

A series of Research Briefs designed to bring research findings to policy makers

Understanding and preventing Indigenous offending

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Introduction

Indigenous over-representation is the most significant social justice and public policy issue for the Australian and New Zealand criminal justice systems. Closing the gap on Indigenous over-representation has been identified as a priority and promoted through the *National Indigenous Law and Justice Framework* and *Reducing Offending by Māori Project* (SCAG 2009; Yeboah 2000). This research brief reports on the data available regarding Indigenous offending patterns, and finds that over-representation is particularly acute with regard to acts intended to cause injury, public order offences, offences against justice and unlawful entry. Like other offenders, Indigenous offenders are very likely to be male, substance abusers, unemployed and poor. The legacies of colonisation, dispossession and child removal policies, such as psychological distress and social disorganisation, also appear to be risk factors. The implications of these findings for crime prevention are examined.

In examining offending patterns, this paper relies on official sources of data such as reported crime and people charged, convicted or imprisoned. Indigenous Australians aged 10 and over were 7.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous people to be charged by police during 2008-09 (ABS 2010a). Indigenous young people aged 10 to 17 were 14.2 times more likely than non-Indigenous to be under community based supervision and 20.7 times more likely to be in detention during 2007-08

(AIHW 2009). Indigenous adults were 13.9 times more likely to be imprisoned during 2009 (ABS 2010b). Māori were 6.7 times more likely than non-Māori to be convicted and 12.0 times more likely to be sentenced to detention during 2008 (Statistics New Zealand 2010).

These official sources do not include undetected or unreported offences, and therefore only approximate real rates of offending. The statistics are affected by the distribution of police resources, availability of diversionary options, and use of discretion by police, prosecutors and the judiciary, and may reflect direct or systemic bias (Cunneen 2006; Fergusson, Horwood & Swain-Campbell 2003). Such biases involve apparently neutral laws, policies or practices being applied in an unfair or uneven manner and result in adverse outcomes for Indigenous people.

Characteristics of Indigenous communities also affect recorded rates of offending. For example, some Indigenous communities traditionally socialise in public space, which increases interaction with police and the potential for negative outcomes. This caveat is particularly relevant to public order offences, where over-representation of Indigenous people is very high. On the other hand socio-historical influences may result in distrust of government, reducing the willingness of individuals to report offences (Jones, Masters, Griffiths & Moulday, 2002). Ideally, official data collections would be supplemented by surveys to give a more comprehensive picture of

offending. However Australian surveys (NATSIS and NATSISS, discussed further below) do not ask respondents about undetected offending, but only if they have been charged, arrested or imprisoned.

Offence profiles

Two national data collections provide information about the principal offence charged by police for people aged 10 and over during 2008-09 and adults incarcerated on 30 June 2009 (ABS 2010a; 2010b). Data on police charges only relate to New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory because of concerns about data quality in the other jurisdictions. Offences charged by penalty/infringement notices were excluded, many of which related to public order and traffic offences. The focus on principal offence results in less serious offences being under-represented where individuals were charged with more than one offence or on more than one occasion.

Figure 1 shows the principal offences charged. *Acts intended to cause injury* and *public order offences* accounted for half of all Indigenous principal offences. Indigenous offenders were more likely to be charged with offences from these two categories and *unlawful entry with intent offences* than non-Indigenous. Indigenous offenders were less likely than non-Indigenous to be charged with *illicit drug offences*, *theft and related offences*, and *fraud, deception and related offences*.

