

Teachers' Perceptions of Academic Supervision in a Pandemic Era; Phenomenological Review

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Abstract:

Academic supervision is non-negotiable for leaders to improve teacher professionalism in schools. This research aims to understand the teacher's perception of the principal's academic supervision at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya. This study uses a qualitative approach to the type of phenomenology. This research is an understanding of social phenomena or phenomena that occur in the field, with more emphasis on a complete picture of the phenomena that occur. The results showed that teachers' perceptions of academic supervision by school principals had a perfect meaning because, on average, they had good motivation and performance before the covid-19 pandemic. Teachers interpreted the supervision carried out by the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Kroya as professional guidance assistance, quality-oriented based on continuous improvement, quality control, driving school principals, and an arena for the principal's responsibility to teachers.

Keywords: *Teacher, Principal, Perception, Academic Supervision*

Abstrak:

Supervisi akademik merupakan hal yang tidak bisa ditawar lagi bagi pimpinan guna meningkatkan profesionalisme guru di sekolah. Riset ini bertujuan untuk memahami tentang persepsi guru terhadap supervisi akademik yang dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah di SMP Negeri 2 Kroya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif jenis fenomenologi. Penelitian ini bersifat understanding (memahami) terhadap fenomena atau gejala-gejala sosial yang terjadi di lapangan, dengan lebih menitik beratkan pada gambaran yang lengkap tentang fenomena yang terjadi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persepsi guru terhadap supervisi akademik yang dilakukan oleh kepala sekolah memiliki pemaknaan yang sangat baik, karena mereka rata-rata memiliki motivasi dan kinerja yang sudah baik sebelum masa pandemi covid-19. Guru memaknai supervise yang dilakukan oleh kepala SMP Negeri 2 Kroya sebagai bantuan bimbingan profesional, quality oriented berbasis pada continuous improvement, pengendalian mutu, kepala sekolah penggerak, ajang bentuk tanggung jawab kepala sekolah terhadap guru.

Kata Kunci: *Guru, Kepala Sekolah, Persepsi, Supervisi Akademik*

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus, better known as Covid-19, is a disease hitting Indonesia and the whole world (Abidah et al., 2020). This virus was first detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan and continues to spread to impact the economic and educational systems of countries in the world (Sintema, 2020). The coronavirus transmission, which emerged at the end of December 2019, is from one person to another through splashes from the respiratory tract produced by sneezing or coughing from virus sufferers. Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes diseases ranging from mild to severe symptoms in sufferers (Pratiwi et al., 2020). Therefore, the government urges the public to take preventive measures so as not to contract the coronavirus through; washing hands frequently with soap, using hand sanitizer, covering mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, and wearing a mask (Nash, 2020). Therefore, the government urges the public to take preventive measures not to contract the coronavirus through; washing hands frequently with soap, using hand sanitizer, covering the mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, and wearing a mask (Syarifudin, 2020; Suppawattaya et al., 2020).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology issued Circular Letter No. 15 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Organizing Learning from Home in an Emergency Period for the Spread of COVID-19, which is reinforced by Circular No. 15 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Learning from Home in an Emergency Period for the Spread of COVID-19 (Mustajab & Fawa'iedah, 2020; Kurniasari et al., 2020). The aim is to ensure that students' rights to receive educational services are protected from the spread of Covid, protect education unit residents, prevent its spread, and provide psychosocial support to educators, students, and parents (Aji, 2020; Prasetyaningtyas, 2020).

Students, parents, and teachers who run online learning have many obstacles, especially at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, Cilacap Regency, Central Java. One criticism from students is that they are not used to using cell phones to deliver homework, making it difficult for them to understand the material. Parents have expressed concern about the increasing need to purchase quotas and the lack of understanding of topics guiding their children's learning. The difficulty of delivering material to students, there are still many students who are not actively participating in online learning. There is a lack of facilities to provide learning to students, not achieving student material achievements, and various other problems. Teacher complaints about the implementation of online learning. Despite the many criticisms, online learning is a lesson that must be learned to avoid the spread of the coronavirus (Suwidiyanti & Anshori, 2021; Fajri et al., 2021).

