

## Enhancing Educational Supervision in Palestine: Insights from the Swedish Model

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### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of the structure and operations of supervision in Sweden, which is known for its effectiveness, in order to enhance educational supervision in Palestine. It also examined previous studies on the current Palestinian supervision system and its challenges which showed that while Palestine has moved towards more modern supervision methods, there are still issues like lack of training for supervisors, and focus on inspection over development; which reveal the need for continued modernization and enhancement of the system, around organizational structures and supervision methods. To address these gaps, the study proposed a model for the Palestinian educational supervision structure, inspired by Swedish approach, and it ended up with recommendations such as training supervisors on modern supervision methods, and implementing accountability through audits. Adopting aspects of the Swedish model could enhance the Palestinian educational supervision system.

**Keywords:** Educational supervision, Palestine, Sweden, school leadership.



## تعزيز الإشراف التربوي في فلسطين: إطلاقات من النموذج السويدي

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### ملخص:

إن الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو تقديم نظرة عامة على هيكل الإشراف التربوي في السويد وعملياته، المعروفة بفاعيتها، بهدف تطوير الإشراف التربوي في فلسطين. كما ناقشت الدراسات السابقة نظام الإشراف التربوي الفلسطيني الحالي وتحدياته، والتي أظهرت أنه بينما انتقلت فلسطين نحو طرق إشراف تربوي أكثر حداثة، إلا أنه ما زال هناك تحديات مثل نقص التدريب للمشرفين، والتركيز على التفتيش بدلاً من التطوير وغيرها؛ مما يكشف الحاجة إلى مواصلة التحديث وتعزيز النظام. ولمعالجة هذه الفجوات، اقترحت الدراسة نموذجاً لهيكلية الإشراف التربوي الفلسطيني مستوحى من النهج السويدي، وانتهت بتوصيات مثل تدريب المشرفين على أساليب الإشراف الحديثة، وتنفيذ المساءلة من خلال التدقيق. إن تبني جوانب النموذج السويدي يمكن أن يعزز نظام الإشراف التربوي الفلسطيني.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الإشراف التربوي، فلسطين، السويد، القيادة المدرسية.

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## **Introduction**

Education is the vital core of human societies, enabling their advancement across all areas. Civilizations have been built up and have progressed due to education. It is a fundamental human right promoted by religions and international laws. A country's development is measured by its educational system. Thus, countries prioritize education highly, seeing it as a source of empowerment and a solution to challenges. Developing nations in particular strive continuously to improve their education systems in order to progress and catch up with more developed countries.

The 21st century has brought rapid change in all domains, presenting challenges for education system. Educational supervision is critical for improving education quality. It guides teachers through counsel, development opportunities, and pedagogical innovations to equip students for the future. Supervisors identify struggling teachers and students, provide mentoring, and support adoption of new technologies. With strong supervision that evolves alongside technological advances, education system can flourish despite 21st century challenges (Hussein & Awad, 2006).

The notion of educational supervision has progressed through various phases, evolving based on shifts in administrative principles. Initially, supervision was restricted to inspection and faultfinding, relying on sudden classroom visit (Al-Saud, 2022). However, as educational research revealed the limitations of this approach for enhancing teaching and learning, supervision adopted more developmental focus (Abu Shamlah, 2009). This involved moving beyond criticism to empower teachers, provide meaningful feedback, and foster a collaborative culture aimed at continuously improving instructional quality and student outcomes. Effective supervision is achieved through an organizational structure that combines centralized sovereignty of law and close follow-up with delegated authorities and participation in decision-making, and creating a collaborative atmosphere that together ensure the quality of educational outputs (Zepeda, 2017).

Education in Sweden is often considered one of the best in the world (Abdullahresul & Talusi, 2021). This is largely due to the country's effective education supervision system. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD (2020) report, Sweden has a comprehensive evaluation and supervision framework that ensures quality education across the country. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate

regularly inspects schools and provides support to ensure they meet national standards and improve any deficiencies (Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2021).

In contrast, the education system in Palestine faces many challenges and needs improvement. A UNICEF (2022) report found major gaps in educational access and quality in Palestine. Limited resources, and the ongoing conflict constrain the development of the Palestinian education sector (Nicolai, 2007).

