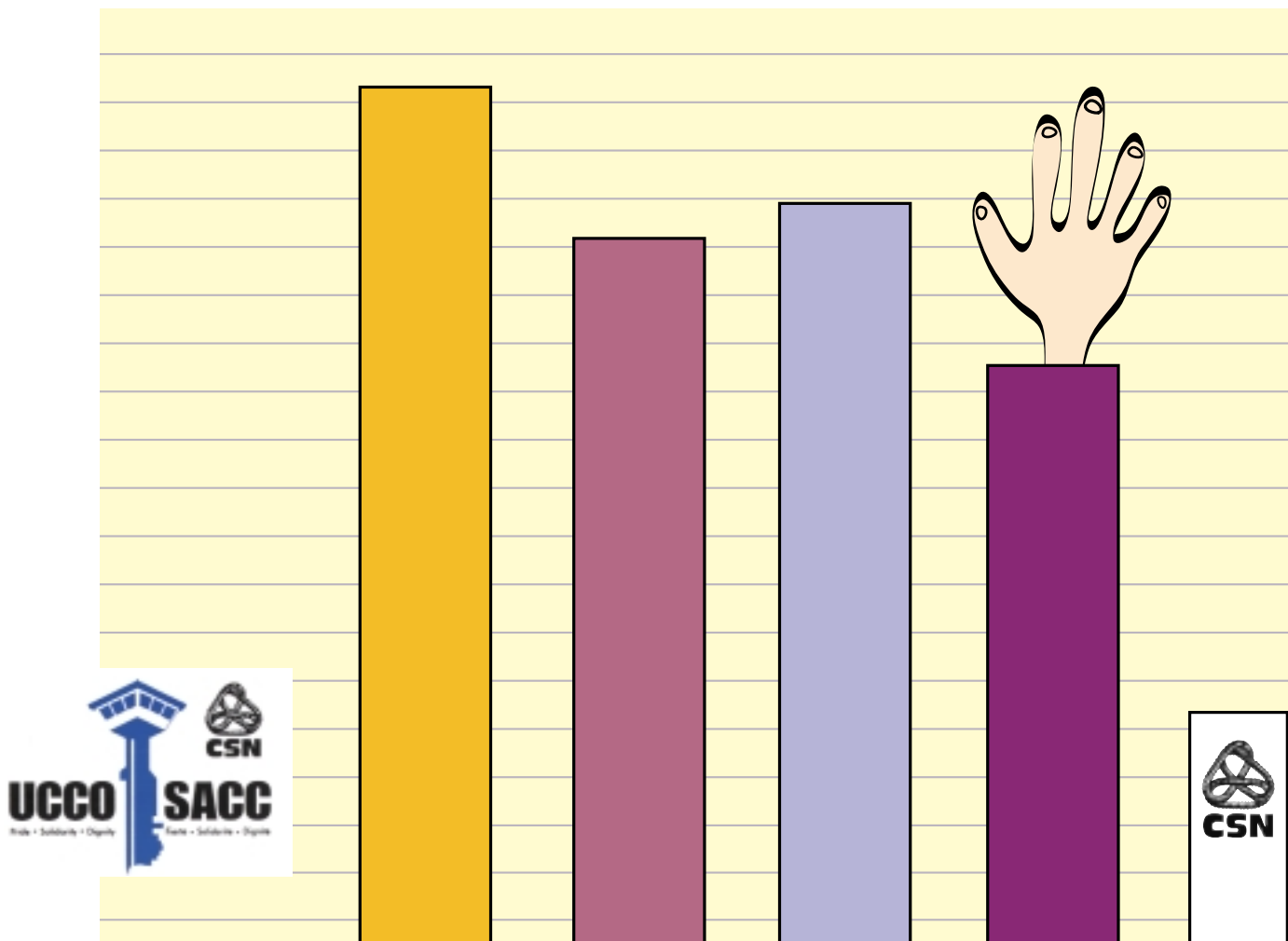


Correctional Officers of CSC and their working conditions: a questionnaire-based study

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“Any organization or social structure which consists of one group of people kept inside who do not want to be there and the other group who are there to make sure they stay in will be an organization under stress.”

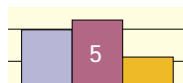
BRODSKY, C.M., “*WORK STRESS IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS,*” *JOURNAL OF PRISON AND JAIL HEALTH* 2, 2 (1982), PP. 74-102.

1. Introduction

At the request of Union of Canadian Correctional Officers–CSN (UCCO-SACC-CSN), a questionnaire was prepared by the Prevention Group (Health–Safety–Environment) of the CSN Labour Relations Department. The questionnaire was intended for all UCCO-SACC-CSN members working in all detention facilities of Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). The primary objective of the study was to gain better understanding of the relationship between the correctional officers’ working conditions on the one hand and their health, safety and general well-being on the other.

In addition to factual data concerning the workplace (detention capacity, prison population, number and gender of employees, etc.), the questionnaire also contained questions that sought to gauge the perceptions of correctional officers regarding the quality of the correctional facilities where they work, as well as the quality of the training and professional supervision they receive in the course of their work.

The questionnaire also sought to evaluate the officers’ perceptions of their own physical, psychological and technical ability to properly perform the tasks that their jobs require.



2. Methodology

The questionnaire is divided into four distinct sections:

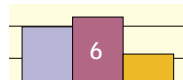
- Section A comprises 11 questions dealing with the location and characteristics of the institution;
- Section B comprises 17 questions dealing with the quality of the job, perceptions of the job's requirements, the impact of the job upon the officer's life away from work, as well as the quality of the training and professional supervision provided;
- Section C comprises 14 questions that deal specifically with job-related accidents and illnesses.
- Section D comprises five questions that deal with other personal information regarding the general conditions of the well-being and health of the officers, as well as their role as parents, concretely or potentially.

In all, 5000 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to correctional officers working in the five administrative regions of CSC in April 2003. Of this total, 2,432 questionnaires were completed and received before the stipulated deadline and have thus been included in the statistical analysis of the data collected. Over one hundred other completed questionnaires were received after the deadline, and were, therefore, not included in the analysis.

The response rate to the questionnaires that were sent out is thus over 49%, and nearly 43% of all of CSC's correctional officers. In light of this response rate, and along with the examination of available literature in the areas of criminology, organizational psychology, sociology and occupational medicine undertaken, this research project represents by its scope one of the largest studies specifically dedicated to correctional officers as a public service sector in an OECD ¹member country.

All the completed questionnaires received before the deadline were handed over to the *Groupe Ad Hoc Recherche* of Montreal in order to carry out the data entry process using the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS v.10) software programme. Once the data entered, customary statistical analyses were performed by the Prevention Group (Health-Safety-Environment) of the CSN Labour Relations Department using SPSS v.11. Additional data processing was carried out using the Excel spreadsheet programme (Microsoft Office 2000 Premium).

¹To our knowledge the largest study conducted was that of Goldberg P. et al. at the *Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale de France* (INSERM) entitled: "Work conditions and mental health among prison staff in France." *Scand J Work Environ Health* 22, 1 (February 1996), pp. 45-54.



Analyses were made using the following variables in such a way as to provide a means for cross tabulation of the results obtained:

- The respondents' gender
- The administrative region (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies or Pacific)
- The security level of the correctional facility (maximum, medium, minimum or multiple level)
- The prison population (male, female, mixed)
- The years of service (seniority).

One part of the questionnaire dealing with the assessment of the physical, psychological and technical demands of the job, as well as the fit between these demands and the agents' ability to perform the work, was specifically addressed to officers with 25 or more years of service.

What follows are the results and our comments based on the analysis of the data collected. The information in this report is limited to the most salient findings, that is, results which are closely related to the health and well-being of correctional officers members of UCCO-SACC-CSN, and regarding which, concurring and consistent conclusions can be drawn.

3. Breakdown of respondents

Table 1 provides a breakdown of respondents on the basis of the independent variables selected to perform the statistical analysis of the data, and processing of the ensuing results. Upon examining the table, it should be noted that when adding up the numbers of respondents along any given dimension, the totals do not always agree, due to the fact that respondents did not always answer every single question. Thus, although all the respondents provided answers regarding the administrative region of their institution, some of them did not answer the questions regarding their gender, the prison population, their years of service, etc.

TABLE 1 RESPONDENT BREAKDOWN ACCORDING TO THE CRITERIA AND ANALYTICAL VARIABLES SELECTED

CRITERIA	SUB-CRITERIA	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Total number of respondents used in the analysis		2,432
Region	Atlantic	196
	Quebec	710
	Ontario	461
	Prairies	594
	Pacific	471
Security level	Maximum	709
	Medium	825
	Minimum	238
	Multiple level	424
Prison capacity	<100	161
	100 to 200	295
	200 to 300	410
	>300	1,348
Prison population	Male	1,891
	Female	109
	Co-ed	224
Officer Gender	Male	1,655
	Female	579
Years of service (seniority)	<2 years	332
	2 to 4 years	651
	5 to 10 years	442
	10 to 15 years	193
	>15 years	610

The table indicates that all the selected categories are sufficiently represented to allow for statistical analyses to be undertaken with a high degree of certainty (in terms of the conventionally accepted 'confidence levels' attached to the specific results obtained).

Figure 1 shows the respondents breakdown by age group for both men and women.

FIGURE 1 DISTRIBUTION OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS BY AGE GROUP

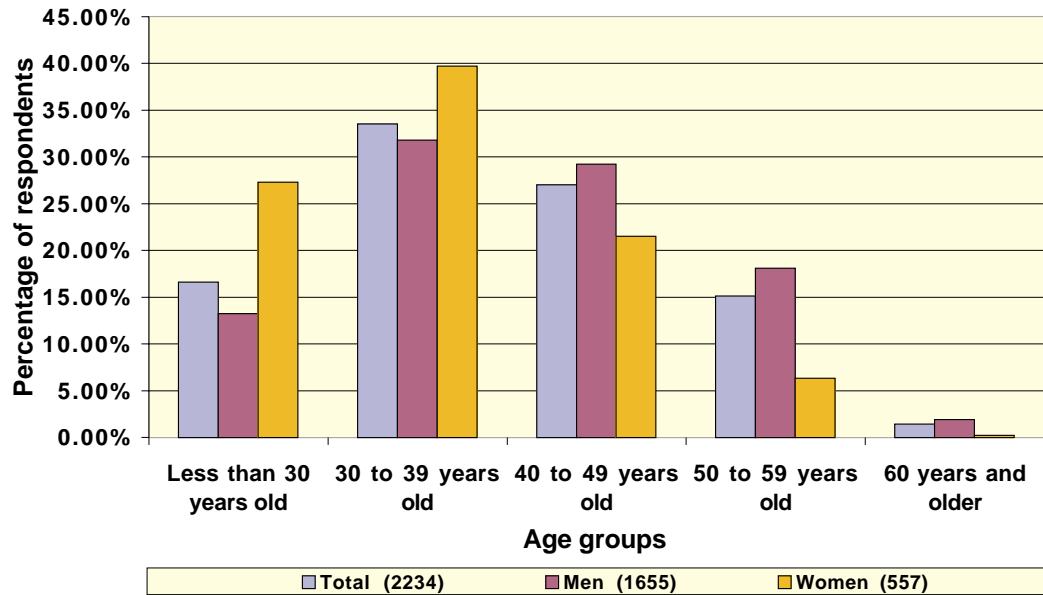


Table 2 shows the average age of respondents broken down by gender and by years of service, including the average and standard deviation for each criterion. The data reflect the more recent entry of women into the field of corrections as correctional officers. It also reflects the progressive ageing of the correctional officer population as can be seen by the increase in average age with increase in 'years of service'.

TABLE 2 AVERAGE RESPONDENT AGE BROKEN DOWN BY GENDER AND BY YEARS OF SERVICE

STATISTICAL PARAMETER	AGE BREAKDOWN OF THE SAMPLE BY GENDER			AGE BREAKDOWN OF THE SAMPLE BY YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)				
	Total (2,234)	Men (1655)	Women (579)	<2 years	2 to 4 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	>15 years
Average	39.4	40.7	35.5	32.6	34.3	37.9	44.9	48.9
Standard deviation	9.7	9.7	8.4	7.1	7.8	7.9	7.6	6.0

4. Work in relation to stress and officers' private life away from work

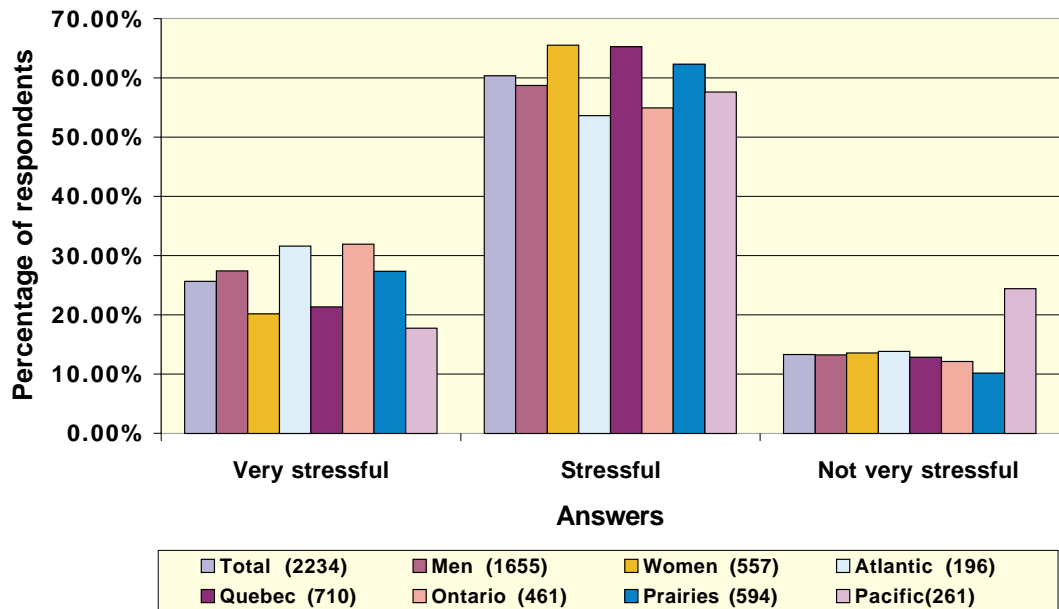
4.1 Results

Figure 2 shows the results obtained from the answers to question B1:

B1. Do you consider your work:

1. very stressful
2. stressful
3. not very stressful

FIGURE 2 WORK IN RELATION TO STRESS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

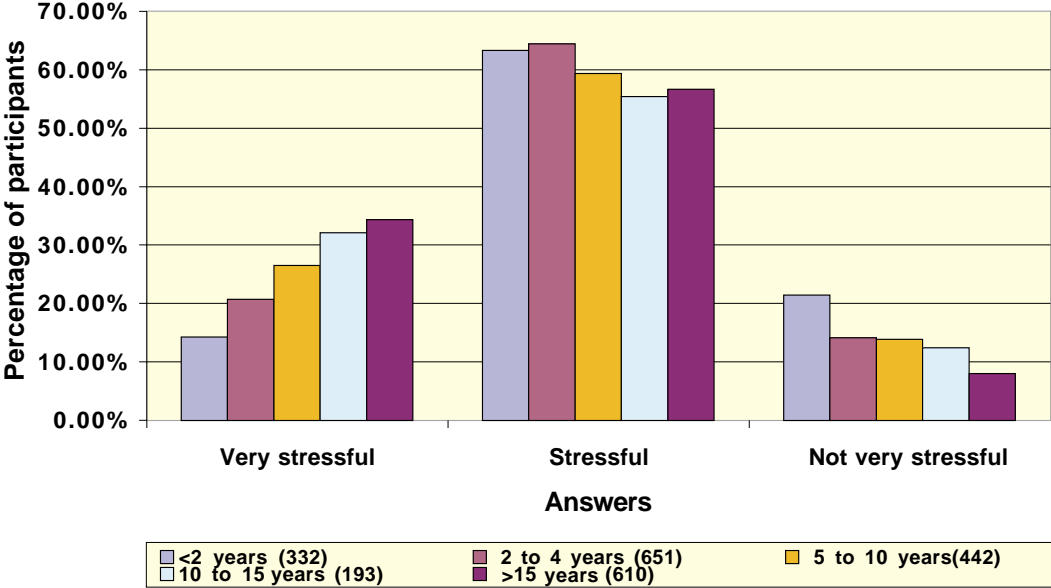


The graph shows the results for all respondents, as well as by gender and by region. The following tendencies stand out:

- Between 70% and 80% of correctional officers judge their work to be “stressful” or “very stressful”.
- Men and women associate stress with their work as correctional officers in comparable proportions.
- The Atlantic and Ontario regions report the highest work-related stress levels, while the Pacific region indicates the opposite tendency whereby 24% of the officers say their work is “not very stressful”, an answer which contrasts sharply with other regions.

