

School Supervisors as Key in Improving the Managerial Competencies of Principals and Teachers in Aceh Besar

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Abstract

School supervisors play a crucial role in maintaining the quality of education, particularly in enhancing the managerial competencies of principals and teachers. Through supervision and oversight, supervisors ensure that the teaching and school management processes comply with established standards. This study aims to analyze the role of supervisors in improving the managerial competencies of principals and teachers in Aceh Besar Regency. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The research subjects consist of 18 individuals, including 3 school supervisors, 3 principals, and 12 teachers from three elementary schools: SDN Lambada Klieng, SDN Labuy, and SDN Ruyung. The subject selection was conducted using purposive sampling, aimed at gaining in-depth insights into the role of supervisors in enhancing the quality of education. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques, which include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The research findings indicate that supervisors play an important role in providing support to principals and teachers through training, supervision, and effective monitoring. The supervision carried out by school supervisors has proven to improve the managerial competencies of principals, as well as enhance the professionalism and quality of teaching among teachers. This study suggests the importance of the active role of supervisors in capacity-building programs for teachers and principals to achieve better education quality in Aceh Besar.

Kata kunci:

Peran Pengawas Sekolah, Kompetensi Manajerial, Peningkatan Kualitas Pendidikan

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Abstrak

Pengawas sekolah memiliki peran penting dalam menjaga kualitas pendidikan, terutama dalam meningkatkan kompetensi manajerial kepala sekolah dan guru. Melalui pengawasan dan supervisi, pengawas memastikan bahwa proses pembelajaran dan pengelolaan sekolah sesuai dengan standar yang ditetapkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran pengawas dalam meningkatkan kompetensi manajerial kepala sekolah dan guru di Kabupaten Aceh Besar. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari 18 orang, yang terdiri dari 3 pengawas sekolah, 3 kepala sekolah, dan 12 guru yang tersebar di tiga sekolah dasar, yaitu SDN Lambada Klieng, SDN Labuy, dan SDN Ruyung. Pemilihan subjek dilakukan dengan purposive sampling, yang bertujuan untuk mendapatkan wawasan yang mendalam mengenai peran pengawas dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, serta dianalisis dengan teknik analisis data kualitatif yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengawas berperan penting dalam memberikan dukungan kepada kepala sekolah dan guru melalui pelatihan, supervisi, dan monitoring yang efektif. Pengawasan yang dilakukan oleh pengawas sekolah terbukti mampu meningkatkan kompetensi manajerial kepala sekolah, serta meningkatkan profesionalisme dan kualitas pengajaran guru. Penelitian ini menyarankan pentingnya peran aktif pengawas dalam program peningkatan kapasitas guru dan kepala sekolah guna mewujudkan mutu pendidikan yang lebih baik di Aceh Besar.

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INTRODUCTION

School supervisors play a strategic role in the education system, particularly as guardians of quality and developers of the competencies of educators and education personnel (Amirudin, Supiana, Zaqiah, & Rohimah, 2024; Madkan, Mumtahana, & Ardianto, 2025; Marsena, Fatrisna, Sesmira, Saputra, & Yuliani, 2024; Wati, Nengsih, Handrianto, & Rahman, 2024). This study raises an important issue regarding the strategic role of school supervisors within the education system, particularly as guardians of quality and developers of educators' and education personnel's competencies (Fahrudin, Warti'ah, & Supriyanto, 2024; Husnaeni & Burga, 2024). As the spearhead of quality assurance, supervisors are responsible for ensuring that learning processes, school management, and other supporting activities align with national standards, even providing personal guidance to principals and teachers to address weaknesses through appropriate recommendations (Sartini, Triyono, & Triastuti, 2025; Triyono, Sahayu, & Yuliana, 2025). In certain contexts, such as regions facing geographical and social challenges, the role of supervisors becomes even more crucial because the implementation of education requires adaptive and intensive supervision (Senang, Sunardi, & Farchani, 2024; Siagian, Amin, Munawati, Syafruddin, & Suprihatin, 2025; Zufriyatun, Ismunadi, Muttaqin, Mukhammad, & Sadarman, 2025). Thus, the issue of supervisors' roles in enhancing the managerial competencies of principals and teachers is highly relevant to efforts to improve educational quality.

