

# Quality Management of Higher Education — From the Perspective of Organization

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**Abstract:** The organization of higher education is the carrier of management, and its quality management is based on the change of organization, and the organizational structure of higher education has changed accordingly. Traditionally, the organizational form of higher education is mostly hierarchical, and the teaching quality of higher education has exceeded the scope of various departments, which is determined by the functional departments of higher education. At present, the traditional functional structure of higher education limits the cooperation of various functional departments within higher education and affects the quality management of higher education. The prerequisite for the quality management of higher education is the transformation from traditional higher education to high quality education. It is necessary to construct the organizational structure with quality as the core, and successfully integrate the new variable of quality into the organizational design and organizational operation of higher education, so as to make the reform and construction of the organizational structure of higher education become a learning higher education, so as to make the quality management of higher education succeed.

## 1. Introduction

The 21st century is the era of quality. In the new century, China's higher education has transformed from "elite" to "popularization". On the basis of foreign advanced experience, strengthening the quality management of higher education is an effective way to solve the quality problems of higher education. It is also proved by the current national practice. However, the organizational system of higher education has not been adjusted in a timely manner. The teaching quality management of higher education is often a mere formality and plays a supervisory and maintenance role at most. It is difficult to continuously improve the teaching quality of higher education and solve the quality problems of higher education. From the perspective of the relationship between organization and management, quality management is a new stage and paradigm of higher education management, and the organizational structure and system of higher education must be adjusted accordingly. Only by establishing corresponding organizational forms and institutional arrangements can the various connotations of higher education be implemented. Establishing learning organization is the successful experience of quality management in enterprise field ; in the quality management of higher education, we should learn from the concept of learning organization and establish learning universities. In fact, in the current teaching practice, "due to the influence of organizational learning and learning organizational concepts, the development of learning schools has become the main means to improve teaching efficiency in advanced countries".

## 2. From General Organizations to Quality Organizations

Max Weber's bureaucracy is the ideal form of traditional organization, while Peter Sage's organizational structure is the most ideal form. Max Weber's research on government institutions focuses on a traditional institution, while Peter Sage's "learning" organization is the ideal of corporate organization change. Since the 1930s, due to the expansion of the scale of various organizations, bureaucratic organizational structure has gradually become a reasonable structure,

