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		RESEARCH ARTICLE 
		<h1 style="text-align: center;">Higher Education in the Algerian University: Reality and the Need for Renewal</h1>
Leila Laouer	Dr.	
	Lecturer B, University of Setif 2	
	Algeria	
	E-mail: l.laouer@univ-setif2.dz	
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Abstract <p>Scientific research has undergone numerous transformations, leading to an evolution in its objectives and in educational paradigms, shifting from traditional instruction to modern education. This modern approach focuses more intensely on the effectiveness and productivity of the competencies graduates acquire annually from universities. This is achieved through the acquisition of experiences, skills, and competencies that are clearly reflected in their ability to keep pace with the progress, development, and prosperity occurring in most countries worldwide, especially amidst the evolution of the concept of Artificial Intelligence and its diverse applications. Consequently, it has become imperative to undertake renewal within the Algerian university to overcome the various problems it suffers from, which have constituted a significant barrier preventing the university from achieving its various pre-established goals. However, the process of renewal reflects the extent of the Algerian state's concern for the higher education sector and the high priority accorded to it. This renewal encompasses the philosophical framework, educational objectives and paradigms, the renewal of the university educational process, the renewal of university faculty development, the renewal of the field of university performance evaluation, and other variables that must be renewed in order to achieve the university's ultimate purposes and objectives.</p>		
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Introduction:

Amid rapid global transformations and immense technological progress, higher education faces unprecedented challenges that necessitate a reevaluation of its roles, objectives, and operational mechanisms. The Algerian university is among the academic institutions striving to adapt to these changes, despite structural and functional issues that hinder its path toward renewal and development. This article sheds light on the reality of higher education in the Algerian university, outlines key challenges, and discusses proposed solutions and alternatives for its advancement—aiming to achieve qualitative training that meets contemporary demands and serves societal and labor market needs.

I. Defining Higher Education

Higher education typically refers to the educational stage following secondary education, provided through university and non-university colleges. It requires at least a secondary education certificate and lasts no less than two academic years. Higher education institutions are divided into two main categories: university-affiliated institutions, where study often lasts at least four years, and non-university institutions, with programs of at least two years, located in colleges and institutes outside the university framework.

Given the quantitative and qualitative expansion it is witnessing, higher education is the most costly educational stage due to the nature of study and its distinct objectives, potentially negatively impacting funding for earlier educational levels. In this regard, a leading comparative study indicates that the cost per student in this stage in developing countries is equivalent to twenty times the cost per pupil in primary education, rising to eighty-eight times the average cost per primary school pupil (Salmani Hadda et al., 2020, p. 176).

II. Defining the Algerian University:

The university is akin to a factory for knowledge production, utilized to achieve both educational and societal goals by providing cognitive inputs about an environment developing remarkably across all life spheres.

The university specializes in all matters related to university education and scientific research conducted by its faculties and institutes through teaching staff and student researchers, aiming to serve society and elevate it culturally, thereby contributing to the advancement of thought, scientific progress, the development of human values, and supplying the nation with specialists, technicians, and experts in various fields, while preparing individuals equipped with the fundamentals of knowledge and advanced research methodologies.

It is also defined as an institution primarily providing advanced education to highly mature individuals characterized by the intellectual and psychological readiness to pursue specialized studies in one or more fields of knowledge (Ahmed Djelloul, 2022, p. 65).

It is a free space where scientific research is conducted, and researchers share their knowledge; it is the environment where societal issues across all fields are studied, and scientific, practical solutions are formulated, thus serving as a mechanism for improving societies.

From the perspective of Algerian legislation, the university is considered a public institution of a scientific, cultural, and professional nature, whose function is to meet the needs of the national economy by preparing and training professors and researchers capable of producing ideas—the fundamental driver of development—and subsequently engaging in contemporary knowledge-based society (Houriya Tayebi, 2021, p. 1737).

The university is the key to the future, and placing it on its natural trajectory within the process of civilizational action across its various levels and fields—akin to global universities since the European Renaissance to this day—through linking it to economic, industrial, agricultural, and commercial wheels, is what we must contemplate, research, and realize (Ezzat El-Sayed Ahmed, 2007, p. 16).

III. The Reality of the Algerian University:

1. Increased Pressure on the University:

The Algerian university today suffers from deficiencies that have hindered its progress and development, along with serious multi-faceted accumulations. Among the greatest obstacles it faces is the imbalance between its capabilities and the requirements of both the internal and external university environment. For instance, the increase in student numbers—seen by some countries as a positive advantage for expanding the base of degree holders—could form an educated elite more beneficial and significant if linked to the labor market.

