

The Role of The Principal as a Supervisor in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the Al-Hafizh Banyuasin Playgroups

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Head of School, Supervision, Implementation of Free Curriculum.	Supervision is a monitoring, training and evaluation activity carried out by a supervisor or head of school to improve and improve the quality of learning and school activities. The research uses descriptive qualitative approaches with case study methods and data collection techniques such as interviews, documentation and observations. The results of the study are the supervised approaches used by the head of the Al-Hafizh group to learn, namely Teacher Centered-Approach and Student Centered and Teacher-centered. Some of the approaches that the leader of the group uses in supervising today are Direct Approach, Non-Direct Approaching and collaborative approaches. Al-Hafizh joint teachers of the learning group work together to pursue a continuous improvement in the learning management and school administration system that includes training and supervision on the implementation of learning by teachers. Such as the ability of teachers to conduct learning planning, use of learning media, mastery of social personal learning materials and classroom management. As well as realizing a sense of family through intensive communication or other persuasion approaches, so that the Al-Hafizh playgroup becomes a school that seeks to develop its qualities according to the conditions of the institution and the demands of the times.
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INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions serve as environments for learning and for fostering the younger generation into intellectual, character-driven, and virtuous individuals, aligned with the goals of national education. This critical role highlights the necessity of continually advancing educational institutions within society. Education itself is a multifaceted process, aimed at facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, ethics, beliefs, and practices (Kusumaningrum et al., 2020). The

implementation of a curriculum, essential to the educational process, brings both advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, it is generally difficult to classify any curriculum as universally good or bad, as each has unique strengths and weaknesses (Jannati et al., 2023).

To ensure that education is structured, organized, and accountable, rules and guidelines are required. The curriculum holds an integral role in this regard, despite the presence of additional rules, norms, and regulations in schools. The 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) results highlighted challenges in Indonesia's education system, ranking Indonesian students' literacy skills sixth from the bottom, with an average score of 371. Mathematics skills also ranked low, at seventh from the bottom, with a score of 379, marking a decline from previous rankings in 2015 (Sidu, 2020). Following the Covid-19 pandemic, Indonesia sought curriculum improvements, as the shift to online learning during the pandemic raised concerns over learning loss due to delayed education and limited knowledge acquisition opportunities.

The Covid-19 pandemic underscored the importance of direct learning as a means to effectively achieve educational objectives (Tanjung et al., 2022). To address learning loss, improvements to the curriculum in Indonesia have become essential. As part of this effort, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology issued Decree No. 56/M/2022, establishing guidelines for curriculum implementation aimed at learning recovery and development. This initiative seeks to foster critical thinking, creativity, devotion to God Almighty, and adherence to Pancasila values among students, while encouraging global awareness and cooperation through the adoption of the Independent Learning curriculum.

Implementing the Independent Learning curriculum requires a solid foundation in school leadership. Principals, as key leaders within schools, must possess a thorough understanding of the competencies that teachers, as professional educators, need to fulfill their roles effectively. Principals, bearing the highest authority in school management, are responsible for coordinating resources, guiding educators, and utilizing organizational management skills to achieve educational goals. A competent principal significantly enhances a school's capacity to achieve high quality and to remain competitive across diverse educational scenarios.

In line with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education, principals are required to demonstrate four core competencies, including supervision. In the context of the Independent Learning curriculum, supervision plays a foundational role in improving learning outcomes. Effective supervision extends beyond monitoring and evaluation; it involves guidance, support, and continuous improvement. As the Independent Learning curriculum represents a new approach, it is essential to optimize the roles of school leaders and educational personnel to ensure its successful implementation (Murwantini, 2017). Supervision, therefore, becomes a necessary support mechanism, where the

principal acts as a mentor to develop and advance the learning process within this evolving curriculum framework.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. The type of research used is descriptive research. Moleong (2019) argues that qualitative research is research whose data is in the form of detailed descriptions or stories from informants or people being observed, either in the form of written or spoken words holistically. The research procedure includes the pre-field stage, the field stage, the data analysis stage, and the preparation of reports. The study uses observation, interview, documentation and other data collection methods to present various responses and behaviors from those observed (Sugiyono, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principal Supervision in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum

The Independent Learning Curriculum, introduced as an improvement on the emergency curriculum post-pandemic, offers both benefits and challenges in its implementation. According to Anggraini et al. (2022), the Independent Curriculum features diverse intracurricular learning opportunities, designed to optimize content delivery and provide students with sufficient time to explore concepts and strengthen their competencies. Although the curriculum has certain limitations, these can often be addressed through ongoing improvements and adjustments. Supervision plays a key role in this process, serving as a mechanism to ensure that all educational activities align with the curriculum's goals.

In education, supervision refers to the systematic monitoring of instructional practices to achieve educational objectives. The principal, as the primary supervisor, must possess the necessary competencies to plan and implement learning supervision effectively. By conducting systematic supervision, principals can evaluate teaching practices and identify areas for improvement based on observed results (Isa et al., 2022). Supervision encompasses a wide range of school management activities, from initial planning to evaluating the outcomes of school programs. Typically, the principal or designated supervisors from the education office are responsible for carrying out these duties.

Supervision by the principal is essential because they serve as both an accountable authority and a key stakeholder in school management. Principals are often trained by the education office to implement the Independent Learning Curriculum effectively and to empower their schools to operate

efficiently. In this capacity, principals must adopt supervision approaches tailored to the specific needs and conditions of their schools. This is especially important as some aspects of the curriculum are not yet fully optimized, a situation often attributed to the learning loss that resulted from extended periods of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In the current educational landscape, principals serve as mentors to teachers within the Independent Learning Curriculum, assisting them in addressing learning-related challenges and providing guidance from the planning phase through to the evaluation stage. The principal's role as a supervisor also includes fostering teacher development, ensuring that learning objectives are met, and ultimately contributing to the successful implementation of the curriculum. To make supervision more effective, principals employ direct, indirect, and collaborative approaches, tailoring their methods to the unique needs of their schools. This multifaceted approach enables principals to carry out their supervision duties in a way that is both effective and efficient, supporting the successful realization of the Independent Learning Curriculum's goals.

Principal Supervision Techniques in Implementing the Independent Curriculum

In implementing the Independent Learning Curriculum, principals must adhere to systematic procedures to ensure that supervisory practices align with the curriculum's goals. A structured approach requires the application of appropriate techniques, as they not only facilitate an organized and conducive environment but also serve as indicators of the effectiveness and efficiency of the supervision process in meeting the desired objectives. The selection of supervisory techniques is crucial, as they should be adapted to the context of each school. This context may relate to the school environment, the specific tasks of teachers, or the roles of staff, such as those at the Al-Hafizh Playgroup. When supervision techniques align with teachers' and staff members' duties, the supervisory process can be directed more effectively toward the desired outcomes.

According to Poniman et al. (2017), the principal's leadership style significantly influences school performance. The principal of Al-Hafizh Playgroup often uses group-based techniques, where each administrative and teaching staff member is encouraged to learn, support, and grow together. This collaborative approach is essential, as the successful implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum relies on teamwork, shared responsibility, and competencies that align with current technological and educational advancements. However, in specific circumstances, the principal may

adopt individual techniques as a form of personalized support, fostering a familial approach among the staff at Al-Hafizh Playgroup.

At Al-Hafizh Playgroup in Banyuasin, the principal employs three main supervisory approaches: direct, indirect, and collaborative. The direct approach is applied when immediate issues arise. According to Sri Banun (2010), this approach involves the principal taking a more dominant role in supervision to address pressing issues directly. This direct interaction between the principal and teachers enables quick problem resolution and immediate feedback, allowing for swift evaluation and real-time adjustments.

