

# The Paradigm Shift from School Inspection to School Quality Assurance in Tanzania: Teachers' Feedback on the Achievements Made.

## Abstract

The government of Tanzania desires to improve the quality of education as a strategy towards preparation of innovative, creative, competent and competitive man power towards the Tanzania development vision-2025 as well as the global sustainable development goals-2030. The paradigm shifts therefore, from school inspection to school quality assurance in basic, secondary and teacher education in 2017 was an imperative intervention. The objective of this study was to evaluate the achievement of the paradigm shift as empirical feedback from teachers for the government commitments and investments. Data were collected through semi structured questionnaires from 76 primary school teachers pursuing Diploma in School Quality Assurance and interview conducted to head teachers trained in Education Leadership, Management and Administration from 2019 to 2021 in Tanzania. The descriptive statistics and content analysis techniques were used to analyze, present and discuss data respectively. The study found that, the major achievement of the paradigm shift is institutionalization of a collaborative, transparent, holistic and friendly mechanism compared to its predecessor school inspection. However, such achievement has not impacted positively on the quality of education provided as expected due to inadequacy of resources to meet quality standards as recommended by school quality assurance officers, limited understanding among teachers on their roles and responsibilities in the new paradigm, little attention given to teachers' welfare services and lack of legal power to school quality assurance directorate to enforce their recommendation in schools. The study recommended therefore, the improvement of resources to meet the quality standards in schools, developing quality assurance competences to students in Teacher Colleges, special attention to teachers' welfare services and constitutionalizing the school quality assurance directorate into an autonomous entity reporting direct to the parliament. Further study can be conducted on evaluating the development of quality assurance competences in Teacher Colleges.

**Key Words:** Paradigm Shift, School Inspection, School Quality Assurance, School Quality Assurance Framework, School Quality Assurance Directorate.

## 1.1 Introduction

The quality of education is a determinant factor for social and economic development at individual, national and global level (United Nations, 2016). Since independence therefore, the Tanzania government has been designing and implementing different strategies and mechanisms to ensure that the quality of education provided is improved and maintained to foster man power training towards national development vision (National Audit Office of Tanzania, 2016; United Republic of Tanzania, 2000). Consistently, the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance system in monitoring of basic, primary and teacher education in Tanzania is a typical strategy and mechanism to improve the quality of

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education provided towards innovative, creative and competitive man power training for national development (Agency for the Development of Education Management, 2021).

The genesis of school inspection system can be traced as far back to the Napoleon Regime in France during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which was intended to monitor the provision of education in terms of standards (Kabati, 2017). It was then adopted in the United Kingdom when her majesty inspector of school was appointed in December 1839 to ensure that the money given to school as grants are well spent to support the provision of public education in England (Gerran, 1998). The system was established therefore to ensure that, education provision as a public service, complies with the prescribed rules, regulations and programmes (Brown, MCNamara, Hara & O'Brien, 2016). School inspection system was then adopted in different countries across the world, even in the high performing education systems like Hong Kong, Singapore, New Zealand, Scotland and Netherlands for the same purpose as those of England (Whitby, 2010) and the United States of America (Berner, 2017).

In Africa, school inspection begun during colonial era. In Ghana, for example, it was established in 1853, after the appointment of the first inspector of schools for British West Africa Colony to ensure that, the African teachers in colonial schools comply with the prescribed curriculum, rules, regulations, programmes and procedures for safeguarding the colonial interests (Opoku-Asare, 2006).

Similarly, after Independence, school inspection system was adopted by independent African government for the same purpose of adherence to the prescribed rules, regulations and standards (Hongoke & Mmbando, 2010). In independent Tanzania for example, school inspection was formalized in 1979 when the inspectorate department was established under the Ministry of education, following the education Act number 25 of 1978 (Kambuga & Dadi, 2015). The main objectives of school inspection in Tanzania include: Monitoring enrollment, access, completion and equity in education; observing the work being done by students, teachers and schools, so as to make judgements on quality; promoting school development and improvement; collecting data, analyzing, interpreting them, giving reflection and reporting; providing feedback to the Ministry, Heads of schools, owners and other stakeholders, identifying specific needs for schools, teachers and students; monitor students' and teachers' discipline and conducting action research (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2011: 71). The system involved inspectors visiting schools without prior information for

evaluation purpose to ascertain whether they comply with the education act and regulations or not and administer punishments to the culprits (UNESCO, 2018).

