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# Rethinking Of Education Quality in Secondary Schools in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe

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**Abstract:** *The use of quality assurance processes in implementing the curriculum in secondary schools is very crucial owing that this educational level is the foundation of further level of education (tertiary). Teachers' professional practices have to be given precedents and priority concern for quality assurance through quality assurance processes. It is therefore paramount to effectively utilise those quality assurance processes that will support teachers' competences and develop their potentials for quality service delivery in secondary education. The study has therefore examined effectiveness of quality assurance processes used in secondary schools in Chipinge District to enhance quality education. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Information was sought from all school heads, deputy heads, senior teachers and the teachers from three secondary schools in Chipinge District. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The study sample comprised three school heads, three deputy school heads, three senior teachers and twenty seven teachers from three secondary schools. The study employed two main types of instruments for data collection: interview schedules and questionnaires. Questionnaires gathered data from teachers while interview schedules guided interviews held with the administration officers of the three schools. The results of data analysis were presented and analysed qualitatively. The study established that most teachers of secondary schools in Chipinge District have positive attitudes towards the use of quality assurance processes. They also indicated that they have benefitted a lot from quality assurance processes in areas such as development of work plans, preparation of lesson plans, records of work, maintaining quality instruction, improving actual classroom instruction and developing instructional materials. However, some teachers had negative attitudes; as a result they failed to implement recommendations made by their supervisors after supervision. The study recommends that, School heads should create a friendly environment between teachers and administration officers so that they will be able to instill passion in teachers to continue doing the work effectively hence desired results will be*

*produced. Government should also provide in-service courses for the other members of the school administration so that they will carry out quality assurance processes effectively. There is also a need for sensitisation of community members for increased participation in matters affecting curriculum implementation through organised workshops.*

## INTRODUCTION

This study critically examined the effectiveness of quality assurance processes used in secondary schools in Chipinge District in Manicaland Province. For quality education to be achieved in a nation the principal actors of learning who are the teachers, learners and the environment must be cooperatively organised. In Zimbabwe there are a number of processes used to enhance quality education. These include the organisational structure of the school system, teacher performance and student performance that is administratively and pedagogically. It follows that the teacher must be adequate in quality and quantity, the students must be well trained and facilities must be adequately provided as well, and this should be well administered by school heads.

Secondary education is the bedrock upon which other levels of education are built. It is considered critical for providing every child with a good basic education. In Zimbabwe, secondary education is education given in institutions for children aged 4 to 13 plus. The policy of education states that curriculum delivery in secondary education shall be by practical, exploratory and experimental teaching methods. These methods will ensure that learners are taught to develop a complex skill set that prepares them for further schooling, responsible citizenship, international competitiveness, the demands of the workplace and life-long learning (UNESCO, 2014). This notion of being taught implies that it is the teachers who should teach the learners the 21st century skills. If teachers must teach learners the requisite skills for learners to become global citizens, the teachers must be professionals of the highest quality. This will also

involve incorporating all quality assurance processes that will enhance and promote teachers' professional practices in secondary school system.

Ijaiya (2011) defines quality assurance as a process through which an education institution guarantees to itself and its stakeholders that its teaching, learning and other services constantly reach a standard of excellence. Quality assurance in education involves the efficient management, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce quality outputs (students) that meet set standards and expectations of the society. It is apparent that the goals of quality assurance are the anticipation and avoidance of faults or mistakes by setting attainable standards for a process, organising work so that they are achieved, documenting the procedures required, communicating them to all concerned, and monitoring and reviewing the attainment of standards. These definitions raise the issue of promoting good value in the institutional management and supervision of teaching and learning process to produce quality learners from the school system.

Quality assurance process is also related to learner's welfare and participation. These processes entail to gender, guidance and counseling, clubs and games and special needs education. Quality assurance processes are concerned with quality development. Quality development 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 staff development. Therefore the purpose of quality assurance processes is to make sure whether there is added value on education through supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

Education is always, in one sense or another, preparing persons for the future. Young people and children must be given through education the tools to deal with the different tasks that they will need to perform in their lives. They must be helped to prepare themselves for their private lives, but equally be prepared to participate in economic life, cultural life and the political life of their societies (Ijaiya 2011). Education must help young people and children to develop themselves as persons. They must learn the necessary skills and achieve the essential knowledge that will make it possible for them to play an active part in economic life. As citizens they must learn to be critical and responsible. In today's world there is also a need to prepare young people and children to participate in

and understand activities at an international level. Therefore quality assurance processes should help the education daily practices to meet these standards.

