

## What do Hawaiian Students Know about Kobe?

by Keisuke Miki

I carried out my research project at the UH cafeteria. My topic was Is Kobe Famous in Hawaii? I asked students four questions. Question 1: What do you know about Kobe City, which is in Japan? Question 2: Do you know the company Asics? Its main office is in Kobe. Question 3: Do you know who Ichiro is? Question 4: If you know Ichiro, do you know which team Ichiro used to play for in Kobe? If you do not know Ichiro, what major league baseball players in Japan do you know? I asked thirteen people; three were Japanese and ten were not Japanese.

The results of question 1 were that all of the Japanese said, "Yes," but none of the others knew anything about Kobe City. However, almost all of them knew of Kobe beef. I think it is problem that Kobe beef does not lead people to know about Kobe City. We Kobe citizens must promote the knowledge that Kobe beef was born in and around Kobe City.

In answer to question 2, all of the Japanese said, "Yes," as well as nine of the other people. These results make it clear that Asics is a global company. But, almost no one knew its main office is in Japan and in Kobe. I was a little sad when I heard this.

The results of question 3 were that one Japanese said, "Yes," two Japanese said, "No," five other people said, "Yes," and five other people said "No." I was surprised that less than half of the people knew Ichiro. I thought Ichiro is a superstar and the most popular Japanese person. Therefore, I was shocked by this result. According to what I heard, major league baseball is not so popular in Hawaii. Football is more popular.

The responses to question 4 were that the one Japanese who lives in Hawaii knew that Ichiro used to play for a team in Kobe, but all the rest of the people did not know Ichiro used to play in Kobe and did not know any other Japanese major league baseball players. One non-Japanese person said, "I do not know Ichiro, but I know KIRIN Ichiban Shibori." It was a funny answer.

From this research, I felt that foreign people in Hawaii did not know very much about Kobe or Japan, much less than I had expected. We should recreate Kobe City with distinctive features and publicize it. But right now, Kobe City is not famous in Hawaii.