

6.0 Introduction

Education is a process of bringing desirable changes in learners; education makes human beings a right thinker and a decision maker. Education is the wise, hopeful and respectful cultivation of learning undertaken in the belief that all should have the chance to share in life. John Dewey's (1967) learning theory states that the educational system had to be thoroughly overhauled because of the deep going changes in the society, people spontaneously foster capacities for self-direction, discipline, leadership and independent judgments. Bruner's (1966) theory supports the belief that learners construct new ideas or concept based upon existing knowledge. Therefore, with the reference of existing knowledge the society demands change or transformation. Traditional knowledge and skills are no more capable of coping with the changing needs of the changing times. People are left with no alternatives but change or perish. The skills and knowledge that seem to be relevant today are becoming obsolete and outdated within a short span of time. Old skills and knowledge are being replaced by new knowledge and skills. Today's Indian education system demands a paradigm shift in education system from knowledge transmission to knowledge construction. Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development, increasing people's capacity to transform their visions for society into realities. Therefore, to provide quality education in school one must have good management, principals, teachers of high quality and proper monitoring of the schools for necessary improvements to achieve quality parameters.

Therefore, for maintaining these parameters, implementing government policies and programs, and to evaluate and improve the institution, the knowledgeable and quality Principals, teachers and the even the supervisors and inspecting officers are needed.

These stakeholders need to be committed equipped with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies for effective teaching and ability of acceptance and integration of innovative practices in the institution.

Therefore, the dynamics of education and its role in social transformation and national development makes it essential that the content and processes of education are continuously renewed in order to make them in tune with the changing needs, aspirations and demands of the society. School education is a sector of fundamental importance to both individual and national development, which plays an important role in the overall development of human beings. Primary school education helps in the formation of personality of children later higher education shapes the children for future. Secondary education is that where you prepare the boy or girl to face the realities of life, the challenges of life, and the requirements of life as the component of holistic development of the individual in this Competitive world. "Secondary Education is really a backbone for Education where young contribute to the projection of the nation as a Competent, and as efficient nation among the Comity of nations and this is where you contribute to the whole world." (Former prime minister NarsimhaRao commented about Secondary Education in International Conference on Secondary Education for 21st century. 1993, DELHI)Secondary Education serves as bridge between primary and higher Education. So according to Dr. Mudaliyar's Commission (1952-53) the objectives of Secondary Education are:

- 1) Development of Democratic Citizenship.
- 2) Improvement of Vocational efficiency.
- 3) Development of personality.
- 4) Education for Leadership.

The Jacques Delor's commission (1996) visualized the role of Secondary education in two contexts. One is to establish direct link with supplying manpower to the world of work and the other is to prepare inputs for higher education.

Most of the policies and programs such as NPE (1986), NCF (2005),NKC(2007), and the most important is RMSA(2009) which stresses on access, equity and Quality in Education. So according to RMSA (2009) India needs to expand the access inclusiveness and quality of Secondary education. So that students with equal ability will have equal access to opportunity. So quality assurance in education becomes an important aspect in today's world of globalization.

6.1 Purpose of the Study

The Secondary education which serves as a bridge between primary and higher education is expected to prepare young person between the age group 14-18 in the world of work and entry in higher education. As countries achieve universal primary education, there is pressure to increase opportunities for access to Secondary education for larger number of individuals completing primary education. In this age of globalization worldwide, in terms of enrolment ratios, Secondary education is the fastest growing sector of formal education. All the concern to ensure that expanding access to Secondary education is not at the expense of the quality program. In fact, there is an increasing realization that access and quality are different sides of a same coin, since if access of primary education is expanded without this education being relevant and of a high quality; high dropout rates will remain which in term determines the move to expand access and reduces the internal efficiency of the system. In addition, it is important to develop effective systems for monitoring and evaluating learning outcomes achieved, both to measure the success of the program

mounted in achieving their aims and also to provide feedback information that can contribute to improving the program offered.

Therefore, Quality becomes an important aspect in Secondary Education. The Government plays a critical role as an important arm in school Administration.

