

Inspectors under Focus: Education Inspectors' Image and Communication Styles in Turkish Cinema

Ahmet BOZAK¹ & İrfan ARIK²

Abstract

Education inspectors play a crucial role in improving educational quality, yet their representation in Turkish cinema has not been previously examined academically. This study addresses this gap by analysing 16 films (1953–2015) through document analysis to identify inspectors' professional images and communication styles, ultimately proposing image management strategies. Using custom observation forms, the research evaluates professional traits and interactions with school stakeholders, including students, teachers, and managers. Findings indicate that inspectors are predominantly portrayed negatively, as authoritarian, rigid, and incompetent, exaggerations that misrepresent professional reality. These portrayals vary by genre: comedies often caricature inspectors, while dramas depict them as bureaucratic defenders of the status quo. While inspectors typically maintain assertive communication with school managers and teachers, their interactions with students are frequently characterized by aggressive styles. These cinematic depictions reflect a critique of the era's essentialist educational philosophy and serve as instruments for broader political criticism. By demonstrating how cinema significantly shapes societal perception, this research emphasizes the critical need for strategic professional image management. The findings offer valuable insights for educational policymakers and cultural content producers regarding the construction of professional identity.

Keywords: Education Inspectors, Image, Communication Styles, Supervision, Turkish Cinema

Eğitim Müfettişleri Mercek Altında: Türk Sinemasında Eğitim Müfettişlerinin İmajı ve İletişim Tarzları

Öz

Eğitim müfettişleri eğitim kalitesinin iyileştirilmesinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır, ancak Türk sinemasında müfettişlerin temsil edilmesi daha önce akademik olarak incelenmemiştir. Bu çalışma, 16 filmi (1953-2015) doküman analizi yoluyla inceleyerek müfettişlerin mesleki imajlarını ve iletişim tarzlarını belirlemeyi ve nihayetinde imaj yönetimi stratejileri önermek suretiyle bu boşluğun doldurulmasına katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Gözlem formları kullanılarak yapılan araştırma, mesleki özellikleri ve öğrenciler, öğretmenler ve idareciler dahil olmak üzere okul paydaşlarıyla olan etkileşimleri değerlendirmektedir. Bulgular, müfettişlerin çoğunlukla otoriter, katı ve yetersiz olarak olumsuz bir şekilde tasvir edildiğini ve bu abartıların mesleki gerçekliği yanlış yansıttığını göstermektedir. Bu tasvirler türe göre değişiklik göstermektedir: komediler genellikle müfettişleri karikatürize ederken, dramalar onları statükonun bürokratik savunucuları olarak tasvir etmektedir. Müfettişler genellikle idareciler ve öğretmenlerle iletişimlerinde iddialı bir iletişim tarzı sergilerken, öğrencilerle etkileşimleri genellikle agresif tarzlarla karakterize edilmektedir. Bu sinematik tasvirler, dönemin esaslı eğitim felsefesine yönelik bir eleştiriyi yansıtmakta ve daha geniş kapsamlı siyasi eleştirinin bir aracı olarak hizmet etmektedir. Sinemanın toplumsal algıyı nasıl önemli ölçüde şekillendirdiğini gösteren bu araştırma, stratejik profesyonel imaj yönetiminin kritik önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bulgular, eğitim politika yapımcıları ve kültürel içerik üreticileri için profesyonel kimliğin inşası konusunda değerli veriler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eğitim Müfettişleri, İmaj, İletişim Tarzları, Denetim, Türk Sineması

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¹ Assoc. Prof. Dr. - Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Faculty of Education, abozok77@gmail.com,

 ORCID: 0000-0001-5275-0514

² Asst. Prof. Dr. - İzmir Katip Celebi University, Celebi Vocational School, irfan.arik@ikcu.edu.tr,

 ORCID: 0000-0001-5742-374X



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Introduction

The public image of a profession is shaped not only by direct encounters but increasingly by media and cultural representations. In contemporary visual culture, mass media play a decisive role in constructing these professional images. While these representations are likely to reflect reality, they are more often reconstructed through ideological, aesthetic, or other preferences and presented to the viewer in the intended way. Such a process, a form of mental representation, is shaped in diverse ways by the values, experiences, and prejudices of the individual exposed to it (Varol, 2019). Nevertheless, the public image of a profession directly influences its social value and the self-perception of its members. The image may be positive, negative, or neutral (Karaköse, 2012). Moreover, this created image is not always obliged to reflect reality either.

Image can be defined as the combination of associations, emotions, and cognitive representations that people form in their minds about a person, group, or institution (Demir, 2003; Şişman, 2002). Likewise, the gender, age, personal characteristics, desires, social structure, and other factors influence the formation of the image (Bulduklu, 2015). However, an image may be quite different from objective reality, and its influence on perception is strong enough to shape an individual's attitudes and behaviours. Indeed, in today's culture, where visibility is of great importance, and perceptions precede reality, it is impossible to ignore the concept of image (Engin, 2014). In addition, effective management of image also encompasses systematic strategies aimed at consciously directing and controlling public perception of a person, institution, or professional group (Uysal, 2019). These strategies fall within the sphere of influence and responsibility not only of public relations professionals, but also of other professionals such as cultural content producers, particularly filmmakers and screenwriters.

The role of cinema in the image production process is undeniable. The power of cinema lies in its multifaceted impact. Cinema combines visual and auditory elements to create emotional and cognitive effects. Through this process, it does not merely reflect reality but actively reconstructs it (Göker & Göker, 2014). The reconstruction process is completed with the internalisation of cultural representations as well. In other words, cinema not only reflects social life; it is also a tool that guides society, offers role models, and glorifies specific values (Ryan & Kellner, 1997). Therefore, cinema has become one of the most potent tools in image management.

When examined globally, Hollywood's productions that universalise the American lifestyle, Bollywood's films that incorporate Indian culture with religious and dramatic themes, Latin American series with narratives revealing social class structures, and Turkish series with their presentations focusing on family, social authority, and traditions, demonstrate how national image is constructed through media (Özeren, 2019). Such cultural products shape the perception of a country, society, and professions not only within national borders but also in global public opinion.

