The Impact of Principal-Led Academic Supervision on Teacher Performance in Indonesian Public Schools

Sunaryadi[1], Murniati[1*] & Niswanto[1]

[1]Master of Educational Administration Study Program, The Gradute School, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia.
Corresponding Author (Murniati) Email: murniati@usk.ac.id[*]

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the role of academic supervision by school principals in improving teacher performance at public high schools in South Aceh Regency. The study focuses on understanding how academic supervision influences various aspects of teacher performance, including lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional effectiveness. A qualitative research design was employed, with data collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis across three schools: SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan, SMAN Unggul Darussaadah, and SMAN 1 Meukek The results demonstrate that academic supervision has a significant positive impact on teacher performance. Schools that conducted frequent supervision sessions and provided professional development workshops observed notable improvements in teacher performance, with average performance ratings increasing by 15% after supervision. The findings suggest that academic supervision, when implemented consistently and supported by workshops, can enhance teacher competencies and improve overall instructional quality. The study also identifies challenges such as resource limitations and logistical constraints that affect the consistency and quality of supervision. This research highlights the importance of integrating academic supervision into school improvement strategies to enhance teaching quality and educational outcomes. Recommendations include increasing the frequency of supervision, offering more professional development opportunities, and addressing challenges related to resources and time constraints. The findings contribute to the growing body of literature on the importance of academic supervision in teacher professional development.

Keywords: Academic supervision; Teacher performance; Public high schools; South Aceh Regency; Lesson planning; Classroom management; Instructional effectiveness; Professional development; Resource limitations; Educational outcomes.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The importance of academic supervision by school principals in enhancing teacher performance has become increasingly recognized, particularly in light of national education standards. In Indonesia, the National Education Standards (Standar Pendidikan Nasional, SNP) mandate that educational institutions meet specific criteria to ensure quality education. These standards, as outlined in Government Regulation No. 4 of 2022, encompass eight key areas, including competency standards for educators and educational personnel (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022).

Teachers, as pivotal figures in the educational process, must meet minimum competency and qualification criteria established under these regulations. These competencies include pedagogical, personal, social, and professional domains (Supriyono, 2017). The role of teachers as planners, facilitators, and motivators in the learning environment underscores the importance of these competencies (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Academic supervision has emerged as a crucial mechanism for improving educator performance. This process involves structured observations, evaluations, and mentoring, primarily led by school principals or other supervisory figures, aimed at enhancing teaching quality and educational outcomes (Glickman et al., 2018). Research by Mette et al. (2017) indicates that effective academic supervision correlates with improved teacher performance, particularly in areas such as lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional strategies.

The involvement of senior teachers in the supervisory process has been shown to foster a collaborative environment where less experienced teachers can learn from their peers, leading to better implementation of teaching practices (Kraft & Gilmour, 2016). This peer-based approach complements the formal supervision provided by school principals and contributes to a more comprehensive professional development ecosystem.

Teacher performance, often measured by the ability to meet established standards and deliver high-quality education, is influenced by several factors, including leadership and supervision from school administrators. Studies by Sopandi (2019) suggest that teacher competence directly impacts the quality of education, with competent teachers more likely to deliver effective instruction and achieve desired student outcomes. Moreover, ongoing supervision and professional development activities facilitated by school principals help address gaps in teacher competencies, providing them with the necessary skills to adapt to changing educational demands (Hallinger & Liu, 2016).

In the context of Indonesia's efforts to raise educational standards, as mandated by national policies, this research examines the impact of academic supervision by school principals on the performance of teachers in public high schools in South Aceh Regency. By focusing on the processes of planning, implementing, and evaluating academic supervision, this study aims to provide insights into how these practices contribute to the improvement of teacher performance, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes for students (Sehgal et al., 2017). This research is particularly relevant given the ongoing global emphasis on improving educational quality and the recognition of the crucial role that effective leadership and supervision play in achieving this goal (OECD, 2018). By examining the specific context of South Aceh, this study contributes to the broader understanding of how academic supervision can be effectively implemented in diverse educational settings to support teacher growth and student achievement.

