1.0 Introduction

"Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man" (Swami Vivekananda)

Education is a process of bringing desirable changes in learners; education makes human beings a right thinker and a decision maker. Education influences the individual and social development process as a whole. Education today shows its impact on each sector of the society. The task of building an enlightened, strong and prosperous nation rests on the shoulders of its children who are to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care. Education has always played this important role and has thus emerged as a natural characteristic of human societies. It has contributed to the shaping of the destinies of societies in all the phases of their development and has it never ceased to develop. It has been the torch-bearer of humanity's most noble ideals. In this sense as an agent for social change, Education necessarily reflects its main ethos, aspirations and concerns (NCF, 2000).

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 The skills and knowledge that seem to be relevant today are becoming obsolete and outdated within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 helps a child to face the realities, the challenges, 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 Narsimha Rao 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 Secondary Education 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 Delors' 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.

Secondary Education being one of the most important factors responsible to shape the personality of an individual has manifold functions. It is the potent source of material and human development. Quality is the most cherished goal in human endeavor and especially for Secondary Education. National Curriculum Framework (2005) recommends that 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. Quality in education includes concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. This is why a concern for peace, protection of the environment and predisposition towards social change must be viewed as core components of quality, not only as value premises. The twelfth five year Plan also stresses on Quality in education. It will prioritize and invest in improving educational leadership and management at the district ,block and school levels, with a focus on making better use of data and governing the education

system with the objective of improving learning outcomes at all levels of schooling. It is imperative to strengthen the monitoring and accountability mechanisms of stakeholders in school education including community and parents as envisaged under the RTE (2010).

Thus, the above recommendations of national policies and schemes emphasize the importance of quality in Secondary education. So, quality becomes an important aspect in education. The present study emphasizes on the Quality assurance system in Secondary schools of Nasik district in the Maharashtra State.

1.1 Meaning and definitions of Quality

Quality is defined as:

- "Meeting, exceeding and delighting customer's needs and expectations with the recognition that these needs and desires will change over time." (Dewney et al. 1998)

- "The nature, kind or character (of something) now restricted to cases in which there is comparison (express or implied) with other things of the same kind; hence, the degree or grade of excellence, etc. possessed by a thing." (Oxford English Dictionary)

- "Fitness to use the conformance to requirements." (Juran, 1984)

  The quest for quality and urge for greater heights have been the characteristic since ages in all communities and societies of the entire history of human civilization.

Quality in education as a concept has been difficult to define. There is no exact definition of what constitutes quality in school education. Quality is a never ending journey. Quality education is that which enhances the quality of life. Quality in education includes a concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. The British standards institution (BSI) 1991, defines quality in functional terms as the totality of

features and characteristics of a product or service or implied needs. "Quality" refers to the degree of excellence possessed by students, teachers and the schools. The efforts made or interest shown by the teachers to make teaching learning a pleasurable experience is one of the important qualities of education. Further quality lies in the intrinsic validity of the products of education with regard to reach its goal and fulfilling its enrolment and retention figures, checking out the drop-out rates and the level of competency, commitment and effectiveness developed among pupils and teachers.

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 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.(Karandikar,2007). This thing demands about a change in quality processes. In the era of globalization, knowledge has become an essential commodity and real wealth of nation is its people. Quality is a relative concept and its meaning is not absolute.

India is a developing democratic republic. She 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 (NCF,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. National Knowledge Commission, (2007) has recognized the crucial significance of this 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.

Therefore, according to Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (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 in education becomes an important aspect in today's globalized world.

1.2 Need for Quality education

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.

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.

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(2000) 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.

1.3 Importance of Quality in Education

Quality in education is defined as a philosophy that aligns the activities of all stakeholders in the education system with the common focus of customer satisfaction through continuous improvement of the educational system. (National Invention

Conference, 1992) It was also said that quality in education embraces, but is not synonymous with effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. It is not the same as satisfying the customer with.(Higher Education Quality council, U.K. 1995) Quality in Education is also defined as; it is about anything that can be improved , affects everyone in the educational Institution equally and empowers staff and students to fulfill their responsibilities(Billing,2004) It also means efficiency in meeting the set goals, relevance to human and environmental needs and conditions and something more in relation to the pursuit of excellence and human betterment (Rajput & Walia, 1997). Quality in education has been seen with reference to excellence in education, value addition in education (Feigenbaum, 1991), fitness of educational outcome and experience for use (Juran& Gryna, 1988), conformance of education output to planed goals, specifications and requirements (Crosby,1979), defect avoidance in education process and meeting or exceeding customer's expectation of education (Parasuraman et al. 1985).Commitment to quality makes student proud to learn and work hard for improvement. Quality improvement is a never ending process. Quality in Education leads to a prospective future. Hence, insight on quality indices and virtual implementation need to be given top priority and due attention should be paid to the category in the wide range of educational strata e.g. school, university, educational management, and the staff. Educational administration is an important part of quality assurance in education. The main components of educational administration are, forecasting, decision making, planning, organizing, motivation, control, co-ordination, evaluation, recording and reporting.

Quality Education in General and Quality Secondary Education in particular is the concern of most of the recent educational policies and programs in India. NKC (2007) states that providing universal access to quality school education is a

cornerstone of development and a minimum necessary condition for progress towards making India a knowledge society. The national document on Universalization of Secondary Education of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA 2009) categorically highlighted the importance of quality in Secondary education as it aims at development of technical and vocational skills among students along with generic knowledge component. The challenge now for the government of India is to dramatically improve, access, enrolment and quality in education. RMSA(2009) offers a tremendous opportunity to set up a mass Secondary education structure that is responsive to the country's socioeconomic needs and capabilities to the developed nation. Thus, the above recommendations of national policies and schemes state the importance of quality in Secondary education. So, Quality becomes an important aspect in education. The concept of quality is most contested among educational thinkers, because quality is not a constant attribute but a variable. Hence it is contextual. If the context changes the parameter of quality also changes. The context of one school is different from another. There are more than forty school boards with three Boards at the national level, of which two are in the formal sector and one in the non-formal sector. The schools are run by thousands of management bodies which influence their educational processes and functioning, governance and leadership. After the success of SSA and implementation of Universalization of Secondary Education the important task for government is to improve the quality of secondary education in the Country.

