

The Role of Academic Supervision In Improving Teachers' Professionalism at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of academic supervision in improving teachers' professionalism at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School. Academic supervision at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School possesses distinct characteristics and is implemented systematically, differing significantly from public schools and several other Islamic boarding schools that have not yet adopted a similar system. The research method employed is descriptive qualitative with a case study design, involving several individuals as informants, including the Head of the Boarding School, the Head of the Education Department, the KMI (Kulliyatul Muallimin Al-Islamiyah) Division, and other related parties. Data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, direct observations, and document analysis related to the implementation of academic supervision. Based on the findings, academic supervision plays a significant role in enhancing teachers' professionalism at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, particularly in teaching skills, pedagogy, discipline, and self-development. This serves as an innovative model to be applied in public schools and other Islamic boarding schools in an effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Therefore, this research is expected to serve as a reference for developing more effective implementation of such programs in educational institutions and to provide insights for

administrative staff in formal education institutions to improve teachers' professionalism.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran supervisi akademik dalam meningkatkan profesionalitas guru di Pondok Pesantren Mawaridussalam. Supervisi akademik di Pondok Pesantren Mawaridussalam memiliki karakteristik tersendiri dan diterapkan secara sistematis, berbeda secara signifikan dengan sekolah umum dan beberapa pesantren lain yang belum menerapkan sistem serupa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus, yang melibatkan beberapa individu sebagai informan seperti, Pimpinan Pesantren, Kepala Bidang Pendidikan, Bagian KMI (kulliyatul Muallimin Al-Islamiyah), Serta beberapa pihak lain yang terlibat. Teknik pengumpulan data mencakup wawancara mendalam, observasi secara langsung dan analisis dokumen terkait pelaksanaan supervisi akademik. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian peran supervisi akademik sangat berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan profesionalitas guru di Pondok Pesantren Mawaridussalam terutama dalam hal keterampilan mengajar, pedagogik, kedisiplinan, pengembangan diri. Hal ini menjadi inovasi baru untuk diterapkan di sekolah umum dan beberapa pesantren lainnya dalam upaya meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di Indonesia. Sehingga penelitian ini diharapkan bisa menjadi bahan acuan bagi pengembangan pelaksanaan program tersebut yang lebih efektif di lembaga pendidikan. Serta memberikan wawasan kepada staf administratif lembaga pendidikan formal dalam meningkatkan profesionalitas guru.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most essential aspects of life because it plays a significant role in shaping the quality of human resources. Education does not only function as a means of transferring knowledge but also contributes to the development of character, skills, and critical thinking abilities of individuals. According to UNESCO (2020), quality education must emphasize the development of learners' abilities to analyze, evaluate, and solve problems. This indicates that modern education should no longer focus solely on content mastery but also on fostering critical thinking skills to address various problems and face global challenges.

(Marsico & Dazzani, 2022) stated that the purpose of education is neither universal nor absolute; rather, it is influenced by the development of time, local culture, and human perspectives on life. Every individual holds different viewpoints regarding education. According

to Fadjar, A. Malik (1997), education is essentially part of the processes of socialization and enculturation that shape each individual's character based on the values and norms they uphold. Therefore, the aspects to be achieved through education may vary and can be adjusted according to the needs and orientation of the local community.

Meanwhile, based on the contents of *Pancasila* and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of 1945, the national goal of education is to promote general welfare, enlighten the life of the nation, and contribute to establishing a world order founded on independence, everlasting peace, and social justice (Karimah, 2019). In simple terms, the purpose of education itself is to develop abilities and shape character in order to enhance the intellectual life of the nation.

In this context, Islamic boarding schools are also formal educational institutions that play a significant role in achieving the national educational goals. The education system in Islamic boarding schools has distinctive characteristics in its teaching approach, namely the integration of Islamic values into various aspects of education. According to Nur Muhidin et al. (2025), Islamic boarding schools provide holistic education that fills the gaps left by the formal education system. Consequently, teachers in Islamic boarding schools are not only instructors and educators but also serve as role models who embody and instill Islamic values in their students.

However, over time, along with the challenges of modernization and the demands for improving the quality of education, Islamic boarding schools must adapt to developments in public education, particularly in improving the quality of teaching staff. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 14 of 2005 (as cited in Slameto, 2010), teachers are required not only to master the subject matter but also to possess pedagogical and professional competencies, as well as the ability to deal with students of diverse characters and to apply technology in the learning process. Nafa Nur Bahaiyah (2023) stated that the integration of technology in 21st-century learning has become an essential part of pedagogical competence to achieve shared educational goals. Therefore, it is necessary to implement strategies for continuously improving teachers' professionalism through training, supervision, evaluation, and technology-based development to ensure that Islamic boarding schools remain relevant and competitive within the national education system.

