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## IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING BARRIERS IN OBTAINING CERTIFICATION BY FOOD PRODUCING MANUFACTURERS IN LORESTAN PROVINCE

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to survey the reason for not obtaining certification by food production manufacturers in Lorestan province. In order to investigate this issue, food manufacturers and experts of Standard Institute in Lorestan province has been considered. Total food manufacturers in Lorestan province are 68 manufacturers, 12 manufacturers include incentive standard regulations and 56 manufacturers include mandatory standard regulations. From the number of manufacturers that are subject to mandatory standard regulations, 12 manufacturers have achieved this goal, and 44 manufacturers have not been able to get certification. To investigate reasons of lack of certification, factors such as poor quality raw materials, inappropriate machinery and equipment, inefficient manpower and sales rate, which are expressed in four hypotheses. The method of work was that for each hypothesis, some questions were considered for both groups, and by distributing a questionnaire between two groups, namely, food production manufacturers in 44 manufacturers and experts from standard institute of Lorestan province among 10 people i.e. In fact, a census was conducted in this research. Then, after collecting questionnaires, 41 food manufacturers responded to the questions in Lorestan province and 3 food manufacturers did not respond to the questionnaire. It also should be said that every 10 experts in standard institute have responded to the questionnaire. Results showed that all hypotheses were approved by both groups, which means that poor quality raw materials, inappropriate machinery and equipment, inefficient manpower and high sales rates have had a significant effect and play an important role on the lack of certification.*

**Keywords:** certification, mandatory standard regulations, food production manufacturers

### INTRODUCTION

Desirable quality of goods and proper performance of services require general principles, that compliance of these principles are announced as mandatory because of their importance by governments. Importance and increase of the number of goods that are subject to mandatory standardization rule in one hand and direct and indirect factors affect quality of their production, on the other hand, sometimes lead to lack of full implementation of law, and consequently, problems of reduced goods quality arise in domestic market, export and global market share will not come to fruition.

Establishing rules for enforcing mandatory standards of some goods in the country, which are executed almost every year by Supreme Council of Standard, economic and social situation of country to consider quantity of production in order to balance the supply and demand, on the other hand makes implementation of mandatory standard of relevant laws less important, and causes these types of products exist in poor quality and without certification on the market.

Pursuing main reasons of failing units covered by mandatory standard rules to get certification is the solution.

Certainly, compliance with standard rules in food products not only enhances health and safety of community and its people, but will also bring benefits of standardization to manufacturer, including reducing diversity, increasing production levels, saving on consumption of materials, energy and manpower, reducing waste, facilitating storage and transportation of goods and expanding domestic and foreign trade, etc. Also, in addition to ensuring safety of product under standard rule, consumer benefits from product's high quality and reliability, durability and efficiency, ease in ordering and using product, low cost of payment, easy access to parts and interchangeable items.

Brokers in Institute of Standard and Industrial Research in Iran are facing problems in monitoring standard implementation, which are mainly divided into two categories: problems related to internal complex of a production and service unit do not allow for creation and improvement of quality, such as manpower, machinery, raw materials, labor relations, etc. Problems are related to set of systems, general economic, social and cultural conditions, such as liquidity, currency, laws and regulations, etc.

Identifying and reviewing both groups is very important, whether in defining goods for mandatory standards or for obtaining certification by units. Therefore, studying and identifying factors that are effective in this area will help us to resolve problems and bottlenecks that are present in this regard and then improve quality of our products. As a result, industrial units can successfully get certification in the shortest time. In this research, a number of factors that have led to obtain certification in food producing companies in Lorestan province have been investigated.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Standards Basics and Standardization*

With increasing popularity of commodity consumption, logic of production was created and the needs of consumers and market attraction, characteristics of commodities were discovered at every point. In this way, first steps for industrial standard were taken in factories. Immense variety of commodities in domestic markets of newly industrialized countries caused many problems, including increased production costs, increased time, difficulty in transport and storage, lack of confidence in delivery of goods and inappropriate quality of some goods (Institute for Standard and Industrial Research, 1999). In order to solve this problem, government intervention or non-governmental organizations were necessary to determine standard of goods, and establish organizations to formulate and implement standards in each country were begun. Industrial standardization has actually started in some countries since about two centuries ago. At the beginning of twentieth century, Theodor founded massive American Telephone and Telegraph Company, which provided idea of standardization. This created a big change in post office. Frederick Taylor, founder of Taylorism Movement, believed that standardization of every step that a worker take gives the work a scientific aspect.

