

From Top-Down to Bottom-Up: How Participative Supervision Models Enhance Teacher Performance

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the top-down supervision model in Madrasah Tsanawiyah and explore how shifting towards a participatory supervision model can enhance teacher performance. This study is based on the argument that the supervision paradigm needs to be changed to be more sensitive to the needs and aspirations of teachers, considering that teachers in Madrasah Tsanawiyah have great potential but are often hindered by a lack of participation in decision-making. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, collecting data through in-interviews, observation, and documentation. The research findings indicate that a collaborative approach involving active involvement between the principal and teachers in planning and evaluating learning, as well as classroom supervision that ensures the effectiveness of the learning process, instructional supervision that focuses on improving the quality of teaching, constructive feedback that builds, and continuous evaluation to ensure teacher professional development. This study suggests that the shift from a top-down supervision model to a participatory supervision model can enhance teacher performance in Madrasah Tsanawiyah. This collaborative approach is expected to strengthen the role of teachers in decision-making, improve the quality of learning, and support the continuous development of teacher professionalism.

Keywords: *Participatory Supervision, Teacher Performance, Collaborative Approach*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan model supervisi top-down di Madrasah Tsanawiyah dan bagaimana pergeseran menuju model supervisi partisipatif dapat meningkatkan kinerja guru. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada argumen bahwa paradigma supervisi perlu diubah agar lebih peka terhadap kebutuhan dan aspirasi guru, mengingat guru di Madrasah Tsanawiyah memiliki potensi besar, tetapi sering terhambat oleh kurangnya partisipasi dalam pengambilan keputusan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, dengan data yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan kolaboratif yang melibatkan keterlibatan aktif antara kepala sekolah dan guru dalam merencanakan dan mengevaluasi pembelajaran, supervisi kelas yang memastikan efektivitas proses pembelajaran, supervisi instruksional yang berfokus pada peningkatan kualitas pengajaran, umpan balik konstruktif yang membangun, serta evaluasi berkelanjutan untuk memastikan pengembangan profesional guru. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi bahwa pergeseran dari model supervisi top-down ke model supervisi partisipatif dapat meningkatkan kinerja guru di Madrasah Tsanawiyah. Pendekatan kolaboratif ini diharapkan dapat memperkuat peran guru dalam pengambilan keputusan, meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran, serta mendukung pengembangan profesionalisme guru secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: *Supervisi Partisipatif, Kinerja Guru, Pendekatan Kolaboratif*

INTRODUCTION

Educational supervision is crucial in enhancing the quality of school teaching and learning. Although many supervision models have been implemented (Nurtanto et al., 2021), most remain top-down, where policies and teacher performance evaluations originate from superiors without involving direct teacher participation (Karim et al., 2021). This often results in a lack of ownership among teachers towards the policies implemented and limitations in their professional development (Huang et al., 2022; Popova et al., 2022). The top-down supervision model often overlooks factors related to teacher motivation and satisfaction in fulfilling their duties (Chen et al., 2021; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022). Without the opportunity for teachers to provide input or feel appreciated in decision-making, their performance tends to stagnate or even decline. A more participatory supervision model that involves teachers in designing and evaluating policies will have a positive impact on teacher morale and performance.

As the educational paradigm evolves, increasingly emphasizing the role of teachers as professionals who require empowerment, this challenge must be addressed promptly (Morgado et al., 2021; Tay et al., 2021). A more participatory supervision model, in which teachers can collaborate in determining policies and designing learning strategies, can increase their sense of ownership of their tasks (Bendtsen et al., 2022; Rahmat et al., 2021). That way, teachers can be more motivated and feel valued in their self-development process.