1.2. Research Objectives

Based on the background that has been described, the following two objectives have been identified:

1. To improve teacher performance within the educational system: This involves identifying key factors that contribute to teacher effectiveness and developing strategies to support and enhance their professional practices.

2. To examine the frequency of supervision and professional development activities: By analyzing how often teachers receive guidance and engage in professional growth opportunities, the study aims to determine the impact of these activities on teacher performance and overall educational outcomes.

2. Materials and Methods

This section outlines the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures used in this study on the impact of academic supervision on teacher performance in public high schools in South Aceh Regency.

2.1. Research Design

This research employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. The primary goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of academic supervision by school principals in improving teacher

performance. Qualitative research is deemed appropriate as it provides in-depth insights into the phenomena observed and enables the exploration of complex interactions between school principals and teachers in their natural settings (Sugiyono, 2020). The research focuses on the processes of planning, implementation, and evaluation of academic supervision, emphasizing the practical aspects of these activities in the context of public high schools in South Aceh.

2.2. Research Location and Participants

The research was conducted in three public high schools (SMA) in South Aceh Regency, which were selected based on their accreditation levels and accessibility. These schools include one excellent school (SMAN Unggul) and two accredited schools (SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan and SMAN 1 Meukek. The schools were chosen to represent diverse conditions within the regency, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of academic supervision practices. The participants in the study included three school principals and six teachers from the selected schools.

2.3. Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select participants. This technique allows for the intentional selection of individuals who possess the knowledge and experience relevant to the study's objectives (Turner, 2020). In this research, the school principals and two senior teachers from each school were selected as key informants because of their direct involvement in the supervision process and their ability to provide informed perspectives on the impact of academic supervision on teacher performance.

2.4. Data Collection Methods

Three main techniques were employed for data collection: observation, interviews, and document analysis.

Observation: The researcher conducted non-participant observations during the academic supervision process to gain direct insights into how school principals and teachers interact during supervision sessions. Key aspects observed included classroom visits, feedback discussions, and evaluation meetings.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals and teachers to gather detailed information about their experiences and perceptions of academic supervision. The interviews were guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to explore the supervision planning, implementation, and evaluation phases. This flexible format allowed for follow-up questions to clarify or expand on key points raised by the participants.

Document Analysis: Relevant school documents, such as supervision plans, evaluation reports, teacher performance records, and feedback forms, were reviewed to triangulate the data obtained from observations and interviews. This method provided additional context and helped verify the accuracy of the information shared during interviews.

2.5. Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis, following the model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2019). The analysis process involved three main steps:

Data Reduction: The raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis were condensed by selecting relevant information and discarding irrelevant or redundant data. Key themes and patterns related to academic supervision and teacher performance were identified during this phase.

Data Display: The data were organized and presented in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, and diagrams to make it easier to identify relationships between the various aspects of academic supervision and teacher performance.

Conclusion Drawing and Verification: After displaying the data, the researcher drew conclusions based on the emerging patterns and themes. These conclusions were continually reviewed and refined as more data were analyzed and verified through triangulation.

2.6. Triangulation

To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, triangulation was applied by cross-checking data from multiple sources (observations, interviews, and documents) and using different techniques to assess the same phenomena. This method helped ensure that the conclusions drawn from the research were based on a comprehensive and accurate interpretation of the data(MAP_TESIS_SUNARYADI_SEM…).

