

Activating Pedagogical Support with the Adoption of the "LMD" System in Higher Education in Algeria

تفعيل المرافقة البيداغوجية مع تبني نظام " ل م د " في نظام التعليم العالي في الجزائر

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Abstract:

The topic of "Activating Pedagogical Support in Higher Education After Adopting the 'LMD' System in Algeria" addresses the importance of providing academic support for students, The new system (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate) aims to improve the quality of education, but this requires strengthening pedagogical support to facilitate students' transition between stages.

Universities face challenges in supporting students, which necessitates training faculty in support strategies, Experiences indicate that effective support contributes to improving academic achievement and reducing psychological stress.

It is also essential to allocate a sufficient budget to provide necessary resources and develop supporting programs, Ultimately, there is a need for clear policies to enhance support as a fundamental part of the higher education strategy, contributing to student success and the development of education in Algeria.

Keywords: Pedagogical Support, Higher Education System, Quality of Education, Faculty Training.

Introduction:

Higher education in Algeria is one of the fundamental pillars of societal development and sustainable growth, However, this system faces numerous challenges that require effective strategies to improve the quality of education and ensure student success, In this context, the importance of activating pedagogical support emerges as an effective means to assist students in their academic journey, Pedagogical support is not merely an academic assistance process but extends to be a comprehensive strategy aimed at providing guidance, counseling, and enhancing students' individual capacities.

The higher education system in Algeria has undergone significant changes since the adoption of the "LMD" (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate) system, which aims to improve the quality of education and enhance competitiveness.

The importance of this topic lies in its contribution to improving students' academic performance and fostering a stimulating educational environment that develops their skills and competencies, Activating pedagogical support is a vital step toward achieving the goals of university reform, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of higher education in Algeria at both regional and international levels.

This study aims to identify effective mechanisms and methods for activating pedagogical support, particularly after the adoption of the "LMD" system, and to examine its impact on students' academic experiences.

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The central question is:

How can pedagogical support be activated in Algeria's higher education system under the "LMD" system to ensure the improvement of education quality?

To address this question, an analytical approach was adopted, including a review and analysis of educational policies related to the "LMD" system, in addition to a descriptive approach to explore the practical realities in universities, This is presented through the following two sections:

Section One: Pedagogical Support for Students in Higher Education Institutions.

Section Two: Framing and Pedagogical Support for University Professors.

Section One: Pedagogical Support for Students in Higher Education Institutions

Developing and underdeveloped countries strive to keep pace with advanced nations through intellectual openness to confront globalization challenges, This can only be achieved through education and training, as global experiences have proven that economic growth is linked to several indicators, the most important of which are academic, administrative, and environmental dimensions.¹

Globalization, technological revolution, and information technology have imposed significant challenges, prompting many countries, including Algeria, to adapt to these changes, Higher education in universities relies on international agreements and cooperation, necessitating the search for new programs and curricula that align with global developments, such as the "LMD" system, which translates to "Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate."²

To address these difficulties and ensure the success of this educational system, the state, through its constitutional institutions, including the President, the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has established a set of regulatory texts framing the "LMD" system, Pedagogical support for students was introduced as a first step, later extending to pedagogical support for new university professors, aiming to remove obstacles and achieve harmony between the university and the external environment.

Subsection One: Pedagogical Support with the Adoption of the "LMD" System

Algeria's choice of the "LMD" system represents a significant step to address various shortcomings and achieve desired goals, This system improves the recognition of degrees and ensures harmony between the national system and global systems, as it is a higher education training system.³

Paragraph One: Decisions Governing the "LMD" System

The study in the "LMD" system is organized into semestrial units,⁴ including several types of units, First, there is the Basic Education Unit (BEU), which contains one or more fundamental measures related to the specialization, providing students with essential knowledge in their field of study.

Second, there is the Methodological Education Unit (MEU), which aims to enable students to acquire self-working skills, focusing on developing their ability to learn independently and manage time.

Third, the Exploratory Education Unit (EEU) allows students to delve deeper into specific topics and direct their studies according to their interests.

