




## Research Article

# Changing time unchanging balance: Examining the effects of gender, personal dynamics, and actor-partner effect on Turkish couples' division of household labor

Pınar Özdemir

*Düzce University, Education Faculty, Department of Educational Sciences, Türkiye*

Correspondence should be addressed to Pınar Özdemir  [haticepinarozdemir@gmail.com](mailto:haticepinarozdemir@gmail.com)  
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This study aimed to determine whether the gender-centered approach persists in the changing and evolving cultural structure of the 21st century and whether women's entry into the labor force, which is accepted as a power-enhancing resource in resource-based approaches, makes a difference in the division of household labor. In addition, the effects of personality traits constituting the personal dynamics of married couples and perceptions of power on the division of household labor were examined using a dyadic method. The sample consisted of 610 individuals (305 heterosexual married couples). Adjective Based Personality Scale (ABPT) developed based on the five-factor model, the Division of Household Labor Scale, and the Relationship Power Scale were used to collect data. Results showed that women took on more roles in the division of household labor. Women in paid employment reported performing less home labor than those who are not employed, but this is still lower than men. The results regarding the effects of personality traits and power showed that agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and power balance between spouses had effects on the division of household labor. The findings were discussed along with the recommendations for the professionals and future studies.

**Keywords:** Division of household labor, personality traits, power, roles, gender differences, marriage, dyadic analysis

## 1. Introduction

Roles refer to the responsibilities individuals must fulfill concerning their status or position in social life and the rules governing their interactions with others. Family therapy approaches explaining family relationships, such as the Adlerian approach, family systems theory, and the McMaster model, emphasize the existence and importance of roles in the family (Carlson & Yang, 2008; Epstein et al., 2003; Sherwood, 2008). Roles in marriage refer to definitions such as spouse, mother, and father, which are framed by various duties, responsibilities, and expectations to ensure continued functioning (Chen et al., 2014). The concepts of traditional gender roles and egalitarian gender roles are used to explain how roles are framed. Egalitarian gender roles are seen in the symmetrical relationship that continues with meeting the family's material needs and dividing household labor regardless of gender (Gladding, 2015). On the other hand, traditional gender roles dominate in complementary relationships. Roles are rigidly divided, and tasks such as household labor, shopping, maintenance, cleaning, and repairs are expected of both partners. The performance of these tasks and responsibilities may vary depending on the structure and characteristics of the family and the changing conditions of the time. After the 1990s, complementary roles based on traditional gender roles in marriages began to be replaced by symmetrical relationships based on egalitarian roles (Cherlin, 2004; Whiteman et al., 2007). Thus, the effects of gender on household labor may have been changed during the last century.

### 1.1. Division of Household Labor

There are two main directions in the theoretical development of household labor research: resource-based and gender-centered approaches. There are three main resource-based theories. The frame of relative resources claims that a spouse with more resources should also have more power, which allows for avoiding household labor and, if necessary, utilizing economic resources to avoid household labor (Kolpashnikova & Kan, 2020). The second perspective in the resource-based framework suggests that time can be one of the negotiation resources. The time availability approach relies on time differences between spouses to explain differences in participation in household labor (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Hook, 2004). The third approach is the absolute resources perspective. Gupta (2007) argued that individual resources (absolute resources) allow husbands and wives to outsource their share of household labor to hired helpers, thereby reducing the amount of household labor. The other main direction in the theoretical bases of household labor is the gender-centered perspective, which draws attention to traditional gender roles. According to the gender-centered perspective, societal expectations of the genders and their performance determine the gendered nature of the division of household labor. Traditionally, household labor has been considered the domain of women and outdoor work the domain of men (Bartley et al., 2005). The studies on this approach provided a cultural framework to explain the differences in participation between women and men in household labor. For example, while some research provided contrary evidence (Dernberger & Pepin, 2020), the majority of scholars argued that the gender gap is narrowing due to the spread of gender equality among younger generations (Gershuny, 2000) and cultural change in gender expectations (Davis & Greenstein, 2013). Changing working conditions and life concepts, such as women's participation in the labor force, have differentiated the roles men and women must fulfill to continue the family (Jeffrey-Hill et al., 2004). That difference means that complementary roles in marriages based on traditional gender roles were replaced by symmetrical relationships based on egalitarian roles after the 1990s (Cherlin, 2004; Whiteman et al., 2007). According to Bartley et al. (2005), in a family system based on symmetrical relationships, women continue to perform about twice as much household labor as husbands and perform a different variety of household labor than men, despite husbands' increased participation in household labor. In addition, previous studies revealed the differences in the division of household labor in terms of culture and country. For example, Chinese couples prefer a relatively egalitarian division of household labor. Korean couples experience conflicts between spouse's participation in the labor force and the traditional division of labor (Oshio, 2013). In Asian countries, an inverse relationship between household labor burden and marital satisfaction has also been found. In the United States, perceived inequality in the division of household labor was negatively related to marital satisfaction for both husbands and wives (Frisco & Williams, 2003). In addition, there might be other factors affecting sharing household labor. Next section explains couple's personality traits and power perceptions as potential predictors of sharing household labor.

