

Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on the Lives of Foreign Citizens

There are 6,072 foreign citizens living in Toyonaka City (as of June 30, 2021).

South Korea / Korea	China	Vietnam	Philippines	India	United States	Other
1,881	1,660	797	289	149	149	1,147

Permanent resident	Special permanent resident	Student	Engineer/Specialist in humanities/International services	Dependent (Family stays)	Other
1,651	1,437	516	472	418	1,578

Toyonaka City and the Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis (ATOMS) conducted a survey to find out how COVID-19 affected the lives of foreign residents in the city and what challenges they were facing.

A questionnaire survey (July to August 2021) and interviews (August to December 2021) were conducted to explore what Toyonaka City and ATOMS would be able to do to make the life easier for foreign residents.

Questionnaire survey

We conducted a survey to find out how COVID-19 affected the lives of foreign residents and what challenges they were facing.

We contacted 2702 foreign residents who reside in Toyonaka City, who were 18 years of age or older, and with the status of residence other than "Special Permanent Resident" or "Permanent Resident."

★ The questionnaire was sent by mail from Toyonaka City.

There were three ways to answer the questionnaire.

- (1) Answer the online questionnaire from the dedicated website.
- (2) Fill out the questionnaire (hard copy).
- (3) Give answers orally to staff members of the Toyonaka International Center.

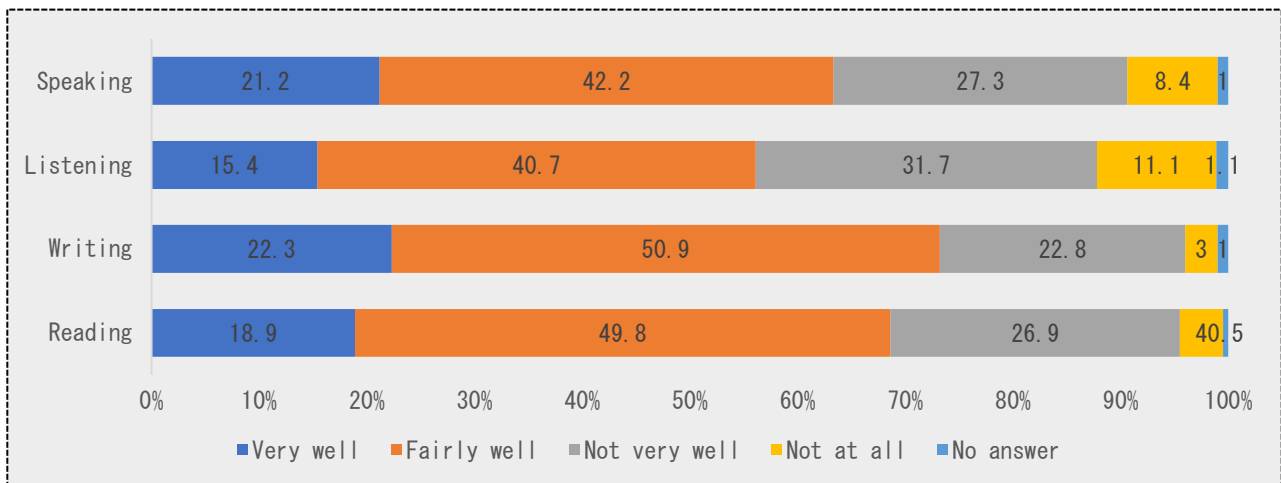
Of those contacted, 631 people responded (23.7%).

1. Japanese Language Proficiency

The most common answer was that they were "mostly proficient" in all of "speaking", "listening", "writing", and "reading".

The combined percentages of those who answered "mostly proficient" and "very proficient" were 73.2% for "listening", 68.7% for "speaking", 63.4% for "reading", and 56.1% for "writing".

