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ABSTRACT

The aim of the current study is to understand the nature and role of home-based projects for stay-at-home women in terms of their contribution to improving the economic and social situation of the family. Given the complexity of living standards and the rise in costs, families are seeking additional income to meet their essential needs. Women, often primarily responsible for managing household affairs due to their constant presence at home, are particularly interested in initiating home-based projects, partly to collaborate with their spouses in ensuring a decent standard of living for their families.

Following the conceptual treatment and field observation of the subject, the study arrived at the following conclusions:

- Home-based projects contribute to improving the economic situation of the family and ensuring self-sufficiency.
- Through home-based projects, women have gained a good social reputation, leading to a change in the social status of the family.
- Some women in the sample have achieved significant success in their projects, expanding and developing their activities.

Keywords: Women, Home-based projects, Stay-at-home, Socioeconomic status, Family.

INTRODUCTION

Work, as a social value, has many advantages that are not limited solely to financial profit; it has psychological benefits, as well as economic benefits, not to mention its important social dimensions. Work contributes to improving the individual's mental health, refining and developing personal skills, and its economic returns do not only benefit the individual but also contribute to the national income as a whole. The social value conferred by work upon its holder can make them socially recognized and elevate their status in the social hierarchy.

Therefore, work is considered a personal necessity and a social need. It is the means to achieve a dignified life, ensuring self-sufficiency and the conditions for a decent living. Currently, the need for work, regardless of its nature, has increased due to the complexity of lifestyles and the rise in consumer demand for both essential and non-essential goods.

While the primary motivation for work may be financial security and satisfying the material aspect for the individual, there are other motivations as well. These include acquiring social status through providing benefits to others and playing a significant role in the lives of the communities we belong to, as well as establishing a new position for the family that preserves its dignity and social standing.

In the rapidly changing social landscape, work is no longer confined to a specific gender. Within the framework of social solidarity and familial cooperation, everyone seeks to engage in activities or professions that generate financial profit, thus achieving role integration and balance within the family structure. This shift has led women to seriously consider securing financial income and improving their family's situation by opening their own businesses. They search for what they excel in, endeavor to practice it after careful thought and planning, and are eager to gain a commercial and social reputation that contributes to promoting and succeeding in their projects. The benefits of these projects extend beyond the individual to the social sphere to which they belong, namely their family.

To delve further into the intricacies of this subject, the current study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Identifying the most important home-based projects for stay-at-home women.
- Revealing the motivations that prompt women to consider home-based projects.
- Understanding how home-based projects contribute to improving the economic and social situation of the family.

To accomplish these objectives, the following questions are posed:

- Why do women turn to considering home-based projects?

- How do home-based projects contribute to improving the economic situation of the family?
- How do home-based projects contribute to improving the social situation of the family?

This study was conducted from the beginning of February 2023 to the end of March 2023, in some municipalities of the El Oued province, located in southeastern Algeria. This province is characterized by its conservative social nature and its notable commercial activity, especially regarding agricultural products.

The current study relied on the descriptive-exploratory method, which examines the phenomenon as it exists in reality, focusing on providing a detailed description and expression of it quantitatively or qualitatively. The tool used was the electronic questionnaire, which is designed and sent electronically via one of the mediums. The link is sent to the sample, filled out, and then resent through links created virtually.

The questionnaire was sent to a sample size of 30 individuals. Given the nature of home-based projects for stay-at-home women and the fact that these projects are usually conducted in homes and are not prominently visible, the researcher utilized the snowball sampling method, as she was acquainted with some of the individuals engaged in these projects. She tasked those individuals with forwarding the questionnaire to others they knew who were involved in similar projects.

"The snowball sample is a sample that involves adding individuals each time, especially those who are relevant to the subject. The sample of the study is characterized by growth and increase based on the individuals reached" (Seventy, 2012). This type is commonly used when the researcher lacks details about the environment or the phenomenon being studied.

To complete the sociological understanding of the subject, the researcher employed some theoretical approaches in this study. These include the functional-structural approach, represented by Durkheim's ideas on organic solidarity, Parsons' ideas on roles and status, and the theory of modernization and social role theory.

2. Conceptual Definitions

2-1 Home-based Project

It refers to an activity practiced by women at home. The characteristic of such activity is that it requires physical effort, such as making sweets, sewing, or hairdressing, etc. Women usually resort to it due to their financial circumstances and their desire to improve their family's situation.

