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**Cultural Coexistence between Foreign Students and Algerian Students in
Algerian Universities Residences**

التعايش الثقافي بين الطلبة الجزائريين والطلبة الأجانب في الإقامات الجامعية الجزائرية

Hassiba Mezali *	University of Algiers 2 Abou El Kacem Saadallah	E-mail : hassmezali@gmail.com
Sabah Ayachi	University of Algiers 2 Abou El Kacem Saadallah Laboratory of Family, Development, Prevention of Delinquency and Criminality. (Algeria)	E-mail : sabahayachi@yahoo.fr

Abstract:

This study aims to understand the nature of cultural coexistence between international and Algerian students in Algerian universities residences, and to analyze the most important factors and variables that govern the establishment of interaction and communication between different cultures in a social environment. The goal is to achieve a range of academic and practical aspirations, including identifying the cultural and social challenges and difficulties faced by Algerian and International students in residences, and assessing the extent to which a peaceful, tolerant, and cooperative university environment is created, leading to their academic success and social stability. The study is divided into three parts, a methodological section, a theoretical section addressing the most important theories and characteristics of cultural coexistence, and third section is dedicated to the field study, and its key qualitative findings. Finally, the study concludes with a summary and practical recommendations.

Keywords: Cultural Coexistence, International Student, Subcultures, University Accommodation, Racism

* Corresponding Author: Hassiba Mezali

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An Introduction:

Coexistence and social interaction among individuals are fundamental principles instilled in human nature by God, making them essential for human life on Earth. Humans cannot live in isolation; rather, they inherently require cooperation with others within their natural environment or the society in which they reside. This essential truth was first articulated by Ibn Khaldun, the founding figure of the science of human civilization (sociology), in the first part of his (**Muqaddimah/377 AH / 14th century CE**), where he stated, “Man is by nature a social being.” This insight remains a cornerstone of sociology, and all sociological studies, particularly field research, rely on this premise when analyzing any social phenomenon. It acknowledges that humans are inherently social, despite differences among individuals or groups in thinking, personality, social behavior, family cultural background, or geographical location.

A deeper analysis of human sociability reveals that it is an innate disposition created by God. Humans cannot live entirely independently; they continuously depend on others to satisfy their basic needs—including sustenance, physical and emotional care, shelter, security, and cultural development—all of which are vital for survival and identity. Such needs can only be fulfilled through participation in human groups or interaction with other groups, which fosters cooperation in forming a sustainable and integrated society. Societies facilitate the exchange of knowledge, goods, and services—including agriculture, industry, crafts, arts, sciences, technology, and artificial intelligence—thereby contributing to the development of both the individual and the community. This process establishes a civilization founded on stability and continuous progress, achieved through a combination of enduring and evolving laws and norms that balance individual responsibilities with societal obligations, while safeguarding rights and preventing oppression, injustice, and violations of others’ rights.

The scope of social interaction is not limited to individuals sharing the same traits or cultural background; it extends to broader engagements that build human social relations beyond immediate social circles. Such interactions promote cooperation and integration, a phenomenon referred to in this study as “cultural coexistence.”

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In this context, the international expert Sabah Ayachi provides a detailed sociological perspective on cultural coexistence, describing it as “a symbol and outcome of cultural diversity and richness, composed of various subcultures inherited through generations within the family tree and preserved over time. Its reference points are customs, traditions, norms, dialects, language, and religion, whether within the home country—where subcultural family traditions exist within the broader societal culture—or across different countries (countries of migration) due to work or study. Both contexts involve family groups coexisting among themselves, and even within a single family, cultural coexistence occurs between spouses and their relatives, whether in the home country or abroad, as exemplified by ‘mixed marriages’” (Sabah, Ayachi (2020) p.41)

She further emphasizes that the social practice of engaging with others and fostering cultural coexistence begins with family and social upbringing, which later positively influences formal institutions, including schools, universities, and workplaces. Raising children in a balanced manner—addressing their daily life needs and gradually exposing them to the wider world—instills civilizational values and norms that become tangible in social behavior. Such behaviors include engaging with others, cooperation, respectful interpersonal conduct, peaceful coexistence despite cultural differences, mutual respect for each individual’s identity, the culture of dialogue and discussion, fraternity, compassion, and tolerance.