Understanding and evaluating the quality of education requires a holistic picture of the unique and complex character of schools, boards and government policies and the way in which they interact inside and outside the school thereby affecting student achievement. Therefore it is important to consider the entire context in which a

school functions. In light of the varying context in states, culture and communities, a common standard applicable to all the schools is to be developed. Quality enhancement is an ongoing process. It changes in step with developments from time to time. Thus, Quality assurance is an important aspect of Secondary education in India.

1.4 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.

 In Educational institutions, Quality is assured at two levels:

- Constitutional based and time bound authorization process to ensure maintenance of norms and standards while granting recognition.

- Intermittent accreditation of programs.

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

- Compliance of institutional and program related profiles.

- Validation of profiles by visiting teams of experts through on site visit.

- Evaluation of experts committee's report.

The Committee on Universalization of Secondary Education, CABE (2005) had also, at the same time, set up another Committee on "Girls Education & Common School System" under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister, Assam. Report of this Committee was also presented in June, 2005. The Committee has recommended,

inter alia, that, "making good quality education available to all students in all schools at affordable fees is a primary commitment of the Common School System", Robinson (1994) defines quality assurance as the set of activities that an organization undertakes to ensure a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality. Its goals are the anticipation and avoidance of faults or mistakes by setting attainable standards for a process, organizing work so that they are achieved, documenting the procedures required, communicating them to all concerned, and monitoring and reviewing the attainment of standards.

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 (2007) 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 (2003) opines that quality assurance in education is the process of ensuring continuous improvement in all aspects of an educational 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.

Same way with all other aspects that is pedagogical process of the school, infrastructure, human resources, material resources, internal supervision, External Inspection plays an important role in the process of school improvement. With school decentralization becoming increasingly widespread internationally, especially as regards staff and resource management or even educational practice in general, school inspection systems are assuming key importance in ensuring quality provision for all around the world. 'In fact school inspection is subject to critical scrutiny' (MacBeath, 2000). To effectively provide education, there is a need to ensure that the educational system is reliable. Reliability in terms of educational system can only be enhanced through supervision. (Peretomode,2004). Quality control is one of the important components of educational administration.

The concept of quality control dates back to early 30s of the 19th century. 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. The National Policy on Education (2004) Nigeria, emphasizes the need to ensure quality control through regular inspection and continuous supervision of instruction and other educational services. In this respect, supervision was observed as a program for enhancing classroom work through direct visit and observation. Also, supervision of instruction is regarded as the process to enhance professional growth of teachers, the

curriculum and improving the techniques of teaching in classrooms through democratic interactions between the teacher and the supervisor.

According to Nwankwo (1984) supervision can be divided into two categories: That is instructional and personnel supervision. Instructional supervision has been defined as a set of activities which are carried out with the purpose of making the teaching and learning purpose better for the learner. Personnel supervision on the other hand deals with the set of activities which are carried out by the supervisor with the basic aim of sensitizing, mobilizing and motivating staff in the school towards performing their duties optimally in terms of the achievement of the stated aims and objectives of the educational system.

Enaohwo (2003), Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008) 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 to 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.

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. Kothari Commission (1964-66) has also realized the importance of quality in education which recommends a dynamic inspectorate for accelerating educational reforms. It recommended that in each district, a statistical cell may be provided and the factual data regarding all the

schools may be collected there. Schools also can be classified into various grades. Each grade will have its own standard and hence its own problems. Guidance must be provided in accordance with the expected standards. 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.

This study seeks therefore to highlight the external measure, 'Inspection' in the administration of Secondary Education as an in veritable tool for quality assurance and the study focuses on school inspection in secondary schools of Nasik district in Maharashtra state.

1.5 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. Inspection is carried out specifically to ensure that minimum standards are maintained in the basic activities of teaching and learning. This is with regards to content coverage, resource provision, maintenance of discipline and keeping of statutory records and accounts. It also provides opportunities to access the challenges

confronting the school and the level of success achieved in the pursuit of school goals.

Inspection, however, is never only an instrument of accountability-it has always assumed, as a potential consequence, the improvement of the institution inspected (OFSTED 2001).In India, the system of school inspection was brought in more than 120 years ago. First it was started in England then in the mid of 19th century in Chennai. In the course of all these years, the concept and practice of inspection has undergone many changes. Objectives of education have changed, a colonial Government has been replaced by the peoples own Government and it would be interesting to study the impact, the changes in educational objectives and the authority Government have had on inspection. With changing times, the procedures of inspection have changed. It is necessary to study the present system of inspection to assure quality in education.

The Wood's Dispatch (1854) has recommended the opening of schools by private enterprise to supplement the Government. In the initial stages the role of the inspectors was to visit schools and recommend them for recognition to the Department of Education and also to regulate the working of the schools that were on the grant-in aid list. Even today the chief aim of inspection in almost all state, by and large, continues to be control, regulations and maintenance with improvement and development of schools. The inspector has to play the crucial role in the maintenance of educational standards.

The modern trend of inspection is quite different. Rather than inspection of a regulatory type, it envisages more professional guidance, democratic procedures and a human approach, to the task of teaching and a concern for dynamic, cooperative and scientific attitudes among educational workers.

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.

1.5.1 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.

   OFSTED (2008) determines three major functions of Inspection:

- Checking on the use of public funds

- Provision of information for central government,

- Provision of advice to those responsible for running educational establishments.

The first two functions are related to accountability and the third function is concerned with the support and development of institutions and those within them.

1.5.2 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 school 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 checkup, how effectively co-curricular activities are being conducted and also how much the school is having constructive discipline and CCE.

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 proper utilization of school funds.

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 check-up, in what particular field the students of the institutions have distinguished, their academic cultural and other activities.

Ofsted's school inspection reports present a written commentary on the quality of a school's provision. The inspection of a school provides an independent external evaluation of its effectiveness and a diagnosis of what it should do to improve, based upon a range of evidence, including that from first hand observation by inspectors.(OFSTED 2012)

1.5.3 Objectives of Inspection

1. Main objective is evolution of the school program i.e. the inspector is expected to assess the growth of the child and the effectiveness of teaching/learning process.

