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## **The Algerian Quality Award: A tool for supporting quality and excellence in Algerian Institutions**

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**Abstract**--This research paper aims to highlight the role played by Algeria in keeping pace with the changes in the business environment, especially with the increasing focus on the concepts of quality and excellence. Algeria has developed its own quality model, which includes a set of criteria with relative weights assigned based on their importance. The model is inspired by the European Quality Model due to its compatibility with the specificities of Algerian society. In the same context, an annual quality award was established to recognize the best Algerian institutions. This award is presented on December 19th each year, coinciding with the National Day of Standardization and Quality, under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry and Pharmaceutical Production. The study concludes that the award has motivated many institutions to remain competitive, with numerous public and private institutions receiving the award since its inception. This reflects the competition to adopt the criteria of the Algerian

Quality Model, which has positively impacted their competitiveness at the international level.

**Keywords**---supporting quality, Algerian quality award, Algerian Institutions.

## **Introduction**

In recent years, organizations have increasingly focused on excellence and quality as a means to adapt to the new business environment and intense competition. For any organization aiming to survive and thrive, it is essential to have a strong management system that can keep up with success and progress. In today's market, only excellent organizations can thrive, and among the modern management approaches is the establishment of a culture of quality.

Quality is considered a tool for achieving excellence through learning and sharing experiences. In response, many countries have established quality awards as a way to promote quality and pursue excellence, such as the American, Japanese, and European models of excellence and quality. With the emergence of various global and Arab models, Algeria has made significant efforts to adopt and institutionalize the concepts of quality and excellence within its national institutions. As part of its rehabilitation efforts, Algeria has established the Algerian Quality Award to promote competitiveness and spread a culture of quality, responding to the changes taking place both internationally and domestically.

### **Problem Statement:**

To learn more about the Algerian Quality Award, we try to formulate the following question:

- What is the Algerian Quality Model?
- What are the criteria for the Algerian Quality Award?

### **Hypothesis:**

- The Algerian Quality Award has motivated many Algerian institutions to adopt quality and achieve excellence.

### **1. The Concept of Quality and Excellence:**

In this section, we will explore the concepts of quality and excellence separately. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines quality as "the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs." It is also defined as a set of attributes and characteristics that distinguish a product or service, enabling it to meet the needs of consumers, whether in terms of design, manufacturing, or performance, with the aim of satisfying and delighting customers (Ben Jassim Ben Mohamed, 2008, p. 29).

The concept of excellence began to gain attention in the early 1980s, when it was first used in the field of economics. Tom Peters and Robert H. Waterman published their famous book *In Search of Excellence* in 1982, which was a response to the excellence of Japanese companies since the 1960s and 1970s. The authors studied a group of excellent American companies and identified the factors that contributed to their excellence based on specific criteria (Nicole, 1991, p. 5).

Linguistically, the word "excellence" derives from the Latin word *Excellere*, meaning "to rise above others." It is associated with the words *Excel* and *Excellence*. The former means to surpass or excel, while the latter refers to the quality of achieving excellence, often in comparison between two things (Sayed Youssef, 2015, p. 20).

Excellence is about doing things correctly with a high degree of precision and professionalism. It is a scientific way of measuring achievements by understanding the satisfaction of employees, customers, and stakeholders within the organization (Kinji.G., 2001, p. 701). Quality and excellence are interrelated concepts that represent the modern management approach adopted by global institutions.

## **2. The Algerian Quality Award:**

The European Excellence Model is one of the most prominent models of excellence management used in the contemporary world. It is based on the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) derived from the activities of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). The general logic of the European model is based on the results achieved by the organization for its various stakeholders, including employees, customers, and society as a whole. It also considers the efficiency of leadership in setting strategies and policies, guiding employees, and coordinating available resources, all of which lead to the organization's performance results (Mahdid, 2021).

### **2.1. The Establishment of the Algerian Quality Award:**

Algeria, like many other countries, has focused on excellence to keep pace with global developments and challenges. The proposal to establish a national excellence model was first made in 2000 as part of a program to develop a national standardization system. This model was officially approved by Executive Decree No. 05-02 dated January 6, 2002, under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry and Investment Promotion, represented by the Quality and Industrial Safety Division (Qaptan, 2010, p. 12). The award is presented on December 19th each year, coinciding with the National Day of Standardization and Quality. The supervising authority aims to spread a culture of quality within Algerian institutions and promote the principle of continuous improvement, which is the path to achieving excellence in performance (Executive Decree No. 02-05, 2002, p. 7). The competition for the Algerian Quality Award began in 2003. The national excellence model offers the Algerian Quality Award, which includes:

- A financial reward of 2 million Algerian dinars,
- A trophy and an honorary certificate.

