

Salaried workers' attitudes towards the retirement system in Algeria -A Field Study on a Sample of Workers at the Skikda Petroleum Refinery Complex. 2023 - 2024

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Abstract:

The study aimed to find out the trend and describe the attitude of salaried workers in the Skikda oil refinery complex for the Algerian retirement system, especially after the amendments initiated in the second half of 2016. The study relied on the descriptive approach, and the use of a corresponding form as a tool for collecting information and data, relying on a purposive sample, the sample was estimated at 93 individuals from the study community, and the study found that the attitude of workers towards the retirement system in Algeria is negative, as well as the result of the negative attitude related to the recent amendments to the retirement system.

Key Words: Retirement System- Early Retirement- Partial Retirement- Retirement Without Age Condition-Attitude-Tendency-Trend.

INTRODUCTION

The retirement system is considered one of the most important social systems that protects individuals after they reach a certain age, in order to provide them with social and economic security against potential risks in their future life after years of work.

The retirement system in Algeria has undergone numerous changes that have affected its form and content; from the 1962 law to the 2016 law, passing through the amendments made to it in 1983, the most recent amendments that affected both its formal and legal aspects, which took place at the end of 2016, are considered among the most important changes that have occurred, abandoning the formulas of relative retirement, early retirement and retirement without age condition, and adopting new conditions for benefiting from it.

In our study entitled “Salaried Workers’ Attitudes Towards the Retirement System in Algeria: A Field Study on a Sample of Workers at the Skikda Petroleum Refinery Complex”, we will try to reveal the attitudes of the employees of the institution towards the new retirement system established by the 2016 amendments, within a multidimensional approach.

First: Definition of the study problem and objectives

The topic of the study is of great importance given the nature of its variable, which revolves around the retirement system in Algeria and the attitudes of the employee workers of the Skikda Petroleum Refinery Complex towards it after the recent reforms it underwent in 2016. In fact, this topic is an exploratory study that paves the way for an in-depth study that aims to

compare the attitudes of the salaried workers working in economic institutions with the attitudes of the salaried workers working in administrative institutions by focusing on some dimensions of the new Algerian retirement system that were adopted as scale items for the attitude measurement.

There is no doubt that the retirement system is one of the most important social protection systems in every country in the world. It allows workers to maintain their ability to live in dignity after years of work and dedication to the institution to which they belong. This can prevent the physical and mental health problems that can make the remaining years of their lives difficult and even prevent them from enjoying the skills and gains they have accumulated as a result of that work. This, in turn, has a number of negative effects that go beyond the individual level to the social level, which makes the issue very sensitive and requires knowledge and study, especially since the issue is closely related to human resources in terms of employment policies and attracting workers, since workers are the subject and the basis of retirement. Recruitment and employment policies and strategies are often based on the number of workers who will retire or who have applied for retirement, which is further evidence of the central position that the pension system occupies in the field of human resources management and administration.

The complexity of working life has led to the emergence of local and international laws and regulations aimed at protecting the rights of workers and ensuring their future. In Algeria, under Algerian law, the right to retirement is one of the social rights enshrined in the Constitution and is considered one of the normal and legal cases for terminating the employment relationship between the employer and the employee. This system has undergone profound changes linked to political, social and economic developments, the most important of which were the amendments made in 1983 by Law 83-12 and in 1994 by Legislative Decree 94-10, mainly for economic reasons. In this context, the legislator introduced the system of early retirement in order to protect employees who lose their jobs involuntarily, followed by the system of partial retirement and then retirement without age limit. In general, the benefit from the retirement system depends on two conditions: age and years of social security contributions.

At the end of 2016, the latest amendment to the Algerian retirement system was enacted, which led to the abolition of the three retirement formulas that workers had benefited from: early retirement, retirement without age condition, and partial retirement, while maintaining the standard retirement formula. This was done in order to restore the balance of the National Retirement Fund, which was no longer able to pay the pensions of retirees due to the continuous increase in the number of its members and the inclusion of some categories that were not previously members. The amendment was approved in the last edition of the Official Gazette of 2016 and entered into force on 1 January 2017. Workers' positions on these amendments are diverse and varied, which requires investigation and research. Based on this, our current problem is formulated as follows:

- What is the attitude of workers at the Skikda oil refinery towards the new retirement system established by the 2016 amendments?

This problem question includes four sub-questions:

1. What is the attitude of the workers of the Skikda oil refinery towards the abolition of early retirement?

2. What is the attitude of the workers of the Skikda oil refinery towards the abolition of partial retirement?
3. What is the attitude of the workers of the Skikda oil refinery to abolish the retirement without age condition?
4. What is the attitude of the employees of the Skikda oil refinery towards the retirement system under the new conditions?

The objectives of our present study are as follows:

- To discover the trends and describe the attitude of the employees of the complex under study towards the retirement system according to the new conditions created by the recent reforms, especially in 2016. This main objective includes two sub-objectives:

1. To analyse the recent reforms that have affected the retirement system in Algeria.
2. To collect field data related to employees attitudes of the institution under study towards the retirement system in its new form, to be used in a large subsequent comparative study.

