

The Dynamics of The Social Representation of Working Women, Value Transformation and the Continuity of the Gender Model

LAMOUR Warda*

MCA, Skikda University, University of 20 August 1955 Skikda, Algeria

Email : w.Lamour@univ-skikda.dz

Received: 10/01/2026

Accepted: 28/06/2026

Published: 07/07/2026

Abstract

This study examines the dynamics of social representation of working women by exploring the relationship between value transformation and the persistence of gendered models in the Algerian professional context. It addresses the question of whether women's growing participation in paid employment is accompanied by a corresponding transformation in the meanings and values that structure their social status.

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach grounded in social representations theory.

Fieldwork was conducted in two institutions in the education and health sectors in Constantine, Algeria, using a purposive sample 31 participants. Data were collected through a free-association network and differentiation questionnaire, enabling the analysis of the semantic content of representation as well as polarity and stereotypy indicators.

The findings reveal a strong presence of values associated with financial independence, ambition, self-assertion and freedom alongside the continued centrality of family responsibilities and gendered stereotypes. They further indicate that some emerging values, particularly independence and ambition, remain subjected to symbolic reservation that constrain their full social legitimacy, the study concludes that representations of working women do not reflect a straightforward transition from a traditional to a modern model, rather, they reveal dynamic reconfiguration in which emerging values coexist with persistent of social negotiation over the legitimate boundaries of women's professional agency.

Key words: social representation, working women, value transformation, gendered model, professional independence.

Introduction:

The expansion of women's participation in work has resulted in clear shifts in their position within the professional and social spheres and has re-posed the question of the roles they occupy within the family and society. However, a change in women's position in social reality does not necessarily mean a similar change in the perceptions and values that frame this position, as recognition of their professional role may expand, at a time when social expectations continue to link them to traditional family and gender roles. Thus, women's work becomes a field for exploring the nature of social change, its limits, and the way in which new values interact with previous references.

In the Algerian context, this issue appears to be more complex, given the transformations witnessed by women's presence in education, work, and the public sphere, in contrast to the continuation of the family and the roles associated with it in performing an essential function in determining their social status.

Therefore, the sociological question is no longer limited to the extent of women's presence in the labor market or the degree of social acceptance of their work, but rather is directed towards understanding the meanings and values that are organized around this presence, and how through them the image of the working woman and her social position are reconstructed (Siyah Nadia et al., 2022, p. 184).

From this perspective, social representations allow approaching this problem by moving from the apparent appearance of the situation to the symbolic structure that gives it its meaning. What is important is not only knowing whether a woman's work is accepted or rejected, but rather revealing the contents that make this work acceptable in some cases and conditional or a subject of reservation in other cases. In this context, some Algerian studies indicate the continued influence of gender roles in shaping the perception of working women, despite the transformations witnessed in their professional and social presence (Ben Haddouche and Al-Wazin, 2023).

Accordingly, the transformation brought about by work in the position of women cannot be understood as a simple transition from a traditional model to a modern model, as it appears that the values associated with independence, work, and professional effectiveness can coexist with other values attributed to family responsibilities and gender roles, and thus highlights the importance of researching how transformation and continuity are organized within the social representation of working women, rather than being satisfied with determining the degree of change or continuity individually.

Based on that, this article seeks to analyze the dynamics of the social representation of working women between value transformation and the continuity of the gender model, by revealing how the values associated with the professional role interact with the perceptions associated with the family and gender role. Accordingly, the main question revolves around the following:

How are the dynamics of the social representation of working women shaped in light of the value transformation, and how do the elements of professional role recognition coexist within it with the continuity of the gender model?

To address this problem, the article relies on field data from the study conducted in the education and health sectors, which allows reading the representations associated with working women and revealing the manifestations of transformation and continuity that take place within them.

