

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected. This chapter presents the findings of the study followed by discussion. The discussion goes as reflections on present findings and that of prior research on Quality Assurance systems in Secondary schools. The study mainly focused on the School Inspection as an external quality assurance mechanism adopted by Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, perception of the beneficiaries and functionaries and issues and challenges related to the same. After the detailed analysis of the data, major Findings of the study are derived.

5.1. Major findings of the study

From the analysis of the relevant reports and documents with regard to policies and programs for Quality Assurance in Secondary Education in state of Maharashtra, the following findings were derived.

1. It was found from the study that the Maharashtra State had established the Maharashtra Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (MIEPA) in 1994 as an autonomous society at Aurangabad district with a view to conduct orientation and in-service training programs in educational planning and administration for educational officers in Zillaparishads, Blocks and mantralaya levels. Besides, it aims at developing training modules on educational planning and administration, developing innovative approaches for effective supervision and evaluation of schools, conducting action research, creating awareness programs on educational issues etc. Very few states in India have established such institutions at state level to assure quality in school education through continuous monitoring and professional development of educational administrators.

2. The study revealed that the School Inspection System is the primary mechanism for quality assurance of schools from the government point of view and primarily responsible for School quality monitoring. A clear administrative structure and functions are laid down for school inspection system right from the state level and down to the village. The school inspection board is under the control of the District Education Office and the state exercise complete control on secondary schools through the District Education Officer. Block Education officers and the extension officers are also equally responsible for school inspection.

3. It was found from the study that the state of Maharashtra has been consistently putting efforts to improve school quality by implementing several projects and programmes. 'ADEPTS' (Advancement of Educational Performance through Teachers' Support) is one such program for the school improvement which is being operated in all the districts. School grading system is another such initiative by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education as a complement to the routine inspection system the state has evolved an institutional evaluation format for improving accountability and performance of schools. Human Development Program was designed and being implemented to support schools for the enhancement of academic excellence by providing teachers support, transportation facility and other learning resources.

4. At the school level, the study revealed that the principals and the Block development officers together form a quality development circle which looks after the quality of the schools in that particular taluka.

5. Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (MSBSHSE) is decentralized in its administration through nine divisions and

follow the same policy as per the provisions enlisted in the Secondary School Code and the Maharashtra Employee of Private School (MEPS) Act, 1981. Inspection and supervision is mandatory for improving the quality of education as well as for monitoring the functioning of schools and for continuing the grant-in-aid.

6. The study found that a senior IAS officer was appointed as the Educational commissioner, who mainly looks after the administrative work of the department at state level. The Regional Deputy Director is mainly responsible for monitoring and supervising almost all educational programs at District levels. He/She supervises the works of District Officers and Government Institutions at the Primary, Secondary and junior college levels in his/her region. They were appointed through the Maharashtra State Public Service Commission examination. At the District level, the District Education Officer is responsible for overall Inspection of the Secondary Schools at Nasik District. The Block Education Officer looked after the Quality of Secondary Schools at Taluka level who is assisted by the Extension officers. The officer in-charge of inspection were recruited through public service examinations and the extension officers and class III officers in District Education Office are recruited by seniority and by their qualification. From 2014 Pre-service training was arranged for the BEO's.
7. It was found that as per code of the State Government, there should be three inspection visits to each school in a year. First visit was meant for general observation or pre-inspection whereas second visit contains inspection and third follow up. According to the norms, the DEO and the Deputy Education Officers, Secondary Education, were expected to visit minimum 20 -40 secondary schools per year respectively. Inspection of school is done according to an evaluation

format, which mainly includes issues of infrastructure, teaching processes (periods, time table, assignments etc.) record maintenance, examination results, overall functioning, problems etc. From 2009 the evaluation of the school is also done by the prescribed format of Right to Education (2009).