In reality, there is a misunderstanding of the university's role; its concept remains outdated, and its functions and objectives traditional. However, the university is supposed to be a factory for producing productive human beings, not merely a workshop for manufacturing degrees.

2. Ineffectiveness of the University:

The reality of the Algerian university, and even some Arab universities, suffers from several deficiencies of varying severity because these universities still provide education for the sake of learning, not for culture, creativity, invention, and solving societal problems—to the extent that the university itself often becomes a problem exporting its issues to others (Al-Sadiq Dahhash, pp. 63/67).

3. Rush Toward University Education and Explosion in Student Numbers:

This has led to weakened absorption capacity, attributed to Algeria's encouragement of education (democratization of education).

4. Centralized Relationship Between the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Algerian Universities:

Despite legislation regulating the Algerian university as an independent legal entity, it lacks autonomy.

5. Diminished Prestige of the University Degree as a Safety Factor for Employment:

Many students' motivations for obtaining a university degree are currently limited to social rather than productive drivers.

6. Restriction on Universities from Engaging in Precise, Specific Social Issues Through Fieldwork or Reality:

This has rendered university research purely academic, largely theoretical and detached from real-world events, stripping it of significant importance.

7. Widening Gap Between Higher Education Objectives and Its Economic and Social Returns, Along with Increasing Ideological Conflict Within the Algerian University Community (Muslim Ibrahim, 2021, pp. 771/772).

8. Weak University Training:

University training in Algeria faces several challenges, including the global acceleration of the educational process and the inadequacy of Algerian university teaching techniques to keep pace, in addition to problems arising from increased demand for university education due to social developments in recent years. The free and governmental nature of universities encourages this demand—an important and positive step for spreading education and awareness—but, conversely, reveals universities’ inability to provide high-quality educational services due to limited financial support relative to the large student numbers (Majid Shabani, p. 258).

Table 1. Key Challenges Facing Higher Education in Algerian Universities

No.	Challenge Area	Description	Source
1	Massification of Higher Education	Rapid increase in student enrollment leading to pressure on infrastructure, faculty, and educational quality.	Muslim Ibrahim (2021)
2	Limited Institutional Effectiveness	Universities focus on theoretical learning rather than innovation, creativity, and problem-solving.	Dahhash (2017)
3	Weak Link with Labor Market	Mismatch between graduates’ competencies and labor market requirements; declining employment value of degrees.	Shabani et al. (2015)
4	Centralized Governance	Limited autonomy due to strong administrative control by the Ministry of Higher Education.	Tayebi (2021)
5	Declining Social Value of Degrees	Motivation for university enrollment often social rather than productivity-oriented.	Ibrahim (2021)
6	Overcrowding and Limited Resources	High student numbers with insufficient financial and material support.	Shabani et al. (2015)
7	Gap Between Objectives and Outcomes	Weak economic and social returns from higher education outputs.	Ibrahim (2021)
8	Traditional Educational Methods	Teaching approaches not aligned with modern technological and pedagogical developments.	Dahhash (2017)

Table 2. Obstacles to Scientific Research in Algerian Universities

No.	Research Constraint	Description	Source
1	Lack of Data Availability	Insufficient access to reliable statistical and sectoral data.	Frouga (2018)
2	Limited Financial Support	Inadequate funding and research equipment.	Frouga (2018)
3	Weak Applied Research Orientation	Research often theoretical and disconnected from societal needs.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
4	Poor Institutional Coordination	Weak collaboration between universities and research centers.	Frouga (2018)
5	Limited Access to Databases	Shortage of modern scientific references and digital resources.	Frouga (2018)
6	Weak Research Environment	Lack of incentives and supportive research culture for faculty.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
7	Low Research Capacity	Shortage of qualified research personnel and structured research planning.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
8	Weak Regional Cooperation	Limited scientific integration with Arab and international universities.	Frouga (2018)

Table 3. Structural and Administrative Problems in Algerian Higher Education

No.	Structural Issue	Description	Source
1	Organizational Rigidity	Reliance on traditional administrative structures with limited flexibility.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
2	Bureaucratic Administration	Outdated regulations restricting innovation and institutional development.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
3	Political and Administrative Dominance	Excessive central control affecting academic independence.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
4	Curriculum Crisis	Traditional programs not aligned with technological and societal changes.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
5	Weak University-Industry Linkages	Limited cooperation with economic and productive sectors.	Ibrahim (2021)

