

**THE ROLE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS OFFICERS IN ENHANCING  
QUALITY EDUCATION AND STANDARD PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED PUBLIC  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ISOKA DISTRICT.**

**By**

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## **DECLARATION**

**This research is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.**

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**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

This dissertation by Mwandia Chizya is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Education Management.

**EXAMINERS**

Examiner's Signature..... Date.....

Examiner's Signature..... Date.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my beloved mum and dad for their love, encouragement and support in the course of my studies.

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The success of this work is due to the commitment of colleagues within the field of education and encouragement of my family members.

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## ACRONYMS

<b>DEB</b>	District Education Board
<b>DEBS</b>	District Education Board Secretary
<b>DESO</b>	District Education Standards Officer
<b>ESO</b>	Education Standards Officer
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>MOGE</b>	Ministry of General Education
<b>QASO</b>	Quality Assurance and Standard Officers
<b>TR</b>	Teacher
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nation Education Science and Cultural Organisation

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officer's in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in Isoka District in Muchinga Province, with a view of finding out how QASO's supervisory role enhances the quality of education and standard performance through frequency of carrying out monitoring. The study objectives were; to assess the role Quality Assurance and Standards Officers play in enhancing quality education and standard performance in selected secondary schools in Isoka. The other concern was that of challenges and opportunities encountered by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers during inspection and monitoring in secondary schools. Thirdly, to establish strategies Ministry of Education would put in place to curb challenges faced by Standards Officers. Finally, to assess the impact of standards officers made by frequent visit to schools. The study employed a descriptive survey designed to target all the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs), teachers and head teachers of all the five (5) selected public secondary schools. Purposive sampling was used to select forty (40) teachers, twenty eight (28) heads of departments, five (5) head teachers and four District Education Standards Officers to accurately represent the population earmarked for study giving a total of 77 participants out of the total number of 105 teachers in the five schools under study.

A case study approach was used in conducting this research. Thereby, interview schedules, documentary and focus group discussion guide were used for data collection. Before the actual data collection, a pilot study was carried out to help improve the validity and reliability of the instruments. The research yielded data that required qualitative analysis. Therefore, the researcher sought to use qualitative method in the collection of data for the study. Qualitative data was analysed thematically in line with the research questions. Then the results of data analysis were presented using frequency tables.

The main findings of the study indicated that very little was being done in the area of public secondary schools being monitored by District Standards Officers. Reports by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers revealed that teaching and learning materials were not easily available for use as the case for the revised curriculum by the government. Nevertheless, the study established that QASO's supervision and monitoring had a positive impact towards enhancing quality education and standard performance in the education system. The study established that the exercise helped both head teachers and teachers to perform their duties more effectively and also became better educators. The major roles played by QASO's during



curriculum supervision (monitoring) were visiting teachers in the classroom to observe their teaching methodologies; checking lesson preparations and records and ensuring teachers have adequate teaching and learning materials. Regarding the extent to which QASO's activities addresses the challenges in the schools, the study concludes that the major activities that QASO's in Isoka district were engaged in monitoring and advising schools on academic performance, curriculum delivery and assessment. However, the results of the analysis revealed that majority of the QASOs were not engaging in monitoring and advising schools on environmental conservation and school provision of career guidance. The major challenges experienced by QASOs while carrying out their roles were poor transport system, inadequate directorate of quality assurance and standards staffs, lack of qualified personnel in the directorate and teachers' negative attitude towards the officers. Finally, the study concludes that without proper supervision (monitoring) by the QASOs, the education system will be jeopardized and its implications will lead to poor quality education and standard performance in the system. The study recommended that the Ministry of General Education should allocate more funds towards recruitment of the QASOs to curb the problem of understaffing in the district. QASOs should visit schools more frequently for monitoring and also embark on a follow-up mechanism in order to ensure that their recommendations are implemented among other recommendations.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the overview of external evaluation (monitoring) in form of school inspection by national governments in an old system of monitoring education quality in the education system. The first school inspection or supervision originated from France under Napoleon's regime at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Grauwe, 2007). The idea was captured by other European countries and later was embraced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Grauwe, 2007).

It is important to note that both developed and developing countries share three main factors in the establishment of school inspectors as an external evaluation in the education system. Thereby, it is stated that the school inspection is the central frame through which the government can monitor and ensure the quality of education provided in the society. Another concern is that, it is argued that, the government cannot ensure the implementation of national goals and objectives if there is absence of external evaluation as a counter balance of teachers' accountability in teaching and learning process.

Finally, it is further argued that for countries to prepare a competitive workforce to meet the challenges emerging due to globalization processes, school inspection as external control in education is indispensable and inevitable (Hoyle and Wallance, 2005). In this regard Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) are clearly considered to play vital role in monitoring quality education through teaching and learning in the education sector. The point of departure in this study is; the role of QASOs in enhancing quality education and standard performance in the education system.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

School monitoring is widely considered as an essential instrument for quality education and enhancement of quality standard performance in schools, which will help the nation to compete in ever changing world economy. It is the form of evaluation, which involves the measurement, testing and evaluation of education activities in systems for the purpose of improving the standards and quality of education programmes offered (Ololube, 2014).

Therefore, inspectorate is an important sub-sector within the Ministry of Education for ensuring the quality education and standard performance of education in secondary schools. Inspectors have a variety of professional responsibilities that relate to the quality and effectiveness of school education, MOE (1996). Standards Officers are frequently entrusted with other tasks that are administrative in nature and that are not closely related to actual school work. Essentially, Standards Officers have an advisory and an evaluative function in relation to educational provision. Their advisory function is to perform through school monitoring. On such visits, their principal focus is to improve teacher effectiveness and school organisation. As disseminators of good practices, they stimulate teachers to examine their lesson preparations and follow-through their teaching strategies, the way they develop or use curriculum materials, how they evaluate pupils, and how they organize the teaching session.

The evaluative function of the inspectorate is to assess the quality education and standard performance effectiveness of actual educational provision in individual schools and in the system as a whole, and reporting on this to the appropriate authority. At secondary school level, this involves developing a set of achievable indicators in the various areas of school operation and evaluating schools and individual teachers on performance in relation to these indicators, MOE (1996). The purpose of such evaluation is to determine how successful schools and teachers are in working towards prescribed educational objectives. The monitoring evaluation also provides occasion for taking necessary corrective measures.

Worldwide, quality assurance in the education system is an important process which cannot be a preserve of a single agency. In the United States Department of Education for example, a federal agency is one of the two institutions that carry out the recognition of accrediting agencies, (Eaton: 2004). Quality Assurance in relation to standard performance in schools is the process of bringing improvement in instructions and school management in general through visits by the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to the individual teachers. Wango (2009) defines quality assurance as “aiming at promoting the highest possible standards through external monitoring of the performance of schools.”

Britain has the earliest history of inspection which took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In education this means that, as far as educator evaluation was concerned, a panel of experts on teaching might develop evaluation instruments that seek to itemise the characteristics of effective educators. In Britain, inspectors' were selected on their ability to undertake a careful observation of teaching and schooling so that they could discern whether or not appropriate standards of teaching and education were being met. They relied to a large extent on the expert

judgment. The form of inspection was aimed at determining whether the teachers were doing their work the way they were supposed to do, failure to which they would be replaced with better teachers, Elsbree and Nally (1967).

In Kenya, for example, Ministry of Education was charged with the responsibility of supervision of schools under the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards. The Directorate was given the mandate by the Education Act cap 211 of the Laws of Kenya to enter and inspect the schools. The Kenyan government through the Ministry of Education has made several efforts to improve this directorate in order to provide quality education.

In Zambia, Directorate of Standards, Curriculum and Evaluation does the function of assessing the standards of teaching and learning in schools, school registration and controlling of mass discipline, MOE (1996). The Directorate of Standards Curriculum and Evaluation in the Ministry of Education has been charged with the responsibility of ensuring that there is standardization of education. The Directorate had been charged with the responsibility of ensuring that there is standardization of education carrying out various kinds of assessments, school registration, controlling of school mass discipline and public centres.

Quality Education and Standard performance in schools have been quite a challenge to Quality Assurance and Standard Officers. Therefore, there is need to acquire special skills and knowledge in order to achieved quality education and standard performance in public schools.

MOE (1996) clearly indicates that, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers are mandated to go and monitor any school or place at which it was reasonably suspected that a school is being conducted at any time with or without notice to monitor. Previously Standards Officers were referred to as inspectors of schools to which the term “inspectors” used to connote a person who came from above to see that policies developed at the central education office were being implemented in schools. Wanzare (2006) concluded this notion, by creating a rift between the inspectors and the teachers. The move prompted government to change so that teachers tended not to cooperate with the inspectors fearing that inspectors were on a fault finding venture or mission. Therefore, Standards Officers aimed at harmonizing or to remove the stigma accompanied by the inspector and to portray the officers as people concerned with improving quality education and standard performance of education by working as partners with teachers.

The central importance of contact with schools promotes sustainable value that can be accomplished with such intermittent visits. The strength and value of the inspectorate should lie in its closeness to the schools and its intimate knowledge of all that goes on in schools. Due to

the constraints of numbers and resources, many Standards officers' have been obliged to replace their rightful contacts with schools by office tasks and duties, (MOE ;1996). The Ministry wishes to re-affirm that the key role of the inspectorate lies in its maintaining contact with schools and supporting school heads and teachers. It would, therefore, seek to increase the number of Standards Officers and to provide them with the necessary resources so that they are able to visit schools regularly and frequently.

The terms quality assurance and quality control are often used interchangeably to refer to ways of ensuring the quality of a service or product. On one hand, assurance is often used to refer to implementation of inspection and structured testing as a measure of quality assurance while control on the other hand, was used to describe the fifth phase of, define, measure, analyse, improve, as the control model. Hence, it is a data driven quality strategy used to improve processes. Quality assurance consists of administrative and procedural activities implemented in a quality system so that the requirements and goals for a product, service or activity would be fulfilled. It is the systematic measurement comparison with a standard monitoring of processes and an associated feedback loop that confers mistake prevention.

Quality education and standards performance in schools is the process of bringing improvement in instruction and school management in general through visits by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to the individual schools. According to Wango, (2009) Quality Assurance aims at promoting the highest possible standards through external evaluation of the school work. The Education Act (2011), in Zambia has mandated Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to enter and inspect any school or place at which it is reasonably suspected that a school is being conducted at any time with or without notice, inspect and audit the accounts of the school or advise the manager of the school on the maintenance of accounting records for the purpose of inspection or audit. Additionally the 2011 Act clearly states that, Quality Assurance and Standards is related to learner's welfare and participation.

The other purpose of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers is to ascertain whether there is added value on education. In this respect, the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers seek to determine whether there is improvement in teaching and learning as well as other areas of school activities. It is concerned with quality development. It deals with development of teaching and learning materials, provision of advisory services and provision of opportunities for staff development. Advisory services are given on management of school curriculum, teaching and learning, examination and in-service training. Wango (2009) asserts that Quality Assurance is



supposed to be carried out by Quality Assurance Officers from the Ministry of Education and principals.

Wango (2009) indicated that, quality education is supposed to be done by Quality Assurance officers from the Ministry of General Education and institutional managers. The decline of education standards in schools has been a challenge to the Quality Assurance and Standard Officers. This has been evident in poor performance in schools as well as National Examinations, poor reading skills and low literacy and numeracy skills among learners. In light of this, the Quality Assurance and Standard Officers are needed to provide external scrutiny on how the curricular is being implemented at school level. This implies that, schools management have the mandate to ensure quality teaching and learning process is of high standard. However, academic performances in schools still pose numerous challenges.

The Ministry of General Education under standards and evaluation department visits schools for monitoring in quest of the implementation of the revised curriculum. The revised curriculum consists of two career pathways. These are academic and vocational pathways. There is also an introduction of computer studies in schools to eliminate laxity in curriculum delivery in the schools which had impacted negatively on learning outcomes in the schools for many years. MOE (1996) indicates that, the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in improving quality and maintaining standards in education has been a major concern in most education systems of the country. Consequently, the effort by the government to provide quality education has been enhanced through regular supervision and monitoring of the educational institutions. UNESCO (2007) indicates that, the supervision service of curriculum implementation is in different ways, depending on the role and what was expected of it. Thus, the supervision services are supposed to offer regular advice and support to members of staff and schools at large. The organisation also highlighted that, similar supervision structures with education officers play a key role in monitoring of schools. However, despite the stated roles of Quality assurance and Standards Officers in the public secondary schools, attaining quality education and standard performance have been quite a challenge.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

More emphasis has been raised on the academic performance of pupils in schools at the expense of raising standard performance through teaching and learning. It is noteworthy that academic

performance is a pillar in shaping the future of learners. Teachers and parents alike are guilty of stressing on the good academic performance and sidelining the standards of teaching and learning. This is the major reason government through its various agencies has also followed those who had succeeded in performing well academically. The Education Standards Officers from the District Education Boards at school level seem to be more interested in academic excellence. They guide, supervise and advise on the main stream curriculum implementation. Therefore, the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards department has the responsibility of improving quality education and standard performance of the education system, (MOE, 1996).

School supervision by QASOs is aimed at promoting quality education and standard performance of education in various sectors. To promote quality education and standard performance, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers carry out monitoring in schools and advice on capacity building and organisation of resources to achieve quality education and standard performance. The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers are expected to perform activities such as supervision, provide advisory services and give feedback through report writing and ensure curriculum maintenance and standards. Members of the Directorate standards and Evaluation are expected to visit schools regularly, monitor and provide advisory activities to schools (MOE, 2012).

A number of studies have been conducted on the factors influencing academic performance and the influence of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers. However, such studies have concentrated on the implementation of Co-curricular Activities in public secondary Schools, Instructional Supervision practices on Curriculum implementation in Public secondary Schools, Quality Assurance and Standard Officers in the management of schools curriculum, challenges and opportunities for quality assurance and standards. There has been no comprehensive study on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance of education in public secondary schools. This study therefore attempts to assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools of Isoka District.

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary Schools in Isoka District.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- i. To assess the role Quality Assurance and Standard Officers play in enhancing quality education and Standard performance in selected secondary schools in Isoka District.
- ii. To determine the challenges and opportunities encountered by Quality Assurance and Standard Officers during monitoring in the selected secondary schools in Isoka district.
- iii. To establish the strategies the Ministry of Education would put in place to curb challenges faced by Standards Officer in Isoka district.
- iv. To assess the extent to which Quality Assurance and Standard Officers' frequently visit and monitoring influence the improvement of quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in Isoka district.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY**

Based on the study objectives, the following are the research questions under study:

### **1.5.1 General research question**

What are the roles of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools?

### **1.5.2 Specific research questions**

- i. To what extent does the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers play in enhancing quality education and standard performance in selected secondary schools of Isoka District?
- ii. What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in carrying out monitoring of schools in Isoka district?
- iii. What strategies should the Ministry of General Education use to curb the challenges faced by Standards Officers' in conducting monitoring in public secondary schools in Isoka? Examine the extent to which Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' frequent visits and monitoring improve quality education in selected secondary schools in Isoka.

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study was significant in that the findings might be of benefit to education planners, school management and the government to make informed decisions on areas of investment within the education system and specifically to improve school standards, teacher capacity monitoring and curriculum delivery. These have been identified as strong moderating factors to quality education and standards performance.

The Department of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers was established in 2004 when it used to be known as ‘inspectorate’ (MOE: 1996). It was imperative to have this study because it might also help Standards Officers’ to change attitude and be committed to their instructional supervision in schools.

The study might help various levels in education circles like schools, districts and provincial management boards on how to handle issues of quality education and standard performance in education system. It would also help head teachers to do instructional supervision because they are government agents on the ground or are the grass root implementers of educational policies.