The Swedish education system ensures quality supervision through several mechanisms and agencies; these include: State responsibility, responsible bodies, Swedish National Agencies for Education (Skolverket), Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen), Quality assurance in adult education and training (Folkbildningsradet). These mechanisms and agencies work together to maintain a high quality equitable education in Sweden by ensuring that schools comply with national laws and regulations (Eurydice-European Union, 2023; Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2021; The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2015; Boztas & Kemal, 2012). However, to look over the quality of the Swedish educational system from the perspective of the PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), we note that the Swedish students' performance was above average compared to their peers in The European Union in the previous years (Boman, 2002). Based on the previously mentioned, the supervision model in Sweden could provide insights to help strengthen Palestine's education system. This could improve oversight, accountability, and quality assurance across Palestinian schools.

### **Statement of the problem and study questions**

Educational supervision is a critical component of any effective education system, yet research indicated there were weaknesses in the Palestinian supervision system that may be hindering educational outcomes. The results of multiple studies examining the reality of educational supervision in Palestine indicated a clear need to improve and develop the practices of the supervision system, by adopting modern methods in supervision, enhancing accountability and transparency, and rethinking upon the structure of the educational supervision system in Palestine (Khalaf & Fareed, 2022; Al-Hadidi, 2020; Hamayel, 2019; Farhan, 2012; Sleiman, 2011; Qamar & Musaleha, 2007). The overall findings showed only a moderate degree of effective supervision that fosters professional development and growth for teachers. To truly

transform the supervision culture, there must be greater investment in training supervisors on modern methods, reducing supervisor workloads, increasing trust and partnership between supervisors and teachers, and moving away from an 'inspector' mindset (The Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2016).

Sweden is recognized as having an effective approach to educational supervision (Eurydice-European Union, 2023; Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2021; The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2015; Boztas & Kemal, 2012), that could provide insights for improving the Palestinian system. This research will provide an overview over the structure and mechanisms of the educational supervision system in Sweden, propose a model for the structure of the educational Palestinian supervision system, as well as suggest recommendations that could be adopted to improve the educational supervision in Palestine.

Based on the above, the following questions are sought to be answered in this study:

1. What is the organizational and operational structure of the educational supervision system in Sweden?
2. What is the reality of the Palestinian educational supervision system, and what are its challenges?
3. How can the educational supervision in Palestine be enhanced in light of the Swedish model?

### **Study Purpose**

Based on the questions provided, the purpose of the study seems to be:

- Provide an overview of how the educational supervision system in Sweden is organized and operated.
- Provide an overview of the structure and mechanisms of the educational supervision system in Palestine.
- Assess the current supervision system for educators in Palestine including its structure, and processes through results revealed from previous studies related to the subject, and shed light on major challenges.
- Develop a model and put forth on recommendations to improve the supervision system for Palestinian educators, informed by lessons from the Swedish approach.

### **Study Importance**

The importance of this study is determined in two aspects: theoretical

and practical. From a theoretical standpoint, it may contribute to enriching the educational literature and providing a reference framework for researchers, decision makers in the Palestinian Ministry of Education, and leaders. As for the practical aspect, it is hoped that the study will contribute to improving the structure of educational supervision in Palestine and enhancing supervisory practices in order to raise educational outcomes.

### **Methodology**

The current study followed the theoretical Analytic–Synthetic Methodology which is based on analyzing the theoretical literature related to the subject, as it is suitable for the nature of the study. The Analytical-Synthetic Methodology, as Al-Saud (2020) explained, is the result of combining two approaches: the analytical approach and the synthetic approach. These two approaches have an important influence on the processes of thinking and knowledge. Each complements the other by using abstract perceptions, intellectually breaking them down into parts for understanding, then reassembling them to recreate the whole.

Based on that, the justification for using this approach in the current study is to provide an overview over the Swedish Educational system, and clarify how supervision works in Sweden, and that for Palestine as well, provide a comparison analysis between them, and assess the current Palestinian system through analyzing results and recommendations of previous studies on the subject, and use insights from Sweden to propose a model for the structure Palestinian supervision system and suggest recommendations to enhance the supervision process for educators in the Palestinian context.