### 1.2. Personality Traits and Power

A partner's personality trait is one of the most important keys to understanding how a relationship works. They also directly affect the marriage's quality, stability, and harmony. Personality traits affect the division of labor and many other aspects of marriage (Caughlin et al., 2000; Veldorale-Brogan et al., 2010). Deciding how to divide labor and set rules in marriage is related to personality dimensions and who holds power (Arránz-Becker, 2013; Harris vd., 2008; Weiss, 2014). Blood and Wolfe (1960) conceptualized power as one partner's potential to affect the other partner's acts. In marriages, the dominant partner with more power may dominate the decision-making process for many things, such as the division of labor (Pulerwitz et al., 2000). In some marriages, the power relationship is on an equal basis regardless of gender; in others, it is based on complementary relationships in which one party has more dominance regardless of gender. In the study conducted by Özdemir (2019), the relationships of happy couples were examined, and the division of labor

was found to begin to shift from its traditional gender-centered focus to an egalitarian approach. However, the qualitative analysis by Özdemir showed that most women (including women working) were found to work twice as much as their husbands, and the division of household labor was organized according to traditional gender roles. The important finding of that research was that some women (including those not in paid employment) were able to achieve equality in household labor. Özdemir emphasized the traits that enable this equality, arguing that personal dynamics are as important as cultural structure. Özdemir also argued that among couples living in similar circumstances in Turkey, some of the partners' personality traits and perceptions of power in the relationship make a difference in the division of household labor.

Nevertheless, when considering Özdemir's (2019) recommendations, more study is needed to examine the generalizability of qualitative results. Parallel to previous studies (Davis & Greenstein, 2013), it was suggested that the gender gap may be narrowing due to cultural changes in gender expectations. In the 21st century, where cultural changes accompany globalization, the division of tasks of the generation experiencing this transition can be very complex, and personal dynamics are also crucial to this complexity. Therefore, this dyadic study aimed to find out whether the gender-centered approach to the division of household labor of couples living in Turkey persists and whether women's entry into the labor force, which is accepted as a power-enhancing resource in resource-based approaches, makes a difference in the division of household labor. In addition, this study aimed to examine the effects of personality traits and perceptions of power, which constitute the personal dynamics of married individuals, on the division of household labor using a dyadic method. Considering that such studies are quite insufficient and need to be renewed due to cultural changes, this study can fill a big gap. This study sought answers to the following questions to uncover the role of gender, whether women's employment in a paid job, spouses' personality traits, and power perceptions on the division of household labor among married individuals:

RQ 1) Does the division of household labor differentiate according to women's gender and entering into the labor force?

RQ 2) Do partners' (male/female) personality dimensions significantly predict their (actor effect) or their partner's (partner effect) division of household labor?

RQ 3) Do partners' (male/female) perceptions of power predict their (actor effect) or their partner's (partner effect) division of household labor significantly?