Quality in Education can be evaluated by two different ways:

1. Internal school supervision
2. External school inspection.

Therefore, this study mainly focuses on the School inspection as an important aspect to assure quality in education. The researcher has made an attempt to understand the nature, process of school inspection, its impact on school improvement and the issues and challenges faced by the functionaries and the beneficiaries in this process of inspection in the Secondary schools of Nasik District in Maharashtra State.

6.2 Quality in Education

Quality education in India is influential in determining the future of children and in turn the fate of the nation. Therefore, education not only targets the literacy rate but also the overall complete development of the child. The sixth goal of the UNESCO Dakar Framework for Action 'Education for All' has been set out as - improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. The relativist approaches to quality of education emphasize that the perceptions, experiences and needs of those involved in the learning experience mainly determine its quality.

Quality refers to those attributes which make an object what it is, they define its character. The question of quality in education is therefore basic and pertains to its

very essence. The phrase, "Quality in education" implies standard and efficiency base, of course on the context in which the term is being used. In general, quality in education is an umbrella concept which includes all those aspect of education which makes it efficient and good.

As is known by everyone, quality in people involves positive change in the mind set, change in the habits, change in the attitude, and change in the skills. This change is all in an integrated holistic way. It is not only the change in cognitive area; or in affective area, but it prophets people for action with accompanied faith and self-confidence. (Karnadikar, 2007). Quality is a relative concept and not something that is absolute.

India is a developing country, is presently engaged in developing quality education for citizens. There is therefore a need for the well prepared teachers, principals, supervisors and inspecting officers. It also calls for adequate preparation for program in the teacher training institution. Quality expresses the system's capacity to reform itself for enhancing its ability to remedy its own weaknesses and to develop new capabilities. The key reforms required in our system today are those that will enable it to overcome its internal rigidity and its indifference to changing circumstances (National Curriculum Framework 2005). Quality is not merely a measure of efficiency; it has a value dimension. The attempt to improve the quality of education will succeed only if it goes hand in hand with steps to promote equality and social justice. NKC (2007) has recognized the crucial significance of quality improvements as the foundation upon which any further advances must be based. Commitment to providing quality education for all is a goal enshrined in the constitution of India. This goal has been pursued by successive development policies and plans for the last six decades. Nevertheless, with a large and growing population it has been an uphill task to keep pace with the expanding demand for education. The sixth goal of the

UNESCO Dakar Framework for Action 'Education for All'(2000) has been set out as - improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. The relativist approaches to quality of education emphasize that the perceptions, experiences and needs of those involved in the learning experience mainly determine its quality.

Understanding the importance of quality in education, RMSA (2009) has also stressed that India needs to expand the access inclusiveness and quality of Secondary Education. So that students with equal ability will have equal access to opportunity. So quality assurance in education becomes an important aspect in today's world of globalization.

6.3 Quality Assurance in Education

Quality assurance is comprehensive term which implies all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product for service will satisfy given requirements for quality. Quality control is an aspect of quality assurance and deals with the operational techniques and activities including a feedback system for correction so as to fulfill quality requirements. In operational terms quality assurance is creating and maintaining a highly motivated work environment of autonomy.

Venkaiah (1995) sees quality assurance as a philosophy and a process in which all the functions and activities of an institution are treated equally, planned, controlled and implemented in a systematic and scientific manner. Harvey (1999) defines quality assurance as the process of ensuring effective resource input, control, refining the process and raising the standards of output in order to meet the set goals and satisfy public accountability. This definition raises the issue of promoting —good value in

the institutional management and supervision of teaching – learning process to produce quality learners from the school system. Raouf (2008) opines that quality assurance in education is the process of ensuring continuous improvement in all aspects of education business in an institution of learning to satisfy the needs and expectations of the institution's customers (society). This approach is built around the premise that every step of the process of a service and of an operation has room for improvement.

Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008) opined that quality assurance is a proactive means of ensuring quality in any organization. Quality assurance in education aims at preventing quality problems and ensures that the products of the system conform to the expected standards. A critical look at the definitions shows that Quality Assurance in Education encompasses systematic management, monitoring and evaluation procedures adopted to measure the performance of school administrators (principals), teachers and students against educational objectives to ensure best practices in resource inputs, utilization and curriculum management by the principals to produce students that achieve the set educational goals in Secondary schools. In the educational system, entry behavior of the students, qualification of teachers, number of school days and hours, curriculum, textbooks, instructional materials, school infrastructure, facilities in the school are pointed out as quality benchmarks.

