

Chapter 4

The Evolution of the LMD Reform: The Case of the Department of English at Mohammed V University in Rabat



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Abstract When the LMD system (Licence, Master, and Doctorate) was first introduced in the Department of English in Rabat in 2004, professors and students expressed their skepticism. Many thought that the way it was structured would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching and would not allow the students to achieve a high proficiency in the language. The main objective of the study is to find out the extent to which the introduction of the LMD system has affected the professors' teaching practices, research, and career. It also seeks to determine its impact on the students' learning, performance, and language proficiency.

Keywords LMD system · English department · Moroccan higher education · Bologna declaration

4.1 Introduction

Following the Bologna declaration on 19 June 1999 in Bologna, which emphasized the importance of education and educational cooperation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful, and democratic societies, Morocco substituted the Old system with the Licence/Master/Doctorate (henceforth LMD) system of education during the academic year 2003–2004. With the novel declaration, the major aim of this shift in Moroccan higher education was to follow the European model and facilitate the mobility of the students and professors. Upon the implementation of the reform, the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences at the University Mohammed V in Rabat started to offer a teaching in 15 streams leading to the Licence degree and three professional Licence programs. The courses are managed by 13 departments, 6 languages and literatures departments (Arabic, French, English, Spanish, Italian, and German), and 7 human sciences departments (philosophy, sociology, psychology,

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Islamic studies, geography, science and technology of communication), in addition to the streams of Portuguese and Chinese languages.

One of the major and vibrant departments in the Faculty of Letters in Rabat is the Department of English. It has trained generations of English majors who have become high school teachers, university professors, or pursued other careers. As such, it has significantly contributed to the promotion and evolution of the English language teaching and learning in Morocco. Being part and parcel of the Faculty of the Letters, the Department of English adhered to the LMD system in 2004. This study tries to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Old and new systems, the impact the LMD system has had on the teachers' professional life, and the impact it has had on the students' performance, proficiency in English, and the quality of their training. The discussion will shed light on the issues addressed and help determine the evolution of the Department of English and the impact of the adoption of the LMD system on both professors and students.

4.2 The Department of English and the Moroccan Educational System

Before 2003, Moroccan universities used to adopt a year system, and the academic year and courses lasted from October to mid-April. Exams were organized into sessions, with the first session in May and the second session in June. The students' attendance was not compulsory. They were also free to attend with a group they do not belong to. There was no continuous assessment, but only one final exam, which tested both the students' oral and written proficiencies. The academic year ended on June 30. One of the main strengths of the Old system was the course-coordination among teachers; all teachers were required to get involved in the course-coordination for the sake of the final common exam. Another strong aspect of the Old system was the fact that the exams were anonymous and required double grading for all the subjects. This procedure seemed to guarantee both objectivity and meritocracy. However, one of the weaknesses of the system was the non-consideration of the student's attendance and class participation in the final exam.

The Bologna European model was introduced in Morocco as a university reform with the objective to improve the Moroccan educational system's performance and "prepare the student for integration into the socioeconomic environment" (El Masrar, 2015, p. 1). It also announced a change of the pedagogical architecture and more autonomy for the university. The reform also promised important changes at different levels: logistics, working conditions, syllabi and teaching methods, and so on. It assured the improvement of the working conditions and the reduction of the group size to a maximum of 30 students per group. The reform was also supposed to provide teachers with opportunities for personal development and the students with extra-curricular activities.

The LMD was supposed to make up for the deficiencies in the Old system and improve the Moroccan educational system (Lamine, 2010). Policy makers claimed that the new system would affect the students' training and academic development and improve the educational system. The academic year in the new system is organized into two semesters: a Fall and a Spring semester. Each is composed of 16 weeks, with 14 weeks of class and two weeks for continuous and final assessments. Among the issues faced with the LMD system was the length of the semester. Indeed, most teachers were not able to cope with the semester principle and had issues finishing the program. All the strong positive aspects of the Old system were given up: course coordination, common and anonymous exams and double correction. As the groups were large, some teachers avoided continuous assessment and also tried to evade having the students take the make-up exam (i.e. *rattrapage*). Subsequently, the new system revealed to be time-consuming for the teachers and less demanding of the students (Altihami, 2010).

4.3 Research Methodology

The present study is based on fieldwork adopting a qualitative research approach. It relies on interviews to elicit the participants' views on the differences between the Old and the new systems. The interview form contains 17 open-ended questions and seeks to collect relevant information on the different aspects of the study, notably the major differences between the two systems, their strengths and weaknesses, and their relevance to the students and teachers' careers.

