



Parents' perspective of parent–teacher relationships in early childhood education and care in Japan

Sachiko Nozawa, Yumi Yodogawa, Midori Takahashi

Toshihiko Endo and Kiyomi Akita

Center for Early Childhood Development, Education, and Policy Research
(CEDEP)

The University of Tokyo

Sachiko Nozawa nozawa@p.u-tokyo.ac.jp

Outline

➤ Introduction

- Aim of the study
- Background
- The Japanese context
- Research Questions

➤ Methods

➤ Results

➤ Discussion

Introduction: Aim of the study

- ❑ This study aims to explore parents' perceptions of parent–teacher relationships in the context of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in Japan.
- ❑ Specifically, the study will examine the manner in which parents perceive the exchange of information relating to topics such as their children's meals, sleep, and play both at home and at the ECEC environment.

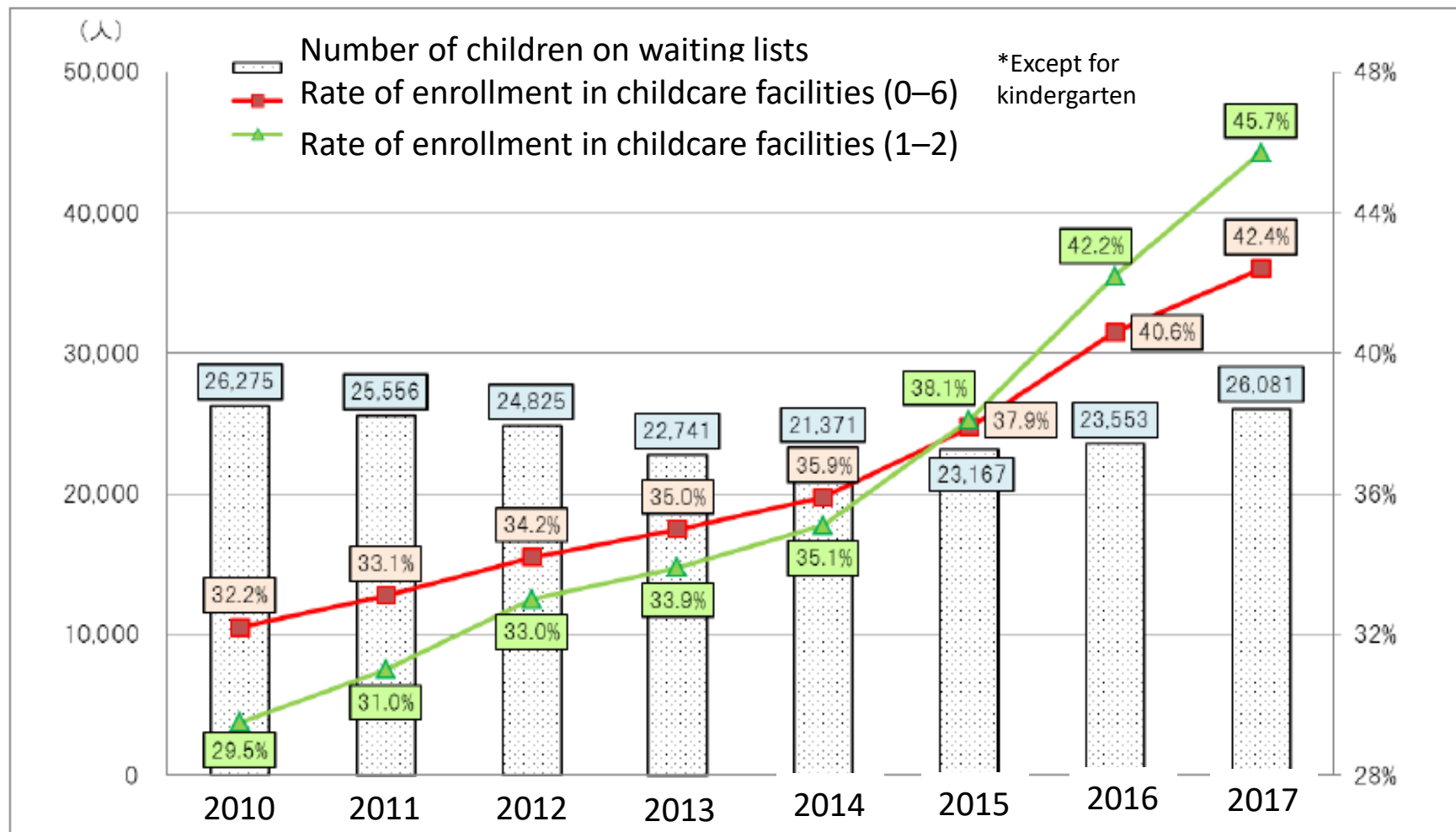
Introduction: Background

- The importance of parent–teacher relationships
 - Coordinating care between a child’s home and ECEC settings is essential for high quality care and education, especially for young children (Lang, Tolbert, Schoppe-Sullivan, Bonomi, 2015; Reedy & McGrath, 2010; Vlasov and Hujala, 2017 etc.).
 - Co-caring relationship, that is “parents and teachers ‘work together’ in their roles nurturing the child” (Lang et al., 2015; Lang, Schoppe-Sullivan, and Jeon, 2017) is one of the perspectives for understanding the nature of parent-teacher relationships.

- Although it is argued that communication is one of the important components of co-caring relationship (Lang et al., 2015; Lang et al., 2017), there has been little detailed examination of the manner in which parents perceive communication with teachers. In particular, the exchange of information on specific topics such as their children's sleep, meals, and play both at home and in the ECEC environments are less examined.
- This study investigated Japanese parents' perceptions of parent–teacher relationships with reference to the co-caring relationship perspective, especially focusing on the exchange of information between them.

