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ILLINOIS CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION AUTHORITY

Prior victimization of incarcerated women in Illinois

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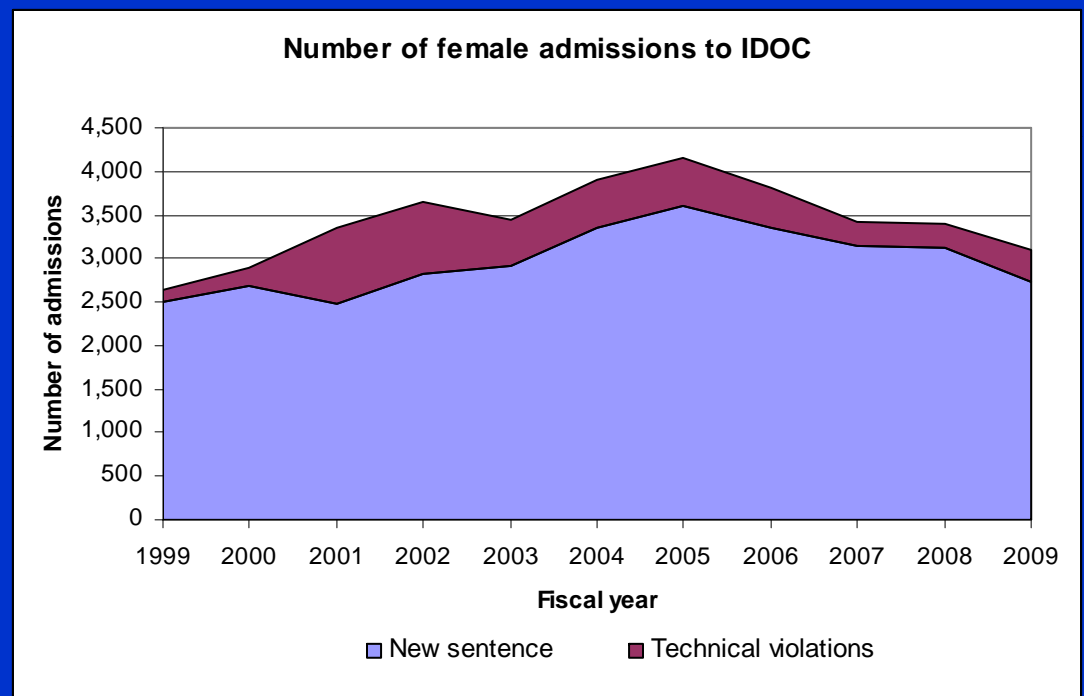
Presentation to Justice Research and Statistics
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Research Goals

- Learn about victimization of incarcerated women
 - What characteristics are correlated with prior victimization?
- Increase knowledge of the female inmate population in IL
- Possibly provide policy implications based on findings

What do we know about women behind bars?

- Number of incarcerated women has increased over past few decades
- They are typically admitted for drug or property offenses
- They are mothers, living in poverty, undereducated, unskilled
- They have multiple concerns—prior abuse, mental health issues, substance abuse



Prior studies

State	Study	Methodology	Random sample?	Sample size	Number of facilities	Lifetime prevalence recorded?	Relationship to perpetrator recorded?
Ohio	McDaniels-Wilson & Belknap (2008)	surveys	yes	391	3	yes	yes
California	Owen & Bloom (1995)	surveys	yes	294	4	yes	yes
Washington	Lake (1993)	interviews, surveys	unknown	83	1	yes	yes
Oklahoma	Sargent et. al. (1993)	interviews, surveys	no	267	2	no	no
Texas	Mullings et. al. (2003)	interviews	no	1,198	1 (at intake)	no	no
New York	Browne et. al. (1999)	interviews	no	150	1 (max security)	yes	yes
Georgia	Cook et. al. (2005)	interviews	yes	403	1 (at intake)	no	no

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Methodology

Interviews

- One-on-one, face-to face interviews
- 98 questions covering:
 - Demographics
 - Substance use
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Stalking/ emotional abuse
 - Trauma
 - Help-seeking strategies including prior services, treatment, and assistance

Who did the interviews?

