36.2	2,435	8.2	914	23.0	121	4.1	31
Institutional Designation								
RTC	5.9	422	3.3	399	3.6	21	1.1	10
Non-RTC	94.1	6,729	96.7	11,750	96.4	593	98.9	860

Note. RTC = Regional Treatment Centre.
[a]Security level information was missing for 1,424 individuals from men's institutions and 173 individuals from women's institutions.

Table 2 presents the distribution of ethnocultural group[8] categories in each group, while Appendix A outlines the incarcerated individual self-identification options that comprise each of the ethnocultural groups used within the current research report. For men, White and Indigenous incarcerated individuals made up the majority of the sample, followed by Black, Asian, and Multiracial/Bi-racial individuals. Similar distributions were found in the women's samples, though Indigenous women represented a larger proportion of the groups. The majority of the sample was incarcerated in men's institutions (*n* = 12,149 in the non-violent group; *n* = 7,151 in the violent group), while the remainder of the sample was incarcerated in women's institutions (*n* = 870 in the non-violent group; *n* = 584 in the violent group).

[8] A classification based on an individual's self-identified cultural, ethnic, or racial background, as recorded in the Offender Management System (OMS).

Table 2
Ethnocultural Groups of Study Groups by Institution Gender Type

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 19,300)				Women's Institutions (*N* = 1,454)			
	Violent (*n* = 7,151)		Non-Violent (*n* = 12,149)		Violent (*n* = 584)		Non-Violent (*n* = 870)	
Ethnocultural Group	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
White	37.4	2,677	50.9	6,186	28.3	165	49.8	433
Indigenous	41.4	2,960	29.0	3,519	63.9	373	40.3	351
Black	12.5	891	9.6	1,167	3.9	23	4.0	35
Asian	4.5	322	5.9	721	1.5	9	2.6	23
Multiracial/Bi-racial	1.1	76	1.0	122	1.2	7	2.1	18
Hispanic	1.1	79	1.2	141	†	†	†	†
Other/Unknown	2.0	146	2.4	293	†	†	0.9	9

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Measures

Data were collected from the Offender Management System (OMS). OMS is CSC's mission-critical digital platform used to manage offender information. It supports CSC's operations by enabling staff to store, retrieve, and manage offender data, which is essential for case management, institutional operations, and reintegration planning.

Risk/need variables. A range of variables regarding static risk and criminogenic needs were included in this study. Static risk was measured using the Static Factor Assessment (SFA), which includes the Criminal Risk Index (CRI). The SFA is based on static risk factors to help determine level of intervention and provides a risk rating of low, moderate, or high. The CRI is generated based on the Criminal History Record of the SFA and provides an auto-populated assessment to assign program intensity levels based on the likelihood of recidivism (Motiuk & Vuong, 2018). This study utilizes both CRI total score (0-34, with higher scores indicating higher risk) and CRI levels (based on the score cut-offs used for correctional programming referral as outlined in Commissioner's Directives guidelines 726-2; CSC, 2021b). Dynamic needs were measured by the Dynamic Factors Identification and Analysis-Revised (DFIA-R) tool on seven domains: employment/education, marital/family, associates, substance use, community functioning, personal/emotional orientation, and attitudes. The tool includes a rating on each of the domains (low, moderate, high, or asset/no need), as well as an overall criminogenic need rating of low, moderate, or high. In addition, selected DFIA-R indicators were

examined based on their theoretical relationship to problematic institutional behaviour (i.e., in the areas of problem-solving skills, self-regulation, interpersonal skills, general aggression, general criminal attitudes, and violence-specific attitudes).

Assessments of accountability, motivation, responsivity, engagement, and reintegration potential were also considered. Each assessment is rated on a scale of low, moderate, or high, with the exception of responsivity and engagement, which are dichotomous (yes/no) variables. These measures are based on initial assessments completed at intake to assist in the development of an incarcerated individual's correctional plan.[9] The Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse (CASA) or Women's Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse (WCASA) provided additional context on the treatment needs for individuals that had this supplementary assessment available. This study focused on the treatment required based on the results of the assessment of the nature and seriousness of specific substance use problem areas (i.e., high, moderate, or low intensity, or no treatment). Lastly, the Mental Health Need Scale (MHNS) is used to structure the assessment of an individual's level of need and priority domains for treatment when applicable. Unlike other measures that are completed as part of the intake assessment, the MHNS is administered only for individuals who have contact with mental health services. The last assessment prior to the incident of study was selected and categorized into overall need ratings of no or low need, some need, or considerable or higher need. Individuals without a completed MHNS are included in the no or low need group, as they have not had a need identified.

Institutional behaviour. Placements at a Structured Intervention Unit (SIU)[10] prior to the incident were also examined, including the reason for transfer, number of days in the SIU, and number of previous placements. Institutional incidents and disciplinary charges prior to the selected violent incident were considered. For the purpose of this study, the measure of institutional incidents only includes those incidents whereby the incarcerated individual was identified as the instigator. A dichotomous indicator of institutional incidents and incident sub-types as well as the number of incidents was examined. In addition, any use of force prior to the

[9] Criminogenic risk/need variables were not restricted prior to the incident date in order to include those individuals whose incident occurred during the Offender Intake Assessment process. Instead, the first assessment on their sentence was included.

[10] SIUs are used when incarcerated individuals cannot be managed safely within a mainstream inmate population. In SIUs, individuals receive targeted interventions, programs, and healthcare with the goal of returning to a mainstream inmate population as soon as possible. Incarcerated individuals in SIUs have the opportunity for a minimum of four hours a day for time outside their cell, including two hours a day of interaction time with others.

selected violent incident was measured in terms of a dichotomous indicator. Disciplinary charges are incidents that result in a charge, and are defined as minor (i.e., negative or non-productive inmate behaviour that is contrary to the institutional rules) or serious (i.e., commits, attempts, or incites acts that are serious breaches of security, violent, harmful to others, or in repetitive violation of the rules) depending on the nature of the act (CSC, 2021a). Dichotomous indicators of minor and serious disciplinary charges were included. The overall number of grievances and grievance types prior to the selected violent incident were also considered.

Prosocial interventions. Prosocial interventions included a range of programs (e.g., correctional, educational, employment) and program completion was examined by program type. Nationally Recognized Correctional Programs (NRCPs) specifically address risk factors related to offending at intensity levels appropriate to incarcerated individuals' risk and needs. Program completion was also considered in terms of any educational programs and employment programs. While program eligibility, enrollment, and completion can be a complex issue influenced by external factors, for the purpose of this study, program completion was simplified to dichotomous variables to indicate whether the individual had completed a certain program type. Participation in culturally-specific interventions was measured for Indigenous incarcerated individuals only based on the available data in OMS. This included work with Elders/Spiritual Advisors[11] (documented in OMS through Initial and Progress Elder Reviews) and participation in the Pathways Initiative for Indigenous incarcerated individuals.[12]

Analytic Approach

The results are presented separately for incarcerated individuals in men's institutions and women's institutions. This approach is intended to capture the institutional factors specific to the institution type, and better reflect the experience of gender diverse individuals. Descriptive analyses were also completed separately by ethnocultural group where sample sizes allow.

Incident Characteristics. To provide context to the incidence of violence, file coding of incident reports was completed using a sub-sample of the study group. A coding manual was

[11] An Elder/Spiritual Advisor is any person recognized by an appropriate Indigenous authority as having knowledge and understanding of the traditional culture of the community, including the physical manifestations of the culture of the people and their spiritual and social traditions and ceremonies.

[12] Pathways Initiatives are designed to provide a healing environment for those Indigenous incarcerated individuals already engaged in and committed to their personal traditional healing path with more intensive healing interventions. Pre-Pathways participation was also included for individuals incarcerated in maximum security.

developed to examine incident characteristics (e.g., type, location, time of day), victim information (e.g., victim reaction, staff rank for staff victims), and incident outcomes (e.g., victim injury, discipline and/or resolution) based on a preliminary review of 20 cases. The coding manual was refined once inter-rater reliability was established and throughout the coding process. Several variables (e.g., precipitating events, degree of staff involvement) were removed due to a lack of consistency in documentation. A total of 1,410 incident reports were coded, 1,226 (87.0%) from men's institutions and 184 (23.0%) from women's institutions. This represents 51% of cases from men's institutions and 100% of cases from women's institutions in the 2023/24 fiscal year (N = 2,594). As the findings presented on incidents characteristics are based on the coding of incident reports, which often contain minimal or incomplete information, the accuracy of the data in reflecting the actual incidents may be limited.

Profile and Institutional Experience. Descriptive analyses were used to examine the criminogenic risk/need profile, institutional behaviour, and participation in prosocial interventions prior to the selected violent incident.

Predictors of Institutional Violence. Separate logistic regressions were performed to explore the individual-level predictors of institutional incidents of violence. Logistic regression produces an estimate of the odds of an event occurring, while controlling for relevant risk and need characteristics. In this study, the event was whether an individual had an institutional violent incident. An odds ratio greater than 1.0 indicates an increased likelihood of violent incident, while an odds ratio less than 1.0 suggests decreased odds. The results are presented separately for incarcerated individuals in men's institutions and women's institutions.

Results

The results are presented in four parts. The first section explores the characteristics of violent institutional incidents. The second section describes the profile of incarcerated individuals who instigate violent incidents, while the third section examines their institutional experiences prior to the incident of study. The last section provides a quantitative examination of the individual-level predictors of institutional incidents of violence.

Characteristics of Violent Incidents

As demonstrated in Table 3, inmate fights represented approximately half of the violent incidents under examination at both men's (46.9%) and women's (56.2%) institutions. Assaults on inmates also represented a substantial proportion of the incidents at men's (44.8%) and women's (36.8%) institutions, while assaults on staff comprised 7.5% of the selected incidents at men's institutions and 5.0% at women's institutions. There were variations in the types of violent incidents across ethnocultural groups in both institution types.