The study would also be used to strengthen Quality Assurance, Standard Officers and the teachers to work in a more cooperative way to enhance their relationship to promote quality education and standard performance in the schools.

Nevertheless, the study may also serve as a launching pad to rejuvenate the formulation and implementation of effective quality assurance strategies and policies in the quest for quality standards in education. Hence it might be used to, establish value added to education Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and compare the entry behaviour of learners with the end results for planning purposes. The study might prompt other researchers to do studies on enhancing quality education and standard performance in other levels of education in the education system.

## **1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to assess the role of QASO in promoting quality education in public secondary schools in Isoka district. The study was limited to selected five (5) public secondary schools. Thereby, for more comprehensive report the data should have been collected

from all the public secondary schools which was not possible due to limited funds. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of schools.

## **1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was carried out in only Isoka district, Muchinga Province due to limited resources and inadequate time. So it provided information on the role of QASOs in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in the district.

## **1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework adopted for this research is based on the management assumptions of Theories X and Y. It was argued that every managerial act rests on assumptions generalisation and hypothesis. In addition to that, the way in which managers approach the performance of their jobs and the behaviour they display towards subordinate staff is likely to be conditioned by predispositions about people, human nature and work, This is as stated by McGregor(1960).

According to McGregor (1960), the two theories present the opposite managerial styles, where the Theory X – oriented managers believe that employees can be motivated only by the fear of losing their jobs or by extrinsic rewards such as money, promotions and tenure. This management style emphasises physiological and safety needs in the Maslow's hierarchy. In contrast, Theory Y management focuses on the lower level needs, McGregor proposed another set of assumptions for managers where he based these assumptions on a theory called Maslow's higher level needs. Theory Y oriented managers believe that employees can be motivated by the opportunity to be creative, to work hard for cause they believe in, and to satisfy needs beyond the basic need to pay the rent. Thus, they seek to motivate employees through intrinsic reward. It is also noteworthy that, the assumptions behind Theory X emphasise authority, the assumptions behind Theory Y emphasise growth and self-direction. It was McGregor's belief that although some employees need the strong direction demanded by Theory X, and those who are ready to realise their social esteem and self-actualisation needs will not work well under Theory X assumption.

McGregor put forward two suppositions about human nature and behaviour at work. Firstly, it is argued that the style of management adopted was a function of the manager's attitudes towards people and assumptions about nature and behaviour. It is asserted that, Theory X assumption is

about human nature, it represents the carrot-and-stick assumption on which traditional organisations are based, and it is widely accepted and practised before the development of the human relations approach. Its assumptions are that, the average person is lazy and had an inherent dislike of work, most people should be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment if the organisation is to achieve its objectives, the average person avoids responsibility, prefers to be directed, lack ambition and value security most of all and motivation occurs only at the physiological and security level, Mullins (2005).

The central principle of Theory X is directed and controlled through a centralised system of organisation and the exercise of authority. McGregor questions whether the Theory X approach to human nature is correct and its relevance today's management practices. It is argued that, the traditional use of rewards and sanctions exercised by the nature of the managers' position and authority would result in exploitative or authoritarian style of management.

Theory Y postulates assumptions about human nature; the central principle of this theory lies in the integration of individual and organisational goals. Some of its assumptions are that most people work was as natural as play or rest; people exercise self- direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which they are committed, and commitment to objectives function of rewards associated with their achievement. Hence, given the right conditions, the average worker would learn to accept and seek responsibility, the capacity for creativity in solving organisational problems is distributed widely in the population, the intellectual potential of the average person is only partially utilized and motivation occurs at the affiliation, esteem and self-actualization levels as well as the physiological and security level, Boddy (2005).

McGregor implies that, Theory Y is the best way to elicit co-operation from members of an organisation. This is because the task of management was to create the conditions in which individuals may satisfy the motivational needs, and in which they achieve their goals through meeting the goals of the organisation. McGregor developed an analysis of the implications of accepting Theory Y in regard to performance appraisal, administration of salaries and promotions, participation, staff-line relationships, management development and managerial team.

In relation to McGregor theory X and Y, the study also assumes that the manager's role is to organise resources, including people to best benefit the education system because people are self

centred as a result they must be closely monitored and often coerced to achieve organisational objectives.

Secondly, the study also indicates that most teachers are not ambitious, have little desire for responsibility, and prefer to be directed. Hence, need for frequent monitoring by QASOs to enhance quality education and standard performance in the education system. In addition, Theory X assumes that the primarily source of employee motivation is monetary and security. Under this theory one can have a hard or soft approach to getting results. The study also indicates the same that, to get quality education and standard performance employees has to be motivated through monetary and security such as responsibility allowances, remote and rural hardship, double class allowance just to mention a few.

In conclusion, work can be natural as play if the conditions are favourable for example private schools and people will be committed to their quality and productivity objectivity if rewards are in place that address higher need such as self-fulfilment.

#### **1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Accountability:** To take into consideration something when making a judgment and be responsible for the action taken.

**Curriculum:** refers to the sum total of the effort to influence learning whether in a class or on the playground or out of school.

**Curriculum implementation:** is the accomplishment of all components concerning teaching and learning towards good performance.

**Education:** is the form of learning in which knowledge, skills, attitudes, norms of learners are transferred from one government to another through teaching and learning

**Effectiveness:** This is the achievement of the stated goals/objectives in an organization.

**Evaluation:** The process of assessing the learners in academic achievement

**Influence:** refers to the activities of determining students' progress in school, quality of personnel in schools, students' performance and the equipment and materials for instruction.

**Implementation:** means putting into practice or putting into effect, fulfilment of the plan (syllabai) and goal of a school by teachers and other stakeholders such as parents in the teaching and learning process.

**Learners:** refers to people, including children who participate in school activities and other education programs of a school.

**Monitoring:** Checking on the teaching/learning process so as to ensure that the programmes are going on well.

**Performance:** is the students' level of attainment of knowledge and skills as compared to others of the same level.

**Quality:** The degree of which something is good or bad.

**Quality Assurance** (established standards): refers to the determination of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements by an expert body. In short it is the means by which an institution can guarantee with confidence and certainty that the standards and quality of its educational provisions are being maintained and enhanced.

**Quality education:** refers to how much and how well the knowledge gained by learners translates to a range of personal social and developmental benefits such as interaction, careers and intelligence.

**Quality enhancement:** is the process of positively changing activities in order to produce for a continuous improvement in the quality of institutional provision.

**School: Learning** institution composed of teachers, pupil's managers and auxiliary staff subordinates.

**School inspection;** has been perceived as a form of accountability in education that accounts for the work performed by those responsible for the task of raising standards in education.

**Standards:** describe levels of attainment against which performance may be measured. Attainment of Standard usually implies a measure of fitness for a defined purpose.

**Standard Performance;** is a management approved experience of the performance thresholds, requirements or expectations that must be met to be appraised at a particular level of performance.



**Supervision;** is an organised examination or formal evaluation exercise. It involves the measurements, tests and gauges applied to certain characteristics in regards to an objector activity.

**Transparency:** Doing things that people are able to see through a check in and open manner.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter gave an introduction and background of the study. Therefore, this chapter presents a review of ideas, theories and findings of other researchers that have carried out activities of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers role in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools.

#### **2.2 THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION**

Quality is often described as the totality of features and characteristics of service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Quality in secondary schools, according to Article 11 of the World Declaration of Higher education published by the United Nations, (UNESCO: 2007) is a multi-dimensional concept which embraces all its functions and activities, teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, faculties, equipment, services, the community and the academic environment. It should take the form of internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, which are vital for enhancing quality education. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognised at international level, should be defined.

Quality development should always aim at maintaining the quality of education or schools and ensure the provision of a constant improvement. Therefore, the process of quality development should be in line with school inspection. To achieve quality development, schools should aim at improving educational processes, improving teaching and classroom management and strengthen policy making capacity at school, Johnsen (2001).

Schindler et al (2015) identified four broad conceptualizations of quality in higher education (quality as purposeful, transformative, exceptional and accountable), there was no agreement on the definition of quality. Therefore, an educational definition is that of an on-going process ensuring the delivery of agreed standards. These should ensure that every educational institution where quality was assured has the potential to achieve a high quality of content and results. Quality Assurance (QA) had always been of utmost importance, originally, in education and other public service sector. Quality remains the most important attribute that creates value about

the product or service for the receiver. It is also a means by which service providers differentiate themselves from their competitors. Since businesses were leaders in quality assurance, non – business organisations such as educational institutions can benefit from the important lessons learnt by businesses.

Puzziferro and Shelton indicate that a common framework for a quality assurance model would provide consistent assessment of learning design, content and pedagogy. However, there are many disparate ways to characterize quality in education. Barnett (1992) indicates that there were two conceptions’ of quality in education. The first was tacit conceptions of value and intellectual property in academia. It is the character and quality of the contributions of secondary education members that are an issue rather than outcomes. The other conception of quality is the performance conception in which secondary education is measured in terms of performance as captured in performance indicators. Vincent (1987) further states that another conception of quality in secondary education was of faculty student interaction.

According to Vroeijerstijn (1995), the term Quality Assurance refers to ‘systematic structured and continuous attention to quality in terms of maintenance and quality improvement. The three main approaches to quality are accreditation, assessment and audit. Firstly, accreditation refers to the evaluation of an institution or programme that meets a threshold standard and qualifies for status. Dill (2000) ascertains that the focus of accreditation was comprehensive, examining the mission, resources and procedures of an education institution or program. Quality in education is better assured if schools are dynamic in their pursuit of excellence. MOE (1996) indicates that, “there is a clear understanding today than in the past as to what makes for a really excellent school.” Various stakeholders have contributed significantly to this clarification. When questioned about decisions to place their children in certain schools, parents state that they are influenced by such factors as a wide range of subjects offering, clear focus on the importance of teaching and learning acquisition, possibilities for many kinds of extra-curricular activities, stability in staffing, orderliness, sense of purpose and sensible discipline, emphasis on moral standards and personal formation of pupils through the whole climate and value system of the school. Larry and Smith (2001) assume that, Quality Assurance comprises administrative and procedural activities implemented inequality system so that requirements for service, activity or product would be fulfilled. Quality education is one that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihood, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual wellbeing.

Ndiso (2013) looked at Influence of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' instructional supervision practices on curriculum implementation in public primary schools in Kenya. It was discovered that, the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers have not been felt to impact aspects of quality education on the implementation of the curriculum in public schools

### **2.3 QUALITY STANDARDS IN EDUCATION**

Management and employees, all play an important part in quality control (Wilcox, 2000). When we talk of quality control management, it is referred to a strategy for managing each state of production, so that early corrections can be made instead of reworking the product after end-of-time inspection, (Stoner and Freeman, 1989). Quality and productivity go together. In a school set up, quality management deals with the assessment and evaluation of learning objectives, the appraisal of teachers' performance and measurement of pupils' performance through tests and examinations. The results that pupils produce at the end of the year reflect on the quality of education and standard performance in the education system. The supervision practices become the quality control management strategy.

Managers make two kinds of quality such as control decisions, which are strategic decisions and tactical decisions. Strategic decisions refer to the setting of the level of quality for the organisation's output. Therefore, strategic decisions influence product design, training of personnel, selection and maintenance programmes for equipping, as well as reward system. While Tactical decisions on quality control in education are concerned with day to day preparations for teaching. Hence, quality management is part of strategic quality decisions which primarily involve quality planning and the taking of steps to improve quality standards in schools. The quality of education at any institution of learning is reflected by the popularity of the school.

Quality in education was a centre stage and supported by a general global commitment to improving quality Education and standard performance in the Education System. Quality education was largely dependent on trained teachers; a learner-centred approach, good resources and facilities relevant to curricula and material, family and community support, gender-sensitive design and a safe and conducive learning environment, Farrant (1994). Conceptually, education is a complex system, requiring a holistic education system with natural framework that clearly outlines fundamental elements of Quality Assurance which was the bedrock of quality education.

Ministry of General Education (2016) acknowledges that quality education which is equitable and accessible is the right to every Zambian child. Therefore, quality education and standard performance should be applied to both public and private secondary school education and backed by a comprehensive regulatory regime.

Monitoring is the process of examining and assessing the implementation of a programme to ensure that the set objectives are achieved. Monitoring is a viable tool in ensuring the smooth delivery of education in schools. It is the best way of judging and determining the path of educational provision as it provides a concrete basis for effective decision making in the way education should be run in schools. However, the current situation in schools shows that there is inadequate internal monitoring of various activities. This has led to inadequate preparation and poor lesson delivery by teachers thereby diminishing the quality and standards of education. The results have been indicated by poor learner performance in schools especially during national examinations. The Ministry of Education, (1996) states that these factors include the fact that many teachers took up the teaching career as a last and only available option, others were trained or selected to join teaching not in the areas of their interest but in a field where vacancies existed and lack of comprehensive teacher in-service programme. It further states that, apart from such challenges, ineffectiveness of the department of quality assurance and standards hamper the achievement of quality education.

The concept of quality focuses on maintaining high quality services and how these can be transferred to educational institutions. Moreover, it should be envisaged that adaptation of the most successful and relevant strategies helps educational institutions in creating higher standards of quality in education. In addition to that, sharing the results and methods of quality assurance practices helps alleviate some of the problems such as failing pupils' numbers, finding and recognition of courses and qualifications. It can be deduced, therefore that, the concept of quality assurance is not a new thing but the range of the terminology and methodologies which are now used to define, develop and apply it are relatively recent. There are a great number of different perceptions of what is meant by quality in education. Cole (2005) indicates that the increasing demands for good quality secondary education by pupils and society imply that educational institutions now face similar pressure that the business sector has been facing for decades. According to Kambangu and Chiyeka (2013) on the study conducted, "An Investigation into District Education Standards Officers' Monitoring of Standards in High Schools." A Case of Selected High Schools in Southern Province of Zambia. The teachers agreed

that supervision has not been adequately done even at school management level due to lack of qualified personnel and transport challenges.

## **2.4 GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY STANDARDS IN EDUCATION**

The notion of governance and standards for quality education surfaced throughout the education system. It might be accepted that governance and quality standards are critical to ensuring quality in education. hence, the need for engagement and collective participation and accountability, monitoring and evaluation, transparency and clear accountability and responsibility framework for supporting the development and sustained delivery of quality education.

Mabey (2011) states that, government has a broaden duty to promote the highest standard of Education and learning for all in secondary schools. This entails that, giving attention to variety interdependent factors including the quality of curriculum, teaching, assessment, the quality of teachers in school and institutional management planning process and evaluation of the effectiveness of the education provision to schools. In line with this, Dull (1981) stipulated that lack of basic factors, community interference, teaching methods and administrative related factors such as poor management of school resources have been attributed as some of the contributory factors.

The government must strengthen external and internal monitoring in order to enhance professionalism at all levels to promote quality education and standard performance in secondary schools. Thus, the functions of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' role or core business in secondary schools are to ensure that quality learning and teaching comes first in all schools regardless of the school status, (Education Act 2011). Powers of Education Standards Officers' in discharging their duties have the following; inspect any educational institution, operation or activity undertaken on any land, building or premises in connection with matters pertaining to the Act. Moreover, they are also supposed to inspect and take copies or records or documents of any education kept or used in contravention of the provision of this Act and further order the application of measures that are prescribed for the purpose within a specified period. However, this does not only refer to subjects' content, methodology and instructional materials but also to quality in the management of human, material and financial resources. In this regard, the Standard Officers work with specialised teams of other educationists and stakeholders to ensure that proper records are kept, transparent and procurement systems were

adhered to. The work of Standard Officers is to help formulate the regulations about the running of schools at all levels and make sure regulations are adhered, (MOE: 2015).