The award is granted annually through a competition to recognize the best institution or organization subject to Algerian law. The award is based on an evaluation by a jury whose composition is determined by the Minister in charge of standardization. It is worth noting that participation in the Algerian Quality Award is free of charge, including the field visits conducted by the committees. The jury consists of recognized leaders, academics, and specialists in quality and management. The jury is supported by a team of qualified assessors who have received the necessary training to conduct evaluations and are bound by clear and precise ethical and confidentiality rules.

## **2.2. Objectives of the Award:**

The Algerian Quality Award aims to:

- Establish a reference for quality for Algerian institutions;
- Serve as a guide for institutions of all sizes, including small, medium, and large enterprises, as well as organizations, to identify their strengths and areas for improvement in their quality journey;
- Reward the results achieved by institutions in various activities through quality;
- Encourage the efforts made by Algerian institutions toward excellence;
- Motivate and engage all employees in the quality project;
- Recognize the efforts made by institutions in pursuing quality.

## **2.3. Rules and Conditions for Participation:**

To participate in the competition, the following conditions must be met (Ministry of Industry, 2024 Edition, p. 6):

- The application file must include: an application form; a detailed cover letter signed by the director; a company presentation; and responses to each chapter of the framework.
- The file must include tables, charts, and other relevant information, such as results obtained over at least three years, to enable evaluation.
- The application file must not exceed 40 pages, including appendices (in A4 format). For security reasons, the file must be numbered, bound, and submitted in three (03) copies for evaluation by the technical secretariat in a sealed envelope.

In addition, participating institutions must respect the following regulatory rules (Ministry of Industry, 2024 Edition, p. 3):

- Respect the deadlines for submitting application files to the Ministry, which are usually set for the months of July, August, and September. There is no fixed date, as it changes from year to year due to considerations related to the month of Ramadan.
- The participating organization must comply with all legal standards and rules applicable in the fields of taxation, health, occupational safety, public safety, and the environment.
- The participating organization must accept an evaluation team that will conduct field visits to verify the accuracy of the information provided in the application file.
- The Ministry overseeing the Algerian Quality Award has the right to use the information provided in the application files for statistical or pedagogical purposes (e.g., in lectures, training programs, national or

international publications) without objection from the participating organization.

- Participating organizations must accept that the decisions made by the evaluation committee for the Algerian Quality Award are final and cannot be appealed.
- The winner must attend the award ceremony, which is held on the National Day of Standardization.

#### **2.4. Evaluation Methodology:**

The national model provides an evaluation methodology that is generally similar to other excellence models. The Algerian model derives its criteria and principles from the European Quality and Excellence Model. The evaluation process for the Algerian model is based on nine criteria, eight of which represent the foundations, and the ninth is related to results. Organizations wishing to apply for the award must submit a comprehensive report on the status of these criteria, ranging from 40 to 80 pages, highlighting their actual situation during the year and the various measures they have taken to improve their performance and progress toward excellence. The report must be submitted in five copies to the Quality and Industrial Safety Division by July 31st of the following year, where it undergoes an initial evaluation and review by a specialized committee composed of managers, academics, and evaluation experts who have received specialized training from leading countries in this field.

The initial evaluation is followed by field visits to examine and deepen the various elements of the report through interviews and discussions with the managers and officials of the participating organizations. The evaluation results are then revealed, and the award is granted to the organization that has demonstrated significant progress in its pursuit of excellence during a ceremony organized by the supervising ministry, coinciding with the National Day of Standardization (NORMALISATION) on December 19th each year. The award is open to all institutions operating at the national level, whether small, medium, or large enterprises, public or private, for-profit or non-profit.

#### **3. Criteria for the Algerian Quality Award:**

Initially, the award criteria were limited to eight criteria, as outlined in Executive Decree No. 05-02 dated January 6, 2002. These criteria included: management commitment (120 points), strategy and objectives (80 points), customer or user focus (200 points), quality control (120 points), quality evaluation (100 points), quality improvement (80 points), employee contribution (100 points), and results (200 points).

To keep pace with changes, these criteria were modified to include nine chapters, each with a point evaluation, allowing organizations to achieve a maximum of 1000 points. Responses to these elements are provided in a detailed report. It is worth noting that there is an introductory chapter (without points) that includes the identification data of the participating organization.

The specialized evaluation committee assigns points based on the observations made regarding the organization's responses to the evaluation criteria questions,

as follows (Qaptan, The Algerian Quality Model: The Path of Algerian Organizations Toward Organizational Excellence, 2014, p. 111):

- A satisfactory response is awarded between 80% and 100% of the total points allocated for the criterion.
- A good response is awarded between 60% and 80% of the total points allocated for the criterion.
- An average response is awarded between 30% and 60% of the total points allocated for the criterion.
- An insufficient response is awarded between 0% and 30% of the total points allocated for the criterion.

