

The Status of the Employed Married Woman in Algerian Society

واقع المرأة العاملة المتزوجة في المجتمع الجزائري

¹semaoune noureddine

University of chlef (Algeria)

n.semaoune@univ-chlef.dz

Received: 19/02/2025

Accepted: 30/04/2025

Published:01/09/2025

Abstract:

This study aims to know the reality of married women working in Algerian society, and the difficulties they face, even if their work women, in general, contributes to the development of the society to which they belong. It also contributes to improving the standard of living for their families by assisting their husbands with financial responsibilities and the costs of living. Additionally, work elevates the social status of women, enhances their self-esteem within the community, and allows them to participate alongside their husbands in making decisions that affect the family as a whole.

However, employed women also face numerous challenges. Some argue that a woman's decision to work brings negative consequences, particularly impacting marital relationships, child-rearing, education, and even household duties. The duality of roles creates numerous obstacles that hinder women from fulfilling their responsibilities effectively.

What, then, is the reality of the employed woman, and how does her work impact the family, particularly in terms of marital relationships, child-rearing, and household chores?

Keywords: Work, Employed Woman, Role Multiplicity, Effects of Women's Work.

ملخص : تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة واقع المرأة العاملة المتزوجة والصعوبات التي تواجهها ، وإن كان عملها يساهم بصفة عامة في تنمية المجتمع الذي تنتمي إليه ، كما يساهم عملها في تحسين المستوى المعيشي لأسرتها من خلال مساعدة الزوج في تحمل الاعباء المالية وتكاليف المعيشة ، إضافة إلى كون العمل يرفع من المكانة الاجتماعية للمرأة وتقديرها لذاتها في المجتمع ويجعلها تساهم وتشارك الزوج في اتخاذ القرارات التي تهم الأسرة ككل .

The Status of the Employed Married Woman in Algerian Society

ولكن من جهة أخرى تواجه المرأة العاملة العديد من التحديات والصعوبات ، فالبعض يرى أن خروج المرأة إلى العمل له تداعيات سلبية تمس بالأساس العلاقة الزوجية وتربية الأبناء وتمدرسهم وحتى الأشغال المنزلية ، لأن ازدواجية الأدوار يجعلها تواجه الكثير من التحديات والصعوبات التي تمنعها من تأدية واجباتها على أكمل وجه. فمما هو واقع المرأة العاملة وتأثيرها على الأسرة من حيث العلاقة الزوجية ، تربية الأبناء ، العلاقة الزوجية والأشغال المنزلية ؟

الكلمات المفتاحية : العمل ، المرأة العاملة ، تعدد الأدوار ، نتائج عمل المرأة.

- Corresepondin author :Semaoune noureddine

1. Introduction

The economic, social, and cultural transformations resulting from the Industrial Revolution deeply impacted various social systems, including the family unit. The Algerian family, in particular, underwent significant changes after independence, notably the entry of women into the workforce. This shift led to structural and functional transformations within the family, contributing to both partial and total breakdowns.

Due to social circumstances and challenges, women now play dual roles. The societal demand for women's labor, coupled with the undervaluation of their domestic work, has led many women to seek fulfillment outside the home. This search often seeks to reclaim their lost identities and fulfill needs and aspirations that had been suppressed for years. As a result, the family has had to bear additional burdens, and the issue of balancing women's work with family life has sparked intense debate and discussion.

Women's participation in the workforce is a social phenomenon that presents challenges on both the public and private levels. The absence of women from the home leaves familial responsibilities, such as household duties, child-rearing, and caring for the husband, unmet. This can negatively impact family cohesion. Moreover, prolonged absence from the home can have detrimental social and psychological effects on women as well.

However, this does not negate the economic benefits that work brings to both women and their families.

What, then, is the reality of the employed married woman within Algerian society?

2. Conceptual Framework:

2.1 Work

Work refers to any physical or mental effort for which a person receives compensation. It is a manifestation of human activity. (aliya H. h., 1978, p. 45)

In the terminology of social sciences, work is defined as "an intentional mental or physical effort aimed at influencing material objects to achieve a beneficial economic goal. It is also a social function in which the individual's personality is realized." (Badawi, 1982, p. 236)

2.2 Employed Woman:

An employed woman is one who works outside the home and receives monetary compensation for her labor. She performs two primary roles in life: the role of a homemaker and that of an employee. (atia, 1976, p. 2)

2.3. Role Conflict:

Role conflict refers to the inability to reconcile the different roles imposed on individuals within society. (Mabrouk, 2008, p. 101)

Role conflict occurs when an individual faces expectations associated with two or more distinct roles, and it is impossible to fulfill them simultaneously. (Wittig, 2005, p. 323)

3. Factors Contributing to Women's Entry into the Workforce:

The phenomenon of women entering the workforce was not random; rather, it was shaped by various intertwined factors that encouraged women to work. These factors can be summarized in the following points:

3.1 Historical Factors:

In encouraging women to join the workforce. As men went off to fight,

The Status of the Employed Married Woman in Algerian Society

workplaces were left vacant, and women stepped in to fill these roles. Additionally, wars reduce the male population, as seen particularly during World War II, which led to a decrease in the number of men, thus opening the door for women to enter the labor market.