Although various studies have highlighted the roles of supervisors, principals, and teachers, there remains a gap in describing how supervisors concretely work to enhance managerial competencies at the school level (Desmiati, Kusnadi, & Yunus, 2023; Syarifah, Anam, & Maulana, 2025; Zamroni & Barnoto, 2024a). Principals, as leaders of educational institutions, are responsible for all operational aspects, including human resources, finance, infrastructure, and community relations (Hermawan, Anggraeni, Amar, Kadir, & Hamid, 2025; Ningsih, Darim, Srinio, & Jannah, 2025; Riski, Chande, & Adriantoni, 2024; Soro, Utomo, Budiyanoto, & Dewi, 2024). Managerial competence is essential to ensure that all school components work in harmony toward achieving educational goals (Mustofa, Asy'ari, & Ratnaningsih, 2024). However, many principals still struggle to carry out managerial duties due to limited training or inadequate facilities, making the supervisor's role as a mentor through continuous guidance vital (Wahidah, Amrulloh, & Hakim, 2024). On the other hand, teachers also require managerial competencies to contribute to school program planning, classroom management, and the implementation of effective learning activities (Hariyanto, 2024); (Setiawan, Widiyanah, Istiqfaroh, Ardelia, & Kristanti, 2023). Challenges such as limited access to training and a lack of in-depth mentoring (Lestari & Kurnia, 2023); (Hastutiningsih, Pramudiyanto, Elviana, & Raharjo, 2024). illustrate that research on the direct contribution of supervisors to improving teachers' competencies has not been widely explored. This study fills that gap.

In addressing these challenges, strengthening the role of school supervisors becomes essential. Supervisors function not only as evaluators but also as mentors who support principals and teachers in developing their competencies (Aisyah, Yusrianti, & Siregar, 2023; Arief et al., 2025; Rifki, Ma'arif, Rahmi, & Rokhman, 2024; Zamroni & Barnoto, 2024b). To provide effective guidance, supervisors need to understand the local context, such as the specific needs of schools in particular areas, and offer direction that is tailored to those conditions (Timpal, 2024). Strengthening this role can be achieved through training, adequate resource provision, and granting broader authority (Nurrochman, Darsinah, & Wafroaturrohman, 2023). Competent supervisors with a

clear vision can become significant agents of change in improving educational quality (Msamba, Msuya, & Anangisye, 2023; Rohmadi, Rahmat, & Ardianto, 2024; Rokhimawan, Ichsan, Aulia, & Rifai, 2025; Yulianto, 2023). In addition, harmonious collaboration among supervisors, principals, and teachers is essential to creating a productive learning environment. Supervisors serve as a bridge between government policies and their implementation at the school level (Susanto, Tohardi, & Juliana, 2024). and they must build strong working relationships, provide moral support, and foster open communication (Fathoni, Sulaeman, Azizah, Styawati, & Ramadhan, 2024; Fitrawati, Insan, & Djalil, 2024; Salamah, Mujiono, & Muslihun, 2025). Based on this context, the aim of this research is to gain an in-depth understanding of how supervisors help improve the managerial competencies of principals and teachers.

