

**EVALUATION LOGIC AND INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE
PERFORMANCE OF TEACHERS-RESEARCHERS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS IN MOROCCO.**

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Abstract

The observed reality of the current situation of higher education establishments in Morocco is marked by the gradual introduction of a number of evaluation practices. These practices are far from being a true system of performance evaluation culture. On the other hand, these systems are highly research- oriented which is not without consequence on other activities and especially that of education and training.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the impact of this focus on single profile evaluation systems centered on publications, on the overall performance of higher education institutions.

Keywords: Evaluation logic, individual and collective performance, regulation.

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the last century, higher education institutions in Morocco have undergone incessant reforms. These reforms have impacted its “governance method”, “training architecture” and “teaching contents”. These reforms are governed by the texts of the Law 01-00 on the organization of the sector of higher education and by the orientations of the national charter for education and training. The process of reforms has progressively imposed new requirements on university community, as well as a change in collective values and a change in its own representations with the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon model more centered on contractual inter-institutional an intra-institution relations; implying more autonomy and more responsibility of the actors and a progressive implementation of a new management having the evaluation of performance as one of its pillars.

Within this context, some evaluation practices have progressively taken shape (auto-evaluation, accreditation, international ranking), they are the work of ministerial bodies or under the leadership of universities presidents, university councils or others governance forums and international ranking. Till today, these practices remain insufficient to provide the Moroccan university establishments with a real cultural system of evaluation of performance.

Furthermore, these practices seem to suffer from the absence of logic unity in their implementation since they were established by university actors based on their capacity to problematize the university performance and also based on the balance of power between the actors. In addition, social actors of public university establishment, when confronted with national and international constraints, tend to wish to show that they are efficient as far as this recurrent question on the choice between the option of elitism and selection or the choice of inclusion and integration.

At the second level the status of student, client or user, arises in acute form. It is not uncommon to reveal even in the scholar literature, which is only the exegesis of the texts amending the Moroccan university system, the absence of a clear response to these fundamental questions.

The observed practices of evaluation wave between the requirements of a “control regulation”¹ multi-headed, inaccurate and changing and which is represented at the national level by both the Ministry and the High Councils and sometimes by the presidency of universities and their councils or by the local bodies of each establishment, council or department. It can also be of an international origin when it comes to seeking to impose standards taken from classification practices. Concerning the “autonomous-regulation”, it dominates the practices of evaluation and it is dominated by both individuals and informal groups of individuals, they benefit from the specific characteristic of each establishment of higher education, which are considered by some peoples as a “professional bureaucracy” and a weakness of “control regulation”.

Within this global context, the purpose of this article is to show how the systems of evaluation have triggered the interest of individuals towards more research activities. This orientation is not without consequences on other activities and especially that of education. Finally, our central question is about the impact of this research-oriented system of evaluation, with a unique profile and centered on publications and on the global performance of higher education institutions in their heterogeneities.

In the effort to try to bring some response elements, the continuation of this article will be arranged in three phases. After presenting the global context of the system of higher education in

¹ J.D. Reynaud (1988) considers “regulation” as a capacity to produce rules. “Rules” are employed in the broad sense and cover both the field of judicial rule at different levels (law, rule) and the moral rule, the formal rule and the informal rule. Reynaud distinguishes also three major types of regulations, “autonomous regulations” produced by basic groups and “control regulations” issued by the upper hierarchy and/or the political officials, the power holders and “ joint-regulations” : Institutionalized and cooperative systems and therefore relatively stable, and is a combination of the two first types of regulation.

Morocco² (part 1), we will present a theoretical analysis on the logic of evaluation of individual performance (part 2) and as a conclusion, we will reveal the contradictions of the evaluation in universities.

I .GLOBAL CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS : RULE AND REGULATION OF EVALUATION.

Three fundamental aspects characterize the mission of universities: education, research and services to community. It is achieved in a large way and comprises academic, social, political, cultural and economic dimensions. This mission contributes in a general way in the development of persons and society. Furthermore, with the globalization and the harmonization of higher education systems, the university is faced with a change of paradigm which concerns not only education but the entire positioning of the academic sphere within its environment and the way the university shall find its place and fulfill the tasks assigned to it. Moreover, the implementation of reform processes creates conflicts:

- The first level of conflict is due to the relation between the regulatory authority and the university as an institution. The essential question is about the reality of freedom of action left to establishments.
- The second level is due to the organizational resistance of intermediate level which are the components (training and research units, departments for instance)
- The third place of resistance is situated at the level of actors, users and the implementers of reforms.