Moreover, school inspection system, had four types of inspections which included: Full inspection that intended to evaluate the whole operation of the school from curriculum implementation, administrative function as well as school environment; follow up inspection to examine the extent to which, school management have implemented the given recommendations from the previous inspection; partial inspection to evaluate specific aspects of the school operations as well as special inspection to find solution for a certain problem in a specific school (Common Wealth Secretariat, 1998).

However, school inspection system has been criticized at global level about its limitation to address quality challenges threatening the achievement of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning needs (Almadani & Rodrigues, 2011). At local level, school inspection has been graded as ineffective to improve the quality of education which is the driving force towards the Tanzania development vision '*transforming a country from low-agricultural productivity into a middle income and a semi-industrialized nation by 2025*' as well as the Sustainable Development Goal, Agenda 2030 which intends to transform people's lives in different aspects (National Audit Office of Tanzania, 2008; 2016; Kabati, 2017). Such global and local needs for quality education as declared in the education and training policy of 2014 in section 3.2 that: '*education and training should adhere to quality assurance and standards acceptable that would make Tanzanians to be competent and competitive at national and international levels*', necessitated the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania in 2017, where the latter is expected to be collaborative, effective, evidence-based, communicative and transparent to ensure that the prescribed standards are achieved and maintained than the former (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2014; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017).

## **1.2 Quality Assurance Systems in Tanzania Education**

The quality assurance systems in Tanzania education can be categorized into three types. The first is the School Quality Assurance Directorate (SQAD) which is a ministerial department of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The SQAD is responsible to ensure the quality of education at primary, secondary and teacher education levels. The directorate is the transformation of the former, school inspection department (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017). The second is the National for Technical Education (NACTE) which is the semi-autonomous agency responsible to ensure the quality of technical education (NACTE,

2010). The third is the Commissions for Universities (TCU) which coordinates quality assurance activities for university and higher learning institutions (SUA, 2017). That means, each level of education provided in Tanzania, has its own quality assurance mechanism although, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology has the overall responsibility for educational quality improvement.

### **1.3 Context of the problem**

The Tanzania government in 2017, transformed education monitoring system from school inspection to school quality assurance as an intervention to improve the quality of education which is the catalyst for man power training for individual and national development (Agency for the Development of Education Management, 2021). Therefore, the school inspectorate department and their officials, school inspectors assumed the functions and responsibilities of school quality assurance (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017). The paradigm shift intended to transform the practice and behaviour of school inspection into school quality assurance towards achieving the desired quality goal in education (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2018) Since 2017 when school quality assurance system was born from school inspection in Tanzania, there was a dire lack of empirical feedback about the achievement of the paradigm shift in education. Without such feedback, the national and international efforts and endeavours towards improving quality assurance systems in the Tanzania education would remain at dilemma. To bridge such knowledge gap therefore, this paper has come into being.

#### **1.3 Factors for the Paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance**

There are empirical evidences as well as policy statements as forces behind the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance. Starting with the failure of school inspection as the external evaluation system hence a need for a blended system of education monitoring. For example, the paper on approaches to school inspection in Northern Ireland Assembly, pinpointed out the need for blending school self-evaluation and external evaluation instead of relying on the external evaluation only. This new approach of blending school self-evaluation and external evaluation is a paradigm shift from school inspection which relied only on external evaluation to school quality assurance which is a blended system (Perry, 2013).

Secondly, the weaknesses of the school inspection system. The study conducted in Pakistan on barriers to effective school inspection in Pakistan, highlighted the following among the

weaknesses: autocratic tendencies among school inspectors, bureaucracy in the system, faultfinding attitudes among inspectors and lack of follow-up after the school visits for inspection (Ahmad *at al*, 2013). This implies that, there was a need of transforming the system which would remove bureaucracy and solve the lack of follow-ups.