This representational power appears more visible in professions that have earned society's trust and respect, such as teachers and doctors. Numerous academic studies into the teacher figure in Turkish cinema have revealed that teachers are mainly presented as idealistic, self-sacrificing, and integrated characters (Efendioğlu, 2013; Akcan & Polat, 2016; Topakoğlu & Canlı, 2022). Similarly, in Indian cinema, teachers are associated with discipline, whereas in Brazilian productions, they are related to social justice. On the other hand, in American cinema, police characters are generally seen as heroic (Varol, 2019). In Western cinema, religious characters are usually portrayed in highly respected positions, helping the elderly, the sick, and the needy, and addressing societal problems. However, in Turkish cinema, religious characters are often depicted as sorcerers, jugglers, and faith healers, isolated from social life and presented in a highly destructive manner (Karahana, 2008; Menekşe, 2004).

However, despite being a crucial component of the education system, education inspectors have found remarkably little screen time in cinematic content and representations. Education inspectors play vital roles in ensuring that teachers and school managers fulfil their duties in accordance with regulations and in supporting the smooth functioning of the system through supervision, evaluation, and direction (Karagözoğlu, 2023). Nonetheless, the figure of the inspector has either been absent from Turkish cinema or presented superficially, clichédly, and mainly as a comedic element.

Despite a few studies on the image of education inspectors in relation to teachers, such as those by Yıldırım and Yürek (2025), no specific academic studies on the image of education inspectors in Turkish films have been published to date. Therefore, the current research is deemed to make a unique

contribution to the fields of educational supervision and communication. The portrayal of inspector characters in cinema—whether positive, negative, or neutral—may influence public perception in a specific direction. These perceptions can directly affect not only public opinion but also the development of inspectors' professional identity and their professional motivation in the future.

This study aims to analyse the image and communication styles of education inspectors, portrayed in 16 Turkish films made between 1953 and 2015. Within the scope of this study, answers are sought to the following fundamental research questions in order to conduct an in-depth examination of the images of education inspectors in Turkish cinema.

- What are the favourable and unfavourable professional and personal image characteristics of education inspectors as reflected in Turkish cinema between 1953 and 2015?
- What are the thematic and quantitative distributions of positive and negative image traits of education inspectors in the analysed films?
- What specific communication styles (passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, manipulative, or assertive) do education inspector characters exhibit in their interactions with school managers, teachers, and students?
- Based on the observed cinematic traits, what strategic recommendations can be made for the professional image management of education inspectors?

In this respect, the research builds an interdisciplinary bridge between educational sciences and media studies and makes visible an area that has not previously been studied systematically. Therefore, the findings are expected to contribute not only to the academic literature but also to education policymakers, public authorities, and other cultural content producers, such as television series and films.

Method

Adopting the qualitative research method of document analysis, the research outlined here examines the images and communication styles of education inspectors in Turkish cinema. Document analysis is a research approach that enables the systematic examination and interpretation of written and visual materials (Sak, Sahin Sak, Öneren Şendil, & Nas, 2021; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021) and allows for a detailed analysis of existing data sources in line with the research objective. Accordingly, the study descriptively examined the content of images and the communication styles of education inspectors through scenes from Turkish films featuring education inspector characters.

Research Sample

The research sample consists of 16 Turkish films produced between 1953 and 2015 that feature the character of an education inspector. The films were selected using a purposive sampling method, one in which samples are selected from information sources that serve the research purposes (Aziz, 2015; Patton, 2014). Films were chosen that take place in educational settings, meaningfully feature an education inspector, provide sufficient screen time for the character, and allow observation of their communication style and professional image.

Data Collection

Two observation forms, developed by the researchers through a literature review, were used to collect data.

a) The first form aimed to analyse the professional and personal image characteristics of inspectors (e.g., appearance, behaviour, discourse, and social relations).

b) The second form aimed to determine the communication styles of inspectors with school managers, teachers, and students. The form utilises communication styles grouped into five main headings, as suggested by Edmund J. Bourne (2020) in *The Anxiety and Phobia Workbook*. Accordingly, five communication styles—*passive*, *aggressive*, *passive-aggressive*, *manipulative*, and *assertive*—were used as criteria for observation.

The observation forms were evaluated for content validity through expert input, and necessary revisions were made.

Data Analysis

The data from the first observation form, which aimed to define how education inspectors' images were depicted in films, were evaluated through a deductive perspective based on the content analysis method, within the following steps (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2021):

- a) The relevant parts of the films were examined and transcribed into texts. The texts of 16 films were examined twice.
- b) The gathering, categorising, and interpreting of data around specific themes, sub-themes, and concepts were involved.
- c) The necessary coding, labelling, categorising, and theming procedures were completed, and the findings that reflect the professional images of inspectors were interpreted in light of the relevant literature.

Likewise, the data from the second form observing the education inspectors' communication styles in films were evaluated from both deductive and inductive perspectives based on the content analysis method, following these steps:

- a) The relevant parts of the films were examined and transcribed into texts.
- b) The data were coded and categorised into subcategories, considering the features of the five communication styles (Passive, Aggressive, Passive-aggressive, Manipulative, and Assertive) by Edmund J. Bourne (2020).
- c) Finally, the attitudes and behaviours of inspectors in those scenes were evaluated and interpreted through the features of these five communication styles in the context of inspector-teacher, inspector-student, and inspector-school manager relationships, as well as relevant literature.

Validity and Reliability

Trustworthiness, a widely accepted reliability-validity approach in qualitative research, was used in this study. Trustworthiness indicates the researcher's credibility and dependability through four key features: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Accordingly, in cases of misalignment between two coders, inter-rater agreement techniques were employed to clarify the current code assignment through third-party review, and each theme and subtheme were defined through consensus among those coders (Shenton, 2004; Uzuner, 2005; Yıldırım, 2010).

