

Profile of Correctional Officer Recruits

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INTRODUCTION

In response to the growing concerns of institutional staff regarding the challenges of dealing with a changing inmate population, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) initiated a process in September 1998 to hire 1,000 additional correctional officers by 2001. CSC recognizes that the diversification of the offender group must be handled with an appropriate composition of correctional officers in order to work more effectively. For example, there has been an identified need to increase the cultural and ethnic diversity of the correctional officers. Addressing this area would enhance the quality of staff-inmate interactions by increasing awareness of, and respect for, cultural diversity.

In recruitment, ideally, successful candidates will be required to perform a significant role in accomplishing the organization's legislated mandate of rehabilitation. Correctional officer recruits that hold positive attitudes towards offenders, corrections and correctional work should then be hired to meet this challenge. Further, to increase the fit between organizational and employee values, emphasis on attitudinal values in the selection process should be of high importance. An investment in a front-end selection process is worthwhile as many of the candidates may remain within the organization as for a career choice. Recent findings of a sample of 1,357 correctional officer recruits show that 87% of them remained with the CSC for the examined two and half year period (CSC, 2001). By implication, correctional organizations must have, or develop, strong value-based measures for the selection of good candidates.

The primary focus on values is critical. It has been argued that the selection, assessment and training of correctional officers should be linked to attitudinal and behavioral skills that are required for their performance on the job (Walher & Gendreau, 1985). The interaction between employee attitudes and the organizational philosophy is fundamental to organizational functioning and work outcomes (Simourd, 1997).

In September 1998, a new value selection process was implemented in the CSC to assess the values of new correctional officer recruits. The value selection process mainly consists of assessing the candidate's personal suitability against a set of five values important to the CSC. During a value-based interview recruits are evaluated on five key value areas consisting of respect, desire to learn and change, integrity, results orientation, and teamwork. As part of the selection process to becoming a correctional officer, the candidates knowledge is also evaluated on areas held important by the CSC, including: CSC's Mission, Criminal Justice System, Criminal Behaviour and Intervention Techniques, Correctional Operations, Case Management and Community and Institutional Resources. In addition, correctional officer recruits are assessed on both written and oral communication skills as well as their analytical, motivational and organizational skills.

The purpose of this research is to provide a national profile of correctional officer recruits. More specifically, it will examine recruits who have attended the Correctional Training Program (CTP) since September 1997 in the five regions of the CSC. Profile comparisons will be made between "new" recruits (those hired after September 1998 through the new values based process) and the "old" recruits (those hired prior to September 1998 before the implementation of the values based process).

It should be noted that the findings presented in this report represent Phase I of a larger national multi-wave longitudinal research project aimed at exploring value changes in correctional officer recruits throughout their training and over their first year of work placement in a correctional environment. A broad range of variables will be examined, including: job motivation, concerns about personal safety, job stress, role expectations, training evaluation, personal adaptation, social cohesiveness and occupational self-efficacy.

METHODOLOGY

The population consisted of 1,236 Correctional Officer recruits who were selected from all five correctional regions in Canada (i.e., Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairie and Pacific) during the period of September 1st 1997 to May 31st 2000. Data collection took place at the Personnel Recruitment Offices and some penitentiaries in all five regions. Demographic variables, including race, age, gender, education, work experience and volunteer experience, were collected to provide an overall profile of the recruits. Candidates were also evaluated on a number of areas including knowledge assessment (Part A), abilities and skills (Part B) and personal suitability (Part C). Each of these exams were summed to provide a total maximum score (i.e., 30, 75, and 45 respectively). These maximum scores determine whether the candidates have successfully met the set requirements according to Correctional Officer (COI and/or COII) standards. Each of the key areas within the three examinations was weighted to reflect their varying importance.

Of the five values, "respect" is considered the most crucial. The scoring for "respect" is graded out of 25 while the other four are graded out of five. In accordance to the *Career Management Selection Process for Correctional Officers Manual*, "respect" refers to the ability by recruits to acknowledge, appreciate and understand differing beliefs of those they interact with, as well as respecting Canadian law, authority and the Mission of the CSC. Examples include the recruits' abiding to rules, supporting leaders and authority figures, allowing for differences of opinion, supporting the rights of others, and endorsing the rule of law.

The second element of the values based interview is "the desire to learn and change". This is described as the recruits' motivation to learn, adapt and grow in the organization (CSC). Some examples of this behaviour are when the recruits actively listen and ask questions, search for challenges, rebound from mistakes and help others to understand.

"Integrity" refers to the consistency between the recruits' behaviour and values (e.g., personal and organizational) in dealing with certain situations that do not have prescribed responses. Examples include recruits raising and debating issues, challenging inappropriate behaviour of others, admitting errors and accepting responsibility.

The fourth element is "results orientation" and it is defined as the recruits' desire to actively participate in defining the work to be completed and to initiate activities that will contribute to good correctional practices. Some examples of this would be arriving on time, finishing what they start, striving for excellence and working independently.

The final component to the values-based interview is "teamwork". This entails the ability to lead and/or follow at the appropriate times, support other members and to encourage team initiatives. Examples of this behaviour are actively encouraging team members, being attentive to the needs of others, compromising to reach a consensus, celebrating team accomplishments and recognizing team effort.