- Two-thirds of interviews conducted by two contractual women ex-offenders
 - Possibly puts subjects more at ease if they can identify with the interviewers
 - Interviewers made sure not to interview anyone they had known from prior incarceration(s)
 - These two interviewers also now occasionally present for adjunct instructors who work at the Authority
- Remaining women interviewed by female research staff

Measurement and recording information

- Physical and sexual abuse questions selected from The Early Trauma Inventory (Bremner, 2000) and slightly modified to cover entire life course
- Emotional abuse/stalking questions adapted from the Chicago Women's Health Risk Study (Block, 2000)
- PTSD Checklist – Stressor specific version (PCL-S)
- Abuse severity scale
 - Zink, Klesges, Stevens, Decker, 2008
- Substance Abuse questions similar to several other instruments
- Life History calendar developed staff

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Results

Sample Descriptive Statistics

	Sample (n=163)	Prison pop. (n=2,665)		Sample (n=163)	Prison pop. (n=2,665)
Age (mean, in years)	36.2	36.5	Conviction offense type		
Race			Violent	36%	32%
White*	50%	42%	Property	32%	30%
Black	44%	51%	Drug	25%	32%
Hispanic	6%	7%	Sex	6%	4%
Marital status			Committing county		
Married	18%	15%	Cook County*	32%	40%
Not married	82%	85%	Collar counties	9%	12%
Children			Rest of Illinois**	60%	48%
No children*	13%	19%	Prison security level		
1+ children*	87%	81%	Minimum*	51%	58%
Conviction offense class			Medium*	33%	26%
Murder	14%	12%	Maximum	7%	7%
Class X-2	55%	53%			
Class 3-4	31%	35%			

*p<0.05

**p<0.01

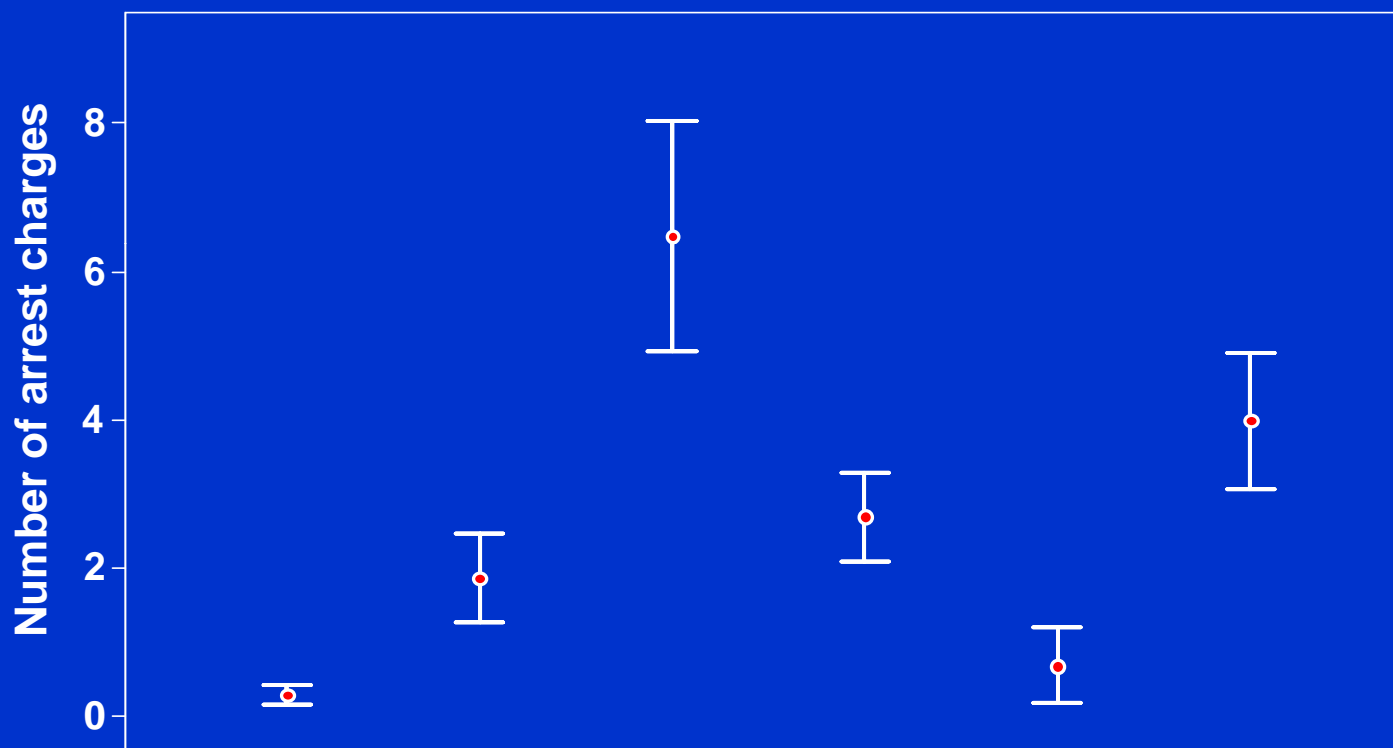
Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