In this respect, practices of evaluation were progressively established at the individual and institutional levels. The creation of a national evaluation organism was also laid-down on the basis of a judicial arsenal.

Hence, the Law 01-00 provides:

- **Article 8** :.To base the acquisition of modules on regular evaluations...;
- **Article 77**: Regular evaluation of higher education system regarding its internal and external profitability, and affecting all pedagogical, administrative and research aspects.
- **Article 78**: Self-evaluation of establishments.
- Article 79**: Creation of a national body for evaluation and an observatory for the appropriateness of higher education to the economic and professional environment.

Moreover, the national charter for education recommends:

² We suggest a managerial reading away from the factual readings focused on the chronological presentation of the reform process.

- **Article 80:** To establish students syllabus on evaluation.
- **Article 103:** Creation of the national agency for evaluation and orientation.
- **Article 127 and 129:** Two types of evaluation for scientific research: internal and external.
- **Article 137 (a):** Evaluation criteria for the promotion and gratification of teachers.
- **Article 155:** Evaluation of central administration.
- **Article 157:** Evaluation of the entire educational system.

The policy of administrative evaluation of tenured teachers of higher education concerns career advancement within the framework of the same rank (from A to C) or during the progression from the rank of Assistant Professor to the rank of Authorized Professor and from this one to the rank of Professor of Higher Education.

Career Advancement within the framework of the same rank is ensured via a committee composed of members of the scientific committee and heads of department who deliberate on the basis of a grid filled by the candidate. This grid records research works, activities of teaching and responsibilities in local and international activities.

Concerning the promotion from the rank of Assistant Professor to the rank of Authorized Professor, and from this one to the rank of Professor of Higher Education, a committee deliberates on the basis of a test based on the grid of evaluation of works of research and teaching activities realized by the candidate and an interview done in the form of a presentation and a debate (Kaaouachi A.2010)

In this system, the practice of ranking is explicitly presented in the way of promotion within the same rank and is implicitly done in the overall.

The regulatory system progressively put in place has not paid off the deficit of real and perceived performance. It seems also to neglect the logic of evaluation in its simplest expression, for the least that we can say; the regulatory system has not appropriately favored a satisfactory regulation.

The regulation is a complex process. According to French dictionaries it's an action that consists in adjusting and ensuring the proper functioning of systems and especially biological systems.

The regulation and the rule are two different but linked notions. If we can generally think that rule can allow regulation (Keynes, for instance, advocates the intervention of the State as a regulatory agent of market economy), the deregulation is also a mode of regulation (Hayek defended the total deregulation so as to let the market go it alone).

Maroy Demailly (2004)³ distinguishes several levels underlying regulations: the international, national, intermediate and local level ... and the way they are built around, the actors source of

³ Lise Demailly and Patrice de la Broise, (2009) "The implications of deprofessionalisation » Soci-logos, published on line on 07 Mai 2009 . URL : [http:// socio-logos.revue. org/2305](http://socio-logos.revue.org/2305).

regulation, in other words, hegemonic actors or subject to hegemony : the State, the market, the established professions, the unions, the users, the public opinions, the experts.... According to Lacoumes Simard (2011)⁴, the instruments used to produce, legitimize, impose rules may be normative (to directly target the orientation of practices) or systematic (to favor, thanks to a certain number of supra-structure rules, which have an impact on conflicting interests, the emergence of certain number of conducts). All these elements and their articulations define a method and a particular configuration of regulation.

Moreover, J.D. Reynaud (1988) considers “regulation” as a capacity to produce rules. “Rules” are employed in the broad sense and cover both the field of judicial rule at different levels (law, rule) and the moral rule, the formal rule and the informal rule. Reynaud distinguishes also three major types of regulations, “autonomous regulations” produced by basic groups and “control regulations” issued by the upper hierarchy and/or the political officials, the power holders and “joint-regulations”: Institutionalized and cooperative systems and therefore relatively stable, and is a combination of the two first types of regulation.

At the end, the regulation methods establish the report of hegemony between actors who can pretend to be co-producers of the action and ranking as a regulation method constitutes an example.

II. LOGIC OF EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE PERFORMANCE.

The transformations in the field of higher education have affected not only the institutions but also the actors. In fact, with the development of the systems of university accreditation and ranking at the international level, higher education institutions have adapted their evaluation systems to suit this new context. The emphasis put by these institutions has moved from the role of development to the role of judgment, where the quantitative measures have become of a primordial importance in the evaluation of university activities (Bogt et Scapens, 2012)

The ranking of universities has become a powerful tool for the evaluation of higher education establishments; it mainly focuses, however, on the performance of research activities. Consequently, the use of their measures on the individual performance brings actors to develop a great interest for the activities of research.

