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Inclusion Degree of the International Quality Standards in the Postgraduate Programs in Majmaah University (Saudi), as Perceived by its Faculty Members

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ABSTRACT This study aimed to identify the extent to which international quality standards are included in postgraduate programs in Majmaah University, as viewed by its faculty members. To achieve the study objectives, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to collect the date from the study sample (n=90) - faculty members who were chosen randomly from the study population. The researcher applied the descriptive analytic method, and the study was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2017/2018. The study concluded that the inclusion extent of the international quality standards in postgraduate programs in Majmaah University, as viewed by its faculty members, was medium. The study further showed that there were no statistically significant differences attributed to the gender, specialization, or experience. The study recommended that there is a need to work toward developing postgraduate programs in the light of the international quality standards, to raise their efficiency, and to keep up with the scientific and technological development.

INTRODUCTION

The unprecedented knowledge, technological, scientific and economic revolutions, which the world never experienced before, imposed on both the developed and developing world countries reconsidering their educational programs, in a way that keeps up with the requirements of these revolutions. Since the end of 1980s and the beginnings of the 1990s, the interest in the standard levels, total quality, cognitive economics, globalization and their implications in the educational process, became the preoccupation of all those who have to do with this process.

The total quality management (TQM) is an administrative entrance seeking to bring about a continuous change in the organizational culture inside the institution, and build in the organization. It also seeks to establish a culture of quality in the first place, and the use of a modern management that leads to achieve a high-level quality of the provided product and services, in the second. This change should include all the work functions and scopes in the institution based on the group work, and continuous improvement of the total performance in the organization, to realize success at the long run (Al-Mosawi 2003). Total quality could be seen as a cultural revolution, because of the way in which the management thinks and works, in terms of working toward the continuous improvement of quality, focus on the teamwork, and encouraging the individuals by setting the goals and taking the decisions (Al-Azzawi 2010).

The total quality is also seen as an integrated method to serve the customer. Therefore, it is not a specialized management seeking to achieve quality in one or more fields inside the organization. Rather it is an integrated process that includes all the activities and jobs in the form of a series, so that any defect in any of its rings is deemed a weakness affecting the total quality (Nashwan 2004).

The standard culture appeared to realize the total quality in the educational process. In this regard, judging the success extent of the educational institutions, as institutions of high quality products, depends on the degree to which these institutions had fulfilled the total quality requirements. Total quality, as a modern and developed trend, aims at upgrading the level of the producer to be effective and able to produce and interact in a way that meets the market demands and the community needs through reliance on a number of standards and indicators. Al-Moghrabi and Abdul Mawjood (2005) indicated that the power of any nation lies in its ability to achieve quality in teaching and education. The United States is one of the first nations that placed high attention on the reforma-

tion of education to develop the economics. This was approached by changing the teaching curricula and evaluation methods to agree with high-level performance standards in an endeavor to achieve a new concept termed "total quality in education." At the Arab World level, the Eighth Conference of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Conference, which was held in Cairo (2001) under the slogan "Quality of the Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Arab World to Face the Future Challenges" called the Arab countries to set Arabic standards for academic quality and excellence, and to establish national institutions to assure achieving and applying the total quality in the higher education institutions (Population Research and Studies Unit 2001).

At the beginning, the view on the quality was merely seen as a pure economical term, but with the increasing interest in the educational and teaching field, the term "quality" changed from assessing the commodities and products into an educational teaching term, because of its importance in the teaching and education processes. The educational institutions always aim to provide the best possible services. Accordingly, interest in quality became very important in our days inside the educational institutions, and direction toward the quality became a distinguishing characteristic of the educational institutions so that the teaching systems used the quality term as a standard or criterion for the teaching product (Ahmad 2007).

Quality of teaching is among the most important and successful means and methods in developing and improving the educational system structure with its both material and human components. It even became a necessity and strategic option, imposed by the nature of the educational and teaching development in the present time (Abu Aziz 2009).