Figure 3 shows the answers to the same question, with the data broken down here according to respondents' years of service.

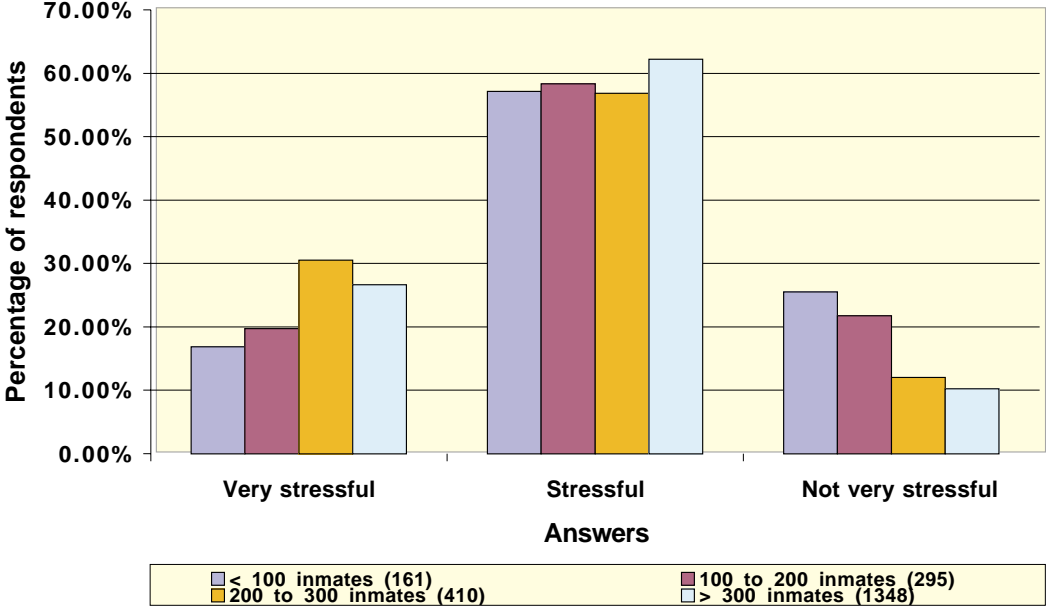
FIGURE 3 WORK IN RELATION TO STRESS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



This graph shows a strong positive correlation between stress at work and years of service. Accordingly, 34% of officers with 15 years of service or more judge their job to be “very stressful” compared to only 14% of officers with less than two years of experience. The findings reveal that in the case of correctional officers, increase in familiarity with work which normally grows with years of service, does not translate into reduced stress on the job as would be expected. On the contrary, the officers’ level of stress increases as their years of service increase.

Figure 4 shows the answers to question B1, broken down by the detention capacity or size of the institution where the respondent is employed.

FIGURE 4 WORK IN RELATION TO STRESS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO DETENTION CAPACITY



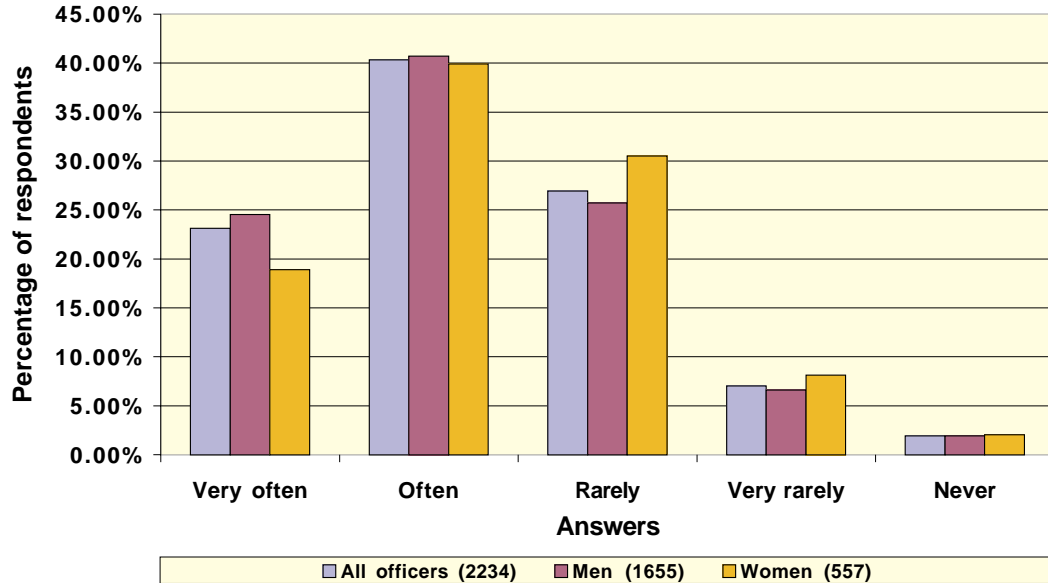
The results indicate that the reported level of stress increases with increase in detention capacity. Accordingly, only 10% of officers working in an institution housing 300 or more inmates (1,343 officers) describe their job as “not very stressful”, compared to 25.5% of officers who work in an institution accommodating less than 100 inmates (161 officers).

In order to evaluate the negative impact work might have on the private life of correctional officers the questionnaire included the following question:

- B8. Would you say that your work has negative effects on your personal life?**
1. very often
 2. often
 3. rarely
 4. very rarely
 5. never

Figure 5 shows the answers to this question for all respondents, as well as results broken down by gender and by security level of the institution.

FIGURE 5 NEGATIVE SPILLOVER OF WORKING CONDITIONS ON THE PRIVATE LIFE OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



These results reveal the following tendencies:

- Between 60% and 65% of correctional officers report that their work has a negative impact on their life away from work, “very often” or “often”.
- Men and women report experiencing negative effects from their job, in their lives away from work, in similar proportions.

According to this data, the negative impact of work upon the officers’ private life does not appear to stem from the security level of the prison institutions where they work. It is thus the correctional officer’s job as such, regardless of security level, which seems to be the major decisive factor underlying this phenomenon.

The answers to question B8 were also broken down according to respondents’ years of service (seniority). Figure 6 shows the results..

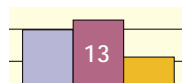
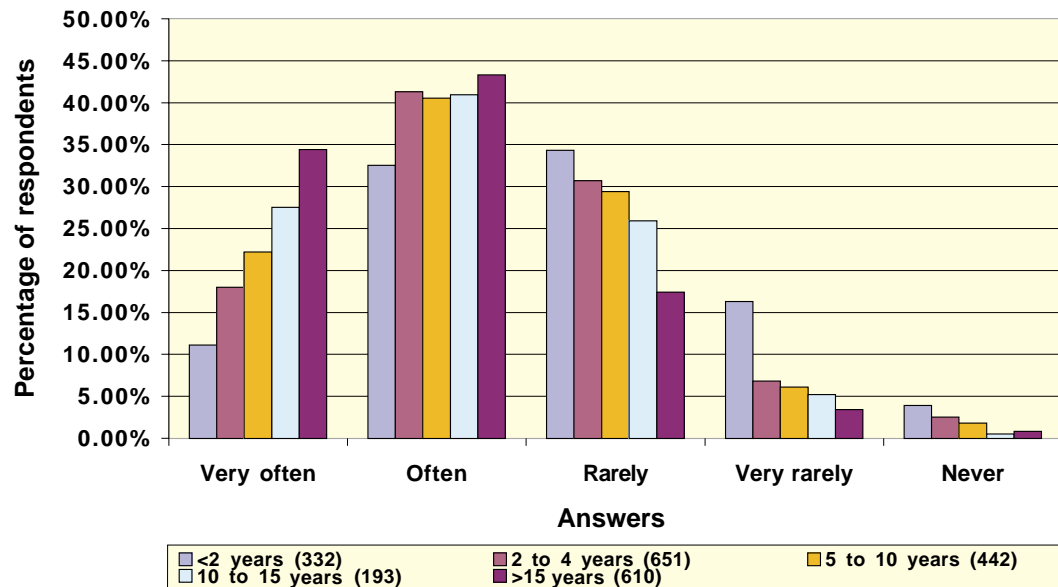


FIGURE 6 NEGATIVE SPILLOVER OF WORK ON THE PRIVATE LIFE OF CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



The graph reveals an unambiguous tendency: The negative impact of the correctional officers' job on their life away from work increases significantly and inexorably with the increase in years of service. Accordingly, nearly 35% of officers with 15 years of service and more (610) affirm that their work has negative impact on their private life "very often", compared to only 11% of officers with less than 2 years of service who report the same phenomenon to the same degree

4.2 Discussion of stress experienced by correctional officers in the context of work-related stress in general

Stress at work differs from other forms of pressure that can be associated with one's job, such as professional challenge, ambition to climb a career ladder, etc., in that it is clearly and almost exclusively a negative phenomenon. Thus, according to the *National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)*, the federal agency charged with overseeing occupational health and safety matters in the United States:

job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury².

² NIOSH, *Stress at Work*, Publication No. 99-101, 1999.

As the quotation appearing at the beginning of this report so strikingly and simply states, it is intuitively obvious that a high and permanent level of stress must be an integral part of any correctional officer's job, as is the case in certain other jobs such as those of police officers, emergency medical staff and the military in combat situations. Although stress in these other categories of employment receives the attention that it rightfully deserves from public authorities and researchers, the stress encountered by correctional officers has however attracted much less attention, notwithstanding the existence of a limited number of studies that have demonstrated that stress in this domain is also significant, if not more so, than stress experienced by police officers and the military in combat situations³.

In the following, some of these studies will be examined in more detail. *Stohr et al.* identified stress as a serious and growing problem in the American prison system⁴. Other studies have identified the correctional officer's job as one of the most stressful professions that exist⁵. Still others have corroborated the perception correctional officers themselves harbour of their work as being "very stressful"⁶. There is likewise the study of *Lindquist and White* in which 241 correctional officers were surveyed. According to the study, 39% of the officers characterized their work as "very stressful" or "stressful"⁷. While these figures are slightly lower than the results obtained in this study, the work of *Lindquist and White* confirms the tendency observed in the current findings. In one of the rare studies on the physiological effects of stress on correctional officers, *Hannold and Stinchcomb* reported that 26% out of a sample of 141 officers suffered from hypertension, 19% from persistent migraines, and 31% stated that they were "under medication or under their physician's care"⁸.

Stohr et al. also report that the principal determining factors responsible for creating or aggravating stress among correctional officers were the administrative and organizational work methods employed in the workplace. *Stohr et al.* also found that stress in the correctional officer's job decreased as their work was more equitably compensated, and as more attention was paid to implementing genuinely participatory work practices and administrative methods. In another study, *Wright et al.* corroborate the conclusions of *Stohr et al.*, including the positive effect of reducing stress via a participatory approach to administrative and organizational practices⁹. Other studies also backed up these conclusions. Accordingly, *Cheek and Miller* found that lack of autonomy and ambiguity in administrative and professional supervision are potent causes of stress among correctional officers¹⁰.

³ Patterson, B. "Job Experience and Perceived Job Stress among Police, Correctional and Probation/Parole Officers." *Journal of Criminal Justice and Behaviour* 19 (1992), pp. 260-85.

⁴ Stohr, M. K., Lovrich, N. P. and Wilson, G. L. "Staff Stress in Contemporary Jails: Assessing Problem Severity and Type of Progressive Personnel Practices." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 22 (1994), pp. 313-327.

⁵ Cooper, C. L., Cooper, R. D. and Eaker, L. H. *Living with Stress*. London: Penguin, 1988.

⁶ Finn, P. "Correctional Officer Stress: A Cause for Concern and Additional Help." *Federal Probation* 62 (1998), pp. 65-74.

⁷ Lindquist, C. A. and Whitehead, J. T. "Burnout, Job Stress and Job Satisfaction among Southern Correctional Officers: Perception and Causal Factors." *Journal of Offender Services, Counselling and Rehabilitation* 10 (1986), pp. 5-26.

⁸ Honnold, J. A. and Stinchcomb, J. B. "Officer stress." *Correct Today* (December 1985), pp. 46-51.

⁹ Wright, K. N., Saylor, W.G., Gilman, E. and Camp, S. "Job Control and Occupational Outcomes Among Prison Workers." *Justice Quarterly* 14 (1997), pp. 525-546.

¹⁰ Cheek, F. E. and Miller, M. "The Experience of Stress for Correction Officers: A Double-Bind Theory of Correctional Stress." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 11 (1983), pp. 105-120.

When examining the relation between a correctional officer's job and stress, the comparison is often made with police officers whose exposure to stress is widely understood and recognized.^{11, 12, 13, 14} This recognition also extends to the physiological and medical consequences of stress upon police officers. Accordingly, it has been observed that police officers have higher blood pressure and stress hormone levels than those encountered in other clerical job categories¹⁵. It has also been established that American police officers (in the State of Iowa) are twice as likely to develop a cardiovascular disease than people in other job categories¹⁶. There are likewise reports that police officers have a higher mortality rate due to cancer than the population in general¹⁷. Another serious consequence of job stress experienced by police officers is suicide. Thus, according to *Violanti*, the suicide rate among police officers is six times higher than among the general population, while 8.3 times more deaths among police officers are attributable to suicide than to criminal acts¹⁸.

In view of the fact that some of the studies mentioned above found that the stress associated with the work of correctional officers is just as significant, if not more so, than stress experienced by police officers, it would be surprising that the physiological and medical consequences of this stress were any less profound or serious amongst correctional officers. Nonetheless, apart from some rare studies on this subject, such as that of *Hannold and Stinchcomb*, research in this area is scarce.

¹¹ Burke, R. J. "Stressful Events, Work-Family Conflict, Coping, Psychological Burnout and Well-Being among Police Officers." *Psychol. Rep.* 75, 2 (1994), pp. 787-800.

¹² Brown, J. and Campbell, E. *Stress and Policing: Sources and Strategies*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1994.

¹³ Gaines, J. and Jermier, J. "Emotional Exhaustion in a High Stress Organization." *Academy of Management Journal* 26, 4 (1983), pp. 567-586.

¹⁴ Sewell, J. "The Development of a Critical Life Events Scale for Law Enforcement." *Journal of Police Science and Administration* 11, 1 (1983), pp. 109-116.

¹⁵ Ely, D.L. and Mostardi, R. A. "The Effect of Recent Life Events, Stress, Life Assets and Temperament Pattern on Cardiovascular Risk Factors for Akron City Police Officers." *J. Human Stress* 12, 2 (1986), pp. 77-91.

¹⁶ Franke, W. D., Collins, S.A. and Hinz, P.N. "Cardiovascular Disease Morbidity in an Iowa Law Enforcement Cohort, Compared with the General Iowa Population." *J. Occup. Environ. Med.* 40, 5 (1998), pp. 441-444.

¹⁷ Vena, J.E., Violanti, J.M., Marshall, J. and Fiedler, R.C. "Mortality of a Municipal Worker Cohort: III. Police Officers." *Am. J. Ind. Med.* 10, 4 (1986), pp. 383-397.

¹⁸ Violanti, J. *Police Suicide: Epidemic in Blue*, Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher Ltd., 1996.

That being said, the fact that stress amongst correctional officers is at least comparable to stress amongst police officers is well-noted in some circles, including within the official confines of CSC itself. Hence, in a joint committee report that examined the working conditions and compensation of federal correctional officers compared to that of RCMP officers and provincial correctional officers, the following was noted:

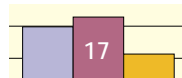
The working conditions, broadly defined, comprise some important similarities with the jobs of RCMP general duty constables, including contact with the criminal justice system, response to emergency situations, violence and the exposure to danger.

There are also important differences in working conditions that provide correctional officers with added challenges: the daily contact with offenders, including those who officers themselves may have reported and charged, and the risk of contracting infectious diseases, are but two examples (...) *It is fair to say that over the years, the vast majority of correctional officers have either directly experienced or will experience a serious violent incident while on the job. And some will themselves be the target of this violence. National statistics from CSC indicate that 775 serious violent incidents occurred in federal institutions from 1990 to 1999. Of these, there were 32 major assaults on staff, as well as 51 murders of offenders, 136 suicides and 474 major assaults on offenders. In the twelve-month span from April 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999, CSC counted 2 major assaults on staff, 6 murders of offenders, 3 hostage-takings, 16 suicides and 31 major assaults on offenders¹⁹. (our emphasis)*

The significance of stress in general, and the exposure to traumatic incidents, in particular, in the course of a correctional officer's job is also recognized in the literature published or sponsored by CSC . Accordingly, in a highly relevant study by *Lois Rosine* published by CSC²⁰, "in-depth interviews" were organized with 122 correctional officers employed in six Ontario correctional facilities. The facilities covered the full range of security levels and included detention facilities for both male and female offenders. According to this study, an average of 27.9 incidents were experienced on an individual basis by the officers surveyed. The study also found that subsequent to these incidents, 17% of the officers participating in the study had suffered to the point where they were clinically diagnosed with post-traumatic disorder. According to the study, with a 17% post-traumatic disorder incidence rate, correctional officers fall much higher than the 1% rate reported among the general population, and a lot closer to the 20% rate encountered with Vietnam veterans who suffered injuries during combat.

