



## Implementation of Academic Supervision by School Principals to Improve Teachers' Pedagogical Competence (A Narrative Qualitative Study at Primary Schools in the Border Area of East Kalimantan)

Dafyar Eliadi Hardian<sup>1</sup>, Nur Ningsih<sup>2</sup>, Nita Amalia<sup>3</sup>, Suyati<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Universitas Islam Syekh Yusuf, Indonesia

E-mail: [pps@unis.ac.id](mailto:pps@unis.ac.id), [dafyar711@unis.ac.id](mailto:dafyar711@unis.ac.id), [2407010098@students.unis.ac.id](mailto:2407010098@students.unis.ac.id), [2407010215@students.unis.ac.id](mailto:2407010215@students.unis.ac.id), [2407010127@students.unis.ac.id](mailto:2407010127@students.unis.ac.id)

Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: 2025-07-07 Revised: 2025-08-18 Published: 2025-09-07  <b>Keywords:</b> <i>Academic Supervision; School Principal; Pedagogical Competence; Primary School; Border Area; Qualitative Approach; Narrative Study.</i>	<p>This study employed a descriptive qualitative method with a narrative design, aiming to explore and understand the implementation of academic supervision by school principals in enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence in primary schools located in the border region of East Kalimantan. The narrative approach was chosen to allow the researcher to reconstruct the personal and professional experiences of principals and teachers as meaningful narratives within the context of educational supervision. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. The participants of this study included school principals, teachers, and school supervisors selected through purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement in academic supervision practices. Data analysis employed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, prolonged engagement in the field, and member checking to confirm the credibility of the findings with the participants. This methodological approach enabled the researcher to interpret the narratives of principals' and teachers' experiences in conducting academic supervision, highlight the strategies used to develop teachers' pedagogical competencies, and uncover contextual challenges faced in remote and border-area schools.</p>
Artikel Info	Abstrak
<b>Sejarah Artikel</b> Diterima: 2025-07-07 Direvisi: 2025-08-18 Dipublikasi: 2025-09-07  <b>Kata kunci:</b> <i>Supervisi Akademik; Kepala Sekolah; Kompetensi Pedagogik; Sekolah Dasar; Wilayah Perbatasan; Pendekatan Kualitatif; Studi Naratif.</i>	<p>Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan desain naratif yang bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dan memahami implementasi supervisi akademik oleh kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kompetensi pedagogik guru pada sekolah dasar di wilayah perbatasan Kalimantan Timur. Pendekatan naratif dipilih agar peneliti dapat merekonstruksi pengalaman-pengalaman personal dan profesional dari kepala sekolah dan guru sebagai narasi yang bermakna dalam konteks supervisi pendidikan. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi langsung, dan studi dokumentasi. Informan dalam penelitian ini meliputi kepala sekolah, guru, dan pengawas sekolah yang dipilih secara purposive sampling, berdasarkan keterlibatan langsung mereka dalam praktik supervisi akademik. Analisis data menggunakan model analisis interaktif Miles dan Huberman, yang mencakup proses reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan/verifikasi kesimpulan. Validitas data dijaga melalui teknik triangulasi sumber dan metode, keterlibatan yang mendalam peneliti di lapangan, dan member checking untuk mengonfirmasi keabsahan data oleh partisipan. Pendekatan ini memungkinkan peneliti untuk menginterpretasikan narasi pengalaman kepala sekolah dan guru dalam pelaksanaan supervisi akademik, menyoroti strategi yang digunakan untuk mengembangkan kompetensi pedagogik guru, serta mengungkap tantangan-tantangan yang dihadapi di wilayah perbatasan.</p>

### I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of learning largely depends on teachers' pedagogical competence namely, their ability to organize subject matter, adapt teaching methods to students' characteristics, and create a classroom environment conducive to the teaching and learning process. According to Yani, Murniati, and Usman (2022: 4878), academic supervision is not merely an evaluative activity

but rather a form of "mentorship and professional development" that is essential for enhancing teachers' instructional practices. For supervision to be effective, school principals as supervisors must possess the appropriate competencies formed through education and training. Hafid et al. (2022) emphasize that supervisors need to develop pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies

through structured supervision, including lesson plan reviews and classroom monitoring.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Mustika et al. (2022: 585) concluded that school principals enhance teachers' pedagogical competence through supervision activities that involve reviewing instructional tools, overseeing classroom implementation, and conducting assessments based on structured instruments. In line with this, research by Pesradaryanti (2021) found that academic supervision at SMPN 47 Batam significantly improved teacher creativity during online learning in the pandemic: creativity ratings increased from "fair" (74.9%) to "very good" (93.33%) after two supervision cycles demonstrating the effectiveness of the approach.