Three demographic profiles were conducted: National, Comparative and Regional. The National profile assesses all recruits in Canada to provide their overall demographic distribution. The Comparative profile compares recruits' characteristics according to the selection period (September 1, 1997 to August 31, 1998 and September 1, 1998 to May 31st, 2000) on all six demographic variables. This will determine if any changes were brought on by the new values based selection program. A Regional breakdown of recruits by demographics were also conducted to determine the region and the type of recruit they are attracting (i.e., gender, educational attainment, etc.). Descriptive analyses were employed examining all recruits on the six demographic variables. In addition, correlational analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between recruits' test scores and demographic variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

National Profiles

The racial diversity of correctional officer recruits was examined as indicated in Table 1. Caucasians (87.9%, $n = 1,087$) were found to be the most represented of all three ethnic groups. Aboriginal and Visible Minorities, comprised 6.2% ($n = 76$) and 5.9% ($n = 73$) of the remaining correctional officer recruits. It appears when comparing these findings with an earlier sample of 1979 CSC correctional officers that the number of Caucasians (86.4%, $n = 1,710$) has remained consistent, while the number of Aboriginal officers (4.8%, $n = 96$) increased and Visible Minorities (8.7%, $n = 173$) decreased (CSC Staff Survey 1996). The increase in Aboriginal recruits may be reflective of our comprehensive Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy.

Gender differences were also observed, with more than twice as many men recruits (67%, $n = 823$) than women recruits (33%, $n = 406$). In reference to the CSC's 1996 Staff Survey, it appears that the gender gap has been reduced between the number of women and men correctional officers. In 1996, only 19% were women.

Interestingly, if we examine the results from an earlier study conducted in 1987 by Plecas and Maxim, we find that in a sample of 670 (CSC) correctional officer recruits, that close to half (45%) were women. These discrepancies could be explained by the fact that these studies were comprised of samples as opposed to a population and were voluntary instead of file reviews.

In an investigation of the recruits' previous work experience, it was found that the majority (83.8%) of correctional officer recruits entering the CSC had related work experience. It was reported that more than one third (35.8%, $n = 438$) of the recruits had five or more years of experience working in a related environment. Previous work experience can provide recruits with a realistic expectation to the duties that are involved as a correctional officer. This would allow them to adapt and adjust more readily than a recruit with no prior working experiences.

Table 1: Demographic profile of correctional officer recruits

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Race		
Caucasian	1,087	87.9
Aboriginal	76	6.2
Visible Minority	73	5.9
Age		
Under 25	388	32.1
25-29	416	43.4
30-34	190	15.7
35-39	123	10.2
40-44	58	4.8
45 and up	34	2.8
Gender		
Men	823	67.0
Women	406	33.0
Education		
High School	361	29.5
Unrelated College Diploma	84	6.9
Related College Diploma	377	30.8
Unrelated University Degree	65	5.3
Related University Degree	338	27.6
Experience		
No experience	3	0.2
Unrelated experience	194	15.8
Under 5 Years Related	590	48.2
5 to 10 Years Related	296	24.2
Over 10 Years	142	11.6
Volunteer		
No Experience	577	47.1
Unrelated Experience	129	10.5
Under 5 Years Related	445	36.4
5 to 10 Years Related	62	5.1
Over 10 Years	11	0.9

N = 1,236 numbers rang from 1,209 (age) to 1,236 (race) due to missing cases

Examining the recruits' scores from the Part C values-based interview (Table 2) shows an overall total mean score of 31.3 ($n = 772$). The total score surpasses the COI standard set at 27 and it appears that the recruits are performing evenly in each of the key areas. Further analysis revealed that only eleven among the 902 cases, for which data was available, failed the interview phase of the selection process.

Table 2: Distribution of personal suitability assessment scores (Part C of Value-Based Interview)

Personal Suitability Assessment Score	Maximum Score	Distribution		
		Mean	Median	Mode
1. Respect	25	17.6	20.0	20.0
2. Desire to learn and change	5	3.5	3.0	3.0
3. Integrity	5	3.3	3.0	3.0
4. Results Orientation	5	3.4	3.0	3.0
5. Teamwork	5	3.4	3.0	3.0
TOTAL SCORE	45^a	31.3	32.0	27.0

($N = 772$) may vary due to missing cases in each of the value areas

^a Passing Mark: COI = 27

As shown in Table 3, a mean total score of 23.8 ($n = 805$) was obtained in part A, indicating a mark that exceeds the minimum requirements for both COI (set at 18) and COII (set at 21). Clearly, the extensive knowledge of these recruits in the core knowledge areas is noteworthy. Interestingly, only ($n = 9$) failed to meet the COI standard which resulted in their dismissal from the program.

Table 3: Distribution of scores on Part A Examination of the Value-Based Selection Process

Knowledge Assessment	Maximum Score	Distribution		
		Mean	Median	Mode
1. The Criminal Justice System, <i>Corrections and Conditional Release Act</i> and other relevant legislation and policy.	6	4.8	5.0	5.0
2. The Mission, Corporate Objectives and Correctional Strategy.	6	4.3	4.0	5.0
3. Criminal behaviour and intervention techniques.	6	4.8	5.0	5.0
4. The Unit Management Framework and correctional operations.	4	3.2	3.0	4.0
5. Concepts, phrases, and processes of Case Management.	5	4.1	4.0	5.0
6. Community and institutional resources.	3	2.5	3.0	3.0
TOTAL SCORE	30^a	23.8	24.0	25.0

(N = 805) may vary due to missing cases in each of the knowledge areas

^a Passing Mark: COI = 18, COII = 21

The Part B examinations results, as depicted in Table 4 shows an overall mean total score of 48.7(*n* = 805), which surpassed both COI (set at 37.5) and COII (set at 45) requirements. In this phase of the selection process the highest failure rate was recorded. Fifteen recruits failed to meet the COI standard. The overall attrition rate for the all phases was 35 out of 805 (4%).