Consistently, In Australia, the study conducted by Altricter and Kemethofer in 2014 established that, the inspected schools improved their academic performance compared to the uninspected one. In the same line, the report of the Controller and Audit General about school inspection in Tanzania, highlighted the incapability and incapacity of the school inspectorate department to inspect many schools, citing example that, in the 2008/2009 financial year, the schools inspected were 346 out of 3,798 which is about 9% of the schools which were supposed to be inspected in that year (National Audit Office of Tanzania, 2008). This implies that, if the inspected schools improve their academic performance, only 346 schools could improve their academic performance while the uninspected schools deteriorating. Due to this situation, there was a need for a paradigm shift from school inspection system.

Similarly, the study conducted in six countries: Bangladesh, India, Cambodia, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa on challenges facing school inspection identified: corruption, irregular practices, and lack of competences among inspectors as well as financial constrains (UNESCO, 2018). Those challenges imply the weakness of the system thus a need for change for improvement. In Nigeria, school inspection is ineffective due to unprofessional tendencies of inspectors who serve as masters of all subjects, punishment-oriented inspection, relying on set down rules than reality and poor remuneration among inspectors (Ololube & Major, 2014).

In the same line, the paper presented by Hongoke and Mmbando in the 2010 Joint Education Sector Review, under the subject 'Management, Inspection and Supervision for Effective Delivery of Quality Education' condemned school inspection system for creating antagonistic relationship between inspectors and the inspected, lack of commitment among inspectors and inspected, poor feedback systems, lack of follow-up mechanism, poor facilities, lack of transparency as well as lack of autonomy to the inspectorate department itself. The same weaknesses were observed by the Controller and Audit General in 2008, Kambuga and Dadi in 2015 as well as Mollel in 2015 hence a need for intervention strategies including structural and administrative change of the system as emphasized in the education and training policy (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2014).

Finally, the need for improving the quality of education to meet the learning needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century which are critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration have instigated the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance to ensure that education management and administration, the curriculum, methodology, assessment and teaching and learning resources address these learning needs. These skills are essential for man power training towards Tanzania development vision 2025 and sustainable development goal, 2030 as stated in the education sector development plan 2016/2017-2020/2021 (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2018).

## 2. Theoretical Underpinning

The paper was guided by the paradigm shift theory founded by Thomas Kuhn (1962). The theory asserts that, a paradigm shift is the fundamental changes in world view, concepts and practices when the former paradigm does not drive towards the expected goals (Gomez-Diago, 2020). The major assumptions of the paradigm shift theory include: Changes are inevitable as the world is not static, the consequences of the paradigm shift can be good or bad depending on how the new paradigm is put into use, paradigm shift often comes from the young because older people normally are conservatives of ideas and practices, the existing paradigm cannot be abandoned until its replacement is found and a new paradigm needs adequate time for its goals to be achieved (Joshua, 2014). The paradigm shift is the result of the weaknesses of the existed paradigm which did not meet peoples' expectations (Anandi, Larson & Mahoney, 2020). The theory is suitable for this paper because it answers critical questions of the study concerning to what, how, why, when and for whom is the paradigm shift. Therefore, the collection of data, analysis, presentation and discussions based on the paradigm shift theory.

## 3. Methodology

The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed methods design which merged together the qualitative and quantitative research approaches and methods. The design enabled the triangulation of the results collected concurrently and analyzed separately using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques respectively (Creswell, 2014). Questionnaires with open ended and closed questions were distributed randomly to 94 out of 172 primary school teachers pursuing Diploma in School Quality Assurance at the Agency for educational Management (ADEM) in order to solicit their perceptions concerning the achievement of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania education. 76 out of 94 respondents returned the complete filled questionnaires while 6 filled with some questions skipped, and 2 did not fill anything at all. The return rate therefore

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was 80.1%. Interview questions was conducted to primary school heads graduated from Diploma in Education Leadership, Management and Administration for triangulating the responses filled in questionnaires. Purposeful sampling was used to obtain both categories of respondents because of their professional training and practices in quality assurance and education management respectively from 2019 to 2021. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics while qualitative data were subjected into verbatim and content analysis techniques. Data presentation involved table, figure, frequency, verbatim and descriptions.

