

Analysis of the Implementation of Academic Supervision in Elementary Schools : A Case Study of Public and Private Elementary School

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Abstract

Improving the calibre of teaching and learning in elementary education and raising teacher professionalism depend critically on academic supervision. Still, its actual application is usually administrative and hasn't worked effectively as a tool for professional development. This study examines the contextual variables that affect these practices as well as compares how public and private elementary schools apply academic monitoring. Qualitative technique using a comparative case study design gathered data by means of interviews, observations, and documents including school supervisors, instructors, and principals. Strict bureaucratic demands suggest that in public schools supervision is typically formalistic and geared toward administrative compliance, which reduces its influence on teacher growth. By contrast, private schools usually use more flexible, interactive, and ongoing supervisory techniques. In conclusion, the study emphasizes the need of a contextual, cooperative, and reflective supervisory strategy to successfully support teacher growth and improve learning quality.

Keywords: *academic supervision, instructional leadership, public elementary schools, private elementary schools.*

Abstrak

Meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran dan pembelajaran di pendidikan dasar serta meningkatkan profesionalisme guru sangat bergantung pada supervisi akademik. Namun, penerapannya biasanya bersifat administratif dan belum efektif sebagai alat pengembangan profesional. Studi ini meneliti variabel kontekstual yang memengaruhi praktik-praktik tersebut serta membandingkan bagaimana sekolah dasar negeri dan swasta menerapkan supervisi akademik. Teknik kualitatif menggunakan desain studi kasus komparatif mengumpulkan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumen termasuk pengawas sekolah, instruktur, dan kepala sekolah. Tuntutan birokrasi yang ketat menunjukkan bahwa di sekolah negeri, supervisi biasanya formalistik dan diarahkan pada kepatuhan administratif, yang mengurangi pengaruhnya terhadap pertumbuhan guru. Sebaliknya, sekolah swasta biasanya menggunakan teknik supervisi yang lebih fleksibel, interaktif, dan berkelanjutan. Kesimpulannya, studi ini menekankan perlunya strategi supervisi yang kontekstual, kooperatif, dan reflektif untuk berhasil mendukung pertumbuhan guru dan meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran.

Kata kunci : *supervisi akademik, kepemimpinan instruksional, sekolah dasar negeri, sekolah dasar swasta.*



INTRODUCTION

Academic supervision plays a strategic role in ensuring the quality of the learning process in elementary schools, both public and private (Sugiar, L et al., 2024). Academic supervision focuses on improving teacher professionalism and the quality of classroom learning practices (Glickman et al., 2018). Madumere-Obike's theory describes supervision as a modern mechanism used by school leaders to maintain the balance and quality of daily school activities (Fabunmi, 2025). In this context, academic supervision is not merely interpreted as administrative oversight, but as a systematic, reflective, and ongoing coaching process based on the actual needs of teachers. Through planned supervision, the principal acts as an instructional leader capable of encouraging the improvement of teachers' pedagogical competence, the development of relevant learning designs, and the implementation of a contextualized curriculum. However, various empirical findings indicate a significant gap between the ideal concept of academic supervision and actual practice. Studies over the past six years have revealed that most elementary schools have not implemented academic supervision consistently and continuously. Although supervision programs have been planned, their implementation often falls short of optimal results due to time constraints, high administrative burdens on principals, and low supervisory competency (Pratiwi et al., 2020; Hidayat & Rahman, 2022). Furthermore, research shows that supervision in many schools remains an administrative formality and solely assessment-oriented, thus failing to provide adequate space for reflective dialogue and teacher professional development.

This gap is reinforced by other empirical evidence showing that supervision tends to be superficial and unsustainable, resulting in general and non-specific feedback to teachers (Sari, 2024; Kusumawarti, 2025). Consequently, academic supervision has not been able to drive significant changes in classroom learning practices. Mulyanti's (2023) findings also confirm that many principals have not optimally implemented their coaching function due to limited supervisory competencies, limited time, and a weak culture of reflection within the school environment. This situation indicates a clear gap between the goal of supervision as a means of improving learning quality and the reality of its implementation in elementary schools. Furthermore, there are indications that the institutional context of schools also influences the implementation of academic supervision. Public elementary schools tend to be bound by strict regulations and bureaucracy, which in practice can limit the flexibility of supervision and reduce the frequency and quality of follow-up. In contrast, private schools have greater managerial flexibility but often face resource constraints and varying leadership qualities (Nasreen & Shah, 2023). Adeoye's (2023) research shows that these differences in context influence teachers' perceptions of the benefits of supervision and the level of professional support they receive. However, comparative studies specifically examining the differences in the implementation of academic supervision between public and private elementary schools are still very limited, particularly those that comprehensively link aspects of planning, implementation, and follow-up. The post-pandemic changes in the education ecosystem further reinforce the urgency of this research. The transformation of learning demands a more adaptive, collaborative, and technology-based supervision model. Recent research shows that supervision based on collaborative coaching and reflection is more effective in improving learning quality than a purely evaluative approach (Puspitasari, 2025). However, there is limited research examining how this supervision model is implemented in the different contexts of public and private schools, and its effectiveness in addressing contemporary learning challenges.