2. To provide professional leadership to all the stakeholders under his/her jurisdiction.

3. Identify the various factors, responsible for promoting or hindering the teaching/learning process and taking necessary steps to utilize or control them.

4. To ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the school and get suitable goals or targets for progress.

5. Participation and involvement of the supervisors in the actual teaching/learning process and to help solve the educational problems faced by the teachers for development.

6. Assist teachers to identify and analyze learning difficulties and other educational problems of pupils and helping them in planning suitable remedial instructions.

7. Evaluate teachers' performance in terms of, pupils' growth and educational objectives of suggested ways and means.

8. Promote professional growth of all teachers, through provision of in-service educational program like training courses, staff discussion, writing and reading educational material and so on.

9. To motivate teacher for undertaking research and experiment himself and with the participation of management and teachers.

10. To increase the degree of perfection among teachers.

11. To prevent misdirection of resources and energies.

In brief, Inspection is intended to improve the quality of instruction by promoting professional growth to the institution. The whole purpose of inspection is the development of better education.

1.5.4 Types of Inspection

Mohanty (2005) had divided school inspection in three types,

1. Corrective type: The inspecting officer under this type pays visits to the schools with a view to finding out faults and mistakes, with the methods of teaching process of students maintenance of records and so on. That is why, this type is called as "Fault-Finding."

2. Preventive: This implies safe-guarding any possible mistakes, helping teachers to meet situations, successfully before they actually arise. Being a person of considerable experience and insight, the supervisors anticipate the difficulties to teachers and help them to avoid them.

3. Constructive and Creative: This implies, liberating the teachers from set procedures and making them reliant and enthusiastic in their work. The supervisors may help towards experimentation with new ideas. The dissemination of the results

of experiments of new ideas, of useful methods is probably the most important function of the inspectors and it is here where their work can be really creative.

The concept of inspection has undergone vital change during recent times, the meaning and nature of inspection has changed in the modern era of globalization.

In short these are some of the functions of inspection which lead to assure quality in education.

1.5.5 The Modern concept of Educational Inspection

The Modern concept of Inspection defines Inspection as a systematic collection and analysis of evidence obtained mostly through direct observation in a school building, evidence is collected and evaluated based on a published set of standards describing a high-quality education (research-based frameworks, OFSTED 2010). 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 of India Kapil Sibal (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. Therefore, the Government has begun with the school grading system.

1.5.6 Inspection and School Grading

As a complement to the routine inspection system the states have evolved an institutional evaluation format for improving accountability and performance of schools. The evaluation tool is based on a 5 point scale i.e. A to E, covering different aspects viz. Academic efficiency, infrastructure facilities, utilization of resources, co-curricular activities etc. In the gradation process, schools are given opportunity for self-evaluation using evaluation tool. School grading is done after the Headmaster of school fills in grading format/booklet and the information given are verified by an inspector. A committee of experts at the Block Level consisting of awarded teachers, educationist and extension officers examines the performance of the school based on self-evaluation of Principal and further verification of information. Schools in tribal and remote rural areas are given some relaxation in evaluation parameters.

The schools with grades E, D, and C which are low according to the continuum, receive preference in the inspection schedule. Despite having better physical facilities the schools with pass percentage of less than 20% in the result of SSC examination are also given priority in inspection. In case of school with continuous zero percent results for two-three years the recognition may be withdrawn.

Thus, the government is trying to improve the quality of schools through grading and motivating them to do better.

1.6 Recommendations of National Policies and Programs for Quality Secondary Education

Importance of Quality in education is stated in almost all the National Policies right from the pre-independence period. The British set up the inspection system on the same lines recommended by Wood's Dispatch in 1854. In the mid of 19th century the inspection system was introduced by the British in India with the very purpose of checking the quality of instruction that was offered and also the grants being utilized. After independence, The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) stressed on the quality of Secondary schools for which it recommended that teachers with at least ten years of experience or experienced headmasters or qualified staff of training college should be recommended as inspectors. The main task of the inspectors should be to render help for the improvement of schools.

The Kothari Commission (1964) was of the opinion that education must increasingly become a national concern and Government of India should play its role not only in the improvement of educational administration, but also in carrying out the responsibilities. The commission also asserted that the radical construction of education which has been recommended in the report of Kothari commission will not be possible, unless the Government of India provides the needed initiatives, leadership, financial support and educational administration, both at the Central and State levels, is adequately strengthened. Evaluation and accountability are key issues in ensuring quality provision for all.

The National Policy of Education (NPE-1968) has played a major role in the quality assurance development of the Indian education system. With the constitutional

amendment of 1976, bringing education into the concurrent list, the Central Government has a meaningful role in ensuring the quality of education. It has to reinforce the national and integrative character of education, maintain quality and standards, it recommended development of many areas of curriculum enrichment; a high quality education should be accessible to the poor, disadvantaged, and even for population of rural area NPE-1968was prepared to improve the quality of education in the country and was focused on providing education facilities to all the citizens of the nation. The policy has been reviewed in the subsequent years. It was further updated in 1992 to spread knowledge and freedom of thought among the citizens of the country.

It recommended that District Boards of Education will be created to manage Education up to the Higher Secondary level. State Government will attend to this aspect with all possible expedition. Within a multilevel framework of Educational development, Central, State, District and local level agencies will participate in planning, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the Secondary schools.