Table 3

Incident Types of Violence Incidents

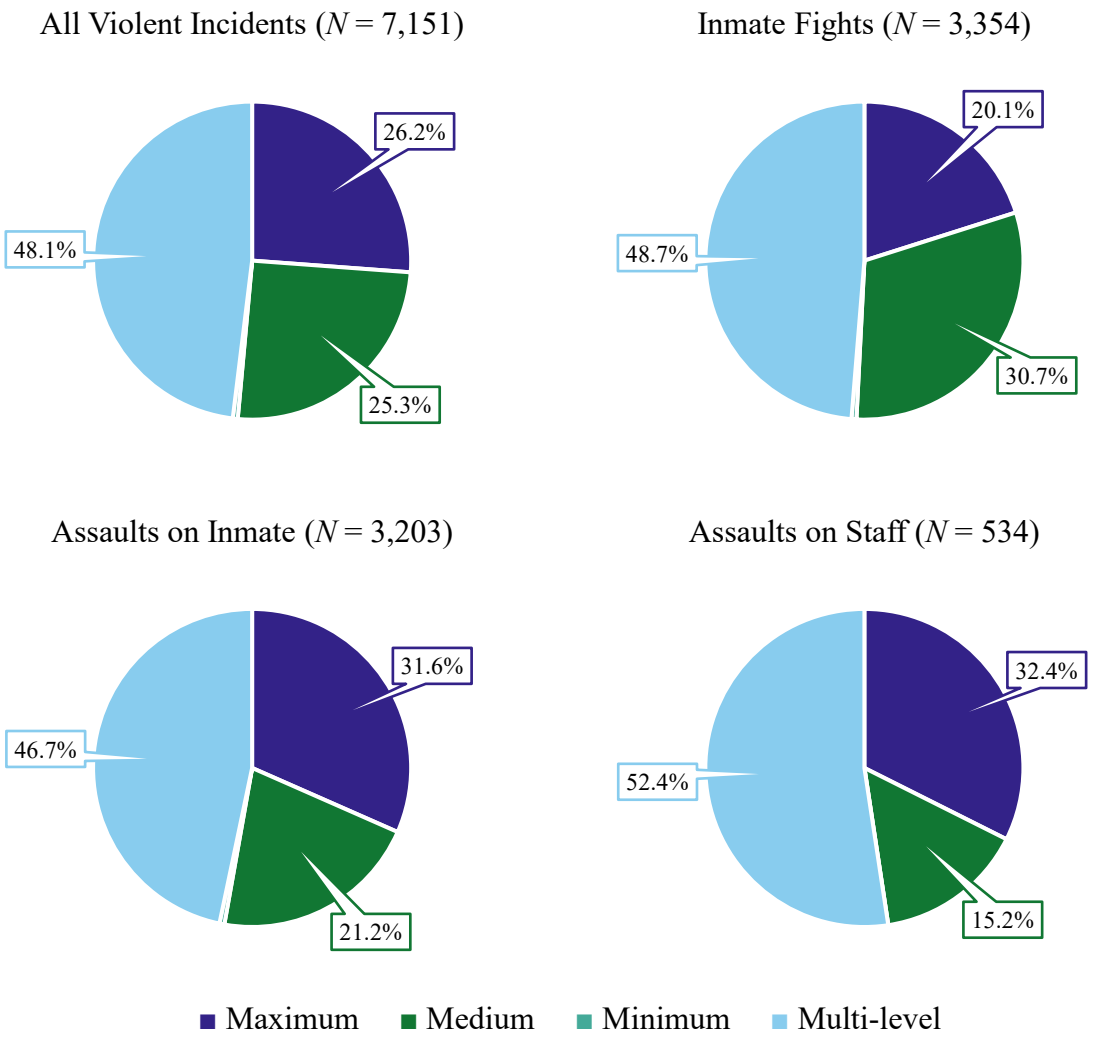
	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Inmate fight	44.7	398	40.9	1,212	53.8	1,441	48.6	303	46.9	3,354
Assault on inmate	46.2	412	50.5	1,494	38.1	1,021	44.3	276	44.8	3,203
Assault on staff	7.5	67	7.7	228	7.4	199	6.4	40	7.5	534
Murder/Attempted murder	0.9	8	0.3	10	†	†	†	†	0.3	24
Other violent incident	0.7	6	0.5	16	0.5	13	†	†	0.5	36
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Inmate fight	65.2	15	52.0	194	63.0	104	65.2	15	56.2	328
Assault on inmate	26.1	6	40.2	150	31.5	52	30.4	7	36.8	215
Assault on staff	†	†	5.4	20	4.2	7	†	†	5.0	29
Other violent incident	†	†	2.4	9	†	†	†	†	2.1	12

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Figure 1 demonstrates that multi-level men's institutions had the highest percentages of all types of violent incidents, while minimum security facilities had the lowest.[13] A greater proportion of assaults on inmate and assaults on staff occurred in maximum security (31.6%, *n* = 1,013 and 32.4%, *n* = 173, respectively) relative to medium security (21.2%, *n* = 678 and 15.2%, *n* = 81, respectively) institutions. In contrast, a higher percentage of inmate fights occurred in medium security (30.7%, *n* = 1,029) than maximum security (20.1%, *n* = 674) institutions.

Figure 1

Violent Incident Types by Security Level at Men's Institutions



[13] Multi-level men's institutions include clustered sites. Results are not displayed for murder/attempted murder (*n* = 24) or other violent incidents (*n* = 36) due to small sample sizes. This analysis was not completed for women's institutions as they are all classified as multi-level.

Table 4 highlights the variations in region, institutional designation, and OSL at the time of the violent incident. The Prairie region had the highest proportion of violent incidents (36.3% at men's and 34.9% at women's institutions), followed by Ontario (24.2% at men's and 24.8% at women's institutions). There were notable differences in regional variation by ethnocultural group. For instance, Black incarcerated individuals involved in violent incidents were more represented in Ontario, while there was a higher proportion of Indigenous individuals involved in violent incidents in the Prairie region. Instigators of violent incidents had a higher proportion of "medium" OSL ratings for men's (57.0%) and women's (63.5%) institutions. This was followed by "maximum" OSL ratings for men's (34.1%) and women's (20.7%) institutions. The occurrence of violent incidents in RTCs was low at men's (5.9%) and women's (3.6%) institutions.

Table 4

Location and Offender Security Level at the Time of Violent Incident

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Region										
Prairie	14.7	131	56.9	1,685	22.6	605	28.6	178	36.3	2,599
Ontario	49.8	444	14.8	437	24.0	642	32.9	205	24.2	1,728
Quebec	19.8	176	8.8	261	28.1	753	19.9	124	18.4	1,314
Pacific	7.9	70	14.6	431	11.8	315	13.6	85	12.6	901
Atlantic	7.9	70	4.9	146	13.5	362	5.0	31	8.5	609
OSL										
Maximum	40.2	358	34.1	1,009	32.0	857	33.9	211	34.1	2,435
Medium	49.7	443	59.3	1,755	57.6	1,542	53.9	336	57.0	4,076
Minimum	1.9	17	2.5	74	3.8	103	3.4	21	3.0	215
Pre-OSL	8.2	73	4.1	122	6.5	175	8.8	55	5.9	425
Institutional Designation										
RTC	3.1	28	5.5	164	7.5	201	4.7	29	5.9	422
Non-RTC	96.9	863	94.5	2,796	92.5	2,476	95.3	594	94.1	6,729
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Region										
Prairie	†	†	46.6	174	12.7	21	21.7	5	34.9	204
Ontario	39.1	9	19.6	73	32.7	54	39.1	9	24.8	145
Quebec	†	†	5.6	21	16.4	27	†	†	8.9	52
Pacific	†	†	17.4	65	10.3	17	†	†	14.6	85
Atlantic	30.4	7	10.7	40	27.9	46	21.7	5	16.8	98
OSL										
Maximum	30.4	7	23.6	88	13.9	23	†	†	20.7	121
Medium	56.5	13	64.3	240	61.8	102	69.6	16	63.5	371
Minimum	†	†	4.3	16	9.7	16	†	†	6.0	35
Pre-OSL	†	†	7.8	29	14.5	24	†	†	9.8	57
Institutional Designation										
RTC	†	†	4.3	16	†	†	†	†	3.6	21
Non-RTC	95.7	22	95.7	357	98.2	162	95.7	22	96.4	563

Note. OSL = Offender Security Level. RTC = Regional Treatment Centre.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Use of Force. Use of force occurred in 29.9% (n = 2,139) of violent incidents at men's institutions and 18.7% (n = 109) at women's institutions. There were some differences by ethnocultural group, with use of force being observed more often in violent incidents instigated by Black individuals at both men's (37.1%, n = 331) and women's (30.4%, n = 7) institutions (see Figure 2). These disparities suggest potential differences in how incidents are managed across ethnocultural groups. While the data do not capture the rationale behind use of force decisions, the elevated rates for Black individuals may reflect differential threat perception or institutional response patterns.

Figure 2

Incidents that Resulted in Use of Force

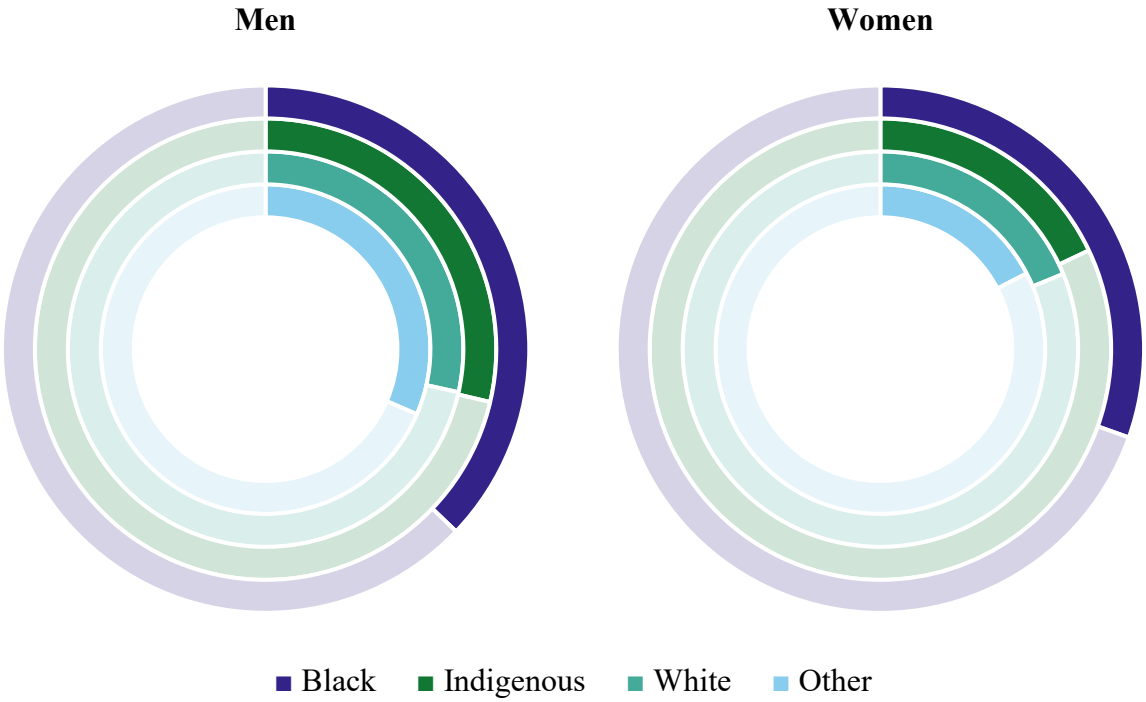


Table 5 displays the use of force characteristics for the violent incidents included in the study.[14] Inflammatory agents, physical handling, and restraint equipment were the most used types of force across institutions. Inflammatory agents were the most used force type at men's institutions, while physical handling was used to a greater degree at women's institutions (72.5%, n = 79). Similar to men's institutions, approximately half of the violent incidents at

[14] Results are not disaggregated by ethnocultural groups for women due to sample size constraints.

women's institutions involved one use of force type (58.7%, *n* = 64), while about one-quarter of incidents involved two force types (24.8%, *n* = 27). In most cases at men's institutions (97.1%) and all incidents at women's institutions, the use of force was spontaneous as opposed to planned. The Emergency Response Team was deployed in only 0.4% of violent incidents at men's sites, and none at women's sites.

Table 5

Characteristics of Violent Incidents Involving a Use of Force in Men's Institutions

	Black (*n* = 331)		Indigenous (*n* = 849)		White (*n* = 763)		Other (*n* = 196)		Total (*N* = 2,139)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Level of force type[a]										
Inflammatory agents	70.1	232	67.6	574	68.7	524	71.4	140	68.7	1,470
Physical handling	26.6	88	29.2	248	31.6	241	31.6	62	29.9	639
Restraint equipment	26.0	86	30.4	258	27.3	208	33.7	66	28.9	618
Other intermediary weapons	12.1	40	12.6	107	10.1	77	14.3	28	11.8	252
Chemical agents	2.1	7	2.8	24	2.9	22	†	†	2.7	57
Distraction devices	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
Shield	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	0.5	10
Baton	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	0.3	6
Firearms	4.5	15	7.8	66	3.4	26	6.1	12	5.6	119
Number of force types deployed[a]										
One	57.5	185	48.1	392	55.5	408	46.7	91	52.1	1,076
Two	27.3	88	24.8	202	28.8	212	34.9	68	27.6	570
Three or more	15.2	49	27.1	221	15.6	115	18.5	36	20.4	421
Preparation type[b]										
Planned	1.8	6	1.2	10	1.6	12	2.6	5	1.6	33
Spontaneous	98.2	322	98.8	829	98.4	736	97.4	189	98.4	2,076

[a]Force type and number of force types deployed was missing for 72 incarcerated individuals.
[b]Preparation type was missing for 30 incarcerated individuals.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Context of violent incidents. To provide more context to the information available through extractable administrative data, incident reports were reviewed and coded. Table 6

presents the distributions of violent incidents that were examined. There were multiple incident types for 34 (2.4%) of the total cases coded, 28 (82.4%) at men's institutions and six (17.6%) at women's institutions.