Quality cannot be seen as a static concept. Quality and standards are in fact relative matters - relative to the particular time and place and to particular learners and their circumstances. One important aspect of quality is the relevance of the subjects taught and the objectives of education. Quality education is an education that provides students with the tools to deal with and find solutions to the challenges confronting mankind. In a changing world this means that what was considered quality education yesterday might not meet the standard of what will be understood as quality tomorrow. This is particularly true at present if we take in to consideration the rapid changes created by new technologies. There is a need to discuss this concept continuously and to define and redefine it, hence staff development becomes necessary in teaching and learning process as a quality assurance process.

There are different types of approach in quality assurance process hence this study will focus much on the instructional process approach which is built around the premise that every step of the process of a service and of an operation has room for improvement. This process enables the quality assurance process to regularly monitor, assess and evaluate the resource inputs, instructional process and outputs by identifying the key elements/aspects that need improvement and ways of addressing these, implementing the plan, analysing the result to ensure that significant agreement exists between the original goals and what is actually achieved, and acting on the plan full scale by conducting further work through feedback and reviews with those concerned. A critical look at the definitions shows that quality assurance in education encompasses systematic management, monitoring and evaluation procedures adopted to measure the effectiveness of quality assurance processes used in secondary schools against educational objectives to enhance quality education in secondary schools.

Supervision ensures that all staffs reflect appropriate rules, routine, procedures and regulations to achieve set objectives. In a school setting the overall supervisor is the school head. Every school head's dream as a supervisor is to get his school ranked among the best in national examination and discipline. According to Pertl (2006) an effective supervisor should be a little more informed of modern methods of administration and those of teaching. It is the supervisor who is responsible for quality and

internal supervision which is a tool for attainment of quality.

A school head is of crucial importance for continual improving education quality through implementing quality assurance process. The school head is a well-established position of the chief executive who provides instructional leadership by coordinating curricula, co-curricular programmes and is responsible for the general administration of the secondary school activities such as enrolment, learner performance, staffing, evaluation and supervision. They are at the vantage positions to supervise, monitor, assess, evaluate and disseminate current information on educational issues and modern teaching techniques to teachers in order to stimulate them for scholarship and best practices in curriculum delivery. Quality assurance is achieved in schools that have strong school heads who devote considerable time to coordinating and managing instruction and such school heads are highly visible in the school and stay close to quality assurance processes such as instructional processes, (Peters and Waterman 2008). Continuous and consistent classroom visitation as a process ensures adequate teaching and learning processes. At the same time, shared responsibility is also an instructional process used for quality assurance. It engenders a common sense of commitment and collegiality among the staff. Once an effective school head establish clearly defined goals for academic achievement, he/she concentrate on available resources and operations on attaining them, provide adequate time-table for teaching, routine check of lesson notes and subject dairies, observation of classroom instruction, continuously monitor pupils progress to determine whether their instructional goals are being met, provide feed-back on pupil performance, motivation of teachers for improved performance, reinforcement of pupils for excellent performance, maintenance and appropriate usage of physical facilities, enforcement of discipline to ensure peaceful atmosphere, capacity building of teachers for effective service delivery and provision of instructional facilities and materials to enhance quality teaching-learning processes. (Lawrence, B. K. (2005)

In furtherance of quality assurance, it is necessary for an ideal school head to set reasonable expectations for work and achievement, (Pertl 2006)). The concept of the school as a place of learning is communicated clearly to the students, and a commitment to learning is expected in every classroom. Expectations of the society are manifested in the performance standards set by the school. High standards reflect high expectations; low standards reflect low expectations.

It is therefore quite clear that the complex task of quality assurance processes helps the school head on how to organise the school to meet the various challenges facing school administration so that the education aims and objectives can be achieved. The school head must make it possible for staff to have access to suitable facilities of all kinds in order to discharge fully their responsibilities in achieving the educational objectives. The teachers must be well supervised and motivated in order to sustain their interest and make them dedicated, committed, willing, enthusiastic and inspiring teachers. The quality of the supervision of teachers' instructional tasks by the head teacher is an index of effective school management.

Of all the quality assurance instructional processes used in secondary schools, none is as sensitive and as challenging as the one relating to supervision. It is expected to be given the deserved attention in the scheme of things. Instructional supervision is an internal mechanism adopted by school heads for school self-evaluation, geared towards helping teachers and pupils to improve on their teaching and learning activities for the purpose of achieving educational objectives, (Pertl 2006). The head teacher ensures effective supervision by interacting academically and socially at a regular basis with teachers and pupils within and outside the classrooms. The secondary aim is to monitor the implementation of curricular and ensure desirable increase in teachers' capabilities, upgrade their conceptual knowledge and teaching skills, give them support in their work to facilitate better performance in teachers' pedagogical practices and pupils' learning outcomes in the school settings. Instructional supervision provides a vehicle and structure which allows schools, departments, as well as individuals (teachers and pupils) within them, to respond effectively to curriculum and instruction in order to achieve the stated educational objectives. Instructional supervision, if handled with utmost attention, has the potential to strengthen the school heads' capacities for managing human and material resources. The school head that is the driving force behind the school programme needs to proactively mobilise all members of staff, teaching and non-teaching, the governing board, parents and the community towards identifying the schools strengths and weaknesses and take appropriate decisions on type of follow-up action required to improve teachers' inputs and pupils' learning outcomes in the school,

