

## Cognitive Housework and Parents' Relationship Satisfaction

Richard J. Petts\*  
Ball State University

Daniel L. Carlson\*\*  
University of Utah

Jaclyn S. Wong\*\*\*  
Langer Research Associates

The authors have no conflict of interest to report.

Petts, Richard J., Daniel L. Carlson, and Jaclyn S. Wong. 2025. "Cognitive Housework and Parents' Relationship Satisfaction." *Journal of Marriage and Family*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.13082>.

### Acknowledgements:

This study was generously supported by the American Sociological Association Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline (2020) and the National Science Foundation under Grant Nos. 2148610 and 2148501. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

\*Richard J. Petts, College of Sciences and Humanities, Ball State University, 193 North Quad, Muncie, IN 47306. Email: rjpetts@bsu.edu. Phone: 765-285-1074.

\*\*Department of Family and Consumer Studies, 225 S. 1400 E., Alfred Emery Building, Room 234, Salt Lake City, UT 84112. Email: Daniel.Carlson@fcs.utah.edu

\*\*\*Langer Research Associates, 29 Fair St. #1724, Carmel, NY 10512. Email: jaclynswong@gmail.com

## **Cognitive Housework and Parents' Relationship Satisfaction**

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study examines the association between the division of cognitive housework and parents' relationship satisfaction.

**Background:** Equity theory suggests that factors which either objectively (i.e., equal sharing) or subjectively (i.e., feeling appreciated) enhance partners' feelings of mutual benefit lead to greater relationship satisfaction. From an equity perspective, cognitive labor may be especially consequential for relationship satisfaction not only because it is boundless, burdensome work but also because it is invisible and often unappreciated. Drawing on equity theory, we argue that relationship satisfaction is highest when cognitive labor is equally shared.

**Method:** We use cross-sectional data on different-gender partnered U.S. parents from Wave 5 of the Study on U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID-19 (SPDLC) and OLS regression to estimate associations between the division of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction separately for mothers and fathers.

**Results:** Equal divisions of cognitive housework are associated with the highest levels of relationship satisfaction for both mothers and fathers. This association is consistent across various measures and dimensions of cognitive housework, with few exceptions.

**Conclusion:** Relationship satisfaction is highest when partners equally share cognitive housework, as sharing this labor may reduce burdens on one parent as well as increase the visibility and value of this often hidden form of domestic labor.

Keywords: gender; housework/division of labor; relationship satisfaction; unpaid family work

### **Cognitive housework and Parents' Relationship Satisfaction**

The gendered division of domestic labor has important implications for relationship satisfaction (Bernard, 1976; Jackson, Miller, Oka, & Henry, 2014; Twenge, Campbell, & Foster, 2003). Yet, scholars have increasingly recognized that effort in physical domestic labor may only be part of the story. Indeed, emerging work has shown the importance of considering cognitive labor for developing a more complete understanding of couples' divisions of domestic labor as well as the consequences of these divisions (e.g., Daminger, 2019; Petts & Carlson, 2023).

Cognitive labor involves the anticipating, monitoring, evaluating, planning, scheduling, and decision-making related to household management and family life (Damingler, 2019; Dean, Churchill, & Ruppner, 2022). Cognitive labor is vital for families, yet unique in that it is boundless (i.e., never-ending and can be done anywhere at any time) and largely hidden (i.e., what one does is not easily perceived by others). As such, cognitive labor can act as a unique stressor that may potentially strain relationships if one parent is disproportionately responsible for it (Haupt & Gelbgiser, 2023; Petts & Carlson, 2023; Reich-Stiebert, Froehlich, & Voltmer, 2023). Similar to gendered patterns of physical domestic tasks, extant evidence suggests that mothers are also disproportionately responsible for cognitive labor in families (Damingler, 2019; Deutsch, 2000; Offer, 2014; Petts & Carlson, 2023; Wong, 2023). But, literature on cognitive labor is still emerging, and few studies have considered the extent to which divisions of cognitive labor may be associated with one's relationship satisfaction.

In this study, we consider the association between divisions of cognitive housework and parents' relationship satisfaction. Consistent with equity theory (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978) and research on physical housework and relationship satisfaction, it may be that more equal divisions of cognitive housework are associated with greater relationship satisfaction

(Carlson, 2022; Schieman, Ruppner, & Milkie, 2018). We use cross-sectional national survey data from the Study on U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID-19 (Carlson & Petts, 2023) and OLS regression to consider whether the division of cognitive housework overall, and across individual tasks, is associated with parents' relationship satisfaction. Separate regression models are run for mothers and fathers to consider potential gender differences. We contribute to an emerging literature on cognitive labor by incorporating a robust set of indicators of cognitive housework, and by considering how divisions of this labor are associated with parents' relationship satisfaction. This knowledge furthers our understanding of how cognitive labor may influence parents' relationship well-being and the implications of gender inequality within families.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### *The Division of Housework and Relationship Satisfaction*

Consistent with many studies on the implications of parents' divisions of housework (e.g., Carlson 2022; Demaris 2010; Schieman, Ruppner, & Milkie, 2018), we draw on equity theory to understand how cognitive housework may be associated with parents' relationship satisfaction. Equity theory (Walster et al., 1978) argues that individuals are most satisfied in relationships that are mutually beneficial since being under-benefitted leads to negative feelings like anger, resentment, and frustration while being over-benefitted may lead to feelings of guilt and negative feedback from one's under-benefitted partner (Lively, Steelman, & Powell, 2010; Mirowsky, 1985). An equitable division of housework exists when both parents contribute to these tasks and consequently receive similar rewards, and this balance should promote satisfaction within the relationship (Carlson 2022; Walster et al. 1978). As such, relationship satisfaction is highest when housework is shared equally, and lower when either parent takes on

a greater share of these tasks (i.e., a curvilinear relationship between division of housework and relationship satisfaction).

Numerous studies investigating the association between couples' divisions of physical housework and relationship satisfaction generally support the idea that greater sharing of housework promotes relationship satisfaction whereas inequitable arrangements are linked to lower relationship satisfaction – at least among mothers and women more generally (Charbonneau, Lachance-Grzela, & Bouchard, 2019; Hu & Yucel, 2018; Lennon & Rosenfield, 1994; Ruppner, Brandén, & Turunen, 2018; Schieman et al., 2018). Results for fathers (and men) are decidedly more mixed with some studies supporting an equity perspective, others showing that fathers are more satisfied when they do less housework than their partners, and yet others finding no relationship between parents' divisions of housework and fathers' relationship satisfaction (see Carlson, 2022).