The foundations of this upbringing are embedded in family customs and traditions, the norms distinguishing subcultures within families, and the teachings of divine religions. Among these, Islam notably emphasizes pluralism and peaceful coexistence, supported by clear Qur’anic texts and concrete historical models, such as the society of Medina. In this society, the Prophet Muhammad and his followers exemplified ethical coexistence with individuals and groups who initially resisted integration. Despite these challenges, he treated all with dignity, upholding principles of justice and equality regardless of religion, worship practices, gender, skin color, social status, or geographical location (Sabah, Ayachi (2022) p.46)

The international expert Sabah Ayachi further adds that the social practice of getting to know others and cultural coexistence begins with the nature of family and social upbringing, which later has a positive impact on all formal institutions, including schools, universities, and workplaces. Raising children in a balanced manner, addressing their daily life needs and gradually exposing them to the wider world, instills human civilizational values and standards in a tangible way in the

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social behavior of individuals everywhere. These behaviors include getting to know others, cooperation, proper interpersonal conduct, peaceful coexistence despite cultural differences, mutual respect for each person's identity and individuality, the culture of dialogue and discussion, fraternity, compassion, and tolerance.

The foundations of such upbringing are rooted in family customs and traditions, the norms distinguishing subcultures within families, and the teachings of divine religions. Among these, Islam stands out as one of the religions that explicitly endorses pluralism and peaceful coexistence through clear textual references in the Qur'an and concrete historical models, such as the society of Medina. In this society, the Prophet Muhammad and his followers were known for their exemplary ethics in coexisting with individuals and groups who were initially resistant to coexistence. Despite such challenges, he treated them with dignity, applying principles of justice and equality for all, regardless of their religion, worship practices, gender, skin color, social status, or geographical location (Sabah, Ayachi (2020) p.43)

Returning to history, we find that pre-Islamic society was marked by considerable diversity in beliefs, ethnicities, customs, and traditions. It was a society characterized by slavery and racism, until the arrival of the one who established the first human document—considered “the most important constitutional and legal charter issued to regulate ethical relations and coexistence” in Medina—based on love, brotherhood, and humanity: the Seal of the Prophets, the Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him (Hassan al-Fadl Abdullah, Mahāsin (n.d), p 2).

The Qur'an further reinforces this principle in the verse: “...and We have made you nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honorable of you in the sight of God is the most righteous...” (Qur'an 49:13). Despite differences among tribes and peoples, the purpose of such diversity is to foster closeness and mutual recognition. Human beings are inherently curious; they are naturally attracted to what is new and different. The word “li-ta'ārafū” (to know one another) in Arabic is rich in meaning, encompassing exchange, understanding, communication—in essence, coexistence.

From this, we understand that coexistence constitutes one of the primary aims of human interaction with others in life. Coexistence among nations has now become one of the major challenges of the twenty-first century and an urgent necessity for civilizational and technological advancement. This is due to the multiplicity of cultural differences deeply rooted in members of every society, alongside the

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persistence of discrimination and racism among individuals, groups, and nations. These conditions have resulted in divergent attitudes and perspectives that emerge fundamentally from the foundational structures of every society: the family, places of worship, tourist and public spaces, and other social institutions, including educational institutions such as universities and their associated structures.

The transformations witnessed in our contemporary era are but a continuation of the longstanding existence of diverse tribes, peoples, and civilizations. Nonetheless, this diversity now calls for a global charter of coexistence grounded in the security and well-being of all members of society. Yet, for some, these differences have turned into a burden rather than a blessing, due to the inability to effectively integrate and employ them within the structures of many societies.

Today, we observe increasing efforts across the world to establish a comprehensive foundation for cultural coexistence in all scientific, social, and other domains. These efforts are influenced by several factors, including the nature of the officially approved educational curricula, as determined by governments; the ideological orientations of individuals and groups; and the diversity of sources shaping these orientations. Such ideologies may promote moderation and openness, rejecting all forms of discrimination and racism. Conversely, they may foster fanaticism that resists positive change because it threatens limitless interests, or they may cultivate narcissistic authoritarian tendencies that seek to keep others in a perpetual state of fear under their dominance.

These dynamics are further reinforced by social media platforms and electronic networks, which now exert strong influence on public attitudes and behaviors regarding both national and international issues. These influences are directly or indirectly connected to the type of familial and social upbringing practiced by parents—whether in conservative, open, or closed families, or in another classification, moderate versus extremist. Such variations reflect the depth of their understanding of the teachings of their divine religions, their adherence to other human-made belief systems, or even atheism.