Table 6

Incident Types

	Men's Institutions (N = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (N = 184)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Assault on inmate	46.0	564	42.4	78
Assault on staff – fluids/waste	6.7	82	†	†
Assault on staff – physical	11.3	139	4.9	9
Attempted murder	†	†	†	†
Inmate fight	34.7	425	50.0	92
Murder of an inmate	0.7	9	†	†
Sexual assault	0.4	5	†	†

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

The majority of incidents occurred outside of business hours at both men's (61.2%, *n* = 750) and women's (62.5%, *n* = 115) institutions. Approximately three-quarters of incidents occurred in common areas (71.0%, *n* = 870) and one-quarter in private areas (27.7%, *n* = 339) at men's institutions. Comparatively, the vast majority of incidents occurred in private areas (92.9%) with only a small proportion in common areas (5.4%, *n* = 10) at women's institutions. Twenty (1.4%) incident reports did not list a location or did not have a clear location. Across sites, most of the violent incidents had only one assailant (65.8%, *n* = 928), one victim (88.7%, *n* = 1,250), and no associates (88.6%, *n* = 1,249) involved (see Table B1 in Appendix B).

Most reports did not provide an explanation for why the incident occurred (58.5%, *n* = 825; see Table B2 in Appendix B). Of the explanations that were provided, incident reports most often described a situation involving provocation or a disagreement between the instigator(s) and victim(s) for both men's (14.8%, *n* = 182) and women's (50.5%, *n* = 93) institutions. Feelings of expressed unhappiness (typically towards staff or the institution) were also commonly described as the reason behind incidents for both men's (13.1%, *n* = 160) and women's (7.6%, *n* = 14) institutions. Other coded explanations included gang or debt-related incidents.

The majority of incidents were committed without a weapon (e.g., using hands or feet) in both men's (79.4%) and women's (85.9%) institutions (see Table 7). Over half of incarcerated victims at women's institutions reportedly fought back when assaulted (58.5%, *n* = 100)

compared to less than half of incarcerated victims at men's institutions (48.5%, *n* = 487; see Table B3 in Appendix B).

Table 7

Types of Weapons Used

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (*N* = 184)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Weaponless[a]	79.4	974	85.9	158
Physical weapon	12.5	245	12.5	23
Fluid/waste/food	10.4	127	8.2	15
No weapon[a]	2.3	28	†	†
Other	1.7	21	†	†
Barricading cell	0.5	6	†	†

Note. Each incident could have more than one weapon type used.
[a] "Weaponless" refers to violent physical actions without a weapon (e.g., punching, shoving, biting), while "no weapon" applies to non-physical actions or intimidation (e.g., verbal threats, posturing).
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category

Out of the incident reports reviewed, approximately a third (37.2%, *n* = 525) resulted in some level of victim injury (see Table 8), though the level of injury was unclear or not described in a substantial portion of the reports (39.4%, *n* = 555). Medical attention was required or suggested in over half of the incidents (53.8%), with the violent incidents resulting in moderate to severe levels of injury in 18.4% of reports at men's institutions and 10.3% at women's institutions.

Table 8

Level of Injury and Medical Attention

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (*N* = 184)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Level of injury				
None	23.7	290	21.7	40
Minor	16.3	200	38.6	71
Moderate to severe	18.4	226	10.3	19
Death	0.7	9	†	†
Unclear/not described	40.9	501	29.3	54
Medical attention required/suggested				
Yes	52.4	642	63.0	116
No	47.6	584	37.0	68

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Multiple resolution or disciplinary measures were often recorded per incident (see Table 9). The most common outcome for incidents involved case management related outcomes[15] for both men's (57.7%) and women's (48.9%) institutions. Over half (51.8%) of the incidents that occurred at men's institutions also resulted in asking the incarcerated individuals involved in the incident and/or the entire range or unit to return to their cells. Almost one-fifth (19.5%) of the coded incidents resulted in returning to a normal routine with no disciplinary measures according to the information available.

Table 9

Incident Discipline and Resolution Outcomes

	Men's Institutions (N = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (N = 184)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*
Case management related outcomes	57.7	708	48.9	90
Return to cell or lock up	51.8	635	31.5	58
Normal routine and/or no disciplinary measures	21.0	257	9.8	18
Police reports and charges	16.4	201	6.0	11
Victim movement	15.2	186	28.3	52
Internal transfer for instigator[a]	12.6	155	23.9	44
Mediation	8.6	106	16.3	30
Involuntary transfer for instigator	7.1	87	†	†
Change in movement for instigator	6.4	78	14.7	27
Institutional charges	5.9	72	18.5	34
Informal resolution between incarcerated individuals	4.9	60	†	†
Mental health referral	1.0	12	†	†
Other	7.6	93	10.3	19

Note. Each incident could have more than one discipline or resolution outcome.
[a] "Internal transfer for instigator" refers to outcomes where the instigator was transferred internally within the institution (i.e., to a different cell, unit, range, etc.).
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

[15] Case management related outcomes included receiving an offence report, notifying management, requiring a new incompatible listing between incarcerated individuals, or a security review.

Profile of Instigators of Violent Incidents

The profile of incarcerated individuals responsible for instigating violent incidents was examined in terms of their demographic characteristics, sentence and offence information, and risk, need, and engagement indicators. Overall, at both men's and women's institutions, incarcerated individuals involved in violent incidents presented with unique and complex needs.

Demographic Characteristics. Overall, the data shows a significant representation of younger age groups and single marital status in both men's and women's institutions (see Table 10). Across institutions, the instigators of violence were typically in the range of 18-29 years (37.6% at men's institutions and 42.0% at women's) or 30-39 years (38.6% at men's institutions and 41.1% at women's). Most individuals involved in violent incidents at women's institutions were single (70.7%), while 55.2% of those at men's institutions were single.

There is a noteworthy difference in the distribution of age and marital status across ethnocultural groups in the sample. For example, the majority of Black (47.4%) and Other ethnocultural groups (49.9%) at men's institutions were aged 18-29 and Indigenous individuals were also highly represented in the 18-29 age group (40.9%). White individuals were more evenly distributed, with significant representation in the 30-39 age group (39.2%). At women's institutions, a large majority of Indigenous women (76.7%) involved in violent incidents are single, whereas the frequency of being married/common law is relatively lower among Indigenous women (15.5%).

Table 10

Demographic Characteristics

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Age										
18-29 years old	47.4	422	40.9	1,212	27.7	742	49.9	237	37.6	2,687
30-39 years old	37.8	337	39.0	1,154	39.2	1,050	34.8	217	38.6	2,758
40-49 years old	10.7	95	13.5	400	18.4	492	11.4	71	14.8	1,058
50-59 years old	3.3	29	5.3	157	9.9	266	2.7	17	6.6	179
60+ years old	0.9	8	1.3	37	4.7	127	1.1	7	2.5	179
Marital status										
Single	41.3	368	59.9	1,773	56.6	1,514	47.0	293	55.2	3,948
Common Law/Married	30.3	270	27.9	825	26.3	704	24.1	150	27.3	1,949
Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	1.5	13	2.1	61	4.6	123	3.4	21	3.0	218
Not Specified	26.9	240	10.2	301	12.6	336	25.5	159	14.5	1,036
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Age										
18-29 years old	47.8	11	43.4	162	38.2	63	39.1	9	42.0	245
30-39 years old	34.8	8	43.7	163	36.4	60	39.1	9	41.1	240
40-49 years old	†	†	11.3	42	15.2	25	†	†	12.7	74
50-59 years old	†	†	1.6	6	5.5	9	†	†	2.9	17
60+ years old	†	†	†	†	4.8	8	†	†	1.4	8
Marital status										
Single	56.5	13	76.7	286	60.0	99	65.2	15	70.7	413
Common Law/Married	26.1	6	15.5	58	25.5	42	†	†	18.3	107
Divorced/ Widowed/ Separated	†	†	2.7	10	6.7	11	†	†	4.3	25
Not Specified	†	†	5.1	19	7.9	13	†	†	6.7	39

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Offence and Sentence Information. Table 11 presents the findings related to violent offences, sentence types, and sentence numbers across different ethnocultural groups. At men's

institutions, a high proportion of individuals involved in violent incidents were convicted of violent offences (75.9%), with similar distributions by race. At women's institutions, 69.5% of those instigating violent incidents were convicted of a violent offence, with higher proportions amongst Black and Indigenous individuals relative to White and Other ethnocultural groups.

Table 11

Sentence and Offence Characteristics

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Violent offence[a]	74.7	659	79.9	2,358	72.9	1,945	71.1	441	75.9	5,403
Sentence type										
Determinate	78.9	703	84.0	2,486	83.5	2,236	82.7	515	83.1	5,940
Indeterminate	21.1	188	16.0	474	16.5	441	17.3	108	16.9	1,211
Sentence number										
One	75.3	671	63.5	1,879	57.3	1,534	83.8	522	64.4	4,606
Two	20.2	180	23.0	682	24.2	649	13.0	81	22.3	1,592
Three or more	4.5	40	13.5	399	18.5	494	3.2	20	13.3	953
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Violent offence[b]	73.9	17	75.3	281	55.8	92	68.2	22	69.5	412
Sentence type										
Determinate	82.6	19	91.4	341	92.7	153	91.3	21	91.4	534
Indeterminate	†	†	8.6	32	7.3	12	†	†	8.6	50
Sentence number										
One	87.0	20	79.4	296	80.6	133	87.0	20	80.3	469
Two	†	†	16.1	60	11.5	19	†	†	14.4	84
Three or more	†	†	4.6	17	7.9	13	†	†	5.3	31

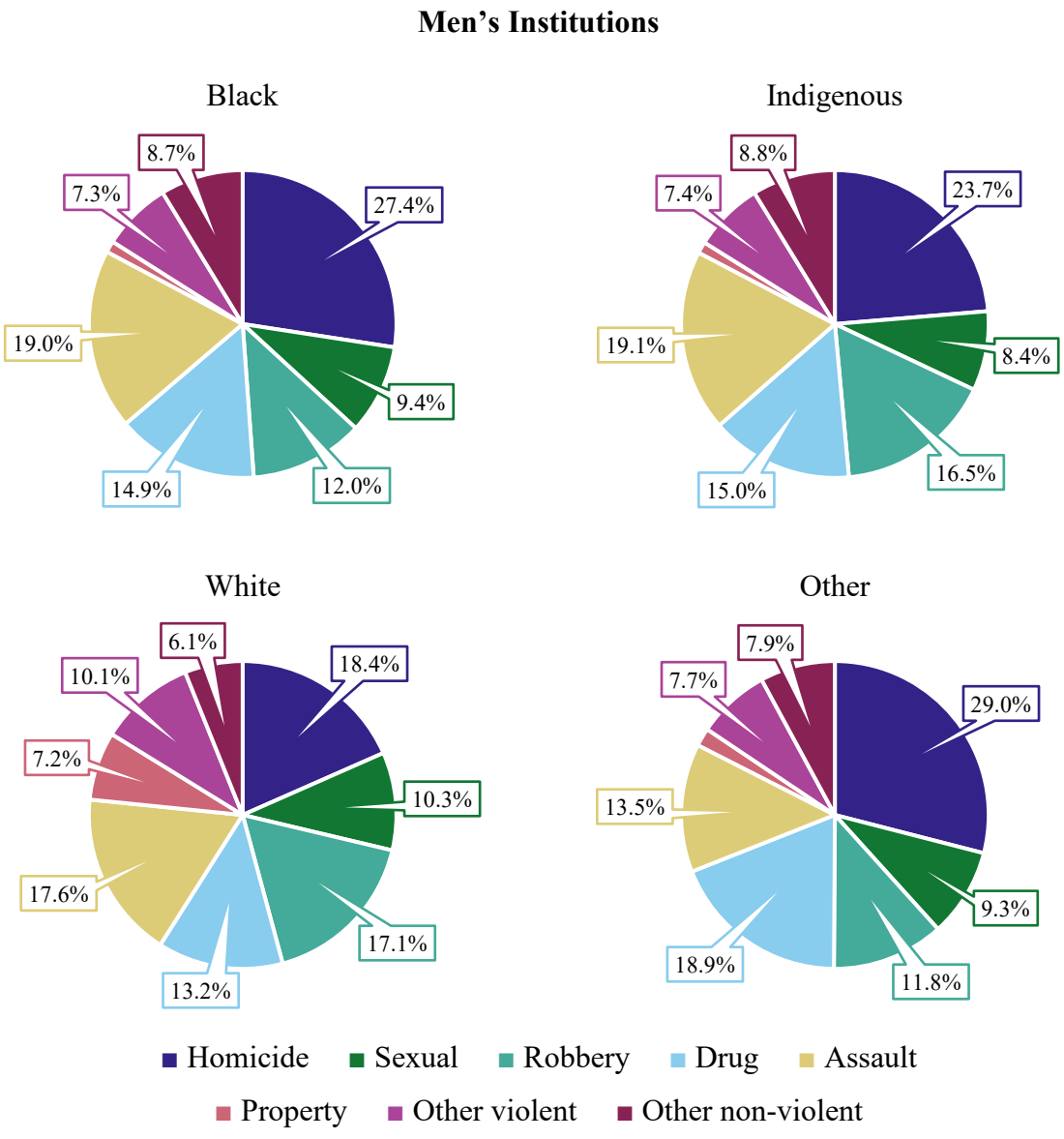
Note. Violent offence refers to Schedule 1 or homicide offences.
[a]Violent offence was missing for 28 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions.
[b]Violent offence was missing for one incarcerated individual from women's institutions.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

The majority of sentences were determinate at men's (83.1%) and women's (91.4%) institutions. The mean sentence length was 1,821 days (*SD* = 1,304) at men's institutions and 1,375 days (*SD* = 878) at women's institutions. Most of the instigators of violence at women's institutions were serving their first sentence (80.3%), whereas there was more variability in sentence number amongst men. While 64.4% of those in men's institutions were serving their first sentence, 22.3% were on their second sentences and 13.3% had three or more sentences.

