

## Optimizing Academic Supervision for Enhancing Teacher Performance in Integrated Islamic Elementary School

Kafrina<sup>1</sup>, Jummeida Zaliany<sup>2</sup>, Rahma Fitra<sup>3</sup>, Ilham Ageng Subekti<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Hidayat<sup>5</sup>, Syafaruddin<sup>6</sup>, Arrum Intan Sari<sup>7</sup>✉

<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6,7</sup>Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Indonesia

Email: [arrumintansr17@gmail.com](mailto:arrumintansr17@gmail.com)

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### Article info

### Abstract

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Corresponding author

*This study aims to analyze the implementation of academic supervision, identify obstacles to optimizing academic supervision, describe efforts to optimize academic supervision, and examine its contribution to improving teacher performance at SD IT Nur Inayah Kubang. This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach. The research subjects consisted of the principal and teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Observations focused on the implementation of academic supervision, classroom learning activities, interactions between the principal and teachers during supervision, and changes in teacher performance following supervision. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that academic supervision was systematically conducted twice each semester, namely at the beginning and in the middle of the semester. The supervision activities included reviewing instructional documents, observing classroom teaching, and providing feedback to teachers. However, its implementation had not been fully optimized due to the principal's limited time, heavy managerial workload, insufficient post-observation feedback sessions, and teachers' perceptions of supervision as an evaluative activity. Efforts to optimize academic supervision included structured supervision planning, strengthening collaborative communication, providing constructive feedback, and conducting follow-up activities through continuous professional development programs. Academic supervision contributed positively to improving teacher performance, particularly in lesson planning, instructional implementation, and learning evaluation.*

**Keywords:** Academic Supervision, Optimization, Teacher Performance

#### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pelaksanaan supervisi akademik, mengidentifikasi hambatan dalam optimalisasi supervisi akademik, mendeskripsikan upaya optimalisasi supervisi akademik, serta menganalisis kontribusinya terhadap peningkatan kinerja guru di SD IT Nur Inayah Kubang. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah bidang kurikulum dan guru yang dipilih secara purposive. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Observasi dilakukan terhadap pelaksanaan supervisi akademik, proses pembelajaran, interaksi antara kepala sekolah dan guru, serta perubahan kinerja guru setelah memperoleh supervisi. Analisis data dilakukan melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa supervisi akademik dilaksanakan secara terprogram sebanyak dua kali dalam setiap semester, yaitu

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pada awal dan pertengahan semester. Kegiatan supervisi meliputi pemeriksaan perangkat pembelajaran, observasi pembelajaran di kelas, dan pemberian umpan balik kepada guru. Namun, pelaksanaannya belum sepenuhnya optimal karena keterbatasan waktu kepala sekolah, tingginya beban tugas manajerial, belum optimalnya konferensi balikan, serta persepsi sebagian guru yang masih memandang supervisi sebagai kegiatan evaluatif. Upaya optimalisasi dilakukan melalui perencanaan supervisi yang terstruktur, penguatan komunikasi kolaboratif, pemberian umpan balik yang konstruktif, dan tindak lanjut melalui pengembangan profesional guru. Supervisi akademik memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap peningkatan kinerja guru, terutama pada aspek perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi pembelajaran.

**Kata kunci:** Supervisi Akademik, Optimalisasi, Kinerja Guru

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is one of the primary pillars in improving the quality of human resources and shaping the future development of a nation. The quality of education is strongly influenced by the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes implemented in schools, where teachers play strategic roles as educators, facilitators, mentors, and learning managers (Yolviansyah et al., 2024). Teachers are expected to create effective and innovative learning environments while managing classrooms efficiently to ensure that educational objectives are achieved. However, teacher performance does not always meet expected standards due to various challenges, including limitations in pedagogical competence, classroom management skills, instructional planning abilities, and external factors such as school culture, facilities, and leadership support. These challenges indicate that improving teacher performance requires systematic, structured, and sustainable professional development efforts (Ramadhona, 2024).

Teacher performance refers to the ability and success of teachers in carrying out their instructional responsibilities. According to Uno (2014), teacher performance encompasses teachers' effectiveness in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning activities, which is reflected through professional discipline, work ethic, and commitment to educational quality. Therefore, teacher performance is not solely measured by instructional outcomes but also by the professional processes undertaken to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for students.

One of the most strategic mechanisms for improving teacher performance is academic supervision. Academic supervision is a professional development process conducted systematically by school principals or educational supervisors to assist teachers in enhancing their competencies and instructional practices (Altinok, 2024). Rather than functioning merely as an evaluation tool, academic supervision emphasizes guidance, support, mentoring, and constructive feedback aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. Effective supervision should adopt a collaborative, humanistic, and developmental approach that supports teachers in instructional planning, classroom implementation, and learning assessment (Singerin, 2021).