Second : Conceptual approach of the study

1-Attitude

The Dictionary of Psychological Terms states that psychological attitude is a learned neural-mental readiness for positive or negative response to people, things, situations, or symbols in the environment that may elicit that response. Many definitions have been given for the concept of attitude:

- The definition of ALLPORT:

Attitude is defined as “a mental or neural state of readiness, organised through experience, which exerts a directive or dynamic influence on the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is associated”. (Abd El Hamid. Mohamed Ali, 2012, p. 48)

This definition has two dimensions:

- * The cognitive component of attitudes, which includes the individual’s personal experiences.
- * The functional aspect of attitudes, which is expressed in guiding the individual’s response to things and situations.

So, the attitude as a relatively stable, acquired readiness in individuals that determines the individual’s responses to certain things, ideas or people. We all have an attitude towards others and an attitude towards ourselves. They distinguish between two types of attitude: a personal attitude related to the events and circumstances of the individual’s life, and a general attitude towards general issues and events.

The events of an individual’s life and their circumstances, as well as a general tendency towards public issues and events.

As for (Bogardus), he sees that attitude is: “the inclination that directs behaviour towards or away from certain environmental factors, attributing to them positive or negative criteria

according to one's attraction or aversion to them" (Ahmed Mohamed Al-Zoughbi, 1994, p. 173).

This definition clarifies the relationship between the individual and his or her social environment, such that attitude causes the individual to conform to the prevailing norms, beliefs and values in society, and his or her responses to stimuli are greatly influenced by them.

As for (Saari Abchoo), he sees that attitude is "the positions taken by individuals in the face of the issues, matters and affairs surrounding them... Attitude is a construct consisting of three parts; the first is mainly cognitive and refers to the information the individual has about these issues or matters, the second is behavioural and is manifested in the actions the individual takes or works to defend or facilitate in relation to these issues, and the third is emotional and expresses the individual's evaluations of everything related to these issues" (Abd El Fattah Dwidar, 1992, p. 58).

As for the operational definition of attitude; by examining the previous definitions, it became clear to us that there is a variation in the approach of researchers to the concept of attitude, some of whom focused on the cognitive aspect, while others approached attitude from a functional perspective, and another combined the cognitive and behavioural components of attitudes.

As an operational definition, it can be said that attitudes are "the positions taken by employees towards the recent changes made to the retirement system in Algeria at the end of 2016".

2. Retirement

Retirement is the stage of transition of a salaried or non-salaried worker towards comfort (cessation of work), after having stopped working and after having spent a period of time practising his profession. Some scholars have provided definitions of the concept of retirement, including:

- "Retirement or the end of legal working life is the natural end of the employment relationship and is therefore considered as the cause and legal status for the termination of the employment relationship" (Ahmia Suleiman, 2002, p.340).
- Retirement is a legal formality and one of the reasons by which the employment relationship between the employer and the employee can be terminated.
- Retirement is "an administrative decision taken at the request of the employee under the supervision of the administration for those who have reached a certain age with a certain number of years of service, and their relationship with the administration ends from the date of signing the notification of their retirement decision" (Abd El Qader Belarbi, 2016, p.89).
- Retirement is "the cessation of paid work in exchange for receiving a retirement pension, which consists of two interrelated and intertwined processes: the cessation of work and the receipt of a retirement pension" (Mohammad Khaled Al-Zughaib, 2012, p.42).

The operational definition of retirement is a situation reached by the employee, whether salaried or not, in which the person is no longer able to carry out the tasks assigned to him or her, and this does not necessarily have to be a physical disability, it can also be

psychological. Or they may have completed the legal period agreed in the employment contract, even if they are not incapacitated. It is different from resignation or dismissal.

Third: The Constructivist Approach to the retirement System in Algeria:

1. Stages in the development of the retirement system in Algeria: The retirement system in Algeria is considered one of the most important social systems through which the state seeks to enshrine the principle of social solidarity and cohesion. Inherited from the colonial period, the Algerian retirement system has undergone many changes, particularly in its social and economic aspects, which are reflected in the reforms it has undergone since independence to the present day, which can be divided into the following stages:

1.1- The first phase:1962-1983: This phase was characterised by the continuation of the system that had prevailed during the colonial period, with the exception of that which conflicted with national sovereignty. On 31.12.1962, three regional funds were set up, attached to three regions: casorac, specific to Constantine, the eastern region; casoral, specific to Algiers, the central region; and casoran, specific to Oran, the western region. Each administration had its own specific retirement system. In 1964, the complementary system was signed in Paris and remained in force until 1983; it included two forms of retirement, namely proportional retirement and retirement on the basis of seniority.

Retirement by seniority:

In this system, the retirement pension is granted to the senior employee who has reached the age of 60 and has a condition of actual service for a period of 30 years, or to the active employee who has reached the age of 55 and has worked for a period of 25 years.