Age as of March 31, 2009

Prison population on March 3, 2009

Criminal History

Arrest Charges – 95% Confidence Intervals



	Homicide	Person	Property	Drug	Prostitution	Other
mean	0.3	1.9	6.5	2.7	0.7	4.0
median	0.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	0.0	2.0
s.d	0.8	3.8	9.9	3.8	3.2	5.8

Abuse

Abuse types

Variable	Proportion experienced
EChild	2%
ETeen	32%
EAdult	80%
PChild	61%
PTeen	71%
PAdult	90%
SChild	47%
STeen	50%
SAdult	40%

Abuse severity and trauma

Variable	Excluding those without abuse		Assigning value of zero to those without abuse	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
EASeverity	7.27	2.22	6.15	3.33
PASeverity	11.18	3.48	10.84	3.94
SASeverity	10.18	4.07	7.68	5.63
PTSD Score	42.14	18.98	42.14	18.98

Abuse histories

Bivariate correlation coefficients (phi)

Abuse type and age	EChild	ETeen	EAdult	PChild	PTeen	PAdult	SChild	STeen	SAdult
EChild	1.00	0.23**	-0.02	-0.04	0.10	-0.08	0.01	0.00	-0.05
ETeen	0.23**	1.00	0.08	0.11	0.33**	-0.15*	0.25**	0.19**	-0.10
EAdult	-0.02	0.08	1.00	0.10	-0.09	0.33**	0.14	0.04	0.16*
PChild	-0.04	0.11	0.10	1.00	0.34**	0.02	0.42**	0.18*	0.11
PTeen	0.10	0.33**	-0.09	0.34**	1.00	0.04	0.23**	0.27**	0.09
PAdult	-0.08	-0.15*	0.33**	0.02	0.04	1.00	0.00	0.02	0.20*
SChild	0.01	0.25**	0.14	0.42**	0.23**	0.00	1.00	0.34**	0.06
STeen	0.00	0.19**	0.04	0.18*	0.27**	0.02	0.34**	1.00	0.14
SAdult	-0.05	-0.10	0.16*	0.11	0.09	0.20*	0.06	0.14	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

