

CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.0. INTRODUCTION

Quality Assurance in Secondary Education is a continuing concern because of three major reasons first, the launching of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) launched in March, 2009 with the main aim of achieving quality secondary education. Second, Quality of education and its assurance fundamentally emerges of all crucial issues in the context of increasing recognition of the role of secondary education for national development. Third, there is undoubtedly a change in the secondary education landscape with a huge success of SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan). Besides these factors, it is also evident that the Grant in aid secondary schools is becoming complex in terms of expanding access and depends on the government for their full financial resources. Given such a scenario, there is a rise a concern about quality of education which in turn leads to the demands for accountability on the part of the State Board Secondary Schools.

Since more than six decades secondary education was given importance through various programs and policies on the improvement of quality. But it still invites more attention. The secondary education commission of 1952-53, commonly known as Mudliar Commission recommended the establishment of a board of secondary education to deal with all aspects of education at the secondary stage. It mentioned that quality secondary education is indispensable in

creating a bright future for individuals and nation alike. Thus strengthening the secondary and higher secondary stage by improving quality in a significant way, would enable Indian students to compete successfully for education and jobs globally. The Objectives of the NPE (The National Policy on Education) and POA (The Programme of Action), 1992, stressed to improve the quality of education in the country by providing education facilities to all the citizens of the nation, identifying and encouraging development of infrastructures, curriculum reforms, identification of learning outcomes in the form of competencies for secondary and higher secondary stage, reforming curriculum in the teacher training institutes for competency based teaching and learning and encouraging states to recruit teachers through objective methods of testing and to provide regular in-service training to the teachers. Therefore an important area of consideration is the Secondary Education Board and the role played by the Education Boards in achieving the quality of Secondary Education. In the present context, the Secondary Education Board needs to be made more relevant, efficient, and all-encompassing to cope with the management of change and maintain quality in education to cater to the emerging needs.

5.1. THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

The main concern of school effectiveness research has been to discover those school related factors that are critical in determining student achievement. According Scheerens (2004) school effectiveness consists of Intellectual capital, Social capital and Organisational capital. Thus, the main concern of school effectiveness research has been to discover those school related factors that are critical in determining student achievement. As per the literature effective

schools are frequently self-managing and self-improving they are flexibly structured to maximize the use of time and accommodate the varied lives of their students, staff, and community in order to improve the performance of all students. It includes all the contextual variables related with school such as teaching, learning, administration, student's motivation and community involvement. The term school effectiveness has been used to describe educational research concerned with exploring differences within and between schools (Goldstein, 1997). It also focuses on pupil's progress that might be expected considering their background and initial attainment (Mortimore, 1991).

An effective school adds extra value to its student's outcomes in comparison with other schools. One of the main objectives of school effectiveness research is concerned with the exploration of "explanatory and outcome factors using appropriate models" (Goldstein, 1997). Therefore, it is of main importance to develop adequate and reliable ways to measure the quality of the school (Mortimore, 1991). McCarthy (1980) view school success "as positive changes in any one, or a combination, of the following four variables: 1) student achievement, 2) student attitudes toward the school or themselves as learners, 3) teacher attitudes toward the school or students as learners, 4) community/parent attitudes towards the school". Hartwell and Vargas-Baron (1998) propose an idealistic "concept of quality that is not based on how well a few succeed, but rather on how well all succeed. Quality, thus, is attained when all student succeed in learning, according to their learning styles and abilities, not just those who are judged in traditional terms to be the most able".

5.2. THE NEED FOR SELF-EVALUATION AS A QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICE

During the self-evaluation process of a school the absence or presence of quality assurance mechanisms and procedures enables Principals of schools to determine whether they are indeed enhancing the quality of their schools. In such a self-evaluation exercise the primary aim is to determine the mission statement of the school and, in line with this, its goals/aims and objectives in the light of its notion of quality and the role it sees for itself. It is extremely important that the school should prioritize identified mechanisms and procedures.

The task of quality assurance in Secondary Schools is not to implement a prescriptive quality assurance system, but to develop, a system that will be owned by all, by means of a participatory and comprehensive approach. With such an approach both those who manage (e.g. Principals and Trustees) and those who are managed (e.g. Teachers/Facilitators) will be made aware of their responsibilities with regard to establishing quality in their management and teaching functions. Besides, quality assurance is not about fulfilling the expectations of school inspectors, but it should be taken as an integrated aspect of school work, teaching learning activities and the general performance of teachers. Therefore, in order to ensure that the quality assurance process is for continual improvement of all the activities and the overall performance of the school, continuous self-evaluation should form part of the planning of the schools. Unfortunately this self-evaluation system of assuring quality in schools is not followed in all the Secondary Schools today.

Thus, Educational system in India needs immediate interventions to remove deficiencies at schools level and for this, attempts have to be made to develop school education and sustain quality enhancement through self-evaluation. All this cannot be fruitful unless there is an efficient delivery system which effectively implements the objectives of school education. The delivery system has to relate to management of school education at the micro (school), meso (district) as well as at the macro (government) levels. Along with the efficient delivery system there also have to be certain parameters set to monitor quality of schools at secondary level. Researcher has focuses on the monitoring of school quality through the development of indicator systems, for it is essential to know not only “which factors work” to make schools effective, but also to identify according to which indicators school quality is being assessed in different parts of the world.

5.3. INDICATORS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

The major concern of this study was to explore the literature on school effectiveness in order to identify the in-school and out of school factors that were found to be crucial determinants of school quality. According to (Murnane, 1987) Quality indicators can be divided as; Inputs, Process and Outputs, where the inputs include financial, physical and Human resources required to function at each educational level. Financial resources include educational expenditures per student. Physical resources include the age and quality of facilities as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries and any other physical resources required for academic and administrative functions of the school. Human resource includes the teacher,

pupil, parents and other human resources engaged in educational activities at each class level. They also include background information about these teachers such as educational qualifications, experience, and perhaps knowledge competencies and attitudes.

Willms (2004) notes that many countries have established programmes to collect indicators of school quality for monitoring performance at national, regional and local levels. Quality of education becomes a matter of degree of the presence of the indicators, rather than an absolute, or discrete variable. This assertion is consistent with Yin's (1996) observation that, evaluation of school performance must focus on multi-level and multi-facet indicators including inputs, process, and outputs of schooling in addition to academic development of students. Ideally, indicators should evaluate both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of schools. The quantitative indicators available in most countries are enrolment ratios, learner achievement levels, qualification of teachers etc. The quality indicators given by UNESCO in 2005, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in 2005 and the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) in 2009 focuses on bringing improvement in the education outcomes and thereby enhancing quality of education.