## **2.5 STANDARD OFFICERS' OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN MONITORING SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION**

Education occurs within a complex and dynamic environment with various influences affecting quality education and standard performance. According to Cresswell (2014), quality education is dependent on a wide variety of inputs, institutional arrangements and contextual factors. There should be no single “golden key,” there might be no singular factor which influences education quality with different emerging factors and having greater or lesser influence on the context.

Throughout decades there have been growing concerns by various stakeholders about the status of education in Zambia. Abigi and Odipo (1997) states that, the government, parents, non-governmental organisations and donors recognize that although major strides have been made in the education system, there are still serious shortcomings in the education system. To explore quality further, there was a burgeoning nation debate on the quality of teaching and learning, noting that at the core of the challenges facing Zambia in maintaining quality education and Standard performance in education system, Wasanga (2004) concluded that, Standard Officers are hampered by inadequate legal provision which limits enforcement of monitoring recommendations and inadequate budgetary allocations and tools.

Marecho (2012) also noted that, the numbers of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers are too small compared to the many schools they are allocated to monitor. Citing Isoka District as an example, it has been discovered that there are 68 schools categorised into eight (8) secondary schools, fifty six (56) primary schools against four (4) Standards Officers at District level. It is evident, therefore, that the numbers of Standards Officers are inadequate to monitor and supervise every school frequently. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers functions in this regard are mainly implementing standards in schools.

Chapman and Carrier (1990) emphasized that particular attention should be given to the issues concerning educational quality and improvement strategies in the schools. It is for this reason that the ministry of General education thought it necessary to improve its inspection by restructuring it and changing its name to Directorate of Standards and Evaluation (Ministry of Science and Technology, 2004). During restructuring, there was creation of the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers at National, Provincial and district level. Consequently, at all levels, Quality Assurance and Standard Officers constitute of the standards,

Curriculum and Evaluation Department. At school level head teachers and deputy head teachers are designated as internal quality assurance officers and at departmental level, the head of departments are responsible for quality education and standard performance in their respective departments. School prefects are there also to help school administrators in carrying out duties and responsibilities that enhance quality education.

Nevertheless, the functions of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers' includes having regular reports on the general quality of education, identifying educational institutional needs for improvements, ensuring that quality teaching and learning is taking place in the schools. Thus, monitoring the performance of teachers and educational institutions in accordance with all round standard performance indicators, ensuring equitable distribution of teachers by working out the curriculum based establishment, carrying out regular assessment of all educational institutions, advising on the provision of proper and adequate facilities in educational institutions by ensuring that the appropriate curriculum is implemented in educational institutions, MOE (1997). Standard Officers' still maintain that though the trend was gradually changing Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers still used the authoritarian mode to access the teachers thus creating fear and unwillingness to cooperate. This indicated that, despite the change to the directorate of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers, a lot was yet to be done to improve the relationship.

In addition, lack of vehicles for use as a mode of transport was cited by Standard Officers as a serious predicament to the directorate of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers' operation. Transport at district level for Standards Officers is inadequate to facilitate their movement to schools. Quality Assurance and Standard Officers depended on schools, other departments in the Ministry of Education and other line Ministries for public vehicles. This is prohibited and inconveniencing thus restricting frequent supervisory visits. Kinaiya (2010) adds that challenges facing Quality Assurance and Standards Officers included impassable roads, resistance from teachers, inadequate personnel hostile environment and poor communication.

The policy that directorate of Standards Officers should visit a school without notice is also a challenge in the enhancement of quality education. Hogwood and Gunn (1984) states that, success of educational policies depends on their strategic formulation and implementation. In light of this, the policy that Quality Assurance and Standard Officers can visit a school without notice was cited by head teachers and heads of departments including teachers as a challenge. Hence, for the sake of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers are compelled to do so to enhance quality education. The Quality Assurance and Standard Officer concurred with the



views of the head teachers, heads of departments and teachers noting the presence of regulations governing their operations and emphasising the expectations that all officers should operate within them. They added though that because of irregular or delayed in servicing a few may deviate from the norm. These findings were consistent with Hogwood and Gunn (1984). He stated that, the success of educational policies depend on their strategic formulation and implementation. All head teachers agreed that the numbers of these regulations are flawed with officers' abusing schools in the name of monitoring exercises. It was observed that, standards officers' visit schools with already formed attitude. The findings are consistent with the views of Education for All (2005) that a new post description is by far not sufficient to change the culture of service assessors who always have exercised control and have seen such control as a form of power. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' cannot be easily transformed into actors offering collegial support to teachers. This is simply to change structure and terminologies other than transforming ingrained cultures and traditions.

Umalusi (2005) suggested that, the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers is to ensure that everything in schools is done correctly and safely. This view is supported by Kelly (1999) who argued that schools are expected to perform according to the set standards by higher authorities. However, the demands by Standards Officers may not be what teachers expect from them. They may have other problems including personal ones such as inadequate accommodation which are rarely discussed during inspection. Therefore, quality education is achievement and success of pupils. Hence, when we talk about quality education, Kelly (1999:127) says it is 'about achievements of pupils, their students' success when they leave school for further education, in getting jobs and for productive work.' Teachers have often complained that some learners do not make progress, and in their view had no place in the education system, Gibson (2005). Myers (1981) argues that all learners can make some improvement. It follows that the high failure rate by learners is due to lack of good teaching strategies.

Therefore, Standards Officers' has the responsibility to observe teachers in class, scrutinize of lesson plans and schemes of work, audit financial records for example procurement of school requisite, Orphan and Vulnerable Children fees, tuition facilities and staff establishment records to enhance quality education and standard performance in education system.

## **2.6 MONITORING EDUCATION STANDARDS IN SCHOOLS.**

One of the objectives of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' is monitoring education standards based on all round performance indicators in public secondary schools. Wasanga (2004), a major role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers was monitoring and advising on standards in education based on 'all round standards performance' indicators. This role is aimed at promoting the quality of education and improving academic achievement. Low quality of schools is widely recognized as a serious problem in the developing countries.

There was substantial evidence of decline in quality education and standard performance of education in many developing countries, even at a time, when donor assistance has been directed towards the improvement of education, Psachoropolous and Woodhall (1985). Poor standard performance of education in any country has a major effect to economic growth. According to Wango (2009) quality education was aimed at promoting the highest possible standard performance through external evaluation of the schools. Moreover, the Education Act (2011) has mandated Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to inspect schools suspected of being in operational with or without notice, to inspect and audit the Accounts in school and advise the school manager accordingly.

Quality education and standard performance was related to the learners' welfare and participation. This includes gender guidance and counselling, clubs, games and special education needs. The purpose of quality education and standard performance was to ascertain whether there was added value on education system. In this respect Standards Officers' seek to monitor whether there was improvement in teaching and learning as well as other areas of school activities to raise the standards of the school.

## **2.7 ROLE OF STANDARDS OFFICERS IN ENHANCNG QUALITY EDUCATION AND STANDARD PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers shall provide professional services of support, guidance, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and reporting on the process of teaching and learning in schools, on the development and the implementation of the curriculum, syllabi, pedagogy, resources, and necessary modes of assessment and on the administration, the assurance and auditing of quality education and standard performance in colleges and schools, MOE (1996).

The qualities being sought for in this post are those of a capable educator, with vision, knowledge, competencies and drive to form part of a dynamic team within the Ministry of General Education with the aim of improving the education system within the context of the National Curriculum Framework.

Therefore, the role of QASOs shall be generally those assigned by the Directory of Standards and Curriculum Department under Ministry of General Education and to ensure that policies and provisions laid down in the Education Act as well as other policies and provisions of the education services are implemented. Furthermore, Kelly (1999) indicates that QASOs do promote, support and monitor the implementation of the national policies and strategies in private and public institutions.

Apart from that, they also provide advice, input, support and monitoring in Quality Assurance developments, management and implementation at Directorate, college, school and other educational institution level, in both at National, District and school level. Farrant (1984) puts it that Quality Assurance and Standards Officers are also responsible in conducting external reviews in schools to look into the quality of learning and teaching as well as the educational leadership of the selected schools, by reviewing relevant documentations, class observations, interviewing staff, learners and parents. Finally, the role of QASOs was also to Network with international inspectorates, organising and participating in international conferences, workshops and meetings related to Quality Assurance, thereby contributing towards the organisational and provision of professional development.

Therefore, Kellen (1997) indicated clearly that, the major role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers are to monitor and advise on the standard performance in education basing on all round standard performance indicators. This role was aimed at promoting the quality of education and improving academic achievement. Low quality of schools is widely recognised as a serious problem in the developing countries. Currently, there is substantial evidence of decline in education standards in many developing countries.

Furthermore, Mabey (2011) argues that the government has the duty to promote the highest Standards of Education and Learning in the secondary schools. This means that it should pay particular attention to variety of interdependent factors including the quality of curriculum, teaching, assessment and the quality of teachers, institutional management planning process and Evaluation of the effectiveness of Education provision in schools. Mabey also stipulates that lack of basic factors, Community interference, teaching methods and administrative related

factors and poor management of school resources are some of the contributing factors of poor results

Coombs (1970), reports that for the school to be managed well, quality leadership must be exhibited by the school managers. The vision, objectives and strategies of how to manage the school must be well stipulated and should accommodate the pupils, teachers and Community who are key stakeholders in the management of the school. From the Education scholars point of view there are various factors that affect the provision of quality Education and academic performance of learners in the school management process.

Moreover, Standard Officers play a major role also in promoting staff development activities in education, Wasanga (2004). Within the education settings, training and development, or professional development, refer to any experience designed to enhance teacher performance with the ultimate aim of promoting pupil learning. Literature provides various definitions of professional development such as, Sparks and Loucks (1989) who noted that, staff professional development includes those processes that improve the job related knowledge, skills or attitudes of teachers. Patton (2001), regarded staff development as a process designed to influence positively the knowledge, attitudes or skills of professional education to enable them design instructional programmes to improve education standards.

In addition, Velayutham (1988) advocates a supervisory leadership role for educational administrators or managers and not inspection. He considers 'supervision' as a process of improving the teaching-learning process and the conditions related to it. It is argued that, the supervisory leadership role has not been sufficiently demonstrated in the present work of standards officers.

It was also noteworthy that, Monitoring education standards were based on all round performance indicators in public secondary schools. This was aimed at promoting the quality of education and improving achievements. Monitoring of education standards through regular assessment was an important part of the provision of quality education as it was one of the essential functions for the operation of good schools.

## **2.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS OFFICERS' FREQUENT VISIT AND MONITORING PERCEPTION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**

Quality assurance is a condition that leads to the achievement of transparency. It ensures that, quality of the academic (teaching, curriculum, and learning) and structural (building, computers) provision of courses allow an objective review of their quality. The transparency should be dialectical, meaning that the Quality Assurance should make institutions transparent but also that the quality assurance itself should be transparent allowing the outcomes to be shared by the participants. UNESCO (2007) indicated that teachers had a lot to say on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards officers including other education officers in enhancing standards in schools. Many teachers were not happy with them because they never announce their coming and they were fault finders than professional advisors.

Orodho and Kombo (2006) observed that, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers ought to build trust by creating a rapport with the teachers so that they realise that it was important to be monitored for the betterment of the pupil and perceive as fair, honest and forth right. The supervision, regardless of their experience, the teachers would accept to be supervised or to be monitored to improve the standards in school. Therefore, questions and answers on honesty would give room for further investigation; such approaches might change the whole activity of supervision perception.

Wanjoli (2005) observed that most Standards Officers are accused of being autocratic and authoritarian always insisting on maintenance and observance of departmental rules and that whenever they visit secondary schools, they focus on fault-finding instead of advising and encouraging teachers. When quality Assurance and Standards Officers visited a school, the atmosphere between the school members of staff and them was usually so tense that the later was not encouraged to improve work. Thus, the problem all along has been officially with the standards officer show that they went about with their duties, putting teachers on the defensive.

UNESCO (2005) indicated that, teachers had a lot to say on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and other educational officers, otherwise many teachers were unhappy with Standards Officers because of their conduct when in school for being more of 'fault finding' than professional advisors. The teachers cited that Quality Assurance and Standards Officers intimidated them most of the time.

Nevertheless, Wanjohi (2005) contends that, many Standard Officers go to schools not to make them better but to put teachers in their place. They only visited schools whenever there is a crisis and when their advice is least likely to be sympathetic to the plight of teachers. He further stated that, there was a time when the mention of Standard Officers was enough to make teachers panic. The officials cause terror as they are known of storming into schools where they harass, victimize and scare teachers by threatening to write negative reports about them. Wanjohi (2005) noted that, Standard Officers would go into a school without notice, carry out their usual monitoring work and not inform the head teacher of their findings. They wrote reports without consultations and would leave the school without a word. Hence, the result of mistrust those teachers had on the quality Assurance and Standard Officers. Many teachers viewed their role in enhancing standards in the education system with a lot of fear, suspicion and hostility. Thus, they perceived standards officers as fault finders who are only interested in reporting them to higher authorities instead of giving them advice to enable them improve their teaching techniques. This results in a poor relationship between them and Quality Assurance and Standard Officers.

Wafulo (2010) stated that, teachers' perception on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers' in enhancing standards in promoting and maintaining quality of education in secondary schools. The study revealed that, school managers had their own perception over the quality assurance and standards officers' who were said to be of importance in helping to improve actual teaching and general standards in schools. Teachers perceived Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to be very helpful in the role of preparations and keeping of teaching records. On assessment and evaluation of students, school managers perceived Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to be more helpful than did teachers. Similar findings were obtained in the provision of information on organisation of classroom resources and in acting as role models.

Furthermore, Kimayia (2010) also researched on secondary school teachers' perceptions towards supervision by Quality Assurance and Standard Officers in schools. It was revealed that, the teachers had a positive perception towards supervision. Mabiru (2008) referred to attitudes of teachers towards secondary school managers administrative behaviours to which it was clearly revealed that, female teachers generally displayed more positive attitudes towards supervision than male teachers who possess the highest academic qualifications while few had negative attitudes towards the heads' supervision. Hence, it was discovered that, there was no difference in attitudes towards supervision among teachers of different teaching experience. For example,

professionally qualified teachers showed favourable attitudes towards heads' supervision than the less professionally qualified ones.

## **2.9 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this chapter was to assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in promoting quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in Isoka district.

Literature reviewed from existing studies show that provision of quality education has not met the expectations of the Ministry of General Education and remains a great challenge. The Quality Assurance and standards Officers' have not been felt to impact aspects of quality education and standard performance of education in the institutions. Therefore, the study will assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in Isoka district. The current trend in many countries is towards more school-based management in order to enhance the quality, effectiveness and responsiveness of public education. Different factors impact on quality education and standard performance through effectiveness of the school.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology that will be used to conduct the study. The first part outlines the approach used in the study design of the research while the second section highlights the methods of data collection which was used. Part three discusses how the information would be analysed.

There could be no research deprived of the use of a specific technique or methodology. The interrogation at that point in time would be ‘What is a methodology of research?’ In responding to this interrogation, it could be held that, a methodology of research necessitates “the logic-in-use involved in selecting particular techniques, assessing their yield of data and relating these data to theoretical propositions” (Perti and Gretie, 1978:3). In the same lines, Msabila and Nalaila (2013:26) states that a ‘research methodology’ refers to: the logical, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of research, or the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge.

Innumerable methods can be used to conduct research. As per Creswell (2003:8) argues that, “what determines the choice for research method is its suitability in providing the best process at arriving at dependable solutions to problems.” Arriving at solutions to research problems takes a process entirely grounded in a pre-planned system of data collection, data analysis and interpretation of data.

