

## INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AND GROUP PROCESSES

Need Some Help, Honey? Dependency-Oriented Helping Relations  
Between Women and Men in the Domestic SphereOrly Bareket and Nurit Shnabel  
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Five studies ( $N = 2,339$ ) found that men and women, especially if high on benevolent sexism, engage in *dependency-oriented* cross-gender helping relations in domestic tasks. Study 1 revealed that, in response to hypothetical scenarios of cross-gender helping interactions in traditionally feminine domains (e.g., cooking a dish), men's benevolent sexism correlated with their intentions to seek dependency-oriented help (direct assistance, rather than tools for autonomous coping) from women, and women's benevolent sexism correlated with their intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to men. Study 2 revealed that the association between benevolent sexism and (a) men's intentions to seek, and (b) women's intentions to provide dependency-oriented help occurs in cross-gender, but not in same-gender, interactions. Studies 3 and 4 replicated these patterns while examining help-seeking (among men) and help-providing (among women) behavior in a test about common domestic tasks (e.g., how to clean a burned pot). Study 5 focused on heterosexual couples, revealing that when encountering difficulties in traditionally feminine domestic tasks (e.g., getting the kids ready for kindergarten): (a) men, especially if high on benevolent sexism, reported seeking more dependency-oriented help from their partners than women; (b) women, especially if high on benevolent sexism, reported providing more dependency-oriented help to their partners than men; and (c) engagement in dependency-oriented helping predicted an unequal division of household labor. We discuss these findings in light of previous theorizing and research on the social psychological barriers that reinforce men's relatively low involvement in the domestic sphere.

**Keywords:** dependency-oriented help, benevolent sexism, traditional gender roles, the domestic sphere, division of household labor

**Supplemental materials:** <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000292.supp>

Housework is the only activity at which men are allowed to be consistently inept because they are thought to be so competent at everything else.

—Letty Cottin Pogrebin

This article was published Online First June 25, 2020.

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Anna Kende was supported by the János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Data files and full protocols for all studies can be accessed through the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/wcxyyp/>).

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Reflecting the stereotypical perception of men as “clueless” in the domestic sphere, a popular Internet joke is that “motherhood means being able to identify your baby’s cry even in a room where there are 100 other babies crying; fatherhood means not being able to identify your baby’s cry even in a room where she is the only baby.” In fact, despite the dramatic increase in women’s entry and advancement in traditionally masculine domains, men’s entry into domestic, traditionally feminine domains has been rather slow (Croft, Schmader, & Block, 2015; England, 2010). Even when women work full-time, they are still the primary responsible for domestic household and childcare tasks (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019a; Pew Research Center, 2015; United Nations Development Programme, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2018; see also Horne, Johnson, Galambos, & Krahn, 2018, for a life course perspective). Women also tend to do the lion’s share of organizational “housework” (bringing food or coffee, performing administrative tasks, etc.; Babcock, Recalde, Vesterlund, & Weingart, 2017; Dishman, 2015). At the same time, men are underrepresented in communal, traditionally feminine HEED (health care, elementary

education, and the domestic sphere) professions (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019b).

This role imbalance constitutes a barrier to gender equality. The *second shift* among many working mothers (Hochschild & Machung, 2012; Sayer, England, Bittman, & Bianchi, 2009); namely, the fact that women continue to manage life inside the home and act as primary caregivers to children, hinders women by limiting their freedom to pursue more career goals (Williams & Chen, 2014). This double burden also leads women to enjoy less leisure time than men (Håkansson & Ahlberg, 2010; Kamp Dush, Yavorsky, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2018) and to experience psychological distress (Bird, 1999) and health problems (Burgard, 2011; Thomas et al., 2018; Väänänen et al., 2005). At the same time, men's disengagement from communal roles (such as child rearing) causes them to miss the positive psychological and life outcomes associated with taking on more communal activities, roles, and values (e.g., subjective health; Bauer & McAdams, 2010; Le, Impett, Lemay, Muise, & Tskhay, 2018; Petts, Knoester, & Wald-fogel, 2020; Wong, Ho, Wang, & Miller, 2017).

Given the social importance of achieving a more equal distribution of domestic tasks, and the increasing scientific interest in this phenomenon (e.g., Sudkämper, Ryan, Kirby, & Morgenroth, 2019; for a review, see Meeussen, Van Laar, & Van Grootel, 2020), the goal of the present research was to identify a potential barrier to men's greater inclusion in the domestic sphere; namely, cross-gender helping in conducting domestic tasks. The literature on intergroup helping relations suggests that help behavior is often a subtle, nonconflictual means to reinforce existing (unequal) social arrangements (Nadler, 2002). Similarly, the literature on sexism proposes that benevolent sexism, an ideology that places women on a pedestal, is a subtle, nonconflictual means to keep women in restricted roles (Glick & Fiske, 2001b). The hypotheses tested in the present research were derived from the integration of the two literatures, which we now turn to discuss.

### Helping Relations: The Fish and the Net

A famous proverb says "give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." This proverb captures the distinction, pivotal in the literature on interpersonal and intergroup helping (see Van Leeuwen & Zagefka, 2017), between *autonomy-oriented* help, which consists of providing the recipient with the skills needed for independent coping in the future (e.g., by explaining to the recipient how the problem should be tackled), and *dependency-oriented* help, which consists of direct assistance on the part of the helper (Nadler, 1997, 1998). Dependency-oriented help is conceptualized as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it addresses the recipient's immediate needs and signals the helper's care. On the other, it signals the helper's superior skills in that domain, implies that the recipient is unable to learn the knowledge and skills in question, and ultimately leaves the recipient in a passive position (Brickman et al., 1982; Van Leeuwen & Täuber, 2010). Thus, dependency-oriented help reinforces mutual dependence between helpers and recipients.

Previous research on women as help recipients revealed that participants were more likely to attribute a help request by a woman (vs. a man) to her passivity and low ability, and consequently believe that dependency-oriented help would be more suitable to respond to her request than autonomy-oriented help

(Chernyak-Hai, Halabi, & Nadler, 2017). Moreover, women who received dependency-oriented help were perceived as lower in competence and regarded as less promotable than women who received autonomy-oriented help (Ruiz, 2019). Together, these studies point to a self-feeding cycle in which the stereotype about women's dependency leads to the perception that women should receive dependency-oriented (rather than autonomy-oriented) help, which in turn reinforces the stereotype that women are dependent. Perhaps because they wanted to break this cycle, when women were made aware of the dependency stereotype, they were less willing to seek help from a man and felt worse if they did seek help (Wakefield, Hopkins, & Greenwood, 2012).

Research on men as help recipients revealed opposing patterns such that, because of prescriptive stereotypes about men's agency and independence (Heilman, 2001), men are generally reluctant to seek help in response to various difficulties (e.g., Vogel, Heimerdinger-Edwards, Hammer, & Hubbard, 2011; for reviews, see Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Möller-Leimkühler, 2002). Although the existing research has not distinguished between different types of help, its logic suggests that men would rather seek and receive autonomy-oriented than dependency-oriented help. Yet, this research has focused on men's help-seeking behavior in settings where receiving help might threaten their masculinity (e.g., because it requires them to give up control over the situation; Addis & Mahalik, 2003, or acknowledge their inability or lack of knowledge; Tannen, 1990).

The domestic sphere, however, is a substantially different context. Men's traditional role is to be responsible for the protection and livelihood of their family (Glick & Fiske, 2001b). Therefore, men are traditionally considered exempt from the tasks of household and childcare (e.g., Kamp Dush et al., 2018; see also de Beauvoir, 1949/1997), which are assumed to be women's expertise. In fact, traditional gender roles prescribe that men should be passive and helpless when tackling domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and caring (the three Cs; Anderson, 2000) and that women should act as their "saviors" (Williams & Chen, 2014). Thus, we theorized that in the domestic sphere, as opposed to the contexts examined in the helping literature so far (e.g., STEM-related tasks; Shnabel, Bar-Anan, Kende, Bareket, & Lazar, 2016), men would seek dependency-oriented help from women, and women would provide dependency-oriented help to men. For example, a man who is asked to babysit his little nephew might ask his girlfriend to entertain the child for him (i.e., seeking dependency-oriented help), or a woman who learns that her boyfriend was asked to babysit his little nephew might offer to entertain the child instead of him (i.e., providing dependency-oriented help). We further theorized that these helping tendencies would increase among men and women who more strongly endorse a particular form of social ideology; namely, benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

### Benevolent Sexism: A Kind Reinforcement of Traditional Gender Roles

Gender relations, compared with other contexts of intergroup relations (between groups of different ethnicity, race, etc.), are characterized by especially high levels of mutual dependency (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Wood & Eagly, 2012). This interdependence, which motivates men and women to cooperate and

avoid open conflict (Jackman, 1994), gives rise to beliefs and ideologies that justify and stabilize the existing gender arrangements (Jost & Kay, 2005). A key ideology that serves this function, and that has been extensively studied in social psychology, is *benevolent sexism* (Glick & Fiske, 1996)—a set of stereotypical and restrictive beliefs about gender relations that seem positive in tone. Benevolent sexism idealizes heterosexual love based on the notion that men and women have different, yet complementary traits and consequent responsibilities (Glick & Fiske, 2001b). Both men and women endorse benevolent sexism, because it appeals to both genders. It allows men to enjoy a privileged position while maintaining a positive image as women's protectors (e.g., as the family breadwinners). It guarantees to women that men's privilege and status will be used to their advantage (e.g., to support them financially). Because of this appeal, in some cultural contexts women endorse it to a greater extent than men (Glick et al., 2000).

Despite its subjectively favorable tone, benevolent sexism is positively correlated with hostile sexism, an adversarial view of gender relations in which women are perceived as seeking to control men (Glick & Fiske, 2001b). Whereas the negative consequences for gender equality of hostile sexism are straightforward (e.g., hostile sexism predicts negative reactions to career women; Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997; Masser & Abrams, 2004), the negative consequences of benevolent sexism are subtler and people often fail to recognize it as a form of sexism (e.g., Kilianski & Rudman, 1998; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001). Nevertheless, over two decades of research have shown that benevolent sexism shapes men's and women's perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors in ways that restrict women and reinforce traditional gender roles. To illustrate, exposure to benevolent sexism, but not to hostile sexism, was found to increase women's alignment of their behavior with prescriptive stereotypes about how women "should" be (e.g., by engaging with their appearance; Calogero & Jost, 2011, and describing themselves in a gender-stereotypical manner; Barreto, Ellemers, Piebinga, & Moya, 2010).

Most of the existing studies, however, have focused on how benevolent sexism challenges women's entry into male-dominated arenas (e.g., by undermining their STEM performance; Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007). Relatively few studies have examined how this ideology shapes attitudes and behaviors related to men's entry into female-dominated arenas. These studies reveal that benevolent sexism predicts men's and women's rating of nursing (a female-dominated occupation) as a less appropriate career for men than for women (Clow, Ricciardelli, & Bartfay, 2015), more positive perceptions of female (but not male) caregivers (Gaunt, 2013), and gendered expectations regarding housecleaning responsibilities (Ogletree, Worthen, Turner, & Vickers, 2006; see also Silván-Ferrero & Bustillos López, 2007). While these findings demonstrate that benevolent sexism correlates with explicit and general attitudes about women's domestic roles, in the present research we sought to identify the concrete behaviors occurring in cross-gender interactions through which benevolent sexism subtly perpetuates women's responsibility for the domestic sphere.

### Benevolent Sexism and Cross-Gender Helping

Previous research (Shnabel et al., 2016) revealed that, among men, benevolent sexism predicted providing dependency-oriented

(rather than autonomy-oriented) help to women who encounter difficulties when performing traditionally masculine tasks, such as operating an electronic device or solving a math problem. Among women, benevolent sexism predicted seeking dependency-oriented (rather than autonomy-oriented) help from men when performing these tasks. These findings suggest that in situations in which women are the help recipients and men are the help providers, benevolent sexism leads both men and women to engage in dependency-oriented helping relations that reinforce traditional, paternalistic gender roles (in which women are dependent on "male saviors"; Rudman & Heppen, 2003).

We theorized, however, that when the task at hand is domestic, benevolent sexism—despite the fact that it is typically associated with the perception of men as agentic, competent, and independent (Cikara & Fiske, 2009)—would lead men to show passivity, incompetence, and dependency, and women to expect, accept, and even encourage this passivity. More specifically, we reasoned that each of the three components comprising the ideology of benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001a) would be related to men's dependency on women in the domestic domain: *complementary gender differentiation* includes the belief that women have favorable traits (e.g., nurturance and refined taste), which make them especially suitable for the domestic sphere (e.g., as childrearsers or responsible for decorating the house); men, by contrast, are believed to have agentic traits (e.g., competitiveness and assertiveness) that make them suitable for the public sphere (e.g., as managers; Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Eagly & Mladinic, 1994; Ellemers, 2018; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Jarman, Blackburn, & Racko, 2012). *Protective paternalism* includes the belief that men should be the primary providers at their homes and, thus, a fair gendered division of labor would exempt them from household labor, for which women should be the primary caretakers. *Heterosexual intimacy* includes the belief that men are dependent on women's love, which is manifested (among other things) in domestic services (the proverb "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach" illustrates the assumed link between men's romantic affection and women's cooking). In summary, benevolent sexism reflects the acceptance of the principle of mutual dependence between men and women, as well as perceptions of women as "naturally suitable" for, and men as "clueless" in, the domestic sphere.

If so, when men high on benevolent sexism encounter difficulties in performing domestic, traditionally feminine tasks, they would be likely to consider a potential female helper as an expert in this domain (whereas a potential male helper would likely be considered as lacking such expertise). Because people tend to adopt a passive, dependent position when interacting with someone whom they perceive as far more knowledgeable than they are in a particular domain (Nadler & Chernyak-Hai, 2014; see also Nadler, Ellis, & Bar, 2003), men's benevolent sexism would predict their tendency to seek dependency-oriented help from women (but not from men). Similarly, women high on benevolent sexism would be likely to consider a male help recipient as dependent and incompetent in the domestic domain (whereas a female help recipient would be considered to be self-reliant, if given the tools for independent coping). Because people tend to provide dependency-oriented help to recipients whom they regard as lacking the ability to cope independently (Nadler, 2002), women's benevolent sexism would predict their tendency to provide dependency-oriented help



to men (but not to women). To illustrate, consider a man who has to iron a shirt for a job interview, and needs assistance from his flatmate. If this man is high on benevolent sexism, and the flatmate is a woman, he would be more likely to ask her to iron the shirt for him (i.e., dependency-oriented help) rather than ask her to teach him how to do it himself (autonomy-oriented help). Likewise, if the flatmate is high on benevolent sexism, she would be more likely to offer to iron the shirt for him, rather than to explain him how to do it by himself.