The word standard in English now means a number of meanings. The most important used meanings in this regard are:

1. A scale for measuring or testing weights, sizes and modules such as standard meters, standard kilograms.



2. The meaning mentioned in previous section is virtual, means the scale by which qualities, goodness and quality of objects are measured or tested.
3. Gold and wire in money, as well as base of money, as discussed in standard of money, means the grade of gold and silver in coins.

A standard benchmark is to adapt in a way that is acceptable. And standardization can be defined and described in the form of a general concept of establishment of rules and regulations for harmonization of similar types and unification of specifications in any method and practice that involves economic, technical and social interests. Following many research and studies, the Constituent Committee for Examination of Standardization Principles approved definition of the two terms as follows:

The standard in its general meaning is synonymous with order. Each standard is the result of a special effort that has been made to standardize in a given field and approved by a competent authority. Standardization is the process of regulating and applying rules for ordering a specific effort to benefit those who are interested in and in cooperation with all of them, particularly in order to promote the economic that is better and more comprehensive in terms of public good and taking into account scientific and safety requirements.

#### *Objectives of Standardization*

The Standing Committee for examining standardization principles of STACO, affiliated with the International Standard Organization Council, outlines basic objectives of the standard as follows (Bouzari, 1974):

1. A general economy (comprehensive economy) in manpower, materials, energy, etc. consumption in production and exchange of goods,
2. Maintaining consumer interests by ensuring quality of goods and services in a way that meets the requirements and, as it should, be controlled and uniformed.
3. Maintaining safety of life and property and providing health
4. Providing a means for expressing intentions and exchanging ideas between parties concerned in each transaction

Obviously, various goals of standardization cannot be decisively separated, because these goals are all connected. Goals that are now regarded for standardization are simplification, switching, standard means of exchanging thoughts, signs and ciphers, comprehensive economics, safety, consumer interests, community benefits and eliminating business barriers.

In general, standards are important tools for improving production, work and raw materials. At all stages of production to the final stage of consumption, standard is a meaning to reduce costs and solutions are provided by standard for problems that are repeated frequently, most important of them are as follows:

Methods of calculation, determination of specification of construction materials, determination of specifications and details of different parts, collection of signs and abbreviations for plat, building: the standard practice in building is accompanied by a significant reduction in the cost of goods, storage of export products is the result of standardizing products, reducing volume of materials and ease of their storage, storing imported products.

#### *Standardization principles*

Principles of standardization are as follows (Bouzari, 1974):



Principle I: Standardization is, in principle, the act of simplification created by deliberate effort of the community, requiring a reduction in the number of certain things, not only leading to the opening of present complexity, but also to avoid future complications.

Principle II: standardization is both social and economic practice, and must be prepared in cooperation with all beneficiaries and those interested in, namely, establishment of standards should be based on public consent.

Principle III: Publication of a standard is not worthwhile by itself unless it can be implemented and standard implementation may involve some sacrifice for the benefit of majority.

Principle IV: The practice that is required to establish standards is first and foremost to select and choose, and then to prove (to immune from change), of course, in the short term.

Principle V: Standards should be reviewed at regular intervals and revised if necessary.

Principle VI: When describing other product features, a description of test methods which were used should also be mentioned to determine how much a given commodity meets these qualities. Also, when sampling is necessary, sampling method and, if necessary, sample size and frequency of sampling should also be determined.

Principle VII: The mandatory implementation of national standards should be carefully considered, and should take into account the standard and rate of industrial growth, and current laws as well as conditions in the community for which standards are provided.

#### *Classification of Standards*

Standards can be categorized in the following ways (Standard Institute and Industrial Research of Iran, 1974):

Geographically, standards are divided into four categories: national, regional, factorial, and international, which characteristics of each one are briefly mentioned.

