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YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMANT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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MASTER THESIS

DOMESTIC LABOR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN TURKEY

EMRE TÜFENKCİ
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THESIS ADVISOR
ASSIST. PROF. FAHRİYE DİNÇER

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ABSTRACT

DOMESTIC LABOR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN TURKEY

This thesis aims to investigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on domestic labor in Turkey and contribute to the literature on both domestic labor and the distribution of domestic labor. The main objective of this thesis is to find out potential changes in domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to accomplish this objective, academic articles, reports, and field studies published between 2020 and 2022 in Turkey are analyzed through qualitative thematic analysis. The research question of this thesis is "How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect invisible and unpaid domestic labor in Turkey from March 2020 to July 2022?"

During the pandemic period from March 2020 to July 2022, this study identified an escalation in labor-intensive processes within households, a partial increase in awareness regarding invisible and unpaid household labor, and in terms of gender roles, while women predominantly undertook these responsibilities, there were instances of partial involvement by daughters in some cases and fathers in others.

Keywords: Domestic Labor, the Covid-19 Pandemic, Distribution of Domestic Labor, Gender, Gender Roles

ÖZ

KOVİD-19 PANDEMİSİ SÜRECİNDE TÜRKİYE'DE EV İÇİ EMEK

Bu tez, Türkiye'de Kovid-19 salgınının ev emeği üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmayı ve hem ev içi emek hem de ev içi emeğin dağılımı literatürüne katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu tezin hedefi, Kovid-19 salgını sırasında ev içi emekteki potansiyel değişiklikler olup olmadığını bulmak ve ev içi emeğin nasıl dağıtıldığını ortaya çıkarmaktır. Bu hedefe ulaşmak için Türkiye'de 2020 ve 2022 yılları arasında yayınlanan akademik makaleler, raporlar ve saha çalışmaları nitel tematik analiz yöntemi ile incelenmektedir. Bu tez "Kovid-19 salgını Türkiye'de Mart 2020'den Temmuz 2022'ye kadar görünmeyen ve ücretsiz ev emeğini nasıl etkiledi?" sorusunu sorar.

Bu çalışmada, Mart 2020'den Temmuz 2022'ye kadar süren pandemi döneminde ev içinde daha emek yoğun süreçler ortaya çıktığını, görünmez ve ücretsiz ev emeği konusundaki farkındalığın kısmen arttığını ve sürecin büyük oranda kadınlar tarafından üstlenilmesi devam ederken bazı örneklerde kız çocukların, bazı örneklerde ise babaların bu sürece kısmi katılımlarda bulunduğunu saptamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ev İçi Emek, Covid-19 Pandemisi, Ev İçi Emek Dağılımı, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Rolleri

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Emre Tüfenkci
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LEXICON

UN	: United Nations
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
SU Gender Excellence	: Sabancı University Gender and Women's Studies Center of
IstanPol	: Istanbul Political Research Institute
WWHR	: Women For Women's Human Rights
TUIK	: Turkish Statistical Institute
KHAS	: Kadir Has University

1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic, which originated in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, has evolved into a major global health crisis, impacting numerous countries. This virus, transmitted primarily through respiratory means, rapidly escalated into a worldwide pandemic. Covid-19 is a disease that poses serious health risks, particularly for the elderly and individuals with underlying chronic conditions. The outbreak has resulted in millions of infections and thousands of fatalities worldwide. The pandemic has strained healthcare systems, halted economic activities, and profoundly affected people's social lives.

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, many individuals have found themselves compelled to stay at home. Factors such as curfews, mandatory lockdown measures, and remote work have made people feel confined to their homes. The necessity to stay at home has led to changes in daily routines, disruptions in work schedules, and a reduction in social interactions for many individuals. Spending more time at home has prompted people to discover new hobbies, establish work-from-home routines, and attempt to maintain social connections through digital communication tools. However, there were also challenges associated with being required to stay at home. Individuals encountered issues such as social isolation, stress, anxiety, and a lack of motivation due to lockdowns. During this period, maintaining a healthy lifestyle has become crucial for those who are obliged to stay at home, emphasizing the importance of preserving both mental and physical well-being.

Arising from this substantial change in people's lives, the primary objective of this research is to examine how domestic labor have changed during the pandemic, determine whether it have undergone unexpected transformations, and identify where disruptions have occurred. The Covid-19 pandemic has profoundly affected individuals and households, leading to alterations in daily routines, work schedules, and social dynamics. This study specifically investigates changes in the distribution of domestic labor in Turkey, particularly from a gender perspective. The aim is to understand the transformation of household chores during the pandemic, assessing how these changes impact daily life, work arrangements, and social relationships.

The reason for selection of this topic is to shed light on the impacts of such a major and global crisis that has not been experienced in 21st century on the distribution of domestic labor in Turkey. By examining these changes, particularly in the context of the distribution of household chores based on gender, this thesis seeks to identify potential alterations that have emerged in this regard.

The study aims to provide a perspective on the impact of the pandemic on domestic labor by analyzing the experiences and viewpoints of household members, drawing from articles, field studies and reports. It aims to shed light on the distribution of domestic labor under pandemic conditions. It focuses on unexpected changes and examines the unique alterations in the gender-based distribution of household chores during the pandemic through the analysis of published academic articles, reports, and field studies. Therefore, this research seeks to offer an additional perspective to previous studies in understanding changes in the gender-based distribution of household chores and domestic labor. This perspective on the dynamics of household chores aims to bridge the existing gap in the literature and guide future research post-pandemic era.

This thesis is conducted to understand the alterations in domestic labor during the pandemic and, specifically, to evaluate these changes from a gender perspective. The aim is to comprehend the impact of these alterations on post-pandemic societal dynamics and provide a valuable perspective on issues such as domestic labor. This research aspires to contribute to the literature by shedding light on domestic labor in the context of Covid-19 pandemic.

1.1. Research Question

The main objective of this research is to examine how domestic labor has undergone changes during the pandemic, whether it has unexpectedly transformed, and to identify the points at which disruptions have occurred. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on individuals and households, leading to shifts in daily routines, work arrangements, and social dynamics. This study aims to investigate the extent to which these changes have affected the division of domestic labor particularly in terms of gender. By analyzing the experiences and perspectives of individuals within households, this research seeks to uncover any unexpected shifts or disruptions in the distribution of domestic labor during the pandemic.

Understanding these changes and identifying the points of rupture can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of domestic labor and contribute to discussions on equal distribution of labor within the household, work-life balance, and the broader social implications of the pandemic.

Based on objectives, this thesis aims to answer the following question:

How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect invisible and unpaid domestic labor in Turkey from March 2020 to July 2022?

The further supplementary questions are as follows: What were the gender-specific patterns observed in the allocation of domestic chores during the Covid-19 pandemic? How did the Covid-19 pandemic impact the distribution of labor between men and women? In what ways did the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbate or challenge traditional gender roles regarding domestic labor? What were the disparities in the burden of invisible and unpaid domestic labor between genders during the Covid-19 pandemic? How did socio-economic factors intersect with gender dynamics to influence the distribution of household responsibilities during the Covid-19 pandemic? By examining these questions, this study aims to provide insights into the transformations and challenges faced in the realm of invisible and unpaid domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey.

The hypothesis of the thesis is that, despite the increase in the amount of domestic labor and relatively the growing awareness of invisible and unpaid domestic labor during the pandemic period, the redistribution of this labor did not have a concrete impact on equal sharing of household chores. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant changes to daily routines and work arrangements, leading to an increased burden of household responsibilities. While there may have been a temporary shift in the sharing of domestic labor, the hypothesis suggests that this redistribution did not signify long-term changes that promote equal sharing of household chores. Further investigation into the factors influencing this phenomenon and an exploration of potential solutions will be crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between the pandemic, domestic labor, and gender dynamics.

1.2. Research Design

1.2.1. Data

The data utilized in this thesis comprises of 16 articles, 10 field studies, and 11 reports obtained through an extensive literature review. These sources have been selected for their relevance to the field of domestic labor in Turkey and their publication during pandemic period. To determine the texts to be analyzed in this research, online academic databases, such as JSTOR, Springer, Academia and Research Gate are primarily utilized. In addition, online libraries of Bilkent University, Yıldız Technical University and Başkent University, to name a few, are used.

These sources have been carefully curated for their relevance, depth of analysis, and contribution to the discourse on domestic labor dynamics within the specified timeframe. A critical examination of gender dynamics within the realm of domestic labor necessitates a thorough exploration of articles that delve into this multifaceted issue. 16 articles examining the impact of the pandemic on family life, women's invisible and unpaid labor, and gender roles are supported by theoretical discussions, critical analyses, and literature-based approaches. These studies investigate the effects of the pandemic on division of labor, women's domestic labor, and gender roles. Articles explore how the increased duration of home stay and the heightened demands of caregiving influence individuals in Turkey.

Field studies provide invaluable insights into the real-world contexts of domestic labor, offering nuanced perspectives that complement theoretical frameworks. In this thesis, it draws upon a range of field studies to explore the lived experiences of individuals engaged in domestic labor. 10 field studies on domestic labor in Turkey during the pandemic encompasses a wide range of approaches, methodologies, and locations, aiming to explore how individuals' experiences of domestic responsibilities differ based on factors such as gender, relationship dynamics, and socio-cultural backgrounds. This diversity in research methodologies and participant demographics offers valuable insights into the nuanced ways in which domestic labor was influenced by gender roles and how household chores were distributed during the pandemic in Turkey.

Institutional reports offer valuable insights into domestic labor dynamics from organizational perspectives. This thesis engages with a selection of 11 reports issued by reputable institutions to explore the broader understanding of domestic labor in Turkey. International organizations' reports are comprehensive, containing detailed sections on domestic labor. These sections extensively address the status, issues, and potential solutions regarding household chores and intra-family services. Reports from civil society and research centers may vary, with some being published annually, while others may focus directly on domestic labor or address it within different thematic areas. These texts that provide data for this research will be discussed in detail in the following chapters of this thesis. Specifically, Chapter 4 will delve into the analysis of the field studies, the articles, and reports.

1.2.2. Methodology

The main objective of this thesis is to identify the shifts in invisible and unpaid domestic labor that have occurred during the pandemic, exploring potential changes, and identifying key points of disruption. As mentioned above, the data collected for this research is academic articles, reports, and field studies. In order to analyze the chosen data, qualitative thematic analysis will be used in this thesis.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research methodology utilized for the identification, analysis, and presentation of patterns or themes inherent in a dataset (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis constitutes a structured process of discerning, examining, and elucidating recurring themes or discernible patterns within qualitative data. As articulated by Nowell et al. (2017), thematic analysis serves as a methodological approach employed to investigate individuals' perspectives, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values as portrayed in qualitative data sources (p. 2). This analytical technique facilitates the systematic identification and interpretation of consistent thematic elements across research datasets (p. 5). Widely recognized as a fundamental method in qualitative inquiry, thematic analysis imparts essential competencies requisite for the execution of various other qualitative analytical methodologies (p. 2).

In the realm of social sciences, the stages of thematic analysis constitute a methodical and rigorous approach for discerning, examining, and presenting patterns within qualitative data. Drawing on Braun & Clarke's (2006) insight, it is delineated

sixth phases of thematic analysis, offering a comprehensive framework for the execution of this methodology (Hemming et al., 2021). The initial phase involves immersing oneself in the data, which may include interview transcripts, observational notes, or other qualitative data sources. Researchers become familiar with the content, gaining an understanding of the breadth and depth of the material (p. 3). Subsequently, the researcher begins the process of coding the data. Codes are specific labels or tags that are applied to segments of the data to capture key concepts, ideas, or patterns. This phase involves systematically coding the entire data set, identifying meaningful segments that may later form the basis of themes (p. 7). Then, the researcher begins the process of identifying potential themes within the coded data. Themes are patterns of meaning that capture something important about the data in relation to the research question. This phase involves reviewing the codes and exploring how they may be grouped into overarching themes (p. 5).

After identifying potential themes, the fourth phase is that the researcher reviews and refines them. This involves examining the coherence and relevance of each theme in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set (p. 5). In fifth phase, the researcher finalizes the themes by clearly defining and naming each one. Each theme is described, outlining the key characteristics and the data that support it. This phase ensures that the themes are well-defined and distinct from one another (p. 6). The final phase involves writing up the analysis. The researcher presents the findings, including the identified themes and supporting evidence from the data. The report provides a coherent and detailed account of the thematic analysis, demonstrating how the themes address the research question and contribute to the overall understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (p. 6).

In utilizing thematic analysis within the context of invisible and unpaid domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic, the following six phases were undertaken to systematically analyze and interpret the qualitative data: During the initial phase of data review, critical segments were highlighted while omitting terms associated with routine household chores commonly encountered in the literature. Subsequently, the highlighted segments were thematically categorized. For instance, frequently used terms such as “cleaning,” “disinfection,” “vinegar,” “sterilization,” and “hygiene” were grouped under the overarching category of “home maintenance.” Similarly, terms such as “making salad,” “meal preparation,” “kitchen duties,” “cooking,”

“vegetable cutting,” and “fruit chopping” were classified under the theme of “responsibilities in the kitchen.” Terms related to “distance education,” “homework,” and “childcare activities” were clustered under the theme of “childcare,” while phrases such as “health monitoring,” “disease management,” “chronic illness," and “social isolation due to age” were collected under the theme of “elderly care.” Additionally, terms such as “stress,” “care burden,” “fatigue,” “anxiety,” and “grief” were aggregated under the theme of “emotional labor.”

Following the identification of primary themes, an examination for intersectional themes was conducted to assess compatibility. While themes such as violence, social policies, and employment emerged during this process, they were deemed beyond the study’s scope and therefore excluded from further analysis to maintain focus on the primary research objectives. The four identified themes—child-elderly care, home maintenance, responsibilities in the kitchen, and emotional labor—were further elaborated upon in the literature review to provide the general framework. Subsequently, a total of 10 field studies, 16 articles, and 11 reports were systematically analyzed under these thematic categories to derive comprehensive insights into the experiences and challenges of invisible and unpaid domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey.

Thematic analysis facilitates the transformation of data into meaningful patterns and the establishment of relationships between themes, thereby enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the study (Naeem et al., 2023). This methodology supports the objective of gaining a deeper insight into the changes in domestic labor during the pandemic and uncovering the underlying reasons for these changes. Thematic analysis provides flexibility in comprehending complexity and extracting meaning from findings, effectively addressing the research questions in this thesis. Thematic analysis enables this thesis to thoroughly examine the existing literature and sources, and systematically analyze the obtained data, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of my thesis. Through the application of this method, this thesis will aim to identify transformations in domestic labor during the pandemic and comprehend the social, cultural, or economic contexts associated with these transformations.

1.2.3. Research Outline

This thesis is structured into four chapters, with the first chapter serving as the introduction. In this chapter, the research question is presented, providing a clear focus for the study. The research design is also outlined, detailing the overall approach and methodology employed in the research process. Under the subheadings of data and methodology, the chapter delves into the specifics of data collection methods and analysis techniques. The methodology section provides a comprehensive overview of the research methods employed, and the rationale behind their selection. By providing a detailed introduction, the first chapter sets the stage for the subsequent chapters, which will delve into the theoretical of gender, and invisible and unpaid domestic labor. This chapter serves as a foundation for the research, establishing the research question, outlining the research design, and contextualizing the study.