8. The schools were given marks according to the prescribed format. Accordingly the schools were graded from A to E. However, with the grading the inspectors fill up the detail report after the inspection and give their remarks for improvement of the school. Three copies of the reports were made. One was given to the school, other to the Block Education office and third one was sent to the District Education Office. Detailed information about finances however was separately collected by audit official, who directly recommends about the non-salary grant to the District Education Officer. From 2010 the schools had to fill up the online information of their schools which was called as unified District information system of education. (U DISE).
9. The study revealed that during the inspection visit, the BEO and Extension officers were assisted by the subject Experts. Class room observation was done by the subject experts. Generally after the inspection, the inspecting authority conducted a feedback session with the Principals and the teachers. The District Education officer formally sends overall feedback after 2-3 months, but within the academic year. The school management was expected to act upon the inspection reports and deficiencies found out were to be complied with.
10. The study revealed that in follow up inspection, if no improvement was noticed, then a special order was given to the School Managing Committee to take necessary action on the Principals and the teachers. The study signified that School Inspections were carried out in rural schools (40%) at least once in a year as

compared to urban schools. However, 8% of the rural schools and 12% of the urban schools in the sample have never been inspected in last ten years. Most of the high performing schools in the urban areas were not been inspected in last 5-7 years. It was assumed by the Divisional Board that these schools perform well, therefore, these schools were not been inspected.

11. It was revealed that while inspecting the schools, the inspectors gave more importance to the school documents whereas very less time was spent in inspecting the teaching learning process. School Inspection was only one day process and hardly one or two periods were spent by the inspectors for the classroom observation. It was found that most of the teachers were not satisfied with the inspection process as the data was manipulated by the school management/ Board and therefore they felt that the feedback provided by the inspecting team was not at all authentic.

5.2 Principal's perception related to Quality Assurance for school improvement

1. Most of the Principals opined that School inspection had resulted in narrowing curriculum and instructional strategies in their school. But the responses to the statement such as, School inspections have resulted in refocusing curriculum and teaching and learning strategies in the school ($p=.86$) did not show any significant difference.
2. Majority (73.1%) of the Principals expressed that the school Inspectorates were professional in their approach and collected sufficient data to properly assess the school.
3. The respondents opined that the feedback provided to the school during the last inspection visit was insightful; the inspectorate identified additional strengths and weaknesses that the school had not identified. However, the respondents opined

that the written reports were not so helpful in identifying areas for improvement in the school and that the feedback received should be discussed with the parents and all other members of different committees.

4. The Principals opined that the school Inspection helped in the areas of professional development of teachers, it also encouraged teachers to improve their teaching practices, supported teachers in developing their careers and supervision of the teachers. However, they opined that the school inspection helped in the development of the school plans in which goals for the next academic year were outlined for the self-evaluation of the school and implementation of long term improvements.
5. The Principals also expressed that the inspectors were friendly with the teachers and other staff members; they discussed different teaching methods, skills and techniques with the teachers. They also updated the teachers with modern teaching aids.
6. Most of the Principals stated that mainly the issues related to the inspection were that they felt stressed to prepare for inspection; they found that there was some contradiction between the verbal communication of the inspectors and the final report and also the preparation for Inspection was a time consuming process.

5.3 Teacher's perception related to Quality Assurance for school improvement

1. Majority (78.7%) of the teachers felt that the preparation for inspection visit led to changes in the teaching, learning and organization in/of the school. The teachers expressed that they were familiar with the inspection standards and they felt that the preparation for school inspection was mainly about putting protocols

and procedures in writing that were in place in the school and gathering documents and data.

2. It was revealed that the teachers used clear, structured and challenging teaching approaches.
3. The study revealed that similar to the Principals, majority (73.6%) of the teachers also felt that the inspectors collected sufficient data to properly assess the school. It was found that the teachers had to spend time in preparation for school inspection which affects the teaching-learning process in the school.
4. Most of the teachers opined that the staff was involved in making decisions about educational matter such as teaching methods, curriculum and objective. Majority(79.1%)of the teachers expressed that the report received from the Inspectorates was insightful and it identified the areas for school improvement.
5. The study revealed that the inspectorates spent very less time for classroom observations. Therefore, they opined that the academic and administrative inspection should be separated. Most of the teachers expressed that feedback received from the inspectors should be discussed with different committees of the school whereby it should also be discussed with the parents.
6. There was a significant difference found ($p=.62$) in the responses of the teachers, the school inspection showed an impact on school evaluation. The teachers opined that the feedback given by the inspectorates hardly helped the school in long term improvements.
7. Most of the teachers felt that their internal evaluation system was of a high Quality when compared to the school inspection.

