



The role of educational leaders in school changes: Examining approaches from the perspective of principals and teachers

Mehdi Salehi^{*1}, Abubakr Veysi², Peyman Ghanbarian Ghalandar³

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Abstract

The present study examines the role of educational supervisors in school changes: an analysis of approaches from the perspective of school principals and teachers. The research approach is qualitative and employs interpretative phenomenology. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. The research sample includes 14 principals and teachers from schools in Kermanshah province, selected through maximum variation sampling (examining cases where the phenomena of interest have a strong presence). Data analysis was conducted using the critical incident technique. To determine the validity of the research, three methods were used: credibility, transferability, and confirmability.

The research findings revealed seven key categories as effective approaches of educational supervisors in schools for facilitating changes, which are: peer coaching approach, reflective/intellectual leadership approach, motivational mechanism approach, supportive/clinical approach, democratic leadership approach, communication-centered and trust-based approach, and the multidimensional perspective of leaders in assessment and judgment. Additionally, five key categories were identified as ineffective approaches of educational supervisors in schools, which are: limited vision of leaders, weakness in the culture of specialization, lack of an integrative/unifying perspective from leaders, the inherently weak relationship between educational supervisors and teachers, and an overemphasis on inspection. Therefore, it can be concluded that despite the importance of educational supervisors in schools, the specialized nature of this role has been neglected by education policymakers, which can ultimately lead to a decline in students' academic performance in schools.

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¹ Faculty member, Department of Educational Sciences, University of Kurdistan

^{*}Corresponding Author Email: mehdi452001@yahoo.com

² Master's degree in Educational Management, University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran

³ PhD in Educational Management, University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran

Introduction and Problem Statement

In the current century, we are witnessing significant changes in the social, political, and technological realms. The education system, as one of the most complex subsystems of society, economy, and culture, is no exception; to align with these transformations and face the challenges they present, it requires change and development (Vakilian, 2019). Implementing change necessitates a precise evaluation of the current situation and the gap to the desired level. The extensive expansion of educational activities, evaluation of educational organizations, programs, personnel, and assessment of the services provided by them can play an effective role in ensuring educational quality (Afkaneh & Shokoureh, 2006).

In today's world, the growth of science and the emergence of transformative technologies have granted the education system a special status. The teaching-learning process is not only considered a primary factor for a country's development but also determines its success or failure in national and international competitions. Developed countries believe that one of the most important factors for their success is their special focus on the development and empowerment of human capital (including teachers, administrators, supervisors, and educational leaders); thus, they have prioritized it in their strategic and developmental plans (Espino & Diaz, 2020).

Although identifying competencies and designing a development and empowerment system based on them play a significant role in improving the quality of educational systems, particularly schools, when such a system undergoes fundamental changes, other programs, such as supervision and educational guidance, can be more effective than any other factor in enhancing the teaching-learning process. In fact, the existence of educational guidance programs and mechanisms in schools ensures that human and material resources are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner to improve and develop the learning of all key stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, administrative staff, students, and educational supervisors (Hiyan & Jiang, 2021).

In general, educational supervisors should act as facilitators and controllers to ensure that programs are well implemented. They are responsible for overseeing, assisting, and providing specific guidance to all academic and managerial systems implemented in the school. They play a vital role in

providing professional support to teachers to help them achieve better development; thus, the learning process can be improved or corrected, leading to more desirable outcomes (Soltani et al., 2021). This involves engaging teachers as peers in consultations regarding educational and learning-related issues. Educational supervisors have an essential role in assisting teachers with significant tasks, including achieving positive outcomes among students, teaching students to develop the skills and attitudes that underpin resilient behavior, and helping students feel good at school, in an environment where they can utilize their potential. Adequate feedback, consultation, and support from them for teachers and schools are available to achieve student well-being goals (Zepeda & Ponticell, 2019).

Anne Rose et al. (2019) define educational leadership as "a process in which teachers, either individually or collectively, influence colleagues, administrators, and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of enhancing student learning and progress." Educational supervisors can be an important resource in achieving our efforts for continuous school improvement. Their knowledge in teaching and classroom dynamics shows that they can play a crucial role in promoting and supporting changes in teaching performance. The educational leader's framework, relying on a collaborative supervision model, studies teacher behavior in the classroom in a systematic manner, accompanied by mutual respect, and to achieve this, leaders require specific knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and skills (Maghniel, 2021).

Given the importance of the role of educational supervisors in schools and the performance of administrators and teachers, this research aims to analyze and provide feedback on effective and ineffective approaches of educational supervisors in the school environment from the perspective of school administrators and teachers. A review of existing research indicates that many studies have been conducted in the field of educational leaders; however, there has been no research on the role of educational supervisors in school change. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question regarding the suitable and ineffective approaches of educational supervisors in schools from the perspective of school administrators and teachers.

Research background**Table 1. Domestic background**

Findings	Title of the research	Year	Writers
The Failure of Educational supervisors Working in the Kurdistan Province Department of Education in Fulfilling Their Professional Duties and the Misalignment with Their Organizational Job Descriptions for Educational Supervision and Guidance	An Examination of the Alignment Between the Performance of Elementary School Supervisory Teachers in Kurdistan Province and Their Organizational Job Descriptions from the Perspective of Supervisory Teachers, Principals, and Education Officials	2002	Nadi
The predominant role of educational supervisors administrative and organizational, and it does not have a desirable impact on the professional performance of teachers.	An Examination of the Role of Supervisory Teachers from the Perspective of Principals and Teachers in Elementary Schools of Yazd City	2007	Baharestan
Educational supervisors have been weak in the areas of improvement and education, professional development, human relations, evaluation, administrative tasks, and curriculum programs.	Evaluation of the Performance of Supervisory Teachers from the Perspective of Principals and Teachers in Elementary Schools of Tehran City	2009	Javadipoor & Mohammadi
An analysis of the experiences of educational supervisors in implementing the classroom-centered supervision and guidance model revealed that, in this model, educational supervisors are influenced by their interactions with teachers and are also able to have various impacts on them. Based on this, their experiences can be utilized to address the issues and challenges faced by both teachers and the educational supervisors themselves.	An Analysis of the Experiences of Educational supervisors in Implementing Teacher-Centered Educational Supervision Models in Elementary Schools	2019	Izan and The Colloques