Table 4: Distribution of Scores of Part B Examination of the Value-Based Selection Process

Abilities and Skills Assessment	Maximum Score	Distribution		
		Mean	Median	Mode
1. Define and analyze problems/crisis situations, identify options and recommend or take appropriate action for resolution	15	10.2	9.0	9.0
2. Communicate effectively orally	15	10.2	9.0	9.0
3. Communicate effectively in writing	15	10.3	9.0	9.0
4. Analyze and summarize information	15	8.7	9.0	9.0
5. Motivate, influence, persuade and assist others	7.5	4.7	4.5	4.5
6. Plan, organize, and prioritize work to meet deadlines and achieve results	7.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
TOTAL SCORE	75^a	48.7	48.0	45.0

(N = 778) may vary due to missing cases in each of the abilities and skills areas

^a Passing Mark: COI = 37.5, COII = 45

The success of the recruits in the various examinations may be the result of certain underlying variables. Correlational analyses were computed to examine the relationship between four selected demographic variables (i.e., education, work experience, volunteer experience and age), the recruits' test scores on all three examinations (Part A, B, & C), and against the variables themselves. As shown in Table 5, the results support the contention that certain variables contribute significantly to higher examination scores. Level of education was shown to be a significant correlate to Part A ($r = .13$) and Part B ($r = .17$) examinations. Recruits

with university degrees performed significantly better on the knowledge, abilities and skills testing than those with lower educational attainments. University graduates excelled significantly better than recruits with college diplomas and high school degrees. Conversely, those with college diplomas were more proficient than correctional officer recruits with high school competencies. Specifically in Part A, it was found that the most educated recruits were more knowledgeable in criminal behaviour and intervention techniques ($r = .12$). In reference to the Part B exam, recruits performed better in written communication ($r = .20$), analyzing and summarizing information ($r = .11$), and planning, organizing, and prioritizing to meet their objectives ($r = .13$). Not surprisingly, these specific knowledge, abilities and skills areas are necessary for most higher learning institutions (e.g., university), thus resulting in recruits to perform better in these areas.

Significant correlations between work experience and recruits' total test scores were also reported. Recruits with work experience ($r = .13$) were more knowledgeable in the various components of the Part A exam than those with no work experience. In addition, significant findings were observed within Part B examination. Recruits with more work experience demonstrated a higher ability to effectively communicate orally ($r = .12$). Perhaps recruits having work experience had more opportunities to interact with colleagues and thus acquire and refine their verbal skills.

Volunteer experience accounted significantly for a greater knowledge in the Part A requirements ($r = .11$). Interestingly, according to the Part C examination recruits who had less volunteer experience significantly performed better in the value-based interview ($r = -.13$), specifically they were more respectful ($r = -.14$).

When examining the relationship between the demographic variables it was found that the older recruits were less educated ($r = -.14$), and have both more work ($r = .30$) and volunteer experiences ($r = .18$). Correctional officer recruits who were more educated also tended to have more volunteer experience ($r = .13$).

Table 5: Correlation matrix-correctional officer recruits demographics and Part A, B & C examination*

PART A	Education	Work Experience	Volunteer Experience	Age
1. The Criminal Justice System, <i>Corrections and Conditional Release Act</i> and other relevant legislation and policy	.02	.04	.10	.04
2. The Mission, Corporate Objectives and Correctional Strategy.	.10	.09	.10	.01
3. Criminal behaviour and intervention techniques	.12*	.03	-.05	.02
4. The Unit Management Framework and correctional operations	.10	.07	.04	.02
5. Concepts, phrases, and processes of Case Management. The Unit Management Framework and correctional operations	.10	.05	.03	.01
6. Community and institutional resources	.07	.09	.07	-.01
TOTAL	.13*	.13*	.11*	.02
PART B				
1. Define and analyze problems/crisis situations, identify options and recommend or take appropriate action for resolution	.09	.01	-.06	.03
2. Communicate effectively orally	.10	.12*	.02	.08
3. Communicate effectively in writing	.20*	.01	-.01	-.05
4. Analyze and summarize information	.11*	.09	.01	.01
5. Motivate, influence, persuade and assist others	-.07	.06	-.04	.05
6. Plan, organize, and prioritize work to meet deadlines and achieve results	.13*	.02	-.08	.00
TOTAL	.17*	.10	-.01	.04
PART C				
1. Respect	.04	.08	-.14*	.07
2. Desire to learn and change	.04	.01	-.05	.10
3. Integrity	.05	.07	-.07	.10
4. Results Orientation	.06	.03	-.08	.10
5. Teamwork	-.01	.10	.00	.07
TOTAL	.05	.09	-.13*	.08
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	.14*	.02	-.02	.03
DEMOGRAPHICS				
Education	1.0	.01	.13*	-.14*
Work Experience	.01	1.0	.10	.30*
Volunteer Experience	.13*	.10	1.0	.18*

*Bonferroni procedure was used to set the alpha level at $p \leq .003$ to control for Type I error

Comparative profiles

The implementation of the new values based selection process in September 1998 allowed for a comparative analysis between recruits hired before September 1998 and recruits hired after this date. The recruits were assessed on a number of demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, work and volunteer experience, race, education) to determine whether any changes occurred between the two selection periods (September 1, 1997 – August 31, 1998, and September 1, 1998 – May 31 2001). Results examining gender (as indicated in Table 6), demonstrated a significant increase in the selection of men recruits (60.9% to 69.2%) and a decrease in the number of women recruits (39.1% to 30.8%) after September 1998. This might be attributed to CSC's focused attempts to hire a large group of correctional officers in a prescribed time period.

Although no meaningful differences were observed for age and volunteer experience, variations were noted for the two selection periods. It appears that a shift has occurred between the percentage of recruits selected under the age of 25 and over 25. Fewer recruits were under the age of 25 after September 1998 compared to before September 1998 (30.6% to 36.5%), whereas more were older than 25 years of age (69.4% to 63.5%). Correctional officer recruits with no volunteer experience seems to have increased (42.9 – 48.7%) while those with less than 5 years related volunteer experience decreased (40.7% – 34.8%).

