



**INSTRUCTINONAL LEADERSHIP THOUGH  
PRINCIPAL SUPERVISION A QUALITATIVE  
STUDY ON TEACHER COMPETENCE IN SPECIAL  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS**

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**Abstrak**

Studi ini meneliti bagaimana supervisi kepala sekolah diimplementasikan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi guru di sekolah menengah pertama berkebutuhan khusus, serta mengidentifikasi faktor pendukung, faktor penghambat, dan strategi untuk mengatasi tantangan supervisi. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, studi ini melibatkan seorang kepala sekolah dan enam guru sebagai partisipan penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi terstruktur, dan analisis dokumen, dan dianalisis melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa supervisi kepala sekolah dilakukan secara terencana dan berkelanjutan melalui observasi pembelajaran, supervisi individual, dan forum diskusi kolaboratif. Praktik supervisi ini berkontribusi positif terhadap pengembangan kompetensi pedagogis, profesional, sosial, dan pribadi guru dalam menangani beragam kebutuhan siswa yang berkebutuhan khusus. Selain melaporkan temuan empiris, studi ini memberikan kontribusi teoretis dengan memperkuat perspektif kepemimpinan instruksional yang mengkonseptualisasikan supervisi sebagai proses pengembangan dan kolaboratif, bukan hanya sekedar praktik evaluatif saja tetapi secara praktis, temuan ini memberikan panduan berbasis bukti bagi para pemimpin sekolah dalam merancang model supervisi yang sistematis, reflektif, dan berkelanjutan di lingkungan Pendidikan khusus. Kontribusi ini meningkatkan relevansi internasional studi ini dalam bidang kepemimpinan Pendidikan dan Pendidikan khusus.

*Kata kunci: Kepala sekolah, kompetensi guru, kepemimpinan instruksional, Pendidikan khusus*

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### Abstract

This study examines how principal supervision is implemented to improve teacher competence in special needs junior high schools, as well as identifying supporting factors, inhibiting factors, and strategies to address supervisory challenges. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study involved a school principal and six teachers as research participants. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi structured interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that principal supervision, individual supervision, and collaborative discussion forums. These supervisory practices contribute positively to the development of teacher' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies in addressing the diverse needs of students with special needs. Beyond reporting empirical findings, this study contributes theoretically by reinforcing instructional leadership perspectives that conceptualize supervision as a developmental and collaborative process rather than merely evaluative practice. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based guidance for school leaders in designing systematic, reflective, and sustainable supervision models to strengthen teacher competence and improve instructional relevance of the study within the field of educational leadership and special education.

*Keywords: Principal supervision, teacher competence, instructional leadership, special education*

### INTRODUCTION

Despite the growing body of scholarship on principal supervision and teacher competence, studies examining supervision practices in special education contexts remain relatively limited. Existing research has largely framed supervision as a managerial or evaluative function, while its role as a form of instructional leadership that supports the development of teacher competence in special education settings has received insufficient attention. Moreover, only a limited number of qualitative studies have explored how principals and teachers perceive and experience supervision in addressing the distinctive pedagogical challenges associated with educating students with special needs. This study seeks to address this gap by examining principal supervision practices as a form of instructional leadership in special junior high schools, thereby providing a contextualized contribution to the literature



on educational leadership. In special education institutions, supervision is even more critical because of the complexity of learners' needs, which require adaptive methods and specialized pedagogical approaches. Accordingly, structured and sustained principal supervision is indispensable for strengthening teacher competence and improving the overall quality of education (Maryati, 2024; Agusta et al., 2025)

The scholarly literature consistently suggests that principal supervision should be understood as a process of professional support rather than merely an evaluative mechanism. Contemporary perspectives on educational supervision emphasize collaboration, reflection, and developmental assistance (Nahrowi, 2021; Lubis & Pulungan, 2025). Through classroom observation, professional dialogue, and constructive feedback, principals can assist teachers in identifying instructional shortcomings and recognizing opportunities for improvement. Several studies have shown that effective supervision contributes positively to teachers' pedagogical competence, classroom management, and instructional confidence. Furthermore, supervision fosters the development of professional learning communities, enabling teachers to learn through shared experiences and reflective dialogue. In special education contexts, supervision also plays a crucial role in guiding teachers to adapt curricula, instructional strategies, and assessment practices to accommodate students' diverse abilities. Thus, supervision is widely recognized as a key instrument for enhancing teacher competence and sustaining instructional quality within schools (Lebu et al., 2024; Zulfadli et al., 2025).