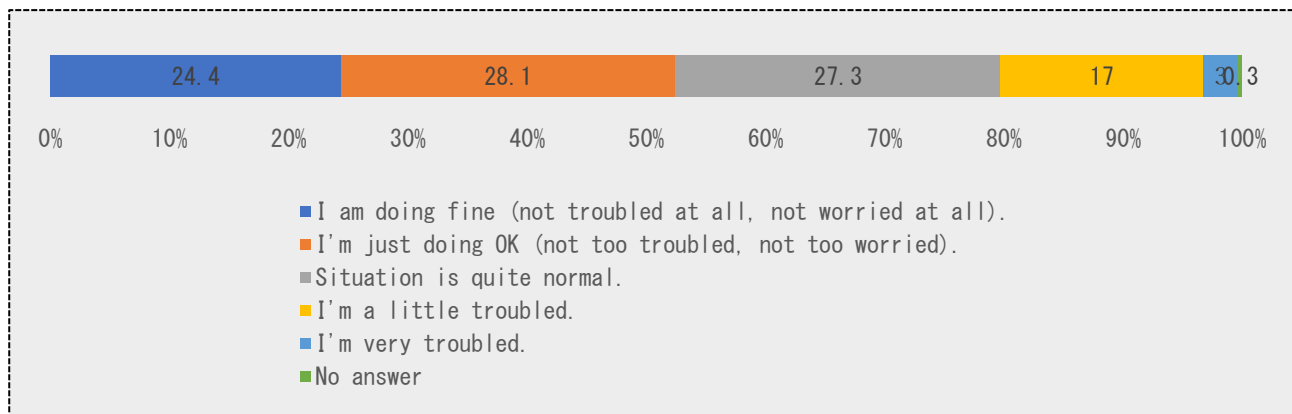
Q. Please tell us about your level of Japanese language proficiency. Please choose for each of the categories "Speaking," "Listening," "Writing," and "Reading" the answer that best applies to you. (All respondents n=631)



2. Living Expenses

Twenty-eight point one percent (28.1%) of the respondents chose "generally okay (not much trouble, not worried)", 27.3% chose "as usual", 24.4% chose "okay (not at all troubled, not worried at all)," 17.0% chose "somewhat troubled," and 3.0% chose "very much troubled".