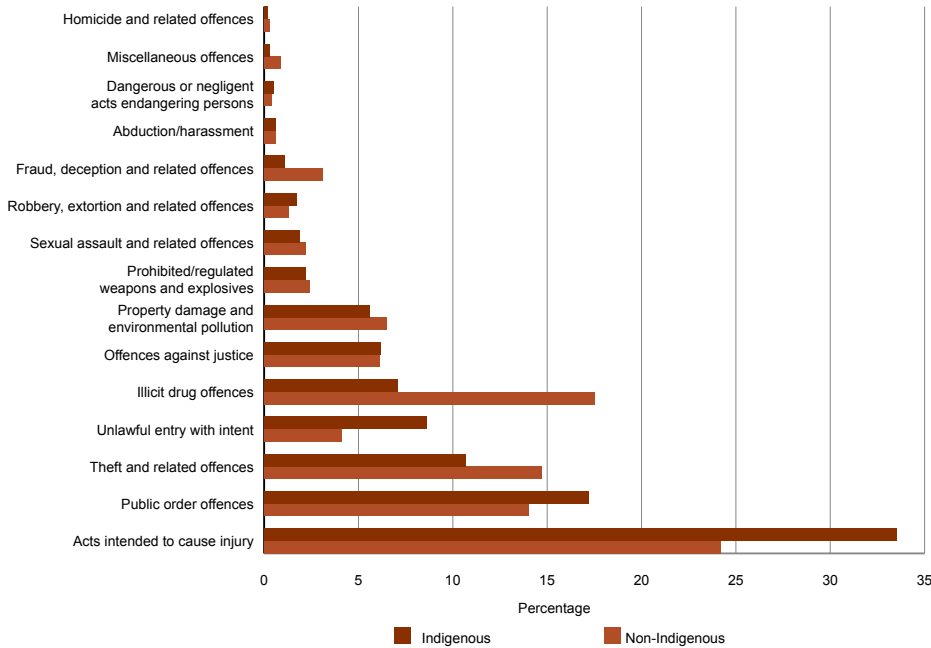


Figure 1: Principal offences charged by police in four jurisdictions, 2008-09 (ABS 2010a)

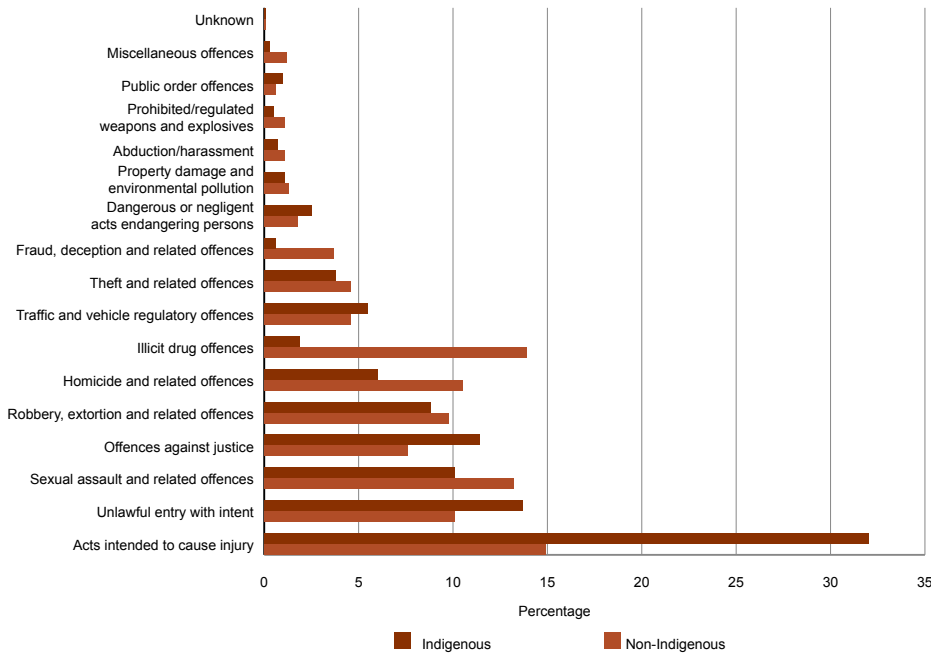


Figure 2: Principal offences of Australian prisoners, 2009 (ABS 2010b).

The offence profile based on police charges is mirrored by adult incarceration statistics, although the latter naturally reflect more serious offences. The principal offences for which people were incarcerated on 30 June 2009 are shown in Figure 2. One third (32.0%) of Indigenous prisoners were incarcerated for *acts intended to cause injury*. Consistent with police charges, higher proportions of Indigenous than non-Indigenous prisoners recorded *acts intended to cause injury* and *unlawful entry with intent* offences. Indigenous prisoners were more likely than non-Indigenous to be incarcerated for *offences against*

justice, which includes breaches of existing orders such as bail, probation and parole, and *traffic offences*. Lower proportions of Indigenous than non-Indigenous prisoners had *illicit drug offences*, *fraud, deception and related offences*, *homicide and related offences* and *sexual assault and related offences*.