The primary objective of principal supervision is to facilitate the continuous development of teacher competence in instructional practice. Supervision is intended to support teachers in improving lesson planning, teaching strategies, classroom interaction, and learning assessment (Nasution, 2021; Fansori et al., 2025). In addition, supervision promotes reflective practice, enabling teachers to critically evaluate their own performance and pursue ongoing professional growth. For teachers in special education settings, supervision is particularly important in strengthening their capacity to design inclusive learning environments, implement differentiated instruction, and utilize appropriate learning media. Empirical studies indicate that well-organized and consistent supervision significantly enhances teachers' pedagogical and professional



competencies, which in turn positively affect student learning outcomes (Karmelia et al., 2024). Based on these considerations, this study aims to explore the implementation of principal supervision, identify factors that support or hinder its effectiveness, and examine the supervisory strategies used to improve teacher competence in special junior high schools.

This study is grounded in the assumption that principal supervision can serve as an effective means of enhancing teacher competence when it is implemented in a structured, collaborative, and sustained manner. Principals who are directly engaged in academic supervision are more likely to cultivate a professional environment characterized by mentoring, self-reflection, and continuous professional development (Rasuani et al., 2025). Well-planned supervision helps align teachers' developmental needs with school goals while simultaneously promoting accountability and innovation in instructional practice. In the context of special education institutions, strong supervisory leadership plays a pivotal role in ensuring that teachers receive adequate support in responding to the diverse needs of learners with disabilities (Manalu et al., 2025). This study is significant both theoretically and practically, as its findings are expected to contribute to scholarly discussions on educational supervision and to provide actionable guidance for school leaders in developing supervision strategies that enhance teacher competence and strengthen inclusive education practices.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent studies over the past decade indicate that principal supervision has increasingly been conceptualized as a developmental practice and a form of instructional leadership rather than merely an evaluative function. For example, Hallinger (2018) underscores the central role of instructional leadership in shaping teaching quality and fostering professional learning, while the OECD (2019) identifies school leadership as a key driver of teacher competence development. Nevertheless, empirical research in special education contexts remains limited, as most studies continue to focus on general education settings. In addition, recent scholarship has tended to examine supervision from a single perspective, offering only limited insight into how supervision is collaboratively experienced by principals and teachers in addressing the complex learning needs of students with special needs. This study responds to these gaps by



providing a qualitative, context-sensitive analysis of principal supervision as instructional leadership in special junior high schools.

Research further demonstrates that supervision strengthens instructional coherence and accountability across classrooms when it is conducted consistently and constructively (Wardhana & Trihartono, 2025). In special education settings, supervision is particularly significant because of the diversity of learners' needs and the complexity of instructional demands. Accordingly, the educational literature consistently identifies principal supervision as a fundamental mechanism for enhancing teacher competence and ensuring the overall effectiveness of instructional practices within schools.

The principal's role as an instructional supervisor is central to the successful development of teacher competence. As instructional leaders, principals are responsible for guiding teachers through classroom observation, mentoring, and structured professional feedback. Empirical studies indicate that principals who actively engage in supervision positively influence instructional quality and teachers' commitment to professional growth (Hanifah et al., 2025). Supervision that prioritizes dialogue and reflection rather than evaluation enables teachers to respond constructively to feedback and to implement improvements in classroom practice (Miller, 2023). Moreover, supervisory approaches that take into account teachers' levels of experience and the specific context of the school help foster trust and collegial relationships (Wiyono et al., 2021). In special education schools, principals must also ensure that supervision addresses inclusive instructional strategies and individualized learning needs. Therefore, the effectiveness of supervision is strongly shaped by the principal's capacity to integrate leadership, professional guidance, and collaborative support within the supervisory process.

Teacher competence refers to a set of professional capacities that include pedagogical knowledge, subject-matter mastery, personal integrity, and social responsibility. Collectively, these competencies determine teachers' effectiveness in facilitating meaningful learning experiences. Recent studies emphasize that teacher competence must be continuously strengthened through systematic professional development initiatives (Naima et al., 2023). Supervision plays a critical role in this process by identifying instructional strengths and areas requiring improvement. Through structured supervisory activities, teachers receive



guidance that supports the refinement of instructional strategies, classroom interaction, and assessment practices (Sitompul, 2022). In special education contexts, teacher competence also encompasses the ability to design adaptive instruction and respond to diverse learner characteristics, both of which require sustained supervisory support (Malika et al., 2023). Accordingly, the literature demonstrates that supervision serves as an essential framework for fostering continuous teacher development and maintaining high standards of instructional quality.

