

## **Application and Limitations of Total Quality Management in Higher Education**

**Aishah Siddiquah\***

Lahore College for Women University

**Nighat Sana Kirmani\*\***

University of the Punjab

Total Quality Management (TQM) has proved itself effective in improving quality, reducing waste and increasing productivity in industry. The current study aims to explore the application and limitations of this philosophical approach in higher education. Literature pertaining to TQM was reviewed extensively for the identification of its relevance in higher education. The components of TQM are discussed as the application of TQM in higher education. However, two main limitations arise with reference to the implementation of TQM in higher education; the imprecisely defined role of student and application of Zero defect theory to the educational objectives. The ambiguity of student both as raw material and customer is one of the basic tensions while applying the idea of TQM in higher education. Furthermore, the zero defect theory can be applied to the objectives that call forth the attainment of minimum required criteria for a content (mastery objectives) but not to more complex developmental objectives on which various degrees of progress are expected from the students. Keeping in view the intricate nature of higher education, the implementation of relevant components of TQM will help in improving its quality.

*Key words:* Total Quality Management, higher education, customer satisfaction, leadership

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\* Aishah Siddiquah, Institute of Educationl, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Pakistan. \*\* Nighat Sana Kirmani, Institute of Educational Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Correspondence concerning to this article should be addressed to Aishah Siddiquah, Institute of