#### *Cognitive Labor and Relationship Satisfaction*

Although the division of physical housework matters for relationship satisfaction, at least for mothers, it is possible that shares of cognitive housework matter more than shares of physical household labor. Cognitive labor is the invisible work of “anticipating needs, identifying options for filling them, making decisions, and monitoring progress” (Daminger, 2019; p. 609), and is considered one aspect of the mental load which also involves emotional labor such as worrying about these responsibilities (Dean et al., 2022; Wayne et al., 2023). Although these non-physical forms of domestic labor are related, recent studies suggest that cognitive and emotional labor are distinct constructs (Wayne et al. 2023), and we focus specifically on cognitive labor in this study.

Some key differences between cognitive and physical housework are its boundarylessness and never-ending nature (Dean et al., 2022). For example, while cooking

involves the physical task of actually preparing a meal, cognitive housework related to cooking includes monitoring contents in the refrigerator, recognizing the need to buy more ingredients, choosing items that household members will eat, and deciding when to start cooking so people can eat at an appropriate time. This mental work begins before meal preparation has begun and continues after the physical work of cooking has concluded. Continuing the cooking example, once a meal is cooked that physical task is done (at least until the next meal). But, one can keep thinking about meal planning (e.g., what is the menu for the rest of the week, what ingredients are needed, what time would be best to eat, and whether one needs to shop) and can do this cognitive labor anywhere and even while doing other tasks (e.g., at work or at a child's soccer game). Because cognitive housework can occur beyond the home and cannot be "finished", and because the hidden nature of cognitive labor makes it harder to acknowledge and appreciate in the same way that visible physical tasks are, cognitive labor is considered particularly unsatisfying to do (Haupt & Gelbgiser, 2023).

Because mothers are seen as particularly capable, and do larger shares, of cognitive labor, they are at greater risk of experiencing the negative effects of this exhausting mental work (Daminger, 2019; Dean et al., 2022; Robertson et al., 2019). For example, mothers' greater time spent in cognitive labor is associated with lower psychological well-being and higher family-work conflict (Haupt & Gelbgiser, 2023; Petts & Carlson, 2023; Wayne et al., 2023). Given that physical housework is often viewed as undesirable and minimally rewarding (Poortman & Van Der Lippe, 2009; Sullivan, 2013), we might expect that this also holds true for cognitive housework – perhaps even to a larger extent as cognitive labor is less likely to be noticed, and thus less rewarded, than physical labor. Consequently, gendered and unequal divisions of

cognitive housework may especially contribute to mothers' lower reports of relationship satisfaction compared to fathers (Jackson et al., 2014; Twenge et al., 2003).

An equity perspective suggests that a more egalitarian division of cognitive housework fosters more positive perceptions of relationship satisfaction than unequal arrangements. By contributing equally to the planning, anticipating, and decision-making about family needs, parents may feel closer to their partners (Wong & Daminger, 2024) and less burdened, especially because "managerial thinking" to ensure household functioning often takes on emotional salience as an outward expression of love (Dean et al., 2022; Robertson et al., 2019; Walzer, 1998). For example, qualitative evidence suggests that couples connect equally sharing cognitive labor to intimacy and coupledom (Wong & Daminger, 2024).

Although objective equality in the division of domestic labor is associated with greater feelings of equity surrounding domestic arrangements, feelings of equity do not necessarily depend on equality. Indeed, it is well documented that employed women frequently view unequal divisions of physical domestic labor as fair to themselves (Frisco & Williams, 2003; Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003). Such findings demonstrate that feelings of equity also depend on subjective assessments of the division of labor. One may feel an objectively unequal arrangement is fair to them not only when the value of the labor is highly internalized but also when one receives external social rewards from their work (Gager 1998). As Hochschild's (1989) "economies of gratitude" suggests, feeling that one's work is valued and appreciated by others may decrease feelings of burden and under-benefit and thus promote satisfaction.

Nonetheless, the role of subjectivity in shaping feelings of equity and satisfaction, especially the receipt of social recognition, may be diminished in the case of cognitive domestic labor. Since cognitive labor is often invisible, and one's partner may be unaware of the scope and

depth of the labor one performs, this labor is less likely to be recognized and appreciated by others compared to physical domestic tasks. Objective equality in the division of labor, therefore, is likely more important to shaping satisfaction with one's cognitive labor duties than physical labor and thus feelings of satisfaction should be tied strongly to one's objective share of cognitive labor. As such, those who do a larger share of cognitive housework, especially women, should feel significantly less satisfied than those who share cognitive labor equally.

While mothers in particular may benefit from a more equal division of cognitive housework given that they often shoulder more of this labor (Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2022), fathers' perceptions of relationship satisfaction may also be higher when cognitive housework is shared equally given that fathers express a desire to be more fully engaged in domestic labor and as such may be more satisfied with their relationships if they meet these desires (Petts, 2022). Indeed, there is some evidence that both mothers' and fathers' psychological well-being is higher when cognitive labor is shared more equally between parents (Petts & Carlson, 2023).

One previous study by Cicolla and Luthar (2019) considered the association between cognitive labor and relationship satisfaction, finding that cognitive labor associated with child adjustment and household finances (but not household routines) were negatively associated with mothers' relationship satisfaction. Their measures of cognitive labor focused on a sum of domains that mothers were mostly responsible for (i.e., combining the categories of equal responsibility and fathers were more responsible), however, making it difficult to assess whether equal sharing of cognitive labor is most likely to promote satisfaction. We build on Cicolla and Luthar's (2019) work by examining both mothers and fathers to consider gender differences, and using numerous, unique measures of cognitive housework that enable us to assess whether equal sharing of this labor is most satisfying for parents. Drawing on equity theory, we hypothesize:



*H1: The association between cognitive housework shares and relationship satisfaction is curvilinear; satisfaction is highest when cognitive housework is shared equally.*

*H1a: The association between cognitive housework shares and relationship satisfaction will be stronger for mothers than fathers.*

### *Other Factors*

Other factors may confound the association between the division of cognitive labor and parents' relationship satisfaction, so we consider them as controls in our empirical models. For example, time availability and relative resource theories suggest that parents' divisions of labor may depend on how much time, money, and power each parent has, which may also shape perceptions of relationship satisfaction. We thus consider factors associated with paid work (e.g., hours worked, work from home status) and earnings (Blair & Lichter, 1991; Cunningham, 2007). Also, couples who are more educated and who have more egalitarian gender attitudes are more likely to have more egalitarian domestic arrangements (Carlson & Lynch, 2013; Dernberger & Pepin, 2020), and egalitarian attitudes have also been linked to higher relationship satisfaction (e.g., Wilcox & Nock, 2006). Additional factors such as family size, child's age, and marital status may also affect parents' divisions of cognitive housework (e.g., gender gaps in domestic labor may be greater in cohabiting couples compared to married couples) and relationship satisfaction (e.g., parents with fewer children may report better relationships) (Davis, Greenstein, & Marks, 2007; Pepin, Sayer, & Casper, 2018; Twenge et al., 2003).