None
48

None
21

None
2

Mono
3

Poly
16

Mono
14

None
1

Mono
2

Poly
11

Poly
13

None
0

Mono
3

Poly
10

None
6

None
0

Mono
0

Poly
6

Mono
51

Mono
23

None
2

Mono
7

Poly
14

Poly
22

None
2

Mono
2

Poly
18

None
5

None
0

Mono
0

Poly
5

Poly
64

Mono
8

None
0

Mono
0

Poly
8

Poly
51

None
1

Mono
9

Poly
41

Age and type of victimization and incarceration offense

Proportion of respondents who indicated they experienced type of abuse by incarceration offense

Experienced abuse type	Current incarceration offense type				
	Person (n=59)	Sex (n=9)	Property (n=51)	Drug (n=41)	Other (n=3)
PACHild	67.8%	100%*	51.0%	53.7%	100.0%
PATeen	79.7%	44.4%	66.7%	65.9%	100.0%
PAAdult	91.5%	100.0%	88.2%	87.8%	66.7%
SACHild	59.3%*	66.7%	37.3%	41.5%	0.0%
SATeen	59.3%	55.6%	51.0%	36.6%	0.0%
SAAdult	39.0%	44.4%	47.1%	34.1%	0.0%
EACHild	1.7%	0.0%	3.9%	2.4%	0.0%
EATeen	37.3%	11.1%	21.6%	43.9%	0.0%
EAAdult	83.1%	100.0%	76.5%	78.0%	33.3%

* Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Victimization age and type and incarceration offense type

Bivariate correlation coefficients (phi)

Abuse	Current incarceration offense type				
	Person	Sex	Property	Drug	Other
PACChild	0.10	0.192*	-0.14	-0.09	0.11
PATeen	0.15	-0.14	-0.06	-0.06	0.09
PAAdult	0.05	0.08	-0.03	-0.03	-0.10
SACChild	0.182*	0.09	-0.13	-0.07	-0.13
SATeen	0.15	0.03	0.02	-0.15	-0.14
SAAdult	-0.01	0.02	0.10	-0.07	-0.11
EACChild	-0.04	-0.04	0.06	0.00	-0.02
EATeen	0.09	-0.11	-0.15	0.15	-0.09
EAAdult	0.06	0.12	-0.06	-0.02	-0.16

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Substance Use- Lifetime

Reported periods of regular drug use in lifetime (several times a week to daily):

- **85% any drugs or alcohol**
- 64% marijuana
 - 25% monthly
 - 15% daily
- 53% alcohol
 - 38% monthly
 - 15% daily
- 53% crack cocaine
 - 21% monthly
 - 14% daily
- 39% powder cocaine
- 35% heroin

Stalking/Emotional Abuse by Intimate Partner

- 85% experienced stalking or emotional abuse
 - 61% said a partner made them feel they had no control over their lives
 - 60% said a partner made them feel unsafe
 - 59% said a partner showed up at places they had no business being at
- 62% were under the age of 20 years old when they first experienced stalking, average was 21 years old
- 60% abused by a boyfriend, 23% by husband

Physical Abuse

- 98% experienced physical abuse in their lives
 - 89% had been pushed or shoved
 - 81% had been slapped
 - 67% had been punched or kicked
- Average age of onset was 10 years old
- 77% were abused by intimate partners, 73% family members, 31% strangers

Sexual Abuse

- 75% experienced sex abuse in their lives
 - 51% had been touched on intimate body part that made them feel uncomfortable
 - 45% experienced inappropriate sex comments before age 18
 - 44% experienced attempted sexual assault
 - 43% were sexually assaulted
- Average age of onset was 11 years old
- 37% were abused by family members, 33% a person known to them (neighbor, friend of parent, acquaintance), 31% strangers

Findings on Victimization Types

- Women who were sexually abused were more likely to experience physical abuse as well
- Women who experienced sexual abuse in childhood were more likely to also experience it later in life

