

## Moroccan Higher Education System: Reality and Prospects

Abdallah Ghaicha<sup>[a],\*</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>Lecturer, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Ibn Zohr University, Hay Addakhla, Agadir, Morocco.

\*Corresponding author.

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### Abstract

The present article is a reflection on the Moroccan Higher education system. It attempted to describe the state of affairs (reality) of this dubious system and suggests amendments to account for the impoverishing inconveniences. The discussion is initiated by the discrepancy between official's communique and the reality with regard educational reform, taking it through the quality of teaching and assessment, students' commitments, scientific research limitations. The second part of the reflection centers its concern on introducing a new framework to improve the Moroccan education system. It sheds light on new teachers' roles, up-to-date administrative engineering and governance, need for compulsory in-service professional development, and the urgent major conceptual and practical departure from the previous old educational policy and practices.

**Key words:** Moroccan higher education system; Accountability; Instruction; Educational policy; Assessment and evaluation; MENA

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### INTRODUCTION

It is undeniable that a country's education system reflects its level of development as well as its potential to cope with the continual demands of this global world.

The Moroccan higher education system (MHES) is no exception as has been reported to be in a very dubious rank compared to the MENA countries, according to the 2007 World Bank developmental report (WBDR). What is actually prevailing is a petrified, unsuccessful and unproductive education system, with rambling displeasure among teachers, students, and administrators offering higher education that is unharmonious with high-level values associated with universities.

Its current unpromising state of affairs coerces one to call for a moratorium on reassessing the current state against the objectives that were once set for it during the past decades and putting an agenda for improvement based on that assessment results. The MHES needs serious, well-thought and pedagogically founded reform procedures for it to regain its past prosperity that dates to the 70's of the past century. The present article came as a reaction to this unhopeful state of such a critical state of the MHES, offering a personal contribution to the issue as to how to redress both its state and quality for better improvement. For this purpose, a description of its state of affairs will initiate this discussion, followed by shedding light on areas of weaknesses, and finally suggesting an eventual framework for improvement.

### 1. THE STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE MHES/REALITY

Prior to uncovering the reality of the current state of affairs of the MHES, it is rudimentary to affirm that the reality of a thing is manifested in the facts that one observes, lives, and experiences. These facts may appeal to some and may mean nothing to most. Hence, what I am sharing with the reader in this reflection remains a personal interpretation to the earnestness of that I observe and experience as a part of this, unfortunately, pitiable system. Therefore, the legitimacy of this "reality" might seem thoughtful to some and elusive or thoughtless to

others. It has reached such a point that there is a growing feeling of disenchantment and apathy spreading among all the stakeholders; more pitifully students when it comes to choosing a degree course.

The current reality of the MHES apparently shows that ALL the practices, political vision, pedagogical (teaching and assessment) manifestations are far from reflecting the principles officially voiced in the vision(s) of the Moroccan education architects. This shall be made clear by stressing the educational reform conception itself, the quality of teaching and assessment of learning, administrative engineering and governance, students commitments, and scientific research.

Dozens of published articles, evaluative reports, ministerial communiqués and “blog” memories that have been consulted, as well as the local or national TV programs and documentaries about the educational system, all convey a “bleak” image about its status. This was warned against years ago. Bouzidi (2007) claims that high numbers of Moroccan students have been denied enrollment in European countries, chiefly France, due to the tougher visa restrictions applied by European Union on Moroccan Baccalaureate holders seeking applications for pursuing higher education in France, a privilege that has been granted to their fellows up until recently. Therefore, high rates of Moroccan Baccalaureate holders’ applicants seeking enrollments at French universities and colleges undergo many troubles achieving that dream. Accordingly, High rates of Moroccan applications for studying abroad have been overthrown due to the complex enrollment procedures applied by those agencies; defending that act by alleging the invalidity of the diplomas issued by Moroccan Ministry of Education due to their emptiness from solid pedagogical quality and low equivalence. This has been corroborated by a recent WBDR that rated Morocco 126<sup>th</sup> among the evaluated countries, and the second-place next to last among the 14 MENA countries covered by its last Moroccan comprehensive evaluation. It then called for an urgent educational reform for Morocco claiming that “education systems do not produce the skills needed in an increasingly competitive world” (WBDR, 2007, p.1), and continues alleging that the system needs to “change pedagogical approaches to better compete internationally” (WBDR, 2007, p.2). In effect, Morocco’s failure to implement the previous reforms is caused by the lack of the country’s collective affiliation, especially among all state sectors, including politicians, elected representatives, companies, the civil society, syndicates, families, instructors and associations, averring that none of them has assumed his due responsibilities to the collapse of the Moroccan school status. To this concern, the internal accountability of the MHES, in which both the school and the university make part, is generally very shabby, asserting that a high number of graduates are unqualified or qualified and competent in domains that the economy market is not in need of. Weird to read

