

GENDER INEQUALITY AND THE DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR:
COMPARISONS AMONG
CHINA, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, AND TAIWAN

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This dissertation compares the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. It poses three research questions. First, how much difference is there in the amount of time that men and women spend doing housework in the four countries? Second, which theoretical approach—the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, or the gender role attitudes approach—best explains gender differences in the division of household labor in these countries? Third, how does gender structure at multiple levels work to maintain this gender inequality? For this study I employed two sources of survey data, the 1997 East Asia Social Survey (EASS) and the 2002 Family and Changing Gender Roles III of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP). In addition, I conducted in-depth interviews with married men and women from the four countries.

The results show that women perform the majority of housework in the four countries. Chinese women do the least amount of housework among women across the four countries while Chinese men do the most in comparison with men in the other countries. Among the three theoretical approaches offered to explain this gender division of labor, the data in several respects support the relative resources approach and the gender role attitudes approach, but not the time availability approach.

Cross-national comparisons suggest that the relative resources approach explains women's time commitment better than it explains men's time commitment. This approach offers greater explanatory power with respect to gender inequality in

household labor in Taiwan than it does in China, Japan, or South Korea.

The gender role attitudes approach provides only slightly greater explanatory power in explaining men's contributions to housework than in explaining women's. In addition, this approach provides greater explanatory power with respect to gender inequality in household labor in China and Taiwan than in Japan or South Korea.

Conceptualizing gender as a structure with effects at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels, I discuss how such a multi-leveled gender structure helps maintain gender inequality. I discuss how, at the individual level, interviewees' attitudes towards cleanliness are related to gender inequality, observing that men do not do more housework than their wives do even when they show greater concern for cleanliness than their wives show. This suggests that gender structure at the institutional and interactional levels constrains the behavior of men and women more than does gender structure at the individual level.

The results show that Japanese and South Korean interviewees described greater gender inequality in the labor market than Chinese and Taiwanese interviewees did. Finally, the interviews suggest that gender ideology plays an important role in defining appropriate gender roles for men and women in these countries. Such a gender ideology is reinforced through everyday interactions between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters, which promote and maintain gender inequality.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Pi-chun Hsu was born in Yun Lin County, Taiwan on August 31st 1975. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communication from Shih Hsin University in Taipei in June of 1997, with a minor concentration in Social Psychology. She received her Master of Arts in Sociology from National Chengchi University in Taipei in June, 2001.

In memory of my mother, Kung-tieh Hsu

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Why is the study of household labor important.....	1
1.2 Why East Asian countries.....	2
1.3 Definition of household labor.....	5
1.4 The gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	6
1.5 Outline of the study.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: MACRO-LEVEL FACTORS RELATING TO THE GENDER DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR.....	12
2.1 Gender ideology.....	13
2.2 Types of family.....	19
2.3 Gender inequality in the labor market.....	23
2.4 Availability of domestic services.....	29
2.5 Conclusion.....	33
CHAPTER THREE: EXPLANATIONS OF THE GENDER DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR.....	36
3.1 The time availability approach.....	36
3.2 The relative resources approach.....	38
3.3 The gender role attitudes approach.....	39
3.4 Gender perspectives.....	41
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA AND METHODS.....	46
4.1 Data.....	46
4.2 Hypotheses.....	48
4.3 Dependent variables.....	49
4.4 Theoretical variables.....	51
4.5 Control variables.....	54
4.6 Analytic strategies.....	59
4.7 In-depth interviews.....	61
CHAPTER FIVE: THE GENDER DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR IN CHINA, JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, AND TAIWAN.....	63
5.1 The characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	63
5.2 Descriptive statistics.....	90
5.3 Summary.....	93

CHAPTER SIX: WHY DO MEN AND WOMEN DO HOUSEHOLD LABOR UNEQUALLY: EXPLANATIONS AND CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS...	95
6.1 China.....	96
6.2 Japan.....	103
6.3 South Korea.....	110
6.4 Taiwan.....	116
6.5 Cross-national comparisons.....	124
CHAPTER SEVEN: HOW GENDER STRUCTURE CONSTRUCTS GENDER INEQUALITY IN HOUSEHOLD LABOR: MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVES.....	132
7.1 Individual level: The one who cares more about neatness does more housework.....	133
7.2 Institutional level: Gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market.....	141
7.3 Interactional level: The help of mothers or mothers-in-law with housework maintaining gender inequality in housework.....	155
7.4 Discussion.....	168
CHAPTER EIGHT: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	173
8.1 Summary.....	173
8.2 Major findings.....	173
8.3 Study limitations.....	178
APPENDICES.....	180
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	186

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Women’s Labor Force Participation Rates in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	4
Table 2 Percentage distributions of Attitudes toward Appropriate Gender Roles of Men and Women in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States.....	19
Table 3 Distribution of Nuclear Family and Extended Family in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	21
Table 4 Women’s Labor Force Participation Rate and Women’s Wages Compared to Men in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and United States.....	25
Table 5 Distribution of Women’s Employment Status in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	29
Table 6 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in China.....	56
Table 7 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in Japan.....	57
Table 8 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in South Korea.....	58
Table 9 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in Taiwan.....	59
Table 10 Country by Work Status.....	62
Table 11 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in China.....	67
Table 12 An Example of Unequal Share of household labor in China.....	69
Table 13 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in Japan.....	74

Table 14 An Example of Unequal Share of household Labor in Japan.....	77
Table 15 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in South Korea.....	80
Table 16 An Example of Unequal Share of Household Labor in South Korea.....	83
Table 17 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in Taiwan.....	87
Table 18 An Example of Unequal Share of Household Labor in Taiwan.....	89
Table 19 Means and Standard Deviations of Housework Hours and Percent of Housework Per Week for Married Men and Married Women in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States.....	92
Table 20 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in China.....	97
Table 21 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in China.....	100
Table 22 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute Hours and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in China.....	102
Table 23 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan.....	105
Table 24 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan.....	107
Table 25 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute Hours and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan.....	108
Table 26 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea.....	112
Table 27 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea.....	114
Table 28 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute Hours and Proportion of	

Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea.....	115
Table 29 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan.....	119
Table 30 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan.....	122
Table 31 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute Hours and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan.....	123
Table 32 Comparisons of Significance — Control and Theoretical Variables for Absolute Hours of Housework among China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	127
Table 33 Comparisons of Significance —Control and Theoretical Variables for the Proportion of Housework among China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.....	128

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why is the study of household labor important?

Researchers from many academic fields have considered the issues concerning paid work in the formal labor market. Prior to the late 1970s, little attention was directed to the study of unpaid household labor. During the late 1970s and the 1980s, sociologists such as Berk and Berk (1979), Berk (1985), Coltrane (1989), England and Farkas (1986), Hartmann (1981), and Miller and Garrison (1982) focused on the issues concerning household labor. Since the 1980s, a significant effort has been made by researchers to examine unpaid household labor, and numerous studies on this subject were published in the 1990s. For example, Hochschild's *The Second Shift* (1989) is a book frequently cited by many researchers.

An important issue in the field of household labor concerns whether or not gender differentials in housework have been reduced (Bianchi et al. 2000). An answer to this question that has been repeatedly verified in studies in Western industrialized countries is that women still perform the majority of housework (Baxter 1997). For instance, studies in the United States found that women, regardless of their employment status, perform most of the housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Brines 1994; Coltrane 2000; Hochschild 1989). Even in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden and Norway, where comprehensive policies were made to enhance gender equality, women perform 74 percent of the housework in Sweden and 77 percent in Norway (Kalleberg and Rosenfeld 1990). The labor force participation of women in industrialized countries has increased over the last few decades. However, women still do the majority of the housework.

Many sociologists have tried to identify the factors that determine the housework

participation level of men and women over the last two decades. Three major theoretical approaches have been developed since the 1980s, which are the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach. Most studies in the area of household labor concentrate on the gender division of household labor in the United States and Western European countries. Nonetheless, the circumstances in other parts of the world, such as East Asian countries, have not been given much attention. Recent studies concerning household labor have indicated that it is important to “test established theories in a variety of structural environments and to test for possible cross-national differences in the effects” (Geist 2005: 24). To put it differently, it is crucial to consider the impact of other cultural, institutional, and structural factors on household labor in greater detail (Baxter 1997; Coltrane 2000; Fuwa 2004). Therefore, this comparative analysis explores household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan and examines the cultural and institutional influences on household labor in these four East Asian countries. The analysis attempts to answer a seemingly universal question: Why are women always the ones doing the majority of household labor?

1.2 Why East Asian countries?

East Asian countries share a common cultural heritage — Confucianism. Confucian gender ideology has been embedded in the cultural norms which regulate hierarchical relationships between men and women and those between generations (Rozman 1991). Confucian gender ideology plays an important role in defining the gender division of labor between husbands and wives in these countries, with the primary roles of husbands being defined as breadwinners and the roles of wives being defined as caretakers. In addition, Confucian gender ideology places great emphasis on the hierarchal kinship system in which the senior in age is privileged over the junior.

For example, according to the hierarchal kinship system, a mother-in-law occupies a higher status than a daughter-in-law does. Therefore, Confucian gender ideology must be understood not only in terms of the public-private sphere between men and women, but also as a hierarchal gender arrangement that applies to women or men of different generations. The combination of separate spheres for men and women with a hierarchal kinship system renders Confucian gender ideology distinct from gender ideology in Western industrialized countries.

The four East Asian countries, China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, have experienced remarkable economic development in the twentieth century. Japan enjoyed the fruits of economic development earlier than Taiwan and South Korea and has become one of the most highly developed and industrialized countries in the world. Since the beginning of the 1980s, Taiwan and South Korea went through stable economic development. Owing to its communist ideologies, China was the last of the four East Asian countries to experience sustained economic development. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure that helps to ascertain the sizes of the four economies. Japan enjoyed the GDP per capita of US \$35,660 in 2006, highest in the four countries (Department of Investment Services, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Executive Yuan, ROC 2008). The GDP per capita that Taiwan and South Korea had in 2006 were close to each other, with US \$16,030 in Taiwan and US \$18,481 in South Korea (Department of Investment Services, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Executive Yuan, ROC 2008). China had the lowest per capita GDP of US \$1,988 in 2006 (Department of Investment Services, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Executive Yuan, ROC 2008).

The region is an increasingly important site as far as gender inequality is concerned. Rapid economic development in the four countries has led a huge number of women into the paid labor force. Table 1 below shows that women's labor force

participation rates between 1975 and 1998 have increased 4 percent in Japan, 8 percent in South Korea, and 8 percent in Taiwan. Women’s labor force participation rate in 2001 was 73 percent in China. These rates have increased significantly over the last few decades in East Asia, but full-time female workers still earn less than full-time male workers.

Confucian ideology, as we have seen earlier, has been a unique cultural heritage shared by the East Asia countries. This ideology has continued to influence gender relationships in the region and has been different from Western culture. Gender inequality in the East Asian labor markets results in the circumstances where women have fewer opportunities for equal employment than men. Furthermore, gender inequality in the labor markets has led to the situations where women have less economic resources in the negotiation for equal gender relationships at home. Consequently, it is worth examining gender norms and economic resources and the influences they have brought about on the gender relationships and the behaviors of men and women in the four East Asian countries.

Table 1 Women’s Labor Force Participation Rates in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

	China ^a	Japan ^b	South Korea ^c	Taiwan ^d
1975	-	46	40	38
1998	73	50	48	46

Sources: a. United Nations Development Program (UNDP), *Human Development Report*, 2002.

b. United Nations, *Women in Japan: A Country Profile*, 1998. Statistics Bureau, Japan, *Labor Force Survey*, various years.

c. United Nations, *Women in the Republic of Korea: A Country Profile*, 1998. National Statistical Office, ROK (Republic of Korea), *Annual Report on the Economically Active Population Survey*, various years.

d. Council of Labor Affairs, Executive Yuan, ROC. *Women’s Labor Statistics*, various years.

Employing quantitative data and in-depth interviews, this study aims to compare household labor within the four East Asian countries as well as to compare household labor in East Asia with that in the United States. It makes use of two kinds of data, i.e. the East Asia Social Survey (EASS) carried out in 1997 and the 2002 Family and Changing Gender Roles III of International Social Survey Program (ISSP). This project interviews married men and women from the four countries. The cross-national comparisons of the gender division of household labor aim to answer the following questions:

1. What are the household tasks in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan?
2. How do men and women divide household labor in the four East Asian countries?
3. How do men and women differ in the amount of time spent doing housework in the four East Asian countries and in the United States?
4. To what extent do the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach explain the participation in household labor of men and women in the four countries? How useful are these theories in explaining the gender division of household labor in the four countries?
5. How does gender structure at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels construct the gender inequality in the household labor in the four countries?

1.3 Definition of household labor

The methods for measuring household labor vary (Shelton and John 1996; Coltrane 2000), but there is little doubt as to what household labor refers to (Coltrane 2000). Shelton and John (1996:300) have noted that “housework most often refers to

unpaid work done to maintain family members and/or a home.” Therefore, emotion work and other invisible types of housework are generally excluded from the analysis, although some researchers argue the importance of these two types of household labor (Erickson 2005; Minnotte et al. 2007).

Definitions of household labor are slightly different in the relevant literature owing to different research purposes and measuring methods. In general, the studies about housework in the United States often distinguish between *time-consuming* household tasks and *occasional* household tasks (Blair and Lichter 1991; Coltrane 2000). The five most time-consuming household tasks include preparing meals, washing dishes or cleaning up after meals, housecleaning, doing laundry, and shopping for groceries. In addition, occasional household tasks include the tasks such as paying bills, household repairs, garden and animal care, and driving other people (Bianchi et al. 2000; Coltrane 2000). However, other studies divide household tasks into three groups: traditionally female tasks (preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, and doing laundry), gender-neutral tasks (grocery shopping, paying bills, and driving other people), and traditionally male tasks (automobile maintenance and repair, yard work, and household repairs) (Kroska 2004; Presser 1994; Twigg et al. 1999).

In this study, household labor is defined as unpaid household tasks which include preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, doing laundry, shopping for groceries, and doing repairs around the house.

1.4 The gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

In China, the research based on the data from the 1991 Household Survey of the China Health and Nutrition Study has found that married Chinese women spend about

23 hours per week doing housework, but married Chinese men spend about five hours only on housework (Lu et al. 2000). Analyzing the data in 1991, 1993, and 1997 editions of Household Survey of the China Health and Nutrition Survey, Chen (2005) has found that that married Chinese women perform housework for 18 hours to 19 hours per week, but married Chinese men spend three hours to four hours on housework. These studies have shown that Chinese women do more housework than men. Chinese women do about 80 percent of total housework while Chinese men share about 20 percent of the housework.

In Japan, married women spend much more time doing housework than married men. Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) have noted that married Japanese women spend 33.5 hours per week doing housework, but married Japanese men spend an average of 2.5 hours per week doing housework. This means that Japanese married men perform only 7.4 percent of all housework (Tsuya & Bumpass 2004). Examining data of 1996 Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities, Ueda (2005) has noted that it takes married Japanese women about 38.5 hours per week to complete housework, but married Japanese men spend only 1.3 hours per week on housework.

In South Korea, Lee (2004) has said that the married South Korean women who have full time employment spend an average of 25 hours per week on housework, while full-time housewives perform housework for an average of 30 hours. The married South Korean men who have employed wives perform housework for only two hours per week, while married South Korean men with non-employed wives share an average of 1.7 hours of housework (Lee 2004). A study based on a nation-wide survey on how Korean people use their time has indicated that married South Korean women perform about 38.5 hours of housework per week, but married South Korean men spend only 4.2 hours doing housework (Cho 1994). Similarly, these studies have shown that South Korean women perform the majority of the housework. South

Korean women do about 90 percent of all housework, but South Korean men share only about 10 percent of the housework.

In Taiwan, a research based on a large-scale survey on social change in 1997, which was carried out by the Academia Sinica in Taipei, found that married Taiwanese women perform about three-fourth of all housework (Hsiao 2005). This survey indicates that the married Taiwanese women who have full time employment perform 33 hours to 36 hours of housework per week, but married Taiwanese men do only four hours to six hours of housework per week (Hsiao 2005). In other words, Taiwanese women perform much more housework than Taiwanese men. Taiwanese women carry out about 85 percent of all housework, while Taiwanese men share only about 15 percent of the housework.

The foregoing empirical studies attest to the persistence of gender inequality in household labor in each of the East Asian countries under study. There is, however, no systematic comparison of this gender division of household labor across the countries in the literature. To be sure, certain empirical studies have examined the determinants of the gender division of household labor on the basis of the three theoretical approaches (i.e. time availability, relative resources, and gender role attitudes) in each country, but gender theories have not been adequately incorporated into their theoretical argument. Therefore the present comparative study contributes new findings to the existing literature by examining the gender division of household labor under various cultural, institutional, and structural circumstances. Drawing on several gender theories, this project aims to reveal how gender structure at different levels helps to maintain the gender division of household labor, which in turn helps to explain why such gender inequality persists. In addition, the in-depth interviews help uncover diverse perspectives among the respondents, which serves to supplement existing quantitative data.

1.5 Outline of the study

Chapter 2 discusses the macro-level factors that might influence the gender division of household labor in the four East Asian countries. These factors are gender ideology, types of family, gender inequality in the labor market, and the availability of domestic services. This part of the study compares the possible influence of macro-level factors on gender inequality in household labor across the four countries and then compares the influence of the same macro-level factors in the four countries with their influence in the United States.

Chapter 3 considers three major theoretical approaches, i.e. the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach, and examines their effects on the gender division of household labor. This chapter also reviews the empirical studies that concern the United States and the East Asian countries. It makes an effort to develop the theoretical arguments and hypotheses for this project. The last section of Chapter 3 considers the relevant gender perspectives.

Chapter 4 discusses the sources of data examined in this study, which include the the 1997 East Asia Social Survey (EASS), the 2002 International Social Survey Program (ISSP), and in-depth interviews. Then chapter 4 elaborates on the hypotheses for this project and defines the dependent variables, theoretical variables, and control variables as well as the ways in which quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed. This chapter also explains how qualitative interviews are conducted.

Chapter 5, first of all, considers the results of qualitative interviews relating to divisions of household labor in four East Asian countries. According to the qualitative data, household labor has been regarded as unpaid household tasks that include the household tasks such as preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, doing laundry, grocery shopping, and carrying out repairs at home. This qualitative analysis

is followed by a quantitative analysis, which focuses on the amount of time that married men and women spend doing the five types of household tasks. This part of the study analyzes the descriptive statistics of household labor for men and women in each of the East Asian countries and compares similarities and differences of the gender division of household labor among the four countries. In addition, this study compares the descriptive analysis of the gender division of household labor in East Asia to that of in the United States.

Chapter 6 examines the effectiveness of three major theories on the gender division of household labor. The three theories are the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach. This chapter tries to employ the three theoretical approaches to explain the gender division of household labor in each East Asian country. It focuses on whether or not these approaches are useful in such analysis. The final section compares the effectiveness of the three major theories on the gender division of household labor across the four countries.

Chapter 7 illustrates how gender as a structure at different levels helps maintain gender inequality in the household labor in the four countries. Building on the multilevel approach of gender structure, this chapter aims to illustrate how gender structure in individual, interactional, and institutional levels supports the gender inequality in household labor in the four countries. First of all, this chapter looks at the gender structure at individual level. That is, this section considers how gender differences in cleanliness relate to their differential contribution to housework in the four countries. Second, this part of the study discusses how gender structure at institutional level, i.e. gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market constructs gender division of labor. Finally, this chapter ponders the interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters and illustrates how the interaction maintains unequal household labor between men and

women in the four countries.

Chapter 8 summarizes the conclusions reached in the previous chapters. It then provides suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

MACRO-LEVEL FACTORS RELATING TO THE GENDER DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR

The macro-level factors relating to the gender division of household labor in the four East Asian countries provide a useful perspective for studying household labor. This chapter examines the cultural, structural, and economic factors in each of the four countries before carrying out comparative studies. Having a proper understanding of the context is helpful for conducting comparative studies because macro-level factors may interact with micro-level factors and affect how men and women share housework. For instance, Fuwa (2004) examines whether macro-level factors of gender inequality limit the impact of micro-level factors (i.e. time availability, relative resources, and gender ideology) on the division of household labor in 22 industrialized countries. The results indicate that the macro-level economic and political gender inequality would discount micro-level effects on negotiating housework (Fuwa 2004). That is, the women who live in less gender-egalitarian countries benefit less from their individual-level resources (i.e. time availability, egalitarian gender ideologies) in negotiating housework than the women in more gender-egalitarian countries (Fuwa 2004). In addition, Giest (2005) investigates the differences relating to division of household labor among liberal, conservative, and social-democratic welfare regimes. The research results show that the division of household labor is not only affected by two partners, but also by structural factors (Giest 2005). It is then important to analyze the macro-level factors of each of four East Asian countries and consider how the variation of macro-level factors may affect the negotiation of housework.

This chapter ponders gender ideology, types of family, gender inequality in the labor market, and availability of domestic services in China, Japan, South Korea, and

Taiwan. This part of study also analyzes the relationships between these macro-level factors and the micro-level negotiation of housework between men and women in the four East Asian countries.

2.1 Gender ideology

To understand the gender ideology in the four East Asian countries, it is necessary briefly to discuss Confucian gender ideology from various historical and cultural perspectives and to examine the changes of the Confucian gender ideology in these countries. The Confucian gender system regulates the gender division of labor from birth through the use of space, body, possession, and ritual items (Rosenlee 2006). The private-public distinction signifies the roles for women and men in familial and extrafamilial relations. The concept of “threefold dependence” refers to the social obligation that women must follow the views of their fathers, husbands, and sons at different stages of their life (Rosenlee 2006:89). In addition, the concept of “four womanly virtues” refers to the excellence, work, speech, and deportment of women (Rosenlee 2006:81). First, the excellence of women means that women should curb their talent so that they would not outshine men (Han and Ling 1998; Rosenlee 2006). Second, the work of women refers to that the roles of women are limited to help their husbands manage the house (Han & Ling 1998; Rosenlee 2006). Third, the speech of women refers to the rule that their talks should be controlled (Han and Ling 1998; Rosenlee 2006). Fourth, the deportment of women means that women’s appearance should be modest and understated instead of attractive (Han and Ling 1998; Rosenlee 2006). All these doctrines intertwine with the kinship hierarchy and determine the privileged status for men and inferior status for women in the four East Asian countries.

In China, the ideology of Confucianism has been severely challenged since the

early twentieth century. The first wave of anti-Confucianism was those literati in the era of the early Republic of China. Confucianism was regarded as old and useless values, which were unable to resist the force of the West (Rosenlee 2006). The second wave of anti-Confucianism was seen during the Communist Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. An essential goal of the Communist Party was “to deny that country and family had the right to hold women back on the ground of family life” (Wang 1999:26). During the Cultural Revolution, the family life was devalued, “where ‘private’ was equated as selfish” (Wang 1999:26). Therefore, traditional gender division of labor was recognized as an obstacle to women’s liberation. The Chinese government manipulated the relevant discourse, making an effort to convince men that they should share some housework when their wives are engaged in political activities (Wang 1999). The Chinese state opened the door to the world in 1978 and initiated market reforms under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The major task of the Chinese government has been to secure stable economic development. The perception of a crowded labor market, unemployment, and underemployment has driven the resurrection of the Confucian ideal of *virtuous wife and good mother* (Pimentel 2006). The Chinese government has played an important role in transforming gender roles through value regulation. However, nowadays it withdraws from the transformation of gender ideology, and the traditional gender ideology has resurged. As a result, it is interesting to consider the influence of previous denial and recent resurgence of Confucian gender ideology in the Chinese country.

In Japan, the ideology concerning gender division of labor appeared during the Meijin Restoration in the late nineteenth century, when the authorities propagated the ideal of “good wife and wise mother” (Hirao 2001:192). Women were encouraged to stay at home and take care of the family and housework when their husbands went to work. The gender ideology overwhelmed the Japanese country and the government

even failed to utilize the labor force of women effectively during World War II (Tipton 2004). The expectation that women should be good housewives and mothers was even intensified during the economic growth and structural change of the post-war period (Uno 1993). Having a full-time housewife and mother at home is a symbol of prosperity for middle-class families. The expectation for having a good wife and wise mother has permeated Japanese society in such a way that most Japanese women have conformed to this gender expectation (Stockman et al. 1995; Tipton 2004). Traditional gender division of labor remains prevalent in Japan if compared to other advanced industrialized countries (Stockman et al. 1995), but the challenge of this gender ideology has at present become a public issue. The relevant discourse is believed to have brought impact on the gender role attitudes of the younger generation in Japan. For instance, Ojima (1998) as described by Chiavacci (2005) reported that about two-thirds of the Japanese in her research agreed or somewhat agreed with the traditional gender roles in 1985, but this figure decreased to two-fifths in 1995.

In South Korea, Confucianism has long influenced the Korean society and regulated the gender relationships based on four womanly virtues (Han & Ling 1998). During the Choson dynasty from 1392 to 1910, the Korean society created strict rules of sex segregation for men and women and for husband and wife. “Obedience, chastity, perseverance, and women virtues” were regarded as women’s characteristics (Yoon 1986:42). Since the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, Koreans experienced Japanese colonization, the Korean War and then decades of authoritarian rule. This East Asia country has industrialized and economically modernized over the past three decades, but the gender ideology confined to women has changed tardily (Palley 1990). For example, the relatively low employment rates among married South Korean women are consistent with the traditional cultural norms that have recognized being good wives and wise mothers to be the virtues of women (Lee 2001), in spite of

the increase of higher education for women. In addition, a study of the value system of housewives in South Korea has indicated that about 70 percent of the South Korean respondents held the view that husbands should be breadwinners and wives should be caretakers (Kim 1994). In South Korea, older generations and men are more likely to support the traditional gender roles than younger generations and women (Bumpass & Choe 2004). It is widely believed that since the 1980s, the development of women's rights movements, the enactment of Equal Employment Opportunity Law, and the amendments of Family Law have brought about changes to the traditional gender ideology of South Korea.

In Taiwan, Confucianism has been influential since 1949. It was the year during which the force of the Kuomintang, or the Nationalist Party, was defeated by the Liberation Army of the Chinese Communist Party in mainland China. The Kuomintang government then began the some 40-year authoritarian rule on the island. The Chinese Communist Party made every attempt to remove Confucianism from the Chinese culture during the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976, but Confucian thinking has long been very influential in Taiwanese society. All the students in senior high schools in Taiwan have been required to study the Analects of Confucius, which constitutes an essential element of the course of Chinese language. A main idea of Confucian thinking is that men and women should be treated differently, which may have led to women's inferior status in family and country (Rosenlee 2006).

Gender stereotypes such as women as major caretakers and men as breadwinners are still commonly seen in Taiwan. With the development of a democratic regime and capitalist modernization in Taiwan, women have benefited from an increase of equal education and employment opportunities. The traditional gender ideology in the East Asian country has also been challenged. Certain cross-national studies have revealed the change of gender ideology in Taiwan. Tu and Liao (2005), for instance, have noted

that a higher proportion of the people in China accept a traditional division of marital roles (e.g., wives stay at home and husbands make a living) than those in Taiwan. In addition, although Taiwanese men are still regarded as major breadwinners, married Taiwanese women have started to serve as the supplementary providers (Yu 2001).

In the United States, normative gender roles also followed the doctrine of separate spheres during the nineteenth century. Influenced by liberal individualism, critics of gender inequality grew in number in the early twentieth century and continued to influence legislation such as the Equal Rights Amendment—a milestone proposal albeit one that never passed (Norman et al. 1995). Public debates over the role of women broke out during the Kennedy administration, resulting in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (Norman et al. 1995). As the women's movement ebbed and flowed over time, a great number of married women would enter the labor force with each wave of activism, and the cumulative effect has been profound. American women have thus experienced more frequent and intense debates about appropriate gender roles for men and women than the women in the four East Asian countries. A cross-national comparison of appropriate gender roles for men and women has shown that more Americans (56%) disagree that men should be the primary breadwinners and women should be the primary caretakers than people in the four East Asian countries do (see table 2). In addition, more Japanese people (54%) and Taiwanese people (48%) disagree with the idea of separate spheres for men and women than Chinese people (32%) and South Korean people (31%). These results indicate that Americans exhibit more liberal ideas about gender roles than people in the four East Asian countries do. Among those in the four East Asian countries, Japanese and Taiwanese people have more liberal gender role attitudes than Chinese and South Korean people do.

In brief, Americans exhibit more liberal gender role attitudes toward men and women than people in the four East Asian countries do. The four East Asian countries

have long shared a similar Confucian gender ideology, one that identifies separate spheres for men and women. In addition, Confucian gender ideology places great emphasis on the hierarchal kinship system in which the senior members of any hierarchy have more power than the junior members do. However, “in the hierarchal kinship system one shifts from being a junior to a senior, or being both at the same time, depending on the relative position that one occupies” (Rosenlee 2006:88). Moreover, Confucianism emphasizes the importance of the familial virtue of filial piety, which refers to show respect to the senior and support them. The relationships between the three key elements of Confucian gender ideology, i.e. separate spheres between men and women, kinship hierarchy, and filial piety, have emerged as a critical area of gender studies in East Asia (Rosenlee 2006). The separate spheres interact with the hierarchal kinship system and filial piety and maintain men’s presumptive superiority over women and senior women’s dominance over junior women. As a result, such complex relationships make Confucian gender ideology different from the gender ideology in Western industrialized countries.

China is the only East Asian country that experienced the rejection of Confucian gender ideology during the Cultural Revolution and then the resurgence of the relevant ideologies after the end of the 1970s. Such experience makes China distinctive from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The gender ideology has been challenged and changed in the later three countries owing to modernization, economic development, and social movements, but it is worth noting that the authorities concerned in the three countries have not made much effort to challenge the gender ideology. The similarity and difference in the gender ideology make it worthwhile further to examine how these may affect the gender relationships within households in the four countries.

Table 2 Table 2 Percentage distributions of attitudes toward appropriate gender roles of men and women in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
China	12.2	50.4	30.8	1.5
Japan	10.7	14.1	13.1	40.7
South Korea	10.0	58.9	28.5	2.5
Taiwan	9.9	36.4	43.2	4.9
U.S.	5.9	13.2	—	55.8

Sources: East Asia Social Survey, 1997; International Social Survey Program, 2002.

Note: The East Asia Survey asked respondents whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement, “For married couples, husbands should be in charge of matters outside the home while wives are in charge of things in the home.” The international Social Survey asked respondents about the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement, “A men’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family.”