1- Conceptual and theoretical framework

1-1 Social representations as an input to relevant/social analysis

The article starts from the theory of social representations as an appropriate introduction to the study of how social phenomena are transformed into meaningful topics. This is because

in daily life, social representation is not limited to an individual mental image, but rather is formed in the space of interaction and communication.

Where circulating knowledge, values, standards, and collective experiences intersect in producing a shared meaning of the social issue. Hence, studying the representation of working women allowed a move from the level of the apparent attitude towards work to a deeper level related to the meanings through which women's position is built and on the basis of which the legitimate or expected roles of them are determined (Summit et al, 2015 pp, 3-11).

This approach gains its importance from the fact that representations not only explain social reality, but also contribute to regulating the relationship with it. They provide individuals and groups with frameworks for classifying people, roles, and practices, and through them, social reality becomes understandable, deliberation, and evaluation. Therefore, representative representations of working women can reveal the symbolic boundaries that separate what is seen as a legitimate change in women's roles from what is seen as a departure from prevailing social expectations.

Contemporary literature in the theory of representations confirms that the strength of this approach lies precisely in the link between circulating knowledge and the practices and social relations that produce and reproduce it (Sousa, Souza 2021 pp, 1-12).

Accordingly, the article does not deal with the representation of working women as a fixed image of them, but rather as a social construct capable of being reorganized whenever the group's choices and social conditions change. This allows looking at the transformations that have occurred in women's professional position as factors that can reshape representations without necessarily leading to the erasure of its previous components.

2 - The social representation of working women between transformation and continuity

If social representation is shaped within social life and is affected by the changes brought about by changes in women's position in the professional field, then it can represent a source for rebuilding the meanings associated with it. The expansion of women's participation in work has led to the emergence of a new image of women as economic and professional actors with the ability to be independent, self-actualized, and to contribute to the public sphere. However, this image does not arise in a symbolic vacuum, but rather enters into a relationship with previous representations associated with family, care, and the division of roles between women and men.

Recent studies and applications indicate that representations related to gender and work remain able to guide perception and practice even in environments that have witnessed an expansion in women's participation in work. The 2024 Wanle study showed that social representations of gender in the context of work can be organized around different images of women and men. These representations directly affect how they are treated and the career paths available to them, as the study of (Ocha Rodriguez 2023) and (Gonzalez Victoria) showed.

The continued presence of traditional gender roles among women in leadership positions reveals that professional advancement does not automatically lead to the disappearance of traditional gender references.

Accordingly, the shift in the representation of working women should not be understood as a complete replacement of one value system with another, but rather as a rearrangement, as representation can accommodate new values related to work, independence, and effectiveness, and at the same time retain elements related to family, motherhood, care, and division of roles.

It is precisely from this angle that the concept of dynamism gains its meaning, as it does not refer to linear temporal change, but rather to interaction and negotiation between heterogeneous elements within the social representation itself.

3- The gender model as a framework for the continuity of certain meanings:

The concept of social location helps explain the other side of the problem, that is, the continuation of some meanings that assign women and men different positions and roles within the social structure.

Gender is not only related to the difference between women and men, but also to the social meanings that are attributed to this difference.

and the rights, responsibilities and expectations that build on it. Hence, gender roles are produced and reproduced through upbringing, institutions, and daily interactions, which makes them subject to change but at the same time persistent due to their embeddedness in social practices (Bimmerman, 1987, p. 125).

In this context, the article uses the concept of the gender model to indicate the existence of one fixed and similar model in all contexts, or to indicate the system of expectations and standards that give the roles of women and men different meanings and implicitly determine what is considered appropriate for each of them. Therefore, the continuation of the gender model can appear even in light of the recognition of women's work when this work remains governed by expectations related to their family duties or when the degree of acceptance varies depending on the profession, professional position, or the nature of the responsibilities that they assume.