that the ministry exports its emergency plans, which falls within its political and educational responsibility, to a multilateral application including other parts like elected representatives and other social cooperates. The question that poses itself to the fore is that how would the minister and his architects manage such a mission which was once having one boss “the ministry”, and that has now become bossed by different heads? However, when talking about the place of the university in the reform, the new educational policy has seeks to grant Moroccan university more autonomy and honor, claiming that university success is conditioned by its autonomy in its own essential choices and its educational decisions. It is even plainly revealed by other stakeholders that the Moroccan university suffers from some impairment due to the imbalance that exists among the types of programs opened to the students and the assessment system applied to measure student learning and hence judge their achievement. That made education architects think about ways of restructuring those programs opened in all different levels of college education through undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs.

Related to what has been presented above, what does our home-based higher education system offer to empower Moroccan students with the necessary academic competences and skills that would warrant them a smooth access to European, British, and / or American colleges after getting their baccalaureate, or to host them if they choose to study in Morocco? The architects of the Moroccan educational philosophy promised to guarantee a highly qualified instruction for all. Nevertheless, the actual facts, as is discussed below, do not echo these promises.

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## **2. DISCREPANCY BETWEEN OFFICIAL’S COMMUNIQUE AND THE REALITY WITH REGARD EDUCATIONAL REFORM**

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It is true that the Moroccan education reform that was launched in the year 2000 reflects a well-designed conception at its inception; however, after about a decade of implementation, the reality invalidates much of what was once communicated through those pompous speeches delivered to the public by education architects about that reform. Past ministers, including claim that they decided to give Moroccan students the opportunity to move both within the national and into the international system, and be closer to the European model. It seems, however, that the European system is no longer in need of keeping Moroccan students abreast lately as Bouzidi (2007) claims.

Since its introduction in 2000, the reform was aiming at improving the quality of education offered to Moroccan students. However, recent evaluations of the education reform that Morocco was engaged until 2009 reported that its gains and efficacy were very stumpy. The far-reaching

over ambitious goals turned out to be unachievable at all due to very (un)strategic pitfalls that the architects have sloppily encountered. These are due to either or all of the following aspects: (a) the overreaching goals set by reform architects positing that “the charter was very ambitious in its reform conception, as a whole nation’s project”,..., and “goes far beyond the size of this institution”, (b) ignorance or failure of upgrading the necessary resources (logistics, qualified human resources) to the demands of the reform expectations, (c) demeaning the act of diversifying resources of contributions to the design of the pre-conceived framework of reform, especially by not opening communication(s) to different contributors, including teachers, students and parents’ voices; and (d) the lack of continuous follow up to, assessment of the reform, evaluating its progress and intervening to redress it when stuck or sounding non-conforming to the actual changes affecting the system, hence either reviewing unneeded goals or searching ways to heal them immediately. Additionally, Sifting through the agenda(s) for the governmental parliamentary meetings, among the 24 meetings scheduled for April 14 to May 5, 2009, not even one has shown an immediate concern and ethical commitment of the MHE sector to discuss issues pertinent to the progress and or the quality of education offered there, as if everything is satisfactory with it. Very few attempts have been made to redress the situation and solve the issue; yet, they all remain superfluous.

