Who Belongs in the Kitchen? A Systematic Review Literature of Gender, Space and Domestic Practice

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Abstract
Exploring the relationship between gender, kitchen spaces and domestic practices based on a systematic literature review. Kitchens and their connection to women will be examined, along with the effect cultural beliefs, social norms, space and technology have on gender roles. This systematic literature review was performed according to qualitative systematic review methods and PRISMA 2020 reporting guidelines. Literature from architecture, sociology, human geography, gender studies, media studies, and cultural studies was used from 2000 to 2026 collecting 192 articles from different sources. Hegemonic Masculinity Theory and Doing Gender Theory formed the theoretical base of this study. The reviewed literature reveals the inequality in cooking and domestic work sharing between genders, different perceptions of men's and women's cooking activities – leisure and skill vs. routine, as well as the opportunity for women to use kitchens for their cultural and creative self-expression. The review shows that although modern kitchen design and technologies have advanced significantly, this alone is not enough to change the traditional gender disparities in kitchen and other domestic activities. It is concluded that shared domestic activities, inclusive design of kitchen spaces and cultural attitudes are crucial for ensuring gender equality.
Keyword: Gender Studies, Kitchen Space, Gendered Space, Systematic Literature, Kitchen Psychology

Introduction

For much of the twentieth century, the kitchen held a strange sort of double identity in both everyday life and academic thought. People saw it as the beating heart of the household, yet at the same time, it was so deeply accepted as "women's territory" that scholars rarely bothered to study it seriously. The kitchen never stayed just a place to cook and clean, though. Through constant, repeated daily routines, it became a space where ideas about gender got built, questioned, and reinforced in physical form. Meah's work on how kitchens are arranged and used shakes up simple stories that frame women's kitchen experiences as purely oppressive or purely freeing. These findings show where space, gender, and power constantly shape each other in connected ways.

This tug-of-war between the kitchen as a place of exhausting chores and the kitchen as a place of control, inventiveness, and even quiet defiance sets up the foundation for this systematic review. Feminist geography researchers and those who study domestic spaces have argued for years that space carries gender meanings. The built world around us quietly decides who belongs in which spots, nudging bodies into expected layouts based on sex, class, and social standing. Kitchens show this pattern with remarkable sharpness. During the twentieth century, these rooms were designed and advertised around ideas of scientific housekeeping and efficiency, carefully planned to ease women's unpaid workload while locking them into that same work. Hand and Shove's study of kitchen culture looks at how domestic guides like

Good Housekeeping and Ideal Home helped create a design model built around the housewife managing household jobs smoothly. Choices that seem neutral or stylistic, counter heights, where appliances sit, how well a woman can watch her kids playing outside, all carry hidden assumptions about whose time, ease, and visibility really count at home.

At the same time, a growing collection of scholarship complicates any reading of the kitchen as a monolithic space of oppression. Studies of different cultures and regions show that kitchens can become spaces where women hold authority, build communities, and pass down knowledge across generations. Christie's research on kitchen space in central Mexico found that food preparation areas reach far past the indoor kitchen's walls. Outdoor cooking spots matter too, since women gather there for community events and gain social standing plus networks of mutual help that would stay out of reach otherwise (Christie, 2008). These findings warn us against viewing "The kitchen" as one single category that never changes across history. Instead, they highlight the need for careful, context-based analysis, which a systematic review is well equipped to handle.

Understanding how kitchen space gets gendered requires looking at bigger theories about gender being something people do continuously rather than a trait they simply have. Connell and Messerschmidt's revised take on hegemonic masculinity offers a helpful lens here. They describe masculinity and femininity not as fixed characteristics but as organized practices arranged in hierarchies, ones that justify unequal relationships between men and women and also among men themselves (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). When applied to domestic settings, this framework clarifies why men cooking in the kitchen - as helpers, weekend hobbyists, or skilled home chefs - gets talked about so differently compared to women's everyday, unnoticed labor in the same space. Masculinized cooking tends to be framed as fun, impressive, or skillful. Feminized cooking, on the other hand, tends to be framed as duty.

Architectural and design historians have taken this critique further by looking at the kitchen's physical design. Their argument is that even kitchen types that claim to be progressive or minimal still carry assumptions about social reproduction and who should handle care work. Giudici's critique of kitchen typology in modern architecture looks at the kitchen as a spatial category where relationships involving care, reproduction, and shared life might be rethought instead of just accepted as they are. This runs parallel to the architectural and sociological currents, feminist geographers have used the kitchen as a lens onto broader questions of modernity, technology, and domestic visibility.