Table 2. Domestic background

Findings	Title of the research	Year	Writers
It has been shown that the subjective and evaluative nature of educational supervision and guidance, along with a lack of experienced supervisors, has led to certain deficiencies. Additionally, another reason for the ineffectiveness of educational supervision and guidance in Turkey is the emphasis on its administrative aspect. On the other hand, the failure to adopt appropriate supervisory methods that have a corrective aspect, along with the implementation of punitive practices in the educational system, which emphasizes the evaluative nature of supervision, has caused disruptions in the execution of supervisory duties.	Factors Contributing to the Ineffectiveness of Educational Supervision and Guidance in Schools	2000	Calinz⁴
New teachers express a desire for the ongoing use of supervisory approaches that align with their individual needs. The selection of supervisory methods, appropriate planning, and active participation in the decision-making process are beneficial supervisory actions for them. New teachers are inclined towards educational supervision and guidance that fosters trust and collaboration, provides support and assistance, and contributes to their professional development to ensure high-quality education for students.	Examining Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Ideal Approaches to Educational Supervision and Guidance and Their Relationship with Professional Development in Secondary Schools in Canada and Ukraine	2003	Kasturba⁵
It has been shown that the supervisory approach tends to focus more on identifying the faults of teachers.	Quality of Education and Supervision Practices in Schools in Pakistan	2013	Bahlul & Parveen⁶
The results of this study indicated that the more comprehensive the understanding of the supervisory roles of educational guides, the more positively the supervisory role is evaluated, and the more effectively it impacts the professional development of teachers.	Examining primary school teachers' perceptions of the impact of educational supervision on teachers' professional development in Winneba, Ghana.	2016	Domina⁷

Research methodology**Research Approach and Strategy:**

The approach of the present study is qualitative and falls under the category of interpretive phenomenology. This research is positioned within

an interpretive framework. The researcher aims to achieve a correct understanding of complex situations (Flick, 2006).

Participants and Sampling Method:⁴ Calinz⁵ Kasturba⁶ Bahlul & Parveen⁷ Domina

The research field for this study includes all principals and teachers from schools in Kermanshah province, selected through purposeful sampling. The number of participants will be determined based on the nature of the study and the quality of the collected information until theoretical saturation is reached. In other words, until the researcher gains a clearer understanding of the experiences through subsequent interviews with participants (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002). In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is used to select the sample under study, requiring that all participants have experienced the phenomenon being studied. Fourteen principals and teachers were selected through purposeful sampling methods and interviewed, allowing the researcher to reach theoretical saturation in data collection. This means that the researcher found that the participants had no new insights to share.

Data Collection Method:

To gather insights from the perspectives of school principals and teachers, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The number of interviews was not predetermined; instead, the interviewing process continued with experts until the aspects and hidden components of the phenomenon were clearly identified and described, achieving theoretical saturation. The notion of saturation refers to the point at which the researcher subjectively concludes that new data do not provide additional information or insights for categorization (Bazarghan, 2014). Therefore, the number and diversity of interviews defined the sample size. The interviewing process was designed so that data were coded and analyzed after each interview, allowing for the identification of dimensions raised by principals and teachers, which were then followed up in subsequent interviews. Interviews continued until it was evident that the findings were repeating and that new interviews did not provide additional insights for categorization. The general characteristics of the interviewees in the qualitative phase of the study are presented in Table 3. The tool for data collection in this research was semi-structured interviews. The overall aim of using semi-structured interviews to gather data was to collect information from key informants who possess experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and personal beliefs related to the topic of interest. Researchers can use semi-structured interviews to gather new and exploratory data related to the research topic, triangulate other data sources, or validate findings through member checking (respondent feedback on research results). In the case of using mixed methods, semi-structured interviews can be employed in the qualitative phase to discover new concepts for generating hypotheses or to explain the results of a quantitative phase that tests the hypotheses (Junkir et al., 2019).

Maintaining confidentiality and privacy of the interviewees was a critical principle pursued in this research. The duration of each interview varied between 60 to 75 minutes.

Data Analysis Method:

In this research, the critical incident technique was utilized for data analysis. The critical incident technique is a qualitative tool for analyzing and discovering individuals' problem-solving behaviors in critical situations. This technique focuses on problematic critical situations. In this technique, the researcher is the key tool for data collection. Data are collected in the form of words through interviews, participant observations, and/or qualitative open-ended questions. Data analysis is conducted inductively, focusing on the participants' perspectives. Moreover, research questions are also framed based on this technique, considering both negative and positive questions (Cunningham, 2020).

Data Validation:

Researchers ensure scientific accuracy in qualitative research using the concept of credibility and its multiple elements through various strategies, such as participant review (of interviewees), peer review, triangulation, external auditing, self-review by the researcher, analysis of negative cases, adequacy of referenced sources, bracketing the researcher's opinions, design review or peer review during the research process, seeking disconfirming evidence, researcher credibility, precise description of the study conditions, and conducting interviews with a two-person committee separately but in parallel, comparing researchers' findings (Krebs, 2012). In this study, a combination of the aforementioned criteria and strategies was utilized for qualitative validation.

To ensure the accuracy of the findings, the following actions were undertaken:

- A summary of the interviewee's statements was provided at the end of each interview, along with a final conclusion to confirm the expressed content.
- Most interviewees confirmed the dimensions and categories derived from the content analysis of the interviews.
- The research findings were reviewed by participating members, and data sources were triangulated.

