Since the 1960s, the number of the population of children in Japan has decreased drastically due to a considerable decline in its birthrate. The birthrate of children of ages between 0 and 14 years old in Japan was at 20% in the 1960s. It fell drastically to 10% in the 1990s and further decreased to 13.5% in 2007. Naturally, the number of people of university entrance age (18 years old) has also continued to decline. As a result, 47.7% of private universities are already under their enrollment capacity, although university enrollments have shown a marginal increase because of an increased rate of population who obtain college education.

The decreasing birthrates have resulted in a decrease in the number of junior high schools and high schools. The number of junior high schools decreased by 2.8% from 11,275 in 1990 to 10,955 in 2007, and the number of high schools decreased by 3.5% from 5,506 to 5,313. This in turn caused a decline in the number of teaching staff, especially in the number of health and physical education instructors, which decreased by 28.7% from 34,300 in 1989 to 24,800 in 2004 in middle schools, and by 18.9% from 22,700 to 19,100 in high schools. As a result, the market for education of health and physical education instructors, which had become the main platform for the existence of sports universities, has shrunk considerably.

Despite increasingly low birthrates, the number of universities has continued to grow. The number of private universities increased by 23% from 478 in 2000 to 589 in 2008, and even the total number of universities increased by 18% from 649 to 765. This can be caused by the "Revised Standards for Establishing a University" published by the Ministry of Education in 1991.