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*Brigham Young University - Provo*

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Division of Labor and Marital Satisfaction in China

Lexie Y. Pfeifer

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Richard B. Miller, Chair  
David Nelson  
Roy Bean

Department of Marriage and Family Therapy  
Brigham Young University  
August 2011

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## ABSTRACT

Division of Labor and Marital Satisfaction in China

Lexie Y. Pfeifer

Department of Marriage and Family Therapy, BYU  
Masters of Science

Research done in the United States has linked household division of labor to marital quality. Research shows that satisfaction with division of labor is associated with greater marital happiness. There is minimal research in other countries on the relationship between division of labor and marital quality. China, with a history of gender inequality and emerging women's rights, makes an ideal setting for examining the relationship between division of labor and marital quality. In addition to measuring the influence of division of labor and satisfaction with division of labor on marital satisfaction, this study includes a scale on childcare related tasks. The data used in this study were collected between 1995 and 2001, from 446 couples, in Beijing and Hangzhou, China. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used for dyadic analysis. Results show that traditional division of labor and wives' satisfaction with division of labor positively affect Chinese husbands' marital satisfaction. Contrary to US research, results do not show a statistically significant effect between division of labor and Chinese wives' marital satisfaction. Results also show that higher levels of wives' responsibility for childcare predicts lower levels of marital satisfaction for husbands. Implications for culturally sensitive counseling are discussed.

Keywords: marital satisfaction, China, division of labor, childcare

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my chair, Rick Miller, who supported me in researching a culture I love. To my committee members, Roy Bean and Dave Nelson, for their support and guidance. To my cohort, for their help and companionship in the thesis-writing process. To my parents, for their love and support.

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## Introduction

Substantial research done in the United States has examined the influence of household division of labor on couples' marital satisfaction. Generally, satisfaction with, or perceived equity in, spousal division of labor is associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction (Perry-Jenkins, 1990; Sutor, 1991; Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Across studies, findings are more significant for wives.

Although the relationship between the equity of household division of labor and marital satisfaction is well established in the U.S., there is little research on the topic in other cultures. In the few studies that have been done in other countries (e.g. Cubbins & Vannoy, 2004; Golding, 1990), researchers have also found a relationship between satisfaction with division of labor and marital satisfaction. China is among the nations that have just begun to see research in this area. With a population of over 1.3 billion people, China provides a wide and diverse setting for examining the relationship between division of labor and marital satisfaction. China also represents a traditionally strong, male-dominated gender structure (Hershatter, 2004). This gender structure, combined with a history of gender inequality and emerging women's rights, makes it an ideal setting for examining gender relationships in the home and marital relationship.

In addition, the cultural and structural differences of Chinese culture, as opposed to Western culture, provide potentially interesting insights into the dynamics of the relationship between division of labor and marital satisfaction. Chinese traditional values, the prevalence of multi-generation households (Xu, Xie, Liu, Xia & Liu, 2007), and China's one-child policy (Hershatter, 2004) are examples of cultural differences that could potentially influence division of labor and its effect on marital quality.

Minimal research has looked at the division of labor and marital satisfaction in Chinese couples. The purpose of this study is to build upon a foundation of research done in the US by studying Chinese couples in their native country. Not only can this enhance general understanding of how division of labor influences marital satisfaction, it can provide us with specific information about Chinese culture. Understanding cultural differences can provide direction for therapeutic practice with culturally diverse populations.

## **Literature Review**

### **Division of Labor and Marital Quality in the US**

Studies have defined division of labor in different ways. Some studies defined division of labor by the number of hours spent in household tasks (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Leslie & Anderson, 1988; Lye & Biblarz, 1993; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Others asked for a self- or spouse-rating of the proportion of time spent on household chores (Sulitor, 1991; Frisco & Williams, 2003). Benin and Agostinelli (1988) also created a variable for feminine household tasks performed by the husband, distinguishing type of chore from a more generalized category of household labor.

Other studies have sought to define inequity of division of labor. Wilkie et al. (1998) conceptualized perception of inequity in two ways. First, partners' reports of own and spouse's hours at domestic labor were compared. For example, if the husband's estimation of wife's time at household chores was less than the wife's self report, the division was considered inequitable. Also, partners were asked to rate the fairness of their contribution, as well as the fairness of the expectations of their spouse. These two methods created a way of measuring the perceived equity of the division of labor arrangement.



A study done by Suitor (1991) is representative of a large body of research that has established an association between household division of labor and marital satisfaction in American couples (Lye & Biblarz, 1993; Perry-Jenkins & Crouter, 1990; Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Specifically, Suitor (1991) examined division of labor and marital satisfaction across the life cycle and found that, regardless of the life-cycle stage of the couples, satisfaction with division of labor was associated with greater marital happiness and less marital conflict for both husbands and wives. However, husbands had a higher overall satisfaction with division of labor than their wives. Also, the effect of division of labor on marital satisfaction was more significant for wives. Further, Suitor found that satisfaction with household division of labor predicted marital satisfaction better than demographic variables such as age, educational attainment, and wives' employment status.

Inequitable division of labor can also negatively influence marital satisfaction (Leslie & Anderson, 1988; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Some studies note an effect on marriage through inequitable division of labor increasing marital disagreement (Lye & Biblarz, 1993; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999). Many studies found that household division of labor affects marital satisfaction through partners' individual perceptions of equity or fairness of the division between them (Frisco & Williams, 2003; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998).

Voydanoff and Donnelly (1999) found that time spent in household chores is negatively related to marital happiness for wives. Likewise, husbands' time spent in household chores was a significant predictor of marital disagreements. They found that perception of unfairness to self in the division of chores and child care predicted marital dissatisfaction. Spouses who perceived

unfairness in the division of chores had lower levels of marital happiness and more marital disagreement.

Wilkie, Ferree, and Ratcliff (1998) also found that marital satisfaction is lower for wives when they perform more hours of household chores. Spousal empathy, or feeling understood by their spouse, can lessen the impact of these excess hours on marital satisfaction. Perception of equity in the division of labor also mediates the relationship between hours in division of labor and marital satisfaction. When a partner perceived the division of household work as inequitable, marital satisfaction was lower.

Some studies have examined perceptions of fairness in terms of gender-associated role preferences and egalitarian ideals (Amato & Booth, 1995; Benin & Agostinelli, 1988; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Wilkie et al. (1998) found that the more husbands' role preference leaned toward helping with domestic chores, the more likely the husbands were to perceive household division of labor as fair. Higher percentages of domestic labor performed by the wife were perceived as unfair by both husbands and wives. Benin and Agostinelli (1988) similarly found that wives were significantly more satisfied with the division of labor when the husband contributed in traditionally female household tasks. This suggests that egalitarian attitudes toward division of labor contribute to perceptions of fairness. Also, role preferences in congruence with egalitarian ideals can increase perceptions of fairness.