Proportional retirement:

This is based on two conditions: that the worker has reached the age of 65 for the retired worker, 60 for the active worker, and has worked for a period of 15 years.

This stage has also been characterised by specific patterns of pension systems according to the sources of financing, the sector of activity and its evolution, following the economic, social, political, military and legislative choices of the State in the field of insurance and social security, in which age and length of service are influential factors that have created some disparities in pension systems, the most important of which are as follows:

- The general non-agricultural pension system
- The agricultural system
- The mining pension scheme
- The railway workers' pension scheme
- The national electricity and gas company pension scheme
- The Maritime Workers' Retirement Scheme
- The self-employed pension scheme
- The employees' pension scheme

1.2- The second phase from 1983 to 2016

This period is also known as the unified retirement system. During this period, Algeria attempted to overcome the consequences of the retirement system of the previous stage and to remedy the shortcomings and deficiencies suffered by the social security system in general and the pension systems in particular, both legally and practically:

- The multiplicity of pension systems and their failure to keep pace with the country's basic choices, and the disparity in the privileges granted from one system to another in the field of retirement.
- The weak position of the principle of solidarity.
- A clear disparity in the sources of financing of retirement funds and institutions, which has led to differences in their organisation and management, resulting in significant differences in the assessment of workers' rights.
- The exclusion of some social groups from the benefits of the pension system.

Law No. 83-12, which came into force on 1 January 1984, merged all the previous schemes into a single system, the main features of which were as follows:

- Unification of the retirement age at 60, with some exceptions for special categories, including combatants and workers in dangerous occupations.
- Setting the minimum retirement pension at 35% of the national minimum wage.
- Setting the maximum retirement pension at 86% of the monthly wage.
- Setting a relatively short maximum career limit of 32 years.
- Calculating the amount of the pension on the basis of the average monthly salary for the last year of work.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the retirement system in Algeria, at this stage, has focused on establishing the basic principles of the social system and social protection, namely: solidarity, unification of benefits and centralisation of transfer and management. The retirement system in Algeria has been characterised by legal diversity in the enjoyment of the pension, with the existence of many formulas that give the worker the right to obtain a pension according to the available options that he deems appropriate. This diversity in the retirement system has enshrined the principle of individual freedom to remain in or leave the institutions.

Within this system, the following types of retirement can be distinguished:

- **Retirement at legal age:** at the age of 60 for men and 55 for working women, at their own request.
- **Retirement without regard to age:** the beneficiary must have completed 32 years of contributions to the National Pensions Scheme, irrespective of the age specified.
- **Proportional retirement:** requires two basic conditions:
 - * Reaching the age of 50 for men and 45 for women.

*Contributions to the National Retirement Fund for at least 20 years for men and 15 years for women.

- **Early retirement:** on the basis of the following two conditions;

* Reaching the age of fifty (50) for men and 45 for women.

* Completion of twenty years of work.

The retirement system based on these models has been characterised by legal diversity in the use of retirement benefits, with the existence of many formulas that give the worker the right to retire according to the available options that he deems appropriate. This diversity in the retirement system has enshrined the principle of individual freedom to remain in or leave the institutions.

1-3. Retirement system from 2016 to date: At the end of 2016, the Algerian government introduced amendments to the retirement system in order to address the significant deficit of the National Pension Fund and to maintain the financial equilibrium of the Fund. These amendments were published in the Official Gazette No. 78 through Law No. 15-16 of 31 December 2016, which set the retirement age at 60 for men and 55 for women, with a minimum of 15 years of work required.

Workers have the right to continue working voluntarily after the aforementioned age for up to an additional five years, during which time the employing entity cannot force the worker into retirement.

If we examine the content of these amendments, which are contained in Articles 2 to 8 of Law 15-16 amending and supplementing Law 83-12, we can conclude that:

* The amendments mainly concerned the legal retirement age, setting it at 60 for men and 55 for women, and abolishing three forms of retirement: proportional retirement, retirement without age limit and early retirement. Article 6 stipulates that the right to retirement is conditional on the worker having completed at least 15 years of work.

Retirement requires two basic conditions:

* The condition of reaching the age of 60 for men and 55 for women, at their own request.

* The second condition is to have worked for at least 15 years, with the proviso that the worker must have contributed to the National Retirement Fund for seven and a half years in order to actually benefit from the retirement pension.

* The establishment of a new formula for retirement, particularly for those in arduous professions, to be determined by the Ministry of Supervision.

* Article 10 also stipulates that retirement may be extended at the worker's request, up to a maximum of five years.

It should be noted, however, that despite the abolition of the three aforementioned retirement formulas, the government continues to deduct monthly contributions for these formulas from workers' salaries, from 2017 to the present.

2. Pension institutions in Algeria

These are the general legal mechanisms responsible for managing the pension system in Algeria (Bel'arousi Ahmed Tadjani, 2004, p.15), which are

2.1 The National Retirement Fund (CNR)

This is a financially and legally independent public body created by Decree No. 85-225 of 20 August 1985. The purpose of this body was to manage the various pension schemes that existed before the 1983 amendment and to unify them into a single system offering the same benefits and rights to all workers. It was given the following tasks

- Administering retirement pensions and benefits, as well as benefits for beneficiaries.
- Collect and monitor workers' contributions.
- Work on the application of laws and international treaties in the field of social security.

