

Report

What Impacts is the COVID-19 Crisis Having on Work and Daily Life?

—From the Results of “Survey on the Impact that Spreading Novel Coronavirus Infection has on Work and Daily Life” (May 2020 Survey)

I. Introduction

COVID-19 continues to rage on. The government issued a “declaration of state of emergency” for 7 prefectures on April 7, 2020, and then expanded it to cover all prefectures on April 17. “Emergency Economic Measures to Cope with COVID-19” were approved through a Cabinet decision on April 7 (and subsequently amended on April 20). They included further expansion of the Employment Adjustment Subsidy’s special measure¹ and financial measures, payment of “sustainability benefits” for SMEs, and cash handouts of 100,000 yen to all citizens. Later, requests were made to refrain from nonessential and non-urgent outings and to suspend business as well as to reduce 70% of employees going to work until the declaration was later completely rescinded on May 25. These requests had a major impact on the public’s daily living. JILPT (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training) conducted a questionnaire survey “Survey on the Impact that Spreading Novel Coronavirus Infection has on Work and Daily Life” (hereinafter referred to as the “May Survey”) via online screens that targeted “employees of private enterprises” and “freelance workers” to ascertain the degree to which the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to control it are affecting work and daily life based on the circumstances of the virus’s spread during this time and the progress of government-implemented countermeasures (see the box below). The survey is conducted as a joint research project

with RENGO-RIALS (Rengo Research Institute for Advancement of Living Standards). This report summarizes its main findings.²

The COVID-19 pandemic in Japan and main measures taken by the government

- Mid-January: Confirmation of the first COVID-19 cases in Japan.
- January 30: Establishment of the government’s Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters
- February 13: Compilation of the government’s “emergency measures concerning the novel coronavirus infectious disease” (followed by a second round of emergency measures on March 10) and implementation of special measures for the Employment Adjustment Subsidy (EAS), etc.
- February 25: Formulation of the government’s “basic policy for countermeasures against the novel coronavirus pandemic” (later revised into Basic Policies for Novel Coronavirus Disease Control on April 7)
- February 27: Request for temporary closure of all elementary schools, junior high schools and senior high schools as well as special needs education beginning on March 2
- Mid-March: Number of cases in Japan reaches

March 13:	1,000. Passage and enactment of a reform bill for the Amendment of the Act on Special Measures for Pandemic Influenza and New Infectious Diseases Preparedness and Response (enforcement from the following day)
End of March:	Number of cases in Japan surpasses 2,000.
April 6:	Number of cases in Japan jumps above 4,000.
April 7:	Issuance of a “declaration of state of emergency” for 7 prefectures based on Article 32 (1) of the aforementioned act, and expansion of the declaration to all prefectures on April 17
April 7:	Approval of “Emergency Economic Measures to Cope with COVID-19” by a Cabinet decision (with subsequent amendment approved on April 20), which includes expanded financial measures and payment of “sustainability benefits” for SMEs as well as cash handouts of 100,000 yen to all citizens, etc.
May 14:	Lifting of the declaration of the state of emergency for 39 prefectures
May 21:	Lifting of the declaration of the state of emergency for 3 prefectures in the Kansai area
May 25:	Complete lifting of the declaration of state of emergency

II. Outline of the survey

The survey targeted “employees of private enterprises” and “freelance workers” (self-employed workers who are not shop owners and who do not have employees [excluding those in agriculture, forestry, or fishery]) among those registered as monitors with an internet survey company who are aged at least 20 years old but no more than 64 years old residing in Japan as of April 1, 2020. Note that it

included those who became unemployed on or after April 1, 2020, and up to the time of the survey if they satisfied the above requirement.

As for employees of private enterprises, this survey forms a follow-up survey based on the same respondents as a COVID-19-related survey³ that was conducted as part of RENGO-RIALS’ 39th Short-Term Survey of Workers in Japan (hereinafter the April Survey) by distributing questionnaires with priority given to the respondents of the April Survey.

For employees of private enterprises, stratified random allocation was conducted for sex×age group×residential region block ×regular/non-regular employee¹ status (by 180 cells). For freelance workers, stratified random allocation was conducted by sex×age group×residential region block (by 90 cells) based on the distribution of “self-employed workers (without employees)” of the *Employment Status Survey*.

The main survey period was between May 18 and 27, 2020. The number of valid responses totaled 4,307 for employees of private enterprises (3,600 respondents to both the April Survey and May Survey and 707 new respondents to the May Survey only) and 580 for freelance workers (8 fewer than the target number).

III. Impacts on “employees of private enterprises”

1. Were there COVID-19-associated impacts on employment and/or income?

(1) 45.0% of employees responded “there was an impact.”

When employees of private enterprises (N=4,307) among all valid respondents were asked whether there was a COVID-19-associated impact on their employment and/or income, 16.3% responded “there was a major impact” and 28.7% responded “there was some degree of impact.” In total, 45.0% of respondents indicated that “there was an impact” (Table 1). Looking at specific “impacts” (multiple responses allowed), about one in four employees of private enterprises experienced “decreased workdays and working hours” (26.6%) and/or “decreased income” (24.4%), followed by

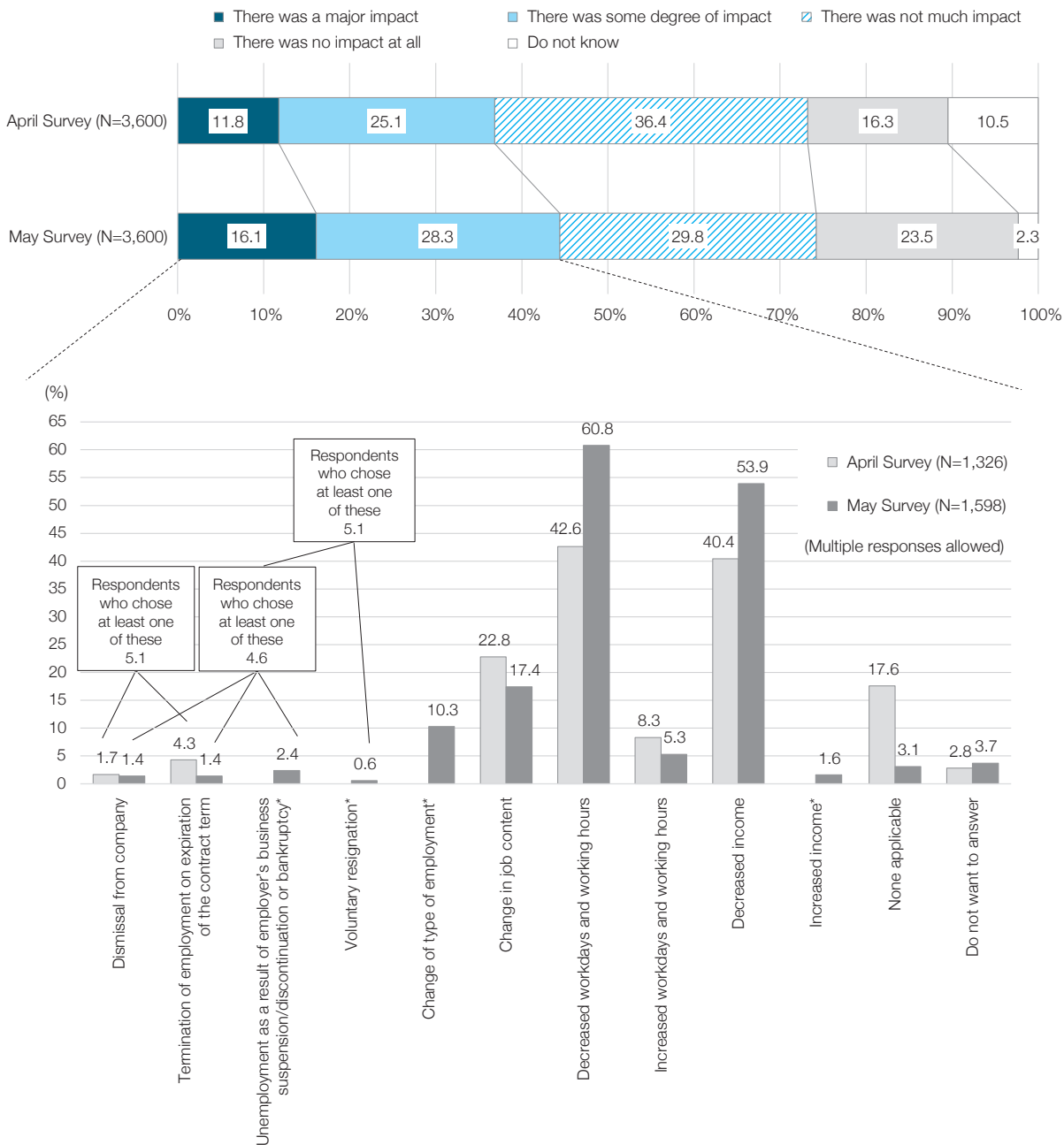
Table 1. COVID-19-associated impacts on employment and/or income