Quality is one of the necessary purposes to upgrade the teaching process, to be at good performance in the modern age, which was termed by the thinkers as "age of quality". As such, quality is no longer an alternative taken or claimed by the educational institutions. Rather, it grew as an urgent need imposed by life necessities, and an indicator of the educational institution's activity. In addition, the quality of the textbook became a life necessity for education, and its requirements of technology to develop and improve the teaching quality and promote the level of the learner (Hammad 2011).

Interest in applying the quality criteria appeared in the educational institutions through looking at teaching as a commodity; as other commodities, it should compete, and attain the satisfaction of the consumers of this commodity (students, community and the state). Teachers wish to obtain the best academic qualifications to get job opportunities, which are increasingly becoming less with the increasing numbers of graduates and limited numbers of job opportunities. The parents are looking forward for the best qualification of their children. As for the state, it looks forward for distinguished educational outputs, which will enable it achieve its developmental plan's objectives. Many of the advanced countries made their main focus and concern today on preparing and developing their teachers, because of their vitally important role in improving teaching and achieving its desired objectives, which will positively reflect on the community development as well as the development of its members (Ahmad 2007).

The educational studies emphasize on the necessity for applying quality standards in the educational institutions to approach the qualitative and outstanding performance. In this regard, the reason for the progress of the countries seeking for approaching their prestigious scientific status is their actual interest and concern in their teachers, throughout all the educational stages. Furthermore, these countries placed great care and attention on the teachers' quality performance in all aspects, and upgrade their social, economic and cultural status. Many experts explained the progress of Japan in the end of the Second World War by saying that the secret lies in the teacher, education and curricula. The Japanese say that they paid the teacher the salary of the minister, the prestige of the officer and the authority of the judge; thereby, this new Japanese generation was produced (Al-Hamdoon 2000).

As a result, for the sake of approaching a distinguished higher and university education, free from defects, the researchers see that it is inevitably necessary to establish a basic education, being the main source of higher education. The quality education issue constitutes a chal-

lenge to the officials of the education institutions, as many educational conferences, at both the national and international levels, introduced the topic. The purpose is attracting the attention of the education officials to the importance of applying the quality standards in the higher education, as one of the best solution to face the contemporary challenges, and the decline in the higher education level. Furthermore, they called for linking the quality in education with a number of standards, which should be available in all the elements of the educational process in the university. In this regard, the standards provide a common language and objectives, which the educators and the local community strive to achieve, and help to provide a beacon of accountability for the performance of educational institutions, as the standards reflect the expected or acceptable quality level.

Ahmad and Hamdoon (2007) studied the challenges and obstacles that face the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates in applying the total quality; the study was conducted on Sharja University. It emphasized that all the obstacles stated in the questionnaire are considered actual barriers, facing the university employees, and that they actually inhibit the successful implementation of the quality system at the university. There is almost an agreement among the views of the university staff on the importance of adaptation with the quality system. The study of Venkatramam (2007) aimed at providing a framework for the total quality management (TQM), which ensures the ongoing improvements in education, being an acceptable way to implement the TQM programs in higher education. TQM was analyzed in higher education through looking into the different decisive factors, such as the prevailing teaching practices, obstacles facing TQM, and the return-on-investment in TQM applications. These discoveries led to setup a framework for the total quality, based on Demings' Wheel of Plan-Dock-Act Cycle, for carrying out the continuous improvements in the higher education programs. Al-Dawood (2015) outlined in his study some of the general obstacles facing the application of the TQM in the higher education institutions. Among these obstacles, were: lack of commitment by the higher management, focus on certain methods in total quality management rather than on the system as a whole, non-participation of all the workers in applying the TQM, training did not move forward to the application phase, adopting ways and methods of TQM that do not correspond to the privacy of the institution, change resistance of some manager and worker, and expectation of immediate results. Alnabhani (2007) discussed in his study seven ways to manage change and development. He found that six of these seven ways are capable of creating change and development in the ministry, but they do not exactly match the needs of the ministry. He found that the TQM system is the only system capable of solving all the internal and external challenges that face the Ministry of Education.