Participatory supervision can improve the quality of teacher performance in various educational contexts. A study by Ortan et al. (2021) showed that a supervision model involving teachers in the evaluation and decision-making process has been shown to increase teacher job satisfaction and the quality of their teaching. Teachers who feel valued and involved in supervision are more likely to adopt creative and effective learning innovations (Chang et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022; Stumbrienė et al., 2024; Khotimah et al., 2024). Bellibaş et al. (2021) also showed that the participatory supervision model implemented in several schools increased teacher motivation and the quality of learning. However, the application of this model is still limited to several schools that have implemented limited participation-based policies.

Supervision by the principal and education supervisor tends to focus on centralized administrative supervision and evaluation. Decisions regarding learning activities or improving teacher competency are often made without involving teachers as the leading actors in the education process (Zhou et al., 2022; Fahmi et al., 2023). This makes some teachers feel isolated and less responsible for the policies taken. This condition also shows the importance of changing the supervision paradigm, which must be more sensitive to the needs and aspirations of teachers. Ortan et al. (2021) demonstrate that teacher participation in supervision enhances job satisfaction and ownership, thereby improving teaching quality. Wiyono et al. (2021) demonstrate that participatory supervision models

can foster innovation in learning and offer opportunities for teachers to develop.

Based on this evidence, there is an urgent need to replace or improve the top-down supervision model with a more participatory model, especially in the context of education in Indonesia. At MTs 1 Negeri Brebes, teachers have great potential to improve the quality of learning, but are often hampered by the lack of space to participate in decision-making.

This study's novelty lies in applying a participatory supervision model in madrasah, which has not been widely explored in Indonesian education, especially at the madrasah tsanawiyah level. The study aims to investigate how the participatory supervision model can enhance teacher performance in madrasah. This is based on the premise that active teacher participation in decision-making and learning evaluation will increase a sense of ownership, motivation, and desire to innovate in learning.

The study examines how the top-down supervision model is applied in madrasahs to improve teacher performance. Participatory supervision allows for more continuous professional development, directly impacting the quality of education provided to students. The study's results will make an original contribution to empirical evidence supporting a paradigm shift in educational supervision from top-down to more participatory approaches, which is expected to improve teacher professionalism.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design (Williams, 2021) to investigate the application of participatory supervision models in enhancing teacher performance at MTs 1 Negeri Brebes. This is to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of supervision in schools and how teacher participation in supervision can influence their motivation and performance. A qualitative approach was chosen because it focuses on understanding the social context that influences the interaction between the principal, supervisor, and teacher in the supervision process. Case studies were chosen because they allow for in-depth analysis in one specific context to understand the complexity of the phenomena that occur in the field.

This study will collect data through several techniques, namely in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews will be conducted with the principal, supervisor, and teacher to explore their experiences implementing participatory supervision. Participatory observation will be used to directly observe interactions during the supervision process and how decisions are made by involving teachers. Additionally, documentation related to supervision reports, lesson plans, and evaluations will be collected to provide a more detailed picture of the supervision procedures employed.

Data will be analyzed using the Miles and Huberman, as well as Saldana, approaches (Truman, 2023). Referring to the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, the analysis process will involve three main stages, namely: first, data reduction, where interview, observation, and documentation data are filtered and selected for relevance to the research focus; second, data presentation, where the selected data is arranged in a more organized form, such as thematic or categorical;

and third concluding involving interpretation of patterns and themes that emerge in the data. This approach enables researchers to map the relationship between factors that influence the success or failure of participatory supervision.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Collaborative Approach

The collaborative approach in the MTs 1 Negeri Brebes participatory supervision model refers to the active involvement between supervisors (principals) and teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. This approach prioritizes teamwork, where both parties share ideas, solve problems together, and commit to improving the quality of teaching through discussion and reflection. This collaborative process allows teachers to feel valued and more open to receiving feedback and contributing to decisions taken to improve the quality of education in schools.

The results of an interview with one of the teachers said, "This collaborative approach allowed us to discuss effective teaching methods with the principal. We were given instructions and invited to share our opinions on what was going well and what needed improvement." This teacher added that collaboration is beneficial in creating a more dynamic and mutually supportive learning atmosphere among peers.