Therefore, individuals must assume responsibility toward their societies and future generations to serve humanity and preserve cultural diversity—an inherent human characteristic—without allowing their national identity or the historical specificity of their society to dissolve into other identities. Either all individuals live in peace, security, cooperation, and civilizational progress across scientific, social,

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economic, cultural, academic, health, and technological fields—while working to eliminate negative values and practices such as discrimination and marginalization—or societies will remain trapped in perpetual conflict, strained relationships, and global instability, affecting all formal social institutions, including the family, school, and university.etc. (Sabah, Ayachi. (2020), p 331)

From this standpoint emerges the significance of the present research, which can be summarized as follows:

- Strengthening intercultural exchange and interaction through comprehension and engagement with Algerian culture and its subcultural extensions, without abandoning one's original culture, thereby reducing tensions, preventing cultural clashes, and removing social barriers.
- Supporting university institutions by facilitating the integration process and breaking down barriers through the findings of this research, as well as expanding the culture of social support to positively influence the psychological well-being of international students, thereby easing their adaptation and coexistence within the Algerian social system.
- Helping Algerian universities build an open and internationally oriented educational space, thereby contributing to civilizational openness.

The objectives of the study are defined as follows:

- To determine the extent to which Algerian students adapt to one another within university residences in the capital, considering that they come from different regions of Algeria and carry subcultural backgrounds that influence their social behaviors toward others.
- To identify the key factors that either facilitate or hinder cultural coexistence and the acceptance of cultural differences between Algerian students and international students from various countries, particularly in university residences.
- To explore the nature of social and cultural relationships and interactions among Algerian students themselves, as well as between them and international students, and to understand how they perceive Algerian society in all its components.
- To assess the level of integration of international students within the Algerian university environment, given the new social context that differs from their home countries.

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1. Problem Statement:

Owing to its strategic geographical location, Algeria has historically experienced intense cultural contact and exchange. Throughout the ages, it has attracted various colonizers and served as a meeting ground for multiple cultures. These cultures have at times coexisted side by side, and at other times merged to form new cultural patterns adopted by different social groups, each reshaping them according to its own characteristics and specificities. This process has continuously produced new forms of subcultures, to the point where the Algerian cultural system has become a complex network of interwoven elements, pathways, and orientations. Such complexity requires extensive analysis across multiple levels—most notably sociological and psychological—since understanding the structure, or rather the *structures*, of the social members within a cultural system helps explain the partial or general disturbances and transformations within society.

Furthermore, identifying and defining individual personalities, behaviors, and subcultures allows for a clearer understanding of the processes of psychological and socio-cultural adaptation within a confined social environment.

The Algerian society continues to witness the arrival of foreigners who come to live in the country, most commonly for purposes of employment, investment, or university education. According to data from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS) for the academic year 2024/2025, **5,478 international students** are enrolled in Algerian higher education institutions (mesrs.dz).

- Their distribution by geographic origin is approximately as follows: **2,907 students from African countries, 2,762 from Arab countries, 2,660 from Asia, and 56 from Europe** (mesrs.dz).
- A 2025 official statement from the same ministry announced the launch of a new digital platform, *Study in Algeria* (launched on 8 April 2025), aimed at facilitating the registration of international students and strengthening Algeria's positioning as a destination for international education (mesrs.dz).
- At the level of individual universities—for example, **the University of Tlemcen**—MESRS reports that “more than 500 international students from over 35 countries” are currently enrolled (mesrs.dz).

For the 2025/2026 academic year, the number of international students was likewise estimated at **5,478**, including **2,907 students from Palestine, Mali, the Sahrawi**

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Arab Democratic Republic, and Mauritania; 2,762 students from African countries; 2,660 from Arab countries; and 56 from Europe (MESRS, 2025; www.mesrs.dz).

These students join various Algerian universities according to their areas of specialization and typically reside in university housing alongside Algerian students, who carry the Algerian cultural identity and its diverse subcultural components. The international student—who possesses a cultural profile that may differ significantly from the Algerian cultural system—finds themselves in a community they must adapt to. Consequently, the university residence becomes a miniature society containing an indefinite number of cultural differences, and possibly ideological, religious, and socio-cultural contradictions. This environment produces continuous and direct interaction that may result in agreement, conflict, attraction, or repulsion.

