

Family Associations in Algeria: Collective Work in the Service and Support of the Family

Case Study of an Algerian Family Association

الجمعيات الأسرية في الجزائر: عمل جماعي في خدمة الأسرة وتدعيمها

دراسة حالة جمعية أسرية جزائرية

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Abstract:

Associations were established within the context of modern societies to keep pace with the complex developments and needs of social life. They express a human will to serve humanity and help individuals achieve self-fulfillment. These are non-profit organizations that aim to support families and individuals both materially and morally so they can overcome the difficulties they face in life and realize their ambitions and personal projects. With the increasing pace of social change and the hardships of human life, various forms of associations have emerged to respond to these challenges. Among them are associations concerned with the affairs of the Algerian family and its many issues. Their goal is to accompany families in fulfilling their social, educational, religious, and economic needs and responsibilities.

Keywords: Family associations, family, family support, collective work, volunteering.

ملخص:

تأسست الجمعيات ضمن سياق المجتمعات الحديثة لتواكب التطورات والاحتياجات الشائكة للحياة الاجتماعية، فهي تعبر عن إرادة إنسانية لخدمة الإنسانية، ومساعدة الإنسان على تحقيق ذاته، وهي منظمات ذات أهداف غير ربحية تسعى لمساعدة الأسر والأفراد ماديا ومعنويا لكي يتمكنوا من تجاوز الصعوبات الحياتية التي تواجههم، وتحقيق طموحاتهم ومشاريعهم الخاصة، ومع تزايد وتيرة التغيرات الاجتماعية وصعوبات الحياة الإنسانية، ظهرت أشكال مختلفة من الجمعيات من أجل التصدي لذلك، من بينها الجمعيات التي تهتم بالشؤون المتعلقة بالأسرة الجزائرية وقضاياها المتعددة، والتي تهدف إلى مرافقة هذه الأسرة حتى تصل إلى تحقيق حاجاتها الاجتماعية وأداء المهام الموكلة إليها اجتماعيا وتربويا ودينيا واقتصاديا.

كلمات مفتاحية: الجمعيات الأسرية، الأسرة، خدمة الأسرة، عمل جماعي، التطوع.

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Introduction:

Associations are among the most prominent institutions providing essential social services and actively operating within modern societies. Their widespread presence is attributed to the inability of government efforts alone to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of all members of society. Hence, these associations play a vital role in assisting individuals, groups, and families, meeting the needs of the poor and vulnerable groups, caring for orphans, and providing support to people with special needs. The importance of the role

played by these organizations in realizing the essence of social service lies in the expansion of their scope and areas of intervention to include all marginalized and excluded segments from the development process. This must be implemented in reality through a series of programs distributed across various social, cultural, educational, health, and other domains.

The family represents the fundamental social unit in which the process of social regulation is carried out. It instills values, principles, and morals in individuals, teaches them customs and traditions that guide their lives, and protects them from the dangers and problems of social life. The family also works to maintain its continuity and stability through sustained social and cultural relationships, as well as through education and training, which are essential tools for behavior regulation and adaptation to the evolving conditions of social life.

Often, the family influences the entire social structure through parental experiences and cultural heritage and is, in turn, affected by the social, economic, and cultural conditions of the society. Currently, families face significant challenges in fulfilling their responsibilities due to a lack of resources and capabilities, limited support and assistance, and the absence of proper guidance. Consequently, many families turn to charitable institutions seeking essential aid and humanitarian services.

In light of this, the present study aims to explore the role of family associations as community institutions that strive to support families in fulfilling their functions and duties and in coping with life's difficulties and challenges, given the pressures and constraints of the external environment, the rising cost of living, the complexity of modern life, and the shortage of material resources. This leads us to pose the following question: How do family-focused associations contribute to supporting and serving the family?

I. Conceptual Framework

Operational Definitions:

1. Concept of Associations:

Associations are one of the essential pillars of charitable and voluntary work in every society. They complement formal institutional social work and are organizations that aim to provide social and material assistance and services to individuals and families without seeking financial profit.

2. Concept of the Family:

The family is one of the key social institutions that performs important functions in society. It typically consists of spouses and children and represents a self-sufficient social, educational, and economic unit that supports its members and meets their needs. Thus, it faces numerous life challenges.

3. Concept of Family Support:

Family social work refers to one of the fields of social service concerned with caring for families and helping them overcome the difficulties of daily life. It involves efforts and activities aimed at enabling families to achieve better living conditions.