Process indicators which reflect the classroom reality are difficult to measure. Hence, methods of evaluation should include both quantitative data and qualitative information collected through interviews, observations and discussions. According to Harvey and Green, when quality is approached or viewed in terms of value of money, the approach focuses on performance

indicators. Quality at this level is assessed in terms of quantitative improvement. In a school situation, an increase in the number of schools with 100% results in the public examination or the number of 1st class candidates in each year's Board examination results could quantitatively indicate quality improvement. Thus, the system of indicators of quality in education, as well as the quality criteria associated with the indicators, helps schools to point out the important areas of their own activities, their own advantages and disadvantages and development opportunities. School quality team can debate about representation and development of particular indicator aspect and search for method to upgrade and improve indicator representation in specific school circumstances. Researcher after analysing the quality indicators given by UNESCO, RMSA and CBSE selected six quality indicators for this study that represented the top performing schools.

5.4. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In the present study different studies related to quality assurance, effective school systems, teacher effectiveness and school leadership are discussed. The review of literature was designed to reflect both the local and the international trends and features of the current movements and practices for quality assurance in education and also put an emphasis on quality and quality assurance practices followed in the top performing schools. For the sake of more clarity and to be focused on highlighting the relevant literature, the review literature was divided into four main sections.

- ***Studies Related to Effective Schools***

Among the most rigorous empirical studies that examine how effective schools quality management affects students' outcomes, Mohana (1983) finds that a dedicated Head, close supervision of system by authority and favourable tradition create favourable system effect on the individual member of the system. The students of innovative schools were found to have higher academic achievement. Govinda and Varghese (1993) find that the quality of the school was also found to depend on the provision of a certain minimum school facilities. The conclusions drawn correspond with the findings of studies in developing countries on the factors that are pivotal for learner's achievement. As seen elsewhere the crucial elements appeared to be the provision of physical facilities and inputs which were necessary, but not sufficient conditions for achievement.

- ***Studies related to School Climate and Teacher Effectiveness in Effective Schools***

A positive school climate promotes cooperative learning, group cohesion, respect, and mutual trust. These particular aspects have been shown to directly improve the learning environment (Finnan, Schnepel, & Anderson, 2003; Ghaith, 2003; Kerr, Ireland, Lopes, Craig, & Cleaver, 2004). School climate is an important factor in the successful implementation of school reform programs (Bulach & Malone, 1994; Dellar, 1998; Gittelson et al., 2003; Gregory, Henry, & Schoeny, 2007; Guffey, Higgins-D'Alessandro, & Cohen, 2011; Guo & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2011).

- ***Studies Related to Leadership and Student Achievement in Effective Schools***

Studies of effective schools are unanimous in their linking of school quality to the importance of school leadership roles and to the increasingly intricate and multifaceted responsibilities of the principal ship (Hall, 2002). Fox (1991) classifies leadership among the most crucial aspects to the top management responsibility besides the aspects of developing a vision for the future, setting specific quality objectives and establishing the budget for quality. Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford (2006) found that values and beliefs of principals and capacity building could contribute to the student outcomes. Gentilucci and Muto (2007) focused on the student perceptions on instructional leadership behaviours of principals which most positively influenced their learning and academic achievements. These studies identified key areas that were significant in effective schools. All the reviewed studies focused on how the schools implement certain mechanisms for bringing quality in their system. More or less, the school effectiveness or school quality has been viewed in terms of the cognitive outcomes attained by the student's achievement that is easily measured by standardized tests.

5.5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

This review of the literature primarily focused upon the quality assurance in education and the quality mechanisms followed in the high achieving secondary schools. From the definitions of quality assurance it was observed that in the first section; '*Studies Related to Effective Schools*' showed five school

processes i.e. strong leadership, focus on learning skills, an orderly school and classroom environment, high expectations of pupil's attainment and frequent evaluation of progress emerged as important for effective schools. The second section, *'Studies related to School Climate and Teacher Effectiveness in Effective School'* argued that teachers help schools in attaining goals and objectives. But when we see the current position of the working of schools in the country it is equally important for the schools to formulate clear goals in the areas where it has to work and to follow up and evaluate these goals and use the results to develop the schools further. The third section was on *'Studies Related to Leadership and Student Achievement in Effective Schools'* it showed that Schools are open systems and are flexible to change. They remain in constant touch with the supra system and are in the process of constant change. This requires dynamic school leaders who encourage ambitious instruction among their teachers that improves overall student achievement according to their learning styles. But the question remains whether our leaders are sensitive enough to make sure that the staffs have the time needed for this work. The literature review thus facilitated the researcher to put the present study in perspective with current knowledge and practices in its chosen area. It was found that there is a need for more research in these areas as opportunities for more research will not only address concerns regarding the effectiveness of the implementation of the processes in local context but will also contribute to knowledge in this area. For instance, more research will be necessary to understand the perceptions of the

various stakeholder groups about the nature, outcomes and effectiveness of the processes in order to effectively evaluate their outcomes. Owing to the ambiguity in quality concepts, varying contexts and deeply embedded problems within the education system on the whole especially in the Indian context, the present study is both timely, relevant and has the potential to make significant contribution to schools for achieving quality and enhancing student performance.

5.6. RATIONALE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Quality of secondary education is a major concern of the country. Parents keep attaching more importance to the quality education and motivate their children towards stern competitions to secure a seat in the best schools. The major objective of the best schools is the learning outcomes of students, which is exhibited in form of cognitive achievement. So they take the students' cognitive achievement as an important indicator of school quality along with other indicators. Quality of a school system can be ascertained only with its identified indicators. The school authorities thus, monitor quality continuously with respect to different identified indicators and take appropriate actions to achieve the goals. Such an approach helps the management and the teachers to be aware of their responsibilities with regard to establishing quality in their management and teaching functions.

The systems and practices of assuring quality of education in the State Board Secondary Schools needs immediate concern of the government as the development and implementation of quality assurance in Secondary Education is

one of the areas of ongoing debate (RMSA launched in March, 2009 with the main aim of achieving quality secondary education) and with this quality of education and its assurance has come to the forefront of all crucial issues in the context of increasing recognition of the role of Secondary Education for National development. The huge success of SSA (SarvaShikshaAbhiyan) has also increased the need of rapid institutional and enrolment expansion. This expansion depends on financial resources which are stringent, it increases the complexity of Grant in aid secondary schools in terms of expanding access as they depend on government for their full financial resources. These trends raise a concern about quality of education and thus lead to demands for accountability on the part of State Board Secondary Schools.