- The researcher engaged in self-review during the data collection and analysis process.
- During the interview process, follow-up questions were used to clarify and provide more transparency, such as “What do you mean by...?” or “Please elaborate on this topic further.”
- The flow of the interview was carefully directed to facilitate effective data collection.
- The content was reviewed in two phases (during the work and at the end), and the data obtained from the interviews were documented by the researcher.
- Efforts were made to control researcher bias and preconceptions as much as possible.
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Table 3. Demographic information of the participants

Duration	sex	Degree	Level of education	Row
4 years	Male	Master of Educational Psychology	Elementary	1
31 years	Male	Bachelor's degree	Elementary	2
21 years	Male	Master of Educational Psychology	Elementary	3
30 years	Male	Bachelor of Educational Sciences	Elementary	4
17 years	Male	Master of Family consulting	Elementary	5
30 years	Male	Bachelor of Educational Sciences	Elementary	6
17 years	Male	Master of Accounting	Elementary	7
29 years	Male	Bachelor's degree	Elementary	8
2 years	Female	Bachelor of Educational Sciences	Elementary	9
17 years	Male	Master of Educational Sciences	Elementary	10
10 years	Male	Master of Educational Psychology	Elementary	11
21 years	Male	Bachelor of Educational Sciences	Elementary	12
30 years	Female	Bachelor's degree	Elementary	13
17 years	Male	Master of Family consulting	Elementary	14

Research Findings

In the present study, the data analysis based on interviews was conducted in two stages: open coding and axial coding, following the grounded theory approach. Coding refers to breaking down the gathered data into the smallest meaningful components, which serve as a basis for discovering and constructing the underlying concepts in the data.

For coding, the text of the selected interviews was analyzed line by line, segmented, and each segment (which was content-based to cover the research objective) was considered a code. The name of each code was chosen to precisely describe the specific segment or line (open coding). This process continued until the theoretical saturation point was reached, which is when no new codes were identified. The result of this stage was the

identification of a large number of open codes.

After extracting the open codes, the researchers merged similar initial codes and categorized them, selecting a name for each category that represented the codes contained within it (axial coding) (Gall et al., 2013).

In this way, the main categories of the study were extracted, and ultimately, the number of codes was reduced to a more limited set, allowing the researchers to understand the diverse perspectives and viewpoints of school administrators and teachers regarding effective and ineffective approaches..

Research Question 1: From the perspective of school administrators and teachers, what effective approaches have educational supervisors implemented in schools?

The researcher, through examining the first research question and conducting a two-step coding process based on grounded theory, identified a total of 55 open codes and 7 axial codes, as shown in Table 4 below. Furthermore, after the coding process, the researcher utilized MAXQDA software to extract codes related to the first research question.

Table 4. Coding process (open and central) related to the effective approaches of educational supervisors in schools

Main Categories (Axial Codes)	Subcategories (Open Codes)
Peer Coaching Approach	Understanding the Individual Characteristics of Staff Strengthening Creative Teaching Strategies for Teachers Improving Teachers' Teaching Skills Raising Awareness Among Staff About Organizational Issues Supporting Teachers in Addressing Classroom Challenges Providing Motivational Opportunities for Individuals Supporting Adult Learners' Education Aligning Leaders' Beliefs and Attitudes with Those of Teachers and Students
Prudent/Thoughtful Guidance Approach	Standardization of Time and Criteria by Leaders Having Long-Term Goals Being Risk-Tolerant Having Goal-Oriented Planning Guiding Teachers towards Improving Classroom Management Focusing on Enhancing Student Learning Open-Mindedness and Reflective Thinking of Leaders
Motivational Mechanism Approach	Teacher Assessment of Their Own Classroom Management Evaluation of the Teaching-Learning Process of Learners Involving Teachers in Educational Leadership Training Assisting Teachers in Self-Assessment of Their Teaching Engaging Teachers in Professional Activities at Schools Recognizing Active and Committed Teachers for Rewards
Supportive/Clinical Approach	Identifying Students with Special Needs and Supporting Teachers Who Need Assistance to Provide Them with the Best Services Linking Positive Educational Experiences Among Teachers Creating Opportunities for Observing Successful Teachers' Classes Improving Solutions for Classroom Challenges Faced by Teachers and Students Revitalizing Traditional Teaching Styles of Teachers

Providing Appropriate Feedback Based on Classroom Analysis
Aligning School Behavior Systems to a Unified Perspective

Democratic Leadership Approach	Collaborative Decision-Making with Teachers Exchanging Knowledge and Information with Teachers Distributing Responsibilities in Work Processes Delegating Authority in Activity Execution Being Peers with Educational supervisors and Teachers Group Cohesion and Support with Teachers Conducting Consultative and Advisory Meetings with Teachers Collaborating with Teachers in Implementing Quality-Focused Initiatives
Communication-Centric and Trust-Based Approach	Friendly and Professional Interaction with Colleagues Throughout the Supervision Cycle Understanding Teachers' Perspectives Providing Necessary Solutions for Teachers to Consider Utilizing Teachers' Suggestions in Supervision Employing Diverse Communication Channels Accurately Interpreting Teachers' Understandings Exchanging Suggestions Finding the Best Solutions After Discussion and Consultation Allowing Teachers to Take Leadership Roles Creating a Trust-Based Atmosphere Relationship-Building Between Supervisors and Teachers Establishing Positive Communication
Multidimensional Approach of Leaders in Evaluation and Judgment	Continuity of Supervision and Evaluation by Educational Leaders Establishing Consistency Between Various School Policies and Their Evaluation Employing Diverse Criteria for Different Regions and Schools Fair Evaluation and Comprehensive Understanding of Teachers Strengthening the Relationship Between Leaders' Language, Thought, and Behavior with School Factors Having Various Standards and Criteria for Evaluating Teachers' Performance Being Aware of Teachers' Diverse Working Conditions for Judging Their Performance

Research Question Two: From the perspective of school administrators and teachers, what ineffective approaches have educational leaders employed in schools?

The researcher, in the second step, examined the second research question and carried out a two-

phase coding process based on the Glaserian approach. In Table 5 below, a total of 37 open codes and 5 axial codes were identified. Additionally, after the coding process, the researcher utilized MAXQDA software to extract the codes related to the second research question.

