

## **Integrating Developmental Supervision and School Culture to Foster Teacher Professional Growth**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the implementation of developmental supervision by the principal in enhancing teacher professionalism at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalrejo. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that developmental supervision plays a strategic role in improving educational quality by functioning not merely as control but as continuous professional guidance. Effective supervision, when carried out in a planned, need-based, and collaborative manner, fosters teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. The results also highlight the importance of a positive school culture, reflective practices, and the principal's role as both mentor and facilitator in creating an environment conducive to professional growth. Furthermore, developmental supervision encourages instructional innovation, the use of interactive learning media, and contributes to enhancing teachers' motivation as well as students' learning outcomes. Overall, this study underscores that developmental supervision integrated with teacher professional development empowers teachers to optimize their potential and supports the creation of high-quality learning.

**Keywords:** *Developmental Supervision, Teacher Professionalism, Instructional Leadership, Professional Development, School Culture*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The principal's role in developing teacher professionalism is one of the key factors in improving the quality of education in schools. In their role as a supervisor, the principal is responsible for ensuring that teachers receive guidance, feedback, and continuous professional development opportunities (Putra et al., 2023). Effective supervision involves various activities such as classroom observations, instructional evaluations, constructive discussions, as well as the facilitation of training and workshops. Through this supervision, the principal can identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses, provide support for improvement, and encourage innovation in teaching practices (Anshari & Zahara, 2017).

Principals are required to possess various competencies, one of which is supervisory competence. The supervisory competence of principals is crucial in improving the quality of education in schools. Through effective supervision, principals can assist teachers in overcoming instructional challenges, enhance their professionalism, and ultimately achieve educational goals optimally (Iwantoro, 2015). In this context, principal supervision serves as a means to accompany, guide, and encourage teachers to develop professionally.

Supervision is a systematic effort by the principal or supervisor to lead and guide teachers in improving the teaching process. It involves the analysis and evaluation of teaching methods as well as providing constructive feedback for improvement (Fadilla et al., 2022). One effective approach to supervision is developmental supervision, which focuses on the continuous development of teachers' competencies in accordance with the

needs and challenges encountered in the teaching and learning process (Wulandari, 2019). Developmental supervision is not merely about assessing or evaluating teachers' performance, but also about helping them recognize their potential and providing support to enhance their pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies (Masuwai, Zulkifli, & Hamzah, 2024).

Developmental supervision is a crucial component of educational management aimed at optimizing teacher performance (Poncowati, 2024). Its primary focus is to empower educators through a series of mentoring activities and the strengthening of professional capacity. This process is designed to encourage teachers to engage in deep reflection on their teaching practices, with the ultimate goal of continuously improving the quality of learning (Rofiki Moh, 2019).

This supervisory method does not merely assess performance but creates space for teachers' professional growth through a collaborative approach. This is carried out by providing targeted training, conducting formative evaluations, and offering mentoring tailored to the needs of individual teachers as well as the needs of the educational institution (Rika Widianita, 2023).

Along with technological developments, developmental supervision has undergone a significant transformation. Modern approaches utilize information and communication technology to expand the scope and effectiveness of guidance. Through digital platforms, online training, and interactive communication channels, supervision can be carried out in a more flexible and dynamic manner (Rika Widianita, 2023).

The characteristics of this contemporary supervision enable teachers to continuously develop their competencies in line with the demands of 21st-century education, where adaptability and lifelong learning are primary prerequisites for professional success. The principal of SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalorejo Magelang has implemented developmental supervision to enhance teacher professionalism. The principal employs this supervisory strategy with the aim of ensuring that every teacher meets the established competency standards and continuously improves the quality of their teaching (Zega, 2016).

Despite its great potential, the implementation of developmental supervision still faces various challenges in practice, including time constraints, limited resources, and teachers' lack of understanding regarding its importance (Badriyah, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to explore how the implementation of developmental supervision by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalorejo can enhance teacher professionalism. It is expected that the findings of this study will provide deeper insights into the effectiveness and challenges encountered in applying developmental supervision, as well as offer recommendations for improving the quality of supervision in schools.