Proportions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people charged and incarcerated for offences do not take into account different populations in the community. Figure 3 shows rates of Indigenous over-representation for principal offences charged by police in the four jurisdictions during 2008-

09 and in prison nationally on 30 June 2009. The rates of Indigenous over-representation for offences charged are not age standardised while rates for offences incarcerated are age standardised. Age standardisation takes into account the different age profiles of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. That is, adjustments are made to account for the younger age of the Indigenous population because young people are more likely to offend. Information was not available about over-representation for traffic offences charged by police, because Indigenous status was not routinely collected for offences charged by penalty/ infringement notice. Indigenous people were more likely to be charged with and incarcerated for all offence types. Indigenous over-representation in charge and incarceration statistics were particularly problematic for *acts intended to cause injury* (10.4 and 30.0 times); *unlawful entry with intent* (18.8 and 15.7 times); *public order offences* (21.5 and 9.2 times); *offences against justice* (20.9 and 7.6 times); *dangerous and negligent acts* (19.0 and 8.5 times); and *robbery extortion and related offences* (12.6 and 10.3 times).

In New Zealand in 2008, Māori were over-represented in convictions for violent and property offences and were more likely to be sentenced to detention for violent offences (Figure 4). Differences also existed between Māori and non-Māori in the proportions sentenced to detention for traffic and justice offences, with Māori more likely than non-Māori to be sentenced to detention for traffic offences and less likely for justice offences.

Demographic characteristics of offenders

Most offenders, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, are male: 92% of Indigenous prisoners in Australia on 30 June 2009, and 82% of Indigenous juveniles under supervision during 2007-08 were male (ABS 2009; AIHW 2009). Over-representation rates for Indigenous women and girls are much higher. While Indigenous men in New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory were 5.8, 9.5 and 8.7 times more likely than non-Indigenous men to be proceeded against by police,

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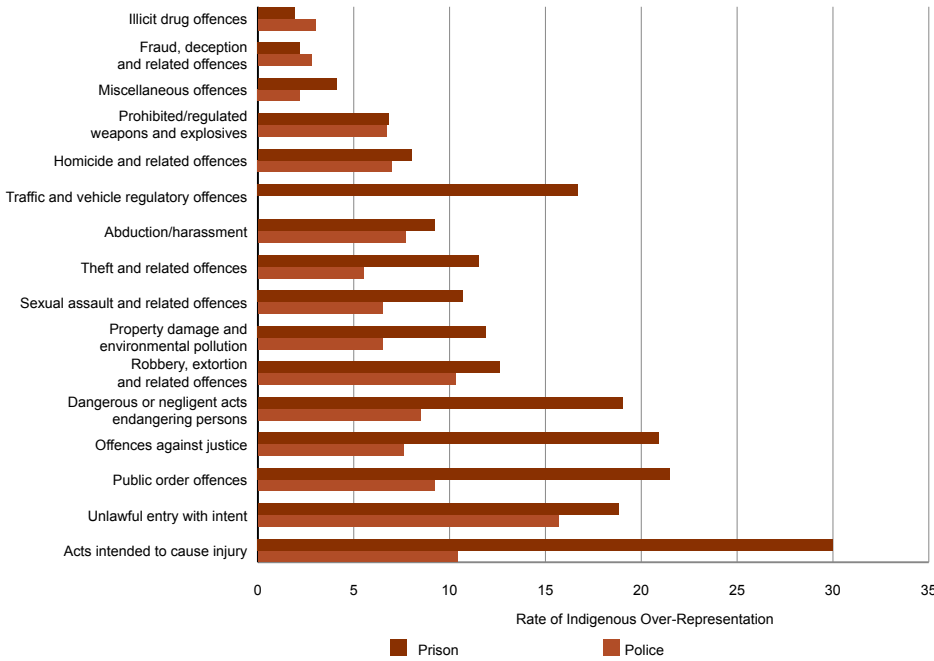


Figure 3: Rates of Indigenous over-representation for principal offences charged by police in four jurisdictions 2008-09 (ABS 2010a) and in prison nationally 2009 (ABS 2010b)