At this analytical juncture, we arrive at the following questions:

-Main questions:

1. What is the nature of coexistence between Algerian and international students within university residences?
2. Is there a relationship between cultural coexistence and the subcultural patterns within Algerian society?

From these central questions, the following sub-questions emerge:

- Is this coexistence a *cultural coexistence* based on national and humanistic social values—such as dialogue, respect, cooperation, interaction with others, and adaptation among students—and is it related to the subcultural patterns of Algerian society?
- Or is there a *cultural clash* resulting from the specificities of different cultures and regional disparities, leading to negative or aggressive behaviors between international and Algerian students, and thus various forms of discrimination?

Based on the sub-questions, the hypotheses were formulated as follows:

- The nature of subcultures and regional differences carried by both Algerian and international students determines the nature of cultural coexistence within university residences.

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- The beliefs and preconceived notions held by both Algerian and international students about one another influence the formation and stability of cultural coexistence in campus housing environments.

-Definitions of Key Concepts

1. Cultural Coexistence:

This concept consists of two components:

a. Coexistence.

Linguistically: The term denotes life and everything we engage in through daily activities and exchanges. “The word *coexistence* is derived from the root ‘ayš (to live), which denotes life, and it signifies sharing life with familiarity and affection. The term follows the morphological pattern *tafā‘ul*, indicating a reciprocal relationship between two parties” (Khalfawi Achouak & Khalaf Noria, (2023), p 266).

Conceptually: “It is the ability to live positively with others and participate in the process of building society” (Hashim Dhanoun, Omar (2019), p183).

b. Cultural

The term is derived from *culture*, which encompasses “all forms of theoretical knowledge and practical experience acquired by an individual throughout their life, thereby shaping their way of thinking and attitudes toward life—regardless of the source from which such knowledge or experience was obtained”. (Belâaz, Karima (2019), p 604).

From this, we understand that *cultural coexistence* is a facet of culture shaped by a human will to exist and interact with others. Malik Bennabi considers it “a human civilizational project leading toward unity and human coexistence in the long term” (Bay Mohamed, Baghdad (n. d), p 3).

- Operational Definition of Cultural Coexistence:

It refers to the process through which Algerian students open up to international students and vice versa—meaning accepting the presence of the other in a shared time and place. Thus, cultural coexistence in university residences requires each individual to respect others’ differences, even when these differences contradict their own beliefs or culture. This is achieved through the use of peaceful dialogue

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aimed at identifying and strengthening common ground, away from conflict and prejudice.

3. Subcultures:

(Abner Cohen) defines subcultures as “a way of life that differs from the dominant culture; in other words, a pattern of behavior that characterizes specific groups living within the larger society. Although the behavior of members of these groups may differ from that of the broader society, their subculture still contains shared elements with the dominant culture, while maintaining distinctive aspects that differentiate it from other cultures” (Abbas Ibrahim, Mohamed (1985), p127).

-Operational Definition of Subcultures:

Every society is divided into smaller units known as sub-communities, each with its own distinct culture, values, customs, traditions, heritage, and attitudes—collectively referred to as a *subculture*. Each student or student group—whether international or Algerian—possesses a subcultural system that differs, to varying degrees, from the dominant cultural system in society. It is also important to note that university residences constitute a highly favorable social environment for the emergence of new subcultures generated through continuous and sustained interaction among students.

3. Racism

Racism is “a common behavior in all university residences, as documented by numerous academic studies. This deviant behavior is rooted in caution and fear toward individuals who possess physical or cultural traits different from one’s own” (Ben Jelloul, Tahar (1998), p27). This fear eventually evolves into contempt, originating from stereotypes that themselves stem from ignorance of the other. Students—whether Algerian or international—often arrive already influenced by the subcultures they carry.

4. International Student

An international student refers to any resident of the university housing system who does not hold Algerian nationality and who receives academic instruction—either temporarily or permanently—with the aim of obtaining a university degree. This student is in constant interaction and contact with Algerian students, sharing the same social environment.

5. University Residences

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University residences represent a geographical and social designation and “constitute the basic unit of social services, with responsibilities that include offering accommodation and providing social and cultural support to residents” (Khelifi Hafidha (2021), p. 578). A university residence operates as a micro-society in which thousands of students from various specializations, and with diverse cultural and social affiliations, come together. Their interactions—positive or negative—generate social dynamics such as coexistence and adaptation, or alternatively, alienation, conflict, and marginalization.

