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Principal's Supervision Management to Enhance Teacher Pedagogical Competence: A Case Study at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the principal's supervision management in enhancing the pedagogical competence of teachers at *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan* (vocational high school) or SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, focusing on four main stages: planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring of supervision.

Design/methods/approach – This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research was conducted from February to April 2025, with data collected through in-depth interviews with three informants: the principal, the vice-principal for curriculum affairs, and a teacher, as well as through documentation related to school supervision. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, while analysis was performed using the Miles & Huberman model, which includes the stages of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Findings – The supervision management at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is conducted systematically through: (1) planning that emphasizes targets for pedagogical competence development, (2) fair and transparent organization among the supervision team, (3) communicative implementation supported by digital technology, such as WhatsApp for coaching and discussions, and (4) adaptive monitoring through routine evaluations and needs-based follow-ups for teachers. Supervision serves not only as a control mechanism but also as an effective tool for professional development that fosters improvements in teaching quality.

Research implications/limitations – These findings can be adopted by other vocational high schools to strengthen teacher pedagogical competence by enhancing two-way communication, utilizing digital technology, and providing continuous coaching. This study is limited to a single school with a small number of informants; therefore, the generalization of its findings should be approached with caution.

Originality/value – This research offers an empirical framework for the implementation of principal supervision in a vocational high school setting by integrating digital media into the teacher coaching process. This approach enriches the literature on educational supervision in Indonesia, particularly within the context of vocational education, which demands rapid adaptation to technological advancements and industry needs.

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Introduction

The issue of educational quality remains a primary concern within Indonesia's national education system. The 2024 U.S. News & World Report ranked Indonesia 67th globally and 4th in the ASEAN region, trailing Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, and Vietnam. This ranking represents a decline from the previous year, highlighting the need for greater attention to efforts aimed at improving educational quality across various levels and educational units.

One of the key factors determining educational success in schools is the role of the principal. Principals function not only as administrators but also as educational leaders capable of motivating, mobilizing, empowering, and developing all school resources. An effective principal can optimally realize the school's vision, mission, goals, and objectives (Fitrah, 2017).

Educational supervision itself is a systematic effort to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process. Effective supervision is no longer viewed merely as a formal inspection or a means of finding faults, but rather as a service of assistance, coaching, and professional development for teachers (Harahap et al., 2023; Riska, 2020; Rohmawati et al., 2023). Principals must be able to formulate thorough supervision plans, conduct systematic implementation, provide constructive feedback, and perform continuous evaluations (Guntoro, 2020; Sirojuddin et al., 2021).

Several prior studies have examined various aspects of principal supervision related to enhancing teacher competence, particularly in vocational education, or SMK (Vocational High School). Anugerah & Santosa (2025) investigated the implementation of academic supervision by principals in SMKs, concluding that systematic supervision can improve learning quality; however, their study did not deeply explore implementation barriers or the variety of supervision models across different SMK contexts. Alfaro et al. (2024) found that academic supervision through collaborative monitoring and feedback plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance, but their research did not address supervisory innovations related to the digitalization of learning, a topic of increasing relevance.

Furthermore, a correlational study by Gadriaman (2024) demonstrated a positive influence of supervision on teacher performance, but its focus on the junior high school level did not fully represent the characteristics and challenges of supervision in SMKs, which have distinct needs. Akemalludin et al. (2025) also confirmed a significant relationship between supervision and teachers' professional competence but did not sufficiently explore non-academic dimensions or the contextual factors of supervision implementation in vocational schools. Astuti et al. (2024) stated that intensive academic supervision could significantly improve teachers' professional competence but did not discuss the integration of digital supervision or the role of supportive educational policies in the success of supervision programs.

SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, as an educational institution continuously striving to improve learning quality, has routinely implemented a principal supervision program to support the development of its teachers' pedagogical competence. Through planned, structured, and sustainable supervision, it is expected that the quality of teachers as primary drivers of education will increase, thereby producing graduates who are excellent and competitive.

Unlike previous studies, which predominantly used quantitative or survey-based approaches, this research adopts a more in-depth qualitative case study approach at SMK

Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, which possesses unique characteristics related to vocational education. Prior research has largely discussed principal supervision in general terms without providing a detailed picture of the challenges and context within SMKs, especially concerning the development of teacher pedagogical competence through structured, technology-based, and continuous supervision. Moreover, many studies have not explored the application of digitalization to support effective supervision, even though in the current digital era, technology use is increasingly relevant for enhancing efficiency and quality. This study also provides further insight into how principals can play a vital role in improving the quality of learning in SMKs through an approach that is more adaptive to the dynamic needs of vocational education.