Table 5. Coding Process (Open and Axial) Related to the Ineffective Approaches of Educational supervisors in Schools

Main Categories (Axial Codes)	Subcategories (Open Codes)
Limited Vision/Leaders	Lack of Shared Values Between Educational supervisors and Teachers Teachers' Inability to Ensure Teaching Quality and Learning Methods Educational Leader's Oversight of Teachers Due to a Friendly Atmosphere Teachers' Misinterpretation of the Leader and Leadership Responsibilities Educational Leadership Viewed as Harsh by Teachers Lack of Acceptability of Criticism by Leaders and Teachers Creation of Stress and Anxiety for Teachers by the Leader Students' Lack of Focus Due to the Presence of the Educational Leader.
Weakness of Specialization Culture	Lack of Skills Among Educational Leaders Inattention to Individual Differences Among Teachers During Leadership Inexperience of Educational Leaders Overemphasis on Degrees by Educational Leaders Use of Superficial Strategies by Leaders Lack of Original and Innovative Thinking Among Educational Leaders Weakly Structured Programs to Enhance Collaboration and Participation Between Teachers and Leaders.
Lack of a Holistic/Integrative Perspective from Leaders	Lack of Coordination Between Teachers and Leaders in the Supervision Cycle Gap Between Implementation and Evaluation by Educational Leaders Multitasking of Educational supervisors in the Leadership Role Inconsistency Between the Knowledge and Actions of Educational Leaders Lack of Integrated Planning by Leaders Disconnection Between Leaders' Knowledge and Supervisory Beliefs and Values.

The Intrinsic Nature of the Weak Relationship Between Educational supervisors and Teachers

Distrust in the Relationship Between Leaders and Teachers

Lack of Encouragement and Motivation for Teachers from Leaders

Lack of Teachers' Self-Confidence in Collaborating with Educational Leaders

Lack of Understanding by Leaders and Teachers of Their Own Laws and Roles

Limited Collaboration Between Leaders and Teachers

Leaders' Inability to Access Teachers' Personal Beliefs Regarding Teaching and Learning Processes

Lack of Consensus on Educational and Learning Objectives

Lack of Mutual Trust and Shared Vulnerability Between Leaders and Teachers

Leaders and Teachers Not Sharing Responsibility for Each Other's Roles.

Emphasis and Strict Focus on Inspection

Catching Teachers by Leaders

Focus on Traditional Leadership Rules

Emphasis on Teaching Rather than the Teacher

Lack of Focus on Personal Strengths, Weaknesses, and Shortcomings

Ritualistic Nature of Classroom Inspections

Unpleasantness of the Inspection Process for Students

Potential Conflict Created by Leaders

Purely Controlling Attitude of the Leader.

Description of Research Findings

First research objective

A - Utilizing Effective Approaches of Educational supervisors for Changes in Schools

1. Peer Coaching Approach (Facilitative Role)

School administrators and teachers, as participants in this research, emphasized peer coaching as a unique approach for educational supervisors in assessing teachers to assist them in their teaching practices. Based on the participants' perspectives, peer coaching is a form of supervision for educational supervisors designed to help teachers improve their teaching skills, learn creative educational strategies, assist teachers in resolving classroom challenges, analyze and find solutions to classroom issues, and more. Participants mentioned that leaders with strengths in peer coaching always adjust their behavior and demeanor based on observing and understanding situations and teachers' reactions, particularly those of students.

"If educational supervisors behave in a way that teachers realize leadership means helping and supporting them in their duties, they will be better received. The meaning of leadership in the present era is to assist teachers in strengthening their classroom skills, rather than the leader coming to catch them out. This has become a culture in our country, while the philosophy of leadership everywhere in the world is about aiding school factors to improve their performance." (Interviewee No. 1)

2. Reflective/Thoughtful Leadership Approach

The reflective or thoughtful approach emphasizes collaborative and group efforts between leaders and teachers to improve the teaching process. Reflection on the thoughtful approach of educational supervisors in schools, from the interviewees' perspective, relies on a process through which leaders and teachers critically analyze their attitudes, beliefs, and actions. More clearly, the thoughtful approach of educational supervisors is neither an inductive nor a deductive process, but rather practical knowledge, reflective practice, and thoughtful dialogue, having long-term goals, being risk-takers, and creating focus among teachers to guide them towards improving the

classroom and enhancing student learning. In this manner, thoughtful and reflective leaders possess characteristics that accept "thinking during action" as a professional norm; ultimately, such leaders seek to develop their knowledge and that of the teachers and are interested in collaborating with them.

"I see individuals who are leaders or supervisors but, contrary to what we might think, they may not elevate themselves and are not out to catch others out; instead, they seek comprehensive advancement. That is, they might sometimes not perform their jobs well and be criticized by teachers or even students, but they try to create a friendly and open environment for progress." (Interviewee No. 8)

3. Motivational Mechanism Approach

According to the interviewees, establishing motivational mechanisms by educational supervisors in schools can serve as an effective knowledge management plan when starting to review teachers' activities, yielding long-term benefits for student learning. Teacher motivation and commitment to enriching student learning are key factors for the success of educational supervisors and the school at large. Based on the participants' statements, recognizing motivational issues among staff, especially teachers, is crucial for improving their performance, making teaching effective, and ultimately enhancing a school's productivity. Supporting teachers in evaluating their performance in the classroom, assisting with self-assessment, and frequent involvement in professional activities based on a collaborative approach can significantly improve the use of human resources, including the critical mission of educational leaders; thus, the most important component for establishing motivational mechanisms by leaders is understanding the behavioral, work-related, and mission needs of teachers, as this approach can lead to job security for teachers and educational supervisors themselves.

