

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

OCDE/GD(92)106

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOLING AND OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MONOGRAPH N 2

THE ROLE OF THE INSPECTORATE AND INSPECTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND
MONITORING OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Paris 1992

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(Note by the Secretariat)

In the context of the activity on the Effectiveness of Schooling and of Educational Resource Management, the Secretariat has invited a number of experts to prepare reports on the areas of interest highlighted in the Framework for the preparation of country reports.

This report discusses the role of the inspectorate and inspectors in the development and monitoring of school management and effectiveness. It has been prepared by Mr. Clive Hopes, German Institute of International Educational Research, Germany, in his capacity as consultant to the Secretariat. The views expressed in it are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Organisation or of the national authorities concerned.

The Secretary-General of the OECD has agreed to make the report available to the public on his responsibility.

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The role of the inspectorate and inspectors in the development and monitoring of school management and effectiveness

PART I: INTRODUCTION

In June 1990, a project to review the work of inspectors in school systems in the European Community was completed at the Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung in Frankfurt-am-Main after two years' work with practicing inspectors in all twelve countries (1). The project was partially financed by the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education (Task Force Human Resources) (2). In addition to a report, country analyses, each approximately 60 pages in length, were developed. These overviews give insights into the work of inspectors and many other aspects of administration, such as structures and processes in several school systems (3). The following analysis is partly based on the materials gathered during this project and also draws from experience gained in reviewing the role and functions of the Irish schools inspectorate in a commissioned investigative follow-up to the OECD report on Ireland (4).

The focus of attention was on the work of inspectors with regard to the inspection of schools. This refinement was necessary because, in many countries, inspectors carry out other tasks which are not directly related to the inspection function.

PART II: DEFINITIONS AND BASIC CONCEPT

Although in most European School Systems the position of "Inspector" exists, its meaning varies. It does not always imply that the person with this title is only concerned with the inspection of schools and teachers. At times he or she is occupied with many other ancillary activities, which are either a traditional part of the work of an inspector or are developed as a consequence of the inspection task. Sometimes the word "adviser" is used, although this may be a synonym for inspector.

The word "inspection" has two main implications as it applies to schools. On the one hand it can mean that teachers and schools are inspected with the purpose of grading them according to some hypothetical, optimum scale of functioning. An evaluative grading is given to the person or institution with the intention of making them responsible for improving their performance in areas indicated to them by the inspector. The reporting is therefore person-oriented or institution-oriented. They are sometimes sent to the person evaluated or to the authority responsible for schools.

Another purpose of inspection is to monitor the system and to examine how well teaching and the management of schools is being performed and to note the difficulties that teachers and principals are experiencing in trying to implement new syllabi or to set up new school organisational structures. Reports are sent to superiors to help them define policies which will lead to system-wide improvement. The system is, theoretically at least, a reciprocal centre-periphery/periphery-centre interaction.

Both approaches lead to similar behaviours by inspectors in trying to make improvements. But there are differences in underlying principles. In the first case, the inspectors may be of the opinion that the teaching force is considerably inferior to the standards which they think are satisfactory. Individual teachers and their superiors receive reports pointing out shortcomings. In the second case -- monitoring the system -- inspectors recognize that teachers are working well, but, perhaps due to lack of resources and knowledge of other teaching methods, they are unable to carry out their tasks to the best of their ability. The inspectors then work with the teachers to provide in-service experiences for them which will help them to improve their performance.

The same differences in principle apply to institutional inspection. Reports may be sent to school boards or to the responsible authorities leaving other persons or bodies to take necessary measures or, after an assessment of the situation, inspectors may become the initiators of organisational development schemes.

The two approaches towards teachers and institutions are prevalent in many member states of the European Community.

PART III: FINDINGS

A. Structures

The structures of inspection systems are extremely different in the member states of the European Community. In general, primary and secondary inspectorates operate separately. Primary inspectors are usually generalists, whereas secondary inspectors are subject-area specialists. In large countries which are divided administratively into regions and districts, secondary inspectors are organised regionally, whereas primary inspectors are organised within districts. The amount of articulation between these levels is often negligible or non-existent. At the secondary level, inspectorates may be divided into academic, technical and vocational sections, operating independently of each other.

This section gives a brief overview of the diversity of structures in several countries.

{Ireland}

There are inspectorates for the "Primary" and "Post Primary" levels. At the Post-Primary level the inspectorates for the "Academic" and 'Vocational and Technical' Schools are nominally integrated but in practice work separately.

{England and Wales}

There are inspectors (sometimes known as advisers) at the Local Educational Authority (regional) level and a separate, autonomous national inspectorate, which also has regionally based inspectors.

{Netherlands}

Inspectors cover the whole country from regional offices, supervised from a headquarters unit and operating in the several different school systems. There are separate groups of inspectors for primary and secondary schools. The system is set up as a kind of independent enterprise supervised from a headquarters unit, which has a large degree of self-management, direction and internal accountability.

{Belgium}

The Flemish and French speaking sectors have their own education system and operate separate inspectorates. At the primary level there are two types of inspector -- one type for the community schools and the other for the subsidised schools. At the secondary level inspectors are divided generally according to main courses, special courses and vocational training.

{Luxembourg}

There is no inspectorate at the secondary level. At the primary level a small staff of fourteen inspectors work in their own sectors. They are supervised by an: Inspector-general.

