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# The Views of Provincial School Inspectors on the Obstacles to Communication with Teachers in the Counseling and Inspection Process

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## Abstract

This study aims to identify the “views of provincial school inspectors on the obstacles to communication with teachers during the counseling and inspection process”. The study uses the survey model, and its population comprises a total of 340 provincial school inspectors. Of these, 151 were based in 6 of the 12 Eastern Anatolian provinces selected by taking into account the number of school inspectors in these provinces (Ağrı, Bingöl, Elazığ, Erzurum, Malatya and Van). The remaining 189 were based in 4 of the 8 Southeastern Anatolian provinces selected once again by considering the number of school inspectors in these provinces (Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Siirt and Şanlıurfa). A total of 279 data collection instruments were returned and evaluated.

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*Keywords:* primary school, secondary school, communication, counseling, inspection, provincial school inspector

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## 1. Introduction

Communication is the key that helps people maintain their relationships, enables them to express their emotions and thoughts, and allows them to exist within social life. It is also due to communication that people can affect those around them, express their views, bring about changes, and meet their needs. It is possible for an inspector to establish an effective communication with those he inspects. An inspector with effective communication skills can also have more influence on the inspected (Baskan, 2012).

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Inspection has a functional importance in identifying the level at which organizational targets are being achieved. For proper and healthy inspection, a healthy communication is needed between the teachers who are inspected and the inspectors. It is therefore important for both parties to leave their prejudices aside; be open, involved, and cooperative; display a facilitative attitude and duty orientation with no or limited resistance; and keep a certain social distance so that the organizational climate can be protected and inspection leads to improvement.

The effectiveness of the inspection process requires provincial school inspectors to have certain technical competencies. Knowing what one is expected to do and self-criticism, basin communication on the characteristics of people and the situation, managing complaints, seeing the situation from multiple perspectives, and handling problems immediately (Van Dersal, 1974; Başar, 1993) are all closely related to technical competencies of communication. Communication depends on language, listening, comprehension and writing competencies (Başar, 1993). Particularly for an inspector, nonverbal elements of communication such as body language, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice are paramount. For quality inspection, inspectors need to be facilitative, interested and challenging, as well as role models in effective instruction. Good communication skills while doing all of these will surely increase the effectiveness of inspection (Reinman & Lois Thies-Sprinthall, 1998). Bennett (2006) states that a close relationship based inevitably on trust, respect, cooperation and understanding exists between teachers and inspectors, and that these are critical values for both parties. For effective inspection, the tolerance and cooperation of inspectors and teachers is needed. Obstacles in communication make the sending and receiving of messages more difficult (Ergin & Birol, 2000). The more obstacles in communicative processes, the less effective communication (Şimşek, 2003). These obstacles are created by personal qualities such as emotions or value judgments, as well as organizational structure and technical insufficiencies (Gürgen, 1997). However, communication obstacles generally stem from personal qualities rather than technological ones. As Burton (1980) also states, on average 20% of communicative processes are technological and 80% psychological (Şimşek and Altinkurt, 2009). In the communication between inspectors and teachers, the party that talks most the time is the inspector. In this process, the inspector needs to understand the teacher without unnecessary blames or need for self-defense (Sullivan and Glanz, 2000). In order to do this, it is crucial for the inspector to listen to the teacher. The ideal relationship type needed for such healthy communication is effectiveness on both the source's and receiver's part (Erdoğan, 2000; Yazıcı & Gündüz, 2010).

The aim of this study was to identify the views of provincial school inspectors on the obstacles to communication stemming from teachers in the counseling and inspection process and to make recommendations regarding what can be done to overcome these obstacles. The following sub problems were stated in order to seek an answer to the research problem:

1. What are the dimensions of the views of provincial school inspectors?
2. Do their views vary with respect to gender, subject area, work experience, and the province and region where they are based?

### *1.1 Method*

Aiming to identify the views of provincial school inspectors about communication obstacles with teachers in the counseling and inspection process, this study follows the survey model. The intention of surveys is to define a past or present situation in the way as it is (Karasar, 2009). The study population comprised 340 provincial school inspectors. The entire population was targeted; however, a total of 279 instruments were eventually evaluated as some inspectors did not volunteer to participate in the study, some were on leave, and some were not available.

### *1.2 Data Collection Instrument*

Data were collected by an instrument entitled "Obstacles to Communication Stemming from Inspectors" (OCSI) designed and revised by the researchers after a literature survey and the views of 5 field experts. The original instrument comprised 41 items and was used to identify "the views of teachers on communication obstacles stemming from provincial school inspectors in the counseling and inspection process". In the present study, the statements were changed to refer to inspectors. Reliability and validity studies of the instrument were conducted by

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