Previous studies have shown that academic supervision is an effective strategy for improving teachers' professionalism and the quality of learning. Diyanti and Atikah (2022) revealed that well-structured academic supervision can significantly enhance teachers' pedagogical competence. According to Mulyasa (2013), academic supervision involves the monitoring, guidance, and evaluation of teachers' development and students' academic progress, encompassing aspects of lesson planning, implementation, and evaluation. Lalupanda (2019) stated that academic supervision not only assists teachers in planning and implementing instruction but also in shaping students' character holistically. This process aims to improve teachers' competencies and the quality of classroom learning. With proper mentoring, teachers can develop their professional quality optimally. Such activities are systematically designed by the principal and the academic supervision team. Pratiwi et al. (2023) further explained that academic supervision activities are carried out through three main stages: pre-observation, observation, and post-observation—conducted by the principal and the involved teams.

(Sari & Utami, 2020; Widodo, 2019) stated that in improving the quality of educators, academic supervision plays a crucial role, encompassing guidance, mentoring, monitoring, and providing feedback on teachers' performance. Academic supervision is not only intended to assess the learning process but also serves as a means to support the optimal development of teachers' potential. Among the various roles of academic supervision implemented in educational institutions are: assisting teachers in designing creative and effective learning activities, enhancing teaching method skills, improving the use of instructional media in the classroom, encouraging the utilization of technology, and fostering an inclusive attitude toward students in the learning process. According to Ary, Agung, and Sulindawati (2025), academic supervision also plays an important role in creating a collaborative environment.

In line with these findings, since its establishment, Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School has continuously implemented academic supervision activities as part of its efforts to improve the quality of teachers under the supervision of the KMI (Kulliyatul Muallimin Al-

Islamiyah) division and the Head of the Education Department. Through this structured and systematic supervision process, the school has been able to ensure that teaching and learning activities run smoothly, effectively, and innovatively, in accordance with students' needs. Moreover, the teachers at Mawaridussalam are able to develop their professionalism to a level comparable with that of teachers in public schools, even though there are significant differences in the implementation of supervision between Islamic boarding schools and public schools.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objective of gaining an in-depth understanding of the processes and dynamics involved in the implementation of academic supervision and its role in improving teachers' professionalism within the environment of Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School. Qualitative research is naturalistic in nature; therefore, the researcher observes phenomena as they occur, without applying treatment or manipulation to the variables under study.

The case study design was used to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the context of academic supervision implemented by KMI (*Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyah*). This case study is exploratory in nature and aims to capture the meaning, processes, and impact of academic supervision practices within the Islamic boarding school context, which possesses its own distinctive educational characteristics.

Research Location and Duration

This research was conducted at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, located on Jl. Pringgan, Dusun III, Tumpatan Nibung Village, Batang Kuis District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province. This Islamic boarding school was chosen as the research site because it is the educational institution where the researcher currently serves and has previously been directly involved in academic supervision activities through KMI (*Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyah*) Division. This experience provides the researcher with an in-depth contextual understanding of the process and implementation of academic supervision within the pesantren environment.

The research was conducted from February to June 2025, encompassing data collection through observation, interviews, and document analysis related to the implementation of academic supervision in the boarding school, followed by data analysis and the preparation of the final report.

The research subjects consisted of the Head of the Islamic Boarding School, the Head of the Education Department, the Head of the KMI Bureau, and several other parties directly involved in the implementation and evaluation of academic supervision. The selection of subjects was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, in which participants were chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the focus of the research.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through three main techniques:

1. In-depth interviews, which aimed to explore the views, experiences, and perceptions of informants regarding the implementation of academic supervision.
2. Participant observation, conducted to directly observe the supervision process, including the stages of planning, observation, and post-supervision follow-up.
3. Document analysis, which involved reviewing supervision reports, follow-up plans, evaluation notes, and instructional materials used by teachers.

Data analysis was carried out interactively through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction was conducted by sorting relevant information, organizing it into specific categories, and formulating key themes. Data display was presented in the form of descriptive narratives illustrating the supervision process and its impact on teachers. Finally, conclusions were drawn while maintaining data validity through source and method triangulation.

This research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how academic supervision practices at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School encourage teachers to become

more professional, even though the approach differs from that of the formal education system in public schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structure and Implementation of Academic Supervision Based on Interviews, Observations, and Document Studies

This study revealed that KMI (Kulliyatul Muallimin Al-Islamiyah) has implemented and developed a structured academic supervision system with four main mechanisms as follows:

First, classroom observation program is conducted periodically by the Head of Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, the Head of the Education Department, and KMI staff. This activity not only evaluates how teachers deliver learning materials but also observes the use of teaching methods, instructional media, teacher-student interactions, student participation, and the achievement of learning objectives. Prior to the observation, selected teachers are informed about the schedule and purpose of the observation. During the observation, supervisors and staff record important aspects using standardized assessment instruments, covering planning, implementation, classroom management, and evaluation of learning.

