



Academic Supervision as a Catalyst for Professional Growth in Schools

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61987/acsj.v1i1.638>

Abstract:

The purpose of writing this article is to examine the impact of synergy in academic supervision collaboration on improving the performance of teachers and principals in elementary schools in Kabat District. The uniqueness of this study lies in its focus on assisting in the preparation of learning tools and guiding the use of various learning methods and media as important steps in the supervision process. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, collecting data through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The results of the discussion show that synergy in academic supervision collaboration has a significant impact on improving the performance of teachers and principals. This mentoring contributes directly to improving teachers' professionalism, making them more competent and confident in teaching and able to adopt more effective and innovative teaching practices, which ultimately improves student learning outcomes. In addition, academic supervision also has a positive impact on the performance of school principals by increasing the effectiveness of school management and developing a positive school culture, allowing principals to plan and implement better school development strategies as well as creating a conducive learning environment and ensuring that the educational process runs in accordance with the expected goals.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 11 December 2024

Revised 1 February 2025

Accepted 8 March 2025

KEY WORDS

Supervision, Supervisor, Performance

INTRODUCTION

Improving the performance of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers through academic supervision is very important for various significant reasons. Teachers' performance in the learning implementation process has a role in improving the quality of learning (Ajepri et al., 2022). Not only that, religious education has a key role in shaping students' character and morals (Jannah, 2023). Teachers who have high performance can be more effective in conveying religious and moral values, so that students can internalize and apply them in daily life. Academic supervision can also help address weaknesses in teaching practices by providing constructive feedback and solutions to obstacles faced by teachers (Tanggulungan & Sihotang, 2023; Tursina & Rudiansyah, 2024). The learning process views teacher performance as teaching capital to students in achieving educational goals. One of the efforts to improve teacher performance is through academic supervision carried out by supervisors or supervisors.

Academic supervision plays a role in improving the quality of learning. Through proper guidance and evaluation, teachers can develop more effective and innovative

teaching methods, according to the needs of students (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023). Education in Kabat sub-district, teacher performance continues to be improved and improved with one of its efforts through academic supervision. Elementary school teachers in the Kabat sub-district have their own characteristics and uniqueness in their educational institutions, the teaching and learning process of teachers has their own ways and tricks in each institution in carrying out Islamic religious education.

Academic supervision is directed to improve teacher teaching activities through guidance, encouragement, direction, and assistance activities in an effort to improve the quality of learning (Ubogu, 2024). Good academic supervision is part of the solution to help achieve the expected national education goals (Setyaningsih & Suchyadi, 2021). Conceptually, academic supervision is a series of activities to help teachers develop their professional ability to manage the learning process for the achievement of learning objectives carried out by supervisors (Lorensius et al., 2022). In order for academic supervision to help teachers develop their abilities, it is necessary to first conduct an assessment of teachers' abilities, so that aspects that need to be developed and how to develop them can be determined.

The importance of supervision today is based on the tendency to treat teachers as human beings unhealthy. This means that teachers are treated too much as objects rather than subjects (Akhmad & Azzam, 2022). For example, teachers must teach according to curriculum targets, make lesson plans with changing preparation provisions, make student worksheets, carry out various tests and record them, become homeroom teachers, become pickets, while the available time is only small. Through supervision, teachers as the main actors in the implementation of the education system can be assisted in the growth and development of their profession for the achievement of learning objectives (Amelia et al., 2023; Hartono, 2022). Thus, the existence of supervisors in educational institutions is to provide encouragement and assistance to teachers in solving all types and forms of problems that arise in the implementation of teaching, as well as to be teachers' partners in the implementation of learning.

Previous research that has existed includes discussing the influence of academic supervision on the quality of PAI learning in elementary schools. The results of the study show that academic supervision carried out with a collaborative and sustainable approach can improve the quality of planning and implementation of PAI learning and have a positive impact on student learning outcomes (Kabariah & Adiyono, 2023; Volunteer et al., 2022; Usman et al., 2022). Several other researchers also examine the importance of supervision that has an impact on teacher performance so that it can affect the quality of student learning (Doko et al., 2022; Sanglah, 2021; Tengko et al., 2021). Supervision can also improve teacher competence (Mok & Staub, 2021; Tampubolon & Sibuea, 2023), this also affects the professional development of teachers to be able to improve the quality of teaching, work discipline, and interpersonal relationships between teachers and students.

