

Economic exchange and gender identities: Housework division and wives' economic dependency across welfare regimes

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The relationship between division of housework and economic contribution – two opposing dynamics

Economic dynamic

Reflects bargaining power and spousal exchange

- “Economic dependency”
- "Relative resources“
- "Time availability”



(Aassve, Fuochi, and Mencarini 2014; Blood and Wolfe 1960; Brines 1994; Procher, Ritter, and Vance 2017; Sorensen and McLanahan 1987).

Cultural dynamic

Confirms and reinforces the gendered identity

- “Doing gender”(“Gender display”)
- “Compensation”



(Bittman et al. (2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein ; 2000 ; Sevilla-Sanz, Gimenez-Nadal, and Fernandez 2010; South and Spitze 1994; West and Zimmerman 1987)

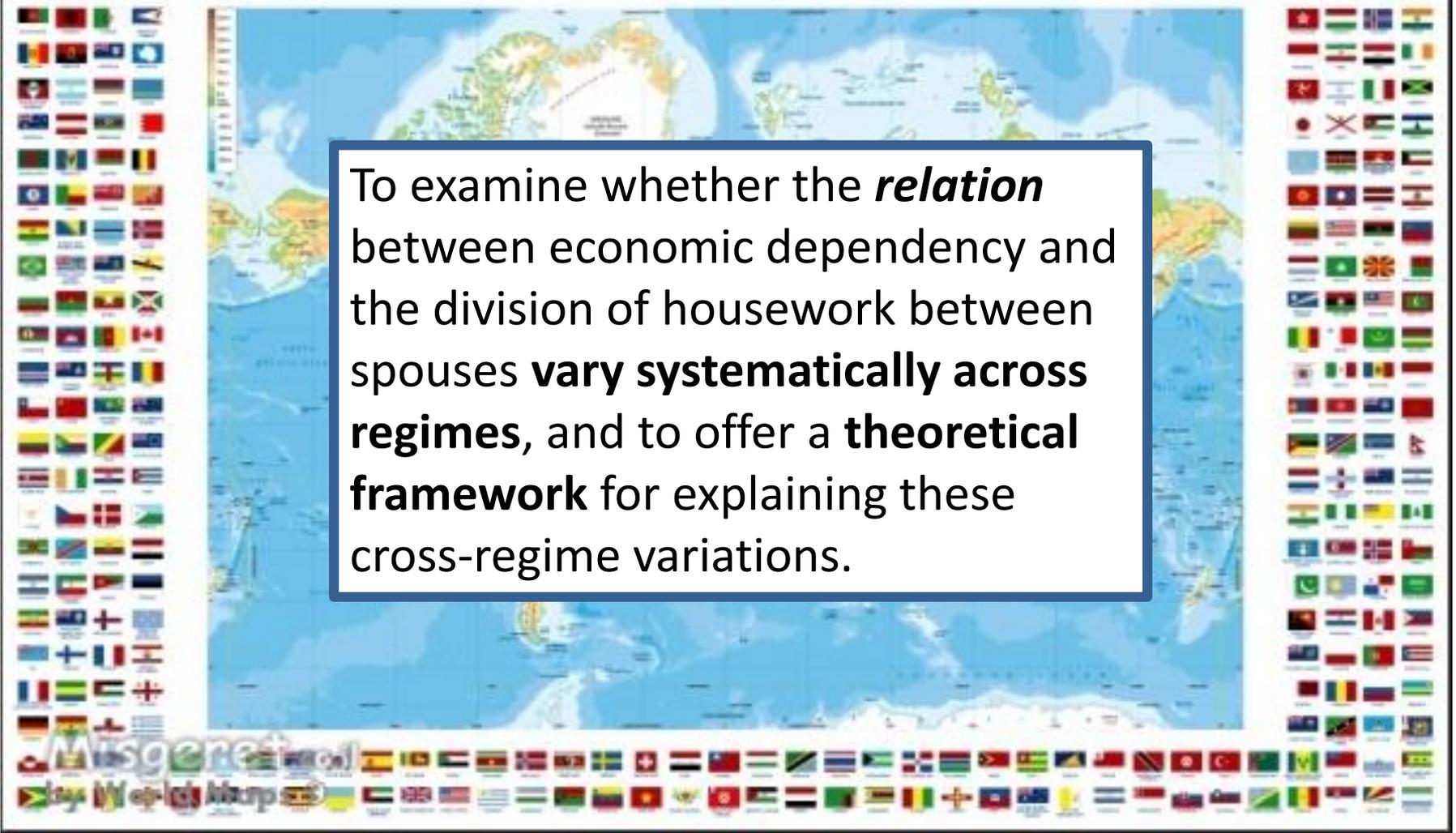
The gendered division of household labor is omnipresent



BUT

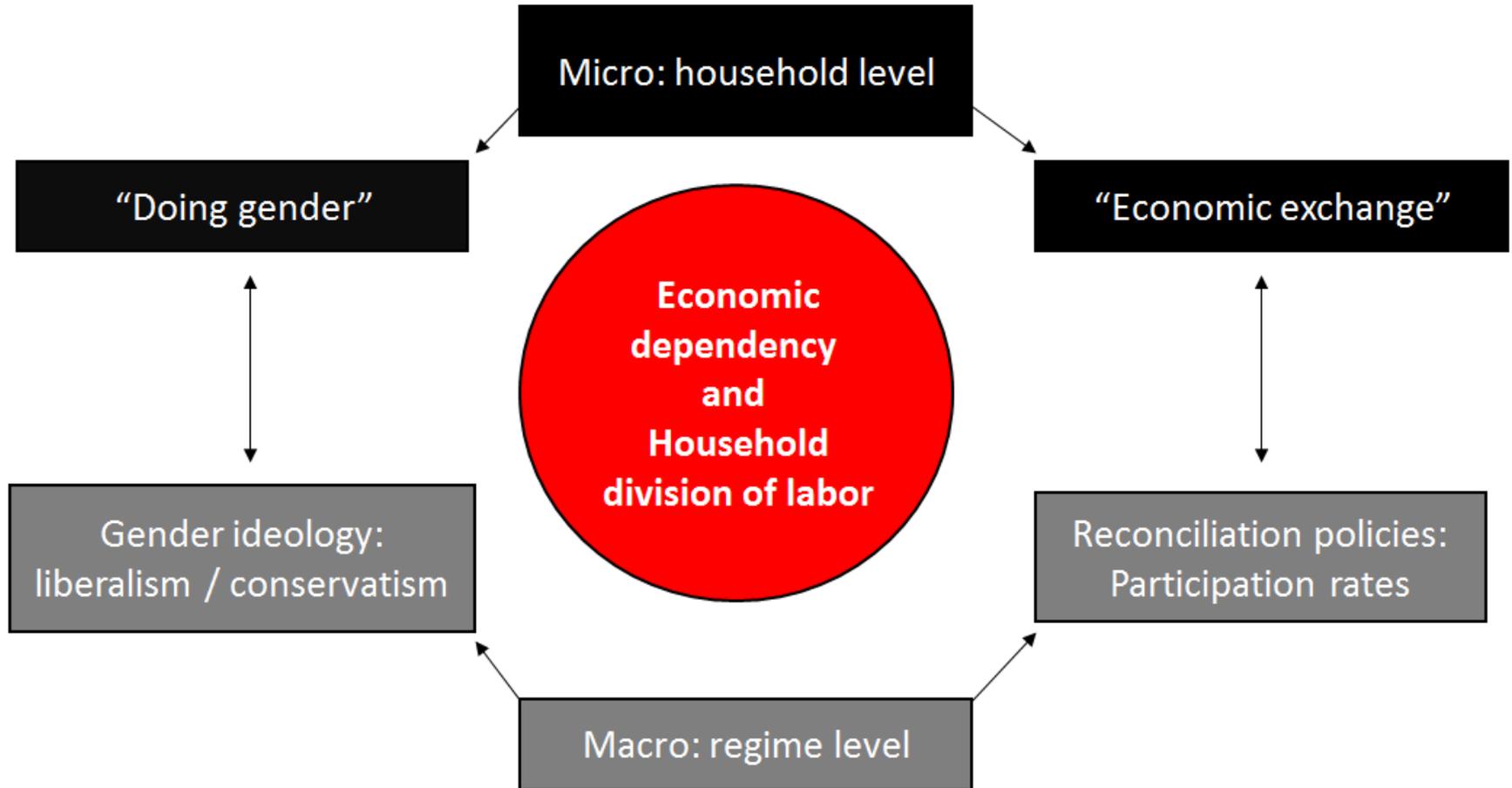
There are non-trivial differences between countries in both; the **household division of labor**, as well as in **levels of wives' economic dependency**.

Objectives



To examine whether the *relation* between economic dependency and the division of housework between spouses **vary systematically across regimes**, and to offer a **theoretical framework** for explaining these cross-regime variations.

