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Kosyakova, Yuliya; Kulic, Nevena

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Kinship, inter- and intraethnic social networks and refugees' division of housework

Yuliya Kosyakova^{1,2} & Nevena Kulic³

¹ Institute for Employment Research (IAB), ² Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg, ³ University of Pavia

Address correspondence to: Nevena Kulic, University of Pavia, Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche e Sociali, Corso Carlo Alberto, 3, 27100 Pavia PV (Italy). Email: nevena.kulic@unipv.it

Abstract

Objective: This article investigates the role of social connections—kin proximity, premigration friends, and exposure to intra- and interethnic contacts in the host country—in the division of routine housework in refugee couples in Germany.

Background: Although social connections are established as an influential factor in the economic and societal integration of newcomers, the role of such connections for the household division of labor among immigrant couples is less understood.

Method: Pooled OLS and fixed-effect models were applied to four waves of the longitudinal IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees (2016–2019) to study coupled refugees of working age (1,045 couples, 2,699 couple-years).

Results: We find that social connections are significant to the gendered division of routine housework among refugee couples. In particular, networks consisting of new inter- and intraethnic contacts are more influential than those consisting of kins and premigration friends. Moreover, it appears that the kin and

hours and relative to their wives. Husbands' new contacts with Germans are positively related to their involvement in routine housework. In turn, wives' contacts with Germans are not associated with a more egalitarian division of housework.

Conclusion: Social networks may provide useful explanations for immigrants' domestic behavior, and they should be considered in setting up new policies that guide their integration.

Key words: refugees; gender roles, housework, network, kinship, IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey of refugees, Germany



1. Introduction

The reduction in time that women spend on domestic activities has important implications for their emancipation both in their households and society (Geist, 2009). More egalitarian arrangements increase within-household equality (Brines, 1994) and women's wellbeing (Boye, 2009). In addition, when more time is made available, there is more space for productive activities outside of the household: women have more time to participate in the labor market and be active citizens (Bianchi et al., 2000). The importance of these arguments is further strengthened in the case of immigrant women, many of whom face additional hurdles in host societies, such as fewer employment opportunities and, if employed, lower wages, more precarious working conditions, lack of language skills, challenges in recognition of their educational credentials, and housing issues (Fendel, 2020; Frank & Hou, 2015; Gowayed, 2019; Koyama, 2015). These difficulties have the capacity to reinforce the traditional division of labor in immigrant families and are even more pronounced for refugees who also need to safeguard family well-being after potentially traumatic experiences (for review, see Kogan & Kalter, 2020).

Against this background, this article contributes to the current literature by studying the factors that may reinforce or challenge the division of labor in refugee families. The special focus of the article is social connections, which are established as an influential factor in the economic and societal integration of newcomers (Aguilera & Massey, 2003; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993), although their role in the household division of labor is less understood (Gowayed, 2019; Parrado & Flippen, 2005). The study is situated among refugees who have recently arrived in Germany, most of whom came from Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq, countries affected by civil wars or conflicts; at least half of the refugees arrived with families (Brücker et al., 2020). According to the recent ILO report on Unpaid Care Work and the Labor Market (Charmes, 2019), in most countries, women are primarily responsible for unpaid work. However, there is an important difference between emerging economies and developed countries: approximately 80.2 percent of unpaid care work is performed by women in emerging economies, in contrast to 65.5 percent in developed countries (Charmes, 2019, secs. 49–50), with Arab countries lagging significantly behind Germany in men's share in unpaid work in total men's work (e.g., from above 40 percent in Germany to below 20 percent in Iraq, Charmes, 2019, p. 44). Traditional patterns in the gender division of housework of refugees might, therefore, endure in the new environments.

Previous studies have already highlighted the relevance of kin and friends to the division of domestic labor and argued that living close to immediate family or friends may affect the intimate relationship between partners and influence how partners make decisions (Kulic&Dotti Sani, 2020; Cheng, 2019; Treas, 2011). In the context of recent refugee influx, the role of networks is expected to play out through three potential mechanisms. The first of these—the 'passage of traditional values'—is about prevalent gender norms that shape views in coethnic networks, a phenomenon also found in other contexts with strong ethnic communities (Fernández & Fogli, 2009). The second one—'help of others'—refers to the actual help that coethnic networks may provide to refugee families in terms of housework. The last one—the 'passage of progressive values'—follows the ideas derived from the assimilation theories stressing the importance of networks for immigrants' integration process over time if those networks increasingly consist of native populations with different values and gender ideologies (Alba & Nee, 1997; Kibria, 1995). Accordingly, the network can play a role in the organization of domestic life, including household labor, and can influence future change and integration when it expands to incorporate new contacts and contacts with different ideologies.

Consequently, this article asks the following questions: Does spouses' close and frequent contact with coethnics and the proximity of kin play a role in the traditional division of housework? If so, in which direction? How do interethnic connections to natives relate to the traditional division of household labor between male and female refugees? Finally, does the housework allocation in refugee couples change as social connections change? To address these research questions, we rely on longitudinal data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees representative of recent refugees in Germany (Brücker et al., 2017). Our findings point to the importance of considering the multidimensional aspects of social network characteristics to understand how social networks can contribute to or offset traditional household arrangements in couples. The implications of our results, therefore, go beyond the study of refugees and contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms through which social networks may shape domestic life among the general population, where individuals can vary in their gender ideology and be

drawn in different directions through a differential network composition. The refugee migration context only maximizes variation in some of these dimensions.

2. Recent refugees in Germany

In the second decade of the 21st century, Germany faced a significant influx of refugees of an average of half a million per year. More than 80 percent of the newcomers fled from Arab countries with remaining refugees from ex-Soviet republics or the Western Balkans (Brücker et al., 2020; see also Table S2 in the [Appendix](#)). Generally, these groups are characterized by more traditional gender roles than the German population (Charmes, 2019; Gebel & Heyne, 2017). However, migration itself is a selection process, meaning that newcomers are not a random sample of the population representing the country of origin (Belot & Hatton, 2012). In contrast, more progressive individuals are likely to leave countries with more traditional views (such as MENA countries), particularly those planning to emigrate to high-income OECD countries (Docquier et al., 2020); therefore, their attitudes toward civic values and the division of household labor are not always as different from the host population as can be expected based on their countries of origin (e.g., Brücker et al., 2019; Fuchs et al., 2021; see also Table S1 in the [Appendix](#)).