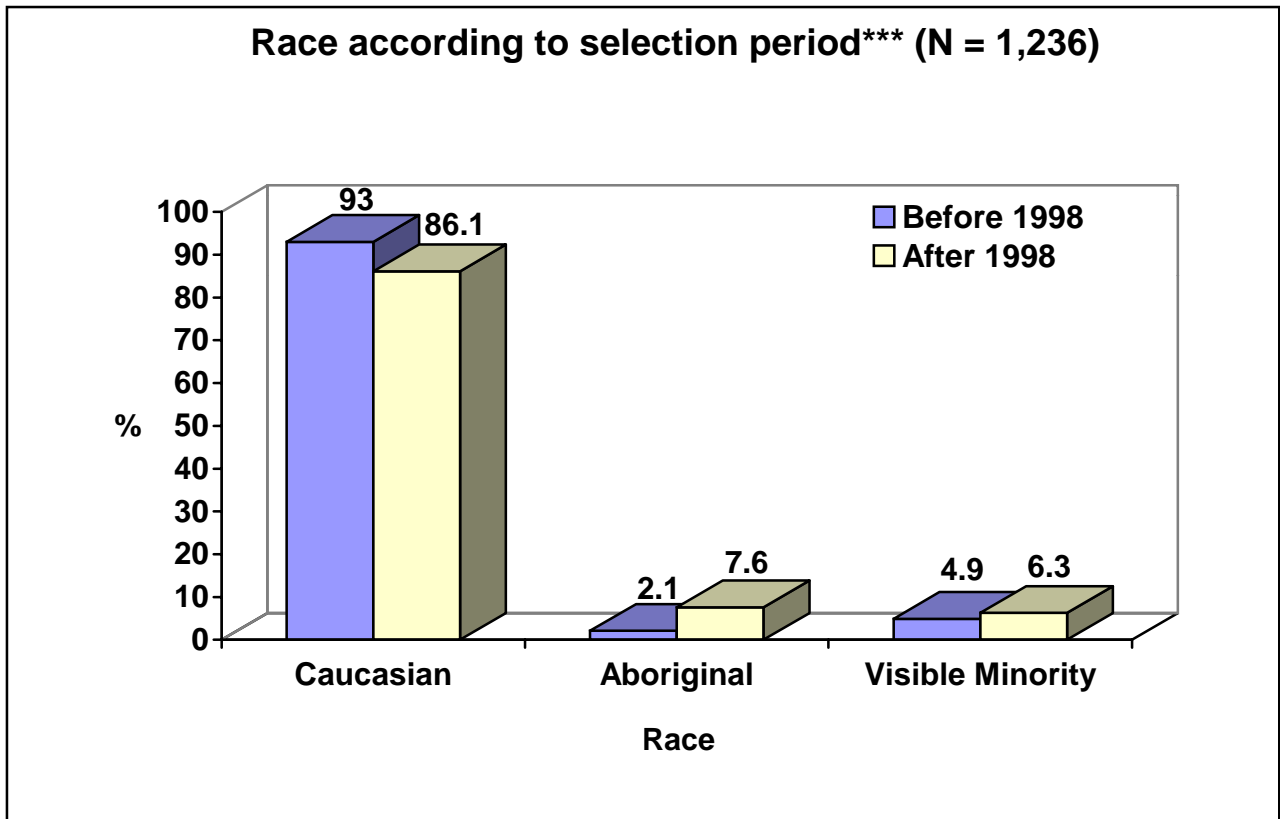
Table 6: Demographic profile of correctional officer recruits according to the selection period

Demographic variables	Recruits hired before September 1998 %	Recruits hired after September 1998 %
Age		
Under 25	36.5	30.6
25 and Up	63.5	69.4
Median Age	26	27
(N = 1,209)		
Gender**		
Men	60.9	69.2
Women	39.1	30.8
(N = 1,229)		
Experience		
No experience	0	0.3
Unrelated experience	14.9	16.2
Under 5 Years Related	49.9	47.6
5 to 10 Years Related	26.9	23.2
Over 10 Years	8.4	12.8
(N = 1,225)		
Volunteer		
No Experience	42.9	48.7
Unrelated Experience	10.8	10.4
Under 5 Years Related	40.7	34.8
5 to 10 Years Related	4.6	5.2
Over 10 Years	0.9	0.9
(N = 1,224)		

**p < .01

Significant differences were also observed for ethnicity by selection period. As shown in Graph 1 fewer Caucasian recruits were selected (93% to 86.1%) after September 1998. In contrast, an increase in both Aboriginal (2.1% to 7.6%) and Visible Minority (4.9% to 6.3%) recruits was found for the same period. It appears from these results that the gap between the races has slowly decreased over the past few years. This demonstrates CSC's commitment to further diversify its correctional officer group, in order to better meet the challenges of an ethnically diverse offender population.

