

# Low Motivation of Youth in 21st Century: A Case Study of The U.S., China, and Japan

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## ABSTRACT

The statistical data shows that more and more young adults are living with their parents instead of looking for their own job or future life. Old generations are saying that young people are losing the willing to fight. This paper will focus on the society, development, and problems of the U.S., China and Japan to find out the reason of this problem. This paper will compare and analyze the present situation between three state to show the general question of the world. The result shows that the unemployment and high housing price are being the main challenge for young group. As the international relationship develops, the globalization and COVID-19 becomes new problem.

**Keywords:** *Youth, globalization, social conditions, global challenge, Asian study*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As the new born of 21st century, the Millennium has got a close attention from the whole world. Some voices from the society are saying that they are the new hope of human beings. However, there are also different views that the new generations are showing unparalleled low motivations. This condition is making the society worried that human culture will gradually slides to collapse.

The problem of young people living on parents has been a global challenge since late 20st century. Every country has their own word for this group of new generation that are getting their own jobs or lives, but instead staying in a small room and depends the parents. The American media call them "boomerang child" while the Chinese call them "Kenlao", which means "eating parents". Some elder generations in Japan are disappointed with the young people born in Heisei period because they have no goal or motivation for the future.

According to the research, there are 36% young American adults (Age 18 -- 31) are living with parents in 2012. [1] Some of them have degrees and some not. Most youths in the western culture choose to live by themselves after graduate. It is a sign of being an independent adult. However, more and more young American adults cannot live in the society by themselves. A research shows that more than 1/3 of the Millennium in the U.S. are living with parents, which means about 21.6 million young American adults have problem with "life weaning." [2] Michigan State University did an investigation on 700 employers of graduates. Almost 1/3 of employers have seen the parents sent resume for their children and some of parents even did not tell the kids about the resume. 1/4 of employers have seen parents came in person to talk with the HR for kids'

job. Moreover, 4% of employers have seen parents came with their kids for the interview.[3] The parents of new generations are taking more and more work for the kids. At the same time, the young people have no motivation to find a job or work for their own life. They fail to be independent in the society.

It is not a unique instance, but has its counterpart. The young adult in Japan choose to stay in a small room that does not cost a lot rent for a long time. Those young generations only interested in animations or games but not real life. Beside this, the decadent group in China are also living with parents. Parents over 50 or 60 are still trying to find a job to support their kids. Although the kids are already in the work age, they cannot afford their own house or car. Those decadent young generations around the world are doing nothing for the society with low living motivation.

However, the public need to see the radical question behind this if the world wants to solve this problem. There are two kinds of decadent group. One appears in developed counter, the other one occurs in the developing country.[4] The U.S. and Japan would be the example of well-developed country while China is an example of developing countries. The difficulties youth in three states are much of a muchness but with little differences. This paper will analysis the U.S., China, and Japan as cases studies to find out the reason of the appearance of the decadent youth.

## 2. LONG-TERM CHALLENGE

The increasing of decadent boomerang child has been a global challenge for a long time and it will still remain for years. The first need is to know the challenge new generations are facing if the society want to let those

young men have their own life. The main problem here is a long-term challenge that also could be seen as a working challenge. The reasons that cause working challenge in three states are different because of different policy and developing process.

One of the biggest society problems of Japan is affecting young adults looking for jobs, which is called “ageing of population.” Here are two graphs of Japan:

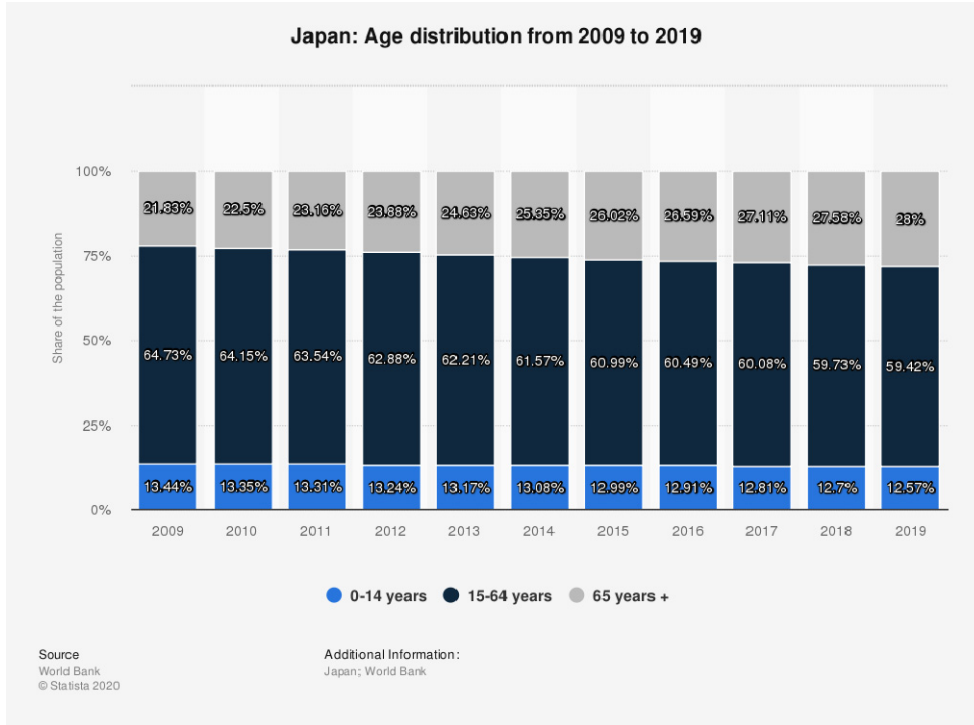


Figure 1. Japan: Age distribution from 2009 to 2019[5]

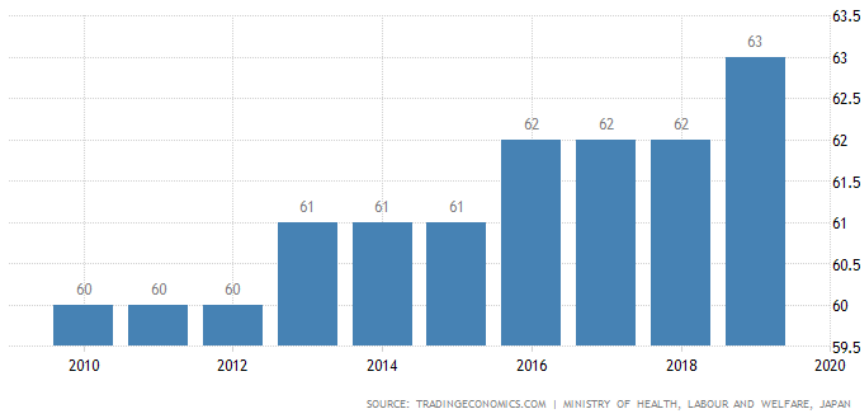


Figure 2. Japan: Retire age of Males[6]

Figure 1 is the age distribution of Japan in recent 10 years and graph 2 is the retire age of Japanese males. Graph 1 shows that the group over 65 is slowly increasing since 2009 and reach 28% in 2019. The population age 15 to 64 years has decreased from 64.73% to 59.42%. This result means there are more and more ageing people in the society but not young groups. Thus, the Japanese government is raising the retire age to keep the society work (see figure 2). In recent ten years, the retire age of Japanese workers has increased from 60 to 63, although it should be younger than 60 before 2010.

The raising of retire age means more elders are in the company now while young generations are looking for a job. The jobs in a company are limited, which means there will be less youth employed because the elders are still in the position. Even though some youths get into the company, promotion would be very difficult for them. Elder workers usually have more working experiences that could hold them onto the higher executive level. There are fewer high positions for young workers because the elder managers are not retiring. Thus, those young adults could

not see any chance to reach a higher level in their lives and then they lost the motivation to work hard.