Abdul Halim (2011) conducted a study in which she concluded that the universities should place greater attention on the long-term strategy equally as the attention degree to the ability and efficiency in managing the short-term university affairs. For the universities to achieve this, it is necessary to choose the performance evaluation tools that are applied in the administrative accounting, which realizes the quality of the universities performances of their basic functions. Al-wadi (2010) study concluded that the problems of some universities caused by faculty cadres, technicians and employees, quantitatively and qualitatively, and the right timing, as well other problems, resulted from dealing with the external environment and the extent of the ability of the university to cope with these problems. Such problems cannot be solved merely by applying TQM without the presence of a leadership that adopts the TQM strategy, represented by the ministry of higher education.

Tian et al. (2010) discussed the existence and development of higher education to build the quality awareness, create quality assurance, build the scientific quality assurance system for the higher education, and underline the factuality of the higher education reformation. For this purpose, they discussed the obstacles and challenges facing the establishment of the quality assurance system in the higher education in China. Qawi's study (2011) indicated that it is necessary to follow the total quality management system to meet the needs of ever-changing needs of the labor market, on one hand. On the other hand, the researcher valued and ap-

preciated the attempt of the Algerian university to improve its outcomes by adhering to the LMD policy as an initial directive to apply TQM. Al-Eethawi and Al-Samerra'i (2011) conducted a study which concluded that there is no compatibility between the audit committee and the specifics of the university, and that the special conditions of every university are not observed. For instance, the stage in which the life cycle is passing through; whether it is a public or private university; and its financial abilities. The study further showed that the poor attention to the authentication leads to the inability of the team, which follows-up the evaluation process in the university to prove certain facts.

The study by Eid (2015) found that all the academic categories (current students, graduates and faculty members) are satisfied with the program level in the university. The study of Kaaki (2015) concluded that both the distance learning and regular learning in the MA stage are in need to activate the use of electronic communication media to increase the interactions of the (female) students with the faculty members. In addition, the faculty member is also in need for attending training programs that may qualify him/her in how to teach, use the electronic media, communication skills, and how to prepare the electronic exams. In this concern, the study called the colleges providing these programs to avail (female) academic advisor and electronic technician to fix any failures that may occur during the live broadcast, providing intranets that enable the (female) students communicate with the faculty members and send their works to them electronically. The study further called for obliging the (female) students to join compute courses, and other courses in the internet use before enrollment in the MA program, for the sake of improving the MA program outcomes, with both its types, the distance and regular learning (attendance at the University). Al-Ja'afreh's study (2015) indicated that the students' evaluation level of the faculty members was (3.57); that is high, and that the means of all the areas fell in the high level, except for the domain of student's learning evaluation, which came at a medium level. The study of Mahdi and Hamood (2015) aimed to identify the professional development level of the faculty members of Baghdad University, in the light of the total quality indicators, as perceived by them. The study further showed that the level of the professional development was achieved at a medium degree.

It is quite clear from the above mentioned that the previous studies referred to in this study varied in tackling the issue of the evaluation of the higher studies programs, or the evaluation of the faculty members in the universities, whether perceived by the students or the faculty members themselves. The previous studies agreed on applying the descriptive method and the questionnaire as a data collective instrument. In this concern, the researcher of the current study benefited from the previous studies in developing the study instrument, and explaining its conclusions. The current study is different from the previous studies in that it is the first study, as far the knowledge of the researcher goes, which tackled the degree of including the international quality standards in the higher education programs, as viewed by the faculty members at Majmaah University within the scope of objective (public and private scope) educational content field, and the field of connecting the educational program with the community needs and the technological changes.