6	Isolation from Socio-Economic Environment	Universities operate separately from development priorities.	Ben Esbaa (2014)
7	Dependence on State Funding	Limited financial autonomy and lack of diversified funding sources.	Ben Esbaa (2014)

Table 4. Summary of Renewal Needs for Algerian Universities

Dimension	Renewal Requirement
Governance	Greater institutional autonomy and decentralization
Teaching	Adoption of modern pedagogical methods and digital learning
Research	Increased funding and focus on applied, innovation-oriented research
Labor Market Alignment	Development of competency-based and employability-focused programs
Infrastructure	Expansion of facilities and digital resources
Faculty Development	Continuous professional training and research incentives
Internationalization	Strengthening partnerships, mobility, and global academic integration

IV. Obstacles Limiting Scientific Research in Algeria

1. Lack of necessary data and information on certain economic, social, etc., variables, limiting scientific research in these fields.
2. Weak material capabilities and specialized tools for researchers and university professors to conduct scientific research, especially given that research requires physical and financial effort.
3. Disconnection of scientific research in Algeria from the applied field and societal problems in some cases.
4. Weak coordination between Algerian universities, institutes, and higher schools.
5. Absence of modern scientific references and lack of databases and information on certain sectors.
6. Lack of scientific and research integration among Arab universities.
7. Weak capabilities of universities and higher education institutions in Algeria, and absence of positive environments for teaching staff that encourage productive work and activity in teaching and scientific and cognitive research.
8. Absence of a clear methodology in the scientific research trajectory adhered to administratively, and low numbers of qualified individuals for scientific research work (Sirir Frouga, 2018, p. 204).

(Additionally, we find:)

1. Crisis of structures and organizational frameworks: Higher education systems in Arab countries, including Algeria, due to their origins and reliance on imported, copied Western models, suffer from rigidity, stagnation, and formalism in both their organizational structures and frameworks or the content of their programs and curricula, methods, means, and procedures. Thus, they are characterized by conservatism, traditionalism, and lack of flexibility.
2. Dominance of administrative management and political discourse.
3. Crisis of programs, curricula, and university culture.
4. Crisis of alignment between training and labor market requirements: Manifestations of imbalance in higher education systems include the mismatch between higher education outputs and the needs of development plans for qualified and trained technical labor. Admission policies in universities are not determined by development needs and labor market requirements but rather by attempts to provide higher education based on increasing demand, regardless of labor market needs and skill requirements.
5. Isolation of the university from its socio-economic environment.
6. Weak research infrastructure and research culture: Evidenced by the failure of research bodies at university institutions supervising research to direct attention to research areas linked to societal needs and problems (Hassan Ben Esbaa, 2014, pp. 88/94).

(According to another classification, we find:)

1. Bureaucratic pathology of administration: Laws governing university educational institutions are mostly issued long ago, and despite some updates, their essence remains unchanged, restrictive of work, and stifling any developmental initiatives or efforts. An examination of university administration reveals various sources of tension, worse at the college or university level.
2. Absolute reliance of the university on the state budget.
3. Traditional university programs.
4. Low levels of university performance and absence of systems and standards for performance evaluation to align university education and ensure the quality of its outputs, thereby detecting shortcomings or reinforcing positives, prompting the state to consider establishing an independent performance evaluation body.
5. Prevalence of individual culture within the university and absence of systemic culture when changing leadership, whether at the university's senior administration level or college/department administration.
6. Gap between university education institutions and governmental/private production institutions, and finally, weak utilization of technological innovations in university administration (Hassan Hicham, pp. 217/218).

V. The Algerian University: Solutions and Alternatives

1. Algeria's Efforts to Improve the University and Scientific Research and Adopt the LMD System.

After gaining independence from French colonization, Algeria immediately sought to establish a modern state based on knowledge and modernization, hence building schools, training centers, universities, and restructuring and Algerianizing universities inherited from the colonizer. In the 1970s, the state aimed to train personnel to promote socialist revolution projects it adopted. The 1980s witnessed disturbances, including the emergence of student opposition—nationalist, Islamic, and Berberist. In the 1990s, the Algerian university experienced the aftermath of the Black Decade, while also having to keep pace with global changes represented by globalization and the new international order, specifically the globalization of universities, prompting the ministry to undertake reforms to extricate the university from its situation (Kebbar Abdellah, pp. 60/61).