An interview with the principal revealed, "We try to build open communication, where each teacher is given space to discuss the challenges faced in teaching. These discussions are critical to understanding their needs first-hand and tailoring the support needed." The principal also emphasized that this collaboration made all team members feel responsible for the school's progress, and the results were also seen in the improvement of teacher performance in the learning process.

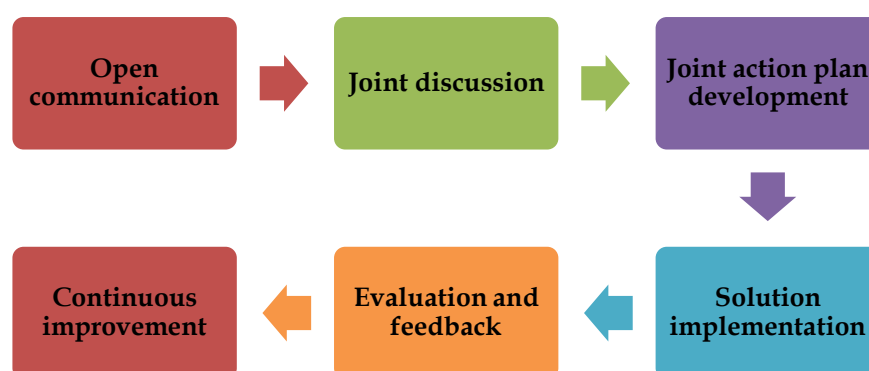


Figure 1. Collaborative Approach

Figure 1 shows that the flow of collaboration in supervision activities has been well developed. The process begins with open communication between teachers and principals, followed by joint discussions about the challenges faced, and ends with the implementation of mutually agreed solutions. This flow shows that collaboration is about sharing information and involves learning together to deal with classroom problems. This approach increases each individual's sense of responsibility and involvement in creating a better learning environment.

The collaborative approach resulted in more open communication between teachers and principals. In the classroom, teachers showed increased use of varied and more creative teaching methods, as they felt supported to experiment with new approaches. This shows that collaboration between teachers and leaders occurs at the planning level and flows into more innovative learning practices.

The collaborative approach applied has improved teacher performance. Through more intense interactions and based on sharing knowledge and experience, teachers feel more valued and more motivated to improve the quality of their teaching. This collaboration improves teaching skills and builds a sense of collective responsibility to achieve better educational goals.

The pattern that can be seen from the data is an improvement in the quality of communication between teachers and school principals, which leads to the professional development of teachers. The collaborative approach allows teachers to grow and share their challenges. This shows that involving all parties in the decision-making process makes teachers feel more belonging, more motivated, and better prepared to improve the quality of their teaching. This pattern indicates that effective collaboration can overcome barriers to teaching and encourage better performance in the school environment.

Classroom Supervision

Classroom supervision in the context of the participatory supervision model in MTs 1 Negeri Brebes refers to the process of supervising teaching and learning activities carried out by the principal or education supervisor to ensure that the learning process runs effectively and efficiently. In contrast to the supervision approach that focuses on unilaterally evaluating teacher performance, classroom supervision in this model is more collaborative, where teachers are given space to discuss, share experiences, and receive constructive feedback. Supervisors not only observe but also help teachers overcome challenges in the classroom and develop better learning methods.

Tabel 1. Classroom Supervision Implementation

Statement Quotes	Indicators Taken	Report
"The principal often comes to the classroom to monitor how the learning process is going."	Direct supervision of classroom activities by the principal	Teacher
"We often discuss the obstacles faced in teaching, and the principal gives advice on how to deal with them."	Discussion and feedback on teaching challenges	Teacher
"The principal provides full support to teachers, both in terms of teaching materials and classroom management."	Principal's support for teachers in classroom management	Principal

Table 1 shows that classroom supervision is not just ordinary supervision; it is carried out with an in-depth and collaborative approach. The principal actively monitors the course of learning, which provides a direct understanding of the teaching process in the classroom. This direct supervision enables principals to provide more precise and relevant feedback based on real-world conditions.