The appraisal of teachers' pedagogical practices is necessary in order to safeguard quality standards in schools. In order to accomplish this task, the school head must have an intimate knowledge of the psychology of human learning, have a command of

the various theories of instruction, be acquainted with the sources and uses of instructional media/materials, be familiar with evaluation techniques, be skilled in individual and group counseling, and have a good knowledge of the nation's education system and goals (Kallen 2007). In pursuit of these goals, the school head teacher makes use of supervisory techniques that includes clinical supervision/classroom observation, micro-teaching, seminar/workshop and research to improve the conceptual knowledge, skills and competence of teachers, and pupils' learning. The areas that usually attract the attention of secondary school heads include the schemes of work and effective delivery of lessons, improvisation and utilisation of instructional materials, providing regular feed-back on pupils' performance, adequate keeping of records and appropriate discipline of pupils to ensure quality assurance in secondary schools. A well-planned and adequate instructional supervision enhances teaching and learning effectiveness in schools.

In Chipinge District, most schools often fail to achieve desired goals probably because of inefficient use of quality assurance processes. This has led to calls for strengthening of school heads particularly in improving the knowledge, skills and attitudes of head teachers in using quality assurance process so as to enhance quality education within the whole district. The causes of underachievement in schools are complex and may be difficult to determine (Lawrence 2005). For example studies in Zimbabwe have shown that the quality of instruction is affected by high teacher-pupil ratio, lack of teacher motivation, inadequate remuneration, inadequate supervision and poor relationships among teachers. Instructional leadership should be viewed as an important component in implementing quality assurance processes as its functions are directly related to supporting classroom teaching and learning while its indirect workings have a statistical significant effect on student achievement. For quality assurance processes used in secondary schools to be effective the school vision needs to have high expectations for all (teachers and students) which raises the overall achievement of all students. Thus instructional leaders need to value a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development while trying to enhance quality education.

In all aspects of the school and its surrounding education community, the rights of the whole child, and all children, to survival, protection, development and participation are at the centre. This means that the focus is on learning which strengthens the capacities of children to act

progressively on their own behalf through the acquisition of relevant knowledge, useful skills and appropriate attitudes; and which creates for children, and helps them create for themselves and others, places of safety, security and healthy interaction.

For quite a time now, it has been noted that quality assurance processes were not used due to dismal performance of the grade seven results. Generally, teacher supervision can contribute to quality education and enhance academic performance in school. According to Etindi (2010), quality assurance standards has put measures in enhancing teacher effectiveness hence provision of quality education. They include emphasis of syllabus coverage, emphasis of extra time teaching, transfer of teachers who have overstayed in one school, discouraging absenteeism, sensitising parents on the importance of ensuring quality education, encouraging maximum use of instructional materials, and timely preparation of professional records by teachers. It is against this background that this research was organised to examine the effectiveness of current quality assurance processes used in schools in Chipinge District. The problem being studied in this research is despite measures taken to enhance the quality of education in secondary schools in Chipinge District, pupil's performance continues to deteriorate. In spite of the societal demand for quality assurance in education and the need for thorough supervision in schools, there is a growing concern about the understanding of secondary education objectives due to doubt that many schools give little attention to quality assurance processes in secondary schools. Consequently, there has been a steady decline in teachers' instructional task performance and students' academic performance which depicts non-realisation of quality assurance processes in secondary schools. This has been largely attributed to gaps in teachers' competence, curriculum instruction, learning facilities and resources, funding and institutional management. The identified gaps and challenges include lack of commitment to supervision by many head teachers and also lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of students learning outcomes.

#### **Research Question**

- 1) What are the quality assurance processes used in secondary schools in Chipinge District?
- 2) Why and how should quality assurance processes be utilised in schools?
- 3) How effective are the current quality assurance processes used in secondary schools in Chipinge District?

- 4) What are the opinions of secondary school teachers on the implementation of quality assurance processes in Chipinge District?
- 5) What improvements can be done to make these quality assurance processes to be more effective in the implementation of curriculum

### **The Research Design**

This study utilised a qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research is a fundamentally interpretive inquiry process that is based on a naturalistic approach where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2007). The goal of qualitative research is to explore and understand a central phenomenon in its real-situation and seek to understand participants' experiences with the central phenomena (Creswell, 2007).

