

The Principal's Performance as a Supervisor in Improving the Professionalism of Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The principal holds a strategic role as a supervisor who is responsible for guiding and developing teacher professionalism so that the quality of the learning process continuously improves. This study aims to describe the principal's role as a supervisor in fostering teacher professionalism, to identify the stages of academic supervision, and to reveal the obstacles faced by the principal in carrying out the supervisory function at TK Islam Terpadu Adam School. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with one principal and two teachers as informants, then analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the principal performs the supervisory role through strengthening teachers' academic competence, building teacher learning communities, conducting in-house training, modeling exemplary practice, and technology-based monitoring through closed circuit television (CCTV) and daily digital reporting. Supervision is carried out periodically through planning, classroom observation, joint evaluation and reflection, and follow-up in the form of feedback and teacher development programs. The obstacles found include the principal's limited time due to concurrent duties and weak completeness of teachers' instructional administration. These obstacles are addressed through delegation, strengthened communication via online groups, and cultivating a culture of joint reflection. This study recommends strengthening a technology-based supervision system combined with a humanistic approach so that the coaching of teacher professionalism can run sustainably.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of education at the early age level is highly determined by the quality of the learning process that takes place in the classroom, and this quality cannot be separated from the competence of teachers as the main implementers of learning. Teachers are required to continue to update their

pedagogical, professional, personality, and social abilities in order to be able to answer the challenges of the dynamic world of education. In an effort to maintain and improve this competence, the existence of academic supervision carried out by school principals is one of the important instruments that cannot be ignored.

The principal as the leader of the education unit has multiple roles, one of which is the role of supervisor. Supervision in education is understood as a series of efforts to provide assistance to teachers in developing the ability to manage the teaching and learning process for the achievement of learning goals (Setiyadi, 2020). Through supervision, the principal not only functions as an administrative supervisor, but also as a coach, motivator, and reflective partner for teachers in developing their professionalism. Zaini (2022) emphasized that the role of school principals as supervisors contributes significantly to improving teacher professionalism if carried out in a scheduled, systematic, and oriented manner with clear follow-up.

Various previous studies reinforce the urgency of this role. Rahayu et al. (2024) through a literature review concluded that supervision carried out continuously by school principals has a real influence on improving the skills, discipline, and performance of educators. In line with this, Lisna and Munastiwi (2020) in their research in Kindergarten found that the role of school principals as supervisors includes coaching activities, providing technical guidance, and periodic evaluations of teachers' teaching performance. Artanti (2024) also added that the effectiveness of educational supervision is greatly influenced by the consistency of school principals in following up on the findings of supervision into concrete development programs. In the international context, Brandon et al. (2018) also noted that teacher supervision and evaluation by instructional leaders face challenges in the form of time constraints and complexity of leadership roles, so an efficient and collaborative supervision strategy is needed.

Although conceptually the role of school principals as supervisors has been widely studied, in practice there is still a gap between the objectives and functions of supervision and its implementation in the field. A number of schools carry out supervision as an annual administrative activity without follow-up that has an impact on improving teacher competence in real terms. This condition is interesting to be studied more deeply in educational units that have distinctive managerial characteristics, one of which is the Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten, which combines face-to-face supervision with technology-based monitoring such as CCTV and daily digital reporting.

Based on this description, this study aims to describe: (1) the role of the principal as a supervisor in fostering teacher professionalism; (2) the stages of implementation of supervision carried out by the principal; and (3) the obstacles faced by the principal in carrying out his function as an academic supervisor at the Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten. The results of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of education management and supervision studies, as well as practical contributions for school principals and education stakeholders in designing an effective and sustainable supervision model.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, which aims to gain a deep understanding of the role of school principals as supervisors in their natural context (Sugiyono, 2020). The location of the research is Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten. The research informants are determined purposively, consisting of one principal and two teachers who are considered to have direct knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of academic supervision in the school.