Hence, methodology refers to the tools or devices employed to comprehend social or other studies of scientific phenomenon (Kgatla 1992:9). Methodology is a description of tools and devices to be used at each time; why and how such tools and devices ought to be used (Smith 2008:158). A research design is a course of action that guides a researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting data and observations to find answers to research questions (Bless and Higson, 1995: 63). Therefore, the methodology used in the current study is a mixed research which offers opportunity to participants to freely give their personal experiences and accounts.



## **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is a set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analysing measures of the variables specified in the research problem. The design of a study defines the study type (descriptive, correlation, semi-experimental, experimental, review, meta-analytic) and sub-type (for example, descriptive-longitudinal case study), research problem, hypotheses, data collection methods and data analysis plan. Research design is the framework that has been created to find answers to research questions (Connole, 1998).

Yin (2003) describes Research design as a logical sequence that connects the empirical data to the study's initial research questions and ultimately, to its conclusion. It would be an overall process which the research study might undergo from the identification of the research problem to the final presentation of the findings and conclusions in relation to the problem. They should employ a qualitative research approach with the orientation to the phenomenological research perspective. Individual interviews and document studies might be used as the methods for data collection to answer the research question "the role of Standards Officer' in enhancing quality assurance and standards in secondary schools."

The case study approach was used in this study to enable an analysis of the role of Standards Officers' in enhancing quality standards in selected secondary schools in Isoka District.

The research used the case study approach as a way of organising educational data and brings about deeper insights and better understanding of the problem of enhancing standards in public secondary schools. The study is designed to be qualitative in nature, because no hypotheses were tested.

### **3.2.1 CASE STUDY**

According to Creswell, (2009) this method of study is especially useful for trying to test theoretical models by using them in real world situations. Basically, a case study is an in depth study of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It is a method used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. Though does not answer the question completely, it gives some indications and allow further elaboration and hypothesis creation on a subject. As Connole (1998) indicates, the case study research design is also useful for testing whether scientific theories and models actually work in the real world. One may come out with a great computer model for describing how the ecosystem of a

rock pool works but it is only by trying it out on a real life pool that one can see if it is a realistic simulation. For psychologists, anthropologists and social scientists they have been regarded as a valid method of research for many years. Scientists were sometimes guilty of becoming bogged down in the general picture and it was sometimes important to understand specific cases and ensure a more holistic approach to research (Bless, Higson and Smith, 1995).

Babbie and Mouton (2001) argued that a case study provides more realistic responses than a purely statistical survey. It has been discovered that, case studies make more interesting topics than purely statistical surveys, something that has been realized by teachers and magazine editors for many years. The general public had little interest in pages of statistical calculations but some well-placed case studies can have a strong impact (Babbie and Mouton 2001).

The adoption of a case study approach was prompted by the desire to get deeper and richer insights on the enhancement of standards in selected public secondary schools in Isoka District. The case study approach was used in this study to enable an analysis of the role of Quality Assurance and Standards officers in enhancing standards in secondary schools. Case studies deal with the intricacy and precise nature of the case in question which made it an appropriate methodology for the research (Stake, 1995). This study approach was used to establish a contextual analysis of the role of Quality Assurance and Standards officers in enhancing standards in public secondary schools.

Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing objectivity or generality of findings (Kratochwill, 1978). However, Stake (2008) argues that one method to uncover the general is to begin by looking at the particular, that is, the case. The purpose for the use of the case study methodology in this research was intended to establish concepts and prepositions that can be tested in other public secondary schools in Zambia that are undergoing challenges such as the schools under study. Thus, the value of using the case research method in this research was not to generalizing the findings to all public secondary schools but to generate principles that can be used to improve standards to enable them achieve their purpose in the Zambian education system which has kept on declining.

### **3.2.2. THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH**

The reason for choosing the qualitative approach for this study is that this approach is flexible, therefore the research questions may be changed at any time and it allows open ended and inductive style of questioning and observation which is interactive and humanistic. Thus the qualitative research approach encourages active participation between the informants and the investigator in the study (Creswell, 2014). Through the use of in depth interviews this approach allows more information to be collected from the participants (Cohen et al 2007). Qualitative approach allows the investigator to collect the data in the natural setting, thus the investigator has to move to the site of the informants to collect data (Creswell, 2014). This therefore encourages the investigator to develop a high level of confidence about the individual participants and the site of the study and also to highly get into the experiences of the participants (Oso & Onen, 2005, Denzin& Lincoln 2005; 2011, Patton 2001 p.39, Creswell 2012).

Qualitative research also involves an interpretative approach where by the investigator collects the data and makes an interpretation of the data collected. This involves developing a description of an individual or setting, analyzing the data for themes and categories and finally making an interpretation and drawing conclusions about its meaning theoretically and personally (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, Creswell 2003, 2014). In addition qualitative approach enables the investigator to look at the social phenomena holistically thus this design acts as a road to an interactive that encompasses the narrative aspect in the study (Silverman & Spirduso, 2010). Through this holistic approach, validity and reliability can easily be tested; generalization can be made out of the information gathered from the participants. Thus the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations within the field of study, new insights about a phenomenon, and problems that may exist within the phenomenon under study can easily be identified.

Qualitative research is the most appropriate research method for this research because the marvels to be investigated by the current research are broad, without previous theories and not well explained. Furthermore, one of the goals of this research was the development of theories hence, the suitability of embarking on qualitative research in this research. This is in line with Patton (2002:16), when he postulates that “qualitative research is most appropriate for those projects where phenomena remain unexplained where the nature of the research is uncommon or broad, where previous theories do not exist or are incomplete”. In the same lines, “qualitative

research is most appropriate where the goal is extensive narrative understanding or development of theories” (Hamersley and Atkinson, 1983:20).

Unlike quantitative research which is “concerned with the measurement and quantification of phenomena as essential steps in the process of enquiry” (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989:14), “qualitative research emphasizes the nature of human experiences and their meaning to people” (Draper, 2004:642). As such, mostly qualitative research is perceived as an alternative to quantitative research. Qualitative research uses questions which begin with ‘how’, ‘what’, ‘why’ and others of the same kind rather than those in quantitative research which usually begin with ‘how many’ and ‘how much’ and others of a similar nature.

From a qualitative perspective, “the questions above are always examined in the individuals’ immediate social contexts and their meanings and explanations of the phenomena under scrutiny” (Labuschagne, 2003:23). In the same lines, Creswell (1994:6), identifies a key feature of qualitative research as “a process of enquiry centred on building a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the research in a natural setting”. Through this, social and human problems are extensively explored. An important addition to the description of qualitative research above is also the recognition of the contextual nature of the knowledge and actions obtained from such research as well as the aspect that knowledge and action is to a large extent determined by culture (Draper, 2004:642).

Into the bargain to the above, another main activity linked to the interpretive tradition is the analysis, description and understanding of patterns of behaviour from the perspective of the people being studied (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). According to Labuschagne (2003: 2), the word ‘qualitative’ refers to “*a preoccupation with processes and meanings which are not concerned with the measurement and quantification of phenomena*”. From a small number of cases, qualitative research can offer detailed data through the use of direct quotations, close observations and precise descriptions. Through the utilization of what anthropologists refer to as “*an insider’s or ‘emic-perspective’, qualitative research aims to describe and explain social phenomena as they occur in their natural settings*” (Draper, 2004: 643). The outcome of an insider’s or emic qualitative perspective on human action or behaviour is “a depiction of the fullness of experience in a meaningful and comprehensive way” (Winget, 2013:3).

In qualitative research the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives. In line with this Creswell (2003:12) asserts that, knowledge claims can be constructed from multiple meanings of individual experiences and meanings socially and historically constructed with an intention of developing a theory or pattern or advocacy or participatory perspectives such as political, issue-oriented, collaborative or change oriented or both. Coherent with the above-mentioned, “the constructivist approach to research perceives reality as relative and multiple” (Patton, 1990:130). This implies that there can be more than one reality and more than one way of accessing such reality. Unlike the positivist approach to research, the human dimension in the reality being investigated is prioritized in the constructivist approach to research thereby ensuring the utilization of the ‘inner perspective’ of the people being researched on. Unlike positivism which focuses on data of the sense, constructivism focuses on data of the consciousness.

This permits the qualitative researcher “to understand and interpret human behaviour rather than generalize and predict effects and causes” (Patton, 1990:130). Understanding and interpreting human behaviour also involves consideration of among other things, the ‘time’ and ‘context’ bound subjective experiences of those being studied such as; the motives, meaning, reason, and others.

Furthermore, Omari (2011:57) states that, qualitative research is “not one unitary methodology of inquiry as it is a diverse field with a wide array of different data collection techniques”. Therefore, within qualitative research are differentiations at many levels such as data collection styles and emphases. However, despite the qualitative research variations outlined above, Morse (1994:27), states that qualitative researchers undergo “similar procedural steps in the practice of qualitative research”. In relation to the aforementioned, despite the specific research technique employed by a qualitative researcher, the following cognitive processes are experienced:

- i. Understanding the feature under research ,
- ii. combining a representation of the feature which accounts for linkages and relationships within its pieces,
- iii. Theorizing how and why these relationships appear the way they do
- iv. Decontextualizing the new knowledge.

Weiss (1994:16) indicated that, “different qualitative data collection techniques fall into the categories of interviews, observations of social life and written documents.” All the way through the data collection methods, qualitative researchers generate honest and detailed data from the people being studied. As for the available qualitative data collection techniques, a qualitative researcher ought to choose a technique that best suits the phenomenon being studied.

### **3.3 STUDY POPULATION**

Polit and Hungler (1999) refer to the population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conforms to a set of specifications. This means that a population refers to the large group from which the sample is taken. In addition, the population which was targeted for specific study shares a number of common features. In this study, the targeted population included Head teachers who were managers of public secondary in Isoka District. The study comprised of head of departments and teachers because all these play a key role in the academic performance of the learners.

### **3.4 STUDY SAMPLE**

The New advanced Learners Cambridge Dictionary defines a sample as a subset of a population selected for measurement, observation or questioning to provide statistical about the population. The sample was drawn from the population of study. It comprised randomly sampled Head teachers who were assessed in terms of how they managed their schools in relation to raising the general standards in school to enhance quality education to the academic performance of the learners and their duties, Heads of departments and teachers were sampled and then interviewed. School records in all the selected secondary schools were also observed.

### **3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

For the purpose of this study purposive stratification sampling was deemed appropriate as it targets a small number of participants and sites that are manageable and accessible. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the participants and the phenomenon of the role Quality Assurance and Standards officers’ play in enhancing quality standards in Secondary schools. The reason for using purposive sampling was that all Head teachers, head of departments and teachers stood a chance to participate in the study.

### **3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

These are variety of techniques for collecting data. Therefore, the research instruments are devices used to facilitate the collection of data. , focus group discussion guide were used. The use of these instruments was meant to achieve triangulation in data collection. It was considered necessary to triangulate using these three methods of data collection in order to strengthen validity and trustworthiness of the findings. Furthermore, the justification for the use of triangulation in data collection methods was due to sensitive nature of the study in which no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective on a study (Yin, 2013).

#### **3.6.1 INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Interviews are important source of the research information gathering. Yin (2003) identifies two jobs that need to be carried out in the interview process. Interviews are common qualitative data collection techniques which involve gathering of information directly from the participants. The researcher collects data directly from the participants in a one-on-one contact and recording their views and opinions using a recorder. As a substitute of writing the responses, the interviewee gave the needed information verbally in a face-to-face relationship with the interviewer. According to Robson (2002:269), as a qualitative research technique, “interviewing involves the researcher asking questions and receiving answers from the people he or she is interviewing”. In relation to the aforementioned, Sidhu (2006:145) defines ‘interview’ as “a two-way method which permits an exchange of ideas and information”.

First, there is need to follow a line of inquiry, in this case an “appreciative inquiry”, second, ask the actual questions in an unbiased manner serving the needs of the line of inquiry. The questions in the interviews were open- ended and encouraged unsolicited discussions. The strength of data collection through interviews was that it focused directly on the topic and was really insightful.

#### **3.6.2 DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Document review is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. The documents might be internal to a program or organization or might be external. Documents may be hard copy or electronic and may include funding proposals, reports, meeting minutes, program logs, performance ratings, newsletters, and marketing materials.

Document review was also used as a supplementary method to get the background information of the study. Document review is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents that are printed or electronic. Like any other method in qualitative research, document review requires the data to be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, acquire understanding and develop empirical knowledge. In this regard, qualitative research was expected to draw upon multiple sources of evidence to seek convergence and collaboration through the use of different data sources and methods.

Document review would be used in this study as a cost effective measure as it would be a low cost method of collecting data as part of the process that were unobtrusive and nonreactive, Bowen (2009). In this case, the study was analysed monitoring reports from the Standards Officers. In the same vein, it preferred to analyse policy reports on monitoring the standards in public schools. The data from the document review assisted the researcher to minimise bias and set a firm ground on which to analyse the data since it was combined with the data from the interview guide.

### **3.6.3 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

Document analysis was also used as a supplementary method to get the background information of the study. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents that are printed or electronic. Like any other method in qualitative research, document analysis requires the data to be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. In this regard a qualitative researcher is expected to draw upon multiple (at least two) sources of evidence thus to seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods, Data Analysis was used in order to provide a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Eisner, 1991: 110). In this study, document analysis was used as a complementary data collection method that supported the triangulation and theory building. Glaser and Strauss (1967) call for attention in the usefulness of documents for theory building-a process which 'begs for comparative analysis, a fantastic range of comparison groups, if the investigator has the ingenuity to discover them' (p.179). My review of documents in this study was helpful.

The use of document analysis in this study was cost effective- it was a low cost method of obtaining empirical data as part of a process that is unobtrusive and nonreactive (Bowen 2009). In this case, this study analyzed inspection reports from the inspectors of schools, from the



Directorate of Education Standards officers. In the same way the study also preferred analyzing policy reports on inspection/monitoring as concerning improving education standards in schools. The data from documents helped the investigator to minimize bias and set a firm ground on which to analyze the data since it was combined with the data from interviews. In addition information was readily available especially in the files. This was an attractive option for this study. As stated by Merriam (1988), locating public records is limited only by one's imagination and industriousness. It is therefore important to keep in mind that if a public event happened, then some official record of what happened is likely to exist (Bowen 2009).

A focus group discussion is an interactive activity or event guided by an interviewer to stimulate participation, guide discussion and probe in order to obtain highly detailed and specific group data that meet the research requirements or objectives (Shedlin and Schreiber, 1994). It promotes the richness and flexibility in the manner of collecting data and it also allows the extensive exploration of the research problem (Cresswell, 2009), which the researcher must capitalise on while resolving the challenges it presents. In this study, a focus group discussion guide was designed and used to collect qualitative data from the selected schools' respondents (the targeted group). The tool was picked because it allowed the researcher to explore further and obtain deeper insights into responses provided by QASOs earlier.

### **3.7. PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher explains how qualitative data was collected in view to answer the research questions on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in enhancing quality education and standards performance in the selected public secondary schools of Isoka district, Muchinga Province.

#### **3.7.1 Access to Research Sites**

The researcher began data gathering by obtaining the letter of ethical clearance approval from the University of Zambia. This was a requirement by the University for every study involving human participants. Permission to conduct the study was also sought from relevant authorities, that is, the Ministry of General Education, through the District Education Board Secretary's office in Isoka district. The authorization letter collected from DEBS office was presented to all head teachers in the five (5) selected public secondary schools. This was to allow the researcher collect data from the school managers and other targeted groups within the school setting. A letter of authority is presented in the appendix section

### **3.7.2 Data Collection.**

Data was collected using qualitative method. Therefore before the interviews were conducted, the head teachers, head of departments and teachers were contacted in order to make prior appointments for the interviews and explain the purpose of these interviews. The interviews were conducted in the respondent' offices and the head teacher's offices. During the interviews, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondents before start of the interview. An interview guide was used. Respondents were allowed to exhaust their views before moving on to the next question. Data collected was recorded by writing down responses in the note book, it was also later reorganised for data analysis. Responses from the interviewee were double checked by reading them out to the respondents for purposes of validation. Thus, this was done in with providing validity to the narratives in the results.