Study Problem and Questions

The international quality management is one of the contemporary entrances to reinforce the competitive ability and advantage of the institution. The educational institutions seek for excellence in providing the educational services to the beneficiaries (student, labor market); as it is inevitable to upgrade to a remarkable level of quality, which will be assessed through the perceptive of the student and labor market, on one hand, and the perspective of the institution itself. In this concern, evaluation authorities focus on a number of quality dimensions: accreditation, merit, dealing, response, understanding the consumer, credibility, security, possibility and ease to access the service, and physical embodiment of the service. Quality of the educational institutions realizes a pool of standards that enable them contribute to the community development, with outcomes capable to compete in the educational field. It further realizes a number of returns, such as improving the workers' performance, control of the administrative

system of the institution, a sense of belonging to the institution, by adhering to the required standards and principles and bases needed to achieve them. Furthermore, they realize outcomes characterized by efficiency and creativity.

Higher education institutions should take into consideration applying the accreditation standards, quality assurance standards, and the international quality standards and indicators. They further should review their plans, programs, structures and environment; and authenticate their tracks, which will help in outlining their status, their identity and ability to create distinguished specializations and programs, to enhance their competitive capability, at the national, regional and international levels.

There are reasons and justifications that necessitate attention to the quality of higher education. For instance, high tuition costs; frustration due to very few employment opportunities, extensive critics directed to the higher education, concerning their efficiency and the decline in their outcome level, whether by employers or graduates themselves, their parents, or the pertinent institutions. In addition, there are calls raised inside and outside the educational institutions toward the application of quality systems.

Observer of the tracks of the educational systems finds that most of the educational institutions do not spare effort to approach the international quality standards, for raising the level of the teaching-learning process. Majmaah University is one of the educational institutions seeking for approaching the international quality standards in its educational programs. Accordingly, and to diagnose the reality, very accurately; due to the rarity of the studies, as per the researcher' knowledge, which dealt in the international quality standards in the educational programs of the postgraduate students, the researcher made an attempt to identify the extent of including the quality standards in the postgraduate programs at Majmaah University, as perceived by its faculty members; by answering the following questions:

Question One: What is the degree of including the international quality standards in the postgraduate programs at Majmaah University, as perceived by its faculty members?

Question Two: Are their statistically significant differences at the statistical significance level (α=0.05) among the means of the study sample individuals' evaluation, about the degree of including the international quality standards in the post graduate programs attributed to the gender, major and experience variables?

Study Significance

The importance of this study stems of the fact that it focuses on the factuality of the quality standards in the postgraduate programs, which contributes to provide the officials of planning and development a list of the international quality standards; that should be taken into account upon the start for building and developing the educational programs. The current study opens the gate before future studies and research in different axels, in the field of the development of postgraduate program. The importance of this study lies also in providing the decision takers in the universities knowledge on how to assure the existence of international quality standards in the postgraduate program, as viewed by the faculty members, and taking them into account in the preparation process of the postgraduate programs in future.

METHODOLOGY

The study applied the descriptive, survey method, as most fits the nature of the study.

Study Instrument

For achieving the objectives of the study and answering its questions, the researchers employed the questionnaire as their study instrument. In the development of constructing this instrument, the researcher relied on the educational literature and reference to the previous studies, such as Al-Balawi (2012), Al-Anzi (2012), and Al-Ghoul (2010). The study instrument consisted, in its initial shape, of (3) areas comprising (34) items.

Validity of the Instrument

The validity of the instrument was achieved by presenting it to a number of the faculty members at Majmaah University in the educational management, measurement and evaluation

specializations. They were requested to judge the suitability degree of the instrument items to the study objectives; accuracy of wording, and the extent of the belonging of the items to the areas they are assigned to. After the agreement of the arbitrators on the instrument and its validity, and after deleting (5) items, the instrument came with (34) items in its final shape. The researchers adopted the following criterion to judge the means:

- From 1.00 - 2.33 Low
- From 2.34 - 3.66 Medium
- From 3.67 – 5.00 High

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was made through distributing it twice (two-week interval between the first and second distributions) over an exploratory sample consisting of (15) faculty members, other than the study sample individuals. The reliability was further assured by obtaining the Pearson Correlation Coefficient twice between their degrees, for obtaining the reliability coefficient of the test. In addition, Chronbach Alpha was also applied (Table 1).