2-2 Stay-at-home Woman

She is defined as "the homemaker, the woman who manages all household affairs starting from organization, cleaning, cooking, and takes responsibility for raising children and caring for her husband" (Abdelfattah, 1984). A stay-at-home woman is one who assumes the role of a homemaker and does not work outside the home. She has responsibilities towards her family like any other woman, whether married, taking care of children and her husband, or single, taking care of her family affairs.

2-3. Family Situation

In this study, it refers to the economic and social status of the family. Economic status denotes the financial condition of the family and its standard of living, while social status refers to the family's position and social standing.

3. Presentation of Study Results

3-1 Presentation of Results for the First Question

The text of the first question was: "Why do women turn to considering home-based projects?"

Table 1. Represents the age variable.

%	R	The Age Group
40	12	30-20
36.66	11	40-30
23.33	7	50-40
100	30	Total

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

Through Table 01, it becomes apparent that the percentages associated with the age variable are close, indicating that as age increases, the percentage decreases, as shown in the table above. This aligns with the nature of projects that require physical and muscular effort, which tends to diminish with age. Additionally, at this age, motivations are formed and mature in a rational, logical, and organized manner, becoming clearer and more defined.

Table 2. Illustrates the educational level of the sample.

%	R	Educational Level
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20	6	Intermediate
33.33	10	Secondary
46.66	14	University
100	30	Total

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

From Table 02, it is evident that the highest percentage was attributed to the university level, indicating that most graduates did not obtain employment positions, either due to the absence of vacancies or because husbands refused their wives to work for certain social considerations.

Table 3. Represents the nature of the projects for the sample.

%	R	Nature of the Project
33.33	10	Confectionery
20	6	Barbershop
16.66	5	Tailoring
6.66	2	Printing and Distribution
10	3	Handicrafts
10	3	Educational Support
100	30	Total

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

From Table 03, it can be observed that there is a diversity of projects practiced by women at home, but the largest share is occupied by the sweets project, which is considered an exceptional demand for special occasions, especially at a time when sweets have diversified in types, colors, and shapes, not to mention the increasing costs of occasions and the attention to the smallest details that enhance appearance and splendor. On the other hand, women, especially those who work, often prefer to resort to ordering sweets from their makers to save effort and time.

Regarding question number 02 about the reason for choosing the project, which was an open question, all answers agreed that this project is a hobby chosen out of love and desire. When we choose something out of conviction and desire, it will be like fuel that nourishes it and helps it continue despite the obstacles faced by the project owner.

In question 03 of the questionnaire, "What made you think about opening a home-based project?" which was also an open question, answers revolved around three main points. The first reason is mastering this profession and loving it, the second reason is for the purpose of earning money and improving family conditions, and the third reason is unemployment, whether for the husband or the wife, especially if they have a university degree.

3.Presentation of Results for the Second Question

How does the home-based project contribute to improving the economic situation of the family?

Table 4. Represents whether capital was possessed at the beginning of the project or not.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	17	13	Repetition
100	56.66	43.33	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

As illustrated in Table 04, there is a considerable percentage of women who started without capital and with very limited resources, then used the income from the project to become their capital. Conversely, there are women who secured capital before starting the project.

Table 5. Represents the presence of financial and moral support from the family.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	9	21	Repetition
100	30	70	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

As evident in Table 05, the predominant percentage is family support. It's worth noting that family support here is not necessarily financial; it also relates to motivation, moral encouragement, and the family's approval, such

as allocating space in the home. This too is considered significant support for women, especially at the beginning of their project.

Table 6. Represents the financial return from the project.

Total	Low	Midium	High	Return
30	4	24	2	Repetition
100	13.33	80	6.66	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

From Table 06, the highest average income percentage is represented. This is natural considering the size of the projects themselves and also the simple resources used. Additionally, the reported percentage in the table may not always reflect the reality, especially since some women may be reluctant to disclose such information.

Table 7. Represents securing project profits for the family's essential needs.

No	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	8	22	Repetition
100	26.66	73.33	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

What is stated in Table 07 aligns with the previous Table 06; if the income is average, it will cover the family's essential needs. This is what every woman who considers starting a project seeks: providing for the family's necessities while maintaining modesty and decency. The important thing is to have an income that may fluctuate but still ensures the conditions for a decent living.

Table 8. Represents the method adopted in promoting the project.

Total	Social media	Relationships and Friends	Promotional method
30	16	14	Repetition
100	53.33	46.66	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

What is noticeable from Table 08 is the diversity in promotion methods, with a greater reliance on social media platforms, which undoubtedly reach a larger number of customers. Additionally, project owners work on promoting their businesses across various pages and sometimes provide delivery services.