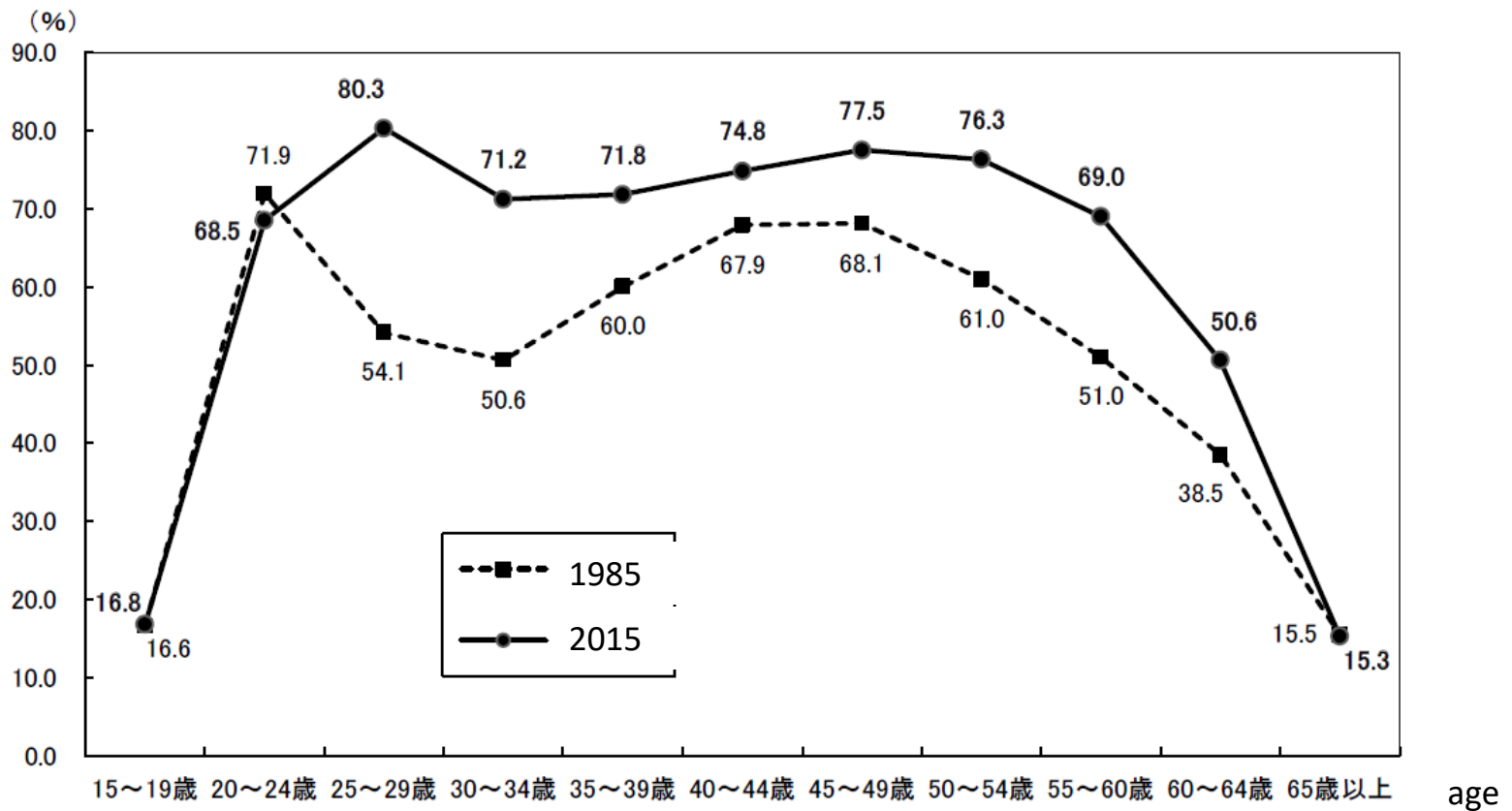
Introduction: Japanese context

- Increase in the demand for childcare, especially for children aged 0–2



➤ Increase in the rate of working women

Labor participation ratio of women



資料出所：総務省「労働力調査」（昭和 60 年、平成 27 年）

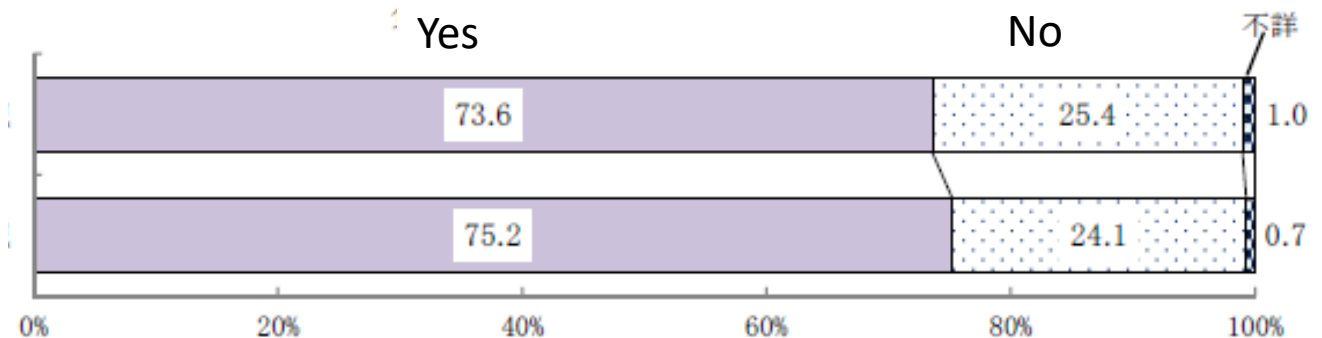
<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/houdou/0000135522.html>

- Many parents feel mentally burdened or anxious about childrearing.