This study is based on the assumption that effective supervision has a tangible impact on improving the managerial competencies of principals and teachers. Competent principals can create more organized, transparent, and accountable management, thereby increasing public trust in the school (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023). Teachers with strong managerial competence are also able to deliver high-quality instruction, foster innovation, and enhance student motivation. However, previous research findings indicate that the managerial competencies of principals and teachers in Aceh Besar still need improvement. Although principals have planned various efforts such as teacher training, facility improvements, and addressing students' learning needs, their implementation remains constrained and requires further evaluation. This raises an important question: How do supervisors work to enhance the managerial competencies of principals and teachers? This question is answered through data analysis in the study, with the aim of providing empirical insights into the contribution of supervisors in improving managerial quality in schools.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to explore the approaches used by school supervisors in building a strategic culture, strengthening cooperation, and identifying supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. To achieve this goal, the study uses a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to delve deeply into the data and understand the behaviors, experiences, and perspectives of relevant individuals. The qualitative method produces descriptive data in the form of words, both oral and written, that represent the reality of the research subjects (Nurhayati, Apriyanto, Ahsan, & Hidayah, 2024). This approach is highly relevant for systematically and accurately portraying educational phenomena without focusing on hypothesis testing. The qualitative approach was chosen for several key reasons. First, it allows the researcher to adapt to multidimensional and complex facts. Second, this method facilitates a more direct relationship between the researcher and the subjects, thereby enhancing the validity of the data obtained. Third, this approach is sensitive to social and cultural values that influence behavioral patterns and dynamics in the field. In the context of this study, qualitative descriptive research provides the flexibility to understand the educational situation holistically. This study involves school supervisors, principals, and teachers as the main subjects, with a participant range between 12 and 30 people from SDN Lambada Klieng, SDN Labuy, and SDN Ruyung. The selection of this number is based on the need to generate rich and varied data to answer the research questions. The researcher first conducts observations to ensure the appropriateness of the location, subjects, and issues being studied before proceeding to

the interview and documentation stages. This approach ensures that the data collected encompasses a variety of relevant perspectives.

The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation (Waruwu, 2023). Observation is conducted to understand field conditions directly by utilizing all senses and tools such as audio recordings or photos. This approach allows researchers to identify patterns of interaction and dynamics between supervisors, principals, and teachers. Structured interviews are conducted with questions designed to delve into the roles, challenges, and strategies of the research subjects. Additionally, unstructured interviews are employed to explore supplementary information that may not emerge during formal sessions. Documentation serves as a highly significant supplementary method in this study. Various documents, such as supervision reports, meeting minutes, school administrative data, and other relevant documents, are analyzed to complement the data gathered from observations and interviews. Through this method, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the educational context and ensure the validity of the information obtained from the research subjects.

The data analysis process in this study involves three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, the collected information is summarized and focused on points relevant to the research objectives. This stage helps researchers identify significant patterns emerging from the data. Subsequently, the reduced data is systematically organized into a data presentation format. This presentation facilitates the researcher's understanding of the relationships between the obtained information and the logical drawing of conclusions. The final stage is conclusion drawing, where the researcher interprets the data based on insights gained during the study. Conclusions are elaborated in a narrative form that addresses the research questions and provides relevant recommendations. With this approach, the study is expected to offer an in-depth understanding of the role of school supervisors in enhancing strategic culture and collaboration, as well as supporting the development of principals' and teachers' competencies. This approach also ensures that supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of strategies can be comprehensively identified.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study involves interviews with three supervisors under the Aceh Besar Education Office to evaluate measures aimed at enhancing the managerial competencies of school principals. The interview process was conducted in stages to obtain representative results and avoid cooperation challenges. Based on the supervisors' responses, several strategic measures have been implemented, including group mentoring, mentoring programs, and community-based training to strengthen professional networks and foster innovation in school management. Training evaluations were conducted through direct monitoring, performance observation, and long-term impact analysis on educational indicators.

Partnerships with relevant educational institutions played a crucial role in designing training programs that matched the needs of schools. The main challenge encountered was the low interest in learning among principals and teachers. This was addressed through a personal approach, training needs surveys, and the establishment of learning communities. In addition, the implementation of measures aligned with the "*Guidance Cycle*" has largely been on track, although adjustments are still needed in documentation, reporting, and relevance of training materials. Future plans include

expanding the scope of programs, involving more stakeholders, introducing diverse training modules, and ensuring resource accessibility for all principals and teachers.

Interviews with three school principals revealed positive assessments of the supervisors’ success in supporting school management, particularly in enhancing managerial competencies. The principals highlighted that supervisors actively guided them in reflecting on educational report cards and drafting effective and participatory school program plans. Supervisors were also viewed as partners and facilitators who encouraged collaborative participation in achieving school goals. Supervisors’ guidance in developing data-driven planning was also perceived to increase management effectiveness and learning quality. The principals further acknowledged that collaboration with supervisors had positive impacts on school activities. Supervisory support strengthened community participation, ensured smooth teaching and learning processes, and helped principals address challenges such as motivating teachers to contribute more actively.