The second chapter provides a comprehensive review the conceptual framework of this thesis; specifically, “gender” and “invisible and unpaid domestic labor” The chapter begins by addressing the conceptual framework of gender, which explores the theoretical perspectives that have contributed to our understanding of gender, including feminist theories. Within the discussion of gender, the chapter further examines the concept of gender roles, which are socially constructed expectations and behaviors associated with masculinity and femininity. It explores how gender roles have influenced the division of labor within households, assigning certain tasks and responsibilities to individuals based on their gender. The chapter also addresses the implications of gender roles on the distribution of power, resources, and opportunities within society. Moreover, the chapter investigates the concept of gender equality, examining the historical and contemporary efforts to challenge and transform gender inequalities to establish a wider basis to discuss issues related to domestic labor. Therefore, it discusses the importance of achieving fair distribution of domestic labor, including the recognition and valuation of domestic labor. Following the exploration of gender, gender roles and gender equality, the chapter delves into the theoretical framework of invisible and unpaid domestic labor, exploring the various perspectives and theories that have contributed to our understanding of this concept. It examines how domestic labor, despite being

essential for the functioning of households and societies, has historically been undervalued and rendered invisible.

In the third chapter, an exploration of worldwide domestic labor during the Covid-19 period will be presented. The chapter begins with division of labor, analyzing how societal norms and expectations have shaped the allocation of different types of work based on gender. It examines how this gendered division of labor has contributed to the undervaluation and invisibility of domestic labor, reinforcing gender inequalities within households and societies. By providing a comprehensive review of the literature on invisible and unpaid domestic labor and gender, this chapter establishes the theoretical foundation for understanding the complexities and dynamics of domestic labor within the context of gender. This chapter aims to provide a detailed analysis of the various types of domestic labor that have become particularly significant during this time. Based on the Covid-19 pandemic and domestic labor, several subtopics will be examined in depth. One subtopic that will be explored is child-elderly care as a form of domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic. With schools and daycare centers closed or operating at limited capacity, families have had to take on increased responsibilities for the care of children and elderly family members. This has resulted in a significant rise in the workload and challenges associated with caregiving within the domestic sphere. Another subtopic to be addressed is domestic home maintenance. With individuals spending more time at home due to lockdowns and remote work arrangements, the need for household maintenance and cleanliness has become even more crucial. This includes tasks such as cleaning, organizing, and ensuring a safe and comfortable living environment for all household members. Kitchen maintenance as a space will also be examined as a significant aspect of domestic labor during the Covid-19 period. With restaurants closed or limited in their operations, individuals have had to rely more on cooking and meal preparation at home. This has led to an increased workload in planning and preparing meals, as well as managing grocery shopping and food supplies. Furthermore, the chapter will delve into the concept of emotional labor as a form of domestic labor during the pandemic. Emotional labor involves managing and providing emotional support to family members, maintaining a positive and harmonious atmosphere within the household, and addressing the emotional needs and well-being of individuals. The increased stress and anxiety caused by the

pandemic have placed an additional burden on individuals engaged in emotional labor within the domestic sphere. By exploring these subtopics in detail, the third chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the various types of domestic labor that have become particularly significant during the Covid-19 period. This analysis will shed light on the challenges, and transformations within the realm of domestic labor observed worldwide within the context of the pandemic.

The fourth chapter of this thesis focuses on the main theme of analysis of impacts of Covid-19 on domestic labor in Turkey. The chapter begins with review of the texts utilized in the analysis. Then, it delves into the examination of women's gender roles and their engagement in various forms of domestic labor. Specifically, it explores the areas of child and elderly care, domestic home maintenance, responsibilities in kitchen, and emotional labor in the context of Turkey. By analyzing these specific aspects of domestic labor, the chapter aims to shed light on the unequal distribution of household responsibilities. It explores how the unequal burden of domestic labor can perpetuate limit women's opportunities for education and employment and reinforce traditional gender roles and expectations. The chapter also examines the social and cultural factors that contribute to the persistence of these inequalities, as well as the potential strategies and interventions for achieving a more equitable distribution of domestic labor. In addition to the examination of women's roles and equal distribution of labor within the household, the chapter introduces two recent tendencies observed in the households in Turkey the period of the pandemic: First, a perspective on girls within the context of domestic labor explores how girls are socialized and assigned specific domestic responsibilities from a young age. By highlighting the experiences and challenges faced by girls in relation to domestic labor, the chapter aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of persistence of traditional gender dynamics within the households. Second, and on the other hand, the chapter delves into the concept of domestic masculinities in the Turkish context by examining how traditional notions of masculinity can influence men's engagement in domestic labor and the potential for challenging gender norms. By exploring the concept of domestic masculinities, the chapter aims to broaden the discussion on gender roles and encourage a more inclusive and equitable division of household responsibilities.

The conclusion chapter provides a critical evaluation of the thesis findings and reflects upon the initial research question. It summarizes the key insights and contributions of the thesis, highlighting the significance of redistributing domestic labor. The chapter concludes with closing remarks that emphasize the importance of recognizing and valuing the diverse forms of labor within the domestic sphere and the need for continued efforts to challenge gender inequalities.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of gender underscores that it is a social construct rather than a biological determinant. This notion emphasizes that social norms, cultural beliefs, and societal structures contribute to the shaping of gender, exerting a substantial influence on various facets of individuals' lives. Therefore, the subject of gender carries significant importance within the realm of social sciences and gender studies. This section of the thesis delves into the conceptual framework of gender, exploring the definition of gender, the dynamics of gender roles, and the pursuit of gender equality.

2.1. Gender

The concept of gender has undergone substantial theoretical advancements, notably shaped by the influential contributions of various feminist scholars. A pivotal figure in this discourse is Simone de Beauvoir, whose groundbreaking study, *The Second Sex*, originally published in 1949 in French as *Le Deuxième Sexe*, challenges entrenched notions of gender by asserting its socially constructed nature. Beauvoir critically analyzes the societal construction of gender and its profound implications for women's lived experiences (Beauvoir, 2019). She contends that gender is not an inherent trait but rather a social construct imposed upon individuals by society (p. 19).

Rejecting the prevailing belief that women are solely defined by their biological distinctions from men, Beauvoir argues that gender roles and expectations are socially manufactured and perpetuated. She underscores the imperative of recognizing women's agency and advocates for their transcendence of societal expectations and constraints. She highlights the historical marginalization and oppression of women, emphasizing the constraints imposed by traditional gender roles (p. 18-19)

The central to Beauvoir's study is the concept of "the Other", wherein she posits that women have been systematically positioned as the Other in relation to men, defined in opposition to the male norm. This positioning has resulted in the subordination and objectification of women. Beauvoir calls for a reevaluation of women's roles and identities, urging them to challenge and surpass the limitations imposed by society (p. 89-93). *The Second Sex* instigates significant debates on gender, feminism, and

women's rights. Her study serves as a cornerstone for feminist theory and activism, disrupting conventional understandings of gender. Her emphasis on women's agency and the imperative for autonomy and liberation continues to exert a profound influence in contemporary feminist discourse.

In her seminal study *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, initially released in 1984, bell hooks underscores the pivotal role of intersectionality in comprehending gender dynamics. She emphasizes how systems of power and oppression, including gender, race, and class, intersect and collectively shape individuals' experiences (p. 4-5). This indicates that gender cannot be understood in isolation; rather, it is intricately interwoven with other social identities and structural influences. She advocates for an inclusive feminism that considers the experiences of all women, particularly those situated at the margins of society and subject to various forms of marginalization (p. 25). Therefore, bell hooks conceptualized gender by emphasizing the intersectionality of gender with race, class, and other social factors. She advocated for a feminist perspective that is inclusive of diverse voices and experiences, particularly those of marginalized groups (Valdivia, 2002). One of hooks' central arguments is the call for a feminism that actively centers the experiences and voices of women who are often overlooked or silenced in mainstream feminist discourse (p. 26-27). This means that a comprehensive understanding of gender requires addressing the intersectional nature of oppression and acknowledging the complex interplay of multiple social identities. By recognizing and addressing these intersecting systems of oppression, she aims to cultivate a more inclusive understanding of gender.

Simone de Beauvoir's conceptualization of gender as a social construct established a fundamental framework within feminist theory. However, bell hooks further enriched this theoretical perspective by highlighting the intricate interplay of gender with other socio-cultural factors. By foregrounding the significance of various socio-cultural dimensions beyond gender—including race, class, and education—hooks facilitated a more thorough examination of the diverse array of identities shaping human experiences. By integrating hooks' theory into the analysis, it becomes clear that domestic labor extends beyond mere household tasks and gender roles, encompassing power dynamics and socio-cultural factors. This comprehensive approach, analyzed in Chapter 4, has significantly contributed to a deeper

understanding of how these intersecting factors collectively mold individual experiences and influence broader social dynamics.

Simone de Beauvoir's foundational assertion that gender is a social construction laid the groundwork for bell hooks' expansion of this theory, incorporating socio-cultural dimensions to illuminate the complexities of gendered experiences. Building upon this lineage of feminist thought, Judith Butler, another important figure in the literature, introduced the concepts of fluidity and performativity, further enriching our understanding of how gender is enacted and contested within social contexts. In the influential study *Gender Trouble*, published first in 1990, Judith Butler introduces the groundbreaking concept of gender as performative, challenging established perspectives on gender conceptualization. According to Butler, gender is not an inherent or fixed identity; instead, it is a continuously produced and reproduced social construct, shaped through repeated acts and performances (Butler, 2008: 191-192). This conceptualization of gender centers on the notion of performativity, which is defined as a repetitive activity performed and a series of stylized acts or practices that are collectively constructed across discursive fields (Proctor-Thomson, 2013). This viewpoint underscores the performative aspect of gender, emphasizing that individuals partake in gendered behaviors that give the impression of a stable gender identity (Jan & Rahman, 2022). By framing gender as performative, this viewpoint opens up avenues for understanding how individuals negotiate and contest societal expectations, contributing to ongoing debates about agency, identity, and social change.

Gender, in Butler's perspective, is enacted through everyday actions, gestures, and behaviors, all guided by societal norms and expectations (p. 53-54). This challenges traditional understandings of gender as a fixed binary by emphasizing posit that gender is not something one is, but something one does (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2011). In this view, individuals do not simply conform to preexisting gender norms; rather, they actively participate in the ongoing creation and re-creation of gender through their behaviors, expressions, and identities. This conceptualization of gender as a continuous process of doing implies that there is no singular or definitive original state of gender; rather, gender is perpetually in flux, shaped by a multiplicity of influences and practices. These performances, rather than expressing an

individual's internal identity, result from social conditioning and the inclination to conform to established gender norms.

In exploring the potential for transformative shifts in everyday practices, it is conceivable to interpret Butler's concept of performativity within the framework of this thesis as offering a nuanced perspective. Rather than solely advocating for radical transformation, this suggests a hopeful interruption and alteration of everyday practices, acknowledging that change may unfold continuously and across various dimensions. This perspective aligns with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's notion of reparative reading, which stands in contrast to paranoid reading, emphasizing a more constructive and hopeful approach to analysis (Callahan, 2009). Just as performativity allows space for both long-term shifts and short-term transformations, reparative reading encourages a shift towards more affirmative and empathetic modes of literary analysis (Baumbach et al., 2016). In times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Sedgwick's concept of reparative reading becomes particularly relevant, offering a constructive lens through which to engage with texts and, by extension, the world. As crises disrupt societal structures and prompt individuals to question the status quo, both Butler's concept of performativity and Sedgwick's notion of reparative reading underscore the potential for positive ruptures amidst challenges. This perspective emphasizes the importance of seeking moments of connection, empathy, and healing within texts, reflecting the ongoing efforts toward the transformation of practices driven by hope (O'Grady & Shaw, 2023). By embracing positive practices such as solidarity, empathy, and reevaluation, individuals can navigate times of crisis with resilience and agency, further affirming the possibility of constructive change.

A central theme in Butler's argument is the recognition of the fluidity and instability of gender. Butler's study emphasizes the fluid and unstable nature of gender, challenging traditional fixed binary understandings. Fluidity is also evident in the discussion of drag identities, where it perceives fluidity as indicative of gender freedom and as destabilizing categories and boundaries (Davis, 2009). By emphasizing its constant negotiation and redefinition within social contexts, this perspective indicates that it challenges the notion that gender is a predetermined and fixed aspect of one's identity. Furthermore, Butler's notion of performativity and the

body suggests that studying bodies that transgress gender norms draw upon and reifies the matrix, highlighting the fluidity of gendered identities (Souza et al., 2016).

The concepts in *Gender Trouble* have significantly impacted feminist theory and gender studies, contributing to the deconstruction of traditional gender categories, and opening new avenues for understanding the social construction of gender and its implications for individuals and society. Concepts of gender performativity and fluidity challenges traditional notions of gender roles, emphasizing that gender is reinforced through repetitive actions rather than being natural. This highlights the potential application of concepts to analyze how gender norms impact the division of labor within households, particularly during the pandemic, by shedding light on how individuals enact and perpetuate these roles through their everyday actions.

Furthermore, within the realm of feminist studies, the examination of masculinity also plays a significant role in shaping the theoretical framework of gender. The contribution of masculinity studies to this thesis is particularly salient within the context of the pandemic period, as it sheds light on how societal expectations of gender intersect with the challenges posed by unprecedented circumstances. Understanding masculinities within the household setting becomes crucial during times of crisis, as traditional gender roles may be both reinforced and reconfigured. Amidst the pandemic, examining men's roles as caregivers and their responses to changing domestic dynamics becomes imperative. Masculinity studies offer insights into men's resilience to change and their ability to adapt, presenting themselves as helpers rather than solely as primary breadwinners, even amidst the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

R.W. Connell's study, *Masculinities*, originally published in 1995, introduced the groundbreaking concept of multiple masculinities, thereby challenging the prevailing belief in the existence of a singular, dominant form of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinities refer to the dominant patterns of gender expression that endorse and reinforce patriarchal structures, ensuring the primacy of men and the subordinate status of women (Connell, 2015:77). This notion entails a hierarchical arrangement of masculinity, wherein hegemonic masculinity embodies culturally favored ideals, elevating specific forms of male identity above femininity and marginalized expressions of masculinity (Weber, 2012). The recognition and interrogation of these hierarchies and disparities within masculinities are underscored as significant.

Connell underscores power dynamics within male-female relationships and among different groups of men, aiming to reconcile the observable inequalities among men with the overarching dominance of men over women (Lusher & Robins, 2007). The concept of hegemonic masculinity elucidates why certain masculine traits hold such sway that most men conform to them, fearing the erosion of their perceived manliness (Fritsche, 2012). This underscores the interplay between social roles and identities, illustrating masculinity as a component of gender dynamics and elucidating how masculine behaviors are shaped by power dynamics, thereby influencing men's social roles and identities.

Alongside Connell's research, Michael Kimmel's study, particularly in *Manhood in America*, first released in 1996, scrutinizes the social construction of masculinity and its implications for men's experiences and explores how societal expectations and norms shape men's behavior, emotions, and relationships (p. 7-8). Kimmel contends that gender is not inherent but rather acquired and enacted through socialization and interpersonal interactions (Gerami, 2003). He underscores the influence of societal expectations and norms in shaping individuals' perceptions and expressions of their gender identity. Kimmel's conceptualization resonates with the notion of hegemonic masculinity, which it is defined as the prevailing and idealized manifestation of masculinity within a given society, often characterized by traits such as power, dominance, and control (Soulliere, 2006). Moreover, Kimmel's perspective delves into the ramifications of gender role stress on men, elucidating how societal pressures to adhere to traditional masculine standards can precipitate psychological distress and aggressive behavior (Parrott, 2009).