2.2 Types of family

The phrase *family* can be classified in various manners, but families in East Asia are generally categorized into four types which include single, nuclear, extended families, and other families. This section analyzes nuclear and extended families because the main objective of this project is to explore gender division of household labor between married couples or cohabitants. A nuclear family refers to married couples only, or married couples and their unmarried children, or one parent (the other either dead or divorced) with unmarried children (United Nations 1998). An extended family consists of married couples and their parents or married couples with their parents and children (United Nations 1998).

The distribution of family types has some implications for housework. On the one hand, when couples live with their parents or parents-in-law in the same houses, it means that the couples may need to take care of their parents or parents-in-law who are ill or too old. On the other hand, the amount of time that married men and women spend doing housework and childcare may be reduced because of the *helping hands* from their parents or parents-in-law, in particular mothers or mothers-in-law (Brinton 2001; Chen 2005).

In China, nuclear families constituted 72 percent in 1990 and 71 percent in 1995 (Yi 2002). About 21 percent of the family households in 1990 and about 22 percent of the family households in 1995 were extended families (see table 3). In other words, the distribution of nuclear and extended families in China does not change significantly from 1990 to 1995.

In Japan, nuclear families have also been the most common family type over the last few decades. The proportion of nuclear families has been considerably stable from the 1950s to 1980s, with the proportion between 59 percent and 62 percent (United Nations 1998). Nuclear family households accounted for about 60 percent of all households in 1990 and about 59 percent in 1995 in Japan (United Nations 1998). The relative share of extended family households among all households in Japan has been declining steadily, constituting 17 percent and about 16 percent in 1990 and 1995, respectively (United Nations 1998) (see table 3).

The family structure in South Korea has changed significantly over the last 30 years. The traditional extended family has been replaced gradually by the nuclear family in the East Asia country (United Nations 1998) (see table 3). Data from censuses indicate that the nuclear family increased from 72 percent of all families in 1970 to 80 percent in 1995 (United Nations 1998). Extended families, however, declined from 20 percent of all families in 1970 to about 11 percent in 1995 (United Nations 1998).

Table 3 Distribution of Nuclear Family and Extended Family in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and United States

	China ^a	Japan ^b	S. Korea ^c	Taiwan ^d	U.S. ^e
Single family	6.0	24.8			25.5
Nuclear family	71.4	59.0	79.9	57.7	52.8
Extended family	22.1	15.8	10.7	34.1	16
Other family	0.5	0.3	9.4	8.2	5.7

Sources: a. Zeng, Yi. 2002. "A demographic analysis of family households in China, 1982-1995"

Journal of Comparative Family Studies.

b. United Nations. 1998. *Women in Japan: A Country Profile.*

c. United Nations. 1998. *Women in the Republic of Korea: A Country Profile.*

d. Ministry of the Interior, ROC. 1998. *Survey on Women's Living Conditions.*

e. U.S. Census Bureau. 2000. *2000 Current Population Survey: America's Families and Living Arrangement.*

In Taiwan, censuses show that nuclear family households, making up 58 percent of all families in 1997, were also the most common family type (Ministry of the Interior, ROC 1998). According to the data, Taiwan (57.7%) and Japan (59%) had lower proportion of nuclear families compared to China (71.4%) and South Korea (79.9%) (see table 3). In addition, Taiwan (34.1%) and China (22.1%) have much more extended families (Ministry of the Interior, ROC 1998; Yi 2002) than South Korea (10.7%) and Japan (15.8%). This means that there are more Taiwanese and Chinese couples living with their parents or parents-in-law than Japanese and South Korean couples.

In the United States, studies of family structure have proved that Americans have experienced a continuing decline in the number of extended family households during the twentieth century (Goldscheider and Goldscheider 1989; Sweet and Bumpass 1987). Extended family households constituted about 10 percent of all households in the United States over the past three decades, breaking out into 12 percent of all households in 1970, 9.6 percent in 1980, 12.2 percent in 1990, and 16 percent in 2000 (Glick et al. 1997; U.S. Census Bureau 2000)¹. The proportion of extended family

¹ The distribution of extended families in the United States varies with natives and immigrants. On a percentage basis, more immigrants than natives live in extended family households.

households in the United States is much lower than in China and Taiwan. It is close to the proportion in Japan, but is higher than in South Korea (see table 3).

Moreover, it is worth noting that the time at which young adults leave the parental home and live alone in the four East Asian countries is different from when it typically occurs in Western industrialized countries. A cross-national comparison of the time of leaving the parental home between East Asian and Western countries has indicated that many more adult children in East Asia leave the parental home much later than their Western counterparts do (Yi et al. 1994). Men in China, Japan, and South Korea leave the parental home about three to four years later than men in the United States, Sweden, and France do (Yi et al. 1994). For example, about 75 percent of Chinese men remained in the parental home at the age of 25, but most Americans leave home around the age of 18 (Yi et al. 1994). In most Western industrialized countries, children leave the parental home at the time of marriage or of entering college or the labor market. In East Asian countries, adult children do not necessarily leave the parental home even after marriage. They are more likely to do so, however, when they enter college or take up employment. Even if they do so, they may later live with their parents again when the parents become elderly or when they feel that their parents need their support due to the cultural tradition of filial piety. Men in East Asia are therefore less likely to live alone in comparison with their Western counterparts. Even when they live alone, they generally do so for a shorter period of time than do men in Western countries. Such living arrangements may therefore affect the gender division of household labor in the four East Asian countries.

In brief, there are in the United States proportionally many fewer extended family households than in the East Asian countries. Consequently Americans are less likely to receive help with housework from other family members such as parents or parents-in-law. Among the four East Asian countries, South Korea has the highest

proportion of nuclear family and the lowest proportion of extended family, which indicates that South Korean couples are more likely to do most housework with little help from other family members than the couples in the three other countries. Moreover, Taiwan has the lowest proportion of nuclear family. At the same time, Taiwan and China have the highest proportion of extended family in the four countries. This means that Taiwanese and Chinese couples are more likely to obtain help with housework from other family members than Japanese and South Korean couples. Getting help with housework from members of an extended family reduces the amount of the time that Taiwanese and Chinese couples spend doing housework. Since housework would presumably fall on the shoulders of married women, it is worth exploring further whether the help from parents or parents-in-law indeed reduces the amount of time that married men or women spend doing housework. Chapter seven will discuss further how the help of mothers-in-law or mothers constructs and bolsters the gender inequality in the household labor in the four countries.

2.3 Gender inequality in the labor market

The economic development in East Asia has driven a large number of women into paid labor force. Despite the increase of women's labor force participation, most women in the labor market encounter different treatment compared to their male counterparts. The main objective of this section is to investigate this phenomenon of gender inequality in the labor market and to consider how this problem may influence the gender division of household labor in each of the four East Asian countries. To analyze the gender inequality in the labor market, this section examines certain relevant aspects including women's labor force participation rates, women's work patterns, and women's wages compared to men.

Before 1976, the goal of the Chinese Communist Party was to integrate women

into social production as a way of female liberation. As a consequence, all Chinese women were expected to join the labor force and life-time employment was arranged by the state (Fei 1997). China began since the late 1970s a transition from a planned economic system to a socialist market economy. Women's labor force participation rates have since then declined, but the rates remain relatively high. Women's labor force participation rate was 72 percent in 2000 (Jiang 2004). The labor force participation rate for women in Japan was only 50 percent in 1970, 48 percent in 1980, and 50 percent in 2000 (United Nations 1998; Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics 2003). The rate in South Korea was 38 percent in 1970, 42 percent in 1980, and 48 percent in 2000 (United Nations 1998; Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics 2003). Finally, the rate in Taiwan was 31 percent in 1970, 39 percent in 1980, and 46 percent in 2000 (Bauer 1997; Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics 2003). A comparison on these rates indicate that Chinese women participate more in the paid labor force than the women in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan (see table 4). In the United States, the women's labor force participation rate was 59.2 percent in 1980, 62.8 percent in 1990, and 64 percent in 2000 (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006). This latter figure is higher than the corresponding rates in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, but lower than the rate in China (see table 4).

Table 4 Women's Labor Force Participation Rate and Women's Wages Compared to Men in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and United States

	China	Japan	S. Korea	Taiwan	US
Women's labor force participation rate in 2000 ^a	73	50	48	46	64
Women's wages compared to men ^b	84	60	55	70	84

Sources: a. Jiang, Yonping. 2004. "Employment and Chinese Urban Women Under Two Systems." Pp. 207-41 in *Holding Up Half the Sky*, edited by Jie Tao, Bijun Zheng, and Shirley L. Mow. Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics, Executive Yuan, ROC. 2003. *Gender Statistics and Women's Status: Cross-National Comparisons*. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2006. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-table2-2007.pdf>
 b. Shu, Xiaoling & Yanjie Bian. 2003. "Market Transition and Gender Gap in Earning in Urban China." *Social Forces* 81(4): 1107-45. Brinton C., Mary. *Women's Working Lives in East Asia*. United Nations. 1998. *Women in Japan: A Country Profile*. United Nations. 1998. *Women in the Republic of Korea: A Country Profile*. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2006. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom2006.pdf>

It is worth noting that women's work patterns throughout their lives are different in the four East Asian countries. Women's labor force participation rates in Japan and South Korea present an M-shaped curve. That is, if we represent labor force participation among women by age group on a graph, the peak periods (early twenties and later forties) combine with the lowest points (early thirties) to produce an M-shaped curve (Brinton 2001). Women's labor force participation rates attain to the first highest peak in the M shape at the age of 20 to 24 in Japan and South Korea (Brinton 2001). After that, a large number of Japanese and South Korean women at the age of 25 to 35 withdraw from the labor market around the time of marriage or childbearing, which results in the lower participation rates in Japan and South Korea. Some of them in their 40s may return to work after their children are older and therefore produce the second peak in the M shape. Women's exits and re-entries into the labor market in Japan and South Korea results in a twin peak or M-shaped employment pattern (Bauer 1997; Brinton 2001; Lee 2004). Nonetheless, this pattern is not apparent in China and Taiwan (Brinton 2001; Hsueh 2000; Yi & Chien 2002; Yu

2001). More than half of the employed Taiwanese women remain in the labor force after marriage, childbirth, or childrearing (Brinton 2001). The women's labor force participation rates in Taiwan decline with age and they are much closer to a single-peak pattern. About 90 percent of the employed Chinese women stay in the labor market after marriage, childbirth, or childrearing (Yi & Chien 2002). Consequently, women's work pattern in China is much similar to that in Taiwan than those in Japan and South Korea. In the United States, labor force participation rates among married women with young children increased about 30 percent between 1975 and 1995; two-thirds of married women with young children were in the labor force by the mid-1990s (Brinton 2001). Although labor force participation on the part of American women was until recently characterized by an M-shaped pattern, it has been transformed into a more continuous pattern across the life cycle (Brinton 2001). Therefore, the pattern of work for women in the United States is more like the pattern found in China and Taiwan than it is like the pattern in Japan and South Korea.

Moreover, data show that wage rates for women compared to men are higher in China and Taiwan than those in Japan and South Korea (see table 3). Chinese women made 84 percent of the annual income of Chinese men in 1995 (Shu & Bian 2003), which is the highest proportion of income that women can earn in the four East Asian countries. In addition, Taiwanese women who were full-time workers earned about 70 percent of the monthly income of Taiwanese men in 1995 (Brinton 2001; Zveglich et al. 1997). Japanese female full-time workers earned about 60 percent of the monthly income of men workers, while South Koreans female full-time workers made 55 percent of the monthly income of men workers (Brinton 2001; United Nations 1998). In the United States, the proportion of a man's income made by a woman increased from 80 percent 1995 to 84 percent in 2000 (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006). The comparison of the income gap in the four East Asian countries and the United States

shows that the gap between men and women in the United States and China is smaller than the corresponding gap in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea (see table 4).

Finally, many more women are self-employed or family workers in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan than in Western countries. About 90 percent of all working women in most Western industrialized countries work as paid employees (Brinton 2001). This is not the case, however, in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Why are women in these three countries more likely to become self-employed or family workers? One conventional explanation is that these types of work are more attractive to married women because they better accommodate their family and work responsibilities than if they work for others (Lee 2004). In other words, it is difficult for married women to balance their family and work duties when they work for others on rigid schedules. Another possible explanation is discrimination against married women in the labor market. For example, married women are less likely to be promoted to important positions in comparison with their male counterparts. Table 5 below shows that 15.6 percent of South Korean women are self-employed and 16.3 percent are family workers, which is greater than the percentage of Japanese and Taiwanese women. Lee (2004) has examined the association between different employment status categories and the amount of time that men and women spend doing housework in South Korea. The result shows that women who are family workers spend more time doing housework than do women who are self employed or outside employees (Lee 2004). Very few studies have examined the effect of employment status on the amount of time that men and women spend doing housework in the four countries, however, so we do not yet have a definitive explanation for these results. Given that more South Korean women are self-employed or employed in family businesses than Japanese or Taiwanese women are, we may wonder about the extent to which these types of employment status affect the time men and women devote to housework in the four

countries. This question will be examined in chapter six.

The relatively high labor force participation rates for Chinese women and continuous employment patterns throughout their lives would presumably have them spent less time doing housework than the women in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea.² In addition, the gender wage gap may have influence on the economic power of men and women in the labor market and on the power within households. Although the wage gaps between men and women exist in the four countries, the gap in China and Taiwan is not as sharp as those seen in Japan and South Korea. Given this gap, this study argues that the relatively high wage that Chinese and Taiwanese women have presumably increases the power they have within households. It is such power that might have helped them secure a better position when negotiating for less housework at home. Also, the factor of gender inequality in the labor market determines the extent to which women depend on their husbands or men cohabitants for economic support. The problem of gender inequality is more serious in the Japanese and South Korean labor markets than in the Chinese and Taiwanese labor markets. As a result, married Japanese and South Korean women rely more on their husbands or men cohabitants for economic support than married Chinese and Taiwanese women, which presumably increases gender inequality in the allocation of housework. Chapter seven will discuss how such gender inequality in the labor market suppresses the supply of paid labor among married women and examine the relationship of this inequality to the allocation of household labor in the four countries.

² However, the increase of women's labor force participation itself is not sufficient to explain the time of housework for women and men. Hook (2006) argues that women's labor force participation or time constraint should be considered under specific contexts such as whether or not social policies support men's participation in housework. That is, the increase of women's participation in paid work is likely to reduce their time of housework if social policies are created in response to women's rising employment and to promote men's share of housework.

Table 5 Distribution of Women's Employment Status in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

	Japan ^a	South Korea ^b	Taiwan ^c
Self employment	8.4	15.6	9.7
Family workers	12.0	16.3	15.4
Outside employment	79.6	68.1	74.9

Source: a. Statistic Bureau, Japan, *Employment Status Survey*, 1997.

b. National Statistical Office, ROK (Republic of Korea), *Korean Census*, 1995.

c. Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics, Executive Yuan, ROC, Report on Fertility and Employment of Married Women, Taiwan Area, Republic of China, 1993.

2.4 Availability of domestic services

Domestic services refer to the replacement for household labor available in the market, which may reduce the amount of time that people spend doing housework. Previous studies have indicated that the women with more financial resources are more likely to purchase domestic services or employ migrant domestic workers for relief from the burden of housework (Lan 2003; Remero 2002).

Domestic services in the four East Asian countries are a form of informal economy, which means that official and systematic statistics concerning the services are not always available. This study makes every effort to pull together and analyze all the relevant data issued by the governments or academia concerned. Such data include the number of domestic workers, the income of domestic workers, and the supply and demand of domestic services in the four countries.

In China, domestic workers are usually those who migrate from rural areas to urban areas and those who have lost their jobs in government agencies. There is no official nation-wide statistics relating to the domestic workers and domestic services, because the domestic services are regarded as one of the informal sectors in the country. A survey conducted in 9 cities, i.e. Shanghai, Yianjin, Chongqing, Shenyang, Nanjing, Xiamen, Nanchang, Qingdao, and Wuhan, which was issued by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, provides some basic statistics regarding the domestic

services in these cities. The results of this survey have shown that the total number of people employed as domestic workers in the nine cities is about 239,600 (Wong 2006). In addition, about 153,000 domestic workers were employed in Beijing, but there was a shortage of 50,000 domestic workers in 2006 (Wong 2006). A shortage of domestic workers was also reported in Shanghai (Wong 2006). The demand for domestic services has been increasingly higher in big cities. However, the supply of domestic workers has largely lagged behind the demand, which has resulted in a huge shortage of domestic workers in the country. This has consequently become a serious social problem over the last few years. Such a shortage results from the relatively low wages, long working hours, and the lack of social security for domestic workers. According to a relevant survey conducted in Beijing in 2004, the annual income of Beijing residents is US \$2,178, but more than 60 percent of the domestic workers in the capital city earn only US \$836 to US \$1,170 (China Youth on Line 2006).³ The wage is insufficient for maintaining a minimum standard of living in the city. What is worse is that many of the domestic workers must send money back home to support their families in the rural areas of China.

In Japan, there are mainly two kinds of domestic services. Many municipal governments have launched a family support system that organizes some domestic workers who are paid US \$6 to US \$7 per hour to help with childcare and household tasks (Oishi 2005). In addition to this domestic service, private companies offer professional housework services for a fee ranging from US \$15 to US \$40 per hour (Oishi 2005). According to the 1995 Population Census in Japan, the numbers of Japanese domestic workers were 41,086 in 1990 and 54,580 in 1995 (Statistics Bureau, Director-General for Policy Planning and Statistical Research and Training Institute, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan 1995). The number of

³ <http://local.online.sh.cn/App/rw.aspx?ID=2270>

domestic workers increased by 32.8 percent from 1990 to 1995, which renders this occupation the seventh fastest growing one in the East Asian country. As the aging population and the proportion of dual-earner families have been increasing in the country, a growing demand for the domestic services is likely. Notwithstanding this increasing demand for domestic workers, Japan has become the only high-income country in Asia that does not accept foreign domestic workers owing to its highly restrictive immigration policies (Oishi 2005). There are two major reasons that Japanese government has not accepted migrant domestic workers (Oishi 2005). First, the state policy forbids unskilled foreign workers. Second, the state has strongly bolstered the gender ideology that Japanese women should carry out housework by themselves instead of hiring domestic workers.

In South Korea, Kim and Chang (1968) as described by Lee (2005) reported that about 40 percent to 60 percent of urban households in Seoul and other cities employed live-in domestic workers during the 1960s. Young (1970) as reported by Lee (2005) described that about 42 percent of the families in Seoul and Kyunggi-do hired domestic workers in the 1970s. Teenage girls from rural areas were the major providers of domestic services during the 1960s and the 1970s (Lee 2005). The number of live-in domestic workers declined during the 1970s, and the number of part-time domestic workers, mainly middle-age married women, exceeded the number of live-in domestic workers by the middle of the 1980s (Lee 2005). In addition to the local domestic workers, live-in Korean-Chinese⁴ migrant domestic workers have also provided domestic services since the 1990s. Ryu (2002) as described by Lee (2005) reported that about half of the Korean-Chinese domestic workers earned US \$770 to US \$850 per month, while about one-fourth of them earned US \$540 to US \$770 and

⁴ Korean-Chinese refers to those ethnic Koreans and their succeeding generations who have lived in China since the nineteenth century.

the other one-fourth earned US \$850 to US \$1,100. Compared to the average income of US \$930 to US \$1,200 of local live-in domestic workers, Ryu (2002) as described by Lee (2005) indicated that the Korean-Chinese domestic workers earned about 80 percent to 85 percent of the wages of local Korean domestic workers. Most of the foreign domestic workers were undocumented or disguised as trainees in South Korea because the Korean government officially prohibited the entry of unskilled foreign labor (Oishi 2005). Korean immigration restrictions were not relaxed until August 2004. The government allows the foreign workers to enter South Korea as trainees but not as workers (Lee 2005). The number of foreign trainee entrants was 8,000 to 9,000 in 1992 and 1993 and has steadily expanded ever since (Lee 2005). By the end of 2001, the figure increased and exceeded 100,000 (Lee 2005).

In Taiwan, domestic services are usually provided by housekeeping companies, individual domestic workers, and migrant domestic workers. Before the early 1990s, housekeeping companies and Taiwanese domestic workers are the main providers of domestic services. There were almost no migrant domestic workers at that time. However, the demand for domestic services has increased rapidly because of the growth of dual-earner households and the aging population in Taiwan. In the capital city of Taipei, about one-third of the households need domestic services to handle household chores and look after family members. Owing to the shortage of daycare centers and nursing homes, the Taiwanese government has approved the employment of migrant domestic workers from mainly Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam since 1992. Recently, more than 150,000 migrant workers have been working as domestic workers in Taiwan (Council of Labor Affairs 2005), and they constitute a major supply of domestic services. The average annual income for these domestic workers was US \$6,480 when the GDP per capita in Taiwan in 2005 was US \$ 15,668 (Department of Investment Services, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Executive Yuan,

ROC 2006). Compared to the foreign domestic workers, the Taiwanese citizens who work as domestic workers are paid higher wages and they are provided with more time flexibility and work autonomy (Lan 2003).

Domestic workers are generally regarded as unskilled workers, and their wages are low if compared to other occupations. Where domestic services are inexpensive and they are accessible in a country, it is very likely that the women in that country are willing to pay for the services in order to avoid the burden of housework⁵. The review of domestic services in the four East Asian countries in this chapter has indicated that the demand for domestic services has largely exceeded the supply of the services. That is, the four countries are similar in the sense that they all face a shortage of domestic services. Nevertheless, the South Korean and Taiwanese governments have opened the door for migrant domestic workers, while the Japanese and Chinese governments maintain restrictive policies toward migrant workers. As a result, we may expect that the domestic services in China and Japan are less accessible than those in South Korea and Taiwan.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the macro-level factors that may affect the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. A comparative study has also been carried out to analyze the factors of gender ideology, types of family, gender inequality in the labor market, and availability of domestic services in the four East Asian countries.

⁵ Since people who work as domestic workers or migrant domestic workers are mostly women from working class or women of color, gender scholars have criticized the purchase of domestic services as a reproduction of unequal gender division of labor among women with different social status and different races (Romero 2002). The gender and racialized division of domestic service is an important issue and deserves more attention, but it is beyond the scope of this research.

All the four countries have long been under the influence of Confucian gender ideology. China once rejected the Confucian gender ideology during the Cultural Revolution, but the ideology became influential again after the power struggle within the Communist Party of China came to an end in 1976. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have never experienced such a change, which makes China distinctive in East Asia with respect to gender ideology. This is a major difference related to gender ideology in the four countries. This study, as a result, takes this similarity and difference into account later in the examination of relevant qualitative data. In addition, the highest proportion of extended families in Taiwan and China shows that the age-based hierarchical kinship could be more commonly seen in Taiwan and China than in Japan and South Korea. Chapter seven will discuss how the hierarchical kinship interacts with gender beliefs and strengthens gender inequality in household labor.

The comparative study on the distribution of family types indicates that Taiwan has the lowest proportion of nuclear family, and that Taiwan and China have the highest proportion of extended family in the four countries. This means that Taiwanese and Chinese couples are more likely to receive help with household labor from other family members than Japanese and South Korean couples. The assistance from other family members presumably reduces the time that Taiwanese and Chinese couples may spend doing housework.

As to the economic factor with respect to the household labor in the four countries, the cross-national comparisons show that the problem of gender inequality in the labor market is less serious in China and Taiwan than that in Japan and South Korea. The gender inequality in the labor market in Japan and South Korea could end up with women's dependency on their husbands or cohabitants for economic support. Therefore, the married women in Japan and South Korea may have less power to negotiate for less housework than the married women in China and Taiwan.

Finally, the comparisons of the availability of the domestic services across the four countries indicate that they all face the shortage of the domestic services. Nonetheless, this problem is more serious in Japan and China than in Taiwan and South Korea owing to the restrictive policies toward migrant workers in the former two countries.

The cross-national comparisons relating to gender ideology, family types, gender inequality in the labor market, and availability of domestic services have shown that the four countries can be divided into two groups. One of them consists of China and Taiwan, and the other consists of Japan and South Korea. The difference between these two groups is obvious as to the distribution of family types and gender inequality in the labor market concerning the four macro-level factors. As to the distribution of family types, the proportion of extended family in Taiwan and China is larger than that in Japan and South Korea. For this reason, it can be expected that there are more Taiwanese and Chinese couples living with their parents or parents-in-law than Japanese and South Korean couples. In addition, the problem of gender inequality in the labor market is less serious in China and Taiwan than it is in Japan and South Korea. China and Taiwan are similar with respect to family types and gender inequality in the labor market, which could lead to similar results of the gender division of household labor in the two countries. In addition, it can also be expected that Japan and South Korea could be similar as to the results of the gender division of household labor. This dissertation will focus on these similarities and differences relating to gender division of household labor in the four countries later in chapters five, six, and seven.

CHAPTER THREE
EXPLANATIONS OF THE GENDER DIVISION OF
HOUSEHOLD LABOR

Studies in the United States have shown that gender continues to be the most significant predictor of the time people spend doing housework (Coltrane 2000). To explain gender inequality in household labor, social scientists have developed several theoretical approaches. This section begins by reviewing and discussing three major theoretical approaches: the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach. The last section of this chapter then addresses the gender perspectives.

3.1 The time availability approach

The time availability approach suggests that men and women participate in housework to the extent that they have time available. The most commonly used indicators of this approach are employment status and employment hours for men and women.

Most studies indicate that women's employment hours are negatively associated with the absolute amount of time spent doing housework (Bergen 1991; Bianchi et al. 2000; Brayfield 1992; Kalleberg and Rosenfeld 1990; Kroska 2004; Ross 1987; Shelton and John 1996). The relationship between women's employment hours and men's housework time is more varied. Some studies have found that women's employment hours are positively related to men's absolute time spent doing housework (Blair and Lichter 1991; Brines 1993) while others state that the women's employment hours are associated only with men's proportion of housework (Ross 1987). Some other studies report a weak or insignificant association between women's

employment hours and men's housework time (Shelton 1990; Thompson and Walker 1989).

In general, the more time women spend on paid work, the less time they spend doing housework. However, the number of hours men spend on paid work is a weaker and less consistent predictor of their housework time than the corresponding figure is for women. Certain studies find that longer paid work hours for men are negatively associated with their participation in household labor (Coltrane and Ishii-Kuntz 1992; Greenstein 1996a; Kamo 1988). However, John and Shelton (1997) report that there is no relationship between men's paid work time and their participation in housework. On a related question, Blair and Lichter (1991) report that men's paid work hours are positively associated with the extent of household task segregation. To put it differently, in a situation in which a man spends considerable time on paid work, it is very likely that he will perform only men's household tasks such as gardening and car repairs.

In brief, studies of household labor in the United States show that the negative association between women's employment time and their housework time is supported more consistently by the data than a corresponding association for men. In China, a study by Lu et al. (2000) shows that the more time a wife spends on paid work, the greater is the husband's contribution to housework. Research on housework in Japan reveals that the time wives spend doing housework is reduced significantly in accordance with their employment time (Tsuya and Bumpass 2004). In addition, Japanese men increase their share of housework only when their wives work full time (Tsuya and Bumpass 2004). In South Korea, research points out that wives' employment hours do not significantly affect their time doing housework or their husbands' participation in housework (Lee 2004). In Taiwan, wives' paid work hours have been shown to significantly reduce the time they spend doing housework, but

their paid work hours do not affect their husbands' housework time (Hsiao 2005). Research on housework in Taiwan by Lee et al. (2000), however, does not support for the theory of time availability.

3.2 The relative resources approach

The relative resources approach takes an exchange-based perspective, assuming that housework allocation is governed by the relative economic power between husbands and wives. The main argument of this approach is that the spouse with the greater economic resources will use those resources to negotiate the least involvement in housework (Brines 1993). Relative resources are usually measured in terms of income.

The income proposition assumes that higher income leads one to spend less time doing housework. In general, the smaller the differences in income between husband and wife, the more equal is the division of household labor (Bianchi et al. 2000; Blair and Lichter 1991; Brayfield 1992; Greenstein 1996a; Presser 1994; Ross 1987; Sanchez and Thomson 1997). Some researchers, however, argue that this effect is not always found (Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Orbuch and Eyster 1997). Studies assessing the effect of income on the time that men and women spend doing housework separately find that income has a greater effect on housework time for women than for men (Shelton and John 1996). Higher income for women is strongly associated with the purchase of domestic services (Cohen 1998) and hence reduces women's housework time. Lower income or unemployment for women is linked to economic dependency on their husbands' earnings, and hence women are more likely to accept that they should do more housework when they earn lower income than their husbands (Kane and Sanchez 1994; Sorensen and McLanahan 1987). In addition, men with higher income do little housework (Presser 1994) either because their wives are

more likely to be full-time housewives responsible for all housework or because they might employ domestic workers to help their wives with housework. Lower income or unemployment for men is not associated with their doing more housework. That is, the more men depend on their wives for economic support, the less housework they do (Brines 1994).

With respect to China, Lu et al. (2000) argue that the greater the income difference between husbands and wives, the less time the husbands spend doing household labor. In Japan, Iwama's study (2005) indicates that the relative resources approach cannot explain the gender division of household labor in Japanese dual-earner families. However, a study of Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) finds some support for the relative resources approach to gender-based differences in the division of housework. That is, the more income Japanese wives earn the less housework they do, while their husbands do more of the housework than do husbands of lower-income wives (Tsuya and Bumpass 2004). In South Korea, when husbands earn more than wives do the wives tend to increase their housework time while husbands tend to decrease theirs (Lee 2004). In Taiwan, Lee et al. (2000) find that the higher the relative income of married Taiwanese women, the more time their husbands spend doing housework. Using income differences between husbands and wives in Taiwan to examine the effect of relative resources approach on housework, Hsiao (2005) finds strong support for the approach.

3.3 The gender role attitudes approach

Scholars employing explanation based on gender role attitudes have assumed that the performance of housework reflects gender ideology on the part of women and men. They hypothesize that women and men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes will exhibit a more equal division of household labor than those with more conservative

attitudes towards gender.

Men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes are expected to devote more hours to housework and share in doing a greater proportion of the housework than men with traditional gender role attitudes (Greenstein 1996a; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Presser 1994). However, some researchers have failed to find support for this hypothesis (Coverman 1985; Crouter et al. 1987). They have found no association between men's gender role attitudes and their participation in housework when using the absolute amount of hours to measure housework. Still, other researchers who use proportional measures of men's share in housework (e.g. the percentage of total hours spent by men on household tasks) typically find a positive association between men's egalitarian gender role attitudes and their share in housework (Greenstein 1996a; Shelton and John 1996). In addition, studies report that women with more egalitarian gender role attitudes spend less absolute time doing housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Brayfield 1992; Presser 1994). But other researchers have failed to support the effects of gender role attitudes on women's housework (Ross 1987; Shelton and John 1993 1996). Although gender role attitudes are measured in various ways and have led correspondingly to mixed results, most studies support the idea that gender role attitudes often provide a better prediction of household labor on the part of men than on the part of women.