Based on the background described, the research problem is formulated as follows: how can the principal's supervision management enhance the pedagogical competence of teachers at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, and how is this supervision effectively implemented through planning, implementation, organization, and monitoring? This study aims to deeply explore the practice of principal supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan and how it can contribute to the development of teacher pedagogical competence to improve the quality of learning and graduate competitiveness. Additionally, another objective is to contribute to the development of educational management science by highlighting the under-researched aspect of technology-based supervision, particularly within the vocational education context.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to provide an in-depth description of the principal's supervision management in enhancing teacher pedagogical competence at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan. This approach was chosen for its ability to explore the meanings, processes, and experiences of the informants within a natural and authentic context.

The research was conducted at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan from February to April 2025. This school was selected because it has consistently implemented annual supervision and, since 2020, has been designated as a *Sekolah Pusat Keunggulan* (Center of Excellence School) by the Directorate of Vocational High Schools of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (MoECRT).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria: (1) directly involved in the planning, implementation, or evaluation of supervision; (2) possessed a minimum of two years of experience in that role; and (3) were willing to provide information openly. The exclusion criterion was any individual on extended leave or not involved in the current year's supervision cycle. Based on these criteria, three informants were selected: the principal as the person in charge of supervision (N1), the vice-principal for curriculum affairs as the supervision coordinator (N3), and a teacher as a representative of classroom-level implementation (N2).

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, which allowed for a broad exploration of the informants' experiences, perceptions, and practices, as well as limited observation of learning situations and supervisory interactions. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles & Huberman model, which includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analysis was performed manually without software aids like NVivo or ATLAS.ti, to ensure the researcher remained directly engaged with the field data.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, which involved comparing the answers and perspectives of the three informants to identify similarities, differences, and informational consistency. For instance, the principal's explanation of the supervision objectives was compared with the teacher's perceptions and the vice-principal's views to ensure that the findings reflected a collective experience rather than individual opinions.

Result

After collecting data through in-depth interviews with the three informants, this study successfully gathered information regarding the implementation of the principal's supervision management in enhancing the pedagogical competence of teachers at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan.

The principal's supervision process at this school is conducted through structured stages, beginning with planning, followed by organizing, implementation, and finally, monitoring. The data obtained reveal the principal's crucial role in managing supervision as a tool to foster improvements in teaching quality and teacher professionalism. The following findings present the key results derived from the interviews, which uncover various aspects of the principal's supervision management at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan.

A visual representation of the research findings, reflecting the dynamics of the principal's supervision management to enhance teacher pedagogical competence at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, is presented in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1.

Concept Map of the Principal's Supervision Management to Enhance Teacher Pedagogical Competence

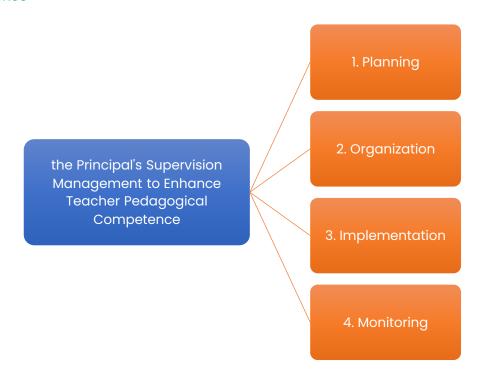


Figure 1 illustrates the supervision workflow, which includes the stages of planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring, where each stage is interconnected to support the enhancement of teacher pedagogical competence.

1. Supervision Planning

Supervision planning at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is carried out with the objective of improving teachers' pedagogical competence, particularly in the implementation of differentiated instruction. In the planning process, the principal and the managerial team establish clear supervision goals, both quantitative and qualitative. According to N1 (Principal):

"Our planning is quantitative in nature; the target is for one teacher to be supervised at least once in an academic year. The supervision of learning in the classroom... the main goal of supervision is to determine the extent of the teacher's quality in applying their pedagogical skills in the classroom."

This indicates that the primary purpose of supervision is to directly evaluate the application of teachers' pedagogical competence in the classroom.

Furthermore, the principal explained that supervision serves not only as an evaluation tool but also as a means to improve the quality of teaching.

"With supervision, our goal is to know the teacher's performance in delivering instruction in the classroom. Is it in accordance with pedagogical principles or not?".

This statement underscores the importance of supervision as a tool to ensure that teachers apply correct pedagogical principles in the learning process.