Enaohwo (2003) in Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008:pg.no.217) stated that the concept of quality assurance in the education system can be looked at from two angles, viz: the internal perspective (within the system) and the external measures (checks and balances by the regulatory agencies). This monitoring and evaluation is equally important from macro (systems) level through that of the micro (individual classroom) level. This monitoring of quality is done in the educational institutions

through inspection and supervision practices. Inspection works as an external body for improvement of schools whereas supervision works as an internal body for the school improvement.

In Educational institutions, Quality is assured at two levels:

- Statutory based and time bound approval process to ensure maintenance of norms and standards while granting recognition.
- Periodic accreditation of programs.

In both the levels, specific programs are followed, they are;

- Submission of institutional and program related profiles.
- Validation of profiles by visiting teams of experts through on site visit.
- Evaluation of experts committee's report.

This program mainly leads to monitoring of the schools. Monitoring of the school is possible through school inspection. School inspection is important for the progress and development in any institution. It is one of the main factors to improve the quality of any institution. Many countries throughout the world have developed some means of monitoring the quality and standards of their education systems. In most cases the monitoring process involves supervision or inspection of educational institutions such as schools and other aspects of educational system. The critical role of inspection as one of the dominant strategies for monitoring and improving the performance of education system in school can be over emphasized. Inspection is concerned mainly with, the improvement of standard and quality of education and in the integral parts of a school improvement program

Focusing on all these aspects, the present study was undertaken to find out the Quality Assurance of Secondary schools in Nasik district through 'School

Inspection' done by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

6.4 School Inspection

'School Inspection' means critical examination of one or more aspects of the school and its program. Historically speaking, inspection means to enforce control on the educational system and authority as an executive arm of the government. The officers in charge of "Inspections" were mainly administrative officials who used to pay visit to schools. With the view of checking the work of teachers and process of pedagogy as per the rules and standards prescribed by the government from time to time.

Whatever may be the Nomenclature in any country of the world; this is the original function of an inspector. In England and India where schools were given financial assistance or grants it was the responsibility of the inspectors to make assessment of the functions, of teachers and standards of teaching for payment of grants to concerned schools. School is the basic purpose of education and the basic purpose of school as an institution is instruction, so supervision by authorities in school directly or indirectly relates to the supervision of teaching learning processes and other curricular activities in the school. Instructional inspection deals with the attempts and activities related to direct supervision to enhance the teaching learning processes.

6.4.1 Aims of Inspection

Kocchar (2005) has stated the important aims of Inspection

- 1 To improve the quality of education by providing professional leadership both to the heads and the teachers.
- 2 To appraise the work of the educational institutions and to offer suggestions for improvement.

- 3 To promote the professional growth of all teachers by providing them in-service training.
- 4 To prevent misdirection of resources and energies.

6.4.2 Areas of School Inspection:

Kocchar(2005) and Mohanty (2005) have identified the following areas of school inspection.

1. Inspection of Instructional work: Inspection in fact is a planned program for the improvement of instruction. The Inspectors check the effectiveness of the methods of teaching in a particular institution, the audio-visual aids used to make teaching interesting and effective the timetable enforced to carry out the instructional work, distribution of work among the staff members, checking of the diaries of teachers is also an important job.
2. Inspection of co-curricular activities program: As the co-curricular program is an important part of the education today, the inspectors check up, how effectively co-curricular activities are being conducted and also how much the school is having constructive discipline.
3. Inspection of School Environment: The inspectors also have to check up cleanliness of the School surroundings, hygienic conditions of the school canteen, proper drinking water arrangements and cleanliness of lavatories after they should evaluate the steps, taken by the school authorities for the welfare and the safety of the students.
4. Inspection of School records: The inspecting staff examines all sorts of school records and registers. They securitize records and funds. They check up whether or not proper use of school funds is being made.