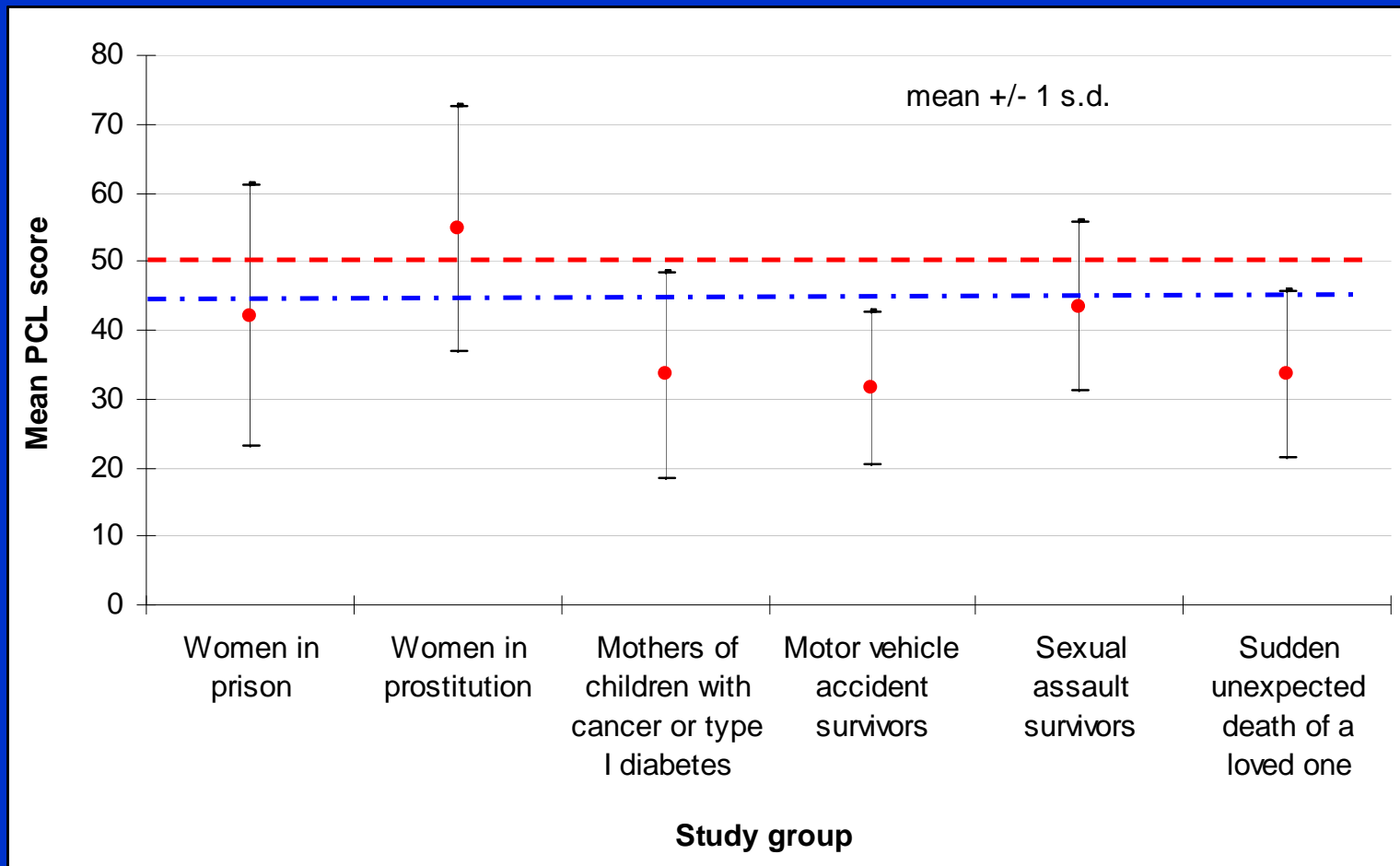
Trauma

- 83% were bothered by PTSD symptom in the past month
 - 75% felt very upset when something reminded them of a stressful experience from the past
 - 71% bothered by repeated, disturbing memories, thoughts, or images of a stressful experience from the past
 - 71% avoided thinking about or talking about a stressful experience from the past or avoided having feelings related to it