### **Results**

#### **Q1: What is the organizational and operational structure of the educational supervision system in Sweden?**

##### **Overview on the Educational system in Sweden**

The school system in Sweden includes several types, most of which are affiliated with municipalities, as well as independent schools and other schools such as those affiliated with the Sami nationalities and immigrant schools. It is free except for the preparatory stage and higher education where simple fees are imposed, and it is also compulsory up to the ninth school year. Seventy percent of the school system is funded by municipal taxes, and the Swedish government treats public and private schools

equally, as it adopts a "school for all" policy to ensure every student's right to equal education regardless of their economic or social background. As equity is a core principle, all students receive free school meals, health care, transportation, and learning materials. Schools in disadvantaged areas get more funding and support (OECD, 2023).

The Swedish education system places a strong emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, and student autonomy. Teachers act as guides and facilitators, allowing students to direct their own learning. This stimulates innovation, and self-motivation. Teachers have high social status and autonomy. Requirements are strict for entry into teaching, but pay and benefits are excellent. This professionalism empowers the workforce (European Union, 2011).

The Swedish education system also focuses on group work, discussion, and democratic decision-making regarding curricula. Students help shape their own study plans and curricula, so unified national curricula do not exist. Practical compulsory subjects like swimming, carpentry, sculpture, electronics, cooking, and sewing aim to develop well-rounded individuals. The flexible national curriculum allows teachers to adapt to students' needs and interests. Assessment involves ongoing collaboration focused on development rather than standardized testing or ranking, reducing stress (OECD, 2015).

Early childhood education focuses on play-based learning and socialization. Language and social skills are taught through play. Basic subjects are introduced without formal curricula until 7th grade. In high school, additional languages, more advanced science and social science, religion, and vocational programs become available. Vocational education is integrated through apprenticeships and career-focused programs, facilitating direct career pathways for non-academic students (OECD, 2023).

Such a system must be subject to an educational administration and supervision system that should be explored.

### **Educational Supervision in Sweden**

Educational supervision in Sweden is a system to prevent school difficulties, promote learning, and develop work in an organized and goal-oriented manner towards long-term goals (Thorin & Larsson, 2022).

Abdullahresul and Talusi (2021) pointed out that Sweden has an effective supervision system that has evolved over the years, and the educational institution's need for supervision does not mean that people are

unable to do their job. Rather, it can facilitate the change process that leads the educational institution to success.

The responsibility for planning and educational supervision of schools, vocational education, higher education, adult education and refugees in Sweden lies with the "Ministry of Education and Educational Research". This educational supervision within the school sector has a structure that was established since the 1990s and is still in place today. It consists of three levels: the national level, the local level, and the executive level represented in school administration.

### **First: Supervision at the National Level**

It includes the following institutions:

#### **1.1 The Swedish National Agency for Education:**

The agency sets the general framework and guidelines for providing and evaluating education through plans, knowledge requirements and tests. It is the main supporter for developing schools by providing reform initiatives and keeping abreast of everything new through conferences and online information. It also cares about developing competencies through the "National School Leadership Training Program" and the "Complementary Professional Training" initiative for teachers and supervisors. It is also responsible for the national examinations and evaluation of Swedish schools, publishing an annual report on this and granting a license to practice teaching (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2015).

#### **1.2 The Swedish Schools Inspectorate:**

Its overall objective is to ensure the provision of a school system that guarantees the right of all children to acquire good knowledge and education in a safe and motivating environment. It carries out four main tasks: regular supervision, quality audits, investigations and decisions related to individual complaints, and issuing independent school permits. The Inspectorate also issues special reports on this that it submits to the higher authorities, which in turn publishes them on its website to make them available to everyone (Segerholm et al., 2022).

Based on the The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (2010) publications, regular supervision by the Inspection Department on Swedish Schools is by reviewing and auditing all school authorities, i.e. municipal associations and educational institutions and other organizations that manage school activities. This is done every three years with prior notice, and the purpose

is to identify areas for improvement in schools and their various activities and promote development.