Germany is often considered to be a relatively conservative country in terms of the within-household division of labor, with Eastern German women being comparatively less specialized than Western German women (Geist, 2009). On a global ranking, however, Germany scores better than a range of developed countries and is found in the top ten countries on men's share of unpaid work in total men's work and is 28th out of 72 countries regarding women's share of unpaid work in total women's work, after Ireland, Spain or Belgium in the European comparison (own calculation based on Charmes, 2019, pp. 43–44). Germany is also doing significantly better compared to most Arab countries in this classification, such as Occupied Palestinian Territory, Qatar, Oman or Iraq (ibid.).

In traditional Arab communities originating from the Middle East, patriarchal norms are salient, and the position of women in such communities is influenced by the degree of male domination (Gowayed, 2019; Shalaby, 2016). Traditional values lead to power imbalances in families that are particularly mirrored in the organization of family life and domestic arrangements (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Conforming to that idea, refugees in Germany show more traditional views on gender conceptions, particularly related to family, than the native population (Brücker et al., 2019; see also Table S1 in the [Appendix](#)). In turn, previous research has shown that such traditional gender norms increase the burden of household tasks for women, specifically those related to housework and childcare (Greenstein, 1996; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003).

Moreover, empirical evidence has revealed the importance of intraethnic connections for recently arrived refugees in Germany: Eighteen percent of refugees reported having premigration support from relatives or friends who lived in Germany (Brücker et al., 2020). On the one hand, kin and friends from their countries of origin—if available—can guide many refugees' socialization in the new environment, especially during the early period of their stay. This is particularly true for the first months in reception centers, where refugees primarily interact with other refugees and have little contact with the rest of society. Such coethnic social connections increase access to key resources (such as jobs and housing) and information among refugees; individuals learn from their old and new connections and are affected by them (Haug, 2008).

On the other hand, recent refugee cohorts in Germany encounter, albeit increasing but still a small number of coethnic groups compared to regular immigrants, which may limit refugees' access to intraethnic contacts (Hartmann & Steinmann, 2020). However, the limited access to (or lack of) such coethnic connections might be advantageous to refugees: they may attempt to establish new social connections in the destination country, which may be facilitated by more frequent contact with natives (Roth et al., 2012). Contact with natives may be further stimulated by residential allocation policies that locate refugees 'away from other migrants' (Roth et al., 2012, p. 319). In Germany, refugees' first residential allocation is also binding, making it difficult for them to move around the country in search of other opportunities. Additionally, public policies are in place that promote integration; these policies include training programs, educational opportunities, and childcare programs, all of which increase the chances that refugees interact with the native population.

3. Social networks and immigrants' division of labor

Migrant social networks refer to 'a composite of interpersonal relations in which migrants interact' (Haug, 2008, p. 588). The networks provide different kinds of support, including assistance, information, and protection (Taylor, 1986). By providing information and advice, social network contacts may affect an individual's interpretation of reality (Kulik & Rayyan, 2003). In part, gender inequalities in the refugees' division of labor that result from socialization with cultural norms and values in the country of origin can be reinforced through networks, which is particularly the case when the host country network also consists of family members or friends and acquaintances from the same country of origin. Nevertheless, instrumental help provided by such networks also has the potential to countervail these patterns, particularly by helping women perform their household work. However, migration requires that families adjust to the new environment in their family life (Pedraza, 1991), and social networks can play a key role in such a process (Berry et al., 2006). New circumstances in the host country threaten the culturally imposed division of labor in immigrant families (e.g., through exposure to new working opportunities, different ideological values, and contacts with natives; Fuwa, 2004; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003). Social support may help undo initial gender inequalities (Gowayed, 2019).

In our study, we test various hypotheses by relying on different characteristics of refugees' social networks. The theoretical basis for the distinctions between different network characteristics is adapted from Rözer et al. (2018), who closely followed the original classification of Bott (1957). We build on this framework and distinguish between close-knit networks and loose-knit networks measuring the degree of connectedness among people. In particular, we conceptualize close-knit networks as comprising premigration friends (living in the host country) and geographically close kin and loose-knit networks as comprising new contacts (both intraethnic contacts and contacts with natives) met on arrival. The ethnic composition of a loose-knit network allows differentiation in terms of exposure to coethnic and native networks (approximated via the number of new coethnic and native contacts) and the intensity of exposure (approximated via the frequency of meeting new contacts).

3.1 *The function of networks: Perpetuation of traditional gender values versus help of 'others'*

There are contrasting views on how the presence of coethnic social networks may affect the contribution of (refugee) women and men to household labor. In the following section, we provide competing views and derive hypotheses based on two mechanisms: traditional gender norms and help from others.

On the one hand, having immediate family and friends from the country of origin might help preserve patriarchal values. As explained by Kulik and Rayyan (2003), gender norms influence gender attitudes and, consequently, the division of paid and unpaid work. The role of men as breadwinners is emphasized in many societies (Blossfeld & Drobnič, 2001). However, in patriarchal societies, strict norms dictate that husbands make decisions regarding daily life (Fuwa, 2004). Socialization in Arab societies from the Middle East occurs along gender lines, meaning that daughters are socialized by female kind and sons by male kind, and the predominant gender roles assign women a secondary position in a couple household (Shalaby, 2016).

Consequently, it can be expected that the division of labor is less egalitarian in families that are more influenced by traditional gender norms. This expectation holds for both the native population and the immigrant and refugee populations. For instance, a more traditional division of labor is found among Syrian families after their arrival in the United States than in the US population (Gowayed, 2019). Similarly, research on different groups of immigrants in Canada suggests a positive correlation between traditional gender values in origin countries and females' involvement in housework among immigrant couples (Frank & Hou, 2015). Some evidence also exists that traditional gender values may become more pronounced in new settings than among immigrants' peers in their origin countries (Parrado & Flippen, 2005). It has been argued that, for some families, preserving or reinforcing the traditional division of labor as in their countries of origin after immigrating may be a way to provide some stability in the new circumstances (Yu, 2011). Immigrant networks often serve this role, and tight networks with coethnics help maintain and reinforce the traditional division of labor in the household. This is even more pronounced with the presence of kin in such networks (Alesina et al., 2013; Ngenzebuke et al., 2018) because kinship authority is important in many cultures (Weiner, 2016). In particular, the presence of husbands' kin is

argued to secure male dominance in the household because of the interest in preserving the male lineage (Szinovacz, 1987; Zuo, 2009).

Accordingly, if social networks affect couples' division of labor through the norms of the community, we expect that social connections with coethnics (kin, friends, or acquaintances) strengthen a gendered division of labor in refugee families.

H1a: Living with kin in the same household is associated with wives' higher absolute and relative housework hours and husbands' lower absolute housework hours. These patterns are more pronounced when husbands' kin live in the same household.

H2a: Contact with premigration friends is associated with wives' higher absolute and relative housework hours and husbands' lower absolute housework hours.