The trustworthiness assessment indicated that the study results are credible, transferable to other contexts in the fields of educational administration and communication, and confirmable with consistent data and findings. A detailed description and assessment of each trustworthiness criterion have been provided in Appendix A.

Findings

The following sections explain the relevant data on the professional image of education inspectors and their communication styles in the context of inspector-teacher, inspector-student, and inspector-school manager relationships.

Findings on Professional Images of Education Inspectors

In a significant number of the 16 films in the study ($f=12$), the unfavourable personal and professional image traits of inspectors were emphasised far more than their positive ones. Favourable features appeared in only two films, while in two other films, both positive and negative image features were presented together.

a) Findings on the favourable perceptions of the education inspectors' image

Among the positive image characteristics, inspectors are portrayed as well-dressed, smiling, polite, courteous, respectful, keen observers, and self-confident (Table 1 and 2; Figure 1). The most frequently observed positive image in the films is that of the education inspectors, who are generally depicted as well-dressed, wearing ties and acting in a formal style ($f=9$). These positive images, presented within a limited framework, are generally confined to the beginning of scenes, clothing, greetings, and etiquette. In contrast, negative images are brought to the forefront much more prominently later in the scenes, and in

some films, the image of the education inspector is entirely constructed from negative image characteristics and elements; this goes so far as to deviate from reality and contradict the normal course of life.

Table 1. Favourable Image Characteristics of Education Inspectors in Films

Film Title and Year	Image Characteristics	
1. Hababam Sınıfı, 1975.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Respectful	✓ Polite
2. Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı, 1976.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Suitable Oratory and Public Speaking ✓ Polite	✓ Affectionate ✓ Respectful ✓ Smiling
3. Hababam Sınıfı Uyanıyor, 1977.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Dutiful	✓ Respectful ✓ Smiling
4. Hababam Sınıfı Tatilde, 1977.	✓ Suitable Oratory and Public Speaking ✓ Well-dressed	✓ Respectful ✓ Smiling
5. Hababam Sınıfı Merhaba 2003.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Self-confident	✓ Determined ✓ Suitable Oratory and Public Speaking
6. Bir Dağ Masalı, 1967.	✓ Talkative ✓ Self-confident ✓ Kind-hearted ✓ Courageous ✓ Law-abiding ✓ Dutiful	✓ Compassionate ✓ Honest ✓ Fair ✓ Hardworking ✓ Frank ✓ Respectful
7. Öğretmen, 1988.	✓ Calm ✓ Keen observer	
8. Hakkari'de Bir Mevsim, 1982.	✓ Self-confident ✓ Realistic	✓ Cold-blooded
9. Paydos, 1968.	✓ Self-confident ✓ Talkative	
10. Okul, 2004.	✓ Interested in technology ✓ Keen observer	
11. Öğrenci İşleri, 2015.	✓ Faithful ✓ Appreciative	
12. Bitirimler Sınıfı, 1975.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Courteous	✓ Polite ✓ Respectful
13. Hıçkırık 1, 1953.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Calm ✓ Inquisitive	✓ Keen observer ✓ Compassionate ✓ Tender-hearted
14. Hıçkırık 2, 1965.	✓ Well-dressed ✓ Compassionate ✓ Tender-hearted ✓ Inquisitive ✓ Empathetic ✓ Affectionate ✓ Polite ✓ Smiling	✓ Kind-hearted ✓ Determined ✓ Consistent ✓ Sensitive ✓ Understanding ✓ Well-mannered ✓ Gentlemanly demeanour
15. Sınıfta Şenlik, 1975.	✓ Smiling ✓ Keen observer	
16. Şaşkın Damat, 1975.	✓ Courteous ✓ Polite	✓ Smiling ✓ Affectionate

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the favourable image characteristics attributed to education inspectors in each of the 16 analysed films examined between 1953 and 2015. The films in which the most positive character traits were observed regarding education inspectors were, in order, *Hıçkırık 2*, *Bir Dağ Masalı*, and *Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı*.

Table 2. *Favourable Characteristics of Education Inspectors by Themes, Sub-themes, and Codes*

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codings	Frequency
<i>Professional Skills and Manners</i>	Personal Appearance and Manners	Well-Dressed	9
		Smiling	6
		Courteous	2
		Well-Mannered	2
		Gentlemanly demeanour	1
	Job skills and manners	Keen observer	4
		Dutiful	2
		Calm	2
		Inquisitive	2
		Fair	1
		Hardworking	1
		Frank	1
		Interested in technology	1
		Law-abiding	1
		Realistic	1
		Faithful	1
		Appreciative	1
		Honest	1
<i>Interpersonal Relationships & Personal Attributes</i>	Respect and Kindness	Respectful	6
		Polite	5
		Affectionate	3
		Compassionate	3
		Kind-hearted	2
		Tender-hearted	2
		Empathetic	1
		Sensitive	1
		Understanding	1
	Personal Confidence and Other Attributes	Self-Confident	4
		Determined	2
		Consistent	1
		Cold-blooded	1
		Courageous	1
	Communication Skills and Manners	Suitable Oratory and Public Speaking	3
		Talkative	2

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the favourable characteristics of education inspectors across various themes and sub-themes identified in the analysed films. Within the theme of Professional Skills and Manners, the data highlights that inspectors are most frequently depicted as well-dressed (f=9) and smiling (f=6). Their job-specific skills include being keen observers (f=4), inquisitive, calm, and loyal to their duty. Under the theme of Interpersonal Relationships and Personal Attributes, the sub-theme of Respect and Kindness stands out, with being respectful (f=6) and polite (f=5) appearing as the most prominent traits. Additionally, the table identifies attributes like self-confidence (f=4) and suitable oratory or public speaking skills (f=3) as positive components of their professional persona.