Finally, the Transversal Education Unit (TEU), previously known as the Transversal Education Unit, is dedicated to providing students with necessary tools such as language and computer skills, contributing to the development of their general skills.

Several legal texts have been issued to regulate the evaluation, progression, and guidance in the Bachelor and Master stages, Among the most prominent are Executive Decree No, 08-265,

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dated August 19, 2008, which includes the study system for obtaining Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degrees, and Ministerial Decision No, 136, dated June 20, 2009, which defines the common rules for pedagogical organization and management.

Paragraph Two: The Emergence of Requirements for Student Support

The Ministry issued two new decisions (711 and 712) to replace the previous ones (136 and 137) due to difficulties in achieving positive results for students under the "LMD" system, These new decisions reintroduced evaluation and progression methods:

- **Ministerial Decision No, 711⁵:** Defines the common rules for the organization and management of obtaining degrees, addressing aspects such as the mode of lessons, the right to academic leave, exam procedures, attendance, and absence in directed work, and the process of re-enrollment.
- **Ministerial Decision No, 712:** Outlines the principles of evaluation, progression, and guidance, including the general principles of the "LMD" system, registration and re-registration, educational organization, and knowledge and qualification control.

The necessity of thinking about mechanisms to facilitate the adaptation of university students to their new environment emerged, through the establishment of pedagogical support aimed at reducing the gap between students and professors during their formation as university students, facilitating their integration into university life under the new system.

Subsection Two: The Legal Framework for Activating Pedagogical Support for University Students

The comprehensive reform of the higher education system necessitated a deep consideration of the requirements for supporting and accompanying new students in universities, given the complexities they would face within the university training requirements.

Paragraph One: Resources Allocated for Framing Pedagogical Support

Pedagogical support or supervision is an imperative necessity brought about by the "LMD" system, as programs focus on the personal activity of students who need skills to utilize scientific research facilities, This contributes to eliminating student passivity and ensuring effective dynamics between students, professors, and administration, translating into high-quality graduates.⁶

Supervision, in general, is one of the arts of management,⁷ where the supervisor provides a set of practical information such as awareness, guidance, and directions, The idea of accompanying students was not previously emphasized in Algerian universities except in a few cases, particularly in supervising graduation theses, which were conducted in an academic and methodological manner, With Algeria's adoption of new educational reforms, student support has become an urgent and essential necessity, aiming to achieve a qualitative leap in the productivity of higher education.⁸

The supervision task involves continuous follow-up and support for first-year students,⁹ facilitating their access to information about the professional world, as stated in Article 2 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, dated January 3, 2009, which defines the supervision task and its implementation methods.

On a practical level, pedagogical support has been applied and activated for all student levels, not just first-year students, given the difficulties students faced due to changes in paths, specializations, and frequent modifications in training programs under the "LMD" system.

The supervision task includes multiple aspects:¹⁰

- **Informational and Administrative Aspect:** Includes reception, orientation, and mediation.
- **Pedagogical Aspect:** Involves learning agreement, organization of personal work, and assistance in building the student's training path.

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- **Methodological Aspect:** Includes teaching university work methods, individually and collectively.
- **Technical Aspect:** Includes guidance in the use of pedagogical tools and supports.
- **Psychological Aspect:** Includes motivating students and encouraging them to follow their training path.
- **Professional Aspect:** Includes helping students prepare their professional project.

The material resources include financial bonuses allocated for supervision, paid to the supervisor or accompanist based on additional hours specified at four hours per week, with a maximum of nine hours every three months,¹¹ according to an individual commitment between the supervisor and the institution's official.¹²

The legislator has also allocated other material and legal means for the supervision task, as evident in Article 7 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, where higher education institutions provide the supervisor with means to ensure the performance of their task, including:

- **Appropriate spaces for communication with students:** Most universities have dedicated internet spaces and computer support rooms for all students.
- **Regulatory texts:** That organize the pedagogical and administrative functioning of the institution.
- **Information related to training:** About the forms of training offered by other higher education institutions.
- **Useful information:** About the social and economic environment to guide students in their choices related to their training and professional path.