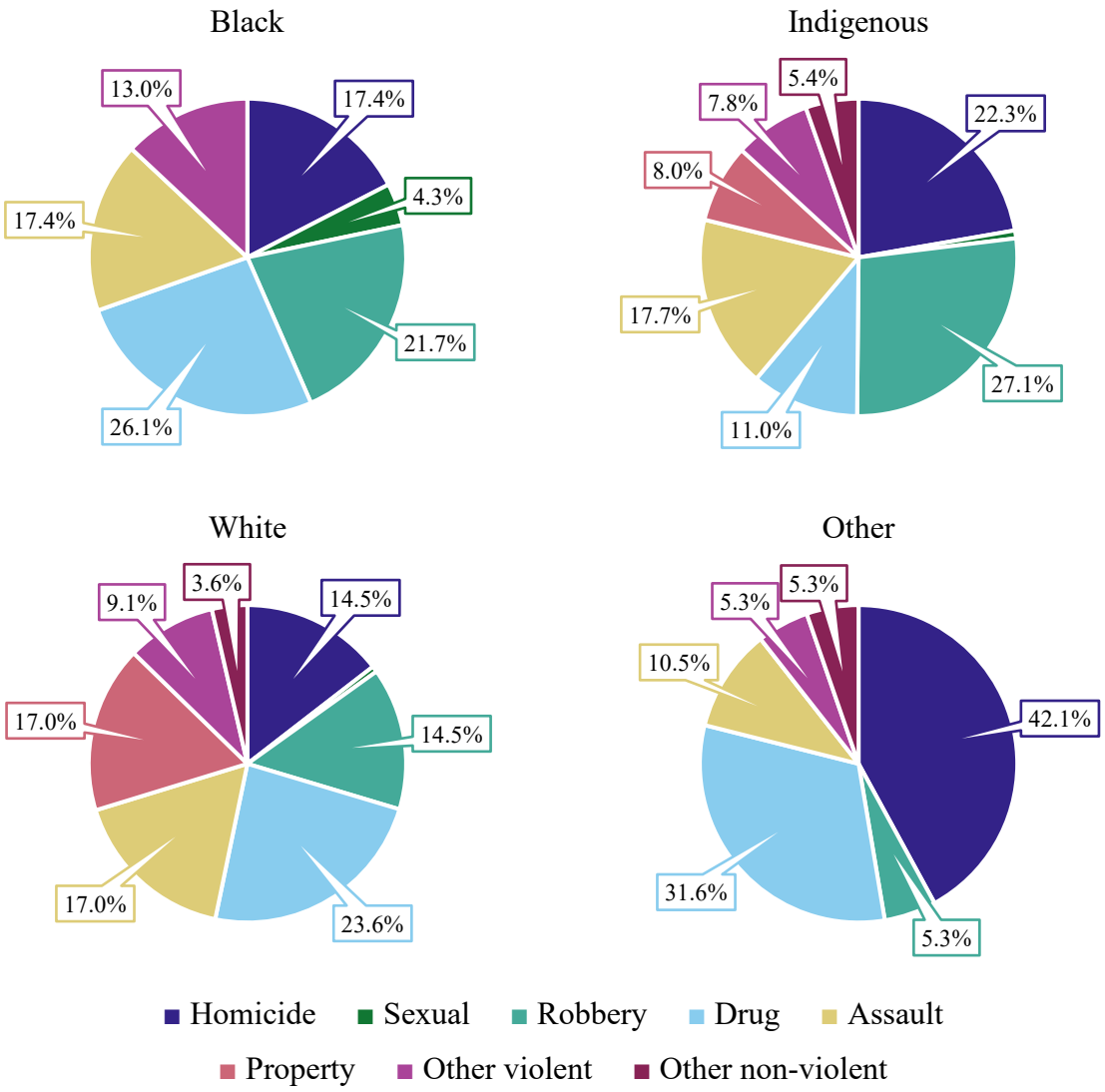
Figure 3 demonstrates the offence types in both men's and women's institutions, with notable variations in the prevalence of specific offences among different ethnocultural groups. Approximately one-fifth of the individuals involved in violent incidents had committed homicide-related offences (22.5% at men's institutions and 20.4% at women's institutions). Assault-related offences also comprised about one-fifth of the sample, with 20.0% at men's institutions and 17.2% at women's institutions.

Figure 3

Offence Types



Women's Institutions



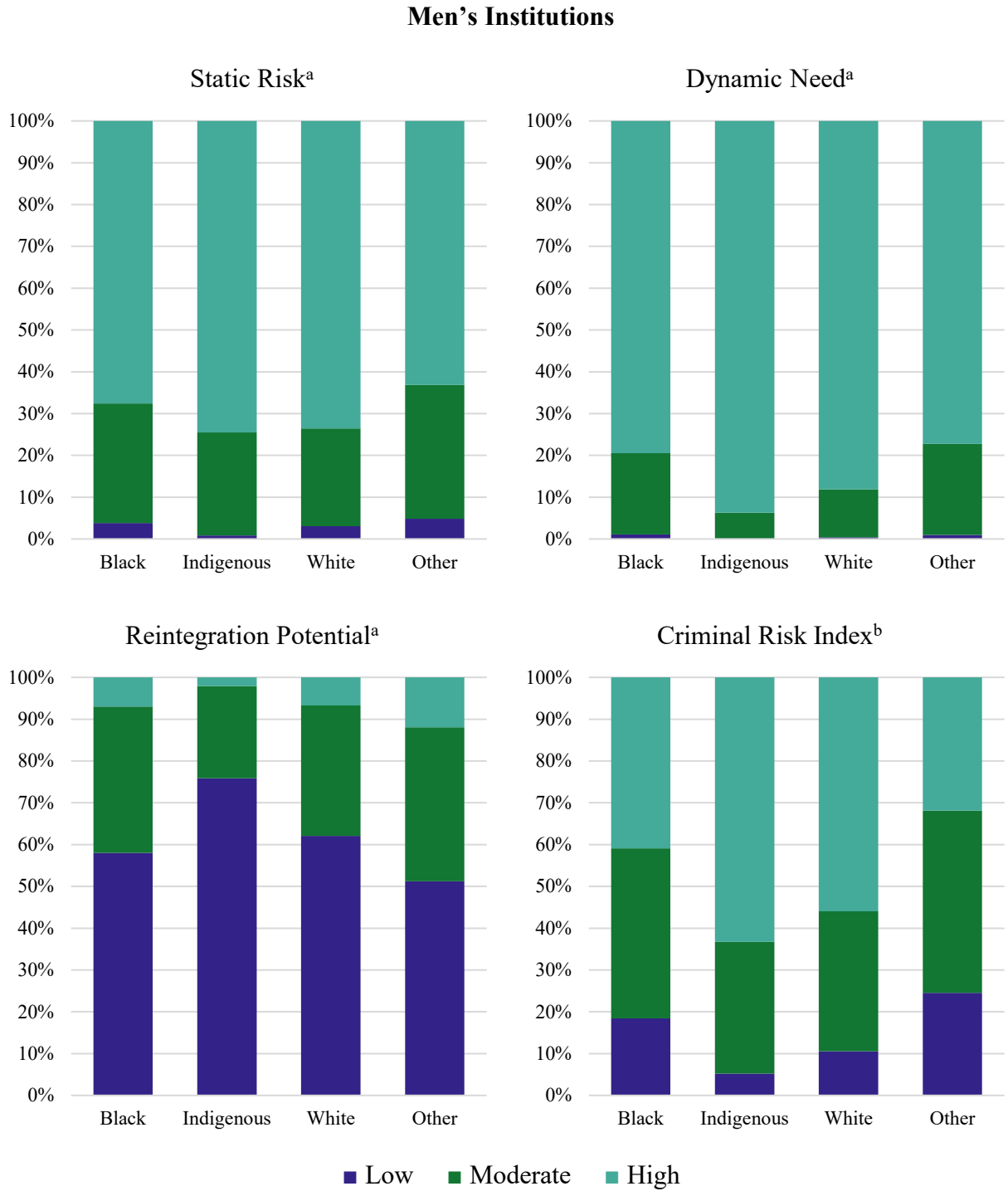
Criminogenic Risk and Need Characteristics. Measures of risk and need at intake are displayed in Figure 4. At men's institutions, instigators of violent incidents are primarily rated as "high" (72.3%) or "medium" (25.3%) static risk as intake. Though there are some fluctuations by ethnocultural group, this pattern is also observed in dynamic risk, with 88.4% assessed as "high." More variability was observed in risk levels based on the CRI, which focuses solely on criminal history, with 55.0% rated "high" and 34.4% rated "moderate." Most instigators of violent incidents are considered to have "low" (66.3%) or "moderate" (28.4%) reintegration potential.

At women's institutions, instigators of violent incidents demonstrated more variability in their risk and need profile. Approximately half of the sample was rated "high" in static risk

