

# Geographic Proximity to Parents and Women's Labor Force Participation in Japan

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Past research has consistently indicated that coresidence with the couple's parents contributes to women's full-time participation in labor force. However, the impact of parents' geographic proximity on women's labor force participation has not been fully explored, even though the percentage of adults residing in close proximity to their parents has increased.

In this study, I examined the impact of proximity to mother—wife's mother or husband's—on wife's labor force participation, using the Second and Fifth National Survey on Family conducted in 1998 and 2013, respectively. I found that living in close proximity, rather than coresidence, increases the likelihood of wife's full-time labor force participation. A comparison of the Second and Fifth Survey results revealed: (1) Coresidence with wife's mother no longer contributes to wife's labor force participation, but residing in close proximity does increase the likelihood of wife's full-time participation. With respect to husband's mother, (2) both coresidence and living in close proximity contribute to wife's full-time labor force participation, but (3) coresidence decreases the likelihood of full-time participation when the youngest child is under age 7. (4) I also found that in both surveys, mother's coresidence or proximity has an impact only when the wife works full-time. The needs for the assistance of mothers who coreside with their married daughters are relatively high. This suggests that married women coresiding with their mothers may be facing a double burden of care—care for their children and for their mothers.