H3a: A higher number of contacts and contact frequency with new coethnic friends is associated with wives' higher absolute and relative housework hours and husbands' lower absolute housework hours.

However, families often receive help from others, either paid or unpaid, in doing housework (Cohen, 1998). Reliance on informal (unpaid) help is known in the literature: such help can be from relatives—transfer between generations—and often from parents to adult children (Padgett, 1997) or friends (Hatch, 1991). Commonly, help from others is gendered, with women receiving help in the form of childcare support, whereas men are mostly helped with what are considered 'manly' tasks, such as repair and maintenance work and errands (Spitze, 1999). Help is particularly common when family or friends live in close proximity or are in frequent contact (Spitze, 1999). Help from others may reduce the time that both husbands and wives spend on housework (Cohen, 1998) or may affect spouses' relative division of labor in a way that lessens the load on women (Cohen, 1998; Craig et al., 2016).

Support from others in completing household chores is particularly common in refugee populations because the traditional context of these families and the collectivist cultures from which they come presume more help from extended families (Wang et al., 2010). Therefore, it can be expected that external help decreases the share of the total labor provided by women in the household because other women help them (Spitze, 1999). Accordingly, if social networks affect couples' division of labor through the help of others, we expect that social connections with coethnics (kin, friends, or acquaintances) contribute to greater gender equality in relationships. The counterhypotheses to *Ha* are as follows.

H1b: Living with kin in the same household is associated with wives' lower absolute and relative housework hours; husbands' absolute housework hours are not affected.

H2b: Contact with premigration friends is associated with wives' lower absolute and relative housework hours; husbands' absolute housework hours are not affected.

H3b: A higher number of contacts and contact frequency with new coethnic friends is associated with wives' lower absolute and relative housework hours; husbands' absolute housework hours are not affected.

3.2 The integration perspective: Contact with natives

Multiple studies show that immigrants' housework behavior changes over time in the new country in the direction of female emancipation (Frank & Hou, 2015; Hwang, 2016). For instance, the organization of Vietnamese families in the US underwent a great transformation in the families' new context, changing from traditional family arrangements to more balanced gender relations (Kibria, 1995). This qualitative evidence has been supported by quantitative findings: married immigrant men in the United States increase their participation in housework over time, whereas the hours that female immigrants spend on housework decrease during the assimilation process (Hwang, 2016). Such housework behavior changes have also been observed for refugee families: Gawayed (2019) shows how a number of Syrian women in the United States gained resources through language acquisition, which promoted their integration into society and the labor market and possibly changed the gendered patterns in their households and the within-household allocation of paid and unpaid work.

These changes are likely to be influenced by contacts with the native population and cultural assimilation. Although no studies exist that explicitly show that those who have more contact with natives change faster, the literature points to the importance of networks. Indeed, the fact that the (macro)context

matters has also been corroborated by cross-comparative studies: Individuals' orientation toward traditional gender ideology is reinforced in countries with a more traditional view on gender relations (Fuwa, 2004; Kulik & Rayyan, 2003). At the same time, wives' more egalitarian gender values seem to be 'discounted' in less egalitarian regimes (Fuwa, 2004). One important channel for these changes is expanded social networks and social connections with natives (Gowayed, 2019). Likewise, interethnic ties with natives have been identified as a factor that promotes self-identification with the host country (De Vroome et al., 2011) and cultural assimilation processes (Berry et al., 2006; Facchini et al., 2015). Hence, by implication, access to interethnic ties can affect gender differences related to household tasks by altering the gender norms and identities of migrants.

As discussed in Section 2, refugees' lower social embeddedness in coethnic communities due to a small group size, residential allocation policies 'away from other migrants,' and integration policies may prompt them to form contacts with the majority population in Germany. Given that gender role conceptions, particularly in the family context, are likely to be different between natives and refugees (Brücker et al., 2019), the opportunity to integrate with Germans may challenge the patriarchal structures that are often found in families of middle eastern origin. For this reason, gender roles within refugee couples can be renegotiated over time, and the contact that refugee women and men have with the native population may contribute to this renegotiation (Ferree, 1990).

Accordingly, if social networks affect couples' division of labor through the norms of the community, we expect that social connections with natives (friends or acquaintances) contribute to greater gender equality in the couple's relationships.

H4: A higher number of contacts and contact frequency with new native friends is associated with wives' lower absolute and relative housework hours and husbands' higher absolute housework hours.

4. Methods

4.1 Data and sample

Our hypotheses were tested on the first four waves of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey covering the period from 2016 to 2019 (Brücker et al., 2017). The data were sampled from the Central Register of Foreign Nationals (*Ausländerzentralregister*, AZR) and are representative of the refugee population in Germany that arrived between 2013 and 2016 (irrespective of their legal status as of the sampling date). The response rate in the first wave amounted to approximately 50 percent, which, in comparison to other surveys of individuals with a migration background, is rather high (Kroh et al., 2017). The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey sample was refreshed in 2017. The data include approximately 5,000 refugee households and provide rich information on pre- and postmigration socioeconomic characteristics at the individual and couple levels as well as on social contacts and household routines, including housework. In the recent refugee population, approximately 31 percent are couples with children, and 3 percent are couples without children (Brücker et al., 2020).

4.2 Sample

We studied coupled individuals in marital and nonmarital unions (for the sake of brevity, we refer to all partners as 'spouses,' 'wives,' or 'husbands'). Fewer than two percent of the refugee couples are not legally married. Such couples are more likely than married couples to arrive from different countries of origin and report separate arrivals. We identify couples via person-specific markers indicating the relevant partner. To ensure that our data include only refugee couples and are representative of the goal population, we exclude couples if one of the spouses arrived before 2013 or was identified as a nonrefugee by the survey institute. From the initial sample of 2,845 refugee couples (6,964 couple-years), we consider only heterosexual couples where both spouses participated in the personal interview (1,931 couples, 3,634 couple-years). The analysis is further restricted to couples in which both partners are below the age of 65 years (1,907 couples, 3,587 couple-years). These restrictions ensure that both partners are still able to actively participate in the workforce. From these couples, only waves with information on all relevant dependent outcomes and only

those with at least two observation times are considered. In total, 1,045 couples meet these conditions for the analyses of the housework chores (2,699 couple-years).

