

Turkey's Testing with the Inspection System in Education¹

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze Turkey's educational inspection system from past to present with a holistic approach. The research was carried out in a document analysis model, one of the qualitative research designs, and the data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis technique. In this research, legal regulations and scientific research were examined. The inspection of educational institutions came to the fore for the first time in 1838 and was handled with a systematic approach in 1914. In 1926, Educational Assurance Unit was established, and with the 'Regulation of the Inspection Board, professional training of inspectors was emphasized. The Board of Inspection became one of the advisory and audit units of the Ministry in 1992. From 2011 to 2021, audit discussions were carried out over concepts. In 2022, the election, training, appointment, duties, powers and responsibilities of the inspectors were rearranged. An audit system, which is constantly changed and restored after being found to be wrong, continues to operate in Turkey. As a result, the audit system in Turkey should be handled with a scientifically holistic approach with the contribution of field experts, and the understanding of system building through trial and error should be ended.

Keywords: Supervision, supervisor, inspector, inspection system.

Article Type Research article

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Introduction

The effectiveness of educational activities is directly proportional to the degree of achievement of educational goals. It is undeniable that supervision has an important function to determine the reaching level of the goals in education and training activities. It is a reliable practice for the education system taking the necessary measures to reduce the problems encountered in the education system and, to use the inspection reports to provide guidance services to administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other personnel. In an education system, the concepts of inspection, investigation, guidance, inspector, muin (inspector assistant), and controller are used (Taymaz, 2005).

The purpose of inspection is to find the most appropriate values and processes to achieve the aims of education and training (Bursalioğlu, 2000). Inspection is the understanding process whether organizational actions are in accordance with predetermined principles, and the rules in line with the agreed objectives. The main purpose of the audit is to determine the achievement degree of the organizational goals. The other purpose is to take the necessary measures to get better results and to improve the process (Aydın, 1986). Education supervision is a tool that accelerates the achievement of

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educational goals (Gökçe, 1994). Inspection is one of the ways of overseeing education. In this sense, it is one of the most used mechanisms to control and regulate the organizational behavior on behalf of the public interest (Bursalioğlu, 2000).

According to Taymaz (2005), scientific inspection envisages searching for scientific methods and tools for the most effective use of resources. Scientific inspection is also used to increase the quality and quantity of the product in order for educational institutions to achieve their goals, based on the innovations and research in the field. The educational aspect of the inspection is based on the best implementation of the annual work plan, identifying and eliminating the deficiencies, leadership, success, guidance, and cooperation. On the other hand, the supervision should be based on public interest, human relations, guidance, professional assistance, group work, and motivation of staff. Moreover, the inspection should be constructive, unifying, and conciliatory.

Providing the expected benefit from the audit is directly related to the legal regulations, the structuring of the audit, the characteristics of the audit system, and its historical development. Education supervision is as old as educational administration, as it is a stage of the management process. The purpose of supervision, which was applied in different ways for different purposes in the past, is perceived as a set of activities aimed at correcting and developing everything related to education in the light of scientific developments. It is difficult to say that this perception and practice is widespread in our country today (Başar, 2006, p.158).

It is noteworthy that the education supervision system in Turkey has been in constant change from the beginning of the 1800s to the Republic, and from the Republican period to the present day within the body of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (Ada and Baysal, 2020; Durnalı and Limon, 2018; Kayıkçı, Özdemir, and Özyıldırım, 2018; Kel and Akın, 2021; MoNE, 2022a; Taymaz, 2005). Bursalioğlu (2000) stated that before 1900, inspection was carried out only in an administrative nature, and teachers were considered as civil servants controlled by the administration. On the other hand, he stated that at the beginning of the 20th century, inspection began to be carried out by expert educators, and the inspection process gained a scientific quality between 1920 and 1930. In addition, it was emphasized that democratic human relations started to be taken as a basis in the inspection between 1930 and 1940, and rational and scientific methods were used after 1940. In today's supervision approach in tendencies such as establishing a link between education and national strategy, reducing the gap between the aims of educational organizations and the results of practice, and protecting the professional independence of the teachers. In addition, today, instead of a strict understanding in inspection, the dominance of an understanding of supervision that contributes to the development of the school and the professional development of teachers, maintains its weight as an important need in supervision. In this context, the inspection system is expected to develop the school in a way that compatible with the aims of the society. For this purpose, the inspection system needs to be restructured to ensure the development of teachers, school administrators, and students.

Since 1990, as in some other countries the frequent changes have been made in the legislation regulating the education supervision system and practices in Turkey (Kayıkçı, Özdemir, and Özyıldırım, 2018). In studies conducted in recent years, it is stated that new regulations are frequently made, but because the desired and expected results cannot be obtained, the previous regulation has been returned (Durnalı and Limon, 2018; Kel and Akın, 2021; Öner, Gürsoy, and Ulutaş, 2021). Regarding the changes made in Turkey's inspection system in recent years, it becomes clear that the inspection system in education is not handled with a holistic approach and therefore, a modern inspection model is needed.

The aim of this research is to analyze the education inspection system from past to present in Turkey with a holistic approach. For this purpose, the answer to the question *to what extent does the change in the education inspection system in Turkey from past to present meet the need?* was sought.

Method

The research was carried out in qualitative research design, and document analysis model. Data were obtained from different documents and analyzed with descriptive analysis technique. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2006), document analysis, which includes the analysis of written materials containing information about the targeted phenomenon or phenomena, can be used alone in

qualitative research, or it can be used in conjunction with other data collection methods. Document analysis is a qualitative research method used to analyze, and evaluate the content of printed, electronic, and visual documents (Ekiz, 2009; Kiral, 2020) rigorously, scientifically and systematically.

Data Collection

In this study, the relevant legal regulations and related research were examined. Data were collected by applying the national web addresses such as <https://ulakbim.tubitak.gov.tr/>, <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>, and <https://www.meb.gov.tr/> were used. In data collection process the titles 'inspection', 'inspector', 'audit', 'supervision', 'supervisor', 'inspection system', and 'MoNE' were investigated.

Data Analysis

The research, theses, and legal regulations were assumed as the documents. Documents, as important information sources that should be used effectively in qualitative research, also contribute to the "data triangulation", and the validity of the research when used together with other data collection methods (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006). Like other methods used in qualitative research, document analysis requires the examination and interpretation of data in order to make sense of information and documents, to create a scientific understanding about the relevant subject, and to develop empirical knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The documents were analyzed by using thematic content analysis technique. The main themes were emerged as the 'Ottoman Empire Era', 'Republic Era', and 'Educational Supervision in Today'.

Findings

The historical development of inspection in Turkish Education System may be examined in three stages: (1) the Ottoman Empire era, (2) the Republic periods, and (3) educational supervision in today (Kurum and Çinkır, 2017).

Historical development of inspection in Ottoman Empire Era was given in Table 1.

Table 1

Historical Development of Inspection in Ottoman Empire Era

Date	Regulation	Purpose
1838	Appointment of Officials	to increase teachers' professional competence
1846	Appointment of Muins (assistant inspector)	school inspection
1862	Appointment of Inspectors	to inspect the secondary school and sıbyan schools
1869	General Education Regulation	inspection was seen as an official job
1875	Inspectors	school inspection
1911	Regulations on the Central Organization	inspectors was chosen from among the teachers who worked in secondary schools and higher schools
1913	Primary Education Law	the responsibility of inspectors was determined: inspection, investigation, and guidance
1914	Regulation on the Duties of Education Inspectors	the principles, which considered in the inspection of secondary education and other institutions

In the Ottoman Empire era, it is seen that the inspection in education first started in 1838, when the teachers at the neighborhood school were inspected by the officials in order to increase their professional competence (Taymaz, 2005; MoNE, 2022a). In 1846, two units, named Mekatib-i Sıbyaniye Muinliği and Mekatib-i Rüşdiye Muinliği, were established under the Ministry of General Education, and the *muins* (assistant inspector) who perform inspection duties were appointed (Akyüz, 2015). In 1862, for the first time, the officers who called inspectors were assigned to inspect the

Secondary School and Sibyan schools, and they were given the inspection task for central and provincial schools. In 1869, the General Education Regulation was prepared, and Provincial Education Councils were established under the Ministry of Education (Şahin, Elçiçek, and Tösten, 2013). In this regulation, it was stated that inspection was the official job and duty of the Ministry of Education, the investigators and inspectors were appointed in the assemblies. In this sense, it can be said that for the first time in Turkish education history, the concept of inspection is used in a contemporary sense. In a regulation prepared in 1875, it was foreseen that inspectors would guide and assist teachers, it was stated that there should be an inspection book in high school and how this book would be used was explained (Bilir, 1991). With the "Regulations on the Central Organization of the Ministry of Education" prepared in 1911, the central services were divided into two as administration and inspection. And the inspectors was chosen from among the teachers who worked in secondary schools and higher schools. In 1913, the Tedrisat-ı İptidaiye Kanunu (Primary Education Law) was prepared. According to this law, in primary schools, the inspection was foreseen to carry out by primary education inspectors. According to the directive, the duties of primary education inspectors were grouped into three main groups: inspection, investigation, and guidance. In 1914, the Regulation on the Duties of Education Inspectors was published. The regulation covers the principles, which considered in the inspection of secondary education and other institutions affiliated to the Ministry (Taymaz, 2005). In Table 2 historical development of the inspection in Republic Era was presented.

Table 2

Historical Development of Inspection in Republic Era

Date	Regulation	Purpose
1923	Education Inspectors Directive	the duty and authorities of inspectors, and the principles of inspection were explained
1924	Law of Unification of Education	the duties of the inspection board were rearranged
1926	Law on the Educational Organization	a regulation including the rights, authorities, and duties of education inspectors was come into force
1950	Assignment of Ministry Inspectors	Ministry inspectors gathered in centers such as Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir
1967	Regulation of the Inspection Board	the professional training of inspectors was taken as a basis
1983	Inspection Centers	the provinces of Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, Diyarbakır, and Erzurum were determined as inspection centers
1993	Inspection Board Presidency	the inspectors were named 'supervisors' and the rules of the Inspection Board was published

In the Republican era, after the opening of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, national education services were given to the Ministry of Education on May 1, 2020. The establishment of the inspectorate, the duty and authorities of inspectors, and the principles of inspection were explained in the Regulation on the Duties of the First Education Inspectors, published with the Education Inspectors Directive in 1923, and an inspection board consisting of one inspection committee director and ten inspectors was established (Taymaz, 2005). The inspection approach in the Republican period was based on the necessary regulations and incentives for the realization of the basic principles, and the objectives of education. Surveillance files and documents kept in schools regularly were followed up with disciplinary laws, regulations and directives covering the regulations regarding the inspection system, and thus educational goals were tried to be achieved (Çelebi and Asan, 2016).

With the Law of Unification of Education dated March 3, 1924, all madrasas and schools were associated with the Ministry of Education and the duties of the inspection board were rearranged (Akyüz, 2015). A "Congress of Education Inspectors" was held for the first time in Konya between 1-20 May 1925. An Instruction on the Legal Powers and Duties of the General Education Inspectors was prepared, so it was planned to appoint the Inspector General and his assistants to supervise all educational institutions in accordance with the laws, by-laws and regulations on behalf of the Deputy of Education (Çetin, 2020). In 1926, the Ministry of Education was established by the Law on the

Educational Organization, and a regulation including the rights, authorities, and duties of education inspectors was prepared (Bozan, 2003). With the regulation, the title of Ministry Inspector was used instead of Inspector General, and the assistant inspector position was abolished. Ministry inspectors are also divided into two as central and district inspectors (Su, 1974). Central inspectors were divided into three groups according to the nature of their duties, education and training, administration, library and museum inspectors, and district inspectors were assigned to inspect all educational institutions in their regions (Şahin, Elçiçek, and Tösten, 2013). However, when the Educational Assurances were abolished in 1931, district inspectors continued to work as Ministry inspectors (Taymaz, 2005).

In 1933, the organization of the Ministry of National Education was re-formed according to the conditions of the day in order to ensure better execution of educational services, so the Inspection Board and its duties were rearranged. In 1938, primary education inspectors were included in the general budget with the Law Concerning the Inclusion of Primary Education Inspectors in the General Budget. By eliminating the differences in graduation areas among the inspectors, it was required that those who would be appointed as primary education inspectors graduated from Gazi Education Institute or similar schools in foreign countries (Ekinci, 2009).

With a decision taken in 1949, Ministry inspectors were dispersed to the regions, but this practice was abandoned after a short time (Su, 1974). In 1950, Ministry inspectors gathered in centers such as Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir. With the "Regulation of the Inspection Board of the Ministry of National Education" that came into force in 1967, the professional training of inspectors was taken as a basis. On the other hand, it has been stated that the Inspection Board is responsible for providing professional assistance and conducting investigations when necessary (MoNE, 2017). In addition, books on the principles that Ministry inspectors should pay attention to during their inspections were prepared by the Inspection Board and distributed to the inspectors (Su, 1974).

With the law enacted in 1970, the Chairman of the Inspection Board became a natural member of the National Education Council, and a chief inspector was appointed to the Coordinating of the Inspection Boards established in Istanbul and Izmir in 1980. In 1983, the provinces of Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, Diyarbakır, and Erzurum were determined as inspection centers (Şahin, Elçiçek, and Tösten, 2013). In 1987, the rules to be followed by the inspectors in school supervision and the principles regarding report writing were determined. In 1990, the MoNE determined the principles to be considered in the supervision of public and private schools. In 1993, the Inspection Board Presidency was established, and the inspectors were named 'supervisors' and the rules of the Inspection Board was published (Taymaz, 2005).

In Table 3 educational supervision in today was presented.

Table 3

Educational Supervision in Today

Date	Regulation	Purpose
2011	Guidance and Supervision Department	the inspection unit in the central organization was restructured. The 'Supervisors' were named 'Educational Inspectors'
2014	Supervisors	the title of 'Educational Inspector' was given to the 'Supervisors'
2016	Inspection Board	the inspection unit was restructured as the 'Inspection Board', and the inspectors were given the title of 'Ministry Education Inspector'
2017	Amendment	duties, authorities, and the responsibilities of educational inspectors were redefined
2021	Amendment	the name of 'education inspectors' were changed as the 'educational supervisors'
2022	Regulation on Educational Inspectors	to be employed as an inspector, at least 8 years of teaching profession is required for teachers

In Turkey, the inspection unit in the central organization was restructured as the 'Guidance and Supervision Department' in 2011, and the 'Supervisors' were named as the 'Educational Inspector' with the Decree No. 652 (Ergün and Çelik, 2018). In 2014, the title of 'Educational Inspector' was given to the 'Supervisors' again (Durnalı and Limon, 2018). In 2016, the inspection unit was restructured as the 'Inspection Board' and the inspection personnel were given the title of 'Ministry Education Inspector' (Kurum and Çinkır, 2017). When the structuring of the supervision in the provincial organization in Turkey is examined, it is seen that the inspection unit did not gain a unique structure from 1913 to 1999 and the inspection staff received the title of primary education inspector. In 1999, the inspection unit was named as the head of primary education inspectors and the supervisors were named as primary education inspectors (Bozak, 2017). In 2010, the inspection unit was named as the education inspectors' presidency and the supervisors were named as education inspectors. In 2011, the inspection unit, the head of education inspectors, and the inspection staff became the provincial education inspector. By the year 2014, the inspection unit was named as the head of education inspectors and the supervisors were named as education inspectors (Kayıkcı, Özdemir, and Özyıldırım, 2018). Looking at these practices, it may be said that changes were made only on the names of the inspection unit and inspectors, the modernization of the inspection and the provision of appropriate inspection services remained in the background. From 1990 to 2014, it is observed that changes were made in the legislation very frequently. With the regulation made in 2014, the practice of supervising the course of teachers by inspectors was abolished and course supervision was left to school principals (MoNE, 2014). In addition, with this regulation, the practice of giving success points to administrators and teachers was eliminated (Kel and Akin, 2021). In the change made in 2016, the scope of audit services was narrowed, process and result, system and financial audit examination and evaluation were abolished, and only performance and compliance audit service continued (Durnalı and Limon, 2018).

With the amendment made in 2017, duties, authorities, and the responsibilities of education inspector and assistant inspectors, their recruitment, training, appointment, assignment, working procedures and principles, and the obligations of the inspected were redefined (MoNE, 2017). With the regulation, Ministry inspectors are assigned to carry out research, preliminary examination, examination, investigation, inspection and guidance procedures for the Inspection Board, the institutions and organizations within the Ministry, and the institutions subject to the Ministry's supervision (Tosun and Ordu, 2020).

In 2018, the guiding role of the Board of Inspectors was highlighted. The task of carrying out the guidance, on-the-job training, inspection, evaluation, examination, research and investigation services of formal and non-formal education institutions of all types and degrees and provincial and district national education directorates has been given to Ministry education inspectors. In 2021, the name of 'education inspectors' were changed as the 'educational supervisors', and the title of Ministry education inspector was changed to 'Ministry supervisor'. In the Official Gazette dated March 01, 2022, and numbered 31765, the "Regulation on Educational Inspectors of the Ministry of National Education" was published (MoNE, 2022b). When this Regulation is examined, it is seen that to be employed as an inspector at least 8 years of teaching profession is required for teachers. However, for those who do not come from the teaching profession such as law, politics, economics, etc. it is planned to appoint as the education inspectors only based on their KPSS scores without taking the written exam. On the other hand, the condition of 35 years of age was sought in the application to the inspectorate, and course supervision was taken from the school principals and given to the education inspectors again. However, in the 2022 regulation, exam subjects for graduates of different fields are determined as 20% in Law, 20% in Economics, 20% in Finance, 20% in Accounting and Business Administration, and 20% in other subjects, and these subjects are not in the content to serve the purpose in the inspection of educational institutions and teachers.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results of the research reveal that from the past to the present, the Turkish education system has undergone a dual structure as central and provincial inspection units. In addition, it is noteworthy that constant changes have been made regarding the roles and responsibilities of inspection units and

supervisors. In the 2023 Vision Document, it is stated that the inspection system will be reconsidered as separate specializations in the form of guidance and inspection, and the inspection process and inspector roles will be restructured to provide the guidance services needed by teachers and schools (MoNE, 2018). On the other hand, it is stated that in addition to the investigation duties, attention should be paid to collecting information in accordance with regional needs, conducting research and analyzing data (Öner, Gürsoy, and Ulutaş, 2021). The results revealed that instead of creating a sustainable inspection system in line with the needs of the education system, the changes were limited to the titles of the inspectors (Bülbul, 2021), and that permanent and functional practices were not included (Öner, Gürsoy, and Ulutaş, 2021). Moreover, the changes did not work, and the old practices were reinstated in a short time. According to Beycioğlu and Dönmez (2009), the important thing is not the change of nouns and adjectives, but innovation in content and practice.

The applications based on the results of scientific developments cannot become widespread throughout the country, and the principles of scientific thinking and life cannot find enough meaning even in universities, prevent the perception and implementation of educational supervision with its contemporary features (Başar, 2006, p. 158). In the first years of the Republic, a behavioral supervision approach was applied due to the mission of not only detecting the deficiencies and faults imposed on the inspectors, but also guiding and encouraging the teachers of the young Republic, although it bears the traces of the traditional supervision approach (Çelebi and Asan, 2016). Structural problems in the field of education supervision, which continue in the parliamentary government system, continue to a large extent in the presidential government system (Bülbul, 2020). As Durnalı and Limon (2018) stated, the continuous structural change of the audit system by policy makers, especially between 2011 and 2017, is a problem area that is discussed. MoNE's change in the audit system again in 2022, strengthens the perception that routine changes continue today.

The "Regulations on Educational Inspectors of the Ministry of National Education" (MEB, 2022b), which came into force after being published in the Official Gazette dated 01 March 2022 and numbered 31765, has been criticized by a wide range of academics, inspectors, and teachers since the day it was published. Moreover, education unions apply to the judiciary for the annulment of this regulation (EYEDDER, 2022). Education Administrators and Education Supervisors Association (EYEDDER) (2022) asserts that with the 2022 amendment, it has been regulated that the graduates of law, politics and economics, who are not from the teaching profession, will be appointed as the inspectors according to the KPSS. While the condition of being a teacher is not required for other candidates, it may be stated as a situation contrary to equality that the requirements for teachers to work in teaching profession at least 8 years. In addition, the requirement of 35 years of age when applying to the inspectorate is a situation that limits the application of all teachers. Furthermore, not giving priority to graduates from the field of educational administration is a fundamental problem.

In the supervision system in Turkey, frequent changes in the titles of people who supervise educational institutions and teachers (e.g., inspector, supervisor, education inspector) is an important problem. On the other hand, the establishment and then abolition of structures at provincial, regional and ministry levels at various times in the historical process can be seen as another problem. In addition, changing the name of the inspection units in the central organization and then returning to the old one (Guidance and Inspection Department/Inspection Board) may again be perceived as a problem. Moreover, it is among the problems that the inspection structure at the provincial level is first strengthened and then completely neutralized (Kel and Akin, 2021). As Aydın (1986) states, supervision is mandatory for organizations established to realize a certain purpose, and organizations have to constantly know and monitor the degree of realization of their goals. For this, the inputs, processes and outputs of the organization must be continuously controlled and evaluated in a planned and programmed manner. However, the fact that the inspection system is not in a healthy structure brings along various problems. According to Gülşen (2021), frequent changes in the inspection system

prevent the institutionalization of the inspection system in education and cause the unsupervised institutions to be managed poorly.

It is observed that the factor of merit is ignored in the selection and training of the inspectors. In addition, the inconsistent changes made in the inspection system in recent years have caused problems in the working conditions and personal rights of both the inspectors in the provincial national education directorates and the Ministry education inspectors working in the central organization of the MoNE (Bülbül, 2020). As Durnalı and Limon (2018) stated, there is no data on why the changes in the legislation were made and what their pragmatic foundations are.

These results show that the education supervision system in Turkey is not functional and sustainable. It may be beneficial to include teachers in the supervision processes so that the supervision system can contribute more to the development of educational organizations (Tosun and Ordu, 2020). It may be useful for policy makers in education to take steps that focus on the real problems of the system and improve and advance the system while making changes in the supervisory system (Kel and Akın, 2021). The realization of changes in the education supervision system in Turkey with an independent of political understanding, the improvement of the inspection system and the working conditions, powers and opportunities of the inspectors with legal regulations can contribute to the rational determination of the level of realization of the goals of the education system (Gülşen, 2021). As Konan, Bozanoğlu, and Çetin (2019) stated, in order for the Turkish Education System to function in accordance with the objectives and expectations, uncertainties should be eliminated, and stakeholders should not have a problem of trust in the system. In this sense, the inspection policies of the Ministry of National Education should be reviewed with the participation of expert administrators and school stakeholders, and standard and permanent policies should be established. As a result, there is a need for an applicable and sustainable inspection system that will be developed based on the participation of all stakeholders in the education system.

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