## 2. Methods

In this study, the correlation-type and comparative relational screening models were used to examine the division of household labor among married individuals. Relational screening models aim to determine the presence and/or degree of co-variation between two or more variables (Karasar, 2009, pp. 81-82). Analyses were conducted dyadically to uncover actor-partner effects.

### 2.1. Participants

The participants consisted of married men and women between the ages of 26 and 52 ( $M = 38.01$ ;  $SD = 6.4$ ) who were reached online by the researcher. Although the age range of participants appears to be wide, the mean age (38.01) and variance (6.4) suggest that participants are in the average adult age range. Only married couples, 305 men and 305 women, were included in the study, which consisted of 610 individuals. Being non-couples was the exclusion criterion of the study. Of the participants, 44 (7.2%) had a graduate degree, 282 (46%) had an undergraduate degree, 203 (33%) had a high school degree, and 81 (13%) had an elementary school degree.

### 2.2. Instruments

#### 2.2.1. Demographic information form

The demographic information form was created by the researcher to collect data about participants' gender, age, education level, and occupation status.

### 2.2.2. Adjective-based personality scale (ABPT)

Bacanlı et al. (2009) developed the ABPT based on the five-factor model. The ABPT consists of 40 items based on pairs of antithetical adjectives scored on a 7-point Likert scale. Factor analysis revealed the following five factors: extraversion (e.g., "prefers to be alone/likes social gatherings"), agreeableness (e.g., "vindictive/forgiving"), conscientiousness (e.g., "steady/unsteady"), neuroticism/emotional stability (e.g., "quiet/peaceful"), and openness to experience (e.g., "interested in art/not interested in art"). Higher scores refer to higher perceptions of the specific trait. The emotional stability items were reverse-scored. These five factors were found to explain 52.6% of the total variance of the scale. In the current sample, Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the dimensions ranged from .71 to .81 for men and from .72 to .80 for women.

### 2.2.3. Division of household labor scale

The scale was developed by Gündoğdu-Aktürk (2010) to measure how household labor is divided. Although the scale has a single factor, it consists of two sections, "household labor" and "childcare." In the "household labor" section (9 items), individuals rate how household labor, such as "doing the dishes" and "cooking", and in the "childcare" section (5 items), individuals rate how childcare labor, such as "taking care of the child's school problems" are divided in their marriages. The items are on a five-point Likert scale. Since the aim of this study was to measure the individual's share of the division of household labor, the scale was scored as "1=I usually do it," "3=We share equally or take turns," and "5=My spouse usually does it." Higher scores indicate that the spouse is perceived to play a greater role in household labor. Gündoğdu-Aktürk (2010) found the internal consistency coefficient of the scale .84; in the current sample, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .76 for men and .81 for women.

### 2.2.4. Relationship power scale

Kaynak-Malatyalı (2014) developed the Relationship Power Scale to measure perceptions of power between spouses. The scale has two factors: power processes and power outcomes, which explain 48.67% of the total variance. The items are on a five-point Likert scale. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as .82, .82, and .87 for the (general) dimension, respectively. A higher score indicates that the person perceives themselves as more powerful in the relationship, while a lower score indicates that the person perceives their partner as more powerful. In the current sample, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .82 for men and .83 for women.

## 2.3. Data Analysis

Ethics committee permission was obtained from the Local Institutional Review Board before data collection. The measurement tools used in the study were transferred to an online platform, and the online link was shared with the participants. Before proceeding to instruments, participants were informed about the purpose and importance of the study and how to answer the questions. Participants also consented with a question of whether they wanted to participate in the study voluntarily. The SPSS 22.0 package program was used to analyze the data. The significance level of .05 was set to interpret the significance of the results.

Data was analyzed in two stages. The suitability of the data set for the multivariate analyses was examined in the first stage. In the second stage, the *t*-test for independent samples was used to analyze whether gender and women's entry into the labor force made a difference in the division of household labor. A hierarchical regression analysis was then performed to investigate the effects of the sub-dimensions of personality traits (agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience) and perceived relationship power balance on the division of household labor.