Looking at how kitchens were designed in different countries like Australia, Britain, and Finland, we can see that the "Modern kitchen" came from shared ideas about scientific management. Local housing policies, migration patterns, and job markets shaped different results for women's roles at home (Johnson, 2006). Some newer research has started questioning the assumption that domestic space is always heterosexual. This work looks at how kitchens fit into the daily lives of older lesbian couples, which challenges common beliefs about who does the cooking, who it gets done for, and what family setups look like (Scicluna, 2017).

When we put these different research areas together, it becomes clear that gender in kitchen studies needs to be looked at through multiple angles at once. Sexuality, class, race, migration background, and life stage all matter together, not as separate boxes to check. The existing literature is broad and theoretically rich, but it stays split across fields like human geography, architectural history, sociology, anthropology, gender studies, and material culture studies. Few researchers have tried to pull findings together across these disciplines or examine how different methods lead to different conclusions about gender and domestic space.

This review steps in to fill that gap. It uses a systematic approach based on the PRISMA 2020 reporting guidelines for finding, filtering, and combining relevant studies (Page et al 2021), focusing on research about gender, space, and everyday domestic life in the kitchen. Along the way, this review tackles three connected questions:

(a) How has the kitchen been conceptualized as a gendered space across disciplinary traditions and historical periods

(b) What mechanisms architectural, ideological, technological, and social have sustained or challenged the association between femininity and kitchen labor

(c) Under what conditions does the kitchen function as a site of empowerment, resistance, or renegotiated gender relations rather than straightforward subordination.

By synthesizing this dispersed literature, the review aims to clarify not only who has historically been assumed to belong in the kitchen, but how that assumption continues to be built, challenged, and rebuilt through everyday domestic practice.

Review of Literature

Within interior architecture, Amoroso and Alcocer (2025) look again at the kitchen as a social-spatial barometer. They argue that the blurring of reproductive and productive activity in contemporary housing has not removed gendered space. Rather, it has spread that space across new domestic-urban arrangements. Drawing on a genealogy of domestic space, they show how everyday time, rather than fixed room typologies, has become the main mechanism for organizing who performs care work and where.

Emgin, Bektaş Ata, and Karaosmanoğlu (2025) add an architectural lens. Their historical study of Turkish kitchens from the 1930s to the 2020s traces a long shift of the kitchen from a place of obligatory labor toward one increasingly marketed as a site of leisure. The authors argue that this shift has been driven more by appliance design and media discourse than by any underlying redistribution of domestic responsibility. Together, these studies suggest that architectural modernization of the kitchen has been double-edged. It has opened new possibilities for shared or leisure-coded cooking while leaving the deeper allocation of everyday, unglamorous foodwork largely untouched.

Masculinity, technology, and media representation. A cluster of 2024-2025 studies examines how domestic technology and media discourse construct men's presence in the kitchen as fundamentally different in kind from women's. Karaosmanoğlu, Bektaş Ata, and Emgin (2024) analyze Turkish television commercials for domestic appliances. They find that men are consistently framed through tropes of play, novelty, and self-indulgence - the naughty scientist, the flirtatious chef - rather than through the routine, unremarked competence attributed to women.

The authors argue that the increased visibility of men in kitchen advertising does not result in the equalization of domestic labor, and that the aestheticization of domesticity is enabled by men’s selective engagement with it. The same research team has conducted a companion study (Karaosmanoğlu et al., 2025) on women’s own embodied, sensory relationships with kitchen appliances. The authors claim that women’s engagement with electric technology has been comparatively neglected in scholarship that focuses on technology’s liberatory promise rather than its lived, gendered texture.

These findings resonate with and update the long-standing theoretical assertion traceable to Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) account of hegemonic masculinity that men’s entry into feminized domains tends to be recoded as skill, leisure, or spectacle rather than obligation. Kitchens in institutions and work.

Recent research has also extended beyond the private household to consider gender dynamics in professional and institutional kitchens. In the ethnographic case study of Italian institutional catering by Paraciani, Pitti, and Martelli (2026) women are the majority of the workforce in large-scale cooking centers, but Women are still underrepresented in managerial and technical positions. Everyday organizational practices such as assigning tasks and scheduling mesh with larger cultural assumptions about care, and the moral value of feeding others, to guide women into lower status positions, while men more often occupy supervisory or technically prestigious ones.