The Fund comprises two agencies:

- a- The National Social Security Fund for Employees (CNAS)
- b- The National Social Security Fund for Non-Workers (CNANS)

2.2 The Pension Fund for Senior Executives in the State

The National Pension Fund for Senior Executives in the State is an administrative body attached to the Ministry of Finance, established by the legislator to protect the employee who has the status of a senior political executive in the State in the field of retirement. It is considered to be one of the privileges reserved exclusively for the category of presidents, prime ministers, their members and senior state officials.

It is worth mentioning that the conditions for benefiting from the retirement under this fund have been set at a minimum of 10 years of service spent by the employee in state institutional positions, with the state covering the financial deficit.

2.3 The National Military Pension Fund:

It is attached to the Ministry of National Defence and was created by the 1977 law based on article 148 of the Algerian Constitution, with retroactive effect to 1967. It covers the retirement pensions of military and paramilitary personnel of all ranks.

Fourth: The methodological approach of the study

1-The nature of the study and the methodology used The present study falls within the scope of exploratory studies that aim to uncover the nature and description of the attitude of the new retirement system introduced by the 2016 amendments in Algeria. The study is based on a sample survey, which is one of the applications of the descriptive method. The five-point Likert scale was used to determine the trend and its intensity, according to the following procedures:

Table (01): Presentation of the trend levels and the degree assigned to them

| Trend | Strongly disagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|

| | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Score | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

The average intensity of the statements can be calculated by referring to the lower and upper limits of each category of the five-point Likert scale, by calculating the range = 5-1=4, and then dividing the range by the number of categories, which gives 4/5 = 0.8. The number 0.8 is then added progressively from the first category and the results are shown in the following table:

Table (02): Mean ranges of statements on the five-point Likert scale

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Trend | Strongly disagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| Weighted average | From 1 to 1.79 | From 1.8 to 2.59 | From 2.6 to 3.39 | From 3.4 to 4.19 | From 4.2 to 5 |

These categories allow us to know the trend of the data; for example, if the arithmetic mean of a statement is 1.5, this means that the responses of the sample to this statement tend to strongly disagree (according to the table), because the value of the arithmetic mean belongs to the category that represents strongly disagree [1 and 1.79]. As for the standard deviation, its purpose is to know the extent of the dispersion of the answers around the arithmetic mean; if the value of the standard deviation exceeds the length of the category, which is 0.80, this indicates to us that the answers to this statement are characterised by dispersion.

The arithmetic mean was calculated using the following formula Where:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{x_1 + x_2 + \dots + x_n}{n} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i}{n}$$

- \bar{x} : symbol of the arithmetic mean
- n: number of sample elements
- \sum : sum of the intensity of the statements

Where: intensity of the statement = frequency of the statement × value of the statement on the scale

As for the standard deviation, it is calculated according to the following equation:

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (X_i - \bar{X}) \times f_i}{n - 1}}$$

2. Analysis methods:

2.1 Quantitative approach: Based on the SPSS statistical programme in describing and estimating the trend on the five-point Likert scale through:

- Presenting data in simple tables
- Using frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

2.2 Qualitative approach: By analysing the statistical data and extracting its sociological connotations, referring to the empirical and sociological theoretical approaches, in a way that is appropriate to the nature of the study variable, through which we aim to give scientific value to the topic.

3. Study population and sample:

The subject of the study is the attitudes of salaried workers towards the new retirement system in Skikda oil refinery complex, which is an Algerian state. A “worker” is defined as “any person who performs manual or intellectual work in return for a salary (wage), within the framework of the organisation and on behalf of another natural or legal, public or private person, called the employer” (Ben Azzouz, Ben Saber, 2010, p. 103).

Accordingly, the general framework of the research includes the workers who are registered in the social security records and who have the privilege of the right to retirement, and who perform their work at the level of the Skikda oil refinery complex (RA1K). It should be noted that during the period of the exploratory study it was not possible to obtain precise statistics on their number and distribution.

Since the study is exploratory and aims to know the tendency of wage earners towards the new retirement system, we relied on a purposive sample with certain specified characteristics as follows:

- The sample members are aware and knowledgeable about the retirement system and its laws.
- The sample members have sufficient professional experience to interact with the items of the attitude scale included in the questionnaire.

The sample is determined and its size is based on the subjective estimate of the researcher, based on experience, where it included 93 elements appointed based on an initial interview with the workers to know the previous characteristics and their acceptance to be part of the sample.