So far, there were no accreditation standards for primary and secondary education institutes in India. The private schools have set forth their own standards of school governance. On the other hand, the National Accreditation Board, and Training (NABET) established for improving quality of schools (has developed the procedures for schools that seek the accreditation) has not been made mandatory. Such apathy towards ensuring quality education has raised the question of how Secondary State Boards demonstrates quality of education in a changing secondary education environment and it requires an understanding of their current practices and systems for assuring quality based on empirical research.

In Gujarat school inspections is the only mode of assessing quality of educational institutions and thus serves an important link between the education administration and individual schools. Inspections are carried out via field functionaries who at district levels monitor the programmes launched by the department of school education and thus ensure quality in education. As per NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training 2001) in Gujarat despite the inspection system is at place to monitor school quality, the reality of quality assessment is not satisfactory as the appointment of education officers at the district level to supervise subjects in secondary schools is a token process. District education officers do not visit the required number of schools while the size of the education system has increased tremendously in terms of number of institutions. Teachers are having a negative impact due to the 'summative' (combined) nature of inspection as the system causes fear of dismissal, frustration and unneeded competition among the teachers. Thus, quality of education is not monitored as required to enhance the teaching- learning processes in schools.

To manage quality of education in the schools, self-evaluation or school based evaluation as an internal evaluation must be effectively followed along with the external evaluation made by the inspectors. To make school based evaluation work for the benefit of the learners, it must be an integral part of the school's day-to-day management. Moreover, teachers and support staff need to be involved in the design of internal quality assurance mechanisms, and they in turn are empowered to use and embed. In fact it is the staff who will make things happen for an institution so the way in which they are valued and respected will play a major part as school based evaluation is a team effort.

The main focus of the research was to identify the top performing secondary schools of Gujarat and study the quality indicators prevailing in the school system as perceived by the teachers, parents and students. The study has also explored the current practices of quality assurance in the areas of quality indicators and then developed the scenario of best practices in selected top performing schools. Such a study will highlight the importance of quality assurance system in schools for excellent performance and then help in understanding how such systems are developed at school level and integrated in the school system.

Theoretically, this study will be an effort to bridge the research gap in the area of Quality Assurance in Secondary Education. The findings of the study can be used to develop theoretical framework and/or model for building Quality Assurance Systems that fits to the context of State Board Secondary Schools in Gujarat. The conceptual understanding of the problem and the insights gained from the review of related literature helped the researcher to formulate the following research questions for the present study.

5.7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the rationale of the study the following research question emerged;

- 1) What is the status of the secondary school education in the state of Gujarat in terms of quality education?
- 2) What are the quality assurance mechanisms that are being practiced in secondary schools of Gujarat?

- 3) What are the quality indicators in the secondary schools of Gujarat?
- 4) How quality is assured in secondary schools of Gujarat by the government in terms of monitoring and evaluation of educational programmes?
- 5) Whether the individual schools adopt school based quality assurance system?
- 6) To what extent quality assurance system in the schools making an impact on school improvement?
- 7) What are the good practices of quality assurance in secondary schools of Gujarat?

5.8. PRESENT STUDY

A Study on the Quality Assurance System in the Secondary Schools of Gujarat State

5.9. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To study the policies and programmes for Quality Assurance in Secondary Schools of Gujarat
- 2) To identify the quality indicators as perceived by the teachers, parents, and students of the top performing secondary schools of Gujarat.
- 3) To study the best practices of quality assurance system in top performing secondary schools of Gujarat.

5.10. EXPLANATION OF THE TERMS

- ***Quality Assurance System:***

The term ‘Quality Assurance System’ is understood to refer to the movements, procedures, or activities through which these special properties, attributes, values or characters of an organization or establishment are maintained and the quality of the product or service guaranteed. In this study the term ‘Quality assurance System in the Secondary schools of Gujarat’ refers to those special efforts, procedures or activities or the best practices that are carried out by the high achieving state board secondary schools of Gujarat in their effort to maintain and guarantee quality outcomes in teaching and learning.

- ***Secondary Schools:***

Secondary school is a grade of education from Standards IX to XII which caters to the students from ages 14 to 17 years.

5.11. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study focused exclusively on top performing English Medium Secondary Schools affiliated to the Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB). Hence it may not be easy to generalize the results in schools where conditions of learning are different.

The study is also delimited to the secondary schools of Central Gujarat. The Central Gujarat comprise of Vadodara, Kheda, Anand, Dahod and Panchmahal districts.

5.12. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study employed a mixed method design, which included procedures for “collecting, analyzing, and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006) to answer research questions.

5.13. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study comprises of all the Secondary (644) and Higher Secondary (361) schools affiliated with the Gujarat state Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board. As far as the secondary schools (GSHSEB) are concerned there are only a few secondary schools run by the government, majority of the secondary schools are run by trust and funded by grants from the government. There are secondary schools in tribal areas known as Ashram Shalas with hostel facilities; these are run by the welfare department of the government in rural and tribal areas runs.

5.14. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

Purposive sampling technique was used in identifying and selecting top twenty secondary schools of Gujarat for the initial survey. After identifying the schools and arranging them in order as per the academic performance of the students in SSC Board Exams, the top twenty schools were selected for the present study. Teachers, parents and students were then selected randomly from each of the schools to collect data to study quality indicators in schools through questionnaire survey. The random sample consisted of 20 principals 200 teachers, 100 parents and 100 students randomly selected from 20 high achieving State Board Secondary Schools of Gujarat.

5.15. TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The research instruments used for data collection; were questionnaire for parents, students and teachers, open ended interview schedule for Principals and Board officials ‘and Focus Group Discussion for parents.

5.15.1. Interview Schedule

The researcher conducted unstructured and open-ended in-depth interviews, it allowed participants to share their opinions about causes for school and student success, it allowed participants to share what they believed were the most influential actions and activities that they have experienced. Questions were framed in such a way that it helped to elicit responses about school success, positive culture of improvement, student learning, consistent staff development, and celebration of success as these components are critical to school success.