For the teachers, N2 (Teacher) views supervision as an important opportunity for reflection and professional improvement.

"Personally, I feel that being supervised is a moment for reflection. You get to know your shortcomings, and then there is input from your superiors. So, the ultimate goal is really about improvement."

This shows that teachers perceive supervision as an opportunity to receive constructive feedback, which in turn can improve their teaching techniques.

Overall, the research findings indicate that supervision planning at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is highly focused on developing teachers' pedagogical competence. Clear supervision objectives, direct classroom evaluation, and space for teacher reflection are key factors in enhancing the quality of teaching at this school. Moreover, supervision here aims not only to evaluate but also to provide feedback that supports continuous improvement in teachers' pedagogical competence.

2. Supervision Organization

The organization of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is highly structured, with a clear division of tasks among the supervision team members, which consists of the principal, the vice-principal for curriculum affairs, the vice-principal for student affairs, and the vice-principal for personnel affairs. Based on the interview with N1 (Principal), the formation of the supervision team and the allocation of duties are done to ensure an equitable distribution of the workload.

"We formed a supervision team consisting of myself as the principal, the vice-principal for curriculum affairs, and the vice-principal for Ismuba (AI-Islam, Muhammadiyah, and Arabic Language studies) and personnel affairs... The total number of teachers, minus the names of the supervisors, was then divided among the three officials. There's no special classification; it's just a direct division by three."

This indicates that a clear and fair division of tasks can maximize the coverage of supervision and provide equal opportunities for all teachers to be supervised.

Additionally, N3 (Vice-Principal for Curriculum Affairs) added that the organization of supervision considers workload distribution to ensure its effectiveness.

"We currently have 45 teachers, and we divide them among the five vice-principals, including the principal. So, we assign tasks, some get eight teachers, some get seven, to ensure the supervision is evenly distributed."

With an equitable division, each supervisor is responsible for a specific number of teachers, allowing them to focus more on providing constructive feedback related to pedagogical competence.

N2 (Teacher) also revealed that with clear organization, teachers feel more prepared and less confused during the supervision process.

"The supervisors are determined from the beginning. From the start of the academic year, we already know who will supervise each of us, whether it is N1 himself or another vice-principal, so it is clear."

This clarity provides a sense of security for teachers, as they know what is expected and who is responsible for their supervision, allowing them to prepare accordingly.

Thus, the clear organization of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan helps ensure that supervision is conducted equitably and effectively, which ultimately has a positive impact on enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence. The structured division of tasks also enables more focused supervision, maximizing the development of pedagogical competence through constructive and targeted feedback.

3. Supervision Implementation

The implementation of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan focuses on enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence, especially within the context of differentiated instruction. According to the interview with N1 (Principal), supervision is carried out by prioritizing two-way communication and providing constructive feedback. The principal explained:

"After the supervision, we then hold a coaching session, or essentially, the supervisor and the person being supervised meet. We usually have a casual chat, so it's not rigid, which encourages teachers to be open about any difficulties or new ideas they have."

This approach creates a more relaxed and open atmosphere, allowing teachers to feel more comfortable receiving constructive feedback on their pedagogical practices.

The implementation of supervision is also supported by the use of digital technology to expedite communication and documentation of results. N3 (Vice-Principal for Curriculum Affairs) added:

"If something needs to be confirmed, or if a teacher wants to ask about the supervision results, it's usually done via WhatsApp or email. This way, communication is ongoing and doesn't have to wait for an official meeting."

This makes it easier for teachers to receive prompt feedback and make improvements without having to wait for a formal meeting.

From the perspective of N2 (Teacher), the informal yet structured implementation of supervision is beneficial for improving their pedagogical skills.

"After being supervised, there must be a form of, what is it, corrections or suggestions, which are all included in the email."

This process enables teachers to conduct personal reflection on their teaching performance and receive suggestions for improving the quality of instruction to better suit student needs.

The implementation of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan demonstrates that supervision aims not only to control but also to guide and encourage teachers in developing their pedagogical skills, especially in applying differentiated instruction. Furthermore, the use of flexible communication, both directly and through digital media, plays a significant role in ensuring that teachers receive timely feedback, allowing for a faster and more effective improvement process.

4. Monitoring of Supervision

The monitoring function in the principal's supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah I Moyudan is crucial for ensuring that the implementation proceeds according to plan and positively impacts the enhancement of teacher pedagogical competence. At this school, supervision monitoring is conducted systematically through continuous evaluation and direct feedback to the teachers. NI (Principal) stated:

"I always check the incoming supervision reports and sometimes go directly to the classrooms if there is a special case. If there are scheduling or technical issues, we immediately evaluate and adjust, so the supervision continues to run smoothly."