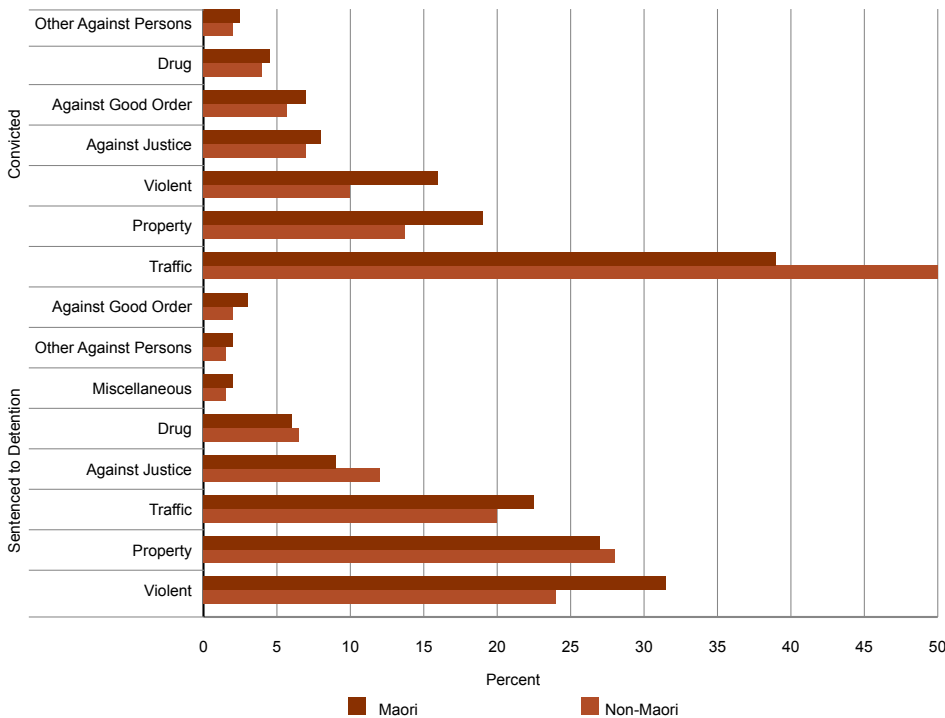


Figure 4: Principal offences resulting in a conviction and sentenced to detention, 2008 (Statistics New Zealand 2010)

the figures for women were 9.3, 16.3 and 11.2. In 2007-08, Indigenous women accounted for 29% of women in prison, compared with 24% of men (Bartels 2010). Indigenous females accounted for 47% of all female youth under community supervision in Australia, while 38% of all male youth were Indigenous (Richards 2009). In New Zealand, Māori made up 12.5% of the population but 50% of those in prison, and Māori women were 60%

of the female prison population (NZ Department of Corrections 2007).

Within Australia, Indigenous offenders first have contact with the criminal justice system at younger ages than their non-Indigenous counterparts (Allard et al 2010; Skrzypiec, Wundersitz & Castle 2005). Indigenous people in criminal justice system populations are also younger than non-Indigenous people. While half of all offenders charged with

an offence during 2008-09 were aged 10-24 years, Indigenous offenders were almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous offenders to be aged 10-14 years (9.8% v 5.6%; ABS 2010a). During 2007-08, Indigenous youth on community based orders were 3.8 times more likely than non-Indigenous youth to be aged 10 to 12 (5.3% v 1.4%) while Indigenous youth in detention were 3.0 times more likely than non-Indigenous youth to be aged 10 to 12 (6.0% v 2.0%; AIHW 2009). During 2009, Indigenous adult prisoners were on average four years younger than non-Indigenous ($M=32.1$ years, $M=36.4$ years), with Indigenous males and females particularly over-represented in 18-29 age groups (ABS 2010b). In New Zealand, there were no differences in the age profiles of Māori and non-Māori offenders convicted or sentenced to detention during 2008 (Statistics New Zealand 2010).