¹⁹ Joint Committee Report on Federal Correctional Officers, "A Comparison of the Duties, Working Conditions and Compensation Levels of Federal Correctional Officers, Uniformed RCMP Officers and Selected Provincial Correctional Officers." (April 2000), <http://dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca/Collection/BT43-102-2000E.pdf>

²⁰ Rosine, Lois, "Exposure to Critical Incidents: What Are the Effects on Canadian Correctional Officers?" *Pleins feux sur le personnel* 4, 1 (1992), SCC. http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/pblct/forum/e04/e041m_e.shtml



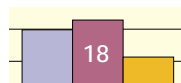
The Rosine study also found that nearly one-half of the officers (47%) indicated that exposure to critical incidents had had a negative impact upon their private and family life away from work, a finding which is entirely consistent with the conclusions of the present study. Rosine writes:

The vast majority of officers who had experienced symptoms of critical incident stress (94%) said the personal impact of these events was severe, with 4% rating it as moderate and 2% as having little or no impact.

In the course of the study, physicians were asked to rate the condition of the correctional officers who had participated in the study. Their conclusions were reported as follows:

About two of every five officers in this study (42%) had sought professional help for a traumatic stress-related health problem. Their physicians reported that 34% of the officers currently suffered from a stress-related problem that required medical attention; for half of these, their doctors indicated that the problem was related to exposure to a traumatic event. Physicians were asked to rate their patients along a continuum of seriousness from mild to severe. Of the 34% of officers identified by their doctors as having a stress-related problem, 18% were considered by their doctors to have a serious problem, 78% a moderate problem, and 9% a mild problem. For 41%, their physicians considered the problem serious enough to interfere with daily living, and 59% required medication.

The results of the present study thus conclusively bear out what has been described in other studies with respect to stress in a correctional environment, and the negative impact of such stress upon the well-being and life away from work of correctional officers. Such corroboration is all the more relevant in that it is based upon data obtained from 2,400 federal correctional officers, a figure that represents more than 43% of all federal correctional officers in Canada.



5. Work demands and the officers' ability to discharge their duties correctly

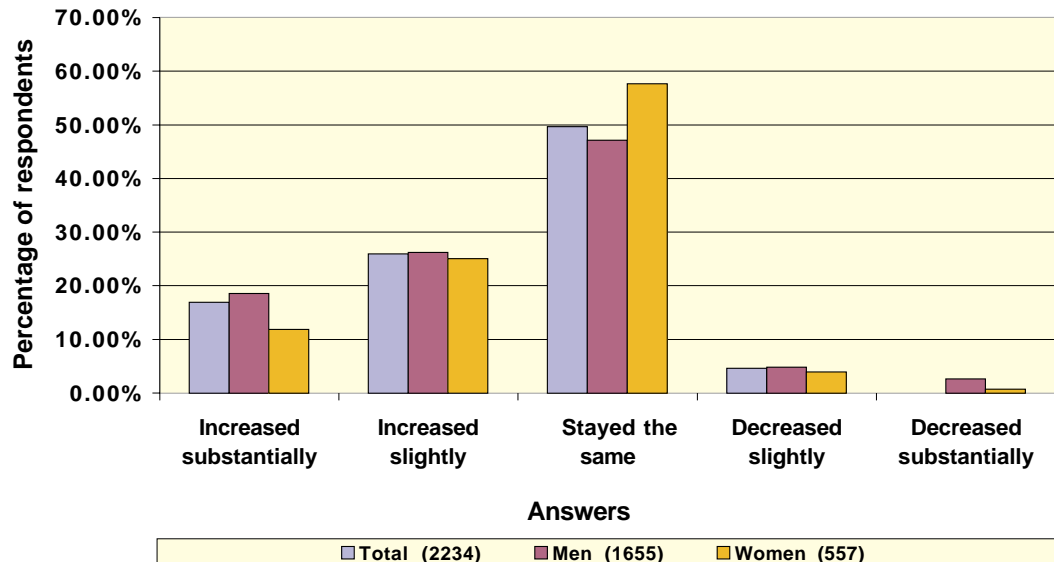
5.1 Physical Demands

In order to assess the evolution of physical demands on correctional officers in the course of their work, the following question was included in the questionnaire:

- B2. In the last 5 years (or since you have been working in your current job), would you say that the physical demands of your work have:**
1. increased substantially
 2. increased slightly
 3. stayed the same
 4. decreased slightly
 5. decreased substantially

Figure 7 shows the answers to this question for all respondents, and by gender.

FIGURE 7 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PHYSICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Between 30% and 40% of respondents judge that the physical demands of their work have “increased substantially” or “increased slightly” over the last five years. Meanwhile, it should be noted that nearly 18% of men assert that these demands have “increased substantially” compared to only 11% of women.

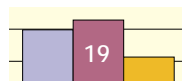
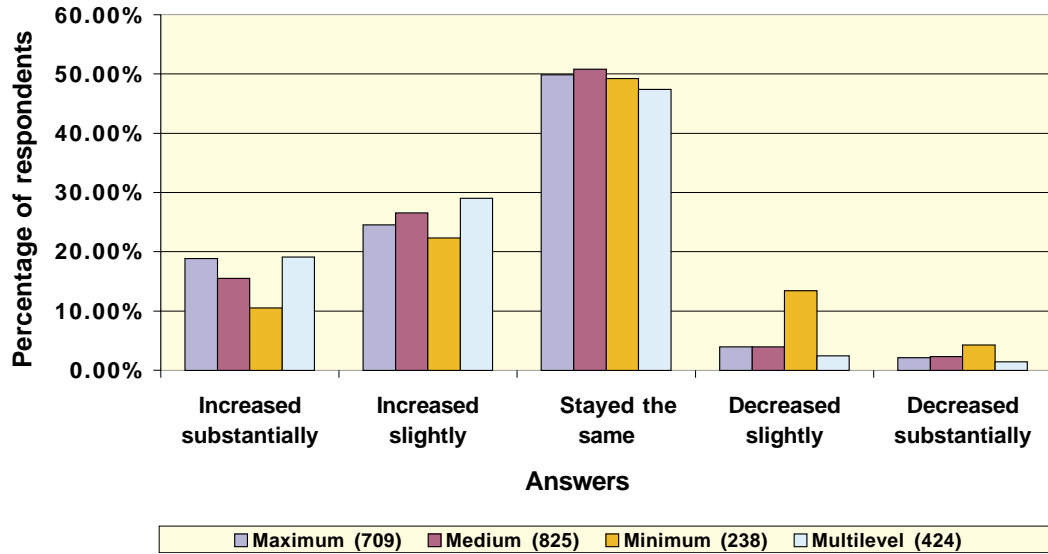


Figure 8 shows the answers to the same question, with the data broken down according to the security level in the respondents respective facilities.

FIGURE 8 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PHYSICAL DEMANDS AMONG THE INSTITUTION'S CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS, ACCORDING TO SECURITY LEVEL



While the general tendency observed earlier is confirmed, the graph reveals a perception of a substantial increase in the physical demands of the job in multiple security level institutions. Thus, nearly 20% of officers working in these institutions (424) report a substantial increase in the physical demands of their job, a margin that is comparable to the proportion of officers working in maximum security institutions (709), who provide a similar assessment

The answers to question B2 have also been broken down according to the gender makeup of the prison population. Figure 9 shows the results of this analysis.

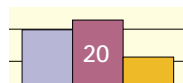
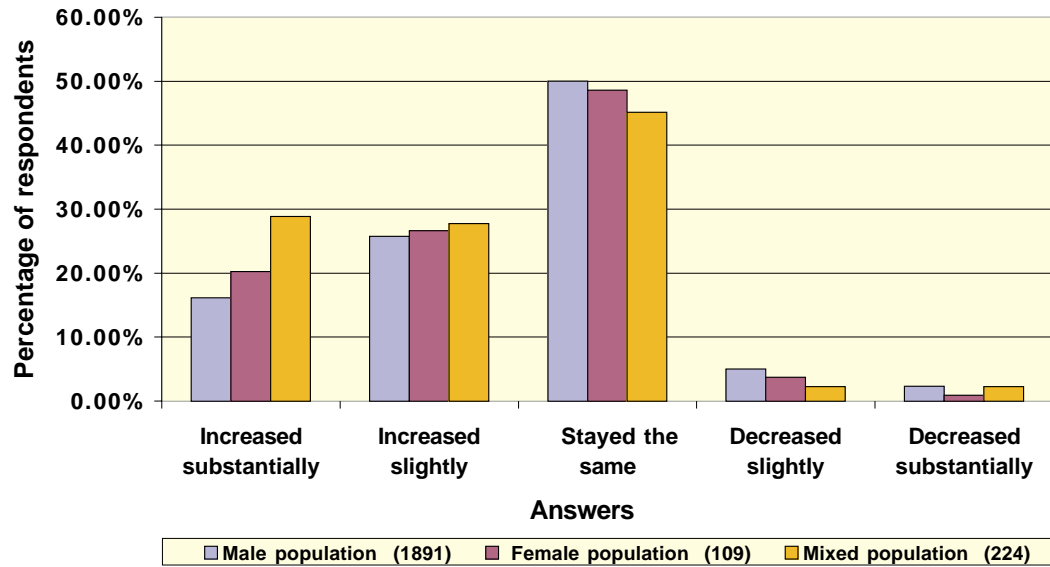


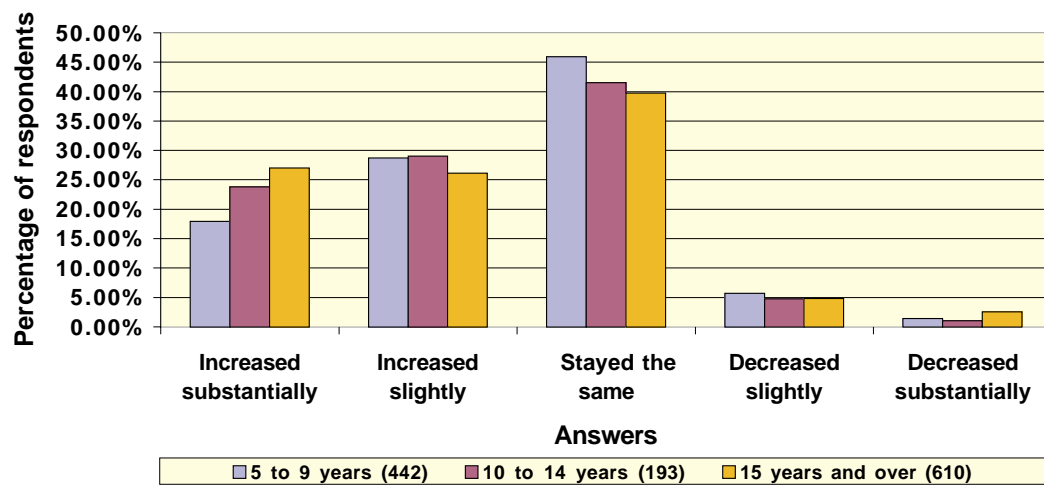
FIGURE 9 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PHYSICAL DEMANDS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS, ACCORDING TO INMATE POPULATION



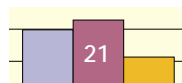
The data demonstrates that a higher proportion of officers working in the mixed institutions (224) report substantial or slight increases in the physical demands of their job compared to officers working with exclusively female or male prison populations.

Figure 10 shows the answers to the same question broken down according to the respondents' years of service.

FIGURE 10 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PHYSICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



As can be seen in this graph, the perception of an increase in the physical demands of the job increases with years of service.



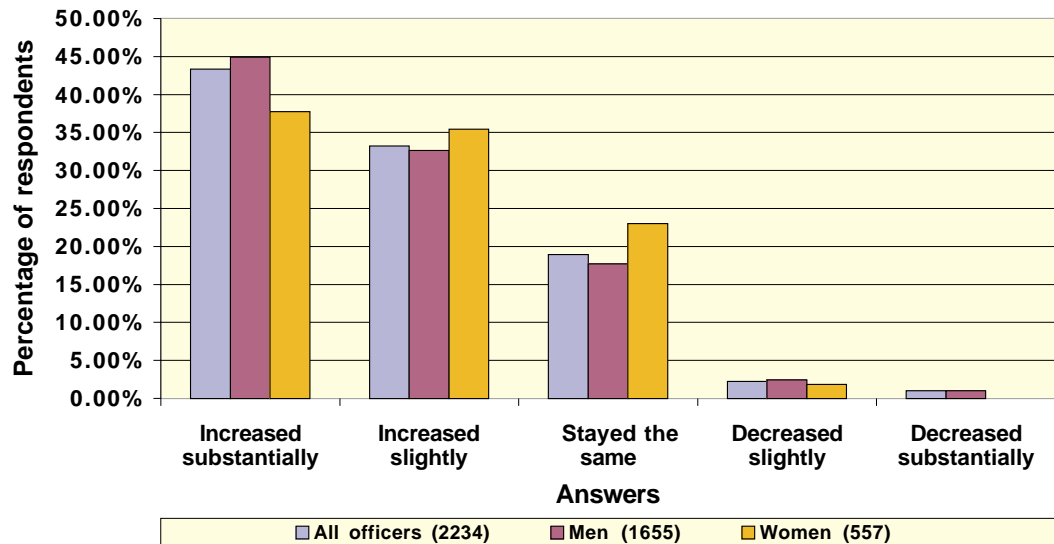
5.2 Psychological demands

In order to assess the evolution of psychological demands on correctional officers in the course of work, the following question was included in the questionnaire:

- B3. In the last 5 years (or since you have been working in your current job), would you say that the psychological demands of your work have:**
1. increased substantially
 2. increased slightly
 3. stayed the same
 4. decreased slightly
 5. decreased substantially

Figure 11 shows the answers to this question for all respondents, and by gender.

FIGURE 11 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Compared to the physical demands of their job, far more officers (between 37% and 45%) report a substantial increase in the psychological demands imposed upon them at work. A clear distinction is also evident between male and female officers in this case, where 45% of men report a substantial increase, compared to only 37% of women. Overall, a substantial proportion of correctional officers, between 70 and 75%, report that the psychological demands of their job have increased over the past five years.

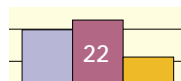
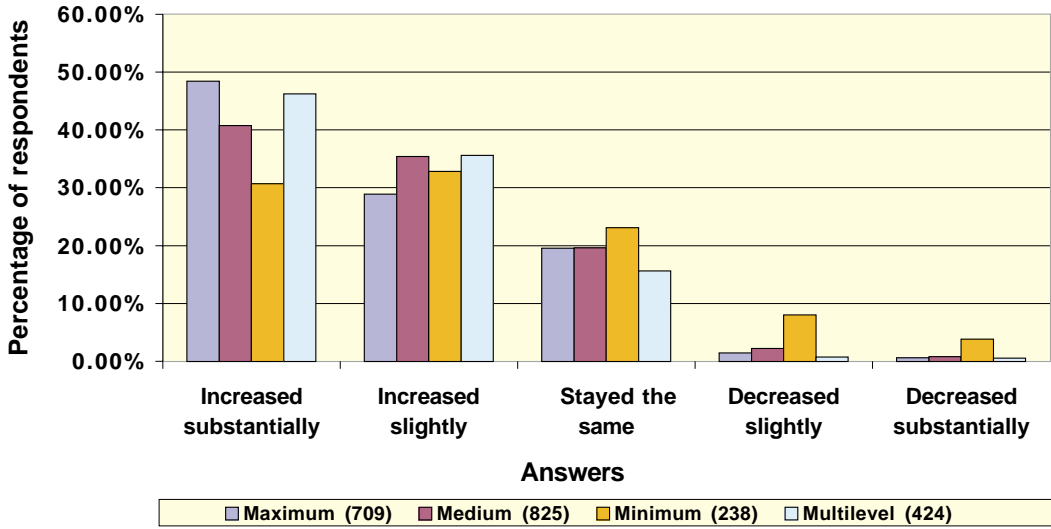


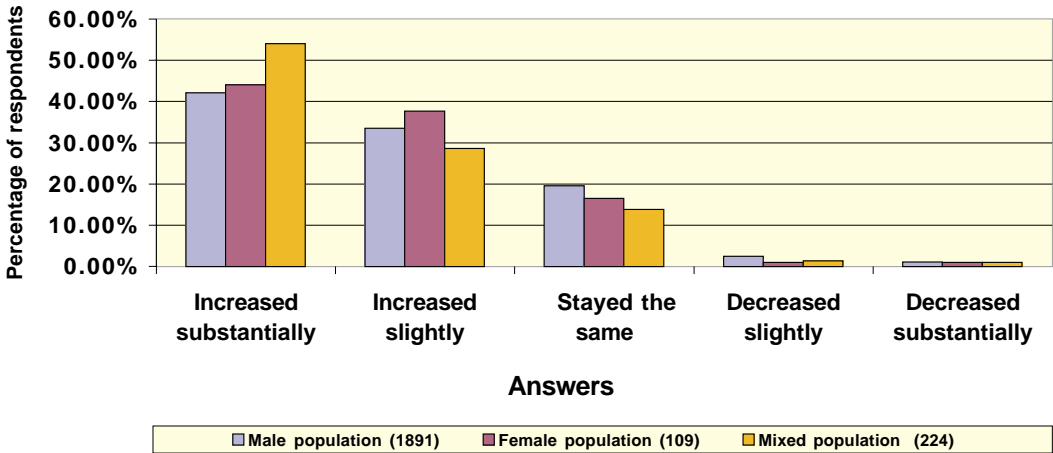
Figure 12 shows the results for the same question, viewed according to the security level of the institution where the respondent works. The results mirror the tendencies observed with regards to the physical demands of the job, but at higher percentages. The results also show that a sizeable proportion of officers in the multiple level security institutions, 46%, report a substantial increase in the psychological demands of their job, a proportion comparable to that obtained in the case of officers working in maximum security institutions (48%).