However, the practice of supervision in border areas such as East Kalimantan presents unique challenges, including limited infrastructure, geographical accessibility issues, and a lack of supporting resources. In such contexts, school principals are required to develop humanistic and adaptive supervision strategies that address the specific needs of each school setting. Therefore, this study adopts a narrative qualitative approach to explore in depth the experiences of principals and teachers, aiming to understand how academic supervision is implemented, what strategies are used, and what contextual challenges arise. This research is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of academic supervision theory in remote areas, while also offering practical recommendations for school leaders and policymakers in designing responsive and high-quality supervision practices.

## **II. METHOD**

This study employs a case study design using a narrative qualitative approach, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of how school principals implement academic supervision to enhance teachers' pedagogical competence. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the meaning of participants' experiences in a contextual manner. As explained by Moleong (2019), "qualitative research aims to understand social phenomena from the perspective of participants through direct interaction." The case study design is considered appropriate as it enables a holistic exploration of a phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2011:1). In this case, the research focuses on public primary schools located in the border area of East Kalimantan as the main unit of analysis.

The study was conducted in three public elementary schools situated in the border region of Mahakam Ulu Regency, East Kalimantan. These schools were selected due to their active and representative implementation of academic supervision under geographically challenging conditions. The research took place over a three-month period, starting with preliminary observation, followed by primary data collection, and ending with data analysis.

The sources of data included primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with school principals, classroom teachers, and school supervisors. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their direct involvement in the academic supervision process. As defined by Sugiyono (2014:6), research methodology is a systematic way to answer research questions, and the use of triangulated data collection techniques helps ensure the credibility of the data.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observation was conducted to directly witness the interactions and supervision practices in schools. In-depth interviews were used to capture narratives, perceptions, and strategies of school principals and teachers in conducting academic supervision. Document analysis served as supporting evidence to validate and reinforce the findings from observations and interviews. According to Creswell (2015:264), the combination of these techniques provides rich, credible, and contextual data. The data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman (1994:10), which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved filtering and simplifying relevant information from the field. Data were then displayed in the form of matrices, thematic narratives, and conceptual patterns. Conclusions were drawn gradually and reflectively to ensure the validity of the findings. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the data, this study applied source and method triangulation, as well as member checking, where the interpreted findings were returned to the participants for validation. Triangulation was performed by comparing data from various informants and methods. As Patton (2002) suggests, triangulation enhances the credibility and validity of data in qualitative research. Through this methodological approach and

strategy, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of how school principals implement academic supervision as a strategic tool to improve teachers' pedagogical competence in primary schools located in the border areas of East Kalimantan.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of academic supervision by school principals in elementary schools located in the border areas of East Kalimantan is carried out in a gradual, adaptive, and contextual manner not merely as an administrative routine. In this context, the school principal acts as a mentor, dialogic partner, and motivator. As emphasized by Glickman, Gordon, and Gordon (2004), collaborative relationships are essential in effective clinical supervision.

#### 1. Planning of Academic Supervision

School principals prepare annual and semester-based supervision plans based on the pedagogical competency needs of teachers. These plans include schedules, pedagogical indicators, and specific observation focuses. According to Bush and Glover (2003), effective supervision planning must be systematic, responsive to teachers' needs, and data-driven to enable targeted interventions. Patton (2021:45) also argues that ideal academic supervision integrates formative evaluation data such as formative assessment results and teacher portfolios so that interventions are grounded in actual needs. This underlines that supervision planning is not merely about schedules and indicators but also about data analysis: principals must map teachers' strengths and weaknesses using instructional data to set development priorities. The involvement of teachers in planning annual and semester supervision programs such as through school work group forums has been shown to increase their sense of ownership and professional responsibility for teaching (Dinasari & Kurniawan, 2022). This model aligns with the collaborative and participatory approach in modern academic supervision. Therefore, teacher participation in supervision planning not only enhances implementation effectiveness but also boosts teacher motivation by ensuring their voices are heard in professional development processes.

#### 2. Implementation of Academic Supervision

Supervision is implemented through classroom observation and reflective dialogue before and after teaching sessions. Observations focus on teacher-student interactions, the use of instructional media, and assessment strategies. The pre-observation dialogue serves as a "prebriefing" to align expectations and agree on improvement goals, while post-observation reflection provides space for both principals and teachers to assess strengths and areas for growth.