Recidivism

Studies focused on particular jurisdictions indicate that after initial contact with the justice system, Indigenous offenders are more likely than non-Indigenous offenders to have additional contact, have higher rates or more frequent levels of contact, and for shorter periods of time to elapse before additional contact (Allard et al 2010; Chen et al 2005; Skrzypiec, Wundersitz & Castle 2005). Indigenous offenders in four Australian jurisdictions during 2008-09 were more likely to have multiple contacts and were twice as likely as non-Indigenous offenders to be charged on more than one occasion (46.7% v 18.2%). Almost one tenth (8.6%) of Indigenous offenders were charged on five or more occasions compared with 3.3% of non-Indigenous (ABS 2010a). Indigenous youth were 1.2 times as likely as non-Indigenous youth to have more than one (48.3% vs 38.6%) or five or more (6.3% vs 5.2%) receptions to a detention centre in 2007-08 (AIHW 2009). During 2009, about three-quarters (74.4%) of adult Indigenous prisoners had served a previous period of incarceration compared with half (49.9%) of non-Indigenous prisoners (ABS 2010b). Australian and New Zealand research focused on recontact or reimprisonment of parolees also indicate higher recidivism rates, with Indigenous parolees 1.2 to 1.8 times more likely to have recontact for

offences within two years than non-Indigenous parolees (Holland, Pointon & Ross 2007; Jones et al 2006; Nadesu 2009).

Risk factors for offending

Three Australian studies have assessed how Indigenous people who are charged and arrested are different from Indigenous people who are not. This research has been based on analyses of data from two population surveys: NATSIS and NATSISS (ABS 1994, 2004). The first survey was conducted with 10,235 Indigenous people aged 13 years or older while the second survey was limited to 9,359 Indigenous people aged 15 years or older (ABS 1994, 2004). The surveys collected data on a wide range of socioeconomic, health, welfare, housing and other characteristics, which have been used to explore the correlates of being charged or arrested and frequency of arrest during the preceding five years as well as whether ever imprisoned. The strongest predictors of self-reported contact with the justice system were being male and substance abuse (Hunter 2001; Weatherburn, Snowball & Hunter 2006, 2008). High-risk alcohol consumers were 2.6 times more likely to be charged than people who were not (Weatherburn, Snowball & Hunter 2006). Other risk factors included: unemployment, having been physically attacked or verbally threatened, aged 18 to 24 rather than in older age groups, failing to complete year 12, welfare dependence or experiencing financial stress, living in a crowded household, being a member of the stolen generation, lack of social involvement and residing in a sole-parent family (Hunter 2001; Weatherburn, Snowball & Hunter 2006, 2008). Importantly, these associations hold after controlling for the influence of other demographic and socioeconomic factors (Weatherburn, Snowball & Hunter 2008).

The results of the studies summarised above indicate that risk factors for Indigenous offending in Australia are largely similar to those for the wider population: being young, male, low socio-economic status, poor education, unemployment, substance use (Weatherburn 2001). The higher incidence of these risk factors in Indigenous populations may explain

much of the high rates of offending.

On the other hand, a New Zealand study found that family circumstances and parenting behaviours were more important than socio-economic status in predicting offending. A longitudinal study of more than 1000 people born in Christchurch in 1977 revealed that Māori appeared to be involved in violent offending at two to three times the rate of non-Māori. However when controls were introduced for family circumstances (including parental alcohol abuse and offending) and parenting behaviours (use of punishment and level of care), ethnicity no longer functioned as a significant explanatory variable (New Zealand. Department of Corrections 2007).

It has been suggested that risk factors specific to Indigenous people might include forced removals, dependence on government, and racism (Homel, Lincoln and Herd 1999). The NATSISS found that 8% of the adult population had been taken away from their family and one third had a relative removed. Dodson & Hunter's (2006) examination of NATSISS data shows that having a family member taken is strongly correlated with arrest and incarceration. The intergenerational effect is evident, as children were three times more likely to be removed from their families if their parent had been removed. The Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey (Zubrick et al 2005) also found that forced removal is an independent risk factor: Aboriginal carers who were forcibly separated from their natural family were almost twice as likely to have been arrested and charged with an offence at some time. The children of those separated were twice as likely to be at high risk of behavioural difficulties and had levels of alcohol and drugs use that were twice as high as those whose carers were not forcibly separated from their family. Fiona Stanley of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research argues that forced removal of Aboriginal people is "the single most important antecedent factor in the many causal pathways into today's poor outcomes" (Stanley 2008 cited in Crime and Misconduct Commission 2009).