Gender, as elucidated through feminist perspectives, is a social construct intricately interwoven into the societal fabric. Its impact on individuals' behavior, roles, and identities is profound and pervasive. The influence of gender extends to the social roles and expectations ascribed to individuals based on perceived gender identity. Rooted in societal norms and cultural traditions, these roles and expectations shape individuals' conduct and interactions within their communities (Launius & Hassel, 2022).

Moreover, the social construction of gender extends beyond individual behavior and identity to encompass broader power dynamics and societal structures. Gender is intricately intertwined with power relations, wherein specific behaviors and roles are

assigned greater value and authority based on gender (Launius & Hassel, 2022). This phenomenon can result in the perpetuation of gender-based inequalities and the marginalization of individuals who deviate from traditional gender norms (McIntosh, 1991).

In summary, gender is a socially constructed concept deeply ingrained in society, molded by cultural, political, and historical contexts, and characterized by its fluid and evolving nature. The social construction of gender not only shapes individuals' behavior, roles, and identities but also plays a significant role in broader power dynamics and societal structures. Rooted in societal norms and cultural traditions, gender norms and expectations influence how individuals conduct themselves and interact within their communities. Moreover, the social construction of gender affects the development of gender-related characteristics, impacting individuals' sense of self and their societal positioning. The intricate link between gender and power relations assigns varying values and authority to certain behaviors and roles based on gender, thereby perpetuating gender-based inequalities and marginalizing those diverging from traditional gender norms.

2.1.1. Gender Roles

Historically, the conceptualization of gender within feminism has undergone a complex and multifaceted evolution. The feminist movement, shaped by various influences, has particularly been impacted by the intersectionality of gender with race, class, and sexuality (Needham, 2010). This perspective has led to the acknowledgment that the often prevailing "white, western, middle class, liberal feminism" has contributed to the perpetuation of colonialist and racialized discourses, significantly influencing the historical trajectory of gender within feminist discourse (p. 64)

Moreover, the feminist movement has progressed through distinct waves, each leaving its imprint on the comprehension of gender. Notably, Needham (2020) claims that the first wave of feminism, marked by the pursuit of women's suffrage and legal rights, was predominantly spearheaded by white, western, middle-class liberal feminists. However, criticism has been directed at this wave for its exclusive focus on gender as the primary basis for equal rights, inadvertently perpetuating colonialist, and racialized discourses (p. 64-65). The subsequent second and third

waves of feminism have brought about substantial shifts in the perceptions of gender roles and feminist consciousness. These waves have played a pivotal role in challenging traditional gender norms and advocating for women's rights across various domains of life (McCabe, 2005).

The impact of the feminist movement extends beyond gender, influencing broader social attitudes and policies. It has been linked to shifts in perceptions of appropriate gender roles (Gidengil et al., 2008; Banaszak & Plutzer, 1993). Gender roles encompass societal expectations, norms, and behaviors attributed to individuals based on their perceived gender identity. These roles are molded by cultural elements, social expectations, and historical traditions, playing a significant role in shaping individuals' behavior, the division of labor, and social relationships. The delineation of masculinity and femininity roles in society is a result of a complex interplay among cultural, social, and historical factors. This intricate interplay contributes to the formulation and perpetuation of gender norms and expectations (Launius & Hassel, 2022).

The construction of gender roles is deeply ingrained in cultural and societal expectations, dictating the behaviors and attributes ascribed to masculinity and femininity. These expectations often mirror traditional beliefs and values concerning the roles and responsibilities of men and women within a given society (McIntosh, 1991). Masculinity is frequently linked to traits such as power, confidence, and autonomy, while femininity is associated with characteristics like caregiving, compassion, and emotional sensitivity. Socialization processes, media representations, and institutional practices serve to reinforce these gender roles, contributing to the perpetuation of conventional gender norms (O'Neil, 2008).

The impact of gender roles on individuals' behavior is profound, shaping their self-perception, interpersonal interactions, and life choices. Gender roles influence the allocation of labor within households and communities, often resulting in the assignment of specific tasks and responsibilities based on perceived gender identities (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Furthermore, these roles can affect individuals' social relationships as they may conform to or resist societal expectations associated with their gender identity (Falomir-Pichastor et al., 2019). Additionally, gender roles play a role in determining individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making power within diverse social context (Clarke et al., 2021).

In conclusion, gender roles are deeply embedded in societal structures, influencing individuals' behaviors, division of labor, and social interactions. Shaped by cultural, social, and historical factors, these roles reflect prevailing societal expectations and norms regarding masculinity and femininity. Masculinity is often characterized by attributes such as power and independence, while femininity is associated with qualities like caregiving and empathy. The reinforcement of these gender roles occurs through socialization processes, media portrayals, and institutional practices. The impact of gender roles on individuals is substantial, affecting their self-perception, interpersonal dynamics, and decisions in life. Furthermore, gender roles dictate the allocation of responsibilities within households and communities, as well as individuals' access to resources and decision-making authority. Despite their entrenched nature, it is crucial to acknowledge that gender roles are socially constructed and can be challenged and transformed.

2.1.2. Gender Equality

Within the conceptual framework of this thesis, gender equality assumes significance as a foundational aspect shaping the broader socio-political landscape in which domestic labor dynamics during the pandemic period are situated. While not the primary focus, an examination of gender equality is essential for contextualizing the nuanced intersections of gender dynamics with domestic labor practices. Notably, while many of the published articles in Turkey have titles reflecting discussions of gender (in)equality, some specifically address domestic labor within the context of gender (in)equality, indicating the relevance of this to the broader thematic concerns of this thesis.

Gender equality is a concept that ensures that individuals of all genders have equal rights, opportunities, and access to resources, free from discrimination based on gender. It encompasses the pursuit of fairness and justice in social, economic, and political domains, with the goal of eliminating gender-based disparities and promoting inclusivity and equity (McKague & Harrison, 2019). Attaining gender equality is essential for cultivating a more just and prosperous society, as it contributes to the empowerment of individuals and the advancement of communities and nations (Singh et al., 2013).

In the societal context, gender equality plays a crucial role in challenging and deconstructing traditional gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices. It advocates for the acknowledgment of varied gender identities and expressions, thereby cultivating a more inclusive and accepting societal environment (Islam & Asadullah, 2018). Moreover, gender equality is foundational for addressing concerns like gender-based violence and discrimination, contributing to the establishment of safer and more supportive settings for all individuals (Roseboom, 2020).

From an economic standpoint, the importance of gender equality cannot be overstated in promoting sustainable development and economic growth. It serves to ensure equitable access to education, employment, and economic opportunities for individuals of all genders, thereby unlocking human potential and fostering overall prosperity (Araújo-Vila et al., 2021). Gender equality in the workplace not only enhances productivity and innovation but also values and leverages diverse perspectives and talents (Tominc et al., 2017). Additionally, gender equality is intricately linked to poverty reduction and elevated living standards, enabling individuals to actively participate in and contribute to economic activities (Parejo & Radulović, 2023).

In the realm of politics, the attainment of gender equality holds paramount importance as it ensures that individuals of all genders are afforded equal opportunities for political participation and decision-making. Gender equality in politics fosters the representation of diverse voices and experiences within governance and policy-making processes, thereby fostering more inclusive and responsive political systems (Bahri, 2014). Moreover, the presence of gender equality in political leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the development of policies and initiatives that effectively address the needs and concerns of all members of society (Green, 2020).

Attaining gender equality necessitates collective endeavors at the individual, institutional, and societal levels. It entails the active questioning and reformulation of discriminatory attitudes and practices, alongside the implementation of policies and initiatives that foster gender equity (Candra et al., 2022). Education and awareness-raising play a pivotal role in advancing gender equality, as they contribute to the critical examination and dismantling of gender stereotypes, while cultivating inclusive and respectful mindsets.

In conclusion, gender equality is a fundamental principle that seeks to ensure equal rights, opportunities, and resources for individuals of all genders. It encompasses various spheres of society, including the social, economic, and political realms. Gender equality challenges and dismantles traditional gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices, fostering a more inclusive and accepting society. It addresses issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination, creating safer and more supportive environments for all individuals.

2.2. Invisible and Unpaid Domestic Labor

The conceptual framework surrounding invisible and unpaid domestic labor encompasses diverse perspectives aiming to elucidate the allocation of household tasks, the gendered dimensions of unpaid domestic labor, and the socio-economic factors influencing domestic labor. This framework incorporates different viewpoints on the distribution of household responsibilities and the reasons behind the often gender-specific roles, with the goal of illuminating how societal and economic dynamics impact domestic work. The various perspectives within this framework contribute to cultivating a comprehensive understanding of the contextual intricacies surrounding unpaid domestic labor. This section will expound upon the conceptual framework concerning invisible and unpaid domestic labor and domestic care as an ethical concern.

2.2.1. The Concept of Invisible and Unpaid Domestic Labor

The terms “invisible domestic labor” and “unpaid domestic labor” are frequently employed interchangeably, yet they encompass distinct nuances. Understanding the disparity between these concepts is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of household responsibilities. Invisible domestic labor pertains to tasks within the household that often go unnoticed or lack proper appreciation, contributing to the overall functioning and well-being of the household. Such tasks encompass emotional labor, mental load, and organizational work, which may not always be visible or explicitly acknowledged (Daminger, 2019; Edwards, 2004). In contrast, unpaid domestic labor encompasses tangible, physical responsibilities like cleaning, cooking, and childcare, undertaken within the household without receiving financial compensation (Sullivan, 2013; Poortman & Lippe, 2009).

Invisible domestic labor is commonly linked to the cognitive and emotional facets of household management, encompassing activities such as planning, coordination, and the orchestration of family relationships (Daminger, 2019; Edwards, 2004). This category of labor is frequently shouldered by women and holds paramount significance in ensuring the seamless operation of the household. Nonetheless, its intrinsic value is often underestimated and disregarded, contributing to its characteristically "invisible" nature. In contrast, unpaid domestic labor encompasses the observable and concrete tasks essential for the daily functioning of the household, including activities such as cleaning, cooking, and childcare (Sullivan, 2013; Poortman & Lippe, 2009).

The correlation between invisible and unpaid domestic labor is paramount for a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics inherent in household work. Invisible domestic labor encompasses cognitive and emotional tasks, often disregarded, yet vital for effective household management, including emotional labor and organizational work. Despite being essential for the smooth operation of the household, these responsibilities tend to be undervalued and disproportionately undertaken by women. Conversely, unpaid domestic labor encompasses visible and tangible tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and childcare, constituting the more conventionally acknowledged aspects of household responsibilities. While both forms of labor are indispensable for the functioning and well-being of the household, the invisibility of certain tasks within the realm of invisible domestic labor underscores the necessity for a more comprehensive acknowledgment of the diverse contributions individuals make to household dynamics.

The examination and comprehension of invisible and unpaid domestic labor have been enhanced through the incorporation of diverse theoretical perspectives and frameworks. Coltrane furnishes a thorough examination of the theoretical, methodological, and empirical facets pertinent to the investigation of household labor, underscoring the social embeddedness of routine family work (Coltrane, 2000). This viewpoint accentuates the interdependence of household labor with wider social structures and relationships, providing valuable insights into the intricate nature of unpaid domestic labor within the family unit.

Marxist feminist perspectives have played a crucial role in elucidating the dynamics of unpaid domestic labor. It is engaged in a critical examination of unpaid domestic

and care work through a Marxist feminist lens, centering on the commodification of social reproduction and its ramifications (Beier, 2018). This perspective delves into the contradictory consequences arising from the escalating interest in unpaid domestic labor, while also contemplating feminist strategies and movements in global governance. It offers a discerning lens through which to analyze the intricate dynamics of unpaid domestic labor within capitalist societies. Additionally, Müller formulates a conceptualization of care work within capitalist societies, accentuating the confinement of specific aspects of care work to the private sphere, where they predominantly persist as unpaid and inconspicuous. This perspective underscores the gendered and economic facets inherent in care work, emphasizing its pivotal role within the overarching framework of capitalist societies and the labor market (Müller, 2019).

Moreover, it is employed a feminist political economy approach to comprehend the dynamics of patient hood, unveiling the interplay between paid and unpaid labor in the realm of caregiving. This approach broadens the scope of labor analysis to encompass both compensated and uncompensated dimensions, elucidating the intricate nature of unpaid domestic labor within the framework of illness and caregiving (Pritlove et al., 2018). Simultaneously, Roberts investigates the fragmentation of domestic labor into spiritual and menial components, offering insights into the multifaceted character of unpaid domestic labor (Roberts D. E., 1997). This perspective delves into the nuanced facets of domestic labor, encompassing not only the physical tasks but also the spiritual and emotional dimensions inherent in unpaid domestic work.

Additionally, the examination of the impact of neoliberalism on social reproduction and the commodification of unpaid domestic labor is addressed in critical literature, exemplified by the study of Roberts (Roberts A. , 2008). This perspective extends Karl Marx's radical conceptualization of "primitive accumulation" to characterize the escalating intrusion of capital into novel spaces and social relations, elucidating the neoliberal dynamics influencing unpaid domestic labor and social reproduction. Nevertheless, Blackburn challenges the conventional conceptualization of housework as unpaid labor, emphasizing a fundamental theoretical error in applying market concepts to non-market work (Blackburn, 1999). While this standpoint critically scrutinizes the application of economic concepts to unpaid domestic labor, it is

imperative to contemplate the broader social and gendered implications of such labor beyond the confines of traditional market frameworks.

Scholars have delved into various theoretical perspectives, such as the social embeddedness of household labor, the commodification of social reproduction, the gendered and economic dimensions of care work, and the intersection of paid and unpaid labor in caregiving domains. These theoretical frameworks, rooted in disciplines such as Marxist feminism, feminist political economy, and critical examinations of neoliberal dynamics, have yielded invaluable insights into the intricate complexities and implications associated with unpaid domestic labor. These perspectives have not only illuminated the interdependence of domestic labor with broader social structures but have also challenged conventional conceptualizations of housework, offering a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of unpaid domestic labor. However, there is a compelling need to expand this conceptual framework to encompass endeavors aimed at addressing and challenging the invisible and unpaid aspects of domestic labor.

Historical endeavors aimed at addressing the undervaluation and invisibility of domestic labor have been multifaceted, encompassing changes in gender ideologies, the labor movement, feminist activism, and legislative actions. Notably, the labor movement played a pivotal role in challenging the undervaluation of domestic labor. The burgeoning of the labor movement in the 1960s introduced the concept of equitable relations between classes, drawing attention to the unequal treatment of domestic workers and ultimately challenging the norm of inequality (Bourne, 2010). Furthermore, the emergence of national labor movements facilitated the protection of domestic workers and the acknowledgment of their rights (Anner, 2008).

Feminist activism has played a pivotal role in challenging the undervaluation of domestic labor. An international movement of domestic workers has emerged, advocating elements of a feminist agenda, and revalorizing the work of reproduction. This movement has compelled a new generation of feminists to grapple with the question of housework and to formulate novel models of gender relations (Federici, 2016). Additionally, proponents within the battered women's movement have recognized women's social and economic inequality as a structural influence on domestic violence, thereby shedding light on the broader societal implications of gender inequality and domestic labor (Nichols, 2013).

Additionally, legislative actions have played a crucial role in confronting the undervaluation of domestic labor. Initiatives to eliminate the exclusion of domestic workers from labor and employment laws have been implemented, aiming to rectify the invisibility and lack of protection for this sector of the workforce (Milkman, 2018). Changes in gender ideologies have also been identified as a contributing factor in challenging the undervaluation of domestic labor. Studies suggest that husbands' engagement in domestic labor declines as their gender role attitudes become more traditional, emphasizing the pivotal role of evolving gender ideologies in fostering more equitable domestic labor arrangements (Jansen & Liefbroer, 2006; Pitt & Borland, 2008).