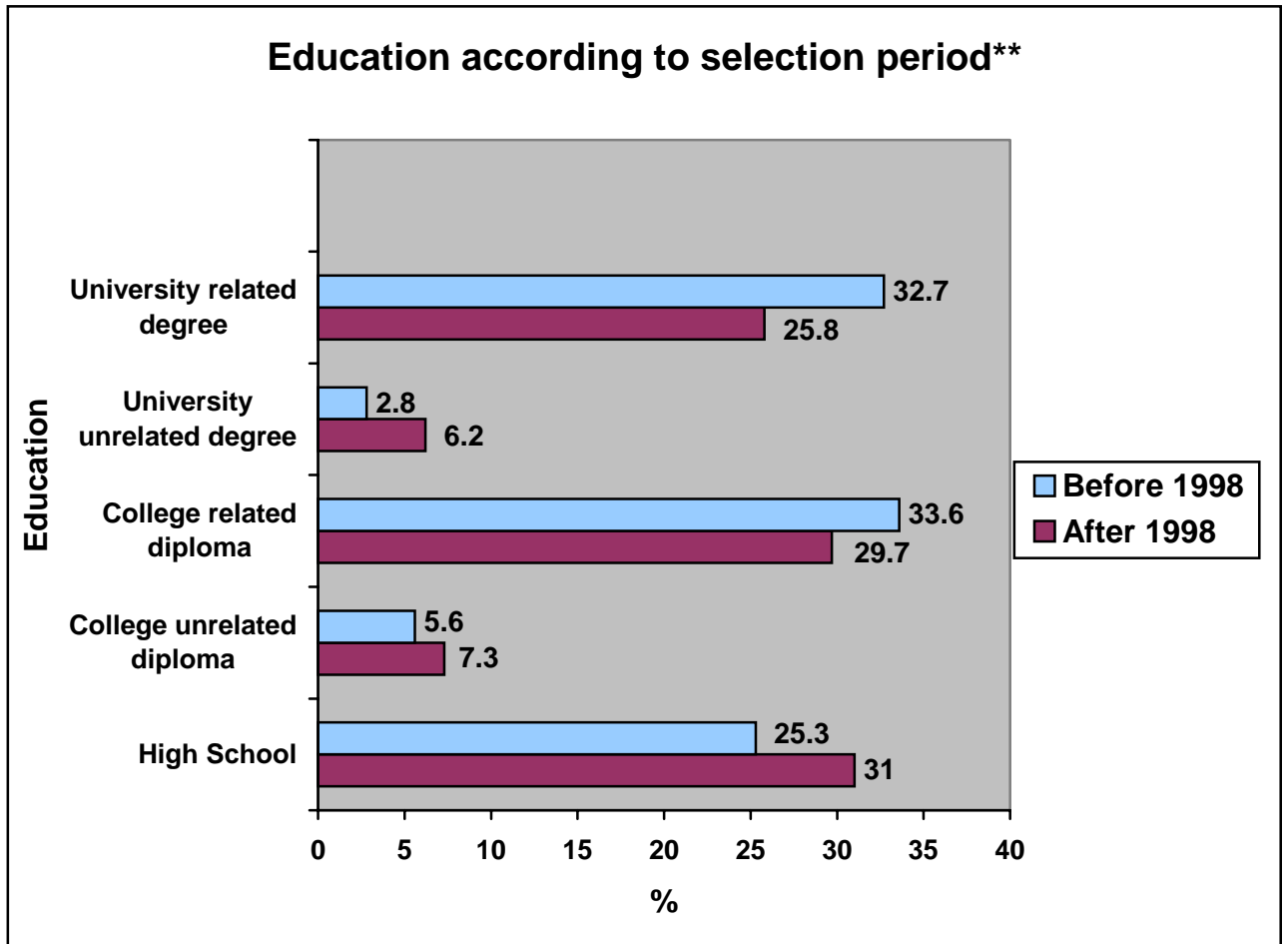
Graph 1: Race according to selection period



*** $p < .001$; ($N = 1,236$)

Further analysis examining education by selection period also demonstrated significant differences. As indicated in Graph 2, fewer recruits with a related university degree (32.7% compared to 25.8%) and related college diploma (33.6% compared to 29.7%) are now entering CTP, while recruits with a high school education has increased from 25.3% to 31.0%. However, an increase in recruits with both unrelated college diplomas (5.6% to 7.3%) and unrelated university degrees (2.8% to 6.2%) were observed after September 1998. These findings could be explained by the major hiring initiative of 1,000 correctional officers.

Graph 2: Education according to selection period



** $p < .01$; $N = 1,225$

Regional analysis examining selection period by demographics was conducted as shown in Table 7. A significant statistical difference was observed for race in the Atlantic, Ontario and Prairies regions between the two selection periods.

Gender analysis by region and selection period showed that the number of men recruits had significantly increased before and after September 1998 for the Quebec region only. Data examining age also found that the Quebec region was the only one of the five that reported a significant shift before and after the implementation of the values-based selection process between the under and over 25 years of age cutoff. Again, the Quebec region was the only region that captured significances between the two selection periods for education.