This study is important because it shows that the gendering of kitchen space is produced not only by domestic ideology but also by apparently neutral workplace structures, thus extending the analysis of gendered kitchens from the home into the formal labor market. Domestic foodways and resilience to binary roles. In the sphere of everyday domestic practice Maj, Goszczyński and Wójtewicz (2026) use qualitative interview data from Poland to identify two recurrent figures in contemporary domestic food culture: the Vestal, a woman who takes on the ongoing responsibility of feeding others, and the Masterchef.

A man who cooks, generally, occasionally, of his own accord. Emerging trends—men’s increasing investment in food and body image, rhetorical investments in shared responsibility, and the redefinition of cooking as leisure—have not yet resulted in a fundamental restructuring of who is responsible for everyday domestic food provision, the authors report, suggesting that shifts in cultural discourse about cooking tend to outpace shifts in the allocation of actual labor. Cultural and literary representations. The literary and cultural studies scholarship of this period continues to understand the kitchen as a charged narrative space through which gendered identity is constructed and contested.

Samal and Mishra (2025) read Ambai’s short fiction in Tamil to argue that the identities of Indian women are constituted around, and sometimes in opposition to, the kitchen as an imposed spatial category, thereby complicating any easy reading of the kitchen as either prison or sanctuary. In a similar vein, Dhanya (2026) explores contemporary Indian women’s culinary memoirs, arguing that recipes and kitchen stories function as affective archives that preserve intergenerational memory even as they reposition the kitchen as a space of authorship rather than mere duty.

Cultural narratives seem important for understanding how women deal with gender roles in the kitchen even if they do not get used much as evidence. Recent studies show things are changing but not evenly. Men's involvement in cooking has gone up according to the numbers and they use more kitchen gadgets now. But the detailed studies find it still gets

treated differently compared to what women do whether it is in ads or at work or at home. There is still this difference between how things look on the surface with more men cooking shown and talk about it being equal and the actual day to day work that stays the same. The review will look across more of the newer papers from 2000 to 2026 to trace how it connects.

Research Methodology

Aim of The Study

The goal here is to pull together research on kitchens as spaces tied to gender and daily routines in the home. It draws from many fields like geography and design along with sociology and media studies. The point is to map out how these elements connect and what has stayed the same or shifted over time from the late twentieth century onward. No fresh data gets collected. Everything comes from published work instead and the focus stays on material up through recent years.

Scholarship on this stays pretty split across different areas that do not connect much. People looking at kitchen layouts and tools often work apart from those studying who does the housework. Writing about kitchens in books or stories rarely links to observations from actual workplaces or institutions. Studies of cooking in ads do not usually tie back to bigger ideas about domestic space. It feels hard for anyone reading across it all to get a clear sense of what is known so far. A review is needed for that reason. Some connections seem obvious once you look but they stay overlooked in the separate fields. It seems like that leaves gaps in how the whole picture comes together:

(a) consolidate dispersed findings into a single, comparable evidence base.
(b) identify where findings across disciplines converge, diverge, or contradict one another.
(c) surface methodological patterns and gaps that have shaped what is currently known.
(d) provide an evidence-based foundation for future empirical, design, and policy work aimed at addressing the persistent gendering of domestic and institutional kitchen space.

Given renewed scholarly attention to this topic between 2024 and 2026 spanning new work on kitchen technology, institutional catering labor, and literary representation, the timing of this synthesis is particularly significant.

Research Objectives

RO 1 - Systematically identify and map the scope, disciplinary distribution, and geographic spread of peer-reviewed literature published on gender, space, and domestic practice in relation to the kitchen.

RO 2 - Critically examine how the concept of the kitchen as a gendered space has been theorized and operationalized across different disciplinary traditions (architecture, geography, sociology, anthropology, media and cultural studies).

RO 3 - Identify and categorize the specific mechanisms architectural, technological, ideological, organizational, and representational through which gendered associations with the kitchen are produced, sustained, or challenged.

Research Questions

RQ1 - How is the relationship between gender and kitchen space theorized across different academic disciplines?

RQ2 - What architectural, technological, and design-related mechanisms have historically constructed the kitchen as a feminized space, and how are these mechanisms represented in the most recent (2000–2026) literature?

RQ3 - How does men's participation in kitchen labor whether domestic, leisure-oriented, or professional get discursively framed differently from women's participation, and with what consequences for the gendered division of labor?

Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative systematic review methodology, following the reporting standards established by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta Analyses (PRISMA 2020) statement (Page et al., 2021) and the standalone systematic literature review guidance developed by Okoli (2015) for the social sciences. Unlike a

quantitative systematic review or meta-analysis, which aggregates numerical effect sizes, this review is designed to synthesize heterogeneous qualitative, conceptual, and mixed-methods scholarship using a structured, transparent, and reproducible protocol. The systematic method was chosen over a conventional narrative review because it minimizes selection bias, makes the search and selection process auditable, and allows the synthesis to be updated as new literature emerges, an important consideration given the active publication of new studies on this topic through 2026.

Research Design

A structured search was conducted across multidisciplinary academic databases like Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, Taylor & Francis Online, SAGE Journals, ScienceDirect using Boolean combinations of key terms. Articles were also hand-searched to identify additional eligible studies (snowball sampling). Screening and eligibility assessment: Titles and abstracts were screened against pre-specified inclusion and exclusion criteria detailed in Section 9 followed by full-text assessment of shortlisted records. This two-stage screening process followed the PRISMA flow structure of identification, deduplication, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

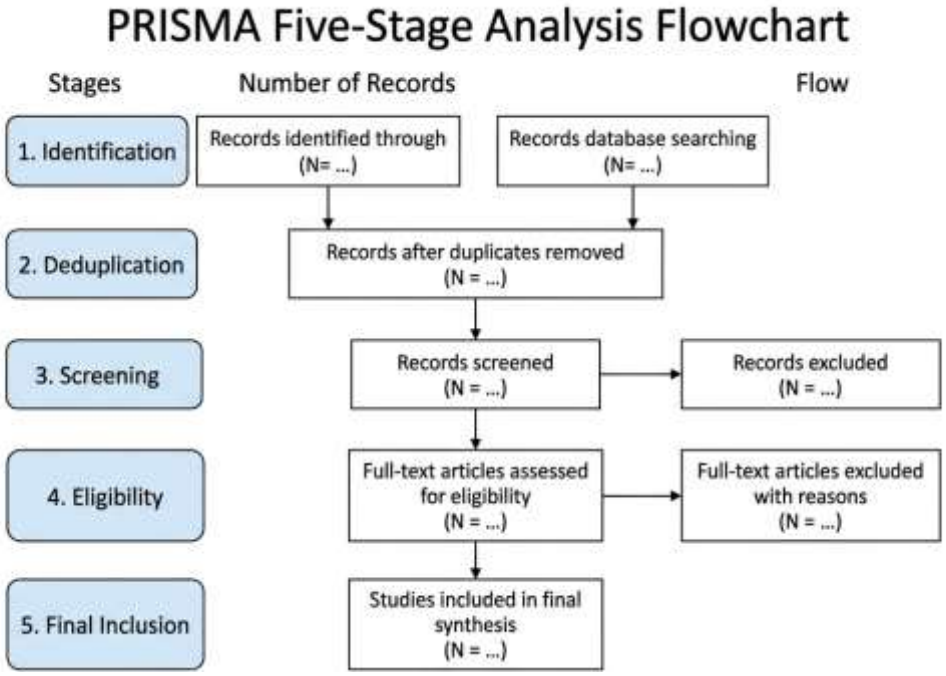


Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart

Theoretical Framework

The review is organized around two complementary theoretical lenses drawn from gender theory and applied throughout the coding and synthesis process as sensitizing concepts rather than as fixed hypotheses to be tested. The first is Hegemonic Masculinity Theory as reformulated by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), which conceptualizes masculinity and femininity not as static traits but as hierarchically organized social practices that unequal relations between men and women.

This framework is used to interpret findings concerning men's kitchen participation. For example, why cooking performed by men is frequently coded as leisure, skill, or spectacle, while functionally identical labor performed by women is coded as routine obligation. The second is Doing Gender Theory, originating with West and Zimmerman (1987), which understands gender not as an internal or fixed identity but as an ongoing social accomplishment produced through everyday interaction and held accountable to normative expectations. This framework informs the review's interpretation of studies examining household food practices, where the allocation of kitchen labor is treated as an interactional accomplishment continually negotiated between household members rather than a static assignment. Together, these two frameworks allow the review to move beyond simply cataloguing who does kitchen work toward explaining how and why the gendered meaning of kitchen labor is produced and reproduced.