Amato and Booth (1995) similarly found that husbands who prefer sharing in the division of labor are more satisfied in the marriage. Deviation from egalitarian values, by contrast, can have a detrimental influence on couples' relationship. They also found that wives who espouse more egalitarian values are more dissatisfied in the marriage. This also can be interpreted to

suggest that each spouse's tendency toward an arrangement that suits the other's ideals, or congruence of ideals, increases marital satisfaction.

Lye and Biblarz (1993) were interested in how traditional attitudes about gender roles affect marital satisfaction. They found that spouses that had congruent attitudes were more satisfied in the marriage, whether they held congruent traditional attitudes or congruent nontraditional attitudes. Couples with incongruent attitudes were less satisfied in the marriage. However, they also noted an effect for traditional versus non-traditional attitudes. Interestingly, congruently traditional couples were more satisfied than congruently non-traditional couples. Also, in general, traditional attitudes for husbands and wives were associated with higher marital satisfaction and less marital disagreements. This contrasts with findings that support egalitarianism, or non-traditional attitudes, as increasing perceptions of fairness and marital satisfaction (Amato & Booth, 1995; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998).

Lye and Biblarz (1993) also found that couples where the wife held non-traditional attitudes and the husband had non-traditional attitudes suffered the most in terms of marital satisfaction and marital disagreement. These findings reflect the influence of the couples' traditional attitudes and not the influence of traditional, domestic behavior. In other words, traditional, domestic behavior, as measured by hours spent in housework, was not found to have a significant influence on marital satisfaction. Whereas, traditional attitudes of spouses were found to impact their marital satisfaction. The current study will particularly examine the effect of traditional versus non-traditional household division of labor behavior and attitudes on marital satisfaction for Chinese couples.

Across studies division of labor is related to marital satisfaction, affecting wives more than husbands (Suitor, 1991; Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). . Husbands are shown to have significantly higher levels of satisfaction with division of labor, and there is also a weaker association between division of labor and marital satisfaction among men (Suitor, 1991; Perry-Jenkins & Folk, 1994; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). There are different explanations for the effect between household division of labor and marital satisfaction. Studies suggest that perceptions of unfairness influence satisfaction with division of labor and subsequent marital satisfaction (Amato & Booth, 1995; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Studies also suggest that congruence of traditional or non-traditional values can influence this relationship (Amato & Booth, 1995; Lye & Biblarz, 1993; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998).

### **Division of Labor and Childcare**

Most of the research on household division of labor has focused on domestic tasks, highlighting chores such as cleaning, cooking and doing laundry only (Frisco & Williams, 2003, Perry-Jenkins & Crouter, 1990). Golding (1990) argues that childcare duties are “conceptually distinct” from other measures of household labor. However, there is some evidence that the division of childcare responsibilities is also important in marriages. Voydanoff and Donnelly (1999) measured domestic work and childcare separately. The sample consisted of married parents of children aged 10-17 years. Childcare was measured by five items that asked how often they spend time with children in leisure activities outside, working or playing at home, talking, helping with homework and watching television. The amount of time spent with children predicted marital happiness for husbands and wives. However, perceptions of unfairness in the distribution of childcare responsibilities were associated with a decrease in

marital happiness for wives and an increase in marital disagreement for wives and husbands. Leslie and Anderson (1988) looked at how husbands' and wives' time spent in domestic labor, childcare and leisure was related to marital adjustment. A significant effect between childcare and marital adjustment was found for wives who are working part-time. Wives who worked part-time showed more negative marital adjustment. The authors suggest that for these women, an unequal balance of labor between them and their husbands for domestic and outside work could explain their lower marital adjustment. While some studies highlight the positive benefit of spending time with children on marital quality (Ehrenberg, Gearing-Small, Hunter & Small, 2001; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999), there is also sufficient evidence to suggest that inequity of childcare responsibilities negatively influences marital satisfaction (Leslie & Anderson, 1988; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999).

### **Cross-Cultural Theories**

Social science approaches to cross-cultural research have been divided between perspectives that emphasize sameness of family process regardless of culture and perspectives that focus on family processes shaped by cultural context. This difference in perspectives is reflected in cross-cultural psychology's "emic-etic" dichotomy (Berry, 1989; Nelson, Hart, Wu, Yang, Roper & Jin, 2006). An "emic" approach would study from within the culture to define and describe behaviors. This perspective assumes that cultural values substantially influence family processes, which suggests that family processes need to be studied and interpreted within specific cultures. On the other hand, an "etic" approach assumes behaviors are similar across cultures and compares behaviors found in one culture to another using similar assumptions and measures. This perspective assumes that patterns of family interaction will be similar across cultures, with family patterns transcending cultural influence. These two competing theories

have also been called the ethnic equivalence and cultural values models (Bean, Barber & Crane, 2006; Lamborn & Felbab, 2003).

As an example, research on parenting practices in China provides support for both models. A Chinese study on the relationship between parenting practices and social withdrawal in young children found consistency with similar studies done in Western cultures, such as the United States (Nelson, et al., 2006). Both this Chinese study and similar US studies confirm a relationship between specific parental practices, such as maternal directiveness, overprotection, coercion or shaming, and reticence in children (Rubin, Nelson, Hastings, & Asendorpf, 1999; Rubin, Burgess, & Hastings, 2002). The same study (Nelson, et al., 2006) also highlighted culturally unique outcomes, such as the meaning of passiveness. While passiveness is often seen as a negative characteristic in the U.S., Chinese parents often view it as a favorable quality in children as it is conducive to success in academics, which is an area highly valued in Asian culture.

Another study compared the appropriateness and validity of Western and Chinese parenting measures, using both American and Chinese samples. These measures were found to be valid in both cultures, including a measure derived from Chinese culture that was also found to be applicable to the parenting of US mothers. Similarly, parenting measures derived from Western cultures were applicable for Chinese parents (Wu et al., 2002). However, comparisons indicated that these two cultures emphasized different parenting practices, with Chinese mothers scoring higher on modesty encouragement, shaming and protective behavior. Also, US mothers associated directive practices with verbal hostility, which Chinese mothers associated them associated with maternal involvement. These results show that, although measures can be applied cross-culturally, there are cultural differences in the application of these parenting

techniques. Thus, Nelson, et al. (2006) and Wu, et al. (2002) provide support for both “etic” and “emic” approaches to cross-cultural research. There is evidence in the parenting literature that provide support for both “etic” and “emic” approaches to cross-cultural research.