National Curriculum Framework (2005) determines the concern of Quality in education, it stresses that 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. Conventionally, monitoring of schools has been done through the inspectorate system. This system has served largely to exercise authority and control rather than provide academic support to the teachers. The school inspectors perform a number of functions, one of which is to visit schools under their purview. Their visits are usually few and far, during which the students and teachers tend to present a positive picture of the school regardless of the ground realities due to fear of punishment. This reduces monitoring to a 'policing' function. Monitoring for quality

must be seen as a process that enables and provides constructive feedback in relation to the teaching and learning processes within specific classroom contexts. The RMSA, (2009) is committed to universalize quality education at Secondary and Higher Stage. It recommended, theme specific supervision visits besides the overall assessment visits would also be undertaken. Classroom observation by resource persons has also been provided for states will work out their supervision/appraisal/monitoring and research Plans, based on the indication of resource availability as per the norm approved from time to time by the National Mission. Two supervision visits of at least three days each would be undertaken by the National/State level Mission each year, to each of the States. States will constitute their own supervision teams. Each Supervision team will have four Members, two from the State Mission and two from the National Mission, Representatives of National Resource institutions, State specific research institutions and University Departments of education would be encouraged to participate in the supervision team. The non-governmental representative who undertakes supervision visits will be entitled to a modest honoraria, over and above the TA/DA. The visits will be coordinated by the State and the National Mission. Suitable supervision formats will be designed through special workshops, which will be organized by the National/ State level resource institutions. Resource persons involved with training teachers will also undertake classroom observation. Modest honoraria may be provided for nongovernmental/ retired resource persons who are involved in this work. Supervision reports will be shared with district and block level officials. National Knowledge Commission (2009) recommended the establishment of 6,000 model schools, one in each block, ICT based pedagogy and learning aids, broadband connectivity to all the Government and Government aided Secondary schools, urban

and local planning for the physical requirements for schooling, including provisions for play grounds and other school facilities flexible central schemes for school education, greater degree of autonomy of local level management in the use of funds, improved and regulated Pre-service teacher training, changes in the examination system, and special strategies to ensure greater access to schools in backward regions, remote locations and difficult terrains. This is in the direction of establishing quality Secondary schools in the country. Right to Education (2009) describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. The right to education also includes a responsibility to provide basic education for individuals who have not completed primary education. In addition to these access to education provisions, the right to education encompasses the obligation to rule out discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve the quality of education. The District Education Officer conducts an inspection in the school, accompanied by a Committee of three to five members comprising of educationists, civil society representatives, media, and government representatives, which shall make due inquiry and submit its Report, along with its recommendations for continuation of recognition or its withdrawal, to the District Education Officer.

12th five year plan (2012)consolidates as well as elaborates on   the strategies and plan of action for quality issues concerning 'good quality education' in terms of curriculum, classroom processes, enabling learning environment, adolescent education, use of ICT and processes through professional and quality teachers at the Secondary stage. It aims to make realistic provisions in their own budget for meeting the expenditure ensuring quality at the Secondary stage specifically balancing the financial and physical terms with progress in quality to be assessed independently.

To delineate quality concerns focusing on inputs, processes and the outcomes including creation of State Resource Group (SRG) to reflect the vision of the state towards Universalisation of Secondary Education. Spell the specific roles and functions of the educational personnel at the district level simultaneously enabling and empowering them to:

- Constituting District Resource Group (DRG) for quality and academic aspects.

- Prepare specific plans for each district based on the local needs. A district plan should include sub-district priorities, focus and resource allocations.

- Identify districts for special treatment based on clear, objective criteria relating to educational backwardness. The districts should identify sub district levels that need greater attention and resources and reflect them in their respective district plans.

- Plan for quality teacher preparation for continuous professional development of teachers, implementation of CCE, classroom processes, need based bridge courses and monitoring mechanism for academic aspects.

It initiates to establish online networked environment to facilitate micro (sub district and school level), meso (district level) and macro (state) level planning which have implications for the operation of various schemes of government, availability of information 'on tap' and its use in survey, research, monitoring and evaluation activities.

It provides inputs for updating and expansion of state wide MIS database for Secondary education incorporating the quality components, adopting the approach of accumulating queries/needs submitted by the teachers for designing need based teacher development program, designing registry of subject experts at the district level for continuous professional development programs, teacher profile, summative

examination data under the adequate supervision at the national level. To take necessary steps towards filling up the teaching and non-teaching positions for capacity building and the smooth functioning that proposed academic structure for implementing quality inputs. This can be achieved by network data collection through schools. School Quality Assessment and Accreditation System would be established to cover all aspects of school functioning, including scholastic and co-scholastic domains, physical infrastructure, faculty management, school leadership, learning outcomes and satisfaction of pupils and parents/guardians. The above reference of all the policies and programs state the importance of Quality in Education and school inspection in secondary schools.

1.7 Status of Secondary Education in India

Secondary education plays a critical role in addressing the emerging human development concerns in countries engaged in building knowledge societies for staying connected to the globalization process. For several decades, it has been argued in the literature that Secondary education needs to be expanded both as a response to increased social demand and as a feeder cadre for higher education, giving little emphasis to its other important functions. It is also argued that investment in Secondary education yields considerable social and economic returns, making it crucial for national development. (Alain and Tan, 1996; Tilak, 2001)

India is following a service-led growth model and striving hard to survive the global competition, in these conditions it is being increasingly recognized that Secondary education is the most critical segment of the education chain. Apart from the bottom-up pressure (i.e. arising from the growth of primary schooling) and the top-down pressure (as the source of potential intakes for higher education) for its expansion, there is a need to pay greater attention to Secondary education as it caters to the

needs of the most important segment of the population – adolescents and youth, the source of the future human and social capital of a nation. The NPE, (as modified in1992) specifically laid emphasis again on increasing access to Secondary Education with particular focus on participation of girls, SC's and ST's; increased autonomy of Boards of Secondary Education to enhance their ability to improve quality; introduction of ICT in school curriculum for coping with globalization; renewed emphasis on work ethos and values of a humane and composite culture in the curricula; and vocationalization through specialized institutions or through the refashioning of Secondary education to meet the manpower requirements of the growing Indian economy (Para 5.13 to 5.15). "The NPE – POA(1992) envisaged a child-centered approach to promote universal enrolment and universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and substantial improvement in the quality of education in the school" (POA, P. 77).The Working Group on Secondary Education for the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07) suggested the Central Government providing support to states in the areas of access, equity, quality improvement, ICT, inclusive education, and vocational education. Further, in 2005the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) accordingly emphasized the provision of high quality Secondary education to all Indian adolescents, girls and boys, up to the age of 16 by 2015 and up to 18 by 2020 (i.e. Universalization of Secondary and higher Secondary education).

The CABE Committee on Universalization of Secondary Education 2008 (USE) recommended that each state should develop norms for USE keeping in view the common national parameters as well as the state specific parameters. States should also develop their medium-term perspective plans for USE; go for decentralization as the main approach to planning and implementation of USE; and invest in the public

school system with the specified norms and standards similar to those of the *KVs* for enhancing its effectiveness. The committee also emphasized that vocational education and training should become a major national program and be structurally and administratively placed outside the school system.

