

Academic Supervision: Concepts, Objectives, and Practices

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Abstract

Academic supervision is widely recognized as a strategic mechanism to improve instructional quality and strengthen teacher professionalism. This study aims to elaborate the concept, objectives, stages, and implementation of academic supervision while clarifying its contribution to both theory and practice in contemporary education. Specifically, the article examines how academic supervision supports the development of pedagogical and professional competencies, improves instructional planning, classroom management, assessment literacy, and learner engagement, and shifts supervision from an evaluative activity into a developmental and reflective learning process. Using a qualitative descriptive method through literature synthesis and policy review, the findings confirm that effective supervision depends on systematic stages of planning, observation, feedback, and follow up supported by collaborative approaches. The article contributes theoretically by strengthening the view of academic supervision as a humanistic and evidence based framework for teacher development, and practically by offering guidance for school leaders in implementing responsive and sustainable supervision practices.

Keywords: *Academic supervision, instructional quality, professional development*

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Introduction

Academic supervision is a fundamental component of a modern education management system focused on improving the quality of learning, developing teacher professionalism, and achieving sustainable educational quality standards. In the context of Indonesia's educational transformation, demands on teachers are increasingly complex, ranging from the ability to develop adaptive learning plans, implement innovative pedagogical approaches, conduct continuous assessments, integrate digital technology, and ensure that the entire learning process remains student centered. All of these demands cannot be effectively met without a structured, professional, and continuous academic supervision mechanism that provides comprehensive direction, guidance, and coaching tailored to the needs of teachers at various levels of education (Harsono, 2023; Siregar & Yusuf, 2024).

In this context, academic supervision plays a strategic role in developing teachers to optimally carry out their professional duties. Teachers are not only required to teach but also to possess strong reflective skills, the capacity to design differentiated learning, and the ability to continuously innovate pedagogically to address the

increasingly diverse needs of students. Therefore, academic supervision serves as a professional support system that bridges teacher competency standards, national education regulations, and the realities of classroom learning practices that demand rapid adaptation amidst technological developments and social dynamics (Putri & Jauhari, 2024). This aligns with findings that effective career management through qualification and training programs is crucial for improving the quality of education in schools (Ramandhika et al., 2025).

The state of education in Indonesia demonstrates that Improving the quality of learning remains a major challenge. A 2023 report from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) shows that some teachers are unable to implement active learning, have not optimally utilized formative assessments, and still experience difficulties in meaningfully integrating technology into learning activities. Meanwhile, the competency gap between senior and novice teachers remains quite significant, compounded by the low ability of some teachers to implement differentiation based learning as emphasized in the Independent Curriculum (Widodo & Nasution, 2023). This situation emphasizes the importance of academic supervision as a strategic effort to strengthen teachers' technical skills in classroom management, improve the quality of learning interactions, help teachers master pedagogy relevant to 21st century demands, and provide data based feedback that can map teachers' weaknesses and strengths in the teaching process. Essentially, supervision is not merely a control instrument, but a professional development mechanism that emphasizes coaching, mentoring, and strengthening pedagogical reflection so that teachers have broad insight into the quality of their learning practices (Cahyono & Prasetya, 2024).

In recent years, the paradigm of academic supervision has undergone a significant shift from the traditional top down approach to a constructive and collaborative approach. Traditional supervision is often perceived as solely focused on monitoring, assessment, and supervision, often leading to teacher resistance, as it is perceived as error oriented rather than development oriented. However, recent research shows that effective supervision is dialogic, supportive, and participatory, positioning teachers as equal partners in the learning improvement process, rather than as objects of evaluation (Harsono, 2023; Putri & Jauhari, 2024). This paradigm shift aligns with global trends in various countries implementing instructional coaching, clinical supervision, lesson study, peer mentoring, and collaborative reflection, which have proven more successful in improving the quality of teaching practice by positioning teachers as lifelong learners and opening up collaboration between educators in a supportive professional environment.

In the Indonesian context, academic supervision receives special attention in various national regulations, including through Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 13 of 2007 concerning Standards for School/Madrasah Principals (2007), which emphasizes that one of the principal's main competencies is the ability to supervise learning; Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 15 of 2018,

which stipulates academic supervision as part of the principal's workload; and the Independent Curriculum policy (2022–2024), which emphasizes differentiated learning and formative assessment two crucial components that can only be optimally implemented through intensive, systematic, and needs oriented academic supervision in the field (Kemenristekdikti, 2022). However, various recent studies have shown that the implementation of supervision in schools is often suboptimal due to supervisors' time constraints, lack of mastery of modern supervision techniques, a lack of supervision instruments appropriate to contemporary learning needs, and weak coordination between supervision policies and daily practices in schools (Rahmawati, 2023).

