

The Reality of the Quality of Life Within the Social Dimensions of Sustainable Development in Algeria "2005-2023"

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to endeavor to provide a comprehensive conceptualization of both sustainable development and the distinctive dimensions thereof. Additionally, it delves into concepts related to the quality of life, intimately connected to the social dimension of sustainable development. Moreover, it addresses the reality that distinguishes Algeria in the realm of the social dimension of sustainable development and the varied outcomes reached. The improvement in indicators of education, health, unemployment levels, and human development is considered an attainment of a certain level of sustainable development goals. However, this fell short of realizing the desired levels of quality of life, a benchmark that advanced nations have significantly surpassed.

Keywords: quality of life, sustainable development, human development, social dimensions.

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Introduction

The expression of quality of life encompasses several concepts, including public safety for individuals and communities. This is followed by summarizing the negative and positive features in life. The term quality of life also reflects satisfaction with life, including everything from physical health, family, education, employment, wealth, security, freedom, religious beliefs, environment, and a wide range of contexts. This includes areas of sustainable development, which consider economic, social, environmental, technological, and other concepts.

It is known that quality of life has immeasurable standards due to its association with the psychological aspect of human beings. However, reaching general indicators related to the social

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aspect of sustainable development provides a comprehensive picture of the quality of life in a society. In order to achieve a decent standard of living and a dignified level of quality of life within sustainable development that respects the rights of present and future generations to natural resources and reflects complete individual satisfaction with their lives, it is necessary to consider the social dimension. This dimension is considered the most important aspect that distinguishes sustainable development and significantly represents the level of quality of life.

The good health of individuals, high levels of education, low levels of unemployment, in addition to high human development indicators, all together are criteria and indicators that indicate the quality of life in a society. In this regard, Algeria has made significant progress in promoting the social dimension of sustainable development, since the beginning of the millennium until the present day, in its quest to achieve high levels of quality of life for Algerian individuals. Indicators such as unemployment, public health, education, and human development reflect the level of quality of life enjoyed by Algerian individuals.

Based on the above, we can formulate the research question as follows:

What is the reality of the quality of life within the social dimensions of sustainable development in Algeria during the period (2005-2023)?

This research question will be answered through the following dimensions:

The conceptual framework of sustainable development.

General concepts about quality of life.

Social indicators of sustainable development in Algeria during the period (2005-2023).

1. The conceptual framework of sustainable development

The topics of sustainable development have gained great importance recently in international social and economic forums and conferences, due to the direct connection and relationship between economic, social, and environmental development. The latter plays a major role in preserving the environment. From this perspective, we will try to highlight the various definitions of sustainable development, as well as the dimensions it can take and the reasons that prompted organizations, governmental and non-governmental bodies to adopt these issues and ideas.

1.1. Definition of sustainable development:

The official launch of the concept and term "Sustainable Development" began with what is known today as the report "Our Common Future", issued by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987.

The United Nations defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs and requirements of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹

“Edward Barbier” defines sustainable development as the activity that promotes social welfare while preserving available natural resources with minimal environmental damage.²

The definition of sustainable development has evolved noticeably, through which we can distinguish three main axes targeted by the aforementioned definitions:

- Meeting the needs of humans in the present time
- Preserving natural resources to ensure the rights of future generations
- Achieving growth and social justice worldwide.

1.2. Dimensions of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is based on multiple dimensions in order to achieve its goals and aims to make improvements in these dimensions as they are directly or indirectly related to humans or their environment. These dimensions are:³

1.2.1 Economic dimension: According to this dimension, sustainable development in wealthy countries means making reductions in levels of energy and natural resource consumption that are at risk, through improving energy efficiency and changing consumption patterns of resources. In poor countries, sustainable development means using resources to improve living standards and reduce poverty, which is closely linked to environmental degradation and rapid population growth.

1.2.2 Environmental dimension: The idea of environmental sustainability is based on leaving the Earth in a good condition for future generations. If humans maintain their activities and performance without depleting natural resources or damaging the environment, this activity becomes naturally sustainable. This is achieved by reducing the consumption of natural materials, using fully recyclable materials after consumption, and collecting them without harming the environment or depleting its resources.

1.2.3 Social dimension: The social dimension of sustainable development focuses on humans and providing their basic needs currently and in the future, such as housing, education, and health. It also emphasizes achieving justice and equality, firstly between the current generation and future generations, and secondly between the peoples of the world.