5.4 Issues and challenges faced by functionaries and beneficiaries during school inspection in Nasik District.

1. The respondents perceived that the process of school inspection began from the time they receive the information from the Board about the inspection. The respondents shared that though the inspecting officers were familiar to them, but sometimes they had the attitude of 'Fault Finder' instead of being a guide.
2. The Principals informed that they had to be very careful while preparing the documents and that was a tedious job. But those who update them in time could easily do this work. In most of the schools the Principals for Upper Primary and Secondary section were same therefore they reacted that they had too much stress even related to mid-day meal, Human Development Program and so on.
3. The study revealed that most of the schools were performing best in curricular and co-curricular activities, in extra mural activities, even in bringing social awareness. However, most of the Principals reacted such extra efforts of the schools were not taken into consideration by the Divisional Board nor were they awarded for the same.
4. It was found that most of the teachers were stressed during the entire process of inspection right from the preparation of inspection to classroom visits. It was found that the teachers felt offended when the mistakes in the lesson plans were discussed in front of everyone and the teachers were asked content related questions during classroom observations.
5. It was revealed that the teachers had pessimistic approach towards the external inspection they informed that they could not find any type of change in the teaching-learning process as impact of school inspection.

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6. It was revealed that the teachers were not involved in the important decisions related to school improvement neither were they appreciated by the school management or the Board. It was observed that the teachers were panicky with the CCE method as it had increased their clerical job, therefore they reacted that their most of the time was spent in doing the paper work so they could not give enough time for preparation of lessons and teaching.
7. The study revealed that in most of the schools the teachers were recruited on adoc basis or on contract basis, therefore they were very less paid, which affected the performance of the teachers and ultimately affected the Quality of the School.
8. It was found that the recruitment of the Inspecting Officers was done by public service commission or by seniority; they were not specified with any type of pre-service or in-service training. Therefore, they were not clear with their administrative jobs and with instructional supervision.
9. It was observed that the Inspecting Officers were overburdened with academic and administrative work. The Block Education officers informed that they had to visit too many schools in a year in addition to that they had to look after the administrative work in their office. Therefore, it was found that their most of the time was spent in attending and conducting meetings.
10. It was revealed that the officers were neither provided with necessary transportation facilities nor with the allowances.
11. The study revealed that the inspectors had too much political pressure. Many times during the school visits if the Principal or a management member was a politically strong person, the officers were suppressed and so they could not give proper feedback.

12. It was found that in the offices of BEO or the extension officers, the peons or any other helping hand was not recruited, they had to do all the work on their own. The number of recruitments of the inspecting officers was too less and therefore the officers could not reach to all corners of the Taluka. Too many changes in the education policies had increased the work of the officers.

5.5 Recommendations of the Principals and the teachers on School Inspection for school improvement

The Principals and the teachers recommended the following things that the educational inspectors should thoroughly inspect during the school visits, which would help in the Quality improvement of the schools.

1. The Principals perceived that the inspecting officers should find out the problems in the school and should act as a bridge between the state Board and the schools. They should also help and support the schools related to their legal aspects and other problems faced by the schools in the villages. As these issues created hindrance in their teaching –learning process. Even it was expected from the inspectorates that those schools which do not have instructor for IT labs and those schools whose IT labs were not working, the school inspectors during inspection need to identify them and put it forward to the District Education Office.
2. Most of the Principals of non-grant –in-aid or private schools opined that they were not at all satisfied by the inspection process and it did not help them for any type of quality improvement of the school. Immediate reforms in the inspection system can satisfy the purpose.
3. Most of the Principals of private institutions felt that they were harassed by the educational inspectors more than the grant-in-aid schools. The reason behind which was malpractices.

