



LTCB International Library Trust/International House of Japan

A
Nagging
Sense of
Job The New Reality
Facing Japanese Youth
Insecurity

Genda Yūji

*Associate Professor,
Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo*

Translated by Jean Connell Hoff

Contents

Preface to the English Edition . ix

Prologue 1

Nagging insecurity / Young people's problems overlooked /
Voluntary or involuntary? / Transforming uncertainty
into risk

Chapter 1 9

THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF JOB INSECURITY

The job insecurities of middle-aged and older white collar
workers / The actual state of unemployment by age and
schooling / Unemployment among high school grads more
serious than among college grads / The future of the labour
market / "Unemployed" and "not in the labour force" /
Will the unemployment rate go down? / A country where
only one out of every two works

The data speak

Why will only one out of two Japanese be working in 2050?

Chapter 2 29

THE "PARASITE SINGLE" EXPLANATION

Worsening youth employment / What is a "parasite single"? /
 Misperceptions about youth unemployment / The repercussions
 of an aging workforce / Employment practices and the labor
 market / The entrenched vested rights of middle-aged and older
 workers / No hope for the future

The data speak

The graying workforce and hiring trends

Chapter 3 51

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FREETERS

An evil government plot? / The "seven-five-three" turnover
 rate / The labour market's "cohort effect" / Vocational
 guidance at the crossroads / Are freeters really the problem?

The data speak

Behind the "seven-five- three" phenomenon

Chapter 4 73

AVERTING THE CLASH OF GENERATIONS

Reservations about abolishing mandatory retirement /
 The current state of the mandatory retirement system /
 The mandatory retirement system and hiring / Classifying
 companies that have raised their retirement age / Is it
 possible to revise the right of dismissal?

The data speak

Raising the mandatory retirement age and hiring plans

Chapter 5

95

THE INCOME GAP AND THE JOB GAP

Wage disparity and a mounting sense of inequality / Is the gap widening? / Performance-based pay and perceptions of disparity / The job gap as seen from the perspective of working hours / Job change, part-time work, and a dual labour market

Chapter 6

113

**PERFORMANCE-BASED PAY AND A SENSE OF PURPOSE
IN ONE'S WORK**

How are ability and work talked about? / Conditions for implementing a performance-based system / A "training-type" performance-based system / A performance-based system and hope for the future / Changes that can be implemented right away / The day "*batteki*" loses its meaning

The data speak

Performance-based pay and the incentive to work

Chapter 7

131

CONDITIONS FOR A HAPPY JOB CHANGE

Why job changes among middle-aged and older workers are unhappy / Stayers and leavers / Stayers' and leavers' outlook on life / The key to a happy job change / Human relations outside the workplace / Between the individual and the community / A harsh conclusion?

The data speak

Finding a new job, going into business for oneself and the importance of friends and acquaintances