

# **Home and Away: The Lived Experiences of UK- Based Algerian Doctoral Graduates on Returning Home to Algeria**

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## **Abstract**

The launch of an international postgraduate scholarship programme, initiated by the Algerian government, commenced in 2014. Initially, five hundred Master students from different English language departments were offered scholarships to pursue doctoral studies in various UK universities with the aim of expanding their academic, social, and cultural knowledge. In return for the award of the scholarship, students were contracted to complete their intended degree and return home after their studies in the UK to start teaching in the Algerian university sector. This paper focuses on Algerians who have successfully obtained their doctorate and returned home to start their new academic careers. It sheds light on their lived experiences, as Algerian doctoral returnees, both on social and academic levels in order to understand how they make sense of their lived experiences and careers. The data featured in this project is taken from 18 online semi-structured interviews (3 pilot and 15 full interviews). The participants included 5 men and 13 women from different graduating UK universities, research fields, departments, Algerian cities, and working locations. Analysis of the data has been undertaken via interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and this reveals the emergence of personal and group experiential themes. The main themes discussed in this paper include - criticality, professionalism, academic growth, academic network, research knowledge and skills, lack of resources, and bureaucracy issues. This paper contributes to a growing body of research literature related to the understanding of lived experiences of returning scholars from abroad and their experiences and the ‘management’ of returning.

**Keywords:** Academic experiences, Algeria, Lived Experiences, Returnees, Postgraduate Studies.