The implementation of effective supervision generally follows a structured process consisting of planning, classroom observation, feedback, and follow-up. Supervisory planning ensures alignment between instructional goals and teachers' developmental needs (Haratua et al., 2025). Classroom observation provides principals with direct evidence of teaching practices and serves as a foundation for constructive feedback. Research suggests that feedback is most effective when delivered through reflective dialogue that encourages teachers to critically examine their instructional decisions (Putri, 2025). Follow-up activities, including coaching and collaborative professional learning, support the sustainability of instructional improvement (Fauzi et al., 2023). In special education schools, supervision must additionally address instructional adaptation and individualized student support strategies. Therefore, a well-structured supervisory process enhances the effectiveness of supervision by ensuring that professional guidance leads to measurable improvements in teacher competence and instructional practice.

Despite its importance, the practice of principal supervision often faces substantial implementation challenges. Principals frequently encounter time constraints, heavy administrative workloads, and insufficient training in instructional supervision, all of which may reduce the effectiveness of supervisory practices (Tani, 2025). In addition, supervision is sometimes perceived by teachers as evaluative rather than developmental, resulting in resistance and limited professional engagement (Maulidiyah & Suriagir, 2025). Research highlights that the establishment of trust, transparency, and open communication is essential to overcoming these barriers. Professional development programs designed to strengthen principals' supervisory competencies are also critical for improving the quality of supervision (Ramadhani et al., 2024).



In special education settings, the complexity of students' needs further intensifies supervisory demands. Therefore, addressing both structural constraints and leadership capacity is necessary to ensure that supervision functions effectively as a tool for teacher development.

Overall, the existing literature confirms that principal supervision plays a decisive role in enhancing teacher competence and instructional quality. Supervision that is continuous, collaborative, and development-oriented supports teachers in refining their professional skills and improving classroom practice. When integrated into comprehensive professional development systems, supervision becomes a sustainable mechanism for long-term instructional improvement (Algusyairi et al., 2025). In special education contexts, effective supervision also promotes inclusive and adaptive teaching practices that address diverse learner needs (Iqbal et al., 2024). Principals who approach supervision as a form of instructional leadership are more likely to foster reflective practice and cultivate a culture of continuous improvement within schools. Consequently, supervision should be understood as an integral leadership function that directly contributes to strengthening teacher competence, improving instructional effectiveness, and enhancing overall educational quality.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Data analysis was carried out through a systematic qualitative procedure. First, all interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, while observational field notes and documentary materials were carefully organized. Second, the data were coded inductively to identify emerging themes related to supervisory practices and teacher competence. Finally, these themes were interpreted through the lens of instructional leadership in order to generate analytical findings. Triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents was employed to enhance the credibility and consistency of the findings.

The study was conducted at a public special junior high school in Jambi, Indonesia. The research participants consisted of the principal and six teachers, who were selected through purposive sampling. The principal was chosen because of his role as the primary supervisor, while the teachers were selected based on their direct involvement in the supervision process. Data were collected through observation, semi-



structured interviews, and document analysis to ensure comprehensive coverage and triangulation (Putri, 2025). Observations focused on classroom supervision and follow-up activities, whereas interviews explored participants' perspectives on supervisory practices and the challenges encountered. Documentary sources included supervision reports, lesson plans, and school policies. Data analysis followed an interactive model comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to ensure systematic interpretation and the credibility of the findings (Rijali, 2018).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Although the findings confirm the positive role of principal supervision in enhancing teacher competence, alternative interpretations should also be taken into account. The observed improvement in teacher competence may not be attributable solely to supervisory practices, but may also have been influenced by teachers' intrinsic motivation, peer collaboration, or an ongoing culture of professional learning. In this sense, supervision may function as part of a broader ecosystem of professional development rather than as an isolated leadership strategy. From a theoretical perspective, these findings extend existing understandings of instructional leadership by demonstrating that supervision in special education contexts is not merely an evaluative mechanism, but also a relational and adaptive leadership practice that responds to the complex instructional realities of special education. The study underscores the importance of flexible, dialogic, and context-sensitive models of supervision, suggesting that school leaders should move beyond standardized supervisory routines and adopt reflective coaching approaches tailored to teachers' professional needs in special education settings.