## 3. Results

Regarding the suitability of the data set, outliers, normality, multicollinearity between variables, variance inflation factor (VIF), and tolerance values were examined. Mahalanobis distance values

were inspected, and no outliers were found in the data set. In terms of normality, the skewness values ranged from  $-.87$  to  $-.14$ , and the kurtosis values ranged from  $-.84$  to  $.45$ , suggesting that the data set was normally distributed (Pallant, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). VIF values were less than 10, and the tolerance levels were greater than  $.10$ . In addition, all relationships between the independent variables were examined, and the highest value among the relationships was  $.55$ . Thus, there was no multicollinearity issue among the independent variables. Those findings indicated that the data set met the necessary assumptions. Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients among the variables, means, and standard deviations.

The independent-sample *t*-test was used to determine whether the means of the division of household labor of married individuals differed significantly according to gender and whether or not the woman was in paid employment. The results are shown in Table 2. The results showed a statistically significant difference in the division of household labor score according to gender ( $t = -33.11$ ;  $p < .001$ ). The mean values of women were lower than those of men, indicating that women played a larger role in the division of labor than men. In only women, the results revealed a significant difference in the division of household labor scores according to whether women were in paid employment or not ( $t = -3.51$ ;  $p < .01$ ). The mean scores of women not in paid employment were lower than those in paid employment. In other words, women who are not in paid employment reported that they played a greater role in the division of household labor, while women who are in paid employment reported that their husbands played a greater role in household labor. To determine the difference in the division of household labor scores according to gender depending on whether women were in paid employment, household division of labor scores were compared according to the employment status of female participants and men (general). There was a significant difference between the scores for the division of household labor of men (general) and women in paid employment ( $t = -25.09$ ;  $p < .001$ ). The mean of women in paid employment was lower than the mean of men. Therefore, even when women participated in the labor force, their role in the division of household labor was greater than men.

A three-step hierarchical regression was conducted to examine the effects of women's and men's personality traits and power perceptions on the women's divisions of household labor. In the first step, women's personality traits were entered into the model. Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were found to negatively predict women's division of household labor, whereas Openness to Experience positively predicted women's division of household labor and explained 24% of the variance. In the second step, men's personality traits were included. Agreeableness and Openness to Experience positively predicted and contributed 13% to the total variance explained. In the last step, the power perceptions of women and men were included in the model. The women's perception of power predicted positively, and men's perception of power predicted negatively. The variables in the third step explained an additional 7% of variance. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 4 shows the results of the hierarchical regression analysis on the effects of women's and men's personality traits and power perceptions on the men's divisions of household labor. In the first step, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience negatively, Extraversion positively predicted, explaining 23% of the variance in men's household labor division. In the second step, women's personality traits were included in the model. Agreeableness and Conscientiousness predicted positively, Openness to Experience predicted negatively and contributed 17% to the total variance. In the third step, women's and men's perceptions of power were included to the model. Women's perceptions of power negatively and men's perceptions of power positively predicted men's score for division of household labor. Women's and men's perceptions of power explained an additional 7% variance.