5.15.2. Questionnaire

In this study open-ended questions were used on Likert’s five point scale. It was administered to all teachers, parents and students in each of the twenty schools. The items surveyed teachers’ perceptions about their own practice, pedagogical preferences, assessment, the affective domain of their teaching, their observations of leadership, and the quality culture of the school. Open ended questions enabled the respondents to express general attitudes and opinions that helped the researcher to interpret responses to structured questions. Thus, they were useful in identifying underlying, motivations, beliefs, and attitudes. The questionnaires were developed and administered to the teachers, students and parents.

5.15.3. Document Analysis

In this study the document analysis was conducted to uncover information regarding policies on quality assurance in secondary education, school's student achievement data as well as policy intentions of quality assurance, staff and student profiles etc. The researcher collected the documents which contained information about the policies of school, goals of schools, vision and mission, communication regarding interactions/dealing between principal-teachers, teachers-learners and principal-learners. Some of the documents identified were the school diary, teachers log book, School board results, guidelines, circulars, the annual calendar of schools, the school magazine, newsletter, the muster roll, the record of students, the record of students' result in Class X and XII (2009-2013), published materials related to secondary education and quality assurance circulars (regarding fee structure, schedules for admission, and communication to parents)

5.15.4. Focused Group Discussion

In this study the group of parents of the sampled schools were the members of the focused group discussion, where the researcher herself steered the group by initiating the discussion on the topic of quality assurance to know their opinions and perceptions on quality assurance practices in their schools. From each school minimum five PTA members were selected randomly for focus group discussion.

5.15.5. Observation Schedule

Observations are a critical component of data collection in qualitative studies. While interviews and surveys do provide insight into the inner workings of the environment, they are restricted by the memories, communication abilities, and openness of those participating in the interview. During the study, researcher conducted on-site observations with the help of observation schedule prepared by the researcher (Appendix-B, C) of the routine events at the sample schools: academic activities, PTA meetings, events, and meetings of the staff and school leadership. Thus some good practices in the schools have been formally observed during the field study. In so doing, researcher was able to fill the role of participant-observer.

5.16. COLLECTION OF THE DATA

Data was collected in the following phases;

Phase-I

In phase-I, Researcher selected twenty top performing schools using purposive sampling technique. The criteria evolved to select the sample schools were as follows;

1. The schools which were showing consistent high result for the SSC Board Examination for the last five consecutive years in the central Gujarat.
2. Schools with students of top ten district and state level ranking in SSC Board Examination.

Phase-II

In phase II, Researcher conducted a survey by implementing the survey questionnaire to the teacher's parents and students to study quality indicators in these top twenty secondary schools.

Phase-III

In phase III Researcher identified four top performing schools from the analysis of the survey questionnaire for in-depth case study.

Phase-IV :

In phase IV researcher conducted in depth case studies on four schools identified as top performing from the survey.

5.17. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED

The collected data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data was reduced into descriptive statistics such as percentages; correlations, t-tests, and by using one-way ANOVA. The qualitative data were also transcribed, coded and interpreted thematically. The thematic approach was followed to display the analyses and findings from both quantitative and qualitative data. The themes for the data analyses were derived from the conceptual framework of the study that was grounded in the basic research questions.

5.18. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are presented under the following subheadings:

- Quality Assurance Policies and Practices in Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board.

- Quality Indicators in Top Performing Secondary Schools.
- Internal Quality Assurance System in the Top Performing Secondary Schools

5.18.1 Quality Assurance Policies and Practices in Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board

The following are the major findings for the Quality Assurance System existing in Secondary Schools of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB) in terms of relevant policies and quality assurance practices.

- It was found from the study that the state government has taken initiatives to monitor quality in school education by instituting various bodies at state, district and village levels.
- Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board conduct inspection & supervision of secondary schools in the state and it conducts Academic Panel inspections, to bring up the quality of schools identified as low performing. Secondary Education
- Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board's latest initiative for quality assurance of secondary schools is Gunotsav Drive. It's initiative for improving quality of education are Model English schools in rural Gujarat, Grant of financial assistance for secondary schools to purchase computers, Education innovation Commission and Quality accreditation council.

- The study revealed that the government of Gujarat has divided schools into “ShalaSankools” for effective monitoring of quality in schools.
- Gujarat Council of Educational Research and Training is a nodal agency responsible to bring out qualitative improvement at all the levels of school education and for implementing the educational policies, programs and researches. It provides various training programs and academic guidance through extension services.
- The study revealed that the mean scores of quality indicators; Student Achievement, Infrastructure and Teachers Professional Development were found high as per the perceptions of Teachers in the top performing schools.
- The study revealed that the mean scores of quality indicators; Infrastructure, School Leadership and Student Achievement were found high as per the perceptions of Parents in the top performing schools.
- The study revealed that the mean scores of quality indicators; Student Achievement, School Leadership and Infrastructure were found high as per the perceptions of Students in the top performing schools.

5.18.2. Quality Indicators in Top Performing Secondary Schools

The following findings of the study are presented under the headings of the quality indicators identified in the top performing secondary schools of Baroda City. These findings have emerged from the in depth case studies conducted by the researcher. The study revealed that several school based practices are being implemented by the schools to control and monitor quality within the institutions.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The findings of the study under the Quality Indicator ‘School Leadership’ are presented under the following subheadings;

Academic Leadership

- It was found from the study that the mean score of the indicator ‘school leadership’ was high as perceived by the students, teachers and parents as an essential indicator in the top performance schools.
- From the study, it was found that school leadership ensures participatory approach; realistic planning, implementation and effective monitoring can create leaning culture in the institutions.
- It was found from the study that the Principals have democratic behaviour with the staff they play transformative role by taking initiatives and managing the day to day activities of the schools.
- The study revealed that the principals were both visible and accessible and giving personal attention to the employees. This leads to increasing their enthusiasm and reducing frustration, thus indirectly increasing their level of performance and job satisfaction.
- It emerged from the study that there are high expectations for students’ academic performance and strong discipline programs, as a contributing factor in the schools’ success.
- The study revealed that the Principals focus on communications and connections among the teachers, parents and communities.

- During the interviews the Principals revealed that the parents give high value to their children's education and this leads to high levels of student performance in schools.
- The study revealed that the Principals plan the timetable for remedial teaching for weak students to bring improvement in their performance. They also plan extra classes and orientation programs for the SSC Board Students before they appear for the Board Exam.
- It was found from the study that the Principals ensure the coherence in curricula, teaching learning, and assessment processes.