In summary, throughout history, there have been various and complex endeavors to confront the undervaluation and invisibility of domestic labor. These efforts have encompassed a range of strategies and movements, including the labor movement, feminist activism, legislative actions, and shifts in gender ideologies. Collectively, they have played significant roles in addressing the unequal distribution and devaluation of domestic labor. The aim of these efforts has been to acknowledge and elevate the importance of domestic labor, challenge traditional gender roles that perpetuate its undervaluation, and advocate for the rights and recognition of domestic labor.

2.2.2. Domestic Care as Ethical Concern

The ethics of care constitutes a moral and political framework underscoring the significance of care in ethical decision-making and social relations. It is stated that care should be acknowledged as a fundamental human need and a central element of our moral and political existence (Tronto J. , 1993). The approach to the ethics of care centers on the interdependence and interconnectedness of individuals within social contexts. She stresses the importance of recognizing and addressing the care needs of individuals and communities, while also considering the broader social and political structures that influence care practices (Tronto J. , 1993). A pivotal concept in ethics of care is the notion of care itself. It is defined care as "everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (Tronto J., 1993, p. 103). Care involves attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness to the needs of others (Tronto J. , 1993).

In her study “Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care”, she elucidates these concepts in the following manner: Attentiveness denotes being fully present and engaged within the care relationship, actively observing and listening to the needs, emotions, and experiences of the care recipient (Tronto J. , 1993). It necessitates sensitivity to subtle cues, signals, and an awareness of the evolving circumstances and dynamics within the care context. “Attentiveness” (p. 142) requires being sensitive to subtle cues and signals and being aware of the changing circumstances and dynamics within the care context. “Responsibility” (p. 142-145), within the care framework, involves recognizing and accepting one’s role and obligations in providing care, acknowledging the moral and social duty to respond to the needs and well-being of others. This encompasses taking appropriate actions and making decisions that prioritize the welfare and dignity of the care recipient. “Competence” (p. 142) pertains to possessing the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to offer effective care, being trained and knowledgeable in the specific tasks and practices associated with caregiving. Competence also entails the ability to adapt and respond appropriately to various situations and challenges that may arise in the care context. “Responsiveness” (p. 142) involves the capability to comprehend and meet the unique needs and preferences of the care recipient, being sensitive to their individuality, values, and desires, and tailoring the care approach accordingly. It necessitates flexibility and adaptability in adjusting care practices to best support the well-being and autonomy of the person receiving care (Tronto J. C., Care as a Basis for Radical Political Judgments, 1995).

Moreover, the ethics of care is closely intertwined with the issues of invisible and unpaid domestic labor, particularly in relation to gender dynamics. She contends that care work, especially within the domestic sphere, has historically suffered from undervaluation and invisibility, driven by gendered norms and expectations (Tronto J. C., Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice, 2013). She underscores the imperative to acknowledge and reallocate the burden of care work while challenging the gendered division of labor that disproportionately assigns the responsibility for care to women (Tronto J. C., Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice, 2013). Ethics of care also underscores the significance of political engagement and collective action in addressing care-related issues. She contends that care is not solely an individual responsibility but a shared social responsibility demanding

collaborative endeavors to foster caring communities and establish just social structures (Tronto J. , 1993).

Regarding gender dynamics, ethics of care recognizes the gendered character of care work and the uneven allocation of caregiving responsibilities. She posits that care work has historically been linked to women, and gender inequalities are intricately woven into care practices (Tronto J. , 1993). This framework aims to confront and reshape gendered norms and expectations, striving to foster a more balanced distribution of care responsibilities.

In conclusion, ethics of care underscores the significance of care in ethical decision-making and social relationships. It acknowledges the historical undervaluation and invisibility of care work, particularly within the domestic realm, and emphasizes the imperative to acknowledge and reallocate the burden of care responsibilities. This framework recognizes the gendered nature of care work and the uneven distribution of caregiving responsibilities, with the aim of challenging and reshaping gendered norms and expectations. The ethics of care advocates for the acknowledgment and appreciation of both paid and unpaid forms of care work, encompassing invisible and unpaid domestic labor.

3. GENERAL FRAMEWORK ON IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON DOMESTIC LABOR

In this section of the thesis, it is delved into the comprehensive analysis of how household responsibilities have been distributed amidst the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The focal point will be the intricate examination of various facets of domestic labor, encompassing child-elderly care, home maintenance, kitchen-related burdens, and emotional labor. The investigation within the broader framework of the division of domestic tasks during the pandemic aims to shed light on the intricate dynamics at play. Furthermore, this section will extend its scrutiny to elucidate the nuanced impact of the pandemic on gender inequality within domestic labor. The exploration is designed to meticulously unravel the multifaceted implications of the crisis on the existing gender roles within households. By scrutinizing the shifts in domestic labor, this analysis will aim to serve as a pivotal reference for understanding the enduring repercussions of the pandemic on familial dynamics and gendered responsibilities.

3.1. Division of Domestic Labor

The division of labor, a foundational aspect of economic and social organization, has historically been influenced by gender, delineating roles, and expectations in both public and private spheres and creating a dichotomy with profound implications for individuals and communities.

The conceptualization of the division of labor was first introduced by Adam Smith in his seminal study, originally published in 1776, *The Wealth of Nations*, contended that the division of labor serves as the catalyst for economic growth. It argues that by subdividing work into smaller, specialized tasks, workers could enhance their proficiency in specific roles, resulting in heightened productivity and efficiency (Smith A. , 2007). This theory implies that the division of labor fosters the development of skills and expertise, subsequently leading to innovation and technological advancement.

Karl Marx, in his crucial study *Capital, Volume 1* (1887), offered a distinct perspective on the division of labor. Marx's analysis of the division of labor within capitalist society underscores its pivotal role in perpetuating phenomena such as

alienation, exploitation, and social stratification. He posited that within the capitalist framework, the division of labor engenders a profound separation between the laborer and the product of their labor, thereby fostering a pervasive sense of alienation and powerlessness among workers (Rauh, 2007). Additionally, he emphasized the inherent exploitation ingrained within capitalist production relations, wherein workers find themselves estranged from the fruits of their labor and subjected to oppressive working conditions (Foster et al., 2020). This alienation is further compounded by the commodification of labor, a process whereby human labor is commoditized and treated as a mere tradable entity within the market, consequently devaluing human creativity and autonomy (Mirowsky, 2011). Marx's examination of this concept offers a foundational framework for comprehending the internal workings of capitalist economies and societies. Moreover, the conceptualization of the division of labor elucidates the devaluation of workers' labor, their alienation from the production process, and the facilitation of class conflicts and injustices within the capitalist system.

The examination of the division of labor extends to the realm of social organization and interaction, with notable contributions from French sociologist Emile Durkheim. Durkheim significantly enriched the understanding of the division of labor in his seminal study *The Division of Labor in Society*, originally published in 1893. Contrary to viewing the division of labor solely as an economic necessity, Durkheim's notion of the division of social labor underscores the simultaneous existence of two levels within society, where individuals function as both social and individual entities (Callegaro, 2012). This viewpoint draws attention to the dynamic interaction between social structures and individual agency in shaping the division of labor. Similarly, it is argued that the assumption of the inevitability of the sexual division of labor conceals the intricate nature involved in achieving, sustaining, and altering this division (Pestello & Voydanoff, 1991). This specific standpoint brings to the forefront the nuanced complexity of the division of labor, placing a strong emphasis on the intricate interplay of its deeply ingrained social dynamics and temporal dimensions.

An alternative perspective on the division of labor centers on its association with gender roles. Talcott Parsons, in his study *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process* (1955), proposed a theory of gender roles within the family based on the

division of labor. He suggested that the family structure comprises expressive and instrumental roles (p. 42). He contended that women are naturally inclined toward the expressive role, involving nurturing and caring responsibilities, while men are more suited to the instrumental role, encompassing providing and decision-making tasks (p. 41-42). Nevertheless, feminist scholars have contested this traditional division of labor. Similarly, it is argued that a sexual division of labor exists, wherein men are responsible for market labor, and women are tasked with responsibilities within the household (Giddings, 1998).

Ann Oakley, a feminist sociologist, conducted a critical analysis of the gendered division of labor in her seminal work *The Sociology of Housework* (1974). She challenged the conventional belief that women are inherently suited to domestic work, asserting that this division is not biologically determined but socially constructed and argued that the gendered division of labor functions to reinforce patriarchal power structures (p. 2-5). Oakley also defines the gendered division of labor as a culturally normative family pattern that assigns different tasks to women and men within the household (Lavee & Katz, 2004). This means that it emphasizes the societal construction of gender roles and the unequal distribution of labor within the family unit, highlighting the influence of cultural norms and gender ideologies on shaping these divisions (p. 28-29). This underscores the gendered nature of traditional roles and responsibilities undertaken by women in society, particularly highlighting the disproportionate burden of household chores and caregiving placed on women, which are often perceived as invisible within societal norms. Thus, it emphasizes that the gendered division of labor yields not only economic implications but also significant social and cultural consequences.

The gendered division of labor extends beyond the household and infiltrates the workplace. Arlie Hochschild, in her influential study *The Second Shift* (1989), highlights the unequal distribution of household labor, where women, despite their employment outside the home, are still expected to shoulder the majority of domestic duties and childcare (Bianchi et al., 2012). This phenomenon is often referred to as the “second shift” or “double burden” signifying the additional labor that women perform after their formal working hours, contributing to the perpetuation of gender inequality (Gershuny & Sullivan, 2003). Moreover, Hochschild’s concept of the “second shift” has been linked to the broader societal ideal of dual-career families,

emphasizing the challenges faced by women in balancing work and family responsibilities (Worth, 2018). This claims that this unequal division of labor perpetuates gender inequalities, with women's contributions being undervalued and unrecognized, both within the home and the workplace.

Paula England, in her study *The Gender Revolution: Uneven and Stalled* (2010), points out that the progress of the devaluation of activities has been slow and inconsistent (p. 153). The research reveals that, despite advancements in gender equality, women still disproportionately bear the brunt of domestic work. This phenomenon is often reconciled as Hochschild's concept "double burden" or "second shift", where women, following their formal employment, are still expected to take on the majority of household chores and childcare responsibilities. She argues that this unequal division of labor is not solely a result of individual choices or preferences, but a systemic issue rooted in societal norms and expectations about gender roles (p. 158-159).

Moreover, England draws attention to the issue of occupational segregation, where men and women tend to concentrate in different job types (p. 157). Despite the increasing presence of women in the workforce, they are frequently confined to lower-paying, lower-status jobs, while men dominate higher-paying, higher-status positions. She argues that this occupational segregation is a key contributor to the gender wage gap and perpetuates gender inequalities in the labor market (p. 159-160). The relationship between gender and the division of labor is intricately intertwined and influenced by societal norms and expectations. Traditional gender roles have historically dictated the division of labor, assigning men the role of the breadwinner and women the role of the caregiver.

Despite societal shifts toward greater gender equality, research consistently indicates that women continue to bear the predominant burden of household labor. The realm of household responsibilities includes activities, such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare, which frequently lack proper acknowledgment and appreciation. Various factors contribute to the allocation of domestic duties. It is emphasized the influence of gender ideology, proposing that individuals' attitudes toward gender roles can have a substantial impact on how household tasks are distributed (Greenstein, 1996). As an illustration, within households adhering to traditional gender norms, women are prone to undertake the majority of domestic responsibilities. Conversely, in

households espousing more egalitarian gender ideologies, domestic tasks are likely to be distributed more evenly. The perception of fairness plays a pivotal role in determining the division of household labor, as highlighted, which is claimed that individuals' notions of a "fair" distribution of labor can impact the apportionment of domestic responsibilities (Gager, 2008).

Nevertheless, these perceptions are frequently shaped by societal norms and expectations, perpetuating gender disparities. Social class, for instance, stands out as another influential factor affecting the allocation of household labor. According to Rosenberg, in affluent households, there tends to be a more equitable division of labor, potentially attributed to the capacity to delegate domestic tasks externally (Rosenberg, 1994). Conversely, in lower-income households, women often shoulder an unequal burden of household responsibilities. Examining the dynamics of labor division within families yields valuable insights into power dynamics, gender roles, and the perpetuation of inequality within domestic settings. It unveils how societal norms and expectations regarding gender roles manifest within the home, reinforcing gender-based inequities.

In summary, the concept of the division of labor has exerted a pivotal influence on shaping both economic structures and societal norms, particularly when viewed through the gender lens. The foundational contributions of scholars such as Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Emile Durkheim, as well as the more contemporary perspectives offered by scholars, such as Ann Oakley, Arlie Hochschild, and Paula England, collectively underscore the profound implications of the division of labor on gender roles, inequality, and social organization.

The perpetuation of gender inequalities across various life spheres is evident in the traditional gendered division of labor, assigning women to domestic and caregiving roles and men to market labor. Despite strides towards a more equitable distribution of labor, persistent gender disparities underscore the ongoing challenge of achieving genuine gender equity. This ongoing struggle underscores the intricate interplay between social norms, economic structures, and individual agency in shaping the division of labor.

Moreover, the division of labor transcends its economic dimensions, manifesting as a deeply ingrained social construct that influences family dynamics, power relations,

and the perpetuation of inequality within households. It mirrors and reinforces societal expectations regarding gender, necessitating a comprehensive approach to address these inequalities. This approach should challenge traditional gender roles and advocate for fairness both in the workplace and the home.

In essence, the division of labor emerges as a multifaceted concept intertwining economic, social, and gender dynamics. It functions as a critical framework for comprehending how societies allocate tasks and responsibilities, emphasizing the persistent struggle for gender equality in an ever-evolving world. Striking a balance between the advantages of specialization and efficiency and the imperative of gender equity stands out as a crucial challenge for contemporary society, demanding ongoing reflection, advocacy, and concerted action.

3.2. Types of Domestic Labor

The global emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in late 2019, persisting into subsequent years, significantly transformed various facets of our daily lives. With nations implementing lockdowns, quarantine measures, and social distancing protocols, households worldwide encountered a distinct set of challenges, particularly in the domain of domestic labor. The pandemic underscored the heightened importance of five fundamental categories of domestic labor, each contributing to the collective endeavor of adapting to these unprecedented circumstances. These categories encompassed tasks related to child-elderly care, household maintenance, kitchen responsibilities and emotional labor. This article aims to thoroughly explore the multifaceted dimensions of domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic, delving into the changes, challenges, and adaptations that unfolded in response to this extraordinary global crisis. Through a focused examination of these categories, the objective of this part is to elucidate how various types of domestic labor are affected during the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.2.1. Child-Elderly Care as Domestic Labor

The Covid-19 pandemic has exerted profound effects on diverse facets of society, notably in the realms of child and elderly care. The imposition of social distancing measures, stay-at-home directives, and the heightened susceptibility of the elderly to the virus have markedly influenced the dispensation of informal care by grandparents

and other relatives' members of family (Zamarro & Prados, 2021). Moreover, the pandemic has brought into sharp relief the gender-specific repercussions of caregiving responsibilities, wherein mothers have borne a disproportionate share of childcare burdens, particularly in the context of school and childcare facility closures (Zoch et al., 2020).