**The Inspectorate's auditing at the local level is on the following matters:**

- Educational conditions: such as the level of education and experience of the school principal and supervisors, and the standards for their selection and the extent of their application; in addition to health services for students, counseling and guidance, etc.
- Development of education: such as quality initiatives and resource allocation.
- The financial and legal conditions of the school authority to provide education.
- At the school level, the Inspectorate audits the following matters:
  - Teaching and learning: which is based on the curriculum and effective teacher support, taking into account the individual needs of students, and providing special support for those who need it.
  - Student assessment and grading: to ensure that the teacher uses all available information about students' knowledge and assesses it in a comprehensive manner.
  - Safety and proper study environment: and following preventive methods to create a school environment based on respect and prevent students' aggressive behavior, dropping out, etc., and the use of health services and the nature of the meals provided to students.

As for auditing, it is an in-depth audit of specific areas in the school system based on national goals and principles supported by research results. The auditor collects written documents, visits schools, conducts interviews and observations, and surveys with staff, students and parents, to identify areas for development, follow up on their implementation and evaluate them.

Regarding complaints, it follows up on students' complaints and everyone who benefits from the educational process, investigates them and follows up cases in courts, and imposes penalties on violating schools.

The Inspectorate also issues permits for independent schools based on a number of criteria and after conducting a comprehensive assessment, and considering whether the education in the school to be licensed adds something new to the set of educational programs available in the town. (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2010)

It is worth mentioning that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate employs about four hundred experienced staff in various fields, from educators, supervisors, auditors, legal experts, statisticians, and sociologists. The Inspectorate trains them with the bulk of intensive training for auditors and supervisors, believing in the importance of their role. It also publishes self-evaluation models on its website that allow stakeholders in municipalities and schools to do so in the interest of transparency and clarity in what they will be evaluated on.

### **1.3 The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools:**

It represents the main advisor for everything related to special education, and provides the necessary special educational materials. It also directly manages schools for students with special needs.

### **1.4 The Swedish Centre for Educational Research:**

It is commissioned to systematically collect research results and make them available to teachers, school principals and other stakeholders within the school. Bergmark and Hansson (2021) indicated that Sweden has worked with this new method since 2015 and it has become a legal requirement, that the basis of education be built on scientific basis and proven experience. It is the first country in the world to do so, which pushed teachers and school principals to find ways to build research-based education and activate it in the educational process. Accepted experience-based knowledge is documented and incorporated into the educational process.

### **Second: Educational Supervision at the Local Level**

It is the responsibility of municipalities. In the twentieth century, the Swedish Parliament adopted a decentralization policy and gave the municipalities (about 300 municipalities) full responsibility for school activities. The municipality adopts a school plan describing the financing, organization and development of school activities, guidance and evaluation using the approved curriculum that is consistent with the national objectives and the local school plan (OECD, 2021). It is also responsible for appointing teachers after they are selected by the school board, providing books and equipment, and providing training programs for teachers and specialized supervisors within the school based on a request from the school, and providing those schools with what they need to develop their performance and achieve quality before the Swedish Schools Inspectorate reaches them.

**Third: Supervision at the Executive Level**

The school principal, deputy and head teacher, as resident supervisors at the school, draw up the school's annual plan, monitor the teaching-learning process within the school, evaluate teachers, and suggest ways and means to improve the teaching and learning process in consultation with the other members of the school management board, which includes teachers from the school, elected parents, staff from the local education administration, a non-education worker, and this board works voluntarily without any compensation (Boztas & Kemal, 2012).

This board also controls the school's funding budget and monitors it, and nominates the teachers who are appointed by the local education administration at the municipal level. There are also specialized supervisors for the various subjects and department heads within the school who monitor the quality and progress of the teaching-learning process within it, and this is done through dialogue as educational supervision in Sweden tries to develop the teacher's ability to find appropriate solutions through thinking that occurs in supervisory conversations (Abdullahresul & Talusi, 2021).

**Teacher Training**

Teachers are considered one of the most important resources to enhance student learning, and they are the main pillar of the education development process in Sweden. In recent years, as an important part of the education management and educational supervision process, Levander (2022) indicated that higher education in Sweden focused on attracting senior lecturers, with advanced academic degrees, according to special recruitment procedures, and the selection process is based on two criteria which are giving great attention to assessing educational experience and assessing research experience. The student enrolled in the education college at the university studies teacher training programs for four years, then conducts an induction year as pre-service training in coordination with the Swedish National Education Agency, after which he becomes a certified teacher after applying for a license to practice the profession (Martin & Christopher, 2022).