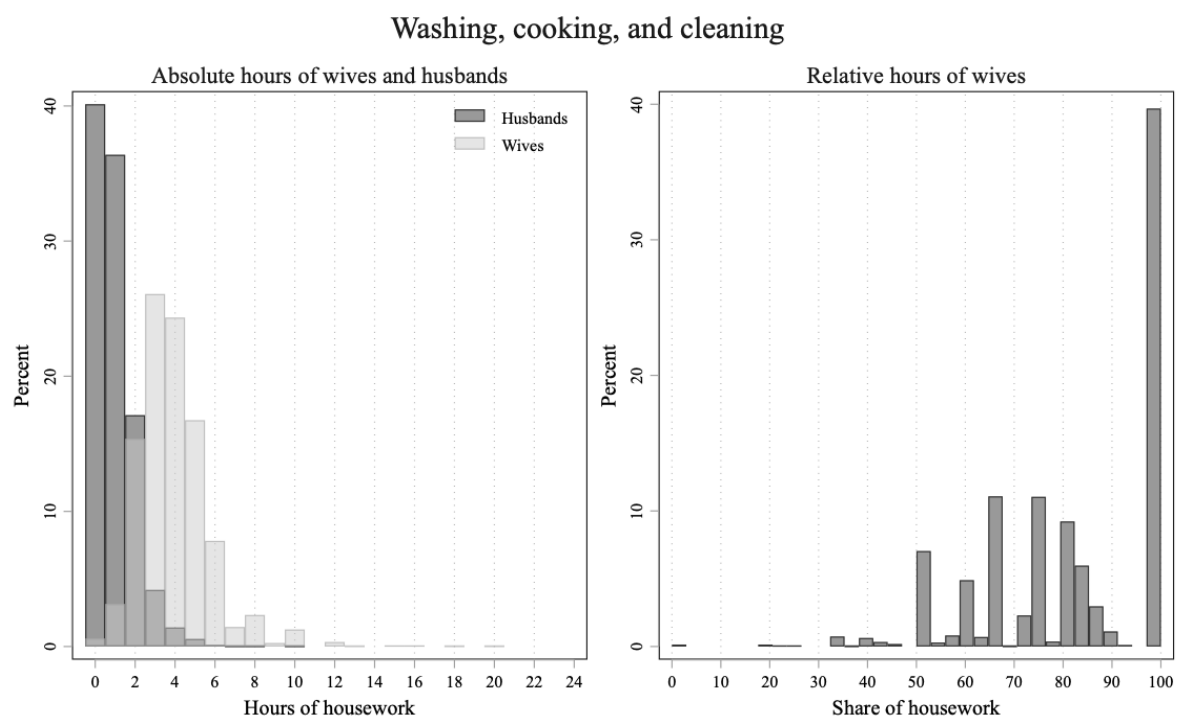
4.3 Measures

4.3.1 Outcome variables

Our dependent variable comprises annual information on each partner's daily time spent doing routine housework (washing, cooking, cleaning). The corresponding measures are based on the question 'How many hours do you spend on the following activities on a typical weekday: Housework (washing, cooking, cleaning)?' We analyze each spouse's absolute hours spent on respective activities as well as the wives' share of the couple's total hours (cf. Coltrane, 2000). Note that our housework measure does not consider repair and maintenance work (repairs to and inside the house, car repair, garden work) or errands (e.g., shopping, trips to government agencies) for the following reasons. First, maintenance work and errands have a less routine character, are less time consuming, are more enjoyable and flexible and are more easily postponed than everyday routine housework tasks, such as washing, cooking, and cleaning (Coltrane, 2000). Second, these routine housework tasks are more relevant for the total housework, as this accounts for a large amount of total work (75 percent). Third, previous research revealed that particularly routine housework negatively affects wages (e.g., Noonan, 2001), especially for female migrants (Fendel, 2020).

In our sample of refugee couples, wives reported 3.92 average daily hours of routine work (median = 4 hours), whereas husbands reported 0.93 daily hours (median = 1 hour). Correspondingly, wives' contribution to that routine work was approximately 82 percent. Among our couples, 91 percent have children below age 18 in their households. Figure 1 illustrates the full distributions of the dependent variable.

Figure 1: Distribution of husbands' and wives' housework hours on an average weekday



N = 1045 couples and 2699 couple-years

Note: Wives' hours of housework: Mean = 3.92, SD = 1.83. Husbands' hours of housework: Mean = 0.93, SD = 1.02. Wives' share of housework: Mean = 81.63, SD = 18.10.

Data source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Sample, 2016–2019.

4.3.2 Predictor variables

To test the impact of wives' and husbands' close-knit (coethnic) networks on the time allocation of spouses, we examine the residential proximity of kin and the contact with premigration friends of both spouses. For *residential proximity of own kin*, we consider the residence locations of own parents, or other (unspecified) close relatives coded as follows: (1) at least one kin residing in the same household, (2) at least one kin residing in Germany, and (3) no kin residing in Germany (the reference category). *Own contact with premigration friends* is an indicator dummy for having had assistance during the move to Germany from any acquaintances or friends who already lived there. In a similar way, we define the *residential proximity of partners' kin and partners' contact with premigration friends*.

We test the importance of loose-knit networks via exposure to new coethnic and German contacts and the intensity of this exposure. Again, the analyses distinguish between the individual contacts of husbands and wives. The *number of new coethnic contacts* and the *number of new German contacts* are measured via continuous variables indicating the self-reported number of new regular contacts from the same country of origin or from Germany ("How many new coethnic contacts/how many Germans have you regularly met since your arrival in Germany?"). To account for the intensity of exposure to new contacts, we create dummy indicators for one's own frequent contact with coethnics and one's *own frequent contact with Germans* (this indicator equals one for at least weekly contacts and zero otherwise). To examine the impact of partners' loose-knit networks, we similarly generated the *number of partners' new coethnic contacts* and the *number of partners' new German contacts*, as well as indicators for *partners' frequent contact with coethnics and partners' frequent contact with Germans*.

The questions on premigration contacts and the number of new (coethnic and German) contacts were surveyed only in the first interview and are, therefore, time invariant. The residence of kin was surveyed in the first and second interview rounds, while the frequency of contact with coethnics and Germans was surveyed yearly.

4.3.3 Control variables

In the multivariate analyses, we control for common predictors of the gendered division of household labor (e.g., Bianchi et al., 2000; Coltrane, 2000; Frank & Hou, 2015; Treas, 2011) that may also drive social contacts in one way or another (e.g., Facchini et al., 2015; Martinovic et al., 2009). Table S2 in the [Appendix](#) includes information on all model controls, their descriptions and corresponding descriptive statistics. If not explicitly indicated as time-invariant, i.e., TI, all control variables described below are time-variant.