A synthesis approach consistent with feminist geography's broader claim that domestic space is never neutral but is actively constituted through gendered social practice. Research Design This review follows a five-stage sequential design adapted from PRISMA 2020 (Page et al 2021) and Okoli's (2015) standalone systematic literature review

protocol. A review protocol was developed in advance, specifying the research questions, eligibility criteria, search strategy, and planned analytic approach, in order to reduce post hoc bias in study selection.

A structured extraction form was used to record, for each included study, the author(s), year, discipline, country/context, theoretical framework, methodology, sample or corpus, and key findings relevant to the review's research questions. Synthesis: Extracted data were synthesized using thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008), described further in Section 10. This design is qualitative and interpretive rather than statistical, reflecting the predominantly qualitative, conceptual, and humanities oriented nature of the underlying literature on gender and domestic space.

The individual peer reviewed journal article, book chapter, or scholarly monograph addressing gender and the kitchen as domestic or institutional space. Time frame: Given the review's dual objective of establishing historical and theoretical grounding while emphasizing recent developments, the corpus was structured into two temporal bands foundational literature (approximately 1987–2023), used to establish theoretical grounding, and a focused recent band (2024–2026), used to capture emerging themes and to ensure currency of the synthesis. Disciplinary scope: Human geography, architecture and interior design, sociology, anthropology, gender and women's studies, media and communication studies, and literary/cultural studies.

English-language, peer-reviewed publications with verifiable digital object identifiers (DOIs), to ensure traceability and reproducibility of the evidence base. Empirical qualitative studies (ethnography, interviews, discourse and content analysis), conceptual/theoretical papers, and literary-critical analyses were all eligible, reflecting the interdisciplinary character of the topic purely quantitative time use studies without a gender-space analytic focus were excluded unless they were used as contextual or statistical background. The sample in this review refers to the corpus of studies selected through the systematic search and screening process described in Section 7, rather than a sample of human participants.

Inclusion criteria required in the study:

(a) Directly addressed the kitchen, domestic food preparation space, or institutional/professional cooking space.

(b) Engaged explicitly with gender as an analytic category (rather than mentioning gender only in passing).

(c) The papers were published in a peer-reviewed journal, edited volume, or academic press book.

(d) The articles are available in full text with a verifiable DOI or equivalent persistent identifier.

Studies were excluded if they concerned food consumption or nutrition without reference to spatial or gendered dimensions of preparation, were purely product-design or engineering studies with no social-scientific framing, or were non-peer-reviewed opinion pieces, blogs, or journalistic commentary without an academic citation apparatus.

These criteria have been applied to the search process outlined in Section 7, leading to a purposively assembled, interdisciplinary corpus comprising of texts in fields of architecture and interior design (Amoroso & Alcocer, 2025), media and visual studies (Karaosmanoğlu et al., 2024, 2025), sociology of food and labor (Maj et al., 2026; Paraciani et al., 2026), and literary and cultural studies (Samal & Mishra, 2025; Dhanya, 2026), as well as seminal theoretical and empirical works of the past few decades, which set up the conceptual foundation of the field (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Meah, 2014; Hand & Shove, 2004).

This purposive, criterion-based sampling approach rather than random or exhaustive sampling is standard practice in qualitative systematic reviews, where the goal is analytic saturation and disciplinary representativeness rather than statistical generalizability (Okoli, 2015).

Findings, direct arguments, and illustrative material from each included study were coded inductively, remaining close to the original authors' own terms and framings (e.g kitchenspace, doing gender, masterchef, aestheticized domesticity). Codes with conceptual overlap were grouped into descriptive themes that stayed close to the primary studies. For example, themes such as architectural continuity of gendered design, masculinity and technology/leisure framing, institutional and workplace reproduction of gender hierarchy, and literary and narrative construction of kitchen identity. Descriptive themes were then interpreted through the study's theoretical framework hegemonic masculinity and doing gender to generate higher-order analytical themes that go beyond the primary studies themselves most notably, the recurring tension between rhetorical/representational change increased visibility of men in kitchens, design innovation, discourse of shared responsibility and persistent material inequality in the everyday, low-visibility allocation of routine domestic food labor.

The analysis was conducted systematically by means of reflexive memos during the coding phase, verification of themes that emerged in relation to the original data in order to prevent drift from primary data and consideration of contradictory findings such as studies focusing on kitchen as the place of female empowerment or prestige. This analysis procedure is in accordance with the guidelines for synthesis of diverse qualitative and conceptual literature in the systematic review of the social sciences and humanities (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

DATA ANALYSIS

Five-stage sequential PRISMA analysis of the literature:

The five stages can be reconstructed from the figures actually treating the relevant categories as the screening/eligibility decisions, while clearly distinguishing this reconstruction from figures explicitly labelled as PRISMA.