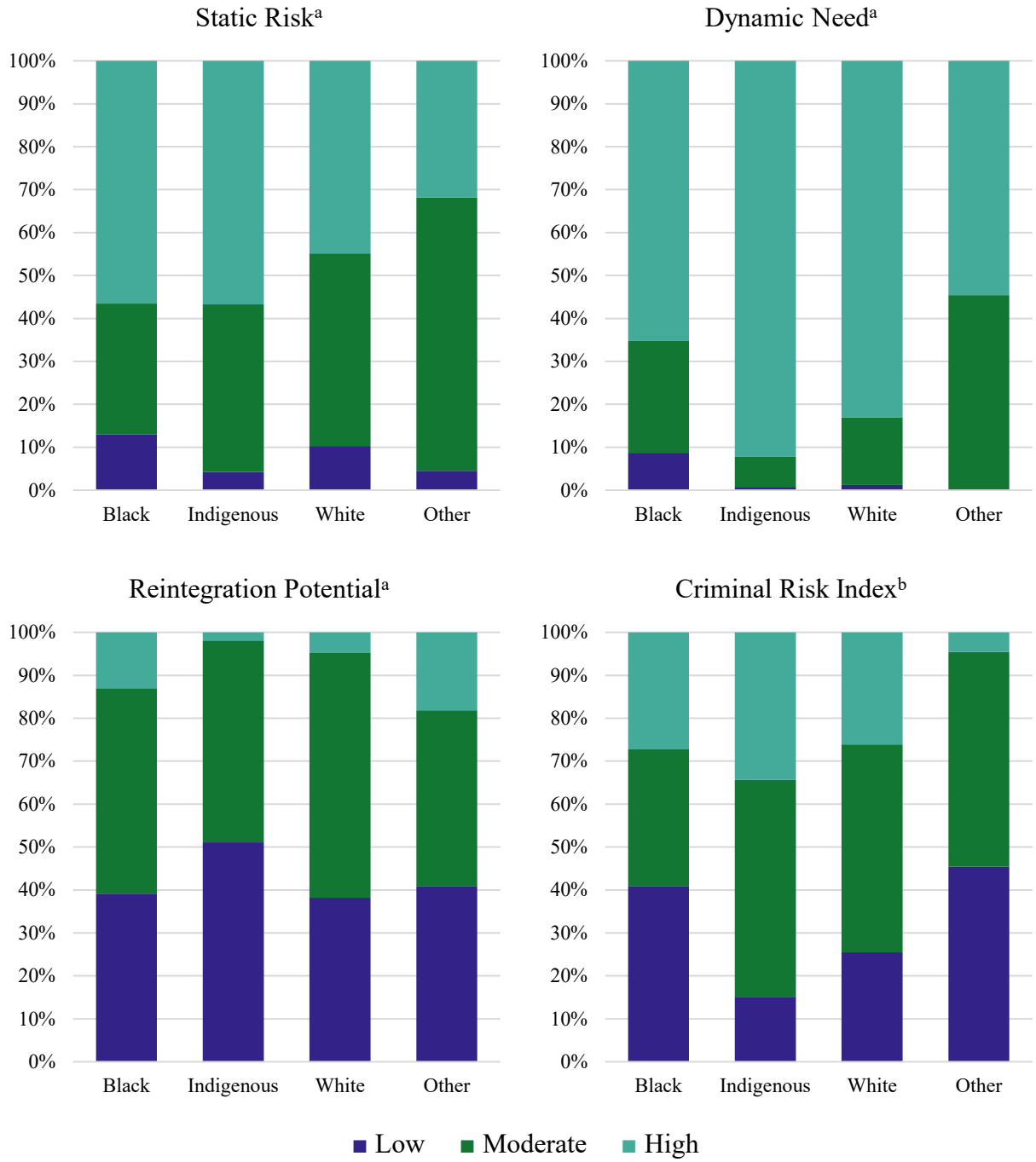
(52.4%), with a substantial proportion rated “moderate” (41.2%). Likewise, instigators of violent incidents at women’s institutions had “medium” (49.7%) or “low” (46.6%) levels of reintegration potential. CRI levels were also varied with “moderate” (49.2%) and “high” (30.6%) levels. Similar to men’s institutions, the majority of individuals fall into the “high” risk category of dynamic need. There was considerable variability in dynamic need by ethnocultural group, ranging from 54.4% amongst Other ethnocultural groups to 92.2% amongst Indigenous individuals rated “high.”

Figure 4

Measures of Risk and Need at Intake



Women's Institutions



[a]Risk, need, and reintegration potential information was missing for 13 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions and two incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.
[b]Criminal Risk Index information was missing for 158 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions and 15 incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.

Table 12 presents a more in-depth examination of dynamic need domains. At men's institutions, instigators of violent incidents demonstrate the highest levels of need amongst the personal/emotional (90.4%), attitudes (88.2%), and associates (82.2%) domains. While the levels of need are consistent across ethnocultural groups for these domains, there was more variability in dynamic need for other domains. For instance, Indigenous (92.5%) and White (83.4%) individuals involved in violent incidents showed higher levels of need in substance use than Black (40.2%) or Other ethnocultural groups (61.2%). Instigators of violent incidents at women's institutions demonstrate high need amongst most domains, and particularly in the personal/emotional (96.2%), substance use (92.8%), and associates (90.9%) domains.

Table 12

Dynamic Need Domains at Intake

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions[a]	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Associates	85.1	735	85.8	2,419	77.4	1,913	81.2	491	82.2	5,558
Attitudes	90.7	784	86.6	2,442	89.1	2,203	88.3	534	88.2	5,963
Community	32.1	277	51.9	1,463	38.2	944	31.7	192	42.6	2,876
Employment	73.3	633	86.7	2,446	64.7	1,599	66.4	402	75.1	5,080
Marital/family	28.0	242	55.6	1,568	44.3	1,094	32.7	198	45.9	6,759
Personal/emotional	85.4	738	93.0	2,623	90.3	2,231	86.1	521	90.4	6,113
Substance use	40.2	347	92.5	2,610	83.4	2,060	61.2	370	79.7	5,387
Women's Institutions[b]	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Associates	87.0	20	95.6	348	83.4	136	72.7	16	90.9	520
Attitudes	82.6	19	76.9	280	76.7	125	77.3	17	77.1	441
Community	56.5	13	82.7	301	58.9	96	50.0	11	73.6	421
Employment	73.9	17	83.0	302	63.8	104	68.2	15	76.6	438
Marital/family	56.5	13	86.8	316	62.0	101	63.6	14	77.6	444
Personal/emotional	78.3	18	97.0	353	96.9	158	95.5	21	96.2	550
Substance use	78.3	18	97.0	353	88.3	144	72.7	16	92.8	531

Note. Need was determined as having a rating of "Moderate Need for Improvement" or "High Need for Improvement."

[a]Dynamic need domain ratings were missing for 389 to 392 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions.

[b]Dynamic need domain ratings were missing for 12 incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.

A number of dynamic need indicators that are theoretically linked to violence (e.g., self-regulation, problem solving skills, violence-specific attitudes) were examined for further analysis (see Appendix C). Across institutions, a vast majority of instigators of violent incidents demonstrated moderate to high levels of need in impulsivity (88.2% at men's and 89.1% at women's institutions) and a limited ability to generate choices (81.4% at men's institutions and 87.5% at women's). Those involved in violent incidents also displayed difficulties in solving interpersonal problems (79.3% at men's and 85.5% at women's institutions). At women's institutions, instigators of violent incidents also displayed considerable difficulty coping with stress (93.2%).

Most instigators of violent incidents did not have an STG affiliation, with 22.2% at men's institutions and 15.6% at women's institutions having an affiliation (either active or inactive). At men's sites, Indigenous individuals (33.2%) had the highest proportion affiliated, followed by Black (29.9%), Other (20.1%), and White (8.1%) individuals. At women's sites, Indigenous individuals (23.6%) had the highest proportion of STG affiliations amongst instigators of violent incidents.[16]

Accountability, Motivation, Responsivity, and Engagement. Across institutions, instigators of violent incidents predominately displayed medium levels of motivation (76.1% at men's institutions and 74.6% at women's) and accountability (67.0% at men's and 77.2% at women's institutions; see Table 13). Over one-quarter of the instigators of violent incidents were identified as having responsivity factors (28.2%), with highest levels amongst Indigenous individuals (35.7%). Individuals involved in institutional violence at women's institutions demonstrated higher levels of responsivity needs (44.6%). Overall, most individuals are assessed as engaged in their Correctional Plan, with 66.5% at men's institutions and 87.6% at women's institutions rated as engaged.

[16] Proportions are not presented for Black, White, or Other ethnocultural groups due to sample sizes less than 5 in one category.

Table 13

Engagement Characteristics at Intake

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Motivation[a]										
Low	23.3	208	17.2	508	20.9	558	21.6	134	19.7	1,4.8
Medium	73.0	650	79.5	2,351	73.8	1,971	74.3	460	76.1	5,432
High	3.7	33	3.3	97	5.4	143	4.0	25	4.2	298
Accountability[b]										
Low	39.8	353	25.4	750	28.8	768	34.4	212	29.3	2,083
Medium	57.2	507	71.0	2,098	67.0	1,783	61.5	379	67.0	4,767
High	2.9	26	3.6	106	4.2	112	4.1	25	3.8	269
Responsivity[b]	15.3	136	35.7	1,054	25.9	690	20.9	129	28.2	2,009
Engagement[b]	57.6	510	70.2	2,074	66.4	1,767	62.3	384	66.5	4,735
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Motivation[a]										
Low	21.7	5	6.5	24	5.5	9	†	†	6.7	39
Medium	60.9	14	76.1	283	75.2	124	59.1	13	74.6	434
High	†	†	17.5	65	19.4	32	36.4	8	18.7	109
Accountability[b]										
Low	34.8	8	5.7	21	9.1	15	22.7	5	8.5	447
Medium	56.5	13	83.0	307	69.5	114	59.1	13	77.2	447
High	†	†	11.4	42	21.3	35	†	†	14.3	83
Responsivity[b]	52.2	12	44.9	166	42.1	69	50.0	11	44.6	258
Engagement[b]	69.9	16	88.1	326	89.6	147	81.8	22	87.6	507

[a]Motivation level information was missing for 13 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions and two incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.
[b]Accountability level, responsivity flag, and engagement flag information was missing for 32 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions and five incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Additional Treatment Needs. CASA/WCASA assessments were available for 4,171 individuals (58.3%) in men's institutions and 527 individuals (90.2%) in women's institutions. There was variation between ethnocultural groups in treatment needs based on CASA/WCASA assessments of substance use severity (see Table 14). For example, Black individuals had predominately low or no treatment needs (82.0%), while most Indigenous individuals had moderate or high treatment needs (72.1%). In general, there was higher substance use treatment needs across ethnocultural groups at women's institutions.

Table 14

Substance Use Severity Treatment Needs

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 427)		(*n* = 2,059)		(*n* = 1,368)		(*n* = 317)		(*N* = 4,171)	
High intensity	9.4	40	51.9	1,069	40.6	556	21.1	67	41.5	1,732
Moderate intensity	8.7	37	20.2	415	18.7	256	16.1	51	18.2	759
Low intensity	47.3	202	22.8	469	28.4	388	44.2	140	28.7	1,199
No treatment	34.7	148	5.1	106	12.3	168	18.6	59	11.5	481
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 21)		(*n* = 331)		(*n* = 155)		(*n* = 20)		(*N* = 527)	
High intensity	52.4	11	70.7	234	59.4	92	45.0	9	65.7	346
Moderate intensity	†	†	15.1	50	12.9	20	†	†	13.5	71
Low intensity	†	†	10.9	36	20.0	31	35.0	7	14.8	78
No treatment	23.8	5	3.3	11	7.7	12	†	†	6.1	32

[a]Substance use severity treatment needs information was missing for 2,980 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions and 57 incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

As demonstrated in Table 15, there were varying mental health needs across different ethnocultural groups and between men's and women's institutions. Based on the MHNS, most instigators of violent incidents at men's institutions demonstrated no or low need. At women's institutions, individuals involved in institutional violence were more evenly distributed among ratings of no/low need, some need, and considerable or higher need.