The following table shows the weights distributed across the nine criteria:

Table 1: Evaluation Elements of the Algerian Quality Award

<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Evaluation Element or Criterion</b>	<b>Points</b>
Chapter 1:	Management Commitment	120 points
Chapter 2:	Strategy and Objectives	90 points
Chapter 3:	Employee Management	100 points
Chapter 4:	Resource Management	80 points
Chapter 5:	Process Management	260 points
Chapter 6:	Customer Satisfaction	120 points
Chapter 7:	Employee Satisfaction	80 points
Chapter 8:	Integration into Society	60 points
Chapter 9:	Operational Results	90 points
<b>Total</b>		<b>1000 points</b>

Source: The Algerian Quality Award, Objectives, Conditions of Participation, and Questionnaire, Ministry of Industrial Development and Investment Promotion, 2024 Edition, p. 19.

From the table above, we observe that the evaluation criteria for the Algerian Quality Award are divided into nine axes, with appropriate points allocated to each axis. The most significant weight is given to process management, with 260 points, reflecting its importance in creating quality.

The following is an explanation of these criteria and their respective points (Bousalem, 2014, pp. 112-113; Qaptan, The Algerian Quality Model: The Path of Algerian Organizations Toward Organizational Excellence, 2014, pp. 116-117; Zid El-Kheir and Racham, 2014, p. 288):

### **3.1. Management Commitment (120 points):**

This criterion aims to assess the extent to which management is committed to quality by allocating resources, involving employees, and demonstrating leadership in quality initiatives. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- Does management allocate the necessary resources to achieve quality objectives?
- Does management set an example through internal and external actions?
- Does management recognize and reward employee efforts in achieving quality?

### **3.2. Strategy and Objectives (90 points):**

This criterion focuses on the clarity of the organization's quality strategy and its alignment with the overall organizational strategy. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- Is the quality strategy aligned with the organization's overall strategy?
- Is the quality strategy integrated into all organizational activities?
- Are the quality strategy and objectives known to all employees?
- How does the organization ensure employee contribution to achieving the quality strategy?

### **3.3. Employee Management (100 points):**

This criterion measures the organization's ability to manage and engage employees in quality initiatives. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- How does the organization measure employee satisfaction ?
- How does the organization anticipate employee needs?
- How does the organization handle employee complaints and ensure responsiveness?

### **3.4. Resource Management (80 points):**

This criterion assesses the organization's ability to control the quality of its products and services and manage processes that affect quality. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- How does the organization control the quality of its products and services?
- How does the organization manage operational and support processes for quality control?
- How does the organization control the quality of services provided by suppliers?

### **3.5. Process Management (260 points):**

This criterion evaluates the organization's ability to select and control quality indicators that allow it to achieve its quality objectives. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- How does the organization select quality indicators to achieve its objectives?
- Are these indicators communicated to the relevant structures for follow-up?

### **3.6. Customer Satisfaction (120 points):**

This criterion focuses on the organization's ability to continuously improve and address deviations between expected and achieved quality objectives. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- Are the results of quality-related actions adequately analyzed?

- How does the organization identify actions for quality improvement based on its objectives and achieved results?
- How does the organization guide processes related to quality improvement?
- How does the organization ensure the effectiveness of improvement actions?

### **3.7. Employee Satisfaction (80 points):**

This criterion assesses the organization's ability to promote employee participation and engagement in quality initiatives. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- How does the organization encourage employee participation in quality initiatives?
- How does the organization inform and train employees to achieve quality objectives?
- How do employees propose actions for quality improvement?

### **3.8. Integration into Society (60 points):**

This criterion evaluates the organization's contribution to its internal and external environment, particularly in social life. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- What actions and results demonstrate that the organization meets the needs and expectations of the community in which it operates?
- Does the organization contribute to the safety of its employees and the public?
- Does the organization engage in environmental preservation beyond legal obligations?
- Does the organization contribute to employment, training, and social integration?

### **3.9. Operational Results (90 points):**

This criterion assesses the organization's performance in terms of customer and employee satisfaction, financial performance, and market share. The evaluation is based on responses to questions such as:

- What are the organization's overall performance results?
- What are the organization's operational results as measured by its indicators?
- How has the quality approach contributed to achieving these results?