The structured interviews target both students and teachers who have experienced the two systems, and remain suitably qualified to provide reliable judgments of the two systems. Hence, the population sample involves mainly people who have studied or taught at English Department at the University of Mohammed V. The respondents, most of them, are currently teaching at the above-mentioned department, while others are teaching at different universities and schools in Morocco. The data analysis has been organized in the light of the research questions addressed and the themes collected through the interview.

4.4 LMD System: Strengths and Weaknesses

One of the key questions addressed to all the respondents concerns their impressions of the LMD system when it was first launched. The respondents' opinions diverged significantly: a post-secondary school teacher, who experienced both systems as a student, affirms: "I was skeptical because, in the old system, it took us four years to finish our academic training and get our BA." A doctorate holder from the Faculty of Science of Education reports that she "was surprised the first time [she] learned about the LMD system." The participants' feelings of apprehension show that students

and teachers were not well prepared for the considerable change in the educational system, and that they were misinformed about its eventual added value.

Indeed, mixed feelings appear to be common among the majority of respondents to this very question. Many respondents had, in contrast to the previous claims, expressed positive position toward the LMD system when it was first introduced before they found out that it did not meet their expectations as teachers or students. In this regard, an English professor at Sultan Moulay Slimane University claimed: "At the beginning, we were optimistic concerning the LMD system as we thought it would be better than the Old system. However, when it was implemented problems started to emerge." A female English professor at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University expresses her discontent with the way the reform was implemented, "I was in favor of the LMD system. It brought many changes, most of which seemed very promising. I was mainly in favor of the continuous assessment part and of the LMD system; however, with the way things have turned out now, I wish we could go back to the Old system!" A big disparity is being revealed, herein, between what the LMD system promised to achieve and what it has eventually attained.

While some respondents have expressed their skepticism toward the change in the overall structure of courses and studies, others have shown eagerness for the new system and expected it to create a favorable educational environment. For instance, a teacher-trainer at Mohammed V University reports that "I was in favor of some form of reform as the Old system was so rigid and students' diverse needs and interests were not attended to in comparison to the new system, which is seemingly flexible enough to consider the students' differences." Likewise, a colleague of his declared: "I was in favor of the LMD when I first heard about it thanks to the various advantages that it claimed it would have for the students' trajectory. First, the new system promised to reform the content by making it more updated. Teaching of small groups ensures quality. Last but not least, the number of graduates will go higher while the number of dropouts will decrease."

4.5 The Old System and The LMD System: Strengths and Weaknesses

The participants' responses reveal important differences between the Old system and the LMD system, mainly in the teaching methodologies and outcomes. Respondents tend to praise the Old system for diverse reasons, which, overall, consolidate the students' self-dependence in studying and researching. In this regard, an English teacher at CPGE stated that "in the Old system, the student was more independent and autonomous since he had to take notes, do research and identify areas of difficulty by him/herself." Most responses praise the Old system, which they deem to be a "high quality academic training." In this respect, a participant who studied in the Old system and who is currently teaching in the new system affirms that teachers used to work

more comfortably and cover the whole syllabus in the Old system, in comparison to the new one.

Many respondents have expressed their discontent with the new system for instance, because “in the new system, the students are more dependent upon the teacher and the program. They need to grasp only some subjects according to modules and modules have to be validated through compensation between the fall and spring semesters.” Respondents also argue that the new system puts a lot of pressure on both students and teachers vis-à-vis syllabus completion. Unlike the Old system, in which teachers and students used to have sufficient time to cover the contents of courses, the new system involves proportionately shorter study periods, not to mention the fact that graduation involves only three years instead of four.

Overall, the mainstream answers tend to emphasize the differences between the Old and the LMD system. Interestingly, they all converge on the supremacy of the Old system and highlight its positive aspects, which are lacking in the LMD system. Responses mention the shortage of time, the course pressure, the students’ poor training and self-reliance, the frequent interruptions of studies, and the heavy workload for teachers. Most respondents seem to focus on the deficient implementation of the promised reform rather than on the reform itself for the latter was really meant to consolidate the teaching and training by compensating for the weaknesses of the Old system. A professor at Ibn Zohr University sums it all up saying: “The Old system was perfect.”