Once the war ended, many women found it difficult to leave their jobs and return to the home. On the other hand, the death of many men during the war forced many widowed women to remain in the workforce, as they no longer had a male breadwinner.

The Algerian War of Liberation (1954) also played a key role in dismantling traditional customs that had previously prevented women from working. The sacrifices made by women during the revolution led them to continue participating in professional roles post-independence. According to the National Charter issued in 1962 in Tripoli, Libya:

"Women's participation in the liberation struggle created the conditions necessary to break the old constraints surrounding her and to fully involve her in managing public affairs and national development. The party must eliminate all barriers to women's progress and support the work of women's organizations. Otherwise, progress in this area will be hindered. It is also worth noting that our society still harbors negative views toward women, a belief in her inferiority and incapacity, a sentiment which has unfortunately spread among women themselves."the text of first subtitle. (oufi, 2002, pp. 106-107)

3.2Economic Factors:

The necessity for women to work arose from the increasing demands of modern industrial society (economic necessity). The rising cost of living and the aspiration for a better quality of life pushed women to step outside their traditional roles as mothers and caregivers. In a study conducted by Farouk Ben Attia in Algeria regarding the reasons for women joining the workforce, 61.5% of respondents reported they entered the labor market primarily to meet economic needs. (nadia, 2012, p. 127)

Thus, women's work became an economic necessity that helps men support the family and improve their standard of living, as the labor market is now open for women to participate in various economic and social activities.

3.3 Political Factors:

Political factors include the legal measures and policies enacted by the state in favor of women, such as changing men's perceptions of women,

Creating job opportunities, assisting men with household chores, and establishing nurseries and kindergartens. These measures also include extending maternity leave, ensuring a woman's right to return to work after childbirth, and providing modern household appliances that save time and require less physical effort.

All of these efforts were made by the government to enable women to integrate into public life, fulfill their domestic responsibilities with less effort, and perform their professional roles. (AL-suweidi, 1990, p. 13)

All Algerian constitutions have affirmed the principle of equality between men and women in all aspects of life. The 1963 Constitution, in the section on fundamental rights, Article 12, states: "All individuals, regardless of gender, have equal rights and duties." Furthermore, Article 39 of the 1976 Constitution concerning basic freedoms and human and civil rights states: "Basic freedoms and human rights are guaranteed, and all citizens are equal in rights and duties." The 1989 amended Constitution, following the October 28, 1996 referendum, emphasized the principle of gender equality and the eradication of outdated beliefs about women's roles in society. In the section dedicated to the general principles that govern Algerian society, Chapter Four on rights and freedoms, Article 29 asserts: "All citizens are equal before the law and no discrimination can be made based on gender, race, opinion, or any other personal or social condition." (Algeria, constitution of 1989, 1989)

3.3 Increased Cultural Awareness:

Education, elevated their expectations regarding the possibility of joining the workforce. Particularly, higher education in institutions such as universities and colleges has increased women's awareness and raised their social status. As a result, women strive to make the most of the academic qualifications they have earned and seek to escape from the monotonous and tedious routine of domestic work.

The Status of the Employed Married Woman in Algerian Society

Moreover, participation in public societal activities requires academic qualifications. Statistics show that women's participation in economic activities increases with their educational level.

4. Consequences of Women's Entry into the Workforce:

The conclusion of a research paper needs to summarize the content and purpose of the article. The conclusion of a research paper needs to summarize the content and purpose of the article. The conclusion of a research paper needs to summarize the content and purpose of the article.

4.1 Consequences of Women's Entry into the Workforce on Themselves:

Personalities and the assertion of their identities by venturing into all areas of work, including political positions. However, the consequences of women entering the workforce were not entirely positive, as they also had negative effects on women themselves. Modern work often involves strict schedules, regulations, and procedures, which has led many women to juggle two roles: one at home (handling household chores, child-rearing, and caring for their husband) and the other outside the home in their professional life. This dual role leads to physical and psychological exhaustion, with many women reporting that they have little to no time for themselves and are often completely consumed by their responsibilities. (zian, 2008, p. 202)

Studies conducted in Europe have shown that married working women are among the least likely to get enough rest. The life of a working woman revolves around three demanding phases: leaving the home early each day to deal with transportation issues, returning after hours of work to handle the housework, cooking, and caring for her children and husband. As a result, these women are constantly preoccupied with their domestic duties. (bernouti, 1984, p. 199)

4.2 Consequences of Women's Entry into the Workforce on Household Duties:

Although women have gained the opportunity to work in various sectors and fields, they still bear the majority of household responsibilities. Working wives often face the dual burden of productive and domestic duties. Their typical day involves working long hours outside the home, preparing meals,

taking care of children, cleaning, and performing other household chores, all of which can negatively impact their ability to manage domestic tasks efficiently. (McIntosh, 1983, p. 52)