### **Marriage and Gender in China**

In order to understand the relationship between division of labor and marital satisfaction for Chinese couples, it is essential to have an understanding of gender socialization and marriage in China. China’s long history, more recent communist government policies, contemporary contexts all provide perspective for understanding gender and marriage in modern Chinese culture.

**History of women’s rights.** Historically, regardless of culture or nationality, women’s experience has been characterized by oppression and limitation. China is no exception. Traditions such as foot-binding, female servants or concubines, arranged marriages, bridal purchase, and abduction of brides are a few examples that help paint a picture of the oppression women faced in historic, pre-Communist China. Males were more valued in Chinese culture for carrying on the family name, being able to physically work, and providing for elderly parents in their later years. This led to practices, such as infanticide, abandonment of female children, and violence against wives for bearing a female child, that provide evidence of the devaluation of women in historic Chinese culture (Hershatter, 2004).

The traditional Chinese family was characterized by parent-arranged marriage, patriarchal households, and multi-generational family structure (Zang, 1993). Family structure was characterized by patriarchy and hierarchy according to age. The elderly usually lived in the home and exerted significant power over family matters. Bridal purchase was a common practice, and the bride would typically become part of the groom’s household when married.

Hershatter (2004) points out that this placed women in a vulnerable and weak position in their family of origin, as well as in their new family by marriage. Often, women would emphasize ties with their children, as this strengthened their role and power in the family. Mothers-in-law would exert significant influence over their daughters-in-law, perpetuating the cycle of female submissiveness and powerlessness.

**Communist influence.** The position and role of women, as well as the face of marriage and family in China, have undergone considerable change in the past century. Chinese experts associate change from the traditional to modern Chinese family with the 1949 shift to communist rule (Zang, 1993). Family-defining policies were officially adopted and promulgated during this shift to communist rule (Zang, 1993; Hershatter, 2004). The face of marriage and the role of women in society and in families began changing with this shift. The 1950 Marriage Law advocated rights for women by raising the marriage age, legislating against arranged marriages, bridal purchases, concubinage and marital violence, and giving women rights to manage their property (Engel, 1975; Hershatter, 2004). This law also provided rights to both men and women to divorce (Palmer, 1995). An important elaboration of the divorce policy came in the subsequent 1980 Marriage Law, which granted spouses the right to divorce based on “loss of mutual affection.” The liberalization of the divorce law led to an increase in divorce petitions brought to the courts (Palmer, 1995). This influenced marital relationships by giving women more power at home. This period of time also saw a decrease in the influence that the older generation had on their adult, married children. This shift in generational power provided more autonomy and independence for women and the younger married couple (Hershatter, 2004).

During this time and in the following years, the government emphasized women’s place and obligation in society as workers with the slogan, “Women hold up half the sky” and



“Whatever men comrades can do, women comrades can do” (Hershatter, 2004). Government policies allowed and encouraged women to work outside the home, another source of power for women (Xu, Xie, Liu, Xia & Liu, 2007).

However, in the 1980’s, there was a return to more traditional thinking about gender. This Reform Period, from 1980 to 1991, reemphasized women’s femininity and their role in the home, characterized by a popular phrase---“virtuous wife and good mother” (Hershatter, 2004). This period also produced writings about women’s inferiority to men and their fitness for the proper domain of the home. Pimentel (2006) describes the potential for this regression to traditional thinking to be particularly confusing and disruptive for women and their marital relationships. Pimentel hypothesizes that this trend may contribute to discontentment for women, who have once enjoyed, but now struggle for, acceptance and equality in the workplace.

**Marriage and family in modern-day China.** Aside from marriage and family changes spurred by government policy, Western influence and media have contributed to a gradual shift in Chinese attitudes toward dating and marriage. Around the 1990s, extramarital affairs were a theme in popular media, and divorce was a topic of public discussion (Hershatter, 2004). Divorce rates continue to rise, with over half of divorces initiated by women (Hershatter, 2004). The divorce rate rose from .35% in 1980 to 1.28% in 2004, with higher divorce rates in urban areas compared to rural areas. These rates reflect the influence of political, social and economic changes on beliefs and practices in Chinese marriages (Xu, Xie, Liu, Xia & Liu, 2007).

Education is another factor in women’s access to and success in the workplace. There are contradictory findings about women’s access to education. On one hand, as recent as the 1990s, 70% of illiterate adults were women. However, other data from the 1980-1990s suggests that women’s enrollment in high school and college was rising. Hershatter (2004) suggests that this

may be reflective of a difference in urban and rural China. An urban sample would represent more educated and autonomous women, as opposed to a rural sample representing women still emerging from the dust of traditional, oppressive Chinese culture.

Today's family is characterized by free-choice marriage, though parents and friends still have a strong influence in the dating process. Couples today also are more likely to live in their own home as a nuclear family. This particular development could be attributable to government's family propaganda, as well as the economic development in China, which suggests it is more affordable for newly-wed couples to own their own home (Zang, 1998; Xu, Xie, Liu, Xia & Liu, 2007).

Today, between the Reform era resurgence of traditional thinking and increasing modernization, women and couples in contemporary China struggle with confusion over gender roles. Since 1980, China continues to espouse a more traditional view of gender inequality. However, Hershatter highlights that most other nations are moving towards a view of gender equality, and this influence may accentuate the contrast between the emphasis on equality for women during the shift to communist rule and the current regression to a dominant societal discourse on gender inequality (Hershatter, 2004). Women, once liberated, are more aware of discrepancy in gender equality. Western influence and modernization also draw attention to women and family's issues. Men, influenced by society's trend toward unequal gender thinking, are potentially in opposition to women's desire for equality. This general picture of society becomes more relevant when narrowed down to the domestic sphere, where wives' and husbands' gender ideals and practices may be pitted against each other (Pimentel, 2006).

### **Division of Labor in Modern Chinese Marriages**

Research done in recent decades in China has shown a shift in the burden of household labors. Fewer hours are being spent on domestic labor for both males and females. Research has also shown a shift to husbands participating more in housework (Shen, 1996). Pimentel (2006) did a cross-sectional examination of relationships and found that the gap between domestic labor performed by wives versus husbands has lessened among younger cohorts of couples. Though wives still shoulder a “double burden”, balancing outside employment and domestic work, husbands have been contributing more to domestic work in recent years. However, there is still an inequality, with wives assuming the majority of responsibility over household tasks (Shen, 1996; Pimentel, 2006).

