



“Who are the incarcerated women in Latin America?

Characteristics and gender inequality”

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Using data from “Inmate Surveys” carried out in eight Latin American countries, this article contributes to expand the knowledge about incarcerated women in the region. Findings show relevant gender differences with regard to criminal behavior and the level of social exclusion prior to incarceration. Women are involved in less violent crimes than men, have a shorter criminal career and act mostly accompanied, highlighting the importance of their dependence on the male figure. In addition, the social, economic, and family conditions of women before being admitted to prisons are more vulnerable than similar ones for men. The proportion of unemployment among women is higher, and the responsibility of child rearing relies on them. The article emphasizes the need to consider the particularities of incarcerated women when designing prison, re-entry, and crime prevention policies.

Keywords: incarcerated women; Latin America; gender inequality; vulnerability.