### The Present Research

In five studies, we tested the hypotheses that men and women, especially if high in benevolent sexism and in cross-gender interactions, would seek and provide, respectively, dependency-oriented help in traditionally feminine tasks. Studies 1 and 2 examined behavioral intentions in response to various hypothetical scenarios. Specifically, Study 1 examined the correlations between endorsement of benevolent sexism and (a) male participants' intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from a woman when performing various traditionally feminine tasks (e.g., cooking a dish), and (b) female participants' intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to a man performing these tasks. We examined the generalizability of these relations by testing them among Israeli, German, and Hungarian samples. Study 1 also examined whether these correlations are unique to benevolent sexism, such that hostile sexism would not be similarly associated with engagement in dependency-oriented helping. Study 2 extended Study 1 by experimentally manipulating the gender of the help provider or recipient: After completing a measure of their benevolent sexism, male participants reported their intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from either a man or a woman (Study 2a), whereas female participants reported their intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to either a man or a woman (Study 2b). We tested the hypothesis that benevolent sexism would predict stronger intentions to engage in dependency-oriented helping in cross-gender, but not in same-gender interactions.

Studies 3 and 4 used an experimental paradigm to examine actual help-seeking and help-providing behavior in a test about traditionally feminine, domestic tasks, such as how to clean a burned pot or avoid diaper rash. In both studies, participants first completed a measure of their benevolent sexism. In Study 3, male participants were then asked to complete a test on household tasks. When they had difficulties solving it, participants were given the opportunity to seek dependency-oriented help; namely, the final answer to the question (rather than an explanation of how to answer it on their own) from either a female or a male helper (depending on the experimental condition). In Study 4, female participants had the opportunity to help either a man or a woman (depending on the experimental condition) on a test about household tasks by providing him or her with the final answer (rather than an explanation of how to answer the questions). In addition, Studies 3 and 4 explored potential mediators through which benevolent sexism may translate into engagement in dependency-oriented helping behavior in cross-gender interactions.

Study 5 tested the ecological validity of the conclusions derived from Studies 1–4 by focusing on helping within heterosexual relationships—a central context in which cross-gender interactions related to performing domestic tasks actually occur. Following a

measure of their benevolent sexism, male and female participants who are engaged in a heterosexual relationship reported their helping intentions in response to scenarios describing routine domestic tasks (e.g., getting the children ready for kindergarten in the morning). Whereas Studies 1–4 examined only men as help seekers and only women as help providers, in Study 5 we directly compared men's and women's help-seeking and help-provision intentions. This allowed us to test whether, when performing traditionally feminine, routine domestic tasks, men, especially if high on benevolent sexism, seek more dependency-oriented help from their romantic partner than women (Study 5a), and whether women, especially if high on benevolent sexism, provide more dependency-oriented help to their romantic partner than men (Study 5b). After reporting their helping intentions, participants indicated the division of household labor within their relationship. We tested whether intentions to seek or provide dependency-oriented help to one's romantic partner are associated with a gendered division of household labor. To test whether the observed patterns are unique to traditionally feminine tasks, Study 5 also explored helping intentions in performing traditionally masculine tasks (e.g., taking the car to the garage).

In summary, the five studies systematically examined men's and women's engagement in dependency-oriented helping behaviors in feminine domestic tasks. These behaviors within cross-gender interactions may seem trivial at first glance, both because of the general tendency to trivialize many issues that are related to women's lives (e.g., Bartyk, 1990; de Beauvoir, 1949/1997; Lemish, 2002) and because of their mundane, day-to-day nature. Yet, in line with Cameron's (1998) analysis of the significance of seemingly "banal encounters" between men and women, as these mundane cross-gender interactions accumulate, they have far-reaching implications for the maintenance and reproduction of traditional gender roles (Swim et al., 2001).

Before describing the studies in detail, note that: (a) data files and full protocols for all studies can be accessed through the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/wcxyp/>); (b) in all studies we only recruited heterosexual participants, because heterosexual intimacy (i.e., the belief that a man cannot be complete without the love of a woman) is a critical component of benevolent sexism, which is less likely to be endorsed by nonheterosexual respondents (see Cowie, Greaves, & Sibley, 2019), and that makes the scale measuring this construct inappropriate to use among nonheterosexual women and men; (c) the studies were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of a large Israeli university; and (d) no additional measures were included besides the ones reported in these studies.

### Study 1

The main goal of Study 1 was to examine the correlations between male and female participants' benevolent sexism and their intentions to engage in dependency-oriented cross-gender helping in a host of traditionally feminine tasks. The secondary goal was to test whether dependency-oriented helping would be uniquely correlated with benevolent sexism, but not with hostile sexism. The latter prediction is based on theorizing according to which intergroup inequality can be reinforced either through the "stick" of overt hostility and oppression of the disadvantaged, or in subtler ways, through the "carrot" of cooperation between the

advantaged and the disadvantaged (Jackman, 1994). Engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations (e.g., receiving and providing charity, rather than legislating policies that promote structural change; Shnabel, Dovidio, & Levin, 2016) is conceptualized as a subtle means to stabilize and reinforce the existing social arrangements (Nadler, Halabi, & Harpaz-Gorodeisky, 2009). As such, engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations corresponds to benevolent sexism in that they both serve a similar (carrot-like) social function: maintaining cooperation between unequal groups, while sweeping the issue of inequality under the proverbial carpet. Hostile sexism, by contrast, is based on the perception of a power struggle between the genders (Sibley, Wilson, & Duckitt, 2007), in which women wish to manipulate and control men (Glick & Fiske, 2001a, 2001b). Men who endorse this ideology are more likely to exhibit overt expressions of hostility toward women, such as workplace sexual harassment (Begany & Milburn, 2002; Diehl, Rees, & Bohner, 2012) and relationship aggression (Cross, Overall, Hammond, & Fletcher, 2017; Cross, Overall, Low, & McNulty, 2019). Therefore, we did not expect it to be associated with engagement in cross-gender helping.

Participants in Study 1 were presented with a series of scenarios that involved a man who needed assistance in traditionally feminine domains and seeks help from his female flatmate. Male participants were asked to imagine themselves in the shoes of the male protagonist, and female participants imagined themselves as the female protagonist. We tested the hypothesis that men's and women's benevolent sexism, but not hostile sexism, would positively correlate with their behavioral intentions to seek (for male participants) or provide (for female participants) dependency-oriented help.

## Method

**Participants.** An a priori power analysis using the G\*Power calculator (by choosing the statistical test "correlation: bivariate normal model" from the "exact" test family; Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) indicated that a sample size of at least 169 (for each gender) was required for detecting correlations of  $\rho = .19$  at a 5% level of significance and a power of 80%. This effect size was based on the smallest correlation between benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented helping intentions observed in a study that examined cross-gender helping in traditionally masculine domains (Shnabel et al., 2016; Study 1).

Participants were 170 heterosexual men and 177 heterosexual women, who were recruited through a local commercial participant recruitment service to complete an online questionnaire about helping in interpersonal relationships, in exchange for a payment. One male participant was excluded from the analysis because he wrote in the open-ended comments that he did not understand the instructions to the Helping Intentions measure. This left 169 male participants ( $M_{\text{age}} = 39.78$ ,  $SD = 9.79$ ) and 177 female participants ( $M_{\text{age}} = 38.09$ ,  $SD = 10.63$ ). The majority of the participants (86%) were employed in various occupations (e.g., administrative employees, business consultants), and the rest (14%) were students majoring in various fields (e.g., social sciences, engineering). The majority of the participants were married (56%), and the rest were single (30%), divorced (9%), separated (1%), or did not report their relationship status (4%). All the participants were Jewish.

The native tongue of 88% was Hebrew (the rest reported Russian, English, French, or other).

**Procedure and measures.** As a cover story, participants were told that the study consisted of two parts, such that the first part (that actually measured helping intentions) examined "interpersonal relations," and the second part (that actually measured benevolent and hostile sexism) was related to Internet dating. Note that although the predictor variable(s) are typically measured prior the dependent variable, we reversed this order in Study 1 because of our concern that the blatant, overtly antagonistic wording of the hostile sexism scale might reveal the study's real purpose and increase socially desirable responding. Thus, participants completed the following measures in the following order.

**Helping intentions.** Male participants were exposed to 10 scenarios describing everyday situations in which the male protagonist has difficulties performing a particular task and has to ask his female flatmate for help. For each scenario, two courses of action were suggested: (a) ask the flatmate how to approach the task and, thus, receive explanations for independent coping (i.e., autonomy-oriented help), or (b) ask the flatmate for direct assistance by having the flatmate do the task instead of the participant (i.e., dependency-oriented help). In all 10 scenarios, participants were instructed to assume that their flatmate had the requisite skills, knowledge, time, and willingness to provide help.<sup>1</sup> For each scenario, participants were asked to indicate the probability (in percentage) of taking each course of action. If the two numbers did not add up to 100%, participants were required to edit their response. The tasks described in these scenarios captured a wide range of daily, traditionally feminine domestic tasks related to house cleaning, child rearing, clothing and so forth. To illustrate, in one scenario, male participants read, "You need to babysit a friend's son (a two-year old), but you find it difficult to entertain him" and were asked to indicate the probability that "I will ask the flatmate for an explanation of how to approach, play and entertain the child," and "I will ask the flatmate to play with the child and entertain him." Other scenarios referred to cooking a meal, ironing a shirt for a job interview, removing a stubborn stain from the kitchen table, decorating a birthday cake, arranging a party, choosing an outfit for an event, interviewing a caregiver for an elderly parent, consoling an acquaintance in emotional distress, and growing herbs on the balcony. We calculated the total sum of the participants' responses to the dependency-oriented items in all scenarios, such that higher scores indicated stronger intentions to seek direct assistance from the female flatmate in these various situations.

The female participants were presented with identical scenarios, except that they were placed in the role of the provider of help and had to indicate the probability that they would provide their male flatmate who needed help with (a) explanations enabling independent coping (autonomy-oriented help), or (b) direct assistance

<sup>1</sup> In Studies 1 and 2, which involved hypothetical scenarios, we were interested in participants' preference of a certain kind of help (dependency- or autonomy-oriented) and, thus, we tried to create a context in which providing and seeking help would be reasonable. In the case of men as help seekers, if the flatmate does not have the knowledge needed to help, then it makes no sense that the participant would ask for help at all. In the case of women as help providers, if the participant believes that she does not have the knowledge to help the flatmate, then it makes no sense that she would provide help at all.

(dependency-oriented help). We calculated the total sum of the participants' responses to the dependency-oriented items in all scenarios, such that higher scores indicated female participants' stronger intentions to provide direct assistance to the male flatmate in response to these various situations.

**Benevolent sexism.** Using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*) scale, participants filled out the full version of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 2001b, translated into Hebrew by Shnabel et al., 2016). The scale is composed of 11 items measuring benevolent sexism,  $\alpha_{\text{men}} = .88$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{women}} = .89$ . These items represent the three factors comprising benevolent sexism; namely, protective paternalism (e.g., "In a disaster, women ought to be rescued before men"), heterosexual intimacy (e.g., "People are not truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex"), and gender differentiation (e.g., "Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste"). Eleven other items measure hostile sexism (e.g., "Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances"; "Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist"),  $\alpha_{\text{men}} = .90$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{women}} = .88$ . To disguise the study's real purpose, we also included four filler questions about online dating (e.g., "Online dating is not effective because both sides convey a lot of false information"; see Shnabel et al., 2016).

## Results

**Intentions to engage in dependency-oriented help.** Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations between benevolent sexism, hostile sexism, and helping intentions (see also Figure 1 for scatterplots). Table 1 also presents the partial correlations between each type of sexism and helping intentions, while controlling for the other type of sexism. Consistent with the hypotheses, higher levels of benevolent sexism among men predicted stronger intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from women. Similarly, higher levels of benevolent sexism among women predicted stronger intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to men.

As shown in Table 1, hostile sexism was correlated with intentions to engage in dependency-oriented help in women but not in men. However, this significant correlation for women resulted from the relationship between benevolent and hostile sexism, because the partial correlation indicated that when controlling for

benevolent sexism, hostile sexism no longer predicted women's intentions to provide dependency-oriented help. By contrast, the partial correlations between benevolent sexism and helping intentions while controlling for hostile sexism were significant for both men and women.

**Cross-cultural replication.** To test the generalizability of Study 1's conclusions, we tested the association between benevolent sexism and dependency-oriented helping intentions in two other cultural contexts; namely, Germany and Hungary (for the importance of reproducibility in social psychological research, see Cacioppo, Kaplan, Krosnick, Olds, & Dean, 2015; Schmidt, 2009). Although these social contexts differ in terms of structural gender (in)equality (United Nations Development Programme, 2019) and cultural values (Schwartz, 2006), we expected similar patterns in all samples. Admittedly, the extent to which this ideology is endorsed differs across contexts, such that higher levels of gender inequality are associated with higher levels of benevolent sexism, especially among women (who need greater protection and provision in contexts where their status is lower; Glick et al., 2000). Nevertheless, because the endorsement of benevolent sexism, regardless of its mean level, is driven by the same basic motivation of maintaining differentiated gender roles (see Feather, 2004; Glick & Fiske, 2011; Sibley et al., 2007)—it should be associated with similar psychological constructs even in substantially different cultural and structural contexts. Supporting this rationale, previous research (e.g., Glick et al., 2000; Glick, Sakalli-Ugurlu, Ferreira, & Souza, 2002; Kahalon et al., 2019) pointed to cross-cultural similarities in terms of the association between benevolent sexism on the one hand, and other constructs (including cross-gender helping in traditionally masculine domains; Shnabel et al., 2016), on the other.

Our samples included 240 German ( $N_{\text{men}} = 84$ ;  $N_{\text{women}} = 156$ ) and 450 Hungarian ( $N_{\text{men}} = 107$ ;  $N_{\text{women}} = 343$ ) participants. The method was generally similar to that of Study 1, with slight changes (e.g., in the German sample, the Helping Intentions measure included four additional tasks). Because of space considerations, we report the full methods and results (see Table S1) in the online supplemental materials. In brief, the correlations between benevolent sexism and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from women were,  $r(82) = .30$ ,  $p = .006$ , among German men, and  $r(105) = .18$ ,  $p = .059$ , among Hungarian men. The correlations between benevolent sexism and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to men were,  $r(154) = .20$ ,  $p = .015$ ,

Table 1  
Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Partial Correlations for Study 1

Measures	<i>M (SD)</i>			<i>r</i>		
	Men ( $N = 169$ )	Women ( $N = 177$ )	Total ( $N = 346$ )	(1)	(2)	(3)
(1) Benevolent sexism	3.42 (1.02)	3.08 (1.06)	3.25 (1.06)	—	.46**	.18* (.15*)
(2) Hostile sexism	3.62 (0.99)	2.74 (0.96)	3.17 (1.07)	.57**	—	.09 (.01)
(3) Dependency-oriented helping intentions	441.41 (155.97)	435.05 (139.99)	438.15 (147.83)	.23** (.16*)	.17* (.05)	—

*Note.* For benevolent sexism, the scale ranged from 1 to 6 (theoretically and for the actual values). For intentions to engage in dependency-oriented helping, the scale theoretically ranged from zero to 1,000, but actual scores ranged from zero to 850. Intentions to engage in dependency-oriented helping corresponded to intentions to *seek help from a woman* for male participants, and to *provide help to a man* for female participants. Correlations for men are presented above the diagonal and for women below the diagonal. Partial correlations between benevolent sexism and helping intentions while controlling for hostile sexism, and between hostile sexism and helping intentions while controlling for benevolent sexism, are presented in parentheses (on the right side of the table).