4.6 The LMD System and Students’ Proficiency

Among the issues addressed is the impact of the new system on the students’ training and their language proficiency. In this regard, almost all the participants insist on the emphasized adverse impact of the LMD system. They use varied labels to describe the numerous weaknesses and repercussions on the academic development of students. A respondent from Sultan Moulay Slimane University affirms: “the performance of the students in the LMD system is much weaker than in the Old system.” Irrespective of the alleged positive aspects the LMD system may have the respondents’ views converge and all agree on the students’ poor level and affirm that it is generally decreasing. Obviously, such unfavorable perspectives make one question the value of the LMD system and its rationale.

The agreement among the participants on the students’ disappointing performance leaves no doubt over the supremacy of the Old system and its value for university students. According to the participants, the quality of training in the new system is poor compared to the Old system, which jeopardizes the professional and academic future of the students. In this regard, a female teacher from Mohammed V University in Rabat argues: “students succeed thanks to the inflated grades in periodic exams. Thus, they manage to graduate despite their low achievements.” This does not only reveal the lack of rigor but also the leniency of the teachers who seem to fall in the exaggeration of the students’ grades.

The respondents also stress the students' low proficiency in English and their weak academic achievements. Most respondents' views corroborate the same point: "students are less autonomous in the new system"; "their speaking and writing skills are unsatisfactory as they do study everything in a short time"; "learners do not have enough time to practice and assimilate instructional content and achieve the learning objectives." This reveals the major facet of the new system and its impact on the students' learning and training. Hence, the low language competencies force students to "rely more on cheating and luck than hard work" to pass their exams, a teacher-trainer at Mohammed V University in Rabat reports. Subsequently, "many students keep bouncing from one exam to another until they graduate from university empty handed," affirms another teacher. Indeed, a large number of students graduate, or rather leave the university, with very poor academic training or linguistic competencies.

4.7 The LMD System and Professors' Professional Lives

The study reveals a real dissatisfaction with the impact of the new system on the professors' work. The majority of the respondents refer to the diverse effects the new system has had on their professional life. Most teachers report that the LMD system has imposed a lot of pressure and a heavy working load on them. They have become very busy with their courses and the students' assessment. Given the semester's organization in the LMD system, the teachers have to work throughout the year and have little time for research, professional development, and rest. The shortage of time has not only affected the interaction between teachers and students but has also limited the interaction and coordination among the teachers themselves, according to some interviewed teachers.

Indeed, the respondents' testimonies reveal a number of drawbacks of the new system. These seem to have largely outweighed its reportedly few benefits. In this regard, a teacher-trainer at Mohammed V University in Rabat maintains: "teachers have now to deal with more heterogeneous groups, large class-size, different modules, and very tightly scheduled semesters." Apparently, the new system has generated unfavorable conditions for both teachers and students. The same teacher adds that "these conditions favor quantity over quality, as teachers are mostly obsessed with covering the syllabus rather than with making sure the learning is taking place." The few cited testimonies all prove that teachers have become busier and more stressed with the advent and the adoption of the new system.

Overall, time pressure, teaching loads, large groups, discontinuous study terms are some of the negative aspects that have been strongly stressed in the testimonies. These issues, in effect, make the teachers' tasks difficult and harder to accomplish. Interestingly, only two respondents out of 11 claim that the new system has a positive impact on the teachers' work. "Teachers have become more innovative as new subjects emerge so as to meet the new changes in society," says a female teacher at Mohammed V University. Another teacher in the same university affirms that

“teachers have the advantage of considering the students’ overall performance, not just their performance in the final exam.” Indeed, the rate of negative statements show the failure of the LMD system to meet the anticipated educational and pedagogical outcomes

4.8 The LMD System and Teaching Quality

In the light of all the aforementioned issues, the quality of teaching seems to have been negatively affected “since teachers work under stress and under certain unfavorable circumstances,” as a former undergraduate student and current doctoral student at Mohammed V University argues. The same view is expressed by other participants, who assert that the quality of teaching has certainly been affected since it is taken for granted that the teachers’ working conditions normally affect their teaching. According to most respondents, time constraints and large classes have severely affected the quality of teaching. A professor from Sultan Moulay Slimane University wonders “how a teacher can teach spoken English to a class of 200 students?” Similarly, an English language trainer argues:

The quality of teaching has of course radically been altered. While the Old system allowed the students to have more practice in the different language areas, the new one is very limited and limiting in terms of scope and coverage, because learning takes place cyclically, not linearly. Learners need to go back to the learnt materials several times and in different ways to enhance assimilation; there is no room for this in the new system at least in the way it is being implemented [...]. Students now move to higher level modules while they haven’t yet validated the modules that are normally a pre-requisite. A good example is the case of the writing modules: Paragraph Writing in semester 1, Composition 1 in semester 2, Composition 2 in semester 3. Students can take composition 1 or 2 even if they haven’t been able to validate the previous writing level(s); this means they haven’t achieved the basics of writing; still they move up to more advanced levels.