In fact, the evaluation is the material that orients the actions of actors in the organization, i.e. that the actors try to be efficient within the framework of the action that will be assessed by the organization. It shall have as a matter of consequence an important impact on the global performance of the organization and the performance of actors too, and especially by helping them to determine their priority; this is why it is important for the universities to complement

⁴ Pierre Lascoumes, Louis Simard, (2011) “public policy seen through the prism of its instruments.

Introduction» . French political science magazine.

their system of research evaluation with that of education and that of the implication of administrative tasks.

For an evaluation system to work well, it must allow the objectives of the actors and those of the institution to join in order to evolve together. Although university rankings indicate that they also focus on these two dimensions of higher education, research seems to have gained in importance, both at the organizational level and at the individual level.

From another point of view, the actors influence the development of their environment by their actions. They define their own reality through the understanding they have about their environment. They fear that their actions will only be valued if they are reflected in their performance. As a result, they learn to act according to what the evaluation system measures.

In this perspective, evaluation is a strategic tool at the service of educational institutions to achieve their objective, since evaluation systems is a means of coordination between the objectives and the individual interests of teachers-researchers (The desire to be recognized in their discipline, to teach courses that interest them, etc ...) and on the other side the institutional objectives.

III- CONTRADICTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS EVALUATION

The evaluation system is dominated by the number of publications; this system does not encourage individuals to diversify their activities, except for example, for their compulsory hours of teaching courses. Obviously, the choice to focus evaluation on publications is not totally irrational since international rankings consider them as a credible measure of the production of teachers-researchers (Thiéart, 2009). The evaluation in the universities does not take into account the three dimensions of the Professions, which creates, to use the expression of Dejours (2003) tensions between the prescribed and the real that the teachers-researchers must learn to manage. As a result, teachers-researchers will be more interested in research activities at the expense of other activities of the teacher-researcher. Thus, evaluating equitably the different activities of the teacher-researchers, will allow a balanced orientation of the activities of the actors and, finally, a match between the objective and the individual interest with those of their institutions, in order to avoid perverse effects.

In this spirit, it is a matter of matching what is needed in the context of the additional objectives and what is important for the individual evaluation mechanisms to meet these objectives, avoiding perverse effects (Pras& al, 2010) In short, the importance universities place on research is at the expense of other dimensions and is at the root of the problem of evaluation in universities. In this sense, this contradiction shows the difference between what is evaluated and what is really lived / demanded (Thiéart, 2009). In other words, current evaluation systems do not promote the match between personal goals and institutional goals. Since the teachers-researchers will logically tend to invest more in the activities allowing them to advance in their career.

"The efficiency of an evaluation system is measured by its ability to" generate good practices "that is to say to channel the resources of attention and reflection towards the accomplishment of the fundamental missions of the organization. An overly exclusive focus on the evaluation of research alone at the expense of other dimensions will necessarily weaken these other dimensions. (Early, 2011).

In addition, the system that is basically designed to motivate teachers-researchers to publish in the best journals often creates the opposite result. With the following consequences, first of all, the teachers-researchers focus more on lower-ranked journals to get enough points for their next assessment. This can affect the quality of research and explains the observed multiplication of the number of poorly ranked journals. However, the existence of a ranking of journals facilitates deliberation during promotional evaluations. Another consequence of this qualification of the evaluation is that the bodies responsible for the evaluation rely almost entirely on the editors' judgment since they are the ones who allow a teacher-researcher to be published, to obtain his bibliometric points, to increase its "scientific capital" and to have access to a promotion. There is thus a form of "outsourcing" of evaluation powers to reading committees (Walery, 2011). As a result, in this system, traditional evaluation bodies are gradually turning into passive actors.

As higher education institutions are classified according to their ability to "publish" their teachers-researchers, several strategies are put in place, which are based on institutional injunctions whose evaluation system is the key. It is a punishment-reward system: which will necessarily influence the recruitment process and create a bias towards the selection of teachers-researchers rather than research-teachers (Durant and Dameron, 2011).

By way of conclusion, unbalanced evaluation systems lead teachers-researchers to favor the "individual" criteria to the detriment of collective. Thus they tend to think only of their "individual" career and to publish so as to add one more line in their CV "(Deetz, 1995); (Courpasson & Guédri, 2007). Finally, the perversity of the evaluation system can only be centered on the sense of duty, ethics and even moral considerations. The professorial ethos is a qualifier that finds ample space to describe this situation.

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