The novelty in this study makes a new contribution in the field of education, especially in the context of academic supervision for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in the elementary school education environment of Kabat district. This article introduces and seeks to explore a collaborative approach in academic supervision, which involves active interaction between supervisors and PAI teachers. This approach emphasizes joint learning, experience sharing, and deep reflection, which is different from the conventional supervision approach which is more *top-down* in efforts to

supervise teachers' performance. This study aims to explore how a collaborative approach in academic supervision can be applied by supervisors or education supervisors, as well as provide benefits for improving the performance of PAI teachers in elementary school education in the Kabat sub-district.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a type of qualitative research, which aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects by producing descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behaviors (Waruwu, 2023). This study describes the academic supervision of supervisors in improving the performance of PAI teachers in Kabat District, using a phenomenological approach that emphasizes the natural disclosure of reality without prejudice. This research was conducted in Kabat District with the research object consisting of 15 elementary schools, 25 PAI teachers, one supervisor, and 15 school principals. The focus of the research was directed at the supervisor of the elementary school in Kabat District and several teachers and principals from six elementary schools in the supervision process. The selection of six schools with three different domicile criteria is expected to represent the reality in the field.

Data collection techniques include interviews with PAI elementary school supervisors and elementary school Islamic Religious Education (GPAI) teachers as primary data sources, as well as elementary school principals as secondary data sources. Observations were made on the activities of PAI supervisors and the response of school principals. Documentation of various records and related documents is also used. This study uses three stages of data analysis: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction is carried out by simplifying and classifying relevant data to produce meaningful information. Data presentation involves organizing data systematically to facilitate understanding and drawing conclusions. The final stage involves drawing conclusions by looking for relationships, similarities, or differences from the data that has been reduced, as well as verifying to ensure the suitability of the data with the purpose of analysis, so that the conclusions produced can be considered credible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Synergy in Academic Supervision Collaboration

The implementation of academic supervision carried out by supervisors for PAI teachers and school principals at the basic education level in Kabat District covers various aspects of comprehensive guidance. This process involves guidance in the preparation of learning tools, which assist teachers in designing effective and structured lesson plans. In addition, the supervisor provides guidance on the use of various learning methods, which aims to enrich teachers' teaching strategies so that they are able to accommodate various learning styles of students. No less important, guidance also includes the use of various learning media and technology. With this support, teachers can take advantage of modern tools and resources to make learning more engaging and interactive.

a. Assistance in the Preparation of Learning Tools

Learning tools prepared by teachers, ideally there are a series of activities in the form of guidance provided by supervisors (Akhmad & Azzam, 2022; Rohman et al., 2022). The determination of the schedule for the guidance process itself is prepared as a form

of supervisor assistance, and ends with an evaluation of the learning tools that have been prepared by the teacher. In this regard, the supervisor of PAI Kabat District revealed that as a first step, guidance is carried out by looking at the form of teaching preparation that has been made by teachers. After that, it was followed by a small chat between the supervisor and the teacher in the form of exchanging ideas related to the preparation, by providing guidance if there were shortcomings. In this case, the supervisor asks the teacher about the teacher's own version of the preparation shortcomings before the supervisor provides additional input. This series of activities is carried out regularly at the beginning of the semester. At the end of the semester, the supervisor again questioned the PAI teacher concerned regarding the effectiveness of the learning tools that had been made. Through this approach, supervisors not only act as evaluators, but also as partners who support the improvement of learning quality through continuous guidance and constructive dialogue.

Related to this, there is a contradiction between the mentoring process by supervisors to teachers in educational schools. The reason is, the principal of SDN 1 Kabat said that the PAI supervisor had never discussed with him, either formally or informally, about guidance activities for teachers in the preparation of learning tools. His statement that PAI teachers in Kabat District have a KKG forum that is most likely to discuss this in every activity. The same thing was also conveyed by the principal of SDN Benelanlor Kabat who stated that there had never been a discussion with the supervisor regarding the guidance by the supervisor for PAI teachers in the preparation of learning tools. According to him, the activity must be carried out in the KKG forum. Ironically, SDN Benelanlor Kabat does not have PAI teachers who are civil servants or non-civil servants, and the PAI teachers who are currently on duty do not come from the teacher education background of the PAI department and often do not follow the agenda that has been set by the teacher working group (KKG) management.

The phenomenon that occurs is that the form of supervisory assistance to teachers is carried out through KKG activities. In accordance with the statement of the PAI teacher of SDN Bunder, guidance in the preparation of learning tools by supervisors was carried out in the KKG forum which was attended by elementary school teachers in Kabat District. The results of the researcher's observation show that in the routine KKG activities of the PAI subject, which is carried out in the last week of every month with the implementation of attendance. This shows that all PAI elementary school teachers in Kabat District are committed to attending this forum. The forum was used to discuss various obstacles they faced in the teaching and learning process activities in the field. This commitment reflects the seriousness of teachers in improving the quality of learning through discussions and guidance provided by supervisors in the KKG forum.