Q. Are you currently having trouble making ends meet? (All respondents n=631)

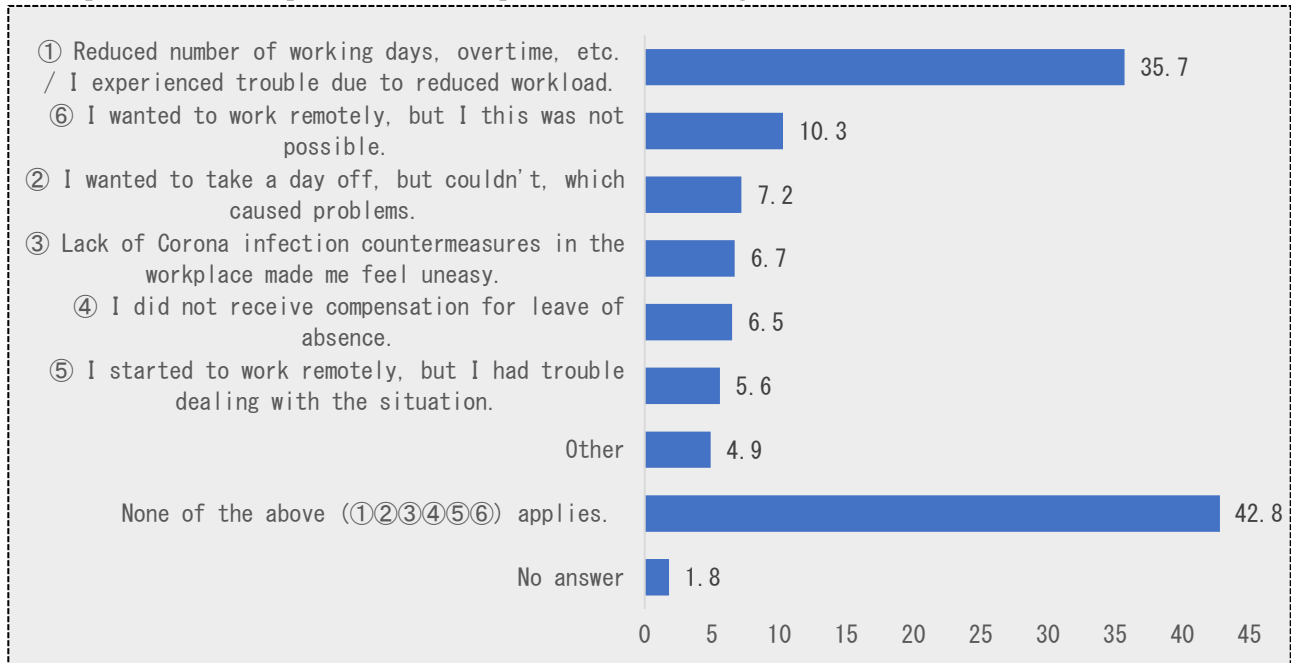


3. Changes in Work due to COVID-19

Of those who have a job, a total of 55.4% experienced some changes due to COVID-19, with 35.7% saying, "1) The number of working days and overtime work decreased, and I had trouble due to less work," 10.3% saying "6) I wanted to work from home but couldn't," and 7.2% saying "2) I wanted to take days off but couldn't".

Q. Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), have you, with regard to your job, experienced any of the following? Please select the statements that apply to you.

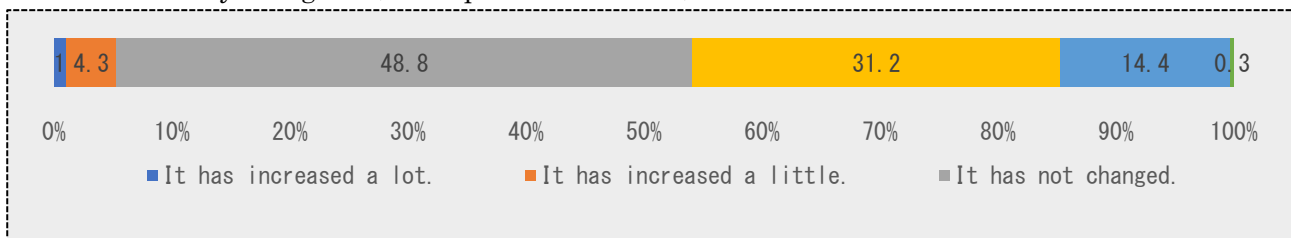
(Multiple answers are possible.) People who are working (n=446) (%)



4. Income Changes due to COVID-19

Forty-eight point eight percent (48.8%) said their income "stayed the same", 31.2% said it "declined a little," 14.4% said it "declined significantly," 4.3% said it "increased a little," and 1.0% said it "increased significantly."

Q. Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), has your or your household's salary changed? (All respondents n=631)