The closure of schools and childcare facilities amid the pandemic has imposed a substantial burden on parents, notably mothers, who find themselves navigating the challenges of balancing work responsibilities alongside increased childcare demands (Kerr et al., 2021). Studies indicate that, in the absence of significant alterations in working conditions due to Covid-19, mothers would persist in shouldering the predominant share of caregiving responsibilities during the closure of educational and childcare institutions (Zoch et al., 2020). This gendered allocation of childcare roles holds noteworthy implications for women's employment and career progression, potentially leading to a necessity to scale back working hours or exit the workforce entirely (Petts et al., 2020). The limited availability of formal childcare options has further contributed to adverse effects on parents' mental health and overall well-being (Zamarro & Prados, 2021).

Informal care, traditionally provided by grandparents or other family members, has historically played a pivotal role in aiding parents with their childcare responsibilities. Nevertheless, the pandemic has presented challenges, rendering it difficult, if not impossible, for informal care providers to contribute to childcare due to the elevated risk of Covid-19 mortality among the elderly (Zamarro & Prados, 2021). As a result of this, parents have found themselves increasingly dependent on formal childcare alternatives or grappling with the complexities of balancing work and childcare responsibilities in the absence of additional support. The experiences of paid childcare providers during the pandemic have garnered limited attention, underscoring the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of the impact on all stakeholders engaged in childcare (Smith J. , 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the elderly population, leading to the implementation of stringent measures to safeguard their health and overall well-being. Social support networks have traditionally played a vital role in providing care and assistance to older individuals, but the pandemic has disrupted these networks (Cugmas et al., 2021). The absence of social support has had

detrimental effects on the mental and physical health of the elderly, underscoring the necessity for targeted interventions and a combination of care services (Cugmas et al., 2021). The unique challenges presented by a pandemic, which emphasizes the need for physical distancing rather than community cohesion, call for tailored approaches to ensure the well-being of the elderly population (Cugmas et al., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the provision of child and elderly care, presenting significant challenges for parents, caregivers, and the elderly population. The closure of schools and childcare facilities has disproportionately burdened mothers, exacerbating existing gender inequalities in caregiving responsibilities. The absence of informal care providers has further strained parents' ability to effectively balance their work and childcare responsibilities. Additionally, the elderly population has experienced heightened vulnerability and increased social isolation, necessitating the implementation of tailored interventions and support systems.

3.2.2. Home Maintenance

During the Covid-19 pandemic, women have shouldered a significant burden when it comes to domestic home cleaning. With the increased emphasis on hygiene and cleanliness to prevent the spread of the virus, the demand for cleaning and disinfecting homes has surged (Smith et al., 2020). This has resulted in women taking on additional responsibilities and spending more time on domestic cleaning tasks (Collins et al., 2020). One of the reasons for this gendered division of domestic cleaning labor is the persistence of traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Historically, women have been assigned the primary responsibility for maintaining a clean and organized home (Carlson et al., 2020). The pandemic has further reinforced these gender norms, with women feeling a heightened sense of duty to ensure the cleanliness and safety of their households (Smith et al., 2020). The closure of schools and the shift to remote work have also contributed to the increased burden on women. With children at home and the need to create a conducive environment for remote work, women have found themselves juggling multiple roles simultaneously (Craig & Churchill, 2020). This has left them with limited time and energy to dedicate to domestic cleaning, often resulting in added stress and exhaustion (Pierce et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the pandemic has highlighted the unequal distribution of domestic cleaning labor within households. Studies have shown that women continue to bear the majority of the cleaning responsibilities, even when both partners are working from home (Sevilla & Smith, 2020). This imbalance can perpetuate gender inequalities and hinder women's ability to fully participate in other areas of their lives, such as career advancement or personal pursuits (Collins et al., 2020).The increased focus on hygiene and cleanliness during the pandemic has also led to a rise in professional cleaning services. However, it is important to note that these services are not equally accessible to all women due to financial constraints or concerns about safety and privacy (Carlson et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated women's domestic cleaning responsibilities. Traditional gender norms, the closure of schools, and the transition to remote work have collectively contributed to this increased burden. Prevailing societal expectations continue to assign women the primary role of managing household chores, particularly cleaning, thereby intensifying their workload. With the closure of schools, women, who often shoulder the majority of childcare duties, must now juggle both childcare and cleaning tasks. Furthermore, the adoption of remote work blurs the boundaries between professional and personal life, leading to heightened emphasis on maintaining cleanliness within the household.

3.2.3. Responsibilities in the Kitchen

The kitchen has emerged as a focal point in feminist literature, offering insights into the gendered dynamics inherent in domestic labor, identity formation, and power relations within households. Scholars have scrutinized the kitchen space through the prisms of gender construction, female destiny, identity, and experiences of women. This perspective sheds light on the challenges confronted by women within the kitchen, where they contend with the enforcement of discourse rules by male hegemony, the mental oppression of traditional gender roles, and the intricate circumstances wherein contemporary female occupants may find themselves at odds with each other (Wang & Liang, 2018).

Feminist literature has delved into the kitchen as a locus for the negotiation of gender roles, power dynamics, and the construction of identity. The kitchen is conceptualized as a space that not only generates but also reproduces a nuanced set

of relations among individuals, thereby reflecting the intricate interplay of gender, labor, and societal expectations within the domestic realm (Kohl & McCutcheon, 2014). Furthermore, the increasing presence of men in the kitchen has enabled the expression of a more diverse range of masculine subjectivities. This shift has introduced new anxieties for women, transforming family meals into a site of domestic conflict alongside their role as a celebration of family life (Meah & Jackson, 2013).

Furthermore, feminist literature has addressed the kitchen tasks in perpetuating gender discrimination and reinforcing entrenched gender norms. The kitchen is recognized as a space that shapes cooking as gendered labor, upholding conventional notions of masculinity and femininity (Matwick & Matwick, 2015). This discourse prompts inquiries into how individuals' engagement with food and cooking is influenced by gender, thereby illuminating the gendered characteristics of culinary practices and the formation of culinary identities (Cairns et al., 2010). The kitchen has been subject to examination as a space conducive to challenging and reformulating gender conventions. Cooking shows, in particular, have been scrutinized as platforms that disrupt gendered norms within food culture, reshaping the association between cooking and masculinity, and redefining masculine identity through culinary activities (Leer, 2016). This perspective accentuates the potential of cooking shows to reshape gendered narratives and reconceptualize the connection between gender and culinary practices.

The Covid-19 pandemic has prompted a renewed focus on the kitchen within feminist literature, serving as a lens to examine shifts in sociocultural dynamics, alterations in food consumption patterns, and changes in the portrayal of kitchen-related activities amid broader societal changes. It has brought attention to gender disparities in household responsibilities, with a notable emphasis on childcare and domestic tasks, predominantly borne by women (Collins et al., 2020). Feminist scholars have underscored the imperative to reassess the kitchen space and cooking within the feminist discourse, emphasizing the discernible gap between theoretical perspectives and practical realities (Ghosh & Reddy, 2021). Thus, the feminist literature has become instrumental in providing a critical lens through which to analyze the pandemic's profound impact on kitchen spaces, shedding light on evolving domestic labor.

The gendered allocation of labor, notably within the sphere of the kitchen and domestic culinary activities, has garnered increased attention during the pandemic. Research indicates that women continue to shoulder the predominant share of domestic cooking responsibilities, underscoring the enduring presence of traditional gender dichotomies in household duties (Ita, 2023). Moreover, within the pandemic context, comprehending the gendered dynamics of network-based solidarity and social resilience becomes crucial, especially when addressing matters of care beyond conventional understandings of domestic labor and affection (Manzo & Minello, 2020). While the kitchen is often associated with values of intimacy, memory, and care, a critical examination of these associations is imperative, considering the historical subordination of feminine spaces to the masculine in patriarchal societies (Ita, 2023).

In conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic has exerted a profound influence on kitchen spaces, bringing to the forefront the gender disparities in household responsibilities and the enduring gendered division of labor, especially within the realm of domestic cooking. Feminist literature has played a pivotal role in scrutinizing and dissecting these dynamics, offering critical insights into the challenges confronted by women in the kitchen during this unparalleled period. The pandemic has laid bare the unequal burden borne by women in terms of childcare, housework, and cooking, reaffirming traditional gender roles and exacerbating pre-existing gender inequalities. Women have borne the brunt of domestic cooking labor, further underscoring the persistence of gender dualisms within households. This underscores the imperative for a reevaluation of the kitchen space and culinary practices within the feminist discourse, aiming to bridge the gap between theoretical perspectives and practical realities.

Furthermore, the pandemic has underscored the significance of comprehending the gendered dynamics of network-based solidarity and social resilience in the kitchen. A crucial aspect involves approaching the matter of care beyond conventional notions of labor and affection to navigate the challenges posed by the pandemic. The kitchen, conventionally associated with values of intimacy, memory, and care, demands a critical examination to contest the historical subordination of feminine spaces to the masculine in patriarchal societies. Feminist literature has supplied

valuable insights into the pandemic's impact on kitchen spaces, shedding light on the gendered dynamics of domestic labor, power dynamics, and identity construction.

3.2.4. Emotional Labor

The seeds of emotional labor can be traced back to Betty Friedan's groundbreaking study *The Feminine Mystique* (1960), where she initially identified the societal pressures and expectations that would later be conceptualized as integral aspects of emotional labor. Friedan's analysis of the "feminine mystique" described how white educated women were confined to narrow roles of sexual passivity, motherhood, and domesticity, perpetuating traditional gender roles (Thompson & Bennett, 2017). This refers to the sense of dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment experienced by many women in the 1950s and 1960s who were confined to traditional roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers (Chrisler & McHugh, 2018). Here, Friedan, conceptualizes the emotional dissatisfaction stemming from the devotion to housework, which constructs an illusory sense of happiness, as "the problem that has no name". The notion of "the problem that has no name" captures the profound yet unidentifiable feeling of discontent that women felt despite seemingly living the idealized suburban life and stemmed from societal expectations that limited women's opportunities for personal and professional growth, leading to a sense of emptiness, despair, and lack of purpose in their lives (Allen, 2016). The emotional experiences of "emptiness" and "despair," highlighted by Betty Friedan, laid the groundwork for the subsequent development of the concept of emotional labor by Arlie Hochschild in the 1980s.

The theory of emotional labor, as formulated by Arlie Hochschild, has played a significant role in shaping our comprehension of emotional work within the household and its repercussions on individuals' well-being. Her groundbreaking study, *The Managed Heart* (1983), introduced the concept of emotional labor, highlighting its gendered nature and its influence on individual well-being (p. 6-7). Hochschild's framework primarily concentrates on emotional labor in the public domain, particularly within service-oriented professions. However, her research also holds significance for comprehending emotional labor within the private sphere, where individuals undertake emotion work to foster and maintain positive emotional atmospheres within familial contexts (Eby et al., 2010). Emotion work in the private

sphere entails offering emotional support, encouragement, and regulating one's own emotions to enhance the emotional well-being of family members (Minnotte et al., 2007). Minnotte et al., indicate that his facet of domestic labor encompasses endeavors to manage feelings, cultivate optimistic perspectives, and reinforce self-esteem within the familial context (p. 775). Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labor in the private sphere challenges the conventional dichotomy between public and private emotional labor by underlining that emotional labor transcends the confines of the workplace, extending into the realm of managing emotions within familial bonds (Carrier-Moisan, 2017).

The association between gender and emotional labor has been extensively investigated in scholarly research. Grandey emphasized that a substantial portion of service-oriented occupations, often characterized by emotional labor, is predominantly occupied by women, thereby establishing gender as a salient issue in the context of emotional labor (Grandey, 2000). This gendered characteristic of emotional labor is particularly conspicuous, which caregiving tasks are frequently construed as inherently "female", consequently leading to the devaluation of such work as a commodity (Henderson, 2001). Moreover, research has consistently indicated that women tend to engage in more emotional labor than men (Mahoney et al., 2011), aligning with the hypothesis put forth by Hochschild that emotional labor holds distinctive implications for women (Pruitt, 2012). Additionally, emotional labor exhibits a close connection to the division of labor within the family, as it encompasses the regulation of emotions and the performance of emotion work within the context of domestic responsibilities (Tartakovsky, 2022; Minnotte et al., 2010).

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the dynamics of domestic emotional labor have undergone significant transformations due to the unprecedented challenges and disruptions brought about by the global health crisis. The pandemic has prompted a reshaping of caregiving responsibilities within households, with a specific emphasis on the gendered aspects of emotional labor. Research has highlighted the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women's emotional labor, particularly in the realm of managing childcare duties while working remotely (Manzo & Minello, 2020). This emphasizes the imperative of comprehending the gendered dynamics of network-based solidarity and social resilience, particularly within the framework of caregiving responsibilities amid the pandemic.

Moreover, the pandemic has highlighted the emotional labor within academia, particularly emphasizing the negotiation of caring acts and emotions in both compensated and uncompensated domains (Newcomb, 2021). Newcomb indicates that Hochschild's concept of emotional labor has proven crucial in comprehending the challenges individuals face in regulating their emotions while navigating the intricacies of remote work and caregiving responsibilities amid the pandemic (p. 640). Additionally, the pandemic has raised apprehensions regarding the mental labor of mothers, emphasizing the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of mental labor phenomena in the context of family care (Robertson et al., 2019). The heightened demands for mental and emotional labor during the pandemic underscore the imperative for a more profound understanding of the psychological and emotional well-being of individuals managing caregiving responsibilities within the household.

In conclusion, Arlie Hochschild's theory of emotional labor serves as a significant framework for elucidating the complex interconnections between gender, and emotional labor. By highlighting the gendered aspects of emotional labor within households, particularly the predominant emotional work carried out by women, Hochschild's research contributes to our understanding of how emotional labor is intertwined with broader societal and economic dynamics. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated these dynamics, bringing emotional labor within households to the forefront of attention. The pandemic, accentuating the heightened emotional labor burden on women and the challenges associated with juggling responsibilities like remote work and childcare, illustrates the influential role of gender in shaping the landscape of emotional labor.

4. ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON DOMESTIC LABOR IN TURKEY

4.1. Review of the Texts Utilized in the Analysis

In this section of the thesis, various studies focusing on domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic between March 2020 and July 2022 are examined. These studies consist of three different types of publications: field research, articles, and reports. The selection of these studies is based on their direct and indirect focus on domestic labor during the Covid-19 pandemic period. This encompasses subjects that do not explicitly underscore domestic labor but nevertheless integrate it within the scope of the research, incorporating themes such as gender equality, domestic violence, the labor market, and employment during the Covid-19 pandemic. The main focus of this thesis aligns with the conceptual framework of domestic labor and specifically examines the various form of domestic labor. A detailed evaluation has been conducted under four themes, as seen in the literature, broadscale areas such as child-elderly care, household maintenance, kitchen duties, and emotional labor. Through reviewing the literature produced on domestic labor, 10 field studies, 16 articles, and 11 reports have been analyzed.

Text of the field research include different focus groups of women and men living in different cities, conducted through surveys, online interviews, and face-to-face interviews. Due to the lockdowns during the pandemic period, perusal of online methods is also predominant in the literature. While the number of target groups of these studies differ among each other, utilization of online methods demonstrated their wider outreach with more participants.

Among one of the most comprehensive studies, Ersöz's study comes to the forefront (2020). In this study, 413 women with diverse marital status, residing in different cities of Turkey, parenthood, and educational backgrounds were interviewed to examine how women experienced the pandemic and the challenges they faced during this period. The research assists in understanding women's emotional, social, and economic experiences during the pandemic. The study participants consist of 63.2% women within the age range of 21 to 44. The percentage of married women is 75%, and 74.1% have attained a university or higher education degree. Furthermore, 83.8% of women reside in families consisting of four members or fewer. The

proportion of women without children is 26.1%. Among the 301 women who have children, almost half (49.5%) have two children. These findings indicate that the profile of women in the study are well-educated, predominantly in the younger age group, living in smaller family units, typically have a lower number of children and women have a middle-income level (p. 1515-1516).