(%)

		N	Total of "there was an impact"	(Multiple responses allowed)												
				Dismissal from company	Termination of employment on expiration of the contract term	Unemployment as a result of employer's business suspension/discontinuation or bankruptcy	Change of employment type	Change in job content	Decreased workdays and working hours	Increased workdays and working hours	Decreased income	Increased income	Voluntary resignation	None applicable	Do not want to answer	
		4,307	44.9	0.8	0.6	1.0	4.5	8.1	26.6	2.4	24.4	0.8	0.3	1.4	1.8	
Main type of business	Construction	232	34.5	0.4	0.9	—	4.3	6.9	15.5	1.3	16.4	1.3	0.4	0.4	2.6	
	Manufacturing	946	47.0	1.0	0.5	0.4	5.2	6.0	28.4	2.2	28.0	0.4	0.3	1.7	2.0	
	Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	69	29.0	—	1.4	2.9	5.8	4.3	10.1	2.9	7.2	1.4	—	—	2.9	
	Information and communications	233	30.5	—	0.4	0.4	5.2	6.9	13.3	0.9	11.6	—	0.4	3.0	0.9	
	Transport	243	49.4	0.4	1.2	1.2	4.1	8.6	31.7	4.9	33.3	0.4	0.4	—	0.8	
	Wholesale and retail trade	553	41.6	0.4	0.5	0.2	3.3	5.4	28.4	2.5	22.6	1.6	0.2	0.7	1.3	
	Finance and insurance	228	33.3	0.4	—	—	3.9	8.8	20.2	1.3	11.8	0.9	0.4	1.3	1.8	
	Real estate	98	37.8	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.1	10.2	22.4	—	18.4	—	—	1.0	2.0	
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	161	75.8	3.1	—	6.8	7.5	14.3	60.2	2.5	57.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	
	Medical, health care and welfare	607	37.1	1.0	0.2	0.5	2.3	10.4	14.5	3.0	15.2	1.0	0.3	2.1	2.6	
	Education, learning support	134	56.0	—	—	1.5	10.4	9.0	41.0	3.7	32.8	—	—	2.2	1.5	
	Postal services, cooperative associations	38	44.7	—	—	—	—	2.6	15.8	2.6	18.4	2.6	—	2.6	7.9	
	Services	586	57.3	1.2	1.0	2.6	5.6	9.9	37.4	1.7	31.4	0.3	0.5	1.5	1.2	
	Others	158	44.9	1.3	1.9	1.3	4.4	11.4	21.5	3.8	24.1	1.9	—	1.9	1.9	
	Do not know	21	47.6	—	—	—	—	14.3	4.8	14.3	28.6	—	—	—	—	
Region of residence	Tokyo metropolitan area	1,325	47.0	0.9	0.9	1.7	5.1	8.8	29.0	2.6	26.8	0.7	0.5	1.3	1.4	
	Chubu or Kansai area	1,475	46.2	0.7	0.7	1.1	4.5	8.0	26.2	2.3	24.1	0.7	0.3	1.7	2.0	
	Others	1,507	41.9	0.8	0.3	0.4	4.0	7.8	24.9	2.4	22.6	0.9	0.2	1.3	1.9	
Type of employment	Regular employees	2,848	42.2	0.8	0.3	0.6	4.8	8.9	22.8	2.6	21.3	0.6	0.2	1.5	1.9	
	Non-regular employees (total)	1,459	50.2	0.8	1.2	2.0	4.0	6.6	34.1	2.1	30.3	1.0	0.5	1.3	1.4	
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and <i>arbeit</i> (temporary workers)	1,042	54.3	1.0	0.6	2.3	3.7	7.1	37.4	2.8	33.9	1.2	0.7	1.2	1.6	
	Contract workers and <i>shokutaku</i> (entrusted workers)	277	35.4	0.4	1.8	0.7	4.0	6.5	20.2	0.4	17.7	0.7	—	1.4	1.1	
	Dispatched workers	140	48.6	0.7	4.3	2.1	5.7	3.6	36.4	—	28.6	0.7	—	1.4	0.7	
Income of household for the past 1 year	Less than 3 million yen	635	53.5	0.2	0.8	1.9	5.7	10.6	32.3	2.2	32.4	0.5	0.3	0.8	1.7	
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	931	46.5	1.1	0.5	0.9	4.7	8.8	27.6	2.3	26.5	0.9	0.5	1.3	1.2	
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	857	43.8	0.7	0.2	1.2	4.8	7.2	27.3	3.2	22.5	0.6	0.1	0.9	1.2	
	7 million to less than 9 million yen	515	39.4	0.6	0.8	0.4	4.3	6.4	20.2	1.7	20.8	1.2	0.2	1.9	1.2	
	9 million yen or more	620	40.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	4.5	7.6	23.7	2.7	20.5	1.1	0.2	2.1	1.6	
	Do not know	749	44.3	1.5	0.7	1.2	3.2	8.0	26.4	2.1	22.7	0.5	0.5	1.9	3.7	

Notes: 1. Total of "there was an impact" is the total of "there was a major impact" and "there was some degree of impact."

2. The questionnaire form was designed so that it first asked "was there an impact?" and, when the respondent answered "there was a major impact" or "there was some degree of impact," it then asked sub-questions concerning the specifics of that response. However, to make the percentages of responses making up all "employees of private enterprises" easier to read, they are presented based on the total number of samples.



Note: *Because a certain number of “none applicable” responses were seen in the April Survey, several response options were added to the May Survey.

Figure 1. COVID-19-associated impacts on employment and/or income: Comparison of the April Survey and May Survey

“change in job content” (8.1%) and “change in type of employment” (4.5%). There were responses indicating “increased workdays and working hours” (2.4%) and “increased income” (0.8%). At least at the time of the survey, responses pertaining to employment in itself stayed within a certain level

with “dismissal from company” standing at 0.8%, “termination on the expiration of contract term” at 0.6%, “unemployment as a result of employer’s business suspension/discontinuation or bankruptcy” at 1.0%, and “voluntary resignation” at 0.3%.

Figure 1 shows these results in terms of the

total for respondents to both the April Survey and May Survey (N=3,600). The percentage of those who responded “there was an impact” relating to COVID-19 on their own employment and/or income rose from 36.8% in the April Survey to 44.4% in the May Survey. Looking at specific “impacts” (multiple responses allowed), there are marked rises in “decreased workdays and working hours” (42.6% in the April Survey and 60.8% in the May Survey) and “decreased income” (likewise, 40.4% and 53.9%). Looking at responses that pertain to employment in itself, the percentage of either “dismissal from company” or “termination on the expiration of contract term” was 5.1% in the April Survey. Responses that pertain to employment in the May Survey stood at 4.2% including responses of a newly added choice “unemployment as a result of employer’s business suspension/discontinuation or bankruptcy,” and remained low at 5.1% even if adding responses of “voluntary resignation.”

In contrast to what occurred during the 2008 global financial crisis such as cancellations of labor contract for non-regular employees, responses about specific “impacts” in this survey conducted in the COVID-19 crisis were centered on “decreased workdays and working hours” including temporary leave and the like (at least at the time of the survey).⁴ These responses may have something to do with the fact that there was a labor shortage just prior to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the fact that, unlike the situation during the 2008 financial crisis, the Employment Adjustment Subsidy program has been largely relaxed and include non-regular employees whose weekly scheduled hours were fewer than 20 hours (and who were therefore not covered by employment insurance).⁵ However, it is possible that the situation will transit from one based on the taking of emergency measures in the face of the pandemic toward an economic recession accompanied by a worsening employment situation. Trends will continue to be watched.