The Agency also provides in-service training programs for teachers and supervisors such as the "Complementary Professional Training" programs, the "National School Leadership Training Program", which started operating since 2007 until now, and there are other new training programs such as initiatives for reform, development and professional

training for teachers that have been adopted since 2013, which grant significant salary increases funded by the government to those enrolled in them, and teachers are admitted to join them based on their documented experiences and recommendations from their principals (Gronmo & Onstad, 2013).

It is worth mentioning that many municipalities in Sweden, in partnership with local universities, implement “Professional Learning Communities” projects within schools to develop education, where teachers work with their peers in collective analysis and reflection on teaching practices and exchange experiences among themselves (Wennergren & Blossing, 2017).

Thus, from believing in the teacher's role, we see how the Swedish government manifests his role, gives him social status and satisfies him financially as a teacher's salary in Sweden is one of the best salaries, attaches him to training courses while giving him incentives, which represents moral support that makes him give his best.

### **Criteria for Selecting Supervisors in Sweden**

The important role given by the Swedish government to the educational supervisor, and the confirmation of his professional identity, whether at the national, local or school level, has become clear. Under an accountability, transparency and auditing system by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, supervisors are selected according to a set of criteria that consist of having a master's degree in educational administration, and having teaching or school management experience ranging between at least four to six years, and having to pass prescribed training programs and exam for this profession by the Swedish National Agency for Education, in addition to enjoying professional and personal competence, self-control and emotional stability (Brauckmann et al., 2020).

### **Q2: What is the reality of the Palestinian supervision system, and what are its challenges?**

#### **Structure and Mechanisms of Educational Supervision in Palestine:**

The structure and mechanisms of educational supervision in Palestine can be clarified as follows (Ministry of Education, 2013):

1. **Resident educational supervision:** The supervisor stays at schools for a sufficient period and participates with the teacher to improve the educational process through observation and follow-up of changes at the school. It goes through two stages: preparatory stage and

implementation stage.

2. **Supporting schools through a quality coordinator:** An educational supervisor responsible for managing the improvement of education quality in a cluster of schools by providing support and assistance to school principals and teachers through regular meetings, developing plans to meet schools' technical and material needs, coordinating with other subject supervisors, activating professional learning communities, following up on comprehensive monitoring reports, etc.
3. **Pioneering projects, studies and research:** The cluster coordinator follows up on pioneering projects, disseminates successful experiences between schools, forms small arbitration committees to referee research and studies, and submits reports to the head of the supervision department on the supervisor's activities in the cluster.
4. **Comprehensive monitoring:** A planned, organized process to make a comprehensive diagnosis of the school's status, then provide quality learning for students according to school performance standards that achieve the Ministry of Education's vision and educational philosophy. It monitors school leadership, teachers, students, and the educational environment through three visits where schools are classified according to set criteria.
5. **Cluster as a development unit:** A cluster consists of 5 schools on average. An educational supervisor called the quality coordinator for each cluster contributes to developing and implementing plans, providing advice, and transferring expertise between cluster schools. The cluster concept aims to create a common language between teachers of the same subject to disseminate experiences and successes, reinforce decentralization through cooperation with education directorates, institutions and local community, and achieve quality student learning by providing material resources and facilities.

The directorate is divided into educational regions of 5-8 regions, then each region is divided into clusters containing 3-5 schools, one of which is the cluster center. It coordinates all activities in the cluster, has leadership and teaching staff, educational facilities and labs, and is open to the local community. Work in clusters is activated through peer supervision in regions and clusters, professional learning communities to identify areas of work and professional needs at different levels, and public education councils to activate partnerships with the local community to support education.