Another important but contextually limited study, Işık's research (2020) on the labor experiences of women in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic. It involves six married and three single women aged between 31 and 60, residing in Ankara (p. 228). By conducting face-to-face interviews with nine women about sixty to ninety minutes, this study explores the form of employment status, the impacts of support services such as primary school and kindergarten on women, and individuals in need of care in the household on women. The reason for low number of participants and the location to be chosen as Ankara is due to the high risk of infection and easy access to women working in both public sector and private sector.

Although the risk of infection still persists, there have been studies with wider scope that have been conducted with higher number of individuals. As an example, Ilkkaracan and Memiş's study (2021) compares the results of the surveys conducted to measure the time-spent at home by 2407 women and men in May 2020 with the surveys conducted on in April 2018 with 5793 individuals (p. 293). The study examines the changes in gender inequalities in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly the transformations in the inequalities between paid and unpaid work and their consequences. This study holds significance as it conducts a comparative analysis of survey results conducted before and during the pandemic, providing insights into shaping gendered patterns of time allocation.

In addition, three field studies specifically focusing on the experiences of employed women at home are conducted. Özeren, Çabuk, and Şimga (2022) interviewed 21 women and 27 men, aged between 25 and 65, working in different sectors (p. 301-302). In the study conducted by Karacan and Yılmaz, 80% of the participating women are married, and nearly 75% of these married women have children (2022). The interviewed women in the research represent various occupational groups, including both the private and public sectors. All participant women reside in different cities, and their ages range from 28 to 55 (p. 6). In the study conducted by Topal and Kaya (2021), interviews were conducted with a total of 13 women

residing in Giresun province. Out of these women, 10 are married and three are single. Additionally, all of them are employed, such as academicians, lawyers, teachers, and except for two women, all have children (p. 100). Kaya and Işık (2021) explored the effects of social isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic on family and marital life through interviews with 15 married couples. According to the interviews, 80% of the participants are women, 33.3% had a high school education, 46.7% are housewives, and 66.7% of participants in the study reported that their economic status is equivalent to their expenses. All participants mention that they are parents, with 46.7% having one child. Additionally, 73.3% of the participants stated that they are not actively working during this process, while 66.7% mention that their spouses are also not actively working (p. 513).

Başaran and Aksoy (2020) examine how 26 parents (19 mothers and seven fathers) balance childcare, household chores, and work responsibilities, and the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on family relationships. The participants in this study primarily consist of mothers, most of whom are generally found at home, and they have stated that they did not work during the pandemic period. However, some working mothers have been continuously at home during the Covid-19 period, while others are required to leave home for work. It is noted that all fathers are employed, and during the Covid-19 period, 13 fathers are reported to be consistently present at home. The participants have at least one child (p. 671).

Another important source of this thesis is the articles written by researchers from different disciplines, which address various aspects of domestic labor. These articles examine the changes and effects of domestic labor during the pandemic using theoretical frameworks, data analysis based on field studies, and literature reviews. The research includes parental child caregiving and women's responsibilities in home, more specifically potential impact of closures on caregiving, remote work of parents and single mothers. These studies shed light on the challenges women face, the work-family balance, especially the domestic responsibilities, and gender inequalities during the pandemic. They also further examine the economic impacts of the pandemic, the risk of poverty for women, and the respective effects on gender equality.

The final important focus of this study is the reports, which comprehensively monitor gender studies during the Covid-19 pandemic. These reports provide a

comprehensive evaluation of the impacts of the pandemic on gender-based inequalities, employed women, women's rights, and women's responsibilities at home, childcare, social policies, and remote work. The reports are mainly produced and published by credible international and national organizations or university research centers that have been active in such studies for years. To name a few, UN Women (2020), UNDP (2020), SU Gender (2020), IstanPol (2020), the Istanbul Policy Center-Sabancı University-Stiftung Mercator Initiative (2021) and WWHR (2020). The expertise of these institutions in conducting similar studies and the comprehensive insights and findings shared in these studies strengthens the basis for discussions in this thesis.

As discussed as above the studies subject to this thesis have been grouped under four categories, namely, child-elderly care, domestic home maintenance, responsibilities in the kitchen, and emotional labor as the predominant categorization in the literature. Yet, it should be underlined that the divisions among these categories are blurred, meaning that, they are crosscutting in many ways and have impacts on each other.

4.2. Themes of Women's Gender Roles and Domestic Labor

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant changes in various aspects of society in Turkey. One of these changes is the impact on women's gender roles and domestic labor. Within the context, this section will discuss how women have taken on responsibilities in areas such as child-elderly care, domestic home maintenance, kitchen, and emotional labor during the pandemic, and examine the effects of these responsibilities on gender roles on the basis of field studies, articles, and reports published in Turkey. Additionally, it will also discuss the involvement of men in domestic responsibilities and share insights on the identified changes of domestic roles in household chores.

4.2.1. Child-Elderly Care as Domestic Labor

One of the most effort intensive area of domestic labor is child and elderly care. Child and elderly care involve responsibilities regarding health, education (for children), meal preparation, and hygiene. While such household responsibilities account for a significant amount of time for the parents, the situation has almost

doubled during the pandemic period. Yerlikaya's article (2022) highlights this issue in the meaning that a scrutiny of the assessment of unpaid labor time during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially throughout the quarantine period, has revealed a prevalent tendency where women are generally more adversely affected, and a parallel situation has been experienced in Turkey in the literature. Extraordinary circumstances such as the transition to remote education, the escalating need for child, elderly, and patient care, and challenges in accessing products and services from the market due to the pandemic have resulted in a substantial surge in demand for domestic production and care labor (p. 76).

It has been identified that the studies reviewed under this topic has indicated that there has been a major increase in the amount of the child and elderly care duties associated with parents. This increase is mostly due to lockdowns, remote education, and the age limit applied for the elderly. For the first time, a restriction on outdoor activities was imposed on individuals aged 65 and above, as well as those with chronic illnesses. Additionally, primary, and secondary schools, universities, and daycare centers were temporarily closed. Subsequently, in addition to these measures, a curfew was implemented for individuals under the age of 20. In this process, the government has initiated lockdowns lasting for three weeks and these restrictions remained in effect for a period of two years, with occasional flexibility, as determined by the government's specified conditions.

Starting with the impacts of lockdowns and stay-at-home orders, increased time spent at home resulted in families spending more time at home. This meant that parents had to manage childcare and household tasks without the usual breaks or support systems that were available before the pandemic. The findings of Kocatürk's field study (2021) indicate that women who previously received support from family members, neighbors, or daycare centers for childcare were deprived of such assistance during the pandemic (p. 246). Additionally, another reason for the increased workload related to childcare, as revealed in the interviews conducted by Karacan and Yılmaz (2022), is the arising need to manage children's meal preparation and academic follow-up at home. Children's daily meal routine has been expanded to include snacks in addition to traditional meals such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Furthermore, to support the remote learning process at home, parents

have taken on a new role as educators, replacing the previous support provided by teachers at school (p. 13).

The distribution of childcare responsibilities has been found to vary in field studies and research articles during the pandemic. For instance, in Başaran and Aksoy's field study (2020), it is reported that men were more involved in providing childcare, engaging in activities such as playing together, watching cartoons, playing pretend, and cooking (p. 672). In their research this is mostly related to time spent at home by fathers since the half of the male interviewed was working at home during the pandemic period and only three participants had to leave for longer hours to work.

"Salgında kadın olmak: Covid-19 Salgınının ve Kamusal Alan Kısıtlamalarının Kadınlar Üzerindeki Etkilerinin Haklar Bağlamında Değerlendirilmesi" (2020) provides findings in terms of the involvement of male members of the household in childcare as well. Published by WWHR, it represents a comprehensive study conducted nationwide in Turkey, involving women from the association's network as well as selected participant groups. Examining the notable participant profile, it is observed that 1% are illiterate, and 2% have not completed any formal education. Within this group, 18% have completed primary or middle school, 25% have completed high school, and 55% have received university-level education and beyond (p. 30). Furthermore, the average number of children for women in this study is 1.92, with an average of 1.54 of these children continuing to reside in the same household as the women (p. 34). Additionally, 58% of women in the interview describe their place of residence as a provincial center, 37% as a district center, and 4% as a rural area (p. 35). According to the findings derived from the interviews in this study, it is highlighted that there is an observed increase ranging from 8.2% to 16.5% in the post-pandemic period regarding spouses/partners of women with children taking on responsibilities related to the care of the children (p. 65).

Likewise, in a study conducted by Özeren, Çabuk, and Şimga (2022) with 48 participants, it is emphasized that male participants showed increased support for childcare. This study draws attention to its participants' demographic profiles as all women and men participated in the study are employed and white-collar workers (p. 301-302). The majority of participants utilized an approach based on mutual assistance. This means that the increasing visibility of domestic labor in the households due to time spent at home resulted with men becoming more involved in

the increasing work at home although they were involved in through supporting roles, such as making salad, loading the dishwasher, and setting dinner tables (p. 314). Within the scope of this study, it is observed that both female and male participants have relatively higher socio-economic levels, and with both parents being employed, there is a tendency for men to be involved in household chores.

As for the articles, most of them indicate that women have been primarily responsible for childcare during the pandemic. In the study conducted by Akbaş and Dursun (2020), it is noted that the maternal status of working women diversified and increased in relation to remote learning for children and working from home situations (p. 80). This study aligns with the conclusions drawn by Akkan and Kesici (2021), emphasizing that the closure of schools for one and a half years resulted in the responsibility of childcare falling predominantly on women. According to the 2016 data from TUIK, women in Turkey spent an average of approximately four hours per day on household chores and family care, while men devoted about one hour per day to these activities (p. 2824-2825). In line with this, Ilkkaracan and Memiş's study (2021), based on TUIK data, reveals an increase in the time allocated to domestic labor during the pandemic for both women and men. Specifically, it is stated that the time dedicated to domestic labor among women doubled during this period (p. 295). In addition to these studies, another significant study by Memiş and Kongar (2020) highlights that families who lacked non-parental childcare arrangements, such as grandmothers and nannies, faced a caregiving crisis (p. 11). The study emphasizes that women with children took on the responsibility themselves, increasing the burden of childcare on them.

The report, "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Algısı Araştırması", conducted by KHAS since 2015, has systematically engaged a total of 7042 participants. The participants are residents of 23 different cities across Turkey (p. 2), with 46% being male and 54% female (p. 4). It has been stated that over 80% of the participants in the study have children and mostly possess a moderate-income level (p. 6-7). This ongoing research initiative provides a comprehensive dataset offering insights into gender-based perceptions, encompassing a broad geographical scope. Based on the findings from the year 2022, the study indicates an increase in regular activities related to childcare among men, including caring for, going out with, playing games, studying, reading books, putting to bed, feeding, and bathing their children.

However, this increase is notably associated with fathers' involvement in childcare and is correlated with their educational background - as the level of education rises, fathers' participation in childcare also increases (p. 28).

These studies emphasize the diversification of interaction time with children and the increasing involvement of men in childcare. The diversity in the educational backgrounds of the interviewees in these studies is noteworthy, with more than half having education beyond the university level. Additionally, the fact that both parents work and there is a dual income in the household stand out as a significant finding. Moreover, the impact of higher income levels compared to other participants and the majority residing in urban areas is evident. The intersection of these factors highlights the dynamic nature of modern parenting roles, suggesting a shift towards shared responsibilities in childcare. In this context, it becomes clear that the dynamics of parenting roles should consider not only gender roles but also educational and socio-economic factors during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant challenges and changes not only in the realm of childcare but also in the domain of elderly care. As previously mentioned, the restrictions, prohibitions, and social isolation brought about by the pandemic have led to an intensified provision of elderly care. The increase in elderly care can be attributed to several factors, as indicated by the findings of the Işık's field study (2020). These factors include the difficulty in accessing healthcare services, resulting in limited access to regular health check-ups and treatments for elderly individuals (p. 225). Additionally, the study conducted by Öztürk, Üstünalan, and Metin (2020) emphasizes the loss of social support networks and the challenges in meeting the emotional needs of elderly individuals. Additionally, this study highlights that elderly individuals have been abandoned to care homes due to restrictions, resulting in a decrease in socialization opportunities with family members (p. 188).

The increased workload in elderly care has necessitated a closer discussion of how this burden is shared among caregivers and family members. The general finding across all studies in this research indicates that traditional gender roles persist in elderly care, with women predominantly performing these responsibilities. Ersöz's (2020), Özeren, Çabuk, and Şimga's (2022), Öztürk, Üstünalan, and Metin's field studies (2020), as well as some reports, consistently highlight that task such as

cleaning, medication management, and grocery shopping for elderly care are primarily carried out by women.

Based on the findings of field studies, articles, and reports, it is seen that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the workload related to childcare significantly increased due to school closures, limited access to external support, the need to balance work and childcare, increased time spent at home, and the emotional strain experienced by families. Although the role of women in this field has generally remained unchanged, field studies mostly demonstrate an increased involvement of men in childcare in practice. However, in elderly care, women continue to perform caregiving duties in line with traditional gender roles. In this regard, it is not possible to speak of a genuine balanced workload in terms of gender, but there are indications of shifts and an increased involvement of men in childcare to a limited extend, as shown by most of the field studies. The findings of fields studies are especially important since they demonstrate a practical progress in the distribution of child-care responsibilities. The extend of which this practical progress would be translated into an understanding of domestic labor from a more equal perspective will be visible in subsequent studies in the field.

4.2.2. Home Maintenance

One of the prominent issues highlighted in the literature within this theme is the increased workload associated with domestic home maintenance, encompassing various tasks such as general upkeep, cleaning, repairs, security measures, organization, and many more. As mentioned in the previous section, the increased amount of time spent at home due to restrictions has resulted in a greater demand for domestic home maintenance. Additionally, the limitations on accessing external services, such as house cleaner have compelled household members to take on their own responsibilities for home maintenance.

During this health crisis, the high risk of transmission has led to additional responsibilities in domestic home maintenance. As highlighted in Alpar's article (2020), the increase in the number of family members has significantly heightened the responsibilities for hygiene and sterilization (p. 176). Karabulut's article (2021) also emphasizes this situation in the meaning that household chores such as dishwashing and laundry have increased like never before due to the "piling up" of

family members at home (p. 74). As a result of the compulsory increase in household activities, the traditional concept such as cleanliness and hygiene have been coded as women's work. This situation necessitates creating a home environment that requires more care and attention to ensure the safety of household members from health risks.

The report from the Istanbul Policy Center-Sabancı University-Stiftung Mercator Initiative (2021) examines the gender-based distribution of domestic responsibilities before and during the pandemic, based on a survey conducted with 1,500 participants across Turkey (p. 3). According to the report, the percentage of women participants claiming responsibility for household chores during the pandemic has decreased from 77% to 71% (p.4). This decline is attributed to women who previously asserted sole responsibility for these tasks now indicating shared responsibilities with their spouses. The proportion of both male and female participants stating that they share household chores with their partners has increased. Among male participants, the percentage claiming to share these responsibilities with their spouses has risen from 13% to 18%, while among female participants, this figure has increased from 10% to 16% (p. 4).

The findings from the "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Algısı Araştırması" (2022) conducted by KHAS, provide insights into men's participation in various domestic activities, including laundry, dishwashing, house organization, cleaning, grocery shopping, and home maintenance. The research suggests that, in general, men tend to concentrate on responsibilities associated with the external environment while concurrently engaging in household chores. This indicates a preference among men to prioritize work, career, or other activities outside the home over traditional domestic duties. Nevertheless, as highlighted in the report, there is a positive correlation between the level of education and an increase in men's involvement in household chores (p. 25).