FIGURE 12 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTION'S SECURITY LEVEL



A similar tendency is observed when the answers to this question are broken down according to the gender makeup of the prison population as shown in Figure 13.

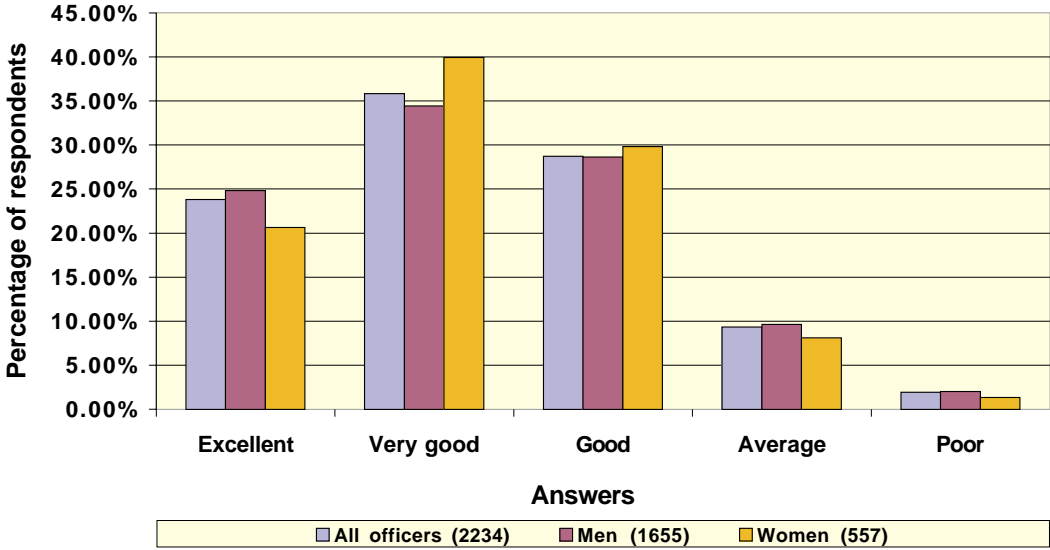
FIGURE 13 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO INMATE POPULATION



The results reveal that a higher proportion of officers working in mixed institutions report a substantial increase (53%) in the psychological demands of their job, compared to officers working with exclusively female or male populations.

Figure 14 shows results for question B3, analysed according to years of service. In line with the tendencies already observed, the perception of an increase in the psychological demands of the job increases significantly as years of service increase.

FIGURE 14 CHANGE IN THE WORK'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



As already mentioned above with regards to stress and the psychological demands of the job, although longer years of service bring correctional officers more familiarity with their work and its demands, such familiarity does not translate into a reduction in the difficulties encountered in the workplace, as is often the case with other types of jobs. On the contrary, as in the case of stress, and probably as an expression of that stress itself, the psychological difficulties associated with work grow with the increase in the officers' years of service.

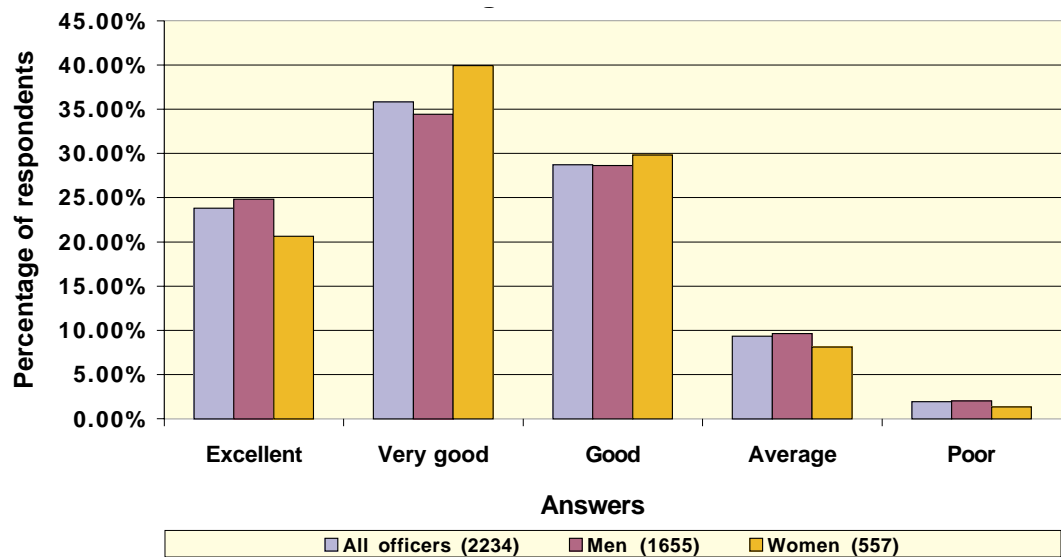
5.3 Physical ability to properly carry out assigned duties

The questionnaire also sought to measure the correctional officers' perception of their physical ability to do their job properly. With this in mind, the following question was put to them:

- B4. How do you rate your physical ability to perform your assigned duties properly?**
1. excellent
 2. very good
 3. good
 4. average
 5. poor

Figure 15 shows the results for this question. Between 80% and 85% of officers feel physically able to properly perform their assigned duties. Both men and women respond to this question in relatively comparable terms.

FIGURE 15 PHYSICAL ABILITY TO PROPERLY PERFORM ASSIGNED DUTIES AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



5.4 Psychological ability to properly carry out assigned duties

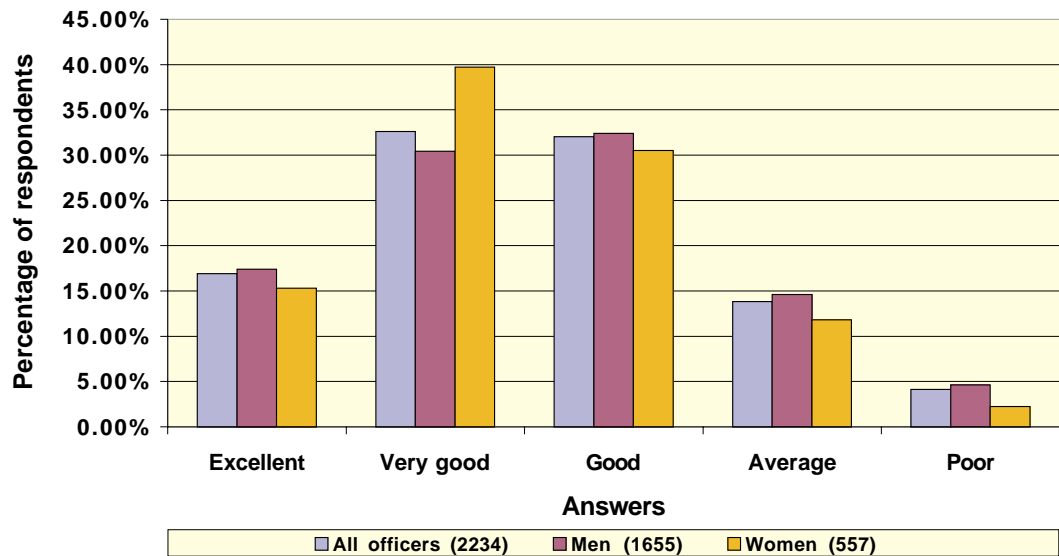
The questionnaire sought likewise to measure the correctional officers' perception of their psychological ability to do their job properly through the following question:

B5. How do you rate your psychological ability to perform your assigned duties properly?

1. excellent
2. very good
3. good
4. average
5. poor

Figure 16 shows the results for this question.

FIGURE 16 PSYCHOLOGICAL ABILITY TO PROPERLY PERFORM ASSIGNED DUTIES AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Between 75% and 80% of officers feel psychologically able to properly perform their assigned duties. Again, no discernible differences can be noted between men and women in this case.

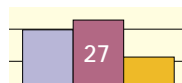
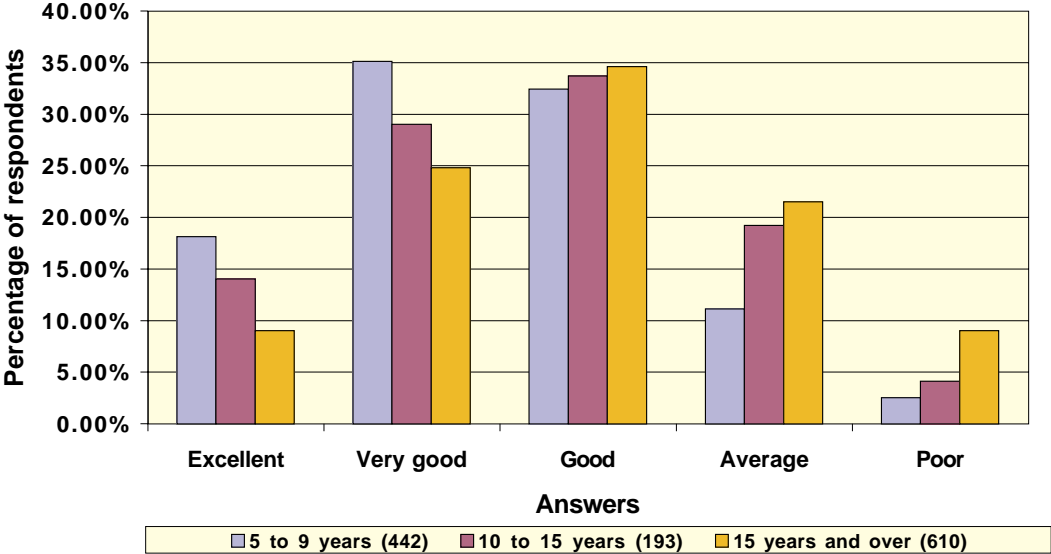


Figure 17 shows the results of the answers to question B5, broken down by years of service.

FIGURE 17 PSYCHOLOGICAL ABILITY TO PROPERLY PERFORM ASSIGNED DUTIES AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



The “staircase” tendency is clearly evident in this graph. Once again, the correctional officers’ perception of their own psychological ability to properly perform their job duties decreases considerably with years of service.

6. Quality of job training and supervision

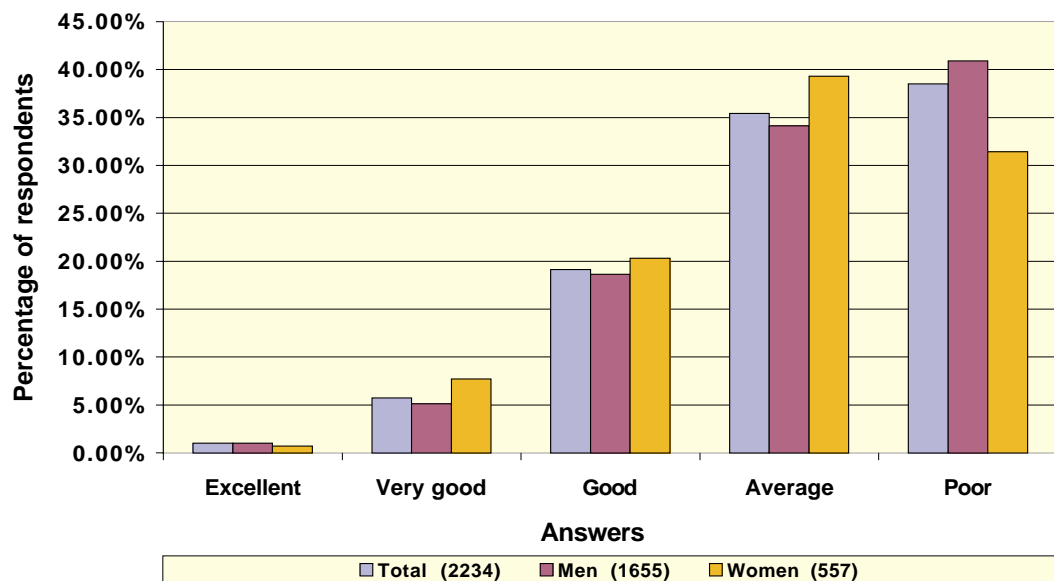
The questionnaire also sought to sound out correctional officers on the quality of the training and professional supervision they receive on the job. The question designed to gauge this aspect was as follows:

B7. How do you rate the job training and supervision that you receive in terms of your assigned duties?

1. excellent.
2. very good
3. good
4. average
5. poor

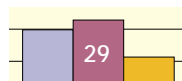
Figure 18 shows the answers to this question.

FIGURE 18 QUALITY OF TECHNICAL TRAINING AND SUPERVISION AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



The results reveal that only 25% of all officers judge the quality of job training and supervision they receive as either “good”, “very good” or “excellent”.

Meanwhile, between 30% and 40% of officers describe that quality as “poor”. This issue is an important aspect of the correctional officer’s work. As already stated, several studies dealing with stress have found that the level of stress felt by correctional officers is heavily dependent upon the quality of the administration, organization and technical supervision of their work (See the discussion of stress in Section 3).



7. Working conditions of officers with 25 years or more of service

The questionnaire singled out for special consideration the work experience of correctional officers with 25 years of service or more. The following questions were thus, directed exclusively to this group of officers.

B9. If you have 25 years or more of work experience as a correctional officer, how do you rate your physical ability to properly perform your designated duties?

1. much better than ten years ago
2. better than ten years ago
3. unchanged in the past ten years
4. worse than ten years ago
5. much worse than ten years ago

B10. If you have 25 years or more of work experience as a correctional officer, how do you rate your psychological/mental ability to properly perform your designated duties?

1. much better than ten years ago
2. better than ten years ago
3. unchanged in the past ten years
4. worse than ten years ago
5. much worse than ten years ago

B11. If you have 25 years or more of work experience as a correctional officer, how do you rate your interest for the work?

1. much higher than ten years ago
2. higher than ten years ago
3. unchanged in the past ten years
4. lower than ten years ago
5. much lower than ten years ago

The following three graphs show results of the analysis carried out on the answers to these questions in the order given above.