This proposition is of particular importance in the Algerian case, as a recent study has shown that women's presence in the professional field intersects with cultural and social determinants that are still framed by the structures of gender perceptions. The study (Zahhaf 2025, pp. 182, 69) reveals, for example, that the gender culture of working women in Algeria is formed through overlapping dual, legal and organizational dimensions, which confirms that the change in the professional situation is inseparable from the social structure that produces its meanings and defines its boundaries.

1-4 Value transformation and the continuity of the gender model towards an analytical framework for the study

Based on the link between social representations and gender, the article assumes that the transformations that have occurred in women's work can produce a partial shift in some of the values associated with their social position without necessarily leading to a break with the gender model. The recognition of women as a professional actor may reflect a shift in the

value of work, independence, and social participation, but it may coexist with perceptions that make family and care responsibilities an essential option in evaluating their professional presence.

Hence, the article does not assume the courses of social representation of working women “modernly” or “traditionally,” but rather deals with it as a complex structure that can bring together disparate elements. This assumption allows us to read field results by searching for indicators of value transformation on the one hand and indicators of gender continuity on the other hand, and then revealing how these elements are organized within a single representation. Some Algerian literature supports this analytical trend, as the study of Boucharit and Sidi Moussa (2024) concluded that the field of work for women Entrepreneurship in Algeria is shaped by the interaction of socio-cultural and socio-economic factors with the development of its social role, which indicates that role change cannot be separated from the value structure that gives it its meaning. Studies that dealt with the reality of women’s work in Algeria indicate the continued influence of traditional cultural heritage in determining the fields of work that are seen as the most suitable for women, despite their increasing participation in the labor market (Mnad and Saghravi, 2017).

Thus, the theoretical framework of the article takes the form of an analytical relationship between three interconnected levels: social representation as the field of meaning production, actual transformation as an expression of redefining some women’s roles and status, and the dialectical model as an exploratory mechanism for examining the boundaries and expectations associated with these roles. On the basis of this relationship, the field data will be read with the aim of determining the presence of change or continuity separately, and the concepts of how females coexist within a single social representation of working women.

Methodological procedures of the study:

The study adopted a descriptive analytical approach within the framework of the theory of social representations with the aim of revealing how the meanings and values associated with working women are organized and analyzing the indicators they reflect of professional transformation and the continuity of some gender references. This design was chosen because it is compatible with the nature of the problem, which aims not only to measure the position on women’s work, but also to analyze the semantic and value-based contents that frame their social representation.

The field study was conducted in two institutions for the education and health sectors in the city of Skikda: the Muhammad Lousif Middle School in the municipality of Felfela and the multi-service clinic Barakat Al-Zahra. The two fields were chosen intentionally in view of the difference in the two professional contexts and the presence of women, which allows for enriching the analytical reading of the representations.

The sample consisted of 31 informants, 15 from the education sector and 16 from the health sector, including 21 women and 10 men. They were chosen intentionally in a manner consistent with the nature of the study and its analytical objectives of extracting the contents and meanings organizing the social and spatial representation under study.

To collect data, the free association network was used to reveal the semantic field associated with the working woman, in addition to the discriminative form that allowed the organization of the extracted elements and the distinction between the most central elements and the peripheral elements in the structure of representation. The combination of the two tools allows the transition from defining the contents of representation to examining its internal organization.

At the level of analysis, the field data was reorganized in accordance with the problem of the article by classifying the contents in light of two analytical axes: indicators of a value shift in the representation of working women, and indicators of the continuation of the gender model.

The nature of the interaction between them within the representational structure was analysed, so that the reading of the results does not limit itself to describing the repetition of the elements, but rather aims to explain their location and sociological significance in the structure representing the working woman.

-3_View and analyze results:

The field data represent a social representation of working women that is characterized by structure rather than intentionality. In addition to the emergence of values related to independence, ambition, and self-affirmation, familial and cultural standards persist within the representation that determine the conditions for recognizing this professional presence and its limits. This duality appears as an occasional contradiction in the answers of the respondents and their answers as a significant regularity based on a number of elements revealed by the associative network and the discriminative questionnaire.