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4. Powers of the Principals should be increased. The government officers should take action on the decisions of the Principal, whether it was to promote a teacher or demote him/her from the post, with proper authentication, decisions should be taken. The training for the changed syllabus should be held in vacations and the trainers should be experts in their subjects and experienced people.
5. It was opined that the teachers should not be loaded with extra work. So that, they could concentrate on teaching and other activities of the school. Inspection is the best action to bring uniformity, discipline, and a code of conduct to the schools. But it should provide a proper guideline to the schools. The inspectors should take into consideration the urban and rural areas and the problems of the schools during inspection.
6. The government brings too many reforms in the system of education which was mainly related to completion of paper works, the teachers and the Principals were asked to complete in a very short period of time, which hindered the daily work of the Principals as well as the teachers. The government officials should give them enough time to complete their work. The respondents suggested that the Government should form a public private partnership. The academic inspection should be done by the private agency whereas the Government officers should conduct the administrative inspection. Therefore, proper follow up of the school improvement would be possible and it would help in improving the Quality of the schools. Most of the Principals recommended that the schools should not depend upon external inspection rather they should begin with the strong self-evaluation.
7. The teachers recommended that most important thing was to decrease the extra work load of the teachers. Such as, senex duty, election duty and other duties from the government. So that they could spend more time on planning and

implementing new methods and techniques for teaching. Proper training should be given to the teachers related to new curriculum. The officers should discuss with the teachers and Principals the aims and objectives of education and about Quality education.

8. The teachers recommended that they should be provided training related to life skills, and implementation of continuous and comprehensive evaluation. In rural areas yet the teachers were not able to understand the meaning of CCE, therefore the officers should visit such schools and give proper training to the teachers. In some cases teachers exchange program can also be done by the Divisional Board.
9. The teachers recommended that most of the times the school inspectors were the fault finders. Instead of just finding out the faults, the officers should also look at the efforts of the teachers and appreciate. This would motivate the teachers to work. Most of the teachers opined that the inspectors should create a good rapport with the teachers, and give enough time to talk to the teachers and listen to their problems.
10. The respondents suggested that while inspecting the schools the inspecting officers should also take care of the school environment, student's socio-economic status, the standard of parents, rural areas and so on. As per recommendation of NKC(2009) the Board should establish model schools in the districts and the inspecting officers when visit the schools, if needed should conduct demonstration classes.
11. The teachers further opined that to improve the Quality of the school, school inspection process should be strictly followed. In which there should be steps followed in the process, which were planning, guiding, and training. Surprise visits should be conducted so that the teachers won't be alert only for a day and

would continuously try to improve the quality of the schools. The Divisional Board should take strict actions, for inspecting the secondary schools of Nasik District every year.

5.6 Recommendations of functionaries related to School Inspection for school improvement

The functionaries of the school inspection are the DEO, the BEO's and other extension officers. The functionaries recommended following points, which would help the schools in Quality Improvement;

1. The Officers in the DEO office informed that the State Government had defined the norms and had listed a job profile for each officer. It had also recommended how much time the officers should spend for school visit. Accordingly, if the officers work they could easily give enough time for academic inspection also.
2. The inspectorates opined that the school should work regularly and keep the documents ready all the time. This show should not be only for a day. If everyone worked properly there was no need of inspection.
3. The respondents suggested that there should be more number of recruitments of extension officers in each talukas. Monitoring and implementation of different programs and policies and the academic inspection should be separated.
4. The respondents recommended that the work load of the inspecting officers should be reduced. Separate persons should be appointed for the administrative work in the office and for the school visits. It becomes unmanageable for one person to handle everything.
5. Proper training should be given to the BEO's and the extension officers which would help in the capacity building of the stake holders and for school improvement.