Using education as a proxy in order to examine the determinant of gender role attitudes on housework, Lu et al. (2000) find that married Chinese men with higher educational attainment share in doing more housework than those with lower educational attainment. In Japan, married men with egalitarian gender role attitudes significantly participate in more housework than those with traditional attitudes (Iwama 2005). Other research finds, however, only partial support for the gender role attitudes approach. Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) indicate that Japanese men increase

their share in doing housework only when their wives also hold egalitarian gender role attitudes. In South Korea, highly educated married women perform less housework than do women with a junior high school education or less (Lee 2004). And the husbands of highly educated South Korean women tend to share somewhat more in doing housework than the husbands of less-educated women (Lee 2004). Empirical studies in Taiwan have shown that egalitarian gender role attitudes among men are significantly associated with doing more housework and, not surprisingly, with women such egalitarian gender role attitudes are associated with doing less housework (Hsiao 2005). In addition, research shows that Taiwanese husbands share significantly in doing housework when both husband and wife hold egalitarian gender role attitudes (Lee et al. 2000). Having even one member of a couple with strongly egalitarian gender role attitudes also positively affects the husband's participation in housework in Taiwan (Lee et al. 2000).

3.4 Gender perspectives

A strong critique arose among feminists in the 1990s, identifying problems with the relative resources and time availability theories. The feminist scholars argued that the allocation of household labor involves not only a rational arrangement but also something irrational. This section first briefly discusses three theoretical traditions with respect to gender and then specifies the gender theory in this project.

The earlier gender theory tradition focuses mainly on the microlevel or the origin of "gendered selves" (Risman 1998:13). Sex-role theory holds that differences in childhood socialization of boys and girls determine differences in their behavior in adulthood, and that men and women develop different personalities due to this early socialization. Men develop masculine personalities and as a consequence are aggressive, competitive, confident, and work-oriented, while women develop feminine

personalities and as a consequence are nurturing, person-oriented, and child-oriented (Risman 1998). Many gender scholars (Connell 1987; Ferree 1990) have criticized the emphasis on sex-role socialization because they reject what they term an “oversocialized concept of human behavior” (Risman 1998:17) and believe that the effects of early socialization may be modified or replaced in later life.

The second gender theory tradition centers on how macrolevel structures cause and maintain mechanisms of gender inequality (Dunn et al. 1993). Researchers who emphasize macrostructures do not reject the influence of microlevel characteristics and behaviors on the gender inequality. They assert rather that “macrostructural theories enhance the understanding of how individuals are affected by and in turn affect structure” (Dune et al. 1993:69). The key macrostructural variables include ideological systems, family structure, economic factors, and political factors (Dunn et al. 1993). Although macrostructural variables are important factors in explaining gender inequality, sex category (e.g. men and women) remains a powerful predictor of gender inequality in families (Risman 1998). This implies the importance of considering mesolevel factors or interaction.

The third gender theory tradition focuses on how mesolevel factors, or interaction, may affect gender differences and gender inequality. The most well-known theory in this tradition is West and Zimmerman’s article, “Doing Gender.” They argue that “gender itself is constituted through interaction” (1987:129). They suggest that people are categorized into indigenous categories such as men or women and show gendered behaviors accordingly based on the category to which they belong (West and Zimmerman 1987). The process of “sex categorization” (Ridgeway and Correll 2004) is taken for granted to such an extent that it “offers a quick cognitive start to making sense of another in relation to the self” (Ridgeway and Correll 2004: 515). Sex-role theory generally considers gender as a kind of internal identity or given attribute

(Correll et al. 2007). Researchers in gender theory argue, however, that gender is a dynamic process rather than a static attribute or internal identity. In other words, gender is something one *does* rather than something one is (West and Zimmerman 1987). The theory of doing gender has been well accepted in the feminist sociology. However, it has been criticized that “it undertheorizes the pervasiveness of gender inequality in organizations and gender identities” (Risman 1998:23).

The three gender theory traditions reviewed above explain the maintenance of gender inequality based on different theoretical approaches. However, they are not incompatible. Recent studies by gender theorists have proposed the integration of multiple levels, including microlevel and macrolevel factors, and applying this integration of multiple levels to reveal gender inequality (Folbre 1993; Molm 1993). Risman (1998:28) conceptualizes gender as a structure and proposes that the gender structure has consequences at three levels:

(1) At the individual level, for the development of gendered selves; (2) at the interactional level, for men and women face different expectations even when they fill the identical structural positions; (3) at the institutional level, for rarely will women and men be given identical positions.

Risman argues further that “interactional pressures and institutional design create gender and the resultant inequality, even in the absence of individual desires” (1998: 29). This project builds on the multilevel perspective of gender and conceptualizes gender as a structure with consequences at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels. To understand the gender inequality in household labor, it is important to reveal how the gender structure at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels affects the behavior of men and women.

As mentioned above, sex-role theories focus on explaining how internalized gender differences lead to gender inequality. Sex-role socialization theorists consider

gender to be a “mostly stable and durable aspect of who people are” (Correll et al. 2007: 2). Sex-role socialization theory has been criticized for focusing too narrowly on explaining gender differences while disregarding gender similarities between men and women (Correll et al. 2007). Empirical studies do support certain sex-based differences in adult personality. The differences are, however, fairly small (Connell 1995) and “more myth than reality” (Risman 1998: 18). In addition, this theoretical approach has been criticized for assuming that the stability established by early socialization will continue throughout life, underplaying the effects of individual agency (Risman 1998). Gender is a dynamic “process” (Correll et al. 2007: 4) rather than a static identity or internalized trait. I argue therefore that sex-role socialization theory cannot fully explain why men and women participate unequally in doing housework. It is the gender structure at the institutional and interactional levels that creates and maintains the unequal gender division of household labor.

Gender structure at the institutional level involves gender beliefs and the gender-based distribution of resources (Risman 1998; Ridgeway & Correll 2004). Gender beliefs represent men and women differently according to a narrow set of features. These gender beliefs exist as abstractions, but we have learned them through everyday interaction with others and from the media (Risman 1998). We act and react meaningfully and effectively on the basis of such gender beliefs. These gender beliefs “provide a blueprint for doing gender in most settings where individuals consider themselves relative to others” (Ridgeway & Correll 2004: 514). Therefore, gender beliefs are part of gender structure and must be analyzed in everyday interaction.

Gender scholars have argued that gender inequality is created and re-created through everyday social interaction (Glick & Fisk 1998; Ridgeway & Correll 2004). As mentioned earlier, doing gender theory suggests that, once men and women are labeled as belonging to one sex category or another, they display gendered behavior on

the basis of that sex category (West & Zimmerman 1987). Men and women are therefore expected to do gender, and this doing gender legitimates gender inequality (West & Zimmerman 1987). Berk's investigation of the allocation of household labor (1985) suggests that the arrangement of housework supports two production processes: that of household goods and that of household services (preparing meals, caring for children, and so on). As she puts it: "Simultaneously, members 'do' gender, as they 'do' housework and child care" (1985: 201). Therefore, doing household tasks is not simply producing household goods and services. It also provides opportunities for men and women to demonstrate that they are competent members of a sex category. To display their competence as members of a sex category, women tend to do more of the housework while men avoid it.

In summary, I argue that sex-role socialization theory, in regarding gender as a static attribute, cannot fully explain gender inequality in household labor. Considering gender as a structure having consequences at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels, I further argue that gender structure at the interactional and institutional levels has a greater effect on gender inequality than gender structure at the individual level.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA AND METHOD

4.1 Data

As noted in chapter 1, this project makes use of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data are drawn primarily from two sources of survey data: the 1997 East Asia Social Survey (EASS) and the 2002 Family and Changing Gender Roles III of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP). The former includes data from China, South Korea, and Taiwan. The latter contains data from Japan. In addition, qualitative data are collected by employing in-depth interviews that focus on understanding how gender structure persists in maintaining the gender inequality in household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

The questionnaire for the 1997 EASS was developed by a multi-country research team, including William L. Parish and Mary C. Brinton (Harvard University), Hei-yuan Chiu (Sociology Institute, Academia Sinica, Taiwan), Yong-hak Kim (Yonsei University, South Korea), and Chonglin Shen, Yingying Chen, and Xiaoye Zhe (Sociology Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China). The data from the 1997 EASS were collected by the three leading research institutions in Taiwan, South Korea, and China, respectively. Sampling was based on strict probability sampling methods in each country. Sampling in China began with a purposive sample of coastal regions, following which probability sampling was used throughout subsequent levels. The data (N = 3,013) were collected from individual interviews conducted from April to June of 1997. The South Korean (N = 3,570) and Taiwanese data (N = 2,831) were collected from late 1996 into early 1997 from individual interviews. Surveys generally represent the adult population in these three countries.

The ISSP is a continuing annual program that conducts collaborative

transnational surveys covering important topics in the social sciences. The same topic is measured every five to ten years. This project uses Family and Changing Gender Roles III of the ISSP in 2002 because the data from 2002 have variables that measure the gender division of household labor. Probability sampling was employed in each country. The Japanese sample was drawn out from the whole population with a two-stage stratified random sample of Japanese aged 16 or older. The data (N = 1,132) were collected in November of 2002 through individual interviews.

The EASS collects data from China, South Korea, and Taiwan, but it does not carry data on Japan. To compare household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan this project uses Japanese data from the ISSP. The ISSP collects data on Japan and Taiwan. This project used only the Japanese data from the ISSP, due to some problems with the Taiwanese data. A preliminary analysis of the Taiwanese data from the ISSP shows that indications of the time Taiwanese women spend doing housework are obviously inconsistent with the results of other existing empirical studies. Therefore, this project uses Japanese data from the ISSP. Using quantitative data from two different sources does raise related research limitations that may be noted with respect to this project. To compare household labor in the four countries, this project has to use variables that are available in both datasets. Since the two sources of data have been collected according to different research purposes and standards of measurement, the number of variables included in this project was limited accordingly. The second limitation, which is related to the first limitation, is that more than half of the variables in these two datasets must be transformed into the same standard of measurement in order to conduct cross-national comparisons. This may change the original standard of measurement of these variables.

To make the samples of the four countries comparable, this study selects similar samples according to marital status, age, and the area of residence. This study selects

respondents who are married or living with a partner. It is in these households that the distribution of housework between husbands and wives or partners is likely to be apparent. Respondents under 25 years of age are very likely to be students and respondents beyond the age of 64 years are mostly retired in these four countries. The income effect may not apply to these two groups. I therefore restrict the analysis of quantitative data to respondents who are between the ages of 25 and 64. Additionally, the proportion of urbanized population in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan is much higher than that in China owing to varying degrees of economic development. The Chinese government has long concentrated its attention on the economic development in the urban areas, but the government has paid much less attention to the development in the rural areas. The difference in the policy has rendered the development of the rural areas far lag behind that of the urban areas. In the urban areas of China, more than 90 percent of married women are in the paid labor force. Also, these married women and their husbands equally share economic resources (Bian et al. 2000). This suggests that the characteristics of urban population in China are very similar to those in the other three countries. To make the samples comparable, the study selects the respondents who live in the urban areas in the four countries.

4.2 Hypotheses

This study examines the three theoretical approaches, including time availability, relative resources, and gender role attitudes, in terms of how each theory determines the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Hypotheses based on the three theoretical approaches are proposed below.

Hypothesis one: The more time wives spend doing paid work, the more hours, and the greater the proportion of total hours, husbands spend doing household labor.

Hypothesis two: The higher the relative income of wives, the more hours, and the

greater the proportion of total hours, husbands spend doing household labor.

Hypothesis three: The more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of husbands, the more hours, and the greater the proportion of total hours, they spend doing household labor.

Hypothesis four: The more time wives spend doing paid work, the fewer hours, and the lesser the proportion of total hours, they spend doing household labor.

Hypothesis five: The higher the relative income of wives, the fewer hours, and the lesser the proportion of total hours, they spend doing household labor.

Hypothesis six: The more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of wives, the fewer hours, and the lesser the proportion of total hours, they spend doing household labor.

4.3 Dependent variables

In the 1997 EASS, respondents were asked to indicate the number of hours per week that they and their spouses or partners spend doing household tasks, including shopping for groceries, preparing meals and washing dishes, repairing appliances around the house, and doing laundry and housecleaning chores. The present study sums the hours that respondents spend doing each type of household task and creates a total sum of weekly housework hours for the 1997 EASS. In the 2002 ISSP, the total housework time was measured by asking the respondents: “On average, how many hours a week do you personally spend on household work, not including childcare and leisure time activities?” and “How many hours a week does your spouse or partner spend on household work, not including childcare and leisure time activities?” The household work in the 2002 ISSP includes the same household tasks as the 1997 EASS.

Time diaries and survey questions are the two most common methods used to measure housework information. Time diaries are considered to be the most accurate

basis on which to estimate housework time, but they are problematic if a given day that is selected for sampling is not representative of the general pattern of daily activities (Coltrane 2000); moreover, some concurrent activities may be underestimated (Coltrane 2000). This study measures housework time by using direct survey questions from the 1997 EASS and 2002 ISSP because both surveys measure housework time based on direct questions. Comparisons between time diaries and survey questions have shown that survey questions about housework information tend to produce higher time estimates than time diaries (Juster and Stafford 1991; Press and Townsley 1998). However, this overestimation of housework time can be improved upon by defining the tasks that comprise the housework more narrowly (Shelton and John 1996). As mentioned earlier, the 1997 EASS measures housework time by asking about respondents' weekly hours spent on each type of household task, while the 2002 ISSP measures housework time by asking about respondents' weekly total hours on all household tasks. The total housework time reported by married men and women in Japan may therefore be overestimated when compared with their real housework time.

Asking direct questions about the time that men and women spend doing housework is common in research. Respondents are asked to estimate how much time (in hours or minutes) they spent doing housework yesterday. As mentioned above, the problem with direct questions is that men and women tend to overestimate the time they spend on household tasks (Coltrane 1996; Marini & Shelton 1993). Men tend to miscalculate their housework time to a greater degree than women do (Coltrane 1996; Marini & Shelton 1993). In addition, it is common for researchers to measure gender differences in housework proportionally, in terms of percentages of total hours contributed by husbands and wives. The problem with a proportional measure of housework is that it is difficult to interpret "what a change in the independent variable actually means" (Bianchi et al. 2000:203). That is, "the independent variable may

affect the numerator of the ratio, the denominator, or both simultaneously” (Bianchi et al. 2000: 203). Therefore, we do not know whether the proportion of a husband’s share in doing housework increases because his wife does less or because he does more. In general, using actual hours alone can “mask issues of equality” (Coltrane 2000: 1218) and using proportional measures alone makes it difficult to sort out the meanings of variable changes (Bianchi 2000). As a result, this study uses both actual hours and proportional measures of housework.

In brief, this study considers four dependent variables, as below:

1. *Husband’s total weekly housework hours*. This variable adds up the weekly hours that a husband spends on all types of household tasks and creates the husband’s total housework hours for one week.
2. *Wife’s total weekly housework hours*. This variable also sums the time that a wife spend doing all types of household tasks and provides the wife’s share in total housework hours for one week.
3. *Husband’s percentage of a couple’s housework time*. The husband’s total weekly housework hours are divided by the couple’s total weekly housework hours.
4. *Wife’s percentage of a couple’s housework time*. The wife’s total weekly housework hours are divided by the couple’s total weekly housework hours.

4.4 Theoretical variables

This study includes theoretical variables related to the three theoretical explanations for the gender division of household labor (see table 5 to table 8), corresponding to the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach.

Woman’s paid work hours comprise the number of hours that a woman spends doing paid work per week. In the 1997 EASS, respondents were asked about their

individual paid work hours and about their spouse's paid work hours. In the 2002 ISSP, the respondents were asked for the number of paid work hours for them and for their spouses or partners. As discussed earlier, empirical studies done in the United States indicate that the number of hours doing paid work is a weaker predictor of men's housework time than it is of women's. We do not know if this trend holds in the four East Asian countries. In addition, this study focuses on analyzing the relationship between women's employment time and men's housework time. Therefore, this study examines time availability based on women's paid work hours.

Wife's relative income measures each spouse's relative economic contribution to family income. In the 1997 EASS, respondents were asked to report the amount of annual income that they and their spouses or partners earn. If the respondents hesitated to state their annual incomes precisely, they were allowed to select a scale of annual income within which theirs falls. To compare these figures with those from the 2002 ISSP, responses to questions about individual annual income and spouse's or partner's annual income in the 1997 EASS were recoded into a five-point scale. The scale includes: the husband has a much higher income; the husband has a higher income; their incomes are about equal; the wife has a higher income; and the wife has a much higher income. The scale ranges from 1, indicating the husband's much higher income, to 5, indicating the wife's much higher income. As for the 2002 ISSP, wife's relative income is obtained on the basis of respondents' answer to the question: "Considering all sources of income, between you and your spouse or partner, who has the higher income?" Responses to this question were also recoded into the five-point scale that as the scale used for the 1997 EASS, where 1 indicates the husband's much higher income and 5 indicates the wife's much higher income.

Gender role attitudes are based on two questions designed to measure what respondents consider to be appropriate gender roles for men and women. In the 1997

EASS, two questions measure such gender role attitudes. The questions are: “For married couples, husbands should be in charge of matters outside the home while wives are in charge of things in the home”; and “By nature women are more suitable for taking care of the family than men.” Respondents were asked if they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the two questions in the 1997 EASS. The responses to each question were coded from 1 to 4. Cronbach's Alpha for these two questions is .70 for China, .60 for South Korea, and .51 for Taiwan. In the 2002 ISSP, two questions similar to the two questions about gender role attitudes in the 1997 EASS also assess gender role attitudes. The questions are: “A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family”; and “A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children.” There are five responses, ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘agree’ to ‘neither agree nor disagree’ to ‘disagree’ to ‘strongly disagree.’ To compare these figures with those from the 1997 EASS, the five responses to these two questions in the 2002 ISSP were recoded into a four-point scale. The scale includes ‘strongly agree,’ ‘agree,’ ‘disagree,’ and ‘strongly disagree,’ where 1 indicates ‘strongly agree’ and 4 indicates ‘strongly disagree.’ The response of ‘neither agree nor disagree’ is recoded as a missing value. The higher a respondent’s score, the more egalitarian are his or her gender role attitudes. The Japanese data show that Cronbach’s Alpha is .51 for these two questions.

Self employment is entered as a dummy variable. Employment status includes outside employment, self employment, and family work. The omitted employment status is that of outside employment. As mentioned earlier in chapter two, it is worth noting that many women in South Korea are self-employed. For women who are self-employed, the boundary between work and family is more blurred than for women who are outside employees. Therefore, it is worth examining whether a wife’s self employment affects her housework time.

Family work is included as a dummy variable. The omitted employment status is that of outside employment.⁶ Similarly, as mentioned earlier in chapter two, many more South Korean women are family workers than are women in Japan or Taiwan. It is important to further examine whether this type of employment affects the amount of time that women spend doing housework. Lee's study (2004) of housework in South Korea has found that married women who work in family businesses spend more time doing housework than women who are outside employees or self-employed. This suggests that it is important to consider the effect that working in a family business has on the time women devote to housework in the four countries.

4.5 Control variables

The gender division of household labor may vary with individual characteristics, so this project includes certain individual variables as control variables (see table 6 to table 9).

Age is included as a continuous variable measuring the respondents' ages in years. The ages of men and women may reflect their different stages in the courses of their lives. Previous studies have shown that younger married women do less housework than older married women do, while younger married men do more housework than older married men do (Rexroat & Shehan 1987). Results of descriptive statistics show that the mean age of women respondents is 43.7 in China, 46.3 in Japan, 40.5 in South Korea, and 41 in Taiwan (see tables 6 through 9). In addition, the mean age of men respondents is 44.3 in China, 47.5 in Japan, 41.8 in South Korea, and 41.9 in Taiwan (see tables 6 through 9).

⁶ Types of employment status in the Japanese data include only outside employment and self employment, but family work is not included in employment status. Therefore, this project examines only the dummy variable of self employment with respect to housework for Japan due to this missing variable.

Education is a variable measuring respondents' completed years of education.⁷ Most researchers find an association between a husband's having attained a higher educational level with greater participation in housework on his part (Bergen 1991; Kamo 1988; Presser 1994). A wife's level of educational attainment, on the other hand, is associated with lower housework time (Presser 1994; Sanchez and Thomson 1997; Shelton and John 1996). Education has been used to examine the gender division of housework according to different theoretical perspectives. Some researchers consider education to be a measurement of the relative resources available to both members of a couple or to be a component of social class, while others use it as an indicator of gender role attitudes. To avoid confusion, this study renders education as a control variable. The descriptive statistical results show that women complete, on average, 9 years of education in China, 12.9 years in Japan, 10.8 years in South Korea, and 9.8 years in Taiwan (see tables 6 through 9). In addition, men complete, on average, 10 years of education in China, 13.6 in Japan, 12.3 in South Korea, and 11.3 in Taiwan. Overall, men complete slightly more years of education than women do in the four countries.

Number of children under 18 is a measure of the presence of children under 18 years old in the household. Women generally spend more hours doing housework when they have children, while men tend to increase their time doing paid work (Sanchez & Thomson 1997; Shelton 1992). Other studies show that both men and women increase the number of hours they spend doing housework when they have more preschool children (Baxter 1994; Bergen 1991; Presser 1994). This study considers the reported number of children to be a control variable. The number of

⁷ Baxter (1997) mentioned that education is one of the most difficult variables to construct for cross-national comparisons because of national differences among educational systems. This research avoids this problem because the educational systems in the four East Asian countries are generally similar. In addition, the results of regression are similar regardless of using years of education or categorical measures. This result is also confirmed by Baxter's study (1997).

children under 18 years old on average is about one for Chinese men and women and about two for Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese men and women (see tables 6 through 9).

Table 6 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in China

Variables	Description	Women		Men	
		M	SD	M	SD
Age	Respondent's age in years	43.68	10.59	44.28	9.97
Education	Respondent's years of education	8.98	3.90	10.02	3.38
Number of children	Number of children under 18	1.06	.28	1.07	.33
Wife's paid work hours	Women's weekly hours for paid work	42.28	9.62		
Wife's relative income	Wife's income divided by the couple's income	2.89	.94	2.46	.82
Gender ideology	Additive scores based on two questions: Do you agree or disagree... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For married couples, husband should be in charge of matters outside the home while wives are in charge of things in home. • By nature women are more suitable for taking care of the family than men. 	4.44	1.15	4.36	1.11
Self employment	0, outside employment or family work; 1, self employment.	.05		.04	
Family work	0, outside employment or self employment; 1, family work.	.05		.03	

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Table 7 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in Japan

Variables	Description	Women		Men	
		M	SD	M	SD
Age	Respondent's age in years	46.28	10.76	47.51	10.12
Education	Respondent's years of education	12.89	5.08	13.58	2.88
Number of children	Number of children under 18	2.15	.73	2.14	.70
Wife's paid work hours	Women's weekly hours for paid work	32.59	14.79		
Wife's relative income	Wife's income divided by the couple's income	1.42	.82	1.33	.84
Gender ideology	Additive scores based on two questions: Do you agree or disagree... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the family. • A job is all right, but what most women really want is a home and children. 	5.66	2.08	5.55	2.00
Self employment	0, outside employment or family work; 1, self employment.	.28		.23	

Source: International Social Survey Program, 2002.

Table 8 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in South Korea

Variables	Description	Women		Men	
		M	SD	M	SD
Age	Respondent's age in years	40.49	9.80	41.77	9.17
Education	Respondent's years of education	10.79	3.60	12.29	3.29
Number of children	Number of children under 18	1.69	.63	1.76	.63
Wife's paid work hours	Women's weekly hours for paid work	60.49	18.94		
Wife's relative income	Wife's income divided by the couple's income	2.31	.87	2.93	1.11
Gender ideology	Additive scores based on two questions: Do you agree or disagree... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband should be in charge of external matters while wives handle matters within the household. • By nature women are better at taking care of the family. 	4.45	1.05	4.23	1.01
Self employment	0, outside employment or family work; 1, self employment.	.51		.51	
Family work	0, outside employment or self employment; 1, family work.	.16		.01	

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Table 9 Mean and Standard Deviation of Theoretical and Control Variables in Taiwan

Variables	Description	Women		Men	
		M	SD	M	SD
Age	Respondent's age in years	40.96	8.64	41.86	8.03
Education	Respondent's years of education	9.57	4.41	11.31	3.96
Number of children	Number of children under 18	2.00	.82	1.96	.80
Wife's paid work hours	Women's weekly hours for paid work	48.34	13.48		
Wife's relative income	Wife's income divided by the couple's income	2.27	.87	2.35	.80
Gender ideology	Additive scores based on two questions: Do you agree or disagree... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband should be in charge of external matters while wives handle matters within the household. • By nature women are better at taking care of the family. 	4.53	1.17	4.49	1.16
Self employment	0, outside employment or family work; 1, self employment.	.16		.35	
Family worker	0, outside employment or self employment; 1, family work.	.08		.01	

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

4.6 Analytic Strategies

The first stage of data analysis aims at delineating the household labor and the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan and then compares the gender division of household labor across the four countries. The first

research question is devised to address the characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, respectively. The qualitative data are used to depict household labor scenarios in each of these countries and then to address the second research issue: how married men and women divide household labor in each country. The third research question is devised to address the extent to which the gender division of household labor varies across the four countries. Quantitative data from the 1997 EASS and the 2002 ISSP are employed to compare the actual hours of housework and the proportion of housework done by men and women across the four countries.

The second stage of the analysis examines the determinants of the gender division of household labor in each country and across the four countries. This research employs linear regression models to test the impact of independent variables on the gender division of household labor. To reveal the potential dynamics of power relations between men and women, feminist researchers have proposed separate model for men and women (Sprague 2005). This study, therefore, estimates separate linear regression models for men and women. Model one includes all control variables. Model two adds the three major theoretical variables and examines the effects of the time availability, relative resources, and gender role attitudes approaches, respectively. Model three adds the two dummy variables pertaining to employment status.

The third stage of the analysis focuses on understanding how gender structure at individual, interactional, and institutional levels constructs the gender inequality in household labor. The aim here is to understand why men do not participate in more of the housework, while women still perform most of it in the four countries. To address this question, data from in-depth interviews are used to develop theoretical arguments.

4.7 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews, which are not rigidly structured, generate stories and perspectives that reveal the complexity and ambiguity of personal experience and raise questions that might not have been considered in a rigidly structured interview in which respondents cannot range beyond a fixed set of topics (Knight 2002). In addition, some researchers have stressed the importance of listening to men and women to understand how they approach household labor in their own terms and thereby to include the insider perspectives (Doucet 1995). Therefore, I conducted in-depth interviews with married men and women from China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

This project generates its samples by employing snowballing techniques. I first contacted some friends from the four East Asian countries and asked them to help to introduce their friends for interviews. In addition, I attended activities held by the student associations representing the four countries at Cornell University and found some interviewees at these events. The interviews were carried out in empty classrooms, respondents' houses, or quiet restaurants in Ithaca, New York. Each interview lasted for about 40 to 80 minutes. Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

I interviewed a total of 42 married Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese women and men from February to August of 2007. The sample included at least ten interviewees from each country. This study focuses on respondents' experience related to housework in their home countries. Therefore, the interviewees must have been married and lived together with their spouses in their home countries at least six months before they came to the United States. The interviewees comprise 22 women and 20 men. The age range of the interviewees is from the late 20s to the late 40s. The mean age for all interviewees is 34 years.

Table 10 Country by Work Status

	China	Japan	S. Korea	Taiwan
Both work full time	11	6	6	10
Husband works full time, wife works part time		2	1	
Husband works full time, wife stay at home		2	4	
Total	11	10	11	10

Source: Author.

All of the Chinese and Taiwanese interviewees reported that both husbands and wives work full time (see table 10). Six of the Japanese interviewees described that both husbands and wives work full time. Two of the Japanese interviewees reported that husbands work full time and wives work part time, while two of them presented that husbands work full time and wives stay at home. For the South Korean interviewees, six of them reported that both husbands and wives work full time. One of the South Korean interviewees described that husband work full time and wife work part time, while four of them said that husbands work full time and wives are housewives. Sixteen of the interviewees have college degrees and 26 of them have graduate-level degrees.

The interview questions cover work histories and work experience; information about the time interviewees, their spouses, and their parents or parents-in-law spent doing housework; the time spent doing housework on a typical weekday and weekend; attitudes toward the gender division of labor; perspectives on cleanliness; and demographic information.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE GENDER DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD LABOR IN CHINA, JAPAN, SOUTH
KOREA, AND TAIWAN

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate household labor and the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, as well as to compare the gender division of household labor across the four countries. Both of the qualitative and quantitative data will be used to the analysis in this chapter. This part of study first addresses characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan and compares the gender division of household labor among the four East Asian countries. Following the description of household labor and the gender division of household labor based on qualitative analyses, I use quantitative data to compare the housework time between men and women and across the four countries.

5.1 The characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

Technological developments, such as electrical appliances and the mass production of household goods and services on the market, can to some extent reduce the time spent doing housework, although some new household technologies may actually increase women's housework load in some areas. Moreover, the advent of modern electrical appliances and the commercialization of housework notwithstanding, some household tasks are difficult to replace fully by the market-based solutions, such as caring for children or family members. The aim of this section is to gain a general understanding of major household tasks in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, focusing on describing the household tasks typically undertaken by urban married men and women in the four countries. This section first discusses some characteristics of

household labor; second, the section describes how couples share housework in each country; finally, the section elaborates on the gender division of household labor in each country. The interview questions elicited information about, among other things, how interviewees, their spouses, and their parents or parents-in-law typically manage housework on weekdays and weekends; what they consider to be the most important and the least important types of housework; and how they divide household labor between the husband and the wife.

5.1.1 Household labor in China

Among the 11 Chinese interviewees, preparing meals is generally considered to be the most time-consuming household task because it requires time to shop for groceries, prepare meals, wash dishes, and clean up the kitchen. The first characteristic of household labor in China to note is that about half of the Chinese interviewees mentioned in the interviews that they usually eat two or three of their daily meals out, so the need to perform household tasks is limited. A Chinese woman who worked full time for a foreign company said:

I usually didn't do housework on weekdays. My husband and I both had full-time jobs. My work was always very busy, so I rarely did housework on weekdays. We had our three meals out all the time, so I didn't prepare meals at home. On Saturday, I usually spent about two hours doing laundry, two hours mopping the floor, and about 1 hour putting everything in order. That's all.