The data collection technique was carried out through semi-structured interviews guided by a number of questions related to three problem formulations, namely the role of the principal in fostering teacher professionalism, the stages of supervising implementation, and the obstacles faced. The interview was held in person at the school on Monday, May 11, 2026. The interview data is then transcribed verbatim to maintain the authenticity of the information submitted by the informant.

Data analysis refers to Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes three stages, namely data reduction (sorting and focusing the data from interview transcripts according to the problem formulation), data presentation (organizing data into the form of a descriptive narrative per theme), and drawing conclusions/verifications (interpreting inter-informant answer patterns to obtain a complete picture of the principal's role as a supervisor). The validity of the data was strengthened through triangulation of sources, namely by comparing the principal's answers and the answers of two teachers to related questions.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of the Principal as a Supervisor in Fostering Teacher Professionalism

The results of the interviews showed that the principal of Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten carried out his role as a supervisor through several complementary coaching strategies. First, strengthening teachers' academic and professional competencies is carried out by providing full support to teachers who take the initiative to develop themselves, both through teacher working groups (KKG) and the school's internal learning community, so as to create a culture of sharing experiences between peers. Second, school principals actively facilitate teachers to participate in technical guidance, webinars, and training organized by the education office or private institutions, by presenting resource persons who have a higher capacity than teachers in general.

Third, in the recruitment and coaching process, the principal emphasizes the aspects of willingness to learn and openness to input as the main criteria compared to just the formal education level. This view emphasizes that teacher professionalism is not just an academic achievement, but a lifelong learning attitude that must be continuously nurtured. Fourth, the principal places example as the main coaching instrument, believing that changes in teacher behavior will be more effective if the principal first shows the attitude and competence that they want to grow, not just through one-way instruction.

These findings strengthen the view of Rahayu et al. (2024) who stated that continuous supervision plays a significant role in improving teachers' skills and discipline, especially when carried out through a collaborative coaching approach, not just administrative supervision. This is also in line with the results of research by Lisna and Munastiwi (2020) at the Kindergarten level which shows that the combination of technical guidance, mentoring, and leader role models is an effective coaching pattern in improving the teaching competence of early childhood teachers. Data from the two teacher informants also confirmed that the coaching received was in the form of in-house training, internal workshops, mentoring, discussion rooms between teachers, as well as motivation and appreciation—a pattern that shows that coaching does not stop at the technical aspects of teaching alone, but also touches on the psychological aspects and motivation of teachers.

Facility support is also part of the coaching role. Schools provide technology facilities and learning media, such as computers, projectors, internet access, and digital learning platforms, which allow teachers to update their teaching methods according to the times. The availability of these facilities is relevant to the findings of Ismaya (2023) that the success of school principals in improving the quality of education is not only determined by personal leadership competencies, but also by their ability to provide adequate supporting resources for the professional development of teaching staff.

The Role of the Principal as a Supervisor in Carrying Out Supervision

The implementation of supervision at Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten takes place through relatively systematic stages. The first stage is preparation, namely the principal informs the supervision instruments and learning methods that teachers must prepare before observation is carried out. The second stage is the implementation of classroom observation, which is carried out by directly recording the learning process in the classroom on an agreed schedule. The third stage is joint evaluation and reflection, namely the principal and teachers give each other input regarding the learning process and teaching competence. The last stage is the preparation of a report on the results of supervision which is the basis for decision-making and the preparation of the next school development program.

The description of the two teacher informants describes the stages that are in line, starting from supervision planning and initial meetings, followed by class observation, then analysis and evaluation of supervision results, and ending with follow-up in the form of feedback, reporting, and documentation. The follow-up is concretely in the form of providing appreciation and motivation, suggestions for learning improvement, follow-up assistance, and teacher participation in training or workshops according to the needs identified from the supervision results.

The prominent thing about the supervision practice in this school is the use of technology as a daily monitoring instrument. The principal implements a digital reporting system, where teachers send video documentation of learning activities every day, equipped with monitoring through closed circuit television (CCTV) in each classroom. This model allows the principal to continue to supervise even though they are not always physically present at school due to additional tasks outside the school. The two teacher informants also confirmed that the physical presence of the school principal is not always every day, but monitoring continues to run through online communication groups and CCTV systems, so that the supervision function is carried out continuously.