Our analytical framework (in a nutshell)



Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

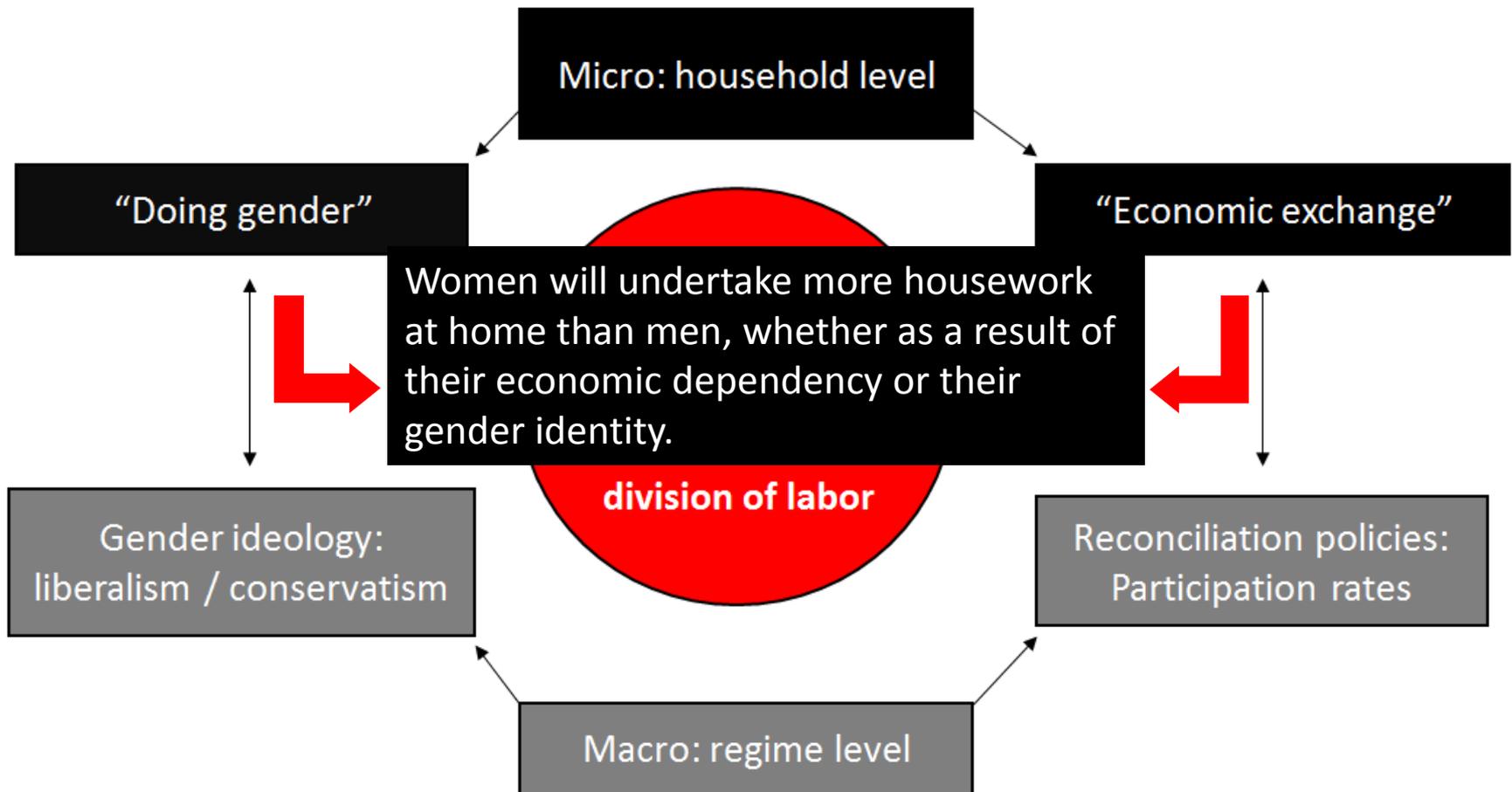
Data

- **Source:** ISSP 2012, “Family and changing gender roles” module.
- **Countries** identified under **Esping-Andersen’s (1990) triple typology:**
 - Social Democratic: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland
 - Conservatives: West Germany, Austria, France, Spain, Israel, Czech Republic, Switzerland
 - Liberal: USA, Great Britain, Australia, Ireland.

All countries’ samples are weighted so that each country contributes equally.

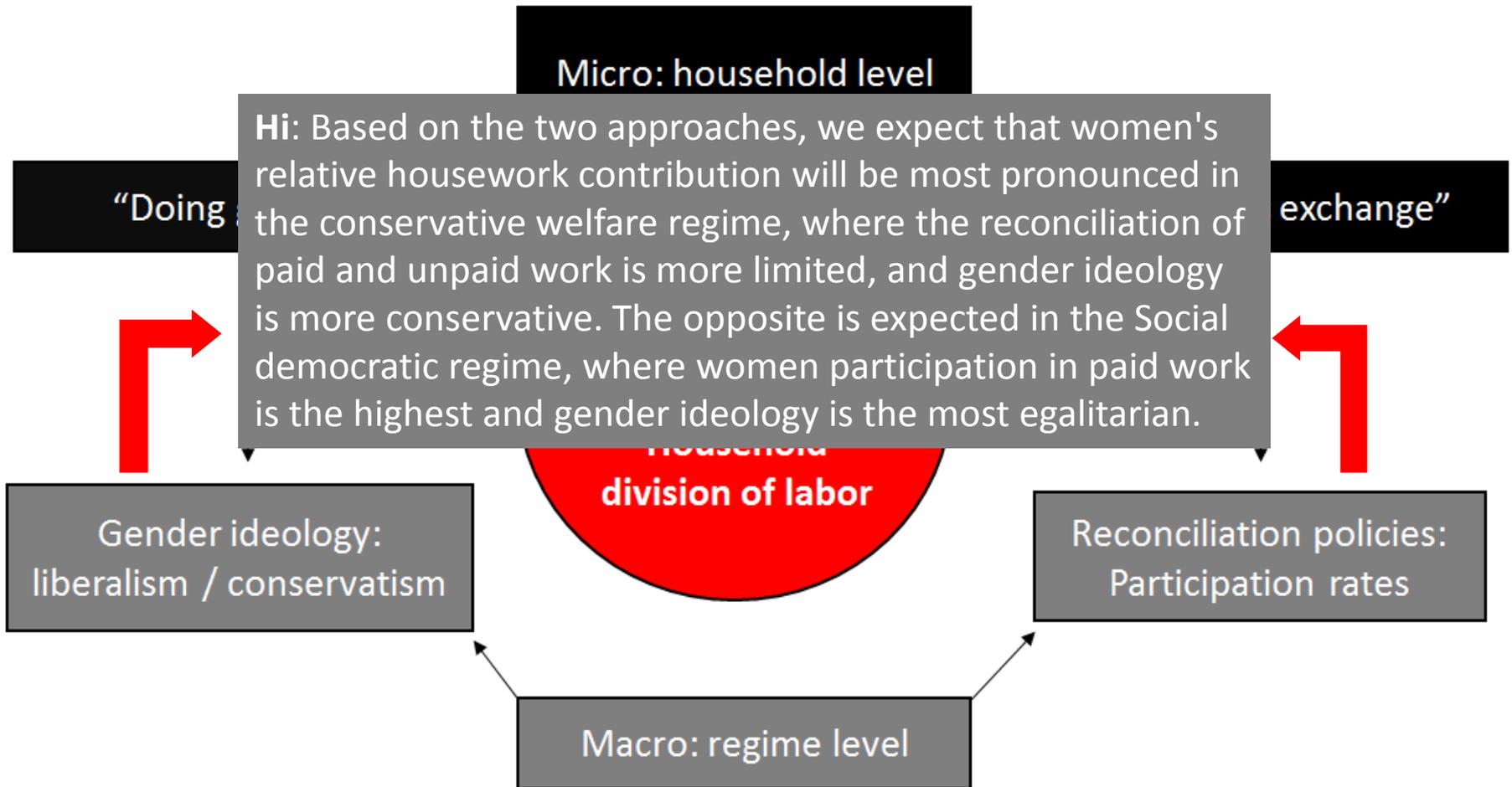
- **Selections:**
 - Married or cohabiting couples
 - Prime working age (25-64).
 - Good health condition for highly or fully economically dependent husbands (“compensation” notion)

Based on the principles of the two theories:



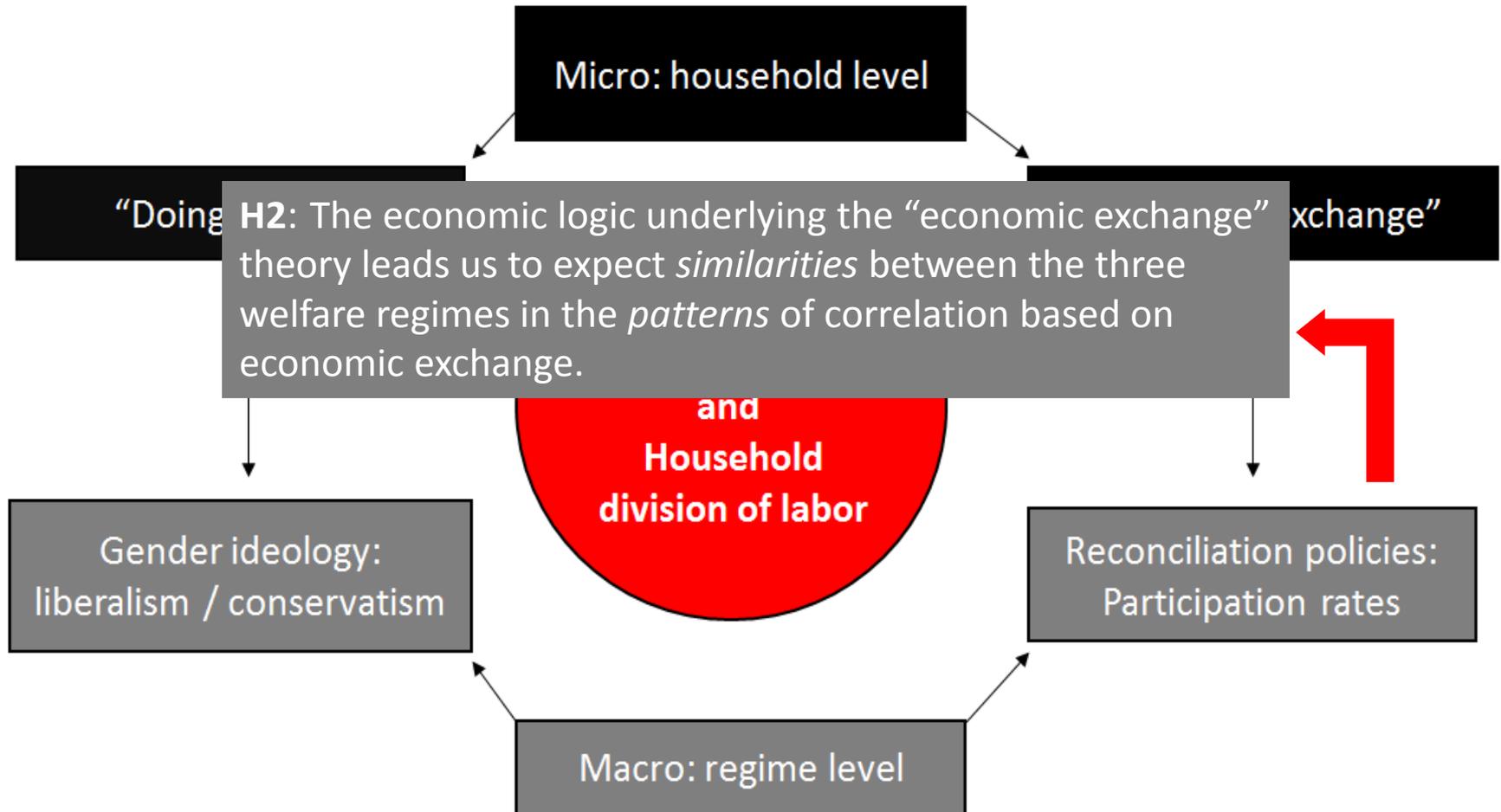
Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

