

# Contribution of External Quality Assurance in Improving Instructional Practices among Heads of Schools and Teachers in Secondary Schools in Zanzibar

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## ABSTRACT

*In this study, we explored the contribution of External School Quality Assurance (ESQA) towards the improvement of instructional practices among Heads of Schools (HoSs) and teachers in secondary schools in Zanzibar. A mixed-methods research approach coupled with a convergent parallel design was employed to generate data. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to get the study participants. Data were collected from the Kaskazini Region in Unguja. The study involved 167 teachers, 12 HoSs, 1 REO, 2 DEO, and 11 ESQ assurers. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documentary review and analyzed through content analysis and bar charts. The findings indicate that although ESQA has a great contribution to the improvement of instructional practices, classroom observation was not effectively carried out by ESQ assurers. The findings also indicate that ESQ assurers created fear and tension among teachers because teachers knew that their work performance was to be reported to higher authority. The findings indicate further that there were irregular school visits which hindered the HoSs' and teachers' effective improvement of instructional practices. The key argument in this study is that the current ESQA is ineffective in enhancing instructional practices in secondary schools. For ESQA to contribute to the improvement of instructional practices among HoSs and teachers, ESQ assurers need to concentrate on classroom observation. The government needs to support the ESQA with both human and financial resources and training programmes for the ESQ assurers are equally imperative for effective monitoring of the quality of education in secondary schools.*

**Keywords:** External school quality assurance, heads of schools, instructional supervision, quality assurance

## **INTRODUCTION**

External school quality assurance (SQA) has been a school management issue among many scholars (Chepkuto, 2012; Ehren & Visscher, 2006; Chika, 2019; Ehren & Shackleton, 2016; Farrell, 2011; Fungilwa, 2021). The goals of SQA align with Sustainable Development Goal No.4 which aspires to strengthen access to quality education for all (Matete, 2009; the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training [MoEVT], 2017). This need and role of SQA has influenced different countries to deploy an External School Quality Assurance (ESQA) approach to monitor and control the quality standards of secondary education (Federal Ministry of Education [FME], 2016; Kinesti, 2019). In most European countries, especially in England, ESQA by the name of school inspection was officially introduced through the Education Act of 1992. This Act mandated the Department of Education and Science (DES) to start a new inspectorate department that would be known as the Office for Standards in Education (De Grauwe, 2007; Berner, 2017). Later, the office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (OHMCI) was established in Wales with the task of ensuring that the quality of educational inspection was improved (Thomas, 1998). They are supposed to trace and establish procedures towards excellence and improved quality (United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2017; MoEVT, 2018).

According to URT and MoEVT, ESQA, with support, coaching and mentoring, ought to ensure compliance with the laid down policies, laws, and regulations highlighted in the Education Act No. 10 of 2018 as well as an Education Training Policy (ETP) of 2014. It should be noted that many of the developing countries expanded the SQA services after independence (De Grauwe, 2007). For example, In Zanzibar, the legal basis for quality inspection of schools has its essence in the Educational Act No. 6 of 1982 which stated that school inspectors should hold schools, heads of schools and teachers accountable to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Ehren, 2012). Further, Act No.10 of 2018 on SQA has mandated the department to establish the Government Agency known as the Office of the Chief Inspectorate of Education [OCIE] (MoEVT, 2018a). Within this Agency, there are several sub units one of which is concerned with ESQA. The resolution of the OCIE in Zanzibar required that ESQ assurers visit and observe all school levels in compliance with the Ministry of Education

guidelines so that the education standards and quality are met (MoEVT, 2018a). OCIE is intended to supervise the curriculum management and implementation, to ensure that ESQ assurers give professional support and constructive feedback and suggest the best ways classroom instructions can be applied by teachers to encourage their creativity (MoEST, 2017; MoEVT, 2018b). Elsewhere, for instance, in Kenya (Mwinyipembe & Orodho, 2014), Nigeria (Chika, 2019) and Germany (Saeed, 2018), ESQA plays a considerable role in improving the quality of education; it promotes the HoSs and teachers' instruction process as well as pupils' learning achievements. However, the quality of education in Zanzibar has not been promising despite the deployment of ESQA. A baseline survey by Ali (2015) observed that there were inadequate supervision practices in schools around Zanzibar that could improve the students' academic performance.

Similarly, the schools' academic performance was also unsatisfactory. For example, the Form Four examination results between 2016 and 2019 continuously reported to be poor (MoEVT, 2019; MoEST, 2019). School performance is one of the indicators of effectiveness of ESQ assurers' practices, teachers and HoSs' instructional supervision practices (Lupimo, 2014; Ali, 2019). There has been limited research in Tanzania, particularly in Zanzibar that delved into contribution of ESQA on improving the instructional practices in secondary schools. What is instead available is abundant research on the role of school inspection (see for example, Matete, 2009; Haule, 2012; Ali, 2015; Lupimo, 2014; Omar, 2016). These studies have generally concluded that school inspection has been ineffective and unsustainable in supporting the HoSs and teachers' instructional practices (Matete, 2009; Lupimo, 2014; Salmin, 2016). Some of the current studies in Tanzania, for example, the study by Fungilwa (2021) and Sebastian (2020) have concentrated on internal quality assurance (ISQA). The contribution of ESQA to the improvement of instructional practices among HoSs and teachers in secondary schools remains unexplored. This study, therefore, explored the contribution of ESQA in improving the instructional practices of HoSs and teachers in secondary schools in Zanzibar. The key question in this study was: How does ESQA contribute towards the improvement of instructional practices among HoSs and teachers in secondary schools in Zanzibar?

