

A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities

دراسة احصائية حول النظام العام داخل الجامعات الجزائرية: بعض الاجراءات
لتعديل عادات التدريس و تنمية النشاطات البحثية

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Abstract:

The concern of this paper is to promote the fact that applying administrative supervision can demonstrably consolidate the general conduct inside universities, and thus, help ensure better teaching practices and research activities in favour of the community inside and outside universities. Actually, thousands of procedures and regulations are amended to meet the needs of these communities and serve every single aspect in departments and faculties as far as pedagogic activities, personnel relationships, responsibilities and duties are concerned. However, there is a drive to depreciate these organizational schemes. Surveying what typifies activities inside universities through qualitative and quantitative methods can help understand the current challenges, in relevance to codes of ethics and codes of conduct, and thus, sort out what goes with the country's broad objectives. In this vein, refining codes of ethics, or rather transforming regulations into actions, will put down bad habits and practices. It is significant to reinforce the role of lecturers, councils and committees for they can bring in deep changes if sustained administratively.

Key words: conduct- boards- empower- transformations- surveying

Introduction:

University is without any doubt the driving force behind development of all its kinds and forms if not the engine room to turn the wheels of the country's different institutions. If handled properly, university can be the first institution to help place countries on the world's list of pioneers in a number of fields, and Algerian universities are no exception. In this context, constant transformations are launched to meet the nation's local and international interests and

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"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

needs. Actually, changes in policies and schemes, both structural and organizational, are just a response to the outer circumstances around us if not an urgent desire to speed up intellectual triumph over the challenges of the day. In other words, legal measures are for sure needed to describe the means and the ways different activities will be handled.

Codes of ethics are meant to ensure a number of values and morals among those acting on the behalf of organizations, institutions and agencies, whether public or private. They do establish the standards, or rather behaviour expectations, that employees and third party agents should be accountable to uphold.[†] Yet, mainly in Algerian universities, codes of ethics are often written off if not utterly ignored. Employees, lecturers and students remain unaware of these organizational measures that target issues like conflicts of interests, responsibilities, safety and harassment. In fact, 63% of the community inside university are unfamiliar of what codes of ethics are exactly for. Accordingly, this attempt aims at bringing codes of ethics to the fore through transforming behaviour expectations into actions, more exactly, codes of conduct. The success of institutions and organizations does not rely upon guidelines but strong mechanisms to enforce better practices and habits among employees. Briefly, codes of ethics should be strictly handled to arrive at the desired effects behind setting up institutions and organizations.

There is a blurry policy when it comes to codes of ethics and codes of conduct in many Algerian universities. It is still hard to resolve problems and settle down disputes; the fact that deteriorated the whole atmosphere inside departments and faculties. Complaints, for instance, are common and often unaddressed due to the fact that codes of conduct are generally less implemented. This attempt is therefore intended to catalogue all that typifies the general conduct inside universities in terms of pedagogic and research activities as well as relationships and duties. It then moves to what made codes of ethics, and the adjacent standards, less efficient and less applicable. This paper finally ends with a number of recommendations on how to ensure better practices and habits inside universities to achieve their utmost.

1- Methods:

A qualitative method was used to explore the realm of ideas and concepts in relevance to codes of ethics and different standards institutions and organizations usually design to ensure accountability and integrity. This will help gain a clear picture on what kind of challenges, or rather problems; employees are facing inside these organizations, and thus, deduce what might be appropriate for the general conduct in departments and faculties. In addition to the qualitative method, a survey was additionally conducted to understand to what extent employees comply with codes of ethics as well as the measures that might consolidate organizational practices and habits inside universities. Over 60 participants, lecturers, students and administrators, took part in this survey that includes 10 questions. These are about the different conceptions of ethics, the

"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

belief in codes of ethics and all that might help increase awareness of the major objective from setting a list of morals and lessons for the better conduct inside institutions and organization.

2- Results:

Exploring the issue of ethics and standards inside universities have revealed some surprising facts and unexpected details, which may form a solid platform for legal changes and remedies, and thus, develop both pedagogic and research activities at university. The present study showed that 71% of the respondents believe that there is a great difference between codes of ethics and codes of conduct in the sense that the latter is not only meant to outline but to clearly state what it takes to be part of institutions and organization. It additionally revealed that codes of ethics are usually misconceived. 33% of the respondents see that codes of ethics are more than outlining guidelines and standards among employees. In the same context, most of the respondents, more than 75%, believe that codes of ethics are useless for they do only bring little or no effects on integrity and accountability. In brief, some of the results were really unanticipated and unpredictable.

