



SHEDDING A LIGHT ON EDUCATION INSPECTORS' WORKLOADS IN TURKISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract:

This research aimed at investigating the subjective perceptions of education inspectors related to their real and ideal workloads, the impact of their current workloads on their private lives, the challenges they face in managing their workloads, possible steps to be taken to manage their workloads and the comparison of their workload and incomes. The research was designed as a qualitative and phenomenological approach with a semi-structured interview form including 36 education inspectors. In general, participants complained about the intense working schedule including the evenings and weekends. Almost all the inspectors had difficulties in managing their workloads. One of the main reasons of these difficulties stems from the hierarchical relationships with Provincial Directorate of National Education and constant additions to the current workloads. Besides, administrative and political pressures during legal investigations cause difficulties in managing the workloads of inspectors. Most of the working hours of inspectors are filled with investigation issues so as leaving very limited time and effort for guiding and improvement activities to the teachers and school administrators. Most of the inspectors find their incomes low when they compare with their workloads. It can be concluded that the psychological workload of the inspectors are heavy since the nature of their work requires a flexible time management and working in the evenings and at the weekends. Such a tiring work time tempo complicates the ideal roles of inspectors such as improving education by guidance and professional help to the teachers. To manage their workloads more successfully, inspectors mostly suggest a division of labour in terms of the separate working areas of inspectors such as supervision, guiding and investigation.

Keywords: education inspectors, workload, workload sources, managing workload

Introduction

School inspectors' roles have undergone several changes in Turkish education system since the foundation of Turkish Republic. The latest and recent change in inspection structure was made on 24 May 2015 and the workloads of inspectors were regulated with a legislation called "*Regulation on Chairmanships of Ministry of National Education Guidance and Inspection*" (2014). According to this legislation, the inspectors who work in the central organization of the "*Ministry of National Education*" and "*Provincial Directorates of National Education*" in the 81 provinces with different titles were combined under one title as "*education inspectors*". After this change, all the inspectors including the central organization of MoNE were appointed to the "*Directorates of National Education*" (DoNE) as subordinates of directors of national education. The inspectors who work in the central organization of Ministry of National Education (MoNE) are appointed among the inspectors working in "*Provincial Directorates of National Education*" with a temporary status. At this point, despite their job titles and job descriptions are same, the workloads of inspectors in "*MoNE at the department of Guidance and Inspection*" and DoNE (in 81 provinces) differentiates at some points. For example, as TEMSEN (2015) declared, the inspectors in DoNE are performing their responsibilities in a hierarchical relationship with the presidents of DoNE is actually contradictory to the inspection's reason for being. The problem here is that all the inspectors are serving under the supervision of presidents of DoNE and this subordinate positions of inspectors raise the question of "*how can be the central organization and the foreign organizations of MoNE inspected?*" This current situation is criticized in the sense that the inspections of central organization and the foreign organizations of MoNE have been virtually ended. Since inspectors' responsibilities cover a wide range of inquiry subjects and necessitate independent decision-making ability, these criticisms appear realistic.

Inspectors' workloads have seriously affected by these changes and several problems related to their workloads as well as concerns regarding their status were reported in scholarly studies (e.g. Özer and Yılmaz, 2005, Şahin, Çek and Zeytin, 2011). The formal workloads of education inspectors in Turkey cover pre analysis, analysis, research, investigation, guidance, and inspection. It is well-known that while they are carrying out these duties, they spend time and effort for invisible works. From this point, this study focuses on the subjective perceptions of education inspectors related to their workload phenomenon. The present study examined the changing workloads of education inspectors in Turkey with special attention to the real and ideal forms of their workloads. Despite finding a place in different platforms and press representing inspectors' opinions related to their status and workloads, their professional status has

not been shown interest in terms of the current and ideal working hours and its manageability. This study seeks for answers what an inspector exactly does with its visible and invisible sides. It also addresses what challenges they face during this change process in educational inspection and what can be done to manage their workloads more effectively. It is hoped that the findings reached by this research may provide some valuable insights to understand what the education inspectors do in reality and what it is expected to be the ideal. By this way, there can be also a step and an opportunity to make comparisons with other country practices.

Literature Review

The Concept of "Workload"

The demands from an employee and the coping capacity of the employee with these demands determine the employee's perception related to the workload. The reason of intense interest to the topic of workload is that it emerges as a result of the performance experienced by the employee (Van Roy and Schultz, 2008). The studies related to workload of an employee covers the subjects such as the calculation of workload in a specific time -week, month or year- (e.g. Billot, 2003; Leithwood ve Azah, 2014), reasons of increasing workload (e.g. Ballet ve Kelchtermans, 2009; DfE, 2014), relationships between workload and various organizational variables (Male and Male, 2003; Keser, 2006; Butt ve Lance, 2005) and strategies that can be applied to manage the increasing workload (e.g. Leithwood ve Azah, 2014; Baeder, 2011). Although the concept of workload was referred to the time and effort spent by an employee on a daily, weekly or yearly basis, the number of studies that define the term "*workload*" as a term is very limited. For this reason, there is not a clear definition of workload as a term on which scholars have a general consensus. Yet, the definitions imply that workload covers the "*demands from an employee in a specific work environment and the responses given by that employee to these demands*". For example, Gawron (2008), defines workload as a series of work necessities consisted of efforts, activities, and achievements. These achievements mean the aims that are attained: the time that is given to the employee and the performance level that is necessary to fulfil the responsibility. Keser (2006) defines the concept as the perception of an employee that the work loaded to him/her is over the normal limits. Gopher and Donch (1986) who assert that workload is a difficult, multidimensional and complicated term defines the term to explain the dimensions of interaction between the employee and the duties given to her/him.

