

The role of quality Assurance Unit in progressing the ranking of Algerian universities

دورخلية ضمان الجودة في تقدم تصنيف الجامعات الجزائرية

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Abstract:

The developments and changes that the world has experienced in modern societies across all cognitive and technological fields have made the world aware of the importance of quality education to keep pace with evolution and meet the surrounding challenges. Beyond its importance in community development, it plays an effective role in human resource development, which is necessary for thinkers and researchers to seek new models, such as quality concepts, in various areas of educational reform to be compatible with current and future needs. The strength of powerful nations in our time is measured by the assets of educated human capital, capable of creativity and productivity, including in terms of thought and values, which help to consolidate the behaviors of civilization.

Keywords: university system, university education, quality of education.

الملخص:

لقد ساهمت التطورات والتغيرات التي شهدها العالم في المجتمعات الحديثة، عبر مختلف المجالات المعرفية والتكنولوجية، في إدراك العالم لأهمية التعليم الجيد لمواكبة التطور ومواجهة التحديات المحيطة. وبالإضافة إلى أهميته في تنمية المجتمع، يلعب التعليم الجيد دوراً فعالاً في تنمية الموارد البشرية، وهو ما يستدعي من المفكرين والباحثين البحث عن نماذج جديدة مثل مفاهيم الجودة، في مختلف مجالات الإصلاح التربوي بما يتوافق مع الاحتياجات الحالية والمستقبلية. وتقاس قوة الدول العظمى في عصرنا الحالي بما تملكه من رأس مال بشري متعلم،

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قادر على الإبداع والإنتاجية، بما في ذلك على صعيد الفكر والقيم، مما يُسهم في ترسيخ أسس الحضارة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: النظام الجامعي، التعليم الجامعي، جودة التعليم

Introduction:

Just as society needs natural resources to build its structure in all areas, it also needs intellectual resources to construct its cognitive and intellectual framework. This is where education, and especially higher education, comes into play. Educational institutions are among the organizations that constitute a source of intellectual resources for society. They are institutions created to serve science, knowledge, and scientific research. Their activities are geared toward the social demand for higher education and contribute to social development. Consequently, their objectives are linked to those of the society to which they belong, which gives them a distinctive character that differentiates them from other organizations. Thus, modern organizations rely on educational outputs characterized by quality and excellence.

Nature of the University:

The university is considered one of the most important social institutions in society, due to its role in training researchers and scientists and its great capacity to store, disseminate, and produce knowledge.

University Actors:

The fulfillment of the university's functions rests on three main elements: the professor, the student, and the educational infrastructure.

1/ Professors:

If the university needs a flexible and adaptable educational and organizational framework to fulfill its mission, while taking into account the human dimension of social relations, then the most important element is undoubtedly the faculty. The university does not acquire expertise solely through its administrative structure and regulations; it must also bring together a number of teachers and researchers in its laboratories and lecture halls (Mohammed Al-Arabi, 1989, p. 197).

Their main responsibilities include:

- Teaching and providing academic support to students.
- Conducting and supervising scientific research.

- Participating in the administration of the university, faculty, or department.
- Developing curricula and writing or co-writing textbooks.

2. Students:

A university student is someone whose academic abilities have enabled them to gain admission to university, in accordance with their chosen field of study, through a qualifying degree. University students are considered essential and active participants in the educational process throughout their studies, representing the majority of students enrolled at the university. Higher education aims to develop students' skills and abilities on all levels—physical, intellectual, and psychological—so that these qualities later manifest as balanced and harmonious behavior, enabling them to contribute to society in various fields. As Habibullah bin Muhammad al-Turkistani said: Today's student has goals and aspirations. They wish to acquire knowledge and wisdom, and they also aspire to a job that will allow them to live with dignity. They hope that their degree will be a passport enabling them to move from the world of cultural development to that of creativity and engagement.