### 3. THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The reform stresses delivering high quality instruction to all Moroccan learners. Nonetheless, reform architects have not gone further than articulating resonant speeches on auditoria, theorizing as to what should be done to promote the MES or possibly alleviate its current state, part of which has recently been proposed through the “emergency plan” (2009-2012) that was launched by the MNEHEST&SR as a new conception to save the Moroccan school from its current collapse. They should, prior to that, have paid field visits to representative samples of Moroccan public or private institutes and universities to get a closer representation of the real situation of those contexts instead of just proscribing what should(not) be done based on the reports they keep receiving, which are most of the time faking the realities of the things.

Presently teaching practices in most Middle East and North Africa still being prevailed by the abundant use of traditional pedagogical methods, such as copying from the blackboard, where there is little interaction between teachers and students (Gersten, 2008, p.6). Worse than that are the observed unprecedented malpractices dominating over both the teaching and assessment practices in most

of the levels of the MES. Being personally involved in this system, as an EFL university lecturer, I cannot deny the unjustified and unpardonable inconsistencies and malpractices in the Moroccan tertiary education across the country. To provide but one example about Faculties of Letters and Social Sciences, Fall Classes must officially start by the second week of September while Spring ones must formally start by the first week of February. That schedule has never been respected. The “average” academic semester is usually shortened to eight to ten weeks. Assuming that the academic year happens to magically begin on time, bigger issues related to classroom teaching prevail over the scene. This is being developed in the sections below.

Needless to say that, language classes in most Moroccan universities nowadays receive an average of 180 to 220 enrolled students, which go beyond the capacity of the classroom (demands) on all the standard means. As a case in point, what degree and quality of attainment are we expecting those students receiving instruction in very poor conditions compared to other developing countries? To cite but a few examples, foreign language teachers rarely receive classes less than 180 students in a one front door classroom where, if all the students decide to attend their classes, they will have to sit squeezed most of the time sharing with two or three students a table (100 cm×50 cm) or if they are lucky they would find just a chair to sit on. If they choose to stay in, they would have to sentence themselves to a 2 hours standing position changing postures. I bet this is common to all language classes in the Faculties of Letters and Social Sciences (FLSS) across Morocco. What is critical about this is the mediocre output of such an impoverished system leading its graduates to a bleak horizon of emptiness after graduation. Most of its diploma holders do not find a place in the job market. It is rare that they can either contribute to their economic and social environment. This is supported by Llorent-Bedmar (2014, p.101) in his claim that

*This is a university system cut adrift from its economic and cultural environment, and an obvious sign of this is the huge number of graduates who leave the university and immediately swell the ranks of the unemployed. This problem cannot be attributed exclusively to the labor market failing to absorb enough of these graduates, but rather to the irrelevance of the contents of the degree courses and of the qualifications to the socioeconomic development of the country. (Llorent-Bedmar, 2014, p.102)*

Worse is the burden shouldered to the instructor while formatively or summatively assessing his students learning; where everything is left to his responsibility and discretion alone with that same number of students he used to be teaching in the same conditions. He has to administer exam drafts, exam papers, control attendance and do the hardest task of controlling, “patrolling”, the class against any sort of fraudulence or

academic dishonesty. The current situation of the system producing thousands of graduates missing the essence of instruction, lacking the content and skills described in the pedagogical descriptive files accredited by the MHEST&SR as been what needs to be mastered and demonstrated by the BA and MA graduates together with PhD holders. It is highly needed to administer National Entrance-Exit Examinations at the BA, MA and PhD levels assessing the content and skills trained on by the students to merit the diplomas they are getting at the end of their training and instruction.

Other factors contributing to the underprivileged situation of the M(H)ES relate to the lack of both horizontal and vertical coordination among faculty instructors, which renders instruction chaotic. Absence of coordination creates a total disparity in the amount and quality of course contents taught for each group of students, types, timing and number of assessment measures used to assess students' achievements. This dearth of clearly established perspective of best ways of ensuring high levels of accountability to the different stakeholders (instructors, students, status of the department, institution, parents, ministry, and funding agencies) downgrade the value and quality of instruction offered to the students. The institution's infrastructure, logistics and human resources are other factors contributing to this dubious situation. While the regulations require only sixty students per class, it is highly unlikely that one teaches a class less than 180 students. What is strikingly weird is that one has to even individually take charge of assessing those numbers, in one room the capacity of which does not exceed 80, with no help from other invigilators or proctors.