The importance of academic supervision is formally recognized in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of Indonesia Number 13 of 2007 concerning Standards for School Principals, which stipulates that principals must possess supervisory competencies, including the ability to design academic supervision programs, implement supervision using appropriate approaches and techniques, and follow up supervision results to improve teacher professionalism (Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 13, 2007). Consequently, academic supervision has become an essential component of educational leadership and a critical responsibility of school principals in fostering instructional quality and teacher development.

Within the framework of school leadership, academic supervision is expected to support teachers in strengthening their pedagogical and professional competencies. Through well-planned and continuous supervision, schools can promote instructional improvement and encourage teachers to engage in reflective professional practice. In this regard, academic supervision serves not only as a quality assurance mechanism but also as a professional learning process that contributes to the development of competent, adaptive, and competitive educators capable of responding to contemporary educational challenges.

Despite its strategic importance, the implementation of academic supervision in many schools often falls short of its intended purpose. Many teachers still perceive supervision as a control mechanism or performance evaluation process that generates pressure rather than as a form of professional support. Furthermore, supervisory activities are frequently characterized by administrative compliance and procedural formalities, with limited emphasis on substantive coaching or instructional improvement. School principals often face substantial managerial responsibilities, administrative duties, and institutional demands that restrict their capacity to conduct intensive and meaningful supervision. As a result, supervision frequently focuses on documentation and compliance rather than continuous teacher development, thereby limiting its effectiveness in improving teacher competence and performance (Mulyasa, 2017).

This situation creates a significant gap between the intended objectives and the actual implementation of academic supervision. Ideally, supervision should assist teachers in improving instructional planning, enhancing classroom practices, and engaging in reflective evaluation of their professional performance (El-Hamamsy et al., 2024). However, in practice, supervision often fails to generate substantial improvements in teaching quality because it is not consistently followed by reflective dialogue, mentoring, or professional development activities.

Preliminary observations and interviews conducted with several teachers at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School revealed that academic supervision has been implemented by the school principal; however, its execution has not yet reached optimal effectiveness. Limited time availability, combined with the principal's extensive managerial responsibilities, constrains the implementation of comprehensive

supervision activities. In addition, follow-up actions based on supervision findings are not always conducted consistently due to institutional and resource-related limitations. These conditions suggest the need for strategies that can optimize academic supervision to produce more substantial improvements in teacher performance and instructional quality.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the positive contribution of academic supervision to teacher performance. Arjunaini & Arifin (2023) found that systematically implemented academic supervision contributes to improving instructional quality and teacher professionalism. Similarly, Purwaningsih et al. (2023) reported that collaborative supervision approaches enhance teacher competence through structured and continuous professional guidance. Furthermore, Suroso et al. (2023) emphasized that the effectiveness of academic supervision is influenced by comprehensive planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up processes conducted by school principals.

Although previous studies have highlighted the positive relationship between academic supervision and teacher performance, most have focused primarily on measuring supervisory effectiveness or examining its general impact on teachers. Research specifically investigating how academic supervision can be optimized to address implementation challenges remains limited, particularly within the context of Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools. This context is unique because it combines general education with Islamic values, requiring supervision practices that support not only academic competence but also the integration of Islamic principles into teaching and learning activities.

This limitation in the existing literature reveals an important research gap concerning strategies for optimizing academic supervision in Islamic educational institutions. The novelty of the present study lies in its focus on exploring academic supervision optimization from a holistic perspective, including implementation practices, challenges, improvement strategies, and contributions to teacher performance within an Integrated Islamic Elementary School context. By examining these dimensions simultaneously, the study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how academic supervision can be strengthened to support both instructional quality and professional teacher development.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the optimization of academic supervision in improving teacher performance at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School. Specifically, the study investigates the implementation of academic supervision, identifies challenges affecting its effectiveness, examines strategies employed to optimize supervisory practices, and analyzes its contribution to teacher performance in instructional planning, implementation, and evaluation. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of Islamic Educational Management scholarship and provide practical recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of academic supervision and educational quality in schools.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the optimization of academic supervision in improving teacher performance at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to explore complex educational phenomena within their real-life context and to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and practices. The study specifically focused on examining how academic supervision was implemented by the school principal, the challenges encountered during its implementation, the strategies employed to optimize its effectiveness, and its contribution to teacher performance improvement. Through this approach, the research sought to generate a rich and contextualized understanding of academic supervision practices within the school environment.