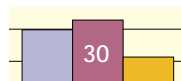
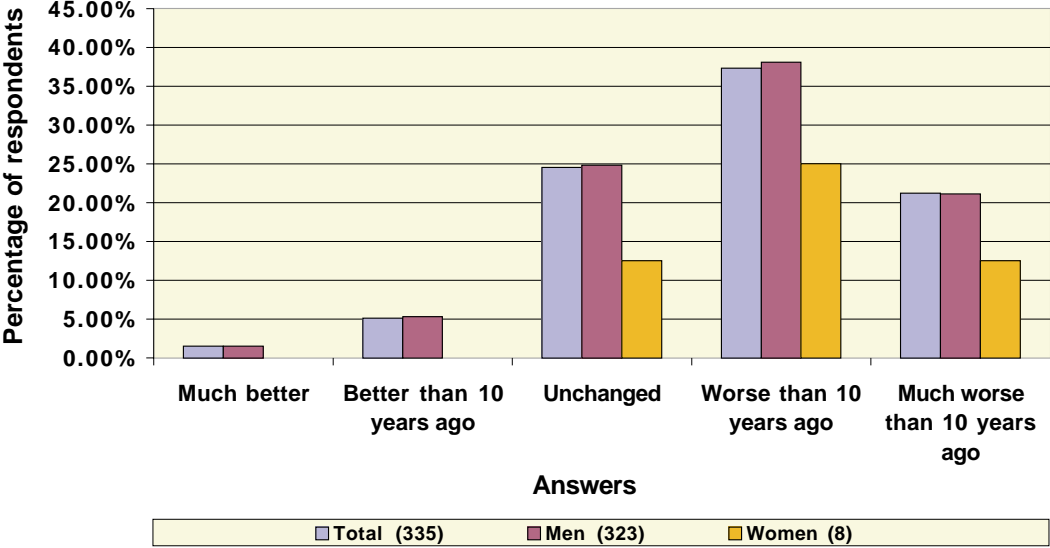
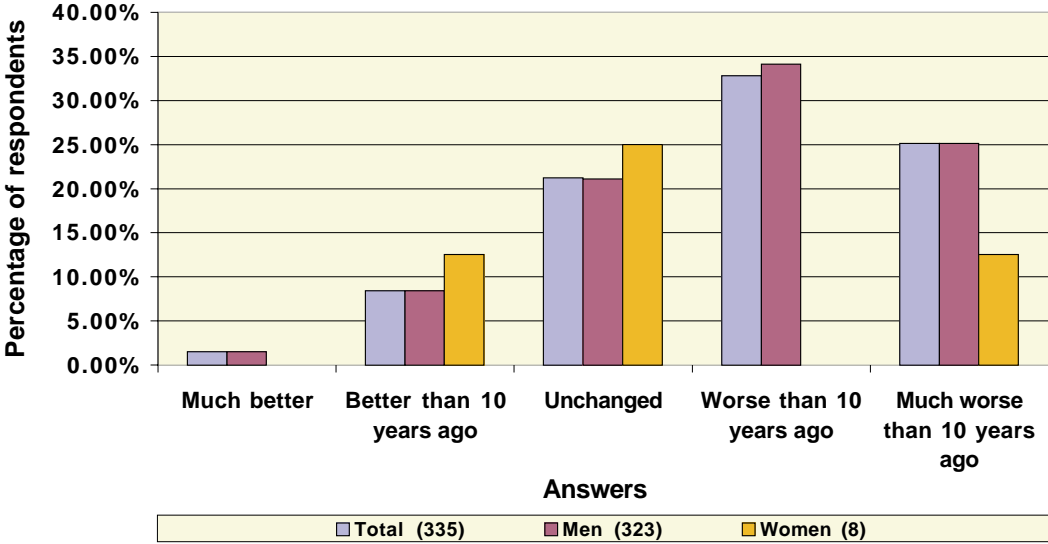


FIGURE 19 PHYSICAL ABILITY TO PROPERLY PERFORM ASSIGNED DUTIES AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (25 YEARS OF SERVICE AND OVER)



Nearly 55% of the officers with 25 years of service or more report that their physical ability to properly do their work is “worse” or “much worse” than 10 years ago. Although the results for women follow the general tendency of the population as a whole, they should not be used to draw any quantitative conclusions in view of the significantly smaller number of women in this category of officers.

FIGURE 20 PSYCHOLOGICAL ABILITY TO PROPERLY PERFORM ASSIGNED DUTIES AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (25 YEARS OF SERVICE AND OVER)



Nearly 60% of the officers with 25 years of service or more consider that their psychological ability to properly do their work is 'worse' or 'much worse' than 10 years ago.

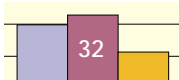
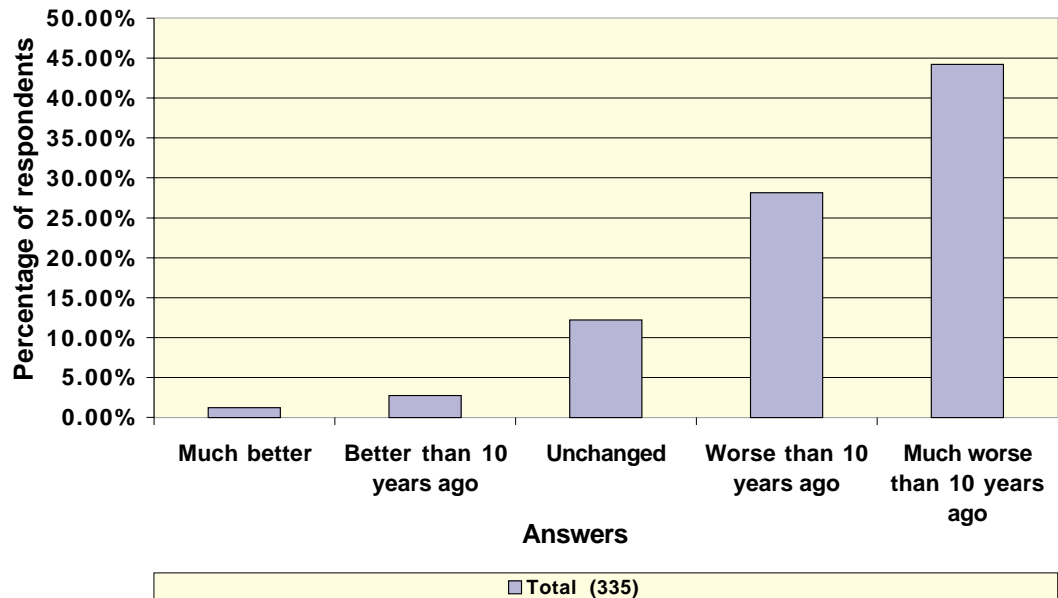


FIGURE 21 LEVEL OF INTEREST IN WORK AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS (25 YEARS OF SERVICE AND OVER)



An even more significant proportion of officers with 25 years of service or more, that is between 72% and 75%, indicate that their interest in their work is “lower” or “much lower” than 10 years ago.

Taken as a whole, the combined results of these three questions demonstrate that there is a particularly poor fit between interest in work and the psychological and mental disposition of officers with 25 years of service or more, on the one hand, and the environment and working conditions set out and maintained by CSC, on the other. Such a poor fit cannot go on forever, nor be ignored, other than to the detriment of both the correctional officers members of UCCO-SACC-CSN, as well as public interest as embodied in CSC’s mandate and social mission.

8. Harassment

The questionnaire devoted a relatively significant amount of space to the issue of harassment that correctional officers may encounter in their workplace. It should be emphasized in this regard that the questionnaire gave the following definition of the term “harassment” for the purposes of our analysis:

Harassment means conduct in the form of repeated and unwanted attitudes, words, acts, actions, or gestures which diminish a person's dignity or their psychological or physical well-being, and which have serious adverse consequences upon their ability to maintain a healthy relationship with their work environment. A single serious act that causes harm or that has an on-going harmful effect may also constitute harassment.

It should be noted here that the *ad hoc* definition of harassment used in this study is not identical word for word with the definition adopted by the Treasury Board Secretariat²¹. There is, however, sufficient overlap of the two definition as to make them substantially equivalent

The questions administered on the subject of harassment were as follows:

B12. Have you been the target of harassment at work in the past 5 years?

1. yes
2. no (skip to question C1)

B13. If you answered YES, how many episodes of harassment have you experienced? (An episode corresponds to all the acts of harassment committed by the same person or group of persons).

1. a single episode
2. two
3. three
4. four
5. five
6. six or more

B14. If you answered YES, what kind of harassment was it? (Choose more than one answer, if applicable).

1. psychological
2. physical (but not sexual)
3. sexual

²¹ The definition given by the Treasury board Secretariat is as follows: **Harassment** (*harcèlement*) - is any improper conduct by an individual, that is directed at and offensive to another person or persons in the workplace, and that the individual knew or ought reasonably to have known would cause offence or harm. It comprises any objectionable act, comment or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat. It includes harassment within the meaning of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. See the document: “*Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of harassment in the Workplace*”; http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/hw-hmt/hara1_e.asp

**B15. If you answered YES, from whom did it come?
(Choose more than one answer, if applicable).**

1. a co-worker
2. more than one co-worker
3. an inmate
4. more than one inmate
5. a supervisor
6. more than one supervisor

B16. If you answered YES, was the harassment reported to your employer?

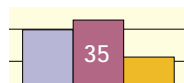
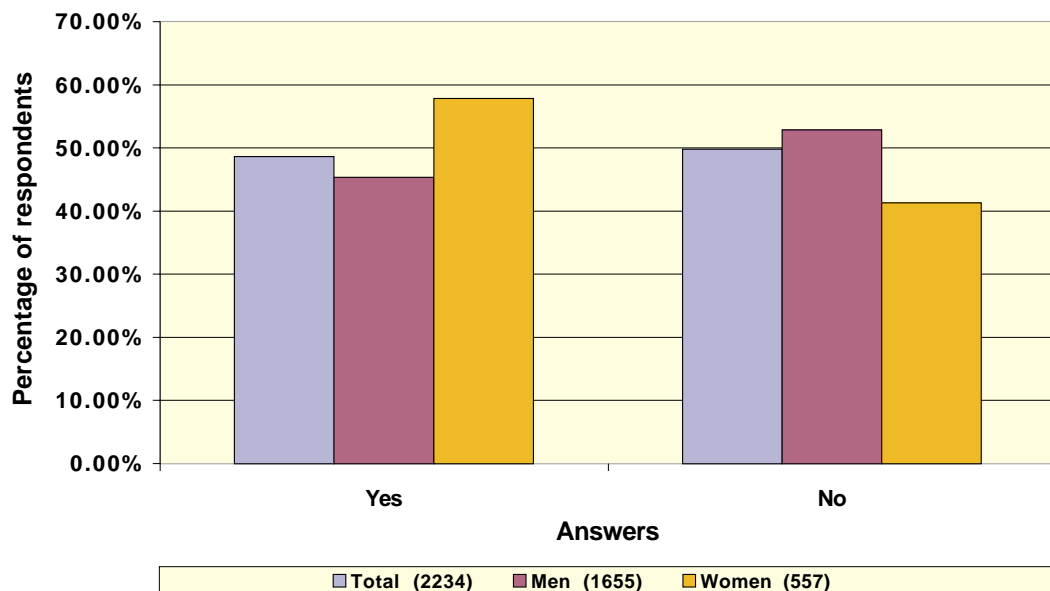
1. yes, in every case
2. yes, but not in every case
3. no (skip to question C1)
4. I don't know (skip to question C1)

B17. If you answered YES, how do you rate the way your employer followed up on the report of harassment?

1. very satisfactory
2. satisfactory
3. unsatisfactory
4. very unsatisfactory
5. employer did nothing
6. I don't know

The following series of graphs show the answers to these questions according to the breakdowns indicated in each graph.

FIGURE 22 CASES OF HARASSMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Results indicate that 48% of officers declare having been victims of harassment in the last five years, within the bounds of the definition given above. It should be noted in this regard that the figure is significantly higher for women – close to 58% – than for men (45%).

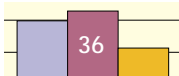
Compared to the extent of the problem of workplace harassment reported elsewhere, victimisation levels of between 50% and 60% are very high, even alarming. Going by the results of the frequently cited Harris public opinion poll conducted in 1994, which looked at the social phenomenon of harassment, the study found that 31% of women workers and employees reported having suffered harassment at work. In comparison, the study reported that harassment is experienced in by only 7% of men. Furthermore, 62% of those who identified themselves as victims of harassment said that they had not taken any action subsequent to the incidents of harassment they encountered.²² The Harris poll also reported that harassment came from “supervisors” in 43% of the cases, from senior co-workers in 27% of cases and from co-workers with the same level of responsibilities in 18% of cases.

The rates of workplace harassment reported in this study are also quite high compared to levels reported in a 1993 Statistics Canada survey.²³ According to that survey, 6% of women reported having suffered harassment in the 12 months preceding the survey. The rates found in this study are also distinctly higher than those of a recent Swiss survey reported by the *European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health*.²⁴ According to that survey (a 3,500-person representative sample of the Swiss labour force), 4.3% said that they had suffered harassment in their current job or the job they had just left. The survey also found that the risk of harassment was greater for foreign workers and workers with dual citizenship.

²² Capstone Communications, “Statistics on Sexual harassment,” Louis Harris and Associates Telephone Poll, March 28, 1994. <http://www.capstn.com/stats.html>

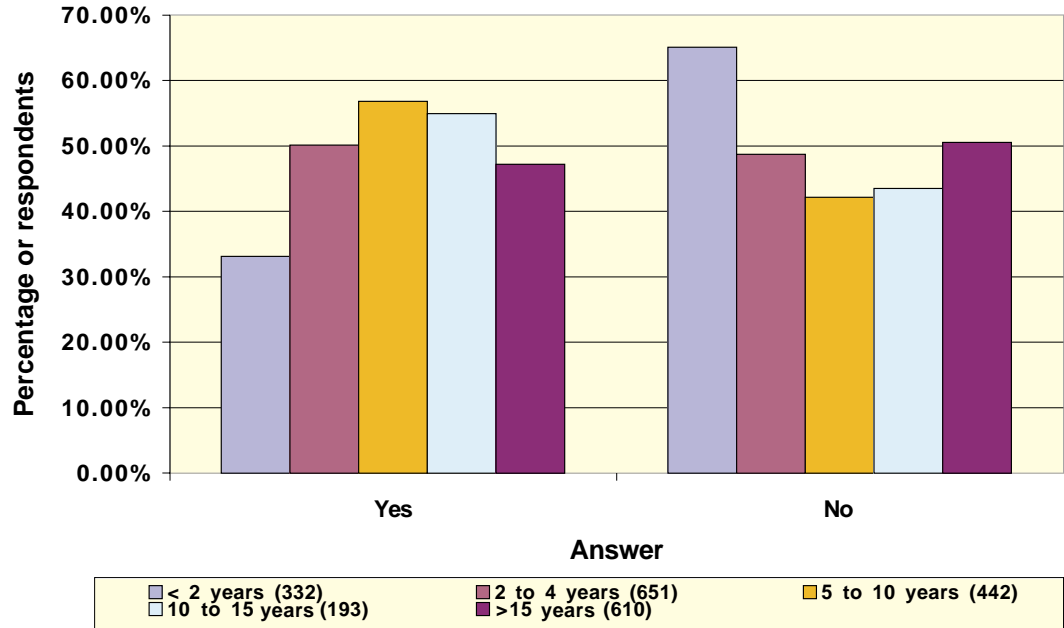
²³ Johnson, H., *Work-Related Sexual harassment: Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Winter (1994), v.6, no.4, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/indepth/75-001/archive/1994/pear1994006004s4a01.pdf>

²⁴ ‘Swiss Survey on Harassment at the Workplace’; http://agency.osha.eu.int/publications/newsletter/13/en/index_50.htm



The results for harassment were also analysed by years of service. Figure 23 presents the results of this analysis.

FIGURE 23 CASES OF HARASSMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



Excluding the group of officers with less than two years of service, the rate of victimisation that was reported ranged from 47% to 57%; with the highest rate found in the group with between 5 and 10 years of service, a range which corresponds roughly to the 27-32 age group.

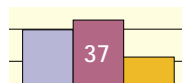
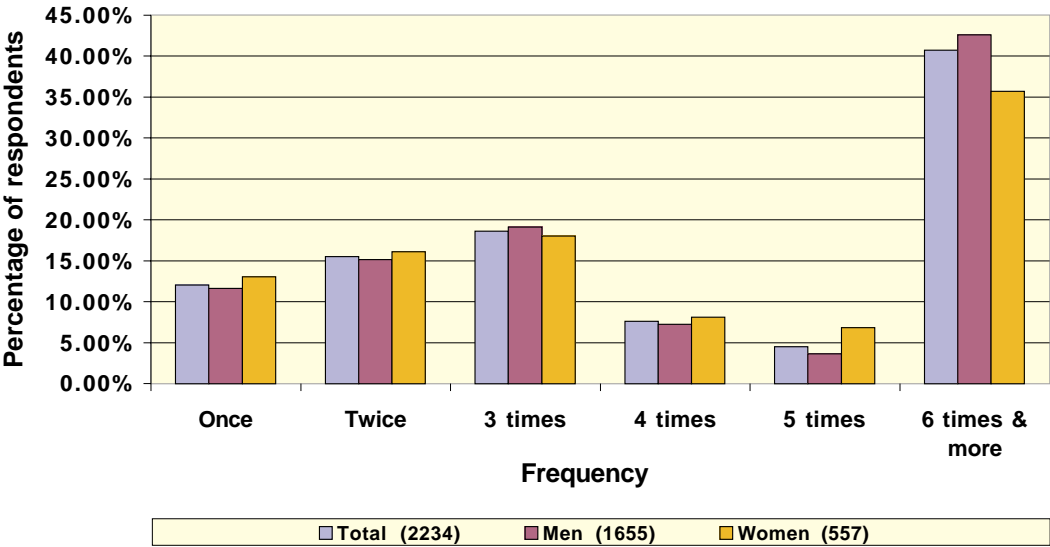


Figure 24 gives the frequency of harassment cases reported by all officers and according to gender.