II. The Family as an Institution: Fundamental Components and Needs

1. Fundamental Components of the Family:

Human life depends on a set of essential components for survival and continuity. As one of the most important social institutions, the family strives to rely on several key components to ensure social and psychological stability for its members. These include (Salem & Al-Muqil, 2016, pp. 25–26)

a. Structural Component:

This refers to the fundamental pillars that form the family system, in addition to secondary components when present. In a nuclear family, the structural component consists

of the husband, wife, and children (if any). In an extended family, it includes the husband, wife, children, and other cohabiting relatives.

b. Functional Component:

This involves the roles and functions performed by the members of the family. These functions vary according to the family's needs and may include biological, social, religious, economic, psychological, and health-related roles, among others.

2. Family Needs:

Throughout its life cycle, the family requires a range of essential needs in order to fulfill its functions effectively. The lack of these needs may affect internal relationships and family stability. These needs include:

(Abu Asaad & Dardeer, 2015, pp. 54–57)

a. Physiological Needs:

These are the basic needs necessary for the survival of family members. They are innate and common to all societies, although the level of satisfaction varies by individual. Some of these needs maintain individual survival (e.g., breathing, eating, drinking), while others preserve the species.

b. Safety Needs:

Their fulfillment depends on the degree to which physiological needs are met. Individuals seek safety and reassurance for themselves and their children, as well as job security—whether through stable income or protection from occupational hazards. Failure to meet these needs may lead to psychological and emotional distress (e.g., job security, emotional security, family security, health security).

c. Social Needs:

These reflect the individual's need to belong and feel accepted, whether within large social groups like clubs and communities or smaller relational circles like family, teachers, and colleagues.

d. Esteem Needs:

If a family member is fortunate enough to satisfy all previous needs, the need for esteem becomes dominant. This includes seeking recognition and appreciation from others, leading to a sense of self-worth, competence, and confidence.

e. Cognitive Needs:

These include the desire for exploration, knowledge, and understanding—for example, a wife's need for personal development at different life stages.

f. Aesthetic Needs:

These involve a sensitivity to disorder, chaos, and ugliness, and a preference for harmony, order, and balance, as well as a need to resolve tension caused by unfinished tasks or systems.

g. Self-Actualization Needs:

This refers to an individual's need for self-fulfillment, which emerges when they are driven to carry out a task they feel uniquely capable of performing. The person persists in completing it, overcoming obstacles, and investing their full potential, thereby achieving a sense of distinction they perceive as uniquely their own.

III. Family Support Services:

The subject of family support occupies a significant place in contemporary social thought and in social assistance programs across both developed and developing countries. Its main goal is to enhance human well-being and help individuals live in a stable and secure social environment.

1. Objectives of Family Social Work:

The objectives of family social work can be summarized as follows:

(Salem & Saleh, 2016, pp. 264–265)

a. Therapeutic Objectives:

These involve helping the family and its members identify and resolve their personal problems resulting from poor adjustment either among themselves or with the environment they live in.

b. Preventive Objectives:

These aim to prevent the emergence of problems within the family that may arise from poor adjustment between family members and their surrounding environment—which includes neighbors, relatives, and the local community.

c. Developmental Objectives:

These focus on developing and enhancing the capabilities of family members as a whole, in order to maximize benefits for both the family and its individuals.

2. Key Considerations for Family Social Work:

This refers to the foundational conditions and principles that must be upheld in order to achieve the goals of family social work: (Al-Deeb, 1998, pp. 256–257)

a. Belief in the importance of the family as a social institution with distinct functions, as it is central to reform, guidance, and development efforts.

b. Social work must address the various problems a family may encounter throughout its stages of development and areas of activity.

c. The surrounding environment of the family must be studied in order to identify the customs, traditions, and social heritage that shape family members' behavior.

d. It is essential to understand and promote healthy interaction patterns among family members and find ways to strengthen those relationships.

e. Modern approaches to addressing family problems should be regularly reviewed and adopted.

f. The social worker expresses the real needs of the community, which calls for the creation of institutions that meet family needs and fulfill their demands.

g. Special attention should be given to studying the latest methods of child-rearing.

h. It is crucial to understand family-related laws, including personal status laws, economic aid and social security regulations, as well as custody, guardianship, and juvenile laws.

i. Technical assistance methods must be carefully managed within the family's multiple functions, and professional goals should be clearly defined when working with clients.

j. When the family faces psychological, material, or social problems, social work must harness all its resources and professional tools to provide the necessary support.

3. The Importance of Volunteering in Collective Work for the Benefit of the Individual and Society:

Voluntary work is a historically significant phenomenon in the history of human relations. Today, it holds an important and unprecedented role within modern society. There is growing international awareness of the importance of volunteering for individuals, communities, and humanity as a whole. This is reflected in the United Nations' efforts to raise awareness of the value of volunteerism and its essential role in economic and social development. These efforts aim to promote and advance this human practice, especially in societies that lag behind in this area.