### **A comparison analysis of the educational supervision systems in Sweden and Palestine**

While both Sweden and Palestine have established systems for educational supervision, there are some key differences between the two:

- Sweden has a centralized national supervision system with clear roles divided between different national agencies like the Schools Inspectorate, National Agency for Education, and National Agency for Special Needs Education. This provides a robust framework for setting standards, training, evaluation and oversight across all regions.
- Palestine's supervision system appears with supervision happening at the regional and cluster levels. The national Ministry of Education sets overall vision and standards but implementation is driven locally.
- Sweden conducts regular inspections of all schools on a 3-year cycle to audit operations and compliance. Palestine's supervision seems more focused on monitoring learning outcomes and school performance through cluster visits.
- Sweden places emphasis on training supervisors and principals through national programs like the Leadership Training Program. This ensures consistency and quality of school leadership.
- Both utilize school clusters for collaboration, sharing best practices, and distributed leadership. However, Sweden's clusters seem to be more developed with a clear cluster center school.
- Sweden focuses strongly on attracting and developing teacher quality through recruitment, training incentives and salary. This elevates the teaching profession.
- Sweden utilizes research and proven experience to inform teaching practices. Explicit use of research is lacking in Palestine's supervision structure.
- Sweden seems to strike a balance between national quality standards and local flexibility for context-specific solutions. The supervision system enables decentralization and distributed leadership across different levels. Aspects that indicate decentralization in their model include: municipal autonomy over schools; school-based planning; shared governance with local stakeholders; flexibility in curriculum, assessment, and professional development; regional collaboration in networks; and school choice policies incentivizing responsiveness.

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**Challenges of educational supervision in Palestine**

The development of educational supervision in Palestine has been uniquely impacted by the historical challenges faced by the Palestinian people, including occupation and lack of sovereignty. Since 1994, the Ministry of Education has been transforming supervision from an inspection role to one focused on supporting teachers. It has worked to study global trends and adopt modern, integrated supervision methods with the goal of continuous improvement and progress despite obstacles. Educational supervision in Palestine aims to catch up with other countries not facing these challenges, though the context remains exceptional due to the ongoing violations and absence of Palestinian control over their land.

The supervisory trends adopted by the Palestinian Ministry of Education were not easy to implement at first. They faced challenges of clinging to the old ways, especially in the first stages of introducing the new, in addition to other challenges like misunderstanding the intended messages of the new programs, lack of training especially in early stages due to lack of conviction with change, lack of reinforcement for groups involved in development, and lack of material incentives for the Palestinian educational supervisor and his heavy burdens, which puts the Educational leaders in Palestine into continuous challenges to reform the structure and methods of the supervision system (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2010).

Many studies have been conducted to examine the reality of educational supervision in Palestine. Their results showed that the educational supervision structure and methods need development. A study conducted by Khalaf and Fareed (2022) recommended the necessity of designing organizational structures for the Palestinian educational supervision in modern ways to improve its efficiency level.

Al-Hadidi (2020) study showed that administrative governance, including the rule of law, transparency and accountability, is minimally practiced in the Palestinian Ministry of Education. The study recommended the necessity to let employees at the Ministry of Education have access on reports, integrating them in decision making, have hiring being based on merit and competence principles, adopting clear standards, and relying on a transparent promotion system.

As for Hamayel (2019), it indicated a moderate response regarding the reality of supervision related to teacher performance in upper basic governmental schools in the northern West Bank governorates. The study recommended reexamining concepts of modern educational supervision

and its types, and reducing the workload and number of teachers assigned to the supervisor.

Farhan's (2012) study also showed that teachers' and principals' perception of the reality of the educational supervision process in governmental basic schools in Jerusalem and Ramallah educational directorates and its role in raising teacher functional performance was moderate.

Suleiman's (2011) study, which aimed to identify the degree to which supervisors in Bethlehem and Hebron practice different supervision patterns from the viewpoint of supervisors and teachers, found that supervisors practice different patterns to a moderate degree. The study urged supervisors to adopt supervisory patterns that take into account individual differences among teachers, and meet their needs.

Hamad's (2009) study showed moderate estimates by governmental secondary school teachers in the northern Palestinian governorates regarding the performance of educational supervisors in light of modern supervisory trends. The study recommended diversifying supervisory methods with a focus on modern trends in supervision.

The study of Qamar and Musaleha (2007) also emphasized the necessity of adopting quality standards in the educational supervision program provided in the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, including the philosophy of supervision followed and the quality of planning.