Table 9. Is related to expanding the home-based project.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	19	11	Repetition
100	63.33	36.66	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

From Table 09, it is evident that a significant percentage has expanded the home-based project, whether in terms of location, providing labor, or diversifying the project itself and introducing improvements to it in line with social demands. On the other hand, the larger percentage did not expand the project, but this does not necessarily mean the failure of the project.

3-3 Presentation of Results for the Third Question

How does the home-based project contribute to improving the social status of the family?

Table 10. Represents the extent to which the project contributes to gaining a good social reputation.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
100	00	30	Repetition
100	00	100	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

As illustrated in Table 10, every individual in the sample contributed to gaining a good social reputation through the project. Typically, society appreciates hardworking women and acknowledges their efforts, especially if they are the breadwinners for their families.

Table 11. Pertains to the presence of regular customers.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	2	28	Repetition
100	6.66	93.33	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

The presence of customers has two aspects: one related to the reputation of the project and the quality it provides, and the other related to the owner's relationships themselves, and whether they have the ability to attract and gain loyal customers who only buy from them.

Table 12. illustrates the change in others' perceptions and the acquisition of new social relationships.

Total	No	Yes	Alternatives
30	1	29	Repetition
100	3.33	96.66	Ratio

Source "Lebbihi, 2023"

What appears in Table 12 confirms what was stated in Table 10: the existence of a large and strong network of relationships can contribute to securing customers. Additionally, successful individuals experience a change in society's perception of them and receive significant social appreciation. Everyone seeks to establish relationships with them. This was affirmed by the study sample, almost unanimously agreeing that since the beginning of the project, the community's perception has changed, and they have gained new social relationships.

Regarding the final question from the survey, which was an open question about the difficulties encountered at the beginning of the project and whether there was consideration of discontinuing the project, responses varied. Some stated there were no difficulties, with only two responses of this nature. Other difficulties were categorized as follows: material difficulties related to the costliness of essential materials and the lack of spacious premises, health difficulties related to back pain and fatigue leading to various health issues, and social difficulties such as societal criticism, bullying, and demotivation. Regarding the contemplation of discontinuing the project, all women had a unified response; they decided not to give up, or as most of them stated, "I decided not to surrender, no, and I won't consider stopping."

4. Discussion of the study's results

4.1. Discussion of the first question

Through field observation, it became apparent that what motivates women to start a home-based project is their family's circumstances. This could be due to the husband's unemployment, insufficient income to meet family needs, or even if the husband is employed, due to the high cost of living and the changes in consumer culture where necessities are pursued with the same fervor as luxuries. In their responses, one woman stated that the reason for starting the project was her children entering school and the increased costs of private lessons, which have become a necessity or rather a social trend everyone seeks for their children. Another reason is related to husbands who do not allow their wives to work outside, especially if they are qualified to do so. One woman said, "He told me to stay at home and not go out." Here, the woman is caught between satisfying her husband and fulfilling her passion and ambition, so she resorts to a compromise that satisfies everyone, which is starting the project at home.

Another driving force behind women's consideration of a project is their love for the craft, a personal motivation that plays a significant role in the success and continuity of the project.

Talking about women entering the workforce and establishing their home-based projects indicates a constructive direction, especially in the context of modernization theory, which suggests that the various roles of women are linked to the nature of social construction and the social and cultural changes that occur. In the past, women were not allowed to work or start private projects, but due to rapid social changes, it has become normal, if not necessary, especially when there is a growing social need.

4.2. Discussion of the results of the second question:

It can be said that the project has significantly contributed to improving the economic situation of the family, achieving the material goals for which the project was initiated. This economic improvement is manifested in securing the capital, indicating the woman's pre-planning for her project, as well as supporting the family, especially financially through financial assistance and providing a place at home to execute the project. Additionally, family members encourage, motivate, and assist her. For example, one participant mentioned the support of her parents in taking care of the children and bringing meals to her, especially during seasons of increased demand for confectionery.

All of this reflects the positive interaction of the family with the woman's aspirations, whether she is living with her family of origin or married. This demonstrates the strength of social bonds within the family structure. Regarding the financial returns of the project and the profits that may contribute to meeting the family's needs, there is almost a consensus among project owners that the project generates a considerable income, contributing to the overall household income. This implicitly indicates the organic cooperation and solidarity that characterize the family.