"Teachers must be motivated in their work, and this issue should be important to educational leaders. For instance, given the current situation in Iran, teachers should be in a good position regarding motivation, and those who can create this uplifting role are educational leaders, as they are familiar with motivational theories and have accepted this

responsibility, so they can be the proverbial morale boosters for teachers' instructional activities." (Interviewee No. 2)

4. Relief/Clinical Approach

What can be inferred from the interviewees' comments is that the ultimate goal of educational supervisors in supervision is to improve classroom teaching for better learning. In this path, leaders will not make progress unless they can share teachers' positive educational experiences and create an environment where inexperienced teachers can observe the performance of experienced teachers in the classroom. Many interviewees believed that effective supervision could only be achieved when all involved in school behavior systems share a unified attitude and a common will. The excellence of educational leadership and the recovery of traditional teaching styles among teachers play a significant role in this harmonization. Thus, it is clear that the functional domain of educational supervisors with teachers is very broad and necessary; therefore, educational supervisors must possess specific professional qualifications to provide appropriate feedback based on the analysis conducted in the classroom and to unify the behavioral systems of the school.

"I believe the duty that lies behind the main role of the leader is to create a peaceful role among the school staff, but more than anything, they should focus on teachers, as they are their main audience, and seek the weaknesses of teachers and students and address the issues that create problems for them." (Interviewee No. 7)

5. Democratic Leadership Approach

The appropriate approach for educational supervisors and teachers is to take steps toward improving the educational status of the school through participation and group collaboration. The existence of shared decisions among teachers and observers and the exchange of information and knowledge among them is a fundamental step toward improving the quality of teaching and learning; it will also strengthen cooperative learning in the school environment and the classroom among students. From the participants' viewpoint, the democratic approach of educational supervisors should focus on the emotions and feelings of teachers in their performance; it is through this that the concept of quality-oriented teaching will occur

under the guidance and direction of educational leaders. Consulting and discussing with teachers in sessions conducted by leaders in a specialized manner aims to provide information and facilities that ultimately help teachers, the school principal, and the leaders themselves make effective and accurate decisions regarding the performance of both parties and the educational and career future of students. "In our centralized educational system, many leaders may not be very flexible due to regulations; however, they should continually engage in participatory group consultations with the school principal and teachers to align their thoughts and ideas while recognizing strengths and weaknesses in fulfilling their duties. Leaders must insist on holding brainstorming sessions with teachers after each visit to a school." (Interviewee No. 5)

6. Communication-Centric and Trust-Oriented Approach

From the participants' perspective, the communication-centric and trust-oriented approach is one of the most critical approaches for educational leaders; they can ensure that teachers have sufficient opportunities to express their problems, exchange ideas, and collaborate in supervision and guidance programs to make appropriate decisions and strategies regarding their work. Many participants observed that when leaders step into the school, the news spreads quickly throughout the school environment, and each staff member, especially teachers, suddenly adopts a completely different attitude compared to a moment before to ensure educational leaders' satisfaction. In contrast, educational supervisors should foster an environment based on friendly and professional interaction with colleagues throughout the supervision cycle, utilize diverse communication channels, exchange suggestions, create a trust-based atmosphere, and allow teachers to assume leadership roles. Creating such conditions for teachers by supervisors enhances teachers' sense of independence.

"A teacher who is involved in the supervision and leadership process and has the opportunity to express their opinion or even sometimes offer new solutions to the leader will certainly increase that teacher's productivity. However, we should not forget the significant role that the school principal can play in creating such an environment; in other words, a

triadic relationship should be established to create such conditions." (Interviewee No. 10)

7. Multidimensional Leadership Approach in Evaluation and Judgment

The multidimensional approach of leaders was discussed by participants as the seventh approach. The multidimensional perspective of educational supervisors for executing their supervisory responsibilities requires various models and policies that allow them to evaluate teachers flexibly. Participants emphasized that the perspective and evaluation of educational supervisors regarding teachers' performance should be diverse and tailored to the specific situations and conditions in which teachers are teaching. Thus, it can be acknowledged that the self-awareness of educational supervisors regarding the current situations in which teachers are working is essential, and the criteria and standards that leaders use to evaluate teachers' educational performance should be varied and compatible with the concepts discussed, depending on the context and resources in which teaching and learning take place.

"The guidelines for educational supervisors for supervising the teaching and learning in a school should consider the conditions of an area, whether rural or urban. For instance, leaders in areas with good facilities should be stricter with teachers, while in deprived areas, the situation should be the opposite. This requires a culture of supervision." (Interviewee No. 4)

Second Research Objective

B. Ineffective Approaches of Educational Supervisors for Changes in Schools

1- Limited/Different Perspectives of Leaders

Based on the findings of the research, limited or different perspectives of leaders can be seen as a significant barrier to facilitating changes in schools. Teachers and administrators in schools have expectations of educational supervisors, in other words, seek leaders who are fully aware, practical, and helpful, regardless of who recommends or offers them. According to the interviewees, sometimes ineffective approaches from educational leaders—namely, the lack of shared values between educational supervisors and teachers and the leader's

consideration for teachers due to a friendly atmosphere—lead to the educational leaders' strategies being rejected or not recognized by teachers, administrators, and other educational stakeholders. However, schools that lack connection with the government, community, and families are unsuitable for becoming institutions where the relationships between educational supervisors and school staff are harmonious; this issue itself leads to a lack of commitment from both leaders and teachers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the school. While having a different leadership perspective can provide changes based on creativity and added value that are desirable for schools, the incorrect perception of teachers about the concept of leadership and its negative interpretation can make these changes seem far less creative in schools.