Table 1  
Descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 E (W)	1													
2 A (W)	.11	1												
3 C (W)	.33 **	.34 **	1											
4 ES (W)	.04	.25 **	.08	1										
5 OE (W)	.49 **	.06	.13 *	.13 *	1									
6 E (M)	-.02	.08	.13 *	.07	.04	1								
7 A (M)	.12 *	-.02	.01	.05	.16 **	.28 **	1							
8 C (M)	.12 *	-.06	-.08	.07	.22 **	.33 **	.36 **	1						
9 ES (M)	.02	-.06	.03	.09	.09	.13 *	.19 **	.08	1					
10 OE (M)	-.01	-.04	-.08	.05	.15 *	.55 **	.29 **	.35 **	.17 **	1				
11 RP (W)	.16 **	.01	-.06	.09	.25 **	.02	.16 **	.15 **	.21 **	.16 **	1			
12 RP (M)	.01	.24 **	.16 **	.11	-.05	.08	-.09	-.09	.14 *	-.06	-.06	1		
13 DHL (W)	.06	-.32 **	-.33 **	.01	.22 **	.12 *	.35 **	.31 **	.07	.29 **	.32 **	-.30 **	1	
14 DHL (M)	-.03	.36 **	.27 **	.05	-.27 **	-.11 *	-.36 **	-.34 **	-.15 **	-.31 **	.34 **	-.59 **	.34 **	1
Mean	49.02	51.43	41.56	30.08	41.73	46.80	51.34	39.10	32.41	39.28	3.84	3.81	2.27	3.66
SD	8.49	7.88	5.63	7.78	7.15	8.93	8.25	6.31	7.66	8.01	.68	.68	.53	.51

Note. \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; E: Extraversion; A: Agreeableness; C: Conscientiousness; ES: Emotional Stability; OE: Openness to Experience; RP: Relationship Power; DHL: Division of Household Labor; W: Woman, M: Man.

Table 2  
Comparison of the division of household labor scores of married individuals according to gender and employment status of the woman

Score	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-test	
					t	p
Division of Household Labor	Women	305	2.27	.53	-33.11	.000***
	Men	305	3.66	.51		
Division of Household Labor (Women Only)	Women not in paid employment	156	2.17	.52	-3.51	.001**
	Women in paid employment	149	2.38	.51		
Division of Household Labor	Men	305	3.66	.51	-25.09	.000***
	Women in paid employment	149	2.38	.51		

Note. \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

Table 3  
Results of hierarchical regression analysis on the prediction of women's division of household labor

Step	Variable	B	SHB	$\beta$	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F
1	(Constant)	3.28	.27	-	12.16	.000	.23	.23	18.40***
	A (W)	-.02	.01	-.26	-4.62	.000			
	C (W)	-.03	.01	-.30	-5.35	.000			
	OE (W)	.02	.01	.23	3.81	.000			
2	(Constant)	1.98	.31	-	6.35	.000	.36	.13	16.53***
	A (W)	-.02	.01	-.24	-4.59	.000			
	C (W)	-.03	.01	-.28	-5.16	.000			
	OE (W)	.01	.01	.15	2.64	.009			
3	A (M)	.02	.01	.24	4.69	.000			
	OE (M)	.01	.01	.14	2.43	.016			
	(Constant)	2.03	.33	-	6.26	.000	.42	.06	17.74***
	A (W)	-.05	.01	-.21	-4.15	.000			
	C (W)	-.02	.01	-.25	-4.83	.000			
	A (M)	-.01	.01	.21	4.29	.000			
RP (W)	.15	.04	.19	4.02	.000				
RP (M)	-.13	.04	-.17	-3.67	.000				

Note. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4  
Results of hierarchical regression analysis on the prediction of men's division of household labor

Step	Variable	B	SHB	$\beta$	t	p	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F
1	(Constant)	5.42	.22	-	24.49	.000	.23	.23	17.89***
	E (M)	.01	.01	.18	2.79	.005			
	A (M)	-.02	.01	-.25	-4.43	.000			
	C (M)	-.02	.01	-.21	-3.69	.000			
	OE (M)	-.02	.01	-.25	-3.99	.000			
2	(Constant)	4.20	.29	-	14.37	.000	.40	.17	19.36***
	A (M)	-.02	.01	-.234	-4.71	.000			
	C (M)	-.01	.01	-.14	-2.59	.010			
	OE (M)	-.01	.01	-.16	-2.69	.007			
	A (W)	.02	.01	.29	5.80	.000			
3	C (W)	.01	.01	.15	2.89	.004			
	OE (W)	-.012	.01	-.25	4.63	.000			
	(Constant)	4.04	.30	-	13.38	.000	.47	.07	21.21***
	A (M)	-.01	.01	-.21	-4.29	.000			
	C (M)	-.01	.01	-.12	-2.35	.020			
	OE (M)	-.01	.01	-.12	-2.11	.036			
	A (W)	.02	.01	.25	5.27	.000			
	C (W)	.01	.01	.12	2.47	.014			
	OE (W)	-.015	.004	-.21	-4.06	.000			
	RP (W)	-.129	.034	-.17	-3.74	.000			
	RP (M)	.157	.034	.21	4.67	.000			

Note. \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.