## **The Role of ESQA**

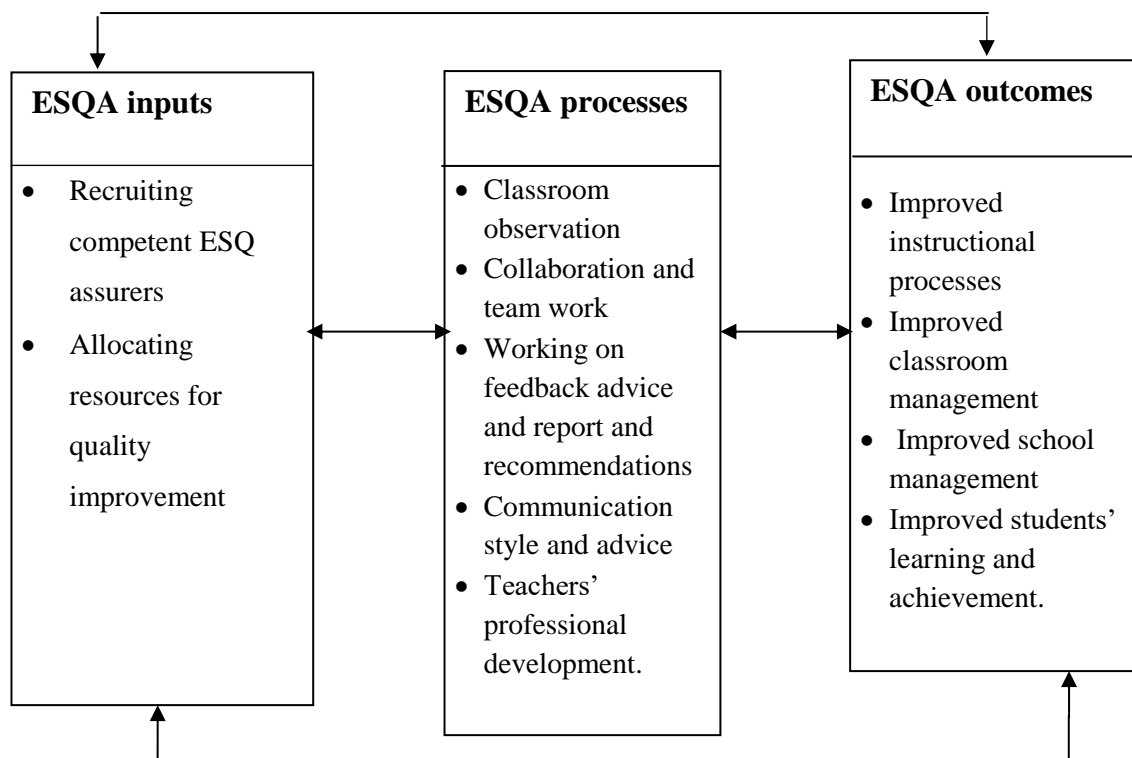
ESQA plays a great role in improving instructional leadership and teachers' work performance to enhance pupils' learning outcomes (Chepkuto, 2012; Lupimo, 2014; Alkutich, 2015). ESQA are responsible for accomplishing activities such as supervising, evaluating and monitoring the quality of school instruction, school organization and management (Gustafsson, 2014; Kambuga & Dadi, 2015). ESQ assurers are responsible for ensuring that HoSs monitor the teaching and learning to improve students' learning (Tesema, 2014; Mtweve, 2017, Manase, 2016). SQA processes comprise a set of criteria and standards/guidelines for ESQ assurers to follow as a complete tool during school visits for observations and information gathering (Mmbonde, 2010; Haule, 2012). Different countries tend to prepare the criteria and standards to meet their quality requirements and these are usually published in an official document (Haule 2012). The main aim of setting quality standards is to improve teachers' efficiency and effectiveness when teaching.

According to Chika (2019), countries need the SQA system if they need to maintain quality of education provided to citizens. This is because it is important to ensure the internalisation of the quality of education provided including improving teachers' effectiveness and efficiency in job performance. ESQ assurers are expected to provide professional support to HoSs by helping them on how they can monitor the pedagogical skills among teachers. This can help them how to improve their teaching and learning techniques, better use of teaching and learning materials, mastering the subject, preparation of lesson plans and content delivery (Ehren & Visscher, 2006 & 2008; Matete, 2009; Patrick, 2009). Tyagi (2010) suggested that teachers' professional development could be promoted by ESQA through regularly checking professional documents and providing feedback to both teachers and students. Countries such as England, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands, use ESQA for maintaining quality and at the same time enhancing teachers' accountability for students' learning (DES, 2016; Wong & Li, 2010). According to De Grauwe (2007) and Matete (2009), ESQA needs to be reformed with a purpose of ensuring that ESQ assurers work with teachers as friends and not enemies and the aim should be to improve e students' learning. In Tanzania, a study by Matete (2021) recommended the

ESQ assurers to have a close supervision of teachers in a classroom setting through classroom observation if students’ learning is to be improved. The question which remains unanswered is whether the ESQA satisfies these t important obligations in schools to facilitate students’ learning with ultimate goal of the improvement of academic performance.