(2) Approximately 60% of respondents in “accommodations, eating and drinking services” responded that they encountered decrease

in workdays and working hours, and income.

Looking at COVID-19-associated impacts on employment and/or income by the main industries of work places, responses indicating “there was an impact” reached approximately three in four respondents in “accommodations, eating and drinking places.” The impacts were particularly large in this industry (Table 1). This was followed by “services” (57.3%), “education, learning support” (56.0%), “transport” (49.4%), and “manufacturing” (47.0%). Looking at specific “impacts” (multiple responses allowed), approximately 60% of respondents in “accommodations, eating and drinking services” indicated “decreased workdays and working hours” (60.2%) and “decreased income” (57.8%). In the case of the 2008 financial crisis, electrical machinery, automobiles, and other areas of “manufacturing” had particularly large impacts. However, a characteristic of the COVID-19 crisis is that impacts are being experienced in not only manufacturing but a broad range of domestic demand-oriented industries, particularly in those involving interpersonal services such as “accommodations, eating and drinking services.”

(3) Larger impacts are felt among non-regular employees.

Looking at COVID-19-associated effects on employment and/or income by type of employment, it can be seen that the percentages of respondents indicating “there was an impact” on their own employment and/or income are higher for non-regular employees (50.2%) and, among them, part-time workers (54.3%), than for regular employees (42.2%). Looking at specific “impacts” (multiple responses allowed), more than one in three part-time workers indicated “decreased workdays and working hours” (37.4%) and “decreased income” (33.9%). Among dispatched workers, more than one-third (36.4%) indicated “decreased workdays and working hours.” Additionally, they had a higher percentage of “termination on the expiration of contract term” (4.3%) than the other type of employment. As in past economic crises and recessions, this may indicate

that the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis are being shifted more heavily onto non-regular employees.

In the study over the tendency by type of employment, it is known that certain connections exist between type of employment and industry. For example, there is a high percentage of non-regular employees in the industries such as “accommodations, eating and drinking services” and “services.” Let us look at the percentages of respondents indicating “decreased workdays and working hours” by type of employment with industry under control. No significant differences are seen between regular employees and non-regular employees in “transport” (32.3% among regular employees and 29.2% among non-regular employees) and “wholesale and retail trade” (likewise, 27.7% and 29.2%). However, the percentages of non-regular employees are conspicuously higher than those of regular employees in “accommodations, eating and drinking services” (55.6% among regular employees and 62.1% among non-regular employees), “services” (likewise, 31.1% and 45.2%), and “education,

learning support” (32.5% and 44.7%). In another aspect, in those industries, the percentages of “change in job content” chosen as a specific “impact” were slightly higher for regular employees (specifically, 28.9% in “accommodations, eating and drinking services,” 10.0% in “services,” and 12.4% in “education, learning support”).

2. How were workdays and working hours adjusted in companies?

(1) Actual hours worked per week: The percentages rose for “under 40 hours” among regular employees and for “less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) among non-regular employees.

Then, how were workdays and working hours adjusted in response to the COVID-19 crisis? Figure 2 shows the results when employees of private enterprises at any point in time on March 1, April 1, and at the time of the survey in May (hereinafter referred collectively as “the survey times”) (N=4,203) were asked how their actual

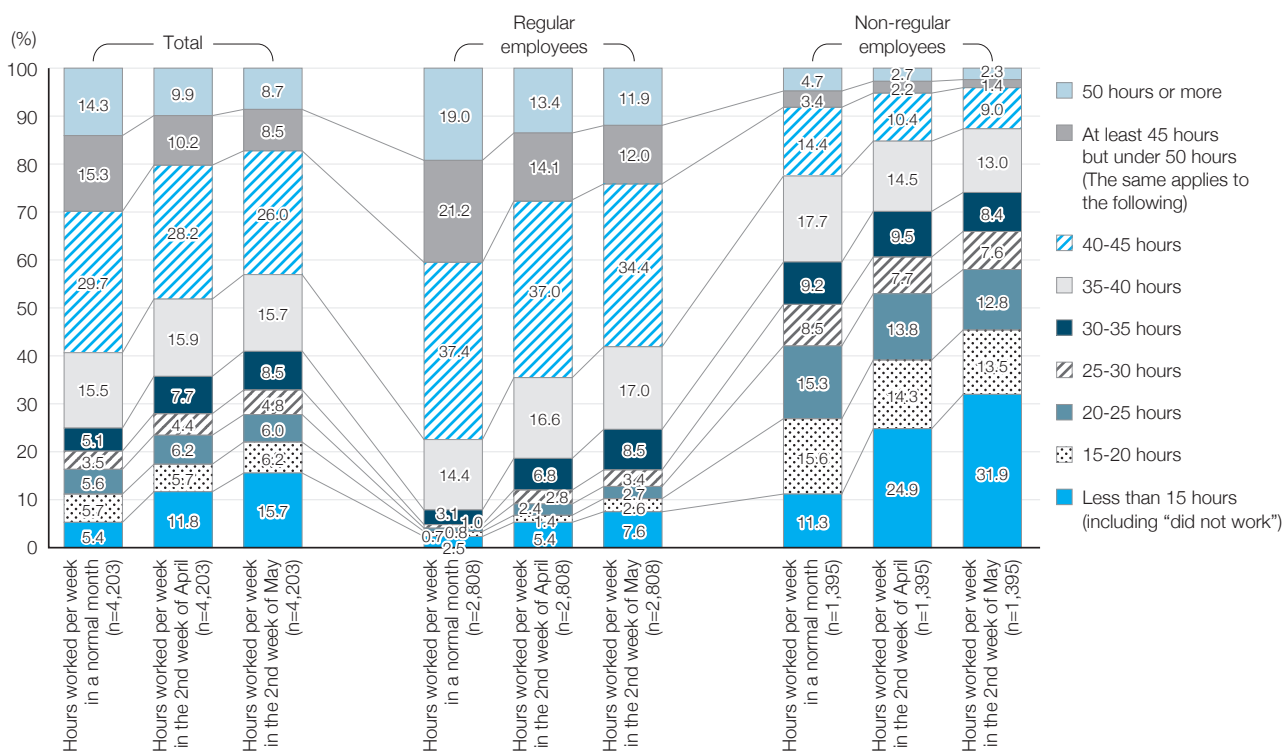


Figure 2. Changes in actual hours worked in the 2nd week of April (April 6-12, before the implementation of national emergency measures) and the 2nd week of May (May 7-13, after the implementation of national emergency measures) in comparison of a normal month prior to the COVID-19 crisis

working hours (including overtime work) per week changed in comparison with a normal month prior to the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis. Overall, the percentages of those who indicated that their actual working hours per week were “over 40 hours” gradually decreased in the second week of April (April 6 to 12) and second week of May (May 7 to 13), while the percentages of those of “under 40 hours” increased proportionally. In the second week of May, the percentage of “less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) roughly tripled compared to the normal month.

A breakdown of these findings by type of employment shows that it was mainly regular employees that showed decreases in the percentage of “over 40 hours” and increases in the percentage of “under 40 hours.” Among regular employees the percentage of “less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) did not rise above 7.6% even in the second week of May, and even the total of “under 40 hours” did not reach double that of the normal month. It can be seen that changes among regular employees centered on decreased overtime and the like.⁶ On the other hand, among non-regular employees, the percentages of “over 15 hours” decreased while the percentage of “less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) correspondingly exceeded 30% in the second week of May. This clearly shows that large-scale adjustment has been implemented for non-regular employees.

(2) 41.6% of non-regular employees responded that their most recent monthly income decreased.

How far did “decreased income” extend at the point of the survey? When employees of private enterprises were asked about how the amount of their most recent monthly income changed in comparison with the normal month, 64.9% of the total indicated that “it was roughly the same (change of less than 10%).” Among those who indicated that “it decreased” (32.4%), more than half indicated that the decrease was “about 10% to 20%,” but some indicated a decrease of “90% or more.” (Table 2).

Looking at the results by type of employment,

70.0% of regular employees indicated their most recent monthly income were “roughly the same (change of less than 10%)” in comparison with the normal month, while 41.6% of non-regular employees indicated that their monthly income “decreased.” Looking closely at respondents who indicated “decreased,” more than 60% of regular employees indicated that the decrease was “about 10 to 20%,” while more than 60% of non-regular employees indicated that their monthly income decreased more than 30%.⁷ When looking at the change in income by household income for the past 1 year, the percentage of monthly income “decreased” is high in the category of yearly household income decreased “less than 3 million yen.” A tendency is seen whereby the percentage of “roughly the same (change of less than 10%)” monthly income rises with categories of higher yearly household income toward “9 million yen or more.”