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

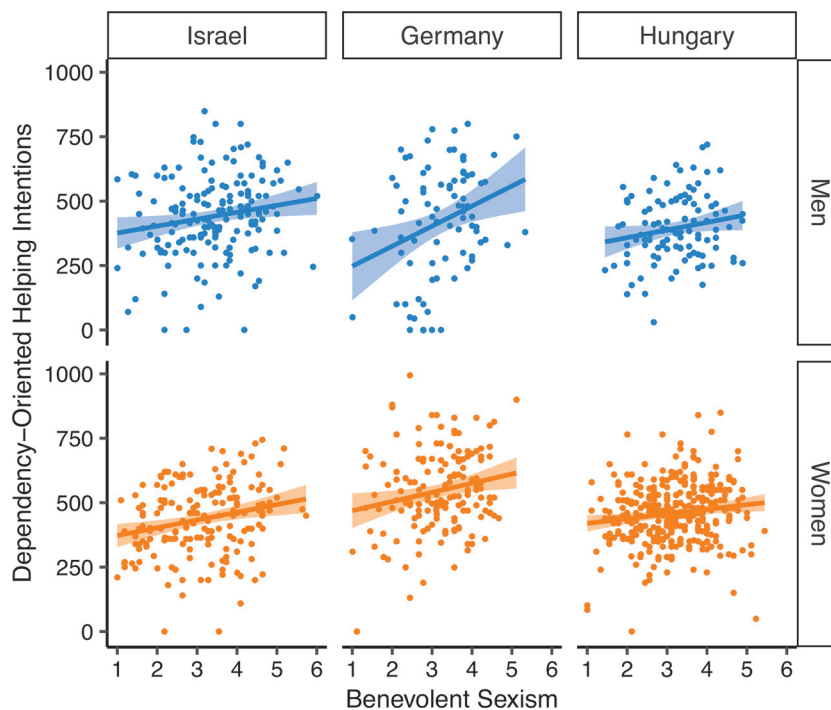


Figure 1.  $N_{\text{Israel}} = 346$ ;  $N_{\text{Germany}} = 240$ ;  $N_{\text{Hungary}} = 450$ . Scatterplots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism and intentions to seek (for male participants) or provide (for female participants) dependency-oriented help. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

among German women, and  $r(341) = .14$ ,  $p = .008$ , among Hungarian women.<sup>2</sup> Overall, these results, presented in Figure 1, strengthened the generalizability of our conclusions.

## Discussion

In three different cultural contexts, we found that benevolent sexism was associated with men's and women's dependency-oriented helping intentions in traditionally feminine tasks. A limitation of the study conducted among Israelis is that the majority of participants reported being married and, therefore, might have found it difficult to put themselves in the shoes of a protagonist living with a flatmate (a situation remote from their current situation). Nevertheless, the Hungarian and German samples had younger participants, predominantly students, for whom the context of flatmates is probably more relevant (as sharing a flat with same- or other-gender partners is common among students). That the results replicated in these samples bolsters our confidence in the validity of our conclusions.

In addition, consistent with our theorizing, after partialing out the variance associated with benevolent sexism, there is no evidence that engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations was uniquely related to hostile sexism. In the absence of evidence for a positive correlation between hostile sexism and dependency-oriented help, we did not include the Hostile Sexism scale in the subsequent studies. Our decision was guided by our wish to minimize the risk that the blatant, overtly antagonistic wording of the Hostile Sexism scale would increase socially desirable responding

and impair the reliability of the cover stories that we used in the following experiments (e.g., that the study is about "interpersonal interactions on the Internet" in Studies 3 and 4). Our decision might have impeded a more nuanced understanding of the association between hostile and benevolent sexism on the one hand and engagement in dependency-oriented helping on the other hand. Nevertheless, the focus of the present research was on examining dependency-oriented helping relations in cross-gender interactions, rather than on identifying the differences between these different types of sexism (as done, e.g., by Becker & Wright, 2011).

## Study 2

In Study 2, we used an experimental design to test whether benevolent sexism predicted intentions to engage in dependency-oriented helping in cross-gender interactions to a greater extent than in same-gender interactions. We used a procedure similar to that of Study 1, except that we manipulated the gender of the person who provided or sought help. Thus, after completing the benevolent sexism measure, male participants (Study 2a) reported their intentions to seek help from either a female or a male helper. Female participants (Study 2b) reported their intentions to provide

<sup>2</sup> In the cross-cultural replication of Study 1, and in Study 2, besides the variables of interest we measured two potential intervening factors: enjoyability and perceived skill in the tasks at hand. Controlling for these variables did not change the statistical conclusions. The rationale for including these variables and the relevant results are reported in the [online supplemental materials](#).



help to either a male or a female recipient. In both studies, we expected a two-way interaction between benevolent sexism and the experimental condition (i.e., cross-gender vs. same-gender helping interactions), such that participants' benevolent sexism would predict stronger intentions to seek (Study 2a), or provide (Study 2b) dependency-oriented helping in cross-gender, but not in same-gender interactions.

## Study 2a

### Method.

**Participants.** To determine the sample size for Study 2a, we conducted an a priori power analysis using the G\*Power calculator (using the statistical test of "linear multiple regression: fixed model,  $R^2$  increase" from the "F tests" family). The analysis revealed that at a 5% level of significance and a power of 80%, with three total predictors and one tested predictor (i.e., the interaction), a sample size of at least 95 participants was sufficient for detecting small-to-medium effect sizes ( $f^2 = .085$ ; Cohen, 1998), based on the small-to-medium sized correlations observed in Study 1.

In Study 2a, we initially collected data from 101 male participants. The predicted two-way interaction was in the expected direction but was nonsignificant. We decided to improve our estimate of that effect by adding more participants until there were no sign-ups, resulting in 16 additional participants. The drawback of the decision to add participants after picking at the initial results was that we were no longer able to view the  $p$  values obtained in the statistical analysis as accurate estimates of the probability of obtaining the results under the null hypothesis. To improve the estimate of this probability, we followed the method recommended by Sagarin, Ambler, and Lee (2014) and reported the key interaction for both the initial and full samples, as well as the  $p_{\text{augmented}}$  statistic (that represents the magnitude of the Type I error inflation resulting from post hoc data augmentation).

Participants in the final sample were 117 heterosexual Jewish Israeli men, who were recruited through the subject pool of two large universities to complete an online experiment in exchange for a raffle draw. As explained above, the data were collected in two waves and stopped when there were no new sign-ups. After the exclusion of two participants who reported technical problems, the final sample was composed of 115 participants ( $M_{\text{age}} = 25.39$ ,  $SD = 3.18$ ). Participants were undergraduate students majoring in various fields such as computer sciences and business. The majority of the participants were single (60%), and the rest were either

in a relationship (32%), or married (8%). The native tongue of 97% was Hebrew (the other native tongue was Russian).

**Procedure.** The procedure was similar to that used in Study 1 for male participants, except that the participants were randomly assigned either to a same-gender or a cross-gender condition. Thus, after completing a shortened nine-item version of the Benevolent Sexism scale,  $\alpha = .85$ ,  $M = 3.13$ ,  $SD = 1.00$  (and the four filler questions on online dating), the participants indicated their percentage of help-seeking intentions in 10 scenarios ( $M = 371.17$ ,  $SD = 123.10$ ) in which the help provider (i.e., their flat-mate) was either a man or a woman.

### Results and discussion.

**Intentions to seek dependency-oriented help.** To test our main hypothesis, we conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis with intentions to seek dependency-oriented help as the dependent variable. The predictors were benevolent sexism and gender of help provider, entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction, added in the second block. The regression model obtained in the second block, presented in Table 2, was significant,  $F(3, 111) = 6.28$ ,  $p = .001$ .

As shown in Table 2, the gender of help provider had a significant effect on intentions to seek dependency-oriented help, such that male participants reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in cross-gender ( $M = 408.48$ ,  $SD = 109.90$ ) versus same-gender ( $M = 340.38$ ,  $SD = 109.90$ ) interactions. This effect was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction. This interaction was in the hypothesized direction but nonsignificant for the initial sample of 101 participants (before data augmentation),  $\beta = .25$ ,  $t(97) = 1.96$ ,  $p = .053$ . For the interaction in the full sample,  $p_{\text{augmented}} [.051, .056]$ , the low end of the range estimated  $\alpha$  under the assumption that the second wave of data would not have been collected if the test's  $p$  value had been higher than .053; the high end of the range estimated  $\alpha$  under the assumption that the second wave of data would have been collected even if  $p = 1.00$  in the first wave. Note that an inevitable ramification of post hoc dataset augmentation is that  $p_{\text{augmented}}$  always exceeds .05 (i.e., the value of  $p_{\text{augmented}}$  must be larger than the critical value to determine significance). Because the results in the full sample were significant, and  $p_{\text{augmented}}$  indicated little Type I error inflation because of the additional data collection, we are relatively confident that moderation occurred (see Sagarin et al., 2014).

The results are presented in Figure 2. Examining each condition separately revealed that, replicating the results of Study 1, the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help was significant when the helper was a woman,

Table 2

### Results of Regression Analysis on Intentions to Seek Dependency-Oriented Help (Study 2a)

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	340.42	14.75		23.08	.000	311.19	369.64
Type of interaction	58.32	22.00	.24	2.65	.009	14.72	101.92
Benevolent sexism	0.22	15.04	.002	0.02	.988	-29.59	30.03
Type of Interaction $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	47.82	22.04	.26	2.17	.032	4.51	91.49

*Note.*  $N = 115$  male participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. To save space, only the effects of Block 2 of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R_{\text{first block}}^2 = .11$ ,  $\Delta R_{\text{second block}}^2 = .04$ . Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale theoretically ranged from 1 to 6, but the actual values ranged from 1.00 to 5.33. For intentions to seek dependency-oriented help, the scale theoretically ranged from 0 to 1,000, but the actual values ranged from 65 to 687.



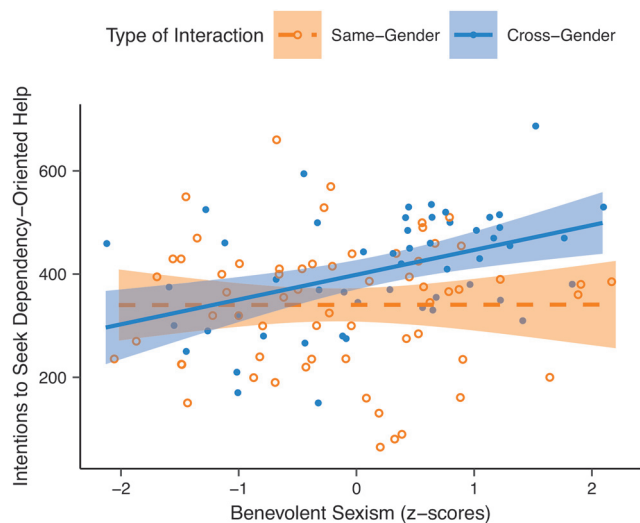


Figure 2.  $N = 115$  male participants. Scatterplots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism (z-scored) and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help as a function of type of interaction. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

$r = .44, p = .001$ . By contrast, when the helper was a man, benevolent sexism did not correlate with participants' intentions to seek dependency-oriented help,  $r = .002, p = .989$ . Interpreting the two-way interaction using Preacher, Curran, and Bauer's (2006) calculator, revealed that, as expected, male participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean) reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in cross-gender versus same-gender interactions, *simple slope* = 106.14(30.66),  $t = 3.46, p < .001$ . By contrast, participants who were relatively low on benevolent sexism ( $-1$   $SD$  below the mean) reported similar levels of intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in the cross- and same-gender conditions, *simple slope* = 10.50(31.61),  $t = 0.33, p = .741$ .

## Study 2b

### Method.

**Participants.** Based on the power analysis reported in Study 2a, we needed to recruit at least 95 participants. We initially collected data from 106 female participants. However, because the predicted two-way interaction was in the expected direction but nonsignificant, we decided to keep collecting data until there were no sign-ups, resulting in 55 additional participants. As in Study 2a, we reported the key interaction for both the initial and full samples, as well as the  $p_{\text{augmented}}$  statistic.

Participants were 161 heterosexual Jewish Israeli women, who were recruited through the subject pool of two large universities to complete an online experiment in exchange for a raffle draw. After the exclusion of two participants who reported technical problems, the final sample was composed of 159 participants ( $M_{\text{age}} = 24.40, SD = 2.44$ ). Participants were undergraduate students majoring in various fields, such as the social sciences, engineering, and health studies. The majority of the participants were single (62%), and the rest either in a relationship (33%), married (4%), divorced (0.5%), and one participant was a widower (0.5%). The native

tongue of 94% was Hebrew (the rest were Russian, English, and French).

**Procedure.** The procedure was identical to that used in Study 2a, except that the Helping Intentions measure referred to providing (rather than seeking) help. The reliabilities and descriptive statistics were as follows: Benevolent Sexism scale ( $\alpha = .83, M = 2.95, SD = 0.91$ ) and Helping Intentions measure ( $M = 442.08, SD = 106.39$ ).

### Results and discussion.

**Intentions to provide dependency-oriented help.** To test our main hypothesis, we conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis with intentions to provide dependency-oriented help as the dependent variable. The predictors were benevolent sexism and gender of help recipient, entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction, added in the second block. The regression model obtained in the second block, presented in Table 3, was significant,  $F(3, 155) = 7.10, p < .001$ .

Gender of help recipient did not have a significant effect on intentions to provide dependency-oriented help, such that female participants reported similar intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in cross-gender ( $M = 445.53, SD = 104.45$ ) and same-gender ( $M = 438.30, SD = 109.03$ ) interactions. As predicted, the two-way interaction was significant. This interaction was nonsignificant in the initial sample of 106 participants (before data augmentation),  $\beta = .18, t(102) = 1.22, p = .227$ . For the interaction in the full sample,  $p_{\text{augmented}} [.053, .054]$ . The results are presented in Figure 3. Examining each condition separately revealed that, replicating the results of Study 1, the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help was significant in the cross-gender condition,  $r = .48, p < .001$ , but not in the same-gender condition,  $r = .09, p = .463$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that, as expected, female participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean) reported higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help when the recipient was a man rather than a woman, *simple slope* = 48.64(22.63),  $t = 2.15, p = .033$ . By contrast, female participants who were relatively low on benevolent sexism ( $-1$   $SD$  below the mean) reported similar intentions to provide dependency-oriented help regardless of the recipient's gender, *simple slope* =  $-31.42$  (22.65),  $t = -1.39, p = .167$ .

