

# Trends & Policies in Criminal Justice

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## Reentry of Juvenile Offenders at Training Schools in South Korea (III)

### Introduction

- It is of much significance to assist transition of incarcerated juvenile offenders into communities because it is closely related to their successful reintegration as well as reduction in recidivism.
- Internationally, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child clearly states that the fundamental goal of juvenile justice is their community reintegration. In addition, United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("the Beijing Rules") explicitly provides that juveniles shall be properly assisted to re-enter into the society at all stages of proceedings and at the different levels of juvenile justice administration.
- Active support is required to assist young offenders in detention so as to integrate into the community in accordance with relevant international conventions and rules.
- Criminal policies to provide assistance to reentry of juveniles would be more effective when they are formulated based on understanding of personal and environmental characteristics of juveniles as well as their needs. For this reason, it is required to figure out features of their transition prior to and after community reentry and conduct empirical research before establishing policies.
- It is a three-year research project (2017-2019) that involves collecting panel data of life situation after the release and social safety net. The study provides a review of the current circumstances of young offenders reentering the community and recommendations for future directions.

# Research Methods

## Literature review

- The study examines prior research in relation to the notion of reentry, recidivism of youth offenders after leaving custody and social reintegration.
  - The notion of reentry and the concept of reintegration in correctional practice
  - Recidivism rates of released juvenile offenders and their reentry
  - Analysis on the transition of juvenile offenders to society and resources for community integration

## Longitudinal survey

- A panel study on young offenders discharged from correctional facilities and juveniles on probation.

## In-depth interview

- Longitudinal in-depth interviews were conducted from 2017 to 2019 for the purpose of collecting information of case study on juvenile offenders released from custody. Those interviews helped to figure out any changes in behavior and attitude and relevant factors.
- Cross-sectional interviews were carried out with youth offenders discharged from the facilities, their guardian, and probation officers supervising them. Characteristics related to successful reintegration were examined.