In addition to having obstacles faced in online learning, on the one hand, online learning also has advantages. Sim et al., (2021) and Samat et al., (2020) say that online learning has advantages such as minimizing time and energy so that the remaining time and energy can be used to carry out other activities outside of class hours. Some of the advantages of online learning are that it can be done at any time and wherever the place is studied; for example, learning

can be done in the room, living room, and so on, as well as at adjusted times such as morning, afternoon, evening or night (Chung et al., 2020; Rahman & Subiyantoro, 2021). In addition, online learning can also be reached even at long distances, just as students do not have to go to school first to study; they are anywhere they can access online learning (Aziz & Nurannisa, 2022).

From January 2021 until the publication of this guide, the government made several regulatory adjustments following the dynamics of the pandemic (Kurniasari et al., 2020). In the latest adjustment, the regulation outlines that if the local government has permission and the education unit meets all tiered requirements, limited offline/face-to-face learning will be carried out while still implementing strict health protocols (Hickling et al., 2021). This face-to-face implementation applies the precautionary principle because it is related to the health and safety of school residents, so the health protocol must be applied strictly by the limited face-to-face implementation rules (Haekal et al., 2022). Limited face-to-face learning limits the number of students in one class, so it is necessary to regulate the number with a rotation system. A capacity of 50% of the average number of students, approval of students' parents, application of strict health protocols, education personnel has carried out vaccinations, and facilities and equipment. Supporting infrastructure for implementing Health protocols is available (Ahmad, 2020; Haekal et al., 2022).

The re-implementation of offline learning at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya indicates a transition from online and offline learning or even a combination of the two. These repeated merging and transitions can hurt the quality of learning as students and teachers have to adapt to changing learning systems constantly. If the transition between online and offline learning is not managed correctly, it can lead to learning loss. So teachers need to have good quality online and offline classroom management.

One way that can be used to improve the quality of learning at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, especially during the pandemic, is to conduct academic supervision so that the quality of learning can be well maintained (Fahmi et al., 2019). Principals and teachers play an essential role in implementing education since they are in direct contact with students throughout the teaching and learning process. For this reason, a school principal must guide, encourage, and direct his or her teachers and staff in order for them to deliver their finest work. The academic supervision function is an improvement effort as a continuous process and is carried out continuously (Ginting & Siburian, 2019; Okeke-Uzodike, 2021). This academic supervision upholds the practice of continuous quality improvement as one of the basic principles and integrated management (Nurhayati et al., 2019).

This is based on research conducted by researchers, including; Muharlisiani et al., (2019) who said that academic supervision could improve pedagogic competence and teacher performance in schools. Asmuni (2020) also said that academic supervision positively affects teacher performance in schools. Nurhayati et al., (2022) added that the principal's academic supervision and teacher job satisfaction increase teachers' pedagogic competence by 43.1%. Other factors determine the remaining 56.9%. Hoque et al., (2020) said that the

practice of supervision carried out by school principals, as a whole, did not correlate with teacher performance and attitudes. However, supervision is positively and significantly related to teacher performance and attitudes.

Suhairi & Badrudin (2021) reported that the application of academic supervision by supervisors during the Covid-19 pandemic was carried out both online and offline, using individual and group methodologies, according to their research. However, the supervision operations have not run as efficiently as possible due to several problems supervisors, and schools have encountered. Permatasari et al., (2022) argue that academic supervision of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic required a series of good preparations, an approach to academic supervision which was usually carried out face-to-face, carried out remotely, and divided into two parts, verification of program plans, manual learning, and online synchronization so that it can support the sustainability of teacher performance well.

Sanoto & Sugito (2021) stated that the online-based educational monitoring system is a breakthrough in the 3T (frontier, outermost, and least developed regions). Distance, expense, time, and the lack of supervisors can all be handled by an online educational supervision system. Mudarris & Hasanah (2021) added that for supervision activities to be effective and efficient, the principal first carried out problem mapping, then continued with the perception equation, the implementation of supervision activities, and evaluation and improvement follow-up plans.

The research above shows the importance of academic supervision that school principals must carry out. Therefore, academic supervision activities carried out in the pre-pandemic and pandemic periods will have a different impact and meaning on teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, so it is exciting to be interpreted and studied because it is the novelty of this research. The follow-up research on the findings of academic supervision is expected to be a stepping stone for learning habits in this new average era. Well-managed online and offline teaching and learning activities have proven to be an effective way of learning in the classroom.