Based on the above explanation, this study focuses on the implementation of developmental supervision by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalorejo in enhancing teacher professionalism. The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How is developmental supervision implemented by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalorejo?
2. What is the impact of the principal's developmental supervision on improving teacher professionalism at SMP Birrul Ummah?
3. What supporting and inhibiting factors affect the implementation of developmental supervision by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalorejo?

## **METHODS**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach. Creswell (2018) states that qualitative methods are research methods used to explore and understand the meaning of social or human problems experienced by individuals or groups. This study adopts a case study design. According to Creswell (2018), a case study is a type of research in which the researcher carefully investigates a program, event, activity, process, or a group of individuals. The case study approach in this research aims to reveal events, facts, conditions, phenomena, variables, and circumstances occurring during the study by presenting what actually happens.

The research was conducted at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalrejo. The research subjects consist of five individuals: the principal, the vice principal in charge of curriculum, and three Islamic Education (PAI) teachers who were supervised. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling. Data collection techniques in this qualitative study included observation, interviews, and document analysis/documentation.

The validity of the data in this study was examined using triangulation techniques, which included source triangulation and method triangulation (Alfansyur & Mariyani, 2020). Data analysis was conducted through the following steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The researcher filtered the collected data by selecting those considered important and relevant to support this study. From the refined data, the researcher was able to provide a clearer picture and facilitate further data collection to achieve the research objective, namely describing the implementation of academic supervision by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalrejo. The data from interview transcripts and observations were presented and narrated to explain and describe the findings related to the implementation of academic supervision by the principal at SMP Birrul Ummah Tegalrejo as they were observed. This step involved interpreting the data to formulate conclusions based on the findings (Sugiyono, 2014).

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

Findings from the interviews indicate that principal supervision plays a central role in improving the quality of education. Supervision functions not only as an evaluative tool but also as a continuous mentoring mechanism for teachers. Effective supervision can foster teachers' professional development and support the successful implementation of the curriculum (Juhadira et al., 2024).

In addition, the importance of a supportive school environment and positive work culture emerged as key findings. A collaborative atmosphere that is open to feedback enables teachers to feel supported and motivated to improve their performance (Faustino & Muneja, 2023).

In the context of the school studied, a positive work culture helped build mutually supportive relationships among principals, teachers, and staff. This demonstrates that the implementation of effective supervision cannot be separated from the school's work culture (Virgana & Kasyadi, 2020). Supervision carried out in a supportive atmosphere tends to yield better results compared to supervision conducted merely as a formality without the backing of a strong work culture (Nizam, 2022).

The success of developmental supervision also highlights the integration between monitoring and mentoring approaches. The principal does not merely function as a controller but also positions themselves as a mentor and facilitator. This aligns with the clinical supervision model, which emphasizes the importance of strong interpersonal relationships between supervisors and teachers (Manzi et al., 2017).

The work culture implemented in this school reflects a professional approach that supports teachers' self-development (Ingram, 2017). Values of openness and positive acceptance of feedback demonstrate the presence of trust and a sense of security between teachers and the principal. A supportive, open, and collaborative work culture can enhance teachers' motivation and confidence in improving their performance (Suriagiri, Akrim, & Norhapizah, 2022).

Providing opportunities to participate in relevant training or workshops also supports teachers' professional development efforts. Continuous professional development through training is one of the key components in improving teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes (Zubair Ahmed Chachar et al., 2023).

The culture of reflection practiced at this school is an essential element of developmental supervision. Reflection helps teachers critically assess their teaching practices and identify opportunities for improvement. This emphasis on reflection aligns with modern supervisory approaches that are not merely controlling, but also aim to empower teachers through experiential learning (Cao, 2023).

The principal plays a central role in building this work culture. By encouraging openness, providing constructive feedback, and facilitating professional development, the principal helps create an environment conducive to effective supervision. This supports the concept of transformational supervision, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration, trust, and personal development in supervisory practices (Gaikhorst et al., 2019).