Table 7: Regional distribution according to selection period by demographics

Demographics	Atlantic ^a		Quebec ^{b,c,d}		Ontario ^e		Prairie ^f		Pacific	
	Before n (%)	After n (%)	Before n (%)	After n (%)	Before n (%)	After n (%)	Before n (%)	After n (%)	Before n (%)	After n (%)
Race										
Caucasian	32(94.1)	90(70.3)	71(100.00)	207 (93.7)	-67 (95.7)	177 (97.3)	65 (94.2)	131 (86.8)	64 (82.1)	167 (77.3)
Aboriginal	1(2.9)	21(16.4)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.2)	1 (1.5)	16 (10.6)	5 (6.4)	25 (11.6)
Visible Minority	1(2.9)	17(13.3)	0 (0.0)	11 (5.0)	3 (4.3)	1 (0.6)	3 (4.4)	4 (2.7)	9 (11.5)	24 (11.1)
Age										
Under 25	9 (27.2)	44 (35.2)	36 (51.4)	54 (24.3)	22 (34.4)	52 (28.6)	19 (28.4)	52 (33.1)	26 (35.6)	74 (34.3)
25 and Up	24 (72.8)	81 (64.8)	34 (49.6)	168 (75.7)	42 (65.6)	130 (71.4)	48 (71.6)	105 (66.9)	47 (64.4)	142 (65.7)
Gender										
Men	19 (57.6)	91 (74.6)	36 (50.7)	144 (64.3)	49 (70.0)	128 (70.3)	48 (64.0)	114 (72.2)	47 (60.3)	147 (68.1)
Women	14 (42.4)	31 (25.4)	35 (49.3)	80 (35.7)	21 (30.0)	54 (29.7)	27 (36.0)	44 (27.8)	31 (39.7)	69 (31.9)
Education										
High School	5 (14.7)	44 (35.8)	2 (2.82)	66 (29.5)	20 (29.0)	35 (19.2)	19 (26.4)	50 (32.1)	36 (46.15)	84 (38.9)
Unrelated College Diploma	3 (8.8)	14 (11.4)	3 (4.23)	11 (5.0)	6 (8.7)	15 (8.2)	5 (6.9)	16 (10.3)	1 (1.28)	10 (4.6)
Related College Diploma	10 (29.4)	25 (20.3)	25 (35.2)	49 (21.9)	32 (46.4)	82 (45.1)	24 (33.3)	55 (35.3)	18 (23.1)	57 (26.4)
Unrelated University Degree	4 (11.8)	11 (8.9)	4 (5.63)	25 (11.2)	0 (0.0)	8 (4.4)	1 (1.4)	2 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	10 (4.6)
Related University Degree	12 (35.3)	29 (23.6)	37 (52.11)	73 (32.6)	11 (15.9)	42 (23.1)	23 (31.9)	33 (21.2)	23 (29.5)	55 (25.5)
Work Experience										
No experience	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Unrelated Experience	19 (55.9)	68 (55.7)	14 (19.7)	40 (17.9)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.7)	12 (17.1)	27 (17.1)	3 (3.9)	8 (3.7)
Under 5 Years Related	13 (38.2)	47 (38.5)	39 (54.9)	100 (44.7)	26 (37.1)	70 (38.5)	40 (57.1)	93 (58.9)	43 (55.1)	119 (55.1)
5 to 10 Years Related	1 (2.94)	4 (3.3)	14 (19.7)	50 (22.3)	34 (48.6)	63 (34.6)	11 (15.7)	25 (15.8)	27 (34.6)	67 (31.0)
Over 10 Years	1 (2.94)	3 (2.5)	4 (5.6)	31 (13.8)	10 (14.3)	46 (25.3)	7 (10.0)	13 (8.2)	5 (6.4)	22 (10.2)
Volunteer Experience										
No experience	18 (52.9)	76 (61.3)	28 (39.4)	154 (69.1)	30 (42.9)	56 (30.1)	32 (45.1)	61 (39.4)	31 (39.7)	91 (42.1)
Unrelated Experience	13 (38.2)	30 (24.2)	16 (22.5)	49 (22.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.7)	4 (5.6)	5 (3.2)	2 (2.6)	7 (3.2)
Under 5 Years Related	3 (8.9)	17 (13.7)	20 (36.7)	20 (9.0)	31 (44.3)	100 (55.0)	31 (43.7)	81 (52.3)	41 (52.6)	95 (44.0)
5 to 10 Years Related	0 (0.0)	1 (0.8)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	8 (11.4)	18 (9.9)	2 (2.8)	7 (4.5)	4 (5.1)	21 (9.7)
Over 10 Years	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	5 (2.8)	2 (2.8)	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	2 (1.0)

a. * $p < .05$ per race; b. *** $p < .001$ per age; c. * $p < .05$ per gender; d. *** $p < .001$ per education; e. * $p < .05$ per race; f. * $p < .05$ per race

Regional profiles

The demographic profile of recruits significantly varies across regions. As indicated in Table 8, the regional breakdown by education shows that the Pacific region (40.8%) had the highest concentration of recruits with high school education. The recruits with a related college diploma (e.g., police technology, police foundations, etc) were mostly observed in Ontario (45.4%) and unrelated college diploma was mostly found in the Atlantic region (10.8%). The Quebec region had the greatest percentage of correctional officer recruits with university degrees regardless if it was related (37.3%) or not (9.8%).

Table 8: Regional distribution according to education***

Education/Region	Atlantic n (%)	Quebec n (%)	Ontario n (%)	Prairie n (%)	Pacific n (%)
High School	49 (31.2)	68 (23.5)	55 (21.9)	69 (30.26)	120 (40.8)
Unrelated College Diploma	17 (10.8)	14 (4.8)	21 (8.4)	21 (9.2)	11 (3.7)
Related College Diploma	35 (22.3)	74 (25.1)	114 (45.4)	79 (34.7)	75 (25.5)
Unrelated University Degree	15 (9.6)	29 (9.8)	8 (3.2)	3 (1.3)	10 (3.4)
Related University Degree	41 (26.1)	110 (37.3)	53 (21.1)	56 (24.6)	78 (26.5)
National Distribution	157 (12.8)	295 (24.1)	251 (20.5)	228 (18.6)	294 (24.0)

*** $p < .001$; $N = 1,225$

Table 9 illustrates that work experience was significantly different from one region to the other. The Atlantic region reported the highest percentage of recruits with unrelated experience (55.8%). Results indicate that the Prairies (58.3%) had the highest concentration of recruits with less than five years-related experience, while the Ontario region showed both the most representation of recruits with five to ten years related (38.5%) and over 10 years (22.2%).