Several Chinese interviewees described a similar experience, namely that they usually eat out all three meals. The Chinese interviewees who tend to eat out are those who do not have children at home and both husband and wife work full time. For the interviewees with children at home, they tend to prepare meals at home more often than the interviewees without children at home do. If the couples usually prepare one

or two meals at home, they shop for groceries frequently. A Chinese woman who worked as an assistant for an advertising agency lived with her parents after she is married. She described their daily grocery shopping in China:

We went grocery shopping almost every day. My mom, my dad, and I took turns buying groceries. My mom usually shopped for groceries on weekdays after work. My dad and I went grocery shopping on weekends.

Another characteristic of housework in China is that some Chinese couples wash clothes by hand, perhaps because they do not have a washing machine at home or they believe that some clothes should be washed by hand. A 25-year-old Chinese woman said:

My dad and I usually took turns washing clothes. We don't have a washing machine at home, so we usually washed our clothes by hand every other day.

Although ownership of electrical appliances in China is generally higher in urban areas than in rural areas, it is less common than in Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan. In addition, owning a drying machine is not common in China. Most Chinese people prefer to air-dry their clothing. As mentioned earlier, China has the lowest per capita GDP in the four countries. For this reason, it is understandable that ownership of electrical appliances may not be as widespread in China than as in the other three countries.

The gender division of household labor in China

Housework for dual-earner couples in China differs somewhat from weekdays to weekends. Most couples tend to do only urgent or necessary housework on weekdays and leave the less important housework to weekends. A Chinese woman who worked

as an assistant research fellow for a governmental research center provides an example (Table 11). When asked to describe how she and her husband divided housework, she described the housework they did on weekdays:

I usually arrived home around 6 pm and then I prepared dinner almost every weekday. After dinner, my husband was in charge of washing dishes. I would put things back if I found some things were everywhere around the house.

After coming back from work, the Chinese woman is usually exhausted. So all she can do is to prepare dinner and organize the house a little bit on weekdays. She said they usually did more of the housework on weekends:

We usually did laundry once on weekends. If I was busy, my husband would hang the clothes out to dry. Most of the time, we hung up the clothes in the air together. I washed underwear and socks by hand. I also cleaned up our house on weekends. I cleaned the kitchen and wiped the tables, chairs, and some cabinets. My husband usually mopped the floor on weekends. Sometimes he had to repair the house. We usually went grocery shopping together once on weekends.

This Chinese woman thinks the division of housework in her family is about equal, even though she appears to do a slightly greater share of the housework than her husband does. Table 11 itemizes the major household tasks this Chinese couple does in a week. From this table we can see that both the wife and the husband perform some major household tasks individually. That is, the wife is responsible for meal preparation and housecleaning while the husband takes care of washing dishes and some housecleaning. In addition, they do some household tasks together, such as shopping for groceries and doing laundry. It, therefore, seems fair to say this Chinese couple share housework relatively equal (see table 11).

Table 11 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in China

	Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking dinner almost every day. • Organizing things around the house irregularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing dishes almost every day. 	
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing underwear and socks by hand once every week. • Cleaning kitchen once every week. • Wiping house furnishings once every week. • Preparing dinner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mopping floor once every week. • Repairing the house irregularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping for groceries once every week. • Doing laundry once every week. • Hanging clothes out to dry every week.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Chinese couple and created this table.

Based on the interviews, I found that urban Chinese dual-earner couples with young children at home, particularly the wives, spend more time doing housework than couples without young children at home. Young children are likely to increase the need for household labor, although some studies have found that additional children actually reduce a husband's contribution to housework (Greenstein 1996a; Blair and Lichter 1991). A man professor in China with a 12-year-old son told me that his wife is in charge of most housework although they both have full-time jobs (see table 12). He described the housework he usually did:

I usually drove my son to school and back home. Sometimes I went grocery shopping with my wife and helped her set up the table for three meals. And I usually mopped the floor once or twice in one week. Sometimes, I would do

some repairs around the house.

His wife is a professor and administrative staff member at the same university. He told me in the interview that his wife's working hours are relatively longer than his are. He described the housework his wife usually performed:

My wife usually prepared our three meals. Breakfast was easy to prepare because we usually ate steamed bread and drank soymilk. We live at a school dorm. So she usually came home at 11:30 am and prepared lunch for us. She didn't have much time to prepare lunch, so we ate something that could be prepared fast. [Did she do any other housework?] Yeah, she went grocery shopping every day before preparing dinner. She usually put the clothes into the washing machine when she was preparing dinner. After dinner, she hung the clothes up to dry. And she spent some more time cleaning the bathroom on weekends.

The Chinese man also mentioned that his wife was in charge of housework related to taking care of their son. He said that his wife performed about 70 percent of the housework while he contributed about 30 percent. From the interview, we learn that the Chinese man's wife works longer hours than he does, and yet it is obvious that his wife still does much more of the housework than he does as well. When asked how he thinks about his wife's performing most of the housework under these circumstances, he answered that:

We talked about this a little bit before getting married. I expected that she would take care of our family and do the housework and I would work hard to earn money. My wife agrees with my idea. If she hadn't agreed with this, we would not have gotten married. Actually, I had never done any housework before getting married. When I was looking for a wife, I did seriously consider whether she would be able and willing to do housework. If she couldn't or would not be willing to do the housework, I would not marry her.

From this interview we learn that the Chinese man maintains the traditional gender division of labor. That is, he believes that men should go out to work and earn money

and women should be in charge of all of the housework and taking care of the family. In addition, he believes that his wife does the majority of housework because they have both agreed with this gender division of labor. Therefore, throughout the interview, this man seems not to have been bothered by the fact that his wife performs most of the housework, although she apparently works longer hours than he does.

Table 12 provides a list of the major household tasks the Chinese man and his wife share. Obviously, the wife is responsible for the most time-consuming household tasks while the husband shares in doing some household tasks that are usually regarded as occasional or flexible. In addition, there is only one household task they do together once in a while. For these reasons, it seems fair to say that this Chinese couple presents a traditional gender division of housework.

Table 12 An Example of Unequal Share of household labor in China

Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing three meals almost every day. • Shopping for groceries every day. • Doing laundry. • Hanging up clothes to dry. • Cleaning up the bathroom on weekend. • Taking care of the son. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving son to school. • Occasionally setting up the table for meals. • Mopping floor. • Occasionally repairing the house. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally shopping for groceries.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Chinese man and created this table.

The Chinese interviewees tend to describe that Chinese married women are responsible for traditional women's household tasks, including preparing meals, shopping for groceries, cleaning house, and doing laundry. Chinese men tend to share

in doing some of the housework such as mopping floors, washing dishes, driving family members to work or school, and doing occasional household repairs. Chinese women are still responsible for the traditional women's housework. However, the interviews show that about one-third of the Chinese men interviewees are willing to share traditional women's housework such as cleaning house, washing dishes, and even preparing meals. A 44-year-old Chinese man professor told me how he shared in the housework:

My wife's office is quite far away from our house, so she must leave our house early like 6:30 am and come home after 7 pm every day. I work for a university and, you know, the working time for a professor is more flexible than other occupations. So I am in charge of preparing breakfast for my son and myself. Then I usually went home earlier and helped my wife prepare dinner. I washed vegetables and made noodles. After my wife arrived home, she only fried or stir-fried the meat or vegetables.

In addition, about one-third of the Chinese interviewees reported that husbands did more housework than wives. For example, a Chinese couple described their experience of sharing housework in China and in the US. When they lived in China, both had full-time jobs and shared housework about equally. Then the wife was admitted to graduate school in the US, so the husband moved to the US with his wife. In the US, the husband does most of the housework because he has more free time than his wife does. He described the housework he usually performs in the US:

I prepare breakfast for both of us every day. After my wife goes to school, I wash dishes and then go out to the library. I usually shop for groceries twice or three times a week. I prepare dinner and lunch boxes for us. I also vacuum our house once a week and change blankets and bedding once every one or two weeks.

The wife of the Chinese man told me later in the interview that her husband shared about 85 percent of the housework while she did about 15 percent. She told me that

her husband was applying for graduate school at the time of the interview. If he were to be admitted to graduate school, he might not do so much housework in the future. She really appreciates that her husband is willing to share most of the housework when he has free time. The Chinese woman's husband expressed no such appreciation in the interview. Her husband emphasized that he is willing to do more housework than she does in the short run, but not for long. He will still expect his wife to spend more time doing housework than he does in the future.

The interviews have shown that major household tasks in China include preparing meals, washing dishes, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, drying clothes, cleaning house, repairing the house, and taking care of children. Most of the Chinese interviewees describe that Chinese married women share more in traditional women's housework than Chinese men. One interesting finding is that about one-third of the Chinese interviewees describe that men are willing to take on traditional women's household tasks or even to do more housework than their wives do.

5.1.2 Household labor in Japan

Among the ten Japanese interviewees, more than half of them emphasized in the interviews that preparing meals at home is very important because it allows them to achieve more complete nutrition than if they eat out. Most Japanese married men and women prefer to eat breakfast at home rather than eat out. American-style breakfasts, such as milk and bread, are also popular in Japan, but most Japanese people prefer a traditional Japanese breakfast. A traditional Japanese breakfast generally includes rice, soup, a main course, and some side dishes. In addition to preparing breakfast at home, Japanese married men and women like to prepare boxes for their lunch. A married Japanese woman in her mid 30s described how she prepared three meals:

In the morning, I usually have to prepare breakfast for both of us and prepare a lunch box for my husband. We like to eat rice, miso soup⁸, grilled fishes, seaweed, and a kind of beans in the morning. I also prepare dinner every day.

Shopping for groceries is also an important household task in Japan. Most Japanese people living in urban areas purchase groceries daily at nearby supermarkets. People in the United States tend to shop for a greater amount of groceries once or twice in a week. In Japan, most people shop for groceries more frequently than Americans do. A Japanese married woman described her grocery shopping:

I prepared dinner every day. On my way home, I would get some fresh meat, seafood, and vegetables at the supermarket nearby my house every day before I cooked dinner. But sometimes when I was cooking, I found I didn't have eggs, soy sauce, or something I needed at the moment. I would ask my husband to buy the groceries for me. He would go to the supermarket nearby and get those things for me right away.

Another characteristic of housework in Japan is that most Japanese people do not dry clothes by heat although they are able to purchase the drying machines. Some interviewees explained in the interviews that it is too expensive to dry clothes by using the drying machine, so they prefer to dry their clothes in the air or sun.

The gender division of household labor in Japan

For dual-earner couples without children in Japan, both spouses spend a lot of time on working. As I have noted earlier, most Japanese interviewees emphasized the importance of having meals at home. Preparing meals frequently at home is an ideal, but actually is difficult to achieve for dual-earner couples, particularly if wives are busier than their husbands. In this case, the wives tend to reduce their time on

⁸ Miso soup is a traditional Japanese soup that consists of a stock called dashi into which is mixed soft miso paste.

housework. A 32-year-old Japanese woman who worked as a research consultant for a company in Japan said that she spent a lot of time working on weekdays, and therefore had no time for housework. She put it this way:

My work was usually very busy during the busy season. When I was very busy, I didn't have time to prepare breakfast, so we usually got our breakfast at convenience stores. Sometimes I could leave my office a little bit earlier. I would go to get some groceries and prepare dinner. After dinner, I washed dishes. But if I had to work until very late at night, my husband sometimes ate out with his friends or sometimes prepared his dinner.

This woman research consultant then mentioned in the interview that she would do some more housework on weekends. She explained her typical weekend schedule:

We usually slept until very late on weekends. I prepared our brunch. Then I washed dishes. After the brunch, my husband might go back to sleep again. I usually went to the gym and do some exercise. Before preparing dinner, I went grocery shopping and then prepared dinner. I also did laundry on weekends or whenever we thought we needed to do it.

The Japanese woman's husband is a junior consultant for a governmental organization in Japan. He described the housework he usually did on weekdays:

If I was going to prepare dinner for myself, I would buy some pre-cooked food, vegetables, and meat at the supermarket on my way home. After dinner, I usually put the dishes off until next time if I was gonna cook dinner. Sometimes my wife would wash the dishes if she came home earlier. I usually did laundry when I felt that I had to do it. After the cleaning work was done, I took the clothes out and hung them in the air.

In addition to sharing some housework on weekdays, the Japanese man mentioned that they usually cleaned house together on weekends:

We usually cleaned up our house on weekends. We took turns vacuuming our

house. We folded up some clothes we had piled up on weekdays. We tidied up the house. We didn't really divide the housework and said she had to do that housework and I had to do this housework.

The Japanese husband indicated that he shared about 40 percent of the housework while his wife performed about 60 percent. Table 13 below details the housework that the Japanese couple shares. From the table we can see that this Japanese couple tends to perform similar household tasks individually or cooperatively. The gender division of housework is not clear-cut in terms of the types of housework and the percentage of housework between the Japanese husband and his wife.

Table 13 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in Japan

Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally preparing dinner on weekdays. • Preparing brunch and dinner on weekend. • Shopping for groceries. • Doing laundry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally preparing dinner for him. • Shopping for groceries. • Doing laundry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing dishes. • Vacuuming. • Folding up clothes. • Tidying things around the house.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Japanese couple and created this table.

Studies have suggested that the gap in housework time between men and women has declined mainly because women spend relatively less time doing housework, but not because men have increased the time they spend doing housework. Married Japanese women are still responsible for taking care for most of the housework regardless of having full-time jobs. Since men are less likely to increase their housework time, the wives of dual-earner couples usually experience the “second shift” (Hochschild 1989). A Japanese woman who worked for a governmental department in Tokyo performed about 80 to 90 percent of the housework although she

worked relatively longer hours than her husband did. She described the housework she usually did on weekdays:

I prepared breakfast every day. We ate toast, milk, eggs, soup, or yogurt in the morning. Then we both went out to work. I left my office around 7 or 8 p.m. I usually prepared dinner, so I got some groceries at the supermarket on my way home. After dinner, I washed dishes and tidied up my bedroom.

The Japanese woman spent a lot of time at work. However, she still carried out most of the housework on weekdays. On weekends, she spent more time cleaning their house. She detailed the housework she did on weekends:

I usually prepared breakfast or brunch for us on weekends and washed dishes after that. Then I vacuumed and cleaned the bathroom and toilet every weekend. I also washed the sink and stove in the kitchen on weekends. I did laundry on weekends. If we went out somewhere, we usually had dinner out. If we stayed at home, I prepared our lunch and dinner.

When she was asked about the housework her husband shared in doing, she said:

My husband prepared dinner about once every two weeks. He liked to prepare easier meals, like curry chicken. He also helped me make things orderly. Cleaning the bathtub was his job. He cleaned out the bathtub every day. Sometimes he would help me hang up the clothes to dry. [Anything else?] He also took the garbage out almost every day.

When asked how this gender division of household labor came about, she said, “We haven’t talked about this. The division of housework is naturally formed.” I then asked her why she performed so much more of the housework than her husband did. She explained that this is a Japanese tradition that is difficult to change. She put it this way:

In Japan, most people think women have to take care of the family and do the housework. If a woman has her work, then she also has to take care of her family and do the housework. If she can't take good care of her family and do the housework, then she shouldn't work. Most of the mothers of Japanese people now in their 20s or 30s were housewives when the latter were kids. They think a mother should stay at home, do housework, and the family will be happy. They take this for granted. I think my husband also has these ideas.

In addition to her husband's traditional gender ideology, the Japanese woman also mentioned that she still thinks women should do more housework than men do. When both members of a couple share this traditional gender ideology, it is not surprising that the Japanese woman does the *lion's share* of the housework. Table 14 below details the housework for this Japanese couple. Apparently, the Japanese woman performed much more housework than her husband. However, her husband shared housework occasionally in terms of the time and frequency he spent doing housework. Furthermore, the Japanese woman undertook most of the traditional women's housework while her husband shared only in some housecleaning work. Therefore, it is apparent that the Japanese couple divides housework based on the gender difference.

In Japan, major household tasks generally include preparing meals, washing dishes, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, drying clothes, cleaning out the house, repairing the house, and taking care of children. All of the ten Japanese interviewees reported that women participate in more housework than their husbands do. At the same time, Japanese women tend to be responsible for traditional women's household tasks like preparing meals, grocery shopping, cleaning house, and doing laundry. Japanese men usually share in doing some of the housework such as taking out the trash, cleaning the bathtub, doing laundry, and home repairs. In other words, Japanese men tend to share in the household tasks that are flexible or require less time. Unlike Chinese men, Japanese men are less likely to share in traditional women's housework

such as preparing meals or washing dishes. Therefore, the research results show that Japanese married men and women interviewees describe a more traditional gender division of household labor than Chinese interviewees do.

Table 14 An Example of Unequal Share of household Labor in Japan

	Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing breakfast every day. • Shopping for groceries 4 to 5 times a week. • Preparing dinner 4 to 5 times a week. • Washing dishes. • Organizing clothes. • Doing laundry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing dinner about once every two weeks. • Hanging clothes up to dry about once every two weeks. • Cleaning bathtub every day. • Taking the garbage out every day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting things in order
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing brunch. • Washing dishes. • Vacuuming. • Cleaning up the bathroom and toilet. • Washing the sink and stove. • Doing laundry. • Preparing lunch and dinner. 		

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Japanese woman and created this table.

5.1.3 Household labor in South Korea

Like Japanese interviewees who are married and work full time, most married South Korean couples in the interviews emphasize that preparing meals is the most

important housework, particularly for couples with young children at home. Among the 11 Korean interviewees, more than half of them described that they like to have breakfast at home. A traditional Korean breakfast is similar to a lunch or a dinner, which includes rice, soup, some side dishes, and a main course. A 40-year-old South Korean woman described the breakfast they like to have:

I prepared breakfast for my son and my husband every day. We like to eat rice, soup, kimchi⁹, some side dishes, and one main course for our breakfast. It usually took me about 20 to 30 minutes.

In addition to preparing breakfast at home, South Korean people like to eat various side dishes. Preparing the side dish is one of the most important pieces of housework in South Korea. Kimchi and kongnamul (made from soybean sprouts) are the two most common Korean side dishes. Preserved food and prepared or semi-prepared food are fully available in South Korea. However, most Korean people prefer homemade side dishes because the homemade side dishes are fresher than those purchased from a market are. A 34-year-old South Korean woman described her preparation of side dishes:

Korean people eat side dishes every day. So we usually prepare side dishes at home because they are fresher than you get from market. I usually prepare two or three side dishes every other day. It takes me about 1.5 hours to prepare two or three side dishes.

Like Chinese and Japanese people, South Korean people tend to shop frequently for groceries at nearby supermarkets. A 32-year-old South Korean woman mentioned their grocery purchases in South Korea:

⁹ Kimchi also spelled gimchi or kimchee, is a traditional Korean fermented dish made of some select vegetables such as cabbage and white radish with varied seasonings.

You know, in the urban areas of South Korea, supermarkets are usually nearby your house. So you can get some daily groceries really fast. We went to the nearby supermarket and did some small shopping every other day. But we went to big supermarkets farther away and spent more time shopping for groceries on weekends.

Like Chinese and Japanese people, most Korean people usually do not use a clothes dryer. They like to dry their clothing in the air or sun.

The gender division of household labor in South Korea

Married South Korean women are generally responsible for doing most of the housework. For the South Korean couples in which husbands are breadwinners and wives are caretakers, wives do most of the housework by themselves. Four South Korean women who are full-time housewives reported a similar experience. Their husbands usually avoid doing any housework except when they are asked to help. A 37-year-old South Korean woman who is a full-time housewife described the housework her husband shared:

My husband usually did not do any housework. If I was very busy, I would ask him to take care of my sons and help put them sleep. Sometimes I asked him to buy me some precooked food on his way home if I didn't have time to cook. I think that's all housework he did.

If there are no other family members to help the wives of dual-earner couple do housework, they tend to reduce the housework as much as possible. For example, they may often eat all three meals out. Husbands of the dual-earner couples may be asked to share in the housework to a greater extent. A 28-year-old South Korean woman spoke about how she shared housework with her husband on weekdays:

I usually prepared breakfast. My husband would wash the dishes after breakfast if he had enough time. I did laundry almost every day. I also prepared our dinner about two or three times in a week. If I cooked, my husband washed dishes. He mopped the floor once every two or three days. He also took the garbage out every day and helped me move some heavy things in the house.

The Korean couple usually shared some routine housework on weekdays. In addition to the routine housework, the wife would do some more housecleaning on weekends.

She explained:

My husband prepared some simple food for our brunch on weekends, and I washed the dishes. We cleaned up our house on weekends. I did laundry and made things orderly. I liked to change the bedding and wash the bedding on weekends. I also liked to reorganize furniture on weekends. If I need help, my husband usually helped change the bedding and move furniture.

The South Korean woman indicated that their division of household labor is almost equal. Table 15 below lists the household tasks the South Korean couple shares.

Table 15 An Example of Equal Share of household Labor in South Korea

	Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing breakfast. • Doing laundry every day. • Preparing dinner two to three times a week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing dishes. • Mopping the floor about twice in a week. • Taking the garbage out every day. • Moving heavy things. 	
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing dishes. • Doing laundry. • Making things orderly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing brunch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing bedding. • Reorganizing furniture.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a South Korean woman and created this table.

Table 15 shows that the husband is willing to do traditional women's household tasks such as preparing meals, washing dishes, and cleaning house. In addition, they take turns doing various household tasks or performing some housework together. Therefore, they do not conform to a traditional gender division of housework.

When South Korean couples have young children at home, wives tend to spend much more time performing housework than husbands do, regardless of having full-time or part-time jobs. A South Korean woman researcher who worked full time for a university laboratory in South Korea was totally occupied with her research on weekdays. Her husband also works as a researcher for a company and always spends a lot of time working. She described her general schedule on weekdays:

I usually got up at 6:30 a.m. I prepared breakfast for my son and myself. My husband usually had breakfast at his office with his colleagues. I washed the dishes. After my son got on his school bus at 7:30 a.m., I tidied the living room and made the blankets and bed sheets orderly. After that, I usually wrote down some brief notes to my son and let him know what he should do today after school. My mom usually prepared dinner for us. After dinner, I checked my son's homework and helped him practice violin. I also helped him take a shower and read stories for him.

When asked if her husband shared in any of housework, she explained that her husband usually works about 80 hours a week. He is too busy to share in any of the housework, except occasionally he looked after their son. To balance her work and family duties, she asked for her parents' help in taking care of her son and doing some of the housework. She described how her mother helped her do most housework:

We lived very close to my parents' house in South Korea. My mom usually went grocery shopping before she went to my house. She prepared dinner for us every weekday. After dinner, my mom washed the dishes. She also mopped the floor and did laundry about once or twice a week. She took the trash out every day. The most important thing was that my parents could take care of my son before I got home.

Her mother helps her do most household tasks on weekdays and she performs some of the household tasks on weekends. Because of her mother's help, the Korean woman researcher saves a lot of time on housework during weekdays. She then explained her housework on weekends:

I liked to prepare a special breakfast like sweet potatoes, French toasts, and scrambled eggs on weekends. Then I washed dishes after breakfast. I vacuumed and tidied up the living room and my son's bedroom. We usually visited my parents-in-law twice every month. If we went to their house, my mom-in-law prepared the dinner for us. If we didn't go to their house, I would go grocery shopping on Saturday afternoon and we had our dinner at restaurants.

When asked her opinion of the division of housework between she and her husband, the South Korean woman explained that her husband does not do any housework because he "does not know how to do housework" (in her words). In addition, she mentioned her parents-in-law and said that:

My parents-in-law know my husband is very busy with his work, so they always call me and tell me I should support his career and be a good wife. To them, being a "good wife" means paying attention to their son's health and putting their son's needs ahead of my own career. They think I should take more responsibility for the family and the housework than their son does. Their opinion may not be the major reason. Actually, I also think my husband's career is more important than mine is.

From the interview we learn that traditional gender expectations still play an important role in shaping the woman's gender role attitudes. Table 16 below lists the housework that the South Korean woman researcher and her mother share on weekdays and weekends. Apparently the South Korean woman researcher and her mother perform all of the housework, freeing her husband completely from household labor. Her mother's

help relieves her burden of housework on weekdays. However, she is still expected to perform major household tasks on weekends. There is therefore little doubt that this South Korean couple conforms to a traditional division of household labor.

Table 16 An Example of Unequal Share of Household Labor in South Korea

	Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Mother's housework
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing breakfast every day. • Washing dishes. • Organizing living room and bedroom. • Helping son do homework and take shower. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping for groceries. • Preparing dinner. • Washing dishes. • Mopping the floor. • Doing laundry. • Taking the garbage out. • Taking care of son.
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing breakfast. • Washing dishes. • Vacuuming. • Organizing living room and son's bedroom. • Shopping for groceries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally looking after son sometimes. 	

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a South Korean woman and created this table.

The major housework performed in South Korea comprises shopping for groceries, preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, doing laundry, and taking care of children. Like Chinese and Japanese women, South Korean women generally perform much more housework than their husbands do. Like Japanese women, South Korean women are still responsible for traditional women's household tasks such as preparing meals, housecleaning, and doing laundry. Those household tasks are not only routine, but also less flexible. Most South Korean men, however, appear to avoid

sharing in traditional women's housework, particularly preparing meals. They tend to participate only occasionally in housework such as taking trash out and mopping floor. Therefore, South Koreans tend to describe a traditional division of housework based on the gender difference.

5.1.4 Household labor in Taiwan

The first characteristic of household labor in Taiwan is that almost all interviewees believe that doing laundry and/or taking out the trash are the most important household task. This is very different from Japanese and South Korean people, who emphasize preparing meals at home. Among the ten Taiwanese interviewees, five of them said that doing laundry is the most important household task. For example, a 30-year-old woman engineer who worked full time said:

Doing laundry is the most important housework for me. It is very inconvenient if I run out of the clean clothes, especially if I need some clothes for work. So doing laundry is the most important housework for me. Other types of housework can be put off until I am free.

In addition, five Taiwanese interviewees think that taking out the trash is the most important housework because they think the trash may smell and attract insects.

Unlike Japanese and South Korean people, many married Taiwanese interviewees tend to have breakfast out instead of preparing breakfast at home. They like to eat breakfast at the breakfast shops that provide both Chinese breakfasts (such as soymilk, steamed buns, steamed buns with stuffing, and so on) and American-style breakfasts (such as coffee, sandwiches, and so on). A 31-year-old Taiwanese woman who worked as a financial consultant for a bank in Taiwan put it this way:

We usually ate our breakfast out at breakfast shops. You know, the shops provide

different kinds of breakfast like sandwiches, steamed buns, steamed buns with stuffing and drinks. It is very convenient for people who are busy. So we rarely prepared breakfast at home.

Furthermore it is common for dual-earner couples to have three meals out in Taiwan when both are fully occupied with their work and do not have young children at home. This aspect of housework in Taiwan is similar to what urban dual-earner couples in China experience. A 40-year-old assistant researcher said that they usually had three meals out:

We usually went out to have our breakfast at the breakfast shops. We ate lunch out since we both had full-time jobs. I usually left my office around 5 p.m. Most of the time, I didn't prepare dinner and we ate out at restaurants or my husband bought cooked food on his way home. Sometimes, I would prepare dinner, but it depended on how busy I was.

The last characteristic of housework in Taiwan to be mentioned is that taking the trash out is somewhat different from there that it is in Japan and South Korea. In the urban areas of Japan and South Korea, there are garbage bins in the public dumps accessible to urban residents. The urban residents in Japan and South Korea can bring their trash to the public dumps any time, but the recycling can be taken out only on specific day of the week. In Taiwan, there is no public dump to which Taiwanese people can bring their garbage. The garbage trucks collect trash and recycling. The trucks run twice at a fixed time every day and everywhere in Taiwan, so Taiwanese people must take their trash out at fixed times. If they miss a time, they have to wait until the trucks come again.

The gender division of household labor in Taiwan

For Taiwanese dual-earner couples without children, housework can be limited to a minimum. If both the husband and wife are occupied with their work, they tend to

eat three meals out because preparing meals is considered the most time-consuming household task. As for the remaining household tasks, wives generally perform more housework than husbands do. For instance, a 40-year-old Taiwanese woman works as a researcher for a governmental department. Her husband also works for a governmental research center. She described how they shared housework on weekdays:

I usually didn't prepare breakfast and lunch at home, but I prepared dinner two or three times a week. If I planned to prepare dinner that day, I usually bought some groceries on my way home. I usually did laundry and took the garbage out once every other day on weekdays. If I prepared dinner, my husband washed dishes. We did laundry and hung the clothes out to dry together. He bought lunch or dinner boxes on his way home if I didn't feel like preparing meals.

In addition, the woman researcher mentioned the housework they usually shared on weekends:

I took garbage out on weekdays, and my husband took the garbage out on weekends. I cleaned up the toilet and bathroom once a week. I usually swept the floor once on weekends and mopped the floor once every two weeks. Sometimes my husband would do this cleaning work. It depended on if I was really tired that week or if the floor was dusty. We did laundry, hung the clothes out to dry, and went grocery shopping together.

The Taiwanese woman noted in the interview that they divide the housework about equally, although she tends to perform a bit more housework in terms of frequency. Table 17 below lists the housework that the Taiwanese woman shares with her husband. From the table we can see that the wife takes charge of some traditional women's work such as preparing dinner and housecleaning, and the husband shares some traditional women's work such as washing dishes and housecleaning. In addition, they frequently do some household tasks together such as laundry and shopping for

groceries. It therefore is fair to say that this Taiwan couple shares housework relatively equally.

Table 17 An Example of Equal Share of Household Labor in Taiwan

	Wife's housework	Husband's housework	Housework shared together
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing dinner twice or three times a week. • Shopping for groceries. • Taking the garbage out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing dishes. • Buying lunch or dinner boxes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing laundry.
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweeping the floor. • Mopping the floor. • Cleaning the toilet and bathroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking the garbage out. • Occasionally sweeping floor. • Occasionally mopping the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing laundry. • Hanging clothes out to dry. • Shopping for groceries.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Taiwanese woman and created this table.

Half of the wives of dual-earner couples in Taiwan reported that wives do more housework than their husbands do. A 31-year-old Taiwanese woman who worked as an accountant complained that she did most of the housework even though she and her husband both spent a lot of time at work:

I usually did housework when I got home around 7 or 8 p.m. I mopped the floor and washed the glasses or dishes we used in the morning every day. I did laundry two or three times a week. My husband did almost no housework on weekdays. The only housework he did on weekdays was to take out the trash. Actually, I took out the trash often than him.

The Taiwanese woman was fully occupied with her work. However, she still did some housecleaning on weekdays and postponed the big housecleaning jobs to weekends.