#### 4. Results of the Study

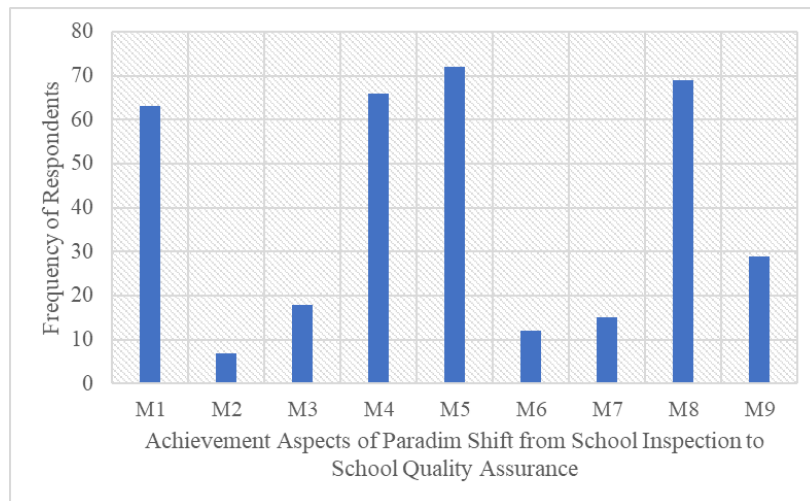
A total of 76 primary school teachers pursuing Diploma in School Quality Assurance were asked to give their opinion about the achievement of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in basic education. Their responses are presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Teachers’ responses on the achievements of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania education.**

The achievements of the Paradigm Shift from School Inspection to School Quality Assurance in Tanzania Education	Frequency N 76.
Improved the use of quality assurance feedbacks for school improvement (M1)	63
Improved the quality of education provided in schools (M2)	7
Improved teachers’ awareness on their roles and responsibilities in quality assurance processes (M3)	18
Change of attitude from school inspectors to school quality assurance practitioners (M4)	66
Improved community involvement in quality assurance practices (M5)	72
Improved teachers’ welfare services (M6)	12
Improved enforcement of the quality assurance recommendation (M7)	15
Improved transparency in quality assurance processes (M8)	69
Improved school resources for quality achievement (M9)	29

**Figure 1: Teachers’ responses on the achievements of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania education.**

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As indicated in Table 1 and figure 1, teachers pursuing Diploma in School Quality Assurance are knowledgeable that, the shift from school inspection to school quality assurance, has made a remarkable transformation in education monitoring mechanisms in terms of stakeholders' involvement, improved feedbacks, change of attitude from school inspectors to school quality assurance practitioners and transparency in the whole process of quality assurance. Triangulating these findings to headteachers, an interview question was posed to head teachers about the achievement of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania primary education. Their responses were as follows:

The head teacher from school A, replied that:

*'These school quality assurance officers are friendly; they advise and share their views for improving the teaching and learning as well as school management and administration unlike the former school inspectors. But teachers' welfare services are not part of the quality assurance framework, the concentration is on learners' achievement disregarding their abilities'.*

The head teacher from school B, answered that:

*'The school inspectors created fear as they invaded schools unnoticed, their relationship with teachers was cats and rats but currently, things are good. However, the good recommendations they gave require adequate resources hard for school management to mobilize and themselves they are incapable to enforce them to the ministries dealing with education'.*

The head teacher from school C, argued:

*'Although the quality education in terms of academic results have not been achieved due to increased enrollment compared to the available teachers, classrooms and books, there is an achievement in stakeholders' involvement in quality assurance practices as well as transparency in the whole processes and constructive feedback to schools. The bad side of the paradigm shift is that, apart*

*from head teachers, other teachers are not even aware of their roles and responsibilities in the new paradigm.*

The head teacher from school D, responded that:

*'At least these quality assurance officers are aware that some situations in our schools like shortage of teachers, classrooms, books, and desks is not the fault of the school Management but the government which own these schools. In the former systems we were penalized for the mistakes not ours, for example poor performance in standard seven examinations lead to the demotion of most of head teachers from their posts'*

Head teacher from school E, said:

*'A paradigm shift, needs time to achieve its intended goal, there are observable gradual improvement year after year since 2017 up to date. At first, we have got the new system, that is a great achievement then we expect for the achievement of the new system in a near future especially improvement of school resources, students and teachers' welfare and academic performance in the poor performing subjects'*

## 5. Discussion of the Findings

The views of teachers pursuing Diploma in School Quality Assurance are in line with the observations given by the head teachers trained in Education Leadership, Management and Administration that, the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance have improved the character and practice of personnel dealing with education monitoring. This result is in line with the study conducted by Doherty in United Kingdom (2012) who established that, quality assurance should replace school inspectors in 'white coats' with quality assurance personnel 'problem solvers' This has been achieved in Tanzania as manifested in change of attitude from school inspectors to school quality assurance personnel as well as improved transparency and feedback systems. However, the observable achievement has impacted little in the academic performance, a tangible indicator of quality goal of education which was a cry even during the school inspection system as established by the controller and audit general in 2008 and 2016 (National Audit Office of Tanzania, 2008; 2016). Moreover, the results imply further that, little academic achievement is the result of putting little attention to teachers who are the steering wheel towards the quality education. There are a lot of teachers' grievances in terms of delayed promotion, unpaid leaves, salary arrears and poor working condition. The emphasis on learners' achievement in the new paradigm should go hand in hand with teachers' achievement due to their mutual relationship as proposed by the study conducted by Almadani, Rud and Rodrigues (2011) in Bangladesh that. Similarly, the study results on little achievement on learners' achievement are in line with the study conducted by Abdullahi (2020) in Nigeria

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who found that, the education quality achievement has not been achieved through quality assurance processes due to the poor quality of the enrolled students in schools as well as limited teachers' competency.

#### **6. Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study concludes that, the major achievement of the paradigm shift from school inspection to school quality assurance in Tanzania education-monitoring system is institutionalization of a collaborative, transparent, holistic and friendly mechanism compared to its predecessor school inspection. However, such achievement has not impacted positively on the quality of education provided as expected due to various factors such as inadequacy of resources to meet quality standards as recommended by school quality assurance officers. Besides, teachers are apparently confused about their roles and responsibilities in the new paradigm. Furthermore, teachers' welfare services receive a little attention. In addition, there is lack of institutionalized powers on school quality assurance directorate of the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to mandate various recommendations to the operators of schools including the Ministry that is responsible for dealing with education currently known as Ministry of Presidents' Office - Rural Administration and Local Government.

Basing on the paradigm shift theory which guided this study, three years is not enough for a new paradigm to achieve fully, its goals and objectives however, this study at early stage of the paradigm was necessary to track the progress. Therefore, to achieve the desired outcomes in education as resulting from a paradigm shift, the current study recommends the following. Firstly, providing relevant resources and facilities to meet the standards of quality provision of education in schools. This includes, though not limited to quality teachers, classrooms, teachers' houses, school libraries and students and staff meals. Secondly, developing foundational quality assurance competences to teachers while still in Teacher Colleges. A few of these foundational competences are: Conducting school self-evaluation, quality preparation and internal quality assurance practices. Thirdly, reviewing policy in order to practically strengthen community involvement in education. Community involvement aspects should include: Resource provision to support education, monitoring of teaching and learning and follow up for students' progress to mention but a few. Fourthly, giving a special attention to teachers' welfare services. The current study highlighted welfare services such as timely and fair promotion, teachers' houses, upgraded salary scale, payable leaves and good working environment. Fifthly, constitutionalizing the school quality assurance directorate as an autonomous entity reporting direct to the parliament. This will enable the parliament to allocate

enough resources for school improvement and held accountable officials deviating school resources. Further study should be conducted on evaluating the quality of school quality assurance officers, development of quality assurance competences in Teacher Colleges, as well as comparative study on academic achievements during school inspection and after the paradigm shift.

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