Overall, the results of Study 2b aligned with our predictions. While we caution that the statistical reliability of the Study 2 results is hampered by adding more data after the results were known, the fact that the findings are consistent with the results of the other studies reduces the concern that they reflect a statistical fluke.

## Study 3

The goal of Study 3 was to extend the generalizability of the Study 2a findings by examining men's help-seeking behavior in a setting that simulated a real, rather than imagined, helping interaction. Participants in Study 3 were men, who completed a test of household tasks that tested their knowledge of how to perform household activities and everyday tasks (e.g., cleaning, cooking, laundering clothes, and home decorating). Participants were given the opportunity to ask an assistant for help that was either dependency-oriented (i.e., final answers) or autonomy-oriented (i.e., explaining how to answer the questions). Depending on the

Table 3  
Results of Regression Analysis on Intentions to Provide Dependency-Oriented Help (Study 2b)

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	438.10	11.56		37.91	.000	415.27	460.92
Type of interaction	8.61	15.99	.04	0.54	.591	-22.99	40.20
Benevolent sexism	9.39	11.71	.09	0.80	.424	-13.76	32.54
Type of Interaction $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	40.03	16.02	.28	2.50	.014	8.38	71.68

Note.  $N = 159$  female participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The effects of Block 2 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .08$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .04$ . Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale ranged from 1 to 6 (theoretically and actual values). For intentions to provide dependency-oriented help, the scale theoretically ranged from 0 to 1,000, but the actual values ranged from 170 to 795.

experimental condition, the assistant was either a man or a woman. Consistent with Study 2a, we expected a two-way interaction, such that men's benevolent sexism would predict greater seeking of dependency-oriented help from a female assistant (i.e., in cross-gender interactions) but not from a male assistant (i.e., in same-gender interactions).

A second goal of Study 3 was to explore the processes driving the relationship between benevolent sexism and help-seeking behavior. For this purpose, we measured two psychological constructs that could serve as potential mediators that prompt men relatively high on benevolent sexism to seek dependency-oriented help from women. The first construct was assumed helper's expectations; namely, the participant's metaperception as to whether his partner expected him to seek dependency-oriented help rather than autonomy-oriented help. Previous research revealed that individuals' metastereotypes (beliefs about how their ingroup is viewed by outgroup members; Vorauer, 2006) shape their metaperceptions (e.g., assumed outgroup members' impressions of them; Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998). These metaperceptions, in turn, lead people to align their behaviors accordingly (e.g., Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Chen, Shechter, & Chaiken, 1996). Metastereotypes were also found to affect help-

seeking behaviors, for example by increasing reluctance to seek help when exposed to a negative metastereotype about one's group (Wakefield, Hopkins, & Greenwood, 2013). Benevolent sexism can be conceptualized as a specific set of metastereotypes, reflecting expectations from men and women to behave stereotypically in cross-gender interactions (e.g., men are expected to pay for a date; McCarty & Kelly, 2015; Paynter & Leaper, 2016; Viki, Abrams, & Hutchison, 2003).

Of direct relevance to the present research, previous research on women's help-seeking behavior in a traditionally masculine domain (a psycho-technical test; Shnabel et al., 2016) revealed that the higher women were on benevolent sexism, the more they assumed that a male (but not a female) instructor expected them to ask for dependency-oriented help and aligned their behavior accordingly (i.e., asking the male instructor for the final answers instead of explanations on how to solve the questions on their own). Men's help-providing behavior was also mediated by assumed partner's expectations (Shnabel et al., 2016). When men could provide help to a female (but not a male) student solving a psycho-technical test, the higher these men were on benevolent sexism, the more they assumed that the female student expected them to provide dependency-oriented help and aligned their behavior accordingly. Based on these findings, we explored whether assumed partner's expectations could also mediate helping behavior in the traditionally feminine domain of household tasks.

The second potential mediator was the belief in the partner's superiority in the tested domain. Help recipients are more likely to adopt a passive stance and seek dependency-oriented help when they perceive the help provider as superior to them in that domain (Nadler & Fisher, 1986), especially if this superiority seems immutable (i.e., reflects "the way things are"; Nadler et al., 2009). We explored whether, when their assistant was a woman (vs. a man), the higher the male participants were on benevolent sexism, the more they would perceive their assistant to be in a superior position (in terms of domain ability) relative to them, leading, in turn, to more dependency-oriented help-seeking.

## Method

**Participants.** An a priori power analysis using the G\*Power calculator revealed that a 5% level of significance required 189 participants for 80% power to detect an effect size of  $f^2 = .042$ , based on the effect size observed in Study 2a. We aimed for at least this sample size, but the actual sample was somewhat smaller because there were no new sign-ups. Nevertheless, a sensitivity

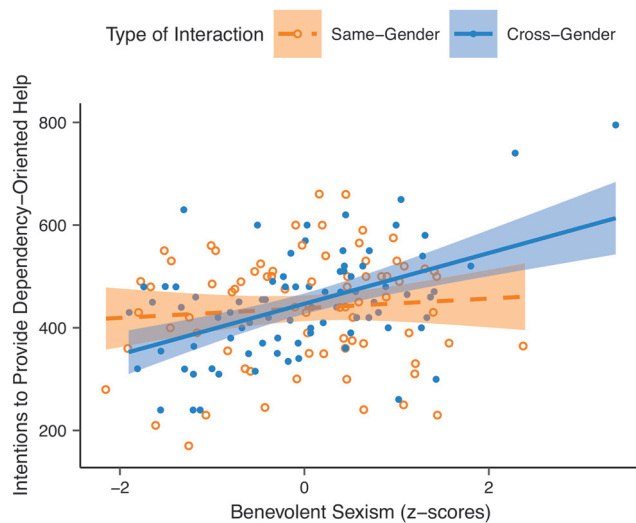


Figure 3.  $N = 159$  female participants. Scatterplots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism (z-scored) and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help as a function of type of interaction. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

analysis (Faul et al., 2009) for a 5% level of significance and a power of 80% revealed that our actual sample size was sufficient to detect a minimum effect of  $f^2 = .05$ , and the observed effect,  $f^2 = .10$ , exceeded this minimum value.

Our sample was composed of 148 heterosexual Jewish Israeli men ( $M_{\text{age}} = 28.61$ ,  $SD = 5.12$ ) who were recruited by three undergraduate RAs through snowball sampling to participate in a psychological study in exchange for payment. The majority of the participants (58%) were undergraduate students majoring in various fields, such as the social sciences and engineering, and the rest were employed in various occupations (e.g., accountants, teachers, and computer engineers). In terms of relationship status, 42% of participants were single, 37% were in a relationship, 20% were married, and 1% were divorced. In terms of living arrangements (that may influence one's familiarity with household tasks): 15% of participants reported living alone, 25% with their parents, 21% with flatmate, 26% with a female partner (a wife or romantic partner), and 13% with a partner and children. The native tongue of 93% was Hebrew (the rest were Russian, English, French, and Romanian).

**Procedure.** Participants completed the experiment at home, at a prescheduled time. Several minutes before the time at which the experiment was scheduled to begin, the experimenter called the participant to verify that he was online and ready to begin. The actual purpose of this call was to increase the credibility of the cover story according to which participants are working with a partner, which requires the coordination of their joint work. As a cover story, participants were told that the study was designed to examine interpersonal interactions on the Internet, and consisted of three parts related to Internet dating, online customer services, and patterns of social interactions in online problem solving.

After filling out demographics, participants were directed to the first part of the experiment, which included the full Hebrew version (11 items) of the Benevolent Sexism scale ( $\alpha = .85$ ,  $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = .93$ ) and four filler questions on online dating. To bolster our cover story's credibility, participants were then directed to the second part of the study, which consisted of filler questions about the effectiveness of online customer services (e.g., "Online customer service is an efficient and convenient way to get service"; see Shnabel et al., 2016).

The third part of the study ostensibly examined Internet teamwork and was conducted in collaboration with a bogus online partner (see Nadler & Chernyak-Hai, 2014). Constituting the experimental manipulation, the type of interaction (cross-gender vs. same-gender) was manipulated. Participants were told that this part of the study consisted of a test of household tasks that examines familiarity with household activities and everyday tasks such as cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, home decorating, and so forth.<sup>3</sup>

Participants were also told that one team member (either them or their partner) would be randomly assigned the role of "participant," who had to answer these questions, whereas the other member would be assigned the role of "assistant" and receive the information needed to answer the questions (i.e., explanations and final answers) to help the participant as required. All participants were then informed that they had been randomly assigned to the participant role, and that their partner was assigned to the assistant role. Two manipulation checks verified that participants correctly identified their assigned role (participant) as well as their partner's

gender. These checks were disguised among filler questions about the partner's age and name. Also, the partner's name was randomly selected out of 10 options (for each gender), to minimize the risk that, if participants talk between themselves, they would find out that their partner had the same name (that could hamper the credibility of the cover story). All participants except two correctly identified this information. Those who were wrong, received a reminder of the details about their partner (gender, name, and age), as well as their and their partner's assigned roles, before proceeding.

Next, after reporting their perceived ability in the household domain,<sup>4</sup> participants were given a sample test question (to familiarize them with the test requirements; see Study 3's protocol). Afterward, participants completed the test, which consisted of 16 questions related to diverse household-related tasks, such as cleaning, cooking, home styling, and child care. Upon completion, all participants were informed that four of their answers were wrong. For each of these four questions, the participant could ask the assistant for either the final answer indicating dependency-oriented help-seeking ("I want to get the final answer to the question from [assistant's name]"), or an explanation on how to solve the question on his own ("I want to get a hint from [assistant's name] to help me answer the question"). The hints provided to participants included basic principles that could be used by the recipient when encountering similar tasks in the future (e.g., "aggressive detergents usually have unpleasant side effects," "it is recommended to match the ironing process to the fabric's features"; see Studies 3 and 4 protocols). Participants' dependency-oriented help-seeking score (the outcome variable) ranged from zero (no final answers requested) to four (final answers requested for all four questions).

Next, participants were informed that their help requests had been transferred to the assistant and in the meantime they were asked to answer several "feedback questions," which actually measured the two potential mediators. Specifically, participants were asked what prompted them to request the final answers from the assistant. Using 7-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 =

<sup>3</sup> Before Studies 3 and 4, we conducted two pilot studies with a similar purpose; namely, to examine help seeking (in male participants) and providing (in female participants) behavior. The studies used similar procedures and experimental designs as Studies 3 and 4, with one key difference: participants were required to complete an emotional intelligence (instead of household tasks) test. In both studies, the expected two-way interaction failed to reach significance. In hindsight, our assumption that participants would associate the emotional intelligence test with the domestic, feminine domain (because communal roles, such as successful child rearing, require high socioemotional skills; Croft et al., 2015) was probably wrong. We suspect that despite the fact that the socioemotional domain is traditionally feminine (Koenig & Eagly, 2005), a test of emotional intelligence is nevertheless perceived as masculine, at least to a certain extent; e.g., because participants associate "emotional intelligence" with traditionally masculine traits such as assertiveness or leadership (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000). The materials and data are available on request from Orly Bareket.

<sup>4</sup> Because perceived domain ability was controlled for in previous research on cross-gender helping behavior (see Shnabel et al., 2016), in Studies 3 and 4 we also measured this construct, using a three-item 7-point scale (e.g., "In general, how do you evaluate your ability to answer questions of this kind?"; in Study 3,  $\alpha = .92$ ,  $M = 4.80$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ; in Study 4,  $\alpha = .92$ ,  $M = 5.28$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ). For the sake of consistency with Shnabel et al.'s (2016) previous work, we tested the regression models in Studies 3 and 4 while also controlling for perceived domain ability; doing so did not change the statistical conclusions.



Table 4  
*Results of Regression Analysis on Dependency-Oriented Help-Seeking Behavior (Study 3)*

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.39	0.14		10.04	.000	1.12	1.67
Type of interaction	0.004	0.20	.002	0.02	.985	-0.38	0.39
Benevolent sexism	-0.37	0.15	-.30	-2.51	.013	-0.66	-0.08
Type of Interaction $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	0.76	0.20	.46	3.84	.000	0.37	1.15

*Note.*  $N = 148$  male participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The effects of Block 2 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R_{\text{first block}}^2 = .002$ ,  $\Delta R_{\text{second block}}^2 = .093$ . Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale theoretically ranged from 1 to 6, but the actual values ranged from 1.18 to 5.18. Dependency-oriented help-seeking score ranged from 0 (no final answers requested) to 4 (final answers requested for all four questions) both theoretically and for the actual values.

*strongly agree*), participants rated their agreement with three items. One item ("I believe the assistant primarily expected me to ask for the final answers") measured assumed partner's expectations; and two items (e.g., "I thought the questions on the test relate to a domain in which the assistant is better than I am") measured perceived partner's superiority (these items were significantly correlated,  $r = .34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Note that although we hypothesized that these constructs could serve as mediators, we measured them only *after* we examined participants' help-seeking behavior, because of our concern that exposure to these items might reveal the study's real purpose. To some extent, this might limit the strength of the inference from the mediation analyses.

Finally, participants were supplied with the type of help they requested for each of the four questions they allegedly got wrong and were asked to answer these questions again. The hints and final answers that the participants were given were matched to fit their actual answers to prevent a situation in which a participant received the same answer as the one he originally marked. To illustrate, one of the four questions participants allegedly got wrong was: "Which of the following spices is most appropriate for a cabbage salad? (a) Hot paprika; (b) Sweet paprika; (c) Red curry powder; (d) Chili powder." If the participant originally marked "a," "c," or "d," depending on their helping choice, he subsequently got either the final answer "(b) Sweet paprika" or the following hint: "Hot spices are more suitable for winter dishes that are served hot, rather than for cold dishes, because the spiciness enhances the warming effect of the dish." If participants originally marked the answer "(b) Sweet paprika" then they subsequently received either the final answer "(d) Chili powder" or the following hint: "Using hot spices that do not have a very dominant taste is recommended for adding a kick to salads with neutral taste." In other words, we used four ambiguous questions that allowed us to lead participants to believe that the correct answer was different from the one they chose (regardless of their answer). Upon completion, participants completed a demographic form. They also responded to an open-ended question, included to probe for suspicion, in which we encouraged them to write their comments about the experiment. None of the participants expressed suspicions about the study's purpose or about whether their partner existed. To minimize the risk of hampering the credibility of the cover story, participants were not debriefed immediately upon their completion of the study (to prevent them from telling new participants about the study's

real purpose). Instead, participants were debriefed by e-mail after the completion of data collection.

## Results

**Dependency-oriented help-seeking behavior.** Overall, 31% of the participants did not seek dependency-oriented help at all, 26% sought dependency-oriented help once, 26% – twice, 10% – three times, and 7% – all four times. To test our main hypothesis, we conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis with dependency-oriented help-seeking behavior as the dependent variable. The predictors were benevolent sexism and the assistant's gender, entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction, added in the second block. The regression model obtained in the second block, presented in Table 4, was significant,  $F(3, 144) = 5.03$ ,  $p = .002$ .