4. Theoretical Framework of the Study:

Although some research avoids relying on theoretical grounding, theory remains essential for granting scientific legitimacy to any study. The importance of theory lies in the principles and key concepts it provides, which guide the researcher in defining the research path and in dealing with empirical data in a scientific and abstract manner. The selection of an appropriate theoretical framework must align with the nature and objectives of the topic; therefore, it would be illogical to apply theoretical laws that do not correspond to the expected outcomes of the study. From each theory, only elements relevant to the research are adopted.

1. Theory of Civilizational Coexistence:

The Theory of Civilizational Coexistence is an intellectual framework that emphasizes the possibility of harmonious living among different civilizations without conflict or domination, recognizing cultural diversity as a source of mutual enrichment. It is used in sociology to analyze interactions among societies regardless of their size. This theory has undergone significant intellectual development, beginning with Ibn Khaldun and extending to its modern expression in the works of thinkers such as Malek Bennabi. It stands in direct opposition to Samuel Huntington’s well-known thesis of the “Clash of Civilizations.”

2. Civilizational Coexistence in Ibn Khaldun’s Thought:

Ibn Khaldun did not explicitly use the term “coexistence,” yet the concept can be inferred from his theory of ‘umrān (civilization), which is grounded in the idea that civilization emerges from ‘asabiyyah (social cohesion) and social cooperation. He demonstrates that diverse peoples (Arabs, Berbers, Kurds), despite their varied lifestyles, depend on exchange and mutual support in ways that contribute to civilizational development. This is particularly evident in his explanation of how

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Bedouins surpass sedentary populations through their ability to interact and coexist in pursuit of social stability (Ibn Khaldun. A (2004), p. 126).

3. Civilizational Coexistence in Malek Bennabi's Thought:

Before presenting Bennabi's perspective on coexistence, it is important to clarify that his use of the term "culture" corresponds to the concept of "civilization" in Ibn Khaldun's terminology of 'umrān. If cultural coexistence appears implicitly in Ibn Khaldun's writings, it is explicit, deliberate, and central to Bennabi's work—constituting a core component of his civilizational theory.

According to Malek Bennabi, human beings coexist, participate, and communicate within a shared framework of values—whether they belong to the same culture or to different cultures—thereby contributing to the formation of a unified society or a broader human community.

Bennabi argues that the issue of “cultural coexistence” is fundamentally a problem of civilization, as it is inherently related to the communicative nature of culture. This issue becomes more pronounced beyond the geographical boundaries of a given culture, particularly when a society interacts with another that either shares some values with it or differs significantly. The problem becomes critical when societies are unable to construct a cultural synthesis that enables positive coexistence (Bay Mohamed, Baghdad (n.d), p 2).

The international expert **Sabah Ayachi** adds that cultural coexistence among individuals, groups, or societies represents the foundation of human stability and civilizational progress. She stresses that coexistence eliminates negative social behaviors such as mockery, stubbornness, arrogance, pressure, force, conflict, self-interest, hostility, oppression, exploitation, and domination—behaviors that often lead to tense relationships at the familial, institutional, societal, or even international level.

Cultural coexistence, she argues, “fosters sustainable development in all domains because it emerges from universal human values that enable cultures to serve humanity. These values include mutual respect, positive interaction, dialogue, communication, understanding, tolerance, and recognition of the national or communal identity and culture of the other. Differences in thought, language, religion, or customs do not imply conflict; instead, they represent opportunities for

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complementarity and cooperation across educational, scientific, cultural, technological, economic, and health sectors. Coexistence also promotes equality and justice without discrimination, ensuring a sense of belonging and shared security for all” (Ayachi, S (2022)).

5. Fieldwork:

1. Research Method:

The research method is determined by the nature and objectives of the study. No scientific inquiry can be conducted without a methodological foundation, as the method represents “the objective approach adopted by the researcher to examine a phenomenon and identify its dimensions comprehensively, thereby facilitating understanding and analysis” (Khaldi El-Hadi & Abdelhamid Nada (1996), p22).