There is evidence, though, that the gap in division of household labor has narrowed considerably in urban China. Xu (1998) used a measure of division of labor to examine trends in gender inequality. It was found that from the year 1933 to 1991, Chinese wives’ share in household labor has declined, with wives currently performing 50-60% of household chores (Xu, 1998).

Despite evidence that suggests a growing equality in household division of labor for Chinese couples, there is also evidence to suggest that household division of labor and issues surrounding childcare remain a source of contention for Chinese couples. Household chores accounted for 51.7% of marital disputes, with disagreements about children accounting for 38.1% of disputes. Financial issues, problems with in-laws, and unhealthy eating habits describe the remainder of marital disputes. Interestingly, sexual issues and extramarital affairs accounted for the lowest percentage of disputes (Xu, et al., 2007). In this context, it is important to understand how this balance of division of labor, both in household chores and childcare, affects Chinese couples’ marital satisfaction.

## **Division of Labor and Marital Quality in China**

Limited research has looked at the division of household labor and its association with marital satisfaction among Chinese couples. Pimentel published two sets of analyses (2000; 2006) that used the same data, which were collected in 1991 in Beijing. The sample consisted of 1,778 couples. In the first study, Pimentel (2000) examined the relationship between household division of labor and marital quality in the overall sample. Division of labor was measured by obtaining partners' ratings as to whether husband or wife was primarily responsible for five household tasks, including grocery shopping, cooking, washing dishes, washing clothes and managing money. The rating scale ranged from one to five, with one indicating the wife performed most of the chores and five indicating the husband performed most chores. Based on participants' responses to these five questions, Pimentel created a categorical division of labor variable that included four types of arrangements: integrated sharing (equal sharing, indicated by ratings of three on the five items), segregated sharing (husband and wife are responsible for proportionally equal amount of chores, but each spouse leans toward more responsibility with a specific chore), wife most, or husband most.

She measured marital quality in two ways. A measure of marital closeness consisted of items about marital satisfaction, affection and communication. A second measure of marital disharmony consisted of items about frequency of disagreements and conflict resolution styles.

Pimentel found that wives' reports of doing most of the housework was associated with them having lower levels of marital closeness and higher levels of marital disharmony. In addition, wives who reported a segregated household chores arrangement reported higher levels of disharmony. Husbands' results show no significant association between division of household

labor and marital quality. Overall, findings are consistent with research in the US that shows unequal division of labor is associated with decreased marital quality for wives.

Pimentel's 2006 study elaborated on her earlier work by examining the effect of division of labor on marital quality by three separate cohorts, which allowed her to examine any effects attributable to political and social circumstances of given historical time periods. Cohorts were divided into couples married from 1949 to 1965 (early Maoist period), 1966 to 1979 (Communist revolution), and 1980 to 1991 (economic reform period). Using the same measures that she did in the 2000 study, Pimentel (2006) found that satisfaction with division of household labor decreased from the older to younger cohorts. For wives and husbands of the two youngest cohorts (Cultural Revolution and Reform cohorts), marital closeness decreased when the wife did most of the chores or in a segregated sharing arrangement. For husbands in the Reform cohort, their report of doing most of the chores was associated with decreased marital closeness. These findings suggest that the link between division of labor and marital quality is more pronounced among the younger cohorts.

Outside of Pimentel's work, little research has been done on division of labor and marital satisfaction in China. Xu and Lai (2004) utilized data from a 1996 family survey in Taiwan that included 446 married women and 481 married men. Division of labor was measured on a continuum from traditional to non-traditional chore arrangements. Chores included shopping/cooking, washing dishes, laundry, and cleaning the house. Responsibility for chores was coded from one to five, with one indicating that the wife performed the chores. Two indicated others, such as parents or in-laws were responsible for chores. Three indicated the husband and wife shared chores. Finally, four indicated the husband performed the chores. Xu and Lai (2004) conceptualized marital quality as a construct of marital harmony (measured by

five items on marital togetherness and two items on marital satisfaction) and marital discord (measured by one item on marital instability, one item on marital disagreement and six items on marital conflict). Structural equation modeling was used to explore the link between the different variables. The authors found that nontraditional division of household arrangements were associated with higher levels of marital quality for both husbands and wives.

### **Research Question**

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between division of household and childcare labor and couples' perception of marital satisfaction using a sample of couples living in Beijing, China. This study builds upon previous research by addressing two significant gaps in the current literature. First, studies of satisfaction with the division of labor among Chinese couples have used a global satisfaction question, where respondents are asked to assess their satisfaction with the overall division of labor arrangement. Sutor (1991), on the other hand, used a measure that assessed each spouse's perception of the division of labor for each task, as well as a question that assessed their desired level of involvement for each task. Sutor calculated a satisfaction score for each task by taking the difference between the two desired level of involvement and the actual perceived level of involvement scores. This method of determining satisfaction is more specific than a global rating of satisfaction. The current study aims to replicate Sutor's methods by measuring division of household labor and desired division of labor in specific tasks. Consistent with Sutor's methods, satisfaction will be measured by the discrepancy between actual and desired division of household labor for each task. Second, studies of division of labor in China have focused on household tasks, while neglecting division of labor for child care tasks. Studies done in the US have shown that husbands' sharing of childcare related tasks is associated with increased marital satisfaction and decreased

psychological distress (Ehrenberg, Gearing-Small, Hunter & Small, 2001; Erickson, 1993). Consequently, it is important to consider the relationship between the distribution of child care tasks and marital satisfaction among Chinese couples.

It is hypothesized that more traditional division of household labor, where the wife performs more chores will be associated with decreased marital satisfaction. This result is expected because of trends that suggest Chinese couples are leaning toward more egalitarian views and practices with regards to marriage (Hershatter, 2004). A traditional division of labor arrangement may contribute to discontentment for wives, who are shouldering most of the household labor. Non-traditional arrangements, or the husband performing more household labor, would be expected to predict increased marital satisfaction for wives, but perhaps decreased marital satisfaction for husbands who will perceive this arrangement as unfair.

### **Methods**

The data used in this analysis come from a larger data collection project on parenting done in Beijing, China (Hart, Yang, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, Nelson, Porter, Jin, Olsen & Wu, 2000; Nelson, Hart, Wu, Yang, Roper & Jean, 2006). The data were collected between 1995 and 2001. The sample consisted of 446 parent-couples with children enrolled in preschools, four from Beijing and one from Hangzhou of mainland China. All of the couples in the study were married and were ethnic Chinese. In group meetings at the school with the parents, researchers explained the procedure of the study and gave the parents a series of three packets of questionnaires to return within the month. Each packet took about 30 to 45 minutes to complete. 70% of the children from the classes and their parents participated in the study. All of the measures in the questionnaires were carefully forward- and back-translated and pilot-tested with Chinese families.

