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[Abstract Title]

Potential of Mosques to Serve as Evacuation Shelters for Foreign Muslims:
Case Study of Gunma, Japan

[Abstract]

While the number of foreign residents in Japan is increasing, they generally have problems in evacuation shelters at times of disaster. In particular, foreign Muslims face difficulties as there are almost no prayer space and halal food in shelters. While public sectors seek to solve such problems, resources of private sectors should also be utilized effectively. Therefore, this study aims to demonstrate the potential use of mosques as evacuation shelters for foreign Muslims since Mosques are considered to have large prayer space and halal food served after pray time. We conducted field surveys, targeting two mosques in Isesaki, Gunma to investigate whether they have facilities (e.g., restrooms and kitchens) to serve as a shelter. We also examined the number of people who can be accommodated, the amount of halal food, and the willingness of the mosque's administrators to cooperate. We found that the two mosques have useful facilities and the capacity to accommodate approximately 60 to 80 evacuees although they do not stock sufficient halal food regularly. Our results imply that the mosques have the potential to serve as shelters more appropriately if halal food is stocked regularly, which provides basic insights for future studies.



[Keywords]

foreign residents, mosque, evacuation shelter, halal food, field survey