The LMD system is a new educational framework in the university, subject to educational system reforms, abbreviated as LMD (Licence, Master, Doctorate), corresponding to the classical or old system adopted by the Algerian university since independence and applied until 2004. This educational structure is imported from Anglo-Saxon educational policies and is currently used by several countries, including the USA, Canada, England, France, Germany, Russia, Belgium, China, Japan, Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco, and other African nations. It allows students to sequentially prepare for three degrees.

a. Licence Degree: The first degree obtained after three years of study or six semesters.

b. Master's Degree: Prepared over two years after the licence (four semesters), a stage for deepening knowledge in the chosen specialization.

c. Doctorate Degree: The final degree for master's holders wishing to deepen their studies, prepared over three years (Ailam Fatiha, 2020, p. 285).

2. Mechanism for Restructuring Higher Education:

Algeria had no other choice after the failure of previous reform attempts but to restructure higher education and introduce the LMD system as a model for university development and catching up with advanced universities, hoping thereby to achieve the following objectives:

2.2. Improving the level of higher training to serve societal needs.

3.2. Linking graduates to the labor market, thereby reducing unemployment among degree holders.

4.2. Allowing students to choose their training path and possibly change it, subject to licensing, which has become an integral part of their training.

5.2. Modernizing higher education through enhanced use of technologies.

6.2. Developing the relationship between the university and various institutions.

7.2. Under this system, students are awarded three degrees—Licence, Master, and Doctorate—for those whose circumstances allow continued study (Houriya Tayebi, 2021, p. 1540).

3. Renewal in University Education:

1.3. Renewal in the philosophical framework underlying the university.

2.3. Renewal in higher education objectives.

3.3. Renewal in university education patterns and structure.

4.3. Renewal in the university educational process through: adopting modern techniques in teaching and learning methods; developing teaching methods beyond traditional lectures to include effective strategies such as self-learning, mastery learning, problem-solving learning, etc.; continuous development of curricula and study courses; and finally, attention to continuous evaluation of all educational aspects—students, objectives, educational content, teaching methods and techniques—in addition to methods and tools measuring not only memorization but also understanding, analysis, criticism, and ability to perform required skills, revealing commitment to new trends.

5.3. Renewal in developing university teaching staff.

6.3. Renewal in the field of university performance evaluation (Chbel Badrane, 2001, pp. 71/80).

4. Methods for Developing University Education:

1.4 Benefiting from national expertise.

2.4. Qualifying current and new personnel.

3.4. Granting autonomy to universities and institutes.

4.4. Developing educational and training capabilities.

5.4. Reconsidering specializations and curricula.

6.4. Allowing professors to dedicate themselves to teaching and scientific research (Al-Ayeb Mihoub, 2020, pp. 223/224).

(In another classification:)

1. Paying attention to university graduates and utilizing their energies and capacities. Undoubtedly, universities and their human and research outputs are among the most important tools for development and the key to qualified development for societal progress.

2. Establishing centers, laboratories, and mixed research teams with other economic sectors to encourage valorization of university research outcomes, in addition to pursuing partnerships with foreign universities for global exposure and elevating local education levels.

3. Converting available non-electronic resources into electronic form, as most Algerian universities have a large backlog of activities (conferences, scientific journals, theses, and publications) that can be published and converted into electronic format and shared online, increasing transparency and openness standards.
4. Encouraging the use of English in the main pages of university websites and in publishing scientific research, while ensuring translation of scientific conference proceedings into English.
5. Working on drafting new educational policies and setting plans through specialized scientific advisory bodies that can contribute to solving many of the university's educational and research problems. On the other hand, making quality assurance a fundamental condition for elevating university education and adopting quality standards in evaluating the inputs, processes, and outputs of this education to align with the labor market (Zemouri Kamal, 2019, p. 108).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that developing higher education in the Algerian university represents an imperative necessity amid successive global and local transformations. Despite the difficulties and challenges it faces, political and academic will appears serious about moving forward toward genuine and comprehensive reform. By adopting renewal visions, enhancing autonomy, improving infrastructure and research capabilities, and integrating technology into the educational process, the Algerian university can reclaim its role as a fundamental engine for development and a space for creativity and innovation. Undoubtedly, success in this journey requires the combined efforts of all stakeholders—professors, researchers, students, and societal institutions—to build a university model capable of shaping the future and confronting its challenges.

Ethical Considerations

The author confirms that this study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of academic research and scholarly integrity. The work is original and has not been published previously nor submitted to any other journal for consideration. All sources of information have been appropriately cited and referenced to avoid plagiarism. No human participants, personal data, or confidential institutional information were directly involved in this study; therefore, formal ethical approval was not required. The research adheres to international publication ethics guidelines and standards.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. The research was conducted objectively, and no financial, professional, or personal relationships influenced the study's outcomes.

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