The qualitative methodology can overcome certain kinds of resistance and is suited to issues such as the use of quality assurance processes in enhancing quality education in secondary schools in Chipinge District. Qualitative research is concerned with the 'why' and the 'how', and seeks to grasp what is actually happening rather than just regulations and norms. In this research, it studied knowledge and insights regarding on how quality assurance processes are used in Chipinge District. The research has also managed to identify needs and anxieties of the persons involved and unlock the real experience of others and explore the concerns of all interested parties involved in implementing quality assurance processes. It distinguishes between what people say they have to do (the rules), what they say they do (the norms), and what they actually do (reality) in trying to enhance quality education in the district through quality assurance processes. The aim of understanding lies at the heart of the qualitative methodology with a far greater emphasis on processes and the significance of attitudes, points of view and actions than on their frequency.

The researcher used qualitative research for it permits the description of the phenomena and events. In support Meadows (2003) notes that qualitative research helps to understand social phenomena in a natural setting with emphasis on the views and experiences of the participants. This helped the researcher to explore the phenomena using interviews, questionnaires and documents.

### **Population and Sampling**

The study population for this research were all teachers, school heads, deputy heads and teachers' in-charge in all secondary schools in Chipinge

district. Oyedele (2011) state that the term population in research refers to the total number of elements or cases that one can investigate. Oyedele (2011) say that the term population in research refers to any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher.

The study employed purposive sampling in choosing participants for the study. Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned (Merriam, 2009). The researcher wanted to discover school heads' perspectives of quality assurance and accountability based on their experiences to add to current understandings of quality assurance and accountability in education. As such, he identified potential participants as those who were open to sharing their experiences and understandings.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The researcher employed open-ended questionnaires, interview guide, and document analysis to collect data. In the following sections, details about the instruments are given below.

#### **Open ended- questionnaire**

Questionnaires were found appropriate for the study because as Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), note they allow measurement for or against a particular viewpoint, in this case the views of teachers on quality assurance processes in enhancing quality education was reviewed.

They also enabled a researcher to collect large amount of information in a reasonable quick space of time. The questionnaires were used to gather data from teachers the effectiveness of quality assurance processes used in Chipinge District. The questionnaire was administered to teachers only

#### **Structured Interview**

In this study a semi structured interview schedule was used because it has the advantage of being reasonably objective, while still; permitting a more thorough opinion and remain appropriate for studies in education. It provides a desirable combination of objectivity and depth and often permits gathering valuable data that could not be successfully obtained by any other approach.

#### **Document Analysis**

In this research document analysis was used to examine the progress records, attendance registers, previous years grade results and PLAP records and also curriculum policy documents that related to quality assurance processes as a measure of quality

assurance to see the effectiveness of implementing quality assurance processes.

#### **Data Collection Procedures**

Before collecting data from the sampled respondents, a letter of acceptance was given from the Faculty of Education at Africa University. Having granted the letter from the Faculty, permission letter was applied for from the Ministry of Secondary and Secondary Education to be given permission to visit schools to collect data. The permission was granted and then managed to follow relevant steps, because the letter had to pass through the Provincial office and the District office before going to the specific schools. After sorting all the necessary procedures, the researcher became involved in complete interviews with administration officers and documents analysis from the schools. Questionnaires were administered and collected on the same day by the researcher herself.

#### **Demographic profile of study participants**

Participants of this study were thirty- professional teachers comprised of three school heads, three deputy heads, three senior teachers and twenty-seven teachers. The demographic information section showed that all teachers were professionally qualified. They had a teaching experience of between six to thirty-five years and were in senior teachers' grade. The senior teachers' grades are experienced teachers who range from six to twenty years and above teaching experience. The experience of teachers in senior grade helped in determining respondents' feelings on quality assurance processes.

Out of thirty-six respondents, thirty had a teaching experience of ten years and above. Of all these years the respondents could have gone through numerous quality assurance processes and they were likely to respond to the questionnaire and interviews basing arguments on experience

The data gathered proved that academic qualification of the respondents was very satisfactory concerning the subject, and the information indicated that respondents were drawn from a full range of qualification from grade CE to university degree levels.

The information presented showed that the thirty six respondents were professionally trained hence would be in a position to appreciate quality assurance processes as a way of enhancing quality education in the education system. Professional trained teachers were likely to share their views on quality assurance processes as an instrument which

would aim at polishing, enlightening and improving methods of implementing the curriculum. This means that these trained officers would share the same views on means and ways of promoting quality assurance processes which aim at improving quality education in secondary schools. The data gathered proved that academic qualification of the respondents was very satisfactory concerning the subject, and the information indicated that respondents were drawn from a full range of qualification from grade CE to university degree levels.