1. *National standard*: At this level, standards are provided by all practitioners and experts, including manufacturer, consumer, executive authorities, academics, and an excellent institution in the country that takes into account interests of entire country and with regard to advancement in world technology and industrial facilities of country, and expectations of consumers and market requirements, which will be recognized as the competent authority for this work (National Standards Institute). Basically, national standards serve as coordinating demands and points of view on three factors: consumer, producer, and technology serving the economy of a country. In other words, national standards are a set of rules and regulations that are prepared by the National Authorizing Organization to standardize products or carry out certain activities in accordance with the law, and have valid credentials in domestic trade.
2. *Regional Standard*: Sometimes, two or more countries accept single standards for their trade exchanges, and these standards, which are prepared in collaboration with engineers and authorities responsible for beneficiary countries, are called regional standards. Therefore, regional standards are developed by a group of countries geographically located in a region and used for interoperability between themselves.
3. *Factorial Standards*: it is a standard in a company which is prepared by agreement of different parts of it be taken into account in purchase and production, control of production and sales line, and other related work. Factorial standards can include standards for terms and symbols, basic standards, dimensions standard and component standards.



4. *International Standard*: Standards that are developed with the cooperation and agreement among a large number of beneficiaries and interested countries for global use. In other words, International Standard has all rules and procedures that are provided by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in accordance with procedures laid down in organization's charter to coordinate national standards and establish a unified relationship within the international community. In this sense, international standard is also referred to as a standard commodity standard, such as International Standard for Electrical Cables, etc.

According to their characteristics, standards may be formal or informal, which include:

1. *Official standard*: Standards to be produced by a qualified official in accordance with legal provisions. A government official may be the official of government but not a government employee.
2. *Unofficial standard*: Any standard that does not have characteristics of a standard is called informal standard. For example, in a supervisor's factory, they have certain standards under their supervision for certain standards, which are due to their past knowledge and performance. These are called informal standards.

Some countries have divided standards into terms of use and geographic location, as set forth in the Code of Practice on the Weights and Measures of England, standards are divided into practical standard and local standards (Allama Haeri, 1969):

1. *Practical standard*: A yard or one-meter measure is tested by comparing with a local standard having a length equal to their length.
2. *Local standard*: Practical standard weights that fall under this regulation should be compared and tested with non-ferrous materials if they are non-chemical.

Official standards can be divided into enforceable and incentive standards in accordance with law enforcement guaranty:

1. *Mandatory standard*: A standard whose implementation is mandatory at the community level and the offender is punished by law.
2. *Incentive Standard*: A standard that does not guarantee the enforcement.

#### ***Role of raw materials in the production of high quality products***

One of the affecting factors in quality is using appropriate and standard materials that in the years following the revolution, especially wartime period, the raw materials were not properly and adequately supplied to manufacturers, and the need to supply in order to meet demand in any case unfortunately causes an inferiority culture. Of course, social acceptance is a matter of providing a suitable cultural context. When one can expect people of a society to seek standardized tools and commodities that there are appropriate cultural contexts for such an acceptance. In the first stage, or input, supplying materials or raw materials for production is prior to everything. The view of production management at this stage must certainly recognize that purchasing and supplying raw materials, both quantitatively and qualitatively, must contain sufficient economic returns and it should be cost-effective and the effect be more profitable in the final assessment of product. Production of a good and most appropriate product requires superior raw materials, and manufacturer must use the best and standardized method for production of raw materials.



***Machinery technology and products manufacturing***

Today, technology plays a crucial role in all human activities, and the relationship between science and technology is very tight and what today is considered as a criterion in the development and advancement of countries is having a modern industry or technology in accordance with global standards. Because then it can be hoped that manufactured goods also have this quality and the global standard. It is very natural that with old resources and technology, it is not possible to produce high quality goods in accordance with international standards of success. Therefore, in the first step to conquer world markets, it is necessary to enhance level of industry and technology of countries in order to be able to compete with advanced countries of the world (Shahidi, 1992).

***Relationship between human resources and standard***

High-quality human is always trying to supply and produce the product or service that provides peace and safety for himself, beauty and satisfaction for his customers. And it might be better to say that a high quality human cannot believe or tolerate low-quality in any circumstances. In contrast, a poor quality person cannot be a producer or supplier of a product or service that can be consistently assured of its quality. Because he cannot believe and endure the low-quality. To improve the quality of education and training, all employees from all levels have a very important role in expressing quality. Therefore, it is necessary to accurately investigate educational needs for improvement and increasing awareness and motivation of employees, taking into account the level of responsibility and type of individual or group tasks. In primary education, people have the first objective to influence attitude and viewpoint of employees towards quality and change it (Pour Shams, 1994).

