

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out, as clearly as possible, the process through which the data was gathered, so that the work can be contextualized within the framework of the policies and programs related to Quality Assurance in Secondary schools of Nasik District.

A descriptive research methodology was used for this study. This research is a survey type of study. A survey was administered to a selected sample from a specific population identified for the study. The purpose of the survey type of study is to reveal the present scenario of circumstances which furnish the evidence for future planning and bring betterment in its present state with future perspective. Survey study of research is a serious endeavor which brings implications about the present scenario. The term 'survey' is commonly applied to a research methodology design to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and typically utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument. Then the researcher presented the objectives and explanation of the terms. This was followed by the Research methods, location and context of the study, selection of principals, teachers, selection of the schools, selection of themes, data collection methods, process of data collection and data analysis. In the final two sections, the researcher outlined how she has gathered and analyzed the data used in this thesis.

3.1 Research Questions

1. What are the different Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Education?
2. How does the Quality Assurance System works in the field of School Education in Maharashtra State?

3. Whether the Quality assurance system of Secondary Education in Maharashtra state is effective?
4. How the School Inspection as the mechanism to monitor school Quality is managed in the state?
5. What are the perceptions of the teachers and school Principals on school inspection?
6. What are the administrative challenges of School Inspection?
7. How can the practice of school inspection be strengthened?

3.2 Statement of the Problem

A Study on the Quality Assurance System in Secondary Schools of Nasik District in Maharashtra State.

3.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To study the nature and process of Quality Assurance in the Secondary schools of Maharashtra State.
2. To study the impact of school inspection as a mechanism of Quality Assurance on the Quality Improvement of Secondary Schools as perceived by the teachers and principals in terms of academic and administrative dimensions in Nasik District.
3. To study the problems faced by the school Principals and teachers in the process of school inspection in Nasik District.
4. To study the challenges faced by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education in conducting school inspection.

3.4 Operational definitions of the term used

Quality Assurance : The term 'Quality Assurance Systems' in the study represents all those programs of Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education for

monitoring and improving the standards of the Secondary schools in academic and administrative dimensions.

School Inspection: The term ‘School Inspection’ refers to a mechanism for Quality Assurance Practice of the Maharashtra State Education Board to monitor school Quality.

3.5 Description about the Population for the study

The population of the present study comprise of all the Secondary schools in Nasik Divisional Board of Maharashtra state that are affiliated to Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. The Nasik divisional Board is decentralized into four districts, viz. Nasik, Dhule, Jalgoan and Nandurbar. There are a total of 2,492 Secondary schools, both managed by the government and private bodies in Nasik divisional Board. There are 959 Secondary schools in Nasik District; the number of Secondary schools is more as compare to other districts of Nasik Divisional Board. The SSC results of 2015 are 92.16 % and H.S.C. is 89.54% in the examinations conducted by MSBSHSE. Thus, the present study aims at understanding the inspection as quality assurance mechanism in Secondary schools of Nasik district in the state of Maharashtra.

3.6 Sample of the Study

There are 959 recognized Secondary Schools in Nasik district that are affiliated to Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. The schools are distributed in 15 Talukas. The purposive sampling technique was adopted by the researcher to identify sample for the study. The schools were purposively selected based on two criteria:

1. Those talukas of Nasik District having maximum number of schools.

2. The schools in which the pass percentage of the students in S.S.C examination is high for the last five consecutive academic years.

All the principals of the selected schools and five teachers from each school were randomly selected as the sample for the study. The District education officer, block education officers of each taluka and 3 extension officers from each block were selected as a sample for the study. The distribution of sample in detail is stated in the below table.

Table No: 3.1

Table showing sample distribution

Sr.No	Taluka	Total No. of Schools	Number of Schools selected	Principals	Teachers	No. of B.E.O's	No. of extension officers
1	Malegoan	80	10	10	50	1	3
2	Satana	78	09	09	45	1	3
3	Dindori	61	08	08	40	1	3
4	Chandwad	57	06	06	30	1	3
5	Kalwan	40	09	09	45	1	3
6	Deola	34	08	08	40	1	3
7	Nasik City	139	10	10	50	1	3

3.7 Research Tools and Techniques for data collection

The focus of the research study was to study the system of school inspection and therefore the data was collected from the teachers, principals and education officers with the help of the following tools and techniques.

3.7.1 Content analysis of the relevant reports on quality assurance published by MSBSHSE

The relevant documents, reports, program brochures and other related information from state, district, block and schools related to school inspection of Secondary schools of Nasik District were collected by the researcher from the schools, the office of Block Education Officer and Zilla Parishad's department of Secondary Education. These documents were analyzed by the researcher to study the process of Quality Assurance system in Secondary schools of Nasik District. Most of the documents were in Marathi language, which were analyzed and translated by the researcher to fulfill the objectives of the study.