As seen in this table, the assistant's gender did not have a significant effect on dependency-oriented help-seeking behavior (male participants reported similar levels of dependency-oriented help in cross-gender,  $M = 1.37$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ , and same-gender,  $M = 1.37$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ , interactions), yet the two-way interaction was significant. The results are presented in Figure 4. Examining the correlations in each condition separately revealed that benevolent sexism predicted *more* dependency-oriented help-seeking when the assistant was a woman,  $r = .32$ ,  $p = .005$ , but *less* dependency-oriented help-seeking when the assistant was a man,  $r = -.29$ ,  $p = .013$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that male participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1 *SD* above the mean) sought more dependency-oriented help when the assistant was a woman than a man, *simple slope* = 0.76(0.28),  $t = 2.76$ ,  $p = .007$ . Also, male participants who were relatively low on benevolent sexism (-1 *SD* below the mean) sought *less* dependency-oriented help in cross-gender versus same-gender interactions, *simple slope* = -0.75(0.28),  $t = -2.71$ ,  $p = .008$ .

**Conditional indirect effects.** Using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS procedure for SPSS (Model 8), we explored whether assumed partner's expectations and perceived partner's superiority mediated the Assistant's Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interaction on participants' seeking of dependency-oriented help. The results of the moderated mediation analysis are presented in Table 5. As seen in the table, the indirect effects of the Assistant's Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interaction on dependency-oriented help-seeking through both assumed partner's expectations and perceived partner's superiority were significant. Thus, when seeking help from a female assistant, the higher men were on benevolent sexism, the more they assumed the she expected them to ask for



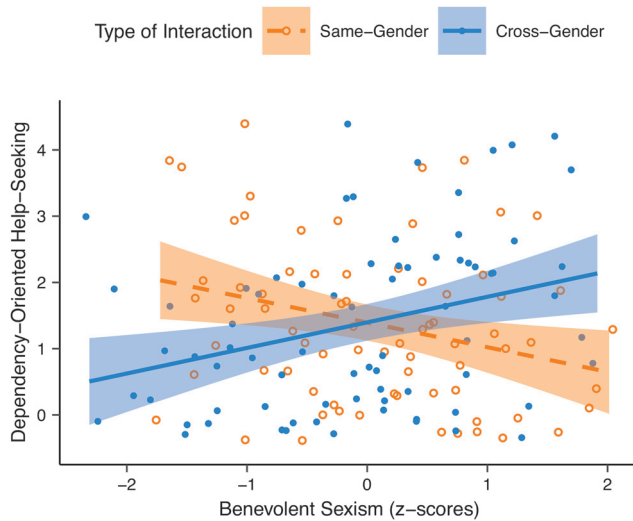


Figure 4.  $N = 148$  male participants. Scatterplots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism (z-scored) and dependency-oriented help-seeking as a function of type of interaction. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

dependency-oriented help and perceived her skills as superior to theirs. These expectations and perceptions, in turn, predicted men's seeking of dependency-oriented help. Benevolent sexism did not influence men's assumed expectations and superiority perceptions when the assistant was a man.

## Discussion

The results of Study 3 supported our main hypothesis, and revealed that the endorsement of benevolent sexism predicted men's tendency to seek more dependency-oriented help (i.e., final answers, as opposed to hints for a solution) in a test of household tasks, within cross-gender, but not within same-gender, interactions. This finding extends the large body of research that has focused on the way masculine norms shape men's help-seeking behavior (for a review, see Addis & Mahalik, 2003). Whereas this previous literature showed that men are reluctant to seek help for a range of difficulties, the present study found that in the domestic sphere men *do* seek help. We further identified the specific type of help men seek in these situations, as well as how it relates to their gender role ideology and situational cues (i.e., the gender of the help provider).

An unexpected finding was that men low on benevolent sexism sought *less* dependency-oriented help in cross-gender, compared with same-gender, interactions. A possible explanation is that because individuals with lower benevolent sexism are motivated to promote equality (Feather, 2004), they perceived the situation as an opportunity to advance a warranted change in traditional gender roles (by reducing their dependency on women in the domestic sphere). This possibility is consistent with findings that in the context of traditionally masculine domains, men who were low on benevolent sexism provided less dependency-oriented help to women than to men (Shnabel et al., 2016). Hence, men who are low on benevolent sexism appear to actively engage in behavior

whose purpose is to counteract traditional gender roles (for similar findings of opposite behavioral patterns among men who are high vs. low on sexism; see Acker, 2009; Hideg & Ferris, 2016). Another unexpected finding was that benevolent sexism among men predicted *less* dependency-oriented help-seeking in same-gender interactions. A possible explanation is that, because men's traditional gender role prescribes independence and self-reliance, men who are high on benevolent sexism are eager to prove their autonomy when interacting with other men (eagerness that surpasses even their reluctance to learn how to perform domestic tasks).

The results pointing to assumed expectations as a mediator are in line with previous research showing that individuals' metastereotypes (Vorauer, 2006) shape their metaperceptions (Vorauer et al., 1998) and help-seeking behaviors (Wakefield et al., 2013). Thus, men high on benevolent sexism were more likely to believe that the woman with whom they were interacting expected them to exhibit stereotypically consistent behavior (i.e., behave in a dependent manner). These assumed expectations, in turn, predicted men's seeking of dependency-oriented help, in line with findings showing that people align their behaviors with the expectations of their interaction partners (e.g., Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Chen et al., 1996). As for the second mediator, our findings suggest that men high on benevolent sexism relied on their female assistant for dependency-oriented help because they believed that she had skills superior to their own. This belief is prescribed by the notion that women have many positive traits (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994) that compensate for what men stereotypically lack (e.g., warmth, refined sense of culture and good taste; Glick & Fiske, 2001a). Thus, these men acted in compliance with their beliefs about women's traits, consistent with psychological research showing that people act in accordance with their attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen, 2001). Overall, the mediation analysis sheds light on how benevolent sexism might function as a self-fulfilling prophecy by leading to perceptions and expectations that translate into dependency-oriented help-seeking behavior. Future research should examine whether, by reinforcing men's helplessness in the domestic sphere, this behavior feeds back into the ideology of benevolent sexism.

## Study 4

Study 4 was designed to extend the generalizability of the Study 2b findings by examining female participants' helping behavior in real, rather than imagined, helping interactions. The procedure generally matched that of Study 3, except that participants were women and were assigned to serve as assistants of a partner, who was ostensibly assigned to the role of participant and took a test about household tasks. Depending on the experimental condition, the partner was either a man or a woman. When the partner requested help, participants in Study 4 could provide help that was either dependency-oriented (i.e., final answers) or autonomy-oriented (i.e., hints). We expected a two-way interaction such that women's benevolent sexism would predict their provision of more dependency-oriented help to a male partner, but not to a female partner (i.e., in cross- but not same-gender interactions).

Similar to Study 3, we also explored the mediating role of assumed partner's expectations (whether the partner expected to get the final answers rather than explanations on how to answer

Table 5  
Moderated Mediation Analysis (Study 3)

Regression results for conditional indirect effects							
Predictors	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
Outcome: Assumed partner's expectations							
Constant	-0.13	0.11	-1.12	.264	-0.35	0.10	
Benevolent sexism	0.05	0.12	0.39	.699	-0.19	0.28	
Type of interaction	0.27	0.16	1.71	.090	-0.04	0.58	
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.34	0.16	2.15	.034	0.03	0.66	
Outcome: Perceived partner's superiority							
Constant	-0.18	0.11	-1.63	.106	-0.39	0.04	
Benevolent sexism	0.17	0.12	1.50	.135	-0.06	0.40	
Type of interaction	0.37	0.15	2.40	.018	0.07	0.67	
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.30	0.15	1.91	.058	-0.01	0.60	
Outcome: Dependency-oriented help-seeking							
Constant	1.48	0.13	11.48	.000	1.23	1.74	
Assumed partner's expectations	0.25	0.11	2.32	.023	0.04	0.47	
Perceived partner's superiority	0.34	0.11	2.99	.003	0.11	0.56	
Benevolent sexism	-0.44	0.14	-3.21	.002	-0.71	-0.17	
Type of interaction	-0.19	0.18	-1.02	.311	-0.55	0.18	
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.57	0.19	3.09	.002	0.21	0.94	
Conditional direct effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-oriented help-seeking							
Type of interaction	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
Same-gender	-0.44	0.14	-3.21	.002	-0.71	-0.17	
Cross-gender	0.13	0.13	1.01	.313	-0.13	0.39	
Conditional indirect effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-oriented help-seeking through the mediators							
Type of interaction	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
Mediator: Assumed partner's expectations							
Same-gender	0.01	0.04	-0.05	0.10			
Cross-gender	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.23			
Mediator: Perceived partner's superiority							
Same-gender	0.06	0.05	-0.01	0.19			
Cross-gender	0.16	0.06	0.07	0.30			
Index of moderated mediation							
Mediator	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI			
Assumed partner's expectations	0.09	0.06	0.01	0.26			
Perceived partner's superiority	0.10	0.06	0.01	0.25			

Note.  $N = 148$  male participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. Level of confidence = 95%. Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). The scores for all continuous variables (benevolent sexism, assumed partner's expectations, and perceived partner's superiority) were standardized. Dependency-oriented help-seeking scores ranged from 0 (no final answers requested) to 4 (final answers requested for all four questions). Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

the questions on his or her own) and perceived superiority relative to their partner (participants' belief that they were better than their partner on traditionally feminine tasks; see Van Leeuwen & Täuber, 2010, for the finding that people are more likely to provide dependency-oriented help when they perceive themselves as superior to the recipient). We explored whether, when women who are high on benevolent sexism assist a man (vs. a woman), they perceive themselves as superior to him and assume that he expects them to provide dependency-oriented help and align their behavior accordingly.

## Method

**Participants.** An a priori power analysis using the G\*Power calculator indicated that for a 5% level of significance and a power of 80% we needed a sample size of at least 189 participants to

detect an effect size of  $f^2 = .042$ , which is based on the effect size observed in Study 2b. We aimed to achieve at least this sample size.

Participants were 221 heterosexual Jewish Israeli women, who were recruited by three undergraduate RAs through snowball sampling to participate in the study in exchange for payment. After the exclusion of two participants who reported having technical problems, the final sample was composed of 219 participants,  $M_{\text{age}} = 26.44$ ,  $SD = 6.95$ . The majority of the participants (78%) were undergraduate students majoring in various fields, such as health studies, engineering, and life sciences; the rest were employed in various occupations (e.g., human resources specialists, social workers). In terms of relationship status, 36% were single, 42% were in a relationship, 19% were married, 1.5% were divorced, one participant was a

widower (0.5%), and 1% reported other. In terms of living arrangements, 3% of the participants reported living alone, 24% with their parents, 19% with flatmate, 40% with a male partner (a husband/romantic partner), 9% with a partner and children, and 5% reported other. The native tongue of 97% was Hebrew (the rest were Russian, English, and Spanish).

**Procedure.** As a “mirror image” of Study 3, after the measure of their benevolent sexism ( $\alpha = .88$ ,  $M = 3.13$ ,  $SD = .95$ ) and the completion of the filler task, and before the test of household tasks, all participants were informed that they had been randomly assigned to be assistants. Two manipulation checks verified that they correctly identified their assigned role as well as their partner’s gender. All participants, except two, correctly identified this information. Those who were wrong received a reminder of these details.

Next, after reporting their perceived domain ability and being given a sample question, participants read the test of household tasks (that included 17 questions) and, as assistants were given both the final answer and a detailed explanation on how to answer each question. While their partner (assigned to the role of “participant”) was supposedly working on the test, participants were notified (six times overall) that their partner had asked for their help. For each question, the participant could provide her partner with either autonomy-oriented help or dependency-oriented help (“The participant is asking for help on this question. Would you like to provide [the partner’s name] with a hint or with the final answer?”). Thus, participants’ dependency-oriented help-providing score ranged from 0 (no final answers provided) to 6 (final answers provided in response to all help requests).

Participants then answered ostensible “feedback questions,” which actually measured two potential mediators. Using 7-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*), participants rated their agreement with three items. Two items ( $r = .52$ ,  $p < .001$ ) measured assumed partner’s expectations (e.g., “I believe the participant expected me to provide him/her mainly with the final answers”). One additional item, “I thought the participant was asking for help because s/he is not as good as I am in the domains tested by the questions,” measured perceived superiority. Again, the potential mediators were measured after we examined participants’ helping behavior. Finally, participants completed their demographics, wrote their comments on the experiment in an open-ended question (none of them expressed suspicions). Participants were debriefed by e-mail after the completion of data collection.

## Results

**Dependency-oriented help-providing behavior.** Overall, 4% of the participants did not provide dependency-oriented help at all, 6% provided dependency-oriented help once, 25% – twice, 35% – three times, 16% – four times, 9% – five times, and 5% – all six times. To test our main hypothesis, we conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis with dependency-oriented help-providing as the dependent variable. The predictors were benevolent sexism and help recipient’s gender, entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction, added in the second block. The regression model obtained in the second block, presented in Table 6, was significant,  $F(3, 215) = 3.62$ ,  $p = .014$ .

As seen in this table, the gender of the help recipient did not have a significant effect on dependency-oriented help-providing behavior, such that female participants reported similar levels of dependency-oriented help in cross-gender ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ) and same-gender ( $M = 3.05$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ) interactions. As predicted, the two-way interaction was significant. The results are presented in Figure 5. Examining the correlations in each condition separately revealed that benevolent sexism predicted providing *more* dependency-oriented help when the partner was a man,  $r = .23$ ,  $p = .016$ , but *less* dependency-oriented help-providing when the partner was a woman,  $r = -.20$ ,  $p = .035$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that female participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean) provided more dependency-oriented help when the recipient was a man than a woman, *simple slope* = 0.51(0.25),  $t = 2.00$ ,  $p = .046$ . Participants relatively low on benevolent sexism (–1  $SD$  below the mean) provided *less* dependency-oriented help in cross-gender versus same-gender interactions, *simple slope* = –0.65(0.25),  $t = -2.57$ ,  $p = .011$ .

**Conditional indirect effects.** Using Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS procedure for SPSS (Model 8), we explored whether assumed partner’s expectations and perceived superiority mediated the Help Recipient’s Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interaction on participants’ provision of dependency-oriented help. As seen in Table 7, the indirect effect of the Help Recipient’s Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interaction on dependency-oriented help-providing through perceived superiority was not significant, whereas the corresponding effect through assumed partner’s expectations was significant. Thus, when providing help to a male partner, the higher women were on benevolent sexism, the more they assumed that he expected them to provide dependency-oriented help and aligned their behavior accordingly. Benevolent sexism did not influence women’s assumed expectations when their partner was a woman.