Based on the principles of the two theories we frame 3 Hypotheses:



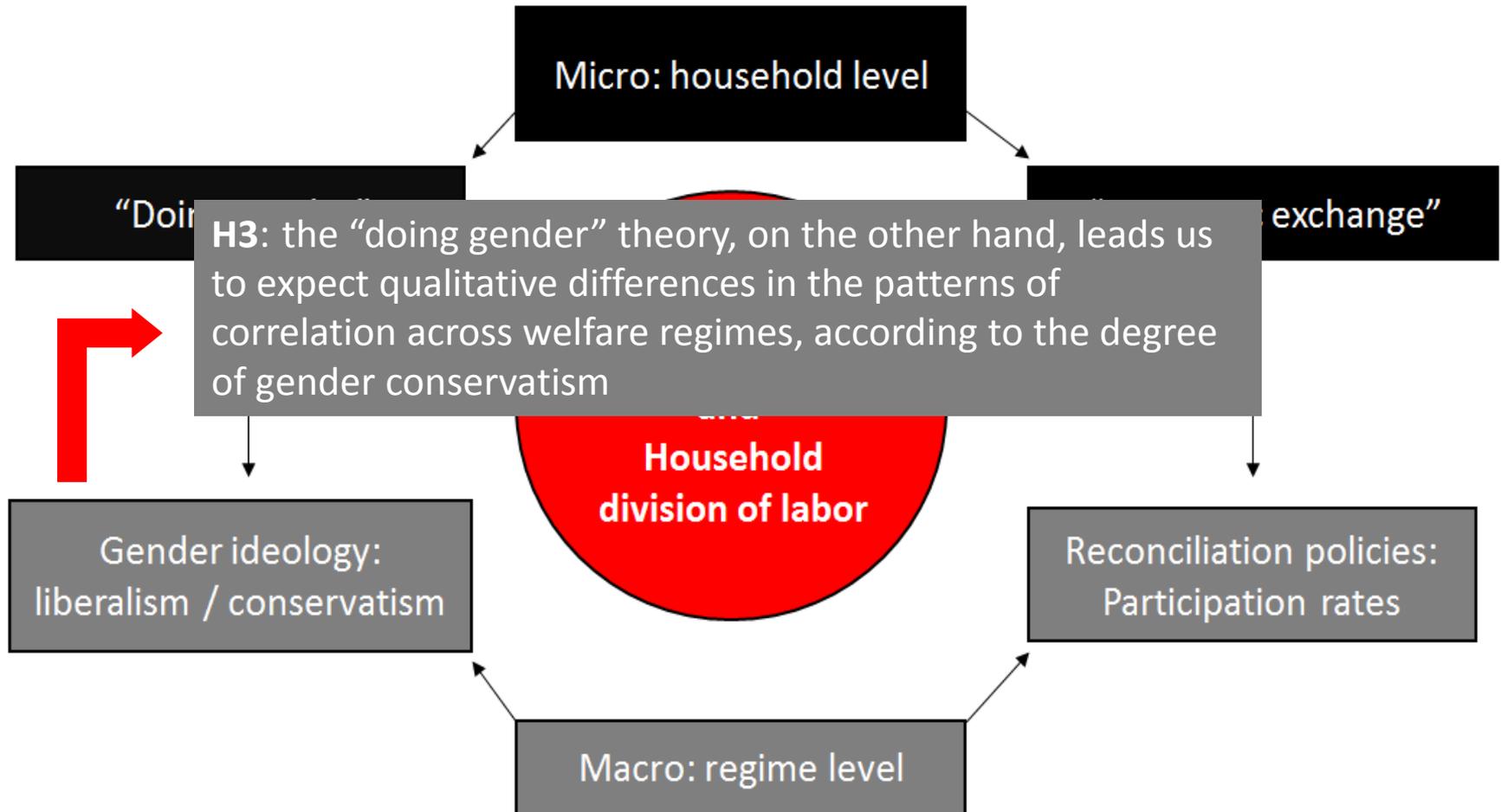
Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

Based on the principles of the two theories we frame three **Hypotheses**:



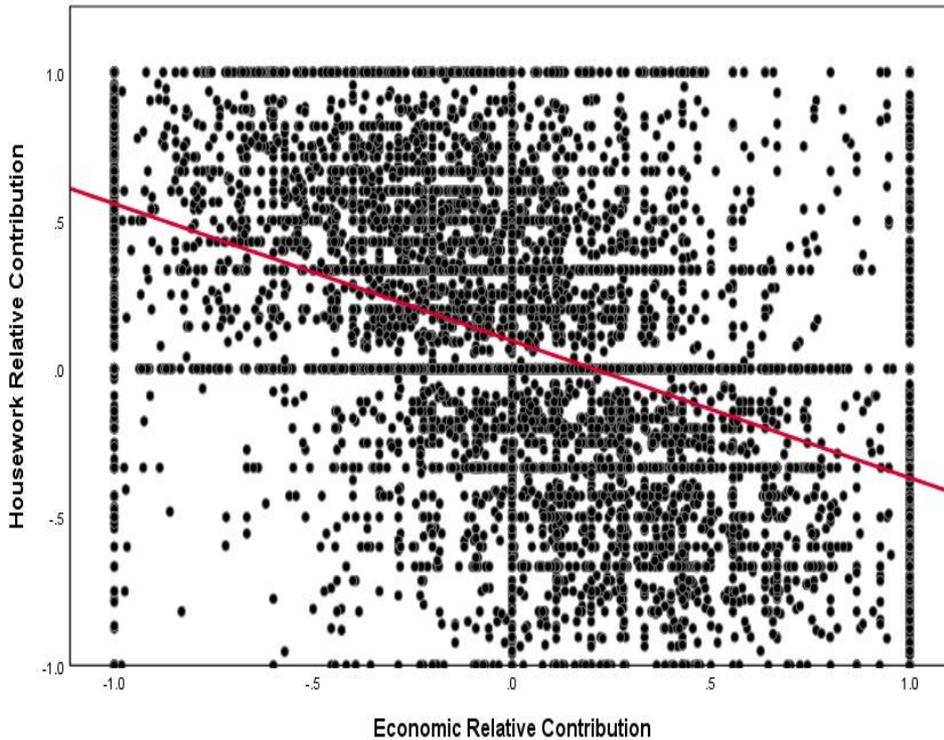
Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

Based on the principles of the two theories we frame 3 Hypotheses:



Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

Results

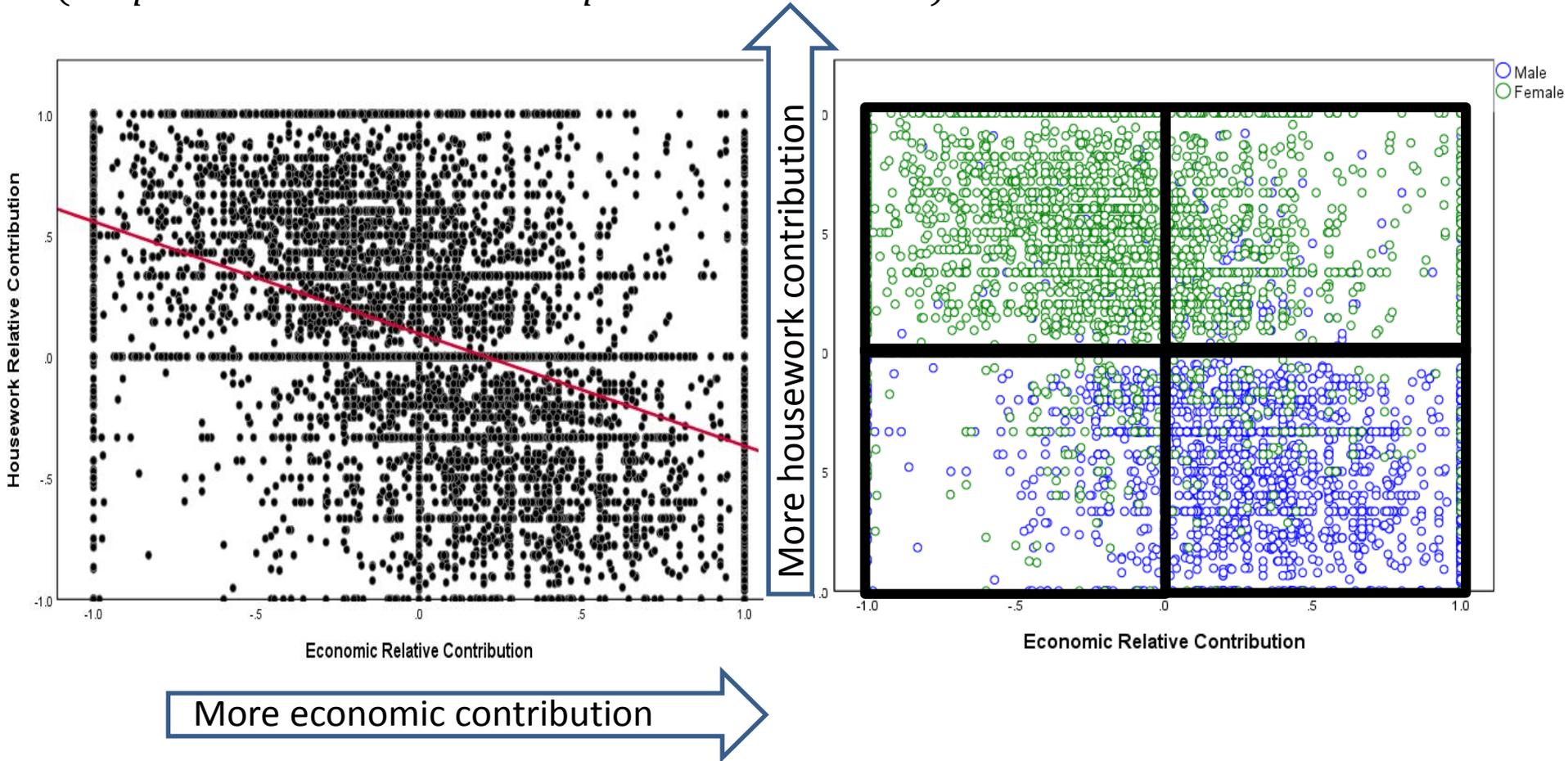


More economic contribution 

$$\frac{(\text{Respondent's housework} - \text{spouse's housework})}{(\text{Respondent's housework} + \text{spouse's housework})}$$