As for the impacts codes of ethics can bring to institutions, the answers to our questions were also stunning in the sense that they invite for additional analyses and studies. 86% of the respondents said that conflicts of interests and powers inside institutions and organizations were rendered to the lack of compliance with codes of ethics, and that 63% of them were victims to intimidation and the loss of rights. More than that, very few, exactly 39% of the respondents, affirmed that codes of ethics proved less efficient in settling disputes and conflicts. These statistics confirm that it is high time to refine codes of ethics and think of better mechanisms, as far as legal standards are concerned, to reinforce better practices and habits inside institutions. The survey ends with two main questions which in fact addressed what helpful practices can ensure discipline and increase accountability in organizations and institutions. 41% of the respondents believe that both integrity and accountability rely upon refining codes of ethics. 49% of the respondents believe that it is important to turn codes of ethics into codes of conduct.

Discussion:

Codes of ethics are for sure the chief blocks to sustain integrity and accountability inside institutions, and thus, it is needed to refine guidelines and policies that take both employees and institutions to other levels. In this vein, the study is intended to validate the fact that the success of institutions does not only rely upon lists of standards and measures that describe roles and missions, but also upon powerful mechanisms and means that hold everything to account. It addresses the importance of codes of ethics, the current practices and habits in relevance to codes of ethics and codes of conduct, and it finally ends with a number of recommendations on how to empower codes of ethics inside institutions.

3-1- A Rich Code of Ethics in favour of the General Conduct

In many institutions and organizations, codes of ethics are inevitable if not indispensable. They do comprehensibly and coherently express both standards and principles that employees have to comply with. They do coherently define the role and responsibility of profession and this will help professionals respond ethically at certain instances and situations.[‡] For firms and

"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

organizations, particularly when things went wrong, codes of ethics lay out the rules for behaviour and provide the groundwork for pre-emptive warnings. In other words, all members should mind that violating ethical guidelines can result in sanctions. Adopting a code of ethics means building trust, setting ethical behaviours and achieving excellence. When every member, from the CEO to the people at the very bottom, complies with rules and behaves in an ethical way toward one another, productivity will undoubtedly grow as conflicts disappear from the workplace.⁸ In brief, codes of ethics are meant to organize and prepare the ground for all that might help get the utmost out of universities, institutes and research centres.

In our case, the general conduct inside universities is required to meet a number pedagogic and research outcomes. Basically, a rich code of ethics has been put up to build strong relationships, assign duties and guarantee rights inside departments and faculties. A chain of acts, regulatory in nature, describe what all the members are expected to do, the way they are supposed to do it and even how to respond when things went wrong. A number of organs, namely scientific committees and faculty councils, are designed to ensure that courses, exams and other related procedures are handled appropriately. Research laboratories, on their part, are devised to supply the different increasing needs of the whole community, both inside and outside university, and this is actually the core objective behind founding universities and institutes. Thus, adopting codes of ethics that target every activity inside firms and organizations is unavoidable and mainly central to the functioning of these institutions (See **Figure one**).



M..Seddiki, (April, 2022). *Codes of Ethics in Algerian Universities*. <https://forms.gle/sSrXH82Y6oCBQoZY6>

"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

For pedagogic settings, Algerian universities, and through their relevant bodies, are committed to certain activities, such as the students' registration, courses and exams planning, the circulation of information and other scientific products. These activities and practices should always go in accordance with the university's code of ethics. Bodies like scientific councils and committees at the level of both departments and faculties are constituted to look after the progress of pedagogic and scientific activities as well as the maintenance of the administrative order. The members of these organs are required to share and report results, address what might go wrong with these activities and suggest remedies if possible.^{**} In the last two years, research evaluation becomes recommended after the rise of plagiarism and scientific theft, and thus, additional measures have been taken to eradicate every attempt, intentional or unintentional, to copy ones' ideas, inventions or products. These measures are all part of ethical guidelines that students, lecturers and even administrators should mind.