## Sample Characteristics

The mean ages of husbands and wives were 35.2 (SD=3.80) and 32.9 (SD=3.40), respectively. Husbands' age ranged from 25 to 52, with wives' age ranging from 25 to 47 years. Children averaged 60.99 months (SD=7.66). Wives and husbands had similar levels of education, with both averaging 13.7 years of education (SD=2.80 and 2.99 for husbands and wives, respectively).

## Measures

**Household labor.** Household division of labor was assessed by a one-item measure. Partners were asked to respond to the following item: "Generally, who does more of the regular inside household tasks, such as laundry, preparing meals, vacuuming, etc.?" Response options ranged from one to five, with one indicating that husband does "much more" than wife, five indicating that wife does "much more" than husband, and three indicating that labor is "shared about equally". Thus, similar to the study by Xu and Lai (2004), the responses form a continuum that ranges from traditional (wife only) to nontraditional (husband only), with higher scores reflecting more nontraditional child arrangements. Respondents rated each task twice, once for the current household division of labor arrangement and once for their desired distribution of labor on the task.

**Childcare.** The measure for division of childcare labor was composed of three items: a) "Generally, who does more of the child-care tasks, such as feeding, changing diapers, reading to the children, etc.?" b) "Generally, who handles the disciplining of children when they do not conform to adult expectations?" and c) "Generally, who takes care of health care needs, like taking children to the doctor, giving medicine when necessary, etc.?" The response options were the same as with the household division of labor item, and partners responded which spouse



currently was more responsible for these tasks, and as well as their desired arrangement for responsibility for these tasks.

**Satisfaction with division of household labor and childcare.** Based on the work done by Sutor (1991), satisfaction with division of household labor and childcare were conceptualized as the discrepancy between partners' ratings of their desired arrangement for and the actual arrangement. The actual score for each task score was subtracted from the desired score to produce a satisfaction score (e.g. desired – actual = satisfaction). Scores had potential to range from -4 to 4, with 0 indicating no difference between the desired and actual division of household labor. For women, a negative satisfaction score indicated that they were dissatisfied because their desired score, (assuming that they wanted more participation from their husband), was lower than their actual score. Consequently, a dissatisfied woman would score high on the actual task scale, indicating that she did most or all of the task, while she would desire her husband to be more involved, which would be a lower score for their desired arrangement. Thus, the difference score would be negative. For men, on the other hand, a positive satisfaction score indicated that they were dissatisfied.

**Marital satisfaction.** The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale was used to measure marital satisfaction. It is a widely used scale that measures partners' ratings of their level of satisfaction with the marriage, relationship and spouse. The items are measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not very satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied) (Schumm, et al. 1986). Chronbach's alpha for the scale is .96, demonstrating high reliability of items. Schumm also found criterion-related validity for the scale, suggesting that the items can differentiate distressed from non-distressed wives (Schumm, 1985). Other tests of this scale's reliability have yielded

test-retest correlations of  $r=.71$  and concurrent validity with items from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Mitchell, Newell & Schumm, 1983; Grover, Paff-Bergen, Russell & Schumm, 1984).

A Chinese version of the scale has been validated. Shek, Lam, Tsoi & Lam (1993) found similar reliability and validity for the Chinese version of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (C-KMS). The scale was forward- and back-translated into Chinese, and the convergent validity of the scale was tested against Chinese versions of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (C-DAS) and Marital Comparison Level Index (C-MCLI). The scale was tested on groups of maritally adjusted ( $n=91$ ) and maladjusted ( $n=81$ ) couples. Cronbach's alpha for the scale was .97, demonstrating high reliability of items. Convergent validity of the C-KMS with the C-DAS and C-MCLI was supported with correlations of  $r=.87$  and  $r=.84$  respectively ( $p<0.001$ ). The results also supported the scale as demonstrating high discriminant validity, discriminating between adjusted and maladjusted couples.

**Control variables.** Husbands' and wives' education and age were included as control variables. Education was included because there is evidence that marital quality is associated with spouses' education among Chinese couples (Shen, 1996).

## **Analysis**

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data. Structural equation modeling was used because it controls for measurement error better than standard multiple regression (Kline, 1998). In order to fully utilize the dyadic nature of the data, an Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (Cook & Kenny, 2005) was tested. Using this model, the effect of a spouse's perception of the division of labor on their own marital satisfaction (Actor Effects) was tested, as well as the effect of their perception of the division of labor on their partner's marital

satisfaction (Partner Effects). Because there are four major independent variables, four models will be tested: 1) division of household labor and marital satisfaction, 2) division of child care and marital satisfaction, 3) satisfaction with household labor and marital satisfaction, and 4) satisfaction with child care and marital satisfaction. Figure 1 illustrates the generic model that will be tested.

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Figure 1 about here

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## **Results**

Tables 1 and 2 present the means and standard deviations for husbands' and wives' reports of division of labor and satisfaction with division of labor. 68.4 percent of wives and 72.6 percent of husbands were satisfied with the household division of labor. Percentages for wives' satisfaction with the childcare items ranged from 68 to 73.2 percent. Percentages for husbands' satisfaction with childcare items ranged from 73.3 to 82.6 percent. Seventy-three percent of husbands were satisfied with childcare tasks, such as feeding and changing diapers. Also for husbands, there was a slightly higher percentage (80.7% and 82.6%) for satisfaction with the other childcare items (discipline and healthcare).

T-tests were performed to determine gender differences in perceptions of division of labor. Wives reports of their involvement in household chores and childcare were significantly greater than husbands' reports for household chores ( $t=2.74$ ,  $p=.007$ ), discipline of children ( $t=3.241$ ,  $p=.001$ ), and health needs of children ( $t=3.658$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Gender differences in perceptions of general childcare were insignificant ( $t=.121$ ,  $p=.904$ ). For the satisfaction

variables, there were no significant gender differences in reports of satisfaction with household or childcare division of labor.

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Tables 1 & 2 about here

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### **Inter-Correlations of Latent Variables**

Table 3 presents the correlation matrix of study variables. There were few significant correlations between the marital satisfaction variables and other variables. Some noteworthy significant correlations were husbands' satisfaction with the division of childcare and household labor and wives' marital satisfaction ( $r=.181, p<.01$ ;  $r=.070; p<.05$ ). The more satisfied husbands were with the division of childcare and household labor, the more satisfied were wives' reports of marital satisfaction.

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Table 3 about here

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Inter-correlations between the division of household and childcare division of labor, as well as satisfaction with household and childcare division of labor were all significant. This suggests significant association between husbands' and wives' perception, performance of and satisfaction with division of labor tasks.