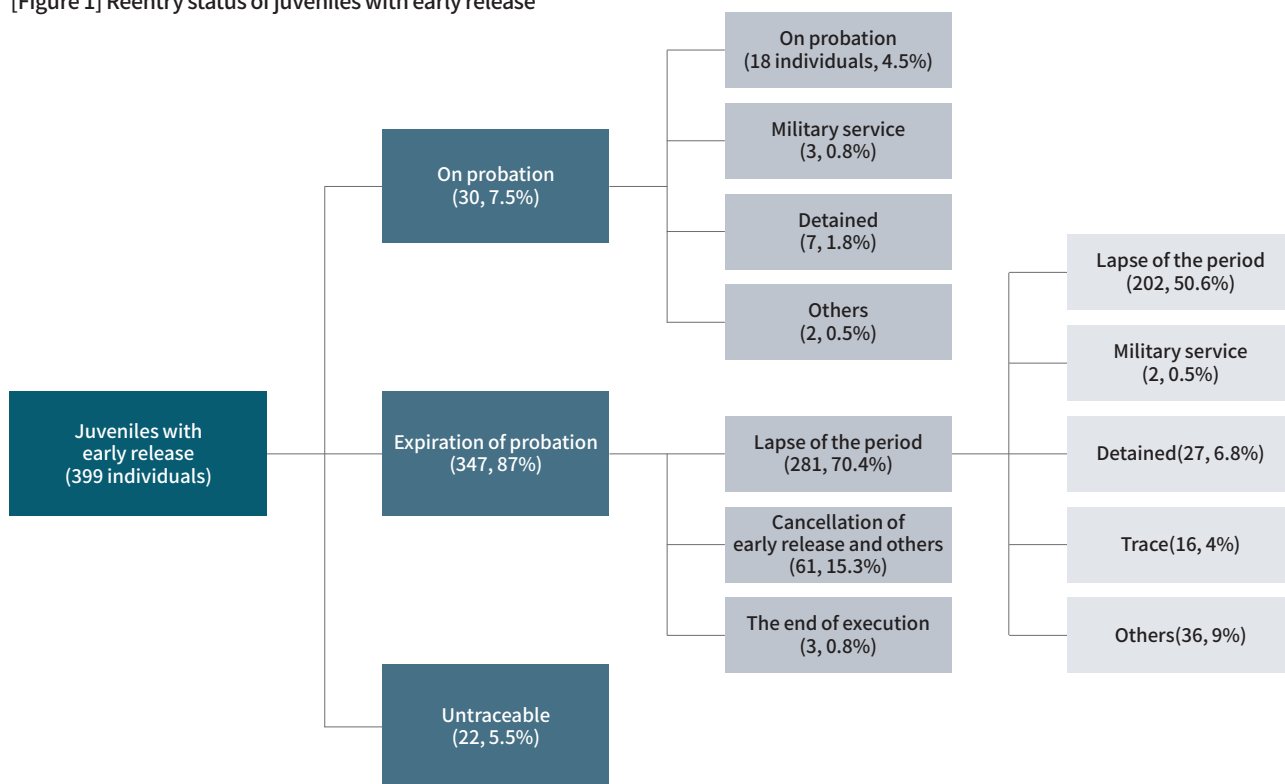
[Table 1] Overview of study design

	Juveniles in training schools		Juveniles on probation (comparison group)		
Survey design and survey participants	1st survey - May 18 to 31 2018 (9 youth correctional facilities) - participants: 533		- not applicable		
	2nd survey on juvenile offenders with early release - July to December 2018 - participants: 200		1st survey - July 9 to August 3 2018 (19 probation offices) - participants: 463		
	juvenile offenders without early release - October 2018 to March 2019 - participants: 170				
	3rd survey (only on juvenile offenders with early release) - December 2018 to April 2019 - participants: 170		2nd survey - February to March 2019 - participants: 263		
	4th survey (only on juvenile offenders with early release) - June to July 2019 - participants: 78		3rd survey - June to July 2019 - participants: 217		
	classification	contents		resource	
Survey contents and data collection	reentry factors	perception · attitude, law abidance, positive self-image, and accepting responsibility for crime		survey and documents	
		behavior	- preparation for vocation, GED or certificate - gambling, cyber delinquency, violent behavior - written warning, recidivism, changes in disposition		
	risk and protective factors	personal characteristics	- gender, age, education level - vulnerable to crime, self control, stress, risky and deviant lifestyles, strong religious spirit, high reliance on alcohol, suppression of negative emotion		survey
		family characteristics	- residence, primary guardians, attachment with parents, domestic abuse, living with family members		
		peer characteristics	- affiliation with deviant peers or pro-social ones		
		others	- negative stigma, the level of community safety, social assistance and support, personal attachment with probation officer		