Household income relates to various factors such as type of employment, occupation, size of enterprise (number of employee), household membership, number of employed people in household, and age. With that in mind, overall situation revealed that households with lower yearly income are likely to face severe circumstances.

3. Areas where anxiety was particularly felt in terms of work besides infection of the COVID-19
(1) 40.7% of employees feel income anxiety and more than 20% feel employment anxiety.

Anxiety about income (hereinafter “income anxiety”) and anxiety about employment (hereinafter “employment anxiety”) are rising against this backdrop. When asked whether they felt particular anxiety in terms of their work besides their “own infection,” from the time that COVID-19 crises began to the survey time (up to 3 responses allowed), more than 40% of employees of private enterprises indicated “decreased income” (40.7%). This was followed by “infection prevention, response when infected persons emerge, and other aspects of company’s hygiene management” (26.2%), “worsening business condition or corporate bankruptcy/office closure” (24.0%), “adjustment

Table 2. Most recent monthly income in comparison with the normal month (prior to the emergence of the COVID-19 crises)

		N	%										Total of "it was decreased"		Total of "it was increased"	
			Decreased 90% or more	Decreased by about 70% to 80%	Decreased by about 50% to 60%	Decreased by about 30% to 40%	Decreased by about 10% to 20%	Roughly the same (change of less than 10%)	Increased by about 10% to 20%	Increased by about 30% to 40%	Increased 50% or more					
		4,307	2.5	2.6	3.4	7.0	16.9	64.9	2.0	0.4	0.2	32.4	2.6			
Main type of business	Construction	232	1.7	1.7	1.3	5.2	12.9	74.1	1.7	1.3	—	22.8	3.0			
	Manufacturing	946	0.8	1.8	2.7	7.3	21.9	63.4	1.1	0.6	0.3	34.6	2.0			
	Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	69	—	1.4	2.9	4.3	8.7	76.8	5.8	—	—	17.4	5.8			
	Information and communications	233	1.7	0.9	1.3	3.9	15.5	74.2	2.6	—	—	23.2	2.6			
	Transport	243	0.8	3.7	1.6	5.8	26.7	57.6	3.3	0.4	—	38.7	3.7			
	Wholesale and retail trade	553	1.4	2.0	4.2	6.5	16.8	66.5	2.5	—	—	30.9	2.5			
	Finance and insurance	228	0.9	0.9	2.6	4.4	12.7	76.3	1.8	0.4	—	21.5	2.2			
	Real estate	98	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.1	14.3	76.5	1.0	—	—	22.4	1.0			
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	161	9.9	9.9	10.6	19.9	15.5	32.9	1.2	—	—	65.8	1.2			
	Medical, health care and welfare	607	1.6	1.6	1.6	4.1	12.0	76.4	2.1	—	0.3	21.1	2.5			
	Education, learning support	134	9.0	3.7	5.2	6.7	20.1	50.7	3.0	—	1.5	44.8	4.5			
	Postal services, cooperative associations	38	—	—	2.6	5.3	15.8	71.1	2.6	—	2.6	23.7	5.3			
	Services	586	5.8	4.4	6.5	10.8	14.7	54.8	2.2	0.7	0.2	42.2	3.1			
	Others	158	3.2	4.4	4.4	6.3	17.7	60.8	1.9	0.6	0.6	36.1	3.2			
	Do not know	21	4.8	9.5	—	4.8	14.3	61.9	4.8	—	—	33.3	4.8			
Region of residence	Tokyo metropolitan area	1,325	3.2	3.0	4.5	7.8	16.9	61.7	2.0	0.4	0.3	35.5	2.7			
	Chubu or Kansai area	1,475	2.2	2.5	2.9	6.5	18.6	64.3	2.0	0.7	0.3	32.7	3.0			
	Others	1,507	2.1	2.4	3.0	6.6	15.3	68.4	2.1	0.1	0.1	29.3	2.3			
Type of employment	Regular employees	2,848	0.8	1.6	2.4	5.3	17.6	70.0	1.8	0.3	0.2	27.7	2.2			
	Non-regular employees (total)	1,459	5.8	4.6	5.5	10.1	15.6	55.0	2.6	0.5	0.3	41.6	3.4			
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and arbeit (temporary workers)	1,042	7.1	5.0	6.5	10.5	16.4	51.2	2.5	0.4	0.4	45.5	3.3			
	Contract workers and <i>shokutaku</i> (entrusted workers)	277	2.2	2.2	1.4	8.3	13.7	69.0	2.9	—	0.4	27.8	3.2			
	Dispatched workers	140	2.9	6.4	5.7	11.4	13.6	55.0	2.9	2.1	—	40.0	5.0			
Income of household for the past 1 year	Less than 3 million yen	635	3.3	2.8	6.8	10.7	19.8	54.3	1.6	0.2	0.5	43.5	2.2			
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	931	2.1	3.0	3.8	7.1	16.8	64.3	2.1	0.5	0.2	32.8	2.9			
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	857	1.8	2.8	2.6	6.3	18.7	65.3	2.1	0.4	0.1	32.1	2.6			
	7 million to less than 9 million yen	515	2.1	2.1	1.4	5.2	16.7	69.9	1.7	0.6	0.2	27.6	2.5			
	9 million yen or more	620	1.9	1.8	2.9	4.4	16.8	69.0	2.4	0.5	0.3	27.7	3.2			
	Do not know	749	3.7	2.8	3.1	7.7	12.8	67.4	2.1	0.1	0.1	30.2	2.4			

of own work” (19.4%), “dismissal/termination (employment anxiety),” and “availability of environment for work from home or telecommuting” (both 12.9%) (Table 3).

Looking at main industries of the respondents’ workplaces, the percentage of those who “felt anxiety” is high particularly for “accommodations, eating and drinking services” and “education, learning support” at more than 80%. This percentage exceeds three-fourths for “information and telecommunications,” “wholesale and retail trade,” “manufacturing,” “services,” and “transport.” Looking at specific “anxieties” (multiple responses allowed), the percentage of “decreased income” was high for “accommodations, eating and drinking services,” “transport,” “services,” “education, learning support,” and “manufacturing.” Moreover, the percentage of “worsening business condition or corporate bankruptcy/office closure” was high, exceeding one-fourth, for “accommodations, eating and drinking services,” “wholesale and retail trade,” “manufacturing,” “services,” and “transport.” Additionally, the percentage of “dismissal/termination (employment anxiety)” for “accommodations, eating and drinking services” was high, exceeding 20%. It deserves noting that the percentage of “infection prevention, response when infected persons emerge, and other aspects of company’s hygiene management” was high particularly for “medical, health care and welfare” at over 40%.

(2) Different anxieties among regular employees and non-regular employees

The percentages of regular employees and non-regular employees who felt anxiety were roughly the same. However, regular employees and non-regular employees have different anxieties. The percentages for “worsening business condition or corporate bankruptcy/office closure” (25.8%) as well as “adjustment of own work,” and “availability of environment for work from home or telecommuting” were high in the case of regular employees. In the case of non-regular employees the percentages of “decreased income” (44.1%) followed by “infection prevention, response when infected persons emerge, and other aspects of

company’s hygiene management” and “dismissal/termination (employment anxiety)” were higher. Especially for “decreased income,” percentages were high for part-time workers/arbeits (temporary workers) and dispatched workers among non-regular employees. Additionally, the percentage for “dismissal/termination (employment anxiety)” was high particularly for dispatched workers, surpassing one-third.

4. Percentages implementing work from home/telecommuting

Could it be that the tendency for adjustments of workdays and working hours to occur among non-regular employees is due to the increasing use of work from home/telecommuting by regular employees during the COVID-19 crisis?⁸ When asked what kind of employment-related initiatives their employers (e.g., office, factory, or shop) took based on either a request from the national/local government or voluntarily (multiple responses allowed), nearly 30% of employees of private enterprises responded “implementing work from home/telecommuting” (29.9%). This was followed by “canceling/restricting business trips” (24.4%) and “using teleconferencing” (21.6%) (Table 4).