After the observation, supervisors provide constructive feedback, addressing various key aspects such as classroom teaching strategies, effectiveness of interactions with students, and classroom management. This feedback is delivered through reflective discussions aimed at encouraging teachers to objectively evaluate their teaching practices. Through this program, a positive competitive climate is fostered among teachers, motivating them to continuously improve classroom learning quality. Teachers develop competencies to enhance teaching methods, create effective, interactive, and collaborative learning environments. According to Hattie (2009), the success of learning largely depends on teachers' ability to apply innovative teaching strategies and to build a learning environment that supports active student participation.

Second, Classroom Patrol Program is conducted routinely every day, particularly during transitions between class periods. In its implementation, several teachers are assigned on a rotational basis according to a prearranged schedule to patrol each classroom. The purpose of this program is to maintain an orderly learning environment while simultaneously monitoring teachers' punctuality. Indirectly, this program supports teachers in the execution of teaching and learning activities (KBM) and serves as a platform to address potential challenges that may arise during the learning process, such as the need for learning facilities, student discipline issues, and other matters. Through this program, a consistently orderly, conducive, and well-controlled learning environment is created at all times.

Third, the Lesson Plan Review System (*Idād Tadrīs*) is an essential component of academic supervision at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, focusing on the review of lesson plans (*Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran*, RPP), known in the pesantren context as *Idād Tadrīs*. This review is conducted daily by a special team composed of experienced senior teachers who understand effective lesson planning. Although the program has been previously communicated to all teachers, the random daily implementation motivates teachers to prepare their *Idād Tadrīs* seriously and consistently every day.

The review team examines several critical aspects, such as the formulation of learning objectives, the alignment of content with learning materials, completeness of the materials, and other key components. This comprehensive review ensures that all elements of the *Idād Tadrīs* are not only completed but also meet national quality standards (Suparmi, 2019). Structured supervision activities help teachers improve and refine their lesson plans, making them more effective and aligned with quality standards.

This activity is not merely a form of oversight; it also fosters a culture of professionalism among teachers and ensures that every teaching and learning process (KBM) in classrooms is preceded by thorough and well-prepared planning, consistent with the educational quality standards of the Islamic boarding school.

Fourth, Periodic Evaluation through Regular Meetings is another important component of academic supervision. This activity is conducted weekly and involves the Head of the Education

Department, the Head of the KMI Bureau, and KMI staff. The forum serves as an evaluative platform for reviewing the implementation of supervision activities and discussing problems that arise during the teaching and supervision processes, allowing effective solutions to be identified for future improvements.

Through this forum, the Head of the Education Department and their team also discuss policies for more targeted teacher development. Topics addressed include: pedagogical training to improve teacher quality, specialized mentoring for teachers in need, student-related challenges during teaching and learning activities (KBM), and evaluation of the supervision system. Thus, this forum is not only intended as an evaluative mechanism but also as a platform for formulating strategic policies aimed at enhancing teaching quality and developing teachers' competencies comprehensively.

The Impact of Supervision on Teacher Professionalism

The implementation of academic supervision by KMI has had a significant impact on improving teacher professionalism at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School:

1) Enhancement of Pedagogical Competence – Ta'hil Program

This program was specifically designed by KMI to enhance teachers' pedagogical competence, particularly in mastering subject matter. The Ta'hil Program is structured systematically and implemented continuously, covering in-depth study of content, teaching methodologies, and the reinforcement of relevant scientific foundations in each subject area. However, in practice, the program has not yet been fully implemented across all subject areas due to time efficiency constraints. The subjects that have participated in the program include *Tamrin Lughah, Nahwu, Shorof*, Islamic Studies, English, and Grammar.

Based on internal evaluations and feedback from participants, the Ta'hil Program has successfully improved teachers' understanding of the material they teach, while also fostering a motivation to continuously learn and enhance the quality of their classroom instruction. This program not only impacts teachers' cognitive abilities but also contributes to increased confidence in delivering lessons, designing effective teaching strategies, and fostering more meaningful interactions with students.

2) Pedagogical Development

Based on the results of the observations conducted, it was identified that academic supervision has a positive impact on both teachers and students. Through supervision, teachers become more professional and are able to develop more varied teaching methods tailored to students' needs. In addition, this activity helps create positive teacher-student interactions. Supervision also encourages teachers to engage in continuous self-reflection and to enhance their competencies in order to achieve national educational objectives.