Table 1. Supervisor Programs for Principals

No	Supervisor Program	SDN Lambada Klieng	SDN Labuy	SDN Ruyung
1.	Active mentoring in reflecting on educational report cards	√	√	√
2.	Developing effective and participatory school program plans	√	√	√
3.	Supervisors as mentors, partners, and facilitators	√	√	√
4.	Encouraging the involvement of all stakeholders in achieving educational goals	√	√	√
5.	Supervisory guidance in data-driven planning	√	√	√
6.	Supporting the effective implementation of teaching and learning activities	√	√	√
7.	Assisting principals in motivating teachers to actively contribute	√	√	√
8.	Overcoming challenges and obstacles in school management	√	√	√
9.	Enhancing principals' managerial capacity	√	√	√
10.	Improving overall educational quality	√	√	√

Based on the table obtained during observations at the schools, it was found that the supervisors at these three schools have implemented programs that assist principals in improving the quality of education. When presented in the form of a graph, it would look like this:

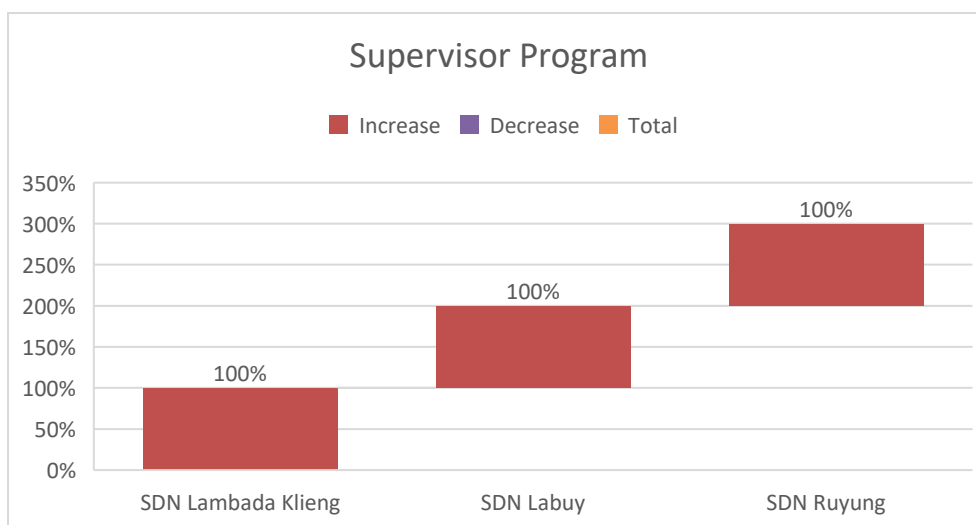


Figure 1. Percentase of supervisor program

The graph shows that the supervision program in the three schools has a 100% implementation rate, meaning that all the supervision programs have been fully executed in each of the schools. However, some challenges remain, such as suboptimal time management by the supervisors, lack of teacher data in evaluations, and the reluctance of some teachers to use technological media, such as laptops, in the guidance process. Below is the supervisor program in tabular form:

Table 2. Supervisor Programs for Teachers

No	Supervisor Program	SDN Lambada Klieng	SDN Labuy	SDN Ruyung
1.	Supervision	√	√	√
2.	Monitoring	√	√	√
3.	Evaluation	√	√	√
4.	Guidance	√	√	√
5.	Reporting	√	√	√
6.	Follow-up	√	√	√
7.	Development of Teaching Skills	√	√	√
8.	Improvement of Technologi Mastery	√	√	√
9.	Teacher Work Motivation	√	√	√
10.	Reflection and Self-Evaluation	√	√	√
11.	Time Management	√	√	-
12.	Teacher Data	√	-	-
13.	Use of Technologi Media	-	-	-