4. Data collection tools

There are two essential factors that the researcher needs to consider when selecting the field research tools for the study: the nature of the study itself and the methodology to be used in it. (A. JONES, 2000, p. 324)

Considering the nature of the current study and the methodology used, the main tool used to collect the field data is the Attitude Questionnaire, which aims to reveal the attitudes of the wage earners towards the new retirement system according to the recent changes (2016) that

have affected this system. It includes 4 dimensions, which are the same as the dimensions of the research problem, as follows:

- **The first dimension:** related to the abolition of early retirement and included 5 questions.
- **The second dimension:** related to the abolition of retirement without age condition and included 3 questions.
- **The third dimension:** related to the abolition of proportional retirement and included 4 questions.
- **The fourth dimension:** related to the new conditions of the retirement system and included 4 questions.

Fifth: processing and interpretation of field data

1- Data related to the “abolition of early retirement” dimension:

Table 3: Presentation of the sample’s attitudes towards the statements of the “Abolition of Early Retirement” dimension.

| Statements | | Estimates | | | | | Total | Mean | Deviation | Strength of trend |
|--------------|---|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|------|-----------|-------------------|
| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | | | | |
| Statement 01 | F | 2 | 0 | 0 | 49 | 42 | 93 | 4.34 | 0.7 | Strongly agree |
| | % | 2.2 | 0 | 0 | 52.7 | 45.2 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 02 | F | 3 | 0 | 3 | 60 | 27 | 93 | 4.16 | 0.7 | Agree |
| | % | 3.2 | 0 | 3.2 | 64.5 | 29 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 03 | F | 2 | 7 | 9 | 35 | 40 | 93 | 4.11 | 1.00 | Agree |
| | % | 2.2 | 7.5 | 9.7 | 37.6 | 43 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 04 | F | 11 | 54 | 4 | 15 | 9 | 93 | 2.53 | 1.18 | Disagree |
| | % | 11.8 | 54.1 | 4.3 | 16.1 | 9.7 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 5 | F | 65 | 22 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 93 | 1.36 | 0.6 | Strongly |
| | % | 69.8 | 23.7 | 6.5 | 0 | 0 | 100 | | | |

| | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Total Average for the Dimension | 1.74 | 0.49 | Strongly disagree |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|

Table No. (03), which shows the values of frequencies, percentages, arithmetic means and standard deviations for the statements after the abolition of early retirement, reveals the following:

- Statement No. 01, which states that “the introduction of the age of 50 for men is appropriate”, occupies the first place with an arithmetic mean of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.7, with a general direction of high intensity “strongly agree”. This is immediately followed by statement no. 2, which states that ‘the adoption of the age of 45 for women is appropriate’, with a mean of 4.16, which is very close to the mean of the first statement, and a standard deviation of 0.7, also with a similar tendency of ‘strongly agree’. This indicates that the age requirement within the early retirement formula was widely accepted by the sample individuals and that the worker can choose to leave the workplace earlier at this age according to his or her circumstances and aspirations.

With regard to statement no. 3, which states that “the adoption of 20 years as the duration of work is appropriate for all categories of workers”, it enjoys “support” with less intensity than the previous two statements (1 and 2), with an approximate arithmetic mean of 4.11 and a slightly higher standard deviation of 1,00 a greater dispersion around the arithmetic mean. This may indicate some of the peculiarities that distinguish the different occupational categories in terms of the time that the worker has to spend in the actual activity. A simple calculation shows that this duration largely coincides with the year of starting paid employment and the trend towards early retirement. Taking into account the cultural and social peculiarities that the Algerian worker has to go through before taking up a job, such as the obligation to do military service and to obtain university or professional qualifications, as well as the years of maternity for married women, may not be appropriate for all occupational categories.

Perhaps this leads us to say that the abolition of these two conditions is not in line with the majority of the tendencies of the sample individuals, since they are objective measures that express their positive attitude towards the condition of early retirement and reflect their aspirations and ambitions.

As for the fourth sentence, which states that “ten years of participation in the pension fund guarantees the worker a respectable pension after retirement”, the trend was “disagree”, which is natural given the formula used to calculate the pension, which decreases the fewer years worked, except for those who receive high salaries. The pension under this formula may not be suitable for all professional categories and may cause many difficulties because it may not meet all the needs of the retiree, since the worker loses the right to benefit from this pension as soon as he/she enters a new employment relationship.

Phrase number 05, which states that “the abolition of the early retirement formula is a sound measure”, occupies the last place with an average of 1.36 and a standard deviation of 0. 6, in the general direction of the “strongly disagree” category, and this seems logical given the tendencies of the sample individuals towards the previous phrases that explain how and under what conditions to benefit from the early retirement formula, which provides workers with a suitable alternative to voluntarily terminate the employment contract and the freedom

to choose between staying in the institution or leaving it, according to their living circumstances and the aspirations offered by job opportunities with new contracts.

Considering the general statistical data on workers' attitudes towards the "abolition of early retirement" aspect, with an average attitude estimate towards the aspect phrases falling into the "strongly disagree" category at an average of 1.74 and a standard deviation of 0.49, we can say that this decision has deprived workers of the freedom to leave the workplace in a relatively short period compared to the new retirement system, which requires workers to serve the legal working period, which is at least 15 actual years. The empirical evidence for this result is the intensive departure of workers in the years 2015-2016 under the early retirement formula in all institutions before the actual implementation of the new retirement law in 2017.