In the literature, different types of workloads were referred depending upon the occupations or duties that are examined. First type of workload is cognitive workload which is defined as "*the difference between the capacities of the information-processing system*

that are required for task performance to satisfy performance expectations and the capacity available at any given time and must take into account the interaction between the task and the person performing the task" (Hatfield and Kerick, 2007, 100). The second type of workload is mental workload which is defined as "the task requirements as an independent, external variable with which the working subjects have to cope more or less efficiently" and "the interaction between task requirements and human capabilities or resources" (Hacker, 1998, 2941). Considering these definitions, the workloads of education inspectors can be defined as the subjective perceptions of education inspectors arising from their formal duties and responsibilities.

Workloads of Education Inspectors

The workloads of education inspectorsⁱ in Turkey consist of pre analysis, research, investigation, guidance, and inspection. The competencies that are expected from inspectors to fulfil the responsibilities and roles in the inspection process can be classified in three dimensions (Taymaz, 2005, 49): a) decision-making competencies, b) should have expected from inspectors, b) humanitarian competencies, c) technical competencies. The inspectors should have an education in the field of educational inspection to provide these competencies. Besides, they have the responsibilities of finding the truths and forward them to the top-level administration units of Ministry of Education, it is essential that they do their duty without any reserve (Taymaz, 2005, 50). According to the "Regulation on Chairmanships of Ministry of National Education Guidance and Inspection and Directorates of Education Inspectors" (article no. 57), workloads of inspectors cover the following duties:

- a) Preparing the reports as a result of guidance, inspection, inquiry and investigation activities in 20 days and preparing the reports of more extensive works in a specified time.
- b) Providing the training of the assistant inspectors given their responsibilities.
- c) Performing the duties in the departments and committees they are appointed.
- d) Performing the other duties entrusted by the legislation.

While performing the duties above, inspectors are expected to do eight main groups of works within their workload definitions (Standards of Education Inspectors, 2015). In *guidance* roles, inspectors guide the staff in inspected institutions with an approach that prevents corruption, be instructive and promote a participative approach to achieve the purposes of inspection. While doing an *inspection*, inspectors compare the performance criteria and quality standards of the services with the processes and results displayed that were determined in the legislation as purposes and goals.

ⁱ Henceforth education inspectors shall be referred to as *inspectors*.

Inspectors also evaluate these activities based on the proof ins *inspection* process. In this process, inspectors are expected to do the following kinds of inspection: suitability, performance, financial, data processing system and system. In *analysis* process, inspectors clarify the issues that are approved by the authorities to be investigated upon the complaints or notice from the community. At the end of this process, inspectors write a report that states their opinions whether the subject is investigated or not. The *investigation* work covers all the operations related to the public officers that were outlined by the legal amendments which require them to perform their duties that were approved by the legislations. The investigation report should be completed in 20 days. *Pre-analysis* covers the process that inspectors do all about the inquiry about an action or a crime. *Research* consists of the activities to improve the quality of education and instruction in the light of scientific methods and techniques. *Monitoring and evaluation* are performed to provide data for the MoNE that reflects the achievement level of the institution's purposes and goals by considering the results of self-evaluation, rewarding system, analysis and investigations periodically done in the institution. Based on the results, a development plan is prepared by MoNE and it is periodically monitored. *Other duties* of inspectors cover the works that can be given for improving inspectors' competencies, increase the quality of education and related activities in projects, workshops, seminars, and conferences. It is clear that inspectors face a wide range of workload types which are quite distinct from each other.

Significance of the Study

The studies (örn, Burgaz, 1995; Körođlu ve Ođuz, 2011) focusing the education inspectors mostly concentrate on the expected roles from the inspectors. Apart from that, a sufficient number of studies analysed the problems related to the working fields of inspectors from the perspectives of inspectors, teachers, and principals. For example, in a study by Aslanargun and Tarku (2014) scrutinizing the expectations of teachers from inspectors related to their inspection and guidance roles, teachers reported that the inspection and guidance duration was very short and guidance dimension of inspection process was mostly neglected. Another study addressing women inspectors' opinions and problems (Canlı, Demirtaş, Bozak ve Doruk, 2013) revealed "financial incapacibilities" is the first among the reasons they are not pleased about their jobs. Kayıkçı (2005) examined the perceptions of inspectors related to the structural problems of the inspection system and their satisfaction level. He found that inspectors experienced many problems at a considerable level which is mainly related to their socio-cultural and financial concerns. Inspectors believed that they are living on a lower level status than they deserve. This finding can be interpreted that empirical findings

imply an unbalanced perception regarding the workloads of inspectors and their gainings.