#### 4. STUDENTS, COMMITMENTS

Reaching higher levels of learning attainment would not be significant without committing the learners to all the requirements of instruction. Part of that includes regular and mass attendance, pre-class readings, thoughtful involvement in class participation and discussion as well as both in-class and term group-projects or portfolios, continuous submission of classroom or take-home assignments, accomplishments of sound, academic end of study papers, etc. Yet, the bleak reality that prevails over our students conceptions about the Moroccan education system devalues their commitment levels to any or most probably all the aforementioned requirements. Instances of such de-motivators are related to the atmosphere proliferating over the instructional and administrative scene at the institution, the varying quality and pace of the teaching styles adopted by each faculty, the ad hoc student schedule which most of the time satisfies teachers wishes at students detriment; the apparent discrepancy in the teaching load and content style, assessment procedure,

quizzes weightings among teachers; the faculty alumni past experiences, the type of (mostly negative) rapport that prevails among teachers and students, teacher administration rapport, student administrator rapport, the degree of seriousness with which educational and instructional matters are taken care off within the institution, the value of the institution in the eyes of other immediate or remote educational or social corners within or outside Morocco, sometimes even among different departments within the same institution.

#### 5. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Strange enough is that while documenting about the Moroccan educational reform as an emergent issue, any credulous evaluation of the MHES could not be found. Alas, the reports that could be accessed were mostly written by members of agencies like the World Bank. Not even one was traced as a comprehensive evaluation done by a Moroccan in response to all the queries I goggled and searched for in official websites of numerous Moroccan, American and European universities and international journals. This is real evidence that architects designing, or adopting foreign reforms do not make evaluation procedures of an existing reform before launching a new one implementation to assess its potential applicability and degree of success before even investing more efforts and money on it? What is a common trend is keeping any of those shy attempts to criticize the system within ministry official archives, fearing for stimulating public annoyance with the continuously alarming state of the system.

Bloom, Canning and Chan (2006), studying higher education and economic development in Africa, reported that African countries suffer from a limited number of research. They argue that the publication rate in Africa remains incredibly low; only 5,839 papers were published in 1995, compared to 15,995 in South Asia, 14,426 in Latin America & Caribbean. Additionally, there is a shortage of graduate programs as well as strong (PhD) faculty, which in most cases obtained from the north, in areas of no local relevance. There comes in the third rank poor research infrastructure, including ICT, lack of international journals accessible by faculty. The relatively few university research groups that exist carry out low-level scientific research with limited economic and material means. What is even apparent is the low-degree of relevance and responsiveness to national development or even pertinent appealing educational issues that worth immediate treatment. In effect, most faculty publications, if that happens ever, remain either local, institutional, or regional newsletters or journals, very few fetch and guarantee works published in both reputable national/regional, international research specialized journals. Yet, that remains unrepresentative in most cases.

## 6. SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVEMENT

Current realities of the MES clearly show that past effort reforms have not produced the desired outcomes. Future education reforms, or as some ironically calls it, “*reforming the reforms*”, must be guided by a newly updated, approach or framework of a pre-estimated measures of efficiency in the application. The proposed framework draws insights from assessing the current state of affairs of the M(H)ES in order to put forward significant suggestions to improve it for the welfare of all (inter) national stakeholders (students, parents (associations), teachers, administrators, ministers and (non)governmental funding agencies. This approach might be very challenging, but still represents a potentially pertinent perspective. Suggestions for improvement should provide room for covering the roles that each of the stakeholders might fulfill to give a push forward to this education system. Before describing my personal approach to improving the MHES, it is important to pay some service to a few suggestions that have been presented by the (MNEHEST&SR), some Moroccan architects and the public.

Improving a system should not ALWAYS rest on the shoulders of external funding agencies (i.e., the WB), nor on ministerial authorities per se. It should, however, be a shared responsibility of different stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, administrators (within institutes, universities, ministries, and other external funding agencies). Suggestions to potential reforms should, rather, always be cross-validated by both the immediate agents taking care of the services offered (instruction and assessment of learning and (inter)national educational authorities), rather than always being proscribed from external bodies; provided that they satisfy sound and highly principled evaluation scheme(s).