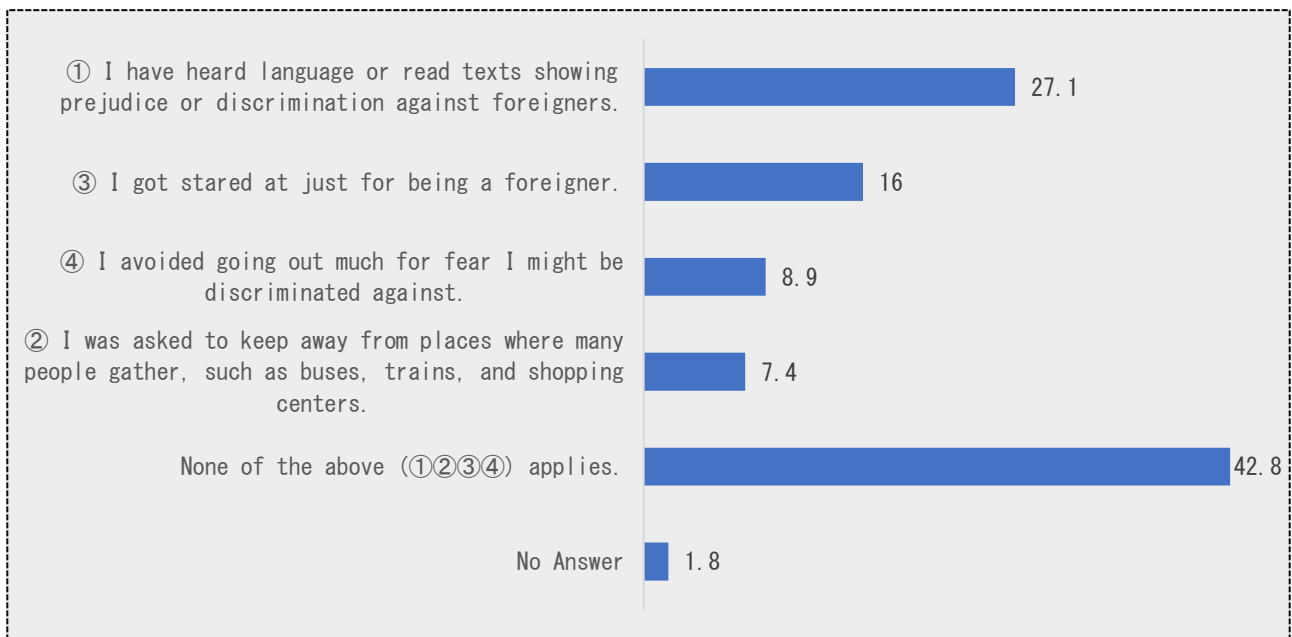


5. Change (Discrimination) due to COVID-19

Forty point three percent (40.3%) said that they experienced changes during the pandemic, with 27.1% saying they "1) heard words or saw texts of prejudice or discrimination against foreigners," 16.0% saying they "3) were stared at because they were foreigners," and 8.9% saying they "4) did not go out much because they might be discriminated".

Q. Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), have you, with regard to you or your family, ever experienced any of the following?

[About discrimination.] (Multiple answers are possible.) All respondents (n=631) (%)



6. Concerns and Burden of Child Rearing

We asked those living with children younger than 18 about their concerns and burdens of child rearing. Fifteen point one percent (15.1%) were "very concerned/burdened" and 29.6% were "somewhat concerned/burdened".

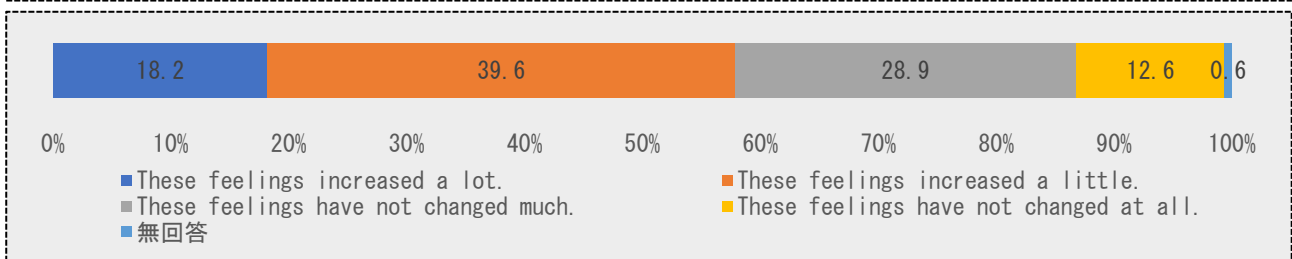
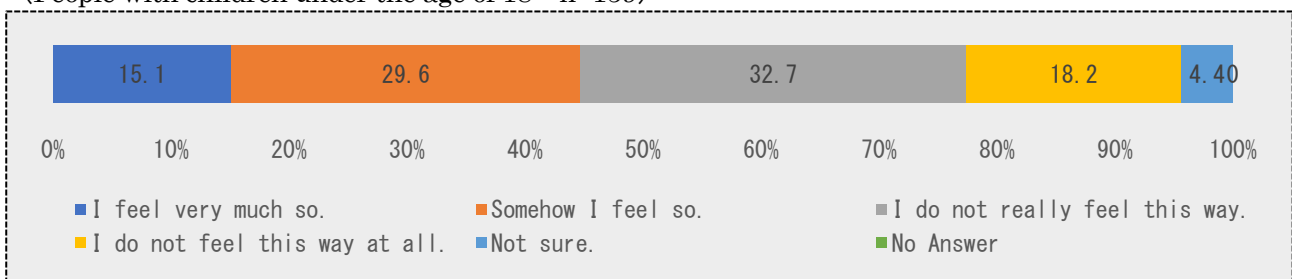
In total, about 44.7% of respondents were concerned or burdened about raising their children.