The findings indicate that supervision planning was conducted at the beginning of the academic year through coordination meetings involving the principal and the teaching staff. The supervision plan included the scheduling of classroom observations, the preparation of supervision instruments, and the identification of priority areas based on teachers' needs. This planning process enabled the principal to tailor supervision to the distinctive context of special education. However, although formal supervision plans were in place, implementation did not



always follow the predetermined schedule because of administrative demands and time constraints. Despite these limitations, teachers perceived the planning stage as beneficial in clarifying expectations and supervisory objectives. Effective supervision planning is essential for ensuring clarity, consistency, and accountability in supervisory practice (Hattu et al., 2024; Zulfadli et al., 2025)

Classroom supervision was conducted primarily through direct observation, during which the principal examined teaching methods, student-teacher interactions, and the use of instructional media. These observations focused particularly on teachers' ability to adapt instruction to diverse student needs, especially those of learners with disabilities. The findings show that teachers became more aware of their instructional strengths and weaknesses following supervision sessions. Post-observation feedback sessions encouraged reflective dialogue and supported professional growth. Nevertheless, some teachers reported that classroom supervision was not conducted regularly, which limited its long-term impact. These findings reinforce the view that consistent and reflective classroom supervision is crucial for enhancing instructional quality and teacher competence (Dwinata & Amalia, 2023; Fansori et al., 2025)

Individual supervision techniques, such as personal conferences and mentoring, were employed to address specific challenges faced by teachers. The principal provided personalized feedback and guidance related to lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment strategies. Teachers acknowledged that individualized supervision helped them improve their teaching practices more effectively because it directly addressed their immediate professional needs. However, the principal's limited availability restricted the frequency of such individual supervision. Despite this constraint, individualized supervision was perceived as more impactful than group supervision because of its personalized nature. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the effectiveness of individualized supervision in addressing teacher-specific needs and fostering professional development (Mukniyah et al., 2021).

Group-based supervision was implemented through staff meetings, joint discussions, and informal workshop sessions that brought teachers together within shared professional spaces. These forums



supported peer learning and enabled teachers to address common challenges through collective reflection and problem-solving. Participants noted that group supervision created opportunities to exchange instructional techniques, classroom experiences, and practical solutions, while also strengthening collegial relationships and a sense of professional solidarity. Despite these benefits, however, such activities were often dominated by administrative agendas, including scheduling, reporting, and policy dissemination. As a result, only limited time was available for in-depth discussion of teaching practices and pedagogical development. This emphasis reduced the overall impact of group supervision on improving instructional competence. Effective group supervision should therefore maintain a clear balance between administrative coordination and sustained professional learning, ensuring that collaborative activities contribute meaningfully to the enhancement of teachers' pedagogical skills within diverse and inclusive school contexts (Hartanto, 2019).

The findings further demonstrate that principal supervision contributed positively to teachers' pedagogical competence, particularly in lesson planning and instructional delivery. Teachers improved their ability to design adaptive lesson plans and to select appropriate teaching methods for students with special needs. Supervision also encouraged reflective teaching practices and fostered greater awareness of students' learning characteristics. These improvements are consistent with national competency standards and highlight the role of supervision in promoting pedagogical development (Fitria et al., 2019; Lubis & Pulungan, 2025).

Principal supervision was also found to have a significant impact on teachers' professional competence, particularly in strengthening subject-matter mastery and the application of effective instructional strategies. Through consistent supervisory practices, teachers demonstrated better lesson preparation, more structured classroom management, and improved approaches to student assessment. The supervision process also created space for professional reflection, enabling teachers to evaluate their teaching practices and identify areas for continuous improvement. This reflective dimension fostered a culture of ongoing professional growth within the school environment. Nevertheless, the development of teachers' competence had not yet reached an optimal level because of limited access to professional development programs, training opportunities, and relevant learning



resources. These constraints reduced the potential long-term impact of supervision on the development of professional expertise. Overall, these findings are consistent with previous studies that identify supervision as a crucial instrument for promoting teacher professionalism and supporting sustainable improvements in instructional quality (Firdaus & Yoseptry, 2025).