Should “reforms” always be proscribed from others (like the WB (cases 1995, 2007 & 2008)), a question buzzing stakeholders, instructors and administrators running the institutions need not even be fulfilling their duties like teaching, assessment, tutoring tasks, and management they have to do by profession. Yet, it’s high time we started demonstrating to the public that we can do it “perfectly” and we would not appreciate any type of intrusion from any “imposters”. I shall in what follows share the framework within which we should be acting out our educational conceptions and duties in order to immunize ourselves from unneeded proscriptions. To achieve such an aim, I will proceed by suggesting possible alterations that can possibly be applied to our educational duties as real responsible educationists in order to come into grip with the demands of our educational tasks in such a rapidly changing world.

### 6.1 Introducing a New Framework to Improve the Moroccan Education System

Having described the state of affairs of the Moroccan education system and spotting most of its noticeable areas of weakness, it is now the turn to set a prospective plan for improving it. Reforming this system requires a strict well-balanced agenda based on a multidimensional approach that integrates all stakeholders’ efforts to respond to both the national educational needs and global requirements. This approach has to open new horizons for public contributions to any education-related issues. Consequently, prior to implementing any reform of the MHES, no matter how well-architected that might be, all members, liable to affect or be affected by the consequences of that reform, need to rejuvenate readiness, internal predisposition and faith in the fact that no one would care for the well-being of our country except us (Moroccans). Assuring that would allow one to easily advance the improvement conception that s/he would share.

As it has been made clear from the discussion above, the MHES needs a well-functioning and firmly designed process to implement accountable policies. The latter should draw its basic inspirations and foundations from (a) motivated institutions, teachers, students and administrators, whose thoughts, willpowers and attitudes towards change need be amended, and (b) adequate mechanism of citizens to affect education objectives, priorities, and resource allocation which should go in total concomitance with good engineering, incentives and public accountability.

### 6.2 Teachers’ Roles

A teacher, an educationist by virtue, should fulfill his/her edifying duties (teaching, tutoring, assessment and research) both in accordance with the Moroccan educational philosophy, as manifested in the ministerial circulars, updated program descriptive files accredited by the ministry of higher education, and institutional pedagogically elected internal circulars) vis-à-vis one’s ongoing professional development in the field. Teachers have to eventually accomplish such tasks as suggested below. They should:

(a) Admit that their efforts, as teachers, to fulfill the required duties might not be free from deficiency- unless it is intended. But, a devoted and a dedicated teacher should always self-evaluate his work and monitor its alignment with the institutional and ministerial established policy. S/he should be as highly accountable to his/her students, institution and educational system by fulfilling all his/ her teaching, assessment, tutoring and specifically research duties to worth the salary s/ he is receiving out of public taxes. Faculty instructors should then put some emergency plans and evaluation measures part of their teaching practices and educational agendas.

(b) Guide their instruction, as teachers' primary duty, by high sense of responsibility and ethics. It should as well be aligned with a thoughtfully graded content responding to the needs of the prospective students benefiting from it. For this reason, ALL the departments of English studies are required to set departmental meetings at least once a year, preferably at the end of each academic year. ALL teachers have to physically attend it, responding to both horizontal and vertical coordination requirements, to set a yearly or a semester agenda for the up-coming academic year or the present semester. This should yield palpable formal agreements on all the following sets of concerns:

- i. Establish a thoughtful gradation of the teaching materials (unified textbooks or handbooks), responding to the content and skills that need be achieved by the students as instruction recipients, respecting the pedagogical descriptive files that are accredited by the Moroccan ministry of higher education, staff training and scientific research. Agree upon modes and frequency of assessment(s) with detailed description of exam specifications for the whole assessment duties.
- ii. Set a fixed agenda for the needed meetings to monitor and redress the progress and achievement of the broad-spectrum of instruction and assessment-related issues.
- iii. Adopt a research-based approach to the internal departmental or institutional issues and problems that affect the quality of educational life in their immediate context; issues that might serve as topics for their action research. They might invest them for their end of study seminars and co-work on them in either a student teacher, a teacher-teacher research approach, or special interest research groups. This would raise teachers', students' accountability rendering both parts efforts, and time spent on the end of study paper, MA theses and PhD dissertations *commendable*. That would help getting rid of the unjustified disparity among teachers instructional, assessment and research practices which were affecting the quantity and quality of content taught, the assessment measures used (most of time missing quality, goals and uses, standards), and eventually affecting their social, academic and professional accountability.