2. Data related to the aspect of "Abolition of Retirement without Age Condition".

Table No. (04): Shows the responses of the sample individuals to the phrases of the aspect "Abolition of Retirement without Age Condition".

| Statements | | Estimates | | | | | Total | Mean | Deviation | Strength of trend |
|--|---|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|------|-----------|-------------------|
| | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | | | | |
| Statement 06 | F | 03 | 05 | 11 | 53 | 21 | 93 | 3.90 | 0.92 | Agree |
| | % | 3.2 | 5.4 | 11.8 | 57 | 22.6 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 07 | F | 25 | 20 | 25 | 22 | 01 | 93 | 2.50 | 1.15 | Disagree |
| | % | 26.9 | 21.5 | 26.9 | 23.7 | 1.1 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 08 | F | 48 | 19 | 13 | 11 | 02 | 93 | 1.92 | 1.15 | Disagree |
| | % | | | | | | 100 | | | |
| Total Average for the Dimension | | | | | | | | 2.77 | 1.52 | Neutral |

From Table No. (04), which shows the values of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations for the phrases of the aspect "Abolition of Retirement without Age Condition", the following can be seen:

- Phrase No. 06 ranks first with a mean of 3.9 and a standard deviation of 0.92. The phrase reads "Accepting 32 years of actual work is an exploitation of the worker", with which the sample individuals expressed their agreement. This period of actual work exhausts the workers' energies and is considered to be an exploitation of them and their capacities. It should be noted that there are exceptions related to dangerous jobs and jobs with rights.

- Phrase No. 08, which reads “Abolishing the formula of retirement without age condition is a sound measure”, came last with a mean of 1.92 and a standard deviation of 1.15, falling into the “disagree” category. This trend indicates that the age condition for retirement is not suitable for employees, which is in line with the trend of the phrases in the previous aspect.

- Phrase no. 7, which states ‘It is appropriate to adopt 15 years as the minimum contribution period to the fund’, falls into the ‘Disagree’ category with a mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of 1.15. This suggests that the contribution period is burdensome for the employee and may benefit other groups.

Based on the results of the aspect of “retirement without age condition”, it is evident that there is ambiguity surrounding this formula, which the employees in the sample mostly expressed as a lack of clarity in trend or neutrality. This is because the conditions of the “retirement without age condition” formula imply a certain restriction of the freedom of the individual through the assumption of 32 years of actual service. According to the employees in the sample, this can be considered a form of slavery under a legal guise, especially for those who perform arduous tasks. The duration of 32 years of work is considered unfair and the workers’ attitude towards this aspect was characterised by proximity and lack of clarity. The overall tendency of the aspect was clearly away from neutrality.

3. Data on the aspect “Abolition of proportional retirement

Table no. (05): Shows the responses of the sample individuals to the phrases of the aspect “Abolition of Proportional Retirement”.

| Statements | | Estimates | | | | | Total | Mean | Deviation | Stre of tr |
|--|---|------------------|----------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | Stronglydisagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Stronglyagree | | | | |
| Statement 09 | F | 03 | 03 | 03 | 50 | 34 | 93 | 4.17 | 0.89 | Agre |
| | % | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 53.8 | 36.6 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 10 | F | 01 | 03 | 04 | 63 | 22 | 93 | 4.09 | 0.70 | Agre |
| | % | 1.1 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 67.7 | 23.7 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 11 | F | 05 | 07 | 17 | 37 | 27 | 93 | 3.79 | 1.10 | Agre |
| | % | 5.4 | 7.5 | 18.3 | 39.8 | 29 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 12 | F | 53 | 27 | 07 | 00 | 06 | 93 | 1.69 | 1.01 | Disa |
| | % | 57 | 29 | 7.5 | 00 | 6.5 | 100 | | | |
| Total Average for the Dimension | | | | | | | | 1.49 | 0.43 | Disa |

Through Table No. (05), which shows the values of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the statements under the “Abolition of Relative Retirement” dimension, the following is evident:

- Statement No. 09, which states “Adopting the age of 50 years for men is appropriate,” ranked first with a mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.89, strongly within the “Agree” category.
- While Statement No. 12, which states that “Abolishing the form of relative retirement is a sound measure,” ranked last with a mean of 1.45 and a standard deviation of 0.81, indicating a negative direction within the “Strongly Disagree” category. This can be explained by the fact that the relative retirement formula provided workers with an important alternative that allowed them to manage their careers according to the circumstances they live in and the aspirations they seek to achieve, and therefore, its abolition is a waste of a precious opportunity in their professional lives.
- Statements 10 and 11 came within the “Agree” direction, which state respectively “Adopting the age of 45 years for women is appropriate” and “Adopting a minimum of 20 years of work is an injustice to the worker’s right.” Workers believe that the age requirement is quite objective, and their attitude towards it is positive. The same applies to Statement 11, which can be interpreted as the workers’ desire to move towards early retirement due to the work pressures they live in and the search for psychological and physical rest.
- Undoubtedly, a worker or employee who has worked for at least 20 years has been completely depleted and may have been affected by some chronic diseases, burdened by the high cost of living and the pressures of life, and is no longer able to provide more. Continuing to work until the age of sixty means exposing oneself to further risk, especially in the field of strenuous work, in addition to the fact that the retention of this group in their positions will exacerbate unemployment among young job seekers.
- Overall, the study sample’s attitude towards the “Abolition of Relative Retirement” dimension is negative, falling within the “Strongly Disagree” category, with a mean of 1.49 and a standard deviation of 0.43.