As for response options that are common to those of the April Survey, an over-time comparison of those who responded to both the April Survey and May Survey (N=3,600) shows that the percentage indicating “implementing work from home/telecommuting” rose from 18.7% in the April Survey to 32.4% in the May Survey, which is an increase of more than 10 percentage points. This suggests that the introduction of work from home/telecommuting made steady progress in the interim. At the same time, “use of teleconferencing” (18.4% in the April Survey, 22.5% in the May Survey) and “staggering work hours” (likewise, 18.3%, 20.8%) also grew slightly.

An aggregation of the number of days per week that work from home/telecommuting took place as a measure to control COVID-19 infection shows that experience with “work from home/telecommuting” grew rapidly as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. This is the result in the case of respondents who selected “implementing work from home/telecommuting”

Table 3. Areas where anxiety was particularly felt in terms of work from the time that COVID-19 crises began until the present time (as of the survey time in May)

		N	Total of "felt anxiety"	(Up to 3 responses allowed)										Others	
				Worsening business condition or corporate bankruptcy/office closure	Dismissal/termination (anxiety about employment)	Decreased income	Infection prevention, response when infected persons emerge, and other aspects of company's hygiene management	Company management for leave and work arrangement associated with "school closures"	Availability of environment for work from home/telecommuting	Adjustment of own work	Change in interpersonal relationships at workplace	Others	Did not feel any particular anxiety	Do not want to answer	
		4,307	73.9	24.0	12.9	40.7	26.2	7.8	12.9	19.4	6.2	1.4	22.1	4.0	
Main type of business	Construction	232	58.2	19.4	11.6	30.6	20.3	5.2	15.9	15.5	6.5	1.3	37.1	4.7	
	Manufacturing	946	75.6	29.6	13.4	44.0	19.9	8.7	17.2	16.7	6.4	0.5	20.6	3.8	
	Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	69	63.8	10.1	7.2	11.6	23.2	8.7	20.3	21.7	11.6	1.4	30.4	5.8	
	Information and communications	233	76.8	18.9	11.6	36.5	20.6	12.0	32.2	26.2	7.7	0.4	20.2	3.0	
	Transport	243	75.3	27.2	13.6	49.4	23.0	5.3	8.2	21.8	7.8	0.8	20.6	4.1	
	Wholesale and retail trade	553	75.8	30.6	16.1	41.6	27.7	6.5	8.9	18.4	5.1	2.2	21.9	2.4	
	Finance and insurance	228	72.4	15.4	8.8	28.9	25.4	7.0	23.7	26.3	7.0	2.2	23.2	4.4	
	Real estate	98	69.4	12.2	6.1	30.6	26.5	7.1	18.4	27.6	6.1	1.0	28.6	2.0	
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	161	85.1	37.9	23.6	66.5	22.4	3.1	2.5	18.6	4.3	0.6	12.4	2.5	
	Medical, health care and welfare	607	73.1	17.8	6.9	31.6	42.7	8.6	2.0	18.1	6.4	3.0	22.4	4.4	
	Education, learning support	134	82.8	14.2	14.9	46.3	28.4	19.4	16.4	26.9	3.7	2.2	13.4	3.7	
	Postal services, cooperative associations	38	50.0	7.9	7.9	28.9	15.8	10.5	7.9	13.2	7.9	-	42.1	7.9	
	Services	586	75.6	28.2	16.2	48.6	26.1	5.6	9.7	19.1	4.4	1.0	19.8	4.6	
	Others	158	71.5	13.3	15.8	39.9	29.1	8.9	16.5	19.0	7.6	0.6	24.1	4.4	
	Do not know	21	38.1	-	-	28.6	-	4.8	14.3	-	9.5	-	28.6	33.3	
Region of residence	Tokyo metropolitan area	1,325	74.3	23.7	14.9	43.2	24.2	7.4	16.5	19.8	6.3	1.2	21.7	4.0	
	Chubu or Kansai area	1,475	75.1	23.6	12.1	40.3	26.4	7.7	13.5	21.3	6.3	1.2	20.7	4.2	
	Others	1,507	72.5	24.8	12.0	38.9	27.8	8.2	9.3	17.1	5.8	1.7	23.7	3.8	
Type of employment	Regular employees	2,848	74.3	25.8	9.7	38.9	25.4	8.7	16.7	20.9	6.8	1.1	21.7	4.0	
	Non-regular employees (total)	1,459	73.1	20.6	19.3	44.1	28.0	6.0	5.6	16.4	4.9	1.9	22.9	4.0	
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and arbeits (temporary workers)	1,042	73.1	21.3	16.3	45.9	29.3	7.0	2.4	15.0	4.8	1.9	22.8	4.0	
	Contract workers and shokutaku (entrusted workers)	277	72.2	20.2	20.9	35.7	27.4	4.0	16.2	19.9	4.7	1.8	23.8	4.0	
	Dispatched workers	140	75.0	16.4	38.6	47.9	19.3	2.1	8.6	20.7	5.7	2.1	21.4	3.6	
Income of household for the past 1 year	Less than 3 million yen	635	74.0	26.1	17.8	46.5	26.1	3.1	7.2	15.4	6.9	1.4	21.6	4.4	
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	931	75.9	26.1	15.1	44.1	24.7	7.3	10.5	18.2	6.1	1.1	21.8	2.3	
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	857	78.3	26.7	10.7	40.6	26.7	10.3	16.3	23.6	6.2	1.3	19.6	2.1	
	7 million to less than 9 million yen	515	77.3	23.3	11.8	35.9	28.3	11.7	18.4	23.5	5.4	0.8	21.6	1.2	
	9 million yen or more	620	73.2	22.3	9.8	36.9	26.5	9.5	20.3	22.7	7.3	1.6	24.8	1.9	
	Do not know	749	64.5	18.6	11.9	37.9	26.0	5.3	6.9	13.9	5.1	2.0	23.8	11.7	

Editor's note: The option "worsening business condition or corporate bankruptcy/office closure" in the above is the same option translated as "worsening business condition of employer or company bankruptcy/shutdown" in the first aggregation. The editor has made a correction in the translation.

Table 4. Employment-related initiatives being taken by companies

(%)