Five (5) focus group discussions involving randomly selected teachers and head of departments on each panel were conducted in the five secondary schools, with the view to collect in-depth information on the research study. The number of focus groups was five. The discussions took place in the departmental offices which provided conducive atmosphere for the activity. Prior to the discussion, respondents were informed about the research topic and the purpose of the focus group discussion. They were also free to choose to participate in the discussions or not. Participants were encouraged to freely express their opinions on the subject matter. A focus group discussion guide was used to direct the discussions and data was collected by writing down main points in responses. Participants discussed the topical questions until ideas were exhausted before another question could be paused or raised. The session was concluded as soon as all the questions prepared were exhausted and a summary of main points discussed was read as compiled to the respondents for the purpose of validation.

Nevertheless, regarding document analysis, the researcher requested for copies of school policies such as the homework policy, timetable, tests policy and also the school rules that govern each school. No school produced hard copies of school rules and regulations which were the major documents that were supposed to be represented asked for.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

Data analysis is a process for obtaining raw data and converting it into information useful for decision-making by users. The research findings was analysed in order to answer research

questions pertaining to the role Quality Assurance and Standards Office play in enhancing quality education and standard performance in the public secondary schools in Isoka district.

Qualitative data was by categorising thematic areas for easy descriptions of practices and policies in the factors associated with quality education and standard performance of both the teaching fraternity and the learners in the public secondary schools. Creswell (2003) indicated that, thematic analysis identifies common themes within the data and allows for these themes to be grouped in a clear and organised manner. They further argue that, categorizing thematic data helps the researcher to interpret the research topic and give detailed descriptions of data. Therefore, in this study, major themes were drawn from interviews with head teachers, head of departments and teachers as well as from focus group discussion.

Qualitative data is better analysed manually. Firstly, categorise data according to themes. Then design the questionnaire in such a way that questions are categorised according to themes that may be derived from the research questions and objectives. The aim of conducting the research project is to provide answers to the research questions and met the research objectives. Hence, in the preparatory stage, handwritten field notes from interviews were organised and transcribed for analysis. Each set of raw data was explored by reading through while identifying and noting common themes in accordance with the items on the interview guide. This action is supported by Creswell (2003) who asserted that this stage entails that, the researcher reads all data to obtain a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning. Thereby, using the constant comparative method, which is a form of analysis where data are reviewed line by line in detail (Mugenda and Mugenda; 1999), thorough categorization was done by coding and creating labels for common themes on each item. Major themes were drawn and described in line with the study and that the frequency of the themes indicated the trends. Therefore, the researcher used the information collected during literature review to refine the themes. This made it easy for the findings to be presented in themes.

As for data collected from focus group discussions, the initial analysis was done during the discussions. This prompted creating simple categories of emerging themes according to research questions. During the main analysis the researcher considered the words and their meaning, the frequency, the specificity of the responses, the extent and the context of the comments in the textual data. This is as Borg and Gall (1983) emphasized. Thorough categorizing of the themes was later done using thematic analysis in order to capture the experiences of QASOs.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

The ethical consideration for this study included seeking prior permission from the University of Zambia/University of Zimbabwe before undertaking the research. The researchers also seek for permission from the Provincial Education Officer and the District Education Board Secretary and the school at large before conducting the research. The researcher also recognised the rights and privacy of respondents and worked with maximum granted privacy of any information obtained and was not used for any other purpose other than the intended purpose. The research got informed consent from the participants and respondents. They (respondents) will participate by voluntary or consent and not by inducement due to consideration and respect for the social values and laws that govern the particular society with respect to the condition under study.

### **3.10 Validity and Reliability of Study Instrument**

Validity refers to the degree to which a measuring instrument measures what it intends to measure Shuttleworth (2009). Therefore, to ensure content validity the researcher constructed data collection instruments with adequate number of items and made sure that each item or question had a link with the objectives of the study and ensured that all items covered a full range of issues being measured. Also in ensuring validity of instruments the researcher consulted colleagues and the supervisor for proper guidance after which the researcher pre-tested the instruments. In interviews, the researcher used simple language and clear instructions appropriate to the respondents. Questions were phrased to ensure consistency in responses of the participants. The respondents who participated in the study were informed and knowledgeable about the study and this ensured reliability of findings.

Borg and Gall (1989) define reliability of a research instrument as its level of internal consistency or stability over time. A reliable instrument is therefore is one that constantly produces the expected results when used more than once to collect data from two samples randomly drawn from the sample population. Reliability of the instruments were determined by establishing whether there are ambiguities in any item and whether the instruments elicited the type of data anticipated and also if the type of data desired were meaningfully analysed in relation to research questions.

### **3.12 Summary**

This chapter has described the research design and methodology which was used in the research which is qualitative in nature as it was grounded on the assumptions that individuals construct social reality to inform of meaning and interpretation. The study used interview guide, focus group discussion guide and document analysis to obtain data from respondents concerning the role of Quality Assurance and Standard Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance in the selected public secondary schools in Isoka district.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings from the specific themes that emerged during interviews conducted with the participants in the five selected secondary schools in Isoka. The gap was identified in the literature on the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance. Quality of education is determined by the inputs such as curriculum content, instructional materials and equipment, school culture, teacher pupil ratio, costs and guiding policies, quality assurance, learning duration and above all the quality of teachers and management practices. It is also determined by the products of an education system and the focus should therefore be broad and not limited to the performance only even though there is much which needs to be done concerning the development of teachers.

However, Odhiambo (2008), note that most of these variables are lacking in public education system and those being introduced such as quality assurance lack details and are introduced without wide consultation with those involved especially the teachers. The current study therefore sought to assess the role of QASOs in enhancing quality education and standard performance in the school system. .

The research findings are based on the four research questions as follows;

- i. To what extent do the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers play in enhancing quality education and standard performance in public secondary schools in Isoka District?
- ii. What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by Quality Assurance and Standards officers in carrying out monitoring in schools?
- iii. What strategies should the Ministry of General Education use to curb the challenges faced by standards officers' in conducting monitoring in public secondary schools?
- iv. To what extent do Quality Assurance and Standards Officers play by frequently visit and monitoring the implementation of policies to achieve quality education and standard performance in selected secondary schools in Isoka district?

The research involved five (5) public secondary schools in the form of collective study. Zucker (2009:2) explains a collective study as “the study of a member of cases in order to inquire into a particular phenomenon.” The casestudy involved five secondary schools in Isoka district. Data from each of these schools was presented separately and there after all case studies were discussed as a unit. Data was presented as a comparative case study.

The interview data for the study was collected from 40 teachers, 5 head teachers, 20 Head of departments and 4 Standards Officers, giving a total of 69 respondents. A document study was done on the role of QASOs in the education sector or in schools. This chapter also discusses the research findings of the study in the light of the themes and the research objectives which were qualitatively analyzed.

**Table 1: Education level of members of staff in the five selected schools under study.**

Education level				
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>Valid percent</b>	<b>Cumulative percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Master’s degree</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>
	<b>Bachelor’s Degree</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>46.7%</b>	<b>47.7%</b>
	<b>Advanced diploma</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>49.6%</b>
	<b>Secondary diploma</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>98.2%</b>
	<b>Certificate</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>100.1%</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>		

The above table shows the qualifications of members of staff from the selected five public secondary schools under study in Isoka district. From the findings, it was revealed that majority of the respondents (51) were secondary diploma holders in terms of their level of education equivalent to 48.6% while those holding bachelor's degree were 49(47.7%) of the respondents reported to have advanced secondary diploma in education were 2 (1.9%) so as those holding certificates. One (1) respondents held master's degree level of education with representing 1.0%. From the statistical outputs majority of teachers in Isoka district have secondary diploma as their level of education an aspect that could be attributed to their success in administrative performance as it is very vital in determining the academic performance of students.

**Table 2: Period in Service**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>percent</b>	<b>Cumulative percent</b>
<b>Valid</b>	<b>Less than 5 years</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>
	<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>53.3%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
	<b>10 and above years</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>		

In the study respondents were asked of the period in service in the Ministry of General Education. It was revealed from the majority that 53.3% of them had spent 5-10 years serving in the education system. Further the analysis indicated that 34 (32.4%) of the respondents had spent more than 10years on teaching experience representing (14.3%) of the respondents.



**TABLE 3: STAFF QUALIFICATION BY GENDER**

The table below shows a sample of officers by gender employed to enhance quality education and standard performance in five (5) selected public secondary schools in Isoka district.

	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>MASTER'S DEGREE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>BACHELOR'S DEGREE</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>ADVANCED DIPLOMA</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DIPLOMA</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>CERTIFICATE</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>182</b>

These were the qualifications of staff from the five schools visited as tabulated in the Table 4:1 The table shows teachers qualification by gender in the five selected schools in relation to enhancing of quality education and standard performance in schools.

**Table 4: Profile of the five Public Secondary Schools That Participated in the Study**

Secondary Schools	Distance from Debs Office	Year Opened	Number of streams per Grade	Number of teachers by Gender		Pupils enrolment by Gender		
				M	F	BOY	GIRL	TOTAL
A	2.5km	1965	6	47	22	805	0	805
B	3km	2004	4	37	24	335	446	781
C	6km	2014	3	23	14	324	237	561
D	42km	2013	2	16	8	200	153	353
E	28km	2013	2	23	11	195	127	322

This table shows the profile of the five public secondary schools for the study. These schools are marked using the letters of the alphabet according to the size of the school namely A, B, C, D and E.

Table 4 indicates that school A is 2.5 kilometers from District Education Board Secretary's office. While school B is 3 kilometers, school C is 6 kilometer, school D is 42 kilometer and school E is 28 kilometers. Then, the enrolment was as follows; school A there are no girls the

total enrolment was 805, school B pupils by Gender boys were 335 and Girls 446 giving a total of 781 pupils. Then school C pupils by Gender boys were 324 and Girls 237 giving a total of 561 pupils, School D the pupils by Gender boys was 200 and Girls 153 giving a total of 353 pupils, and finally School E the pupils by Gender; boys 195 and Girls 127 giving a total of 322 pupils.

#### **4.2 Theme One: Importance of QASOs in monitoring and how it may attempt to Enhance Quality Education and Standard Performance in public secondary schools**

This theme explored Inspectors, teachers, head teachers and head of departments' views about the importance of school inspection and monitoring and how school inspection may attempt to enhance quality education and standard performance in schools. Data from all the respondents and school observation revealed that school inspection is one strategy for monitoring teaching and learning in schools.

The government stimulates schools through inspection to develop their own quality assurance systems which will lead to improvement in the quality of education and standard performance as cited by Head teacher from school A. Likewise data also showed that school inspection examines all aspects of the school as a place of learning based on the school development plan. This was reflected when the head teacher from school D complemented that "School inspection is an integral part of all education system, therefore, inspection must look at all aspects of the school from the classroom, compound and the infrastructure."

The above statement indicates that since most of the inspection/monitoring visits are geared towards achieving the improvement of standards and quality of education and hence this should be an integral part of a school improvement program. In other words findings also revealed that inspection gives QASOs opportunities to observe classrooms and thereby seek a better basis for discussing the development of the institutions with the head teachers. This was revealed by one of the respondents who expressed it in this manner. "As an inspector when I go for school visits, I get the opportunity to observe class lessons, interact with the learners as well as the teachers, then after that I have something to discuss with the teachers and the head teacher," QASOs from DEB's office.

The findings also revealed that when school inspection or monitoring is done, QASOs get the opportunity to learn about schools for example; to identify some of the discipline problems encountered in schools; infrastructure meant to cater for all the learners, the teachers, head

teacher, the curriculum and then indicate which way forward. Thereby, as one respondent puts it that school monitoring was a potential learning experience for those involved because it provides useful information for the parents in their choice of schools. (As teacher from school B and C put it)

*Wilcox (2000:19) "School inspection and monitoring leads to a better understanding of schools especially for promoting quality education and standard performance in the school. It enhances staff cooperation and public recognition that the school is on the right track when its teachers change their practices after advice".*

The respondents also agreed that school inspection and monitoring helps the QASOs to diagnose the problems and shortcomings in the implementation of the curriculum and to identify whether the curriculum is harmonized to cater for all the learners. Further data gathered from the informants revealed that there are several indicators that lead to the improvement of inclusive education in which school inspection plays a major role. For example, Teacher from school C testified; *"When monitors visit us, we try to be conscious in our planning for the lesson and to ensure our lessons cater for individual difference and the slow learners"*.

Across all the textual data, theme 1 appeared to be critically important for Quality Assurance and Standard Officers even teachers. They seemed to have understanding of school inspection and monitoring, its importance, how it may attempt to enhance quality education and standard performance in the education system. Even though they expressed it differently, each of them explained the importance of enhancing teaching and learning. According to the respondents Standards Officers visit schools to monitor the implementation of the learning practices on the curriculum and to provide guidance to schools on how they can improve teaching and learning. Respondents added that school inspection and monitoring was an eye opener for teaching and learning practices in secondary schools. They also indicated that school inspection and monitoring plays a potential role towards improving teaching and learning. This was evident when one respondent explained that School inspection and monitoring improves teaching and learning. Furthermore, prominent about teaching and learning is that teachers change their instructional practices by varying the methods, assess learners equitably and teach with instructional materials after being advised by the Standards Officers.

When the respondents were asked how school inspection and monitoring has helped improve the teaching and learning: several sentiments were arrived at. Another aspect that arose was that teachers and schools are encouraged to conduct continuous professional development for the

good of their work. One respondent confidently said that such initiatives are done at different levels like in schools, zones and at district level. These sessions are facilitated by well experienced quality assurance officers who also encourage a spirit of team teaching among teachers. As one head from school E *“I organize continuous professional development like refresher training courses in centers and follow them to schools regarding instructional materials. As a teacher educator, I conduct inspections to assess the number of children with challenges in learning and also to check the methods teachers use for example are the methods catering for all learners?”*

Analysis further suggests that teachers do a lot of work to enhance quality of education despite stumbling blocks as the following transcript suggests.