Figure 1. *Favourable Characteristics through Word Cloud.*

Figure 1 provides a visual synthesis of the favourable professional and personal image characteristics of education inspectors. The visualization highlights that the most common positive attributes are being well-dressed, respectful, polite, and smiling. Other notable qualities included in the word cloud are being a keen observer, self-confident, affectionate, and compassionate.

b) Findings on the unfavourable perceptions of the education inspectors' image

In a significant number of films ($f=12$; $n=16$), negative characteristics of inspectors are predominantly reflected on screen. In these scenes, education inspectors are portrayed as characters exhibiting profiles and personality traits such as rigidity, authoritarianism, and rule-boundness, prejudice, suspicion, distrust, mental illness, low intelligence, and impoliteness (Table 3 and 4; Figure 2). Accordingly, in these films, the inspector is portrayed as a strict authority figure who enforces regulations without empathy, allows no emotional expression, exhibits prejudice, distrusts those communicating with him or her, and displays characteristics of abnormal mental health.

Table 3. Unfavourable Characteristics Observed Regarding Inspectors' Image in the Films.

Film Title and Year	Negative Characteristics
1. Hababam Sınıfı, 1975.	❖ Disrespectful and Rude Behaviour (Taking the teacher's desk during the inspection; Insulting the students; Teasing the students; Violence against the students)
2. Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı, 1976.	❖ Low intellectual capacity (Unintelligent questions and behaviours; An authority figure with weaknesses who can be easily overthrown) ❖ Monotonous personality structure (Repetitive behaviours) ❖ Mental and psychological health disorders (An educator with mental health issues; Irritable, reactive, unstable)
3. Hababam Sınıfı Uyanıyor, 1977.	❖ Monotonous personality structure (An educator who asks only the same type of questions, who expects to receive the same answers as she/he wanted) ❖ Mental and psychological health disorders (Irritable and reactive)
4. Hababam Sınıfı Tatilde, 1977.	❖ Low intellectual capacity (Unable to understand events and the answers given to questions in their true context; Intellectually deficient) ❖ Mental and psychological health disorders
5. Hababam Sınıfı Merhaba 2003.	❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound
6. Bir Dağ Masalı, 1967.	❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ Those who prioritise and enforce laws and regulations above everything else.
7. Öğretmen, 1988.	❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ A person, prioritising and enforcing laws and regulations above everything else.
8. Hakkari'de Bir Mevsim, 1982.	❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ Lacking sentimentality and overly realistic ❖ Cold, distant, and overly formal behaviours
9. Paydos, 1968.	❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Accusatory and judgmental ❖ Cunning and insidious ❖ A monotonous, one-sided personality structure that thinks and evaluates in a single-minded way.
10. Okul, 2004.	❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ Unforgiving and harsh-mannered ❖ Accusatory and judgmental
11. Öğrenci İşleri, 2015.	❖ Hasty and task-oriented ❖ Cold, distant, and overly formal behaviours ❖ Rude and Impolite ❖ Arrogant ❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Accusatory and judgmental
12. Bitirimler Sınıfı, 1975.	❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ Accusatory and judgmental ❖ A personality structure that is prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others. ❖ Unable to analyse events, having difficulty establishing cause-and-effect relationships ❖ A traditional essentialist approach to education

.... Table 3.

Film Title and Year	Negative Characteristics
13. Hıçkırık 1, 1953.	❖ Negative imagery has not been used in the film.
14. Hıçkırık 2, 1965.	❖ Negative imagery has not been used in the film.
15. Sınıfta Şenlik, 1975.	❖ Rude and impolite behaviours ❖ Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound ❖ Accusatory and judgmental ❖ A traditional essentialist approach to education ❖ Violence against the students ❖ Behaviours that signal mental health and psychological disorders
16. Şaşkın Damat, 1975.	❖ Low intellectual capacity ❖ Unable to understand events and answers to questions in their true context ❖ Intellectually deficient ❖ Naive and foolish appearance

Table 3 details the negative characteristics of education inspectors in the analysed films, revealing negative representation in a total of 14 films among those examined. However, two of these 14 films feature both positive and negative character traits. Negative character traits were not present in only two films. The films with the most negative character traits are, in order, *Öğrenci İşleri*, *Sınıfta Şenlik*, and *Bitirimler Sınıfı*.

Table 4. Distribution of Unfavourable Image Features by Themes and Sub-themes

Theme	Sub-themes	Coding	Frequency
Unfavourable Characteristics of Inspectors' Image	Rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound	Strict; authoritarian; rule-bound; overly formal, unforgiving of mistakes; harsh attitude; strictly enforces laws and regulations; essentialist and duty-oriented; accusatory; judgmental and punishing.	10
	Prejudiced, suspicious, and distrustful of others.	Prejudiced; suspicious; lacking trust in others.	5
	Mental and psychological health disorder	Over-reacting, unstable, and irritable	4
	Impolite Behaviours	Rude, disrespectful, and arrogant.	3
	Low intellectual capacity	Intellectually weak and inadequate; easily manipulated; naive; difficulty understanding; asking monotonous and strange questions; and misperceiving.	3

Table 4 categorizes the unfavourable image features of education inspectors into specific themes and sub-themes, providing a quantitative look at how these negative portrayals are distributed across the analysed films. The data reveals that the most dominant negative trait is being rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound, which appeared with a frequency of 10. Other significant negative categories include being prejudiced and suspicious ($f=5$), as well as exhibiting signs of mental and psychological health disorders ($f=4$).