5. Inspection of developmental aspects: The inspectors examine various steps taken by the school, to serve the locality it is situated.

6. Inspection of pupil growth: The main objective of educational activities is pupil's growth. The inspectors have to checkup, in what particular field the students of the institutions have distinguished, their academic cultural and other activities.

The researcher aimed to study the school inspection process as a mechanism for quality assurance by the Maharashtra State Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board.

6.4.3 Modern concept of Educational Inspection:

A great change is being noticed in the theory and practice of educational inspection in the recent days. A highly democratic, dynamic, enlightened and creative type of inspection is emerging. The so called nomenclature of inspectors is being replaced by Education officer staff consultant, coordinator resource workers and specialists. Today's inspector is not a judge for fault finding but a friend, philosopher and a guide who helps the teachers to develop into better and effective teachers. He/she stimulates and guides them to plan their work wisely and encourages and supports them to execute it judiciously and fearlessly. Modern inspection brings about significant changes, even in the techniques of supervision from directing, demonstrating teaching and surprise visits. They are heading to informal classroom visits, workshops, faculty meetings, study groups, conference and action research constantly.

Co-operative planning is the core of modern inspection. There is co-operative planning at the very source of program building. Co-operation in the discovery of common problems, adequate criteria's for the evaluation of educational activities, experiences and even in writing of educational reports. Former HRD Minister

KapilSibal (2009) announced about the establishment of a separate agency and an accreditation system for school education in the country. This independent accreditation agency will look at institutions and point out their deficiencies and give them time to take care of those deficiencies within a time frame, and if they don't they will lose their recognition.

6.5 Reviews of related literature

To assure quality in any institution, internal supervision and external inspection play an important role. Therefore, In the present study the researcher has categorized the reviews under following headings:

1 External Quality Assurance Mechanism

2 Internal Quality Assurance Mechanism

3 Quality Assurance Mechanism- Models of different countries

In the above there are total 34 reviews reviewed by the researcher. In which 24 reviews are on External quality assurance mechanism whereas 10 are on internal quality assurance mechanism. The researcher has reviewed the Quality Assurance mechanism model of five countries. In the reviews studied of External Quality Assurance, only two are the case studies whereas all other researchers have adopted qualitative method for analysis. In the reviews studied of Internal Quality Assurance, three are quantitative studies where the researcher has used ANOVA to find out the significance in the samples, and one is a mixed method study where the researcher has used percentage for the detail study, whereas all others are qualitative studies.

The studies have helped the researcher to identify the methods to be adopted for the study. The researcher studied different country models to understand the Quality Assurance mechanisms of other countries and accordingly if it can help in improving the external quality mechanism of our country.

From the review of related literature, that studies have been conducted in the area of internal supervision and external inspection. It was the researcher's conviction that this study could help in rectifying some of the deficiencies and trigger recommendations for necessary improvements towards more effective supervision. The researcher has identified a number of approaches to research, including surveys, case studies, documentary research and the phenomenographical research. But most of the studies were qualitative in nature. The tools used were interviews, focused group discussions, opinionnaire and so on. The study of Farooq (2003) and Aveni (2012) is quantitative in nature as Aktar (2012) has used both quantitative as well as qualitative methodology to analyze the data. The studies right from 1956 explains the traditional way of inspection. Trivedi (1965), N.C.E.R.T. Report of the study group of supervision and inspection (1969), Rajmammal (1981), Kulkarni N. B. (1982), conducted a study to examine critically the evaluation of the inspection system of the Secondary schools in India, to discover strength of all the system which could either be retained in the present form or reshaped in keeping with the growing needs of the fast developing Secondary schools in India. According to them Pedagogy should be given more importance and inspectors should be more qualified and with high competence. They also felt that the follow up of inspection should be strengthened. Special recruitment and training program should be held for the inspectors.