Do you feel mentally burdened or worried about childrearing?

Parents' of children
born in 2001

Parents' of children
born in 2011



<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/syusseiji/16/index.html>

⇒ The national childcare guidelines stress the importance of support for parents in childrearing.

➤ Parent–teacher communication

☐ Direct communication

- Daily conversations at the time of drop off and pick up
- Teacher-parent meetings

☐ Indirect communication

- Daily communication via notebooks
- Documents (notifications, class news etc.) sent by childcare facilities

Introduction:

Research questions

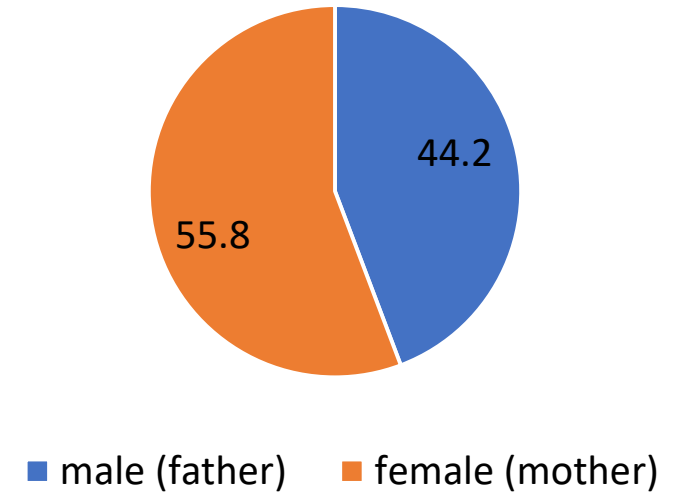
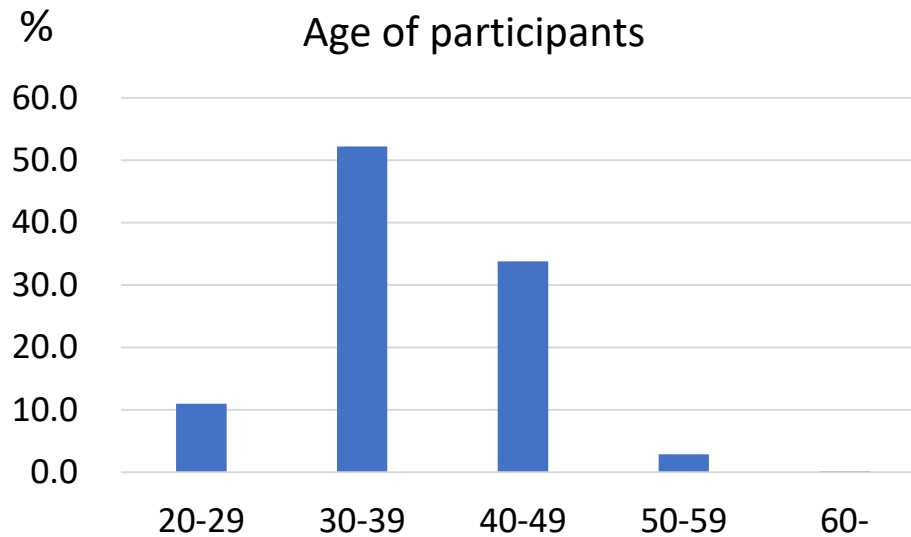
1. How do Japanese parents perceive the information exchange pertaining to particular topics such as their children's sleep, meals, and play both at home and in the ECEC environments?
2. How do Japanese parents perceive their relationships with their children's teachers?
3. How is the information exchange about particular topics related to the quality of parent–teacher relationships as perceived by parents?

Methods:

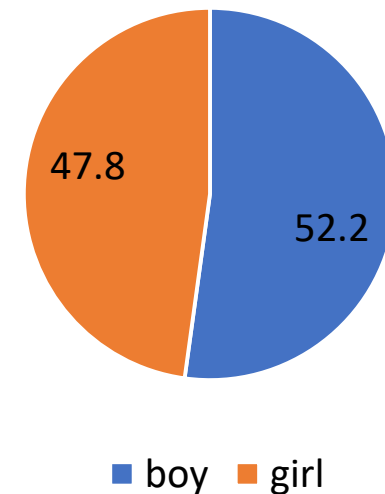
A large-scale survey conducted in 2017

- A survey entitled “Children’s life and childrearing at home” was conducted in March 2017.
- The questionnaire was developed by CEDEP and the implementation of the web survey was entrusted to Cross Marketing Inc.
- The target participants were parents of children aged 0-6 years old (preschool) .
- The survey received permission from the Office for Life Science Research Ethics and Safety, The University of Tokyo. Participation was voluntary and the protection of privacy was ensured for all respondents.