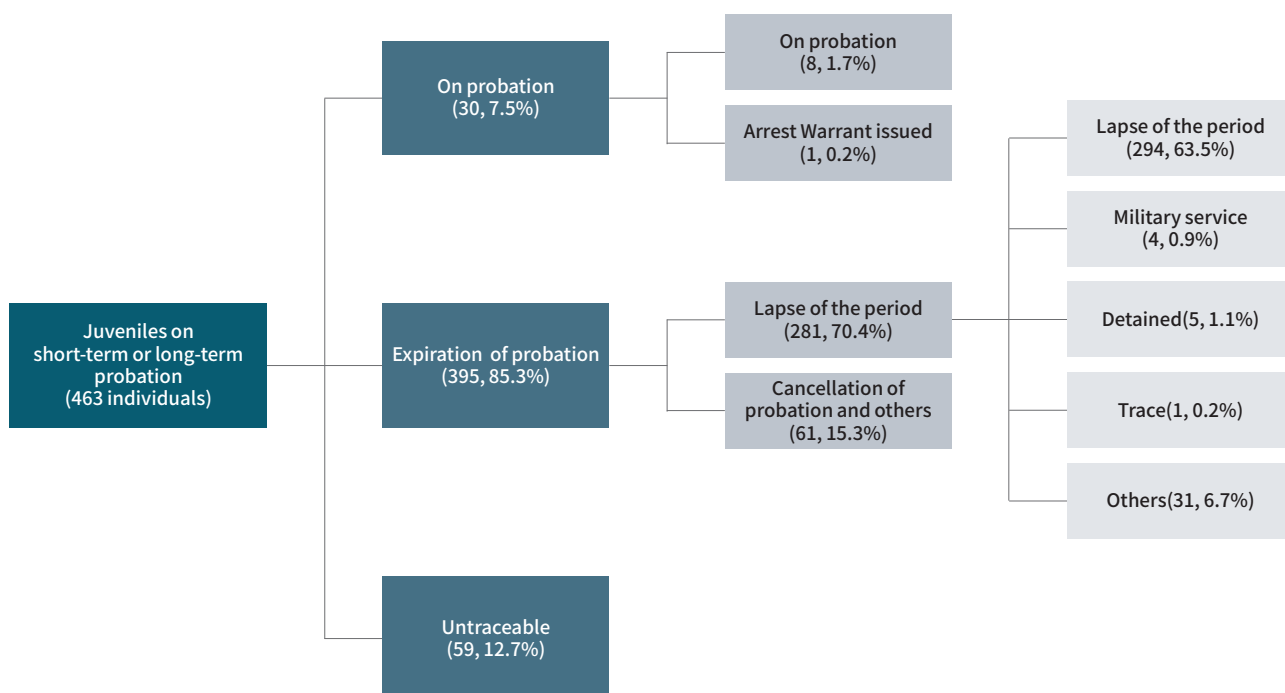
# Results

## Status of reentry

[Figure 1] Reentry status of juveniles with early release



[Figure 2] Reentry status of juvenile short-term or long-term probation



## **Comparison aspects of reintegration between those with early release and on probation**

- When it comes to perception/attitude factors, juveniles on probation showed higher level of law abidance but lower level of positive self-image than those of juveniles at correctional facilities. For behavioral factors, temporarily released juveniles were higher than those on probation in preparing for or earning certificates or their high school diploma. At the same time they showed higher risks of engaging in illegal activities, for example, gambling, delinquencies in cyberspace, or violence than those on probation. Regarding recidivism, one of behavior factors, the number of crimes by temporarily released juveniles outnumbered those on probation and the time to re offend of youths at correctional facilities was 2.3 times shorter than that of youths on probation. For written warnings the temporarily discharged youth received more written warnings than those on probation. They also showed higher frequency in warnings and shorter period of time to get a written alert when compared to the youth on probation.

## **Factors having impact on successful reentry into the community**

- a) Law abidance: law abidance increases when factors are reduced such as allure of crime, deviant acts, religious belief and contact with delinquent peers, and self-control and social assistance are stronger. b) Positive self-image: positive self-image is stronger in females than males, and it also increases when age, religious belief, suppression of negative emotions, contact with pro-social peers and social support rise while negative stigma decreases. c) Accountability: an increasing social support could grow a recognition of their offences. d) Interest for a job: juveniles with stronger religious belief, negative emotion suppression, affiliating with pro-social peers, living with family, high level of community safety or social support show a growing interest in a job. e) Preparation or acquisition of certificates or high school diploma: factors including gender, education level, affection with the facility officers, level of stress or alcohol dependence influence success in earning certificates or high school diploma.