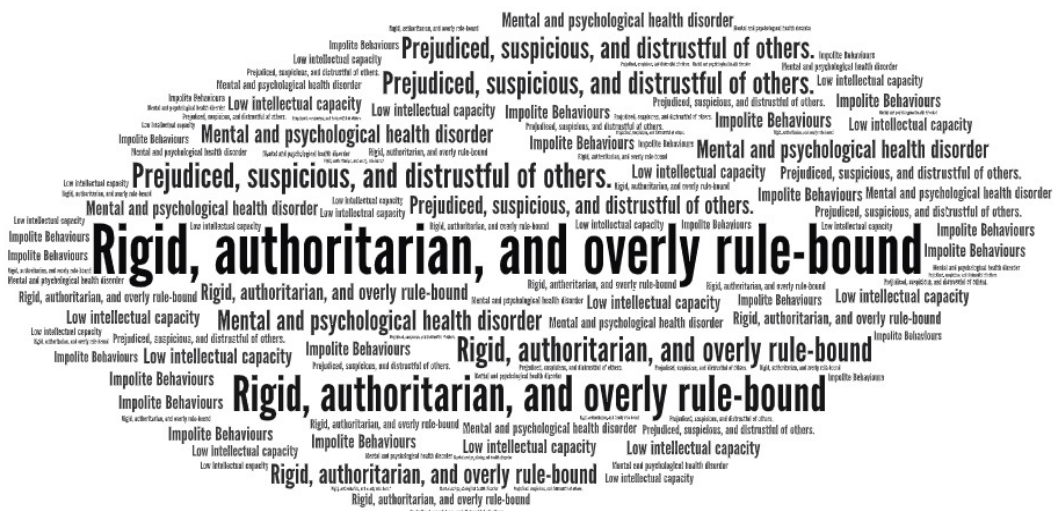


Figure 2. Unfavourable Characteristics through Word Cloud.

Figure 2 shows the unfavourable image characteristics of education inspectors. According to Figure 2, the most dominant terms are being rigid, authoritarian, and overly rule-bound, which reflect the most common negative stereotypes identified in the research. Other significant attributes prominently displayed include being prejudiced, suspicious, judgmental, and irritable.

Findings on Communication Styles of Education Inspectors with School Stakeholders

The following sections explain the communication styles adopted by education inspectors towards school managers, teachers, and students, based on observations from 16 films. Accordingly, our study found that education inspectors adopt a situational communication style when engaging with school managers, teachers, and other information sources. While inspectors mainly prefer an *assertive* style in their conversations with school managers and teachers, they tend to use a more *aggressive* style when communicating with students. The observation data on the communication styles of inspectors with school managers, teachers, and students, as depicted in the films, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Observation data in the films regarding inspectors' communication styles with school managers, teachers, and students.

Film Title and Year	Communication Styles with;		
	School Managers	Teachers	Students
1. Hababam Sınıfı, 1975.	Assertive	Assertive	Aggressive
2. Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı, 1976.	Assertive	Passive-aggressive	Aggressive
3. Hababam Sınıfı Uyanıyor, 1977.	Assertive	Assertive	Aggressive
4. Hababam Sınıfı Tatilde, 1977.	Assertive	-	Aggressive
5. Hababam Sınıfı Merhaba, 2003.	Assertive	Passive-aggressive	Aggressive
6. Bir Dağ Masalı, 1967.	-	Assertive	Assertive
7. Öğretmen, 1988.	Assertive	Manipulative	Assertive
8. Hakkari'de Bir Mevsim, 1982.	-	Assertive	-
9. Paydos, 1968.	-	Aggressive	-
10. Okul, 2004.	Aggressive	Aggressive	-
11. Öğrenci İşleri, 2015.	Assertive	-	Aggressive
12. Bitirimler Sınıfı, 1975.	-	Assertive	Assertive
13. Hıçkırık 1, 1953.	-	Assertive	Assertive
14. Hıçkırık 2, 1965.	-	Assertive	Assertive
15. Şaşkın Damat, 1975.	-	Assertive	Assertive
16. Sınıfta Şenlik, 1975.	Assertive	Assertive	Aggressive

Table 5 reveals that inspectors predominantly prefer an *assertive* communication style in their interactions with school managers. Accordingly, in eight of the films, inspectors adopt an *assertive* communication style towards school managers, while in only one film, an *aggressive* communication style. However, inspectors' communications are deemed to be more diverse towards teachers. In nine films, the inspectors adopt an *assertive* communication style towards teachers; in two films, they use an *aggressive* style; in two others, a *passive-aggressive* style; and in one film, a *manipulative* style. On the other hand, inspectors' communications seem to be more aggressive towards students. In seven films, inspectors adopt an *aggressive* communication style towards students, whereas in six they adopt an *assertive* style.

a) The Communications Styles between School Managers and Education Inspectors

Nine out of the 16 films included in the study feature a scene involving education inspectors and school managers. In their communication with school managers, education inspectors mainly adopt an *assertive* communication style, which involves a more equal and balanced approach. The assertive style is characterised by confidence, initiative, and self-assurance, resulting in a more balanced, goal-oriented, and effective means of communicating (Pipaş & Jaradat, 2010). In many of the films examined (*Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı*; *Hababam Sınıfı Uyanıyor*; *Öğretmen*; *Sınıfta Şenlik*), inspectors engage with school managers in a more respectful, understanding, and polite manner.

b) The Communications Styles between Teachers and Education Inspectors

Of the 16 films included in the study, 14 feature communication between education inspectors and teachers. The findings indicate that inspectors' communication styles are mostly assertive towards teachers. However, in some cases, this communication style is replaced by *aggressive*, *passive-aggressive*, and *manipulative* communication styles characterised by behaviours such as insensitivity, judgment, prejudice, and planned manipulation.

Therefore, the communication style of the inspectors towards the teachers shifts from politeness to a more sensitive, *passive-aggressive* style in some films (*Hababam Sınıfı Sınıfta Kaldı*; *Hababam Sınıfı Merhaba*); while in *Paydos* and *Okul*, it reaches more extreme levels with an *aggressive* communication style that includes judgmental and prejudiced behaviours. In the film *Öğretmen*, the inspector adopts a *manipulative* communication style to mislead the teacher, validating his preconceived notions and ultimately achieving his desired outcome.

An assertive communication style emphasises a balance and equality between both parties. On the other hand, an aggressive communication style represents a self-centred or more selfish approach. In this style, individuals tend to exhibit judgmental and confrontational behaviours without considering others' thoughts or feelings (Yapıcı, 2021). As seen in inspectors' communication with school managers, they also tend to prefer a more equal and balanced approach with teachers, using an *assertive* style.

c) The Communications Styles between Students and Education Inspectors

In their interactions with students, inspectors tend to adopt not only an *assertive* but also an *aggressive* style that is more condescending, commanding, angry, and more confrontational, imposing their own opinions.