¹ -Zerman Karim, Sustainable Development in Algeria through the Economic Recovery Program 2001-200-, Economic and Administrative Research, Issue VII, University of Mohamed Khider, Biskra, p. 195.

² - BARBIER kl, **The concept of sustainable economic development**, Environmental Conservation ,vol 14 ,n2 , London, 1987, p104.

³ -Khenchoul Dunia, The reality of sustainable development in Algeria - an analytical study during the period 1992-2015, Journal of Economic Studies, Vol. 5, No. 1, June 2018, pp. 75, 76.

1.2.4 Technological Dimension: Telecommunications technology has contributed to significant advancement in improving the performance of private institutions, as well as enhancing research and information activities. It has also contributed to the modernization of new institutional patterns, including technology incubators and cities, stimulated economic growth, created many job opportunities, reduced poverty and unemployment, and facilitated the implementation of programs aimed at transforming society into an information society.

2. General Concepts about Quality of Life

2.1. Definition of the Term "Quality of Life":

The World Health Organization defines quality of life as an individual's perception of their position in life within the context of the culture and values in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, and concerns.⁴

Fernandez-Ballesteros suggests that the term "quality of life" is a fundamental concept in various sciences, including environmental science, health, psychiatry, economics, politics, geography, psychology, sociology, management, and more. Over the past two decades, the concept of quality of life has been increasingly used and applied to respond to individual and group support programs and social policy evaluation services. This usage and interest reflect a broad perspective that considers quality of life as a favorable outcome of education, health, rehabilitation programs, and social services.⁵

"Lambiri emphasizes" the growing interest in the concept of quality of life in economic and social fields at the theoretical and field research levels, especially in sociology and urban economics, due to the impact of quality of life on competitiveness and well-being rates.⁶

In summary, quality of life can be defined as the sum of the needs that an individual enjoys, including food, clothing, education, good income, good health, a clean environment free from diseases, and a social environment that makes them feel valued within society.

2.2. Aspects of Quality of Life:

Several aspects can be identified for evaluating the personal quality of life for each individual. These aspects are prioritized based on each person's interests and perceptions. The following are the aspects:⁷

⁴ - Safaa Salah Sanad Ibrahim, *Quality of Life and Mental Health Your Way to Happiness*, Dar Yastroun, Cairo, First Edition, 2016, p. 12.

⁵ -Iraqi, Salah Al-Din Ramadan, Mustafa Ali, The effectiveness of a counseling program to improve the quality of life among depressed male and female students, *Journal of the Faculty of Education, Tanta University, Egypt*, 2005, Vol. 2, No. 34, p. 468.

⁶ - Al-Maliki, Hanan Abdul Rahim Abdullah, Depression, Personal Meaning and Quality of Psychological Life among a Sample of Female Students of the College of Education, um Al-Qura University in the Light of Some Variables, *Journal of the Faculty of Education, Al-Azhar University*, 2001, Part III, p. 244.

First Aspect: Material Factors and Well-being.

This includes surface-level material services such as education, health, social status, and others.

Second Aspect: Meeting Needs and Satisfaction with Life.

When an individual's needs are met, the quality of their life rises, whether related to survival needs like food, drink, shelter, and health or social relationships such as the need for security, belonging, love, power, and freedom. Life satisfaction comes after fulfilling the human needs.

Third Aspect: Individual Empowerment and Life Perceptions.

The use of human capabilities, energies, and activities for meaningful projects that establish social relationships falls under the category of life's components. The more an individual feels their value and importance to society, the higher their sense of life quality and meaning.

Fourth Aspect: Health, Biological Well-being, and the Individual's Sense of Happiness.

Health is considered one of the needs of life quality, and happiness is the feeling of satisfaction, contentment, and self-fulfillment. It is the ecstasy an individual feels when recognizing the value of their life.

Fifth Aspect: Existential Quality of Life.

This is the subjective unity of life aspects, representing the most profound elements within the self, and an individual's sense of existence.

3. Indicators of Social Development for Sustainable Development in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

In order to achieve a better quality of life, enhance the living standards of the population, and develop and strengthen the human resources, Algeria has undertaken in its development plans to consider aspects such as individuals' purchasing power, healthcare, employment levels, and unemployment. These factors are essential social indicators that must be taken into account to embody the components of sustainable development.