The studies mentioned above give some implications about the problems caused by inspectors' workloads. For example, Kayıkçı and Şarлак (2009) examined the factors that trouble the effectiveness school inspections and they found that excessive workload, extensive job requirements and uncertainty of job description take place among the barriers that affect the inspection process negatively. Another study focusing the structural problems of the inspection system by Kayıkçı (2005) also revealed that it is necessary to decrease the workload of inspectors' workload and they should be positioned in a more effective in terms of their guidance and on-the-job training (of teachers) roles.

The fact that education inspectors have a wide range of responsibilities in different areas on-going in every level and type of school causes a diversity in inspectors' works which in turn increases their workloads. Another factor which affects the workloads of inspectors is the number of the inspectors working in a specific province. According to the Inspectors' Reassignment Guide of MoNE Human Resource Management (2016), 2507 education inspectors are on duty in 81 provinces of Turkey. This number meets the 57, 14% of the needed inspector number across the country. In that case, current inspectors undertake the two times more their workload capacity. On the other hand, there is an unbalanced distribution of this number in terms of the cities/provinces the inspectors work. There is redundancy in the cities like Ankara, İzmir, Adana, Bursa and Malatya (which are the biggest and most developed cities), it is possible to state that inspectors working in cities other than these relatively developed cities are working with a double workload.

It is very well-known that the routine duties of inspectors such as inspections and investigations frequently take precedence over the ultimate aim of the inspection which is improving the education. At this point, although the intensity of inspectors' workload is referred as an issue to be dealt with the other problems, there has no serious attempt to analyse the workloads of inspectors on the "*workload term*" basis with a comparison between the real and the ideal situation including the different dimensions of the workload phenomenon. Moving this rationale, the aim of this study is to determine the opinions of inspectors related to their real and ideal workloads. Within this aim, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How do the inspectors evaluate their current and the ideal workloads?
2. What are the impacts of inspectors' workload on their private lives?
3. Are there any changes in inspectors' workloads in the last one year?
4. Are there factors that make difficult to manage inspectors' workloads?
5. Are there professional problems caused by inspectors' workloads?

6. What strategies are inspectors using to manage their workloads?
7. What steps can help the inspectors to manage their workloads?
8. What do the inspectors think about their incomes when they compare it with their workloads?

Material and Methods

Design

This study which aims at determining the different dimensions of inspectors' workloads is designed with the phenomenological approach. With phenomenological design, deriving from the personal experiences of participants, the meanings, and perceptions they attribute to a specific phenomenon are analysed. This type of approach focuses on how the participants make sense of their experiences with their personal perspectives (Baş and Akturan, 2013). The phenomenon in this study is inspectors' workload with its different dimensions.

Participants

Inspectors included to the study were selected among the volunteers easily accessible in five different regions of Turkey. The characteristics of participants were displayed in Table 1.

Table1: The characteristics of participants

| | Group | f |
|------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Gender | Female | 2 |
| | Male | 34 |
| | <i>Total</i> | 36 |
| Seniority | 1-5 years | 3 |
| | 6-10 years | 2 |
| | 11-15 years | 3 |
| | 16-20 years | 21 |
| | 21-25 years | 4 |
| | 26 years and above | 3 |
| | <i>Total</i> | 36 |
| Region | 1. Region | 17 |
| | 2. Region | 5 |
| | 3. Region | 6 |
| | 4. Region | 4 |
| | 5. Region | 4 |
| | <i>Total</i> | 36 |

As can be seen in Table 1, participants worked in five different regions of Turkey. Only two of the participants were female and 34 of them were male. It is known that the ratio of female inspectors was quite lower than the males. Most of the inspectors (f:21) have 16-21 years seniority. Most of the participants worked in 1. Region (consistent with the general ratio across Turkey) and the rest worked in second (f:5), third (f: 6), fourth (f: 4) and fifth (f: 5) regions and 26 different cities of Turkey. The average of inspector's age was 46.47' dir.

Data Analysis

According to the literature, the main data gathering instrument designed as a phenomenological study is the interview (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2005; Glesne, 2013; Bař ve Akturan, 2013). In the light of research problems utilizing the literature related to workload, five common themes were determined. Within this frame, nine interview questions including the sub-questions were determined. The draft interview form was presented to the field experts' comments and two education inspectors were interviewed for the pilot testing of the form before the main study was carried out.

Inspectors were invited to face to face semi-structured interviews at the first phase and many of them stated that they prefer to explain their opinions in a written form because of time limitation and they feel freer while writing. Since being a volunteer is essential in participations, the inspectors were invited to participate the study by snowball sampling, reached by their official e-mail in the websites of their workplaces and e-mailed through their professional e-mail groups. By this way, inspectors from different regions and cities of Turkey were included in the study. 38 inspectors participated in the study and 36 of them were analysed. The responses of participants varied between two and four pages.

Participants were coded as I1-I36 to provide the anonymity. In qualitative data analysis, quasi-statistical descriptive approach (Robson, 2011, 467) was used. In order to determine the relative importance of terms and concepts importance, correlations of word group were applied. Data was analysed in the light of conceptualizations in the literature in line with the research questions and systematically presented. Use of direct quotations (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005, 256) was used to provide evidence regarding inspectors' opinions which are accepted as an important criterion of validity.

Results and Discussion

Theme I: Weekly Workloads of Inspectors

First, inspectors were asked how many hours they work in a week and their responses were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Weekly working hours of Inspectors

| Weekly current workload | f |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 60-65 hours | 8 |
| 55 hours | 6 |
| 50 hours | 5 |
| 45 hours | 3 |
| 40 hours | 4 |
| 35 hours | 3 |
| 25 hours | 1 |
| 20 hours | 1 |
| 15 hours | 1 |
| 12 hours | 1 |
| Unstable | 3 |
| <i>Average weekly hour</i> | 47.27 |

As can be seen in Table 3, inspectors' weekly working hours vary between 12 and 65 hours. Their average working hour is 47.27. After determining the current workloads of inspectors, the ideal working hours were asked (Table 3).

Table 3: Inspectors' Opinions Regarding the Weekly Ideal Working Hours

| Ideal Weekly Workload (Hours) | f |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 40 | 14 |
| 30 | 3 |
| 35 | 2 |
| 25 | 8 |
| 20 | 4 |
| Unanswered | 2 |
| Uncertain (Because of the nature of the work, it is difficult to state an hour) | 3 |

As can be understood from Table 3, more than one-third of the inspectors were of the opinion that 40 hours in a week is the ideal. Inspectors' opinions related to the real and ideal hours are mostly consistent. On the other hand, some of the participants (f:8) stated that 25 hours is ideal in a week. Relatively less number of participants expressed that 20, 25, 30 and 35 hours in a week will be ideal. Two of the participants did not answer the question and three of them reported that it is difficult to give an exact hour because of the nature of the job. In sum, the real and the ideal weekly working hours of participants are consistent for some of them while some inspectors found it excessive

and need to be decreased. Within this theme, the last question was about how they felt about the intensity about their working hours (Table 4).

Table 4: Inspectors' Opinions Regarding the Intensity of Working Hours

| Intensity of Workloads | f |
|----------------------------------|----|
| 1. Normal | 5 |
| 2. Slightly intense above normal | 3 |
| 3. Intense | 12 |
| 4. Very intense | 12 |
| 5. Unanswered | 4 |
| <i>Total</i> | 36 |

In Table 4, it is clear that inspectors found their workload intense in varying degrees. A few inspectors interpreted their workloads as normal.

Theme 2: The Impact of Inspectors' Workloads on their Private Lives

Upon the responses of inspectors' interpreting "intense" their workloads, they were asked whether they work at weekends and/or evenings. All of the inspectors (f:36, 100%) stated that they worked weekends and evenings at home to complete their works. Some of the views of participants take place below:

"Every evening, I work at least 1,5-3 hours. Actually, our Office is not suitable for reporting activities (I9)".

"Almost every evening I bring work to the home and I cannot get to bed before 2 o'clock (I6)".

"Certainly yes. Many of the works of inspectors are timely. To provide the works done, it is necessary to work in the evenings and weekends (I14)".

"Yes, but because of the entire of the work, there may not be an intense working condition in the regular work hours (I36)".

Participants were asked that whether this workload had an impact on their private lives. All the participants reported that extra work hours had an impact on their private and these are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: The Impact of Inspectors' Workloads on Their Private Lives

| The Impact of Inspectors' Workloads on Their Private Lives | f |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Not to have enough time for the family members | 17 |
| 2. Not to have time for personal area of interest (reading, going on a holiday, doing sports, friends, cinema and theatre) | 10 |
| 3. Stress | 2 |
| 4. Feeling time pressure | 2 |
| 5. Short temper | 1 |
| 6. Not planning the private life | 1 |
| 7. Tiredness | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 36 |

The following statements reflect the opinions of inspectors related to this issue:

"If you want to spare time for your child, you cannot talk about a qualified interest and support. Your wife has got used to this situation. Your anxieties related to your work reflect your behaviours and attitudes to the extent that your wife even does not open up space for it. More importantly, with regard to the consequences of inspections and investigations, you should certainly keep your social circle minimum. Your talks in social circles can easily return to you in your work environment. This situation is experienced in small cities much more (I32)".

"It affects you directly and negatively. Your duty and the effort we spent to complete it affect the private life. Legal and conscientious responsibility goes beyond the private life and takes lots of things from our private lives (I12)".

"Surely, it is affected. You spare less time for your social life. Inspectors have to improve themselves in every field but unfortunately, we do not have time for this (I5).

"Primarily, we do not have a chance to have plans for our private lives. Since it is uncertain that where and when we may be given work, private life is generally in the background (I28)".

Theme 3: Reasons for Increase in Inspectors' Workloads

Inspectors are asked that whether there is an increase in their workloads in the last one year. The reason why this question asked is the empirical findings in the literature that many professions are facing a growing increase in their workloads. And for the inspectors, a structural change has made affecting the workloads of inspectors in 2004 with the law number 6528. Before that regulation, two different inspector groups were in service in the central organization of MoNE and in its provincial organizations in 81 cities. After this change, all the inspectors working in central and provincial organizations were combined under a single title "*education inspectors*". Their duty

fields have not changed whereas their workload intensity has changed. For this reason, inspectors were asked that whether they experienced a change in their workloads stemming from this new structure and workplace changes.

Within this question, some of the inspectors reported an increase, some of them reported a decrease in their workloads and some of them reported that the workload stayed stable. The answers of the participants were presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Changes in the Workloads of Inspectors in the Last One Year

| Workload has | f |
|----------------------------------------------|----|
| Increased | 22 |
| Not increased | 7 |
| Decreased | 6 |
| Uncertain since the structural change is new | 1 |
| Total | 36 |

As can be understood from Table 5, most of the inspectors reported that their workloads have increased after the new structural change. Some of the inspectors stated a decrease (f:6) in their workloads whereas some of them (f:7) stated that their workloads remained same. One of the participants expressed that because the change is new; it is not possible to make a comparison. Some of the respondents explained their opinions as follows:

"Yes, my workload has increased because I was assigned in investigation group (I33)".

"Yes, my workload has increased because I was appointed to İstanbul (M4)".

"Yes, my workload has increased. When the teacher inspection was ended, I thought that our workload may decrease but it has increased (I35)".

Some inspectors reported that their workloads were decreased because of the change in the cities they work and the inspection of teachers during course hours. Some examples of these opinions are presented below:

"Yes, it has changed. After the combination of the inspectors, investigation and inspection groups were separated and the hassle was ended (M1)".

"It has decreased since I came from the central organization. My current workload is ten times less than my previous workload in central organization of MoNE (M10)"

"Yes, it has decreased because the classroom and course inspections have ended (M25)".

The reasons for the increase in inspectors' workloads are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: The Reasons for the Increase in Inspectors' Workloads

| Reasons | f |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Inadequacy of inspector number | 7 |
| Extension in inspectors' working field after the change in the legislation (the increase in the number of institutions to be inspected) | 5 |
| 2. The reason that educational administrators want to base all their decision on the inspectors' reports. | 4 |
| 3. Increase in the complaints to the MoNE | 4 |
| 4. The rapid structural changes in MoNE. | 3 |
| 5. The fact that school administrators' do not know their duties and responsibilities. | 3 |
| 6. The large number of investigation files | 2 |
| 7. Un-functional inspection legislation | 1 |
| 8. The trust felt to inspectors' professional knowledge. | 1 |
| 9. Problems caused by working with different colleagues in the investigation groups | 1 |
| 10. The fact that some of the inspectors are not sharing the workload enough | 1 |
| 11. Increase in commission works | 1 |
| 12. Being assigned to the investigation group | 1 |
| 13. The fact that the work field is extensive and inspectors' not an being expert in their working fields. | 1 |
| 14. Schools that are not fully equipped | 1 |
| 15. Transportation in Istanbul | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 37 |

The inadequate number of inspectors (f:7) takes place in the first order among the reasons of increase in inspectors' workloads. Extension in inspectors' working field after the change in the legislation (f:5) follows this reason. Four of the inspectors asserted that the fact that education administrators frequently apply for the inspector report increase their workloads. The following statement reflects one of these views (I29):

"The trust felt our decision come the first. When the administrators have difficulty in deciding, understanding and interpreting, moreover when the issue is risky, they decide a pre analysis and direct the case to us. More importantly, while the administration owns the positive issues, they elude themselves from the negative situations pointing the inspector reports".

Another participants' views support the previous situation (I2):

"Our workload is gradually increasing all the works that are under the authority of the provincial director of national education and governor of the province, inspectors' reports were required in order to base them upon our reports"

Another frequent reason for workload increase is caused by the increase in the complaints made through the complaint call lines like BIMER and ALO 147. One inspector stated that (I11):

"Especially after the establishment of BIMER, complaints about the educators were started to increase. Moreover, people become complainant even for the slightest problems".

Theme 4: Reasons That Makes Difficult to Manage Inspectors' Workloads

Inspectors were asked whether they have difficulty in managing their workloads. One of the inspector stated that there is not such a difficulty. The rest of the inspectors (f:35) reported some difficulties that they come across (Table 7).

Table 7: Reasons That Makes Difficult to Manage Inspectors' Workload

| Reasons | f |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Working under the Director of National Education | 4 |
| 2. Growing increase in the work to be done | 4 |
| 3. Incompetencies of the education administrators | 3 |
| 4. Frequent changes in legislation | 3 |
| 5. Politic pressures | 3 |
| 6. Inadequate time given for the work to be done | 2 |
| 7. Difficulties in working with the group and the other inspectors | 2 |
| 8. The fact that investigations and analysis are made in different places | 2 |
| 9. Economic problems | 2 |
| 10. Being not able to plan because of the uncertainties in job descriptions | 2 |
| 11. The necessity of working in the fields of guidance, inspection, and investigation at the same time | 2 |
| 12. Living in a big city | 1 |
| 13. Unexpected and unplanned works appointed by MoNE | 1 |
| 14. Psychological factors that the uncertain nature of the profession causes | 1 |
| 15. Demands that are contrary to the law | 1 |
| 16. The contradictory legislations regulating inspectors' position in the MoNE organizations. | 1 |
| 17. The fact that MoNE does not allocate vehicles for transportation to the workplaces | 1 |
| 18. The fact that a working office and officers do not exist. | 1 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 19. Being not able to reach the necessary information and documents needed in analysis and investigations. | 1 |
| 20. With the change of legislation, inspection has been made inactivated | 1 |
| 21. Being exposed to threats | 1 |
| 22. The increase in reporting works | 1 |
| Total | 40 |

In table 8, the main reason of inspectors' in managing their workload comes "working under the Director of National Education" (f:4) and "growing increase in the work to be done" (f:4) comes. One inspector noted that:

"Inspectors are working under the direction of Director of National Education. It is inevitable to restructure the current process in order to implement universal norms in terms of inspection's goals (I14)".

Other noteworthy reasons which make difficult to manage inspectors' workload are "incompetencies of the education administrators" (f:3), "frequent changes in legislation" (f:3) and "political pressures" (f:3). One of the respondents has expressed the difficulty because of living in Istanbul (I5):

"Sometimes, we travel 4-5 hours just to take the statements as a part of the investigation. Moreover, we have to go stand on the buses".

Two of the participants reported that the reasons arise from the external factors. One of the participants pointed out (M31):

"The problems in managing the workload are not produced by ourselves. Our administrators should do something. Administrators should follow how many files each inspector has and they should do a fair work division. Unfortunately, the presidentship is very bad on this issue".

Theme 5: Professional Problems Caused by Inspectors' Workloads

Responses of inspectors related to their professional problems related to their workloads are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Professional Problems Caused by Inspectors' Workloads

| Problems | f |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Administrative and political pressures in pre analysis and investigations | 3 |
| 2. Being not able to have time to professional development. | 2 |
| 3. Fail to solve educational problems | 1 |
| 4. Working with the people appointed by political relationships and working dependent on these people. | 1 |
| 5. The fact that the decision was taken at the end of the investigations are risky | 1 |
| 6. Incompetencies in following the latest issues and developments in education systems. | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 9 |

As presented in Table 8, inspectors mostly experience pressures from politicians and their superiors. Time constraint because of the intense workload comes in the second order as a workload problem after political pressures.

Theme 6: Strategies Used by Inspectors to Manage Their Workloads

Inspectors use different strategies to manage their workloads. These are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Strategies Used by Inspectors to Manage Their Workloads

| Strategies | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Working more | 7 |
| 2. Planning the works more detailed | 5 |
| 3. Working regularly and rigorous | 4 |
| 4. Abolishing the time traps | 2 |
| 5. Communicating well with the colleagues and administrators | 2 |
| 6. Consulting the experienced colleagues | 2 |
| 7. Using the informal communication methods in problem-solving | 1 |
| 8. Applying the quick and selective reading methods | 1 |
| 9. Being a good listener | 1 |
| 10. Applying the opinions of experts in the field | 1 |
| 11. Collaboration | 1 |
| 12. Trying to adopt the technological, formal and cultural changes | 1 |
| 13. Using self-opportunities (e.g. car, computer, internet and mobile) | 1 |
| 14. Withdrawal from the work and ignoring | 1 |
| 15. Being desensitized | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 31 |

Theme 7: Possible Steps to Manage Inspectors' Workloads

Inspectors were asked that what kind of steps can make easy to manage their workloads and they suggested a series of changes (Table 9).

Table 9: Possible Steps to Manage Inspectors' Workloads

| Possible Steps | f |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Inspectors may become an expert on a specific field such as inspection or investigation. As a result, there may be a division of labour according to these expertise. | 9 |
| 2. Inspectors should gain an autocratic legal status | 6 |
| 3. The workload should be limited on a monthly or yearly basis. | 5 |
| 4. Inspectors should not work under the Director of National Education anymore and should be liable to the MoNE at the department of Guidance and Inspection. | 3 |
| 5. School administrators' administration capabilities should be developed | 2 |
| 6. The subjects that are in the duty field of lawyers should be removed out of inspectors' investigation responsibilities. | 1 |
| 7. The working groups should change from time to time. | 1 |
| 8. Enough time should be given the works and new works should be given at the end of the previous work deadlines. | 1 |
| 9. Transportation problem should be solved. | 1 |
| 10. The workload should be distributed equally. | 1 |
| 11. The number of inspectors should be increased. | 1 |
| 12. Inspections of the private institutions should be triennial. | |
| 13. Investigations that do not require professional expertise should be dealt by the employee who is competent in the same institutions. | 1 |
| 14. Job descriptions of the inspectors should be done clearly. | 1 |
| 15. Presidents of the inspectors should be voted. | 1 |
| 16. The offices should be redesigned to respond the needs of inspectors such as writing the reports and making the investigations. | 1 |
| 17. The inspection system should be changed totally. | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 36 |

In Table 9, it is understood that many participants (f:9) agreed that division of the works based on the investigation, guidance and inspection tasks can help to manage inspectors' workloads by reducing the variety of work fields. Secondly, inspectors aspire for a more autonomous structure which relieves the inspectors from the hierarchal relationship with the director of National Education. In the current system, inspectors are the subordinated of directors of National Education which treat the free deciding power of inspectors. Moreover, an inspector asserted that the inspection

system should change completely. At this point, one inspector suggested that the inspectors should work under the department of Guidance and Inspection at the central organization of MoNE. An inspector stated (I1):

“The most important paradox is that the inspectors are serving under the director of National Education and at the same time inspecting the same institution and its functioning. The inspection system should be recovered from this ridiculous situation and restructured as a reasonable system”.

Another inspector stated that inspectors' impartiality should be ensured and the respectability of the profession should be raised (M5):

“The inspection system should be corrected as to provide that partisan employees excluding them from the system. A controlled inspection system should be designed in itself and the status of the profession should be reconsidered to provide a high-level career profession more than a profession that earning a living.”

One inspector noted that the job descriptions of inspectors should be made clearly so that the workload can be limited (I16):

“Job descriptions should be made. For example, the inspection and investigation numbers of an inspector should/can do should be determined and this limit will not be exceeded”.

Theme 8: Inspectors' Opinions regarding Workload-Income Comparison

The last question asked to inspectors about what do they think about their incomes when they compare it with their workloads. The responses of the participants were summarized in Table 10.

Table 10: Comparison of Inspectors' Workload with their Income

| Workload-Income Comparison | f |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Very satisfactory | 1 |
| Satisfactory | 5 |
| Unsatisfactory | 14 |
| Very Unsatisfactory | 14 |
| Unanswered | 2 |
| <i>Total</i> | 36 |

As can be seen in Table 10, most of the inspectors participated in the study find their income unsatisfactory (f:14) and very unsatisfactory (f:14). Only one participant reported a positive view related to his income. Two of the participants did not answer this question. Five of the participants found their income satisfactory. One of the reasons that inspectors find their income low is that the responsibility they take and the salary they take is unbalanced. Some of the participants' opinions are as follows:

"Our workloads are above our salaries. I think the work times should be considered in determining the salaries (M3).

"We are earning less than the employees we inspect. There are differences among the inspectors' salaries, too. This situation causes a decrease in our motivation (M8)".

"It is low. We are earning less than the principals we inspect (M24)".

The reason why the education inspectors find their incomes low lies between the difference between their incomes and inspectors' incomes working in other ministries (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice).

"We are paid less than the inspectors in other ministries although we are examining more files and making more investigations (I13)".

"Certainly very low. Equal workload should be equal paid. We are earning less than the inspectors having the inspector title in other institutions. Moreover, some of us are paid less about 1800-2000 TL than our colleagues doing the same work in the same institution. It is very low when compared to the workload (I36)".

Some participants complained that despite they do the same job with the inspectors who were working at the central organization of MoNE (before the inspection structure has been changed) they earn less than them:

"Inspectors are put together with a title "education inspectors". But our personal benefits are not equal. We are paid according to the old inspection system although we are working with the same titles and doing the same job (I33)".

"One of the inspectors doing the same job earns 5300 TL while the other earns 3200 TL. Now, there is no labour peace (I14)"

Conclusion and Recommendations

Workloads of inspectors vary between 12 and 65 hours. Despite the average working hour of inspectors is 47.27, the range between 12 and 65 hours means that the

workloads are unbalanced among the inspectors doing the same job. This unbalanced picture emerges from the difference between the big and the small cities which inspectors work in. In some of the big and developed cities, the number of inspectors is far above the needed number of inspectors. According to the 2016 statistics of the MoNE General Directorate of Human Resource Management some cities are short of inspectors (e.g. Şanlıurfa: 45; İstanbul: 36 and Diyarbakır:30) whereas some cities (e.g. Ankara: 250, İzmir: 39, Malatya: 17 and Adana: 15) have much more than the required number of inspectors. Especially, in Ankara, the capital city, nearly twice of the required inspector has been working. The gap between the working hours of different inspectors may be stemming from this differentiation among the cities in Turkey.

Inspector's ideal workloads vary between 25 or 40 hours a week. When the current/real and ideal workloads of inspectors are compared, most of the inspectors' found their workloads above the ideal hours and they need to be decreased. In other words, most of the inspectors found their workloads intense. Similarly, Polat (2016) who have recently investigated the problems that inspectors come across in investigation duties, it was found that they could not find enough time for planning the inspection process because of the intense work tempo. This intense workload has also some negative impacts on the private lives of inspectors besides their professional lives. First one is, they could not plan their personal affairs since the nature of their work is uncertain about the place and the time they may be given work. Besides, in order to manage their workloads, inspectors work in the evenings and afternoons. Thus, they cannot have enough time to have with their families or social lives.

The change in the inspection system in 2014 has caused an increase in inspectors' workloads. After two groups of inspectors working in different departments of MoNE were integrated under one title, most of the inspectors perceived an increase in their workloads. After the change in the system, many of the inspectors were appointed to another city. As it was mentioned before, many inspectors are performing their duties in the cities where the number of inspectors is far above or under the required human resource. For example, an inspector's workload has increased after he appointed to İstanbul. Another reason of that inspectors' workload is that the inspectors in some cities (e.g. Ankara) are separated into different groups such as inspection, guidance, and investigation. Especially the inspectors taking place in inspection groups perceive their workloads more intense than the other groups. A few number of inspectors perceived a decrease because of the same reason. This situation can be explained by the fact that the works included in investigation group include more work and takes much effort than the other groups (such as inspection and guidance). Overall, the main reason for inspectors' heavy workload seems the advocacy of inspector number in most of the

cities. The second reason is the increase in the education institutions that needs to be inspected. Third reason is the increase in the complaints that comes from the call lines.

Considering the issues summarized so far, almost all the inspectors have difficulty in managing their workloads. These difficulties mostly stem from their status that they work under the directors of National education whom they may open up an investigation at the same time. This is a paradox that inspectors may investigate their superiors whom they take directions. Besides, some inspectors believe that incompetent educational administrators increase their workload since some administrators do not know their rights and responsibilities fully and because of this they avoid risk taking. Thus, the problems that can be solved by education administrators are also added to the workloads of inspectors. The frequent changes in legislations, financial incapacities, and political pressures are the other noteworthy workload problems. This finding is parallel with the findings of a study (Canlı, Demirtaş, Bozak and Doruk, 2013) examining the women inspectors' opinions related to the profession of inspecting. Researchers found that among the other factors, women inspectors are not satisfied with their profession. Another support comes from Kayıkçı's study (2005) which focuses on the structural problems of the inspection system, the financial problems comes first. He reported that inspectors found their socio-cultural and economical standards lower than they deserve. Another problem raised by inspectors is that their working offices are not suitable for making and reporting their investigations. This finding is consistent with Polat's study (2016) who found that inspectors have problems about finding office while performing their duties.

Inspectors are uncomfortable about the political and administrative press in terms of professional problems related to their workloads. Besides, because of the intensity in their workloads, they cannot find time to develop themselves by following the recent changes and improvements in education systems. It is interesting that most of the working hours of inspectors are filled with investigation issues so as leaving very limited time and effort for guiding and improvement activities to the teachers and school administrators. Only a few participants noted the need for providing professional support to the teachers. It is obvious that inspectors' workloads do not give priority to the function of improving education by guidance and constant support to the teacher. Yet, researchers (e.g. Aslanargun and Tarku, 2014) examining teachers' expectations from the inspectors proved that teachers found the inspection durations very short and guidance dimension of inspection process was neglected. Besides, it is the reality that teachers expect professional help from the inspectors about the classroom management and challenging students.

Inspectors mostly manage their workloads by working more and planning them in details. Time management and utilizing colleague's experiences are the other

strategies. Inspectors mostly suggested a division in inspection, guidance, and investigations and becoming an expert in a specific field among them. Secondly, inspectors noted the importance of an autonomous and independent inspection structure that they can be objective and impartial free from the political pressures. Thirdly, inspectors believed that a limitation on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis may help to decrease their workloads and may provide a balanced workload distribution at the same time. It is clear that this kind of an amendment is needed to provide the organizational justice among the member of the same institution where they do the same job with the same title. But, this distribution is closely related to the number of inspectors needed in a specific city. As long as the number of the inspectors is kept unbalanced across the provinces, distributing the workload among the inspectors in a specific city do not solve the inequality among the provinces which have inspectors below and above its capacity. It is possible that this kind of an administration approach will cause an organizational injustice feeling because of this unequal process. Most of the inspectors found their incomes low because of the reasons such as long working hours, earning less than the employees (e.g. teachers, principals) they inspect and earning less than the inspectors with the same title working in other public institutions. Consequently, the inspection system has in important function in achieving the purposes of education institutions. Ideally, inspector's main role is supposed to be improving education in modern education systems. The inspection system in Turkey's history of education has undergone a series of functional and structural changes.

The main reasons of these changes lie in the critical importance that inspection system holds. Thus, the workloads of inspectors were shaped within these frames. It can be asserted that the success of the inspection system can be achieved by understanding its keystones, inspectors' opinions related to their workloads and the way they manage their workloads and the problems stemming from their workloads. Based on the findings of this study, it can be suggested that the workloads of inspectors doing the same job with the same title and same personal benefits should be distributed equally and fairly. Such a step may help to rebuild the labour peace among the members of the profession. Considering the findings of this study generally, it can be asserted that the psychological workload of the inspectors are heavy since the nature of their work requires a flexible time management and working in the evenings and at the weekends. Such a tiring work time tempo complicates the ideal roles of inspectors such as improving education by guidance and professional help to the teachers. At this point, it is critical that the workloads and job descriptions of inspectors should be re-organized providing them with a role in improving education and providing professional guidance to the educators. Also, the workloads of inspectors working in different cities should be reconsidered to balance the unbalanced workloads they perform. Actually, in

the document “*Standards of Education Inspectors*”, the importance of the distributing the workloads is emphasized and it is reported that the current workload, the weight and the maximum completion of the previous tasks should be considered. It seems that there are some administrative disruptions in doing so.

The most referred factor that makes difficult to manage inspectors' workloads was political and administrative pressures that they come across in investigation processes. Currently, inspectors' status limit their decision making authorities as there are times that is abused in the hierarchical relationship with the directors of National Education in which inspectors have a subordinate status. This finding is supported by the news reflected to the press from time to time. For example, there is a case reported (<http://www.haber32.com.tr>) that a chief inspector was relegated to another city because that inspector rejected to close the investigation file of a director of National Education who was paid as the city Responsible of An Examination though not being in that city and on his duty. In order to establish a more objective and well performing inspection system, providing a more autocratic and independent status to inspectors may make contribution to inspectors' managing their workloads. In the new model, inspectors may be directly dependent to the Ministry of Education.

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