3-1 Independence and ambition are a valuable presence that transforms within the represented:

The associative network showed the emergence of a group of elements related to the new professional meaning of women's work, most notably financial independence with a frequency of 29 responses, then ambition with 18 responses, and self-proof with 20 responses, in addition to freedom, productivity, and diligence.

These elements should not be read as a mere list of values preferred by the respondents, as their presence in this presence within the semantic field of the actor reveals that work has become linked to tasks that go beyond direct economic need. Financial independence, ambition, and self-affirmation lead to an image of women as an actor capable of producing value, taking initiative, and achieving a degree of independence and liberation within the public sphere.

The pitfalls in the significance of these elements further illustrate the complexity of the process of moving from repetition to polarity. Financial independence, despite its high frequency, registered a negative polarity, just as ambition and self-affirmation recorded their limits with negative saturations.

Here, one of the most important sociological results of the study appears, which is that the new value does not necessarily appear as a socially acceptable value in a possible way. Financial independence is strongly present in the representation of working women, but at the

same time it calls for reservations. Conflict is present as a professional trait, but it can turn into an issue of questioning the lack of what is understood as a competition to family obligations. As for self-affirmation, it is not always received as a legitimate understanding of individual effectiveness.

Therefore, what the data reveal is not the absence of a value transformation, but rather a transformation that has not yet completed the process of its symbolic legitimization. Women have gained a position within the professional field, but some meanings that make this position explained and in the future are still the subject of social negotiation.

-3 - 2 Responsibility and double burden: continuing family centralization:

In contrast to the values of independence and ambition, responsibility emerged as an active element within representation and recorded a negative polarity of -2.00. This result explains the working woman's association with two simultaneous responsibilities, the responsibility of work and production on the one hand, and the responsibility of family, education and home care on the other hand.

This result is important because it reveals that women's entry into the professional field did not lead to a clear redistribution of care responsibilities within the social representation, as work appears to have been added to the family role rather than replacing it or redefining its boundaries. Thus, recognizing women as workers does not necessarily mean recognizing the redistribution of responsibilities associated with the family.

The results related to the discriminatory questionnaire confirm this trend more clearly, as the dominant values included phrases that reduce the image of the ideal working woman as being a successful wife and mother first, then an employee second, and linking her success to her family stability, which indicates that she is forced to give up part of her professional ambition in order to preserve the family. This means that the standard by which the legitimacy of women's professional roles is measured remains partly outside the professional field itself. Women are not evaluated solely according to their competence or achievement, but rather according to their ability to maintain the role arrangement that makes the family a priority. Hence, the continuation of the gender model can be understood not as an explicit rejection of women's work, but rather as the reintegration of professional work within a hierarchical arrangement of roles, denying the leveling job a decisive option for evaluating women.

3-3 Ambition and leadership limits the recognition of professional effectiveness

The results reveal that some women's professional presence is met with more pronounced symbolic resistance. Ambition registered a high negative polarity, while self-affirmation also registered a negative polarity. In contrast, the phrase psychological pressure and endurance recorded a completely positive polarity, which indicates a noticeable recognition of women's ability to bear multiple burdens and coexist with them.

Here a sociological paradox emerges that deserves attention. It seems that society is more willing to acknowledge women's ability to endure than it is to fully recognize their right to ambition and redefine their professional position. Women can work and bear and reconcile their burdens, but when work turns into a source of independence, ambition, or self-assertion, the legitimacy of this presence becomes more open to debate. This reading is reinforced by

discriminatory mediation that has shown stereotypes that consider working women less patient and tolerant of work pressures than men, or more dependent on Emotion in career decision making.

She also wants her professional ambitions to be positive, and her forms of success and promotion are explained by support and courtesy rather than competence and entitlement.

These results mean that all members of the sample confirm these perceptions to the same degree, but rather reveal their presence within the studied representational field. This is an important methodological point because the analysis of representations does not equate the presence of an element in the representation with its adoption individually by each respondent.