- Characteristics of participants



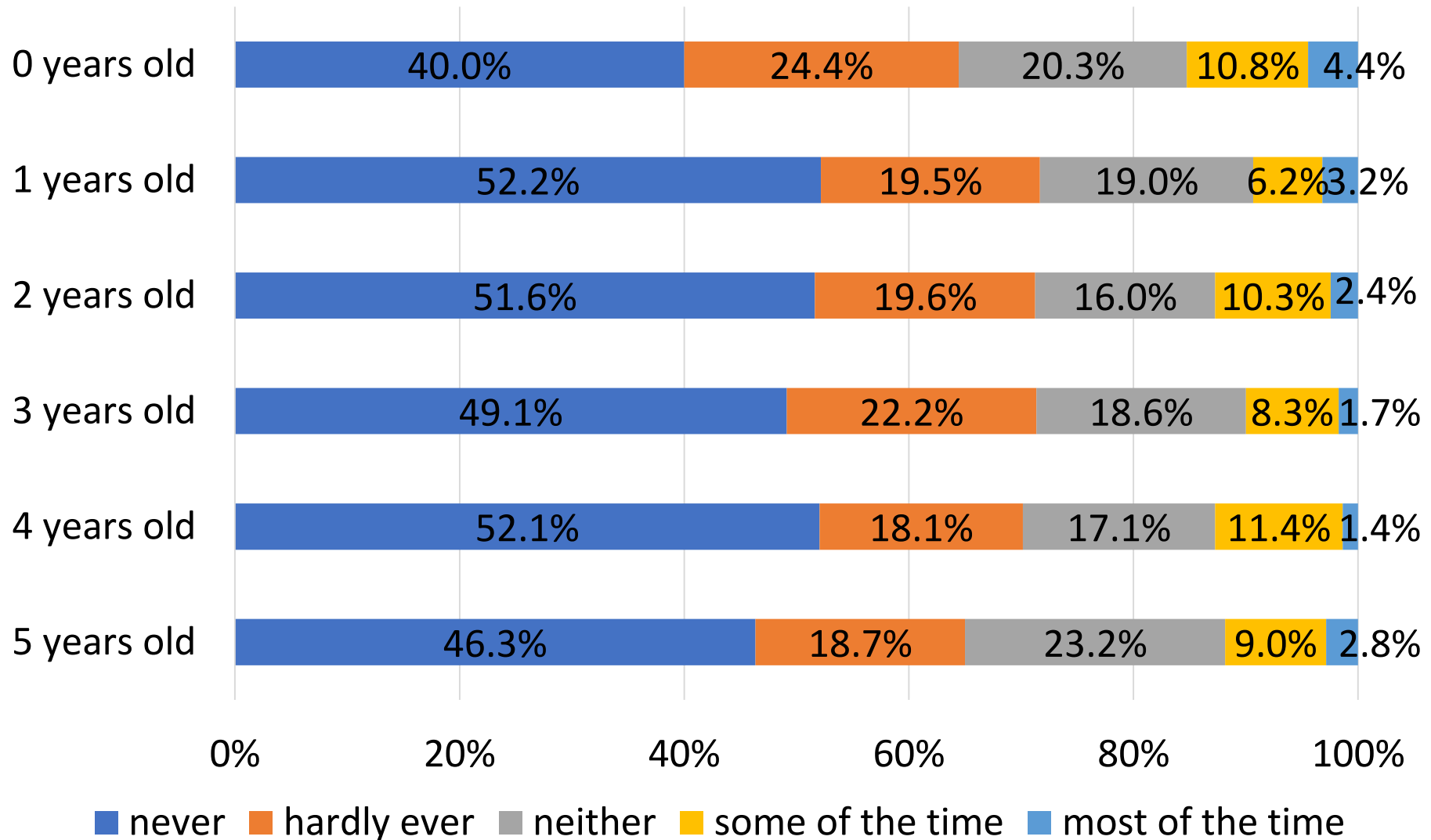
Age of child	Month and year of child's birth	N
5	Apr.2010~Mar.2011	1167
4	Apr.2011~Mar.2012	1181
3	Apr.2012~Mar.2013	1008
2	Apr.2013~Mar.2014	788
1	Apr.2014~Mar.2015	679
0	Apr.2015~Mar.2016	372



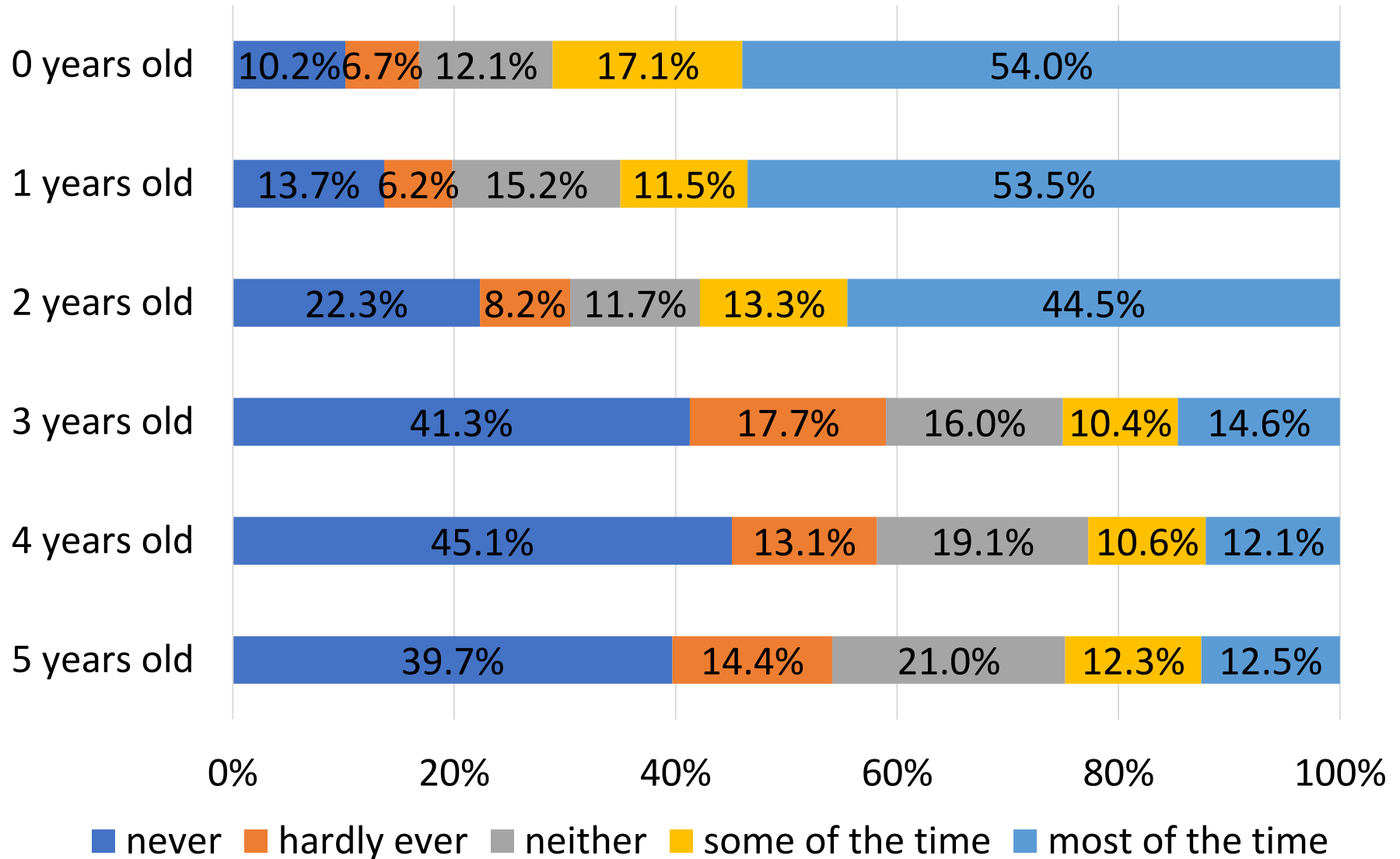
Results on RQ1:

- How do Japanese parents perceive the information exchange pertaining to particular topics such as their children's sleep, meals, and play both at home and in the ECEC environments?
- Parents' responses reveal that parents of younger children tend to exchange more information about their children's meals, sleep, and play with teachers than parents of older children.
- They primarily use the school notebook to communicate on these topics instead of initiating a direct conversation.

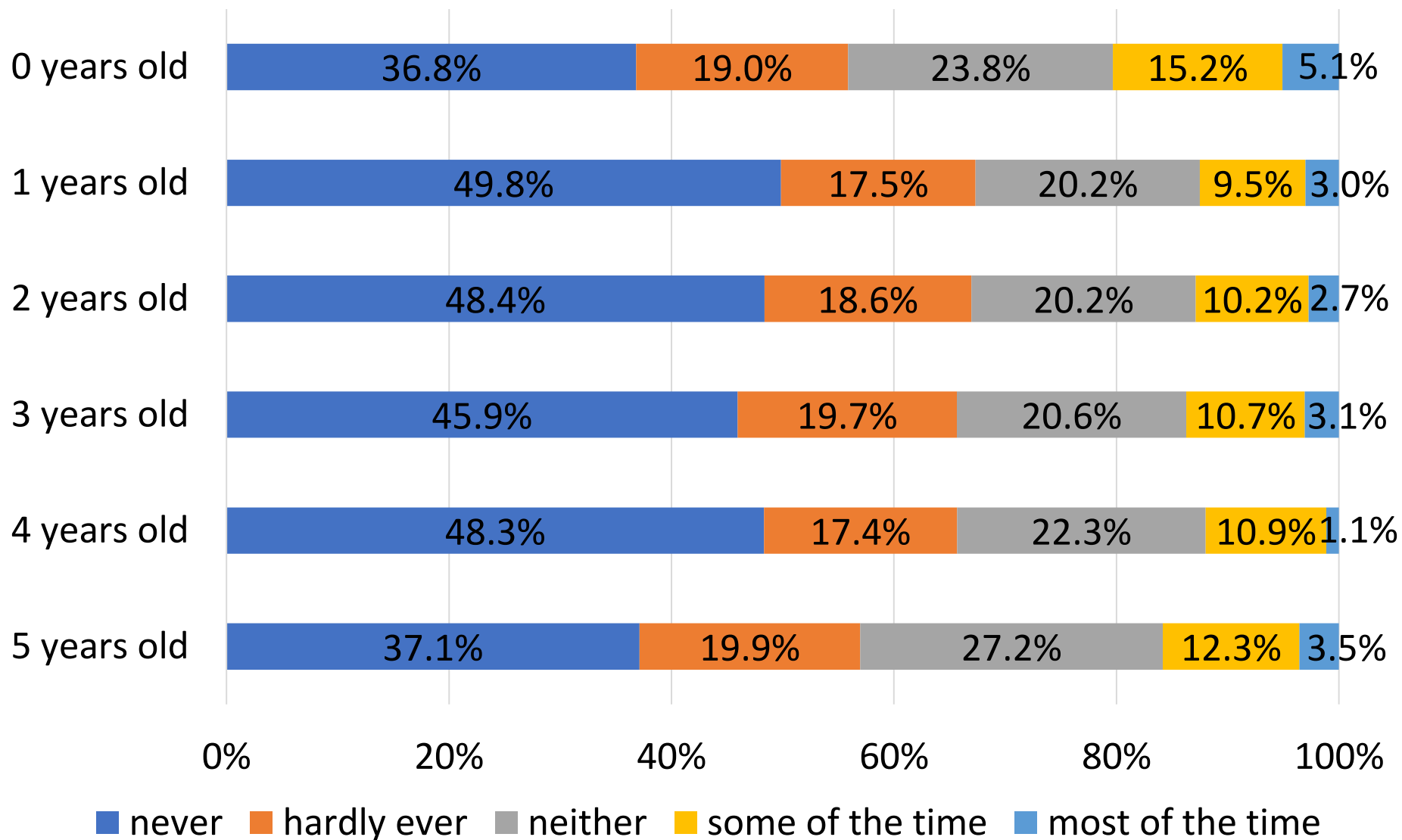
I inform my teacher in daily conversations about the time and duration of my child's sleep at home