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#### **Data from interviews**

##### **Understanding quality assurance processes in the context of secondary school basing on the experience**

The school heads, deputy heads and the senior teachers were asked to express their views on what they understand by quality assurance processes. The following were some of the responses;

- *A way of checking on the product being produced*
- *It is monitoring and supervising teachers on how they are implementing the curriculum.*
- *They are methods of developing teachers professionally so as to keep them well abreast of the changes and improvements in educational teaching and learning.*
- *They are methods of helping teachers in learning changes and new approaches to pupils.*
- *They are methods of reminding teachers of the golden rules, their purpose of existence the schools.*
- *Quality assurance processes are ways of assisting teachers to enhance their knowledge of teaching by sharing strength and weaknesses with their superiors.*

The above responses shows the most significance of the quality assurance processes in schools, in

other words these findings clearly redefined the process quality assurance within a given context. It is also important to comment that the knowledge expressed by the administration staff could be the reason of their level of professional qualifications that made them to show a high degree of articulating issues of quality assurance processes. In addition, their experience in the ministry as teachers and as administrators who make evaluations of school activities relates very well to the knowledge of what these quality assurance processes are. It could be the administrators who are in a position to explain the meaning of quality assurance processes to the teachers at a school and its relevance to their profession.

This is consistent with observations made by Kallen (2007) in view of quality assurance, said that quality assurance processes involves understanding school structure, context, and philosophy to play an effective role in the clarification of aims formulation of educational policies.

**When you were appointed as the school administrator, did the education officers organise an induction for you?**

They give the following responses

- *We go for workshops and in-services trainings once a term*
- *Workshops are organised and sometimes it's very difficult to attend the workshops because of other work related pressures to an extent we end up sending representatives*
- *We rarely have management workshops instead we are invited to curriculum implementation workshops to train teachers on how to deliver lessons*

In addition to the above qualifications, the head teacher and the other administration officers mentioned that they had attended other courses on school supervision including secondary school management, sensitisation seminars, workshops and seminars on quality assessment and supervision. The school heads also mentioned that they are regularly in-serviced to enable them perform their school assessment duties effectively. Training of school heads and other administrative officers is important especially on public relations. This is because the school heads have in the past been accused of being cruel to teachers. For example it goes without saying that in the past most inspectors were autocratic and authoritarian who always insisted on maintenance and observance of professional rules, and that whenever they visited classrooms, they focused on fault-finding instead of

advising and encouraging teachers. Such school heads behaviour can have a negative impact on teachers' perceptions of the role of quality assurance processes, leaving the teacher demoralised hence could not perform effectively.

Training school heads would help by making inspection/supervision an enjoyable exercise for both teachers and the school administrators. It seems that other administrative officers have meetings occasional.

**How do you rate the quality assurance processes in your school and do you think teachers are gaining any knowledge on them?**

The third objective of the study was to outline the areas in which the teachers had benefited from quality assurance processes in curriculum implementation? Below are some of the responses in short:-

- *We have benefited much on development of work plans, lesson plans and records of work as professionals*
- *This has helped us to maintain quality instruction.*
- *As for myself I am noticing a great improvement in actual class room instruction.*
- *I am now an expert in developing instructional materials.*

According to Hannagan (2008), there are two major roles of quality assurance processes which are; to ensure that the educational systems work efficiently and the standards are well maintained and the second one being that to improve the performance of teachers by offering professional encouragement, guidance and counselling and by seeing to it that they got whatever In-service training they needed to do their jobs effectively. He further stressed that, it was to the advantage of the teachers to make the fullest possible use of quality assurance processes. It was also noted that quality assurance process is not only to provide a link between teachers and administration but are able to offer teachers access to in-service training and educational resources. This implies that quality assurance processes are of great benefit to the teachers.

**To what extent are the quality assurance processes you use relevant in the implementation of the curriculum?**

From the respondents, the study found that the teachers benefit from quality assurance processes;

- Teachers are now able to work together in curriculum implementation. There is team work and collegial teaching. We complement each other

- With the high teacher ratio we are now able to manage large classes
- I have started to value remedial teaching because it improves my pupils understanding
- It has been difficult for us to instil discipline without a cane but for we are setting discipline without a cane
- The study found that teachers benefited from quality assurance processes.