3-4 Between acceptance and stigma, a representation that does not reject work as much as regulates its conditions

The data as a whole reveal that the position on women's work cannot be reduced to a binary of acceptance/rejection. There is a clear recognition of women's professional value, which appears in the presence of independence, ambition, self-affirmation, and productivity, but this recognition remains conditional on their ability to maintain family balance and not exceed the boundaries drawn by the gender model.

This mechanism appears clearly in the association of work with some of the respondents' responses to possibilities such as family disintegration. The phrase family disintegration was formed in a completely positive polarity when it was attributed to the professor.

With the mentor here, the thinking received a positive evaluation, and the recipients or interviewees recalled this concept as a possible outcome of women's work.

Analytically, this result reveals what participation constitutes for the future in the presence of women at work.

As much as it is in the social meanings that can underlie this existence, work becomes acceptable when it remains consistent with family expectations, while it can turn into a source of anxiety when it is read as a threat to the traditional order of roles or authority within the family.

This also explains the apparent indicator of financial independence. The results link the negative polarity to the possibility of women's economic independence being understood as a decline in economic dependence on men or as a violation of some forms of traditional male authority.

3-5 The structure of representation transforms the contents without breaking with the gender reference

A careful reading of the results reveals that the social representation of working women allows a movement from a 'traditional' model to a 'modern' model in a linear manner, as the elements associated with independence, ambition, freedom, and self-assertion indicate the entry of new characteristics into the representational field.

While the centrality of the family, dual responsibility, and stereotypes reveal the continuation of traditional references that frame these new meanings.

The central nature of representation is confirmed by the overall indicators recorded by the network - the average - the general polarity index reached 2,001, while the stereotypicality index reached 2,500, according to the results of the study.

Reading these numbers should not be read as direct evidence that society is negative towards working women. This is a conclusion that goes beyond what the numbers and sample allow. Sociologically, it is more accurate to say that the studied representational field is characterized by relative homogeneity in calling for contents with a conservative evaluative load towards some dimensions of women's independence and ambition, with the continued presence of positive contents linked to the ability to work, endurance, and effectiveness. Therefore, the most significant result is not represented by negative stereotyping per se, but rather in the transgression between the high presence of transformational values and high reservation towards some of them. Material independence is strongly present but semantically loaded, ambition is present but subject to questioning, and freedom is present but less. Crucially, family and responsibility remain strong criteria for evaluating women.

Thus, the study reveals a social representation of internal changes without separation from its gender reference. The actual transformation does not happen outside the gender model, but rather takes place within its borders, and it is a game to negotiate around them. This analytical meaning in which the dynamics of 'representation' can be carried is not one of decisive transitions to another, but rather a continuous rearrangement of the relationships between what has been legitimately valid for women professionally and what is still expected of them socially and familiarly.

Discuss the results in light of the literature

Field results reveal a social representation of working women that does not move linearly towards acceptance or rejection, but rather takes shape within a space of negotiation between new meanings linked to independence and professional effectiveness, and more established references linked to the family and the division of gender roles. Therefore, the analytical value of the results lies not only in proving the existence of a change in the image of working women, but also in revealing how this change occurs within a representative structure that still maintains some mechanisms of gender control.

This result is consistent with the findings of (Ville et al, 2024) in their study of social representations of gender in the context of work, where the results showed that representations

Professionalism does not only reflect a difference in the evaluation of women and men, but it can be organized around dualities such as the 'fragile' and burdened woman, and the man and woman in different positions within the work system. The study also showed that these representations affect the professional interactions themselves, which means that the representation does not only represent a healthy description of reality, but can contribute to producing different patterns of dealing with women and men within the professional field.