On the individual level, we include the following for each partner: *premigration years of education* (time-invariant, TI), an indicator for having *premigration work experience* (TI), *working status*, *health satisfaction*, *age*, and *family and gender role attitudes* (TI). Both premigration education and work experience relate to a more egalitarian division of labor in the family, while current work obligations may limit the amount of time a spouse can invest in housework and may increase the bargaining power of that spouse (e.g., Bianchi et al., 2000; Frank & Hou, 2015). At the same time, these characteristics may shape the development of interethnic ties in the host country (e.g., Facchini et al., 2015; Martinovic et al., 2009). Health satisfaction is controlled because health problems may limit spouses' ability to perform housework and may also increase the necessity of receiving social support. For similar reasons, we control for age. We also account for one's own *months since arrival*, as it is positively associated with opportunities for paid work (Frank & Hou, 2015) and immigrants' exposure to social contacts (Martinovic et al., 2009). Because of collinearity issues, we do not account for partners' time since arrival.

On the couple level, we control for *equivalized disposable income* the month prior to the interview (in 2015 prices), *marital status*, *number of children up to 14 years old*, having *children less than one year old*, having *children between two and four years old* and having *children between five and seven years old*. We also control for whether there are *persons in the household who need care*, the size of the *living space*, living in a *private* (versus shared) *accommodation*, and having a *yard*—all of these add to the total hours of housework in one way or another (e.g., Bianchi et al., 2000; Frank & Hou, 2015) but may also affect the (type of) social capital formation that refugees undergo. Immigrants who arrived after their partners show different assimilation profiles, possibly due to the availability of resources and information accumulated by spouses who arrived first (Basilio et al., 2009). Similar arguments are applicable for spouses originating from different countries (Frank & Hou, 2015). Hence, we control for *order of arrival* (TI) and the indicator used for *same origin country* (TI). *Country-group-of-origin* (TI) is controlled for (but not of partner due to collinearity issues)

because it might be related to gendered division of labor at home but also to the size and use of coethnics resources.

To control for time-invariant or long-lasting differences between East and West Germany (such as cultural differences and long-term political preferences), we include an indicator dummy for residing in *East Germany*. Finally, to absorb any systematic differences related to the survey design, we control for the *survey sample* (M3, M4, M5; TI) and *survey year* (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). The latter also accounts for general trends in time allocation.

4.4 Analytic strategy

Our analyses consist of two steps. First, we provide a descriptive portrait of the relationship between spouses' social connections and household chores by estimating pooled ordinary least squares (OLS) models with robust standard errors clustered at the individual level for relative and absolute hours in routine housework: (a) the husband's housework hours, (b) the wife's housework hours, and (c) the wife's share of the couple's total housework hours. Formally, we estimate the following model:

$$Y_{i,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 O\text{-}Kinship_{i,t} + \alpha_2 P\text{-}Kinship_{i,t} + \alpha_3 O\text{-}C_i + \alpha_4 P\text{-}C_i + \alpha_5 O\text{-}Cethn.size_i + \alpha_6 P\text{-}Cethn.size_i + \alpha_7 O\text{-}Cgerm.size_i + \alpha_8 P\text{-}Cgerm.size_i + \alpha_9 O\text{-}Cethn.freq_{i,t} + \alpha_{10} P\text{-}Cethn.freq_{i,t} + \alpha_{11} O\text{-}Cgerm.freq_{i,t} + \alpha_{12} P\text{-}Cgerm.freq_{i,t} + \alpha_{13} X_i + \alpha_{14} X_{i,t} + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (1)$$

where $Y_{i,t}$ refers to the absolute or relative hours of housework of individual i in year t , O denotes own social connections, P denotes partner's social connections, $Kinship_{i,t}$ denotes kin's residential proximity, C_i denotes contact with premigration friends, $Cethn.size_i$ is number of new coethnic contacts, $Cgerm.size_i$ is number of new German contacts, $Cethn.freq_{i,t}$ is frequent contact with coethnics, $Cgerm.freq_{i,t}$ is frequent contact with Germans, X_i accounts for time-invariant controls, $X_{i,t}$ accounts for time-variant controls, λ_t is the survey year fixed effect, and $\varepsilon_{i,t}$ is the error term.

Second, we examine whether changes in social connections affect changes in the allocation of housework between spouses in refugee couples by controlling for individual fixed effects (θ_i). Following the Hausmann test, fixed-effect specifications were preferred to random effects. Accordingly, the second model specification focuses on the networking aspects that may change over time, including their own and partners' residential proximity of kin, their frequent contact with coethnics, and their frequent contact with Germans. The following model is estimated:

$$Y_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 O\text{-}Kinship_{i,t} + \beta_2 P\text{-}Kinship_{i,t} + \beta_3 O\text{-}Cethn.freq_{i,t} + \beta_4 P\text{-}Cethn.freq_{i,t} + \beta_5 O\text{-}Cgerm.freq_{i,t} + \beta_6 P\text{-}Cgerm.freq_{i,t} + \beta_7 X_{i,t} + \lambda_t + \theta_i + \vartheta_{i,t} \quad (2)$$

We deem both estimation techniques to be important in understanding the household division of labor in refugee families, as the OLS estimation additionally allows us to examine the relationship between time-invariant characteristics of social connections and spouses' contribution to housework.

5. Empirical results

5.1 Social contacts of refugee couples

In the first step, we describe the social network of refugee wives and husbands. Since our core argument is that the network structure of refugee couples shapes the gendered division of household labor, we compare wives' and husbands' social resources in our sample in Table 1.

Table 1: Social contacts of refugee couples in the sample

Social contacts	Level	Mean/Share	(SD)	Missing (%)
<i>Residential proximity of kin (in %)</i>				
not in Germany	Husband	62.23		0.93
not in Germany	Wife	68.71		0.89
in the same household	Husband	3.63		0.93
in the same household	Wife	1.53		0.89
in Germany	Husband	34.14		0.93
in Germany	Wife	29.76		0.89
<i>Contact with premigration friends (in %)</i>				
	Husband	3.64		0.33
	Wife	2.84		0.89
<i>Number of new coethnic contacts</i>				
	Husband	8.28	(15.65)	2.56
	Wife	5.21	(7.29)	3.74
<i>Number of new German contacts</i>				
	Husband	5.56	(10.89)	2.67
	Wife	3.80	(6.57)	3.00
<i>Frequent time with coethnics (in %)</i>				
	Husband	64.26		0.37
	Wife	56.78		0.30
<i>Frequent time with Germans (in %)</i>				
	Husband	62.36		0.19
	Wife	49.02		0.22

Data Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Sample, 2016–2019. In the multivariate model, we control for missing values in the variables of interest.

We observe that only a minor share of refugee couples resides in the same household as their relatives: approximately four percent with husbands' kin and only one and a half percent with wives' kin. For the rest of the couples, their kin reside either in or outside Germany, with the latter being more often in the case of wives' relatives. Likewise, only three percent of women and four percent of men report having premigration contacts in Germany before arrival. Hence, refugee couples possess a rather small close-knit network.