"The presence of educational supervisors can be suitable and effective for any school and any institution, but since all school factors resist against leadership roles based on traditional thoughts and previous interpretations, this resistance can seriously harm the quality of teachers"

2- Weakness of Specialization Culture

The findings from the participants' perspectives indicated that the second ineffective approach used by educational supervisors in schools is the weakness of specialization culture. Based on the views of the participants in this research, this issue is very important; as educational supervisors who lack updated knowledge and skill competencies, continuous guidance and monitoring of educational processes, and lack innovative and creative thinking in the field of supervision, lead to using incorrect methods and inappropriate techniques and prioritizing ambiguous and incompatible goals with the capabilities of teachers and students in carrying out their specialized activities towards achieving their original goal, which is to enhance student learning and promote the professional growth of teachers, thus failing to realize educational objectives. The lack of specialization, inexperience, and inadequacy of monitoring educational supervisors in schools will marginalize the crucial issue of educational quality and educational equity, which requires empowerment and a rich theoretical foundation from educational supervisors more than anything else. Interview results with

participants show that the issue of the weakness of specialization culture is rooted in the weakness of three main skills of educational leaders: technical, conceptual, and human skills. This is while educational supervisors and those who select leaders in schools play a fundamental role in creating sustainable learning; however, with the lack of skills and professional knowledge of educational leaders, the risk of degrading the quality of education and learning of students in schools will threaten the educational environment.

"The educational leaders' program has a lot of problems. When the leaders enter the school, it is evident that they do not have the professional and specialized ability to evaluate the school. Every school has an evaluation, and it is not clear what expertise and knowledge it is based on." (Interviewee No. 4). "The biggest flaw in the educational leadership program, which is its Achilles' heel, is the qualification and rawness of educational leaders. I am amazed at what kinds of people and with what intentions these individuals have been chosen as educational leaders. An educational leader who only holds a degree and is unaware of the mission of leadership cannot evaluate the work of a school. Instead, a true specialist should perform this task." (Interviewee No. 2).

3- Lack of Unifying/Integrative Perspective from Leaders

Given the separation and lack of coordination between teachers and educational leaders, and the profound gap observed between implementation and evaluation by educational supervisors in schools, the programs of educational supervisors in schools have been deemed "impossible" and "ineffective or artificial" in practice. The gap between the perspective and action of educational supervisors prevents teachers from acquiring the necessary skills for improving their teaching and behavioral skills to impact student learning. In this regard, the analysis of participants' views in this study shows that the most crucial component in supervision and guidance for educational supervisors is to convey to teachers and school administrators the message that supervision and guidance hold a special place in schools and educational environments. If leaders do not have a positive attitude toward implementing educational supervision and guidance, and if there is no necessary integration between the beliefs and

values of supervision from leaders, teachers, and the school principal, the existing inconsistencies that leaders can exhibit in their evaluation responsibilities in schools will not yield more favorable educational outcomes, the scope of teaching will not be more effective, and the quality of teachers' performance will be adversely affected.

"When we say an educational leader is specialized, we mean that the individual who takes on this duty should solely focus on that responsibility. There are leaders who are both managers and teachers. Naturally, they cannot deeply and actively engage in this heavy duty, and certainly, there will be contradictions between the actions and theories existing in leadership for them, and they will not take this responsibility seriously. It has become a habit in our country to hold meetings, gather educational and training leaders, define plans and programs for them, and once everyone leaves, they forget everything that has been said, saying something was mentioned because we are following our own path, and no one cares about this situation. It means something was said, but in practice, we witness something entirely different." (Interviewee No. 11).

4- The Internal Nature of the Weak Relationship Between Educational Supervisors and Teachers

Considering the statements of participants, the fourth ineffective approach of leaders in schools was the internal nature of the weak relationship between educational supervisors and teachers. Given the duty nature of educational leaders, it can be stated that their authentic role is to judge and express professional opinions regarding the overall performance of schools for fundamental changes in them. Often, the degree of separation and distance of educational supervisors from school factors, including teachers, becomes so profound that it deprives them of the necessary ground for fair evaluations of teachers' and the school's performance. According to the participants' descriptions of this approach, educational supervisors and teachers eventually become obligated to lack recognition of their related rules and roles, such that both parties will believe they should carry out their activities completely distinct from one another. This level of indifference will yield nothing but a decline

in the quality of educational efficiency for the school. According to the participants in this research, the intensity of the weak relational nature between leaders and teachers leads to limited collaboration between the two, and in this situation, leaders hold all the necessary power, while teachers appear vulnerable from any perspective. With such an atmosphere, teachers and other staff in the school are unlikely to allow educational supervisors deeper insights into their hopes, fears, and personal beliefs regarding the teaching and learning process. This lack of sharing responsibilities between leaders and teachers prevents mutual trust and shared vulnerability from developing. *"In educational leadership, distancing itself*

is a serious obstacle, and the strict adherence of educational supervisors to cumbersome educational regulations, which are unclear how they are designed, means that it benefits neither the teacher, nor the leaders, nor the principal or students; rather, it can create problems and obstacles for a school and its factors. When leaders and teachers do not agree to work as collaborators for the benefit of teachers' teaching and students' learning, it can become a peak educational disaster for a school and its staff, even for the leaders themselves." (Interviewee No. 9).

5- Sole Emphasis on Inspection

According to the participants' views, supervision as inspection, although an old concept, is still strongly emphasized by many educational leaders, which can be severely criticized by teachers and students and can further highlight the potential conflicts it may create. Based on the descriptions by participants, it can be acknowledged that the strict emphasis on inspection by educational leaders, which necessitates stringent control, limits many teachers instead of promoting professional growth. Also, through this solely authoritative approach, managers and educational leaders, instead of relying on rich data gathered through deep classroom observations to improve teachers' teaching processes, merely focus on stereotypical characteristics, weaknesses, and personal deficiencies of teachers, resulting in an unfavorable form of leadership for the school.

"In the field of educational leadership today, there are many books, workshops, and training classes, and leaders should prepare themselves

for this heavy responsibility. They must gradually set aside old ways and methods and adapt themselves to modern theories and new characteristics of leadership. However, more than we see, there is still the same use of traditional and old inspection that we saw a long time ago, and I think there is not much difference from before. That is why teachers, students, and school managers do not welcome this concept much today because they prefer to catch the person out and impose more stress and pressure on teachers." (Interviewee No. 13).