#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

When the division of household labor by gender was analyzed, there was a significant difference between women and men. Both women and men indicated that women took a greater role in the division of household labor. Whether this situation changes depending on the employment status of the women participants was examined, women's entry into the labor force was found to change women's perceptions of division of household labor. Women in paid employment reported that their husbands played a greater role in household labor. In addition, women in paid employment and men were compared in terms of the division of household labor. The mean scores of women in paid employment were still lower than those of men. Thus, even if women participated in the labor force, their role in the division of household labor was still greater than that of men.

Depending on the roles women or men take in the division of household labor, the following results emerged regarding the effects of personality traits and perception of power:

- As assumed a greater role in household labor, participants rated themselves as agreeable, and their spouses rated themselves as headstrong.
- As they took on a greater role in household labor, participants rated themselves as more conscientious, while their spouses rated themselves as less conscientious.
- When women participated less, and men participated more in household labor, both women and men rated themselves as more open to experience. In couples where men took a smaller role in household labor, and women took a larger role, women and men rated themselves as closer to experience.
- In couples where the woman's perception of "my spouse plays a greater role in household labor" was high, women perceived themselves as more powerful, and men perceived women as more powerful. In couples where men's perception of "my wife plays a greater role in household labor" was high, men perceived themselves as more powerful, and women perceived men as more powerful.

The findings showed that an increase in agreeableness consisting of calm, harmonious, balanced, patient, self-sacrificing, sensitive, and helpful traits of individuals predicted that they would perform more household labor such as cleaning, washing dishes, sweeping, and childcare. Furthermore, when individuals perceived themselves as more punctual, attentive, planned, and programmed (conscientiousness dimension), they would take on more household labor. As married individuals' openness to experience scores increased, so did men's perception that they would take on a greater role in household labor. Those results suggest that the more open women and men were to developments and the more advanced they were, the greater the participation of men in the division of labor in the household. In other words, in families with women and men open to experience, men were more involved in the division of household labor. The final step of the analysis examined women's and men's perceptions of power, and the results revealed a negative effect of power on household labor. Individuals who feel powerful take on less, and their spouses take on more roles in household labor.

Previous studies on the effects of gender, employment status, and other personal dynamics on household labor across cultures, geographies, and time periods were reviewed to discuss the current findings. First, the relationships between personality traits such as agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and division of labor were notable. Agreeableness was about kindness, helpfulness, sensitivity to others, and empathy (Bacanlı et al., 2009). Those traits may make individuals more receptive to their spouses' needs and more willing to participate in strenuous household labor. Agreeable personality traits may facilitate negotiation and cooperation in task division. This will likely lead to relationships evolving from complementary roles to symmetrical ones. Conversely, individuals with low levels of agreeableness may be more conservative about their own needs and desires and less willing to compromise, leading to conflict and inequality in the division of labor. Another dimension related to the division of labor was conscientiousness. Conscientious individuals are characterized by organization, a sense of responsibility, and attention to detail (Bacanlı et al., 2009). High levels of conscientiousness are