Administrative Leadership

- The study revealed that the majority of the principals use written documents (records of syllabus and other work covered, student's progress records and class attendance register, student's personal profiles, teacher appraisal reports etc.) for the academic and administrative decision making.
- It emerged from the study that the Principals have an ability to target resources where they are needed, hire the best available teachers, provide teachers with the opportunities they need to improve, and keep the school running smoothly.
- With respect to the quality assurance mechanisms followed in the schools i.e. the school inspections, all the principals revealed that schools supervision, monitoring and inspection are carried out once in a year by the District Education Officer (DEO). The inspectors assess student's Attendance Register and Teacher's Record of work, Schools Diary and Mark sheets to determine whether they are well kept and whether the pupil's scores are credible.

- School Principals have clearly indicated that schools and staff expected that the Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board to be more involved in academic improvement of schools.
- It emerged from the Principals interview that the schools do duplication of work (data of students) and attend repetitive meetings of school (sankool) which is made compulsory by the Gujarat Board. They consider it as inappropriate and a waste of time.
- Principals shared that academic and administrative inspections in schools are carried out once in a year for one day by the office of District Education Officer.
- Many Principals complained that the link between internal and external quality assurance is missing, because there is no external review (by DEO through inspections) of the programs or activities carried out by these schools to enhance quality. There is no recognition or good ranking on the basis of the innovations or quality achievements by the schools.
- It was found from the study that the principals define the school-wide behavior expectations, document them and display throughout the school building.
- Researcher found that the schools have mission statements and attendance policies which are reinforced in multiple ways. The vision and the resulting mission statement do assist the schools in developing the school goals.
- Majority of the Principals shared that the school conducts annual comprehensive data driven needs assessment.

- It was found from the study that the majority of secondary schools have developed a comprehensive school plan that delineates the responsibility, accountability and established timelines.
- It emerged from the study that the school plans are reviewed on a regular basis to determine if established goals need to be revised, refined or discarded.
- It was found from the study that majority of school Principals are more accountable to parents and remains answerable to them. This was in line of the responses of parents in the focussed group discussion.
- It was observed by the researcher that the Principals keep the student trophies in their rooms and students achievement certificates hanged on the walls this shows an idealised influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation on the part of the principals.
- Researcher observed that the principals had good interpersonal skills and ability to establish positive connections and relationship with their staff, students and parents this provides a firm foundation for academic success to their schools.
- It was found from the Principals interview that all the principals directly or indirectly were accountable to the stakeholders.
- It was found from the study that all the principals make an attempt to create community within their School diaries by including parents' home and cellular telephone numbers in school calendars (and in one instance similar information for parents). Such information would appear to foster

communication between parents, teachers, and students outside school hours.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER RESOURCES

The findings of the study under the indicator ‘Quality Indicator Infrastructure and Other Resources’ are presented under the following subheadings;

Physical Facilities

- It emerged from the study that the mean value of the indicator ‘Infrastructure’ was also found essential by teachers, parents and students for top performing schools.
- From the observation and survey questionnaire it was revealed by the parents and students that the schools have well maintained infrastructure. The buildings were clean, classroom furniture were well maintained, auditorium chairs were in good condition, the light fixtures and fans were in working condition.
- It was observed by the researcher that the schools have a computer room with enough computers in good working conditions for each student, art room, sports equipment room, music room, teacher staff rooms located closer to classrooms, large classes with big windows of glasses for good ventilation and each classroom with two doors one for entry and other for exit as well as smart board, enough storage area for students project work. Less noisy halls, Office well equipped with computers, printers and Xerox machines.

- From the study it emerged that most of the secondary schools were located in conducive learning environments such as huge buildings spaces with acres of land. These schools had enough room for playgrounds.
- It emerged from Principals interviews that they had adequate finances to improve the school facilities.

Teaching Learning Material

- From observation, it was noted that ICT based student centered approaches in instruction were used by teachers to develop higher order skills and promoting quality education.
- It was a unanimous agreement of teachers in the survey that the classrooms were in good condition for teaching and there were availability of Science Laboratory, functional computers, library and sports facilities in all the secondary schools.
- The internet and email facility provided by the schools is effectively utilized for correspondence work. Schools have an access to most of the important online journals for teachers.
- It was observed by the researcher that the schools have all sorts of teaching-aids like OHP, computers, smart boards, teaching/learning materials, subject related software's etc. while the students learn their lessons through smart boards and there is lot of interaction among the students and teachers while the lessons are being taught.

Health and Hygiene

- From the study it was found that the classrooms, laboratories and libraries were well maintained.
- The researcher observed that the environment of the school was quite clean and hygienic.
- The study found that majority of schools has their grounds covered with walls and barbed wires with a guard at the gate.
- It was found from the study that the classroom climate was comfortable throughout the year in terms of ventilation, lighting, temperature and noise.
- It was observed by the researcher that the majority of schools had well equipped medical rooms with a trained nurse and the schools maintain student's medical details.
- Study found that the schools have kitchen and provides healthy and nutritious snacks and lunch to the students.
- It was observed by the researcher that special care was taken for the student's safety. Science Laboratories and sports ground and floor corridors are never unsupervised even during the short and long breaks in the school.
- The study brings out that the schools indoor and outdoor space meets the needs of all program activities.

STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT

The findings of the study under the Quality Indicator 'Student's Achievement' are presented under the following subheadings;

Scholastic

- It emerged from the study that the mean value of the indicator 'Student Achievement' was also high and found essential for top performing schools.
- The study found that the amount of instructional time spent by teachers and students in the teaching - learning activity, significantly enhances student achievement.
- It was found from the study that the Principal along with academic and administrative staff work towards providing students an interactive stimulating environment, where teaching is pupil-centric rather than teacher-dominated.
- It was evident from the school documents that the students are provided with the opportunities to re-learn, this helps student engagement particularly in the area where student needs extra support and the schools utilize their own successful alumni to inspire and connect with younger students.
- Researcher found out that the schools have high expectations from the students, as schools have 45 percent result as pass rate for school tests rather than the required 35 percent pass rate prescribed by the Board.

Co Scholastic

- The observation results showed that feedback on important issues was taken from students through informal interaction with them and there was a sense of belonging and pride for the school.
- The study found that student leadership as an important factor that leads to high student achievement. Student Leadership groups includes; Student Representative Council which is elected by students.
- Researcher's observation indicated that school has a well-functioning strategy to prevent indiscipline. There is discipline in charges from all the sections of the school and they meet regularly to discuss the rules.
- It was found from the study that the main strength of school is that the teachers challenge students enough to keep them engaged.
- Majority of the students appreciated opportunities provided by schools for demonstrating leadership and acquiring a range of social and team work skills in a safe environment, e.g. the student body organization in schools like the Student Council provide them with an opportunity to exercise leadership and share responsibility for the success of the school.
- Researcher observed that the students perceived that the uniforms, house activities, inter-school competitions and other school-focused events strengthened their sense of belonging and pride in the school.