This result helps explain what the current study showed of the simultaneous presence of independence, ambition, and self-affirmation on the one hand, and skepticism about some forms of women's professional effectiveness on the other hand. The representation that recognizes women's ability to work may not necessarily grant them the same recognition when it comes to ambition, leadership, and independence, which makes the transition from accepting work to legitimizing professional effectiveness an incomplete transition.

In this context, the results are consistent with a review by Helman et al. (2024) which confirms that gender stereotypes at work span two interconnected levels of knowledge: descriptive, relating to what women and men are believed to be 'like', and normative, relating to what they should be like. The review shows that these individuals may face symbolic obstacles when they display characteristics or behaviors that do not match traditional expectations associated with femininity, especially in areas that are culturally associated with effectiveness and leadership.

This result gains direct significance when reading the study's findings that ambition, self-affirmation, and financial independence, despite their strong presence in the internal field of representation, were linked in some indicators with a negative polarity, the sign here of which is not represented by the level of giving or refusal of the work itself, but rather in the normative limits that define the acceptable form of women's work and leadership. When work transforms from a mere source of income into a tool for independence and self-affirmation, it becomes more capable of arranging traditional roles and thus more exposed to symbolic negotiation and pressure.

This birth is more evident in the result related to responsibility and the double burden. The study showed that the recognition of women's work is not necessarily accompanied by a redistribution of family responsibilities, but rather they remain required to combine the professional role with the feminist role.

This result finds an echo in a recent Algerian study that dealt with working women and family relations, which concluded that the shift in women's economic position did not eliminate their participation in care and housework roles, but rather led to the restructuring of the relationship between the professional role and the family role.

We also learn about another Algerian study on the reality of working women within urban families, which showed that the multiple roles of working women constitute an essential element in understanding their position within the family, which reveals that professional participation does not separate them from the family structure that accommodates and reorganizes this change.

The importance of the results of the current study goes beyond simply confirming the "existence of a double burden." The results indicate that the double burden is not only an organizational or material reality, but it is also a component of the social representation of working women, meaning that a woman does not bear multiple responsibilities alone, but rather her professional legitimacy is measured in part by her ability to bear these responsibilities without it affecting her performance of her family role. From this angle, the double burden has the potential to reproduce the traditional model within representation

because it maintains the woman's responsibility in the family field even after she enters the professional field. This reading is also supported by the results of D'Silva, who showed from a study on the social representations of nuclearity among women from the urban middle class that the discourse of empowerment can coexist with the continued perception of women as responsible for managing relationships, burdens, and social and family roles. The importance of this slide lies in the fact that it reveals that the discourse related to independence and empowerment does not necessarily lead to the dismantling of gender responsibilities. Women have been recast as active and independent, while at the same time they are still required to bear responsibility for family stability.

Hence, it is possible to understand the ****paradox**** revealed by the results of the current study, between ****financial independence**** as a value associated with transformation, and the continuation of family responsibility as a criterion for organizing this transformation. Independence does not appear here as a continuous defection towards a new relationship between the sexes, but rather as a value whose social legitimacy is being negotiated. This is what makes the value shift in the representation of working women towards ****selective****, accepting some of its contents when the family is separated first and threatens the order of roles, while other contents become more problematic when women are granted wider independence in decision-making or redefining their position.

This finding finds additional support in the recent economic and social literature on gender position; A study (Patrick, 2024) showed that traditional gender attitudes that associate women with care affect the career paths themselves and make women more likely to move toward care-related professions compared to men. This means that the gender model does not only operate through explicit judgments about working women, but can extend to defining professional fields that seem "natural" or "appropriate" for women.

This result gains importance in light of the field field of the current study, which includes the education and health sectors and areas historically linked to many social contexts with care and educational work. Therefore, we should not conclude from the presence of women in these two sectors alone that they have transcended the gender model, as part of this presence itself may be compatible with a social representation that makes care and education an acceptable extension of feminine roles.

Therefore, the deeper question is not only related to the increase in women's participation in work and the standards of work that becomes available to them and socially acceptable, and the tangible limits that govern this acceptance. The importance of this dimension in the Algerian context is confirmed by recent studies that dealt with feminist work only.