Based on the table provided, the supervisor programs at the three elementary schools (SDN Lambada Klieng, SDN Labuy, and SDN Ruyung) show various activities carried out to support the management and improvement of educational quality. All programs, including supervision, monitoring, evaluation, guidance, reporting, follow-up, development of teaching skills, improvement of technology mastery, teacher work motivation, and reflection and self-evaluation, are implemented in all three schools. However, there are

some activities that are not achieved in all schools, such as time management, which is only implemented in SDN Lambada Klieng and SDN Labuy, while SDN Ruyung does not implement this. Additionally, teacher data is only recorded in SDN Lambada Klieng, while SDN Labuy and SDN Ruyung do not carry out this program. The use of technology media is also not achieved in all three schools, indicating possible challenges in implementation or access to adequate technology. Based on the table obtained from observations at the schools, it appears that the supervisors at these three schools have provided programs that assist teachers in improving their classroom competencies. However, there are still some challenges. This can be visualized in a graph as follows:

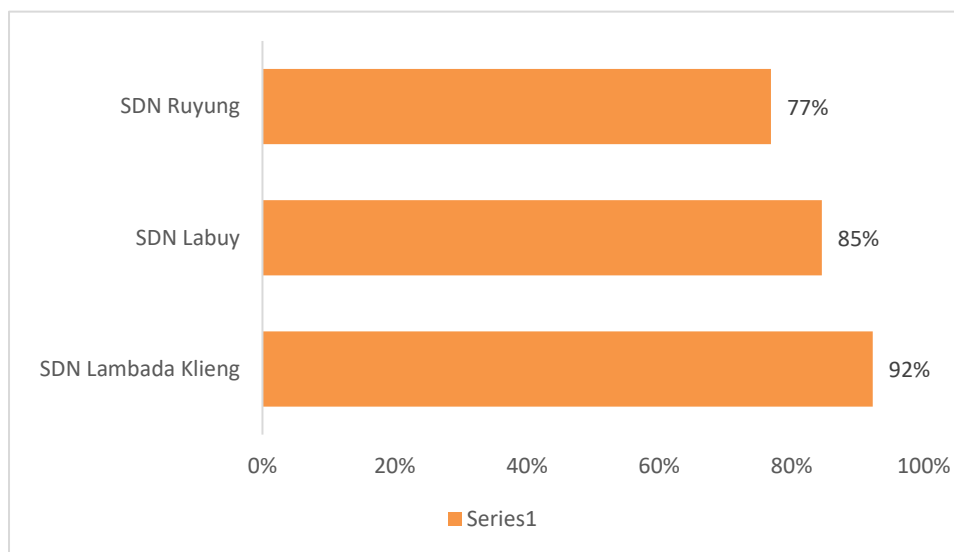


Figure 2. Supervisor Program

The percentage of supervisor programs for teachers in several elementary schools shows varying results. At SDN Lambada Klieng, the supervisor program achieved 92%, indicating a very high level of involvement. At SDN Labuy, this figure is slightly lower at 85%, which still indicates quite good supervision. Meanwhile, at SDN Ruyung, the supervision percentage is recorded at 77%, showing that while supervision is in place, there is still room for improving the involvement or implementation of the supervision program.

Before supervision efforts were strengthened, principals struggled in areas such as assertiveness, decision-making, communication, and technology management. Teachers also required improvement in pedagogy, technology use, variation in teaching methods, and professional development. After the interventions, there were notable improvements in managerial competencies, pedagogy, creativity, personality traits, and technology skills. Training, supervision, and teacher community activities were key contributing factors. Both principals and teachers responded positively to these improvements and expressed strong commitment to continued progress.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with previous research emphasizing the strategic role of school supervisors as quality assurance agents and professional mentors. Supervisors play a crucial function in strengthening both principal and teacher competencies, consistent with the perspectives of Marsena et al. (2024) and Amien et al. (2024), who describe supervisors as central figures in maintaining educational standards and providing targeted guidance. The implementation of structured mentoring, group guidance, and community-based training reflects the adaptive supervisory practices needed in diverse educational contexts.