With regard to loose-knit networks, on average, husbands have met eight new coethnic contacts, whereas this figure amounts to five contacts for wives. Husbands also report more frequent contact with coethnics than wives do: 64 percent of husbands and slightly more than half of the wives spent weekly time with coethnics. For interethnic contacts, the data suggest generally fewer new German contacts, and husbands usually meet more German contacts than wives do. Likewise, the frequency with which husbands meet with German contacts is higher than the frequency with which wives meet with German contacts. Overall, husbands have larger networks with more frequent social contact than wives, and refugee couples have more intraethnic contacts than interethnic contacts.

5.2 Division of housework in refugee couples by time

Table 2 presents the results from our regression models examining how absolute and relative hours of housework among refugee couples vary by their social connections. We start with Equation (1), where we estimate pooled models of absolute hours of housework done by husbands (Models 1 and 2) and wives (Models 4 and 5) and wives' relative contribution (Models 7 and 8). We build our models gradually, starting with the inclusion of the measures for the social connections of spouses and survey year dummies (cf. Models 1, 4, and 7), followed by the inclusion of individual control variables (cf. Models 2, 5, and 8).

Our results show that living in the same household with husbands' or wives' kin is negatively but not significantly associated with husbands' housework hours (Model 1). For wives' housework hours, husbands' kinship in the household is positively, and their own kin is negatively related to their absolute and relative hours, although neither relationship is statistically significant (Models 4 and 7). These conclusions do not change after the inclusion of a set of control variables (cf. Models 2, 5 and 8). Looking at his or her contact with premigration friends, we find no significant impact on either absolute or relative contributions of spouses' housework hours (Models 2, 5, and 8). Ultimately, little evidence exists that a close-knit network relates to spouses' division of housework.

Table 2: Absolute and relative hours refugee couples spend doing housework

Outcome:	Husband's absolute hours			Wives' absolute hours			Wives' share in total hours		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)	OE ≤ (SE)
Residential proximity of own kin (Ref: No kin in Germany)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In same household	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.14 (0.10)	-1.12** (0.41)	-0.18 (0.29)	-0.04 (0.33)	1.81+ (1.02)	-0.30 (2.48)	-0.39 (3.01)	7.86 (9.32)
In Germany	-0.08+ (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.50 (0.38)	0.01 (0.10)	-0.02 (0.09)	0.23 (0.78)	0.47 (0.94)	0.38 (0.93)	-2.49 (6.70)
Residential proximity of partner's kin (Ref: No kin in Germany)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In same household	0.03 (0.16)	0.10 (0.17)	-0.34 (0.56)	-0.00 (0.17)	0.02 (0.17)	1.27 (1.02)	2.17 (1.81)	2.32 (1.81)	29.96** (11.13)
In Germany	-0.01 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.17 (0.49)	0.07 (0.10)	0.04 (0.10)	0.05 (0.74)	1.37 (0.91)	0.84 (0.90)	11.32 (8.09)
Own contact with premigration friends	0.15 (0.14)	0.21 (0.14)	-	-0.44+ (0.24)	-0.19 (0.22)	-	-1.38 (2.27)	-1.07 (2.22)	-
Partner's contact with premigration friends	0.03 (0.14)	0.04 (0.14)	-	0.18 (0.26)	0.09 (0.24)	-	-0.51 (2.25)	-1.72 (2.26)	-
No. of own new coethnic contacts	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	-
No. of partner's new coethnic contacts	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	-
No. of own new German contacts	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.06)	-
No. of partner's new German contacts	0.01+ (0.00)	0.01+ (0.00)	-	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	-
Own frequent contact with coethnics	-0.12** (0.04)	-0.11* (0.04)	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.09)	0.70 (0.77)	0.35 (0.76)	0.90 (0.90)
Partners' frequent contact with coethnics	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.05)	0.12 (0.09)	0.08 (0.08)	0.05 (0.10)	1.59* (0.79)	1.38+ (0.79)	0.22 (0.95)
Own frequent contact with Germans	0.08+ (0.05)	0.13** (0.05)	0.16** (0.06)	-0.19* (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.10)	-2.99** (0.83)	-2.12* (0.82)	-1.21 (1.00)
Partners' frequent contacts with Germans	0.14** (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.09 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	0.11 (0.10)	-1.26 (0.81)	-2.06* (0.81)	-1.89+ (0.98)
Constant	0.87** (0.07)	0.86* (0.33)	-3.35 (3.46)	4.18** (0.13)	2.24** (0.50)	3.14 (5.96)	83.22** (1.21)	79.87** (5.60)	129.38* (51.42)
Controls ¹⁾	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Survey year dummies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual fixed effects	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Person-Year observations	2699	2699	2699	2699	2699	2699	2699	2699	2699
Person-observations	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045	1045
R ²	0.03	0.09	-	0.02	0.12	-	0.02	0.08	-
R ² within	-	-	0.06	-	-	0.04	-	-	0.06
R ² between	-	-	0.00	-	-	0.04	-	-	0.00
R ² overall	-	-	0.00	-	-	0.05	-	-	0.00

Data Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Sample, 2016–2019.7

Notes: + p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01 (two-tailed test). Models 1–2, 4–5, and 7–8 were estimated as OLS with robust standard errors. Models 3, 6, and 9 were individual fixed effects models with robust standard errors. For all indicators, a higher value corresponds to more (absolute or relative) hours. 1) Further controls were omitted; see Table S3 in the [Appendix](#).

Regarding loose knit networks, the results imply that the loose-knit network is an important predictor of the gendered division of housework labor. In particular, while the number of his or her new coethnic contacts is not associated with the housework hours of spouses, husbands' frequent contact with coethnics reduces their absolute housework hours by 0.11 hours (Model 2). While wives' frequent contact with coethnics does not affect their absolute (Model 5) or relative housework contribution (Model 8), their partners' frequent contact with coethnics contributes to their relative housework (significant at 10 percent, Model 8).

Contact with the native population relates to refugees' division of labor at home. Husbands' frequent contact with Germans increases their housework by 0.13 hours (Model 2) and lessens the gender imbalance in housework by two percent to the advantage of women (Model 8). At the same time, wives' frequent contact with Germans increases husbands' housework by 0.10 hours (Model 2) and reduces their relative

housework contribution by two percent (Model 8). However, frequent contact with Germans has no significant impact on wives' absolute housework hours (Model 5). Note that neither his nor her number of new German contacts is significantly associated with spouses' contribution to housework.