There is some evidence from New Zealand indicating that an insecure cultural identity can be a risk factor for crime. Marie, Fergusson & Boden

(2009) examined differences in offending rates between people who identified their ethnic identity as Māori only, Māori and another ethnic identity and non-Māori. After controlling for the impact of socioeconomic status, family functioning and personal adjustment, no differences were found in offending rates between sole-Māori and non-Māori but Māori/other were found to have higher rates of offending. This finding suggests that having an insecure cultural identity is related to increased offending and highlights the potential protective function that having an 'uncompromised' cultural identity may have for reducing offending by minority groups.

Understanding violence

Identifying risk factors is not the same as identifying the causes of offending (Weatherburn, Snowball and Boyd Hunter 2008). A number of major reports have attempted to go beyond statistical correlation to identify the reasons Indigenous people commit more offences, particularly violent offences. Memmott et al's (2000) report on violence suggested that the underlying factors were violent dispossession, removal, the disempowerment of elders (by the imposition of mission authorities), leading to hopelessness, helplessness, despair and rage. In addition, situational factors such as the use of alcohol, intertribal conflict and family feuds, unemployment and boredom, and tolerant attitudes towards violence, also contribute to the high use of violence. This report noted that some violent behaviour, such as fighting and payback, has its origins in traditional culture, but when transferred into vastly different circumstances and without traditional controls, becomes dysfunctional.

Since Memmott et al (2000), five Australian governments have published reports exploring the reasons for high rates of violence against women and children: Aboriginal Child Sexual Assault Taskforce 2006 (NSW), Northern Territory Board of Inquiry 2007, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Women's Task Force on Violence Report 2000 (Qld), Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force 2003, Gordon, Hallahan, Henry 2002 (WA). Most identified the same causal elements as Memmott. For example, in the New South Wales report, the authors identified

the trauma and grief consequent to colonisation, dispossession and the stolen generation, as well as substance abuse, social and economic disadvantage, the normalisation of violence, and social breakdown as reasons for high rates of child sexual assault. The Queensland report places particular stress on transgenerational trauma as both a cause and effect of violence. The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission's 2009 report on crime prevention in Queensland's Indigenous communities also noted the existence of high levels of known risk factors for violence in Indigenous communities: low income and employment, poor school attendance and high alcohol consumption. However this report suggests that "perhaps the most significant" risk factor is poor parenting. Policies of child removal and institutionalisation have severely damaged the parenting capacity of many Indigenous people. Many parents are further incapacitated by their poor health, substance abuse and by imprisonment. Poor parenting is a very significant risk factor for offending (Weatherburn 1998).

Of great concern is the identification of an intergenerational cycle of abuse and violence. Indigenous children frequently witness or experience violence, which is normalised and increases the risk that they themselves will use violence (Mazerolle & Legosz 2007; Willis & Moore 2008). Alarming, a survey of 480 Queensland offenders, including 98 Indigenous offenders found that child sexual assault is a very significant risk factor for involvement in the criminal justice system (Mazerolle & Legosz 2007).

Some commentators have suggested that alcohol abuse is not only a response to trauma and grief, but an independent causal element for offending (Pearson 2001, Weatherburn 2006). Research indicates that alcohol has a significant role in many offences, with Indigenous people 1.5 to 3.8 times more likely to be under the influence at the time of the offence (Johnson 2004; Payne & Dearden 2009; Putt, Payne & Milner 2005). Most of the government reports referred to above noted that Aboriginal people made urgent submissions seeking restrictions on the supply of alcohol, as well as rehabilitation services for addicts.

Gaps in knowledge about Indigenous offending

While there is increasing availability of information about Indigenous offending from Australian data collections, information is not available relating to contacts that Indigenous people have with police in all jurisdictions and there is no information about contacts that Indigenous people have with courts. There is limited information about the offending profiles of youth and adults on community based orders or youth in detention. Statistics New Zealand has an impressive range of data that can be used to assess Māori contact with the justice system, but information about police contact is recorded as apprehensions rather than individuals and there is an absence of data about detention and corrections populations. While recognising the many data quality issues, particularly related to Indigenous identification and the need for data linkages to create individual level data from incident or event level data, increased availability of information is essential to provide a national and fine-grained profile of the contacts that Indigenous people have with the justice system. Data should facilitate exploration of the demographic and spatial distribution of offending to assist targeting of crime prevention initiatives. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that criminal justice data is available about populations diverted from formal processing to facilitate improved understanding about the use and efficacy of programs.