Several supporting factors contributed to the effectiveness of the supervision process, including constructive teacher attitudes, a cooperative school environment, and the availability of adequate infrastructure. Teachers generally demonstrated openness to supervisory feedback and a strong willingness to refine and improve their instructional practices. This positive disposition made it easier for supervisors to provide guidance and for teachers to engage in reflective improvement. In addition, a collaborative school culture fostered mutual support, shared responsibility, and open communication among staff members, thereby strengthening the supervision process. The availability of sufficient learning facilities, instructional media, and classroom resources also played an important role in supporting instructional improvement. These conditions enabled teachers to apply supervisory recommendations more effectively in their daily teaching. Overall, the combination of positive attitudes, collegial collaboration, and supportive infrastructure significantly enhanced the impact of supervision and facilitated the continuous development of teachers' professional competence (Joen & Purnamawati, 2022).

Although supervision yielded positive results, several inhibiting factors limited its overall effectiveness. One major challenge was time constraints, as both principals and teachers often faced demanding schedules that reduced opportunities for in-depth supervisory interaction. In addition, heavy administrative workloads diverted attention away from instructional guidance and professional mentoring. The supervision process also lacked continuity, with activities sometimes conducted irregularly and without systematic follow-up. These conditions weakened the potential of supervision to support sustained teacher development. Teachers therefore emphasized the importance of more structured, well-planned, and continuous supervision in order to achieve meaningful professional growth. Consistent supervision would allow for ongoing monitoring, reflection, and improvement of teaching practices. Addressing



issues related to time management, workload distribution, and supervisory consistency is therefore crucial to optimizing supervision practices, particularly in special education settings that require sustained guidance to meet the diverse needs of learners (Fidmatan et al., 2024).

**a. Supervision as Professional Development**

The findings indicate that principal supervision functioned primarily as a mechanism for professional development rather than merely as an evaluative activity. In line with contemporary theories of supervision, the practices observed in this study focused on providing guidance, encouraging reflective thinking, and offering continuous support to teachers. Through this approach, supervision became a constructive process that helped teachers recognize their strengths and identify areas for improvement without creating a sense of pressure or judgment. Teachers were actively engaged in reflective dialogue, which enabled them to examine their instructional practices and professional responsibilities more critically. This model reflects contemporary perspectives on educational supervision that emphasize collaboration, mutual trust, and shared responsibility for improvement. By positioning supervision as a growth-oriented and participatory process, principals were able to foster a supportive professional environment that encouraged continuous learning, strengthened teacher competence, and contributed to sustainable improvements in teaching quality within the school context.

**b. The Importance of Systematic Supervision Planning**

The gap between supervision plans and their actual implementation underscores the critical need for systematic management of supervisory activities. Well-designed supervision plans alone are insufficient if they are not supported by strong commitment and consistent follow-up during implementation. Effective supervision requires ongoing monitoring to ensure that planned activities are carried out as intended and adapted to emerging needs. Without such control mechanisms, supervision risks becoming irregular and losing its developmental focus. Findings from previous studies indicate that the quality of supervision planning has a direct impact on the overall effectiveness of supervisory practice. Clear objectives, realistic scheduling, and well-defined supervisory procedures contribute to



more focused and meaningful supervision outcomes. Therefore, aligning planning with disciplined implementation and continuous evaluation is essential for ensuring the sustainability of supervision programs and maximizing their role in supporting long-term teacher development and instructional improvement.

**c. Supervision in Special Education Contexts**

Supervision in special education settings requires adaptive approaches that are responsive to the varied and complex needs of learners. The findings of this study demonstrate that effective supervisory practices strengthen teachers' capacity to adjust instructional methods, materials, and classroom strategies in accordance with students' individual characteristics. Through targeted guidance and reflective feedback, teachers become more skilled in identifying learning barriers and selecting appropriate instructional modifications. This adaptive form of supervision helps ensure that teaching practices remain flexible and inclusive. The results are consistent with the existing literature, which highlights the importance of contextualized supervision in inclusive and special education environments. Supervision that takes into account student diversity, learning differences, and specific educational needs is more likely to support meaningful instructional improvement. Consequently, supervision should not follow a uniform model, but rather should be designed to address the unique demands of special education, thereby enhancing teacher effectiveness and improving learning outcomes for students with special needs.