The various challenges to implementing academic supervision become increasingly apparent when considering the findings of a 2023–2024 study, which showed that many teachers and principals still perceive supervision as an inspection activity, not a coaching activity. Teachers often lack specific constructive feedback, supervisors lack effective coaching techniques, and some teachers exhibit resistance due to poor past supervision experiences. Furthermore, supervision is often conducted without thorough preparation, is not sustainable, and has not yet become part of a culture of reflection in schools. Research by Siregar & Yusuf (2024) revealed that 68% of elementary school teachers view supervision as an administrative burden, rather than a means of professional development. This indicates fundamental problems in the paradigm, approach, and implementation of supervision that need to be improved to better align with teacher needs and current learning dynamics.

Meanwhile, in various countries, academic supervision has evolved into a professional learning system based on research and collaboration. Several developed countries are implementing leading practices such as instructional coaching in the United States, which emphasizes reflective dialogue and video analysis of lessons; sentinel supervision in Finland, which focuses on teacher well being and strengthening a culture of learning; lesson study in Japan, which encourages teacher collaboration in designing, observing, and revising lessons; and the mentoring model in Australia, which provides intensive support for beginning teachers during their first two years of teaching. Through these diverse practices, it is clear that academic supervision focuses not only on pedagogical evaluation but also on developing teachers' comprehensive emotional, social, and professional capacities so they can carry out their duties optimally and meaningfully.

Furthermore, the demands of 21st century learning further emphasize the importance of academic supervision. Teachers are required to master technological literacy, critical and creative thinking skills, collaborative learning, differentiated learning management, and the creation of authentic and formative assessments. Widyarningsih (2023) research shows that teachers who receive reflection based supervision have better abilities in developing formative assessments and implementing innovative learning models than those who do not. Therefore, academic supervision should be directed at strengthening student needs based learning

planning, utilizing technology in learning, improving classroom management skills based on a humanistic approach, and adapting to a flexible and contextual curriculum.

Although numerous studies have addressed academic supervision, several research gaps remain that require further study. These include how the quality of supervisory feedback influences long term changes in teacher teaching practices, the extent to which coaching based supervision impacts teacher performance in non urban areas, the relationship between school culture and the success of academic supervision, how to develop supervision instruments that adapt to the demands of the Independent Curriculum, and how supervision influences teacher assessment literacy in the learning context. Taking these gaps into account, this article seeks to provide an in depth theoretical review of the concept, objectives, and practices of academic supervision based on the latest research findings from 2023–2025. This will contribute to strengthening the conceptual understanding and implementation of supervision in schools.

The overall aim of this article is to examine the concept of academic supervision from a modern educational perspective, explain the purpose of academic supervision in teacher development, outline its implementation practices according to the needs of contemporary schools, integrate the latest research findings as a basis for conceptual strengthening, and provide recommendations that can strengthen the implementation of academic supervision in schools so that it can address today's educational challenges.

Research Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe, analyze, and interpret the concepts, objectives, and practices of academic supervision based on a review of theories, regulations, and the latest research findings from 2023–2025. This approach was chosen because academic supervision is a complex, contextual, socio pedagogical phenomenon that cannot be measured solely through quantitative data. Therefore, a qualitative approach allows researchers to examine the meaning, process, and dynamics of academic supervision in depth from both theoretical and implementation perspectives. This research was designed using a structured library research model through the process of collecting, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant scientific literature to build a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of academic supervision as a crucial component of educational management. This literature review design was chosen because academic supervision is a field rich in theories, models, and empirical findings, making literature based analysis the most appropriate method for formulating concepts and their implications for educational practice.

The research data sources were primary and secondary literature, including accredited international and national scientific journals published between 2023 and 2025, textbooks and academic references related to instructional supervision,

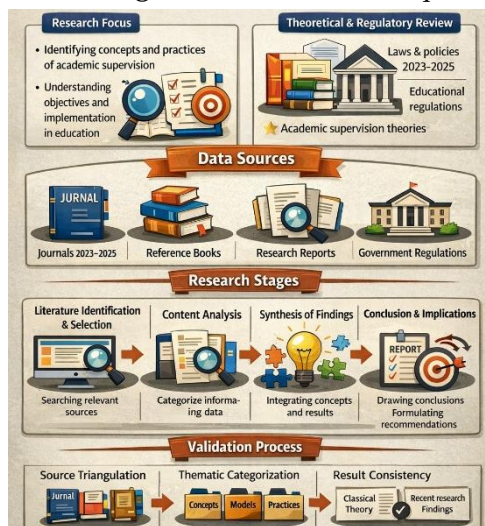
educational management, pedagogy, and teacher professional development, as well as government regulations such as Ministerial Regulation No. 13 of 2007 and Ministerial Regulation No. 15 of 2018, and the Independent Curriculum policy relevant to the implementation of supervision in schools. These included research reports and official publications from the Ministry of Education and Culture. All literature was selected based on eligibility criteria, including topic relevance, recency of publication, source credibility, and theoretical and practical contributions to the understanding of academic supervision.