Moreover, another problem of the developed country is social stratification. It is normal to see in a developed country that less people have more wealth. For example, a research shows that a hundred percent populations of United States are holding one third wealth of the nation.[7] Although the U.S. has got most of the new technology skills, the labor requirements has been decreased because the manufacture moved to the developing countries.[8] The requirements of professional knowledges and skills in a normal job is increasing, which means the young generations need to pay more attention on degrees than their parents. However, not everyone can get successes in an expert area. The Millennium of the U.S. is having trouble with getting a job. The result of unemployment is that young adults could not afford the daily outgoings in normal life or live independently.

Unlike the well-developed countries, China has a different cause of unemployment as a developing country. China is in the period of social transition that rapid urbanization is making more and more people move into the city.[9] More young adults try to get a college degree and change their lives in a big city. This trend is making the competition heavier for every young adult. At the same time, employers are seeing more and more fresh graduate from universities. The new situation would give employers a wrong impression that a lot of young adults with college degrees are looking for jobs. Thus, Chinese employers enhance their requirements of employees, which makes young people with no higher education experiences has no chance.[10] However, high requirements could not help college graduate students start careers easier either. According to the data, the rate of unemployment of university students in 2018 is 8.5% and the unemployment rate of graduates is 90%.[11] The devaluation of degrees makes more and more costs of life. As the rate of unemployment increase, the young Chinese come to know that their degrees are no longer an advantage in careers. On the other hand, the market is still under the last generations' control. For instance, Chinese young adults are having trouble with getting their own house because of the high prices. However, young group has no choice on the price problem because the price of houses is being

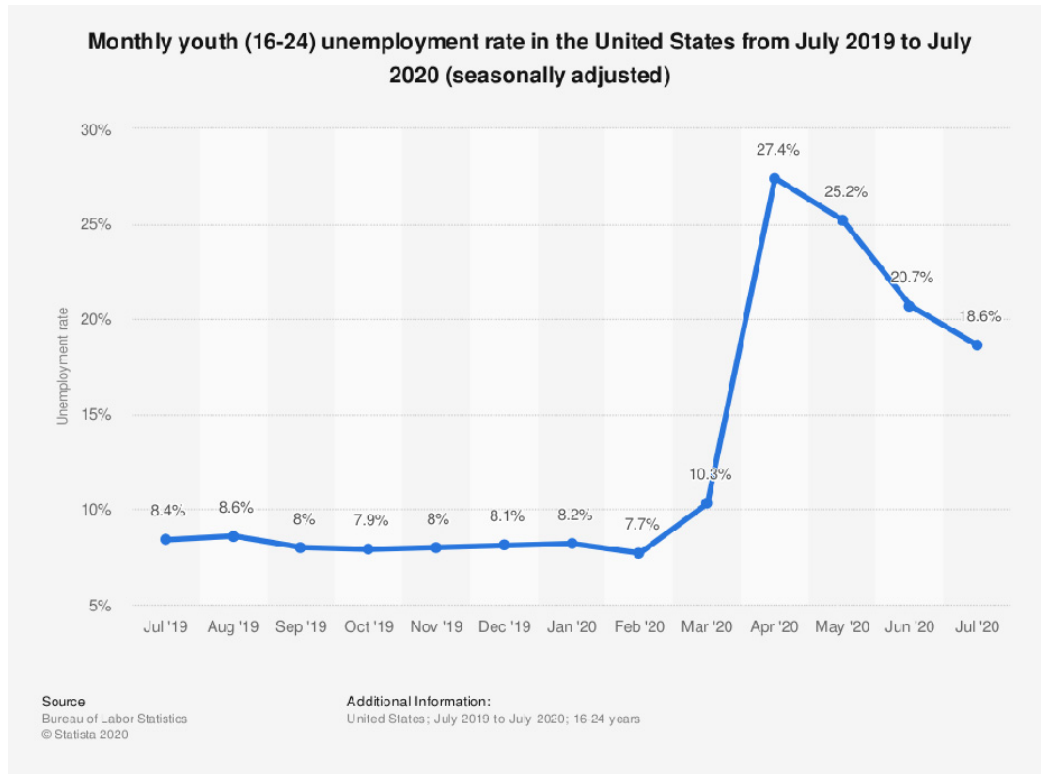
decided by the last generations. Thus, some of young group sees no hope in their lives. People realized that the degrees they get after hard working so many years are not as worthy as they thought anymore. Then, young generations would have no motivation to work for life.