5.7 Discussion

After the success of SSA and implementation of Universalization of Secondary Education and RMSA (2009) the burden now for access, equity and Quality Secondary education is on the shoulders of Secondary Education Board. The MSBSHSE has implemented many programs to improve the quality of Secondary education. In this journey to achieve quality in education the main role is played by the school inspection. This study mainly tosses a light on the nature and process of school inspection, Impact of school inspection on school improvement and issues and challenges faced by the beneficiaries and the functionaries in this whole process of school inspection in Secondary schools of Nasik District. The findings in the study are discussed as above. The researcher came across some of the noticeable programs implemented by state Government in achieving quality education are also listed in the findings.

The researcher personally visited the schools and collected the data from the documents and reports. It was seen that the policies defined by the Central and State government of Maharashtra indicates the importance of Inspection or in other terms external accreditation, for assuring Quality and improving accountability of the Secondary Education in Maharashtra State.

The Secondary Schools of MSBSHSE follow same policies and norms as decided by the State Government. But as a coin has both the sides, though on paper the policies are appropriate and initiates to improve Quality of the schools, however there are many loopholes in the implementation of the present system.

The District Education office at Zilla Parishad is responsible for school inspection of Secondary schools at district level whereas Block Education officer and Extension officers are responsible for school inspection of Secondary schools at Taluka level.

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The DEO's and the BEO's have to conduct the academic as well as the administrative inspection in the schools. During the focused group discussion with the extension officers it was revealed that the school inspectorates were overburdened with the duties. Although, the State Government has defined the job profile for each officer, the same is not followed by the officers and all are interested in School Administration and School visits. Due to which it was found that the Inspectorates lack in professional leadership. It was found that the school inspection was conducted hardly once in some of the schools. There were many schools who failed to remember when the school inspection in their schools. The main objectives of school inspection is to achieve quality in education, provide proper leadership and guidance to the principals, monitor the progress of the school and provide proper guidance to the stake holders related to pedagogical process. However, it was found that due to lack of time they could not give proper instructions related to improvement of Quality Assurance in the school. Teachers opined that certain skills and managerial competencies were required by the school inspectors to make their visit effective.

As to study the perception of the Principals and the teachers, the researcher administered a questionnaire, conducted unstructured interview and also had a focused group discussion and classroom observation. The teachers had a pessimistic approach towards the process of school inspection and felt that due to political pressure or many other reasons the data was manipulated. Therefore, it loses its authenticity. The Principals informed that sometimes they have pressure of preparation for school inspection, but as sometimes the center head being from their own area, they had no pressure during inspection. The teachers expressed that the

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Government should separate academic and administrative inspection. They discussed that though the inspection helped in the process of school evaluation but their internal evaluation system was of a high quality. This was because the teachers felt that the inspection procedure/process was very good on the paper but practically it is not done in a systematic way and the members of the management visited the school many times in a year, due to frequent visits of the trustees which included surprise visits the schools regularly update the documents. From the regression analysis it was clear that the Principals felt that preparation for school inspection was an important aspect in the process of inspection and significantly contributed in school improvement. Whereas, the teachers perceived that inspection of curricular and co-curricular activities and satisfaction of school inspection significantly contributed to improvement of school inspection. The teachers therefore insisted that more time should be given for classroom observation and for discussion with the teachers for which academic and administrative inspection should be separated. The teachers also expressed that the inspectorates should share goals and visions of the school which would help them to prepare for long term objectives of the school.

The Government should take a serious heed of it and should have a proper control on the work of Education officers. The respondents also expressed that the Inspectorates lack in positive reinforcement which affected the teaching quality of the teachers.