- It was observed by the researcher that the school had implemented a range of strategies that were designed to create a positive school-wide culture of learning and engagement including:
 1. Creating a vibrant and competitive ‘house’ system which fostered a sense of belonging and identity for students.
 2. Facilitating participation in sports through access to quality facilities, free uniform, free transport to games and competitions recognising and rewarding the top students with high attendance
 3. Celebrating academic, cultural and sporting achievement of students.
- It was found from the study that the disciplinary standards are well set both for teachers and students. (There are set rules for the teacher’s timings, leaves, absenteeism, curriculum completion etc. and for student’s rules related to late coming, poor performance in examinations, curricular and curricular activities, attendance etc.)

CURRICULUM TRANSACTION IN CLASSROOM

The findings of the study under the Quality Indicator ‘Curriculum Transaction in Classroom’ are presented under the following subheadings;

Classroom organization and Management

- The indicator ‘Curriculum Transaction’ has low mean score in survey than the other indicators which is indicative of the increasing role of teachers as facilitators in the classrooms and students at the centre of their decision making.

- Researcher found from the observations that teachers have a positive relationship with students, they call each student by name.
- It was found from the study that the teachers have high expectations for students. They develop different strategies for each student and keep the parents informed of their progress.
- It was found from the study that the teachers plan different strategies for student behaviour in the schools, these includes introduction of points system linking attendance, behaviour and homework and the student could use the points accrued towards attendance at the end-of-year in increasing their house points for the best student or best sportsman award.
- It was found from the study that the Principals regularly inspect the staff activities and what they expect from the staff.

Teaching-Learning Strategies/Methods, Aids and ICT used in Transactional Process

- The study revealed that teachers preferred using technology and project work in the classrooms transactions.
- It was found from the study that the students were engaged in the Project Based Learning and they are judged on their projects. This creates transparency in learning expectations and fosters a sense of mutual responsibility in the students teaching learning process.
- The study found that the teachers believe in collaboration and team work and considered it to be having greatest influence on their effectiveness and success.

- Researcher found that the teachers in these schools plan weekly assessments for students and make efforts to achieve high pass percentage for students.
- It was found from the study that the Principals have daily classroom visits to ensure that effective teaching learning is taking place.

Involvement of Students in Teaching-Learning Process

- It was found that careful monitoring of student academic success emerged to be the major attribute of schools along with well-planned remedial teaching schedules.
- The study revealed that the students are engaged in class projects in different subjects where they contribute to questions and searches for answers. They present their work in the form of seminars in the classrooms.
- It was observed by the researcher that the students are given timely feedback of their work and it helps them to improve. They assess their own performance and set goals for future performance.

TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The findings of the study under the Quality Indicator 'Teacher's Professional Development' are presented under the following subheadings;

Opportunities for Lifelong learning/Work Based Learning/Organizational Learning

- It was found from the study that all (100%) of teachers had undertaken initial training course (B.Ed.). It was also noted that majority of teachers (80%) had received short in-service courses in schools.

- It was observed that the Teachers undergo various training, short term courses, workshops and seminars to assist in learning the principles of pedagogy and classroom management through, with subject specific work.
- The results of document analysis showed that the workshops and various National and International training programmes have helped the school develop and implement various innovative practices in school administration, academic curriculum design, classroom transactions, technology-embedded assessment, and evaluation and feedback mechanism

Academic Environment Through Networking and Teacher Collaboration/Team Teaching

- Effective mechanisms are in place in all the sample schools for selecting teachers for teacher training. The schools select teachers for training in different areas after the teacher assessment.
- The findings reveal that the teachers go for teacher exchange programs. Schools have subject groups and subject labs and all the teachers of the same subject in different sections meet once in a week, this foster team teaching.
- The study found that the schools put extra emphasis staff development. This is achieved by providing strong mentoring programme for teachers, they make special efforts to minimize teacher turnover rates, it includes various workshops, seminars, and other programmes for the staff.

- The study revealed that the schools carefully plan the professional development activities for the school principals and teachers.
- It was observed that the schools plan regular interaction among the principals of different schools (specially the same trust schools) and there are formal discussions on their experiences on achievements attained and challenges encountered. This encourages new ideas and techniques.
- The study revealed that the schools are found to create a system of support and “coaching” for newly appointed teachers and for teachers having difficulty in classroom management. These workshops help the teachers to develop effective instructional plans and engage students in challenging assignments.
- The study found out that the schools have made mentoring and sharing essential for new teachers.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The findings of the study under the Quality Indicator ‘School Community Relations’ are presented under the following subheadings

Opportunity to Play an Important Role in Helping the School

- It was found from the study that the mean value of the quality indicator ‘School Community Relations’ was low, this was because parents do not have a direct role to play in the evaluation of teachers work performance but rather their input is indirect via the “grapevine” and the school governing body.

- It was found from the study that the majority schools have an effective and efficient communication system for communicating with parents to give regular feedback of their ward's progress.
- The study revealed that the school regularly bring in community members as guest speakers.
- Researcher observed that in majority of schools that neither parents nor students of this school have any problems with accessing the required information and, as a result there was no variation in information accessibility.
- It was found from the study that the schools have various activities for the parents e.g. sports, hobby etc. and library facilities for the parents. This helps in expanding community parental involvement.
- The study revealed that all the schools have well updated websites which display all the required information that makes the system transparent.

PTA and MTA, Alumni Associations and Activities

- It was observed that the schools have active parent teachers associations that contribute in school activities.
- It was revealed from the study that the schools have active alumni that meet regularly. The school's alumni organises various lectures on important topics and invite famous academicians.
- The study revealed that the schools believe in promoting the school community relations in multiple ways. It was obvious from the school corridors and displays on bulletin boards of the PTA programs and guest speakers. All this reflect community related themes.

- It was evident from the observation that there is a feeling of mutual respect and support between the parents, students, teachers, they all work together in each and every school functions be it Annual day, Sports day Student council election or any PTA sponsored activity or event.
- It was observed that the PTA meetings in the schools are fixed in the beginning of the academic year and held on a particular day of each month. These committees are very active and discuss important issues of the schools and find solution to the problems.