3.7.2 Questionnaire for Principals

A questionnaire was prepared by the researcher which consisted of both open and closed ended questions. The draft of the questionnaire was expert validated prior to its implementation. The questionnaire was given to the experts in the field of education, the opinions of the experts were collected and then the final draft of the questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire consists of the profile of the school and the Principal along with the statement covering the dimensions of school inspection such as process of inspection, standard of inspection affects, capacity building, improvement actions and the time devoted for the purpose. The aim of this tool is to elicit the responses for the statements from the Principals on 5point scale on two broad dimensions; academic and administrative. The purpose is to understand how the school inspection as a mechanism for quality assurance in schools helps in improving the academic and administrative activities of the school in the direction of quality improvement. The following table describes the number of statements in the questionnaire on various dimensions.

Table No. 3. 2

List of Dimensions in the questionnaire given to the principals

Sr.no	Components
1.	Personal Profile of the Principal/teachers and schools
2.	Process of Inspection (Academic Dimension) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation • Teaching-learning Process including Teaching methods and Teaching aids used • Organization of Curricular and co-curricular activities • Evaluation of CCE • Evaluation of students Performance (Administrative Dimension) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure of the schools • School Finance • Documents related to students admission • Documents related to planning. Organizing and implementing curricular and co-curricular activities • Details related to teachers appointment and salaries • Details of Scholarships • Community School Partnerships
3.	The inspection standard affects <u>Academic aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular and co-curricular activities • Teaching and learning in the school • Students performance • Principals and teachers professional development • Long-term objectives of the school <u>Administrative aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation of the school • Internal supervision of the school • Goals for the next academic year
4.	Capacity building to provide for good education <u>Academic aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are involved in educational decisions like teaching methods, curriculum and teaching objectives • Principals support teachers in developing the careers • In service training for teachers and Principals <u>Administrative aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory practices in the school • Develop Leadership qualities of Principals
5.	Improvement actions of schools <u>Academic aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic objectives and goals of the institution • Teachers use clear, structured and challenging teaching approaches • Teacher assessment results • Students performance <u>Administrative aspects</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure of the school • Financial documents • Details of student’s enrolment and teacher’s appointment. • Accountability of the Principals and teachers. • Norms related to students enrolment and other aspects of the school.

6.	<p>Impact of inspection</p> <p><u>Academic aspects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogical process of the school • Curricular and co-curricular activities • Continuous and comprehensive evaluation in the school • Students achievement • Teaching skills of the teachers <p><u>Administrative aspects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths and weaknesses of the school • Feedback provided during inspection • Issues and challenges
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3.7.3 Questionnaire for teachers

A questionnaire was prepared by the researcher that consisted of both open and close ended questions. The questionnaire same as the principals was prepared for the teachers. This draft was validated by the experts prior to its implementation.

It helped the researcher to study the nature and process of school inspection, teachers' perception towards school inspection and Impact of school inspection to assure quality in the Secondary schools.

The following table describes the purpose of posing questions on school inspection as a mechanism for quality assurance:

Table No. 3.3
Purpose of the Questionnaire

S.R. No.	Dimensions in the Questionnaire	Purpose of asking the questions
1.	Personal Profile of the schools, Principals/Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know the Qualification of the Principals and teachers • To know the type of school • To know the years of experience of the Principals as principals and teachers • To know the years of experience of the teachers
2.	Process of Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Know about the Preparation of Inspection • To know about the whether the beneficiaries and functionaries are aware about the scoring rubrics of Inspection • To know the proficiency of school inspectors • To understand the actual process of school inspection • To reflect on Feedback given by the school inspectors
3.	The Inspection Standard affects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To find out whether inspection standard affects the curricular and co-curricular activities in the school • Other activities in the school • To know whether it helps the school to plan for next academic goals
4.	Capacity building to provide for good education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand whether the teachers are involved in decision making about educational matters such as, teaching methods, curriculum and objectives • To know whether the Principal supports teachers in developing their carriers and improve their teaching practices • To know how does inspection help in the professional development of the Principals and the teachers.
5.	Improvement actions from the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To know about the improvement actions taken by the school after the inspection • To understand whether the teachers used clear, structured and challenging teaching approaches. • To know whether the school is made resourceful in terms of library, science labs, teaching aids, IT labs and so on. • To know whether the inspection helps in improving the accountability of the Principals and the teachers.
6.	Impact of school inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand about the satisfaction of school inspection of the Principals and the teachers related to school inspection • To know about the impact of the inspection through feedback provided by the inspectors. • To understand the issues and challenges in the process of inspection.