associated with a sense of duty and accountability, which may lead responsible partners to be more involved in household labor. Previous studies examining the relationship between personality traits and division of labor revealed a relationship. In a qualitative study examining the philosophies and strategies of 47 middle-class heterosexual couples who considered themselves successful in balancing work and family, the female partner was reported to be primarily responsible for organizing the family (Zimmerman et al., 2002). In the interviews, couples explained this in terms of personal characteristics. They reported that women took the role of the main organizer because they were better suited to handle such responsibilities, referring to the organizer personality of women. They portrayed women as the ideal person to fulfill the role of family organizer. Participants made statements such as "it was in her nature," "it was her type," or "she's really good at it because of the way she acts" (p. 79). On the other hand, many men saw themselves in complementary roles, with their explanations expressing a "flexible personality" (p. 80). The authors argued that the interactions between personalities create a cycle of behavioral interactions between spouses. In other words, if a couple believes that one of the partners is more organized, planned, and programmed, more organizational tasks will be assigned to that partner and a belief may develop that the other partner is less capable of organization. Considering that being organized, planned, and programmed, as noted in Zimmerman et al. (2002), represents the characteristics of the personality dimension of conscientiousness according to the five-factor theory, a result emerges consistent with the current study. Being conscientious leads to taking on more household labor. Kolpashnikova and Kan (2020) found that agreeableness had explanatory significance in household labor, such as cooking and shopping. In addition, women with high levels of agreeableness were more involved in household labors such as cooking, and men with high agreeableness were more involved in household labors such as shopping. Erickson (2005) examined the relationship between personality and division of labor using the instrumental-masculine and expressive-feminine subscales of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, developed by Spence and Helmreich (1978). Erickson found that women who described their personalities using more feminine expressions tended to perform more emotional labor. Interestingly, women who viewed masculine, instrumental traits as appropriate for themselves also tended to do more labor. Even after controlling the effects of relative resources, time constraints, and gender ideology, women were found to be primarily responsible for household labor and childcare. Erickson's (2005) study showed that personality traits have an influence but that a more gender-centered approach remains prevalent. Bartley et al. (2005) conducted a study on the effectiveness of the gender-centered approach. They found that although husbands also participated in household labor, tasks such as cleaning and care were perceived as the responsibility of women, and women performed about twice as much household labor as husbands. During the Covid-19 lockdowns in Spain and Italy, a study was conducted on gender differences in household labor and childcare distribution and how these affected couples' conflicts during the lockdown. The study showed that the overall amount of household labor during the lockdown led women to perceive an unequal distribution of the household, which in turn affected couples' conflicts (Hernández-Albújar et al., 2023). The current study found that women assumed a greater role in household labor than men, despite their entry into the labor force, consistent with the literature. It can be concluded that gender roles and related expectations still play an important role in the Turkish sample.

Another finding was that openness to experience was also a predictor. Openness to experience means that individuals can think independently, are creative, and adapt to innovations (Bacanlı et al., 2009). The fact that couples with these characteristics behave more egalitarianly in the division of labor shows that these individuals are free from traditional gender roles. The expectation and tendency of partners towards more egalitarian gender roles might have led them to design the division of household labor with more egalitarian solutions. Traditional gender roles play an important role in shaping household labor dynamics. These roles are often seen as complementary relationships that require women to be responsible for caregiving and household labor. Contemporary societies have made progress in challenging these norms, but deeply held beliefs can still influence the division of labor. Working Mother (2000) provided another explanation for

why the onerous responsibility of household organization is left to women. Many women argued they did not trust their husbands to do such tasks. The article noted that many women do not feel comfortable sharing family organizations with their husbands and that their husbands often seem unwilling to manage many of the details of family life (as cited in Zimmerman et al., 2002). Killewald and Gough (2010) argued that the absolute resources approach was better suited to explain the extent of participation in household labor in countries of the global North. That is, external support is included in the division of labor. Evertsson (2014) examined spousal gender ideology, routine household labor, and the division between men and women in childcare in Sweden, and found that men with egalitarian gender ideology spend 1 hour more per week on household labor than other men, while their wives spend about 2 hours less than other women. Evertsson reported that in couples where men and women had an egalitarian solid ideology, child care was more equally divided by gender. Childcare and equality in household labor are interrelated. The study showed that in a family where gender was equal in childcare, men also spent more time on household labor. Kyrgyzstan is one of the countries where traditional gender roles and the resulting complementary relationships are dominated by individuals who resist innovation and change (Kan et al., 2019). The return of post-Soviet countries to traditional gender roles challenges linear notions of gender relations development, in contrast to what is observed in the global North (e.g., Canada and the United States; Kolpashnikova & Kan, 2020).