On the other hand, offline learning requires the existence of learning facilities and the capacity of teachers to use them. During the pandemic, adjustments must be made to catch up with learning based on local situations (Safitri et al., 2021). Teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya must transfer knowledge and information using various means and facilities according to the needs and circumstances of learning. As a result, teachers must improve their teaching skills and adapt them to the needs of offline and online teaching and learning activities. Teacher performance can be improved with appropriate adjustments and great motivation to carry out their obligations at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya. Thus, teachers are expected to demonstrate their ability to carry out their duties as professional educators. Therefore, this study aims to fully understand the meaning of academic supervision carried out by school principals for teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to the type of phenomenology. This research is an understanding of social phenomena or phenomena that occur in the field, with more emphasis on a complete picture of the phenomenon of academic supervision carried out by the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, Cilacap Regency, Central Java towards teachers, thus giving rise to various kinds of meanings or perceptions that will be interpreted according to the data in the field. In this case, the author intends to understand the empirical reality of the emerging phenomena to be understood and interpreted based on the author's interpretation, then compared with the results of studies conducted by previous researchers. Of course, in interpreting and interpreting information and data, the author uses references as a reference or support and to strengthen the data found in the field.

To understand the meaning and interpret phenomena and interaction symbols about academic supervision activities, the researchers went directly to the field to collect the required data by conducting interviews, observations, and documentation to strengthen the research data. During this research, the researcher acts as a planner and implementer of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. In the end, he becomes a reporter for the results of his research. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the informants, as many as ten people consisting of the principal, vice-principal, and teachers. The data analysis was carried out through the stages of analysis by Miles & Huberman (2014), namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Professional Guidance Assistance

Based on the study results, it was shown that the principal's academic supervision had a significant impact on improving the performance and quality of learning at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya and had a significant effect on professional guidance assistance. As the highest leader, the principal is essentially a person who understands and masters effective managerial and supervision (Komariah et al., 2019; Lian et al., 2019). Successful supervision at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya is shown by the ability of the principal to carry out effective learning, form good leadership characteristics, develop staff, manage teaching staff, to be able to form a responsive and anticipatory attitude in school personnel, be able to bring the school towards change towards a better direction, good ability to create a safe and orderly school environment (Azwardi, 2020).

In this case, the principal supervising activities at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya is open and motivates school personnel to show their best performance to improve their schools' quality of education and learning. The fundamental thing about the success of the supervision carried out by the principal is his ability to build a work culture in schools, build work motivation and create a religious work climate that can influence the performance of each individual at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya.

As revealed by AMD that the supervision activities carried out in schools are a form of professional guidance assistance to teachers; wherein this supervision activity, the teacher can display performance and show reinforcing documents to demonstrate self-professionalism. Supervision activities should provide enthusiasm and motivation for us to be more active in improving discipline, completing good learning administration, and increasing the competence of teachers in their respective fields.

While the aspect of teacher unpreparedness when supervised according to AWN as a teacher at SMP Negeri 2, Kroya stated that; Supervision activities could indeed improve our professionalism as a teacher, but we also feel pressured by the existence of supervision which is always oriented towards improving administration only, but lacking in the application of performance (educational service to students). Teachers are too busy with school administration, so they do not have time to develop educational services for children. In contrast, service is an essential element in implementing knowledge so that it is right on target than the concept of good administration but cannot be applied.

The assistance and support provided by the principal to teachers to carry out assessment and supervision from a technical point of view of education and administration at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya are in the form of providing direction, guidance, and examples regarding the implementation of the teaching and learning process of teachers so that they can improve and develop knowledge. The teacher owns the teacher to improve teacher performance in carrying out the teaching and learning process. Creating a comfortable working atmosphere can encourage comfortable teachers to develop teacher performance optimally even though all teachers do not fully accept this activity for various factors and reasons.

The results of studies in the field indeed have pros and cons to applying supervision as a means of professional guidance. However, so far, academic supervision carried out by school principals has had a considerable impact on improving teacher performance and professionalism. The results of the observations indicate that the academic supervision carried out has implications for the completeness of teacher administration and teacher skills in teaching in the classroom, such as the completeness of the learning tools they have (consisting of the subject syllabus, annual program, a semester program, lesson planning), teacher teaching style, learning targets are achieved as planned. This shows that the principal's academic supervision can provide motivation and positive changes to the completeness of teacher administration, increasing the competence and professionalism of teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya.

Quality Oriented Based On Continuous Improvement

Improving quality through the concept of continuous improvement at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya is very much needed. All components in the organization are required to provide the best service because they will create the next generation that can be oriented towards community progress. Quality-oriented

based on continuous improvement is an activity to evaluate the development and improvement of sustainable programs in all aspects carried out by schools in order to make improvements to improve quality and services to the public.