The questionnaires for the Principals and teachers are enclosed in Appendix No.- V-A and B respectively.

3.7.4 Interview Schedule

Interview Schedules were used to collect the qualitative data .The District Education Officer (DEO), Block Education Officer (BEO), Extension officers, Principals, and teachers, were interviewed to probe on the questions which were not included in the questionnaire related to academic and administrative dimensions of school inspections. Interview schedules were also used to gather more information from the respondents on specific aspects of school inspection. Interview schedules for teachers and principals and Inspecting Officers are enclosed in Appendix no: V-C, D, & E respectively.

3.7.5 Participant Observation

The researcher used participant observation to understand the actual process of school inspection, duties of the functionaries and the beneficiaries, to record the behavior, attitudes and beliefs of the inspectors, principals and teachers towards the school inspection. The Participant observation was to understand the actual method, process and effectiveness of school inspection.

3.7.6 Focused group discussion

Any group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of and attentive to the group interaction (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999).

The researcher collected the data from the principals, teachers and extension officers with the help of focus group discussion. This helped the researcher to understand the process of inspection, duties of the teachers and the Principals during and before

inspection, feedback given by the Inspectors, the improvement actions taken by the school after recent inspection, the issues and challenges of school inspection, the problems faced by the teachers, principals and the educational inspectors. The following table explains in detail the sources of information, the research tools and the how the data was analyzed.

TABLE: 3.4

Research Tools and scheme of Analysis of the Data

Objectives of the study	Sources of information	Research tools	Analysis of the data
1. To study the nature and process of quality assurance in Secondary schools of Nasik district in Maharashtra state.	D.E.O. educational inspectors and principals and documents of policies and programs by MSHSEB, reports for the same.	Questionnaire, interview and content analysis of the documents.	Content analysis, qualitative analysis
2.To study the impact of school inspection as a mechanism of quality assurance on the quality improvement in terms of academic and administrative dimensions.	Principal, teachers, and extension officers	Questionnaire, interview, observation, focused group discussion	Descriptive statistics, one sample t-test and Chi-squared test
3.To study the problems faced by school principals and teachers in the process of school inspection.	Educational inspectors, principals, block officers, extension officers, and teachers.	Questionnaire, interview, focused group discussion	Qualitative analysis
4. To study challenges faced by Board in conducting school Inspection.	D.E.O, B.E.O's and extension officers	Questionnaire, focused group discussion and interview	Qualitative analysis

3.8 Construction of the Tools

The present investigation is intended to study the perceptions of the teachers, principals and Education Officers related to external inspection as one of the aspect of quality assurance in Secondary schools. After going through various previous

investigations and research articles in journals and periodicals, and some of the research papers published on the subject matter, the investigator has taken the present research problem, 'To study the Quality Assurance system in Secondary schools of Nasik District in Maharashtra state'. The researcher referred the tools of EU Life Long Learning-project 'Impact of School Inspections on Teaching and Learning'. This was further contextualized according to the objectives of the study.

3.9 Norms for interpretation of response

The quality assurance questionnaires were given to the Principals and the teachers of Secondary schools of Nasik District. The responses of the respondents were collected on 5 point scale ranging from 0 to 4 from strongly disagree to strongly agree. During the interpretation of the data a higher mean indicates a higher value for variable.

3.10 Validation of Research Tools

The questionnaire was constructed for the teachers and principals. The questionnaire was expert validated prior to its implementation. The content validation of the tools was done by the experts in the field of Education. Their suggestions and recommendations were considered in the light of the research objectives and then the tool was finalized for the collection of data. List of experts is given in Appendix No.II

3.11 Data collection

To have the detail insight into the external school inspection, the researcher has collected the data from the teachers, principals, Block Education officers, extension officers and the officer in-charge at District Education Office.

Data was collected by the survey method. In survey method the information is obtained only from a part of the population and based on this, inference is drawn for the entire population.

So initially the researcher got the list of grant-in-aid and non-grant-in-aid Secondary schools from the Divisional Board office of MSBSHSE. The talukas having maximum number of Secondary schools were identified by the researcher. Then from the same Board office the researcher received the list of high performing schools. For example, the schools in which the pass percentage of the students in S.S.C. examination is high for last five consecutive academic years. Total 60 schools were identified by the researcher from 7 talukas of Nasik District.