A study on the social representations of women's work in the Algerian health sector showed that acceptance of women's work is affected by the social context and factors such as age, educational level, civil status, and place of residence. Night shifts and mixing with men represent the most important factors that can push toward reservations about women's work. This intersects with the results of the current study in that acceptance of women's work does

not seem to be independent of the conditions of its practice and the social boundaries that surround it.

A recent Algerian study on the formation of perceptions of job position among working women also reveals that gender culture is shaped by the interaction of cultural, legal, and organizational dimensions, which supports reading the results of the current study as a product of an interaction between transformations in women's professional position and the cultural and organizational structures that frame this position.

Despite this intersection, the results of the current study and the addition of its analysis are important, not only proving the continuity of gender values, but rather revealing how they coexist with new values within the representation itself. Independence, ambition, and self-affirmation are not absent elements, but rather strongly present. However, their presence does not automatically lead to the redefinition of women outside the family role. This means that the value transformation does not take place in the form of replacing an old system with a new system, but rather in the form of a rearrangement of social representation, where new meanings are introduced into the structure of representation and then what is inherited from them is reinterpreted according to existing references. Accordingly, the results allow for a reconsideration of the "traditional/modern" dichotomy, which at first glance may seem appropriate to explain the situation of working women. The data do not reveal a complete transition from one of the two models to the other, but rather a symbolic negotiation over the boundaries of the variable itself. Women become more independent, but their independence remains subject to question and they become more ambitious, but their ambition may be read as competition for the family role and they enter the professional field as a productive actor, but they are still required to prove their ability to reconcile with family and discretionary expectations. Hence, the concept of representational dynamics is not limited to explaining and focusing on interpreting the results or the concept of transformation alone. Dynamics here indicate that the representation does not change by mechanically deleting elements and adding others.

Rather than rearranging the relationship between new elements and previous elements, the continuity of the gender model in relations means the absence of a value transformation, just as the presence of the values of independence and effectiveness does not mean the end of the gender model. Rather, patriotism is formed within an ongoing social negotiation process about the legitimate status of working women.

This reading of the study adds to the literature that dealt with women's work in the Algerian context, a dimension related to the internal structure of social representation. Our world has not only the fact that women have entered the field of work or that society has become more accepting of that, but there is the working woman herself who is reproduced at the meeting point of professional independence and family and executive continuity. This point is what gives the field results their explanatory value, and at the same time explains why a tangible change can occur in social practice without being accompanied by a change to the same degree in the meanings and standards that frame it.

Conclusion

This study sought to reveal the dynamics of the social representation of working women by questioning the relationship between value transformation and the continuity of the gender model in light of field data collected among a sample of workers in the education and health sectors. The results showed that women's entry into the professional field did not produce a linear value shift leading to the disappearance of traditional references, nor did the continuation of these references lead to the abolition of the new values associated with women's work, and a legacy that led to a reconstitution of social representation within which the meanings of independence, ambition, and self-affirmation juxtapose with The centrality of family, responsibility, and stereotypes associated with gender roles.

This result reveals that the shift in the representation of working women occurs at the level of contents without necessarily meaning a similar shift in the normative structure that regulates these contents. Financial independence, ambition, and professional effectiveness have become present elements in the image of the working woman, but their legitimacy remains conditional in part on the representation of the woman's ability to maintain her family obligations and not exceed the symbolic boundaries associated with the gender role. Therefore, the continuation of the gender model does not appear primarily in the explicit rejection of women's work, but rather in setting conditions guaranteeing the acceptance of their professional presence and specifying the forms in which this presence should be determined.

Accordingly, the study proposes to go beyond the binary reading that grants "transformation" in exchange for continuity; A dynamic understanding of social representation was created as a space for renegotiating the meanings of women's roles and status.