## DATA AND METHODS

### *Data*

Data are taken from the Study of U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID-19 (SPDLC), a longitudinal IRB-approved study of U.S. partnered parents who reside with a biological child of any age (at the time they enter the study; 11% of parents reported that their

youngest child was age 18 or older at Wave 5) collected through Prolific. Prolific hosts an online, opt-in survey panel that was originally designed for academic research and thus provides high quality data and more diverse samples compared to other opt-in panels (Peer, Brandimarte, Samat, & Acquisti, 2017). The SPDLC sample is not nationally representative, but evidence suggests that multivariate regression results using opt-in panels are largely consistent with those from representative samples after accounting for demographic characteristics (Jeong et al., 2019; Tourangeau, Conrad, & Couper, 2013). The SPDLC does contain a diverse sample of U.S. parents, and we use the post-stratification weight provided to match national estimates of U.S. parents with resident children by parent age, race/ethnicity, and gender (Carlson & Petts, 2023). As we are ultimately interested in the association between cognitive housework and parents' relationship satisfaction and not in producing national estimates of time spent in cognitive labor (for example), these data are well-suited for this study.

Although the SPDLC is a longitudinal study (for details see Carlson & Petts, 2023), we only use the Wave 5 data here as this was the first wave in which cognitive housework questions were included. Data were collected in October 2023; although the original intent of the study was to follow parents' experiences during the pandemic, data used for this study are taken from after the U.S. public health emergency was declared over in May 2023 (and as such, we do not focus on pandemic-specific experiences). A total of 3,156 parents participated in the Wave 5 survey (2,082 were panelists who had participated in at least one prior wave, and 1,074 were new participants recruited for the repeated cross-section component of the SPDLC). We restrict the sample to partnered parents ( $N = 3,070$ ) who identify as a man or woman ( $N = 3,043$ ) in different-gender partnerships ( $N = 2,839$ ). After listwise deletion to remove cases with missing values, our final sample size is 2,737 parents (1,607 mothers and 1,130 fathers). Parents with

missing values were less likely to be married and had fewer children on average than parents included in the analytic sample, but had similar mean values of our key variables of interest.

Overall, the parents in the sample have a similar profile to national estimates: most families are dual-earner families where the father earns more than the mother, most parents are married, and the sample matches national estimates of parents in regard to age and race/ethnicity (after weighting). However, parents in this sample are more educated (60% have a bachelor's degree or higher) and have higher incomes (\$84,000/year) on average compared to national estimates. See Table 1 for details.

### *Relationship Satisfaction*

*Relationship satisfaction* indicates how satisfied parents are in their relationship with their partner, ranging from 0 = not at all satisfied to 10 = completely satisfied.

### *Cognitive Housework*

Wave 5 of the SPDLC included dedicated sections on parents' divisions of cognitive labor. To more comprehensively assess the association between cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction, we employ numerous measures of cognitive labor. This includes an omnibus single-item question regarding household management, as well as several questions about specific cognitive tasks that are both scaled and examined individually.

Participants were first primed to think about cognitive labor: "Now, we want to know about COGNITIVE LABOR, which is different from the physical work of doing tasks. Cognitive labor involves the mental work of ANTICIPATING NEEDS, THINKING, PLANNING, SCHEDULING, and ORGANIZING different spheres of family life. Examples include: planning what meals to cook, anticipating upcoming repairs that need to be made, thinking about what needs to get done the next day at home, and organizing family events." Participants were then

asked a series of questions about how they and their partner divide this labor. Each question was coded to have the following response options: 0 = mother does it all; 1 = mother does more of it; 2 = shared equally; 3 = father does more of it; 4 = father does it all.

We use this information to construct several variables for fathers' shares of cognitive housework. First, parents were asked a general question: "Overall, when it comes to household management and organizing (e.g., planning, assigning tasks, keeping track of household needs, scheduling repairs, etc.) how do you and your partner divide the cognitive labor? Responses to this question indicate *fathers' shares of household management*. Parents were also asked about how cognitive housework is divided across specific domains. We assess separate indicators for: (a) *routine housework* (e.g., planning meals, monitoring laundry, organizing cleaning schedule), (b) *home repairs and maintenance* (e.g., identifying repair needs, scheduling repairs, monitoring yard needs), (c) *kin keeping/family relations* (e.g., remembering birthdays, planning get togethers/holidays), and (d) *family finances* (e.g., remembering when bills are due, monitoring bank accounts). We also use the mean response across the four domains as an indicator of *fathers' shares of cognitive housework*.

We take this multi-measure approach to cognitive housework for a few reasons. First, like physical housework, cognitive housework is a latent construct comprised of several distinct task areas. Scaling individual items for specific domains allows us to tap this latent construct and assess how it is associated with relationship satisfaction. Second, examining the associations of specific task areas with relationship satisfaction provides potential insights on whether the divisions of particular tasks matter more for relationship satisfaction than others. Last, cognitive housework may entail more than just routine housework, home repairs/maintenance, kin keeping, and family finances. As such, a single omnibus item that asks respondents to report on the

division of cognitive labor related to running their home may encapsulate unobserved dimensions of cognitive housework not captured in the cognitive housework scale.