		N	Total of "some kind of response was being made"	(Multiple responses allowed)												Not taking any of the initiatives mentioned
				Suspending business (e.g., shutdown, closure, etc.) or increasing non-business days	Shortening business hours	Temporary layoff	Reducing number of workdays (ex.: two-day work weeks on alternating shifts, etc.)	Encouragement of taking paid leaves	Implementing work from home/telecommuting	Change of work location (e.g., to a satellite office, etc.)	Change of commuting method (e.g., limitation on use of public transport, etc.)	Staggering working hours	Reduction of work	Using teleconferencing	Canceling/restricting business trips	
		4,307	71.2	17.3	19.1	3.6	21.4	14.9	29.9	2.6	7.0	19.5	9.6	21.6	24.4	28.8
Main type of business	Construction	232	65.9	9.1	7.8	1.3	11.6	18.5	32.3	3.0	6.0	25.0	5.6	21.6	23.7	34.1
	Manufacturing	946	77.7	17.5	9.1	5.7	20.6	19.7	39.4	3.7	12.1	26.2	11.7	32.3	38.2	22.3
	Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	69	68.1	4.3	17.4	1.4	24.6	11.6	31.9	10.1	11.6	11.6	8.7	26.1	29.0	31.9
	Information and communications	233	94.0	9.0	9.4	1.7	18.5	18.0	78.1	4.7	8.2	38.2	8.2	47.6	37.8	6.0
	Transport	243	63.4	10.7	15.2	8.6	23.9	14.0	22.2	1.6	7.8	17.3	11.5	17.7	26.3	36.6
	Wholesale and retail trade	553	73.1	18.6	40.7	1.3	18.8	14.3	20.8	1.3	6.0	16.6	6.9	16.1	21.7	26.9
	Finance and insurance	228	86.8	10.5	30.7	1.8	36.8	14.0	51.8	5.3	11.0	29.8	11.4	29.8	33.3	13.2
	Real estate	98	76.5	22.4	35.7	4.1	32.7	15.3	39.8	2.0	8.2	27.6	8.2	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Accommodations, eating and drinking services	161	82.0	50.9	54.0	5.0	36.6	13.0	5.0	0.6	3.1	8.1	18.6	3.7	6.2	18.0
	Medical, health care and welfare	607	43.8	6.3	7.4	1.5	10.9	8.4	5.3	0.7	2.3	5.3	7.1	7.1	13.0	56.2
	Education, learning support	134	85.8	39.6	16.4	4.5	29.9	12.7	44.8	1.5	7.5	19.4	8.2	22.4	17.9	14.2
	Postal services, cooperative associations	38	57.9	5.3	28.9	2.6	13.2	7.9	7.9	—	2.6	7.9	2.6	18.4	18.4	42.1
	Services	586	72.7	26.5	21.7	4.1	26.3	15.7	26.5	2.9	4.4	16.9	10.8	17.4	16.9	27.3
	Others	158	70.3	15.8	15.8	3.8	21.5	12.0	30.4	3.2	3.8	22.2	9.5	20.9	16.5	29.7
	Do not know	21	38.1	9.5	9.5	4.8	9.5	4.8	19.0	—	—	9.5	—	4.8	4.8	61.9
Size of enterprise (number of employees)	29 or fewer employees	894	56.8	16.6	19.9	1.9	18.1	8.4	12.8	0.3	3.1	10.6	8.4	6.7	10.2	43.2
	30 to 299 employees	1,314	70.8	16.7	17.6	3.3	22.0	15.6	25.3	1.9	6.5	18.8	9.5	17.7	21.5	29.2
	300 to 999 employees	550	76.9	17.8	14.5	4.7	22.7	18.5	38.9	3.8	9.1	24.4	10.0	30.0	32.7	23.1
	1,000 or more employees	1,102	86.3	16.8	21.4	5.3	23.5	20.0	51.2	5.7	11.5	30.0	11.4	40.0	41.0	13.7
	Do not know	447	56.6	20.8	22.1	1.8	19.0	9.2	14.3	0.4	2.7	7.8	6.9	6.9	10.7	43.4
Region of residence	Tokyo metropolitan area	1,325	78.0	20.0	22.0	3.7	26.8	16.5	40.2	3.4	7.8	26.9	9.9	24.8	24.2	22.0
	Chubu or Kansai area	1,475	70.8	16.5	18.0	3.4	19.5	15.1	29.6	2.5	8.3	18.6	9.0	20.3	23.5	29.2
	Others	1,507	65.6	15.5	17.7	3.6	18.4	13.4	21.2	2.1	5.1	14.1	9.8	20.0	25.7	34.4
Type of employment	Regular employees	2,848	74.6	15.1	16.7	3.8	20.1	17.2	37.3	3.5	8.8	24.2	9.6	27.4	30.6	25.4
	Non-regular employees (total)	1,459	64.5	21.4	23.9	3.0	23.8	10.5	15.4	0.9	3.6	10.6	9.6	10.2	12.5	35.5
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and arbeits (temporary workers)	1,042	60.8	23.6	26.5	2.4	21.7	9.9	7.0	0.6	2.0	4.9	9.8	5.8	7.2	39.2
	Contract workers and shokutaku (entrusted workers)	277	73.6	13.4	17.3	4.7	26.7	13.7	37.2	1.8	7.9	25.3	9.7	23.5	29.6	26.4
	Dispatched workers	140	73.6	20.7	17.9	4.3	33.6	8.6	35.0	1.4	6.4	23.6	7.9	17.1	17.9	26.4

Table 5. Determinants relating to “implementing work at home/telecommuting”

Explanatory variables:	Explained variable: “Implementing work at home/telecommuting”= 1							
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Type of employment dummy variables (Regular employees)								
Non-regular employees	-1.140	.092***	-.794	.100***	-.813	.111***	-.722	.138***
Main industrial category of employer dummy variables (Others)								
Construction	-.310	.231	-.466	.244	-.286	.266	-.267	.332
Manufacturing	.051	.193	.351	.210	.085	.230	.075	.295
Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	-.196	.320	-.329	.333	-.658	.369	-.561	.445
Information and communications	1.780	.242***	1.452	.252***	1.363	.274***	1.359	.343***
Transport	-.797	.239**	-.001	.272	-.380	.294	-.219	.358
Wholesale and retail trade	-.601	.209**	-.721	.225**	-.666	.245**	-.603	.311
Finance and insurance	.640	.226**	.409	.237	-.147	.262	-.055	.326
Real estate	.118	.278	-.114	.291	.011	.317	-.072	.380
Accommodations, eating and drinking services	-1.973	.407***	-1.622	.426***	-1.582	.449***	-2.087	.622**
Medical, health care and welfare	-2.345	.257***	-2.614	.267***	-2.748	.294***	-2.418	.385***
Education, learning support	.872	.255**	.630	.266*	.542	.300	.273	.373
Postal services, cooperative associations	-1.645	.634*	-1.600	.649*	-2.387	.787**	-1.776	.840*
Services	-.305	.203	-.152	.219	-.045	.239	-.032	.306
Occupational classification dummy variables (Others)								
Administrative and managerial workers (section manager level or higher)			1.509	.289***	1.257	.307***	.750	.348*
Professional and engineering workers			1.096	.277***	.855	.295**	.706	.336*
Clerical workers			.857	.269**	.755	.287**	.586	.326
Sales workers			.643	.283*	.449	.301	.254	.341
Service workers			-.259	.310	-.405	.331	-.397	.376
Security workers			-.974	.791	-1.637	.811*	-1.626	.838
Production/skilled workers			-.892	.307**	-1.030	.326**	-1.149	.375**
Transport and machine operation workers			-1.290	.477**	-1.278	.494**	-1.350	.542*
Construction and mining workers			-.402	.533	-.097	.554	-.294	.671
Carrying, cleaning, and packaging workers			-2.474	.644***	-2.790	.773***	-2.552	.794**
Size of enterprise dummy variables (30 to 299 employees)								
29 or fewer employees					-.833	.133***	-.718	.154***
300 to 999 employees					.665	.127***	.634	.149***
1,000 or more employees					1.059	.105***	.966	.123***
Final level of school education dummy variables (Specialized training college/junior college graduate)								
Junior high school/high school graduate							-.234	.150
University/graduate school graduate							.442	.133**
Household income for the past 1 year dummy variables (5 million to less than 7 million yen)								
Less than 3 million yen							-.541	.186**
3 million yen to less than 5 million yen							-.167	.137
7 million to less than 9 million yen							.183	.151
9 million yen or more							.416	.145**
Constant	-.287	.183	-.982	.316**	-.981	.346**	-.945	.431*
N		4286		4229		3825		2772
-LL2		4384.122		3985.392		3475.624		2566.921
χ^2		849.153***		1196.960***		1313.878***		1041.690***
Cox-Snell R2		0.180		0.247		0.291		0.313
Nagelkerke R2		0.255		0.349		0.407		0.430

Note: Parentheses indicate reference groups. ***: p<0.001, **: p<0.01, *: p<0.05

in the May Survey and who were employees of private enterprises at all of the survey times (N=1,270). Approximately 70% (68.9%) responded

“not engaging in” work from home/telecommuting for the normal month. This percentage decreased conspicuously in the second week of April (25.1%)

and second week of May (6.3%). Correspondingly, the percentages of “1 or 2 days” per week (14.6% for the normal month, 30.1% for the second week of April, and 38.0% for the second week of May), “5 days (or more)” (likewise, 11.7%, 25.8%, and 0.9%), and “3 or 4 days” (4.8%, 19.0%, and 24.8%) all rose.

Furthermore, let us look at the situation how much employment-related initiatives were taken by companies by respondents’ occupation. “Administrative and managerial workers (section manager level or higher)” (60.3%), “professional and engineering workers” (38.6%), and “clerical workers” (37.3%) had higher percentages, while “carrying, cleaning, and packaging workers” (1.8%), “security workers” (8.3%), “transport and machine operation workers” (8.7%), and “service workers” (10.1%) had lower percentages. A tendency is seen whereby the percentage of “not making any responses” increased in line with smaller enterprise sizes, while, conversely, the percentage of enterprises implementing most initiatives rose in line with larger enterprise sizes. Especially at responses of “implementing work from home/telecommuting,” the percentage was more than half (51.2%) for employees of enterprises with “1,000 employees or more,” while those with “29 or fewer employees” only reached about 10% (12.8%). In other words, industries, occupations, and sizes of enterprise (number of employees) that could accommodate work from home/telecommuting were seen. Work from home/telecommuting had difficulty gaining ground among non-regular employees. It is possible there was an aspect of this that easily led to “decreased workdays and working hours (and, as a result, “decreased income”).”⁹ Regarding this point, a binomial logistic regression analysis that sets “implementing work at home/telecommuting”¹⁰ as the explained variable shows that the applicability of industrial categories and occupational classifications is extremely good, and even when they are controlled, the negative effect of “non-regular employees” has significance at the 0.1% level (Table 5).