Additionally, there is an active interaction between the principal and the teacher, who discuss the problems encountered in the teaching process. This

supervision is limited to observation and involves two-way communication that builds mutual understanding between teachers and principals. The principal's feedback helps teachers find solutions to existing classroom management problems and use more effective teaching methods. Principals provide broader support to teachers, not only in supervision but also in assisting with aspects of teaching materials and classroom management.

The principal often visits classrooms to observe teaching and learning activities. This supervision is conducted to evaluate teacher performance and provide opportunities for teachers to consult on the problems they encounter. When a teacher has difficulties managing a class or teaching specific material, the principal provides guidance appropriate to the context. This helps teachers overcome the obstacles they face while improving the quality of learning in the classroom.

School principals often hold informal meetings with teachers to discuss ways to improve learning effectiveness. Discussion includes teaching and strategies for creating a more conducive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere for students. This indicates that classroom supervision is more supportive than controlling, creating a positive work environment for teachers.

Classroom supervision not only focuses on evaluating teacher performance but also involves active discussion and support provided by the principal to the teacher. The pattern seen in this data is establishing a more collaborative relationship between school principals and teachers. The principal not only acts as a supervisor but also as a facilitator, providing support in teaching materials and classroom management. Through direct observation, discussion, and constructive feedback, principals and teachers can collaborate to enhance the quality of teaching.

Instructional Supervision

In the context of the participatory supervision model in MTs 1 Negeri Brebes, instructional supervision focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning processes in the classroom. This approach involves observing teaching activities, providing constructive feedback, and assisting teachers in improving their teaching methods and skills. The main goal of instructional supervision is to ensure that teachers' teaching techniques and strategies meet established educational standards and effectively improve student learning outcomes.

Table 2. Instructional Supervision Implementation

Statement Quotes	Indicator	Report
"Principals often give advice on more engaging and interactive teaching methods."	Providing feedback on teaching techniques and methods	Teacher 1
"In each meeting, we are invited to discuss ways to improve learning."	Discussion on the development of teaching strategies	Teacher 2
"We were given the opportunity to try a new teaching approach guided by the principal."	Applying new teaching techniques in the classroom	Principal

Table 2 illustrates that instructional supervision seeks to enhance the quality of teaching by offering constructive feedback and refining teachers' instructional skills. The principal's application of new teaching techniques is also reflected in daily practice. Principals allow teachers to try new methods, which allows teachers to experiment and adapt their teaching approaches.

The principal is actively involved in developing more effective teaching techniques. The principal regularly holds meetings with teachers to discuss the challenges they face in teaching and provide guidance on how to improve the quality of instruction. In addition, school principals often organize workshops or training sessions that focus on using more creative and interactive teaching methods, indicating that the supervision carried out is more oriented towards developing teaching skills sustainably, rather than merely supervising.

Teachers feel more confident in implementing the new techniques they learn. They feel more encouraged to innovate in teaching and are more open to technology and learning media that can increase student engagement. The pattern seen from this data is the continuous development of teaching techniques applied. The principal plays a role not only as a supervisor but also as a mentor, providing support through advice, discussion, and training. This creates space for teachers to develop professionally and improve the quality of learning. This pattern suggests that collaboration-based instructional supervision can enhance teachers' teaching skills and have a positive impact on student learning.

Constructive Feedback

Constructive feedback in the context of the participatory supervision model in this madrasah refers to providing teachers with constructive, positive, and relevant feedback on their classroom performance. The primary purpose of this feedback is to enhance the quality of teaching, refine learning methods, and encourage teachers to be more innovative in classroom management. This feedback is provided openly and in a two-way manner, with clear solutions or suggestions. With this approach, teachers can feel valued and encouraged to continue to grow in their profession.