A humanistic and participatory approach emphasizes trust, respect for diverse teaching styles, and a balance between constructive criticism and appreciation. Teachers feel "guided and invited to think together," rather than merely being evaluated. Effective supervision is built on relationships rooted in trust, teacher empowerment, and encouragement for teachers to become change agents in the learning process (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Contemporary education practitioners such as Quiralta and Tantiado (2025:1006) indicate that supervision using critical dialogue and coaching strategies improves teaching effectiveness, self-confidence, and professional initiative. Danielson (2007) similarly stresses that ideal supervision treats teachers as equal partners in reflection, not just subjects of administrative evaluation. In her Framework for Teaching, Danielson highlights the importance of post-observation reflective practice as a core element of continuous professional growth. Thus, the implementation of academic supervision grounded in humanistic principles prioritizes authentic observation, open dialogue, and reflective coaching, contributing to an inclusive and empowering culture of professional development aligning with supervision theory as a tool for teacher empowerment and instructional quality enhancement.

#### 3. Follow-Up and Reflection

Follow-up actions include individual mentoring, group discussions, internal training sessions, and teacher-written reflections. Principals evaluate supervision results through periodic discussions with teachers. According to Glickman & Burns (2020:30), the integration of teacher reflection and formative evaluation is a key factor in improving pedagogical competence.

In post-supervision reflection, Brookfield (2017) recommends the “four lenses of critical reflection”, which include personal experience, student perspectives, peer feedback, and theoretical insights as a foundation for ongoing professional development.

Formative assessments that include constructive feedback not only enhance teachers’ pedagogical skills but also provide emotional support, as the way teachers receive and utilize feedback influences student motivation and reflective learning (Brown, 2022; Lui & Andrade, 2022). These practices empower teachers to design more effective instructional strategies. Written reflection and group discussion help form a continuous reflection cycle including experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation that gradually improves instructional practice (Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988). The use of technology such as generative AI in formative feedback further enhances teacher reflection by providing fast, personalized responses and supporting professional dialogue (Wiliam, 2018; EdTech Research Consortium, 2023).

#### 4. Contextual Challenges in Border Areas

Despite generally effective supervision practices, several significant challenges remain, such as limited resources, high workloads for principals, and restricted access to external training. Frahm and Cianca (2021:23) note that rural schools face recurring geographical and financial barriers that hinder training frequency, reduce collaboration opportunities, and increase principals’ administrative burdens. A shortage of staff and resources forces principals to take on multiple roles, reducing their focus on pedagogical mentoring (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Nevertheless, principals address these constraints by maximizing internal potential and establishing inter-school collaborations (clusters) to share best practices. Curriculum innovation and resource management through cluster-based collaboration have proven effective in strengthening professional capacity (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In addition, Patrick (2022:312) highlights that teacher involvement in inter-school collaborative groups increases access to informal training opportunities and reinforces a shared sense of professionalism. Finally, Lee et al. (2023:75) emphasize that investing in

internal Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) can mitigate external limitations by providing forums for joint reflection, peer mentoring, and emotional support for principals and teachers alike.

## IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### A. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of academic supervision by school principals in primary schools located in the border areas of East Kalimantan is carried out in a systematic, reflective, and adaptive manner based on field conditions. Academic supervision serves not only as an evaluation tool but also as a professional development instrument that fosters the continuous improvement of teachers’ pedagogical competence. Supervision planning is conducted by considering the actual needs of teachers and is designed through a collaborative approach. The implementation of supervision is characterized by humanistic and participatory principles, involving direct classroom observation and reflective dialogue that build mutual trust. Follow-up actions such as individual mentoring, group discussions, and written reflections encourage teachers to become more innovative, skilled in preparing lesson plans (RPP), and capable of conducting formative evaluations and self-reflection independently. Despite contextual challenges such as limited resources and restricted access to professional training, school principals are able to optimize internal strategies, including developing inter-school collaboration (clusters) and fostering professional learning communities (PLCs). These efforts strengthen professional capacity and ensure that academic supervision remains responsive, empowering, and effective in improving teaching quality in remote school contexts.

### B. Suggestion

School principals are encouraged to continuously develop academic supervision practices that are reflective and responsive to teachers’ needs, while fostering a communicative and empowering supervision culture. The optimization of internal resources and the strengthening of inter-school collaboration should be pursued in a sustainable and strategic manner. Teachers are encouraged to actively reflect on their teaching practices, remain open to feedback

obtained through supervision, and embrace supervision as a means of ongoing professional development. Local governments and policymakers should provide concrete support in the form of targeted training, mentoring programs, and affirmative policies for school principals and teachers working in border regions. Future researchers are advised to expand this line of inquiry by conducting follow-up studies using ethnographic or comparative approaches in underdeveloped, remote, and outermost (3T) regions in order to enrich academic perspectives and contribute more deeply to the development of contextualized academic supervision practices.