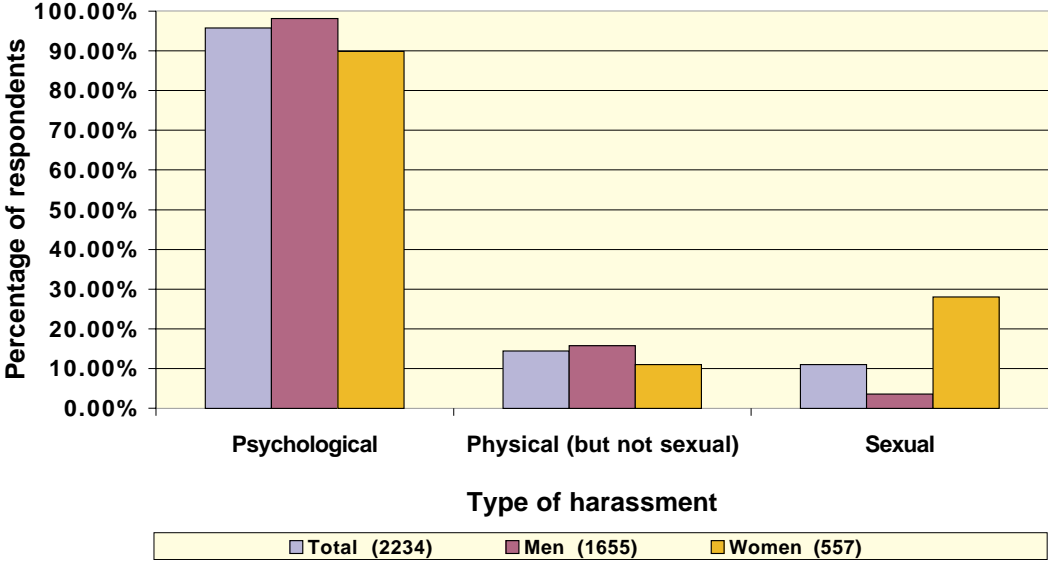
FIGURE 24 FREQUENCY OF HARASSMENT CASES OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



As seen in the graph, between 35% and 42% of those who reported having suffered harassment reported having been harassed 6 times or more in the course of the last five years. This figure clearly shows that the phenomenon of harassment in correctional institutions, and thus constitutes, a problem serious enough to warrant appropriate attention

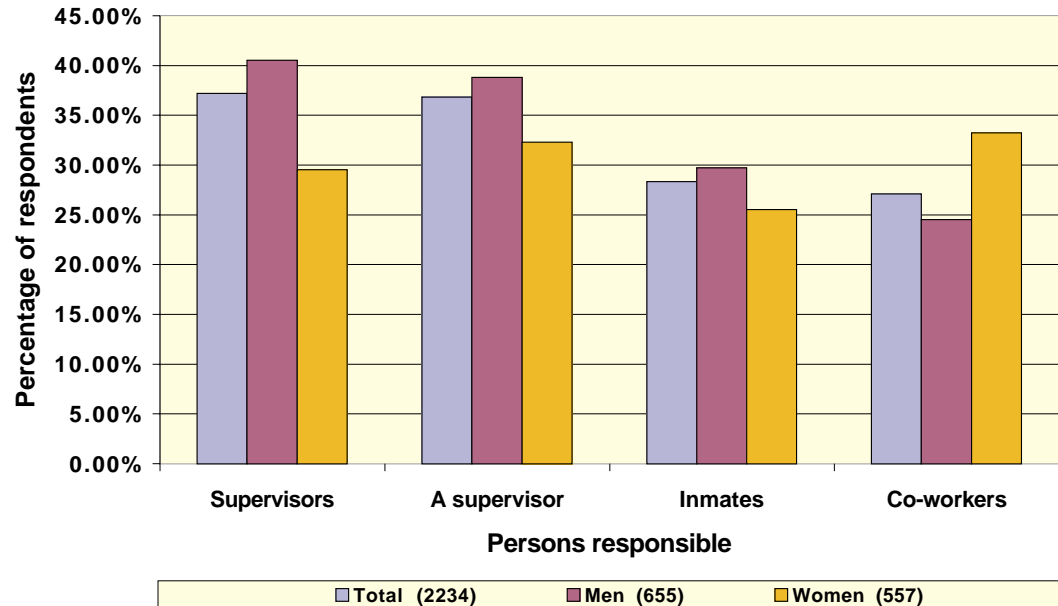
Regarding the type of harassment reported, Figure 25 indicates that in about 90% of cases – for both men and women – the harassment is psychological. As might be expected in light of what is known about current social practices, the percentage of women who classify harassment as sexual is much higher than for men. As has already been shown, and consistent with the other quantitative findings on harassment in this study, the levels of sexual harassment reported by female correctional officers are distinctly higher than equivalent levels reported in Canada and elsewhere.

FIGURE 25 TYPE OF HARASSMENT ENCOUNTERED OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



The findings of the study make it possible to draw some significant conclusions about those whom the respondents identify as responsible for the harassment. Figures 26 show the results obtained.

FIGURE 26 PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Keeping in mind the fact that the categories of potential perpetrators of harassment are not mutually exclusive, the following conclusions may be drawn from these results:

- 1- The proportion of officers declaring having been victims of harassment on the part of their superiors (30 to 40%) is higher than the proportion of officers attributing harassment to inmates or colleagues (25-30%).
- 2- The rate of harassment attributed to co-workers is comparable to that attributed to inmates, namely, between 25 and 30%.(for the total as well as for male officers).
- 3- Men report a victimisation rate attributable to superiors that is substantially higher than that reported by women (38-41% compared to 30-32%).
- 4- The percentage of women declaring having been victimised by co-workers (33%) is substantially higher than the corresponding ratio in relation to inmates (25%).

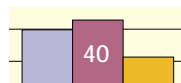
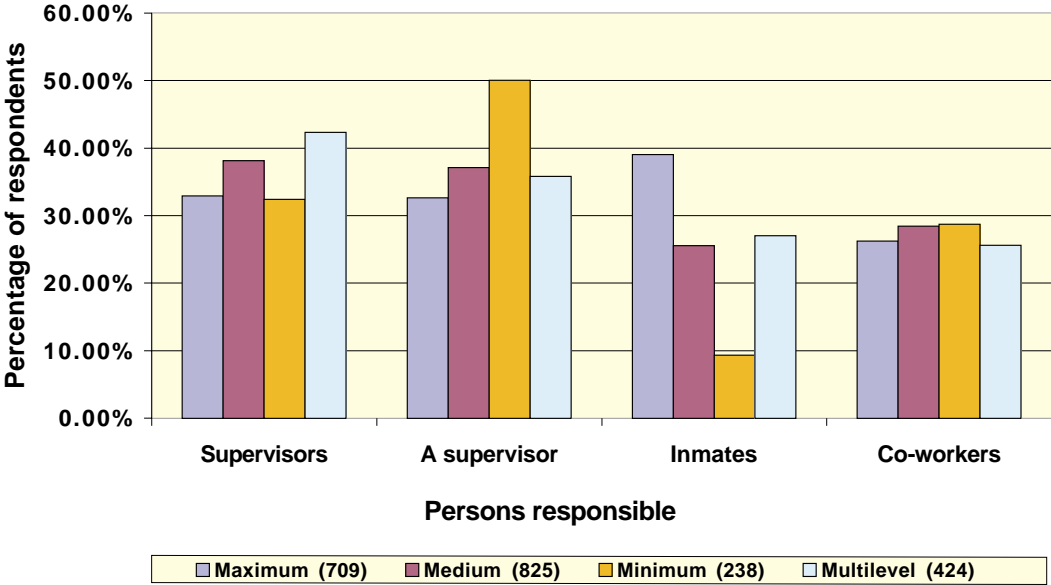


Figure 27 shows the results obtained with those responsible for harassment, presented according to security level.

FIGURE 27 PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTION'S SECURITY LEVEL



The results show the same tendencies already mentioned. They also show that minimum-security institutions have the lowest rates of harassment by inmates as well as for the three categories considered (supervisors, co-workers and inmates).

Figure 28 presents the results as analysed by inmate population.

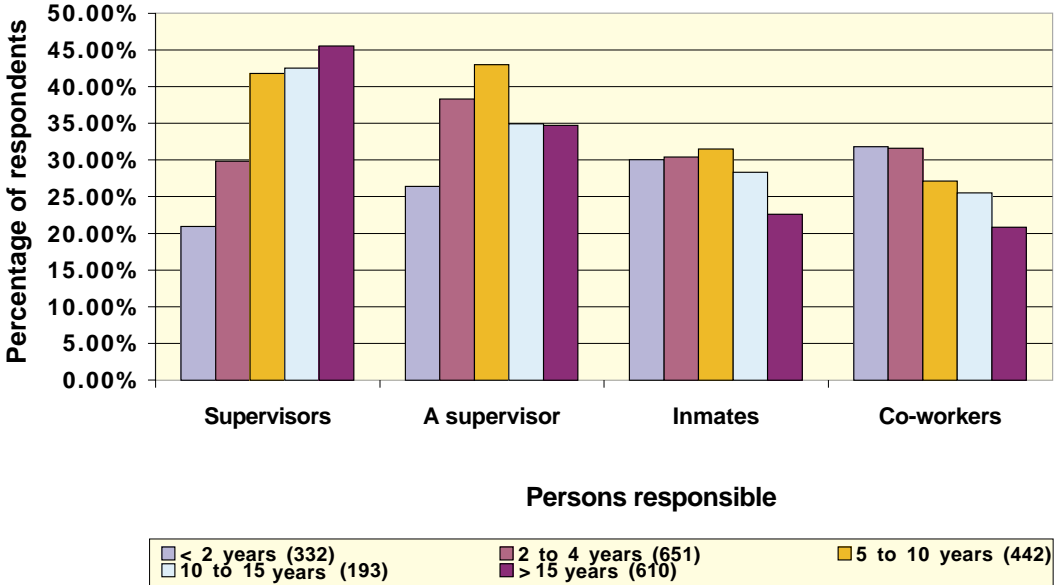
FIGURE 28 PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO INMATE POPULATION



As would be expected based on what is known of current social practices, female inmate populations are associated with the lowest rate of harassment by inmates reported by officers (close to 15% of cases reported). Noteworthy points to be kept in mind here: The rate of harassment by co-workers is twice as high (30%) as the rate of harassment by inmates for the same category of institution. Harassment by supervisors in the same category of institution seems to be close to three times the rate of harassment by inmates (41% versus 14%).

Analysed by years of service, a significant trend emerges: The rate of harassment by supervisors increases systematically and substantially with the officers' years of service (Figure 29).

FIGURE 29 PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR HARASSMENT OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



According to the data, 45% of officers with 15 or more years of service declare having been harassed by supervisors, compared to only 20% of officers with less than two years of service. Officers with the least seniority (less than two years of service) also reported the highest level of harassment by co-workers (31%).

Is harassment reported to the employer? The results of the analysis (Figure 30) show that between 40% and 45% of officers didn't bother to complain about the harassment they said they had suffered.

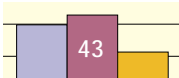
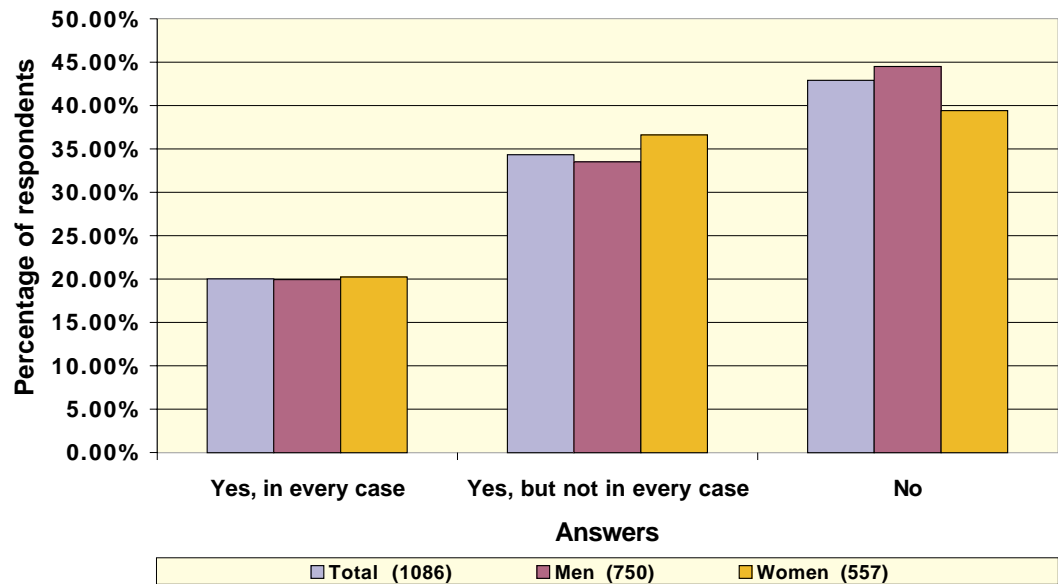
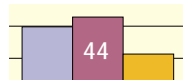
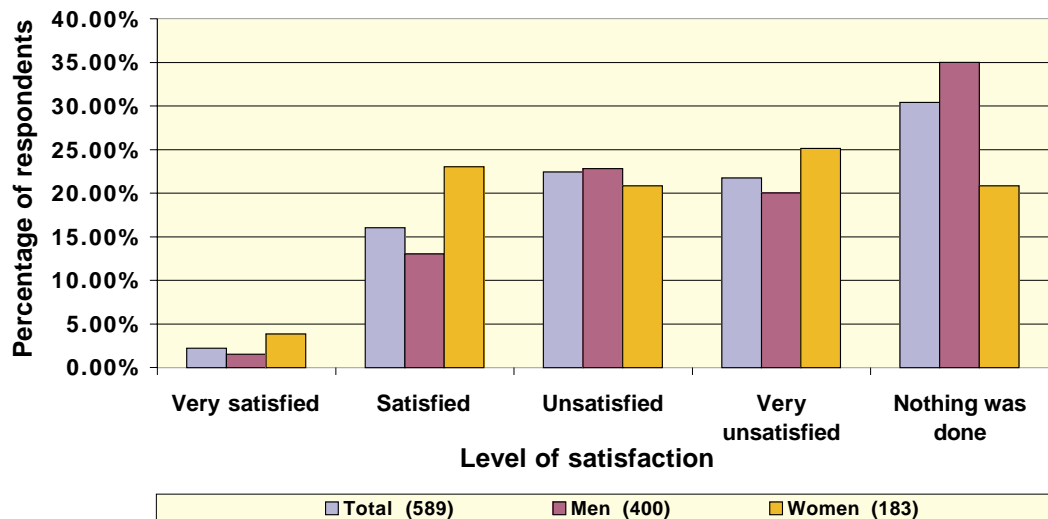


FIGURE 30 HARASSMENT CASES REPORTED OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



As to the degree of satisfaction with the employer’s follow-up when harassment is reported (Figure 31), close to 40% of respondents said they were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with that follow-up. Moreover, between 20% and 35% of respondents said that nothing was done after harassment was reported. In this regard, it should be noted that women reported relatively higher rates of satisfaction with the employer’s follow-up, with almost 27% saying they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” In the same vein, the finding “nothing was done” was reported by 35% of men – significantly higher than the 20% of women who reported the same outcome.

FIGURE 31 LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH IN THE EMPLOYER'S FOLLOW-UP ON HARASSMENT CASES REPORTED AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Overall, and considering the data available about harassment in other studies referred to earlier, the results of this study warrant the conclusion that harassment is a serious problem for correctional officers in Canadian correctional institutions. The results also indicate that the problem is more acute for officers with 15 years or more of service. The study suggests as well that there is fairly extensive dissatisfaction with, and lack of trust in, the employer's ability to manage the problem of workplace harassment properly. The scope of the problem and its cross-cutting nature, involving supervisors, co-workers, and inmates alike, also point to the need for both parties, management and union, to address the issue in order to limit its breadth and consequences.

Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada, which has ultimate responsibility for working conditions in the federal civil service, spells out the federal government's commitment in regard to harassment in the workplace in these terms (see footnote 21):

Harassment affects workplace and individual well-being and will not be tolerated. This policy aims to prevent harassment by promoting increased awareness, early problem resolution and the use of mediation. The application of this policy will help create a work environment where all are treated with respect and dignity. It will not only promote the well-being of all in the workplace, but it will reinforce those values of integrity and trust that are the foundation of a sound organization.