3.1. Evolution of Employment Levels in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

Algeria has been and continues to make efforts to reach a stage that controls the phenomenon of unemployment threatening society. The ability of the economy to generate employment and absorb the workforce is a priority in the agendas of countries and governments. This is because the economic wheel only turns after reaching a stage of employment, allowing the national

⁷ -Mohamed Helmy, Khalaf Hamdan, Measuring the Quality of Life of Persons with Disabilities, and the Impact of Some Demographic Variables on Them, Yastron Publishing House, Cairo, 2018, pp. 65, 66. (At the disposal of the researchers).

economy to adopt effective and sustainable development. The following table illustrates employment and unemployment levels during the period (2005-2023).

Table 01: Evolution of Unemployment Rates in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023)

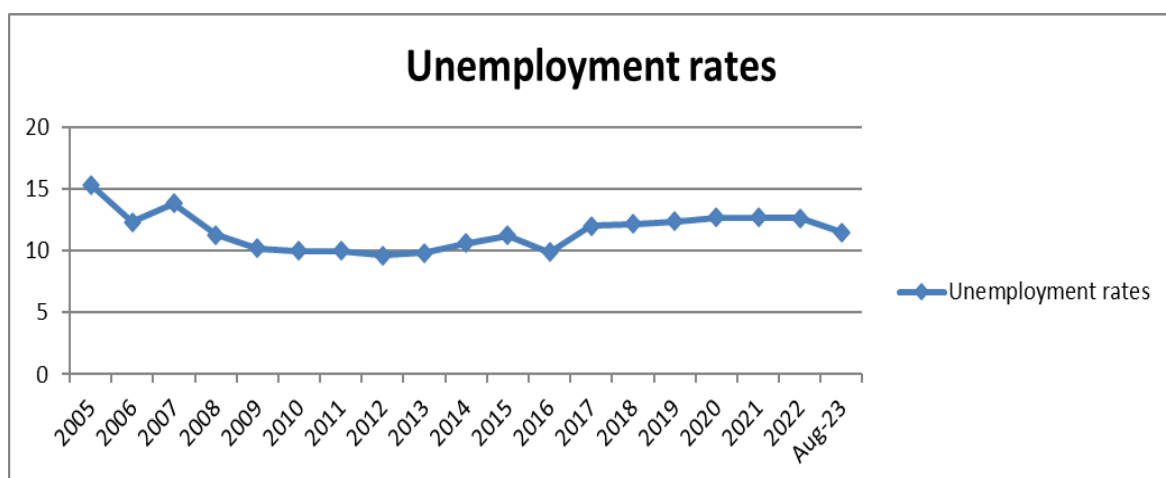
Unit: %

2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	years
9.6	10	10	10.2	11.3	13.8	12.3	15.3	Unemployment rates
2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	years
12.70	12.34	12.14	11.99	9.9	11.2	10.6	9.8	Unemployment rates
					august 2023	2022	2021	years
					11.5	12.6	12.7	Unemployment rates

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the National Bureau of Statistics.

Through Table 1, we observe a significant improvement in the policy adopted by Algeria to absorb unemployment and provide job opportunities. Unemployment levels decreased from 15.3% in 2005 to a minimum of 9.8% by 2013. However, they began to rise again in the subsequent years, reaching 11.5% in August 2023. For further clarification, we attempt to visualize the data from the table in the following chart.

Figure 01: Evolution of unemployment rates during the period (2005-2023)



Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the data of the previous table.

Through the above statement, which illustrates the evolution of unemployment rates during the period (2005-2023), and the preceding table, it is evident that the fluctuations in the unemployment rate in Algeria were closely linked to the fluctuations in oil prices in the global markets. Accordingly, any change in energy prices directly affects unemployment rates. We can also assert that the development programs adopted by the government will not be able to achieve sustainable development goals, especially in the social aspect of employment. Moreover, the figures relied upon by the government raise many question marks, as the actual unemployment levels are much higher than officially declared. Temporary and non-permanent contracts are not included in the list of job positions, impacting the psychological well-being of Algerians and perpetuating a constant state of concern, affecting overall quality of life and satisfaction.

3.2. Evolution of Health Levels in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

In this indicator, we can refer to the life expectancy at birth and the number of deaths for newborns who die each year. These two indicators are crucial for experts in determining public health in Algeria.