- Males than females as well as juveniles with higher educational level, stronger attachment with parents, or loosen attachment with probation officer, or contacting more frequently with delinquent juveniles as well as pro-social peers were more likely to do gambling than others. Increase in vulnerability to crime, alcohol addiction, number of contacting delinquent peers was highly likely to lead to cyber delinquency. Like gambling, males were more prone to engage in deviant activities on the internet than females. For violent behavior, males than females, those with high level of vulnerability to crime or alcohol abuse, or frequencies of contacting not only delinquent peers but pro-social ones, weak control of negative emotions, or loosen relationship with probation officers showed increase in violence. Growing alcohol dependence and domestic abuse also became the cause of increase in receiving written warnings. For recidivism, males are more likely to recommit crimes than females. In addition, the younger juveniles were, the more they were vulnerable to crime or abuse, but the less security level of the community they lived, the higher the recidivism rate was. Any variables did not have significant effect on changes in disposition.

## **Analysis of networks**

- A survey was conducted on temporarily released juveniles to examine their personal networks before and after released from juvenile correctional facilities. First, no significant changes in the network's form and nature were not observed. Specifically, when it comes to personal relationship types, they placed much importance on relationship with peers or girlfriend or boyfriend than their bonding with family members. By analyzing the influence of the characteristics of the network on reintegration into the community, it was found that not the form of the network but the nature of the network influenced reintegration to some extent. In particular, when they had strong relationship with family members or teachers, they received more assistance or support, they developed more positive attitude of law abidance or they showed higher level of taking criminal responsibility. On the contrary, for released male juveniles, male dominated networks weaken the social and personal ties with others, and relationship with others who were much vulnerable to crime or lived

in the same neighborhood caused somewhat negative changes such as deviant activities in cyberspace, higher propensity toward violence, violation of conditions of probation, or recommitting crimes. Based on findings, the study found that the nature and characteristics of personal networks cause differences in juvenile offenders' levels of community integration.

## Policy Recommendations

### Recommendations for laws and systems

- The establishment of reentry programmes before and after the release
- The establishment of assistance mechanism for reintegration on the post-released young offenders
- The enactment of laws and regulations to systematize and facilitate the networks among organizations
- The provision of assistance for juvenile reintegration with the establishment of ordinances in local authorities
- The expansion of the networks for local communities' resources
- Dispatchment and allocation of dedicated staff and resources by the Ministry of Justice to assist reentry

### Reentry assistance within correctional facilities and communities

- Measures to assist reintegration of juvenile offenders into community may include introducing a systematic evaluation system for institutionalized juveniles, diversifying vocational training and connection of resources within community, helping to develop positive identity, self-esteem, and resilience, revitalizing family relations recovery programs and providing opportunities to visit local community support organizations and get necessary information on resources of the community where they would live after release. In addition, it is required to strengthen information sharing and cooperation between correctional facilities and probation offices, and enhance support for juveniles' reentry through a reintegration assistance system (so called guide for hope).
- It is also needed to establish a systematic resource link system at probation offices, keep balance

between supervision and monitoring, and support and resource linkage. In addition, customized supervision and assistance, use of coaching programs immediately after release, counseling and education for guardians should be enhanced.

### Reentry assistance in community

- The operation of a vocational training center and residence for helping independence in consideration of juvenile offenders' needs of characteristics
- The provision of a variety of vocational experiences to young criminals
- Downsizing juvenile detention facilities (the mid and long-term plans)

### Reentry assistance considering characteristics of each juvenile groups

- Assistance programs should be prudently formulated taking account of characteristics of female juveniles, those with mental problems such as mental illness, or "mixed-unstable" type juveniles.

## Expected Effects of the Policies

- This study would be helpful in clarifying necessities to provide assistance for juveniles' reintegration into community with longitudinal analysis of the change process and factors after custody
- It could be used as basic data to organize programs to help successful community reentry of confined juveniles or those on probation and to design guidance and supervision plans.
- Research outcomes of the study would be useful to formulate rehabilitative interventions for high risk juvenile offenders.
- Lastly, it could be referred to designing an upcoming survey for juvenile delinquency.

## Major Keywords

Juvenile offenders, Reentry, Longitudinal study, Community reintegration



## Memo

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**Change**  
Human Behaviors  
Community Response  
Social System