{France}

School supervision in France is hierarchical and organised on a national basis. There are three levels of administration and two types of hierarchy. The levels are national, regional and district; the hierarchies are pedagogical and administrative. The inspectors who work in the pedagogical domain relate directly to the administration at the several levels. National "{inspecteurs généraux}" report to the Minister through several "{directions}" in Paris and have responsibility for all the other inspectors at the regional and district levels to whom they are superiors. They work throughout the country, ensuring that national guidelines are being adhered to and, more recently, they have had co-ordinating responsibilities at regional levels. Secondary inspectors are subject-area specialists and work at the regional level. Primary: inspectors work at the district level and are co-ordinated by an Inspecteur d'Academie.

{Germany}

Each State may be regarded as having its own separate school system arising from the status of the States enjoying cultural sovereignty. The study was carried out in the Federal Republic before unification of the two parts, when there were eight States and two City States. (Berlin-West had a special status). A national council of education ministers meets regularly to minimise divergence, to coordinate planned changes and to attempt to agree on comparable practice. Although the status and tasking of the differentiated types of inspectors for the different levels of schooling at the primary level and the several types of classified secondary schools are similar for each classification throughout the country, their organisation varies considerably. For example, the Academic School inspectors operate directly from the ministry level in one State, from State Regional offices in another, and in one State at the district level alongside their counterparts from the other school types. Similarly, the organization of the other secondary level inspectors has different loci of administrative operation. Primary school inspectors are organized at district level.

{Denmark}

There are no inspectors for the Common School serving the primary and first-stage secondary level of schooling. The schools are operated at District level. Inspectors are nominated to the Ministry at the secondary level, but they are few in number and often have half-load additional responsibilities as regular teachers.

{Spain}

There are primary and secondary inspectorates with similar organisation in both the non-autonomous regions, reporting to the national ministry in Madrid and the autonomous regions, each with an inspectorate reporting to its own regional ministry. There is also a "High Inspectorate", which has the function of overseeing conformity to national regulations established to prevent divergence between the autonomous regions and the other regions from nationally agreed standards and regulations.

{Portugal}

Since the survey was made there have been considerable changes in the school system. At the time of the survey, the typical structure of primary and secondary level inspectors was to be found at the district and regional levels.

{Italy}

Peripheral inspectors for secondary and primary schools are organized at the Regional and District levels respectively. Secondary inspectors report to the regional administrator and primary inspectors to the provincial administrator. There are central directorates which also communicate instructions to the inspectors. Until the end of 1989, there had been a Central Inspectorate operating as a National Inspectorate, but based in regions. After considerable dissention from the Peripheral Inspectors, who claimed that the Central Inspectors were nominally carrying out the same tasks they performed at a considerably higher salary and apparently without the same accountability to the Regional and District administrators, the term Central Inspector was dropped. (Eventually, the two groups will be merged on the same salary scale).

{Greece}

After a break of about 15 years, the reintroduction of inspection in Greece in both primary and secondary schools has been mooted. Until the end of 1990 advisers without inspection functions had been working in schools. Although they did not have policing inspection functions, a form of monitoring existed whereby the advisers liaised with a national curriculum institute, providing feed-back to the institute about practice in the schools and informing the schools about planned change from the centre. The familiar pattern of regional organisation for the secondary advisers and district organization for the primary advisers prevailed.

B. Duties and Tasks

It would be impossible in this paper to cover all the tasks which inspectors carry out in the several member states of the European Community.

The list on the following page is compiled from the typical responsibilities defined in formal regulations. As has been indicated already, inspectors are involved in many activities which are not directly related to the inspecting and monitoring role. The emphasis on supportive activities is dependent on how well the infrastructure of a school system has been developed with other supportive agencies, e.g. in-service training institutes, curriculum development councils, examination boards, etc. Where these institutions do not exist, it invariably falls to the lot of the inspectorate to provide services in these areas. At the system, middle management level, they are the only pedagogical specialists who can provide the expertise needed.

Table of general duties summarized from formal regulations relating to inspectors' responsibilities

- Checking educational standards and contributing to its improvement
- Monitoring the implementation of new policies
- Evaluating teachers -- evaluating teaching
- Providing pedagogical and methodological advice to teachers
- Providing teachers with information about methods and resources
- Improving teachers' performance
- Contributing to curriculum development

- Producing syllabi
- Monitoring the school system and reporting on its performance
- Facilitating pedagogical innovation
- Organising teachers' in-service education
- Teaching in-service education courses
- Correcting irregularities
- Initiating disciplinary action related to service matters
- In the primary sector, in some countries, organising and administering the school's management and curriculum
- Inspecting private schools
- Checking proper allocation of financial expenditures (in some countries a special corps of Administration Inspectors have this duty)
- Evaluating examination results
- Identifying and making known good teaching and school management practice

PART IV: GENERAL COMMENTARY ON PRACTICES

Inspection as the control of personnel and the monitoring of teaching

Historically, the inspection of personnel as a control function over teachers has been strong in many European countries. It follows a particular philosophy of management which advocates that the control factor motivates people to work better, because teachers know that they are subject to inspection and reports. Its legitimacy in the past seems to have been that, as teachers were regarded as inexperienced persons with insufficient training, it was essential to control them. If some of them were really ineffective, they could be removed from the teaching profession. More recently rediscovered as "accountability", the need to have a system of monitoring school systems and teaching has caused many inspectorates to re-examine the effectiveness of their role.