### 6.3 Administrative Engineering & Governance

The Ministry of Higher Education, Staff Training and Scientific Research, being the body responsible for the conception, architecture and execution of reform plans as reflections of a state's education philosophical policies, should cater for three basic components to make their education reforms operative; engineering, incentives and public accountability as the WBDR (2007) posited.

High-quality engineering measures should ensure efficient use of the right technical inputs needed to achieve the desired educational outcomes; the better engineered an education system is, the more capable it will be in producing relatively better education results. This engineering should be determined by features like: Quality of pedagogy that feeds or promotes sets of highly independent cognitive and inquiry-based learning, provides multiple chance learning, emphasizes technology use, science and foreign languages. It should to be empowered by teaching capacity, structure of education, and fair flow of students and human resources through both levels of education and promotion for both teachers and students respectively, allowing some sort of resource mobilization with a degree of merit. This needs a new kind of engineering based on partnership rather than hierarchical command. Education authorities need to coordinate the contribution of an assortment of actors (public, private, local, non-governmental), rather than controlling allocation of all educational inputs and resources.

(a) The government and universities' administration should both incentivize educators as agents of change, *encouraging them* to better promote their academic, instructional and research performance as well as their responsiveness to the demand of self-development in individual areas of specialization and more focus on the immediacy of the context in which they are working, as manifestations of accountability. A way to achieve this is by devising an apparatus linking education outcomes with the rewards or penalties ((non)pecuniary offered to teachers and institutions on the basis of their accountability and professional improvement). Different measures would be used for this sake to assess incentives for the public education system. These are institution autonomy, participation in international tests, conferences, competitions, existence of national accreditation system which could sturdily compete with international ones, the presence of vivid parents' associations, a system of inspection, and whether the country links the performance of institutions to any kind of reward- resources, (non) pecuniary payments or career development. Yet, to incentivize educational outcomes as well as vehicles of public accountability function on the basis of firm, accurate, credible, regularly updated and detailed set of fair criteria. To promote the flexibility and performance of education actors, our country needs to improve incentive structures. Firstly, and foremost, more decision making needs to concentrate on the educational institution (university), or at least, fairly shared between the ministry and the academic institution, to increase flexibility. Secondly, teacher licenses and promotion, (non)pecuniary endorsement, should be tied to entirely satisfying educational outcomes (outcomes and performances). This would require teachers to continuously upgrade their

teaching and research skills and competencies, rather than depend on seniority alone for promotion. As a matter of fact, and for efficient intervention,

*for the Moroccan universities to aspire to greater prestige, the quality of their services had to improve considerably. On the one hand, the role of the state had to change radically, particularly in matters of management and financing; on the other, a suitable basic education, general yet diversified, had to be designed, complemented by practical training with technical and professional qualifications, and without losing sight of the needs of the labor market.*

(b) Education should serve the public good by meeting the interest of the widest range of citizens (parents, students and other stakeholders) by ensuring public accountability. Such a criterion should be accounted for by providing the public with opportunities of sharing responsibilities over the formation of education objectives, policies, and resource allocation either at the national, regional or local levels. Holding policy makers accountable to citizens can ensure that education in serving the broader objectives of society. It is necessary that our country introduced an Index of Public Accountability (IPA), which would provide room for citizens to access information, which must in turn be valid, hold their leaders and public officials accountable for their decisions and actions, and become involved in selecting and replacing those in authority. However, caring for public accountability should be commensurate with high educational outcomes as well.

#### **6.4 Compulsory In-Service Professional Development**

A successful reform of an education system should be warranted by a purposeful and justified high quality in-service professional development of all educational agents involved in its implementation. This should account for fulfilling the requirements of those agents through an ethically strict, horizontal and vertical relationship. Education agents comprise educational policy architects at the MHEST&SR level, university presidents, their vice-presidents and general secretaries, deans and vice-deans, and finally teachers. The staff governing the progress of instruction is sometimes poorly trained, the material resources are precarious and there is, furthermore, a clear mismatch between what is taught and the labor market, all reasons why the Moroccan university has gained a rather poor reputation.