Analysis of research into Palestinian educational supervision practices makes evident the imperative for continued modernization and enhancement of the system, particularly around organizational structures and supervision methods targeting teacher growth. While progress has been made in transforming the predominantly inspection-based supervision model since 1994, studies widely rate current implementation as only moderately effective and lacking elements that characterize robust, supportive supervision. Areas like adoption of contemporary frameworks and approaches, ensuring quality through transparency and accountability, all require address. Moreover, organizational change including updated hierarchical structures is integral into one that strikes a balance between centralization of national quality standards and dominance of law, and the decentralization and local flexibility to improve its efficiency level. Though the Palestinian supervisory system aims to catch up globally while facing exceptional challenges, researchers concur that there remains

significant room for elevating supervision to optimize outcomes for students. Thus reform both system wide and in supervision execution adopting models like the Swedish one seem to address obstacles that the researchers revealed regarding the Palestinian education supervision system. This continues to be a priority for the educational field in working to fulfill its improvement agenda despite obstacles imposed externally.

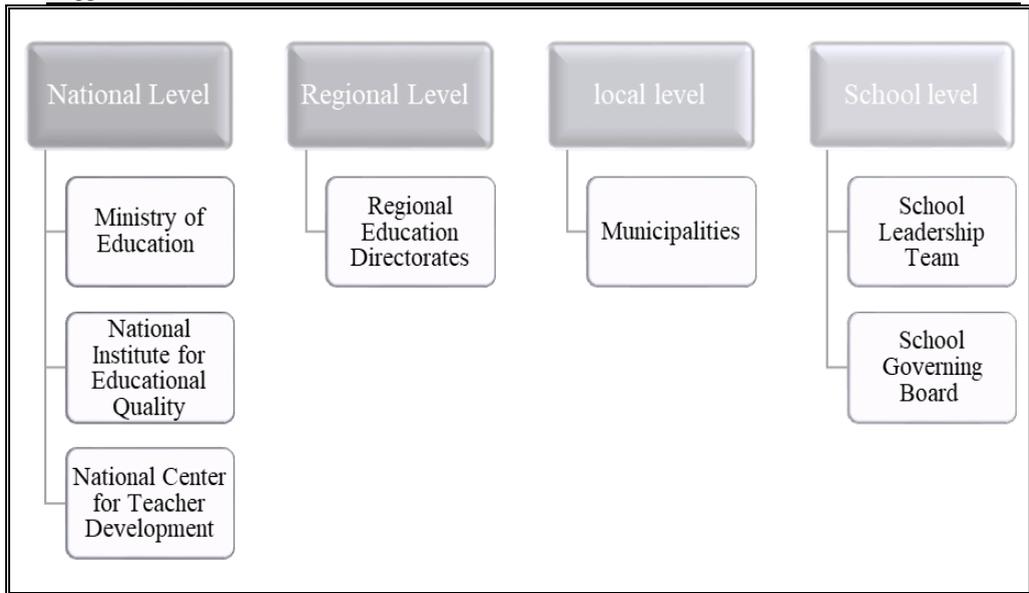
**Q3: How can the educational supervision in Palestine be enhanced in light of the Swedish model?**

The Swedish education system is regarded globally for its quality and its governance model which balances centralized national guidance with localized autonomy. The national government sets overall policy aligned with national interests, sustainable development, and human rights while allowing municipalities flexibility to choose curricula through participative processes. This combination of decentralized democratic participation and centralized accountability and transparency ensures quality education outcomes are achieved (Sahlénet, et al., 2020).

To develop the Palestinian educational supervision system in alignment with the successful Swedish model, the researcher depends on the following:

1. The overview of the Swedish Education Supervision System including its structure, and mechanisms, and practices.
2. Analysis on research of the current Palestinian Supervision system and its challenges revealed by several previous studies on the subject.
3. Analysis comparing the structure of the Swedish and Palestinian supervision systems.

Based on the above, the researcher proposed the following model for the structure of the Palestinian supervision system, illustrated in figure (1) as follows:



**Figure (1): A model for the structure of a Palestinian supervision system**

**The levels of the proposed model and the tasks burdened are clarified as follows:**

**First: National Level and it is presented by the following authorities:**

1. Ministry of Education:
  - Sets overall vision, standards, policies and curriculum guidelines.
  - Oversees national exams and assessments.
2. National Institute for Educational Quality:
  - Conducts school inspections and audits on a regular 3-year cycle.
  - Issues accessible audit reports and requires corrective actions.
  - Investigates complaints.
  - Grants licenses for private schools.
3. National Center for Teacher Development:
  - Sets qualifications and training requirements for teachers and administrators.
  - Provides pre-service and in-service training programs.
  - Conducts educational research to inform teaching practices.