**Conceptual Framework**

For ESQA to contribute to the improvement of instructional practices there should be inputs in terms of financial resources and qualified human resources. There should also be processes that contribute to quality outcomes. The relationship between ESQA and the improvement of instructional practices are as indicated by the double directional-arrows as shown in Fig. 1.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for ESQA to Contribute towards Instructional Practices in Secondary Schools**

Source: Modified from Matete (2009)

**ESQA Inputs**

For ESQ assurers to help HoSs and teachers improve instructional practices, the government has to recruit ESQ assurers who are competent in their subject matter so that they can help teachers in an effective way, especially for difficult topics (Matete, 2009). It is equally important that the government provides financial resources to facilitate the ESQ assure visits in schools if the quality of education is to be improved.

**ESQA Processes**

For ESQ assurers to help HoSs and teachers improve their instructional practices, they need to undertake classroom observation, where they can be in a better position to discern teachers. Hislop (2017) recommended that ESQ assurers need to strive to improve the practices and thus it is important that ESQ assures focus on the classroom visits if they are to help teachers improve students' learning. They also need to work with teachers in a collaborative way and as friends and create a teamwork spirit among teachers, who can help each other based on expertise (Matete, 2009). For improvement to take place in instructional practices in secondary schools, there is also a need for the school leaders such as the DEOs and district directors to work on given ESQA reports and recommendations by outlining and giving affirmative good practices (Hislop, 2017). This goes hand in hand with professional support to teachers in areas of weaknesses to help teachers improve their instructional practices in the classroom. As observed by Macharia and Kiruma (2014), ESQ assurers need to support teachers professionally to have an added value and develop more effective and efficient instructional practices.

**ESQA Outcomes**

If the inputs in terms of human and financial resources are directed to schools and processes are properly undertaken, then it is likely that instructional processes in secondary schools may be improved including the classroom management by both HoSs and teachers. It is also expected to improve the school management, especially on the supervision part of teaching and learning which in turn can bring about improved students' learning and achievement.

## **Methodology**

This study used a mixed-method research approach coupled with a convergent parallel design. This design was used to validate the study's findings. Data were triangulated from different sources of information. This approach helped to complement each type of the collected data. However, it should be noted that balancing between quantitative and qualitative findings is difficult and sometimes it is time-consuming, specifically when the purpose is to clarify the issues at hand. It was necessary, therefore, to ensure that questions were made clear to avoid wastage of time including ensuring that both quantitative and qualitative data were presented. The study was conducted in the Kaskazini Region in Unguja, Zanzibar –Tanzania. The region was selected because of the limitations found in the SQA practices. Reports have indicated that the instructional practices and classroom observations had inappropriately been carried out by both ESQ assurers and HoSs from 2016 up to 2019 consecutively (Office of the Chief Inspectorate of Zanzibar, 2019; Ali, 2019).

Similarly, the standards of school performance in this region were also unsatisfactory (MoEVT, 2019). In that regard, it was important, therefore, to explore the contribution of HoSs and teachers on ESQA practices that in turn could improve students' learning and achievement. In this study, simple random sampling was used to select 167 teachers and purposive sampling was adopted to select 12 HoSs, 11 ESQA, 2 DEOs, and the REO making a total of 193 participants. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and documentary review. Copies of close-ended questionnaires were distributed to teachers who filled up information about the ESQA and its influence on instructional leadership practices in secondary schools. The questionnaires allowed the collection of a huge amount of data from a large sample (Abawi, 2014). The questionnaires were administered in person to ensure that respondents do not skip questions and to improve the return rates (Debos, 2019). In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect the required data from teachers. This study employed in-depth interviews that allowed learning from participants' perspectives, experiences, and the world they live in (Abawi, 2004). A documentary review was conducted to generate data from EQA books, ESQA observation forms, log books, schemes of work, lesson plans, educational policies, and students'

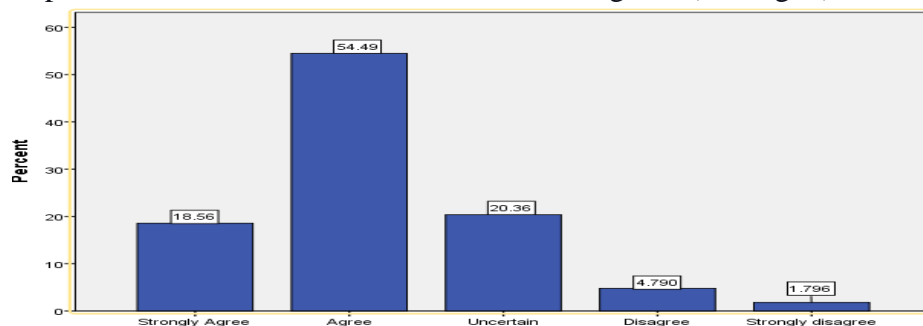
summative examination results. Document analysis facilitates the collection of information to fill the gaps that might have been left by other data collection methods such as interviews and questionnaires (Shoba, 2009). The documents surveyed in this study were scrutinized to ensure that relevant data were collected. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by using bar charts while thematic analysis was applied for qualitative data, where the data were coded to get themes and sub-themes. All ethical issues, including obtaining the participants’ consent and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the study participants, were considered.