NUEPA (1986) and Tyagi (2011) had conducted a survey on school inspection in five and three major states of India respectively. According to the survey, 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. It also suggests various measures for strengthening the efforts of the head of government and private-aided institutions in the light of the lack of academic support from educational authorities. Mohanty (1988), Sharma, (2000) also suggested that supervision was to be separated from administration, particularly at the grass root level, so that such inspectors will be free to look at the academic growth of the teachers. The researchers suggested that if there is a change in the process and nature of inspection, there shall also be change in the quality of schools education., It was observed that there was a positive impact of inspection on the tribal schools of Bhopal district whereby he found out that Schools even in the remotest areas are functioning, children are enrolled and attending schools, teachers are regular, well trained and motivated, structures and institutions are providing academic and resource support, teaching and learning activities are changing, children are enthusiastic and keen to learn. There is a definite change in the authority and power structure that facilitate decentralized management. Effective supervision and support systems are clearly visible in the field so the attainment level of the children has been found encouraging pedagogical renewal processes. Mangena(1985) stressed that concern in educational administration is quality. This research revealed that there is inadequate consideration of objectives and procedures in the administration of supervision and inspection in KaNgwane. This implies that there is a great need for improvement of the current supervisory and inspection procedures. Wilcox (March 2000) of UK had a survey for "Making School inspection visits effective The English experience", had an IIEP Project on improving teacher supervision and support services for basic education . The project had begun from

1996-2001. They felt that some 'Code of Conduct' is essential for inspectorate. The skills of inspection once acquired should be periodically assessed, resulting where necessary in further training. This study was to provide a critical examination of the nature of inspection and to identify a rigorous inspection approach which can have beneficial impacts on the school. It also recommended that the recruitment process for inspectors become crucial and needs careful consideration and these inspectorates should be given suitable in-service training with special emphasis on educational evaluation and assessment. It finally stresses on the accountability of school inspectors and self-evaluation. Ekundayo, Tilehi(2006), Idumu(2007)Mobegi and Ondigi (2011) recommended that quality assurance in school education is also the challenge for the principals, head masters and the teachers. Akhtar (2006) of Bangladesh Open University conducted a study to assess the quality programs, to identify the challenges of quality assurance in Secondary schools and to explore the area of improvement to meet the challenges of quality. Wanzare (2006) suggested that there were numerous deficiencies in the practice of school inspection in Kenya. Particularly the important fact is that the school inspectors themselves are poorly supported and trained and that teachers have virtually no input into the inspection process though the government has tried to initiate change in the system of inspection by introducing a hand book. Watsulu and Simatwa (2011) had conducted a study on Quality education in Secondary schools: challenges and opportunities for quality assurance and standards in Kenya, The challenges faced in enhancing quality education included lack of co-operation from some teachers and incidents of unavailability of finance records. The studies concluded that schools were not assessed as many times as required, although the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards had many opportunities. Many challenges were faced in the process of

assessing schools and the coping strategies included adherence to professional ethics. The study recommended that schools should be assessed at least once in every three years. The findings of this study will be useful to education policy makers, planners, Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards, and school administrators in promoting the quality of education. After reviewing related researches, researcher observed that there are very less researches conducted in 10 years in educational administration. Not only that studies are few in number but it was surprising to note that other areas of educational management, organizational climate, motivation, innovation and management of change etc. were covered but the researcher was unable to find studies on Secondary school inspection. From the framework of inspection of different countries, we can come to know that the countries like UK, Australia give importance to the external inspection. According to the frameworks class observation is the important means to know about the standards of the school. They also recommended the benchmarks of quality assurance, based on which the schools should be graded. Through the different research studies in this area it was seen that even in the foreign countries, the inspection process needs to be analysed and discover the impact of that on the quality of education, also to know whether the process of inspection is a monotonous one or keeps a force on the administration of educational institution. The survey studies regarding effectiveness of the program and schemes in primary and secondary sections or rate of enrolment wastage and failure of students are taken up regularly, but the same is not the situation with this area of research. Quality assurance in education is the most important task for any educational institution. This is the challenge for the world to develop a quality based educational pattern. After reviewing the researches it is observed that inspection is an important part of educational administration if carried out properly according to the

codes and conduct of inspection can help in quality assurance. So the researcher is interested in conducting the study for ensuring the quality of Secondary school through educational inspection. More radically, this study argues that a re-definition of the inspection process is needed, to incorporate the views of teachers rather than to exclude them and to make inspection a learning experience for those same teachers by emphasizing advice rather than judgments.