She described her housework on weekends:

On weekends, I liked to wash bed sheets and clean up the toilet and bathroom. I usually went grocery shopping once on Saturday. If we didn't go out, I cooked our dinner and washed dishes after dinner.

She said that her husband shared in doing about 20 percent of the housework while she performed about 80 percent. When asked why she performs much more housework than her husband does, she attributed this unequal division of housework to the influence of her mother and traditional gender expectations of women. She said:

I think how your parents taught you at home will influence your behavior later in your life. For example, my mom usually asks my sisters and I clean up our bedrooms and share some of the housework, but she never asks my brother to clean up his bedroom or do any housework. I do think that most people in our society expect men and women to behave in different ways.

I then interviewed her husband, who was a researcher for a chemical company. I asked him if he agreed that he does much less housework than his wife does. Interestingly, he seemed to think that he does more housework than his wife said he does in her interview. He described the housework he did:

I took care of our bathroom. We didn't have a bathtub, so I usually washed the floor of the bathroom and toilet at least once every one or two weeks. I also mopped the floor of the living room and bedroom almost every weekend.

When asked why his wife does more housework than he does, he attributed this to his parents-in-law's favoring of their son. He put it this way:

My parents-in-law have four daughters, but only one son. They care for their son much more than they do for their daughters. They still follow the old thinking that sons are more important than daughters are. I know something about my

parents-in-law because my wife and I often had dinner at their house. My mom-in-law always asks my wife or my sisters-in-law to help with housework, but she never asks my bother-in-law to do any housework. My parents-in-law have a very clear preference for their son. So I think my wife has been taught to do more housework than men do.

Table 18 below itemizes the housework the Taiwanese couple shared. It is obvious that the wife performed much more of the housework than the husband does. The husband is willing to do some housecleaning work. Still, the wife is responsible for most of the traditional women’s housework. Given this, we may conclude that the division of household labor for this Taiwanese couple is relatively unequal.

Table 18 An Example of Unequal Share of Household Labor in Taiwan

	Wife’s housework	Husband’s housework
Weekday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mopping the floor every day. • Washing glasses or dishes every day. • Taking the garbage out. • Organizing things. • Doing laundry two or three times a week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking the garbage out.
Weekend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washing bed sheets. • Cleaning the toilet and bathroom. • Shopping for groceries. • Preparing dinner. • Washing dishes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mopping the floor of the bathroom and toilet. • Mopping the floor of the living room and bedroom.

Note: The author summed up the interview text with a Taiwanese couple and created this table.

In Taiwan, major household tasks generally include preparing meals, washing dishes, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, cleaning house, and taking care of children. Like the people in China, Japan, and South Korea, most interviewees describe that Taiwanese women perform more of the traditional women’s housework such as preparing meals. In addition, Taiwanese men are less likely to participate in preparing meals than their wives. This characteristic is similar to what I observed with

respect to Japanese and South Korean men. Taiwanese men are willing to share in doing some traditional women's household tasks such as washing dishes, doing laundry, and cleaning house. However, the gender division of household labor in Taiwan is more like the gender division of household labor in Japan and South Korea than what was found in China. Finally, the results of the interview show that Confucian gender ideology still plays an important role in shaping the gender expectations of men and women in the four countries. The interviewees who admitted to an unequal division of household labor based on gender tended to justify this gender inequality by reference to Confucian gender ideology.

Based on the qualitative interviews, I have described the characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. In addition, I have illustrated the gender division of household labor and showed how the interviewees justify the gender division of housework in each country. Following the discussion of the gender division of household labor, I will in the next section compare the time married men and women spend doing housework across the four countries. Quantitative data from the 1997 EASS and the 2002 ISSP will be used in the analysis.

5.2 Descriptive statistics

Table 18 provides the descriptive statistics pertaining to housework for married men and married women in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States. In China, women spend about 24 hours per week doing housework, which is pretty close to the amount of time reported by Lu et al. (2000). In addition, the results of this project indicate that Chinese men spend about eight hours per week doing housework. Previous studies have suggested that Chinese men spend about three to five hours per week doing housework (Chen 2005; Lu et al. 2000). Thus the Chinese men in this study reported doing more housework than previous studies have suggested.

In Japan, the research results show that Japanese women perform about 27 hours of housework per week (see table 18). Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) have reported that Japanese women do 33.5 hours of housework per week while Ueda (2005) has suggested a figure of 38.5 hours per week. Thus the figure reported here is less than suggested by previous studies. On the other hand, the findings here have Japanese men performing about two hours of housework per week, which is similar to figures reported in previous studies (Tsuya & Bumpass 2004; Ueda 2005).

In South Korea, women perform 26 hours of housework per week (see table 18). This result is similar to Lee's estimation (2004), but is much less than the 38.5 hours per week that Lee (1984) suggested. Moreover, South Korean men report that they spend about two hours doing housework, which agrees with the figure given in Lee (2004). Lee (1984) has indicated that South Korean men do about four hours of housework every week. These comparisons suggest that South Korean men have reduced their housework commitment from five hours to two hours per week.

According to my findings (see table 19), Taiwanese women spend 33.7 hours per week doing housework, which falls between the 33 and 36 hour figures estimated by Hsiao (2005). Taiwanese men perform about five hours of housework per week, which falls within the range reported by Hsiao, between four and six hours per week.

Overall, women do far more housework than men do in terms of absolute and proportional housework time in the four East Asian countries. Chinese women report the fewest mean hours of housework (24.23) per week while Taiwanese women report the most, at 33.68 hours on average per week. At the same time, Chinese women report having the responsibility for the lowest percentage of housework (74) among the four countries. As for men's participation in housework in the four countries, South Korean men report the fewest mean hours of housework (1.95 hours) per week while Chinese men report the highest mean hours of housework (8.17 hours) per week. In

the meantime, Chinese men report the highest percentage of housework (26) among the four countries.

In the United States, women reported that they spend 13.5 hours per week doing housework, while men reported that they share in doing 6.5 hours of housework per week (see table 19). Additionally, American women perform an average of 67 percent of the housework while American men take up the remaining 33 percent. If the weekly housework hours in the four East Asian countries are compared with those in the United States, the results show that American women reported the least time spent weekly doing housework (13.54 hours) while Taiwanese women reported the highest figure among the five countries concerned (see table 19). In addition, Chinese men described spending the greatest amount of time doing housework (8.17 hours) while South Korean men reported the least amount among the five countries under study.

Table 19 Means and Standard Deviations of Housework Hours and Percent of Housework Per Week for Married Men and Women in China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States

Variables	China		Taiwan		Japan		S. Korea		U.S.	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Women's hours	24.23	14.85	33.68	19.77	26.92	14.01	26.05	12.30	13.54	12.12
Men's hours	8.17	10.23	5.28	8.07	2.44	3.36	1.95	2.65	6.51	7.98
Women's percent	.74	.27	.86	.21	.90	.14	.92	.12	.67	.20
Men's percent	.26	.27	.14	.20	.10	.14	.08	.12	.33	.20

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997 and International Social Survey Program, 2002.

Finally, the results show that women in the United States reported performing the least percentage of total housework (67), followed by women in China (74), Taiwan (86), and Japan (90), with the highest percentage of housework for women being reported in South Korea (92). The distribution of housework between married men and women in China is therefore much closer to what is reported in the United States than to the corresponding figures for Taiwan, Japan, or South Korea. Nevertheless, there remains a consistent pattern across both the United States and East Asian countries insofar as women still do the majority of the housework.

5.3 Summary

This chapter has described the characteristics of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Major household tasks in the four countries include preparing meals, washing dishes, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, cleaning house, repairing the house, taking care of children, and driving children to school. The results have shown that men and women tend to do housework based on gender difference. That is, women interviewees reported that they do more of the traditional women's housework such as preparing meals, washing dishes, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, cleaning house. These household tasks are time-consuming, routine, and almost never-ending. However, men interviewees described that they share more of the traditional men's household tasks such as repairing the house and driving children to school. One interesting finding is that Chinese interviewees described that men are more willing to share in doing the traditional women's housework than men are in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. At the same time, one-third of the Chinese interviewees said that men do more housework than their wives, which is never found in the interviews of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Another main finding of this study is that interviewees often emphasize the influence of Confucian gender ideology

in explaining why women perform the majority of the housework in the four countries. In other words, Confucian gender ideology is, in the minds of many interviewees, a justification of the unequal gender division of household labor in the four countries.

Following the qualitative analysis, this chapter compares the amount of time men and women spend doing housework across the four countries by using data from the 1997 EASS and the 2002 ISSP. In general, women do much more housework than men do in each of the four countries. Cross-national comparisons of the four East Asian countries show that Chinese women reported spending the least amount of time doing housework while Chinese men reported spending the most time. This result obtains for both absolute and proportional measures of housework.

The results of this chapter indicate that women generally do far more housework than men do in the four East Asian countries. In order to explain this finding, the next chapter will examine the factors that determine this gender inequality in household labor in each country, employing three theoretical approaches—the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach.

CHAPTER SIX

WHY DO MEN AND WOMEN DO HOUSEHOLD LABOR UNEQUALLY: EXPLANATIONS AND CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS

Sprague (2005: 95) notes that feminist researchers have raised one problem of conventional quantitative methodologies, which tend to “fit one model to all cases amounts to assuming that the same processes are at work to the same degree and in the same ways for all respondents”. Therefore, Sprague (2005: 96) proposes instead that we “fit separate models to distinct groups” as a way of grasping the potential dynamics of power relations. The present study therefore involves analyzing separate models of the determinants of housework for men and women in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. In addition, some researchers have shown that the determinants of the gender division of housework may vary with the method by which housework is measured (Bianchi et al. 2000; Coltrane 2000). That is, using an absolute or proportional measure of housework may bring different results. Here therefore housework is measured based on both absolute hours and proportion of housework.

It is likely that the gender division of housework varies with age, level of educational attainment, and the presence or absence of children under 18 years old at home, so this project includes the three corresponding variables as control variables. Model one first examines the effects of the three control variables on the determinants of housework. Model two then adds the three main theoretical variables, which include wife’s paid work hours, wife’s relative income, and gender role attitudes. Finally, Model three includes the two dummy variables representing employment status, self employment and family work. The results below show a series of multiple regression models of housework for married men and women in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

6.1 China

Table 20 presents the determinants of absolute hours of housework for men and women in coastal China. The left side of Table 20 shows the results of the regression for Chinese men. Model one first examines the effects of the three control variables, which include age, years of education, and the number of children under 18 years old. The results show that the three control variables have no significant effects on the determinants of housework for Chinese men. Model two adds the three major theoretical variables, which consist of wife's paid work hours, wife's relative income, and gender role attitudes. The results of running Model two indicate that gender role attitudes are significant predictors of the extent to which Chinese men share in doing housework, whereas a wife's paid work hours and wife's relative income have no significant effects. Men's egalitarian gender role attitudes show a positive coefficient on their share of housework (0.115, $P < .05$). That is, the more egalitarian a Chinese man's gender role attitude is, the more housework he does. Model three includes the two dummy variables of employment status, self employment and family work. Adding these two variables does not change the significance of the three main theoretical variables. There remains a significant association between the amount of housework men do and the degree to which they hold egalitarian gender role attitudes. This result supports Hypothesis three. However, Model three shows that, in China, a wife's paid work hours do not significantly affect her husband's participation in doing housework. This result does not support hypothesis one. In the meantime, wife's relative income is not significantly associated with the amount of housework Chinese men perform, which fails to support Hypothesis two. All variables in Model three explain 3.3 percent of the variance in housework for men in coastal China.

Table 20 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in China

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.056 (0.083)	0.050 (0.083)	0.049 (0.083)	0.060 (0.137)	0.067 (0.137)	0.065 (0.136)
Education	-0.015 (0.171)	-0.028 (0.174)	-0.037 (0.175)	0.002 (0.282)	0.019 (0.286)	0.031 (0.287)
Number of children under 18	-0.075 (1.451)	-0.090 (1.504)	-0.054 (1.684)	0.043 (2.399)	0.060 (2.479)	0.018 (2.764)
Wife's paid work hours		-0.001 (0.054)	0.001 (0.055)		-0.007 (0.090)	-0.005 (0.090)
Wife's relative income		0.080 (0.607)	0.072 (0.614)		-0.077 (1.001)	-0.072 (1.008)
Gender role attitudes		0.115** (0.460)	0.108** (0.463)		-0.136** (0.758)	-0.133** (0.760)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.052 (3.335)			0.021 (5.474)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.062 (3.608)			0.123** (5.922)
Intercept	7.760	2.595	2.444	14.133	23.988	24.676
R ²	0.009	0.028	0.033	0.006	0.029	0.043
N	354	354	354	354	354	354

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

The right side of Table 20 shows the determinants of absolute hours of housework for women in coastal China. Model one examines the impact of the three control variables on women's housework time. The effects of the three control variables on Chinese women's housework time are not significant. Model two adds the three main theoretical variables to the model. Egalitarian gender role attitudes shows a significantly negative association with Chinese women's housework (-0.136, $P < .05$). In other words, the more egalitarian a Chinese woman's gender role attitude is, the less housework she does. Neither wife's paid work hours nor wife's relative income are related to Chinese women's participation in housework. Model three adds the two dummy variables signifying employment status. The result reveals that Chinese women who are family workers perform significantly more housework than Chinese women who are outside employees (0.123, $P < .05$), while self-employed Chinese women do not devote significantly more time to housework. Hypothesis six presumes that the more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of wives are, the less housework they do. In Model three, Chinese women with egalitarian gender role attitudes are again significantly likely to do less housework, which supports Hypothesis six. In addition, Hypothesis four assumes that the more time wives spend doing paid work, the less time they spend doing housework. Hypothesis five is that the higher the relative income of wives is, the less housework they do. However, neither a wife's paid work hours nor a wife's relative income affects Chinese women's participation in housework. These results fail to support either Hypothesis four or Hypothesis five. Together all variables in Model three explain 4.3 percent of the variance in housework time performing by women in coastal China.

The results reported above show that gender role attitudes approach offers stronger explanatory power with respect to housework time performed by Chinese men and women than the time availability approach or the relative resources approach

in terms of absolute hours spent doing housework. At the same time, the employment status (e.g. family worker) affects Chinese women much more than Chinese men, as women family workers do significantly more housework than woman who are not family workers, while being family workers has no significant affect on the amount of housework performed by Chinese men.

To compare the absolute and proportional measures of housework time in China, Table 21 shows the determinants of proportion of housework for men and women. The left side of Table 21 shows the results of the regression for Chinese men. Like the results of the absolute hours of housework above, Model three on the left side shows that the more egalitarian are men's gender role attitudes, the higher is the proportion of housework they share in doing (0.146, $P < .01$). This result provides support for hypothesis three. Unlike the measure of absolute housework time, Table 21 shows that wife's relative income has a significant association with the proportion of housework time for Chinese men (0.128, $P < .05$). That is, Chinese men share in doing a higher proportion of housework when their wives earn relatively higher income. The finding support hypotheses two. Table 21 shows the comparisons in significance of the absolute and proportional measures of housework time for Chinese men and women. The comparisons show that the R-square of the absolute measure of housework time (.033) is less than the R-square of the proportional measure of housework time (.056) for Chinese men.

Table 21 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in China

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.000 (0.003)	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
Education	-0.035 (0.005)	-0.043 (0.005)	-0.053 (0.005)	0.035 (0.005)	0.042 (0.005)	0.052 (0.005)
Number of children under 18	-0.073 (0.044)	-0.110* (0.045)	-0.074 (0.050)	0.074 (0.044)	0.111** (0.045)	0.074 (0.051)
Wife's paid work hours		0.054 (0.003)	0.054 (0.002)		-0.055 (0.002)	-0.055 (0.002)
Wife's relative income		0.134** (0.018)	0.128** (0.019)		-0.132** (0.018)	-0.126** (0.019)
Gender role attitudes		0.150*** (0.014)	0.146*** (0.014)		-0.148*** (0.014)	-0.144*** (0.014)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.030 (0.100)			0.031 (0.100)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.092 (0.108)			0.092 (0.108)
Intercept	0.402	0.104	0.096	0.600	0.897	0.905
R ²	0.006	0.048	0.056	0.006	0.047	0.055
N	349	349	349	349	349	349

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

The right side of Table 21 presents the determinants of the proportional contribution to housework time for Chinese women. Like the absolute measure of housework time, the result of Model three on the right side supports the proposition that Chinese women do less housework when they have more egalitarian gender role attitudes. This result supports hypothesis six. Unlike the measure of absolute housework time, being family worker is not associated with performing a higher proportion of housework among Chinese women, but wife's relative income does have a significantly negative association with Chinese women's proportional contribution to housework time ($-0.126, P < .05$). In other words, Chinese women share in doing a lesser proportion of housework when their incomes are higher than their husbands' are. The result provides support for Hypotheses five. Table 22 shows that the R-square of the absolute measure of housework time (.043) is slightly lower than the R-square of the proportional measure of housework time (.055) for Chinese women.

Many studies have shown that the more egalitarian a man's gender ideology is, the greater is the proportion of housework he does (Greenstein 1996a; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Presser 1994), but such association is not found when using the absolute amount of hours to measure housework. The results of this project show that Chinese men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes do more housework by either the absolute hours or the proportion of housework. The effects of gender role attitudes on housework for women, however, tend in the opposite direction. Several studies report that the more egalitarian a woman's gender role attitude is, the less absolute time she spends doing housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Brayfield 1992; Presser 1994), but some similar studies have failed to support the effects of gender role attitudes on women's housework time (Ross 1987; Shelton and John 1993, 1996). The results of this project support that Chinese women with highly egalitarian gender role attitudes both put in fewer hours and perform a lesser proportion of the housework.

Table 22 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in China

	Absolute measure of housework		Proportional measure of housework	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age				
Education				
Number of children under 18				
Wife's paid work hours				
Wife's relative income			**	**
Gender role attitudes	**	**	***	***
Self employment (1 = yes)				
Family work (1 = yes)		**		
R ²	0.033	0.043	0.056	0.055
N	354	354	349	349

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

The relative resources approach assumes that the smaller are the differences between a couple's incomes, the more equal will be the division of housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Blair and Lichter 1991; Brayfield 1992; Greenstein 1996a; Presser 1994; Ross 1987; Sanchez and Thomson 1997). The results in China partially support the relative resources approach when measuring housework proportionally. As

Chinese women earn relatively higher income, Chinese men increase their proportional contribution to housework and Chinese women decrease their proportional contribution to housework. The measure of the absolute amount of housework hours in China, however, does not support the relative resources approach.

6.2 Japan

Table 23 presents the determinants of housework time as measured in absolute hours for men and women in Japan. The left side of Table 23 shows the results for Japanese men. Model one includes the three control variables which consist of age, years of education, and the number of children under 18 years old. Age is significantly associated with Japanese men's share in doing housework (0.147, $P < .10$). As Japanese men get older, their share in doing housework increases. Education also has a significantly positive association with Japanese men's participation in housework. That is, the more education they complete, the more absolute hours of housework they do. The number of children under 18, however, is not related to how much absolute housework Japanese men do. Model two adds the three key theoretical variables, which include wife's paid work hours, wife's relative income, and gender role attitudes. Gender role attitudes are significantly related to how much absolute housework Japanese men do (0.183, $P < .05$). The more egalitarian are the gender role attitudes of Japanese men, the more hours of housework they do. Women's paid work hours and wife's relative income are not significant factors affecting how much absolute housework Japanese men do. Adding the three theoretical variables increases the impact of age on the time Japanese men spend doing housework, but it slightly reduces the impact of education. At the same time, adding the three theoretical variables increases the R-square from .065 to .120. Model three includes the dummy variable of employment status (i.e. self employment). Self employment does not affect

Japanese men's participation in housework. In addition, gender role attitudes here again have a significantly positive effect on Japanese men's absolute housework hours (0.186, $P < .05$). This result lends support to Hypothesis three. However, neither women's paid work hours nor wife's relative income affect Japanese men's absolute housework hours. This result fails to support hypotheses one or two. Overall, Model three explains 12.8 percent of the variance in housework time performed by Japanese men.

The right side of Table 23 presents the determinants of absolute housework time for Japanese women. Model one shows that, unlike the case concerning Japanese men, the three control variables do not significantly affect Japanese women's time spent doing housework. Model two includes the three main theoretical variables. Wife's relative income has a significant association with Japanese women's participation in housework (-0.271, $P < .01$). In other words, the higher the income of a Japanese woman, the fewer hours she spends doing housework. On the other hand, neither wife's paid work hours nor their egalitarian gender role attitude significantly impacts their housework time. The three main theoretical variables and the three control variables in Model two explain 7.9 percent of the variance in housework time for Japanese women. Model three adds self employment to the model. Self employment is not related to the time that Japanese women spend doing housework. As in Model 2, wife's relative income has a significant effect on women's participation in housework, which supports Hypothesis five. Hypothesis four presumes that the more time women spend doing paid work, the less time they spend doing housework. In addition, Hypothesis six assumes that the more egalitarian are the gender role attitudes of women, the less housework they do. These two hypotheses, however, are not supported by the regression results. Model three explains eight percent of the variance in the housework for Japanese women.

Table 23 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.147* (0.035)	0.153* (0.035)	0.166* (0.035)	0.046 (0.131)	0.053 (0.128)	0.048 (0.130)
Education	0.226** (0.110)	0.193** (0.114)	0.193** (0.114)	0.046 (0.413)	0.089 (0.427)	0.089 (0.429)
Number of children under 18	-0.042 (0.439)	-0.003 (0.445)	0.006 (0.446)	0.054 (1.632)	0.051 (1.669)	0.049 (1.679)
Wife's paid work hours		-0.002 (0.023)	0.012 (0.023)		0.146 (0.084)	0.141 (0.085)
Wife's relative income		0.144 (0.320)	0.139 (0.320)		-0.271*** (1.174)	-0.269*** (1.180)
Gender role attitudes		0.183** (0.164)	0.186** (0.164)		-0.064 (0.627)	-0.064 (0.630)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.091 (0.700)			0.032 (2.581)
Intercept	-3.277	-6.050	-6.310	14.718	15.514	15.759
R ²	0.065	0.120	0.128	0.007	0.079	0.080
N	136	136	136	127	127	127

Source: International Social Survey Program, 2002.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

In summary, the gender role attitudes approach has greater explanatory power than either the time availability approach or the relative resources approach with respect to the absolute measure of housework time for Japanese men. In addition, the relative resources approach provides the greater explanatory power with respect to the

absolute measure of housework time for Japanese women. In addition, the control variables have stronger effects on housework time for Japanese men than for Japanese women. The results suggest that men and women are affected by different factors in Japan in terms of participation in housework. In addition, employment status (i.e. self employment) offers very limited explanatory power in Japan. Interestingly, the results in Japan show that the regression models have greater explanatory power with respect to men's housework than to women's when using the absolute measure. This result is uniquely different from the results for China, South Korea, and Taiwan.

To compare the absolute and proportional measure of housework, Table 24 presents the determinants of the proportional measure of housework for Japanese men and women. The left side of Table 24 shows the regression analysis for Japanese men. In shifting from absolute to proportional measurement, Model three on the left side shows that the size of wife's relative income has a significant association with the proportionate time Japanese men spend doing housework (0.217, $P < .05$). That is, Japanese men contribute a higher proportion of housework when their wives earn relatively more in income. This result supports hypothesis two. Again in contrast to the results of absolute measurement, age, education, and gender role attitudes do not have significant effects on Japanese men's proportional contribution to housework. Table 25 compares the significance of variables for absolute and proportional measures of housework. Overall, the absolute measure of housework explains more of the variance in housework time for Japanese men (12.8) than the proportional measure (11.3).

Table 24 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.084 (0.002)	0.080 (0.002)	0.098 (0.002)	-0.084 (0.002)	-0.080 (0.002)	-0.098 (0.002)
Education	0.102 (0.005)	0.072 (0.005)	0.073 (0.005)	-0.102 (0.005)	-0.072 (0.005)	-0.073 (0.005)
Number of children under 18	-0.104 (0.020)	-0.064 (0.021)	-0.055 (0.021)	0.104 (0.020)	0.064 (0.021)	0.055 (0.021)
Wife's paid work hours		-0.026 (0.001)	-0.003 (0.001)		0.026 (0.001)	0.003 (0.001)
Wife's relative income		0.225** (0.015)	0.217** (0.015)		-0.225** (0.015)	-0.217** (0.015)
Gender role attitudes		0.150 (0.008)	0.147 (0.008)		-0.150 (0.008)	-0.147 (0.008)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.131 (0.032)			0.131 (0.032)
Intercept	0.035	-0.078	-0.091	0.965	1.078	1.091
R ²	0.025	0.096	0.113	0.025	0.096	0.113
N	127	127	127	127	127	127

Source: International Social Survey Program, 2002.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

The right side of Table 24 presents the regression analysis for the proportional measure of housework time for Japanese women. Under Model three, wife's relative income is the only variable showing a significant effect on the proportional contribution to housework of Japanese women. The regression result indicates that Japanese women do less housework when they earn more money than their husbands earn, which lends support to hypothesis five. Table 25 shows that the absolute measure of housework time explains less of the variance in housework time for Japanese women (8.0) than the proportional measure of housework time (11.3).

Table 25 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Japan

	Absolute measure of housework		Proportional measure of housework	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age	*			
Education	**			
Number of children under 18				
Wife's paid work hours				
Wife's relative income		***	**	**
Gender role attitudes	**			
Self employment (1 = yes)				
R ²	0.128	0.080	0.113	0.113
N	127	127	127	127

Source: International Social Survey Program, 2002.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

Previous studies in the United States have suggested that the more egalitarian a man's gender role attitude is the greater is the proportion of housework he performs (Greenstein 1996a; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Presser 1994), but this association is not found when measured in absolute hours. The results of this project partially support that Japanese men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes take on a greater share of the housework, but only when measured in absolute hours. This association is not found in the proportional measurement in this project. For women, some previous studies in the United States report that the more egalitarian a woman's gender role attitude is, the less absolute time she spends doing housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Brayfield 1992; Presser 1994), while others do not find these effects (Ross 1987; Shelton and John 1993, 1996). The results of this project do not support the effects of gender role attitudes on both the absolute hours and proportion of housework by Japanese women. Overall, the regression results for Japan suggest that gender ideology is often better predictors of housework for men than for women. In addition, the findings for Japan reinforce Iwama's research (2005), in which it was shown that married Japanese men with egalitarian gender roles do significantly more housework than those with traditional gender role attitudes.

The relative resources approach assumes that the partner with greater economic resources will use this economic power to negotiate less time performing household labor. The results for Japan in this research find some support for this approach. Although wife's relative income does not influence on the absolute hours of housework time on the part of Japanese men, it strongly influences Japanese women. In other words, the higher the income of a Japanese woman in comparison with her husband's, the fewer hours she spends doing housework. In addition, the effect of income difference is significant with respect to the proportional contribution to housework on the part of both men and women. The higher the income of a Japanese

woman relative to her husband's the greater the proportional contribution of her husband, and the lesser the proportional contribution of the Japanese woman. This result confirms the research of Tsuya and Bumpass (2004). Overall, income difference has greater explanatory power with respect to the housework done by Japanese women than that by Japanese men.

It is unclear why a wife's paid work hours are positively associated with housework in Japan, even though the result is not significant. The results of this study have shown that Japanese women spend less time doing paid work (32.6 hours per week) than women in the other three countries do. Japanese women are apparently more likely to choose part-time work, possibly reflecting a belief that housework is still their primary responsibility and the time they spend doing paid work should not impinge on the time they devote to doing housework.

6.3 South Korea

Table 26 shows the regression results for the absolute hours of housework for men and women in South Korea. The left side of Table 26 presents the results for South Korean men. Model one first examines the effects of the three control variables, which include age, years of education, and the number of children under 18 years old. Education is significantly associated with South Korean men's housework time (0.137, $P < .05$). That is, the more education a South Korean man has completed, the more housework he does. Age and the number of children under 18 are not similarly related to housework time. Model two introduces the three main theoretical variables, comprising wife's paid work hours, wife's relative income, and gender role attitudes. The result shows that the three theoretical variables do not significantly affect South Korean men's housework time. Model three adds the two variables for employment patterns, which include self employment and family work. These two variables are not

significantly related to South Korean men's share of housework time. Model three explain 3.4 percent of the variance in housework time for South Korea men.

The right side of Table 26 presents the regression results for the absolute measure of housework time for South Korea women. Model one tests the three control variables. Here again, education is significantly associated with the contribution to housework (-0.257, $P < .001$). The more years of education South Korean women have, the fewer hours of housework they do. Age and the number of children under 18 are not related to women's contribution to housework. The three control variables explain 7.3 percent of the variance in housework time for South Korean women. Model two inserts the three main theoretical variables. Unlike the housework time of South Korean men, wife's relative income has a strong impact on the housework time of South Korean women (-0.174, $P < .01$). In other words, the more income a South Korean woman earns relative to her husband, the less housework she does. Women's paid work hours and gender role attitudes are not, however, related to their participation in housework. Adding the three main theoretical variables increases R-square from .073 to .112. Model three brings in the two dummy variables of employment status. Unlike the results pertaining to housework for South Korean men, South Korean women who are family workers perform more housework (0.131, $P < .05$) than the women who are not. Hypothesis five assumes that the higher is the relative income of wives, the fewer hours of housework they do. Model three shows that wife's relative income is significantly associated with women's doing less housework (-0.188, $P < .01$). Thus the result supports Hypothesis five. Model three explains 12.9 percent of the variance in housework time for South Korean women.

Table 26 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	-0.036 (0.023)	-0.030 (0.023)	-0.038 (0.024)	-0.032 (0.099)	-0.031 (0.098)	-0.023 (0.100)
Education	0.137** (0.055)	0.143** (0.057)	0.141** (0.057)	-0.257**** (0.237)	-0.277**** (0.241)	-0.270**** (0.240)
Number of children under 18	-0.005 (0.251)	0.001 (0.257)	0.004 (0.258)	0.093 (1.081)	0.085 (1.086)	0.081 (1.082)
Wife's paid work hours		0.032 (0.009)	0.043 (0.010)		-0.064 (0.037)	-0.101 (0.040)
Wife's relative income		0.048 (0.208)	0.054 (0.210)		-0.174*** (0.878)	-0.188*** (0.880)
Gender role attitudes		0.040 (0.158)	0.037 (0.159)		0.020 (0.669)	0.027 (0.666)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.015 (0.363)			0.070 (1.525)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.076 (1.170)			0.131** (4.915)
Intercept	0.802	-0.500	-0.419	33.615	42.534	42.276
R ²	0.023	0.029	0.034	0.073	0.112	0.129
N	269	269	269	269	269	269

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

In general, the relative resources approach better explains South Korean women's participation in housework than either the time availability approach or the gender role attitudes approach, in terms of the absolute hours of housework. Employment status (i.e. family worker) offers greater explanatory power for South Korean women's housework than for men's housework. However, the three theoretical approaches fail to explain South Korean men's participation in housework in terms of absolute hours of housework. As in the case of China, the regression models have greater explanatory power with respect to the housework of South Korean women than that of men.