For the proper conduct inside universities, it is central to eradicate any unethical acts that might threaten mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. Lecturers, students and administrators are all required to mind the standards and rules listed in the code of ethics. They have to abide by the pedagogic and administrative arrangements. When things went against expectations, every agent has to assume the sanctions. For effective pedagogic activities, lecturers should regularly update their courses and manuals without promoting any personal attitudes. There must be no room for any sort of differentiation between students as far as their nationality, gender, race, beliefs or political leanings. Professional secrecy is another core measure to adopt when it comes to pedagogic or administrative meetings.^{††} For all the agents, violent deeds or responses are wholly prohibited if not liable to disciplinary measures. It is plainly unethical to do anything that might obstruct the general conduct inside university under the umbrella of freedom of speech or liberties. In the end, codes of ethics are meant to foster strong relationships at the workplaces, but it may happen to encounter less ethical habits which can only lessen productivity and integrity.

3-2- Difficult to maintain Ethical Practices

Though a rich code of ethics is at the disposal of lecturers, students and administrators, it is still notable to meet less ethical practices, which did unfortunately plague the whole atmosphere inside universities. Actually, compliance with codes of ethics inside universities is utterly decadent (See **Figure Two**). A great number of lecturers, students and administrators remain reluctant to comply with the rules listed in their codes of ethics. For pedagogic concerns, some teachers remain uncooperative with their colleagues, and more surprisingly, with the ministry's policies and the regional boards' recommendations. Some even set their objectives and activities, as far as teaching is concerned, away from their peers. It is both unethical and unprofessional to ignore what is meant to ensure accountability and integrity. Working in a less homogeneous climate would influence the whole process, particularly teaching. Students would lose equal opportunities to courses, grades and even scholarships. It is true that experiences are different, but it is under no means to set themes and units totally different from the regional

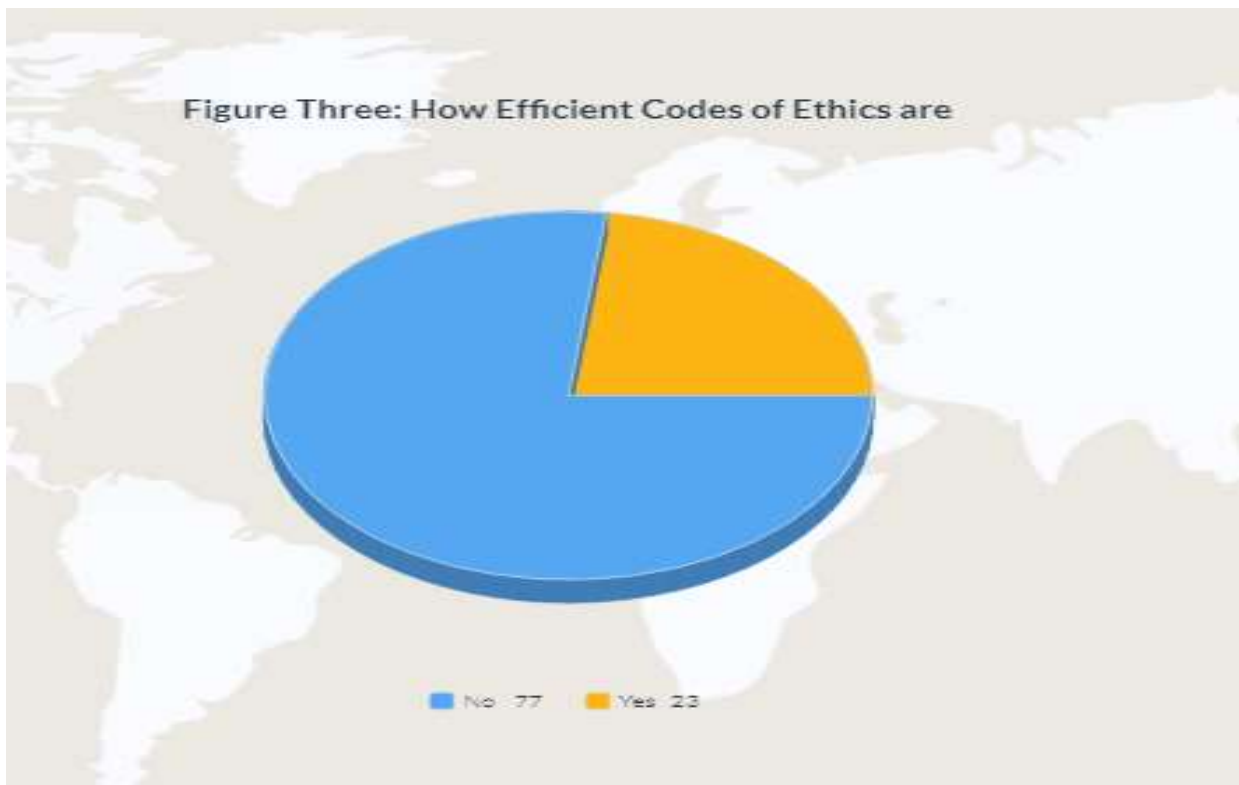
"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