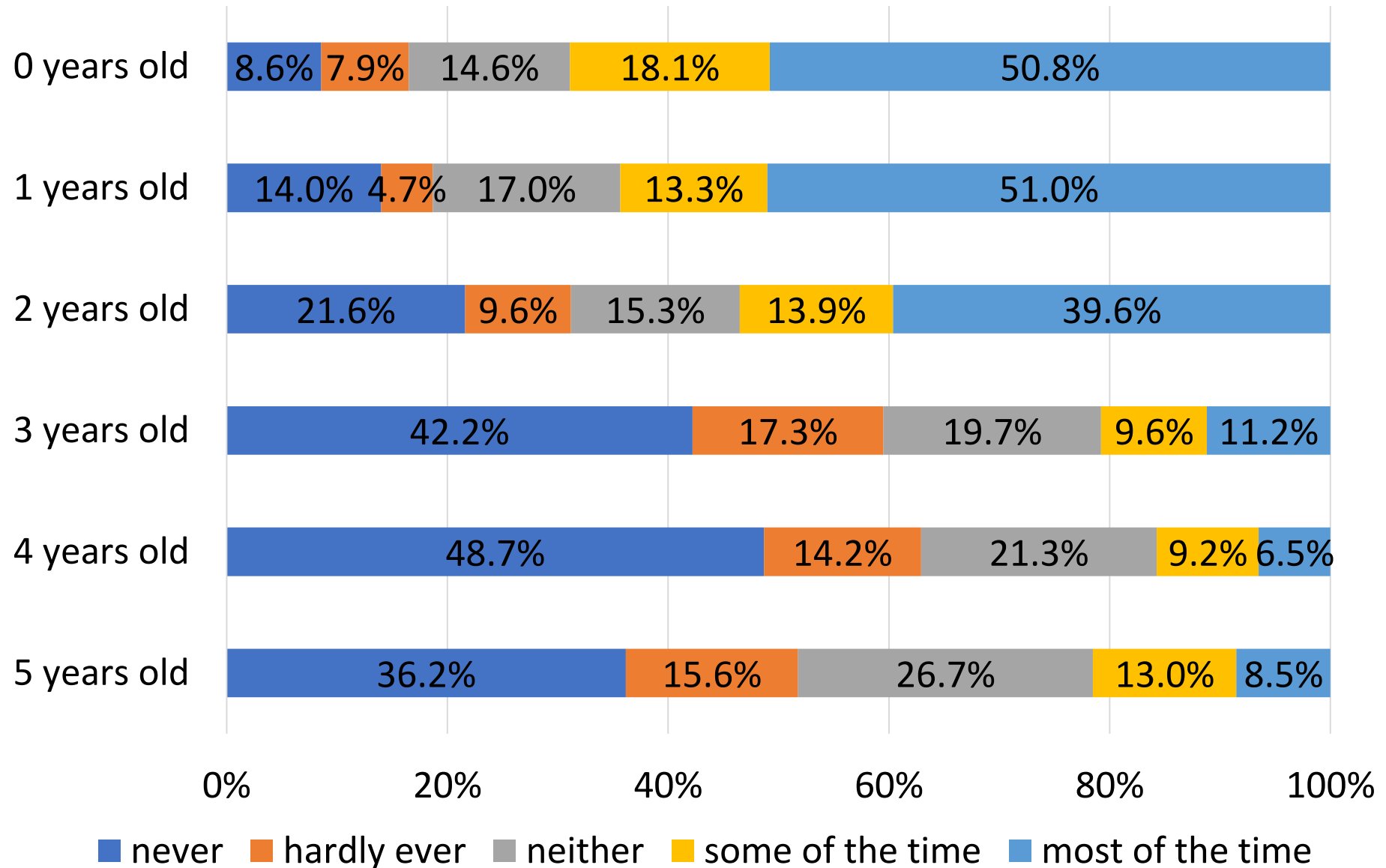
I write about the time and duration of my child's sleep at home on my daily communication notebook



The teacher informs me in daily conversations about the time and duration of my child's nap.