Furthermore, similar findings are evident in other field studies, notably in Işık's study (2020), where participants mentioned receiving external support for cleaning before the pandemic but having to handle almost the tasks themselves during the pandemic. Based on the findings presented in the articles and the experiences shared in field research, it can be expressed that household chores are still predominantly evaluated within the framework of traditional gender roles. In this context, some participants reported that household tasks are still considered as responsibilities that

fall on women, limiting the active participation of men within the household (p. 237-238).

Some of field studies, articles, and reports consistently demonstrate that women have mostly experienced a significant increase in their involvement in household tasks, particularly in areas related to hygiene, during the pandemic. This has resulted in a doubling of the time and effort women dedicate to maintaining cleanliness and hygiene within the household. However, it is evident that men have been insufficient in sharing the responsibilities associated with household tasks. As the level of education among men increases, there is a noticeable improvement in their engagement and contribution to domestic duties. This positive correlation between higher educational attainment and increased involvement in household responsibilities highlights the potential impact of education in fostering a more equitable distribution of tasks within the home.

4.2.3. Responsibilities in the Kitchen

A considerable bulk of domestic labor during the pandemic was in the kitchen. This has established the foundation for the kitchen to be a separate discussion category in this thesis, as discussed under section of literature review. This is because examining the kitchen space through the lens of gender construction, and identity, this perspective underscores the challenges women face, including discourse rule from male hegemony and the oppression of traditional gender roles.

Based on information obtained from field studies, kitchen activities before the pandemic were primarily limited to fundamental practices such as grocery shopping and cooking. However, the pandemic introduced diversity into these new practices. New responsibilities emerged due to hygiene concerns, such as checking and monitoring the expiration dates of externally purchased foods and packaged products, as well as ensuring the cleanliness of these items. Disinfection processes using solutions, such as vinegar or bleach also became additional tasks incorporated into kitchen routines.

The extensive field study carried out by Özeren, Çabuk, and Şimga (2022) convey experiences of male participants in the kitchen as follows: “My spouse enjoys cooking and is actively involved in it. I, on the other hand, assume more of a supportive role; we prepare meals together, I chop vegetables, and then I wash and

place pots and pans in the dishwasher. However, was it like this before? Yes, it was much more limited...” and “My spouse prefers to take the lead in cooking. I have started spending more time in the kitchen.” It is also shared experiences such as “We have small contributions, like making salads, arranging the dishes in the dishwasher...” (p. 309). It is indicated that the increasing frequency of mealtimes led to a higher prevalence of regularly cooked stovetop dishes and oven-prepared items among individuals within households. Additionally, it is reported that the pre-pandemic culture of dining out underwent a setback, transforming home kitchens into something akin to restaurant kitchens (p. 308).

Some of the findings from field studies, articles and reports indicate significant disparities in the weight of roles undertaken by women within the household, particularly highlighting a two-fold increase in the duration and burden of these roles for homemakers compared to other groups of women, owing to their overall responsibility for household chores. Similarly, Karacan ve Yılmaz’s research (2022) claim that for women engaged in professional careers, both the workload and time commitment have doubled. This underscores the dual pressure that women face, balancing demands from both their professional and domestic spheres. On the other hand, an examination of men’s roles within the household reveals a tendency to assume specific tasks, yet they are often confined to peripheral roles (p. 15). As Başaran and Aksoy it is claimed that men, notably, continue to sustain their supporting role in meal preparation by preparing side dishes such as salads (p. 672).

The report “Covid-19 Salgın Döneminde “Zorunlu” Evden Çalışma: İş ve Özel Yaşama Etkileri” (2020) prepared by Istanbul University Faculty of Economics Human Resources Research Center reveals that, with the onset of mandatory remote work amidst the pandemic, traditional gender roles persist in household activities, particularly in meal preparation. According to the participant profile outlined in the report, the majority of participants, constituting 55%, are women, predominantly married individuals (60%). The percentage of participants without children stands at 51%, while 60% hold managerial positions. In the distribution of age, it is observed that three-quarters of the participants fall within the 25-34 age range (44%). Regarding educational attainment, the majority (93%) have received education at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Furthermore, 89% of the participants do not

have children requiring care, and 70% do not have children engaged in remote learning (p. 4).

The studies analyzed in this research indicate that the workload for women has diversified and increased; however, especially field studies and reports, fall short in explicating the reasons behind this escalation. The findings in this regard underscores the significance of the conceptual framework in the thesis. By focusing on concepts such as gender and gender roles at the outset of the thesis, perspectives on why women are compelled to assume an increased workload were presented. In this context, it should be emphasized that they did not thoroughly delve into the social, cultural, and historical factors underlying the rise in women's workload. Pandemic being a very recent and new experience for households and for studies evaluated under this thesis shed light on the need to conduct more detailed and comprehensive analyses in the literature.

4.2.4. Emotional Labor

In Western literature, emotional labor has been extensively discussed, yet there is a notable lack of comprehensive studies in the Turkish literature. As previously discussed in the literature review, emotional labor in domestic work pertains to meeting emotional needs and managing the emotional atmosphere within the household. This concept encompasses elements such as providing emotional support in domestic relationships, demonstrating empathy, utilizing communication skills, managing conflicts, coping with stress, and maintaining emotional balance among family members. In the realm of domestic emotional labor, the aim is to establish healthy communication and emotional connections among family members, meet emotional needs within the family, and ensure the sustainability of relationships within the household.

In the context of emotional labor during the pandemic, Çelik and Çak (2021) highlight the emotional impact of uncertainties, concerns, and fears stemming from disruptions in health, economy, and societal norms. Their study emphasizes that individuals, grappling with these challenges, are compelled to seek emotional support. Additionally, they claim that the imposed restrictions during this period contribute to a deviation from the expected grieving processes within families, leading individuals to confront issues such as depression and mental health concerns

(p. 45). This perspective resonates with the in-depth field study conducted by Öztürk, Ünalan, and Metin (2020), shedding light on how individuals adapt their emotional coping mechanisms based on the specific conditions in which they live. The study further delves into discussions derived from interviews, exploring the nuanced ways individuals navigate and respond emotionally to their circumstances. Furthermore, the article states that individuals residing in homes with gardens or balconies, or those with personal spaces, experience a diminished sense of confinement, anxiety, and uncertainty (p. 208). This finding underscores the interplay between living conditions and the emotional well-being of individuals during the pandemic.

The field study by Karacan and Yılmaz (2022), as well as the article by Akbaş and Dursun (2020), reveal similar findings concerning women attempting to reconcile their private and public spheres while working from home (p. 15-16). These findings emphasize the challenges faced by women in balancing work and home life, sustaining work performance, and managing work processes. Individuals caught between work and home experience emotional difficulties, highlighting factors such as work-related stress, pressure, fatigue, and lack of motivation. This situation underscores that individual working remotely, particularly women, encounter various emotional challenges related to their work.

Among the factors contributing to the increased emotional labor during this period, studies highlight the intensification of relationships within the household due to the increased time spent at home, the impact of social isolation, and the rise in caregiving responsibilities. In the field study conducted by Öztürk, Üstünalan, and Metin (2020), the increase in time spent at home is identified as potentially fostering heightened interaction among family members; however, this does not necessarily imply the establishment of deeper bonds in every household. An experience in the research is articulated as follows: “This situation genuinely instilled a profound fear in me. My mother has diabetes and high blood pressure; I left masks and disinfectants at the door for her, but I cannot see them. Fear has emerged due to the concern of potentially transmitting the virus to my roommate” (p. 209). This indicates that this situation intensifies emotional labor for family members, requiring them to allocate more time and energy to each other’s emotional needs.

Another experience in Öztürk, Üstünalan, and Metin’ field study (2020) is expressed as follows: “After meeting with a friend during the first weekend of the pandemic, I

returned home. I woke up in a panic attack, drenched in sweat, during the night. I felt anxious about the possibility of having contracted the disease, but I did not want to go to the hospital due to my fear… I was in need of companionship and spending time with others." (p. 209-210). This experience suggests that the impact of social isolation, which restricts individuals' social interactions and distances them from support mechanisms, may impose an additional emotional labor burden on household relationships. Additionally, the escalation of responsibilities such as remote education for children, care for elderly family members, and other caregiving duties implies that family members are exerting more effort in providing emotional support, displaying empathy, and meeting caregiving needs.

Consequently, building on this discussion, Tanış's article (2021) eloquently conveys the concept of emotional labor: Drawing on Haicault's insight, it is emphasized that emotional labor extends beyond reducing domestic labor to a mere activity. It is highlighted the intellectual and emotional dimensions of this labor (p. 275). He underscores that care labor is not confined to performing household chores or meeting the needs of children and the elderly at home. This process involves a range of activities, on one hand, evoking various emotions and, on the other hand, demonstrating the dimensions of emotional labor. Among these activities are anticipating emotional needs, identifying options to address those needs, making decisions among alternatives, and ultimately monitoring the outcomes (p. 275).

During the pandemic, factors such as an increase in household chores, remote education for children, and the care of elderly family members have led women to engage in more emotional labor. Women have found themselves taking on additional responsibilities in providing emotional support, displaying empathy, utilizing communication skills, and managing conflicts within domestic relationships. However, studies on emotional labor should not be exclusively focused on women. It is crucial to also delve into masculinity and throughout the pandemic, studies claim that some men have increased their involvement in household tasks and also contributed to emotional labor. Among the experiences shared in Çobaner and Tasouji's field study (2021), participants expressed different emotional difficulties such as "I experienced insomnia and loss of appetite due to stress" and "I had concerns about my general health. My eating habits changed" (p. 1217-1218). Similarly, the finding emphasized in the research by Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay

(2022) claims on the emotional responses arising from the health threat during the pandemic, highlighting emotional states such as responsibility and protectiveness during this period (p. 25). Therefore, experiences obtained from field studies indicates that both men and women experience emotional labor in different forms and to varying degrees.

4.3. Redistribution of Domestic Labor under the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Although extensively discussed in Western academic literature, the topics of "Girls" and "Masculine Domesticity" remain crucial for examination in the discussion section of this study, which explores the impact of domestic labor on gender roles from diverse perspectives. Within the sub-topic of "Participation of Girls in Domestic Labor", it is underscored that in societies where household chores and caregiving responsibilities are typically ascribed to women, girls also assume these responsibilities, thereby influencing gender roles. This perspective delves into the experiences of girls in relation to domestic labor and discusses the transmission of societal gender norms. Conversely, in another discussion section, "Masculine Domesticity," attention is directed towards the changing role of men in domestic labor, challenging the traditional norm that predominantly assigns household chores and caregiving to women. This paradigm shift reveals the fragility of societal norms surrounding domestic labor while also discussing the implications of men's changing role in this domain.

4.3.1. Participation of Girls in Domestic Labor

In societies where household chores and caregiving responsibilities are traditionally assigned to women, reports during the Covid-19 pandemic have notably highlighted that in many cases girls have also assumed these responsibilities. This circumstance necessitates a comprehensive examination of the impact of gender roles on domestic labor. This discussion provides a crucial perspective for comprehending the experiences of daughters in connection with domestic labor and the transformation of gender roles.

Experiences from Işık's field study (2020), such as "My daughters are at home. They help around the house" (p. 233), and also experiences from Topal and Kaya's field

study (2021), like “My eldest daughter tidies up her room, helps with anything that needs to be done. Sometimes the table is set, sometimes the dishwasher is emptied. In such situations, there is assistance. One of us sweeps, one of us wipes, one of us dusts. Having a daughter is important because girls are more organized, helpful to the mother”, collectively reveal instances of daughters’ involvement in household chores and their assistance to mothers (p. 105). Particularly noteworthy is their contribution to tasks such as tidying up rooms, setting the table, and emptying the dishwasher.

The findings from the comprehensive report of UN Women Turkey (2020), which includes a total of 1,508 women and men from different cities of Turkey as participants (p. 9), indicate that factors such as school closures, remote education, and increased time spent at home during the pandemic have led to a heightened involvement of girls in household responsibilities. This, in conjunction with the increased domestic workload for girls, points to a decrease in educational and personal development opportunities (p. 6). It is noted that household tasks and caregiving responsibilities lead girls to allocate their time and energy away from other activities. This situation is reported to make it challenging for girls to focus on their education and career goals.

However, it is crucial to note that the description of daughters as being more organized and helpful may reinforce gender-based stereotypes and traditional divisions of labor within the household. The perception that girls are inherently more organized and helpful might perpetuate societal expectations associated with gender roles. Rather than reflecting an equitable sharing of domestic responsibilities, these experiences may inadvertently underscore gender-based discrimination. Therefore, a critical examination of such narratives is essential to foster a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics surrounding gender roles and domestic labor.

In the context of the discussion, it is noteworthy that in the majority of detailed analyses, there is an absence of data regarding the involvement of boys in domestic labor, with only a few exceptions. Notably, UN Women Turkey (2020) report indicates that 15% of women and 17.5% of men reported increased involvement of boys in household chores compared to the period before the Covid-19 pandemic (p. 6). The limited availability of such data can be attributed to the prevailing focus of the literature on domestic labor, predominantly directed towards understanding gender-based inequalities within the realms of women and girls. The perception roots

in traditional gender roles, considering household labor primarily as the responsibility of women and girls, may contribute to a scarcity of studies documenting the involvement of boys in domestic labor. Additionally, research methodologies often tend to center around questions focusing on women or girls with a potential consequence of creating a gap in accurately measuring the participation of boys in household labor.

Through some studies, it has become evident that women are currently in a position of being producers of household labor and that they pass on this practice to their daughters. This situation, combined with the reality that women are already in a disadvantaged position, has led to the reproduction and transmission of gender roles within the household across generations. The reproduction of gender norms within households implies that women continue to sustain their existing roles through domestic labor and pass on these roles from one generation to the next, particularly to their daughters. This scenario forms a noticeable pattern in the growth processes of girls, directing them towards assuming similar roles.

4.3.2. Masculine Domesticity

Masculine domesticity is a concept that encompasses the understanding of men's engagement with traditionally domestic roles and spaces. It involves the redefinition of masculinity to include characteristics and activities that have been traditionally associated with femininity, such as emotional expression, sensitivity, and caregiving (Hunter et al., 2017). The boundaries between "feminine" and "masculine" domestic activities are becoming increasingly blurred, challenging the traditional gendered meanings of domestic practices (Neuman et al., 2017). This redefinition of masculinity in the domestic sphere is indicative of a shift towards a more caring and involved form of masculinity, which is intertwined with men's identities and the meanings of home (Walsh, 2011).

The concept of masculine domesticity also involves the exploration of how men's engagement with domesticity can reshape dominant discourses of home, providing insights into the diverse and fluid gendered meanings of home (Gorman-Murray, 2014). It is evident that there is a range of masculinities, and contemporary research documents a considerable diversity in the ways men express and perform their masculinity (Shows & Gerstel, 2008). The modern history of homemaking has

brought about new masculine roles, which differ from traditional female domestic roles in terms of spaces, activities, language, and themes (Mechlenborg & Gram-Hanssen, 2020). This suggests that there is a transformation in the roles and practices associated with masculinity within the domestic sphere.