Mobilization of Resources from Community

- The researcher found that the parents have high expectations for their children and maintain regular contact with teachers concerning student's progress. These parents expect many initiatives from the schools.
- The school documents reveal a high attendance rates by parents at open house meetings and other school events, this indicate a community that feels included and valued.
- According to the parent's schools motivate them to come to school events through academic meets, open house, sports and cultural events or celebrating their child's success.
- According to the Participants (PTA members) of the focussed group discussion. It was appreciated that the school shares attendance data regularly and promptly with the parents.
- The study found that it is important for the parents to respond proactively and support all the initiatives taken by the school.

- It was found that the schools have a good amount of parent involvement, which was evident from parent volunteers at the school. Parent support was present in academic and non-academic events of the schools.
- It was observed that schools have systems in place for maintaining discipline in the school. It was evident, from expectations conveyed to the parents on the school orientation day regarding the standards that the school had with respect to attendance and behaviour of students.
- From the document review it emerged that the school regularly communicate to parents through phone or email about student absenteeism and performance status and parents are requested to provide an explanation for their wards absence and performance.
- It was found that the principals have established and maintained effective communication practices between staff, parents and school community. The communication channels reflects a variety of methods including newsletters, parents' diary, students' folders, school website, emails and SMS as well as personal meeting with the parents on open house days.
- It was evident from the parent volunteers helping students learn different activities be it painting, dance, drama sports or any curricular and co-curricular activities. These volunteers are also encouraged to help student's project work and remedial teaching programs.
- Researcher found that the schools offer tailor made workshops and programmes for parents and community.

- Parents of these schools were of the opinion that there is positive leadership in school with high level of energy and focus on students. Principals have a vision for their school and they focus intently on creating a culture in which each and every student of the school can learn. Schools make parents aware of the extra-help program and enlist their support.

5.18.3 Internal Quality Assurance System in the Top Performing Secondary Schools

The school based internal quality assurance system is to use identified good practices to raise standards across the institution, and to promote continuous improvement. School Leaders and School Teachers are the key agents of change as the effectiveness of the learning actually takes place in classrooms. Each school is unique and has an individual approach to achieve goals. Therefore, there is no general blueprint of internal quality assurance system for all schools to follow. Thus schools must motivate the staff to be progressive. They must identify their strengths and weaknesses and ascertain the source of problems in order to find an appropriate direction for improvement. The systems of internal quality assurance followed in the top performing schools are ‘Accountability’ and ‘Monitoring’.

Accountability because the schools have to provide proof to key stakeholders (i.e. parents and the local community) as well as to the government that they are providing value for money. This has become increasingly important in the context of government Aided State Board Schools, as they get finance from the government. Monitoring helps to periodically review the school programmes, this helps to establish the confidence of stakeholders through well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed activities.

Following are the findings related to the internal quality assurance system in the top performing secondary schools.

- It was observed from the documents that the schools follow teacher assessment twice in one academic year. They follow 360 degrees assessment in schools.
- It was found from the study that the teachers on the basis of their assessment results get increment or a cash prize along with the best teacher award and a certificate of appreciation from the management.
- It was found from the study that the schools follow accreditation to maintain quality in schools.
- It emerged from the study that the Principals regularly observe teaching and learning in the classrooms and check teachers log book daily.
- It was observed by the researcher that principal regularly checks students work by asking the teachers at random for students class work and homework notebooks.
- It was observed that the Principal checks all the question papers and their blue prints before the papers go for print for examination.
- It was revealed from the documents that the principal analyse the reports of School Inspectors and Accreditation organisations and prepares an action plan to bring improvements on the comments.
- It was observed that the Principal gets feedback from students and parents surveys at the term end of the academic year.

- It was observed that after at the end of each and every school function, Principal conducts a post-mortem meeting with the staff to evaluate the effectiveness or failures of all aspects of the function.
- It appeared from the study that the school Management assume monitoring role.
- It was found that the schools encourage teachers to pursue continuing education (sending them for different short term courses) and empower the team by providing them with opportunities for professional development.
- It was found from the study that the top performing schools have holistic yet focused review on school performance
- It was observed that the teachers monitor students' progress in the Board year by setting Pre Board Examination question papers above the State Board standard.
- It was found from the study that the principal compiles action plans of activities specifying target dates and make arrangements for its continuous monitoring.
- It was observed that the school follows a system of documentation of all the students' records and daily activities. This indicates the schools capacity to demonstrate how high quality is sustained and continued improvement is ensured.

From the findings of the study it emerged that the basic responsibility for improving the quality of school rests with the school leadership. To make internal

quality assurance system work for the benefit of the learners, the Principals make it an integral part of the school's day-to-day management. The teachers and support staff are involved in the design of internal quality assurance mechanisms, which they in turn are empowered to use and embed. Internal quality assessment system is not considered as a mechanism to identify issues in the schools working but is taken as a team effort to achieve school goals. It is of crucial importance for schools leaders to identify their strengths and weaknesses correctly. It is the School Leaders who identify institutions strengths and highlight good practices and undertake the necessary remedial action to rectify weaknesses. This contributes to schools capacity to improve. Thus, the Principals of top performing schools evaluate schools success and contribute to its well-being.

5.19. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY FOR IMPROVED QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES

Overall, the study has demonstrated that the internal, school based evaluations carried out in the top performing schools proved to be enabling condition for quality assurance practices in these top performing secondary schools of Gujarat State Board. But it is not the case with all the secondary schools of Gujarat State Board. Many of the internal and external quality assurance practices are missing in these schools. There is a quality gap between the intended and actual quality assurance practices, and quality of education by a multitude of interrelated problems from both the internal and external environment of the schools as well as the Board. This calls for a closer attention of the existing quality assurance systems and practices. The following are the implications of the study for improved quality assurance practice;

- The adoption and implementation of self-evaluation as a measure of quality assurance for improvement is unlikely in the absence of an enabling and supportive environment (internal and external) like capable, motivated and committed staff; reasonably adequate resources and a supportive culture for student learning. Externally, the government should strengthen regulatory frameworks and ensure competence and commitment of leadership to stimulate and facilitate the adoption and implementation of internal quality enhancement in secondary schools. Thus, by organizing periodic capacity development workshops for educational managers (Principals and Inspectors) on institutional management and instructional supervision can improve the quality of teaching and learning processes and learning outcomes in schools.
- This study would furnish policy makers in the Ministry of Education with information on the top performing schools in implementing self-evaluation as a mechanism for quality assurance. Hence it will be giving them a scope to formulate better policies regarding quality assurance in secondary schools and a need to ensure that the secondary education is well managed and led in terms of accomplishing regular inspections and ensuring that the inspection staff is professionally competent to provide feedback for improvement to the secondary schools.
- State Board of Secondary Education can help facilitate the introduction and implementation of systems that require secondary schools to present evidences on learning outcomes. This may involve developing and employing standardized instruments to collect and analyze information

concerning quality of student learning outcomes, this will encourage secondary schools to examine, maintain and improve quality based on periodic feedback. Evaluation must be an ongoing process in order to identify (and rectify) problems as (and when) they occur and not at the end of an academic year or semester.

