

Improving Islamic Education Teachers' Performance and Learning Quality through Academic Supervision in Madrasahs

¹Widya Rahim Nuhuyanan, ²St. Jumaeda, ³Maimuna

¹²³Universitas Islam Negeri Abdul Muthalib Sangadji Ambon

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji implementasi supervisi akademik kepala madrasah dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dan mutu pembelajaran di MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara. Penelitian ini penting dilakukan karena supervisi akademik di banyak madrasah masih cenderung bersifat administratif dan kurang disertai tindak lanjut yang sistematis, sehingga berdampak pada belum optimalnya kinerja guru dan kualitas pembelajaran. Dalam konteks pendidikan abad ke-21 serta tantangan pendidikan di wilayah kepulauan, supervisi akademik yang efektif menjadi kebutuhan penting untuk memperkuat profesionalisme guru dan meningkatkan praktik pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk: (1) mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan supervisi akademik oleh kepala madrasah, (2) menganalisis kinerja guru PAI pasca supervisi, dan (3) mengkaji kontribusi supervisi akademik terhadap peningkatan mutu pembelajaran. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap 27 informan, observasi pembelajaran, dan studi dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman, sedangkan keabsahan data dijamin melalui triangulasi, member check, dan thick description. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa supervisi akademik dilaksanakan melalui tiga tahapan, yaitu perencanaan, observasi kelas yang disertai diskusi reflektif, dan tindak lanjut supervisi. Supervisi akademik berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan kemampuan guru dalam perencanaan pembelajaran, pengelolaan kelas, strategi pembelajaran, dan evaluasi pembelajaran. Selain itu, mutu pembelajaran juga mengalami peningkatan yang ditandai dengan meningkatnya keaktifan siswa, variasi metode

pembelajaran, pemanfaatan teknologi pendidikan, serta peningkatan prestasi belajar peserta didik.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in improving the quality of human resources and developing a competitive and civilized society. In the context of national education, learning quality is considered one of the primary indicators of educational success in producing competent, ethical, and adaptive students capable of facing the challenges of the 21st century. Teachers, as the central actors in the teaching and learning process, hold a crucial position in determining educational quality. Therefore, improving teachers' competence and professionalism has become a fundamental necessity in creating effective and meaningful learning. In Islamic education, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers are not only responsible for transferring religious knowledge but also for instilling moral values, spirituality, and character formation among students. Consequently, the performance of PAI teachers significantly influences the quality of learning outcomes in madrasahs (Sudjana, 2005).

The improvement of teacher quality cannot be separated from the role of the madrasah principal as an academic leader. Madrasah principals are responsible for guiding and supervising the instructional process through academic supervision. Academic supervision is a professional assistance process intended to help teachers improve their pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies in order to achieve effective and high-quality learning. According to Glickman et al. (2014), academic supervision should not merely function as administrative control but also as professional mentoring that continuously supports teachers in developing their instructional capacity. Similarly, Sergiovanni (2007) emphasizes that academic supervision aims to improve learning environments through the enhancement of teachers' instructional practices.

In practice, academic supervision in many madrasahs still encounters various challenges. Supervision activities are frequently administrative and formalistic, with limited systematic follow-up. As a result, supervision has not

fully contributed to improving instructional quality. Zulkarnain (2020) explains that effective academic supervision must involve planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous follow-up to improve teacher professionalism and learning quality. Another study by Rahmat and Syahril (2023) highlights that successful supervision depends heavily on the principal's active involvement through classroom observation, reflective discussion, and evaluation of instructional practices.

The urgency of academic supervision has become increasingly significant in the era of 21st-century education, where teachers are expected to possess critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and digital literacy skills. Teachers are required to integrate innovative teaching methods and educational technology into classroom instruction. In this context, academic supervision serves as a strategic instrument to help teachers adapt to curriculum changes and technological developments. Yusuf (2021) found that collaborative and humanistic academic supervision significantly improves teacher professionalism in designing innovative learning activities. Furthermore, Siregar (2024) revealed that academic supervision positively affects pedagogical competence, teacher motivation, and student learning outcomes.

In archipelagic regions such as Southeast Maluku Regency, educational challenges become more complex due to geographical conditions, limited educational facilities, and uneven teacher distribution. These conditions influence the effectiveness of academic supervision and the overall quality of learning in madrasahs. MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara, as one of the Islamic educational institutions in the region, plays an important role in improving educational quality in island areas. However, preliminary observations indicate that some PAI teachers still experience difficulties in preparing learning tools based on the Merdeka Curriculum, applying innovative teaching strategies, and utilizing educational technology effectively. In addition, the implementation of academic supervision by the madrasah principal has not yet been fully optimal due to limited documentation and insufficient follow-up activities.

Previous studies have generally examined the relationship between academic supervision and teacher performance or learning quality separately. Wahyuni (2021) focused on improving teachers' professional competence through academic supervision, while Fitriani (2022) concentrated on teacher competency development in general. Studies integrating academic supervision, PAI teacher performance, and learning quality within a single analytical framework, particularly in the context of island-based madrasahs, remain limited. Therefore, a significant research gap still exists.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the implementation of academic supervision by the madrasah principal in improving the performance of PAI teachers and learning quality at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic educational management, particularly academic supervision in madrasahs, and practically provide insights for principals and teachers in improving sustainable learning quality.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the implementation of academic supervision conducted by the madrasah principal in improving the performance of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and learning quality at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara. The qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, experiences, and educational practices within their natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research was conducted at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara. The participants consisted of 27 informants, including the madrasah principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, PAI teachers, students, and educational staff. Informants were selected purposively based on their involvement and understanding of academic supervision practices in the madrasah.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain comprehensive information regarding the planning, implementation, and follow-

up of academic supervision, as well as its impact on teacher performance and learning quality. Classroom observations were carried out to examine teachers' instructional practices, classroom management, teaching strategies, and student engagement during the learning process. Document analysis included reviewing supervision programs, lesson plans, teaching modules, supervision reports, and learning assessment documents.