Inspection has continued in many forms, although the visiting style and form of behaviour of the inspectors have been modified. Exercised in the traditional way, the classroom visit by inspectors is sometimes seen as an affront to present-day teachers who, in some countries, might have had more teacher training than older inspectors would have had, especially in methodology. Although inspectors would argue that their experience outweighs such factors, the question of the legitimacy of traditional attitudes towards the practice of inspection must be addressed.

The characteristics of the operations of an inspectorate also seem to be linked to the prevailing political philosophy in any one country.

The reason for the dissolution of the inspectorate in Greece, until its planned reintroduction in 1991, was due to several factors during reforms made two decades ago, which also had some political overtones. The control system exercised by inspectors had been resented by the teachers and during democratic reforms in Greece the teachers were able to influence the government to abolish the inspectorate and replace it with educational advisers. Recently, however, due to a swing in the political pendulum in Greek government, it is planned to terminate the adviser role and replace it by inspection.

Similarly, more control over teachers is also being implemented in current British government policy. More inspection of teachers is promised and personnel appraisal is being introduced. More inspection of schools is being advocated. Again, it is linked to notions of accountability and more efficient management which are thought to be achievable through a concise control ideology.

Spain, having changed from a dictatorship to a democracy 15 years ago, has moved away from its previously controlling mode and shifted towards a more developmental and supportive role for inspectors.

In the States (Länder) in Germany, different styles of inspection can be directly related to the political philosophy which has prevailed consistently in particular States over a long period. The emphasis and need for controlling and reporting on teachers varies from State to State.

In Denmark, there is local district supervision of the (Folkeskole) (or pupils from 6 to 16). Local councils, consisting of parents, teachers, and parents and teachers together with the school principal and administrator representatives, exercise direct local control and overview of the schools. The structure in Denmark is typical of many Scandinavian countries, which use democratic, participatory approaches in a way not found in other countries with other forms of democratic representation. Depending on the size of a district and the funds which can be made available, subject area advisers are appointed who can operate in the schools to cater for teachers' needs, but they do not evaluate or inspect teachers or schools. Their function, like their Greek counterparts until 1990, is to support and develop activities for improving teaching and learning.

In France, (Inspecteurs généraux) inspect teachers in superior secondary level schools which prepare pupils for special examinations entitling them to enter elite, tertiary-level learning institutions. Secondary inspectors visit schools at the secondary I level (colleges) and at the secondary II level (lycées), and have to write regular reports on teachers. Primary Inspectors are generalists and have considerable responsibility in the organisation and running of primary schools. These inspectors also have to write reports on teachers.

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In France, the strong tradition of reporting on teachers has been passive and routine, the reports being necessary for the advancement of teachers in the salary scales.

The traditional concept of French schooling has been that of a highly centralized system. During the past five years, however, considerable changes have been taking place with a shift in organisational and administrative responsibilities to the regions. Such changes have implications for the inspectorate which will have to be concerned with monitoring differences of emphasis between regions.

It can be seen that decisions about how an inspectorate should interact with teaching personnel seem to depend on a particular philosophy of management, on democratic structures or even political conviction. Some concepts of leadership hold that employees need to be controlled and reported on. This approach is assumed to maintain quality and some might suggest that this style can even improve the quality of work and the motivation of employees, if it can be linked to proper mechanisms and followed through. Some systems have structures which permit checks and balances without controlling personnel, while yet others depend on a philosophy which includes the belief that only a directive style can be effective.

A. Inspection of adherence to regulations

Rather than inspecting the school as an institution, continental mainland inspectorates have traditionally inspected schools to ensure that they are adhering to regulations. This monitoring function is to ensure that minimum standards are being maintained.

The function can be helpful if reporting on general standards is included and if the administrators can take notice of the reports. An effective inspectorate can provide a vital service to the Ministry to give its policy-makers advice through which it is able to plan more effectively and to make decisions on the basis of sound information.

B. Control of institutions

Schools as institutions are subject to supervision for a number of reasons.

In many countries, schools are private, but receive funding from the State. In return, the private schools must forego some of their independence, while retaining autonomy, by allowing the State's inspectors to certify whether minimum standards in buildings, equipment, curriculum and qualifications of teaching personnel are achieved.

Secondly, in many countries, such as Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, and Belgium, a separate administrative inspectorate has been created to watch over the management, administration, maintenance and finance of all schools. In England and Ireland this has not been a tradition and inspectors have assumed this function as an additional inspection responsibility.

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Thirdly, there may be a system of inspection to evaluate schools as institutions as an objective in itself, i.e. not for certifying schools for recognition by the State, but rather for assessing the quality of the school system by comparing as many institutions as possible. Inspection of institutions focuses on the whole operation of a school, including general standards of teaching. This part of the school inspection means observing teachers, but it does not have as its purpose the evaluation of individual teachers.

This tradition was only to be found operating in the United Kingdom through Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Its objective is to report to the minister on the state of the schools. Local Education Authority inspectors have not usually been engaged in this activity but, as a consequence of the Education Reform Act (1988), this may change. H.M.I. is the only inspectorate in Europe with considerable autonomy, although some reports suggest that the Netherlands is moving in this direction. This autonomy enables an inspectorate to be open and, at times, strongly critical of the state of the schools, which might reflect unfavourably on the Government of the day.