boards' suggestions. There should be ways and means to eradicate these habits and bring to the fore the code of ethics.



M.Seddiki, (April, 2022). *Codes of Ethics in Algerian Universities*. <https://forms.gle/sSrXH82Y6oCBQoZY6>

In many other cases, the pedagogic activities are not handled properly due to little consideration to the code of ethics. Only five in twenty five lecturers are aware of the organizational standards and rules. In the same vein, pedagogic meetings and interdisciplinary coordination are less frequent between lecturers sharing the same courses though it is required to sit down together to tackle the related issues. Actually, this has caused conflicting attitudes among students. The lack of awareness extended to evaluation, which is additionally handled improperly, mainly when it comes to the broad objectives of both exams and tests. These are more summative than formative. In many other instances, students remain perplexed with the way exams are conducted or built. Another concern, which is plagued with reluctance, is supervision. Master students' supervision needs swift changes. The bulk of students are less guided to get the utmost of their supervisors in terms of research tips and experiences. It is ethically known that lecturers should guarantee qualitative and up to date practices in relevance to the current transformations and needs.^{‡‡} More than that, they should be part of research units and all that will contribute to the quality of information. Yet, and again, very few lecturers are committed to these ethics and standards inside universities; the fact that seriously limited the outcomes of academic research and pedagogic attainment. This study has shown that only 23% of the respondents who believe that codes of ethics are efficient to ensure integrity and accountability (See Figure Three).



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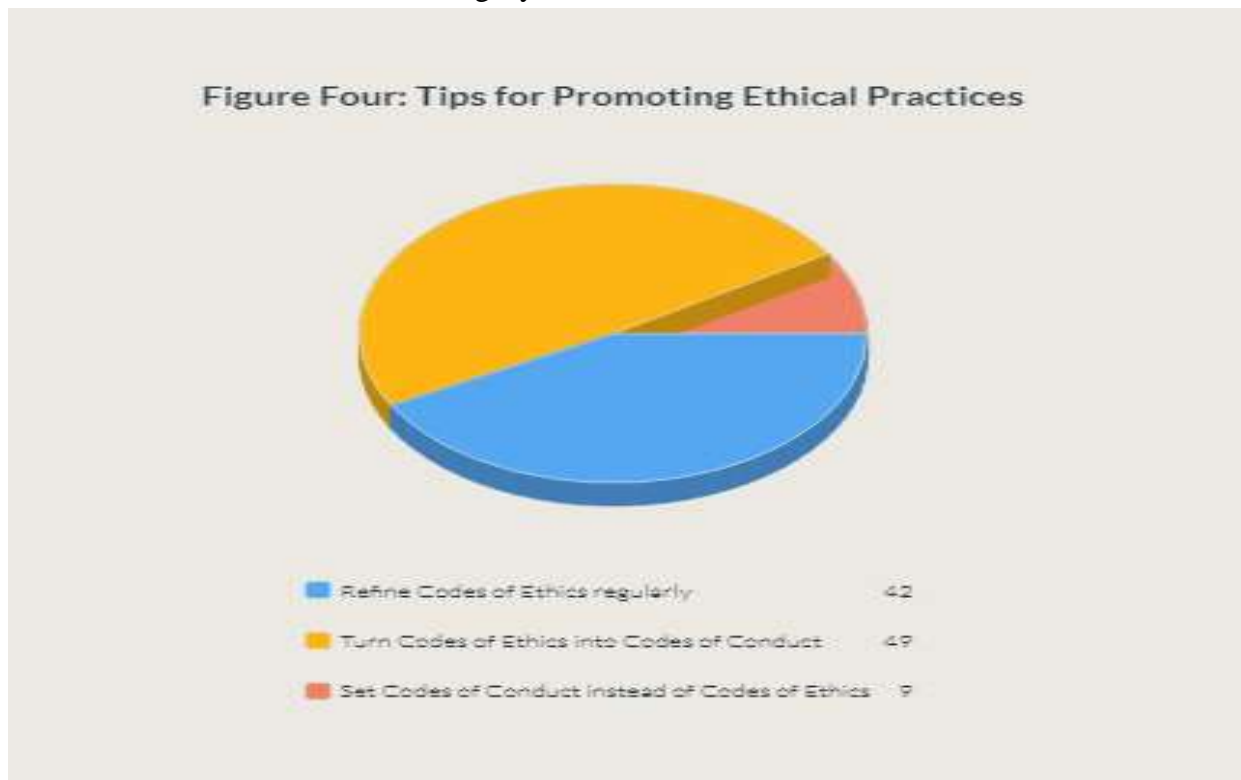
The lack of awareness extended to roles and functions. It is common among some university lecturers that their pedagogic role is purely teaching or conducting research, and this is ethically wrong. In all cases, lecturing at university means the transfer of information to students in relevance to their needs as well as research activities, mainly writing reports, books and booklets.^{§§} Nevertheless, and in many departments, it is still hard to realize balance between teaching and research. Without any doubt, there are mechanisms to make sure that teaching is handled conveniently, but again, committees and pedagogic groups inside departments and faculties have limited powers to intervene into what is going on in classes. More than that, research is equally liable to foreign factors or rather challenges that even academic organs cannot easily remedy. Research production cannot be dismantled from the technicality of platforms, editors' policies, blind reviewing and research relevance. The Algerian Scientific Journals Platform is a fine example. Unfortunately, it is still permissible to publish in revues and journals that are not relevant to the scope of research papers.