As the deputy principal, ANS stated that in improving quality based on continuous improvement, monitoring was carried out by school components, one of which was academic supervision activities carried out by the leadership, which essentially aimed to improve some existing shortcomings and weaknesses. Academic supervision carried out by the school shows conformity with Deming's concept, namely the concept of continuous improvement that impacts improving the organization's quality (Dudin et al., 2017). Continuous improvements and quality improvements will lead the organization in a better direction in the future (Agrawal, 2019).

RDW as a teacher at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, said that the academic supervision activities carried out regularly here indicate that the principal is somewhat authoritarian. He only wants and demands that teachers must be professional, but it is not comparable to what we expect. In contrast to the AKM statement, as a teacher who has been supervised, he stated that the supervision carried out by the principal was an effort to direct all teachers about the best and had not been done. At its core is self-evaluation through peers, which aims to explain our shortcomings and weaknesses. I think that is very good and needs to be done to make improvements as soon as possible.

This academic supervision activity is carried out in a programmed and structured manner according to the agreement on the results of the school meeting. It is followed up through a follow-up plan that the leadership will monitor again. It is a follow-up step from monitoring to measure and enhance actions, such as matching results. The evaluation ensures that the plans are working and that the goals are met.

Continuous improvement activities are intended to improve and re-plan activities running through the correction phase and make improvements from before. These initiatives try to determine the most excellent way to improve. Creating the best solutions to current problems so that the outcomes persist and improve.

Quality Control

SMP Negeri 2 Kroya, as an educational institution of good quality, can certainly control and maintain the quality that the community has firmly held. Of course, the existence of a quality school can increase public confidence in the school. All components carry out quality control in the school, and the main controlling factor, namely the principal, one of whose activities are realized through academic supervision. The role given to schools as a form of responsibility to educate the nation's children, with quality control management carried out with continuous improvement (Ahmad, 2017)

Quality control and learning quality towards better education need to be carried out with systematic and continuous efforts, such as academic supervision, to improve teachers' quality and competence. By implementing a supervision program that has been scheduled by the principal or supervisor of

the teacher, it is expected to be able to control and maintain the quality of the school so that it remains a superior school and even more superior in the future. The primary purpose of supervision is to improve the teaching and learning process activities to control the quality of teachers and the quality of learning outcomes that are implemented for students. One more thing supervision is done to improve the performance of teachers in transferring knowledge to students.

The head of SMP Negeri 2 Kroya said that academic supervision activities aim to observe educational and to learn activities carried out by teachers, starting from planning or preparing for learning activities carried out by teachers, implementing teaching and learning activities, and evaluating learning outcomes, reprocessing evaluations in improving services. Teaching and learning, creating a pleasant learning atmosphere, utilizing existing learning resources, and so on. Students will be well served if supervision is used to improve the quality of learning and control the quality of schools so that they maintain a positive image; students will be well served if supervision is used to improve their abilities by their potential and increase achievement and the percentage of graduates from educational institutions (Nurhayati et al., 2022).

It is thought that the academic supervision provided has a favorable impact on the understanding of pedagogic competence and the quality of teacher learning management in general. The improvement of teacher competence and performance in preparing learning tools and their implementation shows a good and satisfactory direction. Based on observations and interviews with teachers and principals, teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya have administratively prepared lesson plans. However, the learning process is sometimes not by the plan. So departing from this, the principal promotes academic supervision to regulate teaching and learning activities according to the planned path. Teachers' perceptions of supervising activities are still pros and cons. However, so far, the results of the supervision carried out by the principal can control the school's quality in a better direction. Practically, it can be used as feedback and input for school principals to carry out programmatic and structured supervision, increase teacher motivation to become professional teaching staff, and be used by related parties as guidelines for developing strategies for improving school quality (Saihu, 2020).

Motivating School Principal

Principals are required to have the ability to transform ideas and imaginations, and big wishes into reality. Principals have a vision and mission, but there must be concrete evidence to improve the quality of an institution with innovations and new movements that can foster enthusiasm and fighting spirit from their subordinates. The leadership pattern of the principal is significant since he is the highest-ranking official in the school and is the only one who has the authority to make decisions in all areas of the school's operations. The principal's role in increasing the quality of education comprises

that of an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator, among other responsibilities (Nasution, 2021).