Based on the above description, there are two main gaps underlying this research. First, the gap between the ideal concept of academic supervision as a reflective coaching process and field practice, which is still predominantly administrative in nature and has little impact on improving the quality of learning. Second, the research

gap is the lack of comparative studies that in-depth examine the differences in the implementation of academic supervision between public and private elementary schools in real-world contexts. Therefore, this research is important and urgent to conduct to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how academic supervision is implemented in different contexts, as well as the factors that influence its effectiveness. This research not only contributes to enriching theoretical studies on academic supervision but also provides practical recommendations for school principals and education stakeholders in developing more effective, contextual, and sustainable supervision models.

This study aims to analyze and compare the implementation of academic supervision in public and private elementary schools through a case study approach. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) analyze the planning, implementation, and follow-up of academic supervision; (2) identify similarities and differences in supervision approaches influenced by institutional context; (3) analyze the role of the principal as a learning leader in developing supervision that is coaching and reflective; and (4) identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of academic supervision. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of an academic supervision model that is more effective, adaptive, and oriented towards improving the quality of learning in elementary schools.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a multiple case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of academic supervision practices. A qualitative method was chosen to explore the phenomenon comprehensively, while the multiple case design allowed comparison between two schools with different institutional characteristics. The research was conducted in Nogosari District, Boyolali Regency, involving SD Negeri Pojok as the public elementary school sample and SDIT Iqro as the private elementary school sample. The research subjects included one public school, one private school, their principals, teachers from both schools, and one school supervisor.

Data were collected through several techniques: (1) structured observations, (2) in-depth interviews, (3) document analysis, and (4) field notes. To ensure data validity, triangulation was applied to provide a comprehensive understanding and to minimize potential bias from both the researcher and informal sources.

Data analysis followed the qualitative model proposed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, to obtain a deeper understanding of how academic supervision is implemented in both school contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of research and discussion regarding the implementation of academic supervision based on data obtained through interviews at Pojok Public Elementary School as a representative of public elementary schools and Iqro Islamic Elementary School as a representative of private elementary schools in Nogosari District. The research results are presented systematically as follows:

Table 1. Differences in supervision between Pojok State Elementary School and I'qro Islamic Elementary School

Category	Public Elementary School	Private Elementary School
Planning	More routine and homogeneous	More Flexible and Participatory
Implementation	Evaluative and instructional approaches.	A more collaborative and reflective approach
Follow-up	A written recommendation or note given to a teacher.	Coaching, teacher group discussions, and ongoing learning support.

1. Reviewing the planning, implementation, and follow-up of academic supervision carried out by principals in public and private elementary schools.

During the planning stage, principals in public elementary schools tend to develop formal, structured supervision programs based on the academic calendar and education office guidelines, with an orientation toward fulfilling administrative requirements (Astuti & Fitria, 2021). Conversely, planning in private elementary schools is more flexible and participatory, directly involving teachers, making them more responsive to the real needs of learning and professional development (Yuliani, Suharyanto, & Slamet, 2023). This suggests that the level of institutional autonomy contributes to the emergence of more contextual and adaptive supervision practices, in line with previous research findings that confirm that decentralization of school management encourages innovation in supervision planning (Glickman et al., 2018). During the implementation stage, academic supervision in public elementary schools is generally conducted through classroom observations using an evaluative and instructional approach, with the principal acting as a teacher performance assessor based on established operational standards (Setiawan, Anwar, & Lestari, 2021). In contrast, supervision in private elementary schools demonstrates a more collaborative and reflective approach, with the principal acting as a professional partner, encouraging two-way dialogue and shared reflection (Lestari & Anwar, 2024). This finding reinforces the view that professional partnership-based supervision is more effective in improving the quality of learning, as confirmed by previous studies showing that a reflective approach can increase teacher engagement and motivation in developing teaching practices (Rahmawati & Mulyasa, 2023). In public elementary schools, follow-up is generally limited to providing recommendations or written notes without ongoing support, resulting in relatively minimal impact on changes in teaching practices (Hidayat & Rahman, 2022). In contrast, in private elementary schools, follow-up is carried out through intensive coaching, group discussions, and strengthening teacher learning communities, which significantly encourage changes in teaching practices. These results are consistent with previous research confirming that academic supervision will be more impactful if followed by a systematic and ongoing coaching program (Rahmawati & Mulyasa, 2023; Glickman et al., 2018).