Eighteen point two percent (18.2%) of the respondents felt their concern and burden "increased significantly" and 39.6% felt it "increased slightly" during the pandemic.

In total, 57.8% said their anxiety and burden increased.

Q. Do you ever feel anxious, overwhelmed, or burdened by the challenges of raising your child/children? Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), has your feeling anxious, overwhelmed, or burdened by the challenges of raising your child/children changed?

(People with children under the age of 18 n=159)

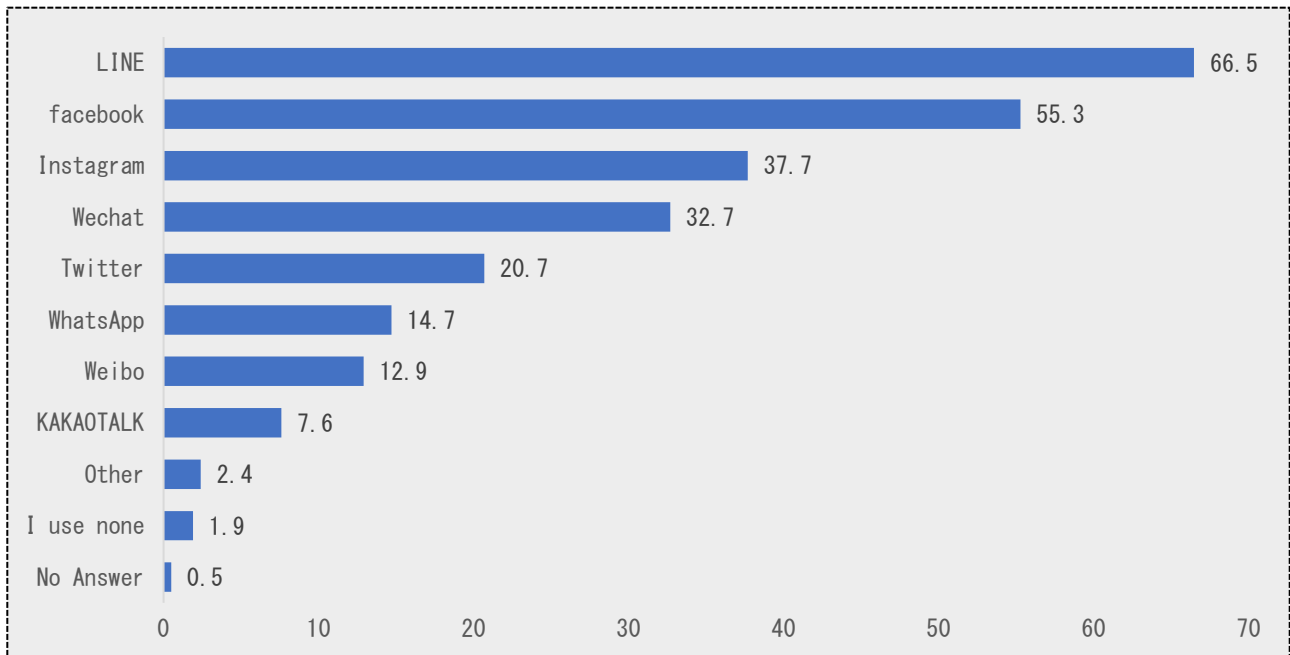


7. Use of Social Networking Services (SNS)

To those who have PCs and smartphones, we asked what social networking services (SNS) they use most often. The most common one was "LINE" (66.5%) followed by Facebook (55.3%), Instagram (37.7%) and WeChat (32.7%).