#### **How do you rate your teachers' attitude towards the quality assurance processes?**

The school heads mentioned that teachers' attitudes' quality assurance processes is influenced by presentation of supervisor or inspector. The other school head said the teachers' attitude can also be influenced by the degree of performance of the teacher. The lazy ones hate assessment and hard workers enjoy being assessed for they would want transformation. Below are some of the responses:-

- *Most teachers are not prepared such that the time they are observed they become very frustrated and end up having negative attitudes.*
- *Most teachers enjoy being assessed because know that they are being corrected from their mistakes.*
- *The attitude of the teacher towards quality assurance process depends on how he/she was supervised before*
- *Some teachers tend to show positive attitude but even if they are corrected they will never take that into consideration. They will not change.*

A previous study by Etindi (2010) concluded that school heads and teachers past experience should not affect perceptions on the role of quality assurance processes. The school heads noted that in most cases teachers are unprepared for curriculum implementation and those few who prepare are irregular. They added that they always give feedback of their assessment by leaving a summary on what have been done to the teacher. The other school head noted that some teachers have negative attitude towards supervision, adding that this has a negative impact on curriculum delivery. The last one said that teachers fail to implement recommendations of school administrators, arguing that the work is too much for them and have little time.

#### **What is your opinion on how best you can cooperate with the teachers in implementing quality assurance processes?**

- *Teachers have to take their work seriously*

- *As administrators I think we need to organise more of workshops at least six times per term so that teachers will develop professionally*
- *Teachers should be given incentives so that they keep on motivated not only in the form of cash but motivational*

From the findings the head teachers indicated that they could cooperate best with the teachers by organising workshops and seminars for teachers after they have identified the teacher's areas of weakness. They also indicated that they feel that they need to create good relationships between teachers and school administrators through having open discussions with teachers and also working together in creating a strong team that is willing to uplift the standards of the school and also promote cooperation among stakeholders. This implies that school heads have a high spirit to cooperate with the teachers in all areas they required to enhance quality education. As mentioned, to cooperate there was need for good relationship and a positive attitude which creates a positive atmosphere for cooperation.

In every situation or work station and places, challenges arise due to differences in environment, therefore it was necessary for the study to find out what could be the challenges and hindrances that might face or make it difficult for the respondents to cooperate with the teachers in curriculum implementation.

#### **Hindrances that make it difficult for cooperation**

The respondents responses were as follows:-

- *if either teachers or head teachers have a negative approach on quality assurance processes it will be difficult for them to cooperate.*
- *some school heads lack leadership skills hence end up harassing teachers.*
- *Some teachers keeps quarrelling because of fear due to lack of preparation.*
- *Some will lack insufficient teaching materials and professional ethics.*

This implies that quality assurance processes is faced by many challenges ranging from harassment, negative perception, lack of commitment and insufficient resources. These findings were in line with Chikwature and Oyedele (2006) who asserted that the major problem was that of irregular teacher assessment and inadequate follow up of assessment visits to classrooms and services. Assessment had at times, been marked by impromptu, irregular visits by administrators aimed

at “catching” the teacher doing wrong which lead to lack of cooperation.

**Recommendations proposed by school heads to be considered in order for them to offer effective school supervision services to secondary schools.**

- The administrators made the following recommendations
- ministry should ensure adequate staffing to avoid high teacher pupil ratio
- Responsible boards or authorities should ensure adequate funding and provision of enough working tools.
- Teachers need to develop a positive attitude towards assessment
- Working conditions should be improved in all aspects; modern technology, teacher remuneration and other motivation factors.

**Data from questionnaires**

**Opinions and feelings towards quality assurance processes**

Teachers were asked their opinions and feeling towards quality assurance processes used in secondary schools and responses were as follows ;

- *It helps in developing innovative programs and changes in school management*
- *It provides a forum where teachers feel free to initiate positive changes in their schools*
- *They help teachers become better educators*
- *Inspection helps teachers become more organised and committed to their work, for instance through lesson preparation*
- *The quality assurance processes helps teachers to perform their teaching duties more effectively*
- *However there are some teachers also who had negative feelings towards quality assurance process and their responses were as follows*
- *Inspections are aimed at faultfinding and threatening teachers to make them work*
- *The exercise is of no importance to teachers and they would rather do without it*

These findings showed t that most teachers had positive attitudes towards the role played by quality assurance processes.

**Teachers’ Opinions on how best they can work with quality assurance processes in order to implement the curriculum.**

From the responses given teachers indicated that they could work best with quality assurance processes in:-

- preparation of lesson plans and implementation
- working best in stressing syllabus coverage in time
- preparation of teaching learning aids
- disciplinary matters for example guidance and counseling
- proper selection of teaching and learning materials and resources
- assessment of pupils’ work and progress
- Mobilising other stakeholders for support towards education.