### **Research Setting and Participants**

The study was conducted at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang, Indonesia. This school was selected because it regularly implements academic supervision as part of its instructional quality assurance program and demonstrates relevant dynamics related to teacher performance improvement. The primary focus of the study was the implementation of academic supervision and its role in enhancing teachers' instructional performance.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that the individuals involved possessed direct knowledge and experience related to the phenomenon under investigation. The participants included the school principal as the primary academic supervisor, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers who had directly experienced the supervision process. These participants were considered information-rich sources capable of providing comprehensive insights into the implementation, challenges, optimization strategies, and outcomes of academic supervision within the school.

### **Research Focus**

This study focused on the optimization of academic supervision as a strategy for improving teacher performance. Specifically, the investigation examined four key dimensions: the implementation of academic supervision practices, factors constraining the effectiveness of supervision, efforts undertaken by the school to optimize supervision processes, and the contribution of academic supervision to teacher performance in instructional planning, classroom implementation, and learning assessment. These dimensions were explored to provide a holistic understanding of how academic supervision functions as a mechanism for supporting instructional quality and professional growth.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were conducted to directly examine the implementation of academic supervision, classroom teaching and learning activities, interactions between the principal and teachers during supervision sessions, and changes in teacher performance following supervisory activities. This method enabled the researcher to obtain firsthand evidence regarding supervisory practices and instructional processes within their natural setting.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers to gather detailed information regarding the implementation of academic supervision, challenges encountered during supervision activities, strategies adopted to optimize supervision, and the perceived contribution of supervision to teacher performance improvement. The interview format allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives while ensuring that discussions remained aligned with the objectives of the study.

Documentation analysis was used to complement and validate the findings obtained from observations and interviews. The documents reviewed included supervision programs, supervision instruments, classroom observation records, teacher instructional documents, school reports, and photographs of supervision activities. The use of multiple data sources strengthened the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings (Thalib, 2022).

## **Research Procedures**

The research was conducted through several interconnected stages. The first stage involved preliminary fieldwork, including an initial assessment of the research setting, identification of research participants, and preparation of observation and interview instruments. The second stage consisted of field data collection through observations, interviews, and documentation review. During this phase, data collection and preliminary analysis were conducted simultaneously to allow emerging findings to guide subsequent data collection activities.

The third stage involved data verification through source and method triangulation to ensure the trustworthiness and consistency of the findings. The final stage consisted of organizing, interpreting, and synthesizing the data into a comprehensive research report that reflected the experiences and perspectives of participants regarding academic supervision and teacher performance improvement (Ramadhan, 2016).

## **Data Analysis and Trustworthiness**

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and organizing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The

condensed data were then systematically presented in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic categories to facilitate interpretation and identification of patterns across data sources.

The final stage involved drawing conclusions and continuously verifying emerging interpretations against the collected evidence to ensure analytical rigor. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, triangulation was employed through multiple data collection techniques, including observations, interviews, and documentation analysis, as well as multiple data sources comprising the principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers. This triangulation process enabled the researcher to cross-check findings and strengthen the validity of interpretations generated from the study (Sa'diyah & Hidayat, 2024).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of Academic Supervision at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang**

The findings revealed that academic supervision at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang, was implemented systematically and had become an integral part of the school's academic quality assurance system. Based on interviews with the principal, vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers, academic supervision was conducted twice each semester, namely at the beginning and middle of the semester. This schedule was formally documented in the school supervision program and communicated to teachers before implementation.

At the beginning of each semester, supervision focused primarily on teachers' instructional preparedness. Teachers were required to submit instructional documents, including annual programs, semester programs, teaching modules, assessment instruments, student worksheets, and supporting learning materials. Document analysis showed that the school used standardized supervision instruments to evaluate the completeness and quality of instructional planning. According to the principal, this stage was intended to ensure that all teachers were adequately prepared before the learning process began. One participant stated:

*“Before entering the classroom, teachers must ensure that all instructional documents are complete. Through supervision, we can identify deficiencies and provide recommendations for improvement.” (P1)*

Observation data further indicated that the supervision process was conducted in a structured manner. The principal reviewed each teacher's instructional documents and provided written comments regarding areas requiring revision or improvement. Teachers reported that this process encouraged greater discipline and accountability in preparing instructional materials.

The second phase of supervision was conducted during the middle of the semester through classroom observations. During these observations, the principal directly observed classroom activities and assessed multiple aspects of instruction, including lesson openings, learning activities, classroom management, student

engagement, instructional strategies, use of learning media, and assessment practices. Observation records indicated that teachers generally followed their planned instructional activities, although variations in teaching quality and classroom management were evident across classrooms.