To compare the absolute and proportional measures of housework, Table 27 presents the results of the proportional measure of housework for South Korean men and women. The left side of Table 27 shows the regression results for South Korean men. Model three on the left side shows that the more education South Korean men have, the greater is the proportion of housework they perform (0.266, $P < .001$). Overall, education is the only variable having a significant association with South Korean men's contribution to housework by both the absolute and the proportional measures of housework. Table 28 shows that the absolute measure of housework explains less of the variance in housework time (3.4) than the proportional measure (9.5).

The right side of Table 27 shows the regression results for the proportional measure of housework for South Korean women. Overall, Model three on the right side shows that education is the only variable that has a significant association with the proportion of housework performed by South Korean women. As was true for men, Model three shows that the three theoretical variables have no impact on the proportion of housework performed by South Korean women. Wife's relative income shows a significant association with the absolute hours of housework for South Korean women. However, this association is not found in terms of the proportional

measure (see Model 3 on the right side of Table 27). Table 28 suggests that, with respect to South Korean women, the absolute measure of housework explains more of the variance in housework time (12.9) than the proportional measure (9.5).

Table 27 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	-0.005 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.005 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Education	0.258**** (0.003)	0.272**** (0.003)	0.266**** (0.003)	-0.258**** (0.003)	-0.272**** (0.003)	-0.266**** (0.003)
Number of children under 18	-0.041 (0.012)	-0.037 (0.012)	-0.035 (0.012)	0.041 (0.012)	0.037 (0.012)	0.035 (0.012)
Wife's paid work hours		0.049 (0.000)	0.095 (0.000)		-0.049 (0.000)	-0.095 (0.000)
Wife's relative income		0.082 (0.010)	0.099 (0.010)		-0.082 (0.010)	-0.099 (0.010)
Gender role attitudes		0.024 (0.008)	0.016 (0.008)		-0.024 (0.008)	-0.016 (0.008)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.099 (0.017)			0.099 (0.017)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.096 (0.056)			0.096 (0.056)
Intercept	-0.038	-0.117	-0.120	1.038	1.117	1.120
R ²	0.070	0.082	0.095	0.070	0.082	0.095
N	266	266	266	266	266	266

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

Table 28 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in South Korea

	Absolute measure of housework		Proportional measure of housework	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age				
Education	**	****	****	****
Number of children under 18				
Wife's paid work hours				
Wife's relative income		***		
Gender role attitudes				
Self employment (1 = yes)				
Family work (1 = yes)		**		
R ²	0.034	0.129	0.095	0.095
N	269	269	266	266

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

As discussed above, research in the studies in the United States offers mixed results in terms of the effects of gender role attitudes on men's and women's housework. The research results of this project in South Korea do not support the gender role attitudes approach whether using absolute or proportional measures of housework. That is, gender role attitudes do not affect the absolute or proportional housework of either South Korean men or women.

As mentioned earlier, the relative resources approach assumes that economic resources reflect the power relationship between husbands and wives. The spouse with the most economic resources brings these resources to the relationship and negotiates less time doing housework. The regression results for South Korea offer some support for the relative resources approach. Wife's relative income has a significant influence on the absolute hours of housework done by South Korean women. The more money South Korean women earn relative to their husbands, the fewer hours they spend doing housework. However, wife's relative income does not affect how much housework South Korean men do. Overall, the relative resources approach has greater explanatory power with respect to housework done by South Korean women than housework done by South Korean men.

It is not clear why the association between a wife's gender role attitudes and the hours she spends doing housework is positive in South Korea, even though it is not significant. The Cronbach's Alpha for the two questions designed to measure gender role attitudes is .60 for South Korea. It is likely that the two questions pertaining to gender role attitudes may not accurately measure such attitudes in South Korea.

6.4 Taiwan

Table 29 shows the determinants of absolute hours of housework for Taiwanese men and women. Looking first at the regression results for Taiwanese men on the left side of Table 29, Model one examines the three control variables, which comprise age, years of education, and the number of children under 18 years old. The result shows that Taiwanese men do more housework when they have completed more years of education (0.203, $P < .001$). Model two introduces the three major theoretical variables, which include wife's paid work hours, wife's relative income, and gender role attitudes. Wife's relative income significantly affects Taiwanese men's housework

time (0.094, $P < .05$). The more income a Taiwanese woman earns relative to her husband, the more housework her husband does. In addition, gender role attitudes significantly affect Taiwanese men's housework time (0.122, $P < .01$). That is, holding egalitarian gender role attitudes causes Taiwanese men to increase their housework time. Wife's paid work hours, however, do not lead to more housework on the part of men. Adding the three theoretical variables increases the R-square from .045 to .071. Model three adds the two dummy variables of employment status, self employment and family work. These two variables are not related to Taiwanese men's participation in housework. This project assumes that the higher the relative income of wives, the fewer hours of housework they do. Model three at the right side of Table 28 shows that a wife's relatively higher income is associated with a husband's doing more housework (0.106, $P < .05$). This result supports Hypothesis two. In addition, this project presumes that the more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of men are, the more housework they do. The result of Model three suggests that when men hold egalitarian gender role attitudes, they do significantly more housework (0.124, $P < .01$), which supports Hypothesis three. Overall, Model three explains 7.5 percent of the variance in housework for Taiwanese men.

The right side of Table 29 presents the regression results for absolute hours of housework for Taiwanese women. Model one shows that the three control variables are all significantly related to Taiwanese women's participation in housework. Older Taiwanese women do more housework than younger Taiwanese women do. In addition, the more years of education a Taiwanese woman completes, the less housework she performs. Moreover, the more children under 18 years old Taiwanese women have, the more housework they perform. The three control variables explain 6.7 percent of the variance in housework for Taiwanese women. Model two includes the three major theoretical variables. Similar to the regression results for Taiwanese

men, wife's relative income has a significant impact on Taiwanese women's participation in housework (-0.159, $P < .001$). In other words, the more income a Taiwanese woman earn relative to her husband, the less housework she performs. At the same time, the more egalitarian are the gender role attitudes of Taiwanese women, the less housework they do (-0.110, $P < .05$). Here again the three control variables significantly affect on Taiwanese women's housework time. Model three introduces the two dummy variables of employment status. We see here that self employment and family work are not associated with Taiwanese women's housework time. Model 3 shows that women who earn more income than their husbands do significantly fewer hours of housework (-0.147, $P < .01$), which supports Hypothesis five. At the same time, Hypothesis six assumes that the more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of wives are, the fewer hours of housework they do. Model three shows that egalitarian gender role attitudes on the part of women significantly reduce their housework hours (-0.110, $P < .05$). This supports hypothesis six. Overall, Model three explains 11 percent of the variance in housework time for Taiwanese women.

In brief, the results pertaining to absolute hours of housework for Taiwanese men and women find strong support for both the relative resources approach and the gender role attitudes approach. The results do not, however, support the time availability approach. Wife's relative income and egalitarian gender role attitudes are negatively associated with Taiwanese women's participation in housework, but the two variables have a positive association with Taiwanese men's participation in housework. In addition, there is no evidence that the two variables of employment status affect the time that Taiwanese men and women spend doing housework. Furthermore, the three control variables are stronger determinants of housework for Taiwanese women than for Taiwanese men. Overall, the absolute measure of housework time offers greater explanatory power for Taiwanese women than for Taiwanese men.

Table 29 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting Absolute Hours of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.056 (0.060)	0.061 (0.060)	0.066 (0.061)	0.122*** (0.122)	0.114*** (0.121)	0.121*** (0.122)
Education	0.203**** (0.102)	0.163*** (0.105)	0.158*** (0.105)	-0.162**** (0.207)	-0.110** (0.213)	-0.111** (0.213)
Number of children under 18	-0.024 (0.482)	-0.009 (0.479)	-0.006 (0.481)	0.133*** (0.982)	0.114** (0.970)	0.112** (0.974)
Wife's paid work hours		-0.021 (0.031)	-0.008 (0.032)		-0.009 (0.062)	-0.004 (0.063)
Wife's relative income		0.094** (0.454)	0.106** (0.465)		-0.159**** (0.921)	-0.147*** (0.938)
Gender role attitudes		0.122*** (0.315)	0.124*** (0.315)		-0.110** (0.637)	-0.110** (0.637)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.067 (1.046)			-0.038 (2.065)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.024 (1.497)			0.052 (3.012)
Intercept	-1.954	-6.776	-7.440	22.129	36.295	34.816
R ²	0.045	0.071	0.075	0.067	0.105	0.110
N	470	470	470	486	486	486

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

To compare the absolute and proportional measures of housework, Table 30 shows the results of the proportional measure of housework for Taiwanese men and women. The left side of Table 30 shows the regression results for Taiwanese men. According to Model three on the left side, wife's relative income, gender role attitudes, and education are all significantly associated with Taiwanese men's propensity to do housework. This result is similar to the result obtained by the absolute measure of housework. This project assumes that the higher the relative income of wives is, the greater is the proportion of housework that husbands do. Model three shows on the left side that, when a wife earns money more than her husband does, her husband performs a significantly greater proportion of the housework (0.152, $P < .01$). This result supports Hypothesis two. At the same time, Hypothesis three presumes that the more egalitarian the gender role attitudes of husbands are, the more of the housework they perform. Model three indicates that there is a significant association between husbands' holding egalitarian gender role attitudes and an increase in their share in doing housework (0.134, $P < .01$). Hypothesis three is supported by this result. In addition, Table 31 suggests that the absolute measure of housework explains slightly less of the variance in housework time (7.5) than the proportional measure of housework (9.0) for Taiwanese men.

The right side of Table 30 shows the results of the proportional measure of housework time for Taiwanese women. Model three on the right side shows that, similarly to the case of the absolute measure, the variables wife's relative income, gender role attitudes, and education significantly affect the proportion of housework performed by Taiwanese women. This project assumes that the higher the relative income of wives is, the lesser is the proportion of housework they do. Model three shows, on the right side, significant decreases in housework time for wives who earn more money than their husbands do (-0.152, $P < .01$). This result supports Hypothesis

five. In addition, Hypothesis six assumes that the more egalitarian are the gender role attitudes of wives, the lesser is the proportion of housework they do. Model three shows that holding egalitarian gender role attitudes significantly decrease their proportion of housework time for Taiwanese women (-0.134, $P < .01$), which lends support to Hypothesis six. Age and the number of children under 18 years old, however, are not similarly associated. Table 30 suggests that the absolute measure of housework explains more of the variance in housework time for Taiwanese women (11.0) than the proportional measure (9.0).

According to some studies on household labor in the United States, the more egalitarian are the gender role attitudes of men, the more housework they do (Greenstein 1996a; Pittman and Blanchard 1996; Presser 1994). Other studies, however, find no such relationship between gender role attitudes and housework (Geerken and Gove 1983; Coverman 1985). The results of this project in Taiwan strongly support the gender role attitudes approach. The results indicate that the more egalitarian the gender role attitude of a Taiwanese man, the more housework he does, in terms of both the absolute and proportional measures. In addition, some previous studies in the United States report that having an egalitarian gender role attitude causes women to spend less absolute hours doing housework (Bianchi et al. 2000; Brayfield 1992; Presser 1994), although some other studies have failed to support this association (Ross 1987; Shelton and John 1993 1996). The results of this project in Taiwan strongly support for the association between gender role attitudes and housework time for women. In other words, the more egalitarian is a Taiwanese women's gender role attitude, the less housework she performs, according to both the absolute and the proportional measures. Overall, the regression estimation of housework time in Taiwan supports the idea that egalitarian gender role attitudes strongly affect the housework time of Taiwanese men and women. These findings in

Taiwan also support the research results of Hsiao (2005) and Lee et al. (2000).

Table 30 Standardized Regression Coefficients Predicting the Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan

	Men			Women		
	M1	M2	M3	M1	M2	M3
Age	0.014 (0.002)	0.015 (0.002)	0.014 (0.002)	-0.014 (0.002)	-0.015 (0.002)	-0.014 (0.002)
Education	0.179**** (0.003)	0.118** (0.003)	0.118** (0.003)	-0.179**** (0.003)	-0.118** (0.003)	-0.118** (0.003)
Number of children under 18	-0.088* (0.012)	-0.066 (0.012)	-0.064 (0.012)	-0.088* (0.012)	0.066 (0.012)	0.064 (0.012)
Wife's paid work hours		-0.041 (0.001)	-0.040 (0.001)		0.041 (0.001)	0.040 (0.001)
Wife's relative income		0.154*** (0.011)	0.152*** (0.012)		-0.154*** (0.011)	-0.152*** (0.012)
Gender role attitudes		0.133*** (0.088)	0.134*** (0.008)		-0.133*** (0.088)	-0.134*** (0.008)
Self employment (1 = yes)			-0.003 (0.027)			0.003 (0.027)
Family work (1 = yes)			-0.023 (0.038)			0.023 (0.038)
Intercept	0.065	-0.068	-0.067	0.935	1.068	1.067
R ²	0.044	0.090	0.090	0.044	0.090	0.090
N	464	464	464	464	464	464

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

Table 31 Comparisons of Significance — Absolute and Proportion of Housework for Married Men and Women in Taiwan

	Absolute measure of housework		Proportional measure of housework	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Age		***		
Education	***	**	**	**
Number of children under 18		**		
Wife's paid work hours				
Wife's relative income	**	***	***	***
Gender role attitudes	***	**	***	***
Self employment (1 = yes)				
Family work (1 = yes)				
R ²	0.075	0.110	0.090	0.090
N	470	486	464	464

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

As mentioned earlier, the relative resources approach assumes that the smaller is the difference between incomes of a couple, the more equal will be the division of housework time. The regression results on housework in Taiwan find strong support for the relative resources approach. The variable for wife's relative income is significantly associated with both the absolute hours and the proportion of housework

for Taiwanese men and women. The higher the relative income of Taiwanese women, the more housework the Taiwanese men share in doing and the less housework the women do. These results also support the research results of Hsiao (2005) and Lee et al. (2000).

6.5 Cross-national comparisons

The regression estimation of housework time in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan provide considerable support to both the relative resources approach and the gender role attitudes approach (see table 32 and table 33). At the same time, the regression results offer partial support for the effects of employment status in the four countries. These factors affect men and women and the four countries differently, however. In addition, there is no evidence that the time availability approach explains the gender division of household labor in any of the four countries.

The relative resources approach implies that the spouse with the greater economic power (i.e. income) will use this resource to negotiate lower participation in housework. The income proposition assumes that men and women share in housework more equally when their incomes are more equal. Many previous studies related to housework indicate that higher income for women is strongly associated with their spending less time doing housework. On the contrary, higher income for women is associated with men's doing more housework. Furthermore, previous research indicates that income has a greater impact on women's housework time than on men's housework time. Cross-national comparisons of housework time mainly support the proposition that higher income for women is associated with their doing less housework by both absolute and proportional measures of housework. Table 32 shows that this hypothesis is supported by applying the regression results to women's housework in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in terms of absolute hours of

housework. At the same time, Table 33 shows this hypothesis is supported by women's proportion of housework in China, Japan, and Taiwan. In addition, many preceding studies have pointed out that men do more of the housework when their wives earn relatively higher income. The results on men's housework in Taiwan support this hypothesis in terms of absolute hours (see table 32). The regression estimation for men's proportion of housework time in China, Japan, and Taiwan also lends support to this hypothesis (see table 33). Overall, comparisons across the four countries suggest that a couple's relative resources affect women's housework time more strongly than men's. The relative resources approach is partially supported by the results of China, Japan, and South Korea. The cross-national comparisons have shown that the relative resources approach has greater explanatory power with respect to the gender division of household labor in Taiwan than in China, Japan, or South Korea.

According to the gender role attitudes approach, the more egalitarian is a woman's gender role attitude, the less housework she does. This proposition is supported by the research results on women's housework in China and Taiwan by both the absolute and proportional measure of housework time (see Table 32 and Table 33). In addition, researchers examining the gender role attitudes approach assume that men with egalitarian gender role attitudes do more housework. This hypothesis is supported by the results of present research on men's housework time in China, Japan, and Taiwan when the measure of housework is made in absolute hours of housework (see table 32). At the same time, the results of men's housework in China and Taiwan also support to this hypothesis by the proportional measure (see table 33). Moreover, previous studies of housework time assume that gender role attitudes offer stronger explanatory power to men's housework time than to women's. The comparisons in this project show that gender role attitudes offer only slightly better explanatory power to men's housework than to women's. Taken together, the gender role attitudes approach

provides greater explanatory power with respect to gender division of housework in China and Taiwan than in Japan and South Korea. It is worth noting that the process of mate selection may influence the effects of gender role attitudes on the gender division of household labor. In other words, the men with conservative gender role attitudes may tend to marry the women willing to do housework or those possessing excellent homemaking skills. If this is so, the gender inequality of household labor is not unexpected, though such complex relationships do not fall within the analysis of this study.

Moreover, the time availability approach argues that the more time women spend doing paid work, the less time they spend doing housework. But the relationship between the employment hours of women and the time men spend doing housework is more varied. The hypothesis is not well supported by the results on the four East Asian countries in this research.

Comparisons of absolute and proportional measures of housework indicate that the biggest difference between these two measurements exists in association with the relative resources of married couples. A wife's relative income is used to measure relative resources in this project. When housework is measured by absolute hours, a wife's relative income significantly affects a husband's housework time only in Taiwan. However, a wife's relative income significantly increases her husband's housework time in China, Japan, and Taiwan when housework is measured by a husband's proportion of total housework time. That a wife's relative income has greater explanatory power with respect to the proportional measure of housework than to the absolute measure of housework may be a function of a couple's total housework hours. A wife's relative income can affect the significance of the husband's proportion of housework time because either the husband does more or the wife does less. Even though the wife's relatively higher income does not increase the husband's absolute

housework hours, the wife's higher income may reduce her absolute hours of housework and therefore change the proportion of housework contributed by her husband. This may explain why a wife's relative income in the four countries affects the proportional measurement of housework more significantly than it does in the absolute measurement.

Table 32 Comparisons of Significance — Control and Theoretical Variables for Absolute Hours of Housework among China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

	Men				Women			
	S. Korea	Japan	Taiwan	China	S. Korea	Japan	Taiwan	China
Age		*					***	
Years of education	**	**	***		****		**	
Number of children under 18							**	
Wife's paid work hours								
Wife's relative income			**		***	***	***	
Gender role attitudes		**	***	**			**	**
Self employment								
Family work					**			**

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997 and International Social Survey Program, 2002.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

Table 33 Comparisons of Significance —Control and Theoretical Variables for the Proportion of Housework among China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

	Men				Women			
	S. Korea	Japan	Taiwan	China	S. Korea	Japan	Taiwan	China
Age								
Years of education	****		**		****		**	
Number of children under 18								
Wife's paid work hours								
Wife's relative income		**	***	**		**	***	**
Gender role attitudes			***	***			***	***
Self employment								
Family work								

Source: East Asia Social Survey, 1997 and International Social Survey Program, 2002.

* P < 0.10. ** P < 0.05. *** P < 0.01. **** P < 0.001.

It is likely that gender role attitudes affect the division of housework through preferences that are expressed in the selection of mates. That is, men prefer mates with homemaking skills while women tend to select mates with breadwinning potential. Traditional gender role attitudes emphasize the role of breadwinner as the primary task of men and that of caretaker as the primary task of women. Social role theorists argue therefore that gender roles and marital roles will guide preferences during mate

selection. The study of Eagly and Wood (1999) has supported the claim that greater gender inequality is associated with stronger sex-typed mate preferences with reference to men's earning capacity and women's domestic skills. In addition, cross-national comparisons of nine countries¹⁰ support the proposition that traditional gender role attitudes guide mate preferences (Eastwick et al. 2006). Women place greater emphasis on a mate's earning capacity while men place greater importance on the cooking and housekeeping qualities of a mate (Eastwick et al.). Scholars have studied the gender differences in mate selection in the United States and other Western societies for decades. However, relevant studies of mate selection in East Asian countries are scarce, particularly ones that address the relationship between gender role attitudes and mate selection. I will discuss some existing empirical studies related to this issue below.

A cross-national study comparing mate preferences in the United States and China suggests that Chinese men place greater emphasis on youth, physical attractiveness, and good housekeeping skills in women while Chinese women prefer a mate with a sense of humor, good health, and material possessions (Toro-Morn & Sprecher 2003). Similar gender differences in mate preferences are not found in the American samples (Toro-Morn and Sprecher 2003). Therefore, having good housekeeping skills is among the criteria that Chinese men value most in mate selection, although the study suffers to some extent from sampling limitations.

With respect to Japan, Murray and Kimura (2003) indicate that unmarried university students value a combination of traditional attributes and some materialistic characteristics. Male Japanese students consider physical attractiveness, good cooking skills, kindness, and so on as ideal characteristics in mates, while female Japanese

¹⁰ The nine countries include Germany, Italy, Mexico, Singapore, Spain, Syria, Taiwan, Turkey, and the United States.

students place greater importance on such attributes as love, earning capability, and being fun to be with. This study suggests that the potential for being a good homemaker and caretaker is among the most important preferences in mate selection for Japanese men, which helps to explain the significant effect of gender role attitudes on Japanese men's housework in this study.

The Chosun Ilbo, a leading newspaper in South Korea, reported that South Korean men pay attention to women's physical attractiveness and character when considering mate selection, while South Korean women place greater importance on men's earning capability and occupation (*The Chosun Ilbo* 2006). The report does not, however, fully explain which characteristics South Korean men emphasize with regard to mate selection. In addition, a cross-cultural comparison of love and sexuality between Americans and South Koreans suggests that Koreans are more inclined to emphasize housekeeping as a major responsibility of women than are Americans (Witt et al. 1992). Unfortunately, this study does not examine the association between responsibility for housekeeping and mate selection. There is very little existing research into mate selection in South Korea published in English, and the relationship between mate selection and gender role attitudes has never been examined in the literature published in English. Witt et al. (1992) suggest that parents continue to play an influential role in mate selection in South Korea. However, it is not clear how individual gender role attitudes affect mate selection there.

In Taiwan, a survey targeting Taiwanese men's mate selection preferences¹¹ has shown that Taiwanese men pay attention to women with agreeable and optimistic dispositions and place importance on how well women interact with family members, showing respect to parents, and caring for family (Hung 2005). In addition, a

¹¹ The respondents consist of unmarried male employees in the high-tech industrial sector across the Taoyuna, Hsinchu and Miaoli areas in Taiwan.

qualitative study of Taiwanese men's mate selection preferences reveals a tendency to express contradictory preferences when describing ideal mates, on the one hand placing less emphasis on housekeeping ability while on the other hand emphasizing a woman's ability to serve as the major caretaker (Chiang 2000). Additionally, Chang (2001) reveals that Taiwanese men place greater importance on skillful interaction with family members than Taiwanese women do when considering selection preferences. Overall, these empirical studies have shown that a person's ability to have a good relationship with family members is an important factor that guides Taiwanese men during mate selection. It is not clear whether sex-typed preferences guide Taiwanese men in mate selection because of the mixed results that have been produced in existing research.

In summary, cross-national comparisons of the determinants of household labor in the four East Asian countries have shown that the relative resources approach and the gender role attitudes approach exhibit greater explanatory power than the time availability approach. The relative resources approach can better explain the gender division of household labor in Taiwan than in the other three countries. In addition, the gender role attitudes approach is more strongly supported by the results in China and Taiwan than by those in Japan and South Korea. In the next chapter I will discuss why this difference exists in the four countries, and then explain how gender structure helps to maintain gender inequality in household labor.

CHAPTER SEVEN
HOW GENDER STRUCTURE CONSTRUCTS GENDER INEQUALITY IN
HOUSEHOLD LABOR: MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVES

Given the unequal gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, chapter six has further considered why men and women divide household labor unequally in the four countries. Chapter six examines the determinants of the gender division of household labor on the basis of the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach. The regression results have shown that the relative resources approach and the gender role attitudes approach better explain the gender inequality in household labor than time availability approach does in the four countries. Since the 1990s, however, many gender scholars have argued that the division of household labor reflects more than time availability or the relative resources of husbands and wives. They have argued that it is important to incorporate gender theories into the analysis of household labor. The aim of this chapter is therefore to illustrate how gender theories help us understand the construction of gender inequality in household labor in these four countries.

This project builds on the multilevel perspective of gender, which conceptualizes gender as a social structure having consequences at individual, interactional, and institutional levels (Correll et al. 2007; Risman 1998; Ridgeway and Correll 2004). To analyze how gender structure at multiple levels affects the gender inequality in household labor, this chapter is organized into analyses of gender structure at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels. I argue that gender differences at the individual level cannot fully explain gender inequality in household labor. We can explain this gender division of household labor only by understanding how gender

structure at the interactional and institutional levels help maintain such gender inequality. At the individual level, I consider how men and women think about cleanliness and how they relate cleanliness to their gender identities and differential contributions to housework. At the institutional level, I discuss how gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market relate to the unequal gender division of household labor. At the interactional level, I analyze how the interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters help to maintain gender inequality in household labor.

This project utilized in-depth interviews with 42 married men and women from China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. There were 11 Chinese, 10 Japanese, 11 South Korean, and 10 Taiwanese interviewees. The interview questions cover perspectives on cleanliness; attitudes toward the gender division of labor; work history and experience; and the distribution of housework among the interviewees, their spouses, and their parents or parents-in-law.

7.1 Individual level: The one who cares more about neatness does more housework

As discussed earlier in chapter three, sex-role socialization theorists argue that boys and girls learn different gender roles and internalize these gender roles as gender identities in childhood, and that these gender identities determine their behavior in adulthood. Therefore, “gender is a product of socialization” (Correll et al. 2007: 2). On this view gender is considered to be a stable attribute, part of the identity of men and women. This theoretical approach has been criticized by many researchers. I have briefly discussed the criticism of sex-role socialization theory in chapter 3 (for a full review see Conell, 1987). One of the problems with sex-role socialization theory is that it excessively emphasizes gender differences between men and women while

ignoring their gender similarities (Correll et al. 2007). In this project, I argue that the sex-role socialization theory cannot fully explain why men and women participate in household labor unequally. If differently gendered personalities really determine household labor inequality, how do we account for men and women with atypical gendered personalities? Will men contribute more time to housework than their wives do when they internalize atypical gender identities?

When asked why men do not share more equally in doing housework, most interviewees attribute this gender inequality in household labor to gender differences with respect to *cleanliness*. This section first discusses how men and women think about cleanliness, and then talks about how they reason out the relationship between cleanliness and unequal participation in housework. Finally, it addresses how men react to atypical gender behavior on the part of women.

7.1.1 “Women have that kind of tendency motivating them to care more if the house is clean enough.”

Many men interviewees from Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan point out that they do less housework than their wives do because wives usually are not satisfied with the way their husbands do it. Some of them think the major reason is that women tend to insist on keeping their house clean on the basis of *their* standards and they ask men to follow the same standards. A 32-year-old Taiwanese man said in the interview that his wife really cares that their house is tidy, so she cleans it every day although she is tired after work. His wife performs most of the household cleaning tasks. He usually helps with mopping the floor, but sometimes he is asked to organize clothing or wash dishes when his wife is occupied with other household tasks. He said:

I don't think we should fold clothes and put them neatly in the closet. We can just put the clothes in a basket and get what you want from the basket. But my

wife likes to put all of the clothes neatly in the closet. I would fold the clothes, but she would rearrange the clothes after me. After I would wash dishes, she would wash the dishes and arrange them neatly again. Don't you think she asks too much? She has her ways of doing housework and she doesn't like my ways of doing housework.

Many of the men interviewed emphasized that their wives sometimes complain that they do not do the housework carefully enough. Their wives therefore often redo the housework after the men are finished with it. Those men attribute their wives' discontent to the fact that they are *women*, so they care more about whether the house is neat than they do as *men*. A Japanese man spoke of a similar experience. His wife worked full time as a researcher and spent a lot of time at work. He usually would pile up everything in the living room or bedroom. After meals, he would put the dishes in the sink and wash them only when he needed to use them again. Although his wife was occupied with her job, she would do housework as soon as she had free time. The Japanese man ascribed his wife's eagerness to do housework to "*women's tendency*" (in his words). He said that:

My wife cleans up the house more often than me and much harder than me. She is stricter with the cleaning part than me, but I don't really care. I think my wife really thinks that cleanliness is important, so she spends more time doing housework than me. Women have that kind of tendency and that tendency motivates them to care more if the house is clean. I don't really care about cleanliness. Also, she thinks she is supposed to do that housework. She doesn't like the house in a mess. Even though she had no time to clean up the house on weekdays, she would clean up our house on weekends.

During the interview, he emphasized several times that he does not care if the house is clean enough. It is his wife, as a woman, who pays much more attention to keeping their house tidy than he does.

About half of the men interviewees mentioned that their wives usually set up unacceptable standards for doing housework. They think it is natural for women to be

more concerned with keeping a house neat than men are. Based on the interviews, we see that men tend to see an explicit linkage between women's emphasis on neatness and their performance of the majority of housework. On the one hand, most men believe that women do more housework in part because they express much more concern about tidiness than men do. On the other hand, men infer that they do less housework than their spouses do in part because they do not really care about neatness. Therefore, a common answer from the men interviewees is that the one who cares more about tidiness does more housework. The one here means the *wife*. What do women interviewees think about men's explanation of cleanliness? I will discuss their opinions next.

7.1.2 "Men do housework without concern."

More than half of the women interviewees believe that men are not serious about housework, so they do not do housework carefully. A Japanese woman described how her husband would help her wash dishes, but she was not satisfied with the housework her husband did. She put it this way:

I think men don't really care if the house is clean enough, so they can't really keep the house clean. Overall, I think they do housework without concern. My husband sometimes helps me wash dishes. I know he really wants to help me. But I have to say I am not really satisfied with what he does. The dishes are not really clean. I've never told him anything about this, but I really feel he doesn't carefully rinse the dishes.

The Japanese woman is not really satisfied with the housework her husband does, and she attributes it to the fact that he is a man and he does not know how to do housework.

While men are usually regarded as not taking housework seriously, most women

think that women generally pay more attention to neatness than men do. For this reason, they think that women can do housework better than men can. A Japanese woman believes that she cares more about tidiness and thus does more housework than her husband because she is a woman. She commented that:

I kind of feel that doing housework is a wife's responsibility because women usually care more about neatness than men do. The standard of neatness for us is different. My husband cares only about the minimum standard of neatness, but I want my house really clean. I think my husband has the potential to do housework, but I still do more housework because I care more about neatness than him.

