

RESEARCH ARTICLE	Improving hotel services in Algeria through the implementation of the tourism quality plan: A suggested activation model	
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Abstract		
<p>The primary aim of implementing the Tourism Quality Plan (PQT) in Algeria is to engage entities within the tourism and hospitality sector in enhancing service quality to meet the worldwide requirements of prominent tourist destinations. This study seeks to elucidate the issues associated with the implementation of PQT standards in Algeria by identifying the primary hurdles that hinder the effective use of the national quality reference in Algerian hospitality institutions and offering a model for enhancement. The descriptive-analytical approach was employed to analyze and review prior research concerning the impediments to the execution of the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan within Algerian hotel establishments, aiming to develop a model that enhances its implementation to elevate hotel service quality and attain customer satisfaction.</p>		
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Introduction:

The tourism sector is a significant economic activity that contributes numerous advantages to the national economy via its income, employment opportunities, and investments. Culturally, it represents the nation, reflecting its

culture, traditions, and heritage. The hotel industry is regarded as the cornerstone of the tourism sector, as it constitutes a significant component of the tourism supply and plays a crucial role in attracting tourists by offering a variety of services (Gržinić, 2007). Given the current challenges faced by the hotel industry, the quality of hotel services and the acquisition of tourism quality certification from specialized organizations have become essential to deliver services that not only address customer needs and desires but also meet or surpass their expectations, with the objective of securing their satisfaction and loyalty. Algeria is actively developing hotel businesses and enhancing service quality by promoting adherence to tourism quality standards to attract tourists in comparison to surrounding countries. In 2008, the Ministry of Tourism established the “Algerian Tourism Quality Scheme,” which serves as a framework for assessing the quality of hotel services for tourism establishments adhering to this initiative, and encompasses a set of mandatory criteria required to attain the “Algerian Tourism Quality Mark” (ministère du tourisme et de l'artisanat, 2023).

1-1 Research Problem: Although the Algerian authorities recognize the necessity and inevitability of implementing the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan in hotel establishments, there has been no advancement in applying its standards since the creation of a sub-directorate for the Tourism Quality Scheme, due to various obstacles. This research seeks to address the following question:
What are the challenges associated with the implementation of the tourism quality plan, and what model is offered for its operationalization?

1- Literature review

2-1 The Concept of Quality Hotel Services:

Although there is no universal definition of service quality yet, the definitions of service quality proposed by researchers revolve around the idea that it is the result of the comparison that customers make between their expectations about the service and the perceived performance. (Akbaba, 2006).

Hotel service quality can be defined as: “The extent to which a hotel service provides a set of characteristics or specifications that are able to meet the needs and expectations of its beneficiaries and thus achieve their satisfaction.”

2-2 the concept of the Algerian Tourism Quality Mark.

In order to promote and develop the tourism sector in terms of quality, the Algerian state, through the Ministry of Tourism, has adopted a national plan to ensure the quality of tourism in Algeria, which includes a number of criteria that have been developed in a national reference called the “Algeria Tourism Quality Plan”. (PQTA), which is concerns (MINISTÈRE DU TOURISME ET DE L'ARTISANAT, 2023):

- Creation of the “Algerian Tourism Quality Mark”;
- Promote the qualification of human resources;
- organizing tourism activities
- modernization of infrastructure.

2-2 Standards and commitments of the National Reference for Tourism Quality in Algerian Hotel Establishments:

The definition of the National Reference Standards and Obligations for Tourism Quality in Algerian Hotel Establishments has been finalized with the participation of professionals in the sector. These standards represent the necessary requirements for customer satisfaction. They are organized into ten fields, comprising 49 standards and 310 quality commitments.

Table 1: The standards and quality commitments in the hotel industry

activities	Objectiv	the range
Commitment	Standards	field

18	03	Enterprise management and development	1
14	02	Administration Finance and procurement quality	2
27	03	a guarantee Marketing, selling, and communication function	3
15	02	Maintenance Corporation and guarantee public services	4
20	03	administrationHR	5
60	10	ReceptionAnd accompany customers	6
63	10	Residence(room and sanitary facilities)	7
82	13	The restaurantAnd the drink	8
06	01	the environmentand sustainable development	9
11	02	pursuethe quality	10
310	49	the total	

Source: (Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat, 2023)

2- Methodology:

Research purpose:

In this study, the descriptive approach was adopted. Through the use of this method, we aim to collect, analyze and review previous research and studies related to the issue of applying the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan in Algerian hotel establishments in an objective manner that enables us to identify the obstacles and propose a model to activate its application.