Q. Which social network services (SNS) do you use most often? (Multiple answers are possible.)

People who have information and communication equipment (n=618) (%)



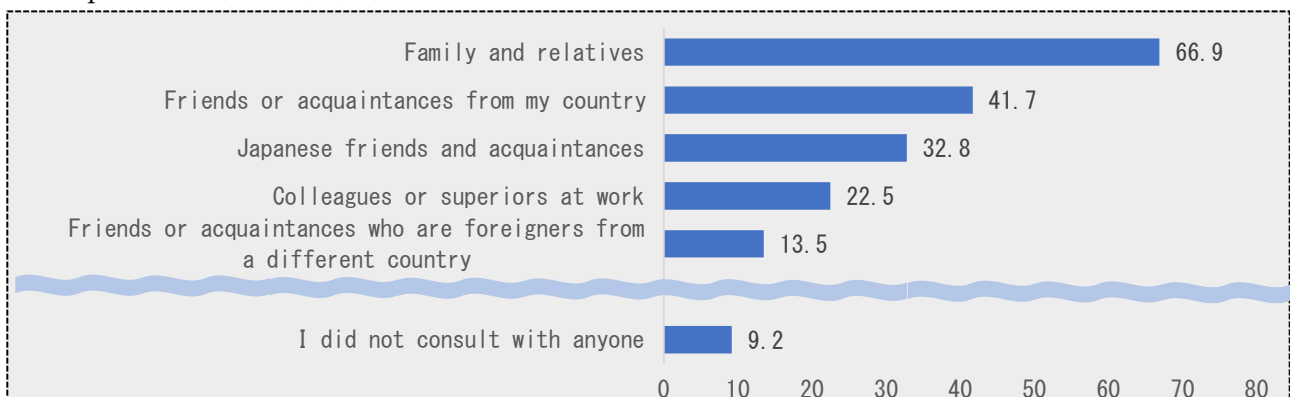
8. Whom to Talk to about Concerns and Worries

The most common answer was "family and relatives" (66.9%) followed by "friends or acquaintances (from the same country)" (41.7%), "Japanese friends or acquaintances" (32.8%), "colleagues or superiors at work" (22.5%), and "friends or acquaintances (foreigners but from different countries)" (13.5%).

Nine point two percent (9.2%) said they did not consult anyone.

Q. Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), who did you consult with when you were worried or concerned? (Multiple answers are possible.)

All respondents (n=631) (%)