6.6 Rationale of the study

The development of any nation depends on the youth. Secondary education is the most important period in one's life. Wherein students interest is further developed, their goals and objectives are further determined and is in the incubation phase. In the era of globalization the Secondary education requires importance to elevate the human development index.

The Secondary education which serves as a bridge between primary and higher education is expected to prepare young person between the age group 14-18 in the world of work and entry in higher education. As countries achieve universal primary education, there is pressure to increase opportunities for access to Secondary education for larger number of individuals completing primary education. In this age of globalization worldwide, in terms of enrolment ratios, Secondary education is the fastest growing sector of formal education. All the concern to ensure that expanding access to Secondary education is not at the expense of the quality program. In fact, there is an increasing realization that access and quality are different sides of a same coin, since if access of primary education is expanded without this education being relevant and of a high quality; high dropout rates will remain which in term determines the move to expand access and reduces the internal efficiency of the system. In addition, it is important to develop effective systems for monitoring and

evaluating learning outcomes achieved, both to measure the success of the program mounted in achieving their aims and also to provide feedback information that can contribute to improving the program offered. This monitoring and evaluation is equally important from macro (systems) level s to that of the micro (individual classroom) level. This monitoring of quality is done in the educational institutions through inspection practices.

School inspection is important for the progress and development in any institution. It is the main factor to improve the quality of any institution. Inspection is concerned mainly with, the improvement of standard and quality of education and in the integral parts of a school improvement program.

Maharashtra state by its name means larger and bigger state of India. Maharashtra state is an economic backbone and one of the most developed states of India. Maharashtra state board of Secondary and higher Secondary education is decentralized into nine divisions. Nasik division responsible to look after the academic and administrative work as well as the monitoring of four districts .i.e. Nasik, Dhule, Jalgoan and Nandurbar. Nasik is a fast developing district in Maharashtra. There are 959 Secondary schools in Nasik district, the number of schools is more than all other districts. Also the literacy rate of Nasik is 75.10%.(sensex, 2011) Not only this but in the HSC examination of 2013 Nasik district the total passing percentage of students was by 79.01% and in 2014 it is 89.54%as well in SSC examination of 2013 the total passing percentage of students was **89.02** % and in 2014 it is 90.61. The results of 2015 show increase in the passing percentage of SSC and HSC results. In 2015 the in SSC 92.16% of the students have passed whereas in HSC the passing percentage is 89.54%.Thus, as Nasik being one of the most leading district in academics the researcher was keen to know about the

systems that Nasik district follow to assure quality as well to know the parameters and the mechanisms to monitor the development of Secondary schools in Nasik district. The researcher was also interested to understand whether academic excellence assures quality in education. After reviewing the related research studies, the researcher observed that there were very few researches conducted in last 10 years in the area of quality assurance in Secondary schools. Lastly the researcher has selected Nasik because the researcher belongs to that region and also was the student of Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. The researcher is also well versed with the Secondary Schools, region and language of that particular area which helped the researcher to collect the data from the authentic sources.

6.7 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?

6.8 Statement of the Problem

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

6.9 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.

6.10 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.

6.11 Delimitation of the study

There are nine divisions of Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. The study is delimited to Nasik District in Nasik division only. The study is also delimited to the School Inspections conducted by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board.

6.12 Methodology

The present study is a descriptive type of study. Descriptive study includes survey method of research. 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. So, thus forms the rationale of the study. This particular study sought to reveal the external Quality assurance mechanism adopted, its impact on school improvement and issues and challenges faced by the functionaries and beneficiaries during the process in the Secondary schools of Nasik District, Maharashtra State.

6.13.1 Population of 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 in Nasik District is more as compare to other districts of Nasik Divisional Board. The SSC resultsof 2015 is 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.

6.13.2 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 15Talukas. The purposive sampling technique was adopted by the

researcher to identify sample for the study. Wherein the schools were purposively selected based on two criteria and the teachers and the Extension officers were randomly selected as the sample for the study.

The sample was selected by the researcher based on the 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.

6.13.3 Research Tools and Techniques for data collection:

In order to collect relevant and authentic data the researcher has used following research tools.