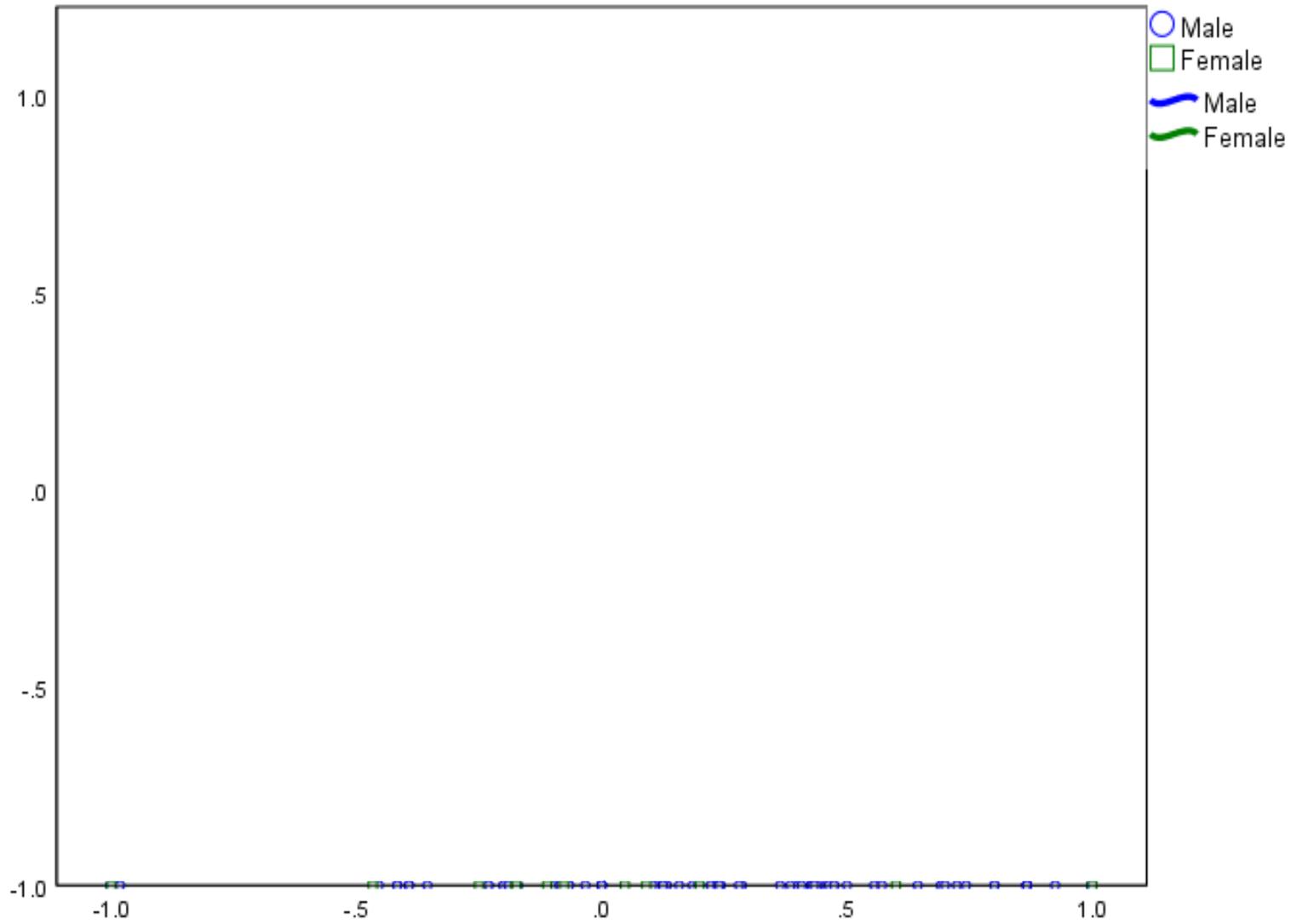
Results

$$\frac{(\text{Respondent's housework} - \text{spouse's housework})}{(\text{Respondent's housework} + \text{spouse's housework})}$$