***Relationship between sales and standard***

Companies should not restrict their activities to create desirable quality products, but this quality should be well supplied. Appearance of the product and the emotion it gives to the customer should represent its quality level. Quality is also provided through other elements of marketing elements. The high price itself is a high quality mark. Brand, packaging, distribution and promotional advertisement also show the quality of goods. All these elements must also create desired mental image of the goods and provide the necessary support. At the same time, one should not suddenly think that companies should always produce the best quality goods (Foruzandeh, 1997). Whether or not all customers are able to buy high quality goods or they do not want them; the producer should choose the level of quality for their products which is consistent with the needs of target market and the quality levels of the competitors' goods. Therefore, manufacturing companies can influence the quality of their sales. It can be concluded that if the quality of product is good and high, the sale of product will be more and if the product quality is bad and low, the sale of the product goes down. It should be noted that by good and high quality, the product is standardized.

In a study entitled identification of barriers in obtaining standard certificates by units subject to mandatory standard regulations from the perspective of Semnan province's industrialists, Naimi (1998) examined 250 industrial units related to mechanical, pharmaceutical, electrical and electronics industries, cellulose, packaging and food industries. The result of this study showed that the main cause of quality-related problem is lack of heart belief of middle managers and supervisors.



Rostami Dashti (1983) has conducted a research entitled standardization of commodity and its role in reducing industrial and economic dependencies in Tehran University.

Shayan Arani (1976) conducted a research entitled Standard and its Importance at Tehran University in which it defines how standards, international standards organizations, economic standardization, history of standard institution of Iran and its tasks, as well as standard benefits for producer and consumer.

Yaseri (1969) presented a research entitled "Applying Scientific Methods of Management in Standard and Industrial Research Institutes of Iran" at Tehran University. In this research, scientific management of standard institutions is considered as the reference body of the country.

### *Research hypotheses*

**Hypothesis 1:** Low-quality raw materials cause the standard label not to be obtained by food-producing companies.

**Hypothesis 2:** Presence of low technology machines indicates lack of displaying certifications by industrial units.

**Hypothesis 3:** Inefficient human resources cause industrial units to fail to get standard criteria.

**Hypothesis 4:** Productive companies do not tend to take standard train because of their high sales to production.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, size of statistical population is the number of units required by standard requirements of 44 food manufacturing units. The research questions are given separately to industrial standard industrial experts in Lorestan province and industry producers of the province. In this research, methodology has been used. Only 41 questionnaires were received from 44 sent questionnaires in Lorestan province. Also, among 10 questionnaires sent to the standard experts of Lorestan, all 10 questionnaires were answered and sent back. The relationship between questions and hypotheses is based on two tables for both groups (experts and manufacturers) as follows:



**Table 1: Experts Group of Standard Institute**

Questions	Hypothesis
1,2,3,4,5,6	1
7,8,9,10,11	2
12,13	3
14,15	4

**Table 2: Producers Group**

Questions	Hypothesis
1,2,3,4,5,6	1
7,8,9,10,11	2
12,13	3
14,15,16	4

In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to calculate reliability. The coefficient for expert questionnaire was 0.943 and in the manufacturer's questionnaire was 0.935. In order to analyze data, the most important and used average central indicator has been used. The criterion for accepting any hypothesis is that the average of all questions related to that hypothesis is greater than 3, otherwise the hypothesis is rejected.

### Data analysis

#### First hypothesis

The questions about this hypothesis are from one to six questions in both groups. The average of the above questions for both groups is indicated in Tables (3) and (4). Also, the average of total questions for each group is also specified in Table (11), which is 4.4 for the expert group and 3.9 for the average manufacturer. Given that the average of all questions in both groups is greater than 3, first hypothesis is accepted for both groups. According to Tables (3) and (4), it is clear that respondents in both groups chose "A" and "B" alternatives on average.

**Table 3: Manufacturers' response to the questions about first hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
3/6	2	5	12	11	11	1
2/5	16	7	4	8	6	2
4/6	0	1	3	6	31	3
4/6	0	0	1	13	27	4
4/2	2	2	1	15	21	5
3/9	2	7	4	10	18	6

**Table 4: Expert responses to the questions about first hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
3/6	0	0	5	4	1	1
4/3	0	0	0	7	3	2
4/8	0	0	0	2	8	3
4/8	0	0	1	0	9	4
4/7	0	0	0	3	7	5
4/3	0	0	1	5	4	6

#### Second hypothesis

Questions about this hypothesis in both groups are in Questions 7 to 11. The average questions for the above hypothesis for both groups are indicated in Tables (5) and (6). Also, average total questions for each group is also specified in Table (11), which is 4.1 for groups of standard institute experts and 4.1 for the average manufacturers. Average total questions in both groups is greater than 3, the second hypothesis is accepted for both groups. According to Tables (5) and (6) it is clear that respondents in both groups have chosen "A" and "B" alternatives on average.