Furthermore, women entrepreneurs are knowledgeable about modern marketing techniques, indicating their adaptation and openness to the world of e-commerce. Most project owners have social media accounts, and electronic marketing is about managing interaction between the platform and the consumer in the virtual environment to achieve mutual interests. This indicates a level of success and continuity in the project.

Expanding and developing the project demonstrates strategic thinking among project owners. They continually make improvements, whether in terms of location or product, to meet societal demands. This also signifies the success and continuity of the project. According to the current study, a considerable percentage of women have expanded their projects either through planning or execution.

The economic aspect of the project leads to a discussion about organic solidarity, as mentioned by Emile Durkheim, where tasks and labor are distributed among groups and individuals within the social structure. This solidarity, which was the impetus for initiating the project and the result achieved by the family, demonstrates cooperation leading to balance and integration within the family framework.

4.3. Discussion of the results of the third question:

The social dimensions addressed in the study are the social reputation and relational aspect of women entrepreneurs. The study results indicate that the project has contributed significantly to enhancing the social reputation and positioning of women within the social structure, referred to as social mobility. Women have moved from the status of unemployment to that of employment, and even in terms of societal perception of their status and that of their families, there has been a shift to a higher and better position.

As previously mentioned, this will lead to two outcomes: firstly, a change in society's perception of women, who will gain social recognition for reclaiming their position in society through the success of their projects. Secondly, it ensures the marketing aspect of the project with the presence of loyal customers who prefer a particular female entrepreneur and deal with her whenever necessary.

Every project or achievement faces obstacles and difficulties, and women may deal with them differently. Difficulties include social aspects such as societal rejection, manifested in criticism, bullying, and demotivation. The study participants positively addressed these difficulties because they usually arise at the beginning of the project, and upon the project's success, society's perception gradually changes, shifting from rejection to acceptance of the new status of women as project owners. Additionally, there are material difficulties as any project requires ongoing development and improvement, resulting in financial costs that women strive to adapt to in order to keep the project running. Given that most projects require physical effort, such as confectionery, sewing, and barbering, alongside household responsibilities, it is natural for women to face some health problems, which, if exacerbated, may hinder the continuity of the project.

Women create mechanisms to adapt to various difficulties. For women, whether working inside or outside the home, work contributes to the development of their personality by enabling them to deal with various emergent situations. Zuhair Hattab affirms, "Work has developed women's personalities, making them discover themselves and feel useful, realizing they can face life even if they have to be alone."

Therefore, establishing a home-based project for women is directly related to their social status. According to role theory, status is linked to a role within social functions, and each individual has a status commensurate with the role they perform. "For women, there are social roles regarding their homes and husbands" (Al-Ghazawi, 1992). Perhaps from a deep sense of responsibility for that role, women have created a project that benefits them and their families economically and socially.

In conclusion, it becomes apparent from the above that the home-based project has contributed to improving the social situation of the family through the good social reputation achieved by successful women entrepreneurs. This facilitated the expansion of their social networks, and the central role they play within their families, enabling them to occupy a higher social position and receive greater social recognition.

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to delve deeper into the realm of women entrepreneurs and to examine the motivations behind their decision to initiate personal projects. It aimed to explore how such projects contribute to improving the economic and social status of families. The focus was on women residing in Wadi Seuaf, utilizing a descriptive exploratory approach and employing a snowball sampling technique, resulting in a sample size of 30 individuals.

After conceptual and empirical analysis, the study yielded the following findings:

- There is a proliferation of home-based projects among women in Wadi Seuaf, whether officially registered or informal.
- Women tend to engage in projects requiring physical effort, such as confectionery and sewing.
- Various motivations drive women to consider home-based projects, including enhancing the family's overall situation, reluctance to enter formal employment due to factors like spousal opposition or inability to secure permanent positions, alongside personal inclinations and interests in domestic activities.
- These projects have assisted women and families in solving financial problems and have improved their economic situation.
- Engaging in such projects has granted women a notable social standing, positively influencing the social positioning of their families.

In line with these findings, the study proposes several recommendations:

- It is imperative to provide financial support to women entrepreneurs, particularly in terms of funding.
- To ensure the success and sustainability of projects, women should undergo training in project management and marketing, enabling them to better organize their ventures.
- Social security coverage for these women is crucial, necessitating a comprehensive data collection process to ensure their protection from various risks.
- Monitoring these projects, particularly concerning pricing, quality of materials, and sanitation standards, is essential, given that most projects have a consumable nature.
- Civil society organizations, particularly associations, should be mobilized to engage with this demographic and improve their status, as they represent a productive sector capable of contributing to sustainable development.

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