*“After receiving advice from the inspectors I try to do my part, take care of all learners in the class, support the slow learners and those with special needs by giving them extra exercises but the biggest challenge is that most of the children live very far away from school for example most children have to walk 6 kilometers daily to school, yet there is no lunch for them and they cannot go back home for lunch. For the case of children with disabilities they do not come to school regularly. These factors have affected the performance of our learners and the teachers as well”. (Teacher from school A).*

However, findings noted that the concept of QASOs is facing numerous challenges despite continuous visits by the inspectors to mentor teachers and carry out Continuous Professional Development on the methodologies for enhancing quality education and standards performance. For example one Informant said: *“Supportive structures like classrooms, desks and latrines are not adequate enough for rapid increase of enrolment of children in schools” (Teacher from school E).*

The other teacher added that the class size is an important aspect of any quality education and if the class size is not enough to accommodate all the pupils then learning becomes a problem for the learners. Additionally, the introduction of day secondary schools came with an increase of the numbers of children attending school including children with disabilities yet the government is very slow in building more classes and when the inspectors come for inspection they are basically interested in the lesson plans, schemes of work and the attendance registers for the pupils yet they do not dwell on more serious issues that affect teaching and learning which if

they did then they would be making reports about the school structures and follow up for the government and ministry's action'. For example the class size ratio pupil/ classroom ratio was 90:1 as opposed to 45:1 which was the national ratio and desks ratio is 9:1 as opposed to 3:1 Another informant a teacher from school C also added that:

*"Inspectors come here make their reports but even if they make a follow up they always find very little change. For example the classrooms will always remain with their problems of big class sizes and we teachers cannot do much to change the situation unless the government comes in to address this issue. Despite these challenges, we teachers continue working hard because we love our job" (Teacher from school B).*

According to the studies carried out in schools, it was discovered that schools had classrooms and the latrines but were not enough and in some instances boys shared with the girls the same latrines. The study further found that there were no latrines specifically for children with disabilities and the ratio of latrine/pupil was 71:1 as opposed to the national standard of 40:1 The above statement implies that implementation of inclusive education is not an easy concept as far as practice is concerned especially to secondary school B which had a provision of pupils from the Special Unit. Thus in the ability to strive towards enhancing the quality of inclusive education, as one respondent had this to say:

*'Through the facilities are not enough to support us in our ability to enhance the quality of education, we have tried to improvise for the children with disabilities. I make choose where they would like to sit before I assign the normal children seats. The first priority is always given to children with disabilities. My only problem is how to conduct a lesson in sign language incase at one time I get such children in my class or if we get those who cannot see" (Teacher from school A).*

From the above findings it shows that teachers have interest in improving the quality of education and standards performance, but the support from the stakeholders and Quality Assurance officers in relation to supportive structures seems to be a mystery because when the school inspectors conduct school inspection they basically put emphasis on class work than prioritizing the other issues on the ground. Yet, quality education can be achieved and improved if the learning environment is not conducive enough for both the teachers and pupils. Findings

further suggest that though teachers try to enhance quality of education through improved teacher pupil performance, it can clearly be seen that a number of factors are still contributing to the poor performance in public secondary schools. Therefore, the government and various stakeholders need to address all categories of priority needs for better performance in schools as teachers also need more support in solving difficulties and overcoming what they feel are the hindrances in enhancing quality education. Like one informant explains;

*“Though we are provided professional support, most of our infrastructure do not support quality education and standard performance as most of our classrooms lack enough furniture and space conducive for learning, so learners find it difficult in writing and even if our curriculum supports information computer technology (ICT) schools do not have enough classrooms where it can be handled. This is a challenge because one needs the right ability, knowledge and skill to manage ICT classes. I wish when the inspectors come to our schools, they would guide us on handling such classrooms” (Teacher from school D).*

It was noted that through proper advice from the inspectorate, the impact can be enormous regarding the quality of teaching that will be achieved in schools. Therefore teachers can be advised what to do to achieve it. The data also indicated that children with disabilities perform better than others in mainstream schools. One teacher had this to say

*“Children with disabilities perform better than children who are normal in my class. This is due to the fact that the methods I use tend to benefit children with special needs, for example I use child to child approach, group work and I also try the tactile and collaborative learning methods”.*

One head teacher asserted that he encourages good performance through assessing what teachers deliver to the pupils. He identifies areas where the teacher needs to improve and guides the teachers. He said:

*“I assess my teachers particularly to see how they implement the curriculum, how they handle individual differences in class then I conference with the teachers, draw the way forward and offer solutions.” (Head teacher, from school A)*

The head of department from school D added that: *in order to help teachers improve their teaching ability and the performance of the pupils, the Directorate of Education Standards Department should introduce another form of inspection model called monitoring and learning*

*achievement whereby they visit schools, administers the tests for example numeracy and literacy, the teachers mark the work, the school inspector analyses the results and after he discusses with the management teachers and head teachers are given feedback”.*

From the above findings it can be deduced that teachers strive to provide quality education when they receive constructive feedback from the inspectors. This revelation was made when the teachers commented during the interview that they are assured of quality education when they interact with each other where they gain some knowledge to improve their work and utilize the feedback from the quality assurance officers such as Inspectors. This is how Teacher from school B put it: *“Providing quality education is not something difficult, but once we are guided especially if there are periodical school visits by the inspectors and they guide us other than blaming, one will always strive for quality and its even part of motivation in our work”* When probed to give an example , one respondent quickly replied that: *“Quality is all about equity in the classroom, using generic methods, modifying the instructional materials, the content and the environment to suit various needs in the classroom” (Teacher from school C).* When asked to explain what generic methods are? Teacher from school C simply replied that, *“Participatory methods of teaching.”* Education Standard Officer Open and Distance Learning Mr Mulenga complemented that; *“Methods are very helpful in the teaching and learning process because all children participate actively and they interact freely within themselves. He also acknowledged the Fact that when teachers use variety of methods they are able to help all learners in the class.”*

The QASOs also added that they always encourage teachers to use various methods that are not complex for the children; This is what he had to say; *“I encourage the teachers to use model methods like demonstrations, collaborative learning during teaching and before they start using any method I have to assess the methods to see if they are appropriate for all learners”.* For example he added *“you must use methods that bring meaning to the learners and that build the learners holistically. Encourage group work and cooperate with one another through team work”.* (DESO Mr. Silwimba).

The data gathered from the informants seem to indicate that the teachers understand the reasons of using various methods to lift the quality of teaching and learning. In applying Vygotsky’s Zone of proximal development (1978), the use of group work is an efficient way of teaching diverse classrooms as the teachers seem to value the importance of the whole class and group

teaching. The effort of the inspectors and the head teachers to encourage the teachers to use model methods and assessing the methods is to ensure that they benefit all learners to improve the quality of the education.

According to the data, assessment featured as one of fruits that are born out of school inspection. The informants confided that School inspection has enhanced their attitudes towards assessment since the curriculum demands them to conduct continuous assessment. By so doing this way: Thematic curriculum that we use in secondary school classes demands of us to assess children's competences in all the learning areas. "When the inspectors or standard officers visit us the first thing they demand of is the progress records of the children." (Teacher from school E).

#### **4.3 Theme Two: Strategies used by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers to try to enhance the quality of education and standard performance in Education**

This theme sought to examine the strategies QASOs used while carrying out inspection and monitoring to schools. Two aspects appeared that after monitoring. The Quality Assurance and Standards Officers provided feedback to the monitoring visits to ascertain how teachers are trying to implement quality education in their classrooms. The Directorate of Education Standards Department has introduced other form of inspection model called monitoring and learning achievement whereby they visit schools to administer the tests for example numeracy and literacy, then teachers mark and the school inspector analyses the results and after he discusses with the management, teachers , head teachers and he gives feedback.

Regarding to how school inspection and monitoring may enhance the quality development of education practices, it is depicted that quality in the education sector is an important task which can be achieved in several ways. Teachers are assured of quality when they interact with each other through continuous professional development meetings where they gain some knowledge to improve their work and when they utilize the feedback from the quality assurance officers such as Inspectors, School administrators and the School Inset coordinators. This is done as a joint commitment with some organs of the Ministry of General Education. This kind of interaction is essential in that the quality of education can be promoted. It is also important to point out that availability of education materials such as text books and other assistive devices like hearing aids and others are made available for learners. The data therefore suggests that the quality of teaching and learning will depend on many factors and this need to be considered during planning these among others include a positive environment that will provide a good relationship between teachers and QASOs during inspection and monitoring of schools.



### **4.3.1 Feedback from school Inspection and Monitoring**

Teachers seem to regard oral and written feedback from school inspectors as an important stimulus for school improvement. Data revealed that teachers perceived the advice and feedback given through inspection and monitoring reports and recommendations useful for making improvement in their work performance. They acknowledged that inspectors give them both positive and negative feedback and perceived the feedback from QASOs as useful. However, they also mentioned that sometimes they do not realize the importance of the monitoring reports as one respondent noted that:

*“Although the school inspectors endeavor to visit schools and later make recommendations, the reports and recommendations are hardly acted upon” (Teacher from school D).*

Similarly, another respondent noted that she had not realized the value of school inspection and monitoring as she had not realized its results from the reports made by the inspectors (QASOs) as she explained:

*“I don’t know the use of school inspection or monitoring. I thought inspection or monitoring was meant to build us teachers and our school holistically but to my surprise these inspectors (Standard Officers) visit school make recommendations and there seems to be nothing done because when the inspector visits the same school the second time or third time he/ she always finds the same issues as identified on the first visit” (Teacher from school A).*

The above statement indicates that there seems to be a problem of staffing in the area of certain fields of education. It means therefore that teaching tasks will be compromised by dodging, if Standards Officers’ recommendations are not taken into consideration by the responsible stakeholder then the district will maintain poor in terms of standard performance and thus the quality of education compromised.

However, data showed that feedback given to teachers during and after monitoring may have an impact on the promotion of quality education and standard performance in schools. As echoed by the respondents.

*“The feedback from my Standards Officer, head teacher and head of department is very important for me because they give me response on good and bad things that I do and they encourage me to improve”. (Teacher from school C).* Another respondent added that

*“The feedback from QASOs is always positive because when they are giving advice at least they conference with the teacher. I feel honored because my weaknesses and strength are identified and this has helped me to improve my practice and my goal is to become a model teacher most especially in the field of education”.*

The issue of feedback in the study is a good idea as it brings out the weakness and strength that teachers have in their execution of duties. All these are brought about by the school monitoring feedback. This was further emphasized in their responses when they perceived the advice they received from their inspectors for making improvement in their work. For example Teacher from school C expressed it this way: *“Monitoring feedback makes us change our way of working in terms of preparation, Management and lesson delivery.”*

This response was confirmed by the head teacher from school D who said that *“feedback was relevant for them as administrators because they try to work on the priority needs of the school”*. This implies that feedback if given at the right time and can be of greater benefits to school managers.

#### **4.3.2 Relationship between Quality Assurance, Standards Officers and the teachers**

Data reveals that to a greater extent QASOs had succeeded in establishing positive relations with teachers. The majority of teachers stated that standards officers used friendly language when discussing with them. One of the respondent testified like this:

*‘When officers come to monitor schools, they try to use a friendly and polite language. For example, some of them can tell you I have not come to look for faults but to see possibly where you need guidance’* (Teacher from school D). Another teacher commented that Standards Officers sometimes do not announce their coming but on arrival, they would first begin with an apology and kindly request you that he wants to see your lessons or the class in generally (Teacher from school E). The study further revealed that QASOs judged the performance of the teacher based on schemes of work, lesson plans and pupils exercise books whereas classroom observations were not effectively carried out. As Teacher from school E put it: *“When they come for monitoring they would want to see whether you have a checked and approved working documents for the period of time”*. This statement was complemented by another respondent who agreed that the first things the QASOs ask for are your schemes of work and lesson plans

and then he/ she would ask for the curriculum to see if you are following it and stating all the competences that are required to improve learners performance. (Teacher from school C).

Findings further reveal that there is an impact in the relationship between school monitoring and school improvement. This was revealed when one respondent mentioned that *“due to the good relationship between QASOs and teachers, relationship between QASOs and school improvement has also been created”* (Head teacher from school E).

#### **4.3.3 School monitoring visits**

According to the data, the informants expressed that without classroom visits they would not feel the impact of school inspection or monitoring. This was also the same revelation that was submitted by DESO Mr. Silwimba, that mostly *“monitoring is all about observing lessons, school environment and all the other school activities”*.

The study indicated that inspection and monitoring gives the QASOs opportunity to observe classrooms and thereby serves as a better basis for discussing development of a school with the head teachers; gives school inspectors an opportunity to learn about schools, head teachers, the curriculum, learners. This was submitted by one of the inspectors and this is how he put it:

*“Inspection serves many purposes in the education system, which is to monitor education standards, tracking standards and performance levels, collect evidence of good or poor work, to learn about schools, teachers, learners and the head teachers, and identifying school failures.”*

Besides that, the data also reflected that classroom visits by Quality Assurance and Standards Officers is a boost in raising quality in teaching and learning because apart from the aforementioned, inspection of classrooms provide information on the type of methods and materials a teacher is adopting or adapting during teaching thus helps to know whether they are appropriate for the lesson. This reflection was made by the Standard Officer Mr Mulenga over his observation and said like this:

*“When we inspect or monitor we give reports inform of feedback and our reports expose some short comings of the teachers and the head teachers, and this creates opportunity for improvement to ensure quality effective lesson delivery in education sector.”*

Standard Officer Mr Mumba complemented this statement when he said: *“Monitoring reports after classroom visits helps to improve the quality of the lessons of the teachers and helps in developing teachers professionally”*. At the same time data showed that the reports after inspection or monitoring exposes the level of performance of the teachers in class and in school and enables one to know whether a school is performing well or not. The feedback report also helps in knowing the needs of the school, in terms of instructional materials, teachers, and instructional facilities; while the school monitoring can also be used as a yardstick for promoting the school from one status to another. For example, Standard Officer Mr Mulenga put it this way: *“When I go for classroom visits, I find it easy to learn the teacher very well, I learn about the school culture, whether the culture is for quality education or for poor education.”*

#### **4.4 Challenges QASOs face during Inspection and Monitoring Routines**

The study also found that Quality Assurance and Standard Officers did not seem to be satisfied with their work conditions. For example, data revealed that effective inspection and monitoring of schools is hampered by inadequate funds to run the activities of QASOs. This was revealed when Mr. Silwimba expressed that: *“money is believed to be the vehicle of evangelism. So for us we can't run our motorcycles that will convey us to and from schools, we lack stationery as well as other logistics during the exercise”*. This testimony was complemented by inspector Mr. Mumba who said that;

*“The lack of adequate funds to buy stationery makes it difficult for meaningful reports to be prepared after monitoring. In fact it is supposed to be carried out regularly, in view of the numbers and population in schools as well as the prevailing cases of misdemeanors in schools”*.

In addition data also indicates that the time being scheduled for monitoring of schools in Isoka is inadequate. In an ideal situation monitoring of schools should be carried out on a regular basis in so doing there are many issues that manifest in schools daily which needs attention of the government. This was a concern in both the teachers and the QASOs, as they lamented like this: *“Due to inadequate time, inspection in schools is superficial and mere formality”*.( Head teacher from school D). Similarly Standards Officer Mr. Mumba in charge of Examinations added that: *“There is limited time for monitoring thus makes many Standards Officers to ignore vital areas in schools in the district.”* It was important to note that inspection and monitoring of schools in Isoka requires ample time for the QASOs to visit each school in every term.

Data further showed that monitoring in Isoka is done to check whether schools adhere to the educational policy aims and objectives, to check whether the schools are in line with curriculum standards set in order to safeguard quality. It further revealed that in the face of limited resources many schools in the district can never be inspected. The study also identified the work of QASOs involving appraising, reviewing, regulating and controlling the curriculum performance and standards. In view of such, the quality of teaching is judged in terms of how closely observable behavior counterpart those associated with student outcomes. Some of the teachers who participated in the study expressed fear that school inspection and monitoring are used to evaluate their performance making them look inferior and reducing their morale. These expressions were evidently disclosed when teacher from school B had this to say: *“I get scared when some Standards Officers come and play the superiority role other than guiding and mentoring. Sometimes I lose interest and even don’t owe respect to the Senior Officers.”* This means that teachers always fear to be monitored due to the fact that their weak areas will be identified and this at times poses a challenge for the QASOs to offer professional guidance and support.

Data further revealed that after monitoring, results were not effectively and efficiently communicated to schools. Even parents hardly get to know about the progress of the school. Worse still teachers expressed disappointment that they were not informed either with respect to the findings of the school inspection and possible recommendations to be put in place. However, the study expressed a need for QASOs to be professional in their practice. But on the contrary the teachers felt that during school monitoring some standards officers do not provide objective judgment for teachers and head teachers’ performance. This is what came out from all the teachers and the head teachers: *“School inspectors should provide objective judgment for teachers, head teachers’ performance; establish friendship and interactive atmosphere with teachers and head teachers and cultivate harmonious working relationship with teachers. They should stop their bullying attitude towards teachers and head teachers and do their work objectively with courtesy.”* This suggests that even though school monitoring seems to achieve a lot in improving the quality of education in Isoka seems to be of a lot of tension emerging as a Result of school inspection and monitoring among the teachers. This can be viewed in terms of fear, stress negative attitude towards inspectors.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0 DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have looked at the background of the study, literature review, methodology, data analysis and interpretation of the findings. This chapter presents the discussion of the findings basing on the themes that emerged in relation to the sub research questions and later general perspective of the findings will be provided. The discussion will greatly refer to theories that are within the related literature and thus draw reflections from the whole study. This will have links with QASOs school inspection/monitoring in this era of educational transformation.