According to the responses given, it showed clearly that teachers could work best with quality assurance processes in all aspects in implementation of the curriculum. The study found that, the intention of.

Quality assurance processes was to raise educational standards and deliver excellence by improving the quality of educational provisions in schools. The quality initiative in schools is improved when a culture of co-operation, collaboration and consultation is included. This was an implication that there was a good relationship and positive perception towards the quality assurance processes and teachers were comfortable in working with them.

To work best, there was need for a lot of cooperation; therefore teachers were asked to indicate how best they could cooperate with administrators.

**Teachers Opinion on how best they can cooperate with administrators**

- We can only cooperate with the administrators when they have positive attitude towards us and showed readiness in guiding and assisting,
- Quality assurance processes are availed in a friendly manner so they should be friendly not to act as if we had never seen each other.
- Administrators there was organized ways of motivating teachers as per their talents
- There should be well organized staff development programmes not just to have them for the sake of recording that it was done
- We should be given room to state our problems in implementing the curriculum and also give advice when we feel it’s necessary

- We should work together in preparing teaching materials because we are the ones on the grass root and know what we want.

This implies that teachers were always ready to cooperate with the administrators stressing more on aspects of good relationship; positive attitude and being given time to express themselves.

#### **Documentary analysis results**

The administration officers comprising the school head, the deputy head and the teacher in-charge, plays a supervisory role to the school staff. The deputy head and the teacher in-charge reports to the school head. The deputy head is in charge with the junior department and the teacher in-charge is responsible for the infant department. The head is the overall supervisor of the school system.

However, a closer look at the duties and responsibilities showed that the deputy head supervises the junior department and if there are any misunderstandings the school head will come as a reviewer. Both the teacher in charge's documents and the deputy head showed that quality assurance processes were done though not frequently done. Most professional books were available showing pupils' progress for the period.

School reports indicated that there is a slight improvement on results from the previous years.

There was also evidence to show that teachers were allocated in various committees for quality assurances like staff development committee, social committee and discipline committee.

There was however no documented evidences concerning the functioning of these committees in improving quality education.

#### **Discussion and Interpretation**

According to Olempo and Cameron (2007), quality assurance processes insures that the educational system worked efficiently and the standards were maintained, improve the performance of teachers by offering professional encouragement, guidance and counseling and by seeing to it that they got whatever staff development programmes they needed to do their jobs effectively, provide a link between teachers and administration through contacts and providing various teachers support services. Further they stated that the quality assurance processes' function was to see what was going on in the school as a whole and in the classroom in particular and to observe children learning and teachers were teaching and when necessary, the administration officers advises the teachers on how to do their jobs better. This

sentiments were in line with the current study where it found that the quality assurance process used in the District were effective in the sense that they enhance quality education through assisting greatly in organizing works on teaching methods such as PLAP, THRASS and ERI. They would also give advice and ideas on ways of implementing the curriculum, update teachers on changes in the curriculum and in preparation of schemes of work. This was an indication that teachers knew exactly the purpose of the quality assurance purposes institutions, showing positive attitude towards the administration officers.

The study also revealed that, for proper quality assurance process to take place and to fulfill its roles, administration officers and teachers must make frequent communication. This was to make sure that they observed the progress of the pupils. As Olempo and Cameron (2007) and Nyakwara, (2009) stated that, quality assurance processes' function is to see what is going on in the school as a whole and in the classroom in particular. The study revealed that quality assurance processes were used in secondary schools though not frequently. This further proved that, although the processes were not frequently used, there was an effort despite the fact that there were many other schools within the district that were not included in the study, but still the processes are being used and proved to be effective. These sentiments were further indicated by the head teachers who asserted that classroom visits are done termly. On the intention of the visits, it was revealed that it was for routine inspection and advisory and administration purposes. The findings concur with Elsbree and Nally (2006) who asserted that the work of school administrators was supervision of teachers i.e. inspecting the work of teachers in school.

As Olempo and Cameron (2007) observed in their study that whenever an educational officer visited a classroom, the atmosphere between him/her and the teacher was usually so tense, this was different in Chipinge District where respondents indicated that there was a good relationship between teachers and the administration officer, sentiments that were sealed by the head teachers, thus an indication of a positive attitude towards the officers.

Further the study revealed that teachers had mentioned that the officers were helpful in their work. These findings were in line with Wafula (2010). Further Kinayia (2010) investigated the teacher's perception on the role of quality assurance processes in promoting and maintaining quality of education. The study revealed that the school heads had perception that the quality

assurance processes were important in helping to improve the actual teaching.