Table 1: Instrument's reliability by applying Pearson correlation coefficient and Chronbach alpha

Area	*Reliability coefficient using Chronbach alpha*	*Reliability coefficient using Pearson correlation*
Objectives area (Public and private outcomes area)	0.79	*0.73
Educational content area	0.79	*0.71
Educational program relatedness to the community needs and technological changes area	0.74	*0.70
The instrument as a whole	0.79	*0.77

* Statistically significant at (α=0.05) level

Table 1 shows the following:

1. Chronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the study areas ranged between (0.74-0.79), which are high and acceptable values for the purposes of application. In this concern, most studies indicated that the acceptable reliability rate is (0.60).
2. The correlation coefficients, by the way of test-retest (applying-reapplying), of the study areas ranged between (0.71-0.77), which are acceptable reliability indicators.

Study Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all the faculty members at Majmaah University. A random sample consisting of (90) faculty members was chosen. Table 2 shows the distribution of the study sample individuals by their variables.

Table 2: Distribution of the study sample individuals by the personal variables

Variable	*Level*	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Gender	Male	70	77.8
	Female	20	22.2
Specialization	Humanities	57	63.3
	Scientific specializations	33	36.7
Experience	Less than 5 years	11	12.2
	5-10 years	17	18.9
	More than 10 years	62	68.9
	Total	90	100

Statistical Processing

The researcher relied, in analyzing the data resulting from the sample members' responses, on the following:

- ***Frequencies and Percentages****:* of the distribution of the sample members by the personal variables.
- ***Means and Standard Deviations*** (M's and SD's to identify the extent of the inclusion of the quality standards in the postgraduate programs, as perceived by the faculty members at Majmaah University.
- ***3 Way ANOVA:*** to identify the differences by their variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study and discussion are according to its questions. Results of question one, providing: *"What is the degree of including the international quality standards in the postgraduate programs at Majmaah University, as perceived by its faculty members?"*

Table 3 about means and standards deviations above shows that the means of the sample

Table 3: Means and standard deviations of the responses of the sample individuals on the instrument areas and the study instrument as a whole

Rank	*No.*	*Area*	*M*	*SD*	*Rating*
1	1	Objectives area (Public and private outcomes area)	3.50	0.57	Medium
2	2	Educational content area	3.44	0.58	Medium
3	3	Educational program relatedness to the community needs and technological changes area	3.38	0.62	Medium
		The instrument as a whole	3.44	0.54	Medium

members' responses on its areas ranged between (3.38-3.50), all of which came medium for all the areas. The highest was the objectives area (public and private outcomes area), with (3.50) mean; the educational content area came second with (3.44) mean; and the third and last position was for the educational program relatedness to the community needs and technological changes area, with a (3.38) mean.

In general, the total mean was medium, which means that the inclusion degree of the international quality standards in the academic programs of the postgraduate studies was medium, as viewed by the faculty members. The researcher attribute the result to that the attention of the attendants and officials for preparing the academic program of the postgraduate studies, to initiate modern educational foundations and bases. This mandates them to form committees to carry out the required assignments and roles, in terms of the academic program, examinations and training. This is done through a team of experts and consultants, and a coordination committee that consists of the members of the postgraduates' academic program. The roles and assignments of each committee are prepared within practical stages, which end in preparing the general framework. The academic program constitutes a part of this framework, which contains the outcomes the study should achieve after the conclusion of the stage. Then comes the second stage of the framework of the academic program of the postgraduates, which are the public and private products or outcomes; they are a reference in preparing the various materials and educational resources. The importance of these products, and the need for applying the international quality standards on them stems from that they contain general common issues, such as the lifelong learning, renovation, communications, group work, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Issues such as structure, sequence, interdependence, integration were taken care of, proportional to the students' age groups.