#### 5.2 Importance of inspection and monitoring and how it may enhance Quality Education and Standard performance in schools.

In this study it was important to delve into teachers' views and perceptions about how they perceived the importance of school inspection and monitoring towards improvement of teaching and learning and also to concur or disagree that school monitoring offered promotes professionalism.

Findings revealed that School inspection/monitoring plays an important role in striving for quality education, thus helped teachers improve their practice. For example, as was testified by one respondent that: *“Through inspection/monitoring the government guarantees that schools will deliver a satisfactory level of educational quality and equity to all learners”*. (Teacher from school B). Similarly, data obtained from teachers from school A, B, C, D and E again indicated that school inspection/monitoring helped teachers improve their practice of teaching and learning. These findings are in line with the suggestion given by Wilcox (2000) that school monitoring should develop teachers' pedagogical skills. Barrett (2005) who studied teachers' perceptions of the local community and education administrators in Tanzania concurs with the findings that teachers also viewed guidance provided by school inspectors to contribute towards professional development and keeping teachers up- dated with the curriculum reforms. This shows that school inspection also known as an external evaluation is aimed at leading to school improvement. Therefore, the role of school inspection should not be overlooked but it should be looked at in a direction that ensures accountability to the government. Earley (1998) supports

this findings that school inspection is more of a mechanism that ensures accountability to those who pay for the education of their children which aims at raising quality standards in education. The findings also indicate that school monitoring play a great role in providing for quality education as echoed by one respondent that *“they conduct school monitoring to identify areas for improvement and to guide on how the improvement is done through professional support”* (ESO-GI Mr Mumba). These finding are in line with OFSTED (1993) who contends that the main purpose of school inspection/monitoring was to promote school improvement through the identification of priorities for action and to inform the stakeholders about the school’s strength and weaknesses. This shows that school QASOs have a right to conduct inspection/monitoring within the areas they are assigned. This right comes as a commitment of the government to monitor progress in education institutions. Due to this, they have powers from above and cannot be stopped as argued by Ehren &Visscher (2008).

However, data from the teachers who participated in the study expressed a need for QASOs to guide them in particular subjects. This expression is supported by MacBeath and Martimore (2001); Wilcox (2000) Ehren and Visscher (2008) states that when teachers are guided and supported in a particular subject, it could be the value added of the school inspection/monitoring towards school improvement in teaching and learning. Accordingly, the findings again captured the suggestion provided by Wilcox (2000) who sees that if teachers are to be monitored, they deserve school inspectors whom they regard as acceptable in the subject area. It is therefore important that teachers in Isoka are helped to find solutions to the problems they face especially in connection with a specific topic and how to resolve the difficulties in teaching it especially if the aim of school monitoring is to improve the quality of education provided by the teachers then they need to be supported to teach particular subjects or topics. But the support provided must be closely linked with the ability of school inspectors to handle a subject area.

### **5.3 Strategies Quality Assurance and Standards Officers use during monitoring of schools**

This study further investigated the kind of strategies Quality Assurance and Standards Officers used and how such strategies are viewed by teachers on the potential benefits of school monitoring towards their work performance, in this case teaching and learning. In this study teachers in their statements stated that school inspection reports in their reports indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers in particular subjects and the try to suggest what should be the alternative on what the teacher should do. In so doing teachers are encouraged to

capitalise their strengths at the same time enabling them rectify the areas of weakness. These findings concur with that of Chapman (2001) who studied changes in the classroom as a result of school inspection and Ehren and Visscher's (2006, 2013) study on the impact of school inspection for improvement found that both oral and written feedback from school inspectors was an important stimulus for school improvement. What is interesting is that although school inspectors give feedback in form of reports and recommendations to the respective stakeholders, these recommendations were not honoured.

These findings corroborated with teachers' concerns that there was nothing done as a follow-up of what had been recommended by the inspectors. This is in agreement with Harris et al (2003); Grauwe (2007) who argue that teachers should be motivated to perform because they are committed to their work. It is therefore important for school inspectors to provide feedback effectively and efficiently in order to stimulate the quality of education and to inform all parties involved in the development of quality education, (Penzer : 2011), Ehren et al (2008). This means that school inspection is still believed to be a mechanism for delivering change in the education fields as the heads, governors and staffs react to series of government interventions and acts that are designed to raise educational standards. As Ferguson (2001) contends that school inspection reports do not only inform leaders, staffs and governors about key issues in the conclusion of the school's post inspection action as parents are also informed about their children's school. It was noted in the findings that the purpose of school inspection is to provide professional support and to identify the strength and weaknesses of the teachers and provide relevant feedback that can lead to quality education. This therefore reveals that the quality of education depends upon the quality of the teachers thus schools as the main focus of inspections need to develop their teachers professionally by giving effective feedback.

The study further sought to establish teachers' perceptions on the nature of school inspection and monitoring visits and whether or not school/ classroom observation were carried out. Findings revealed that school inspectors (Standards Officers) visited schools once in academic year. Further findings revealed that sometimes classroom observations were not carried out by the school inspectors. But teachers stated that school administrators tended to collect their preparation books, lesson plans and schemes of work. It is argued that the collection of prep books, lesson plans and schemes of work may not help the school administrators to understand how teachers are performing in the whole process of teaching and learning. It may also be difficult for them to discern the areas of weakness of the teachers particularly in teaching and



learning process (Holan & Hoover, 2005). Coombe, Kelly and Carr- Hill, (2006) confirm that teaching and learning is what ultimately makes a difference in the minds of the pupils and affects their knowledge, skills and attitudes meaningfully in society. The teaching and learning process therefore should be the main focus of the school inspection rather than the material evidence which is preparatory part of the process.

Furthermore, Chapman (2001), Black and Wiliam (2001) see classroom observation as an important practice of school administrators. For school administrators to influence learning, classroom observation should take place as it lies at the very heart of quality assurance of the school and the core function of improving teaching and learning.

The study also sought to find how Quality Assurance and Standards Officers related with the teachers and head teachers. Findings showed that sometimes QASOs used friendly language, but sometimes the inspectors showed arrogance and belittled the teachers and the head teachers. These findings capture the suggestions given in by Leeuw (2002) and Ehren and Visscher (2008) who share a common thinking that there should be a positive relationship and respect between teachers and the school administrators so as to have productive dialogue. Thus the reciprocity relationship as indicated by Leew (2002: 138) on a balance of “give and take” and “you too- me too” applies with special weight in this context. To Ehren and Visscher (2013), a good relationship between QASOs and teachers would probably have more impact on teaching and learning as teachers would be more open to accept suggestions with regard to their strengths and weaknesses.

Ehren and Visscher (2006) view the school administrators as a critical friend whose visit to schools leads to improvement in teaching and learning. What is important here is that the QASOs should always strive to make all possible ways of improving the work of the teacher. Sometimes teachers may be faced with challenges, frustrations especially those who work in difficult environments. Quality Assurance and Standards Officers should employ more wisdom so that one can easily understand the personalities involved and especially the perceived difficulties of the teachers in the given circumstance.

However, some teachers indicated a negative relationship between them and the school administrators while others indicated that they feel stressed and worried when inspectors visit schools and are only interested in observing their lessons. According to the teachers’ response it

seems that most of them develop “*goose pimples*” when the inspectors sit behind the class observing their lessons. This shows that the teacher-inspector relationship is viewed in the same direction but the relationship becomes that of the subordinate and the superior and this kind of relationship cannot lead to efficiency in the education sector. Further research needs to be done to establish if really the teacher-inspector relationship influences the quality of education. This finding also captures the suggestion of OELMEK (1999) who share a common understanding that this relationship is not effective due to the fact that inspectors have failed in their roles as counselors and that their administrative role predominates their role as counselors. According to some teachers QASOs still use harsh language that demotivates them and it cannot help in the improvement of teaching and learning. This reveals that there might be some inspectors who still consider themselves as superiors over their subordinates yet this in turn may affect teachers’ productivity and efficiency hence since they are the curriculum implementers they will maintain poor quality education.

For quality education to be achieved, QASOs need to work with teachers as partners. The study also found that some inspectors are not aware of the teacher’s needs. Most teachers mentioned that at times inspectors are not aware of their real needs like text books and teaching aids. This means that in order to mend the relationship between the teachers and inspectors, inspectors should be made alert of the teachers’ needs as the first step. This finding is in line with Rowland & Birkett (1992), Guskey & Sparks (2000), who agreed that a person conducting the appraisal should know the teachers’ strengths and weaknesses very well and should have close interest in the performance of their subordinates. As opposed to the above finding, most teachers admitted that some time they are also not prepared to teach and hence this angers the inspectors. It is therefore important for the inspectors to strive to make all possible ways of improving the work of the teachers. Perhaps some stress is caused by frustrations and working in the rural area which limits opportunities for progress.

The study also found that teachers were using the right methodology to manage the inclusive classrooms which help learners’ to acquire the basic knowledge and skills that are important for shaping their future life after school experience. As argued by Nkinyangi (2006), the learning institution and teachers have to take the responsibility of improving teaching and developing pupils’ knowledge and understanding skills in all the curriculum areas. Therefore school administrators must ensure that at all times teachers are using the right methodology that is in line with the needs of learners. However the teachers’ ability in monitoring and assessing their

effectiveness and their individual classrooms should not be over looked because this can help them to improve.

#### **5.4 Challenges Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and teachers experience during school inspection and monitoring.**

In this study QASOs expressed dissatisfaction with their work. However though it is said that school inspection and monitoring plays an important role in enhancing the quality of education and standard performance in schools, it was also noted in the findings that the role played by school administrators seemed to be minimal. Some respondents noted that school monitoring is a stressful act and they do not see its intended purpose as one that enhances the quality of education. According to them when QASOs visit schools they only dwell in the schemes of work, lesson plans and in most cases some inspectors handle them in unprofessional manner by intimidating them. The QASOs therefore visit schools to look for faults and not supporting and guiding the teachers as the intended purpose of school inspection should be.

In line with Kogan & Maden (1999) and Earley (1998), their study found that school inspection/monitoring generally brings about little improvement in the quality of teaching and learning within schools. In addition Shaw et al (2003) and Rosenthal (2004), also found that there was a decline in students' achievement during the year of inspection visits. Ehren et al (2006), on the other hand it was found that although inspectorates are not directly involved over the control and responsibility of the entire school improvement and providing direct feedback to schools and indirect interventions (like the publication of the school reports) they aimed at leading to school improvement. Wilcox and Gray (1996) supported that School inspection can therefore be seen as a catalyst for change if all the stakeholders take the initiative and welcome it as an improvement process.

It was further found in the study that during classroom observation inspectors are able to identify the strength and weaknesses. They are able to set recommendations for improvement. Inspectors therefore have to conduct continuous assessment, monitoring and reviewing of the performance and progress of the pupils. In line with Nkinyangi (2006), they also review the instructional methods of delivery in order to produce a desired impact on school improvement. Learmonth (2000), also concur in his study that it would be a waste of time if QASOs monitor schools without checking what takes place inside the classroom.

This means that teachers should be assured and reminded that they are professional partners and that their schools are potential institutions for promoting the quality of education for all students through the use of correct methodology, curriculum and positive attitude towards every pupil. Reflecting back to the findings, it should be said that classroom observation, teaching and learning should always be prioritized in any inspection by so doing the quality of education can definitely be improved.

Further findings suggested that teachers do a lot of work to enhance the quality of education despite stumbling blocks. As suggested by Ofsted (2012), QASOs should ensure that the teachers and senior staff are updated on how the inspection/monitoring proceeding and the inspection teams reach their judgment. In this respect, teachers must be involved in the monitoring process so that they can present their views on issues concerning the monitoring as part of the pre inspection discussions and participate in joint classroom lesson observation. In a way this leads to increased teacher- inspector relationship. In regards, Ehren et al (2008), believes that this relationship encourages good communication between teachers and QASOs and later lead to better performance. As opposed to Earley, Fider & Ouston (1996), they argue that a poor relationship diminishes the professional ethics of school inspection. At the same time they agree that a good relationship between the QASOs and the teachers leads to a well-motivated and efficient work and ensures mutual understanding and trust. Therefore it should be noted that mutual trust is a key to team work and efficiency that can result into quality education.

However, it was also noted in the study that although teachers strive for quality education, the concept of quality education faces a lot of challenges particularly in Isoka district, example there are limited classrooms, desks, latrines and the class size or pupil population is always high. With all this stumbling challenges, it can be deduced that though teachers strive for quality education through improved teacher pupil performance and relations, they still lag behind due to a number of factors that contribute to poor performance. Quality education was not an easy concept to implement therefore teachers needs adequate knowledge and training to manage the examination classrooms. This means that a lot has to be done by both school inspectors and teachers in order to enhance quality education.

Therefore, quality can be achieved if all the facilities that facilitate learning are put in place. It was also found that the unprofessional behavior of some standards officers has been a topic of

discussion over the years as to what extent they influence teachers' attitudes. In this study it was found that when some inspectors visit schools, they harass the teachers before the pupils and they concentrate on teachers short comings not what influences learning and teaching for better quality. This is quite challenging because inspectors need to build positive attitudes in teachers and they need to work with the teachers as partners in education who share a common goal to encourage pupils learning and develop positive attitudes towards learning. In relation to MOES (2012), Combe et al (2006), inspectors need to encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes towards learning.

In addition Masara (1987), noted that some teachers have developed anxiety about QASOs and they are unable to carry out their duties well. This comes as a result of poor approach used by the QASOs during the inspection process and this has led to teachers being de-motivated. Emily (2011), Sergiovann & Strarrat (2007), contend that school administrators should encourage a feeling of satisfaction among teachers through creating interest in them as important partners in the field and encourage intrinsic motivation so that teachers can develop a feeling of personal enjoyment, interest and pleasure at work. In relation Deci (1999), also is in line with Emilly, Sergiovann & Strarrat that intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through spontaneous satisfaction. In this study, it was found that teachers receive motivation from their superiors in terms of refresher training courses and they are also encouraged to pursue further studies to better their education. It was further found that head teachers as well motivate teachers by offering meals at school, having friendly meetings and providing positive comments towards teachers work. Quality can be achieved if the teachers are willing to work with vigor and if they are supported by their superiors.

However though some respondents (teachers) said that the feedback from monitoring was useful for improvement, the study also found that some respondents did not attach much value to the school inspection feedback as some mentioned that though monitoring visit schools they place much attention to the teachers mistakes and lesson plans and also if they identified issues, the recommendations and reports they write hardly get acted upon. This therefore revealed that if the school monitoring feedback is not taken into consideration then the quality of education may be comprised, also poor feedback in terms of inspection reports and environmental setting where the school is located. It is understood that support from school inspection must aim at attaining high educational outcomes.

Furlang (2002) & Sammons (2007), contend that school inspection may as well play a major role in marketing respective schools in the community. Parents would like their children to be educated in schools that are performing. Reflecting on the argument of these scholars, it can be said that the role and purpose played by school inspection in schools is central and it should be supported by all stakeholders in Education sector.