Table 9: Regional distribution according to work experience***

Experience/Region	Atlantic n (%)	Quebec n (%)	Ontario n (%)	Prairie n (%)	Pacific n (%)
No Experience	0 (0.0)	3 (1.02)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Unrelated Experience	87 (55.8)	54 (18.3)	3 (1.1)	39 (17.1)	11 (3.7)
Under 5 years Related	60 (38.5)	139 (47.1)	96 (38.1)	133 (58.3)	162 (55.1)
5 to 10 Years Related	5 (3.2)	64 (21.7)	97 (38.5)	36 (15.8)	94 (32.0)
Over 10 years	4 (2.6)	35 (11.9)	56 (22.2)	20 (8.8)	27 (9.2)
National Distribution	156 (12.7)	295 (24.1)	252 (20.6)	228 (18.6)	294 (24.0)

*** $p < .001$; $N = 1,225$

Similar findings were observed for volunteer experience, as shown in Table 10. The Atlantic (59.5%) and the Quebec (61.9%) regions reported the most recruits without volunteer experience. Recruits from the Atlantic region (27.2%) were those with the most unrelated experience. The Prairie and Ontario regions had the most recruits under 5 years-related experience recording 49.6% and 52.0% respectively. The

recruits between five and 10 years experience (10.3%), and over 10 years (2.4%) were mainly from the Ontario region.

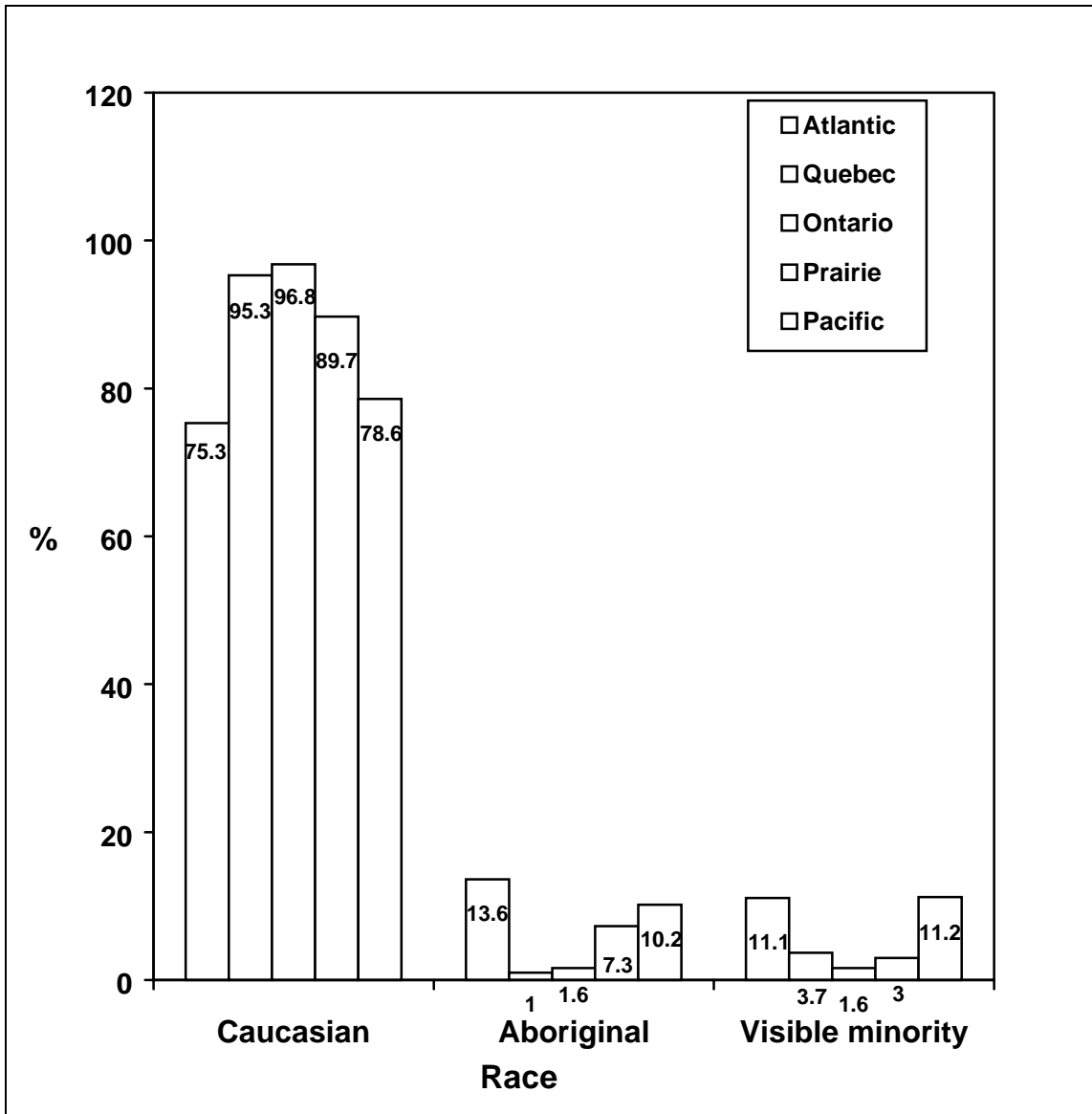
Table 10: Regional distribution according to volunteer experience***

Volunteer/Region	Atlantic n (%)	Quebec n (%)	Ontario n (%)	Prairie n (%)	Pacific n (%)
No Experience	94 (59.5)	182 (61.9)	86 (34.1)	93 (41.2)	122 (41.5)
Unrelated Experience	43 (27.2)	65 (22.1)	3 (1.2)	9 (4.0)	9 (3.1)
Under 5 years Related	20 (12.7)	46 (15.7)	131 (52.0)	112 (49.6)	136 (46.3)
5 to 10 Years Related	1 (0.6)	1 (0.3)	26 (10.3)	9 (4.0)	25 (8.5)
Over 10 years	0 (0.0)	0 (0.00)	6 (2.4)	3 (1.3)	2 (.07)
National Distribution	158 (12.9)	294 (24.0)	252 (20.6)	226 (18.5)	294 (24.0)

*** $p < .001$; $N = 1,224$

Regional differences by ethnicity were exhibited in Graph 3. Interestingly, Aboriginal recruits were mainly represented in the Atlantic region, where they accounted for 13.6% of recruits, followed by 10.2% in the Pacific region. Similarly, these two regions also reported the most Visible Minorities with 11% of the recruits. Surprisingly, the Prairies selected the third highest percentage of Aboriginal recruits (7.3%), where most of the Aboriginal offenders are incarcerated.