The main or central themes derived from this research align with the research questions; however, the researchers in this section have attempted to interpret these central themes more generally. Below is a summary of the overall findings of this phenomenological study. The results obtained in this research are consistent with the findings of other studies, including those by Adams (1984), Hunter (1980), Ozimer (1993), Glickman (2002), Goldhammer (1996), Natelrilou (1982), and Pawon (1985).

Research Question 1: From the Perspective of School Managers and Teachers, What Effective Approaches Have Educational supervisors Implemented in Schools?

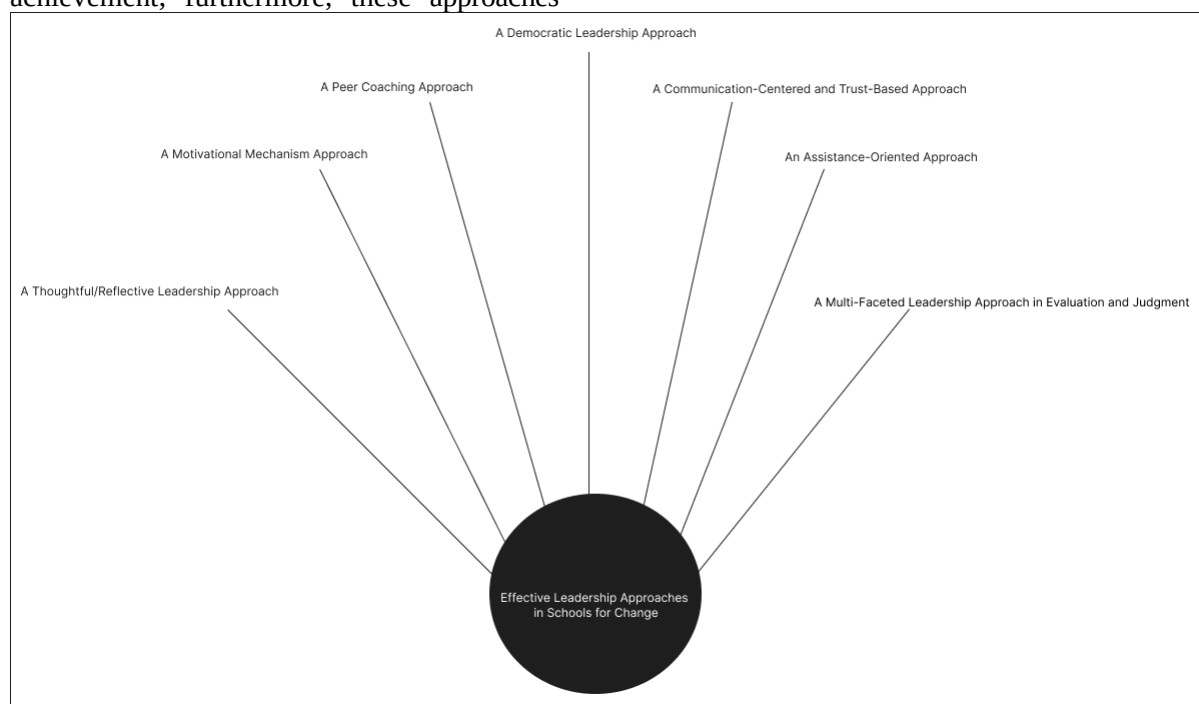
Based on the views of school managers and teachers, the effective approaches of educational supervisors for changes in schools have been categorized into seven themes, while the ineffective approaches of leaders have been categorized into five core themes. The first theme, peer coaching approach, involves the effective use of this approach by leaders to organize teachers in such a way that they can feel comfortable and relaxed alongside each other and benefit from each other's experiences. Since, in a natural state, teachers tend to rely on one another for support, educational supervisors also collaborate to improve teachers' education by assigning extensive responsibilities in teaching through a structured and accepted method for directly assisting teachers. Teachers and educational supervisors mainly provide educational leadership through the collaboration of educational specialists. If teachers and other school staff acquire supervisory skills, leaders can play the roles of clarifiers, trainers, planners, and problem-solvers for the school

and teachers. The mutual collaboration between leaders and teachers has a defined and internal purpose, leading to a necessary and clear path for teachers' training and problem-solving in situations (Nolan et al., 2008).

The second component of the leadership approach is the prudent/thoughtful approach. The results align with research by Telegram et al. (1993). The prudent or thoughtful approach component emphasizes collaborative efforts between educational supervisors and teachers to improve the teaching process and teacher training in schools. By employing a thoughtful approach towards the professional growth and development of teachers, leaders can take essential steps for changes and transformations in the school, which in turn leads to improved educational performance and student achievement; furthermore, these approaches

can enhance the capabilities, competencies, and better performance of school staff.

The third component recognized as an effective and efficient approach of educational supervisors is the motivational mechanism approach. The findings are consistent with research by Adams (1984). It is evident that educational supervisors equipped with diverse motivational mechanisms will encourage teachers and other school staff towards achieving school goals, and on the other hand, they will inspire teachers and students to find the necessary motivation and enthusiasm within themselves to enhance and improve their performance and discover ways to achieve their personal and professional goals concerning



"Figure 5-1: Extracted Pattern of Effective Approaches of Educational supervisors for Changes in Schools Using MAXQDA Software"

Research Question Two: From the perspective of school managers and teachers, what ineffective approaches have educational supervisors employed in schools?

The first ineffective approach adopted by educational supervisors in schools was their limited vision. The results align with the research of Adams (1985) and Hunter (1980). The limitation in the perspective and viewpoint of educational supervisors within the school, along with the issues of supervision and evaluation, can emerge as a

serious obstacle. This often results from the lack of shared values between educational supervisors and teachers due to their differing and distinct perspectives, leading to a situation where teaching and learning occur with deficiencies and gaps. The limitation of vision for educational supervisors and other stakeholders in the school acts as a heavy debt (or cost). This limitation is a debt because it creates walls for educational leaders, disrupting their understanding of the nature of teachers' duties and the qualities and processes of education that do not align with the concepts chosen for teachers' success.