Table 4 illustrates that the means of the response of the sample members on the items of

Table 4: Means and standard deviations of the study sample responses on the items of the objectives area

Rank	*No.*	*Area*	*M*	*SD*	*Rating*
1	1	Educational outcomes take into account the learners' needs	4.29	0.71	High
2	2		4.01	0.80	High
3	3	The educational outcomes respond to community needs	3.69	0.85	High
4	4	The educational outcomes include standards that serve achieving the students' outcomes	3.55	0.88	Medium
5	5	The educational programs include educational outcomes that reflect the skill area of the students	3.45	0.95	Medium
6	7	The educational outcomes focus on the problem-solving way and employing it by the students.	3.44	0.78	Medium
7	8	The educational outcomes include the students' acquisition and retention of the cognitive skills.	3.38	0.81	Medium
8	9	The educational outcomes in the educational programs focus on getting the student acquire understanding and comprehension levels	3.23	0.83	Medium
9	6	The educational programs include educational outcomes reflect the students' emotional area.	3.08	0.87	Medium
10	10	The educational outcomes allow a sufficient space in the academic programs for the analysis and synthesis skills.	2.86	1.22	Medium
		Objectives area as a whole	3.50	0.57	Medium

the objectives domain ranged between (2.86-4.29). The highest was for Item No. (1), stating, "The educational outcomes take into account the learners' needs"; meanwhile, the lowest was for the Item No. (10), stating, "The educational outcomes allow a sufficient space in the academic programs for the analysis and synthesis skills." On the other hand, the area as a whole came at a medium range with a (3.50) mean. The research ascribes this result to that the faculty member monopolies most of the lecture time in explaining the scientific content, and attention for the activities that require in-depth thinking and consideration. This is because the faculty members are aware of the positive role played by the activities that turn the student into the axel and focus of the teaching process. Furthermore, these activities contribute to the participation of all the students, with thinking levels that match each student, individually.

Table 5 which is about means and standards deviations of sample members' responses shows that the means of the study sample members on the items about the educational content area ranged between (3.10-3.75). The highest was for item No. (3), stating, "The educational content is closely linked with the objectives." On the other hand, the lowest was for item No. (9), stating, "Helps in modifying the learners' behavior in consistency with the curriculum objectives." The result shows that application of the international quality standards did not approach the targeted quality level. Meanwhile, the area as a whole came with a medium level, with (3.43) mean.

Table 5: Means and standard deviations of the sample members' responses on the items of the educational content area and the area as a whole

Rank	*No.*	*Area*	*M*	*SD*	*Rating*
1	3	The educational content is closely linked with the objectives	3.75	0.81	High
2	4	Focuses on the self-development process with the students and get them acquire new knowledge and skills	3.74	0.79	High
3	5	Shows the educational content in a manner enhancing both the vertical and horizontal integration of the study plans	3.69	0.73	High
4	1	Commensurate with students' abilities and aptitudes and preferences and needs	3.59	0.80	Medium
5	2	The educational content allows the use of the various teaching methods and strategies	3.51	0.75	Medium
6	7	The educational content is characterized by accurate and updated information	3.50	0.77	Medium
7	16	The content is linked with the social value set and the social and cultural factuality	3.50	0.95	Medium
8	8	The educational contents takes, in its organization, into account the balance between the logical and psychological organization	3.44	0.90	Medium
9	14	The educational content contains a number of methods and activities that help student to understand	3.42	0.81	Medium
10	15	The educational content includes the organized, cumulative knowledge	3.40	0.86	Medium
11	6	The educational content is characterized by scientific honesty	3.37	1.04	Medium
12	17	The educational content considers displaying information from the easy to the difficult	3.37	0.83	Medium
13	13	The educational content diversifies the psychomotor, cognitive, emotional and social domains	3.36	0.91	Medium
14	12	Achieves equilibrium between the theoretical and applied aspects	3.32	0.80	Medium
15	11	Seeks to spread scientific awareness to face superstition and some habits and traditions that defy and contradict the truth	3.15	0.90	Medium
16	10	The educational content is displayed in a logical manner	3.12	1.06	Medium
17	9	Helps in modifying the learners' behavior in consistency with the curriculum objectives	3.10	1.03	Medium
		The Area as a Whole	3.43	0.58	Medium