It is impossible to imagine community-based work without volunteerism, as it is volunteering that gives such work its spirit and identity. (Boukhreis, 2013, pp. 108–109)

The significance of voluntary work is reflected in the following key aspects: (Hassan, 2015, pp. 335–336)

- a. Volunteering helps overcome negative barriers and isolation that may exist between individuals and the society they live in.
- b. It contributes to mobilizing and channeling both human and material resources into desirable social activities.
- c. Volunteering eliminates causes of underdevelopment and creates conditions for progress and well-being through the most effective and beneficial means.
- d. It helps fill gaps in services, expand their reach, and ensure adequate provision in underserved areas—fulfilling the principle of justice.
- e. Volunteering strengthens the foundational relationships between individuals and the community.
- f. It transforms inactive or incapable energies into productive and contributing forces.
- g. Volunteering fosters solidarity between community initiatives and governmental efforts.
- h. It strengthens loyalty and a sense of belonging to the community and reinforces concern for its interests.

IV. Models of Collective Work in Serving the Algerian Family: Nour Association for Women, Family, and Childhood

1. About the Association:

Nour Association for Women, Family, and Child is a provincial-level voluntary organization established on May 30, 2019, by Mrs. Dalila Hussein. It is an active charitable association operating in Algiers, committed to humanitarian work through its members and staff. The association is known for its charitable and humanitarian projects and its strong belief in the necessity of volunteerism to achieve social solidarity. It was founded to support and assist families and vulnerable social groups such as women and children, and to contribute to family development, security, and the resolution of family issues using advanced scientific methods that align with Algerian identity.

The association has a future vision to become a leading organization in caring for women, families, and children across all fields within Algerian society. Its mission is to provide psychological, educational, social, and legal services to families through a specialized team dedicated to ensuring a safe and stable environment through collaborative community participation.

Table (1) : Table containing the association’s identification data

Association name	Nour Association for Women, Family, and Children
Founder name.	Dalila Hussein
date of establishment	30-05-2019
Number of Permanent Board Members	7
Number of Member.	2000
Number of Headquarters	1
Number of Branches and Groups	8

2. Circumstances of the association's founding:

The idea of establishing the Nour Association for Women, Family, and Children emerged when a group of university-educated women decided to provide a fundamental beneficial service to the country and the Algerian family, especially after the worsening of family disintegration, the unregulated exposure to social media, and the lack of peace and stability in some Algerian households. The way to address this was through volunteer work within the framework of associative activity. In 2019, the president of the association, Mrs. Dalila Hussein, decided to found the association, and its objectives were defined based on needs, requirements, and also the necessary capabilities and resources.

3. Objectives of the association:

The Nour Charitable Association for Women, Family, and Children seeks to achieve and implement a set of important practical objectives, including:

- Focusing on the family and contributing to reducing family disintegration.
- Raising awareness and empowering women to play a positive role in society and serve the country.
- Preparing unmarried girls and creating spaces that care for their concerns and interests.
- Educating the child on educational, scientific, and psychological levels.
- Working to support families after divorce to protect the rights of the child and the divorced woman.
- Encouraging various women's activities: crafts, skills, and creative work.
- Supporting and following up with craftswomen and productive women and integrating them into economic life.
- Establishing coordination and cooperation relations with associations that have similar goals across Algeria.

4. Overview of the association's main activities and services:

The Nour Association for Women, Family, and Childhood is one of the social organizations established in Algiers to care for the family. It makes great efforts to help Algerian families and care for their children, in addition to supporting mothers and raising awareness among Algerian women in general to overcome their problems and fulfill their role in community development.

Table (2) : Table showing the association's activities and their nature

Activity Name	Nature of the Activity	Target Group
Kifaf Project	Professional – Economic	Women
Nour Knowledge Club	Educational	Women – Children
Health and Beauty Club	Health Care	Women
Girls' Club	Educational – Upbringing	Children (Girls)
Children's Club	Educational – Upbringing	Children (General)
Listening Cell	Health – Psychological	Women – Children
Qur'an Sections	Educational – Religious	Women – Children
Sports	Physical Fitness	Children
Trips	Educational – Recreational	Women – Children
Exhibitions	Professional – Economic	Women

The fields of activities in which the association participates are organized into the following areas:

A. Legal Axis: Focused especially on legal consultations, initiatives, and legal proposals.

B. Media Axis: Implemented through specialized awareness days, as well as participation in television, radio, and press programs.

C. Social Axis: Concerned with providing material assistance, supporting orphans and widows, preparing brides, and encouraging productive families.