*Control Variables*

We include control variables in all models to account for respondents' *age*, *education* (ranging from 1 = high school or less to 6 = PhD or professional degree), and *race/ethnicity* (White, Black, Latino, Asian, or other race). We also control for parents' *marital status* (1 = married; 0 = cohabiting), *age of youngest child*, *number of children*, and whether their youngest *child attends in-person daycare or school*. Controls for income include *household income* (ranging from 1 = less than \$1,000/month to 7 = \$9,000 a month or more) and a categorical indicator of *relative earnings* (father earns more, earnings shared equally, or mother earns more). Controls for parents' employment situation include variables for mothers'/fathers' *work status* (not employed, works part-time, or works full-time) and mothers'/fathers' work from home status (never, sometimes, or exclusively). *Traditional gender attitudes* indicates respondents' agreement to six items such as "women and men should share equally in raising children" and "preschool children are likely to suffer if their mother is employed" (responses range from 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree). Responses are coded such that higher values indicate more traditional gender attitudes, and the mean is used as the indicator ( $\alpha = .74$ ). Finally, to minimize the likelihood that our measures of cognitive housework are reflecting gender gaps in domestic labor more broadly, we include a variable to indicate *fathers' shares of physical housework tasks*. This measure is a mean scale combining information on the division of preparing and cooking meals, laundry, shopping for groceries and other household needs, doing dishes, and house cleaning, with each item ranging from 0 = mother does it all to 4 = father does it all.

*Analytic Strategy*

We use linear regression (OLS) models to assess the associations between each measure of cognitive housework and parents' relationship satisfaction, and present all analyses separately for mothers and fathers. Given that an equity perspective (Walster et al., 1978) suggests a curvilinear relationship between cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction, we first test for nonlinearities in these associations for both mothers and fathers by including squared terms and considering both significance tests on the squared terms and BIC statistics to assess whether models improve with nonlinear terms. Tests supported adding squared terms for cognitive housework (although not a focus of this study, tests also supported adding squared terms for physical housework in some models). To test whether the association between parents' division of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction differs between mothers and fathers, we use seemingly unrelated regression to test the equality of coefficients across the models and report results in the text (Mize, Doan, & Long, 2019). Because we use nonlinear measures of cognitive housework, we also present results graphically to illustrate whether equal sharing of cognitive housework is most likely to promote relationship satisfaction.

## RESULTS

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Results support previous research showing that mothers perform greater shares of cognitive housework than fathers, on average. Mothers reported that they do more cognitive housework for both the omnibus (household management) and scaled measure (values of approximately 1 on a 0-4 scale) whereas fathers reported that this labor is shared (values of approximately 2). Across all cognitive housework measures (both the global measures and individual tasks), mothers reported a more unequal division than fathers ( $p = .000$  for all). Fathers reported greater relationship satisfaction than mothers.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics

	Mothers		Fathers		Min	Max
	Mean /Prop.	SD	Mean /Prop.	SD		
Fathers' shares of household management	1.05*	0.82	2.05	0.88	0	4
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework	1.38*	0.69	2.13	0.58	0	4
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework for routine housework	0.74*	0.78	1.65	0.95	0	4
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework for home repairs and maintenance	2.39*	1.18	3.06	0.87	0	4
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework for kin keeping/family relations	0.85*	0.84	1.32	0.87	0	4
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework for family finances	1.54*	1.33	2.50	1.24	0	4
Relationship satisfaction	7.40*	2.41	8.00	2.14	0	10
<i>Fathers' work status</i>						
Not employed	.10	-	.06	-	0	1
Part-time	.07	-	.06	-	0	1
Full-time	.83	-	.88	-	0	1
<i>Mothers' work status</i>						
Not employed	.27	-	.27	-	0	1
Part-time	.25	-	.22	-	0	1
Full-time	.48	-	.51	-	0	1
<i>Fathers' work from home</i>						
Exclusively	.12	-	.20	-	0	1
Sometimes	.17	-	.35	-	0	1
Never	.71	-	.45	-	0	1
<i>Mother works from home</i>						
Exclusively	.23	-	.13	-	0	1
Sometimes	.18	-	.19	-	0	1
Never	.59	-	.68	-	0	1
Respondent education	3.20	1.37	3.75	1.28	1	6
Respondent age	40.03	8.88	41.65	9.30	19	85
<i>Respondent race/ethnicity (ref = white)</i>						
White	.61	-	.60	-	0	1
Black	.08	-	.09	-	0	1
Latino	.21	-	.20	-	0	1
Asian	.08	-	.09	-	0	1
Other	.03	-	.02	-	0	1
Marital status (1 = married)	.86	-	.93	-	0	1
Age of youngest child	9.13	6.45	8.86	6.18	1	22
Number of children	2.02	0.95	2.01	0.89	1	4
Child in daycare/school	.59	-	.65	-	0	1
Traditional gender attitudes	1.83	0.64	1.97	0.72	1	5
Household income	4.98	1.58	5.56	1.39	0	7
<i>Relative earnings</i>						
Father earns more	.63	-	.63	-	0	1
Earnings shared equally	.19	-	.23	-	0	1
Mother earns more	.18	-	.14	-	0	1
Fathers' shares of physical housework	2.12*	0.70	2.84	0.72	1	5
N	1607		1130			

Note: Weighted means presented. \*Indicates statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) difference between mothers and fathers for indicators of satisfaction, communication, and cognitive labor.

Results from multivariate regression models assessing the associations of the single omnibus household management item and the cognitive housework scale with relationship satisfaction are presented in Table 2. Results consistently showed that there is a positive, but curvilinear, association between fathers' shares of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction for both mothers and fathers. These associations are further illustrated in Figure 1. Consistent with H1, relationship satisfaction was highest for both mothers and fathers when cognitive housework, regardless of how it is measured, was shared equally between parents. Indeed, statistical tests show that relationship satisfaction was higher for both mothers and fathers who shared household management and cognitive housework equally compared to when mothers did all or more of this labor ( $p < .03$ ); however, there was no difference in relationship satisfaction when parents shared equally compared to when fathers do more. Contrary to H1a, seemingly unrelated regression models showed no differences between mothers and fathers on the association between cognitive housework and parents' relationship satisfaction.