3. The Pedagogical Apparatus:

The university, as an institution, is characterized by its organization, management, structure, and specific objectives. These are based on the relationships between the various members of the university community and the functions assigned to each. This implies the existence of a self-regulating administrative authority, as well as the management of material and human resources and other activities. In other words, the organization of the university institution refers to the appropriate form adopted by the university to achieve its objectives. The structural framework of the university refers to the relationships that unite the various elements constituting the institution as a whole. These elements are called substructures. The administrative structure encompasses all those responsible for the management of the university and is divided into substructures such as human resources management and financial management, etc. (Badran, 2001, p. 72).

2/ The Roles of the University:

The essential functions assigned to the university have led to its evolution from its traditional, compartmentalized structure to a new framework that integrates it into society and connects it to its needs and

aspirations. The Algerian university, like other universities, has been entrusted with specific functions, as defined by Decree No. 83-544 of September 24, 1983, published in Official Gazette No. 40, concerning the standard statutes of the Algerian university. These functions include:

- Contributing to the dissemination, preparation, and development of knowledge.
- Training the personnel necessary for the country's development, in accordance with the objectives defined in the national plan.
- Providing students with training in research methodologies. The functions of the university are complementary and interdependent, and mutually influential. It is generally accepted that the university fulfills three main functions: teaching, scientific research, and the development of society.

1. Education:

While education is the primary function of the university, its role in training future leaders is invaluable, given the crucial role of human capital in the development and education process (Abdullah Boukhalakhal, 1997, p. 3).

2. Scientific Research:

Hassana Mohi El-Din defines scientific research as follows: “Organized human activity aimed at examining the validity of information or an important event, clarifying a specific situation or phenomenon, or finding an effective solution to an academic or social problem of concern to the individual and society. Scientific research is an organized activity, a method of thinking, and a way of investigating facts using objective and verifiable methodologies in order to determine the relationships between these facts and to deduce general principles or explanatory laws.” (Hassana Mohi El-Din, 1999, p. 106).

3. Community Development:

The university can only fully fulfill its mission if it commits to addressing societal challenges and meeting the demands of its growth and prosperity. Therefore, public service to the community has become a fundamental function of the university, no less important than the two previous functions.

3/ Higher Education Reform :

(The New LMD System): The structure of the LMD system can be described as follows:

1. The Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate system is based on three stages of study, each leading to a university degree:

- Stage 1: This level corresponds to the baccalaureate followed by three years of higher education, leading to a Bachelor's degree.
- Stage 2: This level corresponds to the baccalaureate followed by five years of higher education, leading to a Master's degree.
- Stage 3: This level corresponds to the baccalaureate followed by eight years of higher education, leading to a Doctorate. Within each stage, study programs are organized into teaching modules, which are themselves grouped into semesters.

Characteristics of the LMD System:

The LMD system in higher education is characterized by:

- The new structure of education: The new structure of the LMD system (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate) allows for better recognition of degrees in the job market and is structured around three phases:
 - The first phase leads to the awarding of a Bachelor's degree.
 - The second phase leads to the awarding of a Master's degree.
 - The third phase leads to the awarding of a Doctorate. Consequently, the Ministry must define a comprehensive strategy for higher education and develop the guidelines for the national plan for the development of higher education.
- Higher education institutions must define and propose, within the framework of this strategy, their current policies regarding training and research, drawing on their own capacities, resources, and those of their environment.
- Regional evaluation committees, as well as the national accreditation committee, must evaluate and approve proposed programs and accredit higher education institutions in order to guarantee quality teaching.

- **Organization of LMD (Bachelor's-Master's-Doctorate) training programs:**

Training programs are organized according to diverse and personalized pathways. Each pathway includes core, exploratory, and interdisciplinary modules. These modules are defined by the institution based on its training strategies in a specific field. They offer a wide variety of pathway choices, ranging from a structured curriculum to more flexible pathways. This approach promotes individualization by integrating multidisciplinary approaches, including preparatory and progressive support for students, based on their professional or personal projects, through a system of standards common to the different pathways.

- **Assessment and progress:**

Students' learning outcomes are assessed through continuous monitoring of knowledge acquisition. The final certificate is awarded either after validation of each module individually or through the application of the principle of cross-validation between the different modules.

- **Lifelong learning:**

The new LMD system allows everyone, at all stages of life, regardless of their level and motivations, to begin and complete a learning process. The same certificate can be obtained in different ways: initial and continuing education, on-the-job training, or validation of prior learning. (Ashour, 2010, pp. 5-6).