To examine whether a change in spouses' networks produces a corresponding change in their division of housework, we estimate the second specification in Equation (2), where we estimate the individual fixed-effect regressions (cf. Models 3, 6 and 9). These results partly differ from those derived from the pooled regressions. In particular, we find that a change in both close- and loose-knit networks is associated to a significant degree with changes in housework. Moving together with husbands' kin reduces husbands' absolute housework hours by approximately one hour (Model 6) and increases wives' relative housework burden by approximately 30 percent (Model 9). Wives' kin have no significant impact on spouses' contribution to housework. For loose-knit networks, only frequent exposure to German contacts is significantly related to division of housework between spouses. In particular, husbands' frequent contact with Germans significantly increases husbands' absolute hours of housework (Model 3) and lessens wives' relative contributions (significant at 10 percent, Model 9).

5.3 *Linking empirical results and hypotheses*

In this section, previous results are elaborated in light of our hypotheses. For instance, we expected that if social networks affect a couple's division of labor through the norms of the community, we would find a higher involvement of wives and a lower involvement of husbands in housework if (particularly husbands') kin live in the same household (*H1a*), if they have contacts with premigration friends (*H2a*), and if they have a large number of contacts and frequent contact with new coethnic friends (*H3a*). We have also expected wives to be less involved and husbands to be more involved in housework if they have a large number of contacts and have frequent contact with new German friends (*H4*). If social networks affect a couple's division of labor through 'help from others', social contacts with coethnics were expected to correlate with less housework for wives and no change for husbands (*H1b*, *H2b*, and *H3b*).

Our results allude to the impact of social connections as predominantly mediated through perpetuating cultural values and not receiving help from others. First, moving together with husbands' kin clearly reduces husbands' absolute housework time and inflates wives' relative housework burden. This is in line with *H1a*, which stipulates the perpetuation of more traditional gender values when (particularly husbands') kin live close by and, thus, increase women's work. Given that moving with wives' kin has no impact on a couple's routine housework, we can rule out an alternative explanation that a larger household size likely increases the absolute amount of work in the household. At the same time, this refutes our competing *H1b* on the role of kin in helping with housework. Premigration friends have no influence on housework hours, in contrast to what was expected in *H2a* and *H2b*. Second, (more frequent) exposure to coethnic contacts results in lower involvement of men in housework, which, however, does not hold true after controlling for the individual fixed effects, suggesting a selection process into the interethnic social environment of more traditionally oriented husbands. Our hypothesis *H3a* is therefore only partly confirmed. Third, exposure to German contacts is positively associated with husbands' housework contributions and somewhat shifts the burden away from wives. These results conform to *H4* and hold in the specification with individual fixed effects.

5.4 *Robustness checks*

To test the robustness of our results, we performed a series of robustness checks using our benchmark models (Models 1–9 in Table 2). In the following, we briefly discuss our findings; the results are presented in the [Appendix](#).

The traditional division of household labor is likely to be observed among couples with smaller children because of the additional burden of childcare obligations (Craig et al., 2016). In this regard, families with childcare obligations may rely more on network support and outsourcing the burden of housework. Correspondingly, we replicated the benchmark models, restricting the analytical sample to couples with children. The results remained robust (available in the [Appendix](#), Table S4) since our sample contains very few childless couples.

Some concerns may pertain to the possibility of socially desirable answering in response styles to housework measures: Previous research has identified that husbands are likely to overestimate their own contribution to housework and wives underestimate the husbands' contribution (Kamo, 2000), and these patterns may vary by socioeconomic background (Bryant et al., 2003). To determine whether social desirability might be an issue for our inferences, we followed Kühne (2016, 2018) and created an index based on selected socially desirable items in the data (interest in politics, worries about xenophobia, life satisfaction, mental health: calm and relaxed, mental health: down and gloomy). We replicated the benchmark models excluding respondents who scored high on the resulting social desirability index. The results remained fairly robust (available in the [Appendix](#), Table S5). Furthermore, we considered the question to the interviewer: 'Aside from linguistic difficulties or the presence of other people, other things can have an effect on an interview. Examples include questions dealing with sensitive issues, questions that do not reflect respondents' life realities, or a respondent's general lack of trust in the confidentiality of their answers. How closely do you as an interviewer think the responses given in this interview reflect reality?' Replication of our benchmark models excluding respondents for whom the interviewer reported that the interview answers were unreal have not changed our conclusions (available in the [Appendix](#), Table S6).

Finally, it is also possible that patriarchal values are more easily passed through the gender of the kin and not through their origin. Hence, we replicated our benchmark analyses considering the gender of kin instead of whether kin are wives' or husbands'. Overall, our results suggest that it is the residential proximity of male kin that shapes the gendered division of labor in refugee couples (available in the [Appendix](#), Table S7). In particular, fixed effect specifications imply that moving together with male kin reduces husbands' absolute hours of routine work (Model 3, Table S7), thereby contributing to a growing share of wives' share in total hours (Model 9, Table S7). Linking these results with the results in our main analyses, there is suggestive evidence that the preservation of patriarchal values and the male lineage is transmitted through the presence of husbands' kin and particularly husbands' fathers.

6. Conclusion

More egalitarian arrangements in the organization of housework are important for a higher participation of women in the labor market and their well-being. This applies to all women who are by-and-large considered the main caregivers in most societies but is of great importance for immigrant women and refugees who are at additional risk of more traditional arrangements due to difficulties in adjustment to new societies (Frank & Hou, 2015; Parrado & Flippen, 2005).

This article studies factors that contribute to the division of labor in refugee couples by focusing on the social context in which refugee couples operate. Specifically, we consider different facets of social networks and study both close-knit and loose-knit networks that consist of friends and family to understand how such contacts shape the intrahousehold division of labor. We propose several competing perspectives: Networks can both maintain traditional values in families and accelerate the assimilation of immigrants in terms of family life ('passage of traditional values' and 'passage of progressive values'), and they can serve as providers of actual help in housework ('help of others'). We focus on the case of recently arrived refugees in Germany, who serve as one example of a group embedded in different types of social networks: those that were formed before immigration ('old') and those formed afterward ('new'). Through a longitudinal lens in a four-year framework, we follow the lives of more than 1000 refugee couples in Germany by relying on the most recent data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey. We adopt a gender perspective and distinctly analyze wives' and husbands' engagement in everyday household work—specifically housework. This is because we start from the assumption that cultural socialization into gender roles has run along traditional lines and was predominantly characterized by conservative ideologies, according to which housework falls mostly into the domain of women, whereas paid work falls mostly into the domain of men.