In Ireland, in the primary sector school reporting is carried out and in the post-primary sector, according to general regulations, a form of organisation inspection is provided for. The special situation with the various school forms needs separate consideration, together with other factors which will be examined more closely in another part of this review.

C. Reporting

Most systems of inspection have to be confidential or even secret. Internal criticism is minimised and negative findings are generally not disclosed.

The amount to which reports evaluating systems are published varies enormously. Reports are published by a minister sometimes fully, sometimes partially, and sometimes not at all. The practice of allowing teachers to see what has been written about them is also very varied. The degree of confidentiality of administration has an effect on the process of making improvements, and lack of openness in defining and accepting shortcomings can be a considerable hinderance to solving problems.

D. Responsibilities other than inspection

Inspectors are often involved in many activities other than inspection. A few examples will illustrate the point.

{Administration}

In some systems, inspectors are basically regarded as administrators who are given inspection tasks as an additional responsibility. In most German States, for example, inspectors work from administrative offices, where administration of the school system is a heavy burden. They have become more and more involved in administration and the duty of inspection has become more superficial.

{Committee work}

Inspectors are useful "technical" experts in the system for assignments in a wide range of committee work (syllabus development, special reports, school management, education councils, international committees, etc.). But in these committees, they really have a different responsibility in the school system. In no way should it be confused with inspection and evaluation.

{Staff work}

Inspectors are considered to be all-rounders, who are expected to write speeches about many aspects of the school system and, on occasion, represent the Ministry in public meetings, other professional engagements and in events abroad.

{Examination supervision and operation of the entire examination process}

As technical experts they can be used reliably to monitor and administer examinations. In Italy, they are assigned a number of schools to visit to ensure that examinations are being carried out according to regulations, but they are not involved in the examining process. In Germany, inspectors are appointed as chairmen of oral examining committees. For the Matriculation Examination (the "Abitur" they monitor the quality of examination papers submitted by teachers before permitting the teachers to present them to the candidates. The overview they gain of the quality of examination style serves as quality control on a local basis. In Ireland, where there have been no alternative structures and no resources to set up a separately-staffed Examinations Board, inspectors are expected to develop, write, check, proof-read, supervise, mark, and adjudicate examinations, and, finally, to take charge of the appeals process.

{Curriculum Development}

With the experience they have as former teachers, inspectors become involved in writing syllabi and books for use in schools. In addition, they orientate teachers to the new syllabi and make suggestions about methodology.

{In-service education of teachers}

Where no highly developed separate system for the further in-service education of teachers exists, inspectors either attempt to provide this service themselves at some time during the school year or at least engage in the planning and coordination of events.

{Advising}

In advising a principal, an inspector has to be in close contact with other institutions and often particularly with the Ministry to be able to inform a principal about the best course of action. An inspector has to be adept in finding his or her way about the system. In the case of advising teachers, differentiation has to be made between the professional advice of a senior colleague indicating to another professional the source of further information, and that of advising a new teacher about the practice and methodology of teaching. In most cases, the amount of time an inspector can really give to new teachers is limited and the effectiveness of these sessions depends much on the degree to which an inspector can spend time with a teacher to ensure transfer of learning.

{Encouraging experimentation and innovation}

If inspectors work close enough with in-service training and research institutions, they should be able to bring new ideas, practice, and information into the schools. In Italy it is the special responsibility of post-primary inspectors to be in touch with research institutions to encourage innovation. Other inspectorates, particularly Her Majesty's Inspectors in the United Kingdom, stress the importance of the principle of "spreading good practice".

{Linking role}

Inspectors have a linking role between the Ministry, schools and other institutions. They can be essential in facilitating bilateral communication between the centre and the periphery of the system. In many European systems, however, it was apparent that the return feed-back is often underdeveloped or ignored.

E. Change and innovation in inspectorates

In more than half the member states changes are taking place in the inspectorates as a consequence of reviewing their own effectiveness and revising their objectives and methods. Most of the change is in the direction of more system evaluation but except in England and Wales, where -- traditionally overviewed by Her Majesty's Inspectors -- where more emphasis is to be put on teacher and institution evaluation.

In France, there has been planned change involving devolution of administration and decentralization of decision-making.

The consequences for inspection have led to changes:

- observing and evaluating schools and the school system instead of mainly inspecting and advising individuals;
- evaluating collective subject areas instead of single subjects;
- a more collective, objective-oriented planning instead of the relatively extensive autonomy of individual inspectors.

Changes in the Netherlands will ensure more self-accountability and tighter management over its inspectorate's objectives.

These reforms in France and the Netherlands are particularly noteworthy with regard to inspectorates attempting to come to terms with modern demands.

PART V: COMMENTARY ON PRACTICES AND CRITIQUE

A. The effectiveness of teachers

A distinction is made here between the effectiveness of teachers and the effectiveness of teaching. In this section, the effectiveness of teachers will be related purely to personnel management. In another section, the relationship between the evaluation of teachers and the assessment of teaching is discussed.

{Probationary Teachers}

During the probationary period of a teacher's career, an inspector is required in some countries to visit the novice and to make an estimation of the probationer's suitability and competence. At the end of this period the inspector will be present at an examination to decide on a recommendation for the candidate's permanent status.