More housework contribution

Housework Relative Contribution



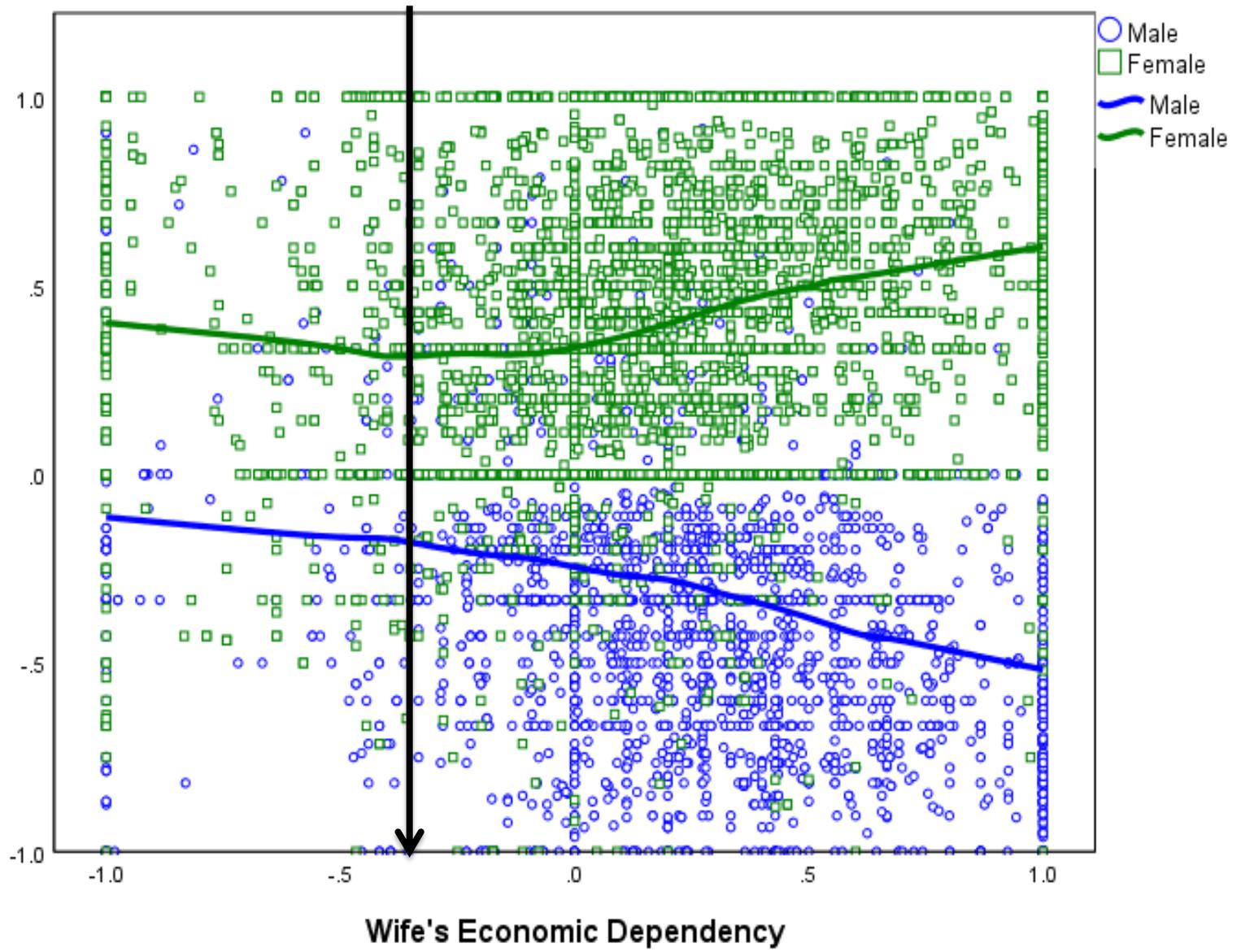
Husband is fully dependent

Equal dependency

Wife is fully dependent

More housework contribution

Housework Relative Contribution



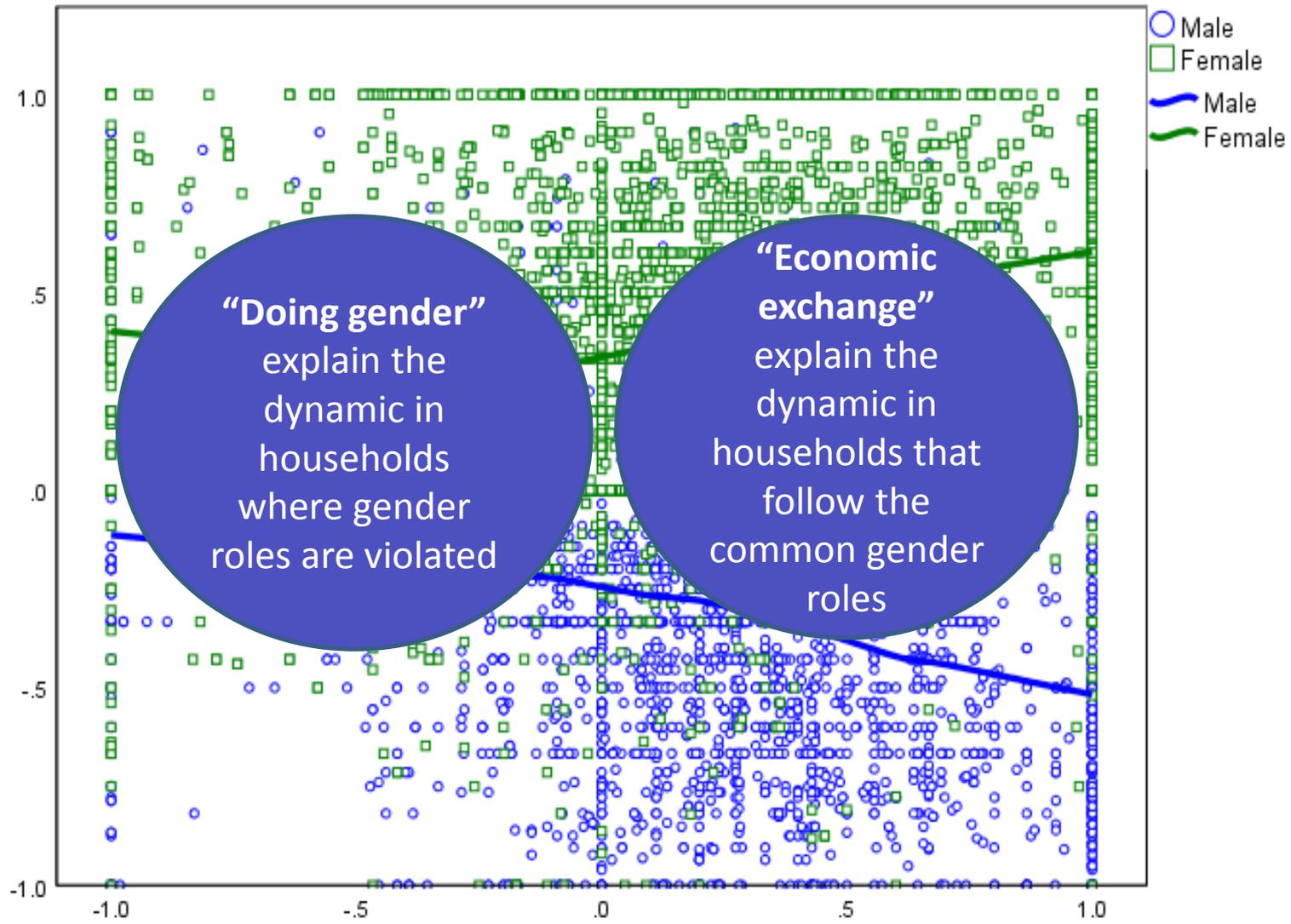
Husband is fully dependent

Equal dependency

Wife is fully dependent

More housework contribution

Housework Relative Contribution



“Doing gender”
explain the
dynamic in
households
where gender
roles are violated

“Economic
exchange”
explain the
dynamic in
households that
follow the
common gender
roles

Husband is fully
dependent

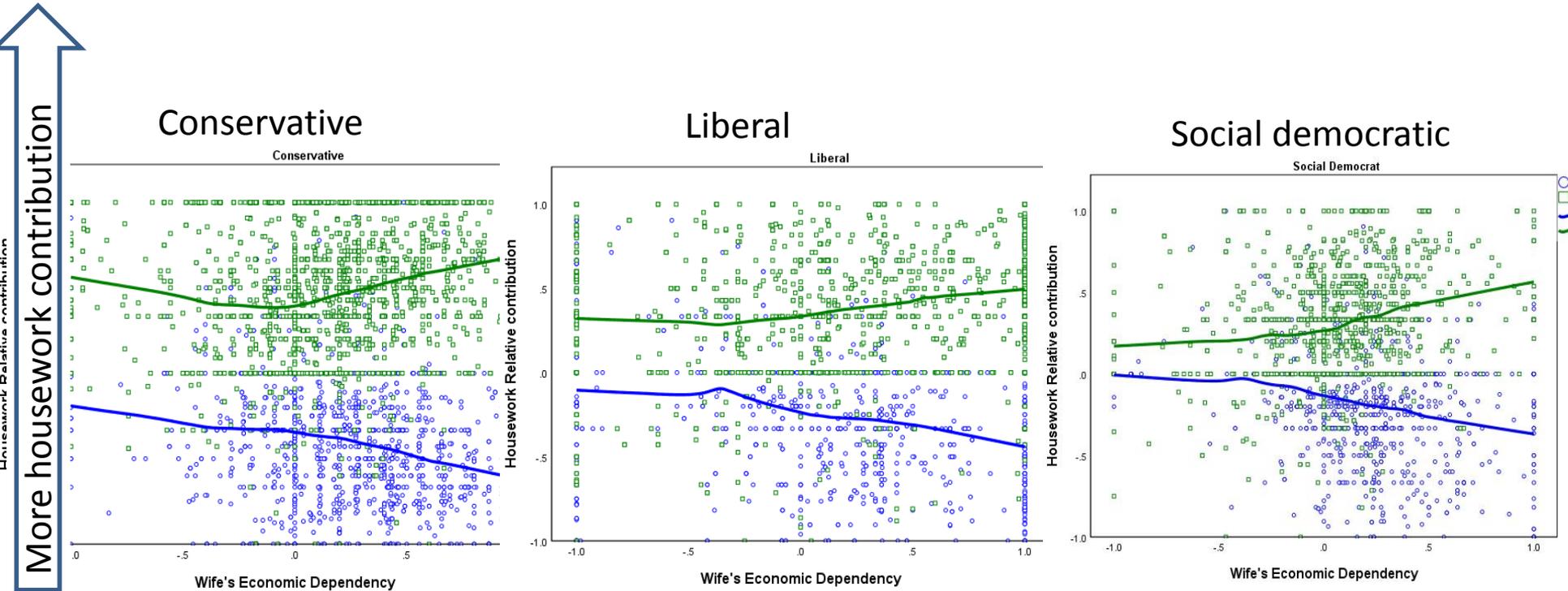
Equal
dependency

Wife is fully
dependent

Cross regime variation (Esping Andersen 1990)