Developmental supervision has a significant impact on teachers' professional growth, particularly in enhancing teaching quality. Islamic Education (PAI) teachers felt that supervision helped them improve their instructional approaches and use of media, contributing to better learning experiences for students (Putri & Permana, 2022).

The importance of supervision in supporting innovation in teaching media and approaches is also evident, as effective supervision encourages teachers to explore new methods and instructional tools. Moreover, supervision oriented toward teachers' needs positively impacts their confidence in implementing new strategies (Khun-Inkeeree et al., 2020).

The use of engaging instructional media and innovative approaches not only supports learning but is also highly relevant in the context of Islamic Education (PAI). In this field, creative and interactive teaching approaches can help students better understand religious values and their relevance to everyday life. Supervision that helps teachers focus on this aspect shows that the principal's role as a supervisor goes beyond technical evaluation and extends to holistic mentoring (Khanif, 2023).

Furthermore, teachers' acknowledgment of the relevance of supervision to their needs demonstrates a directed and contextual supervisory practice. Undirected supervision often proves ineffective in driving meaningful change in teaching practices. Therefore, needs-based supervision emerges as an ideal model for implementation (Sezer & Engin, 2024).

The principal's guidance in encouraging instructional innovation reflects an understanding of the importance of teachers' role as agents of change in education. Principals who provide such strategic direction act as instructional leaders who not only manage but also motivate and empower teachers. Principals who actively support teachers' professional development can create an environment that fosters high-quality learning (Megawati, Syamsir, & Firdaus, 2021).

Supervision in the context of teacher professional development plays a vital role in improving the quality of teaching. Through supervision, teachers have the opportunity to receive constructive feedback from more experienced individuals, including principals, colleagues, or external parties such as university mentors. The feedback provided through supervision functions not only as an evaluation but also as guidance that helps teachers identify areas for improvement in their teaching practices (Kurniawan & Matematika, 2023).

In addition, supervision provides space for teachers to identify new and more effective ways of delivering learning materials. In an ideal supervisory process, teachers are not only directed to recognize their weaknesses but also encouraged to explore their potential and opportunities for growth. This process motivates teachers to continuously learn and innovate in their teaching approaches, thereby creating better learning experiences for students (Supit et al., 2021).

The relationships built through supervision also contribute to enhancing teachers' motivation and self-confidence. When teachers feel supported through constructive feedback, they are more open to change and more motivated to try new teaching practices. Thus, collaborative and professionally oriented supervision benefits not only individual teachers but also has a positive impact on the overall quality of education in schools (Almaajid et al., 2023).

Supervision conducted in educational settings plays an important role in helping teachers improve instructional quality. Through supervision, teachers not only receive constructive feedback but also gain opportunities to develop new skills and strategies relevant to students' needs. In practice, feedback from principals often provides valuable insights that can be applied in classroom management as well as instructional approaches (Supit et al., 2021).

The impact of supervision becomes evident when teachers experiment with new methods to engage students. For example, the use of more interactive strategies or creative approaches in delivering content can create a more dynamic learning environment. Moreover, supervision also serves as a means of reflection, allowing teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods used and make adjustments for subsequent lessons (Hasibuan et al., 2022).

## **CONCLUSION**

Principal supervision has been proven to play a strategic role in improving the quality of education. Effective supervision is not merely a form of control but serves as a means of continuous guidance that emphasizes collaboration, trust, and teachers' professional development. The principal's leadership as a mentor and facilitator fosters a positive school culture, one that is open to feedback and encourages critical reflection in teaching practices. Moreover, need-based supervision has been shown to be more relevant and effective in facilitating competence development through training, workshops, and the exploration of innovative teaching methods. Its impact is evident in teachers' increased motivation to innovate, the creation of more interactive learning experiences, and the enhancement of both student motivation and learning outcomes. Thus, supervision that is integrated with teacher professional development not only addresses weaknesses but also empowers teachers to optimize their potential and contribute to the realization of high-quality learning.

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