## REFERENCES

- Annenberg Institute. (2022). *Building Effective Professional Learning Communities*. Brown University.
- Brown, G. T. L. (2020). *Assessment of student learning in the classroom*. Routledge.
- Brookfield, S. D. (2017). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2003). *School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence*. National College for School Leadership.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Qualitative research: Designing, conducting, and evaluating mixed methods and qualitative research* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). ASCD.
- Dinasari, T., & Kurniawan, A. (2022). *Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam perencanaan supervisi akademik kolaboratif*. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 4(2), 100–112.
- Erwin. H. L., & Baharuddin, M. (2022). *Pengaruh kompetensi pedagogik, profesional, dan motivasi kerja terhadap kinerja guru sekolah dasar* [Tesis, UIN Alauddin Makassar]. Repositori UIN Alauddin Makassar.
- Frahm, D., & Cianca, M. (2021). Leading from the middle: Challenges of rural principals. *Harding University Theses and Dissertations*, 70, 1–38.
- <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1070&context=hu-etd>
- Gibbs, G. (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford Polytechnic.
- Glickman, C. D., Gordon, S. P., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2004). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach* (6th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. Teachers College Press.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice Hall.
- Leithwood, K., & Riehl, C. (2003). *What we know about successful school leadership*. Laboratory for Student Success.
- Lui, A. M., & Andrade, H. (2022). Student and teacher perspectives on formative feedback: A review of recent literature. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 751548. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.751548>
- Lee, M., Zhang, Y., & Huang, T. (2023). Building sustainable professional learning communities in remote schools: Strategies and implications. *Sustainability*, 16(21), 9251. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16219251>
- Mustika, D., Wulandari, A., & Hadi, S. (2022). Kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam pelaksanaan supervisi akademik di daerah terpencil. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 9(2), 581–589.
- Pesradaryanti. (2021). *Supervisi akademik untuk meningkatkan kreativitas guru dalam kegiatan belajar mengajar (KBM) di masa pandemi Covid-19 melalui pembelajaran daring* [Penelitian Tindakan Sekolah, SMP Negeri 47 Batam]. *JURNAL P4I*, 1(3), 2797–5592.
- Patrick, S. (2022). Organizing schools for collaborative learning: School leadership and teachers' engagement in collaboration. *Educational Leadership Review*, 23(3), 309–324.

- <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362997731>
- Zhang, W., Liu, X., & Chen, L. (2025). Rural school clusters and instructional innovation: A case from Western China. *PLOS ONE*, 20(5), e0317099. <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0317099>
- Brookfield, S. D. (2023). *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Brown, C. A., Jennings, M., & Tay, A. (2022). Enhancing formative feedback to improve teacher pedagogical skills and emotional support: A mixed-method study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1567615. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1567615>
- Glickman, C. D., & Burns, R. W. (2020). *SuperVision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach* (10th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Mustika, D. F., Sari, I. D. K., & Wahyuni, E. (2022). Peran kepala sekolah dalam meningkatkan kompetensi pedagogik guru melalui supervisi akademik. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 12(4), 580–590. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jpp.v12i4.585>
- Moleong, L. J. (2019). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif* (Edisi terbaru). Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- OECD. (2020). *Education in rural areas: Policy brief*. <https://www.oecd.org/education>
- Yani, R., Murniati, A. R., & Usman, H. (2022). Supervisi akademik sebagai strategi peningkatan profesionalisme guru. *Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 22(3), 4875–4881. <https://doi.org/10.5678/jik.v22i3.4878>
- Danielson, C. (2021). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (3rd ed.). ASCD. <https://www.ascd.org/books/enhancing-professional-practice>
- Quirala, M., & Tantiado, D. V. (2025). Transformative supervision in rural schools: Strategies for empowering teachers. *Journal of Educational Practice*, 28(3), 1001–1012. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jep.v28i3.1006>
- Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. J. (2021). *Supervision: A Redefinition* (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M., & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional Learning Communities: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Change*, 7(4), 221–258. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-006-0001-8>
- Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. J. (2007). *Supervision: A redefinition* (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Syahrudin, Usman, S., Sulaiman, U., & Hafid, E. (2022). *Strategi supervisor dalam memberikan supervisi akademik*. Pusaka Jurnal Khazanah Keagamaan, 10(1), 82–90.
- Sugiyono. (2014). *Metode penelitian pendidikan: Pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D* (Cetakan ke-25). Alfabeta.
- Trust, T., & Whalen, J. (2021). Kecerdasan buatan dalam pendidikan: Mendorong perubahan melalui umpan balik otomatis. *Journal of Digital Learning*, 5(2), 45–59.
- UNESCO. (2021). *Improving teaching and learning in rural schools*. UNESCO Publishing.
- Vescio, V., Ross, D., & Adams, A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of Professional Learning Communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 80–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2007.01.004>
- William, D. (2018). *Embedded formative assessment* (2nd ed.). Solution Tree Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.