As for human resources, the supervision task has been assigned to the supervisor or pedagogical accompanist according to Article 4, Paragraph 1 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, where the practicing professor in the institution ensures the supervision task, as defined in Article 8 of Executive Decree No, 08-130,¹³ which requires continuous follow-up.

In this capacity, the supervisor or pedagogical accompanist undertakes the following tasks in detail:

- Assisting students in organizing and managing their schedule and familiarizing themselves with university work tools.
- Helping students in their documentary work, such as controlling bibliographic tools and using the library.
- Assisting students in acquiring evaluation and self-training techniques.

One of the most important aspects that the supervisor considers is the student's psychological state, as they must motivate them to follow their training path by enhancing their self-confidence and giving them a positive image of their abilities, helping them integrate into the university environment and fostering a spirit of teamwork. The supervisor's success in accompanying university students depends on their ability to build an effective communication bridge with them,

The supervisor's success is assessed through periodic evaluations conducted by the training field team and the department head, through a report submitted every three months, taking into account student satisfaction. Based on the evaluation results, the commitment is renewed or canceled.¹⁴

The supervision task is not limited to the professor-researcher only, as the Algerian legislator has also entrusted this task to advanced students (Master and PhD students) under the responsibility of a supervising professor, as stated in Paragraph 4 of Article 4 of Executive Decree No, 53-54 on the organization of the supervision task.

To enhance the pedagogical support task for university students, Ministerial Decision No, 713¹⁵ was issued, which defines the composition and functioning of the supervision committee,

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consisting of the institution's director, the deputy director for pedagogy, training field officials, and supervising professors, whose appointment is left to the discretion of the institution's director.

Paragraph Two: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Pedagogical Support

In early January 2016, the national conference for evaluating the "LMD" system (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate) in Algerian universities commenced in Algiers, with the participation of more than 800 attendees. The conference witnessed the presence of government members, representatives from the National Evaluation Committee, the National University Qualification Committee, and the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, in addition to representatives from the Academy of Sciences and Technology and economic and social partners of the sector. Four workshops were organized during this conference, dedicated to improving the quality of higher education, the relationship between the university and the economic sector, governance, and student life.

The Director-General of Education and Training at the Ministry of Higher Education, Nouredine Ghaouali, confirmed that the "LMD" system is witnessing continuous growth, despite some issues that need to be addressed in programs and educational offerings to align with the needs of the economic and social sectors.

In this context, a set of decisions related to the basic educational program for Bachelor degrees in all fields was determined, following the deans' conference that discussed the difficulties faced by students. This came after the issuance of Decision No, 75, dated 2012, which includes the establishment and organization of the National Pedagogical Committee, and Decision No, 129, dated March 6, 2013, which stipulates the establishment of the deans' conference for each field.

The obstacles faced by the pedagogical support process after seven years of implementation can be summarized in three main factors: the student, the supervising professor or pedagogical accompanist, and the lack of unification of basic programs and paths at the university level.

• Primary Actor: The University Student

Although the supervision task is dedicated to meeting student needs, they have become a significant obstacle to the success of this mechanism,¹⁶ through their lack of commitment to attending pedagogical support sessions and their limited communication with supervising professors, hindering the effectiveness of support and the achievement of desired results.

• Primary Actor: The Accompanying Professor

The accompanying professor can become an obstacle to the success of the supervision process if they are not familiar with the "LMD" system or if they are unaware of the legal texts related to it. Additionally, the accompanist's lack of psychological framing that enables them to establish effective communication with the student represents another obstacle, as the student, at the beginning of communication, needs to feel comfortable, reassured, and obtain accurate information.

• Primary Actor: Lack of Unification of Basic Programs in Higher Education Institutions

The multiplicity of programs and training projects in Bachelor and Master degrees across different universities hinders the identification of links between professors and students. Often, the initial regulatory texts are canceled and replaced with new ones in the following year. The Ministry of Higher Education noticed this issue after the graduation of the first batches under the "LMD" system, who faced difficulties in joining competitions due to the diversity of specializations. Therefore, the Ministry hastened to issue a set of regulatory texts to unify basic education (two years of common core) for all specializations at the Bachelor level and unify specialization criteria at the Master level, providing better opportunities for students.