Currently, several Secondary education development schemes and programs, including the recently launched Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA, 2009), are being implemented in the country to achieve the 11th Plan targets. The RMSA was launched in April 2009 with the basic developmental objectives of universalizing access and improving quality of Secondary education (Grades IX-X) in the country. In other words, the RMSA aims at making Secondary education of good quality accessible and affordable to all young people. However, the important quality improvement interventions envisaged in the program, among others, include curriculum revision and examination reforms; teacher training and rationalization of subject teacher deployment; capacity building of the School Management and Development Committee (SMDC), including the leadership development programme for school heads; strengthening classroom-based support and supervision; promotion of life skills and adolescent education; strengthening guidance and counseling at the school level; and establishing Learning Resource Centers, with libraries, ICT support and links with Education Satellite (EDUSAT).

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan(2009) offers a strategic opportunity in Secondary education to improve access, equity, quality, accountability and ability to measure learning outcomes through standardization of curriculum and examinations across state.

Research and the empirical evidence in the school inspection have shown that there is a considerable decline in external supervision practices by educational

administrators, particularly in academic supervision, which has a direct bearing on improvement in the teaching-learning practices and the overall quality of school. It is, therefore, necessary that the supervisory systems and procedures need to be rethought so that they respond to the quality concerns of school education. There is need to reform school supervision, by changing its mandate – from inspection to support and professional development. The key to an institution's successful functioning probably lies in getting the balance right between delegation to, supervision over, and support of staff (Tyagi, 2011).

1.8 Administration of the State department of education in India

The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) has recommended the administrative structure in India. The Minister at the Central level administers his duties through the state department of education. The State department of education is organized at two focal points: policy making and coordinating function in the Secretariat and the direction, regulation and inspection function at the directorate. The directorate is an executive body. It executes the policy of the government framed in the Secretariat. The state is divided into circles. Each Circle Education Officer looks after all the schools in the circle. The circle education officer discharges their functions through number of District Education Officers. District Education Officers are assisted by Block Education Officers.

All the states have their different boards so most of the states do not have their identical administrative setup. In most of the states the Board has a full time Chairman, who is the Chief Executive of the Board. He is assisted by the Secretary, Assistant Secretary and accounts officer in all matters concerning examinations, administration, finance, vigilance etc.

1.9 Present Scenario of Secondary Education in Maharashtra

Maharashtra is a highly populated state in the western part of India with the estimated population of 112,372,972. The education system in Maharashtra, with respect to schooling is divided into four distinct stages like, Primary (Class I to IV), Upper Primary (Class V to VIII), Secondary (Class IX to X) and Higher Secondary (Class XI and XII). Maharashtra ranks fifteenth on the Education Development Index (EDI) Percent (Census 2011). There are almost 21,929 Secondary schools in Maharashtra with, enrolment of 3,420,798 students, while the dropout rate at Secondary level is reduced to 8.9 percent in 2008-09.Maharashtra has registered a literacy rate of 82.9 percent in comparison to national average of 74.02 the state is also registering consistent rise in number of Secondary schools. The types of schools in Maharashtra are mainly, tribal social welfare schools 2.29%, local body schools 4.79%, Private unaided schools are 26.67%, but there is no school run by other Government managements in Maharashtra. (dise report,2013-14)

Therefore, the researcher was keen to understand the quality assurance systems adopted by Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education and how effective these quality assurance mechanisms were.

1.10 Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education

The Maharashtra State Board of Secondary Education, Pune came into existence on 1st January, 1966, as per the Maharashtra Act No. XLI of 1965 (called as Maharashtra Secondary Boards Act 1965) to regulate certain matters pertaining to Secondary education in the State of Maharashtra. The Act was amended in 1977 and the nomenclature of the Board has been changed to The Maharashtra State Board of

Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (MSBSHSE). As a State level organization, the Board substantially contributes towards upgrading educational standards and introducing innovations in the field of Secondary and higher Secondary education. The board is diverse, mass participative education system with a broader base of access that provides the benefits of uniformity and diversity. Over a period of 3 decade, the Board has grown tremendously in terms of schools and number of students.

1.10.1 Functions of Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (MSBSHSE)

The board advises the State Government on matters of policy relating to Secondary and higher Secondary education in general and on the following matters in particular:-

• Ensuring a uniform pattern of Secondary or Higher Secondary Education.

• Maintenance of uniform standard of education in Secondary Schools and Junior Colleges.

• Co-ordination between National Policies and State policies in Secondary or Higher Secondary Education.

• Co-ordination between Secondary or Higher Secondary Education, University Education and Primary Education.

• To lay down guiding criteria for curricula & Syllabus.

• To prescribe standard requirement for Material & Human Resources.

• To prepare Text-Books

• To award certificates to candidates passing the final examination.

- To institute and award scholarships, stipends, medals, prizes and other rewards, and to prescribe conditions.

- To appoint officers and employees of the State Board (other than the Chairman, Secretary, Joint Secretary or Assistant Secretary) in its office and in the offices of the Divisional Boards and regulate the terms and conditions of their service.

- To inspect and supervise generally the working of the Divisional Boards and periodical accounts of institutions.

The Board has emerged as a major role play in both the Secondary and Higher Secondary sector and a potential source of human resource capital of the State of Maharashtra. The jurisdiction of the board extends to the whole state of Maharashtra comprising of 33 districts. The Board has decentralized its activities in favor of increased responsibilities to the students, teachers and the schools; it has nine divisional boards at Pune, Mumbai, Kolhapur, Nasik, Amaravati, Nagpur, Aurangabad and Latur and Kokan. All these divisional boards enjoy autonomy to conduct examinations.

The divisional Boards are headed by Divisional Chairman, and are assisted by 21 members. Members include ex-officio members like Regional Deputy Director of Education and Education Officers at Secondary level in Zilla Parishad. Non- official members nominated by Government are from categories like Principals of junior colleges, Headmasters of Secondary Schools, and teachers from Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools, Teacher Training institution and Academic Councils of Universities.