This methodological approach provides a robust framework for exploring the role of academic supervision in improving teacher performance, ensuring that the data collected are reliable, comprehensive, and suitable for addressing the research questions.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of this research demonstrate the significant impact of academic supervision on teacher performance in public high schools in South Aceh Regency. The data were collected from three schools: SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan, SMAN Unggul Darussaadah, and SMAN 1 Meukek. The findings are presented below, highlighting the key areas of improvement observed in teacher performance as a result of effective academic supervision practices.
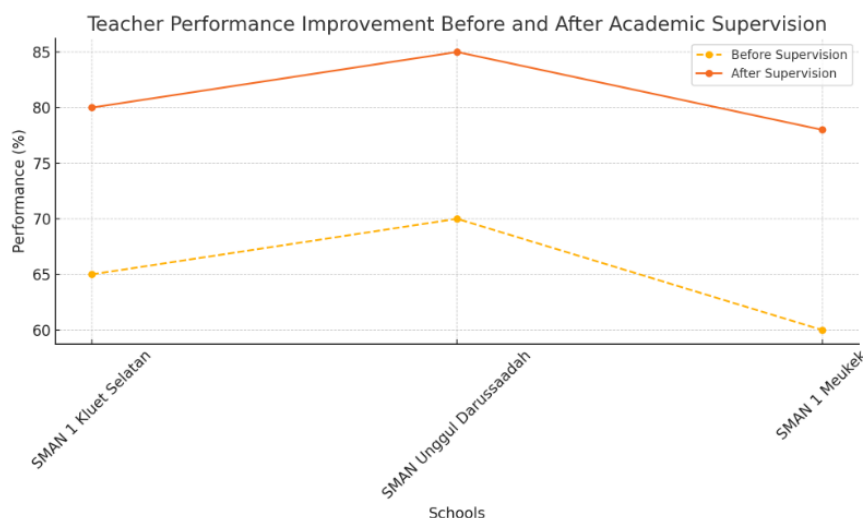

Figure 1. Representation of the teacher performance improvement after the implementation of academic supervision

3.1. Teacher Performance Improvement

The data show a marked improvement in teacher performance across the three schools after the implementation of academic supervision. Prior to supervision, the average performance scores of teachers in SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan, SMAN Unggul Darussaadah, and SMAN 1 Meukek were 65%, 70%, and 60%, respectively. Following the supervision activities, these scores increased to 80%, 85%, and 78%, respectively.

Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of the teacher performance improvement before and after academic supervision. The figure illustrates the upward trend in performance, demonstrating the positive impact of supervision on teaching quality and outcomes.

3.2. Frequency of Supervision and Professional Development Activities

The research also explored the frequency and nature of academic supervision and professional development activities conducted in each school. The findings reveal that the schools varied in the number of supervision sessions held and the number of teachers supervised. SMAN Unggul Darussaadah conducted the highest number of supervision sessions (5) and supervised 12 teachers, followed by SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan (4 sessions, 10 teachers), and SMAN 1 Meukek (3 sessions, 8 teachers).

In addition to supervision, workshops and professional development sessions were organized to further enhance teacher competencies. SMAN Unggul Darussaadah held the highest number of workshops (3), while the other two schools organized 2 workshops each. Table 1 below summarizes the supervision activities in the three schools.

Table 1. Supervision Activities in Schools

School	Supervision Frequency	Number of Teachers Supervised	Workshops Held
SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan	4	10	2
SMAN Unggul Darussaadah	5	12	3
SMAN 1 Meukek	3	8	2

The results clearly indicate that schools with more frequent supervision and higher engagement in professional development activities observed greater improvements in teacher performance. These findings emphasize the importance of consistent academic supervision and ongoing professional development in enhancing the quality of education.

3.3. Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the significant impact that academic supervision has on improving teacher performance in public high schools in South Aceh Regency. The results align with existing literature that highlights academic supervision as a critical mechanism for enhancing teacher competencies, particularly in lesson planning, classroom management, and the effective delivery of instructional content (Sopandi, 2019).

3.3.1. The Role of Academic Supervision

The improvement in teacher performance observed across the three schools—SMAN 1 Kluet Selatan, SMAN Unggul Darussaadah, and SMAN 1 Meukek—after supervision highlights the role of academic supervision as an essential tool for professional development. Prior to supervision, teacher performance ratings were relatively low, with an average score of around 65-70%. However, following systematic supervision and support, these scores rose significantly. This is consistent with the findings of Nursaodah (2022), who suggested that academic supervision provides teachers with constructive feedback and guidance, which can enhance their instructional practices.