This technology-based supervision pattern enriches the conceptual framework of conventional academic supervision. Zaini (2022) emphasized the importance of regularity of supervision schedules as a condition for the success of teacher coaching, and the findings of this study show that this regularity can be maintained through technology integration when face-to-face supervision faces time constraints. However, Brandon et al. (2018) remind that observation-based and monitoring-based supervision should not lose its dialogical and reflective aspects, because effective teacher evaluation requires a professional conversational process, not just one-way supervision. The findings at the Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten show that these two elements, technology-based monitoring and dialogical reflection are carried out side by side, so that the control function and the supervision coaching function can run in balance.

Obstacles Faced by School Principals in Carrying Out the Function of Academic Supervisors

Interview data revealed that the main obstacles faced by school principals stemmed from the dual roles they played. In addition to serving as school principals, informants also play the role of state civil servants (ASN) in other schools, founders of inclusion schools that are being pioneered, postgraduate students, as well as housewives. The complexity of this role has direct implications for the limited time of physical attendance at school, which in turn affects the intensity of the face-to-face supervision that can be performed.

To overcome these obstacles, school principals implemented a number of strategies. First, delegating responsibility to teachers through instilling the value of joint ownership of the school, so that school operations continue to run even though the principal is carrying out duties outside. Second, strengthening online group-based communication and digital monitoring systems as a substitute for physical presence. Third, building a joint commitment between the principal and teachers to maintain each other's professionalism, with the principle of mutual exemplary between leaders and teaching staff.

The second obstacle identified is the lack of completeness of teacher learning administration, such as learning implementation plans (RPP) and grade lists, which should ideally be authentic evidence of the supervision process. The principal responds to this proportionately, namely by not making administration an excessive burden for teachers, but emphasizing the importance of this completeness as a reference for learning continuity, for example when teachers are unable to attend and the learning process needs to be replaced by other teachers.

In addition, the principal emphasized the importance of managing the psychological aspects of teachers as part of the strategy to overcome obstacles. Teachers are encouraged to interpret the teaching profession as a fun art, not a burden, and are equipped with stress management training to still be able to present a positive learning atmosphere for students. This approach emphasizes that success in overcoming supervisory constraints does not depend solely on the managerial-administrative aspect, but also on the relational and emotional dimensions between the principal and the teacher.

The findings regarding the constraints of time constraints are in line with the results of a study by Brandon et al. (2018) who stated that the main challenge for instructional leaders in carrying out supervision and evaluation of teachers is time constraints in the midst of the burden of complex leadership roles. Meanwhile, the strategy of delegation and technology utilization applied by the principal of the Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten strengthens Artanti's (2024) argument that the effectiveness of supervision is not always determined by the frequency of the leader's physical presence, but by the consistency of the institutionally built monitoring and follow-up system.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the principal of Adam School Integrated Islamic Kindergarten carries out the role of supervisor through three main dimensions. First, teacher professionalism development is carried out through strengthening the learning community, facilitating training and technical guidance, selection based on willingness to learn, leadership examples, and support for learning technology facilities. Second, the implementation of supervision takes place through the stages of preparation, class observation, evaluation and reflection together, to follow-up combined with a CCTV-based digital monitoring system and daily reporting, so that the control function continues to run even though the physical presence of the principal is limited. Third, the main obstacles faced are limited time due to the dual role of school principals and the weak completeness of teacher learning administration, which is overcome through delegating responsibilities, strengthening digital communication, and a humanist approach that pays attention to the psychological aspects of teachers.

This study provides an implication that a supervision model that combines conventional approaches with the use of technology can be an alternative solution for school principals who have limited physical attendance time, without reducing the essence of reflective and dialogical coaching. For further research, it is recommended to examine the effectiveness of the technology-based supervision model quantitatively and expand the scope of informants at other levels of education in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

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