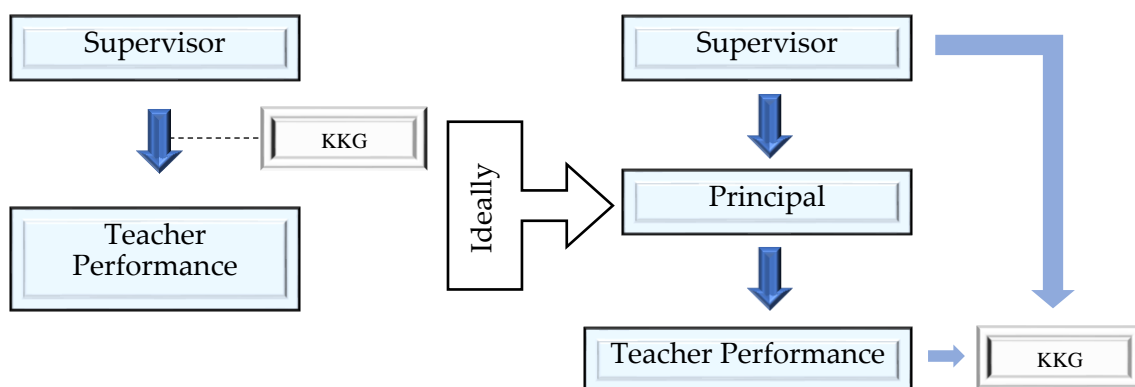


Figure 1. Form of Supervisory Supervision

Figure 1 above and the previous discussion, shows that conceptually the supervisor fully understands that the position of guidance in the preparation of learning tools by teachers is very important and the implementation of guidance is more intensely carried out by supervisors in the KKG forum by referring to the data obtained from their visitation to the school at the beginning of the semester, although on the other hand in reality the implementation of these activities is constrained by the lack of coordination between the supervisor and the head school. In fact, coordination is very important considering that there must be synergy in leading between leaders of educational institutions.

b. Guidance on the Use of Various Learning Methods and Media

The implementation of academic supervision is inseparable from guidance activities using various methods and learning media by supervisors to PAI teachers (Amini et al., 2021; Suchyadi et al., 2022). Regarding this implementation, a PAI supervisor must understand the urgency of the implementation of guidance, the criteria for teachers who need guidance, and the criteria for teachers who do not need to be guided in using various learning methods. The PAI Supervisor of Kabat District revealed that in the selection of learning methods and media, all teachers are required to be sensitive to this aspect. Given the rapid development of the times that bring great changes and influences on the world of education, these changes have a direct impact on the findings of new learning methods put forward by education experts. So, supervisors must *update* learning progress information to teachers. Thus, the guidance provided is not only relevant but can also improve teachers' competence in implementing effective learning methods and in accordance with the needs of the times.

The same thing was also conveyed by PAI teachers at SDN Bunder that in using various PAI learning methods and media, they really expect guidance from various parties, especially supervisors. Teachers find the arrival of supervisors two to three times in one semester very helpful. The frequency of visits is expected to provide enough data for supervisors to enrich and update information in the KKG forum related to learning methods that can be used in the teaching process. With regular and continuous guidance, PAI teachers can continue to improve the quality of their learning, ensuring that the methods and media used are always *up-to-date* and effective in answering today's educational challenges. Guidance from supervisors is also considered important to provide practical solutions to various obstacles faced by teachers in the field, so that the teaching and learning process can run more optimally.

The discussion showed that the supervisor carried out guidance on the use of various learning methods and media to PAI teachers properly. This was realized through submission and discussion in the KKG forum which was attended by PAI elementary school teachers in Kabat District. The implementation of the forum is well scheduled, usually held in the last week of every month, so as to provide an opportunity for supervisors and teachers to discuss regularly. Supervisors provide the necessary guidance, update the latest learning methods and media, and evaluate and provide solutions to obstacles faced by teachers in the field. The commitment of teachers to attend this forum reflects their seriousness in improving the quality of education. Thus, this structured and scheduled guidance activity plays an important role in efforts to improve the competence of PAI teachers and the effectiveness of the learning process in

schools.

Impact of Performance Improvement

Supervision in educational institutions has a significant impact on various aspects, ranging from the quality of learning, teacher professional development, to overall school management (Hanafiah et al., 2022; Priyambodo, 2023). Educational supervision plays a crucial role in helping principals and teachers develop their potential optimally. Education is a key factor in the formation of the human person, and effective supervision can ensure that the educational process runs well and in accordance with the expected goals (Azhar et al., 2021). Effective educational supervision has various positive impacts on all parties involved in the educational process. Teachers and school principals, as central role holders in the educational environment, feel increased competence and confidence in carrying out their duties. Through supervision support, teachers and principals can identify their strengths and weaknesses, as well as obtain the guidance necessary to improve and develop their professional skills. This allows them to reach their maximum potential and apply best practices in school teaching and management. In elementary schools in Kabat District, effective supervision has been proven to help principals and teachers achieve significant improvements in the quality of education.