Supervision is also a program from driving schools that can improve the quality and quality of schools because it is from the results of supervision that teachers can correct themselves in all things from planning, implementation, and evaluation (Saleh & Mutiani, 2021). From the supervision of teachers, they can also find solutions to minimize errors in preparing learning plans and when implementing learning activities for students (Permatasari et al., 2022). The preparation of school programs can be used to plan and implement school program activities so that they are more focused and run efficiently and effectively (Astuti et al., 2020). In supervising activities, principals and supervisors are the most authorized to provide evaluations and motivation so that teachers can further improve their competencies.

As the deputy principal, ANS explained several transformations that were very visible in the principal's supervision program as a driver, namely motivating teachers to improve their competence and performance further. This is as shown by his behavior in his daily life which shows the application of high discipline, enthusiasm in participating in training or seminars, especially in increasing competence, innovating with new things such as the use of digitalization in the 21st century making learning tools in digital format, e-Reports, and digital link book.

The principal of SMP Negeri 2 Kroya said that in realizing a more advanced, superior, more innovative, and inspiring school, a program was needed to increase the school's capacity to move towards a better direction than the previous one. Both from the level of human resources, facilities, and infrastructure and the education received by students. In all of these improvements, the supervision program is considered capable of assisting the principal's task in evaluating deficiencies that require continuous improvement.

The role of the principal is very complex, so the principal must carry out monitoring and evaluation of the vision and mission as well as the implemented programs that are carried out in supervised activities. The supervision program, which is included in the driving school principal program, can provide a new picture that can be seen by the broader community so that the quality and quality of education are more visible to the world of education. The implications obtained from improving the quality of education through the strategy of the driving school principal can provide more trust in institutions from the community.

The Event of Responsibility to Teachers

The teacher is an essential element and cannot be ignored in the teaching and learning process because the teacher is the central shield as a bridge to improve children's growth and development (Sopian, 2016). Therefore, in education and teaching, it is necessary to have qualified teachers available. In addition to mastering subject matter, teaching methods, and understanding the basics of education, through academic supervision activities, it will be possible to know the extent to which a teacher's quality is in carrying out his noble duties as a teacher or educator.

Academic supervision is a form of the principal's responsibility in guiding teachers. The principal's job is to provide mental strength for teachers, employees, and students at SMP Negeri 2 Kroya. This mental strength encourages interest and enthusiasm for work and can increase the enthusiasm of teachers and students to learn. The presence of a humble and motivating principle can refer to the enthusiasm of teachers and students to follow the flow of the head of government towards better school quality.

As the deputy principal, ANS said that the principal's supervision activities received support from various parties, both from the ministry of education and culture, supervisors, parents, and students. Almost all teachers are very enthusiastic about participating in supervision activities to improve performance in the field of education and learning and can correct the shortcomings of the planned program. Supervision is also a place to improve teachers' learning, starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation. Another perception was conveyed by ATN, who said that the supervision activities carried out were more focused on emphasizing increasing teacher competence without being accompanied by increasing the rights obtained by teachers.

Supervision is used as a form of responsibility for the head and teacher in planning learning or guidance, implementing quality learning or guidance, assessing and evaluating learning outcomes or guidance, as well as implementing learning, improvement, and enrichment, improving and developing academic qualifications and competencies (Rismawan, 2015).

When the supervision program was launched, first, the perception of the initial process of building understanding among all parties in the school was carried out, from the head, teachers, committees, and guardians of the students involved, namely developing teacher competence in cultivating the talents that exist in students. The principal's job is not only as a school manager but also as an inspiration who can inspire and motivate teachers to further improve their competence, especially in education through supervision activities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that academic supervision carried out by school principals during a pandemic has deep meaning for teachers. Some are pro, and some are counterproductive to this activity. However, on the whole, teachers have a good and positive perception of academic supervision activities carried out by school principals because they are Civil Servant teachers who have duties and obligations inherent in their teachers. In interpreting academic supervision in this pandemic period, teachers consider that this activity is guidance assistance towards improving competence and skills that lead to teacher professionalism, quality-oriented based on continuous improvement for mutual progress, quality control of education and learning in schools, supervision is a form of innovations from school principals, especially those related to driving principals and as a form of principal's responsibility to teachers in improving their professionalism. To attain the desired goal, the principal must be objective in his academic monitoring activities and employ the principle of humanity in his interactions with teachers as his subordinates.

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