In this study, the qualitative method was adopted to explore the nature of coexistence between Algerian and international students. This method aims to “describe the social and psychological experiences of individuals and groups from within—that is, from the perspectives of the participants themselves. Its objective is to enhance understanding of social realities and shed light on social processes, meaning-making systems, and structural characteristics” (Fezza Jamal & Ahjij Hassane (2019), p44).

2. Research Population:

To promote scientific and intellectual advancement, the Algerian state has long provided opportunities for individuals wishing to pursue higher education. Given that many students reside in remote areas or choose specializations unavailable in their local universities, the state continues to establish university residences across the country to accommodate students from all regions (States)—as well as international students.

Student housing is not a recent phenomenon, either nationally or globally. Its earliest forms can be traced to ancient Mesopotamia, where families sent their children to distant religious institutions to acquire knowledge under the supervision of priests. Similarly, pre-colonial Algerian society practiced such educational traditions, with both boys and girls attending zawāyā (religious schools) at a young age to study religious principles, long before these institutions evolved into modern, organized educational systems.

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Today, Algerian university residences—despite significant expansion and ongoing state efforts to improve facilities—still lack certain international standards, especially in the organizational and relational dimensions. These dimensions, in particular, play a crucial role in shaping the phenomenon under study: cultural coexistence.

This research focuses on university residences in Algiers, as they host the largest concentration of international students (approximately 30–40%). The residences selected for the study are Bab Ezzouar University Residences 1, 2, and 3.

4. Study Sample:

Purposive sampling method was adopted to enable an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Participants were selected according to predetermined criteria such as gender, age, language, country of origin, and field-related variables including duration of residence in the student housing and the individual's social network.

The number of international students was not fixed in advance; interviews depended on availability and willingness to participate, given their academic commitments and schedules. However, through repeated visits to university residences in Algiers—such as those affiliated with the University of Houari Boumediene in Bab Ezzouar and the University of Blida—the researchers succeeded in interviewing 40 international students and 40 Algerian students.

5. Research Techniques:

The selected techniques were chosen according to the nature of the topic. Two primary tools were used: observation and the semi-structured interview. These tools align with the qualitative approach and support the objectives of the study. Semi-structured interviews also allow for comparative analysis between participants' responses.

The interview was organized into the following thematic axes:

1. Personal Information
2. Conditions of Residence and Study
3. Social and Personal Characteristics of the Student (Subcultural Background)
4. Cultural Coexistence within the University Residence

It is worth noting that the interview questions were prepared in three languages—Arabic, French, and English—depending on the preferred communication language

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of each student. Specific versions of the interview were also tailored separately for Algerian and international (Foreign) students.

6. Presentation of the Main Findings:

The study—integrating both theoretical and field components, and examining relationships between independent and dependent variables—has led to the following key findings:

1. Subcultural Backgrounds as a Determining Factor in Interaction and Contact:

The nature of students' subcultural backgrounds and their sense of belonging to them constitute an important factor influencing the extent to which they interact and engage with others. This applies to international students—from various countries—and Algerian students coming from different regions of the country.

Despite the diversity of subcultural norms shaped by family upbringing, traditions, customs, and geographical environment, the social values inherited from family and extended social spheres deeply influence moral conduct, general etiquette, respectful behavior, empathy, hospitality, and willingness to support others—especially those far from their own families.

This was clearly observed in the social practices of Algerian students toward international students, and also among Algerian students themselves, as confirmed by the international students interviewed. These values—manifested in everyday behavior—play a major role in shaping cultural coexistence.

This influence appears in daily practices related to food, communication, and leisure, and takes both positive and negative forms:

- **Positive influence:** evident in sharing meals—especially during Ramadan—between Algerian and international students, as well as in the strong curiosity Algerian students expressed toward exploring the daily habits of international students.
- **Negative influence:** emerges in mutual avoidance or discomfort related to differing religious beliefs and orientations

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2. Gender as a Factor

It is noteworthy that female students, from both groups, demonstrated greater willingness to interact and engage with others compared to male students.

3. Preconceptions and Fear of the Other

Prejudices and apprehensions about the other often give rise to various forms of racism—whether verbal, physical, social, cultural, or even media-related. A notable form observed was **institutional or administrative discrimination**, particularly reflected in the **housing separation** between Algerian and international students. This segregation negatively limited opportunities for acquaintance and, consequently, coexistence.