**d. Individual versus Group Supervision**

The study reveals that individual supervision tends to have a stronger impact than group supervision, as personalized feedback enables teachers to engage in deeper professional reflection and to receive guidance that directly addresses their specific needs. Through one-to-one supervision, principals are better able to identify individual strengths and areas requiring improvement, thereby making the supervisory process more meaningful. Nevertheless, group supervision remains important when it is carefully structured, particularly in promoting collaboration, shared learning, and the exchange of professional experiences among teachers. For this reason, a balanced supervision model that integrates both individual and



group approaches is recommended. In addition, the study identifies time limitations and heavy administrative responsibilities as major barriers affecting the quality of supervision. These challenges are consistent with findings from previous research and highlight the importance of redistributing workloads and applying delegation strategies so that supervision can be conducted more effectively and consistently.

#### e. **Implications for School Leadership**

Overall, the findings underscore the strategic role of school principals as key instructional leaders within the educational process. Through effective and well-planned supervision, principals are able to strengthen teachers' professional competence and contribute directly to the improvement of educational quality. Supervision that is conducted in a continuous and reflective manner encourages teachers to critically examine their instructional practices and engage in sustained professional growth. This approach supports the development of a learning-oriented school culture in which improvement is understood as a shared responsibility. In special education contexts, the role of the principal becomes even more crucial, as teachers require sustained guidance to respond effectively to the diverse needs of students. Therefore, school leaders should prioritize supervision that is systematic, supportive, and reflective in order to promote sustainable teacher development and ensure that instructional practices remain responsive, inclusive, and effective over time.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that principal supervision plays a substantial and multidimensional role in enhancing teacher competence in special education contexts. The findings demonstrate that supervisory practices implemented in a planned, continuous, and dialogic manner contribute to the development of teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. In particular, supervision that emphasizes reflective feedback, collaborative problem-solving, and individualized guidance enables teachers to respond more effectively to the diverse learning characteristics and educational needs of students with special needs. These findings reaffirm the importance of supervision not merely as a managerial activity, but as a meaningful mechanism of professional



support that shapes instructional quality in special education settings.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature on instructional leadership by extending existing conceptualizations of principal supervision beyond its traditional evaluative function. The findings suggest that, within special education contexts, supervision operates as a relational and adaptive leadership practice that requires sensitivity to teachers' professional challenges, emotional demands, and contextual constraints. This theoretical contribution lies in demonstrating that instructional leadership in special education cannot rely solely on standardized supervisory frameworks developed for general education settings, but must instead be contextualized to address the complex pedagogical and social realities faced by teachers working with students with special needs. By positioning supervision as a developmental leadership process, this study adds nuance to instructional leadership theory and provides empirical support for more human-centered and context-responsive leadership practices in special education.

In practical terms, the study offers important implications for school leaders and policymakers. Principals are encouraged to move beyond compliance-oriented models of supervision and adopt reflective, dialogic, and collaborative approaches that support teachers' continuous professional learning. The findings indicate that supervision becomes more effective when integrated with ongoing professional development initiatives. School leaders should therefore be equipped with specific competencies related to special education leadership, including the capacity to provide differentiated support for teachers, facilitate collaborative reflection on instructional challenges, and create psychologically safe environments in which teachers can openly discuss the difficulties they encounter in teaching students with diverse needs. These practical insights may inform leadership training programs and the development of supervision guidelines tailored to special education contexts.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. The findings are drawn from a qualitative inquiry conducted within a specific institutional context, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other educational settings. The study also focuses on the perceptions and experiences of a relatively small number of participants, which, although offering considerable depth of understanding, may not fully capture the diversity of supervisory practices across different types of special education schools. In addition, the scope of the study is confined to a single school, further limiting the broader applicability of the findings. These limitations underscore the need for further research examining



supervision practices across a wider range of institutional contexts and leadership configurations.

Future research is therefore recommended in several specific directions. First, comparative studies between general education schools and special education schools are needed to identify contextual differences in how principal supervision functions as instructional leadership and how these differences influence the development of teacher competence. Second, longitudinal studies should be undertaken to examine the long-term impact of supervision practices on teachers' professional growth, instructional quality, and retention in special education settings. Third, multi-site qualitative or mixed-methods research could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different leadership styles, school cultures, and organizational structures shape the effectiveness of supervision across diverse educational environments. Finally, future studies may incorporate the perspectives of additional stakeholders, such as special education coordinators, parents, and support staff, in order to develop a more holistic understanding of how supervision practices influence the broader ecosystem of special education.

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