IV. Impacts on “freelance workers”

1. 64.6% of freelance workers indicated “there was an impact.”

The total of 580 freelance workers responded to this survey. When asked whether there was a COVID-19-associated impact on work (business activity) and income, approximately one-third of freelance workers responded “there was a major impact” (33.6%). When combined with “there was some degree of impact” (31.0%), the percentage responding “there was an impact” exceeded 60%, surpassing the percentage of non-regular employees among employees of private enterprises. Looking at the specific “impacts” (multiple responses allowed), over half of them responded “impact on business performance (decrease or increase in net sales/income)” (52.8%). This was followed by “reduction or loss of new orders or customers” (25.3%), “cancellation or postponement of ordered jobs (including events and tours)” (21.9%), “suppression or suspension of business activity (production, sales, service)” (17.1%), “suspension/scaling back of business or bankruptcy of client” (14.1%), and “deteriorating cash flow” (10.9%).

2. “Less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) increased for freelance workers in a manner similar to non-regular employees.

Among freelance workers who answered that they were “self-employed (including piecework)” at all of the survey times (N=498), the percentage responding that the hours worked per week (including overtime) were “less than 15 hours” (including “did not work”) rose conspicuously in the second week of April (26.3%) and second week of May (30.7%), compared to the normal month (12.0%). Thus, the percentage rose to exceed 30%, which is similar to the percentage seen for non-regular employees.

It should be noted that when the survey asked freelance workers (N=580) whether they were taking any actions in their jobs based on either a request from the national or local government or voluntarily (multiple responses allowed), more than two-thirds indicated they were taking some kind of action. Their responses included “use/provision of masks and alcohol-based disinfectants” (38.3%), “reduction of work” (22.2%), “cancellation/self-restraint in holding events, gatherings, meetings, get-togethers,

Table 6. Areas where particular anxiety was felt in terms of daily life from the time that COVID-19 crises began until the present time (as of the survey time in May)

		(Up to 3 responses allowed)															(%)	
		N	Total of "felt anxiety"	Inability to see when infections will abate	Inability to get accurate information	Shortages of supplies to prevent infection (masks and alcohol-based disinfectants)	Shortages of daily necessities	Person/facility to watch child during school closure	Effect on child's education due to absence from school	Visiting hospital/hospitalization due to own or family member's chronic disease, etc.	Participating in or organizing trips, events, important ceremonial occasions, etc.	Government's response in controlling infections	Prolonged/worsening economic recession	Difficulty in daily life associated with decreased income	Others	Did not feel any particular anxiety	Do not want to answer	
		4,887	88.7	58.7	14.2	30.6	7.2	2.9	12.7	8.3	13.3	15.6	37.1	22.3	1.2	8.2	3.0	
Sex	Male	2,722	84.7	55.7	14.7	27.4	6.8	2.6	11.6	6.1	12.1	14.3	36.6	21.2	0.9	11.6	3.7	
	Female	2,165	93.8	62.4	13.7	34.6	7.8	3.3	14.0	11.2	14.7	17.3	37.7	23.6	1.5	4.1	2.2	
Age group	20-29 years old	830	85.1	58.9	16.9	28.6	8.1	1.7	1.9	5.3	18.9	13.6	29.8	25.1	0.7	9.0	5.9	
	30-39 years old	1,078	88.1	56.1	14.9	28.0	8.0	6.5	15.0	7.3	11.7	12.9	33.2	23.2	1.1	8.9	3.0	
	40-49 years old	1,398	88.6	57.6	12.9	29.5	7.1	3.4	22.6	6.9	9.7	14.8	37.5	22.2	0.9	8.8	2.6	
	50-59 years old	1,130	91.6	60.7	13.2	35.0	6.7	0.9	10.4	11.5	13.3	18.9	43.2	20.8	1.9	6.2	2.2	
	60-69 years old	451	90.0	63.0	14.2	33.3	5.5	—	1.8	13.1	18.0	20.0	43.7	19.1	1.3	8.6	1.3	
Region of residence	Tokyo metropolitan area	1,505	89.1	59.8	15.1	27.6	8.4	2.3	11.2	7.8	13.0	16.1	38.0	25.2	1.1	7.8	3.1	
	Chubu or Kansai area	1,668	88.2	56.5	14.1	29.4	7.3	3.2	14.1	8.6	14.0	16.0	36.6	20.8	0.9	8.2	3.5	
	Others	1,714	88.9	59.9	13.5	34.4	6.1	3.1	12.5	8.6	12.8	14.8	36.8	21.2	1.5	8.7	2.5	
Type of employment	Regular employees	2,848	87.6	59.1	14.9	29.5	7.7	3.6	13.0	7.1	14.1	15.1	35.7	17.3	0.9	9.2	3.2	
	Non-regular employees (total)	1,459	91.2	60.5	13.2	36.0	6.9	2.3	14.3	10.3	12.3	16.4	35.8	26.1	1.7	6.4	2.3	
	Freelance workers	580	88.1	52.2	13.3	22.8	5.5	0.9	7.1	9.8	11.7	16.0	47.2	37.4	1.2	7.9	4.0	
Breakdown of non-regular employees	Part-time workers and arbeits (temporary workers)	1,042	91.9	59.6	13.5	36.7	7.3	3.0	17.2	10.2	11.6	16.3	33.4	28.2	1.6	5.8	2.3	
	Contract workers and shokutaku (entrusted workers)	277	89.5	63.2	12.6	36.1	6.5	0.4	6.9	12.6	16.6	19.1	41.2	17.3	2.2	7.6	2.9	
	Dispatched worker	140	89.3	61.4	12.1	30.7	5.0	1.4	7.9	6.4	8.6	11.4	43.6	27.9	1.4	9.3	1.4	
Income of household for the past 1 year	Less than 3 million yen	765	88.2	57.4	14.1	30.6	6.9	1.6	6.8	9.9	11.5	14.1	35.0	28.9	1.4	8.9	2.9	
	3 million yen to less than 5 million yen	1,060	89.5	58.4	14.8	30.0	8.0	2.6	11.1	9.1	13.2	14.6	37.2	24.9	1.3	8.7	1.8	
	5 million to less than 7 million yen	940	90.7	58.8	14.9	29.9	8.4	3.4	17.6	8.8	14.3	15.1	38.8	21.3	1.2	7.7	1.6	
	7 million to less than 9 million yen	558	92.1	60.0	15.1	31.9	5.4	4.8	19.0	8.4	13.6	16.1	39.8	18.6	1.1	7.2	0.7	
	9 million yen or more	691	90.2	60.5	12.9	30.5	5.8	3.9	16.2	6.8	16.4	18.4	41.2	14.2	0.6	8.5	1.3	
	Do not know	873	82.7	57.8	13.4	31.4	7.6	1.7	7.6	6.8	11.2	16.2	32.1	23.3	1.3	8.2	9.0	

etc.” (21.2%), and “suspension of business (e.g., shutdown, closure, etc.) or increase of non-business days” (18.3%). On the other hand, the percentage of respondents who indicated “implementing work from home/telecommuting” reached only 17.9%.¹¹

The survey asked freelance workers who answered that they were “self-employed (including piecework)” at all of the survey times (N=498) about what happened to their net sales from work (business activity) as a result of the effects of COVID-19 (including the postponement of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games).¹² With a normal month prior to the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis considered to be 100%, the percentage responding “over 75-100% or less” vis-à-vis net sales for March to projected net sales for May fell (March: 62.4%, April: 49.2%, and May: 32.9%), while the percentage responding “25% or less” (likewise, 12.0%, 19.3%, and 24.5%) and “over 25-50% or less” (12.0%, 16.5%, and 16.8%) rose correspondingly.¹³

V. Findings from the results of the survey of all valid respondents

Anxiety about decreased income rose among freelance workers, non-regular employees, and those with lower household incomes.