Data collection was conducted in stages, beginning with literature identification using keywords such as academic supervision, instructional supervision, coaching for teachers, professional development, Independent Curriculum, and teacher evaluation. The literature was then screened by reading abstracts to ensure alignment with the research focus. After that, an in depth reading of the selected literature was conducted to obtain information regarding the concepts, objectives, models, techniques, and practices of academic supervision, as well as the data extraction process in the form of definitions, principles, benefits, research findings, and implementation recommendations from each source so that all data used is truly valid and relevant.

The collected data was analyzed using content analysis techniques, which emphasize the categorization, interpretation, and synthesis of information from various literature sources. The analysis was conducted through data reduction by grouping literature based on common themes, such as the concept of supervision, objectives of supervision, supervision models, implementation practices, and obstacles and opportunities for supervision in the context of modern education. The data was then presented in a structured narrative and linked to educational management theory and the demands of 21st century learning. Conclusions were then drawn to formulate a comprehensive understanding of academic supervision and its implications for teacher professional development. The analysis process was conducted iteratively, comparing various sources to maintain consistency of information and strengthen the validity of interpretations.

Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation techniques, which compare information from empirical journals, government policies, theoretical textbooks, and research reports to ensure data consistency, pattern similarity, and interpretation accuracy, ensuring that conclusions are objective and scientifically sound. Data validity was also strengthened through cross checking between classical supervision theory and the latest research findings, ensuring that the analysis results are not confined to a single perspective but instead reflect a more comprehensive and up to date understanding. Overall, the research procedure was carried out through the stages of formulating the focus of the study according to the research needs and the relevance of the Indonesian educational context, collecting primary and secondary literature through international and national journal databases, screening the literature based on the criteria of relevance and novelty of publications, content analysis through thematic categorization and interpretation processes, compiling a synthesis of findings to build a conceptual framework for academic supervision, and

compiling a scientific report according to the articulation structure of academic journals. All these procedures ensure that this research is systematically structured and follows the rules of qualitative research methodology that are valid and accountable in an academic context. The following are the research steps illustrated in the figure.



Pic 1. Steps Qualitative Research Design's

Result and Discussion

The results of this study indicate that academic supervision plays a crucial role in improving the quality of learning and teacher professional development. Based on a synthesis of recent literature from 2023–2025, academic supervision is understood as a systematic, planned, and ongoing professional development process to ensure that teachers implement learning in accordance with established pedagogical and professional competency standards. From a contemporary educational perspective, academic supervision is no longer viewed as an authoritative supervisory activity, but rather as a collaborative process involving constructive dialogue, pedagogical mentoring, and data based feedback. Harsono (2023) explains that modern academic supervision should function as an instrument for enhancing teacher capacity through a reflective and supportive approach, while Putri & Jauhari (2024) emphasize that supervision should be implemented as competenc based mentoring encompassing curriculum analysis, learning evaluation, and teacher coaching within the context of professional development. From a global perspective, academic supervision is even integrated into the concept of instructional leadership, which positions the principal as a pedagogical leader who encourages innovation, provides effective coaching, and creates a collaborative school culture that supports improved learning quality. Studies also show that the primary goal of academic supervision is to improve the quality of learning by strengthening teacher competencies in pedagogical, professional, social, and personal aspects. However, recent research developments indicate that the goal of supervision now places greater emphasis on improving instructional quality, classroom management effectiveness, the ability to implement differentiated learning,

and the application of formative assessment as required by the Independent Curriculum. Siregar & Yusuf (2024) revealed that academic supervision plays a significant role in helping teachers understand and apply student centered learning principles, while research Rahmawati (2023) indicates that academic supervision impacts teacher skills in designing teaching materials, managing classrooms, and providing constructive feedback to students. Thus, academic supervision is not only oriented toward identifying teacher weaknesses but also aims to strengthen teachers' potential for pedagogical innovation, foster creativity in the learning process, and foster a culture of continuous reflection to improve the quality of learning over time.