4/ The Importance of Quality in Higher Education:

1- The Importance of Quality in Higher Education: Anyone observing the current state of our educational institutions, in a context of rapid global evolution and across various fields, will find that they face numerous challenges, whether related to technological advancements, the pace of change and cultural openness, or the optimal economic and social aspects in line with the culture and nature of society. Therefore, the importance of implementing quality in education lies in the following points:

- Helping educational institutions identify aspects of educational quality and their intellectual and material resources.
- Contributing to decision-making related to work and proposing appropriate solutions and alternatives.

- Contributing to meeting the needs and expectations of students.
- Contribute to keeping pace with educational developments for continuous improvement.
 - Evaluate academic (student) and non-academic performance.
- Contribute to the development of leadership skills.
- Identify and manage different types of waste.

2- Objectives of Quality Implementation in Higher Education:

The objectives of quality implementation in higher education institutions can be summarized as follows:

- To raise students' awareness of the educational process and its objectives, while offering them more effective opportunities for independent learning.
- To ensure the participation of all university staff in administration, with each person clearly aware of their role, responsibilities, and contribution to the improvement and development of the institution.
- To significantly reduce administrative bureaucracy and eliminate repetitive and sometimes contradictory procedures, while respecting official guidelines and participating in decision-making.
- To ensure the quality of educational services provided despite the diversity of staff members' profiles.
- To facilitate the implementation of an effective system guaranteeing continuity of services in the event of a staff member's absence or resignation.
- To increase the respect, recognition, and reputation of the university for the services it provides to students and the community, particularly through its contribution to local development. (Larqat Ali, 2008, p. 48).

8- Steps for Implementing Quality in Higher Education:

To implement a quality approach in higher education, the following steps must be followed:

• Promote a Culture of Total Quality:

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a new administrative and cultural philosophy that must replace the traditional culture. This process requires the educational institution, under the leadership of its management, to promote a culture of quality through the following means:

- Select qualified trainers, teachers, and staff to work within the TQM framework.

- Organize meetings, conferences, and workshops led by quality system experts to present this concept.
- Develop training programs for administrators, teachers, and staff to equip them to plan, improve, and monitor the quality system.

- **Plan the Implementation of the Quality System:**

This step requires a thorough understanding of the inputs, processes, and output specifications of the quality system. In other words, planners must have a clear vision of all the program's inputs and processes. They must also:

- Define the educational institution's objectives.
- Define the educational institution's mission in relation to its objectives.
- Identify the clients or beneficiaries of the educational service.
- Identify the clients' requirements and expectations of graduates and monitor their progress.

Organization for Implementing a Quality System:

A quality system should be characterized by the following elements:

- Consistency and efficiency among the services and staff of the educational institution.
 - Knowledge of the institution's mission and objectives by each employee.
 - Reduction of competition and promotion of teamwork (Yazeed Qada, 2011, p. 558). To achieve this, the educational institution establishes a council chaired by its director and appoints a quality coordinator. The quality system also emphasizes the importance of everyone's participation in taking responsibility, in innovation, and in creativity.
 - Implementation of the Quality System: This takes place in several stages:
 - Preparation: This stage prepares the educational institution's staff for the concept of quality and includes the following elements:
 - Explanation of the concept of Total Quality Management to all employees.
 - Identification of the needs of internal and external clients.
 - Define the quality standards to be achieved for each activity or learning area within the institution.
 - Define the tasks and responsibilities necessary to carry out the various missions.
 - Provide the financial resources and information necessary to begin implementation.
- Implementation: This includes the following practices:

- Distribute tasks and responsibilities among individuals based on their skills and potential.
- Assign each individual the authority appropriate to their responsibilities.
- Strengthen the skills necessary for implementation through ongoing training. Evaluation: The main practices of the evaluation process are as follows:
 - Continuously monitor performance from the preparatory phase to the end of the implementation phase.
 - Compare performance to the quality standards established during the preparatory phase.
 - Evaluate employee performance and assign performance ratings.

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