6.13.3.1 Content analysis of the relevant reports on quality assurance published by MSBSE

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 ZillaParishad'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 translated by the researcher to fulfill the objective of the study.

6.13.3.2 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 of the same area, the opinions of the experts were collected and then the final draft of the questionnaire was prepared. Going by the objectives a questionnaire was prepared both with open ended and close ended questions. There were total 62 questions consisting of 6 dimensions. The questionnaire began with the profile of the principal and his school. These were all open ended questions, but the questions related to other dimensions were put on 5point scale as close ended questions. The numbers at one end indicated strongly disagree and the other ends indicated strongly agree. The dimensions in the questionnaire mainly consist of the percentage of time devoted by the principal to achieve different tasks, process of inspection, standard of inspection affects, capacity building to provide for good education, Improvement actions from school and impact of inspection.

It helped the researcher to study the nature, components and process of school inspection, the impact of quality in terms of academic and administrative dimensions and also to study the problems faced by principals.

6.13.3.3 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.

6.13.3.4 Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule was conducted by the researcher with the District Education Officer (DEO), Block Education Officer (BEO), Extension officers, Principals, and teachers, to know the problems and challenges faced by Maharashtra State Secondary Board of Education. 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 deviated from the interview schedule occasionally to probe 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.

6.13.3.5 Participant Observation

By the prior permission of DEO the researcher personally visited the schools to understand the actual method, process and effectiveness of school inspection. This gave the researcher the first hand information about actual implementation of the process of school inspection. This observation was made to record the behavior, attitudes and beliefs of the inspectors, principals and teachers towards the school inspection.

6.13.3.6 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 Focus Group provides an opportunity to generate the data that are amenable to analyze data which emphasized the active construction of meaning.

Focused group discussion was conducted by the researcher with the principals, teachers and extension officers. This helped the researcher to understand the impact of school inspection, the problems faced by the teachers and the principals as well as the educational inspectors. The following table signifies in detail the sources of information, the research tools and the how the data was analyzed.

6.13.3.7 Procedure for data collection

To have the detail insight into the external 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, Nasik District in Maharashtra state.

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. Sampling is thus a part of rural and urban areas of Nasik district.

So initially the researcher got the list of grant-in-aid and No grant-in-aid Secondary schools from the main 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. i.e 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.

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 schools and there were even some schools who said that our school has always been performing well, we have our internal evaluation system so from last 5-10 years we had no inspection in the school, finally, the researcher was able to collect data from 50 schools.

6.13.3.8 Procedure for data Analysis

The detailed analysis of the data collected is presented in chapter IV. 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 she had collected. 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.

The data obtained from the interviews, focused group discussion, participant observation was analyzed qualitatively.

- **Hypotheses** – There is no significance difference in the perception of principals and the perception of teachers related to school inspection. The researchers used Chi-squared test to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of confidence.

The data collected from the different sources was triangulated and at the end findings were drawn related to nature and process of school inspection, impact of Quality assurance mechanism on quality improvement of school, perceptions of beneficiaries

and functionaries and issues and challenges faced by the functionaries and beneficiaries in this process of Inspection.

6.14. 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. 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 was 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.

6.14.1 Perceptions of the Principals 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.

6.14.2 Perceptions of the Teachers 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.

6.15 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.

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.

6.15.1 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.

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, sensex 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.

6.15.2 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.

6.16 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.

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 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 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 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) 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 needs to 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.

6.17 Implications of the study

The findings of the study are relevant to draw implications to the Quality improvement of Secondary Schools in Maharashtra State. The study tosses light on the external inspection system for assuring quality in Secondary Schools of Nasik

District. The study indicated that the School Inspection being an important arm of Government is being neglected by the stake holders. The Principals and the teachers are not only at fault, but the school inspectors need to raise expectations through criteria and grade descriptors that illustrate the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of schools and offer a sharp challenge and the impetus to act where improvement is needed.