Educational professional development of all those agents should necessarily support an ongoing skill development, new knowledge, and system change and reform. To achieve such a legitimate aim, educationists are invited to ethically guarantee involvement in a sort of multidirectional networking where every single member should feed his personalized learning through others developed expertise and vice ver. ca. This kind of networking would grant all intervening participants a

chance to manage the heated philosophical discussions as well as present highly efficient exemplars capable of withstanding criticism; hence easily spot areas of potential weakness in the system and try to solve it ahead of time through the know-how of any of the agents. If it happens that the issue is complex to be solved, a framework for solution would be tailored for that aim. It is their where the inquiry for the knowledge starts as a part of the solution, which is in turn part of the professional development. The question that poses itself is whether all educational architects need the same kind of professional development with equal level of depth. The answer is obviously no. We shall see below the types of professional development that are at the disposition of different educational agents.

Updating academic's subject matter, technical, administrative, research and professional understandings and skills are a basic premise for a successful professional development. This should involve every single individual educator, policy designer, administrator, researcher and the teacher in a progressive shining of their domain-specific knowledge and skills coping up with the novelties in their areas of specialization and always search for ties of applicability of that they are learning and the immediate environment they work in and the public they are responsible for. Yet, we need to stress the fact that the higher we grow in the hierarchy of the politico-educational ladder, the more complex the responsibility of being professionally knowledgeable in all the "nuts and bolts" of the education system one is functioning within.

#### **6.5 Need For Major Conceptual and Practical Departure From the Previous Old Educational Policy and Practices**

This departure needs exigent amendments to the content taught to the 21<sup>st</sup> generation that remains obsolete due to its expiry dating back to the 60s. It even requires updating one's teaching materials and assessment every academic year by replacing the currently loose and unscrupulous means of assessment system with a more rigid one requiring higher levels of standards from students, teachers and administrators as well. Such an updating will, by implication, upgrade the level of our assessment system to a level where it could allow fair and legitimate comparisons among students when putting candidacy in any training center if longing to pursue a professional career, or in any other university or college if choosing to continue their studies or get involved in a research program. This is corroborated by Starkey et al. (2009, p.186) when asserting that "In service teacher education / professional development is viewed as an extension of pre-service teacher education in ensuring that teachers-whether new or experienced-have up to date snapshots of the knowledge needed to be effective".

These measures would not reach justifiable effectiveness without promoting a solid faculty

involvement in high level of networking nationally or internationally along their academic and research specialization allowing for better understanding of the nuts and bolts of the novelties in both domains of expertise. A professional development program need be personalized in a way that would satisfy the academic and research needs of the faculty. Once analyzed, these needs have to be weighed against the country's educational philosophies, not to forget their concomitance with the international standards of the fields in question. Faculty can help more with the systematic considerations needed to better approach, establish and implement a successful reform and a professional development program in a negotiated manner, quite unlike the centrally driven approach usually proscribed vertically by a ministerial architect without any formal consent from either recipients of the reform or its agent implementers.

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## CONCLUSION

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In a nutshell, no reform should be implemented through emergent hastily made proscribed recipes served in the corridors of the ministry or other external organisms. They would rather be the fruit of a support foregrounded through a shared effort among all different agents involved within the education system going through a serious professional development before launching the reform into implementation. That would provide more room to assess the pre-reform implementation cost and effective costs. For independent and efficient interventionist approach to

heal the MHES, a systematic reform enabling the faculties and colleges to open up and adapt to the Moroccan social and economic environment, together with boosting and unifying the quality of education through public investment in a strict vision matching the expectations of the entire public (stakeholders). Being the major contributory factor, more financial resources should be invested in the higher education system at the level of teaching and research incentives, abundance of teaching materials and logistics amounting to the well-being of recipients of instruction and training. If provided, more prestige, academic standards, students will then be well-prepared for professional life. A situation exacerbated by the mismatch between a university education and the needs of the labor market.

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