and has been widely used in social life. However, in the long-term development, due to its inertness to organizational behavior, the disadvantages of bureaucracy have become increasingly prominent, and thus the voice for transcendence has become increasingly high. Since the 1980s, with the advent of the era of quality management, the traditional organizational structure has gradually been difficult to adapt to the development of the times, and building a learning organization has become a new development trend. Quality problem is not limited to a department, it is a multi-sectoral work, need to organize learning, need all staff to participate in, and collaboration between departments. However, the current enterprises cannot well serve customers. Organizations are often based on functional structures that limit cooperation among functional departments. In this context, the relationship between organizational change and quality management has also been put on the agenda. Quality organization is an important part of enterprise quality management. In the quality organization, the pursuit of quality is a way of life for all members of the organization, and the continuous improvement of quality is the common task and goal of all departments in the organization. In ordinary enterprises, each department takes function as the boundary and takes a higher level as the goal. Solving the “quality problem” tends to increase the “quality department”, while quality is responsible for the “quality department”. Other departments will not pay attention to it, and even affect the quality of products. In addition, quality organizations pay more attention to the formation of quality, while ordinary enterprises pay more attention to its own functions. Quality organization emphasizes learning and sharing information, quality-oriented management system, but also concerned about internal and external customers. Ordinary enterprises are based on instructions and control, they pay more attention to the interests of employees and enterprises. The prototype of quality organization is a learning organization, which reverses the basic principles of the whole organization. Quality organization has the same vision, and integrates quality into the organizational structure through systematic thinking and organizational learning. “Compared with traditional management, quality-driven enterprises can share information more conveniently and widely, focus more on customers and employees, and education and training are no longer limited to limited areas of work.” In quality management, each department takes quality as a link to overlap, penetrate and coordinate with each other, especially focusing on the self-transcendence of individual initiative and the influence of team cooperation on organizational quality. In a quality organization, people’s attitude or quality is related to the quality of an organization, and the quality of an organization determines the future of an organization. For an enterprise pursuing high quality, change is the way to survive. In the whole quality management process, organizational changes are necessary and continue in the subsequent process. At the beginning, we should try to change the corporate culture. Only on the basis of customer satisfaction, improved corporate culture and collaborative mechanisms can overall quality be like “just another management solution”. The failure of higher education in implementing TQM lies not only in the differences in organizational characteristics between higher education and enterprises, but also in the incoordination between quality management and organizational change within higher education. Since the 1980s, with the successful experience of implementing TQM in Chinese enterprises, TQM and ISO9000 series standards have gradually prevailed in higher education. As a management trend, or a trend, like the company at that time, in higher education, “there is a tendency, that is, to find a way to make people produce quality, and it can be proved by awards that it does exist. No system can solve all problems. If we can do this, then the world will become so beautiful. Because the real situation is that only ideas and understanding can achieve the desired results.” TQM is a big challenge and its success requires coordination at both organizational and institutional levels. If TQM is introduced without changing the organizational and institutional level, it is unlikely to succeed. After the implementation of TQM in the organization, continuous improvement of quality will promote changes in organizational structure, behavior and culture. To some extent, it can also be said that the “refusal to change” of higher education organizations is the cause of higher education TQM. As a quality organization, higher education itself is a carrier of quality management. Organization change is the foundation of overall quality. Without change, we have no quality. Anyone involved in organizational quality management must understand what changes are necessary and how. It can be

said that enterprise restructuring is one of the important contents of quality management. To realize quality management, quality organization must be established. If the traditional organizational structure of higher education does not change, the long-standing “qualityless” management in the field of higher education will be difficult to achieve the transformation to quality management. “Organizational structure will affect people’s actions. In the same system, no matter how different their personalities are, their actions have similar consequences.” Therefore, under the traditional university organizational structure, quality management cannot be achieved without corresponding reforms, that is, only a few words, or more words than actions. Quality management requires enterprises to carry out organizational change, and its purpose is to establish a quality organization. Quality organization is the prerequisite and result of quality management. On the one hand, due to the implementation of quality management, the traditional enterprise structure faces the pressure to change; on the other hand, quality management must first establish a quality system to truly implement. In practical work, people first establish a quality organization, then carry out quality management, or carry out quality management before organizational reform. Different institutions have taken different measures. Previous experience tells us that TQM does not require structural adjustment, and the process of improving quality may require structural adjustment. However, structural adjustment will also shift the focus from improving quality, resulting in institutional fatigue. The adjustment of organizational structure hinders the improvement of quality, and there are many similar cases in the field of education. Therefore, it is better not to carry out structural adjustment before implementing TQM. As a relatively conservative cultural institution, the changes in the organizational structure of higher education are mainly gradual. In the quality management movement, nothing can be changed. The organizational structure of higher education is a very stable structure relative to enterprises and government institutions. Therefore, structural adjustment or process reconstruction before quality management will inevitably lead to institutional instability and thus affect the normal operation of the organization. The more appropriate method is to carry out organizational changes synchronously with the management needs of enterprises in the implementation of quality management. The change range of enterprise organization should be able to adapt to the quality management needs of enterprises, and should not be restructured in advance within enterprises. Quality organization is an organizational carrier suitable for quality management, and its main characteristics are: (1) In quality management activities, all departments should strictly implement the idea of “total quality”. In practice, all departments should operate according to quality standards. (2) During the implementation of quality management, all members of the organization receive comprehensive quality education, have a clear understanding of quality strategies, quality plans, quality objectives, quality guidelines, quality guidelines, etc., and implement them in specific work to make them a universal way of life <sup>[1]</sup>.