**Table 5: Manufacturers' responses to the questions regarding second hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
4	1	1	3	26	10	7
3/8	4	1	4	21	11	8

4/3	2	1	2	13	23	9
4/1	1	2	7	11	20	10
4/1	2	1	7	13	18	11

**Table 6: Experts' responses to the questions regarding second hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
4	0	0	3	4	3	7
3/9	0	0	1	9	0	8
4/4	0	0	1	4	5	9
4/3	0	0	1	5	4	10
3/9	0	0	3	5	2	11

### *Third hypothesis:*

Questions about this hypothesis in both groups are in Questions 12 and 13. The average questions for hypothesis three for both groups are indicated in Tables (7) and (8). Also, average of total questions for each group is also specified in Table (11), which is 4.5 for groups of standard institute experts and 4.3 for the average manufacturers. Average of total questions in both groups is greater than 3, the second hypothesis is then accepted for both groups. According to Tables (7) and (8), it is clear that respondents in both groups have chosen "A" and "B" alternatives on average, and both groups did not respond option "D" at all.

**Table 7: Manufacturers' responses to the questions regarding third hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
4/2	0	1	4	20	16	12
4/3	0	0	4	21	16	13

**Table 8: Experts' responses to the questions about third hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
4/7	0	0	0	3	7	12
4/3	0	0	0	7	3	13

### *Fourth hypothesis:*

Questions about this hypothesis in both groups of standard institute experts are in Questions 14 and 15 and questions about the manufacturers group are questions 14, 15 and 16. The average of questions related to the third hypothesis for both groups is specified in Tables (9) and (10). Also, average total questions for each group is also specified in Table (11), which is 3.8 for standard institute experts and 3.3 for average producers. In both groups the average of all questions is greater than 3, the fourth hypothesis is accepted for both groups.

**Table 9: Manufacturers' responses to the questions about the fourth hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
3/3	1	2	24	12	2	14
3	2	12	14	9	4	15
3/7	3	2	9	16	11	16



**Table 10: Expert responses to the questions about the fourth hypothesis**

Mean	Very low	low	Average	High	Very high	Question
3/8	0	0	4	4	2	14
3/8	0	0	2	8	0	15

**Table 11: The average total questions related four hypotheses in two groups of manufacturers and experts**

Experts	Producers	Hypotheses
4/4	3/9	1
4/1	4/1	2
4/5	4/3	3
3/8	3/3	4

## CONCLUSION

From the averages obtained from both groups for each hypothesis, it is concluded that, despite confirmation of hypotheses by both under review groups, some averages for each group in relation to each hypothesis are close to each other, and some are opposite of the above issue. In this regard, it can be concluded that closeness of both groups' meanings to the mean of second and third hypotheses is due to high level of scientific knowledge and level of awareness of experts and manufacturers in the field of machinery, equipment, manpower, and the close proximity of both groups' averages on the averages of first and fourth hypotheses are also due to the difference in the level of experts and producers in province in the field of raw materials and sales. It should be noted that opinions of experts of Institute of Standardization must be prioritized and make a criterion for our work.

Therefore, as it can be seen, the importance of four main factors considered as the research hypotheses in this research is also confirmed and emphasized by the manufacturers, and their prioritization for experts is an important point of manpower, raw materials, machinery, and equipment, while from the manufacturer's point of view, it represents manpower, machinery, equipment, materials and sales.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Lack of high quality raw materials and its high price will force and impose on the owner of industry in order to produce a non-quality product through the use of inferior and cheap raw materials. Therefore, it is suggested that country's authorities should create necessary conditions through industrial development policies of country and provide necessary facilities to producers and apply the rules.
2. Machine depreciation, equipment production and existing technical defects in them and non-issuance of import licenses for modern machines keep us away from achieving high-quality products, by providing necessary facilities and implementing industrial strategy in the country.
3. Required given knowledge to people in a broad range of knowledge and standard education is provided at all academic levels so that person from the very beginning of

his education will have necessary knowledge about framework of standards set in relation to services to be provided in the future.

4. Producers must eliminate profligate thinking and not just focus on their own interests, but also the interests of society and consumers.

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