Within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, instances have starting to be emerged, illustrating a shift in traditional gender roles, notably marked by an increased involvement of men in tasks traditionally associated with females, including housework and childcare. Studies have indicated that men increased their time spent on household chores during the pandemic, reflecting a potential shift in traditional gender roles (Stefanova et al., 2021). However, it is important to note that the increase in men's involvement in household labor is often temporary and influenced by factors such as job loss or working from home, rather than a sustained abandonment of traditional gender roles (Stefanova et al., 2021). This temporary increase in men's involvement in household chores may have been influenced by the removal of spatial constraints due to lockdowns, potentially facilitating a more gender-equal division of labor (Stefanova et al., 2021).

In the field study conducted by Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay (2022), The focus group consists of individuals aged between 32 and 45, with an average age of 37. Examining the titles of the participants; two individuals are professors, three are associate professor, four are research assistants, and seven are academic staff. Among the participants, nine have working spouses, while seven have non-working spouses. Additionally, the number of children among the participants ranges from one to four (p. 21).

According to the findings of Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay (2022) study, it is claimed that the participants, academician fathers, were unable to spend enough time with their children due to the challenges brought by their work life before the pandemic (p. 26-27). However, they express a positive change in this situation during the pandemic. Fathers make efforts to have more productive time at home with the limitations on outside activities. In this regard, they emphasize engaging in games and board games with their children at home and highlight the importance of spending quality time together as a family (p. 28). This emphasizes that the circumstances provided an opportunity for these fathers to establish a more regular

family life, closely monitor their children's development, and strengthen their bonds with them.

Another finding from Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay (2022) is that during the pandemic, participants spent more time with their spouses and there were changes in household roles. The experiences similar to the ones mentioned in the study "I have consistently taken on responsibilities in various aspects, and my partner has never exhibited an attitude of 'It is not my responsibility, you handle it,' or 'I could not manage it, so you had to'. Such notions do not exist in our relationship. If there is a task to be completed, the person who notices it takes the initiative, and there is no expectation for one person to wait for the other to address it." This experience aligns with findings from the study, indicating that fathers, who previously had limited time for household chores, have increased their involvement in domestic tasks. This shift is attributed to "the newfound flexibility brought about by the ability to work from home" (p. 29-30).

The field study conducted by Çobaner and Tasouji (2021) involves 20 participants between the ages of 28 and 50, residing in nine different major cities in Turkey. Among these participants, only one has completed high school, while nine have attained a university degree, and 10 have pursued postgraduate education. Of the participants, 15 are married with children, and six are single. All participants have experienced working from home or adopting flexible work arrangements during the pandemic, albeit at different times (p. 1216-1217.

One of the key findings of Çobaner and Tasouji (2021) study revolves around experiences within the family concerning communication and responsibilities. One participant expressed the enjoyable nature of the time spent with their family during this period, stating, "I think it was pleasant to spend time together, which we had not done for a long time. We engaged in various activities and had fun" (p. 1219). Another participant highlighted the changes, saying, "There must have been a change because I became a father who spends most of his time with his wife and children... I started helping my wife in the kitchen. Being required to spend more time brought the necessity of being more understanding" (p. 1219). These statements emphasize the experiences of fatherhood during this period and underscore the increased time spent with children. Almost all participating fathers in the study indicated an increase

in responsibilities related to childcare during the pandemic, emphasizing a significant rise in the time spent together.

Another important revelation in this study is the heightened involvement of men, particularly those with working wives, in assuming greater responsibility for the distribution of domestic labor during the pandemic. Additionally, it has been identified that the traditional gendered division of labor persists within households where the spouse is not engaged in employment. This scenario underscores the persistent perception that women's presence at home is primarily associated with responsibilities related to housework and childcare. Furthermore, the increased participation of spouses in household chores can be viewed as a positive stride toward a more equitable distribution of domestic labor. However, the continuity of traditional gender norms among men with non-working spouses results in the concentration of domestic responsibilities on women and an unequal division of labor.

Kaya and Yaşar's field study (2021) focuses on a male profile consisting of married or dating couples who experienced the pandemic together. In this context, interviews were conducted with a total of 9 couples, with one being in a dating relationship and the other 8 being married, within the age range of 22-62. Six of the interviewed couples have children, and there is diversity in the educational and occupational statuses of the couples, with a minimum of high school graduation (p. 13-14).

In Kaya and Yaşar's study (2021), it is stated that during the pandemic, activities traditionally associated with masculinity, such as football matches on the field, coffeehouse gatherings, gym sessions, and sports-related events, have been temporarily suspended (p. 16). Many of these activities that are considered "normal" before the pandemic have been restricted, and some have even become "abnormal". The pandemic has ushered in new definitions and circumstances into our way of life, signifying a shift from the erstwhile concept of "normal" to the era of the "new normal". The term "new normal" underscores the emergence of fresh norms and changing regulations accompanying the pandemic, indicating the obsolescence of prior norms and their replacement by new ones. Within this framework, the research engages in a discourse on the economic, social, and cultural challenges confronted by male participants during the pandemic -their most significant feelings of absence in this period, and their strategies for adapting to the "new normal" (p. 14-15).

Based on the findings of Kaya and Yaşar study (2021), when compared with Çobaner and Tasouji's (2021) and Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay's (2022) field studies, it reveals that the experiences of some participants indicate the persistence of a gendered division of labor. For instance, statements such as "My spouse may have felt like a kitchen robot... At this age, watching TV becomes the easiest, I guess I did the same" and "My spouse had to cook three meals every day, and naturally struggled" (p. 18) suggest that some participants perceive the continuation of traditional gender roles. However, on the other hand, some participants express their involvement in all household tasks, including cooking, dishes, and cleaning, with statements like "In a way, I became a woman of the house" (p. 22). Especially, the expression "When my spouse started cleaning, I would continue and finish it. I did all the tasks like sweeping, window cleaning, painting the house" (p. 22) indicates a tendency to challenge traditional masculinity norms.

Based on the experiences derived from the interviews in Kaya and Yaşar's study (2021), another significant finding emerging from the participants' expressions indicates that the division of household labor persists in a gendered manner, but there are relative shifts. For instance, statements like "My spouse did all the tasks like cooking, dishes, and cleaning. I generally took care of the child", "Mostly, my wife handles all the household chores. I only surprised them and occasionally cooked meals on some days", "I generally assisted in cooking because I enjoy it" and "Specifically, we did not have a situation where this task is yours, and that task is mine, but for example, making breakfast every morning is my responsibility. I occasionally helped with cleaning at home". For instance, "I took care of dust on high places that my wife could not reach" suggest that men staying at home usually take on a supportive role, and they characterize this assistance as a "surprise" or a "favor" (p. 23).

The findings of these three field studies demonstrate the impact of participants' socio-cultural profiles on responsibilities in domestic labor and distribution of domestic labor. For instance, in Güngör, Daşbaş, and Akçay's study (2022), with academic fathers, having a higher level of education indicate providing a different awareness regarding fatherhood and masculinity. This suggests that this group of fathers may exhibit a more egalitarian approach and greater involvement in household chores. Similarly, in Çobaner and Tasouji's study (2021) involving

university-educated participants, a similar participation in domestic responsibilities may be observed. Higher education levels can empower individuals to question and start to change gender norms, contributing to a more equal distribution of domestic labor and some flexibility in gender roles. On the other hand, the participants in Kaya and Yaşar's study (2021) being at least high school graduates may indicate a shift in masculinity norms in the "new normal". This suggests that even individuals with lower levels of education are starting to contribute to domestic labor, and traditional gender roles are newly being questioned.

Furthermore, the fact that spouses are employed and living in non-rural areas emphasizes the potential for a more equal distribution of gendered division of labor. This highlights the influence of economic factors and living conditions on the distribution of domestic labor. When spouses are employed, it can encourage greater participation in household chores and contribute to assume domestic roles for husbands and male individuals. These findings underscore the impact of social-cultural factors on domestic labor and gender roles in domestic sphere. Factors such as education level, economic status, and living conditions can influence individuals' potential to question and challenge traditional gender norms.

5. CONCLUSION

The focus of this thesis was to examine the transformations in domestic labor in Turkey amid the Covid-19 pandemic, exploring the potential for substantial changes and identifying specific instances of disruptions. Domestic labor includes unpaid work, such as, child-elderly care, home maintenance, responsibilities in kitchen, and emotional labor, which are mostly undertaken by women in the private sphere. However, the starting point of this thesis is the possibility of changes in domestic labor and the distribution of labor in Turkey, given the increase in time spent at home during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly due to lockdowns and stay-at-home conditions. Thus, the thesis derived from the question of "How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect invisible and unpaid domestic labor in Turkey from March 2020 to July 2022?" The objective of this thesis was to identify the potential changes in domestic labor in Turkey and to reveal the points of fractions in how domestic labor was distributed.

In order to answer the research question, a total of 16 academic articles based on the literature, along with 11 reports of extensive nature and broad subject matter, 10 field studies based on comprehensive unique experiences were analyzed. To analyze the data, qualitative thematic analysis was implemented. Thematic analysis facilitated the determination of the main themes, the more comprehensive interpretation of the experiences of the individuals who participated in the field studies, and the emphasis on the interrelationship between the determined themes.

Moreover, the primary objective of this thesis does not lie in advocating for the interests of a specific demographic or community; rather, it endeavors to propose and analyze a particular subject matter. As such, the thesis does not confine itself solely to the experiences or viewpoints of any particular demographic or community, but instead adopts a comprehensive approach that encompasses individuals from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the study restricts itself to utilizing field studies, scholarly articles, and reports released between March 2020 and July 2022. It is pertinent to note that studies published in fields such as political science, gender studies, sociology etc., are explicitly included within the scope of this thesis.

Despite the visible increase in involvement of men in childcare, a similar change has not been detected in other categories, namely, elderly care, domestic home maintenance, and responsibilities in kitchen. For elderly care, no additional responsibilities were taken by men although the increasing workload arising from lack of external care support, need of emotional support, and routine assistance on medicine, health, and food related needs. A similar pattern was identified for domestic home maintenance as men's involvement has increased only to a limited extent. Especially the field studies reviewed shed light on the minor assisting roles men take such as unloading the dishwasher, vacuuming, and tidying the house. This was also visible from the discourse of men shared through the interviews and focus group studies conducted, since the predominant testimony by men was that them taking additional responsibilities was a favor to women, who is the sole responsible actor in domestic home maintenance.

One of the categories of domestic labor that has experienced a major increase in workload was tasks regarding kitchen. The hygiene concerns, increased time spent at home and the respective increase in the number of meals prepared resulted with a substantial increase in kitchen responsibilities. Yet, the roles men take remained as secondary since the involvement of men was through supporting tasks such as making salad, setting the dinner table, and cutting vegetables. The main bulk of the work was still on the shoulders of women as women was the main responsible actor making three meals a day, cleaning, and ensuring hygiene of ingredients. This shows that while men provided efforts in taking additional roles in the kitchen, primary roles and responsibilities was pushed to women, as apparent from the high amount of time spent by women in the kitchen as indicated reports.

The last category of domestic labor is emotional labor that individuals experienced more during the Covid-19 pandemic. Increased care responsibilities in home, loss and grief or the possibility of loss and grief, remote work and other challenges, uncertainty and anxiety became the hearth of emotional labor during the pandemic. Women have been burdened with emotional labor while already producing other types of domestic labor. Yet, some men experienced emotional labor more closely and were affected considerably by health-related issues, lack of social life and relations at home as indicated by field studies.

As evident from all four categories reviewed in this thesis, men's involvement was limited to supporting roles and this support was only visible in some households. The main characteristics of such households where men showed additional support was mainly households with relatively higher income, educational level, and better living conditions. In case of working parents, the distribution of workload was from a more egalitarian perspective, where men started to share almost equal workload with women. It has been identified in some reports reviewed was the direct correlation between education level and involvement of men compared to the pre-pandemic period.

What has been a striking finding of this study was also the women's positioning of themselves as the main responsible actor in household chores. In the experiences shared by women and men by the field studies revealed that even in the households with relatively higher income, educational level, and better living conditions, women take the main responsibility in line with the traditionally distributed gender roles. The discourse of women outlined in the field studies demonstrates a language structured around "help", "assist", "support", and "contribute" as a positive connotation for the additional roles that men take. This discourse was also shared by men, indicating that the main responsibility in domestic labor lies with women where men can only take supporting roles. This shows that the limited increase in the involvement of men was not constructed in the language used, which still reflects traditional gender roles.

Another finding of this thesis that some of the reports shed light on was the women asking for support from their daughters due to the increasing workload in the household. The perception of girls as being inherently more organized and helpful created expectations from them to be relatively more involved in domestic labor. The daughters took supporting roles in domestic home maintenance and kitchen, as women transferred the responsibility to the next generation that reflects the reproduction and transmission of gender roles within the household across generations. While women demonstrate themselves in a position to grasp much of the work as the main responsible actor, this role is passed on to the next generation, especially to girls showing the conservation of traditional roles associated with women.

In the light of analyzed 16 articles, 10 field studies and 11 reports, during the pandemic period from March 2020 to July 2022, this thesis identified an escalation in

labor-intensive processes within households, with a partial increase in awareness regarding invisible and unpaid household labor by asking the research question of "How did the Covid-19 pandemic affect invisible and unpaid domestic labor in Turkey from March 2020 to July 2022?" This thesis also noted that while women predominantly undertook these responsibilities, there were instances of partial involvement by daughters in some cases and fathers in others.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which has created major global social and economic impacts, also had substantial effects on households due to health concerns, isolation, and social distancing. Although lasted for almost two years with strong impacts, the pandemic is still a relatively new experience for individuals, shaping the social landscape worldwide. Several studies from focus groups, interviews, or surveys conducted during pandemic period provided insights on how the Covid-19 pandemic has shaped domestic labor in households. Yet, some of the studies conducted with limited the number of participants and targeted locations due to the risk of infection and lockdowns. The literature is also not very comprehensive yet, as a result of short period passed since the occurrence of the pandemic. During the Covid-19 pandemic, some studies may encounter limitations in scope and challenges in obtaining representative samples due to factors such as restricted access to certain populations, time constraints, resource availability, and logistical complexities. Consequently, research efforts may be confined to specific aspects of the pandemic or narrow demographic groups, potentially curtailing the applicability of findings to broader contexts. Additionally, field studies and reports conducted amid the pandemic may confront obstacles in accessing particular locations or populations due to travel restrictions, quarantine measures, or safety considerations. This may lead to incomplete or biased data collection, particularly if certain areas or communities are disproportionately affected by the pandemic. As a result of these pandemic-induced conditions, online surveys and remote interviews may have inadvertently excluded certain segments of the population. For instance, individuals lacking internet access or facing limitations in accessing digital technologies may have been unable to participate in such research endeavors.

This thesis, by reviewing the literature produced on the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on domestic labor in Turkey provides a detailed framework on the studies conducted during the pandemic. This contributed to the literature through combining

the findings of these studies and providing insights into the unique challenges and dynamics faced by households in this specific context. An examination of the impacts of the pandemic on domestic labor through this thesis reveals how gender roles and inequalities within households are shaped or challenged. This research adds depth to the existing literature by providing context-specific insights, addressing cultural and socioeconomic factors, and informing broader discussions on gender roles.

What has been limited in the literature was the studies conducted on masculinities and the role of girls during the pandemic. There is a great benefit in expanding the research studies on Covid-19 and its impacts on households to provide a more intersectional understanding of how various factors interact to influence the distribution of domestic labor. It should also be noted that the social policies available for households during the pandemic have direct influence on the family dynamics including the distribution of domestic labor. While some changes in household practices have been noted during the pandemic, the extent to which these changes are enduring or transient will be elucidated in forthcoming research endeavors. This, in turn, will contribute to a more comprehensive comprehension of household dynamics and the trajectory of their evolution.

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