Figure: 1.1

Location map of Maharashtra

1.10.2 Organizational set up of the divisional Boards

The highest executive of the Board is the State Chairman, who is assisted by a Secretary and Assistant Secretary at Head Quarter and by Divisional Chairman and Divisional Secretary at the Divisional Boards. All these officers belong to the State education cadre. The Board has various statutory committees which are advisory in nature. The Governing body of the Board is constituted as per its rules and regulations. The recommendations of all the committees are placed for approval before the Governing Body on the Board.

1.10.3 Structure of the divisional Board

The Board has a full time Chairman, who is the Chief Executive of the Board. He is assisted by the Secretary, Assistant Secretary and accounts officer in all matters concerning examinations, administration, finance, vigilance etc.

At the District level, the Chief Executive officer (CEO) of Zilla Parishad heads the Education Department. He/She is assisted by District Education Officers of Primary and Secondary education, Deputy Education Officers, Assistant Deputy Educational Inspectors and Senior Auditors. The Zilla Parishads and other local bodies look after mainly primary education in the block but now adays the responsibility of Secondary Schools is also given to the ZillaParishads.

Secondary education is mainly managed by the private bodies and monitored by the Education Officer (Secondary) at the district level. The Education Officer (primary) is the Secretary of the Education Committee of a Zilla Parishad. The Education Officer (Secondary) inspects the Secondary and Higher Secondary schools in the districts and makes recommendations regarding grant of recognition or withdrawal of the Secondary schools, grant-in-aid to the non-government Secondary school. The above post shown are the posts mainly meant for administrative and academic

purpose. These officers look after the Quality improvement of the schools and implement the programs accordingly.

1.11 Current Practices of Quality Assurance in Secondary Schools of Maharashtra

In the line with the National Council of Educational Research and Training, the institute of "State Council of Educational Research and Training" is set up with the objective of looking after educational research training at the school level. The main functions of this institute includes conducting research at school level education related to mainly the school curricula and the teaching methods, providing in-service training to teachers, teacher educators, supervisors and the effective supervision of various educational programs.

In order to train the officers of Educational Department, the State government has established Maharashtra Institute of educational, planning and administration (MIEPA) in 1994 as an autonomous society at Aurangabad. The main function of this institute is to conduct orientation and in service training programs in educational planning and administration for educational officers in Zilla parishads, 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.

 Schools have inspection system and inspections are primarily responsible for Quality Assurance of schools. The affiliation committee of the Board prepares a team of inspectors who visit the school and inspect the school based on guidelines provided by the board. These inspectors are from the DEO office. At the district, level the Board function through the District Education Officer (DEO) The District

Education Officer is the most important officer for the education at the District level. He functions both as an officer for the Board as well as for the government. He has powers for appointment and transfers of teachers and staff in the Secondary schools and grants approvals for establishment issues. The grants to school are disbursed through him. The audit of accounts and inspection of schools are done by his office. Further, the correspondence in respect of getting approvals from the government is to pass through his office. He is responsible for investigations of complaints and departmental actions to be taken including disciplinary action. Thus, 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. They are accompanied by the subject experts and if they needed even can take the help of other school principals.

These Block officers forward their reports to the District Education Officer. The inspector(s) after inspection submit the inspection report to the Board. The Secretary may ask the management of the school to rectify the deficiencies pointed out by the inspector(s) and if the he finds the report satisfactory, he recommends to the members of the affiliation Committee for the affiliation of the school. After the approval of all the members, the Secretary grants provisional affiliation.

The board has made it compulsory for all the schools to fill up the DISE forms. All the information about the school i.e. resources, infrastructure, number of students, number of teachers, laboratories and so on is filled online so during the visit of the inspectors it can be cross checked by them.

The Board conducts 15 examinations related to teachers, commercial education, entrance to Adivasi Vidya Niketan, entrance to military college, National talent search at state level and scholarships at various levels of school education.

School grading system has been started by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. As a complement to the routine inspection system the states have evolved an institutional evaluation format for improving accountability and performance of schools. The evaluation tool is based on a 5 point scale i.e. A to E, covering different aspects viz. Academic efficiency, infrastructure facilities, utilization of resources, co-curricular activities etc. In the gradation process, schools are given opportunity for self-evaluation using evaluation tool. Schools in tribal and remote rural areas are given some relaxation in evaluation parameters.

The schools with grades E, D, and C which are low according to the continuum, receive preference in the inspection schedule. Despite having better physical facilities the schools with pass percentage of less than 20 in the result of SSC examination are also given priority in inspection. In case of school with continuous zero percent results for two-three years the recognition may be withdrawn. Thus, the government is trying to improve the quality of schools through grading and motivating them to do better.

For the self-evaluation of school through teachers support the Board has adopted a tool named as, "Advancement of Educational Performance through Teachers' Support" (ADEPTS). This scale is based on marks whereby the teachers have to mark their own school and accordingly grade it, so the school and the teachers are themselves aware about the quality of school and in which area they need to improve. The Board has also started providing free ICT labs to the schools. They also appoint a specially trained teacher for the same. These ICT labs are mainly useful for the students in rural and semi urban schools.

- The Board has begun with Human Development program from 2011. The program mainly focused on the following points:

1. Revision classes. These classes are mainly meant for the students failing in std. X or XII.

2. In the rural areas night schools have begun. Not only this but the Government grants books and lamps to the children admitted in night schools.

3. Special teachers are recruited for the same and separate payment is given to those teachers who teach in these revision classes.

4. The science labs are formed at the taluka place. It is the center place and the children from the night schools and revision class are brought for visits once in a month.

5. Under this program special bus facility is given to the girls as well those girls who stay nearby, the government provides them the bicycle facility.

   The study mainly focuses on the Quality Assurance practices in Secondary schools of Nasik District.