Despite the availability of modern household appliances designed to ease the workload, studies have shown that working women still struggle to fulfill their household duties to the fullest extent. The internal organization of the home also suffers, as it may appear disorganized or untidy, which negatively affects the mental well-being of family members. This situation often leads to domestic issues. Consequently, many working wives choose to limit the number of children they have, believing it is the only way to balance work inside and outside the home. However, this is a mistake, as they end up spending the majority of their time working. (AL-khouli, 1979, p. 218)

4.3 Consequences of Women's Entry into the Workforce on the Marital Relationship:

The marital relationship is a spiritual bond based on internal unity, emotional connection, and a shared pursuit of a happy life and a stable future. However, this relationship can experience tension that affects the quality of the relationship between the spouses. These tensions do not occur in isolation but are caused by factors, including a woman's decision to enter the workforce, which significantly impacts the family dynamic and creates indirect effects in the marital relationship. (ghabari, 2002, p. 118)

The mere fact that a woman works outside the home creates a void within the household, affecting family stability and leading to changes in the marital relationship. In some cases, a working woman's income can become a source of conflict, especially if she refuses to contribute to family expenses or assist her husband in meeting family needs. Research and studies suggest that poor marital relationships often stem from the acquisition of negative values by the husband, learned through societal norms that differentiate between the roles of men and women.

Furthermore, conflicts in the household of a working woman arise when work conditions clash with family responsibilities. Balancing roles as a worker, wife, mother, and homemaker becomes difficult, which leads to tensions and marital

difficulties. (salama, n.d, p. 60)

5. Conclusion:

Significant attention from scholars and researchers. The issue of married women working directly affects the family, which is the cornerstone of society and the foundation of social structure. A close examination of the phenomenon of women entering the workforce reveals many contributing factors, including historical influences. Women played an active role alongside men in the armed struggle during the Algerian War of Independence to expel the French colonizers. Additionally, political conditions and laws facilitated and supported their entry into the workforce. This includes legislative changes that were in favor of women's employment, alongside educational advancements, as access to education became universal and compulsory, regardless of gender. Furthermore, economic factors, such as the rising cost of living and the inability of husbands to meet all family needs, have also driven women to seek employment.

A closer look at the subject of women's work reveals that working women exert significant effort to balance their external job with their family duties. However, this often negatively affects them both psychologically and physically. They face the strain of performing dual roles, and many have become victims of their own liberation and entry into the workforce, whether by choice or necessity. While some have managed to overcome these challenges and achieved several gains, particularly material ones, they have lost the enjoyment of their personal lives and motherhood, as they continuously chase the demands of modern life. Moreover, their educational role in raising children, especially in the early years of their lives, is affected, in addition to the strain in marital relationships due to their constant presence outside the home and their inability to fulfill many of the husband's desires.

6. Bibliography List :

- Ahmed Zaki Badawi,(1982), *Dictionary of Social Sciences Terms*, 3rd edition, Lebanon Library, Beirut.
- Arnov Witting,(2005), *Introduction to Psychology* (Arabic edition), International Cultural Investments House, Egypt.
- Farhat Nadia,(2012), *Women's Work and Its Impact on Family Relationships*, Academy of Social and Human Studies, Issue 8.
- Farouk Ben Atia,(1978), *Women's Work in Algeria*, S.N.E.P, Algiers.
- Hassan Hussein Aliya,(1978), *Divorce in Kuwaiti Society*, Kuwait Government Printing Press, Kuwait.
- Hassan Hussein Aliya,(1978), *Divorce in Kuwaiti Society*, Kuwait Government Printing Press, Kuwait.
- Malika Ben Ziane,(2002), *The Impact of Women's Work on the Family and Its Effects on Their Psychological and Physical Health*, Journal of Human Research and Studies, Issue 3, 20 August 1955 University, Skikda, Algeria.
- Michel Bart and Marie McIntosh,(1983), *The Marginal Family*, Translated by Mona Rkabi Bessil, Dar Al-Hadatha for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Mohamed Al-Suweidi,(1990), *Introduction to the Study of Algerian Society*, University Publications, Algeria.
- Mohamed Salama Ghabari,(n. d) *Social Services and Care for Childhood and Youth*, 1st edition, Akhadh Publishing Libraries Company, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, no date.
- Mohamed Salama Mohamed Ghabari & Others, , *Social Deviance and Care for Deviants - The Role of Social Services*, , 2nd edition, University Press, Alexandria, Egypt.
- Mustafa Oufi(2002), *Working Women in the Context of International Agreements*, Journal of Social and Human Sciences, Issue 7, Batna University, Algeria.
- People's Democratic Republic of Algeria(1989), *Constitution of 1989*, Amended in the Referendum of November.

The Status of the Employed Married Woman in Algerian Society

-Sana'a Al-Khouli,(1979), *Social Change and Modernization*, University Knowledge House, Alexandria.

15-Suad Nayef Bernouti,(1984), *Enhancing the Contribution of Arab Women to Community Activity*, Arab Scientific Research Councils Union, 1984, Baghdad, Iraq.