Prisma Stage	**Process**	**Records**	**Calculation**	**Outcome**
Stage 1 Identification	Records identified from SciSpace Basic Search, SciSpace full text search and Google Scholar	192	192 merged records	Intial literature corpus
Stage 2 Deduplication	Duplication records removed	48	192 - 48	144 unique papers
Stage 3 Screening	Relevance screening of the 192 literature corpus	192	123+34+19+16	176 potentially relevant, !6 not relevant
Stage4 Eligibility	Papers assessed according to relevant research topic	176	123 highly + 34 partially + 19 low	157 stronger candidates; 19 low-relevance papers excluded
Stage 5 Included literature	Literature review retained as relevant for review	157	123 highly + 34 partially	157 papers included

Table 1. Five-stage sequential PRISMA Table

From the source, it clearly shows that 192 records were included before the process of de-duplication while 48 were deleted as duplicates leaving 144 unique articles. There is also mention of the number of articles that are highly relevant which is 123, partially relevant which is 34, low relevance which is 19, and 16 that are not relevant at all. The inconsistency found in the source is 123+34+19+16=192.

Stage 1 - Identification

The identification captured literature dealing with:

- Gendered Domestic Labour
- Kitchen Space
- Homemaking,
- Household Foodwork
- Spatial Belonging
- Gender And Home
- Migration And Domestic Space
- Masculinity And Cooking
- Architecture And Domestic Efficiency

The interpretation of the above identification states that in the overall 192 review of literatures, 42 papers were highly relevant based on gender domestic labour, 31 papers are related to kitchen space, 15 papers were related to home making, 38 papers are related to household foodwork, 12 papers were related to spatial belongings, 27 papers are related to gender and home, 14 papers are related to migration and domestic space, 13 papers are related to masculinity and cooking and 7 papers are related to architecture and domestic efficiency.

Stage 2 - Deduplication

192 merged records → 48 duplicates removed → 144 unique papers found.

Calculation: $192 - 48 = 144$

The duplicate rate is: [frac{48}{192}times/100=25%] Frac = fraction

Measure	**Number**	**Percentage**
Records before deduplication	192	100%
Duplicates removed	48	25.0%
Unique records	144	75.0%

Table 2. Deduplication of Articles

The above identification states that in the overall 192 papers, 144 papers are unique records that is 75% and 48 papers were duplicate papers that were removed in this process.

Stage 3 - Screening

Screening category	**Number**	**Percentage of 192**
Highly relevant	123	64.1%
Partially relevant	34	17.7%
Low relevance	19	9.9%
Not relevant	16	8.3%
Total	192	100%

Table 3. Classification of Screening

The result is that $123 + 34 = 157$ or [frac{157}{192}\times100=81.77%]

Therefore, In the 192 articles, 157 were categorized as highly relevant or partly relevant, which constitutes about 81.8% of the total collection. The process indicates the fact that the research design and search strategy were properly aligned with the research theme. On the other hand 19 + 16 = 35 or 18.2% were categorized as low relevance or no relevance.

Stage 4 - Eligibility

Eligibility decision	Number	Percentage
Highly relevant	123	64.1%
Partially relevant	34	17.7%
Low relevance	19	9.9%
Not relevant	16	8.3%
Strongly eligible literature	123	64.1%
Potentially eligible/supporting literature	34	17.7%
Excluded because of low relevance	19	9.9%
Excluded because not relevant	16	8.3%

Table 3. Eligibility of Screening

The 123 relevant articles must be considered as the central evidence base on the systematic literature review. It is not necessary to discard the 34 partially relevant papers. They could still be included as supporting literature, especially when they consider such topics as:

Relevant Articles	No. of papers
Domestic labor	24
Food preparation	19
Spatial identity	10
Gender relations	17
Homemaking	13
Migration	9
Masculinity	10
Household practices	12
Domestic architecture	9

Table 4. Gender Themes Addressed

This is crucial in your case because some of the papers may not analyze the kitchen but will contain theoretical/empirical evidence on gendered production and use of domestic space.The 19 less relevant and 16 non-relevant papers are not used as core evidence.