Teachers acknowledged that classroom observation encouraged them to prepare more thoroughly and pay greater attention to instructional quality. As one teacher explained:

*“Knowing that classroom supervision will take place motivates us to prepare better learning activities and use more varied teaching methods.” (T2)*

In addition, interview findings revealed that supervision facilitated communication between teachers and school leaders. Teachers were given opportunities to discuss instructional challenges, student learning difficulties, and classroom management issues following observation sessions. Although the depth of these discussions varied, the supervision process created a forum for professional interaction and instructional dialogue.

However, despite the regular implementation of supervision, the findings suggest that supervisory activities remained predominantly focused on administrative compliance and monitoring instructional implementation. Discussions concerning pedagogical innovation, reflective practice, and long-term professional development appeared less prominent during supervision sessions. Teachers frequently associated supervision with document review and classroom evaluation rather than collaborative professional learning.

**Table 1.** Findings on the Implementation of Academic Supervision

Aspect	Findings
Frequency	Conducted twice per semester
Initial Supervision	Review of instructional documents and teaching readiness
Mid-Semester Supervision	Classroom observation and instructional monitoring
Communication	Professional dialogue between principal and teachers
Main Orientation	Administrative monitoring and instructional compliance
Teacher Response	Increased preparedness and instructional discipline

### Challenges in Optimizing Academic Supervision

The study identified several challenges that limited the effectiveness of academic supervision. The most frequently reported challenge concerned the principal’s workload. Interviews revealed that managerial, administrative, and institutional responsibilities significantly reduced the time available for intensive supervision and teacher mentoring. The vice principal explained:

*“The principal has many responsibilities beyond supervision. As a result, follow-up discussions after observations are sometimes shorter than expected.” (VP1)*

This finding was corroborated by observation data indicating that post-observation meetings were often brief and primarily focused on immediate instructional issues. Opportunities for deeper professional reflection, collaborative problem-solving, and pedagogical coaching were relatively limited.

A second challenge involved the implementation of post-observation feedback. Although feedback was routinely provided, teachers reported that it often focused on technical and administrative aspects rather than deeper instructional improvement. Some teachers expressed a desire for more detailed discussions regarding teaching strategies, student engagement, and classroom innovation. One teacher commented:

“Feedback is usually helpful, but sometimes we need more detailed discussions about how to improve specific teaching practices.” (T3)

Another challenge related to teachers’ perceptions of supervision. Several participants viewed supervision primarily as an evaluation mechanism rather than a developmental process. This perception occasionally generated anxiety and reduced teachers’ willingness to openly discuss instructional difficulties. Interview data suggested that teachers who perceived supervision as professional support were generally more receptive to feedback than those who viewed supervision as performance evaluation. These differing perceptions influenced the quality of interaction between supervisors and teachers.

**Table 2.** Challenges in Academic Supervision

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Description</b>
Principal's Workload	Extensive managerial responsibilities reduce supervision time
Limited Feedback Sessions	Post-observation discussions often brief
Evaluation-Oriented Perceptions	Some teachers view supervision as assessment rather than support
Professional Development Focus	Limited emphasis on pedagogical coaching
Reflective Practice	Insufficient opportunities for collaborative reflection

### **Strategies for Optimizing Academic Supervision**

Participants identified several strategies that could enhance the effectiveness of academic supervision. The first strategy involved implementing needs-based supervision. Teachers emphasized that supervisory activities should be aligned with individual professional development needs rather than relying solely on standardized evaluation procedures.

The second strategy concerned strengthening collaborative supervision practices. Participants highlighted the importance of creating a more collegial atmosphere in which supervision functions as a partnership rather than a hierarchical assessment process. Such an approach would encourage teachers to discuss instructional challenges more openly and engage in reflective dialogue.

Another important strategy involved improving the quality of feedback provided after classroom observations. Teachers expressed a preference for constructive, specific, and solution-oriented feedback that could guide instructional improvement. Participants believed that reflective discussions would enhance the developmental function of supervision. Furthermore, the findings suggest that supervision should be integrated with broader professional development programs, including workshops, mentoring activities, peer learning groups, and professional learning communities. Participants viewed these initiatives as essential for translating supervision findings into sustainable professional growth.

### **Contributions of Academic Supervision to Teacher Performance**

The findings demonstrate that academic supervision contributes positively to several dimensions of teacher performance. The most evident impact was observed in instructional planning. Teachers reported becoming more systematic and disciplined in preparing lesson plans, teaching modules, assessment instruments, and supporting instructional materials.