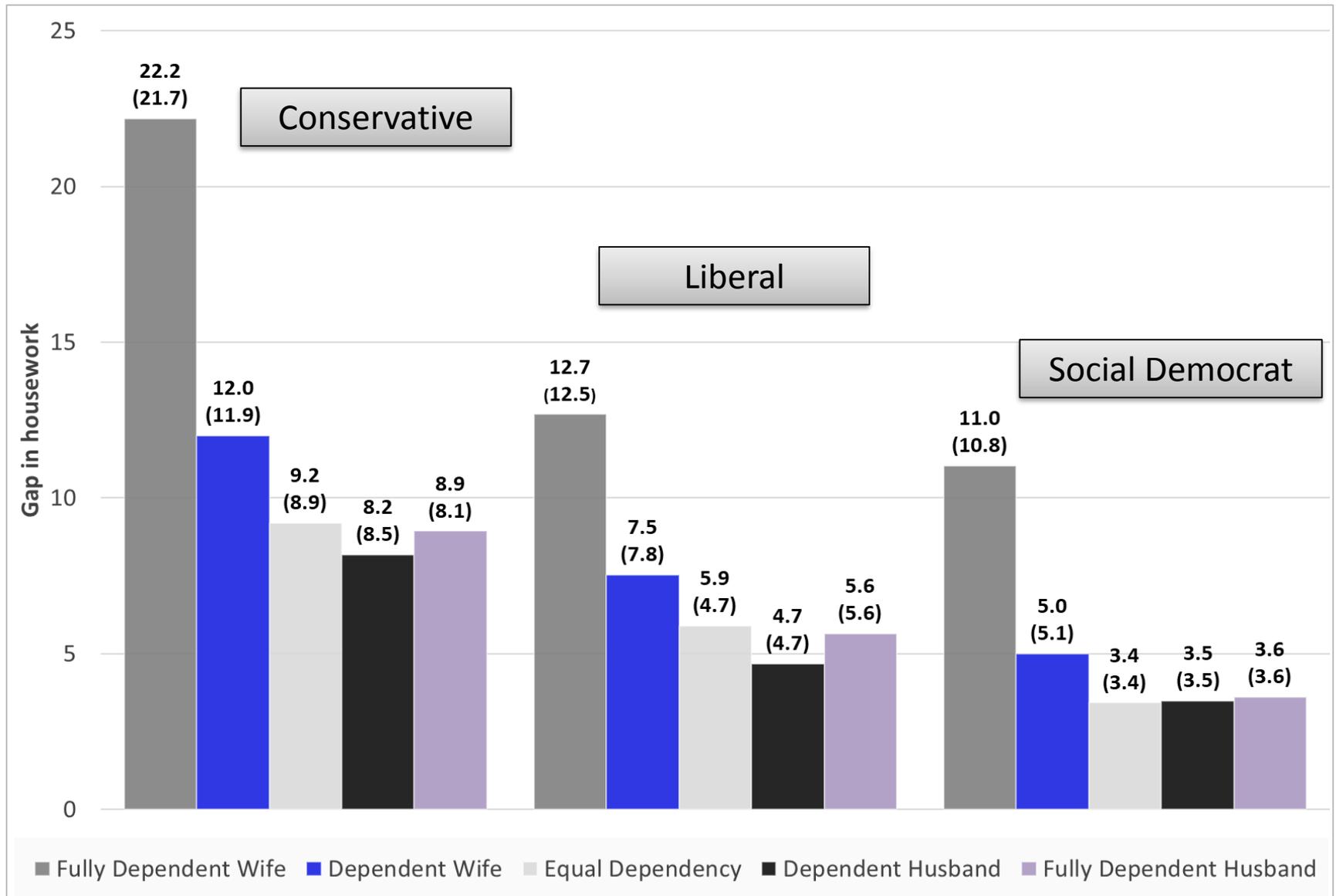
Cross regime variation



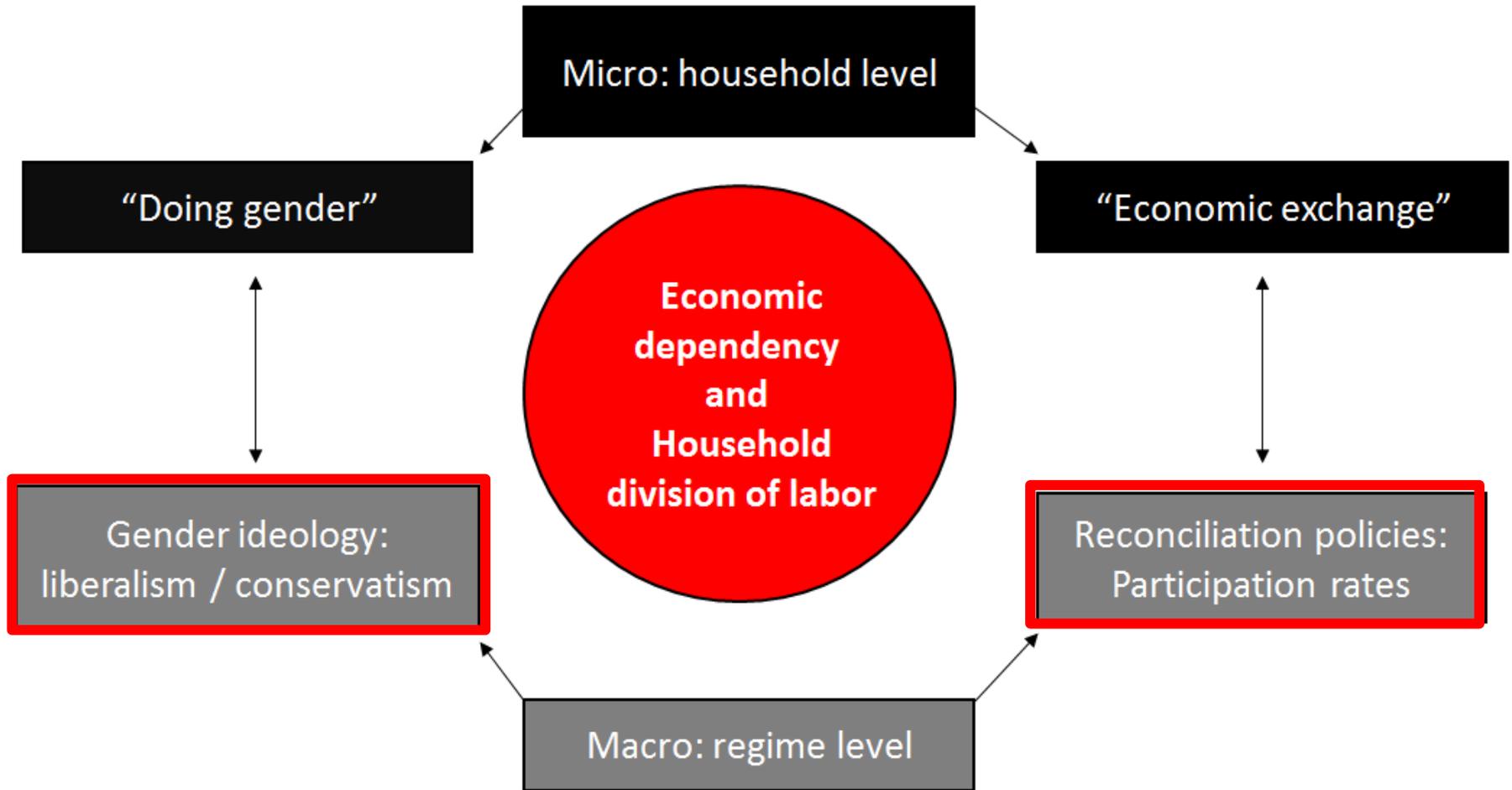
Wives are more economically dependent

- “Economic exchange” theory → similarities in the *patterns* of correlation between the three welfare regimes
- “Doing gender” theory → different *patterns* of correlation between welfare regimes

Housework Gap in Hours Between Women and Men (F-M) by Economic Dependency



The two macro-level mechanisms:



Micro- and macro-level mechanisms influencing the relationship between economic dependency and household division of labor

Cross clusters variation: Gender roles attitudes

Conservative

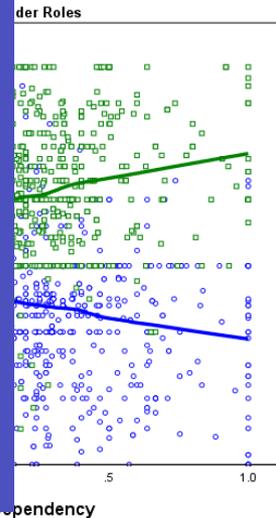
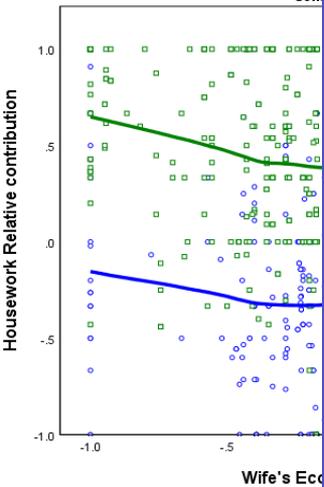
Intermediate

Egalitarian

Index of gender role attitudes , based on 5 items such as:

- “A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.”
- “All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.”
- Etc.