4-Results

4-1 The reality of applying the standards and commitments of the National Tourism Quality Plan in Algerian Hotel Establishments:

In the table below, we review the number of Algerian hotel establishments involved in the Tourism Quality Plan compared to the total number of hotel establishments.

Table No. (01): Evolution of hotel participation in in the Tourism Quality Plan (PQT)

the year	2019	2020	2021	2022
The number of hotel establishments	1417	1449	1502	1576

The Number of hotel establishments participating in PQT (cumulative number)	225	226	246	250
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Source: Prepared by researchers based on the statistics of the Directorate of Tourism Quality plan and Control (<https://www.mta.gov.dz/tableaux-de-bord/?lang=fr>, 2023)

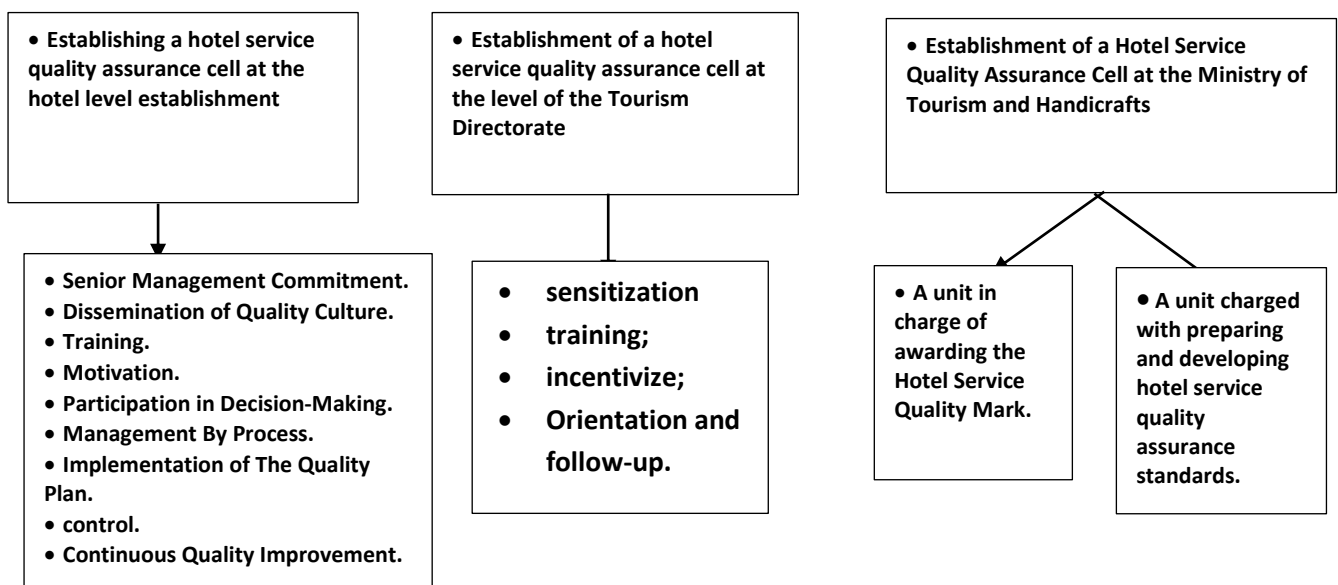
What can be deduced from the data in the table is that there is a slow development in the number of hotel establishments involved in the Algerian tourism quality plan, and this is certainly due to a number of obstacles, which we mention in the following section

4-2 Obstacles to applying the standards and commitments of the national reference for the quality of tourism in Algerian hotel establishments:

Some studies conducted in this field revealed the existence of a number of obstacles that prevented the implementation of the standards and obligations of the National Reference for the quality of tourism in Algerian Hotel Establishments, including (CHAA & Bouabdallah, 2023) (ladjet & wrakem, 2017) (mohmed el hadj & draouci, 2019):

- The absence of a legal provision for the establishment of a committee to evaluate the implementation of the plan by the tourism and hotel establishments involved at the level of the central and decentralized Ministry of Tourism.
- Weak communication process for the realization of the plan.
- The voluntary pursuit of quality.
- The absence of a clear political vision to support the quality of the hotel sector.
- Lack of qualified and qualified human resources to materialize the Algerian tourism quality endeavor in light of the lack of training and refresher training.
- Lack of financial resources, especially with regard to the dues of auditing and consulting offices in the tourism and hotel field and quality experts, especially after the abolition of the state's full sponsorship due to austerity.
- The impossibility of applying tourism quality standards to tourism and hotel establishments, given that the standards and commitments defined in the national framework for tourism quality are difficult to apply in reality.