**Table 2.** Results from OLS Models Predicting the Association Between Cognitive Housework and Relationship Satisfaction (N = 1607 mothers and 1130 fathers)

	Mothers				Fathers			
	1		2		3		4	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Fathers' shares of household management	1.17***	0.22			0.80*	0.36		
Fathers' shares of household management <sup>2</sup>	-0.25**	0.07			-0.19*	0.09		
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework			1.73***	0.35			1.76*	0.72
Fathers' shares of cognitive housework <sup>2</sup>			-0.41***	0.12			-0.43*	0.17
<i>Fathers' Work Status (ref = FT)</i>								
Not employed	-0.46	0.28	-0.42	0.28	-0.59	0.44	-0.50	0.45
Part-time	0.12	0.29	0.14	0.27	0.46	0.27	0.45	0.26
<i>Mothers' Work Status (ref = FT)</i>								
Not employed	-0.02	0.20	-0.11	0.20	0.08	0.22	0.02	0.21
Part-time	-0.38*	0.19	-0.34	0.19	0.01	0.21	0.01	0.20
<i>Fathers' work from home (ref = never)</i>								
Exclusively	-0.06	0.22	-0.09	0.23	-0.17	0.22	-0.14	0.21
Sometimes	0.09	0.18	0.08	0.17	-0.14	0.15	-0.12	0.16
<i>Mother works from home (ref = never)</i>								
Exclusively	-0.01	0.19	0.02	0.19	-0.03	0.26	-0.02	0.26
Sometimes	0.10	0.18	0.10	0.18	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.20
Respondent education	-0.09	0.06	-0.08	0.06	-0.10	0.06	-0.10	0.06
Respondent age	-0.03**	0.01	-0.03**	0.01	-0.03*	0.01	-0.03*	0.01
<i>Respondent race/ethnicity (ref = white)</i>								
Black	0.30	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.49	0.23	0.50*	0.23

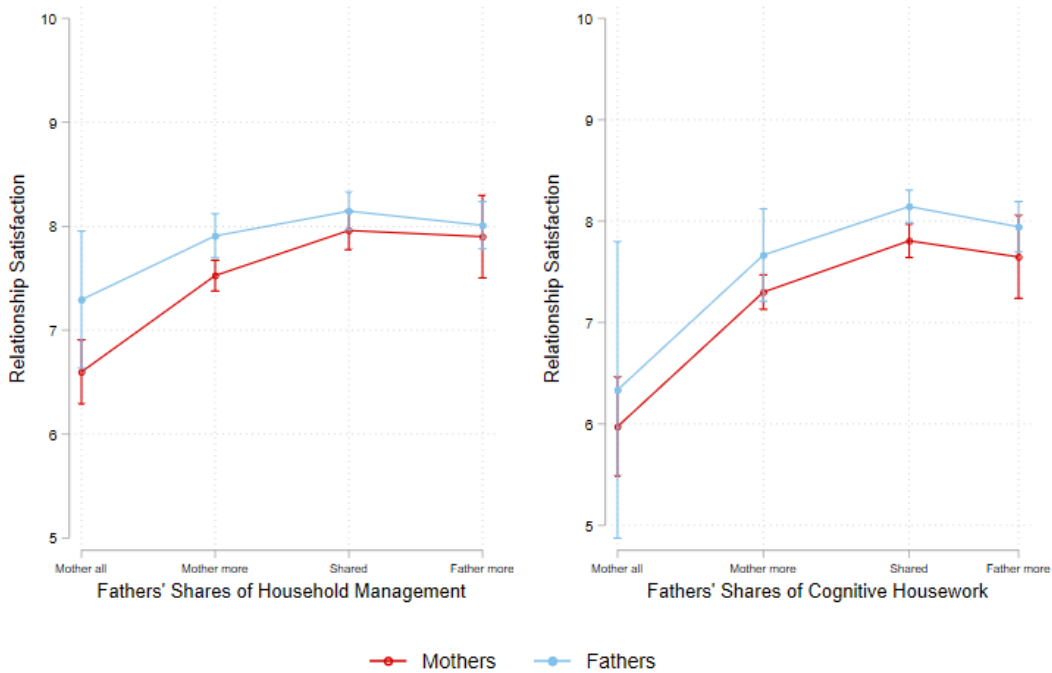


Running Head: COGNITIVE HOUSEWORK AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Latino	0.07	0.23	-0.04	0.23	0.17	0.24	0.17	0.25
Asian	0.09	0.26	0.03	0.26	0.62*	0.26	0.68**	0.25
Other	-0.03	0.38	-0.05	0.38	0.29	0.50	0.34	0.49
Marital status (1 = married)	0.60**	0.22	0.62**	0.22	0.35	0.27	0.33	0.27
Age of youngest child	0.04	0.02	0.04**	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Number of children	-0.06	0.08	-0.06	0.08	-0.12	0.09	-0.12	0.09
Child in daycare/school	-0.20	0.14	-0.15	0.14	0.11	0.17	0.08	0.16
Gender attitudes	0.19	0.11	0.19	0.11	-0.12	0.11	-0.11	0.11
Household income	0.08	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.14*	0.07	0.14*	0.07
<i>Relative earnings (ref = equal)</i>								
Father earns more	-0.05	0.21	-0.11	0.21	0.06	0.20	0.05	0.20
Mother earns more	-0.43	0.25	-0.48	0.24	-0.05	0.26	-0.04	0.26
Fathers' shares of physical housework	0.92**	0.28	0.89**	0.29	-0.61	0.37	-0.85*	0.36
Fathers' shares of physical housework <sup>2</sup>	-0.20*	0.10	-0.18	0.10	0.04	0.10	0.11	0.10

Note: All models weighted. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Figure 1.** Division of Cognitive Housework and Parents' Relationship Satisfaction



Note: Estimates are taken from Table 2. The “father does it all” division of household management category is not shown because this division was very uncommon (see Table S1). Similarly, the “father more” value for fathers' shares of cognitive housework indicates a scale value of 2.75 because only 1% of cases are at or above this cutoff (based on mothers' reports).

Results for analyses examining each of the four individual domains of the cognitive housework scale are presented in Table 3. Results for mothers were generally consistent with those presented in Table 2. That is, fathers’ shares of cognitive housework across all domains were positively associated with mothers’ relationship satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction was higher when parents shared the cognitive housework task compared to when mothers did greater shares.

The domain-specific results for fathers suggest that there was only a positive association between two of the four domains of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction: routine housework and family finances (Table 3). For routine housework, the only significant differences were that fathers’ relationship satisfaction was lower when mothers did all of this cognitive labor compared to when mothers did more ( $p = .028$ ) or when this labor was shared equally ( $p = .029$ ). Results related to family finances were consistent with those in Table 2 – fathers’ relationship satisfaction was highest when cognitive labor for family finances was shared equally.