**Findings**

This study addressed one key research question, how does ESQA contribute towards the improvement of instructional practices among HoSs and teachers in secondary schools in Zanzibar? This section presents key findings which are presented in the following themes: ESQA for monitoring instructional process, standards and criteria used in the ESQA, ESQA reports on students’ academic performance and behaviour changes of the HoSs and teachers.

**ESQA for Monitoring Instructional Process**

Under this theme, the respondents were asked in the questionnaire to rank whether the HoSs had learned how to plan and organize teaching and learning programs after the ESQA’s visit. The results indicated that almost 74 percent of HoSs agreed to be supported by the ESQ assurers on issues related to the organization and supervision of teaching and learning. About 20% of respondents were not sure while about 6% disagreed (see Fig. 2).



**Figure 2: Monitoring of the Instructional Process**

Source: Field data (2021)



As observed from the chart, the majority of the teachers agreed that ESQA was helping HoSs in monitoring and planning the teaching and learning; a few did not agree. A similar observation was recorded during interviews. Some of the teachers did not consider ESQA as a helping hand. One of the HoSs at school 'D' stated:

*The ESQ assurers need to help us in implementing instructional supervision to improve teaching and learning, but they do not come often. If they could do so, it could help improve our efficiency and effectiveness in planning and managing the schools. The HoS has many things to do. Sometimes it is difficult to ensure that we can give all that is needed by teachers. Although I need to supervise teaching and learning, teachers tend to make more effort when the ESQ assurers visit us.*

Teachers also commented that ESQ assurers often tended to concentrate on the number of exercises given to students, schemes of work, and lesson plans but they were not properly supporting teachers on how a particular subject should be taught. During interviews, one of the HoS from school 'F' commented about the help he receives from ESQ with some reservations:

*The ESQ assurers usually observe to see whether there are problems related to the preparation of schemes of work, daily records, and lesson plans. If they observe any problem, they call upon the teachers and show them the appropriate procedure for preparation. They also informed me what I needed to do with weak teachers for them to improve. However, they do not support teachers on how a particular subject should be taught which could be more useful for teachers to improve instructional practices.*

One of the HoSs from 'C' appreciated the support that was given by ESQ assurers to the schools and he commented during the interviews:

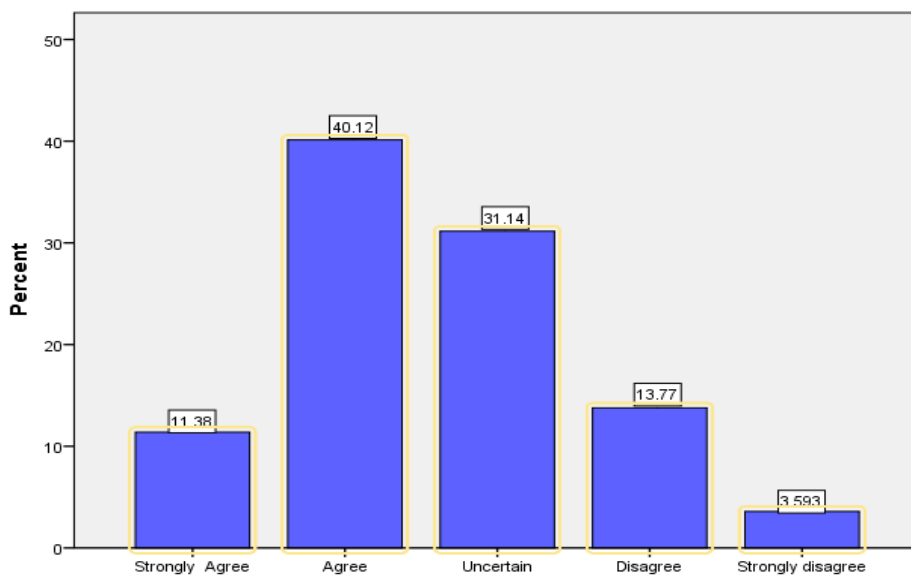
*When the ESQ assurers visit schools, they provide professional guidance and advice on how to organize instructional activities. Teachers are sometimes helped to prepare the teaching and learning materials to improve*

*students’ learning. However, in most cases they check the lesson plans and schemes of work without helping us to improve the teaching and learning based on the content.*

The findings suggest that ESQ assurers were not effective in helping the HoSs and teachers to improve classroom practices as their focus was on the collection of students’ exercise books, schemes of work, and lesson plans. HoSs and teachers thought that if they could be supported on how to teach the content, it could be the added value of the ESQ assurers to help them to improve the instructional practices and students’ learning.