Of the 13 films featuring dialogues between inspectors and students, seven displayed an *aggressive* communication style, while six exhibited an *assertive* approach. In films like *Hababam Sınıfı Uyanyor* and *Öğrenci İşleri*, the inspectors adopted an aggressive style characterised by a condescending, commanding, and angry demeanour, the imposition of their own opinions, and a more confrontational attitude. Conversely, in films such as *Öğretmen* and *Hıçkırık 2*, they demonstrated a condescending, assertive communication style emphasising respect, love, compassion, understanding, and politeness.

Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The current research reveals that in Turkish cinema, education inspectors are mostly depicted with negative image characteristics such as being authoritarian, lacking empathy, incompetent, rule-bound, and ununderstanding. These vocational representations in the films differ by genre: in comedies, inspectors are mostly caricatured, while in dramas, they are depicted as rule-bound, defenders of the system, and bureaucratic.

Additionally, it should be mentioned that the prevalence of the *Hababam Sınıfı* series within the sixteen-film sample may have introduced a genre-specific bias, potentially skewing the findings in favour of comedy's stylistic traditions. Because the comedy genre often uses caricature and exaggeration for humorous effect, the dominance of these specific instalments probably increased the results regarding inspectors' perceived incompetence, low intellectual capacity, or psychological instability. Consequently, while these portrayals provide important insights into how authority is portrayed in films, the general negative image found in this study may be partially rooted in the narrative tropes of comedy rather than representing a uniform trend throughout all Turkish film genres.

Various academic studies on the image of education inspectors also reveal that they are mostly depicted in negative terms as controllers, supervisors, and punishers (Yıldırım & Yürek, 2025). This negative collective outlook of inspectors exists among educators and affects their image in unfavourable ways (Arabacı & Akar, 2010; Çelik, 2020; Demirtaş & Kılınç, 2018; Taş, 2023; Yılmaz, 2017). Inspectors, however, have a number of counter criticisms about the inspection system and this unfavourable image. These include the fact that academic studies on inspectors only address their image from the viewpoint of teachers and school managers, that they contain stereotypical prejudices towards inspections and inspectors, that academic circles do not accurately perceive their profession, and that inspectors' opinions are not given enough space in academic studies on inspectors (Bozak, Seraslan, & Çakır, 2017; Kayıkçı, 2005; Sarpkaya, 2004). Furthermore, many inspectors, when defining their profession, are likely to highlight competencies such as impartiality, openness to change, and communication skills as ideal professional qualities within the framework of professional knowledge, experience, and qualifications (Bozak, 2017).

While inspectors believe their self-image is inaccurate and biased, their image among educational stakeholders varies considerably, as reflected in many film scenes analysed in the study. This may be attributed to several factors, including the profession's control and supervision-focused nature, the extensive scope of authority and responsibility, the formal character of the role, and the obligation of

inspectors to perform multiple tasks simultaneously. However, this gap between their professional self-perception and how they are viewed by the public highlights a significant disparity in the image management of education inspectors.

Image is an abstract perceptual process consisting of impressions, and these impressions must be well managed for a person to form a self-image (Bakan, 2005; Baykasoğlu, Dereli, Sönmez, & Yağcı, 2004; Doğan & Kılıç, 2009). Furthermore, it is likely to change societal views of a vocation over time (Polat & Arslan, 2015). In the field of educational institution inspections, image management is critically important due to its considerable career potential. Although the formal nature of inspections presents certain drawbacks for image management, there are various viewpoints that can be utilised effectively. Similarly, among education inspectors, there are numerous bureaucrats and politicians, such as Hasan Ali Yücel, who served as Minister of National Education, as well as a significant number of poets and writers. For instance, literary figures such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Sabahattin Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Ahmet Kutsi Tecer, Ali Canip Yöntem, Cahit Külebi, and Reşat Nuri Güntekin also previously worked as education inspectors, and obviously, their professional experiences significantly contributed to the successful creation of their literary works. Therefore, this study argues that the names of well-known poets and writers can effectively reshape the unfavourable image of education inspectors by highlighting the profession's positive, intellectual qualities.

Professional and civil society organisations in the field of educational inspection can also make significant contributions to the positive development of a profession's image. Our study argues that such organisations need to take a more active role in both promoting the profession's core values and curating its public face. For example, in some of the films examined in this study, the image of the inspector is portrayed alongside similar negative stereotypes. It has also been observed that the narratives in some of these scenes are exaggerated, contrary to real life, and quite distant from reality. Professional organisations should assess such portrayals in films and, by issuing statements through the press and media, prevent events that negatively impact the image of the inspectorate profession.

Our findings indicate that while inspectors adopt a confident communication style with school managers and teachers, their interactions with students are characterised by both confident and, more frequently, aggressive communication. In these films, many of the problematic situations inspectors face while carrying out their duties arise from teachers and students. The films suggest that inspectors communicate in a confident, respectful, and courteous manner towards school managers, whom they see as representing institutional and official authority, while demonstrating an aggressive communication style towards students, who should be the main focus of the education system. The research reveals that, while the portrayal of inspectors in films criticises the essentialist educational philosophy of the era and places education inspectors at the centre of this criticism, the communication styles exhibited by education inspectors in many films are more often used as a tool for general social and political criticism of the period than for reflecting reality.

Communication style plays a central role in shaping professional image. First impressions—formed through appearance, tone, and interaction patterns—strongly influence how a profession is perceived. These findings reveal how cinema contributes to the public construction of the inspector's professional image. They also demonstrate the media's broader role in shaping societal understanding of the profession. An assertive communication style, conducted within a framework of respect and courtesy, is likely to contribute much more to image management than a condescending, judgmental, and aggressive style. Therefore, when professional roles are represented in fictional media such as cinema, the characters' communication style is deemed a fundamental determinant of the image the audience forms of them.

The current study presents important findings on how the social image of a profession is crafted and perceived through cinema, both positively and negatively, from the perspectives of educational management and communication. Additionally, based on these findings, the study provides recommendations for education inspectors, academics, and other parties specialising in communication and educational management.