**Table 3.** Results for Each Domain of Cognitive Housework Predicting Relationship Satisfaction

	Mothers		Fathers	
	b	SE	b	SE
<b>PANEL A</b>				
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for routine housework	0.52*	0.21	0.70*	0.32
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for routine housework <sup>2</sup>	-0.09	0.06	-0.19	0.10
<b>PANEL B</b>				
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for home repairs and maintenance	1.03***	0.25	0.69	0.41
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for home repairs and maintenance <sup>2</sup>	-0.16**	0.05	-0.14	0.07
<b>PANEL C</b>				
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for kin keeping/family relations	0.52**	0.19	0.25	0.26
Fathers’ shares of cognitive labor for kin keeping/family relations <sup>2</sup>	-0.11	0.07	-0.09	0.08

**PANEL D**

Fathers' shares of cognitive labor for family finances	0.51**	0.16	0.89**	0.27
Fathers' shares of cognitive labor for family finances <sup>2</sup>	-0.11**	0.04	-0.20***	0.06

*Note:* All models weighted. All controls included but not shown. Sample sizes vary slightly due to missing cases on some of the domain indicators (mothers range from N = 1588-1607; fathers range from N = 1124-1130). <sup>a</sup>Supplemental models were run with only a linear term and the association between cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction for fathers was also not statistically significant. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## DISCUSSION

There has been much research on the implications of the gendered division of domestic labor for a variety of outcomes, but scholars have only recently begun to consider the implications of parents' divisions of cognitive labor for fathers' and mothers' well-being. Building on recent work assessing the association between divisions of cognitive labor and relationship quality and well-being (Cicolla & Luthar 2019; Haupt & Gelbgiser, 2023; Petts & Carlson, 2023; Wayne et al., 2023), we advance our understanding of the consequences of cognitive labor by: (a) focusing specifically on cognitive housework using a variety of measures and (b) analyzing the association between the division of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction.

Consistent with equity theory and recent findings (Walster et al., 1978; Cicolla & Luthar, 2019; Petts & Carlson, 2023; Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2022), we find that more equal divisions of cognitive housework are associated with higher relationship satisfaction for both mothers and fathers. It is not simply that parents are more satisfied in their relationships when they do less cognitive labor. Instead, parents are most satisfied when they perceive that the planning, anticipating, and decision-making surrounding housework is equally shared between themselves and their partners. Housework is often seen as undesirable, tedious, and unrewarding (Poortman & Van Der Lippe, 2009; Sullivan, 2013); this may be especially true for cognitive housework

given its invisibility and unboundedness (Dean et al., 2022; Haupt & Gelbgiser, 2023).

Disproportionate responsibility for cognitive housework, therefore, likely leads to resentment, frustration, and anger with a partner, and thus a more negative assessment of one's relationship.

Yet, relationship satisfaction may also suffer if one parent feels guilty that their partner is shouldering more of this labor. As such, equal contributions to cognitive housework likely result in equal burdens for both parents as well as equal rewards (Carlson, 2022; Walster et al., 1978).

The link between equally sharing cognitive labor and relationship satisfaction may stem from adults' expectations for modern relationships, which are based on desires for sharing, mutuality, equality, and intimacy (Giddens, 1992). A recent qualitative study found that racially and educationally advantaged couples view mutually sharing cognitive labor as one way to perform intimacy (Wong & Daminger 2024). Our quantitative analysis of a diverse national sample of partnered parents suggests that other couples may use this logic as well. Sharing cognitive housework equally may also help to promote greater awareness of partners' cognitive labor responsibilities, increase the visibility of this conventionally invisible labor, and perhaps lead this labor to be appreciated or valued (Gordon et al., 2022).

That mothers report higher relationship satisfaction when cognitive housework is shared equally is expected. Mothers are often primarily responsible for this labor across all domains of housework and so may feel less burdened, and consequently, more satisfied in their relationship when fathers share more equally in this work. That fathers also benefit from sharing equally in cognitive housework is perhaps less expected. Yet, contemporary fathers largely endorse the idea that fathers should be equally engaged in all aspects of family life (Petts, 2022) and as such fathers may gain a sense of satisfaction by doing their share of the cognitive housework. Fathers' relationship satisfaction may also be heightened when cognitive tasks are shared because

mothers are appreciative of a more equal arrangement, particularly because fathers are largely unexpected to perform this labor (Damingler, 2019). Indeed, these results are consistent with other studies showing that both mothers and fathers benefit when fathers share in cognitive labor (Petts & Carlson, 2023).

Although we find a general trend of higher relationship satisfaction among fathers when cognitive housework is shared, domain-specific analyses suggest that this relationship is most pronounced for finance-related cognitive housework. It may be that fathers' responsibility for more masculine-typed cognitive tasks, especially those that may involve power (i.e., financial decisions), are particularly important for fathers' relationship satisfaction (Damingler 2019; Wong & Damingler, 2024). However, given that we also find that more equal sharing of household management (Table 2) and routine housework is also associated with higher relationship satisfaction for fathers (Table 3), this is a question that should be considered in future research.

Though this study advances our understanding of the potential consequences of cognitive housework for couples' relationship quality, we note a few limitations. First, the cross-sectional data limits our ability to fully assess causal direction in the observed relationships. It is possible that the associations between the division of cognitive housework and relationship satisfaction are bidirectional and also that there may be mediating effects involving factors not considered here (e.g., communication quality between parents; perceived equity). However, longitudinal data is needed to fully test these possibilities. Future research should consider potential mechanisms that explain the observed relationships in this study as well as the implications of parents' divisions of cognitive labor on various outcomes using longitudinal data.

Second, the SPDLC relies on reports from one parent respondent. Previous evidence shows biases in both fathers' and mothers' reports of time in domestic labor (Lee & Waite, 2005; Press & Townsley, 1998; Yavorsky, Kamp Dush, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2015), and this may be particularly true for cognitive labor given its hidden nature. Our use of relative measures of the division of cognitive housework limits this concern, as it is easier to estimate who does more than it is to specify amounts of time that partners spend in certain tasks. Objective measures of how tasks are divided may also be less important than perceptions of this division, as parents may be more satisfied in their relationships if they perceive the division of cognitive labor as equitable regardless of whether it actually is (Frisco & Williams, 2003; Nordenmark & Nyman, 2003). Moreover, the consistency across measures, and the general gendered patterns consistent with other research (Damingler, 2019; Robertson et al., 2019; Wayne et al., 2023), increases confidence in our findings.