### **3. NEW CHALLENGE**

As the world keeps changing all the time, the situation of this problem is also changing with the new events. The new policies of three states show that the governments and global organizations are trying their best to help with the unemployment problem. However, there are more questions coming out while the old questions are in the process of disappearing. One of them is the globalization, and the other one is COVID-19 in 2020.

The globalization is making an intense competition for young generations looking for jobs. As the technology develops and the economic boundaries, the working skills of a young adult is going to be put into a broader group that countians competitors from different states with different backgrounds. It is clear that not so much people have enough confidence to be outstanding enough when an employer is comparing new employees with almost 6.5 billion populations from the whole world.[12] The globalization gives youth a chance to find jobs out of their own countries, but also make young generations compete with more people from different states. One the other hand, the globalization is also making the companies expand abroad that bring out the working chances. Thus, young generations would have more living pressure than their parents because of the globalization.

Another new problem happened in 2020 is a virus called COVID-19. It has made most of states shut down and stop all activities. Big businesses might go through this disaster, but not small firms. Many restaurants and hotels have been closed down during the shutdown period of the country. However, the big businesses have no income either that they could not afford normal outgoings as usual. Thus, one of the methods to decrease the outgoing is to cut down the salary or reduce the staff. Here is a statistic unemployment rate of American youth from 2019 to 2020.



**Figure 3.** Monthly youth (16-24) unemployment rate in the United States from July 2019 to July 2020 (Seasonally adjusted) [13]

The figure shows that the rate of unemployment rises sharply from March to April, which is the time of the virus outbreak. Twice more young adults lost their job in this epidemic situation. This effect will not be a short-term question because the market needs time to recover. Although the data is decreasing on the graph and reach 18.6% in July, the rate is still higher than normal data that around 8%. The more living pressure COVID-19 brings, the more youths need to live on parents and lost their motivation to worker harder.

**4. SOLUTION**

Working problem and living pressure might haunted young generations in 21st century, however, there is always a way to get out of the dilemma. There are two main solutions that the governments could use to help with those poor young generations.

First, the globalization might bring out the working chances, but also bring in the new knowledges and skills. As an island country that depends on the export and import, the Japanese youths have more chance to learn the newest technologies and skills. Those new skills might give young generations different experiences that could start a new career. Another good thing that globalization brings is that young generations might find new international business to make money but not only depends on traveling or studying abroad. The more communication states have, the more

needs in the market would appear. Then there would be new industrial chain that offer jobs.

Another thing the governments could do is to improve the basic education. Education would help young adults compete in their life. On the one hand, higher education gives youth a chance to get away from lower class they from and helps youth get into a higher class. Education helps young generations get the wealth they want and gives them hope that they could also reach a higher level in the society. The wealth of a nation is no longer take in control by a few people or last generations. Young generations would see a way to have a new life different from parents and believe in hard-working again. On the other hand, the more citizens get educated, the more technologies will be created. Once the new technology got created, there will be a new job.

**5. CONCLUSION**

The problem of young generations in 21st century have no motivation has been a global challenge for years. The development of the world after WWII is unbelievable rapid. It makes elders think their experiences of life could help young groups. However, the world has already be different from their time. Young generations are facing more pressures from the life and jobs because of the national conditions and globalization. The COVID-19 outbreaking in 2020 also makes the problem worse. The society needs

to find out the real reason that young generations lost the motivation of life and fix this problem. Otherwise, more and more young adults will have trouble to live independently on the society.

Fortunately, the globalization is bringing both troubles and benefits. At the same time, the governments and international organizations are trying to help young people by making new policies or give young adults some welfares. Thus, young generations would like to find a way out of the dilemma as long as they see the hope or motivation to work for. When more and more young adults choose to believe in hard-working but not live depends on parents, this challenge would be solved.

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