The Japanese woman told me later that she grew up in a family that was neat because her mother was used to cleaning up their house all the time. She learned the importance of cleanliness from her mother, so she also likes to keep her own house tidy.

As women from each country describe their standards for keeping a house clean, they emphasize different aspects of the work. A Chinese woman expressed her concern about doing laundry:

I like to wash my underwear and socks separately by hand. Actually we've had some arguments about doing laundry. [What kinds of arguments?] My husband thinks we can put underwear and socks together with other clothing, but I insist underwear and socks shouldn't be put together with other clothing in the washing machine. They should be washed by hand separately. I insist that we should do laundry like this, so I have to wash underwear and socks by myself.

A Japanese woman described her concern about leftovers:

Washing dishes is very important housework. I don't like to put any leftovers from a meal or food on tables or in the kitchen because it is very easy to attract cockroaches. I really don't like cockroaches. But sometimes my husband doesn't really care about this, so I have to clean up the leftovers after him.

In addition, a South Korean woman talked about different attitudes toward keeping her house clean:

I really care about putting things in order. My husband usually puts his books and clothes everywhere around our house, like on the tables, chairs, the floor and everywhere. I feel kind of distracted and unhappy if the house is in a mess. So I make things orderly every day.

Finally, a Taiwanese woman mentioned that she likes to keep the floor clean:

My husband doesn't care if the house is clean enough. We have carpeting at our house now. I would vacuum right away when I feel it's kind of dusty, but my husband thinks it is still quite good. He doesn't feel anything is wrong with that carpet. You walk on the floor every day, so keeping the floor clean is very important, especially when we have a little kid at home.

These examples above show how women from the four countries keep their houses clean on the basis of their own standards, which they believe are necessary for keeping a comfortable house.

When asked to compare themselves with their husbands, about two-thirds of the women reported that they care more about keeping the house neat than their husbands do. These women think men do not care if their house is clean or messy, so they are less concerned about housework. They tend to link women's concern with cleanliness and men's lack thereof to their gender. That is, the majority of interviewees generally assume that cleanliness is among a woman's characteristic "tendency" (in their words). A good woman should pay careful attention to keeping a house tidy and comfortable. It is not an explicit social rule, but it is an implicit social norm that defines the ideal woman. Since most men and women interviewees in the four countries consider cleanliness as a woman's gendered personality, next section will discuss how men

react to their wives' atypical gendered personality.

7.1.3 "My wife doesn't care so much about neatness."

Although most interviewees think women pay more attention to tidiness than men do, several men interviewees from Japan and China said that their wives do not really care about neatness. A Chinese man complained that because his wife does not like to do housework, his parents and parents-in-law take turns living with them and help them do housework. When asked to compare his standard of cleanliness with that of his wife, he responded:

My mom and mom-in-law care more about cleanliness than me, but I care more about cleanliness than my wife. My wife doesn't like to do housework. Her housework is only about taking care of my son. I actually think she should do some more housework, but she just shows no interest in doing other housework. So, what can I do? That's why my mom or mom-in-law always stays at our house for long periods of time because we need their help with housework.

In this interview we have a case of a Chinese man paying more attention to keeping the house neat than his wife does. If we agree with the statement that the one who pays more attention to tidiness does more housework, does this mean that the Chinese man will share in doing more housework than his wife does? Interestingly, the Chinese man said in the interview that his wife still performs more housework than he does, although she may not care about neatness as much as he does. In addition, he stated clearly that his wife should take more of the responsibility for doing housework. However, his wife does not really conform to all of his gender expectations. This results in his complaining about his wife's reluctance to perform housework. In the meantime, he does not do more housework than his wife does in spite of his greater concern with tidiness. Interestingly, he turns to his mother and mother-in-law for help rather than doing it himself.

A Japanese man described a similar experience. His wife is a full-time housewife, so she is expected to perform all of the household tasks. And although his wife does perform most of the housework, the man complained that his wife does not do enough cleaning. When asked about his wife's standard of cleanliness, he complained that:

I don't think my wife cares so much about cleanliness. Our house in Japan was not really that clean. Honestly, we both don't really care so much if the house is tidy. For example, if some friends are going to visit us, we clean up our house. She is not good at organizing things. That's a hard issue between us. If I complain that the house is kind of messy, she asks me to help her clean up the house. She said she is not good at organizing things. Of course, she wants to live in a clean house, but she is not good at keeping the house clean. That's her character.

During the interview, the Japanese man made it clear that it is his impression that women are supposed to keep their houses neat. He commented that Japanese parents usually feel ashamed of their daughters if they cannot maintain clean houses. Since his wife is a full-time housewife, he expects her to perform more housework than women who have full-time jobs. When his wife's behavior does not meet his expectations, he is disappointed and expresses his dissatisfaction with her. They have ever argued about this issue in the past. These two cases above provide good examples of men who expect women to put more emphasis on cleanliness than men do. For this reason, they expect that women are better able to keep a house clean. Therefore, they generally expect women to perform more housework than men do. When women violate this gender expectation, people doubt their qualifications as ideal women or wives.

Most interviewees assume that cleanliness is part of the personality of a woman. A good woman or wife should pay more of the attention to tidiness. Most women and men interviewed internalize this gender expectation. Women believe that they can do housework better than men can because they are more concerned about neatness than men are. Men also tend to stress that women have higher standards of cleanliness than

men are. Most of the men attribute women's emphasis on cleanliness to their feminine personalities. Therefore, they believe that women do more housework than men do because of the gender differences in cleanliness preferences. Since people expect women to emphasize cleanliness, one interesting finding is that men sometimes doubt that women who do not follow this gender expectation are not good wives. In addition, it appears that men do not perform more housework than their wives do even when the men are more concerned about neatness than their wives are. The findings suggest that attributing the gender inequality in household labor to concern for cleanliness simply cannot explain why men still perform less housework than women do even when the latter do not insist on cleanliness. The gender structure that operates at the institutional and interactional levels helps us understand why, as I argue below.

7.2 Institutional level: Gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market

Having discussed gender structure at the individual level, this section takes the next step by analyzing gender structure at the institutional level. According to Risman (1998: 29), gender stratification at the institutional level can be analyzed on the basis of "the distribution of material advantage, formal organizational schemas, and ideological discourse." This section focuses on illustrating gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market in the four countries, and explicates the relationship between gender ideology, gender inequality in the labor market, and gender inequality in household labor. Gender ideology is not viewed as internalized masculinity or femininity but rather as a cognitive image that constrains the actions of men and women. Gender inequality in the labor market is defined as the unequal treatment that men and women encounter in that market.

7.2.1 Gender ideology defines men as primary breadwinners and women as main

caretakers

As mentioned in chapter two, Confucian gender ideology is not only perceived in terms of the public-private distinction between men and women, it is also understood through the complex kinship hierarchy that characterizes Chinese culture (Rosenlee 2006). Not unlike gender ideology in Western industrialized countries, Confucian gender ideology explicitly defines the major role of men as that of breadwinner and the major role of women as that of caretaker. In addition, Confucian gender ideology reflects the hierarchal kinship system under which senior members of any hierarchy enjoy greater power than junior members do. In this section, I will focus on discussing how the public-private distinction relates to housework done by men and women in the four countries. In the next section I will further discuss the hierarchal kinship and its relationship to housework.

When asked why men do not do more housework than women do, a portion of the interviewees questioned whether men and women have “equal gender thinking” (in their words). That is, they believe that men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes share in doing more housework than those who have more traditional gender role attitudes. In addition, interviewees mentioned that women may “push their husbands to share some housework when they have more equal gender thinking” (in their words). That is, many of the interviewees link gender role attitudes to gender inequality in household labor. For this reason, I then asked respondents for their perspectives on seeing men primarily role as breadwinners and women primarily as caretakers. I asked them if they agree with the statement that a man’s most important duty is to earn money and a woman’s most important duty is to take care of the home and family. Approximately three-fifths of the interviewees disagreed with the statement. This result is different from the survey data, which show that 40 percent of the respondents of the four countries disagree with men as breadwinners and women

as caretakers.¹² In addition, cross-national comparisons of gender role attitudes in this study indicate that more Japanese (53.8%) and Taiwanese people (48.1%) disagree with the statement asserting separate spheres between men and women than Chinese (32.3%) and South Korean people (31%) do.

The results of interviews show that the interviewees who disagreed with the statement tended to share in doing housework more equally between spouses than those who agreed with the statement. Nearly half of the Chinese men and women interviewees disapprove of the gender division of labor. A Chinese man who criticized the gender division of labor commented in this way about sharing housework equally: “Both husband and wife can have their jobs if they can. If both work, then both should do the housework together. I don’t think husband and wife should have a clear division between work and housework.” In addition, a Chinese woman who disapproved of the gender division of labor said:

Making enough money for a family is not that easy in China. A family really needs income from both husband and wife. So making money is not only the husband’s responsibility. Both have the responsibility to earn money, so both should share the housework together.

Just over half of the Chinese men and women interviewees approve of the gender division of labor. A Chinese man who represented this point of view said his wife did much more housework than he did. He commented on women and housework:

One of the most important things for a family is someone who can do the housework. And I think the housework is still a woman’s major responsibility.

¹² As mentioned earlier in chapter four, all of the interviewees in this project have college or graduate-level degrees. Studies have proved that people have more of the egalitarian gender role attitudes when they complete higher education. Therefore, it is not surprising that the interviewees of in-depth interviews in this project have more egalitarian gender role attitudes than the overall population does.

A Chinese woman from this school of thought who does more housework than her husband does said it is *strange* for men to stay in the kitchen. She put it this way:

I think it is strange for men to stay in the kitchen and prepare meals, so I usually do most of the housework. If you are preparing meals, you have to be very careful about the amount of oil, salt, and many things. I don't like men who care about this kind of detail. I like the men who can take care of more important things.

Chinese people who do not accept the gender division of labor tend to underscore the importance of a wife's contribution to the family income. When both husband and wife work full time, they generally believe that the husband should share in doing more of the housework than if the wife did not work. In contrast, Chinese people who accept the gender division of labor tend to underline the gender difference between men and women. In other words, they think men and women are different owing to the gender difference in their personalities, which explains why traditional gender roles are appropriate. Because of this, they feel women are more suitable to do housework and take care of the family than men are.

About four-fifths of the Japanese men and women interviewees disapprove of the gender division of labor. They agree that men and women can both work full time and share in doing housework. The fact is however that the Japanese women interviewees still do much more housework than their husbands do. That is, there is an inconsistency between what they think and what they do. Here is what one Japanese woman who rejects the gender division of labor and works very hard said:

I don't agree with that idea, but most old people really think like that. My husband has traveled a lot around the world, so he can understand I want to develop my career. But most Japanese men think women should do most of the housework. My coworkers always asked me suspiciously, "Is your marriage

okay?” They thought I shouldn’t work so hard. I should go home earlier and do more housework.

About one-fifth of the Japanese men and women interviewees agreed that a man’s job is to earn income and a woman’s job is to take care of the home and the family. For example, a Japanese man whose wife worked full time but quit her job after they had a child said:

It’s really hard for women to work hard and take care of kids together in Japan. I don’t like that many women work very hard, but they have no time for their husbands and their children. They send their children to daycare centers or babysitters. They buy expensive toys for their children. I really don’t like this.

Another Japanese woman who accepts the gender division of labor said, “In our country, it is more natural if men go out to work and women take care of family and housework.” She and her husband both have full-time jobs and work about equal numbers of hours per week. When asked why she does most of the housework, she answered:

I think the first reason is, women are better at doing housework than men are. Also, even though my husband doesn’t really do so much housework, he may do something to improve the family income. For example, he may come home and search for information about managing our finances or getting a good education for our kid. I think he also contributes his time to the family.

A relatively higher proportion of Japanese disapprove of the gender division of labor. In spite of this, most of them said that women still perform more housework than men do even when women have full-time jobs. That is, there is an inconsistency involved in their gender ideology, the reality of their needing to contribute to family income, and their performance of housework. Hochschild (1989: 74) explains that this contradiction is a strategy that maintains “the façade of a gender identity.” In other

words, the reality is that families do need women to earn money. In the play of this economic reality with their gender identity, women therefore tend to do more housework than men do. In addition, Japanese who approve of the gender division of labor tended to emphasize the major caretaker role for women. Like the Chinese who accept the gender division of labor, Japanese of the same opinion apparently believe that women are better at caring for family and doing housework than men are. They often develop a linkage between women's gender role and their participation in doing more of the housework.

About half of the South Korean people reject the gender division of labor. For example, a South Korean man said, "If women can earn sufficient money for the family, men can do all housework. I think both men and women can work and share housework." Another South Korean woman had been working full time before she came to the US. When asked if she accepts the gender division of labor, she resolutely expressed her perspective:

No, I don't think so. If working opportunities are available, women can work and then hire domestic workers to do the housework. Many women have higher education nowadays. They shouldn't sacrifice their good abilities at work. If women can work, they should work.

When asked follow-up questions related to the gender division of labor, most seem to think women should still be responsible for more housework than men are. That is, they agree that men and women can work full time and participate in housework, but they expect women to perform a greater share of the housework than men do. The other half of the South Koreans interviewed accepts the gender division of labor. For example, a South Korean man approves of the gender division of labor because he thought:

If my wife has a full-time job, it means I am busy with my work and she is also busy with her work. She is exhausted when she comes home. Then she may not feel like doing any housework. She is tired and I am also tired, but somebody has to do housework and take care of our children. If she comes home so tired, who can do the housework? This can be a big problem. I don't like this situation. I think the most important thing is being with your family. It is not worth sacrificing your family just to get some more money.

Notice that during the interview, the Korean man asked, "If she (the wife) comes home so tired, who can do the housework?" Apparently, the answer to this question is not him. It is his wife who has to do the housework. In addition, this Korean man believes that the well-being of the family is more important than any income a wife might contribute to the family. Another South Korean woman approved of the gender division of labor because she thought "it is more efficient than the other ways." She explained:

I think women should take the majority of the care of kids and housework than men. For me, I stay at home and care for my kids and the home. And then my husband can work hard without worrying about the family.

Like the Chinese and Japanese, South Koreans who do not approve of the gender division of labor share in doing housework more equitably, although the women are still expected to be responsible for more of the housework than men are. In addition, those South Koreans who reject the gender division of labor seem to pay more attention to gender similarities in paid and unpaid work. That is, women and men can work and share in doing housework. Those South Koreans who expressed acceptance of the gender division of labor stressed the priority of family and children. They believe it is a woman's responsibility to take care the family and children.

Almost all the Taiwanese interviewed expressed disagreement with the statement that earning money is a man's most important job while taking care of the home and

family is a woman's most important job. Most emphasize that men and women do not need to divide work and housework according to their *sex*. A Taiwanese man whose wife had worked full time for several years before they came to the US rejects the gender division of labor. He said:

I don't think husband and wife should have a clear division between work and housework. If my wife can work, that is good. We can get more of the income. If my wife and I both have full-time jobs, then the one who has more free time should do more housework. If we both have no time to do housework, then we will hire someone to do the housework.

Another Taiwanese woman who rejects the gender division of labor argued that women should have their own careers and men should do some more of the housework. She commented that:

It seems to me some or most people think a good wife should always make great concessions to her family. A good wife is considered as the one who should sacrifice herself for her family. I will never become that kind of woman. I think women should have their own jobs. Men should do more housework.

Only one Taiwanese interviewee, a woman, accepts the gender division of labor. She said:

I feel my husband has more ambition for his career than me, so he has invested much more time on his career than me. Although I happened to have a good job before, I think he has more ambition for his career. So I should support him. That's why I quit my job and become a housewife.

Most of the Taiwanese interviewed reject the gender division of labor. Like the Chinese, Japanese, and South Koreans who agree with them, these Taiwanese believe that men and women do not need to have a clear division of labor because of their sex.

This section has reviewed the gender structure at the institutional level and discussed how this relates to gender inequality in housework. The interviews show that more than half of the interviewees reject the statement that a man's most important job is earning money while a woman's most important job is taking care of the home and family. The interviewees who disapprove of this gender division of labor tend to share in doing housework more equitably than those who agree with the statement. They believe that men and women should be free to work and in that case should share in doing the housework. That is, they believe in gender similarity between men and women in terms of paid and unpaid work. In contrast, interviewees who reported a more unequal division of housework see women primarily as caretakers and men primarily as breadwinners. Those people generally emphasize the gender difference in the male and female personalities as well as the priority of family. The stress on gender difference helps maintain the traditional gender division of labor. Next section will continue to discuss the gender inequality in the labor market in the four countries.

7.2.2 Unequal treatment for men and women in the labor market

As discussed earlier in chapter two, gender inequality in the labor market is more serious in Japan and South Korea than it is in China and Taiwan. This section focuses on the differential treatment that women experience in their paid work with respect to the gender wage gap, interrupted employment, and workplace culture.

Chapter two has indicated that comparative wage rates for Chinese and Taiwanese women (*vis-à-vis* those of men) are higher than for Japanese and South Korean women. Sociologists and economists focus on explaining the causes of this gender wage gap based on the neoclassical theory of human capital and occupational sex segregation (England et al., 1988; Kilbourne et al., 1994; Petersen and Morgan,

1995; Tam, 1997), while other sociologists propose that matching processes operating at the micro level (Marini and Fan, 1997) and unequal access to organizational power (Hultin and Szulkin, 2003) are also important causes of the gap. That is, researchers generally explain the wage differential between men and women by reference to differences in educational attainment, years of work experience, skills, and occupation. The aim of this section is not, however, to explain the causes of this wage differential. It focuses instead on describing the unequal treatment that women interviewees meet in their paid work with respect to wages.

For example, a Japanese woman researcher complained that the wage she was paid in the first three years was unfair when compared with those of her men coworkers in similar positions. She said there are two different systems of income and benefits in her company:

There are two different income and welfare systems in my company. One of the systems is very unfair to junior workers and female workers, but the other benefits senior and male workers.

Mindful of these two different systems of income and benefits, she said she worked very hard for her company for about four years to prove that she could be an “outstanding employee” (in her words). However, she was not treated equally with those of her men colleagues who had come into the company at the same time as she had. Her men coworkers were promoted to higher positions and earned more income than she did. She remained in the same position. She put it this way:

Men and women at the same positions earned different income rates and benefits. I thought it was very unfair to me. So I worked very hard to show my boss that I could be very productive and to show him I should be treated equally with the male workers. Finally, he changed my work benefits and gave me an income and benefits that were similar to those of the other male workers.

She worked twice the amount of time and produced great work results. Therefore, she earned what she deserved. However, she told me later that the two unequal systems of income and benefits are still common in her company. The experience of this Japanese woman researcher has shown us how men and women are paid on the basis of something other than their human capital. The existence of two systems of wages and benefits that are based on different gender evaluations plays a more important role in determining the gender wage differential than human capital does.

Chapter two has also discussed the much higher women's labor force participation rate in China in comparison with those in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. It is also worth noting that a higher proportion of Chinese and Taiwanese women work throughout their lives when compared with Japanese and South Korean women. That is, more Japanese and South Korean women withdraw from paid labor when they get married or have children than Chinese and Taiwanese women do. In this project, women interviewees in China and Taiwan reported that they continued to work after getting married or having children, which agrees with what men interviewees said about their wives. However, about half of the Japanese and South Korean women interviewees reported that they quitted their jobs or changed to part-time jobs when they got married or had children. At the same time, about half of the Japanese and South Korean men interviewees reported similar experiences on the part of their wives. For example, as a Japanese professor mentioned in the interview:

It is very difficult for married Japanese women to continue to work full time, so many women change to part-time jobs or quit their jobs after they have babies.

When asked why it is difficult for married Japanese women to work full time, the professor emphasized that Japanese men spend a lot of time on their jobs. When they have younger children, it is less likely that they will reduce their paid work time and

share in doing more of the housework. Therefore, married Japanese women often quit their jobs or change to part-time work to support their husbands. He added that one reason it is difficult for Japanese women to maintain full-time jobs is that childcare is not always available or is too expensive:

If you live in a small town, it is not easy to find good babysitters or good day-care centers. So women have to quit their jobs and take care of their children. If you live in a big city, babysitters and day-care centers are really expensive. So it is really hard for women to keep their full-time jobs.

In addition to the availability of childcare, the unique *working culture* in Japan is another factor that intertwines with traditional gender ideology and forces Japanese women to leave their jobs. A 34-year-old Japanese woman architect worked for about six years before getting married. She emphasized that the working culture in Japan is somewhat unique when compared with that in other countries. Working long hours is considered a basic requirement for most jobs. As an architect, her working hours were usually very long, such as from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. When she was single, it was not a problem for her to work for such a long time. However, this became a big problem after she got married, in particular when she was pregnant. This woman said:

My husband is also an architect. He works even longer than I do. When both of us were very busy with our jobs, our house was dusty and messy at that time. He sometimes complained to me about this. Then I found out I was pregnant. In my company, you never see a pregnant woman or a woman who has a baby continue to work. Almost all female workers are single or married but have no kids. I then realized it is very difficult for a married woman to continue to work full time, especially if you are in a professional job. I talked to my husband, and then I quit my job.

The Japanese woman architect then told me that she really wants to continue working. The reality, however, is that her husband cannot share in doing more of the housework.

At the same time, it is difficult for her to work less while also working effectively, primarily because the working environment in her company is not woman-friendly, particularly not to pregnant or married women with younger children. Therefore, she quitted her job because of the pressure of the working culture in her profession.

Moreover, one South Korean woman interviewee noted the role of good mother and its relationship with the Korean educational system. This woman worked as a researcher for a university laboratory. She stressed that the educational system in South Korea is very competitive:

It is very difficult for a married woman to work full time in South Korea. Actually, the educational system in South Korea is very competitive, so a mom usually has to spend lots of time supervising her children's homework or helping them with the requirements of school. Most people still think a good mom is supposed be with her children and support them all the time. So, I think it is not easy for a married woman to balance her full-time work and family duties in South Korea.

In the interviews Japanese and South Koreans generally emphasize how often married women resign from paid work because it is so hard to balance work and family. However, this reason was not commonly expressed by the Chinese and Taiwanese interviewees. Unlike Japanese and South Korean women, who often leave their full-time jobs because of the difficulty of balancing work and family duties, the only reason Chinese and Taiwanese women gave for quitting their jobs was that their husbands were going abroad to study. In other words, those whose husbands do not go abroad to study are very likely to continue working full time.

This section has discussed gender inequality in the labor market with respect to the gender wage gap and the interruption of employment among women. The previous discussion in chapter two suggested that the wage gap is more serious in Japan and South Korea than it is in China and Taiwan. In addition, chapter two has indicated that

Japanese and South Korean women often quit their jobs at the time of marriage or childbearing. About half of the Japanese and South Korean interviewees described this experience as it related to themselves or their spouses. The interruption of employment for women was not, however commonly mentioned by Chinese or Taiwanese interviewees.

The discussion of gender structure at the macro level in this section suggests that macrolevel gender ideology defines appropriate gender roles for men and women, assigning to men the role of breadwinners and to women the role of caretakers. In addition to gender ideology, it is important to consider the macrolevel economic resources that men and women acquire in the labor market. In the interviews, Japanese and South Korean interviewees described a greater incidence of interrupted employment for women than did Chinese and Taiwanese interviewees. This finding is consistent with the previous discussion in chapter two. In addition, chapter two has revealed that the gender wage gap is greater in Japan and South Korea than in China and Taiwan. Therefore, gender inequality in the labor market is more serious in Japan and South Korea than in China and Taiwan. The gender ideology supports the gender division of labor between men and women. At the same time, the gender inequality in the labor market tends to suppress women's supply of paid labor. Therefore, the gender ideology and gender inequality in the labor market both help support women's role as major caretaker.

To further explain the relationship between institutional inequality and individual behavior related to household labor, it is necessary to direct our attention to gender structure at the interactional level.

7.3 Interactional level: The help of mothers or mothers-in-law with housework maintains gender inequality in housework

Doing-gender theorists suggest that men and women show different gendered behavior once they are labeled as belonging to one sex category or the other (West & Zimmerman 1987). Sex-role socialization theorists consider gender to be a static attribute or part of a person's identity. By contrast, doing-gender theorists regard gender to be a dynamic process. Through everyday interaction, men and women are expected to do gender, and this doing gender helps maintain gender inequality. Risman (1998: 23-24) argues, however, that "the doing-gender perspective is incomplete because it slights the institutional level of analysis and the links among institutional gender stratification, situational expectations, and gendered selves." Risman proposes gender as a structure that therefore has implications at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels. She further argues that "interactional pressures and institutional design create gender and the resultant inequality, even in the absence of individual desires" (1998: 29).

Builds on the multilevel perspectives, this project supports the argument that an analysis of the division of household labor should seek to understand how institutional gender structure and social interaction construct and help maintain the gender inequality in household labor. As mentioned earlier in chapter two, a higher proportion of married men and women live with their parents or parents-in-law in China and Taiwan than in Japan and South Korea. Such co-residence with parents or parents-in-law provides a platform for married men, married women, and their parents to interact and display gendered behavior. I do not deny the validity of the doing-gender perspective. I argue, however, that interaction between married men, married women, and their parents or parents-in-law exemplifies not only doing gender, it also involves institutional gender stratification, gender beliefs, and gendered

personalities.

As discussed earlier, the four East Asian countries share a similar Confucian gender ideology, which defines men as breadwinners and women as caretakers. Additionally, Confucian gender ideology emphasizes the hierarchal kinship system in which junior members are expected to show respect to senior members. Therefore, Confucian gender ideology should be understood not only at the institutional level, it should also be analyzed with reference to different relational contexts. In addition, Confucianism emphasizes the familial virtue of filial piety, which requires obedience to the will of one's parents or parents-in-law (Rosenlee 2006). Women in East Asia usually join their husbands' families after they are married. A normative expectation is that the eldest son and his wife and children live with his parents, although this expectation is changing because of the influence of Western culture, generational differences in employment opportunities, and the like (Kamo 1990; Rindfuss et al. 2004). If co-residence with the eldest son is not possible, most parents still prefer to live with one of their sons even though there is some evidence that Japan is experiencing an increase in maternal co-residence (Rindfuss et al. 2004). If married women live in an extended family with their husbands and parents-in-law, they are expected to show respect and filial obedience to their parents-in-law. Without close blood relations between parents-in-law and daughters-in-law, relationships between them can be subtle and complicated. A great number of women in the four countries have attained higher levels of education and enjoy more economic independence than ever before. However, research suggests that most sons and daughters-in-law still discreetly obey filial piety (Kung 1999). I argue that, due to Confucianism's emphasis on hierarchal kinship and filial piety, it is important to further illustrate how the hierarchical relationship between men, women, and their parents and parents-in-law, in interaction with their gender beliefs, maintains and reinforces gender inequality in

household labor.

Certain studies related to household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan (Chen 2004; Chen 2005; Tsuya & Bumpass 2004) have suggested that help from other family members reduces the time women and men spend doing household labor. These family members can be parents, parents-in-law, children, or other adult relatives. Although these studies have proved that help from other family members can decrease the time men and women spend doing housework, whether the help actually reduces housework time more for married men than for married women or vice versa has not been given much attention. Women generally assume more responsibility for housework than men do in the four countries under study. I argue therefore that it is important to disclose the nature of interactions between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters. Through analysis of these relationships, we can better understand how Confucian gender ideology functions as a guideline and supports gender inequality in household labor.

In this section I first discuss how a married man benefits from his mother's help with housework when he lives with her after he is married. I then analyze how the Confucian gender ideology is transmitted from mothers-in-law to daughters-in-law through interaction and how this interaction creates gender inequality in housework. Finally, this part of the study compares help with housework offered by mothers-in-law with that offered by mothers and considers how gender structure at the interactional level produces and reproduces gender inequality in housework. About half of the interviewees from China, South Korea, and Taiwan mentioned that their parents or parents-in-law help them with housework, but few Japanese interviewees reported help from their parents or parents-in-law. The explanation of this finding is that half of the interviewees from China, South Korea, and Taiwan lived with or near parents or parents-in-law, but only one Japanese interviewee reported that she lived

near her parents.

7.3.1 “I feel I almost didn’t do any housework”

When a couple lives with the husband’s mother, she usually helps with housework. Consider a married Taiwanese man who lived with his mother. The man and his wife both had full-time jobs, so they were busy on weekdays. Even though the husband’s mother also had a full-time job when they lived together, she still did a greater share of housework than the couple. The man described his mother’s contributions:

My mom was in charge of preparing meals, bringing cooked food home, and doing some cleaning. [How much housework did each of you share?] My mom did about 80 percent of the total housework. My wife did 15 percent of the housework and I did 5 percent left. Honestly, I feel I almost didn’t do any housework. My mom never asked me to do anything.

During the interview, the Taiwanese man clearly admitted that he “almost didn’t do any housework” (in his own words) because his mother never asked him to do any housework. A Chinese man, living in Beijing, described a similar experience when he lived with his mother. The man’s mother usually lives with his older brother in another city in China, but she visits them every year and lives with them for a couple of months to half a year. When his mother lived with them, she helped do most of the housework:

When my mom lives with us; she prepares three meals for us every day. Breakfast is usually simple like bread, soy milk, or milk. My house is very close to my workplace, so I usually go home to have lunch. My mom likes to prepare lunch for me every day. She also prepares dinner for us every day. She washes dishes, mops the floor and cleans the furniture often.

During the interview, the Chinese man mentioned that his mother thought he should do his research and “shouldn’t come into kitchen” (in his own words). It is obvious that the mother of the Chinese man still holds the gender ideology that men should work outside the home while women should take care of the family and housework. Therefore, the kitchen is a woman’s place and men should stay out. When asked to describe the distribution of housework, he said that his mother did about 60 percent, and his wife did another 30 percent. Apparently he did very little housework when his mother lived with them.

A South Korean man also emphasized his mother’s great help with housework. He lived with his parents for about half a year after he was married. Before he was married, his mother did all the housework because she was used to being a housewife. After he married, his mother and his wife shared the housework duties and he still did not do any of it:

For me, I usually didn’t do any housework before or after I married. But my wife had to do some housework. My mom did all of the housework you could imagine besides gardening and repairing the house. These two types of work were my dad’s job. She prepared three meals for my family. She washed dishes, cleaned up the house, did laundry, and lots of housework I can’t really remember. After we were married, my wife shared some housework like helping her prepare meals, cleaning up the house, and laundry.

It is obvious that the wife of the South Korean, as a daughter-in-law, is expected to do housework while the man is completely exempted.