3.2.1. Number of Deaths in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

To study the number of deaths for newborns in Algeria, we observe the following table:

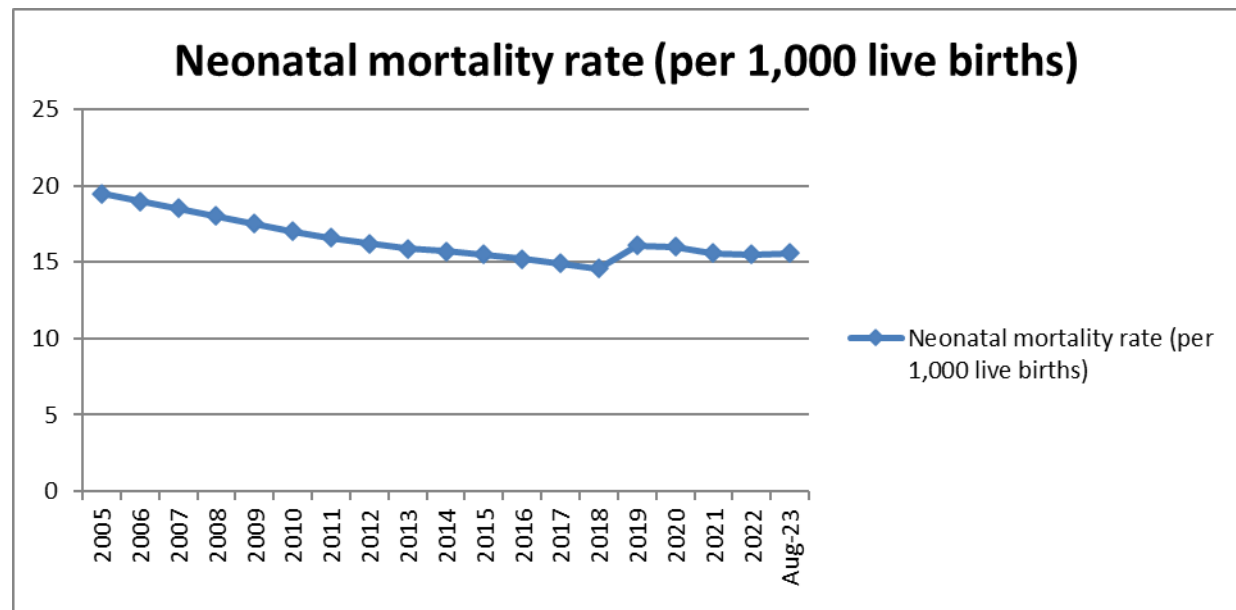
Table 02: Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) in Algeria (2005-2023)

Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	years	Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	years
15.5	2015	19.5	2005
15.2	2016	19	2006
14.9	2017	18.5	2007
14.6	2018	18	2008
16.1	2019	17.5	2009
16	2020	17	2010
15.6	2021	16.6	2011
15.5	2022	16.2	2012

15.6	August 2023	15.9	2013
		15.7	2014

Source: Authors, based on World Bank data, via the website, <https://data.albankaldawli.org/indicator>, accessed 16/05/2023, h13.50.

Figure 02: Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) in Algeria (2005-August 2023)



Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the data of the previous table.

Through the above table and the subsequent statement, we observe that the neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) decreases each year, gradually declining. At the beginning of the study period in 2005, the mortality rate was 19.5, and by 2018, it had reached 14.6. However, by the end of the study period in August 2023, it slightly increased to 15.6 as the neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births). This relative increase is likely attributed to the overall attention to public health and the role of healthcare. As is well known, the health aspect is crucial in supporting the quality of life for the Algerian individuals.