Third, we focus only on cognitive housework in this study, but it is important to recognize that this is only one aspect of cognitive labor and the mental load more generally (Dean et al. 2022; Wayne et al. 2023). Future research should consider parents' divisions of cognitive childcare and emotional labor, and the extent to which these are linked to relationship satisfaction and other outcomes.

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Results from this study suggest that promoting egalitarian sharing of cognitive housework can strengthen families. By promoting relationship satisfaction, equitable divisions of cognitive housework may also contribute to relationship stability (Frisco & Williams, 2003). Sharing cognitive housework may also promote child well-being by strengthening parental relationships (Fine, Voydanoff, & Donnelly, 1994; Goldberg & Carlson, 2014). Future research

should consider whether parents' divisions of cognitive labor are associated with other family dynamics such as relationship stability and children's outcomes as well as whether relationship satisfaction may mediate these associations.

Overall, though cognitive labor differs from physical labor vis-à-vis its unbounded and never-ending nature, perhaps the biggest difference between the two lies in cognitive labor's invisibility. Indeed, inequalities in the division of cognitive labor in couples may undermine relationship quality not only because this work is onerous and burdensome, but also because one's partner may be woefully unaware of just how much cognitive labor one does. By more equally sharing cognitive housework, relationship satisfaction for both mothers and fathers may be enhanced in part by increasing the visibility and recognition of this often invisible labor.

#### REFERENCES

- Bernard, J. (1976). *The future of marriage*. United Kingdom: Penguin.
- Blair, S. L. & Lichter, D. T. (1991). Measuring the division of household labor: Gender segregation of housework among American couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, 12, 91-113. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251391012001007>.
- Calarco, J. M. (2024). *Holding it together: How women became America's safety net*. New York, NY: Portfolio/Penguin.
- Carlson, D. L. (2022). Reconceptualizing the gendered division of housework: Number of shared tasks and partners' relationship quality. *Sex Roles*, 86(9–10), 528–543. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-022-01282-5>.
- Carlson, D. L. & Lynch, J. L. (2013). Housework: Cause and consequence of gender ideology? *Social Science Research*, 42, 1505-1518. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2013.07.003>.

- Carlson, D. L., Miller, A. J., & Rudd, S. (2020). Division of housework, communication, and couples' relationship satisfaction. *Socius*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2378023120924805>.
- Carlson, D. L., & Petts, R. J. (2023). *Study on U.S. Parents' Divisions of Labor During COVID-19, Waves 1-3* [Data set]. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor]. <https://doi.org/10.3886/E194725V1>.
- Charbonneau, A., Lachance-Grzela, M., & Bouchard, G. (2019). Housework allocation, negotiation strategies, and relationship satisfaction in cohabiting emerging adult heterosexual couples. *Sex Roles*, 81, 290–305. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-018-0998-1>.
- Cherlin, A. J. (2004). The deinstitutionalization of American marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4), 848–861. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-2445.2004.00058.x>.
- Ciciolla, L., & Luthar, S. S. (2019). Invisible household labor and ramifications for adjustment: Mothers as captains of households. *Sex Roles*, 81(7), 467–486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-018-1001-x>.
- Cunningham, M. (2007). Influences of women's employment on the gendered division of household labor over the life course: Evidence from a 31-year panel study. *Journal of Family Issues*, 28, 422-444. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X062951980>
- Daminger, A. (2019). The cognitive dimension of household labor. *American Sociological Review*, 84(4), 609–633. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122419859007>.
- Davis, S. N., Greenstein, T. N., & Gerteisen Marks, J. P. (2007). Effects of union type on division of household labor: Do cohabiting men really perform more housework? *Journal of Family Issues*, 28, 1246-1272. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X07300968>.



Dean, L., Churchill, B., & Ruppanner, L. (2022). The mental load: Building a deeper theoretical understanding of how cognitive and emotional labor overload women and mothers.

*Community, Work & Family*, 25(1), 13–29.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2021.2002813>.

Demaris, A. (2010). The 20-year trajectory of marital quality in enduring marriages: Does equity matter? *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 27, 449-471.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407510363428>.

Dernberger, B. N. & Pepin, J. R. (2020). Gender flexibility, but not equality: Young adults' division of labor preferences. *Sociological Science*, 7, 36-56.

<https://doi.org/10.15195/v7.a2>.

Deutsch, F. M. (2000). *Halving it all: How equally shared parenting works*. Harvard University Press.

Fine, M. A., Voydanoff, P., & Donnelly, B. W. (1994). Parental perceptions of child well-being: Relations to family structure, parental depression, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 15, 165-186. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0193-](https://doi.org/10.1016/0193-3973(94)90011-6)

[3973\(94\)90011-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0193-3973(94)90011-6).

Frisco, M. L., & Williams, K. (2003). Perceived housework equity, marital happiness, and divorce in dual-earner households. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(1), 51–73.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X02238520>.

Gager, C. T. (1998). The role of valued outcomes, justifications, and comparison referents in perceptions of fairness among dual-earner couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, 19, 622-

648. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251398019005007>.

- Giddens, A. (1992). *The transformation of intimacy: Sexuality, love, and eroticism in modern societies*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Goldberg, J. S., & Carlson, M. J. (2014). Parents' relationship quality and children's behavior in stable married and cohabiting families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 76*, 762-777.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12120>.
- Gordon, A. M., Cross, E., Ascigil, E., Balzarini, R., Luerksen, A., & Muise, A. (2022). Feeling appreciated buffers against the negative effects of unequal division of household labor on relationship satisfaction. *Psychological Science, 33*(8), 1313–1327.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/09567976221081872>.
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *What predicts divorce?: The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Psychology Press.
- Haupt, A., & Gelbgiser, D. (2023). The gendered division of cognitive household labor, mental load, and family–work conflict in European countries. *European Societies, 1–27*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2023.2271963>.
- Hochschild, A. (1989). The economy of gratitude. In D. Franks & D. McCarthy (Eds), *Original Papers in the Sociology of Emotions* (pp. 95-113). New York: JAI Press.
- Hu, Y., & Yucel, D. (2018). What fairness? Gendered division of housework and family life satisfaction across 30 countries. *European Sociological Review, 34*(1), 92–105.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcx085>.
- Jackson, J. B., Miller, R. B., Oka, M., & Henry, R. G. (2014). Gender differences in marital satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 76*(1), 105–129.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12077>.

