

## 2000-1 Text 4

1- Aimlessness has hardly been typical of the postwar Japan whose productivity and social harmony are the envy of the United States and Europe.

But increasingly the Japanese are seeing a decline of the traditional work-moral values.

Ten years ago young people were hardworking and saw their jobs as their primary reason for being, but now Japan has largely fulfilled its economic needs, and young people don't know where they should go next.

2- The coming of age of the postwar baby boom and an entry of women into the male-dominated job market have limited the opportunities of teenagers who are already questioning the heavy personal sacrifices involved in climbing Japan's rigid social ladder to good schools and jobs.

In a recent survey, it was found that only 24.5 percent of Japanese students were fully satisfied with school life, compared with 67.2 percent of students in the United States.

In addition, far more Japanese workers expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs than did their counterparts in the 10 other countries surveyed.

3- While often praised by foreigners for its emphasis on the basics, Japanese education tends to stress test taking and mechanical learning over creativity and self-expression.

“Those things that do not show up in the test scores - personality, ability, courage or humanity - are completely ignored,” says Toshiki Kaifu, chairman of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party’s education committee.

“Frustration against this kind of thing leads kids to drop out and run wild.”

Last year Japan experienced 2,125 incidents of school violence, including 929 assaults on teachers.

Amid the outcry, many conservative leaders are seeking a return to the prewar emphasis on moral education.

Last year Mitsuo Setoyama, who was then education minister, raised eyebrows when he argued that liberal reforms introduced by the American occupation authorities after World War II had weakened the “Japanese morality of respect for parents.”

4- But that may have more to do with Japanese life-styles.

“In Japan,” says educator Yoko Muro, “it’s never a question of whether you enjoy your job and your life, but only how much you can endure.”

With economic growth has come centralization; fully 76 percent of Japan’s 119 million citizens live in cities where community and the extended family have been abandoned in favor of isolated, two-generation households.

Urban Japanese have long endured lengthy commutes (travels to and from work) and crowded living conditions, but as the old group and family values weaken, the discomfort is beginning to tell.

In the past decade, the Japanese divorce rate, while still well below that of the United States, has increased by more than 50 percent, and suicides have increased by nearly one-quarter.

**23. In the Westerner’s eyes, the postwar Japan was \_\_\_\_\_.**

[A] under aimless development

[B] a positive example

[C] a rival to the West

[D] on the decline

**24. According to the author, what may chiefly be responsible for the moral decline of Japanese society?**

[A] Women's participation in social activities is limited.

[B] More workers are dissatisfied with their jobs.

[C] Excessive emphasis has been placed on the basics.

[D] The life-style has been influenced by Western values.

**25. Which of the following is true according to the author?**

[A] Japanese education is praised for helping the young climb the social ladder.

[B] Japanese education is characterized by mechanical learning as well as creativity.

[C] More stress should be placed on the cultivation of creativity.

[D] Dropping out leads to frustration against test taking.

**26. The change in Japanese life-style is revealed in the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.**

[A] the young are less tolerant of discomforts in life

[B] the divorce rate in Japan exceeds that in the U.S.

[C] the Japanese endure more than ever before

[D] the Japanese appreciate their present life