The second component identified as ineffective approaches for educational supervisors in schools was the weakness of the culture of specialization. Leadership responsibility for any organization, especially educational systems, is essential; however, the frequent lack of skills among educational leaders, lack of attention to individual differences among teachers during leadership, and the inexperience of educational supervisors often result in minimal academic progress for students in schools, influenced by the poor performance of teachers. The weakness of the culture of specialization among leaders is even viewed as a serious challenge for higher educational managers. Due to the absence of innovative and creative thinking among educational leaders, the school environment is deprived of nurturing their professional advancement.

Another central issue was the absence of a unified/integrated perspective from educational leaders. The results align with the research of Glathorn (1992). The weakness or absence of a combined viewpoint from leaders presents complex challenges to the pathways of educational and professional advancement for learners, becoming an obstacle to creating unique educational events, bilateral dialogue, and long-term commitments from both teachers and leaders towards high performance, which is interpreted as high student learning. The separation of foundational factors in student learning results in an imbalance of responsibility between teachers and leaders in the supervisory cycle, creating difficulties for leaders seeking

desirable outcomes from their work processes.

The fourth central issue was the internal nature of the weak relationship between educational supervisors and teachers. If a deep and collaborative internal relationship among managers, teachers, and leaders is not established, a negative atmosphere prevails over the working process of leaders and the teaching methods of teachers, severely affecting the school environment. In such conditions, establishing an atmosphere of trust and confidence is very difficult. Amateur and semi-skilled leaders struggle to cope with such circumstances and are unable to provide adequate cooperation with teachers, which in turn leads to weak teaching lacking mastery of the curriculum by teachers.

Another central issue identified as an ineffective approach by leaders in schools was the excessive emphasis on inspection. The results align with the research of Goldhammer (1996), Natriello (1982), and Pawlan (1985). The purely inspection-based model is an unprofessional approach that seeks to control the quality of teachers' performance through strict methods imposed by educational leaders. Indeed, it can be stated that this traditional approach in the present era can only utilize one method of reforming schools: appointing a leader with traditional thinking as an inspector for each school and allowing them to dismiss those teachers in need of reform without any innovative approach. This scenario is unlikely to be pleasing for teachers and schools.

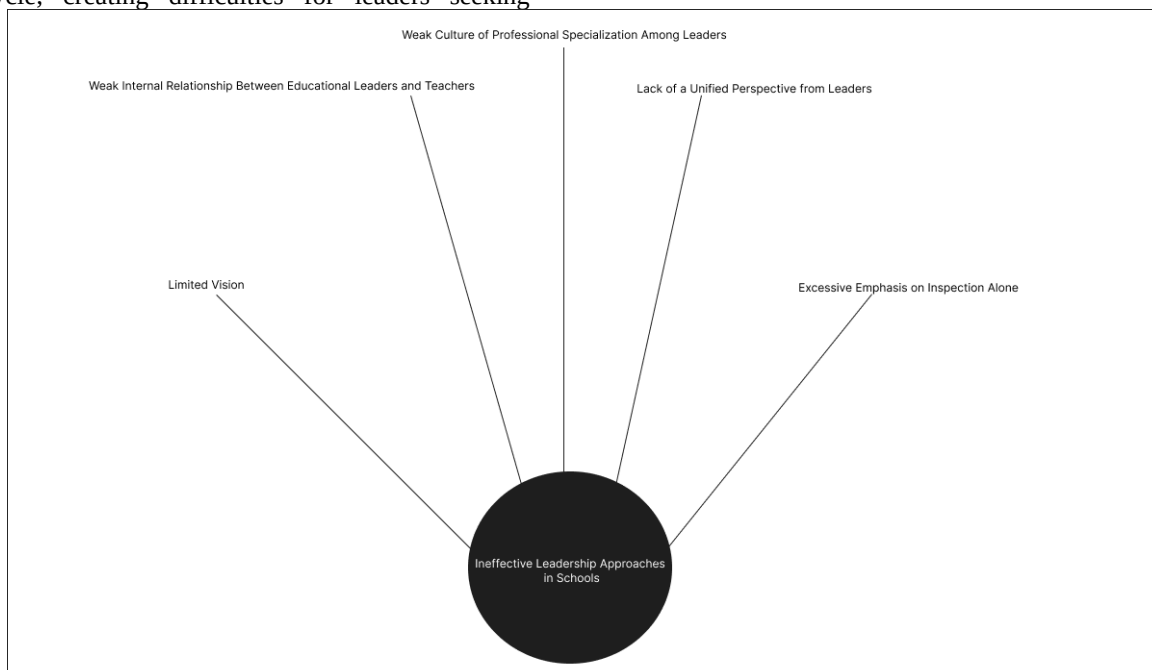


Figure 5-2: Extracted Model of Ineffective Approaches of Educational supervisors in Schools Using MAXQDA Software

Research Recommendations

1. Given that this study was conducted among teachers in Kermanshah Province and that there are very few studies in this area, it is recommended that further research be conducted among teachers in other provinces of the country. This will help clarify all aspects of the issue and identify both effective and ineffective approaches of educational supervisors from the perspectives of teachers in those provinces.

2. Since the research field of this study focused on the managers and teachers of Kermanshah Province, it is suggested that a similar study be conducted in Kurdistan Province as well.

3. Considering that this study aimed to focus on teachers and managers who have experienced the subject matter, it is recommended that research be conducted in other countries along the same lines to identify more efficient and inefficient approaches.

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NAME: Mehdi Salehi

EMAIL: mehdi452001@yahoo.com

Faculty member, Department of Educational Sciences,
University of Kurdistan



NAME: Abubakr Veysi

EMAIL: hajiabubakr1986@gmail.com

Master's degree in Educational Management, University of
Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran



NAME: Peyman Ghanbarian Ghalandar

EMAIL: peyman.gh420@gmail.com

PhD in Educational Management, University of Kurdistan,
Sanandaj, Iran