**Standards and Criteria used in the ESQA**

The study also sought to understand how teachers perceived the standards and criteria used in school ESQA; i.e., whether they were fair and realistic. About 51 percent agreed that standards and criteria were good, fair, and realistic for evaluation of the work of the teachers. About 31% were not sure while about 17% were not happy about the standard and criteria set. Figure 3 below summarises the findings.



**Figure 3: Standards and Criteria Used in the EQA**

Source: Field data (2021)

The findings from the interviews also revealed that the standards and criteria used by the ESQ assurers in schools were good for the improvement of instructional practices. One of the HoSs at school 'D' commented:

*The indicators and criteria of EQA are fair and realistic because they help the teacher to improve instructional practices. For example, the ESQ assurers check the teachers in the classroom and students' participation in the lesson. They also check if the teacher follows the specific objectives that are in the lesson plans and if the teacher gives tasks to students, the classroom environment, and the syllabus coverage.*

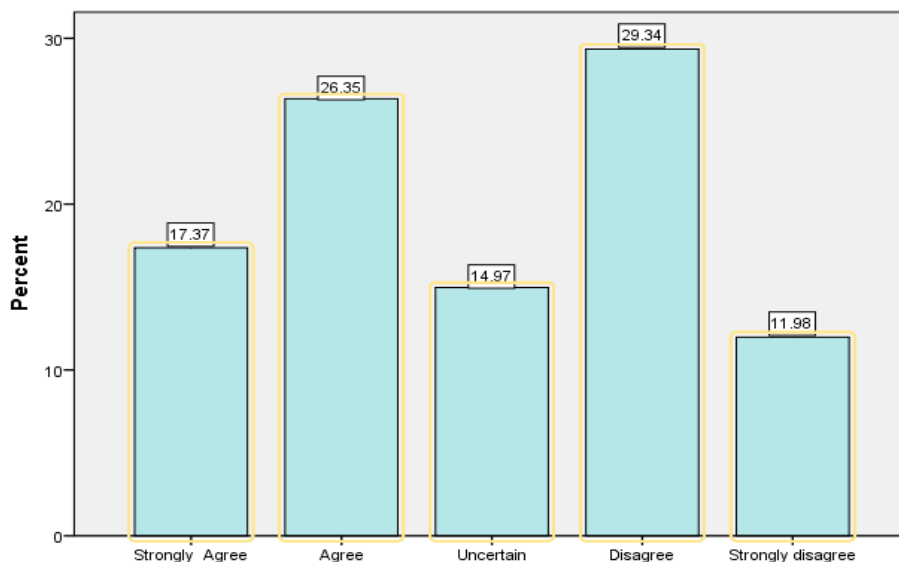
Teachers also commented that if the criteria and standards are followed, HoSs and teachers are more likely to be effective in their day-to-day functions and thus the work of the ESQ assurers would be more meaningful. In this regard, the Regional Educational Officer had this to say:

*The QA tools may lead to efficiency if they are improved since they still have some flaws. Therefore, they need to be improved to a larger extent since we have not yet experienced any notable changes that distinguish the present SQA and the previous school inspection in the past.*

The findings suggest that the ESQA tools were good and accepted to improve the instructional practices in secondary schools. However, they need to be reviewed and improved to align them with the existing situation where teachers need to own their instructional practices and that the ESQ assurers need to work closely with teachers.

### **ESQA Reports Focus on Students' Academic Performance**

The study also wanted the respondents to state whether or not they were aware that the ESQ assurance reports focussed on students' academic performance. The findings indicated that about 43 percent agreed about the matter. About 15% were not sure while about 41% disagreed.



**Figure 4: ESQA Reports Focus on Students' Academic Performance**

Source: Field data (2021)

While it is good for the ESQA reports to focus on students' academic performance, during interviews teachers commented that they should also include other aspects such as how to improve the teaching and learning environment and motivation for teachers. One of the HoSs at school "E" said the following during the interview:

*Their reports should not only present pupils' academic performance but also consider teachers' motivation for them to work hard and improve the teaching and learning environment.*

Moreover, HoSs perceived that the ESQA's report concentrated on syllabus coverage, pedagogical issues, and the use of teaching and learning materials. Regarding this, the HoS 'K' remarked:

*The reports always insist the teachers cover the syllabus on time and use appropriate teaching and learning methods. They also put more emphasis on the improvement of the student's academic performance.*