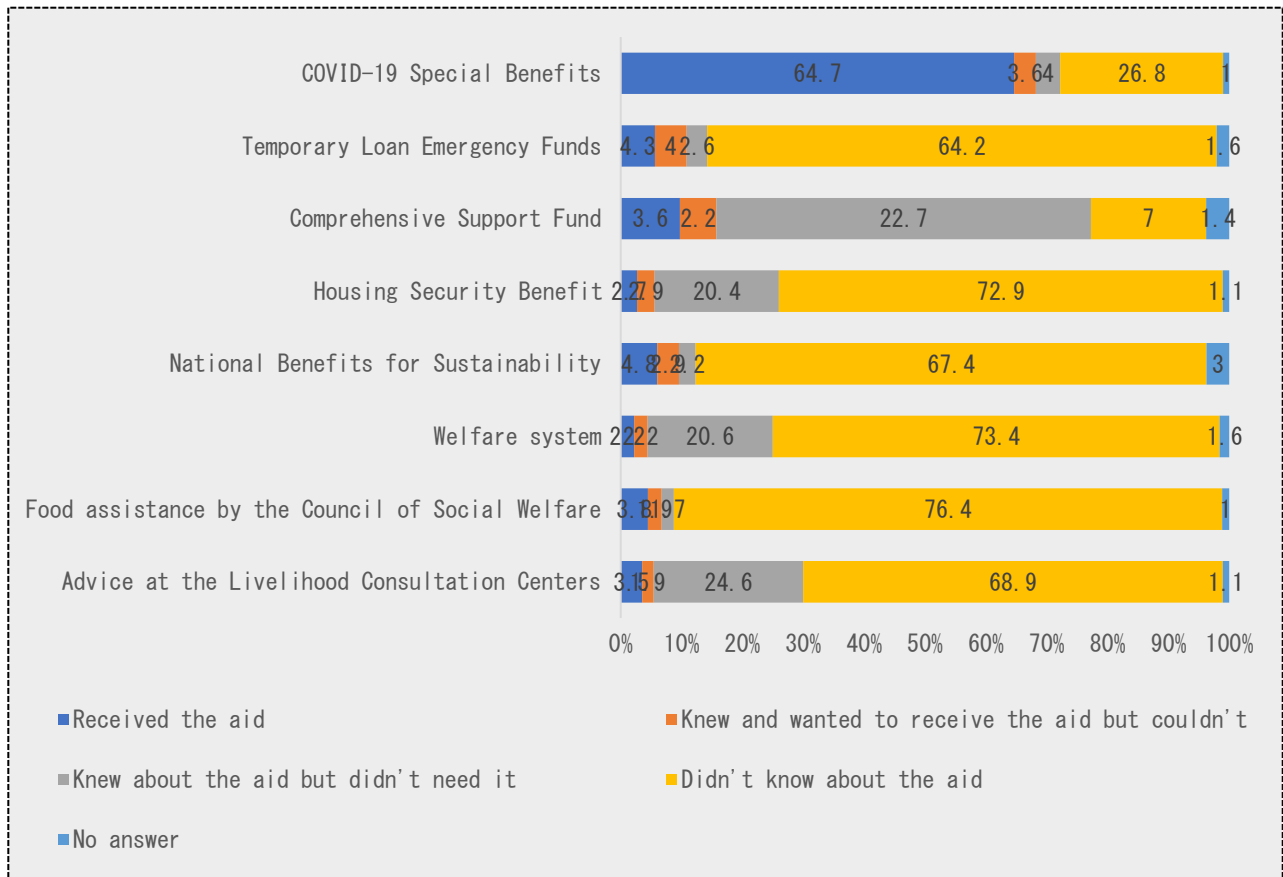
9. Use of Public Assistance

Sixty-four point seven percent (64.7%) said they "used" the special fixed-amount benefit (tokubetsu teigaku kikufukin; 100,000 yen cash benefit per person distributed by the government).

More than 50% of respondents "did not know" about other public support.

Less than 5% of the respondents used other public assistance.

Q. Since the increase in the number of people affected by Corona (from February 2020), have you used any of the following forms of public assistance? (All respondents n=631)