The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying relevant information, while data display was conducted through narrative descriptions and thematic categorization. Conclusions were continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure consistency and accuracy.

To ensure data trustworthiness, this study applied source triangulation, technique triangulation, member checking, and thick description. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, while technique triangulation involved comparing findings from interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking was used to confirm the accuracy of participants' statements, and thick description was employed to provide detailed contextual explanations of the research findings.

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of academic supervision at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara was carried out systematically through three main stages: planning, implementation, and follow-up activities. The supervision process was led directly by the madrasah principal and involved collaborative communication with teachers to improve instructional quality and teacher professionalism.

At the planning stage, the madrasah principal prepared an academic supervision program at the beginning of the academic year by identifying teachers' instructional needs, determining supervision schedules, and preparing supervision instruments. The supervision instruments focused on lesson planning, classroom management, teaching methods, student engagement, learning media

utilization, and assessment practices. The findings indicate that the planning process was conducted collaboratively, allowing teachers to understand the objectives and procedures of supervision. This collaborative approach created a positive perception among teachers that supervision was not merely an evaluative activity but also a professional assistance process. This finding supports the argument of Glickman et al. (2014) that academic supervision should function as developmental guidance aimed at improving instructional competence.

During the implementation stage, the madrasah principal conducted classroom observations to assess teachers' instructional practices. The observations showed that several PAI teachers had demonstrated good instructional preparation, including the preparation of lesson plans and learning modules aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers also attempted to apply student-centered learning approaches and integrate digital media into classroom activities. However, the study also found several challenges, such as limited use of interactive learning strategies, insufficient integration of technology, and variations in teachers' classroom management skills. Some teachers still relied heavily on conventional lecture methods, which reduced student participation and classroom interaction.

Following classroom observations, the madrasah principal conducted reflective discussions with teachers to provide constructive feedback regarding instructional strengths and weaknesses. Teachers reported that reflective dialogue helped them identify areas for improvement, particularly in selecting learning methods, managing classroom interaction, and utilizing educational technology. This finding indicates that supervision was implemented using a humanistic and collegial approach rather than an authoritarian model. Such an approach encouraged teachers to become more open to evaluation and professional development. This result aligns with Yusuf (2021), who stated that collaborative academic supervision contributes significantly to improving teacher professionalism and instructional innovation.

The findings further demonstrate that academic supervision contributed positively to improving teachers' pedagogical competence. Teachers became more capable of designing lesson plans, selecting instructional strategies, and conducting authentic assessments. Several teachers began using collaborative learning models, discussion-based instruction, and multimedia learning resources to increase student participation. In addition, teachers demonstrated better classroom management skills, including organizing learning activities, maintaining classroom discipline, and encouraging active student engagement.

Improvements in teacher performance also influenced the quality of learning in the madrasah. Classroom observations indicated increased student participation during instructional activities. Students became more active in asking questions, participating in discussions, and completing collaborative tasks. The integration of learning media and digital technology also contributed to a more interactive learning environment. Furthermore, teachers' improved instructional planning resulted in more structured and goal-oriented learning activities. These findings support the view that effective academic supervision has a direct impact on improving instructional quality and student learning outcomes (Siregar, 2024).

Another important finding of this study is the significance of follow-up supervision activities. The madrasah principal did not limit supervision to classroom observation but also conducted mentoring and coaching activities to assist teachers in solving instructional problems. Follow-up activities included individual consultation, teacher discussions, and participation in teacher professional development programs such as workshops and training. This continuous guidance helped teachers improve their instructional competencies gradually and sustainably. Such findings reinforce Zulkarnain's (2020) argument that supervision becomes effective when accompanied by systematic follow-up and professional assistance.

Despite the positive impacts, this study also identified several obstacles in implementing academic supervision. Geographic conditions in the archipelagic area, limited educational facilities, and teachers' varying levels of technological literacy became significant challenges. Additionally, the madrasah principal faced

limitations in terms of time management due to administrative responsibilities. These conditions sometimes reduced the intensity and consistency of supervision activities. Nevertheless, the principal attempted to overcome these obstacles by prioritizing collaborative communication and maximizing available educational resources.

Overall, the findings indicate that academic supervision implemented through collaborative planning, classroom observation, reflective feedback, and continuous follow-up contributed significantly to improving PAI teachers' performance and learning quality at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara. The study confirms that academic supervision is not merely an administrative activity but a strategic effort to strengthen teacher professionalism and enhance educational quality in madrasahs, particularly in geographically challenging areas such as Southeast Maluku.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of academic supervision conducted by the madrasah principal at MTs Negeri 1 Maluku Tenggara played a significant role in improving the performance of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and enhancing learning quality. Academic supervision was implemented systematically through planning, classroom observation, reflective feedback, and continuous follow-up activities, which created a collaborative and supportive professional environment for teachers. The supervision process contributed to improvements in teachers' pedagogical competence, instructional planning, classroom management, learning strategies, and the integration of educational technology. These improvements also had a positive impact on student participation, classroom interaction, and overall learning effectiveness. Although several challenges were identified, including geographical limitations, inadequate facilities, and varying levels of technological literacy, the madrasah principal's collaborative and humanistic supervision approach successfully encouraged teachers' professional growth. Therefore, academic supervision can be regarded as an effective strategy for

strengthening teacher professionalism and improving the quality of education in madrasahs, particularly in archipelagic and geographically challenging regions.

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