In general, the quality of teaching, like other diverse aspects of education, has adversely been affected by the implementation of the new system. The survey reveals that teachers have failed to meet the required standards and the desired results due to students’ inability to grasp their lessons and courses. The job of teachers has become tiresome, for they have to teach more courses and spend more time designing, preparing, and giving lessons to large groups of students who need to be assessed and graded as well. All the participants have substantiated their unanimous negative responses to this question. Mainstream views corroborate that the quality of teaching is deteriorating as compared to the situation in the Old system, which seems to be implicitly valued.

4.9 The LMD System and Teachers' Practices, Research, and Professional Lives

One of the objectives of this study is to look into the effect of the new system not only on the teachers' teaching practices but also on their research and professional development. Not astoundingly, most respondents argue that the teachers' academic career has been at stake since the introduction of the LMD system. A professor at Mohammed V University, formerly a student at the same institution, admits that "teachers have less time for research and continuous training." Obviously, research and professional development require more availability and free time, which the new system allegedly does not offer.

As regards the teaching practices, respondents seem to express a negative stance. Most responses assert that the teachers' teaching practices have been influenced by the flaws of the new system. A participant, who went through both the Old and new systems as a student and who is currently a part-time teacher, thinks that "teachers no longer seek quality in teaching; this is apparent in the number of handouts given to students and the teaching method (i.e. teacher-centered teaching) they adopt." He adds that "the new system is frustrating as it does not allow teachers to put into practice their professional experience." Not only are the teaching practices severely affected by the requirements of the new system but the teachers' professional development is also hindered due to time pressure and the heavy workload, among other factors.

Teachers' lack of motivation has also been pointed out as a major cause of the poor teaching practices and disinterest in professional development. A professor at Mohammed V University in Rabat points to the scarce opportunities of professional development as a chief constraining factor that hinders the teacher's academic progress. The same participant adds that "teachers are overwhelmed with teaching hours and BA End-of-Study Project supervision." This claim points out the negative impacts of bulky duties teachers have to carry. This situation has led a number of teachers (e.g. 6 teachers) to opt for early retirement, having completed 31 years at the job.

Most responses hold that the LMD system has had an adverse effect on the teachers' motivation and satisfaction, which has eventually had an impact on their performance. Interestingly, only one participant, a female teacher at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, shows a positive attitude as she maintains that teaching practices have improved in the new system. She states that "the use of ICT has become very common. More and more teachers look for ways to develop and improve their teaching practices (pedagogical trainings, etc.). Teachers are more active and involved in research." This unique optimistic response pales into insignificance in proportion to the mainstream negative portrayal of the LMD system; yet, it suggests that one may perceive and experience the system differently.

4.10 The LMD System and Students' Training, Performance, and Language Proficiency

Responses varied over the effect of the new system on the students' training and performance. While some participants maintain that students' performance has improved, others insist that the students' level has regressed and that they need more opportunities to practice the language. Interestingly, some answers have attributed the students' low language proficiency not to the training they undergo but rather to their constant exposure to the materials on the internet. In this regard, a teacher at Mohammed V University asserts that "students develop their language skills away from the courses they have at the university and from sources like TV programs, YouTube, chat rooms, etc.; in certain cases, this helps them to develop their fluency quite remarkably, but reduce their accuracy and makes it suffer serious defects." This view questions the extent to which the students really learn from the teaching provided in the new system.

Yet, from quite a different perspective, an evidently considerable number of participants claim that students' performance has dropped due to varied constraints such as time, absenteeism, and loaded programs. In this respect, a doctoral student and part-time teacher at Mohammed V University reports that "students' writing and speaking performance has decreased tremendously due to their absence. Students spend more time outside the university than inside it. The focus on the quantity and time constraint affects the quality of teaching, the students training, performance and language proficiency." The responses reveal negative attitudes among participants vis-à-vis the value of the new system in training university students and developing their English language proficiency.