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Section Two: Framing and Pedagogical Support for University Professors

The university professor is the cornerstone of the university, as their primary tasks revolve around training and preparing future cadres and researchers, Therefore, it is essential that they possess two types of complementary skills necessary to perform their tasks satisfactorily in the university: active participation in scientific research and continuous efforts to improve methods of transferring knowledge to their students.¹⁷

From this perspective, the Ministry initiated a training plan for newly recruited professors, aiming to improve their preparation for teaching and acquiring pedagogical knowledge that enables them to train and frame students correctly, especially after we previously addressed the professor's position as a key actor in the success or hindrance of pedagogical support for university students.

The training program for newly recruited professors is derived from the guiding principles outlined in Ministerial Decision No, 932, issued in July 2016,¹⁸ and its main objective is to frame the training of professors over 535 hours, working to build pedagogical teaching competence by learning effective methods for planning and preparing knowledge and skills.

Subsection One: Pedagogical Support for Newly Recruited Professors

Pedagogical support for newly recruited professors was organized within the framework of the pedagogical training program implemented in accordance with Ministerial Decision No, 932, which clarifies the principles, guidelines, and methods of implementation, This program was prepared as a document presented to all higher education institutions to frame this category of employees.

This document allows for the gradual acquisition of the necessary professional skills and competencies to practice teaching tasks, providing a reference work tool that requires training devices based on the competency-based approach.¹⁹

Paragraph One: Dimensions of the Pedagogical Support Program for Newly Recruited Professors

Pedagogical support for newly recruited professors is organized at the level of all higher education institutions, according to Article 1 of Decision No, 932, This support aims to enable the newly recruited professor during the internship period to acquire knowledge and skills in the art of university teaching.

The pedagogical support program includes the organization of training sessions and workshops with diverse dimensions, including, for example:²⁰

- Teaching the principles of university legislation.
- Introduction to didactics and pedagogy.
- Psychology and educational psychology.
- How to design and prepare lessons and pedagogical communication.
- How to evaluate students.
- Distance education.
- The use of information and communication technologies in teaching.

Several material resources have been allocated to implement this program, where teaching methods based on lectures, methodological workshops, seminars, discussions, and presentations are selected, This is achieved by utilizing available training tools, such as documents and information and communication technologies, in addition to the e-learning platform, under the supervision of experts in the "LMD" system, quality assurance, and didactics.

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Paragraph Two: Bodies Responsible for Developing and Monitoring the Implementation of the Pedagogical Support Program for Professors

The pedagogical support program for professors, issued under Decision No, 932 and effective since the 2016-2017 academic year, is organized by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research through the establishment of a cell to follow up and implement the program.

First: The Cell for Developing and Monitoring the Pedagogical Support Program

According to Article 3 of Ministerial Decision No, 932, a cell was established in each higher education institution responsible for developing the pedagogical support program for professors, in line with the principles of pedagogical vigilance, The tasks of this cell include:²¹

- Proposing pedagogical strategies for higher education and training.
- Implementing the pedagogical support program and communicating it to the concerned professors.
- Selecting professors responsible for training.
- Evaluating the professors' participation in training.

The institution's official must provide the cell with all available means to perform its administrative, organizational, and pedagogical tasks, as stipulated in Article 8 of Decision No, 932, The annual report on the implementation of the program is presented to the university's scientific council, and a copy is sent to the Minister of Higher Education.

The human composition of the cell for developing the pedagogical support program includes:²²

- The university's deputy director for higher education in the first and second cycles and continuous training.
- The head of the quality assurance cell.
- Three professors representing the fields of science, humanities and social sciences, and languages, literature, and arts, selected from among professors with proven competencies in pedagogy.

The cell is chaired by a coordinator chosen from among its members, and the cell's meetings are held at the request of the coordinator when necessary.