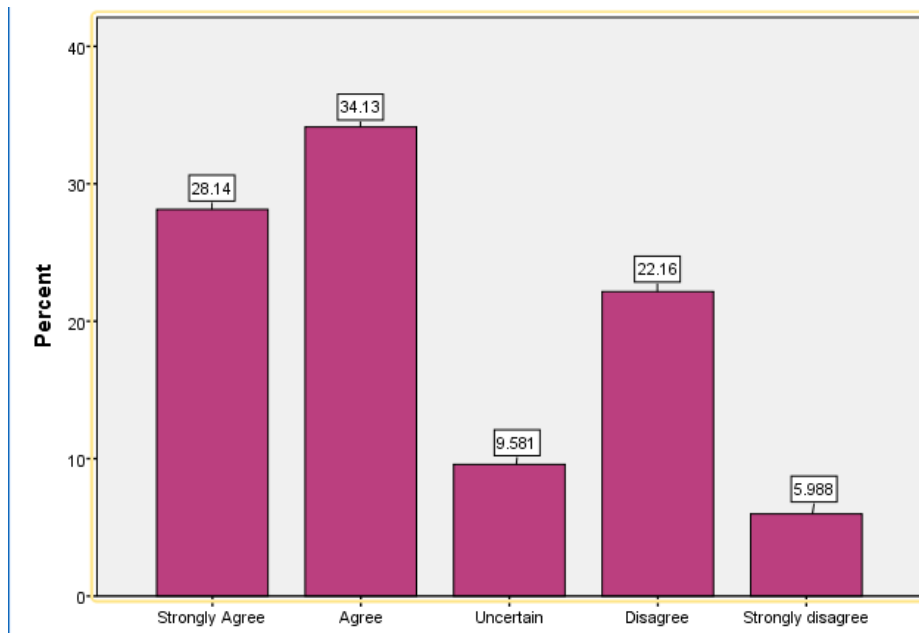
In addition, HoS 'L' also commented the importance of the ESQA reports as they play a great role for teacher to improve instructional practices. S/he noted:

*ESQ assurers report on areas that have been well implemented and the identified weaknesses. If teachers know their weak points, then they are more likely to improve their instructional practices. As they also report on the school resources and the extent to which the head is accepted by his/her subordinates, it gives room to improve for both the HoS and teachers as they are in a better position to know their weaknesses and how to address them.*

As observed above, teachers admitted that it was good that ESQA focussed on students' academic performance and other aspects such as what teachers need to do to improve the instructional practices. Such activities include following the given guidelines and use participative teaching and learning techniques that could improve the teaching and learning and eventually contribute to students' better academic performance.

### ***ESQA causes Tension and a Heavy Workload for Teachers***

This study further sought to establish whether or not ESQ assurers were bringing about tensions and increasing workload amongst teachers as it has been frequently reported by teachers. It was found that almost 62 percent agree that ESQA brings about tension and heavy workload to teachers. About 10% were not sure while about 28% did not agree. Figure 5 below summarises the findings.



**Figure 5: ESQA causes Tension and Heavy Workload to Teachers**  
 Source: Field data (2021)

The data gathered through interview sessions with the HoSs had similar observations. One of the HoSs from school ‘D’ emphasized:

*The ESQ assurers have been too demanding and always want us to implement all the tasks that have been stipulated in the guidelines. They forget that teachers have many students to deal with, including marking. During ESQA visits is a time where teachers are busy with the preparation of lesson plans instead of teaching. This is because; teachers do not fulfill their responsibilities in accordance with the provided guidelines but they tend to have false obedience.*

In line with these responses, some of the HoSs declared that some of the ESQ assurers were troublesome and stressed the teachers. Teachers commented that ESQ assurers used harsh language even for HoSs. On this particular issue, one of the HoSs at school ‘J’ commented:

*Some ESQ assurers are harsh and troublesome. Sometimes they use harsh language. However, currently they need to*

*work with teachers as friends. They bring about stress to teachers and they tend to force teachers to do what they wish although in reality, it is not what it is supposed to be done. As a result, they bring about contradiction as it is not true that they know better than teachers.*

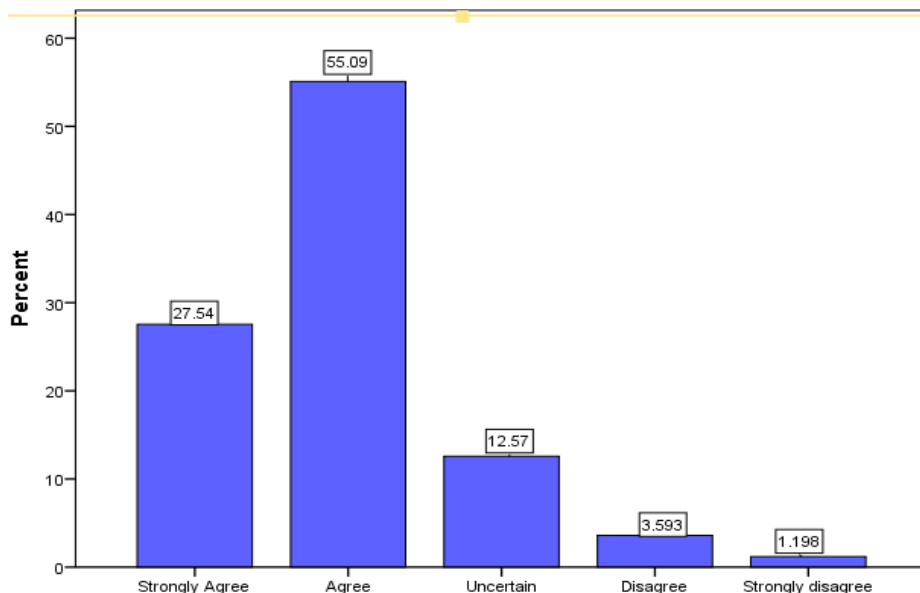
However, some of the HoSs were of the opinion that there was some teachers' indiscipline especially those who tend to work hard when they know that ESQ assurers will visit their school, they tend to pretend to do well. One of the HoSs at school 'L' commented:

*When teachers know that ESQ assurers will be visiting their school, it is a very time when teachers are busy preparing the lesson plans and arranging their things properly. You see that teachers are very busy and some ask for permission that they are sick because they are not doing their work as required without inducement. A good teacher does not fear the ESQ assurers.*

The findings indicated that ESQA brought about tension and heavy workload among teachers. This was partly contributed by teachers who did not organize their work in advance. Yet, there is a need for the ESQ to understand people they are working with so that their visit to the school is of great benefit as the aim of ESQA is to improve students' learning and academic performance.

### **ESQA visits for Behaviour Changes of the HoSs and Teachers**

The respondents were asked to rank their agreement levels towards the changing behaviour of the HoSs after the ESQ assurers' visits. The findings indicate that almost 82 percent of teachers agreed on the changing of behaviour among HoSs after the ESQ assurers' school visits. About 13% were not sure while about 5% disagreed (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6: The ESQA’s Visits Change the HoSs’s Behaviour**

Source: Field data (2021)

Teachers indicated that HoSs just continued doing the same and nothing changed in schools. To them, ESQA is meaningless as they keep recommending the same over and over again. When they visit the schools they find the same problems. One of the HoSs at school ‘A’ explained during the interview:

*The ESQ assurers’ visits do not mean anything. Every year they come and they recommend the same things. Even if the HoS has been mistreating the teachers, no one cares about it. Indeed, I do not see any changes as some teachers and HoSs tend to do things as usual and they just care when the ESQ assurers are present.*

Some of the teachers, however, appreciated that the ESQ assurers helped them to work hard and followed all that had been advised by the ESQ assurers in schools. HoS at school ‘C’ noted:

*ESQ assures are very helpful as they help us improve the instructional practices; they advise the HoSs what they need to do if they are to improve students’ learning and academic performance. They also help me to identify the weaknesses of*



*my teachers and my own. They again assisted me in rectifying my teachers' behaviours. Further, the ESQ assurers help me in my instructional leadership since, when they come, they discern some of the weaknesses that were difficult to know myself. For sure, I get power and improve my capacity to supervise my teachers. Although usually the same, teachers generally tend to work more properly with more effort when they know that they will be evaluated and reported.*

Moreover, it was noted that when the ESQ assurers visited the schools, they also increased teachers' accountability for students' learning. One of the HoS at school 'L' illustrated during the interview:

*ESQ assures have been very helpful as they help teachers understand that they are accountable for students' learning and performance. Indeed, teachers need to know that they are here for students who are the key customers. The school management has set plans to implement the recommendations from the ESQA. When teachers are closely managed, we see some changes in them, especially in preparing and using lesson plans, and schemes of work. However, it is not easy to associate school SQA with the changes in performance in schools as many other factors may contribute to poor or good performances of schools.*

Based on the quotations above, it is argued here that the HoSs, to some extent, can positively change behaviours after the ESQ assurers' visits to improve instructional supervision. However, some HoSs commented that there were no changes; recommendations from the ESQ assurers remain the same year after another and some HoSs did not change the way they deal with teachers. It was good, however, to find that some HoSs appreciated the work of the ESQ assurers in helping teachers to improve their instructional practices as always one tries to work harder after understanding that he/she will be evaluated.

### **Discussions of the Findings**

The findings indicated that ESQA has a great contribution towards the improvement of instructional practices; however, teachers needed more support in teaching content. These findings concur with that of Lupimo

(2014), who revealed that ESQA played a great role in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in Tanzania. Thus, it is important that ESQ assurers and HoSs should work collaboratively to guide teachers in promoting positive attitudes for the improvement of students' learning. This study is in line with Mzena's (2020) study which found that the new SQA tools used in Tanzanian schools contribute to enhancement of students' performance in their National Examinations. However, it is argued here that students' performance in the National Examination results is a product of multiple factors and that one cannot directly associate it with the ESQA. As observed by Akay (2016), factors such as monitoring progress by parents, educational leadership, positive school culture, high expectations from students themselves on the positive outcomes from education, teachers' professional development programmes, and level of school resources may influence students' performance in the National Examinations.