This shows that monitoring is conducted not only through reports but also through direct classroom observation to identify and resolve existing problems.

Moreover, N3 (Vice-Principal for Curriculum Affairs) emphasized the importance of evaluations conducted after each supervision period. He explained:

"After each supervision period concludes, we usually sit down together for an evaluation to see what has been effective and what needs to be changed. Sometimes there are adjustments to the instruments or schedules to better suit the teachers' conditions."

This evaluation process allows the supervision team to adapt methods or schedules based on the needs and conditions of the teachers, making the implementation more effective in improving pedagogical skills.

From the perspective of N2 (Teacher), the continuous monitoring of supervision with constructive feedback positively impacts their motivation and teaching quality.

"If we are not ready or face constraints during the supervision time, we can request a reschedule, and the supervisors are flexible. So, it's not tense; instead, we are more motivated to improve."

This indicates that supervision monitoring conducted with flexibility and clear follow-up actions provides teachers with a sense of security and encourages them to innovate and enhance the quality of their instruction continuously.

Overall, the monitoring of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is highly effective in motivating teachers and improving their pedagogical competence. Continuous oversight and responsive follow-up to supervision results enable teachers to develop constantly. With prompt and clear feedback, as well as adaptations made in response to challenges in the field, teachers feel supported and motivated to enhance their competence in managing classroom learning.

Discussion

Based on the descriptive results of the research conducted, this discussion will elaborate on the four primary aspects of the principal's supervision management at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan: planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring. Each aspect will be discussed in detail to provide a comprehensive overview of the supervision process.

1. Supervision Planning

At SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, supervision planning is established as a critical initial step to enhance teachers' instructional abilities. This plan sets clear objectives, such as ensuring each teacher is supervised at least once per academic year. Additionally, it includes direct classroom evaluations to observe how teachers apply their pedagogical competence. This approach is consistent with the principles of modern supervision, which emphasize clear goals, teacher involvement, and flexibility in adapting strategies (Hariyati et al., 2021; Nawas, 2023). The planning also aligns with the clinical supervision model, which proceeds through pre-observation, observation, and post-observation stages to provide measurable feedback (Sugiyarto et al., 2025).

However, in contrast to the findings of Islamiyati (2023) and Krisdiana (2021), who noted that many schools struggle to meet supervision targets due to principals' time constraints, SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan overcomes this by forming a supervision team at the beginning of the year. Tasks are distributed evenly to avoid overburdening any single individual. This difference is likely attributable to the work culture in vocational schools (SMK), which are accustomed to cross-disciplinary coordination, similar to managing practical learning sessions.

The vocational character of the school also influences the content of its planning. Supervision here does not only assess the alignment of teaching methods with the curriculum but also whether the material and instructional delivery meet industry needs and develop student job skills. Consequently, supervision planning in an SMK requires supervisors to be knowledgeable about technological developments and industry trends, ensuring that the advice given can be directly applied in students' practical activities or projects.

Therefore, supervision planning at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is not merely a routine schedule but a strategy that connects the improvement of teachers' instructional skills with the demands of the professional world. This approach expands upon the classic clinical supervision model by incorporating teamwork and a focus on vocational competence.

2. Supervision Organization

At SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan, the organization of supervision is conducted in a structured and collaborative manner. The supervision team comprises the principal and the vice-principals for curriculum, student affairs, and personnel. Each team member is responsible for coaching a specific group of teachers. With a total of 45 teachers, this division ensures that each supervisor can provide adequate attention, making the feedback more focused and relevant. This task allocation reduces excessive workloads and creates a more orderly supervision process.

This approach aligns with the theory of supervision organization, which emphasizes the proportional division of tasks to enhance the efficiency and quality of supervision outcomes (Nuraini, 2025; Raharjo et al., 2022). However, unlike the findings of Raharjo et al. (2022) in several general high schools where teachers tended to be passive in post-observation sessions, teachers at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan actively engage in discussions and respond to the suggestions provided. This is likely influenced by the character of SMK teachers, who are accustomed to performance-based evaluations and industry practices, making them more receptive to practical input.

The characteristics of an SMK also necessitate that the organization of supervision considers student practical training schedules in workshops or in the industry. Therefore, the division of tasks here is based not only on the number of teachers but is also adjusted according to skill programs and fieldwork schedules. This ensures that supervision proceeds without disrupting technical and project-based vocational learning activities.