The researcher personally visited all the schools. The data was collected with the help of the tools like Questionnaires for both, the Principals and the teachers. Interviews schedule of the Principals, DEO, Inspecting officers and the teachers. Interviews were used to facilitate an in-depth study of respondent beliefs, attitudes, reflections, and insights, which helped to encourage a rich description of the essence of quality assurance practice as experienced. During the actual interviews, the researcher had probed for additional information or to clarify responses. The researcher consciously strived not to direct responses or to allow dialogue to stray from topic. Respondents were invited to elaborate beyond the scope of the interview schedule, and to share personal insights and other relevant comments at the end of their interview sessions. They were also encouraged to contact the researcher with any additional thoughts after their interview as well.

The Focus Group Discussion provided an opportunity to generate the data that are amenable to analyze data which emphasized the active construction of meaning. It was not possible to call all the Principals together for focused group discussion. So the researcher selected the center place of the talukas and from the nearby schools the Principals were invited for focus group discussion. In the Block Education office the

researcher was able to meet the extension officers. This made her able to understand the issues and challenges faced by the functionaries during school inspection. In most of the schools the researcher was permitted to enter in the staff rooms of the teacher, so it was easy to discuss with the teachers the system of Inspection and the issues and challenges faced by them during the process of inspection.

With the prior permission of DEO the researcher personally visited the schools as the Participant observer. This gave the researcher the first hand information about actual implementation of the process of school inspection.

Out of 60 schools, the researcher was able to collect the data from 50 schools. Some of the schools did not co-operate and were not ready to reveal anything about their school. The data was collected in the academic year 2013-14. List of schools is enclosed in Appendix-IV.

3.12 Procedure of Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected through the above described research tools were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative analysis. The researcher has interviewed various Government officials and analyzed various Government reports and documents. The content analysis of the same was done to figure out the hierarchy of the inspection system, the role played by various people especially at the lower levels of the inspection system and the way the inspection system as a whole functions. Efforts have been made to collect the formats used by the authorities to assess schools and find out the main parameters based on which schools are assessed. The reality regarding the functioning of the inspection system has been brought out slightly through the conversations with some of the stakeholders of the system. The questionnaires given to the school principals and the teachers were analyzed

quantitatively whereas the interviews, focused group discussion, content analysis of the documents and observations were analyzed qualitatively.

For the purpose of analysis, the questionnaire was divided into seven dimensions further viz.

1. Perceptions of Principals and teachers on the satisfaction of school inspection.
2. Perceptions of Principals and teachers on the preparation of school inspection.
3. Perceptions of Principals and teachers on curricular and co-curricular activities conducted in the school.
4. Perceptions of Principals and teachers related to proficiency of school inspectors.
5. Perceptions of Principals and teachers related to feedback provided by the inspecting officers to the school.
6. Perceptions of Principals and teachers related to impact of school inspection on school development.
7. Perceptions of Principals and teachers related to issues and challenges in school inspection.

The data obtained from the questionnaire was further analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics the researcher tabulated the frequency of responses, mean and standard deviation. To find out the significance difference in the responses the researcher used one sample t-test for each dimension. The significance difference was tested by the researcher at 0.05 level of confidence.

- **Hypotheses** – There was no significance difference in the perception of principals and the perception of teachers related to school inspection.

The researchers used independent Chi-square test to check the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of confidence.

3.12.1 Interpretation of Qualitative Analysis

The perceptions of the beneficiaries and the functionaries were studied by the researcher. The beneficiaries of the Quality Assurance practices in Nasik District, Maharashtra state are,

1. Teachers of Secondary Schools of Nasik District, working with MSBSE.
2. Principals of Secondary Schools of Nasik District, working with MSBSE.

The Functionaries of the Quality Assurance practices in Nasik District, Maharashtra state are,

1. The School Inspectors or they are also called as extension officers.
2. The Block Education Officers
3. The District Education Officer.

The researcher personally met the beneficiaries and the functionaries whereby focused on the process and the nature of inspection in Secondary schools of Nasik District, the implementation of the actual inspection in school, feedback received from the school inspectors, the improvement action taken by the school, the impact of inspection on the school and finally the issues and challenges faced by the functionaries and the beneficiaries in the process and implementation of Quality Assurance practices in the school.

Thus, the data collected through various sources and through various methods were triangulated, analyzed and interpreted as per the objectives of the study.

3.13 Conclusion

Chapter III gave a detail account of research methodology, research design, population and sampling, instrumentation, data collection procedure and data analysis procedure. A total of 50 principals, 255 teachers, DEO, BEO and 8 extension officers form a sample for the study.

The next chapter presents the detailed analysis of the data collected from various sources.