In light of the findings of this study in regard to harassment, there is no avoiding the conclusion that CSC does not manage the work environment in correctional institutions in a manner consistent with Treasury Board's commitment with harassment in the workplace.

9. Depression

The questionnaire also covered the topic of clinical depression in the following question:

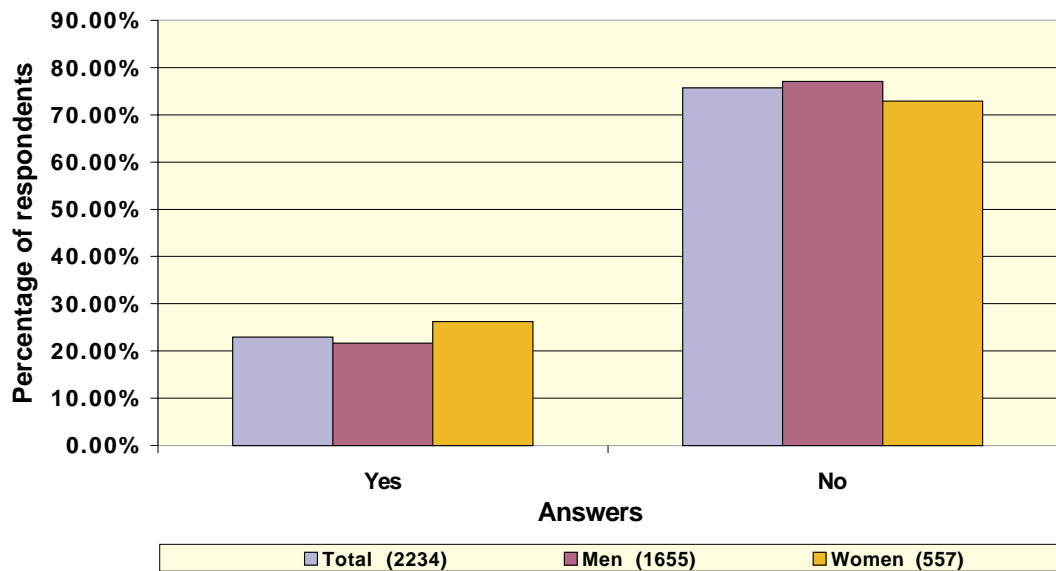
D9. Have you been diagnosed and treated for depression in the last 10 years?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

9.1 Results

Figure 32 presents answers obtained from all officers, and by gender.

FIGURE 32 HAVING BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION IN THE LAST 10 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



The graph shows that close to 23% of all officers reported having been diagnosed with depression in the last 10 years, with the proportion of women reporting depression (26%) almost 25% higher than the same proportion for men (21.6%).

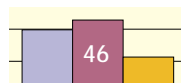
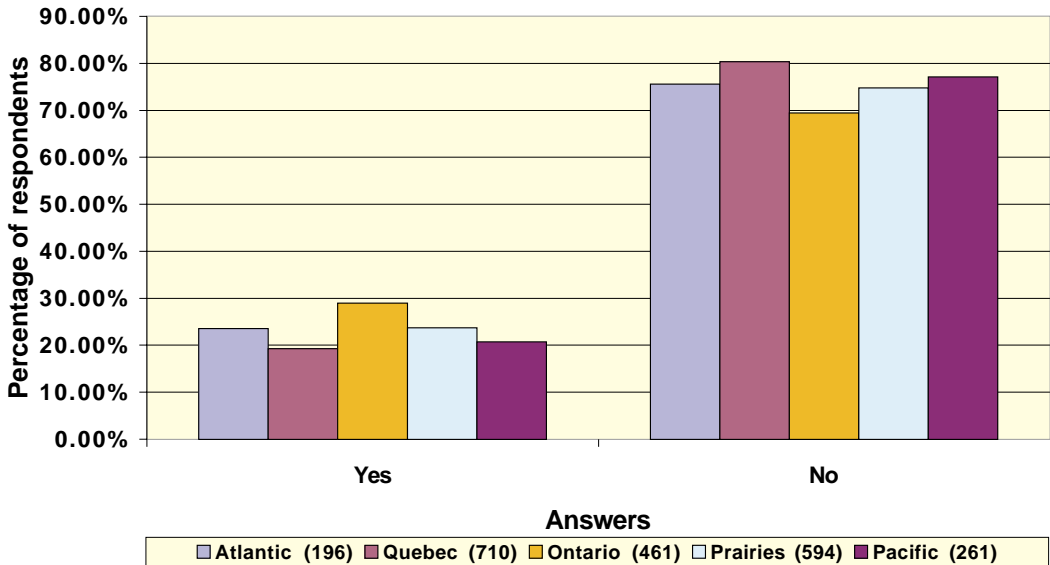


Figure 33 presents the results by region across the country.

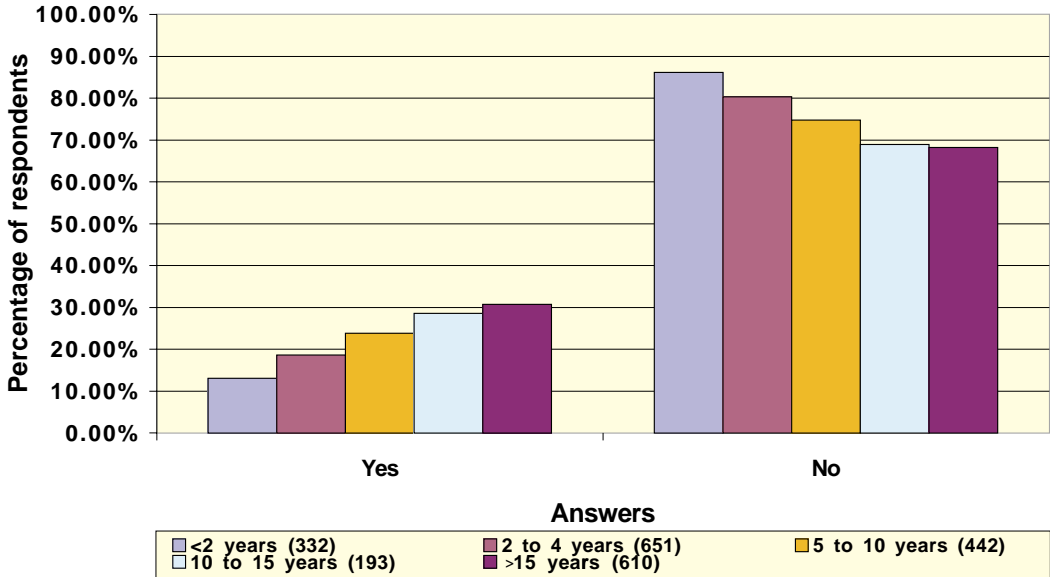
FIGURE 33 HAVING BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, BY REGION



It is noteworthy that Ontario stands out from the four other regions with almost 30% of respondents having been diagnosed with depression, while Quebec and the Pacific region have the lowest rates – around 20%.

Analysed by years of service, the results concerning depression are consistent with other findings in the study: The extent of the problem of depression follows the same trend as with other workplace problems, i.e., it increases with years of service. This trend can be seen clearly in Figure 34. The data shows that over 30 % of officers with 15 years or more of service reported having been diagnosed with depression in the last 10 years, compared to 13% of those with less than 2 years of service, and 23% of those with 5 to 10 years of seniority.

FIGURE 34 HAVING BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO YEARS OF SERVICE (SENIORITY)



9.2 Depression in the wider social context

An appreciation of the findings of this study in regard to depression requires a comparison with the findings of other known studies, and setting the issue in its broader context. First, the results of the study concur with the results of a vast study by Goldberg *et al* of *l'Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (INSERM)* which looked at mental health and working conditions in the French correctional system.²⁵

²⁵ Goldberg P, David S, Landre MF, Goldberg M, Dassa S, Fuhrer R., "Work Conditions and Mental Health among Prison Staff in France," *Scand J Work Environ Health.* (1996) ; 22(1):45-54

Using a questionnaire covering a total of 3,474 men and 1,113 women between the ages of 20 and 64 working at various levels of the French prison system, the INSERM survey concluded that 25% of the men and 21.4% of the women presented “depressive symptoms” that became considerably more marked with age. Thus, based on a number of subjects about 30% higher than those covered by the present study, *Goldberg et al* report similar findings in relation to stress within a correctional environment. Furthermore, the French study found that men with management and supervisory responsibilities in the system constituted the group with the lowest incidence of depression. The study also reported that 22.3% of men and 36.8% of women had symptoms of anxiety, and 42% of the overall group had recurring sleep disorders. According to *Goldberg et al*, the type of prison (security level, inmate capacity, etc.), the alternation of duties, inmate behaviour, problems stemming from the organisation of work shifts, low levels of work satisfaction and an overly negative self-held image of the profession all seem to be decisive factors underlying the phenomenon of “depressive symptoms” reported among correctional officers.

Secondly, the results show that the phenomenon of depression seems to be more widespread among correctional officers than it is in the general population or in other job categories. According to this study, between 20% and 30% of correctional officers in Canada have been diagnosed with depression at least once in the last 10 years. This is two to three times higher than the average incidence rate for workplace depression reported by other Canadian studies which established this rate at around 10%.^{26, 27, 28}

In the United States, the *National Institute of Mental Health* establishes the incidence rate for depression at 9.5%. The *International Labour Organization (ILO)* cites the same rate, reporting that one out of ten adults in the United States suffers from depression. The *ILO* estimates the cost of depression to the U.S. economy at \$30 to \$44 billion annually in terms of absenteeism and lost productivity.²⁹

A third finding of this study relates to observed rates of self-reported depression among male correctional officers. Apart from the fact that the overall depression incidence rate for male and female correctional officers combined is considerably higher than for the general population, the results also show that depression affects male correctional officers proportionately more than it does men compared to women in the population as a whole. It should also be noted that the French study reports a similar finding in this regard.

²⁶ Wilson, M., Joffe, R., & Wilkerson, B. (2002). The Unheralded Business Crisis in Canada: Depression at Work. An Information Paper for Business, Incorporating 12 Steps to a Business Plan to Defeat Depression. Toronto: Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health, p. 4, 18.

http://www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca/aug_round_pdfs/Roundtable%20report_Jul20.pdf

²⁷ “Targeting the high cost of workplace depression,” by Sandy Naiman, *The Toronto Sun*, October 12, 2000

²⁸ Ca Magazine.com, June-July 2002,

http://www.camagazine.com/index.cfm/ci_id/6930/la_id/1.htm

²⁹ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/skills/disability/papers/execsummaries23.htm>

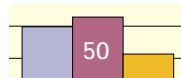
It is commonly accepted in epidemiology, and the U.S. *National Institute of Mental Health* confirms the finding, that there are twice as many women suffering from depression as men in modern industrial societies³⁰(just as it is commonly accepted that although the incidence rate for men is half what it is for women, the consequences of depression for men are often more serious: higher mortality rate, violence, suicide, etc.^{31, 32, 33}). However, this study shows that the rate of depression for female correctional officers is close to 25%. Accordingly, a corresponding rate of 12% to 13% should normally be expected for men subject to the same working conditions and work environment. Yet the results indicate that the rate of depression for male correctional officers is 22%, or almost twice the level that would be expected. Needless to say, the study shows that the rate of depression among male correctional officers is significantly higher than is normally expected in the general male population.

In short, the results of this study call for two major conclusions regarding depression. The first, one that is to be expected, is that the correctional environment engenders a much higher rate of clinical depression than corresponding prevalence rates in the general population. The second conclusion seems paradoxical in view of the public image of the correctional environment as a workplace. The results suggest that the Canadian correctional environment is relatively less hospitable psychologically for male correctional officers than for female correctional officers. If this is true, it may be that the correctional system has been able to develop the means to respond more adequately to the problems of female correctional officers compared to those of male officers. Whether or not such is the case, the phenomenon is significant enough to warrant further consideration.

³¹ Ferketich AK, Schwartzbaum JA, Frid DJ, Moeschberger ML. Depression as an antecedent to heart disease among women and men in the NHANES I study. *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. Archives of Internal Medicine*, 2000; 160(9): 1261-8.

³² Hoyert DL, Kochanek KD, Murphy SL. Deaths: Final Data for 1997. *National Vital Statistics Report*, 47(19). National Center for Health Statistics. DHHS Publication No. 99-1120 (1999). Hyattsville, MD: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvs47_19.pdf

³³ Depression. *National Institute of Mental Health*, (2000). NIMH Pub No. 00-3561, Bethesda, MD.



10. Work and parental responsibilities

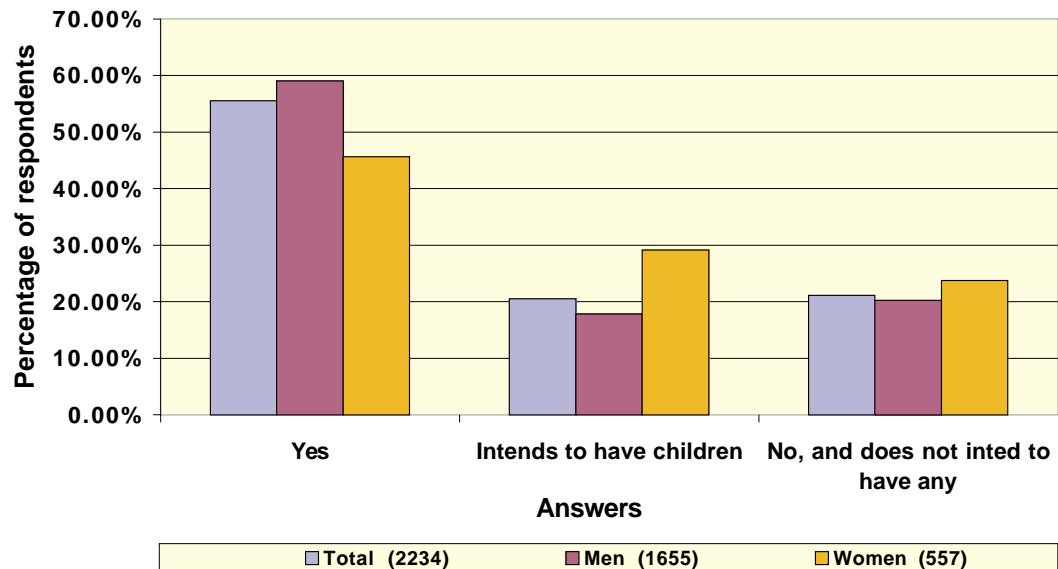
The relationship between work and the responsibilities inherent to parenting, and to maternity and motherhood in particular, were also examined in two questions. The first one was:

D3. Do you live with children, or do you intend to have children in the short or medium term?

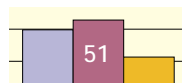
1. yes, I live with children for whom I have parental responsibility in a family setting
2. yes, I intend to have children
3. no, I don't live with children and I don't intend to have any.

Figure 39 presents the answers to this question for all officers, as well as by gender.

FIGURE 39 LIVING WITH CHILDREN IN A PARENTAL CAPACITY OR INTENDING TO HAVE CHILDREN AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



Thus, between 75% and 80% of officers reported living with children, or intending to have children in the short or medium term. It's worth noting that the percentage of men with dependent children is almost 15 percentage points higher than the corresponding figure for women, reflecting the difference in the average age of the two groups.



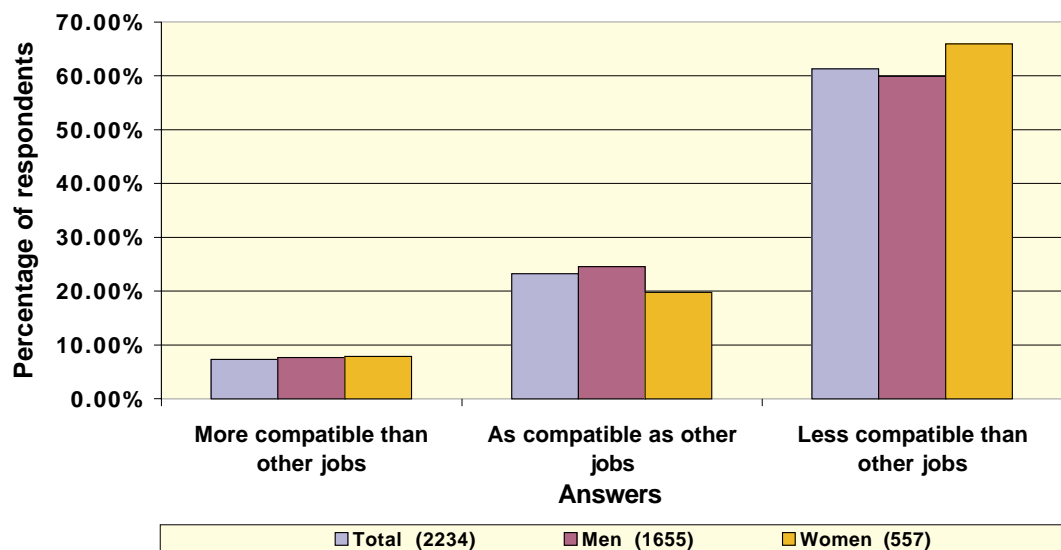
The compatibility of correctional officers' work with the responsibilities and role of parents was examined in the following question:

D4. How compatible do you think your job is with the responsibilities and tasks inherent to the role of a parent?