One of the teachers explained, "The principal always gives constructive feedback after observing our learning process. The feedback is not only in the form of criticism but also includes concrete solutions that are very helpful in improving teaching. For example, when I had difficulty managing the class, he gave me concrete tips on managing my time and attracting students' attention." The feedback provided by the principal is seen to be constructive, focusing on weaknesses and offering practical suggestions that can be directly applied in learning activities. This approach makes teachers feel more prepared and confident in improving the quality of their teaching.

Another teacher added, "The principal often holds reflection sessions after teaching and learning activities. He invited us to discuss what is going well and what needs improvement. That way, we can share our experiences and collectively improve teaching methods. This feedback helps us to understand more effective teaching techniques better." This indicates that the principal provides individualized feedback and encourages collaboration among teachers. This type of discussion fosters a more collaborative learning environment, where teachers

can learn from one another's experiences and perspectives to enhance the quality of teaching together.

The principal also provides constructive feedback by highlighting the positive aspects of teachers' work through informal meetings or reflection sessions following learning activities. In addition to providing constructive criticism, the principal provides practical advice that teachers can apply directly. This demonstrates that the principal not only acts as a supervisor but also as a supervisor who provides support and concrete solutions to help teachers overcome their problems.

The feedback provided is also precise and measurable, allowing teachers to clearly understand what needs to be improved and how to make the necessary changes. This approach enables teachers to focus more on areas that need improvement, providing them with the confidence and motivation to continue improving. Teachers feel valued and more open to the advice given, which creates a positive and supportive atmosphere for their development.

Providing constructive feedback not only highlights shortcomings but also offers concrete solutions that can be implemented immediately. The feedback is delivered in a collaborative atmosphere, where teachers feel valued and more motivated to improve the quality of their teaching. The visible pattern is the provision of balanced feedback, acknowledging positive achievements while providing relevant input for improvement. The principal acts as a supervisor and mentor, providing practical support and encouraging teachers to innovate and continually develop their skills. This fosters a positive work environment where teachers feel empowered to continue innovating and improving the quality of their teaching.

Continuous Evaluation

Continuous evaluation in the context of the participatory supervision model in MTs 1 Negeri Brebes refers to a routine and systematic assessment process carried out on teacher performance to ensure the achievement of learning and professional development goals. This evaluation is not only limited to the final assessment but is carried out periodically by providing constructive feedback. The process involves a joint reflection between teachers and principals, during which they discuss what has gone well, areas that need improvement, and steps to continually improve the quality of teaching. Through continuous evaluation, teachers can continually develop and maintain the quality of learning.

One teacher stated, "After each meeting, the principal always evaluates how we have applied in teaching. He provided helpful feedback to help us improve and refine our teaching techniques. These evaluations are carried out regularly, which makes us feel more responsible to continue to improve the quality of learning." This statement indicates that continuous evaluation is implemented systematically, with school principals regularly evaluating teachers' teaching outcomes. This helps teachers not only identify their shortcomings but also provide clear directions for improvement and development.

Another teacher explained, "The principal's evaluation is about the learning outcomes and how we interact with students and manage the classroom. Principals often provide suggestions to increase student engagement and optimize

the use of time in the classroom.” Continuous evaluation conducted by the principal pays attention to other important aspects of learning, such as interaction between teachers and students and classroom management. This ensures that all learning components are well cared for and continue to develop.

Continuous evaluation is done through regular meetings between school principals and teachers. Each meeting discusses various aspects of teaching, from the methods used to classroom management. The principal provides detailed feedback on the teaching techniques and directs teachers to improve their quality. Additionally, this evaluation is often followed by a discussion of the challenges faced in the classroom and the solutions that can be applied to address these challenges. This approach ensures that the evaluation is not only formal but also leads to continuous development in teaching.

The pattern evident in this data is a routine and structured evaluation focused on improving the overall quality of teaching. The principal facilitates the evaluation process, providing constructive feedback and encouraging teachers to continually develop their skills. This continuous evaluation fosters a positive and supportive atmosphere for teachers’ professional development, encouraging them to continue innovating in classroom management and enhancing the quality of learning.