Countries were classified by their average values on that index



Spain
Czech Republic
Austria
Israel
Switzerland

United States
Great Britain
Australia
Ireland
France
West- Germany

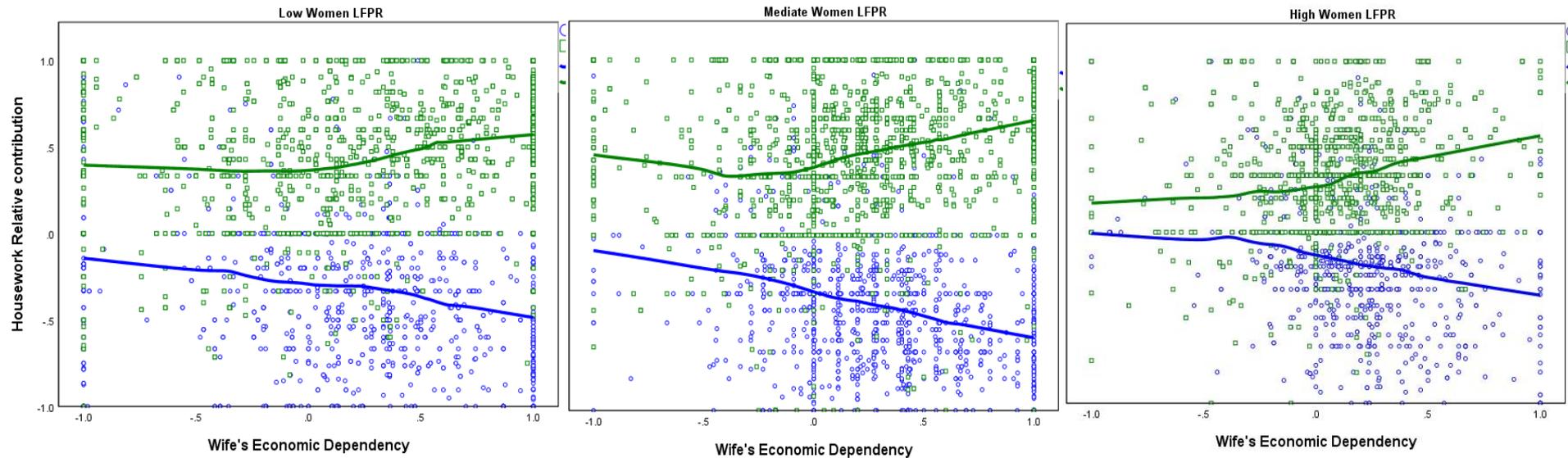
Sweden
Denmark
Norway
Finland

Cross clusters variation: Women participation in paid work

Low levels

Intermediate levels

High levels

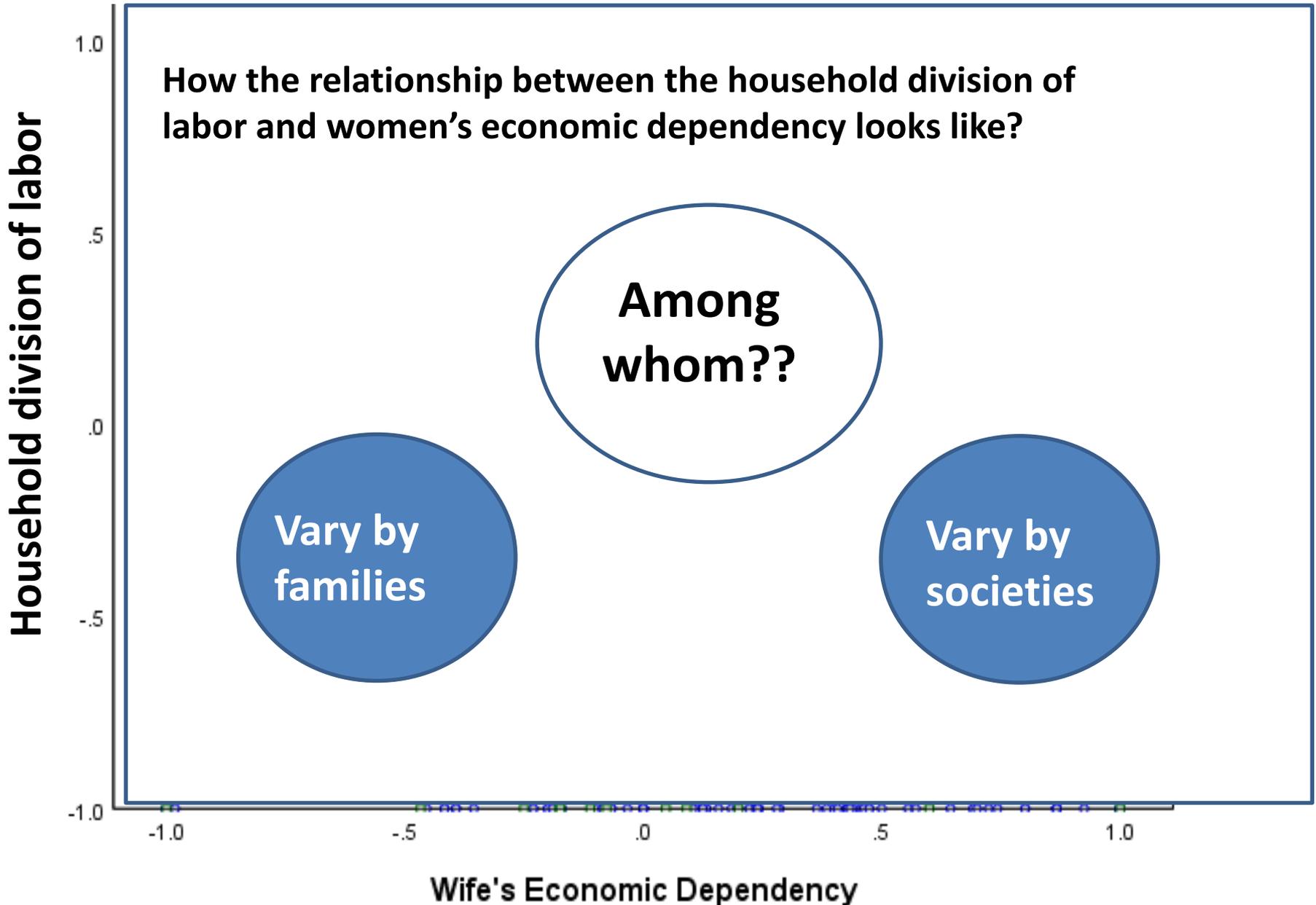


Great Britain
United States
West Germany
Israel
Ireland

Austria
Australia
Spain
Czech Republic
Switzerland
France

Denmark
Finland
Sweden
Norway

Summary and Conclusion



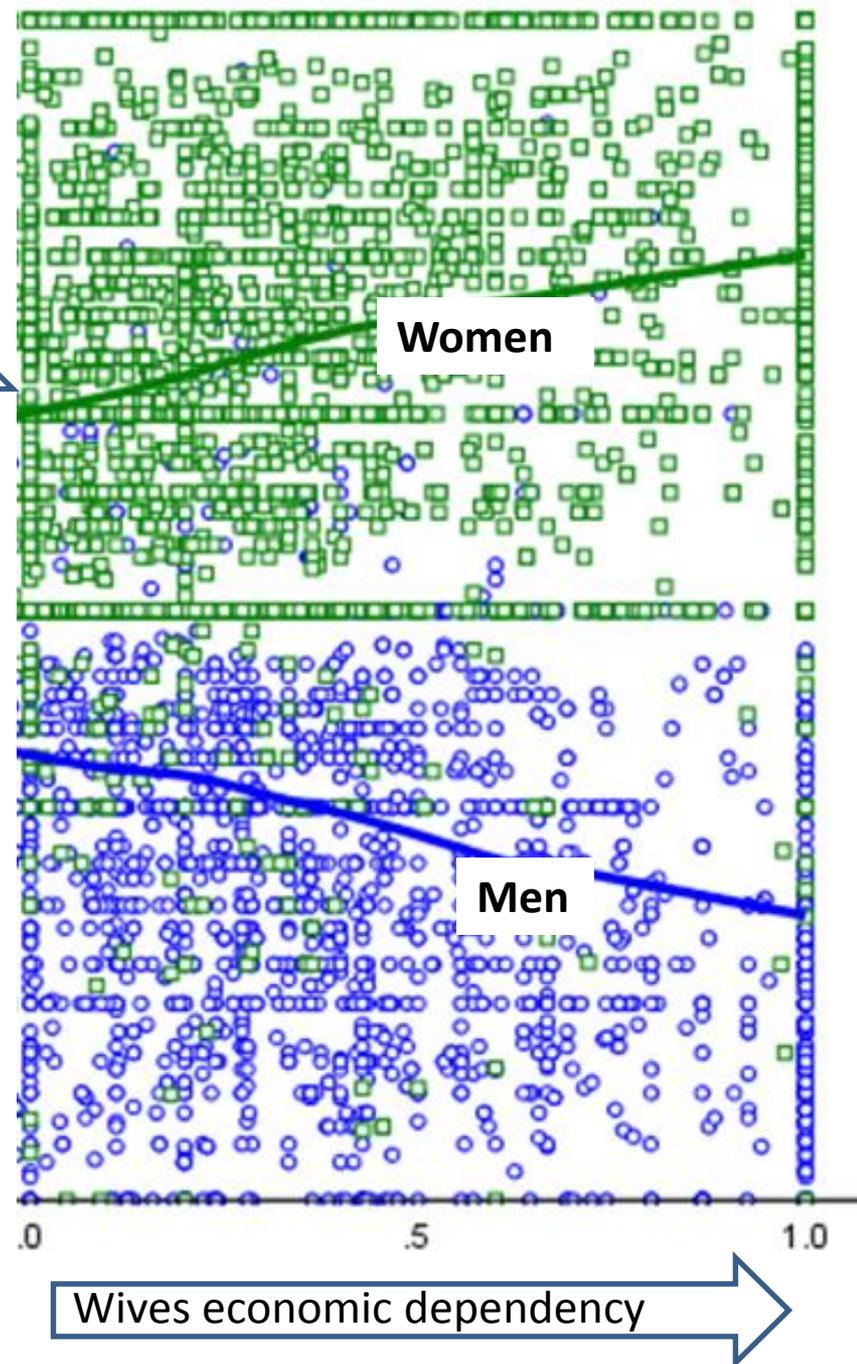
Vary by families

When the husband is the main/sole breadwinner

In families where gender normative roles are not violated the “economic exchange” model describes the relationship between paid and unpaid work quite successfully.

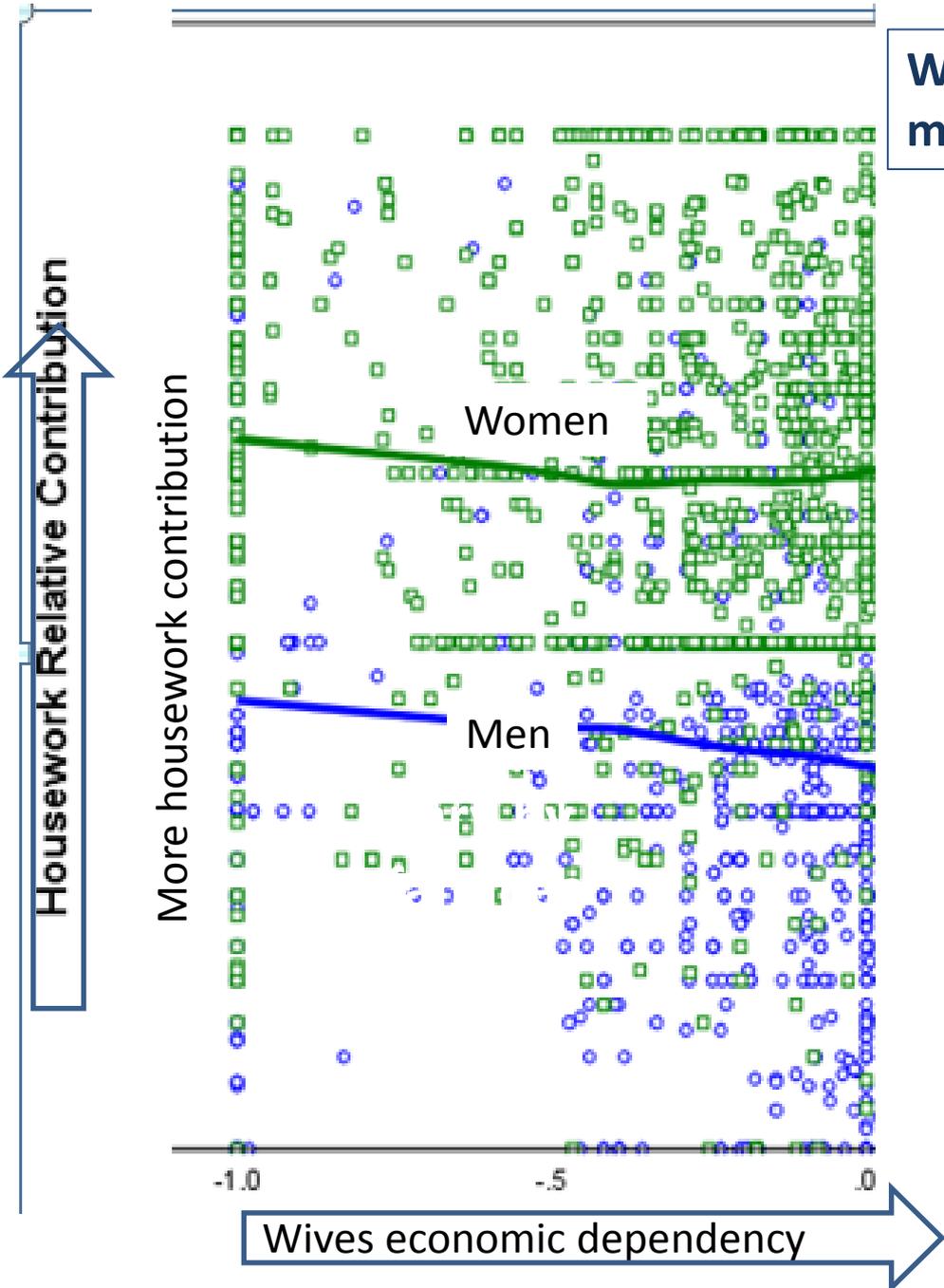
Men, as well as women, tend to contribute more to housework when they earn less, and vice-versa.