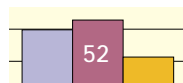
1. my job is more compatible than most
2. my job is equally compatible
3. my job is less compatible than most

Figure 36 presents the results obtained for that question.

FIGURE 36 COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN WORK AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES ACCORDING TO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



The results indicate that between 60% and 65% of correctional officers think that their work is less compatible than other jobs with the role and responsibilities of a parent. As well, women were 5% more likely to give this response than men. It should be added that this question was associated with the highest rate of a “did not answer” response in the questionnaire - between 7% and 10%, compared to between 0% and 3% for all other other questions.



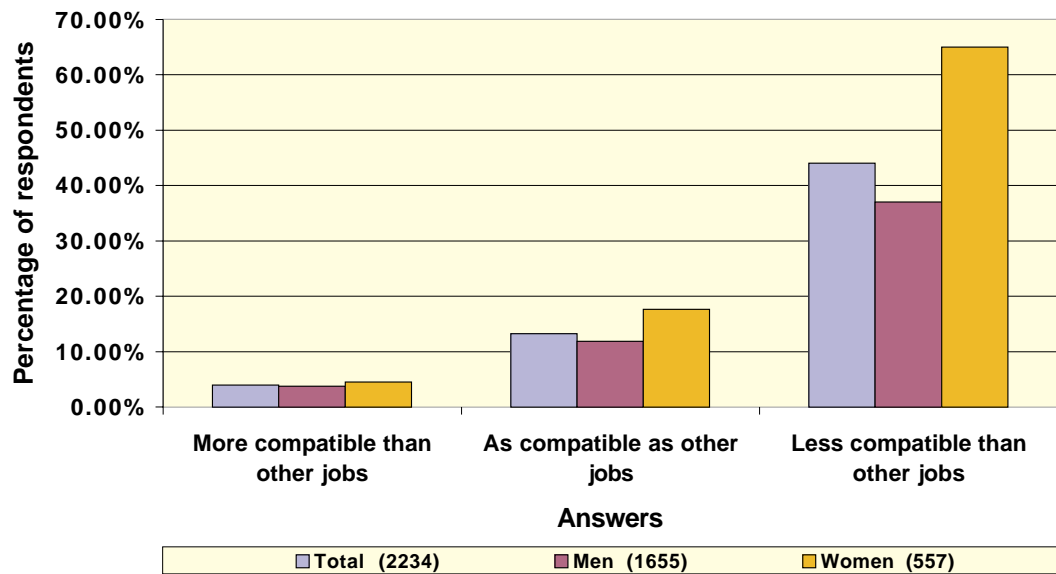
As to maternity and the duties of mothering more specifically, the questionnaire included the following question:

D5. How compatible is your job with the responsibilities inherent to maternity and mothering in particular?

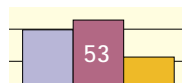
1. my job is more compatible than most
2. my job is equally compatible
3. my job is less compatible than most

Figure 37 presents the results.

FIGURE 37 COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN WORK AND MATERNAL RESPONSIBILITIES ACCORDING TO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



As expected, the percentage of women who reported their work to be less compatible with maternal responsibilities was the same as the corresponding ratio for the previous question. A majority of the men gave a similar answer, although close to 50% of them chose not to answer the question.



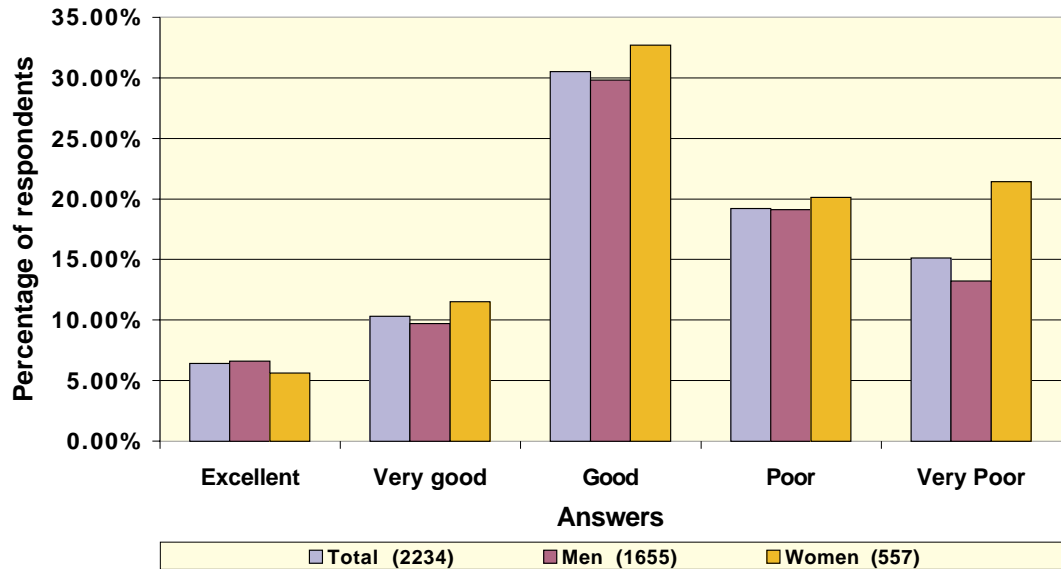
The questionnaire also polled correctional officers about the quality of the federal programme of protective leave for the pregnant officer aimed at protecting the mother and the unborn child:

D6. How do you rate the quality of the current system governing protective leave for a pregnant correctional officer?

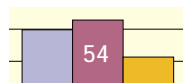
1. excellent
2. very good
3. good
4. poor
5. very poor

Figure 38 presents the answers to this question.

FIGURE 38 QUALITY OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAMME GOVERNING PROTECTIVE LEAVE FOR THE PREGNANT OFFICER ACCORDING TO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

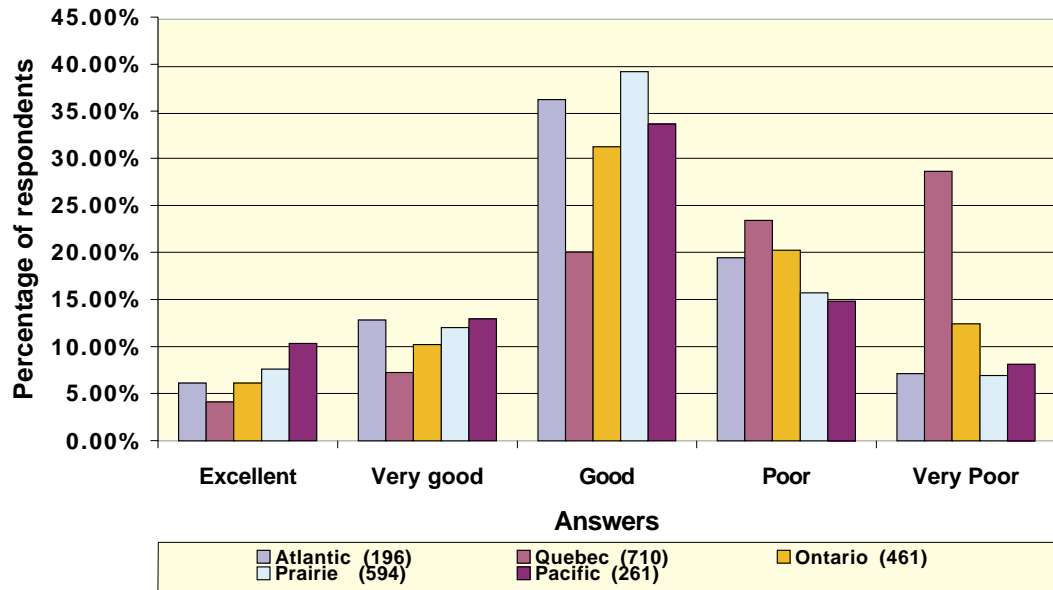


The results show that between 35% and 42 % of officers think that the programme is “poor” or “very poor.”

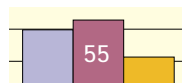


Broken down by administrative region, the answers reveal some interesting regional distinctions, as shown in Figure 39.

FIGURE 39 QUALITY OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAMME GOVERNING PROTECTIVE LEAVE FOR THE PREGNANT OFFICER ACCORDING TO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS, BY REGION



One of the most salient points here is the response from Quebec where the proportion of officers who consider the federal protective leave programme to be “very poor” is between 2 and 5 times greater than elsewhere, depending on the region. The difference is no doubt explained by the fact that federal correctional officers in Quebec are familiar with Quebec’s programme of protective leave to protect pregnant workers and unborn children under Quebec’s *Occupational Health and Safety and Act*. Correctional officers undoubtedly know that the law, (administered by the *Commission de la santé et la sécurité au travail* (CSST)), the public health-care system and employers in Quebec, give female workers in Quebec more benefits than their sister workers covered by federal legislation.



11. Use of employee assistance programmes (EAP) in correctional institutions

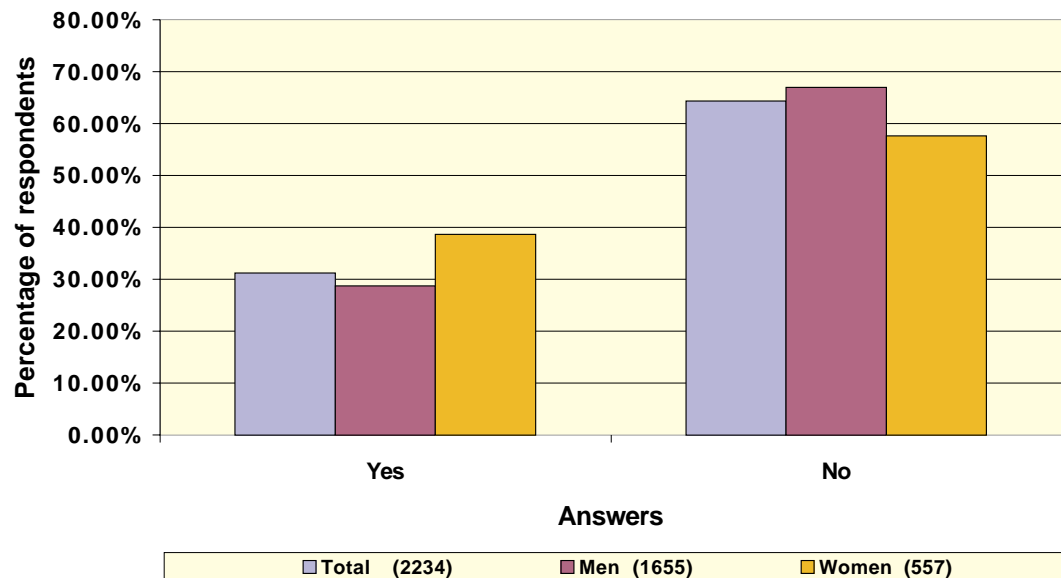
To assess the usefulness and use made of the assistance programmes made available to correctional officers by the CSC in their respective institutions, the following question was asked:

D18. Have you used your institution's employee assistance programme?

1. yes
2. no
3. I don't know about this programme

Figure 40 gives the results obtained in response to this question.

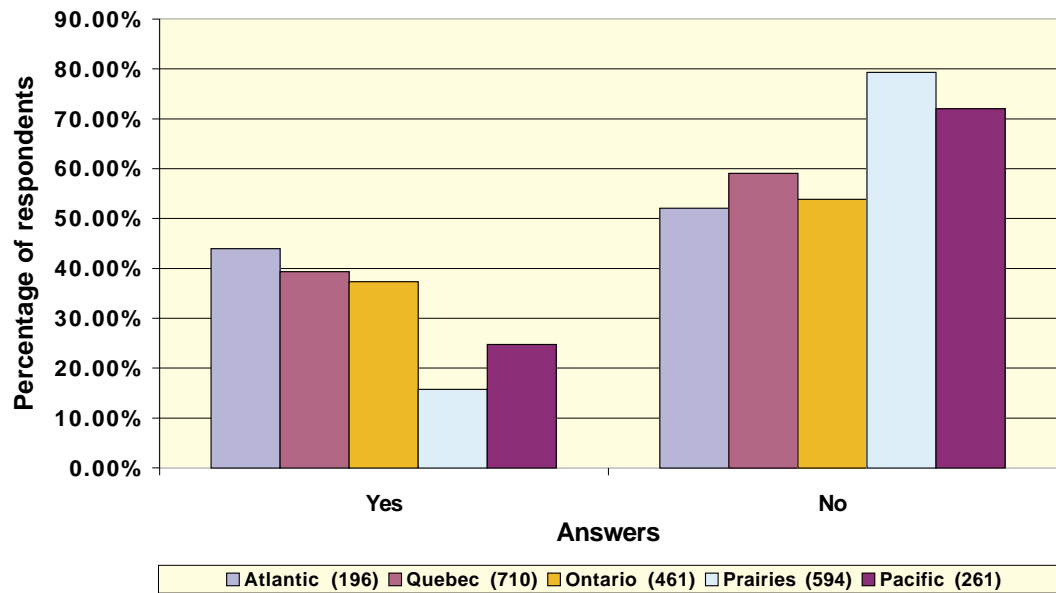
FIGURE 40 USE OF THE INSTITUTION'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME AMONG CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS



The results indicate that between 30% and 40% of officers reported having used the employee assistance programme in their respective institutions. The results also show that women make use of the programme more often than men by almost 30%.

Figure 41 breaks down the answers to this question by region.

FIGURE 41 USED OF THE INSTITUTION'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME, BY REGION



The results show that a significantly lower percentage of officers in the Prairies region, only about 16%, have used employee assistance programmes, a ratio that is much lower than the close to 40% level of use of EAPs reported in the Atlantic, Quebec and Ontario regions. The level of use is also relatively low in the Pacific region, at about 25%. The differences are no doubt partly explained by differences in quality, and in specific administrative and professional characteristics of these programmes as they may vary from one region to another.

12. Summary of the major conclusions of the study

- 1- The stress engendered by the working conditions of federal correctional officers in correctional facilities and the spill-over and impact of this stress on the officers' private lives is a problem that deserves more attention than it now receives. Other studies, whose results agree with the current research, have underlined the importance of administrative and organisational workplace policies as well as the presence or absence of a genuinely participatory management approach, as determining factors behind the phenomenon of stress in a detention environment.
- 2- All the indicators of work-related stress factors seem to rise systematically and inexorably with the correctional officers' years of service. This phenomenon leads to the progressive alienation of older correctional workers from their workplace. This growing gulf between the correctional officers on the one hand, and the requirements of their work on the other is not in the interest of the physical and moral well-being of correctional officers, nor is it in the interest of the Canadian public as defined in the CSC's mandate.
- 3- Close to 40% of correctional officers judge as "poor" the quality of technical training and supervision they receive in the course of their work. This is a significant finding to keep in mind, not only in terms of stress as alluded to earlier, but in relation to its relevance to CSC's capacity to adequately fulfill its public mandate.
- 4- The data indicates that there are alarming levels of harassment within the federal correctional system. As experienced and reported by UCCO-SACC-CSN correctional officers, the phenomenon of harassment in Canadian correctional institutions is apparently far from being addressed properly or in a manner consistent with the Treasury Board Secretariat's commitment in regard to this issue.
- 5- The results of the study show that work-related stress factors in the institutions increase significantly with inmate capacity. The data also show that institutions with mixed populations – both male and female offenders – are associated with higher levels of problems compared to institutions where the inmates are either all men or all women.
- 6- The working conditions of correctional officers are not very compatible with parental roles and responsibilities. The data indicate as well that a majority of federal correctional officers in Quebec consider the federal protective leave programme for pregnant officers to be "poor" or "very poor" – a judgment undoubtedly influenced by their familiarity with the benefits provided by Quebec's equivalent protective leave programme.
- 7- The Prairies region distinguishes itself by having a significantly lower rate of use of its EAP by correctional officers, 16% compared to a rate of use close to 40% for 3 out of the other 4 regions. Nothing in the findings of the current research could explain such a significant difference, a fact which would logically point to the administrative and professional quality of this programme as a likely explanation to be explored.