1.12 Nashik District at a Glance

Nashik District is located between 18.33 degree and 20.53 degree North Latitude and between 73.16 degree and 75.16 degree East Longitude at Northwest part of the Maharashtra State, at 565 meters above mean sea level. The District has great mythological background. Lord Rama lived in Panchvati during his vanvas. AgastiRushi also stayed in Nashik for Tapasya. The Godavari river originates from Trimbakeshwar in Nashik. One of the 12 Jyotirlingas also at Trimbakeshwar.Nashik has to its credit manywell-known and towering personalities like Veer Sawarkar, AnantKanhere, Rev. Tilak, DadasahebPotnis, BabubhaiRathi, V.V. Shirwadkar and

VasantKanetkar just name few. Nashik is also known as Mini Maharashtra, because the climate and soil conditions of Surgana, Peth, Igatpuri resembles with Konkan.Niphad, Sinnar, Dindori, Baglan blocks are like Western Maharashtra and Yeola, Nandgaon&Chandwad blocks are like Vidarbha Region. Nashik, Malegaon, Manmad, Igatpuri are some of the big cities situated in the Nashik District. Recently two talukas are created in the District making the total talukas to 15. Out of 15 blocks in the District, as many as 8 blocks viz.Surgana, Peth, Igatpuri, Kalwan, Baglan, Dindori, Trimbakeshwar & Nashik are tribal blocks. The district also identified as tribal by the State Government.

Many important rivers of Maharashtra originate in the district. Godavari which is popularly known as Ganga of South India originates at holy place Trimbakeshwar. Another major river is Girna. Other rivers are Darna, Mosam, Aram, Vaitarna, Manyad and Kadwa.

A Taluka is an administrative block generally comprising about 90 to100 contiguous villages, with a small town as its headquarters. On an average 8 to 10 Talukas make up a district. Nashik became full-fledged district in 1869. At that time there were 13 talukas and Government has announced two more talukas on 26th June 1999 (Deola and Trimbakeshwar).At present 15 talukas are representing district. Malegaon taluka is the largest in area in the district, occupying 12 percent area of the district, whereas Peth is the smallest taluka having 3.36 percent area followed by Deola having 3.8 percent area; remaining talukas having on an average 5 to 9 percent area of total district. As per 2001 census, the district is having total 1931 villages out of four villages are uninhabited.

Figure 1.2

PHYSICAL MAP OF NASIK DISTRICT

1.13 Status of Nasik Divisional Board

Nasik is a fast developing district in Maharashtra, a district accommodating more than a million populations, which is mostly engaged in industrial estates in and around the city. Nasik is also known as "The City of Pilgrimage". There are 3339 primary schools, 959 Secondary and higher Secondary schools. The literacy rate of Nasik is 82.31%. The male literacy is 88.17% and female literacy is 76.08%(census,2011)

The districts that come under Nasik divisional Board are shown in table below.

TABLE: 1.1

TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN NASIK DISTRICT

Sr. No	Total Districts in Nasik division	Total number of Secondary schools
1	Nasik	959
2	Dhule	442
3	Jalgaon	724
4	Nandurbar	367
	Total	2492

Source: Maharashtra state board of Secondary and higher Secondary education.2010-11

Nasik divisional Board is decentralized into four divisions. The Schools are not only of Marathi Medium but also Hindi, English and Urdu medium. Each District in this board consists of 1 District Education Officers, 10 education officers, 3-4 extension officers. The HSC and SSC results of Nasik board are mostly above 80%.

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) result of 4 districts that come under Nasik board is stated in table No.2

TABLE: 1.2

NASIK BOARD-SSC RESULT OF THREE YEARS

Sr. No	Districts	Passing percentage of students In the year 2012-13	Passing percentage of students in the year 2013-14	Passing percentage of students in the year 2014-2015
1	Nasik	89.02 %	90.61%	92.16 %
2	Dhule	78.03 %	88.22%	91.36 %
3	Jalgoan	80.53 %	87.44%	91.76 %
4	Nandurbar	79.67 %	89.10%	91.53 %

Source: www Maharashtra state board of Secondary and higher Secondary education.2012-15

The data in the above table shows that Nasik district is one of the leading districts in its academic results of SSC in the year 2012 and 2015.

In the year 2013 in Nasik division mainly **1,83, 786** numbers of students appeared for SSC examination, in which **1,54,123** number of students had passed where as in 2014, **84,076** students had appeared and **76,181** students passed. In Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exam 2013, **1,29,102** numbers of students had appeared in which **1,02004** numbers of students had passed the exam which is**79.01%**and in the year 2014, **57,568** students had appeared for the examination and in 2015,**51,497** students passed the exam which comes to **89.54%.**Thus, knowing about the details of results and functions of Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education the researcher was keen to study the quality assured in Secondary Schools of Nasik District, Maharashtra.

1.14 Other agencies functioning for Quality Assurance of the school

Rather than the Government inspection there are other private agencies also that provide inspections to the school, mainly with the purpose of Assuring Quality in the schools.

1.14.1   ISO 9000-9001:

The Prime Minister approved the outline of a Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (PMES) for Government Departments vide PMO I.D. No. 1331721/PMO/2009-Pol dated 11.9.2009. Under PMES, each department is required to prepare a Results-Framework Document (RFD). An RFD provides a summary of the most important results that a department / ministry expect to achieve during the financial year. This document has two main purposes: (a) move the focus of the department from process-orientation to results-orientation, and (b) provide an objective and fair basis to evaluate department's overall performance at the end of the year. In addition to success indicators proposed by the department, there is a set of mandatory indicators proposed by the Government that are common to all departments preparing RFDs. The High Power Committee (HPC) on Government Performance in its meeting of March 11, 2011, decided to include the following mandatory success indicator relating to implementation of ISO:9001 in the Results-framework Document (RFD) of government departments for the year 2011-2012.ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is the world's largest developer and publisher of International Standards. ISO is a network of the national standards institutes of 161 countries, one member per country, with a Central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland, that coordinates the system. ISO is a non-governmental

organization that forms a bridge between the public and private sectors. On the one hand, many of its member institutes are part of the governmental structure of their countries, or are mandated by their government. On the other hand, other members have their roots uniquely in the private sector, having been set up by national partnerships of industry associations. Therefore, ISO enables a consensus to be reached on solutions that meet both the requirements of business and the broader needs of society. The vision of ISO 9001 related to education is, to ensure education of equitable quality for all to fully harness the nation's human Potential.

The important function of ISO is to formulate, regulate, monitor, review, authorize and execute actions for improvement of the school. ISO officials identify the gaps, overlaps, and dead ends in the process. It also provides feedback to the school related to improvement in the Quality of the schools. The officials are mainly the subject experts, the academic section of the school is thoroughly supervised by the experts and the feedback is provided related to pedagogical process in the school. Thus, International Organization for Standardization works mainly on the academic section rather than the administrative section of the schools.