## **Model Fit.**

Four different models were tested: division of household labor, division of childcare labor, satisfaction with division of household labor, and satisfaction with division of childcare labor. Results of the tests for goodness-of-fit statistics indicated that all four models had adequate goodness-of-fit. For household division of labor performance and marital satisfaction, the model fit summary reported a chi-square statistic of 54.98 (df=32) and an RMSEA of .035, which was below the .05 benchmark (Byrne, 2001). Also, the TLI and CFI were .980 and .992 respectively, which are above the .90 that indicates good fit. For satisfaction with household division of labor and marital satisfaction, there was a chi-square statistic of 62.976 (df=32) and an RMSEA of .041. The TLI and CFI were .972 and .989 respectively. Model fit for childcare division of labor and marital satisfaction reported a chi-square statistic of 95.789 (df=77). There was an RMSEA of .020. TLI and CFI were .989 and .994. Finally, the model for satisfaction with childcare division of labor and marital satisfaction had a chi-square statistic of 107.263 (df=77). There was an RMSEA of .026. The TLI and CFI were .983 and .990.

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Table 4 about here

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## **Hypothesis Tests**

As indicated in Table 4, there were no significant associations between wives performance of and satisfaction with division of labor and marital satisfaction. However, there were some notable actor and partner effects between division of labor and husbands' marital

satisfaction. Husbands' report of division of household labor ( $B=.147, p<.05$ ) and childcare ( $B=-.229, p<.05$ ) were significantly associated with their marital satisfaction. This indicates that more traditional division of household labor, with the wives more responsible for chores, was predictive of increased marital satisfaction for husbands. Whereas, when husbands were doing more childcare, their marital satisfaction increased. There were no significant partner effects, indicating that traditional division of labor did not predict the marital satisfaction of the spouse, for husbands or for wives.

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Table5 about here

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Table 5 shows actor and partner effects for satisfaction with division of labor and marital satisfaction. There were no significant actor effects. In terms of partner effects, there was a significant association between wives' satisfaction with division of household labor and husbands' marital satisfaction ( $B=.131, p<.05$ ). This indicates that when wives were more satisfied with the division of household chores, husbands were more satisfied in the marriage. There was also a significant association between husbands' satisfaction with the division of childcare and wives' marital satisfaction ( $B=.295, p<.01$ ). When husbands were more satisfied with the division of childcare labor, wives had higher marital satisfaction.

### **Discussion**

The current study found that division of labor and satisfaction with division of labor were significantly predictive of husbands' marital satisfaction, while they were not significantly

predictive of wives' marital satisfaction. When wives were performing more housework in a traditional division of household labor, husbands showed higher marital satisfaction.

History may explain this finding. In China, as in many nations, domestic work is typically a woman's role. Although China experience a period of women's liberation, in which women were urged into the work force, during the most recent Reform Period (1980-1990), there was increasing propaganda urging women away from the workforce and back into their domestic roles at home (Hershatter, 2004). This return to traditional gender roles may explain husbands' higher marital satisfaction when there is a more traditional division of labor arrangement. This finding is consistent to previous research, which also found that husbands who did most of the chores, as opposed to wives doing most of the chores, were less satisfied in their marriages (Pimentel, 2006; Xu & Lai, 2004).

It is unclear why there was a stronger effect for Chinese husbands' marital satisfaction. This is different from US research that suggests division of labor exerts a stronger influence on wives' marital satisfaction (Suitor, 1991; Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998). Further research could explore variables that may specifically explain the importance of division of labor for husbands. This may include further understanding of Chinese husbands' gender ideology or value beliefs relating to the family and home.

However, contrary to previous research (Pimentel, 2000, 2006; Xu & Lai, 2004), this study did not find a significant association between household division of labor and wives' marital satisfaction. These findings could suggest there is more contentment for wives with the traditional, domestic, gender role than Pimentel and the women's movement would have predicted (Pimentel, 2006). Despite increasing westernization in China (Hershatter, 2004),

traditional influence remains strong. Pimentel suggested that the return to traditional gender roles during the Reform period could take away a sense of liberation experienced by women during the Communist push for women's representation and equality in the workforce (Pimentel, 2006). However, it is arguable that women experienced a sense of liberation associated with their workforce involvement. Despite face-value equality evidenced in women's increasing representation in the workforce, women continued to suffer the double burden (Pimentel, 2006) of outside employment and their domestic role. The Reform period return to traditional ideology, about women's role in the home, could have come as a relief to Chinese women. The results of this study suggest that there is no marital dissatisfaction associated with traditional gender roles.

This is the first study that has examined the association between division of child care and marital satisfaction among Chinese couples. Findings indicate that higher levels of husbands' involvement in childcare is predictive of husbands' increased marital satisfaction. This finding is consistent with recent research on father involvement, which has shown that greater father involvement in childcare is positively related to fathers' marital satisfaction (Lee & Doherty, 2007; McBride & Mills, 1993). There is an emerging research literature that suggests that lack of father involvement may be due, in part, to maternal gatekeeping. This literature suggests that mothers unconsciously discourage father involvement in childcare (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; DeLuccie, 1995; Gaunt, 2007; Schoppe-Sullivan, Brown, Cannon, Mangelsdorf & Sokolowski, 2008).

Mothers' management of their husbands' involvement may stem from a variety of beliefs and factors, including fear of the father's competence in childrearing, the mother's relationship with her own father, cultural values or the marital quality (Allen & Hawkins, 1999; DeLuccie,



1995). In Chinese culture, childcare could have added significance because of a collectivistic orientation and China's one-child policy (Hershatter, 2004). These cultural values and conditions could increase husbands' investment in their child and benefits derived from child rearing, such as children growing up to provide for elderly parents. Maternal gatekeeping effects could also be strong in China because women gain power and influence in their families through their maternal role (Hershatter, 2004). The maternal gatekeeping literature, combined with Chinese cultural values, support and explain the finding that husbands are happier in the marriage when they are involved in childcare.

Contrary to expectations, neither division of household labor nor childcare was predictive of wives' marital satisfaction. These findings are not consistent with previous research in the US (Suitor, 1991; Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999; Wilkie, et al., 1998), as well as China (Pimentel, 2000, 2006; Xu & Lai, 2004). One possible reason for this is that many of the women in this study reported that they preferred to do the majority of household tasks and childcare. Sixty-five percent of the wives reported that their preference was for them to do "a little more than husband" or "much more than husband" in terms of child care tasks. Similarly, 50% of them preferred to do more housework than their husbands, including 24% who wanted to do "much more" than their husbands.