Ahmad and Hamdoon (2007) studied the challenges and obstacles that face the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates in applying the total quality; the study was conducted on Sharja University. It emphasized that all the obstacles stated in the questionnaire are considered actual barriers, facing the university employees, and that they actually inhibit the successful implementation of the quality system at the university. There is almost an agreement among the views of the university staff on the importance of adaptation with the quality system. The study of Venkatramam (2007) aimed at providing a framework for the total quality management (TQM), which ensures the ongoing improvements in education, being an acceptable way to implement the TQM programs in higher education. TQM was analyzed in higher education through looking into the different decisive factors, such as the prevailing teaching practices, obstacles facing TQM, and the return-on-investment in TQM applications. These discoveries led to setup a framework for the total quality, based on Demings' Wheel of Plan-Dock-Act Cycle, for carrying out the continuous improvements in the higher education programs. Al-Dawood (2015) outlined in his study some of the general obstacles facing the application of the TQM in the higher education institutions. Among these obstacles, were: lack of commitment by the higher management, focus on certain methods in total quality management rather than on the system as a whole, non-participation of all the workers in applying the TQM, training did not move forward to the application phase, adopting ways and methods of TQM that do not correspond to the privacy of the institution, change resistance of some manager and worker, and expectation of immediate results. Alnabhani (2007) discussed in her study seven ways to manage change and development. He found that six of these seven ways are capable of creating change and development in the ministry, but they do not exactly match the needs of the ministry. He found that the TQM system is the only system capable of solving all the internal and external challenges that face the Ministry of Education.

Table 6 demonstrates the means of the study sample members' responses on the items of the area of the linkage of the educational program with the community needs and technological developments. The means ranged between (3.30-3.56); with item No. (5), stating, "The educational program fits the community needs, on one hand, and the labor market, on the other", as the

Table 6: M's and SD's of the sample members' responses on the items of the area of the linkage of the educational program with the community needs and the technological developments, and the area as a whole

Rank	*No.*	*Area*	*M*	*SD*	*Rating*
1	5	The educational program fits the community needs, on one hand, and the labor market, on the other	3.56	0.85	Medium
2	4	The educational program provides opportunities to obtain scientific knowledge from various resources other than the textbook, such as the internet and scientific magazines	3.40	0.92	Medium
3	7	The educational program helps students to adopt personal attitudes toward local and foreign historical issues	3.39	0.90	Medium
4	6	The educational program is compatible to the developments and changes that occur in the community in the scientific, technological and information issues	3.35	0.95	Medium
5	1	The educational program keeps up with the modern scientific and technological knowledge	3.33	0.80	Medium
6	2	The educational program discusses the latest scientific and technological knowledge	3.31	0.78	Medium
7	3	The educational program outlines the ethical dimension when discussing the technological issues and their relations with the community	3.30	0.87	Medium
		The area of the linkage of the educational program with the community needs and technological developments, as a whole	3.38	0.62	Medium

highest. Meanwhile, item No. (3), stating, "The educational program outlines the ethical dimension when discussing the technological issues and their relations with the community", was with the lowest mean. On the other hand, the area as a whole came also with a medium mean amounting (3.38). In this concern, the results very clearly indicate that the technology issue did not meet the required attention. The reason may be that the attendants and officials of the program did not perceive the important of this dimension on the design of the educational programs.