Table 6  
Results of Regression Analysis on Dependency-Oriented Help-Providing Behavior (Study 4)

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.05	0.13		24.22	.000	2.80	3.30
Type of interaction	–0.07	0.18	–.03	–0.41	.686	–0.42	0.28
Benevolent sexism	–0.27	0.13	–.20	–2.01	.045	–0.53	–0.01
Type of Interaction $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	0.58	0.18	.32	3.22	.001	0.22	0.93

Note.  $N = 219$  female participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The effects of Block 2 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R_{\text{first block}}^2 = .002$ ,  $\Delta R_{\text{second block}}^2 = .046$ . Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale theoretically ranged from 1 to 6, but the actual values ranged from 1.00 to 5.27. Dependency-oriented help-providing scores ranged from 0 (no final answers provided) to 6 (final answers provided for all six questions) both theoretically and for the actual values.

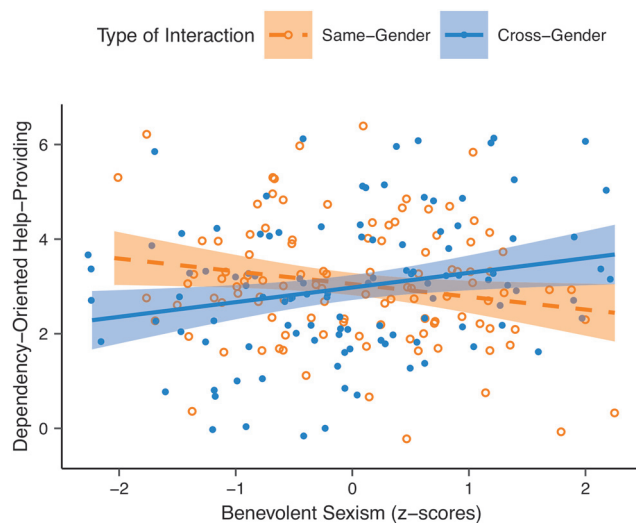


Figure 5.  $N = 219$  female participants. Scatterplots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism (z-scored) and dependency-oriented help-providing as a function of type of interaction. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

## Discussion

The results of Study 4 supported our main hypothesis, and revealed that the endorsement of benevolent sexism predicted women's tendency to provide more dependency-oriented help (i.e., final answers, as opposed to hints) in a test of household tasks, within cross-gender, but not same-gender, interactions. In addition, women low on benevolent sexism provided *less* dependency-oriented help in cross-gender, compared with same-gender, interactions. This behavior is consistent with the notion that being aware of prescriptions regarding traditional gender roles may motivate behavior that defies these prescribed norms (e.g., Wakefield et al., 2012) in individuals who are motivated to promote equality (i.e., low on benevolent sexism; Feather, 2004). Women who were relatively high (vs. low) on benevolent sexism provided *less* dependency-oriented help in same-gender interactions, perhaps because these women believed that their female partner would want to cope independently with the tasks and learn how to perform them on her own.

Our results also point to assumed partner's expectations as a potential mediator. Specifically, when female participants interacted with a male partner, higher levels of benevolent sexism predicted a greater tendency to assume that he expected them to provide him with dependency-oriented help. This, in turn, predicted behavior in accordance with these presumed expectations. These results imply that benevolent sexism may have shaped women's metaperceptions (Vorauer et al., 1998). Unlike Study 3, perceived superiority relative to the partner did not mediate the effect of benevolent sexism on female participants' help-providing behavior. While we acknowledge the inherent problematicity of interpreting null effects, we cautiously suggest that female participants might have felt uncomfortable praising their own skills, in line with the norm that women should be humble and not brag about their abilities (e.g., Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012).

## Study 5

Study 5 complemented and extended Studies 1–4 in several ways. First, whereas in Studies 1–4 men were always in the role of help seekers and women were always in the role of help providers, Study 5 included direct comparisons between men's and women's help-seeking (Study 5a), and men's and women's help-providing (Study 5b) intentions. Based on our theorizing, Study 5a tested the prediction that in cross-gender interactions, especially among participants who are high on benevolent sexism, men would seek more dependency-oriented help than women when encountering difficulties in performing traditionally feminine domestic tasks. This would rule out the alternative prediction that, because of the traditional gender role of women as dependent (e.g., Wakefield et al., 2012), the level of dependency-oriented help-seeking among women would be generally higher than among men. In Study 5b, we tested the prediction that, especially among participants who are high on benevolent sexism, women would provide more dependency-oriented help than men in cross-gender interactions in which their partner encounters difficulties in performing traditionally feminine domestic tasks. This would rule out the alternative prediction that, because of men's traditional role as chivalrous "White Knights" (Rudman & Heppen, 2003), the level of dependency-oriented help-providing among men would be generally higher than among women.

Second, whereas Studies 1–4 focused on relations between flatmates or fellow participants, in Study 5 we examined helping intentions among heterosexual romantic partners who cohabit and raise children together. Using this context allowed us to test whether, in line with our reasoning that it serves to maintain inequality in the domestic sphere, dependency-oriented helping among heterosexual romantic partners is associated with an unequal division of household labor—that typically widens in heterosexual relationships (Gupta, 1999) and as the demand for time on domestic work increases (e.g., in the transition to parenthood; Baxter, Hewitt, & Haynes, 2008; Horne et al., 2018).

Finally, Study 5 explored help seeking and providing in traditionally masculine domestic tasks (e.g., plumbing related maintenance). We expected domain uniqueness, such that the predicted patterns (of men's higher dependency-oriented help-seeking and women's higher dependency-oriented help-providing) would occur for traditionally feminine—but not for traditionally masculine—tasks. In fact, based on previous research (Shnabel et al., 2016) a plausible prediction was that the patterns for traditionally masculine tasks would be opposite to that observed for feminine tasks, such that women, especially if high on benevolent sexism, would seek more dependency-oriented help than men, whereas men, especially if high on benevolent sexism, would offer more dependency-oriented help than women.

After completing the benevolent sexism measure, male and female participants in Study 5a reported their intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from their partner when encountering difficulties in performing traditionally feminine, routine domestic tasks that characterize family life (such as cleaning and organizing the children); male and female participants in Study 5b reported their intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to their partner who encounters difficulties in performing these tasks. Participants also reported their intentions to seek (Study 5a) or provide (Study 5b) dependency-oriented help in masculine domestic tasks.



Table 7  
Moderated Mediation Analysis (Study 4)

Regression results for conditional indirect effects						
Predictors	B	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Outcome: Assumed partner's expectations						
Constant	0.09	0.09	0.91	.362	-0.10	0.27
Benevolent sexism	0.01	0.10	0.10	.924	-0.19	0.21
Type of interaction	-0.17	0.13	-1.26	.210	-0.43	0.10
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.29	0.13	2.16	.032	0.03	0.55
Outcome: Perceived superiority						
Constant	-0.10	0.10	-1.00	.318	-0.28	0.09
Benevolent sexism	0.13	0.10	1.28	.201	-0.07	0.33
Type of interaction	0.19	0.13	1.42	.159	-0.07	0.45
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.08	0.14	0.56	.579	-0.19	0.34
Outcome: Dependency-oriented help-providing						
Constant	2.99	0.11	26.40	.000	2.76	3.20
Assumed partner's expectations	0.64	0.08	7.69	.000	0.48	0.81
Perceived superiority	-0.04	0.08	-0.48	.635	-0.20	0.12
Benevolent sexism	-0.26	0.12	-2.18	.030	-0.50	-0.03
Type of interaction	0.05	0.16	0.30	.766	-0.26	0.37
Type of Interaction × Benevolent Sexism	0.39	0.16	2.40	.017	0.07	0.71
Conditional direct effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-oriented help-providing						
Type of interaction	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Same-gender	-0.26	0.12	-2.18	.030	-0.50	-0.03
Cross-gender	0.13	0.11	1.15	.253	-0.09	0.34
Conditional indirect effects of benevolent sexism on dependency-oriented help-providing through the mediators						
Type of interaction	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Mediator: Assumed partner's expectations						
Same-gender	0.01	0.07	-0.13	0.14		
Cross-gender	0.19	0.07	0.08	0.33		
Mediator: Perceived superiority						
Same-gender	-0.01	0.01	-0.05	0.01		
Cross-gender	-0.01	0.02	-0.06	0.02		
Index of moderated mediation						
Mediator	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Assumed partner's expectations	0.19	0.09	0.01	0.38		
Perceived superiority	-0.003	0.01	-0.06	0.02		

Note. *N* = 218 female participants. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. Level of confidence = 95%. One participant had missing values for the questionnaire measuring the mediators because of a technical problem (hence, this analysis included only 218 participants). Type of interaction was dummy-coded (same-gender = 0, cross-gender = 1). The scores for all continuous variables (benevolent sexism, assumed partner's expectations, and perceived superiority) were standardized. Dependency-oriented help-providing scores ranged from 0 (no final answers provided) to 6 (final answers provided for all six questions). Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

Finally, participants reported their relative share in household labor.

In both studies, we expected an interaction between benevolent sexism and the participant's gender such that men would seek more dependency-oriented help from their partners than women (Study 5a) whereas women would provide more dependency-oriented help to their partners than men (Study 5b), and these patterns would be particularly pronounced for participants high on benevolent sexism. We also tested whether these patterns of interactions occur only for the traditionally feminine (but not for the traditionally masculine) tasks, and whether dependency-oriented help-seeking intentions (Study 5a) was negatively associated, and dependency-oriented help-providing (Study 5b) was positively associated, with self-reported share in household labor.

## Study 5a

**Method.** The study was preregistered on [AsPredicted.org](https://aspredicted.org/ej3k4.pdf) (see <https://aspredicted.org/ej3k4.pdf>). Note that we preregistered the two-way interaction between benevolent sexism and participant's gender on intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine tasks as our main hypothesis. The analyses pertaining to masculine tasks and relative share in household labor were preregistered as exploratory.

**Participants.** An a priori power analysis using the G\*Power calculator revealed that a 5% level of significance requires 189 participants (95 for each gender) for 80% power to detect an effect size of  $f^2 = .042$ , based on the effect size observed in Study 2a (that also examined helping-seeking intentions). However, because we also had an exploratory analysis of a correlation, we set the sample size

to at least 153 participants for each gender (i.e., the minimum sample size required for detecting small-to-medium sized correlations [ $\rho = .20$ ] at a 5% level of significance and a power of 80%).

Participants were heterosexual men and women aged 20–40 years who were cohabiting or married and had at least one child (the population among which gendered division of household labor is most pronounced; Horne et al., 2018; Keith & Malone, 2005; Pepin, Sayer, & Casper, 2018). Participants were recruited through a local commercial participant recruitment service to complete an online study about help-seeking in relationships, in exchange for a payment. Only participants who passed the attention check (right at the beginning of the study) proceeded to complete the study. The sample was composed of 161 men ( $M_{\text{age}} = 34.63$ ,  $SD = 3.72$ ) and 166 women ( $M_{\text{age}} = 33.00$ ,  $SD = 4.51$ ), employed in various occupations (e.g., administrative employees, teachers, and engineers). The majority of participants were married (97%), and the rest were cohabiting without marriage (3%). All participants reported currently living with a romantic partner and having children ( $M_{\text{children number}} = 2.51$ ,  $SD_{\text{children number}} = 1.24$ ;  $M_{\text{children age}} = 2.31$ ,  $SD_{\text{children age}} = 1.91$ ). The native tongue of 91% was Hebrew.

**Procedure.** Participants completed a short demographic form and the full Hebrew version of the Benevolent Sexism scale ( $\alpha_{\text{men}} = .91$ ,  $M_{\text{men}} = 3.93$ ,  $SD_{\text{men}} = 1.07$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{women}} = .91$ ,  $M_{\text{women}} = 3.62$ ,  $SD_{\text{women}} = 1.15$ ). They were then exposed to 22 scenarios describing mundane routine domestic tasks. Half of the tasks were traditionally feminine (e.g., cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, preparing the grocery shopping list, and taking care of children). The other half were traditionally masculine (e.g., maintenance work at the house and garage). For each task, participants were asked to imagine that they encountered difficulties in performing it, and indicate the probability that they would seek direct assistance from their partner; namely, ask the partner to do the task instead of them, representing dependency-oriented help (to provide a cleaner assessment of this construct, in Study 5 we measured only dependency-oriented helping, without contrasting it with the option to seek autonomy-oriented help). We calculated participants' intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine tasks as the sum of their responses to the scenarios describing traditionally feminine tasks. We similarly calculated participants' intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in masculine tasks.

Next, participants reported their relative share in household labor (adapted from Horne et al., 2018; see also Gaunt & Pinho, 2018) by rating their responsibility relative to their partner in five core feminine tasks—preparing meals, tidying up the kitchen, cleaning the house, taking care of laundry, and child care. Participants additionally responded to two filler items about their share in performing masculine tasks. The purpose of these items was not to fully capture men's household responsibilities (that would require more than two items), but rather to reduce social desirability. We were concerned that, if we asked solely about the traditionally feminine tasks, male participants would be embarrassed to admit that these tasks are not equally shared in their household. Including the filler tasks created the impression of a more equal distribution of household labor (assuming that the men who do not perform the traditionally feminine tasks, do perform the traditionally masculine tasks). We did not have preregistered hypotheses for these filler masculine tasks, and they were not included in the analyses. Responses to the feminine-tasks items, indicated on a

scale ranging from 1 (*almost always my spouse*) through 4 (*both of us equally*), to 7 (*almost always myself*), were averaged (higher scores correspond to a higher share of household labor);  $M_s = 3.06$  ( $SD = 1.20$ ) for men, and 5.45 ( $SD = 1.00$ ) for women.

### Results.

**Intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine versus masculine tasks.** We conducted a repeated-measures analysis of covariance with benevolent sexism as a continuous independent variable; participant's gender (woman vs. man) as a between-subjects factor; and type of task (feminine vs. masculine) as a within-subjects factor. The main effects of participant's gender, task type, and benevolent sexism, as well as the two-way Participant's Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism and Task Type  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interactions were nonsignificant,  $ps > .150$ . The Participant's Gender  $\times$  Task Type interaction was significant ( $p < .001$ ), and it was qualified by a significant Benevolent Sexism  $\times$  Task Type  $\times$  Participant's Gender three-way interaction,  $F(1, 323) = 14.15$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .04$ .

We interpreted the three-way interaction using two hierarchical multiple regression models with the same predictor variables; the dependent variable in the first model was intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in traditionally feminine tasks, and in the second model—intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in traditionally masculine tasks. In both models benevolent sexism and the participant's gender were entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction was added in the second block.