With such a high percentage of wives preferring to do the majority of the childcare and household tasks, it isn't surprising, then, that the actual division of labor would have little impact on wives' marital satisfaction. This argument is consistent with the findings from Pimentel's study (2006), which found a high level of satisfaction with the division of labor among wives. Using a single-item measure of satisfaction with the division of household tasks that ranged from

“very unsatisfied” (1) to “very satisfied (5), she found that the women in her study had an average score of 3.9, which suggests substantial overall satisfaction.

Zuo and Bian (2001) also contend that women are satisfied with their domestic responsibilities. Through a series of interviews with 39 Chinese couples in Beijing, they found that wives assume the bulk of responsibility for household chores and childcare, regardless of husbands’ and wives’ paid employment contribution. Wives also reported being willing and satisfied with assuming the gendered role of taking care of domestic responsibilities. They explain this in terms of an integration of gender and equity theories. Traditional gender roles (husband as breadwinner and wife as homemaker) become a gendered resource that each spouse contributes to the marriage and considers in their perception of fairness. When each spouse is performing their traditional role, there is an overall perception of fairness (Zuo & Bian, 2001; Wilkie, Ferree & Ratcliff, 1998).

Greenstein (2009) examined division of labor’s influence on family life satisfaction in 30 nations. He found that in nations with low gender equity, the significance of association between division of labor and family life satisfaction was low. Gender equity was a measure of how the nation ranked considering dimensions of women’s economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health. The US was considered a nation with high gender equity, and according to Greenstein (2009) findings, this explained the more significant influence between household division of labor and marital satisfaction. China was not included among the 30 nations in Greenstein’s study, but would be considered a nation lower in gender equity, and this could explain why the significance of the association between division of labor and marital satisfaction is weaker compared to the US.

This is the first study to examine the association between satisfaction with the division of household labor and marital satisfaction among Chinese couples. Findings indicate that wives' satisfaction with the household division of household labor is significantly predictive of husband's marital satisfaction. This is a unique finding. None of the US research used dyadic analysis, so it is difficult to compare this finding to US research. However, it is interesting that wives' satisfaction with the division of labor predicts husbands' marital satisfaction and not their own marital satisfaction. Cubbins and Vannoy (1994) research suggests that satisfaction with division of labor affects marital quality indirectly through marital conflict. Perhaps, wives' satisfaction with division of labor represents their role satisfaction and translates into harmony and less conflict between spouses. Further research could examine this relationship between wives' division of labor satisfaction and husbands' marital satisfaction. No other relationships were statistically significant.

Chen and Li (2007) found that when husbands perceived their spouse contributing to family work, this predicted an increase in their "enqing" toward their spouse. Enqing is a correlate to the Western notion of marital intimacy. It refers to gratitude and appreciation with one's spouse and is found to be a significant component of Chinese marriages. This also helps support the finding that husbands are satisfied in the marriage when their wives are satisfied with contributing to domestic labor.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of this study is the sample was limited to an urban sample and thus, does not represent a more wide Chinese population. Another limitation is that there was only a one-item measure of household division of labor. More specific items may have contributed to a better understanding of Chinese couples' division of household labor and its effect on marital

satisfaction. A final limitation is the inability to examine the temporal sequence between the division of labor and marital quality. A longitudinal design would allow examination of change in division of labor and marital satisfaction over time and stage of marriage.

### **Directions for Future Research**

Future research on division of labor and marital satisfaction in a Chinese population should address the limitations listed above by considering a longitudinal examination of division of labor across marriage. In addition, Xu and Lai (2004) study included in their measure of division of labor a category for other parties responsible for chores or childcare. China has multi-generation households that create a situation where couples experience the added burden of elderly care, as well as the added contribution of the elderly toward child care and household chores (Xu, Xie, Liu, Xia & Liu, 2007). Future research may consider measures that include elderly care among household tasks or ask about the contribution of elderly to household and childcare work.

### **Clinical Implications**

The findings of this study support an “emic” view that there are cultural differences in the impact of division of labor for U.S. couples and Chinese couples. The findings of this study suggest that husbands’ marital satisfaction is more significantly impacted by division of labor than wives’ marital satisfaction. A culturally competent clinician will be sensitive to this difference and may wish to explore the meaning behind gender roles and household and childcare management for the Chinese husband. Clinicians will be particularly sensitive to understanding the meaning behind division of labor for Chinese husbands.

Findings show that Chinese couples are commonly practicing a traditional division of labor, with wives performing most of the housework. Further, findings imply that Chinese wives' marital satisfaction is not significantly impacted by this inequitable division of labor. Therapists versed in western notions of feminism may be used to noting and focusing on inequity in the couple relationship (Voyandoff & Donnelly, 1999). However, clinicians should be careful to not assume an inequitable division of household labor is causing wives dissatisfaction or leading to marital disharmony. In fact, traditional Chinese beliefs about mental and relational health refer to the yin and yang. This concept implies that these polarities maintain balance and harmony in a system. The traditional roles of male and female in the home correspond to a notion of yin and yang harmony. Egalitarian relationships may offset this balance and cause more distress than contentment for Chinese couples (Lee & Mock, 2005). Culturally conscientious clinicians may question the integrity of imposing western feminist notions in marital therapy with Chinese couples when they appear to be content with traditional roles.

The findings of this study also suggest that husbands' marital satisfaction suffers when wives' take primary responsibility for childcare. This suggests Chinese husbands wish to be involved in childcare. The clinician may wish to explore maternal beliefs and behaviors with regards to childcare and their impact on encouraging or discouraging the husband's involvement. Crane and Wang (1994) also suggest that parents' vested interest in childcare is a point of intervention for Chinese couples. As the father-son bond is traditionally stronger than the husband-wife bond (Lee & Mock, 2005), clinicians can use the mutual goal of child rearing to strengthen the couple relationship.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that similar to western couples, division of household and childcare labor is relevant to Chinese couples and their marital satisfaction.

Clinicians will be aware of and sensitive to cultural values as they relate to the role of division of labor in Chinese marriages. They should explore gender roles in the home and the impact of the balance of division of labor on individual partners and their marriage relationship, rather than assume traditional Western views about egalitarian marriages.