3.2.2. Life Expectancy at Birth in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

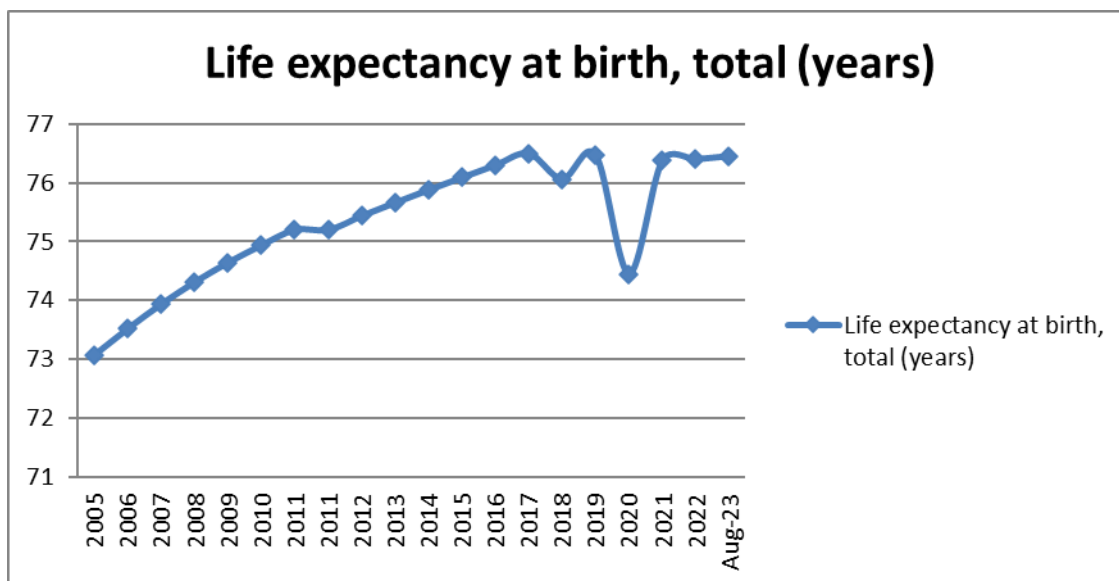
Table 03: Evolution of life expectancy at birth in Algeria during the period (2005-2023)

Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	years	Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	years
75.878	2014	73.072	2005

76.09	2015	73.521	2006
76.298	2016	73.936	2007
76.499	2017	74.311	2008
76.066	2018	74.644	2009
76.474	2019	74.938	2010
74.453	2020	75.199	2011
76.377	2021	75.199	2011
76.401	2022	75.436	2012
76.455	August2023	75.661	2013

Source: Produced by the authors, based on World Bank data, via the website, <https://data.albankaldawli.org/indicator>, accessed 16/11/2023, h 13.00.

Figure 03: Evolution of life expectancy at birth in Algeria during the period (2005-2023)



Source: Completed by the authors, based on the data of the previous table.

The notable improvement in Table 7 and Figure 6 gives the impression that overall health in Algeria is moving towards improvement. It is evident that life expectancy is increasing significantly during the study period, progressing from 73.02 years in 2005 to a peak of 76.45 years in 2023, with the exception of the anomaly in 2020. This exceptional year was marked by the global circumstances related to the spread of the coronavirus. However, in general, these rates

reflect figures that compete with countries enjoying a good standard of living. This underscores the positive role of public health levels and their impact on the quality of life sought by the state.

3.3. Evolution of Educational Levels in Algeria during the Period (2005-2021).

Experts evaluate the educational level of a country based on various indicators, including financial indicators such as the percentage of expenditure on education relative to the gross income. Other indicators include school enrollment and higher education, the latter providing a clearer picture from a social perspective. In the realm of assessing educational levels and their impact on quality of life, Algeria, like many other countries, has experienced significant development in this field, as illustrated by the following table.

Table 04: Evolution of school enrolment, tertiary education (% of total) in Algeria (2005-2021)

School enrollment, tertiary (% of total)	years	School enrollment, tertiary (% of total)	years
34.48182	2014	20.87286	2005
36.78132	2015	21.33784	2006
42.62885	2016	23.60133	2007
47.64683	2017	23.60133	2008
51.36567	2018	29.90938	2009
52.61994171	2019	29.88943	2010
52.49861908	2020	31.21409	2011
53.74174118	2021	32.20153	2012
		33.89099	2013

Source: Produced by the authors, based on World Bank data, via the website, <https://data.albankaldawli.org/indicator>, accessed 06/12/2022, h 16.30.

Through the data in the above table, a continuous and consistent increase in the enrollment rate in schools and higher education is observed. It has progressed from 20.87% in 2005 to 52.74% in the recent years of the study, without interruption or decline. However, the significant interest in this field remains, aiming to consider the elements of life quality in relation to the education sector's capacity to establish the principles and components of development in general, and satisfaction.