Discussion

The participatory supervision model, such as Collaborative Approach, Classroom Supervision, Instructional Supervision, Constructive Feedback, and Continuous Evaluation, conforms with existing literature on educational supervision. The Collaborative Approach aligns with the theory proposed by Meyer et al. (2022), which suggests that collaboration between teachers and principals can foster a sense of shared responsibility in enhancing the quality of teaching. In this study, the principal supervised the teacher and worked together to solve problems and plan improvements. This strongly supports the statement that collaboration in supervision increases learning effectiveness and empowers teachers to grow.

However, there are differences between the existing literature and the concept of classroom supervision. Classroom supervision is often top-down and more focused on control (Honkimäki et al., 2022; Moran et al., 2022; Utomo & Sulistyowati, 2022), while the findings of this study show that classroom supervision in madrasah focuses more on improving teachers’ teaching skills through direct observation and collaborative discussion. Classroom supervision can evolve to be more supportive and collaborative, as opposed to the control paradigm more commonly encountered in traditional supervision models (Buirski, 2022; Riva et al., 2022). In this context, the approach applied is in line with contemporary supervision theory, which emphasizes more coaching than authoritarian supervision.

The study’s findings regarding Instructional Supervision show that school principals in madrasah actively provide feedback and guidance to teachers to improve their teaching techniques. The supervision model prioritizes continuous professional development, not just performance evaluation (Deussom et al., 2022; Lohman, 2021). However, despite conformity with the theory, differences emerge

in a more structured implementation approach and a focus on concrete solutions and direct support, which is not always emphasized in the related literature.

The findings on Constructive Feedback also align with existing feedback theory, which suggests that constructive and relevant feedback can enhance teacher performance. As Ismail et al. (2022) revealed, effective feedback can motivate teachers to continuously improve their skills. However, in practice, this study shows that school principals in madrasah provide feedback on shortcomings and identify positive aspects of teachers' teaching, which has a greater impact on teachers' motivation and confidence. This highlights the importance of striking a balance between criticism and praise when providing feedback.

Continuous evaluation also supports previous research findings, which state that evaluations carried out regularly and collaboratively can result in more effective improvements in teaching. According to Kim (2024), continuous evaluation involving joint reflection between teachers and principals can create a culture of learning that continues to evolve. Evaluation focuses on students' academic outcomes, classroom management, and the interaction between teachers and students, aligning with a more holistic concept of evaluation in the educational literature.

Continuous evaluation is conducted regularly and encompasses various aspects of teaching. The principal assesses student learning outcomes and observes how teachers manage the classroom and interact with students (Nahar et al., 2022; Zhang & Yu, 2021). This evaluation is open, allowing teachers to receive constructive feedback that they can directly apply to improve the quality of their teaching. Through continuous evaluation, teachers feel more encouraged to refine and continually improve their teaching techniques.

The theoretical implications of these findings suggest that the participatory supervision model applied can enrich the theory of educational supervision by showing how a more collaborative and support-based approach can improve teacher performance and teaching quality. Practically, the results of this study provide insights for school principals and education supervisors to implement a more open and collaborative supervision model with a focus on continuous professional development. This approach can be adapted in other schools to create a more positive work environment for teachers and improve classroom learning quality.

CONCLUSION

Implementing the participatory supervision model in madrasah improves teacher teaching quality through a collaborative approach. This supervision effectively fosters an environment that supports teacher professional development through open discussions between the principal and teachers, constructive feedback, and ongoing evaluation. The findings emphasize the importance of supervision, which is coaching, not just monitoring, to encourage teachers to develop and be more motivated to improve their teaching competence. This study has limitations because it only involved one school, so it is recommended to expand the scope of the study by involving more schools and broader contexts. Further research can investigate the impact of participatory supervision on student performance and school culture, as well as the factors that influence its success in various educational contexts.

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