3) Improvement of Work Discipline through Monitoring

Supervision activities have shown a positive contribution to improving teachers' work discipline, including punctuality in teaching, completeness of administrative tasks such as *Idād Tadrīs*, and proficiency in implementing varied teaching methods that meet students' needs. Furthermore, teachers actively participate in all educational activities within the scope of Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School, ensuring a structured and disciplined learning environment.

Challenges in Implementation

This study identified several challenges in the implementation of academic supervision:

1) Seniority Resistance

Although supervision activities are generally well-executed and contribute positively, one challenge encountered is the lack of responsiveness from some senior teachers. Some feel sufficiently capable and are less open to feedback, which poses a challenge to improving educational quality. Supervision is fundamentally not only intended for novice teachers but also for teachers who may require guidance and further improvement (Sari & Nugroho, 2020; Putra, 2019). Therefore, it is important to foster an understanding of

supervision as developmental rather than judgmental, and to cultivate a culture of mutual learning and improvement among educators, regardless of seniority.

2) Limited Time

The intensity of academic activities and the large number of teachers requiring supervision is a major factor limiting the optimal implementation of some supervision activities. For example, the Ta'hil Program sometimes needs to be postponed or disrupted due to scheduling conflicts with other agendas. This situation highlights the need for more flexible planning and effective time management strategies so that Ta'hil activities can be conducted outside regular school hours without disrupting other educational processes.

Theoretical Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce and develop several key theories:

1) Clinical Supervision Theory

The supervision practices at Mawaridussalam adopt the principles of clinical supervision but are also adapted to the characteristics and culture of the pesantren. This model is designed to provide guidance in a flexible and informal manner without compromising the essence of supervision itself. This approach has proven effective in building closer relationships between teachers and the boarding school leadership, the Head of the Education Department, and KMI staff (Sahertian, 2000). Supervision is conducted through direct face-to-face interactions between teachers and the supervisory team, including both the Head of the Boarding School and the Head of the Education Department, while considering the dynamic and busy life within the pesantren. This approach reflects the contextualization of clinical supervision within the pesantren educational environment.

2) Behavior Change Theory

The resistance observed among senior teachers validates the behavior change theory. Special efforts are required to overcome entrenched mindsets before change can be accepted. Therefore, supervision activities must also employ persuasive, communicative, and continuous approaches with senior teachers to minimize resistance.

3) Work Motivation Theory

The reward system implemented by KMI demonstrates effectiveness in enhancing teachers' performance, in line with the work motivation theory by Robbins & Judge (2019). With a clear and measurable reward system, teachers feel valued and are motivated to continuously improve the quality of teaching, maintain discipline, and actively participate in various educational programs.

Innovations and Local Wisdom

This study identified several unique practices that are the strengths of the supervision system at Mawaridussalam:

1. Family-Oriented Approach: Supervision is not only assessment-focused but also emphasizes personalized guidance.
2. Integration of Spiritual Values: Supervision instruments incorporate aspects of moral and character development.
3. Peer Mentoring Model: Senior teachers are facilitated to mentor junior teachers in a non-formal and supportive environment.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide several important implications for the development of academic supervision:

1. The need to strengthen the capacity of supervisors through regular training.
2. The importance of developing contextualized supervision instruments.
3. The need for specific policies to address resistance to change.
4. The importance of integrating technology into the monitoring system.

Limitations and Recommendations

Some limitations of this study include its focus on a single institution. For future research, it is recommended to:

1. Conduct longitudinal studies.
2. Expand the research sample.
3. Develop more comprehensive instruments to measure the impact of supervision.

In conclusion, this study makes a significant contribution, both practically, for the development of supervision systems in pesantren, and theoretically, for the advancement of educational supervision concepts.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully explored the role of academic supervision in improving teacher professionalism at Mawaridussalam Islamic Boarding School. The findings indicate that academic supervision plays a significant role in providing guidance, support, and evaluation of teachers' learning processes. The four main supervision mechanisms implemented—classroom observation programs, classroom patrol programs, lesson plan review (*RPP/Idād Tadrīs*), and periodic evaluations—have proven effective in improving both teachers' discipline and the quality of instruction.

However, the study also identified several challenges in implementing academic supervision, such as resistance from senior teachers and limited time. Nevertheless, the innovations and approaches applied by KMI, such as the integration of spiritual values and the peer mentoring model, demonstrate potential to overcome these challenges.

In conclusion, this research makes an important contribution to the development of more effective academic supervision practices in both pesantren and public schools. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers and stakeholders in efforts to enhance teacher professionalism while helping Islamic boarding schools adapt to increasingly competitive educational demands without compromising the traditional values that define their unique character.

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