Table 15

Mental Health Need Scale Ratings

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
No or low need	84.3	751	73.0	2,160	70.8	1,896	83.8	522	74.5	5,329
Some need	9.5	85	17.7	523	18.4	492	10.8	67	16.3	1,167
Considerable or higher need	6.2	55	9.4	277	10.8	289	5.5	34	9.2	655
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
No or low need	39.1	9	37.5	140	41.2	68	43.5	10	38.9	227
Some need	26.1	6	36.7	137	32.1	53	43.5	10	35.3	206
Considerable or higher need	34.8	8	25.7	96	26.7	44	†	†	25.9	151

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

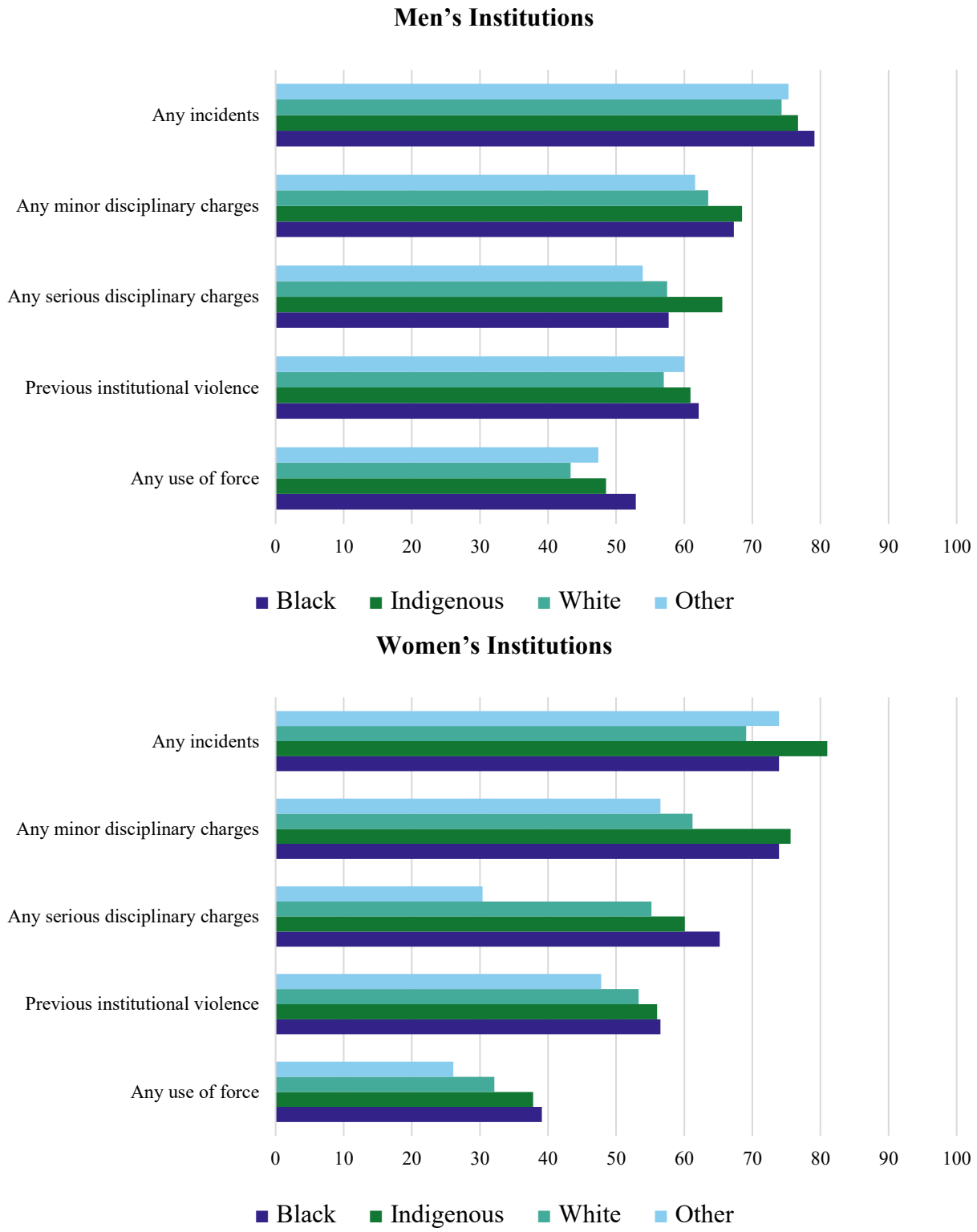
Institutional Experiences of Instigators of Violent Incidents

Institutional experiences prior to the incident of study were examined in terms of incidents and disciplinary charges, SIU placements, grievances, and participation in prosocial interventions and correctional programming.

Institutional Behaviour. Figure 5 shows information regarding institutional incidents, use of force, and guilty disciplinary charges prior to the violent incident at men's and women's institutions. Across institutions, instigators of violent incidents demonstrated problematic institutional behaviour prior to the incident of study. For instance, 76.0% of individuals at men's institutions and 77.1% at women's institutions had a previous incident where they were identified as an instigator. Instigators of violent incidents had a substantial number of previous institutional incidents at men's institutions (M = 16.2, SD = 31.1) and women's institutions (M = 18.8, SD = 47.9). At men's institutions, 65.9% of instigators of violent incidents had a previous guilty minor disciplinary charge and 60.6% had a previous guilty serious disciplinary charge. This pattern was consistent at women's institutions, with 70.7% having a previous guilty minor charge and 57.7% having a previous guilty serious charge.

Figure 5

Previous Involvement in Incidents and Disciplinary Charges Prior to Violent Incident



Note. Incidents are restricted to those whereby the incarcerated individual was identified as the instigator.

Over half of the sample had previous institutional incidents of violence (59.5% at men's and 55.0% at women's institutions), while less than half had institutional incidents that resulted in a use of force (47.0% at men's and 35.8% at women's institutions). As demonstrated in Table 16, the incident involvement of individuals involved in institutional violence is varied. Across institutions, most instigators of violent incidents had previous assault (69.1% at men's and 69.5% at women's institutions), contraband (62.6% at men's and 61.5% at women's institutions), and behaviour (59.9% at men's and 62.8% at women's institutions) related incidents.

There were considerable disparities in institutional behaviour by ethnocultural group, particularly at women's institutions. For example, Black and Indigenous individuals at women's institutions were more frequently subject to minor and serious disciplinary charges, which may reflect disparities in institutional responses and surveillance practices. Individuals from Other ethnocultural groups had the lowest proportions of previous involvement in incidents and disciplinary charges, though these results should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample sizes.

Table 16

Incident Type Involvement Prior to Violence Incident

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Assault	73.3	653	70.6	2,090	66.0	1,766	68.9	429	69.1	4,938
Contraband	65.8	586	65.5	1,940	58.7	1,572	60.4	376	62.6	4,474
Behaviour	67.1	598	61.7	1,825	56.2	1,504	57.1	356	59.9	4,283
Property	12.5	111	16.7	494	15.4	413	12.7	79	15.3	1,097
Self-injurious	8.6	77	18.3	543	17.1	458	11.1	69	16.0	1,147
Death/escape	3.1	28	12.2	362	9.3	248	3.7	23	9.2	661
Miscellaneous	32.2	287	26.0	771	30.8	824	27.8	173	28.7	2,055
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Assault	73.9	17	72.1	269	63.6	105	65.2	15	69.5	406
Contraband	52.2	12	68.9	257	51.5	85	21.7	5	61.5	359
Behaviour	65.2	15	67.6	252	52.7	87	56.5	13	62.8	367
Property	†	†	18.8	70	7.9	13	†	†	14.9	87
Self-injurious	17.4	4	23.6	88	21.8	36	21.7	5	22.8	133
Death/escape	†	†	15.5	58	8.5	14	†	†	12.8	75
Miscellaneous	21.7	5	29.8	111	27.9	46	26.1	6	28.8	168

Note. Incidents are restricted to those whereby the incarcerated individual was identified as the instigator.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Prior to the violent incident, 23.7% of individuals at men's institutions and 12.7% (*n* = 74) at women's institutions had at least one prior placement in the SIU (see Table 17).[17] At men's institutions, most of the transfers to SIUs occurred due to behaviour that would jeopardize the safety of any person or the security of the penitentiary (55.7%) or allowing them to stay in the mainstream population would jeopardize the inmate's safety (41.3%).[18] At women's institutions, the majority of placements fell under reasonable groups for safety/security of the penitentiary (83.8%, *n* = 62), followed by inmate safety (9.5%; *n* = 7) and interference with investigation (6.8%, *n* = 5). On average, instigators of violent incidents in men's institutions spent 38 days (*M* = 38.0, *SD* = 49.7) in the SIU, while those in women's institutions spent 13 days (*M* = 13.2, *SD* = 19.2) in the SIU. For just under half of the sample at men's institutions, the placement represented their first placement in the SIU (46.0%) while the remaining 54.0% had at least one prior SIU placement. This pattern was consistent at women's institutions, with 54.1% (*n* = 40) on the first SIU placement, 21.6% (*n* = 16) second, 9.5% (*n* = 7) third, and 14.9% (*n* = 11) fourth placement.

[17] Results are not disaggregated by ethnocultural groups for women due to sample size constraints.
[18] Section 34(1) of the *CCRA* outlines the legal requirements for transfer to an SIU and includes three reasons for transfer if a staff member is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternatives.

Table 17

Structured Intervention Unit Placements Prior to Violent Incident at Men's Institutions

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
SIU Placement	27.5	245	24.2	717	21.9	586	23.9	149	23.7	1,697
SIU Reason										
Safety/security of penitentiary	63.3	155	49.7	356	59.6	349	57.7	86	55.7	946
Inmate safety	30.6	75	48.7	349	38.4	225	34.9	52	41.3	701
Interfere with investigation	6.1	15	1.7	12	2.0	12	7.4	11	2.9	50
Number of Placements										
1	41.2	101	47.3	339	47.1	276	43.6	65	46.0	781
2	18.8	46	20.4	146	17.6	103	21.5	32	19.3	327
3	16.3	40	11.7	84	13.1	77	13.4	20	13.0	221
4	23.7	58	20.6	148	22.2	130	21.5	32	21.7	368

Note. SIU = Structured Intervention Unit. Reason for and number of placements are calculated based on the number of incarcerated individuals with a placement.
† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Grievances. As demonstrated in Table 18, most individuals involved in violent incidents had submitted at least one grievance prior to the incident. At men's institutions, the most common types of grievances filed were related to conditions and routine (50.7%), interaction issues (34.9%), and visits/leisure (28.8%). A similar pattern emerged at women's institutions, with the most common grievances including conditions and routine (44.7%), interaction issues (42.6%), and visits/leisure (29.8%).

Table 18

Grievances Filed Prior to Violence Incident

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Any grievances	62.0	552	66.1	1,958	70.5	1,886	62.6	390	66.9	4,786
Conditions/ routine	45.5	405	48.5	1,435	55.4	1,482	48.2	300	50.7	3,622
Interaction issues	34.3	306	35.0	1,035	35.9	960	30.8	192	34.9	2,493
Visits/leisure	29.1	259	25.9	768	32.8	877	25.0	156	28.8	2,060
Health issues	15.3	136	24.4	723	30.4	813	17.0	106	24.9	1,778
Programs/pay	15.3	136	16.7	493	24.3	651	10.9	68	18.9	1,348
Security	18.9	168	15.1	448	20.2	541	15.1	94	17.5	1,251
Other subjects	12.8	114	13.9	410	18.1	485	11.7	73	15.1	1,082
Transfer	14.3	127	11.2	332	11.8	315	11.7	73	11.8	847
Case management	12.7	113	10.6	314	13.0	349	8.5	53	11.6	829
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Any grievances	65.2	15	73.2	273	65.5	108	56.5	13	70.0	409
Conditions/ routine	43.5	10	45.3	169	44.8	74	34.8	8	44.7	261
Interaction issues	56.5	13	44.8	167	35.2	58	47.8	11	42.6	249
Visits/leisure	21.7	5	30.0	112	31.5	52	21.7	5	29.8	174
Health issues	21.7	5	28.7	107	24.8	41	26.1	6	27.2	159
Programs/pay	†	†	16.6	62	10.9	18	†	†	14.4	84
Security	†	†	18.8	70	13.9	23	†	†	16.6	97
Other subjects	†	†	13.9	52	6.7	11	†	†	11.5	67
Transfer	†	†	6.7	25	4.8	8	†	†	6.2	36
Case management	†	†	6.7	25	8.5	14	†	†	7.2	42

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Prosocial Interventions. Involvement in prosocial interventions is presented in Table 19. There is a notable trend of high participation and completion rates in correctional programming across all ethnocultural groups and institution type. Overall, most instigators of violent incidents completed the programming that was assigned to them at both men's (89.1%) and women's

(95.7%) institutions. Assignment to and completion of moderate and high intensity programming show variability, with Indigenous individuals frequently having the highest assignment rates. At men's institutions, 38.2% of individuals involved in violent incidents were assigned to moderate intensity and 31.2% were assigned to high intensity correctional programs. At women's institutions, 80.3% of instigators of violent incidents were assigned to moderate intensity and 18.5% were assigned to high intensity correctional programs. While assignment rates to education and employment programming were high, completion rates, particularly at men's institutions, were substantially lower.

For Indigenous individuals incarcerated at men's and women's institutions, participation in culturally specific interventions was also examined. Most Indigenous individuals involved in violent incidents had an Initial Elder Review completed (73.9% at men's institutions, n = 2,188; and 79.4% at women's institutions, n = 296). There were fewer Progress Elder Reviews completed, with 23.4% (n = 692) at men's institutions and 34.0% (n = 127) at women's institutions. While few instigators of violent incidents were identified as Pre-Pathways at men's (6.8%, n = 202) and women's (5.6%, n = 21), a greater proportion had participated or were currently participating in the Pathways Initiative (13.6% at men's institutions, n = 402; and 22.8% at women's institutions, n = 85).