Improvements were also evident in classroom implementation. Observation data indicated that supervised teachers demonstrated greater adherence to lesson plans, improved classroom organization, and more consistent instructional delivery. Teachers appeared more conscious of instructional objectives and classroom management strategies following supervision activities. In terms of assessment practices, supervision encouraged teachers to improve documentation procedures and align assessments more closely with learning objectives. Teachers reported increased awareness regarding the importance of systematic assessment and learning evaluation.

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that the contribution of supervision to deeper pedagogical and professional competence development remains relatively limited. While supervision effectively promotes compliance, preparedness, and instructional accountability, its potential as a catalyst for transformative professional learning has not yet been fully realized. This finding suggests the need for a more reflective, collaborative, and development-oriented supervision model capable of fostering continuous teacher growth and instructional innovation.

**Table 3.** Contributions of Academic Supervision to Teacher Performance

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Instructional Planning	Improved preparation of teaching documents and lesson plans
Teaching Implementation	Better classroom management and instructional delivery
Assessment Practices	Enhanced assessment planning and documentation
Professional Discipline	Increased accountability and instructional readiness
Pedagogical Development	Positive but still limited impact
Professional Growth	Requires stronger follow-up and mentoring support

## **Discussion**

The findings demonstrate that academic supervision at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang, has been institutionalized as a regular and systematic practice. The implementation of supervision through document review and classroom observation reflects the school's commitment to ensuring instructional quality and accountability. This finding aligns with the perspective that academic supervision serves as a mechanism for improving instructional effectiveness through continuous monitoring and support for teachers (Glanz & Glickman, 2015).

The predominance of administrative supervision identified in this study reflects a common pattern observed in many schools, where supervision is frequently oriented toward compliance and monitoring rather than professional growth. While administrative supervision is necessary for maintaining instructional standards, excessive emphasis on documentation may limit opportunities for reflective practice and pedagogical innovation. This finding supports the argument of Glickman et al. (2017) and Sergiovanni (2009), who emphasize that effective supervision should focus on professional development rather than solely on accountability measures.

The challenges identified in this study, particularly the principal's workload and the limited implementation of reflective feedback sessions, highlight the complexity of instructional leadership in contemporary schools. Principals are expected to balance managerial responsibilities with their role as instructional leaders. The findings reinforce Robinson's (2011) argument that instructional leadership requires sustained engagement with teaching and learning processes, including meaningful post-observation dialogue and collaborative reflection.

The findings also reveal that teachers' perceptions of supervision significantly influence its effectiveness. When supervision is perceived as an evaluative mechanism, teachers may become defensive and less willing to discuss instructional challenges openly. This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of trust, professional relationships, and collaborative cultures in successful supervision practices (Blase & Blase, 2003; Louis et al., 2008).

The positive impact of supervision on instructional planning, classroom implementation, and assessment practices confirms the important role of supervision in supporting teacher performance. However, the relatively limited contribution to deeper pedagogical and professional competence development suggests that supervision should be more closely integrated with ongoing professional learning opportunities. Previous studies have emphasized that supervision produces greater long-term benefits when connected to professional development programs, collaborative learning communities, and continuous teacher learning initiatives (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Timperley, 2011).

These findings further highlight the importance of strengthening the principal's role as an instructional leader who not only monitors teaching practices but also actively facilitates teacher learning and professional growth. Consistent with Leithwood (2020), effective school leadership requires creating conditions that support teacher

development, instructional improvement, and sustainable school effectiveness. Therefore, optimizing academic supervision through collaborative, reflective, and development-oriented approaches may contribute more substantially to improving teacher performance and instructional quality.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that academic supervision at Nur Inayah Integrated Islamic Elementary School, Kubang, has been implemented systematically through scheduled supervision activities conducted twice each semester, encompassing lesson plan reviews, classroom observations, and feedback sessions. However, the supervision process remains predominantly focused on administrative compliance and instructional monitoring rather than serving as a comprehensive mechanism for teacher professional development. The findings further reveal several challenges that limit the effectiveness of academic supervision, including principals' managerial workload, insufficient post-observation feedback practices, and teachers' perceptions of supervision as an evaluative rather than developmental activity. Despite these constraints, academic supervision contributes positively to teacher performance, particularly in lesson planning, instructional implementation, and learning assessment. The study highlights the importance of needs-based supervision planning, collaborative supervisory approaches, reflective and constructive feedback, and continuous professional development initiatives to strengthen the impact of supervision on teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies. Strengthening follow-up actions and reinforcing the principal's role as an instructional leader are essential to maximizing the effectiveness of academic supervision in improving teacher performance and instructional quality. Future research may explore more collaborative supervision models and broader educational contexts to generate a more comprehensive understanding of effective academic supervision practices.

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