1. Professional and civil society organisations in the field of educational inspection should take a more active role in shaping the profession's image. For example, well-known poets and writers who previously worked as education inspectors can be utilised to improve the unfavourable image of education inspectors by emphasising the profession's positive, intellectual qualities. Additionally, professional

organisations should evaluate portrayals in films, the press, and other media that harm the profession's image, and inform the public about misconceptions to help manage the professional image effectively.

2. Proactive cooperation with the media and cinema can be established. Considering the power of cinema and television in image building, inspectors should not be portrayed solely as *punitive* figures. Professional organizations can take on advisory roles by collaborating with screenwriters and directors to ensure that inspector characters are depicted in a more realistic, guidance-oriented, and multidimensional manner.

3. Reforms can be made at the educational and policy levels. Courses such as image management, crisis communication, and public relations should be added to the professional training curricula or in-service training programs of inspectors. This enables inspectors to proactively manage their personal images and, consequently, their professional reputation in the field.

4. Comparative and multidisciplinary studies of image management and communication styles through cinema films across professions in medicine, education, engineering, and the military can make significant contributions to management and communication research.

Ethical Statement

During the preparation of the study titled “*Inspectors under Focus: Education Inspectors' Image and Communication Styles in Turkish Cinema*”, scientific principles, ethical standards, and citation rules were strictly followed; no falsification was made on the collected data, and this study has not been submitted to any other academic publication venue for evaluation. Ethics committee approval is not required for this research.

Etik Beyan

“Eğitim Müfettiřleri Merkez Altında: Türk Sinemasında Eğitim Müfettiřlerinin İmajı ve İletişim Tarzları” başlıklı çalışmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel kurallara, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmamış ve bu çalışma herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiştir. Bu arařtırmada etik kurul kararı zorunluluęu bulunmamaktadır.

Statement of Authors' Contribution Rate

The authors contributed equally to the study.

Arařtırmacıların Katkı Oranı Beyanı

Yazarların çalışmadaki katkı oranları eşittir.

Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

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Bu makalenin yazımında yapay zeka ve türleri kullanılmamıştır.

Data Sharing Statement

We declare that the data of this study may be shared upon reasonable request for the purpose of verifying the findings, in accordance with the conditions specified in the relevant section of the “ethical principles and publication policy.”



Veri Paylaşım Beyanı

Bu çalışmanın verileri, bulguların doğrulanması amacıyla makul bir talep üzerine “etik ilkeler ve yayın politikası”nın ilgili kısmında belirtilen şartlara göre paylaşabileceğimizi beyan ederiz.

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Not

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Eğitim müfettişleri, eğitim sisteminin niteliğini artıran ve işleyişini düzenleyen temel aktörlerdir. Bir mesleğin kamuoyundaki imajı, toplumun o meslek grubuna yönelik algılarını şekillendirmekte ve bu algılar sadece bireysel karşılaşmalarla değil, aynı zamanda sinema gibi kitle iletişim araçları ve kültürel temsiller yoluyla da inşa edilmektedir. Literatür incelendiğinde öğretmen ve yönetici imajı üzerine pek çok çalışma yürütülmüş olmasına karşın, eğitim müfettişlerinin sinema filmlerindeki temsilleri ve bu mecradaki imajları üzerine bugüne kadar kapsamlı bir akademik araştırmaya rastlanmamıştır. Buradan hareketle gerçekleştirilen bu çalışma, Türk sinemasında eğitim müfettişlerinin imajını ve iletişim tarzlarını inceleyerek eğitim literatürüne özgün bir katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Sinema, görsel ve işitsel unsurları birleştirerek izleyici üzerinde duygusal ve bilişsel etkiler yaratma gücüne sahip olduğu için gerçekliği hem temsil eden hem de yeniden kurgulayan bir araçtır. Araştırma, 1953 ile 2015 yılları arasında çekilen ve eğitim müfettişi karakteri içeren 16 Türk filmi doküman analizi yöntemiyle sistematik olarak incelemiştir. Bu filmler, karakterlerin ekranda görünme süreleri, profesyonel imajları ve iletişim tarzlarının gözlemlenebilirliği gibi kriterlere dayalı amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmiştir. Veri toplama sürecinde, müfettişlerin kişisel ve mesleki imaj özelliklerini tanımlayan bir form ile yöneticiler, öğretmenler ve öğrencilerle olan iletişim tarzlarını belirleyen ikinci bir gözlem formu kullanılmıştır. İletişim tarzları analiz edilirken *pasif*, *saldırgan*, *pasif-agresif*, *manipülatif* ve *iddialı* olmak üzere beş temel kategori esas alınmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, Türk sinemasında eğitim müfettişlerinin ağırlıklı olarak olumsuz özelliklerle tasvir edildiğini ortaya koymaktadır; incelenen 16 filmde 12'sinde olumsuz kişisel ve mesleki imaj özellikleri baskındır. Müfettişler genellikle otoriter, empati yoksunu, yetersiz, katı kurallara bağlı ve anlayışsız karakterler olarak sunulmaktadır. Bu olumsuz imajın alt temaları incelendiğinde, müfettişlerin sert, cezalandırıcı, önyargılı, şüpheli ve hatta bazen ruh sağlığı bozuk veya düşük entelektüel kapasiteye sahip figürler olarak karikatürize edildiği görülmektedir. Özellikle komedi türündeki filmlerde müfettiş karakterleri genellikle alay konusu edilirken, dram türündeki filmlerde sistemin katı savunucusu ve bürokratik engellerin temsilcisi olarak

