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Understanding the Challenges Faced by Foreign Residents in Japan
During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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1. Abstract

46 **Background:** This study investigates the unique challenges faced by foreign residents in
47 Japan during the COVID-19 pandemic. With Japan's significant international community,
48 understanding these challenges is vital. The primary objectives of this study were to explore
49 the mental, behavioral, and financial differences encountered by foreign residents in
50 comparison with Japanese nationals, and to determine the impact of these on their overall
51 well-being and integration into Japanese society.

52 **Methods:** A secondary data analysis was carried out on a cross-sectional survey
53 conducted from April to July 2022, which included data collected from both Japanese and
54 non-Japanese residents. Descriptive statistics and non-parametric tests were used to compare
55 the differences between the Japanese and non-Japanese responses across aspects of
56 demographic, COVID-19-related behaviors, mental health status, trust in government, and
57 financial impact.

58 **Results:** The study revealed significant demographic differences between Japanese and
59 non-Japanese residents in terms of age, family structure, and vaccine preference. Notably, non-
60 Japanese residents were younger (median age 33 vs. 42, $p=0.004$) and had smaller family sizes
61 (median 0.5 vs. 2, $p<0.001$) compared to their Japanese counterparts. Full vaccination rates
62 were higher (92.9% vs. 86.9%) with a distinctive preference in Moderna vaccine being
63 observed ($p=0.009$). Non-Japanese are significantly less afraid of COVID-19 than Japanese
64 respondents (median score of 47 vs. 28, $p=0.049$). Furthermore, non-Japanese respondents
65 were less likely to take advantage of home office arrangements (21.4% vs. 59.2%, $p=0.012$)
66 and less likely to receive financial aid (42.9% vs. 79.1%, $p=0.004$) at the COVID-19 pandemic.