{Qualified, Permanently Appointed Teachers}

The inspection of teachers is laid down in regulations in many countries as the duty of inspectors. The purpose is to monitor teaching personnel and to make reports on them. These reports are then held in personnel files, which may or may not be accessible to teachers, depending on the openness of administration in the respective countries. In pure inspection, the objective in inspecting teachers is system accountability in reporting on satisfactory compliance with regulations and conforming to duties.

The practice of inspecting teachers varies considerably in several European countries. In one State (Land) in the Federal Republic of Germany all teachers in a particular type of school must be visited by inspectors every four years until their 50th birthday; in another state such inspections are only carried out for special reasons -- on promotion in teacher rank, in selection procedures for senior posts and in cases of complaints against a teacher. In one Land, the practice has been delegated away from inspectors and is now the responsibility of school principals. In France, the regional secondary-level were originally created to help the {Inspecteurs Généraux} to evaluate teachers; they still visit teachers in higher secondary schools exclusively. In the Irish secondary-level schools, the situation is ambiguous, although regulations do provide for inspecting teachers. In primary/level schools, teachers are not inspected on the basis of regular, personnel control.

Although formally required by regulations, in many countries teacher evaluation is a task which is becoming less systematically carried out by inspectors due to their many other duties. Consequently, in many cases, it has become a sporadic ritual. It serves little purpose other than causing considerable administrative work and the mere filing of reports. Such practices seem rarely seem to contribute permanently to the improvement of a teacher's performance. On the contrary, inspectors in several countries reported that subsequent visits to a teacher who had received a negative report merely confirmed the previous assessment.

Some inspectors claimed that the procedure contributed to improving the teacher's morale, but acknowledged that one visit every five or more is a rather paltry form of recognition.

Most countries have regulations stating that inspectors' duties primarily include inspecting and reporting on teachers. In some countries, the practice seems to have broken down due to the problem of not being able to keep up the visits within prescribed periods. The immensity of the task is becoming critical and the intervals are becoming more and more extended.

In a few countries inspectors visit teachers purely to gain information about standards of teaching and for reporting purposes. In the primary sector in Ireland, and in Italy, Portugal, Greece, and Denmark, teacher personnel evaluation by inspectors is only carried out in exceptional cases. In England and Wales, central inspectors (Her Majesty's Inspectors) and Local Authority Inspectors do not evaluate teachers. This is a task usually assigned to school principals.

B. The effectiveness of teaching

The practice of evaluating teachers can give inspectors an impression of the general standards of teaching, but, in general, the focus on the teacher in teacher assessment results in the importance of the need to assess the quality of teaching being overlooked. The assessment of the quality of teaching is highly dependent on what the inspectors' philosophy of what good teaching. That which is criticised in one country as poor practice is not criticised in another because, in that country, it is the form rather than the style of what the teacher is doing which is paramount in the inspection, e.g. compliance with rules and regulations, teaching the prescribed curriculum, etc.

It is a complex problem, because although good teaching must imply learning by the pupils, difficulties arise in determining whether the degree of learning is satisfactory. Inspectors peruse pupils' work books, review regular class test results and, in some systems, they question a class as a means of checking whether the pupils have learned what is in the syllabus. In view of the small amount of time they actually spend with any one class, the reliability of this latter method is problematic. In the survey, only one group of inspectors, Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in England and Wales, a national inspectorate, gave the inspection of teaching as an objective disassociated from the personnel management activity of inspecting teachers.

C. Adherence to and development of the syllabus

Terminology about the plan of contents in a course of study in one subject over the period of one year or more, the syllabus, varies from country to country. In one country, for example, it is called curriculum, whereas in another this term would refer to the whole matrix of programmes and courses offered in a type of school. This section refers to that part of inspectors' work relating to syllabus formulation, implementation, monitoring and modification.

A frequently-cited, important criterion in the selection of inspectors is their recognized excellence as teachers. Their knowledge of their subject area, as former secondary level teachers, or their generalist expertise, as former primary level teachers, is a basis for their participation in syllabus committees. Sometimes this is through the formal function of representing the Ministry or Department of Education, but in other cases it is through a personal interest in the activity. In the former, their presence can still be regarded as a mode of inspection, for their observations and style of participation are forms of overseeing and reporting on developments. Moreover, their input can enrich such deliberations because of their knowledge of direct needs in the system, which are broader than the individual teachers's viewpoint.

During their visits to schools, their main interest in the quality of the syllabus is to see its application. It is here that they are able to monitor the way in which it is being delivered and to identify needs for modification. Particularly in the early stages of the implementation of a new syllabus, the role of an inspector can be essential for feedback within the system. Although this developmental role was cited by most of the consultants in the survey, the relatively limited time some inspectorates are able to spend observing practice in schools and monitoring the practical problems of implementation can become neglected.

In a number of countries, it is the formal duty of inspectors to check that the syllabus is being followed as laid down in syllabus regulations. This maintenance role is performed during routine visits to schools by checking the work of teachers against the schedules.

D. Educational administration, management, and organisation of schools

As the survey was aimed mainly at those inspectors who are more concerned with the pedagogical domain and not with bureaucratic administration and budgetary discipline, the latter were not investigated in any depth. Those forms of inspection were reported, additionally, from Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

With the exception of four countries (Ireland, England, Wales, and France), concern with the implications of the educational administration, management and organisation of state schools seemed to be only marginal. In France, the primary level inspectors are responsible for the quality of planning, organisation and management as it relates to pedagogical concerns and in secondary schools, the "{inspecteur de la vie scolaire}" has responsibility for the quality of the whole academic life of the school. In Ireland, at the secondary level, it has remained relatively underdeveloped as an approach because little time is available for it, due to the inspectors' preoccupation with examinations.