D. Family and Psychological Axis: This important axis revolves around several essential services needed by families and their members, such as:

- Listening Cells
- Marital preparation
- Family counseling and support
- Educational guidance

E. Cultural Axis: Focused on the cultural and educational activities of the association, such as the Children's Club, Girls' Club, Knowledge Club, and Qur'an education.

F. Teaching and Training Axis: Carried out through academic days, scientific courses, and training sessions.

Table (3) : Table outlines the association's activities, goals, and means

Activity / Program	Target Group	Objective	Means	Notes
Marital and Family Preparation Program	Engaged couples, newlyweds	Strengthen family stability, prevent disintegration	Training courses, group meetings, family support	Benefited 101 individuals according to 2019 report
Kifaf Project	Stay-at-home women	Support women's economic empowerment, enhance home production	Vocational training, micro-project support, funding, exhibitions	Launched in 2022 in cooperation with the Ministry of Solidarity
Psychological and Social Support after Divorce	Divorced women, children affected by family conflict	Alleviate psychological effects, reintegrate socially	Psychological support sessions, legal assistance, awareness seminars	Permanent activity within the association's programs
Family and Childhood Awareness Programs	Families in general, wives	Promote healthy family culture and positive parenting	Awareness campaigns, media meetings, field workshops	Part of the association's media activities

Activity / Program	Target Group	Objective	Means	Notes
Psychological Support Program for Children	Children affected by family conflicts or difficult social conditions	Psychosocial rehabilitation of children after trauma	Individual and group therapy sessions, recreational activities, behavioral follow-up	Within the association's post-divorce family support activities
Children's Self-Development Workshops	Children in general	Boost self-confidence, communication skills, personality development	Workshops, group activities, educational games	Presented during events and summer outings
Educational and Awareness Activities for Children	Children in general	Educating on family and social values	Educational stories, awareness meetings	Offered on national occasions and during educational seasons

5. Overview of the Association's Projects:

Since its establishment in 2019, the charitable association *Noor for Women, Family, and Children* has managed to carry out various programs and projects—social, psychological, educational, cultural, and economic. Below is a summary of the most important ones:

5.1. "Kifaf Project" for Women and Productive Families:

This project opens new horizons for women and families in general, especially for stay-at-home female breadwinners and needy families, to shift from dependency to self-sufficiency and productivity. It aims to make a qualitative leap for women and families, transitioning them from consumption and need to initiative and production. The project also seeks to transform the economic situation of women from one of awareness and support to self-reliance and professionalism.

Project Goals:

- Raise awareness among women and families about the importance of work and empower them to participate in economic development.
- Train, support, and follow up with artisan and productive women and integrate them into economic life.
- Seek financial support sources to learn crafts and launch small businesses.
- Encourage women to refrain from seeking aid by achieving self-sufficiency through sustainable programs.

- Focus on talented and motivated women to acquire skills and work towards economic and social stability.
- Organize "Handmade by Me" exhibitions to promote and market products made by women and productive families.

5.2 . Listening Cells:

The association opens listening cells for women facing complex family issues and provides key programs to address marital problems, support couples, and offer marital preparation through seminars, lectures, and other educational and recreational methods. The listening unit also includes psychologists to care for the psychological and pedagogical needs of children and to identify psychological issues such as enuresis (bedwetting) and excessive shyness. For educational problems, there are caregivers at the association who assist children with learning and speech difficulties using proper and effective methods.

5.3 . Weekly Activities and Training Programs:

The association regularly organizes weekly activities and training programs to develop the skills of staff and members, supervised by professors from various fields. It also prepares cultural programs to showcase the Algerian family's cultural heritage through plays and celebrations marking religious and cultural events rooted in the authenticity of Algerian family traditions.

5.4 . Special Program for People with Disabilities:

A dedicated program provides a safe space for people with special needs and others suffering from conditions like autism and Down syndrome. It includes psychological follow-up by specialists to reduce stress and burden on their parents. Despite these achievements—programs, seminars, courses, and services directed especially toward women, children, and families—the association faces several challenges. The most pressing is the lack of a permanent headquarters to conduct these activities. As a result, it resorts to renting, which drains its financial resources, in addition to relying solely on membership fees without any steady income.

Conclusion:

Charitable associations focused on family play an essential role in supporting social work efforts. These organizations are vital in raising awareness, providing support and assistance to families to improve their quality of life, achieve family stability, and maintain social balance. They also guide families in best practices for child-rearing and strengthening proper family values and principles. Moreover, they offer psychological and material support to families facing difficulties and challenges. Therefore, the state should strengthen the work of these associations by providing financial, moral, and logistical support to ensure the continuity of their efforts in uplifting families and society at large.

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