Second: The Establishment of a National Committee for Supervision and Monitoring of the Pedagogical Support Program

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research established a national committee for supervision and monitoring, under Decision No, 1636,²³ responsible for implementing the pedagogical support program for professors, This committee ensures the functioning of the monitoring cells in higher education institutions.

The tasks of the national committee include:²⁴

- Organizing, framing, and accompanying the cells responsible for ensuring and monitoring the national pedagogical education program, in line with the principles of pedagogical vigilance.
- Coordinating and monitoring all activities related to the pedagogical training of professors.
- Conducting periodic evaluations of the continuous training system for professors and PhD students in higher education institutions.
- Establishing a national platform for distance pedagogical training.
- Creating a national network of trainers to enhance the exchange of experiences in human resources.
- Integrating into the international network of pedagogy and developing any pedagogical training system with added value for higher education.

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- Encouraging the impact standard of the cells' activity in training professors through the relationship between the professor's training process and the student's training results.
- Formulating and updating all initial or continuous training programs for professors and PhD students.
- Updating the guide for human resources and bodies or institutions specialized in training and developing pedagogical vigilance.
- Organizing the pedagogical training of PhD students.

Subsection Two: Application of the Pedagogical Support Program for Newly Recruited Professors

Executive Decree No, 08-130, related to the basic law of professors, defines the tasks assigned to the professor (Assistant Professor B) under Article 33, while the confirmation or tenure after the internship period is addressed in Articles 16, 17, and 18 of the same decree, As for the tasks defined under the pedagogical support program, they were clarified in the annex to Decision No, 932 related to the pedagogical support of newly recruited professors, The national training program was also proposed in this annex, which serves as the basis for preparing the unified national training platform using advanced methods.

Paragraph One: Specializations Covered by the Pedagogical Support Program for Newly Recruited Professors

The annex to Decision No, 932 related to pedagogical support specifies the tasks and nature of the specializations in which newly recruited professors should be trained in detail, It also clarifies the nature of the interveners in the training, highlighting the Ministry's interest in the pedagogical training of newly recruited professors, This training is essential for effective follow-up and framing of university students, thereby achieving positive results for pedagogical support, which lacked its most important tool: the accompanying professor, whose training aligns with the nature of the system.

Paragraph Two: Training Approaches and Targeted Competencies in the Pedagogical Support Program for Newly Recruited Professors

The training approaches in the pedagogical support program for newly recruited professors are based on the concept of active learning, including lectures, workshops related to curricula, self-directed studies, and individual or group work.

The main objectives of the pedagogical support program for newly recruited professors are as follows:²⁵

- Understanding the basic law of professors: Recognizing the rights and duties of professors related to the professional and moral responsibility of the university.
- Meeting student needs: By helping them acquire the necessary competencies.
- Dealing with pedagogical follow-up techniques: Effectively.
- Understanding reforms: Including the comprehensive plan of the "LMD" system and the importance of this system in active pedagogy.
- Developing competencies: By understanding the student-centered pedagogical approach and quality assurance in higher education.
- Forming a team of competent professors: To meet the requirements of training fields.
- Knowing how to frame and monitor: And evaluate student internships.
- Recognizing the role of the student and professor: In knowledge acquisition mechanisms, understanding the difference between the logic of teaching and the logic of learning.
- Enhancing the professor-student relationship: Through mentorship within the framework of pedagogical support.

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The training program was proposed according to the defined objectives and tasks mentioned in the specializations table, with the activity and goal of each pedagogical support session specified with a defined hourly volume, ensuring effective organization of the educational process.

Conclusion:

Pedagogical support is a vital aspect of higher education, playing a key role in enhancing the quality of education and ensuring student success in Algeria, In light of the increasing challenges faced by higher education institutions, effective legal mechanisms are necessary to regulate this support and ensure the achievement of academic goals.