4.11 Teachers' Challenges in the Old System

Responses addressing the problems which constrained the teachers' work in the Old system revealed ambivalent attitudes. While some participants who taught in the Old system claim that there were no real obstacles that teachers faced in the Old system, others seem to provide examples of diverse difficulties which used to hinder the teachers' mission. A former female student and teacher at Mohammed V University criticizes the lack of clear goals in the system, which appear to affect the ultimate outcome of the teaching. She claims that "instruction was less focused and the objectives were less clear," while a teacher-trainer reports that the lack of resources, instructional materials, and educational technologies constituted, in addition to lack of professional development activities, major issues limiting the efficiency of teaching in the Old system.

From quite a different perspective, a participant from Mohammed V University names some of the overwhelming obstacles which used to undermine the role of

teachers in the Old system. He emphasizes how conflicting ideologies and inclinations among teachers in addition to the students' poor language proficiency and lost educational compass made the job of teachers very demanding, and not sufficiently rewarding.

The university was highly politicized and various ideologies were in conflict and used to put a vast majority of students in the middle, turning the university into conflict grounds. A large number of students would choose to join the English department due to a perception of prestige rather than a conviction in what English could offer in the long run. A larger number of students specialized in English without having the necessary and pre-required level of language proficiency, thus placing a burden on teaching and learning. Many students only came to the university for lack of better options both in the public and private sectors.

4.12 Teachers' Challenges in the New System

The student–teacher ratio has reportedly been very high in the new system. Few teachers are in charge of teaching, supervising, and grading massive numbers of students. A former student and assistant professor at Mohammed V University complains: “there are only few teachers in each department whereas the new system requires boosting both the number of instructors and the quality of the learning outcomes.” Unquestionably, the quality of instruction depends on the number of teachers in proportion to the total number of students. Indeed, the student–teacher ratio has been one of the main quality-benchmark and the prime parameter in international higher education institutions' ranking (Minsky, 2016). The number of students compared to the shortage in the full-time instructors has apparently been one of the main issues that Moroccan universities suffer from in the new system. Although the number of students has rapidly increased, the number of professors has been decreasing due to their departure on retirement and the decline of numbers of new hires.

The course-coordination among the instructors teaching the same course has had a great impact on the quality of teaching and the teaching outcomes. In this respect, Mohammed V University published in 2014a report entitled “External Institutional Evaluation Mohammed V-Agdal University Period 2009–2012,” which sheds light on diverse aspects of the university's performance and achievements. The report reveals that funding opportunities, academic meetings, and other university events do not always reach the target audience (UM5, 2014, p. 13). Participants have stirred this point anew in the survey to emphasize the significance of inter-staff coordination in yielding satisfactory educational results. In fact, “absence of coordination among the teachers of the same course” has reportedly been of significant impact on the teachers' academic endeavor and the students' achievements. Likewise, some participants refer to time-shortage as an impediment to adequate coverage of the syllabus. Other statements point out the lack of motivation as well as the absence of professional development activities and opportunities that could improve the instructors' performance. The aforementioned report states that “there is no initial training for new inexperienced staff, and no continuing professional development” (ibid).

This statement corroborates the aforementioned claims that the LMD system has failed to enable universities to meet the high educational standards and eventually attain the objectives and the promised goals of the reform.

4.13 Recommendations for Improving Teachers' Working Conditions

Participants have suggested different measures that would facilitate the task of teachers and improve their working conditions. Despite the diversity of suggestions, they all agree on key issues such as the reduction of the size of groups, the provision of the instructional equipment, and the offering of career-development opportunities. In this respect, a former teacher at the national teacher-training school in Rabat referred to the teacher shortage as a chief impediment to adequate working conditions. She argues that "increasing the number of teachers will reduce the rate of supervision of students per teacher and render the process more accessible and productive to all." Other participants corroborate this point by emphasizing the dire need to recruit more professors in order to meet the demand of the growing population of students.

Coordination among teachers has also been raised by the participants as a potential facilitator in the professors' work. Participants insist on the importance of constant communication among teachers and also between teachers and students in order to achieve a good quality and the educational objectives. Accordingly, a former student at Mohammed V University proposes that teachers need to have offices where they can work and meet their students. One of the professors at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University claims that providing teachers with adequate teaching tools in addition to having them adopt office-hours mentoring would enhance the quality of teaching and reinforce the student-teacher contact.