Table 2. Supervisory Approach of Pojok State Elementary School and I'qro Islamic Elementary School

Category	Public Elementary School	Private Elementary School
Difference	The supervisory approach tends to be formal, hierarchical, and oriented towards compliance with external policies.	A dialogic and reflective approach to supervision, with an emphasis on teacher professional development.
Equality	The purpose of academic supervision (improving the quality of learning and teacher professionalism)	

2. Identifying differences and similarities in academic supervision approaches influenced by institutional context.

The similarity identified lies in the shared goal of academic supervision, which is to improve the quality of teaching and teacher professionalism through classroom observation and instructional feedback. In both public and private elementary schools, academic supervision is understood as part of the principal's leadership role in ensuring the quality of the learning process (Astuti & Fitria, 2021; Rahmawati & Mulyasa, 2023).

Differences in supervisory approaches become evident when viewed within institutional and school cultural contexts. In public elementary schools, supervision tends to be formal, hierarchical, and oriented toward compliance with external policies, reflecting bureaucratic structures and administrative cultures. This condition limits principals' flexibility to innovate in developing more adaptive supervision approaches (Hidayat & Rahman, 2022). In contrast, private elementary schools are shaped by more collaborative and performance-oriented cultures, resulting in supervision that is dialogic and reflective, with a stronger emphasis on teacher professional development (Lestari & Anwar, 2024).

Furthermore, the level of managerial autonomy among principals emerges as a significant distinguishing factor. These findings extend previous research indicating that greater managerial autonomy enhances the effectiveness of academic supervision in promoting changes in teaching practices (Setiawan et al., 2021; Yuliani et al., 2023).

3. The role of the principal as a teaching leader in developing academic supervision that is coaching, reflective, and sustainable.

Research findings indicate that the principal's role as an instructional leader is a key factor in developing coaching, reflective, and ongoing academic supervision. Coaching-oriented academic supervision allows teachers to reflect on their teaching practices, identify weaknesses, and design continuous improvements with the support of the principal (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2018).

This aligns with Sergiovanni's (2019) perspective, which emphasizes that instructional leadership requires principals to build professional relationships that support teacher growth, rather than simply assessing their performance. Thus, academic supervision shifts from an evaluative activity to a continuous learning process oriented toward improving the quality of teaching.

4. Revealing the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of academic supervision in encouraging improvements in the quality of teacher learning practices.

Supporting factors for the implementation of academic supervision include the principal's commitment as an instructional leader, a collaborative school culture, and teachers' openness to reflection and coaching. These conditions align with the views of Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2018), who emphasized that effective academic supervision must be oriented toward teacher coaching and ongoing capacity development.

Factors inhibiting the implementation of academic supervision include the principal's limited time, high administrative burdens, and a supervisory culture that remains evaluative and hierarchical. Furthermore, resistance to supervision by some teachers also arises when supervision is perceived solely as an assessment activity. These findings reinforce the views of Sergiovanni (2019) and Mulyasa (2021), who stated that

academic supervision will struggle to drive improvements in learning quality without strong instructional leadership and a school culture that supports teacher professional learning.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of academic supervision in public and private elementary schools is contextual, influenced by institutional characteristics, school culture, and leadership autonomy. In terms of planning, implementation, and follow-up, public schools tend to be administrative-procedural, while private schools are more adaptive, reflective, and collaborative. These differences have implications for the effectiveness of supervision, with a reflective and ongoing approach having a greater impact on improving the quality of learning.

The principal's role as a learning leader is a key determinant of successful supervision, particularly in guiding practices that are coaching and dialogical. Effective supervision is supported by leadership competencies and a collaborative culture, but hampered by administrative burdens, time constraints, and teacher resistance.

The implication is that supervision needs to be reoriented from an administrative approach toward reflective and ongoing professional development. This study's limitations lie in its limited case study design. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the context, employ a mixed approach, and examine the impact of supervision on student learning outcomes and the development of technology-based models.

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