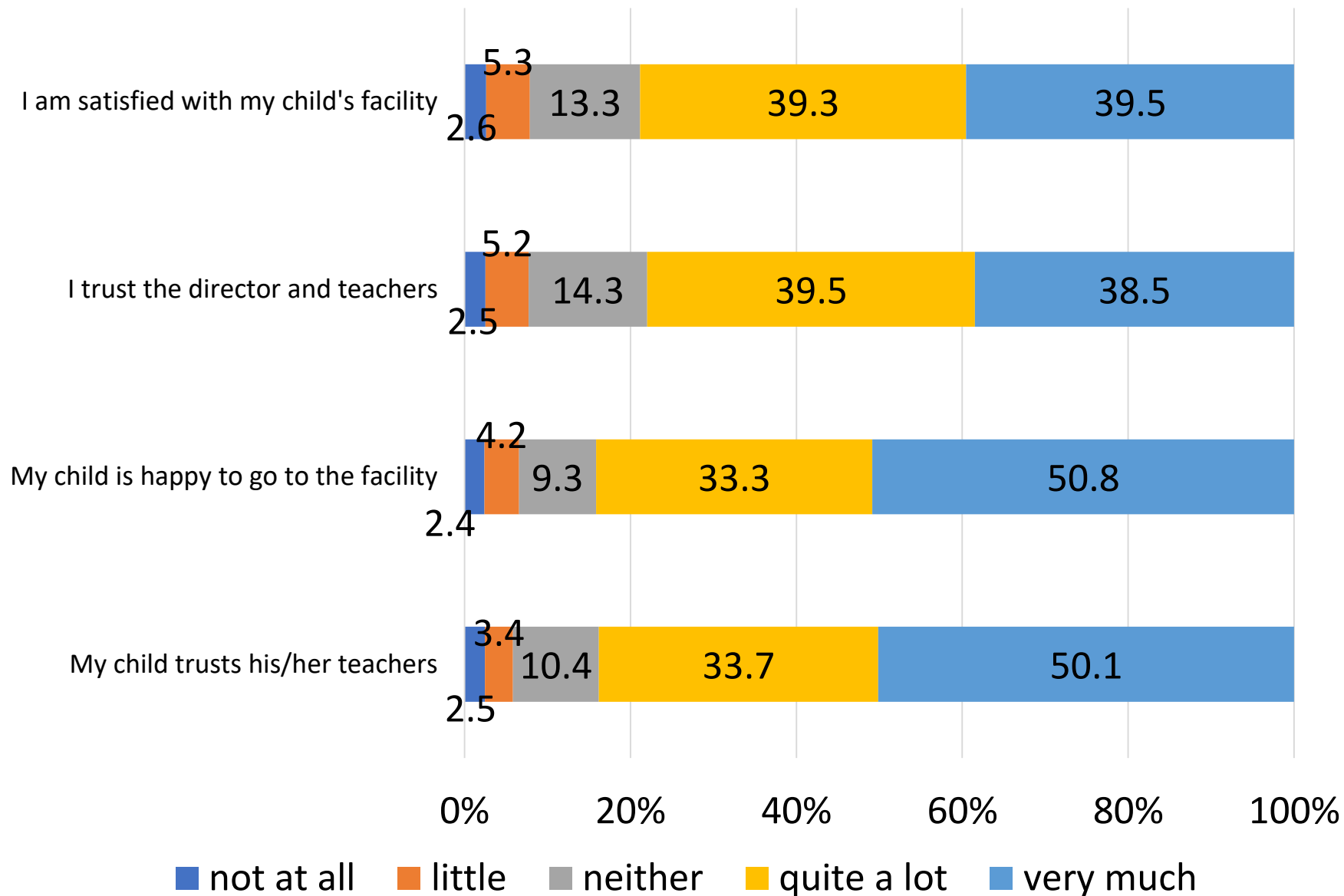
Teacher writes about the time and duration of my child's nap on my daily communication notebook



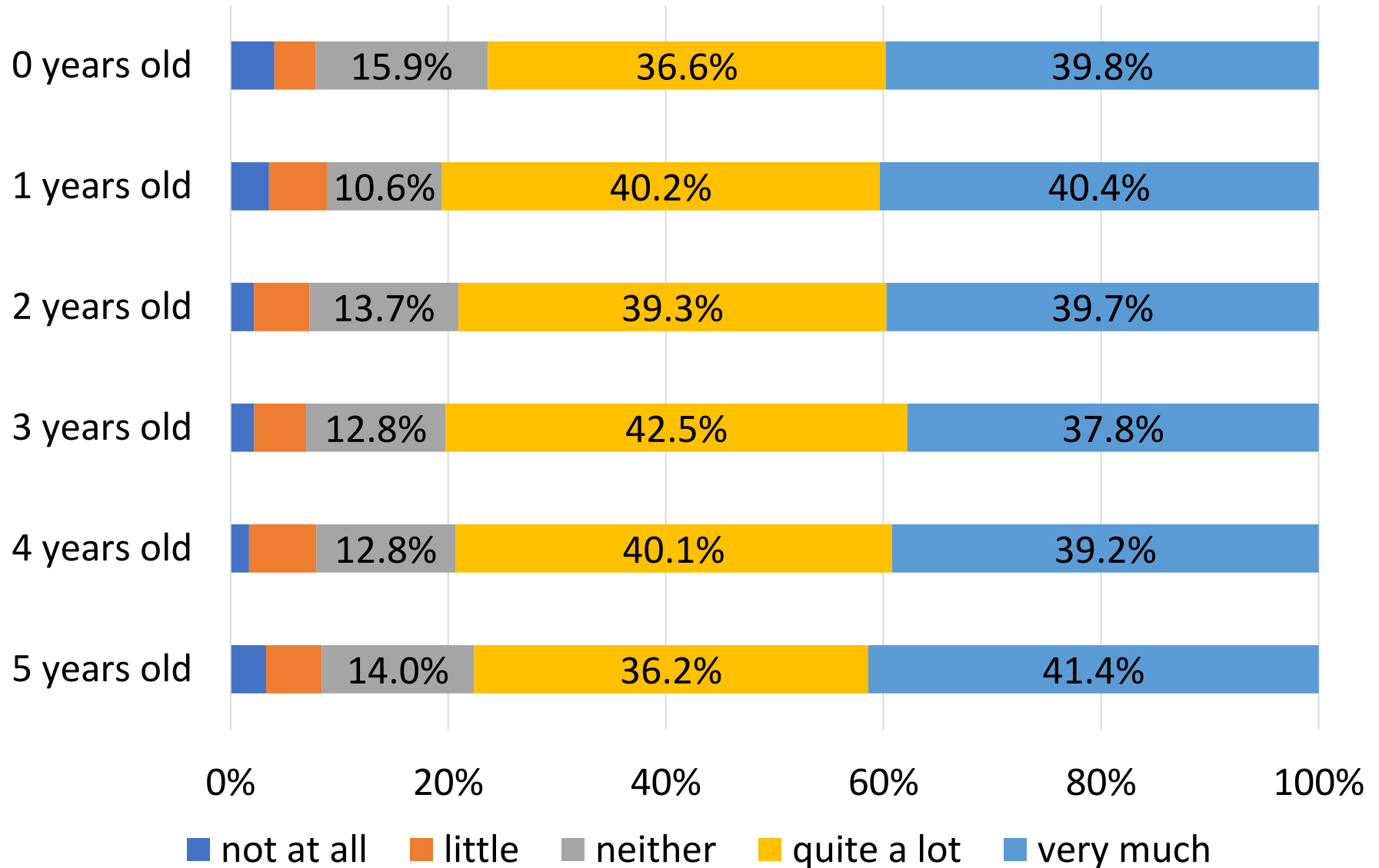
- Similar trends are found for the exchange of information about
 - meals (the time, amount, contents)
 - play (activities, interaction)

Results on RQ2:

- How do Japanese parents perceive their relationships with their children's teachers?
- Many parents think that their children and they themselves trust their teachers. But there are still some parents who do not.