According to many respondents, the teachers' practice can be improved by offering continuous professional development opportunities that will empower the teachers' training and boost their know-how in a fast-changing world. The university is apparently in need of active support to update and enrich their educational practices, which will subsequently serve the students' needs. Last but not least, the reduction of the students' numbers per group has apparently been among the key recommendations that participants insist on. All the informants acknowledge the fact that professors in the Department of English have to teach larger groups than they are supposed to. Hence, they all suggest the necessity to reduce the number of students in groups as it was initially promised. This can be a very effective measure "to ensure good communication between teachers and students and improve the quality of teaching," a female teacher of English affirms. Indeed, the findings reveal that some administrative measures need to be implemented in order to resolve the issues which hinder the teachers' work and have an impact on the students' training and achievements.

4.14 Recommendations for Improving Students' Proficiency and Achievements

The recommendations to improve the students' proficiency are diverse and vary from administering common exams and adopting a method of anonymous marking to reducing the class size. Interestingly, however, many respondents' views hold the students themselves accountable for their alleged incompetence. Accordingly, a female teacher claims that "students themselves should grow more independent and become more organized and responsible for their own learning." Several other responses go along with this claim and argue that students need to enhance their language learning through doing whatever autonomous learning requires rather than relying completely on the teachers. "Students are required to improve themselves on their own and outside the university environment. Teachers are just guiders and moderators. They have to have Extra hours. Read books, magazines ..." a teacher at Ibn Zohr University affirms.

Obviously, the students' duty to improve their language proficiency and acquire adequate and useful communication skills entails making efforts and becoming active participants in their learning rather than remaining passive recipients. Both professors and students have suggested that students should carry out projects, undertake research, and deliver presentations in their classes as potentially instructive activities which can enhance their academic and linguistic development. In this respect, a teacher-trainer at Mohammed V University believes that the assessment should take into consideration the students' workload, contact hours, and learning outcomes, rather than exclusively relying on one final test as the sole evaluation tool. The same participant also recommends that teaching should be counted in hours rather than periods and time-frames; that is, a course ends once a number of teaching hours have been completed.

Some other respondents have stressed the importance of inter-faculty coordination in order to meet the common teaching goals and enable the students to gain the presumed training. A young female teacher at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University argues that "course coordination should become compulsory among teachers; they should work together in order to design unified course descriptions and teaching materials." Another respondent from Mohammed V University claims that the university must encourage and motivate the students to get involved in extra-curricular activities and do regular assignments. A colleague of his asserts that the students' proficiency will improve if further opportunities such as "the creation of a university-funded support system that provides mentoring, monitoring, computer literacy, and coaching in order to ensure that all students have an equal and fair chance to achieve their best potential; the establishment of encouragement schemes that would motivate the students to improve their attainment (scholarships, awards, language programs, etc.)" find their way into the Moroccan university.

4.15 Conclusion and Implications

The results of the study reveal widespread dissatisfaction with the LMD system. However, participants have maintained that both the Old and the LMD systems do not really meet the educational expectations and the desired outcomes. The present study supports to a great extent Ibourek and Amaghous's findings (2014) regarding the successive reforms of the Moroccan higher educational system and the deficiencies that led them to failure. Ibourek and Amaghous rightly argue that "all the reforms that were initiated in Morocco since 1957 have resulted in a blatant failure related to series of problems: very low enrolment rates, rising unemployment among graduates and general mismatch between the educational system and the demands of the labor market" (p. 111). Though a negative attitude toward the LMD system seems to be dominant among the participants, most of them seem to praise the Old system which they openly favor.

The aim of the present research has been to find out about what professors and students of the Department of English in Rabat think of the Old and LMD systems. Through comparing the two in terms of their strengths and weakness, the study reveals that professors and students who have experienced both systems are in favor of the Old system. They all seem to emphasize its positive aspects and heavily criticize the LMD system, which has, in their opinion, worsened the situation rather than improve it as it was meant. Large size classes, insufficient faculty members, students' low levels, heavy working loads for professors are seen as major constraints that inhibit the professors and students' performances alike. Yet, these are only some of the myriad deficiencies of the LMD system which need urgent and real remedy.

The present study has revealed a number of differences between the Old and the LMD systems through the participants' perspectives. Professors and students who have experienced both systems express diverse views toward the major shift in higher education policy during the last two decades. The findings suggest that the inefficient educational reforms may be attributed to the top-down policy, which adopted and implemented the LMD system despite its alleged flaws. In this regard, some participants insist on the inclusion of the teachers' as well as the students' opinions in setting and evaluating the educational policies. For them, only the stakeholders' views can yield accurate evaluation of Moroccan educational policies for prospective appropriate measures. The present research reveals that the LMD system has, overall, failed to reach its objectives and yield the promised outcomes.

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