Supervisor assistance to teachers plays a crucial role in improving teacher professionalism and learning quality in elementary schools in Kabat District. Through structured and ongoing guidance, supervisors assist teachers in identifying strengths and areas that need to be developed, as well as providing constructive feedback. Teachers get the opportunity to take part in relevant trainings and workshops, which enrich their knowledge and skills. As a result, teachers become more competent and confident in carrying out teaching duties. In addition, they are able to implement more effective and innovative learning methods, which contribute to improving student learning outcomes.

Supervisor assistance to school principals has a significant impact on the effectiveness of school management and the development of school culture in basic education institutions in Kabat District. Through comprehensive and ongoing guidance, supervisors assist principals in improving their managerial skills, including in strategic planning, decision-making, and staff performance monitoring. Principals are also assisted in developing better leadership practices, which encourage collaboration and effective communication among all members of the school. In addition, this mentoring assists principals in building and strengthening a positive school culture, where values such as discipline, cooperation, and innovation are upheld. Thus, the school becomes a more conducive environment for learning and working, which not only improves the performance of teachers and students but also builds a harmonious and productive school community.

Supervisor assistance to teachers and school principals plays a crucial role in improving professionalism and quality of learning in elementary schools in Kabat District. Through structured and ongoing guidance, supervisors assist teachers in identifying strengths and areas that need to be developed, as well as providing constructive feedback. Teachers get the opportunity to take part in relevant trainings and workshops, which enrich their knowledge and skills. As a result, teachers become more competent and confident in carrying out teaching tasks, and are able to apply more effective and innovative learning methods, which contribute to improving student learning outcomes. On the other hand, supervisor assistance to school principals has a significant impact on

the effectiveness of school management and the development of school culture. Through this guidance, supervisors assist principals in improving their managerial skills, including in strategic planning, decision-making, and staff performance monitoring. School principals are also assisted in developing better leadership practices, which encourage collaboration and effective communication among all school members (Suciati & Inayati, 2024). This mentoring assists principals in building and strengthening a positive school culture, where values such as discipline, cooperation, and innovation are upheld. Thus, the school becomes a more conducive environment for learning and working, which not only improves the performance of teachers and students but also builds a harmonious and productive school community.

Table 1. Impact Supervision

Impact of Supervision by Supervisors on Elementary Schools in Kabat District			
Teacher Performance	Improvement of Teacher Professionalism	Teacher	Improving the Quality of Learning
Principal Performance	School Management Effectiveness	Management	School Culture Development

Teacher performance has an effect on the professionalism and quality of student learning, allowing teachers to make necessary improvements and adopt more effective teaching practices. The use of a variety of innovative and relevant learning methods and media, driven through supervision, can increase student engagement and understanding. On the other hand, the performance of the principal has an effect on the school's managerial and the overall school development process. Principals who are competent in management can efficiently manage school resources, plan school development strategies, and create a conducive learning environment. This ensures that the educational process runs well and in accordance with the expected goals, as well as improving the quality of education in schools.

Although the development of a continuous and systematic academic supervision program is essential to improve the quality of education, there are several limitations that need to be considered. One of the main limitations is the need for adequate resources, both in terms of time, energy, and funds, to carry out supervision effectively and sustainably. The provision of ongoing training for supervisors, teachers, and principals is also often plagued by budget constraints and tight schedules, which can hinder full participation from all parties. Additionally, efforts to improve collaboration between supervisors, teachers, and principals can face communication and coordination challenges, especially in large or geographically dispersed school environments. Without consistent support and adequate infrastructure, these programs may not be able to achieve the expected impact in improving the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

Synergy in academic supervision collaboration in elementary schools in Kabat District has a significant impact on improving the performance of teachers and principals. Assistance in the preparation of learning tools and guidance on the use of various learning methods and media are important steps taken in the supervision process. This assistance directly contributes to improving the professionalism of teachers, which then has an impact on improving the quality of learning. Teachers become more competent and confident in teaching, able to adopt more effective and innovative teaching practices, which ultimately improves student learning outcomes.

In addition, academic supervision also has a positive impact on the performance of school principals. Through comprehensive and continuous guidance, principals are able to improve the effectiveness of school management and develop a positive school culture. School principals who are skilled in management can plan and implement better school development strategies, create a conducive learning environment, and ensure that the educational process runs according to the expected goals.

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