The previous criteria can be summarized as follows:

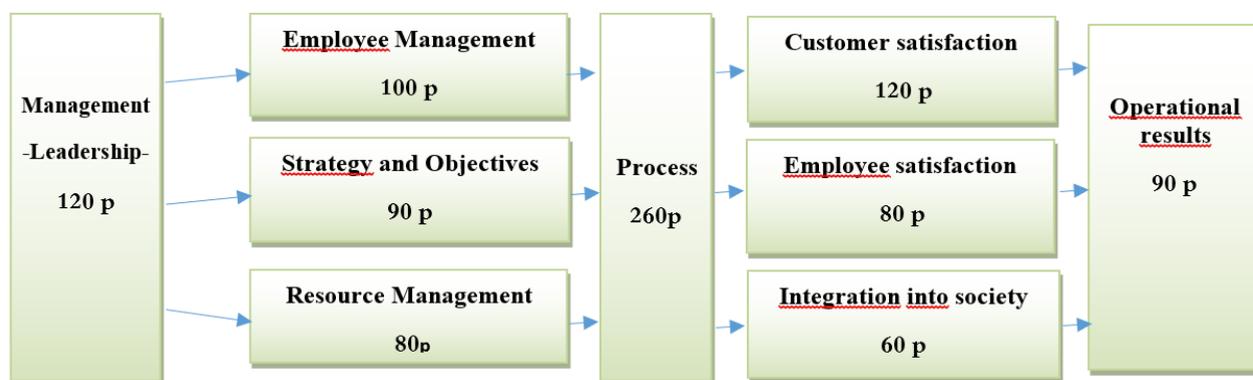


Figure (1) The Algerian model of excellence  
Source: Prepared by researchers based on previous information

By applying the criteria of the European Quality Model and comparing it with the Algerian Quality Model, we find that the latter has adopted all the criteria of the European model. However, the distribution of points was adjusted to reflect the specificities of Algerian society and its institutions. The role of management is clearly evident in defining strategies and objectives, as well as managing various types of resources to ensure that operations align with quality standards. Finally, the satisfaction of customers, employees, and the community is measured, which directly impacts the overall performance and outcomes of the institution.

#### 4. Institutions That Have Received the Algerian Quality Award:

Several Algerian institutions have received the Algerian Quality Award since its inception. The following table lists some of the most notable recipients based on available information:

Table 2: Institutions That Have Received the Award (2003-2022)

Year	Institution
2003	Saidal Pharmaceutical Group
2004	National Cement Company of Aïn Touta
2005	National Company for Nails, Knives, and Faucets (BCR)
2006	National Salt Company (ENASEL)
2007	Public Company for Infrastructure Equipment (ELRIME)
2008	Transport and Industrial Equipment Company (TRANSMAX)
2009	Port of Bejaia Company
2010	National Fats Company (ENAP)
2011	Ben Hamadi Group for Home and Electronic Industries (CONDOR)
2012	Ouamrane Ceramics Company
2013	ENIEM Company
2014	Knauf Gypsum Company in Oran

<b>Year</b>	<b>Institution</b>
2015	InfraRail Facility
2016	ENIEM Company
2017	Ben Hamadi Company for Food Industries (GERBIOR)
2018	Cement Company of Aïn El Kebira (SCAЕК)
2019	CITAL Company for Railway Car Production
2022	Cevital Agro-Industrial Company

Source: [www.industrie.gov.dz](http://www.industrie.gov.dz), accessed on September 22, 2024.

From the table above, we observe that most of the institutions that have received the Algerian Quality Award are industrial and diverse, including both public and private enterprises. However, service institutions are notably absent, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have fewer opportunities to succeed, possibly because the criteria favor larger institutions or because SMEs are not yet ready to compete for the award.

### **Conclusion**

Algeria, like other countries, has focused on quality and standardization to enhance its national quality system. This has been achieved by supporting and strengthening its infrastructure to encompass all its components: standardization, measurement, accreditation, conformity assessment, and certification. The alignment between Algerian legislation and the theoretical frameworks and standards of ISO 9000 related to quality will encourage Algerian institutions to adopt quality management practices. This is evident in the availability of a legal framework and structures to support them in this field, such as the Institute of Standardization and laboratories, as well as the establishment of an annual quality award, similar to other countries. The elements of this award encourage most quality-oriented approaches that institutions can choose to implement.

The research concluded that organizing the Algerian Quality Award competition annually represents an opportunity to motivate and encourage Algerian institutions to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in pursuit of excellence. This is achieved by enhancing their performance, rationalizing production costs, and improving the quality of their products, enabling them to gain greater competitiveness in national and international markets. This, in turn, effectively contributes to wealth creation, job opportunities, and the diversification of the economy and exports.

Additionally, it was concluded that the Algerian quality model has established an annual quality award aimed at small, medium, and large Algerian enterprises, as well as non-profit organizations. The criteria for the Algerian quality model are derived from the European Quality Model with its nine criteria. It was observed that there is intense local competition among the participating institutions, as a different institution wins the award each year, with a mix of public and private enterprises.

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