4. Data on the dimension “Retirement according to the new conditions”.

Table no. (06): Representation of the responses of the sample persons to the statements of the dimension “Retirement according to the new conditions”.

| Statements | | Estimates | | | | | Total | Mean | Deviation | Stre of tr |
|--------------|---|------------------|----------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|------|-----------|------------|
| | | Stronglydisagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Stronglyagree | | | | |
| Statement 13 | F | 64 | 22 | 1 | 6 | 00 | 93 | 1.45 | 0.81 | Posi |
| | % | 68.8 | 23.7 | 1.1 | 6.5 | 00 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 14 | F | 49 | 29 | 03 | 8 | 4 | 93 | 1.18 | 1.12 | Neg |
| | % | 52.7 | 31.2 | 3.2 | 8.6 | 4.3 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 15 | F | 5 | 14 | 9 | 45 | 20 | 93 | 3.65 | 1.13 | Neg |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------------|-------------|------------|
| | % | 5.4 | 15.1 | 9.7 | 48.4 | 21.5 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 16 | F | 62 | 31 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 93 | 1.33 | 0.47 | Neg |
| | % | 66.7 | 33.3 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | | | |
| Statement 17 | F | 62 | 31 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 93 | 1.33 | 0.47 | Neg |
| | % | 66.7 | 33.3 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | | | |
| Total Average for the Dimension | | | | | | | | 1.9 | 0.35 | Neg |

Table No. (06), which shows the values of the frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations of the statements on the dimension “Retirement according to the new conditions”, shows that:

- Statement number 15, which reads “Accepting 20 years of work is a form of slavery”, ranks first with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.13.
- Statement number 14, which reads “Adopting the age of 55 for women is appropriate with the consideration of 3 years for children”, ranked second with a mean of 1.80 and a standard deviation of 1.12.
- Statement number 16, which states “The retirement procedures according to the new conditions meet the aspirations of the workers”, and statement number 17, which states “The retirement procedures according to the recent amendments achieve justice”, ranked third with a mean of 1.33 and a standard deviation of 0.47, which are equal in the negative attitude. This indicates that the new procedures do not meet the aspirations of workers, especially since the retirement system is one of the systems that aims to protect workers and motivate them to be committed to their work, and at the same time express gratitude for the significant efforts made by workers over many years of service.

It is noted that the results of this dimension are totally negative, and this can be interpreted objectively and scientifically as the attitude of the workers towards the recent amendments to the retirement system in Algeria, which can be considered as a law that swept away the dreams and aspirations of the workers, as it did not take into account the social aspect of the workers, but focused only on the economic aspect and the pension fund. It was imposed on the workers, who considered it a law that undermined the objectives for which retirement was established, which created a negative attitude towards it, considering it a form of slavery that affected their freedom.

Sixthly: Study Results

1. Study Results in Light of the Research Problem Questions:

At the end of his research, any researcher returns to the problematic questions he posed, attempting to answer them in light of the results he has reached through his study.

1-1. Results of the Study in Light of the First Sub-Question:

Referring to the values of the arithmetic mean in Table No. (03), it is clear to us:

- For the dimension of abolishing early retirement, the value of the arithmetic mean was: 1.74, which expresses that the workers' attitude towards the dimension is characterized by rejection, which is a negative tendency. This result can be interpreted that this measure will deprive them of leaving the workplace and the opportunities available to them in finding a new job and developing their professional path and maximizing their experiences, and this makes them feel forced to stay in the institution

1.2 Results of the study in the light of the second sub-question:

- For the dimension of abolishing retirement without age condition, the value of the arithmetic mean was: 2.77; and its value indicates that the workers' attitude towards this dimension is not clear, and this seems logical if we know that this formula requires the completion of 32 actual years of work, and this does not leave the workers with diverse options that motivate them to leave the institution.

1.3 Results of the study in relation to the third sub-question:

- For the dimension of the abolition of relative retirement, the value of the arithmetic mean was: 1.49 and its value indicates that the attitude of the workers towards this dimension is negative within the category of strongly disagree, because this formula of retirement used to give the workers the opportunity to benefit from a retirement grant corresponding to the number of years of contribution to the social security, and at the same time the age factor (50 years for men and 45 years for women) was suitable to develop the professional path and to acquire new experiences, taking into account the previous experience.

