CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

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Men Offenders' Substance Use Patterns: An Ethnocultural Comparison over Time (2006 to 2019)

CNS stimulant use increased among all ethnocultural groups, except Black offenders, and IDU increased among Other ethnocultural offenders.

Why we did this study

Indigenous and White offenders have greater substance use needs than other ethnocultural groups. Substance use patterns change over time, therefore, this study was conducted to explore the substance use patterns of ethnocultural men offenders over time.

What we did

Pre-incarceration substance use patterns of federal men offenders are assessed by the Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse for men (M-CASA) upon admission into custody. Between January 2006 and March 2019, 3 a total of 34,202 men offenders were assessed and categorized into ethnocultural groups: White (63%; n = 21,405), Indigenous (18%; n = 6,154), Black (10%; n = 3,517), and Other ethnocultural groups (9%; n = 3,126). 4 Year of assessment was categorized into two-year increments for analysis.

What we found

Offenders indicating lifetime drug use increased across all study groups; the greatest increase was in the Other group (21%, from 42% to 63%), followed by Indigenous (20%, from 71% to 91%), White (16%; from 63% to 79%), and Black offenders (12%; from 39% to 51%). Lifetime alcohol use decreased slightly among Black offenders and offenders in the other group by 4% (both from 91% to 87%). White and Indigenous offenders' lifetime alcohol use remained constant over the study period.

Across all ethnocultural groups, poly-substance use (using multiple substances in one day) increased over time. White offenders reported the largest increase (22%, from 34% to 56%), followed by Indigenous offenders (15%, from 45% to 60%), Other ethnocultural groups (11%, from 17% to 28%), and Black offenders (10%, from 13% to 23%).

Indigenous and White offenders reported a 6% decrease of injection drug use (IDU) (from 31% to 25% and from 26% to 20%, respectively). Reports of IDU among Black offenders also decreased by 2% (from 4% to 2%) but

increased by 5% (from 2% to 7%) among the Other group. All groups reported a decrease in using substances while incarcerated; White and Indigenous offenders reported the largest decreases to 20% and 31%, respectively.

Across all ethnocultural groups, cannabis has been the most used drug over time and cocaine/crack has been the second most used drug (see Table). Central nervous system (CNS) stimulant use has increased, particularly for Indigenous and Other ethnocultural offenders.

Table: Most Used Drugs over Time across Ethnocultural groups

Ethnocultural Group	Time Periods	
	2006-2007	2018-2019
Black	Cannabis (30%) Cocaine/crack (3%) CNS stimulants (2%)	Cannabis (25%) Cocaine/crack (5%) Opioids (2%)
Indigenous	Cannabis (50%) Cocaine/crack (12%) Opioids (2%)	Cannabis (26%) Cocaine/crack (12%) CNS stimulants (17%)
White	Cannabis (26%) Cocaine/crack (24%) Opioids (10%)	Cannabis (22%) Cocaine/crack (12%) Opioids and CNS stimulants (both 11%)
Other Ethno- cultural groups	Cannabis (27%) Cocaine/crack (15%) CNS stimulants and opioids (both 4%)	Cannabis (24%) CNS stimulants and cocaine/crack (both 7%) Opioids (6%)

What it means

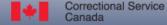
These results demonstrate that substance use patterns have changed over time for all ethnocultural groups, specifically increases in lifetime drug use and polysubstance use. However, there are a few unique patterns across ethnocultural groups, such as the increased use of CNS stimulants among Indigenous offenders and the increase of IDU among the Other group.

For more information

Please e-mail the Research Branch.

You can also visit the <u>Research Publications</u> section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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¹ Garrel, S. & Farrell MacDonald, S. Substance use patterns of ethnocultural men offenders (RIB-20-04). Ottawa, ON: CSC.
² Cram, S. & Farrell MacDonald, S. Federal men offender's substance use over time: 2009-2016 (RIB-20-06). Ottawa, ON: CSC

³ Data from phase 1 of the M-CASA implementation in the Atlantic and Ontario regions between 2002 and 2005 were also examined, but are not presented.

⁴ Other ethnicities include Arab, Asian, Latin American, multi-ethnic offenders and offenders who did not self-report an ethnicity.