One of the reasons for the lack of assessment in this domain in some school systems is the domination of the legalistic-administrative form of control which appears to leave little incentive or demand for individual leadership and initiative and accounts for the relatively weak position of the school principal in those countries. Where few or no competencies are allocated at the internal school management level and where positions carry little organisational autonomy or managerial responsibility, the need for assessment of this aspect of quality has less significance.

In England and Wales, where considerable power resides at the school level in decision-making about the allocation of financial and human resources and, until recently, the determination of the curriculum, it has always been the duty of inspectors to monitor the effectiveness of the use of those powers.

In a few countries, the administrative task of allocating appropriately qualified staff to the schools is assigned to inspectors, because of their supposed knowledge of the character and needs of particular schools and the appropriateness of the selection of specific teachers.

E. Evaluating the school as an institution

The evaluation of the whole institution (philosophy, management, staff, curriculum, teaching, etc.) was reported only in three countries (Ireland, England and Wales) for state schools. The purpose is primarily to establish a basis for reporting on system quality.

In Ireland, information is gathered about primary schools through a

School Report prepared by the inspector in collaboration with the school. At the secondary level "organisation inspection" is included in the inspectors' responsibilities. In England and Wales, general inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectors' visits to state schools result in publicly published reports, which cover all aspects of a schools's activities. Although these methods of whole school inspection are static and oriented towards the past, this kind of reporting establishes a bench-mark for a school at a particular point in time. They provide a basis for making future improvements and an example for other schools in assessing and improving their own performance. It is too early to assess whether a shift might be occurring in France, where a reorganization of the inspectorate with new objectives on a cross-level, cross-school, team system is being implemented experimentally in several regions.

In the other continental mainland countries, only private schools are inspected as institutions. The reason is that these schools must be shown to be attaining standards set by the State in the quality of courses offered and in teaching. One reason for not inspecting state schools as institutions is that it could be regarded as superfluous, due to the already vigorous continental tradition of administering schools by regulation. Schools can be assumed to be operating optimally and satisfactorily through compliance with predetermined standards.

F. Overseeing processes in a system

Inspectors are in the position to act as intermediaries between the centre and the periphery of education systems. They are a vital link between the schools, central administrators and policy makers and can keep them all informed about the progress of changes and problems in the field. In bureaucratic-legalistic systems they can also advise teachers and principals about the admissability of decisions made within the limited scope of their decision-making powers.

In the function of monitoring, the internal processes of the school, such as, for example, the degree of individualised attention teachers give to pupils' learning needs or finding out about teachers' own concerns in checking the reliability and validity of their testing procedures, seem to be neglected. Most inspectorates were more concerned with checking conformity with the regulations than with the consequences which their formulation were intended to achieve. Frequently, due to lack of sufficient time or even inadequate staffing of an inspectorate, such investigations seemed to be rather superficial in not getting to the core of quality control.

A role of the inspector can be to discover snags and difficulties, to suggest improvements and to find solutions to problems. Although this monitoring function is important for a dynamic system, inspectors consistently reported that they do not have to make decisions on the problems they address and they can only make suggestions or recommendations. Most consultants during the working sessions referred to a sense of powerlessness and claimed that their success depended only on how well they could exert influence.

G. Assessing the quality of the system

Policy-makers need information in order to know how well a system is working, especially in systems with long administrative structures from the centre to the periphery. This is particularly necessary in countries with centralised organisation, such as Italy, the States in the Federal Republic of Germany and, in spite of -- or because of -- some aspects of recent reform, in France.

Reporting by inspectors becomes a necessarily important function. In some countries this is carried out by centrally-based inspectors, such as in France and Italy using information gathered by regional inspectors. In the United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Inspectors work separately, autonomously and independently of the other regional authorities' inspectors.

For the inspectors, this approach is summative and conclusive. It tends to be static, oriented towards the past and does not necessarily guarantee the improvement of quality. The information, having been collected and dispensed to the administrators and policy-makers, can be used or ignored, but it is usually not for the inspectorate to undertake any measures to ameliorate deficits. In many systems, as they have no powers, they cannot undertake to see that some person or some group takes on the responsibility of remedying situations they have observed. One of the frequent complaints from inspectors in many countries was their feeling that their observations are ignored by administrators and policy-makers. It seems that the latter groups are more interested in the inspectors being a tool for ensuring that policy is being implemented and monitored, than in being informed by the inspectors of the problems, deficits and need for solutions.

H. Support and development

Inspectors can become involved in caring for the school by offering support for the means of improvement and in becoming part of the improvement process. The prerequisites are a real interest in schools, being able to assist in problem-solving, and being able to mediate in conflict.

These activities are less likely in countries where the policing role is prominent. When their infrequent presence in schools is then mainly for a controlling function, it is less likely that there will be acceptance by the teaching staff of the supportive and developmental role of inspectors. The separate nature of supervision, as a compartmentalised special part of the system, can alienate it from the schools. The degree of support and development which can be offered by inspectorates seems to be very limited in many European systems, because of their predominant role in controlling and policing. Evaluating schools for improvement, as a joint responsibility of inspectors and teachers, is only rarely found as a principle.