2.4 Results of the study in relation to the fourth sub-question:

With regard to the dimension of the recent changes in the early retirement system, the value of the arithmetic mean was 1.90, which indicates that the attitude of the employees towards this dimension is negative. This falls into the "disagree" category and can be interpreted as meaning that the new retirement conditions do not meet the aspirations of the workers or their expectations. This result is consistent with the results of the other dimensions, which means that the amendment of the pension conditions did not take into account the opinions of the workers, but was rather a political decision aimed at solving the deficit of the pension fund.

2. The overall result

After presenting, analysing and discussing the results of the study, the main problematic question can be answered as follows:

Through the mean values of the dimensions in Tables 03-04-05-06, which represent the dimensions of the retirement system, and in order to measure the general trend of the wage earners in the oil refining institution in Skikda towards the new retirement system established by the latest amendments in 2016, we calculate the arithmetic mean of the dimensions of the attitude scale by dividing the sum of the dimension means by the number of dimensions, according to the following relationship:

Number of dimensions / sum of dimension means = overall mean

$4 / (1.74 + 2.77 + 1.49 + 1.9) = \text{overall mean}$

1.97 = overall mean; falls into the "disagree" category

- Based on the arithmetic mean result of 1.97, and referring to Table 02, it is clear that the general attitude of the wage earners in the studied institution towards the new retirement system established by the latest 2016 amendments is negative.

And based on the presentation and analysis of the statements representing the dimensions of the attitude, as well as the results of the arithmetic means, we can conclude that the changes made to the retirement system have negatively affected the attitudes of the workers. This can be interpreted as follows:

* The lack of social justice with regard to the pension funds and their subscribers, and the way in which the retirement conditions themselves are determined, which reveals a great disparity between the beneficiaries of these funds.

* The abandonment of pension formulae as a right of workers that has been violated by the State.

* Loss of trust between the workers and the National Retirement Fund after the hesitation to create a special system for workers in arduous jobs.

* Workers' sense of exploitation imposed by the pension system, especially in terms of actual years of work, which can lead to a sense of alienation among workers within a system that was created because of them and for them.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to reveal the attitudes of salaried workers in an oil refinery institution in Skikda towards the retirement system, according to the new conditions established by the latest amendments in 2016. This was done by revealing and describing the general attitude of the workers towards the new retirement system. Overall, the results of the study concluded that the general attitude towards the dimensions of the new retirement system is negative. The reason for this, as mentioned above, is the reliance on legal texts borrowed from other societies that are far removed from the social and economic reality of Algerian workers. This makes them incompatible with the social and psychological needs of their environment and does not meet their future aspirations and expectations.

The results of the study suggest that the changes made to the retirement system have had a negative impact on workers' attitudes. This can be attributed to the lack of social justice in the pension funds and their subscribers, the feeling that a worker's right has been taken away by the state, the loss of trust between the workers and the National Pension Fund, and the workers' feeling of exploitation imposed by the retirement system, especially in relation to the actual years of work. This has led to a sense of alienation among workers within a system that was created because of them and for them.

The study recommends that the retirement system be reformed to better reflect the social and economic realities of Algerian workers, taking into account their needs, aspirations and expectations. This would help restore their confidence in the system and improve their general attitude towards it.

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Appendices

Attitude questionnaire

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of 20 August 1955, Skikda

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

Department of Social Sciences

**Salaried workers' attitudes towards the retirement
system in Algeria -A Field Study on a Sample of Workers
at the Skikda Petroleum Refinery Complex. 2023 - 2024**

Prepared by:

Dr. Mecibah Louiza

| Dimensions of the new pension system in Algeria | Dimensions | Statements | Stronglydisagree | Disagree | neutral | Agree | Stronglya |
|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------|----------|---------|-------|-----------|
| | Abolition of early retirement | The adoption of 50 years of age for men is appropriate | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of 45 years of age for women is appropriate | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of 20 years of work is appropriate for all categories of workers | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of 10 years of contribution to the social security fund will give workers a decent pension after | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | retirement. | | | | | |
| | | The abolition of the early retirement formula is a good measure. | | | | | |
| | Abolition of Retirement without age limit | The adoption of 32 years of actual working life is an exploitation of workers' rights. | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of 15 years as the minimum contribution to the fund is not appropriate. | | | | | |
| | | The abolition of the retirement formula without an age limit is an appropriate measure. | | | | | |
| | Abolition of Proportional retirement | The assumption of 50 years of age for men is appropriate | | | | | |
| | | The assumption of 45 years of age for women is reasonable. | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of a minimum | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | working life of 20 years is an injustice to the worker. | | | | | |
| | | The abolition of the proportional retirement formula is an appropriate measure. | | | | | |
| | Retirement Under the New Conditions(2016 amendments) | The assumption of 60 years of age for men is appropriate | | | | | |
| | | The assumption of 55 years for women is reasonable with the consideration of three years for children. | | | | | |
| | | The adoption of 20 years as a working life is a form of slavery. | | | | | |
| | | Retirement procedures under the new | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | conditions meet the aspirations of workers | | | | | |
| | | The retirement procedures according to the latest amendments achieve justice | | | | | |