Power was also an important dynamic determining who takes on what task, either through a conscious decision or a spontaneous tendency when entering everyday life. Sergin and Flora (2011) found that the decision-making process and rule-making in marriage were related to who holds the power. The balance of power in the interaction between spouses and the decision-making mechanism that develops accordingly influenced the roles of men and women in marriage (Vennum & Fincham, 2011). The dominant partner with more power dominates the decision-making process, which may be a possible outcome in marriages (Pulerwitz et al., 2000). When it is the man who holds the power as an individual, complementary relationships should be considered, while symmetrical relationships should be considered when they are organized as equals and the woman has a say (Mbweza et al., 2008). The partner who holds the power was found to be influential in the division of household labor and other decisions. The results also showed that women's power was able to shift the division of labor beyond traditional gender roles. Conversely, power led to a tendency toward a gendered division of labor for men. The relevant literature has shown that power, a part of decision-making, was related to the division of household labor (Kolpashnikova & Kan, 2020). Blood and Wolfe (1960) investigated where power comes from and provided evidence that a man's relative power in the household increased in proportion to the amount of his individual resources, such as income, education level, and occupational status. The current study found that despite their income, women still play a greater role in the division of household labor. Thus, power perceived by women can be influenced by many variables other than income. In a qualitative study, Özdemir (2019) also reported that many working women took a greater role in the division of household labor and that women's entry into the labor force did not influence the division of household labor as much as expected. The time factor, one of the resource-based approaches, is also likely to have changed with women's entry into the labor force. Accordingly, families in Spain where women work were analyzed, and the effect of time use on the division of household labor was examined. The results showed that the time factor plays an important role in the division of household labor. However, on a day when the husband did not work, household labor was divided almost equally, while on a day when the wife did not work, most of the household labor was performed by the wife (Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2019). Another study, also conducted in Spain, found that there was no clear relationship between the time women spend on household labor and their absolute income. Regarding childcare, the time women and men spent caring for their children did not depend on relative or absolute income. When women's income exceeded that of their partner, the share of household labor they perform also increased, indicating compensatory gender representation (Altuzarra et al., 2020). Moreno-Colom (2017) concluded that female employment was a necessary but not

sufficient condition for gender equality. A statistical analysis of 310 couples in the United Kingdom found that women's more egalitarian pre-maternity attitudes tended toward a more traditional division of labor after the birth of their first child (Schober, 2013).

The current findings that women take a greater role in the division of household labor despite their participation in the labor force shows that the impact of gender-centered approaches persists and reminds us that more must be done to incorporate egalitarian and resource-based approaches into the system. On the other hand, the impact of personality traits showed that the division of labor in the household could not be explained by traditional or egalitarian approaches alone and highlighted the importance of personality traits. In other words, the problems arising from the division of household labor between married couples should not only be addressed in a sociocultural context but couples should be empowered to take responsibility based on their personality traits.

## 5. Limitations and Future Studies

Although the findings contain important insights, there are also some limitations. For example, this study does not include absolute external resources (women household helpers). In addition, this study did not include the time factor from resource-based approaches. Power relations between partners were examined, but the source of power they hold was not included in the study. Future qualitative studies can investigate the division of household labor, particularly with women who assume a greater role in the division of household labor despite having paid employment and women who do not feel powerful, will provide important insights into the sociocultural context of the twenty-first century. In addition, the relationship between the division of household labor and marital satisfaction and its impact on the family life cycle can be examined. Although there has been a trend toward gender equality over the past 50 years, gender segregation in household labor persists. Studies (e.g., Ruppner et al., 2018) showed that women who reported performing more household labor were less satisfied with their relationship and more likely to consider separation. Policymakers are therefore recommended to work toward reducing household inequality to achieve a better work-life balance for women.

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