**Second: Regional Level**

1. Regional Education Directorates:
  - Provide support and oversight to municipalities and clusters.

- Coordinate distribution of funding and resources.
- Facilitate sharing of best practices between municipalities.

### **Third: Local Level**

#### 1. Municipalities:

- Responsible for school operations and supervision.
- Approve budgets, hire staff, and procure resources.
- Appoint principals and teachers recommended by schools.
- Support professional development and training.

### **Fourth: School Level**

#### 1. School Leadership Team:

- Presented by the Principal, vice principal and department heads.
- Guide school policies, teaching practices, activities.
- Evaluate teachers, identify needs, and recommend training.
- Promote collaborative culture.

#### 2. School Governing Board:

- Includes teachers, parents, students, community members.
- Provides input on policies, activities, budgets.
- Elects teacher and parent representatives.

The proposed supervision model aims to elevate oversight and quality assurance through national guidance balanced with localized decision-making autonomy. It also fosters a culture focused on improvement through developmental supervision methods.

Moreover, taking lessons from the previously overviewed Swedish Model in education and supervision as well, the researcher puts forth on the following recommendations targeted to decision makers and Palestinian educational leaders at all levels:

#### **1. Focus on real-life skills in teaching:**

- Lessen the emphasis on theoretical knowledge.
- Integrate practical subjects like swimming, carpentry, cooking into the curriculum to equip students with abilities they can apply in daily life.
- Consult employers, community leaders and universities to identify abilities needed for employment and daily life. Align curricula with these practical skills.
- Partner with local businesses to provide internships, apprenticeships and guest instruction.

#### **2. Individualize teaching and assessment:**

- Customize learning plans, teaching methods and evaluations based

on each student's needs and abilities instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

- Provide extra support for struggling students.
- Use assessments to identify learning styles, abilities and needs of each student. Tailor teaching methods, materials and pace accordingly.
- Hire specialized staff like counselors and special education teachers to provide targeted support. Maintain small class sizes for more personalization.

**3. Foster a collaborative culture:**

- Encourage teamwork between students as well as professional learning communities where teachers work together to reflect on and improve their instructional practices.
- Build time into teachers' schedules for collaborative planning, observation of peers, and discussion of instructional practices.
- Use team-building activities to promote relationship-building among staff and students.
- Involve all stakeholders in the decision making process.

**4. Invest more in teacher training and support:**

- Require rigorous pre-service qualifications and partner with universities to design programs that include extended classroom practicums.
- Provide regular in-service workshops, mentorships and learning opportunities to continually enhance their expertise. Identify needs through surveys and observations.
- Establish mentoring programs to pair new teachers with veterans. Schedule co-teaching and observation.

**5. Implement accountability through auditing and inspection:**

- Emphasis on Establishing oversight agencies similar to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate (National Institute for Educational Quality is the one proposed in the above mentioned model for educational supervision in Palestine), that conduct regular supervision, audits and complaint investigations to ensure education quality as well as proper use of resources.
- Make reports accessible to all stakeholders through their websites to assure accountability and transparency.
- Hire qualified auditors and inspectors. Develop detailed protocols

for supervision visits, compliance reviews, data analysis, and reporting.

- Conduct unannounced as well as scheduled visits to get an authentic view of school operations.
- Provide audit reports to school leaders and boards. Require corrective actions and follow up on implementation.

**6. Set clear standards for selecting qualified supervisors:**

- Require specific educational administration credentials, teaching experience and emotional competencies.
- Provide specialized training on modern supervision methods.
- Give preference to former teachers and administrators.
- Develop rigorous selection procedures including panel interviews, sample supervision sessions with teachers, stakeholder input.
- Increase salaries, and reduce teacher-to -supervisor ratios to motivate higher performance for supervisors.

**7. Promote relationship-centered supervision:**

- Train supervisors on building trust, caring and respectful relationships with teachers and students.
- Invite supervised individuals to participate in the supervision process and include teachers in setting supervisory agendas and professional growth plans.

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