The researcher observed the inspection process going on in the school. The researcher was a participant observer as well as focused group discussion and interviews were conducted with the Principals and teachers related to issues and challenges of school inspection. The teachers were more stressed as many times it was the question of their

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self-esteem and the management also can question them later. The Principals shared that the inspectorates should actually guide to evaluate the school, supervise, and guide the teachers as well as other staff members, to identify the areas of improvement and help in the professional development of the Principal himself and the teachers. It was found that mostly the extension officers or the subject experts who visit the schools were from their own geographical area, they had a very good relationship with each other which surely affected the feedback. Many times the subject experts can also be from their institution therefore, authentic feedback is not provided by the inspecting team. The NCF (2005) recommended that the monitoring system put in place must be carefully analyzed in relation to its objectives, and the norms and practices that are to be institutionalized to achieve the objectives. The school inspection must provide for sustained interaction with individual schools in terms of teaching-learning processes within the classroom context. But the reality seen today is that the inspectors as they are engage more in administrative works could not give sufficient time for classroom observation and teaching learning process. The researcher has found that the inspectors spent very less time with the teachers and no time with the students, which is also proved by Pandya (1956). Therefore, NCERT (1969) also recommended that training programs should be conducted for the inspecting officers. According to the survey, conducted by NUEPA (1986) inspection is still an administrative ritual, inspectors should pay more emphasis on classroom observations, follow up after inspection is also an important aspect which is many times neglected by the inspectorates. The reality is yet the same. This shows that from so many years the problems of the functionaries and the

beneficiaries have remained the same. Of course there is a change in the policies of inspection but the implementation is going on in the same way. However, they reacted that the inspectorates should concentrate more on teaching- learning process than the documents in the administrative office. Thus, there need be a change in the recruitment process of school inspection. The Inspectors though recruited by MPSC, should be given appropriate pre-service and in-service training. Timely training is needed; the training should not be only once but should be given after 2-3 years. The teachers also suggested that this training should not be only for name sake, but should help the inspectorates to improve their professional competencies and professional leadership styles.

Thapa (2010) also found that the inspection today is not the fault-finders. They behave politely and are less authoritarian, but with the passage of time there isn't any change found in the area of administrative inspection of the schools. Though the course related to computer, MS CIT is made compulsory for the teachers and Principals yet, It was found that most of the Principals, teachers and even the inspectorates lack in technical knowledge, viz. computer, internet, sending e-mails and so on. NKC (2009) states about establishment of model schools, such schools should be established in each district and the inspectorates, Principals and teachers should be given proper training for capacity building and school improvement.

The issues of the education officers have remained the same from a long time span. There are no changes seen in the job profile of the inspectors. The jobs of the inspectors are increasing with new reforms in the education system, but the issues have not decreased, they remain the alike or are increasing with the new reforms in

the educational system. The supervision of instruction is by design a developmental process with the main purpose of improving the instructional program, generally and teaching specifically. Only when this process is carefully planned and executed success can be achieved.

5.8 Conclusion

As per the opinions of the beneficiaries and the functionaries it is clear that External inspection is an important arm of Government which helps in Quality improvement of the school. Therefore, it is important that it provides proper guidelines to schools related to Quality Assurance of the schools. As per the recommendations by RMSA (2009) the government should begin with the non- governmental arm for inspecting the schools. This policy of the center, state and private agency would conduct the schools visits and give proper feedback to the schools. The Government should seriously look into this and change the traditional method of inspection. It is found that since 1956 till date the government is adopting the similar method for school inspection. It is recommended that the Government should initiate the schools to form their own Quality assurance cell. As per Nigerian institutions, the schools should also appoint the Quality assurance officer who would look after the total quality of the school. To achieve the goals of instructional supervision in secondary schools, efforts must be geared towards overcoming most of the challenges facing instructional supervision.

Thus, it's high time now and the Government should bring change in this entire process of Quality Assurance system. This chapter provided the summary of the major finding of the Quality Assurance system in the Secondary schools of Nasik

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District. The perception of the beneficiaries and the functionaries related to School Inspection as an important aspect of Quality assurance, their issues and challenges as well as their recommendation to improve the Quality of school inspection are taken into consideration. The researcher has also studied the perception of the beneficiaries related to the impact of school inspection on Quality improvement of the Secondary Schools of Nasik District. The recommendations of NKC (2009), RMSA (2009) and 12th five year plan, has stressed on improving the School inspection which would help in refining the system of quality assurance in Secondary schools of Nasik District.