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## Appendix A

Figure 1

*Model for Dyadic Analysis of Actor and Partner Effects for Division of Labor on Marital Satisfaction*

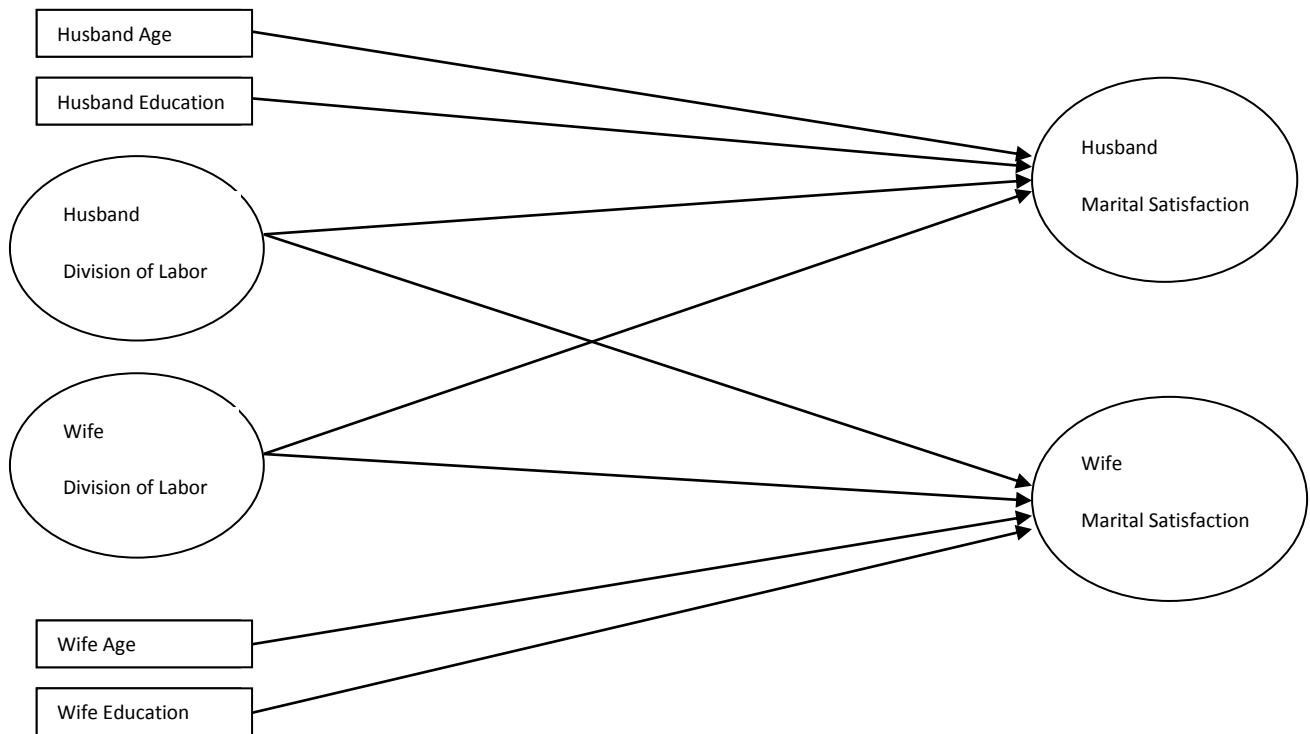


Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for Husband Division of Labor Variables (N=307)*

	Mean	Standard deviation
Household division of labor	3.81	1.015
Household division of labor satisfaction	-.098	1.181
Childcare 01 (feeding, changing diapers)	3.47	1.101
Childcare 02 (discipline)	2.95	1.107
Childcare 03 (health care)	3.30	1.015
Childcare satisfaction 01	-.050	1.270
Childcare satisfaction 02	-.188	1.152
Childcare satisfaction 03	-.206	1.100

Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations for Wife Division of Labor Variables*

	Mean	Standard deviation
Household division of labor	3.81	1.005
Household division of labor satisfaction	-.049	1.354
Childcare 01 (feeding, changing diapers)	3.61	1.072
Childcare 02 (discipline)	3.24	1.103
Childcare 03 (health care)	3.56	1.030
Childcare satisfaction 01	.020	1.301
Childcare satisfaction 02	.009	1.319
Childcare satisfaction 03	.000	1.170

Table 3. Correlations for Marital Satisfaction, Age, Education, Division and Satisfaction with Household and Childcare Division of Labor (N=446)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Husband Marital Satisfaction	~	.443***	.113*	-.001	-.017	.037	.055	.033	-.045	.073	-.103	-.075	.005	-.007
2. Wife Marital Satisfaction		~	-.047	-.069	.074	.033	-.014	.070*	.008	-.044	-.005	.181**	-.038	-.059
3. Husband Age			~	.604***	.330***	.192***	.030	.076	-.073	.088	.040	-.020	.013	.073
4. Wife Age				~	.115*	.251***	.016	.116*	-.105*	.111*	.013	.004	.007	.044
5. Husband Education					~	.606***	.079	.135*	.020	-.022	.024	.037	.030	-.001
6. Wife Education						~	-.015	.124*	-.008	-.064	-.021	.063	.068	-.066
7. Husband Division of Household Labor							~	.627***	.608***	-.236***	.571***	.420***	.364***	-.191**
8. Husband Satisfaction with Division of Household Labor								~	.358***	-.427***	.503***	.667***	.381***	.371***
9. Wife Division of Household Labor									~	-.655***	.341***	.322***	.615***	.479***
10. Wife Satisfaction with Division of Household Labor										~	-.242***	-.463***	.533***	.756***
11. Husband Division of Childcare											~	.682***	.705***	.427***
12. Husband Satisfaction with Division of Childcare												~	.588***	.648***
13. Wife Division of Childcare													~	.782***
14. Wife Satisfaction with Division of Childcare														~

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

Table 4

*Standardized Regression Weights for Division of Labor on Independent and Dependent Variables*

	Household		Childcare	
	Husband's marital satisfaction	Wife's marital satisfaction	Husband's marital satisfaction	Wife's marital satisfaction
Husband's perception of division of labor	.147*	-.022	-.229*	.019
Wife's perception of division of labor	-.139	.009	.104	-.097
Husband's education	-.010	---	.001	---
Wife's education	---	.030	---	.048
Husband's age	-.096	---	-.082	---
Wife's age	---	-.085	---	-.092

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



Table 5

*Standardized Regression Weights for Satisfaction of Division of Labor on Independent and Dependent Variables*

	Satisfaction with household division of labor		Satisfaction with childcare	
	Husband's marital satisfaction	Wife's marital satisfaction	Husband's marital satisfaction	Wife's marital satisfaction
Husband's satisfaction with division of labor	.101	.098	-.091	.295**
Wife's satisfaction with division of labor	.131*	.013	-.043	.115
Husband's education	-.005	---	.008	---
Wife's education	---	.023	---	.019
Husband's age	-.103*	---	-.080	---
Wife's age	---	-.097*	---	-.084

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