

# Role Of School Monitoring In School Quality Enhancement

Ms Naila Latif<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Afifa Khanam<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Ayesha Batool<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer Department of Secondary Education Lahore College for Women University, Lahore,  
[nailalatif57@gmail.com](mailto:nailalatif57@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor STEM Education Lahore College for Women University, Lahore,  
[dr.khanam.wattoo@gmail.com](mailto:dr.khanam.wattoo@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor Department of Secondary Education Lahore College for Women University, Lahore.  
(Corresponding Author), [ayeshabatoolrana@gmail.com](mailto:ayeshabatoolrana@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to explore the extent to which school monitoring has an impact upon the school quality enhancement in secondary schools of District Lahore and to give some insights into how it might be organized to influence school quality enhancement. The study was essentially qualitative and employed 21 participants. These were 1 District Education Officer, 10 secondary school teachers and 10 school monitors. Empirical data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that school monitoring plays a potential role towards improving school quality. Teachers perceived the advice and feedback given through monitoring reports and recommendations useful for making improvements in their work performance. However, the study found that monitoring reports and recommendations were not acted upon by the respective authorities to bring about effective impact on school quality. It was also found that, to some extent school monitors had succeeded in establishing positive relations with teachers. A few of teachers stated that school monitors used friendly language when discussing with them. It was also found that school monitors' working conditions were poor. For example, they did not have a means of transport nor field allowances to facilitate their visits in schools. From the above findings, the study recommends the government to commit its resources towards school monitoring department for effective monitoring of the quality education provided. Classroom observations should be of central focus of the school monitors for their impact on school quality. Moreover, for improvements in school to be achieved the District Education Officer (DEO) should make use of the monitoring findings and recommendations.

**Key Words:** school monitoring, school quality, quality enhancement.

## Introduction

In education, external evaluation through school monitoring by the national government is not new in the world education system. It is stated that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, first school monitoring originated under Napoleon's regime from France (Grauwe, 2007). Later, the idea spread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to other European countries. The first

monitoring services were carried out in 1839 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in the United Kingdom (UK) (Learmonth, 2000; Wilcox 2000). In the sector of education, school monitoring was conceived as one of the accountability forms (Neave, 1987). In education, other accountability forms include the choice of the market as practised in Australia, UK, New Zealand &

United States and the school voucher system in England, Chile, Colombia, and in America (Friedman, 2005; Lee & Wong, 2002).

For example, in England and Wales, teachers' accountability was controlled/conducted through results' payment (Neave, 1987; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005). This suggests that educator's pay/salary was dependent on the performance of pupils in the national examinations particularly in the 1870s (Neave, 1987; Levin, 1991).

Behind this practice, the purpose was to make more dedicated teachers who were dutiful towards pupil's and showed satisfactory performance at school and examination. Lately, the thought of accountability in education in America was associated with the policy of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). School monitoring refers to the particular occasions when the complete school is evaluated and examined as a place of learning. It also means the continuous and constant guidance process based on repeated visits which focus and pay attention to one or more aspects of the schools and the organization of the school. Ojelabi (1981) affirms that monitoring could be defined as the essential inspection of learning institutions. Necessary opinion is given for the school improvement through the monitoring of school. Examples of school monitoring are as follows:

1. Complete monitoring
2. Routine monitoring
3. First visit certificate
4. Sample monitoring visit
5. Sample inquiry visits and
6. Follow up visits

As indicated by Fafunwa and Adaralegbe (1971) during the monitoring visit, the monitors are likely to report on the following: scholastic and managerial records, staffing, teaching program, relationships of school society, school plant, administration and association. Monitoring, on the other hand, is an instrument with which the political and executive authorities maintain the necessary contact with the schools, teachers,

pupils and the society and so guarantee that the structure is working agreeably (Okoro,1994). According to this definition, monitoring is to be considered as fulfilling and communicating the role of educational values and a controlling coordination. It is clear from above-mentioned concepts that development of effective teaching within schools is possible and it is essential that such kind of development is consequential from the control of nexus among pupils, parents, staff, and other stakeholders within the community of schools with a view to rising a positive environment of learning and teaching.

In England and Wales, many studies have been carried out for school monitoring and the improvement of school while in some African countries and the Netherlands; on the other hand, a controversial opinion is found. It is argued that school monitor's find faults simply thus school monitors do many visits in schools but, with little or no impact on learning and teaching (Earley, 1998; Nkinyangi, 2006; Ehren & Visscher, 2006). Others argue that school monitoring only gives unnecessary burden to teachers while teachers already have an idea that what they should do for making better careers while the focus has been on accountability for professional growth (Webb & Vulliamy, 1996; Chapman, 2001b; Richards, 2001). Features of school monitoring include:

1. Emphasis on conformity to rules and regulations at all times
2. Usually fault-finding
3. Focuses on teacher appearance
4. It is usually concerned with paperwork and reporting than with actual school change
5. It lacks leadership abilities
6. It puts fear/pressure on teachers and pupils most of the times
7. It uses out-dated methods

Necessary task by the central education authorities is school monitoring and purposes served by them are (a) to fulfil the administrative

demands; (b) to comply with accountability purposes, and (c) to direct to academic and administrative enhancements

It is a universally recognized fact that monitoring in education is truly essential for the improvement in quality, the well-acknowledged problem between the formative/developmental purposes and summative/accountability purposes of monitoring raise many negative perceptions of strategies and monitoring systems, mainly among teachers. There has been a renewed interest in the past decade in the region of Asia in monitoring the performance and school quality. Some countries were dissatisfied with their monitoring services and now they have re-established monitoring services (e.g. Philippines). While many others countries who had not established proper systems for monitoring schools but now they have established (for example China). More notably, there are many countries that took the initiative of strengthening and reorganizing the monitoring of school and the number of such countries increasing every year. For example, Malaysia has now reorganized its system of monitoring to allow monitors to undertake the institutional reviews of schools.

Many Asian countries, for many years, did not carry out school monitoring as such and they did not monitor the school considering as a unit of the institute. Decentralization in diverse ways is an important policy issue in many countries as Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Nepal, China, Indonesia and India. Education sectors which are decentralized need the local governments' participation, communities and schools in the decision-making process, which includes the performance of school and supervision. In this perspective, aspects of development and accountability of school monitoring are without doubt an issue for the leaders of schools and local school governance and supervision.

It is obvious that school monitoring mainly deals with quality. But unfortunately, no standard

definition of quality is there and like beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder.

Basically, three main premises are put forward in both developing and developed countries for the instituting of school monitoring in the education sector as an external evaluation. Firstly, it is argued that through monitoring of schools, the government can ensure the educational quality provided to the society by monitoring. Secondly, it is also argued that government has no system to make sure the objectives in the absence of external evaluation and the performance of national goals which is considered as teachers' accountability's counter balance in learning and teaching.

Thirdly, it is argued that to make competitive workers for countries to meet up the problems rising due to the internal control in the education sector, school monitoring is essential to cope globalization processes and challenges (Wilcox, 2000; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005; Neave, 1987; Davis & White, 2001; Chapman, 2001b; Mathew & Smith, 1995; Learmonth, 2000). It is on these grounds that this study intended to examine the impact of school monitoring on school quality enhancement in Lahore specifically at the secondary level.

### **1.1-Statement of the Problem**

This study was intended to examine the impact of secondary school monitoring on school quality enhancement in Lahore in order to make suggestions through which school monitoring can have a more positive impact on school quality.

### **1.2-Objectives of the Study**

Following were the objectives of this study:

- To identify the purpose of school monitoring at district Lahore.
- To evaluate the indicators of school monitoring at the secondary level.
- To investigate the impact of school monitoring in secondary schools on teaching and learning.

### **I.3-Research Questions**

1. What is the purpose of school monitoring at secondary level?
2. What are the indicators of school monitoring at secondary level?
3. Does school monitoring have an impact on teaching and learning in secondary schools?

### **I.4-Significance of the study**

This study was expected to contribute to the following in the light of the above rationale:

1. To provide helpful information to the school monitors on how they can best support their teacher's especially for good teaching and learning.
2. To inform the planners and policymakers of education so that they notice the need in education for the external evaluation.
3. To contribute to the already available literature and in relation to school monitoring for researchers serve as a reference and its influence on the overall quality of the school.
4. To provide sufficient knowledge about school monitoring so that probably the government can invest resources towards the monitoring departments to monitor the overall quality of education.
5. Provision of the observed evidence of school monitoring impact on school quality in Lahore.
6. To be beneficial to raise the quality of education at the secondary school level.

### **Methodology**

Phenomenological method of research was used to explore the role of school monitoring in school quality enhancement and to explore the feelings of District Education Officer (DEO), school monitors and teachers.

### **Population**

It included the DEO, school monitors and teachers of the Lahore city. There was no restriction on male and female.

### **Instrumentation**

#### **Data collection**

Researcher personally collected the data. Data collection took almost four months because it was a long and tiresome procedure. Researcher, for this purpose, went to the DEO office firstly for obtaining the information about school monitors. Researcher personally approached the participants. With all participants, face to face interviews was conducted and only one participant gave an interview on phone call.

The researcher collected the demographic information of all participants.

According to the convenience of the District Education Officer (DEO), school monitors' and teachers' interviews were arranged. The researcher firstly contacted through mobile phone with the participants to ask for a suitable time and place for the interview and after seeing the interview protocol, some participants gave interviews on the spot.

All interviews were taken in a very friendly and relaxed environment. Through a voice recorder, all interviews were recorded. The researcher noted the behavior and mood of participants in an interview as well. During the interview, most of the participants used Urdu but few of them used a little bit of English. Lately, all interviews were translated at the time of transcribing interviews by a researcher in English.

#### **Data Analysis**

The researcher prepared a typed file after transcribing and translating all interviews. Main content was used during the analysis of data. According to Fraenkel and Wallon (2006) by an indirect way, researcher ought to try to study the behaviour of a human being while doing the

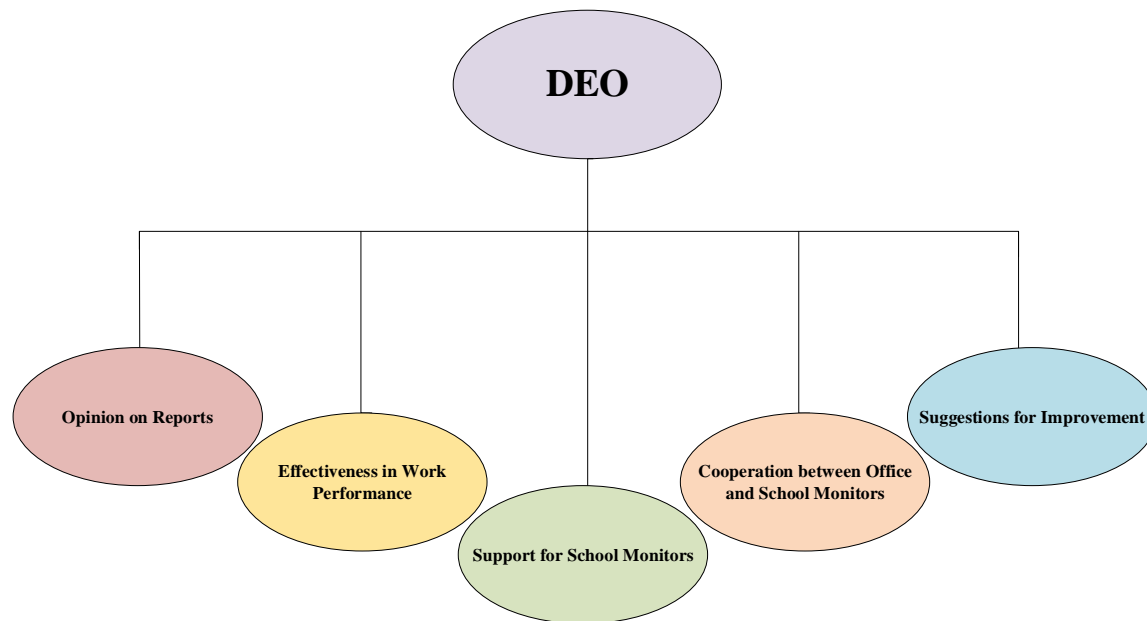
analysis of content i.e. with the help of their state's psychoanalysis.

Cohen and Manion (2007) believe that "Content study involves coding and comparing the categories by creating a link between them." Several steps of analysis were planned by the researcher to identify major themes according to research questions and also keeping in mind the

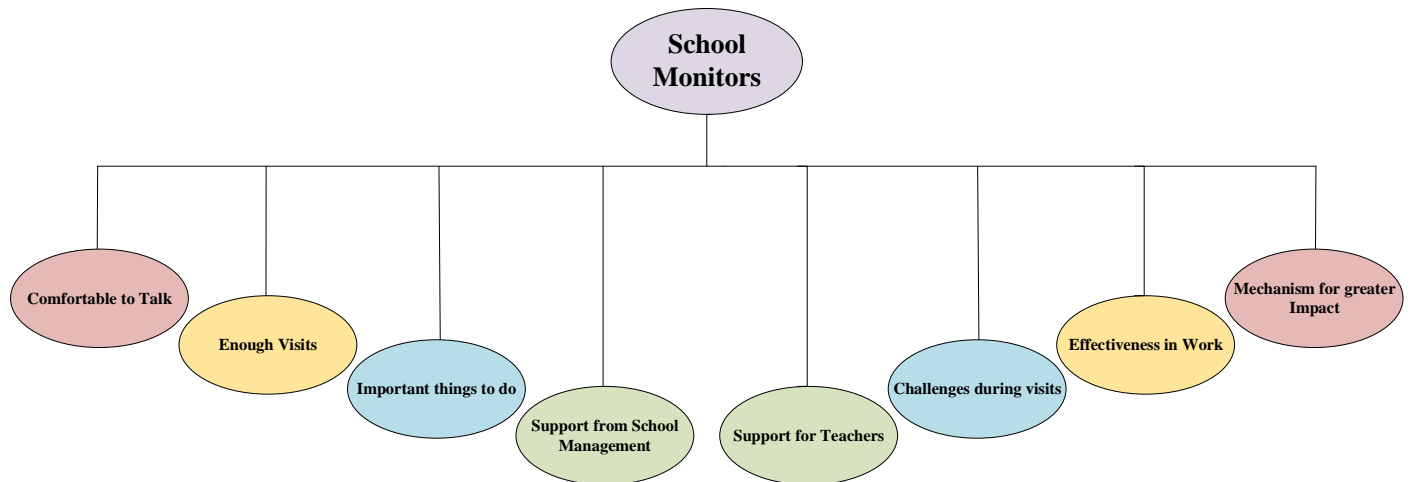
interview protocol. Researcher carefully coded the themes and subthemes and again and again verified these themes.

Codes, themes and sub-themes were tabulated by the researcher. To draw concise meaning, in the light of literature review and opinion of respondents, themes and sub-themes were interpreted and discussed.

## Results



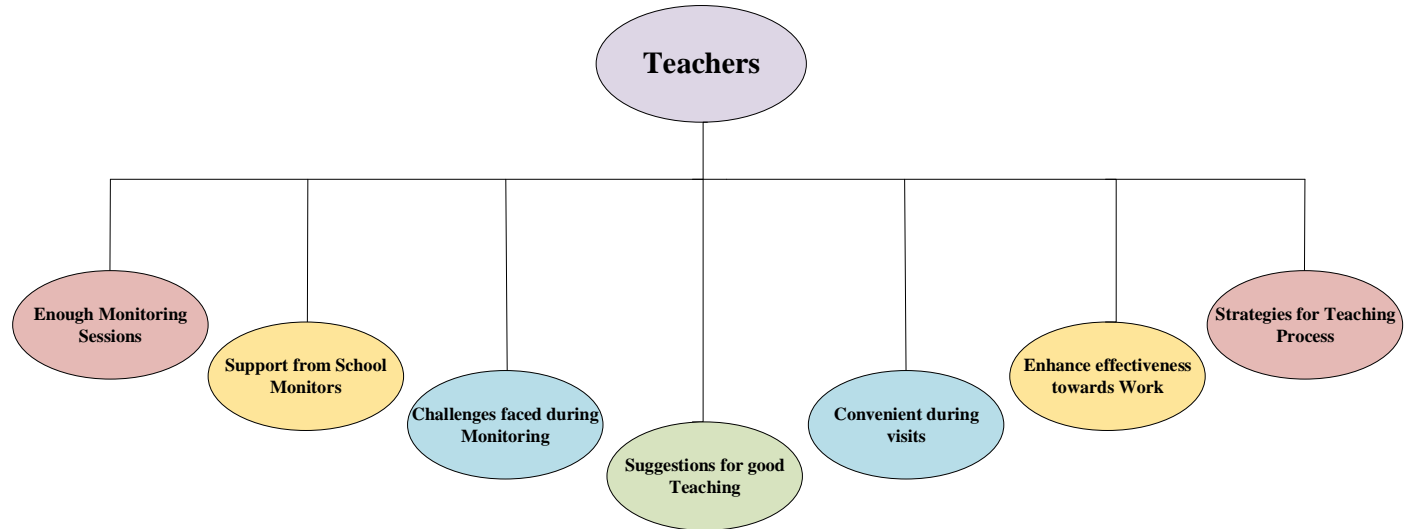
1. All school monitors send reports to DEO. The monitoring reports raise awareness about lacking areas and reports make him able to look for more strategies for betterment. Without having these reports the overall quality of school couldn't be enhanced.
2. All school monitoring reports make DEO more effective and efficient at work. These reports give realization about the needed areas of school like infrastructure and recruitment of staff etc.
3. DEO helps the school monitors for getting incentives on good performance & help them for approval of any productive work & try to be the biggest support for them.
4. There was a great cooperation between school monitors & DEO's office. And this positive cooperation between both makes DEO able to resolve all issues sent by school monitors.
5. There were many suggestions for the improvement of the monitoring process. Like more recruitments are needed, more empowerment in terms of financially and disciplinary actions are needed & proper system of giving incentives is needed also.



1. All the participants were comfortable to talk about school monitoring. Many of them were in consensus that they are comfortable to talk about monitoring because they are sincere with their work. Some of them thought that it's a team work. Few said that credit goes to leadership. Several of them consider it a personal duty.
2. Many of them agreed that these school monitoring visits are enough. Very few of them disagreed that these school monitoring visits are enough because of too much work load & less time. Many of them consider it a job requirement or duty and consider it a good management.
3. Very few of them focus on the usability of government funds. Several of them consider that the check & balance of SOP's is most important. Many of them focus on the overall quality of the school. Few of them focus on the attendance. One of them focuses on the method of teaching.
4. Many of them consider it their duty. Very few of them agreed that they mostly support except sometimes. Several of them believe in the forceful support.
5. One of them believes in the settlement of objectives for good teaching. Many of them brief teachers about the use of different teaching methodologies. Very few believe in motivation & appreciation. Most of them focus on the friendly environment.
6. One of them considers that teacher's lack of interest is a big challenge. Very few of them consider that lack of communication between teachers & them is a great challenge. Several of them consider that lack of knowledge about subject-matter should be reduced. Lack of training is a big challenge for one of them. One of them considers teacher's absences a big challenge.
7. One of them thought that meetings with teachers & parents are necessary. One of them focused on a maximum time for monitoring. Independently work is a key to enhancement for one of them. One of them focused on professional sincerity & expertise for improvement. Few of them agreed that motivation, particularly for teachers, is mandatory. Very few of them focused on pro-activeness. One of them focused on a friendly atmosphere for effectiveness at work.
8. Few of them focused that monitoring department should increase the number of visits. Some of them consider that

enhancement in communication skills is necessary. Several of them agreed that they should have lots of knowledge about their job. Times to time instructions

given by department are necessary for one of them. One of them focused on team work for greater impact on teaching & learning.



1. A lot of them agreed that these monitoring sessions are enough. Very few of them thought that these sessions should be increased for school improvement.
2. Few of them agreed that school monitors support them. A lot of them agreed that they get no support from school monitors.
3. Very few of them thought that student's false answering in front of school monitors is a big challenge for them. Several of them thought that they face no challenge. Some of them consider it routine visits. Few of them thought that these visits make them more conscious & frighten sometimes. One of them was in consensus that they feel pressurized due to less presence.
4. A lot of them agreed that school never give suggestions for good teaching. Few of them thought that these are only formality visits of schools. One of them

considers these visits as report making. Few of them were in consensus that they criticize their bad performance & give some suggestions. Some of them agreed that they always do work hard so school monitors appreciate them & also give suggestions for the more betterment & raise awareness about their weak points. One of them said that their main interaction is with the students, but they often focus on them & give suggestions for good teaching.

5. Several of them were in consensus that they feel convenient with school monitors. Many of them were agreed that they don't feel convenient with school monitors. Very few of them thought that sometimes they criticize them on their performance & it makes them inconvenient. Several of them feel inconvenient with school monitors due to their strict behaviour. One of them felt inconvenient due to strict gestures.

6. One of them thought that a department of monitoring should give them incentives for their good performances. Few of them were in consensus that the work load of school monitors should be reduced. One of them thought that proper check & balance is needed by the department. One of them said that the department of monitoring should gather day-by-day work reports from school monitors. One of them believes in the training of school monitors for betterment. One of them focused on the proper & good communication linkage between department & school monitors. One of them thought that little criticism & more motivation of school monitors on their performances will raise the effectiveness of their work.
7. Several of them were in consensus that they feel good to change & get good strategies for teaching process. Many of them were in consensus that they don't feel any good change & get good strategies for teaching process.

## Discussion

This present study's main aim was to investigate the role of school monitoring in school quality enhancement in Lahore at the secondary level. And for having a positive impact on school monitoring, how it can be organized and contribute to a greater knowledge. Based on the most significant findings in this particular piece of research, it is concluded that, school monitoring does not play a potential role in enhancement of school quality as effectively as it is expected contrary to the findings of Wilcox (2000), Chapman (2001a) and Grauwe (2007) who argue that in many countries of the world school monitoring controls the policy and practice in education and would dictate for the likely future.

In all over the world, tax payers and parents would probably like to see the invested money in their children's education (Neave, 1987; Levin, 1991). According to Castells (1996), we are living in an age where to influence the well-being of nations and individual there is a great optimism regarding the educational power. Therefore, education for parents is a valuable asset for their children lives so that they could be able to build an understanding of their place in this world. The present study reveals the need for an effective monitoring which is more precise, productive and progressive.

According to Garrison (1997), teachers can easily recognize the unique dreams and best possibilities of the future with the help of teaching and learning and they can fulfil their commitments to a caring profession. Garrison adds that for actualizing their best position and unique potential in the society, teachers ought to help their pupils. Through school monitoring, accountability in education is considered as the means/source towards an end. In school enhancement, it is value-added that if school monitors help their teachers in teaching a particular subject they play a central role to enhance quality. The present research supported these researches that monitoring is helpful for suggesting ways and means enhance the quality of education (MacBeath & Martimore, 2001; Wilcox, 2000; Ehren, Leeuw & Scheerens, 2005; Ehren & Visscher, 2008). For solving the specific problems in learning and teaching, teachers need school monitoring which is concerned and effective. Teacher's acceptance of school monitors totally depend on their teaching skills, demonstration and on their level of competency. Coombe et al., (2006) contend that there is a need to promote critical thinking for the enhancement of pupils from teachers to apply their acquired knowledge in the daily life. School monitors should follow the major practice to monitor the understanding of pupils in the setting of the



classroom and give them professional support for achieving good impact on teaching and learning.

Importance of working conditions of monitors is also highlighted in this study and their capacity to conduct a thorough and full monitoring as a source of providing feedback to teachers. And without overcoming these issues, education with good quality remains problematic and teachers will be unable to take full advantage of the process of monitoring. Since school monitoring has been considered a major source or means which can help the government to monitor the society's overall quality of education (Wilcox, 2000; Learmonth, 2000; Hoyle & Wallace, 2005) and that is why departments of school monitoring should receive proper attention. Furthermore, it seems meaningless to have school monitors if they just write reports of monitoring, and it is only a waste of time for them if no one is interested in working on such issues or problems. Therefore, it is important that the authorities who are responsible in order to improve the process of monitoring should utilize the findings of monitoring which in turn would enhance or improve the school's quality.

Wilcox (2000:59, 65) contends "whether or not schools change in any permanent way is a consequence of the extent to which the conclusions of monitoring are acted upon. If the quick implementation is not achieved, schools may be tempted to discontinue their efforts in order to respond to the latest demands". This demonstrates that school monitoring is not a procedure of automatic objective and it is a human process.

## **Conclusion**

The study to understand the role of secondary school monitoring in Lahore, in particular, was the unique need of examining views of teachers on the importance of school monitoring, ways the teachers describe school monitors and the

relationship between teachers and school monitors. These would contribute knowledge to secondary education stakeholders that will facilitate positive change in school monitoring and performance in general.

The most important findings have revealed that teachers see and describe the school monitoring process in both positive and negative ways. These have a great influence on teachers and school monitors' relationship. For the effective role of school monitoring and good performance; stakeholders of secondary education must consider school monitors and teachers' views reported in this study. Therefore, the use of these findings would enable District Education Officer, school monitors, teachers, policy makers and researchers understand how school monitoring can have a more improvement role in the current global economy and hence need to positively work on them.

The study also highlighted the strategies the school monitors use during monitoring and their capacity to conduct a full and thorough monitoring as a strategy of providing feedback to the teachers and building a positive relationship that influences quality. Quality education still remains a problem since the teachers are unable to fully embrace the monitoring process. Yet school monitoring has been proved to be the major means through which the government can monitor the quality of education provided in the community. The government should provide schools with enough resources, funds, more time should also be allocated towards the monitors in order to improve the quality of education than focusing on the old systems of monitoring. It is also better for the government to learn from other countries on how efficiency it is cultivated in schools.

## **Recommendations**

Following recommendations are made after drawing upon the findings of the relevant issues given above:

1. It is recommended that on a specific subject, school monitors should be trained so as when they monitor the school quality they can help students, teachers & administration as well on how to enhance the overall quality of the school.
2. In a classroom setting, to monitor the process of teaching and learning should be the primary goal of school monitors. When teachers are assessed in the classroom setting, it may be very easier for the school monitors to determine the weak areas. And by doing that in order to solve the raised problems it will facilitate the discussion process with teachers.
3. When school monitors feel a need to take action especially in the redistribution to achieve greater social equality of teachers, they should be allowed to do so. And the idea behind this is to ensure that teachers should not commit to their work just thinking that school monitors will come and fulfil their responsibility and will not focus on the implementation after monitoring.
4. There should be more school monitors' training to deal with an increased number of schools. But, the increased number of school monitors should be done with the pre-requisite of improving their work conditions so as to attract many qualified individuals to join the monitoring department. If the government does not keep a critical eye towards that problem, it might be expected in the future that many school monitors may choose to leave the profession.
5. There should be a facility for the transportation means and allowances for the field visits for the sustainability of school monitoring so that to reduce the nature of dependency on the DEOs and their monitored schools.
6. Towards their improved work performance teachers can be motivated when they see that their problems are solved. Also, school monitors will take their responsibility seriously when they understand that their work is of value and it receives some attentions from the key stakeholders like that of the district director and DEO.
7. For improvement in teaching and learning to be achieved, the DEO and the head teachers of the schools should make use of the school monitoring reports and suggestions.
8. There should be an opportunity for school monitors to talk with pupils to determine their problems in learning because pupils are the great source of valued information regarding teaching and learning.
9. More research should be conducted to examine the level to which the DEO works on the reports and recommendations of school monitoring.
10. This study was qualitative in nature; therefore, it can't be generalized in other areas different from Lahore city district. A study must be carried out at zonal level in the geographical area for establishing a better understanding about school monitoring and its impact on school quality.

## References

1. Grauwe, Anton. (2007). Transforming School Supervision into a Tool for Quality Improvement. *International Review of Education*, 709-714.

2. Wilcox, Brian. (2000). Making School Inspection Visits More Effective: The English Experience. Paris: UNESCO.
3. Learmonth, James. (2000). Inspection: What's in it for School? <http://books.google.com/books?hl> Accessed on 20th February 2008
4. Neave, Guy. (1987). Accountability in Education, In Psacharopoulos, George. (1987) (Ed.) Economics of Education-Research and Studies, p 70-79. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
5. Friedman, Milton. (2005). Free Choice. In The Wall Street Journal, Pp. A16
6. Lee, Vicky & Elyssa Wong. (2002). Education Voucher System, Report Paper 06/01-02, Hong Kong: Research and library Services Division.
7. Ehren, Melanie & Adrie Visscher. (2006). Towards a Theory on the Impact of School Inspections. In The British Journal of Educational Studies, Vol. 54, No. 1 p 51-72.
8. Webb, Rosemary & Graham Vulliamy. (1996). Roles and Responsibilities in the Primary School: Changing Demands, Changing Practices. Burkingham: Open University Press.
9. Chapman, Christopher. (2001b). Changing Classrooms through Inspection. In: School Leadership and Management, Vol. 21, No 1, p. 59- 73.
10. Richards, Colin. (2001). School Inspection: A Re-appraisal. In Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 35, No 4, p. 655-665
11. Wilcox, Brian. (2000). Making School Inspection Visits More Effective: The English Experience. Paris: UNESCO.
12. Hoyle, Erick & Mike Wallace. (2005). Educational Leadership: Ambiguity, Professionals and Managerialism. London: SAGE Publications.
13. Neave, Guy. (1987). Accountability in Education, In Psacharopoulos, George. (1987) (Ed.) Economics of Education-Research and Studies, p 70-79. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
14. Davis, Andrew & John White (2001). Accountability and School Inspection: In Defense of Audited Self- Review. In Journal of Philosophy of education, Vol. 35, No.4, p 667-681.
15. Matthews, Peter & George Smith. (1995). OFSTED: Inspecting Schools and Improvement through Inspection. In Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol.25, No. 1, p. 23- 34.
16. Learmonth, James. (2000). Inspection: What's in it for School? <http://books.google.com/books?hl> Accessed on 20th February 2008