Table 19

Involvement in Prosocial Interventions Prior to Violent Incident

	Black		Indigenous		White		Other		Total	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Men's Institutions	(*n* = 891)		(*n* = 2,960)		(*n* = 2,677)		(*n* = 623)		(*N* = 7,151)	
Assigned to any programming	76.4	681	81.7	2,417	79.9	2,138	71.7	447	79.5	5,683
Completed any programming	90.9	619	87.2	2,107	90.6	1,936	89.7	401	89.1	5,063
Assigned to moderate intensity	38.0	339	40.3	1,192	35.5	949	40.6	253	38.2	2,733
Completed moderate intensity	72.3	245	66.4	791	75.3	715	75.5	191	71.1	1,942
Assigned to high intensity	20.7	184	35.9	1,063	32.8	877	17.5	109	31.2	2,233
Completed high intensity	53.8	99	54.1	575	63.7	559	53.2	58	57.8	1,291
Assigned to education	65.5	584	71.8	2,125	63.8	1,709	63.2	394	67.3	4,812
Completed education	50.2	293	47.0	999	47.8	817	53.8	212	48.2	2,321
Assigned to employment	85.0	757	90.4	2,677	85.1	2,278	87.5	545	87.5	6,257
Completed employment	24.2	183	21.1	566	22.3	508	20.2	110	21.8	1,367
Women's Institutions	(*n* = 23)		(*n* = 373)		(*n* = 165)		(*n* = 23)		(*N* = 584)	
Assigned to any programming	95.7	22	91.7	342	92.1	152	82.6	19	91.6	535
Completed any programming	95.5	21	96.2	329	94.1	143	100.0	19	95.7	512
Assigned to moderate intensity	78.3	18	81.8	305	78.8	130	69.6	16	80.3	469
Completed moderate intensity	88.9	16	80.0	244	83.8	109	100.0	16	82.1	385
Assigned to high intensity	†	†	20.1	75	17.6	29	†	†	18.5	108
Completed high intensity	†	†	68.0	51	75.9	22	†	†	71.3	77
Assigned to education	87.0	20	80.7	301	72.7	120	73.9	17	78.4	458
Completed education	45.0	9	68.1	205	55.0	66	76.5	13	64.0	293
Assigned to employment	78.3	18	84.7	316	75.2	124	69.6	16	81.2	474
Completed employment	61.1	11	67.4	213	65.3	81	75.0	12	66.9	317

Note. Completion rates are calculated based on the number of incarcerated individuals assigned to the intervention.
†Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Predictors of Institutional Violence. Hierarchical binary logistic regression analyses were conducted to examine predictors of institutional violence at men's and women's institutions. First, the independent effects of the predictors (i.e., main effects) were simultaneously entered in the first block. The variables included in the first block were ethnocultural group,[19] substance use at intake, mental health needs (assessed by the MHNS), OSL at incident, impulsivity, any previous institutional violence, and age at incident. The product terms representing two-way interactions (i.e., moderation) were included in the second block, which included: (a) mental health need and impulsivity and (b) mental health need and substance use.[20]

Men's Institutions. Controlling for all other variables, ethnocultural group was a significant predictor of violent incidents at men's institutions (see Table 20), where the odds of a violent incident increased 1.38 times for Indigenous individuals compared to White individuals and the odds of a violent incident increased 1.39 times for Black individuals compared to White individuals. Holding all other variables constant, mental health need was also a significant predictor of violent incidents at men's institutions, where the odds of a violent incident increased 3.32 times for individuals assessed as having considerable or higher need compared to men with no or low need. OSL at the time of the incident was also a significant predictor, where the odds of a violent incident increased 2.43 times for individuals placed in medium security compared to those in minimum security. Similarly, the odds of a violent incident increased 7.66 times for individuals in maximum security compared to individuals in minimum security. Results further showed that STG affiliation, impulsivity, and previous violent incidents also increased the odds of violent incidents at men's institutions. In terms of age at incident, for each one unit increase in age, the odds of a violent incident decreased by 2%. That is, as incarcerated individuals got older, the odds of a violent incident decreases.

Substance use was not a significant predictor of violent incidents. Results demonstrated that the interaction between mental health need and substance use was not significant (Omnibus Wald's $\chi^2(6) = 9.20$, $p = .16$). This suggests that the relationship between mental health need and violent incidents is not dependent on their assessed level of substance use need. Lastly, results

[19] Individuals from the Other ethnocultural groups were excluded from the analysis.
[20] Two predictors are said to interact (i.e., have a joint effect) when the effects of one independent variable (mental health need) depend on or are conditional upon the levels of the other independent variables (impulsivity and substance use).

also showed that the interaction between mental health need and impulsivity was not significant (Omnibus Wald's $\chi^2(2) = 1.94$, $p = .38$).

Table 20

Logistic Regression Examining Violent Incidents at Men's Institutions

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	Wald	*OR*	95% CI	*p*
Ethnocultural group						
White	(ref)	(ref)	35.99	(ref)	(ref)	< .001
Indigenous	.32	.06	31.34	1.38	[1.23, 1.54]	< .01
Black	.33	.10	11.84	1.39	[1.15, 1.69]	< .001
Substance use						
No immediate need	(ref)	(ref)	7.15	(ref)	(ref)	n.s.
Low need	-.10	.15	.45	.91	[.68, 1.21]	n.s.
Moderate need	-.10	.13	.59	.44	[.71, 1.17]	n.s.
High need	.10	.12	.68	1.10	[.87, 1.40]	n.s.
MHNS						
No or low need	(ref)	(ref)	13.30	(ref)	(ref)	< .01
Some need	.34	.28	1.50	1.41	[.82, 2.42]	n.s.
Considerable or higher need	1.20	.33	12.88	3.32	[1.72, 6.40]	< .001
OSL at incident						
Minimum	(ref)	(ref)	404.14	(ref)	(ref)	< .001
Medium	.89	.13	50.66	2.43	[1.91, 3.11]	< .001
Maximum	2.08	.14	234.42	7.99	[6.13, 10.43]	< .001
STG affiliation						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	.26	.08	11.28	1.30	[1.14, 1.51]	< .01
Impulsivity						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	.51	.10	27.80	1.67	[1.38, 2.02]	< .001
Previous violence						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	2.11	.06	1364.29	8.24	[7.37, 9.22]	< .001
Age at incident	-.02	.00	63.94	.98	[.97, .98]	< .001

Note. OSL = Offender Security Level; MHNS = Mental Health Need Scale; STG = Security Threat Group; SE = Standard error; OR = Odds ratio; CI = Confidence interval; ref = reference group; n.s. = not significant.

Women's Institutions. Controlling for all other variables, ethnocultural group[21] was a significant predictor of violent incidents (see Table 21), where the odds of a violent incident increased 1.96 times for Indigenous individuals compared to White individuals; however, there were no significant differences between Black individuals and White individuals. Holding all other variables constant, OSL at the time of the incident was also a significant predictor, where the odds of a violent incident increased 2.24 times for incarcerated individuals placed in medium security compared to those in minimum security. Similarly, the odds of a violent incident increased 7.47 times for individuals in maximum security compared to individuals in minimum security. Results further showed that STG affiliation and previous violent incidents also increased the odds of violent incidents. In terms of age at incident, for each one unit increase in age, the odds of a violent incident decreased by 2%.

Substance use, mental health needs, and impulsivity did not emerge as significant predictors of violent incidents while controlling for the other variables. Lastly, results also demonstrated that the interaction between mental health need and substance use was not significant (Omnibus Wald's $\chi^2(6) = 6.29$, $p = .39$), nor was the interaction between mental health need and impulsivity (Omnibus Wald's $\chi^2(2) = 1.93$, $p = .38$).

[21] Individuals from the Other ethnocultural groups were excluded from the analysis.

Table 21

Logistic Regression Examining Violent Incidents at Women's Institutions

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	Wald	*OR*	95% CI	*p*
Ethnocultural group						
White	(ref)	(ref)	10.07	(ref)	(ref)	< .01
Indigenous	.52	.18	8.50	1.69	[1.19, 2.40]	< .01
Black	.86	.48	3.24	2.36	[.93, 5.99]	n.s.
Substance use						
No immediate need	(ref)	(ref)	3.18	(ref)	(ref)	n.s.
Low need	-2.02	1.21	2.80	.13	[.01, 1.41]	n.s.
Moderate need	-.03	.61	.00	.97	[.29, 3.20]	n.s.
High need	.26	.55	.22	.77	[.27, 2.26]	n.s.
MHNS						
No or low need	(ref)	(ref)	3.41	(ref)	(ref)	n.s.
Some need	-2.33	1.27	3.36	.10	[.01, 1.18]	n.s.
Considerable or higher need	-.62	.90	.48	.54	[.09, 3.11]	n.s.
OSL at incident						
Minimum	(ref)	(ref)	29.24	(ref)	(ref)	< .001
Medium	.81	.29	7.92	2.24	[1.28, 3.94]	< .01
Maximum	2.01	.38	28.03	7.47	[3.55, 15.72]	< .001
STG affiliation						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	.75	.31	6.02	2.12	[1.16, 3.87]	< .01
Impulsivity						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	-.08	.40	.04	.92	[.42, 2.02]	n.s.
Previous violence						
No	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)	(ref)
Yes	2.23	.19	131.99	9.30	[6.34, 13.60]	< .001
Age at incident	-.02	.01	6.20	.98	[.96, .99]	< .05

Note. OSL = Offender Security Level; MHNS = Mental Health Need Scale; STG = Security Threat Group; SE = Standard error; OR = Odds ratio; CI = Confidence interval; ref = reference group; n.s. = not significant.

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine the characteristics of violent incidents as well as the profile, institutional experiences, and individual-level predictors of federally incarcerated individuals engaging in institutional violence. The results indicated that inmate fights and assaults on inmate were the most common types of violent incidents, occurring frequently in multi-level facilities and in the Prairie and Ontario regions. In the sample of incident reports that were coded, violent incidents occurred most often in common areas at men's institutions, consistent with previous literature (e.g., McNeeley, 2021; Sorensen et al., 2011), but occurred most often in private areas at women's institutions. Also concordant with previous research (e.g., Sorensen et al., 2011), weapons were not commonly used by instigators during the incidents. Violent incidents commonly occurred outside of business hours, contrary to previous findings (e.g., Taaka et al., 2024). In terms of discipline and resolution, case management-related outcomes and a return to cell or lock-up were the most frequent outcomes.

Use of force by staff was more frequently applied in incidents involving Black individuals at both men's (37.1%) and women's (30.4%) institutions. These findings do not control for other factors (e.g., incident severity, context, or prior behaviour) and should therefore be interpreted with caution. While these findings are consistent with previous research (e.g., Hanby et al., 2023), they raise important questions about potential differences in institutional responses that warrant further examination. The observed disparities may reflect a range of contributing factors, including situational dynamics, institutional practices, and broader systemic influences; however, the current analysis does not isolate the unique contribution of ethnocultural characteristics. As such, further research using multivariate approaches is required to better understand these relationships. These findings highlight the importance of considering trauma-informed and equity-oriented approaches to incident management within correctional settings.

Incarcerated individuals were examined based on relevant variables such as demographic characteristics, criminogenic risk/need, and institutional behaviour. Violent institutional incidents were most often instigated by Indigenous and White incarcerated individuals who were younger, single, and serving a determinate sentence. Homicide-related and assault-related offences were most common in instigators from both men's and women's institutions. Most had

complex needs such as high static risk, dynamic need, and CRI ratings, and low reintegration potential at men's institutions. Individuals from women's institutions also had high dynamic need and CRI ratings but had more variability in the areas of static risk and reintegration potential. Overall, individuals instigating violent incidents most often had medium accountability and motivation levels, and the majority were engaged in their Correctional Plan. At men's institutions, approximately one-third of individuals had identified responsivity factors compared to approximately half at women's institutions. Most individuals at men's institutions had low intensity or no substance use and mental health needs. At women's institutions, the majority had high intensity substance use needs and some, low, or no mental health needs.