When the survey asked all valid respondents (the total of employees of private enterprises+freelance workers: N=4,887) whether they felt particular anxiety in terms of their daily lives, besides their “own or family member’s infection,” from the time that COVID-19 infections began until the present time (up to 3 responses accepted), more than half responded “inability to see when infections will abate” (58.7%) and more than one-third responded “prolonged/worsening economic recession” (37.1%) (Table 6). These were followed by “shortages of supplies to prevent infection (masks and alcohol-based disinfectants)” (30.6%) and “difficulty in daily life associated with decreased income” (22.3%). As a whole, more than 80% of respondents indicated that they felt anxiety.

Looking at this by attributes, the percentage of respondents indicating they felt anxiety was higher for females than males. Additionally, the

percentage rose with older age groups, with those of “prolonged/worsening economic recession,” “government’s response in controlling infections” and “visiting hospital/hospitalization due to own or family member’s condition” being high, while that of “difficulty in daily life associated with decreased income” rose with younger age groups. A tendency is seen whereby the percentage of respondents who responded “difficulty in daily life associated with decreased income” is higher for non-regular employees and even higher for freelance workers, than regular employees, and whereby this same percentage rises with lower levels of income of household for the past 1 year.¹⁴

VI. Conclusion

A number of measures were established with the enactment of the Act on Temporary Special Provision concerning Employment Insurance on June 12. They include enabling a program for payment of “the support fund and for the leave forced to be taken under the COVID-19 outbreak” to insured people who were unable to receive an allowance for temporary leave; raising the per-person daily subsidy amount to 15,000 yen (from 8,330 yen); raising the subsidy rate for SMEs who endeavored to maintain employment without dismissals, etc., to a uniform 10/10; and extending the emergency response period until September 30.

Although life is slowly returning to normal as a result of the state of emergency’s total lifting, COVID-19’s effects on employment must continue to be watched. The “new lifestyles” recommended by the Novel Coronavirus Expert Meeting are beginning to spread. JILPT intends to continue ascertaining how the COVID-19 crisis is changing our jobs, daily lives, and society.

1. The first round of special measures for the Employment Adjustment Subsidy was implemented on February 13, followed by a second round implemented on March 10. Since then, the program has undergone a series of large-scale upgrades that include the relaxation of requirements for employer and indices of production/employment, expansion of employment insurance coverage to include people who are not covered, raising of subsidy rates, and simplification of application procedures.

2. All percentages (%) indicated in this report have been

rounded off to the first decimal place. Additionally, because total percentages are calculated from the total “N” number, the total of breakdown items may not necessarily amount to 100%, and total percentage may not necessarily match the total of breakdown item percentages.

3. RENGO-RIALS, “Immediate Report concerning COVID-19, 39th Short-Term Survey of Workers in Japan” (issued on April 14, in Japanese) (<https://www.rengo-soken.or.jp/work/>).

4. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications’ *Labour Force Survey* also shows that the number of unemployed persons as of April 2020 grew by 130,000 compared to the same month of the previous year to reach just 1.89 million, but the number of “employed persons not at work” among all employed persons grew by 4.2 million compared to the same month of the previous year to 5.97 million. This is the highest such number ever recorded and roughly 4 times that seen during the 2008 financial crisis. For more detail, see Masayuki Nakai, “The novel coronavirus’s impact on the labor market: the number of unemployed has risen slightly, but the number of employed persons not at work has risen substantially and the amount of utilized labor has fallen by 10 percent” (issued on May 29, available only in Japanese) (<https://www.jil.go.jp/tokusyu/covid-19/column/012.html>).

5. See Masayuki Nakai, “Employment Trends and Employment/Labor Measures of Japan Affected by Spread of COVID-19,” *Japan Labor Issues*, vol.4, no.24, July 2020, <https://www.jil.go.jp/english/jli/documents/2020/024-03.pdf>.

6. Looking at how the weekly hours worked changed from the normal month up to the second week of May (changes within the response options [counted in five-hour blocks] are not taken into account), when all responses for regular employees and non-regular employees are considered to be 100%, the percentages of responses indicating that working hours was the same as the normal month were 57.5% and 54.9%, respectively, and the percentages indicating that it had decreased were 38.3% and 41.4%, respectively. Thus, no significant difference is observed between the two groups. However, in the case of regular employees the changes of (1) 45-50 hours→40-45 hours (5.6%), (2) 40-45 hours→35-40 hours (4.0%), and (3) 40-45 hours→30-35 hours (2.7%) were large, while in the case of non-regular employees, the changes of (1) 15-20 hours→less than 15 hours (including “did not work”) (7.3%), (2) 20-25 hours→less than 15 hours (3.9%), (3) 35-40 hours→less than 15 hours (2.6%), and (4) 20-25 hours→15-20 hours (2.5%) were large.

7. Moreover, according to Koji Takahashi, “Decreased Working Hours and Impact on Wages: A Look Back at the Novel Coronavirus’s ‘First Wave’ in Japan,” *Japan Labor Issues*, vol.4, no.26, October 2020 at <https://www.jil.go.jp/english/jli/documents/2020/026-01.pdf> (originally released in Japanese and on June 18, 2020 at https://www.jil.go.jp/researcheye/bn/037_200618.html), it is clear that it was females (rather than non-regular employees) who lost working hours and that decreased working hours tended to link more directly to decreased income for part-time workers and dispatched workers.

8. According to Yanfei Zhou, “The Coronavirus’s Lopsided Effects on Women: Converting Predicament into Opportunity with Work-Style Reform,” forthcoming in *Japan Labor Issues* (originally released in Japanese on June 26 at https://www.jil.go.jp/researcheye/bn/038_200626.html), it is clear that employees

who are engaged in telecommuting have a conspicuously low percentage of employed persons not at work, and that the percentage of employed persons not at work decreases for males and females without a minor child as a result of telecommuting.

9. Shinnosuke, Kikuchi Sagiri, Kitao, and Minamo, Mikoshiba, “Heterogeneous Vulnerability to the COVID-19 Crisis and Implications for Inequality in Japan” (RIETI Discussion Paper Series 20-E-039, April 2020) points out that “in industries such as services that involve face-to-face interactions, the impact on workers engaged in occupations that present difficulties in terms of work from home is thought to be large.” Moreover, looking at industry and occupation, non-flexible and social industries/occupations, which are the most vulnerable types in a crisis, account for about one-fourth of all employees. Such employees are concentrated in relatively low income levels; namely, females in terms of gender, non-university graduates in terms of education level, and non-regular employees in terms of employment type.

10. The question refers to action taken by the respondent’s employer and therefore whether or not the action is being applied to the respondent personally does not matter. However, the question is used in this paper for analysis because it is thought that, for example, there is little advantage in terms of management to be gained by also telling non-regular employees about “work from home/telecommuting” when it will only be applied to regular employees.

11. Measures such as “support the development of remote-work environments for freelance workers are incorporated into the “second interim report (draft)” of the “Planning Meeting on a Social System Oriented to All Generations” (June 25).

12. For projected May net sales, aggregation was based on N=376 after exclusion of “do not know” (24.5%).

13. In connection with the COVID-19 crisis, “allowances in response to primary school closures, etc.” will also be paid to freelance workers who are unable to do the work required by outsourcing agreements due to having to care for a child. Keiichiro Hamaguchi, “Spread of the Novel Coronavirus and the Future of Japanese Labor Policy,” *Japan Labor Issues*, Vol. 4, No. 24, July 2020, makes several important points here, including that “the ‘financial support’ package that suddenly emerged as a COVID-19 countermeasure may be unexpectedly preceding in part of the policy governing ‘employment-like workingstyles’” (<https://www.jil.go.jp/english/jli/documents/2020/024-01.pdf>).

14. OECD Economic Outlook, “Issue Note 4: Distributional risks associated with non-standard work: Stylised facts and policy considerations” (June 2020) also notes that the widespread stagnation of economic activity associated with efforts to contain COVID-19 poses a direct risk to so-called non-standard workers (i.e., part-time workers, fixed-term contract workers, and the self-employed) who work short hours or irregularly for low wages and who do not satisfy the requirements for accessing social protection.

This article is edited and translated based on the article in *Business Labor Trend*, no.539, August-September 2020: 3–11 (https://www.jil.go.jp/kokunai/blt/backnumber/2020/08_09/003-011.pdf), which has been compiled by Department of Employment Structure, and Research and Information Service Department, The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT).