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LA INSPECCIÓN DE EDUCACIÓN EN TURQUÍA: ESTUDIO COMPARADO CON LA INSPECCIÓN EDUCATIVA EN ESPAÑA

THE EDUCATION INSPECTION IN TURKEY: A COMPARED STUDY WITH THE EDUCATIONAL INSPECTION IN SPAIN

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Resumen

El artículo compara los sistemas de inspección educativa en Turquía y España, utilizando el Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) para evaluar la organización y desempeño de los inspectores. Se señala que la inspección es esencial para asegurar la calidad educativa, aunque su implementación

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difiere entre ambos países. En Turquía, se enfrentan a problemas como la falta de estandarización y formación, y se sugiere un modelo de supervisión sostenible. En contraste, España tiene un sistema más descentralizado que promueve la autonomía de los centros y se enfoca en la evaluación formativa. Ambos países comparten la responsabilidad de supervisar el desempeño educativo, pero difieren en su estructura y procesos. El artículo concluye que el cuestionario puede ser útil en otros contextos educativos y resalta la importancia de la colaboración entre inspectores y la comunidad educativa para mejorar los resultados.

Palabras clave: *Inspección educativa, calidad educativa, supervisión, formación, evaluación formativa, autonomía, colaboración.*

Abstract

The article compares the educational inspection systems in Turkey and Spain, using the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) to evaluate the organisation and performance of inspectors. It notes that inspection is essential to ensure educational quality, although its implementation differs between the two countries. In Turkey, challenges such as a lack of standardisation and training are faced, and a sustainable supervision model is suggested. In contrast, Spain has a more decentralized system that promotes the autonomy of schools and focuses on formative assessment. Both countries share the responsibility of overseeing educational performance, but they differ in their structure and processes. The article concludes that the questionnaire may be useful in other educational contexts and highlights the importance of collaboration between inspectors and the educational community to improve outcomes.

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Keywords: *Educational inspection, Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ), educational quality, supervision, training, formative assessment, autonomy, collaboration*

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INTRODUCTION

Educational inspection, a critical function in monitoring the quality and compliance of school systems, is carried out in different ways in different countries. This paper compares the inspection systems in Turkey and Spain and applies a methodology based on Morgeson and Humphrey's (2006) Work Design Questionnaire (hereinafter WDQ) to analyse aspects of the inspection function in both countries. This methodology adapts the dimensions of the WDQ to the context of educational inspection in order to analyse in a structured way the organisation, interaction and performance of inspectors in each setting.

REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE ON INSPECTION IN TURKEY

Eranıl and Barış (2022) carry out a temporal analysis of the scientific literature related to educational supervision, dividing the texts into four periods since the 1980s and obtaining the most relevant aspects of study for each of them. The study is based on the premise that the historical analysis of inspection allows us to understand the cultural and political context in which its work is carried out and to draw relevant conclusions for the future. With regard to the most current of the four periods studied, which runs from 2012 to 2021, the relevant topics they discover in the scientific literature correspond to the structure and effects of supervision, the delegation of supervision to principals, and what they describe as problems specific to supervisors.

Regarding the first aspect, the structure and effects of supervision, aspects such as irregular inspections, inadequate or authoritarian counselling, lack of standardised applications, subjectivity, meticulous criticism, lack of a unified organisation, excessive workload, ambiguity of

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tasks, pressure, break with pedagogical supervision, assignment of research tasks and difficulties in specialisation are mentioned.

The second of the main axes of discussion is the derivation of aspects of supervision to school principals, which affects the basic principles of interaction between inspectors and schools, causes disruption in counselling, increases the workload of principals, results in insufficient supervision, leads to inadequate school management, affects specialisation in supervision, lacks objectivity and ultimately increases problems in schools.

Finally, they highlight a number of problems affecting the inspector himself, such as status, a broad view of the job, inadequate pay and lack of career development.

The authors conclude with the following recommendations: to establish a sustainable supervision model derived from a holistic philosophical structure appropriate to Turkish culture and endowed with a systemic structure within the framework of contemporary supervision theories, to provide supervision by experts in the field, to provide a sufficient number of supervisors and that supervision serves to protect the learner, that its feedback is functional and that it guarantees an end result of supervision.

Ozdogru (2022) notes that the supervision of teaching was the responsibility of principals from 2014 until 2022, when it reverted to the Inspectorate.

A comparative study of inspectorate reports in Turkey and the UK can be found in Usta (2021). The study finds differences mainly in the areas of participation, direct teaching evaluation and transparency. According to the author, the Inspectorate in Turkey, although building on a long historical tradition, has not achieved the desired levels of quality. This is partly related

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to the deficiency of inspection reports, which are not accessible to families and the public. Citing Demirkasimoglu (2011, 46) points to a great similarity in the reports issued, which highlights the highly centralised structure of the inspectorate in this country. This implies a lack of originality and creative approach. Other issues that in his opinion indicate a lack of quality in the reports are the abundance of spelling and grammatical errors, vague statements about the information obtained, lack of comparison with other schools or with international evaluations, and especially lack of participation of the educational community. He agrees with Yavuz and Gulmez (2016) that monitoring would be more beneficial if it focused on improving educational quality rather than merely reviewing documentation.

Okutan (1996) points out that the professional development of teachers is a key factor in the quality of educational organisations and therefore one of the priorities of the inspectorate should be teacher training and development. Chidobi (2015) points out that the lack of initial teacher training proves the need for inspectorate action.

Kılıc et al. (2023) study the opinion of teachers interested in joining the inspectorate in Turkey on the requirements for entry. They focus their study on the main characteristics that, according to the regulations, candidates for the post of inspector and assistant inspector must fulfil: 8 years of professional experience, the university degrees that allow access to the corps, the age limit of 35 years for access, the mandatory written examination and the interview.

The authors conclude on the basis of the results that the necessary experience and the age limit are contradictory, and therefore recommend removing the age limit. They advocate the delimitation and clarification of the university degrees that should give access to the Inspectorate. They affirm that the existence of exams is necessary but that they should focus on

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professional competences and not on a memorised test on legislation. In short, they recommend a change in the entry system along the lines proposed by the teachers surveyed in their study.

The journal Supervision 21 itself, in its 69th issue, presents a paper by Guzelergene et al. (2023) which provides a descriptive analysis of the inspectorate in Turkey, criticising the ups and downs that have occurred in the system. In issue 70 Ergün et al. criticise the situation at the time, in which the supervision of teaching practice was the responsibility of school management rather than the inspectorate, which in their view undermined the quality and professionalism of the service (2023).

Descriptive analysis of inspection in Turkey in terms of comparison with Spain

Educational Inspection shares common functions in different geographical areas, based on the traditional axes of supervision, counselling and evaluation. Relevant differences in comparative studies of inspectorates in different countries are based on the organisational structures of inspectorates, the training of inspectors, the approach to carrying out the functions, and access to and promotion in the workplace.

In the case of Turkey, the model is formally similar to the one established in Spain, with some nuances that we will now point out. It is important to note in this analysis that in Spain, schools have a relatively high degree of autonomy, which influences the role of inspectors, while the education system in Turkey is more centralised, which may result in more standardised inspections.

The main **similarities** stem, as we have already noted, from the functions of the inspectorate in both countries, with an emphasis on ensuring compliance with educational regulations and also on improving the

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quality of education. Both seek to ensure that educational institutions comply with established standards and that educational policies are effectively implemented. Therefore, here we find a first common objective between the two that marks the performance and work of inspectors.

In both countries, the Educational Inspection is supported by a regulatory framework that defines its functions and competences. In Turkey, the National Education Law (No. 1739) regulates inspection activities, ensuring that they are carried out in accordance with the principles of national education. In both contexts, inspectors are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of educational institutions. This includes observing classes, reviewing curricula and evaluating students' academic performance. In both Spain and Turkey, the importance of continuous training for education inspectors is recognised. Both countries promote training programmes to ensure that inspectors are up to date in pedagogical methodologies, regulations and assessment tools, in addition, the Educational Inspection in both countries not only focuses on detecting deficiencies, but also promotes the continuous improvement of educational practices. In relation to collaboration with the education community, both systems seek to provide constructive feedback to institutions in order to foster the professional development of teachers and the improvement of educational outcomes. In both Spain and Turkey, inspectors work in collaboration with principals, teachers and other stakeholders in the education community, taking into account that this collaboration is essential to implement changes and improvements in the education system. Finally, both inspection systems also play a role in the evaluation of education policies through the different reports produced by inspectors.

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In terms of differences, we can observe firstly a decentralised organisational structure in Spain, with competences shared between the State and the Autonomous Communities, as opposed to a more centralised system in Turkey, with the Ministry of National Education in charge of inspection throughout the country.

Access to the inspectorate in Spain is subject to a selection process and specific training in the form of a competitive examination. The selection process includes theoretical and practical tests on educational legislation, school management and evaluation of educational systems and, once selected, they undergo a period of supervised internships. Continuous training and refresher courses on educational issues are valued.

In Turkey, inspectors are generally trained in university programmes specific to educational supervision. These programmes usually include courses in educational administration, supervision, legislation and evaluation. After graduation, candidates must pass a state examination to become assistant inspectors and undergo a 3-year practical training period before becoming full inspectors. Training tends to be more standardised at national level.

If we analyse the approach given to inspection activity in both countries, understanding by approach the emphasis that inspection plans give to the different functions, we find that in Spain the tendency is to focus more on formative evaluation and advice to schools. In Turkey, historically, the focus has been more on control and compliance, although in recent years there have been efforts to include more aspects of improvement and development. This implies that, at least formally, in Spain, the inspectorate places the emphasis on identifying areas for improvement and proposing

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solutions in collaboration with management and teaching teams in areas such as pedagogical innovation and attention to diversity. Compliance with the guidelines set by the Turkish Ministry of National Education is apparently the priority of the inspectorate in Turkey, although in recent years, efforts have been made to include aspects of school development and improvement and work is being done to develop a more balanced approach between monitoring and counselling.

Inspection visits to the centres tend to have a more standardised timetable at national level for regular inspections in Turkey compared to the system developed in Spain, where the frequency may vary according to the Autonomous Community and the type of centre.

Specifically, in Spain, ordinary (planned) and extraordinary (for specific needs) inspections are carried out with the frequency that may depend on factors such as the previous performance of the centre or specific ongoing projects.

In Turkey there is a nationwide schedule. Traditionally, Turkey has sought to inspect each school at least once every three years; however, the actual frequency may vary due to human resource constraints. Priority is given to inspections in schools with identified problems or in areas of special attention. In addition to regular inspections, specific visits are made for specific topics or thematic evaluations.

Educational inspection in Spain has a generalist approach. Inspectors, with exceptions, carry out their duties indiscriminately in all types of schools and educational institutions at the present time. The Turkish system has traditionally divided inspectors into two categories: primary education

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inspectors and secondary education inspectors. In recent years, there have been efforts to unify the inspectorate under a single category called "National Education Inspectors". This reform sought to create a more versatile inspectorate capable of supervising all levels of education. Although there is no formal specialisation by type of school, inspectors often develop expertise in specific areas such as Vocational and Technical Education, Special Education, Foreign Language Teaching and Educational Technology.

There are also differences in the professional careers of inspectors in both countries. In Spain, there is no professional career as such, and the heads of service to which inspectors accede correspond to positions of free designation.

In contrast, career progression in Turkey is clearly regulated, based on years of service, performance and continuous training. There are regular performance appraisals that enable promotion to leadership positions within the inspection system and may affect their chances of promotion and future assignments. The steps in this career progression process are taken through the successive occupation of the following positions: Assistant Inspector (beginning of the career), Inspector, Senior Inspector, Head of Inspection Group and the Provincial Inspector of Education.

Linked to the above, the system of continuous inspectorate training in Turkey is based on compulsory professional development programmes, opportunities to specialise in specific areas or the possibility of postgraduate studies in educational supervision or administration. In this sense, inspectorate training in Spain is more unstructured, although there are differences in this aspect between different Autonomous Communities.

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Finally, one aspect where the two systems seem to be similar is mobility, which in both cases allows the opportunity to work in different geographical areas of the respective countries and the possibility to participate in international projects or exchanges.

METHODOLOGY: ADAPTING WDQ TO THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL INSPECTION

In order to achieve a comprehensive analysis of inspection practices in Turkey and Spain, key categories inspired by the dimensions of the WDQ have been identified. These dimensions have been adapted to assess in detail the inspection function and its impact on the education system, which will be structured into three main categories: motivational, social and contextual.

1. **Motivational Dimensions**: These dimensions measure the degree of autonomy, variety and meaningfulness of the inspectors' tasks, as well as the feedback they receive on their performance.

- **Autonomy**: The freedom of inspectors in Turkey and Spain to carry out their tasks, evaluate institutions and adapt recommendations according to the needs of each institution is examined. In Spain, decentralisation allows for greater flexibility compared to Turkey, where instructions are more centralised.
- **Variety of tasks**: The variety of activities carried out by inspectors in both countries is analysed. In Spain, inspectors tend to combine advisory and evaluation functions in cooperation with schools, while in Turkey the emphasis is on regulatory control in supervision.
- **Performance feedback**: In both countries, inspectors receive feedback on their work, however, in Turkey, this feedback tends to be

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oriented towards meeting centralised standards, while in Spain there is a greater focus on pedagogical improvement.

2. **Social Dimensions**: This dimension focuses on inspectors' interactions with members of the educational community and the social support they receive in their working environment.

- **Interdependence**: Collaboration with principals, teachers and other members of the education community is essential in both countries, although the approach varies. In Spain, inspectors tend to work more collaboratively and are more open to receiving feedback from schools. In Turkey, due to centralisation, inspection is more independent and less interdependent with the community.
- **Social support**: This measures the support received by inspectors from other professionals and their interaction with the education administration. In Turkey, less interaction has been identified due to the centralised hierarchical structure, while in Spain collaboration between inspectors and teachers is more common.

3. Contextual Dimensions: These dimensions address the physical and organisational context in which inspectors work, including ergonomics and working conditions.

- **Physical and environmental demands**: In Spain, the frequency of visits and the geographical scope may vary according to the Autonomous Community, allowing for adjustments according to the workload. In Turkey, inspections follow a standardised nationwide schedule, increasing the workload for inspectors due to less room for adaptation.
- **Ergonomic conditions**: The working conditions and tools available to inspectors affect their efficiency and well-being. The

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administrative burden and the handling of bureaucratic tasks are mentioned as challenges in both countries, although in Turkey this burden is especially high due to the rigidity of the centralised system.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

After a series of preliminary contacts, a conference was held with the Turkish inspectors – Havva Yigit Óztekin and Yasemin Altepe – in which the main lines of action and the difficulties in the exercise of supervision in their country were highlighted. Among the main barriers were the following:

- The desire for the Turkish Ministry of National Education to provide frequent face-to-face training for the professional upgrading of inspectors.
- Need for improvements in remuneration.
- The workload should be reduced by increasing the number of inspectors.

Throughout the interview it also became clear that career advancement, as in Spain, is limited and dependent on political decisions.

We were also informed of the organisation of work in teams on a regular basis and of a programme of visits to the centres which involves the obligation to carry out a supervision which formally resembles an audit at least every three years for each centre. Although there is no classification of schools based on these supervisions, the inspection reports that are produced are used to draw up improvement plans.

During the interview, particular emphasis was placed on the increasing workload, the repetition of administrative or purely bureaucratic tasks and

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the small number of staff to deal with the number and diversity of centres under their responsibility.

We were particularly interested in the perception of the importance that schools and teachers attach to the inspectorate visit. It seems that during these visits, teachers strive to show an image of competence and professionalism above and beyond their usual performance, even though the Inspectorate does not have a punitive purpose per se in the Turkish system, as advice is given priority over supervision in the classical sense.

METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPING A COMPARATIVE INSPECTION ANALYSIS

Based on the perceptions of the members of the Inspectorate in each country and on the analysis of the scientific literature, we can summarise the most relevant aspects of the exercise of the inspection function around several aspects:

- Spatial development of the work.
- Interaction with members of the educational community.
- Work organisation focused on own initiative, instructions or plans.
- Main functions or areas of work.

The methodology based on the WDQ introduces additional categories to enrich and better structure the analysis of educational inspection work in terms of three main dimensions: motivational, social and contextual.

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The proposed questionnaire develops these aspects and takes the form of the following items:

Section 1: Workplaces (Contextual Dimension of the WDQ)

- My work is mainly in schools [1-5].
- I work in the office [1-5].
- I do part of my work at home [1-5].
- Commuting conditions affect my performance and well-being (adapted WDQ) [1-5].
- The environment in which I work is suitable for the performance of my duties [1-5].

Section 2: Importance of Stakeholders (Social Dimension of the WDQ)

- School principals: The relationship with principals is fundamental to my work [1-5].
- Educational administration: The support of the administration is essential to fulfil my duties [1-5].
- Teachers: I work with teachers to improve the qualit of education [1-5].
- Students: Students benefit from my inspection work [1-5].
- Families: Transparency in my work allows families to be informed [1-5].
- I receive the necessary social support from my superiors and colleagues (adapted WDQ) [1-5].
- Collaboration with other inspectors facilitates the performance of my duties (adapted WDQ) [1-5].

Section 3: Independence at Work (Motivational Dimension of the WDQ)

- I act on my own initiative in most of my tasks [1-5].
- I follow my superior's instructions to the letter [1-5].

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- There is a detailed work plan that guides my tasks [1-5].
- I have autonomy in deciding the focus of my inspections (adapted WDQ) [1-5].
- I have the flexibility to adjust my work plan according to the needs of each centre (adapted WDQ) [1-5].
- I can make independent decisions regarding the recommendations I make [1-5].

Section 4: Priority Areas of Work (Motivational and Contextual Dimensions of the WDQ)

- **Problem Identification and Resolution**
  - Identifying problems in schools is one of my main functions [1-5].
  - I collaborate with management teams to solve identified problems [1-5].
  - I feel prepared to face complex challenges in inspections (adapted WDQ) [1-5].

- **Educational Quality Improvement**
  - Improving the quality of education is a priority in my work [1-5].
  - I provide practical recommendations for continuous improvement in the centres [1-5].
  - My work contributes to improving teacher and student satisfaction (adapted WDQ) [1-5].
- **Resource Efficiency and Financing**
  - I promote the efficient use of resources and funding in schools [1-5].

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- Budgetary constraints limit the effectiveness of my recommendations [1-5].
- I believe that funding directly influences the quality of education [1-5].

- **Facilities Maintenance**
  - I monitor the state of the facilities to ensure adequate conditions [1-5].
  - The physical conditions of the centres affect their performance and my assessment [1-5].
  - Working conditions in the centres meet the necessary ergonomic standards (adapted WDQ) [1-5].

- **Health and Safety**
  - Identifying health and safety issues is part of my responsibilities [1-5].
  - My inspections ensure that the centres comply with safety standards [1-5].
  - Safety conditions of educational establishments meet minimum requirements (adapted WDQ) [1-5].

- **Creation and Maintenance of Education Policies**
  - I help to implement effective education policies in schools [1-5].
  - Current education policies facilitate my inspection work [1-5].
  - I have the opportunity to propose changes in education policy based on my observations [1-5].

- **Equality and Diversity**
  - I promote equality and diversity in schools [1-5].

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- Inclusive practices are part of my inspection work [1-5].
- Ensuring diversity is fundamental to the success of my work (WDQ adapted) [1-5].

- **Protection of Students**
- Student protection is a priority in my inspections [1-5].
- I ensure that schools have adequate measures in place to protect students [1-5].
- My recommendations help improve student protection policies [1-5].

This leads to a broad and detailed proposed conclusion, indicating how the analysis of the inspection in Turkey allows for the development of this questionnaire, which is also applicable to other educational inspection contexts in different countries. It is also specified which parts of the questionnaire are deduced from the interviews and documentation on Turkey.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of educational inspection in Turkey, supported by a comprehensive review of documentation, interviews and relevant literature, has led to the development of a structured and multifaceted questionnaire that addresses key aspects of the inspection function. This questionnaire integrates both elements specific to the Turkish context and universal methodological dimensions, adapted from the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ) by Morgeson and Humphrey (2006), which gives it a detailed and applicable approach beyond the particular case of Turkey. Its versatility makes it a valuable tool for application in other educational inspection systems in different countries, adjusting to the characteristics and needs of each context.

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The resulting questionnaire is articulated around four main sections that explore workplaces, the importance of different educational actors, the independence of inspectors' work and priority areas of work. These sections are complemented by motivational, social and contextual dimensions, which enriches its ability to assess both the inspectors' working conditions and their interaction with the educational community and their influence on school performance.

In the following, it is specified how each section and some of the specific items of the questionnaire are deduced from the interviews and documentation on educational inspection in Turkey:

1. **Workplaces**: This section is developed on the basis of the geographical and travel organisation of inspectors in Turkey, where school visits usually follow a nationwide schedule. In this context, inspectors face challenges related to travel conditions and the infrastructure available in schools. These factors have been mentioned both in interviews with Turkish inspectors and in documentation describing logistical constraints and the frequency of inspections at individual schools. In other countries, these questions will allow an assessment of whether the environment and travel affect inspectors' performance in a similar way.
2. **Importance of Stakeholders**: The relationship of inspectors with actors in the education community, such as school principals, teachers and the administration, is drawn from the documentary analysis which underlines the centralisation in Turkey and the normative approach to inspection. Interviews with Turkish inspectors highlight that, although support from the education administration is essential, collaboration with teachers and principals is limited due to

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the hierarchical and rule-based structure. This questionnaire allows us to explore inspectors' perceptions of the support they receive from colleagues and other stakeholders, an aspect that may be relevant in any educational context.

3. **Independence at Work**: Interviews and analysis of the Turkish system reveal strong regulatory control, which limits the autonomy of inspectors and forces them to follow centralised guidelines. However, in the Turkish context, there is a growing interest in promoting more balanced approaches, combining regulatory control with advice. This section of the questionnaire provides an assessment of the capacity of inspectors to act independently, which is particularly relevant in systems where a balance between compliance and pedagogical advice is sought. In other educational contexts, measuring autonomy and flexibility in inspection work may be equally significant in understanding the relationship between monitoring and counselling.
4. **Priority Areas of Work**: This section is one of the richest and draws on various documented aspects of the inspection system in Turkey. The functions of the inspector in Turkey, detailed in the literature and interviews, are mainly oriented towards regulatory control, documentation review and improvement of the quality of education. The questionnaire addresses issues such as problem identification, continuous improvement, efficient use of resources, safety and maintenance of facilities, and student protection, all of which are considered essential areas in the Turkish inspection function. In other inspection systems, these areas may be relevant for assessing the impact of inspectors' work on the improvement of schools and the protection of students' rights.

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The questionnaire designed from these four items and adapted using the WDQ offers a comprehensive tool that can be applied in different educational contexts to study and optimise the inspection function. By integrating motivational (such as autonomy and task variety), social (such as stakeholder support) and contextual dimensions (such as physical demands and working conditions), the questionnaire provides a comprehensive view of the conditions affecting inspectors' performance and the key areas where they can make a positive impact on the education system.

In conclusion, this questionnaire based on the analysis of educational inspection in Turkey provides a model applicable to other countries, offering a flexible structure that allows education officials to adapt the inspection function to local needs. By collecting both specific performance data and perceptions of the working environment and interaction with different educational stakeholders, this questionnaire facilitates an in-depth and practical understanding of the role of inspectors, highlighting their contribution to the continuous improvement of the education system in any national context.

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