It was also noted in the findings that school monitoring maintained good relationships with the teachers. This means that there is a good opportunity that schools can function on a positive way since teachers can also express their feeling regarding their work and get involved in the inspection exercise. When school administrators were asked, “How do you maintain positive relationship between teachers and pupils during the monitoring process?” The QASOs replied that;

*“They do not interfere with the learning process but they collect records then interact with the teacher after the lesson.”* This means that if the inspector is handling a big position and if the criteria of teacher assessment is objective then teachers have to consider a friendly relation with the inspectors so they satisfy their authority. Ehren et al (2008), contend that teacher involvement in the inspection process can be increased through the relationship between teachers and the inspectors and through the way inspectors communicate with the teachers. They also added that a poor relationship diminishes the professional ethics of school inspection. Thus a good relationship between the inspectors and the teachers leads to a well-motivated and efficiency in work.

Even though more teachers also seemed to believe that their relationship with the inspectors was good, they also agreed that this relationship was very important for them to improve their practice. The head teachers who also participated in this study concurred with the teachers and agreed that school inspectors helped to change their approach towards teachers as compared to the previous inspections carried out. This therefore gives an impression that the government can be assured of efficiency in schools since inspectors are aware of what teachers because they interact with them frequently. Through this interaction teachers are assured of more professional support from the inspectors. These findings concur with Ehren & Visscher (2008), who share a common understanding that, there should be a positive relationship and respect between teachers and school inspectors in order to have a productive dialogue.

Some comments may make some teachers relax hence increasing the number of indiscipline cases. In line with Hattle & Timperley (2007), they argued that not all feedback from the school inspectors is useful for schools. This therefore means that there is a lot of research that should be carried out on whether school inspection feedback is adequate enough to influence the quality of education. As opposed to Hattle & Timperley (2007), Ehren et al (2013) noted that educators need to see feedback as relevant, understandable, accurate, clear, and useful. This makes feedback to have the ability to influence the quality of inclusive education. However Gray & Wilcox (1995), assert that the feedback from the school inspectors would have a larger chance of being used if the teachers too are involved in the recommendations and if support is provided to schools rather than recommending without any support. In this study it was found that teachers were partially involved in the feedback process by interacting with their inspectors in order to know about their strength and weaknesses. According some of the teachers inspectors hardly involve them in writing the recommendations. This leaves teachers in suspense since they may seem to think that they are not considered as partners in education.

Despite these challenges, the government cannot relegate inspection because at some point it is noted that benefits are realized in the process though more is desired. School inspectors are capable of identifying weaknesses and strength of teachers. As revealed in the findings that inspectors identify teachers' strength and weakness and give them feedback according to what they have found. The process of identifying teachers' weaknesses and strength helps to improve teachers' practice and it makes them accountable for the quality of education they provide to the pupils.

Nevertheless, some successes of school inspection noted in the findings cannot be over celebrated. One would argue that school inspection is believed to have serious side effects that are too stressing (De Wolf & Janssens 2007). Research conducted in the Dutch primary schools showed that SI has very little impact on students results (Luginbuih et al 2007). Another study conducted by De Wolf & Janssens (2007) also yielded similar results. However, in Uganda, the findings showed that teachers perceive the role of SI as that aimed at providing necessary advice and support so as to ensure the improvement of schools and education in general. Another finding also suggested that head teachers agreed with the teachers as they mentioned that SI helped them to guide, influence, and support and lead their teams towards school improvement. This finding was supported by earlier research of Kamuyu (2001), who believes in minimum standards that should be adhered to and to offer a purposeful and constructive advice in the

improvement of teaching and learning, in schools. If this is the reality then inspection acts as a link between schools and authorities (De Grauwe, 2008). Indeed, the role of school inspectors is to ensure that teaching complies with the institutional expectations and to provide support to teachers.

Going through the findings, it was frustrating to note that some teachers perceived school inspection as an external imposition where the inspectors impose authority to them. This creates imbalance of priorities. This imbalance is confirmed by the research conducted by Semibreve (2009), who established that inspection was more threatening and stressful to the teachers because it only aimed at judging teachers than considering their expertise. Considering the local practice in Uganda SI seems to have little to offer for the improvement of schools. This therefore, presents a distorted picture of SI and its outcomes towards contributing to quality development in schools. The government feeling is that inspectors have enormous role to play in ensuring that the quality of teaching offered to learners will aim at benefiting them in terms of employment and further education and the inspectors need to help teachers in assessing how learners are progressing (MOES, 2012). While at the same time, the Ugandan education seems to be fully committed to embracing quality development of inclusive education despite shortfalls the education system encounters. Involvement in this respect is seen when inspectors are assigned to monitor schools which the government can use for other interventions.

On the contrary, the study found that teachers are keen to improve their service delivery although the support they receive from the school inspectors is inadequate due to lack of professional ethics on the part of some inspectors. When inspectors see that schools have some infrastructural problems such as classrooms, desks, textbooks, latrines there is little or no help offered. This has led to schools viewing inspection as a waste of time or just a creation of job opportunity for selected elite's citizen in the country. Therefore it can be deduced that though the teachers show interest in improving the quality of education, the unprofessional conduct of some inspectors, limited supportive structures makes them be de-motivated at their work. Findings also revealed that inspectors focus on class work and they also observe the schools structures they make recommendations but little is done by the office of the DEO in relation to the inspectors' recommendations. Attempts to hear the DEB'S voice on this allegation remained futile since he was always busy with other duties perhaps he would have explained further about this issue of recommendations.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Having looked at the analysis and discussion of the findings, it was noted that both main research question and minor research question were answered despite weaknesses encountered. Therefore, this chapter will present the recommendations and conclusions taking into account the gaps noted as regards to “How Quality Assurance and Standards Officers enhance the quality education and standard performance in the education practices in Isoka?”

#### **6.1.1 Recommendations**

Recommendations in this chapter are discussed based on the presentation of findings and the responses that emerged from the respondents. Some of these recommendations are suggested for the Government of Zambia and the Ministry of General Education (MoE). These include professional awareness, renewed vision, the role of leadership and further research. Later conclusions are drawn.

#### **6.1.2 Professional awareness**

It is an opportune time that Quality Assurance and Standards Officers and teachers in Zambia need orientation on professional ethics. This can be done at school, zone or at district level. During such sessions, professionals should be made aware of what they are expected to do. In a true sense, this must be ongoing practice that should result to awareness of roles of different working partners. Officers should be exemplary people and need to have a common language of practice. Reflecting on Ofsted (2010), the Officers (School administrators) must demonstrate their ability by providing continuous professional support so as to help teachers learn about their roles and gain more knowledge, skills and confidence to encourage learners to become independent. In line Nkinyangi (2006), also believes that there is need for teachers to take a responsibility of improving teaching and learning and developing pupils’ knowledge. However, this can be possible if the teachers are made aware of their professional responsibility.

Nevertheless, QASOs should continue visiting schools more frequent for inspection and monitoring and also have follow-up mechanism in order to ensure that the recommendations made are implemented. While in terms of curriculum supervision, QASOs should improve on

checking of the syllabi coverage and also student's assignments with their continuous assessment script to ensure marking takes place.

### **6.1.3 Renewed Vision**

The Ministry of General Education should work hand in hand with head teachers and Standard Officers to revise monitoring procedures in schools. Sometimes teachers are traumatized to see standards officers in school corridors. These years the focus should be on supervision as opposed to inspection which can be done after a length of time. In addition, there is need to iron out inconsistencies that have been committed for the past years surrounding the issue of inspection. This will help to change the attitude of teachers towards the inspection exercise and look at it as one that brings about positive change. As suggested by MOE (2012), there is need to encourage teachers and pupils to develop positive attitudes towards school inspection.

### **6.1.4 The role of leadership**

Leadership is about ability to lead a group of people in order to produce effective results. If properly managed leadership can be enjoyed because it has a respective value (Fullan, 2003). Inspectors and head teachers are potential leaders in schools and they need to demonstrate that they have the ability to lead a particular group. Experience has demonstrated that in most cases, bad leaders produce undesirable results as opposed to effective leaders. Those concerned with inspection should create conducive working environments for both experienced and inexperienced teachers. They should be modest in their language and examine the needs of the schools as that working as fault finders. Inspection should be done in a more friendly way to access what schools require and write recommendations for improvement. As added by Chima et al (2012), that leaders should foster good relationship that encourages intellectual stimulation among the staff in an effective way. Based on this it is important for leaders to ensure that they present themselves as people who move government policies forward and they need to emphasize supervisory and not inspectoral practices in order to bring about desired goals.

### **6.1.5 Further Research**

Based on the amount of literature and knowledge that is available as regards school monitoring in Isoka, this study is one of the few that has attempted to assess the role of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in enhancing quality education and standard performance in the education systems and may be used to enhance the quality of inclusive education. The issue is

that the government of Zambia needs to develop a comprehensive research agenda for schools most especially on what should be done to improve quality education and standard performance in the Country. Due to scanty literature at country level as regards school inspection and monitoring, more research needs to be conducted so as to inform the general public what is going on in schools.

As a practice, schools should also reconsider their positions in terms of teaching approaches, clearing misconceptions on policies and work in collaboration with research activities. The government and schools should research about which teaching approaches are effective and what issues are facing schools. This can be done as an action research in a school or collaborative research. The Ministry of Education and Sports also needs to track Academic achievements at the schools and establish scientific standards

## **6.2 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Quality Assurance and Standards Officers may influence the quality development of education practices in Zambia making suggestions as to ways in which standards officers can have a positive impact on teachers' work performance. According to the findings it was concluded that the study was conducted on a small scale due to the nature of the research design. The study adopted a few number of informants that used data during collection. Therefore, it cannot be generalized to the entire country but it was noted that school inspection and monitoring plays an important role in enhancing and improving the quality of education and standards performance particularly in Isoka district where the study was conducted. Some scholars like Grauwe (2007), look at school inspection and monitoring as a dictatorial and a controllable policy in the practice of education yet the world today considers school inspection a great concern that can be used in the improvement of quality education provided in order to meet the needs of a global market economy. By virtue of inspections currently conducted in Zambian schools, we cannot say that inspectors are the most knowledgeable officers. They still need more professional development to equip them with new skills and knowledge regarding their profession. As argued by Wilcox (2000), that the acceptability of school inspectors by the teachers depends largely on their competence in a subject area and the extent to which they can demonstrate their skills in teaching. Coombe et al (2006) add that teachers need to promote critical thinking that will enhance pupils to apply the acquired knowledge in their daily life. To ensure this, monitoring of the pupils ability and

teachers' competence in the classroom setting and professional support should be the major role of the school inspectors if their impact is to be recognized.

This study also highlighted the strategies the school inspectors (QASOs) use during inspection, their capacity to conduct a full and thorough inspection as a strategy of providing feedback to the teachers and building positive relationships that influence quality. Quality education still remains a problem since the teachers are unable to fully embrace the inspection process. Yet school inspection/monitoring have been proved to be the major means through which the government can monitor the quality of education provided in the community. Governments should provide schools with enough resources and more time should also be allocated towards the inspectorate in order to improve the quality of education than focusing on the old systems of inspection. The Zambian educational institutions need to be transformed to meet global challenges that are impeding progress. It is also better for the government to learn from other countries on how efficiency is cultivated in schools.

On the effectiveness of Quality Assurance and Standards Officers advisory assessment, the study concluded that QASOs rarely visited schools. Therefore, there was a common agreement from the respondents that Quality Assurance and Standards Officers visited schools once or twice per each term of the year. Further, the study revealed that the head teachers' relationship with Quality Assurance and Standards Officers was good as compared to teachers Quality Assurance and Standards Officers relationship. This led to low implementation of the recommendations made by QASOs after supervision and this could be one of the factors that negatively influenced quality of education in the public secondary schools.

Lastly findings and recommendations done in this research study are not exhaustive. A lot is desired in order to inform professionals on the best practices in schools at the national level. Due to the knowledge gaps existing in this study, the researcher suggests that more research be conducted. Thereby, the findings and literature in this research study may be used to improve practice at some level in Zambia.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE**

This questionnaire has only part A. Kindly provide an explanation in the space provided.

#### **SECTION A**

1. What is the meaning of school inspection and Quality Education?
2. How important is school inspection towards helping you in the improvement of teaching and learning in the classroom?
3. What kind of support do you get from your school inspector (QASOs) and head teacher during the Inspection and monitoring process?
4. What kind of methods and strategies do you use to teach the pupils classroom?
7. Suggest ways you think can improve the quality of education in your district.

## APPENDIX II: HEADTEACHERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questionnaire is in two parts A and B. Kindly tick in the box or provide an explanation in the space provided.

### SECTION A

1. What is your gender  Male  Female
2. What is your age  
25 – 35 years  36 – 40 years  41 – 45  46 – 60
3. How long have you served as the head teacher? .....
4. What is your professional qualification?  Diploma  Degree  Masters
5. How does School inspection attempt to enhance quality education and improve standard performance in the school?
6. What strategies do you encourage your teachers to use to manage teaching and learning in classrooms?
7. How effective is school inspection in helping your teachers lift the standard of education?
8. What kind of feedback do your teachers expect from the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers?
9. Does this feedback help them improve practice?
10. How do you demonstrate the spirit of hard work agenda in your school?
11. Suggest ways that can improve the quality of education in your school and district.

### SECTION B

#### INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION PRACTICES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS OFFICERS'.

Tick where necessary.

ROLES	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
Give professional guidance to teaches on better teaching methods					
Conduct audit monitoring					

Conduct internal monitoring in school					
Check on performance of each subject					
Inadequate supervision					
Limited learning resources					
Not preparing professional documents					
Not completing the syllabus					
Lack of adequate preparations					
Indiscipline in school					

1. What challenges and opportunities do teachers face with the Quality Assurance and Standards officers' school monitoring visits.....
2. In your opinion, how can the challenges be addressed? .....
3. Which reasons can mostly be attributed to enhancement of quality standards in your school?

	Very much	moderate	little	Very little
Failure to set goals				
Not enough teachers				
Inadequate supervision				
Limited learning resources				
Not preparing professional documents				

Not completing the syllabus				
Lack of adequate preparations				
Indiscipline in school				

4. What are some of the challenges staffs encountered during monitoring?

.....  
.....

5. In your own opinion, explain how the challenges can be addressed.....

.....  
.....  
.....

**THE END.**

### **APPENDIX III: Interview guide for Quality Assurance and standards Officers**

These interview questions are meant for academic only. They are not used for any other service, prejudicial to the respondents.

The information will be held in confidence.

Please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

#### **CHAPTER A**

1. Position of the quality Assurance and Standards Officers' .....
2. Period at present station.....
3. What is your highest academic qualification?.....
4. How many schools are you in charge of.....
5. How many times do you visit the schools per term.....
6. What do you look for during your (school) visits for administrators.....  
.....
7. How do you advise teachers in the following areas of operation?
  - (i) Syllabus coverage.....
  - (ii) Professional documents.....
  - (iii) Teaching/learning methods.....
  - (iv) Specific objectives.....
  - (v) Performance of the learners.....
8. Do you hold meetings after having monitored the teachers during the school visit?  
 Yes             No  
Do you conduct follow up monitoring?
9. Are there some challenges you encounter whilst conducting monitoring to schools, if so list them;  
.....
10. How can they be solved?.....

**THE END.**

## **APPENDIX IV: PROFESSIONAL MATTERS - DOCUMENTARY**

**PUT A TICK [√] in a box where you select appropriately.**

1. A healthy school is where pupils come to school in time. Teachers come to school in time. The head teacher comes to school in time and the school starts promptly as scheduled and teachers work as a team. The school's healthy organization leads to a good teaching morale and good examination results.

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

2. Teachers in our school are committed to their work because they are provided with necessities for teaching (textbooks, preparation books, teaching aids etc)

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

3. Teachers in our school are less committed because they are not given all necessities above.

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

4. Learners are undisciplined and this discourages teachers from doing their work efficiently.

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

5. Poor management in schools leads to low performance in the school.

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

6. Staff meeting should be held at least twice a term but sometimes they are conducted irregularly as the situation dictates.

Disagree      Neutral      Agree

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**