The regression model obtained for feminine tasks, presented in the upper part of Table 8, was significant,  $F(3, 323) = 89.40$ ,  $p < .001$ . Consistent with our preregistered main hypothesis, gender had a strong significant effect on intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine tasks, such that men ( $M = 828.41$ ,  $SD = 195.95$ ) reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help than women ( $M = 435.15$ ,  $SD = 243.33$ ). This effect was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction, presented in the left part of Figure 6. Examining the correlations between benevolent sexism and helping intentions among men and women separately revealed that, replicating the results of Study 1, the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help was significant among men,  $r = .19$ ,  $p = .016$ . Benevolent sexism did not correlate with intentions to seek dependency-oriented help among women,  $r = -.10$ ,  $p = .213$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that the effect of gender was stronger among participants relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean), *simple slope* = 452.83(34.57),  $t = 13.10$ ,  $p < .001$ , compared with those relatively low on benevolent sexism (–1  $SD$  below the mean), *simple slope* = 328.92(35.08),  $t = 9.38$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The regression model for masculine tasks, presented in the lower part of Table 8, was significant,  $F(3, 323) = 156.13$ ,  $p < .001$ . Gender had a significant effect on intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in masculine tasks, such that women ( $M = 860.60$ ,  $SD = 197.05$ ) reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help than men ( $M = 326.35$ ,  $SD = 254.22$ ). Moreover, there was a significant two-way interaction, presented on the right part of Figure 6. Examining the correlations between benevolent sexism and helping intentions among women and men separately revealed that the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help was significant among women,  $r = .25$ ,  $p = .001$ , yet benevolent sexism did not correlate with intentions to seek dependency-oriented help among men,  $r = -.02$ ,  $p = .780$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that the effect of

Table 8  
Results of Regression Analysis on Intentions to Seek Dependency-Oriented Help (Study 5a)

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
<b>Feminine tasks</b>							
Constant	431.92	17.22		25.09	.000	398.04	465.79
Participant's gender	390.88	24.56	.66	15.91	.000	342.55	439.20
Benevolent sexism	-23.05	16.68	-.08	-1.38	.168	-55.87	9.77
Participant's Gender × Benevolent Sexism	61.95	24.69	.14	2.51	.013	13.39	110.52
<b>Masculine tasks</b>							
Constant	867.21	17.63		49.19	.000	832.52	901.89
Participant's gender	-540.00	25.15	-.77	-21.47	.000	-589.48	-490.52
Benevolent sexism	47.14	17.08	.13	2.76	.006	13.53	80.74
Participant's Gender × Benevolent Sexism	-53.03	25.28	-.10	-2.10	.037	-102.76	-3.30

Note.  $N_{men} = 161$ ,  $N_{women} = 166$ . CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The effects of Block 2 of the two hierarchical multiple regression analyses are reported. For the feminine tasks,  $\Delta R_{first\ block}^2 = .44$ ,  $\Delta R_{second\ block}^2 = .01$ ; for the masculine tasks,  $\Delta R_{first\ block}^2 = .59$ ,  $\Delta R_{second\ block}^2 = .01$ . Participant's gender was dummy-coded (woman = 0, man = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale ranged from 1 to 6 (theoretically and for the actual values). For intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine and masculine tasks, the scale ranged from 0 to 1,100 (theoretically and for the actual values).

gender was stronger among participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1 SD above the mean), *simple slope* = -593.03(35.40),  $t = -16.75$ ,  $p < .001$ , compared with those relatively low on benevolent sexism (-1 SD below the mean), *simple slope* = -486.97(35.92),  $t = -13.56$ ,  $p < .001$ .

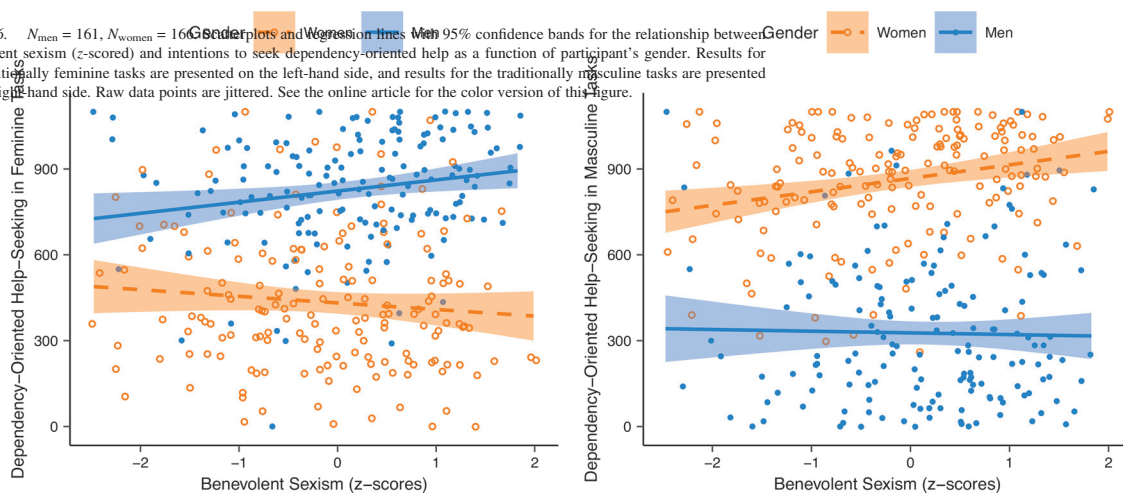
**Relative share in household labor.** In line with our theorizing, intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine domestic tasks were negatively correlated with self-reported share in household labor,  $r = -.68$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $r_{men} = -.36$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $r_{women} = -.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ; see also Figure S1 in the online supplemental materials for scatterplots and 2D kernel density contours for Studies 5a and 5b). Thus, male and female participants who reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from their partner when encountering difficulties in performing traditionally feminine tasks, reported doing less traditionally feminine household labor. We discuss the findings of Study 5a along with the findings of Study 5b.

**Study 5b**

**Method.** The study was preregistered on [AsPredicted.org](https://aspredicted.org/8qh9u.pdf) (see <https://aspredicted.org/8qh9u.pdf>). We preregistered the two-way interaction between benevolent sexism and participant's gender on intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in feminine domestic tasks as our main hypothesis. The analyses pertaining to masculine tasks and relative share in household labor were preregistered as exploratory.

**Participants.** Based on the power analysis reported in Study 5a, we needed to recruit at least 153 participants for each gender. Participants were heterosexual men and women. They were recruited through a local commercial participant recruitment service to complete an online study about help-provision in relationships, in exchange for a payment. Only participants who passed the attention check proceeded to complete the study. The sample was composed of 160 men ( $M_{age} = 34.58$ ,  $SD = 4.56$ ) and 175 women ( $M_{age} = 33.09$ ,  $SD = 5.42$ ). Participants were

Figure 6.  $N_{men} = 161$ ,  $N_{women} = 166$ . Gender plots and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between Gender, benevolent sexism (z-scored) and intentions to seek dependency-oriented help as a function of participant's gender. Results for the traditionally feminine tasks are presented on the left-hand side, and results for the traditionally masculine tasks are presented on the right-hand side. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.



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employed in various occupations (e.g., lawyers, teachers, and High-tech employees). The majority of participants were married (96%), and the rest were cohabiting without marriage (4%). All participants reported currently living with a romantic partner and having children ( $M_{\text{children number}} = 2.26$ ,  $SD_{\text{children number}} = 1.23$ ;  $M_{\text{children age}} = 2.43$ ,  $SD_{\text{children age}} = 3.14$ ). The native tongue of 92% was Hebrew.

**Procedure.** The procedure was identical to that used in Study 5a, except that the Helping Intentions measure referred to providing (rather than seeking) help. The descriptive statistics were as follows: Benevolent Sexism scale ( $\alpha_{\text{men}} = .89$ ,  $M_{\text{men}} = 3.76$ ,  $SD_{\text{men}} = 1.03$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{women}} = .88$ ,  $M_{\text{women}} = 3.47$ ,  $SD_{\text{women}} = 1.01$ ) and relative share in household labor ( $M_{\text{men}} = 3.23$ ,  $SD_{\text{men}} = 1.10$ ;  $M_{\text{women}} = 5.38$ ,  $SD_{\text{women}} = 1.00$ ).

### Results.

**Intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in feminine versus masculine tasks.** A repeated-measures analysis of covariance with benevolent sexism as a continuous independent variable; participant's gender (man vs. woman) as a between-subjects factor; and type of task (feminine vs. masculine) as a within-subjects factor revealed that the main effects of participant's gender, task type, and the Participant's Gender  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interaction, were nonsignificant  $ps > .065$ . The main effect of benevolent sexism ( $p < .001$ ) and the Participant's Gender  $\times$  Task Type and Task Type  $\times$  Benevolent Sexism interactions were significant ( $ps = .013$ ), and qualified by a significant Benevolent Sexism  $\times$  Task Type  $\times$  Participant's Gender three-way interaction,  $F(1, 331) = 13.60$ ,  $p < .001$   $\eta_p^2 = .04$ .

We interpreted the three-way interaction using two hierarchical multiple regression models with the same predictor variables; the dependent variable in the first model was intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in traditionally feminine tasks, and in the second model—intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in traditionally masculine tasks. In both models benevolent sexism and the participant's gender were entered in the first block, and their two-way interaction was added in the second block.

The regression model obtained for feminine tasks, presented in the upper part of Table 9, was significant,  $F(3, 331) = 40.47$ ,  $p < .001$ . Consistent with our preregistered main hypothesis, gender had a strong significant effect on intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in feminine tasks, such that women ( $M = 851.24$ ,  $SD = 182.47$ ) reported higher intentions to provide

dependency-oriented help to their partner than men ( $M = 645.24$ ,  $SD = 228.91$ ). This effect was qualified by the predicted two-way interaction, presented in the left part of Figure 7. Examining the correlations between benevolent sexism and helping intentions among men and women separately revealed that, replicating the results of Study 1, the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help was significant among women,  $r = .44$ ,  $p < .001$ . By contrast, benevolent sexism did not correlate with intentions to provide dependency-oriented help among men,  $r = .10$ ,  $p = .231$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that the effect of gender was stronger among participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean), *simple slope* = 281.29 (31.01),  $t = 9.07$ ,  $p < .001$ , compared with those low on benevolent sexism (−1  $SD$  below the mean), *simple slope* = 159.87 (30.95),  $t = 5.17$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The regression model obtained for masculine tasks, presented in the lower part of Table 9, was significant,  $F(3, 331) = 101.86$ ,  $p < .001$ . Gender had a significant effect, such that men ( $M = 935.16$ ,  $SD = 179.88$ ) reported higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to their partner in masculine tasks than women ( $M = 515.13$ ,  $SD = 255.34$ ). The two-way interaction, presented on the right part of Figure 7, was nonsignificant (albeit in the expected direction),  $\beta = -.11$ ,  $t(331) = -1.86$ ,  $p = .064$ . Examining the correlations among men and women separately revealed that the correlation between benevolent sexism and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help was significant among men,  $r = .22$ ,  $p = .006$ , yet benevolent sexism did not correlate with intentions to provide dependency-oriented help among women,  $r = -.03$ ,  $p = .725$ . A simple slopes analysis revealed that the effect of gender was stronger among participants who were relatively high on benevolent sexism (1  $SD$  above the mean), *simple slope* = −461.72 (34.75),  $t = -13.29$ ,  $p < .001$ , compared with those low on benevolent sexism (−1  $SD$  below the mean), *simple slope* = −370.00 (34.69),  $t = 10.67$ ,  $p < .001$ .

**Relative share in household labor.** In line with our theorizing, intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in feminine tasks were positively correlated with self-reported share in household labor,  $r = .60$ ,  $p < .001$  ( $r_{\text{men}} = .43$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $r_{\text{women}} = .47$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Thus, male and female participants who reported higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to their partner in

Table 9  
Results of Regression Analysis on Intentions to Provide Dependency-Oriented Help (Study 5b)

Predictors	B	SE	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
<b>Feminine tasks</b>							
Constant	642.34	15.76		40.75	.000	611.33	673.35
Participant's gender	220.58	21.83	.48	10.11	.000	177.65	263.52
Benevolent sexism	21.80	15.68	.09	1.39	.165	−9.04	52.64
Participant's Gender $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	60.71	21.98	.19	2.76	.006	17.47	103.95
<b>Masculine tasks</b>							
Constant	929.99	17.67		52.64	.000	895.24	964.75
Participant's gender	−415.86	24.47	−.68	−17.00	.000	−463.98	−367.73
Benevolent sexism	38.84	17.57	.13	2.21	.028	4.27	73.40
Participant's Gender $\times$ Benevolent Sexism	−45.86	24.64	−.11	−1.86	.064	−94.32	2.61

Note.  $N_{\text{men}} = 160$ ,  $N_{\text{women}} = 175$ . CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The effects of Block 2 of the two hierarchical multiple regression analyses are reported: For the feminine tasks,  $\Delta R_{\text{first block}}^2 = .25$ ,  $\Delta R_{\text{second block}}^2 = .02$ ; for the masculine tasks,  $\Delta R_{\text{first block}}^2 = .48$ ,  $\Delta R_{\text{second block}}^2 = .01$ . Participant's gender was dummy-coded (man = 0, woman = 1). Benevolent sexism scores were standardized. For benevolent sexism, the scale ranged from 1 to 6 (theoretically and for the actual values). For intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in feminine and masculine tasks, the scale ranged from 0 to 1,100 theoretically. The actual scores ranged from 167 to 1,100 for feminine tasks and from 0 to 1,100 for masculine tasks.



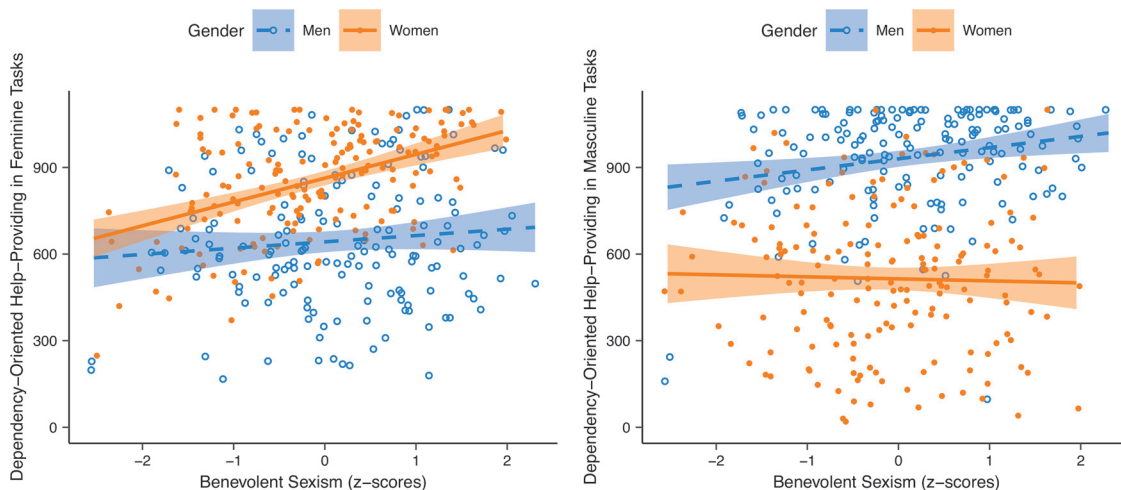


Figure 7.  $N_{\text{men}} = 160$ ,  $N_{\text{women}} = 175$ . Scatterplot and regression lines with 95% confidence bands for the relationship between benevolent sexism (z-scored) and intentions to provide dependency-oriented help as a function of participant's gender. Results for the traditionally feminine tasks are presented on the left-hand side, and results for the traditionally masculine tasks are presented on the right-hand side. Raw data points are jittered. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

performing traditionally feminine tasks, reported doing more traditionally feminine household labor.