gösterilmektedir. Buna karşılık, müfettişlere dair olumlu imaj özellikleri oldukça sınırlı kalmakta ve genellikle sahnelerin başlangıcında iyi giyimli olma, resmiyet, selamlaşma ve nezaket kurallarıyla sınırlandırılmaktadır. Olumlu özellikler arasında iyi giyimli olma en sık rastlanan özellik iken; güler yüzlü, saygılı ve iyi bir gözlemci olma gibi nitelikler de sınırlı sayıda filmde tespit edilmiştir. Ancak bu olumlu başlangıçlar, sahnelerin ilerleyen bölümlerinde genellikle yerini gerçeklikten uzaklaşan ve müfettişlik mesleğinin saygınlığıyla bağdaşmayan olumsuz davranışlara bırakmaktadır. Eğitim müfettişlerinin iletişim tarzları incelendiğinde, muhatap alınan kişiye göre değişen durumsal bir yaklaşım sergilendiği görülmüştür. Müfettişlerin okul yöneticileriyle olan iletişimlerinde büyük oranda *iddialı* bir tarz benimsedikleri, daha eşitlikçi, saygılı ve özgüvenli bir tutum sergiledikleri saptanmıştır. Bu durum, yöneticilerin kurumsal ve resmi otoriteyi temsil etmesiyle ilişkilendirilmektedir. Öğretmenlerle olan iletişimde de iddialı tarz ön planda olsa da bazı filmlerde bu tarz yerini yargılayıcı, önyargılı ve duyarsız davranışları içeren *saldırgan*, *pasif-agresif* veya *manipülatif* iletişim biçimlerine bırakmaktadır. Örneğin, *Öğretmen* filminde müfettişin öğretmen üzerinde önceden oluşmuş yargılarını doğrulamak için manipülatif bir tarz kullandığı gözlemlenmiştir. Müfettişlerin en sorunlu iletişim alanı ise öğrencilerle olan ilişkileridir. İncelenen filmlerin çoğunda müfettişlerin öğrencilere karşı küçümseyici, emredici, öfkeli ve çatışmacı bir *saldırgan* iletişim tarzı benimsediği görülmektedir. Eğitim sisteminin odağında olması gereken öğrencilere yönelik bu sert ve kaba tutum, sinemada müfettiş imajının en karanlık yönlerinden birini oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın tartışma ve sonuç kısmında, sinemadaki bu abartılı ve çoğu zaman gerçeklikten kopuk temsillerin, toplumun müfettişlik mesleğine yönelik algısını derinden etkilediği vurgulanmaktadır. Filmlerdeki müfettiş karakterleri, dönemin esasici eğitim felsefesini eleştirmek için bir araç olarak kullanılmakta ve eğitim sistemine yönelik tepkiler müfettiş figürü üzerinden somutlaştırılmaktadır. Ayrıca, müfettişlerin iletişim tarzları ve imajları, sadece eğitimle sınırlı kalmayıp dönemin genel siyasi ve toplumsal eleştirilerini dile getirmek için bir enstrüman işlevi görmektedir. Müfettişlerin kendi mesleki algıları ile sinemadaki temsilleri arasındaki bu derin uçurum, mesleki imaj yönetiminin ne kadar kritik bir ihtiyaç olduğunu göstermektedir. Müfettişlerin kendilerini tarafsız, değişime açık ve rehberlik odaklı profesyoneller olarak tanımlamalarına rağmen, sinemada kontrol ve ceza odaklı figürler olarak yansıtılmaları mesleki motivasyonu ve saygınlığı olumsuz etkileyebilir. Araştırmada, bu olumsuz imajın iyileştirilmesi için somut öneriler sunulmaktadır. Meslek kuruluşlarının ve sivil toplum örgütlerinin, müfettişlik mesleğinin gerçek niteliklerini tanıtmak ve sinemadaki hatalı temsillerle mücadele etmek için daha aktif bir rol üstlenmesi gerekmektedir. Bu noktada, geçmişte eğitim müfettişliği yapmış olan Reşat Nuri Güntekin, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar ve Cahit Külebi gibi tanınmış yazar ve şairlerin entelektüel kimliklerinden faydalanılarak mesleğin olumlu ve kültürel yönlerinin ön plana çıkarılması önerilmektedir. Ayrıca, sinemada karakterlerin iletişim tarzlarının izleyicinin imaj oluşumunda temel belirleyici olduğu göz önüne alındığında, müfettişlerin nezaket ve saygı çerçevesinde yürütecekleri iddialı bir iletişim stiline imaj yönetimine büyük katkı sağlayacağı açıktır. Sonuç olarak, çalışma bir mesleğin toplumsal imajının sinema yoluyla nasıl inşa edildiğini disiplinler arası bir bakış açısıyla ortaya koyarken hem eğitim politikası yapıcılara hem de medya içerik üreticilerine önemli veriler sunmaktadır. Bu tür çalışmaların farklı meslek grupları için de yapılmasının, yönetim ve iletişim araştırmalarına anlamlı katkılar sağlayacağı öngörülmektedir.

Appendix A. Evaluating Trustworthiness

Evaluative criteria	Description	Study Evaluation Followed by the Authors
Credibility	Evaluation of the findings by providing a credible interpretation of the collected data in the study.	Two distinct observation forms were used, the aims of which were to depict the education inspectors' behaviours and attitudes in a broader perspective to ensure credibility. In addition, the verbal sentences in the film scenes were transformed into text, descriptively analysed, and coded around images and communication styles to evaluate the research questions.
Transferability	Applicability of the study's findings beyond the scope of the study to broader perspectives and relevance.	To ensure transferability, a detailed first-order analysis and a depiction of the film scenes were provided. Furthermore, quotes from related film scenes were included. By providing sufficient background for readers, it aims to help them apply these findings across different inspectorate fields and professions through comparative discussions.
Dependability	Evaluation of the study's data collection and analysis through a theoretical research framework.	Dependability aims to ensure a shared understanding of the phenomenon or subject being studied by using interrater reliability and interrater agreement techniques (Syed & Nelson, 2015). Accordingly, the scenes were coded by two academics, and the current themes and sub-themes were formed through focus group meetings.
Confirmability	Assessment of how the study findings are consistent and supported by the collected data	The films in the study were shared with academics, who were asked to evaluate whether the sample was consistent with the study's scope. Based on the feedback, some films with scenes of other fields inspectors, rather than education inspectors, were excluded from the sample. The study's consensus among researchers and academics is that the analysis and theoretical models are likely to accurately reflect the data observed in the study sample.