Berk (1985) has argued not only that performing household labor is the form of production of household services, but also that it represents an opportunity for men and women to show that they are competent members of a sex category. Therefore, women do gender by being accountable for most housework while men do gender by avoiding housework. The three examples above show that men’s mothers frequently

help maintain the traditional gender division of labor through daily housework. When the interviewees live with men's mothers, mothers generally think that women should be responsible for housework, so they and their daughters-in-law do most of it. Therefore, men benefit the most from their mothers' free help with housework when they live with or near them after they are married. This finding supports the argument of doing gender theory.

Since mothers and wives do almost all of the housework, part of the immediately following section focuses on discussing how gender beliefs are constructed and maintained through daily interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law.

7.3.2 "The first year of my marriage was more like a training period."

When women in East Asia get married, they move out of their parents' houses and join their husbands' families, which admittedly is new for them. The initial period for newly married women is devoted to getting to know their new family members and adjust to a new family. For mothers-in-law, it is a period to teach their new daughters-in-law how to serve adequately as daughters-in-law and wives. A cultural expectation imposed on the daughters-in-law is that they should perform housework. Therefore, doing housework undoubtedly is one of the most important expectations for the daughters-in-law. During this initial period, mothers-in-law tend to do more housework than their daughters-in-law do in order to teach them how to take on their role in the new family. After this period, they expect their daughters-in-law to gradually do more housework until they eventually do it all.

For example, a South Korean woman mentioned that the first year of her marriage was more like a "*training period*" (in her own words) when they lived with her parents-in-law. She and her mother-in-law shared all of the housework, so her husband did none. Her mother-in-law was in charge of household tasks such as

preparing meals while she was responsible for other household tasks:

I feel like the first year we lived together is more like getting to know each other. I didn't know how to prepare meals at that time, so my mom-in-law prepared the three meals. When she was cooking, I helped her wash vegetables and dishes and she taught me how to cook and some other things. I also vacuumed the house, mopped the floor, and did laundry.

Preparing meals is regarded as the most highly skilled household task. Newly married women generally are less likely to be good at preparing meals. Therefore, mothers-in-law assume responsibility for preparing meals and also teach their daughters-in-law how to cook. They expect that their daughters-in-law will take over the cooking responsibility in the near future. A Taiwanese woman interviewee who is a teacher at an elementary school has been married for about six years. She began to prepare meals after she was married for about one year. She explained how she and her mother-in-law shared housework when they lived together:

Before my son was born, I usually was in charge of buying groceries and preparing meals and my mom-in-law would do other housework like laundry, mopping the floor, and cleaning the bathroom. After my son was born, taking care of him occupied all my time. I sent my son to the babysitter in the morning and then I went to work. I took him back home around 6 p.m. After a day of work, I couldn't do any housework besides taking care of my son. So my mom-in-law did most of the housework.

Before the child was born, the woman was the major provider of housework and the mother-in-law helped her do other housework. But taking care of a child is usually regarded as the most important housework, so the daughter-in-law was responsible for childcare and her mother-in-law carried out most of the other housework duties.

In addition to the teaching of doing housework, mothers-in-law also play a role in supervising their daughters-in-law. Under the influence of Confucian gender ideology,

mothers-in-law, as senior members in relationships with their daughters-in-law, generally assume that they enjoy greater privileges than their daughters-in-law, the junior members, do. In addition, daughters-in-law are expected to show respect and filial obedience to their mothers-in-law. Doing housework is an important way in which daughters-in-law can show such filial piety toward their mothers-in-law. The hierarchal kinship system interweaves with filial piety and regulates the interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Although this hierarchical relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law is not always prominent, it becomes manifest when the daughters-in-law does not follow the gender expectations of their mothers-in-law. For example, a normative requirement of daughters-in-law is that they should do housework. If they do not do the housework to the best of their ability, their mothers-in-law may criticize them or complain about their performance. A Taiwanese woman who worked at a bank and lived with her mother-in-law usually shared housework with her mother-in-law. She explained that she was exhausted after work and sometimes did not feel like doing any housework. When asked how her mother-in-law reacted to her unwillingness to do housework, she answered:

I knew she was not happy with my behavior. She complained about this in front of me if I did not do my housework. I would turn a deaf ear to what she said. I was totally exhausted. [And then did she say anything?] No, she just wanted to let me know I should do what I am supposed to do. [Would you do the housework after she complained in front of you?] Not really. I know what I should do and when I really want to take a break. She can complain, but I have my freedom.

This interview provides a good example for the argument of doing gender theory. As a woman, doing housework is a way to show her competence of this sex category. That is, doing housework is to do gender. Not doing housework violates the gender expectation and therefore her qualification as a good woman is suspected. This

example has shown us how important it is to do gender in everyday life. In addition, as Confucian gender ideology has been challenged in the four countries in recent decades, the authority of the mother-in-law has been changing over time. Mothers-in-law still assume that they have more power than their daughters-in-law have, so they can point out mistakes in front of their daughters-in-law. However, daughters-in-law are gradually gaining greater autonomy due to higher education, economic independence, and changing social norms. Therefore, we can see the emerging agency of the daughter-in-law in the interview above even though she faces the power of her mother-in-law.

This section has discussed how Confucian gender ideology is enforced through everyday interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. The interviewees described a relationship in which mothers-in-law teach their daughters-in-law how to perform housework and convey the traditional gender division of labor to them. In addition, mothers-in-law still assume the role of supervisor over their daughters-in-law due to the influence of the hierarchal kinship system. At the same time, daughters-in-law tend to do housework to show that they are not only qualified as women, but also that they are filial daughters-in-law.

7.3.3 “The time you do housework increases when the number of people in your house increases.”

If women have full-time jobs, mothers-in-law generally do housework if they live with their sons and daughters-in-law. Several married Chinese and Taiwanese women noted that their mothers-in-law helped do a great amount of housework when they had full-time jobs. For these women, most of their mothers-in-law are retired or are full-time housewives. When daughters-in-law work full time, the amount of housework mothers-in-law are likely to do depends on how long the couple has been

married as well as the life course of the couple. For example, a Chinese woman said that her mother-in-law helped her take care of her daughter:

My mom-in-law helped me take care of my daughter, so I could work full time. She also prepared meals for us. When I came back from work, I took care of my daughter so she could prepare dinner. Sometimes I helped her prepare meals if my daughter was sleeping. [Did you do other housework?] Yes, I mopped the floor, did laundry, and some other housework on weekends.

Nevertheless, mothers-in-law tend not to do housework if their daughters-in-law are full-time housewives. As full-time housewives, the daughters-in-law are expected to perform most of the housework. For example, a South Korean married woman and her husband lived with the husband's mother for a couple years. The Korean woman is a full-time housewife, so she is responsible for doing all the housework. During the interview, she mentioned the experience of living with her mother-in-law and stressed that her mother-in-law created more housework for her to do:

My mom-in-law liked to cook for us sometimes. [Great, you could get some help.] Actually, I had to wash vegetables and prepare everything before she cooked. She only did the frying or stir-frying part. After meals, I had to wash lots of dishes they created, so I didn't think she was that helpful to me. In fact, I think living with my parents-in-law would create more housework for me to do. Your housework increases when the number of people in your house increases.

Most family members expect a wife who does not work at all to be in charge of most of the housework. In such cases they are less willing to share in doing housework. When the time the mother-in-law spends doing housework does not increase significantly but the number of persons in the house increases, it is not surprising that this woman thinks that living with her parents-in-law only increases the amount of housework she does.

Married men living with their mothers are almost freed from doing any

housework because their mothers and wives do most of it. Married women with full-time jobs reported that their mothers-in-law generally help with housework. The amount of housework their mothers-in-law are likely to share in doing is related to whether the wife has a full-time job and the stage of her marriage. Even though mothers-in-law are willing to share in doing some housework, daughters-in-law are still supposed to do the majority of it.

7.3.4 “The help you get from your mom or mom-in-law is different.”

Expectations about a woman’s contribution to housework depend to some extent on whether she lives with her husband’s family or her own family. When living with her parents-in-law, she is expected to accommodate herself to her new family. However, living with her parents after being married means that she is still a daughter and she can be herself to a much greater extent. In other words, she does not necessarily play the same gender role when she lives with her own parents after being married that she would when living with her parents-in-laws. In addition, housework for a daughter is not the same thing as housework for a daughter-in-law. Therefore, many married women, particularly South Korean women, emphasize that the housework help they obtain from their parents and parents-in-law differs considerably. Several South Korean women indicated that their mothers know what they need and are more willing to help them with housework than their mothers-in-law. Therefore, if their mothers either live with them or are nearby, they can be the best *helping hands* in terms of housework. When a South Korean woman was asked to compare the help she obtained from her mother and mother-in-law; she commented that:

If I lived with my mom or nearby, I would say, yes, my mom can reduce my time on housework because she is really helpful. But this is not the case for my mom-in-law. The help you get from your mom and mom-in-law is very different. Your mom knows what you really need and is willing to help you. But for a

mother-in-law, you don't really know what she likes or doesn't like. You hope you can prepare food they like, so you have to learn their ways of cooking. You hope they can feel comfortable when we live together, so you have to learn something they like.

During the interview, the South Korean woman repeated several times that her mother is always supportive and willing to help her do housework, but her mother-in-law is not as willing to help.

Another South Korean woman described a similar experience. She decided to enter a Ph.D. program in South Korea when her son was three years old. She talked to her parents-in-law and asked for their help with childcare and housework. Her parents-in-law thought she would be sacrificing her family duty to get her Ph. D. degree. That is, they thought she should spend more time taking care of her family and doing housework instead of developing her individual career. For this reason, they were not willing to help her with housework. She then turned to ask her parents for assistance. Her parents were very happy to help her, so she moved in order to live close to them. She recalled how her parents helped her do housework:

My parents usually went to my house before my son got home. On their way to my house, they went to buy some groceries every day. My dad usually helped take care of my son when my mom was cooking. He also took my son to the gym. After dinner, my mom washed their dishes. [Did your mom do any other housework?] Yes, she also mopped the floor and did laundry about twice a week. She washed bedding whenever she thought it was necessary. My parents went back to their house when I got home.

The woman emphasized that she could not balance her family duties and research without such wholehearted help from her parents. When asked if her husband helped with housework, she answered that he was too busy to help, which is why she asked her parents to help. Although her parents' help can relieve her to some extent of the double burden, it is still the Korean woman and her mother who are responsible for all

of the housework. Therefore, the help of her parents with housework still maintains the traditional gender division of labor.

These two cases above have shown that being a *daughter* or a *daughter-in-law* has very different implications for married women with respect to their housework. First, when living with their parents they are still regarded as daughters and are not necessarily expected to learn new gender roles because they do not need to adjust themselves to a new family lifestyle. That is, they can still be themselves. In addition, living with their parents means that their mothers are more likely to help with housework. They can have reliable helping hands and be relieved from the burden of housework. Therefore, married women can enjoy more freedom from housework when they live with their mothers. Living with mothers-in-law, however, means that married women are expected to play the role of daughter-in-law and fulfill the associated responsibilities. That is, they are expected to do most of the housework. Furthermore, most mothers-in-law, if not all, are less likely to help their daughters-in-law do housework in comparison with the help typically offered by the married women's mothers. For these reasons, the women interviewees depicted a situation in which living with mothers-in-law may not really help them reduce their time doing housework. These factors all explain why married women think the help with housework they get from their mothers is different from the help they get from their mothers-in-law.

7.3.5 "I often think it is unfair to me. My mom always calls me when my sons are sick."

The help from married women's mothers undoubtedly can relieve them from the burden of the "second shift" (Hochschild 1989). However, women are still supposed to be the major caretakers when their mothers are not able to share housework and their

family members need care. Although their mothers are willing to offer housework support, they generally think that women are still supposed to take more responsibility for caring for their families. A South Korean woman who worked full time for eight years before coming to the US lived with her mother, husband, and two sons in South Korea. She said that her mother did most of the housework (about 65 percent) while she did some. Her husband, however, did almost no housework. She complained that her husband's lack of contribution to housework was unfair given that they both had full-time jobs. She said:

I often think it is unfair to me. My mom always calls me when my sons are sick. I don't always have enough time to go out with my colleagues, but my husband can do everything he wants to do. We both had full-time jobs before we came to the US, but the reality is we are not equal. My full-time work includes my work at my company and housework at home, but my husband's full-time work means only his work. It is not fair. It is very hard for him to change his thinking and my mom also thinks like that.

Although her mother offers her support, the fact that her mother calls her when her sons are sick suggests that her mother still thinks she should bear more responsibility for housework than her husband does. For this reason she is expected to take over the housework after coming back from work or on weekends. In addition, she is expected to assume more of the burden of caring her family members when family members need her. This implies that the help provided by mothers could relieve married women of a double burden; nevertheless, it does not change the nature of the traditional gender division of labor. To the contrary, it helps to maintain the unequal gender division of labor.

7.4 Discussion

This chapter has focused on analyzing how gender as a structure maintains

gender inequality in household labor through its effects at the individual, interactional, and institutional levels. First, analyzing the individual level illustrates how men and women think about cleanliness and how they construct the relationship between cleanliness and men and women's differential contributions to housework. Second, analyzing the institutional level shows how interviewees think about the traditional gender roles in which men are primarily breadwinners and women are primarily caretakers. At the same time, analyzing the institutional level shows how gender inequality in the labor market restrains married women's supply of labor. Finally, analyzing the interactional level suggests how gender inequality in household labor is maintained through daily interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters. I argue that it is the gender structure at the interactional and institutional levels that creates gender inequality in household labor, even in the absence of gender structure at the individual level.

Interviewees generally ascribe the differential contributions to housework on the part of men and women to differences in gender personality. That is, people generally think it is natural for women to care more about neatness than men do. When concern for cleanliness is a widespread gender expectation of woman, they cannot display atypical gender personality traits without falling under suspicion as poor wives or mothers. In addition, one interesting finding is that even when men are more concerned with cleanliness than their wives are, they do not do more housework than their wives do. This finding suggests that institutional gender stratification and everyday interaction play more important roles in shaping gender inequality in household labor than individual gender personalities.

In addition, interviewees generally attribute their share in doing housework to their "gender thinking" (in their words). That is, gender beliefs at the institutional level may affect behavior that is manifested in housework. The discussion of Confucian

gender ideology in chapter two has revealed that the rejection of Confucian gender ideology in China during the Cultural Revolution distinguishes China from other countries in East Asia with respect to gender ideology. Yet the results of the survey and interviews in this study have shown that Japanese and Taiwanese people exhibit more liberal gender attitudes than Chinese and South Korean people do. This suggests that the rejection of Confucian gender ideology has not brought about radical change in gender ideology in China. The research findings suggest that the interviewees who share housework with their spouses about equally frequently emphasize the idea that men and women can work and share in doing housework together. That is, they generally accept a great degree of gender similarity between men and women with regard to paid work and housework. Interviewees who reported unequal housework time between husbands and wives, however, were more comfortable with the idea that women and men are biologically and socially different. They believe that it is more natural and suitable for women to do housework than for men. Moreover, previous review of the gender inequality in the labor market in chapter two has shown that Japanese and South Korean women encounter more gender inequality in the labor market than Chinese and Taiwanese women do. In this project, more Japanese and South Korean interviewees described the unequal treatment between men and women in the labor market than Chinese and Taiwanese interviewees did. This macro-level cultural and economic gender inequality interacts and tends to intensify women's gender role as major caretakers. The macro-level inequality would deduct the micro-level effect such as relative resources between husbands and wife on the negotiation of housework (Fuwa 2004) and therefore maintain the gender inequality in the household labor. This help to explain why the relative resources approach examined in chapter six is not well supported by the results of Japan and South Korea than it is in Taiwan.

The later part of this chapter addressed the ways in which daily interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters helps maintain gender inequality in household labor. Married men reported doing the least amount of housework when they live with their mothers or mothers-in-law. Married women described that when they have full-time jobs, their mothers-in-law help with housework if they live with or near them. If married women are full-time housewives, they reported that they perform the majority of the housework. Mothers-in-law are more likely to sustain the hierarchical relationship between them and their daughters-in-law than are married women's mothers with their daughters. Mothers-in-law tend to assume the role of supervisor over their daughters-in-law due to the influence of Confucian gender ideology. This hierarchical relationship coexists with gender beliefs and regulates the interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. The traditional gender division of labor is enforced through daily interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Moreover, married women reported that their mothers are more helpful in reducing their housework time than their mothers-in-law are. The hierarchical relationship between mothers and daughters is not significant. Married women enjoy more autonomy and gain much help with housework when they live with or near their mothers. However, the traditional gender division of labor is still maintained through interaction between mothers and daughters. Even though mothers and mothers-in-law can ease the burden of housework for both men and women, the findings suggest that ultimately they reinforce the traditional gender division of labor in dual-earner households.

In sum, Confucian gender ideology not only defines the private-public distinction between women and men, it also should be understood as forming the basis of a hierarchal kinship system that regulates appropriate gender arrangements among women. The discussion of gender structure at the institutional level shows that

Confucian gender ideology interacts with the unequal economic resources available to men and women in the labor market in the four countries, tending to reinforce the belief that women should be the major caretakers while men should be the primary breadwinners. Additionally, the discussion of gender structure at the interactional level suggests that we should analyze the part played by Confucian gender ideology in regulating hierarchal kinship relationships for men and women through everyday interaction between women of different generations. Women do housework in order to prove they are qualified to be good women. In the meantime, women also do housework to show their filial obedience to their mothers-in-law, who they assume should enjoy a privileged position vis-à-vis their daughters-in-law. This finding suggests that it is important to consider various relational contexts under different cultural circumstances when comparing household labor in Western industrialized countries with what takes place in the four East Asian countries under study. These variations in relational contexts and interaction help to maintain gender inequality in household labor in the four East Asian countries. The finding therefore contributes to current research on household labor.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Summary

This study has compared the gender division of household labor in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. First, the study has focused on explaining why married men and women in the four countries participate in doing household labor unequally. I have examined the determinants of the gender division of household labor on the basis of the time availability approach, the relative resources approach, and the gender role attitudes approach. Second, I have compared the effectiveness of the three theoretical approaches in explaining the gender division of household labor among the four countries. Using 1997 East Asia Social Survey (EASS) and 2002 Family and Changing Gender Roles III of the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), I have developed hypotheses in order to examine the three theoretical approaches in the four countries. Finally, conceptualizing gender as a structure, this study seeks to understand how gender structure at the interactional and institutional levels maintains the unequal gender division of household labor, even the gender structure at the individual level is absent. I conducted in-depth interviews with 42 married men and women from the four countries.

8.2 Major findings

8.2.1 Regression results

The regressions results mainly support the relative resources and gender role attitudes approaches. The results do not, however, provide support for the time availability approach.

Regarding the relative resources approach, I expected that the higher the relative

income of married women, the greater would be the time their husbands spend doing housework. This hypothesis is supported by the results for Taiwan, whether measured in terms of absolute hours of housework or proportionally. For China and Japan, the results support the hypothesis only in terms of the proportion of housework performed. In addition, I expected that the higher the relative income of married women, the less time they would spend doing housework. The findings for Japan and Taiwan support this hypothesis with respect to both absolute and proportional housework time. For South Korea, however, the hypothesis applies only to absolute hours of housework, while for China it applies only to proportional housework time. Overall, the relative resources approach has greater explanatory power with respect to the gender division of household labor in Taiwan than other three countries. In addition, the approach offers stronger explanatory power for women's housework time than for men's housework time. The later finding is consistent with those reported in most previous studies.

Regarding the gender role attitudes approach, the hypothesis is that the more egalitarian a married man's gender role attitude is, the more time he spends doing housework. This hypothesis is supported by the results for China and Taiwan whether measured in terms of absolute hours of housework or proportionally. The results for Japan support this hypothesis when housework is measured on the basis of absolute hours but not proportionally. In addition, I expected to find that the more egalitarian a married woman's gender role attitude is, the less time she spends doing household labor. This hypothesis is supported by the findings for China and Taiwan whether measured in terms of absolute hours of housework or proportionally. Previous studies of household labor indicate that gender role attitudes predict men's time spent doing housework more accurately than women's time spent doing housework. The findings of this research are consistent with those reported in previous studies. However, the

findings suggest that gender role attitudes only offer slightly better predictive value with respect to men than to women. Cross-national comparisons show that the gender role attitudes approach provides greater explanatory power with respect to the gender division of household labor in China and Taiwan than in Japan and South Korea.

Regarding the time availability approach, I expected to learn that the more time a married woman spends at work, the less time she spends doing household labor. This negative association should, however, be reversed with respect to time spent doing housework on the part of husbands, who would be expected to spend more time doing housework the more time their wives spend at paid work. These hypotheses are not, however, supported by the research findings, which is probably because the most commonly used indicators of time availability are respondent's paid work hours, spouse's paid work hours, and work schedules. This research examined time availability on the basis of a respondent's paid work hours because spouses' paid work hours and work schedules were not available in the data. Although this result is not consistent with similar research findings in the United States, it is consistent with certain empirical studies done in South Korea and Taiwan (Lee et al. 2000; Lee 2004; Hsiao 2005).

8.2.2 Discussion of qualitative analysis

In her book *Gender Vertigo*, Risman (1998) conceptualizes gender as a structure with implications at individual, interactional, and institutional levels. The present study has built on the multilevel theoretical approach, focusing on illustrating how gender structure at the three different levels maintains and reinforces gender inequality in household labor. I have further argued that gender structure at the interactional and institutional levels creates such gender inequality, even in the absence of gender structure at the individual level. Interviewees generally attribute unequal participation

in housework on the part of men and women to gender structure at the individual level. That is, they believe women care more about cleanliness than men do and that this largely explains why women do more household labor than men do. An interesting finding from the interviews is that men do not do more housework than their wives do even when they show more concern for cleanliness than their wives show. This study does not deny the constraint of gender structure at the individual level, but the findings suggest that gender structure at the interactional and institutional levels constrains behavior on the part of men and women more than does gender structure at the individual level.

Confucian gender ideology not only defines separate spheres for men and women, it also emphasizes a hierarchal gender arrangement among women marked by filial piety for the senior member of any such relationship. The discussion of gender structure at the institutional level focuses on how Confucian gender ideology and inequality in the economic resources available to men and women in the labor market relate to gender inequality in household labor. The interviewees who described sharing housework equally with their spouses generally reject the traditional gender division of labor. In contrast, people who accept the gender division of labor reported sharing housework unequally. This trend adds to the regression results reported above, to the effect that egalitarian gender role attitudes on the part of both spouses lead to more-equal sharing of household labor. In addition, the discussion of gender inequality in the labor market has shown that this problem is more serious in Japan and South Korea than it is in China and Taiwan. This macro-level cultural and economic inequality interacts and therefore would discount the individual level resources to negotiate the distribution of housework, as is suggested by Fuwa (2004). This finding may help explain why the relative resources approach explains more of the gender division of labor in Taiwan than it is in Japan and South Korea.

As Risman (1998: 32) has noted, gender expectations are the “parameters for actions.” And, she says, “Unwritten rules and unspoken beliefs that are part of gender structure can be seen as accurate folklore that must be considered in everyday interaction” (1998:32). As discussed earlier, Confucian gender ideology puts great emphasis on a hierarchal kinship system and filial piety. This study argues that it is important to incorporate such varying relational contexts into the discussion of gender inequality in household labor. That is, I argue that interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law and mothers and daughters in the four countries helps maintain gender inequality in household labor. Confucian gender ideology functions as a taken-for-granted norm and regulates everyday interaction between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Mothers-in-law tend to assume that they have more power than their daughters-in-law do within the hierarchal relationship. Traditional gender division of labor is an unspoken but taken-for-granted gender expectation that mothers-in-law convey to their daughters-in-law through everyday interaction. Mothers-in-law tend to assume the role of supervisor over their daughters-in-law. Therefore, it is certain that the daughters-in-law as junior have to perform the majority of housework. When married women live with or near their mothers after they are married, the hierarchical relationship between them and their mothers is not significant. Women interviewees reported that their mothers are more helpful in reducing the time they spend doing housework than their mothers-in-law are. It is apparent that both mothers and mothers-in-law generally reduce the time women spend doing housework, but not to the same extent. A woman who lives with her mother will be relieved of housework to a greater extent than a woman who lives with her mother-in-law. The findings suggest, however, that interaction between mothers and daughters and mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law still tends to maintain gender inequality in household labor. Women do gender by doing the majority of housework while men do

gender by avoiding housework. This way of doing gender is so inevitable that, even when couples share egalitarian gender role attitudes, they generally maintain gender inequality in household labor. Additionally, doing housework for daughters-in-law to some extent is a way for them to demonstrate they are filial daughters-in-law.

In short, the quantitative analyses of this project suggest that relative resources and gender role attitudes, not time availability, better explain that men and women share in doing household labor unequally in China and Taiwan. These two theoretical approaches, however, are not well supported by the results for Japan and South Korea. Macro-level economic and social inequality in Japan and South Korea discounts the effect of individual resources in negotiating housework. This therefore may explain why the two theories cannot account for gender inequality in household labor in Japan and South Korea. In addition, this study illustrates that gender inequality in household labor is maintained through daily interaction and institutional inequality such as Confucian gender ideology and economic resources rather than through gendered personality, which supports Risman's theory.

8.3 Study limitations

Future research involving cross-national comparisons of household labor time should examine the determinants of household labor by using a more complete cross-national dataset, one that incorporates respondent employment hours, spouse employment hours, and work schedules. Given the select nature of the interviewees, the interview data mostly reflects the perspectives of married men and women who are in their 30s, have received a higher education, and live in urban areas of China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Further research based on respondents of more diverse backgrounds in terms of age, education, and residential characteristics should be conducted to reveal the diversity of gender inequality in household labor in the four

countries. Finally, future studies may examine the association between mate selection and gender role attitudes and their effects on the gender inequality in household labor in the four East Asian countries.

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study about division of housework. The purpose of this study is to learn how much time married people from East Asia spend doing housework in their home countries. I am also interested in learning how you think about cleanliness. I am very interested in learning the division of housework when you have gotten married and have lived in your home country, so please recall your experience in your country when you are answering my questions.

Throughout the interview, I encourage you to provide any experiences or ideas that you think are relevant, even though I don't ask about them. At the end of the interview, I will ask you to provide some demographic information about yourself.

Background/time availability

- 1) When did you get married?

- 2) Did you have kid/kids before you came to the U.S.?

- 3) When did you come to the U.S.?

- 4) When you were in your home country, did you have a full-time or part-time job?
 - a. Full-time job. On average, how long did you work every week?
 - b. Part-time job. On average, how long did you work every week?Please tell me more about your work history and work experience.

- 5) If you had a full-time/part-time job in your home country, who did you work for?

Please tell me that you worked for a company/association, worked for a family company, or work for yourself.

- 6) When you were in your home country, did your spouse have a full-time or part-time job?
 - a. Full-time job. On average, how long did your spouse work every week?
 - b. Part-time job. On average, how long did your spouse work every week?
- 7) If you compare the working hours between you and your spouse in one week, on average, who had the longer working hours?

Relative resources

- 8) When you were in your home country, thinking about the income between you and your spouse, who had the higher income?

Housework of subject

- 9) Let's recall when you were in your home country, what was a typical weekday like for you when you spent time doing housework? Please tell me in details what you usually did from morning to evening on **WEEKDAYS**. How much time did you usually spend doing each type of housework on **WEEKDAYS**?
- 10) Could you recall when you were in your home country, what was a typical weekend like for you when you spent time doing housework? Could you please tell me in details what you usually did from morning to evening on **WEEKENDS**? How much time did you usually spend doing each type of housework on **WEEKENDS**?

11) Let's recall when you were in your home country. Imagine that this was a very busy day for you, but you still had some housework to do. Which type of housework was the most important one for you? Why? Which type of housework was the least important task that you would rather leave it aside until you are free to get around to? Why?

Housework of family member

12) After getting married in your home country, who did you usually live with at the same house?

13) After getting married, where did you live? Did you live close to your parents or parents-in-law?

14) Let's recall when you were in your home country. Did your spouse do housework from Monday to Friday? Which types of housework did she/he usually do on **WEEKDAYS**? How much time did she/he usually spend doing each type of housework?

15) Let's recall the time you were in your home country. Did your spouse do housework on **WEEKENDS**? Which types of housework did she/he usually do on **WEEKENDS**? How much time did she/he usually spend doing each type of housework?

16) Let's recall the time you were in your home country. Did your parents help you do the housework? What kinds of housework did your mom usually do? How much

time did she usually spend doing each type of housework? What kinds of housework did your dad usually do? How much time did he usually spend doing each type of housework?

17) Do you agree that living with your parents in the same house or nearby can reduce the time you spend on housework? Why or why not?

18) Let's recall the time you were in your home country. Did your parents-in-law help you do the housework? What kinds of housework did your mother-in-law usually do? How much time did she usually spend doing each type of housework? What kinds of housework did your father-in-law usually do? How much time did he usually spend doing each type of housework?

19) Do you agree that living with your parents-in-law in the same house or nearby can reduce the time you spend on housework? Why or why not?

20) When you were in your home country, did your children help you with the housework? What kinds of housework did they usually do? How much time did they usually spend doing each type of housework?

21) When you were in your home country, did you hire any domestic workers to do housework for you? How often did you hire them to do the housework? What kinds of housework did they usually do? How much time did they usually spend doing housework? How much did you pay for them every hour/day?

22) Overall, let's think about the time you, your spouse, and/or your parents spent on

housework, who did more housework than others? Why?

Gender ideology

23) Are you/ is your spouse the first son in your/his family?

24) As the first son, does your family expect that you or your spouse should fulfill some family responsibilities? What are these responsibilities?

25) How do you think about a man's major job is to earn money and a woman's main job is to take care of the home and family?

26) How does your spouse think that a man's major job is to earn money and a woman's main job is to take care of the home and family?

27) Do your parents think that a man's job is to earn money and a woman's job is to take care of the home and family? Why?

28) Do your parents-in-law think that a man's job is to earn money and a woman's job is to take care of the home and family? Why?

29) What are your expectations for a "good wife"?

30) What are your expectations for a "good husband"?

Cleanliness

31) In your house, who cares more about if the house is clean enough? Why?

32) In your house, who cares more about if the house is in order? Why?

33) Do you think that cleaning up a house is a wife's or a woman's major responsibility? Why or why not?

34) Do you think that doing housework is a wife's or a woman's major responsibility? Why or why not?

35) In your country, do people expect that doing housework is a wife's or a woman's major responsibility? Why or why not?

36) Is it difficult for a married woman to have a full-time job, take care of family, and do housework together in your country?

37) If the wife is always busy for her job and has no time to do housework, can the husband or other family members accept this situation?

Demographic information

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Years of education: _____

Nationality: _____

Occupation in your home country: _____

Where did you usually live in your home country? _____

Number of children before coming to the U.S.: _____

Year(s) have been in the US: _____

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