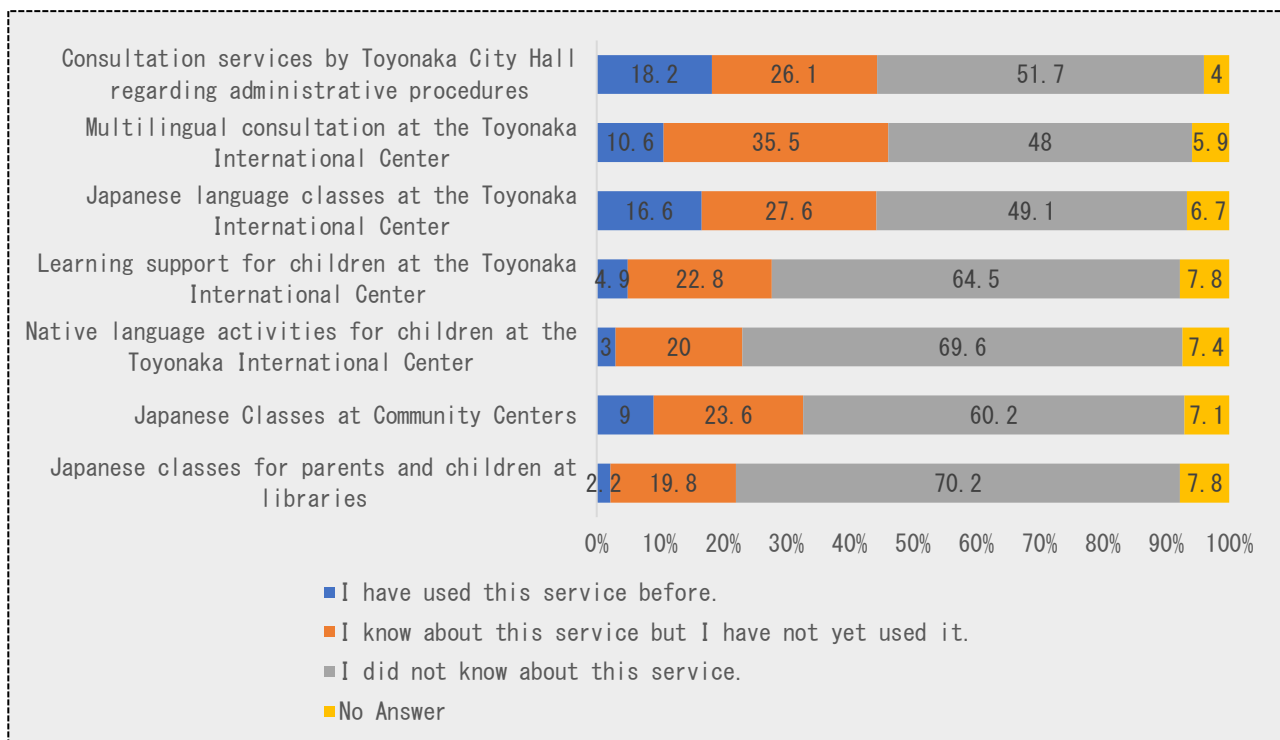


10. Knowledges about Services Provided by the City and the International Center.

Forty-six point one percent (46.1%) of the respondents knew "2) multilingual consultation at the International Centers as they either "have used it" or "know about it but have never used".

Forty-four point three percent (44.3%) knew about "1) consultation on administrative procedures at the City Hall" and 44.2% knew about "3) Japanese language classes at the International Centers".

Q. Please tell us what you know about the services provided by Toyonaka City Hall and the Toyonaka International Center. (All respondents n=631)



2. Outline of the Interview Results

★We interviewed foreign residents of Toyonaka City who were 18 years of age or older (57 people) as well as administrative counselors of Toyonaka City (4 people), counselors of Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis (ATOMS) (2 people), and multilingual staff members of ATOMS (7 people).

★In order to prevent the spread of infection, many countries have restricted the departure and entry of people from and into their countries.

Many were unable to return to their home countries or re-enter Japan after returning home.

There was significant impact.

★Many people obtained information from TV and other media, as well as from the Internet about the COVID-19, grants, benefits, and other support.

Many also obtained information from their family members, friends, and colleagues and superiors at work.

ATOMS also provided a lot of information in multiple languages.

Since the information was sent out in multiple languages many times, some people commented that they felt close to Toyonaka City and ATOMS, and that they felt at ease.

★On the other hand, many people had trouble finding out how to get information that was relevant to them and about support.

★ Before the pandemic, there were many opportunities for foreigners to get together, but such opportunities diminished during the pandemic. Many people said they were not able to get information

as there were much less opportunities to meet other foreigners.

★Some received information about different support, but were concerned that receiving such support might have a negative impact on their visa status or naturalization. Some decided not to receive support.

★When foreigners live in Japan, there are many anxieties and burdens due to differences in language, culture, and customs. There were many anxieties and burdens even before the pandemic, but many people said that the pandemic increased their anxieties and burdens and that they had more things to worry about because they were foreigners. Some of them said that the pandemic helped them because they had less interaction with Japanese people.

3. Support of the Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis (ATOMS)

The Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis (ATOMS) offers many programs for foreigners living in the community.

There are multilingual consultation services, places for children and youth and academic support for them, and Japanese language classes.

Please check our website, Facebook, and LINE for information.

<Editorial/Publisher>

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