I. Constraints on effective inspection

This leads us to the need to discuss whether "Support and Development" is reconcilable with conventional inspection practice. The title of this paper implies the supporting role of the inspectorate to the system, to schools, and to teachers.

Although many inspectors claim that they can carry out both "policing and controlling" and "monitoring and advising" approaches simultaneously (in the same institution or with the same person), the activity can cause problems instead of solving them. At best, the inspector often identifies problems and initiates remedial action which he or she cannot follow through, because of other pressing responsibilities. At worst, the double approach can be dysfunctional, leaving little room for joint evaluative efforts.

In practice, the mode of working by inspectors was often found to be loaded in the direction of "controlling" and "policing". Consequently, the expectations of administrators, inspectors, principals and teachers are similar. Even if, in a few systems, the priority is in other domains, practical exigencies seem to keep the inspectors heavily occupied with controlling duties, either because of inadequate staffing and/or because the amount of time which that activity requires is disproportionate in comparison with that devoted to other more important system needs.

During the survey, a number of other features became noticeable which seemed to be a constraint on inspectors' effectiveness.

In some countries there was a lack of a clear philosophy about the objectives of inspection. In addition, the absence of good management in some inspectorates had led to poor organisation, lack of co-ordination, and subsequent loss of a sense of direction. A number of inspectors expressed feelings of uncertainty of purpose due to changes occurring in the education systems. In the past few years, however, a number of inspectorates have been reviewing their objectives and organization. Changes were reported from the majority of European Community countries.

A related problem in many inspectorates is their lack of autonomy. They are the servants of the administration and are unable to define their own tasks. They are often assigned too many indirectly-related or unrelated tasks. Consequently, there is a tendency to have to pursue short-term objectives instead of having long-term plans. Other consultants mentioned the tendency of being assigned to other tasks before being able to complete an improvement process and bring it to a successful conclusion.

On the other hand, inspectors also seem to choose to work on tasks which should be delegated to other persons or groups and which should only be coordinated or overseen by inspectors. There was frequent evidence during the survey that inspectors are reluctant to give up particular duties when professional institutes or bodies are set up within a school system, for example for curriculum development, in-service education for teachers and examinations. They somehow feel that their true responsibilities have been removed from them and still want to go on working in this field instead of developing the evaluative role. This is partly due to the lack of professional development provided in many school systems beyond the teacher qualification. The inspectors then cling to the "master teacher" role, from which, because of their many other responsibilities, they become more and more estranged.

Their involvement in so many tasks and activities results in inspectors being seen too infrequently in schools in some countries. The frequency of visits then depends on how much time remains for inspection after other tasks with a higher priority set by the administration have been completed. This creates an image of a distant, inaccessible, administrator type and leads to a loss of credibility with teachers. The potential for a cooperative, evaluative approach is lost.

The pattern of information dissemination seemed to be more centre periphery rather than an interaction in both directions. In this situation, reporting tends to become an activity in itself at the local level instead of providing a source of information to policy-makers and a means for system evaluation.

Inspectors as individuals appear to enjoy considerable autonomy, which reflects on their ability to work independently. However, this autonomy leads to a certain degree of isolation. From the system point of view this autonomy has the disadvantage of eroding the basis of working in a general, coherent direction. Inadequate communication between inspectors at different levels of schooling leads to a lack of articulation between schools, creating serious problems in dovetailing syllabi and identifying discrepancies in standards at pupil transfer stages.

In addition to and apart from a short age of staffing in some inspectorates, inspectors expressed the problem of not being able to keep up-to-date and of no longer feeling experts in their own subject-areas. It was noticeable in most countries that there is inadequate preparation for the

office of inspector and little or no provision for in-service education. Such measures would enable them to review and refine their own performance.

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J. Factors contributing towards improvements in inspection practice

In this paper, a distinction has been made between inspectors' primary tasks and their ancillary tasks. The ancillary tasks are usually only indirectly related to the objectives of inspection, monitoring and evaluating.

There is a pressing need for a reduction of the dominance of ancillary activities and for the incorporation of the role of inspectors more effectively into the system evaluation process.

In fact, the time inspectors invest in the nominally ancillary areas (administration, discipline, staff work, etc.) is the dominant proportion and those activities which should be the primary activity receive attention only when routine matters or crisis management measures have been completed. The emphasis is more on the control of the status quo (e.g. checking school statistical reports on staffing and pupil numbers, ensuring that the correct number of teachers are supervising an examination as entered on an administration sheet, processing applications for confirmed status, etc.) than in dynamic, developmental, improving measures.

Monitoring the effectiveness or quality of the processes is rarely undertaken. Communication tends to be one way, from the centre to the periphery, and the opposite direction is neglected. One of the most consistent remarks of the inspectors at the periphery was that they had the feeling that their superiors seemed to have little interest in what was being reported. It is as if the inspectors on the periphery are operating in a detached sub-system.

In most administrations where there are technical and administrative sections there is tension between the two. The administrators need to gather the information from the experts in the field but, by virtue of the decision-making structures, do not involve the inspectors in the decision-making process. Instead of developing a balanced mechanism -- on the one hand, administrators helping the inspectorate define problems for inspection and, on the other hand, inspectors helping the administrators solve problems with information collected -- the inspectors are kept out and used as errand boys, jacks of all trades, or as one international observer has termed them, the "handmaidens of the administrators". The mechanisms for permitting communication between the inspectorate and the administration are either absent or established on a temporary, "{ad hoc}" basis.

