

Abstract:

This study investigates the often-overlooked “mental load” of domestic labor—the invisible planning, organizing, and anticipating required for household functioning—and its implications for gender equality and careers. Drawing on a survey experiment with 2,104 white-collar professionals across 11 provinces in Turkey, I test whether information interventions can shift awareness and attitudes toward the unequal distribution of domestic and cognitive labor. Participants in the treatment group viewed two short videos explaining the concept of mental load, its gendered burden, and possible tools for more equitable task-sharing, while the control group received only a brief statistic on cooking responsibilities. Findings show that the intervention significantly increased participants’ willingness to request support in household tasks, especially among women, and heightened recognition of under-appreciation, conflict, and time poverty linked to domestic work. While implicit gender biases remained unchanged, men in the treatment group reported greater awareness of unfair household labor allocation. These results provide the first causal evidence on how simple information treatments can raise recognition of invisible labor and highlight their potential for workplace and policy interventions targeting gender equity.