The data do not indicate a complete transition from a traditional model to a modern model, but rather to a tense coexistence between changing references and continuous ones, where the representational structure accommodates some transformation and then reinterprets it in light of existing family and gender standards. From this angle, the main contribution of the study lies in highlighting that actual transformation is not measured by the emergence of new values, but rather by the degree of their ability to redefine the standards of social recognition of women and the legitimacy of their professional effectiveness.

These conclusions remain governed by the limits of the study, especially the nature of the limited purposive sample, and the field scope being limited to two institutions and two specific professional sectors. Therefore, the results do not allow generalizations to be made about the Algerian sector, but rather provide an interpretive reading of the structure of representation in the studied context. Declaring these limits is necessary to control the extent of inference and not exceed what field data allows.

Hence, there is a need for subsequent studies to expand the scope of comparison to include different professional sectors and different social and cultural regions, while incorporating variables such as generation, marital status, educational level, and professional location, which allows determining the extent to which representations differ according to

different social locations. It would also be useful to move from studying a) studying the relationship between representations and actual practices to reveal how gender norms transform from mere symbolic contents into practices in the distribution of responsibilities, opportunities for promotion, leadership, and decision-making within the professional and family fields.

In conclusion, the study indicates that the shift in women's position within work does not necessarily mean a parallel shift in the conditions for social recognition of this position, as women's practice of the profession can change while some symbolic rules that determine how this practice is evaluated continue. Therefore, understanding the position of working women requires looking at social change as the replacement of one model with another, but rather as an ongoing process of negotiation about the limits, reasonableness, and legitimacy in women's roles and status within society.

Reference list

References in Arabic

1. *Bin Haddouche Issa and Al-Wazin Sabreen: Casting gender roles and their relationship to society's representations of working women. A field study of a sample from the community, Bani Thawr neighborhood, Ouargla municipality - Algeria 2023 AD*
2. *Boucheret, a nun, and Sidi Moussa Laila: Social representations of work among women entrepreneurs in Algeria - Intellectual Horizons, Volume 12, Issue 2. pp. 211-227*
3. *Message Night Ramadan: Algerian social representations of women's work in the health sector; Algerian Journal of Manuscripts, Volume 18, Issue 1, 2022, pp. 184, 214*
4. *Monad Laqeim - and Saghiri Fawzia: The reality of feminist work in Algeria. Researcher Journal in Humanities and Social Sciences, Volume 9, Issue 02, pp. 257-264*
5. *Zahaf Ali and Bouali Badia: Gender and the labor market in Algeria, Horizons of Science, Volume 05, Issue 3, 2020, pp. 169-186*

Foreign references

6. *D'silva, K (2024) Not to blame but still responsible negotiating social representation of neoliberal feminism amongst urban middle-class India. Journal of community Applied social psychology 34 (4) e2854*
7. *Heilman, ME, Caleo, S, Manzi (2024) Women at work pathways from gender stereotype To gender bias and discrimination, Annual Review of organizational psychology and organizational Behavior, 11, 165,192*
8. *ocho-rodrigues (2023) The dynamics of The theory of fillipe azeve to social representation.*
9. *patrick (2024) Born to care (or not) How gender role attitudes affect occupational sorting. Labour*
10. *Sammut, G., Andreouli, E., Gaskell, G., Valsiner, J. (2015). Social representation: A revolutionary paradigm in; The Cambridge Handbook of Social
a. Representation, Cambridge University Press pp. 3-11 (11) Sousa, K. N.*

Studies and Research in Onomastics and Lexicology (SCOL)

ISSN: 2065-7161

E-ISSN: 2247-7330

Vol. 19 (2) 2026

11. Souza 2021 *Social representation: A. Theoretical review of The approach. Research, Society and Development* 10 (6), e38610615, 15, 881 (12) 12. Zimmeran, West, C. 1987. *Doing gender. Society* 1(2), 125-151
12. DO : 1177/089124328700.