PTSD Mean Score Comparison

Study	Population	N	Mean PCL score	S.D.
Authority study	Women in prison	163	42.14	18.98
Farley, Baral, Kiremire, & Sezgin	Women in prostitution	130	54.9	17.8
Stoppelbein, & Greening	Mothers of children with cancer or type I diabetes	99	33.48	15.04
Kelley, Weathers, McDevitt-Murphy, Eakin, & Flood	Motor vehicle accident survivors	162	31.6	11.2
Kelley, Weathers, McDevitt-Murphy, Eakin, & Flood	Sexual assault survivors	86	43.5	12.2
Kelley, Weathers, McDevitt-Murphy, Eakin, & Flood	Sudden unexpected death of a loved one	185	33.5	12.1

PCL Scores across various study groups



Victimization and trauma

Bivariate correlation coefficients

Abuse type and severity	PTSD Score	EA Severity	PA Severity	SA Severity
EChild	0.01	0.12	0.00	0.05
EATeen	0.10	0.35**	0.20	0.07
EAdult	0.12	-0.14	0.17*	0.02
PChild	0.32**	0.09	0.77	0.34**
PTeen	0.10	0.19*	0.38**	0.24
PAdult	0.13	-0.07	0.08	-0.10
SChild	0.36**	0.15	0.47**	0.63**
STeen	0.32**	0.27**	0.28**	0.07
SAdult	0.10	0.17	0.19*	-0.09
EA Severity	0.30**	1.00	0.23	0.04
PA Severity	0.37**	0.23**	1.00	0.42**
SA Severity	0.29**	0.04	0.42**	1.00

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Help Seeking

- 83% of the female prisoners sought help or services after incidents of violence (n=136)
- Includes talking to a person known to them, consulting an agency or counselor, seeking medical help, or contacting the police
- Women with higher PTSD scores were more likely to seek more types of help/services

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- Almost all of the women experienced abuse, especially physical abuse
 - Most female prisoners are likely to have abuse histories and therefore in need of counseling services
- Strong correlation between sexual abuse and physical abuse

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- Higher PTSD scores were correlated with seeking more types of help
 - Many women may not actively seek out help until they are experiencing severe trauma
 - Early intervention is important to try to help women *before* victimization and trauma escalates

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- There was a correlation between childhood sexual abuse and sexual abuse when teens and adults
 - Again, early intervention is key to stop the cycle of violence in their lives

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- Those who had childhood sexual abuse are more likely to have higher PTSD scores
 - These women may have serious impairment including re-experiencing, avoidance, numbing, on guard
 - PTSD can affect daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, employment
 - Will need long-term therapy to learn coping mechanisms, identify triggers, manage stress, learn situation avoidance, obtain medication, etc.

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- Two-thirds of the women sought help from someone they knew rather than professional services, and most thought it was helpful
 - It is important to make sure the women have someone they trust to talk to in addition to professionals

Conclusions: Implications for Practice and Policy

- Over 90% of those who sought help in prison for abuse issues thought it was helpful
 - There is an opportunity to make an impact in prison
 - In addition, prison has advantages of extended time with their clients, away from abusers, relatively safe environment, motivation (good time for program participation), and a relatively captive audience

Obstacles to research

- Sample attrition/unavailability
 - 163 respondents out of a proposed 200
 - Loss of subjects due to transfers across state, release, segregation, in clinic at time of interview, language barriers
- Conflict between IRB and IDOC
 - During training, attorney from IDOC indicated that if women were to report rule infractions, they would need to know about this
 - Confidentiality could not be maintained and risk of harm to subjects increases
 - IRB would not let the research continue if we had to notify IDOC
 - 6 month delay from training to project starting
 - Negotiations between directors eventually resulted in agreement that allowed research to continue
 - The research focuses on prior victimization *before* entering prison, so abuse during the current incarceration was not asked about