1.14.2 Accreditation for the Schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is a registered society and an autonomous organization under Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The Board has approx. 11,500 schools affiliated to it in India and abroad. These schools are managed by different management bodies such as Kendriya Vidyalaya Sanghatan, State Governments, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Sanghatan, Central Tibetan Schools Association, Educational Trusts and Societies

and companies established under Companies act. The objective of the Board is to serve the educational institutions effectively while keeping in view the educational needs of the students. CBSE through its scheme of Accreditation aims at fostering a sense of quality assurance in its affiliated schools.

In order to ensure quality in school education, the Central Board of Secondary Education has introduced School Quality Assessment and Accreditation (SQAA). The schools affiliated with the Board will be Assessed   through standardized instruments and processes of internal (self-evaluation) and external assessment (peer review), which will encourage sustained qualitative enhancement. Education to provide global parameters of attainment as standards in schools affiliated to it. The CBSE aspires to lay down a set of standards and best practices as paradigms for attaining the benchmark in an individual institution for the upliftment of learning outcomes in the domain of school education imparted to children.

The CBSE School Quality Assessment and Accreditation (SQAA) is holistic as it covers all aspects of a school functioning, namely its Scholastic and Co-scholastic Domains, Infrastructural Areas, Human Resources, Management and Administration, Leadership and Beneficiary Satisfaction.

The Seven Domains identified by CBSE are in fact focused on the seven areas and processes of developing the capabilities of school holistically. By participating in the process of accreditation the institutions will raise their bar of excellence and move towards continuous improvement in quality. The agencies are trained by CBSE through a Manual trains Peer Assessors for conducting the process of accreditation in schools. The Peer Assessors are the principals who are either working or retired from schools with a vast experience and rich insight into the processes that make a quality

institution. It is also expected that the agencies and the assessors will apprise themselves of the latest reforms being conducted by CBSE as well as the Manuals and support material developed by the Board for successful implementation of reform.

The process of accreditation involves the two essential stages:

1. Self-Review using School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Form (SQAAF).

2. Validation by external Peer assessor Team by visiting the assesses school.

The accreditation is valid for a period of three years. CBSE SQAA manual stipulated that the external assessment team shall be called Peer Assessor Team (PAT). The approach of the team would be non-threatening and confidence building. PAT is not an inspecting team, hence the use of the terms 'Assessment' 'Assessor' and 'Assesse'. All Peer Assessors essentially have fully developed 'tangible' and 'intangible' skills which form the core of their good judgments leading to reliable and credible Assessment results.

Assessors are preferably chosen from those who have gained experience while undergoing the process of CBSE SQA of their own institution. Peer Assessors are Principals or educators with vast experience in school education who have been selected, trained and deployed to undertake the CBSE SQAA assignments. CBSE SQAA Peer Assessor Team is enpaneled by the authorized agency. It is primarily a three member team which is national in character. Generally, the team has mixed representation from the state to which the institution belongs and other states. They are chosen from the school system and the Chairperson is normally nominee of the CBSE empaneled by the board. In case of a big school (with strength above 3000), one more member may be added for every 1000 students. The SQAA PA team is perceived to be collegial in nature. The Chairperson is the overall in charge of the

team. It does not undermine the position of other members of the team. The relationship of all the team members is more of 'academic equality' leading o consensus approach rather than the 'hierarchy' that works through majority vote. Confidentiality is the hallmark of the PA Team.

The CBSE appoints observers from time to time to oversee the school visits by the Agencies and PAT. In order to streamline the process of selection of Peer Assessors, to make it more transparent and to appoint a cadre of effective and competent Peer Assessors who are well conversant with the rationale of CBSE SQAA and thus are able to ensure proper and effective carrying out of SQAA process, the Board proposes to conduct an online screening test which consists of two sections. Section A consists of MCQs based on the SQAA Manual and Section B is based on the Case Study.

1.14.2.1The School Assessment and Accreditation [SQAA] Process

At the Pre-Planning Stage On receiving Form Letter Intent from a prospective school, CBSE sends an e-mail to the Accreditation Agency. Accreditation Agency appoints Peer Assessors Team (PAT) and sends an acknowledgment to the school. Submission of SQAAF is done by the Schools. Assesse School fills and submits the SQAA form online / by post along with related evidence to support the data.

CBSE appoints the Agencies then employs transparent selection procedures to empanel Accreditation agencies. Schools are asked to fill in Form of Intent and send online to CBSE. Peer Assessors Team (PAT) and CBSE authorized Agency collate and analyse data, gathered from SQAAF along with evidences and documents submitted by applicant school Only if the school scores 50% initial score (overall) the school visit is planned. Peer Assessors Team [PAT] visits the school (if the school gets the minimum qualifying score) on a mutually convenient date to analyze

the data submitted by the school. PAT mainly focuses on SQAA Domains and Sub-Domains Instruments 2, 3, 4, and 5: Questionnaires (Students, teachers, parents and non-teaching staff) Information is gathered through interaction following the administration of questionnaires, which is analyzed by acquiring the same from different sources like – physical observation, institutional records etc. The final score is recorded on Score Card and shared with CBSE and the school.

PAT Prepares Reports

1. School Quality Enhancement Report - SQER (For Schools)

2. School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Report (SQAAR) - for CBSE and School.

1.15 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 divisional Board is 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%.(Census, 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.

1.16 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?

1.17 Statement of the Problem

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

1.18 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.

1.19 Operational definitions of the terms 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.

1.20 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 divisional Board only. The study is also delimited to the School Inspections conducted by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board.

1.21 Conclusion

Thus, inspection and supervision across the world has been considered a process of assessing the quality and performance of schools by internal and external evaluation. In recent years, many countries have re-examined their inspection systems in the face of demands that schools should be made more transparently accountable for the outcomes and standards that they achieve and therefore responsible for continuously assessing their performance. 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. So the researcher is interested in conducting the study for ensuring the quality of Secondary school focusing on educational

inspection. The subsequent chapter depicts the scenario of research studies in the

area of Quality Assurance in Secondary School.