Academic supervision practices in schools are highly diverse and influenced by the approach used, supervisor competence, and teacher readiness to participate in the supervision process. Literature reviews indicate that academic supervision is generally implemented through several approaches, including clinical, collaborative, academic, and reflective approaches. The clinical approach is one of the most frequently used techniques, as it provides supervisors with the opportunity to directly observe learning through pre observation, observation, and feedback stages. Widyaningsih (2023) found that the clinical approach can improve teachers' abilities in developing formative assessments and implementing active, student centered learning strategies. Furthermore, research developments also indicate that collaborative and coaching approaches are increasingly used in academic supervision because they are considered more effective than traditional evaluative approaches. Coaching offers teachers a space for self reflection, formulating learning improvement goals, and developing instructional strategies based on student needs. Cahyono & Prasetya (2024) emphasize that coaching encourages equal professional conversations, so teachers feel valued as colleagues rather than as those being evaluated. This competency is evident, among other things, in teachers' ability to implement innovative models such as the Teams Games Tournament (TGT), which can improve students' psychomotor skills (Maghribi et al., 2023).

Academic supervision practices in schools are also influenced by school culture, principal leadership, the availability of supervisory instruments, and the quality of feedback provided by supervisors. Effective supervision requires careful planning, a mutually agreed upon schedule, instruments relevant to curriculum requirements, and objective, data based feedback. Supervision should not stop at the observation stage but should be followed up with training, mentoring, or ongoing coaching to ensure teachers' capacity is truly enhanced. Research from 2023–2024 showed that schools with strong supervision systems tend to have a more positive learning culture, teachers who are more confident in teaching, and more effective curriculum implementation. This observation stage is crucial for identifying real world problems, such as student learning barriers in social studies Maghribi et al. (2024) or technical difficulties in cursive writing (Maghribi & Sofiasyari, 2025).

In the context of the Independent Curriculum, academic supervision faces both challenges and opportunities. The challenge primarily lies in the limited ability of some supervisors to understand learning differentiation, formative assessment, and

competency based coaching. Many teachers also still require intensive guidance in implementing teaching modules, developing learning objectives, and designing student centered learning activities. However, the Independent Curriculum (Curriculum Merdeka) opens up significant opportunities to strengthen academic supervision through the integration of technology such as video based observation, digital teacher reflection platforms, and school based learning communities. The use of technology in supervision allows for more flexible, rapid, and accurate observation and feedback. In the context of literacy, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) features is now a crucial strategy for teachers to strengthen elementary school students' understanding of science and mathematics (Rahayu et al., 2025).

Overall, research findings indicate that academic supervision has direct and significant implications for the quality of learning and teacher performance. Professionally designed and continuously implemented academic supervision can enhance teachers' abilities to design meaningful learning, implement innovative instructional strategies, manage classrooms effectively, and improve student learning outcomes. Research findings from 2024 indicate that schools that consistently implement academic supervision have a stronger collaborative culture, higher teacher job satisfaction, and better curriculum adaptability than schools that do not implement it optimally. Humanistic supervision is essential to addressing the various problems and challenges of education in today's era of rapid change (Wasino et al., 2026).

Therefore, academic supervision can be viewed as a crucial foundation for developing schools that are effective, innovative, and responsive to the dynamics of 21st century education.

Conclusion

Academic supervision is a strategic element in enhancing educational quality and teacher professional development, evolving from an administrative oversight process to a system focused on mentoring, pedagogical reflection, and continuous capacity building. It plays a key role in ensuring the effective, adaptive, and relevant implementation of the Independent Curriculum and 21st-century competencies. Systematic, collaborative, and data-driven academic supervision improves teachers' abilities in lesson design, classroom management, innovative instructional strategies, formative assessments, and providing meaningful learning experiences. It strengthens pedagogical competencies, fosters a reflective learning culture, and boosts teacher motivation and professionalism. Contemporary approaches like clinical supervision, coaching, and pedagogical collaboration are more effective than traditional evaluative methods. Despite challenges such as limited supervisor competency and teacher resistance, these can be overcome by enhancing supervisor capacity, fostering a collaborative culture, and using technology. Recommendations include improving supervisor training, building a supportive work culture, and utilizing technology for data analysis. Additionally, schools should implement planned, scheduled supervision

with follow-up programs such as internal training, workshops, and coaching sessions. This will result in tangible improvements in teacher competency and foster teacher learning communities to share practices and design innovations. Academic supervision, when implemented humanistically and professionally, can drive high-quality learning and help schools achieve their educational goals.

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