Figure 1: A proposed model for improving the quality of hotel service in Algerian hotel establishments.



Source: Prepared by the researchers.

4.3- A proposed vision to activate the application of the Algeria Tourism Quality Plan .

The proposed conceptualization is intended to develop a model or a general or future framework that shows how to improve the quality of hotel service. The proposed conceptualization includes a set of mechanisms that the ministry must adopt in order to improve the quality of hotel service in Algerian hotel establishments, and the following figure illustrates this:

5. Discuss the results:

Algeria has developed the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan, which includes a set of standards and commitments to ensure the quality of tourism and hotel services provided, thus achieving the satisfaction of its beneficiaries. However, there is a weak will on the part of decision-makers in hotel establishments to engage in the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan and apply its standards, as we have observed a modest involvement by Algerian hotel establishments in the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan, due to a set of obstacles pointed out by previous studies, including: The absence of a clear strategy to implement and promote the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan and the lack of incentives and privileges that attract hotel managers to engage in the Algerian Tourism Quality Plan.

In light of this, we proposed a model to activate the application of the Algeria Tourism Quality Plan in light of the principles of ISO 9001, it includes the following levels:

First- Establishment of a Hotel Service Quality Assurance Cell at the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts:

This authority is responsible for defining the strategy for improving the quality of hotel service and providing all necessary means to implement it. Which Consisting of:

1. A unit charged with preparing and developing hotel service quality assurance standards:

This unit undertakes the following:

- Determining standards for ensuring the quality of hotel service in Algerian hotel establishments in light of the internal and external diagnosis of their environment and with the participation of stakeholders;
- Developing hotel service quality assurance standards.

2. A unit in charge of awarding the Hotel Service Quality Mark:

This unit performs the following tasks:

- Define self and external evaluation procedures;
- Awarding the Hotel Service Quality Mark;
- And re-awarding the Hotel Service Quality Mark.

This is done by taking the following steps:

- A. Studying the self-assessment reports of hotel establishments wishing to obtain the Algerian Tourism Quality Mark;
- B. Sending experts to the hotel establishment concerned to ensure compliance with the standards of the Algerian Tourism Quality Reference;
- C. Granting the Hotel Service Quality Mark in case of full compliance with the standards, and this license shall be valid for a specified period of time;

D. Granting the Hotel Service Quality Mark after performing certain procedures.

Second - Establishment of a hotel service quality assurance cell at the level of the Tourism Directorate

The **Quality Assurance** Cell of the Tourism Directorate is keen to perform the following tasks:

- Sensitizing decision makers in Algerian hotel establishments to the importance of applying hotel service quality assurance standards;
- Clarify the hotel service quality assurance standards, procedures for applying them, and steps for self- and external evaluation;
- Motivating decision makers in hotel establishments to apply hotel service quality assurance standards;
- Continuous training for decision makers in hotel establishments in everything related to hotel service quality and assurance;
- Participating in the organization of national and international forums and conferences focused on ensuring the quality of Algerian hotel service and reviewing what has been developed in this field;
- Spreading the culture of ensuring the quality of hotel service through various media and communication;
- Contracting with universities to open specializations related to hotel service quality to build human resources in the specialty;
- Accompanying and following up Algerian hotel establishments wishing to obtain accreditation or re-accreditation;

Third - Establishing a hotel service quality assurance cell at the hotel level establishment:

This cell is tasked with performing the following tasks::

- Spreading the culture of hotel service quality assurance at the hotel level
- Directing and following up on the implementation of hotel service quality assurance standards.
- Conducting an annual self-assessment and preparing self-assessment reports;
- Continuous improvement in the quality of the hotel service provided.

Research prospects:

- Implementation of the ISO 9001 quality management system as input to application of the Tourism quality chart in Algerian hotels.
- The role of applying the principles of quality management in activating the application of the Algerian hotel tourism quality plan.

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