3-3- Tips for Promoting Proper Habits

After exploring the decadence of codes of ethics in Algerian universities, it becomes more than urgent to think of ways to empower proper habits and practices. An effective code of ethics does not only promote sound practices but also enforces performance inside institutions and organizations. It should set the general culture so as to build an enviable reputation, particularly

"A Statistical Account on the General Conduct in Algerian Universities: some Procedures to refine Teaching Practices and develop Research Activities"

inside universities. In other words, providing guidance and setting choices are not enough for ethical practices. Outlining the values and roles can be to no effects without thinking of alternatives and mechanisms to eradicate what goes against the existence of institutions (See **Figure Four**). In this case, codes of ethics should be transformed to codes of conduct, which clearly state what is appropriate and what is not. In other words, it is high time to opt for what it takes to ensure order and restore integrity at work.



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To promote proper habits inside universities, frequent meetings will not only remind professionals and employees of the general standards and values, but consolidate ethical practices if not bonds with institutions or organizations as well.*** Many lecturers and students are not familiar with the basics, and in fact, regular meetings will help them make difficult choices easier. Second, it is good to assign more powers to scientific and pedagogic bodies. Committees and councils should have the power to effect changes, not only suggesting remedies. In the same vein, it is helpful to set local and regional boards to make sure that pedagogic and administrative directives are handled properly. Of course, when it comes to nominations, scientific merits, experiences and even age should be take into account when forming these boards. Finally, it is high time to bring universities to the fore. Exporting academic products and experiences outside universities will help other sectors, mainly economic ones. Pedagogic and research activities should not drain the lecturers' time and energy. There should be other interests, like community service and monitoring other groups.

4- Conclusion

There is no doubt that ethics are meant to organize institutions, build reputations and maintain positive perceptions among customers and clients. Universities aren't an exception. They are created to meet academic interests and serve the community's needs, and thus, it is vital to set rules and standards. These will certainly make it easy for lecturers, students and administrators to transform their institutions into an outlet of benefits. It is therefore in our universities' best interest to think of ways to promote or maintain ethical practices. First, leaders and influencers inside universities should reinforce the benefits of ethical habits and practices. Via a number of activities, they have to display the importance of codes of ethics, which have to be consistent to the business inside universities. Engaging lecturers, students and administrators in the university's activities will consolidate a sense of belonging. Another important way to promote proper habits inside universities is to reward ethical behavior. Lecturers, students and administrators will act with integrity and value honesty if their actions are held in high esteem. Following ethical practices is important for many reasons and a major selling point to many of today's consumers. By taking measures to promote ethics in your workplace, you can create a better culture, improve your brand reputation and simply feel good that you're doing something positive.

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