These attitudes gravely undermine the potential of an inspectorate. It is true that in crisis situations, the inspectorate will be brought in rapidly to help solve a particular problem, but in general there is rarely a management strategy to use the human resources of the inspectorate as a long-term means of system evaluation.

The processes of monitoring and Reporting should lead to the channelling of information about the needs of the system towards the providers of solutions. In some European countries inspectors are hardly inspecting at all. Inspection in the form of monitoring and reporting, it would seem, has less attraction than being involved in curriculum committees, in-service training and setting examinations.

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These other activities are "more important" for the inspectors and carry more status than the task of evaluating the system for quality control. As they are not properly trained for the new responsibility, inspectors, as former teachers, are left rudderless in a new sea of action. They drift back towards areas where they feel more comfortable.

Identification with an overseeing function is difficult if the inspectors have not been given a broader view through systematic professional development and clear direction about the purposes of inspection. Where other support institutions exist, the inspectors should be more concerned with overseeing and managing the proper use of the resources rather than being directly involved in the provision process.

Some guidelines would be as follows:

The monitoring and evaluation process should be clearly understood by all parties.

Discipline should be seen as a totally different function from monitoring and the action taken should be determined by a clearly separate procedure instead of integrated with general inspection.

All parties in the school system -- teachers, principals, teachers' unions, subject-area associations, etc. -- should be well-versed in the concept of and need for system evaluation.

The parties directly involved should have the opportunity of employing methods for monitoring mutually.

All parties should understand that no one party has the total "ownership" of knowledge and wisdom in the matter. This particularly applies to the special interest groups mentioned above.

System supervisors responsible for evaluating the end product must have a degree of autonomy to be able to evaluate the final product for the system.

Good monitoring and developmental action assumes thorough training in evaluation and good management practices in overseeing implementation. The quality of evaluation and management of change processes can be of a high standard only when the qualifications of inspectors are wider than simply that of "experienced teacher".

Both the policy-makers and the implementers in the system are equal partners to the information generated in the evaluation, monitoring and improvement process. Excellent communication needs to be nurtured and maintained between the parties involved.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Not all regions within a State were covered. For example, the autonomous regions in Spain, some of the States in Germany, Northern Ireland, and Scotland were not included. Although Denmark was included in the preparatory phase, no documentary materials related directly to the project were developed in that country.
2. Approximately 17 per cent of the budget.
3. These country analyses are scheduled for publication at the Institute.
4. {Reviews of National Policies for Education -- Ireland}, OECD, Paris, 1991.

ANNEX

The following questions are submitted for consideration, critique and development. They could be applied in a practical situation to test the degree of effectiveness of a system of monitoring and evaluating by inspectors.

Control of Personnel (Control of Teachers and School Principals)

In what way are personnel controlled by inspectors?

What is the frequency of visits and/or personnel reports on teachers, principals, etc.?

What is the purpose of the visits and reports?

How are the visits carried out?

What methods are used to collect information for making judgements?

How do teachers feel about these visits, reports?

What happens as a consequence of these controls?

What happens to the reports?

How accessible are they to the objects of the visits or reports?

How do these visits and reports contribute to the effectiveness of teachers and principals?

How great is the discrepancy between inspectors' perceptions of the usefulness of these procedures and the perceptions of teachers and principals?

Monitoring of Teaching

In countries where only the monitoring of "teaching" is made without evaluating "teachers" and in countries where, as a consequence of evaluating personnel, inspectors extrapolate an evaluation of the general quality of "teaching", what is the purpose and what is the consequence of this process?

How is the monitoring process practised?

How are the results of the process communicated to those directly and indirectly affected?

How are the results of this monitoring communicated to teachers, principals, administrators and policy-makers?

What use is made of the information?

What is the effect of this monitoring on the effectiveness of teaching?

What do teachers think about the effectiveness of this monitoring and evaluative process?

What do inspectors feel about the effectiveness of this process?

Control of Institutions

Are schools controlled for effectiveness?

Which persons or bodies are brought under scrutiny?

What happens to the reports?

Does the inspectorate follow up the inspections to see whether action has been taken as a consequence of their observations and reports?

Monitoring of the System

What elements of a school system are monitored? For what purposes? e.g. the whole curriculum, syllabi, the quality of institutions, the management of the schools (both internal and external management), etc.

What is the effectiveness of this monitoring process? How are the observations communicated to the system administrators? ... to the public?

Management of Human Resources

Do inspectors have a role in the management of human resources, e.g. appointment and transfer of teachers, principals, etc.?

What contact do inspectors have with pupils?

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How much are pupils involved in the inspection and evaluation processes? (For example, are their views and feeling ever taken into account?)

Management of Financial and Physical Resources

Do inspectors have to monitor expenditures and school budgets?

Is a separate inspectorate established for these tasks, leaving the other inspectorate to the pedagogical tasks?

Do inspectors themselves have budgets to manage? If so, for what areas of operation are the budgets intended?

Do inspectors have any responsibility for physical resources?

To what extent do they have any say in the planning and location of new schools, and the integration or closing of schools?

Do they have any management functions over several groups of schools?

END-OF-TEXT