Thus, the organization of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah I Moyudan aims not only to distribute the workload but also to build a cooperative atmosphere where teachers feel supported. This model reinforces the concept of team-based supervision with a distinct and special vocational education role, where cross-disciplinary coordination and adaptation to industry activities are integral parts of the strategy.

3. Supervision Implementation

The implementation of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan emphasizes a supportive, communicative, and collaborative approach. The process begins with direct observation in the classroom or practical workshop, followed by informal, relaxed discussions to make teachers feel comfortable sharing their challenges. Subsequently, teachers receive feedback that is directly applicable to their classroom instruction or student practical activities. This approach is in line with the principles of reflective supervision, which prioritizes the active involvement of teachers in the improvement process (Putri et al., 2024).

In contrast to the findings of Aisyah et al. (2024), which showed that supervision in some schools remains rigid and relies solely on written report formats, SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan utilizes technology such as WhatsApp and email to accelerate communication and follow-up. This allows teachers to adjust their teaching methods promptly without waiting for the next formal supervision session. This difference likely arises because learning in an SMK often requires quick responses to adapt to changing practical schedules or student projects.

The nature of vocational education also influences the implementation of supervision here. Observation focuses not only on the delivery of material but also on

how teachers guide practical work, manage tools and materials, and integrate industry skills into learning. As such, supervision in this SMK is more applicative and contextual compared to supervision in general high schools, which tends to emphasize learning theories and concepts.

Overall, the implementation of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan combines positive interpersonal relationships, technological support, and flexibility regarding vocational practical needs and schedules. This model shifts the perception of supervision from mere assessment to a professional mentoring process that is relevant to the demands of the world of work and industry.

4. Monitoring of Supervision

The monitoring of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan is conducted continuously to ensure that all feedback from the supervision process is genuinely applied by teachers in their instructional practices. This process includes routine evaluations of supervision reports, follow-up observations in classrooms or workshops, and brief discussions to track progress. This approach creates a supportive, non-pressuring atmosphere that encourages teachers to continually improve their teaching quality. This model aligns with the view of Wasiri (2023), who emphasizes that effective monitoring functions as coaching, not merely control.

Compared to the findings of Rasto & Mulyani (2019), which indicated that monitoring in some schools is still reactive (only conducted when problems arise), the monitoring at SMK Muhammadiyah I Moyudan is more proactive. This is likely due to the nature of vocational education, which requires rapid adaptation to technological developments, industry needs, and changes in student practical training schedules. Supervision here not only monitors the delivery of material but also ensures the readiness of practical facilities, workplace safety in workshops, and the successful integration of industry skills into learning.

The vocational character of the school also demands flexibility in monitoring, for instance, by rescheduling supervision if a teacher is accompanying students for industry-based practical training. This flexibility differs from the monitoring patterns in general high schools, which are typically more rigid and follow the academic calendar. With this adaptive approach, monitoring does not disrupt learning activities but rather strengthens the connection between the supervision process and the needs of the professional world.

In summary, the monitoring of supervision at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Moyudan integrates consistent oversight with collaborative coaching, helping teachers feel supported in their development. This model reinforces the role of monitoring as part of a continuous quality improvement cycle in vocational education, where relevance to the industrial world is a significant differentiating factor.

Conclusion

This research offers practical implications for the implementation of supervision in vocational high schools. For principals, the resulting supervision model can serve as a guide for developing supervision plans that are linked to teacher professional development programs, distributing tasks equitably according to expertise, and conducting supervision through open and constructive dialogue. The use of digital technology also helps to record,

report, and monitor learning progress promptly and accurately, thereby facilitating decision-making and reducing communication barriers.

For teachers, this model provides a means for self-development, active engagement in improving the quality of learning, experimenting with more creative teaching methods, and building collaboration across different fields of expertise. In general, this study contributes to the development of supervision management in vocational education by shifting the perception of supervision from a mere control activity to a coaching process that involves active participation and innovation. This approach is not only beneficial to educational theory but can also be practically applied to help vocational schools navigate changes in industry and educational policy.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

This research is the result of a collaboration among the three authors. The first author served as the research initiator and was responsible for data collection, data analysis, and the writing of the initial draft of the article. The second and third authors contributed to editing, validating the analysis results, and refining the article for publication.

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Data availability statement

Data that support the findings of this study are available by contacting the first author. Additional data, including survey results and interview transcripts, are available upon request and are subject to the privacy regulations of the associated institution.

Declaration of interests statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Additional information

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