Although the ESQ assurers do not have direct control over the schools, they play a significant role in informing authorities about the actions that need to be undertaken to improve instructional supervision (Ehren & Visscher, 2006). In this study, it was found that classroom observation was not effectively carried out by ESQ assurers. This is arguably hindered effective classroom instruction and ESQ assures may not be in a position to discern the weaknesses of teachers in the classroom setting. These findings confirm what was found by Matete's (2021) study. These findings support the European Commission (2017) which recommends that ESQA reports should focus on improving the quality of teaching by individual feedback, working in teams on pedagogical issues and alignment with overall school development. As observed by Black and William (2001), if ESQ assurers do not focus on classroom observation, it is unlikely that they can provide support to teachers on what needs to be improved based on evidence. Thus, it is important that ESQ assurers carry out classroom observation if the aim is to improve the instructional practices among teachers. As it is noted, the ESQ assurers created fear and tension among teachers because teachers knew that their work performance would be reported; some ESQ assurers used harsh language to teachers. The findings concur with Ball (2004) who stated that ESQA creates uncertainty and fear among teachers. Human beings are always faced with fear when they know that they will be evaluated. However, again,

as suggested by De Grauwe (2007), there is a need to ensure that ESQA and teachers work as close friends with the aim of improving teaching and learning. As observed by OFSTED (2019), teachers are likely to improve their instructional practices through self-evaluation, which signifies the necessity of strengthening the ISQA. The findings indicate further that there were irregular school visits which hindered the effectiveness of HoSs instruction leadership and instructional supervision for the improvement of teaching and learning. Regular school visits by ESQ assurers affect the process of helping teachers with areas of weaknesses to improve the students' learning. It is clear in this study that the standards and criteria used by the ESQ assurers were fair and realistic.

However, it is suggested that the criteria and standards needed more improvement and review to ensure that they are properly implemented. This is different from another Tanzanian study by Haule (2012) who revealed that teachers and leaders felt that the SQA standards and criteria were unfair and realistic to improve teaching and learning. The standards and criteria were too demanding that forced teachers to be busy with such indicators instead of teaching. It is suggested that ESQ assurers need to assess teachers considering their own strengths and weaknesses (teachers' performance) regardless of the official standards (Ololube, 2014). As the findings indicated, ESQA inflict fear and tension among teachers. This finding concurs with Salmin (2016) (from Zanzibar) and Haule (2012) who found that ESQA visits in schools made teachers stressed. Haule (2012) argues that SQA made teachers stressed and busy with professional documents. Matete (2009) also found that tension and fear among teachers were created among teachers because of a lack of proper preparation such as schemes of work, lesson plans, and subject logbooks. This suggests the importance of the ESQ to create close friendliness with teachers so that teachers think that they work with colleagues whose purpose is to improve the instructional practices for effective students' learning. It is important, therefore, that teachers work hard and fulfil their key responsibilities without an inducement from ESQ assures or any other external force. Teachers' primary role is to ensure that students learn and receive quality education that can help them be productive citizens in society and contribute to national development. The findings indicated further that the HoSs to some extent can change in behaviours positively after

the ESQ assurers' visits. This supports the argument by Gustafsson (2014) that ESQA needs to support the instructional leadership roles of the HoSs by giving the chance to conduct professional dialogue with ESQ assurers on the issues related to planning and organizing teaching and learning. The findings also support Onuma and Okpalanze (2017) who argued that ESQA needs to support the school management to run the schools efficiently and effectively. Thus, there is a need for the ESQ assurers to ensure that they carry out school visits regularly to help teachers and HoS schools improve instructional supervision.

### **Conclusions**

In this study we investigated the contribution of ESQA in improving the HoSs and teachers' instructional practices in public secondary schools in Zanzibar. Based on the emerging findings, it is concluded in this study that the ESQA have a great contribution to the improvement of instructional supervision for effective teaching and learning. However, it was found that the ESQ assurers sometimes did not undertake the classroom observation to observe instructional process in the classroom setting. This is viewed to be not enough for them to identify the weaknesses of teachers and offer professional support. ESQ assurers focused on checking the schemes of work, lesson plans and log books that could not give a full picture of what takes place in the classroom. The findings also indicate that standards and criteria used by ESQ assurers needed more improvement to provide quality education. The study further discovered that irregular school visits hindered the effectiveness of HoSs instructional leadership. Thus, it became hard to improve the HoSs' accountability. As a result, the ESQA was ineffective in supporting instructional supervision for the improvement of teaching and learning in secondary schools. Therefore, it is argued that the ESQ assurers have not been able to implement fully their roles to improve the quality of education in the country.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the key findings of this study, the MoEVT through ESQ assurers must consider reviewing and modifying the SQA framework, standards and criteria used to reflect the curriculum changes that consider what takes place at the global level. It is also important that ESQ assurers and HoSs engage in

actual classroom observations to discern the strengths and weaknesses of teachers for proper support to make them improve teaching and learning. Moreover, it is recommended that ESQ assurers should use more effective models of communication with teachers to reduce fear and tension among teachers. ESQ assurers need to ensure that there is a close follow-up visits and actual monitoring of instructional supervision to the HoSs to improve the instructional supervision and students' learning. It is also recommended that ESQ assurers need to carry out classroom observation for them to discern the strengths and weaknesses of the HoSs and teachers to improve the instructional practices. If the government wants to improve the instructional process and the quality of education in the country, then it needs to strengthen the ESQA. Training programmes for ESQ assurers are equally imperative for effective monitoring of the quality of the education offered in secondary schools.

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