Graph 3: Regional distribution according to ethnicity***



*** $p < .001$; ($N = 1,236$)

Highly significant regional differences were also observed, as indicated in Table 11, in the recruits' test scores for Parts A, B, & C of the values-based selection process. Results showed that recruits in the Pacific (24.8) had the highest total test score for Part A examination followed closely by the lowest test scores, which were obtained in the Quebec region (22.7). In relation to the Part B examination, the total test score were dichotomized between scores fluctuating around 44 (Atlantic and Pacific) and 51 (Quebec, Ontario and Prairies). The Quebec region reported the highest total score for Part C examination with an average score of 33.6 compared to the Atlantic region (28.5%). All five correctional regions met the COI standard for all Parts of the examination. The only region that failed to meet COII requirements was the Atlantic region for Part B where an average total score of 44.3 was reported. A total score of 45 was needed in order to meet COII standards.

Table 11: Regional distribution of mean scores for part A, B, & C examinations***

A. KNOWLEDGE	Max Score	Atlantic (n = 121)	Québec (n = 223)	Ontario (n =180)	Prairies (n = 135)	Pacific (n = 146)
1. The Criminal Justice System, <i>Corrections and Conditional Release Act</i> and other relevant legislation and policy.	6	4.8	4.5	5.1	4.8	4.9
2. The Mission, Corporate Objectives and Correctional Strategy	6	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.6
Criminal behaviour and intervention techniques	6	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.6	5.0
3. The Unit Management Framework and correctional operations	4	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.3
4. The Unit Management Framework and correctional operations	5	4.2	3.8	4.3	3.8	4.3
5. Community and institutional resources	3	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.6	2.5
TOTAL	30^a	23.5	22.7	24.2	24.1	24.8
B. ABILITIES AND SKILLS ASSESSMENT						
1. Define and analyze problems/crisis situations, identify options and recommend or take appropriate action for resolution	15	9.5	11.1	10.3	10.5	9.0
2. Communicate effectively orally	15	9.3	10.4	10.7	10.8	9.4
3. Communicate effectively in writing	15	10.2	10.4	10.7	10.6	9.3
4. Analyze and summarize information	15	6.7	9.5	8.8	9.8	8.1
5. Motivate, influence, persuade and assist others	7.5	4.6	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.1
6. Plan, organize, and prioritize work to meet deadlines and achieve results	7.5	4.1	5.1	4.3	4.7	4.0
TOTAL	75^b	44.3	51.4	50.4	51.5	43.9
C. PERSONAL SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT SCORE						
1. Respect	25	15.1	19.6	16.9	17.8	16.8
2. Desire to learn and change	5	3.4	3.6	3.2	3.6	3.5
3. Integrity	5	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.2
4. Results Orientation	5	3.3	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.3
5. Teamwork	5	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.5
TOTAL	45^c	28.5	33.6	30.4	32.0	30.2

***Absolute $t = p \leq .001$

Note: (n) may vary due to missing cases

Passing mark: COI = 18, COII = 21, b. Passing mark: COI = 37.5, COII = 45, Passing mark: COI = 27

CONCLUSION

The demographic profile of the "new" recruits differed significantly from the profiles of the "old" recruits in three important areas, namely race, gender and education. The increase in the number of Aboriginal and visible minority recruits demonstrates CSC's positive efforts to diversify its workforce to meet its operational needs. The unequal distribution between the number of men and women recruits has changed significantly between the two selection periods (less than one third of all recruits were women after September 1998), leading one to ponder about the reasons for such a decrease. Several authors (Farkas, 1999; Larivière & Robinson, 1996; Simourd, 1997) have established the benefits of women in promoting rehabilitative ideals in a correctional workforce. Educational differences before and after September 1998 showed fewer recruits holding related diplomas and degrees. These findings suggest the need to further investigate the various recruitment policies and their impact on the interactions between staff and offenders.

Educational attainment also plays an important role in the performance of the recruits on the knowledge, skills and abilities examinations. On the other hand, education does not seem to influence key corporate values. However, respect appears to be related negatively to the recruits' previous volunteer experiences.

The present data sets provide a good overview of basic demographic variables and their contribution to values. As an organization, we need to gain a better understanding on the values that are held by correctional officers. Various studies have shown that values could be amenable to change (Jones, 1999; Paboojian & Teske, 1997; Plecas & Maxim, 1987). The findings of these cross-sectional research studies suggest that even as early as induction training that the values of correctional officer recruits are open to change. A comprehensive longitudinal study is needed to examine correctional officer recruits from the beginning to the end of their CTP training, and at intervals of three and six months and one year in the institution. Considering that it is the primary goal of a value selection process to ensure that correctional officers who are recruited share the values promoted by the CSC.

For CSC, staff is crucial to the success of the rehabilitative process within the institutions and through this proposed study (phases II through V). CSC can more fully understand how staff values are affected at all levels of their experiences in correctional work. Once these are outlined, existing programs can be modified or new programs implemented, to ensure that the correctional officers' needs are met in order to enhance and maintain those values that best exemplify those that are held by CSC as being essential to correctional work.

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