### **3. Higher Education Quality Management and Learning University**

The 21st century is a century of “quality”. In the new century, with the development of “elite” to “popularization”, the quality of higher education will be greatly challenged in the transformation of “popularization”. From the practice of higher education quality development in China, quality management has become an effective way for higher education to solve its own quality problems. At present, the quality management of China's higher education has risen in the world, but the organizational system of higher education has not been adjusted in a timely manner, resulting in its role in higher education is often a form, at best a kind of inspection and maintenance, it is difficult to continuously improve the quality of higher education. Quality management is a new stage and paradigm of higher education management. It needs to adjust the organizational structure and system of higher education. Without sufficient organizational carrier and institutional guarantee, it is difficult to implement quality policy, quality planning and quality improvement measures. The emergence of the American quality movement is actually the creation of the first wave of learning organizations. Such learning institutions can continuously expand their ability to prepare for their future. Only by establishing corresponding organizational forms and institutional arrangements can the various connotations of higher education be implemented. On this basis, a new concept of

quality management is proposed, that is, learning organization is a new concept of quality management, which can effectively ensure the smooth transition of enterprises from scale management to quality management, and also greatly improve the products and services of enterprises, so as to create more vitality for enterprises. In the quality management of higher education, we should establish a learning university from the perspective of learning organization; without a good learning-oriented higher education, it is impossible to achieve high-quality management. Learning is the result of total quality management. Without organizational learning, quality management is failure. In the current teaching practice, “due to the influence of organizational learning and learning organizational concept, in the developed world, the development of learning schools has become the main means to improve teaching efficiency.” From the 18th century to the end of the 18th century, the teaching mode of the university is mainly completed by teachers and students. Therefore, the university is essentially a community of teachers and students, and learning activities are an important link to maintain this relationship. Since the 19th century, academic research has been carried out. However, with the rapid development of the academic system and the continuous expansion of the scale of higher education, higher education has gradually separated from the track of research organization and gradually moved towards bureaucracy. At this time, college students, although still studying, but mainly self-study. Teachers’ research is based on scientific research, while students’ research is based on examination. These two main research activities did not follow the concept of Humboldt’s “combination of education and science,” from individual learning to organizational development, and ultimately achieved the university research organization; on the other hand, the interaction between teachers and students leads to the effectiveness of university teaching. All countries in the world today, whether from the level of disciplinary system, or from the level of university system to the level of higher education system, show the trend of stratification or even excessive stratification. Although the study does not leave the university, but it has become a common phenomenon in the university, it has become a more practical learning method. School teaching has become the dissemination of knowledge and boring academic exercises, which eventually leads to individual growth and actual learning separation, and the effect is getting worse and worse. Today’s university, more like a factory, it pays more attention to investment and income, rather than unconditionally seeking truth, and constantly improve learning outcomes. “The current research is only limited to specific research areas and is a superficial, unconnected research serving socio-economic purposes.” In the early universities, the situation of “learning as working” no longer existed. Even learning was not an important activity of universities, let alone becoming a college student. Nowadays, studying in school has become a negative and not positive behavior. Whether teachers or students, their attitude towards learning is negative, not positive [2].

#### **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the organization of higher education is the carrier of management, the basis of quality management is the change of organization, and the organizational structure of higher education has also changed. Traditionally, the organizational form of higher education is mostly bureaucracy. The quality of higher education, is across the boundaries of various fields, throughout the entire higher education system, which is jointly determined by various functional departments. At present, the traditional functional structure of higher education limits the cooperation of various functional departments within higher education and hinders the quality management of higher education. In order to change the quality management of higher education from traditional organization to quality, it is necessary to construct an organizational structure with quality as the core, and take quality as a new variable, which can be smoothly incorporated into the organizational design and operation of higher education, so that the organizational reform of higher education can become a learning-oriented higher education, and thus the quality management of higher education can be successfully implemented.

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