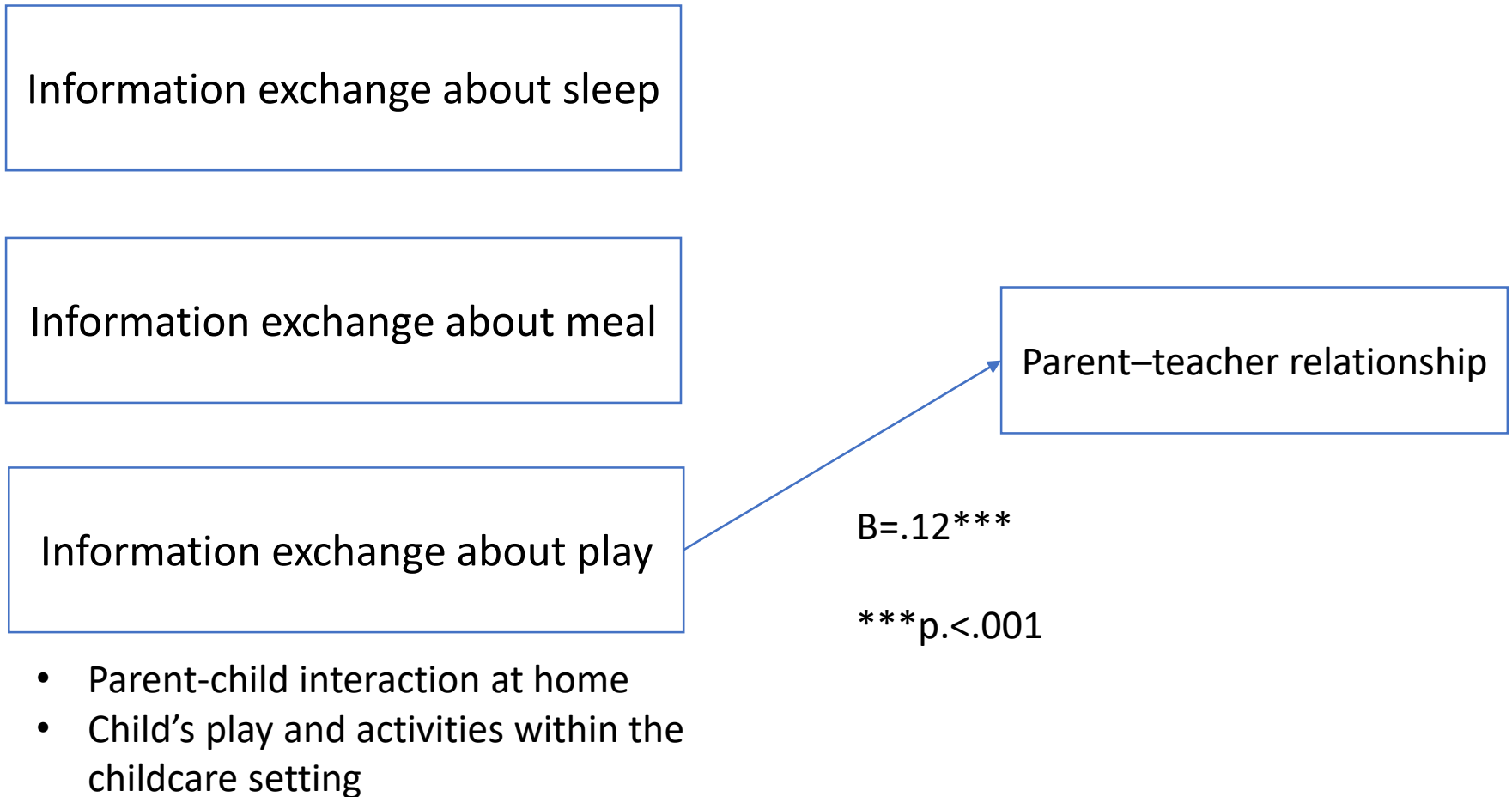
I am satisfied with my child's facility



Results on RQ3:

- How is the information exchange about particular topics related to the parent–teacher relationships as perceived by parents?
- The information exchange about play at home and in the ECEC settings may contribute to the parent–teacher relationships as perceived by parents.

- The results of the multiple regression analyses



Discussion

- A communication notebook is used, and it may constitute a good tool for the exchange of information between teachers and parents of younger children.
 - Specifically, information exchange about children's play at home and in the childcare setting may contribute to the development of the parent–teacher relationship.
- ⇒ The rhythms and patterns of a child's life as well as the child's daily activities and interactions may need to be shared in order to build good parent–teacher relationships.

➤ Implications for practice and teacher training

- It is indicated the importance of communication on the child's daily activities and interactions.
- Writing comments on child's daily activities demands skills and is not easy in busy working schedule of teachers. Enhancement of the skills as well as introducing good tools including good apps for communication may be important.

➤ Future directions

- Exploring other important means of communications and dimensions of co-caring relationships between parents and teachers is needed.