Supervisors' reliance on partnerships with BPMP and BGP also reflects best practices in developing relevant capacity-building programs, as noted by (Siagian et al., 2025). The challenge of low learning motivation among principals and teachers mirrors findings from other studies, which highlight the need for personalized approaches and the importance of cultivating learning communities. The principals' acknowledgment of supervisors as mentors, partners, and facilitators aligns with the insights of (Wandra, Marsidin, & Rifma, 2021). who point out that collaborative supervision contributes significantly to achieving educational goals. Likewise, the support in data-driven planning observed in this study is consistent with (Haghi, Aliakbari, & Yasini, 2023) who emphasize that evidence-based decision-making enhances school effectiveness. The positive impact of supervisory collaboration on school management supports the work of (Ritonga, Harahap, & Adawiyah, 2023) who found that supervisory involvement strengthens community participation and instructional implementation. Teacher-related findings also align with (Heryana, Aurelia, Hayat, & Khumaidi, 2022; Kuraesin, 2020) who reported that supervision improves teacher skills, technology mastery, and teaching preparation.

Teachers have provided positive feedback regarding the support and guidance from the supervisors (Mahmud, 2023). They view the supervisor as a strategic partner in improving the quality of learning, an innovator in the development of teaching methods, a consultant in solving educational problems, and a motivator who encourages teachers to continue developing. The support provided by supervisors, such as constructive feedback, helps teachers plan innovative lessons, evaluate performance, and create a collaborative learning environment (Muaripin & Muaripin, 2024; Posangi, Lundeto, Labaso, Anwar, & Damopolii, 2025; Sutarno, 2023; Yuliana, Setiawan, & Fadli, 2023). Nevertheless, some teachers expect guidance that is more tailored to their specific needs, as well as more open and intensive communication.

The programs carried out by the supervisors also have a significant impact on teachers' performance in the classroom (Tarimo & Lekule, 2024). The implementation of supervision is considered effective in enhancing teachers' professionalism, skills in managing learning, and creativity in creating a conducive learning environment (Ameli, Ayaga, & Ouda, 2024; Irfan, Usman, & Bahrin, 2024). Teachers feel more directed in carrying out their tasks, such as managing the classroom, preparing teaching materials, and using effective teaching methods. Supervision also helps teachers in facing learning challenges, enhancing work motivation, and creating a higher-quality learning environment (Christopher, Osaki, & Makundi, 2024; Sartini et al., 2025). Overall, the role of supervisors in guidance and supervision has made a significant contribution to the improvement of educational quality in Aceh Besar, although adjustments are still needed to address the existing challenges.

Before the intervention, school principals faced difficulties in areas such as assertiveness, decision-making, communication, as well as managing technology and learning programs. Teachers also required improvement in pedagogy, the use of technology, variation in teaching methods, and professional development (Orakova et al., 2024). After the intervention, there was an improvement in the principals' managerial competencies, such as in managing work programs and collaborating with relevant parties. Teachers also showed improvement in pedagogy, personality, creativity, and technology skills. Efforts such as training, supervision, and teacher community activities became key factors in the success (Zahro, Rizka, Handayani, Lestari, & Widyaningrum, 2024). Successful experiences include competency training, accreditation mentoring, and learning innovations such as the "Smart Ladder" for mathematics. The reactions of school principals and teachers to the intervention were very positive, reflecting enthusiasm and commitment to continuous improvement (Mallillin, 2022). The expectation moving forward is the sustained enhancement of competencies, the expansion of program coverage, and the development of more innovative and relevant methods.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that supervisory practices in Aceh Besar effectively improve the managerial competencies of school principals and the quality of teaching through mentoring programs, school program planning, and the development of teaching skills, despite challenges such as low learning motivation and limited technological use, which can be partly addressed through personal approaches and learning communities. The study reinforces previous findings on the importance of supervision and provides new evidence that collaborative approaches, data-driven planning, and adaptive supervisory models can enhance school management effectiveness while offering new perspectives for developing context-based supervisory practices. However, this study is limited by its small sample size, specific location, and lack of variation in educational levels and respondent characteristics; therefore, further research with broader coverage and more diverse methods is needed to produce a more comprehensive understanding and support more effective educational supervision policies.

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