The findings revealed that respondents benefited in development of work plans, lesson plans and records of work, in maintaining quality instruction, improving actual class room instruction and developing instructional materials. These findings concur with those of Farrant, (2005), who asserted that teachers were also able to benefit from the in-service training organized by the school administrators, further he stressed that it was to the advantage of the teachers to make the fullest possible use of quality assurance processes, for such people, not only provided a link between teachers and administration but through contacts, they were also able to offer the teachers access to in-service training and various teachers support services. Head teachers indicated that they benefited in management through advice, curriculum implementation techniques, guiding and counseling teachers, management issues, in leadership roles and motivation, matters of professionalism and financial management and utilization of materials and covering syllabus.

On how best teachers could work with school administrators in order to best implement the curriculum, the study revealed that, the intention of quality assurance processes was to raise educational standards and deliver excellence by improving the quality of educational provisions in secondary schools. The quality initiative in schools was improved when a culture of co-operation, collaboration and consultation was included (Clark, 2000). These findings by Clark are in line with the current study where they work best in preparation of lesson plan and implementation, stressing syllabus coverage, in preparation of teaching learning aids, in disciplinary matters for example guidance and counseling, proper selection of teaching and learning materials and resources, assessment of pupils work and progress and in mobilizing other stakeholders for support towards education.

Further the study revealed that head teachers could cooperate best with teachers in organizing workshops and seminars for teachers, indentifying areas of weakness and retraining, creating good relationships, promoting cooperation among the stakeholders, school heads inviting teachers to attend open discussions with them hence minimizes grey areas and can be able to create a good working team. This implied that head teachers had a high spirit to cooperate teachers in all area they can.

The study further revealed that there were challenges and hindrances which included

negative approach by the school administration officers, frequent quarrels between administration officers and teachers, fear to meet school administration officers due to lack of preparation and insufficient teaching materials and professional documents. These findings were in line with Hannagan (2008) who asserted that the major problem was that of irregular teacher's assessment and inadequate follow up of assessment visits to teachers and services. Further head teachers indicated that they were faced by the problem of insufficient materials and lack of enough time for interaction, lack of friendly environment, lack of trust by teachers, teachers absenteeism and lack of preparation of schemes of work. The findings brought in the issues raised by Kinayia (2010) which revealed that the administration officers and teachers faced many problems in their job such as high teacher pupil ratio, hostile environment and poor communication.

The findings of this study generally revealed that for effective management of secondary education for effective teacher professional practices and quality assurance in secondary schools in Chipinge District, certain quality assurance processes should be effectively considered. These processes will not only improve teachers' effectiveness and efficiency and quality service delivery but lead to positive outcomes that guarantee quality assurance. The findings on the effectiveness of quality assurance process in Chipinge District revealed that the need to provide and create positive teaching environment leading to continuous improvement increase cooperation and competitiveness, need to provide a more comprehensive and balanced approach for educational development within secondary school system. It has also revealed that demand for teachers' efficiency, effectiveness, job satisfaction, work commitment, competences and high productivity, need to facilitate change, employ new and determine problems facing the secondary education system. The results also indicate that there is a need to promote high uniform standard and excellence in secondary school in Zimbabwe. Teacher professionalism and challenge of brain drain can be avoided if the processes are effectively implemented. This agrees with Hannagan (2008), who identified similar basic bases for effectiveness in teachers' professional practices and quality assurance.

The findings further revealed that these the quality assurance processes were neither meant to witch-hunt or adopt hard measures on staff and teachers nor introduce strict measures, rules and regulations that will threaten the management of secondary education.

Findings further revealed the challenges hindering effective utilisation of quality assurance processes in implementing the curriculum in Chipinge District to enhance quality education in secondary schools. These challenges include lack of resources, high teacher pupil ratio. Therefore, when all the quality assurance processes are effectively utilized, thus quality education will be guaranteed.

With all the above benefits mentioned, there is need for secondary schools in Chipinge District to effectively use the quality assurance processes so as to enhance quality education.

### Implications

With regard to effectiveness of quality assurance processes used in enhancing quality education in secondary schools in Chipinge District, the researcher feels that though supervisions and inspections are done in schools, teachers are not analyzing feedback from supervisors such that mistakes will remain uncorrected.

Teachers and administrators should take quality assurance processes seriously, not to make it a termly routine thing, they should walk the talk.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that

- 1) There is need to address the issue of effective communication between school heads and teachers. School heads should create a friendly environment between teachers and administration officers so that they will be able to instill passion in teachers to continue doing the work effectively hence desired results will be produced.
- 2) Government should also provide in-service courses for the other members of the school administration so that they will carry out quality assurance processes effectively.
- 3) There is also a need for sensitisation of community members for increased participation in matters affecting curriculum implementation through organised workshops.

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