There is also a lack of information about self-reported offending, particularly in Australia. The Christchurch Health and Development Study highlighted important differences between Māori and non-Māori in officially recorded conviction rates and self-reported delinquency (Fergusson, Horwood & Swain-Campbell 2003). Indigenous offending patterns in Australia can only be understood if similar information is collected, but this would involve costly community samples or birth cohort studies. While the NATSIS and NATSISS collected information about self-reported arrests and imprisonment, as well as a range of socioeconomic characteristics, the ability of information from these surveys to improve understanding about Indigenous offending is constrained, for reasons discussed below.

The samples were limited to people aged 13 and over (NATSIS) or 15 and over (NATSISS) which does not permit exploration of offending by young people. In asking respondents to recall whether they had been arrested within the preceding five years or ever incarcerated, the surveys did not assess offending that was undetected or did not result in arrest or imprisonment. The cross-sectional design does not facilitate understanding of risk and resilience factors and how these relate to the development of offending over time. Longitudinal research is necessary to explore what occurs at crucial developmental phases, including how life events, economic, social, environmental and family factors impact on interactions with the justice system and offending trajectories (Dodson & Hunter 2006). Longitudinal research could also reveal how offending develops over time, including whether there are "gateway" offences (that serve as entry points to more serious offending) and whether offending becomes more serious.

A further constraint of NATSIS and NATSISS is that there was no non-Indigenous comparison group. A comparison group is necessary to understand differences between the two population groups, to identify the origins of Indigenous disadvantage and the inter-dependencies between socioeconomic conditions and offending (Hunter 2001).

Crime prevention implications

The data discussed in this paper has revealed that Indigenous offenders are particularly over-represented in acts intended to cause injury, public order offences, offences against justice and unlawful entry. It has also revealed that Indigenous offenders are younger than non-Indigenous offenders, have their first contact with the justice system at a younger age, and are more likely to be repeat offenders. High risk alcohol consumption is a significant risk factor, as is socioeconomic disadvantage. Risk factors around dispossession, colonisation and child removal are more difficult to measure, but are thought to have contributed to social disorganisation and an intergenerational cycle of violence. The development

and implementation of appropriate crime prevention programs to reduce Indigenous offending should be based on offending profiles and risk factors appropriate and relevant to offending by Indigenous peoples. While surprisingly few studies have explored factors that precipitate or sustain offending by Indigenous people, available evidence suggests that a multi-faceted strategy is required, addressing broader socioeconomic inequalities and incorporating community-level and criminal justice system responses.

Community-level responses

Improving access to and completion of formal educational qualifications, reducing unemployment, financial stress, welfare dependence and crowded housing should reduce Indigenous offending. While some socioeconomic indicators suggest improvement in conditions, Indigenous Australians remain seriously disadvantaged (SCRGSP 2009). It is beyond the scope of this article to review programs, but there are a range of community-based programs aimed at improving school attendance and performance, improving literacy and numeracy skills and providing apprenticeships resulting in employment (Cunneen 2001; Senate Select Committee 2009).

As alcohol abuse is strongly related to arrest, policy should aim to reduce alcohol consumption in Indigenous communities and provide adequate rehabilitation and support services (Hunter 2001; Senate Select Committee 2009). One approach, which has proved successful, assists Indigenous people to restrict the sale and distribution of alcohol (Senate Select Committee 2009; D'Abbs & Togni 2000). Evidence before Parliament regarding the Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek alcohol restrictions indicates that reducing access to alcohol also reduces community violence (Senate Select Committee 2009). Other community-based approaches aimed at reducing violence include community justice groups, night patrols, men's, women's and elders' support groups, women's shelters and alternative dispute resolution services (Cunneen 2001).