Most incarcerated individuals involved in violent incidents had also been identified as the instigator of multiple previous institutional incidents, oftentimes including a violent institutional incident. Only a small proportion of individuals had SIU placements prior to instigating a violent incident. Approximately two-thirds of individuals had filed a grievance preceding the violent incident at both men's and women's institutions, with most complaints focusing on conditions/routine or interaction issues. In terms of participation in prosocial interventions, the overwhelming majority of instigators completed the programming assigned to them. While assignment to education and employment was high, completion rates were low. Most Indigenous individuals had an Initial Elder Review completed, but few had Progress Elder Reviews. Similarly, participation in Pre-Pathways was very low at both men's and women's institutions, although these numbers were higher for the Pathways Initiative.

Individuals in medium security and especially maximum security were more likely to commit a violent incident than those in minimum security. Work by Taaka and colleagues (2024) found that individuals in their sample committing assaults on staff had higher security classifications than those who did not commit assaults on staff. This is consistent with expectations, given that the security classification of an incarcerated individual is tied to the risk they are perceived to pose to others (Taaka et al., 2024) and that the population of maximum-security institutions have higher needs and risk than those housed in facilities of a lower security classification (Rodriguez, 2023).

STG affiliation, impulsivity, and previous violent incidents were also significant predictors for men, but only STG affiliation and previous violent incidents were significant predictors for women. Our finding that STG affiliation was a significant predictor of violent

incidents for both men and women is also a parallel to other research (e.g., Brabyn et al., 2023; Pyrooz et al., 2011; Sorensen et al., 2024; Taaka et al., 2024; Worrall & Morris, 2012). Consistent with previous research, younger individuals were more likely to commit violent incidents than older individuals (e.g., Glazener & Nakamura, 2020; Listwan et al., 2014; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2020). This finding could be related to factors such as difficulties with emotional regulation, attempting to prove oneself to other incarcerated individuals, or a desire to join a gang (Arbach-Lucioni et al., 2012; New Zealand Police Association, 2021).

Ethnocultural status emerged as a significant predictor of institutional violence, with increased odds for Indigenous and Black individuals compared to White individuals. These findings should not be interpreted as inherent characteristics of these groups, but rather may reflect broader systemic and structural inequities. As Taaka and colleagues (2024) note, race and ethnicity often serve as proxies for underlying factors that disproportionately affect certain groups, such as exposure to trauma, socioeconomic marginalization, and institutional bias. In the Canadian context, the overrepresentation of Indigenous and Black individuals in correctional settings may be influenced by the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, systemic racism, and differential access to culturally relevant supports. As such, the observed patterns may be shaped by a complex interaction of social, structural, and institutional factors, rather than individual-level characteristics alone.

While substance use needs was not a predictor of violent incidents for men or women, having considerable or higher mental health needs was a significant predictor for men only. It is important to note that MHNS ratings incorporate behaviour in the definition, so it is expected that those who have more challenging behaviours may also have higher needs. Previous research has found that mental health alone rarely increases risk (e.g., Stewart & Wilton, 2017). Interactions between mental health needs and other variables such as substance use need and impulsivity were explored but were not significant in predicting violent incidents in this study. However, there are other variables that were not captured (e.g., trauma) that may better explain the complex relationship between mental health needs and institutional incidents. Henry (2020) found that experiences of adversity partially mediated the relationship between these needs and rule violations within institutions, suggesting that the adversity faced by incarcerated individuals may play an important role in violent incidents. Utilizing management strategies that are trauma-informed may help alleviate these stressors and decrease the incidence of institutional violence

(Henry, 2020).

Limitations and Future Directions

It is important to note that the current study is restricted to the use of available administrative data, alongside several limitations associated with incident reporting. Many of the incident reports coded, particularly from men's institutions, had a lack of information in many identified coding areas (e.g., reason for the incident occurring, level of injury). For example, the process for reporting an incident involves many non-mandatory sections that are frequently left blank, and much of the detailed information for a violent incident is often included in the Summary Narrative, which is not extractable. Furthermore, incident reports are seldom revisited to include new information resulting from processes such as internal investigations or any criminal charges posed after the original report was written. Several initiatives (i.e., increased training, security bulletins, investigations/recommendations) may have impacted the quality of the incident reports over the course of the study, as well as moving forward. There may also be impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as population management and policies, that cannot be measured.

While the findings of this study shed light on the characteristics of violent incidents within CSC institutions, there are nuances across regions and institution type that may not be captured. For instance, the physical design of institutions may differ considerably between men's and women's facilities, as well as between maximum, medium, and minimum-security levels. Even within the same facility type (e.g., men's medium-security), there are differences in the physical design and security and supervision characteristics of facilities that can be attributed to changes in design philosophies over time. Previous research within CSC has found that institutional design has an impact on various institutional behaviours such as institutional charges, even after accounting for demographic, offence, sentence, and risk-related information (Gobeil, 2014). For institutions that accommodate incarcerated individuals in apartment style living units rather than cell blocks like other institutions within CSC, this adds an extra layer of management considerations for staff and could result in an increased level of violence. Future research could consider staff-level variables, such as training, experience, and ethnocultural identity, as well as institutional culture audits and qualitative interviews to complement administrative data and provide deeper insight into the dynamics of institutional violence.

Beyond institutional design, the current study did not capture potential aspects such as

institutional management factors, the culture of the institution, or relationships with staff that may impact institutional violence. Wooldredge (2020) argues that these components and other elements of prison culture and management may play an important role in violent offending and victimization within institutions, highlighting a potential area of improvement for incident reporting and future research. Prior research suggests that higher security institutions as well as those with issues related to crowding tend to experience more violence against correctional staff (Gaes & McGuire, 1985; Steiner et al., 2014; Steiner & Wooldredge, 2017), indicating that it may be an avenue worthy of exploration. It would also be beneficial for future research to examine predictors by incident type (e.g., assault on inmate vs. assault on staff). While a study by Taaka and colleagues (2024) examined how a variety of characteristics differed depending on the severity of an assault on staff,[22] this research has not yet been extended to examining the differences between various types of incidents.

This study reinforces key individual-level predictors of institutional violence while also highlighting important ethnocultural disparities. These findings align with existing literature and underscore the need to interpret risk factors within their broader cultural and systemic contexts. These are vital replications given the importance of cultural context in generalizing risk factors for violent incidents in correctional facilities (Butler et al., 2022). Given that the best prediction of human behaviour usually involves examining the interaction between individual and situational variables (McGuire, 2018), a comprehensive study of institutional violence requires consideration of the complex relationships between individual factors and institutional environments. Moving forward, future research may benefit from adopting intersectional, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive frameworks to explore how institutional design, staff relationships, and access to programming influence outcomes.

[22] Incidents were categorized into three levels (no injury, non-serious, and serious) based on the severity of the officer's injuries and the degree of medical attention required to treat the injuries.

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Appendix A: Ethnocultural Groups and Offender Self-Identification Options

Ethnocultural Group	OMS Offender Self-Identification Race Options
Asian	Arab, Arab/West Asian, Asian-East and Southeast, Asian-South, Asian West, Asiatic, Chinese, East Indian, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, South East Asian
Black	Black, Caribbean, Sub-Saharan African
White	White, British Isles, European French, European-Eastern, European-Northern, European-Southern, European-Western
Hispanic	Hispanic, Latin American
Indigenous	First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Innu
Multiracial / Bi-Racial	Multiracial/ethnic
Other	Oceania, Unable to Specify, Other, Unknown, No race listed

Note. OMS = Offender Management System.

Appendix B: Additional Violent Incident Characteristics Tables

Table B1

Number of Assailants, Victims, and Associates Involved in Violent Incident

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (*N* = 184)		Total (*N* = 1,410)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Number of assailants						
One	64.4	789	75.5	139	65.8	928
Two	10.8	133	14.7	27	11.3	160
Three or more	24.8	304	9.8	18	22.8	322
Number of victims						
One	88.3	1,082	91.3	168	88.7	1,250
Two	5.4	66	6.5	12	5.5	78
Three or more	2.9	35	†	†	2.7	38
Number of associates						
None	89.2	1,093	84.8	156	88.6	1,249
One	6.8	83	11.4	21	7.4	104
Two	1.6	20	3.3	6	1.8	26
Three or more	2.4	30	†	†	2.2	31

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Table B2

Reason for the Incident Occurring

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (*N* = 184)		Total (*N* = 1,410)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Unclear or not described	63.2	775	27.2	50	58.8	825
Provocation or disagreement	14.8	182	50.5	93	19.5	275
Unhappy	13.1	160	7.6	14	12.3	174
Other	4.5	55	5.4	10	4.6	65
Gang related	2.0	24	7.1	13	2.6	37
Theft	1.5	18	†	†	1.3	18
Debt related	1.0	12	†	†	1.1	16

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Table B3

Incarcerated Victim or Staff Victim Reaction

	Men's Institutions (*N* = 1,226)		Women's Institutions (*N* = 184)		Total (*N* = 1,410)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Fighting back	39.7	487	54.3	100	41.6	587
No evidence of fighting back	32.1	394	25.5	47	31.3	441
Unclear or not described	17.7	217	15.2	28	17.4	245
Staff use of force	10.2	125	4.3	8	9.4	133
Verbal non-consent	†	†	†	†	†	†

† Information suppressed due to frequencies fewer than five in one category.

Appendix C: Additional Dynamic Need Indicators Examined

	Men's Institutions (N = 7,151)[a]		Women's Institutions (N = 584)[b]		Total (N = 7,735)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Problem Solving Skills						
Displays narrow and rigid thinking	59.3	3,817	40.3	211	57.9	4,028
Problem recognition skills are limited	73.2	4,734	67.9	361	72.8	5,095
Ability to generate choices is limited	81.4	5,257	87.5	461	81.9	5,718
Ability to link actions to consequences is limited	76.3	4,930	72.9	385	76.1	5,315
Has difficulty coping with stress	73.8	4,672	93.2	492	75.3	5,164
Gives up easily when challenged	42.1	2,576	54.9	268	43.1	2,844
Self-Regulation						
Impulsive	88.2	5,699	89.1	473	88.3	6,172
Engages in thrill seeking behaviour	48.3	3,038	45.8	232	48.1	3,270
Interpersonal Skills						
Assertiveness skills are limited	28.9	1,843	51.1	267	30.5	2,110
Listening skills are limited	35.5	2,255	26.1	136	34.8	2,391
Has difficulty solving interpersonal problems	79.3	5,090	85.5	448	79.8	5,538
Manipulates others to achieve goals	49.0	3,062	44.0	222	48.6	3,284
Empathy skills are limited	64.1	4,068	38.6	199	62.2	4,267
General Aggression						
Frequently feels intense anger	41.7	2,596	47.6	250	42.1	2,846
Frequently suppresses anger	29.4	1,806	52.9	274	31.2	2,080
Frequently acts in an aggressive manner	60.1	3,843	49.8	260	59.3	4,103
Low frustration tolerance	60.3	3,790	64.3	332	60.6	4,122
Frequently interprets neutral situations as hostile	36.2	2,224	38.4	190	36.3	2,414
General Criminal Attitudes						
Displays negative attitudes towards the criminal justice system	73.6	4,761	46.9	248	71.6	5,009
Displays negative attitudes towards the correctional system	52.8	3,399	31.8	168	51.2	3,567

	Men's Institutions (N = 7,151)[a]		Women's Institutions (N = 584)[b]		Total (N = 7,735)	
	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*
Takes pride in criminal exploits	22.3	1,397	9.3	48	21.4	1,445
Displays non-conforming attitudes toward society	80.4	5,200	62.6	328	79.0	5,528
Values a substance abusing lifestyle	70.8	4,529	42.6	223	68.7	4,752
Violence-Specific Attitudes						
Attitudes support instrumental/goal-oriented violence	70.0	4,511	50.5	261	68.6	4,772
Attitudes support expressive/ emotional violence	63.3	4,063	55.4	288	62.7	4,351
Rationalizations						
Denies crime or uses excuses to justify or minimize crime	62.7	4,051	46.6	248	61.5	4,299

[a]Dynamic need indicator ratings were missing for 681 to 1,035 incarcerated individuals from men's institutions.
[b]Dynamic need indicator ratings were missing for 52 to 96 incarcerated individuals from women's institutions.