**Discussion.** Study 5 revealed that participant's gender had a robust effect on dependency-oriented helping intentions within heterosexual relationships. Contrary to the stereotype about women's dependency, Study 5a found that men, compared with women, reported substantially higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help in feminine domestic tasks. Contrary to men's traditional chivalrous role, Study 5b found that women, compared with men, reported substantially higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help in such tasks. These gender gaps were especially pronounced among men and women high on benevolent sexism. These findings generalize the conclusions, derived from Studies 1–4, about benevolent sexism and engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations, to the context of heterosexual relationships, where housework burden is especially pronounced (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Supporting our theorizing that engagement in dependency-oriented helping contributes to sustaining a gendered division of housework is the finding that, when referring to feminine domestic tasks, dependency-oriented help-seeking was negatively correlated (Study 5a) and dependency-oriented help-providing was positively correlated (Study 5b) with self-reported relative share in household labor.

Participant's gender also had a significant effect on engagement in dependency-oriented helping in masculine tasks: women reported substantially higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help than men, whereas men reported substantially higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help than women. These gender gaps were more pronounced among men and women high (vs. low) on benevolent sexism. While these results are consistent with previous findings that household tasks performed by women and men in heterosexual relationships, especially in the presence of children, are highly gendered (e.g., Coltrane, 2000), the question may arise as to whether a gendered housework division is at all unequal (given men's responsibility for the

traditionally masculine household labor). Research on housework (Jung & O'Brien, 2019; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010) suggests that the answer to this question is positive, because the feminine domestic tasks (e.g., meal preparation, tidying the kitchen) are more frequent, repetitive, and time-consuming, and less optional and enjoyable than the masculine domestic tasks (e.g., household repairs, teaching the children how to play soccer), which are typically less time-consuming and more flexible in when they need to be completed. The findings that women perform much more of the first kind (i.e., routine tasks) than men (Batalova & Cohen, 2002; Coltrane, 2000), points to the inequality inherent in a gendered distribution of housework.

Besides its robust main effects, gender interacted with benevolent sexism in both Study 5a and Study 5b. This finding is consistent with previous findings about the role of gender ideology in maintaining unequal division of housework among heterosexual couples (e.g., Davis, Greenstein, & Gerteisen Marks, 2007; Nitsche & Grunow, 2016; Parkman, 2004). It may also be viewed as consistent with research on benevolent sexism within heterosexual romantic relationships, according to which it benefits men (by fulfilling their intimacy needs) yet comes with a cost for women (by suppressing their sense of competence; Hammond & Overall, 2015; for a review, see Hammond & Overall, 2017). Engagement in dependency-oriented helping within romantic relationships may similarly benefit men, while imposing a cost on women (e.g., in terms of enjoyment of leisure time; Kamp Dush et al., 2018, or impediment to career goals and aspirations; Williams & Chen, 2014).

The question may arise, however, as to why women behave in a self-debilitating manner. A possible explanation might be that it allows them to maintain the positive qualities associated with their traditional feminine role. By doing so, these women may uphold their necessity and expertise in the domestic sphere, as well as their male partners' dependency on their "services" (Williams & Chen, 2014). This idea is consistent with research on maternal

gatekeeping (Allen & Hawkins, 1999), which characterizes a collection of beliefs and behaviors among heterosexual mothers, such as reluctance to relinquish responsibility over family matters to their husbands by setting rigid standards of performance. Ultimately, these behaviors among women limit their male partners' opportunities for learning and growing through caring for home and children (Cannon, Schoppe-Sullivan, Mangelsdorf, Brown, & Szweczyk Sokolowski, 2008; Gaunt, 2008; Gaunt & Scott, 2014; McBride et al., 2005).

### General Discussion

Five studies, consisting of 12 samples of men and women, supported the hypothesis that in the context of traditionally feminine domains, benevolent sexism promotes engagement in dependency-oriented cross-gender helping relations. Study 1 found that higher levels of benevolent sexism predicted men's preference to ask for dependency-oriented help from women, rather than acquire new knowledge that would potentially promote their independent coping with traditionally feminine tasks. Among women, benevolent sexism predicted stronger intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to men. Study 1 also revealed that the endorsement of overtly hostile sexism did not predict men's and women's engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations, suggesting that there is a "match" between the seemingly kind nature of the sexist ideology and the type of outwardly cooperative behavior that it promotes. By experimentally manipulating the type of the interaction (cross- vs. same-gender), Study 2 further revealed that men's and women's benevolent sexism predicted engagement in dependency-oriented helping relations in cross-gender, but not in same-gender interactions.

Studies 3 and 4 extended these findings to men's and women's behavior in a setting that simulated real, rather than imagined, helping interactions. Study 3 found that men high on benevolent sexism sought more dependency-oriented help from a female than a male assistant when taking a test of household tasks. Exploratory analysis suggested that this effect was mediated by men's beliefs that the female assistant had superior skills in the domestic domain and that she expected them to seek dependency-oriented help. Study 4 found that when serving as assistants, women high on benevolent sexism provided more dependency-oriented help to a male than to a female partner taking a test about household tasks. Exploratory analysis suggested that this effect was mediated by these women's belief that their male partner expected them to provide him dependency-oriented help.

Extending these findings to the context of heterosexual relationships, Study 5a found that men (compared with women) reported higher intentions to seek dependency-oriented help from their partner when encountering difficulties in feminine (but not masculine) domestic tasks. Correspondingly, Study 5b found that women (compared with men) reported higher intentions to provide dependency-oriented help to their partner in such tasks. Engagement in dependency-oriented helping was especially pronounced among men and women high on benevolent sexism, and was associated with a gendered division of household labor.

### Limitations and Future Directions

The present research is not without limitations. First, the samples were not highly diverse in terms of participants' level of education (almost all our participants had at least a high school education). This may limit generalizability because individuals with higher education generally endorse less sexist attitudes (Glick, Lameiras, & Castro, 2002) and enjoy a more equal division of housework (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000; Ger-shuny & Sullivan, 2003). Moreover, whereas more educated, middle-class women can reduce some of their domestic burden by "outsourcing" of the household tasks, working-class women, who cannot afford household help, suffer from a greater domestic burden (Cohen, 1998; Wrigley, 1991). Similarly, socioeconomically disadvantaged fathers experience additional barriers to entering the domestic sphere compared with more advantaged fathers (e.g., greater obstacles for paternity leave-taking; Knoester, Petts, & Pragg, 2019). Future research should examine more diverse samples in terms of education and socioeconomic status.

The relatively low levels of engagement in dependency-oriented help across most samples represents another limitation of the present research. These low levels might be because of the fact that in Studies 1–4 we tested low-commitment relationships (between flatmates or fellow participants). Perhaps in such relationships, in which individuals are less familiar with each other, they may feel somewhat uncomfortable asking for dependency-oriented help (that may present them in a negative light, as lazy, passive, or even parasitic). Similarly, providing dependency-oriented help in such relationships might be perceived as domineering or impolite. The levels of dependency-oriented help seeking and providing, however, were substantially higher in Study 5, in which we tested high-commitment relationships between heterosexual romantic partners. It is possible that in such intimate, communal relationships, in which partners give benefits noncontingently and are not concerned with having a perfect balance between them (Clark & Mills, 2012), people may feel more comfortable engaging in dependency-oriented help. This possibility should be further tested in future research.

We further acknowledge that because we were interested in establishing causality, some of the situations we examined, such as having a man ask help from another man in a domestic task, were somewhat artificial. Also, in Studies 3 and 4 we assessed seeking and providing information required for the performance of various tasks, yet participants did not actually perform these tasks. Future research could strengthen the generalizability of our conclusions by examining helping in real-life settings (e.g., observing heterosexual couples' naturally occurring helping interactions when conducting domestic tasks). Exploring these processes outside of the lab would also allow going beyond the simple dichotomy of autonomy- versus dependency-oriented help. In particular, in Studies 1–5 we used operationalizations of dependency-oriented help seeking and providing that are commonly used in the experimental research on intergroup helping (e.g., Alvarez & Van Leeuwen, 2015; Halabi, Dovidio, & Nadler, 2008; Nadler et al., 2009); namely, asking for or providing a full solution to the problem at hand (Studies 3 and 4), or asking or offering that the task will be fully performed by the helper instead of the help recipient

(Studies 1, 2, and 5). However, research on helping relations among romantic heterosexual couples shows that dependency-oriented helping in this context is sometimes manifested in subtler forms. For example, men who endorse benevolent sexism help their female partners by telling them what they should or ought to do, or providing directive plans and solutions (Hammond & Overall, 2015). This type of help is conceptualized as dependency-oriented, because it typically fails to empower the women who receive it (Hammond & Overall, 2015). In the context of traditionally feminine tasks, a more nuanced conceptualization and measuring of dependency-oriented help could include, for example, examining the amount of time elapsing before a woman who is showing her male partner how to change their baby's diaper gives up on teaching and changes the diaper on her own, switching from autonomy- to dependency-oriented help. Yet, another example, one could examine whether after asking his female flatmate to iron a shirt for him, a man watches her and tries to understand how to iron a shirt well, or engages in other activities until she is done.

The finding that assumed expectations are a psychological mechanism through which men's (Study 3) and women's (Study 4) benevolent sexism translates into actual cross-gender dependency-oriented helping is consistent with past theorizing (Brickman et al., 1982) about the role of expectations in determining helping behavior. However, given the limitations, in terms of causal inference, of the "measurement-of-mediation" design (Spencer, Zanna, & Fong, 2005), future research should directly manipulate assumed expectations to receive or provide dependency-oriented help. Perhaps by explicitly conveying that they want to receive and provide autonomy-oriented help, men and women can break the cycle leading to men's dependency in the domestic domain. This is consistent with Nadler and Chernyak-Hai's (2014) findings that participants provided more dependency-oriented help to low- (vs. high-) status help seekers whom they perceived as incompetent and unmotivated. However, when low-status help seekers explicitly requested autonomy-oriented help, participants no longer provided them with dependency-oriented help.

Finally, it may be valuable to examine how ambivalent attitudes toward men (Glick & Fiske, 1999; Glick et al., 2004) influence cross-gender dependency-oriented helping in traditionally feminine domains. Benevolence toward men, which reflects subjectively favorable beliefs about men as women's protectors and providers (Glick & Fiske, 2001a), may be theorized to predict men's seeking and women's providing of dependency-oriented help. This is because the beliefs comprising benevolent sexism (especially with regards to heterosexual intimacy; e.g., the belief that men are incomplete without the love of women) and the beliefs comprising benevolence toward men (e.g., the belief that women are incomplete without the love of men) are somewhat overlapping—as both represent positive evaluation of traditional gender roles and an idealization of the mutual dependency between men and women. Hostility toward men, by contrast, may be theorized to predict women's reluctance to provide, and men's reluctance to seek, dependency-oriented help, because it reflects the belief in, and resentment of, men's dependency on women (Glick & Fiske, 2001a). In summary, while the present

research focused on the construct of benevolent sexism, whose contribution to the maintenance of traditional gender roles is well-established, future research may examine additional, related theoretical constructs.

## Implications and Conclusion

The findings of the present research add to the growing understanding that traditional gender roles are reinforced not only through behaviors that hinder women's entrance to traditionally masculine domains, but also through behaviors that hinder men's entrance to traditionally feminine domains. The literature points to several social psychological barriers to men's inclusion and interest in feminine roles. One such barrier is men's fear of losing their masculinity status (e.g., Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino, & Taylor, 2005; Chaffee, Lou, Noels, & Katz, 2020; Meeussen et al., 2020; for a discussion of precarious manhood, see Vandello & Bosson, 2013), as well as the social sanctions men experience when transgressing gender stereotypes (see Moss-Racusin, 2014). That is, the backlash men encounter when they enact female-dominant roles and activities (e.g., Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman, Mescher, & Moss-Racusin, 2013) or demonstrate communal traits and abilities (e.g., Bosak, Kulich, Rudman, & Kinahan, 2018; Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Rudman, 2010; Rosette, Mueller, & Lebel, 2015). Another barrier is stereotype threat, such that reminders of the stereotype about men's inferior socioemotional skills impair men's actual performance in this domain (Kahalon, Shnabel, & Becker, 2018; Koenig & Eagly, 2005; Leyens, Desert, Croizet, & Darcis, 2000). A third barrier is "maternal gatekeeping" (e.g., Gaunt & Pinho, 2018), such that (heterosexual) women make it difficult for their partners to become involved in the domestic sphere by setting rigid performance standards. The present research points to dependency-oriented helping relations as one additional potential psychological barrier to men's inclusion in the feminine sphere. This barrier is particularly interesting because, as opposed to the abovementioned barriers, it involves seemingly cooperative and kind behaviors.

Understanding the processes that hinder men's entrance into the feminine sphere is important because of the asymmetrical change in gender roles, such that women are entering previously male-dominated roles at a relatively rapid pace, while men's entry into female-dominated roles has been substantially slower (England, 2010). This asymmetry also manifests in the relatively little research on gender disparities in communal professional roles (e.g., early education; Croft et al., 2015), compared the vast scientific efforts devoted to promoting women's entry and advancement in traditionally masculine roles, which require agency and competence (e.g., leadership positions; Ryan & Haslam, 2007, or STEM fields; Beede et al., 2011; Diekmann, Weisgram, & Belanger, 2015).

In conclusion, because both men and women do not consider men's disengagement from communal roles a critical social issue (Block, Croft, De Souza, & Schmader, 2019), change in this respect has been rather slow. Men's lack of involvement in domestic roles puts them in a privileged position compared with women because it allows men to advance themselves personally (Cohen &



Huffman, 2003; Oliker, 2011), but these privileges remain partly transparent to men, who tend to perceive an unequal distribution of housework (in which women have a greater contribution at home) as equitable (Charbonneau, Lachance-Grzela, & Bouchard, 2019). However, beyond promoting more equal opportunities for women (e.g., Meisenbach, 2010), breaking the benevolent-sexism/men's-dependency cycle in the domestic sphere may enhance men's positive psychological and life outcomes (e.g., Rochlen, McKelley, Suizzo, & Scaringi, 2008; for a review, see Kosakowska-Berezecka, Korzeniewska, & Kaczorowska, 2016). Hence, reducing the behaviors that reinforce gender inequality in the domestic sphere could potentially be good for everyone—women as well as men.

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Revision received May 5, 2020

Accepted May 8, 2020 ■

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Preference will be given to submissions by researchers other than the authors of the original finding, that present direct rather than conceptual replications, and that include attempts to replicate more than one study of a multi-study original publication. However, papers that do not meet these criteria will be considered as well.

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