The indirect approach is used when situations arise that require the principal to listen to teachers' reports or concerns rather than intervening immediately. During these instances, teachers may share their observations, challenges, or areas needing improvement. After listening to these concerns, the principal provides encouragement, offers guidance, and suggests potential solutions based on pedagogical theories or insights (Muslim, 2010). This approach emphasizes a supportive role, where the principal assists in problem-solving through a process of mutual discussion and understanding.

The collaborative approach is especially useful when working with teachers who have varying levels of experience, technological competencies, and understanding of educational developments. The collaborative approach acknowledges the diversity in teachers' competencies, ages, and familiarity with current educational trends. This approach is also employed when the principal has external duties or specific obligations outside the school. Teacher competency development is often influenced by factors such as age and expertise, but school facilities and effective management also play a significant role in fostering professional growth. By combining these approaches, the principal at Al-Hafizh Playgroup promotes a well-rounded and adaptable supervisory strategy that supports the implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum effectively.

Results of Principal Supervision in the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum

The implementation of the Independent Learning Curriculum currently relies heavily on the principal, who serves as the primary figure responsible for overseeing its success. In this role, principals are not only leaders but also act as supervisors and educators for teachers and staff within the school. At Al-Hafizh Playgroup in Banyuasin, the principal is focused not only on ensuring that learning is

conducted in alignment with the curriculum's guidelines but also on serving as an educator and role model for the school community. Principals who have completed both online and in-person training related to the Independent Learning Curriculum are expected to adapt and apply their knowledge based on the specific conditions and available resources of each school.

Another critical factor in the successful implementation of this curriculum is the school's readiness. At Al-Hafizh Playgroup, efforts are directed toward preparing both human resources and school facilities to support the curriculum effectively. Although the principal has planned for resources to support the Independent Learning Curriculum, the school is still in an adaptation phase, encountering various challenges in practice. Additionally, the principal holds responsibility for ensuring that teachers at Al-Hafizh possess the necessary competencies. As drivers of the Independent Learning Curriculum, teachers must not only adapt to changes but also continuously improve their skills in utilizing learning media.

Given the challenges faced by educators and staff at Al-Hafizh Playgroup, supervision activities are essential and must be promptly executed. Supervision serves as a means of oversight, coordination, and guidance, ensuring that activities are structured and directed in alignment with established guidelines, allowing goals to be achieved effectively and efficiently. This supervision is ideally conducted by the principal, who, as the leader and accountable party, is responsible for all school operations. Through this process, the principal can assess the conditions, preparedness, qualifications of educational personnel, as well as the availability of infrastructure and facilities.

The principal's supervisory role at Al-Hafizh Playgroup must align with their responsibilities, competencies, and qualifications. By considering the school's strengths, limitations, and specific challenges, the principal is able to carry out supervision in a way that adheres to procedural standards. This structured approach to supervision contributes to the effective administration and learning processes at Al-Hafizh Playgroup, ultimately enhancing the quality and outcomes for the school community in Banyuasin.

CONCLUSION

Supervision carried out by the principal of the Al-Hafizh study group currently uses two supervision approaches regarding learning, namely the teacher-focused approach (Teacher Centered-Approach) which is an approach with teachers who act as those who master knowledge in class and are responsible for all learning activities and the student-focused approach (Student Centered) this approach gives students the freedom to explore their knowledge or potential to be developed according to their interests and talents. In addition to this, there are three supervision approaches that are generally carried out by the principal, namely the Direct Approach, the Indirect Approach (Non-Direct Approach), and the collaborative approach. The implementation carried out by teachers as teaching staff at Al-Hafizh is that the learning process has been carried out in an interesting and enjoyable way. The implementation of supervision by the principal on the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in the Al-Hafizh Banyuasin study group is the achievement of the implementation of the independent learning curriculum and in addition to supervision and coaching of learning or administration, increasing family ties between staff through informal communication as well as certain agreements and other persuasive approaches, the implementation of teacher reflection activities and learning achievements according to the development phase in teaching and learning activities, the management of the school environment becomes beautiful, conducive and creative, facilities are met and educational staff have met the qualifications and competencies to carry out administration and learning.

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