More housework contribution



When the wife the main/sole breadwinner

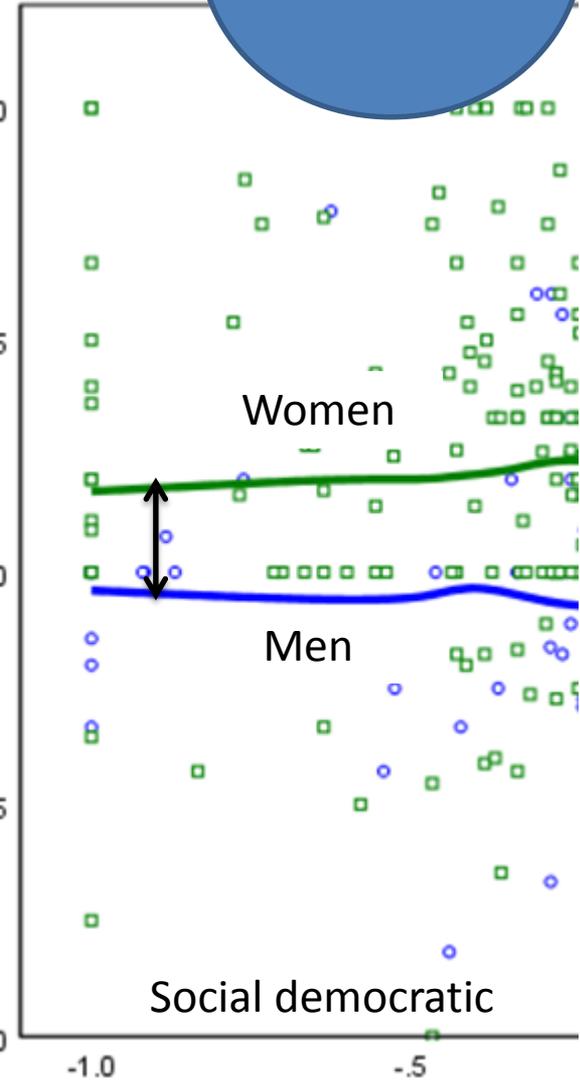
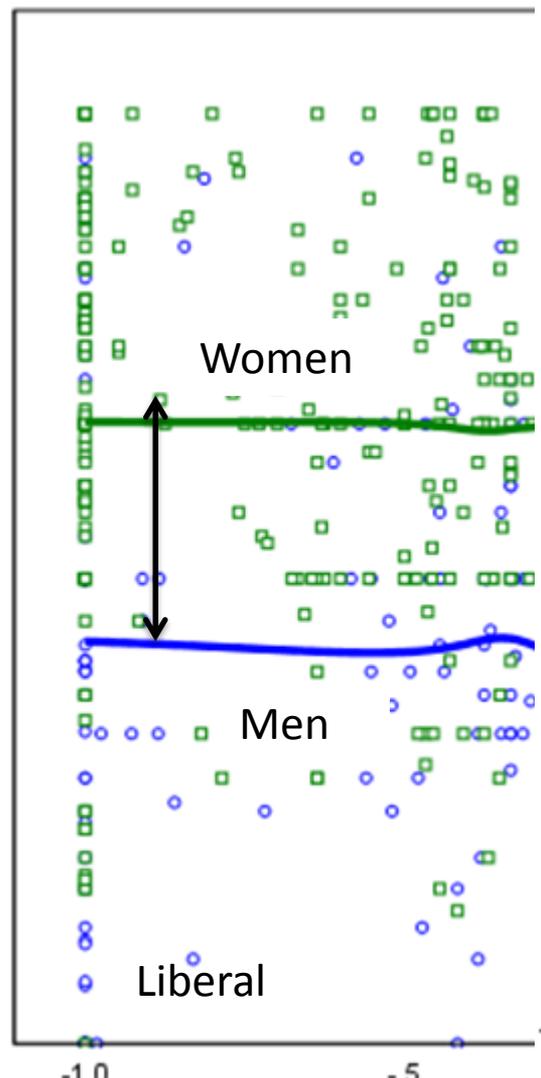
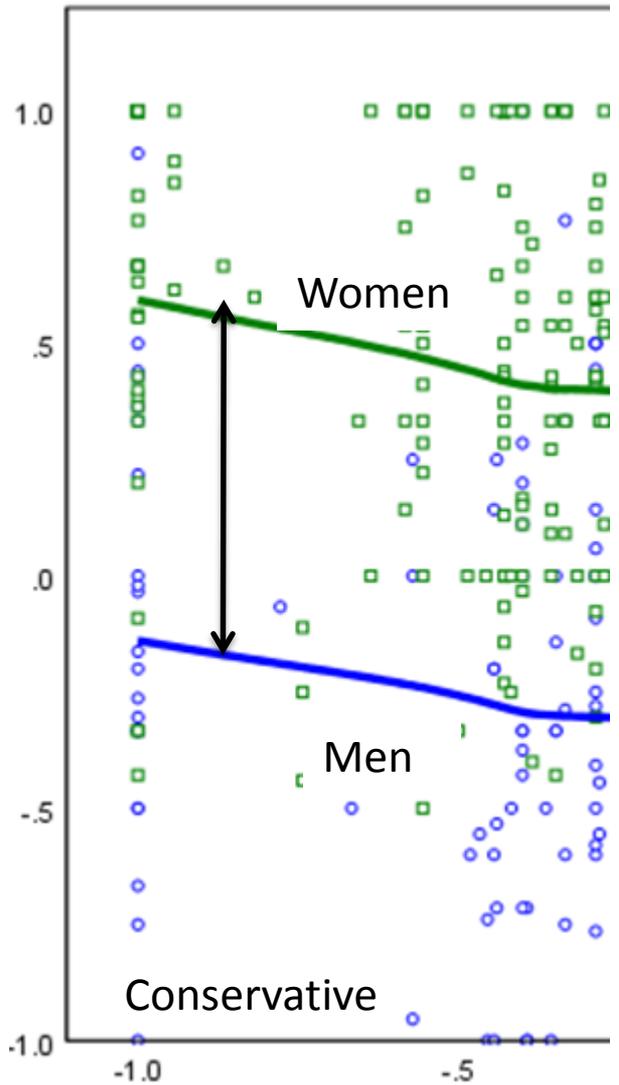
Vary by families



When gender relations within the family are challenged, wife will do most of the housework; whether the wife earns only slightly more than her spouse, whether she is the main breadwinner, or whether she is the sole income provider.

The gaps in housework in families where the wife is the main or the sole breadwinner, by regimes

Vary by societies

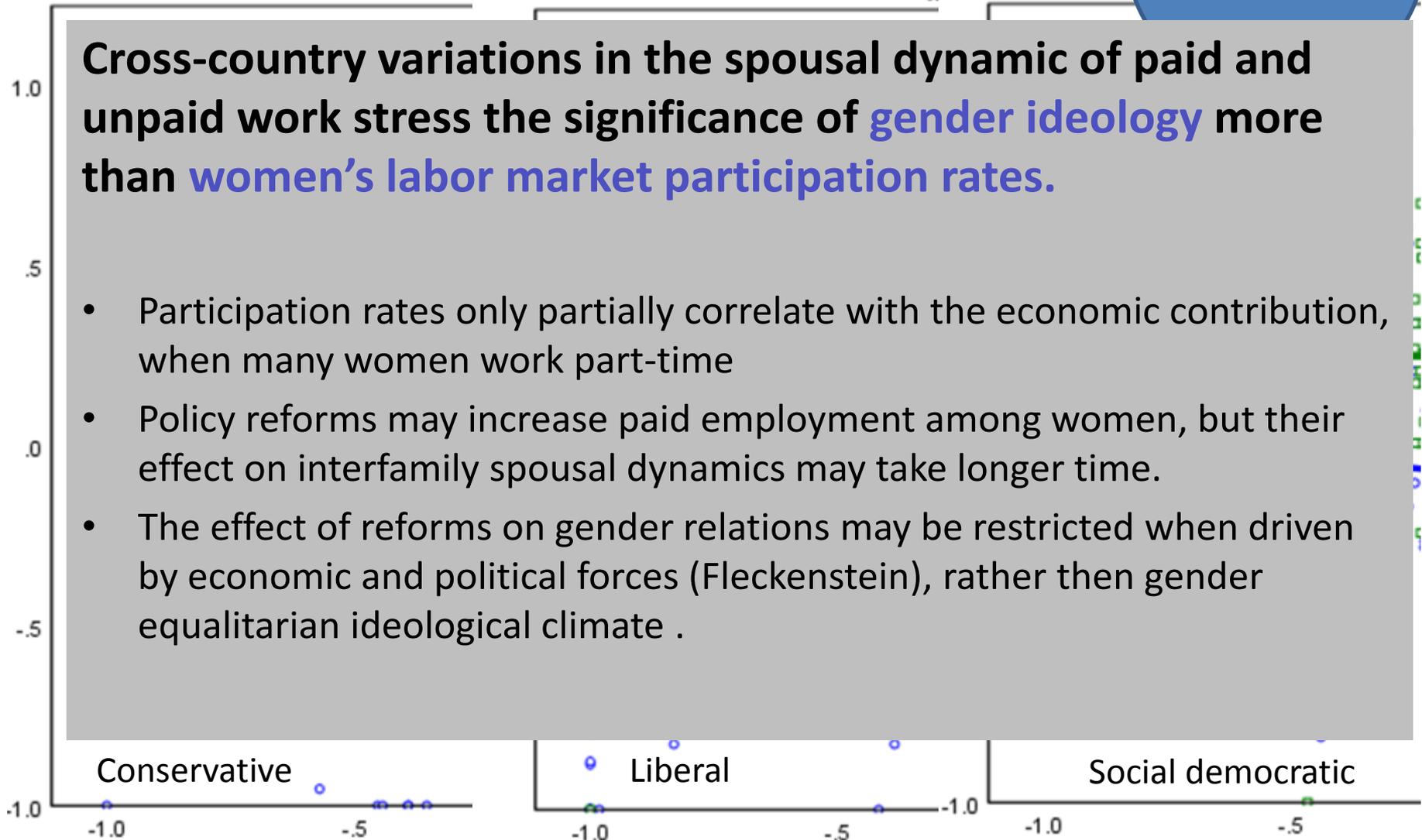


The gaps in housework in families where the wife is the main or the sole breadwinner, by regimes

Vary by societies

Cross-country variations in the spousal dynamic of paid and unpaid work stress the significance of **gender ideology** more than **women's labor market participation rates**.

- Participation rates only partially correlate with the economic contribution, when many women work part-time
- Policy reforms may increase paid employment among women, but their effect on interfamily spousal dynamics may take longer time.
- The effect of reforms on gender relations may be restricted when driven by economic and political forces (Fleckenstein), rather than gender equalitarian ideological climate .



Thank

You