Our results show that coethnic networks are associated with the load of both wives and husbands but in opposite directions. There is some evidence that 'new' networks are more influential than 'old' networks, the latter consisting of kin and friends prior to migration and the former consisting of new inter- and intraethnic contacts. However, moving closer to husbands' kin correlates with less work for husbands, and this result is accompanied by that of husbands' new contacts who—if present within the coethnic community—together help preserve traditional values. In line with this idea, our results show that both husbands' kin and their intraethnic contacts tend to be positively related to higher relative and absolute

housework burdens for women. Even though we hypothesized that instrumental help provided by kin and coethnic communities may counteract the effect of the perpetuation of traditional gender values, there does not seem to be strong evidence for this in our data. Having friends and family within a coethnic community is related to increased relative housework hours for wives and decreased absolute housework hours for husbands, and this is mainly reinforced through husbands' contacts. Therefore, increases in the amount and frequency of coethnic contact seem to increase the level of traditionalization in refugee couples.

At the same time, higher involvement with interethnic contact with Germans is associated with a change in a refugee couple's family life, mostly increasing husbands' involvement in housework. As with the findings for the new coethnic contacts, we observe that an increase in husbands' frequency of contact with Germans increases their involvement in housework chores and decreases that of wives. One mechanism through which this may happen is through a couple's adoption of more progressive values that confront patriarchal attitudes so that male authority changes with more exposure to natives.

In summary, our results confirm that social networks may be associated with more assimilative behavior (see Parrado & Flippen, 2005). The replication of our study in different countries and with various immigrant groups would help determine whether more or less pronounced cultural distance to the host society is differently influential on the division of labor in immigrant households. Additionally, the focus of the current study is on routine chores, which are more often considered female-typed tasks (Tai & Treas, 2012). To grasp the full picture of immigrants' division of household labor, future studies should explore the importance of immigrants' social connections to spouses' contribution to, e.g., male-typed domestic tasks (such as maintenance activities) or gender-neutral tasks (such as errands).

One of the limitations of our study is that we cannot completely rule out alternative explanations for our results. Cultural values and related attitudes such as gender ideology are a plausible explanation for the patterns that we find, although we do not fully examine them empirically. This cautions us against drawing utmost conclusions about the role of cultural attitudes toward traditional task divisions in the absence of time-varying empirical measurements of these constructs. Additionally, we observe in our data a more important role of the 'new' networks for refugees' time allocation in housework compared to premigration friends. This is accompanied by the fact that refugees actually possess only a few 'old' contacts: Fewer than five percent of refugees in our sample have premigration contacts. Accordingly, it is possible that having a relatively small sample contributes to less precise estimates and to insignificant results. We further lack information on how long new coethnic contacts themselves have lived in Germany and how well they have assimilated. The integration stage and the duration of stay can be important predictors of their behavior. Hence, in our study, we rely on the average influence of these contacts without being able to distinguish between various subgroups among them. Finally, some of the effects are rather small in substantial terms and can be viewed more as suggestive evidence of a direction of a change and of the potential of networks.

Despite these limitations, our conceptual approach and empirical results provide new insights into the mechanisms linking the social context and division of (unpaid) labor in immigrant and refugee families. Our findings illustrate that social networks indeed interact with traditional household arrangements; they may provide useful explanations for immigrants' domestic behavior and, as such, should be considered in setting up new policies that guide their integration.

Availability of data and material

This study uses the factually anonymous data of waves 2016-2019 of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees. The survey is conducted jointly by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the research data center of the Federal German Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), and the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW). Data access was provided via the researchers' contacts at the IAB. External researchers may apply for access to these data by submitting a user-contract application to the SOEP Research Data Center (https://www.diw.de/en/diw_02.c.222836.en/data_access_and_order.html). DOI: 10.5684/soep.iab-bamf-soep-mig.2019. The computer codes for data preparation and analyses are available online.

Declarations

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Conflicts of interest

The authors have no competing interests to declare relevant to the content of this article.

Ethics approval

This study analyzed secondary data. All methods were carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations. Asylum seekers and refugees are a particularly vulnerable target group due to their experiences of war, flight, expulsion, and their legal status and who require special protection and for whom there is a corresponding special responsibility. Therefore, a code of ethics was developed, which includes the following measures: (1) Consent was obtained by providing all participants with a declaration of data protection indicating that participation was voluntary, and identities would be kept confidential; (2) Respondents were informed that their participation or nonparticipation would not affect any potential asylum procedures; (3) Sensitive questions that could provoke retraumatization were avoided.

Authors' contribution

All authors contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order

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Information in German

Deutscher Titel

Verwandtschaft, inter- und intraethnische soziale Netzwerke und die Aufteilung der Hausarbeit von Geflüchteten

Zusammenfassung

Fragestellung: Dieser Artikel untersucht die Rolle sozialer Kontakte – gemessen als die Nähe von Verwandten, das Vorhandensein von Freunden vor der Auswanderung sowie intra- und interethnische Kontakte im Aufnahmeland – bei der Aufteilung von Routine-Hausarbeit in Partnerschaften von Geflüchteten in Deutschland.

Hintergrund: Obwohl soziale Kontakte als einflussreicher Faktor für die wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Integration von Neuankömmlingen bekannt sind, ist die Rolle solcher Kontakte für die Aufteilung der Hausarbeit in Partnerschaften von Einwanderern weniger gut erforscht.

Methode: Gepoolte OLS- und Fixed-Effects-Modelle wurden auf vier Wellen der IAB-BAMF-SOEP Befragung von Geflüchteten (2016-2019) angewendet, um Geflüchtetenpaare im erwerbsfähigen Alter zu untersuchen (1.045 Paare, 2.699 Paar-Jahre).

Ergebnisse: Wir finden, dass soziale Kontakte für die geschlechtsspezifische Aufteilung der Routine-inter- und intraethnischen Kontakten bestehen, sind einflussreicher als solche, die aus Verwandten und Freunden von vor der Migration bestehen. Darüber hinaus sind es vor allem die Verwandten und die neuen koethnischen Kontakte der Ehemänner, die negativ mit ihrer Beteiligung an den absoluten und zu ihren Ehefrauen relativen Stunden der Hausarbeit einher gehen. Die neuen Kontakte der Ehemänner zu Deutschen stehen in einem positiven Zusammenhang mit ihrer Beteiligung an der Routine-Hausarbeit. Die Kontakte der Ehefrauen zu Deutschen wiederum sind nicht mit einer egalitäreren Aufteilung der Hausarbeit verbunden.

Schlussfolgerung: Soziale Netzwerke können das häusliche Verhalten von Zuwanderern beeinflussen, und sie sollten daher bei der Ausarbeitung neuer Integrationsmaßnahmen berücksichtigt werden.

Schlagwörter: Geflüchtete, Geschlechterrollen, Hausarbeit, Netzwerk, Verwandtschaft, IAB-BAMF-SOEP Befragung von Geflüchteten, Deutschland

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Yuliya Kosyakova: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9621-1755>

Nevena Kulic: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0606-4051>



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