4. Nationality as a Factor:

The privileges granted by the Algerian state—through bilateral cooperation agreements with Asian, African, and Arab countries—represent a major factor in supporting education, training, and social integration of international students in the host country. These privileges embody a strategic principle of **non-discrimination** between nations and a humanitarian commitment to treating all students equally.

The state continuously implements programs to guide foreign students, ensure their integration, and protect their rights (free education, food services, intra-city transportation between residences and universities, etc.). Such benefits—rarely found elsewhere—facilitate the students’ adaptation and openness to Algerian society.

Additionally, Algerian students generally interacted smoothly with international students, driven by empathy, solidarity, cultural upbringing, and socialization processes that promote respect, cooperation, altruism, and rejection of violence.

5. Language as a Factor:

One of the most significant observations is that neither group rejects interaction; however, communication frequently does not occur due to limited proficiency in the primary languages of interaction (Arabic, French, or English). As a result, relationships often remain at the level of **coexistence without meaningful interaction**, reflected as mere “co-presence” rather than genuine coexistence.

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5. Geographical Space as a Determining Factor:

The study showed that space and time are crucial factors influencing all previous variables. Many students—regardless of cultural background—reported that continuous presence in shared spaces (canteens, TV rooms, gardens, sports facilities) gradually transformed interactions from non-existent or limited to strong and cooperative. Thus, the university residence functions as a geographical and social environment that **reinforces communicative cultural exchanges**, operating as an “unplanned laboratory of coexistence.”

7. Duration of Residence as a Fundamental Factor

The length of stay in the residence also proved essential. The longer students—Algerian or international—remained in the residence, the more interactive, open, and socially engaged they became.

Unlike typical social relationships that weaken over time, the relationships between Algerian and international students demonstrated **continuity and increased cohesion**, largely due to family-based socialization emphasizing friendship, neighborliness, hospitality, generosity, and emotional support—especially evident during Ramadan and religious celebrations.

This coexistence is also driven by the social needs of international students who, being far from their families, seek a substitute environment that provides comfort and belonging.

The process of coexistence evolved through identifiable stages:

- **Discovery Phase (first three months):** marked by hesitation, observation, and psychological and social uncertainty. Students tend to cling to their own cultural group and avoid deeper engagement.
- **Adaptation and Interaction Phase:** driven by social needs. During this stage, a **new hybrid subculture** emerges—formed through the blending of Algerian and international cultural elements—indicating the realization of effective cultural coexistence.

8. Globalization and Modernity as Influential Factors:

University residences constitute dynamic spaces where the currents of globalization and modernity intersect. Students cannot avoid these forces; therefore,

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they must coexist with them. The challenge lies in balancing openness to global influences with the preservation of cultural identity. Cultural coexistence does not imply cultural dissolution or loss of identity.

9. Cases of Withdrawal and Limited Interaction:

In some instances—despite the presence of all favorable conditions for coexistence—certain students (especially international students) remained withdrawn or socially distant. This behavior was often linked to personal factors such as illness, previous negative experiences, or strong attachment to their subculture, coupled with the belief that their presence in Algeria is temporary and exclusively for academic purposes.

❖ First: General Conclusion and Linking the Results to the Hypotheses

The findings obtained from the field study reveal that the factors shaping cultural coexistence within university residences are not the product of a single element, but rather the outcome of a complex interaction between several variables initially proposed in the research hypotheses. The results confirmed the validity of the hypothesis related to the role of **subcultures** in shaping the nature of relationships among students, as it became evident that the social values rooted in early family upbringing constitute a decisive determinant in accepting or rejecting the Other.

The findings also supported the hypothesis that **language** functions either as a barrier or as a facilitator of interaction, since limited linguistic competence reduces opportunities for exchange to mere “co-presence” rather than genuine “coexistence.” The study further validated the hypothesis concerning the impact of **organizational and administrative factors**—such as residential segregation—which restrict opportunities for integration between local and foreign students.

Regarding the hypothesis related to **time and geographic space**, the study demonstrated that living together in shared spaces over extended periods gradually reshapes relationships, ultimately leading to the emergence of a shared culture grounded in solidarity and mutual interaction. Finally, the results showed that **individual factors** may weaken levels of coexistence despite the presence of favorable structural conditions, confirming that coexistence is a dynamic process in which social structures intersect with personal characteristics.

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Overall, the study supports the research hypotheses and highlights that cultural coexistence among students is a multidimensional phenomenon that requires a comprehensive understanding of its various social, geographic, temporal, and personal conditions.