Given that Indigenous people have contact with the justice system at a younger age and are more likely to have sustained contact, early intervention

programs are appropriate (Dodson & Hunter 2006; Weston & Gray 2006). These programs promote positive youth development and prevent antisocial behaviour by intervening with at risk children and targeting risk and protective factors through parental training, home visiting, day-care/pre-school and home/community interventions (Farrington & Welsh 2003). While family and social factors are not readily amenable to policy intervention, early intervention programs have proved cost-effective for reducing offending by non-Indigenous populations (Aos, Miller & Drake 2006; Farrington & Welsh 2003). Where such programs include Indigenous youth, it is essential that they are culturally appropriate and Indigenous people are engaged and have control over how services are provided (Dodson & Hunter 2006).

Criminal justice system responses

The high rate of over-representation for public order offences suggests that changes to legislation, police and court practices may be necessary to avoid a disproportionate impact on Indigenous people. Policing public order offences is highly discretionary, influenced by the history of antipathy between police and some Indigenous communities as well as poor police practices such as over-policing. It has been suggested that several strategies are required, including legislative change to reduce the inequitable impact that police move-on powers have on disadvantaged people, improved training for police focused on how to engage with Indigenous people, and targets to reduce over-representation (QCOSS 2009). Offences against justice procedures include breaches of court orders which could be reduced by making the original orders more flexible, to accommodate for the circumstances of disadvantaged people (QCOSS 2009; Senate Select Committee 2009). Recent studies (Snowball and Weatherburn 2007, Jeffries and Bond 2009, Bond and Jeffries 2009) do not indicate that racial bias in sentencing plays a significant role in the over-representation of Indigenous people in prison, but increased penalties across the board may be having a particularly heavy impact on Indigenous people (Fitzgerald 2009).

There is also a need to ensure accessible diversion programs,

particularly for young offenders in remote areas and offenders with substance abuse problems or unstable housing arrangements (Joudo 2008). While diversion programs in Australia have traditionally removed young offenders from the justice system, several programs involve referral to services by justice system practitioners to address identified needs. Such programs have reduced offending overseas and should be beneficial given that many Indigenous offenders have contact with the system at a young age (Aos, Miller & Drake 2006). Programs aimed at diverting offenders with substance abuse problems into education and treatment should also reduce Indigenous offending given the strong relationship found between alcohol abuse and offending (Joudo 2008; Stokes 2009). However diversion programs for offenders with substance abuse problems must acknowledge the reality that many offenders will have multiple charges, previous criminal convictions, co-existing mental illness and be convicted of serious violent offences (Snowball & Weatherburn 2007).

Agencies responsible for the supervision of offenders should ensure adequate access to programs for disadvantaged offenders. Such programs include vocational and educational training, prison employment or work camps related to post-release employment, and supportive housing programs (Senate Select Committee 2009; QCOSS 2009). Culturally appropriate and accessible rehabilitation programs targeting substance abuse, family violence, anger management and sex offenders as well as provision of mental health services should also reduce offending by Indigenous people. Given the relationship between cultural identity or stolen generation and offending, programs such as therapeutic mental health programs to reconnect Indigenous people to culture, identity and country should also reduce offending (PSRG 2009; Senate Select Committee 2009). These rehabilitation programs are most effective at reducing offending when a culturally relevant, holistic approach is adopted, targeting the multiple needs of high risk offenders (Jones et al 2002).

Conclusion

It would be useful to have further information about self-reported offending. However the data now available is sufficient to conclude that Indigenous offenders typically have contact with the justice system for violent, public order or property related offences and there is some disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people incarcerated for traffic offences and offences against justice procedures. Indigenous offenders are typically male and are more likely to have sustained contact with the justice system from younger ages. Evidence suggests that Indigenous offending is related to socioeconomic conditions and community-level risk factors including alcohol abuse and violence.

Similarly, further information concerning risk and resilience factors on Indigenous offending trajectories would helpfully inform crime prevention efforts, but the evidence available is sufficient to conclude that crime prevention efforts will need to include measures to address socioeconomic inequalities, community level responses such as alcohol restrictions and early intervention programs, and individual focused programs to prevent reoffending. Investment in evaluation is required to identify which programs work, and effective programs should be resourced adequately. The criminal justice system should be continually scrutinised to eliminate direct or systemic discrimination and to ensure that imprisonment is used as a last resort. Finally, justice agencies need to work closely with Indigenous communities in planning and delivering crime prevention activities.

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