3.4. Human Development Index (HDI) in Algeria during the Period (2005-2023).

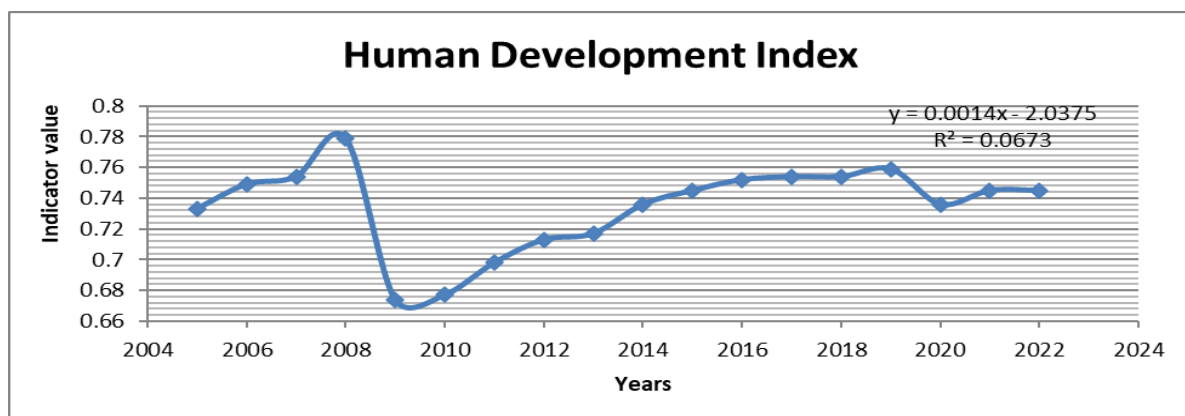
Thanks to the economic and social reforms adopted by Algeria since the beginning of the new millennium, the Human Development Index (HDI) has undergone significant development. This index is considered one of the most important indicators used by countries to measure the quality of life. The table below illustrates the most significant developments that have affected this index during the study period.

Table 05: Evolution of the Human Development Index during the period (2005-2022)

Human Development Index	years	Human Development Index	years
0.736	2014	0.733	2005
0.745	2015	0.749	2006
0.752	2016	0.754	2007
0.754	2017	0.779	2008
0.754	2018	0.674	2009
0.759	2019	0.677	2010
0.736	2020	0.698	2011
0.745	2021	0.713	2012
0.745	2022	0.717	2013

Source: Completed by the authors, based on the data of the Human Development Reports for the years of study.

Figure 04: Evolution of the Human Development Index during the period (2005-2005)



Source: Completed by the authors, based on the data of the previous table.

The Human Development Index (HDI) for Algeria has witnessed significant progress during the study period. It increased from a value of 0.733 in 2005 to 0.779 in 2008, reaching an excellent level. By 2017, it stood at 0.754, securing Algeria the top position in the Maghreb region, according to the Human Development Report 2017, and the 84th position globally. Moving forward, in 2019, it climbed to the 82nd position with a value of 0.759, placing Algeria among countries with high human development. However, there was a slight decrease in 2022, with a value of 0.745.

This overall improvement is primarily linked to enhancements in individual annual income levels, enrollment rates in education, and their outcomes. Additionally, there is a noticeable improvement in the general health level year after year.

4. Conclusion:

Countries aspire to achieve high indicators of quality of life, viewing it as a necessity for thriving societies seeking continuous change, development, life re-planning, and engineering. The measurement and documentation of the sustainability of well-being and peaceful living are crucial. Consequently, the quality of life is closely linked to the concepts of sustainable development, gaining significant importance in recent times in international social and economic forums due to the direct correlation and relationship between economic, social development, and the environment in which humans live.

Moreover, the concepts of quality of life go much deeper than commonly understood. There should not be a conflation between the concept of quality of life and the concept or standard of living, which primarily relies on income levels. Analytical and measurement differences should be acknowledged to prevent confusion. Conversely, indicators used for quality of life extend beyond wealth, employment, and job opportunities, encompassing an environment built on public health, education, employment, and other social dimensions for sustainable development.

Algeria has achieved much in the realm of social dimensions. However, this hasn't propelled it into the ranks of advanced countries, particularly in terms of individual quality of life. This study reveals a significant improvement in education, health indicators, and unemployment rates in Algeria. Still, it falls short of the desired levels. Algeria must continue striving to overcome obstacles hindering the achievement of desired goals in sustainable development and individual quality of life.

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