

## Psychosocial Factors Associated with Recidivism among Male Japanese Criminals in Offender Rehabilitation Facilities

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The aims of this dissertation were to ascertain both the socioeconomic and psychological factors predisposing ex-offenders to recidivism and to propose necessary support measures for the social reintegration of offenders coming out of offender rehabilitation facilities. The three studies verified the following hypotheses: (1) a form of criminal thinking exists specific to Japanese offenders; (2) certain criminological and psychosocial factors would be associated with Japanese recidivists, particularly residents at halfway houses—specifically, strong connections between recidivism and three psychological factors (i.e., criminal thinking, aggression, and SOC) would be expected; (3) gaps in the perception of issues and needs for the process of social reintegration would occur between offenders and others at offender rehabilitation facilities.

Japanese men, who had been placed under parole/probationary supervision or released from prison, in halfway houses served as participants. Most of the participants were in the early stage of release from prison and would leave halfway houses within the stipulated period (about two to three months, ranging between days and one year) to reenter society. Selection criteria were (1) sentenced with either paying a fine or to at least six months in prison; (2) assigned to the prison's general population (i.e., not assigned to a medical prison or a separate unit for mentally disabled inmates); and (3) sufficient language proficiency to complete the interview and questionnaire survey in Japanese.

In Study 1, the final sample of 116 Japanese men participated in the study and completed anonymous self-administered questionnaires. In Study 2, data for 96 Japanese men were included in the final analyses. The participants completed anonymous self-administered questionnaires. In Study 3, six former prisoners participated in semi-structured interviews individually for approximately one hour.

The interview was conducted to explore specific challenges and needs among former prisoners at facilities.

Study 1 revealed four dimensions in the 17-item Japanese Criminal Thinking Inventory (JCTI). The four dimensions were consisted of the following criminal thinking patterns: Discontinuity, Cutoff, Self-Deception, and Cognitive Indolence. The study also demonstrated high internal consistency and validity of the JCTI. In Study 2, having committed theft or drug-related crimes and sense of manageability had strong associations with recidivism. Study 3 revealed four issues participants had been facing.

The JCTI possesses an important implication for offender rehabilitation as it identifies specific criminal thinking patterns. It may be applied as part of a series of measurements to assess offender performance throughout their treatment process in the Japanese criminal justice system. Contrary to previous research that has emphasized social risk factors associated with recidivism, findings from Study 2 indicate that sense of manageability, a psychological or intra-individual factor, has a strong association with recidivism. Study 3 emphasizes the critical need for a “place” consisted of follow-up counseling and psychosocial assessment of each ex-offenders in social rehabilitation. Besides follow-up counseling, this dissertation suggests that the current situation for Japanese offender rehabilitation requires comprehensive reentry interventions. Particularly, it is necessary to provide an intensive program to achieve stress coping skills in meticulous preparation for strengthening sense of manageability and surviving the desistance process throughout the stay at offender rehabilitation facilities and even after release from the facilities.