- Jeong, M., Zhang, D., Morgan, J. C., Ross, J. C., Osman, A., Boynton, M. H., ... Brewer, N. T. (2019). Similarities and differences in tobacco control research findings from convenience and probability samples. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 53(5), 476–485. <https://doi.org/10.1093/abm/kay059>.
- Lee, Y.-S., & Waite, L. J. (2005). Husbands' and wives' time spent on housework: A comparison of measures. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(2), 328–336. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-2445.2005.00119.x>.
- Lennon, M. C., & Rosenfield, S. (1994). Relative fairness and the division of housework: The importance of options. *American Journal of Sociology*, 100(2), 506–531. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230545>.
- Litzinger, S., & Gordon, K. C. (2005). Exploring relationships among communication, sexual satisfaction, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 31(5), 409–424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00926230591006719>.
- Lively, K. J., Steelman, L. C., & Powell, B. (2010). Equity, emotion, and household division of labor response. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 73(4), 358–379. <https://doi.org/10.1177-0190272510389012>.
- Mirowsky, J. (1985). Depression and marital power: An equity model. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(3), 557–592. <https://doi.org/10.1086/228314>.
- Mize, T. D. (2019). Best practices for estimating, interpreting, and presenting nonlinear interaction effects. *Sociological Science*, 6(4), 81–117. <https://doi.org/10.15195/v6.a4>.
- Mize, T. D., Doan, L., & Long, J. S. (2019). A general framework for comparing predictions and marginal effects across models. *Sociological Methodology*, 49(1), 152–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0081175019852763>.

- Nordenmark, M. & Nyman, C. (2003). Fair or unfair? Perceived fairness of household division of labour and gender equality among women and men: The Swedish case. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 10(2), 181–209.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506803010002004>.
- Offer, S. (2014). The costs of thinking about work and family: Mental labor, work–family spillover, and gender inequality among parents in dual-earner families. *Sociological Forum*, 29(4), 916–936. <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12126>.
- Peer, E., Brandimarte, L., Samat, S., & Acquisti, A. (2017). Beyond the Turk: Alternative platforms for crowdsourcing behavioral research. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 70, 153–163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.01.006>.
- Pepin, J. R., Sayer, L. C., & Casper, L. M. (2018). Marital status and mothers' time use: Childcare, housework, leisure, and sleep. *Demography*, 55, 107-133.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-018-0647-x>.
- Petts, R. J. (2022). *Father involvement and gender equality in the United States: Contemporary norms and barriers*. Routledge.
- Petts, R. J., & Carlson, D. L. (2023). Managing a household during a pandemic: Cognitive labor and parents' psychological well-being. *Society and Mental Health*, 13, 187-207.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/21569693231169521>.
- Poortman, A.-R., & Van Der Lippe, T. (2009). Attitudes toward housework and child care and the gendered division of labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(3), 526–541.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00617.x>.

Press, J. E., & Townsley, E. (1998). Wives' and husbands' housework reporting: Gender, Class, and Social Desirability. *Gender & Society, 12*(2), 188–218.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/089124398012002005>.

Reich-Stiebert, N., Froehlich, L., & Voltmer, J.-B. (2023). Gendered mental labor: A systematic literature review on the cognitive dimension of unpaid work within the household and childcare. *Sex Roles, 88*(11), 475–494. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-023-01362-0>.

Robertson, L. G., Anderson, T. L., Hall, M. E. L., & Kim, C. L. (2019). Mothers and mental labor: A phenomenological focus group study of family-related thinking work.

*Psychology of Women Quarterly, 43*(2), 184–200.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684319825581>.

Ruppanner, L., Brandén, M., & Turunen, J. (2018). Does unequal housework lead to divorce? Evidence from Sweden. *Sociology, 52*(1), 75–94.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/003803851667466>.

Schieman, S., Ruppanner, L., & Milkie, M. A. (2018). Who helps with homework? Parenting inequality and relationship quality among employed mothers and fathers. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues, 39*, 49–65. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-017-9545-4>.

Stevens, D., Kiger, G., & Riley, P. J. (2001). Working hard and hardly working: Domestic labor and marital satisfaction among dual-earner couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*(2), 514–526. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.00514.x>.

Sullivan, O. (2013). What Do We Learn About Gender by Analyzing Housework Separately From Child Care? Some Considerations From Time-Use Evidence. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 5*(2), 72–84. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12007>.

- Taniguchi, H., & Kaufman, G. (2022). Sharing the load: Housework, joint decision-making, and marital quality in Japan. *Journal of Family Studies*, 28(3), 914–933.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2020.1769707>.
- Tourangeau, R., Conrad, F. G., & Couper, M. P. (2013). *The science of web surveys*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Twenge, J. M., Campbell, W. K., & Foster, C. A. (2003). Parenthood and marital satisfaction: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65(3), 574–583.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00574.x>.
- Walster, E. G., Walster, W., & Berscheid, E. (1978). *Equity: Theory and research*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Walzer, S. (1998). *Thinking about the baby: Gender and transitions into parenthood*. Temple University Press.
- Wayne, J. H., Mills, M. J., Wang, Y.-R., Matthews, R. A., & Whitman, M. V. (2023). Who's remembering to buy the eggs? The meaning, measurement, and implications of invisible family load. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 38(6), 1159–1184.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-023-09887-7>.
- Wilcox, W. B. & Nock, S. L. (2006). What's love got to do with it? Equality, equity, commitment, and women's marital quality. *Social Forces*, 84, 1321-1345.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2006.0076>.
- Wong, J. S. (2023). *Equal Partners?: How Dual-professional Couples Make Career, Relationship, and Family Decisions*. Univ of California Press.

Wong, J. S., & Daminger, A. (2024). The Myth of Mutuality: Decision-Making, Marital Power, and the Persistence of Gender Inequality. *Gender & Society*, 38, 157-186.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/08912432241230>.

Yavorsky, J. E., Kamp Dush, C. M., & Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J. (2015). The Production of Inequality: The Gender Division of Labor Across the Transition to Parenthood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(3), 662–679. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12189>.

Zamir, O., Gewirtz, A. H., Labella, M., DeGarmo, D. S., & Snyder, J. (2018). Experiential Avoidance, Dyadic Interaction and Relationship Quality in the Lives of Veterans and Their Partners. *Journal of Family Issues*, 39(5), 1191–1212.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X17698182>.