The study also emphasizes on the professional development of the teachers, principals and the inspecting officers. There is a need for school district Boards (District education office) to organize research based teacher professional development programs for school teachers.(Meera,2013)

This study would furnish the policy makers of State Education Ministry to reformulate the policies related to Government inspection. The Government should recruit competent people for academic evaluation of Schools. Those who can clearly identify strengths and weaknesses of the institutions, recommend specific priorities for improvement of the school and appropriately check subsequent progress of the institution.

Therefore, the study emphasizes on conducting pre-service or in-service training to the Block Education officers and extension officers. It emphasizes that the academic and administrative inspection should be separated so that it can foster constructive dialogue between inspectors and those who lead and work in the schools. The Government should begin with public private partnership for academic inspection which is already recommended by RMSA (2009).This should be implemented as early as possible. If needed the inspecting officers should conduct model classes to improve the teaching-learning process in school for improving the Quality of schools. The Government should initiate the schools to begin with self-evaluation and to form

their own Quality circle, it should promote rigor in the way that schools evaluate their own performance, and thereby they should enhance their capacity to improve.

The study also stresses that the Preparation of Inspection should not be the process of a week or 15 days but the schools should update their documents regularly so that this process would not hinder the pedagogical process. The Inspection process should not suffer from the past legacies but need to peep into future. The study recommended that surprise inspection should be conducted by the officers so as to bring the actual reform in teaching-learning process and give suggestions to improve the accountability of the Principals and the teachers.

6.18 Suggestions for the further study

From the present study entitled, 'A study on the Quality assurance system in the Secondary Schools of Nasik District in Maharashtra State'. Based on the findings of the study and other similar studies and from review of related literature, the following recommendations are made for the further research.

1. Comparative study of Quality Assurance mechanism between State board schools and CBSE Schools.
2. Comparative study of the Inspection system of Maharashtra State Board schools and Gujarat State Board Schools.
3. The status of Quality Assurance in CBSE Schools of Maharashtra.
4. A study of Quality Assurance mechanisms used by neighboring countries to improve Quality in education in the Secondary schools of India.
5. A study on the impact of school inspection on the teacher professional practice and learning outcomes of the students.
6. Identification of professional development needs of school inspectors.

6.19 Concluding thought

Quality assurance in education is at the top priority of most of the educational policies and programs in India and abroad. Countries throughout the world are striving hard to achieve quality in education. Quality in Education is a relative concept and not something absolute. It changes from institution to institution. But the general aim of quality is to achieve improvement in the accountability of the schools, organizational efficiency, Professional development of the staff, Pedagogical process, students achievement, quality development, quality control, evaluation and monitoring of the schools.

School Inspection is an important mechanism to assure quality in the schools. Findings of the study stated that the inspection process in the school needs more introspection and improvement related to teacher's accountability, Principals professional and leadership styles, pedagogical process and in the professional development of the school inspectors. Pedagogy is an important aspect of any educational institution; any institution can achieve its objectives when this process is strong and gets good outcomes. So that it will satisfy its very purpose to achieve the quality in institution.

This study will enable the policy maker to understand the drawbacks of present Inspection system. This is a small step to make the stakeholders of the educational institution to critically think about the inspection system. The administrators, the Principals, the teachers who do not give importance to this system should understand that no institution can exist without the permission of this important arm of the government. To achieve the goals of instructional supervision in secondary schools, efforts must be geared towards overcoming most of the challenges facing instructional

supervision. This study is mainly focuses on the loopholes found in the school inspection in Nasik District and to awaken the stake holders for the same.

In most of the countries a new trend is to move from inspection to pedagogical advice, the reforms recognize the professionalism of teachers and to form the self- evaluation. The key rationale for this emphasis on internal evaluation is the conviction that sustainable change in the school demands participation and commitment by the teachers. These internal evaluations can involve a cluster of neighboring schools or the community. The concept of public accountability considers that all potential parents of a school are its public and that they all have the right to be informed about the performances, the characteristics and the quality of all schools. Thus, India needs to come out of the so called ‘classical or traditional inspection’ and needs to change as per the needs and the demands of the society and the stakeholders. The Education officers should study the recent policies and programs for quality assurance and further facilitate it for its implementation.

Mere discussion and policy on paper will not work now; it’s time to, **“Arise, Awake and Stop not till the goal is achieved.”(Swami Vivekanand)**