Table 7: Means and standard deviations of the instrument as a whole, according to the gender, specialization and experience variables

Variable	*Level*	*M*	*SD*
Gender	Male	3.44	0.51
	female	3.48	0.62
Specialization	Humanities specializations	3.47	0.52
	Scientific specializations	3.40	0.57
Experience	Less than 5 years	3.46	0.20
	From 5-10 years	3.50	0.49
	More than 10 years	3.43	0.59

Table 7 about means and standard deviation of the instrument indicates apparent differences between the means of the evaluations of the study sample members about the degree of the existence of the international quality standards in the academic program of the postgraduate studies, which may be attributed to the gender, specialization and experience variables.

Table 8 about ANOVA analysis shows that there are no statistically significant differences, at the statistical significance level (α=0.05), among the means of the estimations of the study sample members, about the availability of the international quality standards in the postgraduate studies academic program, which may be attributed to the study variables. This may be attributed to that the attendants of the postgraduate studies programs follow one methodology in the development of the academic programs, and attempt to reinforce them with all whatever new, to approach the international total quality criteria.

Many literatures explored the total quality management (TQM) issue in the higher education institutions. Al-Ghamidi study (2005) showed many issues such as the obstacles of the success of the total quality management in the Saudi universities. The study also indicated the most important strategies that are to be applied. He concluded his study by showing the most important stage of applying the total quality in Taibah University. The study of Gavriel and Romar (2006) discussed some of the deficiencies in applying the TQM in higher education. It further evaluated the concept of the dual roles of the students, and analyzed its relations and effects on enhancing the educational process, through interaction among these roles. The study contributed to understanding the roles of the student/teacher, how to apply the total quality in higher education to the best possible extent, and it provided a way to reinforce the evaluation process as a scale for the education quality.

The most important results of the study of Al-Adhadhi (2011) were that the main obstacles, in case of applying the TQM at the higher education institutions, are as follows: poor perception of the lifelong learning concept, meager financial support for the scientific research works, poor abilities of the libraries, increasing the burden of teaching, existence of differences in assessing the significance degree of the organizational obstacles and community service, which can be attributed to the experience of the faculty member. The study of Ata Kareem and Al-Sairafi (2011) aimed at identifying the educational ap-

Table 8: Results of applying the 3-Way ANOVA analysis on the instrument, as a whole, according to the gender, specialization, and experience variables

Variable	*Total squares*	*Freedom degree*	*Squares mean*	*F*	*Significance*
Gender	0.26	1	0.26	0.90	0.34
Specialization	1.13	1	1.13	3.90	0.45
Experience	0.32	2	0.16	0.55	0.58
Error	40/64	85	0.29		
Total	1780.45	90			
Total (Corrected)	41.88	89			

plication extent of the total quality assurance at Thi Qar University. The study concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the educational application of the quality assurance and the future prospects. The study of Al-Saleem (2014) showed that many of the criteria are related to the personal traits, human relations, scientific mastery, and carrying out teaching by the faculty members. On the other hand, the researcher showed that the availability degree of the criteria related to stimulation and evaluation is simple. Moreover, she indicated that the majority of the criteria came with a medium availability degree such as criteria required by the modern teaching trends. In addition, she underlined the teaching feedback, which constitutes standards of vital importance to approach the total quality level.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the aforementioned results, the researcher concludes that international quality standards need to be better enforced to produce the desired outcomes. A international mechanism must be in place to ensure conformity to it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher also recommends the following points:

1. Developing the postgraduate studies programs in the light of the international quality standards, to raise the efficiency of the programs to keep up with the scientific and technological developments.
2. Inclusion of modern teaching methods on the use of the modern technology in the postgraduate studies programs.
3. Taking into account the use of the modern references and resources that enrich the students' intellect, when preparing the postgraduate studies' programs.
4. Reconsidering the content of the topics of the postgraduate studies, and emphasizing the modifications that fit the student's abilities and mental level.

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