Stage 5 - Final inclusion

On a reconstructed relevance-based basis $123 + 34 = 157$

Therefore, the potential final literature set is 157 papers, consisting of:

- 123 highly relevant papers
- 34 partially relevant papers

Final category	**Number**	**% of 192 literatures**
Core/highly relevant	123	64.1%
Supporting/partially relevant	34	17.7%
Total retained for review	157	81.8%
Low relevance excluded	19	9.9%
Not relevant excluded	16	8.3%
Total	192	100%

Table 5. Final Categorization

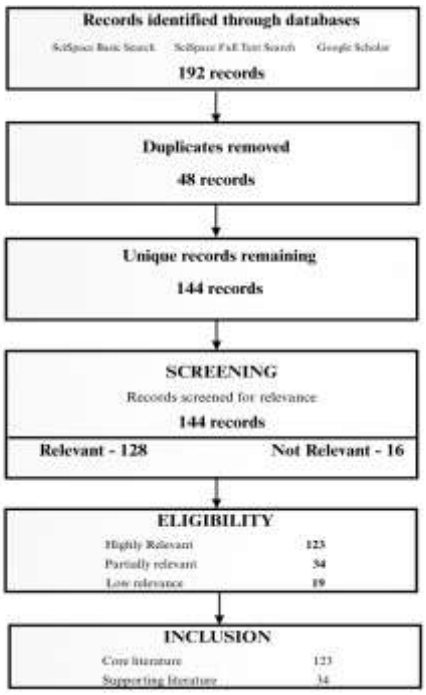


Figure 2. Reviews Identified and Screened

Domain	Literatures Contribution
Kitchen as gendered territory	Kitchen space as a location where gender roles and domestic responsibilities are spatially organized
Domestic labour and foodwork	Cooking, food preparation and household labour as gendered practices
Architecture and spatial organization	Kitchen layout, domestic efficiency and architectural organization as connected to gender
Power, identity and belonging	Home/kitchen as spaces through which identity, agency, belonging and power are negotiated
Changing masculinities and femininities	Men's participation in cooking and changing domestic practices challenging—but not necessarily eliminating—traditional gender divisions

Table 6. The Literature Is Particularly Useful For Building Five Major Analytical Domains

Indeed, the existing bibliography is a strong support for this interdisciplinarity. Such examples include Christie's "Kitchenspace: Gendered territory in central Mexico" Rezeanu's article on domestic spaces and gender identities, Arnaiz's work on food and gendered work, and Samal and Mishra on gendering of the Indian kitchen.

PRISMA stage	Documented / Reconstructed number
Identification	192
Duplicates removed	48
Unique records after deduplication	144
Relevance screening	192 reported classifications
Highly relevant	123
Partially relevant	34
Low relevance	19
Not relevant	16
Eligibility reconstructed	176 potentially relevant

Inclusion reconstructed	157 potentially retained

Table 7. Final Summarization

The PRISMA analysis found 192 merged literature records from SciSpace Basic Research, SciSpace Full Text Search, Google Scholar. Following deduplication, 48 duplicate records were removed, leaving 144 unique papers. The file also reports a relevance classification of 123 highly relevant papers, 34 partially relevant papers, 19 low-relevance papers, and 16 papers classified as not relevant. These categories total 192, rather than 144. Consequently, although the source documents the search and deduplication figures, the relevance categories cannot be treated as a verified sequential screening outcome, and the exact number of studies finally included in the systematic review remains undetermined. The reported figures therefore support a preliminary assessment of the literature and establish a fully reconciled PRISMA flow.

The literature analysis shows that the kitchen is a space of food preparation, but also gendered domesticity, an architectural, technological, cultural and household labor environment. The first research objective is achieved by mapping the scope, disciplinary distribution and geographical coverage of research on gender, kitchen space and domestic practices. The second goal examines how architecture, geography, sociology, anthropology and media studies understand the kitchen as a gendered space connected with femininity, care, homemaking and domestic responsibility. The third objective identifies the architectonic, technological, ideological, organizational and representational mechanisms through which these associations may be reinforced or challenged. The preliminary synthesis indicates that gendered kitchen practices are produced not only by architecture, but by the interplay of spatial design, domestic routines, social expectations and cultural representations. As a solution, the research should embed these dimensions within a systematic analytical framework and code the included studies uniformly by discipline, geographical context, kitchen design, technology, domestic labor, gender relations and representations of masculinity and femininity.Thematic counts are provisional until each paper has been checked against the final inclusion criteria and methodically coded.