- The school based quality assurance practice will encourage school principals to pay special attention to their roles in institutional management and enable them evaluate their school programs and establish procedures. This would help those teachers and students that do not perform well in order to achieve optimum productivity and quality learning outcomes. This will provide teachers with relevant information on the effects and efficacy of their teaching pedagogy and stimulate them for better performance.
- For the school leadership it is expected that the emphasis placed on quality assurance systems will raise the level of awareness of principals with regard to adequate provision of suitable teaching materials/facilities, conducive working environment, capacity building of teachers, non-academic staff, students welfare and promote cordial interpersonal relations between members of the school and communities to facilitate effective curriculum implementation and quality learning outcome in secondary schools.
- This study would inspire school principals to provide constant and adequate feedback to the teachers on their instructional task performance. This will help them to review and improve their teaching-learning process as well as provide constant and comprehensive feedback to parents on students' academic performance.

- The principals would be encouraged to promote capacity development of teachers through intensive and regular in-house seminar/workshop to improve knowledge, pedagogical skills and competence of teachers in various subjects. They would collaborate with the stake holders such as the Parents-Teachers Associations, (PTA), Old Students' Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Communities, Philanthropists and other Development Partners to provide adequate help and facilities for effective quality systems and teaching and learning processes as quality assurance based school and community partnership.
- The findings in this study imply that an external quality assurance system (the school inspections conducted by the DEO) does not help much in effecting improvement of quality. This suggests establishment and implementation of internal quality assurance system at secondary schools.
- This study will also highlight the weaknesses inherent in the school systems and stimulate government and other stakeholders to see the need for quality assurance mechanisms in secondary schools in order to improve institutional management and quality culture of the schools.

Thus, overall, the study has demonstrated that many of the internal enabling conditions for quality assurance practices are present in the high performing secondary schools of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary education Board. There is a similarity between the intended and actual quality assurance practices, and quality of education, particularly student learning is facilitated by ICT based teaching learning technique. This study would help

parents, educational managers/administrators, teachers and Ministry of Education to see, recognize and appreciate the need for quality and quality assurance systems in the secondary schools of Gujarat.

5.20. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH STUDIES

The following suggestions are made in order to improve the quality assurance systems and quality practices for the achievement of the set educational goals in secondary schools. The findings and recommendations of this study would go a long way in generating the much needed information that would be used by various stakeholders in education to improve the quality of education based on the factors that were prevalent in top performing schools which ultimately led to the overall effectiveness of schools. Some recommendations to improve practice and for further research are made based on the results of the study.

- This study addressed State Board affiliated Secondary English medium schools only. Research in the primary and Gujarati medium schools is suggested.
- A comparative study between high performing and low performing schools would be beneficial in determining differences in quality mechanism practices in both the types of schools.
- There is a need for studies to consider the views and characteristics of high performing schools from parents and local community.

- Another interesting comparative study would be to gauge the view of the characteristics of top performing schools from principals, coordinators of the sections, teachers and students both in private schools, grant in aid schools.
- There can be studies on evaluation of the impact of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board policies on the academic productivity of its schools. Policies have intended and unintended consequences and it would be helpful to know through research which policies increased academic productivity. For example, future research could address the question; were there certain policies that especially helped or hindered these high performing secondary schools in Gujarat.
- Researcher in this study discusses about the high expectations the top performing schools had for teachers for producing quality instruction. Further research could reconcile this feature by examining the necessary teacher competencies needed for achieving quality instruction.

5.21. CONCLUSION

Quality assurance is a function for which all stakeholders within the school system must be involved. Because it is a management function, the principal must coordinate teachers with other members to ensure that their activities are geared towards quality service delivery. The nature of quality assurance mechanisms followed in the Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board can be best understood, explained and described in terms of what they are designed to achieve and how they achieve those goals. In the

previous chapters these processes were identified as the school inspections conducted by the DEO (District Education Officer) every year and surprise visits by the board authorities. From the findings of this present study it has been clear that these processes are about making sure that there is regular and positive development and improvement in the secondary schools of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board. Although the term quality assurance was not in everyday use in Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board, but from the interviews it was evident that the term was fast becoming familiar with the respondents of the Board.

Modern administration in school systems is a matter of collaboration and cooperation. All concerned should not only have a share in it, but should be assisted to contribute their best to it. Everybody should be so intimately associated with it that they feel a sense of personal involvement. In order to get the best out of all concerned, everybody should be assigned the most befitting roles and responsibility. For these to be achieved, the principal must supervise the activities of staff regularly and must understand that, as part of quality assurance strategies, the philosophy of education has to be recognised in all aspects of school activities. They must put in place capacity building programmes that would improve professional competence of teachers. They must also ensure that their administrative styles are in line with the path towards achieving school objectives. Therefore, the administrative policies and programmes of the school must be designed with in-built quality system. This will enhance the achievement of the goals for which the schools are set up.

Furthermore, Principals in these schools were described as making teaching and learning in the schools' central focus as the teachers make instructional decisions to implement differentiated teaching strategies in order to meet the learning needs of their students .For the four cases of top performing Secondary Schools of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board all of these things occurred in an environment of strong parent interest and community support.

The conclusions reached can be summed up as; those schools that have developed an internal self-evaluation system to bring quality school culture in which a tradition of high achievement has been enculturated may experience greater stability than others.This study identified the specific quality assurance mechanisms and best practices that supported increased academic achievement in top performing secondary schools. The researcher found that the sample of high-performing secondary schools of Gujarat Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Board were characterized by dedicated, hard-working teachers implementing curricula described as being aligned with state Board standards and doing so within school cultures and exhibiting high expectations for student/teacher performance. The general findings showed that educators had a very positive opinion towards the high achievement.