At the end of this study, the following can be concluded:

- **Improving Academic Performance:** Studies have shown that activating pedagogical support contributes to raising students' academic performance, leading to improved success rates.
- **Reducing the Gap Between Students and Professors:** Effective support enhances communication between students and faculty, creating a more supportive educational environment.
- **Increasing Awareness of Available Resources:** Clear pedagogical support provides students with information about available educational resources, helping them utilize them better.
- **Reducing Psychological Stress:** Students who receive pedagogical support tend to feel less psychological pressure, positively impacting their mental health and academic performance.
- **Developing Self-Learning Skills:** Support contributes to enhancing students' self-learning skills, helping them adapt to the requirements of the "LMD" system.

The study also recommends the necessity of adopting clear policies that support pedagogical support, including:

- Enhancing training programs to develop professors' skills in providing effective academic support.
- Establishing electronic platforms and support centers that offer academic assistance to students.
- Implementing periodic evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of pedagogical support and make necessary adjustments.
- Enhancing the role of students in providing suggestions for improving support services.
- Allocating an appropriate budget for pedagogical support to ensure the provision of necessary resources and the effective implementation of programs.

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³ - Article 16 of Ministerial Decision No, 712, dated November 3, 2011, includes the methods of evaluation, progression, and guidance in the Bachelor and Master stages, p, 3,

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⁴ - Articles 5, 6, 7, and 8 of Decision No, 712, *ibid*, , p, 2,

⁵ - Ministerial Decision No, 711, dated November 3, 2011, defines the common rules for the organization and management of obtaining degrees, currently in effect,

⁶ -نادية بوضياف بن زعموش وحورية تارزولت عمروني، "المراقبة البيداغوجية في نظام ل م د خطوة نحو جودة التعليم العالي"، كلية العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية، جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة، مداخلة منشورة على الرابط الإلكتروني، تاريخ الاطلاع 2017/8/6، الساعة 8:35، <https://fshs.univ-ouargla.dz>.

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⁸ - Reasons for adopting the supervision task in Algerian universities include: high school failure rates, increasing numbers of university students, the emergence of short paths with the LMD system, and the introduction of new concepts such as credits, the credit system, and educational units.

⁹ - Article 3, first paragraph of Executive Decree No, 09-03, related to the supervision task "Supervision is organized by higher education institutions for first-year students in the first cycle."

¹⁰ - Article 2 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, dated January 3, 2009, clarifies the supervision task and its implementation methods, Official Gazette No, 1, issued on January 6, 2009, *ibid*, , p, 27.

¹¹ - Articles 10 and 12 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, dated January 3, 2009, clarifies the supervision task and its implementation methods, Official Gazette No, 1, issued on January 6, 2009, p, 28.

¹² - Article 6 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, *ibid*, , p, 27.

¹³ - Article 8 of Executive Decree No, 08-130, dated May 3, 2008, includes the basic law for professors, Official Gazette No, 23, issued on May 4, 2008, p, 20.

¹⁴ - Article 8 of Executive Decree No, 09-03, *ibid*, , p, 28.

¹⁵ - Article 2 of Decision No, 713, dated November 3, 2011, specifies the composition and functioning of the supervision committee.

¹⁶ - From the practical procedures for the effectiveness of pedagogical support at the University of Guelma as a model, sessions were programmed within student schedules with the identification of rooms and the names of pedagogical accompanists, with two sessions per week.

¹⁷ - Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, "Pedagogical Training for Professors - The Program," Algeria, October 2016, p, 3.

¹⁸ - Decision No, 932, dated July 28, 2016, defines the methods of organizing pedagogical support for newly recruited professors.

¹⁹ - "Pedagogical Training for Professors - The Program," *ibid*, , p, 3.

²⁰ - Article 4 of Decision No, 434 related to the pedagogical support of professors, *ibid*, , p, 1.

²¹ - Article 3, paragraph 2 of Decision No, 932, *ibid*, , p, 1.

²² - Article 5 of Decision No, 932, *ibid*, , p, 2.

²³ - Decision No, 1636, dated October 29, 2016, includes the establishment of a national committee for supervision and monitoring of the pedagogical support program for professors.

²⁴ - According to Article 2 of Decision No, 1636, which establishes the national committee for supervision, *ibid*, , p, 2.

²⁵ - "Pedagogical Training Program for Professors," *ibid*, , pp, 4, 5.