❖ **Second: Summary Table of Cultural Coexistence Factors as Presented in the Findings**

Table 1: Factors Influencing Cultural Coexistence in University Residences

No.	Factor	Nature of Influence	Key Notes
1	Subcultures	Positive / Negative	Family values determine the way individuals relate to others. Algerian family values, prevalent across the country's various provinces (States), have instilled humanistic values in children of both sexes from an early age, making them more capable of positive interaction as students—both among themselves and with foreigners. In contrast, the interaction of foreign students with others varies between positive and negative, depending on their countries' cultures and the sources of their family values.
2	Gender	Positive	Females are more interactive than males
3	Prejudices	Negative	Leads to verbal/physical/administrative discrimination
4	Nationality	Positive	State-provided benefits enhance integration
5	Language	Negative	Weak linguistic proficiency limits interaction
6	Geographic Space	Positive	Shared spaces strengthen exchanges
7	Length of Stay	Positive	Interaction increases as residence duration lengthens
8	Globalization & Modernity	Mixed	Openness versus challenges to cultural identity

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9	Personal Factors	Negative in some cases	Illness, past negative experiences, cultural closure
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Conclusion:

Through this study—despite the complexity and richness of the theme of cultural coexistence—we attempted to shed light on the most significant socio-cultural factors that allow us to understand the nature of this multifaceted and shifting phenomenon. The continuous increase in the number of foreign students residing in university dormitories provides clear evidence that they find themselves in a relatively “comfortable” environment that, in one way or another, compensates for the social ease they experienced in their home countries.

Overall, we concluded that coexistence between foreign and Algerian students in university residences is a highly dynamic and largely positive phenomenon. It is neither new nor foreign to Algerian society, which—throughout history—has consistently hosted outsiders and facilitated their interaction with local communities. However, in the present era, this coexistence has taken on political and diplomatic dimensions that shape the nature of international relations.

Algeria, as a state, has been working diligently—especially in recent years—to improve the image of the Algerian university and its affiliated structures, particularly university residences. This includes developing training and capacity-building programs for foreign students and organizing activities that encourage exchange and interaction between all student groups. These efforts have further strengthened Algeria’s ability to attract a considerable number of international students from around the world, relying on a youthful demographic eager to explore, connect, and form new social relationships driven by curiosity and social need.

Thus, Algeria remains—just as it has been throughout history—a hub of peace and coexistence for numerous ethnic and doctrinal groups, and a meeting point for diverse subcultures that live side by side without forced integration or overt conflict, even within a context of globalization and converging civilizations.

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Practical Recommendations

- 1) **The need for academic enrichment and expanded research opportunities,** particularly future studies and field investigations, to highlight the importance of cultural coexistence among all student groups as both a sociological concept and a tangible indicator of the educational and research role of societies at the international level, thereby contributing to the promotion of global peace.
- 2) **Developing practical mechanisms within universities across Arab, European, Asian, and American countries** to strengthen the human dimension of cultural coexistence between foreign and local students. Examples include “Student Buddy Programs” or the organization of cultural and athletic activities that foster interaction, encourage mutual acquaintance, and help establish coexistence as a global culture that reduces marginalization and discrimination.
- 3) **Implement Student Integration Programs:** Establish programs such as “Student Buddy” or joint cultural and sports activities to facilitate daily interaction and socialization between local and international students.
- 4) **Improve the Organizational Structure of University Residences:** Work on removing unnecessary administrative barriers, such as segregated housing, and provide shared spaces that enhance cultural and social exchange.
- 5) **Promote Cultural and Social Values in Student Behavior:** Adopt educational initiatives to teach students values such as respect, cooperation, and hospitality, based on family upbringing and cultural traditions, to facilitate positive interactions among students.
- 6) **Develop Social and Communication Skills:** Organize workshops and training courses to strengthen students’ communication skills in multiple languages, making interactions easier and reducing isolation caused by language barriers.
- 7) **Enhance Multilingual Education:** Encourage learning one or more common languages among students to exchange knowledge and ideas, and to foster academic and cultural cooperation between different nationalities.
- 8) **Leverage Successful Experiences:** Adopt the successful practices of the Algerian society in cultural coexistence as a practical model that can be generalized to international universities to promote peace and mutual understanding among cultures.

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