The research questions investigates how the relationship between gender and kitchen space is categorized across disciplines, how architectural and technological arrangements have contributed to the feminization of kitchen work historically and how men's participation in domestic, leisure-oriented and professional cooking is represented differently from women's participation. The preliminary analysis indicates that the kitchen is a physical and social space where gender roles are enacted through cooking, cleaning, meal planning, and caregiving. The layout of the kitchen, the appliances and the organization of household activities can affect who does the domestic work, and cultural expectations may portray women's cooking as a routine responsibility and men's cooking as leisure, creativity, expertise or exceptional involvement.

Conclusion

The theoretical frameworks of Hegemonic Masculinity Theory and Doing Gender Theory help explain how gender roles are continuously produced and maintained through everyday activities. These perspectives show that gendered kitchen practices are not simply individual choices but are influenced by social expectations, cultural norms, household relationships, and institutional structures. The review also highlights that gendered divisions of kitchen labour extend beyond the home into professional and institutional kitchens, where women may perform a large proportion of the work while remaining underrepresented in managerial and technically prestigious positions.

Overall, the review concludes that the modernisation of kitchen spaces does not automatically lead to the transformation of gender roles. Meaningful change requires more than improved appliances, contemporary interiors, or increased media representation of men cooking. It requires a redistribution of domestic responsibilities, recognition of unpaid household labour, inclusive kitchen design, and changes in the cultural beliefs that determine who is expected to cook and care for others.

The review provides an interdisciplinary understanding of the relationship between gender, space, and domestic practice. However, the reported PRISMA figures contain inconsistencies between the number of records identified, duplicates

removed, and relevance classifications. Therefore, the final number of studies included needs to be verified before the review can be considered fully reproducible. Despite this limitation, the themes identified in the document provide a useful foundation for further empirical research into gender equality, women's agency, and the transformation of kitchen spaces.

The question of who belongs in the kitchen should not be answered through traditional gender expectations. The kitchen should be understood as a shared domestic space in which all individuals can participate freely, exercise agency, and contribute to household responsibilities regardless of gender.

The theories of Hegemonic Masculinity and Doing Gender allow one to understand the continuous production and maintenance of gender roles through daily practices. This implies that gender practices in the kitchen cannot be seen as choices of individuals, but rather can be understood from the perspective of expectations in society and culture, relationships within the household and institutions. The review also stresses the fact that gender division of kitchen labour extends even to professional and institutional kitchens where women do much of the work while being under-represented among managers and professionals.

The review shows that modernisation of the kitchen environment does not imply the transformation of gender roles. To create any real change, one should not just have better technologies and designs, as well as representations of men cooking in the media, but redistribute domestic chores, recognise the invisible work in the household, make the kitchen accessible for all, and transform cultural perceptions about who should take care of other people.

Recommendations

Future research can build on this systematic literature review by analyzing the experience of gender roles in today's households and the ways in which the experience varies across cultures, generations, and social classes. While the existing literature has contributed a significant amount of information about gendering of the kitchen spaces, more empirical work is needed to analyze how traditional expectations affect women's freedom and activities in the kitchen.

Future research can be based on the experiences of women living in Indian households, especially in the state of Tamil Nadu, both in urban and rural settings. The study might analyze the influence of family traditions, culture, marriage, and generational expectations on women's kitchen duties. Moreover, it can reveal whether younger generations have a greater degree of freedom to make decisions on household cooking.

Future research can analyze the actual division of domestic labor between men and women. In particular, interviews, observations, and time-use diaries can be used to reveal who is responsible for planning meals, buying food, cooking, cleaning the kitchen, and managing all activities related to the process of preparing food.

Future research could explore the relationship between kitchen design and gender equality. It would be interesting to see whether open kitchens, common kitchens, accessibility of storage, flexible designs, and inclusive design processes promote involvement of everyone from the household. This research can be helpful for architects and interior designers in understanding how to design kitchen space in such a way that it promotes sharing of tasks.

The effect of media and social media needs to be studied. Advertisements, films, television shows, cooking shows, and media content in general can be analyzed in terms of how men and women are portrayed in kitchen spaces. Future research can determine whether such representation is breaking gender stereotypes or continuing to portray women as everyday cooks and men as cooks by exception or experts. At last the future research should consider the impact of various other variables on the issue including class, caste, sexuality, migration, age, employment, and family structure.

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