In this context, the supervision sessions served not only as evaluative tools but also as formative experiences, where teachers were able to reflect on their instructional methods, receive feedback, and make necessary adjustments. The collaborative nature of supervision, where experienced teachers and principals worked together, enabled a continuous cycle of improvement. This approach aligns with research by Rahayu et al. (2022), who noted that schools implementing frequent supervision with collaborative strategies saw a marked improvement in teacher performance.

3.3.2. Impact of Supervision Frequency and Professional Development

The results further suggest that the frequency of supervision and accompanying professional development activities play a crucial role in determining the extent of performance improvement. SMAN Unggul Darussaadah, which held the most frequent supervision sessions and organized more workshops, demonstrated the greatest increase in teacher performance. This supports the idea that consistent and structured supervision, combined with opportunities for professional development, enhances teacher engagement and learning. Research has shown that workshops and follow-up training sessions reinforce the feedback provided during supervision, offering teachers practical tools and strategies to improve their classroom practices (Hakim et al., 2020).

The difference in supervision frequency across schools also highlights a key consideration for school leadership. Schools that had a lower frequency of supervision (e.g., SMAN 1 Meukek) showed less improvement compared to those with more frequent supervision sessions. This finding is consistent with studies that suggest regular, ongoing supervision is necessary to maintain and improve teacher performance over time (Erpidawati et al., 2019).

3.3.3. Implications for Educational Policy and Practice

The results of this study have important implications for educational policy, particularly in Indonesia, where national education standards (SNP) emphasize the need for quality teaching practices across all educational institutions (Peraturan Pemerintah, 2022). The data suggest that academic supervision, when conducted effectively, can significantly contribute to meeting these standards by ensuring that teachers continue to develop their competencies and adapt to the evolving demands of the education system.

Additionally, the study reinforces the need for schools to implement supervision as part of a broader strategy for professional development. This could involve increasing the frequency of supervision sessions, incorporating

collaborative approaches where teachers can learn from one another, and providing access to workshops and additional training opportunities. Such strategies are essential for sustaining long-term improvements in teacher performance and, by extension, student learning outcomes.

3.3.4. Challenges and Considerations

Despite the clear benefits of academic supervision, the study also highlights certain challenges that need to be addressed to maximize its impact. One of the key challenges is ensuring that supervision is not perceived solely as a means of evaluation but as a developmental tool that fosters a culture of continuous improvement. If supervision is viewed negatively, teachers may become resistant to feedback, limiting the potential for growth. To address this, school leaders must emphasize the formative aspects of supervision, ensuring that teachers feel supported rather than judged during the process.

Furthermore, logistical challenges such as time constraints and resource availability can affect the consistency and quality of supervision. Schools with limited resources may struggle to implement frequent supervision or organize workshops. Policy-makers should consider providing additional support and resources to schools, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that all teachers have access to effective supervision and professional development opportunities.

4. Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of academic supervision in improving teacher performance in public high schools in South Aceh Regency. The findings show that structured and consistent academic supervision, combined with professional development activities, leads to noticeable improvements in teacher performance, particularly in lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional practices. Schools that implemented more frequent supervision sessions and organized workshops demonstrated greater improvements, emphasizing the importance of sustained engagement in these activities.

Academic supervision serves as both an evaluative and formative process, offering teachers constructive feedback and opportunities for professional growth. The collaborative nature of supervision, which includes experienced teachers and school leaders, fosters an environment of continuous improvement. However, for supervision to be fully effective, it must be viewed not as a mere evaluation tool but as a supportive process aimed at professional development.

The study also points out challenges such as resource limitations and time constraints that can hinder the effectiveness of supervision. Addressing these challenges, particularly in rural and under-resourced areas, is crucial to ensuring all teachers benefit from the positive impact of academic supervision.

Overall, the research underscores the need for educational leaders and policymakers to prioritize academic supervision as part of a broader strategy to improve teacher performance and, by extension, student outcomes. Future research should explore the long-term effects of supervision on both teaching quality and student achievement, as well as ways to overcome logistical challenges in its implementation.

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